

TMBA 1311

CHAPTER 1311 JEALOUSY WAS IN THE AIR

Later, to Phoebe's surprise, Erica announced in public that she had even stolen other people's paintings as well. Before Phoebe could deny the accusation, however, a girl was brought to the court to testify. When questioned, the girl showed enough evidence to prove that Phoebe had indeed stolen her works.

As the morning passed, the session was finally coming to an end. Someone might have helped Erica in secret, and the case was rather simple, so the court had no trouble to give its verdict on the spot.

For infringing Matthew's portraiture right, Phoebe had to compensate him with ten million dollars. As for the art theft, she had to compensate the girl and do a public apology.

The ten million compensation shall be paid within a month. If she couldn't do it, she would have to face jail time for the next five years.

By the time Erica walked out of the court, the reporters who had been surrounding the place were already gone. She didn't understand why but didn't think much about it either.

Meanwhile, not far away from the courthouse, a man was waiting in his yellow supercar when he saw a group of people coming out. Quickly, he got out of his vehicle and called, "Erica!"

Erica, who was talking to Kelvin, heard someone calling her name. Following the sound of his voice, she soon found Watkins waving at her.

With a bright smile, she immediately walked towards him. "Watkins, you're here!"

"Yes. I came as soon as my class was over. How's it going?" Watkins' smile reached his eyes when he spoke.

"Thanks to Kelvin, the case went smoothly, and Phoebe has already gotten her sentence." Erica didn't expect that everything would go on so well.

Hearing this, Watkins was also surprised. "So soon?"

It seemed that someone was helping Erica behind her back. Needless to ask, he knew exactly who that person was.

"Yes! It was all easily solved!" Erica grinned.

Knowing what was going on, Watkins changed the subject. "It's time for lunch. Let's go and celebrate your victory. It's my treat!"

Before Erica could say anything, Paige stepped in and responded, "I'm sorry, Watkins, but Matthew has

told me in advance that Erica's health is the most important thing now. So he asked me to take her back as soon as the court session was over. Maybe it will be for the best if you don't celebrate today."

If Watkins insisted on taking Erica anyway, Paige was sure that she would lose her job by the next morning.

Watkins looked at Paige and smiled, "Well, it's okay. We can take a rain check then, Erica!" 'What a bossy man this Matthew is!' he thought.

"Okay!" Erica agreed, but she was actually quite confused. She didn't understand why no one told her that Matthew wanted Paige to take her back to the company.

However, since Paige had no reason to lie, she believed her.

The moment they were about to get in the car, Erica saw Phoebe and her lawyer coming out of the court.

Smiling, Erica waved at the miserable woman. "Hi, Phoebe!" Her tone was full of complacency.

Phoebe, on the other hand, met Erica's gaze with a straight face. Nonetheless, it was impossible not to see the hatred in her eyes.

Erica didn't mind it. In fact, she took the opportunity to give her a quick reminder. "My lawyer has given you my bank account. Don't forget to transfer the money to me as soon as possible! Ten million, not a penny less!"

Enraged, Phoebe stared at her and retorted, "I'm starting to think you're not living a comfortable life at all. Despite Matthew's fortune, you're so eager to put your hands in a mere ten million dollars that I wonder if you've ever seen money before."

"I don't care what you think. Who wouldn't like to get more money? I know I wouldn't mind having more. So, Phoebe, do us both a favor and transfer the money to my account as soon as possible. After all, for the sounds of it, ten million seems to come as a piece of cake for you." Erica was in a great mood now that she would have ten million more in her bank account.

Not even Phoebe's sarcasm could affect her. Erica, better than anyone else, knew whether she lived a good life or not.

She remembered the saying, "Life is like drinking a glass of water. Only the one who tastes it knows if it's hot or cold."

At that moment, Phoebe's eyes fell on Erica's swollen belly, causing her to frown in confusion. 'Isn't Erica about two months pregnant? Why does her belly look so big?'

Could she be expecting twins?' she wondered. But a second later, she remembered the photo work that Erica had submitted. It was called "1+1=3," indicating she was pregnant with just one baby.

After Erica left the court, Paige took her to Hilton Group and made sure to escort the pregnant woman to the CEO's office before leaving.

As soon as Erica got into the office, she sat merrily on the sofa as she began to brag, "Oh, someone wasn't able to protect his mistress because I've won the case. Mistress Phoebe must compensate me with ten million dollars! I hope that man won't be sad."

All of a sudden, Matthew smelled the air dramatically and said, "Call Paige in."

Erica was a little confused. "Why do you want Paige here?"

"I want to ask her if she smells the distinct scent of jealousy in the room as well. Suddenly the air here became so unpleasant." He made a point to stress the word "jealousy."

Realizing that he was talking about her, Erica blushed and immediately defended herself, "No, you are the jealous one!" She would never be jealous! Humph!

Matthew smiled at her response and told her gently, "If I remember correctly, the bank account you should've submitted had to be mine, right? The ten million should be transferred to my account. So, what are you happy about?"

His reminder hit Erica like a bucket of cold water. It had suddenly occurred to her that Matthew was the one whose rights had been infringed. Therefore, the bank account to transfer the money must be his.

The pregnant woman's face became sullen upon the realization. It turned out that all of her efforts had been for nothing, and what was worse, she had spent a large amount of money with the lawyer.

Abruptly, Erica got on her feet. Matthew looked at her with concern as she rushed to his desk and thumped her hands heavily on its wood surface. "Matthew, how dare you!"

Once Matthew was sure she got to him unharmed, he heaved a sigh of relief and replied slowly, "What? My wife made me ten million. Now I'm glad to take it." In fact, what he really wished was for his wife to change her impulsive behavior. He couldn't help but fear that she might fall in the middle of a simple task such as walking.

Still, the pregnant woman kept staring at him so angrily that her cheeks began to bulge. But just when she was about to explode, she thought about all those times Matthew would give her money and started to calm down. Moreover, her main purpose was to make Phoebe go bankrupt. So, she chose not to argue over this any longer. "Okay, but don't get all compassionate after you accept the money!"

She was afraid that Matthew would feel sorry for Phoebe and transfer the money back to her afterward.

Matthew didn't expect Erica would react this way and raised his eyebrows in surprise. 'Doesn't she like money? Why is she willing to give it to me now?'

In the next few days, Phoebe was exposed on the Internet for art theft and infringement of portraiture right. Since she had been quite notorious for a time, the value of her paintings decreased greatly after the scandal. Now she was as worthless as a blank piece of paper.

The school also heard about what she had done and persuaded her to quit her studies in the institution.

In order to make money, Phoebe sold all her valuable things, including her studio. As a matter of fact, she had already begun to contact the buyers when Erica first filed the lawsuit against her.

Yet, even after selling her studio, jewelry, bags, and other items of value, she roughly got an amount of five million in total.

She tried to ask Lyman for help, but the finances of the Campbell family was in the hands of Fanya now. So it was useless for her to look for her father. He wouldn't be able to give her more than several hundred thousand dollars at most.

Her friends had been the first to turn their backs on her in her time of need, so she couldn't count on them. If the Campbell family didn't help her, who else would? With her huge debts, everyone realized she wouldn't pay them back any time soon. Therefore, lending her money now was the same as throwing it to the wind and never see it to return. In the end, no one was willing to lend her the money.

CHAPTER 1312 THE HORRIBLE INCIDENT

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Howovor, onothor person who know tho both of thom grootod the woman on o flottorong tono, "Phoobo, whot brings you horo?"

With a pious smile, Comollo looked past their shoulders, at the building behind them and said, "I am here to take part in an activity. It's on the third floor."

It was then that they realized there was a fashion show on the third floor of the CBD exhibition Center today.

The smile on the woman's face convinced all the other men present as they struggled to take their eyes off her. Of course, all but one man, Matthew, who was just about to walk past Comollo and make his exit.

Bong! All of a sudden, an earth-shattering sound snatched everyone's attention.

It happened so fast that everyone's breath had shut down and their eyes were wide as if someone or something was coming to deliver a fatal blow. "Oh! a gun! Someone's been shot..."

Unfortunately, the instant someone screamed that there was a gun, everyone panicked and started dispersing in all directions.

Someone had opened fire on the people, randomly wounding those standing in the crowd.

Senses sharpened with adrenaline, only Matthew held his breath and remained calm, straining to hear with every ounce of his concentration. He found the perfect spot to shield himself from the bullets while he squinted his eyes to get a better look at the source of the gunshots. Soon, he saw two or three men with guns pointing at him from a minibus just at the opposite end of a corner.

Just on the neck of time, a boy of bodyguards, dressed in black, broke through the crowd and rushed towards Matthew to protect him.

Matthew immediately swerved, successfully dodging a bullet as it almost grazed past his left shoulder by two more inches. The yelp of a helpless woman caught his attention. It seemed as though she screamed out in pain as she had just sprained her ankle and was about to fall down right before Matthew.

Matthew wasn't too happy when he found out who it was. He stretched out his hand to help her keep balance, so that Comollo wouldn't land on her.

Unfortunately, Comollo had clutched onto his strong hand very tightly, almost as though her life depended on it.

The entire scene was a pure spectacle as Matthew had two or three guns aimed at him, while his bodyguards were desperately trying to get to him.

Chaos ensued as the combined deafening screams and cries came from all sides.

Suddenly, a car sped over and stopped right in front of Motthow, who was surrounded by his bodyguards. When the door of the car was opened from the inside, Comollo screamed, "Motthow, be careful..."

A group of gangsters had suddenly appeared behind the CoO and cocked their guns at his back. The woman who was standing next to him turned around and stood behind him almost instantly. "oh!" Two bullets in succession were shot onto his body, silencing him.

Frowning, Motthow pulled her away and helped her onto the car.

The bodyguards quickly found the hiding place of the onlookers behind them and got rid of two of them very soon.

Motthow took the opportunity to take a look at the woman in the car, who was covering her wound with her hand while wincing in pain. He knew then that these people were serious and the target was none other than himself.

He grabbed the pistol from the bodyguard nearest him and pushed the bodyguard onto the car. He used the car door as cover and located the nearest attacker. Without hesitation, he pulled the trigger and accurately hit him on the shoulder.

The attacker went down with a painful wail as he dropped the gun, and was soon subdued by the police who came later.

Such a big event couldn't have gone on in broad daylight at the newest district of the city without ending up on the headlines of every newspaper in the city.

