

Seduced 261

Chapter 261

Suddenly, my head began to hurt.

If Colin hadn't come in time during the incident, I would've been completely destroyed.

I had a stubborn nature. I knew I wouldn't have been able to live with the disgrace, so I could only choose death.

The instigator of all this was Lilac, who was kneeling in front of my hospital bed while looking aggrieved.

I didn't need to look for evidence. My intuition told me it was her, and I couldn't

be wrong.

No one else would do such a vicious thing, nor did anyone else have grievances with me enough to commit such an act.

Seeing her appear, the hatred and anger in my heart were hot like lava. The fear of being overwhelmed during that incident and the fury from being harmed repeatedly were threatening to erupt all at once.

I wished I could tear Lilac to pieces to quell the hatred in my heart.

Perhaps my expression was too ferocious, so the usually bold Lilac instinctively dodged backward. She tried to grab Felix's hand, only for him to ruthlessly brush

her off.

After more than five years, this was the first time Felix pushed Lilac away for me.

He probably wasn't all bad. After all, he could still distinguish right from wrong. Though the previous incidents were minor, it was a fact that he just kept quiet. even though he knew it was wrong.

This time, it had escalated to a crime. Felix's choice was the right one.

Lilac sat on the ground, trembling while looking pitiful. If I didn't know her temperament well, I might have been deceived by her weak facade. I'd think I was the one who had wrongly accused her.

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"Lulu, I've interrogated those two scoundrels, and it was Lilac who paid them. I wasn't aware of it before, but ultimately, this matter started because of me. Now that I've brought her here, it's entirely up to you how you want to deal with her."

Felix's eyes were as cold as ice. "Lilac, I never thought you were such a vicious person. I had truly underestimated you. No matter what Lulu decides in the end, you owe her a proper apology. You can never repay what you owe her in this lifetime."

"Felix, I didn't intend to do that. I just wanted them to beat up Luna. I didn't ask them to vio--"

Before she could finish her sentence, Colin's expression suddenly changed. It was filled with fury.

Felix, who was slightly closer to Lilac, stepped forward and kicked her on the shoulder.

She was already kneeling, so she fell on the ground after being kicked. It wasn't clear where she was hurt, but the pain made her scream out loud. It startled me.

It was the middle of the night. Making such a noise in a hospital could easily lead to misunderstandings. People would think something really bad was happening.

“Lilac, keep your mouth shut if you wish to suffer less. Spouting nonsense will not end well for you. You know that.”

Felix was Lilac’s backer, but now, even her backer was standing against her. As her gaze swept over the three of us, she realized her desperate situation and became noticeably more subdued.

In just a few breaths, tears filled her eyes. She struggled to her feet, kneeled before Felix, and hugged his legs. She began to sob pitifully.

“Felix, I’m also a woman, How could I do such a terrible thing? I really just wanted those two to beat up Luna. I had no other intention.

“Plus, knowing they were unreliable, I even made a recording when I went to look for them. Let me play it for you. I really didn’t want them to do that.

“Yes, it’s Luna. It must be because she’s so beautiful that those two couldn’t

control themselves. It has nothing to do with me. Please, Felix. Listen to the recording. I’m not lying to you.

“I’m not as malicious as you think. I was just jealous and wanted to teach her a lesson. I really didn’t expect things to get so serious. I was wrong, Felix. I was wrong. Please don’t leave me.”

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At this point, Lilac was still trying to shirk responsibility. She did not once consider the damage her actions had caused me.

How could she not understand that if those men had succeeded, I would never have been able to see the light of day again?

“You’re a vile and shameless person, Lilac!” I was speechless in the face of her

actions.

Felix took the phone, pulled her arms off of him, and played the recording.

The conversation likely took place outdoors, given the sound of wind and a street vendor’s distant cries. It seemed to take place in a less bustling residential area. Lilac had indeed gone to great lengths to plot against me.

The recording wasn’t long. It was just under ten minutes.

Lilac had paid two thousand dollars for those scoundrels to bag and beat me up however they liked, as long as they didn’t kill me.

Those thugs were thrilled at the prospect of getting paid to beat someone up. They promised Lilac to do a thorough job.

There was no mention of rape anywhere in the recording. It was unclear whether Lilac never mentioned it or if the recording had been edited to remove crucial

parts.

