

This Time, I Will Get My Divorce, Mr Chapter 456

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Chapter 456 A Man of Honor

Judging by the indifference and cold hostility with which Sonia had usually treated Toby, it was odd to think that she would offer to make him dinner now. More to the point, it wasn't the first time he had injured himself while saving her, but she never bothered to thank him with such fervor before, much less offer to make dinner for him. The very idea of it would leave one in a state of disbelief.

Toby noticed the surprised look on Tom's face and knew what he thought. An amused smirk tipped up on the corner of Toby's lips and he sounded supremely pleased as he gloated, "Of course it's in her nature to do so and she won't stop at dinner. She'll personally take care of me for the rest of my recovery process."

"Are you serious?" Tom's jaw dropped as his eyes bulged to the size of saucers.

Toby threw him a withering look. "Why would I make this up?"

That question was enough to render Tom speechless. Of course he wouldn't make this up. He wouldn't get anything from lying to me, which means Miss Reed actually will take care of him! At that thought, he hesitantly asked, "President Fuller, did you suggest this proposition, or did she—"

"She offered it on her own accord," Toby brusquely interrupted.

Tom rubbed his chin while pondering on this. "I guess she's doing this out of gratitude for you after you saved her from certain death. So, what's the plan now, President Fuller?"

"What are you talking about?" Toby asked with narrowed eyes.

Tom stared like the answer was obvious. "I'm talking about your chance at reconciling with Miss Reed, of course! Isn't this the perfect opportunity that you've been waiting for? You've never risked your life to save hers before, but this time, you did so. It's a heart-rending and moving tale of your bravado! The fact that Miss Reed has willingly offered to nurse you back to health just goes to show that she doesn't hate you anymore; she owes you a really huge favor and you could press on that advantage and ask her to marry you again. There's no way she wouldn't agree!"

It went without saying that a chance like this was extraordinarily rare and if Toby were to act on it now, he would most definitely succeed.

However, he had never once considered this and even as he listened to Tom's suggestion, he remained impassive. Instead, he countered impassively, "I won't do it."

A baffled Tom demanded, "Why not?" He couldn't understand why Toby wasn't taking the chance to reconcile with Sonia, even though Toby had risked his life to save hers, which, if anything, was a testimony of his love for her.

Toby slowly reached for a document from the stack of papers and flipped through it. "If I were to do that, it would be tantamount to emotional blackmail. I would never resort to such underhanded methods; if I wanted her back, I would pursue her boldly and honorably until she comes back to me on her own accord. Anything else less than that would only make me a scum."

Then, he paused and shot Tom a deadly look. "Moreover, using her gratitude to my advantage would only reignite her hatred for me. Even if she were to agree to marry me again, we'll end up with nothing but grudges between us, which is far from what I want. Do you understand?"

Upon hearing the displeasure in Toby's voice, Tom bowed his head in apology. "I'm sorry for not having considered all these, President Fuller."

"Indeed. Don't bring this up again," Toby warned flatly as he opened the cap of his fountain pen.

"Yes, sir," Tom agreed with a solemn nod.

Then, Toby signed his name on the document with habitual grace and asked, "By the way, any word on Carl?"

"That guy?" Disgruntlement flashed in Tom's eyes as he answered, "He retired from the fashion industry and returned to Westsashire."

"Westsashire?" Toby had opened another folder from the stack, but upon hearing his assistant's answer, he paused and looked up at Tom. "When did that happen?"

"Just yesterday morning. I expect we'll hear about the return of the real Young Master Hayes in the business industry soon enough."

As he twisted his pen, Toby asked, "Does that mean Carl has gone back with the intention of taking his place as the rightful heir to the Hayes Family fortune?"

"Most probably," Tom affirmed. "Whatever Declan has done this time in pursuit of the Hayes Family's fortune must have angered Carl to no end. At this rate, Carl wouldn't stop until he's brought down Declan and the other illegitimate children of the Hayes Family."

"Carl will definitely track down Declan first. Keep an eye on him because if we do, then the chances of us locating Declan will be greater," a somber Toby instructed.

"Why would you say that, President Fuller?" Tom pressed as he gazed at Toby in bewilderment.

As he looked up, Toby asked, "Remember the top hacker who has been helping Sonia all this while?"

"Of course I do. You're talking about Fox Eyes, aren't you? The one who kidnapped Tina and led the Triforce Enterprise to lose five hundred million?"

"That's the one, and Fox Eyes is none other than Carl himself," Toby explained.

Tom gasped audibly. "How is that possible? We suspected he was Fox Eyes and we even looked into it, but the investigation showed differently."

"Hiding one's identity and personal information is but child's play for a hacker," Toby drawled sardonically as he read the document in hand.

