

TMBA 1111

[Chapter 1111 Runaway Bride](#)

"What happened to Rika?"

"She ran away!"

"What? Why?" Blair couldn't believe her ears. Erica and Matthew's wedding was supposed to be held tomorrow, and the private plane Matthew had sent to pick them up was waiting on a private airstrip outside their house. But the bride-to-be had fled!

"Yes, here it is. Check this out!" Gifford shifted his cradle hold to one hand, Feb's head still resting on his shoulder. The man dug into his pocket to find his cellphone and showed Blair the text.

The message on his phone wrote, "Gifford, I'm not going to marry that guy. Please let Mom and Dad know! Thanks!"

Blair was completely floored. She became so knock-kneed that she almost fell to the floor.

She rushed to call Wesley, who was busy preparing the dowry for their daughter. "Rika ran away again! Hurry!"

Wesley flew into a rage when he heard that. 'How could she cut and run like this? She's gonna get it when Carlos finds out!' he thought to himself.

At the airport

An "old" woman waited at the arrival gate. She fidgeted with her scarf, and tapped her foot anxiously. She craned her neck as the crush of passengers disembarked, hoping to find a familiar face.

She waited a bit and finally saw her old friend. She waved so her friend could see her more clearly.

"Rhea, Rhea, over here!" Erica, the "old" lady, called out and waved at a girl in brown casual clothing.

"Hi, Erica!" The girl with purple hair immediately saw through Erica's disguise and ran towards her, carry-on bag rolling behind her.

Rhea Yue was the type of girl to brag that she was the most beautiful and kindest girl in the world. And the most modest, as well. She was Erica's best friend. They'd been hanging out since she was 14 years old.

"Shhhh! Not so loud!" Erica shushed Rhea Yue at once when the latter called out her name. She looked around warily, but fortunately, she didn't see anyone following her.

Rhea Yue acted like a spoiled child and held Erica's arm. "I missed you so much! But, dear heart, why the wig? Rika, I—"

"I'm serious, don't say my name!" Erica wished she could gag her friend. She suddenly regretted sending Gifford that message before she was out of the country. She should have waited until she was safely hidden, and then sent the message.

Rhea Yue final

expected to find Erica so quickly.

The moment he saw her, he texted Wesley and told him that he found Erica and would take her back to Y City.

Erica was irritated. She grabbed the wig on her head and pretended as if nothing had happened. "Hey, what a coincidence! I'm here to pick up my best friend. Why are you here?"

This time, Matthew said nothing. He glanced at his bodyguards, and one of them led her to their car. "Mrs. Huo, please!" the bodyguard said.

'Mrs. Huo?' Erica rolled her eyes when she heard that. She reluctantly took Rhea Yue to the same car. When Matthew made sure both of them were belted in, he got in the car behind them.

The cars parted after leaving the airport. Erica raised her head and asked the driver, "Where's Matthew going?"

"Mr. Huo is going to the branch office to deal with some business. He'll be at your house by evening. Then you'll fly back to Y City together." The driver carefully answered her question.

Erica was speechless. 'What a chatterbox! It was just a simple question.'

When she returned to the Li family manor, there was no one at home but a private plane nearby.

"Thanks a lot, Rhea, I'm screwed because of you!" Erica threw the wig on the table.

"What's the matter with you? You're acting really weird." Rhea Yue had no clue what was going on. She felt a little uncomfortable that Erica tried to run away from her wedding.

Lying on the sofa listlessly, Erica pouted her lips and complained, "I don't want to marry Matthew. I'm trying to run away!"

[Chapter 1112 Can You Marry Matthew Instead](#)

"What?! You don't want to marry Matthew? You want to flee your wedding? I gotta watch how much I drink on planes from now on." Rhea looked at her best friend in shock.

"I'm not kidding. Or what else would I need your ID card for?" Erica retorted.

Rhea put her hand on Erica's forehead. "Do you have a fever? What the hell are you thinking? Running away from your wedding! Well, I knew you had guts. But you are going to marry Matthew! He is the Prince Charming of millions of women. Tens of millions, maybe. And you don't wanna marry him! What's wrong with you, Erica?"

She thought Erica must be crazy. Matthew was hot as all get-out and didn't care if Erica had a baby with another guy. He was willing to marry her, but she wanted to run away!

"I'm only 21. More importantly, I don't love him. Why should I marry him?" Erica asked loudly.

