

President 41

Chapter 41

As she entered the living room, Summer saw Gordon attentively reading the newspaper as he sat on the leather recliner sofa.

With his serious-looking appearance, the military service uniform he was dressed in has made Gordon

look especially stern and solemn.

She greeted him as she bit her lower lip, "Hello, grandfather."

Without even batting an eye at her, he continued to flip through the newspaper as if he had not heard

her at all.

Summer was not too bothered by his response as she had already seen it coming.

With her defined features, Yvette gave out a sophisticated vibe as she was brewing her afternoon coffee.

Summer greeted her as well, "Hello, mom."

"Oh. You're back." Unlike Gordon, Yvette responded and continued to say, "The maids had already tidied u p your room. She'll guide you there in a moment."

A soft but high-pitched voice rang through, "So this is big brother's wife. Right, auntie?"

A slender figure dressed lavishly in black appeared before Summer. Taking Summer's appearances in,

she

looked at her from head to toe.

Furrowing her brows, Lily Marsh said in a hostile tone, "This is what big brother fell in love with? She

doesn't look any special."

"Lily! How could you?" Yvette scolded lightly and turned to Summer, "Please, don't mind Lily. She means no harm; she's just used to speaking very directly, you see. Try to bear with her, alright?"

Glancing at Lily, Summer gave a light smile, "Yes, mom. I will," then, with slight sarcasm in her voice,

she continued, "How could I not, especially to such a cute and truthful girl she is."

Looking haughty as she heard Summer's reply, Lily did not sense the sarcasm and thought that

Summer thought she was much inferior than her to deserving of Mark too.

'So what if they're married? I will break them up!' Lily thought.

Hearing their brief interaction and feeling cautious, Yvette stopped her actions momentarily as she poured her coffee. She then requested for the maid and dismissed Summer off to her room.

The room was spacious with big windows showing a wonderful view of greenery. With leaves and snow

falling simultaneously, it looked simply pleasing.

However, it did not matter to Summer as she was not in the mood to admire the beautiful scenery. To

her, moving and living in the Valentine mansion only

meant one thing, suffering.

After taking a bath, she sat on the couch and watched some television without changing out of her robe.

Hearing footsteps, she turned her head and shifted her gaze to the door. Mark walked in a while, taking

off his tie.

Focusing on the television again, she continued sitting there without intending to move.

Eyebrows raised, he stood in front of her and said with his deep voice, "Mrs. Valentine, I believe it's your job to undress me."

Glancing at his hands, she huffed, "Can't you do it yourself? Your hands are empty anyway."

"I'm feeling slightly tired from work, and there's just too many buttons," he said as he pinched the bridge of his nose with his left hand while pulling her up with his right.

Gritting her teeth, she said, "Don't wear this then if you think it has too many buttons."

'He's the CEO of a big corporate company, for God's sake! Who knew he could have such a lazy side,'

she thought to herself.

He pressed her palm onto his chest. Smirking, he said, "Are you telling me to go out nude? I wouldn't

mind doing, you know."

"You know that's not what I meant!" she lightheartedly scolded him while unbuttoning his shirt.

Smiling with his eyes, he watched her. Noticing her hair still being a little wet, he figured she just bathed. She looked alluring as her cheeks were slightly flushed with droplets dripping on her cheeks from some wet strands of her hair.

Her defined collarbone was peeking out as well from the slightly oversized bathrobe.

Unbuttoning his shirt for him, Summer did not notice the lust in his eyes nor felt his body change.

Just as he wanted to snake his arms around her waist, they heard a knock, and soon, the door was pushed open.

Almost immediately, Lily appeared before them, holding a plate of fruits.

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When Lily saw them hugging so intimately against each other, a look of displeasure plastered on her

face as she glared at Summer.

Stomping towards them in her three inched heels, she squeezed in between them and forced Summer

aside.

"Mark, I peeled and prepared these fruits for you. Auntie said you came back, so I brought this up to you."

"When did you arrive in Santabaca?"

Mark replied after eyeing Summer inquisitively, who was beside him.

Lily beamed at him happily as she asked him, "I just arrived today. If you have time tomorrow, could

you bring me around Santabaca?"

"I can't. I'll be busy."

As he uttered his reply, he sat on the couch cross-legged and drank some water. Seemingly annoyed,

faint furrows appeared in Mark's brows.

