

Standing before Love Chapter 632

In the end, Robert could not bear to lose his temper at Heather and consoled her instead. He had many things to tell her and continued talking to her for a long time. As a result, she could not find any excuse to leave at all.

Only when it was getting rather late that he ended the conversation with her. When she returned to her room, it was already around 10:00PM. As her reaction was quite out of the ordinary today, she was not surprised that the conversation had ended up this way.

As soon as she entered her bedroom, the first thing she did was to open the video. The visual of the video was quite shaky in the first few seconds. With a frown, she continued to watch it.

The rest of the content sent chills down her spine. There was a lone figure on top of a tall building. Heather could not clearly see the face of the person, but as the camera panned closer, she could tell that it was a woman. As Heather continued to watch the video, she found out that the woman resembled Myra.

Oh no, this is bad! As the camera zoomed in, the woman's face was shown in a flash. Heather quickly paused the video, but the frame was not clear as she could only see a vague outline of the face.

Narrowing her eyes, she tried to tell who the person was while hoping that it was not Myra. However, after carefully looking at the video, it really seemed to be Myra. The group of kidnappers actually had the courage to place her on top of a building. However, the video did not end at that moment as a group of men in black arrived.

They brusquely tied her up and used a black satin cloth to cover her face. The woman did not try to protest throughout the entire process, which caused Heather to be slightly suspicious.

Heather could not guess what they planned to do just as the video stopped right there. She clicked on her phone in annoyance. If anyone was here, they would be frightened by her furious expression at this moment.

The ringleader is becoming increasingly arrogant. I have to take some actions. I can't allow them to continue their dominance. With a cold expression on her face, she dialed the ringleader's number. He had always been using the same number to call her without worrying about anything.

Soon, the call connected and his tone remained as sarcastic as ever. She questioned coldly, "What did you do to Myra?"

However, he merely chuckled. When Heather heard his nonchalant chuckle, she wanted to crush every single bone in his body. Apart from that, she could also feel his animosity toward her.

She carefully thought about it. No one will suddenly treat another person as an enemy. Perhaps I had some grudges with the ringleader before?

"Miss Heather, you finished the video later than I expected." He continued to provoke her. After all, he had received instructions to make Heather panic.

"Answer my question," she replied patiently.

The ringleader cleared his throat and responded indifferently, "We won't treat Mrs. Hart badly." Won't treat her badly? Heather could tell his underlying meaning, even though the man was basically speaking in riddles.

"Where are you bringing her?" She tried to control her emotions so that she would not be manipulated by him. She could not allow herself to be seen through by him.

He was also quite surprised to see that she did not flare up. Judging from her personality, she ought to be quite furious at this point.

However, he quickly thought that it was normal. After all, she was not an impulsive person, so it was quite normal for her to have such a reaction. In the ringleader's mind, he thought about how he would deal with her. If she continues to remain calm, I will lose this match. I only have three days to destroy her strong will.

It was not an easy task to do. Even though he had Myra in his hands, he was quite vigilant about it. Compared to catching Myra, he would rather catch Heather instead. When he saw her glorious life at this moment, hatred surge within him.

One day had already passed and they lost control of the situation with Tony. The ringleader was worried that Tony would speak to Heather the next day. They must never meet each other.

“Sorry for making you busy for the entire day. I know that you have the capability to discover our hiding spot, so I can only play dirty. How do you feel about racing with time?” The ringleader continued to tease her.

Heather noticed his intentions to make her emotional. After all, she used to study psychology, so she immediately thought that he had hidden motives when he tried to intentionally provoke her.

“In that case, let’s see who’s faster then,” she replied indifferently. Since they want to provoke me, I will be even calmer.

Sure enough, after seeing her remaining calm, the ringleader became slightly impatient.

“Miss Heather, if you want to see Mrs. Hart safely returning, you better not contact Tony Hart.” He stopped beating around the bush and directly warned her.

“What if I do?” In the past, she would not challenge him head-on, but she did not care about it and wanted to see the ringleader lose his cool this time.

She could guess that the person whom she was speaking to was just a messenger. He did not have the authority to decide, so she thought she did not need to politely treat him anymore.

“You’ll just have to bear the consequences yourself,” the ringleader enunciated clearly with anger in his tone.

Heather deliberately let out a nonchalant laughter so that the ringleader would hear her. “If you guys want to play games, I’ll accompany you till the end.”

After they ended the call, she felt more relaxed. Perhaps the entire situation was not as complicated as what she had imagined it to be. At the very least, Myra was safe. Heather suspected that the ringleader would make demands with Tony directly, which was why nothing was mentioned to her. All this while, he had just been teasing her.

What a way to kill two birds with one stone! It seems like they are not planning to threaten me. It all makes sense now. After all, the most important person to Myra is Tony and the Hart Family runs a huge business. Of course it makes more sense to make demands with him directly.

It was also probably the main reason why the ringleader forbade her from speaking to Tony. However, she could not understand why the man wanted to involve her in this matter.

They did not ask her for money or anything else. Why are they doing this? Just to provoke me? This is unreasonable! Provoking me doesn't give them any tangible advantage, unless they bear a grudge with me. Even if they bear a grudge with me, they will definitely request something from me. If I were them, I would totally make some unreasonable demands.

At the current moment, the only explanation was that the ringleader merely had sick, malevolent intentions. Heather wanted to wait for a while to see how everything played out. After all, kidnapping was quite a scary situation. In their circle, the chances of surviving it was only 10 percent.

I'm afraid I can't come up with any good ideas to deal with the situation at this time. She did not dare to report it to the police. It would be best if we can settle it with money.

Even if she wanted to contact Tony, she still held herself back. In the phone call, she could pretend to easily oppose the ringleader, but she did not dare to do that in person.

Since Heather was unable to contact Tony, there were many things down the line that she could not deduce and all clues stopped right there. She had no idea how to contact him without the ringleader knowing about it, so she wanted to figure out what exactly his motive was.

At this point, the most miserable person was Tony. He could not tell anyone about the ordeal he had been experiencing at this moment, so he drank glasses of alcohol one after another.

In the night, he could not fall asleep at all and he would much rather that he was unconscious at this moment. He looked at the woman beside him now. Back then, she entered our family as a part-timer. I already thought that something was off, but I didn't expect that she would be the reason why we are in this ordeal.

"How many faces do you have?" Tony looked at her with hatred. Her demeanor would change on a daily basis. Sometimes she looked innocent and pure while at other times, she looked sexy and seductive.

There was an evil heart underneath her beautiful face. Tony regretted that he did not clearly investigate her background in the past. After he looked into her background, he realized that her identity did not exist at all. All the information she gave him had been fabricated.

“Director Hart, I know you must hate me, but I love how you look when hatred is shown on your face.” With that, she stretched out with her hand to caress his face.

Tony avoided her in disgust and kept a distance between them. “Don’t anger me.” It was the first time he felt so useless.

“They want me to closely stick to you. Such a distance between us is not considered ‘close’ at all!” While speaking, she inched closer to him again as she gave a seductive smile as she looked at how he tried to hold himself back.

“I will kill you.” He spoke through gritted teeth.

However, the woman merely looked at him nonchalantly. “It’s worth dying in your hands.” With that, she continued to provoke him again. The smile in her eyes was not genuine at all and no one could tell what she had been thinking.

“What the hell do you want?” It was not the first time Tony had asked this question. The kidnappers had not raised any request at this point and every single second was torture to him.

He remembered what happened last night. He brought Myra out for a candlelight dinner, but the place suddenly became pitch black. He could not remember what had happened after that.

In the morning, Tony was woken up by Heather’s phone call. At that moment, this woman was already next to him and completely naked. Back then, he thought he had disappointed Myra by overstepping his boundary. However, after calming himself down, he was sure that he did not do anything out of line. After all, he knew his own body the best.

After that, he received news that Myra was abducted. Like Heather, he also asked the ringleader about their demands. However, the ringleader did not want anything from him.

To be precise, they did make some demands. The ringleader forced this woman to be with him and the reason was for her to keep an eye on him so that he would not report to the police.

Hence, that was how he landed in such a situation. After his conversation with her, he deduced that she was their part-time maid.

Tony had never imagined that he would be tricked by her. If I investigated clearly, this wouldn't have happened.

Remorse thickened within him. His eyes were filled with hatred, but the woman was still smiling at him seductively and mockingly.

“Did we have any grudges?” Tony wanted to peel away the fake persona that this woman wore. He wanted to see what exactly she was and what grudges she bore with him.

Instinct told him that she hated him to the core. It was the type of hatred that she simply could not hide from him.

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Her smile became increasingly seductive. The coldness in her eyes was like an infinite abyss that sent chills down one's spine. Tony tried to recall in his mind, but he did not think of any grudges with anyone.

“Director Hart, you are so suspicious.” The woman flashed a wide smile at him, but her face made him feel intense hatred.

“Don't touch me,” he spoke harshly. He could not wait to tear the woman into halves. If he did not have any hesitations about the situation, he would not let her off the hook easily.

She continued to smile and showed no fear for him at all. Obviously, she called the shots here, but he was being restricted by many concerns. On top of that, he could not contact the outside world here.

“Director Hart, calm down.” Her voice became gentler, but upon hearing that, Tony merely felt disgust.

Both of them stubbornly faced each other and none of them were willing to compromise. Tony could not calm down at all as his head was heavy and he had lost track of time. To him, one day felt as long as a year.

“What the hell do you want? Give Myra back to me!” he yelled. He did not wish for any other thing at this moment, as long as Myra could safely return to him.

“Director Hart, only a day has passed, yet you already can’t hold yourself back. I’m afraid you will break down in the coming days,” the woman reminded him kindly.

Tony angrily looked at her. Up until now, he had no idea what her name was. He merely felt that his vision became more blurry and he was beginning to see doubles of everything.

The woman walked to him and took his wine glass away as she spoke, “Too much alcohol is not good for you.” She played around with the glass with a lustful expression in her eyes.

“Give Myra back to me.” With that, he wanted to take the wine glass from her hands, but his consciousness started to fade away as he became more unresponsive.

The woman’s smile became even savage. This was exactly the result she wanted—for Tony to lose his will to live. He had probably not expected that he would become like this one day. After all, Myra was his soft spot.

When he sank into the chair after being drunk, the woman placed a blanket on him with both love and hatred in her eyes.

“Tony, you shouldn’t have fallen in love,” she spoke in a wistful tone. “Once you fall in love with someone, she will be your weakness. I thought that I won’t be able to take revenge in this lifetime, but you gave me the opportunity to do so.”

She was mumbling and didn’t notice that Tony was just pretending to be drunk.

He had no idea how to make her tell him the truth, so he played a trick by pretending to be drunk. Fortunately, it worked. Now, he was sure that this

woman had grudges with him, but he could not think what the actual trigger was at that moment. Apart from that, he also had no clue of her true identity.

Even though he was more or less under house arrest at this moment, he could still contact the outside world. Unfortunately, he could not keep in touch with Heather.

Tony's instincts told him that she would be the key to turning the entire situation around. Hence, he had been thinking about contacting her since the call last night.

He wanted to hear more from the woman, but she did not say anything else. In that instant, the room was completely silent and empty. He could only hear his own heartbeat while she looked at him with immense gentleness in her eyes. Perhaps we have some connections in the past that are out of the ordinary.

Slowly, he also fell asleep. The next morning, he was surprised to find that he was able to sleep without Myra beside him.

