

Perfect Match: Irresistible Desire For You – Chapter 91 - Tips

Ashley assumed that Joseph was wary of hospitals, so she didn't push him further. "You should lie down for a while. I'll go and get you some medicine." Ashley patted the back of his hand to reassure him before she got up from the couch.

He liked the idea of having Ashley care for him, so he was reluctant to let her leave. Holding her hand on top of his, he said, "I don't have any medicine with me, and I'm feeling much better."

These last few years, Joseph had focused on taking better care of himself, so he didn't feel the need to bring any medicine with him. Besides, it's not like he was sick, so he shouldn't take any medication.

This past week, the two of them didn't have many opportunities for any physical contact. That was why Joseph felt starved for any physical intimacy with Ashley. As he laid his head on her legs, the last thing he wanted to do was leave.

During their trip together, Joseph made sure to be a perfect gentleman. Before he confessed his love to her officially, he tried his best to keep a respectful distance between them. Joseph didn't want to overwhelm her with his eagerness. Once he gave in to his impulses, he knew it would be difficult to control himself.

It would take them a long time to go out and buy medicine, so it wouldn't be the best to get them now. Ashley thought for a few moments before she replied, "I can cook you some porridge. It might make you feel better."

Then, she gently repositioned his head onto the couch so he could rest comfortably. After signaling to him that she would be back soon, she left to go to the kitchen.

As he looked at her receding figure, he couldn't help but feel touched by her care and concern. Due to his position and domineering character, Joseph had always been admired and feared. However, it also meant that people were hesitant to get close to him. He was never one to have many friends since people perceived him as cold and indifferent. The genuine affection Ashley

showered him with felt like warm sun thawing snow, and it uplifted Joseph. He suddenly felt grateful to have her by his side.

When s he left the room, he slowly sat up from the sofa, took out his mobile phone, and made a few phone calls. He called to arrange some special affairs for the both of them.

Joseph couldn't wait any longer. The love he felt for Ashley needed to be expressed, and he yearned to make her his. He wanted a reason to be intimate with this beautiful woman. Otherwise, his rivals in love might keep their eyes on her. Joseph had always been a man to take action. Confessing his love for her was his top priority at this moment.

When they became an official couple, he could be more affectionate towards her and steer her away from other men who would try to come between them. Everything would be perfect after he confessed to her.

As Joseph fantasized about the happy life that awaited the two of them, Ashley suddenly appeared with a bowl of steaming porridge in her hands. "Come and have some porridge first," she said gently. Then she handed the bowl to him.

"I'll only eat it if you feed me," he teased as Ashley bent down in front of him.

She was momentarily stunned by his request. It didn't seem like something he would usually say. Did his demeanor change because he was sick?

She quickly cast the thought aside and decided that making him feel better was more important. Fulfilling his requests was no challenge. She began to scoop up a spoonful of porridge, blew on it, and then brought it to his mouth.

His words sounded like those that came from a spoiled child's mouth. It was surprising to him to realize how naturally it came for him to utter those words. 'When did I become a man who said these things? They are such childish.'

However, he quickly warded off the thought once seeing the look of concentration on Ashley's face as she fed him. It gave him a deep feeling of satisfaction. 'I don't mind being childish if it can bring benefits to me,' he thought.

The scene was peculiar but warm to Ashley. She never would've expected to feed Joseph porridge as if he was an obedient child.

All of a sudden, an image of feeding children popped up in Ashley's mind. The idea of a mini version of Joseph delighted her. It would be lovely to have a child that took after him.

The idyllic scene in her head reflected her longing, but the reality proved to be very different than the one in her head. Later in her life together with Joseph she only had a few chance to picture her children like this since Joseph wouldn't enjoy allowing a child to take up too much of her attention.

"We should rest today. I'll take you out tonight," he said as Ashley moved to place the empty bowl on the table.

"That sounds like a plan." She had often been the one to arrange their itinerary, so it was a pleasant surprise to have Joseph plan their trip this time around.

"Where are you thinking of taking me?" she asked curiously.

"You'll know when the time comes," he teased as he gently patted her head. A small smile played at the corners of his mouth.

Ashley had grown accustomed to seeing him smile and loved when he touched her hair affectionately. When she heard his mysterious tone, she couldn't help but feel excited. She was looking forward to tonight, and she was sure that it would be a good night.

Knowing that Joseph wouldn't tell her anything about tonight, she didn't pry anymore.

After making sure that Joseph was comfortable, she left to tidy up before returning to the living room. When she noticed Joseph observing her, she said, "If you have something to say, then say it. Are you planning on telling me where we're going tonight?"

The truth was, Joseph wanted to ask about the man she spoke to on the phone, but he wasn't sure how to bring it up. At this point, Joseph had allowed her to see his true self so she could read him like a book.

“Who were you speaking to just now?” he casually asked as he picked up the phone she discarded on the couch.

In the end, Joseph couldn't resist but ask. Although it would be simple for him to investigate someone's background, he would prefer if the truth came from her. As the saying goes, “If you know yourself and your enemy well, you can win any battle.” Their call lasted almost twenty minutes. He couldn't just let it go. At the moment, he was calculating how best to nip the problem from the bud.

“He's a close friend of my brother's. The three of us are good friends. His family migrated to the United States a few years ago, and he just came back. He called me to catch up,” she explained. She assumed it would be harmless to give Joseph this information.

“Was he nice to you?” He was unsatisfied with her answer, so he decided to use another strategy to extract the information he wanted.

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“Yes. Perhaps it's because of my brother.” Although Ashley wasn't really sure why Joseph asked about it, she didn't hesitate to tell him everything.

“Okay,” hearing her response, Joseph calmly said.

Joseph was a man who wouldn't miss a trick, so he came to the conclusion that Zaiden, the man Ashley had mentioned earlier, must have feelings for her.

When Ashley and Zaiden were on the phone, although Joseph couldn't clearly make out what they were talking about, he noticed that the man's low voice was filled with so much tenderness. The man said something along the lines of ‘as long as you remember me’. What was more, he was being awfully nice to her, so there was a possibility that he had some indecent thoughts.

Looking at it from a different perspective, a friend of Mike, the CEO of the Guzman Group, must be an exceptional person. And considering how affectionate Zaiden was towards Ashley, he probably wasn't interested in just being friends with her.

Fortunately, Ashley was completely oblivious of that fact. Thinking of this, Joseph was quite pleased, and his heart was more or less put at ease.

'It doesn't matter if you've known her longer than I have, I'm still the one who's going to get her in the end.' Looking at the number in the call log, Joseph couldn't help sneering in his heart.

As a matter of fact, Joseph used to think that Ashley's dullness was a bit troublesome in the past. However, he now found it as quite an endearing quality of hers. It was precisely thanks to her dullness and lack of interest that no other man could make a move on her.

Then, Joseph turned his head and looked at Ashley who was pulling a long face. Needless to be said, he was in a really good mood. 'You are destined to be mine,' he whispered in his heart.

Seeing Joseph's bright eyes as he stared at her, Ashley felt so confused. She still hadn't figured out what he meant by what he just said, and now he was suddenly beaming her a charming smile. 'Could it be an aftereffect of his illness?'

When this thought crossed her mind, Ashley decided not to think too much about it anymore. She said to Joseph, "Why don't we go for a walk in the garden and bask in the sunshine? It's good for your health."

"That's a great idea!" Without having to think twice, Joseph took Ashley's hand to go to the garden at the back of the villa.

Time quietly passed by as the two of them kept each other company like it was the most natural thing in the world. When the clock struck four in the afternoon, Joseph told Ashley that they had to leave soon so she should get ready.

