

Warning 61

[Chapter 61 Sugar Daddy](#)

Charles's POV:

Scarlett reached out her hand, but hesitation could still be seen on her face.

Just as she thought I was going to stand still and let her search me, I pulled her into my arms.

"Do you want me to teach you how to frisk me?" I whispered in her ear.

Scarlett shrank back like a frightened rabbit. But because I was holding her hand, she could not escape me.

"Charles, I promise I won't frisk you anymore. You said you didn't have it. I believe you. Just please, let me go," Scarlett pleaded, her ears red in embarrassment. She looked so adorable whenever she was like this. Her shy demeanor was making me go crazy.

"Too late," I retorted with a smirk.

"Charles, what... what are you gonna do?" Scarlett pushed me away as hard as she could. But as she was petite, the force sent her stumbling backwards. To make things worse, the bathroom floor was slippery. She would fall and get hurt! Without missing a beat, I reached out to catch her.

However, I miscalculated, and we ended up falling into the bathtub on top of each other. I caught her in my arms just in time, and we landed on my back. She should be fine.

"Charles, let me go," Scarlett asked in a barely audible voice.

I spread out my hands and pretended to be innocent. "You're free to get off me. I'm not holding you. Look."

Upon realizing something, Scarlett stared daggers at me and hoisted herself by grabbing the edge of the bathtub. Then, with a red face, she stood up.

"Scarlett, it's you who refused to frisk me. Just make sure to remember that if we ever need to bring up this moment in the future." I stood up from the bathtub as well. Our intimate physical contact just now and the look on her face cheered me up.

Scarlett pushed the door open and grumbled, "You always have a reason to shut me up."

I strode over and stopped her from leaving. "If you want, I can shut you up right now in yet another different way."

"Charles, stop being a rascal!"

"Don't forget; you still owe me a week's meal." I brought up her promise that she had forgotten.

"It's just breakfast for a week!" Scarlett reasoned out.

"I have to charge you an interest for delaying it for too long. It's a week's meal." I was pushing my luck. Knowing her, she did not want to be indebted to anyone.

"Fine. I'll do it. Just let me out." Scarlett pushed me out of her way.

I had gotten the answer that I wanted, so I just stepped aside and made way for her.

I was literally beaming with happiness for the next few minutes.

The next morning, just as Scarlett had promised, she came to my house to make me breakfast. While I was drinking water in the kitchen, she entered the kitchen, a bag of ingredients in her hand.

"What do you want to eat?" she asked without even greeting me.

I could not help but notice the white dress she was wearing. She looked elegant and charming today.

"It doesn't matter. I'll eat whatever you cook for me."

Scarlett rolled her eyes at me.

"Whatever. Get out of the way. I don't like being disturbed when I'm cooking." She motioned me to get out of her way and then walked to the sink to wash the ingredients.

I shrugged my shoulders and stood a few feet away from her.

My presence must be making her nervous. I figured that that might be the case as she shrieked all of a sudden. It turned out that she had opened the tap a little too much, so water splashed all over her clothes.

Without a word, I went to my room and fetched her a shirt.

"Put this on for the meantime, or you might catch a cold," I advised as I handed her my white shirt.

Scarlett looked at her white dress and went to the bathroom to change. Once done, she returned to the kitchen and continued cooking.

However, I could not take my eyes off her. My shirt was too big for her, so the neckline was slightly plunging and I could almost see her chest.

My gaze fell on her breasts, and I felt my throat dry up all of a sudden. Her wearing my clothes made me feel as though I was touching her, albeit indirectly. My mind was in a mess because of this.

Scarlett finished making my breakfast after a while. But even when my breakfast was ready, my mind was still in the clouds. In order to restrain myself, I did not look at her again until my assistant delivered a new set of clothes for her to my apartment.

Scarlett's POV:

I breathed a sigh of relief the instant I stepped out of Charles's house. But now, I was running late, so I had to rush to the company.

I saw Abner as soon as I arrived at the office. For some reason, worry and apprehension were written all over his face, which perplexed me.

"Scarlett, the CEO of Lively Group is here. He's waiting for you in the reception room," he whispered to me, a sense of urgency in his tone.

I must admit, I was shock. The CEO of Lively Group? That was Rita's father! What was he doing here?

To me, the Livelys were not exactly good people. Rita's father and mine used to be good friends. But when my father was in trouble, Rita's father did nothing.

I had no idea what he was here for. But it seemed that whether I liked it or not, I had no choice but to meet with him.

"Here you are, Scarlett! I haven't seen you for a long time. You've become more beautiful!"

The moment I stepped into the reception room, a middle-aged man, who had been sitting on the leather sofa, stood up and greeted me enthusiastically.

"Hello, Mr. Nate Lively. Long time no see," I greeted back with a smile. I then turned around and poured him a glass of water out of courtesy.

"Why are you so cold to me? Is it because of what happened in the past? Scarlett, I didn't have much choice at that time. You're a grown woman now. Don't hold onto the past, alright?" Nate put his hand on my arm as he spoke.

He had just crossed my personal space. Because of this, I instinctively took a step back and glared at him.

"Why are you so sensitive? Come on! A little bird like you needs a sugar daddy who will protect you, right? I can give you everything you want," he continued in an ambiguous tone while fiddling with his

Rolex watch.

I looked at him in disbelief. How dare he come to my workplace just to ask me to be his mistress?!

"Is that why you came here? I'll tell you what. I don't need anyone to protect me, let alone a sugar daddy. You need help. You're sick."

I walked to the door and pushed it open.

Just as I was about to head out, I turned around and coldly said, "Mr. Lively, I'm very busy. I'm afraid I can't see you off."

"Sweetie, if you ever change your mind, feel free to come to me at any time," Nate said with a shrug. Without waiting for my response, he left.

The news that I had met with Rita's father

reached Charles shortly.

In the afternoon, while I was discussing work with my colleagues, he suddenly appeared in front of me. As if on cue, my colleagues left knowingly. Charles then sat down on the main seat and crossed his legs leisurely.

With his hands on the desk, he asked in a serious tone, "Scarlett, what did he say to you?"

"Nothing. It's just about my father."

I was surprised that Charles seemed to care about me.

"Scarlett, no matter what he says, don't believe it. He used to take advantage of your father's business," he cautioned, his eyes narrowed in apprehension. For some reason, my heart pounded in my chest. I could not look at him, unable to believe what I had just heard.

I abruptly stood up and exclaimed, "That's impossible!"

"Calm down, Scarlett. You're a strong girl. Don't worry. I'll find out the truth for you. Anyway, is that everything he told you?"

My face turned red all of a sudden. That disgusting old man even implied that he wanted to keep me as his mistress. It was an insult to my dignity. How could I say that to Charles?

As Charles saw that I seemed troubled, he moved close to me and held my hand reassuringly.

The warmth of his hand made me feel at ease. I lifted my gaze and looked into his eyes. They were as

blue as the sea, and looking at them made me feel like drowning. What was more, the feelings that I had long suppressed felt as though they were about to burst out of my body.

"Scarlett, you need to relax. How about we play tennis this weekend?" Charles asked with a gentle smile.

I hated it whenever he was like this. I would get so weak, and my heart would get the best of me.

[Chapter 62 Played Tennis](#)

Spencer's POV:

David and I had been at the tennis courts for a long time when Charles and Scarlett finally arrived.

"Hey, buddy. It seems that you've been very busy lately. The only time I get to see you is when I turn on the news." I patted Charles on the shoulder and winked and smiled at Scarlett.

Charles pulled me away immediately and scowled, "Don't you wink and smile at her like that."

"Jeez, Charles. Take it easy!" I chuckled and raised my hands in feigned surrender. Then, I pressed, "You're the one who's trying to set me up with Scarlett. Why do you get mad when I try to be nice to her? I don't know where to put myself around you, honestly."

Scarlett put on an embarrassed look. Even when she was not smiling, she looked a hundred times cuter than Rita. I still did not understand why Charles chose Rita over Scarlett. We both knew that Scarlett was better.

"Quit being a smart mouth, Spencer. Save your energy for trying to beat me in the court later," Charles said in an unfriendly tone, casting a sidelong glance at me.

I shut up at his threat.

The tennis courts covered a large area and belonged to a five-star hotel. The hotel was one of the many properties of the Moore family. Charles and I used to play tennis here when we were still students.

"Scarlett will play against David. Spencer, you'll play against me," Charles ordered.

"But I want to play with Scarlett!" I clamored beside Charles, dissatisfied with his arrangement. However, since I just pissed him off by making beautiful eyes at his wife, I did not expect him to be considerate.

As expected, my pouting was useless. Before I could make my case, Charles was already dragging me to our court. We played several games. My knees were already threatening to buckle while Charles did not even look like he was panting. I forgot how he could be so competitive that playing a simple game with

him could mean participating in a death march.

Like Charles, I did exercise regularly, but I was no match for him in tennis or in any competitive sports for that matter.

"Admit it. Your skills are not as good as mine." Charles looked at me coldly and pulled me up from the floor a few moments after I sat down to catch my breath.

