

# THE DIVORCE PRESCRIPTION

## Chapter 411

Their eyes met each other's from across the room.

Declan wore a mask, making it impossible to read his expression. Yet, even through the disguise, his gaze was as cold and distant as ever-looking at Hailey as though she were a complete stranger.

The host laughed and said, "Ladies, please, let's keep your excitement in check. Here's how it works-only one of you will have the privilege of touching our handsome centerpiece. Who will it be? That's for you to decide. Place your bids. The highest offer wins."

Immediately, the wealthy women around her started bidding.

"Ten thousand dollars."

"30 thousand dollars."

"50 thousand dollars."

"100 thousand dollars."

The price skyrocketed to one hundred thousand in no time, leaving Robin in disbelief. "100 thousand dollars just to touch him? Is this guy made of gold or something? Has everyone completely lost it?"

At that moment, Hailey raised her hand. "I bid 200 thousand dollars!"

With that, she instantly drove the price up.

Celine and Robin both turned to Hailey, with Robin giving her a subtle tug.

"Hailey, why are you joining in on this madness?"

Hailey's almond-shaped eyes stayed locked on Declan on the stage. "I'll bid 200 thousand dollars. I want to touch him."

Declan looked down at Hailey, sensing the boldness in her voice.

With her 200-thousand-dollar bid, she effortlessly surpassed the other wealthy women, all for the chance to touch him.

While observing Declan, Celine quickly pieced things together. The only person who could make Hailey act like this was undoubtedly him.

A brief silence swept through the room before the bidding continued.

"I'll bid 500 thousand dollars!"

"I'll bid one million dollars!"

Hailey was taken aback.

She hadn't brought that much cash with her today. Without a second thought, she grabbed Celine's arm. "Celine, please lend me some money! I'll pay you back as soon as we get home."

Celine had no objections. She took out the gold-embossed credit card Adam had given her and handed it over "Take whatever you need!"

"I bid five million dollars!" Hailey exclaimed.

A stunned silence fell over the room.

Hailey had just escalated the price to five million dollars.

The host's voice rang out, "This lovely lady has bid five million dollars! Is there anyone willing to place a higher offer?"

Hailey arched an eyebrow, her gaze locked on Declan with a look that unmistakably conveyed-Tonight, you're mine.

But Declan didn't even flinch. Without a word, he simply turned and walked off the stage.

"Hey, don't go!"

"Why is he leaving?"

The wealthy women gasped in shock.

Flustered, the host quickly

apologized, "Apologies, ladies, I was just kidding earlier. As you know, our centerpiece doesn't offer his

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services for sale. Even touching him is off-limits." en FindNovel

The women's disappointment was palpable. "Let's go."

As the crowd moved, someone accidentally bumped into Celine.

"Celine!" Robin gasped.

Celine braced herself, expecting to fall, but a strong arm quickly wrapped around her waist, holding her firmly.

She looked up and found herself face-to-face with Adam, his strikingly handsome features just inches away.

He had arrived.

"Mr. Alvarez, what are you doing here?" Celine asked, her voice wavering slightly.

Adam's expression was cold. The

bar at this restaurant was designed for wealthy women to indulge themselves, but seeing them bid for a male escort seemed almost

laughable to him.

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"Is this some kind of game for you? And why is my card in your hands? Who are you trying to win over?"

Celine froze, caught off guard.

She quickly stood and said, "I didn't choose anyone. It was Hailey who wanted to."

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As Adam looked up, he saw Hailey already making her way through the crowd, heading toward Declan.

Having always been pampered by the Alvarez family, Hailey had reached an age at which marriage discussions became increasingly unavoidable.

Adam's brow furrowed in frustration. "What is she doing with these unsavory people?"

Meanwhile, Celine observed Adam, impeccably dressed in a tailored black suit.

Amid the opulence, he exuded an air of sophistication, standing in stark contrast to Declan. He belonged to a world entirely separate from that of someone like him.

It was clear-Adam would never approve of Hailey being involved with someone like Declan.

"Mr. Alvarez, you're crossing a line. Hailey's choices have nothing to do with you," Celine said.

Adam met her gaze. "Have you had enough of this place? If you're finished, I'll take you home."