'It's like I'm not even here.'

Summer grunted to herself as she just stood aside, leaning against the wall. 'Why am I here anyway?

This is so annoying,' she thought.

"You're such a bully! I hardly ever visit Santabaca, yet you wouldn't even spend a few hours with me!

I'm telling grandpa on you!"

Looking serious with her words, Lily whined as she knew Mark would only listen to grandpa Gordon.

The reason why Lily could be so bold and forward was that her grandpa and grandpa Gordon had served in the army together, and they were close friends.

She had also heard that her grandpa had saved grandpa Gordon's life back in the days. This was also why grandpa Gordon doted on Lily so much ever since she was a child.

As if he was her Genie, he would grant all of her wishes to keep her happy, and she knew he would back her up for anything.

With eyes reflecting annoyance, his gaze shifted and landed on Summer, who was listening to their 'drama'. Holding the glass filled water to his lips, he said, " Summer can go with you then."

Hearing her name unexpectedly, she froze. Then, she gritted her teeth as she glared at Mark.

Playfully, he raised his brows as he returned her gaze with a smug smile.

Lily obviously did not want the woman who snatched her man to accompany her. She wanted Mark! i

"But Mark, Summer and I are not that close."

Lips curving to a smile, he replied, "You can get to know each other through this chance then. Do you

not want to?"

"No, that's not it," Lily answered defeatedly as she gripped the sides of her dress tightly. Having used

all her cards, she had no means left to retort anymore.

"Then, that's settled."

With his brows still furrowed, he took a few sips of water.

There was something in the room that made him feel uneasy.

Summer snapped, "Am I transparent to both of you?"

She was angry that he made the decision for her without her consent. She wasn't going to let him treat

her so rudely.

He crossed his arms as he leaned on the couch. In a nonchalant tone, he asked, "Isn't it the winter

break already?"

"Yes, but that doesn't mean that I would be free. I could have plans, you know." She argued.

"Oh? You have plans?" he asked while feigning curiosity.

She nodded. She really did not want to spend any time with Lily.

"Fine then. We'll discuss this again once you have sorted out your plans," he swiftly answered.

Summer was rendered speechless.

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Lily spoke up again, "Do you not want to accompany me around Santabaca?"

"No, of course, I want to. It would be an honor to accompany my adorable sister-in-law," Summer said i

n a friendly tone; however, her smile did not meet her eyes.

Lily scoffed, 'Sister-in-law? How ridiculous of her to call me that!'

Chuckling mirthlessly to herself, Lily left the room after.

Summer shifted her gaze back to Mark, who was sitting on the couch, and mocked him, "What a kind

and loving brother you were."

His lips twitched upwards as he looked at her momentarily before saying, "The way you said that sounded so lovely, Mrs. Valentine. Do compliment me again."

Summer was rendered speechless.

The next day.

She was the only one left in the room when she awoke.

Just as she was heading to get some breakfast after washing her face, Lily stomped towards her,

demanding her accompany to go around town.

With Gordon and Yvette in the room, Summer could not turn Lily down, so she agreed defeatedly and

went out with Lily after grabbing her down jacket.

Lily was ready to make things difficult for Summer.

She knew Summer hadn't had any breakfast, yet she dragged her around from morning to noon as she

shopped for various luxury brands.

Stomach growling and feeling hungrier by the minute, Summer quickly went to a KFC nearby and got

herself a burger when Lily was at the fitting room.

Unconcerned about others around her, she casually ate her burger in the store. As a result, the staff there threw funny glances at her.

Lily felt extremely embarrassed for Summer and stormed out of the store. She thought, 'How can one

be so disgraceful in public!'

Taking her own sweet time, Summer ate her burger slowly. She had even ordered a bowl of noodles as

they stopped by a food court.

Frustrated, Lily sat across Summer and waited.

'No one has ever brought me to such a boisterous place, and now thanks to Summer, I am stuck in this

disgusting food court!' Lily complained in her head.

She swore to herself that if it weren't for wanting to make Summer suffer for the day, she would not have stepped into the place.

The bowl of noodles Summer was having was delicious. The broth was thick with flavor, and the noodles were springy. As she was eating, her phone rang. Checking the caller ID, she smiled as she picked up the call. It was Nancy.