"Believe me, Rika. He's handsome, he's rich. How could you not fall in love with him?" Rhea grabbed her hands and looked at her sincerely.

She believed no woman was immune to Matthew's charms and Erica would fall in love with him sooner or later.

Erica freed her hands from Rhea's and looked at her. An idea formed in her mind. "I'm a genius!"

"What?"

"Can you disguise yourself as me and marry Matthew instead? I'll be long gone before they find out."

Erica thought she was quite clever, coming up with an idea like that. She couldn't help flashing a wicked grin.

"Huh? You must be crazy, girl!" Rhea recoiled in horror. "I'm here to be your bridesmaid, not the bride! I hope my boyfriend doesn't hear you. He might get upset."

Rhea had a boyfriend who was a soldier. Gifford introduced them. In fact, it was his idea.

Erica got frustrated and depressed. There seemed to be no way out of this.

It was getting dark, and true to his word, Matthew left work, so he rushed to the Li family manor. He got on his private plane and sent for Erica and Rhea. They were ready to set off for Y City.

On the plane

Erica huddled up in the corner of a sofa. It was Rhea's first time to sit on a private plane. It was actually quite luxurious. She looked around in excitement, but the most important thing was that there was a very handsome man sitting opposite her!

The future groom

ant you to know that I consider us a couple. No matter that my dad is making us get married. I won't cheat on you or do anything to hurt you."

Erica's jaw dropped. He did hear what she and Rhea had said. It must be because Rhea was always too loud.

She smiled awkwardly. "We were kidding, you know."

"I'm not kidding,"

he said in a serious tone. She knew that; he didn't look like a man who would make jokes like that.

"And don't even think about leaving me high and dry on our wedding day. All the guests are in the city already. I'm just giving you fair warning. Don't make me a laughingstock, or I swear I'll get back at you."

'What? Didn't you say you want a talk with me? How come a conversation became a threat?

Fine! I need to say something!' she thought to herself. "I know you're not happy with our marriage—" she began.

He interrupted her. "No, I'm pretty happy with it."

'What?!' If Erica hadn't heard it from Matthew that he was okay with everything, she would beat the person who spread a rumor like that to a pulp.

Reigning in her shock, Erica said to him patiently, "Why? I mean...with your face and family background, you can marry whoever you want. Why listen to your parents and let them talk you into marrying me? I have a kid, and it's not yours. You're five years older than me. You're a CEO, and I left school. And I'm okay with who I am. We're two different people, you and I. We have nothing in common. I don't think we'd have a happy marriage."

[Chapter 1113 Sedan Chair](#)

"Not a problem. You've probably noticed I don't talk a whole lot, so it doesn't matter if I have nothing in common with you. Don't expect conversation from me, or tea, for that matter. I'm just too busy. Dad and Mom like you a lot, and it doesn't bother me you have a kid. The manor needs a little new blood. You can do what you want, but don't cheat on me," Matthew stated calmly.

If he hadn't mentioned that both Carlos and Debbie liked her, Erica would've thought he was confessing his love for her.

She asked tentatively, "What if the baby's father comes back? What if I get back together with him?"

Casting her a cold glance, Matthew replied, "I won't let that happen."

Erica leaned against the back of the sofa, her shoulders slumped. She looked frustrated.

"There's one thing I don't get. Why don't you just marry the girl you're in love with? Wouldn't that make more sense? Aren't you breaking her heart by doing this?"

"Don't worry about that. That's my business. You just have to attend to yours."

Erica was completely flabbergasted. After a while, she said in a timid voice, "Don't worry. I fucked up once. My mom and dad lost face because of me. That won't happen again." Wesley and Blair became the laughingstock in their country because their youngest daughter had a kid out of wedlock. No one said anything to their faces. They were the Li family, after all. But it was inevitable that they would gossip about it behind their backs.

Since her first shot of runaway failed, Erica would never have a second chance. She couldn't figure a way out of her marriage. She'd better marry Matthew and find an opportunity to divorce him peacefully in the future.

The disappointment was obvious in her eyes. She had always been this way—all of her emotions were plain on her face. Anyone could tell that she was sad at the moment.

Matthew took a deep look at her, but held his tongue. What else was there to say?

Finally, it was the day of the wedding.

Erica stayed in Wesley and Blair's old house in Y City. The house was well decorated, with lovely curtains, ornate doorknobs, and nice, tasteful paintings.

