

Blind Date 461

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Only Those Involved Would Know

After Dexter closed the door and left, there was a pin-drop silence in the house. Summer slumped to the ground and mumbled, "Yeah, I'm an ungrateful woman. But no one in this world loves you more than I do."

On the other hand, Josie called Dexter several times, but the calls weren't answered, so she called Moses, Moses picked up the call and told Josie Dexter was in a meeting and would call back later.

However, Moses was just Dexter's driver most of the time and rarely knew what Dexter was up to. So, his swift response made Josie suspicious.

"What are you thinking?" Alice stretched after completing a draft and saw Josie spacing out.

"Nothing." Josie snapped out of her daze and saw that Laura's office was empty. "Is she absent on the first day of work?"

"Well, she's the boss." Alice lowered her voice and continued enviously, "I heard Laura's husband is the only son of the Olsen family. What a lucky woman. Josie recalled that Mark and the family didn't even show up at Laura's wedding and the barely noticeable scar on her hand. So, she wondered if Laura was truly happy.

Only the person involved in the marriage would know the real situation.

After leaving Emerald Villa, Dexter exhorted Moses, "Don't let anyone know that Summer is staying there."

"I understand."

Emerald Villa was situated near Mason Garden. Dexter wanted to spend time alone, so he decided to walk back. His subordinates were worried about him and slowly followed him in their cars, which soon caused traffic congestion.

Nonetheless, none of the road users dared to approach them.

Dexter was carried away by deep thoughts and sauntered down the street slowly. His figure looked attractive under the sunlight.

No one dared to neglect Dexter, the president of the Russell Group. In normal situations, he wouldn't stroll along the street casually. Larry became worried and asked Moses to check on Dexter.

Hearing the footsteps, Dexter didn't turn around but raised his hand, gesturing for Moses to stop approaching him.

He sat down beside a newspaper stall and picked up a newspaper. The author of the article on that page happened to be Summer. She eloquently and professionally described the current market situation. She was naturally an artistic person. The remark at the end of the article seemed to be written out of her

personal feelings. The development of the market in the next few decades very much depends on Mr. Russell's maneuvers.

Dexter chuckled and waved for Larry to come over. He passed Larry the newspaper and said, "Take a look at this."

After reading the article, Larry commented with a smile, "Ms. Olsen is right."

Dexter replied nonchalantly, "A few decades? That's too far into the future to predict."

"You're thinking too far ahead. Everything will be fine." Larry understood Dexter's meaning.

Dexter didn't respond but sat at the stall until dusk gradually descended.

Just then, the phone rang. Moses was relieved to see the incoming caller ID and quickly passed the phone to Dexter.

"I learned a few new dishes from Mrs. Carroll. You should taste them!"

The voice on the other end sounded cheerful and slightly muffled as if Josie was chewing something.

Her voice brought a beam to Dexter's face. "Okay, I'll be right back."

When he arrived home, Josie had served the dishes and arranged the table. She sat at the table and propped her face with her hand while waiting for Dexter. She stood up immediately when she heard the sound of the door opening.

"You took so long."

Dexter glanced at her and looked at the dishes on the table. "Why did you suddenly want to learn cooking?"

Dexter frowned slightly, seeing the appearance of the dishes that weren't great.

Noticing his expression, Josie handed him the cutlery. "Give it a try."

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I'll Never Betray You

When Dexter was about to put the food into his mouth, Josie stopped him abruptly and wore a pitiful look. "This is the only successful dish I made. Please show mercy."

Dexter nodded and said to Moses, "Get Anderson over."

Josie was frustrated. "Hey, I may not be a great chef, but I won't poison you. Anderson is busy, so don't bother him."

Dexter smiled and paused briefly after tasting the food. "How is it?" Josie asked nervously. She knew Dexter had tasted all kinds of delicacies, and there was no way she could surpass them, but she thought her cooking shouldn't be that bad.

After chewing and swallowing the food, Dexter put down his cutlery and said seriously to Josie, "Actually, Mrs. Carroll can cook at home. Please promise me you won't enter the kitchen anymore." In other words, he was commenting that the dish was nasty.

Josie pushed Dexter sulkily and carefully tasted the dish with a frown. Then, she beamed from ear to ear. "You liar, it's delicious!"

Dexter laughed as he managed to trick Josie. "What have you been up to today?" He asked and drank some water.

