

Warning 51

[Chapter 51 Out Of Control](#)

Scarlett's POV:

Charles pulled me into the elevator, ignoring my rejection of his advances. He did not press a floor number immediately. He reached out and felt my forehead. He was standing close enough for me to smell that cool fragrance he was fond of wearing.

"What happened? Why do you have a fever again?" Charles asked in a slightly annoyed tone.

He eyed me carefully, and I turned away. I really did not want to explain myself to him. So what if I was sick? Rita was also sick, but she was not getting this kind of badgering from him.

"Answer me." Charles grabbed my arms and forced me to face him.

"I drank and had a little too much fun in a different city." I looked straight into his mesmerizing eyes and continued, "Seattle had amazing views, and I was with a very nice man."

A muscle flickered in Charles's jaw after I made a reference to Abner. He narrowed his eyes at me and pinched my chin a bit harder than usual. "You are still married to me. You should've asked for my permission first before you went out partying."

The moment he played the husband card, I felt even more exhausted. I just wanted to get inside my house and pass out on my bed. I shook off his hand and jabbed the elevator button to my floor. "I didn't need your permission. My work life is none of your business."

After saying that, I kept silent. I just watched Charles from the corner of my eye. He had put on that frosty expression that he wore whenever he was provoked, and I felt inexplicably happy about it.

I walked out and dragged my suitcase behind me the moment the elevator reached my floor and its doors opened.

I ignored Charles completely and strode away as if he was not there to begin with.

He was on my heels as I made my way to my place. While I dug for my keys in my purse, he said, "I don't like the way Abner looks at you. Why did you go out and have a drink with him? Aren't you afraid that he'll take advantage of you?"

The jealousy in his voice rang so loudly in my ears. He spoke as if he was the only man who was right for me, and it made me stop.

I turned my head and looked up at him. He was wearing an all-black suit with the top two buttons of his shirt undone, revealing a bit of his chest. He looked handsome and elegant as usual.

There were still times when I found myself catching my breath whenever I looked at him.

"First of all, Abner is a decent, respectful man. He'll never take advantage of anyone. Second, he and I went out with the whole team to unwind. It wasn't just the two of us. Third and most importantly, are you jealous?"

I asked pointedly.

Charles looked at me for a few seconds. I could tell that he was caught off guard by my question because a little color rushed to his cheeks.

"You think too much. I'm just worried about our family's honor and reputation. You're still bound to me and the Moore family. You're still expected to behave well while you're still my wife," Charles answered coldly.

"Of course I am." I lowered my head and went back to digging for my keys. I could not help feeling a little disappointed. Why did I expect my soon-to-be ex-husband to tell me that he was indeed jealous? Of course he was not. What was I thinking letting my wishful thinking set me up for yet another self-humiliation?

I did not face Charles the entire time I was looking for my keys and even after I opened my door and got in. I was afraid that I would break down in front of him.

After dragging my suitcase into my house, I stopped Charles at the door and said, "You should go now. Thanks for helping me with my luggage."

"I'm not here to help you with your luggage," Charles said and stopped me from closing the door on him.

"Then why are you here?" I backfired. Was it appropriate for him to keep pestering the woman who was going to be his ex-wife?

"Did you go on a business trip or an out-of-town date with Abner?" Charles asked with a frown.

Even when his face was twisted by negative emotions and his words cut me like a knife, I still found him unbelievably charming, which was ridiculous. I was getting more and more unwilling to talk to him, especially on the subject of Abner.

"It's a simple question."

Seeing that I had no intention of replying, Charles squeezed through my door and then shut it behind him.

I took two steps backward and snapped at him, "Why do you always insist on wasting your time on me?"

Rita's the one who needs you."

I was getting a little tired of his pattern. He always showed up for me at the right place and time and then strung me along. And just when I thought that he truly cared about me, he would turn around and run back to Rita.

Charles did not say anything and just stared at me. After a few moments, he started walking toward me and then snaked his arm around my waist. He pulled me close and then whispered in my ear, "Can we talk like normal adults now?"

Suddenly, he was speaking in a gentle, almost pleading tone.

"But answer my question first." He looked down at me and leaned closer. The tips of our noses were almost touching. "Hmm? Was it a business trip or an out-of-town date?"

I could feel his warm breath on my lips, and I smelled a hint of spearmint.

And right then, my pride and will to resist were extinguished like a candle in the wind.

I backed away, shook off his grip, and avoided his gaze. "It was a business trip. Can you please leave now?"

Before I could push Charles far enough away, my back was already against the wall. He braced one hand on the wall beside my head and leaned in until our breaths mingled.

He said in a hoarse voice, "Why did you go out drinking with Abner? You know you can't handle your liquor." His tone was now tinged with anger. "How could you go out with someone you were not familiar with?"

He put a resentful emphasis on the words "not familiar".

Since I could not get rid of him, I just decided to explain, "I already told you, it was a team celebration, and I didn't drink to get wasted. I drank with my colleagues to celebrate the success of our work. And Nina was there to take care of me when I had a little too much to drink. She helped me get back to my hotel room."

"And where was Abner that entire time?" Charles asked and then added, "Did he swing by your hotel room after Nina was gone?"

"No, but he didn't want to let me fly home without getting checked by a doctor first. He was kind enough to bring me to the hospital to make sure I was okay. And then we flew home together and he gave me a ride here." After that whole lot of explanation, I started coughing. I was getting dizzy. I really needed to get some rest, but Charles just would not leave me alone.

After listening to my explanation, Charles's face softened a lot. Tenderness slowly replaced the coldness in his eyes. He leaned in closer and touched the tip of his nose with mine. My heart leapt to my throat, and I swallowed to shove it back down. My scalp tingled as I breathed the air he exhaled.

"Back away, Charles," I blurted out, desperately trying to keep my voice steady.

But he just drank up my refusal like a bee slurping up nectar.

"Scarlett..."

After uttering my name, Charles crashed his lips against mine.

My mind instantly imploded. I tried pushing him away, but the more I resisted, the tighter he held on. I found the warmth of his mouth against mine a bit surprising.

"Are you crazy?" I managed to murmur during a brief moment of separation. I was caught so completely in the perfect harmony of his gentleness and strength that my brain could not process anything else anymore.

"Scarlett..." Charles let go and called out my name again. Then, he pecked at the corner of my lips and whispered, "I'm not crazy."

I made the fatal mistake of looking into his dark eyes that were framed with thick, luscious eyelashes. Next thing I knew, he was kissing me again and more passionately this time.

After a while, Charles grabbed my thighs and picked me up without his lips leaving mine. He started taking me to my bedroom.

I tried everything I could to break free from his kiss, but his tongue empowered the small part of me that did not want to let him go.

When we stopped to catch our breaths, Charles patted me on the buttocks. "Be a good girl."

Then, he started kissing me again.

Slowly but surely, my defenses melted down like butter on a hot pan.

Charles's deep, urgent kisses turned me into an animal that had fallen into a trap.

Next thing I knew, I was on my back on my bed with my shirt unbuttoned and bra unfastened. My bra straps were hanging off my shoulders, and my skirt was pushed up to my hips, revealing my underwear. Charles was on top of me, and the moment he kissed me again and pressed his body against mine, blood rushed to my cheeks, and I started throbbing in sensitive places. I was completely turned on.

But then, I thought of Rita. Was Charles this aggressive with her? Or did he handle her more mindfully and carefully?

As Charles worshiped me with his mouth, I realized that even if I had him now, he would never truly belong to me. He belonged to Rita, and I was just a chapter waiting to be finished.

I braced my hands on Charles's chest and pushed him away with all my might. Beads of sweat rolled down the side of his face to his Adam's apple. The wildness in his eyes was unmistakable. He wanted something to happen between us.

Once again, he ignored my objection and sealed my lips with another hungry kiss. He gently spread my legs and started rubbing against me.

"No, Charles. Stop it." Tears started streaming down my face. I choked out, "I beg you. Please stop. We can't do this."

Hearing my stifled sobs, Charles paused and then wiped my tears with his thumb. He narrowed his eyes and whispered, "Don't you love me anymore?"

His eyes were brimming with affection, and once more, I found myself crumbling beneath him. No woman could resist that kind of look.

[Chapter 52 Dream Or Reality](#)

Scarlett's POV:

I pulled up the quilt and covered my upper body. Sniffing, I lowered my head and calmly reminded Charles, "What's the point of asking this? Charles, don't forget you're Rita's fiance."

Charles seemed to be annoyed by what I had said. Suddenly, he pulled the quilt like a child throwing tantrums and angrily said, "Don't mention that woman. It's just you and me now."

"Even if I don't mention her, we'll be divorced soon," I snapped back. I pretended that I did not care, but I felt stuffy in my chest.

Annoyed, Charles looked at me with narrowed eyes. Unfortunately for him, there was nothing he could do to me. I realized that even without Rita, we would still have problems between us.

At that moment, my phone rang in the living room. I avoided his hand and propped myself up to get out of bed. "Excuse me."

However, he pinned me to the bed and kissed my neck lustfully. "Say you love me," he commanded in a stern yet gentle voice.