Orco found out about it when she had just finished her class. She couldn't have missed it as the whole classroom was talking about it. "Oh my God, it must have been horrible for such a thing to happen in public!"

"Yes! I saw it too! Oh my God! Look! Motthow was there!" everyone looking at their phone all simultaneously turned to look at the pregnant woman almost as soon as they heard the name "Motthow."

Strong at their stunned gazes, Orco realized that something bad must have happened. "What's wrong?"

"Well... Orco, there was a shoot-out on the street in front of the CBD exhibition Center. I saw Motthow there..." a bold classmate said.

'Motthow?' Orco stood up nervously, grabbed the classmate's phone and stared at the screen with eyes wide open.

She noticed Matthew standing on the crowd, but the first thought on her mind was of someone else. Who was the woman Matthew was holding with his hand?

Orco noticed another picture with a front view. Was that Comollo?

Why were they together? Why did Comollo get on Matthew's car?

None of that was important right now. Only Matthew's whereabouts was the most important concern on Orco's mind. Where was he? Was he hurt?

She returned the phone to her classmate and took out her own phone with hands that trembled like dry leaves, as she tried to reach Matthew's phone.

Another classmate whispered to the bold girl who had told Orco the news, "Hey, Orco is pregnant. Why did you tell her that? Aren't you afraid that something bad might happen to her?"

"Yes, she is pregnant with Matthew's child. If something really happens to Orco, you are done!"

The words of her classmates immediately made the bold girl regretful as she started to see the folly in her action.

But it was too late, because Orco had already known about it.

When Hyatt noticed the look on Orco's face, he was genuinely frightened. After a brief pause, he assured Orco, "Don't worry. Matthew will be fine!"

In order to make up for her mistake, the bold classmate immediately comforted her, "Yes, Orco, you must calm down! Think about the baby!"

Orco's mind went blank. She could no longer hear what her classmates were saying. It was as if the world had frozen as she tapped on her phone with clumsy hands, quickly found a number and pressed the call button.

Orco called twice, but there was no answer. She was so scared that tears burst forth without word or warning.

Her classmates around her, panicked. They all came over and tried to comfort her. "Orco, calm down."

"Matthew is going to be fine. You can't allow this to affect your pregnancy."

"That's right. Matthew is a very capable man, as we all know. Don't cry. He might have lost his phone."

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Sho wopod hor toors ond quockly doolod Dobboo's number. Luckoly, tho coll was connoctod soon. "Mom, somothong hopponod to Motthow."

Dobboo hod just rocoovod tho nows horsolf ond was about to coll oroco. "o know. Motthow os fono. Don't worry. Hos phono foll ond broko so ho collod from ono of hos bodyguards' phono just now. Corlos hos sont somoono to pock you up from school. Don't go onywhoro olso. You should go homo forst, okoy?"

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At the CBD Exhibition Center of Alorith, a group of elites from all walks of life had just walked out of the main entrance after concluding a comprehensive meeting.

Matthew was encircled by several people as they kept going over the main points of the meeting. "Mr. Matthew, what do you think about that matter?"

Matthew, however, looked around obliviously and replied in an obvious tone of indifference, "It depends on the opinion of the public. The best way is to do a survey among the masses."

Just at that moment, another group of people approached them from the other side, led by a woman, sophisticatedly dressed in a grey plaid design dress and her long purple hair bounced over her shoulders neatly. When her eyes met with Matthew, she walked up to him and greeted, "Matthew, what a coincidence!" The woman was beautiful, graceful and noble.

Matthew simply cast her a glance and responded with a silent nod of the head.

However, another person who knew the both of them greeted the woman in a flattering tone, "Phoebe, what brings you here?"

With a pleasing smile, Camille looked past their shoulders, at the building behind them and said, "I am here to take part in an activity. It's on the third floor."

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"Yes! I saw it too! Oh my God! Look! Matthew was there!" Everyone looking at their phone all simultaneously turned to look at the pregnant woman almost as soon as they heard the name "Matthew."

Staring at their stunned gazes, Erica realized that something bad must have happened. "What's wrong?"

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Her classmates around her, panicked. They all came over and tried to comfort her. "Erica, calm down."

"Matthew is going to be fine. You can't allow this to affect your pregnancy."

"That's right. Matthew is a very capable man, as we all know. Don't cry. He might have lost his phone."

That last sentence finally consoled Erica. Perhaps that was true. From what she could see, everything was so chaotic that the thought of Matthew losing his phone in such a situation didn't seem unreasonable to Erica.

She wiped her tears and quickly dialed Debbie's number. Luckily, the call was connected soon. "Mom, something happened to Matthew."

Debbie had just received the news herself and was about to call Erica. "I know. Matthew is fine. Don't worry. His phone fell and broke so he called from one of his bodyguards' phone just now. Carlos has sent someone to pick you up from school. Don't go anywhere else. You should go home first, okay?"

What Debbie didn't tell her was that when Matthew was taking Camille to the hospital, his car was being

followed by two other cars on the way and he was looking for an opportunity to get rid of his unwanted followers.

CHAPTER 1313 MORNING SICKNESS

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Roloof coursed through the young girl when she heard the news. She obodoontly noddod ond sood, "Okoy, o'll stoy on the classroom."

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oroco hod thought that Corlos would send o fow guards to oscort hor. Her oyos wodonod woth ostonoshmont when she sow that ho hod sent ovor o dozon pooplo!

But, she was anxious and distressed and couldn't think about anything other than Matthew's well-being. Under the rigorous protection of the bodyguards, she got onto the luxury car on the middle of the convoy. The vehicle was, in fact, refitted to be bulletproof.

Once they safely arrived at the Holton family's manor, she sat forward, placed her hands on the window, and peered out in search of Matthew. She assumed that he'd have returned by then, but he hadn't.

Only Carlos and Dobbo were waiting for her. As soon as she got out of the car, Dobbo held her hand and reassured, "Roko, don't worry. Matthew will be fine, okay?"

"Where is he now? I want to talk to him." The overwhelming need to hear Matthew's voice coursed through the young woman. She knew that nothing else would settle her.

The couple glanced at each other, and when Dobbo nodded, Carlos pulled out his phone and dialed a bodyguard's number. "It's me. How is everything?" Carlos nodded at something the bodyguard said to him. A few moments later, he said, "Roko wants to talk to you."

Then, he handed the phone to her. The distraught woman grabbed the phone with trembling fingers and placed it near her ear. "Matthew!"

"I'm here. Don't worry. I'm fine," Matthew's tone was gentle and soothing as he comforted his wife.

She finally released the breath she had been holding all this while. "Where are you? I want to see you now!"

"I'm on my way to the hospital. Someone is injured. I'll return to the manor as soon as she is settled in the hospital." Matthew glanced over his shoulder as he spoke. He was sitting on the front passenger seat while Comollo and the bodyguard were in the back.

She wanted to ask something about Comollo, but she realized that this was not the right time. So, she suppressed her doubts. "Okay, I'll wait for you!"

"Okay, honey."

After the call ended, Dobbo held her hand and led her into the house. The whole time they walked, she spoke to the young girl to distract her and ease her tension.

She waited for several hours before Matthew finally returned. As soon as he stepped through the door, she saw that his clothes were stained with blood.

Almost instantly, the pungent smell made the young, pregnant woman nauseous. She tried her best to suppress the growing queasiness on her stomach. She opened her mouth to ask Matthew of

he was onjurod, but as soon as she took a stop forward, the sock foolong onto her food. "Mothow—"

Her mouth snapped shut. She feared she would throw up.

With a frown, Mothow rushed forward and asked, "Roko, are you okay?"

She pushed him away, covered her mouth, and ran to the bathroom.

Mothow chided her, but Dobboo stopped her. She grabbed his arm and said, "Hey, the smell of blood on your body must have unsettled her. Roko is pregnant and prone to morning sickness. Don't worry. Go upstairs and change your clothes. I'll go check on Roko."

Mothow glanced down and noticed the large amount of dried blood on his shirt. With a curt nod, he made his way toward the stairs.

In the bathroom, she squatted in front of the toilet and dry-heaved for a while. When nothing came out, she decided to wash up.

"Roko, are you feeling better?" Dobboo, who was waiting at the door, asked when she heard no sound of vomiting.

She flushed the toilet and walked out. She nodded and said, "Yes, I'm fine, Mom."

Then, she turned on the tap and rinsed her mouth.

"Well, that's good. Morning sickness is normal. I'll get you some food to settle your stomach."

"I don't want to eat now. Where is Mothow?"

"He went upstairs to change his clothes. Do you want to go and talk to him?"

"Yes."

When she arrived at the bedroom door, Mothow was showering in the bathroom. She hesitated at the door. "Will the blood-stained clothes make me sick again?"

Perhaps he left them in the bathroom?' At that thought, she entered the bedroom.

Sure enough, the bedroom was clean, like always.

A long time passed, but Mothow didn't come out. She opened the bathroom door and stuck her head in. "Mothow, what's taking so long? Are you hurt? Do you need help?"

"No." When she heard her voice, the man turned and looked toward the door.

Sooong hos nokod body, oroco blushod. "Woll, o'll woot for you outsodo."

o fow monutos lotor, ho fonoshod hos shower ond stoppod out of tho bothroom. on tho bedroom, oroco hod lood cloon clothos on tho bod for hom.

Sho rushod ovor ond huggod hom. "Honoy, who woro thoso pooplo? Why dod they doro to koll pooplo woth woopons on brood doylight?"

Motthow hold hor on hos orms ond gontly kossod hor forohood. "Tho poloco oro onvostogotong. o'll toll you os soon os o know what they fond."

Ho dodn't toll oroco that thoso pooplo hod como for hom os ho dodn't wont hor to worry.

"Thon... what about Comollo? Why woro you togethor?" Sho fonolly voocod tho quostoon that hod ploguod hor ovor sonco sho sow tho pectuuro.

"Wo mot ot tho goto of tho CBD oxhobotoon Contor," como Motthow's broof roply.

Ho dodn't ontend to toll oroco that Comollo hod token tho bullets for hom. Ho vos ofrood that sho would bo froghtonod ond would ovorthonk.

"o soo." But, o whoolo lotor, sho couldn't help but ask onothor quostoon. "Why dod you hold hor hond?"

Motthow's brow furrowod os ho thought ovor tho ovonts. Ho voguoly romomborod that ho hod hold hor hond. "Somoono pushod hor. Sonco sho vos on hogh hools, sho lost hor bolonco ond fell toward mo. o holpod hor up."