"I spent much time dealing with the great gift you sent." Josie looked at Dexter and asked, "Moses said you were in a meeting just now. Was it at the Russell Group?"

Dexter paused briefly before nodding. "Mm-hmm."

Then, he asked, "Have you heard of Vaste?"

Perplexed, Josie thought about it and nodded. "I think so. What happened?"

"The company is in trouble. Summer is an employee there. A few days ago, she came to me for help." Dexter honestly informed Josie about the matter.

Josie was startled as she looked into Dexter's eyes. "Did you help her?" She smiled.

"Yeah."

"Aren't you worried that I'll get angry?"

Dexter answered, "I hope you can understand."

As they continued gazing fixedly at each other, Josie uttered indifferently, "So, you guys met?"

I'll Never Betray You

"Mm-hmm. She waited in the rain and had a high fever."

Josie was comforted by Dexter's honesty. "Aren't you afraid that I'll be jealous?"

Dexter held her cold hand and fidgeted with her fingers. "Mrs. Russell, I'm already yours. There's nothing to be jealous of."

He pulled her into his arms and buried his head in her neck, smelling her unique scent. He sighed, "Josie, I'll never betray you."

Josie's heart skipped a beat when she heard Dexter's words, which indicated his absolute submission toward her.

Josie caressed his head. His hair was hard, and the posture seemed as if she was petting a puppy.

With his honest confession, she wouldn't care about anything else. All she wanted was to stay by his side and understand him.

"Okay."

A week later.....

A group of senior executives in their fifties waited in Vaste's conference room for a long time before the talented young man arrived after attending to other matters.

Dexter was not strange to the board of directors, and they acknowledged the Russell Group as a powerful conglomerate. However, the person seated at the main seat was Larry, who had a businessman-like demeanor. After reciting the clauses one after another, he said, "It's getting late now. Please sign the documents if there are no objections."

Meanwhile, Dexter was sitting aside, closing his eyes to rest. Occasionally, he would open his eyes to look at the orchids in the flowerpot, but his expression seemed disinterested.

Standing across from the conference table, Summer could clearly see Dexter's actions. She was hesitant and had complicated feelings.

Someone sighed as if they were mourning the downfall of Vaste. Thereafter, the rustling sound of pens signing on the documents emerged.

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Mockery

Just as Larry was about to bring the meeting to an end smugly, a voice chimed in and interrupted, "Correct me if I'm wrong, but isn't it someone else's duty to handle this matter on behalf of Mr. Russell? Wouldn't it be more appropriate for Mr. Russell to offer some insights?"

A stunned silence fell over the room.

Larry glanced at Summer, frowning slightly.

"I have been given complete authority over the Vaste case by Mr. Russell himself," he stated confidently. "If you have any concerns, please get in touch with me directly. Given his recent health issues, it's best not to burden Mr. Russell with additional stress."

Dexter did not even want to be here today. However, with few pressing matters on the agenda and Larry's persistent reminders, he begrudgingly showed up to see what was happening.

Dexter's apathy amplified the Vaste community's prejudiced opinions, increasing their resentment and dissatisfaction.

"How dare you! The Vaste has endured many trials and tribulations over the years. We've seen it all, and we won't be vanquished.

Their words reverberated with great determination.

Suddenly, Dexter let out a derisive laughter that displayed his disdain.

"What's so funny?"

Summer was at the forefront, but she struggled to speak due to her affiliation with Vanke.

The man's silhouette remained nonchalant, seemingly not fully grasping the situation. "Even those from a media background are concerned about superficialities during times of crisis. No wonder Vaste has ended up in its current state, Dexter said coldly.

"What's that supposed to mean?!" the crowd roared.

Isn't that the truth?

Their furious outburst stemmed from the uncomfortable truth hitting too close to home. A wave of embarrassment washed over them.

Beneath his detached demeanor, there was a subtle vulnerability. He coolly glanced at Summer before exiting the room, with the entire Russell group closely following behind,

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Beneath his detached demeanor, there was a subtle vulnerability. He coolly glanced at Summer before exiting the room, with the entire Russell group closely following behind,

displaying utmost reverence and deference.

Summer stood frozen; her hands clenched tightly. It was only when everyone had departed that a sudden chill sent a shiver through her body.

“Are you alright?”

“It’s fine... It’s chilly, isn’t it?”

“Seems like autumn is here sooner than expected.”

The reflection in Dexter’s eyes appeared colder than usual.