Without waiting for a response, Adam firmly took Celine's arm and led her away. Behind them, Robin called out, "Celine! Mr. Alvarez!"

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Declan arrived backstage to change. Though he didn't visit the place often, he knew it was highly profitable.

He ripped off his torn white tank top and was about to pull on a black hoodie when the door suddenly swung open behind him. His sharp gaze immediately flicked toward it. "Who's there?"

It was Hailey, who had followed him in. To her surprise, she found herself staring directly at Declan's bare chest.

Her face flushed instantly, and she quickly shielded her face with both hands. "Ah!"

Without missing a beat, Declan threw on the hoodie, grabbed his bag, and started heading toward the door.

He had no intention of engaging with Hailey, treating her as though she were invisible.

But Hailey stepped directly into his path, blocking his way. "Declan, are you really going to pretend you don't know me?"

Declan halted. "Move."

Hailey refused to step aside.

When Declan moved left, she followed. When he moved right, she positioned herself in front of him again.

With her hands firmly planted on her hips, Hailey spoke defiantly. "Unless you talk to me, I won't move."

Declan didn't waste a second. He grabbed the collar of her shirt with one hand, effortlessly lifting her off the ground as though she weighed nothing.

Hailey dangled in midair, her mind racing. "Damn. He's so strong," she thought to herself.

Without a word, Declan dropped her back to the ground and walked past her.

Hailey sprinted after him, but Declan's tall, commanding figure had already melted into the crowd.

"Declan? Wait! Declan!" Hailey shouted, pushing her way through the throngs in a frantic attempt to catch up.

But Declan had no interest in wasting more time with her. He wasn't about to engage any further. The night was growing late, and he was eager to leave.

Just as Declan stepped outside the bar, a sleek luxury car pulled up. Several bodyguards in sharp black suits moved into his path, effectively blocking his way. "Excuse us, Ms. Adeline O'Brien would like to meet with you."

It seemed like a wealthy woman had somehow managed to track down Declan.

His face remained impassive. "I'm not interested."

The bodyguard smiled knowingly. "Ms. O'Brien mentioned that if you refuse, she'll

contact your family. Finding them won't be a problem."

Declan's stride faltered for a brief moment.

The bodyguard locked eyes with him. "Getting the attention of Ms. O'Brien is a rare privilege. Serve her well, and you'll never have to worry about

food or shelter again. You won't have to struggle like this anymore. Don't squander this opportunity."

With that, the bodyguard opened the car door. "Please, step inside."

Declan's gaze sharpened, but he stepped into the car without a word.

The sleek luxury car sped off into the night.

Noticing Declan getting in, Hailey quickly flagged down a taxi. "Follow that car, and make it quick."

Half an hour later, Declan was led into a lavish presidential suite at a six-star hotel. Waiting for him was a woman in her 40s, still radiating an aura of elegance and allure.

She was none other than Adeline O'Brien, a wealthy and influential woman.

Adeline studied Declan's strikingly handsome face, a satisfied smile curving on her lips. "When you wore that mask earlier, I couldn't get a good look at you. You have such an impressive physique-and your looks are even more striking than I thought."

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Declan's expression remained impassive as he stared at her. "What do you want?"

Adeline stepped closer, her red-painted nails brushing against the muscles of his waist. "Damn, they're so firm."

"Take your hand off me!" Declan snapped.

Adeline wasn't bothered. "You know exactly why I called you here. We're both adults. From now on, you'll stay with me, and I'll support you. As long as you satisfy me in bed, you can set your own price. No more stripping for anyone else."

Declan locked eyes with her. "Shouldn't you be married by now? Aren't you worried your husband will find out?"

"Relax," Adeline replied with a confident grin. "My husband will never know. I've done this before, and he's never suspected a thing. It's completely safe."

A faint smirk tugged at Declan's lips. "And what if I tell your husband?"

"He wouldn't believe you," Adeline shot back without hesitation.

At that moment, Declan pulled a voice recorder from his pocket. "It's a shame... I've already recorded everything you just said."

Adeline's expression shifted instantly. She hadn't expected him to be carrying a voice recorder.

Her face darkened as she sneered, "You're incredibly ungrateful. I have wealth, beauty, and a body that drives men wild. I even offered you money to sleep with me, and yet, you're the first man to turn me down."