The bright sunlight hurt Tony's eyes. He tried to remember his dream from the previous night where he seemed to have dreamed of a woman with whom he had some entanglements in the past.

That dream felt like it had happened in real life. He felt slightly dazed, but he could not recall what exactly the dream was.

He could only remember the woman in his dreams wore white clothes and she stood under a cherry tree like an angel. When he tried to remember more about the dream, he felt as though his mind was breaking apart.

The woman's voice rang from behind him. "You're finally awake, Director Hart."

Tony looked at her woozily, but he quickly returned to his senses as his eyes became fierce with animosity.

She served him breakfast with half a smirk on her face. In a gentle tone, she said, "Since you are awake, let's eat something." Her nonchalance made his hatred for her grow deeper.

“Who the hell are you?” he asked through gritted teeth. The mysterious woman left him feeling quite troubled.

“Director Hart, why do you insist on knowing who I am?” Not only did she not reply to him, she asked him another question.

“Do you have a grudge against me?” he asked definitively, as if he was sure that was the case.

She laughed out loud with sarcasm in her eyes. “Director Hart, is this even important?”

“If you want to attack me, just target me. Why did you have to kidnap Myra?” he asked furiously. At that moment, he hated the fact that he could not do anything. He hated his current helplessness.

The woman merely curved her lips, as though she had heard a joke. “Director Hart, since when have you become so childish? Did your intellect and emotional quotient decrease after we caught your beloved woman?” she asked in a jealous tone.

“Let Myra go. I can agree to any of your requests.” Tony just wanted to save Myra as soon as possible so that she would not be in the kidnappers’ hands.

“I’m sorry, Director Hart. We haven’t thought of the demands we want. You have to wait for a few more days,” she spoke in a carefree tone. Rather than having a grudge with him, she looked like she hated him due to a romance gone wrong.

“Have I disappointed you before?” Tony guessed.

She shook her head. “Director Tony, before you met Myra, your romantic relationship was a piece of blank paper. No such thing happened with me.”

“Do I know you then?” he continued to ask her tentatively. He wanted to figure out what was going on. At the very least, he wanted to know the true identity of this woman.

“Possibly.” She did not give him a firm reply, but he had already gotten the answer he wanted.

It seemed like his guess was correct, but he simply could not remember whether he had any entanglements with other women. Just like what the woman had said, before he met Myra, he had no other relationships.

Even though it ruled out the possibility of Tony falling for other women, it was still possible for other women to secretly fall for him. It was something difficult to trace because there were far too many women who fancied him.

If they were to search through them one by one, it would be too tedious of a task. He narrowed his eyes as he wanted to see her true face, considering that it could trigger his memory of her.

How do I see her true face? Tony tried to formulate a plan in his mind, but she reminded him, "Director Hart, if you don't start eating now, the breakfast will be cold."

Thinking that it would bring no benefit if he continued to treat her as his archenemy, he listened to her words and started to eat.

The woman also ate beside him, but he was not used to eating with people whom he was unfamiliar with. The discomfort was even more prominent since there were only the both of them.

"Director Hart, do you mind eating with me?" The woman could tell his discomfort.

However, Tony denied it. I should try to be closer to her. I don't have much time now since she is controlling the entire situation. I must quickly gain control.

"Director Hart, I didn't know that you like to lie too." With just a glance, she could tell that he was lying to her.

He looked at her deeply. I have an odd feeling about her. The oddest part is that I don't even know where I should start to turn the situation around.

"Do I have a better option?" Since it was difficult to interact harmoniously, Tony just spoke what was on his mind.

She covered her lips as she smiled, thinking that he was quite cute. "If you don't like me, I can eat alone. If you don't tell me, how would I know?" Since the atmosphere between them was quite tense, she teased him. It was only

after so long that she finally had the opportunity to be together with him and she wished that they weren't tense with each other.

"Just let it be." Tony no longer bothered to care. She had been teasing him since earlier. Under normal circumstances, he would not let her off the hook easily. However, since the situation had changed, he could only restrain himself.

"In that case, you have to suffer a little." The woman seemed to be delighted about this. She had shown him raw hatred just yesterday, yet she had a completely different approach today. Her behavior was making Tony quite confused.

"Do you hate me or..." he asked bluntly.

She replied in a tone that sounded like she was genuine yet joking, "I don't hate you at all. I love you." Her confession had caused his heart to tighten since it was a rather odd feeling that he could not tell whether she was serious about it.

Tony looked elsewhere. He was not used to being the recipient of a confession, especially by his enemy.

"I don't believe you have such an innocent side." The woman continued to tease him.

He usually would not have reacted like that. He knew that she was deliberately teasing him, so he was not exceptionally worried about it. The game has just begun. We still don't know who the winner will be.

"I will find out who you are," he enunciated every word clearly as he stared into her eyes.

She merely pouted. "Based on your capabilities, it's only a matter of time before you find out who I am. I'm not doubtful of that."

Upon hearing her words, he put down his cutlery and said to her, "I'm full."

When she heard him, the woman immediately rose to start tidying up the table. Even though she looked kind and harmless, he knew very well that she had an evil, hidden intention. He also knew that he had to be careful around her.

“I want to see Myra,” Tony demanded. It had been a day since he last saw Myra, so he wanted to check in with her current situation.

“It’s not my decision to make.” The woman started to give excuses and sounded as if she did not want him to see Myra’s condition.

“I will only give you ten minutes to arrange. If I can’t see her, I will leave this place,” he spoke with a cold expression on his face. After all, he was not someone who would take orders from others.

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In less than a minute, the woman immediately called the ringleader on loudspeaker. From the other end of the phone, Myra’s voice rang.

Tony pretended to be calm, but he gradually clenched his fists. He was actually suppressing his true emotions. In fact, her voice had almost caused him to break down. The woman had no plans to let him speak to Myra as she merely and coldly eyed his facade.

“Tony, don’t come looking for me.” As Myra forced this sentence from her lips, his expression slightly changed as he had no idea how he should react.

However, without even giving him enough time to think about it, the woman immediately hung up. Seething with anger, he angrily glared at her.

“Aren’t you satisfied about this, Director Hart?” Her teasing tone had annoyed him even more.

“How dare you tease me!” Tony immediately enunciated his words with fury in his eyes.

He tried to calm himself down, but no matter how hard he tried, it was futile. The woman had been constantly challenging his bottom line and he could not even have a proper conversation with her.

As soon as he remembered that Myra had been kidnapped, he could not remain calm. On top of that, she was pregnant. Based on the current situation that they were in, he was completely passive.

“Director Hart, don’t be angry. You need to remember that your wife is still in our hands. I’m not threatening you, but I just want to kindly remind you of this

fact,” the woman said calmly. Her every single action was challenging Tony’s patience.

“What the hell do you guys want?” It was not the first time that Tony raised this question. There are no kidnapppers who won’t demand anything at all! It makes no sense!

“Director Tony, calm down and wait. Give us some time to consider it.” Her reply this time was better, but it was still nonsense.

Tony seldom saw any kidnapppers like them, so he had been guessing their true motives. However, the woman in front of him had tight lips and there was no way for him to make her spill the beans.

He had no idea what type of strategy he should use. It was probably better for him to stay silent at this point. Of course, he would not allow himself to be controlled by them, so there were some secret plans being carried out furtively.

On the other hand, Heather, who also had no clue what was going on, did not have any appetite for breakfast at all. Both her stomach and brain had remained empty.

She was already quite a slender woman and her face became even slimmer at this point. Her sharp jaw made her facial features even more prominent. Actually, she would look better with chubby cheeks as her sharp features would make others feel as though there was a huge distance between them. Just by looking at her, they seemed to feel her power.

It was yet another day without any action. Heather locked herself in her room for the entire day and she had also reminded Everly not to head out for the next few days as well.

Even though Everly had no idea what Heather was secretly up to, she chose to believe Heather. After what happened the day before, she had a change of feelings as she trusted Heather more.

Heather did not receive any calls from the ringleader for the entire day. Not wanting to continue to stay in her room, she prepared to take a walk in the evening.

Since the ringleader had been monitoring her all along, she did not have the opportunity to speak to Tony, who seemed to have disappeared from the face of the earth.

Privately utilizing her contacts, Heather discovered that he had not been going to work for two days. It was rather suspicious for a workaholic like him to be absent from work.

However, she was more surprised to learn that there were no abnormalities in the Hart Group. It seemed like Tony had already given his reasons to the board of directors for not being able to work.

Heather considered whether she wanted to look for Tony's third brother, Shawn, who was in rather a unique position. After all, it was difficult to insert spies around Shawn.

However, it was not suitable for her to directly look for him. At that moment, she thought of Matthias, but she could not allow him to know what had transpired and she could not inform him about Myra's incident either.

Heather had arrived at a bottleneck—unable to think of other people, she thought it would be better to look for Matthias since she couldn't think of better ideas.

When he heard that she was coming over to his place, he was immediately stunned. It was her first time saying that she wanted to visit the Locke Group—something that he would never have imagined. It was simply too surprising for him that she would take the initiative to visit him.

As Matthias looked at his handsome reflection in the mirror, he thought about styling his hairstyle differently since he knew that Heather liked mature and stable men.

While looking in the mirror, he tried to comb his hair to the back of his head. He recently became a different person—as if he was a young man who had just fallen in love for the first time.

By the time Heather arrived, Matthias had already tidied himself. The reason why she had requested to meet him directly in his office was to avoid unnecessary troubles.

However, she never would have thought that the trouble she was avoiding was smack dead in the tightly secured Locke Group.

When Lara saw Heather, Lara's lips uncontrollably curled up before she gave a cold smile while standing at a spot where Heather could not see her.

"You're here, Miss Langston. Our director has been waiting for you." Lara smiled widely at Heather and politely treated her.

However, Heather did not shoot her a second glance and directly walked into Matthias' office. As she did not want anyone to recognize her, she did not plan to stay outside for long.

While looking at Heather leaving, Lara sneered with jealousy swimming in her eyes. After all, it was difficult for her not to be jealous. It was almost impossible for her to win the heart of the person she yearned for, yet it was incredibly easy for Heather. As a result, Lara hated Heather with a vengeance.

Initially, Lara thought she could give them her blessings with a smile on her face. However, no matter how hard she tried, she could not bring herself to do so. The love she had for him was so deep that she simply could not get out of it. The more Heather did not appreciate what she had, the more hatred Lara had for her.

Matthias seemed to be different than usual today, so Heather looked at him with peculiarity. "Today, you look..." she commented as she pointed at his face.

He revealed a satisfied smile, thinking that Heather had noticed the change in his hairstyle.

"Why is there a black line on your face?" she asked as she walked toward him.

Upon hearing that, Matthias was immediately speechless. He quickly looked into the mirror and saw a black line on his face. He also did not have any idea how that happened.

"Where are you focusing on?" He supported his forehead with his hands since he had no idea what he should tell Heather.

“Your new hairstyle looks good.” She flashed a cheery beam at him. She had already noticed his new hairstyle in the beginning, but she just wanted to tease him.

When he heard her satisfactory praise, he smiled again. Everyone would want to be praised by someone whom they deeply loved.

“So, what’s the reason for coming here today, Miss Heather?” he teased with a smile on his face.

Sometimes, there were simply feelings that one could not explain; it was just like how Heather instantly felt better as soon as she saw Matthias, even though she was deeply troubled before this.