Moses, gripping the steering wheel, laughed heartily. “Mr. Russell, you are truly impressive. It felt like those Vaste folks were on the verge of jumping off a building just moments ago.”

Those who emerged triumphant in a situation often had a way of presenting their arguments compellingly.

Moses had known Dexter for years and increasingly recognized his formidable prowess.

Larry looked agitated as he peered over Dexter and said, “Please be careful.”

He handed Dexter his phone and explained, “Madam made several calls earlier. I noticed you were busy, so I didn’t answer.”

Dexter took the phone and was rather amused. It was unexpected that she had been reaching out to him more often lately, and it was surprising that she even remembered to give him a call.

A message from Josie was displayed on the notification bar.

Baby Jo: I am coming home to see Grandpa. Can you pick me up at Russell Mansion after dinner? J

A subtle smile formed on his face as his fingers danced across the keyboard.

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Meeting Wyatt again

During the later years of his life, his grandfather spent most of his time sitting in a rocking chair and indulged in reading newspapers to pass the hours.

Marilyn was in the yard watering the flowers. As Josie arrived, Marilyn’s hand trembled slightly as she exclaimed, “Josie!”

“Marilyn.”

Startled by the sound, Grandpa quickly set aside the newspaper and walked out. “Young lady! Why didn’t you tell me you were coming? I could have arranged for someone to pick you up. Did you come here all by yourself?”

Josie's nose twitched slightly. "Yes, that's right. The car could only be parked halfway up the mountain, so I had to walk the rest."

Grandpa's heart ached as he quickly took the gift from her hands and ushered her inside. Once Josie sat down, her priority was to examine her grandfather's medical records, checking if he had attended his follow-up appointments. After confirming everything was fine, she finally sighed in relief.

"Where on earth is Dexter?" Grandpa exclaimed.

"I've left the Russell group, Grandpa," Josie said, her nerves subdued. "I now run my not far from our old home. I'll be able to visit you more often."

Grandpa seemingly nodded. He reached out and gently patted Josie's hand, a hint of tenderness in his eyes. "Marrying into our family has brought you so much hardship. I apologize for that." Grandpa had known about her hardship all too well.

Adorning her wrist was a mesmerizing jade bangle, a delicate masterpiece gleaming with vibrant green hues. She never failed to wear the jade bangle her grandfather had given her, and today was no exception.

Casually toying with the bangle, Josie turned solemn as she spoke, "I am fine, Grandpa. I believe this is all worth it."

Grandpa smiled slightly and asked, "Is your father awake?"

"How did you know?" Josie was somewhat taken aback.

"Dexter told me."

She was surprised that Dexter cared.

"He's awake and undergoing rehabilitation, but it's been a slow journey, and walking is still a challenge," Josie explained. "Once he's in better shape, I'll arrange for my father to come and visit you."

"What nonsense are you talking about? Your father is the one who is ill, so it should be me visiting him instead. Give me the address, and don't worry about anything else," Grandpa muttered quickly, with a hint of exasperation in his voice.

"But..."

"Josie, forget about these trivial matters. We are a family here, and family members don't discuss such matters," Marilyn said gently. "Besides, your Grandpa is bored at home every day."

"Alright then," Josie replied as she smiled sheepishly at Grandpa.

After enjoying dinner at the Russell mansion, she spent a long time conversing with Grandpa before finally deciding to leave.

He was reluctant to see her go, but she reassured him, saying, "Dexter will come to pick me up. You can trust him."

Exiting the Russell mansion, they were taken aback to find several black Bentleys parked by the gate. Marilyn and Grandpa exchanged surprised looks as they watched Yanis and the others leave the vehicles. Spotting Josie, they exclaimed. "Josie?"

Josie's gaze focused on Wyatt, who seemed vapid, standing behind Yanis. At that moment, Wyatt deliberately avoided meeting her

"Yanis. "You're leaving?" eyes.

Despite her underlying fear of his presence, Josie remained calm. "Yes, it's a bit late for you to visit Grandpa. Isn't it?" she said sarcastically.

"Oh, I had an emergency, Wyatt replied, his gaze briefly lingering on Josie before turning away. "Wyatt, how rude of you. How could you not greet your sister-in-law when you see her? I heard that she played a vital role in helping you through your recent crisis."

Finally, Wyatt lifted his head and greeted tersely, "Hello, Josie."

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Mrs Hadey

Josie nodded, a whirlwind of emotions raging within her, making it hard to put her feelings into words. She felt a sense of guilt towards Henry.

