

President 26

Chapter 26

Summer trembled when the warm palm of his hand touched her skin. It frightened her. She did not know what to do.

Her racing heartbeat only calmed down after a long while. "Why do you want to marry me?" she spelled out her words.

She was not an eighteen-year-old who still fantasized about a fairy-tale relationship anymore.

While he had power and money, yielding dominant influence in Santabaca, she was just an ordinary teacher. Not to mention that they had only met six times.

The only time they had an intimate encounter was the night when they got drunk and slept together.

Had he been fascinated by her body since then?

Absolutely impossible. She felt ridiculous just by thinking about it.

So why did he want to marry her?

There was silence for over ten seconds, and the cigarette between his fingertips still shimmered. He then opened his mouth.

"I need a partner to marry. And you, whom I don't hate,

are the best candidate."

Looking at his penetrating eyes, Summer could see a faint sense of loneliness, and an indescribable complex emotion in him.

When she tried to take a closer look, he let go of her hand. "Think over it tonight and give me an

answer by tomorrow. If you agree, we will register our marriage straightaway. If you don't agree, I will

not force you into it. But you will have got to go to the hospital." He looked calm, his voice low but succinct.

Summer fell into silence. She really needed to think about it.

"And..." he let his words hang for a second, then continued, "never think about running away. It will just

be a waste of energy."

He left as soon as his voice trailed off, leaving her staring at him from behind.

A day of escape attempts ended. Things came back to square one, and she got herself an expired train

ticket.

She hauled her luggage bag back to the school, feeling depressed the entire time.

In the evening, she sat at the table with a bowl of chicken soup for dinner. She felt a crushing burden

falling on her.

Things had gone sideways, catching her unawares.

She had thought about getting married, but marrying Mark Valentine had never been part of the plan.

He was serious about the marriage, and she wanted to keep the baby. So it seemed that it was a match made in heaven.

She was sipping on the chicken soup when his voice rang in her mind again. She felt as if she was imagining things.

'I need a partner to marry. And you, whom I don't hate, are the best candidate.'

She shook her head when she felt her heart galloping again. "Marriage is so casual to him. As long as

he doesn't hate me, he will marry me," she mumbled to herself.

She thought she was simple enough-her thinking was that it does not have to be a mutual affection, but

at least there must be a feeling between two people.

Apparently, his idea of marriage was much casual than hers.

The complicated emotion in his eyes still perplexed her. But she could not tell what it was about.

The next early morning, right at first light, in the icy wind, amid the rustling of the tree branches, salt

grain -like snow falling from the air added a touch of chilliness to the morning.

A black Land Rover was parked outside the apartment. Cigarette butts were strewn on the ground beside the vehicle. It was apparent that the Land Rover had been waiting there for some time.

Mark rested his left hand on the steering wheel, took out his mobile phone with his right hand, and dialed it.

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The phone rang for a long while before a drowsy voice picked it up. "Hello?"

"You have five minutes. Either you come down, or I go up," he frowned and said with a no-nonsense

voice.

He disliked waiting, but today was an exception. He had been waiting for over half an hour, and his patience had run out.

Summer was jolted out of her sleep. She gasped in fright. 'How... how could it be him?'

"Five minutes. If you agree, bring your things and come down quickly. If you disagree, we will go to the

hospital. Now, there are still four minutes left."

He reminded her again and hung up before she could say anything.

He raised his eyebrows, wondering if he was really so frightening to her that she had to gasp in horror

at hearing his voice?

With one minute left, Summer appeared in front of the black Land Rover. She gritted her teeth and opened the car door.

Her hair was pointing everywhere, and there was a stain on the corner of her mouth.

Her appearance startled Mark, but just for a second.

"Where's the fire? It is not like I will run away." She was grumpy.

She had gotten little sleep last night. And she was woken up before the sky turned bright. You can't blame her for her crankiness.

Another gust of chilly wind carrying salt grain-like snow blew past. She shrank her neck in cold and quickly got into the back seat.

"You seem to be not afraid of me now." Mark narrowed his eyes.

"I have never been afraid of you. I just wanted nothing to do with you," she said matter-of-factly.

He glanced at her and held out his hand. "Where is your Social Security card?"

She really hated his commanding tone of voice and self-confidence, as if she was the prey in his

hands, and she had no way to escape. With her brows knitted together, she looked at him and tried to

provoke him." What makes you think I will agree?"

"How could you still sleep if you did not agree?" he squinted with his lips curling up slightly. He did not

even have to make guesses as her emotions were written all over her face.

He paused for a second before he continued. "Besides, you are so brazen-faced and show your temper in front of me."