Hearing this, Ashley, who had just woken up from her nap and was browsing the internet, told Joseph that she just needed to get changed, then she'd be good to go. With that, she turned around and went to the bedroom on the second floor.

After entering the room, Ashley wondered what she should wear for her first real and mysterious date with Joseph tonight. Something was telling her that it

would be a date that she would remember for the rest of her life. As she looked at her suitcase, a deep frown crept onto Ashley's face. She only had casual clothes and some knitted coats, and she felt like they wouldn't be presentable enough for their date.

Not wanting to keep Joseph waiting for too long downstairs, Ashley had to make do with a pair of skinny jeans with a loose white knitted coat, wearing it in a ladylike style. Ashley was tall and slim, and the outfit she was wearing made her appear even taller and more elegant.

As soon as she went downstairs, she saw Joseph waiting down the stairs for her. From the looks of it, Joseph seemed to have chosen an outfit that would match the clothes Ashley had available—a pair of jeans and a simple black hoodie, which gave him a casual look and made him look so handsome.

The clothes Ashley was wearing today might not be that much different from what she usually wore, but she styled her hair differently just for their date. Her soft hair was rolled up in a unique way, revealing her milky white neck. The moment Joseph saw the fresh and beautiful look she had, his eyes lit up in an instant.

"You look so beautiful." When Ashley reached the last step on the stairs, Joseph held her slender hand and complimented how good she looked.

"You look very handsome as well!" Ashley returned the compliment as she looked at Joseph in amazement.

"Yes. Beautiful men and women are meant to be together." Joseph tightened his grip on Ashley's hand and playfully said.

Hearing this, the corners of Ashley's lips twitched a little. 'Could he be more narcissistic? Although there's no denying the fact that he looks so good, he should at least be a little humble about it.'

He reminded Ashley of her friend Yasmin, who was also a narcissist and was quite proud of her natural charisma.

The schedule for the photo shoot of handsome foreign men got delayed just because Joseph had said to Ashley with a straight face, "Do you really need to take pictures of other people even though you already have a gorgeous man like me standing in front of you?" Remembering this, Ashley was once

again left at such a loss for words. In her mind, she thought that this just went to prove that Joseph really was a narcissist.

“So, what are we going to do?” Ashley asked, sitting on the passenger seat of a convertible.

As soon as Joseph was done saying his narcissistic words, they went on their way to the perfect day he had planned for the two of them. And since Ashley didn't know anything at all about this trip, she couldn't help asking Joseph what they were going to do.

Seeing the curiosity written all over her face, Joseph calmly replied, “I'm going to take you to a movie.”

“What movie?” Ashley asked, sounding even more curious.

She never would've imagined that Joseph would invite her to watch a movie. In her opinion, Joseph didn't seem like the type who would enjoy movies since he might think that they were boring and a waste of time, much like how she didn't like dull soap operas. At the thought of this, she became curious as to what type of movies Joseph would be interested in.

“Here are the tickets. You can check it yourself.” Without keeping her guessing randomly, Joseph handed over two tickets to her.

Ashley quickly grabbed the two tickets and looked at them carefully. However, the more she looked at them, the more confused she became.

Not only were the tickets made of special paper and good to the touch, they were also bordered with gold, giving them a formal and classy appearance. However, what confused Ashley the most was the Ob.rarian text embossed in the two tickets—the name of the movie: Serendipity; the time: x/x/x (today) 18:30; the term of validity: permanent; the seats: No. 5 and No. 20...

Looking at these two tickets, Ashley thought it should be a movie that had premiered all over the world. But, after cudgeling her brains about it for a long time, she couldn't think of a movie called “Serendipity” ever being shown in her country. Just what kind of movie was this that attracted Joseph's attention? Most importantly, why did their seats have to be so far apart?

“Why are our seats so far apart?” Feeling so confused, Ashley couldn't help asking Joseph. For now, she had to assume that she probably just wasn't

aware that a movie like that was running in cinemas. However, shouldn't the two of them be sitting next to each other if they were going to watch a movie? In any case, Joseph had always been a big spender, so booking adjacent seats shouldn't be a problem for him.

"You'll find out soon enough. No need to worry." Just like that, Joseph tactfully skirted around Ashley's question once again.

Getting a bit tired of hearing the same response from him over and over again, Ashley curled her lip in annoyance. 'Of course, I'll find out when we get there. I asked because I wanted to know right now.' After letting out a helpless sigh, she glanced at her watch. The movie would begin in an hour and half.

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After thirty minutes, the two entered a high-end bespoke restaurant named 'GoTown'. Ashley followed Joseph as he led them into a private dining area for couples that was located on the top floor of the restaurant. The area was quiet and inviting, unlike the lively and rambunctious dining area downstairs.

"Will we make it to our movie later?" Ashley asked as she leaned back into the chair.

Their movie was scheduled to begin in an hour. Ashley looked forward to watching the movie with Joseph for the first time, which seemed like a traditional activity for a date.

"Don't worry about it. The dishes have been served already. We should eat first." As usual, Joseph chose to avoid the question and steer the conversation in a different direction.

When the waitress served the dishes on the rustic table, Ashley was delighted. She couldn't wait to see how delicious each dish tasted. The moment the waitress left the room, Ashley made a move to grab some of the food.

"These look amazing! How did you know that I like these dishes?" she asked as she cut up a piece of tender steak and put it into her mouth.

In a matter of moments, all the dishes had been served. Joseph had booked this place in advance and pre-ordered their meals. Ashley was curious to know how he found out about her tastes in food.

“Of course, it’s something I should know,” Joseph replied in a soft voice.

He was fully aware that Ashley couldn’t resist delicious food. It wasn’t difficult to figure out her tastes, as long as he paid close attention to it.

He gracefully cut the steak and handed it to her one by one. She beamed when he placed the mouth-watering steak onto her plate, and she continued to enjoy the delicious food.

“I’m full. That was an excellent meal! Let’s go to the cinema!” she said excitedly as she wiped her mouth with a napkin. He sat quietly as he waited for her to finish.

“Alright. You don’t need to get up. We can watch the film here.” He placed a hand on her shoulder to calm her.

Ashley looked around her in anticipation. Except for the sky blue walls that were decorated with exotic ornaments, she couldn’t see anything that would be able to play the movie for them.

As she continued to look around, she heard the faint sound of fingers snapping. Immediately after, soft music began to play in the background, and the room was suddenly cloaked in darkness.

A large screen suddenly came down from the wall in front of them and lit up, casting a soft glow inside the room. Warm, dim lights brightened up the room slightly, creating a romantic atmosphere. It was like they were in a couple box in a cinema.

She was awe-struck at how the room around them suddenly transformed. When she was about to turn around and ask Joseph what had happened, the movie suddenly began to play.

Words appeared on the widescreen that said, “Welcome to the movie showing of ‘Serendipity’.” One scene played out after another after that.

Ashley's eyes were fixated on the screen for the duration of the film. Every scene seemed to penetrate her soul with warmth and music.

On screen, a montage of every moment that they had spent together played out.

The first part was animated and showed scenes of their early encounters together. It showed the one-night stand, the fight they had at the office the second time they met, the time when they pushed the pervert away together, the dance, and finally the dinner with Leonard.

The second part featured live-action photos and videos of the two of them. Several pictures of them were shown smiling brightly together behind different backgrounds. Subtitles appeared below every scene which described the producer's thoughts.

At the end of the film, several photos throughout their relationship were projected onto the four walls. The movie was all about a man that met the love of his life.

The last scene of the film projected the words: "I love you, Ashley!" These words stayed on the screen as the music slowly came to a stop.

When Ashley checked her watch, she realized that an hour had quickly gone by. The beautiful pictures and words touched her deeply, and tears began to well up in her eyes.