The dashing groom arrived at the bride's house promptly at 9 a.m., along with eight groomsmen.

However, Matthew wasn't in the mood for games. He was there to get married, not fool around. The groomsmen usually played games with the brides

of the sedan chair, ready to argue with him. But just when she peaked outside, she saw Matthew climb onto the middle Ferghana horse.

His nimble moves and handsome features shocked the wedding guests, friends and relatives alike.

The anger in Erica's heart dissipated. The lines that she had thought about were no longer useful.

When the man looked back, she closed the curtains with a guilty conscience and sat back in the sedan chair.

They went to the Huo family manor first, and then headed for the hotel. After they arrived at the hotel, Erica went to the lounge to get changed. With the help of Rhea and the staff, she donned the bright red traditional Chinese bridal dress.

Their wedding would be a combination of Chinese and Western styles.

The Huo family had set everything up, including her wedding dress. She didn't have any idea what it was going to look like. By the time she finally saw it, the dress was already finished. Her wardrobe included a phoenix coronet and robes of rank. All that was needed was for her to try it on.

Now, a golden phoenix coronet was put on her head. The delicate textures on the phoenix's wings were crafted through the processes of wire-drawing, blasting and polishing. Under the exquisitely carved phoenix's wings, more than a hundred rubies were inlaid on the coronet.

Erica had to move to the hall after being made up, because the wedding had already begun.

Wesley waited for his daughter at the door to the hall. He wore his green military uniform, all neat and pressed, still looking as handsome as when he was young.

[Chapter 1114 Smelly Socks](#)

With Rhea's help, Erica, clad in a traditional wedding dress with a long train, elegantly walked towards the door of the hall. Seeing how gracious his daughter looked at this moment, Wesley gave her a rare soft smile and reached out his arm. "I didn't think you would be the first among my three kids to get married. Rika, you look great in this dress. Just try not to say anything or you'll show your true colors."

Erica released Rhea's arm and held Wesley's. Despite her dad's warning, she couldn't help but speak with clenched teeth. "Do you think I wanted to be the first one? And do you have any idea how heavy this coronet is? At least a dozen pounds!" As far as she was concerned, Matthew must have deliberately picked out this phoenix coronet to spite her. With this heavy coronet on her head, she had to walk very carefully. If she didn't keep her head up at all times, she was afraid she would lose balance and fall to the ground.

"Look at these rubies inlaid on it, they're all genuine! Of course, it's heavy. I would sure hope so. Just hold out for a little longer. You're wearing a phoenix coronet and robes of rank. In ancient times, only the women in rich and noble families had the privilege to dress like that on weddings. The Huo family is giving you the same treatment. You should be grateful, to say the least," he said.

Erica complained, "But Dad, I am indeed from a rich and noble family. That's what I am saying! Why do you sound like that Matthew Huo is out of my league? Why would I be honored to marry him and not the other way around?"

"Well, it's true, you were well matched, perhaps even better, in status at first, but now you have a son with another man. Forget about Matthew's family background. He's a man of integrity and character. He never fools around. So, indeed, it would be your honor to marry him."

Erica grumbled, indicating disapproval and anger. 'Is that what a father should say to his daughter?'

It was as if she had become utterly worthless to him because she had a child out of wedlock.

"As for Feb, I have discussed it with your mother. We'll take care of him in our home first. When your relationship with Matthew is stable, and if he agrees, we'll bring the baby to you. And one more thing, for heaven's sake, change his name ASAP. Your brother was right, the poor boy will be made fun of in school."

"Dad! If you want to change his name, do it yourself. I'm not good with names."

"I would be happy to," he replied.

The emcee's voice grabbed their attention from down the hall. "Ladies and gentlemen, may I have your attention,

he asked someone to bring a tissue and quietly handed it to Erica. Then she whispered worriedly, "Rika, this is your wedding. Smile and be happy, okay? Please don't cry!"

Just as Erica was about to take the tissue, the man standing next to her swooped in and grabbed it from Rhea.

Erica looked at him in astonishment as he took the tissue and wiped the tears off her face with a deadpan expression.

Matthew cast a cold glance at her and warned her in a low voice, "This is a wedding! Hold back your tears and put aside your unhappiness. If you dare to embarrass me today, I'll be sure to make your life very difficult."

Erica kept silent, but cursed at him in her mind. 'What is wrong with this man? How would my crying embarrass him?'