“Am I not welcomed here, Director Locke?” she teased in return. At that moment, she needed to release the tension within her.

As Matthias rose to his height, both of them locked eyes with each other. He stretched out with his hand to hug Heather’s waist. I haven’t seen her in just a day, yet it feels like eternity. He could not wait to feel the softness of her body.

However, Heather avoided Matthias’ embrace and pushed his arm aside. “Take care of your image in the office,” she reminded him.

He took a step forward nonchalantly. “I can’t help it when I see you.” He still wanted to hug her, but she did not allow him to do so.

Both of them were obviously flirting with each other at this point. When Lara saw the footage on her phone, her fists tightly clenched. Even though she dug her fingernails into her skin, she did not feel the pain at all.

“I have something serious to talk to you about.” Heather was not used to such interactions between them. Even though she already silently agreed that they were now a couple, she could not bring herself to be so intimate with him.

After looking at her, he stopped his actions. It made him feel as though he was forcing her to do something she did not like, as though he was forcing a good Samaritan to commit an evil deed.

“Is it because of the business collaboration between the Locke Group and the Langston Group?” Matthias immediately thought about the collaboration

between both of their companies. To him, Heather was someone who placed the Langston Group as her priority.

“I have no interest in the collaboration.” She had already told him about her thoughts of the collaboration before this—she was completely uninterested.

“In that case—”

Before Matthias could finish his sentence, Heather interrupted with hesitation on her face, “I don’t know how to explain this to you.”

Upon seeing her troubled look, he immediately became solemn. He pointed to the nearby couch and said, “Let’s talk about it while having a seat on the sofa.”

Whenever he discussed matters with others, he would usually sit behind his desk without moving. This time around, he took the initiative to discuss the matter with her on the couch. It showed how special she was to him.

Heather nodded. As soon as she turned, she immediately bumped into his embrace. Looking at the satisfied smile on his face, she said with exasperation, “You don’t look like a director at this moment.”

Matthias wrapped his arms around her into a tight embrace; he was worried that she would slip past his hug in an instant. If she resisted, she might be able to get away from him, but she also needed his sturdy shoulders at that moment. She rested her head on Matthias, who was able to give her a sense of security that no other person could.

“What do I look like then?” he spoke into her ears with a cheeky chuckle as he breathed in and out near her ears. It was rather flirtatious and arousing.

“Like a wilful kid,” Heather responded in a low voice that sounded like music to his ears, making his spirits soar high.

“Indeed, I’m wilful and I want all of you,” he enunciated every word clearly as he hugged her so tightly that it became slightly difficult for her to breathe.

“Cough...” She coughed slightly. Matthias is too passionate today, so much so that I almost can’t take it.

“What’s wrong?” Matthias asked concernedly.

“You are almost strangling me.” Heather nudged him with her elbows. Her sensitive senses noticed a change in him and a foreboding feeling alarmed her.

At that moment, a terrifying thought appeared in her mind. After Myra was kidnapped, she had suspected everyone around her, but she had totally overlooked him.

Right now, the Locke Group was competing with the Hart Group. On top of that, she felt even more terrified as soon as she recalled his mafia background. Hence, she pushed him away and gave him a serious look.

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Everything had happened so quickly that Matthias couldn't understand why Heather would react in that way, so he stared at her in confusion. At the same time, she also realized that her reaction was slightly over the top. If it really has something to do with him, I should act like nothing has happened.

“What is it?” He took a step forward as he thought that his abrupt actions had startled her.

“It's nothing. I've been having a bit of a nervous breakdown lately.” She tried to give an excuse.

Fortunately, he didn't persist in asking her, but his eyes were full of confusion as her sudden change of attitude earlier had filled him with anxiety.

“Is there anything troubling you?” Matthias asked tentatively.

However, Heather only gave him a smile as she couldn't bring herself to answer his question. At that moment, she didn't trust him at all and one could even say that she had never trusted him before. Even if she had built a little trust toward him, it was now completely destroyed.

Since he couldn't get any response from her smile and she obviously didn't want to reply to him, he didn't force her to answer.

Then, Heather took the initiative to sit on his couch, but he didn't follow suit after giving it a thought. Instead, he returned to his armchair because he himself concluded that he couldn't be too intimate with her; otherwise, she would do something surprising again.

Knock! Knock! Knock! Suddenly, someone outside knocked on the door, so Matthias replied, "Come in."

Heather's attention was immediately attracted by the person coming in, who was Lara, and she could see that Lara was holding a huge stack of documents. I didn't expect him to be this busy today.

However, Lara only came in for a while before she entered the room. During the entire period, she didn't bat an eye on Heather, but Heather was vigilantly staring at her. Everyone is a suspect.

Meanwhile, Matthias seemed to have noticed her gaze and he was curious as to why she was suddenly interested in Lara, but he was certain that Heather was hiding something from him.

"Heather," he called her intimately.

However, she wasn't used to him calling her this way. "Yes."

"Did you really come to see me all of a sudden for nothing?" He had seen through her act since the beginning, but he couldn't figure out her true intentions.

"It's really nothing," Heather replied with a faint smile.

Meanwhile, Matthias stared at her eyes as he tried to search for clues, but she had concealed her emotions so well that he couldn't notice anything.

"Then, I'll—"

Without waiting for him to finish his words, she interrupted him with a smile. "You can continue with your work. I'll wait for you here."

Upon listening to her, Matthias was slightly relieved inside his heart. He had important documents to deal with at that moment and he didn't want to delay it, but at the same time, he didn't want to ignore her because of his work. Therefore, he felt much relieved after hearing her words.

After that, he continued with his busy paperwork at his desk while Heather sat on the couch, surveying his office. Not many people would use such a huge space for an office, but Matthias' presidential office is much bigger than any president office that I've seen before.

The high floor had made the whole room look bright and clear. The reason why Matthias chose to have his office on the highest floor was because he could enjoy the feeling of being above everyone.

Heather was rarely this patient, so she would glance at him from time to time while he was working. The most charming thing in the world was the serious looks of a man working, so even she was starting to stare at the side of his face in a daze.

“What are you looking at?” Matthias suddenly turned his face and asked her.

Therefore, her face instantly flushed. I can't believe I've been caught peeking at him. It's so embarrassing. “Nothing.” She turned away. Ever since I met him, I've realized that my face is starting to blush more often.

When he rose from his armchair, the blush on her face had already disappeared. She noticed that he was approaching her, so she quickly took a few steps back to keep a distance from him.

“Focus on your work,” she uttered in a serious tone. I can't stand him approaching me whenever we disagree.

Matthias glanced at Heather with dissatisfaction after his gesture was called out, so he couldn't hug her.

“I can't work properly with you here,” he teased.

Seeing that he was unwilling to return to his seat, she had no choice but to use her trump card. “It seems that I've interrupted your work. I think I should leave.” She walked toward the door.

Immediately, he blocked her path with a playful smile on his face. “Don't go. Let's have dinner tonight.”

It would be dinner time soon and Matthias planned to finish his work as soon as possible so that he could dine with Heather.

“When you are done with the documents on your desk, it may already be late at night.” She raised her brows at him as she considered whether to leave or not.

“I’ll deal with some urgent ones now, but I can leave the others till tomorrow.” As an experienced businessman, he definitely knew what to do.

“That means I’m delaying your work.” Heather looked as though she was determined to leave, which made Matthias even more anxious as he didn’t want her to leave yet.

“Don’t go.” There was a hint of plea in his tone.

“You should just focus on your work!” she said to him.

“I can’t focus on my work if you leave.” However, he was determined not to let her leave. The two of them continued to bicker like children and were close to pulling each other.

“Director Locke, I don’t think you should behave like this in your own company.” This time, she really insisted on leaving. I’m not sure if anyone saw me meeting him, so I need to leave earlier and be more careful to prevent any trouble.

“If you insist on leaving...” Matthias uttered while pulling her into his arms with a smirk on his face. “Why don’t we leave together?”

At the moment, he only had Heather in his mind, so he would never let her leave his office easily. I must follow her everywhere.

“Director Locke, I heard that the board of directors are not satisfied with you lately. If you don’t properly do your work, they may remove you from your position.” She was informed about some of the Locke Group’s internal affairs, so she teased him.

“The Locke Family is still the dominant force in the company. Those pathetic old men on the board can’t impeach me.” He immediately felt a headache the moment he thought about the board of directors.

Matthias’ recent performance had upset the board of directors, so whenever they had a meeting, the directors would find ways to criticize him.

“You will inevitably anger everyone.” Heather poked his chest with her finger and felt that it was really firm like steel.

Although both of them practiced martial arts, the body of a man was still much different than a woman's. Even if she had all the muscles in the appropriate areas, they still weren't as solid as his.

As for Matthias, even though he looked slender on the outside, the muscles on his body were extraordinary. Even if he endured several punches, he would still be fine.

"It's not good to be low-key all the time," he replied suggestively. Not long after he took over the Locke Group a few years ago, he always kept a low profile, but it only made the board of directors behave even more unscrupulously.

Now, he planned to put them in their places. They are becoming more and more ignorant of my position. I need to let them understand that they'll never overthrow the Locke Group.

"The Locke Group has been in turmoil lately. I wonder what you are planning secretly inside your mind," Heather asked casually, but she was actually curious about his true intention.

"As long as the foundation is still there, I don't need to be afraid of some turmoil," he answered confidently.

Upon listening to him, she furrowed her brows in confusion as she couldn't figure out what he was actually thinking about. He had revealed many things to her before, but he was always vague when talking about the Locke Group.

"Why is the Locke Group always targeting the Hart Group?" She took the chance to ask.

Matthias looked at her aggrievedly as he couldn't explain the details to her. After all, she was intelligent. If she connects everything together, she may see through my plan.

At the moment, he couldn't let anyone know about his plan. Not only that, he still wasn't sure whether Heather would choose to side with him in terms of her own interest. I need to exact my plan secretly by myself.

"Heather, you do have many questions to ask. Do you have a thousand questions ready in your mind?" He smiled while changing the subject of the conversation.

“If you think I’m annoying, you should let me leave.” She feigned anger.

While looking at her, Matthias didn’t know whether to laugh or cry as there wasn’t a way for him to please her, so he responded, “If you have any other questions, you can just ask me.”

However, Heather shook her head. “I don’t dare to ask you now because you’ll say that I’m annoying.” It was really funny to look at her anxious looks, so she continued to tease him.

“I won’t. You can ask anything you want. I’ll answer every one of them,” he replied in an extravagant way.

However, Matthias’ sweet words didn’t have much effect on her. In a disdainful manner, Heather responded with a grudge, “You didn’t give me a satisfying answer when I asked you a question earlier.”

“Then, how can I satisfy you, Miss Langston?” he asked while pretending to be frustrated. At that moment, he had no intentions of continuing with his work as he only had her in his eyes.

“I don’t want to force you anymore, so can you please have mercy and let me leave, Director Locke?” Heather adopted a playful tone, but she was still restrained in his arms.

“If you agree to have dinner with me, I’ll let you go,” he answered unreasonably. Now, he was pressing her against the wall so that she would not slip away from his hands easily.

“What if I don’t agree?” She lifted her head and stared at his eyes.

Then, Matthias lowered his head and looked deeply into her eyes. Her brows are so thick that they seem like they are fake. Why is her face so naturally beautiful? No amount of plastic surgery can produce such a natural beauty.

