

Warning 31

[Chapter 31 You Are Priceless](#)

Scarlett's POV:

When Charles asked me how much he was worth to me, he was standing really close, and I could feel his warm breath on my ear. It was incredibly ambiguous.

I looked down at my toes, and whispered, "You are priceless."

Since he got the answer he wanted, he chuckled in my ear.

"But that was in the past," I added, looking into his eyes.

His smile froze as he turned around and forced me to face him.

"And now?"

His grip was so tight that his fingers were digging into my flesh.

I frowned. It was too windy and I couldn't open my eyes. However, my mind was particularly clear as I said the following words.

"You are not worth a cent."

Charles' expression darkened as he finally eased his grip on my arm.

"I want to be the priceless one. Now, and forever!"

"Charles, do you even hear yourself? Don't you think it's ridiculous for a man who is about to divorce his wife to want her to consider him as a priceless treasure?" Shocked, I looked at him in disbelief, but deep down, I was also laughing at the absurd idea.

How could he be so greedy?

'He already has a lover, and yet he wants to be important to me?'

"I am not drunk, if that's what you're thinking. I know exactly what I'm talking about," he retorted with a serious look in his eyes.

"If you are sober, then why do you keep shuttling between two women? You are going to marry your sweetheart, and yet, you can't seem to cut off ties with me, either... Hmm..."

I was furious, but before I could finish my words, my lips were sealed with his as he kissed me forcibly.

Stunned, I did not know how to react, and when I saw a man passing by, I came to my senses and pushed him away.

"What the hell do you want from me, Charles? You asked me to come back to get a divorce, but you're also dragging me along and flirting with me. Are you still the same Charles Moore?"

"It is me! What? Don't act like this is the first day you know me!" Charles' eyes were still filled with passion, but he seemed to be enraged because I had pushed him away.

"You're crazy!" I was so angry that I could not even bring myself to fight with him. I turned around and was about to leave, but then...

"Yes! I'm crazy!" Charles took a step forward and grabbed my hand.

"What are you doing, Charles?" I glared at him, unable to break free.

Without answering me, he pulled me towards his car with great strength. He was obviously livid.

But so was I. I grabbed the car door with my hand, refusing to get in.

"Give me a reason to get in the car," I demanded.

"I left my jacket at your place. I'll drive you home and take my jacket from there. Is that good enough?" Charles was trying his best to restrain his emotions.

"It's just a jacket. You don't need to wear that particular one."

"It's my favorite jacket."

As far as I knew, Charles rarely ever wore the same clothes again, so his reason did not seem believable to me.

I stood next to the car door with no intention of getting in.

"I won't come in. You can get it and give it to me." Charles looked at me helplessly before he finally decided to compromise.

I looked at the cars passing by not far away and all the people around us. I felt that it was not good for us to keep standing there like that, so I agreed to his request and called Nina to apologize to her.

"You can't go back on your word." I was still a little worried.

"Sure," Charles answered readily.

After getting in the car, he leaned against the seat, but his eyes were fixed on me. He looked like a child that was so happy after getting a toy by throwing a tantrum.

I turned to look out of the window, ignoring him.

Soon we arrived at the community. Charles got off the car and opened the door for me like a gentleman while I ignored him and walked straight to the elevator.

With his hands in his pockets, he followed me.

As soon as he entered the elevator, he leaned against the wall with a playful look in his eyes. He kept playing with my hair and didn't stop until I turned around, glaring at him.

The elevator door opened, and Charles could not wait to get off it, which made it pretty obvious what he wanted to do.

"Don't forget what you said." I had to remind him.

He stopped and looked at me, obviously trying to hide the excitement in his heart.

As I went to open the door he leaned against the wall, looking at me. Seeing that the door was open, he could not wait anymore. He touched his nose and said, "Well... I'm a little thirsty."

Ignoring him, I walked straight into the room, fetched his jacket, and threw it to him. Just when he was about to squeeze in, I shut the door.

Slamming the door on his face brought me joy. I could not help but think of his cold expression as he stood outside the door.

Charles' POV:

In the club, I casually tossed my jacket away as I sat on the sofa, feeling pretty depressed.

"What's the matter? Did you just meet Rita?" Spencer took out a clean glass and poured some red wine for me.

"No." I pinched between my eyes, not wanting to say more.

"Looks like it was my dear baby Scarlett, who gave you the cold shoulder." Spencer put the glass of wine in front of me and laughed.

It was as though he was always looking for an opportunity to mock me.

Confused, David looked at him with a puzzled expression.

"What's going on? When did Scarlett become so close to you? And why are you calling her 'dear'?"

"You won't understand. It's a secret between the three of us." Spencer looked at him mysteriously.

"I will understand if you tell me. How can you still be my friend if you have secrets that I don't know about?" David's expression changed when he felt like we were excluding him.

"Do you really want to know?" Spencer asked, looking at him.

"Of course, I do!"

"Then ask him." Spencer raised his chin as he pointed at me.

However, I was not in the mood to explain to him now. I could not get my mind off the fact that Spencer had called Scarlett so endearingly.

'Dear? Baby? Do people really think that they can call others whatever they want now?'

"Don't call her like that from now on," I warned Spencer with a long face.

"Like what?" He tried to play dumb with me.

"Dear! Baby!" Enraged, I began gritting my teeth.

"Wow! You are such a meddlesome ex-husband, aren't you? What's so wrong with me calling my girl 'dear'?"

"I asked you to act, not to make it a real thing!" I picked up the glass and took a sip.

"Are you asking me not to be dedicated? That doesn't sound like your style! Charles, do you really love Rita?" Spencer asked.

"There's no need to ask. He doesn't look like he loves her at all!" David swirled the wine in his glass as though he was watching a play. Obviously, he understood what was going on from the conversation between Spencer and me. "But it looks like Scarlett is giving him the cold shoulder now."

"It seems that someone is going suffer a lot! Cheers!"

After saying that, Spencer viciously tried to clink his glass with David, but he ignored him.

When I thought of what Scarlett had said to me outside the bar an hour ago, I suddenly became excited and wanted to show off.

"Scarlett said that I was priceless to her."

"Well, you're just making things up at this point. Scarlett is such a smart girl. How could she say something like that to someone who is going to divorce her any day now?" Spencer looked at me in disbelief.

"You can ask her yourself."

"I am not joking around. I am really going to call her now." Spencer took out his phone and unlocked the screen. Seeing that I was sitting on the sofa and drinking leisurely, he gave up and said, "Forget it. It's your business, anyway. If I call Scarlett and ask her about it, she will think that I'm a nosy bitch, and that would ruin my image."

"Charles, are you still going to divorce her?" David asked.

"I don't think that he wanted to divorce her at all. Maybe he is just thinking about how to consummate their marriage!" Spencer crossed his legs on the sofa, his voice dripping with sarcasm.

"We are a couple. Is it wrong to want that?" I asked.

"Shame on you!" When they both heard what I said, they looked at me with disdain and disgust in their eyes. Spencer was really angry.

But I didn't care. I just felt proud of myself and my decision.

[Chapter 32 Act Like A Shrew](#)

Scarlett's POV:

After my program ended in the morning, a colleague of mine informed me that someone was looking for me outside the studio.

Rita had come to see me at the station several times, so when I heard that someone wanted to see me, she was the first person that I thought of.

While I debated with myself whether or not to step out and meet her, I heard an angry voice. When I looked up, I saw Susan, Rita's mother.

This time, it was the mother and not the daughter that had come for me.

"I'm looking for Scarlett! Where is she? Hey, don't touch me!"

"Madam, this is the studio. You can't come in here."

"Then tell Scarlett to come out here and face me!" Susan marched angrily inside the studio like she was going to tear the place down. Two female assistants could not stop her at all.

From where I stood, I saw everything that was happening.

"Go ahead with your work. I'll talk to her," I told my colleagues and went over to Susan.

The two assistants who were trying to stop her stepped aside when I nodded at them.

As soon as her path cleared, Susan rushed over to me and slapped me across the face.

I held my cheek and stared at her with wide eyes. I did not expect that she would do that, so I was extremely startled. My face burned after the impact, and for a few moments, my ears rang.

Seeing this, my colleagues hurried and surrounded us again.

"You bitch! How dare you seduce my daughter's man? Did you think that you could get away with it? You better leave him now, or you will suffer the consequences!" Susan pointed at me and threatened me.

Looking at her, I guessed that she was around 50 years old. She was a heavysset woman, and her face was now contorted in fury. If I did not know her, I would not have guessed that she and Rita were mother and daughter.

Well, I supposed that was to be expected on account of Rita's multiple plastic surgeries.

"You can make trouble here all you want, but I'm not afraid of you, Susan." After taking a moment to recover from Susan's slap, I approached her and spoke to her calmly.

My remark only made her even angrier, and she charged at me again.

But I was prepared for it this time. Before she could hit me again, I was able to catch her wrist and throw her aside. She staggered and almost fell to the ground.

"What's going on here?" The next moment, Abner came over to see what the commotion was all about. He probably heard Susan yelling. Per usual, he was in a neat, crisp suit and looking all powerful and elegant. Anyone would recognize him as the guy who ran the place.

Seeing Abner, Susan stepped forward, pointed at me, and shouted, "Did you know that your precious rising star TV host had a morally questionable lifestyle?"

