

TMBA 1301

CHAPTER 1301 TWINS

Erica gripped Matthew's hand tightly and said, "I think it's possible that there is a set of twins in my belly. Didn't Mom say that my baby bump is showing a little too early?"

Debbie, a mother of three children, knew enough to glance at Erica's abdomen and tell that it was protruding sooner than expected. The young woman was thin, and she was just two months pregnant, but her belly had already begun to bulge.

So, the doctor's observation was probably right. It could be twins.

The doctor stared at the screen carefully, and after several anxious moments, confirmed. "I'm sure there's more than one baby in Erica's belly. As the embryos are still too small, it is normal to have missed seeing twins in the previous examination, Matthew. Even now, it is hard to see the other one clearly. When the babies get bigger, we'll be able to see them better."

Matthew tightened his grip on Erica's hand and nodded, "Okay, I see."

Erica was surprised, and excitement overwhelmed her. Unable to remain calm like Matthew, she kicked her legs happily and said, "Oh, my God! Twins! There are twins in my belly!"

Matthew immediately bent over and pressed her legs. "Don't move!" She was responsible for three lives now.

"Oh, okay!" Realizing that she had overreacted, Erica quickly calmed herself.

After the examination, as soon as Matthew settled her in the car, she couldn't help but throw herself into his arms again and proudly exclaim, "Matthew, aren't I great? I'm pregnant with two babies!"

With a faint smile, he touched her head, and lovingly said, "Yes, my Rika is awesome." He hadn't expected this to happen.

"Ha-ha! Hurry up and tell everyone the good news." She couldn't wait to tell everyone in their family.

A broad smile lit up Matthew's face as he pulled out his phone and sent a message to everyone in the WeChat group for the Hilton family. "Twins!"

Erica, however, frowned when she saw the message in the WeChat group. The man was consistent, if nothing else. All this while, she had known and experienced that he rarely used words he considered unnecessary. Although everyone would understand what Matthew meant, she insisted that he send a more enthusiastic message. "Written poorly. You have to use a complete sentence. Redo it!"

Matthew was rendered speechless by her childish behavior and harsh tone. Nonetheless, he withdrew

the message and rewrote it. "Rika is pregnant with twins."

"No, that's not right either. Don't say Rika. Say 'my wife Erica.' Please delete it and send the message again."

The smile left Matthew's face. This was more troublesome than he had expected. Traces of frustration reflected in his expression as he shook his head. But, he knew that it would be unwise to lose his temper. Now that his wife was pregnant, she was the boss. So, he sighed with resignation and withdrew the message again.

The messages had been sent and deleted so quickly that none of the other people in the WeChat group had been able to read them. Confusion coursed through them as they wondered what was happening.

Debbie wrote, "Matthew, what's going on?"

Sheffield asked, "What are you doing? Is your wife pregnant with Nezh*?"

(*TN: Nezh* is the mythological boy who travels around on fiery wheels.)

Joshua teased, "Are you too excited?"

Soon, Matthew's third message brought everyone's phone to life. "Matthew's wife, Erica, is pregnant with twins."

Terilynn's brows shot up at the formal declaration. "Wow, you're showing off your love in our group!"

Evelyn grinned, and her fingers flew across her screen as she typed, "Congratulations!"

Carlos' message followed soon after. "Rika is awesome!"

Even before anyone else could reply, Carlos dialed Wesley's number. "Hi, old buck!" How time flies! In the blink of an eye, the two good friends had become handsome old men with a house full of children and grandchildren.

The memory of being marooned on a desert island with Debbie and being rescued by Wesley was still fresh in Carlos' mind. It was as if it had happened just yesterday.

"Hey, Carlos, how are you?" Wesley's eyes twinkled as he also recalled the days when he and Blair, Carlos, Debbie, and their other friends had vacationed at the seaside resort.

In a flash, they were old and had even become in-laws.

The sentimental memories didn't sadden Carlos. After all, he had just gotten such good news. "Wesley, my daughter is carrying twins," he said smugly.

"What? You mean Erica? Hey, say it right. Isn't she my daughter? You can't just call her your daughter!" Wesley was filled with envy when he heard someone else refer to Erica as "daughter."

"Erica is my daughter now. Don't be jealous. After all, I have to thank you for raising such a good daughter for the Hilton family," Carlos said proudly.

They were now old enough to tease each other and praise each other's daughters and sons.

"Who envies you? Gifford has a wife now, and she will give birth to his baby two or three months earlier than Rika. I bet you will envy me then. Ha-ha!" Wesley laughed happily. It was a fortunate turn of events that Chantel had conceived Gifford's baby first. Otherwise, Carlos' flaunting would have unsettled him.

Carlos could feel Wesley's smug smile from the other end of the line.

"Childish! Don't forget that Rika is having twins. My wife and I will each be holding a granddaughter by then."

"It doesn't matter. If you keep showing off, I'll ask Rika to come home. Then, I'll hold her two daughters, and my wife will hold our son's daughter. You will have to come to Askor if you want to see your granddaughters."

Carlos snorted at Wesley's comment, "I've never seen such a bad father-in-law like you."

"Oh, really? Well, now you have!" Wesley sat cross-legged in his seat and poured a cup of tea from a dark-red teapot.

Although Carlos had two sons-in-law who respected him very much, Wesley had Matthew. Carlos had raised his son for more than twenty years, and now, the excellent young man had become Wesley's son. His filial son-in-law always gave him many rare and precious gifts, and each was worth a lot.

For example, this dark-red teapot was as good as Carlos' azure mud teapot that Sheffield had gifted him a few years ago.

"Wesley, let's have a competition someday. After a few moves, you will know who the stronger one is," Carlos challenged.

"No, I don't need to know. Show Debbie your moves and strength. You and I should only battle a few rounds on the chessboard!"

"You are so naughty, old guy. I'm ashamed of you." When Wesley mentioned Debbie, Carlos glanced around in search of his wife. He found her standing not far away, watering the flowers while sending messages in the group chat. 'Wow, my wife is beautiful, just like the day I married her.' Suddenly, Carlos was driven by the urge to show Debbie how much he still desired her.

"What did I say that was so wrong?" Wesley deliberately sounded confused. But, a mischievous smile tugged at the corners of his lips.

Carlos had other plans. He didn't want to spend more time on Wesley. "I guess Rika should call Blair to tell her the good news. I'm going to end the call now."

"Hmm. We should catch up over drinks when I come to Alorith later."

"Remember to bring your liquor."

"The older you get, the more stingy you become!"

With a chuckle, the two old men ended the call, and sought their wives.

Carlos glimpsed at Debbie's phone screen. She was chatting with Erica in private. "Come to the manor for dinner tonight. I'll ask a chef to cook for you."

"Okay, thank you, Mom!" Erica gleefully accepted.

Debbie put her phone away and turned to her husband. "Find two chefs to cook dinner. Rika is pregnant with two babies. She will definitely eat a lot!"

Obediently, Carlos took out his phone and arranged for two chefs.

When he was done, he remembered why he had come to her. He held Debbie in his arms and said, "Honey, I want you to know how strong I still am! Hey, don't pinch me!"

Debbie blushed and pushed him toward the living room. She glared at him, and with feigned anger, she said, "Our grandchildren will come out soon. What if they see you? Aren't you ashamed of your behavior?"

"That doesn't matter. No matter how many grandchildren we have, you will always be my little cutie." In his eyes, Debbie would always be his girl.

CHAPTER 1302 CAN'T DO ANYTHING

"Cutie?" Debbie couldn't knock off the feeling of goose bumps all over her body. Yet, the smile playing on her lips had already said it all. "Knock it off," she snapped. "Ask someone to bring some fresh fish here. I'll make some soup for Rika."

"Yes, honey." Carlos had always been obedient to his wife.

In the evening, Owen drove Erica to the manor first. He didn't leave until he made sure that the CEO's wife was safe inside the house.

In the living room, Debbie was already waiting for her. She had prepared a plate of fresh fruits, beautifully-shaped desserts and peeled nuts for her.

Seeing her come in, the older woman stopped whatever she was doing and walked towards her. "Rika, you're here. Come and eat some fruits first."

A sweet smile threaded across Erica's lips. "Dad, Mom!"

"Sit down first." Carlos nodded in greeting.

As if she was taking care of a little baby, Debbie pulled out a chair for her and helped her sit down. Finally, she placed her hand on the young woman's already bulging belly. "I've always been wondering why you're showing so early," she stated. "It turns out that you're carrying twins!"

"I didn't expect that I'd be carrying two babies either. I wonder if they're two boys or girls," Erica said thoughtfully. It was still too early to figure out their gender, so everyone was free to guess.

Debbie sat down next to her and handed her a slice of melon. "Do you want them to be boys or girls?"

"Well," she started with a pout. "Boys. Maybe then I wouldn't feel so guilty if I discipline them." If they were girls, she probably wouldn't have the heart to hit them. Knowing Matthew, he'd also be more inclined to spoil them to death.

