

## Love at the Wrong Table Chapter 1-10

Love at the Wrong Table Chapter 1-“I know, Mom. I’m in front of the café. Call you later!” Emmanuel Lowe hung up on his mother impatiently.

The twenty-eight-year-old man had never been in a relationship.

After spending seven years in the army, he retired from the military and worked at a hospital in Yeringham for three years.

He was a gynecologist at the hospital and made eighty thousand a year.

Worried he would end up old and alone, Emmanuel’s mother urged him to settle down. Since he had no idea where to begin when it came to dating, his mother took matters into her own hands and set him up on multiple blind dates.

Thanks to her efforts, he had gone on seventeen blind dates so far.

Alas, wedding bells were clearly not on the horizon for Emmanuel. It was frustrating. He knew he was just going through the motions at that point.

“Help! Someone help me!” Right before Emmanuel entered the café, he heard someone calling out weakly for help.

The cries came from an old man who had fallen on the roadside. Many pedestrians walked past him, but no one dared to stop and help him to his feet.

After all, helping the old man could be more trouble than it was worth if one ended up with an expensive lawsuit for injuring him further. No one would do something that risky and foolish.

It did not deter Emmanuel from stepping forward and helping the man to his feet. He asked, “Are you all right, sir?” “I’m fine! Thank you so much, young man! It’s so hard to find people as kind as you these days. I must repay you for your kindness!” replied the old man with a smile.

Emmanuel realized then that the old man’s attire was at odds with his airs. Despite his tattered clothes, the old man’s clean hands looked like those of a man accustomed to wealth.

Still, he had no time to satisfy his curiosity. After confirming that the old man was unharmed, Emmanuel rushed into the café for his blind date. He never once considered being repaid for his kind act earlier.

The café was massive and practically structured like a maze.

Emmanuel's mother mentioned that his blind date was seated at table number eight. He wandered through the confusing café, but before he could locate the correct table, he stumbled into a special area.

The lighting was softer there, and the floor was scattered with fresh petals.

The sweet scent of flowers wafted through the air. He wondered if he had set foot in heaven.

Emmanuel raised his eyes and immediately froze.

A beautiful, elegant woman sat before a table in the room.

It was no exaggeration to say she embodied perfection itself.

The heavens clearly decided to shower all their favors on her.

The woman quietly sipped her coffee with her legs crossed neatly to the side. On the table was a non-translated copy of *The Power Broker*.

When she noticed Emmanuel barging into the room, she looked up at him in confusion and disgust.

Thump! Thump! Thump!

When Emmanuel recovered from the shock of stumbling upon the beautiful stranger, he realized his heart was about to beat its way out of his chest.

Never once had he ever felt so attracted to a woman in his twenty-eight years of life.

The countless female bodies he had seen in his work as a gynecologist hardly appealed to him. At some point, he even wondered if he was attracted to women at all.

Against all odds, it seemed, the young woman before him made his heart race like a runaway horse.

Am I simply nervous, or am I already attracted to her?

More surprisingly, Emmanuel noticed a large number eight sign on the woman's table.

She's my blind date?

He took a deep breath to calm himself before approaching her table and taking a seat opposite her.

The young woman's expression grew increasingly flabbergasted. There was even a hint of hostility in her pretty eyes.

The audacity of this man! Barging into my private room is bad enough, but he's going to sit opposite me like it's nobody's business?

Emmanuel ignored her expression. It was not the first time a woman had scoffed at him.

They were free to go their separate ways after getting the blind date done and over with.

He introduced himself, declaring, "Hi! My name is Emmanuel Lowe. I'm twenty-eight years old, and I work as a gynecologist. I make eighty thousand a year and don't own a car or a house." Any man would need an incredible amount of courage to say such things to a woman, but Emmanuel appeared unusually calm and unfazed.

The young woman stared at him in shock. A moment later, her lips curved into a smirk, and she replied with an introduction of her own.

"Nice to meet you. I'm Mackenzie Quillen. I'm twenty-seven years old with dual doctorates in finance and business administration from Harvard University. I made three billion last year, and I have a car and a house." Emmanuel was stunned.

What the heck is happening?

He always thought women on blind dates came with red flags.

Mackenzie, however, was arguably flawless.

Where's the catch? Perhaps she's mental? Or crippled? Or infertile?

All sorts of fantastical theories filled Emmanuel's mind.

Mackenzie smirked at his perplexed expression. The pride in her cool gaze was evident.

She deliberately introduced herself to put the stranger in a difficult spot and intimidate him into retreating.

As expected, awkward silence lingered in the air after her words.

Urgh, forget it!

Whether Mackenzie was telling the truth was beside the point. Emmanuel decided to go through all the motions so he could at least mollify his mother, even if the date did not result in a trip to the altar.

He declared, "I don't make much, but if you decide to date me, I promise I'll always protect and cherish you. I'll take over all the household chores so you can be a queen at home. Of course, I hope you'll allow me to preserve my masculine pride in front of my family. If we do get married, I can give you about five to six thousand every month." It was a well-worn script that Emmanuel recited in a single breath.

Mackenzie was dumbfounded at his earnest expression and apparent lack of shame at his much lower salary.

A long while later, she burst into a chuckle.

She had never met a man who could humor her so.

"What are you laughing about?" Unimpressed by her reaction, Emmanuel continued, "I know I don't check all the boxes, but I promise I'll be a good and responsible husband if we're married!" Pfft!

Mackenzie failed to keep in her snigger.

An annoyed Emmanuel demanded, "Why are you laughing, Ms. Quillen? Don't you think you're being rather rude?" "Sir, you're a very good man!" Mackenzie stopped smiling and retorted coldly, "But I think you're the confused one here. I'm not here for a blind date!" Huh? What is going on?

Emmanuel's eyes widened in horror as he sputtered, "Isn't this table number eight?" "Yes, but this is the VIP area. You must be looking for table number

eight in the common dining area. Please go out and turn right!" She pointed a slender finger at the exit.

"I... Sorry! I'm so sorry! I mixed things up!" Emmanuel wished he could sink into the floor in embarrassment. He jumped to his feet, ready to make a hasty escape.

That was so embarrassing! How could I sit at the wrong table for a blind date? No wonder she was laughing so much. She must have thought I was shooting above my weight!

Shortly after Emmanuel's departure, an old man entered Mackenzie's private room, escorted by four black-clad bodyguards.

Emmanuel would have been astonished if he was still around. The old man was none other than the stranger he had helped earlier in front of the café!

He implored, "Perhaps this is fate, Mackenzie. You're twenty-seven, but you've never been in a relationship because of your misandry. No man would dare come near you! But that young man succeeded! He's also a kind and just person. A while ago, he helped me outside the café and didn't expect a reward for his actions!" The old man's true identity was Terence Quillen, chairman of Yeringham's premier financial corporation.

While his wealth could trump that of entire nations, he had a major regret in life.

Terence had had three sons who tragically passed away before him. They either had no children of their own or only left daughters behind.

Mackenzie was Terence's favorite granddaughter and next-in-line to helm Terence Group.

Her intelligence and charisma did not change the fact that she was a woman.

Before Terence met his maker, he wished his favorite granddaughter could give him a great-grandchild.

That spurred him to fake his fall in front of the café and scout a decent man for his granddaughter. To his surprise, the young man who helped him earlier made a blunder of his own blind date and ended up meeting Mackenzie instead.

Isn't that fate?

Mackenzie remained stoically unmoved by her grandfather's words. "Grandpa, he may have passed your test, but he hasn't passed mine. I'll marry him if he aces my test." She wanted to fulfill her grandfather's wish, but she naturally wished to promise herself to a good man.

Marrying a man after one blind date was simply too hasty and careless.

Terence's gaze lit up expectantly, and he replied, "All right! I'm sure he will pass your test!"

Love at the Wrong Table Chapter 2-After turning right at the door, Emmanuel finally found table number eight in the common dining area.

Sure enough, a woman was seated at the table, looking like she was running out of patience.

Dressed in professional attire that accentuated her beautiful curves, she was, by all means, a sight to behold.

Even though she didn't exude the same air of elegance that Mackenzie had, there was no denying she had the power to make men fall at her feet.

Thankfully, Emmanuel wasn't disappointed in the slightest. After all, he was well aware of his own qualities.

Without further ado, he straightened himself up and approached the woman with a smile.

"Sorry I'm late! My name's Emmanuel Lowe. I'm twenty-eight years old, and I work as a gynecologist with an annual salary of eighty thousand—" "Stop!" the woman coldly interrupted before he could finish his introduction. "What's the meaning of this? With what little you have to offer, do you seriously think women would want to marry you? I can't believe you even had the nerve to be late! What right do you have to keep a woman waiting? This has been an utter waste of my time. Hmph!" After firing off a barrage of questions, the red-faced woman angrily splashed a glass of water on Emmanuel's face.

The latter, who was caught off guard, instantly became soaking wet.

Nevertheless, Emmanuel didn't lose his temper. After all, he was indeed late because he went to the wrong place, so he could understand why the woman was upset.

