

My Accidental Husband Is My Revenge Partner

- Chapter 31 – 40

C 31

Who The Fuck Are You?

The journey continued until they passed the border of Radiantia, entering another city, Nexus City, until they arrived at a good distance before the hideout.

Everyone jumped out, keeping their steps as silent as possible so they wouldn't have to fight in the middle of the street. It would be too dangerous and would attract the attention they least needed at that moment.

The two men who had been assigned to watch the hideout came running over when they saw the familiar van.

"How's the situation over there?" Xavier questioned, not giving them the chance to catch their breath.

"A few men left earlier but they returned a few minutes ago, all of them are inside. They are securing the area from any threats too," said one of the two men, his gun in his hand just like the other men around.

"All the girls are inside too, they are being tied and played with by the men whenever they want," the other one replied.

Xavier gritted his teeth.

'Those damn pedophiles,' Xavier cursed under his breath.

"I heard them saying they are planning to continue their journey especially since the police have gotten tired looking for the girls since they have been gone for three months without any trace," the first one added.

Whenever people went missing, nobody would care about their disappearance unless they had family members or friends who cared. Currently, the police only look into the matter a few months before they declare the missing person dead. And just like that, the case is closed.

Unless the missing persons' relative insists on continuing the search, that's only when the police would continue their job.

The girls have gone missing for three months straight. The police looked into the matter for just a few months and are possibly going to declare the girls dead without even finding their bodies.

“We need to save them tonight before they make their move,” Xavier said and the other men nodded.

Together, they matched towards the hideout.

Xavier frowned deeply when he saw the hideout. The house was completely in shambles, the woods, and bricks doing their best to hold it in one piece.

The hideout looked like the wind tried to blow it away but it tried its best to stand firmly on the ground. The total number of men Xavier had brought with him was 10, so he split them accordingly.

The two men from earlier had already informed the divisions of the house, including where the girls were placed and where some of the men were, drinking their lives away while others secured their hideout until their next journey began. Including the number of kidnappers, which was a total of 18 men.

Xavier was left with two other men behind him, Maxwell being included.

They sneaked through the gate, entering the yard of the hideout but they didn't see any of the kidnappers around.

One of the men who had been assigned to watch over the hideout earlier was with Xavier as he led them towards where the girls were kept.

When they entered the shambled house, they tried to keep their steps as quiet as they could because the woods were already starting to creak.

On the stairs, they encountered a man who was zipping up his jeans, his eyes closed as if he was reminiscing about a sweet moment that had just happened with a cigarette in his mouth.

When he opened his eyes, he sighted three strange men in front of him.

Instinctively, he took his gun and was about to shoot but wasn't given the chance to.

Xavier gave him a headshot immediately and he fell flat on the ground, dead.

Naturally, the sound of the gunshot echoed around the shambled house so everyone started panicking.

The kidnappers were on high alert so quickly, they took their guns and started firing all over, wasting their bullets without even shooting an actual enemy.

“What the fuck was that?!” One of the kidnappers questioned as he stood up from his seat. His skin was flabby while the hair on his head and chin had both turned white. Beside him were two other men who were also on high alert due to the gunshot that seemed to be in close range with them.

“Stay here, I will go and check,” said another. He had a bald head with long beards. His black beards were so long one would think he shaved all the hair on his head and glued them to his chin.

The bearded man didn’t take more than ten steps before a bullet pierced through his head as well.

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The children jolted in fear. Their eyes closed as they started to hope they were being saved.

The white-haired man quickly grabbed a girl as a form of protection.

“Take any step and I will blow her brains out!” The white-haired man threatened, his saliva landing on the strands of the girl’s hair.

Her eyes were closed, her mouth was taped and her hands were tied behind her. Tears streamed down her eyes as she accepted her fate.

Xavier glared at the man, his gun pointed at the white-haired man. He and his men took a threatening step towards the two kidnappers who were using the girls as shields.