“There is no such option.” He pressed his chin against her head, but she didn’t resist. In fact, close combat was her strength, so she was actually being polite to him.

“I can’t believe that the great Director Locke is bullying a weak girl like me.” She pretended to be frail while the light in her eyes flickered, as if she was putting on a world class act.

“Heather, can you please accompany me?” Suddenly, he softened his tone and spoke in a pleading voice that no one could reject.

Standing before Love Chapter 636

Most of the people had already left the Locke Group at night, but Matthias was working overtime. Meanwhile, Heather quietly sat on the sideline while waiting for him without any complaints. He initially wanted to complete his work earlier, but she wouldn't allow him to do so and insisted on him to finish his work first.

After opening the office door, the two of them emerged one after another and saw that Lara was still waiting for them. With a glance, he said, “It's late. You should head home now.”

The most hardworking staff in the Locke Group was probably her as she wouldn't leave work if Matthias was still around.

With a smile on her face, she replied, “Director Locke, I'll leave when I'm done packing up my stuff.” Her face looked so innocent that no one would suspect that she had other intentions.

After returning the smile, he left with Heather, but Heather's instinct was telling her that Lara wasn't as innocent as she seemed.

Inside the elevator, Heather approached Matthias and whispered next to his ear, “Does Lara like you?” In the past, she would never pay any attention to something like that, so she definitely was planning something when she abruptly said those words to him.

Then, he stared at her in confusion as he couldn't understand why she would ask him this question. Looks like he doesn't know about my intention, she thought.

“I can't quite understand what you mean,” he answered seriously as he knew that he couldn't afford to give her a casual answer; otherwise, there would be a lot of trouble.

“I meant what I said,” Heather responded speciously while examining the emotions on Matthias' face.

When the elevator doors opened, he was still puzzled, so she decided not to mess with him any longer. At that moment, he looked so nervous that even she was worried for him, as if he had done something terribly wrong.

“There’s nothing between me and Lara,” he quickly denied. Besides, he had never thought about liking her since he always treated her like his little sister.

“Don’t be so nervous. I’m just asking,” Heather replied in a gentle tone as she didn’t want the atmosphere to become awkward.

“I’m not nervous,” Matthias awkwardly refuted. Now, he finally understood the nervousness of being questioned by a woman.

“Are you really not that nervous?” She leaned toward him with a playful smile on her face. Looking at him, she felt that his anxious looks were really adorable, so she couldn’t help but tease him a little.

However, he didn’t know that she was messing with him and he thought that she actually cared about his situation with Lara, so he firmly replied, “Of course not.”

“You really don’t feel that Lara likes you?” Heather brought up the topic of Lara again as she wanted to see his anxious looks.

“How many times do I have to say? There’s nothing between me and her,” Matthias explained again with a headache. Why did Heather suddenly mention her and keep clinging onto the topic? I have a feeling that I’m now being watched.

“Don’t you two have an intimate hierarchical relationship?” Heather emphasized on the word ‘intimate’, making his face even more gloomy.

“Heather,” Matthias called her in helplessness as he didn’t know what else to say. Why do I have the feeling that she is catching me having an affair?

“Matthias, what are we having tonight?” Heather casually asked while completely changing the topic.

However, Matthias didn’t immediately react to her as his eyes blinked. A while later, he finally replied, “What do you want to eat?” He couldn’t bring himself to act dominant in front of her as he always ended up following her decision.

“I want to eat Korean food,” she answered after thinking about it. It was often she who made the decisions when it came to dating, so she couldn’t help but remember his weak looks when he was younger.

Meanwhile, he didn’t say anything as he would eat whatever she wanted, but she noticed the faint expression on his face.

While raising her brows, Heather asked, “You don’t like to eat Korean food?” After all, the taste of Korean food was way different than the cuisine they usually had.

“No.” Whenever he was together with her, Matthias would try his best to please her even if it involved something he didn’t like.

“Director Locke, if you continue to treat me like this, I’m afraid that I’ll be spoiled in the end.” She took the initiative to hold his hand, which was something she herself felt was weird. Why am I suddenly so proactive toward him?

“I want to spoil you for the rest of your life.” Matthias wanted to give her everything he had, to shelter her from danger, and to give her his whole world.

“I don’t like to be spoiled.” Heather did not mean what she said. “I only hope that you can be honest with me.” Her last words pointed to another meaning, but he couldn’t figure out what it was.

“Are you blaming me for something?” Matthias asked innocently. Initially, he thought that she was moved by him, but she was actually questioning him. I just can’t guess a woman’s mind.

“You really are not fun at all.” She tried to pretend that she was in a good mood, but she didn’t even know what she was talking about.

“You really are weird today.” Matthias also noticed her being strange, as if the person in front of him was a completely different person. She usually won’t say something like this.

“Don’t you like it?” Heather asked sensitively. She was still smiling earlier, but suddenly, her face became serious in an instant.

“No, I really like it.” In front of her, he always acted like a naughty kid who couldn’t say anything because he did something wrong.

While interacting with her, he would often think of the stern Chester when he was a kid. It's obvious that inside my heart, I always wanted to rebel against Grandpa, so how did I end up loving this kind of woman?

Therefore, Matthias could only carefully preserve their relationship without breaking the balance they had at the moment. Since he first met her, he already decided that he wanted to be suppressed by her. Even though it might look unfair to the normal eye, he was actually enjoying her treatment.

"Matthias, am I wrong to treat you like this?" Heather was starting to blame herself. Everytime I tell myself that I need to treat him better, I always end up bullying him.

She felt that she couldn't exempt herself from treating him badly. I used to hate those women who are reliant on other people's love, but now, I've become one of them.

"What are you thinking about again?" He reached out and ruffled her hair. Whenever he looked at her, his heart would soften as he wanted to give her the best of everything.

"Aren't you angry that I always bully you?" she tilted her head and asked. At that moment, her eyes were full of innocence, as if she was a little girl who had never stepped foot in this world before.

"When have you bullied me before?" Matthias was confused. I don't think I've fallen to a point where I'm always bullied by her!

"Aren't you annoyed that you always need to follow what I want to do?" Heather was puzzled. This is something that I can't do.

"I'm happy as long as you're happy." He stared at her blankly as he couldn't figure out why she was suddenly so emotional, which was a rare thing in itself.

"Even I think my treatment toward you is unfair." She smiled. It sometimes really feels unfair toward him since I always force him to do something he doesn't want to.

"It's my pleasure." A few simple words from Matthias were enough to move Heather. He was persistent and dedicated to his feelings, and to some extent, he wasn't much different from Tony.

“The people around you will feel that I’m too much and try to defend you. Would anyone around you hope that we won’t be together?” she asked tentatively. Somehow, she felt that something was wrong with Lara, so she wanted to see his opinion.

However, Matthias didn’t know whether to laugh or cry at Heather’s question. “What are you thinking about?” Her spontaneous thoughts are really terrifying. Why would she mention this all of a sudden? This is such a headache.

“I’m wondering whether some people around you hate me or not,” she suggested. I’ve already made myself very clear. He should be able to connect it to Lara, right?

“Of course not. They like you a lot. Nikolai always talks to me about you. He thinks that we are a good match.” Matthias immediately denied her assumption. Instead, he was worried that the people around him would like her too much, especially Nikolai, whom he assumed had feelings toward her.

Upon listening to him, she instantly furrowed her brows. I don’t know whether he is too smart or stupid. Does he really not understand what I’m saying? She stared at his eyes, but it was obvious that he wasn’t messing around with her.

Therefore, Heather could only follow up on Matthias’ words. “Do you think we are a good match?”

“Yes, Evan has often said that we are really suitable for each other. He also mentioned that he has never seen anyone this harmonious with me.” Evan helped a lot in Matthias’ pursuit of Heather. I need to find a chance to properly thank him.

“Harmonious?” She felt as though she had heard something outrageous. Why can’t I see the harmonious part between the two of us? We aren’t harmonious at all.

“Huh?” Matthias looked at her as he couldn’t understand what her tone meant.

“What about Lara?” She had no choice but to mention that name because she didn’t realize that he would be that dense toward relationships.

“Lara?” He didn’t know why Heather mentioned her again as it almost seemed like she had a grudge with Lara. Therefore, he asked her instead since he

couldn't understand the affairs between the two women. "Do you really care about what Lara thinks of you?"

"Are you hoping that I care?" Instead of answering him, she asked another question.

"Why is the subject coming back to me again?" He was frustrated with Heather's constant line of questioning as he couldn't avoid them.

Matthias didn't want to continue discussing those 'unappetizing' topics before dinner, so he said to her, "Let's talk about something else. I don't understand why you keep mentioning Lara today."

At that point, it was better for him to be truthful since he didn't know what else he could say.

"You don't like to talk about her?" Heather looked at him with a faint smile. Looks like he is really upset with me talking about Lara.

"You seldom interact with Lara and she rarely mentions you, so I don't know how to answer your question." He really wanted to end this topic as soon as possible; otherwise, he wouldn't even have the appetite for dinner.

Standing before Love Chapter 637

There were techniques for two people to mingle well with each other, but sadly, Heather and Matthias knew none of it. It would sometimes be better if one of them could change the way that they spoke, but they always ended up bickering with each other.

Before they could even have dinner, their moods were already unpleasant. They had already lost their appetite by that moment and were now staring at each other in an awkward atmosphere.

"Send me home to the Langston Residence." Heather wasn't in the mood to eat and she didn't want to stay with him a minute longer.

Meanwhile, Matthias looked regretful as he realized that his tone was a little out of order earlier. Even if she wasn't a whiny girl, she would still be infuriated when he didn't properly answer her question. "It's almost time for dinner. I'll send you back after we have eaten something." He tried to change her mind so that she would stay.

“No.” She immediately rejected. After what had happened in the past two days, she didn’t have the appetite to eat anything and sudden thoughts in her head didn’t help to improve her mood either.

Upon seeing her determination to leave, he didn’t continue to force her to stay, so he sent her home. At least she lets me send her back home, which means she is not that angry with me.

Heather had remained silent on the journey, so Matthias tried to start a conversation with her. However, all of his attempts were shot down by the frosty look of her face. Whenever her expression became cold, it felt as though the temperature had instantly dropped—like the chill came from her body.

In his heart, he had regretted what he said earlier. I can’t believe I’m arguing with her because of Lara. Looks like the tiny conflicts in life are inevitable.

“Heather.” As they were about to arrive at the Langston Residence, he couldn’t help but softly call her.

“Yes,” Heather flatly replied.

“Are you still angry at me?” Matthias asked worryingly. Compared to her frosty looks, he would rather face her anger because he was terrified of her at the moment.

While looking outside the window with an emotionless face, she responded casually, “Why would I be?” However, her reply had only fueled the anxiety inside his heart.

“Heather, I know that I was wrong. Please don’t be like this, okay?” He had no choice but to apologize to her even if he didn’t think that he had done something wrong. There’s no wrong in apologizing to her.

However, Heather then turned around and revealed a cold smile as she immediately saw through Matthias’ thoughts.

“You don’t need to apologize to me. You did nothing wrong. I was just being unreasonable,” she murmured in a way that didn’t seem like she was an unreasonable person.

“Heather, I admit that I shouldn’t have spoken to you in that way. Please don’t be angry at me, alright?” As he thought about it, he realized that his tone was different than usual when he spoke to her.

