

Savvy Son-in-law by VK Boy Chapter 141

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“You think I’d let your attractiveness make me treat you differently?”

“I don’t care about your words, only your actions. And your recent designs are absolute trash. Talk about falling down the ladder due to overconfidence.”

“It’s good to have boldness, but there should be a limit, or it’ll become barbaric.”

“I’m sorry, but I can’t help you.”

No matter whom Rebecca approached, be it her superiors or her fellow workers in the field, they didn’t care about her words at all. Nobody was willing to spend even five minutes and listen to her story, except for those who wanted to have a taste of her body before they could offer any help.

“I heard you’re married, but it’s still fine. I can still talk to you, if you know what I mean.”

“It doesn’t matter if you’re married or divorced, as it’s secretly common for women to rotate men. As long as I’m in that rotation, I can help you.” “A devil must have come over you for her to have made those designs, but it’s fine if she can show me the succubus in her. I will gladly give all I’ve got.” “One of the hottest women in the world, but with zero personality. Why am I not surprised? She’s making every woman very, very proud, I’m sure.” “I’d buy that bra for a dollar. No pun intended.” “She isn’t like those 100 pound stick figures you see calling themselves models. She had a flawless face, sexy body, and also a bubbly personality, I thought. I used to think my life has everything except Selena Sterling, but I don’t think that way anymore because I don’t want a daughter as stupid as Rebecca even though she rivals her mother in terms of looks. But what are looks worth when there’s no substance underneath?”

“I like her. She’s so beautiful and bold. She’s any man’s dream. She’s a blessing to men all over the world for making a bra of hope. Hope I can meet her before her body loosens up.” “So cute. So hot. So sweet, so handsome, and a working brain. I’m talking about myself, not about Rebecca Sterling.”

These sorts of comments on the web made her lose hope in men and the world, in general. She felt like she was driven to a corner as various companies broke their contracts with her. She was a brand ambassador for Myers’ clothing, but they, too, canceled their contract.

All these things happened too quickly. All in a matter of hours. She went crazy as her whole career and her name had collapsed just like that, for something she didn't do. She couldn't digest that. She couldn't accept the fate that the world was pushing on her, but how could she prove her innocence when her company's CEO himself was lying through his teeth?

If she were to call her dad and tell him everything, would he believe her? He would probably listen to what the world had to say before he would turn to her. That was the kind of man he was. As for her mother, she might be able to help, but her mother's image was already being ruined because of this incident. Would Selena still be willing to fight for her daughter even at the cost of looking ridiculous in the eyes of the world? She wasn't so sure. While Shawn might help her, it would come only at a great price.

The only one she could think of was Louis. Yes, he was a man of few words, but if it was him, there was a chance. She didn't have any enmity with him, after all.

"I should ask him to look into this matter as soon as possible. Hopefully, he'll believe my words." She hurried back to the villa, but the petrol ran out in the middle. She couldn't believe it. This had never happened before. She hit the steering wheel in anger and ended up hurting her hand.

"Ugh," she cringed in pain.

The signs were too obvious to miss. Nothing was going well for her today.

Her phone rang. She glanced, and it was from an unknown number. She took a breath and answered. "Hello?"

"What a sweet voice," the caring voice on the other side said softly, but it felt eerily familiar. Was it Donovan? She suddenly felt goosebumps all over. She immediately cut the call and put the mobile down.

"Why did that bastard call me?" a bead of sweat formed on her forehead, even though AC was running. "I should call and tell Jane everything, but this isn't the time. Sorry, Jane, but I swear I'll talk to you soon."

Her mobile received a text message. It was from Donovan. The message read: I want to meet you. What happens between us stays between us. She replied, 'fuck off,' and then blocked his number. After reading the reply, Donovan wasn't hurt. "What headweight." He felt all the more motivated to keep trying. "It's alright, though. You can act as arrogant as you want as long as I can get into your pants." He was currently sitting on a sofa in Jasmine's room, still wearing only underwear. She was preparing pizza and popcorn in the kitchen. When she came over with a bowl full of popcorn, he pulled her into his lap. The popcorn fell all around. He told her to pick them up with her mouth. Jasmine cheekily smiled and then obeyed him. As she picked up every corn piece, her lips eventually landed on his private part, but he let her touch his little brother. He let her

starve like a dog in a cage with a piece of meat outside the cage. The meat was right in front of her, and despite trying everything in her power, she couldn't taste it, at least not yet.

Meanwhile, somewhere else in the city.

Jacob was with Jane's dad, Mike Cooper, in a popular theater, advertising his film that was going to release tomorrow.

"The advance bookings are just crazy," Mike was absolutely happy. "97% occupancy in all the centers combined. If only we had released it in more theaters, this would have surely broken the all-time opening records."

"If the movie clicks, the theater owners will come looking for us, and we can still beat the all time highest grossing collections worldwide," Jacob confidently said. "Haha, it might happen. This will also serve as an automatic promotion for your next movie that's going to release at the end of this month. Though releasing at the end of a month can affect the collections a bit, the hype your first movie will create should easily cover that issue." Mike looked quite impressed. "You really are a genius, man. I wish I had your brain."

"You don't need to. Just stick with me, and I'll bring you profits." "Haha. You're not wrong. I intend to buy more apartments all around the city," Mike stated his dream. "I'll keep them for a few years and then sell them for great profits. Inflation rarely catches up with the increasing housing prices, after all."

A fat man pushed his way through the gap between these two, shocking them.

"Watch where you're going, pig," Mike scolded.

The fat guy, Christopher, turned back and wiped the sauce off his mouth. "Did you just call me a pig?" He came to buy a movie ticket because Rye's Pizzas temporarily closed for the three days, but he never thought he'd hear the word 'pig' on this day, and it completely ruined his mood.

"Yeah, I did. So what?" Mike talked back arrogantly. "Why do people like you even come to the theater? There's no seat that can bear your big ass here anyway. Just leave."

"You motherfucker..." Christopher attacked Mike like an enraged gorilla, shocking him. As he rained merciless punches on Mike, Jacob threw a swift hook punch, and Christopher fell flat on the floor and lost his consciousness. Mike then kicked Christopher until his foot hurt, and then he told the guards to throw him out. He then thanked Jacob. "You really saved me, If he had kept going, some of my bones would have broken for sure."

"You're my friend, so of course, I'd help you... even when you're wrong." Mike forced out a smile and said, "That's what friends are there for... to have each other's backs."

Jacob received a phone call. It was from Terry. He answered it quickly. "Hi, Mr. Terry. If you want some movie tickets, I can arrange for you." "So you didn't know," Terry's voice was full of suspense mixed with a tinge of pity. "Don't know what?" Jacob's expression quickly changed. "The income tax officers are raiding your villa right now," said Terry. "You didn't keep any illegal documents there, right?" "What did you say?" Jacob's face quickly turned pale. As Terry kept talking, the mobile slipped from his hand and crashed on the hard marble floor. His face metamorphosed into a stupefied, shaken-up monkey.