A stunned Tom was silent for a moment. Then, he drew in a breath and found his voice again. "So, we have played into his hands after all. Don't worry, President Fuller, I'll have someone keep an eye on Carl." Carl is a hacker, and he'll likely track down Declan before we do. As long as we have eyes on him, we'll have as good a chance at finding Declan as he does.

"Alright, you're dismissed. You can come back for these documents tonight," Toby ordered.

Tom straightened his posture and bowed respectfully as he excused himself, "Very well, sir. I'll be taking my leave now." With that, he turned to walk out of the room.

Meanwhile, at Bayside Residence, Sonia was wearing an apron as she stood at the kitchen stove with a porcelain ladle in hand to stir the chicken chowder simmering in the pot.

A hearty bowl of chicken chowder was a product of attention and she needed to stir it while it cooked or it would stick and crust over the bottom of the pot.

At this moment, the doorbell rang and pulled her out of her chef's trance. She threw a quick glance at the chicken chowder and decided that it was almost done. After turning off the stove, she walked out of the kitchen and toward the threshold where she asked into the intercom, "Who is it?"

Charles' voice sounded from the device. "It's me, Sonia."

Upon hearing this, Sonia opened the door and was greeted by the sight of Charles weighed down by carrier bags of supplements. A smile twitched on her lips as she asked, "What are you doing here?"

"Evidently to see you and also to bring you a couple of things," he announced. Then, he handed the carrier bags over to her and said, "Here you go. These are all the supplements that are supposed to help with muscle recovery. Give them a try."

Now that she was amused by his gesture, Sonia was torn between accepting the bags and refusing them, but she knew that choosing the latter would only prompt Charles to shove them into her hands. Oh, whatever, I'll just take them. "Thanks," she responded cheerily as she grabbed the bags of supplements.

Suddenly, Charles sniffed the air in the room. "Something smells good. Are you cooking, baby?"

"I am," she replied as she took out a pair of flip-flops from the shoe cabinet for him. "Come on in."

He bent over to change out of his loafers and into the flip-flops before he followed Sonia into the apartment. After that, he rubbed his hands together greedily and mused, "Looks like I came at the right time! So, tell me what's for dinner today, baby."

"There's no menu, at least not while dinner isn't ready," Sonia answered as she placed the supplements on the coffee table.

He raised a brow. "What, no dinner? Then, what's with the delightful smell coming from the kitchen? It smells like chicken chowder and... Is that butter? Are you making mincemeat pie?"

Visibly taken aback by his deduction, Sonia gasped. "You must have the nose of a bloodhound! You can tell what I'm cooking just by sniffing the air?"

Charles chuckled, looking proud of himself. "Well, of course! My keen sense of smell is a force to be reckoned with, so don't even think about lying to me." He wagged his index finger. "Now that I think about it, I haven't had chicken chowder for a while. Could you get me a bowl of it, baby?"

"Nope," she said firmly. "I didn't make enough to spare you a bowl of it."

"Aw, why?" he whined, feigning dejection.

"Because the chowder's for Toby," she answered bluntly.

"What?" The look of mock exasperation on his face instantly disappeared as he regarded Sonia with a serious gaze. "Baby, are you actually going to take care of him?"

“Did you think I was joking about it?”

He nodded grimly. “I really did.”

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Chapter 457 The Act of Spoon-Feeding

Sonia rolled her eyes at Charles. “Look, do whatever you want to, but you’ll have to wait a bit if you insist on having dinner here because the chowder is off-limits.”

He pouted like a child. “Fine, I guess I’ll let him have the chowder, seeing as he risked death to save you and all that.”

“That’s more like it,” she said with a grin. “Now, sit down while I whip up a couple of dishes. It’ll only take a moment.”

“Okay.” Charles nodded and headed for the couch.

Sonia, on the other hand, wore her apron once more and returned to the kitchen where she resumed her cooking.

True to her words, it didn’t take long for the dishes to be done. They pulled their own chairs at the dining table and got ready to dig in.

He had only just picked up his utensils when he suddenly asked, “By the way, baby, I saw the suitcase next to the coffee table. Are you going on a trip?”

“Not exactly. I’m making a trip to my grandfather’s country house,” she answered after swallowing a mouthful of food.

With a curious gaze, he probed, “Well, what are you going there for?”

“To help my grandfather look for his journal.”

“Oh, is that it? Then, maybe I should go back with you,” he offered after taking a spoonful of one of the dishes.

Sonia eyed him with suspicion. “You don’t have to tag along.”

“Of course I do. I can be your driver. The muscles on your back have yet to heal and driving on your own would be torture; you’ll only return feeling worse. I’m offering my companionship as a matter of precaution and it’d also ease my worries,” Charles explained cheerily.