Abner narrowed his eyes at Susan and glanced at me.

"This is a professional working environment, ma'am. If you have an issue with one of my people, then

take it up with me in my office."

"I didn't mean to make a scene, but Scarlett is so shameless. She seduced the man my daughter was supposed to marry. Now my daughter's alone and heartbroken. As her mother, I had to do something." Susan glared at me. I did not even flinch.

"Oh, my God! Is that true? Did Scarlett really break up an engaged couple?"

"Who knows if it's entirely Scarlett's fault? Maybe the fiance of that woman's daughter is more attracted to Scarlett."

"It's hard to say."

"I just find it hard to believe that an excellent and magnificent woman like Scarlett would settle for being the other woman. She's the complete package. Many single, eligible men are probably hurling themselves at her."

"Maybe the guy's filthy rich, and that's what roped in Scarlett."

Hearing Susan's accusations, my colleagues began whispering among themselves as if I was not standing right there.

"All right, everyone. Back to work," Abner announced. He knitted his brows and flashed me an apologetic look after hearing everyone's comments.

Everybody scuttled back to what they were doing, but as they went, they kept looking back as if they were expecting something else to happen.

"Are you okay, Scarlett? Your face is swollen. Do you need to see a doctor?" After everyone was gone, Abner approached me.

"I'm fine. No need for a doctor." I flashed him a weak smile. Then, he ushered me back to my station.

"Where are you going? We're not done here! What? You just wreck my daughter's engagement and not face the backlash? Shame on you! We're not finished here until you promise to leave Charles!" As Abner led me away, Susan stepped forward and tried to grab me.

But Abner immediately stood in her way.

"Ma'am, please. I already told you that I will speak to you in my office. I can't let you hurt and humiliate one of my people in my building. You need to calm down."

"How could you defend her? She's a wicked woman, and she deserves the humiliation. If you're not going to deal with her, then I will tell every media person in this city about what she did to my daughter.

She will be exposed for what she truly is, and your TV station's reputation will be ruined because of her." Susan figured from Abner's tone that he was partial to me, and she only got even more furious.

"Ma'am, we're not going to be able to solve anything if you're angry and not thinking clearly." After Abner tried and failed to calm Susan down, the TV station's make-up artist stepped up and attempted to soothe her.

After a few moments of speaking with the make-up artist, Susan finally lowered her voice. "I don't want to make trouble either, but Scarlett has gone too far. I'm only trying to make things right for my daughter."

"I understand. Well, our boss's doors are open if you have anything to complain about Scarlett, and he will help you get to the bottom of the problem. But right now, I have to get Scarlett ready. I have to fix her make-up for her program's shoot."

"Okay."

Susan flashed Abner a suspicious look and reluctantly nodded. Then, she followed him to his office.

After that, the make-up artist took me to the dressing room.

Sitting in front of the mirror, I looked at my swollen face and thought about what just happened.

Based on Susan's behavior earlier and what I already knew about Rita, I could only come up with one conclusion. They feared the strong and bullied the weak. Between me and Charles, I was the weak one and easier to intimidate.

Charles did not want to marry Rita, and that was his own decision. I did not have anything to do with it, and I should not take the blame.

The more I thought about it, the more I got annoyed. I shook my head and stopped the make-up artist who was about to set my makeup with powder. "Sorry. I have to go talk to Susan."

"Don't worry about her, Scarlett. Abner can handle her." The make-up artist tried to stop me, but I was not about to let Abner get dragged into something that did not involve him.

"I should face her myself," I told the make-up artist.

Before she could stop me again, I was already walking out of the dressing room.

I went straight to Abner's office.

The door was left open, and from where I stood, I could see Susan sitting in front of Abner's desk with a glass of water in her hand. I came just in time to hear the middle of her exaggerated story about how I

destroyed her poor daughter's life. I could not help rolling my eyes.

Obviously, Abner did not want to listen to her, but he had to deal with her.

"Abner, may I speak with Susan in private, please?" I knocked on the glass door of his office.

Abner flashed me a worried look and then glanced at Susan as if he was afraid that I would suffer again if I faced her alone.

But he did not say anything. He just nodded, stepped out of his office, and shut the door behind him.

"How would you like to lose your job if you don't leave Charles, Scarlett? Your boss just said that he would handle it." Susan raised her chin in smug satisfaction. I almost laughed at the emptiness of her threat.

"Oh, did he? Did you tell him that I'm still Charles's legal wife?" I backfired, cocking my head to the side.

Susan was rendered speechless by what I said. Her previous aggressiveness suddenly vanished into thin air.

I struck while the iron was hot.

"I meant it when I said I wasn't afraid of you, Susan, because at the rate you're going, everyone will eventually find out that Charles and I are still legally married. How do you think that will play out for Rita? That's right. She'll look like a desperate celebrity trying to lock down a wealthy married man by bullying his poor wife."

I watched horror, defeat, and fury dance in Susan's twisted face. I had to admit that I felt vindicated seeing her come to the realization that she had come to a gunfight with a knife.

Obviously, she had come here guns blazing hoping that she would frighten me into submission. I almost felt sorry for her that her little plan did not work. So, even though she came at the station today to assault me, she was the one who ended up crawling back home.

Because if there was anyone in the world who would kill to keep my marriage to Charles under wraps, it was Susan herself.

[Chapter 33 It's You](#)

Scarlett's POV:

After work, I walked out of the TV station with Zora, the make-up artist who helped me out this morning when Susan, Rita's mother, came storming into the studio and started wreaking havoc. Before we could make it to the gates, Abner caught up with us and invited us to dinner.

As soon as we sat down at the restaurant, Zora turned to me.

"So, how did you deal with that hysterical woman who made trouble for you today?" I almost chuckled a reply. Zora was one of the most serious, professional people I knew at work. I found it startling and a little amusing to see her transform into a common gossip.

"I told her that if she ever comes after me like that again, I will expose her family's atrocities," I replied with a smile.

"Atrocities? Oh, my. Tell me more." Zora's eyes glinted with excitement and anticipation.

I just beamed at her but did not answer.

Seeing that I did not intend to reveal more than I already had, Zora stopped asking, but she still flashed me some curious looks the entire meal.

While Abner, Zora, and I enjoyed our dinner, a familiar man strode into the restaurant with a group of men whose swagger screamed opulence. My eyes darted to one of them whose name was Walker. I would never forget him as he had casually asked me to be his mistress over drinks before.

Abner instantly recognized Charles. He glanced at the door and then said to me, "The reason for your bad luck today is coming over."

It took all of two heartbeats for Charles to reach our table, his entourage falling into step behind him.

"Hey, what are you doing here?" I said by way of greeting.

"Dinner with some friends."

I swept my gaze over the men Charles referred to as his friends. They greeted me with a smile, but I could tell from their curious stares that they were guessing the kind of relationship I had with their dear friend.

"I see you've come here for dinner, too. I'll get the check. It's my treat tonight. Enjoy yourselves." Charles nodded to Abner and Zora.

"Oh, thank you, Mr. Moore." Abner did not move. Zora stood up, shook Charles's hand, and thanked him.

Although a little surprised by Zora's gesture, Charles returned the handshake and grinned. Then, he shot me a look as if he was waiting for my expression of gratitude.

"That's very kind of you, Mr. Moore. Thank you," I finally blurted out.

Charles answered my remark with a rare, gleeful chortle.

"You're annoyingly cute when you try to be formal with me, Miss Riley. I wish you'd just call me honey."

My heart leapt to my throat. Why the hell would he say that in front of people?

Was I not in enough trouble?

Charles flashed me his smug smile that he knew very well peeved me. I could only stare at him as he walked away with his friends to their table. He seemed to be in a good mood, and it made me a little nervous.

"What just happened, Scarlett? Did one of the richest, most eligible bachelors in the city just flirt with you in front of God and everybody? Are you guys dating?" Zora looked at Charles's receding figure with wide eyes and then bombarded me with questions in an excited, gasping voice.

"No. It's not what you think," I said perfunctorily.

"What is it then?"

"It's complicated."

Again, Zora stopped asking since she could not get any decent answer. I heaved a sigh of relief.

After dinner, Abner, Zora, and I left the restaurant together, but before we could walk out the door, Charles's assistant rushed over to us.

"Miss Riley, Mr. Moore wants you to stay and wait for him."

"Fine." I did not want to wait for Charles, but his assistant was just doing his job. I did not want to make things difficult for him.

Seeing that I agreed, he nodded and shuffled back to their table.

"Scarlett, do you really want to sit around here and wait for him? You could've refused." Abner immediately noticed my unwillingness.

"It's okay. I have something to discuss with him anyway." I shook my head.

"Are you really going to be okay?" Abner watched me carefully. If I told him the truth, he would not leave.

"Yes. Don't worry. Go home. I'll see you at work tomorrow."

"All right."

I said goodbye to Abner and Zora at the door. As soon as the two of them left, Charles and his friends rose from their seats and started heading out of the restaurant. I stood at the door and waited for them.

"Come." Charles snaked his arm around my waist and ushered me out of the restaurant. The doting look in his eyes got me all confused and a little anxious.

I did not resist. I just let him guide me out. The last thing I needed right now was the attention of the entire world around us. I did not want to embarrass him or myself.