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CHAPTER 142 The income tax officers stayed in the villa all night, with three witnesses from the neighborhood. One of them was Mina disguised as a resident. Jacob didn't even come home. The only mobile he could reach was Rebecca, so he kept calling her and asked for progress. He told her the spots where he kept some illegal documents. She couldn't cover him for him, so she gave her mobile to Shawn, and he took care of whatever Jacob told him. Selena, on the other hand, kept asking the officers why their family was being suddenly targeted with no prior notice or anything. Even though they didn't reply at first, she didn't stop asking. At some point the Chief Commissioner grew tired and told her he received orders from the higher ups to do a raid and he had to do it even though there were no records of the Sterling family evading taxes. The officers found some illegal investments of Shawn in real estate, and some unexplained cash credits in Elizabeth's accounts. To make things worse, Dorothy also had some bullion and jewelry in her lockers, which they had to break open. They mercilessly seized everything they could from documents to dairies and jewelry to computer chips. This went on until morning, and nobody in the Sterling family had slept that night, except for George who could still somehow peacefully sleep despite all the mayhem going around him. After the officers left, Elizabeth woke her brother up with a smack on the back of his head, as she always would. "Why didn't they arrest us?" Dorothy could only wonder. "I thought they had the grounds to put us behind the bars." "Oh, they will, but there's a procedure to everything," replied Nolan. "I will be sad and alone once you go to jail." "Don't worry, dear. I'll tell them you gave me the bullion and jewelry." "Eh?"

Meanwhile, Rebecca finally got the chance to talk to Louis after he walked out of the building and sat on a bench on the lawn.

She sat on the same bench and said, "Enjoying the fresh air?",

Louis lit up a cigar and took a whiff. "Just tell me what you want." Rebecca looked a little embarrassed. "You must have heard about it by now. The whole holes-in-the-bras thing." He nodded and smiled, "That's a piss-poor idea, sis." "That's not my idea!" Rebecca quickly denied. "I was framed by my CEO." "And you know how?" "She doesn't even talk to me anymore. She doesn't want to listen to my explanation, and she fired me." "She must be quite envious of you." Rebecca took a breath. "I would have sued if not for this whole mess going on in the family. Our movies are releasing, too." "Well, any publicity is good publicity as far as movies are considered." Rebecca just shook her head. "So, I guess you want my help?" Louis asked. "Can you?" Rebecca expectantly looked at him. She used to ride on his back when she was young. He used to carry her on this same lawn. Does he still remember those times? Though she could see his eyes from a foot away, they felt strangely distant. Louis could, to an extent, understand why she came to him instead of going to Shawn or Jacob. He exhaled audibly and said, "You know why I don't let Bella work outside?"

"Because she's happy to be a housewife?"

Louis laughed. "No. You got your job without any issues and managed to become popular, but not every woman can be as lucky as you. Most of them get asked to sleep with others for them to get the job or to have some growth in their field. Men also go through this, but women have it a lot worse. I'm sure you're aware of it as well that the cut-throat competitive world of men seeks some relaxation in women, making it unsafe for women to work outside." Rebecca frowned. "Are you saying I should stop working?" "That's for the best," Louis said. "I can find a billionaire for you, and he'll go through the hardships and take care of you like you're his most prized possession." "I'm nobody's possession," Rebecca stood and started walking away. "Thanks for your unnecessary advice."

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"Haa..." Louis exhaled through the mouth and faintly smiled. "Why are you leaving? I never said I won't help."

Rebecca, however, didn't stop. Though she didn't expect the conversation to end like this, she began to understand that she didn't even need his help. When she joined her first job, her superiors asked her out for drinks on the very first week and told her how she could easily climb the ladder if she satisfied them. There were even a couple of women among them. Rebecca complained about them to the boss, but after no action was taken, she quit the job and joined another company.

Hardships had always been part of her professional life, and she didn't ask for her brothers' help before, so she felt like she should also resolve this issue with her own strength.

Rebecca went straight to her personal lawyer without the need for appointment as the lawyer was her friend, though she used to be a legal assistant until recently. She was talking with a client early in the morning. It was a married man who kept begging her to do something about a divorced woman who had trapped him and then demanded money if he didn't want their private photos and videos to be shown to his wife and children. He had already paid a lot of money to her, but that woman still kept demanding more. However, since he was also to blame, the lawyer told him to go away.

After he left, Rebecca asked, "Why didn't you take up his case? He seemed to regret what he had done."

"If he really regretted it, he would have also brought his wife here," she replied. "Anyway, you have become quite the sensation on the internet," she sarcastically said. "How did you come up with such ridiculous designs? Were you drunk when you made them?"

"Sheila, listen..." Rebecca told her the whole story. "Can you help me?" "Of course, I can. And I will."

Sheila's straightforward reply boosted Rebecca's confidence a lot. "Thank you. Thanks a lot."

"Don't mention it. We're friends. Just go home and take a rest. It'll take a couple of days to prepare the documents."

"Okay."

After Rebecca left, Sheila called the CEO Rebecca used to work for and told her everything. "I can stretch the case for months or years if you want, but it'll be costly."

"Don't worry about the money, miss," replied the CEO in a soft voice. "I can pay you ten times the amount she's paying. I'll give you free tickets to male fashion shows all across the country if you want."

Sheila's face lit up. "I'd really appreciate that."

"I'm glad you are so understanding."

Sheila ended the call and was all smiles. "Oh, my lovely Rebecca... you came at the right time to make me rich. I'll milk as much money as I can from you Sterlings so I can settle for life."

At the moment, Sheila had no clue that Mina was hearing her conversation from outside the walls.

Mina just sighed and thought, "This outside world is just as fucked up as the last time I was out and about. I regret leaving the clan, even though I get to taste a variety of ice creams here."

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Rebecca came home after meeting with Sheila the lawyer. Veronica was taking the children to the movie, so she thought of Benjamin for a second. She wanted to watch with him, but she wasn't in the mood right now. "I wonder what he's doing. Should I call and tell him to go and watch the movie alone?" she pondered

In Elizabeth's room, Shawn slapped his wife repeatedly even after she began crying. "70 freaking million! You think money is water? Who told you to buy a house and a private jet?" "I-I... I'm sorry," she apologized in a crying tone. "I won't buy anything without asking you again." Her whole face turned red.

Seeing her like that, Shawn gritted his teeth. "Come here." She was shaking as he hesitantly approached him, thinking he was going to hit her again. However, he hugged her tightly and kissed her on the head. "Don't make me hit you again," Shawn's eyes slightly teared up, though no tears leaked out from the corners of his eyes. "I'm afraid we'll have to sell all those things you bought." "A-At least keep the house," she said in a soft, meek tone. "Our children like it." "Haa... I'll think about it." Nolan and Dorothy, on the other hand, were in their guest room, cursing the entire Sterling family because they lost their gold. "That bastard Jacob didn't even come home. His movies are more important than his family!" Nolan was gnashing his old teeth. "We shouldn't have married our daughter into this family!" "Let's see what happens," Dorothy said patiently. "Our daughter is still young and is in good shape. It won't be hard for her to find another man."

At Pure Waters bar.

Alfred strode into the bar with five movie tickets. There were no customers in the bar at the moment.

"Are those what I think they are?" Shadow asked.

Alfred grinned and looked at Benjamin who was still asleep. "Did he drink excessively last night as well?"

"I think he's numbing the pain with it," Shadow lowered his head slightly and sighed. "He doesn't stop no matter how much I tell him." "At least he's not lashing out in rage like his dad used to after drinking," Alfred chortled. "Anyway, this has to be expected since he fell in love with a woman full of issues. Daddy issues. Mominy issues. Sibling issues and what not. From what I can tell, nobody has been emotionally available for her when she needed it. Master Benjamin also sort of went through the same thing, being forced to fight for freedom and all... Maybe that's why he feels a connection with her? It's just my guess." "I heard people say love can shatter hearts like glass," Shadow voiced his mind, his voice full

of worry. "I just hope this thing called 'love' doesn't shatter his heart." "Hoping isn't all we can do," Alfred waved the movie tickets in his hand. Shadow somewhat grinned and gave a thumbs-up. "You haven't gone senile yet."

