

Blind Date 361

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Her Past

Dexter teased, "If you get drunk again, I'm not taking you home."

Summer blushed and chuckled softly.

She eventually did get drunk, and the driver had to carry her to the car. She lay on the seat with her arms under her head, looking at Dexter. "I missed you, Dex, she muttered.

Dexter's wrist was tangled in her hair! He didn't say anything.

Summer continued talking under her breath. "I had no money or connections when I left the country. I remember taking a bus for half a day to reach a forestry area in Northern California. The CEO of an investment company was staying at his vacation home there. By the time I got to the villa, it was dark, but I had to go into the forest with a flashlight. My team needed the money the next day."

As she recollected her memories, she remembered that the mountain seemed to tower over her, its peak lost in the darkness. The night was dark, and there weren't any street lights to illuminate her path. She was constantly bitten by mosquitoes and had to be extremely careful not to slip. Suddenly, she lost her footing and fell, sliding down two stories. Her back scraped against a jagged rock, tearing through her skin and leaving her bleeding profusely. The pain was excruciating, and her injury left a deep scar on her back.

She continued to climb the mountain cautiously, knowing that if she slipped again, she would fall to her death. As she neared the villa, the sky began to brighten, and she looked down at the valley below. Her blood ran cold as she realized how high she was, and her legs felt weak.

Dexter was holding a lighter to light his cigarette but stopped when he heard her mumble. He paused, his thumb hovering over the lighter's wheel, lost in thought.

This hasn't been the only time she's had to face dangerous situations on her own. If Summer hadn't been watchful and cautious, she wouldn't be here today.

"When I first became a researcher, I would camp at the office from noon until everyone got off work, but I wouldn't get any insights."

"I had to pass by a dark and dangerous alley every day after work to return home. It was a known hangout for thugs, and I was always worried that they would target me. One day, as I was walking home carrying my laptop, a group of thugs stepped in front of me and blocked my path. They must've remembered me as I appeared there frequently."

He finally lit up his cigarette and took a deep drag. The smoke masked his face, concealing any hint of emotion.

The thug was a large, muscular man with a scary tattoo. Summer felt a wave of fear wash over her as he roughly grabbed her and pushed her onto the ground. The stench of alcohol wafted off of him as his red

eyes flared with anger. He grabbed her by the shoulders and started to rip her clothes. Hopelessness tied her down like an insect helplessly trapped inside a spiderweb. Her eyes flashed with darkness as she realized her life was about to end.

Summer smiled as she described her story. Suddenly, she leaned in closer to Dexter. Her lips expanded into a wide grin, saying, “Dex, do you know what happened next?”

Dexter turned his gaze away from her.

Summer picked up the cigarette box he had thrown on the floor. She opened it and saw the neatly-lined black cigarettes. She took one out and reached for his lighter, a silver one from his favorite brand.

He was reluctant to give it to her, but her nails dug into his palms as she pulled harder, and he finally had to let go.

Summer placed the cigarette between her lips and lit it. She took a deep drag, and her eyebrows furrowed in a tight frown as the cigarette was much stronger than any she had smoked before. The smoke stung her eyes, but she didn’t cough.

Dexter stubbed out his cigarette on the carpet. The embers bit into the carpet, immediately burning a black hole in it.

“What happened after?”

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Do You Have Any Questions After?

“I was terrified as he reached for my bra. I grabbed an alcohol bottle from the side and hit him over the head. He started bleeding onto my skirt and all over my hands. When the police came, I explained to them that it was an act of self-defense, but no one believed me.”

It was Arnold who flew all the way to help her.

Summer started to chuckle. “This was the lowest point in my life. It was a narrow escape from death, so I’m no longer afraid of anything now.”

“Dex, I don’t mind at all,” she stammered with a strong alcohol scent lingering. “I love you a lot, and I don’t care if you have a wife.”

Dexter imagined Josie’s profound eyes growing with contempt and exasperation.

He fell silent

Summer had a lot to drink and wouldn’t stop prying on him, “Have you known her for a long time?”