"Well, I just took a few more glances at your wife." I retorted in between labored breaths and added, "I came here for a friendly game of tennis, not to compete in the Australian Open. Seriously, man, you need to calm down and save your pent-up rage for sex, not take it out on your friends."

At this time, Scarlett and David were also done with their game and walking toward Charles and me. Scarlett seemed to catch my last remark and lowered her head, but I still managed to catch a glimpse of her blushing cheeks.

"Watch your damn mouth." Charles flashed me an expressionless glance and then towed Scarlett away. They sat on some nearby benches and rested.

I observed their interaction and found it interesting. I could tell that Charles truly cared about Scarlett.

"What are you looking at?" David asked. Following my gaze, he saw that Charles was wiping the sweat off Scarlett's forehead. He opened his eyes wide in surprise and commented, "What? When did Charles become so sweet and romantic?"

"You see it, too, don't you? He turns into a mushy gentleman when it comes to Scarlett. That's why I don't believe at all that he has no feelings for her." I narrowed my eyes at them and thought that there was no way that I could be wrong.

"But aren't they going to divorce? I don't get it. They're obviously in love." David did not understand. He had been hoping for a happily ever after for Charles and Scarlett. But real relationships were more complicated than that.

"One of them isn't," I corrected David's words. "There wouldn't be a problem if it weren't for Rita. She saved Charles's life, so she has him by the neck. Honestly, I'm not even convinced that she's really sick,"

David remarked indignantly. "Judging from her lively appearance, I don't think she's a terminally ill patient. I even heard that she's having an affair with one of her bodyguards. What a depraved woman. Do you think Charles knows about that?"

"Since you do, then it's safe to say that Charles also does. He must have quelled the rumors to protect Rita. You know how he is." I patted David on the shoulder and said with a knowing smile, "Let's go help our dear Charles realize his feelings for his own wife and stop this madness, shall we?"

After leaving the tennis courts, David and I followed Charles to his car.

"We sent our drivers home," I told Charles with my head held high. I flashed him a cheeky smile. I was actually impressed at how ballsy I was to provoke him.

"And we're starving," David chimed in, putting on a cunning smile.

"So?" Charles challenged. He looked like he was trying to bite down his anger. I almost burst into teary-eyed laughter. David and I did not often see Charles backed into a corner, and now that we had him in such a predicament, I could not help feeling extremely satisfied.

"We would like Scarlett to cook for us. And sharing a meal with her will be a great opportunity for us to get to know each other better," I said casually and shrugged.

"What's that supposed to mean?" Charles sneered.

"Oh, come on, Charles. Get your head out of the gutter. I just meant eating together would be a good bonding session for all of us. I wasn't trying to imply something inappropriate."

After saying that, I urged Charles to drive. I was just teasing him, and as expected, he threatened to explode on me like boiling magma inside an active volcano.

The entire trip to his place, Charles kept silent, so David and I tacitly shifted the conversation toward Scarlett.

"Scarlett, if you're having any difficulties in your current job, please know that you can always come to me. My company will always welcome you."

"She already has me. She doesn't need your help. Stop talking nonsense, or I'll kick you out of my car," Charles growled.

David and I immediately stopped talking and exchanged amused glances. We would have high fived if Charles was not there to see it.

When we walked out of the elevator and arrived at Charles's apartment, I put my hand on Scarlett's shoulder. "I can't wait to taste what you're going to cook for us, Scarlett."

Scarlett simply smiled at me and said nothing.

"Get your hand off her," Charles barked at me.

"Oh, for heaven's sake, Charles, relax. I'm just being nice," I snapped and smirked at Charles. I came today to challenge him at every turn, and so far, I had not failed.

Before I could react, Charles removed my hand from Scarlett's shoulder.

"Will you two stop it already?" Scarlett muttered and then put in the password to open the door.

"Scarlett, how do you know the password to Charles's door? I don't even know it," David asked curiously.

"I..." Scarlett stammered. She obviously did not know how to answer the question.

"Of course she knows the code to Charles's door, David. She's his wife, and she must come here often," I answered for Charles who did not show any sort of reaction.

"Enough with your stupid questions, you two," Charles groaned and pinched the bridge of his nose as if he was getting a migraine.

It would be ill-advised to keep making fun of Charles and Scarlett, so David and I decided to zip our lips for now. When we entered Charles's apartment, Scarlett went directly to the kitchen to cook while David and I proceeded to the living room and made ourselves comfortable.

"I really need you two to leave now," Charles said in exasperation and looked down at us.

We had gone through a lot of trouble to get here. We were not stupid enough to leave without a fight.

I rose from my seat and yelled toward the direction of the kitchen, "Scarlett! Cha..."

"Shut up! Or I'll break your fucking jaw!"

Charles interrupted me before I could finish my words. I imitated his tone and snickered. Then, I sat back down on the sofa, crossed my legs, and flashed him a complacent look. It seemed that I had found the weakness of the great and almighty Charles Moore, and it was his wife and secret love, Scarlett. I thought it quite amusing that he had not realized that fact himself.

"Are you and Scarlett at a good place in your marriage, Charles?" David asked directly and leaned against the sofa.

Charles hesitated for a moment and then answered seriously, "My grandma wants us to be."

I had been Charles's friend for many, many years. I knew when he was spewing bullshit, and right now was one of those times. I could tell that he desperately wanted to be with Scarlett and that he would make that happen with or without his grandmother's approval.

At this time, the doorbell rang. Charles promptly turned around to open the door.

I whipped my head toward Charles's front door. It was getting late. Did he invite someone else to come over?

[Chapter 63 Confession](#)

Scarlett's POV:

I could hear Rita's coquettish voice even from the kitchen.

"How can you let an anchorwoman cook, Charles?" she teased.

She might be using a gentle voice, but she was still enjoying finding fault in me.

"Scarlett was willing to cook, and I didn't think there was anything wrong with that," Charles replied calmly. He sat on the sofa and paged through the magazine in his hand.

Uninterested in their conversation, I just kept my head down and concentrated on cooking.

However, Rita was unwilling to be ignored. She sat down next to Charles and chatted with David and Spencer.

I glanced at her and saw the face of her father, a man who would be forever etched in my memory. No woman would ever forget the man who once asked her to be his mistress. I was still upset about that encounter as if it just happened yesterday.

I walked out of the kitchen. I decided I would continue cooking after Rita was done making a scene here.

"Where are you going, Scarlett?" Charles put down the magazine and stood up when he saw me leaving.

I was about to tell him that I was just stepping out for some fresh air, but then Rita put her hand over her chest and collapsed on the floor. I did not buy her act the moment I saw it. The timing was suspiciously impeccable, the damsel in distress dramatically falling in front of the hero. I almost rolled my eyes.

My eyes darted to Charles. He was immediately beside Rita and asking her if she was okay.

"Rita? Rita!"

Charles called her name several times, but Rita closed her eyes and did not respond.

"Scarlett, give me my phone. I need to call the doctor," Charles snapped.

I went to get his phone and handed it to him. He was now holding the unconscious Rita in his arms.

Charles called a doctor named Addison as he carried Rita out of the apartment. His tone was full of

concern and anxiety. As I followed him out, I felt as if my heart was snapping like dried twigs. Once again, he was abandoning me for Rita.

Charles put Rita on the backseat of his car and then slid into the driver's seat. Then, he turned to look at me.

"Please come with me,"

he pleaded, which instantly burned through my defenses. My mind screamed at me to refuse, but my body did otherwise. I opened the car door and sat in the backseat with Rita. I carefully set her head on my lap and covered her with Charles's jacket.

When we arrived at the hospital, Charles rushed out of the car and grabbed Rita with calculated haste. "Scarlett, please bring my phone," he asked.

After saying that, he raced to the emergency room and met with the hospital staff. They quickly put Rita on a gurney and wheeled her in.

I took Charles's phone and followed him to the emergency room. David and Spencer arrived just in time to fall into step beside me. We found Charles sitting in the waiting room, looking worried and weary.

"I'm sorry, Spencer and David. This is not a big deal. You don't have to stay. Scarlett and I can wait here."

"No. We'll wait until there's news about Rita," Spencer replied.

Charles just nodded and did not say anything more. He sat there quietly and stared at the door to the emergency room.

Looking at everything in front of me, I did not know how to react.

David gently patted me on the shoulder and said, "You must be freaked out, Scarlett. Don't worry. Charles will take care of everything."

I manufactured a smile and put it on my face.

Just then, the doors to the emergency room swung open, and a doctor in green scrubs with a stethoscope around his neck emerged. Charles sprang to his feet. Before he could ask, the doctor spoke. "The patient is stable and out of danger. You can rest easy now."

Soon, Rita was transferred to the general ward.

David, Spencer, and I stood in the corridor and felt relieved to see her.

"It's getting late, Scarlett, and you have to go to work tomorrow. Let me take you home," David offered.

I dipped my chin in acknowledgement. I did not need to be here. Charles could accompany Rita, and Rita most certainly did not need me.