"Ashley, this confession may not be as luxurious as you deserve, but you know that it is sincere. This is from the bottom of my heart. From the moment I met you, my life has never been the same. For the first time in my life, I've felt loved and learned how to love in return. I have discovered the beauty of love through you. I wish to hold your hand and spend the rest of my life with you. Will you give me a chance to do that?" Joseph said with sincerity as he held a bouquet of blue roses in his hands.

Ashley was moved to tears at his declaration of love. Joseph had carefully planned this moment for the two of them. In the past, she had known him as a cold and arrogant man, but he proved her wrong time and time again. How could she not be moved by him?

Ashley looked at him with tear-streamed eyes, and Joseph couldn't help the urge to wipe them away, even if he knew that they were tears of joy.

He moved to hug her as he repeated, "I love you. Let me take care of you for the rest of my life."

She immediately held him back and whispered in a hoarse voice, "Of course. I want nothing more." After a pause, she added in a low voice, "I love you too."

When Joseph heard Ashley declare her love for him in return, his heart was filled with euphoria. The person that he adored loved him back. He couldn't think of a better feeling.

Joseph moved closer to her, then raised a hand to touch her tear-dampened face and said in a gentle voice, "Don't cry. My heart hurts whenever I see you crying."

Ashley nodded in understanding. However, the tears were gushing out of her eyes uncontrollably. Deep inside her heart, she could feel the genuine love that Joseph had for her. She was overjoyed, and she couldn't stop her tears of joy.

Joseph didn't know what to do to console her. His goal was to finally confess his love to her and give her a night to remember. He looked back over to her beautiful face and sweet mouth as he leaned forward to kiss her.

The moment their lips touched, the two felt an electric shock pass between them. They were both in a daze for a few moments, as if they couldn't believe that it was finally happening.

Her lips were as soft and tempting as he had been imagining. Joseph quickly came back to his senses and freed his hand to cradle the back of her head. He began to move his lips against hers.

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Joseph's kissing style was in no way elegant, and he even managed to nip at her lips as he kissed her. However, once he got a taste of her soft lips, he couldn't get enough. The moment Ashley opened her mouth slightly to breathe, Joseph seemed to have taken it as a signal to deepen the kiss. He pried her mouth open, and his tongue reached out to entangle itself with hers.

At first, Ashley could feel her lips aching because of the awkwardness of his kiss. However, the longer he kissed her, the more she indulged herself in his kiss. She even began to kiss him back.

Two people in love were communicating their affections for one another through this kiss. It was as if they were the only ones left in the world, and the sound of their beating hearts was their music.

After a few moments of kissing, Joseph could feel the excitement inside him building. He quickly chastised and reminded himself that he couldn't be intimate with her in this place, so he reluctantly stopped kissing her. He nipped at her lips one last time to rid them both of the evidence of their kissing.

As they kissed, Ashley unconsciously shifted from a sitting position to a standing one. At this moment, she found herself cradled in Joseph's arms. When she felt his intense gaze on her, she bashfully buried her blushing face onto his chest.

Ashley's body was tingling with anticipation as she recalled the passionate kiss they had just shared. This was the first real kiss she had ever experienced in her life. Although she couldn't recall being intimate with this man for the first time, she was well aware that she had now given her heart and soul to the man in front of her. She already regarded him as the love of her life. How lucky she felt to find a man who loved her as he did.

Joseph could tell that Ashley was feeling shy as he looked down to see her hiding in his arms. He wanted nothing more than to see the shy expression on her face that he adored, so he lowered his head and licked her earlobe to tease her.

All of a sudden, Ashley tentatively raised her head from Joseph's shoulder to see him smiling brightly at her. Her face blushed even further at the sight. His smile was tempting and beguiling. Judging from the look of mischief dancing across his eyes, she could tell that he was amused by her shyness.

She reassured herself that there was nothing for her to be shy about. It was normal for a couple to do such things, and the emotion she felt at that moment was something she wouldn't be able to control. Her eyes locked on Joseph's

handsome face, and she teased, “Why are you smiling? You’re a terrible k!sser!”

Joseph was busy examining the state of Ashley’s face. Her face looked ruddy, her mouth was slightly swollen from their k!ss, and her eyes danced with mischief. He found her adorable, and he was proud of his handiwork.

However, the next words that came out of her mouth made the smile on his face freeze. ‘What did she mean by that? How could she say such a terrible thing! As they say, practice makes perfect. This was the first k!ss we’ve shared, and also the first time I’ve ever attempted to practice k!ssing anyone. I thought it was pleasant...’

However, Joseph was notorious for being an unscrupulous businessman, and it wasn’t easy for him to admit his weakness. He even took pride in it! “Honey, if no one had ever given me a chance to practice k!ssing, how would I get good at it?” After a short pause, he added, “Now that you have a clear understanding of my weaknesses, you should practice more with me.” He nodded solemnly to show how important his words were.

When she heard the words come out of his mouth, Ashley was at a loss for words.

Joseph was a terrible k!sser, but he claimed that he wasn’t to blame for it. He even used it as a chance to manipulate her into practicing with him! Ashley saw the scheming side of Joseph come out for the first time.

She was overjoyed at this new tidbit she discovered about him. He picked up the bouquet of blue roses on the table and said to her in a gentle voice, “This is my promise to you for the rest of my life.”

“Thank you! I must warn you though, if you don’t treat me right, I will run away!” Ashley took the bouquet from him and brought it to her nose to smell its fresh fragrance. The roses meant “to stay together forever”.

“That will never happen,” Joseph retorted with no hint of hesitation. ‘I won’t hurt you or let you run away,’ he thought to himself.

Once a cold person like himself fell in love, he couldn’t be living without it if it were taken away from him. Joseph had her now, and he would never let her go.

“I’m kidding! However, if you do end up driving me away and I don’t leave, I forbid you to laugh at me!” Ashley noticed the shift in his expression, so she walked up to him to place her palm in his.

“Don’t talk nonsense. I have plenty of time to prove how good I’ll be to you.” Joseph pinched Ashley’s face, his eyes full of firmness.

“I know! You fool!” she teased. It suddenly occurred to her that one of the main characters in the movie, “Serendipity”, was based on Joseph.

“Ashley. I love you so much,” he said once again.

“This is a token of my love. Keep it forever, will you?” Joseph took out a booklet with a hardcover from behind him. On the cover were the words “A Memoir Of Our Love”.

The moment she opened it, the first page caught her attention. There was a tightly sealed note attached to it and two hundred and fifty dollars. Written on the note was, “Damn you, gigolo! I can’t believe I slept with you. This is two hundred and fifty dollars for your service!”

Ashley burst out laughing as she read the note. The day she wrote that letter was still vivid in her mind. She could recall how angry she had been when she wrote that note.

“What a vengeful man you are!” She turned to Joseph as she affectionately ran her hand over the note.

Ashley never would have expected Joseph to keep her note. In her mind, he had always been an arrogant man who would never have taken money from a woman who called him a gigolo after se.x. She knew that it was a source of doubt and contempt for his male dignity.

Joseph couldn’t remember why he hadn’t torn up this hateful note when he received it. He was just as angry as she was. The only thing he thought to do at that moment was to find the bold woman and teach her a lesson. Later on, he was unable to resist her, and even had the urge to protect her in his arms. He kept the note as a token of their first encounter with one another.

Now, Joseph finally figured out why he had kept the note all this time. It had always been Ashley’s unique way of doing things that drew him to her. He

couldn't miss out on the chance to have a relationship with her. This note was the first piece of evidence of their growing love.

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“I feel wronged. But, I'll give you a chance to make up for it. You have to stay with me.”

Joseph leaned over and whispered in Ashley's ear, putting his arm around her shoulder.

