

The Mbahsb 601

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It still rained heavily outside.

The second Laney stepped out of the club, the cool breeze chilled her to the bone. She rubbed her arms and ran to the nearest convenience store to buy an umbrella.

As she was about to pay, she saw a mother with her child nearby. The child seemed to want to buy the candy bar on the shelf, so he reached out to take it. However, the mother immediately patted his hand and shook her head. "You already have a cavity, little one. You can't have sweets until the dentist fills it."

Having been stopped, the child immediately burst into tears. The mother shot Laney an apologetic smile and pulled the little tyke out of the store.

The cashier smiled helplessly. "Kids, am I right?"

Laney smiled back subconsciously, but then the smile froze on her face.

It suddenly dawned on her that last night, Garrett didn't wear a condom.

After paying for the umbrella, she headed to the pharmacy to buy emergency contraception.

They had sex less than a day ago; she couldn't take the risk.

As soon as she got home, she quickly took the pills and then sat there, not knowing what to do next.

If she stayed in Barnes, she'd inevitably run into Garrett.

After thinking for a while, Laney soon came to the conclusion that she had to leave. Last night had made it clear that she couldn't control herself around Garrett. It was best if she removed herself from the situation literally.

And the best way to put some distance between them was for her to go far away. Anyway, she knew she'd have a job anywhere given her prestige as a bodyguard.

Thinking of this, Laney felt a bit better.

That very night, she packed up all her things.

When she went to Ethan to tender her resignation, the latter didn't have any reason to object. Ethan simply asked, "Are you sure that this is what you want? Your salary here is way above average."

Laney nodded firmly. "And I appreciated that, sir. But it's not that I'm dissatisfied with the pay. I'm just not used to life here in Barnes and I want to try going abroad. Plus, I have too many enemies here. I live in constant worry of being ambushed."

Well, at least what she said was half true.

Seeing that Laney had made up her mind, Ethan didn't force her to stay and simply signed her resignation papers.

Before leaving the city, Laney went to Janet to say goodbye.

When Janet saw Laney at her door, she was pleasantly surprised. She smiled and teased, "What brings you here?"

She stepped aside, letting Laney into the house.

Fidgeting with her hair, Laney looked a little uneasy and embarrassed. "Actually, I came here to say goodbye. I'm leaving the country tonight."

"What?" Janet gasped in shock. "You never told me that you were leaving. Is it because of Garrett?"

Laney nodded. After she told Janet about what had happened between her and Garrett, she didn't know what else to say.

"You guys moved way too fast... But I'll support you no matter what choice you make. Take care, okay? I'll visit you when I have the time, or perhaps you can come back to see me." Janet sighed heavily, clearly reluctant to part with her friend.

Laney stayed with Janet until it was time to go to the airport. Janet drove her there herself.

The atmosphere was depressing. Neither one of them knew what to say.

It wasn't until Laney was about to depart that the two looked at each other with silly smiles, their eyes filled with tears.

Holding the flight ticket tightly in her hand, Laney suddenly threw her arms around Janet tightly. "I'm lucky to have you as a friend. But I never thought we'd be separated so soon."

Patting her on the back, Janet smiled through the tears. "We'll meet again."

Just then, the airport announced that Laney's flight was about to depart. Wiping her eyes, Laney took one last look at the cityscape in the distance and then turned around to walk towards the boarding gate.

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Two days later, Garrett found that Laney had left.

He had been staying in the presidential suite of the club. When he finally checked out, he went straight to Pole Shadow to see Laney.

Only then did he find out that Laney had resigned. As for where she had gone, nobody at Pole Shadow knew. It was as though she had vanished into thin air.

Garrett knew that if anyone knew where Laney was, it was Janet.

As soon as Janet got off work, she saw Garrett's car parked in front of W Marks Studio.

She wasn't surprised at all, though. Ignoring the man in the driver's seat, she started walking towards her home.

Garrett released the brakes slightly and followed Janet. He honked several times and asked, "Where's Laney? I can't get in touch with her. She won't answer my calls. You must know where she is, right?"

Janet stopped and glanced at Garrett indifferently. "Obviously, she doesn't want to see you. And even if you knew where she was, what're you going to do? Get her back? And then what? You can't give her what she needs, can you? So what's the point?"

Garrett wanted to say something but stopped on second thought. Janet was right.

He bit his lower lip, at a complete loss.

But even so, he couldn't just lose Laney forever like that. He didn't even get to say goodbye to her before she left.

Seeing that Garrett had fallen silent, Janet sighed and softened her tone. "Anyway, you think it over. No one can help you but yourself. If you really want to be with her, you should be prepared for a fallout with your family."