His gentle demeanor changed in an instant, and he kept kissing me on the lips.

A feeling of an electric current ran through my body.

Meanwhile, my phone rang relentlessly in the living room. "Let me answer the call," I protested weakly.

Charles pretended not to hear my plea and just continued what he was doing.

As he saw that my eyes glistened with tears, he raised his hand and touched my lips affectionately. "Admit it, Scarlett. You love me from the very beginning."

Without missing a beat, I looked into his eyes and said, "I've never loved you, and I will never do."

In reality, the one who fell in love first was doomed to lose this game of love. Well, I had long been defeated.

Nonetheless, I could not admit that in front of Charles. I wouldn't give him the pleasure of knowing that he had me wrapped around his finger.

When he saw that I was being stubborn, he chuckled and pinched my cheek. "You're right. It wasn't you who sent me lunch every day in high school. And every time a girl approached me, you weren't the one who got angry. Also💎💎"

"Shut up! The old Scarlett is dead." I covered his mouth with my hand, my face beet red in embarrassment. Now that he was rubbing in my face the silly things I had done in the past, I realized how stupid I was.

"If you say so." Charles smiled and nodded in agreement.

I was annoyed at him, but I had no idea what to say.

As Charles saw that I was at a loss for words, he shamelessly licked my palm. I withdrew my hand instinctively.

"You💎💎" Before I could finish my words, he kissed my lips again.

I clenched my jaws shut. But he was like a patient hunter, wandering outside and waiting for his prey to open the door.

I was pissed off at him. He already had Rita, and yet he was flirting with me. As revenge, I bit his lip hard.

Charles groaned in pain but did not flinch, much less backed down. Instead, he slipped his tongue into my mouth when he had the chance.

The desire inside me was like a blooming poppy flower. It was beautiful yet deadly. And just like that, I completely fell into Charles's trap.

For some reason, my consciousness was slowly blacking out, and my eyesight was spinning. Before I knew it, everything turned black. In my dream, I felt as though I was stepping on clouds. On the other side was Charles, smiling at me. He was as warm as the winter sun next to the Seine River.

Only in my dream, he completely belonged to me.

I called his name in a trance, and my heart was filled with joy. I was as happy and carefree, like a child. I wanted to give him all the candies in my pocket and tell him how much I loved him.

But when I called his name, his face darkened. He warned me not to say his name, or else he would pin me down to the bed and do everything a husband would do to his wife.

Even in my dream, he was still hateful. Without a word, I punched him in the face, breaking his phantom.

Then everything faded into darkness again.

The next day, I woke up with pain all over my body. Although my symptoms had mostly subsided, I still felt quite weak.

The curtains in the bedroom were drawn shut, and not a ray of sunshine made its way to the room.

The memory of last night came flooding into my mind. Unsure if it was a dream or reality, I lifted the quilt and looked at myself. Sure enough, I was wearing a clean pair of pajamas. I could vaguely remember that Charles had helped me in the shower and even dressed me. I was disappointed in myself. I had promised myself that I would make a clean break from him. But now, we were getting more and more entangled with each other.

"What are you thinking?" Charles asked while leaning against the door frame. He was wearing casual clothes, and he let his hair, which was usually brushed up, fall on his forehead. In a word, he looked harmless, yet still helplessly handsome.

I stared daggers at him and asked, "Why did you help me take a shower?" Now that I was in the right mind, I could not figure out why he cared so much.

Charles raised his eyebrows at me. He seemed to be in an unusually good mood. Without a word, he walked to the bedside and touched my forehead. "Poor you. You sweated a lot yesterday. I thought you might feel uncomfortable, so I helped you take a shower and change clothes. You should thank me."

I raised my head indignantly, wanting to question him again. However, I suddenly noticed a tiny bruise at the corner of his mouth.

Charles must have noticed what I was looking at. He grinned and teasingly asked, "What? Don't you remember what you did last night? Well, someone here kept calling my name. She couldn't stop crying while she described how much she loved me. I asked her not to call my name, but she suddenly flew into a rage and punched me."

Oh my God! So my dream last night was actually true. I was ashamed of myself. Charles must be so proud of himself now. Judging from the look on his face, I must have said something humiliating.

But even though I was aware I was in the wrong, I looked at him in the eyes and said in a straight face, "We're going to divorce soon. I hope both of us can keep a distance from each other. You helped me take a shower and change my clothes without my consent, and I punched you by accident. We're even."

Charles snorted. "Keep a proper distance? Do you mean kissing and hugging? We've done everything a married couple should do. And now, you're asking me to keep a distance from you? How bold of you to say that. If I remembered it right, you enjoyed it very much last night."

"What do you mean by we've done everything a married couple should do?! Stop talking nonsense!"

"Well, not everything, to be precise. We didn't really have sex if that's what you're worried about. But we were so intimate that it didn't make much difference. Look at yourself. You have my marks all over your body. Mrs. Moore, perhaps you're just saying that out of embarrassment?" Charles calmly asked with his hands in his pockets.

I could not refute his words, so I decided to just get out of bed. But just as I stood up, I felt so dizzy that I thought I was going to collapse.

Charles rushed to my aid, but I pushed him away. "Go away. Don't you dare shed crocodile tears. It disgusts me," I said in a low voice.

"Are you also like this whenever Abner hugs you?" Charles scoffed. Regardless of my protest, he held me in his arms.

"Did he ever behave ambiguously like you?" I retorted.

"He'd better not. I'm warning you. Stay away from him." Charles seemed as though he was taking this opportunity to hold me in his arms.

Sadly, there was nothing I could do whenever he was like this. That was why I decided to draw a line between us once and for all. "From now on, we have three rules."

"What are they? Tell me about it."

"Don't touch me without my permission, nor should you lose your temper before you find out what's

really going on," I said sternly.

"What about the third one?"

"I haven't decided yet. I'll tell you as soon as I've come up with something." As I spoke, I pushed his hand, indicating him to let go of me. "You've been hugging me for quite a while. Let me go now."

"I should've had sex with you last night. That would stop you from talking nonsense with me now," he grumbled.

I could tell that he was not taking my words seriously. He was horrible as ever.

"You're awful!"

All of a sudden, the doorbell rang.

But then, Charles lowered his head and whispered in my ear, "If you dare to open the door, I'll kiss you."

"Are you crazy?" I pushed his head away. He was getting more and more childishly absurd as time went by.

The moment I escaped from his embrace, I hurriedly went to the door to open it.

[Chapter 53 Vow](#)

Charles's POV:

Standing outside the door was the annoying Abner. He had been pestering Scarlett all day long.

I tried to bite down my annoyance, but it surged out from the bottom of my heart. The moment Scarlett opened the door and I saw Abner, I took Scarlett's hand and turned her to me. I kissed her deeply in front of Abner.

Her lips tasted so sweet. They were like some sort of drug that I was totally addicted to. I still could not believe how infatuated I was with her.

All of a sudden, Scarlett bit my lower lip.

Startled, I instantly let go. She stared at me with sharp, furious eyes, like a wild animal ready to fight. Even though I knew that she was trying to threaten me, I could not help smiling. The more she tried to push me away, the more I wanted her. I wanted her so much that I wanted to hide her from the rest of the world so that no other man could see her.

"Why are you in such a hurry, honey? You've just recovered. Abner can wait. Right, Abner?" I held Scarlett in my arms and smirked at Abner.

Scarlett shook off my grip and snapped, "Stop it, Charles!"

I ran my thumb through her cheek and cooed, "You're so cute." Then, I added deliberately, "You bit me so hard last night, too. Be gentle next time, or your dear husband will die young."

Scarlett bit my lip last night as well. It was not a big deal, but I was sure that it would piss off Abner, so I brought it up.

"Shut up!" Scarlett rolled her eyes at me.

"What? I don't need to be so serious in front of my wife, do I?" I flashed her a grave look.

Ignoring me, Scarlett turned to Abner and said, "I'm sorry. Will you give me a few minutes? I just need to change."

Then, she turned around and stepped on my foot, but it did not hurt at all. I shrugged at Abner as Scarlett walked away. Abner looked like he was trying really hard to keep his opinions to himself, which almost made me laugh out loud.

He was wearing a white shirt, and his hair was combed up neatly. After Scarlett was gone, he finally flashed me a polite smile and said good morning by way of greeting.

But I was not in the mood to exchange pleasantries with him. I folded my arms across my chest and looked at him up and down. He was obviously trying to woo Scarlett by coming so early in the morning and bringing some little brown paper bag of breakfast. I sneered, "Scarlett only eats breakfast that I make. Don't bother buying her breakfast next time."

"Why? Because you'll be here cooking breakfast for her? That's odd, considering she's divorcing you soon. But don't worry. Once you're gone, I'll be there for Scarlett when she needs a friend. And you? Well, you'll be her ex-husband, and once you're her ex, she won't want anything to do with you for the rest of her life." Abner's polite smile slowly faded away.