"Don't go, Scarlett. I need you."

I whipped my head toward Charles and stared at him with wide eyes. Before I could say anything, he strode toward me and stood close enough for us to share breath. My heart began beating madly against my ribcage.

"If Charles needs you here, then you should stay, Scarlett."

I did not know if it was Spencer or David who left that last remark because they were gone before I could turn my head to them.

Alas, there was only Charles and I in the quiet, deserted hospital corridor.

We kept silent for a long while. We just listened to each other inhale and exhale. I could have said something had I known what. The thought of Rita lying in the ward nearby rendered me speechless.

"Are you cold? You're shaking," Charles asked as he took my hand.

I was startled by his sudden movement. I hurriedly turned my face away and tried to withdraw my hand.

"No, I'm not cold."

But Charles held on to my hand tightly.

"Scarlett... Please listen to me. I'm sorry for how I reacted when Rita..." Charles said slowly with determination in his eyes. "But it's not because I'm in love with her. I simply want to repay her kindness. I'm in love with you. I want to be with you."

I blinked twice after Charles finished his words. I thought I was dreaming.

I looked at him in disbelief.

What was he talking about? Did he really just say that he was in love with me?

That was impossible! He must be playing tricks on me again!

My mind went blank. After a few heartbeats, I broke his grip, turned around, and walked away.

"Scarlett!"

Charles called my name many times, but all I did was quicken my pace.

Charles's POV:

Rita was still in a coma. I stayed with her at the hospital the whole night. But all I could see in my mind's eye was Scarlett walking away.

It was not until the next morning that Richard arrived.

"Take good care of her. I'll go home first and come back later."

Then, I left. I drove straight to Garden Street. After our last conversation, I did not think that Scarlett would be in the mood to make me breakfast at my apartment today.

I stood by her front door and hesitated to knock.

'You're such a damn coward, Charles,' I cursed myself.

But no matter the result, I should bravely face what was in front of me.

So I raised my hand and knocked on Scarlett's door. However, after knocking three times, no one came to answer. After a while, I decided to take out my key and open the door. Scarlett was nowhere to be found.

She was not home.

The guilt and anxiety in my heart just got stronger. I just stood there in the middle of her house, unsure what to do next.

Then, my phone beeped. I took it out and read the message absentmindedly. Then I saw it was from Scarlett.

"Breakfast is ready."

It was a simple sentence that I stared at for a long time.

Then, my head teemed with a whole new tangle of emotions.

[Chapter 64 Sponsorship](#)

Scarlett's POV:

As soon as I arrived at the office, I received a call from Nate.

"Have you made up your mind, honey?" he asked in a lewd, disgusting tone.

"I will make up my damn mind when I go out of it,"

I snapped. Then, I hung up the phone and blocked his number.

I did not want to waste my breath because I was in a bad mood.

Although my reason told me again and again that Charles only said those words to poke fun at me, my heart still hoped that they came from a place of truth. His words lingered in my ears as if he were uttering them to me. "I'm in love with you! I want to be with you, Scarlett."

That scene played over and over in my head like a broken record, and it was starting to disrupt my concentration at work.

I needed a break to calm down and realign myself, so I stood up and made my way to the lounge.

But before I could push the door open, I overheard people talking about me inside. Judging from the voices, they were female colleagues of mine, but I was not close to any one of them.

"Don't you think it's shameful for Scarlett to do that in the meeting room yesterday?"

"They stayed there for at least an hour. That handsome man she was with must be very energetic."

"I think it's because Scarlett was sexually unsatisfied..."

I could not stand it anymore. I stormed in.

The three ladies sitting at the round table all looked embarrassed when they saw me.

"Aren't you ladies supposed to be working and not gossiping in here?"

They exchanged nervous glances and hurriedly left. None of them dared to make eye contact with me.

I sighed and made a cup of coffee after they left, but before I could take a sip, Linda walked in and approached me in haste.

Thinking of what happened last time, I had guessed what she had come to tell me.

"Scarlett, Mr. Valdez wants you to come have lunch with him today," Linda said directly.

"Oh, Linda, do I have to? There has to be a better way to get a sponsorship." Thinking of that fat, depraved man, I frowned in disgust.

The media industry should not operate in this way. I did not believe that there was no way to change the way things went.

"I know, sweetie. Believe me, I get it. No woman relishes to deal with the likes of Mr. Valdez," Linda agreed in a low voice. "Well, it's not that we don't have a choice. In fact, I think Mr. Moore is a great option. You two seem to get along quite well. I mean, he was just here for you yesterday. With him as your backer, Mr. Valdez won't be able to lay a finger on you."

Linda's words were full of hints.

As soon as I heard Charles's name, my skin bristled as if I were a cornered porcupine raising its barbed quills.

"Charles may be like a brother to me, but I don't want his charity. Besides, I don't like owing people favors. It's just like buying a weakness," I said stiffly. The last person I wanted to depend on was Charles.

"Okay. So is that a yes to the luncheon meeting with Mr. Valdez?" Linda eyed me carefully. She looked like she wanted to say something more but decided against it.

"No, Linda. I'm sorry."

Thinking of what happened that day, I felt my stomach flip.

"Very well. All right. Let me treat you to dinner then. Please?"

"To that I'll say yes. See you after work."

The work day passed by quickly.

In the evening, Linda booked us a VIP lounge at a great restaurant.

When I entered the room, I immediately thought I was dreaming. I saw not only Linda but also Mr. Valdez and Charles.

Charles was sitting at the head of the table, and he smiled at me the moment I walked in.

Thinking of what I said to Linda this morning, I got nervous. Had she said anything to Charles about our conversation? Worried that she might have, I rushed over to Charles and grabbed his hand.

"What are you doing here?" I asked as calmly as I could.

Charles did not show any surprise at my feigned gentleness. He just squeezed my hand.

"Linda and I were schoolmates back in the day. I came here as a favor to her."

I nodded perfunctorily, feeling a little surprised that Linda and Charles actually knew each other. Then, I managed to give Mr. Valdez a friendly smile and chose a seat far away from him.

"Sit next to me, Scarlett," Charles ordered. He pulled up a chair next to him and then casually leaned on his like a king waiting for his jester to entertain him.

I smiled awkwardly and took the seat beside him. I did not want to embarrass him in front of Linda and Mr. Valdez.

Unexpectedly, as soon as I sat down, he wrapped his arm around my shoulders and pulled me close.

"You may not know this, but Scarlett is my woman," Charles suddenly announced to no particular person in the room.

My heart immediately started racing after he finished his sentence, and my eyes darted around the room to spot the nearest exits.

I could not believe he just called me his woman.

"But isn't Miss Lively your girlfriend, Mr. Moore?" Mr. Valdez asked. The moment Charles said that I was his woman, the cocky smile on Mr. Valdez's plump face disappeared.

"Can't I have two women at the same time?" Charles asked in reply, his face remaining neutral.

Mr. Valdez averted his gaze and cleared his throat. He could only muster an awkward smile.

I carefully took a breath beside Charles. I knew that Charles was trying to help me. If he told Mr. Valdez that he and I were involved, Mr. Valdez would not dare to even breathe wrong in my direction. He did not have to do it, but he did, and I wondered why. Was he not afraid of Rita finding out?

All of a sudden, I recalled what Charles said to me at the hospital the night we rushed Rita to the emergency room.

He said that he loved me and that he just regarded Rita as someone whose kindness he wanted to reciprocate. God. What the hell was he doing playing this game again?

Yes, I still thought that Charles was not being serious. This was his pattern. He came on to me and then turned around and left me. I could not fall into his vicious cycle again. I just could not.

As a stampede of assumptions ravaged my head, I happened to glance at Linda and found that she was winking at me. I flashed her a blank look, and then she turned to look at Mr. Valdez.

"Please," she mouthed at me.

Only then did I realize that she wanted me to break the uncomfortable silence. I was not used to dealing with this kind of situation, but on second thought, Charles's business might suffer if he offended Mr. Valdez like this. So I gritted my teeth and decided to apologize to Mr. Valdez.

But before I could, Charles rose from his seat.

"Well, your silence was loud enough to communicate your judgment, Mr. Valdez. I do not appreciate it, but I also do not care for it. I live my life without validation from others."

Charles swept his cold gaze around the room like a monarch sizing up his court.

Obviously, Linda did not expect him to react so strongly to Mr. Valdez's non-response. She stood up with a nervous smile on her face. "Charles, nobody's judging you here. I'm being a terrible hostess. I apologize. How about I have dinner served and we all share a lovely meal?"

Charles still stood there. He looked back at me with tenderness in his eyes.

"Do you want to eat?"

I looked at him blankly and did not answer.

"Then let's go. I don't like this dirty place."

Charles glanced indifferently at Linda and Mr. Valdez, grabbed my hand, and towed me out.

However, as we walked toward the door, it swung open, and the last person I wanted to see swaggered inside like he owned the place—Nate Lively.

I gasped. What was he doing here? Did he follow me here?