After saying that, Janet turned to leave. The next second, she paused and warned him, "Don't follow me!"

With a long face, Garrett didn't say anything. He refused to listen to her and followed her to her house. Seeing that she was about to enter the villa, he jumped out of the car and caught up with her. "Just tell me where Laney is, and leave the rest to me."

Ignoring him, Janet entered the house and slammed the door shut.

Annoyed, Garrett rang the doorbell incessantly.

Unexpectedly, it was Ethan who came to the door. "What do you want?"

Garrett was still on edge. He pointed a finger at Ethan and hissed, "I need to talk to your wife. Let me in."

Ethan reached out one hand to block Garrett's way. He gave him a warning look and said, "You're a grown man. You have to think before you act. If you really want to be with Laney, you should get prepared to face the consequences. Make sure that you'll be able to protect her no matter what before you go after her. If you can't do that, don't go. You're not strong enough now. Even if Laney agrees to be with you, you can't protect her. In the end, you'll only make her suffer. Is this the kind of love you want to give her?"

After hearing what Ethan had to say, Garrett stopped in his tracks. His anger was suddenly extinguished.

Dejected, he returned to his car with his head lowered and drove away.

The second he got home, Garrett sought solace in alcohol. He drank one bottle after another.

A few days later, he had finally calmed down.

Nobody knew how Garrett had managed to get all his ducks in a row, but one day, he went back to the Larson Group and started to work hard, devoting himself to his career.

Seeing him like this, Ethan had a new impression of him. At lunchtime, he asked, "Do you still want to look for her?"

Garrett unhurriedly pushed his glasses up the bridge of his nose. There was a calm look about him. "I respect Laney's choice. The reason why she refused me was very rational. Besides, she doesn't want to be with me. If I forced her back, we wouldn't be happy. I can only let her go."

He smiled and looked into the distance with a trace of sadness in his eyes. "The earth is round. If I keep on walking forward, I can eventually meet her again in the near future, right? I have to prepare for that moment. When that day comes, I will definitely be ready with my own choice, and by then, I'll never let go of her."

Ethan raised his eyebrows and looked at Garrett quietly. After a while, he patted him on the shoulder and said with a smile, "That day will come. I'm sure of it."

[Chapter 603](#)

In the Lester family.

Recently, Seth and Julia had been getting along well. Julia even moved into his villa in Seacisco. The media made a big deal about it, and their love affair instantly became a hot topic.

Leaning against Seth's chest, Julia drew circles on his chest with her fingertips. Her voice was soft, almost angelic. "Are you planning to make my live with you like this for the rest of my life? Hiding here in your villa? Like I'm a vampire who can't go out in the sun?"

Being flirted with like this, Seth felt a little turned on. He grabbed her restless hand and pointed at the teeth marks on his arm. "Look at all these bite marks. You must be a vampire, since you have such sharp teeth. Come on, show me your fangs!"

Then he tried to pinch Julia's chin playfully.

"Meanie!" Julia turned her face away, hammered his chest, and giggled. Then she batted her eyelashes at him bashfully. "My parents have been asking about our relationship. What should I tell them?"

"Don't worry. I'm going back to Sugden this week to make it clear to my wife." Seth coaxed Julia softly, rubbing her shoulder dotingly, but the warmth in his voice didn't reach his eyes.

Now that he had this silly woman wrapped around his finger, it was time for him to go back to Sugden to divorce Tasha.

Ever since Seth had gone to Seacisco to temporarily take charge of the Lester family's business, he had seldom come back to Sugden. The few times he did come home, he was only there to fulfill his duty as her spouse and have sex with her.

He and Tasha had been married for so many years, but they didn't have any children. Before, Elissa used to urge them to have a baby. Now that Elissa was in jail, it was the Jarvis family's turn to urge them.

As soon as Seth stepped foot inside the house, Tasha walked up to him and took his coat and suitcase, smiling tenderly.

"You must be tired after the long flight. Go get a shower and get changed. The dinner will be waiting for you when you're done showering." Tasha's tone was gentle and considerate. As she spoke, she patted the dust off his coat and hung it on the coat rack.

Seth nodded coldly.

He had never felt attached to anyone in his life, including his own wife. To put it bluntly, he didn't feel an ounce of love for Tasha.

After taking a shower, he jogged downstairs. Tasha had already served several dishes on the table.

She was the textbook definition of a good wife. While she wasn't particularly stunning, she was charming in her own way, not to mention kind.

After they got married, Elissa had always praised Tasha as a good wife to Seth.

"What's on your mind?" Over dinner, Seth glanced at Tasha, who was sitting next to him. She looked particularly excited.