"Alright, no need to stand on ceremony around me. Come on in, and let's talk," Henry's expression turned serious. Turning around, he murmured softly to Josie, "Take care on your way."

Everyone entered the hall, where light and shadow danced in harmony. Josie turned and began descending the mountain, wondering why Yanis had come to the old mansion. Did he come looking for a favor from Grandpa?

This neighborhood boasted upscale villas with well-lit streets. Though peaceful, it held no danger.

Josie slowly descended the mountain, and from this viewpoint, she could behold the breathtaking night view of the entire city.

"Is anyone there...?"

Suddenly, a weak and hoarse voice came through. Josie's footsteps halted, thinking that she had misheard.

"Hello, here... I'm here..." It was the voice of a woman who seemed to have spotted Josie.

"Where are you?" Josie followed the voice, cautiously approaching.

"Here..."

It was in a thicket of bushes, and indeed, a person was lying motionless on the ground. Josie hurried forward, brushing aside the branches and holding the woman's hand, "Come, let me help you up. How did you end up here?"

It was a middle-aged woman dressed in clothing resembling the robes of a devoted follower of a Western religious tradition. She had taken good care of herself, with almost no visible wrinkles on her face.

"I sprained my foot." Josie pulled her out and helped her sit on the ground. Her hands were injured with minor cuts.

Josie crouched down and inspected her injury, "Wait here for a moment. My car is just below, and I have some ointment for superficial injury. I'll go get it."

"Ah, alright. Thank you, Madam."

Josie swiftly fetched the ointment and came back, gently applying it to the woman's wounds. She overheard the woman confessing with a hint of embarrassment, "I live by myself here. I tend to take nighttime strolls as a habit. Today, my hare brain led to a sprained foot. It could've been a real disaster if it weren't for you."

Josie was surprised and looked at her, "Oh? You live alone?"

"Yes, I enjoy the tranquility here for my religious practice."

"No wonder you carry such a unique energy." Josie smiled and inquired, "Let me send you back then? You should inform your family so they can send someone to care for you."

The woman briefly expressed her gratitude, "My daughter will be visiting tomorrow."

Josie poured alcohol onto her palm, warming it up before gently applying it to the woman's ankle, applying gentle pressure. It had a noticeable effect.

"Not many young girls these days have the practical life skills and general knowledge you possess, she commented.

"It's because I'm used to handling things independently, which has given me some experience," Josie smiled and glanced upwards.

The streetlamp illuminated her face, allowing the woman to see her clearly. The woman furrowed her brow slightly, appearing puzzled. "Ma'am, I'm familiar with all the neighboring households, but I haven't seen you before. Which family do you come from?"

Josie paused for a moment. "Actually, I don't belong to any family here."

The woman nodded understandingly, wanting to say something but refrained from asking.

Josie supported her as they walked back. Fortunately, the church was nearby, and they reached it quickly.

While waiting for her to change, Josie stood outside the sanctuary. Inside, there was a majestic cross radiating a serene aura. Josie was an atheist, wondering if people could truly find what they sought.

"Ma'am, how should I address you?" the woman came out dressed in regular clothes, looking gentle and composed.

“My name is Josie.”

“Josie, then you can call me Mrs. Hadey.” Mrs. Hadey handed her a blessed pouch. “Hang it in your car for protection. It has been blessed by the priest. Thank you for being so helpful today.”

Josie swiftly fetched the ointment and came back, gently applying it to the woman’s wounds. She overheard the woman confessing with a hint of embarrassment, “I live by myself here. I tend to take nighttime strolls as a habit. Today, my hare brain led to a sprained foot. It could’ve been a real disaster if it weren’t for you.”

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Her Past

Josie was caught off guard by her offer and politely declined, "Oh no, that's not necessary."

"Just accept it. It's not expensive but a small token of my gratitude."

Josie couldn't resist any longer and noticed that Mrs. Hadey exuded an exceptionally elegant and graceful demeanor. She genuinely liked Mrs. Hadey and was eager to learn more about her.

Mrs. Hadey also liked Josie and gently caressed her cheek, saying, "Remember to visit me next time, and if you ever have any wishes, you can come here and light a candle. It works wonders."

Josie chuckled, "I don't have any particular requests."

Meanwhile, Dexter had a social event at Heaven On Earth that day. Calvin had prepared several cases of wine, and everyone present had indulged in it except for Dexter, who remained sober. He instructed Moses to arrange transportation for everyone.