As though she was reminded of her injuries, she reached to feel her back. A gentle prod was all it took to make a sharp ache flare up on her back. She knew that there was no way she could make a three-hour drive down to the countryside and back to the city again; sitting down for hours on end would make her back shrivel up in pain. Besides, her driver had taken the next day off in light of his daughter's birthday.

Since things were already at this stage, Sonia was left with no choice but to look for a new driver for her trip. "In that case, you can come along. We leave at 9:00AM tomorrow," she said as she took a sip of soup.

Charles nodded eagerly. "Great, so that's settled. I'll pick you up tomorrow morning."

"Okay," she replied.

When dinner was done and over with, the both of them left Sonia's apartment. After having exited the gated area of Bayside Residence, she turned down his offer to drop her off at the hospital. The drive from her place to the First Hospital was forty minutes, which seemed manageable to her.

Upon seeing how stubborn she was, he knew better than to try and dissuade her. However, just as she had opened her car door and was about to slide into the driver's seat, he suddenly said, "Hey, baby?"

"What is it?" She held the edge of the door and gave him a look of askance.

There was a hard edge to his features as he warned, "Take care that Toby doesn't try to have his way with you while you're looking after him."

She sputtered at this. "What's going on in that mind of yours, Charles? I wouldn't just let him have his way with me!"

"I'm serious, baby. You have to watch your back. Toby still hasn't given up on you and now that he's saved you from death, I wouldn't put it past him to use your gratitude as leverage and ask you for some strange favor. You and I both know you wouldn't turn him down if that were to happen because you owe him one."

Upon hearing this, Sonia frowned, but she regained her composure in the next second and flashed a quick smile at Charles. "He's not like that. I know him and he's not such a low-life that he'd resort to something like that."

This wouldn't be the first time she owed Toby a favor, after all, given that he had helped her out with the bank loan that racked up to billions and the project collaborations.

He could have used those as valid reasons to force her into returning his favor in whatever way he pleased and she would have been cornered. However, he never did and she was firm in her stance that it wasn't in his nature to do something as underhanded as that.

At the sight of her nonchalance, Charles sighed in resignation. "Fine, then. I rest my case. Anyway, just keep your guard up around him and remember that I'm just one call away if you run into trouble."

"Got it," she said with a reassuring nod before waving goodbye at him as she ducked into the car and drove away.

Forty minutes later, she arrived outside Toby's room. The door was closed, but she picked up on muffled speaking voices coming from the other side, which meant Toby was likely engaged in a phone call.

Sonia raised a hand and knocked on the door. It opened the next moment to reveal a middle-aged woman wearing a caretaker's uniform on the other side. The woman gave Sonia a polite smile and asked, "Hello, Miss. How may I help you?"

"I'm here to see President Fuller. I brought him dinner," Sonia informed, showing the woman the thermal flask that she was carrying.

Realization immediately dawned upon the caretaker. "Oh, you must be Miss Reed."

An astonished Sonia asked, "You know me?"

The caretaker smiled and nodded in earnest. "Yes. When I came in to attend to Mr. Fuller earlier, he told me that a young lady will be dropping by with his dinner and that I was to let her in without any question."

"I see," Sonia responded after hearing the explanation. So, he told the caretaker about me in advance.

"Please come in, Miss Reed. Mr. Fuller has been waiting for you for a while now," the caretaker ushered as she stepped to the side to make way for Sonia.

Sonia raised a brow. "A while?"

"That's right. He sent me out to the balcony ten minutes ago to see if there was any 'pretty young lady with a thermal flask' approaching the ward," the caretaker confessed with good humor.

"My goodness." Sonia laughed. "Thank you for taking the trouble."

She figured Toby was really ravenous if he had been so desperate for her arrival. Then again, it was drawing close to 8:00PM and she was admittedly late.

As such, with the thermal flask in hand, she walked into the hospital ward.

At first glance, he was leaning against the headboard with his eyes closed, seemingly asleep. However, she knew for a fact that he was wide awake because it had only been moments ago that she heard him speaking on the phone.

She carefully tread over to his bed before she placed the thermal flask on the bedside table as quietly as possible. Then, she softly called out his name. "President Fuller."

The sound of her voice appeared to have awakened him whereby he turned to fix his gaze on her as he said, "Oh, you're here."

"Yes, I am." Sonia nodded apologetically. "I'm sorry to have kept you waiting. I made some chicken chowder and mincemeat pie and don't worry, it's all low-sodium. Here, see if you like them."

As she said this, she opened up the flask and proceeded to ladle the chowder into a bowl.

Toby took in her gesture and his features softened as he replied, "I'll like anything you make."

She froze when she heard this, but just as quickly, she brushed it off and went on to heap chowder into the bowl. After having done so, she handed the bowl over to him. "Careful, it's still hot."