“Yes,” Dexter muttered indifferently, without any intention of continuing the conversation.

The conversation finally came to an end.

The driver peeked through the rearview mirror and noticed his boss’ eyes were icy cold, with a look of disdain masking his face.

“Summer came here because of Dexter. It was late, and the both of them were seated on the sofa at the hospital. “She ruined his reputation, and he was infuriated. He gave the Olsen family an ultimatum, so they sent Summer to London,” Arnold explained indifferently.

“Summer had wanted to return to Wavery the past few years, but Dexter wouldn’t let her return. He didn’t want her here.”

“Then how did you get her back?”

“Well, some things are best kept secret.” Arnold’s lips curled into a knowing smile. “I wouldn’t be his rival if I hadn’t had such capabilities.”

Anderson took Josie back to Mason Garden. That night, Dexter did not return home. His driver informed them that Dexter would be sleeping elsewhere, alone.

Josie trusted Dexter. He had called to inform her, so she knew he was telling the truth.

Wavery was becoming warmer as summer approached. After one month, Josie had fully recovered, and Anderson could finally leave Mason Garden.

Josie returned to work at the Russell Group. Even without her, the design department had been functioning smoothly.

Josie had lost weight, and her personality had become more reserved. Alice couldn’t help but ask, “Jo, are you okay?”

“Yes, I’m fine. Why do you ask?”

Do You Have Any Questions

“Nothing. I saw you walking from afar, and I can’t believe how much you’ve changed.”

Josie chuckled softly.

For the past month, Josie had been working remotely without affecting the progress of her work. Now that she was back in the office, most people were surprised to see her.

After work, Josie went to the Carter Group. Arnold had a press conference at the Carter Group,

She saw Summer at the press conference. Summer was typing at the back of the hall, her hair tied back in a bun.

She was a skilled and gorgeous woman with outstanding charisma.

Summer was surprised to see Josie at the event.

She politely nodded at her with a smile, but her demeanor was distant and cold.

Josie was well aware of the rumors that had been circulating about Summer and Dexter for the past month.

Everyone was talking about how differently Dexter treated Summer.

Josie had only seen Dexter a few times in the past month, and they hadn’t had a chance to speak.

The lady in the white blouse, do you have any questions?" the speaker on stage suddenly asked into the microphone.

Josie was the only one wearing white in the audience, so everyone's attention immediately turned to her. She lifted her head slightly, feeling confused by the situation.

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To Anger Her

Everyone's eyes were on her.

Josie snapped out of her daze after three seconds. It was a Q&A session.

"Hello, Mr. Carter. The Carter Group is a top corporation in the current market, and its style aligns with the CEO's personal visions and goals. If the CEO steps down, will the Carter Group continue to be led in such a manner, and will it go against the Russell Group once the partnership ends? That's all for my question. Thank you.""

The question was both controversial and interesting.

Everyone at the press conference noticed the change in her demeanor as she asked it. She began sounding nervous, but by the end of her question, she had calmed down and sounded confident

Arnold, who was on the stage, chuckled softly before asking. "What's your last name?"

Why is he acting? "You can call me Ms. Warren," she replied.

"Ms. Warren, you have an outstanding question. However, this is not the appropriate forum for me to answer it I apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.""

Arnold had an interesting way of avoiding the question. He had managed to keep her dignity intact while also avoiding answering the question himself.

The audience gave a polite chuckle.

Josie rubbed her nose and forced a smile. She held a grudge against him but knew she had to be professional.

Suddenly, the realization dawned upon her. Many reporters were present, and she had forgotten that the forum was being broadcast live.

Back at the Russell Group, the executives were also watching the forum. They were impressed by Arnold's answer, but they were also amused by Josie's reaction. They found her adorable, and they couldn't help but laugh.

The secretary coughed behind Dexter, signaling for everyone to keep their composure. They all turned to look at the man at the end of the table, who was sitting with his hands clasped together, his leg on the table, and a stern look on his face. His eyes were cold and distant.

Arnold sent Josie home when she left the forum.

They had grown closer since their last conversation and were now friends.