“If you come any closer, I swear to God, I will fucking blow her brains out. Don’t you fucking play with me man,” the white-haired man added. He was also afraid since he didn’t know who was standing in front of him. But one thing was for sure, he was an enemy since he killed his men.

“Step away from the girl,” Xavier ordered, his eyes glaring at the white-haired man.

He was in a tight spot at the moment. If he shot the bullet, the kidnappers might kill the girls. But if he’s able to give another headshot, he can take care of the white-haired man while one of his men takes care of the other one.

The white-haired man frowned as he questioned, “Who the fuck are you?”

Keep Some Toys Alive

The white-haired man frowned as he questioned, "Who the fuck are you?"

"The one who's going to blow your brains out if you don't let go of the girl right now!" Xavier replied.

Surprisingly, the man wasn't afraid of his threat. A smirk pulled on his lips as he stared at Xavier.

"Go ahead," he challenged. "Fucking—"

The white-haired man didn't get the chance to complete his words when Xavier pulled the trigger of the gun, shooting the white haired man in the head.

The other kidnapper who was also using another girl as a shield panicked and pointed his gun at them about to spout some threatening words similar to the one who had just died. But unfortunately for him, he didn't get the chance to complete his sentence either. Maxwell handled him and he fell flat on the ground, dead.

The sound of gunshots surrounded the hideout as Xavier's men and the kidnappers battled.

"One of you stay here and keep an eye out for us," Xavier ordered as he rushed towards the girls.

Quickly, he and Maxwell removed the tapes from their mouths and untied their hands as well.

The one who seemed to be the oldest was around fifteen. She was the only one who wasn't crying but her eyes were red as she tried to restrain herself from shedding tears. The youngest looked to be either eight or nine years old.

Their clothes were dirty and they all looked skinny.

'Are they even given food?' He wondered as his eyes softened when he stared at them.

As soon as they were all untied, they immediately crawled towards the fifteen-year-old girl. She had brown that was so dark he wondered if those were its actual colors or they were dirt. Her eyes were as dark as night as she stared at Xavier warily.

"You don't have to be scared of me, I'm here to save you," said Xavier as she stretched out his hand to hold one of the girls who hugged the fifteen-year-old, but she immediately flinched in fear.

“W-who are you?” The fifteen-year-old girl asked.

“I’m Xavier. These are my men,” he pointed at Maxwell and the other who was keeping an eye out. “Me and my other men who are outside fighting with the kidnappers came to rescue you guys. We are not bad people,” he added, hoping he could win her trust since she seems to have been protecting the girls as if she were their mother.

He stared at her, noticing that her clothes looked dirtier than the other children’s. It also had holes in it. He also didn’t fail to notice the bruises on her face and arm. She had been manhandled and he didn’t need to ask her if they touched her because, from the bruises on her skin and torn clothes, in addition with the bloodstains on her shirt, they did.

Xavier sighed. He blamed himself for being late.

There had been different cases of kidnapping of children across the world and he was trying his best to rescue as many as he could. He had extended his organization to other cities and countries, but one man couldn’t save everyone.

“Will you hurt us?” The girl asked, tears pooling in her eyes before they streamed down but she didn’t make any sound. Her lips trembled, but she tried to keep herself from completely tearing up.

Xavier nodded vehemently as he smiled at her, glad that he would be able to get them out of the hideout.

“I promise, I will save you and the other girls.” His eyes landed on the other girls.

“Alright, we will come with you,” she added.

Without wasting a moment, Xavier led them. He and Maxwell were in front while the other one was behind, in case any kidnapper popped up out of nowhere.

It was already dark outside, and the moonlight cascaded upon them. Dead bodies laid scattered on the floor. When Xavier didn’t recognize any of his men to be part of the dead bodies, he internally sighed in relief. He counted the bodies, there were seven that lay on the ground.

‘There are seven more criminals around,’ Xavier thought to himself. He heard more gunshots from behind the house.