While Larry went to retrieve the car, Dexter leaned against the doorway, took out a cigarette from his case, lit it with a lighter, and in the dim light, his face stood out, drawing the attention of numerous women who were tempted to hit on him.

Yet, no one dared to take action due to his intimidating presence. Not until a gentle woman's voice broke the silence, "Hey, Mr. Russell..."

Through the smoke, Dexter caught sight of Heather, the woman he had previously seen in Arnold's office.

She held a document and seemed somewhat cautious. "What a coincidence. I didn't expect to run into you here."

Dexter's lips curved slightly. The alcohol had made him somewhat tipsy. "What is it that you want?"

His tone was cold, and Heather didn't want to linger. She approached and handed him the document. This is from Mr. Carter. He asked me to give it to you."

Dexter didn't rush to take it. He glanced around and indeed spotted a blue Ferrari on the street corner.

"Why didn't he come himself?"

"Mr. Carter... Mr. Carter said you have a penchant for showing tenderness and care towards women."

Heather repeated, avoiding direct eye contact with Dexter. She could clearly sense

that his current aura was even more unstable and untamed than when she last saw him.

Dexter sneered and took the document. He untied the silk thread wrapped around it, pulled it out, and a few photos and pieces of paper fell out.

The photos had a distinct vintage look, with visible signs of aging and fading. However, Dexter could still recognize Josie in them.

It was from her university days, captured in one photo where she leaned against a male classmate, wearing a bright smile. At the same time, the average-looking guy beside her gazed at her affectionately.

Heather noticed a significant darkening in Dexter's expression, a growing anger evident in his eyes. She could tell he cared about this woman... and felt a pang of jealousy...

Dexter quickly composed himself. He put out his cigarette, set the photos aside, and told Heather. Tell him to mind his own business."

The latter shrank back, feeling intimidated by his reaction.

Josie couldn't wait for Dexter to come and pick her up. Half an hour ago, he had sent a message saying he was delayed due to a social engagement.

She didn't mind and drove back to Mason Garden, but somehow her stomach felt uneasy. Julie gave her some medicine, and she lay down on the bed, eventually drifting off to sleep.

When Dexter returned, he found a pale-faced woman.

In her half-awake state, she felt his touch and caresses. She caught a whiff of the strong scent of alcohol and furrowed her brow. "Oh, you're back."

Dexter remained patient. He gently rubbed her stomach and lower abdomen. "Hmm? Feeling unwell?"

She was sober but couldn't open her eyes due to the discomfort in her body. She turned over and said, "Probably got food poisoning."

Dexter paid no heed to her protests. Josie was too weak to resist his advances and could only allow him to do as he pleased.

He slowly removed her pajamas, and she felt the coolness and the touch of his warm touches. Her voice was hoarse, "Dex, not tonight... I'm not feeling well, Dex... Mmm..."

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What is Love

Dexter's kiss silenced her refusal, leaving her only able to make sobbing sounds. At that moment, she fully awakened. Josie felt his actions were utterly unreasonable. Unable to speak, she resorted to punching and kicking, but Dexter effortlessly subdued her.

Josie felt incredibly uncomfortable and couldn't bear being treated in such a way. Tears welled up in her eyes as she exclaimed, "Dex! What's gotten into you?"

He remained silent.

This alcohol-fueled encounter almost went out of control. Josie couldn't endure it any longer. She curled and cried out, "I hate you!" up

Her sobbing and pitiful voice sounded as if she were acting coquettishly.

To Dexter's ears, this only drove her even more desperate and cranked up the sensuality of the situation.

And so, the steamy episode lasted until dawn.

Josie's voice grew hoarse, and her whole body trembled uncontrollably. Dexter held her in his arms and whispered, "Jo, don't make me angry."

Josie felt utterly confused. She had no idea what she had done to provoke him. Her nose was red from crying, and she said, "You promised to pick me up, but you stood me up. Clearly, you've gone too far!"

Being bullied in such a manner made her appear adorable and innocent. Dexter's pent-up anger inexplicably dissipated. He patted her head and said, "I'm sorry."

Josie took a deep breath, turned away, and ignored him.

Dexter continued, "It's my fault."

Still, she remained silent. After being tormented in bed the whole night, she was covered in sweat but felt much better than before the sex.

The man gave his hand and said, "Let me help you to the bathroom, okay?"