Then, Toby propped himself up with one arm and having straightened his posture, he graciously took the bowl and responded, "Thank you."

However, it wasn't until after he had taken the bowl that they both realized his other arm wasn't indisposable. Needless to say, he couldn't handle his utensils and simultaneously hold his bowl with just one hand.

He exchanged a look with Sonia, which caused the atmosphere to instantly grow awkward.

A few seconds later, a somewhat embarrassed Sonia cleared her throat and offered hesitantly, "I-I guess I could just—"

"I'll get down from bed," Toby interrupted, moving to put his bowl on the bedside table.

However, Sonia stopped him from doing so and cautioned, "No, it won't do you any good to move around so liberally right now. Why don't I spoon-feed you instead?"

He stiffened at this as he was surprised by her offer. Turning to darkly gaze at her, he asked in a hoarse voice, "Are you hearing yourself? You want to spoon-feed me?"

"Yes," she answered, a little defensive. "What's wrong with that?"

When he saw how unaffected she was, Toby knew that she hadn't quite caught the problem that could arise from the offer. Since he was entertained by the idea, he let out a low chuckle and pointed out, "In case you haven't noticed, Sonia,

spoon-feeding someone is a rather intimate gesture. Are you sure you want to go through with it?"

Sonia gaped at him. True enough, she hadn't thought about the underlying intimacy of her offer at all. Although she was flustered by this, she couldn't bring herself to take the offer back or it would just seem plain cruel.

Or worse, it would seem like there was some spark between them that she was trying to ignore.

After considering all these, she finally took a deep breath and looked at Toby's arm, which was wrapped in a sling. "You're the patient and I'm your caretaker. It's only normal that I spoon-feed you and there's no intimacy here whatsoever. Now, open your mouth, President Fuller."

She took up the bowl that he had placed on the bedside table earlier before she brought a spoonful of chowder to her lips, blowing on it to cool it before feeding it to him.

Toby watched her with endearment and he glanced at the chowder in front of him, which smelled delicious. At last, he parted his lips like Sonia told him to.

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Chapter 458 Toby's Plan

After having fed Toby a mouthful of chowder, Sonia placed the spoon aside and asked expectantly, "What do you think?"

"It's delicious," he said after he swallowed the chowder to give her a reassuring nod.

She broke into a smile. "Good. I'm glad." Glad that all the stock-brewing, the dicing, the simmering and the stirring are all worth this moment of praise, she thought. Then, she brought another spoonful of chowder to his lips and prompted, "Here, have some more."

And just like that, the both of them fell into a rhythm and before they knew it, the bowl was practically polished clean.

Sonia rose from her seat and asked, "Would you like another bowl?"

Toby shook his head. "No, thanks. I'm full."

"Already?" She glanced at the empty bowl in her hand and frowned slightly. "You barely ate, though!" More importantly, the bowl she used was a small one and

there couldn't have been much chowder in it to fill him up so quickly, not while he was a man with a six-foot-three build.

"I'm actually full," he insisted calmly as he took the mouthwash the caretaker had given him. "They gave me another bottle of IV after you left in the afternoon. Apparently, the fluid contains some substance that makes one feel a little bloated."

"Oh, okay." Sonia nodded at this new information. "Well then, I won't try to force-feed you. I'll keep the rest of the chowder in the fridge, so maybe you can get the caretaker to heat it up for you for breakfast tomorrow."

"Alright," Toby replied.

She brought the flask into the kitchenette of the suite and returned to the room after she had kept everything in place.

Upon seeing that he was the only one in the room, she glanced around and asked, "Where's the caretaker?"

"I let her off her shift," he explained with a book in his good hand.

As she walked over to his bed, she pressed, "What are you going to do at night if you let her off early like this?"

"My legs are completely fine and I'm perfectly capable of being on my own for the night," he said matter-of-factly as he looked up at her.

Now that she saw his point, Sonia nodded. After dusting off her hands, she began to make her way to where she had left her purse.

At the sight of this, Toby's gaze darkened. "Are you leaving?"

"I should be. I mean, it's already 9:00PM," she pointed out as she took her purse and checked her belongings.

He cast aside the book in his hand and asked, "Would you mind staying here for a while longer?"

"Why?" She cast him a bewildered look.

"I figured we could talk for a bit. A friendly chat." He steadily met her gaze. "Please?"

She glanced at the time and after a moment of hesitation, she relented. Nodding in agreement, she said, "Very well, but I must leave at 10:00PM. I need to get some sleep before my trip to the countryside tomorrow morning."

"Okay." A satisfied smile pulled on Toby's lips.

Sonia placed her purse down and took her seat once more next to the bed. He had asked that she stay for a chat, but in all honesty, it was more of a crash course on business management than a casual conversation.

