

TMBA 1361

CHAPTER 1361 A HEART ATTACK

Matthew grabbed her wrist and pressed her against the bed. "You can stay here if you want from now on. I only came here to sleep with you. Whether the children are doing well or not has nothing to do with you anymore."

"Oh really? Didn't you say that you already divorced me? Then why do you have to come and sleep with me?" Erica asked. "He must have lied to me about the divorce."

Since he keeps on coming here to see me again and again, he must still love me.' As these thoughts came to her mind, she wrapped her arms around his neck happily and waited for his answer.

She wasn't aware that her natural fragrance had already turned him on. "Do I need a reason to sleep with a woman?"

"It's either you are a masochist, or you have a quirk. There are so many beautiful women in Alorith, but you came all the way to Tow Village just to sleep with me. Matthew, are you still in love with me?" They both knew very well the distance between Tow Village and Alorith.

Instead of answering her question, he lowered his head to kiss her on the lips to hide his embarrassment.

She was overjoyed. His actions clearly implied that he still loved her, and it wasn't true that he divorced her.

The next morning, while Erica was still asleep, an earthshaking event happened in the village.

The sirens of the police cars had awakened her. As she turned over in the bed, she found out that the man who made love to her the whole night wasn't there anymore.

Upon realizing that she was the only one in the room again, she abruptly sat up on the bed.

She put on her pajamas casually and got out of bed in a hurry to look for Matthew. However, as soon as she stood up, her legs felt very weak that she sank back into bed.

'Oh, my God!' she exclaimed silently, wincing in pain.

She clearly knew that Matthew had come to her with anger for the second time. He had surely given her a hard time. Looking down at the marks on her body, she couldn't help but frown. 'Oh, how humiliating! Never mind. I'll just change my clothes first.'

After putting on a set of clothes that hid her hickeys, she went out of the room. In the yard, she saw a man and a woman staring at each other with Owen expressionlessly standing next to them.

Chantel, who was in a cold sweat, finally felt a little relaxed upon seeing Erica coming out of the house. But since Matthew's cold eyes were still on her, she couldn't even move to greet her.

However, Erica was happy to see her, so she ran over and hugged her. "Chantel, I'm so glad you're here. Are you not busy today?" In the past three years, whenever Chantel was free, she would always fly to Tow Village to see the children.

Chantel nodded. She tried to bite the bullet and said, "Rika..." But Matthew's presence hindered her from saying anything. She was still in shock because she had never expected to meet him here.

It was only then that Erica noticed something unusual. Seeing the sweat on Chantel's forehead, her instinct told her that something was wrong. When she turned to Matthew and saw his gloomy face, she instantly understood what was going on.

She grabbed Chantel's arm and pulled her behind her before facing the cold man and asked, "What do you want to do?"

Matthew's gaze moved from her face down to her neck. Although she wore a turtle neck blouse to cover the hickeys in there, they still didn't escape his eyes. He swallowed to clear the lump in his throat and answered, "I want to send her to the slum."

Chantel was a member of the Leonard family, and she was very aware that both the Hilton family and the Leonard family had been looking for Erica these past three years. She knew all along but she hid her whereabouts from all of them. If she had told him earlier that Erica was here, he wouldn't have suffered being alone for more than three years.

Frightened by his expression and tone, Chantel immediately grabbed Erica's clothes.

Sensing her nervousness, Erica stretched out her arms to protect her like a mother hen protecting her chick. "Matthew, don't blame her. It's all my fault. You can't send her to the slum."

Without saying anything, he turned around and walked out of the yard. She hurriedly stopped him, "Hey, where are you going?"

Since he didn't reply, Owen explained on his behalf, "Mrs. Hilton... I mean Miss Leonard, the car is ready. Matthew is going back to Alorith now."

'What? Does this man never get tired? He came all the way here to sleep with me and immediately leave the next morning, ' she thought.

But then, she immediately ran to him and asked expectantly, "Matthew, aren't you going to take me with you?"

Her mission was completed because she had taken all the necessary photos. She only needed two days to take care of other things, then she could already leave this place.

However, Matthew got into the car without looking back and left without saying a word to her.

She stood there, confused. It seemed that he was making it more and more difficult for her to understand what was in his mind.

Not long after Matthew had left, Erica, Tessie, and Chantel went to Kirk's yard to check what was going on.

At a glance, Erica saw the handcuffed Kirk and Pike. They were standing in the yard next to a police car, watching some police officers moving their things from the basement bit by bit.

The three of them walked up to Kirk.

When he looked up at them and saw Erica, rage filled his eyes in an instant as he cursed, "Bitch!"

Erica didn't show any trace of anger. She just pulled off the mask that was covering half of his face expressionlessly. As soon as the mask was removed, the half of his face that looked horrible because of the fire was exposed. Chantel couldn't help looking away.

Even Pike, who was very close to him, had never seen this side of his face. He almost couldn't believe it.

"Kirk," Erica called out.

He looked at her but said nothing.

There was a long silence before Erica asked in a low voice, "Do you still remember a crime you committed in Kwan three years ago wherein you ruthlessly pulled out a pregnant woman to take the blame for you?"

Kirk's eyebrows were drawn together as if he were trying to recall what she had reminded him. He then looked at her up and down with widened eyes. He was trying to find any trace of that pregnant woman in her.

Erica seemed to have read his mind, so she crouched down and rubbed her clean white hand on the ground a few times, then rubbed her soiled hand to her face. In an instant, she looked like a different person.

Seeing her dirtied face, Kirk recognized her at a glance.

His memory immediately traveled back to three years ago. He had an illegal transaction in Kwan at that time, but the police discovered him. To avoid being arrested, he casually pulled a pregnant woman who

happened to be standing next to him and made her a scapegoat. But he remembered that the woman was not put in jail. Instead, the police arrested another man.

Knowing what he was thinking, Erica nodded and said, "Yes, I was not arrested at that time. Instead, my good friend Orange shouldered the consequences of your evilness!" Orange was one of the members of the idol group, FC. She met him in a hotel when she was on a business trip with Matthew back then.

"Then what happened to him?" Kirk asked eagerly.

Hatred flashed across Erica's eyes as she said, "He... died." Yes, Orange had a heart attack and died inside the prison.

During that incident, he happened to be with her. She was about to give birth at that time, so her belly was already very big. He couldn't afford to watch his pregnant friend being held by a group of people holding daggers against her neck, so he went out and took the blame for them.

At first, they thought that he wouldn't stay long in jail. After all, he was innocent. The police wouldn't be able to find any evidence against him, so he would definitely be released immediately.

However, something happened to him before he could be released.

Matthew grabbed her wrist and pressed her against the bed. "You can stay here if you want from now on. I only come here to sleep with you. Whether the children are doing well or not has nothing to do with you anymore."

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Chentel, who was in a cold sweat, finally felt a little relaxed upon seeing Erice coming out of the house. But since Matthew's cold eyes were still on her, she couldn't even move to greet her.

However, Erice was happy to see her, so she ran over and hugged her. "Chentel, I'm so glad you're here. Are you not busy today?" In the past three years, whenever Chentel was free, she would always fly to Tow Village to see the children.

Chentel nodded. She tried to bite the bullet and said, "Rike..." But Matthew's presence hindered her from saying anything. She was still in shock because she had never expected to meet him here.

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CHAPTER 1362 OUR LOVE

Kirk was surprised to hear that Orange died in jail, so he couldn't help asking, "How did he die?"

Erica stared at him and said, "You don't need to know. After all, it has nothing to do with your case now. Since you and Pike are already arrested, do you think the person behind you can still continue to hide?"

He was rendered speechless.

She then said, "How about this? If you tell me who the person behind you is, I will help you minimize your sentence." Kirk's group had members scattered in several nearby villages, so Erica believed that there must be a powerful leader behind them that controlled everything.

She had long sworn to avenge Orange. If it was not for helping her, he wouldn't end up in jail and die. He would have been very popular in the entertainment industry now. This group of people had ruined the bright future that awaited him.

Kirk shook his head and said, "I don't know who he is. I haven't met him either." 'Even Kirk has never seen him?' she wondered.

That person must be excellent in hiding himself. But then, she tried if he would slip. "Then how do you contact each other?"

He didn't answer.

Erica didn't force him. Instead, she glanced at the police, who were still busy taking all the evidence out of the basement, turned around, and left.