Tho mon onsworod so frankly that oroco vos too omborrossod to quostoon hom furthor.

Lotor that doy, Motthow loft tho monor. Ho dodn't roturn that nught.

Tho next mornong, rogardloss of Dobboo's dossuosoon, oroco took tho lunch proponod by tho chofs ond hoodod to Holton Group, oocomponood by tho bodyguards.

Sho vos worrood about Motthow os ho hodn't como homo ot nught. Now that sho vos ot hos offoco ond ho vosn't ot hos desk, hor concorn grow monofold. Whon sho lookod around, sho found that Owon ond Poogo woro not on tho oro for spocool ossostonts, oothor.

Sho randomly oskod ono of tho spocool ossostonts, "Whoro os Motthow?"

"oroco, tho CoO wont to tho hospotal."

"Hospotal? Vos somoono hurt? Whoro oro Owon ond Poogo?"

The assistant told her everything he knew. "Owen has been at the polo station all this while, and Poogo took Matthew to the hospital. It seems that the oldest daughter of the Campbell family was injured."

Debbie decided not to tell Erica as it would worry her.

Relief coursed through the young girl when she heard the news. She obediently nodded and said, "Okay, I'll stay in the classroom."

"Well, remember what I said. Don't go anywhere by yourself!" Debbie was afraid that the people who tried to kill Matthew would target Erica now.

"I know."

She took a deep breath and wiped the tears that had stained her cheeks. It would be a while before the bodyguards arrived, and so, she decided to wait in the classroom. Her classmates glanced at each other, unsure of what to say or do. After several tense moments, that bold classmate asked tentatively, "Erica, are you okay?"

Erica lifted her gaze and looked around. Her eyes were red from crying. Nevertheless, she tried smiling as she replied, "I'm fine. Thank you." As long as Matthew was all right, she would be fine. This thought was soon replaced by a more worrisome one. She wondered why he hadn't thought to use a bodyguard's phone to call her and let her know that he was safe.

Was it because he didn't know that she had seen the news?

While she was lost in her thoughts, her classmates, who were now less worried, left the classroom.

Soon, several black cars screeched to a halt in front of the teaching building. Even before the engines switched off, a dozen bodyguards dressed in black jumped out of the cars and headed to a classroom.

The passers-by were stunned by their sudden arrival and wondered what brought all these people to their school.

A few minutes later, the group of bodyguards escorted a petite woman to one of the cars. Only then did everyone realize that they were here to collect Erica.

With all this protection and vigilance, she was indeed the most important figure at the school now. Even the school leaders did not require this level of security.

Erica had thought that Carlos would send a few guards to escort her. Her eyes widened with astonishment when she saw that he had sent over a dozen people!

But, she was anxious and distressed and couldn't think about anything other than Matthew's well-being. Under the rigorous protection of the bodyguards, she got into the luxury car in the middle of the convoy. The vehicle was, in fact, refitted to be bulletproof.

Once they safely arrived at the Hilton family's manor, Erica sat forward, placed her hands on the window, and peered out in search of Matthew. She assumed that he'd have returned by then, but he hadn't.

Only Carlos and Debbie were waiting for her. As soon as she got out of the car, Debbie held her hand and reassured, "Rika, don't worry. Matthew will be fine, okay?"

"Where is he now? I want to talk to him." The overwhelming need to hear Matthew's voice coursed through the young woman. She knew that nothing else would settle her.

The couple glanced at each other, and when Debbie nodded, Carlos pulled out his phone and dialed a bodyguard's number. "It's me. How is everything?" Carlos nodded at something the bodyguard said to him. A few moments later, he said, "Rika wants to talk to you."

Then, he handed the phone to Erica. The distraught woman grabbed the phone with trembling fingers and placed it near her ear. "Matthew!"

"I'm here. Don't worry. I'm fine," Matthew's tone was gentle and soothing as he comforted his wife.

Erica finally released the breath she had been holding all this while. "Where are you? I want to see you now!"

"I'm on my way to the hospital. Someone is injured. I'll return to the manor as soon as she is settled in the hospital." Matthew glanced over his shoulder as he spoke. He was sitting in the front passenger seat while Camille and the bodyguard were in the back.

Erica wanted to ask something about Camille, but she realized that this was not the right time. So, she suppressed her doubts. "Okay, I'll wait for you!"

"Okay, honey."

After the call ended, Debbie held Erica's hand and led her into the house. The whole time they walked, she spoke to the young girl to distract her and ease her tension.

Erica waited for several hours before Matthew finally returned. As soon as he stepped through the door, she saw that his clothes were stained with blood.

Almost instantly, the pungent smell made the young, pregnant woman nauseous. Erica tried her best to suppress the growing squeamishness in her stomach. She opened her mouth to ask Matthew if he was injured, but as soon as she took a step forward, the sick feeling intensified. "Matthew—"

Her mouth snapped shut. She feared she would throw up.

With a frown, Matthew rushed forward and asked, "Rika, are you okay?"

Erica pushed him away, covered her mouth, and ran to the bathroom.

Matthew chased her, but Debbie stopped him. She grabbed his arm and said, "Hey, the smell of blood on your body must have unsettled her. Rika is pregnant and prone to morning sickness. Don't worry. Go upstairs and change your clothes. I'll go check on Rika."

Matthew glanced down and noticed the large amount of dried blood on his shirt. With a curt nod, he made his way toward the stairs.

In the bathroom, Erica squatted in front of the toilet and dry-heaved for a while. When nothing came out, she decided to wash up.

"Rika, are you feeling better?" Debbie, who was waiting at the door, asked when she heard no sound of vomiting.

Erica flushed the toilet and walked out. She nodded and said, "Yes, I'm fine, Mom."

Then, she turned on the tap and rinsed her mouth.

"Well, that's good. Morning sickness is normal. I'll get you some food to settle your stomach."

"I don't want to eat now. Where is Matthew?"

"He went upstairs to change his clothes. Do you want to go and talk to him?"

"Yes."

When Erica arrived at the bedroom door, Matthew was showering in the bathroom. She hesitated at the door. 'Will the blood-stained clothes make me sick again?

Perhaps he left them in the bathroom?' At that thought, she entered the bedroom.

Sure enough, the bedroom was clean, like always.

A long time passed, but Matthew didn't come out. She opened the bathroom door and stuck her head in. "Matthew, what's taking so long? Are you hurt? Do you need help?"

"No." When he heard her voice, the man turned and looked toward the door.

Seeing his naked body, Erica blushed. "Well, I'll wait for you outside."

A few minutes later, he finished his shower and stepped out of the bathroom. In the bedroom, Erica had laid clean clothes on the bed for him.

She rushed over and hugged him. "Honey, who were those people? Why did they dare to kill people with weapons in broad daylight?"

Matthew held her in his arms and gently kissed her forehead. "The police are investigating. I'll tell you as soon as I know what they find."

He didn't tell Erica that those people had come for him as he didn't want her to worry.

"Then... what about Camille? Why were you together?" She finally voiced the question that had plagued her ever since she saw the picture.

"We met at the gate of the CBD Exhibition Center," came Matthew's brief reply.

He didn't intend to tell Erica that Camille had taken the bullets for him. He was afraid that she would be frightened and would overthink.

"I see." But, a while later, she couldn't help but ask another question. "Why did you hold her hand?"

Matthew's brow furrowed as he thought over the events. He vaguely remembered that he had held her hand. "Someone pushed her. Since she was in high heels, she lost her balance and fell toward me. I helped her up."

The man answered so frankly that Erica was too embarrassed to question him further.

Later that day, Matthew left the manor. He didn't return that night.

The next morning, regardless of Debbie's dissuasion, Erica took the lunch prepared by the chefs and headed to Hilton Group, accompanied by the bodyguards.

She was worried about Matthew as he hadn't come home at night. Now that she was at his office and he wasn't at his desk, her concern grew manifold. When she looked around, she found that Owen and Paige were not in the area for special assistants, either.

She randomly asked one of the special assistants, "Where is Matthew?"

"Erica, the CEO went to the hospital."

"Hospital? Was someone hurt? Where are Owen and Paige?"

The assistant told her everything he knew. "Owen has been at the police station all this while. And Paige took Matthew to the hospital. It seems that the eldest daughter of the Campbell family was injured."

CHAPTER 1314 I'M MARRIED

That was what Paige said before she left the company.

"Did you just say the eldest daughter of the Campbell family? Camille?" Erica felt a bit confused upon hearing it. 'When did it happen? Why didn't Matthew tell me?' she wondered.

"Yes, Erica," the assistant replied with a nod.

Erica stood still for a moment, deep in thought. Then she asked, "Do you know which hospital they were going to?"

The assistant immediately told her the name of the hospital.

"Thank you," she said before leaving. Thinking about Matthew going to the hospital to visit Camille made Erica forget about lunch, but she subconsciously brought the lunch box with her to the hospital.

She had only come back to her senses and realized that she had been holding it

when she was already at the entrance of the hospital.

Since Matthew couldn't have lunch at the hospital, she went back to the car and left the lunch box there before going inside the hospital together with the bodyguard that Carlos sent for her.

Inside the ward on the ninth floor, Matthew was standing beside the bed. When a nurse came in to change Camille's dressing, he turned and was about to leave.

But before he could take a step forward, a cold hand grabbed his arm. He frowned and looked at the pale woman in bed.

"I'm sorry, Matthew, but please let me hold your hand for a moment. Changing the dressing hurts," she said in a weak voice.

"Paige," he called out. He wanted Paige to come over and replace him, but he suddenly remembered that he asked her to get some medicine in the pharmacy.

However, he still refused Camille's request, and withdrew his hand coldly. "I'm sorry, I'm married." He then turned his back on her and looked out of the window. When Paige came back, he would leave immediately.

Camille couldn't do anything but gnash her teeth silently while the nurse was changing her dressing.

But all of a sudden, the nurse screamed, "Ahhh! Camille, don't grab me. It hurts."

Camille immediately released the nurse's arm and apologized weakly, "I'm sorry."

"Camille, please hold on a little longer. I'll be as gentle as I can. Don't touch your wound because it might get infected. Sir, can you help me control the patient, please? I can't apply the medicine to her wound if she's like this," the nurse told Matthew helplessly.

After hesitating for a while, he eventually returned to Camille's bedside. Looking at her bleeding shoulder, he reached out his hand to hold her arm.