"Ease up. You're with me and my friends. You're safe." Outside the restaurant, Charles stood in front of his friends, wrapped his arm around my shoulders, and held me close.

"My friends, I heard that one of you once attempted to pursue my dear Scarlett. Well, he can't be blamed though. For having a good taste," Charles commented in a voice dripping with sarcasm.

His friends simply looked at him and did not say anything. They all tensed up like they knew they were going to pay for coveting what belonged to one of the members of the Moore family.

Of course, Walker was the most nervous. After all, he was the one Charles was talking about. The others might just look guilty because they had thought about making a move on me but never really acted on it.

"Scarlett is the apple of my grandparents' eye. She's very precious to them. No man in his right mind would risk the wrath of Michael and Christine Moore just to steal Scarlett away."

None of them moved a muscle, but all of them avoided making eye contact with me and with Charles. I supposed they might be wealthy, but none of them was powerful enough to challenge the might of the Moore family.

I just stood there and bore witness. I thought this little charade of Charles's was beneficial to me. If I let him threaten his friends passive aggressively, then none of them would dare come after me anymore, and I would be able to live in peace.

"Well, I guess you also share fault in this, Scarlett. You keep such a low profile. You should make it known that you're part of the Moore family." Charles stared at me with adoring eyes and tucked a lock of my hair behind my ear.

Remembering the mark that Susan's hand left on my face, I dipped my chin and turned my face away from Charles's view. But I was a little too late. Charles saw what I was trying to hide, and his calm, delighted face suddenly turned dark as if someone had just flipped a switch.

"What happened to you?"

I tried to cover up my cheek with my hair, but he stopped me and held my hand tightly.

"Tell me what happened."

"Nothing." I tried to struggle, but it did not work. Charles was incredibly strong.

"For the last time, what happened?"

"I said it's nothing, Charles. Calm down. People are watching."

Charles's expression only became colder. Realizing that he would not get a straight answer from me in public, he grabbed my hand and dragged me toward his car. Next thing I knew, we were sitting in the backseat.

"Is it Rita?" Charles asked through gritted teeth.

"No, it's you!" I exclaimed.

He made a promise to Rita, but he did not keep it. He was the reason Susan marched to the TV station and humiliated me in front of my colleagues.

If he had just married Rita like he said he would, we would not be here right now.

"What?" Charles looked at me with a frown. Then, he appeared to think of something and suddenly said, "You look much better than usual when you're angry. You're more like a real human being now."

"You're insane!"

How was this the perfect time to be joking? And how could he switch moods from angry to amused in a matter of seconds? I honestly did not know anymore.

I pushed him away and reached for the door.

He reached over me and shut the door immediately after I opened it.

"Do you have a first aid kit at home?"

"Why?"

"To treat your face."

"No."

"Then we'll go to my place. I have all sorts of creams there that'll make you feel better."

"No, thanks. I'm fine."

"No, you're not. Drive!" That was the last word that he uttered before he settled in his seat.

Next thing I knew, the driver was gunning the engine and driving to Garden Street.

Twenty minutes later, we arrived at our destination. I refused to get off the car. Why should I do whatever he asked? He did not own me.

When Charles finally lost his patience, he yanked me out of the car and stuck me into the house.

"Be a good girl. When you get hurt, you need to treat your injury immediately. Otherwise, it will take you longer than you need to recover."

"I know, but do I have to treat my injury here?"

"No. I just want you here."

I was speechless for a while. What did he mean by that?

We were going to divorce. Why should I listen to him?

But Charles was so strong. I was helpless against him.

[Chapter 34 Applying Ointment](#)

Scarlett's POV:

Charles forcibly took me to his house.

"Go remove your makeup, so I can apply ointment on your face." He pushed me towards the bathroom and urged me to take off my makeup.

"No." I stood still and turned to refuse him again.

"Do you really think the ointment is going to work if I apply it on top of your makeup?" Charles frowned and continued in a domineering tone, "Hurry up! I'm going to get the first aid kit."

Without resisting again, I walked straight into the bathroom.

It was because I wanted him to finish applying the soon, so that I can leave the place.

I removed my makeup and walked out of the bathroom. As soon as I wiped my face dry, Charles pushed me down on the couch. He leaned close to me, and I was able to feel his warm breath against my ear. He smelled good, but the intimacy between us was making me feel uncomfortable.

"What is this all about?" Why did he have to be in such an intimate position with me just to apply ointment? I was really starting to doubt if he was doing it on purpose.

"I can see better this way." Charles then dipped a cotton swab in the ointment and applied it on my face gently.

But it hurt, and I wanted to stop him as I gasped and trembled. Then, I realized that he was not going to let me go until he was done applying ointment for me, so I gave up the idea of protesting and endured the pain, biting my lip.

"Does it hurt?" Charles asked, looking into my eyes.

We were so close, and compared with the pain, his heartbeat made me feel more uneasy, so I shook my head and tried to push him away.

But he grabbed my hands like it was nothing.

I looked at him in confusion. Was he only applying ointment to my face?

Or was he taking advantage of me?

He put down the cotton swab in his hand and gently massaged my lips with his thumb.

"It's not a good habit. If you continue to do that, then I can't keep myself in control."

"What?" I stared at Charles, not knowing what he was talking about.

When I was not expecting him to, he leaned over and kissed me. The moment his lips clung to mine, he tried to push his tongue into my mouth as he breathed on my face.

I stared at him blankly and completely forgot to struggle. I didn't resist his kiss, and in the end, I couldn't help but respond to him.

The sound of us sucking each other's lips echoed in the living room, making it seem insanely erotic.

I had no idea for how long we'd been kissing when we heard his phone ring.

He stood up with a frown and went to answer the phone while I sat up and tidied my clothes.

"I have already told you not to call me again," Charles said in a serious tone over the phone.

I looked up at him and saw him toss the phone on the tea table irritably before he turned to me.

The phone screen was still on, and I noticed that it was Rita who had called him.

It was the second time I was seeing him react so strongly to Rita's call. The first time, he had put his phone on mute, but now, he told her not to call him again.

What was Charles doing?

When I looked at him, a bold thought flashed through my mind. It was because of his reaction that Rita had felt like she was in a crisis and that was why she was trying to force him to marry her soon.

"What should I do? Scarlett, tell me what I should do." Charles lowered his head. He looked like he was going crazy as he hugged me, asking for help.

My heart ached to see him in such a miserable condition, so I patted his back to comfort him.

"She is the one you love, and she has been the one you have loved for so many years. You two are finally going to get married, and you can't back down now. It is her last wish. It's also your wish. You made a deal with me just for today, didn't you? You should be happy at now, not sad. Listen to me, we will get a divorce tomorrow. It'll be good for all of us."

"Do you really want to get a divorce?" Charles asked reluctantly.

"Yes."

As soon as I said those words, a sense of emptiness conquered my heart.

However, I had a clear mind.

We had expected Charles and Rita to get married from the start, and we had agreed our marriage was just to prevent our families from urging us to get married to other people. So we married each other so that I could live my life and he could continue to be with Rita.

We had not gotten married for the sake of love, so our motive was not pure. Now Rita was dying, and she wanted to get married soon. It was the perfect time to put an end to our phony relationship.

"But I..." Charles looked at me affectionately, which made my heart sink.

"No buts. You should be more determined. Rita doesn't have much time left. You have to marry her before it's too late, or you will end up regretting it for the rest of your life. Cheer up! We'll get divorced tomorrow!" As I said those words calmly, I forced myself not to look into his eyes.

"Okay." Seeing that I had made up my mind, Charles gave me a bitter smile and closed his eyes.

I let him lean in my arms while I waited for him to turn into the strong and decisive Charles again.

"What are you going to do after we divorce?" he asked after a long time.

"Work, eat, sleep, and hang out with my friends."

"Will you start dating other people?"

"Nope." I did not think that I should even be dreaming of a luxury like love. But if I met someone I liked, then I would probably let nature take its course.

I couldn't tell Charles that, because I was afraid that he was going to cause trouble again.

I glanced at the living room clock and noticed that the time was around 12 in the night. I looked at Charles, who was holding me tightly in his arms. Gently, I tried to move away from his embrace.

He was now like an insecure child. If I moved even a little, he would hold me more tightly. I would not be able to get rid of him at all.

The next day.

I was sleeping soundly when I heard the sound of high heels tapping on the floor, waking me up. When I came to my senses, I remembered that I had been sleeping on the sofa with Charles. All of a sudden, I noticed someone pushing the door open from the outside.

I was stunned when I looked up.

'Why did Alice come here?'

She seemed to be really excited and had forgotten to close the door when she walked in. She was staring at us in shock. After a long while, she finally said, "You two can continue to sleep. I'm leaving now."

I quickly straightened myself up, but I was so nervous that I was unable to button up my shirt.

"Mom, it's not like you think. You misunderstood us!"

But she did not listen to me at all. She even took out her phone and started taking pictures of us.

"Charles! Charles! Mom is here!" I shook him, trying to wake him up.

He slowly got up, and his beautiful sleepy eyes gradually brightened.

"What's the matter?"

Alice could not hide her smile when she saw him.

"I have already selected a fine young man to introduce to Scarlett. When can they meet?" She asked deliberately.