With her well-maintained figure and mature allure, it wasn't hard to see why many men found her irresistible.

Declan let out a cold laugh. "If so many men are interested, go find one of them. I'm not interested. But if you ever interfere with my family, I'll make sure your life becomes a living hell."

Adeline fell silent, sensing the lethal threat in his gaze.

Declan turned to leave, but something felt off. A sudden wave of heat swept over him, an unfamiliar warmth spreading through his body.

Having dealt with similar situations before, he turned back sharply. "What did you do? What's in this room?"

Adeline casually glanced at the aphrodisiac incense burning on the table. "You're already feeling its effects. The scent is quite potent."

She walked closer, her red-painted fingers trailing over his shoulder. "At your age, you're in the prime of your physical desires. I refuse to believe you're not tempted by what the body craves. Your body has needs doesn't it?"

Her voice dropped to a hushed, seductive whisper. "Stop fighting it. Let go. We'll experience a pleasure like no other."

By the time Hailey arrived at the hotel, she had found her way to the entrance of the presidential suite, but she was unsure which room Declan had gone into.

"Declan? Declan, where are you?" she called out.

Inside, Declan heard Hailey's voice. He quickly removed Adeline's hand from his arm and opened the door to step outside.

"Declan, what are you doing here?" Hailey asked in surprise as she rushed toward him.

It didn't take long for Hailey to spot Adeline in the room. "Who are you?" Adeline's gaze lingered on Hailey, noticing the contrast between them.

While Adeline possessed a mature, captivating allure, Hailey radiated youth and striking beauty. Her oval face held a delicate charm, and her bright, twinkling eyes were full of irresistible spark.

Next to Declan, they seemed like the perfect pair—a beautiful balance of youthful energy and vitality.

"I should be asking you that," Adeline shot back.

Without hesitation, Hailey wrapped her arm around Declan's. "He's my boyfriend.

What are you doing with him?"

Adeline turned to Declan. "Is she really your girlfriend?"

Declan didn't answer. "Let's go."

He pulled Hailey away, leaving Adeline fuming with frustration.

Clearly, Declan wasn't quite aware of what was in his best interest.

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Hailey and Declan silently walked down the corridor, until Hailey finally broke the silence with a question. "Declan, who was that woman just now? What did she bring you to the hotel room for?"

Declan quickly pulled his arm away from her touch. "I don't owe you any answers."

Undeterred, Hailey reached up and placed her hand on his forehead. "Declan, you're burning up! Are you sick?"

Her soft, delicate hand brushed against him, and the sweet scent of her closeness made Declan's eyes flare. He quickly pulled her hand away, his voice cutting as he snapped, "Don't touch me!"



The sharpness of his words made it clear he was repulsed, and Hailey's eyes glistened with hurt.

As a pampered, sheltered young woman, she had never encountered such coldness before.

A mix of confusion and pain washed over her as she looked up at him, wondering

if he really disliked her that much.

She hadn't done anything wrong.

For a moment, the sadness in her eyes seemed to affect Declan, but he didn't speak. Instead, he turned and walked away.

Like a shadow, Hailey followed, unable to let go of the distance between them.

They stepped into the elevator one after the other. Their silence was heavy, and neither of them said a word.

Suddenly, the elevator jerked twice before it began to plummet rapidly. Hailey let out a sharp scream, her body thrown forward by the sudden drop.

But before she could crash into the elevator's walls, a hand shot out, grabbing her arm and pulling her into a searing embrace.

Declan steadied her, holding her securely against him. "It's just a malfunction, don't worry."

As Hailey's fear began to subside while in his protective grip, a warm sensation spread through her chest.

Moments ago, she thought he didn't care for her, but now she realized he wasn't as indifferent as she'd believed. He was looking out for her.

She glanced up at him. "Declan, what's happening? You're burning up. Are you sick? Should we go to the hospital?"

Declan tightened his grip on her arm, his voice low and strained. "It's fine."

"But you're like a furnace," Hailey said, her hand instinctively reaching toward his waist.

The moment her hand brushed against him, Declan's breath hitched, his body reacting sharply to her touch.

He had never been in a relationship or been with a woman, but Adeline's earlier words about the body's desires kept echoing in his mind.