Not long after, the police took the group of ruffians to the station.

Later that day, the incident was reported on the news. Erica was right. The things that they were making in the basement were all poisonous. The contraband that weighed more than two tons worth millions of dollars, so the news instantly caused a sensation in the whole Kuflya.

As soon as they got back to Erica's house, the three of them entered her room.

Chantel closed the door and turned to look at Erica, who was lost in thought. "Rika, if it's true that even Kirk has never met the big boss, he must be someone not easy to deal with. We can't rush things."

Erica nodded. She felt a little disappointed, but she knew it was useless to be anxious.

Tessie then said, "Now that the police have arrested Kirk and Pike, and they would probably stay in jail for decades, what are you going to do next?"

Resting her chin in her hands, Erica answered unhesitatingly, "I will go back home because I need to deal with things between Matthew and me. But of course, I will continue to find the person behind Kirk."

Chantel nodded and said with a smile, "That's good. It's really time for you to go back. Otherwise, Dad will come here and tie you up." She was referring to Wesley.

The moment he found out Erica's whereabouts, he was so angry that he wished to fly over and cut off their father-daughter relationship.

Erica's eyes suddenly shifted to Chantel, and a mischievous grin appeared on her face. Hinting that there was something behind her smile, Chantel sat up straight and asked immediately, "Rika, what bad idea you have in mind?"

Erica held her hand and said affectionately, "My dear sister-in-law, you now have a successful career and a lot of money. You have a child and a husband too. But don't you think there's still something lacking in your life?"

Smiling politely, Chantel gently pulled her hand away and replied, "I am already satisfied having you as my company and Dad and Mom taking care of Hugo."

"No, you shouldn't be satisfied," Erica said certainly.

"Of course, I'm satisfied. Very satisfied!" Chantel countered firmly.

Looking at the two ladies, Tessie got amused. She then turned to Erica and asked, "Erica, what do you really want to say?"

Erica winked at Chantel and said, "You lack love. You have been married to my brother for quite a while now, but you haven't won his love yet. Don't you think it's time for both of us to make our love stories fulfilled?"

Erica was determined to go back to Alorith to reignite the love between her and Matthew.

It didn't matter if he already had other women by his side. She would wipe out all the obstacles between them, including those women.

When it came to Matthew, she was full of confidence. After all, he had come all the way to Tow Village twice to sleep with her. In short, she was resolute to get him back.

'Love, ' Chantel repeated in her mind. All of a sudden, she felt like her heart was cut by a knife. She bit her lower lip and thought that it was time to end her married life.

For the years that past, her relationship with Gifford didn't improve at all. It seemed that they had nothing to do with each other except for having a child that they both cared about. They occasionally went back to the Leonard family residence to visit Hugo, nothing more.

Since it was she who started their relationship, she should also be the one to put an end to it. "Okay. I will take the initiative to ask your brother for a divorce," she said.

"What? Divorce?" Erica got a little confused. Waving her hand vigorously, she added, "No, no, no! I'm

not asking you to divorce him. Instead, I want you to take the initiative to make him fall for you. You have to do something to make him realize that he loves you too. I want you and my brother to live a happy life together."

Chantel imagined the kind of life that Erica described. It was too beautiful that she didn't even dare to think it would happen to her.

Since she remained silent, Erica continued, "Well, let me be honest with you. Since I run away from home for more than three years, my parents and my brother must be mad at me. I want to ask Gifford's help in investigating Kirk's big boss, but I'm sure he will refuse. You are the most suitable person to help me persuade him. If you succeed in winning his heart, you can then ask him to help us find the person behind Kirk. Gifford often deals with these kinds of people, so I know he has a better way than us. I will also do everything to win Matthew back, so I can ask him to help as well. Besides, our people are not giving up searching. If we can get both of our men's help, we will definitely find the big boss sooner."

Chantel was stunned after hearing Erica's plan. "Do you think that will work?" she asked uncertainly.

"Yes, of course! With Gifford and Matthew's help, we will be invincible." Her experiences in the past three years had at least changed Erica a bit. She had also become smarter now than before.

But Chantel was still a little worried. She had never contacted Gifford in the past few years, so she wasn't that confident. "What if...I meet with Gifford, he will ask for a divorce?"

Erica pounded the table and stood up. "If he dares to divorce you, I will break his legs!"

This time, Tessie couldn't help butting in. She asked, "Erica, do you think you can do that?"

Chantel didn't know whether to laugh or to cry. She pulled Erica back to her seat and said, "Calm down. I only said, what if."

"Don't worry. I'm calm. But you are my only sister-in-law, and no one can ever replace you. If my brother dares to divorce you, I will make sure that he won't have a chance to get married again. I will beat those women up until he comes back to you." Chantel had helped her and her sons a lot in the past three years. She might not even be able to pay her back for the rest of her life.

Tears welled up in Chantel's eyes when she heard her words. With all sincerity, she said, "Thank you, Rika." Being a part of the Leonard family was the best thing that ever happened in her life.

"Thank you for what? And what are those tears for? I have never seen such a sister-in-law like you who is silly enough to give eighty percent of her paycheck to my sons and me." Erica laughed heartily while looking at her tear-filled eyes.

Chantel glared at her and said, "Don't you ever call me silly. You are actually the silly one. Imagine, you run away with four babies in your belly? You are the boldest pregnant woman in the world!" No wonder

she was labeled as Wesley and Blair's naughtiest daughter. Any parents with a daughter like her would definitely have a headache.

CHAPTER 1363 A GOOD WIFE AND A KIND MOTHER

Erica felt a bit guilty upon hearing what Chantel had said. "To be honest, if I had known that I had four babies in my belly when I was still in Alorith, I wouldn't have run away from home no matter what," she said. But when she had found that she was pregnant with four babies, she had already left Alorith, so there was no turning back anymore. Left with no choice, she had to bite the bullet and move on.

Since the other two babies, who were Colman and Damian now, were too small to be seen in the ultrasound, she was already six months pregnant when they were detected.

No wonder her belly at that time was unusually big. She even wondered if her babies were giant. It turned out there were four of them inside her belly.

When Colman and Damian were born, the doctors needed to incubate them for half a month. Colman's health then relatively improved, but Damian took a longer time. Among the four of them, he had the weakest physical health.

"Fortunately, it's all over now. Erica, don't ever run away from home again," Tessie said with a sigh.

She couldn't help wondering, if all of Erica's sufferings were rewarded, how about her? The whole Campbell family had left Alorith for good. If she returned, where would she go? She knew that Erica wouldn't need her to take care of the four children anymore because they were all doing well with Matthew's parents.

"No, I won't ever run away from home again. I don't want to live in an old-fashioned village that has no Internet access. I even have to fight with other people here most of the time. Life in this village sucks. I want to have my life back in Alorith. I will find a stable job, be a good wife to my husband, and a kind mother to my children." She giggled in excitement as she imagined the kind of new life she would have with her family. It was such a beautiful life that everyone was yearning.

Looking at her daydreaming, Chantel chuckled and shook her head helplessly.

Two days later, what Erica had been afraid to happen came.

Since Erica was afraid that she would never have the chance to come back to Tow Village again, she ran around to take photos of the whole place.

On the second day, she came home to have dinner with Tessie. She excitedly put a mouthful of noodles into her mouth, and chewed them leisurely. But before she could even swallow them, she heard a loud noise outside. Bang! Someone kicked their wooden gate from the outside.

The force was strong enough to leave the gate lying on the ground.

'Oh, my God! The police have already arrested Pike and Kirk. Who else would dare to do this in my house?' she thought to herself.

Without leaving her seat, she sucked the noodles into her mouth, chewed them casually, and shouted at the gate, "Who dares to kick my gate? You must be tired of living! Come in and die in my hands!" But when the person who kicked the gate appeared in front of her, Erica's eyes widened in shock.

"D-dad?" A crisp sound of the bowl hitting the floor followed. The noodles scattered all over the floor.

A stray cat sneaked in and ate up all the noodles.

Wesley was wearing a black Chinese tunic suit and a pair of gray casual shoes. He was staring at Erica with inflamed eyes.

Erica had run away from home for more than three years, and Wesley had been looking for her all these years. Clenching his fists, he stepped into the house angrily. With his every step, Erica's heart skipped a beat.