"Hmph. You're twenty-eight and still only earning eighty-thousand a year. No wonder you're doing so poorly! Not only do you lack punctuality, but you also don't seem to take life seriously. You're doomed to be at the bottom of the social hierarchy your entire life! I'm shocked you even have the guts to go on a blind date with me... Stop being delusional!" the woman scolded as she shot Emmanuel a look of contempt.

The next second, she grabbed her bag and stormed off, not once bothering to leave her name.

To add insult to injury, she even waved a wad of cash in front of Emmanuel's face, then slapped it hard on the table as payment for the bill.

The latter's gaze darkened instantly as rage began pulsing through his veins.

This woman is humiliating me! I may not have high expectations for marriage, but that doesn't mean I don't have a temper! Argh! As much as I want to make her regret her actions, I know I don't have that capability...

Since the woman was gone, Emmanuel, too, left the café glumly.

To his surprise, he had only just stepped out the door when he saw a long-haired man deliberately colliding into a BMW and screaming in pain.

Emmanuel couldn't help but furrow his brows. Oh, gosh. That man is clearly staging a car accident. Why is there so much trouble in this café today?

"Ah! Someone's been hit!" "Argh! My leg's broken! Murderer!" Four men immediately rushed out to join the commotion when the long-haired man fell on the ground.

Thankfully, Emmanuel saw right through their ploy. Ha! Those guys must be the co-conspirators!

Just then, a young lady hastily exited the BMW, clad in a maroon sleeveless dress that revealed a large expanse of tender, fair skin.

With her long, shapely legs and her cleavage peeking out from the neckline, there was no denying that she was incredibly sexy and alluring.

“What’s the matter? How could I have injured your leg when I was driving so slowly?” she asked anxiously.

Seconds later, the long-haired man’s buddies surrounded the woman, demanding compensation. “Cut the crap! Pay up! Pay up now!” Several people in the café had witnessed the staged accident, but unfortunately, they were so afraid of the big, burly men that no one dared to confront them.

“How much do you guys want?” the woman muttered helplessly, having resigned herself to the fact that she’d have to settle the matter with money.

The group of thugs, however, began leering at her bosom and drooling over her.

“Haha. Hey, sexy, why don’t you have some fun with us?” one of the men suggested as he shamelessly tugged at her dress.

Just like that, what had started as a staged accident quickly turned into public sexual harassment.

The pretty woman was so scared out of her wits that she staggered backward until she bumped into Emmanuel.

Instead of taking advantage of her like the other thugs, Emmanuel stepped in front of her and glared at the long-haired man.

“Your leg’s broken, and you’re asking for compensation, huh?” Upon seeing Emmanuel’s menacing expression, the thugs felt chills down their spines.

At the same time, Mackenzie was sitting in the café and watching the entire scene unfold.

Well, well, well. Who knew that man would be so brave? I’m sure no one else would have the guts to go up against five thugs.

The next second, Emmanuel stunned everyone by viciously kicking the long-haired man’s leg.

“Argh!” the latter shouted in pain as he began hopping on the leg that was supposedly broken.



The onlookers instantly let out a collective gasp.

Goodness gracious! That man is daring!

Mackenzie, too, had curled her lips into a smile.

The café was one of her properties, so naturally, she had also seen how Emmanuel's blind date went.

I thought he was a coward when he didn't flare up despite being splashed with water. Who knew he was just a gentleman who doesn't lose his temper with women? I must admit, he looks rather charming when he shows his tough side!

"What's this? Didn't you say your leg's broken? I'm impressed you can still jump on it!" Emmanuel mocked.

When the onlookers realized that the long-haired man had lied about his injury, they wasted no time scolding and criticizing him.

By then, the other thugs had also lost their bravado and fell silent. After all, they knew the tables had turned on them.

"Hmph. I'll let you off this time, brat! You'd better watch your back!" the long-haired man warned before running away with his tail between his legs.

With that, the pretty woman gave Emmanuel a warm smile and coyly gestured for him to get into her car. "Hey, handsome, thank you so much for your help. Would you like to go to my house for a drink?" Emmanuel, however, brushed her off without a second thought. "No, thank you. I have other things to do!" Seeing how unmoved he was by her advances, the woman couldn't help but stomp her feet in frustration.

What the hell... Am I not sexy enough? I've already made the first move, so why won't he reciprocate?

Back in the café, Mackenzie heard her grandfather burst into loud guffaws.

"Haha! I told you so, Mackenzie! Didn't I say that man has an excellent character? Your assistant, Lexi, is such a beautiful woman, yet he refuses to give her the time of day! Once you guys are married, you won't have to worry

about him cheating on you!” The more Mackenzie ruminated about Terence’s words, the more her impression of Emmanuel improved.

I hate men because they’re always so lustful... However, Emmanuel Lowe seems to be quite the exception!

“Don’t be too happy yet, Grandpa! Men are either after looks or money,” Mackenzie uttered coldly before getting up.

Ha! I doubt Emmanuel can pass my second secret test of character!

Meanwhile, Emmanuel had gotten home after his matchmaking session failed spectacularly.

Needless to say, his sister, Roselynn Lowe, was frustrated beyond belief. “What? Another unsuccessful blind date?” This is the eighteenth time, for goodness’ sake! My brother’s a six-foot tall, fit, and upstanding young man. Why won’t any woman take a fancy to him? He may be thick-skulled at times, but surely, someone will still appreciate him for his good looks, won’t they?

Emmanuel’s mother, Alessandra Cadigan, seemed even more anxious as she hurriedly dragged him out of the house.

“Mom, what are you doing?” Emmanuel asked, startled by how panic-stricken Alessandra was.

“What am I doing? I’m worried sick about you!” the woman scolded without breaking her stride. “I don’t understand it, either. Our neighbor’s an unkempt twenty-eight-year-old novelist who’s always cooped up at home, yet he’s already planning for his second child! Why can’t my son get a girlfriend? That woman didn’t even stay for the blind date, did she? I paid good money to set this up for you! Let’s go see her at her house right now!” “What?” Emmanuel choked out.

Did I hear that right? I can’t believe Mom has gotten this desperate! The matchmaking session was an utter failure, so why must she still insist on dragging me to the woman’s place? Wouldn’t I just be embarrassing myself again?

Love at the Wrong Table Chapter 3-In any relationship, the party taking the initiative was often seen as more lowly and desperate.

Therefore, upon seeing Emmanuel and his family at her house, Milani Zimmerman wore an even haughtier expression than when she was at the café.

Ha! I knew this loser wouldn't be able to get over my looks, so he's come to badger me again!

Milani's mother, Melody Claus, was just as smug when she learned of the Lowe family's intention.

"If your son wishes to marry my daughter, you'll have to give us a betrothal gift of five hundred thousand," she said as she raised her palm. "We won't accept anything less!" Emmanuel's heart instantly sank.

Oh, my goodness! Five hundred thousand? Is she trying to sell her daughter?

Alessandra, however, gritted her teeth and nodded. "T-That's fine!" As long as my son can get married, I'll do anything to make up for the betrothal gift, even if it means selling the house!

"Your family must also provide a car and matrimonial home!" Milani's father chimed in. "More importantly, you're not going to let my daughter pay for any installments or maintenance fees!" By then, Emmanuel was on the verge of losing his patience.

Shouldn't marriages be consensual? I don't expect both parties to be forking out the wedding expenses equally, but why does it feel like my family's here to surrender and be fleeced?

Alessandra, too, found herself in a tight spot.

She could sell the house to afford the betrothal gift, but how would she pay for the couple's car and home?

"Sure. That's no problem!" Roselynn piped up, even going so far as to pull her brother back when she realized he wanted to object.

She was just as eager for Emmanuel to start a family, and at thirty years old, she had worked and saved up enough to make the necessary down payments for him.

Since Mom is settling the betrothal gift, I shall help Emmanuel with the car and home!

“Lastly, he will bear all household expenses after the wedding!” Milani suddenly said.

That, however, was the last straw for Emmanuel. “Are you guys marrying off your daughter or selling her? I don’t mind paying this much if she’s coming to work for us as a housekeeper, but if she expects to be treated like a princess or queen, you can forget it! I don’t need that!” “Look at your son! What’s with that attitude?” Milani yelled. “We aren’t even married yet, and he’s already so domineering. Wouldn’t it be worse down the road?” “No, no, no... The marriage will work out. It’d work out just fine!” Alessandra pleaded, desperate to finalize the wedding.

I can’t wait any longer... I must fulfill my husband’s dying wish by the end of the year!

Having seen how things were going, even Roselynn knew she had to step in to persuade her mother. “Mom! Stop forcing it!” Manny’s right. There’s nothing wrong with giving a betrothal gift, car, and house. However, asking him to be the sole supporter of his family after the wedding is too much! What about his wife, then? Why can’t she chip in? Will she be sending her own money back to her parents?

Just then, Milani’s younger brother, Jacob Zimmerman, suddenly appeared with a cocky grin plastered on his face. “Haha! Don’t forget about me, Milani! When it’s my turn to get married, I’d be counting on you guys to buy me my car and house too!” Upon hearing that, Emmanuel instantly exploded with rage.

