

## Perfect Marriage with My Substitute Wife Chapter 111

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Nicolette paled. "H-Have you gone nuts?"

He responded icily, "I love her."

Upon hearing that, she froze.

Slowly, he buttoned his shirt. "I'll only love her this lifetime."

Nicolette was at a loss for words as she stared at his handsome but expressionless face.

"Thus, I will never let you get away with this," he added coolly. "I won't let myself get away with this, too."

"Ha!" Nicolette scoffed before hollering with all her might despondently.

"I've found a better place for you," Samuel told her.

She gaped in disbelief. "You want to make things difficult for me!"

He met her gaze calmly. "Yes."

"Ha! Samuel, you're an extremely cruel man." Nicolette stared at him quietly.

"I'm cruel to you only." There was an indifferent look on his handsome face.

With that, he spun on his heels and went away.

"Let me leave, Samuel! I did save your life previously, didn't I?" Nicolette roared at his retreating figure.

Alas, Samuel paid no heed to her.

After walking out of the mountain villa, he turned to Tyson. "Inform everyone to lower their guard on Nicolette."

"Why, Mr. Macari?" Tyson was confused.

Samuel explained, "The Yoeger family wants to save her. Am I right? Let them achieve their goal."

Tyson couldn't wrap his mind around his employer's decision.

"Nicolette's is important to the Yoeger family," Samuel revealed coldly. "Why would you think they want her back? So she could enjoy a lavish lifestyle?"

Suddenly, Tyson understood what he meant. "Mr. Macari, I've heard a rumor."

"What is it?" Samuel asked flatly.

"It hasn't been proven true," Tyson explained. "I heard that Zachary suffers from kidney failure and needs a kidney transplant."

Samuel sneered, "Oh, I see. You should know how to deal with this, right?"

Tyson couldn't hide his surprise.

Nevertheless, he gave a curt nod. "Understood."

"Let's go." Samuel turned around and entered his car.

Tyson got to the driver's seat and glanced at the rearview mirror. "Mr. Macari, you look unwell. Is your gastric problem acting up again?"

"I'm fine." Samuel shut his eyes and leaned against the car seat. "Let's go."

"Mr. Macari, where are we heading?" Tyson inquired. "Are you going back to the Macari residence or Florinia Manor?"

"Florinia Manor," Samuel answered placidly. "Did you find out where Kathleen is staying now?"

"She's staying with Charles," Tyson replied. "Their neighborhood is the one Mr. Troelson has developed."

"Tell Gustav Troelson I want the mansion next to theirs," Samuel ordered.

"All right." Tyson nodded.

For the next three days, Kathleen threw herself into work.

Now that Kylie was gone, everyone got along pretty well. The viewer ratings also kept increasing.

The audience was surprised to see Kathleen and Mila showing their cooking skills. It was a visual feast, for they couldn't eat the food personally.

It was time for Mila to leave on the third day, for the new celebrity would show up soon.

The production team didn't reveal anything about the new guest, so everyone was curious about who it could be.

When it was time for Mila to leave, everyone sent her off.

"Thanks for taking care of me for the past three days. I had a great time!" Mila said. She was reluctant to leave this soon.

"Mila, can I visit your restaurant?" John asked earnestly.

"Of course, you can." Mila flashed a meaningful smile. "I'll save a table for you. You don't have to make a reservation."

"Oh, that's great!" John beamed happily.

"Mdm. Hunt, I'll pay Mila's Kitchen a visit after our shooting ends so that I can enjoy your cooking," Kathleen chimed in as her lips curled up.

"Sure." Mila took her hand. "Remember to bring the man you love the most along."

Kathleen chuckled. "I love Charles the most now. I'll bring him along."

Mila grinned. "Sure." She then glanced at the rest. "I guess that's it. You can back to work now!"

With that, she entered her car and left.

Everyone returned to the restaurant.

Inside, they saw a luggage at the door.

"Is the newcomer here?" John asked curiously.

As soon as he finished speaking, a pretty and elegant lady walked out of the kitchen.

"Hello. You weren't around when I arrived earlier, so I took a look around the restaurant," the lady said with a smile.

"We went to send someone off earlier." Steve glanced at her. "Who are you?"

"My name is Astrid Holloway," Astrid introduced herself. "Nice to meet you."

Everyone nodded and began introducing themselves.

When it was Kathleen's turn to introduce herself, Astrid cut in, "I know who you are."

Kathleen was taken aback by her words.

After all, it was normal for Astrid to recognize everyone here except for Kathleen.

"Have we met previously?" Kathleen asked softly.

"Not really." Astrid's lips curved. "I used to be Christopher's ex-fiancée."

The crowd fell silent.

Christopher's ex-fiancée? Kathleen is his current fiancée! Things are going to get really interesting.

As expected, the comments came flooding in.

What a show!

Previously, we had an ex-husband and an ex-fiancé. Now, we have an ex-fiancée and the current fiancée. I don't believe it's a coincidence!

The production team was obedient for two days but is now causing havoc again.

This isn't a battle. It's practically hell!

Hahaha! I wonder how traumatized Kathleen is feeling right now.

It doesn't look like Kathleen knows who she is. I think Christopher never mentioned her.

Why does Kathleen keep getting herself involved with these kinds of men? Her ex-husband couldn't forget his first love, and her current fiancé has an ex-fiancée.

Kate, stop dating men. They spell disaster. Won't you consider me?

Back at the scene, Kathleen was unfazed. "Hello."

Astrid held her hand and flashed a pleasant smile. "The engagement was actually decided by my grandpa and his grandpa when we were kids. It doesn't count, so you don't have to be nervous."

"I'm not nervous," Kathleen responded. She was neither nervous nor shocked.

Perhaps it was because she wasn't in love with Christopher.

Astrid gave her a slight tug. "I haven't been to the place we live. Can you bring me there?"

"Okay." Kathleen bobbed her head.

As requested, Kathleen brought Astrid to their dorm.

Christopher's brows snapped together when he received a call from his mother. "Mom, what are you talking about? What fiancée?"

"Astrid Holloway!" Emily replied hastily. "The engagement your grandpa decided for you when you were young, remember? She came to you when she was twenty years old, but you rejected her."

"She went overseas. Am I right?" Christopher's frown relaxed slightly.

"She's back," Emily told him. "She is currently shooting a show with Kathleen. During their first meeting, she exposed you and Kathleen's relationship to the public."

Christopher's brows were knitted. "Did it just happen a while ago?"

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Christopher couldn't stop frowning.

Why did Astrid come back right now? I heard she worked as a war correspondent for a few years.

Christopher typed out a reply: I'll do my best to be a good friend to her.

Osvald: It's up to you. I just want you to keep an eye on her. That's it.

Christopher let out a cold snort.

Is he saying that I'm overthinking?

Christopher went to watch the live stream and happened to see Kathleen bringing Astrid to their rooms.

"This is your room. Nancy and I are living on this floor, so if you need any help, just let us know." Kathleen was both gentle and thoughtful.

Astrid chuckled. "All right. This is my first time on a variety show, so I'm completely baffled. Please let me know if I do anything wrong!"

"This is my first time, too." A smile nudged Kathleen's lips. "We can learn together."

"Sure," Astrid replied cheerfully. "I worked as a war correspondent overseas previously. A year ago, a grenade splinter cut across my forehead, and I nearly lost my life. I was traumatized and ended up coming home."

Kathleen nodded in acknowledgment.

