

Capturing the Millionaire's Heart on Divorce Day

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Their connection was something others might not understand.

This tug-of-war delighted Ethan, his nearly thirty-year-old heart racing like that of a teenager experiencing first love.

He nonchalantly ripped off his tie, propping a hand on his knee, "Back off."

And then-

"What are they... doing?"

William, just stepping out of the car, nearly got his leg caught in the door, as both he and Jessica stared agape at the two entering the mansion, one after the other.

Jessica rubbed her eyes, “Unless I’m mistaken, did Madison just... wrap my brother’s hands in a tie and then drag him inside?”

“It seemed so,” William replied dryly.

Dismissing it, he took a deep breath, “Miss, we should go. Staying might be... somewhat inappropriate, no?”

Jessica, still baffled, returned to the car.

Fifteen minutes later.

Michael opened the door to see the two seeking shelter, and

watched them enter, “William is fine, but Jessica, don’t you have a

home? Your brother’s house is huge!”

“Indeed.” Jessica flopped into the sofa, lamenting, “It’s big, but now there’s no room for the likes of me.

Michael, confused, glanced at William.

The latter just shrugged, innocent as can be.

At Lake Wood Vista.

They hadn't seen wrong. Madison indeed bound Ethan's hands and brought him into the house, leading him straight to his study.

Ethan straddled a chair in the study, his hands wound tightly.

He never anticipated Madison could tie such a knot.

Madison pulled up a chair before him, and as their eyes met, they boted their conversation in the car.

u cool down?"

eplied, "Sure, but what if you can't?"

dison pulled away his tie, "I'll tie a knot. If you can untie it..."

Ethan stared at the tie for a long while, earnestly, "If I can untie it, will you agree to one condition?"

At his words, Madison laughed, leaving an inebriated Ethan bewildered for a moment with her response-

"Anything but sleeping with me is fair game."

And then he was bound.

Ethan focused on the knot for ages

The knot was a puzzle on its own, let alone with his hands immobile. Madison stood up, "I'll rest on the sofa over there, take your time." Before lying down, she locked the study door to prevent Ethan from

calling for help.

Madison, seemingly at ease, quickly fell asleep.

Ethan, left with no options, resorted to using his mouth, highlighting the importance of teeth and tongue.

Especially their agility.

Madison slept deeply, her recent restless nights yearning for a proper rest.

Unaware of how long she slept, she turned over, her heart skipping a beat as she felt weightlessness, only to be caught by a pair of hands.

Madison's eyes snapped open to find bright flooring below, and she turned her head back.

The man held a cigarette in his mouth, his hands supporting her neck and...

Lower abdomen.

Madison sat up quickly, brushing off the awkwardness, “You got it untied?”

The study door remained closed, still locked as she’d left it,

indicating no one came to help.

On the floor, the tie was now in two pieces.

She gaped, “Did you bite a knife?”

Ethan, seated on the floor leaning against the sofa as if he’d been there all along, spoke with a hoarse voice, “No.”

“How, then?”

“Nevermind that. Are you a woman of your word?” Ethan extinguished his cigarette and strolled into the study’s restroom.

As the sound of water flowed, Madison, still groggy from sleep and his question, pondered.

A woman of her word?

She had said, as long as he untied it, she would agree to one condition.

After four or five minutes, Ethan returned, the faint haze of intoxication still lingering in his eyes, “Well?”

Madison leaned back, settling into the corner of the sofa with a casual air, “I am a woman of my word.”

at moment, Madison’s heart skipped again.

Ethan was already walking toward her.

nat took Madison completely by surprise was Ethan, pulling up his ant leg and slowly kneeling on one knee before her.

The next second, he leaned in.

Madison's pupils dilated with shock.

In the study, only the ginger glow of the lamp witnessed their closeness.

Ethan's devotion.

He cradled the back of her head, his eyes slowly closing.

Their lips touched, accelerating Madison's heartbeat.

She had kept her word, except for that one thing.

The kiss was not of lust but of deep, heartfelt devotion, and Ethan was willing to kneel.

It was a showcase of his sincerity, unrelated to anyone else.

Ethan pulled back quickly, and while he did not leave, his gaze lingered on her.

Madison's face didn't flush this time, her expression clear and calm.

But no one knew her mind was spinning.

Perhaps instinctively, without thought, she acted to appear less tense, touching her lips, then arching an eyebrow, "Hmm, very soft."

Ethan's pupils shook, "What did you say?"

Madison stood, gazing down at him, her finger lightly tapping his

're very soft."

night, Mr. Grant."

floated from the study.

Back in her room, Madison immediately locked the door, her back against it, breathing heavily.

The panic in her eyes finally surfaced.

He...

He actually kissed her?

Madison shut her eyes tight, recalling her own response.

Surely... it wasn't too foolish?

Her actions were meant to show Ethan she wasn't easy to fool, regardless of the nature of their relationship.

Next door.

Ethan rose slowly, rubbing his wrist, recalling Madison's touch.

Meanwhile, Madison, fresh from her bath and relaxed from a work meeting, heard a ping on her phone.

“Clang-”

The sight of the message made Madison’s hand jolt, sending her phone clattering to the ground. She quickly picked it up, glancing warily toward the door.

On WeChat.

Mr. Grant: Madison, if you dare flirt with me like that again, do you believe I could take you right there and then, regardless of the setting?

Madison steadied herself.

Her reply: I don’t believe it, you wouldn’t dare.

This response made Ethan burst into laughter.

That cheeky girl...

Time passed, so much that Madison finished her work conference, before Ethan finally sent another message.

-So you like being tied up, huh?

-I could learn.

Madison:

She opened the door, unable to hold back, “Ethan!”

From the balcony came a tender, teasing reply-

“Ah, Mr. Grant is here.”

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Madison spun around, her eyes still blazing with anger, brandishing her phone before him as her other hand pressed against the balcony table-

“What do you mean by this?”

Ethan had just sobered up, with a laptop and an ashtray still on the

table.

His smile revealed neat, white teeth, exuding a friendly demeanor: ”

hat you saw.”

ge? Really?

he had the audacity to mention it?

Having interacted with him over the past couple of days, Madison felt less intimidated. She walked over, crouched down, and tilted her head, “How did you untie that knot?”

In an instant, Ethan recalled...

How he’d desperately tried to use brute force to escape the grip of that tie;

The near-miss of chipping a tooth while attempting to bite the tie in two;

And...

He’d even considered using his feet.

Ultimately, it was his cunning use of the candle in the resting room that had burned the tie off.

But during that process, his wrist had felt the pain.

“It just came undone,” he patted the chair beside him, “Sit.”

Madison, now with fewer reservations, boldly took a seat beside him, just one chair away.

They had just...

Shared a kiss.

To think they could now sit side by side, it was quite the marvel.