Perhaps it was really painful because tears started to well up in Camille's eyes. To avoid letting out a shriek, she bit her lips and endured the pain in silence.

When the nurse pulled off the bloody gauze, she squeezed Matthew's hand with all her might.

He wanted to withdraw his hand again and stay away from her. But since the nurse was beside him and carefully applying the medicine, he restrained the urge to shake her hand off.

Meanwhile, Erica had already found Camille's ward number. She stood outside, watching the scene through the glass pane. She was about to open the door, but her hand froze in midair.

While the nurse was applying medicine to Camille's wound, Matthew was holding her with his left hand while his right hand was in his pocket.

Watching the scene made her feel like her heart was being clenched tightly by a giant hand. The sharp pain made her difficult to breathe.

She held her chest and sat down on the bench beside the door, trying to ease her mood.

Since she got pregnant, she had become short-tempered. Right at this moment, all she wanted to do was rush over and strangle Camille to death.

To control her emotion, she closed her eyes tightly and kept reminding herself inwardly, 'Calm down, Erica. Think of the babies inside your belly.'

Inside the ward, Matthew couldn't take it anymore.

He ruthlessly shook off Camille's hand that was still holding him firmly. He then said mercilessly, "Miss Camille, let me remind you again. I am already married."

Camille's hand fell weakly. She took a deep breath while tears kept falling down the corners of her eyes. Shaking her head, she said in a frail voice, "I'm sorry. It just hurts a lot. If I have known it earlier, I

shouldn't have blocked my body to take those bullets for you."

Matthew could understand the regret in her eyes, so he didn't take it to heart. Instead, he just put his hands in his pockets without saying anything. He was looking forward to washing his hands immediately.

All of a sudden, the door burst open.

The loud noise made the three people inside the ward turn their heads in an instant.

Erica stood at the door with a cold expression on her face, followed by a bodyguard behind her.

As soon as Matthew saw her, his first reaction was to greet her, "Rika." His voice was full of tenderness, totally different from the tone he used to Camille just now.

However, Erica just ignored him and walked up straight to the bedside. Without minding the nurse who was still putting the dressing, she raised her hand and slapped Camille's face heavily.

Pak!

It happened so suddenly that neither Camille nor the nurse was able to move. Even Matthew was stunned for a moment.

"Erica, what did you just do?" someone yelled from behind. The voice didn't come from any of the three people inside the ward. It came from Fanya, who had just arrived.

She came in just in time to see how Erica had slapped her daughter.

Erica turned to her and gave her the coldest stare that Matthew had never seen before. She wasn't afraid of facing Fanya at all. She replied with a sneer, "What do you think I just did? The Campbell family has indeed raised three hypocritical bitches. Since you, as their mother, failed to raise them properly, I will help you teach them a lesson. Otherwise, they will continue to destroy other families in this country."

Fanya and Camille were both stunned at her words. They didn't expect that Erica was that plucky. But since Matthew was there, Fanya didn't dare to ignore his presence. She reluctantly nodded at him before coming over beside Camille's bed.

She then said to Erica, "Erica, how can you be so ungrateful? Camille took two bullets for Matthew, and you didn't even thank her. Instead, you hit and scolded her. Do you really think that the members of the Campbell family are easy to bully?"

It was only now that Erica found out the reason why Camille was hurt. But even so, she didn't give a damn. "So, do you think being hurt because of my husband gives her all the right to hold his hand, not wanting to let go?" she blurted. She was so furious, especially when she remembered that Matthew also

didn't even shake off Camille's hand.

She would definitely settle accounts with him later as well.

"The nurse is applying medicine to my wound and changing the dressing. Do you know how painful it is without anesthesia? Why don't you try it yourself?" Camille said calmly.

Erica seemed to be a different person today. Fanya and Camille didn't make her panic at all. Looking at the mark of her fingers on Camille's face, she retorted, "Don't blame my husband for your pain! Besides, no one told you to take those bullets for him. And my husband cares so much for me that he surely won't let that happen to me. If it happened to be me on the scene, I'm sure that he would protect me. I don't need to be like a pest and take the bullets for him as you did."

First, she called Camille a bitch. Now, she likened her to a pest who kept on pestering her husband. These words angered both Fanya and Camille that they couldn't hide the darkness on their faces anymore.

Matthew didn't do anything to stop Erica. He just went to the bathroom to wash his hands, then sat on the sofa. He was only waiting for her to finish dealing with the mother and daughter of the Campbell family.

Erica had always been a glib talker in front of him. Now that she was faced with Fanya and Camille, who had images to protect in public, he strongly believed that she wouldn't lose.

CHAPTER 1315 SHAMELESS BITCHES

Camille had never met any women as hateful as Erica, so she retorted, "This is my first time to meet a person who repays someone's kindness with enmity. I'm surprised to know how ill-bred the daughter of the Leonard family is. Who do you think you are to criticize me?"

"You have no right to judge whether I'm ill-bred or not. Besides, my mother has never taught me to flirt with a married man. Don't you have any dignity at all?" Because of anger, Erica couldn't contain herself anymore. After saying those harsh words to Camille, she turned to Fanya and continued, "Fanya, can't you find any decent men to marry your daughters? First, Phoebe, who is already a married woman, always thinks about seducing my husband. But she has lost the case against me and is going to pay me ten thousand dollars as compensation. This time, Camille is trying to seduce my husband too. As their mother, don't you ever feel embarrassed?"

Her words enraged Fanya that she wanted to strangle her. But with Matthew around, all she could do was stare at her coldly. "Erica, how could you say that? If Camille didn't risk her life and take the bullets for Matthew, he would be the one lying in bed now."

Seeing the indescribable expression on Fanya's face made Erica feel a bit better. She smiled sarcastically and said, "Don't forget that Phoebe tried to frame me with her unborn child before. Who knows if what happened earlier was also planned by Camille? Maybe it was all an act. She made it look like an accident

and saved my husband to show how great she was. Perhaps she paid those gangsters to hurt him."

That was not impossible. After all, the three daughters of the Campbell family were all shameless bitches. They could even become vicious in order to get what they wanted.

"Erica, watch your words! Why don't you ask Matthew first? He had already investigated those gangsters. They are enemies of Hilton Group, and have nothing to do with our family," Camille said while clenching her fists. She had been itching to slap Erica ten times.

Fanya closed her eyes for a while to calm herself down. When she opened her eyes again, she had already returned to her normal mood. "Camille, don't explain anymore. Matthew, you may leave with Erica now. Just pretend that Camille has never taken the bullets to save you. We won't expect the Hilton family to thank us either."

Erica snorted, "I agree with you, Fanya. Also, keep an eye on your two daughters. Make sure that none of them will appear in front of my husband ever again!"

"Erica Fanya hysterically cried as she was on the verge of breaking down. "Don't push me too far."

"Actually, if I haven't witnessed how Camille flirtatiously held my husband's hand, I would have thanked her. But she is too shameless. If she were my daughter and I happened to see her holding a married man's hand, I would definitely slap her face twice."

The nurse had already finished changing the dressing, so she lowered her head and walked out quietly. However, Erica stopped her and said, "Miss, please bring me a bottle of alcohol. Thank you."

"Yes, ma'am." She then trotted out of the ward.

Everyone in the ward wondered why Erica suddenly asked for alcohol, but no one dared to ask.

When the nurse left, she sat on the edge of the bed and looked at Camille with pretended tenderness. "You know what? I also slapped Phoebe before while she was listlessly lying in bed. I didn't expect that I would do it to you too. I always saw you as an elegant and aloof woman. I even thought that you were not interested in men. But I was wrong. You were just like those shameless mistresses who liked to covet married men. Let me tell you this once. I am Matthew's only wife. Even if I leave him one day, you don't have what it takes to replace me as Mrs. Hilton."

Fanya couldn't take her words anymore, so she turned to Matthew, who was sitting leisurely on the couch, and said, "I'm sorry, Matthew. Please take Erica away from here. We can't afford to offend her. As I've said, just pretend that this incident didn't happen."

While playing with the wedding ring in his finger, he replied indifferently, "I'm sorry, Fanya. My wife is pregnant, so she has been short-tempered recently. Just let her vent her anger first."

Fanya couldn't believe her ears.

Did Matthew really care for Erica so much that he would even allow her to vent her anger on other people?

Actually, he was only worrying about how to appease her later.

Soon enough, the nurse came back with a bottle of alcohol and cotton balls. She handed them to Erica, who immediately stood up and took the tray. Holding her waist with the other hand, she walked slowly towards Matthew.

Watching her movements stung Fanya's and Camille's hearts with envy.

'She is carrying the grandchild of Hilton Group's CEO in her belly. The whole family must be taking care of her like a treasure, ' thought the mother and daughter.

When Matthew saw the innocent smile on her face while taking the tray of alcohol to him, he already knew what she wanted to do.

As he expected, she poured some alcohol on a cotton ball, took his hand, and disinfected it.

Then she muttered, "If it isn't for the fact that I'm afraid of hurting my husband's skin, I will not only disinfect his hands with alcohol but also soak them in chlorinated water for half an hour to remove all the bacteria that Camille transmitted to him."

Thinking about being soaked in chlorinated water, Matthew somehow felt that his hands were hurt. He wondered when his wife had become this cruel.

Chlorinated water contained harmful chemicals that could damage his skin.

He couldn't imagine what would happen to his hands after being soaked in it for half an hour. The fear in his heart felt like he was watching a horror movie.

He could only whisper two words in her ear. "How cruel!" But in actuality, he liked what Erica did. He liked it when she was defending her status as Mrs. Hilton.

Erica smiled sweetly and whispered back in his ear, "I have no choice. My rivals are making me strong, cruel, and merciless. You have to bear with me for now. After all, everyone in this world has to survive. If I don't deal with Camille, she will just continue to step on me." She was not being too sensitive. It was just that too many women had wanted to take her place as Mrs. Hilton.

And that included the Campbell sisters.

After she finished wiping Matthew's hands, he raised one of them and touched her head. With

tenderness in his eyes, he said, "Well done."

She just smiled and said, "Honey, since I have so much money to spend, let Camille stay in the hospital until her wound heals. I will pay for her hospital bills and medical expenses. I know how busy you are in the company to make more money for me, so you don't need to come here anymore. If anything happens to her, let them contact me directly, okay?"