I stepped forward and looked down at him. It was then that I realized that he was half a head shorter than I was. I flicked his collar and said casually, "But we're not yet divorced, aren't we? She still belongs to me. I'm still her husband. So you have no business coming here and picking up the pieces of her heart before it's even broken. She's still mine, and you should back off."

Abner's jaw instantly tightened, and the civil look on his face melted away. Fury twisted his face, but he still kept his cool, which I found admirable. He said through clenched teeth, "Scarlett is a good woman, Charles. She deserves to spend the rest of her life with a man who's loyal to her."

"And you think you're that man? Please. You're not good enough for her," I leered.

After that, Abner did not say anything more. He just turned around and left.

Who did he think he was? Did he think that he could just waltz in here and take my woman away?

A few moments after Abner walked away, Scarlett returned. She had changed into a simple white dress, which made her look gentle and lovely.

Abner was in white, and now so was she. Did she dress like that on purpose? Did she want herself and Abner to look like they were a couple wearing matching clothes? I stopped her and dragged her back. "Change into something else. I don't like white."

"Let go of me, Charles! Where is Abner? Did you drive him away? Why are you being such a jerk?" Scarlett punched me in the arm twice, her cheeks bulging with anger.

"I didn't drive him away. He left by himself. I was kind enough not to ask him to fuck off," I backfired. Why should I be civil to someone who was trying to steal my wife?

Scarlett stopped struggling all of a sudden and stared at me with wide eyes. "You're making trouble out of thin air. Here's a new rule for you. Respect my friends, or..."

"Or what? You're angry with me now because of some other guy? And since when is Abner your friend? When did you lower yourself to make friends with someone like him? I forbid you to go out with him anymore." My eyelids twitched. I really did not believe that friendship was all Abner wanted with Scarlett. I was still Scarlett's husband. I was still obligated to protect her from men like Abner.

Scarlett snapped, "Keep your nose out of my business, Charles! Just go to your Rita and take care of her! Leave me alone!"

After that, she grabbed her handbag from the sofa and marched toward the door.

I frowned and reached out to stop her. "I made breakfast for you. Eat first."

"You just pissed me off and now you want me to eat your food? Forget it!" After saying that, Scarlett stormed out. But after a few steps, she turned around and said, "I promised Grandma that I would pick her up from the hospital. Don't follow me."

She left after that, and I just stood there by the door. Once again, she abandoned me, and no matter how many times she did that, I would never get used to it. After hesitating for a while, I decided to follow her, and on the way, all I could think about was how to punish her for leaving me.

When I arrived downstairs, Abner was opening the car door for Scarlett. She got into his car with a big smile on her face.

Dissatisfaction coursed and burned through my veins like venom. It seemed that the punishment I doled

last night was too light.

Scarlett's POV:

Sitting in Abner's car, I felt a little embarrassed. I did not know what exactly Charles told him earlier while I was changing, but I was sure that it could not be good. I took a bite of the toast Abner gave me, which was smeared with mango and hazelnut spread. Then, I took a sip of the hot latte.

Abner focused on driving at first but finally broke the silence. "Are you feeling better today?"

"Yes, much better, thanks." I cleared my throat and added, "About Charles... I didn't know he would be like that today. I'm so sorry."

Abner's mouth twitched, but he kept his eyes on the road. "I understand."

"And I apologize if he was rude to you while I was gone."

Abner half-smiled and turned to look at me. "Charles cares about you a lot. Would you like to know what he said to me earlier?"

"What did he say?" I asked, a little bit nervous to find out the answer. Charles was such a proud man. How could he care about me?

Abner touched his nose and said, "He said that you belonged to him, that no one could take you away from him."

I was stunned for a moment. When I came back to my senses, I felt humiliated and a little enraged. "I'm an independent individual. I don't belong to anyone."

Even as the words left my lips, I did not believe them. Whatever I said only got crushed under the weight of Charles's domineering behavior.

Abner just nodded with a smile and did not say anything more.

When we arrived at the gate of the hospital and were about to get out of the car, Abner looked at me and asked, "Didn't you like the mango spread? Do you prefer blueberry?"

I looked at him with wide eyes and then darted my eyes on the small paper bag that contained the breakfast that he brought me.

With one hand on the steering wheel, Abner said, "You only had one bite of the toast."

I pursed my lips and swallowed. "If I eat too much mangoes, I will get an allergic reaction."

"Oh. I didn't know that. Thanks for letting me know. Consider it noted." Hearing that, Abner flashed me a regretful expression and immediately handed me a box of cooling patches. "I wish you a fast and consistent recovery."

"Thank you, Abner. I really appreciate it."

After saying goodbye to Abner, I walked into the hospital and made my way to the elevator. On the way, I thought of ways to deal with Charles and our divorce, but I was all out of ideas.

"Miss Riley."

As soon as I walked out of the elevator, a burly figure stopped me. I instantly recognized him. His name was Richard, and he was one of Rita's bodyguards.

I eyed him carefully and thought to myself, 'Rita is truly unlike any other critically ill patient. For someone who's terminal, she has a lot of energy to waste on looking for me this early in the day.'

"Yes?"

"Miss Lively wants to see you."

As expected, Rita wanted to stir things up with me again.

"And if I don't want to come see her?" I questioned.

"Please just come. Don't make this difficult for either of us." Richard looked tough and strong. In fact, he looked like he would heave me up over his shoulder and take me to Rita's ward if I refused to come with him peacefully. So I was surprised to hear him talk to me in a civil tone.

I pressed my lips together and nodded. "Fine. Lead the way."

Soon, we were outside Rita's ward. Before opening the door, Richard turned to me and started, "Miss Riley..."

"What's wrong?"

He hesitated and avoided eye contact with me. "Would you like to cover the hickey on your neck first?"

I touched my neck and felt my cheeks burn. I suddenly remembered what Charles did yesterday. "I have nothing to cover it with."

[Chapter 54 His Concealmen](#)

Rita's POV:

In the ward, I greeted Scarlett with the sweetest smile I could muster. She, however, just looked at me warily as if wondering what tricks I had up my sleeve.

I then poured her a glass of water, held her hand, and looked at her up and down. "How have you been these past few days?" I asked with concern.

"What do you want?" Scarlett coldly replied. I could not help but notice that her tone was similar to Charles's.

Just as I was about to pull her to a chair, I saw that there were hickeys on her neck. My eyes glinted in anger, but I quickly adjusted my mood. Instead, I gave her the glass and timidly said, "We haven't seen each other for a long time. I just want us to have a little chat."

Scarlett's eyes narrowed, probably in disdain, but no emotion could be seen on her face.

I smoothed my long hair and decided to go straight to the point. "I was the one who had ordered someone to throw paint on you."

It was only then that she reacted. However, her reaction was far from what I had anticipated. She looked at me and calmly replied, "Yeah, I figured."

"You figured? Didn't Charles tell you that? Oh no. I'm so stupid!" I exclaimed with feigned guilt. "Scarlett, please don't be mad at Charles. He only did that to protect me. Please forgive me. It's just that jealousy got the best of me. Don't worry. Everything will be fine once Charles and I get married. We'll have your blessing, right?" I asked with doe eyes.

"Are you done?" Scarlett put the glass on the table and left without waiting for my reply.

With a triumphant smile, I picked up the glass of water and slowly watered the flowers. 'How do you think you'll win against me? By your beauty? Or perhaps your place in Charles's heart? Oh, please. You will never win.'

Once Scarlett was gone, Richard walked up to me and draped a thin coat over my shoulders. "Honey, why did you let Scarlett go so easily?" he asked with a frown.

"Don't worry. Sometimes, just one word is enough to win a battle." I rolled my eyes at him. This is why I detested Richard. He would easily lose his composure. How pathetic.

At that moment, I turned around and touched his face with the tip of my fingers. But in my mind, it was Charles, who was in front of me. "Now, Scarlett knows that Charles hid the truth from her. I'm sure that that would be her last straw. Her beloved man always defends another woman. She must be very sad."

Meanwhile, Richard swallowed hard. Unable to resist my flirtation, he lowered his head and kissed me on the neck.

All of a sudden, Scarlett's hickies crossed my mind. Disgusted, I pushed Richard away from me, clenched the glass in my hand, and bellowed, "Bitch! Charles has never kissed me. Humph! That bitch must've enjoyed it!"

'Why is it that Scarlett gets whatever she wants without breaking a sweat while I can't? Even though I've done so much for Charles, he still doesn't love me.'

Jealousy fogged my mind. The next thing I knew, I had smashed the glass on the floor, where it broke into a million pieces. I clenched my hands into fists, and my carefully manicured nails dug into my palm. "Why is Scarlett still alive? I wish she were dead!"

Scarlett's POV:

I ran out of the hospital as fast as I could as if a beast was chasing after me. I did not stop until I had run out of breath.

'Rita had insulted me, and yet Charles still defended her. How much does she mean to him? I knew it. I should've just given up. What was I expecting?'

Rita's words were like a bucket of cold water pouring all over me. It woke me up in an instant. My body could not stop trembling. And somehow, it was difficult for me to breathe. I had never been humiliated like this before. My mind was in a mess. I wanted to flee, but I had no idea where to go.