Madison's hand idly traced her earlobe.

"Are you curious about how I broke free?" he suddenly asked.

ooked back at him, "Hm?"

ver mind, Madison added: "I'm not curious anymore."

o knew what strange suggestions he might come up with next?

than didn't persist in teasing her and became serious, "Michael called me a while ago. He said Lucas doesn't agree to split the assets with you. If there's a split, he wants to split the debts too. What do you think?"

Madison's spirit instantly cooled.

Lucas really was bottomless.

Just as she was about to speak, Ethan chimed in again: "If you agree, I'll take care of it for you."

Madison's eyes immediately met his.

Why would Ethan, a businessman, help someone out of pure benevolence?

There had to be a profit to it.

That was something he himself had pronounced.

Ethan smiled, “Don’t guess wildly. I’m not trying to trick you, just

think of it as...”

He pondered his words: “Consider it a meddling man’s whim.”

However, Madison shook her head: “No need. I’ll deal with it myself.

I’ll talk to him.”

She had proof of Lucas’s infidelity, saved on her phone. If Lucas insisted on fighting dirty, she was more than willing to go all the way.

“What, afraid of owing me, then finding it hard to explain yourself Wh

you want to leave?” Ethan poured himself a cup of tea and one

[oo.

ison's breathing slowed.

ow could he guess everything so accurately?

She indeed didn't want to owe Ethan too much. She had no favors to return, nor any reason to enjoy his unwavering support.

Between them, steam from their cups of tea fogged the air.

Their eyes met, and Ethan finally subdued his assertiveness, adopting a gentle tone: "Lucas is sort of a rival in my business sphere. Helping you is like helping myself. If he loses half his assets, it makes it that much easier for me to suppress him. Understand?"

"I don't."

Madison, holding the small tea cup, smiled faintly, "You're getting more and more skillful at bamboozling me."

"When have I ever bamboozled you?"

“Lucas does run an airline company, but his scale of business can’t compare to yours in any way, so how can he be called a rival?”

Madison was not easily fooled.

She could be swayed only if she willingly allowed it.

Ethan ‘oh’-ed in response, put down his teacup, and resigned, “I just want to help you, tell me what to do.

“???”

Madison was utterly baffled.

Ethan was blunt: “I want to get involved in your affairs, do you agree? If you don’t, I’ll assume you still can’t let go of Lucas.”

played the rogue so smoothly, didn’t he?!

s she remained silent, Ethan’s gaze grew heavier, darker, until...

Madison's eyes widened: "...Ethan?"

The man before her had reddened eyes, staring at her with a look of silent grievance and pitiful restraint.

It gave Madison the uncomfortable sensation that she was somehow in the wrong.

"It's not that..." Madison swallowed, "You..."

"Do you still miss Lucas?"

She immediately responded: "No!"

"Do you still like him?"

"Even less!"

"Then you must dislike me."

“How could that be?”

A rapid-fire trio of questions and equally swift responses seemed to raise the temperature of the entire balcony.

Ethan maintained his gaze, and Madison, feeling a bit of pressure, sighed in exasperation: “Ethan, what are you doing?”

“Then agree to it.”

“Fine, fine, I agree,” Madison quickly grabbed a tissue from the table

for him.

Ethan took it, seemingly carelessly wiping the corner of his eye, and spoke in a hoarse voice: “Go rest.”

Madison glanced at him, then hurried back to her room.

As soon as she left, a head peeked out from the end of the upstairs living room.

Michael strolled over, whispering, “How did it go?”

Ethan nodded: “The eye drops worked.”

He hadn’t managed to squeeze out tears, but thankfully, he had the eye drops Michael provided. His eyes often felt dry from staring at the computer screen.

And coincidentally, Madison woke up and came over.

“You old fox, deceiving that young girl, aren’t you afraid of divine retribution?” Michael leaned against the balcony railing, scorn in his voice.

Holding the tissue, Ethan retorted, “When have I deceived anyone? Go talk to Lucas’s lawyer. If he disagrees, expose his marital infidelity.

“Aren’t you afraid Lucas will act desperately?” Michael asked.

Ethan lit a cigarette, lounging back with a lazy smile: “You said it

yourself, he's just a dog."

A dog.

What's there to fear?

Michael clicked his tongue: "Madison doesn't know you're afraid of dogs, does she?"

Ethan's smile stiffened, "You'd better keep quiet, don't ruin my image, got it?"

Michael gritted his teeth and pointed at him, then walked away.

But that night, Madison couldn't sleep, tossing and turning.

Every time she closed her eyes, it wasn't Ethan's kiss that haunted her, it was the words he spoke on the balcony.

"Sigh."

She eventually got so agitated from flipping over that she sat up.

In the middle of the night, she felt hungry.

She quietly got up, not disturbing anyone, and headed to the kitchen.

However, the moment she switched on the light, she locked eyes with Ethan, who was inspecting the expiration date of a loaf of bread.

Madison's heart skipped a beat, instinctively asking, "What are you doing?"

"Checking the expiration date?"

She was dumbfounded: "Without turning on the light?"

"I was about to, then you came in. How's that for timing?"

Ethan smiled, placing the loaf back.

“Are you going to cook? Could you possibly prepare a meal for CEO Grant as well?”

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He was famished too.

Once upon a time, a chef was always at hand in the villa. But since Madison’s arrival, Ethan had dismissed the chef.

After all, with a woman in the house, the presence of a male chef was inconvenient, subjecting him to midnight hunger pangs.

Madison approached the fridge, swung the door open, “What’re you in the mood for?”

Ethan strolled up behind her, peering into the icy glow with her.

After a silence, he offered, “I’m easy. Whatever you make, I’ll eat.”

Madison turned with a quirk of her brow, “Instant noodles, okay?”

Ethan, hardly the instant food type, braced himself, “...Sure. I’ll eat anything you cook.”

son returned her gaze to the fridge, grabbing a few vegetables,
out of the way.”

“What for?” Ethan sensed she wouldn’t settle for mere instant
noodles.

With sleeves rolled, Madison prepped to cook, “You can’t cook. So why be in the kitchen?”

Ethan’s brow furrowed, “Madison is your memory that short? I’ve cooked for you before, remember?”

“...Ah.”

Indeed, that had happened.

But Madison didn’t give him the chance to interject further, simply

instructing, "If you can, then help by washing the veggies."

She was quite commanding when she wanted to be.

Madison handled the fresh meat, her pilot-trained hands skillful with a knife.

While she was busy, a burning gaze caught her attention.

With a slight turn of her head, she locked onto Ethan's deep, amused eyes. Seeing her notice, he raised an eyebrow, "Yes?"

Ethan's hands kept working, snapping the veggies with a crispness that echoed Madison's racing heart.

His gaze was magnetic, almost pulling her into its depths.