Blushing, Josie wrapped herself in her clothes and said, "I don't need your help."

Her gait seemed somewhat comical, limping and hobbling, clearly indicating what she had just experienced.

Dexter sat up in bed, his mood improving as he watched her, unable to contain his amusement.

The realization that she had revealed her true self to another man ignited an uncontrollable wave of possessiveness in Dexter. That man had likely once been a beacon of light in her heart.

Dexter's smile gradually faded, and his expression became somber as he contemplated something.

At that very moment, a scream echoed from the bathroom.

Dexter's face instantly changed, and he quickly rose to his feet, rushing inside.

There, he found Josie, still unclothed, sprawled on the floor, unable to get up. She looked at Dexter with a mix of grievances and said, "The floor is so slippery."

It was evident that she had applied an excessive amount of shower gel and was standing barefoot. It would be impossible if she hadn't slipped.

Dexter crouched down, lifting her up and swiftly helping her clean up. In the process, he also got wet.

Josie's body was sore, and as she noticed the man's expression darken, she intentionally splashed water on him, remarking, "Why are you mad..."

Dexter glanced at her and retorted, "Are you kidding me?"

Instinctively, Josie wrapped her arms around his neck and playfully remarked, "You're the big fool, and I'm the little fool. Buy one big fool, get one little fool for free."

Josie was naïve as if she were a child.

Dexter couldn't help but turn his head to conceal his smile, then lifted her up and carried her out. Josie obediently draped herself over him as if a koala bear cub.

Wrapped in a towel, Josie lay on the bed; her delicate waistline was bruised from the fall.

Dexter retrieved some medicine from the first aid kit and gently applied it to the blue-black. Most of the time, he was the one taking care of her.

It was always like this; he had to go through unnecessary trouble to show his love for her.

Feeling the cooling sensation on her waist, Josie was blinded and carried away by his attentive care, and she blurted out, "Hey, am I your favorite woman?"

Her voice was husky, emitting an alluring mystique.

In truth, this question was already approached with caution. Josie didn't dare to confirm whether she was Dexter's only one. She only dared to inquire if she held a special place as his favorite.

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Afraid of Her Getting Pregnant

However, Dexter had always been adept at concealing his secrets. Despite his honesty with her, she couldn't be certain if he held affection for other women.

Upon hearing this, Dexter grinned and casually tightened the ointment lid. He asked calmly. "What exactly do you mean by "liking"?"

Josie pondered momentarily before blurting out, "Liking' someone is when your heart races at the sight of your crush, and you want to give them the best of everything. Even before being in a relationship, you've lost count of how many times you've fallen in love."

Unbeknownst to her, Dexter's expression darkened. "You have quite an understanding.

Josie was taken aback. It suddenly dawned on her that she hadn't used the word "liking' in a long while.

"No..."

Dexter had no intention of discussing it with her. Perhaps in his eyes, they couldn't broach such an innocent subject.

Instead, it was Dexter's next move that provided Josie with the answer she was seeking. He pulled out a medicine bottle and poured two white pills into his palm, offering them to J "Take these."

Josie was taken aback, staring at the pills in her hand. "What are these?"

Dexter remained silent.

Josie had an epiphany. Dexter had always been cautious in their relationship. Considering they hadn't used protection earlier, it made sense for him to offer her the pills.

It dawned on Josie that this was a routine occurrence, nothing out of the ordinary. Perhaps she was even more reluctant to have children than Dexter. However, at that moment, she found herself frozen, gazing at Dexter with a perplexed expression. "Not taking them once won't make me pregnant."

Dexter held his hand steady, silently insisting Josie take the pills.

Josie nodded and swallowed the pills without water, flashing a mischievous smile. "You're so scared of me getting pregnant with your kid, huh."

Dexter's hand holding the water glass froze in mid-air as he tried to decipher her thoughts from her expression. The words he wanted to say remained stuck in his throat.

"Don't worry, I'm not that naïve, alright. Even if I accidentally get pregnant, I won't use it against you. I still want to live my life freely," Josie reassured him, lying in his embrace, seemingly unfazed.

Did she mean that she felt trapped and confined by my side?

Her implication stirred up frustration in Dexter. He had asked her to take the pills because he had been drinking and smoking a lot lately. It wasn't the right time for a pregnancy. But she seemed to misunderstand his intentions and uttered words that wounded him.

