

Nothing Matters, except YOU & Me Chapter

559

On Matthias' way home, Heather initiated a call to keep him company—something she rarely

did. With her usual dull tone, she chatted with him about whatever came to mind and before

they realized it, Matthias had already reached home.

When he entertained her with a joke Lara once told him, he could hear her subtle chuckle.

Then, she stopped her giggle to inquire, "Are you home yet?" All along, she was sitting at her

study desk, reading a book while chattering with Matthias.

"Yup. Just got to park real quick." Having much left to say to Heather, Matthias was reluctant to end the call as hearing her voice made him feel like she was right beside him.

Swiftly, he parked the car into the garage and grabbed his phone as he got out of the car.

Unexpectedly, Heather didn't hang up on him. What a pleasant surprise! he thought to himself. However, given the pile of mess they had gone through that night, nothing else could intrigue him anymore.

"Heather," he ecstatically called out. There were only two people in the world that would call

for her in such a manner, and Matthias wished to be the third. To his surprise, not only was she not upset, she even hummed a response, and that got him excited.

"Aren't you tired?" Since it was already late, Matthias didn't want Heather to stay up, lest she

lose sleep. After all, she lived a strict healthy lifestyle.

"I'm used to it." Recently, due to many reasons, one of them being insomnia, she had been pulling all-nighters.

"You better get some rest, then. There's a lot ahead of you tomorrow." Anticipating hecticness awaiting the next day, Matthias couldn't help but be concerned. Despite having bribed the reporters to shut up, he couldn't guarantee the absence of other paparazzis.

Before going to meet her, he had ordered Evan to deal with the journalists possessing Heather's photos by tomorrow through social media. Judging by how Evan was still managing it, the matter must have been really troublesome, making Matthias worried for the

day that hadn't even come.

"Do you mean to say that I'll be dragged into the bombing incident?" Having considered the possibility of her being involved due to the atrocious nature of tragedies such as bombings, she had already prepared herself for whatever would come.

The fact that she drove recklessly like a madman earlier could be linked to the incident, leading to the birth of more scandals. Besides, recalling her impulsive embrace with Leon and his mention of his family, she hoped the reporters of Bradford City wouldn't find out about his background.

"I have no idea how many people have possession of those photos," Matthias expressed his concern about how that one photo would be the root of countless issues.

Pulling up the photo on his phone, he gazed at the picture, thinking about how the explosion occurring upstairs could have demolished the building into two. And then there was Heather, with her worried face while hugging Leon. The picture was taken from such an impeccable angle that one could see every detail of her expression. In contrast, Leon's face was left in the dark so there was no telling what his expression was like. Consequently, Matthias found an oddity in the photo. Indeed, the picture was targeted to emphasize Heather, but it strangely seemed like it was trying to protect Leon given how blurred his mug was in the shot. Upon coming to that realization, he shared his opinion with Heather. "I may have discovered something else after going through the photos again. Well, more like a speculation, really." After stating that, he contemplated how to express his thoughts to her. "What is it?" Heather curiously questioned, seeing nothing fishy from the picture.

"In the photos, your face is so clear that I can even see the worry in your eyes. However, Leon's face is so blurred, as if the angle from which the photo was shot was to protect him," Matthias voiced his thoughts. Why did the photographers protect Leon? That was indeed an insightful question.

"Send them over. Let me see for myself." Feeling the discovery was worth something, Heather wanted to study the photos herself.

After receiving the images from Matthias, she zoomed in to study each of them. True enough, no matter the angle of the shot, Leon's face was always hazy and was even more pixelated upon zooming in. One could only figure it was a man while staying clueless to his ethnicity.

"Someone must have been pulling the strings behind this. With what we have on our hands, we can't determine if it was done by one man, a few people, or factions of them. If anything, there might even be an organization that's manipulating everything," Matthias claimed, thinking the entire occurrence was a complicated ruse. If there was only one party causing the explosion, no one could tell whether they intended to kill him off or simply send him a warning.

On the other hand, if it involved many parties, then one of them must be aiming to shield Leon. Considering the possibility, Matthias instinctively scowled. Given how things were escalating so fast, he couldn't even tell if it was a business dispute or something else. While Heather remained silent, Matthias quizzed, "What do you think? Are they coming for you or Leon?"

Previously, she was unable to make her decision and suspected it was someone from the Moriarty Family given how they had been abnormally quiet. "Initially, I thought it was me but after hearing some things from Leon, I started to think it might be a warning to him instead."

As it was getting late, Matthias decided to halt the discussion with Heather and reluctantly

advised, "We shouldn't be racking our brains this late at night. Rest up now, alright?" Still reluctant to end the call, he waited for Heather to hang up first. However, seeing how she wouldn't hang up, he couldn't help but think perhaps she had more to chat about.