“Why did you choose me just now!” Josie asked.

“To anger her,” Arnold replied. It was clear who he was talking about.

Josie was unfazed. She might not even care about you, she said, just like how Dexter doesn’t care about her.

Arnold chuckled without replying to her

Josie froze in the doorway of her bedroom, her eyes widening

She turned on the lamp, and Dexter glanced at her side of the bed. He wanted to reach out and touch her, but she curled into a ball, avoiding his touch.

His hand lingered on the dented part of the bed where she had slept, his palm warm from her body heat.

He glanced at his watch. It was two in the morning.

Josie was sent home by another man at this late hour. She’s getting bolder by the day.

Is she sleep? The corner of his lips lifted into a smirk as he walked into the bathroom. He was surprised to see the clothes Josie had changed out of.

They were filled with the scent of alcohol, even smoke.

Josie occasionally drank a little alcohol, but she never smoked.

His anger boiled over as he immediately pulled her up from her bed.

She cried out in pain and grabbed his wrist, but he flung her hands away. She fell onto the bed, knocking on her head. Josie looked up in fear as he knelt on one knee beside her, his face inches from hers. His hands were raised, and she knew they were meant for her.

His hands hovered in mid-air as if he had finally regained his senses. After a moment, he reached out and gently cupped Josie’s chin in his hands. His chilling smile sent a shiver down her spine. “You stole the show today, Mrs. Russell,” he said.

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Punishment

Josie shoved him away. “Leave!” she demanded, her eyes flashing with anger.

But she had no say in their relationship. “Leave?” he sneered.

His hands were inches away from her chest.

Her pajamas fell open with a slight tug on the knot of her belt. She was pushed onto the bed, her hands pinned above her head by the man’s strong grip. His lips were like fire on her neck, leaving two red marks in their wake.

It wasn’t a kiss but a vicious bite.

Josie's face twisted in disgust as she raised her arms to slap Dexter, but he easily pinned her down. "Have you gone insane?" she yelled.

In the dim light, she noticed that he wasn't wearing their wedding ring.

Dexter loosened his grip and followed her darting eyes. "You must like Arnold Carter," he said, his voice deep and menacing.

Josie felt a surge of anxiety pin her into place as she froze.

The man's voice dripped with venom as he continued. "Have I mistreated you??"

Without a moment's hesitation, he ripped off her pajamas and roughly fell on top of her.

The next day.

It was raining outside. The view from the balcony was obscured by a thick mist that covered the mountains in the distance, and the sound of raindrops beating on the leaves was deafening.

The weather forecast predicted that the thunderstorm would last for another week.

Josie lay in bed, covered by a rumpled blanket that exposed her bare shoulders. She stared at the wall in daze, lost in thought. After a few moments, she sighed and got up, slowly making her way to the bathroom.

A slight movement made her whole body ache as if her bones had been shaken apart and roughly put back together. Her forehead furrowed into a deep scowl as she felt the pain.

He went three rounds with her while she was awake, but she was eventually knocked out.

When she woke up the next time, she could only feel her body aching all over. The man was gone, and a bitter emptiness coiled around her heart.

The rainy weather made the room feel suffocating, so she went downstairs for her meal. When the maids saw her, they all averted their eyes, sighing as they pitied her.

Josie felt like she was gasping for air. She closed her eyes and took a deep breath, trying to calm herself down. Her phone buzzed, and she answered the call.

"I finally reached your her colleague's voice rang through the phone. "What happened, Josie? Why were you fired?"

She opened her eyes with a start.

Josie felt a chill run down her spine. "What are you talking about?" she asked, her voice shaking. "I wasn't fired.

"I just saw the notice on the office bulletin board," her colleague uttered. "It says you were let go."

Josie's stomach churned as she glanced around the room. Her eyes landed on the car keys on the table. They must be Dexter's. She snatched them up and darted into the garage. "Explain slowly," she called out as she turned the engine on. "I'm on my way to the office."

She felt like fate had dealt her a cruel hand.

The sky seemed to be falling in on her.