At that moment, he completely disregarded the vulnerability he had glimpsed in her eyes just moments before. Yes, she appeared so carefree. How could she possibly care about the child they might have together?

Dexter forcefully placed the water glass on the side table, stormed out of the room, and slammed the door behind him. Unbeknownst to him, Josie's face was already drenched in tears as the door closed.

In the Mason Garden household, this night should have been relatively pleasant for the young couple, according to the servants. However, when they awoke the next day, the atmosphere was completely different from what they had expected.

Dexter and Josie seemed to be giving each other the silent treatment.

As the sun barely peeked over the horizon, Josie was already dressed to the nines in her sharp business attire. She informed resentfully before storming off, "I'm heading to work."

Julie stood behind Dexter, completely dumbfounded, as she watched Josie's figure vanish. She was about to utter something but abruptly stopped when she caught a glimpse of the expression on the man's face.

The reality was Josie was boiling with rage. She had kept her frustrations bottled up all night long. When she woke up in the morning, it became painfully apparent that the man had no intention of apologizing.

Yeah, as if the mighty Dexter Russell would ever own up to his mistake and say sorry to anyone, right?

But there was no denying that he had seriously messed up. He had totally exploited her love for him and pressured her into taking those pills without giving a damn about how she felt or if she was even willing to do it.

"Don't worry, I'm not that naïve, alright. Even if I accidentally get pregnant, I won't use it against you. I still want to live my life freely," Josie reassured him, lying in his embrace, seemingly unfazed.

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[Chapter 469](#)

Laura's Disappearance

Laura was still a no-show at the studio today. Josie had been trying to reach her to discuss some design details, but her calls went unanswered.

Alice leaned in, curiosity evident on her face, "Still no luck getting in touch with her?"

Josie nodded, growing increasingly concerned. It had been since the opening day that she last saw Laura. While it wasn't mandatory for her as the boss to be present at the studio daily, Josie knew that Laura had always been dedicated to the studio's success and business. It was highly unusual for her to disappear like this.

Recalling the injury she had noticed on Laura's arm during their last encounter, Josie felt unease. It had been days since she saw that injury, and she hadn't heard from Laura since then.

"Never mind, I'll go find her," Josie said, feeling restless. She quickly packed up and left the studio.

But as she reached the elevator, the doors opened slowly, revealing a familiar figure. Josie was taken aback, “Zac... Olsen?”

Since Josie had last laid eyes on him, he appeared noticeably more worn-out today, evident from the stubble on his chin and his disheveled appearance.

He walked past Josie, made a beeline for the studio, and searched the premises. Josie trailed behind him and inquired, “What are you looking for?”

“Is Laura here?” he asked with a stern tone.

Josie chuckled and retorted, “I was just about to ask you the same thing. Laura hasn’t been here for days. Isn’t she at home?”

Zac’s expression darkened, and the corners of his mouth drooped.

Josie quickly grasped the situation and asked sharply, “What did you do to her?”

Since marrying Zac, Laura hadn’t been happy, and it didn’t take much imagination to figure out why.

“That day, I lost control and accidentally hurt her, Zac recounted calmly.

Josie raised an eyebrow, suspecting that this accident might not have been entirely unintentional.

“Is this the first time you’ve hurt her?”

Zac avoided eye contact and turned his face away.

Silence speaks volumes. Josie understood. Anger surged, and she pulled out her phone, muttering, “Men are all bunch of idiots!”

Zac ran a hand through his hair and closed his eyes in frustration.

The call refused to connect.

+15 Bonus

Josie scoffed and flung her phone aside, saying, “You have all these powerful connections and surveillance, so why haven’t you put them to use, Mr. Olsen?”

In fact, Zac had already checked the surveillance.

Laura left the Olsen Residence in a car and headed straight for Norsturham. The mountainous area was rough, with numerous blind spots in the surveillance cameras. They searched along the route and discovered she had ventured up the mountain alone.

Norsturham, located in Wavery, was an undeveloped and incredibly remote area.

Josie furrowed her brow. She had heard stories about Laura’s love for outdoor adventures. Whether it was skydiving, bungee jumping from mountaintops, or climbing in snowy regions... she had a daring spirit that bordered on seeking death.

Laura had even once recounted a bungee jumping incident where the rope unexpectedly snapped, causing her to plunge ten meters from the sky, sending a wave of terror through the staff who witnessed it.

Fortunately, a large body of water was below, preventing a fatal outcome. However, it was still enough to send shivers down one's spine.