His imposing manner reminded her of the famous martial arts actors, Bruce Lee and Jackie Chan.

'Oh, my God! He is surely mad this time. I'm in big trouble, ' she cried inwardly.

Tessie stood up and greeted him respectfully, "Mr. Wesley."

Erica, who had been in a daze for a long time, came back to her senses upon hearing Tessie's voice. When she saw that Wesley was walking up to her, she turned and ran to the other side of the table reflexively. "Dad, let's talk. I will explain everything to you," she shouted.

But Wesley just ignored her. The next moment, he was already gripping her shoulder very hard. The pain was too much for her to bear that she automatically hit back.

Wesley defended himself. After not seeing each other for more than three years, the father and daughter ended in a fight.

Wesley attacked her twice, but Erica just blocked them effortlessly. With that, an amused smile appeared on his face. She didn't know why, but his smile made her shiver. "How did you become this strong, Erica?" He was surprised that she was able to withstand the two blows from him. It made him wonder how much hardship she had suffered in the past three years that she became more skilled in fighting than before.

Seeing the wonderment on Wesley's face, Erica took the opportunity. She smiled happily and said, "Are you proud of me now, Dad? I am no longer... Ouch, be gentle! I am no longer the same girl who could only run away when you beat me, right?"

Wesley cast her a meaningful glance

upon hearing what she said.

Three minutes later, Erica was already lying awkwardly in the yard. Her hands and feet were tied up by a thick rope. Fortunately, Wesley didn't cover her mouth, so she was able to plead, "Dad, let's talk. Don't tie me here like this. It's so embarrassing."

All of a sudden, she missed Matthew. After he had come here twice, the villagers admired her more.

But Wesley came unannounced and tied her up on the ground. The villagers now witnessed how an old man had defeated their heroine.

He didn't mind her. With hands behind his back, he just silently watched the people he brought moving in and out of the house, taking all her stuff.

After twenty minutes, only the dirty pots and pans were left in the kitchen since no one had the time to clean them up. Erica, who was still tied up, was thrown into the back seat. Wesley then sat in the passenger seat.

Tessie carried her luggage and sat in a car behind Wesley's car.

The two cars drove out of Tow Village immediately. Erica was still reluctant to leave, but she couldn't do anything. She helplessly stared at the blue sky outside the window.

On their way from Tow Village to Askor, she had always kept her head down. She had never been humiliated like this before. Wesley only untied her when they ate, and when she needed to go to the bathroom. Other than those, her hands were tied all the time. If she hadn't begged, her feet would have remained tied too.

After spending more than one day in the car, Erica finally saw the gate of the Leonard family residence that she hadn't seen for a long time.

The door of the villa was open, so she saw a handsome little boy in a grey shirt, watering the plants in the garden with his water gun.

When the boy heard the sound of the car, he looked over and put away his water gun immediately. With a smile on his face, he ran over happily and called out, "Grandpa!"

Erica knew that the boy was Hugo, Chantel's son. She had seen his pictures on her phone countless times.

Her tied hands excitedly patted Wesley's shoulder as she exclaimed, "Dad, that's my nephew, Hugo!"

Wesley didn't even bother to look at her when he replied, "I'm not blind." Of course, he knew that it was his grandson, Hugo, who grew up with them.

'I'm not blind, either. It's my first time to see my nephew in person. Can't I be excited?' she complained inwardly.

The car stopped just right in time that Blair, who fetched a glass of water for Hugo inside the villa, walked out. When she saw the car, her eyes filled with joy.

She knew that Wesley would bring Erica back.

That was the reason why she kept the door of the villa open, and she stayed outside with Hugo. She had been eagerly waiting for her daughter to come back.

"Grandma, is Aunt Rika back?" Hugo asked. Although he hadn't seen Erica personally, he had heard about her many times.

"Yes," Blair answered. Her face showed complicated emotions. She was angry that Erica had run away for too long, but she couldn't also help feeling happy now that she finally came back.

Even if Blair was angry, Erica was still her daughter. Besides, Erica was now a mother to four kids.

Wesley got out of the car first and opened the back door for Erica.

Without minding her tied hands, Erica immediately ran out of the car and threw herself into Blair's arms. "Mom, I'm back."

CHAPTER 1364 DON'T FLATTER YOURSELF

The moment Blair heard her daughter's voice, her heart softened. She held back tears and gritted her teeth, refusing to look at Erica.

Knowing that her mother was enraged, Erica felt bad for the trouble she'd caused. She turned and told Wesley, "I'm home now. I won't run away. Let me go!"

Wesley snorted and ignored her.

Erica hung her head, and her mood turned gloomy, rather than defiant. Hugo lifted his head and said, "I got this. Here you go, Aunt Rika!"

Erica then remembered her dear nephew was also here. She half-squatted down and looked at him in the eye. "Hi Hugo. So you know I'm your aunt?" she asked gently.

He drew himself up to his full height. The boy looked more and more like Chantel every day. He nodded and said, "Grandma said Grandpa was gonna pick you up!" So she must be his aunt.

Erica was amused by him. "You're so smart, Hugo!"

Hugo's eyes fell on the rope around her wrists. Noticing his gaze, Erica looked at Wesley helplessly and explained, "Grandpa tied me up. He's good with knots, and other people can't undo them. So I'm stuck— Wait! What?"

To everyone's surprise, Hugo grabbed the knot and undid it quickly, while Erica was still talking. The rope hung loosely, and she let it drop to her feet.

Everyone was gobsmacked. They had another genius in the family.

When she was free, Erica kissed the boy again and again in surprise. "Thank you, little one. You're definitely my nephew, Hugo. You are so smart!"

Hugo gave her a smug smile and said, "I'm happy if you are."

Wesley, however, rained on his daughter's parade. "Hugo's smart, but that's not your doing. He got it from your brother or Chantel. Maybe both of them. Don't flatter yourself."

"Dad, it's been more than three years. You can't say you didn't miss me." She didn't give up and asked the same question she had asked many times on the way here.

"Miss you? It's been quieter without you around. I brought you back just to teach you a good lesson. I'll send you back to the Hilton family after you learn to behave," said Wesley. And he felt justified as her father. She was still finding new ways to act out. Time to nip this in the bud.

'Never mind. I better just be nice to them. Focus on one at a time,' Erica thought to herself. She stood up and hugged Blair, leaning her head on her mom's shoulder. "Mom, I'm sorry. I'm back, safe and sound. Please don't be angry."

But Blair pushed her away and scolded, "Don't call me 'Mom!' Not after what you did!"

She had four kids, but ran off and left them. She hadn't been back in more than three years, and she didn't even call them once. Blair didn't believe her daughter could be this heartless.

Erica was getting sadder and sadder, but she had to bear it no matter how bad she felt. After all, she deserved it. She explained to Blair in a small voice, "Mom, I just couldn't accept the fact that Matthew likes me. He's so awesome, and I'm so stupid..." Maybe they didn't know that the more he loved her, the more stressful it was.

"That's why I ran off. I wanted to learn to stand on my own feet. I didn't want to ask you for help. I

wanted to be worthy of Matthew's love." Erica took a deep breath and forced her tears back.

Blair's voice softened as she asked, "And now? What have you learned? Was it worth it?"

Erica nodded and then shook her head. "Yeah. But I took the wrong path. Well, maybe that's not the right term. I set off in the wrong direction."

At first, she had imagined that given a few years, she would become one of the most famous, sought-after photographers in the world. She had succeeded—to a point. Maybe she wasn't the most popular one, but she knew her stuff. Trying her hand at everything from photojournalism to portrait photography and even street photography, capturing the hustle and bustle of everyday life. She accepted freelance assignments, lining her pockets while honing her craft.

This all changed when she met Orange. Seeing she was pregnant, he decided to help her out. But he died in jail. In order to take revenge for Orange, she had no choice but to ask Chantel to help her put together a gang of her own. Erica pointed, Chantel paid the bills.

Unexpectedly, the group grew and grew, establishing a fairly prominent gang named the Violet Eagles. Most of the money Chantel earned was spent on them.

Naturally, Erma became the leader of the Violet Eagles, and she used them as her instrument of vengeance.

Finally, Blair sighed and walked inside, Hugo in her arms.

Erica glanced at Wesley, who stood next to her. She didn't miss his loving look, his pride in his daughter.