Now, with the aphrodisiac coursing through his veins, those desires were becoming impossible to ignore.

Declan lowered his head and pressed his lips against Hailey's.

Hailey's eyes widened in shock, her pupils dilating-was this really happening?

Was he the one initiating the kiss?

He kissed her with an intensity that left her breathless, and her legs buckled beneath her, making her stumble.

Declan quickly steadied her by the waist, pulling away just for a moment. His warm breath fanned over her flushed skin. "I've been drugged," he murmured.

Hailey's mind struggled to catch up. "W-What?"

Declan met her gaze. "Can I kiss you?"

Hailey's body seemed to melt at his touch, and before she knew it, she wrapped her arms around his neck, rising on her toes to return the kiss.

Neither of them had much experience, yet their connection felt effortless, as if their past moment together had already laid the foundation. They became entwined, like two lovebirds swept up in a tender, intimate dance.

Hailey's heart raced with affection for Declan. Kissing him felt sweeter than she ever expected.

Declan pressed Hailey gently into the corner as he kissed her again, his hands slowly exploring the contours of her body.

Meanwhile, Hailey's cheeks reddened as she buried her face against his chest, her voice barely a whisper. "Declan."

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Declan froze, his body going rigid.

Hailey blinked, looking up at him. "Declan, does this mean I'm your girlfriend now?"

Declan tensed.

"Only people in a relationship can do things like this. Now that I'm your girlfriend... does that mean you're my boyfriend?" Hailey continued.

It was as though a bucket of cold water had been dumped on Declan, instantly extinguishing the heat of the moment. He slowly started to pull away, loosening his hold on her.

But Hailey wasn't letting him go. She wrapped her arms around his neck, pulling him back toward her. Her red lips pouted as she spoke. "What does this mean? If you don't want to date me, then why did you kiss me? Are you just playing with me?"

Declan swallowed hard, struggling against her sweet scent. "Sorry."

The simplicity of his apology stung, and Hailey felt a surge of frustration. Was he saying he didn't want her?

"Don't you like me?" she asked.

Declan remained silent.

Hailey leaned in closer, her eyes sparkling with a mixture of vulnerability and playfulness. "Why don't you like me? Am I not pretty enough? Not gentle enough? Not obedient enough? Tell me, and I'll change."

Declan instinctively tried to pull her hand away from his neck, but Hailey kept it firmly in place.

"Declan, I like you," she whispered.

Declan could only stand there in silence.

Hailey was bold and determined, clearly set on making him hers.

The desire that Declan had just managed to push aside reignited within him. At that very moment, a bright light shone through, and the elevator doors opened.

"You're free to go now," the technician said with a friendly smile.

Hailey quickly withdrew her hand, releasing Declan.

He turned to step out.

But then, something soft brushed against his palm-it was Hailey's hand, reaching out to take his.

Hailey held his hand firmly.

Declan hesitated for a brief moment.

The technician noticed and smiled. "Are you two a couple? You look really sweet together."

Hailey immediately replied, "Yes, he's my boyfriend!"

Declan felt his frustration build up.

The two of them exited the hotel, and Declan hailed a taxi. Hailey followed and climbed in beside him.

He glanced at her. "I'm heading home. Why are you coming with me?"

"I'm going to take care of you. Didn't you say you were drugged? I can help," Hailey said.

Declan's tone was hoarse as he asked, "Do you even know how to help me?"

"You can teach me. I'm a quick learner," Hailey replied.

Her almond-shaped eyes were

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them giving off an innocent

allure.

Declan recalled that Hailey had once been engaged to Ewan.

Without thinking, he blurted, "Didn't your ex ever teach you?"

As soon as the words left his mouth, he instantly regretted them. It wasn't in his nature to pry, and he couldn't

understand why he had asked.

Hailey didn't dwell on it and answered nonchalantly, "Don't

mention that jerk. Nothing ever net

happened between us. We didn't even hold hands."

At her response, Declan turned his head, his eyes drifting to the window.

Half an hour later, Hailey arrived at the familiar, worn-down neighborhood and stepped inside Declan's home.

Just then, Pamela emerged. "Declan, you're back?"

## **The Divorce Prescription**

Aileen spotted Hailey and excitedly rushed over. "Hailey, you're here!"