Debbie also smiled. "If you want boys, then they will be boys." She waved her hand. "Given your genes, they'll also be handsome when they grow up."

"Thank you, Mom!"

Thinking of Matthew, Carlos sat opposite them. He crossed his arms and leaned back. "I think girls will be nice," he commented. "Maybe they'll be like Rika—all lively and adorable."

"Please, we all know you just want granddaughters." Debbie snorted.

Erica giggled. She had already guessed that her father-in-law would want a granddaughter rather than a grandson.

"Just take Gwyn, Godwin, and Godfrey as examples," he defended. "Look how obedient Gwyn is compared to the two boys. She's less troublesome."

"Matthew had been obedient when he was a child, and you know that." Debbie pursed her lips.

Matthew took after his father in terms of his temperament. He had always been considerate and thoughtful ever since he was a young child, which made Debbie sympathize with him more. Even then,

Carlos never really looked his way. On the contrary, Terilynn had always been naughty, but Carlos never had the heart to yell at his daughter.

The man picked up a slice of mango with his fork and handed it to his wife. "Have some fruit, honey."

Amused, she took the fork. "You know you can't win, so you just want to silence me with food." She chuckled. "Besides, this platter is for Rika. I won't be eating it." She handed the fork to Erica, who shook her head.

"Mom, please eat it." Erica laughed. "I can't finish this massive platter."

Staring at the large fruit platter she had prepared, Debbie had to agree with her. Instead of insisting that Erica take the mango, she ate it herself.

The mother-in-law and daughter-in-law pair chatted happily as they showed each other pictures from their phones. Sitting opposite them, Carlos listened to their conversation after he was done dealing with a few matters.

He would offer some juice to them from time to time.

Just as he was about to go upstairs to handle some documents that needed signing, he heard Erica muttering, "I wonder who this 'Can't Do Anything' is! He's been following my Weibo account for a long time. Although we've never met, I feel like he knows me enough. But I haven't updated my account recently, and I don't talk to him much too."

Carlos turned back at the younger woman who had already busied herself with her phone. "Rika, what did you say his username was?"

"What?" She tilted her head.

"The one you mentioned—your follower."

"Oh!" Her eyes widened in realization. "His username is 'Can't Do Anything.'"

Carlos returned to his seat as a smile spread across his face. "Do you know that his username was inspired from a poem?"

Her eyebrows furrowed. "Really? I didn't know that!" 'Please forgive my ignorance. I'm not that knowledgeable in poems.' She could already feel her cheeks flushing from her ignorance.

Carlos didn't mind enlightening her. His face brightened. "There's a poem from The Legend of Qin. It goes like this: In the northern forest lived a pack of wild geese, with feathers as white as snow. Against the icy wind, they flew towards the south, wing to wing. As rain poured and broke her wings, she couldn't do anything but mourn her lost dreams.*"

(*TN: This line of the poem contains the Chinese characters of Erica's name.) Waiting in the gust of howling wind, he vowed to never forsake or leave."

Being a slow student herself, Erica wasn't quick to understand the depth of the poem. In fact, she grew even more confused. "Dad, I'm not that good at understanding poems," she said sheepishly. "Do you mind explaining it to me."

He didn't mind. "The first line describes how a group of wild geese were living in the forest located in the north.

Due to the cold weather, they flew to the south. It's part of their animal nature. Whenever the weather approaches winter, they would have to migrate to the south.

However, that's not the point.

The third line is about how one of the female wild geese had broken her wings from the heavy rain. What else could she do but wait for her death? Upon seeing her, a male wild goose stopped his flight and stayed with the wounded animal. Under the howling wind, he confessed his love for her and vowed that even if her wings were destroyed by the rain, he would never leave her. If my memory serves me right, the poem is about a man expressing his love for a woman who he falls in love with at first sight."

'I will never forsake or leave you... Wow! Who knew my son is capable of being such a hopeless romantic? Like what Sheffield had said, my son was as unpredictable as he seemed, ' Carlos thought with a shake of his head.

"What?" Erica exclaimed. 'A man expressing his love for a woman?' She was completely dumbfounded. That was when she thought of another problem. 'Does that mean that Can't Do Anything loves me?'

She explained to the two elders, "Dad, Mom, please don't misunderstand. I don't even talk to him that much. If you didn't tell me just now, I wouldn't even know what his username means."

Amused by her defensiveness, Carlos reached out his hand to stop her. "Don't worry, dear. We trust you." His eyes glinted. "Besides, I know who the man is."

Debbie furrowed her eyebrows. "You do? Who is he? Why is he so mysterious?"

"I have the same questions! Who is he? Please tell us, Dad." The two women both stared at Carlos with their eyes wide with expectations.

However, Carlos simply stood up from his seat and said, "Rika, there are so many wonderful things in life just waiting for you to discover them. For example, there's a person in this world who loves you very much."

'Alas! The brat actually hid his feelings well!' He laughed to himself.

Back then, when he angrily asked Matthew to keep his distance from Phoebe, the young man didn't bother to explain himself.

If it weren't for Carlos opening Matthew's safe to get an important file, he wouldn't have seen Erica's picture. It was then that he came to know that his son had fallen in love with the young girl a long time before.

They all said that Carlos didn't treat his son well, but in fact, he had just given his son the best thing in the world.

CHAPTER 1303 GO THROUGH LEGAL PROCEEDINGS

Erica was dumbfounded. She tried to ask Carlos, but he didn't answer her question directly. Instead, his words added to her confusion. 'Someone who loves me so much? Who could Can't Do Anything be?' she thought inwardly.

Debbie was also confused. She had never thought that someone would dare to admire her daughter-in-law. Otherwise, that man was courting death.

When Carlos was about to go upstairs, Erica quickly followed him. "Dad, please tell me who he is," she pleaded.

Carlos smiled but didn't say anything. It was Matthew's way of loving Erica, and he didn't want to get involved. Matthew must be the one to confess his love for Erica by himself.

"Dad, what's his—"

"Rika!" Before she could finish her question, Matthew called her name. He was walking towards her.

Erica desperately wanted an answer from Carlos, so she didn't mind him. She stood at the staircase and looked up. "Dad, what's his last name?"

"What are you asking Dad?" he asked in confusion as he came to her.

Carlos stopped his steps and turned to look at Matthew. He secretly winked at him and said, "She is asking me who is Can't Do Anything."

Matthew's heart skipped a beat. A hint of nervousness flashed through his eyes.

But when Erica turned to look at him, his facial expression went back to normal. She asked, "Matthew, do you have any idea who is Can't Do Anything?"

Instead of answering her question, he held her waist and led her to the dining table. "Never mind him.

What's more important now is our twin babies in your belly. You have to be more careful. Don't run around."

"I know that. I'm not running around. I just want to ask Dad something."

"Honey, stop asking him because he won't tell you. If you really want to know, I'll investigate it for you."

Fortunately, Erica believed in his words. "Okay. Help me check Can't Do Anything's real identity. He is one of my followers in Weibo."

"I will."

Matthew silently heaved a sigh of relief.

Now that he promised her, he knew that she would stop asking around. As for the result of his investigation, it would totally depend on when he would be ready to confess to her.

After dinner, the couple stayed at the manor for a while. Erica was in Debbie's room, helping her sort out her cosmetics.

Actually, Debbie didn't let her do anything because she was pregnant. She just sat next to her and watched her do the job herself.

Erica insisted on helping, but her mother-in-law refused firmly.

A few moments later, Debbie went out of her bedroom to get something. On her way back, Matthew opened the door of the study while holding a phone in his hand. Seeing his mother, he casually said, "Mom, I'm in a meeting right now. Please bring me a glass of water." He was in a video conference and answering a phone call at the same time, so he couldn't leave the study.

But Debbie just waved her hand and said, "Go and get it yourself. I don't have time to look after you right now. Rika is waiting for me in my room. We have a lot to talk about."

He couldn't help frowning upon hearing his mother's words. 'What are they talking about inside Mom's room?' he wondered inwardly. "Can't you just continue talking later?" he asked.

"No, I can't. I am having a good chat with Rika. The snail is about to lay eggs, but she hasn't told me yet where the snail's eggs will come out."

Matthew got confused. 'How can a snail be more important than me?' he wanted to ask.

But he actually knew the answer to Debbie's question. A snail had an opening near the end of its body called the genital pore. This was where eggs came out. Hoping that she would get him a glass of water if he told her the answer, he said, "Mom, I know the answer. I can tell you..."

But Debbie cut him short. "No, no, no. Don't tell me. Your explanation is boring. I prefer Rika's description."

He was at a loss for words. All he could do was watch Debbie enter her room.

After a short while, Carlos went upstairs. Seeing him, Matthew said immediately, "Dad, I'm in a meeting right now. Can you get me a glass of water?"

Carlos glanced at him and showed him the plate of fruits in his hands. "I prepared some fruits for Rika. They will lose their freshness if I don't give them to her right away."