"Why gaze at me while plucking vegetables?"

Having finished with the bok choy, Ethan handed it to her while

leaning casually against the counter, eyes sincere: "Familiar with the core socialist values?"

The question was unexpected.

Yet Madison responded almost reflexively, "Prosperity, democracy, civility, harmony, freedom, equality, justice, rule of law, patriotism, dedication, integrity, friendship."

Rattled off without a hitch.

And then?

Ethan smiled, "Freedom means respect for rationality, and equality is about the rights of persons. So..."

Madison was puzzled but waited patiently.

"I watch because I want to, I just want to watch you."

Her heart thundered in response.

Madison pinched the fresh meat on the cutting board.

What could she say?

He had played the card of core socialist values!

“Alright, enjoy your freedom.”

After pondering his reasoning, Madison couldn’t help but laugh.

Watching her laugh, Ethan joined in

But in the next moment, Madison stepped closer, their gazes clashing, “Take your time, take a good look.”

Ethan’s eyelid twitched, but it was fleeting.

He took her seriously.

He tilted his head, “Madison, shall I get you a beauty card?”

“???” Madison’s eyes widened, “You think my skin is bad?”

“Not at all,” he clarified, “It’s so good it deserves the best care.”

His compliments were so...

Unconventional.

“Stop talking. Go rest. I’m about to cook,” Madison ended the banter.

She knew she couldn’t outmatch him.

“Nope,” Ethan stood firm.

Madison turned serious, “Do you believe I’d hit you?”

Ethan straightened leisurely, “I’m not afraid of pain, go ahead.”

Ultimately, she managed to shoo Ethan out of the kitchen.

Too much of a meddler.

Not just in her cooking, but also a bit...

Distracting to her emotions?

However, the peace lasted only a moment before Ethan returned.

Madison: “...

With a sigh, she asked, “What now?

“Just keeping you company.”

Leaning on the kitchen counter, arms folded, Ethan simply watched, her.

Confronted with his expression, Madison hesitated, “I apologize for what I said earlier, it wasn’t appropriate.”

Ethan blinked, “Which part?”

“When I asked if you believe I’d dare hit you.” Madison regretted it, after all, he was her superior.

Ethan clearly didn’t take it to heart, and as he strolled over, brushing past her to open the fridge, grabbing a bottle of mineral water.

Taking a sip with a mischievous glimmer in his eyes, he said, “Small spats, no big deal.”

Madison gave him another glance.

Interpreting his words as a reminder to moderate her actions, she assured, “I won’t cause you any trouble.”

Unexpectedly, Ethan set the bottle down, voice deepening, “Big troubles, lean on me.”

Só, she was free to follow her heart, in minor and major matters alike.

The meal Madison cooked had her nerves in knots.

By the time they sat down, it was well past midnight.

With communal chopsticks, Ethan served her effortlessly, “You’ve put in the work, help yourself to more.”

You’ve worked hard...

That acknowledgment, rarely heard outside of the control tower,

held significant weight to Madison.

Unable to resist, she smiled sweetly, “It wasn’t hard at all.”

Throughout the meal, Ethan occasionally inquired about her job, refraining from any teasing.

end of their meal, dawn was near.

her to the expansive balcony, offering a grander vista than

one below.

“What is this?” Madison gazed at a corner near the balcony door.

Ethan sat down, “Don’t recognize the God of Wealth?”

“I do, but...”

She hadn’t expected Ethan to worship the deity, let alone affix couplets to his shrine.

“I wrote these, like the look?” Ethan asked with a chuckle!

Madison scanned the couplets and took a deep breath.

The first line: To reap without sowing, basking in success.

The second line: To ascend to heaven in one step without merit.

Horizontal script: Wishes fulfilled.

Bluntly put indeed.

“They’re well-written,” said Madison, taking a seat opposite him.

Ethan chuckled, “Michael called me shameless when he saw them.”

Madison swiftly shook her head, “Not at all. It’s just that...”

She paused, and the man leaned back, waiting.

“They’re just not as direct as yours.

At that, Ethan laughed out loud.

His laughter welcomed the sunrise

“Hey, Madison,” he called her.

o hint of sleepiness, she shifted her gaze from the dawn to his

“You once said the city of Haisu is perfect for proposals, is that true?

Madison felt as if her blood had stopped flowing.

After a long moment, she answered, “That’s what I’ve heard.”

Tapping the armrest rhythmically Ethan suddenly smiled, “Maybe President Grant should take you there for a tour sometime?”

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Was he asking her to go on vacation with him?

Most couples headed to Haisu City for getaways, and they were...

“Ring-ring-”

Madison’s phone broke her trail of thought.

It was her next flight assignment from the airline, with a departure scheduled for tonight.

She had to arrive at the company several hours early for the pre- flight meeting and routine checks.

Luckily, the work notice provided Madison with an escape, allowing her to sidestep Ethan's last question completely.

Watching her bolt, Ethan didn't stop her; his smile only deepened.

Bec

ice.

f work, Madison retreated to her room, glanced at her

loon drifted off to sleep.

adn't realized how much her mood had improved recently; the w had mostly dissipated, and Lucas hadn't crossed her mind

It's true what they say: People can become heartless after extricating themselves from a tumultuous affair.

But this heartlessness was not the cold kind.

She simply wouldn't waste any more emotional energy on Lucas.

That night, Madison didn't dream at all.

Upon waking in the afternoon, she quickly got ready to leave.

But as she opened her door to step out, there was a man on the phone at the base of the steps.

Ethan, dressed sharply in a suit, exuded a refined gentlemanliness.

He gave Madison a wave while still on the phone.

Madison, dragging her black suitcase, closed her door and

descended the steps.

Ethan ended his call, “I’ll drive you.”

“Mukino International and Mukino Airlines are in opposite directions, aren’t they?”
Madison eyed him, “And it’s nearly evening. Don’t you

have work?”

“You forget, I’m the boss,” Ethan replied smoothly, taking her suitcase and handing it to William, who was not far off.

William, ever perceptive, placed her luggage in the trunk and opened the car door for them.

Being treated this way made Madison think, “Ethan.”

han was busy with his phone, presumably with work matters.

Yet he responded with patience, “Yes, I’m listening.”

Madison, dressed in her captain’s uniform with the airline’s issued leather jacket, looked particularly distinguished.

“Can we... keep our relationship strictly professional?”

Ethan, replying to work messages, paused.

Even William in the front seat diverted his attention to the back,

trying to be as inconspicuous as possible.

Ethan put his phone face down and spoke seriously, “Go on, I’m listening.”

Madison took a deep breath, feeling that they needed to address the situation.

“I’ve just divorced.” It was no secret, and she didn’t feel any less of herself for having been married.

But she believed in honesty, which was the foundation of any relationship.