“The stock market took a turn within an hour of opening, and the whole market is in chaos’

Josie’s hands started to tremble on the steering wheel.

She scrolled through her contacts, contemplating whether she should make the call. Suddenly, her phone rang. It was Arnold.

“Are you okay?” Arnold asked worriedly.

Josie forced a tight-lipped smile as she shook her head. “I don’t think so.”

The Carter Group was also caught up in the mess, but Arnold seemed unruffled. He continued in a calm voice. “Your man is intriguing. As expected from Dexter.”

He had caught on quickly,

Josie’s smile faltered. Her body still ached, and she felt exhausted.

Her stomach churned, and she ran to the bathroom to vomit. Tears welled up in her eyes.

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In Trouble

“Are you on your way to the Russell Group?” Arnold asked indifferently.

“If I had known, I wouldn’t have dragged you into this mess,” Arnold continued. Josie slowly lifted her head, her temples still pounding. She used a napkin to wipe her mouth, then took out her lipstick and applied it. As she did, her face slowly began to brighten.

She shouldn’t have crossed the line with Dexter.

“How’s the situation?” she asked.

Arnold frowned as he scanned the stock market report. This doesn’t look good,” he observed. The problem is more complicated than we thought. It’s not just the Carter Group that’s being targeted Small and medium-sized businesses all over Wavery are being affected. The whole market is in trouble.”

Josie could never have imagined that Dexter would go to such lengths to get back at her. “What about the Carter Group?” she asked, her voice trembling.

“We’re taking emergency measures to address the stock market problem, but Dexter’s decision also affects his subsidiary companies, including the team led by Wyatt,” Arnold said urgently.

Josie felt her head pounding. He must be out of his mind. “Tell me what I have to do, she demanded,

“Dexter must be stopped. This stock market cannot continue to crash. I’ll send you a file with the affected businesses later.”

The phone call ended. Josie knew she couldn't drive to the office, so she immediately called Moses, "Where are you?"

He was stunned to hear her voice. She hadn't been to the office lately, so he was on a break at home.

"I'm surprised to hear from you. I thought you'd already fired me.

"Stop the nonsense. Come to Mason Garden and pick me up.

After packing her things. Josie opened the file on her phone. She saw that Wyatt's team was on the list of companies affected by the stock market. Dexter had announced their independence from the corporation, but seeing them go through such trouble was a pity

Moses arrived shortly after. Josie got into the car but didn't answer when he asked where they were going The car idled outside the gates of Mason Garden,

Josie finally made the call to Wyatt. After a long ring, he picked up. "Josie?"

His voice was weak and weary. He sounded exhausted.

"How are you doing?"

"The company was about to be listed, but now the stock market is in chaos. A foreign company has offered to buy us out at a high price

Josie's eyebrows furrowed at the news. "Your opponent is the Russell Group

"What does that have to do with me?" Wyatt asked, his voice sharp.

There was a long pause before he continued, Josie, I'm starting to think this is all a scheme."

Josie felt a pang of guilt at Wyatt's words. She closed her eyes and asked, "Where are you? I'll go over to you."

She shouldn't have angered him. She was finally starting to understand how important her position as Mrs. Russell was.

Wyatt told her his location, and she instructed Moses to take her there immediately,

The e-commerce business attracted mostly young and passionate individuals. Everyone at Wyatt's office was whispering and discussing, clearly having encountered a problem..

Josie walked inside the office, guided by Wyatt's assistant. "Wyatt," she called as she entered his office.

As soon as the door opened, her heart sank. She saw two people inside, one of whom she recognized as the woman who had been seen with her husband in the past month.

Summer was dressed professionally and had a file in her hands. When she saw Josie enter the room, her eyebrows raised, and her lips curled into a wide smile.

The room fell silent.

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May I Speak With You for a Moment

Josie halted her steps. Wyatt stood up from his seat, surprised to see Josie. He was about to greet her but hesitated as Summer was around.

“Take a seat,” he spoke indifferently. “Summer, you can continue.”