Quickly, he ordered Maxwell and the other one to lead the girls to the van and they immediately did as they were told.

The girls tried to run as fast as they could as fear tried to hold them back. It wasn't the first time they were seeing a dead body, but they were still scared to look at a lifeless body.

When Xavier was sure the girls would be taken care of, he went to the back.

He saw his men hiding by the side of the house as they tried to not get shot by the remaining kidnappers.

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When a kidnapper stuck out his head to fire a few shots, he was immediately killed by Xavier before he hid in the same spot as his men.

"Boss, are the girls safe?" One of his men asked. His face was covered with blood which had Xavier give him a questionable look. "Don't worry boss, it's not my blood," he added.

"The girls are safe and they are headed towards the van," Xavier replied. He could hear the silence that reigned for a second before a huge explosion deafened them.

The ground shook due to the explosion.

"The remaining three men are in the area where the bomb had just exploded," one of the armed men who were hiding beside the house informed. "T-they a-are dead," he stuttered.

Xavier gritted his teeth.

He took out a grenade from his bulletproof vest and threw it at the enemies.

He had strictly instructed his men not to use the grenade until the girls were safe and because of that, he had lost three of his men.

The bomb exploded, the debris giving them the opportunity to attack.

"Keep three kidnappers alive, I promised Amanda to bring some toys for her when I get back," said Xavier.

C 33

Almost Kissed

Anastasia was in the living room, her legs crossed on a coffee table as she watched Tom and Jerry which made her laugh hysterically. She poured some snacks

into her mouth as she enjoyed the show, without minding that it was already past midnight and she needed to get some rest after a long day at the shooting site, after the slap she had landed on Michelle, making the latter's face flush in embarrassment.

Whenever she remembered Michelle's flushed face, she would end up laughing even harder.

All of a sudden, Anastasia heard the entrance door open. Her eyes immediately went to the door quickly, completely alert.

When her eyes caught Xavier walking inside, she sighed in relief. She wasn't expecting him to be coming back home since it was already late at night.

Although they lived in the same house, she rarely saw him around. He was always out on business trips.

"Welcome," Anastasia greeted, standing up from the couch for an unknown reason as her gaze landed on him.

Xavier nodded at her, taking in the big pants and shirt she was wearing. It was so extra large that she got swallowed in it, making her already small frame look even smaller and cuter.

"Do you need me to fix you something to eat?" She suddenly asked.

As if hearing her own words, she immediately slapped her mouth, feeling embarrassed.

'What are you doing, Anastasia?' She wondered.

Xavier found her action so cute that he couldn't help but nod. He had never eaten cooking her before. He also wanted to spend some time with her.

Due to his busy schedule, he rarely saw her.

"Yes please, if it's not too much trouble," he replied with a faint smile on his lips.

Food was the last thing on his mind since he and his men had gone to rescue the kidnapped girls. The girls were safe but he hasn't contacted their relatives yet. But he lost three of his men on the mission.

But since everything was settled, he was starting to get hungry.

Anastasia stared at him for a few seconds, her eyes running up and down his figure, before she mumbled, "You look tired."

Xavier's eyes widened a bit, surprised she could sense how tired he was.

"I will quickly go and fix something up for you," she added.

Without waiting for him to reply to her statement, he dashed towards the kitchen. The smile on Xavier's lips broadened even more before he went to his room to take a shower.

When he was done, he came back downstairs and found the dining table garnished with a bowl of noodles while Anastasia stood by the side with her head lowered, refusing to make eye contact with him.

"I forgot I can't cook," she mumbled, raising her head a little before looking back down in shame.

Xavier pulled the chair and sat down. "It's okay, I can teach you how to cook if you want me to," he responded, which had Anastasia stare at him in shock.

"Ahh...N-no, it's too much trouble," Anastasia immediately refused. She felt her body move to grab a chair and sit on it.