She actually didn't want to ask personal questions, for she knew how to respect someone else's privacy.

Now that Astrid chose to reveal everything herself, Kathleen had to play along. "You did great."

"If I don't do it, someone else will," Astrid responded. "It might be dangerous, but I think it's a meaningful job. Compared to normal jobs, I think mine is far more significant."

"Every job has its own significance," Kathleen told her.

Astrid met her gaze thoughtfully. "You're right."

"Let's head down to join everyone downstairs." Kathleen smiled.

Astrid nodded and reached out to take Kathleen's hand. "Oh, your hand is soft, unlike mine. I didn't get to take care of my hands previously, so they are pretty rough."

Kathleen's lips curved. "You can start now. Your hands will be like mine soon."

"All right. Whatever you say." Astrid's lips twitched.

With that, both of them headed down the stairs.

Strangely, I felt really uncomfortable after hearing Astrid's words. Was it only me?

I feel the same way, too! She seemed to be mocking Kathleen! But she's way better with her words than Kylie.

You're reading too much into her words. She was just lamenting how hard her life used to be. I can't believe you interpreted her words that way.

I think Astrid's being honest. She revealed her identity outright so that Kathleen wouldn't misunderstand things, right?

I don't think there's anything wrong with Astrid's remarks. She wasn't lying. Her job was really tough.

Yes, her job was tough, but there was no need for her to insult other jobs! Kathleen's right. Every job has its own hardship. We all work our asses off to earn money. She isn't the only one who's having a hard time!

I can't stand it when she commented how soft Kathleen's hand was. She even said her hands are rough because of her job. Obviously, she was mocking Kathleen.

The netizens began arguing again.

Christopher read the comments as his expression turned dark.

The shooting went on smoothly.

That afternoon, the production team told them that some special guests would be coming for dinner that night and they should pay extra attention to those guests.

However, the production team didn't mention how special the guests were.

Everyone felt nervous at that piece of news.

Astrid asked deliberately, "Kathleen, who do you think the customers would be?"

Kathleen shook her head. "I don't know."

"I thought you'd know who they are," Astrid commented.

Kathleen's voice was calm as she replied, "Why would I know when none of you know?"

Astrid gave her a sidelong glance.

"Will Kathleen prepare dinner alone tonight?" Nancy asked Steve.

Steve hesitated for a while.

"If you don't mind, I can prepare dinner," Astrid offered gaily. "My looks might suggest otherwise, but I'm a great cook. I have the potential to be a good wife and mother."

Nancy fell silent sheepishly. So what if you have the potential to be a good wife and mother? Is that something that is worth bragging about? That sounds really strange.

"It will be tiring if you handle everything alone. You and Kathleen should work together," Steve said.

"Sure. I heard that Kathleen's a great cook. I shall take the opportunity to learn from her!" Astrid agreed readily. "Kathleen, please teach me well."

"Let's each prepare our own signature dishes for dinner," Kathleen suggested nonchalantly. "What do you think, Astrid?"

After a pause, Astrid replied, "Sure."

"I'll teach you sometime later," Kathleen assured her with a grin. "I promise I'll teach you everything you want."

Astrid pursed her lips.

What an inconspicuous retort.

Nancy shot a look at Astrid and sneered inwardly.

After that, Kathleen turned around and went to the kitchen to prepare the ingredients.

Astrid went after her.

In the kitchen, Astrid said happily, "What a wide kitchen. I just realized that there is a dishwasher here. That eases our work."

When she was busy touring the kitchen, everyone else had already gotten to work.

Shortly after, Astrid went to them. "I need some garlic."

John gave her the garlic he had just peeled. "Here, these are peeled."

"Wow, you're fast!" Astrid was surprised. "How did you do that?"

John's lips twitched. "I did this when you were strolling around."

Astrid was speechless.

After his encounter with Kylie, John was equipped with the ability to distinguish flattery words.

Nancy bit her lip and tried hard to tamp down her laughter.

She hadn't expected John to be the first one to speak up.

He must've been badly tormented by Kylie.

None of them wanted another Kylie among them, for it was really exhausting to keep cleaning up her mess.

Astrid froze. She glanced at Kathleen before turning to John. "John, do you hate me?" A smile played on her lips as she posed that question.

John continued peeling the garlic. "If you don't say a word, I might fall in love with you."

Astrid fell silent.

Nancy gave John a kick. "Stop joking around. Your fans will be upset if they hear that."

"I love my fans the most!" John beamed. "I hope they love me forever and never abandon me. I'll do my best!"

Nancy's kick relieved the tension in the air.

"Why do you need garlic?" Nancy asked.

"I'll get them minced," Astrid replied stonily. "But we don't have the tools here, do we?"

"Yes, we do. None of us use it because we have to wash it after using it," Nancy explained.

Astrid couldn't hide her surprise. "Huh? What should I do, then? I don't know how to mince garlic using knives. Oh, I'm a fool. I can take pictures well using a camera, but I'm not a good cook. Kathleen's different, though. She can act and cook well. I envy her."

Kathleen ignored her.

"Kathleen, can you help me mince the garlic? Thank you," Astrid requested.

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Kathleen felt that if it were not for Madeline being autistic, she would have suspected that Samuel had deliberately taught her to say those words.

That jerk is capable of anything!

"I miss him." Madeline pouted.

"All right." Kathleen nodded in resignation before looking at Federick. "Go ahead and call him then."

The latter felt around his pocket. "I left my phone in the car."

Kathleen was at a loss for words.

"Why don't you call him instead?" he suggested.

"I don't have his phone number," she murmured in reply.

"He hasn't changed his number, so you should be able to memorize it, right?" Federick asked.

Kathleen bit her lip. She did remember Samuel's phone number but did not expect that he was still using the same number.

Looking at Madeline's aggrieved face, she took out her phone and called him.

After two beeps, the call was picked up.

"Hello?" Samuel's voice was as captivating as always, magnetic and pleasant to the ears.

Kathleen could not help but feel nervous upon hearing his voice, causing her to fall silent for a while.

"Kate?" Samuel called out.

She knitted her brows. "Are you watching the live stream?"

"No." He answered in a raspy voice, "I'm still at the office. I have some matters to attend to. Is something the matter?"

"Since you're busy, just forget it," she uttered flatly.

It's already eight o'clock, and he's still at the office. Is he truly such a money lover? A certain someone once said that money is just a number to him. He's already so rich, so why is he still working so hard?

"I'm done with work. Go on." Samuel's voice was extremely gentle.

I'll be willing to listen to her even if she spoke for the entire night.

"Madeline came here for the variety show. She wishes to see you," Kathleen explained softly.

He nodded upon hearing that. "The place you're recording the program is not far from my office. I'll be there in ten minutes."

"Got it." She nodded.

"Is this... your phone number?" Samuel inquired with his deep voice.

"Yes." Kathleen nodded affirmatively.

"Okay. I'll remember that." His lips curved into a grin. "See you soon."

Having said that, he hung up the phone.

Kathleen kept feeling that something was weird after their conversation.

Meanwhile, Samuel put on a black suit. With his tall, muscular figure, and broad shoulders, he gave off a dignified yet delectable feeling.

He walked swiftly out of the office and entered the elevator.

While saving Kathleen's number on his phone under the name "Katie," he curled his thin lips into a contented smile.

Over at the restaurant, Kathleen had finished cooking and brought the food over to Federick and Madeline.