Matthew's lips twitched. Obviously, his father also refused to get him a glass of water. He got pissed off. How could they treat their son like this?

All of a sudden, he had an urge to run back home with Erica.

Left with no choice, he called the maid downstairs using the telephone in the study and asked her to bring him a glass of water.

It was a warm day. Erica had just received a piece of good news, and she was happy with the new progress of the court session.

However, she didn't know that Matthew had already known about it because Phoebe had personally called him.

He was at a dinner party when Phoebe called. To avoid the pungent smell of the woman's perfume beside him, he stood up and walked outside to answer his phone. "What is it?"

"Do you know that Erica sued me on your behalf?"

He fell silent for a moment because he actually didn't know.

Since he didn't answer, Phoebe continued, "I suppose you don't know. But please, let me explain everything to you. I actually made that sketch a long time ago when Nathan was still alive. I sketched both of your portraits just for fun. But when Nathan passed away, I decided to keep his portrait in my room as a souvenir. As for your portrait... the organizer displayed it during my last art exhibit. I didn't intend to violate your right to that portrait. I didn't mean to invade your privacy. Please convince Erica to withdraw the lawsuit."

Phoebe had already received two summons from the court. If she still didn't respond, the court would directly have a verdict.

'I didn't know that Erica sued Phoebe just to protect my right to that portrait,' he thought.

Now he knew why one night, she secretly held his finger and pressed it on a few documents. He had never thought that she had filed a lawsuit. "Do you really expect me to help you?" he asked coldly.

This time, it was Phoebe who fell silent. Then after a while, she begged in a low voice, "For the last time, Matthew. For the sake of Nathan, please ask Erica to withdraw the lawsuit. I promise that I will never do something to provoke her again."

He had no time to argue with her, as he also had a lot of questions in his mind. To end their conversation, he simply replied, "Just go through the legal proceedings."

Then he hung up.

Phoebe tried to call him again twice, but he didn't answer anymore.

He immediately called Owen and instructed, "Investigate the lawsuit that Erica has filed. Know who her lawyer is and how she'd met him. Report to me every detail of the case." Although his voice was low, it was full of coldness. Knowing Erica, he knew that she wouldn't be able to sue Phoebe without someone else's help.

But it was impossible that she got help from any of the Leonard family members. Wesley would have definitely told him about it.

Since Wesley had never mentioned this matter to him, he was sure that the Leonard family members didn't know what Erica did.

"Yes, Matthew."

As soon as he hung up, Owen moved quickly. As a result, he had accomplished the mission in the afternoon. He handed all the documents he gathered to Matthew.

Inside his office, Matthew was staring at the pile of documents in front of him with a frown while listening to Owen's report.

"Erica's lawyer is Kelvin Adams. He is the legal advisor of the Champion Group. Based on what I've found, he put aside all his work to focus only on Erica's case."

The fury in Matthew's eyes deepened. The moment Owen mentioned the Champion Group, he immediately threw the documents on his desk angrily.

Owen abruptly stopped talking. He took a deep breath to alleviate the nervousness in his heart before he continued, "I've also consulted with the lawyer of our company. He said that if a wife files a lawsuit on behalf of her husband, the husband's signature is still necessary. Matthew, don't you know about the case?" In his mind, he couldn't help wondering, 'Did Erica ask someone to forge Matthew's signature?'

Everything was now clear to Matthew why Erica asked for his seal and pressed his finger on the papers.

But that was not the reason why he was angry. He was mad that she asked Watkins to find her a lawyer. As her husband, she didn't even consider asking for his help.

He suddenly looked up to Owen and ordered, "Ask someone to hold off this case!" This case wouldn't continue until Erica came to him for help.

"Yes, Matthew." Although Owen was still confused, he didn't dare to ask anymore. He would just do what he was told to.

That night, when Matthew returned to the villa, Erica was already asleep. He sat on the edge of the bed and stared at her beautiful face. He pinched her cheek and called out her name, "Erica."

CHAPTER 1304 THE MOST HANDSOME MAN IN THE WORLD

Maybe it was because of the fact that Matthew had pinched her cheek too hard that Erica turned to the other side. "Mmph," she murmured. However, she made no move to open her eyes, so she didn't get to see the angry expression painted all over his face.

Fearing that he would hurt her, he loosened his hand and moved it under the thin quilt, running his fingers all over her body.

In the middle of the night at another villa in the Pearl Villa District, a man was sleeping soundly with his wife snuggled into his arms. However, the faint smile that had slithered its way into his lips had been interrupted by a phone call.

The loud ringing echoed across the room. Evelyn let out a muffled groan as she kicked the man beside her, pushing him to answer the call. Instead of taking his phone, Sheffield only held her even tighter.

Helplessly, Evelyn pushed him away, sat up, and turned on the bedside lamp. When she took his phone, she saw the caller ID. It was Matthew.

'Why the hell is he calling in the middle of the night?' "Matthew?" She yawned.

"Evelyn, where's your husband?"

"He's sleeping right next to me." She glanced wearily at the man next to her. "Give me a second. Sheffield, it's Matthew." Sheffield had already woken up a moment ago, but he didn't want to answer the phone. Now that his wife had placed the phone next to his ear, he had no choice but to take it. "I hope you have something urgent to tell me; otherwise—"

"How did you do it during the first three months of your wife's pregnancy?" he interrupted.

"What?" Sheffield furrowed his eyebrows.

Impatient, Matthew repeated the question.

Sheffield finally opened his eyes to glance at his wife. Upon seeing her pursed lips and narrowed eyes, he finally realized what his brother-in-law was trying to imply. He groaned. "Is that why you're calling me in the middle of the night?" he demanded incredulously.

"Yes," Matthew answered bluntly.

With a smirk playing on his lips, Sheffield held Evelyn tightly in his arms. "Too bad for you. It's my secret." It was a rare opportunity for him to be so smug in front of Matthew, so he was going to milk it as much as possible.

"You really won't tell me?" Although the younger man's words were casual, Sheffield could hear the warning behind his tone.

Frustrated, he decided to say it. "Look, just do it slowly. Make it extremely comfortable for her, man. That's it." It wasn't as if he was an expert at these things. How the hell was he supposed to know what would fit for him?

"Are you sure that my wife or babies wouldn't get hurt?"

"No. It honestly depends on the woman's health." He paused. "But I do remember how Rika climbed that tree. That means she's physically fit enough. As long as you pay more attention, she'll be fine." Before Erica got pregnant, she had taught Godwin and Godfrey how to crawl around the backyard like the soldier back in the Hilton family's manor. Being the daughter of an esteemed military officer, she was good at these types of physical exercises.

"Got it!" Matthew hung up.

In fact, during their conversation, he had already come up with different ideas on how to make the experience comfortable for the both of them.

Staring at his phone, Sheffield snorted. "My brother-in-law is probably the most arrogant man in the universe," he grumbled. He didn't even get a "thank you" for his advice.

"Who's more arrogant? Dad or Matthew?" Evelyn asked, drawing circles on his chest.

'This isn't easy to answer, ' he thought. Finally, he came up with a decent reply. "We all know how your father is an incredibly influential man. It doesn't matter whether he's arrogant or not. The most important thing is that he's the most powerful and handsome man in the world."

It seemed that he had dodged a bullet from his own wife.

"Didn't you say that you were the most handsome man in the world?" She cracked a smile, trying to hold back her laughter.

"That's obviously before I met you," he quickly said. "Once I met you, I realize I couldn't hold a dime when it comes to your father. Then again, I'm not surprised. You are the most beautiful woman in the world, so it's fit to say that you got both your parents' genes."

Evelyn was rendered speechless. "Oh, just sleep." She rolled her eyes. He had always been such a smooth talker.

"Wait, honey!" he called out.

"What's wrong?" Just as Evelyn turned off the lamp, his body pressed against hers.

"Even if Rika's pregnant, Matthew isn't going to let go of her that easily. Seeing as you're not pregnant and you aren't on your period, don't you think we should be up to something now?" he said as his hands wandered around her waist.

"And what does that have to do with us?" She raised an eyebrow.

"Your brother woke me up, and I couldn't sleep. How about we have some fun?" As soon as Sheffield finished, he pulled her towards him and gave her a searing kiss.

On the other side, Matthew hung up the phone and returned to his bedroom.

He had planned to punish Erica that night, but he soon decided against it once he glanced at the clock. It was already three forty in the morning. For the sake of her pregnancy, he decided to let her have a good sleep first.

In her sleep, Erica had no idea what the man next to her was thinking about. When he lay down, she turned over and held his arm.

She woke up a few hours later. She would've slept a little while longer if she didn't have to go to school.

When she freshened up and walked downstairs, Debbie was already waiting for her. Seeing her all freshen up, she asked the maid to serve her breakfast. "You're awake! Come and eat."