'Can he even cook? He might just teach me rubbish,' Anastasia wondered. If only she knew the meal she ate after her allergies cleared up was made by Xavier.

"I can cook pretty well," said Xavier, as if reading her thoughts. "I'm the second best cook in my family," he added, taking a full spoon of noodles. It looked delicious and he was too hungry to care if it tasted good or not.

"And who's the first?" Anastasia asked, quite shocked that he could cook.

"My father," Xavier replied before he stuffed his mouth with the spoon filled with noodles.

'His father? I've only spoken to his father once, at the party,' Anastasia thought to herself before she heard Xavier make a sound as he chewed the noodles.

His eyes were closed as his muscles flexed, trying to keep himself from throwing up.

When he swallowed, he thought he'd survived a world war where salt was used as a weapon.

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"Is it good?" She asked him.

Xavier stared at her cute expression for a second, sad that he was going to hit her with the truth.

"You added too much salt," he replied.

Anastasia's shoulder dropped in disappointment as she rested her back on the seat. "I should have just woken up one of the maids instead," she mumbled before standing up. "I will go wake one of them up to come prepare something for you to eat," she added, getting up to take the bowl away but Xavier stopped her.

"Wait, I will eat it," he said.

"You just said there's too much salt, you can't eat it," she reminded, about to take the bowl again but Xavier held her hand.

"I said I will eat it so I will eat it," he argued.

"But it's not healthy to eat something that has too much salt in it."

Anastasia was about to pull her hand away from Xavier's grip, but the latter surprised her by pulling her onto his lap.

The both of them froze stiffly as they stared at each other in the eyes, completely baffled by their position.

"I said I will eat it," Xavier repeated his words from earlier. His face was so close to hers that she gulped down her saliva in fear as her heart raced in her chest.

Anastasia blinked at him with her mouth slightly open. She stuck out her tongue, swiftly wetting her lips, anticipating what she wasn't sure she wanted.

Xavier's eyes quickly caught her action.

Silence reigned, none of them spoke a word.

Xavier inched closer to her lips, his hands tightening around her waist as he pulled her closer.

Anastasia closed her eyes, awaiting the kiss. She placed her hands on his shoulders and Xavier winced in pain.

She immediately opened her eyes and stared at him with worry etched on her face.

"What happened?"

C 34

Second Failure

"It's nothing," Xavier responded, gripping his shoulders.

Anastasia stood up from his lap, her eyes on his shirt.

“Let me see,” she requested. It was obvious he was in pain. She reached for his shirt and pulled it to the aside, revealing his broad shoulder that had a brown bandage covered with blood covering a spot. “What happened to you, Xavier?” She asked him, worry etched on her expression.

When Xavier and his men had battled with the kidnappers, he missed a bullet by a millisecond, which led to the sharp metal grazing his shoulder. But he couldn't tell Anastasia that. He needed to cook up an excuse quickly.

“At the gym room, one of the pieces of equipment fell on my shoulder, which led to this cut,” he lied, hoping that Anastasia believed him.

Anastasia stared at him, confusion written all over her face. She had never worked out before so she had no idea what kind of equipment he was talking about, so she decided to believe him.

“We need to get it cleaned up, you are bleeding so much,” she said, urging him out of his seat. “Where's the first aid kit?” She asked him.

“In my room,” Xavier lied. There was a first aid kit right inside the kitchen he had kept for the servants. But he wanted to spend more time with Anastasia even though it was already getting so late at night.

“Then let's go and get this cleaned up,” said Anastasia.

Together, they left for Xavier's room. Anastasia assisted him as if he couldn't walk on his own, while Xavier could only stare at her in amusement.

They got to the room and Xavier sat on the bed.

“Where's it?” She asked.

Xavier pointed at his closet where the first aid kit was. She fetched it out and quickly started opening it, picking out the items she needed before she took a seat as well.