Elsewhere in the city.

Jacob was giving an interview to a popular radio station. He talked about his movies and the latest release *El Man*. Everything was going great until one of the female hosts asked, "Is it true that you didn't want to pay the tax, and so you made films with hundreds of millions?"

"I have always paid my taxes, my lady," Jacob replied with a smile. "Tax to the government is like mother's milk to the baby. If we don't feed our babies well, they'll look and act like you after growing up." The female host began crying almost instantly, but Jacob couldn't care less. He shook hands with the other hands and concluded the interview. After walking out of the interview, Jacob took out his mobile. He had it switched off since morning because of the tax raid.

"It's natural for the raids to happen before big movies are released, but Terry told me they weren't gonna raid me this time. He was dead wrong. At least Shawn hid the documents, so I'm safe."

He switched the mobile on. He had to, given the movie would be screened in the theaters pretty soon, and he would be receiving a lot of calls and messages. He was slightly shivering. The hairs on his arms stood up. "It's been a while since I felt this... thrill, haha." He laughed lightly. "I'm going to become a billionaire soon!"

At Terry's office.

Terry, Langdon, and David were talking with a stranger covering his face with a mask. "It's all done, right?" asked Terry.

"You can rest assured, sir," the masked man replied in a confident but snickering attitude. "Everything is going as planned."

"It better, or your whole life will be ruined and will be played in a theater exclusively for your family."

"Y-Yeah. I'm aware."

After the masked man left to the guest room, Terry glanced at David with a rather confused expression. "How come the SWAT teams were called back?"

"The vice-president called them back."

"What?" Terry was shocked. "These damned mafias have connections with someone that high up the ladder?"

"Well, they used to very much control the government in the past, so it's no surprise," David remarked. "By the way, my son sent some bodyguards to deal with the son-in-law, but they all died. I told him to stop going after him until we corner that bastard. I have a feeling he's probably connected with the mafia."

"Doesn't matter. We should just fuck up everything he's connected with," Langdon opined.

Since he works at Rye's Pizzas, I'll talk with their CEO and get him fired. You just make sure that bastard Rodnie never gets out."

Terry nodded. "Not as long as I have my position."

At Jane's apartment.

Rebecca just arrived, but she wasn't allowed to enter their flat. Jane's mother stopped Rebecca outside.

"Aunt Catherine," Rebecca was annoyed to say the least. "She doesn't lift my calls, and you're now letting me inside? What the hell is happening?" "I don't know, either," Catherine looked confused just the same. "She told me she would rather die than see your face." "What?" Rebecca couldn't believe what she was hearing.

"Can you tell me what happened?" Catherine asked, her voice turning cold. "She broke up with Donovan, and she doesn't want to talk to you. I don't want to jump to conclusions because you're her childhood friend, but..." Rebecca's heart shook for a second. Her heart picked up pace, not liking where this was going. "N-No, no, no. There's nothing like that."

"Here you are," Donovan, who had been secretly eavesdropping, now entered the scene and put his hand around Rebecca's shoulder and showered a cocky smile at Catherine. "Why are you wasting your time with these low-lives?"

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CHAPTER 144 “Get your hands off me!” Rebecca pushed Donovan away, which didn’t surprise him. “I think I’ve seen enough,” Catherine glared at Rebecca. “Don’t ever show your face around here again.” She shut the door in Rebecca’s face.

“Wait!” Rebecca shouted. “You’ve misunderstood me, Aunt Catherine.” She knocked on the door five times, but there was no response.

Donovan again put his hand on her shoulder. She turned to slap him, but he caught her hand. “Let go of me,” she yanked her hand, but his grip was so hard she couldn’t free herself.

“I’m not possessive like your husband,” Donovan grinned, “but I’m sure I can definitely please you better than he ever can.”

She went for a slap with the other hand. Again, he caught her and amusedly smiled. He was taller and stronger, but that didn’t intimidate her. However, what bothered her was that there were people watching, and they made no attempt to intervene. “I’m the kind of guy who doesn’t take shit,” Donovan’s voice grew rough and sharp like a cutting wind. “If you slap me, I’ll slap you back.” Saying that, he let go of her arms. “If cruel romance is your kind of thing, there’s no better mate than me around.” Rebecca’s blood was boiling. “I won’t warn you again. If you bother me once more, I’ll make you regret it for the rest of your life.” She walked off, but he didn’t stop her this time. He turned around and stared at her back and mumbled under his breath, “She’s a whole snack.” He took his mobile out and took some snapshots. “Can’t wait to get my hands on all this wealth.” He licked the mobile screen once.” Hehe.”

He then dialed a number. “Hello, Blackbear. It’s me.” “Yes, Mr. Donovan. How is Jasmine?”

“She’s perfect, but it’s not about her. I have a favor to ask.”

“Anything. Just ask.”

“I want some dirt on a woman,” Donovan said. “I’ll send you her picture.”

“What if we couldn’t find dirt?”

“Just create it.”

“Haha. Alright.”

Meanwhile, Rebecca drove to her home. Just when she got home, she received a call from Benjamin.

She was in a bad mood, so she cut the call.

He called again.

She pursed her lips and answered. “If it’s about the movie, I’m not coming.”

Benjamin fell silent. He was about to ask her to come to the movie, but how did she know? “P Please, Rebecca. I want to watch this movie with you.” He asked like an innocent child requesting his caretakers.

Her mood was still pretty bad because of everything happening, be it her professional or personal life. However, she remembered that it was in fact a movie that had helped her when she was a kid and was sick.

Moreover, did she ever go to a movie together with Benjamin? No. “Alright, but I’m not sure if I can get the tickets or not,” she replied tentatively. “I have the tickets, so don’t worry,” Benjamin excitedly said. “Should I come and pick you up?”

“How long do we have?”

“Thirty minutes.” “There’s no time for me to get ready.” “S-Sorry,” Benjamin wanted to slap himself. He had been sleeping all this while. If not for Shadow, he wouldn’t have woken up. “Just text me the location. I’ll come myself.”

“Sure.”

The call ended, and Rebecca sucked in a burdened breath. In the past decade or so, every time she went to a theater, it was with Jane. Now, the whole situation with Jane made her feel strange. “How can she misunderstand like that? Doesn’t she know what kind of person I am?” she gritted her teeth as she remembered Jane once accusing her of stealing her purse back in the college and searched her whole luggage. However, the bag was later found in another classmate’s room. Jane had forgotten it there. “Come to think of it, once she doubts something, she’s quick to jump to conclusions. But how am I going to prove my innocence this time?”

“Should I record a video of Donovan trying to make me fall for him?” she shook her head. “No. There’s no guarantee she’ll believe it. What if she thinks we’re both playing a game together? That’ll make things worse.”

“Ah,” she touched her forehead. “All this thinking is giving me a headache. If I watch an action movie now, it’ll only worsen, but I said I’ll come, so I have no choice.”

A few minutes later.

Rebecca arrived at the theater, and Benjamin was ready to open the car door for her. When she got out, however, he gave her a quick hug. “Thanks for coming.”