The girl suddenly reacted. "It smells so good."

"If you think so, then eat up." Kathleen stroked the girl's hair. "It's mac and cheese and suits your taste very well."

Madeline clutched her spoon as she replied, "No. I want to wait for Samuel."

Kathleen was at a loss for words.



Federick chuckled before explaining, "It can't be helped. It's the same at home. Once she knows that Samuel is coming, she'll keep waiting for him."

"So, love does disappear, right?" Kathleen looked at Madeline miserably.

The girl blinked a few times. "I also like Katie. You and Samuel saved me when I got lost. You're both good people, and good people should be together."

Kathleen was once again rendered speechless.

Amused by his daughter's words, Federick chuckled, causing Kathleen to look at him in wordless amazement.

What's so funny about this!

"Little one." Kathleen pinched Madeline's cheek affectionately, which made the girl giggle.

"Federick, how has Madeline been doing this year?" Kathleen asked.

"Her condition has truly improved. I'm very grateful to Mr. Macari. Half a year ago, my company was on the verge of collapse. It was him who helped me." Federick then added meaningfully, "Maybe he lost something, so he wishes to get some compensation from Madeline. Some feelings need to be expressed toward someone."

Kathleen pursed her lips upon hearing that.

"Oh, such a pretty little girl," Astrid commented as she strode over. "Pretty one, can you become my model?"

When Madeline saw Astrid, the former instinctively hid behind Federick.

"You didn't hide from me, Madeline. Does that mean that I'm a good person in your eyes?" John asked, intrigued.

Madeline nodded in response.

He was overjoyed. "Such good moral values at a young age. I like you a lot."

"Hey!" Kathleen glared at him. "Be mindful of what you say. She's a child."

Madeline clung to Federick's arm as she turned to John and said, "You look old, so I'll call you mister."

John was rendered speechless.

Upon hearing that, Kathleen burst into laughter.

"You address Samuel by his name as though he is your close friend, but you call me mister? I'm younger than Kathleen." John subtly frowned before continuing, "That doesn't seem right. You're older than me, but she addresses you as Katie. Isn't it confusing?"

"We don't care about that." Frederick flashed him a half-smile. "As long as Madeline's happy."

Astrid did not expect to be ignored by everyone. She looked at Madeline and said to her, "I'm a photographer, Madeline. I can take pictures of you."

As she said that, she reached out to touch the girl.

"Ah!" Madeline shrieked, scaring the former.

Kathleen immediately went to hug the girl.

However, a giant silhouette appeared before her and swept Madeline off her feet.

Kathleen lifted her head and stared at Samuel in surprise.

"Be good. Don't cry," he coaxed as he carried Madeline.

Federick suddenly felt that he, as her father, was unnecessary.

He did not expect his daughter to calm down, merely weeping in Samuel's arms, but did not make a fuss.

"I'm very sorry," Frederick apologized to the others. "My daughter is autistic. She acts this way when there are a lot of people. Sorry about that."

"It's all right. We understand." Everyone was very kind.

"I didn't know she has autism," Astrid muttered.

Samuel handed the calm Madeline over to Kathleen.

It was as though they were a family of three.

Federick was dumbfounded, seeing that his daughter had become a tool to get them together.

"I watched the live broadcast just now. When Mr. Evans was talking about his daughter's illness, you looked over at them. How could you not know about it?" Samuel exposed her coldly.

"They were too far. I couldn't hear anything." Astrid looked slightly flustered.

"Couldn't hear anything?" Samuel scoffed. "Would you like me to get a professional to test the decibel?"

Astrid was dumbfounded.

"Moreover, when you first touched her, she showed obvious resistance, but you still want to approach her. What are you up to?" he continued.

His words made her face flush hot with embarrassment. "I truly didn't do it on purpose. You must believe me."

Kathleen was about to speak, but Samuel beat her to it. "Keep your identity in mind, Ms. Holloway. This isn't a place where you can behave atrociously."

After saying that, he sat down.

Astrid's eyes turned slightly red as she apologized, "I'm truly sorry, Mr. Evans. I didn't do it on purpose."

Federick quietly responded, "I hope you won't do such a thing again."

Astrid took a deep breath before giving Kathleen a side glance. "Kathleen, you've known about this all along. Why didn't you mention it earlier?" she grumbled.

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Did you give me a chance to do that?" asked Kathleen coldly. "In normal circumstances, even if a normal person opposes you, you should still know your limits and stop the harassment, and what did you do?"

Astrid was slightly startled.

"Do you understand what social distancing is?" continued Kathleen displeasedly.

"Kate, you're scaring me," said Astrid with an aggrieved tone.

Kathleen retorted with a stone-cold face, "I can be even scarier. Do you want to see that?"

Astrid was stunned.

"Even though Madeline is just a child, you should still understand that you shouldn't invade her personal space," scolded Kathleen coldly. "I hope you understand that."

Samuel looked over at Kathleen solemnly.

She had a lot of different personalities, which he had yet to understand.

He had always thought she was gentle like a bunny. At the moment, she seemed more like a little fox in sheep's clothing.

"You may leave now. Do you want us to have a bad appetite because of you?" asked Samuel as he looked at Astrid frostily.

Astrid's expression looked as if someone had slapped her across the face. With that, she turned and left.

Kathleen was speechless.

Why did Astrid have to do that? If she wants to chase after Christopher, then she should go ahead. Why did she have to bother me?

Just then, Madeline stopped crying.

She tugged at Kathleen's arm and said, "Katie, I'm hungry."

Kathleen swallowed her feelings and stopped dwelling over the matter. She smiled at Madeline. "You should dig in then. These are made for you," she said.

Madeline opened her mouth and waited for Kathleen to feed her.

Kathleen chuckled and sat down. She then fed her with a small spoon.

"Madeline?" Federick was rendered speechless.

He was happy that his daughter was becoming more normal, but he was taken aback by the sight of Madeline being close with Kathleen.

After all, Madeline and Kathleen were not even that close.

"It's okay," said Kathleen with a grin. "I don't have anything else to do at the kitchen."

Federick apologized, "Sorry for the trouble."

Kathleen shook her head and continued feeding Madeline.

Samuel looked at the whole situation with a gentle gaze.

If my children were born, would I have a wonderful, warm family? Kathleen would have been a great mother, and I would have been an awesome father as well. However, it's all gone.

"Delicious!" Madeline looked at Kathleen with her big black eyes. "Katie, can you be my mommy?" she asked.

Kathleen and Samuel was dumbfounded.

"No!" Federick shook his head and said, "You just said Samuel and Kate were a good match for each other."

"Samuel can be my godfather, and Katie can be my godmother. Isn't that okay?" asked Madeline seriously.

"All right," replied Samuel as he patted her head.

What? Did I say yes? Besides, I don't have to have anything to do with her godfather if I become her godmother.

Kathleen felt awkward.

As she focused on feeding Madeline, Samuel stared at her beautiful and delicate face. His dark eyes were filled with affection.

"Kate, what am I having for the meal?" he asked, trying to strike up a conversation with her.

"Isn't the food on the table?" she replied coldly.

"I want mac and cheese too." He looked at her solemnly. "I haven't had enough of it last time."

Kathleen was at a loss for words.

Federick came over and took the spoon from Kathleen. "I'll feed her. You should go," he said.

Kathleen glared at Samuel before getting up to leave.

Federick let out a slight chuckle and said, "You two have grown close. She's making a meal just because you ask her to do so."