"Have you eaten yet, Mom?" Ever since she found out she was pregnant, Erica was more cautious in going down the stairs. She couldn't handle it if she would lose them because of her own carelessness.

"Matthew and I had breakfast. Come here. I've already asked the cook to make you some soup. It's very refreshing." While the two were talking, the maid already fixed up her breakfast on the dining table.

Debbie ladled a bowl of hot soup for Erica and placed it in front of her. "Be careful," she warned. "It's hot."

"Thank you, Mom!"

"Do you have any class later?" Debbie smiled lovingly at her daughter-in-law.

"Yes, the class begins in an hour." In order not to abandon her studies, Erica had to force herself out of her comfortable bed to attend her classes.

After thinking for a while, the older woman nodded. "Eat your breakfast first. Since I'm free later, I can accompany you to school with the driver." Right now, her main task was to take care of her pregnant daughter-in-law.

"Okay."

By the school gate, as Debbie helped Erica out of the car, many students couldn't help but shoot her envious looks. She was not only born from a rich family, but she also married Matthew. Moreover, she also had a mother-in-law who adored her very much. Naturally, many women here could only wish for such luck.

Not long after Debbie had left, Erica received a call from Kelvin, her lawyer.

"Kelvin," she greeted, thinking that there had been some progress on the case. "Can the trial begin?"

"No, not yet. Erica, there's been some problems with the case." Kelvin was baffled.

She furrowed her eyebrows.

"What? What's wrong?" "Someone's holding off the case. As of now, there's been no progress." If there weren't any leads, then the case couldn't be brought to court.

"What? Who did it?"

"I don't know. They had already set the time for the trial, but now, I was informed that the case was postponed," he said. "Don't worry, Erica. I will call Watkins and ask him for help."

"Let me do it." Erica was also anxious.

"Okay then."

After hanging up the phone, Erica called Watkins.

CHAPTER 1305 HE IS A LIAR

In a bedroom of a sophisticated neighborhood, a man and a woman were having wild sex. They were suddenly interrupted by the man's cellphone, which had been thrown aside before they started.

With her hair messy, the woman reached out to grab the phone. Once she looked at the caller ID, a trace of anger immediately flashed through her eyes. Biting her lower lip, she handed the phone to the man on top of her. "Answer your phone!"

Noticing Erica's name on the screen, he slowed down his moves and took a deep breath before he slid the answer button.

The phone was about to hang up when his voice finally came on the line. "Hello, Erica."

"Are you busy now? It took you a while to pick up the call."

After a short silence, Watkins answered, "No, I'm not busy. I just didn't hear it ringing, that's all. What's up?"

Erica, who had always been careless, didn't notice anything unusual in his voice, so she went straight to the point. "Here is the thing. Kelvin just called and said that Phoebe's case isn't going well. Do you have any idea why?"

"I'll make a few calls and ask what's going on. I'll call you back later."

"Okay, thank you!" Erica felt very lucky that she had Watkins as her friend in Alorith.

Now with his help, she could sue Phoebe without Matthew's knowledge.

After he hung up, Watkins threw the phone aside and urged, "Let's hurry up."

Hearing this, the woman pursed her red lips and asked with a hint of irony, "What's wrong?"

"Nothing. I'm just bored." They went back to having sex until Watkins finished up a few minutes later.

In the evening, Erica got a message from Watkins saying, "Now I know why. Erica, someone is indeed holding off the case."

"Who?"

"Well, it's your husband."

Erica was shocked. 'So Matthew knows! When did he find out? How come I didn't know that he knows?' "Why is he trying to hold off this case?" she asked.

Watkins sent her a worried emoji, and replied, "You should ask Matthew yourself. Maybe it's because

Phoebe used to be the wife of a good friend of his. Anyway, I think you two should talk clearly about this matter."

Erica's heart sank. She hadn't asked for Matthew's help because she was afraid that he would show compassion towards Phoebe.

However, despite all the trouble that she went to keep her plans from him, he still managed to find everything out and interfere with the case anyway.

It's common knowledge that because of all the increasing hormones in their bodies, pregnant women can become quite sensitive.

Erica was no exception to that. With the phone still in her hand, all sorts of hurtful and enraged thoughts came through her mind. Even though she tried to calm herself down, it had no use.

Eventually, she couldn't hold it anymore and called Matthew. "Matthew, what do you mean by interfering in Phoebe's case?" she inquired coldly.

Matthew froze for a moment. He was at an emergency meeting when she called, but due to the sensitivity of the matter, he immediately sought out the exit and walked away from the room with his phone before he answered her, "Rika, I thought you knew the reason why."

"What do you mean? Are you trying to protect her against me?" Thinking about this possibility, Erica got so angry that her mind went blank for a whole minute.

Matthew took a deep breath and closed his eyes. Despite his anger, he kept reminding himself that he needed to comfort her first. "Relax. Don't get too emotional..." He knew that pregnant women shouldn't get too anxious.

"How can I not get emotional?" she yelled. 'He's just a liar. Didn't he fall out of love with Phoebe? Why is he protecting her in such a big deal?' she thought furiously.

"Why didn't you come to me for help to begin with?" he asked. Since she wanted to sue Phoebe, she should have come to him instead of seeking another man's help.

"Why should I've come to you?" Erica believed that if she had asked for Matthew's help, she wouldn't even have found a lawyer yet.

'Huh? Did she dare to ask me why?' Matthew was really pissed off. "We'll talk about it when I get home!" he told her.

"No, you may sleep in the company tonight! And Matthew, mark my words, I'll sue Phoebe with or without you getting in my way!" She swore that she would win the case and let Phoebe pay for her actions.

His face dim, Matthew said, "Honey, don't make a fuss."

His words were actually aimed at her first statement in which he should sleep in the company. However, Erica had taken it as a reply for her not to sue Phoebe, bringing great sorrow to her heart. "I'm going to make a fuss. I won't stop, no matter what." Then she hung up the phone, leaving no chance for Matthew to say anything further.

In the quiet bedroom, the only voices Erica heard belonged to her thoughts. Yet the more she paid attention to them, the worse she felt. At the moment, it seemed that all the sweet times that Erica shared with Matthew had been fake. After all, Phoebe hadn't been a part of any of them. However, on the first occasion that something had involved her, they not only had a horrible quarrel, but Matthew also picked the other woman's side.

Matthew kept calling her, but she refused to answer him. Instead, she called Gifford about ten minutes after their discussion. "Gifford."

As soon as Erica's voice came through the line, Gifford was quick to reprimand her. "Rika, you're pregnant. Why are you up so late?"

Erica grimaced. "Hey, it's only nine o'clock, okay?" Before she got pregnant, she would usually go to bed by midnight. But if Matthew wanted to have sex, they would easily stay up until the wee hours.

"Why are you calling me at this hour?" Gifford was caught up in a small mission. He was watching a situation not far from him as he talked to Erica over the phone.

"I want to go to court. Help me find a good lawyer." She hoped to find a lawyer that even Matthew was unable to intimidate.

Gifford frowned and asked, "What? What happened?"

"It's all because of Phoebe. I can't tell you the details over the phone. But I'll tell you all about it the next time you come to Alorith."

"Shouldn't you ask Matthew for help?" It was much easier for Matthew to find a good lawyer for her.

Erica pouted and complained, "I don't want to ask for his help, and I don't believe I can't find a lawyer without him... No, no, no. I was wrong. Forget about what I said. I don't want you to find a lawyer for me. I already have one. The thing is that I filed a lawsuit against Phoebe, but my case is not moving forward. I need you to find someone to help me so the case can go smoothly."

All of a sudden, she realized that it was not a matter of getting a more powerful lawyer. The problem was Matthew. Her case would never move forward if he kept holding off the case.

"Did you quarrel with Matthew again?" He could feel Erica's temper through the phone.

"Well, he doesn't want me to sue Phoebe, but I decided to go through with it anyway."

"What on earth did Phoebe do to you?" Gifford was confused. Didn't Erica have a good relationship with Tessie before? Why was she turning against all the Campbell sisters now?

Erica didn't want to gossip, but she needed to get all that anger out of her chest before she exploded. "She was pregnant, but then she slandered me saying that I pushed her and caused a miscarriage. How can I let her get away with this?"

"Oh, I see. Did Matthew believe her?"

"I don't know." She was still confused by Matthew's attitude. He never said whether he believed Phoebe or not. But if he did, then why was he so kind to Erica? And if he didn't, why did he never tell Erica so?

"I'd rather not interfere in this matter. This is between you and your husband. Besides, it would be for the best if you persuade Matthew on this subject." Gifford was sincere with her.

"Gifford, why can't you understand that he is on Phoebe's side? Believe me, I didn't want to ask you this either, but to whom will I run to if you refuse to help me?" Erica's voice was full of grievance.

Hearing that, Gifford felt a bit distressed and finally surrendered. "I'll call Matthew and ask him about this, okay?" There must be a misunderstanding between them. Therefore, he had to understand what was going on before he took any action.