Feeling his warm breath in her ear, Ashley's ear turned red once again. Joseph's words were becoming almost too much to bear, and being the shy girl that Ashley was, this left her at such a loss for words.

Pretending not to hear what he said, Ashley continued looking through the handmade booklet. Behind the notes were the photos they had taken during their travels, along with some simple and affectionate words Joseph had written. This unique booklet contained the precious memories the two of them had made along the way.

After getting engrossed in reading all those presented in the entire booklet, Ashley finally found Joseph's vigorous and stiff handwriting at the last page. It said, “Honey, what do you think about the special gift I made for you? If you liked it, then you have to give me 1, 314 k!sses as a reward!” An interesting sketch of a k!ss was drawn right beside it.

“Well, you still owe me 1, 313 k!sses. Keep going,” while Ashley was still left utterly dumbfounded after hearing Joseph's request, he suddenly whispered in her ear again.

“Are you kidding me? You're asking for a reward for giving someone a gift?” Ashley asked, shaking her head in disappointment and pulling a long face. ‘If I k!ssed him at least five times a day, it would still take more than half a year to complete 1, 314 k!sses, let alone five k!sses a day, which should be out of the question.’

“It's just a small token of appreciation for my love. Or should I say it's a way for me to improve my k!ssing skills? Yes, that's more accurate,” Joseph said with a straight face after seeing her cute reaction.

Looking at the serious expression Joseph had on his face, Ashley thought of what he had just said. At that moment, she suddenly had some second thoughts about her promise to stay with him.

“Can I still take back what I said?” Ashley asked in a low voice, feeling a bit hesitant.

Hearing her words loud and clear, Joseph calmly replied, “I’ll let you know once you’ve given me all the k!sses.”

It should go without saying that Ashley was not pleased with his response. As expected, she couldn’t keep up with him at all.

“Oh, there’s one more thing I forgot to tell you. To keep encouraging our love, you have to finish the rest of the booklet. I’m going to check it randomly.” Realizing that Ashley was probably going to ignore him, Joseph ran his fingers through her hair and lightly said this.

The remaining pages were left for Ashley to continue. With this, Joseph would be able to see her keep a record of the moments they shared.

‘It’s not every day that I get a gift from him. However, not only does he want me to give him a reward for it, he also wants me to encourage him.’ Looking straight into Joseph’s deep and dark eyes, for the first time in a while, Ashley couldn’t help feeling that the man in front of her was up to something.

As soon as Ashley closed the booklet, the colorful lights disappeared and the room was instantly enveloped by complete darkness. Then, she suddenly felt her chair turn 180 degrees clockwise and saw a large heart-shaped candlelight display on the ground, with Joseph standing tall in the center and gracefully bowing in front of her and asking for her hand.

In this candlelit room, Joseph’s handsome face was filled with so much tenderness. He was akin to a knight of light who had appeared in the darkness.

Without even realizing it, Ashley looked at Joseph in amazement with the most beautiful smile. Then, she stood up and slowly walked towards the candlelight display and gave her slender hand to Joseph. At this moment, it felt like time stood still, making it seem as though they were the only two

people in the world. It was so calming and serene that they could clearly hear each other's heartbeat.

With the melodious music playing, Joseph and Ashley danced in the middle of the candle lights.

Time seemed to have taken them back to the night when the two of them danced together at the party. A lot of things had happened since then, and the biggest difference was that there were no eyes watching them, and they had now fallen in love with each other so deeply.

When the music stopped playing, Joseph looked at Ashley's ruddy face and saw the glimmer in her eyes. Then, without a warning, he passionately kissed her lips.

Unlike the first time, Joseph cut to the chase this time. Every now and then, his lips would meet hers in a torrid kiss, and he would gently suck the tip of her tongue as they shared this very intimate moment.

Ashley found this sensation so overwhelming, so much so that her body was slowly getting numb and it was turning her on so much. It came to a point where she had gotten so weak in the knees that she could barely even keep standing with Joseph's arm wrapped around her waist.

After a long while, Joseph finally let go of Ashley, who seemed to have lost her strength while leaning in his arms, and nonchalantly said, "What do you think? Have I become a much better kisser now?"

Hearing this, Ashley didn't know what to say. 'Did he seriously kiss me so passionately just for practice?' Without a hint of hesitation, she stepped on Joseph's foot and said in a furious tone, "Don't get ahead of yourself. You're still a terrible kisser, and you still need a lot of improvement."

As soon as she said these words, Ashley walked out of the candlelight display on the ground. She didn't want to risk being used by the mischievous man to practice kissing again because of what she said.

Seeing that Joseph was about to approach her with a devilish grin on his face, Ashley quickly tried to change the topic. "To celebrate our first day of officially being together, why don't we go on a date? What do you say?" Ashley ended the question in a rather coquettish tone, worried that Joseph might force her to practice his kissing skills with him again.

Afraid that Joseph might get too full of himself, there was no way Ashley could admit that he had improved so much. Although she didn't really know what a good kisser was supposed to be like, she honestly thought that he had really made a lot of progress this time.

If it weren't for the first kiss they shared back then, Ashley probably would have doubted whether Joseph was actually an experienced kisser. Now, she could tell that it must be because of Joseph's efforts that he had improved so much.

Hearing the coquettish words coming out of Ashley's mouth, which seemed to have become a little swollen in the darkness, Joseph felt so happy. In any case, he had all the time in the world to practice with her, so there was no need to be in a hurry.

"Okay," Joseph replied, nodding his head in agreement.

When Ashley heard that Joseph happily agreed to her request, she let out a sigh of relief. Without wasting a second, she grabbed a hold of his arms and said with a sweet smile, "Let's go."

At first, Ashley thought that for as long as the two of them were together, it didn't matter whether they were officially dating or not. However, after tonight's confession of love, which felt like a dream, she was captivated by this kind of happiness she had never felt before. On this day, it seemed that they had found someone they truly loved.

"You have to give me the specially-made movie. I promise I'm going to take good care of it." Before walking out of the room, Ashley carefully held onto the booklet on her chest and suddenly asked Joseph.

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Ashley really liked the movie. After all, it was a story about their love, which carried a lot of precious memories. How interesting and exciting would it be to watch and relive it again when they were older and their hair had turned to grey?

"I'm yours now. Stop being silly. You don't have to worry about the movie." Joseph lightly poked Ashley's nose with his finger and said in a playful tone.

Hearing this, Ashley thought for a while and nodded her head in agreement. Then, as if she was a queen talking to a lowly peasant, she raised her voice and said, "I guess you're right! You are mine now. I don't have to worry about it at all." After a short pause, she went on and said, "Joseph, let's go."

This time, Joseph was the one who ended up feeling restless. Indeed, he might have agreed to go on a date with her, but he didn't want to leave here so soon. So, when he sensed that Ashley was acting like a cat on a hot tin roof and seemed to want to get out of this place as soon as possible, he decided to mess with her a little.

While they were on their way out, Joseph stopped abruptly, stretched out his arm, and wrapped it around Ashley's slender waist. Then, he pinched her waist through her clothes with his fingers and whispered in her ear in a low and soothing voice, "Honey, why are you in such a hurry? You know what else I want to do before we leave, right? You know it very well."

When Ashley heard Joseph's attractive but mischievous voice, she was caught in a daze for a few seconds and turned beet red.

'You know what else I want to do before we leave, right? You know it very well.'

These words kept ringing in her ears as Joseph caressed her waist in a weird way.

This made Ashley weak in the knees, just like how she felt that morning. Of course, she knew full well what it was that Joseph wanted to do.

In fact, Ashley didn't expect that Joseph would catch onto her plan and say such a thing to put her on the spot.