“I don’t think I can fully commit to another relationship right now. I can’t deny your merits, and it’s an honor that you fancy me. But I feel... even if I said yes to you now, it might mostly be to escape the shadows of my last relationship, which wouldn’t be fair to you.”

Her eyes were crystal clear, without a trace of deceit, as if one could see right into her soul.

Ethan listened patiently and didn’t show any sign of displeasure, And then?”

“Then...” Madison hesitated, “I work at the airline now, so can I, perhaps, move out?”

ison wasn’t naive; she was realistic.

wasn’t sure if she could give Ethan what he wanted, so in that case, she preferred not to blur the lines.

She wouldn’t play someone like Lucas did, keeping her as a spare option.

Ethan understood her, and simply said, “No”

So much for that conversation.

But she couldn't accuse Ethan of infringing on her personal freedom.

He had helped her too much recently.

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At the airport.

Madison stepped out of the car first, suitcase in hand, and smiled at Ethan, "Goodbye, President Grant.

He sat in the car, watching her through reflective lenses, in a stillness pierced only by the sound of planes overhead.

After a moment, he said, "When you return, I'll be here to pick you up."

Madison's eyelashes fluttered, but she didn't utter a word and turned to leave.

Hesitant, William from the passenger seat said, “President Grant.” M...

The man didn’t respond, his gaze still where Madison’s silhouette had vanished.

He finally looked back, “Let’s go.”

Before her flight, Madison followed the routine – attending a meeting and performing pre-flight checks. She also reviewed the passenger list, a habit Jack never understood.

“Mukino Airlines Flight 3131, clear for takeoff,” informed the control.

tower.

The medium-sized Airbus took off smoothly from Slandon Port, heading again for Tang City.

But this flight was different. Madison found herself distracted during her downtime.

Even Landu noticed their captain's preoccupation but dared not inquire.

Curious as ever, Jack wanted to speak up several times, but each time he met Madison's cold gaze, he thought better of it.

Madison returned to Slandon Port the next day and was immediately summoned to a meeting by the airline.

All big team leaders who weren't on a flight were present in the conference room, except for team one; the rest of the five teams'

leaders were there.

"Here's the situation."

Frank announced something significant, "A major international conference is occurring in nation N, and our country is sending a delegation. The Civil Aviation Administration has entrusted us with the flight, a 13-hour and 25-minute international journey."

He hinted with a gesture towards the ceiling.

Everyone immediately understood.

These were high-ranking officials, making the flight mission critical – no incidents were permissible.

why I've decided to assign two captains to pilot this mission."

ore him sat over twenty captains and forty co-pilots..

Madison's acquaintance, Brian, was not present, likely still on a flight.

In the meeting room, no one volunteered.

Sometimes, volunteering didn't lead to rewards – everyone knew what Frank meant by his reminder.

Do well, and there might be no reward; it's your job.

But one mistake could cost you your career.

“Team three leader?” Frank called out.

Startled, the team leader looked up, chuckling, “Manager Xiao, you know my wife’s expecting our second child any day now, I... I can’t fly far.”

Then Frank called, “Team four leader?”

The team four leader suddenly coughed violently, feigning weakness, “I kept forgetting to tell Manager Xiao, but I’ve had throat pain and chest tightness recently, was about to take my annual leave...”

Frank’s brow furrowed.

Enough, he turned his gaze to Madison and Charlie.

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In truth, upon hearing about the assignment, Charlie had considered volunteering for the mission.

But she had also overheard the conversations of the other captains. Any mishap, no matter how minor, could not only jeopardize their jobs but also bring immense trouble

Charlie couldn't allow a single blemish or stain to mar her professional career, let alone the possibility of being grounded.

After weighing her options, with aspirations to pilot the Airbus A380 next year, Charlie decided to pass on this flight mission...

"Manager Xiao, count me out. It's been a while since I flew internationally," Charlie volunteered.

Her words cast a sudden hush over the meeting room.

No one was willing to invite trouble upon themselves.

Madison, who had arrived last and took a seat at the edge, had been mulling over one thing ever since learning of this assignment.

il Aviation Authority had specifically assigned Mukino

nes this flight task for one possible reason.

It carried substantial risk, and they trusted Mukino Airlines to handle

After all, when it came to all aspects, Mukino Airlines was still not in a position to compete head-on with the national carrier.

Typically, such matters would be considered by the national carrier first.

Perhaps they had declined, which led to Mukino Airlines being

chosen.

If done well, it would elevate Mukino Airlines to new heights, but if it was mishandled...

The pressure would be immense.

Hence the reluctance of the other captains was understandable.

Madison's mind was suddenly awash with Ethan's words from

another time-

"I can't claim I'll always have smooth sailing. Maybe one day, a single crisis could bankrupt me."

An inexplicable rush of emotion coursed through her, furrowing her brow with the weight of the pressure she felt.

Yet, she still raised her head and spoke out in the silent meeting room, "Manager Xiao, I'll fly this mission."

All eyes turned to her, especially Charlie, who stared in

incomprehension.

e of youthful fearlessness, ready to take on any task.

arly, Frank was visibly taken aback, “You?”

t wasn’t that he doubted Madison.

But considering her possible special relationship with the big boss, he hadn’t considered her initially.

Just like the other captains, if anything went wrong...

No one could protect Madison.

Frank hesitated, “You have other flight assignments,

So...

Madison looked at the big screen, “I’ve flown this route three times. I

understand your concerns. First, the passengers on board are of high status, and second, the route is fraught with dangers, crossing two major oceans.”

“In terms of experience, I can’t compare with those veterans who’ve flown for decades. But I am familiar with this route.”

Even Madison herself didn’t know what she was thinking.

She had resolved never to compromise her career for anyone.

And yet, this decision could impact her future, and a single mistake might end her flying career forever.

Nonetheless, Madison stood up.

Somehow, she didn’t want to let down the person who had been by her side, comforting her all this time be suppressed by others or

encounter any crisis.

Frank looked at her for a long while, his pen clicking incessantly.

After an extended pause, he finally confirmed, “On September 23rd, 1 PM sharp, from Slandon Port to the capital of nation N-Mukino Airlines Flight 1976, Boeing 787-9, piloted by Captain Madison.”

he atmosphere, instead of deflating, became charged with tension.

cause what followed...

Was selecting another captain and the co-pilots.

“I’ll support her,” Charlie suddenly offered.

Frank was stunned.

But Madison said, “No.”

Charlie’s gaze snapped to her, “Why not?”

Madison didn't explain, addressing Frank instead, "Manager Xiao,

maybe you could ask Henry if he's willing. As for the co-pilot..."

She glanced towards Jack and Landu on her right.

They exchanged looks and, surprisingly, both stood up, "Manager Xiao, we can take the roles of first and second officers."