Summer placed the files on the table and explained, “A foreign company has decided to buy all your stock. While they are in the process of doing so, I recommend that your team develop a policy for your shares. You could prioritize your trusted aides with your dividends. If you are unable to prevent your company from being taken over, you could also bring your opponent down by repaying your outstanding debt early. This would create a financial crisis for the company that is trying to take over yours.”

Wyatt didn’t say a word, clearly deep in thought, as he mulled over what Summer said.

Josie

stood lost in thought, her gaze drifting over the plants on the windowsill,

Summer continued, “There is another option. You could try to find out who is behind this and find a supporter to buy your company’s shares. They could then go against your opponent and artificially inflate the price of the company. This would not only help your company, and...”

Wyatt interjected, “Summer, if we follow this plan, our company could go bankrupt before we have a chance to defeat our opponent.”

Summer tilted her head.

“I could ask my father to support you, but even with his resources, we may not be able to defeat them without outside help. It will take time to find out who is behind this.”

Summer nodded. “Your concern is understandable. I will do my best to help you overcome this. I need a little more time to think it over.”

“Thank you, Summer. The information you brought me today was very useful.”

Summer chuckled. “You’re like a brother to me. I don’t need thanks for helping the family.”

Wyatt’s shifty eyes and restless posture were evidence enough of the awkward position he was placed under.

She turned to leave but paused beside Josie with a smile. “Ms. Warren, may I speak with you for a moment?”

Josie took a deep breath, pursed her lips, and nodded at Wyatt.

“I wasn’t sure what you like, so I got both of us Americano.” Summer passed her a cup of warm coffee from the cafe downstairs. Her slender fingers were adorned with beautiful nail art.

Josie glanced at her bare fingers. She couldn’t have any nail art, as she needed to work on designs.

“Thank you”

"I didn't add any sugar" she said. "I assumed you and Dexter have similar tastes, so I ordered his usual." Summer's black hair framed her face as she smiled, her eyes curving into crescents, accentuating her

May I Speak With You for a Moment

classically beautiful appearance.

"I like it very much. Josie said with a warm smile. She bent her head to take a sip of her coffee, and Summer noticed the bruises on her neck. She froze, her heart pounding.

I'm glad you like it. While I was away, you took care of Dexter. In the future, if you want anything. I'll do my best to give it to you. She spoke with a resolute voice and took Josie's hand. "After the incident at the factory, I knew you were a good person.

Josie didn't return her smile and slowly pulled her hands away. "I believe you'd be safe no matter what happens, with your great luck and Dexter's protection. It had nothing to do with me."

Summer remained collected despite Josie's hostility. She spoke with an innocent air, "But you were hurt. I hope it didn't affect you too much."

Josie stared at her, a shiver running down her spine. She was no ordinary woman if this woman could control Arnold for all these years.

"Don't worry: I mean you no harm, even though you are Dexter's wife." Summer took a sip of her coffee and leaned back in her chair. Her eyes were unwavering as she continued, "I know you won't be wearing that title for much longer."

Josie couldn't help but scoff at her confidence. "How can you be so sure of yourself?"

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He Doesn't Want To Return Home

Despite Dexter's recent mistreatment, including causing the stock market to crash, Josie knew he wouldn't divorce her if she didn't bring it up

*Dexter told me you married him to make Grandpa happy," Summer said, her eyes gleaming with innocence.

Josie felt her heart swell in her chest. "He told you?"

He even shared this deep secret with Summer

"Yes, he told me everything," she said, her eyes scanning Josie's expression.

Josie realized that she didn't want to put up against her anymore. "Yes," she said, "we'll get a divorce when the time is right. But Ms. Olsen, I need you to be patient for now."

Summer's eyes widened in surprise and disbelief. "That's what he told me as well," she said, her voice calm and composed as she laid her hands on the table.

She had expected this response from him, but hearing it from Summer made her heart sink.

"I thought you would be difficult to deal with, but you're much more reasonable than I expected," Summer smirked. "I'll be waiting patiently for the day you and Dexter get divorced. Even after your divorce, you won't lose out if you're on my side. After all, I am the heir to the Olsen fortune."