"Why are you being so... bad right now?" When Ashley finally came to her senses, she stumbled over her words with a red face.

"Well, you know what they say. Good girls fall for the bad guys," Joseph flatly replied.

Again, Ashley felt like she wouldn't be able to keep up with Joseph at all. He was just too much for her to handle. He could always say these things so nonchalantly, as if he was just stating the obvious, leaving her at such a loss.

Be that as it might, Ashley still preferred this passionate man who could be faintly aloof at times. When they first met, Joseph was too cold and seemed so intimidating.

“You still haven’t answered my question.” Joseph pointed out in a low voice, wrapping his arm tight around her waist again to make sure she wouldn’t be able to go anywhere.

Noticing the stubbornness in his tone, the corners of Ashley mouth twitched slightly in annoyance. ‘Why the heck do I have to answer this question?’ she thought to herself.

Realizing that they wouldn’t get anywhere unless she answered his question, she stood on tiptoes, mustered up the courage, and whispered in Joseph’s ear, “I... I know.

There, can we leave now?” Ashley grumbled, feeling a little embarrassed.

With a snort of satisfaction, Joseph opened the door and left the room with Ashley as soon as he saw the look of embarrassment on her face.

Following him with leaden steps, Ashley couldn’t help feeling like he was getting too full of himself. Just because she accidentally let it slip her tongue once, Joseph didn’t let it go. He didn’t want to leave until he got an answer that would satisfy him. Just now, he was like a child throwing a tantrum and asking his parents for some candy.

Finally, the car arrived at a popular commercial street at Ashley’s request. After parking the car at a corner, the two of them went for a stroll in the bustling commercial street, walking hand in hand.

There was an assortment of products on display in the shops. Since Ashley wasn’t feeling hungry yet, she didn’t bother looking at the food stalls. Instead, she was more interested in checking the gift shops and specialty shops.

Joseph kept an eye on Ashley the whole time they were walking around. And whenever Ashley would take a couple of glances at something, he would purchase it for her right away. At first, Ashley was over the moon that Joseph was paying attention to her all the time. However, as the number of items he

bought piled up one after another, she felt that Joseph's habit of spending money without batting an eye was very spendthrift of him.

Thinking of this, Ashley pulled Joseph aside into the nearest corner to give him a talking-to. With a straight face, she said in a firm tone, "Stop being a spendthrift. Money doesn't grow on trees, you know?"

Truth be told, Ashley was still trying to decide what she should take back to the country as souvenirs for her friends and relatives. However, before she could even make up her mind, Joseph went ahead and purchased the items one by one without asking her. Because of this, she began to wonder if it was time to have a serious talk with him about this. After all, if he ended up buying too many useless things, it would just be a waste of money.

Since she had been a part of the workforce for a number of years now, Ashley was well aware of how hard it was to make money. So, when she saw her rich boyfriend being a big spender, she suddenly turned into a bossy wife.

That being said, after listening to his girlfriend's sincere advice, Joseph, who had been scolded from out of the blue, couldn't help grinning widely.

The serious expression on Ashley's face and the tone of her voice made her look like a bossy wife who had no choice but to slap her husband's wrist for spending too much. Seeing the cute look she had on her face at this moment, Joseph found it so amusing.

'I just bought a few things that I thought she liked. It's not like I spent that much. If it were someone else, they would probably enjoy it if I bought them a lot of luxurious things.' When this thought crossed Joseph's mind, he felt so blessed to be with someone unique like Ashley who was such a sincere and beautiful woman.

One of them had a Cheshire cat grin on his face, while the other was wearing a serious expression. From the perspective of the bystanders, a beautiful foreign woman was scolding the man she was with—whose appearance also made him stand out among the crowd just like her—yet for some reason, the man seemed to be enjoying it.

Witnessing this scene, a handful of young women, who couldn't help feeling sorry for the good-looking man, began to gossip about Joseph who was being scolded by Ashley.

“That foreigner looks so handsome!” one of the women exclaimed, almost yelling out in excitement.

“Yes, he has a charming smile,” another woman echoed shyly, blushing a little.

“Too bad he’s with that mean woman. How could she scold that poor handsome man?” a third woman remarked, sounding so cheesed off.

“Yes, that’s right...” All the girls sighed in disappointment.

Noticing that more and more foreign women were giving her weird looks and gossiping about her, Ashley fiercely stared at Joseph, who still had a big smile glued to his face. All of this was because of his handsome face. Now, a lot of women had their hearts set on him, and all of them thought that she was abusing the poor handsome man.

At this point, Ashley had already become immune to Joseph’s charming smile. But, for the very first time, she seriously thought that he would probably look better without it. After all, no one would dare to look at him when he was giving off such an intimidating aura. That being said, how could she just let other women long for her man? At the thought of this, Ashley inched closer towards Joseph with a pleasant smile on her face.

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When Ashley stopped in front of Joseph, she did not say anything. She merely glanced at the passersby around them. To his astonishment, she stood on tiptoe and kissed his beautiful thin lips as if declaring ownership.

The passersby were surprised to see an extraordinarily good-looking couple kissing on the street. What they did not know was that it was Ashley’s attempt to tell everyone that Joseph was hers. Not only that, but she also meant to teach him a lesson. That was why, with her back to the onlookers, she bit his thin lip coquettishly.

Of course, Joseph did not want to admit defeat. When Ashley was about to run away, he cunningly put his arms around her and bit her as well.

It seemed that this handsome man was not angry about what Ashley had done but liked it enough to kiss back passionately in public. All women who

saw them knew in an instant that the two were a young couple who had just reconciled. With that, they sensibly dispersed and went on with their own businesses.

When Ashley realized that they were kissing fervently on the street, she struggled to get out of Joseph's grasp.

As she was running out of breath, she protested weakly, "Stop... Hmm... Many people... Let go of me..."

However, Joseph seemed to be addicted to it despite her pleas. An idea suddenly occurred to Ashley. Since it seemed that he had no intention of letting her go, she had no choice but to bite his tongue that was making trouble in her mouth. Joseph exhaled sharply in pain, and she retreated at once.

'She's so cruel!' he thought with a helpless sigh. Joseph, whose tongue was still throbbing in pain, gently touched his injured lip with his slender fingers. Then, he looked at Ashley, who was a few steps away from him and not daring to look in his direction.

"Come here," he said as he waved at her. Her eyes seemed to be wandering, looking everywhere but him.

Ashley heard him but pretended that she did not. She wanted to shake her head and refuse him, fearing that he would revenge on her in some way. It was not until now that she realized that they had been reckless and shameful on the busy street. Even so, she took advantage of this to stop Joseph, who seemed to be oblivious of his surroundings.

"Weren't you very domineering just now? Did you run out of courage to face me after provoking me?" Joseph asked in a bewitching tone. At that moment, Ashley wondered whether she should go to him or not. But before she could decide, he was already right in front of her.

As she realized that she was going to get punished anyway, she looked at Joseph's wounded lip and admitted her reason behind her action. "You always flirt with other women when you go out. Biting you is just a slap on the wrist."

When Ashley spoke, it suddenly occurred to her that the ones who wronged her were the women who had been attracted to Joseph. At that realization, she shifted the blame to him. "It's your fault! You can't blame me for doing that, let alone bite me back!"

Seeing that he was only staring at her emotionlessly, Alice mustered all her strength and said in the most serious tone she could, "Who says I don't have the courage to face you? I just... just hit me." Her voice faltered in the end, revealing that she felt frightened by Joseph's icy cold gaze.

Joseph, who had been silent the whole time, stared at Ashley, who was trembling in fear. She even covered her face with her little hands. He looked very serious, yet he could not help but burst into laughter upon seeing her like that. This had never happened before.