Landu was known for being content with the status quo, so Madison hadn't expected him to volunteer for second officer.

She had intended to bring Jack along.

Frank thought for a moment before deciding, "For this flight mission: Captain Madison, supporting Captain Henry, First Officer Jack, Second Officer Landu."

He didn't bother asking Henry, simply making the decision.

The meeting was adjourned.

Madison left the room first; she had to visit Frank's office to understand the specifics of the September 23rd mission.

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cussing it with Frank, Jack, and Landu for over half an hour, doubt just as a female voice called from the right, "Captain

Madison turned.

It was Charlie.

Jack and Landu exchanged a look, "Captain Madison, we'll leave first.

"Alright."

The two women faced off, and Madison broke the silence, "Captain Charlie."

Leaning against the wall, Charlie's gaze was icy, "Why wouldn't you let me support you? Do you think I'm not capable enough?"

Madison's demeanor changed when facing another woman.

In her captain's uniform, she exuded a sharp elegance, "If we both took charge of this flight and something happened..."

"What do you think the world would say?"

Charlie frowned.

Madison continued, "They'd say women just can't do it. Women can't carry the big guns. Women shouldn't be flying planes."

"So you stay. After all, you're Mukino Airlines' first female captain. Your presence means something different."

Her words, perhaps official, genuinely resonated with Charlie.

Charlie dabbed at the corner of her eye and after a long moment, stood upright, extending her hand to Madison, “Wish you a smooth flight?”

Madison smiled, “I’ll take that as a good omen.”

The two women turned, heading in opposite directions, their four bars gleaming, as if they radiated light.

hat?”

than, waiting in the car for Madison to finish her meeting, changed

color when Frank called.

His gaze simultaneously captured the woman emerging from the terminal.

“Talk later.” Ethan hung up.

Madison was arranging a shopping trip with Jessica for the next day when her path was abruptly blocked.

Looking up, she was met with Ethan's cold voice, "Why did you take the flight on the 23rd?"

Madison remained composed, pocketing her phone, "No one else. would take it."

"So you're willing to risk so much? Don't you know if something goes wrong, you might never fly again!"

For the first time since they had known each other, Ethan's tone held a heavy urgency.

As Madison was momentarily stunned, her instincts had her turning to the left.

Simultaneously, a car sped toward them, aiming straight for the curb where they stood!

Madison's reaction was fast, her hands moving before her brain even processed the danger.

ht hand grabbed Ethan's left arm, yanking him back swiftly as

eated.

Despite Madison's preemptive move, it was too late...

The car mounted the curb, tires screeching against the pavement with a piercing noise-

"Puzzzzz-"

www

1958

Chapter 76

Madison felt a dull scrape on her left arm from the car's brush, not painful, but enough to knock her off her feet, tumbling twice on the ground.

It all happened in the blink of an eye; the car drove past and sped away.

"President Grant! Captain Madison" William shouted as he ran from the vehicle.

Madison, lying on the ground, clutched her arm immediately, her face ashen.

Ignoring his own tumble, Ethan knelt and pulled Madison into his arms, his voice trembling, “Madison?”

“I’m... I’m okay...”

She was just a bit sore from the fall, nothing crushed-a minor issue.

But the soreness was undeniable.

Before Madison could get up, Ethan suddenly roared, “Are you out of your mind?”

“?”

She blinked innocently.

Ethan’s eyes reddened with rage, “Why did you pull me? Couldn’t you dodge yourself first?”

Madison instinctively responded, “I was afraid you’d get hit, so I pulled you away without thinking.”

It sounded like a plane had just landed nearby.

The noise of the wheels hitting the tarmac was loud, mixing with Madison’s words, weighing heavily on Ethan’s heart.

Such a heavy, sinking feeling.

She was worried he’d get hit...

Ethan pulled her up, unconcerned about the passersby who stopped and stared, bending over to brush the dust off her himself.

“Are you hurt anywhere?” His tone was terse.

Madison’s arm was numb, “Just the arm, nothing else. You?”

Ethan straightened up, his gaze following the direction the car had fled, growing darker and heavier.

“I’ll have William take you back first.”

“And you...?”

“I’ll be along later.”

Ethan instructed a shaken William, “After you drop her off, have

Silver Helm come over.”

William’s expression changed, “Okay.”

Madison was personally escorted into the car by William, her eyes

fixed on the man standing at the curb’s edge through the glass window until he was out of sight.

After about fifty minutes, William returned and picked up Ethan to leave the airport.

In the backseat, Ethan’s left pinky was scratched and bleeding, the blood now coagulated, the wound slightly swollen.

He looked down, “Take me to the Grant residence.”

The driver hesitated for a moment but then slowed down and

headed in the direction of the Grant family estate.

Grant Home.

Since Ethan’s birth mother passed away years ago, there hadn’t been a genuine daddy of the house.

Instead, there was someone who acted like they ran the place with an iron fist.

A warm-hued living room filled with harmony was abruptly disrupted by an unexpected arrival.

“Ethan?”

The speaker was Ethan’s father, Mason, in his sixties. Thanks to never lacking money, he looked well preserved and energetic, his face now flushed with joy and barely concealed smiles.

Three people were comfortably nestled on the living room sofa, chatting leisurely, exuding the warmth of a close-knit family.

Ethan entered, ignoring Mason’s greeting, not bothering to change his shoes, heading straight for the recreation room.

“Master Ethan?”

The family butler followed anxiously What do you need, Master Ethan? I can get it for you...”

Ethan walked into the recreation room, casually pulling out the sturdiest-looking baseball bat and weighing it in his hand.

“Master Ethan?”

With the bat in hand, Ethan returned to the living room, where William promptly took Ethan’s discarded coat and...

orange!

Ethan had just pulled off.

But Cu Bu

the both

when, “Ethan, what are you up to?”

Bang Ba

A woman named Charlotte appeared every bit the well-bred girl with grace and privilege.

Thud Th

There was a twenty-something young man within with indignation radiating out explosively, which matched his features.

Clang Cla

Ahhhh Ah

He rubbed his head.

“Help-“H

half-brother, Julius, Charlotte’s son, full of her hopes.

Julius shr

m all, fixing his canis gaze on Julius lounging carelessly, Charlottt till want to be sto be sitting there?”

chancetoa

th his nails, turned noned nonchalantly, “Heh, what’s the ss me so much you wa your wanted to chat?”

Meanwhi

white shirt, stood impad massive, his presence

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Ethan gla because y

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Charlotte, “Mom...”

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Julius’s n

Ethan chc

do this. So

be the first

The car tl

people.

Ethan had

If he had

Madison...

175 Beds

But Ethan was beyond caring about Mason's reprimands, swinging the bat again with a glint of murderous intent in his eyes.

Bang-

Thud-

Clang-

Ahhhh-

"Help-"

Julius screamed out.