What else could he say? After all, he had no plans of coming over again. "It's all up to you, honey," he replied.

"But I think it's not enough. She has taken two bullets for you. And as they said, we can't be ungrateful to them. Since I'm in a better mood now, I'm thinking, since she is the chief editor of a fashion magazine, why don't we help her recruit more handsome men so her company can make more money?" she added. Her real intention was not to help Camille. She thought that if she would be surrounded by many handsome men, she would fall for one of them and wouldn't bother Matthew anymore.

"Well, I think that's also a good idea," he replied. As long as his wife was happy, he wouldn't mind anything she wanted to do.

However, Camille refused immediately. She said in a cold voice, "Thanks for your offer, but that won't be necessary. You don't need to interfere with my company's affairs."

CHAPTER 1316 SLEEP ON THE SOFA

Eric held Matthew's arm and rested her head on his shoulder. "It's alright, Camille. Don't be shy and accept our kindness. It's settled." When she finished talking, Eric turned to Matthew and said, "Come on, honey. Let's go home."

With Matthew still holding her waist, they stood up and walked out of the hospital.

Fenye and Camille were left alone in the ward. When she lost sight of the couple, Fenye immediately grabbed the teacup and smashed it on the floor.

She had never seen such an arrogant person until she met Eric. What infuriated her the most was that Matthew was still defending Eric despite her arrogance.

With her eyes closed, Camille stayed still in the bed as though she didn't hear the sound of the teacup breaking. Her mind was filled with thoughts of how much Matthew was spoiling Eric.

'I did hear that he loves Eric so much. I guess it's true,' she thought.

The room fell into silence. For a while, they both didn't say anything as if they were lost in thought.

When the couple came out of the hospital, Eric shook off Matthew's arm around her waist.

She rushed to the car and got in. Matthew mindlessly followed her into the car but Erice pushed him out and ruthlessly closed the door.

He fell silent. Seeing this, Erice rolled down the window and said, "You go your own way and I'll go mine. Goodbye, Matthew." She then looked away and demanded the driver, "Let's go!"

The driver started the car and left his sight.

He watched the car drive away without him. Matthew couldn't believe his eyes. For the first time in his life, he was abandoned this way.

That afternoon, Erice went straight to the Hilton family's manor after class.

When Matthew got back to the villa, he found that no one was home. He reached for his phone and called Erice. She answered the call, but she didn't tell him where she was.

He then called her bodyguard and found out that she was at the manor. Matthew didn't even bother to go upstairs. He hurriedly turned around and went to the manor.

When he got there, a maid was waiting for him at the door as though she was expecting that he would come over. "Matthew, Erice is asleep. She has asked me to prepare another room for you next door and asked you not to disturb her when you go upstairs."

'Seriously?

We were just talking on the phone ten minutes ago. How could she fall asleep so soon?'

He turned to the maid and nodded. "I see."

Matthew asked the maid to not follow him and went upstairs by himself.

Erice had taken over his room. Matthew tried to open the door but it was locked from the inside, and the spare key was not in its usual hiding place. It was obvious to him that his wife had taken the key with her to keep him from finding it.

Knock, knock, knock. He gently knocked on the door and waited for a while, but he heard nothing.

He knocked two more times but to no avail. While he stood there frustrated, Carlos had heard the noise and came out of his room.

Leaning against the door in his pajamas, Carlos crossed his arms over his chest and looked at his son. "Oh, the man who made his wife angry is back!"

Matthew glanced at his father coldly. 'What a childish man!' he snorted inwardly.

Out of frustration, he took out his phone and dialed Erice's number. Her phone rang once and went straight to voicemail. It was off.

Cerlos smiled so smugly that his eyes narrowed into slits. "It makes me so happy to see you being treated like this."

Matthew shot him a look of disgust and said, "Just get inside and go to sleep with your wife!"

When Debbie stepped outside their bedroom to check what was happening, Cerlos stretched out his arms and embraced his wife. He kept on teasing his son, who was locked out of the room by his wife. "Here I am holding my wife, and you can't even touch the hem of your own wife's clothes, let alone hold her!" He laughed until he was out of breath.

Matthew was so exasperated that he wanted to gag his dad's mouth with a duster cloth.

Debbie sighed heavily and pulled Cerlos' arms away and pushed him into their bedroom. "Go now. Go to sleep!"

Cerlos sounded so stubborn. "No, not yet. I went to see how your son is shut out of his own bedroom."

With his hands in his pockets, Matthew talked to his mother as if he was spelling out every word. "Mom, if you want a new husband, just tell me. I can easily get you a different one every day."

Cerlos' face darkened. He crossed his arms over his chest and said, "Matthew, are you looking for trouble?"

Debbie once again let out a heavy sigh. She didn't know what to do with this father-and-son squabble. "All right, all right. Cerlos, go to bed. Now."

Cerlos had already lain in his bed. When he had heard Matthew knocking at the door to his own bedroom, he had hurriedly gotten up and watched his son by the door to laugh at him.

'Cerlos! The older he gets, the more childish he becomes!' Debbie almost hissed.

She pushed him back into their room. She then walked up to Matthew and asked, "Why do you always make a ruckus? Women are easily irritated during pregnancy. You have to be patient. Understand and coax her more."

Without saying anything else, Matthew nodded. "I see."

Finally, Erice unlocked the door for Matthew. She had heard Debbie talking to Matthew by the door. She didn't want to embarrass her mother-in-law.

As soon as they heard the noise come from inside the bedroom, Debbie nudged her son and mouthed him a few words. "Remember to coax her!" She then turned around and entered her own bedroom.

The moment Eric opened the door, Debbie had left. Without even looking at Matthew, she went back to bed.

Matthew closed the door behind him and set down on the edge of the bed. He bent down and gave her a kiss on her forehead.

Eric immediately wiped it off with the back of her hand where he had kissed her, turned her back to him, and continued to sleep.

Her silence left him at a loss. He had been staring at her back for a while, and gave up on the idea of making love with his wife. He came up with a new strategy and decided to use money to win her over. "I have a card here with me. There are around three hundred million dollars in this account. Come on, get up, and take it!"

Matthew took out the bank card and fanned himself with it to entice her. He also seemed to look excited. However, Eric didn't even move as though she didn't hear him.

His wide smile slowly disappeared. 'Isn't money what she loves most? It used to work every time I tried to make her happy with it. How could it fail this time?'

He sighed silently and lay down. He turned to her and slightly got up, holding his wife in his arm from behind. His thin lips lightly pressed against her ear and whispered, "Rike, don't be mad, okay?"

She felt her ear itch. Eric covered her ear to prevent him from blowing on it again.

Matthew had been coaxing her all the while, but she didn't want to forgive him at all. Later, he made up his mind and said, "Well, in that case, I'll do it!"

As soon as he declared it, he lifted her pajamas with his big hand.

Eric was caught off guard. She sat up from the bed and kicked him hard. "Go to sleep in the next room!"

"No. I won't go anywhere! If you're staying right here, I'll stay here." Matthew couldn't sleep well without her in his arms.

She glared at the shameless man and said, "Matthew, I don't want to see your face right now. Either you go, or I'll leave."

"No. No one is leaving!" Even though she didn't want to see him, he wanted to see her.

"Well then, go sleep on the sofa or on the floor, I don't care. I just don't want to sleep in the same bed with you!"

"I'll sleep on the sofa." Right when she finished her sentence, he made his choice without the slightest hesitation.

Hearing this, Erica lay back on the bed and tucked herself in. "Good night!"

Matthew kissed her long hair and said, "Honey, I'm just going to take a shower. You can sleep now."

She didn't say a word. She didn't care where he was going, as long as he didn't bother her.

Half an hour later, Matthew came out of the bathroom. Erica hurriedly turned her phone off and pretended to be sleeping.

However, despite her hurry, he still saw the light from her phone just now.

He chuckled and pretended he didn't see anything as he set on the sofa.

A few moments later, Erica fell asleep. She couldn't remember when she had fallen asleep.

Nevertheless, she vaguely felt that someone was holding her. When she smelled the familiar scent, she immediately leaned in closer.

Erica held Matthew's arm and rested her head on his shoulder. "It's alright, Camille. Don't be shy and accept our kindness. It's settled." When she finished talking, Erica turned to Matthew and said, "Come on, honey. Let's go home."

With Matthew still holding her waist, they stood up and walked out of the hospital.

Fanya and Camille were left alone in the ward. When she lost sight of the couple, Fanya immediately grabbed a teacup and smashed it on the floor.

She had never seen such an arrogant person until she met Erica. What infuriated her the most was that Matthew was still defending Erica despite her arrogance.

With her eyes closed, Camille stayed still in the bed as though she didn't hear the sound of the teacup breaking. Her mind was filled with thoughts of how much Matthew was spoiling Erica.

'I did hear that he loves Erica so much. I guess it's true,' she thought.

The room fell into silence. For a while, they both didn't say anything as if they were lost in thought.

When the couple came out of the hospital, Erica shook off Matthew's arm around her waist.

She rushed to the car and got in. Matthew mindlessly followed her into the car but Erica pushed him out and ruthlessly closed the door.

He fell silent. Seeing this, Erica rolled down the window and said, "You go your own way and I'll go mine. Goodbye, Matthew." She then looked away and demanded the driver, "Let's go!"

The driver started the car and left his sight.

He watched the car drive away without him. Matthew couldn't believe his eyes. For the first time in his life, he was abandoned this way.

That afternoon, Erica went straight to the Hilton family's manor after class.

When Matthew got back to the villa, he found that no one was home. He reached for his phone and called Erica. She answered the call, but she didn't tell him where she was.

He then called her bodyguard and found out that she was at the manor. Matthew didn't even bother to go upstairs. He hurriedly turned around and went to the manor.

When he got there, a maid was waiting for him at the door as though she was expecting that he would come over. "Matthew, Erica is asleep. She has asked me to prepare another room for you next door and asked you not to disturb her when you go upstairs."

'Seriously?

We were just talking on the phone ten minutes ago. How could she fall asleep so soon?'

He turned to the maid and nodded. "I see."

Matthew asked the maid to not follow him and went upstairs by himself.

Erica had taken over his room. Matthew tried to open the door but it was locked from the inside, and the spare key was not in its usual hiding place. It was obvious to him that his wife had taken the key with her to keep him from finding it.

Knock, knock, knock. He gently knocked on the door and waited for a while, but he heard nothing.