The emcee beside them couldn't help but marvel. "Wow, the bride is moved to tears. She's getting married and going to be the daughter-in-law of the Huo family. She must be very excited. And our groom is so considerate that he is wiping tears for our emotional bride..." Thanks to his words, everyone thought that those were Erica's tears of joy.

When the bride finally stopped crying, Matthew handed the crumpled tissue back to Rhea.

The emcee duly announced as the couple exchanged wedding rings.

On Erica's ring finger was a shining diamond ring that was as big as a pigeon egg, while Matthew was wearing a simple platinum ring.

The emcee continued, "It is fate that brought our bride and groom here together. After experiencing sunrises and sunsets, winters and summers, good and bad, years after years, they have finally arrived to

this wonderful and exciting part of their lives. Next, let me ask the groom. Do you take Miss Erica Li to be your lawfully wedded wife?"

[Chapter 1115 Her First Kiss](#)

As the microphone was lifted to Matthew's lips, Erica, with her heart in her mouth, gripped his hand tightly and looked him straight in the eye. She wouldn't be able to survive the public humiliation if he said that he didn't want to marry her now.

Casting a glance at her hand that was holding his, Matthew uttered three words slowly under the watchful eyes of everyone present. "Yes, I do."

The hall erupted with thunderous applause, and Erica exhaled a deep sigh of relief.

"It seems that our groom loves our bride very much," the emcee said to the crowd, cheekily raising an eyebrow.

Erica couldn't tell what was going on in Matthew's mind, but she was feeling quite awkward herself.

'Love? He doesn't love me at all! We are pretty much like strangers, ' she mocked inwardly. If it weren't for the fact that this was their wedding ceremony, they wouldn't even be holding hands right now.

"Miss Erica Li, do you take Mr. Matthew Huo to be your lawfully wedded husband, to have and to hold from this day forward; for better or for worse; for richer or for poorer; in sickness and in health; to love and to cherish, until death do you part?"

The microphone stopped at Erica's lips, but there was no response for a long time.

Matthew squinted his sharp eyes at Erica, who was trying to hide the smirk from her lips.

Having realized that she was just keeping silent on purpose, he pinched her hand softly, as if to warn her not to do something foolish and embarrassing.

"Miss Erica Li, do you take Mr. Matthew Huo to be your lawfully wedded husband?" the emcee asked again.

"Yes, I do," she answered with a smile.

Everyone, especially her father, was finally relieved by her answer.

"I now pronounce you husband and wife." As the emcee faced Matthew, he continued, "You may now kiss the bride!"

Amidst warm applause, Matthew lowered his head and approached Erica slowly.

The closer he got to Erica, the more nervous she felt. Her lips trembled as she whispered to him, "Really? Are you really going to kiss me?"

Matthew raised his eyebrows. "Why? What's the matter?"

Before she could say anything, he wrapped his arm around her waist, pulled her close to his body and pressed his lips on hers.

Erica rolled her eyes with dissatisfaction. 'Oh my God! Is this really my first kiss? This is not romantic at all.'

A moment later, she whispered, "We both know that this marriage isn't based on love. Y

perpetual headache. In fact, she has been a real headache to everyone since the day she was born. Let me tell you a story. When she left my mom's womb, a meteorite fell in A Country. It was late at night, but the area near the hospital was lit up like daytime because of the meteorite. At that time, I wondered if Rika was actually a fairy..."

Suddenly, Sheffield and Joshua, who were busy chatting, stopped to turn their heads around. With keen interest, they listened to Erica's story, as though they were more interested in the story than Matthew was. Gifford continued, "But soon, that night, she proved to me that I was totally wrong. Although she didn't cry a lot like the other babies, she would cause trouble in other aspects. For example, when my dad first held her in his arms, her diaper fell off for some reason. Before he could find a new one, she pooped all over Dad."

"Hahaha." Even the other people around them started laughing.

Gifford must have been a slave for his sister, as he kept talking about Erica. "The next day, when my grandma changed her diaper, she would only poop a little bit on the clean diaper. It was almost as if she were doing it on purpose. My grandma wanted to change her diaper after she was done, but she stopped pooping. Once my grandma changed her into a new diaper, it would get dirty at once.