Samuel replied with a deep voice, "Can't you see that she's reluctant? She definitely wouldn't make it if it wasn't for the camera."

Needless to say, he would never tell anyone about their deal.

Federick was curious. "Mr. Macari, I'm curious as to why you would use my daughter."

Samuel kept his cool. "Madeline is getting better. Didn't you know? Although she has autism, it doesn't mean she's dumb."

Federick huffed in exasperation. "Do you know the chances of a genius being born with autism?"

Samuel kept quiet. Instead, he pulled out a letter from his suit. "This just arrived. It's from Bridge University," he said.

Federick frowned. "What is it?"

"Madeline's IQ test and medical report," Samuel explained. "It says very clearly that her IQ score is one hundred and eighty, and her condition is improving. As long as we're careful, she'll be fine if she doesn't relapse."

Federick was slightly excited.

"She relapsed just now, but she recovered quickly, which means that she's getting better," added Samuel. "However, you shouldn't have hopes for her to be a normal person. She still has a lot of repetitive patterns of behavior."

Federick nodded.

He patted Madeline on the head gently and said, "I only wish for my sweetheart to be healthy. I don't care if she becomes a genius or not."

Madeline still had her mouth wide open, waiting to be fed.

Upon seeing that, Federick fed her.

She chewed for around twenty times and opened her mouth again.

With that, the cycle repeated.

Samuel looked at Federick, thinking that he was only fond of Federick because of Madeline.

After a while, Kathleen came out with mac and cheese and set the plate in front of Samuel.

"Thanks," said Samuel with a grin.

Kathleen snorted coldly.

Samuel grabbed a spoon and dug in. After that, he frowned and asked, "This is mac and cheese?"

"Of course, it's macaroni with cheese, so it's mac and cheese," answered Kathleen.

Samuel smiled and ate everything.

Federick was shocked while Kathleen pursed her lips and stayed silent.

After dinner, all the guests had left except for Samuel.

Federick had taken Madeline home early because she usually slept early.

Kathleen focused on cleaning up the tables and paid no heed to Samuel.

She did not know why Samuel was still here.

Although she ignored him, Astrid brought him water and fruits.

However, Samuel did not touch any of it.

Everybody else did not want to ask him to leave either.

Steve turned toward Kathleen. "You should go and tell Mr. Macari that we're closed," he said, deciding to ask her to do the thing that everyone was afraid to do.

"Why don't you go instead?" Kathleen frowned.

"Do you want to know the truth?" Steve was a bit embarrassed.

"Yes." Kathleen stared at him.

"I'm scared. You should go. You're the only one here who's not afraid." Steve tried to convince her.

"How did you know I'm not afraid?" asked Kathleen, knitting her brows.

"What are you afraid of? You even tricked him. You have the courage," Steve teased.

He slowly got to know Kathleen's attitude.

As long as it was not anything strange, she would be fine with a joke.

Kathleen snorted coldly in response.

Steve held his hands together and pleaded, " Please, Kate."

She looked at him, feeling speechless. "Did you make a deal with Samuel? It's just a word with him. What are you afraid of?"

"What deal?" Samuel's deep voice came from behind.

Kathleen was startled.

She did not know when Samuel had come up behind her.

His breath could be felt on the top of her head.

Steve said sheepishly, "There's something I need to do in the kitchen. Both of you should have a chat."

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#### **Chapter 116**

Kathleen turned around. "Mr. Macari, we're closed."

"I know." Samuel looked at her from above.

Her hair was braided today. Wearing a red sweater and a pair of black jeans, she looked exceptionally youthful and pretty.



When he stood behind her earlier, he kept gazing at the fair nape of her neck. His memories floated to when they had just gotten married.

He had left countless marks at that exact spot. Every time, Kathleen would complain that she couldn't go out like that.

Back then, she was so shy, gentle, obedient, and alluring.

"So why aren't you leaving yet?" demanded Kathleen coldly.

"I have something to tell you." Samuel smirked meaningfully. "I can't say it here. I'll wait for you in the car."

Kathleen frowned.

Suddenly, Samuel bent down and whispered beside her ear, "It's about the Yoeger family. You'd know."

With that, he spun around and left.

Kathleen frowned. Is he telling the truth, or is he lying to me?

However, it was safer to believe that it was the truth if it was about something like this.

After all, what Samuel gave her the previous time was quite useful.

Now, Ivan had already been arrested.

She heard that Vanessa was trying to bail him out.

With all the strong evidence, it was difficult for Vanessa to achieve that too.

More importantly, Kathleen heard that a bigshot was pressurizing JC, so Ivan couldn't get bail.

Is Samuel behind this too?

She pursed her lips. Since it was more important for her to investigate her mother's background, she decided to meet him.

After work, Kathleen went to look for Samuel.

His black Maybach was parked by the roadside.

Meanwhile, he sat in the car, his gaze brooding and unreadable.

As he stared at Kathleen's slender figure, his lips curved into a gentle smile.

This adorable bunny has fallen into the trap.

Kathleen got into the car, sat beside the driver's seat, and asked, "What do you know?"

Samuel smirked, his eyes as dark as ink. "My dearest Ms. Johnson, you're begging me for a favor now. Why are you acting like I owe you?"

She pursed her lips.

Knowing that she sounded quite impatient earlier, she changed her attitude and said, "Is there anything that you'd like to tell me, Mr. Macari?"

An amused look flashed across Samuel's eyes as he passed a file to Kathleen.

She was stunned. Is he giving it to me so easily? Finally, he's acting like a decent human being.

When she opened the file, she was shocked.

"What's this?" Kathleen frowned. "Did Zachary's illness worsen?"

"This is why Vanessa's frantically eliminating everyone that can affect the Yoegers' core interests recently." Samuel glanced at her from the side of his eyes. "Be careful."

Kathleen hesitated. "My brother and I know nothing about this."

"Vanessa concealed it well. I had to spend a lot of money before receiving this intel," revealed Samuel solemnly. "A few million just for an egg fried rice."

Kathleen was at a loss for words.

"I'll repay you." She pouted. "I'll ask my brother for that few million."

A sharp glint flashed across Samuel's icy gaze. Suppressing it, he smiled. "Do you want more information?"

"Do you have them?" Kathleen was surprised.

"I can find out information that you can never get your hands on." Samuel stared at her with an unreadable expression.

She didn't deny it.

Meanwhile, Samuel continued gazing at her relaxedly and patiently.

“But you have conditions,” replied Kathleen anxiously. “What is it this time?”

He smiled. “You sure are smart.”

“I was never dumb. I became useless when you were taking care of me,” complained Kathleen resentfully.

She regretted saying that immediately.

“If you want, I can continue taking care of you.” Samuel flashed her a meaningful smile.

Kathleen frowned. “I can take care of myself now.”

“Then why are you asking your brother for money?” mocked Samuel coolly.

She bit her lips. “He’s my brother. Am I supposed to ask you for money instead?”

“Naturally, I won’t refuse if you’re the one asking me.” Samuel smirked. “But aren’t you Christopher’s fiancée? Why aren’t you asking him?”

Kathleen paused. So that’s what he’s waiting for.

“Chris is different from you!” Her eyes shone brightly. “He respects me a lot and wouldn’t put me in a tight spot.”

Samuel gripped the steering wheels tightly, his knuckles jutting against his skin.

Everything she said was what he had lacked in the past.