The whole time, he spared not one second on pleasantries as he divulged business management tips to her and taught her the best way to navigate the tough commercial world. He even touched on the ideal direction that Paradigm Co. should take in terms of corporate growth and the various industries that the company should invest in.

Initially, he had wanted to coach her on these things over the course of a hopefully developing friendship, but following the drastic shortening of his lifespan, he now only had three good years, during which his body would slowly wear out just to keep him alive.

At this point, Toby no longer had enough time to be her mentor and guide her through life in the industry. He had to teach her everything he knew before his body started to give out.

The business world was cruel; it would mercilessly chew and spit Sonia out as every one of its nooks and crevices was marked with scheme. She was still green, so there was no way she could understand how dark and twisted the industry could be.

If he could continue living, she would never have to discover how terrifying the industry was. He would have shielded her from all of it and kept her rose-colored glasses intact even if the industry rained bullets on it.

Alas, the chances of him staying alive after three years were too slim for there to be room for hope. He was destined to wither away and leave her unprotected, but he would do whatever he could to make her stronger. Going forward, she would be on her own as she tried to survive the industry.

Meanwhile, Sonia was admittedly taken aback by Toby's sudden coaching. She couldn't shake the feeling that he was urgently trying to make her absorb all his pointers, like he was leaving her with them.

However, she brushed off such thoughts and paid attention, clinging to his every word.

These were valuable notes that defined his career in the business industry, the very same ones that helped him to thrive and survive. Experiences like his were hard to come by, much less be narrated in person, and she didn't want to miss out on any detail.

Time ticked by, and soon, it was 11:00PM.

Somewhere during the conversation, Sonia had forgotten that she was supposed to return home at 10:00PM and as it is, she was already fast asleep with her head resting on her arms.

Toby glanced down at her and called out softly, "Sonia?"

Her lips twitched, but he could tell she was sleeping soundly, for she did not wake up at all.

She looked so peaceful when she slept that he couldn't bring himself to stir her awake. Glancing around the room, he saw the jacket she had hung up on the rack next to the bed. He lifted the covers off and reached to grab the jacket, then draped it over Sonia's back.

If it weren't for the fact that one of his arms was busted, he would have carried her into the adjoining room meant for caretakers who stayed over the night and let Sonia rest in a proper bed.

At the thought of this, his eyes fell on the cast on his arm and a rueful, imperceptible sigh escaped him.

After having made sure that the jacket wouldn't fall off her shoulders, Toby reached out to move her hair out of her face so that she could breathe better while she slept.

He had only just done all this when the door to the hospital room opened. Tom came bustling in with documents in hand and greeted instantly, "President Fuller, I—"

However, before Tom could finish speaking, Toby shot him a freezing look that made him clamp his mouth shut. He had no idea what he did wrong at first, but thankfully, he snapped out of his confusion in time to notice Sonia's sleeping frame as she slouched over the bed. At that moment, he finally understood the warning look in Toby's eyes.

As it turned out, his loud greeting had almost woken Sonia up.

"Sorry, President Fuller," Tom whispered apologetically as he tread lightly over to the bed. "I didn't know Miss Reed was here."

Toby retracted his icy gaze and decided to go easy on his assistant. "Carry her into the adjoining room. She'll only strain her back if she keeps sleeping like this."

"Me? Carry her?" Tom pointed at himself in shock, thinking that he must have heard Toby wrong.

"Well, I obviously can't do it since I only have one functioning arm at the moment," Toby responded sarcastically. He understood Tom's concern, but it wasn't as if he liked seeing anyone touch Sonia either. Beggars can't be choosers. If I could, I would have carried her myself.

Tom's gaze fell on the cast on Toby's arm. Suddenly at a loss for words, he set the documents aside and gingerly proceeded to carry Sonia.

"Be gentle, so you don't wake her," Toby warned again, the timber in his voice more prominent this time.

Tom mumbled begrudgingly, "I'm already as gentle as can be."

"Come out as soon as you've placed her on the bed. I don't want you hovering there." With that, Toby flapped his hand, urging Tom to carry Sonia into the room at once.

In a show of obedience, Tom agreeably did as he was told and headed for the adjoining room with Sonia in his arms.

On the other hand, Toby turned to stare after his assistant like he would do something bad to Sonia.

Aware that Toby was staring daggers at him, Tom felt a chill run down his spine. He didn't dawdle in the adjoining room and it only took him a minute to place Sonia on the bed and pull the covers over her. Having done this, he hurried out of the room.

It was only then did the hostility leave Toby's gaze. "So, what are you doing here at such a late hour?" he asked Tom.