After pondering for a moment, my gaze fell on the convenience store not far away. Without thinking, I bought two bottles of wine for myself.

Today was a sunny day, but my world was overcast. Even the cold and strong breeze could not blow away my dejection.

I sat on the curb and drank by myself. Meanwhile, a homeless man a few yards away strummed his guitar and sang Yesterday Once More.

"When they got to the part where he's breaking her heart, it can really make me cry..."

As the man hummed quietly, I broke into tears.

I was immersed in my thoughts.

The lyrics in that song just summed up my life. Before I knew it, tears were welling up in my eyes.

"Miss, are you okay?" the homeless man asked. I was so sad that I did not notice he had stopped singing.

I shook my head and handed him the other bottle of wine. "Sir, you sang well," I praised with a forced smile.

"Thank you! God bless you!" The homeless man seemed happy with the little gift I had given to him. He took the bottle of wine and sang another classic song.

The sun shone on him. And for a fleeting moment, I felt his joy.

It was getting late now. Grandma must be waiting for me in the hospital. With that, I threw the empty bottle into the trash bin and returned to the hospital.

The moment I reached the entrance, I happened to see Charles helping Christine out.

Grandma's face lit up in delight when she saw me. She waved at me and asked Charles to pick me up across the road.

He obediently did as told. He jogged towards me and held my hand when he got close. I wanted to push him away. Unfortunately, I could not do that in front of Grandma.

As Charles saw that I was rather obedient, he gently squeezed my hand with a smile. He seemed to be in a good mood. Little did he know that I was glaring at him from the corner of my eye.

In order to stay away from him, I walked into the car first and sat beside Grandma.

"Grandma, I miss you so much." I leaned on Grandma's shoulder and acted like a spoiled child. Only when I was with her did I feel at ease.

Grandma patted my hand and said, "Good girl, I miss you too."

"Sit on the passenger seat," Charles ordered while standing by the door of the car.

"I want to sit beside Grandma," I groaned. I looked around and noticed that the driver did not come today. It seemed that Charles was the one who drove.

"Grandma needs to rest. You'll just disturb her," he reasoned out.

I could not refute that. Albeit reluctant, I had no choice but to sit on the passenger seat.

While I was fastening my seatbelt, Charles leaned over and took a whiff of me. "Did you drink?" he asked with a frown.

Damn Charles!

I wish I could beat him up right then and there. I turned my head away and admitted, "Just a little."

"Why did drink so early in the day? Drinking is bad for your health. Don't drink again, please?" Grandma persuaded.

"Okay, Grandma. If you say so. I won't drink anymore," I reassured. Grandma would only rest assured if I guaranteed to do what she asked.

Charles raised his eyebrows and eyed me with suspicion. But I did not want to talk to him anymore, so I lowered my head and mumbled, "Dogs indeed have a keen sense of smell."

We arrived at the villa not long after. Grandma got out of the car first with the help of the housekeeper. While I was unbuckling my seatbelt, I suddenly heard a sharp click. It turned out that Charles had locked the door.

I looked at him with a frown.

"What the hell are you doing? We don't need to talk about the details of the divorce procedure again." I put my bag on my knees, ready to argue.

I could not figure out what Charles was thinking. He was more unpredictable than ever.

Without a word, he unbuckled his seatbelt and, to my surprise, loosened the top button of his shirt, revealing his well-sculpted collarbone.

How could he make such a simple action appear so attractive?

"What... what do you want to do? Just say it. There's no need to unbutton your clothes," I stammered.

Charles ignored my words. All of a sudden, he grabbed my wrist and stared at me with his deep eyes. His intense gaze stupefied me. Nervous, I clenched my fists and stared back at him.

Our argument had not yet begun, but my defense had already started to crumble.

[Chapter 55 Feed Me](#)

Scarlett's POV:

"Let me go," I said and bit my lip.

"You've been telling me that a lot lately," Charles backfired and flicked me on the forehead with his finger.

"Ouch! That hurt!" I whined. It really did hurt. He had used a lot of strength.

"As it should. If it didn't, you wouldn't learn your lesson at all. I take my eye off you for half a day, and you take up day drinking. You haven't even fully recovered from your last bad hangover, and you're already messing around. What's wrong with you?" Charles flicked me again, venting his annoyance. This time, he only exerted a little strength. His fingers touched my forehead gently like a feather.

"What do you care?" I murmured as the back of my eyes stung. Rita's words kept echoing in my mind, and they sank my heart deeper and deeper.

"You're not a child anymore, but you're acting like some rebellious brat who always makes me worry." Charles pinched my cheek and squinted at me. "This is your last warning, Scarlett. No more drinking, you hear me?"

Once again, I was stunned by the look of genuine concern in Charles's face despite the pointedness of his words.

"Then promise me one thing first," I started and raised my head to meet his gaze.

"No. You don't get to bargain here,"

Charles replied without hesitation. The soft, gentle expression he just wore moments ago was suddenly replaced by that annoying smirk that made me want to beat the hell out of him.

I shot him a furious glance. What was wrong with him? Why was he so supercilious? What was worse, I did not hate him at all.

Damn it! There was nobody in the world that I despised more than myself for that.

Seeing that I fell silent, Charles loosened his grip on my hand and said, "Fine. What do you want? Maybe I'll agree to it if I feel like it."

After thinking for a while, I lowered my head and straightened my dress. "Let's be brother and sister from now on. I'll be a good sister to you, and you'll be a good brother to me."

"I beg your pardon?" Charles asked, gloom suddenly twisting his handsome face.

I stole a glance at him and pressed, "I think it will be good for both of us to have that kind of relationship. That way, we'll still be in each other's lives without the complications."

"That's the worst idea I've ever heard," Charles laughed mirthlessly. Then, he added, "You better not mention that in front of Grandma, or we will have a whole new thing to fight about."

After that, Charles got out of the car. He slammed the door shut on me.

"Hey! Wait for me!" I screamed after him and jumped out of the car. I ran after him, hoping to catch him before he entered the mansion. He was going to marry another woman. The only way I could stay in his life without messing everything up was to be a sister to him.

I panted as I struggled to fall into step beside Charles. Those long, slender legs of his made him move like a gazelle. Looking at him now, I thought that my idea of us being siblings to each other was a stroke of brilliance.

"Hello, Mrs. Moore. Welcome back." The mansion's middle-aged gardener put down his gardening shears and greeted me when we passed by him.

"Good afternoon," I replied with a smile.

At the moment, I felt extremely happy. I felt like I finally won against Charles this time, and I did not care if our little fight was pointless and silly. The rose bushes in the mansion's garden were in full bloom, and I thought that they were the most beautiful flowers I had ever seen planted in someone's residence.

In the living room, Christine was cutting and arranging some flowers on a small table. They were champagne roses, which were just air freighted from Germany, and they exuded a fresh and clean fragrance. Charles sat on the sofa on the other side and drank the coffee that one of the servants brought him. Seeing me come in, he shot me a cold stare.

I narrowed my eyes at him. It did not matter whether or not he was in a good mood. I walked into the room leisurely.

"Hello, dear. Come sit with me," Christine said, smiling at me, and patted the chair beside her.

I walked over and took the seat. Then, I said, "Grandma, Charles and I have just made a decision."

"You have just made a decision. I didn't agree to it," Charles interjected.

I ignored him and held Christine's hand. "I will take Charles as my brother. That way, I'll still be your granddaughter."

"Okay," Christine nodded. Then, she put down the roses and poured a cup of tea for me from the ceramic teapot. There was a meaningful look on her benign face. She winked at me and seemed to understand what I meant.

Charles snorted derisively. There went his superior aura again. No wonder his employees were terrified of him.

But I was not because Christine was here to back me up. Charles would never show his dissatisfaction in front of his grandmother.

"Right, Charles? My dear brother?" I raised my voice on purpose and smirked at Charles. It felt so good to provoke an arrogant man like him.

"Scarlett! What happened to your neck? Is that a mosquito bite?" Grandma suddenly exclaimed and looked closely at my neck.

I almost rose from my seat in a fit of panic. I was so focused on wanting to piss off Charles that I had been careless. Before entering the mansion's front door, I coiled up my hair and forgot all about the hickey on my neck.

"But this looks like a little reddish bruise. Are you all right? Does it hurt?" Christine asked and then gestured to one of the servants to bring a healing ointment.

"I'm okay, Grandma. It's nothing. It's just a little scratch. No need for ointments or anything like that. It'll clear up in a few days," I explained as blood rushed to my face. I looked at Charles and saw him enjoying my little mishap that I had to wriggle out of with an unimpressive lie. I glared at him. The hickey was his doing, and I was the one paying for it.

At this time, a servant brought a plate of cherries from the kitchen. To take away the attention from my neck, I took the plate and brought it to Christine.

"Would you like some cherries, Grandma?" I offered, desperate to change the subject.

"No, thank you, dear. I'm still full. Why don't you give some to Charles?" Grandma patted me on the arm and went back to her flower arranging.

After hesitating for a bit, I rose from my seat and sat beside Charles on the sofa. "Cherries?"