"Go to bed if you're tired." Hearing no further words from Matthias in a few seconds, Heather hesitantly hung up.

Staring at the end-call screen, Matthias felt a little upset with how needy he was, wishing to never part from her even for a moment. Thanks to the incident, he was even more determined that he in fact adored Heather and wanted to spend his life with her.

Meanwhile, thousands of words narrowly packed on a page entered Heather's eyes, yet none went into her mind. Whenever she felt troubled, she would always grab a book and mindlessly turn its pages as if that was able to calm the conflict in her mind.

For some reason, Matthias' unusual lack of clinginess made her feel a little odd. Hell, he even asked me to go to sleep! Unlike earlier, the Matthias she knew was headstrong, doing whatever he felt like and forcing his wills onto others. Now that he had learned to take care of others and respect their opinions, Heather felt somewhat comforted. Perhaps his once-detestable side was indeed salvageable, after all.

Acknowledging how there were many sides to a person, Heather couldn't bring herself to hate on Matthias as she got to understand him more. Essentially, his concerns for her were genuine as he would notice little things she had never even paid attention to, and this tended to move her.

Swiftly, Heather reached the last sheet of the book. Since the book contained less than ten thousand words, it didn't take her much time to finish it. Besides, underneath the pitch-black

night, Heather got gradually drowsy and felt a little ache surging on her back. Hence, she headed to bed.

When she finally lay on her bed, she felt her aches disappear. Rolling around, she wished for

the light of the day to come later. Since her destiny was bound to arrive, she had already predicted the disastrous headlines on the papers. She tossed and turned on her bed repeatedly, forcing herself to sleep with her worries.

Meanwhile, Matthias was still up awaiting Evan, who had just returned home with a chilly aura. Immediately, Matthias approached him and asked about what had been worrying him most. "How is it?"

"So far, we're unable to determine how many people had taken photos of the scene," Evan expressed with a glower. Regardless, he had done all he could, looking for people and "persuading" them to keep their mouths shut.

"So there are too many to handle?" Matthias inquired anxiously. He had expected that there

were only a few that possessed Heather's photos but on the contrary, there were actually quite a number of reporters that had already received the news.

"Yes. Bunch of amoral imbeciles." Thinking how many of them had dared to make demands,

negotiate and take advantage of him, Evan grew more furious.

“I just fear that we’ve missed some of them,” Matthias voiced out in distress. “That’s a no-brainer. It’s an ocean of fishes out there. There’s no way we can net them all up at once.” At the time, Evan was somewhat hesitant to pay any more bribes as he was conscious that his effort would go in vain with just one whistleblower. “Never mind. It’s merely a matter of money and we’ve done what we can. Besides, once we have paid them, they’ll no longer interfere in this matter. Thus, they are no longer a problem to us,” Matthias claimed upon seeing how it pained Evan to hand out bribes. Despite his gifted, beguiling charm, Evan was, deep down, an avaricious calculator. “I didn’t really mind because it’s your money anyway.” Evan rolled his eyes at Matthias, who tended to turn into a brainless fool in love that would do any stupid thing for his obsession—in this case, Heather. “Have a rest now,” Matthias urged Evan, feeling somewhat sorry for him after his day of hard work. To be fair, Matthias cared very well for his peers and subordinates and would seldom cause them any difficulties or trouble. Hence, whenever he voiced his desires, Evan and Nikolai, and sometimes even Lara, would assist him toward his goals without any question. “You should get some sleep too, sir. If this actually blows up tomorrow, you’ll really have no time for rest then.” Knowing Matthias wouldn’t sit still, Evan expected him to clean up the mess faster than Heather would.

Matthias hummed in response and he carried a perturbed heart with him upstairs. Ah—such a hectic day! The day, however, wasn’t all fruitless. Recalling Heather’s rather welcoming attitude toward him, Matthias was on cloud nine and his commissures would instinctively lift themselves. Indeed, he had become a fool in love. It was already three in the morning yet he was still grasping his cellphone, sending a goodnight text to Heather. Seconds later, Heather, who was tossing around in bed, heard her ringtone and immediately turned on her phone, only to be let down by the word ‘Goodnight’. Unlike a mysterious text out of nowhere she fantasized about, it was merely a text from Matthias. Given that he was still texting at this hour, it seemed like he was insomniac as well. ‘I can’t sleep.’ Heather typed three words down. But when she was about to send the message, she decided not to and deleted it. Feeling that the three words were rather attention-seeking, she laid her phone down as she contemplated what to reply to him with. No matter what she came up with, everything just felt odd. After pondering for a while, she decided not to make a response at all as she put her phone away. “Calm before the storm, huh...” she muttered to herself as she lay back in bed. It was three in the morning and the air was stifling. What plans could God have set up in the

next morning that awaited everyone?