Now that they were about to discuss something serious, Tom picked up the documents that he had brought in earlier and reported, "Well, we have just heard from all the international airports and none of them saw Declan's aircraft landing on any of their tracks."

"None?" Toby's expression grew somber.

Tom nodded. "None at all."

"Have you looked into the possibility of fake identities?" Toby asked, his eyes searching Tom's face.

While shaking his head, Tom explained, "I did consider the possibility that Declan and his men would be using fake identities for boarding, but in the end, I thought it was unlikely. These days, fake identities are less foolproof than they once were, and with Carl being a hacker, he must have already perused through the passenger records at all the major airports. He would have known and made a move as soon as Declan and his men used fake identities for boarding. It's more likely that Declan didn't even board a plane at all and that he's hiding out somewhere."

Toby lifted his chin. "I seem to recall there being ferry ports in Seafield. Am I right?"

"Yes." Tom nodded. When he belatedly realized what Toby insinuated, he asked incredulously, "President Fuller, do you think Declan has smuggled his way out of Seafield through a ferry port?"

"If he wants to cross international borders, smuggling out from a ferry port would be his safest bet and he wouldn't be easily caught too. The probability of him using this to his advantage is high," Toby deduced with narrowed eyes.

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"If that's true, then we were a step too late from the beginning. It's possible that at this moment, Declan has already escaped abroad," Tom spoke with a heavy voice as his brows knitted.

Toby nodded. "Once Declan has gone abroad, it is almost impossible for us to find him."

After all, the world was so big, so who knew which country Declan went to? Although Toby was just as powerful and influential abroad, it was nothing like his home country. There wasn't much he could do once Declan had the intention to hide.

"That's right." Tom sighed.

Toby rubbed his fingers for a moment. "Have our people focus on Carl's next movements. If Carl sends someone out of East Melrose, then it is likely that he has found Declan."

"Yes, President Fuller." Tom nodded.

Then, Toby looked at the time. "Okay, you should make a move first. Come back tomorrow morning."

"Okay." Thus, Tom turned to leave.

Shortly after his assistant left, Toby lifted the covers off the bed, took Sonia's bag and walked toward the adjacent room. When he arrived at the door, he gently opened it. The lights in the room were switched off, but he didn't turn them on either. Instead, he took out his phone and walked in with gentle steps while relying on the light from the device's display screen.

Then, he stopped next to Sonia's bed and placed the bag by the bedside. As he lowered his head, he stared at the sleeping woman on the bed, his eyes filled both with passion and regret.

After what felt like eternity, Toby's legs went numb, so he bent down to lift the corner of the quilt. Then, he lay next to Sonia before he stretched out with his

arm to gently embrace her. He drifted off to sleep moments after he closed his eyes.

Just after dawn the next morning, he woke up and opened his eyes. He turned to look at the woman asleep in his arms with gentle eyes before he raised his hand to ruffle her hair. Finally, he gently removed her hand on his waist before he lifted the quilt and got out of bed. With that, he quietly left the room without making any sound as if he had never entered the room.

2 hours later, Sonia woke up or rather, she was thrown awake by her ringing phone. She stretched out with a hand from under the covers with a frown and moved toward the headboard. As a result, she did not manage to get the phone, but she pushed down the bag left by Toby instead. Thus, the purse fell to the floor with a thud.

Now that she was startled by the sound, she was instantly awake. She opened her eyes and sat up while looking at the unfamiliar room, her mind confused for a moment. Where is this?

She couldn't think much about it because the phone in her bag that was now on the floor rang continuously, reminding her to answer the call. So, she hurriedly lifted the quilt and stepped on the carpet with her bare feet before bending down to retrieve her purse. Then, she found her phone within seconds. Since it was Charles calling her, she hastily answered, "Hi, Charles."

"Baby, where are you? Are you not at home?" Charles' anxious loud voice came from the phone.

Sonia combed her hair with her fingers and apologized, "Sorry, Charles. I'm not at home."

"You're not at home?!" At this moment, he was standing in front of her apartment door and asked with a frown. "Where did you go early in the morning? Don't forget that we have to drive to the countryside today."

"I didn't forget, but I don't know where I am now."

"What?! You don't know where you are?!" The corners of his mouth twitched.

She grunted and turned to look around the room. The room was not large; in fact, it was much smaller than her own room, but it came with all the furniture and things she would need. However, all of it was expensive, so it was obviously not an ordinary room either, but why was she here?

Sonia wrinkled her brows to think hard, but her mind had no memory of how she landed in this room. Instead, she remembered paying attention to Toby last night as he disclosed his experience of managing shopping malls. Then, as she listened...

Her eyes widened as she realized something and she hurriedly walked toward the door. "Charles, wait. Let me confirm."