She could not find a word to respond. His beast-like, sharp gaze frightened her.

With much reluctance and dissatisfaction, she handed her Social Security card to him.

The black Land Rover started, backed out of the parking lot, and drove forward.

Sitting in the back seat, she looked out the window with her hands clenched together. She was a little

nervous and did not know what to do. She wondered if she was making the right choice.

But since things had come to such a pass, why should she worry anymore?

She would just have to roll with the punches and let tomorrow worry about itself.

After the car had driven forward for a while, Mark glanced at her mouth. "Are you sure you want to go

to the Civil Registry Office like this?"

"What do you mean 'like this'? Only now that you think about my appearance? Don't you think it is too

late?" she asked, not noticing the stain on her mouth.

"Since you don't mind, I have no reason to say otherwise," he said in a low voice. Her overreactions did

not affect him a bit.

"What do you mean?" It was only now that she suspected something.

He said not a word. With his left hand on the steering wheel, he tapped the overhead vanity mirror with

his fingers of his right hand, motioning her to look up.

She rolled her eyes at his strange behavior, and then suspiciously, she straightened up and looked at

herself in the vanity mirror.

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She instantly blushed, wishing the ground would swallow her up.

Last night, after having her chicken soup, she was too exhausted and crashed out without cleaning

herself u P-

Also, he threatened her in the early morning. She was afraid of waking her neighbors, so she hurried

downstairs, not realizing...

"Turn the car around!" She patted his seat from behind.

"What do you want to do?" He smirked, asking the obvious.

"Going back to wash my face." She was almost whispering.

"You know what, Miss Hart, I don't mind at all. Just keep it this way." He did not plan to stop the car.

Summer could not describe how embarrassed she was. Yet, she could do nothing about him except

threaten him. "If you don't turn around, I am not going to get out of the car at the Civil Registry Office!"

Mark scanned the surroundings. He then swirled the car around and stopped on the opposite side of the road.

"Get out," he snapped.

"I want to go home!" She looked at the surroundings and shook her head.

"Do you want to get out on your own, or do you want me to kick you out?" He threatened her.

"I want to go home!" She insisted.

He had no choice but to get out of the car and go to the convenience store across the street.

Minutes later, he returned with a bottle of mineral water in his hand. He unscrewed the cap and poured

a small amount of water into the palm of his hand.

He then wet his other hand, bent down slightly, and used his calloused fingers to wipe the stain off her

mouth gently.

She did not expect that he would do this. It stunned her for a while. She did not know how to react.

He was just inches from her. His scent of a mature man mixed with the smell of nicotine was drowning

her. She felt she could not breathe.

When his rough fingers wiped across her mouth, she felt a sense of intimacy.

Her cheeks were now as red as an Elmo doll.

Her eyelashes flicked spontaneously as she looked up at him.

He did not look at her but just wiped her mouth by feel, his black eyes seemingly so focused and gentle.

That part of her heart softened like butter. His action tugged at her heartstrings, as if a rock hit the surface of the water.

Just then, Mark got up but left his finger on her lips for a few seconds before removing it. He glanced

down at her delicate face and noticed a red rubbing mark there.

Her skin must be so delicate that it reddened at the touch of his finger. Nevertheless, her skin felt good

to the touch.

"Do you still need me to turn around?" He looked at her.

Her eyes met his. She then looked away awkwardly. "No need." She had softened her voice now.

He glanced at her red cheeks with a faint smile of delight.

The car continued to move forward. There was a silence in the cabin as neither of them said a word.

Her face flared red, especially the part where he had wiped. Even her ears were red.

When they arrived at the Civil Registry Office, only three couples were waiting. It was probably still

early.

It did not take long before it was their turn. 1

Mark had that impenetrable expression that gave out none of his emotion. The pen in his hand flowed

as he put down his signature.

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After a moment of hesitation, as if she had been through a bloody struggle with herself, she lowered

her head and solemnly put down her signature.

This simple procedure changed their relationship tremendously.

They went from slightly above strangers to becoming a couple who slept together.

It was 8:30 am when they left the Civil Registry Office.

The salt grain-like snow had turned into flakes, covering the ground in white.

Cold air rushed into her nostrils as she took a deep breath. She could not help shivering.

The temperature had dropped so low overnight.

But the thought of her going from being single to married overnight made the changes in weather seem

to be not much of a surprise.

Many things could change overnight.

While her mind ran wild, Mark was walking out of the Civil Registry Office with two staff members. They

followed him from behind and were very respectful when they spoke to him.

Mark opened the car door and motioned for her to get i

n.