Erica smiled and held Wesley's arm, acting like a spoiled child. "Dad..."

Wesley's expression hardened. He pulled her hands away and walked straight into the villa.

Looking at his back, Erica sighed heavily. It was really difficult to make things up to that man.

She waved at Tessie, who stood near the car. Erica said, "Let's get inside! At least relax for a while!"

Tessie hesitated for a time. But she had no other place to go, so she had to follow Erica into the Leonard family's home.

As soon as Erica stepped into the living room, Wesley shouted harshly, "Kneel and ask forgiveness!"

Knowing who he was referring to, Erica did as she was told.

As soon as she knelt down, Tessie immediately tossed her luggage aside and knelt down beside her.

Blair reminded her, "Tessie, Wesley is talking to Erica. You don't have to kneel!"

Tessie shook her head and said, "I also feel bad for you. What happened to Ethan is all my fault. I shouldn't have lied and treated Erica like that. You and Wesley raised Ethan as your own grandkid for so long. In this case, kneeling is the right thing to do. I should beg your forgiveness too."

Wesley glanced at Tessie and said, "No, you didn't do anything wrong. Even if you did, you made up for it by raising her four rugrats. And getting a second chance is rare enough. Get up!" He was going to teach Erica a lesson.

Tessie was moved by his words and choked, "Thank you, Wesley, Blair. But Erica's had a hard time these years she's been gone. I don't think she really has anything more to learn. If you're still angry with her, punish me instead! Whatever you feel is right."

Erica gritted her teeth and refused, "No, thanks. If my dad didn't beat me today, he wouldn't let it go. Just get up, Tessie. None of this is your fault."

Tessie couldn't bear to see her being punished, but seeing that Wesley was about to get angry, she had to stand up and step aside.

Wesley cast a cold glance at his daughter and snapped, "Do you know what you did wrong?"

"I know, Dad!" Erica's attitude was so good.

"So what did you do?"

"I shouldn't have run away from home and made you worry," she answered.

"Kneel until I'm satisfied. Your brother will be back tomorrow. You obviously haven't learned after all these years, so some time training with him in seclusion will help you. Two weeks, maybe."

Hearing this, Erica widened her eyes. "Two weeks?" Gifford's men went through a grueling training regimen. That wasn't for beginners. She could hurt herself, or worse get herself killed. This was not cool.

"Yes! In fact, why don't we make it fifteen days?" Wesley asked rhetorically.

He had to teach Erica well before sending her back to the Hilton family. Otherwise, the Hilton family would keep worrying she'd pull the same tricks.

With a sad face, Erica sat on her feet. "Dad, I promise I'll never run away from home again, okay? I can write a letter guaranteeing this. Please don't send me to train with Gifford's men."

CHAPTER 1365 MY GODDESS

"I don't need your guarantee. One more word, and you will train a month with them!" Wesley ordered.

Erica didn't say anything at first, but after a while, she replied, "Okay. As long as it makes you happy, Dad, I'll go."

"Don't try to fool me. You'll go tomorrow!"

"Okay!" Erica nodded helplessly.

For nearly an hour, she knelt on the living room floor. When Remus and Yvette came over, they found her still on her knees. Both tried to put in a good word for Erica, but Wesley didn't buy it.

After two hours, Wesley still wouldn't let Erica stand up. Feeling sorry for her sister, Yvette secretly sent a message to Matthew on WeChat. "Matthew, Dad ordered Erica to stay on her knees on the floor, but she's been there for hours now."

It took two minutes after that for Wesley's phone to ring.

When he looked at the caller ID, he didn't pick up the phone immediately. Instead, he looked around the living room. Erica and Tessie didn't have their cellphones, so it couldn't have been them who informed Matthew. As for Remus, he had been answering a call beside him the whole time he was there, and Blair had been playing games with Hugo upstairs.

However, he had no idea where Yvette was.

"Yvette!" he shouted.

"Just a minute, Dad!" Yvette's voice came from the bathroom.

After she washed her hands, Yvette showed up in the living room. "Dad, your phone has been ringing. Why aren't you answering it?" she asked.

Wesley squinted at her. "You called Matthew?"

Erica's eyes lit up once she realized Matthew was the one calling. Now she knew she was going to be saved.

She couldn't help but remember that a long time ago when Blair had wanted to beat her, it was Matthew who came to her rescue. Now it shouldn't be any different.

"I didn't," Yvette answered. It wasn't a lie since she didn't really call him.

"Did you send him a message?"

Wesley asked again. 'Oh, Dad is so clever!' Looking into her father's stern eyes, Yvette reluctantly nodded.

Wesley glared at her before he walked away from the room to answer Matthew's call. This way, he wouldn't be able to hear anything Erica might say from this side of the line.

"Matthew, what's wrong?" Wesley asked.

"Dad, are you busy now?"

"No. I'm playing with Hugo. Aren't you busy?" Both father-in-law and son-in-law were beating around the bush.

But Matthew soon realized they wouldn't get anywhere like this. So, he decided to go straight to the point. "Dad, I don't blame Rika."

And he wanted to say that Wesley shouldn't either.

"I'm not doing this because I blame her for anything. I just want her to understand that she can't leave her family worrying about her without facing the consequences. If we don't teach her a lesson now, she will never learn it."

"I don't plan on giving her another chance to run away from home," Matthew stated. From that day forward, he would follow her wherever she decided to go.

Wesley had already expected that Matthew would say that. So, pinching the spot between his eyebrows, he said, "Matthew, don't worry. I know what I'm doing. I'm not going to hurt her."

"Dad, I know. But she has been through a lot in the past few years. I don't want her to suffer anymore." Since she had come back, Matthew couldn't let her go through any painful situation again.

Wesley sighed. "I see. Now, go back to your work. I'll send her to Alorith myself in a few weeks."

"Okay." Matthew assumed that Wesley wanted Erica to stay with them for a while. After all, they hadn't seen each other for over three years. Yet, what he didn't know was that Wesley planned to send Erica to train with Gifford's men for a couple of weeks.

When Wesley got back to the living room, he found Erica looking at him expectantly before he said, "Get up!"

"Alright!" 'Matthew is really my dream man. He is awesome! I love him so much!

When I come back to Alorith, I'll hug him and shower him with kisses, ' she thought.

Meanwhile, after a ruthless training on the camp, dozens of men in military uniforms dispersed and rested on the spot.

Among several men lying on the ground and looking at the blue sky, one on the far left gasped and said, "My goddess, Chantel, is the only reason I'm holding on." At that moment, he started to imagine the face of his goddess in his mind.

The man next to him answered with his eyes closed, "Hey, it seems that nowadays, Chantel is the only one among the most popular female stars who is actually a good actress. Not to mention that her face and figure are also much better looking than the others!"

"Yes, I like her a lot. Her figure aside, she seems so sweet that I can't help but want to kiss her."

The talk about Chantel soon began to attract some other men, who had been listening nearby. Several more people gathered to gossip and talk about the actress nonstop.

It didn't take much time for the subject to reach the ears of a man sitting not so far away. His clothes, however, obviously distinguished him from the others in the training camp.

Looking up at the clear sky, he thought for a while, 'How long has it been since I last met Chantel?'

The last time he saw her was on TV yesterday.

But the two of them hadn't seen each other for three or four years.

He had a feeling that if he never met Chantel again and reminded her that she had a husband, she would probably announce a relationship with another man at some point.

'Rika has come back home today. Matthew said that Chantel had always known where she was. Perhaps, Chantel will also come back home tonight, ' he thought.

He was dying to meet Chantel and confront her about why she never told their family where Erica was.

'Yes, it's decided!'

He suddenly stood up and shouted to the men who were resting, "Attention!"

His loud voice made everyone get on their feet and line up in the shortest time possible.

Then he looked at those who were particularly gossiping about Chantel and ordered, "Harry, Gage, you'll clean up the bathroom for a month. The others may leave now!"

The ones who had just been dismissed laughed under their breaths while the rest stood there in confusion.

As soon as Gifford left, Harry Anderson rushed to catch up with him. "Sir, didn't we pass the training just now?"

Gifford nodded, "Yes, you passed the training."

Harry was even more confused after hearing that. "Then why are we being punished into cleaning the bathroom?"

Gifford looked back at him and asked, "Do you really want to know why?"