The smile on Tasha's face became brighter. Shyness flashed across her face. She put down the fork and started to say, "Here's the thing—"

Seth actually didn't give a damn about whatever she had to say, nor did he have the patience to listen to her. He interrupted her abruptly, saying, "Whatever it is, it can wait. Let's have a divorce."

All the color instantly drained from Tasha's face. "Why?"

Seth didn't bother to make up some excuse. He put down his utensils, crossed his arms over his chest, and asked frankly, "Haven't you seen the news lately? Do you really want to hear it from me? Alright. I'm having an affair."

Tasha couldn't believe her ears. Tears welled up in her eyes and a lump formed in her throat. "The media always makes stuff up. I thought that the news was fake..."

Her voice trailed off. She stood up, went back to their bedroom, and brought a piece of paper to Seth. "I'm pregnant. That was what I wanted to tell you just now. It turns out I was ovulating the last time you came home."

Seth took the pregnancy test report and looked at it with a frown. After a moment of silence, he said, "Then we'll divorce after you give birth to the baby. I'll raise the child and compensate you for your trouble."

Tasha was dumbfounded. "It's my child, too. How could you suggest such a thing?"

She couldn't believe what was happening. Was Seth out of his mind?

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Before Tasha could graduated from college, her family had arranged for her to marry Seth.

Although the Lester family held a certain level of prestige in Seacisco, Tasha initially was against this arrangement. She couldn't bring herself to marry a total stranger.

However, after meeting Seth several times, Tasha found that he was a handsome man with a gentle personality. He had always treated her well, like a proper gentleman.

As she admired both his good looks and personality, Tasha gradually developed feelings for Seth.

Ever since they got married, Seth had been devoted to his work. On the other hand, he thought that Tasha's main duty was to be a good housewife. Moreover, he wanted a child as soon as possible, so he asked Tasha to stay at home and focus on getting pregnant.

At the time, Tasha was about to graduate from college. She didn't want to have a baby so soon. She was still so young and wanted to work for a few years. If she had a child, she would be restrained in all aspects of life and her career planning would also be put to an abrupt halt.

Tasha had voiced her opinions to Seth, but he seemed a little unhappy to hear them. After thinking for a long time, she finally decided to give up on her dreams and devoted herself to the family.

She pulled out of fashion design, which surprised even her parents. Truth be told, Tasha was gifted when it came to fashion design. In her pursuit of such a career, she had even given up on the chance of studying business management abroad. Now, she just gave up her dream for Seth. It seemed that she really loved him very much.

At the time, Tasha was so absorbed in the joy of finding her Mr. Right that she felt it was worth it to sacrifice so much for Seth.

Some time ago, Seth went to Seacisco to take care of his family's business. He only came back once a month. Given the circumstances, she had thought it would be difficult to get pregnant, which worried her.

But a few days ago, she suddenly felt sick and vomited a lot. After getting checked at the hospital, she was told that she was in fact pregnant.

The news brought Tasha endless joy. Little did she know that Seth was planning to divorce her as soon as he came back home.

And even after she told him that she was pregnant, he didn't change his mind about the divorce.

Ever since they got married, Seth had been consumed with his work. He was ambitious and only cared about his own career. Even after they got married, he didn't really spend much time with Tasha.

She used to think that Seth valued his career too much, but she understood him in a way. She also believed that after they had a child, Seth would slowly change. He would learn to be a good husband, a good father.

It never occurred to her that Seth was such an unfeeling person.

"Are you really going to do this to me?" Tasha looked at Seth with tearful eyes and asked in a trembling voice.

Seth plucked a napkin from the table and dabbed at his mouth slowly. Then he tossed the napkin and said, "Have I not made myself clear? This is not a discussion. I'm just informing you."

Tasha was rendered speechless. She was too shocked to even cry and simply stared at Seth blankly.

Seeing that she had gone silent, Seth stood up to leave.

He took his coat from the rack and glanced at Tasha indifferently. "That's all. Take care of yourself and the baby."

Then he left, closing the door behind him.

Tasha sat there in a daze for a long time. After what felt like an eternity, she slowly stood up and was about to go back to the bedroom.

However, as soon as she stood up, the sudden weakness in her legs made her stumble. Her vision went black as she fell to the floor.

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Since then, Tasha had been deeply depressed.

Seth had arranged for several doctors and nutritionists to live with Tasha in the house. They were responsible for her diet and the health of the baby in her belly.

Save for the divorce and the affair, he was no different from a considerate husband, but he seldom went home.

One day, Tasha was watching the gossip news on TV. There, plastered on the big screen, were Seth's and Julia's pristine faces. The man was calm and elegant, while the woman was beautiful and charming. They looked like a perfect match.