“What the f\*ck! Am I marrying your sister or your entire family? I may as well support all of you!” Even though Emmanuel had only meant that as an angry remark, Milani decided to hold him to his word. “Hah! You’d better remember what you just said! In that case, I’ll leave you to plan and pay for the wedding banquet and honeymoon. Don’t tell me you can’t afford that...” “Get lost! I’d rather marry a pig than a woman like you!” Emmanuel retorted as the rage and ferocity he used to experience on the battlefield came flooding back.

He didn’t know what the Zimmermans were playing at, but there was no doubt they were monsters.

“Look at yourself! You’re just an uncultured brute with an awful temper! How dare you ask me for my hand in marriage! I’d rather marry a boar than you!” Milani snapped back.

Given my qualities, I have no problem marrying a rich man, so why should I settle for a pauper like Emmanuel? I’m only too happy that he wants to fall out with me!

After giving an exasperated laugh, Emmanuel stood up and stormed off, leaving Alessandra and Roselynn with no choice but to follow suit.

To their surprise, they had only just stepped out of the Zimmerman residence when three luxury cars pulled up in front of them.

The Zimmermans quickly popped out to see the commotion and almost dropped their jaws when they saw the car lineup.

Oh, d\*mn! Those cars are worth tens of millions! What’s going on? Since when were the Lowes that fancy?

Emmanuel, on the other contrary, seemed to recognize one of the cars. Hmm... Didn’t I see that car outside the café?

The next second, Terence stepped out of the car, surrounded by his convoy of suited bodyguards.

He smiled as he approached Emmanuel and said politely, “I’m here to return the favor, Mr. Lowe, after you helped me outside the café!” Needless to say, everyone was stunned.

Roselynn couldn’t hide her excitement and gripped her brother’s arm tightly.

Ah! Isn’t this like those rags-to-riches stories?

The more Emmanuel thought about it, the more he frowned. Wow... Who knew this old geezer was a millionaire? Could he have intentionally fallen at the café?

Terence waved his hand, and within seconds, his subordinates had unloaded several boxes of gifts.

Not only were there precious stones and jewelry, but there were also famous paintings, antiques, and even a Porsche key.

The total value of the items had to be at least ten million.

For someone who earned a mere eighty thousand a year, ten million was an eye-watering amount of money that Emmanuel could only dream of!

Upon witnessing the scene, the Zimmerman family almost collapsed in shock.

Milani might be a well-dressed woman, but the truth was, her family was just like any other average family. To them, ten million was undoubtedly an astronomical sum!

Sh\*t. If I had known Emmanuel would become a multi-millionaire, I'd have married him straightaway!

After snapping out of her daze, she smiled and hastily clutched Emmanuel's arm.

"What's the matter, darling? Oh, wow... You're so kind to help the elderly! I love that about you!" "Who's your darling?" Emmanuel asked, embarrassing Milani so much that she wanted to crawl into a hole.

As though that wasn't enough, he brusquely pushed her away and added, "Didn't you just reject me? Why are you still using honeyed words?" "Uh... I—" Milani muttered, clearly at a loss for words.

Her family, too, was incredibly frustrated.

After all, they had just missed out on getting a wealthy son-in-law!

Meanwhile, Alessandra was about to say something when Roselynn tugged at her.

As much as I want Manny to start a family, I can't let him settle for the horrible Zimmermans! Besides, he's rich now! I'm sure he can find an even better woman!

"Mom, Roselynn, let's go!" Emmanuel said before ushering both women into the car.

He didn't want to accept the gifts, especially since he knew he hadn't done anything to deserve them. However, it wasn't the time and place to discuss the matter, so he decided to leave instead.

Once the Lowe family had left, a gust of cold wind swept over the Zimmermans as they seethed silently.

“How could you have made such remarks earlier, Milani? Do you think it’s easy to find a millionaire these days?” Melody berated.

“W-What should I do now, then?” In all honesty, Milani was at a complete loss. She had gone on several blind dates to find a rich husband who could give her a life of luxury.

Alas, who knew she’d let a multi-millionaire slip right through her fingers?

“What else can we do? They’ve already come to our place to ask for your hand in marriage. Can’t we do the same?” Melody suggested.

Jacob, who was just as anxious, instantly exclaimed, “I don’t care, Milani! You have to marry that multi-millionaire! When my girlfriend and I get married, you must give us a house and a luxury car! Otherwise, I’ll disown you!” “Okay, okay. I got it!” Milani replied with a long sigh.

Argh! Emmanuel and I left on such bad terms... Would he still care about me?

Love at the Wrong Table Chapter 4-“Take all of these things back!” Emmanuel had Terence take everything back after hitching a ride.

“What?” Terence wasn’t the only one shocked by Emmanuel’s demand, though. Alessandra and Roselynn were just as surprised as he was.

“These things are worth at least ten million! Are you sure you don’t want them?” Terence asked again to make sure his ears weren’t deceiving him.

Ten million may be a small figure for me, but it should be an astronomical sum for this young man and his family!

“That’s right; I don’t want them. My late father taught me not to accept things I don’t deserve. I can’t be accepting such expensive gifts simply for helping you,” Emmanuel replied firmly.

Roselynn could only let out a helpless sigh when she saw how noble he was.

Alessandra felt a little upset as she wondered when Emmanuel would be able to find himself a girlfriend and get married.

“Haha! Very well, then!” Terence nodded excitedly and brought the gifts home.

Fearing that Mackenzie wouldn't believe him, he even recorded the entire process and showed it to her as proof.

“Do you see that, Mackenzie? I told you that man would be able to pass the test! Now that you've lost the bet, it's time to honor your word and marry him! I want my grandchildren!” Terence urged her.

Although Mackenzie said nothing in response, she was not one to go back on her word. Since she had lost the bet with her grandfather, she decided to take care of things the next day. Otherwise, he would surely pester her about it every day.

Emmanuel received a phone call from an unknown number very early the next day.

“Since you refused to accept my gifts yesterday, I have decided to introduce a potential wife to you instead. You wouldn't say no to this, would you, young man?” This voice... It's the strange old man from yesterday!

“Hey, old man, are you some kind of scammer or something? Is this a new tactic to scam people out of their life savings?” Emmanuel responded with a chuckle.

Of course, he didn't actually think Terence was a scammer. He could tell from Terence's aura that the old man was incredibly wealthy.

However, he couldn't seem to figure out why Terence chose him out of everyone else.

Terence deliberately taunted him by saying, “Haha! Yes, I want to scam you into marrying a woman. What's the matter? Are you scared?” “What a coincidence! That's the only thing I'm not afraid of!” Emmanuel replied seriously.

Alessandra had been pestering him non-stop after his eighteenth matchmaking session ended in failure yesterday, so he was willing to marry any woman just to shut her up.

“Then head over to City Hall right now with all the relevant documents,” Terence instructed.



Fine! I'll go! I'm not afraid of getting married!

With that in mind, Emmanuel did as told and headed over to City Hall with all the relevant documents.

Terence had told him that the other party was a strong and capable professional in the corporate world, so Emmanuel did not have high hopes for her appearance.

Being a gynecologist, he had gotten so used to seeing the female body that he didn't even care about her figure.

All Emmanuel wanted was for her to have a decent character.

At the very least, she would have to be better than Milani.

His jaw dropped in shock when he arrived at City Hall and saw the woman he was supposed to marry.

What? Mackenzie?

Her icy-cold aura and the red convertible she was in was a clear indicator that she was from a wealthy family. Despite how beautiful she looked, no guy dared hit on her because she was clearly out of their league.

"Well? What are you waiting for? Come on over!" Mackenzie called out to him.

Her gaze alone was enough to make Emmanuel comply obediently.

That old man wasn't lying when he said she was a powerful woman in the corporate world! She has such an authoritative and domineering air about her!

"Ms. Quillen? Are you the one who wants to marry me?" Emmanuel asked as he was still in disbelief.

"What, you don't want to marry me?" Mackenzie retorted with a slight frown.

Man, that icy-cold aura of hers sure is scary! I bet she's still single because most guys are intimidated by her!

"Of course I do! I wouldn't have come here otherwise!" Emmanuel wasn't sure if he was excited or afraid of his situation.

Mackenzie may be the most beautiful woman I've ever seen, but she seems a bit difficult to get along with. Oh, well... I just need to get married to shut my mother up, so it doesn't really matter if we get along or not!

"Then let's head inside and get this over with!" Mackenzie said as she got out of the car and walked right into City Hall.

Having gotten used to doing things by herself, she was all alone even when getting married.

She was walking so fast that Emmanuel had to jog to keep up with her.

"Are you sure you don't want to reconsider this? It's not too late to change your mind," Mackenzie reminded him when they were about to get registered as a married couple.

Since she didn't actually want to marry Emmanuel, she hoped that he would change his mind. That way, Terence would have no choice but to stop pressuring her.

"For someone with a cold personality, you sure are surprisingly hesitant and indecisive," Emmanuel replied with a nonchalant smile.

The look in Mackenzie's eyes intensified when she heard that. Her gaze was so sharp that it was as though it could slice Emmanuel in half.