"I'm shopping around South Lane. Do you want to join me?"

"Sure. I was planning to get some new clothes as well. Give me a few minutes, and I'll meet you there!"

With that, Nancy ended the call.

Despite knowing that Summer's friend was coming, Lily did not intend to leave. On the contrary, she

asked with feigned politeness, "Is it alright if I tag along with you and your friend?"

What Lily truly had thought at the moment was, 'So what if her friend comes by. My plan to humiliate

her will still go on!'

"Of course, you can!" replied Summer as she gave her a warm smile.

Lily's bad intentions were obvious to Summer.

Immediately after Summer's reply, Lily's phone rang and answered in a soft and gentle tone, "Hello, auntie. You want me to watch a movie with you in the cinema? Sure! I'll head over right now."

Glancing at Summer with the corner of her eyes, she intentionally brought Summer up, "Auntie, Summer is with me right now. Do you want to talk to her for a bit?"

Oh, it's fine? Alright then, I'll let her know."

After keeping her phone in her purse, she looked at Summer. Her eyes lit with arrogance, and she looked as if she was showing off.

"Sorry, Summer. Auntie has asked me to watch a movie with her, so I can't keep you company anymore. Also, auntie wanted to tell you to be safe while shopping alone."

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Watching Lily leave looking as proud as a peacock, Summer giggled as she thought it was funny.

'She sure is childish,' Summer thought to herself.

About half an hour later, Nancy arrived looking glum and tired with heavy eyebags. She looked as if

she did not sleep for a day or two.

Feeling worried, Summer furrowed her brows as she asked, "What happened? Why do you look so tired?"

As Nancy's eyes started to water, she sat next to Summer. Holding back her tears, she complained to her best friend, "Howard got arrested for that no-good woman!"

"Didn't you guys talk it out after the last incident?"

"Of course, we did! I even asked my friends to introduce him to other women, but nothing worked. As

though he was brainwashed by that woman, he just wouldn't snap out of it!"

Nancy felt furious and exhausted of Howard, but she could not change the fact that Howard is a little

brother. She had to help him somehow.

"Summer, aren't you close with Mr. Valentine? Please help me talk to him. Maybe he knows more about

how Howard is doing now."

Hearing her best friend's distressed plead, Summer

felt upset as well. "We've only met a few times. We're not that close," she said softly.

Since everything that had happened was too rushed, Summer had not prepared herself to tell Nancy

the truth yet. She needed a bit more time before letting her know.

Plus, if she were to tell Nancy that they were married, but Mark wouldn't agree to help her, it would be

even more complicated and awkward then.

Summer didn't want things to end that way, so she decided it'd be best to talk to Mark when they're

both home. For her dear friend, she would even beg for his help.

"I remember Mr. Valentine had answered your call that day. Please, Summer. You're the only one who

can help me. I can't think of anyone else who could."

Nancy looked extremely upset, and her voice was hoarse.

Sighing, Summer comforted Nancy while patting her back. She fished out her phone and comforted, "I'll

try and ask him. Don't worry."

She waited for the call to go through, but it soon went straight to voicemail.

Summer glanced over to Nancy and saw her eyes lit with hope. Filled with determination to help her

friend, she gritted her teeth and redialed his number.

The call went through the second time. Her face lit up with joy, and with quivering lips, she said, "Hey,

there's something I want to talk to you about."

"I can't talk right now. I'm engaged with something. Bye," his usual deep voice and blunt words sounded through the phone.

'Engaged with something?' she thought.

She raised her brows as she did not expect him to hang up on her so quickly. Thinking to herself, 'I have thought he would not agree to help, but that was just so unexpected.'

Biting her lip, she turned facing Nancy and explained, "He seems busy now."

The hope in Nancy's eyes seemed to go off in a flash. Her voice sounded forced as she replied, "It's okay. Seeing as you guys aren't that close, there's no reason for him to help us out all the time."

Summer's heart broke a little after hearing her friend's words. "Stay here, okay. I'll go get you some coffee," she told Nancy.

She decided when both Mark and she are home; she would discuss the matter with him seriously.

Nodding to Summer, Nancy watched her leave. She looked around half-heartedly, and suddenly, she spotted a fancy black limousine. She was stunned.