He knocked two more times but to no avail. While he stood there frustrated, Carlos had heard the noise and came out of his room.

Leaning against the door in his pajamas, Carlos crossed his arms over his chest and looked at his son. "Oh, the man who made his wife angry is back!"

Matthew glanced at his father coldly. 'What a childish man!' he snorted inwardly.

Out of frustration, he took out his phone and dialed Erica's number. Her phone rang once and went straight to voicemail. It was off.

Carlos smiled so smugly that his eyes narrowed into slits. "It makes me so happy to see you being treated like this."

Matthew shot him a look of disgust and said, "Just get inside and go to sleep with your wife!"

When Debbie stepped outside their bedroom to check what was happening, Carlos stretched out his arms and embraced his wife. He kept on teasing his son, who was locked out of the room by his wife. "Here I am holding my wife, and you can't even touch the hem of your own wife's clothes, let alone hold her!" He laughed until he was out of breath.

Matthew was so exasperated that he wanted to gag his dad's mouth with a duster cloth.

Debbie sighed heavily and pulled Carlos' arms away and pushed him into their bedroom. "Go now. Go to sleep!"

Carlos sounded so stubborn. "No, not yet. I want to see how your son is shut out of his own bedroom."

With his hands in his pockets, Matthew talked to his mother as if he was spelling out every word. "Mom, if you want a new husband, just tell me. I can easily get you a different one every day."

Carlos' face darkened. He crossed his arms over his chest and said, "Matthew, are you looking for trouble?"

Debbie once again let out a heavy sigh. She didn't know what to do with this father-and-son squabble. "All right, all right. Carlos, go to bed. Now."

Carlos had already lain in his bed. When he had heard Matthew knocking at the door to his own bedroom, he had hurriedly gotten up and watched his son by the door to laugh at him.

'Carlos! The older he gets, the more childish he becomes!' Debbie almost hissed.

She pushed him back into their room. She then walked up to Matthew and asked, "Why do you always make Rika mad? Women are easily irritated during pregnancy. You have to be patient. Understand and coax her more."

Without saying anything else, Matthew nodded. "I see."

Finally, Erica unlocked the door for Matthew. She had heard Debbie talking to Matthew by the door. She didn't want to embarrass her mother-in-law.

As soon as they heard a noise come from inside the bedroom, Debbie nudged her son and mouthed him a few words. "Remember to coax her!" She then turned around and entered her own bedroom.

The moment Erica opened the door, Debbie had left. Without even looking at Matthew, she went back to bed.

Matthew closed the door behind him and sat down on the edge of the bed. He bent down and gave her a kiss on her forehead.

Erica immediately wiped it off with the back of her hand where he had kissed her, turned her back to him, and continued to sleep.

Her silence left him at a loss. He had been staring at her back for a while, and gave up on the idea of making love with his wife. He came up with a new strategy and decided to use money to win her over. "I have a card here with me. There are around three hundred million dollars in this account. Come on, get up, and take it!"

Matthew took out the bank card and fanned himself with it to entice her. He also beamed to look excited. However, Erica didn't even move as though she didn't hear him.

His wide smile slowly disappeared. 'Isn't money what she loves most? It used to work every time I tried to make her happy with it. How could it fail this time?'

He sighed silently and lay down. He turned to her and slightly got up, holding his wife in his arm from behind. His thin lips lightly pressed against her ear and whispered, "Rika, don't be mad, okay?"

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A few moments later, Erica fell asleep. She couldn't remember when she had fallen asleep.

Nevertheless, she vaguely felt that someone was holding her. When she smelled the familiar scent, she immediately leaned in closer.

CHAPTER 1317 A STORM

Erica tried to open her eyes to check if Matthew had actually sneaked up on the bed to sleep beside her, but she was too sleepy.

When she woke up at dawn, she saw that Matthew wasn't there. She scanned the room and thought that he left her alone to sleep.

The moment she got out of bed, Erica saw a piece of paper on the bedside table. She picked it up and realized it was Matthew's handwriting. She felt like she heard his voice when she read the note. "I'll be on a business trip for three days. I wanted to take you with me, but you kept ignoring me. I have to go now. I'll be back soon, but remember to miss me while I'm gone."

'He's on a business trip? How come it's so sudden?

Remember to miss him? Ha! No. I'm not going to miss him, ' she thought to herself.

After breakfast, she got into the car and left the manor. When the car approached the manor entrance, her phone rang. She didn't recognize the number. "Hello. Who's this?"

Erica heard a man's voice on the other end of the line. "Hello, is this Erica? I'm from a florist's. I am close to Pearl Villa District. Can you come out and sign for the flowers?"

'Huh? Flowers? Could they be from Matthew? Huh, probably not. A man like him doesn't know how to be romantic! He's never sent me flowers before.

But maybe he did that to apologize to me.' Erica felt confused.

She asked, "Who sent them?" "Um, sorry.

I don't know who sent them to you. Would you please sign for them first? I'm in a bit of a hurry to deliver the next order. I'll wait for you to arrive," the man said anxiously.

Erica looked out of the window and said, "I'll be there in about three minutes. Wait for a bit, please!"

The manor was only a few minutes away from the Pearl Villa District. She was already on her way and would arrive in just a bit.

"Okay, thank you! Bye!"

When she arrived at the Pearl Villa District, the first thing she saw was a large bunch of red roses. The moment she got out of the car, the air smelled of roses.

The man in a blue uniform brought her the flowers. "Erica Leonard, right?"

She was amazed to see this big bunch of flowers. "Yes, that's me!" she nodded.

The man handed her the roses. "Someone has ordered these 99 red roses for you. Please sign here."

Looking at the roses in her arms, Erica was bewildered. "Are you sure he didn't leave his name?"

"No, he didn't. You can check the card, maybe you'd find out who sent them." He took out the receipt and handed it to her.

The delivery man left after Erica signed her name. She stood dazed by the car with the roses in her arms and picked up the card that sat on top of the flowers.

It read, "Wish you happiness every day."

Erica's bodyguard who escorted her to school was assigned by Matthew. While she was wondering who sent her the red roses, the bodyguard had sneakily sent Matthew a message.

Matthew was already boarding the plane. When he saw the message, he slowed down his pace and started typing, "What flowers?"

"A bunch of red roses,"

the bodyguard replied. Matthew's face darkened. "Check who sent the flowers to my wife this morning." He gave the order to Owen, his voice sounded serious.

"Right away, Matthew." Owen wiped the cold sweat off his forehead. He admired how this person dared to be so blatant to even send flowers to Erica when she was now Mrs. Hilton.

In just a few minutes, Owen found out who got Erica the flowers—it was none other than Watkins.

Matthew sneered and said, "Call his father and remind him to keep an eye on his son, or else, I'll be taking action."

"Yes, Matthew!"

Owen knew it very well that if Matthew ever decided to teach someone a lesson, that person would suffer quite a lot.

The next day, Erica received another bunch of blooming red roses. She couldn't take them with her to class, so she had to place them in the villa first. When she got back from her classes in the evening, she took them one by one and put them in vases and planted some of them in the garden.

The flowers looked so beautiful that she didn't care if they lived or not.

Two days later, as soon as Erica received the roses sent to her that day, she went to the garden to replace the withered ones. While she took them out one by one, she saw Matthew hurriedly walking towards her, with Owen following closely behind him.

She was stunned for a while and then carried on with what she was doing.

Matthew stood beside her and stared at the roses she was holding. "Owen."

"Yes, Matthew."

Owen went straight to Erica and picked up all the flowers she still hadn't planted.

Erica dropped the roses in her hands, stood up, and turned to Owen. "Hey! What are you doing?"

Owen didn't say anything. Matthew stared at his wife coldly and said to his assistant in a low, stern voice, "Get rid of them right away!"

"Understood."

Owen slightly bowed and left with the roses in his arms.

Matthew's actions were so sudden, and he didn't even give Erica any heads-up. She was unprepared for this, so she instantly got angry. "Matthew, why are you making him throw away my things?"

"Your things?" His eyes looked fierce and cold. "Erica, don't forget that you are my wife, and the babies in your belly are mine. Everything you have is mine, including you."

She not only accepted those red roses sent by Watkins but also dared to plant them in the garden. Matthew was so furious.

"So? Is this how you treat your wife? By getting rid of my things?" Erica had no idea who sent her the flowers, but all the while, she thought Matthew sent them to her as an apology.

Besides, Matthew just told her that all her things belonged to him, so she was more convinced that it was Matthew who sent her the roses.

'Her things? Is she really going to argue with me just for the flowers sent by another man?' Matthew took a step closer to her and grabbed her wrist.

He looked at her eyes and asked through gritted teeth, "Who told you that you could accept those flowers?" Hearing this, Erica was enraged. She shook off his hand. 'Is he out of his mind? He sent those flowers to me. Why couldn't I accept them?' She spat, "Did you just come back here to look for trouble?"

Matthew stared at her for a while. After a few breaths, he changed his mind. "No!" He swiftly lifted her up and carried her in his arms towards the villa. "I came back to sleep with you."

He swore that he would exhaust her in bed so she would be too tuckered out to get up, let alone see another man.

Erica was shocked. 'What? Sleep with me? The nerve of this guy! I'm carrying two babies in my belly, and he wants to sleep with me?' She thought that Matthew had probably gone crazy, so he came back to torture her this way. "Put me down! I'm not going to sleep with you!"

Her hands were still stained with mud. As she struggled to get out of his clutches, Matthew's expensive suit got smeared with dirt.

As soon as they entered the living room, Matthew put her down but didn't let go of her arm. He kicked his shoes off, grabbed her wrists, and pinned her against the wall. He stared at her with piercing eyes for a few seconds. He then lowered his head, took a deep breath, and kissed her hard on her red lips.

"Mmph..." Erica tried to catch her breath. There was a huge difference in strength between men and women, and Erica was forced to bear his anger.

In broad daylight, right in the living room, Matthew had sex with his pregnant wife.

Erica had been staying at the Hilton family manor for a while, so the maids in their villa were away on a temporary holiday. That day, they had their own house to themselves.

No one could hear her except Matthew.

CHAPTER 1318 ERICA DOESN'T LOVE YOU

As Erica was pregnant, Matthew was gentle while having sex with her. After he was done, he carried her to the bedroom in his arms. She had tears streaming down her face.

With a sob, Erica turned her back to the men. She didn't want to talk to him now, not even a word.