"You'd better not regret it, then!" That was the final thing Mackenzie told him before they got married.

Ten minutes later, the two of them walked out of City Hall with their marriage certificate in hand.

Because Mackenzie had remained silent and maintained an icy-cold expression the entire time, the staff at the registration counter even wondered if they had come to the wrong counter.

Are they here to get divorced or married?

"I'm only marrying you to fulfill a promise I made to my grandfather, so don't take this marriage too seriously. You can just carry on with your life, and I'll do the same on my end. I won't even care if you'll be sleeping around with other women," Mackenzie said coldly.

Although a little hurt, Emmanuel couldn't help but smile in amusement when he heard that.

Did Mackenzie get our roles mixed up or something? Usually, it's the job of the sc\*mbag husband to say those lines to his wife.

"Oh, by the way, you mentioned that you haven't bought a house, right?" Mackenzie asked all of a sudden.

"Yes, that's right," Emmanuel replied with a nod.

Mackenzie then handed him a set of keys, much to his surprise.

As the CEO of Terence Group, she had gotten used to being prepared.

"What's the meaning of this?" Emmanuel asked.

"It's a patriarchal world that we live in, so women are expected to move in with their husbands. I refuse to move into your house, so I got us our own place instead. You can stay there from now on, but keep in mind that I will hardly be around," Mackenzie replied with an expressionless look on her face.

"Is it just me, or am I being treated like a kept man?" Emmanuel refused to accept the keys as his pride and honor would not let him do so.

"Take the keys!" Mackenzie ordered coldly.

That authoritative tone and penetrating gaze were all it took to make Emmanuel comply.

As expected of a powerful executive in the corporate world! You just can't bring yourself to defy her!

Emmanuel had no choice but to accept the keys. "Fine! I suppose being a kept man is better than nothing!" Since they were already married, getting into conflicts over such trivial matters would only make his life even more difficult.

"Goodbye!" Mackenzie said as she got ready to leave.

"Wait up, Ms. Quillen!" Emmanuel called out to her while grabbing her by the wrist.

When Mackenzie turned around, however, her gaze was so intense that Emmanuel quickly let go of her hand.

“What else do you want?” Mackenzie asked coldly.

She disliked people, especially men, who were indecisive and complained a lot.

“There are three things that we need to make clear.” It was said that married couples had a tendency to behave like each other. A bit of her personality was already rubbing off on Emmanuel as he said in a similarly professional tone, “First of all, I will need your contact details. That way, I’ll be able to call you whenever I need to. Just like how you married me to satisfy your grandfather, I’m also doing it to satisfy my mother. I’ll have to be able to reach you in case she asks me about you, right?” Despite Mackenzie’s cold personality, she was still a reasonable person, so she agreed to his request. “Here, you can reach me on WhatsApp.” After saving her number, Emmanuel continued, “Second of all, I will pay you a sum of five thousand every month. You may think of it as paying rent for the house or as me keeping my promise during our previous date.” Mackenzie’s lips curled into a disdainful smile when she heard that.

Given the amount of money she had, five thousand was a ridiculously small figure for her.

Even so, she did not turn his offer down.

“Third of all, I want to know your plans regarding our life as a married couple,” Emmanuel continued with a serious look on his face.

Love at the Wrong Table Chapter 5-Marriage is not a child’s game. Now that we’re married, we need to decide how we will do a certain something that married couples do!

“Heh... As expected of a man!” Mackenzie rolled her eyes when she heard that.

I knew it! Men and women do think differently, after all! I care about our life as a married couple, but he’s only concerned about our sex life!

“Unless you win my heart over, you can forget about laying even a finger on me!” “Very well, then!” Emmanuel liked Mackenzie’s short and simple reply.

He never believed that a dense man like himself would be able to win the heart of an ice queen like her. While it was true that she could get his heart racing with her beauty, that didn't mean she would turn him on.

In fact, he even thought he was unable to be turned on by women.

Hence, one of the main reasons he didn't want to get married was that he was afraid of not being able to satisfy his wife sexually.

As such, Mackenzie's refusal to have sex with him came as a huge relief.

Mackenzie, however, wasn't too pleased with his response.

What the... This *bstard!* *I can tell he's not faking it! I know that most men wouldn't dare express their interest in me because of my cold personality, but that doesn't mean they don't lust over me! I know I'm a very beautiful woman, so why doesn't this bstard even want to have sex with me? Is it because he's a gynecologist? I hate this so much!*

The two then headed their separate ways after they had made their terms clear with each other.

Emmanuel saw Milani at his doorstep with a basket of fruits the moment he got home.

She looked like a completely different person with that sweet smile on her face.

Disgusted by her pretentious behavior, Emmanuel told her the truth right away.

"What? You rejected all of the gifts?" Milani was shocked to the core when she heard that he had returned the gifts worth ten million.

Oh, my goodness! Why would he do something so stupid? Does he think he's all high and mighty for turning down those gifts? Ugh! Now I see why he's so unsuccessful in life! No one in their right mind would ever want to marry a guy like him! They'd be poor for life!

Alessandra came out of her room when she heard the commotion. "Ah, Milani, you're here! Come on in!" She welcomed Milani excitedly when she saw the latter standing at the door.

After all, that was the first time a woman had come to see her son.

Alessandra was so desperate to marry Emmanuel off that she didn't even care if Milani's family were a bunch of horrible people.

To her surprise, however, Milani's attitude changed instantly.

"Sorry, but I'm really busy! Also, you can forget about having me marry your son! He isn't even worthy of being my footstool, let alone my husband! I bet he'll never be able to find himself a wife! Goodbye!" Milani shouted and stormed off immediately after.

Honestly, I don't even know why my mom wanted me to come visit him! This was such a huge waste of time!

Alessandra was left speechless by her sudden outburst and change of heart.

What just happened? Why would she change her mind so suddenly? Did she bring those fruits here just to insult my son? What is wrong with her?

Emmanuel knew full well that Milani's response was due to the ten million that he gave up on.

Naturally, he had no interest in a gold-digger like her either.

"My goodness! What a crazy woman she is!" Roselynn exclaimed angrily when she came out and saw Milani leaving.

She then turned toward Emmanuel and tried to comfort him, saying, "You need to stay away from women like her, Manny! Don't take her words to heart!" To her surprise, however, he didn't seem to be bothered in the slightest.

"Mom, Roselynn, I'm already married, so you two don't have to worry about me anymore." Alessandra and Roselynn were so shocked that they both screamed in unison, "What?" Roselynn's voice was so shrill that she nearly shattered the glassware in the house.

"Did you just say you're married?" "Who are you married to?" "You're not messing with us, are you, Manny? If I recall correctly, you never had a girlfriend!" Alessandra and Roselynn both fired questions at him one after another.

Instead of trying to convince them, Emmanuel simply whipped out his marriage certificate and showed it to them.

The truth spoke for itself, leaving the two women wide-eyed with shock.

Although the woman on the marriage certificate looked gorgeous, they were still worried about her personality.

“She looks hard to get along with!” “Are you sure this isn’t some kind of scam?” Emmanuel could understand their concerns, so he lied to reassure them. “Don’t worry. She’s a woman I met while I was a soldier at Northern Region. She’s a strong woman and a perfectionist who cares a lot about her image, so she didn’t want people to know about our relationship. That’s why we’ve been keeping it a secret all this while.” “Ah, so that’s what happened...” That explains why he refused to get himself a girlfriend all these years! Turns out, he already had one all along!

“I’m sorry for keeping it a secret from you two for so long! I only did it to protect her career. Anyway, you two no longer have to worry about me getting married. Mackenzie and I will surely live a happy life together,” Emmanuel reassured them, but they were still worried.

Roselynn was especially suspicious of his explanation.

If Manny already had a girlfriend all along, then why did he wait until now to tell us about it? Why did he waste his time attending those eighteen matchmaking sessions? Oh, well... He must have his reasons for lying to us, and I don’t want to make Mom worried by exposing him.

“What does she do for a living, Manny? Why didn’t she come home with you now that you two are married?” Alessandra asked curiously.

No mother wouldn’t be curious about her daughter-in-law, and Alessandra was no exception. Emmanuel knew she would surely ask about Mackenzie’s background, so he had prepared himself to answer her questions.

“Mackenzie is a high-level executive in a huge company, Mom. That’s why she can’t come home with me.” “What? Where will she stay, then?” Alessandra pressed on.

“She bought a house of her own, Mom. Now that we’re married, I’ll be moving in with her soon.” “I...” Alessandra’s eyes teared up all of a sudden.

Roselynn didn't want Emmanuel to leave either, but she tried to comfort Alessandra anyway. "Manny is a grown adult now, Mom. It was only a matter of time before he moved out. You want to have grandchildren, don't you? It'll be hard for that to happen if he stays with you all the time!" Of course, Alessandra understood that very well. After all, no woman would want to live with their in-laws these days. It would be very inconvenient for them to have sex at night, too.

Even so, Alessandra's tears still refused to stop flowing.