"Really? Is that how you offer your 'dear brother' some cherries?" Charles said without looking up from his phone.

"My dear brother, would you like some cherries?" I let my voice drip with sarcasm as I put the plate of cherries in front of him. 'Take it or leave it!' I thought to myself.

"Feed me." He put down his phone and turned to look at me.

"Have you no shame?" I tried my best to keep my voice down so that Christine would not hear me.

However, Charles did not seem to hear what I just said. He folded his arms over his chest and flashed me a challenging stare.

"Feed me," he repeated, raising his eyebrows defiantly.

He knew that with Christine here, I would not dare to make a scene. Before I knew it, I was backed into a

corner.

I sighed in exasperation, picked up a partly rotten cherry, and put it into his mouth. The warmth of his lips felt so nice against my fingertips. I quickly withdrew my hand before he got the wrong idea.

"Do you want more, my dear brother?" I asked through gritted teeth, trying my best to stay calm.

"Yes, please." As soon as he finished speaking, Charles grabbed my wrist and sat me on his lap. He planted a soft kiss on my lips, which made my entire world spin.

Then, he pushed the cherry that I just fed him into my mouth, and its sweetness and fragrance instantly washed over my tongue.

He kissed me passionately for a few moments after that and then nibbled on my lower lip. Finally, he let go and looked straight into my eyes. "So, so sweet."

"You..." Stunned, I covered my mouth. There I was again, helpless under his spell that almost always caught me off guard. Others would definitely not think that we were brother and sister.

"Eat the cherry, my dear sister," Charles said and pressed me on the sofa. He added, "What's the matter? Don't you like it when I call you dear sister? Isn't that what you want?"

I glared at him and kept the cherry in my mouth.

"Stop looking at me like that, Scarlett. You're only making me want to kiss you again and never let go," Charles whispered and blew gently on my face.

"You little..." I was so angry that I almost bit my tongue. Enraged and alarmed, I raised my hands and shoved him away.

[Chapter 56 Reliable](#)

Charles' POV:

Scarlett pushed me away with all her strength and then rushed to the bathroom. She was like a deer fleeing for safety. For some reason, I found that really cute and could not take my eyes off her.

"Charles, why do you always bully her? Scarlett isn't as cheeky as you are." Grandma glared at me. I pretended not to hear what she had said and just stared at the cherry meaningfully.

"Have you ever seen anyone call her husband 'brother'? I just wanted to punish her."

"What do you expect? You're the one who proposed the divorce, but you keep on delaying it," Grandma reminded in a serious tone.

I did not expect her to bring up the divorce again. Well, I could not blame them. After all, all my family knew was that my relationship with Scarlett was just complicated. All of a sudden, the air in the room became stuffy. For a moment, I was at a loss. I did not know how to answer Grandma's question. She was right, after all.

"I've watched Scarlett grow up with my own eyes. We all know she likes you. She may have said that she regards you as her brother, but I don't think she meant it. You should reflect on yourself. Scarlett is a nice girl. You shouldn't treat her like this," Grandma advised.

"Grandma..." I did not want to talk about it anymore.

"Charles, if you like Scarlett, then tell her the truth. Stop being a coward, and man up. Scarlett will change her mind sooner or later, and you'll regret it when that time comes."

At that moment, the door of the bathroom opened. Grandma immediately stopped talking and continued trimming her roses.

Her words hit my heart like a heavy hammer. Did Scarlett still love me like she did before? Or had she already moved on? I did not dare to think about it.

While I was in deep thought, Scarlett walked over. She bit her lip in disdain and stared daggers at me. She must have been dissatisfied with what I had done just now. However, my attention was drawn to her lips, and only one thought came to my mind: I wanted to kiss her.

It took me a moment before I realized I had been staring at her absentmindedly. With that, I quickly looked away.

"Grandma, what were you talking about just now? I think I heard you say 'regret'. What about it?" Scarlett sat down again. But this time, she sat next to Grandma.

"Nothing. I just gave Charles an earful. He always bullies you. He doesn't seem like a brother at all!" Grandma replied with a hint of sarcasm in her voice. I could see that she got a little emotional.

"But Charles does seem like an elder brother to me. He takes care of me all the time." Scarlett patted Grandma on the back comfortingly. When she spoke, her tone was gentle as though she were coaxing a child. She must still be mad at me that she did not even glance at me.

Since when did I treat her as a sister?

How could she say that? Annoyed at her attitude, I stood up from my seat and looked at her with a burning gaze.

"I have no idea when I've ever treated you as my sister." I turned around and went upstairs without even giving Scarlett and Grandma a chance to speak.

When I reached the second flight of stairs, I took a look at Scarlett downstairs. She was chatting and laughing with Grandma, and she seemed to be unaffected that I had walked out.

Scarlett's POV:

As usual, I had no idea how I had offended Charles.

But I was used to this, so I did not take it seriously. However, Grandma looked at me with a guilty expression. She probably thought that I was hurt because of Charles's attitude. Because of this, I gave her a reassuring smile.

At that moment, I heard footsteps coming from the gate. A few seconds later, I saw Alice striding towards us.

"Honey, when you went on a business trip for the program last time, did you interview an old entrepreneur in Washington? Someone named Henry?" she asked, a hint of anxiety in her tone.

Her words perplexed me. I racked my brains to figure out what she was talking about.

I realized that Alice must be referring to the celebrity interview program I had hosted in Seattle. We flew there to mainly interview a successful entrepreneur, and his name was actually William. But there was indeed a Henry that we had also talked to during the interview. Henry Woodson. Another business man in town.

At that moment, I nodded at Alice in response.

"Honey, did he do anything to you?" she worriedly asked again while staring right into my eyes.

"We talked about the program. That's all. He's very popular." I could not figure out why Alice had suddenly asked me about that man.

"Oh my God!" Alice exclaimed. She then handed her phone to me, and a news report was being displayed on the screen.

I took a glance at it. Apparently, Henry Woodson had taken advantage of his position and sexually assaulted a young girl. I was surprised that he did such a thing. He was such a gentleman when we met.

"Scarlett, tell me the truth. Did he do anything to you?" Grandma asked with concern.

Before I could say anything, Alice interjected, "Our Scarlett is so pretty. We can't let anyone who bullies her get away!"

I shook my head and reassured Grandma that nothing had happened to me.

Even so, Alice was still fuming in anger. For some reason, she believed that the news about Henry Woodson was a bad omen.

The matter went on even during dinner.

"Scarlett, you're young and naive. There are many bad men in the world. You have to be careful. I can't promise anything. But I'm sure that Charles is stronger than that old geezer. He's trustworthy and reliable," Grandma earnestly said to me.

I never thought that she would say something like that to me. Upon hearing what she had said, my face turned beet red. What was Grandma thinking about? And how did our conversation lead to this?

Charles happened to come downstairs at that very moment. "What 'reliable'?" he asked while looking at me.

My face turned even redder. I did not know where to put myself.

[Chapter 57 Not On Speaking Terms](#)

Scarlett's POV:

I left with Charles after dinner. However, I walked slowly and kept a distance from him.

"Hurry up. Why so slow?" Charles grumbled in annoyance

"You don't have to do this. I can just take a taxi," I replied. The truth was, I was nervous, especially since we were alone. I would rather take a taxi alone or keep a distance from him than be with him.

Upon hearing that, Charles strode over and grabbed my wrist. Then, he quickly walked to the front of the car and pushed me into the passenger seat without giving me a chance to resist.

Unable to do anything, I touched my nose and sulked.

"Put your bag away," Charles ordered. He then leaned over, and I caught a whiff of a pleasant scent of pines.

I looked at him confusedly. Charles sighed helplessly. Then, he put my bag on the backseat, pulled the seatbelt beside me, and fastened it.

"Thank you," I said in a barely audible voice in embarrassment.

It was already dark when we left the villa, and the streetlights had been turned on.

While we were stuck in heavy traffic, Charles glanced at me and asked, "Did you meet with Rita?"

I sneered and looked at him with amusement. "Why? Did she tell you that I bullied her again? Don't worry. I didn't do anything to your dear Rita. In fact, I think she's beaming with happiness."

Rita used the same trick every single time. She would meet with me and then complain to Charles about my attitude. Her trick was getting old, and I was getting sick of her.

Charles did not say anything in response. He only spoke just as a deafening silence filled the air. "Nothing. I'm just worried you'll misunderstand me."

"I don't think there'd be any misunderstanding," I retorted. My relationship with Charles was complicated. Even I could not understand it at times.

Charles seemed to be displeased with my response. He cast a scornful glance at me and scoffed, "So you don't care?"

"Rita was the one who had ordered to pour paint in my apartment," I replied crossly while twiddling with the seat belt. The more I thought about it, the more aggrieved I felt.

Before he could open his mouth to speak, I added, "And you... you've known it all along."

Charles nodded in response. It seemed that he did not intend in hiding anything from me. Unfortunately, it was too late for him. My anger rose in an instant, and I could feel my blood boiling in my veins. Now that I knew the truth, my chest tightened in resentment. I opened the window to get some fresh air.