On the third day, she vomited all over Dad when he picked her up. On the fourth day, when she finally opened her eyes, she rolled her eyes at my dad. Hahaha..." Gifford shook violently as he burst into laughter, reminiscing how angry Wesley was when baby Erica rolled her eyes at him.

[Chapter 1116 She Runs Really Fast](#)

"She's messed with Dad more times than I can count. Later, when she grew a bit older, she started doing the same to me. Every time I took her out of her playpen to play with her, she'd put her foot in my mouth. If you ask me how I got so strong and tall, I can tell you my secret—it's because I ate my sister's toejam," Gifford said.

"Hahaha." The crowd burst into laughter.

Matthew, on the other hand, wasn't laughing. He showed no emotion at all, as if pretending not to hear Gifford talking about his new bride.

"When Rika got older, Mom began to lose control over her youngest daughter. She'd argue about the smallest things, and was able to find the loophole in anything you said. She should have studied to be a lawyer. Of course, people usually couldn't do anything but give in, because she was really cute when she was like that. My dad was the only one in our family who could somehow intimidate Rika. Fortunately, Dad had retired from the military and had time to pull on the leash. Ever since I can remember, my sister spent all her time running all over creation, while my father spent all his chasing after her. By the way, Matthew, you need to hear this. Rika was probably a rabbit in her previous life, because she runs really fast now. You better get good at running whenever you have time. She likes to run off when she makes a mistake, rather than owning up to it."

Matthew remained silent, while the guests burst into laughter again.

Gifford seriously waved his hand to them and said, "I'm not kidding. My father was a good runner even before she was born. With Rika around, he learned to run even faster. Once, he chased after a thief who rode a scooter downtown. The thief couldn't go flat out without running into cars, but he was still fast. But my dad managed to catch up with it. So, you can imagine how fast my sister runs!"

On that day, Gifford told Matthew a lot of things about Erica, and at the end he emphasized, "Don't tell Rika that I told you this. She doesn't get mad, she gets even."

"Okay," Matthew replied curtly.

Gifford didn't know if Matthew was listening or not. That poker face didn't tell him anything about what was going on in Matthew's mind.

At Pearl Villa District

A mysterious figure made his way to the third floor bedroom and pushed it open, silently. There was only one person inside the room, standing in front of the windowsill,

his body is all corded muscle underneath his clothes. He's much hotter than my idol—Aaron Gao!' she marveled silently.

"Enjoying the view?" The man's cold voice interrupted the stunned woman.

'Enjoying...the view?' Erica immediately regained her composure and said with a red face, "I wasn't looking at you. Stop being so narcissistic!" She bowed her head and washed her face immediately.

'Wait, something wrong...' She squeezed the facial cleanser while asking, "What are you doing here, anywhere? I'm trying to wash my face."

"You're washing your face and I'm going to take a shower. That's why I'm here," he said in a somewhat mocking tone.

'Take a shower now?' She felt like her head was about to explode. Before she applied the cleanser to her face, she turned around and looked at the man. "Why shower now? I'm still using the room. Can't you wait till I finish?"

His lips curled into a sarcastic smile. "You came back much earlier than I did. Why didn't you do what you needed to then, before I came back? Why do it now? It's not like anyone was stopping you? What's wrong? Cat got your tongue? Or did you wait to take a bath with me?"

Before Erica could answer, Matthew took a look at the large bathtub and said, "I think it's big enough for the two of us. But you should probably shower before a soak in the tub..."

"Wait! I think you got me wrong. I don't want to bathe with you. Uncle Carlos and Aunt Debbie dropped in a while ago. They just left five minutes before you came back. I didn't have time to wash my face and bathe. Get it?" Erica tried to calm herself down.

[Chapter 1117 An Intoxicating Kiss](#)

Matthew unbuckled his belt and said indifferently, "And you just couldn't wait to call your lover as soon as they were gone, right?"

'My lover?' Erica wondered if he was referring to Hyatt. She had been talking with Hyatt over the phone before he came back. 'So how much did he hear?' "You eavesdropped on my call!"

She was in a rage. She hadn't completely removed the make-up on her face yet. So, with the mascara, eyeliner and the lipstick, her face was colorful. She even had a freshly squeezed dollop of facial cleanser in her hand.

"Eavesdropped?" Matthew took off his belt and threw it aside. He dropped his pants and was in the process of stepping out of the legs. "Don't forget, this is our room. I went back to our room and you were talking on the phone. Was I supposed to find a different room?"