She carried herself with an air of arrogance that was expected of a wealthy young lady.

"Alright," Josie said, the bitterness of her coffee lingering in her mouth.

Summer's affluent family background was her biggest asset, unlike Josie, who had nothing but a sick father. Josie had also recently lost her job as the director of the design department. She had accepted the reality that Summer was a better fit for Dexter than she was and that she had no chance of winning against her.

She would rather live in peace than share the title of "Mrs. Russell."

After Summer left, Josie returned to Wyatt's office with a grave expression. "How did it go?" Wyatt asked, concerned.

Josie forced a smile. "How else could it go? She couldn't bite me."

Wyatt sighed. There have been rumors circulating for the past month that..

"I know," Josie interrupted as she sat on the sofa. "Let's talk about your situation. Dexter wasn't targeting you. You can still ask him for help, right?"

Wyatt sat down across from her and scowled. Josie, do you remember what Dex said when our company became independent? He wanted us to take full authority, so we'll be held accountable for any problems we face.

Josie recalled the conversation. "But he's your brother."

"We're not biologically related," Wyatt reminded her.

They shared a knowing look. They didn't need to say it out loud to know the truth.

"Tundresand" Josie nodded. She walked over in Wyatt and pamed him on the shoulder. Til do my best to As she turned to leave Wyant called out. "Josie, I've abys looked up to Dex as my role model. I wanted to him. The Revell Family has a rule that you must return home if you fail go back"

After having Wyn's office, she headed towards the Russell Group Moses approached her cautiously: "1 besed you were fired."

Jossed her eyebrows. Do you have to rub it in?"

Moses fell silent, unsure how to respond

Compared to everything che that was happening, losing her job was relatively minor

Suddenly, her phone rang. It was Arnold who gave heran address. Come over for lunch"

Ton my way to the Russell Group

"""Visu don't have to go there anymore."

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Marriage

Josie didn't understand what Arnold meant by his cryptic message, but he assured her she would understand when she arrived.

The restaurant was located in the city center.

Arnold looked dashing in his gray suit, while Josie's face was pale and drawn in comparison. After he placed his order, he pointed at her face and said, "You look exhausted. Please get some rest."

Josie was exhausted, but she was feeling better than she had this morning. She hadn't had a chance to rest since the chaos broke out.

"I don't have time to rest," Josie said, her head in her hands.

Arnold glanced down at her blouse, which was slightly exposed, and saw the bruises on her neck. He narrowed his eyes and asked, "Did he hit you?"

Josie immediately covered her neck with her hands. "No," she uttered softly.

Arnold caught on to what had happened. When their food arrived, Arnold helped Josie to cut fter steak before handing it to her. "Thank you," she muttered.

"Why did you call me out here?" Josie asked. She knew she shouldn't be seen with Arnold, as it would only anger Dexter further. But after everything that had happened, she didn't think this would make any difference.

"You'll know soon enough, Arnold said with a smirk.

A sweet voice rang out across the room. "Arnold!"

Josie looked up and saw a woman approaching them. Her pale, delicate skin gleamed in the distance, and her chestnut brown hair framed her soft features. She wore flats, and her overall appearance was gorgeous, exuding an elegant aura.

Before Josie could start guessing who it was, she noticed the man standing beside the woman.

He was tall and broad-shouldered, with profound yet cold features. He exuded a unique charisma.

Dexter

Josie gripped her fork tightly, trying to control the trembling in her hands.

They were about to approach their table.

"Eileen, come over here," Arnold insisted.

The woman called Eileen met eyes with the man beside her and slowly walked over to their table. Arnold grabbed her wrist and pulled her onto his lap.

"Why are you here?"

Josie stared at the man who stood still a few feet away. She took a deep breath and tried to calm her racing heart. She could see the corner of his lips lift in a smirk as he turned and walked away.

Eileen's voice was soft and gentle. She looked over at Josie and asked, "Who is she?"

Arnold's voice softened when he spoke to Eileen. "She's a friend of mine. We bumped into each other here and decided to have lunch together. Why are you here today?" He ran his fingers through her hair as he spoke.