“Matthias, do you feel aggrieved when you are with me?” she suddenly asked. She felt that it was unfair that the president of the Locke Group was so dejected in front of her all the time.

However, Matthias looked at her in confusion as he couldn’t understand her question. In fact, he never felt aggrieved whenever he was together with her, but he sometimes just couldn’t understand why she was angry at him.

“Forget about it. Your eyes have told me everything.” Heather rolled her eyes at him while calming down a little inside her heart. Even though she knew that she shouldn’t be angry at him today, she still took his love for granted.

At the moment, he wanted to look into a mirror to see what was happening with his eyes. Since he felt that she wasn’t that angry anymore, it was a good thing.

“Just take the left turn ahead.” Heather noticed that Matthias was in a daze, so she kindly reminded him.

His expression suddenly changed as he didn’t expect to reach her home this soon, so he regretted it a little since he wanted to be with her for a while. At the same time, he was also frustrated at himself for not taking the initiative to talk to her in the beginning. Why did I start to talk to her when we are almost arriving at her house?

Therefore, he stopped the car all of a sudden and placed both his hands on the steering wheel. Then, he turned toward Heather and stared at her in a way that made her want to just jump out of the car.

After that, Matthias approached her and kissed her lips. She didn’t expect the sudden kiss at all, but she didn’t dislike it either. Instead, she felt especially secured when his aura completely engulfed her body at that moment.

“Heather, whenever I look at you, I feel that I can’t bring myself to leave you.” She could see the reluctance in his eyes.

“Stop fooling around,” Heather uttered softly. Her face was now slightly blushed as she didn’t know how to respond to him.

Matthias still refused to start the car again and the distance between the two of them was so close that they could practically hear the other person's breath. When she heard his heavy breathing, she suddenly had the urge to push him away and hug him at the same time, which was contradictory.

"Heather." He placed his head on her shoulder while speaking in an extremely loving tone.

"Matthias, stop this." Heather couldn't hold on much longer.

"Heather, please don't be mad at me. I know that I always say the wrong words and I can't say anything to please you." Just like a naughty kid, he continued to murmur while reflecting on himself.

Therefore, Heather coaxed Matthias like a little child. "I don't blame you." Somehow, she felt that she was slowly falling into his hands and was helpless to do anything about it.

"I've angered you." He then spoke in a childish tone, which she found really repulsive.

When did he learn to speak like that? However, it was really effective on her even though she was trying hard to resist it. "I'm going home." She wanted to open the car door, but he had pressed her so hard against the door that she couldn't catch her breath.

"Don't you want to stay with me?" Again, Matthias pretended to be pitiful, which softened Heather's heart.

In the past, she never believed that she would one day fall for this trap, but ever since she met him, she felt that many things that seemed impossible in the past now had the possibility of becoming true.

"Matthias, please stop pretending to be pitiful. This isn't how a man should act," Heather snarled. He really is hard to shake off. At the start, he promised to bring me home, but now, he had a sudden change in mind. Even though she had scolded Matthias, he wasn't embarrassed at all. Instead, he smiled, which made her feel that he really had a thick skin. "Please stop acting like this; otherwise, I'll be really mad," she added in a serious tone to convince him to stop messing around.

He immediately withdrew his hand that he placed on her waist. He was frightened by her stern attitude and didn't want to enrage her later on.

Then, he looked at his hand with disappointment while thinking about the warmth he felt moments ago. Everytime I want to be intimate with her, I will always get ruthlessly rejected in the end. I really am a failure.

"If you don't drive me back, I'll just walk home by myself." Heather had planned to leave the car in anger and walk back to the Langston Residence.

After listening to her, Matthias quickly responded, "Heather, please don't be angry. I'll start the car right away."

Upon seeing the smile of pleasure on his face, she halted her movement. Matthias is a stubborn person, so I don't want to argue with him any longer.

Quickly, the car took a left turn and drove a few hundred meters before it arrived at the Langston Residence. Meanwhile, Heather looked straight ahead while Matthias, who was behind the wheel, kept glancing at her.

Not long after that, the car slowly stopped outside the entrance of the Langston Residence. Then, he immediately alighted from the car and ran to the other side to open the door for her.

While standing outside the door, she said to him, "You should head home now!" She never planned on entering the house with him.

However, he revealed a mysterious smile. "Don't you want to invite me in for a cup of tea?"

What a corny idea, she sneered inside her heart.

"I think what you need now is dinner." Heather then glanced at his belly and raised her brows.

"No. All I need right now is you." Matthias began to talk in a sweet way again, as if he hadn't confessed to her moments ago in the car that he didn't know how to please her with words.

Even though his words were sweeter than sugar, she glared at him in disgust. Why do I have a feeling that he is becoming more unserious? Most people

become more serious when they are in love, but why does it feel as though he is resembling more like a playboy? He must have learned it from Evan!

The more Heather looked at him, the more she felt that he was aspiring to become a second Evan. Therefore, she blinked her eyes in disgust while considering whether to invite Matthias in.

“Heather, aren’t you going in?” he urged as he had already decided to enter with her.

In the end, she didn’t want to embarrass him, so she agreed to let him in. Immediately, his face was filled with joy as he stood next to her like a perfect couple.

When they entered the living room, Heather’s phone rang. Today was so comfortable for her that she almost forgot that Myra was now being held to ransom.

“Miss Heather.” Heather’s expression immediately changed while her heart was being hung by a thread. How could I not recognize this voice? He is the kidnapper who has been contacting me for the past two days.

“I’m here.” With Matthias beside her, she couldn’t reveal too much to him, so she remained unfazed on the surface.

However, he could see that she was acting strangely, so he nervously stared at her while guessing who had called her.

“Miss Heather, you are acting bolder lately. Do you still remember our promise?” The kidnapper spoke in a teasing and disdainful tone.

“What do you mean?” Heather asked flatly without revealing her emotions, but it only made Matthias even more curious about who the person was on the other end of the phone.

“Miss Heather, shouldn’t I be the one asking you this question? I wonder what your intention is by bringing Director Locke into your home.” The kidnapper’s tone became more sarcastic, which she wasn’t pleased with.

“So what?” Heather couldn’t speak much since Matthias was next to her.

“Why don’t I send you another video so that you can see how Mrs. Hart is doing at the moment?” The kidnapper threatened her, causing her to immediately feel a thump in her heart. She was afraid that she would see the image that she feared the most.

Standing before Love Chapter 638

The moment Matthias noticed Heather’s increasingly ugly expression, he quickly reacted by asking her immediately, “Who was that?” He had a tense look on his face and his expression was as somber as hers.

She calmly glanced at him and didn’t respond to his question. However, her meaningful look spoke volumes.

“Aren’t you heading back?” Heather shifted her eyes nonchalantly toward the other direction. She urged him to leave as she needed to have some alone time and calm down.

At that instant, Matthias took the hint and he chose not to bargain with her any further. She was now on the defense and resembled a porcupine with all its thorns on display, causing him to lack the courage to say even a single word.

“I’ll head back right now,” he responded calmly and followed her wish. Frankly, he had never criticized her actions but acceded to her all the time.

“I won’t keep you any longer then. Keep safe,” she said courteously. Then, she heartlessly cast him aside without giving any regard to his confusions.

She watched him leave the place before she resolutely turned her back on him. She was in a rush to return to her room. The video had already been sent over to her, but she wanted to view it in private and she didn’t dare to click into it outside of her bedroom. She hated to have her every single move spied on, but then she seemed to be entrapped in an invisible web. It was the first time ever that she felt so insecure.

Heather found herself being suspicious of everyone around her and she found herself less assertive of the things around her; overall, she realized that she had turned into a cynical person. She disliked this feeling and even more so, she started to hate herself; she hated her emotions and judgment.

As soon as the door slammed shut after her, she immediately clicked into the video. As usual, the beginning part was totally dark. The content of the video

resulted in her furrowing her brows into a thin line. She looked quite dejected after watching the short video clip.

Then, the screen on her phone darkened and she placed it down. Her expression slightly changed, but she repeatedly told herself in her mind to calm down. The kidnappers were just trying to use the video clip to cause her emotional distress. Besides, the grainy quality of the video clip was not indicative of anything. Despite that, she could vaguely make out Myra's outline from the blurred visual. In the video clip, Myra was wearing a thin, white dress and she stood shivering amidst the cold air, atop a darkened building.

Myra's dark-colored hair fluttered loosely in the air and her slightly protruding stomach was prominently displayed in the video clip. Frankly, she was unable to withstand such a harsh environment in her current condition. Although it seemed that the kidnappers hadn't taken any drastic actions, in actual fact, they did.

In the video, Myra seemed to be perched precariously on the edge of a cliff and if someone else lightly pushed her from the side, she would be doomed. Heather tightly clenched her fists. These b*stards! I knew that they wouldn't come up with anything good! Soon after that, she received another phone call from the kidnappers and she snickered, This is quite timely.

Heather answered the call and her voice sounded unusually cold. On the other end, the kidnapper said slowly, "Miss Langston, my videography skills are quite exceptional, right?" The person had said those words quite shamelessly.

"Release Myra! I will agree to anything," Heather spoke in an exceptionally calm voice. She didn't have anything much to say with the kidnapper and she only had one single objective right now. Although the kidnapper used the same phone and phone number to contact her multiple times, she was still unable to detect their precise location because there was something that disrupted her investigation.

"Miss Langston, be patient. You can't gain anything if you are too anxious," the kidnapper continued to tease. Meanwhile, Heather tried hard to suppress her urge as she knew that there was no point in telling the kidnapper off.

"What is the actual motive of the person hiding behind your back?" Heather sneered. There was definitely a mastermind behind the kidnappers' back.

Otherwise, how else could they have possibly and completely hidden Myra out of the public eye in such a small city like Bradford City?

The kidnapper didn't expect Heather to say those words and he paused for a moment. Soon, he came to his senses before he responded calmly and nonchalantly, "Miss Langston, why don't you treat this as a riddle and try to solve it?"

She hated the way he teased her. So, the reason why they kidnapped Myra is to invite me to join this guessing game? How ridiculous! "Are you going to release Myra if I manage to solve this riddle?" she questioned with a somber tone of voice.

At that moment, the kidnapper laughed out loud and Heather found his laugh quite repugnant as she hated this feeling of being led on by her nose. Her anger had been simmering for the past two days.

"There's no harm in you thinking this way, Miss Heather," the kidnapper replied vaguely

His obscure reply meant that there was no way to determine the outcome, but Heather decided to try her luck anyway. If the person who was manipulating everything found enjoyment in playing such games, then she wouldn't mind joining him for a good game. After all, she was quite confident in her own abilities.

The only problem was that the stakes were extremely high for this game; she had to win in this, so she couldn't help but feel anxious. She wondered what Tony was currently doing. Is he making any effort to rescue Myra? She fervently hoped that there was someone else who would stand up and fight alongside her.

Heather knew that there was hardly any foolproof plan, so she didn't dare to take the risk with Myra's life. Furthermore, Myra was also expecting a child. As soon as Heather thought about that, she strongly abhorred the heartless actions of the mastermind behind the kidnapping. They are already wicked enough to kidnap a pregnant woman, but to threaten their friends and family with her life is definitely despicable.

"What is it that you want me to solve?" It was then that Heather realized that she still hadn't discovered the topic of the riddle. As such, how could she solve it?

“You are an extremely bright person, so don’t tell me you haven’t figured out the riddle yet?” The kidnapper’s voice was full of scorn. In actual fact, they hadn’t actually provided the exact topic of the riddle.