Harry nodded.

"I'll tell you after you clean the bathroom for a month. Oh! And don't forget you also have to clean the offices on the third floor!" Gifford patted him on the shoulder before he turned around and left.

Harry stood there, dumbfounded.

Later, at dinner, all the Leonard family members gathered around the table except for Gifford and Chantel.

It felt like ages since Erica had such a nourishing meal. She was so excited that she ended up eating two bowls of rice.

After everyone finished their meal, Tessie helped the maid clean the table. Erica was playing with Hugo when someone opened the villa's door from the outside.

A woman came in, wearing a black bucket hat and a long light blue coat over a white lace dress. Her black high-heeled shoes clicked on the floor as she waltzed in.

From her simple yet fashionable clothes, it became evident that she had undergone a tremendous change from the girl who had come to the Leonard family a few years ago to the woman she was now.

With her designer handbag in one hand, she held many gift bags in the other.

As soon as she took off her sunglasses, Hugo ran to her excitedly. "Mommy, Mommy!"

"Chantel is back!" Walking up to her with a big smile on her face, Blair seemed even happier to see Chantel now than she was when she saw Erica.

CHAPTER 1366 I DON'T WANT TO HOLD YOU BACK

Erica was crestfallen when she saw how her mother behaved around Chantel. Whenever her parents saw Chantel or even Yvette, they seemed like they were very glad to see them. Enthusiasm, hugs, and cries of joy. But this wasn't the case with poor Erica.

Chantel picked up the three-year-old boy with difficulty. "Hugo! Mommy's back!" she said happily. Then she greeted the people in the living room, one by one. Wesley, Blair, Yvette, Remus and Erica all got smiles, greetings, and acknowledgements.

Wesley nodded at her. "Hugo's heavier than ever. Don't hold him too long."

Chantel echoed with a smile, "Yeah he is! And taller, too!"

Yvette didn't see Chantel in person often. More often than not, she had to content herself with seeing Chantel on TV. As did everyone else. She came over and took Chantel to the living room. "How long have you been back? Did you just get back from the airport? Sit down and relax!"

"Yeah. Glad to be back home again." Chantel didn't refuse and sat next to Erica with a smile.

Erica immediately leaned over and whispered in her ear, "Why are you back so soon? Was it because of me?"

Chantel nodded, but it was not convenient to say something with the others around. It was impolite to whisper around the elders, so she just gave her a smile.

Gifford was home early, too. He wasn't due in till tomorrow.

Chantel and Gifford eventually retired to their room.

After Hugo was born, Blair asked the maids to move Chantel's stuff into Gifford's room. Sharing a room just made sense, with the baby and all.

The two hadn't seen each other for several years. But they weren't sure how to be themselves around each other. Things had changed, and were a little awkward.

Chantel had just donned her pajamas and was about to take a shower. When she saw Gifford walk in the room, she was taken aback.

Caught off guard, she was not mentally prepared to meet him like this.

As soon as Chantel came to her senses, she remembered something. Before Gifford could say a word, she ran to the table, took something from her bag and handed it to him.

"I didn't expect to see you. I was just going to leave this here, but you're here now. I can't stay long, but could you sign this?" she said. When she saw his confused look, she clarified, "It's a divorce agreement."

'She wants a divorce?' Gifford took the document and had a look. It was really a divorce agreement. He frowned and asked, "You want a divorce?"

"Yes." She'd done what she'd set out to do. She gave Wesley and Blair a grandkid. They seemed pretty happy. So now, she could set Gifford free, too. He could find a wife that he was happy with.

Gifford flipped through the divorce agreement, and as expected, Chantel's name had been signed at the bottom right corner of the last page.

Since she had become a star now and her signature was needed on many occasions, someone had custom designed her signature. It was absolutely beautiful, and very appropriate for a star.

She also chose to give up everything he'd given her. She wanted no money, no child, and was willing to give Hugo one hundred thousand dollars per month for child support.

A hint of danger in his smile, Gifford held the document in his hand aloft and asked, "Mom and Dad know about this?"

Chantel was a little nervous. "They don't know yet. I wanted to talk to them tomorrow. I didn't expect you to come back ahead of time," she answered.

Making sure Chantel was looking straight at him, he tore the document in two.

Chantel was flabbergasted at his response. Why did he tear it up?

The man sneered and asked the woman, "What's wrong? Now that you're a famous star..." He took a step forward and continued to shred the document into tiny bits, forcing her to retreat.

"...you look down on me, don't you? What? I'm not good enough to be with you?"

'What?' Chantel was speechless. 'That's not what I meant. Not at all. It's like he's being down on himself.'

Watching him tear the divorce agreement into pieces, she shook her head and answered nervously, "No, it's not like that. I just don't want to hold you back..."

He put all the pieces of paper in his pocket, pinched her chin and made her look at him. "You don't want to hold me back? When you and Erica plotted to make me sleep with you, why didn't you think about whether it would hold me back then? So, you don't want to hold me back, or you don't want to hold yourself back? I'm sure there's some younger, hotter actor who's just waiting for our divorce, right?"

Chantel shook her head and stammered, "That's not what's going on..." She was still reeling from all of this. Why was he acting that way? She was considerate of the Leonard family's background, so she only ever got a stunt double for kissing scenes. That way, it wouldn't really be her. Plus, she wouldn't have to turn down lucrative roles.

And she always paid attention to how she behaved. When she wasn't acting, she was in school. Or she would stay at the Leonard family's house with her child. She never did anything wrong, no affairs with other men. She was completely faithful.

Gifford released her chin, satisfied. "Wait for me here. I'm going to take a shower. Don't move from that spot!" he declared.

He had come back in a hurry, without a change of clothes. His clothes were still dirty and he couldn't do anything intimate with his wife like this.

Chantel was always clean and smelled nice. He didn't want to disgust her with how he looked or smelled.

Chantel nodded obediently. "Okay! I'll wait for you."

However, when Gifford walked out after his shower, he didn't see Chantel in the room. He looked around and finally found her—one of four women playing with Hugo in Erica's room.

Yvette, Erica, Tessie and Chantel were singing and laughing around Hugo. They were having a fantastic time.

He opened the door and looked at the women on the bed. He raised his chin toward Chantel and said, "Come here!"

When Hugo saw Gifford, he immediately slipped off the bed and ran over to him, holding his leg. "Daddy! Hug!"

Gifford held up his son with one hand and pinched his chubby face with the other. "Hi little guy! Your mom and I have something to talk about now. Go on and play with your aunties."

"Okay!" The little boy nodded obediently.

Chantel put on her slippers. When she was about to leave, Erica held her hand and snickered, "So when am I going to get a niece? Make my brother work for it."

Chantel blushed and looked at the man at the door subconsciously. Of course, she caught the man looking at her, which made her face even redder. She stuttered to explain to Erica, "No...we have something else to talk about..."

With an expression of understanding, Erica said, "Oh! I got it. Go ahead!"

Chantel sighed. Erica didn't understand at all. It was obvious that she was making fun of her.

Chantel shook her head helplessly and said, "I'll settle accounts with you later!"

Unexpectedly, Erica said to the man at the door, "Gifford, if Chantel has the energy to talk to me later, then you're a loser!" Every time she slept with Matthew, she had no strength to do anything else.

"We'll see whether I'm a loser or not!" Gifford said without hesitation.

Tessie and Yvette burst into laughter. Yvette pushed the blushing woman to the door and said, "Hurry up! Hugo will sleep with us tonight. He won't disturb you!"

Chantel was confused. Something was wrong, but she didn't know what it was.

CHAPTER 1367 BEAT THAT MALE STAR TO DEATH

Gifford and Chantel returned to their bedroom. As soon as he closed the door, he said, "Didn't I tell you not to go anywhere? Why did you run away?"

"What? I just went to Rika's room. Was that already running away for you?" she asked in disbelief.

"Wow! After we haven't seen each other for a long time, I didn't know that you already learned to talk back,"

he snapped. Chantel was rendered speechless. Was she talking back?

But her silence made Gifford feel guilty. He felt like he was bullying her.

"Forget it. Come here," he said in a soft tone.

"What?" She hesitated for a moment.

"I came back today to remind you that you are already a married woman. From now on, you have to behave properly in public." Although he refused to admit it, he was jealous when he saw her holding another man's arm while walking on the red carpet. He even wanted to rush over and beat that male star to death.