Charlotte cried and tugged, but William blocked her, denying any chance to rescue Julius.

Meanwhile, Julius was pinned to the floor, taking blow after blow.

Ethan glared fiercely, "Last time you messed with me, I let it slide! because you were young and foolish. But it turns out you and your mother both love to poke your noses where they don't belong."

The punches landed with a thud.

Julius's nose bled profusely.

Ethan choked Julius's neck, his veins bulging, "Julius, I don't want to do this. So I hope this doesn't happen a second time. If it does, you'll

be the first one I come for."

The car that almost hit him and Madison today was from Julius's people.

Ethan had a memory of it.

If he had been alone there, he might not have lost his temper, but Madison...

Madison was almost crushed under that car!

Ethan's revulsion grew, and as he stood, his gaze towards Mason carried cold disdain.

"You..." Mason clutched his chest in anger.

Charlotte, still crying, accused him, "Ethan, how could you beat your brother like that!"

"Brother?" Ethan picked up the bat, his shirt unbuttoned, his eyes.

indifferent, "Who's my brother?"

Charlotte was speechless.

Ethan turned to Mason, preempting him, "Mr. Jiang, I expect them to -be gone in five minutes. If not, I'll escort them out myself. What do

you say?"

"You..." Charlotte, fuming, "I am your elder, after all!"

"What kind of elder are you?" Ethan didn't mince words.

"A mistress counts as a person?" he pointed at Julius behind him, Or does that make a bastard a person too?"

Capturing the Millionaire's Heart on Divorce Day

"How dare you speak like that! Do you have any manners at all?"

Charlotte screamed.

Slap-

A single slap silenced the entire Grant family living room.

Charlotte clutched her face, slumped in the corner of the sofa with her hair in disarray, her ears ringing, her cheek swelling as if in an instant.

“Ethan, you hit my mother! I’ll fight you!” Julius struggled to rise, ready to lash out.

But William was quicker, intercepting Julius with deft precision.

No matter how much Julius struggled, William didn’t let him escape.

Ethan’s slap had been swift and full of force.

His left hand resting on the bat, his gaze slowly shifted between

Charlotte and Mason.

“Father.”

Mason looked up at the man so close yet felt a stranger to him.

He remembered a different Ethan, not like this.

Ethan's hand rested by Mason's side, blocking his path, his voice low, "I don't want to see or hear of those two here. Not even once, for

any reason."

"You..." Mason's face darkened, "Since when do you dictate my affairs?"

"Is that a problem?" Ethan's eyes were cold and merciless.

After a moment, Ethan straightened up, his voice clear to all, "Let everyone here understand. If those two from the Xin family appear here even once, I'll hold each of you accountable... and you will face the consequences."

"Ethan!" Mason bellowed.

"So, you do remember my last name is Jiang," Ethan mocked coldly. "Since we're on the topic, let's lay it all out."

He turned to Mason, “Mr. Jiang, if you continue this reckless behavior, I’ll leave you with nothing. I wonder if that old woman will still fawn over you then, without a dime to your name.”

Charlotte was humiliated, “By what right do you kick me out?! Tianhao is also of the Grant bloodline!”

“Do I acknowledge that?” Ethan retorted.

Speechless, Charlotte had no argument left.

Ethan, leaning on the bat, ordered, “Throw these two out, along with all their belongings. Leave nothing behind.”

“Don’t you dare touch me!” Charlotte fought back, her struggles futile.

William easily dragged the mother and son out the door.

Ethan dropped the bat and slowly made his way to Mason’s side, pulling out a cigarette and lighting it up.

After a while, he asked hoarsely, “Mr. Jiang, can’t you live without that woman?”

Mason glared at him coldly.

Ethan laughed, a mocking, mirthless one, devoid of any father-son sentiment, “If you really can’t live without a woman, I can find you a few to satisfy you. How’s that?”

When Mason swung at him, Ethan caught his wrist.

His eyes were icy, “Since my mother’s death, we’ve been enemies. Don’t expect respect. I haven’t killed you only out of shame for my mother.”

Releasing Mason’s wrist, he stood, Take care of yourself.”

Leaving the Grant residence, Ethan saw the ousted mother and son cursing by the roadside, their destitution evident.

Charlotte came from a rural background, meeting Mason in a nightclub when she was young. An accident led to Julius’s birth.

She had her ways, keeping Julius by her side. After that, Mason often neglected his wife at home.

During that time, Mason had another indiscretion, resulting in

Jessica.

Ethan's mother was the first to know about Jessica, whose own

mother had passed away, entrusting the child to the Grants.

Ethan's mother was heartbroken for a long time but eventually

d three-year-old Jessica, raising her as her own daughter.

Ten years later, Charlotte, with Julius in tow, showed up.

Seven days after that visit, Mrs. Jiang took her own life.

That's why Ethan could accept Jessica but not Julius; they grew up together, and Jessica was especially filial to Mrs. Jiang.

Hatred had taken root in Ethan's heart long ago..

What Ethan didn't expect was that less than a year after his mother's death, Mason shamelessly moved Charlotte in for a few days.

Since then, Ethan severed any father-son relationship with Mason.

He maintained a facade of obedience while taking over the family business, eventually ousting Mason from Grant Industries.

Over the years, Ethan expanded his own Mukino International.

Today, Mason stood no chance against Ethan.

In the car.

William hesitated, “President Grant, where to now?”

“Where’s Michael?”

“I’ll check.” William made a call to Michael.

After hanging up, “Michael’s at the bar.”

“Let’s go.”

Wood Lake Vistas.

Upon returning, Madison was immediately pinned to the sofa by a trained group... to treat her wound.

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woman treating her arm was stern-faced with flowing hair and

siness.

ark, it's taken care of."

"Thank you," Madison said, clutching her arm.

Then she watched the woman leave. Outside the gates of Wood

Lake Vistas were uniformed men, hands clasped in front, backs to the mansion.

Like a phalanx of bodyguards.

Unbeknownst to her, these twenty-four men were Ethan's top guards, many ex-military, called to protect her because Ethan couldn't accompany her back.

Galaxy Bar.

When Ethan entered the private room, Michael nearly choked on his drink, "You... did you kill someone?"

His white shirt was splattered with blood, unnerving to witness.

Ethan sat down, pouring himself a drink in silence.

William followed in, quietly explaining the situation.

After understanding the events, Michael raised his glass to Ethan, Well done. That alpaca deserved a good beating, always acting so high and mighty.”

He rambled on for a while.

Ethan suddenly said, “You actually might be right.”

What?” Michael was taken aback.

Michael had warned him: any hint of Ethan’s feelings for Madison could be exploited by others, implicating her.

Julius had sent someone to hit Madison with a car. What about next

time?

Would they sabotage Madison's plane?