"I won't object to your relationship if you love her, Manny. I just have one request. Could you bring her over so I can have a look at her? Also, I want you to arrange for both our families to meet each other." Alessandra's sincere requests were actually very simple ones, but they were incredibly difficult for Emmanuel to fulfill.

There's no way a woman like Mackenzie would be willing to visit our house! I don't know what her job title is, but her attire and attitude alone show that she's no ordinary woman. I doubt I can even afford to pay for the dry cleaning if we end up getting her clothes dirty! As for meeting her parents, that's practically never going to happen. She said she only agreed to marry me to satisfy her grandfather, so getting her to show up here and put up an act for me is simply asking for the impossible. What do I do now?

Love at the Wrong Table Chapter 6-"I'll tell you about it after talking it through with her, Mom." Emmanuel decided to leave things be for now.

Since he couldn't agree or refuse, he had no choice but to take it one step at a time.

"All right, then," Alessandra responded. "Well, how about you move out and go live with her today? Girls love it when guys are romantic. It's your wedding night, so you'd better not leave her on her own! Take good care of her. Do you understand?" Wedding night? Emmanuel scoffed internally.

If that hadn't even crossed his mind, then Mackenzie certainly wouldn't have thought of it either.

The woman had never even thought about consummating their marriage.

There's just no way it'd ever happen!



Still, he nodded at his mother and sister. “I’ll be off, then. Take care of yourselves. Call me whenever you need me.” That alone was enough to make Alessandra and Roselynn tear up again.

Given how Emmanuel’s father had died young, and the two women had watched Emmanuel grow up, seeing the only man in the family leave home made their hearts heavy.

“Don’t cry, Mom. How are you going to have grandkids if Manny doesn’t stay with your daughter-in-law?” Roselynn urged, even though she couldn’t stop crying herself.

The women spent a long while helping Emmanuel pack his valuables.

Alessandra shoved a bank card into his hands just as he was about to leave.

“What are you doing, Mom?” The man hastily gave it back, knowing that his mother only had one card. It was baffling that she was handing him her social security fund.

There was no way he could accept it.

“Take it,” Alessandra insisted. “Your wife agreed to marry you without you giving her any betrothal gifts. She even bought a place for you two so you could live together, so don’t let her down. Give her everything she deserves! There are about sixty thousand on this card. Go buy your wife a ring and some jewelry. Do you hear me?” Upon hearing that, Emmanuel felt his nose burn.

I’m such a horrible son. This is her retirement fund! She’s already fifty-seven. What is she going to do if I take all that she has left?

“Take it, Manny. It’s what Mom wants.” Roselynn shot him a glance.

The young woman knew her mother well, so she was aware that Alessandra would surely fear her daughter-in-law leaving if Emmanuel didn’t do as she asked.

Hence, the man had to take the money to ease her mind and present it to Mackenzie—whether she wanted it or not.

“If you really want to thank Mom, come back here with your wife as soon as you can so we can take a look at her,” Roselynn added.

In truth, she had her doubts. Her brother had gotten into a blitz marriage, after all.

“I understand.” With that, Emmanuel spun around and left quickly.

It wasn't that he had no emotions; he just didn't want his family to see how red his eyes had become.

He felt so, so guilty now.

His mother had always wanted him to have a blissful marriage, but instead, he had found himself a random woman to take part in a mere act.

“The truth can never come to light—at least not until she's left this world,” the man muttered to himself, feeling terrified all of a sudden.

There was no way Alessandra would be able to handle it if she found out that this was all a show.

After leaving home, Emmanuel headed over to Yociam Residence as instructed by Mackenzie via text message.

The place was an upscale area in Yeringham and cost over ten thousand per square meter.

There were many buildings there, but Mackenzie had only told him that the apartment number was 1701 without mentioning the block number.

Good thing I had the sense to get her WhatsApp contact outside City Hall. I'd better ask her now.

Thus, he left Mackenzie a voice message.

Yet, despite it being six in the evening, Mackenzie was still in the middle of a meeting at work.

As the CEO of Terence Group, she never checked her messages during meetings.

After waiting for a long while and not receiving a response, Emmanuel figured that the woman's current circumstances didn't allow her to listen to his voice message, so he sent her a text message instead.

There was still no reply. The sky had turned dark, and Emmanuel's empty stomach ate at his patience. Ultimately, he decided to video call her.

The man knew how aloof Mackenzie was and didn't really want to speak to her.

Mackenzie hadn't added him to her contacts when they exchanged numbers earlier. At present, she suddenly heard her phone ring and glanced at the screen impatiently.

This was an extremely rare occurrence.

Those who knew her understood that she would reply to every text that mattered to her, but when it came to people whom she didn't bother responding to, not even a video call would change her mind.

Seeing someone with the username Covertly Magnificent with an unfamiliar profile picture call her, the woman frowned and blocked his number instantly.

Strange. When did I ever give this person my contact?

From how she hung up, Emmanuel knew Mackenzie had her phone with her and tried redialing her number.

Yet, he received a notification: This user only accepts calls and messages from friends.

What the hell?

Emmanuel stared at the screen in a daze for a long time.

She's not messing with me, is she?

Thankfully, the man was smart enough to remember that Terence was her grandfather.

Even though he didn't have Terence's number saved, the latter had called him earlier this morning, so all it took was a quick look at his call history to find it.

“Hey, Gramps, what’s up with your granddaughter? She told me to live with her at Yociam Residence, but she ended up blocking my number! Are you guys just playing around with me? Is this some sort of marriage scam? It’s not like I have anything you can take from me!” Terence was instantly bereft of words.

She really does hate men...

“Calm down, young lad. I’ll call her right now!” He tried his best to console Emmanuel, worried about losing his new grandson-in-law.

The Quillen family was so powerful that even Terence didn’t know how many more businesses Mackenzie had established out there. He had to find out from her.

Meanwhile, Mackenzie was about to resume the meeting when her phone rang again.

She wanted to hang up, but upon realizing that it was her grandfather, she had no choice but to answer.

“What is it, Grandpa? I’m in a meeting now. Don’t you know that?” Like I care about your meeting! That’s not as important as giving me a great-grandchild!

“Mackenzie, didn’t you ask Emmanuel to live with you? He’s already at Yociam Residence, but he doesn’t know which block it is!” Oh, right.

Mackenzie finally recalled that she had gotten married today.

Darn it! What was his name again? Seriously, men are such a pain!

“Tell him we’re staying at Block B, Grandpa.” Right after saying that, Mackenzie hung up so that her grandfather wouldn’t be able to tell her to contact Emmanuel herself. She didn’t know how to, anyway.

Upon hanging up, the woman noticed all the subtle glances coming her way.

Of course, given that she was Terence Group’s CEO, no one dared utter a word—except for a young lady who leaned over with a giggle.

“Was that your husband, Mackenzie?” Mackenzie shot her a glare, causing her to shut up immediately.

The woman was none other than Mackenzie's sister, Beatrix. She was secretly glad to be the younger sibling. Otherwise, she would have been the one marrying that fine specimen of a man who had just called her grandfather.

At the same time, she was also curious as to who on earth could have the courage to take her man-loathing sister as his wife.

Hehe. I wonder how long he'd be able to put up with her temper. Three days? Or maybe he'd be done and move out by the second day!

Love at the Wrong Table Chapter 7-Being the magnanimous man that he was, Emmanuel cast aside all his displeasure as soon as he found the apartment and dragged his luggage in with him.

The unit was huge—more than twice the size of his three-bedroom home—and the interior was lavishly decorated.

The four-bedroom apartment felt a bit like a maze on one's first visit.

One thing that Emmanuel noticed, however, was that although the unit was fully furnished, there didn't seem to be any fast-moving consumer goods.

That means she probably doesn't live here on a regular basis. Rich people sure love wasting what they have, huh? I shared an eighty-square-foot home with two family members, while this woman bought a two-hundred-square-foot apartment and left it unoccupied. If her grandfather hadn't forced her to get married, and she needed to use this place to keep me, it probably would've stayed empty forever.

The man scoffed at his own thoughts.

Wait, "keep me?" I just made myself sound like I'm living off her. That's not what I'm here for! I just needed to find a woman to spend my days with, and we're both getting something out of each other. Besides, I still have to pay her five grand every month! It's pretty much the same as paying rent.

Out of the four bedrooms, only the biggest one had multiple closets filled with brand-new clothes.

This must be her lair.

There was an array of shirts and coats, but only three pairs of underwear—all of which were either fully white or black and made of cotton.

What a waste of a body like that. Why doesn't she wear something spicier?

Despite thinking that, Emmanuel had no interest in touching her clothes and walked away. Then, he picked the bedroom furthest from hers as his own.

Considering how much Mackenzie hated men, he knew he was better off staying as far away from her as possible.

Rumble.

Feeling his stomach growl again, Emmanuel headed into the kitchen.

Seriously? All this premium cookware and equipment, but no food! What's the point? Am I supposed to eat a frying pan?

Thus, the man decided it was time to make a trip down to the nearby supermarket.

Since he couldn't go back to his family for now, he could only make this place his new home.

He was so hungry that he bought himself a bun before doing his grocery shopping.