Charles looked at her and answered briefly, "She is busy."

"Then, are you two still planning to divorce? Scarlett will always be my daughter-in-law, won't she?" Alice's eyes lit up as she hoped to get a positive answer from her son.

[Chapter 35 Critical Condition Notice](#)

Scarlett's POV:

A slight frown appeared on Charles's face as though Alice had already asked too many questions.

"Fine. I won't ask you anymore. As for the divorce, I suggest you think it through again. But, you know, it'll be great if Scarlett gets pregnant while you're at it," Alice hurriedly said with a shrug.

"Alice, I just came here to get my face treated. It's not what you think," I quickly explained, not wanting Alice to misunderstand me more. After fighting with the buttons for a long time, I finally buttoned them up.

"You don't have to explain. I'm the one who should apologize. I didn't know you both returned here last night. But, you don't have to be shy about it. That's normal for a man and woman, after all. Besides, you two are a legal couple. You're free to do anything you want." Alice admitted her faults but still did not let the matter go.

Truth be told, I felt an urge to cry when I heard what she had said.

Charles and I had already made up our minds about the divorce. But now, Alice misunderstood what was happening between us again. What should I do now?

Anxious, I grabbed Charles's hand and asked him, "Please tell mom that we've already agreed to divorce yesterday."

However, Charles merely withdrew his hand and rested his head on it. He then looked at me blankly and acted as if this was none of his business.

This made my blood boil. I wanted to beat him right then and there, but there was nothing else I could do but hold my anger.

Flustered, I turned my face away from him. It was then that Alice caught sight of the palm print on my face.

"Scarlett, what happened to your face? Oh my God! Charles, did you beat her? You jerk! How could you do that?!"

Alice was fuming with anger as she thought that it was Charles who slapped me on the face.

"It wasn't me, but I've already taken care of it." Charles held my chin and gently turned my head to face him. His high spirits did not seem to change at all. At that moment, he opened the medical kit on the tea table and applied ointment to my face again.

My face no longer hurt as much as it did last night. However, I was still angry and resentful, so I tried to keep him at arm's length.

As Alice saw that Charles and I did not fight, she did not ask any more questions. She just left without a word and even closed the door for us.

Judging from her brisk pace, she must be eager to share with Michael and Christine what she had just seen.

"Why didn't you explain to her everything? We agreed that we'd divorce today, didn't we?" I asked Charles once his mother was gone.

"Mom has already misunderstood everything. If we told her that we would still divorce, she'd beat me. You know how violent she can be," Charles explained patiently while applying the ointment on my face with a cotton swab.

"Then why didn't you let me go last night?"

"I didn't stop you," he retorted with an innocent look on his face.

I was speechless. Yes, he did not stop me, but he held me tightly in his arms. I had to sleep in his warm embrace all night long.

This was all his fault. Alice would not have seen us like that if he had not done that in the first place.

"Never mind. But I'm telling you, don't try to delay the divorce again. You promised me," I reminded him. However, his mouth remained shut about the matter. This maddened me, so I pulled down his hand and advised, "I'll make an appointment with the lawyer later. I won't leave until you come. I'll wait for you no matter what. Don't postpone it anymore. It's unlike you."

With that, I left, leaving him in a daze.

Charles' POV:

In the hospital.

Two hours ago, I received a notice that Rita was in critical condition. I rushed to the hospital at once. As soon as I arrived, Susan, Rita's mother, grabbed my arm and broke into tears.

"Charles, please fulfill Rita's wish. She can't hold on any longer. Please, we're begging you! Rita is our only daughter. I can't bear to see her suffer like this. I... I wish it were me who's dying instead. I'm begging you, Charles. Her health is deteriorating. She can't hold on any longer."

"I'll talk with Rita." I walked away from Susan as a dreadful feeling washed over me.

"Charles, you can't tell Rita about this. Her condition is getting worse. She won't be able to bear the news. If you really love her and don't want her to leave with regret, you should marry her as soon as possible." Just as I was about to walk towards Rita's ward, Susan took a step forward and deftly grabbed my arm. "To tell you the truth, we don't expect her to make it. We just hope that she'll have no regrets when she leaves this world. Please stop messing with Scarlett and marry Rita as soon as possible. My daughter is dying."

I turned around and looked at her coldly. "Is that why you went to the TV station for Scarlett?"

Susan froze. She suddenly stopped crying and lowered her head with a guilty look on her face.

Although tempting, I figured that it was not the right time to settle accounts with her, so I shrugged off her hand and went straight to Rita's ward.

But before I could touch the doorknob, I stiffened in my spot. It suddenly occurred to me what Scarlett had told me this morning. She said she would call a lawyer and wait for me no matter what.

I was at a loss. For a moment, I felt as though my body had a mind of its own. Before I knew it, I turned around and left.

Through the glass panel on the door of the ward, I saw a familiar figure get up from bed and sprint towards the door.

She did not seem like a patient in a critical condition at all.

Scarlett's POV:

I stood at the entrance of the law office and watched people walk in and out of the building.

Unfortunately, the person I was waiting for was nowhere to be seen.

This morning, I excused myself from the TV station, so I could go through the divorce formalities. However, it seemed that I excused myself for nothing.

But then, I suddenly remembered that I had told Charles I would not leave until he came. Because of this, I decided to wait for him nevertheless.

Finally in the afternoon, just as I was about to give up, a familiar black car came to a halt in front of the building. It was Charles. As he got off the car, I noticed that he was wearing a nice, crisp suit. It seemed that he came here prepared.

"Here you are. Hurry up. They'll be closing soon." I urged.

To my surprise, the passenger door opened, and Rita, who was still in a blue and white hospital gown, got out of the car.

Charles brought that woman here before we could even get through the divorce formalities. She did not even change her clothes! It appeared that she could no longer wait to marry him.

I felt a sharp pain in my heart, but the smile on my face never faltered. I did not want to give Rita a sense of satisfaction. Not only that, but I also did not want Charles to think that I did not want to leave him.

"Sorry to keep you waiting. I'm not in good health, so we took our time on the way," Rita explained with an apologetic look on her face. In my eyes, it was disgusting.

"I don't mind as long as he comes." I walked away and entered the law office before they could respond.

Charles and Rita followed me.

The divorce formalities started a few moments later. The lawyer printed out a copy of the divorce agreement and looked at us across the table. Meanwhile, Rita stood outside the door, watching us.

"Have you two made up your mind?" the lawyer seriously asked.

"I have," I replied calmly. I then looked at Charles and waited for him to answer.

For some reason, he did not. With his fingers crossed, he lowered his head and said nothing.

"Mr. Moore? I asked if you two have made up your mind." The lawyer called Charles's attention.

Charles still made no answer and just looked at me coldly.

The lawyer put his hand on the divorce agreement and smiled gently at me. "Mrs. Moore, your husband doesn't seem willing to proceed with the divorce. Why don't you two go home first and discuss it?"

"Sir, we've already reached an agreement before coming here. Besides, someone here can't wait any longer." I beckoned the lawyer to look outside the window.

He followed my gaze and saw Rita anxiously watching us.

The lawyer immediately understood what I meant, but he still persuaded me. "Divorce is a matter based on the will of both parties as husband and wife. Anyone else's opinion doesn't matter."

"They've been in love with each other for so many years, and they still do. I don't want to be the bad guy here. The third party. I believe it would be best if I fulfill their wish."

"You compromise because they love each other. What about you? Have you ever loved him?"

Without missing a beat, I answered, "No," I said I did not love him, but my heart said otherwise.

[Chapter 36 Christine Fainted](#)

Scarlett's POV:

Then sign it. The lawyer sighed and pushed the divorce agreement to me.

I picked up the fountain pen, turned to the last page, and signed my name. Then, I pushed the divorce agreement to Charles, looked into his bloodshot eyes, and said, "It's your turn."

You seem pretty eager to get rid of me, don't you? Charles asked through gritted teeth.

I don't see why we should delay it any longer. I put the pen in his hand.

Charles clicked his teeth and slammed the pen on the table.

But I don't like to be dominated by others!

I stared at him with wide eyes. What did he mean?

Was he insane? He was the one who proposed the divorce. How was he the dominated one in this scenario? Was I wrong to go along with his delaying tactics all this time?

Charles, we don't have all day, and we're not the only ones with business here. Other people are waiting outside. Just sign the damn papers. Next thing I knew, Rita was walking over to us and handing Charles the pen.

Judging from the anxious expression on her face, I could tell that among the three of us, she was the one suffering the most at the moment.

Charles clenched his fists and refused to take the pen. He did not even raise his head to look at Rita. He

just fixed his cold eyes on me.

The lawyer swept his gaze on the three of us and then smiled meaningfully as if he understood what was happening.

Charles, please... Rita begged in a broken voice. I bet she would give anything right now to be able to sign the papers for Charles.

Then, my phone rang and broke the silence. It was Alice calling. At the same time, Charles's phone rang. Michael was calling him.

What was going on? Why were Alice and Michael calling us?

As a million bad things raced through my head, my heart burst into a full gallop. I picked up.

Hello, mom? What's up? What? Grandma was rushed to the hospital?

I'll be right there.

Charles and I hung up almost at the same time. Then, he grabbed my hand and towed me out of the law office.