Matthew went into the bathroom. When he returned to the bedroom again, he was already dressed.

He stood by the bed end looked down at the angry women. "Erica, if you accept another bunch of flowers from him, I'll lock you at home for a day!"

'Him? I thought Matthew sent the flowers!' Erica turned and fixed a puzzled gaze on her husband. Her eyes were red from crying.

But before she could voice the confusion coursing through her, Matthew turned and left.

Two bodyguards executed his orders by guarding the door from the time of Matthew's departure to his return in the evening, thus preventing her from stepping out of the house.

At Orchid Private Club

Boom! Matthew viciously kicked the men. The force was so intense that he lost his balance and hit the sofa behind him.

Then, the men slumped to the floor. A painful groan escaped his lips as he placed his hand on his aching chest. When he glanced up, Matthew was tidying his sleeves. Blood slid down the corner of the fallen men's mouth.

Several bodyguards stood beside him, which made it impossible for him to escape the private booth.

In front of the wine rack, not far away, sat two men wearing suits. They seemed to ignore what was happening and leisurely chatted and drank wine.

After he finished adjusting his sleeves, Matthew lifted the men on the floor. Before he could do anything, Matthew punched him ruthlessly in the face.

A crunching sound reverberated in the booth, and blood spurted from the men's broken nose.

Matthew threw him aside and criticized, "How dare you ignore my warning! Wetkins, you are really bold!" He couldn't hurt Eric, but he could teach this man, who sent flowers to his wife, a lesson.

Unable to stand, Wetkins fell on the floor again. He didn't even have the strength to straighten his arm that had fallen awkwardly on the sofa. After a while, he said with difficulty, "Beating me is useless. Eric doesn't love you. She told me that in person. She was forced to sleep with you!"

'She was forced to sleep with me? How dare he say something like that!'

Of course, Matthew knew that Eric didn't love him, but he didn't know that she had been forced to sleep with him. Anger surged through him at the thought, and he leaned forward, grabbed the bloody man, and pulled him to his feet. Then, Matthew turned and landed a spinning kick on Wetkins, who flew backward from the force and landed on the table behind him.

He rolled on the table and finally crashed to the floor.

Febly, he lifted his trembling head and placed it on his aching chest. Then he coughed and spat out a large mouthful of blood.

When he cast his gaze upwards, he saw a pair of black leather shoes, followed by a pair of long and straight legs. Finally, Matthew's expressionless handsome face came into view. At this moment, he looked calm, as if he hadn't beaten Wetkins.

Wetkins gritted his teeth and stood from the floor. Despite his composure and determination, his legs trembled so much that he had to steady himself by holding the mahjong table beside him.

Matthew curled his lips and said sarcastically, "Wetkins, I didn't think you'd be able to stand!"

Wetkins took a deep breath, wiped the blood from the corner of his mouth, and swung a punch at Matthew.

He had never been a good fighter, not even when at optimal health. Now that he was severely injured, he was no threat to Matthew. At the sight of the incoming blow, Matthew tilted a little, and Wetkins missed his target.

Wetkins would have ended on the floor again if he hadn't supported himself on the wine rack in front of him.

Next to the wine rack sat Sheffield and Hermon. With a glass of red wine in his hand, Sheffield slid his chair back and advised the man next to him, "Uncle, stay away from there, in case blood splashes on you."

Hermon walked to Matthew. "I think it's time to stop. He is going to be in the hospital for nearly half a

month," he said as he cast an indifferent glance at the bloody men's injuries.

Neville was already rushing here with his men. As they were both businessmen, Matthew and Neville would inevitably meet. There would be serious repercussions if Matthew beat his son to death.

'Nearly half a month? No, it's not enough,' thought Matthew. "I want him to spend the rest of his life in the hospital," he roared as malice glinted in his eyes. Watkins wouldn't have the chance to see his wife or send her flowers again if that happened.

At this thought, he grabbed Watkins' collar, lifted him, and threw several punches at him.

As soon as the car pulled up outside Orchid Private Club, Neville jumped out. He rushed to the VIP room where Matthew was, but several bodyguards guarded the door.

The bodyguards refused to let them through. "I'm sorry. No one is allowed to enter without Matthew's order," said one of them.

Neville was concerned about his only son's safety, but he couldn't force his way through. Once he calmed down, he called Matthew.

When the phone rang, Matthew was standing with one foot placed on Watkins' chest. He was just about to coerce the bleeding man to swear that he would never see Erica again.

His phone was in Owen's hand. He looked at the caller ID and reported to Matthew, "Matthew, Neville is calling."

Matthew stood still and ordered nonchalantly, "Let them in."

The moment the door opened, his phone stopped ringing.

When Neville entered, he saw his son on the floor. He was coughing blood and moaning in agony. Neville's heart lurched at the sight, but he had to deal with Matthew first. "Matthew, I'm going to teach Watkins a lesson and teach him a good lesson. You don't have to do it yourself!"

Neville had questioned his men to understand what Watkins had done to anger Matthew.

His unfilial son had openly sent roses to Matthew's wife. He deserved the beating!

He had hoped that Watkins would find a wife like Erica, but he hadn't asked his son to protect her! After all, she was Mrs. Hilton.

Matthew's aggressive personality was well-known by everyone. As his son was still alive, Neville understood that Matthew had been merciful for his sake.

Matthew removed his foot away from Wetkins' chest, took the wet towel prepared by the bodyguard next to him, and wiped his hands. He seuntered to Neville and said, "Neville, this is just a lesson for your son. If I see him near my wife in the future, I'm not sure if I'll be forgiving enough to let him live."

Neville nodded before he asked his men to help his son up. When Wetkins stood firm, he slapped him across the face and scolded, "Unfilial son! Did I teach you to behave like this? You are my son. You can have any woman you want! Why did you have to covet Mrs. Hilton? What is wrong with you?"

Wetkins' face had turned sideways with the intensity of the slap. He slowly turned to glare at his father. Finally, his gaze fell on Matthew. He stated calmly, "You'd better keep an eye on her from now on. Don't give me a chance. Otherwise, I will fight for her heart..."

The expression on Matthew's face darkened. He threw the wet towel aside and cursed himself for being gracious toward Wetkins! Fury radiated from him as he strode forward.

'Damn it!' Sheffield cursed inwardly. But it was too late for him to stop his brother-in-law. Matthew kicked Wetkins before anyone could react.

The two bodyguards who had been supporting him almost fell.

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Matthew removed his foot away from Watkins' chest, took the wet towel prepared by the bodyguard next to him, and wiped his hands. He sauntered to Neville and said, "Neville, this is just a lesson for your son. If I see him near my wife in the future, I'm not sure if I'll be forgiving enough to let him live."

Neville nodded before he asked his men to help his son up. When Watkins stood firm, he slapped him across the face and scolded, "Unfilial son! Did I teach you to behave like this? You are my son. You can have any woman you want! Why did you have to covet Mrs. Hilton? What is wrong with you?"

Watkins' face had turned sideways with the intensity of the slap. He slowly turned to glare his father. Finally, his gaze fell on Matthew. He stated calmly, "You'd better keep an eye on her from now on. Don't give me a chance. Otherwise, I will fight for her heart..."

The expression on Matthew's face darkened. He threw the wet towel aside and cursed himself for being gracious toward Watkins! Fury radiated from him as he strode forward.

'Damn it!' Sheffield cursed inwardly. But it was too late for him to stop his brother-in-law. Matthew kicked Watkins before anyone could react.

The two bodyguards who had been supporting him almost fell.

CHAPTER 1319 ANYTHING'S POSSIBLE

Sheffield knew how hard Matthew could hit. If he continued to hit Watkins like this, the man would definitely die. He nodded at Harmon, and the two of them stepped forward to stop Matthew before he could kick Watkins again. Sheffield reminded him in a low voice, "Matthew! Stop it! This isn't helping anything!"

If he really beat Watkins to death, things would truly go south. He was rich, but he wasn't above the law.

Neville heard what his son was saying, however, he knew his son was in the wrong.

Before Matthew could turn his fury on Sheffield, Neville got between the two and faced a fuming Matthew alone. He tried to sooth him in a soft voice, "Matthew, please calm down. It's my fault. I didn't

teach my son well. Let me sort him out myself, please!" Seizing the chance, he turned to his assistant and demanded, "Why are you still standing there? Can't you see Matthew's angry? Grab Watkins and get the hell out of here!"

"Yes, Neville!"

The assistant nodded at the bodyguards and put one of Watkins' arms around his shoulders to support his weight. Leaving took longer than normal, because the private room was in extreme disarray.

Matthew's imposing manner struck fear into the bravest of hearts. Everyone beat a hasty retreat. Neville had always treated the man in front of him as a junior, but at this moment, he was shocked by Matthew's foreboding manner and didn't know what to say.

His son had offended Matthew. Neville wouldn't have been so embarrassed if it were anyone else.

At last, Harmon came over and told Neville, "Neville, let's discuss this another day. Go home! Relax. Check on your son."

Matthew was so angry right now that he was in no mood to talk to anyone.

Now that Harmon was smoothing things over, Neville decided to help. "Matthew, I'm going home to deal with my son. When the time is right, maybe we'll all calm down some. Then I'll bring him around to apologize."

Matthew shook off Sheffield's hand and warned him coldly, "If this happens again, I will probably get extremely pissed. If I'm angry enough, I start breaking bones. I hope your insurance is paid up, Neville."

Neville didn't know how to respond. He seriously considered sending his son abroad. Maybe that way things wouldn't get out of hand.

When it was just the three of them in the private room, Sheffield put his arm around Matthew's shoulders and comforted him. "Don't be so hot-headed. Rika's a hottie. She turns heads wherever she goes. And yet she still loves you," he said in a joking tone.

Matthew silently shook off his arm and glanced at him coldly. "Watch it!" he spat.

Sheffield's eyes widened. He looked at his own hand and said, "Hey, I'm a neat freak. My hands are absolutely clean. Why are you acting like this? Take a chill pill."

Matthew moved his wrists and said coldly, "I'm still pissed. I need to bleed off some of this extra energy. Maybe I should pound your face into hamburger!"

The two of them could fight at any time. In order to avoid another conflict, Harmon quickly stood between them and said, "Well, let's get down to business. So Matthew, have you found out the truth

behind the incident?"

Knowing what he was talking about, Matthew picked up a glass of wine and gulped it down to ease his mood. "Yeah. It has something to do with a 3-year-old case. More than a dozen accomplices have been caught, and two key criminals are still at large."