"Scarlett! Are you leaving already? But I just got here." Nate glanced at my hand, which Charles was holding. He flashed me a crooked smile. I lowered my head in embarrassment and tried to shake off Charles's grip, but Charles just held on tighter.

"It's good that you're here. I have something to tell you," Charles muttered and shot daggers at Nate with his eyes.

[Chapter 65 Protec](#)

Scarlett's POV:

"Charles, what do you want to say to me? Well, whatever it is, we can talk about it inside." Nate rubbed his hands.

"It's about Rita." After saying that, Charles grabbed my hand and escorted me out of the room.

And Nate followed us closely. His hair was neatly combed and he was wearing frameless glasses, which made it obvious that he was a shrewd businessman.

"Mr. Lively, it's been a while, right?" There was a hint of elegance in the way Charles stood casually with one hand in his trouser pocket. Normally, he would be cold and aloof in front of outsiders. I secretly poked his palm. Without looking at me, he pinched my palm softly in order to make me feel comforted.

"Yes. What's the matter with Rita?" With a kind smile on his lips, Rita's father took out a cigarette and handed it to Charles.

Instead of taking the cigarette from him, Charles gave him a cold glance and said in a serious tone, "I will take care of the problem between me and Rita. I hope you stay out of it. You should just enjoy your life and not worry about us. Our lives are for us to worry about."

"Why are you saying such things? I am only worried that you might not be able to handle it." Embarrassed, Nate withdrew the cigarette, but he continued to smile, unbothered by Charles' indifference.

"Just leave it to me, Mr. Lively." Saying that, Charles pursed his lips, his eyes filled with coldness. "And please, don't pester Scarlett again. She has just come to Los Angeles and does not know a lot of things here, so if you need anything, then I suggest you come to me."

Nate squinted his eyes at him, preparing to light his cigarette. After hearing Charles' words, he turned to me in confusion. "Scarlett, what did you say to him? Why is he saying such a thing to me? Is it wrong for me to care about you youngsters as an elder?"

Hearing his words, I felt sickened by his hypocrisy. Even though he knew that he was an elder, he had so brazenly asked me to be his mistress before. Turning away from him, I whispered to Charles, "Let's go."

Just when he was about to take me away from there, Nate stopped him.

The smile on Nate's lips disappeared as he looked at me with maliciousness in his eyes and asked, "Scarlett, you haven't answered my question yet. Can't I look after you as an elder? Do you look down on me and the Lively family?"

Deliberately exaggerating the facts, Nate was trying to accuse me of being arrogant. His shamelessness left me speechless and stunned. Rita and her father were birds of a feather.

"Mr. Lively, I respect you because you are an elder, so don't try to push your luck. Please take good care of your family. I don't think you will be able to bear the consequences if the Lively family collapses. Scarlett is my wife, and you need to keep that in mind," Charles hissed, standing in front of me.

No one would dare to provoke Charles, not only because he had the Moore family backing him up, but also because he was a really powerful man. After only several years of his management, the Moore Group was now flourishing very well. More importantly, Charles was a ruthless business tycoon.

Nate's eyes showed a hint of panic when he faced Charles' wrath, and he had no choice but to keep silent.

Ignoring him, Charles took me away from there with a snort.

Looking at his back, I was having mixed feelings. Everything that he just said kept echoing in my mind. I never expected Charles to protect me like a guardian angel. My heart was full of bittersweet emotions, and tears streamed down my cheeks uncontrollably.

"Let's go home," he said to me.

"Alright," I replied him in a low voice, sniffing.

Charles suddenly stopped walking, and I bumped into his back. "What's the matter?"

Are you crying?" He turned around and held my face in his hands, observing my eyes lovingly.

"No." I tried to avoid eye contact with him as I did not want to admit that his words had moved me, and I was now crying because of it. I was actually embarrassed to admit that even though it was true.

However, my red eyes betrayed me, and he looked at me with a sense of pride in his heart. "Are you enchanted by me? You can just marry me."

I snorted, "You wish!"

"Well, yes... I actually forgot that we're already married." With a faint nod, Charles stroked my head dotingly.

And that very instant, my heart melted into a puddle.

He stopped once we reached his house. I looked at him hesitantly, wondering, 'Is he not going to send me back home?'

"Don't look at me like I kidnapped you! I'm just hungry, so I want to eat the food that you cook," Charles said righteously as though he could read my mind.

"What would you like to eat?"

Since I had not eaten much at dinner, I also felt hungry when I heard him mention that.

However, instead of answering my question, he held my hand and kissed it.

My fingertips felt soft, and I shrank back. "Don't kiss me like that for no reason!"

Charles chuckled and kissed the back of my hand again before letting me go. He then unfastened my seat belt, leaned closer, and whispered softly, "I will soon be eating you."

And the confidence in his tone made me feel extremely nervous.

"Go away!" I shouted, pretending like I was calm.

"Sure, Your Highness." With a smile on his lips, Charles saluted to me as he got off the car.

Due to his flirtatious moves, my mind was a mess now. When I got home, I walked straight to the kitchen, trying to calm myself down. However, I could not get him off my mind. Since I was distracted by him, I accidentally added an extra spoonful of vinegar into the soup. I tried to redeem it in a hurry, but it ended up tasting weird. After multiple failed attempts to fix the soup, I gave up and tried to focus on making the next dish.

I heard a sound coming from the living room. Charles seemed to have come down after taking a shower. As soon as I turned around, I saw him walking towards the kitchen.

His hair was damp, and the drop of water that was clinging to a strand of hair above his forehead, made him look more affectionate. I lowered my head to avoid looking into his eyes. "Dinner will be ready soon."

I tried to ignore his intense gaze on my back and sped up the pace. Soon, dinner was ready.

Just when I was going to take the food to the dining table, he stopped me. I didn't want to look at him, so I stood still with my head down.

He seemed to be a little upset and grabbed the plate from my hand. "Does the floor have any gold on it? Why aren't you looking at me?"

Even though he was trying to make conversation, I still could not face his eyes, so I walked to the kitchen again to get the tableware.

At the dinner table, Charles slowly sliced the beef on his plate with a fork and a knife. His fingers were elegantly moving as he sliced through the steak with a knife. It was as though he was a royal, who looked elegant even when eating.

"Why are you only eating the vegetables? Here, have some soup." Putting his knife and fork down, he looked at me with a frown.

His words pulled me back to reality, but before I could even say anything, he had already filled up my soup bowl. The moment I tasted the soup, my whole face shrunk.

"Is it too hot?" Charles asked with concern.

I faked a smile as I shook my head and gently pushed the bowl in front of him. "It's so delicious, Charles. Why don't you taste it?"

He did not suspect anything at all. Taking a sip of the hot soup, he said in a calm voice, "It really is quite delicious!"

"Isn't it too sour for you?" I blinked in confusion as I wondered if there was something wrong with my taste buds. I took another sip to make sure that I was not wrong, and it indeed tasted sour! It was both sour and salty.

Amused, Charles put away the soup bowl and served me a slice of the beef.

After dinner, I washed the dishes quickly, wanting to go back home as soon as I could.

"What's the rush?" Charles asked casually as he took the clean dishes from my hand and arranged them in the cupboard.

"I am a famous anchorwoman, so my time is very precious."

Just when I was about to leave, he stopped me. "It's so late, and you have to come here tomorrow morning, anyway, so why do you have to go home tonight? Not to mention, I will be extremely worried if you went back alone at this hour."

"Then you send me back," I suggested.

"But I'm so tired." Charles yawned, pretending to be exhausted.

The corners of my mouth twitched. "Then I'll go home on my own."

"Stay here. I'll sleep in the guest room. Don't worry. I am not going to do anything to you."

Charles held my hand tightly, as if he was worried that I would try to run away.

"I'm not worried. You're just overthinking things. Besides, I want to go home because I am used to sleeping in my own bed, and I can't fall asleep here on a new bed, so don't impose your strange ideas on me. And how long do you expect me to accustom myself to such a life?"

"For the rest of your life!" Charles said in a firm voice, pressing his lips into a thin line.

I was so furious that I was at a loss for words. I just wanted to make him let go of my hand. However, his grip was so tight that I could not move at all.

"Staying the night here is not a big deal. Are you worried that you might not be able to control yourself?"

"Fine, I'll stay." Unwilling to argue with him any longer, I had no choice but to compromise.

Before going to bed, Charles asked me to take his bed. The pillows were laced with his scent, which was pleasantly refreshing.

I tossed and turned on the bed, determined to draw a clear line between us starting tomorrow.

[Chapter 66 Granddaughter-in-law](#)

Scarlett's POV:

I got up early. The door of the guest room was closed, so I guessed that Charles had not gotten up yet.

I took some bread and eggs out of the fridge and made breakfast for us. After finishing my meal, I left Charles's on the table.

Charles's apartment was located in the heart of the business district, surrounded by skyscrapers and many establishments. The location of his home was ideal. The only disadvantage was the traffic jam. I had to leave his place early if I wanted to make it to work on time.

As soon as I arrived at the office, I was as busy as a bee. I was thankful for all the work because it allowed me to forget about Charles.