Charles!

Rita ran after us. Charles stopped, turned around, and walked to Rita with a long face. He pulled her out of the office without saying a word. If she had not screamed his name, I doubt that he would have remembered her presence.

Before leaving the law office, he turned to me and said, "Meet me outside. We'll go to the hospital together."

Outside the law office, I saw Charles push Rita into his car and slam the door.

Go!

Charles's snappiness scared Rita to tears.

The engine hummed to life, and as the driver pulled into traffic, Rita rolled down her window and watched Charles rush toward me.

Once again, rage and grief twisted her weary face. The flickering muscle in her jaw told me that she was not happy about what happened in the law office.

For a patient with cancer in the advanced stages, Rita seemed way too energetic to me.

She must really have godly endurance to be able to go around pushing Charles's divorce.

Let's go. Charles took me to the roadside to hail a taxi.

He grabbed my hand. I tried to shake off his grip, but I found that the harder I struggled, the tighter he held on. Eventually, I just gave up and let him nervously hold my hand.

To be honest, I needed the comfort, too. After all, the life of a woman that mattered to us both might be in danger. It was not the time to be squabbling.

Soon, we arrived at the hospital. We raced to Christine's ward.

As soon as we arrived at the door, we heard Christine's lively voice. Through the door's glass window, I saw Michael feeding her some watermelon. There was a big smile on her face. She did not look like someone who had just lost consciousness spontaneously.

The watermelon tastes good.

She chewed and beamed like it was the first time that she ever tasted a fruit.

Slowly but surely, all the pieces started falling into place.

Were Alice, Michael, and Christine in on this? Did they stage this little show to prevent us from going through with the divorce formalities?

If that were the case, then I supposed I was out of luck.

I flashed Charles an annoyed look.

Charles smiled faintly as if saying, "Hey, I don't have anything to do with this." Then, he pushed the door open and walked in.

Grandma? I greeted Christine with a smile.

Oh! My dear Scarlett is here! When she saw me, she got so excited that she opened her arms and beckoned me to give her a hug. I could not decide whether to laugh or cry.

Christine did not seem to be sick at all. In fact, she was her usual happy self.

Seeing my reaction, Michael quickly tugged the hem of Christine's hospital gown and gave her a look. It took a few moments before Christine registered what Michael was trying to tell her. Finally, she groaned and held her head with both hands. It took all my might not to cross my arms over my chest.

Ouch! My head is aching again. I have to lie down for a while.

Are you okay? Christine acted so hard that it made me want to pretend that I was really clueless.

Michael helped Christine lie down, and I tucked her in.

Scarlett, your grandma has been so worried about you and Charles lately that it made her sick. Michael looked at Christine with concern and glanced at me and Charles. If he wanted to make me feel guilty, he succeeded.

What can we do? Charles asked with a smile, leaning against the door.

Of course the one causing the problems has the nerve to ask. I've had it with the both of you. Enough with the foolishness. Scarlett, hand over your marriage certificate. It's the only way to stop your grandma from worrying, Michael declared.

Good gracious! How miserable my life is! I'm getting old. I just want to have a great grandchild before I die, but with my grandson and granddaughter-in-law getting a divorce, I have no hope. Christine pushed her performance.

Compared to Rita's acting, Christine's was even more exaggerated, but somehow, I did not hate it.

I was even afraid to show any holes in my pretend gullibility. I wanted her to feel a sense of achievement even if it was at the expense of my long-overdue divorce.

However, I did not want to hand over our marriage certificate.

Grandma, I... What are you doing? Hey!

When I was about to refuse, Charles suddenly strode over and grabbed my purse. He took out our marriage certificate and handed it to Christine.

The moment Christine saw the marriage certificate, she practically sprung out of bed. She sat up and snapped the certified, holding it to her chest. She heaved a deep, steady sigh, and her eyes glinted with the kind of glee that spelled triumph.

I thought you're having a splitting headache, Grandma.

Christine was so happy that she ignored my comment and just held on to our marriage certificate like it was some sort of a long-lost, legendary treasure map.

Well, I'm cured, thanks to this.

I could only shake my head.

I had been working so hard to get Charles to sign the divorce papers. I came so close today, but Christine swooped in and took the opportunity away. With our marriage certificate in her hands, I was back to square one. I had no idea what move to make next.

At this point, I was wondering whether or not Charles and I could ever get divorced.

I did not want to be in this situation, but mentioning the divorce in front of Christine and Michael would not do anything for me at the moment. So I decided to give it up for the time being. Christine might not really be sick right now, but if I started going on and on again about how much I wanted my marriage to Charles to be over, she might take it very badly.

Next thing I knew, someone was walking into the ward.

At first I thought it was a nurse, but then I looked up and saw Rita.

I heard that you were rushed here, Christine, so I came to see you. Rita approached Christine with a fruit basket in her hand.

What are you doing here? I don't want to see you! Get out! Christine snapped the moment she saw Rita.

Please don't be angry. I know you don't want me to be with Charles because of my illness. If it were up to me, I wouldn't want to be sick. I want to live a long, happy, and healthy life with Charles. Tears streamed down Rita's face as she spoke. The pitiful look on her face was so convincing at the moment that it almost made me feel sorry for her.

Sadly, nobody in the room bought it.

Rita set the fruit basket on the cabinet beside the bed. Christine angrily tossed it to the ground and pointed to the door.

Take your basket and leave, woman! Do you really think that I'm attending this little pity party of yours? I know what you're doing. You're just using your poor health to manipulate my grandson into marrying you and staying by your side. Well, I don't buy it! You can fool everybody else with your act but not me! Get out of my sight, you scheming witch!

[Chapter 37 I Won't Sign I](#)

Scarlett's POV:

"Christine, why do you think of me like that? Charles and I really love each other. Is it wrong for us to want to be together?" Rita burst into tears. People who didn't know the truth might misunderstand that Christine was trying to break up two love birds unreasonably.

"Christine, calm down. You need to take care of yourself." Michael looked at her with concern in his

eyes.

Christine took the watermelon slice from his hand and threw it at Rita's face.

"Love? Do you really believe that? It's just an excuse you found to separate them! Do you even deserve to talk about love? You shameless woman! Do you even know what kind of a feeling that is?"

"Why don't I deserve love? Is it because I'm sick?" Rita burst into tears, her whole body trembling. The watermelon juice mixed with her tears as it trickled down her face. "I respect you, because you are Charles' grandma, and an elder. But you can't humiliate me like this!"

"You ruined their marriage. I have been polite enough until now. If it were someone else, they would have stripped you naked, and thrown you on the streets. And when that happens, people would see how shameless you truly are!" Christine was so furious to see Rita looking at her innocently that she was almost out of breath.

She patted her chest to calm down before she pointed at Rita and continued, "How can you speak with such confidence after you ruined their marriage? Charles has really spoiled you. Just get this shameless bitch away from my face!"

"Ma'am, please." The nurse walked up to Rita and asked her to leave.

"Don't be angry. You should take care of yourself. If you lose your temper, then you will only suffer later," Michael comforted Christine, patting her on the back to help her breathe.

Rita looked at Charles as though she was asking for help, but he completely ignored her. He was only concerned about his grandmother.

"Charles, tell Christine that we really love each other," Rita pleaded with him.

"You should leave, Rita. Grandma is still sick. Don't make her suffer."

"Charles..."

"Ma'am?" The nurse asked Rita to leave again. Seeing that Charles had no intention of helping her, she had no choice but to leave.

After she left, Christine finally calmed down, held our marriage certificate, and smiled warmly.

Looking at her in such a state, I couldn't help murmuring.

"You pretended to faint on purpose to stop us from getting divorced."

My voice was not loud, but both the elders had very sharp hearing. Christine began to groan as soon as I

uttered those words.

"Michael, I feel dizzy. What's wrong with me?"

"Don't worry. The doctor said that you will be fine once you've rested. Maybe it was the noise that made you feel uncomfortable. Just rest for some time," Michael said at once.

He then looked at me and Charles, obviously asking us to step outside.

"Alright, Grandpa. Please take good care of Grandma. I have something important to do, so I'm leaving."

In fact, Charles was the one who had something to do, but he asked me to go with him.

"The marriage certificate is still in Grandma's hand," I said right before we walked into the elevator, unwilling to give up.

"I have an important matter to deal with and it can't be delayed."

"Then why didn't you sign it when we were in the lawyer's office?" Divorce was just one step away, but my hope was shattered once again.

Now that I had lost the marriage certificate, it would be impossible for me to divorce him.

"Scarlett, is this the way you treat your family? Didn't you see Grandma fainting just because we mentioned about the divorce?" Charles looked sideways as he cast a cold glance at me as though I was a selfish bitch who did not care about my own family.

"But she is just pretending..." I explained guiltily.

Charles was even more furious now. He walked up to me and forced me to the corner of the elevator.

"Scarlett, how could you say that Grandma, who has always loved you, is pretending to faint and lying to you? How sad would she be if she heard what you just said?" he roared, glaring at me.

I stared back at him. I didn't believe that he did not notice Christine acting. How could he lie through his teeth so confidently?

However, I couldn't argue with him about it now.

"This is all your fault. Why didn't you sign it earlier?"