What he said didn't sound pleasant in her ears, so she couldn't help retorting, "I've always kept a low profile since I entered the entertainment industry. I have never messed around with anyone." Ever since they had gotten their marriage licenses, Chantel had never forgotten that she was a married woman. That was the reason why she had always been careful when she was with other male celebrities.

'She didn't mess around with anyone? Two years ago, she guested in a variety show with a male actor, and they played a game together. That man even hugged her on-screen.

Then at the end of that year, she attended an award ceremony. She walked on the red carpet with a male actor holding her waist.

At the beginning of last year, she made a romantic movie where the leading man held her in his arms many times.

When she attended a reality show in the middle of last year, a male star took her hand, and they ran fast on the street.

And at the end of last year...' Gifford could clearly remember all those scenes

he saw on TV. He was not sure if any other things were happening behind the screen.

Trying to shake off those memories out of his mind, he looked her in the eye, put his thumb at the corner of her mouth, and pressed it upward. Chantel was forced to smile.

But she didn't know what he was thinking, and why he did such a strange thing. Taking a step back to dodge his thumb, she said, "Well... how about we talk another day? I want to take a rest, so I'll go back to my room now."

She then turned around and was about to leave.

He quickly strode in front of her and pulled her in his arms. She was dazed, especially when he said in a low voice, "Why are you running away again? You belong to me tonight and the next day."

He wouldn't let her settle accounts with Erica tonight, and he would bring Chantel to his workplace tomorrow so that his men could meet her.

'Yes, that's it, ' he thought, satisfied with his plan.

"Wh-what? Mmph..." Before she could say anything, his lips sealed hers.

They were alone in the room, and they hadn't seen each other for four years. Who could testify for her that she didn't seduce Gifford this time?

But she was already lost in his kisses and his touch. Before she could know it, they were now entangled in bed. Then a sudden knock on the door interrupted their intimate moment.

Chantel felt like the knock awakened her, and she came back to her senses. She looked at Gifford on top of her in disbelief as she thought, 'Aren't we supposed to talk about our divorce? What are we doing now?'

Then Hugo's voice came from the other side of the door. "Dad, Mom, I want to show you my toys."

Before either of them could answer, they heard Erica say, "Oh, Hugo. Your dad and mom are making a sister for you. Let's go back to my room."

"Aunt Rika, I want to see Dad and Mom making my little sister," replied the innocent child.

Chantel was dumbstruck.

Even Erica was stunned as she didn't expect to hear such words from her nephew. Now, she was in trouble with how to explain. "Well...uhm...here's the thing. Your dad and mom can only make your little sister if you don't watch them. And you can't make a noise. You have to keep your voice down, or else your little sister will be scared away." She then took Hugo in her arms and ran away fast. Whether the couple inside the room heard her or not, it didn't matter anymore.

As soon as Gifford heard the receding footsteps, he moved to avoid Chantel from running away. Soon enough, he entered her without any resistance from her.

Chantel felt so tired that she wanted to sleep at once. She was already half asleep when she heard his voice. "Forget about the divorce. It's impossible to happen. If you continue to insist on that idea, I will send two people to follow you every day, and I will ban you from getting close to anyone..."

She didn't hear the rest of his words because she wasn't able to resist sleepiness anymore.

The next morning, all members of the Leonard family gathered at the table for breakfast.

But wait! Two people were missing.

One was Matthew, who was in Alorith, and the other was Chantel, who was still sleeping soundly upstairs.

"Dad, I'll go wake Mom up," Hugo said. The child actually missed his mother so much. Last night, he wanted to sleep with her, but his aunt Erica deceived him and brought him back to her room. As a result, it was she who held him in her arms the whole night.

After taking a spoonful of porridge, Gifford replied calmly, "No. Your mother can't get up yet." If Chantel got up as early as them, he would turn out a loser.

All the adults were snickering tacitly, while Hugo stuffed a small bun in his mouth absentmindedly. But after swallowing it, he turned to Gifford again and asked, "Did Mom sleep late?"

"Yep." Gifford was guilty because it was he who didn't let her sleep until the wee hours.

"Did Mom stay up late to make my little sister?"

Hugo asked again. His innocence amused all the adults around the table. As much as they wanted to laugh out loud, they didn't want to embarrass the father and son, so all they could do was snicker quietly.

"You're such a smart kid, Hugo! How did you know that your mom was making a little sister for you?" Remus said with a laugh.

"Aunt Rika said that Dad and Mom were making a little sister for me last night, so I should not disturb them. She said if I got inside the room, they wouldn't be able to make my sister," Hugo answered.

Erica was sold just like that.

As a reward, she got a cold stare from Gifford. She then looked at the little boy with her eyes wide open and asked, "Don't you want a little sister?"

"Yes, I do," he answered, nodding excitedly. "I wish to have a sister as lovely as Wendy."

Wendy Baker was Remus and Yvette's daughter, who was about to turn two this year.

She was taken by Remus' mother back to her hometown, which was why she wasn't with the Leonard family.

Since the little boy mentioned her, Erica remembered to ask Yvette, "Hey, when will Wendy come back?" She hadn't seen her little niece yet.

Remus was the one who answered the question for his wife. "Maybe she will be back the day after tomorrow."

She nodded at him and turned to Wesley, who was eating his breakfast silently. "Dad, Gifford won't go back to the base today. Can I stay here until Wendy comes back?" she asked.

"No way!" Wesley replied unhesitatingly. "When Wendy is already here, you can come back anytime to see her."

'Fine! You're such a cruel dad,' she thought inwardly.

Since she abandoned the Leonard family for more than three years, her status in the family had dramatically declined after she came back. It was very evident that she was the least favored now.

She felt so miserable that she wanted to cry. All of a sudden, she wanted to go back to Alorith. She missed Carlos and Debbie, Matthew, and her four sons.

After breakfast, Wesley took Erica to Gifford's base. She didn't even get the chance to call Matthew.

Gifford didn't come with them because he wanted to spend more time with his son and wife first.

But it didn't matter. With or without his presence, Wesley knew a lot of people in the base who could train Erica. He even chose the strictest leader as her trainer.

CHAPTER 1368 MOTHER OF MY SON

Tessie also came with Erica to Gifford's base. She had already told Wesley ahead of time that she wanted to train with Erica so that they could take care of each other.

Wesley didn't turn down her request.

In the afternoon, Gifford brought Chantel to the base. At that time, Erica and Tessie were already practicing some military postures with the other newcomers.

He first observed Erica, then walked silently to the drillmaster and said, pointing at her, "Look at her posture. Are you sure you won't punish her a five-kilometer run?"

The drillmaster scratched his head in embarrassment and replied, "These two women look so fragile. I don't have the heart to punish them."

Besides, he knew that Erica was Matthew's wife. He didn't dare to treat her the way he handled the other men, or else Matthew would teach him a lesson.

Gifford crossed his arms in front of his chest and reminded him casually, "If my dad finds out that you are too lenient on her, you're dead."

The drillmaster was at a loss for words. If only he could cry. Then an idea came to his mind, so he said, "Your men are also training currently, right? Why don't you let Erica join them so you can personally train her?" The drillmaster didn't want Erica to be in his team at all. He didn't want to offend Wesley or Matthew.

"I'm on leave," Gifford answered nonchalantly.

"So why are you here now?" asked the drillmaster.

"Well..." Gifford looked at Chantel first, who was standing next to Erica, before he smiled unfathomably and replied, "Harry and the others are cleaning the bathroom now. They don't know why I let them do it and think I'm just punishing them unreasonably. Now, they will know why I punish them."

The drillmaster followed his gaze. As soon as he saw the beautiful woman beside Erica, he moved closer to Gifford. With a serious expression on his face, he said in a flirtatious tone, "The woman with you looks familiar. I think I heard some soldiers talking about her. They mentioned her name, but I can't remember. Is she your girlfriend? Finally, you found yourself a girlfriend. I thought you are going to stay single for the rest of your life."

Gifford glanced at him and smiled, revealing his white teeth. "She is the mother of my son."

"You have a son? Seriously?" The drillmaster looked at Chantel up and down in astonishment, mouth agape. And the more he stared at her, the familiar she looked. He had the feeling that he had met her

before, but he couldn't remember where.