Back at Terence Group, the meeting had just ended, and Mackenzie glanced at the time. It was already past nine.

Per usual, her mind was filled with work as she walked over to her Bentley.

The driver took her in the direction of the family mansion.

"Stop!" she called out halfway through the journey.

"What's the matter, Ms. Quillen?" the driver immediately hit the brakes and asked politely.

The woman naturally didn't answer him. In fact, she had only just remembered that she was now married, and Terence had warned her not to return to the Quillen family mansion until she had given birth.

A woman should be wherever her husband was; this was the country's millennium-long tradition.

Regardless of her status, she still had to live with her husband now that she was married.

"Turn around. Take me to Yociam Residence." "Yes, Ms. Quillen." That was all the driver responded with, despite his curiosity.

As Mackenzie's only remaining male driver, he wasn't going to risk losing his high-paying job by being careless with his words.

It was past ten when Emmanuel returned to the apartment.

He had left the lights on when leaving, so he didn't realize Mackenzie was already home, especially since the place looked as tidy as before.

Drenched in sweat after grocery shopping, the man took off his shirt and walked toward the bathroom, only to freeze on the spot the moment he opened the door.

He stared wide-eyed at the woman in the tub, having lost his ability to blink.

Mackenzie was enjoying a bubble bath with her legs sticking out of the tub, her pink toes looking like flower buds in a field of snow.

Even though the bathtub was filled with bubbles, Emmanuel could still vaguely see what was underneath the water from where he was standing.

The woman's figure was stunning beyond description, and her skin shimmered like moonstone.

Thump.

Thump.

Emmanuel's heart began to race again, and this time, it was ten times faster.

Having seen so many women as a gynecologist, he had never felt anything.

However, this time, he knew Mackenzie was different from the rest.

“Are you done staring? Do you want me to carve out your eyes?” Instead of screaming, the woman threatened him icily and glared at him with eyes that could kill.

She never locked the bathroom door as she was used to staying alone, but she now regretted not doing that.

“I’m sorry, Ms. Quillen. I didn’t know you were back.” Feeling goosebumps all over his skin, Emmanuel hurriedly fled.

Despite acting calm initially, he leaned against the wall immediately upon exiting the bathroom and gasped for air.

Any second of delay, and I’d probably be dead. This is exactly the problem with blitz marriages. You don’t know the other person’s habits. Her eyes were so scary, but my God, every inch of that body was just unreal.

To think that even he, a gynecologist, would feel this way.

Meanwhile, Mackenzie clutched her chest while inside the bathtub.

While she had managed to play it cool when the man walked in, she now felt completely on edge after he left.

I can’t believe a man saw my body! Sure, he’s my husband, and it’s not like he was being creepy or anything, but still! I feel so grossed out!

“I knew getting married was a bad idea…” The woman sighed helplessly.

What if it’s all on purpose?

She had always been distrusting of others since she was young, and when Emmanuel passed her two tests so easily, she began suspecting him of having ulterior motives.

I bet he knows I’m loaded, but he pretended not to care about any of that just because Grandpa was testing him.

Mackenzie refused to believe that there was someone with no desires in this world, especially a man.

However, she could only keep up the act since she had no proof.



After her bath, Mackenzie walked into the living room.

Emmanuel was sitting on the couch and pressing the remote button aimlessly when he glanced up and noticed her. Then, he felt his body tense up.

“Ms. Quillen, from now on, could you please put on some underwear after your bath?” Emmanuel requested sincerely.

What kind of man could resist such a beautiful and alluring woman like Mackenzie walking around in nothing but a thin nightgown?

Even Emmanuel, who had a higher resistance due to his profession, could feel his body temperature rising.

“Hmph! It’s not like I knew you’d be waiting for me out here in the living room.” The woman stared at him with frosty eyes.

What woman wears her underwear after a bath? That’s such a hassle!

She loved living without care, so having a man in her house now made things unbearable for her.

“I’ll go to my room, then.” Emmanuel got up to make his escape.

This woman’s way too cold. I thought of having a chat with her to win her over slowly, but I guess I overestimated myself. I don’t even know what to say to her now! How am I supposed to continue living with her?

As Beatrix had anticipated, he was beginning to waver.

Yet, the man heard a loud thud the moment he turned to leave.

He then glanced back and saw Mackenzie kneeling on the floor, seemingly in pain.

The sight of her collar loosening while she had no undergarments on made Emmanuel feel as though his soul had been captured.

“Ms. Quillen! What’s wrong?”

Love at the Wrong Table Chapter 8-Emmanuel hurried over to help Mackenzie up, but his hand stopped in the air abruptly when he sensed an intimidating aura around her.

He hesitated, wondering if he should touch her.

Looking at the motionless woman with beads of sweat trickling down her forehead, he eventually mustered his courage and picked her up.

To his surprise, she felt much lighter than he expected for a five-and-a-half-foot-tall person.

In fact, he reckoned she weighed only around a hundred and ten pounds.

“D-Don’t touch me!” Mackenzie still managed to shoot him a steely glare despite the gripping pain she felt.

It was nothing compared to how much she detested the touch of a man, let alone being carried by one. Goosebumps broke out across her body the moment Emmanuel touched her.

The man evaded her hostile eyes and gently put her down on the couch, saying, “Just look at you. You don’t eat regularly. That’s why you’re having stomach flu now.” Wait. How does he even know that? We’ve only known each other for a day!

Mackenzie was taken aback by how much Emmanuel knew about her, but before she could respond, Emmanuel had lifted her nightgown.

“W-What do you think you’re doing? I’ll kill you!” Mackenzie exploded in a burst of energy, twisting Emmanuel’s arm.

There was no way she would let a man like him take advantage of her, especially when she was a daughter of the Quillen family and had been practicing martial arts her whole life.

Despite how painful the grip was, Emmanuel did not fight back. “I’m just trying to help ease your pain,” he explained, gritting his teeth.

Looks can be deceiving, man. She’s not ladylike at all, despite how gorgeous she is!

“A-Aren’t you a gynecologist? Do you know internal medicine too?” Mackenzie had doubts, but there was no time for that. Another sharp spasm of pain struck, forcing her to let go of Emmanuel and hold her stomach.

“I can well call 911 if you don’t trust me, but you’ll have to endure the pain until you reach the hospital.” Hearing this, Mackenzie took her phone to make a call, for there was no way she would swallow her ego and let Emmanuel have his way, but when the latter saw her curl into a ball because of the pain, he swept her phone aside and squatted down in front of her.

Then, Mackenzie felt a big, warm palm lifting her gown right after, but she did not stop him.

She could not.

Besides, she figured she should trust Emmanuel once, since she could break him into pieces later if she found out he was purely taking advantage of her.

Meanwhile, Emmanuel felt his heart start pounding vigorously when he saw Mackenzie’s pair of fair and flawless legs.

In fact, he gulped without even knowing when he lifted her skirt.

As a gynecologist, he had never felt a sense of irresistible attraction toward any woman except for Mackenzie, but he quickly collected his thoughts and rubbed his hands before warming her stomach with the heat from his palms.

“Urgh...” Mackenzie finally felt more comfortable when a rush of warmth went through her stomach, dispelling the pain from earlier.

Then, Emmanuel repeated the gesture a few times and massaged her lower abdomen.

Oh, her abs are tight and toned. She must be disciplined enough to work out regularly.

“W-What is this you’re doing?” Mackenzie asked, biting her lower lip.

She had always abhorred men’s touch, but this time, it felt different when Emmanuel touched her.

Although the sense of distaste was still there, Mackenzie felt good and embarrassed simultaneously. The feeling perplexed her.

“I’m applying pressure on your acupoints,” Emmanuel answered, looking down to avoid eye contact. As his gaze lowered, he could not help but steal a glance at Mackenzie’s legs.

She's truly a work of art!

Little did he know, Mackenzie was watching his every move.

I knew it. This man is finally showing his true colors. They all put up a front as if they are true gentlemen before they marry you, but the truth is that all men are the same. They're all perverts.

"How are you feeling?" Emmanuel asked suddenly.

"I'm fine already. You should stop touching me now," Mackenzie instructed coldly.

Emmanuel did as she told, but on second thought, he reminded, "What's with this aversion? I'm your husband. Besides, I'm just trying to help you." Mackenzie bit her lower lip and scoffed.

Seriously? I don't understand why human reproduction has to happen between a man and a woman. I bet other women feel uncomfortable about it too!

"Let me make you something to eat. Also, make sure you don't work overtime with an empty stomach next time," Emmanuel remarked, standing up to leave.

"Are you doing this as a doctor or as a husband?" she asked indifferently.

"Is that even important?" Pfft. Does she have to be so serious?

Mackenzie ignored that question and informed instead, "I'm turning in at eleven, so make sure not to disturb me after that." Emmanuel rolled his eyes and smiled in resignation. I swear, getting along with a company executive is harder than working at the hospital.

Ten minutes later, Emmanuel headed to her room and knocked on the door with a plate of spaghetti with egg.

The sight baffled Mackenzie when she opened the door.