If it was the former, I might consider letting Lilac off after teaching her a lesson. But if it was the latter and she had indeed intended to ruin me, there would be nothing else to say. She had to be brought to justice.

As the person responsible for such a vile act, the weight of her crime was no less

than those who carried out her orders.

Apologizing was merely the first step in her atonement.

“It’s not just about forgiveness now. Your actions have crossed the legal line and can’t just be explained away. Lilac, no matter how outrageous your actions were in the past, I forgave and tolerated you. But you must take responsibility for

today’s Incident.”

Felix seemed somewhat ashamed as he spoke. His head was lowered, and he was awkwardly scraping his feet on the ground. He was clearly unsettled by the

uncertainty of the situation’s outcome.

Lilac was stunned for a moment as she grasped the meaning of Felix’s words. Feeling desperate, she threw herself onto the bed and clung to my legs while pleading, “Luna, please forgive me. Felix is so good to you, and I was just blinded by jealousy. I never intended to tarnish your innocence.

“I swear, if I ever harbored such malicious thoughts, let me just be struck by lightning. There’s no deep hatred between us. I could never go that far. Trust me, Luna. I’m not that vicious.”

Lilac was adept at adapting to the situation.

She clung to my legs and shook them. I had injured my knees when I fell earlier, and they started to hurt. It was fine when I was still, but now, they were starting to hurt again due to her frantic shaking.

From the moment Lilac and Felix entered, Colin’s expression had been exceptionally cold. Seeing my increasingly furrowed brows, his expression turned even colder. It was tinged with irritation.

I tried to speak, but he stopped me with a look. He held down my shoulder when I tried to sit up. He was telling me to focus on recuperating and leave everything to

him.

He had promised to seek justice for me.

Felix and Lilac were taken out of the ward by Colin for a talk.

As for where they went and what was discussed, I knew nothing about it. I didn't want to know about it either. I had simply told Colin that a crime was a crime, and I would not accept any resolution outside of the law.

With Colin handling the situation, I felt at ease.

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I felt at ease entrusting Colin with the matter.

He was the person I trusted the most.

Before he left that day, he arranged for a caregiver to look after me. He insisted that if I got hurt while in her care, he would make her pay.

The caregiver, a woman in her 40s, was intimidated by Colin's stern warning. She was reluctant to take on the job but also didn't want to miss out on the high salary. That was why she suppressed her dissatisfaction and accepted the role.

Colin was gone for almost three hours.

During that time, he sent me several messages, telling me not to worry and to just wait for him. He said that he would be back soon with pumpkin soup.

Indeed, he returned close to noon. Not only did he come with pumpkin soup but also a bunch of light purple daisies, which he placed beside my bed.

After two days in the hospital, the doctor said my wound was healing well. I could finally be discharged. I was advised to watch my diet and return to the hospital in three days to remove the stitches.

Colin was overjoyed as he brought me home. While driving, he asked if I wanted to move out of the apartment and live on my own. He said the incident had frightened him. If I stayed in the apartment, he couldn't always know where I was or come to my rescue immediately if danger arose.

Living elsewhere would be much safer. He offered to be my roommate to ensure my personal safety.

Living in the apartment was convenient, free, and comfortable. Even though I could afford it, moving out meant I would have to spend money. Besides, living off campus would mean a longer commute and, more inconvenience with meals and other daily needs./

Overall, the cons outweighed the pros. After weighing the options, I politely declined his offer.

He was somewhat disheartened by my refusal, even appearing awkward when his suggestion was turned down.

When we arrived back at the apartment in the evening, the sky was ablaze with a red sunset. It looked incredibly beautiful.

Unexpectedly, we ran into Felix at the front door of the apartment.

Having not seen him for a few days, he seemed thinner. He still looked strikingly handsome, just gloomier.

He looked clean before, but now he looked unkempt.

Seeing Colin carefully helping me out of the car, he stepped forward with the intention of supporting my other hand. But Colin pushed him away.

"Colin, what are you doing?" he asked coldly.

“Stay away from Lulu.” Colin was uncompromising, even with his only sibling.

Even if they were brothers, they were rivals in love. They would be extra jealous

of each other.

“I’m also heartbroken that Lulu is hurt. Why can you be by her side while I have to stay away?”

Felix was stubborn and insisted on getting an answer, showing an unreasonable determination. It seemed like deliberate irrationality to me.