At noon, Abner walked up to me and handed me a cup of coffee.

"I have good news, Scarlett. The company will choose two employees to send abroad to study. If you're interested, I can talk you up."

"Really? But how long will I be away if I'm picked?"

"A year." Abner paused and then continued, "This is an amazing opportunity. You could learn many things that would help advance your career. I really hope you seize it."

I was a little hesitant. A lot could change in a year.

"I'll think about it and give you an answer as soon as possible."

"I suppose Charles is the main reason for your hesitation." Once again, Abner hit the nail on the head.

I averted my gaze and took a sip of my coffee. "No, I'm just worried about my family."

"Onlookers see more clearly. I know you're indecisive because you can't let go of some things, but I sincerely hope that this time around, you'll put yourself first." After that, Abner left.

Abner was a very rational man. And he was right. When it came to Charles, I still deceived myself.

As soon as Abner left, Linda walked over to me. She took my hand, pulled me into an empty meeting room, and shut the door.

"What happened to Charles and Rita's father last night?" she asked curiously.

I thought for a while and then told her that I did not know. There was no need to explain that matter to outsiders. It was simply one of the things that were better left unsaid.

Linda seemed a little disappointed that she could not get the information she wanted, so she changed the subject. "What about you and Charles? Are you two really together?"

"Charles and I..."

"You know what, forget it. It doesn't matter. Mr. Valdez regrets the advances he made toward you. He said that if he had known that you and Charles were a thing, he wouldn't have made a move on you. He wants to apologize to you." Linda waved her hand and continued, "Well, let's just let bygones be bygones. I don't want to hold onto what happened last night anymore. I'm sorry for the trouble I have caused you."

I was stunned. I did not expect the course our conversation took. To some extent, Charles had helped me solve the problem. Because of him, I did not need to wine and dine with the business partners anymore to get a sponsorship.

I smiled at Linda. I understood her helplessness.

After leaving the meeting room, I went to the studio.

After the show, one of my colleagues told me that an old lady was waiting for me in the reception room. The old lady said that she wanted to see her granddaughter-in-law. I immediately realized that it was Christine.

I thanked my colleague before rushing to the reception room with my phone in my hand.

As soon as I arrived there, Christine's hearty laughter filled my ears. She was sitting there surrounded by many of the station's staff who were serving her some tea and snacks. Everyone around the office was hospitable, and Christine was a ray of sunshine that drew people.

I politely dispersed the crowd, closed the door of the reception room, and sat beside Christine. "What are you doing here, Grandma?"

She smiled and gently patted me on the hand. "I'm here to tell everyone that you're Charles's wife. I don't want to see you get bullied again."

I choked on my words for a bit. I did not want to blurt them out in a way that would hurt one of the most important women in my life. "I appreciate your concern, Grandma, but I can take care of myself. Besides, Charles and I are getting divorced soon."

"But you haven't yet. You're still my granddaughter-in-law. And even if you and Charles get divorced, I still won't allow anyone to give you a hard time," Christine replied with conviction.

I felt moved and helpless at the same time. "Grandma, I may no longer be your granddaughter-in-law soon, but I will always be your granddaughter, right?"

"I suppose we'll always be family. A marriage certificate can't change that." Christine flashed me a perfunctory smile.

I took her hands in mine and squeezed them. "Thank you, Grandma. I think the divorce will be good for me and for Charles, but no matter what happens between us, I will always be your granddaughter."

"All right, my dear." Christine smiled back at me and squeezed my hands as well. Then, she cocked her head to the side and asked, "Do you really only have familial affection for Charles? I remember when you told him you wanted him to be your brother. He pouted so much that I thought he was going to break his face."

Thinking of Charles's boyish, angry look, Christine and I burst into laughter. Only the members of the Moore family and the people closest to them knew of Charles's childish side.

"I just want to focus on my career now, Grandma. I don't want to think about other things for the time being."

"Your career will only affect your marriage and relationships if you let it."

I kept silent for a few seconds and then said softly, "We want to divorce not only because of personal reasons but also because of Rita."

"That damn woman! She really is desperate to marry into the Moore family! Well, she can forget it!"

Christine always got angry every time Rita was mentioned. She put down her teacup and put on a serious face.

She was also a big shot in the business world during her prime. When she was serious, she exuded an intimidating aura.

I immediately comforted her, "I'm sure Charles will try his best to do right by our family. We just have to let him make his own decisions, and one of them is us getting a divorce. Please don't tell everyone that I am your granddaughter-in-law from now on. I don't want the embarrassment when Charles and I finally finish the process."

I looked into Christine's eyes, hoping she would grant my small request.

Slowly but surely, her eyes softened, and a sympathetic smile curled her lips. She leaned over and gave me a hug. "Okay, dear. I'll take back what I said to everyone."

Christine had always been a decisive person. As soon as she finished her words, she rose from her seat and walked toward the door, but I stopped her before she could reach for the doorknob. "You don't need to explain anything to my colleagues now, Grandma. Just stop telling them about me being your granddaughter-in-law. By the way, there's a great coffee shop nearby. How about we go there? I have no work to do this afternoon. I can have coffee with you and go shopping with you if you like."

Christine gladly agreed to my suggestion.

As we made our way out of the reception room, everyone turned to look at us with curiosity in their eyes.

"Scarlett is not my granddaughter-in-law. Stop staring at her. You're making her self-conscious," Christine blurted out without hesitation. She even turned around and winked at me like she was asking for some credit.

I kept my gaze ahead and led her out of the station. As I expected, things got worse after she cleared things up about our relationship.

The coffee shop was not that far from the station.

It was well-decorated, and it offered many different kinds of coffee. It was always filled with people because it was so welcoming and cozy. It was a great place for both those who wanted to enjoy some time with company and those who wanted some time alone with their thoughts.

Christine and I sat there and enjoyed our cups of coffee. We talked like we had not seen each other in a long time. Finally, Christine glanced at her watch and gasped, "Oh, my, look at the time. We've been talking forever. I have to get home now, dear. Your grandfather must already be looking for me. We'll go shopping next time, okay?"

"Okay, Grandma. Let's take a rain check for now."

"Good girl. The coffee here is really good. I'll bring a cup home to your grandfather." Christine nodded and called the waiter over.

Hearing her mention Michael, I could not help sighing, "You and Grandpa really love each other so much, don't you?"

She teased me with a smile, "You and Charles are perfectly capable of doing the same."

As soon as she finished her words, Charles walked into the coffee shop. Speaking of the devil.

"Why are you popping up wherever I am like a mushroom?" I could not help sniping at him. He had no business showing up here because this coffee shop was too far away from his office.

Charles did not answer my question. Instead, he walked up to me.

He was wearing his usual all-black suit jacket, and heads turned toward him as he made his way to me. "Damn, why does he always have to look this good?" I cursed under my breath.

He raised his eyebrows as if he heard what I just mumbled. Then, he leaned in and planted a soft kiss on my cheek. "I've missed you today, my dear wife. I swung by your office to pick you up, and one of your colleagues told me that you left a long time ago with a woman who referred to you as her granddaughter-in-law. Hi, Grandma."

"Would you keep your voice down?" I snapped at him in a low voice. When I heard the words "wife" and "granddaughter-in-law", I felt my cheeks and ears burn. I had no doubt that I had just turned as red as a tomato.

"What? Why should picking my wife up from work be a secret? Anyway, let's give Grandma a ride home first," Charles replied as he held Christine's arm.

"Oh, no. I won't be the third wheel here. I'll ask the driver to pick me up," Christine beamed and shook her head.

[Chapter 67 Ambiguous Relationship](#)

Charles' POV:

After saying goodbye to my grandma, I took Scarlett home.

Scarlett was silent throughout our way back home.

With my hands on the steering wheel, I could not help but tease her, "I'm afraid that all the employees at the company know that you are my wife now."

Upon hearing that, Scarlett turned around, glaring at me. There seemed to be a hint of complaint in her

eyes as she asked, "Oh my God! Why do you have to mention that?"

"We are a couple, and I don't see why we should hide that from them," I replied casually.

"Stop kidding! You know we are not."

It was obviously not something that I wanted to hear, but I took a deep breath and stopped talking about it.

I couldn't be too anxious, after all. I was the one who sinned first. I wanted to make it up to her. I wanted her to believe me and accept me.

As soon as we got home, Scarlett washed her hands, and rushed into the kitchen, trying to avoid me.

I walked into the kitchen, leaned against the wall, and watched as she cooked.

She slightly leaned over the counter and began to chop the vegetables with a knife. Although her knife skills were not as remarkable as those chefs' on the cooking shows, there was an elegance in her style of holding the knife. And I believed that Muse could not be more attractive than Scarlett in the kitchen.

While she was absorbed in her cooking, the apron around her blue dress swayed, making her look quite charming.

"Scarlett, you look so adorable when you cook that even someone like Narcissus will be fascinated with you."

"You're unctuous!" She did not turn around, but I could clearly see that her ears were red.