When she was done, she looked up at Xavier, ready to take out the bloody drenched bandage but immediately gasped in shock when she saw him half naked.

She quickly shut her eyes as she gave him her back.

“Where's your shirt?” She questioned, a rosy hue spreading on her cheeks and ears.

“I needed to take off my shirt so that you can apply the treatments,” Xavier simply replied as if Anastasia had just asked a stupid question. “If I don't take it off, you won't

be able to put the treatment on," he repeated, unable to contain the smile that spread on his lips as he stared at her back.

"Can you at least cover yourself with something?" She asked, refusing to look back at him while he was stark half naked.

"Ana, are you shy?"

Anastasia's face turned even a deeper shade of red at his question.

"I'm not," she lied. "I-it's all a-about c-common decency," she stuttered.

"Hmm, I see," a low voice rumbled in his throat.

Xavier took his shirt and covered his body with it, leaving only his broad shoulders bare.

He could tell she was shy but he didn't want to make her any more uncomfortable than she already was. He still wanted to spend some more time with her before she went to bed. And if he declined her request, she might change her mind about helping him dress his wound.

"I'm no longer half naked," he informed.

It took Anastasia a few seconds before she turned around, sighing in relief when she saw that he had already covered himself up.

"I will start by removing this one," she went back to business, her cheeks still red. She nearly admired his body but quickly snapped out of it.

Xavier didn't say anything, he simply let her do what she wanted.

But the silence was too loud for both of them. They could almost hear their heart beating in their chests. Ana wanted to forget what had happened earlier at the dining table, but the image lived rent-free in her mind.

On the other hand, Xavier wanted to ask her how her day was. He wanted to start a conversation that would loosen the tension between them.

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'How am I supposed to start this?' He wondered, making a mental note to ask Kace for help. But then he remembered his youngest brother was only going to tease him, accusing him of falling in love with Anastasia.

"How was the shoot today?" He asked her when his mind finally found words he could say.

Ana's hands paused for a second before they resumed putting on a new bandage.

"I slapped Michelle."

A smirk appeared on Xavier's lips.

"The slap wasn't part of the script from the movie but I still gave her one. Thankfully, director Jeunes found it iconic and approved of it," she added, pressing the bandage down slightly before she got off the bed.

"You did a good job," he responded.

Anastasia nodded. "I'm done," she said, about to head back to the closet to drop the first aid kit, where she found it. But Xavier grabbed her arm, making her halt.

"Ana," he called.

Anastasia faced him with a smile on her lips. "I won't forget to tell a maid to make you something to eat later," she said. Her eyes lowered to her hand that he held protectively, his big palm covering her slender ones completely.

She was starting to get comfortable around Xavier but in a situation like this, she didn't know if she wished it happened or not.

Xavier was her husband, the man who saved her when her family wanted to get rid of her permanently. She wasn't sure if the feelings that brewed in her heart were because he saved her or something more. Either way, she was still thankful to him.

Xavier cupped her cheeks, leaning in to kiss her but was interrupted by the sound of his ringtone.

Xavier nearly snapped. This was the second time in one day he tried to kiss her but something always interrupted.

Anastasia immediately took the chance to bolt from his room, wishing him a good night.

C 35

An Itchy Plan

Xavier storms towards his phone with huge strides. When he saw who the caller was, he gritted his teeth before picking up the call.

"What is it?" He snapped.

Kace jolted from the other side of the phone call. "What happened? Are you in a bad mood or something?" He asked him.

"Just answer my question."

Kace shrugged from the other side, before he spoke, "Amanda is throwing a tantrum again. One of the kidnappers you gave to her alive to play with is dead. She used the electric chair and increased the voltage."

Xavier's eyebrows furrowed in confusion. "Did he spill anything before he died?" He asked.

"No, he didn't. That was why Amanda killed him, he was starting to frustrate her and she found him useless and killed him," Kace replied, looking at the roasted body of the kidnapper Xavier had caught for Amanda lying on the ground as smoke came out of his body.