“I don’t like to beat around the bush. Why don’t you just be frank about your intentions?” Heather tried to probe for more information from the kidnapper as she currently had insufficient information on hand.

“Haha...” He guffawed and subsequently ignored her by disregarding her words. “Miss Heather, this is all for today.” As soon as he said that, he hung up immediately.

The situation was the same each time and the kidnappers held the upper hand. Heather had no choice but to passively go along with it. After hanging up the phone, she remained silent but could not seem to figure out how to start tackling the problem. Does he want me to reveal his identity in person?

She stared at her phone in frustration. At that moment, she anxiously wished that she could make her way to the other end via the phone call and exterminate the arrogant kidnapper. However, there was nothing else that she could do for now. Despite her utmost efforts, she was unable to discover any information at all. It seemed that the other party had already seen through her moves and she was constantly at her wit’s end while facing them. She was fighting a struggling battle, which seemed quite pointless.

Heather was preoccupied with her thoughts regarding the riddle after she hung up the phone. She was completely clueless about the topic. How can I even solve the riddle if I don’t know the topic? For the first time ever, she doubted her quick wits. I’m such a blockhead right now. I can’t even figure out anything! At the moment, she was quite upset by her own incompetence.

As the sky darkened, Heather’s phone rang once again. She stared at the screen and hesitated to answer the call.

Her phone rang continuously for quite some time and she had no choice but to answer the call. At the same time, Matthias’ voice rang out from the phone and his voice was clearly audible to Heather.

“Heather, I’m home.” It was quite odd for him to arrive home after such a long time and it was also out of the ordinary for him to call her about this.

“Why did you take so long to arrive home?” Heather questioned instinctively. It had been at least two hours since Matthias left the Langstons. Although they lived quite far from each other, it didn’t make sense to take two whole hours for him to arrive home.

He replied, “Why don’t you take a guess of what I did?” Although he had asked at a whim, he never expected to touch on a raw nerve.

“I don’t want to guess. I hate guessing games!” His words had reminded her of the situation with the kidnapper. They want me to solve a riddle and now, he’s also trying to make me guess! This is so annoying!

A perplexed Matthias didn’t know what was going on. Why did she lose her temper when I didn’t even do anything wrong?!

Heather hung up the phone on him in anger. It was quite unusual for her to express her anger so explicitly.

“Heather,” Matthias mumbled her name over the phone quite feebly when she had in fact already hung up the phone on him. He figured that it was unwise to persist in calling her. As for Heather, after she had calmed down, her earlier actions then dawned upon her. She didn’t expect herself to lose her temper at Matthias without any qualms.

At that instance, she had even regarded him as the kidnapper. Right now, she loathed her current behavior. In fact, there was nothing suspicious about him, but she had jumped to the conclusion that he was indeed the kidnapper and had even intended to condemn him for that. Initially, she pondered over whether to apologize to him, but she ended up brushing it off. She had to remain focused on the situation on hand and had no extra time for him. His presence in her life seemed to be quite disruptive to her emotions and she disliked being in such a state. I need to keep a cool head so that I can rescue Myra from the hands of the kidnappers as soon as possible.

Heather had no idea that Tony had already executed his plans to rescue Myra and she assumed that she was working tirelessly alone. I can’t fail in this! I must win this battle!

For the entire night, Heather found herself in a restless state. She self-torturously recounted every single detail after Myra being kidnapped, but she couldn’t find a single flaw. Although she was keen to investigate the incident in

detail, the kidnappers kept a close eye on her, which gave her no chance to show her capabilities.

It was barely seven o'clock in the morning when Heather woke up earlier in the morning and she looked at herself in the mirror. Her skin was usually as smooth as snow, but today she noticed that she had dark eye circles and there were pimples on her chin too. It was the first time that she had ever felt such pressure.

Her electric toothbrush vibrated with a buzz, but she was currently lost in her thoughts. Another day had gone by with the time passing so slowly that it was torturous for her. However, it also felt like she was being rushed at the same time.

Heather didn't know whether Myra could persevere but to be honest, she found it quite hard to go on. She could not stand her own incompetence of being unable to save her best friend and she despised her current self.

She stared at herself in the mirror in a daze before she reached out for her lipstick by the side and wrote "riddle" in red on the mirror. Next, she narrowed her eyes and looked at the mirror. She felt that she nearly had her answer.

There were some things that were about to be revealed and she wanted to grab this inspiration. She had linked everything together and suddenly thought of Everly. The kidnappers were in fact ones who meant what they said, but why didn't they kidnap Everly then? It was Everly who had lost, but why?

Heather felt that she was quite close to the truth. She held her breath as she realized that perhaps Everly was the critical point. On that eventful day, she had in fact made multiple phone calls to Everly, but how was it possible that Everly had missed every single phone call? On top of that, her reaction that day was evidently making Heather feel suspicious.

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Early in the morning, Heather didn't even bother to apply any serum and she went straight upstairs to talk to Everly. Luckily she went there early, as the latter was just about to leave the house.

Everly was in an exceptionally good mood and when she saw Heather, her lips curved into a smile as she greeted the other woman affectionately.

“Heather!” Everly didn’t sense Heather’s unusual behavior and she also didn’t notice the flash of anger in the latter’s eyes. Heather, on the other hand, studied Everly intently before asking, “Are you going out?” Everly’s all dressed-up right now. It’s so early in the morning, so where is she going?

“Yes.” Everly seemed to be in high spirits and she looked quite energetic at the moment. It looks like she must have had a good night’s sleep, Heather pondered over it and came to this insignificant conclusion. She felt regretful that she hadn’t noticed Everly’s change in behavior previously. Right now, she was quite sure that Everly was going out to meet her significant other. Who’s the guy? she mused to herself as she saw the glowing expression on the other woman’s face. Heather came to such a conclusion based on Everly’s unusual actions recently, and this was the very first time she paid attention to this current situation—previously, she had never really thought about this.

“Who are you meeting?” Heather pretended to ask with an innocent expression.

Just then, Everly, who was originally full of smiles, had a sudden change in demeanor and Heather managed to catch this slight detail. The latter focused her intent gaze on the former, which resulted in the former having no choice but to answer the question.

“Just a friend,” Everly reluctantly replied. However, Heather naturally didn’t believe her.

“Just an ordinary friend?” Heather persisted and her expression became sharper, which resulted in Everly being unable to meet her eyes.

Everly nodded and hummed, feeling quite helpless at the moment. Heather’s being so overbearing; this is so stressful!

“It looks like your friend must be quite special to you,” Heather muttered with a cold smile, which caused Everly to shiver out of fright.

“Just an ordinary friend of mine,” Everly insisted once again. At the moment, she felt as though Heather was her elder, and it made her feel inexplicably guilty.

Just then, Heather smiled and her whole demeanor softened. “Why are you so nervous?” In all honesty, she couldn’t quite understand why Everly was so

nervous, and she came to the conclusion that the latter was keeping a big secret from her.

However, Everly then murmured with an abashed smile, “Nothing much. I’m running late for my appointment.”

As soon as Heather realized that, she stood aside and cleared a path for Everly while saying, “Hurry up, then. Don’t keep your friend waiting for too long.”

Everly had assumed that Heather would persist in asking questions but unexpectedly, the latter had willingly allowed her to go on her way. She, too, didn’t bother to consider the situation too much because she was rushing to go out.

In the end, Everly was so preoccupied when she left the room that she didn’t even realize Heather was still in her room. This further strengthened Heather’s deduction that there was something wrong with her cousin.

As soon as Everly left, Heather walked out of the room. Meanwhile, Everly had already made her way to the living room. As Heather looked on from upstairs, she suddenly came up with an idea.

Along the way, she carefully trailed after Everly, though she was worried that the latter would notice her presence. Right now, Heather drove the butler’s car—a commonly seen car on the streets—in order to mask her presence.

Meanwhile, Everly drove in an unsteady and frantic manner in the front, seeming to give off a different vibe than before. Heather maintained a distance and didn’t follow too closely behind as she was worried of being noticed.

Heather’s anxiety levels were off the charts and it stuck to her; after all, she wasn’t a professional private investigator and she was worried sick that Everly would realize that something was amiss. The cars on the road increased as time went by and Heather really wished she had a pair of binoculars as she was about to lose sight of Everly’s car.

Heather’s car was quite a distance away from Everly’s car when suddenly, the latter turned right at the traffic light. As a result, Heather ended up completely losing sight of her car. It was a pain to encounter traffic lights when trailing

after someone and just then, Heather was stuck at the lights so she could only watch helplessly as Everly's car drove further and further away.

She banged on her steering wheel angrily while her eyes remained fixated in the direction that Everly had gone off. However, she was not quite resigned to her luck just yet and wanted to continue with her pursuit.

And so, Heather hastily turned right in the same direction. Right now, she no longer had any qualms so she stepped on the accelerator to speed up. There were many cars in front of her and she could no longer identify Everly's car from the crowd.

Everly usually kept a low-profile in the Langston Family and her car was also an inconspicuous one. Therefore, it wasn't an easy job trying to identify her car from those on the road. Heather racked her brain to come up with a solution and knew that she must not lose sight of Everly. Right now, all I need is a bit of luck. Meanwhile, she decided to keep going and try her luck. She guessed that Everly was just in front of her and the road was quite a long one, so she hoped that she would be able to find her along the way.

Heather approached another traffic light but she still hadn't found Everly's car. She then narrowed her eyes and stared intently as she tried to figure out each vehicle registration plate.

Suddenly, a white shadow flashed across her eyes—it turned out to be Everly's car that she had been searching for for so long. Heather felt her spirits lift and it looked like the Heavens were on her side as well.

She noticed Everly headed straight at the traffic light, so she hurriedly trailed behind her. The stretch of road that Everly took was quite long and Heather found herself driving along for about half an hour. Come to think of it, it seems that Everly is driving around in circles. There's quite obviously a shorter and more direct route to take, so why is she taking the long route?

Heather's heart skipped a beat upon realizing this; she was worried that Everly had realized her presence, so she didn't dare to go any further and tried her best to keep a distance. Truth was, this trailing episode had used up all of Heather's energy. Meanwhile, she wasn't quite sure what Everly was trying to avoid. And so, she cautiously tagged along, all the way fervently praying for her cousin to get out of her car. If Everly kept this up, then they would have already spent almost an hour on the road.

Heather glanced at her wristwatch for the time and revealed an impatient look. Perhaps it was because she hadn't expected this from Everly, so she boldly deduced that the other woman hadn't noticed her trailing behind. This made Heather even more curious as to who Everly was trying to avoid.

It looks like the person she's meeting is someone significant, Heather mused, suddenly feeling a burst of excitement as she couldn't wait to see who the person was. Perhaps she would be able to get some of her answers by default after seeing the other party.

Along the way, Heather was lost in her thoughts of figuring out the interlinked relationship of each of the families in Bradford City. However, there seemed to be a hidden, mysterious force that she still couldn't quite figure out just yet. She had assumed that perhaps the person that Everly was meeting up with was the mysterious force, but she was wrong in her assumption.

The car in front stopped all of a sudden. Meanwhile, Heather could feel her palms wet with perspiration, as this was the moment of truth and some secrets would be revealed quite shortly.