God only knew how terrified Ethan was when the car charged toward

them.

It felt like his heart might explode.

For a moment, a chilling coldness washed over Ethan's gaze.

Late at night.

Madison had not gone to bed, waiting in the living room for Ethan.

Her phone buzzed suddenly, and she quickly opened WeChat, her gaze freezing on the screen.

The message read-

President Grant: About your earlier request to move out... President Grant: I agree.

Capturing the Millionaire's Heart on Divorce Day

Late into the night.

In the secluded space of the bar's private room, Jessica made an unexpected entrance, pointing accusingly at the man in the corner puffing on his cigarette: "What have you done? My idol-why is she packing up to leave?!"

Ethan slowly lifted his gaze, a tumultuous light swirling within his eyes as scenes of his time with Madison involuntarily flooded his thoughts.

She was gentle, yet brave enough not to rely entirely on a man.

So, she really left.

Madison, carrying her luggage in the dead of night, departed from Ethan's abode, leaving behind the deed to the house he had gifted her

as well.

She left as she had arrived, taking nothing more than she brought, not a single superfluous item.

Walking away aimlessly into the night, she eventually found herself on the bustling streets of Slandon Harbor-a capital city that never slept, where the drunk and the merry congregated at this hour.

"Madison??"

The surprised call made her turn her head.

Lucas, staggering from a night of heavy drinking, eyed her up and down before sneering, "It really is you. What happened-you got

kicked out?"

Facing Lucas's mockery, Madison remained undisturbed, attempting to walk away, but he blocked her path, his tone bitter with resentment: "You deserve this! How could someone like you ever be happy? Wherever you go, you're like a dog without a home! Let me tell you, Madison, without me, Lucas, you're nothing! You thought you could cling to a rich man, but look at you now, like a stray dog on the streets!"

II

Madison's grip relaxed, and her black suitcase stood firm on the ground.

Under the neon night, her eyes were tranquil, even holding a barely detectable fierce resolve.

"Lucas."

His face was smug with triumph, "What, you're going to beg me to take you in?"

Slap-

A slap!

Thud-

A punch!

Ma

r thrown a punch before, but this was a first!

instantly with bloodshot rage, cold and terrifying.

ared, Lucas took Madison's fist square on the nose, sing to the ground, immobilized.

eizing the opportunity, Madison's boots rained down on his face.

Passersby gawked, covering their mouths in shock, choosing to

steer clear.

What a badass woman!

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Clad in a black leather jacket, black boots, and throwing punches. without a hint of hesitation!

Only when Lucas's face was bloodied did Madison stop, taking out her phone to call the police.

"Don't you run!" Lucas groaned in pain.

Madison, perched on her suitcase with legs stretched out, just finished the call and scoffed, "You think I'm like you? Careless in my

actions?"

“Remember this, Lucas, if you dare attack me again with such

impunity, I’ll knock out your teeth. I’m curious to see whether you’d replace them faster or I’d knock them out quicker.”

In that moment, Madison seemed to have shed her gentle facade completely.

No, it wasn’t a facade.

Her kindness would only lead to her downfall, leaving her vulnerable

to abuse.

ook at Lucas-she knocked out one tooth and he no longer

to speak out of turn.

The sound of sirens approached.

Madison kicked away the tooth Lucas had spat out, standing tall, Next time you see me, remember to hide your teeth, don't bare them. thoughtlessly."

"Who called the police?"

"I did."

The officers were baffled, "You... you're the one who beat him?"

Madison picked up her suitcase, her demeanor calm, "Yes, let's go."

The world seemed surreal.

So much so that when both were brought back to the police station, the officer taking their statements was utterly confused.

He turned to Lucas, his face swollen and missing a tooth, "As her ex- husband, why would you speak so crudely?"

"What does being an ex-husband have to do with it? She needs to be

scolded!" Lucas was still drunk.

A chilly gaze floated his way.

That chill sobered Lucas up for a moment.

Madison was looking at him, almost smiling, as if daring him, "Go on, say it again if you dare."

Lucas didn't dare.

He really didn't.

Only after being hit did he understand-Madison could strike with such feroci

together, you acted all meek and gentle, the picture

and mother. And now this? You even hid your job from

you!”

e officers were dumbfounded.

Sue for what?

Lucas, fueled by alcohol, blustered, “I’ll sue you for marriage fraud!”

Everyone: ”

The officers had heard enough, “Alright, alright.”

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“Miss Clark, do you have a friend you can call to pick you up?”

Madison paused, friend?

No.

Jessica was Ethan's sister, it was too late to trouble her.

As for other colleagues, they all had flights in a couple of days; rest was crucial.

"Do I have to be picked up?"

"What pickup?" Lucas shouted, "You knocked out my tooth, you owe

me!"

Thud!

The only bank card in her pocket was tossed by Madison in front of Lucas, "Is that enough? I think it's too much, maybe you give me a few teeth back?"

A policewoman quickly stepped in, Ma'am, please calm down. If you strike again, that would be wrong."

Madison was only bluffing, not truly bereft of reason.

Lucas dared not continue his tirade.

Creak-

The door swung open, and the officers were startled before quickly. saying, "President Grant."

At that title, Madison turned sharply.

Even Lucas looked over, his eyes widening in shock, "Mistress! Officers, he's the man my ex-wife was having an affair with! He broke up my marriage, arrest him!"

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Disgusting.

How can the world harbor such vile beings?

Ethan's arrival was unexpected by all.

He had been drinking all evening, more intoxicated than Lucas, a cigarette still smoldering as he entered.

The bloodstains on his white shirt, he strode forward in gleaming shoes, making his way toward Lucas.

Lucas instinctively backed away.

But Ethan's reach was longer, his arm casually draping over Lucas's shoulder as if they were old chums, leading him outside.

Ethan glanced back, his eyes sweeping over Madison's face.

Then he said to the officers, "She's with me; I'll take her too."

The officers didn't dare question, "Okay, okay, go ahead!"

In the corridor.

Madison trailed behind, watching as Ethan escorted Lucas out of the

station

and his shoulder!

on." William hurried over, taking her suitcase from

headed to different vehicles; William escorted her to Ethan's

onal car.

Captain Madison, we'll wait just a moment, okay?" William took the wheel, parking discreetly by the roadside.

The car ahead of them also stopped with its hazards on.

“Ethan...” Madison began, instinctively.

In the shadowed stretch of road ahead, there was no streetlight.

Ethan stepped out first, then pulled a stumbling Lucas out after him.

And then, a kick!

Lucas was struck on the knee, crumpling to the ground in a debased

kneel.

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Capturing the Millionaire’s Heart on Divorce Day

For the first time, Madison saw the ferocious side of Ethan.

His cuff links undone, his collar open, he pulled out his expensive leather belt and lashed it across Lucas with unrestrained force.