CHAPTER 1306 YOUR SONS WANT TO EA

"No! You're on my side. If you call Matthew, you're just admitting he's better than you. So will you help me or not?" Erica demanded.

"Of course I will. I'm busy these days and won't go to Alorith soon, though. I'll make a few calls. If it doesn't work, maybe you can talk to Dad," Gifford answered. But helping Erica was a little tougher than it seemed on the surface. He was glad to help, but he needed help himself to pull it off.

He had no connections in the court system. He knew people who did, so he had to call them and see if they could pitch in.

'Why does Rika always come to me for help? Dad's better set up for that than I am. Maybe she figures Dad would turn her down, anyway, ' he thought.

"I won't call Dad. He always sides with Matthew. He won't help me..." Suddenly, Matthew opened the door. He was silent as usual, so Erica had no clue he was there. His face darkened as he heard what she said. "Thanks Gifford, you're awesome!"

"Yeah, yeah. I know. I'll see what I can do!" Gifford couldn't stand Erica's tone, as if he was the one who bullied her.

The next moment, before Erica could say anything else, her phone was wrenched from her hand. "Mind your own business, Gifford. Just pretend Rika never called you. I'll fix this," Matthew said into her phone.

"Matthew, you're there too? Rika said you are holding off her case against Phoebe. What happened?" 'So I wonder if the rumors are true. Does Matthew still carry a torch for Phoebe?' he wondered. 'Nah. Couldn't be.'

Matthew held the phone high, foiling Erica's attempts to retrieve it. He put a hand out to keep her away, put the phone back to his ear, and said, "Nothing serious. She's just being a bad girl again."

"Oh..." Gifford believed it without a doubt. He knew better than anyone else what kind of trouble Erica could cause. "Remember, Rika's pregnant. You need to be a little more patient. She'll be fine after you calm her down some!"

"Don't worry. I will. Have a good night."

He hung up the phone.

Erica shouted, "Gifford!"

But it was too late. She could clearly see the screen of her cellphone. It showed the call was disconnected.

'Why did Matthew have to come in just when I managed to get Gifford to say yes? All that trouble for nothing, ' she cried inwardly.

Placing her phone on the bedside table, Matthew asked gently, "Are you hungry?"

"I've lost my appetite!" She turned her head away in a fit of pique.

"So what do you want to eat?" he asked, as if he didn't hear her reply. It was said that pregnant women were always hungry and needed to eat more. Not only that, sometimes they did strange things like eat rocks, chalk, or dirt. Those odd cravings were caused by a nutrient deficiency, so he wanted control of her diet.

"I told you: I'm not hungry!"

As if he hadn't heard anything she said, Matthew took off his suit jacket and hung it in the closet. "You can't eat spicy and sour rice noodles. But you still have tons of choices—noodles with seafood, wontons with chicken filling, steak, shrimp dumplings..." He rattled off a long list of dishes, including Western

food as well as more traditional Chinese meals.

Some of it did sound scrumptious, and Erica couldn't help but drool. "I want spicy and sour rice noodles and wontons with chicken filling."

The man glanced at her and emphasized, "No spicy and sour rice noodles. I already said that." Every time she ate spicy and sour rice noodles, she would put a lot of pepper in them. Heartburn was common during pregnancy, especially as the baby grew bigger. So he tried his best to make her feast on some lighter fare.

She lowered her head and replied in a quiet voice, "Then how about noodles with seafood?" Then she looked up at the man and added, "That's what your sons are clamoring for, not me!" She was still angry. How could she want any food he cooked?

With a faint smile, Matthew said, "Well, what if you're carrying daughters?"

"Then it's your daughters that want that type of stuff, not me! Why the stupid question?"

Matthew nodded. 'So Rika doesn't want to eat the noodles, but our sons or daughters want them. Got it.'

The man left the room, and paused at the door. "Come down in twenty minutes. Dinner should be ready then," he said, and went downstairs.

Erica made a face at the man's back and muttered in a quiet voice, "Don't try to buy me off with a bowl of noodles and seafood. I'm not dropping that suit against Phoebe."

On the first floor

When Matthew went downstairs, he called someone up. "Yes. It's me. Send some red shrimps, abalones and scallops. Enough for two people. They must be fresh." Erica also liked eating crab. He had wanted to order some, but it was said that pregnant women should avoid crab meat, so he decided against it.

The maid heard the noise from the kitchen and walked out of her room. Seeing that Matthew was making a fruit platter by himself, she quickly came over and asked, "Matthew, what are you doing? Let me do it."

"No, thanks. Just clean the kitchen later."

The maid hesitated for a moment and guessed that he might want to prepare a midnight snack for his wife himself. She nodded and said, "Yes, Matthew."

Before twenty minutes passed, Erica went downstairs. Seeing the woman making her way downstairs, Matthew said, "Why don't you take the elevator?"

When she had first gotten pregnant, she almost had a miscarriage because she rushed up and down the stairs. When Matthew saw her walk downstairs, fear loomed in the back of his mind.

Erica waved her hand indifferently. "I'm not running, I'm taking it easy!" She used to fly down those stairs, taking more than one step at a time, jumping over several of them on the way down. Since she was pregnant, she took them far more slowly, and used the handrail.

Matthew didn't say anything more. He tore open a piece of Spanish ham meat. He was afraid that Erica would fall back into her old patterns, forgetting that she was carrying babies whose safety she was responsible for.

The colorful fruit platter was sitting on the dining room table. While eating the fruits, Erica played with her phone and sent a message to Watkins. "I'll think of something."

She would find a way on her own first. If it didn't work, she would cry and threaten to kill herself in front of Matthew and he would give in.

The doorbell rang, echoing throughout the house. Erica looked at the man walking toward the door in confusion. Who would be coming here this late?

When she saw Matthew walk out, talk to the man, sign something, and come back in with a delicately packaged box, she couldn't help asking, "What's that?"

Matthew glanced at her and answered, "Seafood."

"Oh, I didn't know we were out of seafood."

"We're not." There was frozen seafood in their fridge, but she was pregnant, so she needed fresh food.

Erica was confused. 'Since we have seafood in the fridge, why did he buy more? He is too extravagant! Forget it.

I'm still mad at him, so I won't ask.'

The smell of food soon filled the kitchen. Erica swallowed and waited for Matthew to serve the food.

The noodles were the same old noodles they always ate. But the seafood was quite different.

Erica ate a mouthful of the noodles. 'Wow! This is amazing.

I love having a husband who can cook!

I have to drive Phoebe away from him, ' she swore in her head.

Matthew took out two egg tarts from the oven and put them on a plate. "Tell me if you get full."

"Well, okay!" Erica agreed and took another mouthful of the noodles. The noodles were so scrumptious that she didn't want to talk.

Seeing that she was eating well, Matthew went upstairs to take a shower.

When he came back down, his wife was pacing back and forth on the carpet, holding her expanding belly in her arms, and every once in a while saying something to the maid cleaning the kitchen.

"Finished?" he asked.

"Mm." Erica wanted to tell him that she was stuffed full, but she was still angry with him. So she continued to look down at the traces of her feet stepping on the carpet one after another, which quickly disappeared.

"So you're all done?"

"Mm-hmm!" This time, she didn't raise her head, nor did she look at him.

Matthew looked at her belly thoughtfully. So she was hungrier. He prepared a large plate of fruits, a large bowl of noodles and two egg tarts for her. She had wolfed them all down.

CHAPTER 1307 YOU IDIO

"What would you like for lunch tomorrow?" Matthew asked. Erica was pregnant now and couldn't just eat whatever she wanted.

She glanced at him and answered cavalierly, "I'll eat whatever they put in front of me." The chefs Matthew hired were great at their jobs. They stuck to the diet, and the dishes were all delicious. Sweet potato, chicken, walnuts, salmon, garlic, and lamb. Those dishes were good for her and the babies. What was more, she liked what they fixed her a lot.

The man raised his eyebrows. He didn't expect her to be so pliant. "Then get upstairs!"

Then he took her hand and led her to the elevator.

However, Erica struggled out of his grip. "I'll take the stairs." She was so full that she felt she should get more exercise.

Matthew paused and took her hand again, but this time they walked up the stairs together.

In their bedroom

Erica took out her phone and sat on the edge of the bed to browse Weibo. Matthew stood in front of her and said, "Reflect on what you have done wrong regarding Phoebe's case!"

He wanted her to understand that whenever she needed help in the future, the first one she went to was her husband, not another guy.

Erica rolled her eyes at him and said firmly, "I did nothing wrong!" And she really believed that, too.

He stood there, stewing, not being able to do anything about it. Then, his eyes glinted, as if he had just thought of something. He no longer argued with her, but led her to the bathroom instead.

"Hey, what are you doing?" she asked.

"You need to brush your teeth!"

This time, Erica wasn't going to fight him on this. She did have to brush her teeth.