"Hello, Mrs. Zamora and Aileen!" Hailey greeted them.

Pamela's expression brightened at the sight of Hailey. "Declan, you should've told me Hailey was coming! We could have prepared more dishes."

Before Declan could explain that Hailey wasn't staying for dinner, Hailey spoke up. "Mrs. Zamora, I'm not picky. As long as there's enough food to fill me up, I'm happy."

"Well then, you'll definitely be well-fed!" Pamela replied.

Everyone shared a lighthearted chuckle.

"I'm going to take a shower," Declan said, heading toward his room.

Once inside, he turned on the shower, letting the cold water rush over him.

The aphrodisiac Adeline had used on him was incredibly potent, and despite his experience, it was hard to shake off its effects.

The cold water splashed against his muscles, droplets scattering in every direction. He slowly closed his eyes, trying to steady himself.

Suddenly, the door creaked open, and Hailey's soft voice rang out. "Declan?"

He didn't look up. "Yes?"

Hailey continued, "Mrs. Zamora asked me to bring you clean clothes."

"Just leave them in here," he responded.

Hailey stepped inside, the frosted glass door keeping them apart. Without meeting Declan's gaze, she asked, "Where should I put them?"

"Hang them up," he said.

"Got it."

With that, Hailey carefully hung the clothes on the rack.

Declan turned his head slightly, his gaze locking on the silhouette of her figure through the frosted glass.

She moved with grace, the gentle curve of her body faintly visible. Her long, dark hair tumbled down, casting a spell of allure in the space around her.

She stood on tiptoe to hang his clothes, her body angled to the side. Her chest was full and rounded, and her back curved elegantly, exuding a youthful vitality. Declan's eyes grew

red-rimmed, his hand reaching out almost mechanically. Outside, Hailey's voice broke the silence. "Declan, are you done? Why are you taking so long?"

There was no response.

She tried again. "Declan, why aren't you answering? Are you purposely ignoring me?"

"Declan?"

"Declan!"

Through the frosted glass, a quiet tension filled the air. The sound of her calling his name was so melodic, each repetition echoing in his mind like a burst of fireworks, leaving Declan momentarily lost in the sensation.

The feeling was brief but intense, like the pull of opium—both strange and addictive.

"Declan? Declan!"

"Enough! Are you trying to drive me mad?" Declan snapped.

Hailey went quiet for a moment before stepping out.

Declan turned off the water and grabbed a towel to dry himself off. After changing into fresh clothes, he emerged from the bathroom.

Meanwhile, Pamela had already finished preparing the vegetables. Declan moved into the kitchen, ready to begin cooking.

Aileen sat at the table, focused intently on her homework. Hailey couldn't help but admire Aileen's beautiful handwriting. Aileen was a top student and was always the highest-ranked in her class.

"Aileen, you're really impressive! Which high school are you aiming for?" Hailey asked.

"I want to go to Central High School. Declan went there, and he got in with the top score," Aileen responded.

Hailey recognized the name. "I heard he was the top scorer in the state for the college entrance exam."

Aileen nodded proudly. "Yes,

Declan's always been number one,

from elementary school all the way through university. He's my role

model but I still feel like I have a

long way to go before I can catch up to him."

Hailey couldn't help but feel a sense of awe for the Zamora siblings—they were both so remarkable. While she was an excellent student herself, she knew she could never match Declan's level of achievement.

She walked into the kitchen, watching as Declan prepared the meal. "Declan, is it because my grades aren't as good as yours that you don't like me? Do you think I'm not smart enough?"

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Declan remained silent, offering no reaction.

Hailey couldn't tear her eyes away from him.

Fresh from the shower, his damp hair clung to his forehead. He wore a simple black T-shirt and matching pants, and his youthful charm shone through.

He was a fantastic cook, a skill developed through years of practice. There was something undeniably attractive about a man who knew his way around the kitchen.

The more Hailey watched him, the deeper her feelings grew. "Declan, why are you ignoring me? If you keep this up, I'll have to tickle you."

Before he could respond, Hailey reached up and began to tickle him.

Her hands found his toned waist, and he jolted at the sensation.

With one swift motion, Declan caught both of her wrists, pinning her against the

wall. "What do you think you're doing? You'd better behave."

Hailey squirmed, trying to free her hands. "Why are you being so rough?"