Though she was initially surprised, it somewhat helped ease her mood a little. “You asked, and it’s my dad’s movie, so…”

“Yeah, but you have already seen the movie, so, you coming here to watch it again really makes me happy.”

Rebecca just smiled in return. “Hey, by the way, when are you going to shave this beard? It’s as big as my hand now.”

“Let’s go. There’s no time.” Benjamin caught her hand and took her into the theater.

Almost all the seats were full. They sat in the middle row, a perfect spot to watch the movie without needing to lift or lower one’s head. The two seats on either side of them were empty. Alfred was sitting one seat away from Benjamin, busy chewing on popcorn and watching ads playing on the screen.

“The movie is about to start, but these people haven’t come yet,” Rebecca wondered. “Traffic issues, maybe?” Meanwhile, outside the theater.

“I haven’t watched a movie in theaters for decades,” Mina was fuming at Shadow. “You better give me that ticket, or I’ll break your bones.”

“No,” Shadow didn’t even take a second to reply. Benjamin had told him to keep the seats on either side of them empty, so even though he wanted to watch the movie, his lord’s wishes were of higher priority than his own.

“You really have a death wish, don’t you?” the veins on Mina’s arms swelled in size, and she vehemently clawed at Shadow. “Die!”

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CHAPTER 145 While the advertisements played on the screen, Rebecca noticed that Benjamin was looking at her instead of looking at the screen.

She acted like she didn't notice it, but then a minute passed, and he was still at it. She couldn't act anymore. Turning her head, she looked at him. "Is something wrong?" Benjamin lifted his hand and gently stroked her cheek with his tentative fingertip. Her eyes closed, and she could feel his touch all the more. It felt like he was probing for something. As his finger moved along her jaw, her lips pursed. When the fingertip reached the chin, her lips and chin together trembled. He curled his finger in.

She slowly opened her eyes, looking flushed and slightly happy. Her expression made her look even more beautiful. Would there be a more perfect time to kiss? He felt really tempted to kiss her. Rebecca was also licking her lips, trying to cope with the situation.

Alfred got out of his seat and walked away. (Dammit. I really wanted to watch the movie. I guess I'll have to book for another show.)

The movie titles started playing. Seconds were passing, but Benjamin was neither looking at her, nor was he touching her. She slightly moved her hand so that her arm touched his arm. She didn't want to look obvious, so she was really careful and vague with her approach. But ever since the movie started, Benjamin's eyes were glued to the screen. She couldn't help but feel angry and jealous because she thought he was going to play with her for longer times, but he just messed with her for a minute and then began enjoying the movie.

(This isn't fair.)

She wanted his attention no matter what. Because it was dark in the theater, nobody would notice her actions anyway, so this gave her the courage to want to act. But how should she proceed? If it was Jane, she would lure a man's attention by seduction, but Rebecca never tried that in the past. All the time, it was the men who begged her during every date. She didn't have the experience of chasing a man, much less being the aggressor in a romantic relationship. Just thinking about it made her heart ring in her ears, though it wasn't painful but plain pleasing.

After thinking for a little while, she copied his approach. She turned and kept staring at him, hoping he'd notice her just the same way she had taken note of him.

As she kept looking at him, a lot of thoughts rushed through her mind. Until a few weeks ago, she wasn't even willing to make her relationship public with this man, but now, she was sitting next to him and watching a movie. What changed? Maybe, she could no

longer hide the fact that she could feel his love? Maybe it was something different. She wasn't sure what changed, but she didn't regret this new chapter of her life.

She kept staring at him. Perhaps, it was the power in her eyes, or the wanting of her heart, Benjamin casually turned his head and found Rebecca looking at him.

But she quickly looked away like a shy doe. Benjamin wondered for a second before leaning in and giving her a quick peck on the cheek

before getting back to watching the movie. Even though he didn't seem that excited, Rebecca found herself breathing slow and heavy. She wanted to return the favor, so she also gave a quick peck on his cheek, pleasantly surprising him..

When his attention shifted to her, she flushed beautifully. He raised his hands and gently caught her adorable little face. While she was thrilled by the touch of his hands and ended up tilting her head a bit to the side, his face kept coming closer and closer until his lips pressed against her lips. Her eyes widened as both their pretty pink lips softly pressed together while their eyes were still open and taking in all the visual love.

Neither moved back. Their breaths were exchanged through the nose, and their scents stimulated each other like never before. His upper lip softly thrust into the gap between her lips like an artful slug. At the same time, her lower lip achieved the same, and they got a taste of each other's lips, probably for the first time as far as they could remember. Their whole bodies bloomed and felt thrilled with goosebumps. It was like swimming in a river of youthfulness, as the sea of love welled up in both of them and drowned the other. They both experienced what a kiss really felt, as this heavenly experience brought a sweet suffocating pain upon their souls. Benjamin moved his head back slowly, and both their lips stretched a bit in the process.

Rebecca did not expect this before coming to the theater, but she should have known what she was getting into when she kept staring at him nonstop, and even dared to kiss him on the cheek.

Either way, it was her first kiss. It was a clean and pure kiss with their tongues never touching in the process, so she had no regrets. It wasn't mind-boggling, but it definitely hardened her nipples. And the AC in the theater only made things much more difficult to cope with.

Rebecca wanted more, but she didn't want to be rude. Though she had seen the movie, he didn't, so she patiently bore all the emotions and fought back the urges of her flesh.

All this happened in the first twenty minutes since the movie started.

The movie was so engaging until this point, nobody in the theater said a word, but this was where things started going South bit by bit. The quality of the post production

suddenly dropped, whether it be the rerecording, editing, background score and what not.

With every passing minute, Benjamin's expression also gradually changed.

By the time the movie reached the thirty minute mark, the people got angry by how rapidly the movie became so unbearable. Many of them began to scream at the owner, thinking there was some fault with the screening equipment or something. However, things didn't change, and it got to the point where people threw food and bottles at the screen.

Many frustrated folks walked out before the movie even got to the half point. Benjamin looked at Rebecca who had a bewildered expression.

"Are you okay?" he asked. She turned to him with a worried look, "Something must have gone wrong. This wasn't the movie I watched last time. They must have released the wrong version of the print. I should call my dad."

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Rebecca tried calling her dad, but his number was busy all the time. She apologized to Benjamin and walked out of the theater. He said he would accompany her, but she said it was her family issue, so he couldn't tag along with her.

If only her family also trusted him like she did, how wonderful his married life would have been? Meanwhile, seeing the audience leave the theater, ranting about how crappy the production values were, Mina laughed like a hyena on drugs.

"I'm glad I didn't watch it," she boasted. "Shouldn't you be thanking me?" Shadow asked. "If not for me, you would have suffered like the audience."

"Hmph! Don't try your luck with me, boy," Mina glared at him before leaving, as she had to follow Rebecca.

Shadow went over to Benjamin and sat on his bike. "Is the movie really that bad, my lord?" "It was really engaging for the first fifteen minutes, but then..." Benjamin shook his head. "The quality turned horrible. I think someone who's envious of Jacob did this." "Maybe it's that damned judge. Just give me the permission to kill him, my lord. If we let him live, he'll cause more trouble."

“First, find out if it’s him or not. We’ll decide what to do afterward.”

“Got it.”