"I could not have. It was not possible for me to do it then." Charles dialed down his aggressiveness as he leaned against the wall with his hands in his pockets. He seemed to be in a good mood. He did not seem like someone who lost his temper just a moment ago.

"What?"

"I said I won't sign it because if I did, then Grandpa would kill me!"

"Why didn't I know that you were such a coward?"

"It's called being smart."

I gave Charles a disdainful look. As soon as the elevator door opened, I walked out first.

"Tell me, what side of me do you like?" Charles asked as he caught up with me and grabbed my hand.

I pouted and kept quiet. Glaring at him, I thought to myself that no matter what, I would never get back with him.

Unexpectedly, Charles caressed my lips softly and teased, "You seem to be asking for a kiss from me. Unfortunately, we are in a hospital and there are so many people around us, so I can't fulfill your wish right now."

"When did I ask you for a kiss?" I became so furious that I had an urge to beat him up right there.

He had always been so cold to everyone except for Rita, so why was he suddenly smooth-talking to me?

The image I had of him in my mind changed all of a sudden.

"Alright, I won't tease you anymore. Does your face still hurt?" Charles looked at my cheek where Susan had slapped me. I was not feeling any pain. I just felt like it was not appropriate for us to be so close to each other at the moment.

"Don't try to dodge." I tilted my head to the side, but he forced me to face him.

He tucked a strand of my hair behind my ears and observed carefully. "It's healing. It won't be visible if you wear makeup."

"Can you let go of me now?"

"Sure." He let go of my face and then held my hand. "Don't get me wrong, but I am taking part in a program at your TV station, so I wanted to drop you off."

"You don't have to, right? People will easily misunderstand it." After all, the media had just reported that Charles and Rita were going to get married. Moreover, Rita's wedding dress photo was also leaked to the public.

And Susan had caused a scene about it at the TV station. If he showed up with me to the TV station,

then it would just be the evidence that people needed to accuse me of being the third-wheel in their relationship.

"Let them misunderstand us." Charles would not listen to me, no matter what I said. He pulled me out of the hospital and pushed me into his car.

After getting in the car, he leaned over to fasten the seat belt for me. When I didn't cooperate, he gave me a death glare.

The driver was right in front of us, so I did not want to fight with him. I just hoped to get to the TV station quickly, so that I could be rid of him.

Soon, we arrived. Charles and I got off the car. I quickened my pace, trying to keep distance from him to avoid gossip.

"Scarlett!" But the next second, I heard him calling my name loudly.

When I turned around and saw Charles standing by his car dressed in his signature suit, I could only think of one word... Noble. However, when I recalled the way he had behaved in the hospital, I felt like I was an idiot to associate him with such a quality.

"What's wrong?" I asked him.

"You forgot something," he said with a smile.

I looked at him suspiciously as I approached him and asked, "What is it?"

"It's right here. Come closer."

As soon as I walked up to him, he suddenly kissed me.

By the time I realized what had happened, he had already turned around and left. I could tell from his brisk steps that he was very happy.

But I was so angry. At the same time, Nina and Abner walked towards me. Nina pointed at me in shock then pointed at Charles.

"Scarlett, did you just..."

Abner's expression darkened.

Looking at them, my heart started racing.

'Damn it! What a jerk he is! Why did he have to kiss me here in public?'

Chapter 38 Buying Flowers

Christine's POV:

Alice, Michael, and Lawrence were all in the hospital with me. While having lunch, we watched the TV program that Scarlett was hosting.

"Our Scarlett is much better than the other hosts in their TV station. She speaks clearly and graciously!" Michael exclaimed while watching TV.

Lawrence and Alice nodded in agreement.

That moment, I noticed that Scarlett's right cheek had not healed yet, which made me angry.

"That mother and daughter duo has hurt our sweetheart. We can't just let them go easily, or they're going to think that the Moore family is so easy to bully!"

"Shall we fight back, then?" Alice blurted out.

"We should. After all, that Susan is a bitch. She hit Scarlett first, and then, she caused a scene at the hospital and forced my grandson to marry her daughter. They are both so annoying. If we don't teach them a lesson, then they'll get too cocky," I said, agreeing with Alice.

"I don't think that would be a good idea. If things go out of control, then not only will their reputation get damaged, Scarlett might lose her job. I just don't think that it'll end well,"

Michael said as he put down his fork and sighed.

I thought for a while and said in agreement, "Then we'd better think if there is a better way to handle this."

Alice's eyes lit up when she saw Scarlett on TV.

"How about we tip the media about Scarlett and Charles' marriage?"

"Do you want to expose their marriage?" Alice and I had the same idea. "That way, Rita, will not be Charles' fiancée, but an outsider who is trying to destroy the others' marriage."

"That's a good idea. With the public's opinion, everyone will take Scarlett's side, even the Internet crowd, and they will help us punish Rita and her mom." Michael also could not help but agree with us.

Lawrence didn't comment, but since the majority was on my side, the matter was settled.

Scarlett's POV:

After work, when Nina and I walked out of the TV station, we noticed Charles' car coming towards us.

"This is so annoying! Our dinner is going to be delayed now, but your lover is more important, so let's have dinner some other time," Nina protested in disappointment before she waved goodbye to me.

"Alright, then." I watched her leave, smiling.

Charles got off his car and walked up to me.

"Hurry! Grandma is still waiting."

"The hospital is not too far from the TV station. I can walk there by myself." With that, I walked forward, wanting to avoid my colleagues seeing me talking to him.

"It will take a long time to get there on foot." With an impatient look in his eyes, Charles stepped forward, grabbed my hand, and pulled me to his car.

I tried to get rid of him, but then I noticed that some of my colleagues seemed to have noticed the commotion between us, so I stopped and glared at him.

"Let me go!" I hissed as I stopped struggling.

"No! Unless you agree to go to the hospital with me, your colleagues will witness the pushing and pulling between us. And when that happens, you won't be able to explain things to them no matter what you say."

I was so furious that I felt my blood was boil under my skin. Seeing that more and more people were watching us, I had no choice but to get in his car.

As soon as I sat in his car, I got a call from Nina.

"Oh my God! Charles is secretly married!"

"What?"

"It's the trending topic! The trending topic, Scarlett! As a media person, don't you pay attention to what's going on around you?"

I hung up the phone and typed Charles' name on Google. The search results were all news about his secret marriage.

"Who did this?" Charles grabbed the phone from my hand in surprise. However, there were no traces of anger in his eyes.

"So it was not you?"

"How could that be possible? If I wanted to leak the news, then do you really think that I would wait until now to do it? It was not me," he explained seriously.

I didn't expect such news to come out now. Feeling nervous, I racked my brains and came up with an idea.

"How about we divorce right away, and then, you can get a marriage certificate with Rita? That way, you will be able to announce your marriage to the media."

If that happened, then no one would be able to find out that Charles and I were married.

"But the marriage certificate is not with me, so we simply can't get divorced." Charles gave me my phone, looked deep into my eyes before he turned to look outside the window.

When I recalled that Christine had pretended to be sick to take away our marriage certificate, my head ached. I was almost certain now that I would not be able to get the certificate back from her.

Feeling desperate, I came up with another idea.

"Aren't you very powerful? Can't you use your influence to get divorced without a marriage certificate?"

Charles sneered as he turned to look at me.

"Thank you for your appreciation, but why would I take the risk and do an illegal thing like that?"

His words left me speechless.

We were about to arrive at the hospital. There was a flower shop next to the hospital. Thinking that I should prepare something to show them that I cared, I asked the driver to pull over.

I walked to the flower shop and Charles followed me.

"Can I get a bouquet of lilies?" Christine had always liked lilies, and I have known that since I was a kid.

The owner of the shop was a friendly-looking middle-aged woman. She put down the scissors in her hand and walked up to us.

"Hold on for just a moment."

"Okay."

Since the shop was close to the hospital, they had good business. In order to prevent the shop from

getting too crowded, they had a lot of pre-made bouquets too.

The owner then took a bunch of lilies with one hand, and a red rose from the flower rack with her other hand. "You two look like a perfect couple. If a couple comes to buy flowers, we are giving them a rose as a promotional gift," the lady said kindly.

"But we are not a couple." Looking at the rose that she was holding out to me, I refused to take it.

Stunned by my reaction, she looked at us in confusion.

"But you two look like a perfect couple..."

"This gentleman has a sweetheart," I explained with a smile.

Hearing that, she apologized with an awkward smile.

"I'm sorry. It doesn't matter if you are not a couple... It's just a flower..."

"We'll take it." Charles took the rose from her as he glanced at me coldly, like he was warning me.

The woman looked at us for a moment and smiled, trying to figure us out. She was obviously thinking that we were a couple that was having a fight.

I was not in the mood to explain to her again. After all, she was just a stranger, and I did not care about what she thought of us.

With that, I took out some cash to pay the lilies. However, when the lady was about to take the money, Charles handed me a credit card.

"Use this."

I stopped and looked at him, and our eyes met for a moment.

"The pin is your birthdate."

"Here you go, ma'am." I turned around, ignoring him, as I handed the lady the money and left with the flowers.

Charles sighed and followed me. He then gave me the rose.

"Here you go."

"Thank you." I took it from him and put it in the bouquet that I bought for Christine.