"Mrs. Lester, why're you watching that?" When the maid saw what Tasha was watching, she grabbed the remote control from Tasha's hand and turned off the TV. "It's all fake news. Don't take it to heart, ma'am."

Smiling wryly, Tasha subconsciously touched her belly and murmured, "He openly goes out with his mistress now. They're like a real couple now."

Tasha had seen several news segments claiming that the eldest son of the Lester family had a new girlfriend and was about to divorce his wife.

The servant was worried that the bad news would worsen Tasha's mood, subsequently affecting the baby in her belly. She tried to put on a smile and consoled her, "But you are the one and only Mrs. Lester. Just ignore that woman. Your health should be your priority now."

Hearing this, Tasha smiled bitterly. "I won't be 'Mrs. Lester' for long."

She had been completely desolate ever since Seth broke the news to her. She knew it was impossible to make him change his mind because he was a soulless, heartless psychopath.

He didn't love her. He didn't even treat her like a normal human being. In his eyes, she was just a baby machine.

As for the child, Tasha didn't intend to keep it. If the child was born into such a broken family, her child was destined to live an unhappy life.

However, Tasha had been pondering over this for days on end, and she still couldn't make up her mind to abort the baby.

This was her first child, and while she was only a few weeks' pregnant, she already loved it very much. Besides, Seth would never allow her to have an abortion.

The servant sighed. "What about the child, ma'am? You have to be strong for the child."

"I can raise the child by myself." Tasha spoke with fierce determination. Even if she ended up giving birth to the baby, never in her wildest dreams would she leave it to Seth.

Seth clearly had no love for her, nor would he for the child. It was painfully obvious that he only wanted the child for the sake of carrying on the family name.

With an indifferent, unloving father and a stepmother who used to be a home-wrecker, Tasha couldn't help but shiver at the thought of what kind of life her child would live in such a household.

Eyes wide with worry, the servant whispered, "Mr. Lester would never allow it! Besides, how can you raise a child by yourself? Are you going to move back to your parents' house?"

Tasha smiled faintly. She had thought it over.

"Please call Mr. Lester and ask him to come back. Tell him that I need to talk to him about the baby."

When Seth received the phone call from the maid, he felt reluctant to go back. However, when he heard that Tasha was going to talk about the child, he flew back to Sugden right after work.

Tasha knew that Seth would come back that very same night, so she had been waiting in the living room.

When Seth opened the door and entered the house, he saw Tasha sitting on the sofa.

The lights were off. The only thing illuminating the room was the TV screen.

Seth shrugged off his coat and said with displeasure, "It's so late. Why haven't you gone to bed yet? Don't you ever think about the baby in your belly?"

Unfazed, Tasha continued to eat the fruit on her plate, watching TV. "For a psychopath, you really care about your child, Seth."

Seth didn't want to waste his breath with this woman. He sat on the sofa next to Tasha, crossed his long legs, and asked straightforwardly, "Why did you ask me to come back?"

Tasha turned her head to look at his face—the very same face she had come to fall in love with.

"You proposed a divorce last time you were here. Here's the thing. I will divorce you, and I want nothing except full custody of the child."

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Seth met Tasha's gaze and said expressionlessly, "Not a chance."

Seth was indifferent by nature, but the child in Tasha's belly was still his. A big and prominent family in Seacisco like the Lester family attached great importance to offspring.

Moreover, it was his first child. Seth would never allow his firstborn child to live with anyone else but him.

It was his child. He simply wouldn't let others take it away from him.

He believed Tasha foolishly thought highly of herself. A woman was just a tool for having children. The child would carry on his surname, not hers. What right did she have to take the child away?

"The baby is also mine, Seth. Don't you think you're being too selfish? Oh, never mind. You'll never understand anyway." All of a sudden, Tasha got worked up. Her dilated pupils reflected the movement in the TV. "If the child lives with you, it'll be impossible for it to ever be happy. I can only imagine how badly you'll treat our child. The child will be ruined, or worse—it'll become another soulless machine, just like its father."

Tasha squeezed her eyes shut and shuddered. If that was the child's fate, she'd rather not bring it into this world.

Seth reached into his pocket for his lighter and cigarette case.

"Ruined? The Lester family will provide nothing but the best for the child. That's better than the child living with you, a divorced woman."

Tasha was speechless. She knew beforehand that it would be useless to reason with such an unreasonable person. She put the plate of fruit down and stood up to go upstairs. "Either the child stays with me or no divorce. It's as simple as that."

Seth grabbed Tasha's wrist. His tone was domineering and unusually sharp. "The child will stay with the Lester family. There is no room for discussion. If you don't agree to the divorce, I actually have plenty of ways to make you do it."