The bodyguards' vehicles parked at a prudent distance, headlights on, combined to illuminate the night as if they could light up half the sky.

Lucas cried out in pain under the assault.

Throughout it all, only Ethan was visible outside, making the scene seem like nothing more than a brawl between two men.

When Lucas no longer had the strength to fight back, Madison watched Ethan crouch down, using Lucas's suit jacket to wipe his belt clean.

Afterward, he refastened his belt, turned, and walked toward her.

William rolled down the windows on the left side of the vehicle.

Ethan, his expression still fierce, revealed a collarbone and chest

marr

of dark red. He leaned on the windowsill, locking

hi

ouch you?" he asked.

son caught her breath, "No, I hit him."

hat did he do to provoke you?"

Ethan's gaze was intense, making her momentarily forget to answer.

"Did he insult you?" he pressed.

Madison's lips tightened, "Yes, that's why I took action."

Ethan then stepped away, and William rolled the window back up.

That's when the bodyguards from the other vehicles stepped out.

Madison noticed for the first time that they all seemed to be of similar height, dressed in black and masked, evidently well-trained.

The leader among them, apparently the captain, approached Ethan. He was Silver Helm, looking to be in his early forties, who bowed slightly and addressed Ethan, "President Grant."

"He's short on cash. Make it a reasonable amount," Ethan said as he lit a cigarette handed to him by Silver Helm. "And his mouth isn't the cleanest, have it washed."

Silver Helm nodded in comprehension, "Understood."

Lucas was then led away by Silver Helm to an unknown destination.

When the car door opened, Ethan entered, and William stepped out.

For a while, the car was filled with the faint scent of alcohol.

Ethan had drunk a lot. He leaned back in his seat and closed his eyes.

Madison noticed the veins on his hand were still prominent, his aural one of deadly calm.

“I’m sorry,” he suddenly apologized.

Madison didn’t avert her gaze, “Why?”

Ethan opened his eyes, “The reason for that car’s appearance was me. It almost involved you, and I’m sorry.”

His voice was laced with intoxication but was earnest.

Madison caught on quickly, “So you agree with me moving out because you’re afraid it will implicate me?”

Ethan’s eyes lingered on her face, heavy with a look she’d never seen before-loss, as if coming to terms with reality.

Madison inexplicably felt breathless.

“Michael wasn’t wrong. I shouldn’t indulge in vain hopes of what I could have; I’m just a burden to others,” Ethan said with a self-

mocking chuckle.

Silence filled the car.

After a long time, the car door opened.

Ethan heard Madison stepping out and mustered all his strength not

to ask her to stay.

But just as the door closed, he heard her say-

“If I had known you thought like this, I wouldn’t have accepted the flight on the 23rd.”

The door shut firmly.

Ethan remained frozen.

What she say?

m?!

an... she accepted that flight on the 23rd for him?

“Captain Madison?” William noticed Madison walking towards the end of the road, calling out to her but receiving no response.

Madison set her sights forward, her face void of any smile.

When the lighthouse's light from the distant coast passed over her, her arm was suddenly seized, forcing her to look back.

Ethan, slightly out of breath with eyes still red, "What you just said..."

"Can you explain it to me?"

Madison withdrew her arm, her demeanor already calm, "I always believed that genuine feelings shouldn't be mixed with anything else, they would spoil. We are indeed different, inside and out, so we're incompatible. Thanks for your care during this time, President Grant, but from now on, I'll just be your most loyal employee."

Chapter 80

She stepped back, and Ethan reached out to her.

Madison dodged, staring at him with an unfamiliar tone, "When

faced with trouble, I think of solutions. You don't, you push people away. Our concepts don't align."

She was angry.

Ethan could feel it.

Just as Madison was about to step away again, her suitcase was snatched from her hand.

She watched in astonishment as Ethan commandeered her suitcase.

Placing the suitcase behind him, he spoke after a few seconds, "I'm sorry, I've recognized my mistake."

Madison stepped forward, tilting her head up slightly with furrowed brows, “You tell me to leave, and I leave. You tell me to come back, and I come back?”

At her words, Ethan’s heart raced, anxious about how to appease her.

Unexpectedly, she added with a playful tone, “That would be quite a blow to my pride.”

Her light-hearted comment instantly relaxed the tense mood.

Ethan drew a breath and suddenly leaned in closer.

To William, watching from a distance, it looked as if they were embracing each other.

“Should I let you berate me to vent your anger?” Ethan tentatively asked.

Madison kept her eyes on him.

Ethan ventured, “Or... maybe you ignore me for a few days? Would three days work? Would that restore some of your pride?”

The corner of Madison’s mouth twitched, and she extended her hand, “Give me my suitcase.”

Instead, Ethan placed his hand in hers, “You can’t have the suitcase, but you can have me.”

“How could you...”

Before she could finish, he embraced Madison tightly.

Madison’s words were cut off mid-sentence.

Ethan held her so close that the heat from his body seemed to seep through their clothes to her.

In her ear was his raspy, placating voice, “Don’t be angry, okay? I know I’m wrong. Can you give me another chance?”

“Let me go first,” Madison regained her senses, attempting to break free.

But his strength was surprisingly formidable.

Ethan was too good at playing the ingénue, a grown man who could act more vulnerable than a woman.

Madison was at a loss, the heat rushing to her ears.

“You... let go first, then we’ll talk.”

Ethan seized the opportunity, “Then I’ll assume you’ve agreed.”

In the car.

Madison remained silent.

Ethan sobered up significantly, the harsh lines on his face softened, ” Go to Michael’s.”

Jessica was still there.

“Let’s spend the night at Michael’s house and return tomorrow; our home is a bit far.”

Our home...

The choice of words.

When they arrived at Michael’s place, it was empty, everyone likely asleep.

Ethan found a guest room for Madison, choosing the one next door for himself.

After the tumultuous night, they both quickly succumbed to sleep.

The next morning.

Michael, groggy from his hangover stood in the living room trying to put on his jacket with eyes closed, when suddenly he remembered something.

“Where’s my tie?”

Unable to find it after searching, he nudged William, who had slept on his sofa.

William sat up, still drowsy, “What’s up?”

“My tie, I left it right here yesterday,” Michael said, patting the back of the sofa.

“I didn’t see it.’

Π

At that moment, someone emerged from the kitchen. Jessica, wearing an apron, had a spatula in her hand.

u use

Michael immediately put his hands on his hips, “Jessica, did you my tie as a rag again?”

“Ah...” Jessica pulled out a crumpled tie from her apron pocket.

Michael was about to explode but was stopped by William, “Don’t shout, President Grant and Captain Madison are resting upstairs.”

Michael, holding back his outburst, stared upstairs with widened eyes in shock.

“They...” he exclaimed in utter amazement, “Are they sleeping together now?!!”