At the same time, Veronica, Elizabeth and her family came rushing out of another theater and got into their car and quickly left the place. “How could he not check the print before releasing?” Veronica was grinding her teeth so hard it hurt her head.

“Normally, Father-in-law is so thorough,” Elizabeth wondered. “But the movie we watched back then was so good, but this one’s poorly edited. I couldn’t watch it.” “If it’s like this in other theaters as well,” George could only wonder, “just imagine how badly it’ll affect the weekend collections. People will even cancel their bookings. Father-in-law should act as fast as possible and release the correct print. Otherwise, the damage will be irreversible.”

Nolan was driving the car, with Dorothy sitting in the back. They both hiddenly smiled and laughed and wanted to see Jacob’s face right now.

Veronica checked online websites for reviews, and people were already leaving extremely poor reviews, even though the first show was yet to finish its full screen time. This just showed how much the movie disappointed or angered them.

Some of the reviews were just too harsh. They just ripped the movie apart. “You call this a movie? It’s a perfect pill to lose your mind in thirty minutes!”

“The movie would have been a lot better in the hands of an amateur editor. I’m afraid people who survived even train wrecks can’t survive watching this 150 min debacle!”

“EL Man, yes, indeed, but beware, L stands for Loser.” “To think I bought a ticket for the first day first show for this crap... fuck my life.” Veronica’s heart pounded against her chest from reading the reviews. If she was feeling this bad, then how much worse should her father be feeling? In a theater owned by Mike, Jane’s dad. Jacob was talking with the satellite company that was supposed to distribute the movie to the screens all around the world. “What the hell do you mean your servers were hacked, and you lost the original hard-drives?” Jacob howled in utter rage. “Is this some sort of a joke? Do you have any fucking idea how much I’m getting fucked right now?” “We’re extremely sorry, sir, but we need you to bring us another copy. You have it ready, right?”

Jacob gritted. “I have to go and get it from my editing department. I’ll bring it in an hour.” He ended the call. “You should first make a press statement,” Mike advised. “Otherwise, people will be confused. But if you promise them, you should also be able to deliver. If you fuck up again, then there’s no saving the movie.” “I’ll give you an audio message. Just send it to the news channels.” Mike nodded. “That should do it, too.” After Jacob left, Mike received a call from his wife. “What’s up, Catherine? I’m busy right now.”

“This is important. Is Jacob next to you?”

“No, why?”

“Listen...” she explained everything that had happened between Jane, Donovan, and Rebecca. “What? Are you sure about this?” “100% sure. Jane hasn’t even eaten anything since yesterday,” she said in a crying tone. “What do you want me to do?” Mike asked. “That’s the big question.” “I want you to make Rebecca and his father pay for what they did,” she angrily yelled. “Erase the smile from their faces.”

“I’ll see what I can do. Keep an eye on Jane till I come home,” saying that, Mike ended the call

at am I supposed to do now? If I don’t do what she says, she’ll make my life hard at home. If I do what she says, I won’t be able to sleep peacefully, either.”

Meanwhile, Benjamin was driving aimlessly. Shadow was no longer sitting in the back seat.

“I wasn’t planning to kiss her, but then I ended up kissing her,” he flushed and daydreamed.” It felt so good. Mm?” He noticed that he was being followed. Not just by one vehicle but a lot of them, both in the front and the back. “What do we have here...”

At Bonsbell’s mansion. “Young Master, it’s still not too late,” Luther was warning. “Tell those men to abort. Last time, I made use of the situation and got away without having to reveal my identity, but this time, it’s different.”

Artur was watching the live video of the bikes and cars chasing Benjamin. “Since 12 failed, I sent 100 this time. If they get him, it’s good, but if they fail, I’m at least going to see how he’ll deal with them.”

“You are putting your head in the tiger’s mouth, Young Master,” Luther’s hairs were standing straight. He still vividly remembered how his best unit was utterly thrashed by a couple of guys working at a pizza shop. It was so humiliating he wished he could forget about it. “That’s just your perception,” Artur smirked. “If you use my eyes, you’ll see I’m so close to shoving a bomb up his ass. He’s pretty much surrounded now. I can get him shot from every direction, but I want to see his fighting skills myself.”

Luther could only shake his head. (He doesn’t get it. He’s writing his own death. That son-in law was swift and terrifying. Unless you catch him in his sleep, there’s no chance of winning.)

“More than his fighting skills, I want to see him cry,” Artur voiced his mind. “Rebecca is a goddess, but what is he? A piss-poor bastard who smells like pizzas shouldn’t be on the same bed with my chick. No, he doesn’t even deserve to be in her life.”

“Young Master...” Luther went out of his way to try one last time. “I was obsessed with a woman like you are now. And then I married her. I called her a princess and what not, but now we can’t even stand to be in the same room.”

“Then why didn’t you divorce?” asked Artur without even looking. “And lose everything?” Luther was quick to reply. “My money. My kids...” “What’s your point, Luther?” “Don’t stress yourself for a pretty face. It’s not worth it.”

“Huh, are you afraid that I’ll finish the mission which you failed to do?” Artur looked confident. “Unlike you, I’ll finish the mission that I started, so just keep watching.” He then gave his men the order. “I want him utterly beaten and thrown at my feet. The man to do it will receive a million dollars.”

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“What the hell happened here?” Steve and many other police who arrived at a private golf course built in the middle of a forest were shocked by what awaited them. A bloody scene they had never seen before.

Hundred men were littered around the field along with bikes and other vehicles parked here and there.

Some were hacked to death. Some were decapitated. Some had their limbs severed. This was without a doubt the most gruesome scene he had ever seen.

He bent down and observed one of the dead men, lying on the grass, shocked and his eyes wide open and full of horror. “The fear in those eyes... He must have seen others die around him. He must be utterly stunned to the point his eyes stayed open even after death.” Steve began sweating without realizing.

Some other police recognized a few of those men. “These guys are street thugs from all around the city. Most of them have multiple murder and rape charges against them.”

Steve’s brows knitted together. “Why were such bastards roaming freely in the city?”

“The governor. After he came to power, he began releasing criminals from prison whenever he could. I think he released over five hundred criminals in the last two years.”

Steve's blood boiled. "We work so hard to catch them, but these damned corrupt politicians make all our efforts look silly with just their signatures. I'm sure the CCTV footage will be tampered, and we'll find nothing there. But still, who could have done this? It's too hard – boiled even for the mafia. They generally cut ears, fingers, and balls, but this... it's middle ages stuff."

"Let our superiors do their job. We don't want to dive into this rabbit hole." "Ah, fuck this job, man." Steve could only gasp in annoyance.

At Pure Waters bar.

"You did what?" Benjamin was stunned by what Shadow just said. He had escaped from the chase after making the thugs chase like hell on a golf course and confusing them. However, now, Shadow came and told him he took care of them all. All hundred of them.

"They were badmouthing you, my lord," Shadow bluntly stated. "They were asking to be killed, and they're all goons, so there's no need to feel for them." Benjamin clenched his fists. "Leave. Go back to the clan."

"What?" Shadow was startled. "But, my lord..."

"If you want to keep shedding blood at every possible instance, don't stay around me," Benjamin ordered. "You're not helping me."

Shadow kneeled and lowered his head. "I promise I won't kill another person without your permission, so please let me stay."

Benjamin exhaled audibly. His expression was stressful because he was worrying about the families of the hundred thugs that Shadow had killed. He didn't want to forgive Shadow so easily. "I will let you stay if you compensate for the families of the dead."