"What—what do you want?" Frightened by the crazed look in his eye, Tasha's face turned pale.

Noticing that she had gone pale, Seth turned to the servant and barked, "Take Mrs. Lester back to her room and ask the doctor to check on her!"

As soon as he finished speaking, he released Tasha, turned around, and left the villa.

The servant helped Tasha to her room. The doctor rushed in to examine her body, only to find that she was fine. She just needed to lie down and have some rest.

After the doctor left, the servant brought a bowl of tonic soup for Tasha.

Tasha drank it up and sank into bed in a daze. The horrible look in Seth's eyes just now kept resurfacing in her mind.

She closed her eyes and patted her chest to calm her racing heart. It took a long time before she finally fell into a restless sleep.

The following morning, Tasha planned to pack up her things and move out. Since Seth didn't want to leave the child to her, she had to come up with another solution.

Just as she brought her packed luggage to the gate of the villa, she was stopped by two bodyguards

"Mrs. Lester, please stay in the house. Mr. Lester said that you can't go anywhere before you agree to let the child be raised by the Lester family." The bodyguards directly pushed Tasha and her luggage

back into the villa.

Tasha was so angry that she felt suffocated. Upon looking around the living room, she found that there were more surveillance cameras installed.

She immediately understood what was going on. She pointed at a camera and shouted hysterically, "Seth, you're such an inhuman bastard! How dare you imprison me?"

She couldn't believe that Seth not only sent people to watch over her but also installed surveillance cameras to monitor her every move at any time.

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Tasha couldn't let things go on like this. She needed to talk to Seth again, but he had never come back again since that night when she told him she wanted to raise the baby alone, nor could she contact him however she tried.

"Can you help me reach Seth?" Tasha turned to the servants, doctor, and nutritionist in the villa angrily.

She felt like a prisoner, and she was in desperate need of help.

But everyone ignored her request since they didn't dare to go against Seth's orders. After all, their only job was to make sure that she was alive and the baby was safe.

Their indifference made Tasha feel more desperate.

She knew that this was what Seth meant when he said he had other ways to force her to give in. This villa was now her prison. As soon as she delivered the child, he'd take the child away from her. And then he would force her to sign the divorce paper and drive her out of the Lester family.

As the days went by, Tasha's mental health gradually collapsed.

She had to get out of here at all costs.

She hated that Seth dealt with the problem in such a violent way.

Every day, the news kept broadcasting photos of Seth and that other woman coming in and out of a hotel. Every time Tasha saw these photos, she'd grit her teeth in hatred.

What the hell did Seth think of her?

A baby machine that he could lock up at home to give birth to his child?

Tasha's affection for Seth was instantly wiped out and replaced with seething hatred.

She was the daughter of the Jarvis family! Even if their glory days were over, she had never been treated like this.

She couldn't just sit still and wait for her doom. She had to get out of here, for the sake of her child.

Tasha climbed out of bed. Seth had asked someone to seal the windows with iron wire. As if that wasn't enough, over half a dozen bodyguards were on patrol outside the villa. Looking at all the men outside, she felt helpless.

She was the weaker party now, and she knew that the Jarvis family could not compete with the Lester family. After the stock market turmoil a few years ago, the Jarvis family had slowly plunged into a decline. Otherwise, Seth would never have dared to bully her like this.

Seth was certain that the Jarvis family wouldn't want to fight against him—nor would they be able to, so he didn't hold back when pushing Tasha to the wall.

Tasha bit her lip and held her belly, feeling completely and utterly powerless.

With a heavy heart, she headed downstairs to the living room. She was still pregnant. No matter how hopeless her situation was, she had to cheer up. The baby needed her.

The news was broadcasting financial news, telling the legendary story of the Larson Group. It became one of the leading companies in both Barnes and Seacisco within only a few years.

Tasha pursed her lips. She remembered that the reason why Seth had gone back to Seacisco was because of the war between the Lester family and the Larson Group. Under the attack of the Larson Group, the Lester family's stock price had fallen sharply.

If there was anyone who could beat Seth, it had to be Brandon Larson, CEO of the Larson Group, who was also known to have another identity as a Lester—Ethan Lester.

After mulling over it for a long time, Tasha finally decided to cooperate with Ethan in secret.

She was still Seth's wife. Maybe she could make a deal with Ethan. The Lester family had made tons of money over the years. How could their hands be totally clean?

Since Seth was so cruel to her, she decided to respond in kind.

Tasha turned off the TV and hurried back to her room, clutching onto the railing for support.

She was locked up here. If she wanted to contact Brandon, she had to get out first. Fortunately, Seth didn't take away her IDs.