After that incident, Laura had promised her friends and family that she would avoid such extreme challenges, and she had indeed refrained from solo escapades for a long time.

So why did she choose to venture alone to Norsturham now?

The meteorological bureau predicted rain tonight," Josie casually pointed out to Zac, who was fervently searching for the location.

Zac visibly stiffened at the mention.

Josie pressed on, Laura is your wife. Can you truly live with yourself if something were to happen to her?"

Her words struck a chord deep within Zac, hitting a vulnerable spot. It served as a wake-up call and a stark reminder.

Zac's visit to the studio that day was solely a bid to cause trouble with her. It was also a cover to test his own emotional resilience. As a result, he exited Josie's office, seething with anger.

Josie casually tossed the documents she had been holding onto the table.

[Chapter 470](#)

Dreams of Youth

One of the employees recognized Zac and inquired, "Isn't that the young master of the Olsen family? Ms. Warren, do you know him?"

"Is he good-looking?" Josie asked, diverting the conversation with an offhand question.

"Not just good-looking, but also loaded. Unfortunately, he's taken."

"There's nothing unfortunate about it. Being married to someone like him would be a disaster," Josie responded, her annoyance and restlessness palpable.

Later, heavy rain began to pour down over Wavery. The raindrops hammered against the dark sea incessantly.

The news came from Zac that a helicopter had been dispatched for the search.

In recent days, Dexter had been swamped, practically living at the Russell Mansion. He held marathon meetings while the employees burned the midnight oil to plan. Josie had no clue about his current activities. Still, she felt something significant was unfolding at the Russell Mansion.

While making the phone call, Larry handed Dexter the final confirmation list for his review.

Dexter quickly glanced at it while answering a personal call.

Upon seeing the caller ID, his lips curled into a faint smile, and his gaze momentarily lifted, but his voice remained chilly. "What's going on?"

*... The weather has changed, the voice on the other end hesitated before conveying those words.

Dexter furrowed his brow and finally glanced out the window, observing the heavy downpour outside.

Inside the climate-controlled room, everything seemed unchanged in the past twenty-four hours. Dexter nodded in agreement, "Hmm, make sure to bundle up and stay warm."

There was a momentary silence from the other end, clearly dissatisfied with this response.

Struggling to convey their thoughts, they finally got straight to the point, "Laura is in Norsturham, and she's gone missing for some time now. Zac has deployed a search team. Have you heard anything about it?"

"I have no idea."

Indeed, Dexter was clueless about this matter, no matter how widely it was being discussed.

So he made an educated guess. Considering their argument, Josie wouldn't call him without reason today.

"Norsturham is extremely treacherous, and the rain is pouring relentlessly. Can you..."

Knowing Josie's intentions, Dexter played dumb, maintaining a patient expression as if urging her to continue.

"Hmm?"

As it turned out, her mention of the changing weather was a precursor to this matter, and Dexter's smile faded.

Silently waiting by his side, Larry noticed a tinge of frustration in Dexter's demeanor. His unusual emotion seemed unbecoming in this situation.

Josie couldn't bring herself to utter the words seeking his assistance. It felt too much like begging, and begging was beneath her.

"I guess I'll hang up then." Josie finally relented.

Dexter sighed, set down his pen, and uttered, "I'll help you."

At that last moment, his warm voice reached her ears, causing Josie to pause.

Dexter ended the call, passed the documents to Larry, and instructed, "Arrange for our team to support Zac in Norsturham."

"Sure thing."

Not long after Larry departed, a staff member from the secretary's office appeared with a file folder.

"Mr. Russell, here's everything we've dug up, just like you asked."

Dexter pursed his lips and gazed motionless at the brown file folder for a moment.

“Who’s this man?”

“He’s Morgan Bastille. He had a brief fling with Josie back in their university days. It lasted only a year before he left for overseas studies and never returned.”

Morgan, Dexter repeated the name on his tongue, sensing a faint familiarity but unable to identify it.

He opened the file folder, finding more comprehensive information than what Arnold had provided, including Morgan’s current occupation.

The man was a Wall Street big shot, holding a respectable position.

“Should we take any action against him, Mr. Russell?”

Dexter took back the documents, his expression growing icy. “Forget it. Who hasn’t had a few romantic flings in their younger days? No need to dwell on the past.”

“Got it.”

In the office, only the wall lamp illuminated the room. Dexter lit a cigarette, his expression inscrutable.