"Did you buy the ingredients? Wait. Do you also know how to cook?" "Of course I bought groceries. Your kitchen is literally empty. Do you think the food just dropped from heaven?" With that, Emmanuel entered the room with the food and placed the plate on the table. "Eat it while it's still warm. You're

not supposed to be eating anything cold.” “Are you seriously telling me what to do?” Mackenzie asked, slightly amused.

She was still not used to living together with a man. Before this, not even her mother dared to tell her what to do, so it caught her off guard when Emmanuel did that.

I’m the CEO of Terence Group. Who dares to boss me around?

“This is just a friendly reminder,” Emmanuel replied sternly all of a sudden. “You’re my wife and, more so now, a patient, so you should listen to me.” A frown crept on Mackenzie’s brows as she stared at the man.

In the end, she gave up arguing with him and started eating, but when she saw the cheap food, she could not help but frown again.

“Is this even edible?” “You won’t die from a tasteless meal, but you’ll definitely suffer if you go through the night with an empty stomach!” Emmanuel was on the verge of losing his temper—he could not understand why Mackenzie could be so intractable.

At last, Mackenzie budged and spun the pasta with her fork.

She began to chew slowly before her face abruptly changed.

“Mm! This is pretty good. I hope I don’t gain weight from an occasional late-night treat,” she commented.

For the first time, Mackenzie thought living with a man was not entirely a bad idea, for it sure felt different from having a housekeeper at home.

Her behavior rendered Emmanuel speechless.

I guess a woman will always be a woman. She might be a misandrist, but she still cares about her body image, just as all other women do. Her beauty is all she lives for.

“I’m done. Is this fine?” Mackenzie asked Emmanuel like a patient seeking approval from their doctor after only taking two bites of the food.

Emmanuel was exasperated.

I can't understand how someone can be this difficult! I made this specifically for her, yet she only takes two bites of it!

Knowing there was no point in trying to change her mind, Emmanuel held his dissatisfaction and collected the plate and cutlery before leaving.

"By the way," he suddenly voiced out when he almost reached the door. "When will you be free to go home with me? My mom would love to meet you." His heart thudded loudly with anxiety as he waited for an answer.

Love at the Wrong Table Chapter 9-Given Mackenzie's fussiness, Emmanuel knew that things would turn out bad whether she agreed to go home with him or not.

"I'm sorry, but my schedule is full. I won't have time this entire week," she answered.

Emmanuel nodded at her reply, which, weirdly enough, made him both disappointed and relieved.

Well, as I thought, it won't be easy to get her home to meet my family.

"Hold on!" Emmanuel saw a ray of hope when Mackenzie called out just as he was about to leave the room.

Did she change her mind? Don't tell me she's found a suitable time to go home with me.

To his dismay, he saw Mackenzie holding out a bank card toward him when he turned back.

"What is this?" he asked with a frown, confounded.

He had no idea why Mackenzie was giving him money, especially when he had not given Mackenzie the sixty grand his mother earned with all her hard work because he suspected their marriage might be a scam.

What is going on?

"I don't want that kind of cheap food at home anymore. There's a hundred thousand in this card, so use it to buy whatever is needed for our home. I hope you can find time to do some shopping for the house. We do need a lot of things here. Just let me know if you need more money." From her no-

nonsense way of talking, one would easily think Mackenzie was assigning a task to Emmanuel at work.

Upset by how absurd the whole situation was, Emmanuel pushed the card back, insisting, "I'm the man of the house, and I have a job too. I don't need you to pay for anything I'm using." His response elicited a frown from Mackenzie.

What's with this fake chivalry? We're already married. Did he really not agree to this because of my money and body?

Having spoken his piece, Emmanuel turned to leave without even mentioning the sixty grand his mother intended to give to Mackenzie as her betrothal gift. He figured it would be a joke to her.

The next day, Emmanuel went to work at the hospital as usual.

Since it had only been two years since he retired from the military, he was only in charge of running various tests and procedures at the Department of Gynecology instead of being a doctor-in-charge.

"Emmanuel! Did you go on a blind date again yesterday?" His best friend's voice rang out from behind him.

Before Emmanuel could reply, Frederick Lewis had lifted his arm and put it across Emmanuel's shoulder.

The two were close to one another since their friendship dated back to the time when they were classmates in middle school. After Emmanuel retired from the military, they met again as colleagues.

"How did the date go?" Frederick asked out of curiosity when he saw Emmanuel nodding.

"It didn't go well." A resentful smile broke out on Emmanuel's face as he recalled the blind date with Milani that went south.

"Seriously? That was your eighteenth date!" Frederick exclaimed with a face full of regret.

"Did you do what I taught you? You should set your bottom line out there right at the beginning of a date. I can't believe not a single one of them is willing to

give you a chance.” Like Roselynn, Frederick believed that Emmanuel was a fine catch, although he could be a little clueless sometimes. Hence, he found it unbelievable that none of the women fell for Emmanuel’s looks.

“You know what? I think I’m messing up every single date exactly because I’m doing what you told me to do. The date just fails every time I tell them I’m earning eighty grand a year!” Emmanuel complained.

“Then you should improvise! Talk about something else!” Frederick argued, glaring at him.

Emmanuel kept quiet at his retort, for he had deliberately mentioned his salary during the dates because he did not want any of it to work out.

“What can I say? Women these days are very practical and materialistic.” “Tell me about it,” Frederick whined. “It’s hard finding someone who’s not materialistic. It’ll be a rare find if you get one.” Emmanuel understood where Frederick was coming from, since the latter had remained unmarried since his girlfriend ditched him for a man from a wealthy family.

“Whatever. I have to go see my mom now. She’s coming over for a check-up today. Can you take over those patients who are doing their medical certificate tests?” “Sure,” Emmanuel agreed as Frederick left in a hurry.

After that, Emmanuel went into the chest X-ray room.

Soon enough, a woman entered with a medical slip.

“Please take off your clothes and stand in front of the machine,” Emmanuel instructed mechanically while he took the medical slip from the patient, as he always did, but he was stunned the moment he saw the name on the paper.

Milani Zimmerman?

“It’s you!” The agitated woman pointed her finger at Emmanuel when he looked up.

“You sicko! Are you trying to see my body? How is it that a male doctor is doing a chest X-ray for women? There’s no way I’m going through with this. I demand to change to another doctor!” Milani shrieked.



At the uproar, other patients in the department began to gather around, whispering among themselves.

Some came forward in support of Milani, arguing that a female doctor should be in charge since the check-up concerned their privacy, while others reiterated that there was no need to make a big fuss since doctors were professionals.

What happened was nothing new to Emmanuel, as similar occurrences have taken place frequently over the past two years.

In a situation like that, patients would usually give in in the end since Emmanuel had a reliable look to him, but that was not the case that day when Milani refused to budge no matter what.

“You’re such a dirty loser. I finally see why you can’t find a wife. I bet you came to this department because you are a pervert and want to check out women’s bodies!” Milani became more aggressive when she saw that Emmanuel did not intend to call another doctor for her check-up.

“What’s going on?” The commotion had attracted Frederick and the other gynecologists.

“Milani?” When Frederick saw it was Milani—the prettiest girl two grades below his back at middle school—he rushed over to explain, “There must be a misunderstanding, Milani. We are professionals in the industry. We don’t prey on our patients. We treat men and women all alike.” “Lies! Do you think I’ll really buy all this bullsh\*t? Did you say you guys treat men and women all the same? Well, then, why do both of you want to marry a woman?” Milani raged.

Infuriated by her scathing riposte, Frederick fought with Milani until the head of the department finally arranged for a female doctor to do the X-ray for Milani after finding out what had happened.

At the end of the day, the disaster seemed to have affected Frederick more than it did Emmanuel.

“Do you know her, Emmanuel? She was two grades below us. Apparently, she was the campus belle back at Yeringham Middle School, but look at her! She’s a snob! Who does she even think she is? She’s not even that special! None of the other female patients had a problem with us!” When Frederick had finally finished his tirade, Emmanuel smiled weakly at him, saying, “She

was actually my eighteenth date.” “She what?” Appalled, Frederick fell silent for a long while until he finally commented, “She’s got the looks, though. Why does she even need to go on blind dates? Actually, do you think something’s wrong with her biologically? Is that why she refused to let you run an X-ray on her?” Emmanuel had no clue what was the reason for Milani’s misbehavior, so he simply smiled.

“Is it because her breasts are asymmetrical? Is she sick or something?” Emmanuel was still quiet, leaving Frederick to make all the wild guesses himself.

Suddenly, Frederick stopped talking altogether when he caught a shadow beside him.

The next thing he knew, Milani was already right before him.

“Cut the crap out! You’re the sick one here! In fact, both of your families are sick. You two losers can never hope to nab a woman like me. That’s why you two will be single for the rest of your lives!” Milani did not leave until she had taunted the two to her heart’s content.

Behind her, the mortified Frederick made a face at her, dissing, “I’ve never met such an arrogant woman!” Emmanuel could not agree with his friend in that respect, for the woman he had married at first sight was equally overbearing, except for the fact that Mackenzie was more tolerable.