Josie nodded at Eileen in greeting and continued to eat her steak. Knowing that she looked frail and exhausted, she was confident no one would mistake her to be Arnold's partner.

Eileen wrapped her arms around Arnold's neck and whispered, "I wanted to find you, but I saw Dexter downstairs, so I decided to have lunch with him instead?"

Her face was pale and soft, like a porcelain doll.

She was undeniably attractive.

Arnold pinched her waist and smiled. If that's the case, you can go ahead. Call me when you're done, and I'll take you home."

Eileen nodded and gave him a peck on the cheek. As she stood up, Arnold pulled her back and passionately kissed her.

Before Josie could ask any questions, Arnold curtly explained, "She's Eileen Shaw, the only daughter of Nigel Shaw from Laxir Corporation. They're considering marrying their daughter into the Carter Group."

Josie's eyes widened. "You're going to marry her to save the Carter Group?"

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Vomit

"Let's put this meeting on hold," Arnold said, avoiding her question. "I didn't know she was friends with Dexter."

After all, it's unsurprising that a woman of her social standing would know Dexter

"What about Summer!"

He seemed unfazed as he answered. She's none of my business anymore"

Josie wouldn't believe him. "Why did you call me here today!"

"You won't find Dexter at the Russell Group headquarters, but you will find him here."

So, this was his plan all along.

Josie didn't know how she would stand up against Dexter. As the CEO, he could fire her from her director position at any time. She also had no say in his aggressive actions on the Carter Group.

She felt a sense of dread in her chest, suffocating her since she met eyes with him.

Josie felt so anxious that she thought she was going to be sick. "I have to use the restroom," she stood up and excused herself.

There were a few private rooms on the way to the restroom. Josie scanned around but didn't find Eileen or Dexter in any of them.

Josie splashed some water on her face to wake herself up.

She looked in the mirror and saw that she looked terrible. Her eyes were dull and lifeless; her skin sunken and dry, a clear sign of over-exhaustion. Her appearance was no match for Eileen's.

Josie walked out of the washroom, head down, contemplating whether to go home and take a rest. She was tired, and her head was starting to ache.

"Ah." Josie bumped into someone's rock-solid chest and felt her head spinning. She stumbled backward but was caught in time by the person's large, strong hands.

Josie felt her heart racing in her chest. As she slowly gained footing, her gaze fell on the familiar jaw. Her eyes lifted slowly_

Josie was frightened, and her eyes grew wide. She gazed upon his face with a sense of anxiety creeping within her.

"What are you doing here?"

The man loomed over her, his voice low and menacing. I see you're clearly attracted to him, and you're not going to let his willingness to be a bootlicker stop you from getting close to him."

He sneered as he emphasized the word "bootlicker, dripping with contempt and condescension

Josie's face tightened with annoyance, and her pupils flared red. She wanted to smack him across the face with her bag. "Dexter, that's enough, she warned through gritted teeth.

He gripped her wrist tightly and pulled her close, his voice full of venom. "Arnold wants the Laxir

Corporation to help the Carver Cup, right? But how much power does he have without his shares? The won't be able to marry her right away so this will all be for nothing"

Jose clenched her fists and raised her hands to slap Dexter Dexter she cried

But he was too strong for her

Jose's eyes filled with tears

The realization finally dawned upon her. Dexter's aim all along was to leave Arnold between a rock and a hard place

It was either the fall of the Carter Group or Arnold getting married. Either way, Dexter would wis

He grabbed her wrists and held them tightly

Josie was quivering with anger, but she didn't know how Dexter's heart sank when he saw Arnold slicing the steak for her and how she uncharacteristically let her guard down around him.

Josie tried to break away, but her stomach churned, and she felt bile rising in her throat. She covered her mouth and bent over slightly, her face pale. Dexter's eyes widened in shock at her sudden behavior. She quickly dashed towards the restroom and vomited into the sink.

Dexter followed behind her, his heart swelling as he looked at her in her vulnerable state.