He knew the reason why Ashley refused his k!ss. Well, she had always been shy in public. In all honesty, he just wanted her to reflect on what she had done. Thanks to her wild imagination, she thought that he would bite her back. Besides, her domineering behavior and her initiative to k!ss him were worthy of praise. How could he hit her? He would never do that.

Even if he were to do that, he would only do so in private. As Joseph gazed at the woman in front of him, he calculated the odds in his heart.

At first, Ashley thought she misheard Joseph when he laughed. 'How can this formidable man laugh after being bullied twice in a row?' She was puzzled. Never could she know that he was plotting behind his laughter.

A good businessman does not do business at a loss. Instead, he would collect his debts and get them with interest. However, Ashley would not figure out this until the right time.

Seeing that she was looking at him strangely, Joseph stretched out his hand and touched her head like he always did. "What are you thinking about? Anyway, let's continue shopping, my bossy girl."

At that moment, Ashley felt that he was no longer angry. However, when she heard his enthusiastic voice, she suddenly remembered that she had not yet finished teaching him how to save money. "From now on, give me your money. I'll keep it to prevent you from misspending. Understand?"

"Yes, my bossy girl!" replied Joseph.

“Well, aren’t you easy to be taught? Listen to me all the time, okay?” Ashley said with concern and appreciation.

The two of them seemed like an ordinary couple at that moment. The power of love made them forget about their wealth and status.

Upon hearing Ashley’s words, Joseph agreed to surrender his money without hesitation. In all honesty, Ashley never thought about becoming the richest woman in the world if he agreed on giving all his property. As a matter of fact, Joseph’s industries were located all over the world. Most of them were renowned and extremely profitable. Aside from that, he also had personal properties and real estate. The amount of wealth he had was truly unimaginable!

Ashley was the one who arranged the shopping trip. Meanwhile, Joseph acted as a mobile ATM and delivery man.

For two hours, the handsome man and beautiful woman walked on the commercial street side by side. Ashley bought a variety of gifts for her family and friends. Not only that, but she also bought a uniquely designed men’s scarf for Joseph. Once done, they finally went home.

When they were back at the villa, Joseph was ecstatic with the success of his confession of love for Ashley today. While she was in the shower, he took the opportunity to call his friend, Zachary.

“What’s wrong with you today? Why did you call me in person?” Zachary teased in a voice dripping with sarcasm.

“I’m in a good mood today, so I’m going to let you off the hook. Did anything happen to the company recently?” Although the purpose of Joseph’s call was to announce the good news, he still did not forget to ask about the business.

Joseph was relieved to have Zachary in charge of the Empire Group. For some reason, he felt the need to share what had happened and ask about the company’s current situation. Zachary was the first person who came to Joseph’s mind. After all, his good friend, Zachary, was the one who had accompanied him for many years.

“Sir, I hope you don’t forget me, now that you’re holding a beautiful woman in your arms. Just so you know, I’m waiting for you. Come back as soon as you’ve had your fun. It’s boring to sit in the office every day.” Joseph’s good

mood made Zachary feel that Joseph had succeeded in chasing the woman of his dreams. Zachary was very happy for his friend, but at the same time, he could not help but complain about his friend's disappointing behavior when he left the company behind.

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Zachary sensed a shift in Joseph's behavior. Before going abroad, Joseph would maintain a cold face and act detached all day long. He despised idle talks. He was a man who went straight to the point. However, of late, Zachary had noticed Joseph was a changed man. When he spoke, there was warmth in his voice. Sometimes, he caught Joseph indulging in insignificant topics. And today he even confessed he was indeed feeling quite good. 'The man I knew didn't talk about his feelings,' Zachary thought to himself.

Zachary sighed, realizing the power of love was too strong. It had softened a cold man like Joseph. He had transformed into a considerate and fun-loving man. Despite the shock, he was sincerely happy for his friend. Joseph, nourished by love, seemed to be brimming with joy all the time.

"I will tell you everything after I return. I haven't asked you to remain in the office all day long. You need to get your a.ss out of the office and fight for your love!" Joseph said in good spirits. He couldn't help but discuss their personal lives.

Even now, he vividly remembered the dispirited look on Zachary's face before he flew abroad. As he brooded over this matter, he finally came to the conclusion that Zachary was trapped in love. Now that he was happy, he wished his friend would be too. He passed on this piece of advice, hoping Zachary would take it.

"You are a changed man. In fact, you sound like a love expert," Zachary teased in a relaxed tone, but deep down he was overwhelmed with distress.

"Yes, I want the best for you. Anyway, don't forget my words. I'll talk to you later," Joseph said distractedly. His girlfriend had appeared, clad in gorgeous thermal pajamas. He was no longer interested in conversing with his friend.

Zachary, who was far away in Ob.raria, realized his friend had hung up on him, without even giving him a chance to respond. The corners of his mouth

twitched. 'Is he going to always abandon me for his girlfriend?' he thought and shook his head.

It was hard to predict what would happen in the future. Joseph, who had thought he would be destined to live alone, had finally found a life partner. He was genuinely happy for his friend yet there was a tinge of bitterness gnawing at his heart. The root cause of Zachary's bitterness was his loneliness. He had been deluded into thinking he found the love of his life. However, to his utter disappointment, she didn't feel the same way about him!

The night when Yasmin admitted she had fallen for another man, Zachary slammed the door angrily and stomped out of the house. She made it clear she wished to cut all ties with him. After this unfortunate incident, Zachary sank deep into work. If he let himself think about her, his heart would ache. After a few days, his rage had disappeared. But he found himself unable to forget her. He wished to see her.

At this moment, he was standing on the topmost floor of the Empire Group. Through the glass window, he gazed at what was happening below. He saw the city was thronging with cars. Everyone preferred the hustle-bustle of crowd. No one was there to accompany him in his loneliness. That was fine by him. He didn't despise solitude.

Looking at the distant sky, Zachary said to himself, 'The whole world can abandon me, but I wouldn't give a damn. I only dread being abandoned by you.'

He began to think about Yasmin's cold-heartedness. Agonies of loneliness and misery swept over him.

It had happened two days ago, around ten o'clock in the evening. Zachary was entrusted with the task of looking for the graduate thesis which Patricia had left in his apartment. Before he left the building after he fulfilled the task, he went to Yasmin's apartment. He came to a halt when he reached the door. Instinctively, he raised his hand and rang the doorbell.

'Just one glance. I'll leave as soon as I am sure she is fine,' he told to himself, justifying his action. Zachary would continue to love her. But he wasn't a selfish man. He wouldn't deprive her of her happiness. She had made it clear

she was with another man. However, at this moment, his concern for her had reached its peak. 'Just one glance,' he chanted to himself again.

The day after they broke up, Patricia caught sight of Zachary. He had a look of melancholy. She spoke to Yasmin, finally discovering the reason behind his sadness. However, before Patricia could do something about it, Zachary sent her back to Olkfield and warned her to keep it from his family.

The last thing he wanted was to put pressure on Yasmin. Their families were eager to get them married. If his parents learned the truth, it was bound to reach Yasmin's mother. And this, in turn would create an uproar. To safeguard the friendship between the two families, perhaps Yasmin's mother would convince her to break up with her current boyfriend.

A relationship would only work if it was two-sided. Forcing someone wasn't love. Zachary would never force Yasmin into a loveless marriage.

After ringing the bell, he waited a while. He told himself perhaps she was never going to open. Just when he was about to leave, he heard the doorknob twist and it opened.

"Who the hell are you! You are disturbing me again!" Yasmin was bleary-eyed.