“All right. I’d better go get my mom’s report,” Frederick noted before rushing off to the CT scan room.

Also concerned about the result, Emmanuel followed after him.

When he saw Frederick shaking with the report in his hands from the door, Emmanuel knew something must be wrong.

“What is it?” Emmanuel dashed over, sensing that things had taken a bad turn.

He was aghast when he beheld the scan image.

This is end-stage lung cancer!

Love at the Wrong Table Chapter 10-Frederick was in utter shock at that diagnosis.

Just then, a doctor from the internal medicine department approached him and said, “Your mom’s cancer is already at the advanced stage. She needs to be operated on immediately. Otherwise, her life will be in danger!” Frederick’s voice was shaking as he asked, “How... How much does the surgery cost?” “Three hundred thousand. Any additional procedures will be charged separately.” The doctor left after saying that.

Being a doctor at the hospital, Frederick knew the hospital policies well. He was aware that the surgery would only be arranged after payment was made.

“Emmanuel, what should I do now? I don’t have three hundred thousand!” Frederick was at a loss as to what to do.

He had only been working at the hospital for two years, and most of his income had been spent on his younger sister’s college education. As such, he did not have much savings left.

“Don’t worry, we will think of something!” Emmanuel comforted his friend.

After a pause, he shoved the bank card that Alessandra had given to him into Frederick’s hand and said, “Take this first. There’s sixty thousand in here.” “T- This... Isn’t this your mom’s bank card? How can I use this money?” Frederick’s body was trembling as his eyes welled up with tears.

That was his best friend’s mother’s hard-earned money, and it did not feel right for him to use it.

“Don’t worry about that. The current priority is to save your mom!” Emmanuel insisted that Frederick keep the bank card.

“But even with this, I still don’t have three hundred thousand! A hundred thousand is the most I can scrape together by today,” Frederick replied in a quavering voice, sounding as if he was on the verge of bursting into tears.

“Besides, I really can’t take your mom’s money. I don’t know how long it will take for me to repay it...” Emmanuel felt rather helpless as well upon seeing the agonized look on Frederick’s face.

At that moment, Milani happened to walk past and noticed the interaction between the two men.

“Ha! Don’t you guys find it embarrassing for two grown men to be seen crying in the hospital?” Milani had always looked down on Emmanuel and had just fought with Frederick earlier. Obviously, she would not miss the chance to mock them upon witnessing the scene.

“Milani, just shut up!” Emmanuel chided the woman for her sarcastic remarks.

As Frederick was already devastated by the news of his mother’s cancer diagnosis, Emmanuel could not let Milani rub salt into the man’s wound.

However, unexpectedly, when Frederick saw Milani, he took the initiative to plead with her, “The most beautiful Milani, judging by your glamorous appearance, you must be very rich, right?” Taken aback by the man’s unusual attitude, Milani took a few steps back and asked cautiously, “W-What do you want?” “Please lend me two hundred thousand! My mom has just been diagnosed with cancer and needs to be operated on immediately. Please, I’m begging you! I will return the money once I have it!” Frederick pleaded with Milani desperately. He was that close to going on his knees, but the woman still had no intention of lending him any money.

Besides the fact that she did not have that much money, even if she had, there was no reason for her to lend it to him.

“Hah! You’re out of your mind. I don’t have two hundred thousand to lend you.” Taking a pause, she continued, “That’s why poor people are so pathetic. You can’t even afford your mother’s surgery expenses. Is it any wonder no woman wants to marry you?” Not only did Milani not agree to help, but she also added insult to injury before she walked off.

Frederick was burning with anger after the woman left. If Emmanuel had not stopped him, he would have beaten her to a pulp!

“Frederick, calm down!” Emmanuel held Frederick in a tight embrace, trying his best to comfort his friend, who was on the verge of breaking down.

Frederick eventually managed to cool off. If he had beaten Milani up, he would have been arrested, and there would be no one to find the money to fund his mother’s surgery.

Frederick proceeded to contact people in his phone book, including those he was not close to. He made more than ten calls consecutively, asking to borrow money from them.

In order to help his friend, Emmanuel also reached out to some people he knew.

Despite their efforts, the two men had only managed to borrow seventy thousand in total, which was not even a third of the three hundred thousand they needed.

“What should we do? My mom might die if she delays getting the surgery!” Frederick finally broke down and started sobbing in front of Emmanuel.

Emmanuel let out a sigh and said, “Please don’t cry. Let me try asking my wife. I’m sure she will lend it to you!” In reality, Emmanuel was not sure if Mackenzie would agree to help.

However, both of them had run out of ideas.

With their social status, it wouldn’t be easy for them to borrow three hundred thousand in such a short period of time.

“Your wife?” Frederick was so shocked that his tears stopped at once. “Emmanuel, have you gone crazy as well? Since when did you have a wife?” Not knowing how to explain the situation, Emmanuel merely smiled helplessly before calling Mackenzie.

After the previous day’s incident, Emmanuel had memorized Mackenzie’s number in case she blocked him on WhatsApp again.

“Hello. What’s up?” Emmanuel was relieved that the woman had picked up his call. Besides, from the clear tone and steady pace of her voice, it did not seem like she was in a meeting or in a rush.

“Ms. Quillen, I would like to borrow some money from you,” Emmanuel stated the purpose of his call directly without beating around the bush.

Ms. Quillen? Frederick was stunned. Is she really his wife? Why would he be addressing his wife that way?

“Borrow money?” Mackenzie froze at Emmanuel’s words. After returning to her senses a moment later, an amused smirk crept across her face.

Before receiving Emmanuel’s call, she was having doubts after what happened the night before, thinking that the man might not have married her for her money after all. Is he already showing his true colors?

Despite her skepticism, she asked, “How much do you need?” “One hundred and twenty-eight thousand!” Emmanuel replied at once.

Frederick and he had managed to pool together one hundred and seventy-two thousand thus far, so that was the remaining balance they needed.

Mackenzie’s curiosity was aroused at once. “You rejected it when I offered you a hundred thousand last night. Now you’re asking to borrow one hundred and twenty-eight thousand from me?” “Yup. Will you lend it to me?” Emmanuel asked casually.

He never liked explaining himself, and neither did he want to act pitifully in front of his wife.

Beep... Beep...

Mackenzie hung up the phone without replying.

A crease appeared between Emmanuel’s brows when he heard the disconnection tone.

What kind of a reply is that? Is it a rejection?

Frederick had yet to fully process the situation, but Emmanuel did not sound like he was talking to his wife. It felt more like he was requesting a favor from his superior!

“Emmanuel, maybe I should try borrowing from loan sharks instead...” Frederick did not want to put his best friend in a difficult spot. It was too late for him to take out a loan through proper channels, but Frederick was confident that loan sharks would lend him a hundred thousand straight away.

“You can’t do that!” Emmanuel objected. “You would be in deep trouble if you failed to repay them on time.” Ding!

While the two of them were feeling torn, Emmanuel suddenly got a text on his phone: You have received two hundred thousand wired to your account from Mackenzie.

What the heck?

Frederick could hardly believe his eyes when he saw the message. Fixing his gaze on Emmanuel, he said with envy, "Oh my goodness! Is this woman really your wife? She... Is she very rich?" He was certain that she had no lack of money, seeing that she had instantly transferred Emmanuel two hundred thousand, almost twice the amount the latter had asked for.

Emmanuel simply smiled without replying. He could not help but feel embarrassed when he saw the look on Frederick's face. It was as though the latter was envious of him living off a woman!

Moreover, apart from knowing that Mackenzie was a senior executive at a company, he had no idea about her true identity and how wealthy she was. Hence, he was unable to answer Frederick's question.

"Take it and ask the hospital to arrange for your mom's surgery immediately!" Emmanuel said while transferring the money to Frederick.

"Thank you! Please help me thank your wife too. Tell her I will return her money as soon as I can!" Tears of gratitude flowed down Frederick's cheeks.

He was immensely thankful to the couple for lending him a helping hand in this time of crisis, thereby solving all his problems.

"No rush. Don't worry about this now!" Emmanuel reassured with a smile.

From the looks of it, he was sure that Mackenzie was not hard up for the money.

That being said, he would still try to pay her back as soon as possible. After all, he did not want Mackenzie to mistake him for a gold digger.

Milani had just finished settling her bill when Frederick approached the counter to make payment.

Upon seeing him, she was stunned that Frederick had managed to scrape together three hundred thousand so quickly.

She could not believe that the pauper who was begging her to lend him two hundred thousand just a moment ago had gotten the money to pay for the surgery in the blink of an eye.

“Ha! I bet you went to a loan shark, didn’t you? Be careful of the compounding interest. You might end up having to pay them with your life!” Milani mocked.

Frederick did not like the woman in the first place. After hearing what she said, he retorted sharply, “Emmanuel’s wife lent me the money. In fact, she transferred two hundred thousand to Emmanuel’s account right after he asked. Thank goodness Emmanuel wasn’t interested in a woman like you. Otherwise, his life would be so sad!” What?

Milani was in utter disbelief when she heard that.

Emmanuel’s wife?

That pauper has gotten himself a wife?