'VAL 1-That's Mr. Valentine's car plate number, isn't it?' Nancy thought.

She watched as a tall and toned figure stepped out of the car, and she realized it indeed was Mark.

Dressed in a fine suit with a black coat on top, he looked dashing and handsome. His defined face and

his charms had made people's heads turn to admire him.

In his right hand was his phone, and he looked as if he was on the phone with someone. Just as his eyes spotted Nancy, he walked towards her.

Watching as he was getting closer, Nancy felt breathless as she could not believe what was happening,

but she was even more overwhelmed with joy.

'He is seriously walking towards me!' she gasped.

Chapter 45

"Hello, Ms. Atkinson," greeted Mark as he tucked his phone away.

Rushing to stand, "Hello there, Mr. Valentine," Nancy responded with her cheeks slightly flushed.

"Where's Summer?"

Nancy was stunned to hear him calling Summer by her first name, 'Since when were they on a first name basis?'

"She went to get coffee," Nancy replied. What she had heard made her extremely curious, so gathering

up the courage, she asked him, "Is it fine for me to say that you seem close with Summer?"

"Yes. We are indeed very familiar with one another," with his eyebrows raised, his lips moved again as

he continued, "In fact, we're married."

Nancy's expression turned tense as her face darkened. Feeling as if there were thousands of needles pricking on her heart, making her bleed uncontrollably, she felt out of breath.

As she thought of Summer's reply saying she wasn't close with Mr. Valentine, she felt furious. She clenched her hands tightly to the point that the print of her nails remained on her palms.

Just as Nancy was thinking about how Summer could be having fun watching her fall into despair,

Summer came back holding two cups of coffee in her hands. Noticing Mark there, she froze as she felt

surprised. Then, she asked, "What brings you here?"

She immediately eyed Nancy warily and thought, 'Oh no. Has she found out about the truth of Mark

and me?'

Nancy noticed her glances, and while repressing her pain and the betrayal she felt, she forced herself

to say, "My dear Summer, why didn't you share this good news with me? I could've celebrated with you."

Upon hearing this, Summer knew that Nancy had found out, and it was apparent to her that Mark was

the one who had told her.

Examining Nancy's expressions, Summer thought she didn't look too shocked or hurt from the news,

'Thank god she seems fine.' And knowing that her friend was okay, she felt a little less worried.

Holding Nancy's hand, Summer looked sincere and apologetic as she told her, "I'm sorry, Nancy. I didn't mean to hide it from you. There were some complications."

Nancy scoffed in her head, 'Complications? What complications could she possibly have when she gets to be married to a man like Mr. Valentine? Is she trying to mock me?'

Despite feeling otherwise, Nancy still plastered on a forgiving smile.

"Silly you, there's no need to apologize at all.

Congratulations, and you have my blessing. I'm sure there's an emergency, seeing as he came all the way here for you. Go to him."

After shooting Nancy a relieved smile, she turned towards Mark. He was watching her with a slight playful gaze in his eyes. With his lips curving to a smirk, he teased, "I'm also curious to know what were the complications you've mentioned just now. Do enlighten me."

Gritting her teeth, Summer glared at him as she knew he was teasing her on purpose to get on her nerves.

"Billy and Sherman just came back from their honeymoon, and they want to meet up with us."

Mark replied without teasing her further. As his eyes swept over Nancy, he politely invited, "Ms.

Atkinson, you should come along as well."

Nancy bit her lip as she hesitated, "Would it be an inconvenience, though?"

"It's fine. It's just a simple meet-up anyways. Let's go," Summer said as she held Nancy's hand in hers

and led her to the car.

The meet up was held at Club Nightshade.

Billy and Sherman were relaxing on the couch while Charlie and Grace were playing billiards in a

private suite at the club.

The one who garnered the most attention in the room was Grace, as she was wearing a tight bodycon

dress and four inched heels.

Tsking, Sherman snickered, "Have you seen yourself with that outfit? You look as if you're insatiable

and just asking for it."

Without saying anything else, Grace just sneered at Sherman's comment.

Charlie's brows raised, and he looked as if he had something to say.

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Watching Charlie's expression, Grace scoffed, "I'll gouge your eyes out if you don't stop looking at me

that way!"

Right after, Mark stepped in, followed by Summer who walked behind him.