Declan didn't release her.

Hailey rose onto her tiptoes. Leaning in, she pressed a soft kiss to his lips.

Declan froze for a moment.

Upon noticing that he didn't pull away, Hailey grew bolder, leaning in to kiss him again.

The sweet, delicate scent of her skin filled his senses-luxurious and floral, a sharp contrast to the soap he'd just used. It was utterly intoxicating.

Finally, Declan let go of her wrists.

Without hesitation, Hailey wrapped her arms around his waist, gently parting his lips with hers as she kissed him again.

He was typically cold and distant, but as she let her tongue slip in, Hailey felt the rush of his warmth. She couldn't help but relish every second of it.

Declan's body reignited with heat, the tension between them returning.

Just then, Pamela's voice broke the moment. "Why does it smell like something's burning?"

She quickly entered the room. "Declan, did you burn the food?"

Since Pamela was visually impaired and in the comfort of her own home, she didn't knock, simply walking in without hesitation.

Hailey immediately pulled away from Declan, her face flushing a bright shade of red.

Declan's expression remained stoic as he swiftly turned off the stove. "Mom, I forgot to turn off the heat. It's nothing."

"As long as everything's fine, there's no problem," Pamela said.

"Mrs. Zamora, I was just talking with Declan, and we lost track of time," Hailey explained.

Pamela smiled warmly. "Alright, you two continue. I'll give you some space."

Once Pamela left, the awkward silence lingered. Hailey stole a glance at Declan, and to her surprise,

, she noticed his earsel

had

turned a deep red.

He was blushing.

Hailey couldn't contain her surprise. "Declan, are you blushing?"

Declan quickly denied it. "No, I'm not."

"Oh, you most definitely are!"

Declan shot her a cold glance. "Leave!"



"I'm not leaving. I want to stay with you," Hailey responded, wrapping her arms around him from behind.

Her soft, sweet presence tangled with

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"Why would I be embarrassed?"

Declan fell silent, unsure of what to say next.

"You're my boyfriend, right? Isn't that what couples do-kiss, hug, be close? I'm not embarrassed!" Hailey replied.

Declan shot back, "Who said I'm your boyfriend?"

"You did! You're my boyfriend!"

"I never agreed to that!"

"Well, I kissed you, and you didn't stop me. You didn't push me away the first time, and every time after that, you still didn't refuse. I refuse to believe you don't have feelings for me"

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Declan spoke up. "First of all, you were the one who threw yourself at me. Plus, I'm single. Maybe I was just acting on impulse."

"So, you're admitting you're a jerk, huh? In that case, I guess I'll just have to let you jerk me around," Hailey quipped.

She knew he wasn't a jerk, of course.

Declan fell silent.

Just then, Declan's friend walked in. "Damn, Declan, where did this beauty come from?"

He had come looking for Declan, only to be met with an unexpected sight. His eyes widened as he took in Hailey's presence.

Hailey quickly stepped back from Declan, offering the man a nervous smile. "Hi, I'm Hailey Young."

"Justin Griffin," he replied. "So, Declan, you finally got yourself a girlfriend, huh?" Declan immediately shut it down. "She's not my girlfriend."

"I am!" Hailey declared confidently.

Declan was momentarily speechless.

Justin let out a laugh. "Damn, Declan. I thought you were destined to be single forever. You've never been interested in anyone before, but now I get it-you're just picky. Looks like Hailey put all those other girls chasing after you to shame."

Declan set the spatula down and turned to Justin. "Let's talk outside."

Without another word, they stepped out.

"Alright, get to the point. Why are you here?" Declan asked.

"Phantom has resurfaced. He's here."

Phantom was the infamous drug lord responsible for Declan's father's death. Years ago, his father had gone undercover in Phantom's cartel, only to be exposed and executed.

For years, Declan had been tracking him. And now, Phantom had finally resurfaced.

A cold wind swept through, making Declan's black T-shirt ripple. His eyes turned steely as he replied, "Got it."

Just as he turned to leave, Justin called out to him, "Declan, that girlfriend of yours is gorgeous."

Declan pressed his lips together. "We're not a couple."

"Oh really? Justin replied, studying

him closely. "We've known each

other since we were kids. If you weren't interested, you wouldn't let her get this close... unless, of course, you actually do like her."