After saying that, she arrived at the door and opened it. The moment it was opened, the familiar hospital bed and patient appeared in her vision and she immediately understood that her guess was right—she was indeed in the companion room of Toby’s ward.

Soon, Sonia gradually understood why she was here and why she couldn’t remember what happened after listening to Toby talking last night. It was because she fell asleep and he had someone bring her into this companion room. Now that she thought about it, she suddenly breathed a huge sigh of relief as her nervousness about being in an unfamiliar environment gradually dissipated. She placed the phone to her ear again. “Charles, I know where I am now. I am at the hospital.”

At the other end of the phone, Charles wrinkled his eyebrows. “Baby, you’re not at Toby’s ward, are you?”

“Mm.” Sonia nodded and did not deny it.

He pursed his lips and asked, “You didn’t come back after you went there last night, right?”

Upon hearing that, she opened her mouth, but nothing came out.

Then, he gritted his teeth. “Baby, was it Toby who told you to stay?”

“No.” She shook her head. “I fell asleep and that’s why I didn’t go back.”

She fell asleep? Charles felt guilty about having wronged Toby and softened his attitude. “Okay, did he do anything to you then?”

It was enough to make Sonia laugh aloud. “What are you thinking? He is a patient at a hospital. What can he do to me?”

“That’s not necessarily the case. He just can’t use one arm; the other one is fine,” he muttered sullenly.

A helpless Sonia shook her head. “Okay Charles, I know you have a negative opinion of him, but there is no need to think so badly of him. After all, he saved me and Carl, so I hope you will be nicer toward him.”

“I know. My attitude is better toward him now. If it were before, I would have whacked him.” Charles huffed before he asked, “Baby, when will you be back?”

Thus, she looked at the time. Since it was already 8:00 AM, she opened her mouth to say, “I’ll be right back.”

“Okay, then I’ll wait for you.”

“Mm.”

The call ended, so she kept her phone away and walked out of the companion room. Outside the ward, Toby heard footsteps and opened his eyes before he sat up with one hand propped on the bed underneath him. "Was it Charles?"

Sonia was still cautiously walking, trying to be as quiet as possible when she suddenly heard his voice. Now that she was startled, she subconsciously stopped and patted her chest in shock. "You weren't asleep?"

"I woke up long ago, but I heard you talking on the phone, so I did not disturb you." Toby smiled gently at her.

She lowered her hand. "I see."

He opened his mouth to apologize, "I'm sorry for scaring you."

"It's okay." Sonia gently shook her head.

Toby looked at her and confessed, "I heard about the call earlier."

Then, she turned to him. "And?"

As she didn't say bad things about him during her conversation with Charles, she remained calm without any need to be nervous.

With the slight curve of his lips, Toby responded, "I was happy to hear that you told Charles to treat me better." Does this mean that she is now feeling differently about me and is beginning to understand that the real me is actually better than the hypnotized me?

When she saw the faint joy in his eyes, Sonia inexplicably felt better. However, she didn't show it on her face; she merely pursed her mouth and probed, "Why are you so happy about this? I'm just telling the truth."

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"Of course, I'm happy. This is the first time I've heard you defend me in front of Charles and the others." Toby spoke as he leaned against the headboard.

Sonia's eyes flashed for a moment before she lowered her eyelids. "You are my benefactor, so I naturally have to defend you; otherwise, I would be inhuman."

"Just a benefactor?" He looked at her.

Her heart skipped a beat whereby her eyelids drooped even lower. "What else?"

He merely stared at her and didn't say anything else. It was only a long while later that he gently opened his thin lips and said, "Well, I'm okay with being your benefactor too. Let's have our breakfast first."

Then, he pointed to the Thermos flask at the bedside, which was what the caregiver had bought earlier in the morning. Sonia turned her head to look before she nodded and walked over to open the container. Afterward, she divided the breakfast into two portions—one for Toby and the other for herself. She didn't start digging in, but rather she picked up Toby's portion and sat by his bedside, ready to feed him like she did last night. However, he refused the offer by gently blocking the spoon while saying, "You should eat first and feed me after that."

"Is there any difference?" a suspicious Sonia asked.

His thin lips moved slightly as he explained, "I don't want you to be hungry."

As she heard these words, something moved in her heart whereby she began to look at him in a complicated way. While maintaining her hold on the spoon in her hand, she moved her lips, but took her time to respond. "I'm okay; I'm not ravenous. Besides, you're the patient, so you should eat first."

"I'm a man," Toby suddenly proclaimed.

Sonia tilted her head, not quite comprehending what he meant. It's just breakfast. What is the relevance of that to his gender?

While staring at the confusion in her eyes, he smiled lightly. "I mean, I'm a patient, but I'm also a man. And as a man, ladies first is a basic etiquette, which is why you should fill your stomach first."