During dinner, Tasha deliberately knocked over all the dishes on the table. When they heard the shattering of the plates, the bodyguards burst through the door and rushed in.

When they got to the dining room, they found Tasha sitting at the table calmly. She wiped her mouth elegantly and said, "Tell Seth that I've made up my mind. I'll give up custody of the child, but there are

some other things about the divorce that I have to discuss with him face to face. Tell him to come here himself. Otherwise, I'll do everything in my power to get rid of this child, even if there're dozens of bodyguards watching over me."

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When Seth heard from the bodyguard that Tasha was willing to divorce, he rushed back to Sugden from Seacisco that weekend.

It had been a month since the last time they met. Tasha was wearing a tight dress today. Her limbs were still slender, but her belly looked a little more round. There were dark circles under her eyes, and she looked very haggard.

But Seth didn't give a damn about her; he just cared about the health of the baby in Tasha's belly.

After all, he had no feelings for the baby's mother. As the eldest Lester child in his generation, he shouldered the responsibility of carrying on the family name. Seth wouldn't have even gotten married if it weren't for this responsibility. In his opinion, marriage was nothing but troublesome, and he would lose some of his assets if he divorced his wife—just like what was happening now.

"I've brought my lawyer here. If all goes well, we can draw up a divorce agreement now." Seth sat on the sofa leisurely, looking very arrogant.

The lawyer stood behind him, with a thick wad of documents in his hand. It seemed that he had prepared for this long before they came here.

Tasha sneered with disdain. "No problem."

She glanced at the lawyer and said in a relaxed tone, "I don't want any shares in your company. It's too troublesome. I just want money. I want a third of your estate—all your cars, antiques, jewelry, and so on should belong to me. Lastly, I want five hundred million in cash."

Seth's nostrils flared. "That's a bit too much, don't you think? You haven't contributed a cent to this family, yet you want to rob me blind."

When Seth heard from the bodyguard that Toshio was willing to divorce, he rushed back to Sugden from Seacisco that weekend.

It had been a month since the last time they met. Toshio was wearing a tight dress today. Her limbs were still slender, but her belly looked a little more round. There were dark circles under her eyes, and she looked very haggard.

But Seth didn't give a damn about her; he just cared about the health of the baby in Toshio's belly.

After all, he had no feelings for the baby's mother. As the eldest Lester child in his generation, he shouldered the responsibility of carrying on the family name. Seth wouldn't have even gotten married if it weren't for this responsibility. In his opinion, marriage was nothing but troublesome, and he would lose some of his assets if he divorced his wife—just like what was happening now.

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Seth's nostrils flared. "That's a bit too much, don't you think? You haven't contributed a cent to this family, yet you want to rob me blind."

Truth be told, the money wasn't that big a deal to Seth, but he was currently in the middle of a fierce fight with Larson Group. He didn't want to let go of five hundred million for no good reason.

Tasha put forward these exorbitant conditions on purpose. She had taken into account Seth's cold-blooded and selfish personality. The bigger the request she put in, the more convinced Seth would be that she really was willing to give up the child.

"You're the one who asked for a divorce, not me. Won't it be worth it to buy your freedom with a little money? I mean, I'm sure your mistress can't wait to see us divorced." Tasha smiled complacently.

Seth fell silent, thinking it over.

Tasha only requested for money, property, et cetera. Although it was by no means a trivial amount, he could afford it. Besides, she didn't want company shares, which made things a lot easier.

Seth sneered with disdain on the inside. On the surface, however, he wore his usual smile and said simply, "As you wish."

Seth studied the woman in front of him. She probably pretended to want the child at first in order to deliberately quarrel with him. That way, she could demand more in the divorce.

Glancing at the lawyer behind him, Seth asked dryly, "Did you hear Mrs. Lester's demands? Draw up an agreement now."

The lawyer quickly did as he was told and showed the divorce agreement to Tasha.

Tasha read through it carefully twice. Then, she smiled. "Looks good. Let's sign it."

Seth took the document and scanned through it briefly. Before signing it, he warned Tasha again, "Remember to take good care of yourself. If the child doesn't survive, I'll kick you out of the Lester family without giving you a penny."

Caressing her belly, Tasha said with a particularly relaxed expression, "Don't worry. With so much money at stake, I have to give birth to a healthy baby. I'm in my twenties. A child would only slow me down. I'd rather leave the child to you and leave with the money. The money will be enough for me until I find another young handsome man."

Hearing this, Seth couldn't help but frown slightly. Without saying anything more, he stood up and left with the lawyer.

Now that she was alone, Tasha slumped over the sofa as though her soul left her body. The adrenaline wore off and she panted slightly, patting her belly gently. "I'm sorry, my baby."