"I will, my lord," Shadow didn't hesitate to reply. If that decision would help him stay closer to his lord, why would he even need to think twice? Even though he was planning to also kill Artur, he had to delay that plan for the time being.

At Artur's mansion.

Artur was sitting at the dining table, but when he grabbed the fork, he realized that his hand was shaking. He quickly put the fork down. What had happened not long ago flashed in his mind. It was worse than the most horrifying video game he ever played. One after another, all the hundred men he sent had fallen right before his eyes, and he didn't even know the reason. Could it be the son-in-law who did it? He didn't know, but Luther said it was definitely him.

Artur even checked who the golf course belonged to, thinking it might have been them who did it, but he knew the Bisonsleys. They probably weren't behind such gruesome killing. Now, he sort of understood why Luther had told him to not mess with the son-in-law of the Sterling family, but his pride didn't allow him to bear the shame, which was why Luther was no longer standing by his side. He had sent his bodyguard off to hire all the professional bodyguards he could and bring them to the mansion. Artur's phone rang. He wasn't in the mood to pick it up, but it was Shawn calling. He mused for a second and answered.

"Mr. Artur, you must have heard what happened. I need some quick cash to settle some things," Shawn tried to sound as casual and confident as he could. "I'll pay you back in a year." "How much?" Artur took his time to ask.

"100 million."

"Huh," Artur gasped. "I know you're a capable man, senior, but I can't give that much without taking collateral. My dad will whip my ass with his favorite belt." Shawn frowned. "I'll think about it and call back soon." "Sure. Take your time." Artur hung up and snorted. "Hundred million? Would that be enough to pull yourself out the shit you've put yourself into?"

Shawn, meanwhile, was at Ducksbelly restaurant, waiting for his friend, Brandon Conreid. However, he received a text message from Brandon saying he fell sick, so he wasn't going to come.

"He didn't even say a customary sorry." Shawn squeezed the mobile hard in frustration. "Where's the order?" he shouted at the waiter that was passing by. "Is your chef fucking sleeping in the kitchen?"

The manager hurriedly rushed over and tried to calm Shawn down, but Shawn scolded him and walked out of the restaurant without eating anything even though he had already paid for them.

At the same time, Jacob reached his editor team's office, only to hear that his system was hacked, and he lost the fully edited print. Moreover, the preservationist was missing, so the hard copy that was supposed to be with him was missing, too.

At this point, Jacob realized something wasn't right. He was releasing the movie by himself

instead of selling it to the distributors all over the country, so he would incur huge losses if the movie were to fail. So he immediately made calls so that the movie wouldn't be screened at the theaters anymore.

The choice was heartbreaking, but he didn't sit in his car and cry as to why this was happening to him. He took risky decisions one after another and worked so that he

could release the re edited version again, though this would cost him much more money.

Jacob then gave interviews to the media, explaining that there were some technical issues, and the film that was released was not the final product they had planned to release. When the reporters asked how much money he was expecting to lose from this incident, he didn't answer.

After spending the whole day, not giving his neurons rest even for a second, Jacob was extremely tired. However, he didn't go home. He went to Terry's home, and Terry welcomed him with a comforting hug.

"I'm so sorry for what happened," Terry patted Jacob's back. "I assure you I'll get to the bottom of this."

"Thanks." Jacob really needed those comforting words. After that, they drank together and talked some more.

Once Jacob left, Terry looked extremely happy. "One needs to be super rich to produce a movie, but whether you stay rich or not depends on the fate of the movie. In a short while, you will become so poor you won't even have the face to ask for my help, Jacob. I wonder what you will do when you are no longer able to produce movies. I wonder what you'll do when you realize your son-in-law is the cause for your downfall."

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After the most horrible day of his life, Jacob didn't sleep for long and woke up early the next day. He had always been a fighter, and he didn't let the El Man disaster defeat him. His family expressed their sympathies, which was the only positive thing that had happened in the past twenty four hours.

He began working hard to make things right, but the main actress of the El Man movie came forward and publicly stated that Jacob harassed her both mentally and physically. This led to a chain of confessions from other female actresses from Jacob's previous films. This whole issue not only made Jacob's life difficult, it made Selena's life difficult to the point she couldn't even attend her shoots. There were some audio leaks of Jacob flirting with the actresses, so whether he actually slept with them or not, Selena didn't even want to talk about it with him.

After that, nobody in the Sterling villa was talking with Jacob. Selena didn't even let Kathy go near Jacob anymore. However, what hurt Jacob more than the movie failure and more than his wife's change of attitude was that his own daughters avoided him.

The loss of money felt little compared to the loss of respect in his daughters' eyes. Jacob had paid half the people that had financed him for his movies, but there were still half left. Mike was also among them, and they regularly visited the villa and made rude remarks. Mike frankly stated that he wouldn't even let the movies release until Jacob paid all the money.

As a result, Jacob couldn't even sleep properly. He began drinking and spending more time with Terry and Langdon, telling them his worries, instead of working extra-time on his movies. Moreover, they made him gamble and lose even more money. Jacob's wealth dropped by millions with every passing day. He had to secretly sell his illegal properties, too, to get past every new hurdle that popped up.

Terry, Langdon, and David together made sure to put constant pressure on Jacob, Selena, Shawn, and Rebecca.

Sheila, Rebecca's lawyer, had already taken an advance payment of 3 million dollars for the defamation and fraud case Rebecca filed against her company and its CEO. Rebecca was left with only 32 million dollars after that.

Shawn, on the other hand, had already sold every asset he had except for the house Elizabeth bought. He would have also sold that, but he felt it was necessary since he predicted that the time for selling the villa was nearing.

Jacob was a prideful man. He could have asked Selena or his daughter for money, but he chose not to. Whether Selena would have paid for him or not was an entirely different topic in itself though.

Jacob put all hopes on his two movies. In order to release his films, he had decided to auction the villa. He was confident that he could buy a better place once his films were to become box office hits. Nobody other than Veronica objected to selling the villa, and Jacob told Veronica to just buy the villa in the auction if she liked the villa so much.

Because a lot of things were at stake, Shawn put pressure on Elizabeth, so she had been trying to find a job so he wouldn't sell all her costly belongings she bought over the years.

George and his parents were still feeding off of the wealth of the Sterlings.

Veronica, on the other hand, left the villa and began staying at her friend's house and dated a different man every day as she grew desperate to find the right man fast.

While Jacob, Selena, and their children were busy with their rapidly changing lives, Benjamin's life got so boring and repetitive the past couple of weeks. He would go to work in the morning, then stay at Pure Waters at night and try to talk to Rebecca over the phone. She had asked him to give her some time as she needed to focus on her career, so there was nothing he could do. He couldn't even give her missed calls, not wanting to disturb her. Since Mina was still guarding Rebecca, he didn't worry about Rebecca's safety. If there was any entertainment, it was competing with Damian during the pizza delivery that gave Benjamin some mental relief. Their friendship grew from calling each other with their first names to calling each other as brothers. On one evening, Damian tagged along with Benjamin because he was invited for a drink. Sasha also came along because Benjamin invited her, too.

While Damian and Sasha danced in the crowd, Benjamin just watched them from his couch, and only he knew what he was thinking. Shadow came over and sat on the couch before picking up a handful of roasted nuts. "They are auctioning the villa tomorrow. Do you want me to... buy it?" Benjamin thought for a second and shook his head. "Do you... want to buy it?" asked Shadow. Benjamin shook his head again. "What if she doesn't stay with you after leaving the villa, my lord?" Benjamin's heart skipped a beat. He glanced at Shadow. "You don't know that."