With her eyes wide open, Erica watched him as he undressed. "Hey, Matthew Huo! Y-you...just say what you want to say. Why are you taking off your pants?"

With knitted eyebrows, Matthew looked at her as if he was looking at an idiot. "Don't you take off your clothes before taking a bath?"

Of course she would. What a silly question! The point was why was he undressing while she was still here?

Now, he was wearing only a pair of underwear. Erica was angry and anxious. Immediately, she closed her eyes and turned her back to him. "Fine. The bathroom is yours now," she said angrily.

After that, she opened the door of the bathroom and rushed out.

Erica used the sink in the guest room and finally got her face clean. She then started a shower.

Tonight was their wedding night. Erica didn't want to go back to their bedroom. She was afraid of what would happen if she climbed into the same bed with Matthew.

She wanted a quilt, but she couldn't find anything like that in any of the other rooms, so she reluctantly returned to their bedroom.

On the big red wedding bed, a man in light gray pajamas was sitting up in bed and looking at his phone, leaning against the headboard. When he saw her come in, Matthew only lifted his eyes a bit, saying nothing.

His indifference relieved Erica. That was exactly what she was hoping for. It would be better if Matthew weren't interested in her!

Erica slowly applied some skin-care lotion to her face, and sat there, brushing and blow-drying her hair.
A

ling."

"Yeah, Dad. It's important. I want to..." She paused, trying to summon the right words.

"What do you want?"

"I want to go home." 'Matthew is too much.'

"You're at home now, aren't you? You don't live here anymore. Where do you want to go?"

Erica pouted her lips, feeling sad. Her dad was so cruel to her. Wasn't she a member of the Li family anymore? Was it just because she was married? "I want to go back to my parents' house."

"I see. Well, you won't have long to wait. Two days from now, you and Matthew will come to visit, according to the custom," Wesley reminded her.

Erica said anxiously, "I don't want to wait two days. I really want to go home now." She missed her father, mother, brother, sister, Feb, her bed, and her mom's cooking. She just missed everything about the Li family. She was really homesick.

Ignoring her anxiety, Wesley said calmly, "Really, honey. It's just first day jitters. You'll be fine."

"Dad!" She was so angry that she stamped her feet.

"I know what you're thinking. Just give it up. Go to bed now. We're going to bed, too. Good night!" Wesley hung up the phone, his teeth gnashing.

Erica's eyes turned red with sadness as she stared at her phone.

She had always known that Wesley could be heartless sometimes, but she didn't expect him to be so harsh.

Blair looked at her husband worriedly.

"Honey, why did you do that? Rika will be heartbroken."

Wesley put the phone aside silently. He knew she was sad. But she was married, now. She had to get used to her new life.

[Chapter 1118 The Wedding Night](#)

"Just go to sleep!" Wesley demanded.

Blair didn't say anything upon hearing what her husband told their daughter.

After hanging up, Erica went back to the bedroom, clutching her phone in her hand.

When she walked in, Matthew's attention was on his phone. "Why don't you go ahead and get some sleep if you've got nothing else to do. I have an important meeting in the morning," he said coldly and put his phone away.

'Really? Does he mean that I can sleep now?' Erica wondered, hesitating with each step she took before getting into the bed.

Just as she had expected, the newly married couple slept in the same bed, but dreamed different dreams.

Being a bride was a lot of work, and Erica felt completely depleted after a busy day. She closed her eyes, about to drift into sleep when Matthew's phone started vibrating on the bedside table.

Having realized this, Matthew looked at Erica and whispered, "Sorry!" Then, he answered the phone and continued, "Hello?"

"Matthew..."

Much to his chagrin, the voice of a woman crying was so loud, Matthew couldn't avoid frowning as he got out of the bed and put on his slippers. "Just tell me what's going on," he muttered.

The woman on the other end of the line said something, but Erica couldn't make out what she was saying. After hanging up, Matthew went to the walk-in closet without saying anything.

He was in a hurry and looked quite serious, implying the urgency of the situation—something bad must have happened to the woman.

Two minutes later, he walked back into the bedroom, all dressed up. It was not until then that he realized there was another person in the room with him. Standing on the edge of the bed, he looked down at Erica, whose eyes were wide with puzzlement. "I have some urgent business to deal with. Don't wait up for me, you should go to sleep."