Over the next few days, Tasha killed time at home by baking desserts, arranging flowers, painting, reading, and watching TV. It could even be said that she was enjoying herself. Whenever the doctor checked her, he'd declare her healthy.

Seth had been monitoring Tasha's situation through the CCTV cameras. Seeing her like this, he was completely relieved and removed the bodyguards inside and outside the villa.

Now that Tasha had decided to give up custody of the child, there was no need for him to imprison her.

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One day, Tasha woke up to an especially quiet villa. It turned out that the all bodyguards had left.

It seemed that Seth had finally let down his guard against her.

Tasha got out of bed and found a servant. "Tell Seth that I'm going back to Seacisco to visit Grandma. I heard that she had gotten sick some time ago, but I wasn't able to go back to visit her."

When the servant informed Seth about this, the latter didn't think too much about it. It was true that Nora was seriously ill. Maybe the news of Tasha's pregnancy would cheer her up.

With Seth's permission, Tasha arrived at Seacisco by plane that very evening.

Just a few years ago, she used to study in a famous design school in Seacisco. However, in a rush to marry Seth, she left Seacisco as soon as she graduated and hadn't been back since.

Ever since Nora fell ill, she had been bedridden at home.

When Tasha arrived and announced that she was pregnant, Nora was so ecstatic that even her cheeks turned a little ruddy. She held Tasha's hand and smiled happily. "That's wonderful news. You've been married to Seth for so many years. Finally, I'm going to have a great grandchild!"

Tasha smiled faintly. "Seth and I have talked about it, and we've decided to let you name the child when it's born. Grandma, you must do your best to recover so that you can be there for your first great grandchild!"

Not wanting to spoil Nora's good mood, Tasha decided not to mention anything about the divorce.

Nora was so happy that she squeezed Tasha's hand tightly.

Tasha kept chatting with Nora until the latter fell asleep from exhaustion.

After Nora's breath steadied, Tasha pulled out her phone and made a call.

As soon as Ethan got home from work, he received a call from a stranger.

The woman on the other end of the line said that she was Tasha Javis, Seth's wife. She wanted to cooperate with Larson Group to defeat the Lester family.

Ethan didn't believe that Tasha would side with him. After all, this woman was Seth's wife. The Lester family and the Larson Group were in the middle of a fierce fight. Why would Seth's own wife want to help him at this critical moment?

Tasha seemed to realize that Ethan didn't believe her, so she added anxiously, "If you don't believe me, we can talk face to face. I'm currently staying with the Lester family, but I don't have much time. Seth may send me back to Sugden any day now. How about we meet tomorrow afternoon at the Seacisco Resort?"

Ethan didn't answer right away.

Recently, news that Seth was having an affair with the daughter of the Walker family had been spread all over the Internet. It made sense that his wife hated him. Still, it might be a trap.

Therefore, Ethan didn't make any promises. "If I have time, I'll meet you there."

Then, without waiting for a response, he hung up abruptly.

"Who was that? It sounded like a woman." When Ethan answered the phone just now, Janet was right next to him. She reached up and pinched his cheek playfully. "Tell me. Who was she? How do you know this woman?"

Ethan scooped Janet in his arms and explained, "It was Seth's wife, Tasha Jarvis."

"Oh," Janet responded perfunctorily, fiddling with Ethan's collar. Then, something clicked and her eyes widened in shock. "Tasha?" she gasped.

Seeing her strange reaction, Ethan chuckled. "What's the matter? Do you know her?"

"I'm not sure, but I knew a Tasha Jarvis back in college. She was two years older than me and she also majored in fashion design. Actually she's also from Sugden. In my freshman year, we teamed up in a design competition held by the school. She was awesome. I thought she'd work as a fashion designer after graduating, but later I heard that she got married right after graduation. What a pity."

Janet had a good impression of Tasha, her quiet and reserved friend. Tasha was very talented when it came to fashion design and was very meticulous with details.

"That should be her. Seth's wife is from Sugden. He was eager to expand the family business to Sugden at the time, so he married the daughter of the powerful Jarvis family," Ethan recalled.

Janet couldn't help but ask, "So why'd she call? How's she doing? She's from a rich family and she married into another rich family. I doubt the Lester family would treat her badly."

Ethan wasn't as optimistic as Janet. "Seth doesn't give a damn about her. You never heard that Tasha was Seth's wife, right? That's because Seth has never shown up with her in public, nor does he ever mention her. Clearly, she isn't important to Seth."

Hearing this, Janet frowned and fell silent. It turned out that living in a wealthy family didn't automatically translate to happiness.

Tasha wasn't sure whether Ethan would come or not. His answer on the phone the previous day was vague and inconclusive.