"The stars of the day have finally arrived! We truly shouldn't judge a book by its cover. Who could have

ever thought innocent-looking Summer was so wild behind our backs!" Referring to the night of the incident before, Grace mocked Summer as she faced her.

Since she did not dare to mock Mr. Valentine, she could only tease and make fun of Summer.

"You better zip it, Grace! You've said enough!" scolded Summer lightly as she felt embarrassed.

"I don't get what you meant by that. All I know is I wasn't invited to a wedding I was supposed to attend,

so you have to compensate me somehow. As your punishment for not letting us know about the marriage, how about you kiss Mr. Valentine in front of us for 2 minutes? Starting now!"

Summer felt her head throb and told her off, "Stop fooling around!"

"Stop fooling around? Do you think that's possible for me?" Grace bickered playfully. Raising her

brows, she continued, "Don't you think that it's incredibly hurtful for me as your closest friend to be the

last to know about you getting married?"

Agreeing to what Grace said in her head, Summer could not form her response.

Sherman also butted in, "I think so too, so I agree with the punishment!"

Signaling Billy, she bumped her shoulder to his. As someone submissive to his wife, Billy nodded immediately, "I agree as well."

Charlie raised both of his hands as he said, "Same here."

"Great! And that's four versus two. We win!" said Grace as she snapped her fingers with a smile on her

lips. Turning towards Mark, she said, "Mr. Valentine, this punishment isn't too much, right?"

"It's not at all," Mark replied as he gave a small smile.

"Just as I thought, Mr. Valentine is an understanding person. However, I won't let you two get off the

hook by just French kissing. That's too boring. How about we have Mr. Valentine feed Summer some

of this wine here while kissing?"

Setting the timer on her phone, she leisurely twirled the wine glass as she added onto the

"punishment".

"You will begin now! The longer you stall, the longer

you'd have to kiss!"

Lips forming a smile, Mark took the glass of wine over and stood in front of Summer and leaned in.

Watching as his face inched nearer to hers, her heart pounded erratically. With her hands, she covered

his lips and stopped him from getting closer while scolding lightly, "Mark, stop it!" He ducked his face

away from her hands and fed her the wine as he kissed her. Through her lips, she felt it flowing over.

The group of friends were just watching them while standing around. Grace whistled while Charlie just

raised his brows. Sherman and Billy, on the other hand, were discussing amongst themselves how interesting the way they kissed was.

Only Nancy alone stared at Summer while gritting her teeth and clenching her fists, i

Summer felt blood rushing to her head, and she wanted to turn her head and hide away.

However, Mark's hold on the back of her head was strong, and it kept her in place. Staring into her eyes, she could feel his hot breath on her numb lips as he said, "Close your eyes."

Listening to his deep voice and seeing her reflection in his eyes, she fell into a daze.

Slowly, she shut her eyes as her heart pounded in her chest.

At that moment, she could only smell his faint masculine scent and the fragrance of the wine he was

feeding her as he devoured her lips. When he finally let go, he announced, "We're done." However, Grace did not want to let them off that easily, "That was only a minute and a half! You still have 30 seconds.

Continue!"

Mark raised his brows as he looked at Summer's flushed cheeks. They were as red as sun-blushed apples. In a gentle tone, he defended, "Her cheeks are burning up already."

Upon hearing so, Summer ducked her head as she froze while her heart was beating erratically.

Chapter 47

Meanwhile, feeling furious from what she witnessed, Nancy's chest heaved.

The 'punishment', however, did not persist as the oh so powerful, Mr. Valentine had spoken up in Summer's defense.

"Tsk tsk, you sure are protective of her!" Grace sighed as she could not stand the gentleness of his tone.

Complaining, Billy huffed, "I was rendered exhausted to the brink of death during your first night! Don't

you think this punishment is too light, Mr. Valentine?"

Mark smirked as he replied in a graceful yet lazy tone, "What do you propose then?"

As he heard the unusual tone, Billy gave a light cough before suggesting, "How about a few rounds of

billiards?"

Facing Billy, Charlie scoffed lightly and booed at his suggestion.

"Why don't you give it a go? You don't know what I've been through," Billy said defiantly.

As he did not want to end up like Billy, Charlie gave a simple excuse, "Before I get married and had my

first night, I'll pass for now."