"I said 'what if?..."

Benjamin sucked in a deep breath and audibly exhaled. "I want her to choose me even when I don't have a big building under my name. Hopefully, she will." His eyes looked around casually, and he noticed a familiar face in the crowd. It was Jane, dancing with her girlfriend. Jane also coincidentally looked at him, with her semi-drunk gaze. She seemed more surprised than he was. She whispered something to her friend before walking over to his spot.

"How are you doing?" she asked in a bit of a pitiful tone. In her mind, she was thinking that Benjamin was devastated just like her after he came to know that Rebecca was having an affair with Donovan. She couldn't even compare her love with Donovan to Benjamin's love with Rebecca. He practically worshiped her like she was some sort of a divine being, and yet he was betrayed.

"I'm fine," Benjamin gestured to her to sit down. She sat next to him and grabbed a wine bottle. "Are you still in a relationship with Donovan?" "Huh? Of course, not!" she barked. "What do I look like to you?"

"Whoa, I was just asking." "Hmph," she snorted and then noticed that Benjamin still had his wedding ring. "Wait, why do you still wear that ring?"

"What do you mean?" Benjamin frowned. He took her question in a different way. Was she suggesting that he should reconsider his relationship with Rebecca now that the Sterling family had lost a lot of their wealth and were also selling away their villa? Was that what she meant?

“What do I mean?” Jane snapped. “Yeah, hic, I mean, you became a slave of the Sterlings for her for how long? A year? But what did she do in return for you? I don’t know, but I bet she didn’t even take pity on you. I tried changing her mind, but clearly, she ended up changing someone else’s mind. To think she was my best friend for so many years...” just thinking about Rebecca’s betrayal stirred her intestines.

Benjamin looked clueless. He couldn’t tell why Jane seemed to be mad at Rebecca, but he thought they might have quarreled about something recently. “She’s your best friend. You shouldn’t be talking behind her back like this.”

“She WAS my best friend,” Jane had eight big gulps of wine and burped a little. “I didn’t leave my room for four days because of what she did, and then I thought... why should I suffer and

rot when she’s the one who should be suffering and rotting. I wanted to make her pay, but God is there. He’s making the entire Sterling family pay.’

Benjamin was a bit bewildered. Was Jane scolding Rebecca for telling the truth about Donovan? For causing her to break up with her boyfriend? It felt bizarre, to say the least. “You should stop,” he advised. “I think the wine is getting to your head.” “Let it get to wherever it wants,” Jane blurted. “I just hope I can do something that can make Rebecca cry as much as I did.”

Benjamin didn’t like what he was hearing. “I think you should go home.” He tried to snatch the bottle out of her hand, but she didn’t let him.

“This is my second home,” Jane sipped some more wine. “You have no idea how many guys I ...” She suddenly remembered that she and Rebecca used to come to this place in the past, and this boiled her blood. The acids in her stomach burned. “What’s the point in bragging about how many boyfriends you’ve had?” Benjamin’s voice reached her ears. “To tell everyone just how unsuccessful you were in making a working relationship?” as he kept talking, she turned to look at him. “I think you should take a step back and understand why your relationships are failing.” He swiftly snatched the bottle from her hand and giggled as he achieved what he was after, but then Jane’s hands firmly grabbed his face. Before he understood what was happening, she buried her face into his face with her whole momentum behind it, firmly pressing her lips into his lips.

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There was a wine glass in one bottle and a wine bottle in the other hand. There was no time for Benjamin to react the moment Jane grabbed his face out of nowhere.

Moreover, before he could even comprehend why she suddenly lay hands on his face, she was upon him like a wind washing all over him.

Her lips firmly pressed into his lips as she used all the momentum she could muster. Her eyes were closed, but his eyes weren't. His eyes were far from closing. His heart jumped into his throat as shock shook his soul.

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Shadow who had been sitting on the edge of the couch watched with his mouth wide-open and all the half-chewed nuts up for view.

Unlike Rebecca who never kissed anyone before on the lips, Jane was a supreme expert as far as kissing was considered. Benjamin's spine bent backward in response, but she kept pressing forward, sucking his lips into her mouth so she could then force her tongue into his mouth. Benjamin's hands dropped the bottle and the glass before pushing her away so hard she crashed back on the sofa.

However, she got a bright smile on her face. She liked how rough he was. "I wasn't expecting such strength from you. No wonder you could beat that cheater Donovan." She licked her lips once. "But I must say your lips taste really well, and you didn't even apply any flavor, did

you?"

Her voice barely reached Benjamin's ears because of the loud music going on in the background. Benjamin clenched his fist. His veins swelled, starting from the hand and traveled all the way up to his neck. He was stepping forward, but Shadow flashed in his path. "Control yourself, my lord," Shadow sent a mental message, his hand pressing against Benjamin's chest. "Your eyes are turning."

Benjamin immediately looked away and shut his eyes. Damian, who was looking in the direction while dancing with Sasha, wondered. (Is she his wife?)

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"Take her as far away from here as possible," Benjamin yelled and ran into the basement.

Shadow swiveled and coldly stared at Jane. "Do you have any idea what you've done? If I hadn't stepped in..."

"Who the hell are you?" Jane was annoyed. "And where did Benjamin go? To the toilet?"

Shadow didn't respond. In fact, he couldn't. A lot of thoughts flooded through his mind. (This woman dared to tempt my lord... on a new moon night of all nights. I wish I could cut her into a million pieces right now.) He held in the anger as much as he could.

"I asked you a question. Are you deaf?"

Shadow raised his middle finger, shocking her.

"How dare you show me your attitude when I was asking you nicely!" Jane stood and swung her hand, aiming his left cheek, but she completely missed hitting him. Shadow was still in her sight, but he was just standing far enough that her hand couldn't reach him. She quickly

stepped forth and tried slapping once more, but she missed again.

Gritting her teeth, she picked up a wine bottle and threw it at him rather recklessly. He slipped out of the bottle's path like an elusive wind, and the bottle ended up hitting a stranger's back.

Screaming in pain, the stranger chased Jane, but she ran away like her life depended on it. He would have caught up with her easily if not for Shadow swiftly throwing a pocket knife and piercing his butt. This time the stranger not only couldn't find who attacked him but also couldn't publicly show the pain he felt, either. It was just too embarrassing.

Shadow later stood at the entrance of the basement and didn't allow anyone to come that way. Damian once tried to enter it, but Shadow's cutting smile made Damian change his mind.

"Chill, bro. Tell my brother Benjamin I'm going home with Sasha, and that we liked our time here at this bar," Damian told Shadow.

As Damian left, Shadow kept icily staring at him. (Calling my lord a brother...) He didn't like it, but he could only swallow his frustration for the sake of his promise to Benjamin. Benjamin, meanwhile, was punching walls in the basement and left holes in them. It took about fifty punches to somewhat calm himself, but he was gasping by then. "Why are you acting like you tasted poison?" a feminine voice rang in his mind, and it wasn't that of Jane. "I poured all my heart into the kiss, but you really know how to hurt my feelings, Ben. I guess I should have expected this much from a guy who killed everyone he grew up with."