She raised her head to look outside and noticed that Everly had stopped in front of an inn. And so, she gradually slowed down and waited for Everly to walk inside before stepping out of her car. Heather could see the inn in front of her but she hesitated slightly. She realized that she seemed to be suspicious of everything recently—be it her own family members or Matthias—and she showed no leniency at all.

However, just as the answer was about to be revealed, Heather hesitated all of a sudden and she wondered whether to enter the place or not. She wasn't quite sure of how to disguise herself either, and was worried that she would be identified by Everly if she walked in directly.

Heather remembered seeing in television series and novels that it was quite common to put on a disguise first. Hence, she took out her phone and looked at her own face from the front-facing camera as she grumbled to herself, It can be a pain to have such distinctly exquisite features! No matter how hard she tried to disguise herself, there was no way she could disguise herself as an ordinary person among the crowd.

Heather caressed her face and racked her brain for a solution. Meanwhile, she cautiously peered inside but didn't catch sight of Everly.

At the moment, Everly was most likely inside one of the private rooms upstairs, and Heather felt much emboldened with that thought. And so, she stepped out with her right foot and strode purposefully toward the entrance. Soon, a waiter made his way over to serve her and she smiled warmly at the waiter. Just then, she realized that there was an advantage in her looks and she planned to find out more information about Everly's whereabouts from him.

"Hi there, madam," he greeted politely.

From the outside, this place looked like an inn. However, the furnishings inside were of a minimalist style. Why is the furnishings so mixed up? Is this how people like things nowadays? Furthermore, even a mere waiter was suited in a tuxedo, and Heather nearly thought that she had entered into a high-end restaurant.

"This place is quite unique," she forcefully came up with a comment.

Meanwhile, the waiter smiled upon hearing her words. His features were quite delicate, which caused her to glance at the other waiters, and she noticed that each of them were attractive young men too. The waiters of this inn were all exceptionally good-looking.

"Most of our customers have the same sentiments," the waiter replied.

Just then, Heather contemplated on how to ask for information about Everly. After pondering over it for a moment, she asked, "Is there a private room?" She was quite sure that Everly must be in one of the private rooms.

"Yes, madam," he replied politely.

And so, Heather came up with an excuse. "Could you introduce each of the rooms to me? I would like to pick one that suits me the most."

However, the waiter gave her a pained look. "Madam, we have five private rooms here, but two of them are currently occupied," He brought this up because he assumed that Heather wasn't an unreasonable person.

"I understand. Then why don't you lead me to the other three rooms to have a look? I would like to keep my options open," she replied without missing a beat. Luckily, there are only two private rooms occupied at the moment so things will be much easier to handle.

The waiter did not suspect that something was off and he brought Heather upstairs. It's quite rare to encounter someone like this, he thought to himself. This place was usually introduced by word of mouth and most people would directly ask for the private room they were after when they arrived. Hardly anyone would behave like Heather and request to pick her room personally.

Nonetheless, Heather's face was too attractive and her smile was captivating, so the waiter found himself going along with her suggestions without even being able to think straight.

During the selection process, Heather tried to probe for more information about the occupants of the other two private rooms. She was told that the five individual rooms were designed according to the four seasons. The most unique room was the fifth one, and the futuristic concept behind it was known as "The Fifth Season".

She then mentioned to the waiter, "I want to experience the charm of "The Fifth Season."

However, he replied regretfully, "That's our main star of the place and usually you'd have to book in advance to get that room. Besides, the room's already occupied. I'm really sorry but it's not available."

As soon as Heather heard that, she portrayed a deep sense of interest and requested with a cajoling tone, "Please, I would really like to have a look at The Fifth Season. Could you please bring me in for a quick look?"

Based on Heather's deduction, she suspected that Everly was inside The Fifth Season. After all, that was the star of the place. Moreover, even if the latter wasn't in there, then she could cross that room off her list if she managed to go and have a peek.

Heather insistently requested to take a look at The Fifth Season and came up with a reasonable excuse. However, the waiter had a torn look on his face. "I'm really sorry, madam. I'm not allowed to bring you there because that would be disruptive to our other distinguished customers. I'll get into deep trouble if I do so," he replied with a somber look on his face. However, his expression was one that managed to instill fear.

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His words made Heather all the more curious to have a look. I'm definitely going to take a look at The Fifth Season! Just then, she beamed widely because she was quite confident that it was only a matter of time before the waiter in front of her gave in to her request.

"Don't tell me that the customer from that room doesn't need their meals to be served, nor do they need any service?" she asked quite forcefully, causing the waiter to be quite intimidated.

"Well..." He looked at Heather with a torn expression.

"Please help me out here," Heather said while she took out some money. She knew that no one was able to resist the temptation of money. "If you're willing to help me with this small favor, then I won't let you be at disadvantage."

The waiter looked at the wad of cash in Heather's hands and he started to hesitate. Upon seeing that, she lamented deep down, Luckily I brought the money with me; otherwise, things might not proceed as smoothly.

"Then I—" the waiter could not make up his mind and he seemed to be struggling.

Just then, Heather directly placed the wad of bills into his hands; the money felt heavy in his hands and at that moment, he was quite tempted to take the offer. Although he was quite perplexed as to why Heather was so insistent on seeing the room, his decision was already swayed toward her and he had already shrugged off the constraints of his work ethics.

"I'll take you there!" He hastily kept the money into his pocket. It's dumb to reject a gift of money!

And so, Heather trailed after the waiter and mused, Luckily he didn't insist on knowing the reason! Come to think of it though, it must be quite common to encounter people who give out money recklessly here.

The waiter knocked on the door to The Fifth Season while Heather hid by the side where she could clearly see the inside of the room. Once the door opened, then she would be able to take a glimpse of the whole room.

Inside the room, a low male voice rang out, "Come in."

Thoughts whirled in Heather's mind and she felt like she had heard this voice from somewhere before. Just then, the old-fashioned door creaked and then opened from the inside. She widened her eyes to look inside and tried to get a clear look at the person's face but unfortunately for her, the waiter was in her way.

She narrowed her eyes and tried intently to get a clear look at the person's face. At the same time, she didn't see Everly in the room so she was slightly disappointed. However, she also heaved a sigh of relief after that. If Everly wasn't in this room then obviously, she would be in the other room.

From Heather's current position, she could see that there were shadows outlined in the other room. She contemplated for a moment and decided that she would pick a room next to that one.

Just then, the waiter came out of the room with a gloomy expression. It was quite likely that the customer in the room was in the midst of an important discussion and had lost their temper at him due to the disruption.

Heather shot a sympathetic look at the guy. She had already made up her mind about her choice of room so she mentioned to him, "I would like to book the Autumn Room please."

He glanced at her with a confused look as he commented, "But then you haven't even seen the Autumn Room."

Heather smiled. "The Fifth Season isn't as good as I imagined," she murmured. "I've seen the Spring Room and didn't like it that much either, but I'm not a big fan of winter so I guess I'll just go with Autumn."

Upon hearing that, the waiter gave her a baffled look, quite likely because it was the first time he had ever encountered such a strange customer. However, since she had already made up her mind, that made things much easier for him too. "Sure, I'll make the arrangements right away," he responded politely.

Soon after that, Heather entered the Autumn Room and noticed that the decorations inside were quite apt with the theme of the room. The room was furnished in gold and yellow hues, and the whole place reverberated with the joy of harvest. This was a contrast to what she had imagined because she had assumed that the theme chosen for this room would be 'The Autumn

Bleaks', but it didn't cross her mind that they would have chosen a joyous theme like the 'Season of Harvest'.

Heather took a seat comfortably by the table; there was a tatami mat in the room and this Japanese style simplicity was well-suited to her taste. She chose to take a seat by the tatami mat but she didn't even bother to give the actual dining table a second glance.

Just then, the waiter handed over the menu to Heather. She glanced at it then turned to him and said, "Can I have my meal by the tatami?"

He smiled at her in reply and nodded his head. "Our customers are our priority, so you can choose to have your meal at any section of this room."

Heather was quite pleased with his response. Then, she randomly picked a few recommended dishes to order. After all, this was her first time visiting the place so it would be wise to pick a couple of their well-known dishes and have a taste. She looked at the coffee table in front of her and realized that the space was quite limited, so it would very likely be crowded later on when all her dishes were served. She frowned out of frustration at that thought. Soon after that, she picked up the teapot on the table and poured herself a cup of tea. Then, she lifted the teacup and took a whiff of the fragrant tea. It smells quite good, she thought and she smiled out of pleasure because she had an appreciation for good wine and great tea.

However, right now, her priority was to find a way to determine the person in the room next to hers. She tried to place her ear to the wall and eavesdropped on the situation next door. To her dismay, the soundproof system of the room was faultless and she couldn't seem to hear a single sound. Meanwhile, there was no way she could barge into the room so she remained at a loss for what to do.

At the moment, the only thing that she was able to do in her room was to keep her eyes on the door to the next room and take note of the time they left the room. When that time came, perhaps she could work around this and open her door slightly to take a peek when they left the place.

Meanwhile, Everly was currently in the Winter Room and would definitely walk past the Autumn Room when they left the place. There was only one route to get out so for safety purposes, Heather decided to employ a foolish tactic of waiting it out patiently.

And so, she kept her eyes focused on the room next door while she ate her meal. I wonder how long will it take for them to end their discussion? she mused, starting to feel quite anxious.

Today's task required endless patience but Heather, who usually regarded time as the essence, was willing to spend her precious time on this today and wait patiently. After quite some time, she practically felt that she was about to become a mummy from all the time that she spent vegetating in the room. However, there was no activity at all from next door. What are they doing inside there?

Even if there's something fairly important to discuss, how is it possible for them to take such a long time? Heather was really tempted to barge in there right away. She sat alone in the room and was bored out of her mind. It was near lunchtime and she wondered, Don't tell me I have to take another meal here?

She had had too much for breakfast so she was quite full just then and didn't have any appetite for lunch. At that moment, she was so impatient that she considered digging a hole and to find out what was going on next door.

Throughout this excruciating ordeal, Heather was full of contempt for herself. Why did I choose such a stupid and passive move anyway? Just as she was about to give up, suddenly, there was some noise from next door. She was quite thankful for the design of this old-fashioned building which made such a loud noise. Otherwise, she wouldn't have realized the activity from next door, let alone be able to take a glimpse.

Heather stood on guard by the door and as soon as their door opened, she would definitely be able to see the face of the customer next door right away. She opened a tiny gap by the door and observed closely. Luckily I haven't ordered a meal, or else the waiter would have come in right now.

The door to the next room opened from the inside and Heather waited with bated breath. She could vaguely see a strapping male figure walking over. He neared her room and it wouldn't take too long for her to see his face. However, she suddenly noticed something and she didn't know whether to laugh or cry at the situation. That man had a mask on his face and his current attire looked out of place.

Nonetheless, the person next to him was Everly and everything had gone according to plan. Unfortunately, though, there was a flaw in the final and

most critical step. I wonder whether he's trying to avoid others intentionally or could it be for some other reason? Anyway, after spending such a long time and trailing after Everly, this plan is a flop.

Heather was quite displeased with this outcome. Meanwhile, she focused her gaze on the man's figure but unfortunately for her, he didn't utter a single word while walking out. After all, if Heather could put a voice to him, then it would make him easier to identify.

After the man left, she requested a piece of paper and a pencil from the waiter. Then, she quickly sketched the man's figure. She had quite good sketching skills so she banked everything on this sketch she did. If I hand this to a private investigator, they should be able to come up with something!