“Kate, I’ll change in the future,” said Samuel hoarsely.

“A leopard can’t change its spots.” Kathleen breathed in deeply. “Anyway, what’s your condition?”

“Macari Group is planning to invest in a movie, but the female lead hasn’t been decided yet. I want you to act in the role,” replied Samuel. “With an award-winning actress, the movie will be extremely popular even before its release.”

Kathleen hesitated for a moment. “I want to read the script first.”

Samuel raised his eyebrows. “So, are you agreeing?”

“The remuneration will be used to repay you,” she continued.

Samuel chuckled. "It's fine as long as you agree to act in the movie."

"I want to read the script first. If it's bad, I won't do it." Kathleen stuck to her own principles.

Samuel grinned. "The director of the movie is Spencer Scott, and the screenwriter is Remy Mills. You know their status in the entertainment industry very well."

Kathleen was stunned.

Spencer was an internationally famous director who had won countless awards.

Numerous people were dying to collaborate with him.

Kathleen couldn't help but feel tempted. If both of them were producing a movie, it would definitely be good.

However, she didn't dare to express it. "Still, I'd like to take a look at the script."

Samuel smirked meaningfully. "Okay, I'll send it to you later. Oh, right. Why don't you add me on Whatsapp? Otherwise, I can't send it to you."

Kathleen was at a loss for words. Eventually, they added each other's contacts.

Samuel looked at her profile picture. She was wearing a white dress and hugging a sunflower. With her dazzling smile, she looked beautiful.

She probably had a fun time during her year abroad. She probably never missed me, right?

She kept praising Christopher. Has he been keeping her company for the past year?

As those thoughts ran across his head, Samuel's emotions began raging in turmoil.

Meanwhile, Kathleen looked at Samuel's profile picture. It was taken when she was trying out her wedding dress.

"I'll go now." Kathleen opened the car door and left. It felt as if she was escaping.

She didn't understand why Samuel wanted to use that photo as his profile picture.

Everyone in his social circle was wealthy and had high status. If they saw his profile picture, their minds would wander.

Staring at Kathleen as she left, Samuel smiled and stroked her profile picture.

It's fine even if she forgets about me completely. It's fine if she wants a gentle boyfriend who respects her. I'll satisfy all her wishes.

At that moment, Samuel's phone rang. It was a call from Christopher.

He picked up the call. "What's up?"

"Stop pestering her," instructed Christopher in a deep voice. "Samuel, she doesn't love you anymore."

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#### **Chapter 117**

love her," replied Samuel icily. "That's enough."

"I think you don't realize how grave your mistake was back then!" yelled Christopher furiously. "You'll make her unhappy if you keep forcing her against her wishes."

"Got it. Thanks for your reminder." Samuel ended the call and drove away.

Christopher frowned. What did he understand?

Christopher stopped his car outside where Kathleen was staying before calling her.

However, the call didn't get through.

Glancing at the time, he saw that it was already eleven at night.

She's probably asleep. After all, she's the main chef now. I'll just let her sleep. She must be exhausted!

Christopher's heart ached.

At that moment, a woman stood in front of his car and knocked on his car window.

Christopher rolled the windows down. "Astrid?"

"Can I get into the car?" asked Astrid softly.

After thinking about it, he nodded.

Astrid sat beside the driver's seat and said after a short pause, "Oh no! I forgot that this is your fiancée's seat now."

Christopher said grimly, "It's fine."

Delighted, Astrid closed the car door.

"What do you want, Astrid?" demanded Christopher unhappily. "You can't keep making things difficult for Kathleen."

"I'm sorry. I'm just struggling to get over it," apologized Astrid. "I simply want to know what kind of woman you like."

"I don't like someone who's like you," replied Christopher coldly. "I'm just being polite to you out of courtesy for your grandfather. I hope you do what's best for yourself."

"I know. Do you think that I can do anything to her?" asked Astrid indignantly. "Look at what she had done to me! Why don't you tell your fiancée off and ask her to be nicer to me?"

"I won't interfere in how she's treating you," rejected Christopher curtly.

Astrid hesitated. "Christopher, I know you hate me and think I'm deliberately making things difficult for Kathleen. But I have no choice."

"What do you mean?" Christopher frowned.

"Would you believe me if I say my grandfather's collaborating with Samuel? He hinted to my grandfather that I should come back and stir up trouble," revealed Astrid. "If I refuse, Samuel would stop collaborating with my grandfather. I'm left with no choice."

"Are you saying that Samuel instructed you to do this?" Christopher frowned.

"Yeah! He wants me to separate both of you so that he has an opportunity to intervene." Astrid pleaded, "I'm so sorry, Christopher. I don't want to do this either. But my grandfather's old, and I don't want him to work too hard."

Christopher said coldly, "If Samuel's using this to threaten you, I'll think of a solution. I'll talk to your grandfather and tell him that Morris Group can collaborate with him instead, so he doesn't need to worry. Meanwhile, you should stop bullying Kathleen."

"That's great! I have nothing to fear if you're backing me up." Astrid grinned.

Christopher said solemnly, "Go out. I'll handle the rest."

"Okay." Astrid nodded and was about to leave the car.

"Huh?" She raised her hands and placed them on Christopher's collar. Smiling, she remarked, "Your collar is ruffled."

Christopher shoved her hands away. "I'll tidy it myself."

Not feeling embarrassed, Astrid laughed. "Quickly pick your fiancée up! If she's taking care of you, you won't be so clueless that you don't even know your collar's up."

Christopher gave no response. Only then did Astrid finally get out of the car.

Christopher frowned. I've underestimated how vicious Samuel is. He's gone overboard!

The moment Astrid left the car and turned around, a cold smirk formed on her lips.

Christopher's becoming more and more charismatic. I'll never give up. Kathleen's just another b\*tch who was previously married. She doesn't deserve Christopher!

When Kathleen woke up the next day, her head felt extremely heavy.

When she took her temperature, she realized that it was 38.7 degrees Celsius.

"Are you awake, Kathleen?" Astrid knocked on the door.

"Come in," she replied.

Astrid pushed the door open and entered. Smiling, she asked, "Aren't you going to wake up? Everyone's waiting for you. It's not good to keep everyone waiting, right?"

"Please tell them that I have a high fever, so I can't go down and cook," said Kathleen weakly.

"No way!" Surprised, Astrid raised her hand to touch Kathleen's forehead.

Kathleen dodged it. "Thank you."

"All right, then." Astrid nodded, got up, and let.

After that, Kathleen stood up from her bed and took out some fever medicine from her luggage.

She gulped a pill down with some warm water.

Still, she had a huge headache and felt extremely uncomfortable.

She crawled back to the bed and wrapped the blanket around herself tightly.

After a while, Nancy entered. "Are you having a fever, Kathleen?"

"It's 37.8 degrees Celsius." Kathleen snuggled in the blanket and said in a nasal tone, "Nancy, I'm afraid that I can't cook today."

Nancy placed her hand on Kathleen's forehead and frowned. "Rest well! Don't worry about what's happening downstairs. Have you taken some medicine?"

Kathleen nodded. "Yeah."

"Good. Have a good rest. I'll bring some porridge over to you later. Lie down now!" said Nancy.

"Okay." Kathleen lay back down, and Nancy left after tucking her in.

When she arrived downstairs, she told Steve, "She really has a fever."

"That's right! 37.8 degrees Celsius is really high!" remarked Astrid snarkily.