"Why didn't you tell me sooner? Were you afraid I'd make trouble for her? If that's what you think, you're wrong. I'm not the kind of person who seeks revenge for something petty. Besides, I don't care about your affairs anymore." I could not bring myself to look at Charles, so I just looked out of the window when I spoke. To my surprise, I calmed down sooner than I had expected.

All of a sudden, Charles turned a corner and pulled over on an empty road.

"What are you doing?" I asked, bewildered. Did I say something wrong? Well, I might have. Rita was Charles's weakness, after all.

"I pulled over so we could talk." Charles looked at me with a frown. Judging from the look on his face, he disagreed with what I had said.

"About what? Are you going to tell me that even if Rita did that, I have to cut her some slack because she must have reasons for doing that?" I sneered and averted my gaze. I tried my best to suppress the worries and scruples in my heart.

"I've already sent someone to teach Rita's bodyguards and the person who had splashed the paint a

lesson. I won't let go of those who dared to bully you." Charles paused for a second and continued, "As your husband, it's my job to help you. Is there anything wrong with that?"

"What about Rita? Did you teach her a lesson?"

Charles fell silent. Seeing this, I folded my arms in front of my chest and snickered. "You're doing this to defend Rita, aren't you? In the end, you're just afraid that I'd take my anger out on her. If you really care about me, you shouldn't have kept me in the dark in the first place."

"She's ill!" Charles bellowed.

I closed my eyes. Suddenly, a scene of Charles and Rita hand-in-hand flashed through my mind. He was dazzling, and Rita was gorgeous. They looked like they were walking out of a painting. They were indeed a perfect match.

I suppressed the bitterness in my heart and asked. "Can a patient do whatever she wants? Forget it. Just do your job and protect Rita at all costs. After all, if she calls you in the dead of night, you'll just come running to her, won't you?"

"Don't mention her anymore," Charles warned.

"Then what else do you want to talk about? Do you want to talk about our relationship? There's not much to say." I pursed my lips and looked at Charles coldly.

"Scarlett, I will never be your brother, nor will I ever follow your stupid rules. You'd better stop thinking about it. You can only be my wife," Charles said in an icy cold tone.

I blinked my eyes, incredulous with what he had just said.

I raised my chin confidently and looked him in the eye. "I won't accept a man who has affairs with another woman. Charles, just accept it. Our relationship is over."

"Rita and I have only hugged and held hands. Nothing more," Charles reasoned out as if saying that would make a difference.

"But I didn't hug and hold hands with anyone except you," I fired back.

Just as I was about to say something more, Charles leaned over and kissed me. His breath was shallow and quick, and the way he kissed me was not gentle but passionate.

He only let go of me until he had run out of breath. For some reason, his eyes were dark and unfathomable. "I've never kissed Rita like that. Scarlett, do you believe me now?"

Like a sweet, loving couple, he then rubbed his nose against mine.

My body trembled like a leaf, but I forced myself to get a grip. Then, I wiped my lips in front of him with apparent disgust. "You have no right to kiss me."

"Who has the right to kiss you then? Abner?" Charles asked while pinching my chin.

"It's none of your business." I lowered my head and did not look at him anymore.

"I beg to disagree. If you dare to do this, I'll lock you up and make sure you won't be able to go anywhere." As soon as Charles finished speaking, he started the engine and sped away, even faster than the speed limit.

I clutched my seatbelt tightly as though holding for my death life and pleaded, "Charles, you're crazy! Slow down!"

Charles did not stop until he heard that I broke down into tears because of fear. "Yes. I'm crazy," he mumbled to himself.

I did not notice the inexplicable look on his face. All I wanted at the moment was to get the hell away from him.

When I arrived home, I hurriedly got out of the car and slammed the door behind me.

"Don't show up in front of me again!" I said through gritted teeth. For a second, I felt an urge to bite him out of anger.

Charles ignored my explosion and just drove away without saying a word.

In the following week, he and I did not see each other. We were not on speaking terms.

Nevertheless, I still knew about his whereabouts. After all, all his movements were posted on the Internet. There was even a picture of him that took the Internet by storm. It was a picture of him picking Rita up from the hospital.

Many writers took it as an inspiration and wrote romance novels. Meanwhile, the netizens all called for them to get married as soon as possible.

Me? Well, I paid no attention to it and instead buried myself in work.

One day, I happened to bump into Abner while I was walking out of the studio. He was wearing a silver gray suit. He looked handsome and elegant. I greeted him with a smile.

"There'll be an important dinner party tonight. You have to go." Abner invited me.

"No problem. What time should we go there?" I agreed without a second thought. I had nothing to do at home anyway. I had better put my worries aside and focus on my career.

Abner looked at me apologetically. "I'm afraid I can't go with you. I have another appointment tonight. You would go with Linda instead. Be careful, okay? Call me if anything happens."

"I will. Thank you," I replied with a smile. I appreciated his concern and kind gestures.

It was undeniable that Abner was a great man. Sadly, we could only be friends.

[Chapter 58 Work Party](#)

Scarlett's POV:

Just like Abner had advised, I went to the party with Linda.

I had been to this kind of gathering before. But until now, I was still not used to it. I did not like drinking either. After all, alcohol was the most common excuse people used after making a mistake.

The first thing I saw when I entered the private room were several men with bulging bellies and empty wine bottles. It appeared that they had been drinking long before Linda and I had arrived.

A fat, bald man waved at me and said, "You're late. Miss Riley, why don't you sit next to me? I have something to tell you." He then glanced at the young blonde woman who was sitting next to him.

As if on cue, the woman, probably his secretary, stood up and offered her seat to me.

"This is Mr. Valdez, the CEO of Valdez Group," Linda whispered in my ear before I walked over to him.

I immediately understood what she meant by that. That man was someone I could not afford to offend. He had invited me enthusiastically. It would be disrespectful to decline. As I slowly made my way to him, I unconsciously tugged the hem of my dress, lengthening it for an inch or two.

I sat next to Mr. Valdez and forced a smile.

"Scarlett, you're more beautiful than I thought. When I first saw you on TV, I thought your legs under your skirt must be smooth and enticing." Mr. Valdez looked at me with a lecherous gaze and even put his hand on my thigh.

I felt that the smile on my face must be stiff.

"You must be more beautiful in bed. Scarlett, a lady like you should wear short skirts often, so you can make more men think with their dicks." Mr. Valdez continued to make lewd and sexist remarks, and the men he was with laughed heartily at his jokes.

I felt humiliated and indignant. I felt an urge to kick him on the part where it hurt the most. But, of course, I could not do that. Unable to do anything, I took a deep breath and restrained myself.

"If you say so, Mr. Valdez. I will consider your suggestion," I replied with a forced smile. It was obviously a lie. If only I could, I would tell him to go fuck himself. Sadly, saying that would cost me my job.

Mr. Valdez lit a cigarette and turned to Linda. "Linda, you have an obedient subordinate here. But she's still a newbie. You should teach her more."

"I will, Mr. Valdez." Linda agreed with a smile.

Just as I thought that verbal sexual abuse was the worst part of the drinking culture, the guests began to take turns to propose a toast to Mr. Valdez. When it was my turn, everyone looked at me expectantly. I looked at Linda unconsciously and noticed that she was also cheering for me.

Only then did I realize that at work parties, young girls were always at a disadvantage. Stifling my distaste, I raised my glass and clinked it with Mr. Valdez's. He smiled happily and drank the wine in one gulp. Not wanting to put myself in a bad light, I plucked up the courage and did the same thing.

I thought that compromising was enough, so this dreadful experience would soon be over. But it turned out that the worse was yet to come. Mr. Valdez began filling my glass with alcohol again and again. As I did not want to offend him, I had no choice but to drink it every time.

My mind became fuzzy not long after, and it continued until the rest of the party.

God. I had never drunk so much in my life.

Once the party was over, Linda told me she would wait for me at the gate. She just had to see other guests off first.

My head was spinning so badly that I had to lean against the wall when I walked. With my remaining consciousness, I contemplated whether to call someone or just hold out, hoping I would not end up sleeping on the streets for the night. The first choice seemed more logical. But on second thought, I had no idea who to call. With that, I supported myself on the wall and continued walking.

"Here you are, Scarlett. You're drunk. Do you want to go upstairs and take a rest?" A creepy and ominous voice came from behind. It was that old geezer, Mr. Valdez. When he spoke, he put his hands on my waist and fumbled around.

His touch made me feel sick to the stomach. But thanks to this, my foggy mind became clear in an instant.

"No, thank you, Mr. Valdez. I should go home now, or my family will be worried sick." While resisting the impulse to beat him, I shook off his hand and walked forward. Fortunately, there were guests in the

corridor, so he did not insist.

I immediately saw Linda when I arrived at the entrance. She walked up to me and supported my body.

"Honey, you look tired. Let me call a Uber for you."

"No need. I'll drive her home," a familiar voice said.

I turned around and saw Abner marching towards me and Linda with a fierce look on his face. He yanked me away from Linda's hand, and my face bumped into his chest.