Matthew prepared a glass of water, squeezed toothpaste and handed the toothbrush to her. She took the toothbrush and carefully brushed her teeth in front of the mirror, making sure she got every last nook and cranny.

A few minutes later, Matthew guided her back to the bedroom. After she sat down on the bed, he put his arms on her side and said with a wicked grin, "Let's see if we can work off some of those pounds!"

"What?" Erica couldn't believe her ears. Matthew smiled and said, "I forgot to tell you I work out before going to bed, too." Didn't she already tell him she had a habit of doing exercise before going to sleep on their wedding night? It just so happened that he also had the same habit.

Erica was confused. "But I'm pregnant and I can't exercise now!"

"It's okay. We'll just have to be careful!" A year without sex. What a terrible idea! He had to do something.

Without saying anything more, he lowered his head and kissed her on her red lips. Heedless of her struggles, he pressed her onto the bed and did whatever he wanted.

Frightened, Erica found a way out. "Honey, stop! I have twins! What if you hurt them? Cut it out!"

The man touched her belly and said in a hoarse voice, "They're only two months along. I talked to the OB/GYN. They said it's fine."

She answered quickly, "They said no such thing. The doctor said you'd better hold off on sex for at least three months. Don't go against the doctor! What if you hurt the babies?" "Wait! We were quarreling just now. Why is he trying to have sex with me now?" she wondered.

Matthew clenched her hands on his chest. "It all comes down to you. If you're worried about the babies, you can help me in other ways!"

"What? How?" Why did she feel that he was up to no good?

The man's eyes fell on her cherry lips. "Let me teach you." He began to describe what he wanted, and her eyes went wide and her cheeks darkened from embarrassment. He'd deliberately held off on that so she wouldn't be frightened. But now...

Erica had never seen an adult movie before, but listened as he described what a blowjob was. She never knew that they could do it that way.

So that was why he wanted her to brush her teeth!

Meanwhile, in the living room of the Campbell family residence

Slap! Camille hit the woman standing in the middle of the living room. The victim's face was red, and you could see the imprint of a hand forming on her cheek.

Phoebe stared at the angry woman in disbelief. "Camille, you hit me?"

"Yes! I hit you because you're an idiot!" Camille was really pissed off at her sister!

Fanya sat on the sofa, tapping out messages to her work group on WeChat. She acted as if everything was fine, as if she didn't see her eldest hit the middle child.

Tears in her eyes, Phoebe bit her lower lip and asked unhappily, "What's going on, Camille? Why are you acting like this?"

"You asked me why? Congratulations! You're the talk of the town. Everyone in the city knows Erica's going to sue you! And they're going to blame it all on us. Where are you going to get ten million dollars, Phoebe? What do you have to say for yourself?" Camille just couldn't understand why Tessie and Phoebe were so stupid. She felt like she was the only one of the siblings with any brains. How could they be her sisters?

Phoebe took the opportunity to put some distance between her and Camille. "Who would have thought that bitch Erica could sue me? Using my own work against me? That fucking bitch!" she said, hatred lacing her tone. "Matthew lets her get away with too much. He loves and spoils her. If he kept her on a shorter leash, she wouldn't be such a thorn in my side."

"So you're just as stupid as she is! You can't keep your cool around Matthew. Before his death, Nathan had asked Matthew to take care of you and your baby. You could have totally torn down Erica, and married Matthew if you just played your cards right. But now? Erica's doing well, and pregnant with his

kid. Look at you! Once the lawsuit is filed, you'll pay her ten million dollars as compensation. You'll be ruined!" Camille looked at her sister with disgust in her eyes.

She once had everything, and she still lost to Erica.

Phoebe was not convinced. "Since you think I'm stupid, what have you done for us lately? Why don't you try to get her to drop the charges?"

She didn't believe that Camille, who had nothing to do with Matthew, would be better than her!

She remembered that when Camille saw the snake on her bed, she was just as scared as her. But she was good at pretending and took control of the situation.

A malicious look appeared in Camille's eyes, which made Phoebe shudder uncontrollably.

After what seemed like forever, Camille told her sister, "I'll do it myself. I don't think Matthew even likes you anymore. I'll marry Matthew, and drive Erica out. Of course, that means that he is mine! You won't see any benefit from it."

If she married into the Hilton family, she'd be one of the richest and most powerful people in Alorith. She'd be the new Mrs. Hilton, and every woman in the city would want to be her.

Phoebe had already given up all hope of being Mrs. Hilton. "Whatever!"

"But from now on, you have to listen to me. You must do whatever I ask you to do!" Her mother said that Camille was the last hope of the Campbell family. She couldn't screw this up. Not this time!

Phoebe asked with uncertainty, "Are you seriously going to use me as a pawn?"

"Of course! You've messed things up royally." Camille didn't hide her thoughts at all. If she used Phoebe well, she could get whatever she wanted.

Seeing the unwillingness in her eyes, Camille sneered, "You can't say no to this. You've made too many mistakes already! You failed to snare Matthew. Now that Erica's carrying his kid, he doesn't give a damn about the Campbell family. So yes, I'm using you. If you don't like it, then get out! We've got the ten million, but you have to earn it. Do this, and the lawsuit's as good as paid for. Defy us, and just see what happens."

It was ten million dollars. Even if Phoebe sold her body, she couldn't get it in so short a time!

Phoebe knew very well that Erica would sue her. As long as Matthew didn't intervene on her behalf, she would definitely owe ten million dollars!

She didn't think that Matthew would help her again, so she had to find a way out of this. And that way

out was her family. "Fine, I will do whatever you tell me to do!"

Hearing that, Fanya stood up slowly from the sofa and tidied her clothes. "Don't get upset, Camille. Head upstairs and get some rest."

Sometimes, a woman's beauty was also a useful weapon.

Camille was the most beautiful and graceful among the three sisters. She was always proud of her beauty.

"Okay, Mom." Hearing this, Camille didn't spare her sister another look. She ignored Phoebe and ascended the stairs.

CHAPTER 1308 WHO WILL BE THE WINNER

Fanya just ignored Phoebe, picked up her bag, and walked out of the Campbell family residence.

Left alone in the living room, Phoebe slumped against the cushions. At this moment, she knew how desperate Tessie felt when she found out that she would be thrown into the slum. She had offended Matthew, and the Campbell family didn't want to help her appease him.

So now, to avoid losing ten million dollars and being thrown into the slum, she must listen to Camille and follow her advice.

The next morning, Erica got up very early because she had an event to attend.

At the breakfast table, she just stared at the food in front of her blankly. She had no appetite at all.

Looking at the food reminded her of what Matthew did to her last night.

She felt like whatever she ate right now was similar to that thing in her mouth the other night.

She stole a glance at the man opposite her, who was eating breakfast heartily.

'Humph! Such a jerk!'

Feeling a dull pain, she subconsciously rubbed her face.

"Why are you not eating?" Matthew's voice startled her, and she quickly put down her hand.

Her face flushed inexplicably upon meeting his eyes. "...I'm not hungry," she stuttered.

"Don't you like the food?" he asked. He wondered why, because the other day, she ate the same breakfast with a big appetite.

"No, the food is fine." She felt embarrassed. Matthew acted as if nothing had happened while she kept on thinking about last night. To shake those thoughts off her mind, she picked up a bun with the chopsticks and put it into her mouth.

Matthew felt amused upon looking at her puffed cheeks.

Most women would never fill their mouths with a whole bun as it would ruin their poise. But Erica just stuffed the bun into her mouth naturally.

She was indeed different, which made her more adorable.

Since she was really hungry in actuality, she enjoyed all the food on the table as soon as she managed to put aside the memory of last night. She even ate more than she expected.

Two days later, Erica called Kelvin about the lawsuit. "Kelvin, how's the case going? Is it still held off?"

"Yes. I just asked them today. The hearing has been postponed." Their first hearing was supposed to be next Monday, but since the case was held off, it was moved to a different day. Kelvin was very worried that things wouldn't go smoothly.

The bad news angered Erica a little. 'Matthew is really challenging me!' she thought. "I'll call Matthew," she said. The hearing must go on as scheduled on Monday.

"Oh, okay." Kelvin was actually curious about what happened between Matthew and Erica. As far as he knew, it was Matthew who asked Erica to represent him in the lawsuit. But all of a sudden, he was holding it off right now.

After hanging up, Erica immediately sent a message to Matthew. As much as she wanted to call him, she couldn't dare to confront him over the phone.

Matthew was in the middle of a meeting when he received the message from Erica. It was actually a threat.

He read it silently. "If the trial won't happen on Monday, I will run away with your sons, Matthew!"

His eyes darkened in an instant. Now he had proven how stubborn she was. He had been waiting for her to come to him for help, but she never did. Instead, she was threatening him now.

She must be out of her mind thinking about running away. "If you run away, I will find you at all costs and lock you at home forever," he replied.

He thought that she would be frightened to be locked at home for life.