Seeing that, I could not help but smile. I felt relaxed whenever she was around. I really hoped to have such days with her in the future.

While I was immersed in admiring her, my phone rang.

I saw the caller ID on the screen, and glanced at Scarlett. She seemed to be quite busy and did not want to talk to me at all.

So I walked to the living room, answering the call quietly.

"What's up, Rita?"

I was on the verge of losing my patience with Rita. Time and again, she would cry and beg for me to understand her, even though she would never consider my feelings.

"Charles! I can't believe what you did! How could you talk to my father like that?" Usually, Rita would

start our calls with a crying voice, but it was different now.

It was evident that her father did not take my words seriously at all. In fact, he had quickly complained to his daughter, thinking that I had offended him.

"He has been harassing Scarlett, Rita. And I am just getting started. If you had not saved me, I would not have let him go so easily," I said in a calm voice.

"No, no, Charles... Didn't you say that you were divorcing Scarlett? My father is your future father-in-law. How could you disrespect him so blindly?" Rita's voice was choked with sobs. I could almost imagine the tears in her eyes, because I had already seen them a million times by now. However, I found it strange that I did not feel pity for her as I had before.

"Yes, I was," I said coldly.

"Charles? What do you mean by that? Why do you keep defending your ex-wife so much?" Rita raised her voice.

Annoyed, I just hung up the phone. I did not expect her to be so insatiable.

Looking at the phone screen, I couldn't help but frown. I had not thought that she would have such a side to her. It was obviously her father who was in the wrong, but instead of feeling guilty, she was taking his side.

Thinking that I had been trusting the wrong person all along made me sick to my guts, like I had swallowed a fly.

"What's the matter, Charles?" Scarlett asked, taking off her apron.

"Rita called and complained that I shouldn't have spoken to her father like that," I explained, trying my best to keep my emotions in check. I was afraid that Scarlett might get angry again knowing that Rita called.

"Oh, hasn't she always been like that? Don't provoke her, okay? She is not in good health right now." To my surprise, Scarlett was a lot calmer than I had expected. She took her apron and hung it on the wall.

"Okay. Is dinner ready? Let's eat! I can't wait to eat the food you made," I said softly, holding her hand.

Scarlett had prepared a sumptuous dinner of cream of mushroom soup, lamb chops with black pepper, and bacon salad.

Although the ingredients were pretty basic, I felt like it was better than the food served at Michelin restaurants. Moreover, Scarlett had specially cooked it for me. Thinking of that, I realized that her food was particularly delicious to me.

Scarlett sat from across me at the dinner table, quietly enjoying her salad. Even though she was not eating her food with elegance like Rita always did, her mannerisms stimulated my appetite.

"Scarlett, I wish I could eat your food every single day." Even my meaningful compliment did not inspire her to pay attention to me.

I was staring at her when her phone rang all of a sudden. Scarlett kept looking at her phone occasionally and would also reply to the messages.

With a frown, I walked over to her, and grabbed her phone.

I noticed that she was messaging Nina. I felt relieved when I thought that she was not texting some man that I did not know about.

"Honey, are you secretly in a relationship with Charles?"

I did not hesitate as I sat down next to Scarlett, held her waist to stop her from taking her phone back, as I replied to the message.

"We are actually a couple."

I then loosened my grip on her waist so that she could take her phone back.

"Charles, why did you do that? Don't talk nonsense!" Scarlett cried out as soon as she saw the message. She withdrew the message, glaring at me.

"Aren't we a couple now?"

I was indifferent to her shyness and her anger as I moved closer to her. Scarlett was so furious that she raised her hand, and tried to push me away, but she was too weak for my strength. I grabbed her hand and pulled her into my arms.

Scarlett's soft breasts clung to my chest, and I could smell a faint hint of peppermint perfume from her body. Although I had always considered myself to be a man with good self-control, even I could not help but admit that I was so fascinated by her at that moment. If only it had been the right time for such things, I would have taken her right then and there.

"Let go of me, Charles. I have to go. I have to meet Nina at the bar."

Trembling, Scarlett pushed me away crossly.

Even if I could not do what I wanted to now, I was not going to let her go so easily.

"I haven't finished yet. You must have dinner with me," I whispered in her ear.

"You are not a child. You don't need an adult to accompany you while you eat your food. Besides, I only promised to cook for you; I never said anything about having dinner with you." Scarlett's eyes were cold as she looked at me.

"What if I tell you that I can't eat without you?" I asked slowly and sensually, looking into her eyes.

"Please, just promise that you will have dinner with me, and after that I will take you wherever you need to go."

Gradually her cheeks began to turn red. Now, I knew for certain that she would not leave me alone.

"Okay, fine, but just this once."

She looked at me helplessly, but I found her reluctance to be rather adorable.

[Chapter 68 The Lawsui](#)

Scarlett's POV:

I swore that I was not a person of weak will.

But when such a perfect man like Charles pouted and acted like a spoiled brat, I did not think any woman could refuse him. So that I could leave as soon as I could, I promised him that I would finish dinner with him and then go meet Nina.

I was absentminded during the entire meal because I was not that hungry. Also, Charles had been watching me and flashing me playful smiles, which made me uneasy. I only felt relieved when dinner was finally done.

Charles kept his word and drove me to the bar.

However, after opening the car door for me and letting me out, he stood in my way.

"Scarlett, drinking is bad for your health, and it's easy to get into trouble when you've had too much of it. Don't drink more than three glasses of wine, and don't stay for more than half an hour inside. I'll wait for you here," Charles declared as he looked down at me.

I rolled my eyes and heaved a frustrated sigh. "Charles, I'm an adult. I know how to conduct myself in a bar. I don't need you to tell me how much alcohol I should drink or how much time I should spend with my friend. Honestly, do you really see me as some girl who doesn't know her limits?"

My snapping apparently intimidated Charles. He raised both his hands in surrender and stepped back.

"Very well. I'm sorry. I shouldn't have said so much. I'm just worried about you, okay?" he said.

I grabbed my purse, walked past him, and headed straight to the bar.

"Stay as long as you want. I'll wait for you here," he yelled after me.

I kept walking. "Go home, Charles. I can take care of myself."

As soon as I entered the bar, I saw Nina waving at me. I smiled, walked over to her, and sat down.

"Hey, Nina. How did you know about this place? It's really nice and buzzing. I love the decoration."

"This is Spencer's new bar. I thought you knew about it. He told me I could swing by whenever I wanted and put my bill on his tab." Nina put on a charming smile and flipped her curly hair.

"Since when did you and Spencer get so close?" I asked curiously.

She giggled and poked me with her elbow. "Oh, please. We're not here to talk about me and Spencer. We're here to talk about you and Charles. So what's your deal? I saw the message before you withdrew it. Are you really a couple? I mean, he's been coming to the office to see you and everything."

Nina leaned in and stared at me with great interest.

I felt a little embarrassed under her probing gaze.

"No, we're not a couple."

"Honey, I just said I saw the message. Don't tell me you just happened to type the wrong word. Aren't we good friends? Why can't you tell me the truth?" Nina refused to give up.

Looking at her, I knew I could not hide anymore. She had always been kind to me, and I had known her to be the kind of person that I could trust. Finally deciding to tell her the truth, I took a deep, steadying breath.

"As you know, the president of the Lively Group came to the office to see me a few days ago. He's actually Rita's father. When my father was alive, he had been involved in a lawsuit with him." I weighed my words carefully and left out the part where Nate expressed his depraved desire to keep me as his mistress. Then, I continued, "Charles found out about it and came to the station to ask me about it. He wanted to know what Rita's father had said to me. And yes, we're indeed a couple. We've been married for a few years."

I felt a little sheepish telling Nina about my secret marriage. It was like I was back in high school and telling my best friend about the forbidden relationship I was having with the school bad boy. I had never felt sillier in my entire life.

"Oh, my God, Scarlett! I can't believe you're only telling me this now!" Nina cried out, drawing the attention of the people in closest proximity to us. I did not see any trace of anger or disappointment in her face though, which made me feel relieved.

"I didn't mean to hide it from you. It's just something that I don't want to bring up in casual conversations." I reached out for her hand and squeezed it.

"Well, thank you for finally telling me. At least I'm sure now that you regard me as a real friend. And you can trust me, you know?" She flashed me a crooked smile, squeezed my hand back, and then proceeded to playfully pinch my face.

"Now, now, Mrs. Moore, don't be sad. Charles will be heartbroken if he sees you frowning."

The moment the words "Mrs. Moore" rolled off Nina's tongue, I instinctively covered her mouth with my hand. I knew she was just teasing, but the fact that I was married to Charles was still not something I wanted announced in a public place.

"Would you keep it down? We're not really the happily-ever-after married couple you think."

"But you're still married, aren't you?" Nina grinned and raised her eyebrows at me.

"Yes, but again, it's not what you think," I whispered, still leaving out the part that our marriage was basically a business deal. It was a complicated arrangement, and I did not want to drag Nina into all of it.

After a little catch-up and joking around, Nina ordered two cocktails for us and asked, "You said that your father was involved in a lawsuit when he was alive. Do you know much about it?"