"Linda, I asked you to take care of Scarlett, didn't I? Why did you push her to Mr. Valdez? Scarlett isn't that kind of girl. I hope this incident won't happen again!" Abner ordered. Judging from the tone of this voice, he was furious.

He held me in his arms and solemnly said, "Scarlett, I'm sorry I'm late."

I could tell from the pain in his voice that he was guilty. I appreciated his help, but I did not have the strength to respond. My eyes closed slowly. And before I knew it, I had fallen asleep.

The next morning, I was awakened by a loud noise.

"You bastard! Where did you take her last night?" a familiar voice bellowed. It was Charles.

My eyes fluttered open, and I ran to the living room as fast as I could.

In the living room, I saw Charles beating the hell out of Abner on the floor. A few steps away from them, a vase lay in pieces. The veins on Charles's forehead bulged in anger. What was more, his eyes were so fierce as though he was going to kill Abner. I was terrified of what would happen next. So, without thinking, I rushed over and stopped Charles.

"Charles, what are you doing? Stop it!" I shouted at the top of my lungs.

Unfortunately, my words had no effect on Charles, and he just pushed me away. If it were not for the sofa behind me, I would have fallen on the floor and got hurt.

"Charles, what the hell are you doing?" Abner pushed Charles away and rushed to my aid.

Charles also stood up and looked at me blankly as if he could not believe what he had done.

"Charles, why did you hit him?" I angrily asked. There were far more important things to worry about than myself. For instance, Abner was beaten black and blue.

Instead of answering my question, Charles asked back, "He took you to the work party, didn't he?"

"He didn't! I went there myself! Social engagements are necessary for work," I fired back.

To my surprise, what I had said angered Charles even more. He pushed Abner out of his way and grabbed my hand.

"Scarlett, I can give you the whole world. Just tell me. Don't do this to yourself. And, for fuck's sake, don't torture me like this!" Charles closed his eyes and frowned deeply as if repressing pain.

I opened my eyes wide, incredulous with what I had heard. I even thought that I was only hallucinating. Charles was once my whole world, but not anymore. Bitterness flashed through my heart at the thought of this.

"Scarlett, don't attend those kinds of social engagements anymore. Where did that jerk touch you? Go, take a shower." Charles grabbed my hand and dragged me to the bathroom.

I shook off his hand. "You're worried that someone might have touched me. Is it because you're scared that I'd cheat on you?"

"That's not what I mean." Charles hoisted me up over his shoulder and walked to the bathroom.

"Charles, you jerk! Put me down!" I roared angrily.

"No way!" Charles retorted.

The two of us yelled at each other, completely forgetting that Abner was still in the living room.

[Chapter 59 I'm Sorry](#)

Scarlett's POV:

Bang!

Charles slammed the bathroom door shut. The next moment, he was making me stand under the showerhead.

"What the hell do you think you're doing?" I took a few steps back and looked at him warily. I tried my best to stay as far as I could from this dangerous man in front of me.

Charles put his hands around my waist and forced me to the corner. "You promised me you wouldn't drink anymore. Didn't you take my words seriously? You're so defiant. I should start thinking how I'd punish you so you'd learn," he said through gritted teeth. For some reason, he sounded as though he was restraining something inside him.

"I never promised you anything," I retorted. At the thought of him and Rita, my heart sank yet again.

Why did he come back to me again? I was fine without him.

"Are you still not convinced?" Charles scoffed.

I straightened up and perfunctorily replied, "No." I was still exhausted from last night that I did not have the strength to argue with him.

"Don't move." Charles suddenly hit me on my behind, but his face remained stern.

I frowned in annoyance. "Don't spank me! How many times have I told you not to spank me?!"

"You don't allow me to kiss you either." Charles suddenly lowered his head and kissed me on the cheek. As he saw that I was maddened by what he had done, he asked smugly, "What? I spanked you and kissed you. What are you gonna do? Beat me?"

"You rascal!" I pushed him with all my strength, but he did not even budge. This man was getting more and more shameless as time went by. And now, he was acting like a pervert.

Charles merely ignored my outburst and lectured me. "Listen. Don't attend that kind of work party anymore. If you disobey me, I'll be sure to punish you," he warned in a low voice.

"It was work! Nothing happened, is there?" I explained in a hurry. I hated it whenever he meddled with my work life.

"Work? You almost got molested! Are you sure that's part of your work?" Charles coldly asked while staring at me with an intense gaze. "Don't stretch me to the limit, Scarlett. I allowed you to go to work because I wanted you to be happy. But just so you know, if you keep doing this, I can take your job away."

None of his words seemed to have an effect on me. He sighed to calm himself down and compromised. "I can give you everything you want. But I don't want this to happen again. I'm worried about you."

It was only then that I looked at him. For a second, I felt my heart warmed up. I could not say anything harsh to him, especially when he just wanted me to be safe, could I?

Ever so slowly, Charles reached out his hand and gently touched my face. He then stared at me intently with his blue eyes. They seemed as mysterious as the vast sea. I could not bring myself to look away. They were tempting to look at. All of a sudden, I felt a cool sensation on my lips. I was so engrossed in my thoughts that the next thing I knew, Charles had kissed me.

I struggled to get out of his grasp, but he only held me tighter. He held my waist and lifted me up, not allowing me to break free. Like a koala hugging a tree, I put my legs around his hips so I would not fall to the cold bathroom floor.

Charles nibbled the top of my tongue and gently asked, "Will you be a good girl now?"

The kiss turned my mind in disarray, and I could hardly breathe. I could not think straight, so I just nodded. However, Charles did not seem satisfied with my answer. He sucked on my lips harder and asked me again in a hoarse voice, "Answer me. Will you be a good girl?"

"Yes." The most important thing at the moment was to satisfy Charles in his demands.

"Good girl."

Charles finally let go of me after getting the answer he wanted. He returned to his usual noble temperament and even helped me run the bath.

"Thank you." I rolled my eyes at him in annoyance. I had now returned to my senses and remembered that Charles was a jerk.

My hangover subsided, and I instantly felt better after taking a shower.

A few moments later, I sat on the edge of the bed and wiped my hair with a towel. But then, I could not help but think of Charles. What on earth was he up to?

His behavior these past few days perplexed me. Was it only an illusion? I patted my head, unable to comprehend what he was thinking.

At that moment, Charles came in with a tray in his hand. As he saw that I was in deep thought and patting my head, he teasingly asked, "Have you realized what you did wrong?"

I looked at him and forced a smile. "Yes. Under the guidance of the great Mr. Moore, I have deeply reflected on my behavior. I realized that I was wrong. I should've just stayed in France, so I wouldn't suffer," I retorted.

Charles put down the tray and chuckled. "But you returned. Now that you're here, you can only be my Mrs. Moore."

He walked towards me and touched my damp hair. "Why aren't you drying your hair? You might catch a cold."

Without waiting for my response, he went to fetch the hairdryer.

"I made you pasta. Eat it while it's still hot," Charles said while helping me dry my hair.

On the tray were two plates of pasta. No matter what Charles did, he always did his best. Even though he was not really that good at cooking, the food he cooked still looked like the ones served in restaurants.

My stomach growled, but I did not want to admit defeat.

"I'm not hungry," I refused him flatly. I should practice not giving in easily.

"Don't starve yourself. I put shrimp in the pasta. It's your favorite, right?" Charles sighed and made a concession, seeing that I was stubborn. "Look. I'm sorry. I promise I'll consider your feelings more in the future."

I looked up at him incredulously, unable to believe that an arrogant man like him would apologize. I must still have a hangover.

"Next time, I'll ask for your permission before I kiss you. Well, I'll still kiss you even if you say no."

What the hell? What a cheeky devil! I was angry and, at the same time, ashamed. I raised my hand to hit his chest, but he grabbed my wrist in the blink of an eye. "Baby, let's eat something first so that you can have the strength to hit me," he said with a smirk.

I had no choice but to eat the food he had cooked. I was starving, after all. Once we were done eating, I took the tray back to the kitchen.

Charles was drinking coffee on the sofa when, all of a sudden, I remembered something. "You drove Abner away again. He's my friend. Why are you so rude to him?"

"Abner isn't trustworthy. He let you drink with those filthy men, and you almost got hurt. I should've beat him harder." Charles seemed dissatisfied that I defended Abner after what had happened. As soon as he said that, he put down his cup of coffee and went to the kitchen.

"But nothing happened, didn't it?" I reasoned out even though I knew I was in the wrong.

All of a sudden, Charles grabbed my hand and bellowed, "Scarlett, how could you not care about your own safety?! Have you ever considered the feelings of those who care about you?"

"I will protect myself in the future. Don't tell me what to do and what not to do," I fired back.

"Then don't agree to my face and then do the contrary. I know your tricks."

He sounded as though he knew me well when, in fact, he did not. I shook off his hand in annoyance. "There are times when I can't refuse because of my job!"

"You're my wife. Nobody dares to make things difficult for you," Charles scoffed. His eyebrows were furrowed, and anger could be seen in his eyes.

"Have you forgotten that our marriage is a secret?"

"Then let's make our relationship public!" It seemed that Charles intended to make use of this situation to do what he wanted.