"Um—"

She wanted to reply, but he interrupted, "Listen to me."

Since Toby's tone carried a hint of dominance, Sonia finally agreed. "Okay then."

She picked up the spoon to take her share and proceeded to dig in. However, she never meant to finish it, which was why after she took a bite, she placed the bowl down and went to take his container again.

When he saw this, his eyebrows twitched. "You're—"

Sonia scooped a spoonful of food and brought it to his lips. "I'll take a bite and feed you a spoonful, so that we can eat together and no one will go hungry. Isn't that good?"

Toby froze for a moment as he obviously was never expecting her to think of this solution. For a moment, he couldn't help but laugh. "It's a good idea, but don't you find it troublesome?"

"If I thought it was troublesome, I wouldn't have come to take care of you. Now, open your mouth," she ordered after slightly smiling.

Thus, he did as he was told. The two of them took nearly 20 minutes to finish their breakfast together through this method. Since she had to constantly change bowls, it was highly likely the most tiring breakfast that she ever had, but instead of feeling exhausted, her heart felt happy. How is it possible to feel happy just from eating such light and tasteless food? I'm probably bewitched.

Upon thinking of this, she shook her head.

When Toby saw this, he asked with concern, "What's wrong? Are you uncomfortable?"

"No." Sonia hurriedly stopped shaking her head.

He was still worried. "Did you not sleep well last night?"

When she heard him mentioning about last night, she suddenly thought of something and looked at him. "President Fuller, you had someone carry me into the room last night, right? Thank you, though."

"It's nothing; it's not a big deal." Toby waved his hand.

Sonia packed the Thermos flask and said, "It's late, President Fuller. I'll take my leave for today and see you tomorrow."

Then, she took her bag. He knew where she was headed to and merely nodded. "Go, but be careful on the way and be safe."

"I will." Sonia smiled and waved at him as she walked toward the door while Toby watched her leaving. She also felt his gaze on her all the time. If it were before, she wouldn't have turned back even though she knew he was looking at her, but she couldn't ignore it now.

He was her benefactor and if she deliberately ignored him, she would feel ungrateful and guilty. So, after she went out, she stopped slightly before turning to him with a smile. "Bye!"

Toby was startled as he obviously wasn't expecting her to turn to bid him adieu. He had subconsciously wanted to say goodbye, but he thought better of it and simply nodded as a response.

Not thinking that there was anything wrong, Sonia turned and left after receiving his response. The moment she walked out, Toby stretched out with his hand in a desire to call her back. In the end, he resisted from doing so and lowered his hand.

Without a suitable heart, he could only live 3 years. During this period of time, each passing day meant that the days in which he would be able to see was also reduced. Therefore, he didn't want to say goodbye to her because he was afraid he would never see her again...

He had longed to have her by his side, so that he could see all the time during these 3 years, but he couldn't bring himself to do that because it only meant confining her and not loving her.

Outside the hospital, Sonia suddenly panicked for no reason when she arrived at the car. She wasn't sure why, but she felt uneasy. Then, she suddenly saw someone before her eyes narrowed—it was the police officer guarding Tina. As she watched the female police officer carrying her breakfast in front of her, Sonia then remembered that Tina was still admitted in the special hospital ward reserved for prisoners and yet to be sent to the women's prison.

Now that she counted the days, 20 days had passed and there were still 10 days left. In 10 days' time, Tina would be formally imprisoned once the court order allowing her to remain out of prison was over. When the time came, Sonia could meet Tina as well.

As she thought about it, Sonia raised her head to look at the special ward of the hospital before she drove away.

40 minutes later, she arrived at Bayside Residence. When Charles saw her coming out of the elevator, he immediately stood up at the entrance of her apartment. He pursed his lips and grumbled, "Baby, you're finally back. Do you know how long I've been waiting for you here? If it weren't for the fact that your apartment is up here, passers-by would probably have seen me sitting here like a silly person and my reputation would be ruined."

Sonia looked at his exaggerated unhappiness before she apologized and laughed. "Sorry, Charles, I'm late."

"Forget it. I voluntarily waited for you anyway, so I forgive you." He waved his hand before allowing her to pass.

"Quickly open the door."

She nodded and opened the door with her fingerprint.

Soon, he followed her inside. "Right baby, have you eaten breakfast? If not, I'll head down and buy it now."

"I've already eaten," Sonia answered while changing her shoes. "Toby's caregiver bought breakfast."

An annoyed Charles commented, "You are becoming more approving of him. I mean, you didn't even refuse his breakfast."

Upon hearing these words, she paused for a moment before quickly recovering. As she hung the bag on the shelf, she replied, "It's just breakfast. Charles, wait for me in the living room. I'll shower and change my clothes. We should be able to leave soon."