"No, not really. It was many years ago. All I know is that something big happened to the Riley Group and that my father was left devastated."

"Wait, the Riley Group? Why does that name sound familiar? Oh! Yes! My father handled that case!" Nina suddenly shouted.

I almost fell out of my seat in shock. "What do you mean?"

At this time, our waiter brought us our cocktails, and Nina took a sip from hers. She collected herself and started explaining excitedly. "My father is a lawyer. He used to work for the Riley Group's legal team."

I could not believe my ears. How could the world be this small? Never in my wildest dreams did I imagine Nina and myself to be connected this way. Nina's father used to be my father's lawyer.

"Your father's case was actually sensational. The media followed it closely back in the day. My father had been very busy at that time. I watched him work the entire case, so I know about it," Nina said, biting on her straw and staring into space as if she was recalling a half-forgotten memory.

Listening to her, my heart started racing. I suddenly thought of my father. He had taken good care of me, but ultimately, we were forced to part ways. I could still remember his haggard face when he was being interrogated like a criminal. It was one of the scenes in my life that I would erase from my mind in a heartbeat if I could.

I picked up my cocktail and took a sip. The cold, sweet liquid burned a line down my throat. The alcohol was supposed to be a downer, something to blunt the edges of pain, but tonight, its sting felt like salt against an open wound. I lowered my head and shook the awful images off my mind.

"My father still thinks that your father was innocent. I'm sorry, Scarlett. We shouldn't be talking about this, but if it makes you feel any better, as long as you don't give up, I'm sure you'll find a way to wash away your father's grievances." Nina held my hand and looked at me seriously.

I appreciated her encouragement. I was grateful to her and her father. Besides myself, they were the other people who believed in my father.

Once again, I squeezed Nina's hand. I had a lot to say to her, but I did not know where to start.

"Wait, is that Rita? What is she doing here?" Nina suddenly asked in a low voice, looking past my shoulder.

Her words toppled my thoughts like a baseball crashing into a pyramid of milk bottles. I turned to look at the entrance of the bar. Charles and Rita walked in arm in arm with Spencer following behind them.

"Oh, my God! Is she following you or something?" Nina mumbled unhappily.

I straightened my back the moment I laid eyes on Rita. I hastily rose from my seat and kept my head down, hoping that Charles had not noticed me.

"Excuse me. I need to go to the bathroom," I told Nina.

My breath started coming in short bursts when I saw Rita cling to Charles. It was the last thing I wanted to see and certainly not something I would love to stick around and watch.

[Chapter 69 Encounter](#)

Rita's POV:

Charles had been getting more and more indifferent toward me lately, which left me feeling all flustered and restless. Did I do something wrong?

At this time, Richard walked in with a bunch of roses in his hand. What was wrong with this man?

"Where have you been? Did you find anything?" I had sent him to keep an eye on Scarlett, but he had

returned with no useful information.

"I haven't found anything unusual, babe." Richard put the roses in the vase, turned around, and looked at me fawningly.

"Oh, you worthless goon! Have you really been keeping an eye on Scarlett like I told you to? Charles has been giving me the cold shoulder! It has to be her fault!" I rushed up to him, grabbed the vase, and shattered it on the floor.

Richard did not even flinch. He had been guarding me for so long that he had gotten used to my mood swings and erratic behavior. Without saying a word, he just went ahead and started cleaning up the mess I made.

"I asked you a question, Richard!" I could not stand it when he answered me with the silent treatment.

"Spencer has opened a new bar. Maybe we can ask him what's going on with Charles and Scarlett," he finally suggested.

That lit up a bulb in my head. Spencer was Charles's good friend. Why had I never thought of asking him?

"Thank you. That's a great idea."

With a smile, I tiptoed and kissed Richard's Adam's apple. The dejection on his face disappeared in an instant, and he had completely succumbed to my charm. He stretched out his arms and attempted to wrap them around me. I knew he wanted more.

But I did not let him succeed. I pushed him away and said, "You stay here. I'll change and go to Spencer's new bar."

Spencer's family was mainly engaged in the entertainment industry, and they had almost complete monopoly over Los Angeles' bar scene. Even though Charles and Spencer had been friends since they were little boys, they were completely different. Charles did not mess around with women while Spencer was a frivolous flirt.

I flicked my wavy hair and practiced my charming smile, hoping to get something helpful out of Spencer.

When I arrived at Spencer's new bar, I bumped into the person I really wanted to see but was not expecting to.

Leaning against the door of his silver Phantom, Charles took a drag from his cigarette. His perfectly sculpted profile was facing me like a bust of a Greek god. He was in all black but without the suit jacket, and the two topmost buttons of his shirt were undone, revealing a little of his chest. I could not help smiling from ear to ear.

Only a woman out of her damn mind would let go of such a handsome, rich man. I clenched my fists and started walking toward him, my insides burning with sheer excitement.

"Charles!" I called his attention.

He turned around and raised his eyebrows. He seemed surprised to see me.

"What are you doing here, Rita? You're unwell. A bar is no place for you. Go home."

He wanted me away the moment he saw me. I was not going to make it easy for him. I softened my features, slumped my shoulders, and started speaking in a gentle tone. "But I haven't come out for a long time. I'm feeling better today, so I decided to go out and have some fun. I heard that Spencer has opened a new bar, so I came to see it. Will you accompany me?"

"No, Rita. Please go home. You can't strain yourself. It'll be more troublesome for you and the people who have to take care of you if your conditions get worse," Charles replied in a neutral tone and then took another drag from his cigarette. He seemed to be unmoved by my begging.

But luck made us meet here. I was not about to leave and waste the opportunity. Knowing that Charles would not dare stop me, I stepped up, took his hand, and dragged him into the bar.

He kneaded his nose, tossed his half-finished cigarette, and let me tow him. I felt complacent that he still cared about me. Otherwise, he would have forced me into his car and drove me home against my wishes.

Spencer was also surprised at my arrival. Upon laying eyes on me, he looked like he wanted to say something but decided not to say it. If I had to guess, I thought it would fall along the lines of me not being welcome in his new bar. I did not appreciate it, but I just flashed him my best sweet smile.

I almost blew up my own act when I saw Scarlett's presence. It seemed that Charles was outside waiting for her.

Ever since we walked in, Charles's eyes had been glued to Scarlett.

I forced a smile and held on tightly to him. "Let's go to a private room, Charles."

Ignoring my request, Charles turned to Spencer and said, "Will you get Rita a private room?"

Then, he left.

I pressed my lips together in a thin line as I watched Charles walk away. The back of my eyes started to burn, but I immediately shoved down the emotions that started bubbling to the surface.

"Come, Rita. Let's get you a VIP room," Spencer said.

"No, thanks. I have to go get Charles."

Not even glancing at Spencer's general direction, I followed Charles. When I caught up with him, I saw him making out with Scarlett near the bathrooms.

My heart leapt to my throat, and I had to grab the nearest wall to support myself as my knees buckled. Was it really Charles? Why was he so obsessed with Scarlett? It was the first time I had ever seen him acting like that. It was not only because he was kissing Scarlett. He was touching and holding her as if it would kill him if he ever let her go. As it turned out, he had some sexual desires, but he only showed them to Scarlett.

In the middle of my trance, a strong hand grabbed my arm, led me into a private room, and shut the door.

"Give up, Rita. If Charles really wants to marry you, no one can stop him. However, he hasn't divorced yet, and it's not because he can't. It's because he doesn't want to," Spencer told me and folded his arms over his chest.

"You don't know that," I retorted. I had done so much for Charles. I was unwilling to give up. It was Scarlett who should give up.

"You just saw him kissing his wife. Why are you so desperate to marry him anyway? I mean, you already have your boy toy Richard. Yes, we know that you two are sleeping together. We're not idiots."

"I don't know what you're talking about. There's nothing going on between me and Richard. You can't hurl a horrendous accusation like that at me!" I was flustered. How did they know that I had slept with Richard? Damn it!

"You have always been so high-profile. It's difficult for you to keep anything in your life a secret," Spencer sneered.

"You..." I tried to bite down the hint of embarrassment in my voice, but I failed.

"Just stop, Rita. You're not doing yourself any favors here. If you keep going on like this, any gratitude Charles has left for you will disappear. Once his vision clears and he realizes that you've been trying to fool him, he'll make your life a living hell. You know that," Spencer said ruthlessly.

"Charles has hurt my feelings. He promised to marry me, but all he seems to want to do these days is to be with Scarlett. He's been jerking me around, and I won't have it!" I snapped. The gloom and distress in my chest lodged a lump in my throat. Scarlett had always been a darling to everyone around her, and it was unfair!

"All right. Don't say I didn't try talking some sense into you, Rita. I'm out. I just hope to God you don't do anything stupid." Seeing that I was beginning to get emotional, Spencer did not want to say anything more and ended our conversation.

Once again, my eyes burned with anger. I took out my phone from my purse and dialed Charles, but he did not answer.