"What should we do?" John looked at Steve. "Who's going to cook?"

"Kathleen's really exhausted recently. She's the only one commanding the entire kitchen," commented Nancy meaningfully. "Why isn't the production team giving us someone more reliable?"

Astrid said nonchalantly, "Why don't we ask Mila to come back? Just tell Kathleen to make a call. She still has the energy to make a call even if she has a 37.8 degrees Celsius fever, right?"

Nancy shot an unhappy glance at Astrid. "Do you know what an average human being's temperature is? Why do you keep saying that it's 37.8 degrees Celsius in such a snarky tone?"

"I didn't say anything mean, right, Ms. Nancy?" replied Astrid.

"Don't call me that! I'm your age," snapped Nancy in annoyance. "We're both adults, so stop speaking like a child. It's as if you're dumb! Everyone's thinking of a solution, so why are you saying something so unrealistic?"

Astrid bit her lips in indignance. "Nancy, I didn't say anything much! Also, none of us know how to cook. Who'd expect that Kathleen would fall sick the moment I come?"

"Anyone can fall sick." John shot a displeased glare at Astrid. "Hey, if you're still in love with Christopher, why don't you look for him privately? We're still filming a show. What are you trying to do?"



Biting her lip, Astrid remained silent with a pitiful look.

The atmosphere in the kitchen was extremely tense.

John exclaimed in frustration, "What's going on? What kind of guest did they invite? She's so b\*tchy! If we rebuke her, it's like we're being unreasonable!"

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#### **Chapter 118**

ohn, I'm sorry. I might not have adjusted to you guys yet," mumbled Astrid. "I know that I'm wrong, so stop hounding me, okay?"

John smirked coldly. "I wouldn't dare to. Why would I dare to hound you? You'd b\*tch about me every minute, and people would criticize me for being such a petty man."

"John, that's not what I'm trying to say." Astrid continued in a meaningful tone, "I know that you care about Kathleen deeply. It's my fault."

"Look! You're hinting that there's something going on between Kathleen and me! You have a way with words, huh? Let's stop talking in the future. Don't mention my name either! I'll be creeped out." With that, John spun around and said to Nancy, "Nancy, cook something for Kathleen."

"Yeah, we mustn't let her starve." Nancy strode toward the kitchen. "I remember that there's still some mushroom soup."

Both of them left the battlefield, leaving only Steve behind to face Astrid.

Steve shot a glance at her before looking at Cain. "Mr. Dodson, why don't you spare us? Five of us aren't enough. Now, even Kathleen's sick."

Cain thought about it for a while. "Why don't we take this day off?"

Steve agreed enthusiastically, "Great! Everyone's been filming for a week, so they must be exhausted. Let's take a break."

With that, he left to inform John and Nancy.

Both of them were delighted. When Nancy brought the mushroom soup upstairs to Kathleen, she told Kathleen the news too.

However, Kathleen felt extremely guilty. "It's all because of me."

"It's not! Actually, the production team was worried that everyone's too exhausted, especially you." Nancy peered at Kathleen. "Sometimes, it's a disadvantage to be too capable, Kathleen."

Kathleen knew what Nancy was trying to say. "Alright, I get it."

"Rest well. I'll go back to my room to review the script. Call me if you need anything." Nancy patted her shoulder.

"Okay." Kathleen nodded.

Only then did Nancy leave.

After drinking some soup, Kathleen regained some energy and continued lying on the bed.

At that moment, her phone rang. It was a message from Samuel.

Samuel: The script.

Kathleen: Got it.

Samuel: Are you feeling better?

Kathleen: Thanks for your concern.

Samuel: If you feel uncomfortable, go to the hospital. I can fetch you.

Kathleen: There's no need for that. I'm going to sleep for a while, so don't disturb me.

Samuel: Okay. Go and sleep.

Indeed, he didn't disturb her anymore, and she quickly fell asleep.

When Kathleen woke up, she felt something warm and moist on her cheek.

Raising her hand, she touched a warm hand.

She quickly opened her eyes. "Chris?"

Christopher was wiping her face with a warm towel. "You're awake?"

Feeling awkward, Kathleen said, "I'll do it myself."

She grabbed the towel.

Not stopping her, Christopher explained, "I came to visit you because I felt worried. Noticing that your fever seems quite serious, I put a cooling patch on you. I was about to wipe your face when you woke up."

Kathleen sighed. "I don't know why I suddenly got a fever."

"You've been overseas for a year, where it's humid. The winter at Jadeborough is so cold. It's normal that you can't take it," said Christopher with a smile.

Kathleen pursed her lips. "Looks like I need to train more."

Christopher grinned. "How?"

"Running!" replied Kathleen. "I can't continue being like this."

He chuckled. "I'll run with you."

"I'll feel bad." Kathleen didn't like to trouble others.

Christopher grinned brightly. "I like it when you trouble me."

Kathleen felt embarrassed.

At that moment, someone knocked on the door.

"I'm coming in, Christopher." Astrid's voice sounded from outside as she pushed the door open and entered.

She looked like she had put in a lot of effort in dressing up. Although it was so cold, she didn't wear anything warm at all. Instead, she wore a long-sleeved dress with her hair tied up. A pair of red earrings dangled from her ears.

"You're awake, Kathleen. Are you feeling better?" Astrid pretended to be concerned.

Kathleen replied nonchalantly, "Thanks for your concern."

"Are you still angry at me, Kathleen?" Astrid sat beside her.

She thought that she would look more beautiful in comparison to Kathleen's sickly complexion.

However, to others, Kathleen would win.

She had a naturally vulnerable and fragile demeanor—one couldn't help but wish to dote on her.

"Chris, I want to rest well. Go chat with her outside," said Kathleen calmly.

Astrid came here just for Christopher, didn't she? I know very well.

"Chris, we should let her..." said Astrid.

This is a rare opportunity.

"I'll keep you company." Christopher then shot a glance at Astrid. "Go out."

Astrid was speechless.

Meanwhile, Christopher lay Kathleen on the bed and tucked her in.

Astrid stood there motionlessly.

"Do you need me to send you out?" demanded Christopher emotionlessly.

Feeling awkward, Astrid stood up and walked out.

Kathleen shot a meaningful look at Christopher. "Chris, she likes you."

Christopher was stunned. "I know. I'll tell her to stop having ridiculous thoughts. Don't overthink."

"No, I'm saying that she really likes you. She's targeting me because she wants me to back off," she explained.

"But I don't like her." Christopher stared into Kathleen's watery eyes. "I like you."

After a slight pause, Kathleen interlocked her fingers and said, "Chris, I..."

"Kate, I won't commit the same mistake as Samuel. Just like you, I like a pure relationship. I don't have a first crush, nor do I have a childhood friend. All I want is you." Christopher's voice was gentle and firm.

Kathleen's heart beat rapidly.

She knew that Christopher liked her. Over the past year, he had hinted at it as well.

However, this was the first time that he was confessing to her so solemnly.

Feeling anxious, Kathleen bit her lips and said dazedly, "Chris, how should I say this to you? I don't want to hurt you, but I don't want to be in a relationship now, nor do I want to think about marriage. I've been hurt so badly that my heart is still bleeding. I don't want to hide anything from you. I fear that my scars can never heal. Even if you like me, I might not be able to reciprocate your feelings. I'll feel very apologetic."

Christopher held her hands and smiled. "Why are you thinking about so many things?"

Kathleen frowned.