Looking at the red rose among the white lilies, Charles frowned slightly. He wanted to say something, but then, he chose to be silent.

The flower shop was not far from the hospital, so we decided to walk the rest of the way. However, as soon as we arrived at the hospital, Charles and I got the feeling that someone was following us.

[Chapter 39 I Don't Hate You](#)

Scarlett's POV:

I wanted to turn around, but Charles put his arm around my shoulders and did not let me look back.

"Forget it."

"I feel that someone has been following me lately."

"Don't worry. As long as you're with me, everything will be fine."

"Does it have anything to do with our marriage? How about you get your assistant on it to find out?" I felt a little uneasy, so I wanted to shed light on things.

"Let's talk about it after visiting Grandma." Charles did not seem to want to take it seriously.

"We can't stall any longer, Charles. Everything will only get more complicated once Rita sees the news." I knew Rita well enough to believe that she was going to come after me again. I was exhausted of being caught up in the mess. I just wanted it to be over.

Charles suddenly stopped walking and turned me to face him. He stared at me deeply with his dark eyes.

I had no idea what set him off again. He stepped forward, and I retreated until I was backed against a wall.

"Charles..."

I muttered, but he did not say anything. He just looked into my eyes as if he was trying to find something there. As I swallowed and my cheeks burned, he braced one hand against the wall beside my head and brushed my hair off my face with the other.

"Scarlett, didn't I tell you not to mention her in front of me?"

My heart started racing. I leaned against the wall to avoid his touch. When he got close enough for us to share breath, I panicked and ran toward the direction of Christine's ward.

"Do you really want a divorce?" Charles screamed after me.

I stopped, took a deep breath, and squared my shoulders. I turned on my heel and flashed him a determined look.

"Yes! I do! I want it!"

The affectionate look on his face quickly melted away like snow in the noonday sun. I stood my ground as he started shooting daggers at me with his eyes.

"It's you who have been making excuses since the beginning. I don't want to do this anymore, okay? Both Rita and I want the divorce to happen, so let's just get it over with."

As a lump lodged itself in my throat, I turned around. Then, I ran to Christine's ward.

As I entered the ward, I overheard Christine and Alice's discussion about announcing Charles and I's marriage to the public.

"We should just tell the world that Charles and Scarlett are married. I think that's the only way to shut down the rumor mill."

"I think that's a great idea."

My chest tightened, and I protested immediately.

"No!"

"Why?" Alice flashed me a confused look.

Before I could reply, Charles walked in. I looked at him and silently begged him for help, hoping he would explain.

But he just stood there, crossed his arms over his chest, and leaned against the wall.

"Scarlett, dear, why do you still want a divorce? You and Charles have already slept together. What if..." Alice did not finish her sentence, but everyone present understood what she meant to say.

Christine turned her head toward me and looked at me as if Alice had just announced that I really was pregnant.

I sighed helplessly and started explaining again.

"Mon, Grandma, we just slept in the same couch, but nothing happened. Besides, Charles has someone he loves, someone that he wants to marry..."

"Ouch! Oh, my head! It hurts!" Before I could finish my explanation, Christine held her head with both

hands and whimpered.

Alice rushed over, helped her lie down, and then looked at me with reproachful eyes.

"Scarlett, Grandma is not feeling well. She can't stand hearing about that awful woman. If you want her to live for much longer, stop bringing up Rita."

I stood by Christine's bed, looked at her, and sighed.

She, Michael, Lawrence, and Alice had agreed to let me and Charles get a divorce, but now they were all working together to keep us from going through the formalities.

Once again, my hands were tied.

I stood there and watched Christine close her eyes. Then, Charles walked over, grabbed my hand, and towed me out of the ward.

Next thing I knew, we were sitting at the backseat of his car parked at the hospital's gates.

"We're never getting divorced now, are we?" I turned to Charles and spoke to him in an accusatory tone. I did not bother to rein in my emotions anymore.

"Grandma and Grandpa are not in good health. I can't upset them." Charles frowned and looked out the window.

"But what about us? We had the perfect opportunity to end it when Grandpa folded and gave me our marriage certificate. Why didn't you pull the plug with me then? We talked about this properly, Charles. We agreed on a clean break, but you stalled at every turn, and now here we are going in the opposite direction and growing more hateful of each other with each passing day. We should be at peace with our own different paths by now, but we're only getting more and more entangled. Aren't you tired of all of it?"

"I don't hate you, Scarlett." Charles turned to me and looked straight into my eyes.

"Well, it's not reason enough to drag this out, Charles. Rita doesn't have all the time in the world. The longer you stay married to me, the shorter the time you'll ever have with her. Do you really have it in you to break a dying woman's heart?"

"Wow, I really underestimated your ability to piss me off." Charles gnashed his teeth together in anger.

"What? I was just telling the truth," I backfired.

He ran his fingers through his hair in frustration, and then he screamed in a voice that I had never heard before.

"Get out!"

As the driver and I struggled to calm down after being so startled by Charles's sudden outburst, the lock on the doors clicked.

I got out of the car, and Charles snapped at the driver to leave immediately. I stood there until the car disappeared from my view.

My heart was still pounding against my ribcage. I really, really infuriated Charles this time.

And it was all for nothing. We were still not getting divorced.

Charles's POV:

As the car lurched forward, I watched Scarlett's figure shrink and shrink through the rearview mirror. I was so angry at what she said that I seriously considered shattering one of my car windows with my fist.

The more I thought about it, the more irked and depressed I became.

Scarlett always put things I did not want to face in front of me and forced me to confront them.

I picked up my phone, called David, and invited him to drink with me.

Half an hour later, David finally arrived at the bar. I had already finished an entire bottle of wine, and the waiter was helping me open a second one.

"What's up? Are you unhappy because your marriage has been exposed?" David casually asked as soon as he sat down.

"No, I am not."

"Then why are you drinking like a fish again?"

I tapped my fingers on the table and shot him a death glare.

"I don't want a divorce."

"What? What about Rita? You promised to marry her and give her the happily ever after of her life." David looked at me in shock.

"She will have her own future." I lowered my eyes and looked at my glass as the waiter refilled it.

Charles's POV:

It was crazy. I wanted to strip Scarlett naked and take her right in the bathtub. I had been finding myself in this kind of situation lately, and I had been finding it harder and harder to control myself.

I definitely frightened Scarlett with my sudden moves, and I hated myself for it.

"I can take a shower by myself. I don't need your help." With both her hands clutching her shirt shut at the collar, she glared at me.

The heating in the bathroom painted her cheeks a pretty shade of red. Her chest heaved up and down. She was still trying to catch her breath. Her cleavage was slightly exposed, and I could not bring myself to avert my eyes.

Indeed, Scarlett was no longer the little girl who used to chase me around and beg me for candy. During the three years she spent abroad, she had grown into a full-fledged young woman. I could not help wondering about the lucky man who would get to be with her.

Could it be Spencer or Abner? I dismissed the thought, for it only pissed me off.

Scarlett started rubbing the paint off her hands and arms. I watched her and then frowned.

"The paint is not easy to remove. Are you sure you don't need my help?" I bent over and whispered in her ear.

"No, thanks." I smiled as I saw her ears turn red. But then she stood up and started shoving me toward the bathroom door.

Before I reached the door, I turned and saw her red ears again. I could not help teasing her.

"Maybe we should take a shower together. I also got some paint on me. And it'd be a great way to conserve water," I suggested smugly and leaned against the door. I expected to see panic and nervousness in Scarlett's eyes, but she just flashed me an uninterested expression.

After rolling her eyes and heaving a bored sigh, she finally spoke.

"Like you care about conserving anything at all. Again, no, thanks, Charles. And save your sexual jokes for Rita. I'm sure she'll be thrilled to hear them." The sheer coldness on Scarlett's face almost made me choke.

Why was she bringing up Rita again? Every time I tried to flirt with her, she always ruined the fun.

"Why is Rita coming up in our conversation again? I would never crack a dirty joke in front of her," I

snapped as I fell out of the mood to tease Scarlett.

"Of course you wouldn't. She's your ever dearest Rita. Unlike me, you'll never disrespect her by making such inappropriate suggestions," Scarlett backfired through clenched teeth.

"That's not what I meant. I'm sorry, okay? I'll leave you to clean yourself up." With a sigh, I reached out and brushed my thumb against her cheek.

She slightly turned away, but I was still able to touch her face. I felt the heat of her anger in my finger. I usually enjoyed watching Scarlett throw a temper tantrum, but when she got furious like that and used such loaded words, the last thing I wanted was to piss her off even more.

Scarlett's POV:

Charles finally walked out of the bathroom. I seethed with rage when he made his stupid suggestion about us taking a shower together. Did he think of me as some red-light district prostitute who would cater to his every sick whim?

Damn it! What a terrible day! I should have jumped out of the car on the way here.

I stayed in the bathroom for more than half an hour. Having to stay with Charles only annoyed me more and more. I did not leave the bathroom until the delicious smell of food wafted in. Swallowing my pride, I put on Charles's clean clothes that he let me borrow and went to the kitchen.

I was still in the living room when the heavenly smell of roasted beef and baked potato with cheese hit my nostrils. Charles cooked those dishes well, and it had been a long time since I last saw him prepare a meal. When we were going to school, he made time to cook, but when we started working, he barely had the space in his schedule.