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560

Boom! The penetrating thunderclap shocked Heather awake. Hearing the wind howling, she immediately got out of bed to close the windows as the thunderstorm neared.

The peace of yesterday had now turned into a heavy downpour. How spontaneous of the weather! Seeing that winter came early and how it rained more than usual, Heather couldn't

tell if it was her fault for getting too comfortable with the climate overseas or it was the weather which was being rather unpredictable.

All at once, Heather, who disliked rain and abhorred thunderstorms, closed the window, effectively blocking the piercing thunder outside. The thunder went on for quite some time but it still hadn't rained, and only a massive billow of grey clouds was seen filling up the sky. Upon seeing that, Heather thought to herself, This rain's going to take years. Seems like I'm not going out today. Suddenly, she had an epiphany and dialed Leon's number.

Missing the first call, Leon reluctantly accepted the second. Hearing Heather's voice, Leon, who was feeling rather lethargic, mumbled, "Do you know what time it is, Heather?" After a long night of forcing himself into sleep, he felt as if he had only closed his eyes for a few minutes only for his slumber to be interrupted by her call.

"I wish to start the business in the New Year," Heather announced, getting straight to the point.

Hearing her out-of-the-blue desire to postpone their business startup, Leon got curious about her plans. He was wide awake now as he curiously questioned, "Why do you want to delay the startup?"

"I have my plans." Unwilling to sit back and relax, Heather intended to investigate the bombing, thus the business postponement.

"It's not a good time to be mindless, Heather," he muttered helplessly while wondering what

she had gone through yesterday to make such a decision.

Since she had already settled on that, there was no way to change her mind. Instantly, she hung up on Leon, not wanting to hear any debates from Leon. While Leon was easy to win over, Paige's parents were no easy feat to take on. After having set a startup date, Heather thought a spontaneous change to the schedule was rather hard to profess to them.

All of a sudden, Leon sent a text over, 'I'm heading to your place now.' Much to her surprise,

Leon actually cared about the business. It has only been a night. How can he be so headstrong?

When the thunder struck once again, Heather was reminded of the awful weather and thus phoned Leon to reject his visit.

"It's not a good weather to come out, Leon. Just stay put in the hotel." The reasons she defied his visit were firstly because accidents were prone to happen to Leon if he were to go

out under such hazardous weather and secondly, she simply didn't want him to show up at

the Langston Residence.

The storm beat down heavily and Leon stared out the window at the rainstorm—one that would give a hard time to the city's drainage system. Consequently, he walked back to his bed and curled up in it. Since it was indeed inconvenient to go out, he decided to properly talk it out with Heather through the phone.

"Tell me—why are we postponing the launch?" Leon enunciated clearly as he was thoroughly clueless when it came to her self-willed actions.

"I thought it'll be more meaningful to commence business on New Year's Day," she replied casually, though not entirely insincere.

Hearing her blurting the perfunctory answer, Leon didn't know what to feel and unable to accept such a baseless excuse, he scowled.

"I feel obliged to find out the reasons behind the explosion yesterday. If I can't ensure my own safety, how am I supposed to concentrate on the business?" Bothered sick by the messy things happening around her, she tossed everything about entrepreneurship aside. Especially after the disaster occurred the night before, she couldn't bring herself to pretend as if nothing had happened, so she was determined to find out the mastermind behind all that.

Lately, she felt like she was constantly being attacked from all angles and it was as if someone was manipulating her life in the dark. By no means was it the plans of God but the doings of men.

"Yesterday was a warning to me. You're not the target." Leon was confident that apart from his own family, no one was bold enough to perform such a daring act so openly, thus it must have been their doing.

"If so, can you explain the text message to me?" Heather queried as she was unable to completely trust what Leon said. After hearing Matthias' discovery, Heather, who had been skeptical since the very start, grew even suspicious of her own relevance in the case. Already bearing a suspect in mind as he couldn't think of another, Leon responded, "People love making stuff up—it's just one of their things, so don't worry about it."

"We both have our doubts and there's no way to convince each other." Since the truth was still an enigma, any explanation was nothing but empty inferences; thus, Heather was unable to take his words entirely.

Once again, she hung up on Leon, who wanted to give her a rational clarification but instead gradually found more loopholes in his words.

Being rudely hung up on, Leon vexedly gazed at the phone as if he was giving Heather, who was right in front of him, the death stare. Looking at the atrocious weather, he decided not to go to the Langston Residence after all. With that, what was more fulfilling than snuggling under the bed sheets?

Based on his understanding of her, he knew that she must have been racking her brains on how to propose the postponement to Paige. Although Heather was always upfront with

Leon, that wasn't always the case with Paige.

After deciding to forget Heather and her triggering attitude, Leon turned the heat up by two

degrees since the rain would cool down the room anyway.