Declan stayed quiet for a moment before responding, "From the start, I knew I couldn't offer her a future. There's no point in getting involved. She comes from a good family."

Justin chuckled. "Rich, beautiful, sweet... and totally into you. Declan,

are you really telling me you don't feel anything? You're overthinking it, man. That girl is crazy about you." en FindNovel

"Let's head back," Declan said.

With that, he stepped back into the house.

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Hailey emerged from the room. "Did Justin leave?"

Declan nodded. "Yeah, he left."

"Justin always brings gifts but never stays for a meal," Pamela commented.

Declan set the dishes on the table. "Let's eat."

Hailey didn't hesitate, taking a seat at the table. Declan had even made fried chicken wings-Aileen's favorite.

He picked up a piece and placed it on Aileen's plate. "Thanks, Declan," she said with a smile.

As Declan set down his cutlery, he noticed Hailey watching him, her eyes filled with anticipation. She subtly pushed her plate closer to him, silently asking for a piece.

Aileen quickly said, "Declan, hurry up and give Hailey a piece too!"

Hailey gazed at him with hopeful eyes.

With that, Declan reached over and placed a chicken wing onto Hailey's plate.

Hailey took a bite. She'd wanted to try his fried chicken wings ever since she first saw him make them, but she hadn't expected them to taste this incredible.

Her lips curled into a satisfied grin. "This is amazing."

"Hailey, if you like it, you should come over more often and let Declan cook for you," Pamela chimed in.

Hailey turned to Declan, her smile brightening. "I'll definitely be back."

Just as dinner was ending, a sudden booming sound echoed from outside, followed by a flash of lightning and a sharp crack of thunder.

Moments later, the sky opened up, and a torrential downpour began to fall.

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Hailey stared out the window at the heavy downpour, unsure how she would manage to get back to campus in such a storm.

Aileen said, "Hailey, it's too dangerous to go out in this weather. You should stay here tonight."

"Absolutely," Pamela added. "Feel free to stay here and sleep in Aileen's room."

Pamela genuinely liked Hailey, but as an elder, she was mindful of boundaries. She wouldn't allow Hailey to stay in Declan's room.

Hailey nodded in agreement. "Looks like I'm staying with you tonight, Aileen." Aileen beamed and linked arms with Hailey. "Come on, I'll show you to the room."

As Hailey stepped into Aileen's room, Aileen handed her a fresh nightgown. "It's brand new. You can wear it."

Hailey took it gratefully. "Thanks a lot, Aileen."

"Feel free to take a shower first," Aileen suggested.

The house had three small rooms-Pamela's, Declan's, and Aileen's-and the bathroom was shared by all.

Hailey clutched the nightgown as she made her way to the door. "Alright, I'll go take a shower now."

As she stepped out, she bumped into Declan. "Declan, it's pouring outside, so I'll be staying here tonight. Don't worry, I'll behave and won't cause any trouble."

Declan glanced at the heavy rain outside before turning his gaze back to her. "So, where will you be sleeping?"

Hailey winked at him teasingly. "With you, of course."

Declan froze for a moment, clearly taken aback. "Hailey!"

Hailey flashed him a mischievous smile. "What's with the shouting? Of course, I'm not sleeping with you. I'll be sharing a room with Aileen! Anyway, I'm going to take a shower now!"

With that, she quickly turned and headed toward the bathroom.

Declan stood there, tension rising within him. He knew Hailey was only teasing him, but the way she did it left him feeling unsettled. Didn't she realize the danger of toying with him like that?

Suddenly, a deafening boom rang out as lightning struck, followed by Hailey's terrified scream from the bathroom.

Declan quickly set down his glass of water and rushed to the bathroom door. "Hailey, what's wrong?"

There was no answer.

Without thinking, Declan grabbed the doorknob and swung the door open. "Hailey, you-"

His words died in his throat as he saw her sprawled on the floor, having tripped and fallen.

What struck him more than her fall was her state-most of her clothes had come off, leaving large portions of her delicate skin exposed, a sight so dazzling it almost burned his eyes.

Declan's throat went dry, and he swallowed hard.

Meanwhile, Hailey hastily covered herself with her clothes and cried out, "There's a rat! A rat!"