Benjamin clutched his head tightly and squeezed it hard. He wanted the voice to go away, but she kept giggling for some time and then it turned into crying. "Those who sit on the throne must marry," another voice played in his mind. It was his father's. "Ryenne loves you and wants to marry you. She's also a warrior who never lost among her peers. You should just marry her. Besides, didn't you two kiss each other? Take

responsibility, and tie the knot.” “I didn’t kiss her, Father! She took me by surprise and kissed me!” Benjamin fought back.” Why should I take responsibility for her rash actions?” “If you don’t want to marry her, then do you have someone else in mind?” “No. I’m not ready for marriage yet.” “Fine. I’ll give you one year. Choose someone by then, or... marry the one I’ll pick for you. No questions asked.”

After the time passed and some crazy stuff happened, Benjamin ran away from home, not wanting to marry Ryenne or sit on the throne if he were to be forced to marry someone he wasn’t interested in.

All that trouble started with a kiss, and now the taste of Jane’s lips still remained on his lips and made him go crazy. Her scent flooded his nose and loaded his brain with nothing but her image. “Stop it.” He punched the hardened steel door, trying to break out of the basement.

The sounds skipped Shadow’s heartbeat. “Shit.” He took the daggers out from under his shirt. “I hope the door doesn’t break.”

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The next morning.

Jane woke up in a good mood almost like a dog with two tails. “I had all these sweet dreams of being with Benjamin. Too bad I didn’t get to kiss him well because of his mustache. If I get another opportunity again, I won’t miss it. I will make sure he will fall for me, hehe.”

She prepared coffee and walked out of her room, whistling to herself, only to see Donovan and Jasmine kissing by the stairs.

She was stunned for a second, but then her eyes gained blood pretty fast. “What the hell are you doing in a public place?” she howled and splashed the hot coffee in their faces.

“Kya!” Jasmine screamed in pain, but Donovan bore it.

“This is my apartment, so if I see this again, I’ll kick you out,” she warned Jasmine.

Both Jasmine and Donovan went into their room.

“Why didn’t you beat her?” Jasmine yelled at him. “Just one slap would have been enough for that bitch.”

“This is her apartment, so let’s not unnecessarily complicate things.” “Unnecessarily? She splashed coffee in my face!” Donovan smiled and leaned toward her. “Let me take care of it.” He licked the coffee off her cheek

“Stop,” Jasmine resisted, but he effortlessly lifted her up and pushed her against the wall and kept doing whatever he wanted to her face with his tongue, bringing her into the mood pretty fast.

Meanwhile, Jane came downstairs to give coffee to her grandmother. “Like a pig in mud, they really suit each other,” he thought of Donovan and Jasmine, with the former being the pig.” Mm?”

To her surprise, Steve was talking to her. She frowned a little as old memories came to her mind. Her grandmother’s shop used to be there in front of the apartment when she still had enough energy to work. Steve was a regular customer of the shop; and he usually bought cigarettes and chocolates. During one of his visits, he saw Jane and fell in love with her. Even though she was still a juvenile back then, he waited until she became a major before approaching her. And then they spent one night together, but that was all. Even though she repeatedly told him to give up on her, he didn’t. And the fact that he still didn’t marry sort of made Jane feel guilty. She went back upstairs and prepared another coffee, then came down and offered the drink to both her grandmother and Steve.

He was more than happy to receive coffee from Jane’s hand. He couldn’t hide his joy. Was she treating him well because she had broken up with Donovan? What other reason could there be?

“I already have a boyfriend, so don’t get your hopes up,” Jane expressed. “W-What?” Steve exclaimed. “Already?” He knew Jane quickly changed boyfriends, but this was way too quick. “Who, who is it?” “Do you remember the guy who knocked Donovan out during his birthday party?” she

sounded somewhat proud.

Steve’s eyes turned round as the moon. “T-That guy?” His heart violently beat against his chest. “He...” Wasn’t it Benjamin who had warned him about Donovan? He thought Benjamin was helping, but it turned out that he was actually being used. Now that Donovan was out of picture, Benjamin used that chance to jump into being Jane’s new boyfriend. Steve got so angry, he wanted to smash the coffee cup to the ground, but he controlled himself and put the cup down before jogging away.

At the Sterling villa.

Lisa was swimming for one last time in the pool. Roshan was sitting on the side, looking like he really hated his life. After all, Shawn had taken his mobile from him and told him to focus on his studies. Without a mobile in hand, the entire world felt boring to him. "Lisa! How long are you going to swim?" Elizabeth came over and shouted at her daughter. "Go to your room and pack your luggage!"

However, Lisa still kept swimming.

Elizabeth looked at her son. "Roshan, at least you go and pack the luggage. We are moving to our new house before the sun goes down." "I'm not coming."

"What?"

"To our new house... I'm not coming," Roshan didn't look into his mother's eyes. "I will stay with Grandma." "Huh? What are you talking about?" Elizabeth gritted her teeth. "Is it because your dad took your mobile away?" Roshan was silent, but stress marks played on his chin. "Why aren't you saying anything?" she demanded an answer, but then he stood at once and walked into the villa, ignoring her words.

Elizabeth looked bewildered.

"Why are you so shocked?" Dorothy entered the scene. "He may love you, but he always listened to your mother-in-law, and now, who has more money? You, or your husband? or Selena?"

"M-My son isn't like that," Elizabeth didn't believe it. "He's smarter than you think, my silly daughter," Dorothy said and sighed. "If I were you, I'd focus more on what I have than what I lost."

Her mother's words made her look toward Lisa. She hoped at least Lisa would come and live with her. She slowly went over to her daughter and said, "Lisa, I'll pack your luggage, so take your time swimming."

Lisa stopped swimming and got out of the pool.

Rails ran in Elizabeth's heart. "W-Where are you going, Lisa?"

Lisa turned around and cast an annoyed gaze, "You are moving your whole wardrobe to your new house, so I'm sure you're not going to miss me all that much." Saying that she rushed

into the villa with an angry look on her face.

Rebecca was watching all this from the balcony, and Elizabeth really wanted to hide her face somewhere. Her mind and heart felt numb right now. Her eyes glistened with tears,

and she didn't know what to do. She felt awful even though her mother tried to console her.

"They grew up in this villa, so they chose their grandmother's side," Dorothy grunted. "But they're still too young to know what they're doing. Don't take their words to heart."

Despite Dorothy's efforts, a gloom still came over Elizabeth, and she whimpered.

"If only we didn't lose most of our money to pay off debts," Dorothy's voice turned bitter, "we wouldn't be depending on the Sterlings like this."

Rebecca didn't like Elizabeth, but even she couldn't help but feel pity for her sister-in-law. She wanted to talk to the kids, but then she thought it would be more effective if Selena were to speak to them. "I should tell mom to send them to their mother."

However, she had no idea that things weren't going to be that easy.

Just then, Amber brought a bouquet to Rebecca, and her gaze was filled with hatred very fast. The message 'Yours Donovan' was tagged on it. She tossed the bouquet down and stomped on it a few times before taking a deep breath. This wasn't the first gift he sent after she had given him a warning to not bother her. "He's trying so hard to make me fall for him. I can't believe Jane dated such a scumbag" Thinking about Jane, she felt downcast. "I should talk to her, but she isn't picking up my calls." She pondered for a while and got an idea. "Should I make Benjamin call her and ask her to come to some restaurant?" She felt excited. "Yeah. That might work."