I didn’t understand why after causing me so much harm, he was still stubbornly trying to get close to me. Was this what he meant by having feelings for me? If so, then such feelings were something I wanted to escape from.

Colin stopped walking and fixed his eyes on Felix coldly. His gaze was dark, swirling with anger. “Do you really want me to tell you why? Fine, I’ll tell you,

then.

“Ever since we were young, but especially in recent years, you bring disaster to Lulu every time you get close to her. I don’t want her to suffer because of you anymore. So, you need to keep your distance. Do you think this is reason enough?”

Apart from the gentleness and warmth he showed when he was with me, Colin had always been imposing. When he got serious, only a few people were not

afraid of him.

Felix had always been somewhat afraid of his brother since they were young, although it had lessened as they grew older.

Felix's body stiffened suddenly. The hands that were dangling at his sides clenched into fists. He did not dare to say anything more.

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I looked up to see a fleeting glimpse of distress and reluctance in Felix's

eyes.

"So, are you going to move aside?" Colin's demeanor became more imposing. His gaze was cold as he stared at Felix.

Something flickered across Felix's eyes, and he silently stepped aside.

When I passed by him, I didn't intend to say much to him. However, I decided it was necessary to make things clear to him.

"Felix, what's in the past stays in the past. Let it go. As for Lilac's actions, the two of you share the blame. Without your indulgence, she wouldn't have gotten bolder each time.

"If what you say about liking me is true and you truly have my best interests at heart, then I ask you not to appear in front of me anymore.

"The world is vast. You should live your life, and I'll live mine. Let's not interfere with each other and cross paths again. That would be for the best."

Colin and I walked past him without stopping.

I didn't know how Felix felt about what I said, nor did I care to know what

he'd choose to do in response.

What I wanted to convey was clear.

As for the future, there was no future between him and me. It had been that

way long ago.

I hoped he understood,

Our past interactions were due to my sentimentality and soft-heartedness. I didn't wish for such things to happen again.

Colin wanted to escort me upstairs, but the supervisor sternly refused and

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said that Colin should set an example rather than break school rules.

Colin was unexpectedly at a loss for words and blushed. He repeatedly reminded me to be careful before leaving reluctantly.

When I opened the door to my room, it was still empty.

Helen hadn't returned.

She was probably caught up with Matthew and had forgotten she still had a

roommate.

After a simple washing up, I planned to take a nap. But if the unfinished painting on my desk were alive, it would probably complain about being neglected. It lay there, still incomplete and unfit for viewing.

I had been sleeping quite well in the hospital these past few days. It felt like a waste of time to sleep now. It was better to paint.

Even though I was injured, I didn't actually need to rest. I just hurt my mouth, not my hands.

This competition entry was fought for by my professor. I had to win a prize to make him proud. If I wanted to win, how could I do so without putting in

the effort?

Just as I was getting ready, Mom called.

The day before yesterday, when I was still in the hospital, she video-called me. Not wanting her to worry and using the competition as an excuse, I switched to a voice call. After a brief conversation, I hung up quickly.

Concerned about our unfinished conversation, Mom decided to call at a

different time.

After I answered the call, she relaxed upon seeing that I was in the apartment. She chatted about family matters and gave me a couple of

reminders-wear more clothes as the weather was getting colder and

reduce my consumption of cold foods and drinks as nothing was more

important than good health.

This was something every mother would say to their children.

After ending the call, I received a message from Colin. He had ordered soup for me, and it would be delivered at 6:30 pm. He also reminded me to be

careful when going downstairs to pick it up.

His message made me think of his repeated suggestions to make him my boyfriend. It left me somewhat perplexed.

Dealing with the Whites had left me wary. But Colin was a wonderful person. If I let him go because of my fears, would I regret it in the future?

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The Whites were the Whites, and Colin was Colin. Would it really be a mistake to generalize things based on a few instances?

I pondered for a long time to find the most accurate answer.

In the afternoon the day after I was discharged, I received a call from a police officer just after 2:00 pm.

They mentioned that there were some details about that night's incident that needed my clarification. They could either come to me or I could go to the police station, but it had to be a face-to-face meeting.

The police station was quite close to school. It was just two streets down the road from the side gate. Plus, Colin would accompany me there.

Upon arriving, Felix was there too, with Lilac standing behind him. She looked aggrieved, and her eyes were red. When she saw me coming in, she glared at me fiercely before quickly lowering her head again. She went back to pretending to be a weak woman.