"Oh, okay." Erica had no qualms with that arrangement. In fact, she would like nothing more than to sleep alone. The call from that woman was like a blessing in disguise for which Erica felt deeply grateful.

She assumed that the woman must be the goddess who shone like the purest moonlight in Matthew's heart. 'That woman is something else! The way she made Matthew leave his newlywed wife on their wedding night is truly amazing!' Erica marveled at the thought of the unknown woman.

With a solemn look at her, Matthew said nothing more and left the bedroom.

When sil

velyn, Mom, I'll go have breakfast then." Erica walked to the dining room.

Debbie tagged along with the housemaid and brought her the breakfast.

Erica was okay with the housemaid bringing her the breakfast. That was her job. However, Erica was taken aback when she saw Debbie doing so, and she stood up instantly to take the porridge from her hands. "Thank you, Mom. You didn't have to do that!"

Debbie sat across Erica, and upon sensing her nervousness, she comforted her, "Don't be so formal around me. After all, you're my daughter-in-law and I'll treat you like my own daughter from now on. This is your home. Do you understand?"

Erica was deeply moved by Debbie's kindness. She would have thanked Debbie for treating her better than her own mother, if Debbie hadn't just asked her not to be so courteous. As such, she simply nodded and said, "Okay."

Debbie propped her hand against her chin and looked at the girl eating breakfast. The way she looked at Erica showed how fond she was of her daughter-in-law. "Rika, I want to tell you something."

"Yes, of course. What is it?" Erica was intrigued.

"Eat your food first, or it will get cold. Matthew went out last night, didn't he?"

'Huh? How does she know that?' Erica nodded absent-mindedly, chewing the dumpling in her mouth.
"Yes, he did."

"I hope you don't take this the wrong way. His best friend, Nathan, was in a car accident on the way back from the airport last night," Debbie explained. That was the reason why Matthew left his wife alone on their wedding night. And Debbie came to explain the situation to her in the morning.

[Chapter 1119 Harlot Erica](#)

'Oh, so that's why!' Erica nodded and asked with concern, "I see. How is his friend now? Is he out of danger?"

Debbie heaved a long sigh. "I called Matthew this morning. He said Nathan's condition is severe. The doctor has already given a written notice of the patient's critical condition. All we can do is wait and see if he makes it through tonight."

"Is it that serious?" Erica was shocked. No wonder Matthew hadn't come back the whole night.

"Yes. By the way, Erica, have you read the news?"

Erica shook her head. She didn't have time to look through her phone. She didn't reply to Rhea's message either.

"I should give you a heads-up then. Last night, when Matthew left the house, his car was spotted by the paparazzi hiding near the entrance of the community. They followed him to the hospital and photographed him there, randomly writing some crap about him having an affair on his wedding night. The woman they photographed him with is actually Nathan's wife. She had only come out of the hospital to lead Matthew in. But the reporters uploaded their photo online and made up a story to go along with it. They have gone too far this time!" Debbie said, her nose flaring.

Carlos had already dealt with the reporters and the media outlets who had spread the rumor. But since the news had spread fast on the Internet, it was impossible to completely erase all traces of it. Debbie was worried that Erica might misunderstand. She thought it would be best to give the young girl a clear picture of what had actually happened.

That was why she had rushed to her early morning.

She knew that Erica didn't have feelings for Matthew yet, but as his wife, Erica had the right to know the truth.

'Oh!' Erica nodded understandingly. "Okay, Mom. I understand. Don't worry about it."

She didn't mind at all. Even if Matthew really had gone to see his goddess last night, she wouldn't have cared about it.

"Good. Have your breakfast. Let's go to the manor after that; it's more lively there. What do you think?"

"Sounds great!" Erica exclaimed. She was bored anyway.

After breakfast, she had time to browse the news, and finally saw the gossips about Matthew on the Internet Both Matthew's and her names were pasted all over the news.

Many eye-catching headlines had c

her wedding. Why were so many people badmouthing her? Did she look like a pushover?

"Fine, but what about Mr. Huo? Did you tell him the truth about Feb?" Rhea was really worried about her friend.

"No. He is just my nominal husband. He doesn't love me, and neither do I. There's no need to explain anything to him." She didn't care what Matthew thought about her. She was hoping that he would see her as an unreliable woman and divorce her as soon as possible. Then, she could live her life on her own terms.

Rhea was at a loss for words. The girl was always so stubborn. "Alright, alright. But I am glad that you at least trust your husband. Since you're married to Matthew now, you should learn to love him even though you don't have feelings for him at the moment. You understand?"