Erica was pissed by his reply, but she tried a different approach. "I have already decided to sue Phoebe, and I don't have any plan of backing out. Is there any way that the trial can push through?"

"Of course. It all depends on you."

For the sake of the lawsuit, she decided to give in, so she asked, "What do you want me to do?" He didn't want to tell her what he really wanted, so he replied, "Think about it yourself." He just wanted her to realize that he was the only one whom she should seek help from. She should not ask for help from any other man.

But what he said baffled Erica. As usual, he didn't make himself clear. She would be the one to rack her brain again. 'Is he out of his mind? Does he really think that everyone is as smart as him?' she thought with a frown.

'If I have even just one-third of his intelligence, I probably won't learn photography but build my own company instead.'

Angered by his last text message, Erica rushed to Hilton Group to confront him. However, Matthew's assistant told her that he was not in his office today.

She felt like crying, wondering why it seemed so difficult for her lawsuit to go on smoothly. Worst of all, her own husband was the one making things difficult for her.

She gave up. She wouldn't look for Matthew nor go to Watkins or Gifford anymore.

Instead, she would go to Carlos.

After all, Carlos was still the CEO of Hilton Group. Matthew, who was under twenty-eight years old, was only acting as a deputy CEO.

Carlos had planned to hand over all his power in the company to Matthew when the latter turned thirty. Because of this, she believed that Carlos was still more powerful than Matthew in Alorith.

Before going to the Hilton family manor, Erica called Matthew first and asked him to go to the manor too. She wanted to talk to Carlos in his presence.

She knew that Matthew had always been afraid of Carlos, so she hoped that he would change his mind on his way to the manor. That way, she wouldn't need to bother her father-in-law anymore.

But if he wouldn't change his mind, it didn't matter either. She still had Carlos to back her up.

Not long after, Erica arrived at the parking lot of the manor. Matthew was already there, waiting for her.

As soon as he saw her car, he got out of his car to open the door for her. Although his face was

expressionless, the care for his pregnant wife was still there.

Although he felt bad that she was accusing and opposing him, he still had to take care of her because she was his wife, and the babies in her belly were his flesh and blood.

As soon as she got out of the car, she looked at him defiantly. It seemed that she wasn't afraid of him anymore as she asked in a complacent tone, "Honey, have you already changed your mind?"

With a faint smile, he answered, "We have not determined the winner yet." He was not looking down on Carlos, but he didn't see him as a serious threat either.

After all, his father was already old and no longer capable of dealing with him. He believed that he wouldn't be able to help Erica.

"I don't know who will be the winner either, but I know that you will die in my hands!" Erica stretched out her slender arm in the air complacently as if grabbing Matthew's neck and strangling it gradually.

The smile on his face froze. He felt a sudden compulsion to kill her, because she already knew too much about him.

But of course, he could never have the heart to do it.

All he could do was spoil her.

As soon as they entered the manor, they saw Carlos and Debbie watching TV in the living room. Obviously, they were already waiting for them.

Erica shook off Matthew's hand and rushed to the living room to greet the two elders. "Mom. Dad."

"Hello, Rika." Debbie came over and held Erica's hand.

Erica nodded at her with a sweet smile, then turned to look at Carlos. In an instant, she looked aggrieved and sobbed, "Dad..."

Matthew's eyes widened upon seeing his pregnant wife crying. At this point, he knew that he lost.

'She's really good at acting. Anyone who doesn't know the real situation may think that I am a bully husband.'

CHAPTER 1309 CARLOS DECIDED TO HELP

Carlos jumped to his feet in anxiety. His heart broke when he saw how upset Erica was. Concern reflected in his tone as he asked, "Rika, what's wrong? Please don't cry! Tell me everything. Did Matthew bully you?"

Without giving anyone a chance to speak, he turned, glared at his son, and roared, "Don't you know that Rika is pregnant with two babies now? Why are you upsetting her? This kind of stress is bad for her and the babies. Are you out of your mind?"

Matthew cast a cold glance at him and thought, 'She's wronged me, not the other way around. The only reason you support her is that she's better at complaining.'

Sure enough, as the saying goes, babies who cry to manipulate their parents get whatever they want.'

Since Carlos' back was turned to her, Erica smiled smugly before making a face at Matthew, whose eyes almost popped out. When Carlos turned to face Erica and express his concern for her, she resumed her aggrieved expression.

Matthew's frustration grew when he witnessed how his wife had tricked him. As he couldn't say anything in front of his parents, he gave her a thumbs up.

Debbie, who didn't see what Erica had done either, slapped her son's hand away, and reproached, "What are you doing? Rika, tell me, what did Matthew do to you? I'll punish him." 'How dare Matthew bully my daughter-in-law?' she thought angrily.

"Yes, tell us." Carlos patted her shoulder.

Erica glanced at Matthew, as though she were scared. Seeing her like this, Carlos wished he could beat Matthew. "Rika, don't be afraid of him. We're here. You're safe."

Matthew rolled his eyes. He couldn't believe how easily she had duped his parents. 'I should take her to bed and teach her a lesson!'

Erica held Debbie's arm and began to tell her in-laws what had happened. Of all the things they had thought she would say about Matthew, they were not expecting what she shared. With a deep sigh, she said, "Dad, Mom, Matthew is protecting his mistress!"

"What?" Debbie exclaimed. She was so stunned that she almost fell off the sofa. 'My son has a mistress?'

Carlos frowned as he processed what Erica had shared. 'Does Matthew wish for death?' His intense gaze fell on his silent son. "Rika, go on," he said through gritted teeth. If what she said were true, he would skin Matthew alive!

Erica could feel the anger radiating from Carlos. It suddenly dawned on her that perhaps this wasn't her best idea. After all, if Carlos became too angry, it would become very dangerous for Matthew. She hesitated for a moment and then revised her earlier statement. "Although he doesn't love her, he is protecting her instead of me! Dad, can you help me? Boo...hoo... I have no choice but to ask for your

help." Gifford was useless. Matthew had fooled him so easily that it had ruined Erica's plans. Now, she was desperate to find another way to deal with Phoebe.

"What happened? Tell me everything. I'll teach Matthew a lesson right away!" Carlos assured.

Erica's fear-filled gaze was pinned on Matthew with every sentence she spoke, just like a poor wife who was afraid that her husband would beat her. "I'm going to sue Mistress Phoebe. Oh, no, it's Phoebe Campbell. I'm protecting the portraiture right for Matthew, but he has the case held off. The court date has been decided, but now the trial can't be held. Dad, it's not a big deal for me to lose face. But, I can't eat or sleep well every day because of this matter. I feel that the babies in my belly are protesting..."

'The babies are protesting? This is disconcerting!' Carlos thought. On impulse, he searched the nearby table for something heavy. As soon as he spotted an ashtray, he grabbed it and raised it, as though he was going to throw it at his son.

Erica was so terrified that she grabbed his hand immediately. "Dad, it's not that serious. Don't be angry. Calm down..." she coaxed.

Debbie was also furious by what she had heard and felt that Matthew was wrong. But she didn't think that throwing the ashtray at him was a good idea. So, she and Erica took the ashtray from Carlos' hand. Then, to settle her husband's temper, she said, "If you hit him with the ashtray, you will have to take him to the hospital. Can you carry him?"

Carlos glared at his son, who, to his detriment, chose to remain silent. "You'd better give me an explanation! And it better be a good one."

Matthew shifted his gaze from the "uneasy" pregnant woman and pinned it at his father calmly. "Dad, do you know that she went to ask the youngest son of Champion Group's CEO for help and that their lawyer is helping her deal with the case?"

He had been unimaginably offended when he learned that his wife had sought another man's help. He believed that Carlos, being a proud man as well, would understand his feelings.

But, he was wrong.

What value did his feelings have in comparison to Erica and her babies' well-being? "That must be because you didn't give Rika a sense of security. You should reflect on why she asked for someone else's help after the incident happened!"

His wife had asked another man for help. Carlos felt that Erica's actions reflected poorly on Matthew, not the other way around. How could his son not be ashamed? After all, he had money and power. What was preventing him from helping his wife? And if that wasn't bad enough, he even went against Erica!

Matthew knew that no matter what he did or said, his parents would side with his wife. He didn't want to talk to Carlos anymore. So, he faced his wife and said, "You should reflect on yourself. Call me after you figure out why I'm holding off the case."

Now that things had come to this, she had tried to manipulate Gifford and Carlos into helping her. Not once did she ask him. The more he thought about it, the angrier he became.

Erica was so depressed. "I..." 'Could there be any other reason except that he is on Phoebe's side?'

Did she make a mistake by going to Watkins for help? Matthew was unwilling to help her, even now. Did she expect him to help her at the beginning?

Matthew turned around and left the manor even though Carlos roared at him to stay.

The door to the living room slammed shut. Even though fury surged through Carlos at Matthew's behavior, he felt obligated to comfort Erica first.