Billy rolled his eyes in playful annoyance at him.

Later, Mark, Charlie and Billy were playing billiards while the women were chatting on the couch.

Mark stepped out of the suite after a while.

Lifting his head to look at his friend, Billy asked, "Where are you going?"

"To the washroom." Mark's voice lingered as he left.

Nancy's eyes had a glint of emotions as she noticed Mark leave. Then, she turned to Summer and

said, "Summer, I'll head to the washroom for a bit."

Leaving enough distance to not get caught, Nancy quietly followed behind Mark.

She stood behind a pot of plants while waiting for Mark in front of the washroom.

At the same time, thoughts flooded her mind, 'I used to think Summer was my closest friend.'

'But not anymore,' Nancy grimly thought.

Nancy was deeply hurt and upset at Summer for keeping the truth from her for so long.

She hadn't had a good night's sleep for such a long time because of her brother's incident.

She thought to herself, 'Even though I had desperately begged Summer, she didn't even seem like she

wanted to help me.' 'She had already been married to Mr. Valentine, yet when I asked, she said she

isn't close with him and had only met him for a few times.' 'If she didn't want to help, she could've told

me directly. Why did she have to act stupid and play me like a fool?'

'There were some complications that forced her to get married, huh?'

'That's the most ridiculous thing I've ever heard! Truly absurd!'

'If she didn't want to help me, does she think I wouldn't take action myself?' she scoffed to herself.

In the corner of her eyes, she spotted Mark stepping out. She gritted her teeth and clenched her hands.

Taking a few deep breaths, she tried to calm her nerves down.

Her heart pounded loudly as she watched him walking closer in her direction. With every second

ticking, her chest was filled with more and more anxiety and uneasiness.

Taking a step towards him, she called out to him in a strained voice, "Hi, Mr. Valentine."

As he heard her voice, he took a look at her. With his gaze deep and voice light, he greeted, "Hello,

Ms.

Atkinson."

Despite her mouth feeling dry and her heart pounding erratically, she did not forget her motive of

following him here, "Can I ask you for a favor, Mr. Valentine?"

"Hmm?" he paused for a moment, then tilted his chin to motion her to continue.

"It's about my brother. You've seen him before at the nightclub. H-he was taken away by Carlos again,

and I don't know if he's even alive right now. Could you help me to get him released?"

She hesitated for a while before she forcibly continued, "If you help me, I will do anything in return."

What Nancy said could be considered as her indirect consent of submitting to him.

She said it all aloud with her head dropping low as she did not dare to look into his sharp eyes.

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Mark's gaze landed on her with his eyes narrowed. His eyes looked deep and bottomless. He shifted

his brows slightly but said nothing.

His expression gave away nothing at all.

Nancy could feel his sharp gaze on her. She felt even more conscious after saying what she did.

She was as taut as a bowstring on the verge of snapping.

Neither of them spoke, and it was silent for a moment which made Nancy's heart feel even tenser.

She heard a voice in her head say, 'This is your only chance of getting close to Mr. Valentine. If it slips

away, you won't get another chance again!'

As the picture of her fantasy was getting clearer, she felt more determined as she knew what she had to do.

She knew there was no way for her to turn back now, and she had to own up to what she had said and

decided. She did not regret it one bit; on the contrary, she felt proud.

'What is there to lose if I could be with this man?' she thought.

After taking a deep breath, she gritted her teeth as she

held out her arms and hugged Mark from behind. Her hold on him was tight as her emotions were

intense. Compared to the indirect consent she gave him earlier, she hoped that he knew that the hug

showed that she was serious.

Even though covered with his coat, her cheeks reddened as she could still feel his toned abs

underneath.

The air around her was filled with only his scent as she was standing so close to him for the first time.

She felt as though she was drowning with how desperate and infatuated she was to him.

In slight annoyance, Mark narrowed his eyes as he pulled her hands off him. His voice sounded deeper

than before.

"Seeing as you're my wife's friend, Ms. Atkinson, I would naturally help you with this favor."

Nancy was ecstatic when she heard him. 'I don't believe it! He agreed to help! He agreed!' she cheered

in her head.

She felt proud and cocky as she thought she could make Mark help her without Summer's help. 'Maybe

he does have feelings for me,' she fantasized.