The corner of his mouth turned down in a grimace as he watches Josie retch into the sink. He wanted to reach out and comfort her, but his hands hovered in the air, frozen. He didn't have the right to touch her anymore.

Josie felt better after a while. She turned on the faucet to wash her hands, and as she lifted her eyes, she met the indiscernible gaze of the man who had followed her inside. "Why

Josie lifted the corner of her lips. "Why are you here!"

The man's lips quivered. Josie felt her heart stop, and her vision flashed black. She collapsed to the floor, unconscious.

"Jostel" he shouted.

[Chapter 370](#)

Fainting

Josie never expected to see Matthew under these circumstances.

He was dressed in

his usual professional and clean attire. "Does it hurt here?"

gently pressed

it. Seeing her wince,

he

noticed, Josie felt embarrassed. She raised her hand to cover her eyes and spoke in

whispering, "Seeing him, Josie"

Matthew's expression stiffened as

he stiffened as he glanced at the

man waiting outside the ward. Dexter's eyes were dark and impenetrable, making it difficult to discern his thoughts.

In a low voice, Matthew advised. "You fainted because of exhaustion, and your body is too weak. You need to take better care of yourself. The vomiting was likely caused by irregular eating habits. I recently prescribe some medicine for you. Rest well and stick to a light diet."

As Matthew turned to leave, Josie grabbed the edge of his clothes and asked, "Matthew, when can I leave here?"

She still had an IV drip attached to her wrist.

Just one more bottle of nutrition. "he adjusted the drip speed for her while asking. "What happened? Did something go wrong?"

Josie forced a smile and nodded, "Since you've examined me, you should be able to guess what happened

The scar on her waist remained, not fully healed yet.

She deliberately didn't use the ointment given by Lao Sun. She wanted to remember this shame on her

OMIL

Manhew pursed his lips. Just now, he saw Dexter rush in carrying her. Matthew was startled by the terrifying darkness that filled in his eyes.

He unbuttoned Josie's clothes and saw bruises, kiss marks, and the scar on her waist, piecing together the general picture.

Dexter's voice resonated from above, "Matthew, you're her friend. Can I trust you?"

Ignoring the bitterness creeping in him, Matthew simply nodded.

Arnold and Eileen followed along. If he hadn't seen it with his own eyes, Arnold wouldn't have believed the man that acted so ruthlessly in the market was the same man that anxiously carried Jose to the hospital

Let's go. Arnold pinched the woman's soft and delicate hand, his eyes distant and ethereal "Let them solve their own problems, okay?"

Eileen's eyes were amber, resembling a cat's "Alright"

"Will you be working overtime tonight? Dad wants us to go home for dinner

She held onto Arnold's hands Sensing the coldness in his eyes, she looked at him pleadingly

Revealing a distant smile on his face, he caressed her chestnut-colored hair "Okay, I'll send you home first."

"Then I'll "Then I wait for you at home, and we can go together later

Arnold accepted the arrangement. Don't tire yourself out. Rest well."

After resting for a while. Josie thought everyone had left She finally removed her arm from her eyes and opened them slightly. To her surprise, she saw a man standing beside her bed, his expression as cold as wearing intently at her

Josie revealed a startled expression but quickly regained her composure, looking indifferent.

Dexter, as if guessing her thoughts, calmly spoke, "You were the one who kept holding onto my clothes, not allowing me to leave

Josie was taken aback, and seeing his unwavering expression, she realized he wasn't joking

“Thank you, her expression unchanged. “But I don’t need you here anymore.”

Dexter raised an eyebrow slightly. “Are you biting the hand that saved you?”

Josie felt annoyed. She detested his mocking tone and besides, if it weren’t for him, she might not have fainted in the first place.

She turned around to leave, but after taking just a couple of steps, she noticed that the needle she had just pulled out caused a sudden gush of blood, covering her hands. Startled by the blood, the man hurriedly approached, taking her to the bathroom to clean up before calling Matthew inside.

Josie impatiently struggled, saying. “Let go of me.”

He forcefully pressed her back onto the bed, revealing a wave of hidden anger. “Don’t move!”