"I'm not saying that you have to be together with me right now, right?" Christopher burst out laughing. "I'm confessing to you because I want you to know that you don't need to feel burdened. Even if one day, I'm not the man who'd win your heart, I'll still wish you all the best. To me, you're the most important."

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### **Perfect Marriage with My Substitute Wife**

#### **Chapter 119**

Listening to Christopher's words, Kathleen felt touched.

However, she thought she was being too arrogant.

She just couldn't feel the same way as he did.

She tried to, but her heart didn't listen to her.

Of course, she could tell that Christopher was indeed a good man.

Perhaps it was because he was too good for Kathleen, so she didn't want to treat him that way. It was too cruel to Christopher.

Christopher patted her head. "Kate, don't think too much. I'm not trying to force you. I'm just worried you'll misunderstand my relationship with Astrid. There's nothing going on between us, I promise. Even though we had an engagement in the past, we have only met a few times. Moreover, we canceled the engagement long ago."

Kathleen looked at him with overwhelmed emotions. "Chris, thank you for making me feel safe."

Christopher smiled. "Then sleep well with this sense of security."

“Okay.” Kathleen nodded and shut her eyes.

Christopher stared at her sleeping face. His lips curled up as his hand was still holding Kathleen’s. She didn’t push him away.

Maybe Kathleen has some sort of feelings for me. It’s just because she has been hurt in a relationship before, so she has become extra careful about love. That’s why she’s rejecting me again and again. It’s okay. I can wait. I’ll wait until the day she completely lets go of the past.

Outside the door, Samuel heard the conversation between them in the room, and his gaze darkened. He left while carrying the things in his hand.

John looked at him, bewildered. “Mr. Macari?” he called tentatively.

“Give this to Kathleen.” After Samuel passed the things in his hand to John, he turned and walked away.

John gazed at the things in his hand and slightly frowned.

Samuel drove alone and headed to the seaside.

When he reached, he got off the car. He was smoking a cigarette as the chilly sea breeze blew at him.

He told himself to stay calm and rational.

Christopher’s confession was nothing since Kathleen didn’t accept it.

Nonetheless, Samuel knew that Kathleen’s heart had wavered.

Christopher was better than Samuel in many aspects.

When there was a misunderstanding, Christopher would explain it to Kathleen to give her a sense of security.

At that, Samuel had lost to him.

Kathleen resisted Samuel so much that he had to force every chance to get close to her.

I’m not a part of Kathleen’s world anymore. Not anymore...

Cough! Cough!

Samuel began to cough, and Tyson quickly came to him.

"Mr. Macari!" shouted Tyson.

He immediately dropped a coat over Samuel. "Mr. Macari, please stop torturing yourself like this. Your body can't take it," he said worriedly.

"It's fine," Samuel replied indifferently.

"Mr. Macari, I know you're desperate to pursue Mrs. Macari's heart. However, if your body is worn out, Christopher will win without a fight!" Tyson added.

"Tyson, if I'm dead, do you think Kathleen will feel sad for me? Years later, will she remember me?" Samuel asked in a low and husky voice.

"Mr. Macari, you won't die," answered Tyson, feeling bitter in his heart.

Tyson knew Samuel was heartbroken and regretted everything he had done in the past.

However, Kathleen was deeply hurt too. Nothing could be changed unless they could travel back in time.

He genuinely hoped that Kathleen and Samuel could be happy.

"She won't remember me, will she? Perhaps she would feel pleased and satisfied," said Samuel, his voice croaked. He continued, "Tyson, I like her so much. I really..."

Before he could finish, Samuel collapsed into Tyson's arms.

"Mr. Macari!" Tyson panicked.

What should I do?

At midnight, when Kathleen woke up, Christopher had gone home.

She was still feeling unwell.

After getting off her bed, she changed her clothes, wore her hat and mask, and left her residential place alone.

She wanted to go to the hospital but didn't wish to trouble anyone.

Therefore, she called a cab and came to the hospital.

When she arrived, she walked to the counter for registration.

Just then, Tyson, who had just sent Samuel to the hospital, stepped out of the elevator.

He was stunned when he saw Kathleen.

"Ms. Johnson? It's really you!" Tyson called as he walked toward Kathleen.

Kathleen's watery eyes were slightly red due to her fever. "Mr. Hackney?"

"Ms. Johnson, what's wrong?" asked Tyson in concern.

"I have a fever. It seems a bit serious, so I thought I should come to a doctor," Kathleen explained.

"You don't have to wait here. I'll bring you to the doctor. This way," said Tyson enthusiastically.

Kathleen hesitated.

Tyson added awkwardly, "Ms. Johnson, you can't see me the wrong way just because I'm Mr. Macari's assistant, right?"

"I'm sorry. Thank you for your help," she apologized.

After all, when she faced problems in the past, it was Tyson who helped her.

She believed that his personality was trustable.

Tyson led Kathleen to the doctor.

The doctor was a very young man who looked 28 or 29 years old, around the same age as Samuel.

"My name is Richard Zimmer," The man introduced himself.

Kathleen blinked. "Oh, nice to meet you, Dr. Zimmer."

Richard gave a faint smile. "Your body temperature now is 39 degrees Celsius. You have to be hospitalized."

"Is it that bad?" Kathleen frowned.

"It's you who have a fever, Ms. Johnson. Are you feeling dizzy because of the fever?" He continued to smile.

"I am indeed feeling sick." Kathleen's eyebrows furrowed.

Richard said, "I'll arrange your stay in the hospital and then set up the IV drip for you."



“Okay.” Kathleen nodded.

“Ms. Johnson, as you might be aware, most hospitals in Jadeborough are short of beds at the moment. We might not be able to allocate a better ward for you, and you’re possibly going to share a room with another person. Is that okay?” asked Richard.

Kathleen felt her head become heavier as she answered, “Anything will do. I’m going to leave after getting the IV drip, so...”

She fainted before finishing her words.

Fortunately, Tyson caught her.

He glanced at Richard and said, “I’ll call the production team. The production team probably doesn’t know that she came out alone.”

Richard nodded in response.

When Kathleen opened her eyes again, she saw the ceiling and knew she was in the hospital.

“Kate, are you awake?” Wynn timer’s voice rang.

Kathleen was stunned. She looked sideways, and Wynn timer came into sight. “Mrs. Macari, why are you here?”

Who has informed her that I’m in the hospital?

“We came to visit Samuel and were surprised to find you here too.” Wynn timer touched her face and continued, “It’s still a little hot. You should lay back down. Do you want to drink water?”

Kathleen frowned. “You’re here to see Samuel? Is he also hospitalized?”

However, how did they find me here? What does that have to do with Samuel being hospitalized?

Wynn timer pointed at the bed beside hers. “He’s right there.”

Kathleen was utterly dumbfounded.

As she looked over, Samuel was in the bed next to hers.

He was getting an IV drip as well but was still unconscious.

What’s going on? Why am I in the same ward with Samuel?

"I've asked the doctor. He said the wards in the hospital are inadequate, so this VIP ward has been changed into a double room. This is the last ward, so he made you share this room with Samuel," Wynn timer explained.

Kathleen bit her lip. "Why is Samuel staying at the hospital?"

"Gastroenteritis. It's his old illness and occurs a lot of times. He has become a regular of the hospital," Wynn timer replied.

Kathleen asked after a slight pause, "I remember he didn't have this before, did he?"

"It started this year," Wynn timer answered in an unfathomable tone.