But as she thought of his words again, her expressions froze, and her face went pale. A disappointed

look was soon plastered on her face.

"Seeing as you're my wife's friend, Ms. Atkinson, I would naturally help you with this favor," was what

he had said.

With that, she realized that it was only because she was a friend of his wife that Mark only agreed to help.

In an instant, she couldn't hide embarrassment as her cheeks flushed. "This must be the most humiliating time yet!" she thought while keeping her head low, not daring to lift it.

Especially not in front of him.

"I believe you don't need to be reminded that you are my wife's friend. I will pretend this didn't happen,

and I hope it won't ever again, Ms. Atkinson."

Mark said simply with his tone sounding cold and distant.

Without looking back at her, he turned and left with a hinge of coldness in his eyes right after.

Nancy was left alone as she stood there. Her cheeks burned as if they were slapped harshly. They felt

numb and painful.

When she returned to the suite, Summer, Sherman, and Grace were busy chatting away, and no one

noticed if there was anything off about her. With eyes fuming with envy, she exclaimed, "Mr. Valentine

sure is manly! How did you even manage to land such a stunner like him?"

Sherman exclaimed in agreement as well, "That's truly ravishing indeed!"

Reminded of the past events, Summer clenched her teeth as she scolded, "I blame you for it!"

Puzzled, Grace asked, "What did I do?"

"On the night of Sherman's wedding, where did you head to after you left me in the room?"

"I went home, of course! But never mind that, most importantly, what happened next?"

"What happened next was he had also gotten drunk and went to the wrong room, climbed onto the

wrong bed! Ugh, I want to strangle you so badly, Grace!" Summer complained as her cheeks reddened

while blaming Grace in her head.

Grace then scoffed and cussed.

"How could I have missed such a romantic yet scandalous affair?! Tsk, you sure scored quite a catch!"

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'Can this woman hear herself? I can't believe her,' Summer thought begrudgingly.

Meanwhile, Nancy spotted something which made her look in a daze. Her eyes glinted as she was

staring at Summer.

Nobody could tell what was in Nancy's head at that moment. As for the women's conversation, it

seemed to get more vulgar as compared to the men's conversation.

Especially with the presence of Grace, their conversation would only revolve around such topics.

Only Nancy has kept silent from the beginning towards the end. Both her expressions and eyes looked

glum and dull.

Long after, it was getting late. After receiving a call, Grace picked up her red fur coat from the couch

and left immediately.

Mark and the gang had entered the room after finishing their game of billiards.

Hanging his coat on his arm casually, Billy gracefully pulled Sherman close to him and bade goodbye

before leaving.

Charlie squinted his eyes and looked around as if he was looking for someone. Mark, who was standing

beside him, took a few glances at him with his eyes crinkled slightly.

As people were leaving one-by-one, Nancy did not spare a glance at Mark. She was scared of his gaze, or rather, she did not dare to look at him, especially after what happened.

"Summer, I still have some matters to attend to, so I'll leave first!" said Nancy hurriedly. Without waiting

for Summer to give a reply, she quickly got into a taxi and left.

When Summer came back to her senses, the taxi had left without a trace.

Furrowing her brows, Summer was worried about Nancy as she seemed off the whole night. She thought Nancy looked as if she had something bugging her, and she assumed it was regarding Nancy's brother.

The black Land Rover drove in the night as the snow was falling peacefully.

Summer hesitated for a moment before speaking up slowly and tentatively, "You've met Nancy's brother before, right?"

"Yes," he replied as his eyes shifted to her for a while. With his brows raised, he knew what she was about to say, but he remained silent.

"Well, he's been abducted. Could you help and get him released?" she asked as she held her hands together.

Her gaze landed on him, and she saw him moving his lips as she heard his deep voice say, "I'm a businessman, and every businessman looks into the profit they can make before deciding on something. So, what would my reward be, my dear wife?"

After pondering, Summer replied in a serious tone, "I would listen to any of your requests as long as it's within my capability, and also, don't make any absurd requests!"

Before ending her response, she mocked him, "What a skimming businessman you are."

In a low pitch, he chuckled after being silent for a few seconds and said, "Well, there are no businessmen who are not skimming."

He did not think that what he said was wrong, but Summer felt her eyes twitch at his response.