I really couldn't understand her thought process.

A normal person would be weeping and expressing her regret, doing everything possible to convince me to let her off. After all, I was the victim here. But she glared at me, full of resentment. What was she angry about?

Felix was by her side. He was cold and detached while she was sobbing. What were they really up to?

The officer who met us was a young man in his 20s. He was slim and unassuming but had a strong presence. As he sat down, he slapped the folder on the table and looked up, causing Lilac to visibly shiver. She moved, closer to Felix, seeking protection as she put her hand on his shoulder.

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Felix's eyelid twitched, and he seemed to want to shake her hand off. However, he restrained himself for some reason.

The officer sternly lectured Lilac, educating her on the law and making her realize that her previous actions were illegal. As an adult, she had to bear the legal responsibility.

Lilac's head hung so low it seemed it might hit the floor. It was only then did the officer let her off the hook.

Then, it was my turn.

The officer explained that they had verified Lilac's recording and found it to be genuine. It meant that they had confirmed that she had hired people to commit an act of violence, but the attempted rape was not connected to her.

Given that I was rescued in time and no serious harm occurred, the officer

recommended negotiations between the related parties. If no agreement

could be reached, legal proceedings would follow.

They emphasized that the decision was mine to make as I was the victim. They would respect my decision. The two assailants would be dealt with

separately.

Knowing that the recording was real, my resentment toward Lilac lessened. As long as she hadn't intended to ruin me, it showed she wasn't entirely without conscience. I thought I'd give her one last chance.

It was not that I was a saint or inherently masochistic. But both Lilac and I had deep ties with the Whites. I didn't want a future where everyone was sitting at the same table but was secretly harboring grudges against each

other. That would make a home not feel like a home.

The negotiation was dominated by Lilac's crying, which annoyed Colin and me to no end. Felix, who had been righteous and indignant in the hospital, remained silent and neutral throughout.

At first, Lilac seemed to be putting on an act. She probably thought a few

tears and a few words from Felix might make everything right again, as that had always been the case.

However, she realized I was unyielding and Colin was glaring at her with a menacing look. Meanwhile, Felix remained a passive observer. So, her attitude began to shift. Though she mostly just cried, I finally sensed some

sincerity.

She kept apologizing and talked about how hard she had worked to get into university. She brought up how happy her father in prison was when he heard she got into graduate school. There were some other things as well.

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Lilac kept playing the family card.

Colin insisted that I should settle this by seeking legal action. He told me not to show any mercy toward Lilac or I would continue to suffer in the future.

But Lilac was crying so badly. She mentioned that her mother was old and her regretful father was serving jail time.

My heart grew soft, and I told her I could spare her if she wrote a letter of confession. Additionally, I reserved the right to persecute her in the future. If she committed another crime in the future, I could press charges

altogether.

Afraid that I would use the letter of confession to blackmail her into doing my bidding, Lilac refused to write it.

I sneered.

The letter of confession was my ultimatum. I refused to fold no matter how hard she begged me.

This was my bottom line.

She had to choose either one of the options—be persecuted or write a letter

of confession.

Surely, she was smart enough to pick the best option.

Lilac resigned. She wrote a remorseful letter of confession and signed it before giving it to me.

I then had the police officer be the witness.

As the mediation was a success, the officer was very happy.

Colin didn't like how merciful I was. Felix, too, was surprised by my

decision.

But I was doing this for myself and Colin.

Felix had said many years ago that he'd only marry Lilac in his life. Given that Colin and I might date, I figured things could get very awkward if Lilac and I became a family one day. It would put the elderly in the family in a difficult position too.

Now that the whole debacle had ended, I couldn't care less about what Felix and Lilac would do. I just prayed that they'd stay away from me.

At the moment, I was busy with the competition. I was also in a dilemma, thinking whether I should make it official with Colin.

More than two weeks ago, I had agreed to consider making my relationship with Colin official. During that period, Colin asked me nearly every night for my answer. At times, he'd act like a sad puppy or a happy-go-lucky person. At times, he'd seduce me and make my heart race like crazy.

I might act all professional when it came to my art, but when it came to love,

I was an idiot. Why else would I think I still stood a chance when Felix clearly had no feelings for me?

Felix had drained my adolescent passion.

Matthew showed me the ugly and convoluted side of human relationships.

Colin proved that I was capable of loving.