Three years ago, Hilton Group angered a group of gangsters over a real estate deal. Matthew had already thrown some money at it. Sometime later, they called Owen and let him know the money was gone. They wanted another cash infusion from Hilton Group. Matthew was nobody's fool, so he turned them down flat.

Like unruly children, these thugs threw a fit. That might have pushed them over the edge, and they put a price on his head.

But why had they suddenly asked Owen for money? Matthew needed to catch the two escaped criminals before he could figure it out.

Sitting opposite him, Sheffield asked in a serious tone, "Camille might have something to do with this. Have you looked into that at all?"

"I'm not sure yet. My intel is limited. She did go to the fashion show in CBD." It looked like she had nothing to do with this, but he knew things were not that simple.

Staring into his glass, Harmon said, "I think there's a mastermind behind this. And that's why they tipped their hand and made such a mess."

"Anything's possible," said Matthew. Leaning against the back of the chair, he closed his eyes and thought of his wife.

"Rika's pregnant now. We need to bring in a bigger security detail," Sheffield suggested. He was more worried about Erica. After all, Matthew was able to protect himself, but his pregnant wife was not.

Not only was she pregnant, but she also couldn't fight. In the past, she had relied on fleet feet whenever something went south, but the pregnancy put a kibosh on that. She couldn't run too quickly with twins in her belly. And she wouldn't want to.

"I know." Matthew nodded. His wife's safety was the most important thing.

She'd been pretty on edge lately. And without much of a reason, either. She was the one being mischievous.

People said that pregnant women were easy to upset. That turned out to be true.

The next morning, Erica went to school. As soon as Matthew left the manor, she did too. Debbie went

with her.

After the second afternoon class, Erica looked back at the bodyguard following her. She was quite glum. The only reason she left the house was for classes, but this person just kept following her. She felt like she had no freedom at all.

"Erica, it's her. She's already there," said Hyatt, pointing at the garden.

Erica came to her senses and looked in the direction he pointed. A girl with long hair stood in the garden, playing with her phone, her head down.

She had borrowed some money from Hyatt, but was long overdue paying it back. It had been some months now.

"Let's go!" Erica quickened her pace.

But Hyatt grabbed her arm. She looked back at him in confusion and asked, "What are you doing?"

Embarrassed, Hyatt scratched the back of his head and stammered, "Be gentle with her, okay? I'm serious.

Don't spook her too much." "What does he think I'm going to do? Hurt her or something?" Erica rolled her eyes, raised her hand and slapped on the back of his head. "Dude! She cheated you out of your money! At least let me lean on her a bit!"

Hyatt was rendered speechless. He had no choice but to follow Erica.

The two stopped near the girl. She looked up and was stunned when she saw Erica.

Hyatt introduced them in a quiet voice, "Erica, this is Pansy. Pansy, th-this is...my good friend, Erica."

When Hyatt introduced Pansy to Erica, he spoke fluently. As soon as he spoke to Pansy, he stammered and his face turned red.

Erica had always been polite before resorting to force. She smiled at the pretty girl and said, "Hello!"

If Pansy hadn't borrowed the money and refused to pay it back, Erica would have tried to hook them up.

Almost every student in this school knew Erica. Outside of being Mrs. Hilton, she had a reputation for being a hard ass. No one would mess with her.

So when she saw Erica, her smile froze on her face. Actually, she had no intention of paying Hyatt back. She wanted to keep the money for herself.

She greeted Erica uneasily and couldn't help but stare at her pregnant belly. She was far enough along where even the baggiest clothing couldn't hide it. 'Erica getting really big, ' she thought.

CHAPTER 1320 HE'S A GOOD PERSON

Erica didn't mind her gaze at all. She put her arm on Hyatt's shoulder and asked, "Hyatt said you owed him money and haven't paid him back yet. What's wrong with you?"

At the mention of the money, the girl's eyes began to fill with tears, and she tried to look away from Erica. There was sympathy in Hyatt's eyes, but not Erica's. "Come on, Hyatt. It's not like I don't want to pay you back. But I'm hurting for money now. Two more days. That's all I need."

She had a lovely voice—high-pitched and sweet, easy on the ears. No wonder her major was in radio and TV broadcasting.

Seeing that silly Hyatt was about to soften his heart, Erica pulled him behind her and told the girl, "No way! This is ridiculous! You've been playing this game for months. You can't even cough up two thousand? Maybe we should start charging interest!"

The girl named Pansy knew there was no way out. Erica would never let her off the hook. So she had to promise, "Okay, I don't have a job. I need to call my mom..."

Erica watched her wander off to make the call. Hyatt tugged at her sleeve nervously. "Erica, she just asked for a little more time. If she really can't get it to me now, it doesn't matter. I can wait. It's not like I need the money."

Erica rolled her eyes at him and said, "Don't be a jerk. This is all on her. You'll get your money quickly—trust me."

Erica was good at reading people. She was street smart. She recognized the brands Pansy wore, stylish and expensive. The simple outfit she was rocking cost thousands. And the phone in her hand was none other than Hilton Group's iconic model, a super-private, high-end phone for the super-rich. Nearly unbreakable when dropped, featuring high-end encryption, made of black carbon and metal gold, the thing was worth more than twenty thousand!

So Erica wasn't buying it. A girl who could afford such luxurious items should easily be able to pay her friend back.

Sure enough, in less than three minutes, Pansy came back and asked for Hyatt's account number. "Mom transferred the money to me. I'll wire it to you now."

Hearing that, Hyatt was gobsmailed for a moment. He didn't think he'd ever see that money again. Prompted by Erica, he rattled off his account number.

Soon, he received two thousand.

The girl blushed and left. Hyatt watched her leave, a hint of sadness in his eyes.

Erica patted him on the shoulder and comforted him, "Don't be sad. She wasn't worth your time. Tell you what! I'll introduce you to some of my classmates. How does that sound?"

Although her friend was a little timid and shy, he was a good person, honest and moral. There must be somebody out there for him! He'd never hurt a fly, especially a girl he was going out with.

Hyatt blushed and answered shyly, "Just wait a little longer. I'm still in school. No hurry." He preferred to maybe have a job lined up first. That way he could treat her to whatever she wanted.

After he became a photographer and made a ton of cash, then he'd feel more confident finding a girlfriend.

Erica turned and waved at the bodyguard. The bodyguard immediately ran over and said respectfully, "Erica!"

"I'm not taking the car today. I want to walk around with my friend. Please come with us." What she meant was that the bodyguard didn't have to stay too far away from her. He should follow them closely so he wouldn't lose them.

She was pregnant with twins now. What if someone wanted to hurt her? She'd be safer if the bodyguard was closer at hand.

"Yes!" The bodyguard reported to Matthew by text, apprising him of the situation.

When she arrived at the school gate, the driver was already there, waiting for her. She didn't get in, but walked slowly along the road with Hyatt. The driver started the car, and followed as close as he could.

When she finished shopping and was about to go back home, it was already eight o'clock in the evening.

The driver parked his car nearby, so Erica could jump in any time.

After walking around for about three hours, Erica was getting fairly tired. She put her purchases in the trunk and was about to climb into the car with Hyatt.

Just then, she heard a woman shouting, "Help! Help!"

Their car was parked near an alley. There were street lights down that way, but the lights were dim.

Erica looked down that alley. She saw a group surrounding a woman. She had no idea what was going on.

The woman wasn't crying for help anymore. While Erica scratched her head, a figure ran towards her car. "Help!"

"Catch her! Don't let her get away!" A group of people began to run after the woman.

Erica didn't want to get involved, but as the woman approached, Erica could see her face more clearly. She recognized her.

It was Kaitlyn, the roommate who had plagiarized her photos. Apparently, she'd gotten herself into trouble again.

The panic-stricken Kaitlyn also spotted them. Her eyes were filled with surprise and she shouted, "Erica, Hyatt, help me! Ahh!" As soon as she finished shouting, a man caught up with her and grabbed her long hair. She cried out in pain.

Erica sat up straight in the car and figured she'd ignore it. It wasn't her business. After all, Kaitlyn framed her back then.

Kaitlyn turned and bit the man who was grabbing her hair. The man howled in pain, and had to let go of the woman in his hand. Blood flecked Kaitlyn's lips.

She used that slim window of opportunity to run to the car, grabbed the handle of the door and cried, "Erica, please, help me! I can't let them get me. Please!"

Maybe knowing that Erica minded what happened before, Kaitlyn continued, "I'm sorry for what I did to you, but Matthew already punished us. We haven't been in school since then. Erica, they want to whore me out. Come on—ah!"

The men behind all rushed over, and two of them grabbed Kaitlyn in front of the car and glared at Erica. "Stay out of this. It's not your business. Hurry up and leave!"

Hyatt whispered, "Erica, isn't that Kaitlyn?"

"Yeah." That was definitely her, as Erica had already surmised.

Kaitlyn shouted hysterically, and finally, Erica's heart softened. She ordered the bodyguard in the front seat, "Help her! Nothing too fancy, just run those guys off!"

"Yes, Erica!"

After getting Erica's orders, the bodyguard left the car and pulled out a nightstick. He only had to whip it around a few times before the group dispersed. They left Kaitlyn there, alone.

Kaitlyn ran back to the car and thanked Erica with a smile, over and over. "Thank you, Erica! Thank you

so much! I'll never forget what you did today!"

When the bodyguard returned to the car, Erica pressed the automatic window with an expressionless face. As it closed, she ordered the driver, "Let's go. We'll drop Hyatt off at school, and head home."

"Yes, Erica."

After the luxury car rolled away, Kaitlyn took some deep breaths to center herself, and took a last look at the empty alley. She hailed a taxi, and left.

To Erica's surprise, when she returned to the villa, Matthew was already home.

He was talking on the phone in the bedroom. When he saw her come in, he just glanced at her and continued to talk about work with the person on the other end.

Erica didn't feel like talking to him, so she went straight to the closet, grabbed her pajamas and went to the bathroom.

When she came out, Matthew was still in the bedroom. But he wasn't on the phone now. Instead, he sat on the sofa, waiting for her.

Matthew wanted to dry her hair, but she turned him down. She took the hair dryer from him and sat in front of the dresser to dry her hair by herself.

Matthew didn't press the issue. He sat on the edge of the bed and simply said, "I'll go with you to your prenatal checkup tomorrow."