A moment after, Mark spoke up and asked, "Do you and Ms. Atkinson have a close relationship?"

Puzzled as to why he suddenly asked, she replied truthfully, "Yes, we're really close. Why do you ask?"

Just as he was steering to the left and driving into a gas station, his eyes flickered with a certain emotion as he asked, "How much do you know about her?"

She thought about it in a heartbeat and replied, "More than anyone or anything!"

He slightly crinkled his eyes, and his thin lips raised into a smirk. Just as an attendant was spotted walking towards them, his eyes darkened as they narrowed.

Feeling curious about the change of his expressions, Summer followed his gaze, and she froze at what or who she saw.

It was Jazz!

With his defined features, he looked dashing, and he seemed like a carefree teenager.

As he walked towards them under the snow, he was wearing a staff uniform. He didn't look his age as

the uniform made him look matured and collected like an adult.

"Hello there, mister. Do you want it to be filled up full?" Jazz asked. His face looked slightly blue from

the freezing air.

Chapter 50

As the window wound down, a familiar face came into view. Jazz was slightly taken aback to see his

brother as he greeted, "Hi, Mark."

Jazz looked troubled when he saw Summer, and Mark just stared at him in silence.

He did not want to greet Summer as her brother-in-law.

With eyes carefully speculating him, Mark knew why Jazz was feeling troubled for, yet he purposefully

asked, "Why don't you greet your sister-in-law?"

Jazz's eyes darkened, and without letting them notice, he clenched the fists on his sides as he bit out,

"Hello, Summer."

Summer still felt uneasy as she greeted him in return. Just as she wanted to speak up again, Mark's

deep voice could be heard as he said, "Explain to me what and why are you here."

"Since I felt too bored at home, I'm just fully utilising my break now and being more productive.
By

working here, I could also get a break from mom's constant nagging."

Jazz shrugged his shoulders as he explained. With snow falling onto his hair, he looked nonchalant
as

he

stood there grinning.

"Anyways, I'll fill up your tank fully, but you have to pay for yourself, okay, big bro? I don't want to
leave

a bad impression on my first day of work."

Crinkling his eyes slightly, Mark glanced at his brother as he said in a light tone, "Remember, since
you've made the decision in doing this, you have to take charge and own up for your actions."

"I knew you would understand. Thanks for the advice," replied Jazz in a carefree manner while
curling

his lips into a smirk.

Leaning out the window slightly, Mark passed him the money while asking, "Will you be coming
home

tonight?"

"Nope, maybe after tomorrow. By the way, Mark, I wanted to tell you something-"

He thought of continuing but just as his eyes shifted to Summer, he stopped mid-speech.

Mark was lightly knocking against the steering wheel with his knuckles and his brows were drawn together as he asked, "What is it?"

"N-nothing. You can go now. Drive safe!" Jazz said as he shook his head and waved them goodbye.

Summer blinked questioningly as she watched him. She could feel that he had something to say, but he didn't because of her presence.

'Am I overthinking?' Summer thought.

Only when he saw their black Land Rover drive away into the horizon did Jazz tear his gaze away and

let out a sigh.

Jazz actually wanted to tell Mark that he saw Raine back home as he was sure that his brother did not

know about it yet. He was also sure that she hadn't told him as well.

He wanted to give Mark a heads up, but he just couldn't do it in front of Summer.

So, Jazz decided to just let Mark find out himself as he believed that protecting Summer and waiting for

her was the only thing he should and could do for now.

6 A.M. in the next morning.

The sky was still dim, and Summer was still asleep when the door pounded loudly.

As she couldn't block out the noise, she groggily opened her eyes into slits, and they were met with a

set of toned and firmed pectorals.

Her gaze shifted downwards, and she realised her legs had wrapped around his muscular waist and clung onto him.

In a flash, all her sleep was shaken off, and she felt fully awake. With reddened cheeks, she pulled her

legs away.

Feeling ashamed, she thought, 'Since when did I start to shift around in my sleep to have ended up like this?'

'Luckily, he's not awake yet.'

Fixing her pajamas, she walked over to answer the door. Flinging the door open, she met with Gordon

who was standing right outside.

Surprised, Summer froze for a moment. When she snapped out of her trance, she instinctively stood

ramrod straight with her head held high as she greeted, "Good morning, grandpa."