Unlike in Europe, Bradfort City's chilly climate was quite a challenge for Leon—who loved himself a warm space—to get used to. It was only fall, yet it was already freezing like in the middle of winter, as if autumn quickly skipped to winter in mere days.

Resting her arms on the window frame, Heather blankly stared at the downpour on the other

side of the window. When the rain eventually ended, the weather would become freezing.

At

this rate, it wouldn't take long to snow.

Unexpectedly, the winter in the South was as cold while snow was already falling in the North. After a long period of not seeing any snow, Bradfort City would get snowy very soon.

Suddenly, there were taps on her door. Turning around, she ordered at the door, "Come in."

Since she had forgotten to lock her door, it was accessible from the other side.

When the butler showed his face after opening the door, Heather, who was still in her pajamas, covered her chest. Unlike any other person, she had forgotten to change into her winter sleepwear after having gotten distracted by many happenings.

"Miss Heather, the Old Master wishes to see you in the study." Judging by the butler's look, Heather intuitively knew it wasn't going to be anything good.

"Let me get changed first," she responded.

Upon hearing that, the butler, who didn't dare to enter her bedroom, immediately withdrew

the revealed half of his body and shut the door without delay.

After watching the butler taking his seemingly guilty leave, Heather took off her pajamas and changed into a set of casual homewear before heading to the study room.

As she had the most excellent reaction speed among the Langstons, she didn't mind the door being unlocked. Besides, nobody was bold enough to charge through her door without permission.

Swiftly, she put on her clothes and had a quick wash up, exposing her delicate bare face.

When she pulled the door open, she saw Everly who was just walking down the stairs.

Despite having eye contact, none of them initiated a greeting.

Seeing how Everly had put some effort into her makeup so early in the morning, seemingly heading out under such weather, Heather couldn't help but feel that something was off, but

she didn't put too much mind into it.

Nonetheless, when Everly walked away, Heather was stunned by her figure, unable to determine whether it was her misconception that Everly's womanly charms seemed to have

overflowed lately.

The once little girl had turned into such a fine woman so rapidly. However, Heather suppressed that thought as that wasn't the time for her to dwell on that.

Then, she continued heading toward the study located on the other side of the hallway while imagining the possible reasons she had been summoned for. The first possibility she could think of was that Robert now knew about the explosion. He must have found out about it from the newspaper... But the serious news would not be highlighting me, so perhaps it is the entertainment section? Since entertainment journalists loved forging stories as they liked, Heather shivered at the thought of the photos taken from the previous night. She gently knocked on the study room door and she could hear Robert's voice from inside the room. "Come in." She pushed the door open and there was only Robert alone in the room with a newspaper laid down on the table in front of him, just as she predicted. In the end, Robert started with words that made Heather's heart skip a beat. "You made the headlines again."

"I can explain," she told him to avoid a misunderstanding. Since there was nothing to hide, she might as well lay everything out. "The news is a mess. Let me explain it to you myself." "Save it. I trust you, but..." Robert took a pause as he gave Heather a sharp gaze. "I'm telling you that if anyone messes with you or our family, I will personally see to the matter." At once, Heather let out a sigh of relief after knowing he didn't call her over to lecture her but rather, to show her his love and support. At such a moment, Robert understood that Heather could use some assistance from her family and decided not to leave his granddaughter alone.

"Thank you, Grandpa." Feeling a little tingle in her nose and some moisture in her eyes, Heather held back the urge to cry as she wouldn't allow herself to do so in front of others. "Silly girl, you don't have to thank me for anything. Well, do you have any suspects in mind?"

In an instant, he fluidly switched from a benign grandfather to an objective one.

"I suspect that it was the Moriartys." Heather directly expressed her suspicion as she couldn't think of any other.

Hearing that, Robert lowered his head and stared at the newspaper. After a while, he showed his face and muttered, "I don't think so." Although the Moriartys had their reasons to make a move on the Langstons, they wouldn't have taken such extreme measures to prove their point.

"Why not?" Even Robert had spared the benefit of the doubt toward the Moriartys, so perhaps the incident wasn't actually targeted at her but instead, at Leon.

"Needless to say, our relationship with the Moriarty Family isn't bad enough to threaten the people around you, let alone bomb threats. Besides, they never stray far from the purpose, so it isn't their habit to involve irrelevant parties," Robert claimed, knowing the Moriartys

wouldn't have taken such severe, shameless actions.

"Last night, Leon told me that he was the target and it was a warning from his family," Heather revealed to Robert. In the end, it seemed that Leon was indeed telling the truth.

"That's very likely. Leon isn't a simple one, is he? His family background is complicated and there wasn't much I could dig up about him." Even after having his men run a background check on Leon, Robert hadn't gotten any useful information. Other than the basics, all other information seemed to have been erased on purpose.