Hailey had a deep fear of rats. One had startled her, causing her to lose her balance and fall.

Declan quickly turned his gaze away. "Where's the rat?"

Hailey pointed in a panic. "It's over there! It's so scary! Declan, I'm terrified!"

Just then, the rat scurried out from the corner, heading straight for Hailey.

Hailey was so startled that she jumped up, immediately throwing herself into Declan's arms. "Declan, help me!"

As she lunged toward him, Declan instinctively opened his arms to catch her. She jumped into him, her long, toned legs wrapping around

his narrow waist. Her hands gripped his neck, clinging to him desperately.

"Declan, the rat is still here! Please, get rid of it!" Hailey cried.

A sweet, intoxicating scent surrounded Declan as his hand brushed against her soft skin. The rat had already scurried off, and in a hoarse voice, he reassured her, "It's okay, the rat's gone."

"Are you sure?"

Hailey glanced at the floor and saw that the rat was indeed gone.

But then, something even more alarming occurred to her—she was still wrapped around Declan, their bodies in an undeniably intimate position.

And worse still, she had removed her outer clothes.

Hailey gasped.

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Hailey was about to scream again, but Declan quickly covered her mouth with his hand, silencing her.

"Quiet. My mom and sister will hear. Do you really want them to walk in and see this?" he asked.

Hailey blinked, her wide, startled eyes meeting his. After a brief pause, she gently pulled his hand away. "I won't scream. Just let me down."

Declan released his grip, and Hailey eased herself off him.

However, as she moved, her hand brushed against his crotch. It wasn't the first time she'd felt it, and her curiosity got the better of her. She reached out again and asked, "What is this?"

"Hailey, don't touch that!" Declan exclaimed, trying to stop her, but it was already too late—her hand was on him.

Declan's chiseled body went rigid, a flush of desire spreading across his face.

Hailey quickly realized what had just happened. She took a few steps back, her wide eyes fixed on him. "Y-You... you..."

The innocence in her expression made Declan hesitate, and without another word, he turned and walked away.

Hailey stood frozen. What had she just done?

She instinctively raised her hand to cover her flushed face, feeling as though she couldn't face anyone at that moment.

Just as Declan stepped out of the room, Hailey's voice rang out. "Declan!"

He halted in his tracks.

Hailey spoke again. "I'm scared the rat might come back. Could you wait by the door while I shower? I'll be quick, I promise."

Declan couldn't bring himself to say no. "Alright."

A few moments later, the sound of running water filled the room as Hailey stepped into the shower.

Declan opened the window to let in some cool air, hoping the breeze would distract him. The warmth of the room made it all too easy for his mind to wander, and he wasn't comfortable with the direction it was heading.

About ten minutes later, Hailey stepped out of the bathroom. "I'm done."

Declan turned as Hailey emerged. Her long, damp hair cascaded over her shoulders, and she was wearing Aileen's floral nightgown.

Although the nightgown wasn't

revealing, it was too tight for Hailey. Aileen, still in her early teens, hadn't fully matured, while Hailey had already blossomed into a young woman. The fabric clung to her body, emphasizing her curves.

Declan stole a quick glance before averting his eyes. "Since you're done, I'll head back to my room."

With that, he turned and walked toward his room.

Just then, Hailey's soft, pale hand reached out and tugged at his sleeve.

Declan stopped, trying to pull his sleeve away, but she stubbornly held on, crinkling the fabric in her grip.

He turned to her. "What's going on?"

"Declan, do you like me?" she asked.

Declan's first instinct was to deny it, but he understood that women often didn't

need a man's answer—they already knew the truth.

A confident smile spread across Hailey's face. "I knew it. You like me!"

"I don't," Declan replied firmly.

Unfazed, Hailey fired back, "If you don't like me, act like it why did you just...

act like that? Whatever, I don't care,

you like me, and that's the end of it!"

With that, she stormed into Aileen's room, leaving Declan standing there, speechless.

After a beat, he turned and made his way back to his room. He sat down at his desk and sifted through the stack of research he had collected on Phantom.

Just then, his phone buzzed with a notification.

It was a message from Justin.

Declan opened it and saw that Justin had sent him a video. What could this be about?

Intrigued, Declan clicked on it.