"No, I don't want to!" Everyone was forcing her to be with Matthew.

"Come on, Rika. Mr. Huo is an excellent man. He is ten thousand times better than Hyatt. Countless women would die to marry into the Huo family. Don't you feel lucky?" Rhea knew that Erica didn't love Hyatt either.

"Fine, I got it! I'll come back to see you in a couple of days."

"Come back? Where are you going?" Rhea asked nervously. She was afraid that Erica was planning to escape from Matthew again.

Erica replied helplessly, "Silly girl, don't you know that you need to go back to your parents' home three days after you get married? It's a custom."

"Oh! I'm sorry I didn't know that. I'm not married yet. I don't know much about wedding customs."

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"Well, I forgive you this time. You can invite me to have wontons after I'm back," Erica said on the phone, pouting her lips.

Rhea giggled and said, "No problem. But I gotta go to the class now. I'll see you in a few days, my honorable Mrs. Huo!"

"Bye, my dear Rhea."

When Matthew left her on their wedding night, Erica didn't think that he would be gone for the next two days.

However, the circumstances couldn't have been any better for her because his absence meant that she wouldn't have to deal with him.

According to their wedding custom, the bride and groom were to return to her parents' home on the third day after the wedding. However, before the day that Erica would go back to A Country, she began to feel depressed.

'Matthew hasn't come back yet. What if he doesn't show up tomorrow? Do I have to go back alone? It will be so humiliating!' she thought to herself.

She wanted to call Matthew to ask when he would be back, but she decided otherwise.

'What should I do? Maybe I can go back by myself.

Yes, that's it!

After making up her mind, Erica walked out of the villa with a backpack on her shoulders and drove to a nearby mall to buy some gifts for her family.

Coincidentally, when she just arrived at the underground parking lot of the mall, she saw a familiar figure.

The person was none other than Matthew, her husband who had disappeared for two days.

There was a woman standing next to him, dressed in a black suit.

As the woman's back was facing Erica, she could only judge that it was a woman by her coiled long hair and high heels.

When a bodyguard opened the back door of the brand-new black minivan, Matthew drew his hand from his pocket and gently helped the woman get into the car.

After the woman was seated, he took a wet tissue from the bodyguard and began to wipe his hand before getting into the car as well.

Just as the car was about to drive away, Erica got out of her car and quickly ran to stop the minivan. "Wait!"

She stood in front of the minivan boldly and stretched out her arms to block its way.

Fortunately, the driver slammed the brakes on at the right time, mumbling curses in anger. When he realized who it was, he turned around and said to Matthew, "Mr. Huo, it's Mrs. Huo!"

Perhaps the fact that he was a married man hadn't sunk in yet as he kept his eyes closed and said, "What's her family name?"

The driver paused momentarily, not knowing how to answer the question. He couldn't help but think to himself, 'Don't you know your wife's family name? Do you really love her?' "Mr

ch room was decorated thoughtfully, in a simple yet luxurious way.

On the first floor was the living room; the kitchen; the main storage room and so on. Another thing worth mentioning was also something that Erica was interested in—Matthew had an extravagant wine cellar in the basement.

The wine cellar covered dozens of square meters. It had an automatic thermostat to preserve a large variety of limited-edition and expensive wines from around the world. There were at least thousands of bottles of red wine in total, all kept nicely.

Erica was shocked when she saw the wine cellar for the first time. Her grandmother also had a wine cellar, but there were only hundreds of bottles of wine at most. Compared with Matthew's cellar, her grandmother's collection was nothing.

The second floor mostly had several bedrooms, all of which were decorated similarly. The bedroom on the third floor, however, was the master bedroom where Matthew and Erica were staying. The master bedroom occupied almost half of the third floor, opposite to which was the study and two empty rooms.

On the fourth floor was the gym, the billiard's room, the entertainment room, the meditation room and the open-air swimming pool. The swimming pool was certainly worth mentioning because the bottom of the pool was made of glass, which meant that people on the third floor could see the swimming pool clearly.

Sitting next to the swimming pool, Erica cupped her chin with her hands and looked at the crystal clear water, deep in thought. 'If someone was swimming here, wouldn't people on the third floor see everything?

I wonder why Matthew would have someone design the swimming pool in such a way. Is he some kind of pervert?'