Listening to this familiar voice, Zachary's face broke into a smile. However, he soon noticed her hair and clothes were disorderly. He felt like he was meeting her after ages. Yasmin was still half asleep. He continued to regard her. He knew he was in no position to take care of her.

In spite of this, he found himself regarding her in silence. He felt something wasn't quite right. On a closer inspection, he noticed her face was a little flushed and her beautiful eyes bright. Her legs seemed weak, on the verge of wobbling. He realized something and a hint of pain flashed through his eyes.

From the look of it, Yasmin had been having sex before he appeared. 'How else can her messy look be explained?' he thought, writhing with rage. His heart ached. He couldn't stand and watch this. He wished to leave at once, but driven by rage, he stepped into her flat.

"Hey, Zachary, you can't go in!" Yasmin, who had finally seen his face, screamed. However, her words fell on deaf ears. She touched her dizzy head with one hand and made a vain attempt to stop him.

Seeing that Yasmin was trying to stop him from entering her room made his resolution stronger. Now he was pretty sure that his suspicion was right. 'How can she sleep with someone she has only known for a few days?' he thought to himself with disgust. Zachary wasn't going to show any mercy. He was determined to beat the hell out of this man who had ruined her purity. At the same time, he was repulsed at the thought of facing him. If what he thought was right, there was nothing he could do to change that! Helplessness clutched him.

Zachary, who was torn between his desire to enter and his fear to face the truth, stepped into her bedroom. He spent a few minutes searching through her room. However, there was no other human being. Just clothes and papers scattered all over the floor.

Finally, it struck him he had been wrong. The joy he felt at this realization was immeasurable. Yasmin, who couldn't understand what was going on in his mind, rebuked him, "Zachary, what the hell are you doing here? We had a deal, remember? How can you meddle with my life?"

The second she registered his beautiful face, she had become weak in the knees. Zachary still had so much power over her.

She had thought she could keep herself from falling in love with him. Not wanting to think about him too much, she left for work early and came back home quite late these days. She overworked herself, hoping fatigue would help her suppress the throb in her heart. All this while, she was under the impression her plan had been working. However, seeing him here made her realize her efforts had been futile.

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The moment Yasmin saw Zachary go there voluntarily, she was not only incredulous but also delighted.

However, she swore to herself that she would no longer be obsessed, much less care, for him. She could only drive him away. He was no longer hers anyway.

Zachary, who was obviously ecstatic, turned around to face Yasmin. He slowly approached her with narrowed eyes. For some reason, her eyes were

vacant and empty. He stretched out his hand and touched her forehead with the back of his hand to feel her temperature. Sure enough, she was burning up with fever.

With her tantalizing eyes, Yasmin stared at him without blinking. Zachary looked back at her and sighed at the sight of her abnormally red face. 'This idiot doesn't even know that she has a high fever. Fortunately, I'm here, or else her high fever might probably knock her out overnight.'

Yasmin did not want to cooperate with him nor lie on the bed obediently. As a result, Zachary had no choice but to put her on the bed forcibly. He pulled up the quilt over her chest and comforted her, "Good girl, you must take a rest first. You have a high fever, and it's best if you stay in the bed in the meantime. I'll only leave when you're finally okay. Understand?"

She nodded nonchalantly in response. There was nothing else she could do anyway. Suddenly, Zachary took out his mobile phone and made an emergency call to the private doctor of the Marshall family. When the call ended, he went to the bathroom to fill a basin of lukewarm water, in which he would dip a towel for a bed bath. Once done, he returned to the bedroom and put the towel on Yasmin's forehead while it was still warm. Since she could not clean herself, Zachary wiped her exposed skin with another towel.

Yasmin was silent the whole time she was watching Zachary take care of her. 'Just let me enjoy this night in peace. Tomorrow, everything will go back to what it used to be,' she thought to herself.

Zachary enjoyed the tranquility as well. There was no conflict between them. It was as though they had returned to the time when they first met and when he was still capable of loving her.

The doctor arrived right after Zachary changed the water for the third time. He did not stay long. He just advised what Zachary and Yasmin should do and what they should not and left.

With the doctor's orders, Zachary gave Yasmin medicine for her fever. Under the effect of the medicine, she fell asleep not long after. He gently touched her forehead from time to time to check if her temperature had gone back to normal. As it did, he finally felt relieved.

He pulled the quilt up that only Yasmin's face was exposed. As he gazed at her sleeping face, he could not help but kiss her cheek lightly. 'Will you let me take care of you forever?' he wondered with his eyes full of affection.

Yasmin, although fast asleep, seemed to have felt his burning gaze as her upturned eyelashes trembled slightly.

Zachary looked around the room. It was incredibly messy. Papers were scattered all over the floor. He picked up a piece of paper and looked at it. It turned out that the papers were rejected plans in the company. He suddenly recalled what the doctor had said before leaving. He informed Zachary that Yasmin had been working too hard and had not had enough rest. It did not help that she was always stressed. Those were the reasons why she suddenly got sick.

Before Joseph had gone abroad, he asked Zachary to work together with the Guzman Group to make sure everything was alright. He promised Zachary that he would suppress the Synder Group once he returned. But now, all Zachary could see were scraps of papers on the floor. His first impression was that the Synder Group was exploiting their employees. As the acting CEO of the rival company, he had to teach the Synder Group a lesson, or else he would regret it.

What he would do would result in Synder Group provoking public outrage. That group would definitely be in trouble again.

Zachary picked up the pieces of paper and cleaned the room while he was at it. He sighed at the thought that Yasmin did not know how to take care of herself. Although career was important, health should be prioritized. Needless to say, she was so overworked that she did not even seem to know that she was sick.

Once Zachary was done tidying up the room, he returned to Yasmin's side and made sure that her fever somehow lessened. Then, he tucked her in again and turned around to leave. At last, he could finally rest. He decided to rest on the sofa in the living room for the night. That way, he would be able to take care of Yasmin.

Yasmin and Zachary were two people who grew apart despite loving each other. Today, they spent the night together, but nothing happened between them.

Early the next morning, after a good night's rest, Yasmin was the first to wake up. Scenes of last night flashed through her mind all at once: Zachary's sudden appearance, the break-in, the tender care, and many more. He did so much for her when she fell ill. Although she did not want to admit it, she wanted more of it. However, she repeatedly reiterated to herself not to be a mistress. Her scarred heart became heavier as she thought of his unexpected concern for her.

'You already have someone. Why are you still so good to me? I hate fickle men, but why do I still love you?' she asked bitterly to herself. Until now, she had not found the answer to that question yet. With that, she walked out of the bedroom with heavy steps.

She thought that Zachary had left quietly last night. She could still remember his words from last night. "I'll only leave when you're finally okay." As she was about to get some water, she unexpectedly saw Zachary lying on the sofa. His torso was on the seat while his long legs were stretched out on the armrest. His suit jacket was on top of his body. He must have used it as a blanket. Not only that, but the dark circles under his eyes could be seen faintly on his quiet, handsome face. Overall, he slept well.

Her heart was filled with mixed feelings. She was moved, but at the same time, distressed. Nevertheless, bitterness overwhelmed her heart. 'Why did you stay with me all night? Do you know I'm afraid when you're so kind to me? I'm scared that I won't be able to extricate myself from loving you. When that happens, I'll hurt a lovely and amiable woman. What if the same thing happens to me in the future? This love is too much for me to bear, don't you understand?'

Ever since she met Zachary, she felt that her course of life had completely changed. While she was busy comprehending what love was, her freedom slowly disappeared. When she finally learned to care, she became too sentimental that she hurt herself in the end. She was not brave enough, and she admitted it. One thing was for sure, though. She would never allow herself to be happy at the expense of making others miserable.

Before Yasmin knew it, her eyes were fixated on Zachary's handsome face. At that very moment, he opened his eyes, and she quickly looked away.