"Yes, of course! By the way, don't forget that my sister is a very naughty woman. Matthew has spoiled her so much that she became lawless. Make sure that you train her well." Gifford patted the drillmaster's shoulder before he turned around and left.

He called Chantel, who was whispering something to Erica, and took her to another training ground. Dozens of soldiers were practicing shooting there.

As soon as his adjutant saw him coming, he ran over to salute him.

The rest of the soldiers just watched them.

When Gifford and Chantel got closer, the soldiers greeted him one after another. Then all of a sudden, someone screamed, "Oh, my God! Isn't that Chantel Rodgers? Why is she here?"

"What?! Chantel? Where is she?" Everyone who heard the soldier's scream dropped their weapon and rushed over.

Harry rubbed his eyes and murmured in disbelief, "The woman with our chief is really Chantel!"

The woman who was walking towards them had a decent smile on her face. She was wearing a casual orange dress with a long beige coat, which made her skin look fairer.

She was also wearing a pair of five-centimeter silver gray high heels. Perhaps she wanted to lessen the height difference between her and Gifford. But with her height that was 165 centimeters, her head barely reached Gifford's neck despite her high heels.

"Our chief is really nice. He knows that we like Chantel so much, that's why he brought her here today." Everyone was boiling with excitement all of a sudden.

Gage Robinson, who wiped the sweat on his face randomly, exclaimed in excitement, "Damn! Now I know why our chief asked us to clean the bathroom. It turned out he prepared the best reward for us. If this is the case, I am willing to clean the toilet for three months as long as I can see my goddess."

He then turned to the soldier beside him and asked, "Look at my face. Is there dirt on it? Does my hair look okay? Do I look cool? This is my first time to meet her in person. I must leave the best impression on her."

But something happened that saddened all of them.

Gifford suddenly grabbed Chantel's hand as they continued to walk towards them.

"Why did our chief hold her hand?"

Gage asked. He then shouted, "Chief, don't be rude to Chantel."

Another soldier also said, "Her hand must feel so soft. I'm so envious of him."

Finally, Gifford and Chantel were now standing in front of them.

Gifford glanced at them one by one and said slowly, "Guys, meet Chantel, my wife, and the mother of my son."

Although Chantel was confused with everything that was going on, she just went with the flow. When she heard him introduce her to everyone, she greeted them with a sweet smile, "Hello, everyone! My name is Chantel Rodgers. I am Gifford's wife."

Her words were like bombs that exploded in front of the crowd. "What? You are his wife?"

"Oh, no! Chantel is married to our chief?"

"Unbelievable! Is this for real?"

"My goddess and our chief are husband and wife. What a perfect match!"

Watching their reactions, Gifford smiled satisfyingly.

With one hand in his pocket, his other hand was holding Chantel tightly.

Harry squeezed to the front and asked again, "Chief, is Chantel really your wife?"

These soldiers were like brothers to Gifford. Actually, the first batch of red pockets that Hugo received when he was born came from them. They were not surprised to know that he was already married.

But knowing who his wife was seemed unacceptable to them. Chantel was their goddess. How could they take that she was their chief's wife?

'Is this really his reward to us? I don't think so! Obviously, he brought his wife here to make us suffer more,' thought Harry inwardly.

The next moment shocked them more. Gifford pulled Chantel into his arm, lowered his head, and kissed her on the lips.

It once again caused an uproar in everyone.

At the sight of the different expressions on their faces, his mouth curved into a complacent smile. "Yes, she is my wife. We have been married for several years now. And now that you know that she is my

wife, stop drooling over her again."

The sad expression on Harry's and the rest of the soldiers' faces showed that their hearts were aching. They had finally understood why Gifford punished them by letting them clean the bathroom.

No man would want other men to covet his wife.

They all felt they didn't deserve it. After all, they didn't know beforehand that Chantel was Gifford's wife.

Everyone in the base now knew that Gifford was married to Chantel, but no one dared to discuss it on the Internet. Thus, except for the soldiers, no one still knew that the popular actress Chantel was married.

Meanwhile, everyone in Erica and Tessie's training ground was having fun. Since it was their break time, many soldiers came to chat with the two women.

Erica was easy to get along with, so she became good friends with the men in just a short time.

CHAPTER 1369 LIKE A BRIGHT SUN

Their first day of training went smoothly, but Erica and Tessie were both exhausted.

Wesley had specially arranged a room for them, and asked them to follow the schedule of the other soldiers.

As soon as Erica saw the bed, she immediately climbed into it without even washing her face and feet. When her back touched the soft mattress, she fell asleep in a second.

Watching Erica sleeping soundly, Tessie shook her head helplessly. She had managed to wash her face first before going to bed.

The next morning, Gifford came to the military base again, but this time he was alone. As soon as he arrived, he first looked for Erica, who was currently doing some sit-ups. "Come with me," he ordered.

To his surprise, she refused. Shaking her head, she said unhesitatingly, "No, I won't go with you. I'm already doing well here."

Her training officer wasn't strict with her, and she could be lazy sometimes. Moreover, she was enjoying the company of the other soldiers in this squad.

If she followed Gifford to his squad, her life would be miserable.

Gifford had been indifferent to her since she returned, so she knew that he was still angry with her. If

she joined his squad, he might vent his anger at her through their training activities. She wouldn't let him make her training experiences miserable.

Gifford looked at her discontentedly and said, "Why are you disobeying me? Just follow my command. Inside this base, you are not in the position to refuse."

"No way! I've already adapted to the training here. If you want to go, go by yourself." She could hardly imagine her life being trained by him for half a month.

Of course, Gifford knew what was in her mind. 'She knows that no one else can train her strictly other than me. She sure wants to train indolently, ' he thought.

The group of soldiers who was doing push-ups not too far away was stealing glances at them from time to time, and it didn't escape the sharp-witted Gifford. When their eyes met his, they immediately looked away and continued doing their push-ups.

Suddenly, Gifford thought of something. Matthew had already known that Erica was training here, and he was on his way here. "Okay. You can stay here if you want." He thought that Matthew would take her away anyway, so there was no need to change her current routine anymore.

Erica was happy, but she was confused as well. "Gifford, why did you suddenly change your mind? Are you—"

Before she could finish her words, he interrupted her impatiently, "Am I what? Do you want to go with me now? If you join my squad, I'll let you run eight hundred laps around the training ground first."

Seeing his disgusted look, Erica lay back and continued to do her sit-ups in silence.

This time, Gifford's heart had softened again. "If you need anything, just tell me. I'll leave now."

But she just ignored him, and did ten sit-ups in a row between clenched teeth.

He sighed helplessly and thought inwardly, 'Forget it. I can't afford to offend her.'

It was almost noontime when a black luxury car slowly drove into the military base and stopped in the parking lot.

After receiving a phone call, Gifford immediately went to check on Erica, who was currently practicing shooting with the other soldiers.

He then left and went to the parking lot without letting her know that he was there.

A few minutes later, two men in a suit walked to the training ground with Gifford.

Erica's shooting posture still looked awkward even though the training officer had already asked an excellent subordinate to teach her all kinds of shooting stances.

Matthew hadn't seen her for a long time, so he was a little surprised when he saw her wearing a camouflage uniform, and her long black hair braided into two. A man in the same outfit stood behind her. Since he was teaching her the proper position to shoot, his arms were around her shoulders.

Matthew stood still expressionlessly, with his hands in his pockets. His eyes locked on the petite figure, who had no idea that he was there.

'Is my father-in-law sure that he sent Erica here to punish her? Looking at these handsome young soldiers here, why do I feel that she is enjoying the kind of punishment given to her? She once said that she wanted to have an imperial harem where she could keep all kinds of handsome men, ' he thought unhappily.

Knowing Matthew, Gifford couldn't help smiling. He then suggested, "Why don't you go and say hello to Rika?"

But Matthew shook his head.

Gifford raised his eyebrows. If he hadn't seen the fury in Matthew's eyes, he would think that he wasn't jealous at all.

'Never mind. Let me do it for him.' Shaking his head helplessly, he shouted like a commanding officer, "Erica!"

"Yes, sir!" After two days of training, Erica had developed the habit of responding this way whenever someone called out her name.

She then turned around and saw three people standing ten-odd meters away from them.

Her eyes fixed on the man that she missed days and nights.