But, had he forgotten that he had Rita and that the major media regarded the two of them as a couple?

"There's no need to do that. We're going to divorce anyway."

Bringing up the divorce was something that could not be avoided. Every time that was mentioned, the two of us would break up in discord.

Charles left a few moments later, and I went to work.

For some reason, it felt that something was up as soon as I entered the company building. People around me gave me weird looks and whispered to one another.

It was not until I saw a familiar figure by the door of the office that I realized what was wrong. It was because of Rita. What tricks did she have up her sleeve again? Stressed, my temples started throbbing.

Suddenly, Rita rushed towards me and pulled the hem of my dress. "It's all my fault. Scarlett, please forgive me. I know I was wrong. I'm so sorry!" she cried out.

Her doing that was ridiculous. People would just think that she was the victim when she was actually a perpetrator.

I did not say anything in response and just looked at her coldly. Because of this, she sobbed harder to gain sympathy from me and the people around me. "You must hate me now because of Charles. It's not our fault he and I love each other so much. Please forgive me. Think about our friendship for so many years."

The employees started whispering to each other. I could not blame them. Anything about Charles was good gossip.

"How can I not forgive a dying woman?" I scoffed with feigned pity.

Rita stopped crying at once and raised her head in surprise. It seemed that she never expected I would say something like that.

The first person to lose his temper was Rita's bodyguard. He cursed at me and strode forward, possibly to beat me. Fortunately, my colleagues were quick to their feet, and they stopped him in time. The scene was chaotic.

Meanwhile, Rita knelt on the ground and continued acting. "I'll kneel here until you forgive me."

"Rita, I really don't have time for this. If you want to kneel, just do it." As soon as I finished speaking, I entered the studio with my colleagues and did not even look back.

Chapter 60 Rumors

Scarlett's POV:

As soon as I left the studio, I heard a female voice call my name. "Scarlett, I didn't expect you to be so capable!"

I turned around and the person I found made my jaw drop. Fiona, one of my colleagues, was walking toward me, her high heels clicking against the floor.

"Stop pretending to be innocent. You're having an affair with Rita's man. Poor Rita." Fiona raised her voice by several notches. She stood in front of me like a hungry lioness that was about to scratch my face off with her claws and then gut me.

She and I were just ordinary colleagues. We were not friends or in good terms in any way. Ever since we met, I had always felt like she hated me, and that feeling had been supported by her behavior toward me. When she heard the rumors going around, she was one of the first people to mock me with them.

It was ridiculous that she and everybody else thought I was Charles's mistress.

"I'm not having an affair with anyone, Fiona. I'm not desperate, and I have some self-respect. I would never date a married man just so that I wouldn't be single,"

I retorted, holding my head high. After that, I walked away. I had more important things to do than engage in pointless arguments with judgmental people.

Just as I was preparing for my next interview, Nina trotted over to me, her anxious voice filling my ears.

"Scarlett! Have you read the news?" She waved her phone at me. "They're saying that you stole Rita's husband! Oh, my God! I can't believe that woman is slandering you for publicity! It's such a desperate and pathetic move!"

Nina was so angry that I could see smoke coming out of her ears, but I had gotten used to it.

"I thought she was supposed to be critically ill. How does she have the energy to go around and make a scene all the time? Is she just pretending to be sick so that she can get attention?" Nina surmised in a low voice.

Although I was a little stunned by her question, I just shook my head. "She's sick, Nina. And if she wasn't, she wouldn't be able to hide it from Charles."

"Scarlett! Why do you trust Charles so much?" Nina looked at me in disbelief.

"Because I know him well."

I had never doubted Charles's love for Rita.

"Well, I still think that Rita is hiding something. You should look into her. Just because you trust Charles doesn't mean you have to trust Rita, too." Nina kept shaking her head and looking at me as if I was being a colossal idiot.

I just nodded perfunctorily. I did not have the time to think about the matter. I had work to do.

Time quickly passed.

Finally, it was time to get off work. As soon as I walked out of the building, I saw Burton driving toward me.

"Mrs. Moore asked me to pick you up and drive you to the family villa."

I got in the car and instantly felt nervous. There was a good chance that Charles would be at the villa as well, and I did not want to face him. I did not care about what the news said about me, but Charles would not let it go easily.

Burton drove all the way to the villa. When we arrived, I got out of the car and looked around. I heaved a sigh of relief after confirming that Charles's car was nowhere to be found.

When I entered the house, I found everyone waiting for me in the living room. Christine was the one to approach me first and gave me a hug.

"My dear Scarlett, are you okay? Just ignore those good-for-nothing tabloids. They have nothing better to write about than attention seekers like Rita."

I was surprised to hear Christine bring up the news before I did. I flashed her a weak smile and helped her to the sofa. Before I could reply to her, I heard the front door swing open.

"Grandma." Hearing Charles's voice made my heart leap to my throat.

Christine pressed her lips together in a thin line and eyed her grandson with so much disappointment in her face. Seeing that look on Christine's face and recalling what the news said about me, I felt dejected. I just sat beside Christine in silence.

"What have you done, Scarlett? Why did you force Rita to kneel down like that?" Charles asked impatiently, which upset me.

"I didn't force her to do anything. She knelt down herself to get people's sympathy. It was all an act, and

only idiots like you believed it," I backfired.

"Charles! Do you have to talk to Scarlett like that as soon as you set foot in the house?" Alice glared at Charles.

Suddenly, the atmosphere in the living room became cold and strained.

"Alas... Things couldn't go on like this. Charles, Scarlett, I think it's better if you two get a divorce." Christine finally broke the long silence. I whipped my head at her and looked at her with wide eyes. The first time Charles and I told Christine that we were getting a divorce, she got so furious that she fell ill and got hospitalized. But now, it seemed like she was finally giving us her blessing.

And I knew that she was only doing it for my sake. I wrinkled my nose as a pang of guilt pierced my heart like a wooden stake.

"What do you think, Michael?" Christine turned to ask Michael who was watering some flowers in one corner of the living room.

"I'll allow it as long as it's okay with Scarlett. Scarlett, have you found another man to spend your life with?" Michael left his flowers at once, trotted over to me, and sat beside me.

"I think Spencer is a great guy," I lied through my teeth.

"He most definitely is not! He's a playboy!" Michael protested immediately.

"Grandpa, Charles thinks that Spencer and I are a perfect match. In fact, he has been trying to set us up," I said lightly.

All I wanted was to divorce Charles and make him disappear from my life as soon as I could. Lying about Spencer's track record with women was a small price to pay for that.

All of a sudden, everyone turned to look at Charles.

"Yes. I think Spencer will be good for Scarlett," Charles agreed.

"I beg your pardon?" Michael almost sprang to his feet.

"I don't mean to judge your friend, Charles. But I think we all know what kind of a man Spencer really is. You can't do this to Scarlett," Alice muttered, rolling her eyes at her son.

"I think David is more reliable. We have discussed before that he is a good young man," Lawrence, who had been silent since I arrived, suddenly suggested. He darted his gaze at me, and I saw a shadow of guilt in his eyes.

I did not expect him to vouch for David. So they had thought about fixing me up with David? But why was Charles pushing Spencer? I chanced a glance at Charles, but he averted his eyes.

Charles's POV:

I did not expect that my lies would be exposed.

"Very well. Charles, come to the study with me." Grandpa looked at me sternly and went upstairs. Keeping my eyes away from Scarlett, I followed him in silence.

As soon as I entered the study, Grandpa turned to me. "Go on. What do you have to say for yourself?"

"I don't want to divorce Scarlett, Grandpa. I want to take good care of her," I answered seriously. At present, that was the only truth I could tell.

"Then sever your ties with Rita. You should announce to the public that you've been married to Scarlett for three years now." Grandpa spoke without looking at me. Instead, he began rummaging in one of his desk drawers.

I had nothing to say to his last remark. I had promised to marry Rita and give her a perfect wedding.

My silence apparently irritated Grandpa. He was probably thinking that I was trying to arrive at a situation wherein I could be with Scarlett and Rita at the same time.

"You really disappoint me, Charles. Take your marriage certificate. Don't use me and your grandmother as an excuse anymore." After saying that, Grandpa pushed me out of his study and slammed the door behind me.

I went downstairs with our marriage certificate in hand and my mind in shambles.

"Charles, you've got the marriage certificate, haven't you?"

I was surprised to find Scarlett waiting for me at the bottom of the staircase. Instinctively, I shoved our marriage certificate in my back pocket. She looked at me expectantly with her big, charming eyes, and my heart ached.

Why was she so eager to get rid of me? I did not answer her.

Seeing that I did not say anything, Scarlett grabbed my wrist, shoved me into the bathroom, and shut the door.

"Have you got our marriage certificate or not?" she asked in a low voice.

"No." I shook my head.

"Why else would Grandpa talk to you in the study? Don't lie to me."

"If you don't believe me, you can frisk me," I replied in a provocative tone.

As I expected, a muscle flickered in Scarlett's jaw. She was annoyed, but she still reached out with trembling hands to search me.