I approached slowly and quietly. The scent of the dishes reminded me so much of the time when we were still students. At that time, I was home with Charles, and Rita was not in the picture. Everything was so simple and happy. It was one of the best times of my life.

"What are you waiting for? Wash your hands and come join me for dinner." Charles was wearing an apron, and the dishes in his hands were steaming. I could not decide whether it was the soft lighting or the smile on his face that made him look gentle and loving. At the moment, he looked like the perfect husband that I had always dreamed of having.

The warm scene in front of me almost moved me, but then I suddenly imagined Rita's face and wrecked everything. Rita was now Charles's fiancée, and I was but a closed chapter in his story.

"No, thanks. I'm going home. Thanks for the shower and the clothes. I'll launder them and get them right back to you as soon as I can." I put on a polite smile and headed to the front door.

"Wait! Scarlett, stop!" Charles called after me, but I pretended not to hear him and kept walking.

Before I could get my hands on the doorknob, Charles was already grabbing me by the wrist and turning me to face him.

Past his shoulder, I could see the table was already set. There were even candles lit.

"Please just let me go, Charles. I want to go home. We can't keep spending time like this together. Don't you understand? You're just making things harder than they have to be. You're engaged to Rita and about to divorce me. We have to keep our distance from each other," I reasoned.

I was sick and tired of being spun around in Charles's web. I tried hard to break away from his grasp, but he was just too strong for me. He held on to me so tightly that my wrist began turning red.

"I'll drive you home after dinner. It's dark out. It's not safe for you to go home by yourself," Charles said flatly and looked out the window.

Indeed, night had descended, and there were not any lights outside except for the faint glow of street lamps.

Charles took advantage of my moments of hesitation, eased his grip on my wrist, and took my hand. He towed me to the dining table.

"Are you going to stare at me the entire meal? I won't run away." I had noticed that Charles had been staring at me like he was scrutinizing me. What was he looking at? And what was that affectionate look in his eyes? It was driving me insane.

"Well, then good. Otherwise, I'll be forced to tie you to my bed." Once again, Charles leaned in and whispered to my ear. As I gnashed my teeth together to rein in my emotions, he let go of my hand and sat opposite me.

Deep inside, I cursed myself for blushing in front of him. Until today, Charles had never uttered sexual innuendos to me. He had never been driven with desire in front of me except for that one time that he kissed me in the elevator. Now that we were alone in his home, he might actually try to sleep with me, and I found that a little unsettling.

"Why are you lowering your head? Are you scared? You know me. I do as I say." Charles flashed me a smile that I could only liken to an arrow piercing through my heart. Seeing that I did not respond, he continued, "Don't worry. I just want you to join me for dinner. That's all."

Then, he started piling some food onto my plate. Afraid that he would heave me over his shoulder again and do God knew what, I just nodded and let him serve me.

I chewed and swallowed my food fast. Even though dinner was going great, I still wanted to go home as

soon as I could. Meanwhile, Charles ate at a glacial pace and kept his eyes fixed on me. If he was trying to give me indigestion by watching me intently like a suspect under surveillance, he was succeeding.

"Can you stop staring at me?" I bit my lip and whined. There must be something wrong with Charles today. I felt uncomfortable under his gaze.

"Fuck! You finish your dinner. I'll go take a cold shower." All of a sudden, Charles's ears turned red. He put down his knife and fork, rose from his seat, and started walking away.

Before he could leave the dining room, he turned around and walked right back to me. He stared at me, and he looked like he was trying to find the right words to say.

"Don't bite your lip like that in front of any man ever again, do you understand? Now, stay here, eat your food, and wait for me to get back. If you leave before I get out of the shower, I will drag you right back here, tie you up, and have my way with you," Charles threatened me fiercely.

It was not easy to hail a taxi in the evening, so I was really counting on Charles to drive me home.

"Fine. I won't leave," I promised.

Hearing that, Charles rushed to the bathroom with a satisfied smile on his face.

[Chapter 40 Be Splashed With Pain](#)

Scarlett's POV:

That evening, just when I was about to go to bed, I got a call from Abner.

"Scarlett, guess what I just saw? Rita was alone in the bar, drinking. She did not seem like she had terminal cancer at all!"

"Maybe the doctor had forbidden her from eating delicious food or drinking wine for a long time now, and that's probably the reason she was at the bar, having a binge." I didn't think too much of it.

"But she doesn't look like someone who has cancer," Abner said after a moment's pause.

"Since she is a star, she always wears makeup, which is probably why she doesn't look all that sick."

Charles was the one who had found Rita's doctor. If there was something fishy going on, then he would be the first one to know.

Besides, he was smart, so how could he get fooled easily?

"Well, maybe I'm just overthinking things." Disappointed, Abner hung up the phone.

I quickly put the phone on the bedside table and began to sleep.

The following days were the weekend.

When I was sitting on the couch, watching TV, I heard someone knocking on my door.

I put down the remote and went to open the door. A man wearing a black mask and a black baseball cap was standing in front of me.

"Sir, what... Ah!"

Just when I was about to ask him if he needed something, he picked up a bucket and pointed it towards me. Realizing the danger, I screamed and quickly hid.

With a splashing sound, the red paint fell all over the floor, some of it stained my feet.

The man was not willing to accept his failure. In a fit of rage, he picked up the bucket again and was about to dump it on my head.

Suddenly, I heard him screaming as though someone had hit him, and the next second, I heard the bucket falling to the ground.

A familiar figure appeared in front of me, but before I could even get a clear look at him, he held me in his arms.

Still in a state of shock, the man glared at Charles before he ran away from my house.

"You're safe now." Looking at the paint tracks on the floor that the man had left before he rushed to the elevator, Charles stroked my hair to comfort me.

My body was still shaking from the fear. I couldn't hear him at all.

Charles wiped away the paint from my body with his hands and forced me to look at him.

"Scarlett, look at me."

I looked at him, and when I saw my reflection in his clear blue eyes, I was able to see how messed up I was.

"Why are you here?" My voice was hoarse.

Without answering me, Charles gazed into my eyes before he pulled me into a hug, ignoring the paint on my body. He then closed the apartment door shut and took me to the elevator.

"Now is not a good time to discuss this. You are not safe here, so I am taking you to my place."

My feet felt so weak that I could barely support myself by holding onto his arms.

When we entered the elevator, I tried my best not to look at my reflection in the mirror. I kept my head down and wondered, 'Who on earth did I offend for them to hate me so much that they sent someone to my house to pour a bucket of paint on me?'

However, I had no clue even after Charles took me to his house.

"Go take a shower."

Saying that, he took out a set of his pajamas and handed it to me.

But I was still in a trance.

"What are you still thinking about? Isn't all that paint making you feel uncomfortable?"

he asked with a disdainful look as he put the clothes in my hand.

Thirty minutes later, I walked out of the bathroom. Sitting on the sofa, he motioned to me.

"Come here," he said.

"What?"

I slowly walked up to him. When I got close to him, he pressed me down on the sofa, and made me lie down on his lap.

I was not used to being so intimate with him, so I tried to get up.

But Charles did not let me move at all.

"Don't move. I'm just going to dry your hair."

Drying a woman's hair was something that her lover could only do. It was not appropriate for Charles to do it for me.

However, he was being too bossy that he did not even allow me to show him resistance.

"Let me do it on my own."

"Don't move. It'll be done soon."

When I tried to get up again, he took the hair dryer and started blowing the warm air on my head. His slender and warm fingers separated my locks and massaged my scalp. He was so gentle, like he was taking care of a priceless treasure.

Although I was indeed feeling very upset, my infatuation with his tenderness was beyond description. I enjoyed it so much that I was about to fall asleep.

Only when the hair dryer stopped whirring and his gentle voice sounded in my ears did I come back to my senses. I quickly got up from his lap and moved away.

"Your place is not safe, so you can stay here from now on." Saying that, Charles put the hair dryer on the tea table.

"It's not like someone is going to attack me every day."

Though I said that, whenever I thought of what had happened at my apartment, I was still a little scared. But I also did not want to live in the same house with him because I found that to be too embarrassing.

"Besides, I have somewhere else where I can stay. Or I can stay at a hotel and move back to my apartment after a period of time."

"Are you seriously trying to say that you would rather stay at a hotel than to stay here? Scarlett, you're saying it on purpose, right?" Charles furrowed his eyebrows, looking displeased.

"What do you mean?" I asked in confusion.

"Do you think the elders will let us divorce after they know about what happened?"

"What are you even talking about?"

"The fact that someone splashed paint on you, or the fact that you want to stay in a hotel..."

"But I can't live here." My anger died down a little when he mentioned the elders.

"This house is under your name. How is it not okay for you to live in your own house?" Charles was taking the situation for granted.

"But we haven't divorced yet, so the house is technically not mine," I retorted.

"Since we are a couple, we both share equal rights over the house." Charles' tone became more and more domineering.

I didn't say more because I did not know what to say. Besides, he was making it impossible for me to refute.

"I've changed the password of the door to our wedding date." His tone softened when he saw that I was not arguing with him.

"We are going to divorce. We should keep some distance between us." I tried to remind him.

But his frown deepened and his tone became more sullen as he asked, "Do you really want a divorce?"