'Oh, my God! Matthew is here to see me!' she exclaimed excitedly in her mind.

All of a sudden, her exhaustion from the training dissipated.

She got so excited that she immediately dropped the weapon in her hand and ran towards him.

Matthew's anger had subsided a little when he saw Erica running towards him with a bright smile on her face.

She looked so beautiful while her braids were swinging with the wind. Since the sun was glaring, her fair skin had tanned a little.

However, it didn't make her less beautiful and lovely.

Being bold as usual, she jumped into Matthew, wrapped her arms around his neck tightly and her legs around his waist, under everyone's gaze.

Matthew had to wrap his arms around her waist so she wouldn't fall.

Feeling his arms supporting her, she let go of his neck, held his face with both hands, and lowered her head to kiss him hard on the lips.

She was so free and willful to do whatever she wanted without minding all the people around them.

Witnessing such a scene made the dozens of soldiers not far away feel envious.

Even Gifford, who was standing next to them, couldn't help feeling envious too. He wondered if Chantel would also treat him like this one of these days.

"Matthew, I miss you so much!" After taking advantage of Matthew's lips, Erica wrapped her arms around his neck again and pressed her head against his cheek.

Despite his anger, he couldn't resist her enthusiasm and passion. She was like a bright sun that suddenly lightened up his mood. The fury in his eyes turned into sweetness in an instant.

Not far away, the soldiers who were training with Erica just now gathered and discussed among themselves. "What is the meaning of this? Why is Erica hugging him like that?"

"And she kissed him too. Do you think she is doing this on purpose to make single men like us jealous?"

"Erica said that her husband was very nice to her, and I believe her now. Look! They have been hugging for so long, but he still has no intention of putting her down. They are really showing off to us!"

"Oh, no! I can't watch them anymore. My heart is now full of envy."

Matthew could feel the people's envy from their stares.

But before he could say anything, Gifford glared at Erica and said, "Get down now. This is not a place for you to show off. Many people are watching you right now. Don't you feel ashamed? Go home if you two want to make out."

CHAPTER 1370 GOING ON A PICNIC

"Gifford! What are you playing at? You're really clueless, you know that?" Instead of getting down from Matthew, Erica held him even more tightly. Her head cocked to one side, she retorted, "Besides, you

kissed Chantel in front of your soldiers! Everyone knows that! Why can't I share a public display of affection with my own husband? I think you're jealous of me because I have someone. But Chantel's too far away to hold!"

Her words made Matthew laugh.

Gifford wanted to say something back, but he couldn't think of anything sharp enough. Erica was too good with the comebacks, and her words often stung! He had to threaten her, "You shut up! Did you forget where you are? This is a military installation—I'm in command here! What if I order you to run twenty kilometers with a five-kilo pack? Could you do it?"

Matthew held the woman in his arms tightly and told Gifford in a calm voice, "You're right. Rika's been a bad girl. But between you and me, we were supposed to teach her how to behave. We're responsible for this. So maybe we should be punished together."

'Together?' Gifford was not afraid of the twenty-kilometer run. He was afraid Matthew had spoiled Erica and never set any boundaries. "You gave her everything she wanted, and how did she thank you? She ran off for more than three years without so much as a word. Next time might be even worse. You sure you still want to spoil her without a care in the world?" He was afraid that if Matthew continued to mollycoddle her like that, this woman would really become a problem.

Erica glared at her brother. It was obvious what he was trying to do. "Gifford, you are such a dick! If I hadn't asked Chantel to come back, where would you be now? But now, when you see me with my husband, you start stirring up shit. See if I do anything for you again!"

Matthew scooped her up into his arms and said slowly, "You're right, of course. I won't make the same mistake twice!"

"What?" She was so sad.

Gifford suddenly felt a little guilty. Did he really drive a wedge between them?

However, what the man said next blew Gifford away again. "But you all have to spoil her. I'm the only one who can reign her in. Anyone tries, then they're going to have to go through me." Then his eyes fell on Gifford's face. "I'm the only one who can handle my wife. No matter what she does, no one can punish her but me!"

Gifford had to say he was really envious of his sister now. "Is it too late for me to transit to female? I'm sure the army will pay for the surgery. I want to be your woman, Matthew." He was only half-joking. He really envied Erica.

Matthew's face was full of disgust. He really wanted to kick Gifford off a mountaintop right now.

Erica immediately became vigilant. She put her face close to Matthew's and glared at her brother with a

WTF look. "What's wrong with you? Have you thought of Chantel? What would possess you to say a thing like that?" 'God hates me. That has to be it. My husband is so awesome that I not only have to worry about another woman stealing him away, but another guy too? Even my brother!' she thought to herself.

When he heard Chantel's name, Gifford got quiet.

Matthew glanced coldly at the men not far away and said, "Don't worry. I'll teach Rika a lesson, but not here." He didn't trust her around all these guys. She'd probably have gathered a harem for herself before she finished the training here.

Erica had enough of the human contact she'd been craving. She jumped out of his arms, and batted her sad, puppy-dog eyes at him. "Dad's already put me through the wringer for a couple days. So I have to listen to you, too?"

Matthew glowered at her.

Frustrated, Erica lowered her head. It was all her fault. She had no right to complain.

He took a look at his watch. There was less than an hour left before lunch time. He told Gifford, "I'm taking her out to lunch. I'll have her back later."

Gifford didn't want to see them anyway, so he nodded, "Okay! Hurry up!" Once they left, he could go home too. He'd find his wife and let her know how much he cared.

'Humph! I have a wife, too. And I can easily spoil her. I'll pamper my wife so much Erica will turn green with envy.'

Erica gladly followed Matthew. Her stomach had been rumbling, and she was starving. She was a nonstop chatterbox as they walked from the training area to the parking lot.

Owen drove the car away from the military base and headed east.

"Can we stop this, please? These training sessions are really starting to get on my nerves."

Matthew didn't say a word.

"Why don't you believe me? I know what I did wrong. If you tell him to stop this, he'll listen to you," she continued.

But the man remained silent.

Frustrated, Erica sat back in her seat and happened to look out the window. "Owen, you're driving on the wrong way," she said anxiously. "We're heading to the burbs. We should go south!"

South was where all the restaurants would be. It was the main part of the city.

Holding back his laughter, Owen cleared his throat and said in the same voice as usual, "Erica, Matthew has something special in mind."

"What? Something special?" She looked over at the man sitting next to her, who was as calm as the sea.

Matthew glanced back at her and said nothing.

She sighed helplessly. Knowing that Matthew was a man of few words, she didn't bother asking. Anyway, wherever he was taking her, at least he wouldn't sell her.

A few minutes later, the car suddenly turned onto a narrow road. They drove on that lane for a few minutes before stopping at the roadside.

She rolled down the window to get a better look at the scenery outside. It was an endless field without shops or houses. She turned to him and asked, "Are we going on a picnic?"

"You can think of it that way," he said mischievously.

"What?" Confused, the woman watched Owen get out of the car, light a cigarette and walk away.

At this moment, she had a bad feeling. She suddenly looked at the poker-faced man and asked, "Where is Owen going?"

Matthew looked up at her and asked instead, "How's your training going?"

"I guess it's going okay. It's just so boring!" Because she had learned some martial arts in the past and was used to exercising, they didn't wear her out too much. In addition, the training officer was kind to her, so she didn't have to do the grueling regimen the others were subjected to.

"That's good!" As he said those words, he pulled her into his arms with his right hand.

Then she was pressed against the back seat, and he was on top of her.

She blinked and looked at her husband. She knew exactly what he had in mind, and it didn't matter whether she was in the mood or not. "Uh...I thought we were stopping for lunch? What's going on?"

"We are stopping for lunch. And you're on the menu!" He lowered his head and kissed her red lips.

Erica was dumbfounded. 'What kind of lunch is this?'

Erica had already thrown the camouflage cap aside. Now with her hair separated into two braids, she

looked as young as a teenager. This made him feel a bit guilty about having sex with her.

Gritting his teeth, Matthew grabbed her camouflage cap and pulled it down over her face. The guilt in his heart diminished some.

They made love for a long time.

When he finally was finished, she opened one of her eyes and looked at the man who was busy mopping up the mess. She tried to say something to him, but her voice was a hoarse whisper. "Matthew, you're crazy!"