Kathleen assumed that it was because he had put too much effort into his work.

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#### **Chapter 120**

Kathleen nodded in acknowledgement.

It wasn't long before Richard arrived in the hospital room.

"You're awake, Ms. Johnson. You barely avoided a lung infection caused by dehydration. I'd suggest you stay put for two more days for observation, just to be safe."

"Is it mandatory?" Kathleen questioned with a grimace.

"But of course. You wouldn't want to deal with complications from the flu," Richard answered sternly in a tone that warranted no objection. "Rest well."

He then turned to address Wynn timer and Calvin who were at the corner. "Were either one of you aware of his eating habits? My diagnosis shows that his gastroenteritis was caused by irregular eating schedules."

Wynn timer wrung her hands in concern. "You know how stubborn he can be."

"That boy is digging his own grave if he continues neglecting his health," Richard announced baldly while Wynn timer continued studying her son's sickly pale features.

It was at that moment that Tyson strode into the room.

"Tyson, has Samuel been eating at all recently?" Wynn timer questioned hurriedly.

"But of course. However, the food prepared was not up to his standard, insomuch that he barely consumed several morsels out of each meal. I tried convincing him but to no avail."

"How is he such a picky eater?" Wynn timer exclaimed in exasperation.

"I remember Mr. Macari enjoying the meal prepared by Ms. Johnson last time. He finished eating it." Tyson darted a meaningful glance toward Samuel.

Wynn timer crossed her arms. "Kathleen won't always be around at his beck and call. He can jolly well learn to care for himself."

Kathleen flushed at the sudden turn of events.

She recalled the time he completely devoured the plain oatmeal she prepared and felt an inexplicable surge of sympathy for Samuel.

Just then, Samuel began to stir, his eyes opening groggily.

Wynn timer rushed toward her son. "Are you feeling any better? With the way you're treating your body right now, you might as well be planning for an early death!"

"I'm fine, all right?"

"You're as stubborn as a mule. Is eating such a harrowing ordeal? I wouldn't have given birth to you if I'd known you'd turn out this way!" Wynn timer's anger was irrepressible.

Samuel chose to remain silent but discreetly directed a knife-sharp glare at Tyson.

God knows why you contacted Mom!

Tyson wiped the cold sweat from his brow.

What a way of showing your appreciation. You wouldn't be staying in the same room as your wife right now if not for my quick thinking.

"Suit yourself! I couldn't care less if you were to ruin yourself," Wynn timer huffed as she stalked out of the room.

"Darling, wait up!" trailed Calvin as he hurried after his wife without a care in the world for Samuel.

Tyson was about to speak up when Samuel cut him off.

"You should leave too. I need some space to clear my head," Samuel uttered while shutting his eyes, signaling the end of their conversation.

Tyson cocked his brows in question at Kathleen.

It was only when she waved him on that Tyson finally departed from the room.

Samuel sucked in a breath and let his eyes wander over the stark ceiling, deep in thought.

Kathleen's voice disrupted his ruminations. "Why weren't you eating on time?"

Samuel looked askance at the petite woman, who was also dressed in a hospital gown, sitting at the edge of her bed.

"Dr. Zimmer claimed that this rooming arrangement was because the hospital was full, though I doubt the veracity of it," said Kathleen.

Samuel's mind was churning with a sea of roiling thoughts. "I've no idea."

Am I dreaming?

"I wouldn't have agreed to this if I'd known." It was Kathleen's turn to stare at the ceiling. "Your parents were worried sick. Couldn't you at least try to allay their fears by taking good care of yourself?"

"What happened to you?" asked Samuel instead of answering her question.

"I had a really high fever."

Samuel dipped his head.

It still felt like he was dreaming.

He reached for his phone and tapped on the message notifications that were popping up.

Richard wrote: No need to thank me, Samuel. This was all Tyson's idea. Richard had no plans of incurring the wrath of Samuel, hence he chose to place the blame on Tyson the scapegoat.

Samuel put down his phone and collected himself. "Are you feeling better?"

"I suppose so. But I still have to remain admitted for two more days just in case."

Two days? Doesn't this mean we'd both be...

Samuel's heart dropped.

The buzz of activity at their doorstep turned out to be the appearance of Charles.

He strode in and gave Samuel a dirty look.

"I must have mistaken your room for another, my apologies."

"What are you doing here, Charles?"

"I could ask you that myself," said Charles in bewilderment as his eyes darted between Samuel and Kathleen.

"I know what this looks like, but I swear it's not what you think. This peculiar situation was entirely coincidental. The hospital was out of available rooms, so we had to compromise," Kathleen elaborated.

"Really?" Charles eyed Samuel dubiously.

"Don't give me that look. I was unconscious all this while and had just woken shortly before your arrival."

Charles was unconvinced. "Is that so?"

"I can testify to that. He was truly left in the dark just like myself."

Charles couldn't stand the thought of his sister staying with that abominable man. "I'll arrange for you to switch rooms right this instant. If there still aren't any available, we'll file for a transfer to another hospital."

"The doctor advised against moving around too often due to my pneumonia," Kathleen explained.

"That sounds serious." Charles held his palm against Kathleen's forehead. "That production team be damned. Their entire team should be dismissed for such negligence!"

Kathleen held on to her brother's hand and said soothingly, "Forget it. There's nothing we can do about it."

Charles was drowning in guilt. "I'm so sorry, dear sister. It's my fault for not having taken care of you well enough. That's it. We'll be withdrawing from the show. I'll cover the penalty for breaking the contract, so don't you worry."

"Get ahold of yourself. With the state I'm in, I'm not fit for work. You'd have to make arrangements with the production team to search for a replacement."

"I've got this." Charles ruffled Kathleen's hair affectionately. "Rest well and recuperate after you're discharged. I'll handle the new script for the production."

"Actually... I sort of agreed to star in the show Samuel invested in," muttered Kathleen sheepishly.

Charles' jaw dropped. "Please tell me you're kidding."

"Come on, Charles. Samuel invested his time and money in this. All I have to do is film. There's a cut out of the remuneration to boot."

"Our household is far better off than you think." Charles side-eyed Samuel. "How much was it exactly?"

"I don't need the money," Samuel replied stonily.

"Stop coveting my sister! If it's revealed that you intentionally arranged all this, your days are numbered," Charles barked.

"I honestly have no clue what's going on right now," Samuel replied.

Hmph!

Charles averted his gaze back to Kathleen and handed her a lunchbox. "I've brought you my signature oatmeal. Eat it while it's still warm."

"Thank you! I'm absolutely famished." Kathleen nodded.

"I knew you'd love it. There's also your favorite Ratatouille for when you're done with that." Charles smiled tenderly at Kathleen.

Kathleen felt like a child opening presents on Christmas day.

Samuel gazed thoughtfully at Kathleen.

Her gentleness was truly the result of her tender and loving upbringing.

"Do you happen to have more of this?" Kathleen glanced over at Samuel and wondered out loud while savoring Charles' cooking.

"This is all I've got." Charles stared suspiciously at her.

"I'm pretty sure there's more in that bag over there," Kathleen coaxed.

"What are you planning?" Charles' eyes narrowed in question.

“Why not make some for Samuel? We’re roommates after all...”

“As if!” Charles folded his arms and refused to look Kathleen in the eye.

Over my dead body!

“Only my brother-in-law is worthy of this. Who exactly is he, pray tell?” Charles remarked disdainfully.