He suppressed his anger, let Erica sit down on the sofa, and promised her, "Rika, do what you want. I'll handle the problem for you! But you must take care of yourself!"

Erica looked at Carlos gratefully. "Thank you, Dad and Mom! I will take good care of myself and my babies." Her in-laws were considerate and supportive of her.

After comforting Erica, the Hilton family sat down for dinner. Eventually, Carlos went out despite the late hour.

In the tea room of a big house, two men were drinking tea. The man in a Chinese tunic suit poured a cup of freshly-brewed hot tea for Carlos. "Carlos, are you at odds with your son?"

The middle-aged man was candid and forthright.

So was Carlos. He took a sip of his tea and answered, "Yes. My son thinks he has grown up enough to defy me and be disobedient."

"Ha-ha, your son is just like you. If I do as you say, he will be offended, and then, I'm sure he'll find a way to back at me. Carlos, please try talking to your son. Don't make things difficult for me!" the man said with a bitter smile.

As he was the most powerful person in the court system of Alorith, Matthew had approached him to hold off Phoebe's case.

"I'm not talking to him. I'm asking for your help!" Carlos exclaimed. He was afraid that if he were forced into the same room as Matthew, he would lose his temper and whip his son.

The man put down his teacup and said, "Carlos, you're his father. You know your son better than anyone else. I can't afford to offend either of you! Alas, you've put me in a dilemma!"

Carlos wasn't offended that the man had refused to aid him. On the contrary, with a faint smile, he assured, "You don't have to be so stressed. The problem arose as my son and daughter-in-law are at odds. You know what kind of person Matthew is. He won't compromise, nor will he be submissive before his wife. I want to teach him a lesson. He needs to learn that a man should do as his wife says."

CHAPTER 1310 THE COURT DAY

Carlos clarified that Matthew had decided to hold off the case because there was some conflict between him and his wife.

The man sitting beside Carlos believed the explanation. After all, Matthew's wife was defending her husband's portraiture right in the case, and Matthew's seal and fingerprint were on the documents. He concluded, just like Carlos, that the disagreement between the couple had affected the case.

"Carlos, you know I can't afford to offend either you or your son. May I make a suggestion? How about I call your son and let him know..." Telling Matthew that his father had come to visit him might reduce some of his wrath. Otherwise, he might offend Matthew if it seemed as though he had heard Carlos and supported him.

'Alas! The father and son made an interesting pair.'

"That is your choice. I approached you as I want to conclude the matter. I hope the case can be held as scheduled," Carlos said. As far as he knew, the young couple argued because of Phoebe. If the trial could be held as planned, Phoebe would come to a miserable end, and he wouldn't have to deliberately remove the source of trouble between his son and daughter-in-law.

It would be like killing two birds with one stone.

As the couple was still in a stalemate, the case was going to be held as scheduled.

When Matthew received the phone call, his face darkened with anger.

But his wife was pregnant. He had no choice but to let her do what she wanted.

The night before the trial, the pregnant woman stood by the bed with an arm around her baby bump, and proudly declared, "Oh, my God! You can't protect your mistress anymore. Your wife is going to turn the tables!"

A hint of danger glimmered in the man's eyes as he said, "Are you happy now?"

"Of course!" She was so overjoyed that she didn't notice she was inviting trouble.

"Come here!" Matthew ordered with a wave of his hand.

Erica was so excited that she didn't overthink. She glided up to him, and lovingly ran her hand over her smooth belly. "Do you want to greet your sons?"

"Okay."

This had been Matthew's routine every night since he learned of her pregnancy. Without hesitating, Erica climbed onto the bed and put her belly close to him.

What began as Matthew bonding with his unborn children soon turned into something more passionate. Despite her slight unwillingness at the beginning, Erica gave in to his desires.

Later, in the middle of the night, she placed her hands on her hips and groaned, "My waist hurts..."

The man had just stepped out after a shower. After a moment's pause, he thought he knew a way to cure what ailed his wife. "How much money do I have to give you to treat your affliction?"

Erica smiled shyly, "Don't be like this. Well, one hundred thousand!"

"That's too little. It's not even worth the trouble of fetching my checkbook!" His eyes bore into his wife as he waited for her to change her answer.

"One million!" she said after some hesitation.

The man didn't even blink.

"Five million!" Erica cried.

It was only then that Matthew put down the towel in his hand, took out a check from his briefcase, wrote down the number, and threw it beside her. "Does it still hurt?"

The pregnant woman's eyes lit up. She kissed the check a few times and shook her head. With a flattering smile, she replied, "No, it doesn't hurt anymore."

Suddenly, a thought flashed through Matthew's mind. With a grim expression, he turned to the pregnant woman, who was still happy, and said, "Erica."

"What?" The joy glimmering in her eyes disappeared when she saw his expression. She held the check closer to her chest and asked, "Did you change your mind?" She wouldn't return the money to him!

Matthew sat on the edge of the bed and looked into the eyes of the woman lying on the bed. "I want to tell you that you shouldn't fear people whom you know are bad. However, those who don't do a moral and

righteous facade but are actually bad, are far more dangerous." The key point was in the second half of the sentence.

'Huh?' Erica tilted her head and shot the man a puzzled look.

'So, is he saying that a bad person, like Phoebe, is not to be feared?' "I know. I won't trust those people easily!" she said with a nod.

Matthew breathed a sigh of relief as he thought she got his point—but she didn't. "It's good that you've understood." Erica was a simple girl. He was afraid that she would not be able to see people's true intentions and would naively believe manipulative people.

Soon, the day of the trial arrived. Many reporters, who had heard that Erica was taking legal action against Phoebe, arrived at the court gate early. They eagerly waited for Erica to appear.

Matthew was still unhappy about this matter, and so, he didn't accompany Erica. However, he sent Paige and several bodyguards with her.

At the Supreme People's Court of Alorith

As soon as Erica stepped out of the car, the reporters rushed forward and surrounded her. Questions flooded her from every direction. "Erica, are you going to defend Matthew's portraiture right?"

"Erica, are you suing Phoebe?"

"Aren't Matthew and Phoebe good friends? Why would he take legal action against her?"

Several bodyguards stopped the reporters from crowding Erica. Concerned that they'd be overwhelmed, Paige asked in a low voice, "Erica, shall we go straight in?"

As there were too many reporters, and everyone was pushing and pulling their way closer to Erica, her concern was justified.

"Okay." Erica had never been interviewed by reporters, and she didn't want to answer their questions either.

Before they could cut through the crowd, another car stopped at the court gate. The reporters turned as the driver got out and opened the passenger door. A clamor arose when they saw Phoebe, who was wearing sunglasses, step out.

Erica didn't need to turn and see who had arrived as the reporters eagerly called out Phoebe's name.

Desperate to get some information, some of the reporters ran to Phoebe. Now that the crowd had thinned, the bodyguards took the chance to escort Erica and Paige into the courthouse.

Phoebe had hired a female lawyer, who was over forty years old, to represent her. Both Phoebe's and Erica's attorneys waited in the same office for the official commencement of the trial.

A moment later, representatives of both sides entered the trial court. When they arrived at the door, Phoebe deliberately walked slower so that she could be by Erica's side. She lowered her voice and asked, "Do you know who referred my lawyer?"

Erica glanced at the female lawyer, but nothing about her seemed familiar. Uninterested in debating with Phoebe, she replied, "Whatever! Even if she is a high-ranking lawyer, you will still lose today!"

Fury surged through Phoebe when her plan backfired. She bit her lip, but soon, she quashed her emotions. Just as they were going to separate, she told Erica, "She is Hilton Group's lawyer. Matthew asked her to help me."

Erica wanted to wipe the smug grin off of Phoebe's face, but it was too late. They had already walked to their respective positions in the courtroom.

Paige sensed that something was wrong, and so, she walked to Erica and whispered, "Erica, are you okay? What happened?"

Erica shook her head to dispel the negative emotions coursing through her. She smiled at Paige and said, "I'm fine." 'Humph! She is just a lawyer. Phoebe would lose the case even if Matthew were physically present.'

"That's good. If anything happens, call me at any time!" Paige said before she took her seat a short distance from Erica.

"Okay."

Now that the proceedings had formally begun, it was Erica's turn, as the plaintiff, to make a statement regarding her claim, before the defendant, Phoebe, could explain herself.

According to the Deplua's law, the plaintiff and defendant could negotiate about suitable compensation on the day of the trial. If the plaintiff and the defendant couldn't reach an agreement, the court would make a final decision.

In this case, Phoebe didn't need to defend herself. The portrait of Matthew she had sketched was taken by someone who worked for Erica. Now, it was Matthew who had entrusted his wife to sue Phoebe. This left no chance for her to reverse the situation.

So, she and the lawyer started with the compensation negotiation. Erica asked for ten million dollars, while the defendant had hoped that the court could settle the matter with damages amounting to one million dollars.

Of course, Erica didn't agree. 'Matthew's portrait right is worth one million only? How dare she undervalue my husband's right!'