Scarlett's POV:

"Go accompany your Rita, and don't bother me." I pushed Charles away. I could not believe he just pinned me against the wall and kissed me in such a public place. Even though the feeling of his lips was still fresh against mine, the image of him and Rita holding hands was still clear as day in my head. I took many deep breaths to keep myself from lashing out.

"Scarlett..."

"Don't call me that!" I snapped, shoved him back, and returned to my and Nina's table.

He knew clearly that I had an aversion to Rita, but he still kept her close. The moment I sat down, I emptied my glass, hoping my drink would drown my sorrows.

"May I sit here?" It was Charles's annoying voice again.

"What are you doing here, Mr. Moore?" Nina raised her head and asked.

"Just waiting for my wife to finish having a good time so that I can take her home," Charles replied shamelessly.

"Your wife is not here," I retorted without raising my head and then gulped down a mouthful of wine. Nina had ordered a bottle while I was gone.

"Slow down, Scarlett," Nina reminded me in a low voice and tugged at my clothes.

"It's okay. Let her drink. If she gets drunk tonight, I'll take good care of her in bed." Charles grinned and poured more wine for me. I saw him wink at Nina, and I rolled my eyes.

I snatched the bottle of wine from his hand and set it on the table. I looked him dead in the eyes and grunted, "Dream on, jerk."

"Well, it looks like you two are good here. I don't want to be a third wheel," Nina said sheepishly, preparing to leave me behind.

"No, we're not good here, Nina," I said, trying to stop her.

"It's okay, honey. Just know that I would like to be your future baby's godmother, all right?" Nina picked up her purse and beamed at me. Then, she turned to Charles and said, "Mr. Moore, would you be willing to sit with me on an interview?"

"It depends on Scarlett. As long as she agrees, I'll be fine with it," Charles said lazily and then glanced at me.

"Then I'll take that as a yes." Nina was very happy to receive a satisfactory reply. Before she left, she gave me one last pinch on the cheek.

[Chapter 70 Fallen In Love](#)

Scarlett's POV:

"Wait for me, Nina. I'll go with you!"

After seeing Nina leave, I quickly picked up my bag, and was about to follow her. I was unwilling to be alone with Charles because I was afraid that it might be too much of a risk.

"You are not going anywhere!" Charles stopped me forcefully and pressed me down on the couch.

"Let me go! What do you want?"

"Isn't it obvious? I want to continue our kiss," he answered brazenly before he pinned me down with one hand and kissed me passionately.

I was gasping for breath, like a fish out of water. I could not breathe as I felt like he had sucked up my soul. Charles kissed me fiercely, and I felt helpless, so I patted him on the arm weakly.

"Don't refuse me, babe." He continued to flirt with me while our tongues were entwined.

My ears were red as I was feeling really embarrassed, but he did not let me move as he parted my lips with his strong tongue. Charles then started a new round of attack.

Fortunately, it was a relatively secluded place, so no one could notice us. Unable to think straight, I was in a trance.

After a while, Charles withdrew from the kiss helped me straighten my wrinkled dress. Although I knew that he was not going to be intimidated by me, I glared at him from the corner of my eyes.

He smiled as he kissed the back of my hand and carried me out of the bar.

I buried my face in his shoulder. I was so embarrassed that I wanted to bury myself. How could he look so cool? Wasn't he embarrassed with all the people looking at us? Spencer and the others are certainly going to make fun of us now.

Carrying me in his arms, Charles walked to the car, and gently put me in the backseat. He then got in the car with me.

Feeling that something was wrong, I sat up at once, but it was too late by then. Charles held me and made me sit on his lap. While struggling, I accidentally touched his muscular abdomen. Biting my lip shyly, I blushed.

"Rita is waiting for you inside. And I want to go home, so put me down already!" I tried to remind him that he should be caring about Rita and not me.

"Spencer is with her, so the only thing I need to worry about right now is to take really good care of you." Charles looked at me with a deep gaze. His shirt collar was a little messed up which highlighted his chiseled jaw. There was a shallow mark on his clavicle, which was caused by my fingernails digging into his skin during my struggle.

"You'd better take care of her," I said with a gulp as I forced myself not to look into his eyes.

"Like this?" Saying that, he quickly slid his hand into my clothes and unhooked my bra clasp.

My eyes went wide with shock.

"You... Rogue! Shame on you!" I tried to weep, but I could not, and Charles was getting greedier and hungrier by the minute.

"What if I am? You are my wife, after all! There is nothing to be ashamed of wanting to be with my own wife." He smiled mischievously as he continued to trace his fingers all over my body.

Burning with rage, I pulled his hand away. "We are going to divorce soon, and people might misunderstand us if you do such things, so please, just behave yourself! Soon, I won't be your wife anymore, so you must be insane if you really want to do such things with me." Clearly, my head was a mess.

"Don't mention the divorce anymore, and if you do, I will announce to the media that you are my wife. When that happens, you will end up being a "Moore" for the rest of your life. No matter how hard you try to, there is no way for you to escape this," Charles warned me with a long face.

I knew that he was quite capable of doing such a despicable thing. His words made me restrain my anger and remain silent as I tried to ignore him.

Charles sighed helplessly and said in a low voice, "Scarlett, please understand me. I just want to be with the woman I love, just like any normal guy."

"Stop it," I shouted. 'What does he even mean by that? Is he trying to push his luck?'

"Don't you feel the same way about me? Didn't you feel anything when I kissed you?" Charles leaned closer and continued to whisper in my ear, "I promise that we won't divorce. I'll deal with Rita. You are the only woman for me, okay?"

His breath was soft, tickling my cheeks. My ears felt numb under his warm breath. I had no clue if he was being truthful or not. Rita's final wish was to marry Charles before she passed. Was he really willing to break his promise to the woman who had saved his life?

I looked into his eyes, trying to find even a sliver of dishonesty in them.

He kissed my eyes softly and said, "I know that you don't believe me now, but give me some time, and I will prove it to you that I am being honest."

"There is no need for you to prove anything to me. We are fine just the way we are now." There was still an aversion towards Rita in my heart, which prevented me from being with him.

"No, I will make you mine, and it will only be you."

After saying that, Charles kissed me passionately, ignoring my objection. Without even wasting a moment, he reached into my clothes and began caressing my waist.

I should have pushed him away, but I didn't. There was a charm in him that made it impossible for me to resist him. Placing my hands on his shoulders, I tilted my head to receive his kiss affectionately. Perhaps, it was the alcohol that pushed me to let loose.

"Take a breath. We've kissed numerous times by now, and yet, you don't know when to take a breath." Taking a step back, Charles looked at me with a smile.

"Do you really think that everyone is an experienced kisser like you are?" Out of breath, I covered my mouth with my hand, fearing that he might pounce on me again.

"Well, that's only because I'm a fast learner. I was only able to improve my kissing skills after practicing with you for a few times, so you should also practice your kissing with me," he said.

'What does he mean by that? Does he mean to say that he hasn't kissed anyone before?' Before I could continue to ponder over it, he kissed me again.

The air in the car was getting hotter by the minute and I gradually immersed myself in his kiss. In fact, I wanted more, but I jolted back to reality the moment his phone rang.

However, Charles did not stop until I gave him a soft push. He kissed the corner of my lips before he sat up.

He answered the phone impatiently and turned on the speaker. It was a call from Spencer.

"You'd better have something important to talk about," Charles said in a gloomy voice.

"Charles, come back at once. Rita wants to drink, and I can't stop her. If she has a relapse in the bar later, then it will be bad," Spencer said exaggeratedly. He was trying to urge Charles to go back to the bar.

"Call her bodyguards, then," Charles replied coldly, before he ended the call and put his phone on silent mode.

Seeing that, I was confused. In the past, he would rush to Rita's side as soon as she called him, but now, he did not seem to want to stop her, even though she was causing a fuss, ignoring her own health condition. Recalling everything that Charles had done for me lately, I could not help but wonder if he really loved me. Shaking my head, I tried to deny such thoughts as I knew that I should not have such unrealistic expectations, if I did not want to be disappointed later.

"Shall we continue?" Charles whispered in my ear.

"Let's go home," I said, punching his chest.

With a smile, he took me to the passenger seat and helped me sit down before he sat down in the driver's seat and started the car.

Feeling exhausted from our passion, I gradually fell asleep.

When I woke up, I saw Charles smoking quietly with the window down. He looked indifferent, like he was lost in thought.

"How long have I slept? And why didn't you wake me up?" I asked, rubbing my forehead, still feeling sleepy.

"Just a while, and you were sleeping soundly. That's why I didn't have the heart to wake you up." Charles quickly stubbed the cigarette and turned to me.

I nodded and said goodbye to him. I wanted to go home and sleep on my bed.

"A goodnight kiss." Grabbing my hand, he looked at me lazily.

My heart softened, and before I realized what I was doing, I had already kissed him on the lips. It was only a peck, and our lips parted quickly.

However, Charles' eyes were filled with happiness, like a little boy who finally got the candies he wanted. He then gently kissed my forehead and said, "Goodnight, Scarlett."