I was a 22-year-old adult now. But to me, a relationship was more than a personal affair. It also involved the future of both families. To be extra safe, I decided to ask Mom about it.

I had no class on Friday afternoon, so I booked a plane ticket to return to Southville.

During breakfast, I told Colin that I'd be going home. Colin tried to dissuade me, saying that there wasn't any special occasion and making a back-and-

forth trip in two days could be mentally taxing.

"I just want to ask my mom if she's okay with me dating you. If you don't think that's important enough, I guess I don't have to go back," I teased

him.

Colin's face brightened up. He leaned back in his seat and crossed his arms behind his head. Excitedly, he exclaimed, "Oh, my! Finally, 20 years of effort are paying off."

To convince my parents better, Colin decided to come with me.

We didn't inform anyone about our return. Instead, we went to my previous home right away.

Mom and Dad worked close to my previous home. They lived there when I was abroad for sentimental reasons. After all, they used to live there for

more than two decades.

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Dad answered the door. When he saw Colin and I standing next to each other by the entrance, there was only one word to describe his look-

flabbergasted.

His jaw almost fell on the ground as if he had just made a groundbreaking discovery. For once, he forsook the gentility he wore as a teacher and ran toward the kitchen so wildly that his slippers shot across the room. He dragged Mom out.

Mom was holding a cleaning rag in one hand and a bottle of dishwashing liquid in another. She, too, was rendered speechless by what she saw. Her mouth was agape. Were it not for the pair of glasses, her eyes would have popped out of their sockets.

Seeing the extent of their confusion upon seeing me with another man and understanding how disastrous the consequences could be, I put down everything and explained it to them.

Perhaps I was being too straightforward. Colin stood beside me expectantly while my parents were squirming with embarrassment.

I was befuddled. Couldn't they just give me a simple yes or no regarding my decision to date Colin? Why were they hesitating?

As the family head, Dad solemnly decided to hold a family meeting for the very first time to discuss my choice to date Colin.

The four of us sat on the couch. Colin relayed everything that happened between us to my parents—including how he had been in love with me for 22 years, how he suffered in his lonely quest for love, and how he was afraid of going back home because it'd remind him of me.

He spared nothing. I blushed, and my ears turned red as he told one story

after another.

After Colin finished his speech, he sat on the couch obediently like a

studious student. The hands on his knees were trembling, and I saw a sheen of sweat on his forehead. I found it funny, so I snuck a few chuckles. I had never seen him this nervous before, not even during his thesis defense.

“It’s not hot today, Colin. Why are you sweating?” My fingers swiped at the sweat beads on his forehead to demonstrate his perspiration.

Colin grabbed my hand and tucked it into his palm without breaking his gaze. He then said in a calm voice, “Stop it. Be serious. We’re trying to get your parents’ permission now.”

Dad and Mom sat next to each other and exchanged looks. After

communicating silently with their eyes, Mom sighed and uttered, “What on earth is going on?”

“That’s right. Which of the White brothers are you dating? I’m so confused,” Dad chimed in.

“Mr. and Mrs. Lawson, if Lulu and Felix were dating, I’d definitely step aside. I wouldn’t get in their way. But they’ve split up. I love Lulu, and I hereby swear that if I ever do anything that hurts her, I’ll be banished to hell

It was a scary vow. I didn’t want to hear it, so I covered his mouth. Worried

that I might trip myself, Colin caught me in his arms.

Not wanting to deal with my meekness, Dad and Mom pouted and returned

to the kitchen. They said they wanted to cook something delicious for us because we had had a long journey and I had lost some weight.

Well, of course, I lost some weight. My tongue was cut, and I could only have

oatmeal for a week!

However, that told me that Dad and Mom approved of my relationship with

Colin.

It was up to us now to build our future together.

I snuck to the kitchen door to eavesdrop on my parents' conversation.

"Honey, what do you think of Colin? Do you think he'll make a good son-in-

law?"

"He's better than Felix, at least. If we had agreed to marry Luna to Colin back then, she wouldn't have had her heart broken."

"That's true."

A symphony of sounds soon emerged from the kitchen. Meanwhile, Colin still sat on his seat like a statue. Sweat glimmered on his forehead.

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I nudged Colin with my elbow. "Quit being so tense. You're not in the military."

He looked around to observe his surroundings. Only when he made sure that we were alone in the living room did he let out a sigh of relief. Relaxing, he wiped away the sweat on his face. "This is worse than serving the

military."