But this was her only chance at teaming up with him.

So the following day, Tasha told Nora that she wanted to go shopping and then left the house without a hitch. So as to not arouse suspicion, she did go shopping. Toting several shopping bags, she went to the Seacisco Resort and walked into the private room she had booked in their restaurant.

Inside, at the table sat a very beautiful woman. A tall, handsome man with a noble air sat next to her.

Tasha had seen Brandon Larson's photos on TV and in magazines before. While he looked good in photos, Tasha had to admit that he looked even better in reality. His pronounced facial features gave him an unapproachable, god-like aura.

"I'm sorry I'm late. Seth has a bodyguard watching me, so I had to make up an excuse: shopping." Tasha put down the shopping bags and smiled at the couple apologetically.

After taking her seat, she took a deep breath and said firmly, "Mr. Larson, I promise that this won't be a waste of your time. I can definitely help you deal with Seth once and for all."

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Ethan wasn't in a rush. He took the menu and leafed through it unhurriedly. "Let's not talk business at the table. Let's have dinner first."

Tasha's mouth snapped shut instantly. Embarrassed, she picked up the glass on the table and took a sip of water to calm herself down.

This man was different from what she had imagined. Even though he was just sitting there, he had an overwhelming aura about him. The delicate and beautiful woman next to him, on the other hand, looked very approachable and even a little familiar. Tasha couldn't help but steal a few more glances at her.

Just then, the woman looked at her, and the two's eyes met.

Tilting her head to the side curiously, Janet asked with a smile, "Don't you remember me? We studied at the same university."

Tasha put down the glass and shook her head in surprise. "Mrs. Larson, did you also major in fashion design?"

Such a beautiful woman should've been one of the campus belles. Why didn't she remember her at all?

Janet chuckled. "We joined the same design competition, remember? Well, my name at the time was Janet Lind. Do you remember?"

As Tasha stared at the smiling face of the woman in front of her, the memory of the innocent young girl gradually surfaced in her mind.

"You've changed!" Tasha smiled in pleasant surprise. What a small world!

How could she have forgotten about the Janet Lind? At the time, Janet's knack for fashion design had impressed her greatly.

It was just that Janet didn't wear make-up back then. Now she wore light makeup, but it made all the difference. Tasha had seen clips of Janet's and Brandon's wedding, but she hadn't recognized her at all.

It could only be said that a woman living happily in love would really bloom. And this was definitely true for Janet.

Tasha sighed heavily. "I never thought we'd meet again, Janet. You studied so hard back in the day, all the while balancing studies with a part-time job. Now, you're the wife of a big-time CEO. Looks like all your hard work paid off!"

She smiled bitterly, thinking that life was really unpredictable.

"You married into the Lester family. Your husband is also rich and powerful. Isn't that good?" Janet tried to comfort her.

Tasha was born with a silver spoon in her mouth. Why did she envy her now?

"I... Well, to put it simply, I married the wrong person. Even if he's rich and powerful—what does that matter if he's cold and heartless?" Tasha looked down sadly.

Janet reached across the table and held Tasha's hand. "Tasha, why'd you come to us? Is there anything we can do for you?"

Looking at Janet's concerned expression, Tasha couldn't help but burst into tears. "Seth is a jerk. I'm pregnant, but he forced me to divorce him. As if the divorce isn't enough, he plans to take the baby away once it's born."

Janet was shocked to hear that. She had heard that Seth had a new girlfriend in Seacisco, but she had no idea that he also had a pregnant wife!

She glanced at Ethan and then turned to comfort Tasha. She said through gritted teeth, "Seth has gone too far. You can't give the child to him!"

Tasha shook her head firmly. "Don't worry. I've thought it over and there's no way I'll let him raise my child. But I don't have the power to fight him, and the Jarvis family is no longer what it used to be. That being said, I had no choice but to ask you guys for help."

Only then did Ethan put down the menu.

He was not too surprised. He didn't have many interactions with Seth before, but he knew for a fact that Seth was not as nice and gentle as he looked.

In fact, Seth was proud and conceited. He had been regarded as the best heir of the younger generation in the Lester family ever since he was a child. He was sent abroad at the age of five or six, and as a result, he had never experienced the love of a parent. Maybe it was because of this that he eventually decided to shut himself off.

In Ethan's opinion, Seth was the most unfeeling person in the Lester family, bordering on psychopathic. He was even crueler than Elissa and Ritchie, and his means were more ruthless than that of Patrick.

Ethan looked at Tasha steadily and asked, "What are you planning to do?"

Tasha looked at him and pleaded, "I wanted to cooperate with you to defeat Seth, but you have to promise me that in the end, I'll be able to escape the Lester family with my child."