Seeing that she was standing not far away, Zachary quickly stood up and turned to look at her behind the sofa. "Are you feeling better?" he asked anxiously. Little did she know, he got up many times during the night to check up on her. As a result, he only slept in the morning.

"Much better. Thank you," Yasmin replied indifferently.

Zachary opened his mouth to speak but stopped on second thought. Seeing this, she grabbed the right to speak first. "I want to be alone now. If you don't have anything else to say, you can leave."

Now that her fever had cleared up, Zachary clearly heard that she was asking him to leave. Even so, he did not understand why her attitude towards him was cruel. Did she no longer want to have anything to do with him? He stared at her for a moment and slowly said, "If you don't want to see me, I'll leave. But before I do, can you promise me first that you'll take good care of yourself?"

"Yeah, right. Just go. I'm not going to send you off," she replied coldly as she quickly faced the other way. She had no strength to watch him leave, much less look at Zachary's eyes that were full of pain. If she did not look away, her heart would be hurt, and she feared that she would not be able to hold back her tears.

When she heard the door close and confirmed that he was really gone, only then did she look at the door. 'I'm sorry for treating you that way. I just don't want to be involved in a messy relationship.'

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Yasmin was sitting on her couch when the doorbell rang not long after Zachary left. In an instant, Yasmin's sad heart grew with pleasure at the moment. However, she lacked the courage and was too weak to deal with Zachary's return. Depressed, she eventually sighed and pushed the door open. Unfortunately, the guy standing outside was a fast-food worker, not Zachary.

"Good day, Miss Olson! A gentleman recently asked for this. It's a delicious congee made of lean beef. The man said that he already applied a leave of

absence for you and that you should be able to rest today.” With a pleasant smile, the fast-food employee cautiously delivered Yasmin the packed food.

“Okay. Thank you so much.” Yasmin smiled and nodded gratefully as she accepted the food box.

“It’s a pleasure to serve you. Please come again.” The fast-food worker immediately left after completing his duties.

Feebly, when Yasmin saw the warm porridge, her tears fell suddenly as she reached the room.

‘I shed tears quickly since sick people are frequently emotional.’ Tears welled up in Yasmin’s eyes as she deeply pondered it to herself in her heart. She couldn’t stop crying as she ate the porridge that didn’t seem to be able to melt her cold heart.

When Zachary saw Yasmin enter the room with a food box, the thought came to a pause. “As long as you’re satisfied, I’ll find a way to give up,” he said as he stood in front of the window.

Zachary and Yasmin hadn’t seen each other about half a month after a series of occurrences like sickness, compassionate treatment, awkward chat, and the calm farewell that day. They were distracted with their own worlds, rattled with forgetting each other as it appeared that time passed unconsciously.

Meanwhile, Joseph and Ashley seemed to be having a great moment. None of them, though, are without flaws. And if it was the last thing Joseph expected to happen, it did.

As Joseph and Ashley continued to explore everywhere, leaving a trail of happiness and sharing their joy, their affection was captured by millions of people. It was during the week of their public declaration of love for each other. Joseph could now publicly do whatever he craved with his girlfriend, Ashley which was a total opposite of him before, who had been pestered by his concupiscence for a long time.

Ashley felt being carried away every moment Joseph k!ssed her. She would reconsider labeling Joseph a lousy k!sser and reprimanded herself for her impulsive talk about him being a bad k!sser. Since with this, Joseph took it as a practice and believed it was reasonable for him to k!ss her hard each time. Joseph had made meaningful gains in k!ssing by practicing many times a day.

Nevertheless, Ashley had a reason to delay it, which Joseph wouldn't relish.

Joseph snuck into his girlfriend's room in the middle of the night when they officially became a couple. "I was concerned that my girlfriend might be frightened of the dark, so I came to accompany you," he said.

Ashley was startled that night by Joseph's embrace. She had spent a significant amount of time in this room. When did she express her fear? She was speechless after listening to such a virtuous and compassionate excuse. Beside, did the man really want to just accompany her by sneaking into her room without her consent in the middle of the night? Ashley, who was exhausted, was able to sleep soundly owing to the reassurance of his boyfriend. She seemed at convenience when Joseph gave her a gentle kiss and then held her in his arms suitably and soothingly.

When Ashley smelled Joseph's faint tobacco fragrance, she felt tender from the inside out. Ashley savored the sensation of Joseph wrapping his arms around her and lulling her to dream.

Joseph feared that having sex with her on their first night together would make her uncomfortable. He knew he had to do this at the right time and in the best spot. That was why he was trying to be a gentleman. Unfortunately, Ashley, a typical woman, had no idea that Joseph's "dignified act" would only last for one night.

Joseph, who was able to caress his partner, had been beaming happily every day since he successfully got the woman he yearned. However, he didn't realize how destructive his charismatic face was until he unconsciously showed it one day.

It was their third nightfall together as an official couple. Ashley was escorted by Joseph to a small town near the villa to grab a midnight snack. Ashley needed to use the restroom nearby at the moment, so she pleaded with Joseph to go out first and buy some food on the street.

However, when Ashley came out of the comfort room, Joseph, who was tall and straight in build, was besieged by numerous stall owners. Her eyebrows lifted as she saw Joseph was carrying something in his hand. When Ashley was about to peek at what was going on, she overheard one of the street vendors who had managed to pick up the foodstuffs for Joseph say teasingly

but politely, “You, attractive man, acknowledged what others offered you. I’ll even share some of my food choices with you. I’m certain they’ll be delicious!”

It was graciously accepted by Joseph. Then the other sellers stepped in, and they all forced their own food towards Joseph, who was immensely enjoying the situation.

Ashley always recalled how much a friendly old lady adored Joseph a day before yesterday. “This young fellow is quite perfect,” the old lady said as she offered Joseph a free pass to a beautiful area. Seeing what was happening now, Ashley noticed that the stall owners had been duped by Joseph’s presence again. In this state, women never hesitated to show their passion for engaging men. Ashley was well aware that the old lady had said that they were a great match and that they would get along well for the rest of their lives because she cherished Joseph.

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Nonetheless, Ashley was displeased with Joseph’s gorgeous face at this stage, particularly now that he was surrounded by a group of ‘friendly’ young women. Then she took a drastic step forward, placed Joseph’s arm in hers, and grinned as she said, “Thank you very much for your thoughtfulness. My lovely boyfriend can surely afford these.” With Joseph seeming to be distracted, she then pulled Joseph’s wallet from his right pocket, dropped a few big bills on the nearby counter, and walked away with Joseph.

“Feel free to come next time, gorgeous guy!” Many women’s voices could be heard as Ashley and Joseph were only a few footsteps apart.

Ashley let go of Joseph’s arm as soon as she realized they were out of view of the other ladies. “Don’t joke around or even smile when you step out in the future,” she said as she turned back. Back then, who endeavored to surround this guy with a distant face? It was all thanks to that brilliant smile of his.

“Didn’t you suggest I should be smiling more?” Joseph replied with a confused tone but a teasing smile on his face. He was puzzled as to why she had suddenly changed her mind. ‘She would remind me to smile every time we took photographs,’ he thought.

Ashley couldn’t help but be upset when she heard this. She placed her hand to her forehead as she thought that after several days getting along with Joseph, he would sometimes reveal a lovely side to her underneath the mask of indifference. When he showed her his beautiful side, though, he came off as a stupid man.

“Try to pay attention to what I’m about to say. What did you think when you took other people’s stuff?” Ashley found it impossible to clarify it to him clearly, so she frowned and raised another question. She was too shy to inform Joseph that his brilliant grin enhanced his attractiveness and left her bitter and jealous.