I laughed out loud, unable to contain myself when I thought of his nervousness. And very uncharacteristically of him, he blushed. His face and neck were crimson, which made me laugh even harder. So much so that my parents popped their heads out of the kitchen to check on me.'

Colin gritted his teeth and locked his arm around my neck. Then, he dragged me into my room and put me down firmly on the couch so that I couldn't move. "It's your turn now. Tell me that I'm officially your boyfriend."

Colin was very warm. Trapped between his arms, I felt like I was in a sauna. My heartbeat went out of control. "But Colin, isn't it too premature to make

it official?"

I nibbled on my fingers, too embarrassed to say yes.

As a woman, I had my vanity. I just wanted him to continue pampering me like a princess.

I wanted him to buy me some flowers, bring me to a fancy restaurant, and fly a banner on top of the city that said "I love Luna!" I knew they were clichés, but I enjoyed those things, alright?

"What else do you want from me? Just tell me." As usual, Colin wasted no

time.

I mulled. "The testing period is over. Now, it's the probation period. Your

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performance will determine when it'll end."

Colin's expression darkened, but he said yes nonetheless. "You're so mean,.. Lulu. I'll impress you with my performance. But first, you have to reward me."

Reward? What reward? No one had ever asked me for a reward before.

Colin's black orbs stared at me for a while. Then, his face slowly leaned in until I could feel his warm breath on my cheek and see his long, curvy eyelashes.

What was he doing? Was he trying to kiss me? Bite me? Eat me?

As I panicked, Colin suddenly laughed out loud. His broad hands held my face, and his soft lips met my forehead, leaving a peck. "My seal of affection.

Seal? What was I? A confidential letter?

After the kiss, Colin pulled away and sat on the couch, pretending that he was observing my room.

And that was the scene my mom saw when she peeked into my room. I was sitting on one side of the couch in a daze while Colin sat on the other side with a reddened cheek. His eyes darted around, and he sat in an upright position. He wanted to look calm and composed.

When Mom brought it up much later, she smirked fondly and said Colin could be quite uptight in a cutesy way.

Meanwhile, I was stumped. Colin and I had spent a lot of time together. He once even hugged me to sleep on the same bed in a hospital. I didn't think

too much of it.

But after I agreed to date Colin, spending time with him felt extra awkward, especially to me. I couldn't look him in the eye at all. When he approached me, my heart would beat faster. I would get all flustered.

Not wanting to stare at each other in awkward silence, I decided to ask him to make a compromise. "Colin, why don't you go home first? Your parents might get mad at you if you come back without paying them a visit, no?"

I poked at his sturdy pecs. He grabbed my finger and nibbled it, sending butterflies into my stomach.

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"It's okay. Meeting my future in-laws is more important. I can visit my parents later." Colin's words came out muffled because my finger was in his mouth. However, his tone was assertive.

"What if your parents won't allow us to date each other? You'll have impressed my parents for nothing," I said jokingly. But it was a valid concern of mine.

What happened between Felix and I had damaged the two families' friendship. We were still close, but not as close as before.

What if Melinda objected to our relationship to protect the friendship between our families?

And truth be told, my feelings toward Felix were more of an infatuation during my adolescence.

But I loved Colin now. I didn't want to end things with him.

Melinda did not like that Felix was dating Lilac. She had repeatedly mentioned to my mom that she wanted Felix and me to reconcile.

I categorically turned her down and went to date Felix's brother, Colin. That would make Melinda look very bad.

"Are you worried about me?" Colin teased as he ran his index fingers on my cheek indulgently. "Aren't you sweet? You're worried that you can't marry

me."

What? It was just a normal question.

Colin just was an expert at twisting meanings!

Abashed by his teasing, I avoided his gaze and punched him lightly on the shoulder with my fist. "I'm still young, so I can always find another boyfriend. But you're 28 now. You might be desperate to settle down."

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“Desperate? Tell me, then. Why would I be desperate? What am I desperate for?” Colin leaned closer and forced me to face him with his hands. I opened my mouth and chomped on his fingers. It achieved nothing except for widening the seductive grin on his face.

I was just trying to find an excuse to ease my embarrassment, and that somehow turned into Colin’s dirty joke.

Colin sure had grown bolder now that I had allowed him to date me. He got to act all cheekily and shamelessly before me.