Right now, Heather wasn't worried about the outcome but she was more anxious about running out of time. She was quite close to a few skillful private investigators in town and she was confident in their abilities. The only problem right now was that there wasn't much time left.

She had already contacted the private investigator that she trusted upon receiving the first phone call from the kidnapper but up till now, the private investigator hadn't managed to come up with the kidnappers' hidden lair.

On the surface, it seemed that Heather was busy trying to figure out the whole incident but in reality, she was actually trying to help cover the tracks of the private investigator. She clearly knew that she wasn't a professional in this field, so it would be much more reliable to leave this investigation work to the hands of an expert.

She had succeeded in gaining the attention of the kidnappers. After all, they probably didn't expect for her to engage the services of a private investigator so early on, and especially a well-known one too.

On the way back, Heather immediately sent her sketch to the private investigator. Truth was, she actually owned a phone that couldn't be hacked. It was one designed for her personally by Leon, and the privacy features it had was exceptional.

Recently, she had been using this to keep in contact with the private investigator. Of course, she kept in contact with Leon as well using this phone. He had the same model too, and the male version was black while hers was white.

Initially, Leon had designed this as a couple phone but Heather had ended up falling in love with someone else. Nonetheless, after that, if they had any private and urgent matters, they would normally use this phone to make contact.

The private investigator, also known as the Great Detective, looked at the photo on his phone and revealed a cunning smile. He had flown from miles away to get to Bradford City to investigate this kidnapping incident. This was his way of showing his respect to Heather.

“My darling Heather, I just got off the plane and I’m knackered. Could you please give me a break before I throw myself into work?” he teasingly replied to Heather with a flippant tone of voice.

“I’ll increase your pay to 500,000. Just bring me the identity of this person right away,” Heather countered swiftly. She didn’t quite trust his words and knew that he tended to drag things on, so her only solution was to throw money at him.

“Darling, this isn’t a matter of money.” He smiled perversely. He hadn’t seen her for quite some time now and he recalled his previous encounter with her. She was dressed in a bright red dress and was so attractive back then. If only I can have a night with her, then that would definitely be my motivation to work hard.

“Where are you?” Heather was quite aware of his perverse nature, so she knew that he must be raring to meet her. Although she couldn’t stand his perverted manner, she knew that he was top in this profession and she had no better candidate for this job.

“Darling, do you miss me as much as I miss you?” he murmured flirtatiously.

In the end, Heather didn’t want to waste her time beating around the bush so she said bluntly, “Send me your location and I’ll head over right away.”

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After a 30-minute drive, Heather finally found the place where the Great Detective was. It was a remote area, which was a good choice when one wanted to hide from the public.

A smirk played by the Great Detective's lips as he looked at her walking toward him. I've really missed her, he thought to himself. Then, he spread his arms wide and said to her, "Hattie, let me give you a hug."

Heather rolled her eyes at him. "Zayne, be serious. I'm not in the mood to joke around with you."

Upon hearing her words, he put down his arms in disappointment but the smile on his face remained as bright as ever.

"Hattie, who made you so angry?" he asked in a girly voice. He was not only a pervert but feminine in character, not to mention bisexual.

"Please act more normal. You are becoming rather gay lately," Heather responded with a look of disgust on her face.

Zayne Lee was unfazed by her reaction and said, "You dislike me for being a pervert, right? So, I thought that you may like me if I act this way and think of me as your bestie!" he purred in a British accent that sounded so annoying that Heather wanted to beat him up.

"Did you stay in Britain for too long? Why do you have a British accent?" She rubbed her temple and was starting to regret asking him to come over.

"Don't you like it, though? It sounds gentle." He spoke with his pinky raised.

The way Zayne behaved in his burly build made his overall image seem incongruous. In all honesty, Heather even suspected that he was actually putting up an act because she couldn't imagine him as a bottom, nor could she imagine anybody having such a peculiar taste to actually accept him as a partner.

Although Zayne was no longer the pervert he used to be when she met him, this time around, she still found his image now unacceptable.

"Let's get to business." She cleared her throat and found a spot to sit down, trying her best to stay as far away from him.

"Alright, I understand that you didn't invite me here to become your bestie," he stated as he took a seat beside her.

“Is there any progress after so many days?” Heather asked with a frown. With Zayne’s capability, it is impossible for him not to find anything after investigating things for so long.

“What kind of progress do you want?” he countered with a raised brow. Truth was, he looked rather handsome after dropping the feminine act.

“I want to rescue Myra as soon as possible.” Heather murmured and her brows were tightly knitted.

However, her request put him on a spot. “This will be difficult.”

“Difficult?” she repeated in disbelief. It was rare to hear Zayne using the word ‘difficult’, as he would usually complain that things were too simple to him.

“Is there any better method?” she asked, refusing to believe that he had no better ideas.

“Heather, I am but an insignificant detective. What other ways do I have?” This was the first time she heard him describing himself like this and it made her even more anxious.

“Zayne, don’t brush me off. I know that you definitely have a way!” Heather roared, thinking that he must be pulling her leg. This can’t be true!

However, Zayne merely shrugged and smiled at her. “This matter is not as simple as it seems. The kidnappers may seem like mere criminals from the surface, but they are supported by unfathomable forces behind them.”

Truth be told, he did not expect Heather to be so irritable because of this and it was giving him a headache. She seldom lost her sense of judgement, but the kidnapping incident this time had obviously made her lose her calm.

Upon hearing that, Heather tried to calm herself down because blowing up at him would not help the situation since it wasn’t his fault to begin with. “Do you have any good suggestions?” she asked.

“Stay put. Don’t worry, though; your bestie’s life is not in danger for now,” he reassured her, finally getting serious.

“Myra is pregnant, so of course I’m very worried for her!” Heather stressed this point again to him.

Zayne raised his brows and replied nonchalantly, "Heather, you know very well that this sort of thing happens every day. Even if the one who is being kidnapped is a pregnant woman, so what?" Zayne did not wish to see her losing her composure, so he had to find a way to make her view this kidnapping case without personal feelings.

However, Heather countered, "She has been my best friend since I was young. In my heart, she is more important to me than my real sister." This was the first time she confessed her heartfelt feelings.

Zayne looked at her in distress, but he couldn't allow her to be emotional. He had to remind her to think with reason.

"The more you care about her, the more likely it is for you to fall in the kidnappers' trap." He revealed the truth bluntly. "You are now being led by the nose. I have to say, Heather, I've never seen such a stupid side of you." He intentionally stressed on the word 'stupid' as he could not bear to see her continue on like this.

"Do I really look stupid now?" She, too, felt that she seemed to have lost her judgement and kept doing stupid things.

"Yes, incredibly stupid, I might add." Zayne held nothing back as he recklessly degraded her.

"What do you think I should do, then?" She looked into his eyes with a piercing gaze. She needed an answer right now, one that could show her the way.

However, Zayne raised his voice and muttered, "Like I've said—stay put. This is a kidnapping incident, so you should understand that this kind of case is the most challenging one to handle." He really couldn't bear to see Heather this way. She seemed totally different from how graceful and glamorous she used to be.

"I understand. I understand it all but if I don't do anything, I feel useless." Heather had been racking her brain to think of a better way these few days because she just couldn't bear not doing anything.

"You don't understand that you are only acting foolishly." Zayne shot her a cold look. He never expected Heather to become this way when they met again, and he found it an utter disappointment.

“How should we rescue Myra from the kidnappers, then?” She was especially concerned about this matter. She had placed all her hope on Zayne, who had now practically become her savior.

“Calm down. I can’t think of any way at the moment, but I’m not pulling your leg either—this case is too complicated, so I don’t know how to explain it to you,” he explained slowly. It will be easier to deal with this if my words can get through to her.

“Explain it to me in a way that is easiest for me to understand, then.” On the other hand, Heather required an explanation so that she could understand the entire situation.

“You are very irritable now, so I’m afraid that you may hit me if I say something wrong.” As Zayne was speaking, he tried to match his words with his actions by giving her a timid gaze—he really pulled out all the stops for his act.

Upon seeing that, she raised her hand in frustration. “I will hit you right now if you don’t give me a good explanation,” she muttered bluntly, as she knew that the generous Zayne never picked on her faults for trivial stuff like this.

“Alright, alright. Please forgive me, O’ Master Heather. I’ll tell you everything,” he helplessly replied in aggrievement, which looked rather hilarious on him.

“You’d better give me a good explanation,” Heather growled in an intimidating tone.

“This incident probably involves a lot of parties. Now that Myra is in their hands, they have got something on us, so we can’t just barge in and snatch her back even if we find their hideout,” Zayne explained vividly.

“So?” Heather seemed to understand what he implied and looked at him thoughtfully.

“Have you forgotten that they are criminals? Even if they are treating Myra fairly well now, things will not be the same if we try to barge into their place to save her. Do you really think that they won’t make a move on Myra by then?” He threw her a question and had her figure it out herself.

“You are saying that our actions are limited and we can’t do much because Myra is in their hands?” Heather responded with a question, finally understanding what he had in mind.

“You don’t say!” He revealed a bright grin, which she found rather ugly.

After listening to his analysis, Heather managed to calm herself down because what he had said made sense. Upon seeing that her expression had eased a little, Zayne inwardly heaved a sigh of relief.

“So we are going to remain passive?” she pressed on, reluctant to accept that there was nothing they could do. If we continue to do nothing, how are we going to rescue Myra?

“Have you heard of a kidnapping case where the kidnappers kidnapped a wealthy businessman for three months, and the latter managed to return unharmed?” Zayne suddenly brought up a case in a high spirit—it was a case that he was involved as well.

“Three months?” Heather repeated in disbelief. “We can’t possibly let Myra give birth at the kidnappers’ place, can we?” Myra’s delivery date was approaching and it left them with not much time.

“Stay calm. Trust me; I will try my best to get Myra back unharmed and as soon as possible.” Zayne was picking his words carefully as Heather now was too irritable, and he was afraid that he might accidentally say something that would offend her.

“I trust you and your capabilities as well, but I need a timeline. I can’t just wait blindly,” she countered. It was hard for Heather and it never had been her intention to urge him this way as well, but whenever she thought of the fact that Myra was still in the hands of the kidnappers, she would feel so restless that she was unable to do anything.

“One month.” Zayne reluctantly replied.

“So long?” Heather asked incredulously.

“Yes. This case is somewhat similar to the kidnapping case of the wealthy businessman. At that time, the kidnapper didn’t name their conditions even after quite some time and kept holding him captive, but of course, he didn’t torture the businessman. When I accepted the case, I was the same as you—I

had no idea what to do.” He continued to comfort her. He believed that an intelligent person like Heather would surely understand what he implied.

“And after that?” She was more concerned about what had happened next.

“It was a complicated case that involved the interests of many parties, so it would be difficult for me to tell you everything at once. However, you have to trust me that this isn’t something that can be rushed,” Zayne reassured Heather, who had anxiety written all over her face.

Upon hearing that, she sighed. She initially thought that a kidnapping case like this would be rare, but it turned out that strange occurrences were never rare in a world as large as theirs. It was great that Zayne had experience in this sort of case and she was glad that she did not find the wrong expert to help her.

“All you need to do now is to trust me completely and listen to my every command, alright?” He had to gain her complete trust as there were a lot of things that required her to work very closely with him.

After some contemplation, she nodded seriously. “Okay. Consider it a deal.”