She still could not get used to their relationship, and so she looked awkward. She pretended to look at

the time and then made excuses. "It is half-past eight. I have to rush to school. I know you must be

very busy too. I will just take a taxi."

"Get in the car," he snapped, frowning, as if he had not heard her.

More people had arrived. Envy eyes were on Mark as people whispered among themselves.

Mark was undoubtedly the most eye-catching person everywhere he went.

Summer thought of her appearance and became self-conscious. She had not washed her face yet and was too embarrassed to keep standing here. So she bent over and flew into the back seat.

Just then, his deep voice came. "Sit in the front. I am not your chauffeur, mind you."

She gritted her teeth. 'What is wrong with this guy that he wants to dictate where I should sit?'

But she gave in.

The car drove forward, smooth like a magic carpet. Mark looked over at her. "I have an important meeting in the afternoon. Go home and pack your belongings, and the secretary will fetch you over."

She flustered, spontaneously shaking her head. "My parents haven't known about it yet. Let me tell them

first, and then I will move in." 2

Things happened too suddenly that she was not mentally prepared for it.

Thinking of having to live with him from now on, she was discomposed again.

He looked at her for a few seconds, turned the steering wheel to the left to make a turn. His eyebrows

were knitted together. "Neither have I told my parents. Make time these few days. We will go to your

side first, then mine. It is better to let me do the talking."

She couldn't agree more.

He stopped the car outside the school. "My secretary will wait for you in front of your apartment in the

afternoon."

"Can't I move in two more days?"

"Why?"

"I have not prepared for it yet." She was truthful.

He looked at her for a while, and then his eyes narrowed. "What kind of preparation-mentally or physically?"

What the heck? Summer glared at him, her heart thumping. "Of course, mentally!"

"So that means you are physically prepared." He was playing with her words in a matter-of-fact way.

She felt heat spreading on her face. She gritted her teeth. "You are trapping me with words!"

Chapter 30

"Yes." He sounded naughty. "Teachers should know how to improvise and adapt. I have full confidence

in you, Miss Hart."

"Who told you that a teacher should know how to improvise and adapt? Do you think I am a wild survivor?" She retorted irritably.

"You really know a lot." He started the car and left.

'How could this man be so dictatorial? He never listens to others at all.' She thought to herself with a frown.

But then, she could not deny that he looked charming when he raised the corner of his mouth as he was leaving. Summer got off work and walked out of the school in the afternoon. A middle-aged man in a suit walked up and stopped her. 1

She frowned, wondering what this man was up to. When she was about to ask, the man spoke, "I am Billy Day, Mr. Valentine's secretary. He asked me to bring you to the apartment."

No wonder. She could not refuse but to get into the car. She first returned home to pack her belongings.

Only then she went to the apartment with Billy.

It was an expensive apartment, large, but no one else was there. She was standing in the living room

with

her suitcase. Billy had left. 1

She stood there, hesitating and falling into a daze. She was nervous because she was not used to living with a man.

But she also knew that there was no escape. So she gritted her teeth and walked into the bedroom with

the suitcase.

Club Nightshade.

The place was thumping with loud music, and men and women were moving their bodies to the crazy

beat.

Inside a private cubicle.

Billy and Charlie stared unblinking at the man on the couch.

Mark's suit jacket was placed on the couch. He was wearing only a black shirt with his sleeves rolled

up to his elbows, revealing his muscular arms.

He picked up a wine glass and knocked back.

"Holy smokes, this is Polish vodka. The alcohol concentration is 96 percent. Why hasn't he gotten

drunk?" Billy scratched his chin.

"I am more curious about how he got together with Miss Hart. They even got married." Charlie shrugged with amazement.

"As curious as I am about that, what beats me is that why is he drinking here on the first night of his marriage? Is he still thinking of his aunt?"

Mark's hand holding the wine glass stopped in midair for a fleeting second, and then it returned to normal, as if nothing had happened before.

But Charlie's keen eye had noticed that. He nudged Billy with his shoulder and whispered, "Don't poke

a wounded tiger, man."

Realizing his blunder, Billy hemmed and shut up.

1.00 am.

Probably because she was not used to the new environment, she could not sleep. So she sat on the sofa.

Mark had not come home yet.

She frowned, as she could not describe her feelings now.

Just then, a knock on the door jolted her out of her thoughts and up from the sofa.

'Who could it be at this hour? Is it Mark?'

She went to open the door and saw Charlie and Bill holding Mark on each side.

Judging by his condition, Mark was apparently drunk.

"Hello, Miss Hart." Billy let out a smile. "Mr. Valentine went to a business meeting and got drunk."