“Desperate on the inside. You’re old now, so you must want to find someone to settle down with as soon as possible, whereas I’m still young. I’m doing this for you.”

“Oh, you’re calling me old now. Let me show you what happens to those who disrespect the elderly.”

Colin and I began to play in the room like kids. He gave me joy that I had never experienced in the first 18 years of my life.

He loved and respected me. The lesson he said he would “teach” me was tickling. Without my permission, he wouldn’t go overboard. Quoting him, it was only fun when I was a willing participant.

As we played, I noticed something was off.

Colin was blushing, and his movements became rigid.

To find out if what I thought was happening was true, I glanced at his crotch, trying to spot any difference.

I wasn’t a pervert, but I was curious. Everyone in my situation would be.

However, my gawking was too conspicuous, and Colin found out. Embarrassed, he pressed my head into his jacket and forbade me from moving.

But would I comply? Hell, no! I was a rebel.

Besides, I was used to doing what I wanted to in front of him. I would never change that.

I thrashed around, and my hands pinched his waist.

Soon enough, Colin's beautiful eyes turned glossy as he grabbed my waist firmly. "Stop moving now. I might lose control soon."

"Colin, you

I was too stunned to speak when I noticed his bulge.

He nibbled on my ear and covered my eyes. In a husky voice, he uttered, 'I'm 28, darling, I've been holding myself back for 28 years. I'm a man, and of course, my body will react when the woman of my dreams is in my arms.'

Chapter 270

Huh? So that was the case.

I stayed still out of fear, but deep down, I felt loved.

He said he had been holding himself back for 28 years, which meant that he had been keeping his virginity for me. He hadn't fooled around at all.

And despite the abstinence, he did not force himself on me. Now that was what an ideal love should be.

I took out my mental note and added a flower to the space next to Colin's name. Once I gathered a hundred flowers, I would allow him to become my boyfriend for real.

This was my deepest secret. No one knew about it.

“Dinner’s ready. Come to the table now,” yelled Dad from outside.

Colin combed through my messy hair with his fingers and planted another peck when I wasn’t paying attention. “Should you get changed before going

out?”

I shook my head.

The whole situation was already embarrassing enough. And I was sure my parents heard the ruckus we had made earlier on. They only chose to play dumb. If I came out with a set of changed clothes, that would make

everything even more obvious.

There was tension during dinner. Mom and I ate gingerly.

Dad, for whatever reason, kept filling Colin’s glasses with wine.

Colin knew this was a test, so he never turned it down. In the end, he was

sated with wine in lieu of food.

Amidst the dinner, Dad suddenly felt sentimental and gazed at me with

teary eyes. "So, my baby girl is going to leave me and go off with another man, after all."

What Dad didn't know was that Colin was still in the probation period. I hadn't promoted him to be my official boyfriend just yet.

Surprised by what Dad said, Colin choked on his drink and began coughing.

Relying on his wits, he quickly turned the situation around and filled Dad's glass. "Mr. Lawson, think of it as you've now gained a handsome, successful son!"

Hearing for the first time how Colin flattered and oversold himself, I burst out laughing. Mom covered her mouth and nudged me. She reminded me to behave appropriately.

Dad was a bit tipsy, so he could no longer think straight. With his glass in his hand, he mulled for a while and thought that Colin was right. Cheerfully, he clinked glasses with him. "That's true, I've gained a new son!"

After the meal, Dad and Colin were completely wasted.

Mom sent Dad back to his bedroom while Dad continued to mumble how he

lost a daughter but gained a son.

Colin was lying on the couch muttering my name. Looking at him, I

wondered what the right course of action would be.

Should I let him sleep on the couch? But he lived opposite my parents' place.

It wasn't right not to send him back to his home.

After discussing it with Mom, I decided to send him back.

But Dad was asleep and Mom was busy. I thought about knocking on Mr.

and Mrs. White's door, but I didn't know how to explain the whole situation

to them. In the end, I decided to walk Colin back myself.

"Colin, I'll send you home now. I'm not strong, so can you help me, please? If you hear me, say something."

Colin mumbled a response after a while.

"Okay, let's stand up now. Follow my lead. One, two, three."

Urgh. Men were so heavy when they were drunk.

I wrapped one of Colin's arms around my neck and lifted his body by the waist with another. Together, we lumbered toward the opposite door.

Mom, providently, opened the door for me and knocked on the door

opposite us.