The other one who was tied to a normal chair was shaking with fear, his eyes trembling, hoping the crazy girl wouldn't kill him like she had killed his colleague.

Meanwhile, Amanda was seated on the ground, staring at the one who was still alive with a creepy smile on her lips, tilting her head side to side as if he was an interesting creature.

Xavier pinched his temple out of frustration before he asked, "What is the condition of the second one?"

"He's still alive and scared. I don't think he will frustrate Amanda like the first one did. He has already witnessed how she killed him," Kace replied.

Xavier sighed. He had always known that Amanda didn't like her patience being tested when she was questioning her toys. They were just fresh toys and she'd already killed one. Now he considered bringing more back the next time he went on a mission.

"Update me when you reveal some information," said Xavier.

"Got it," said Kace. "Xavier," he called.

Xavier paused his thumb that was about to hang up on the phone call. "What is it?"

"What were you doing earlier, before I called you?" Kace asked him, a teasing smile on his lips, and somehow, Xavier knew he was smiling.

"It's none of your business," Xavier snapped before he hung up on the phone call.

He knew that Kace had called him because he needed to tell him something important. But still, he wished the latter hadn't called in the first place. He had interrupted his move.

Xavier sighed, confused by his actions as well. He couldn't help but remember someone from his past whenever Anastasia was around.

"Get yourself back together, Xavier," he said to himself.

**

It was the second day of shooting another scene of The Sinner, and Selene was excited to go to work again.

Selene greeted her colleagues while Kace was trailing behind her, his face etched with confusion.

"Selene, did you and Xavier fight?" He suddenly asked, catching her off guard.

She halted her steps before shaking her head vehemently.

"Why do you ask?"

"Well, when I came to pick you up, you seemed to be avoiding Xavier. He offered you breakfast but you declined, knowing fully well that you have to eat before we come here else you will be too tired to do anything," Kace responded.

Selene's face turned slightly red when she remembered what had occurred between her and Xavier the previous night. But she wasn't going to tell him that.

"You are thinking too much about it. I wasn't hungry so I didn't eat breakfast," she lied.

She had been surprised when she saw Xavier in the morning. Usually, he would have already left for work so seeing him made her remember last night.

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Kace stared at her for a few seconds without saying anything.

"What? Why would I be avoiding Xavier in the first place? He didn't do anything wrong to me," she added, feeling pressured under Kace's gaze before she laughed.

"Do you like my brother Xavier?" Kace suddenly asked.

He had seen some changes in Xavier's attitude. Usually, Xavier wouldn't waste time cooking for a woman. He rarely cooked for himself even and when he and Mark saw

him making food for Anastasia a few weeks ago, he knew his brother had changed or love had changed him.

The latter didn't seem to know he was in love with Selene.

"W-what?" Selene asked, shock written all over her face.

She didn't get the chance to say anything else when she saw Michelle walking towards them.

"Selene, how are you doing?" She asked her, a huge smile on her lips which had the two confused.

Selene had expected Michelle to still be fretting over the slap but with the smile on her face, she seemed to have gotten over it.

Selene's ears narrowed at Michelle slightly.

'Impossible, she should be up to something,' Selene thought to herself.

She wasn't sure of that but one thing was for sure, she needed to be careful with Michelle around.

"I'm doing fine, Michelle," Selene replied.

"Alright then, I will be going inside," said Michelle. Selene's eyes were on Michelle's back as she retreated.

"She has something planned for you," said Kace.

Selene turned to him before she shrugged. Director Jeunes came and announced for the cast to go get ready for the next scene.

Selene went to her makeup room. She found Allison and Natalie already waiting for her.

Immediately, they began.

Allison got Selene's makeup kit ready while Natalie readied the dress she would be wearing.

Allison put some powder at the back of her hand, took the makeup brush, and was about to apply it on Selene's face when she noticed her hand becoming itchy all of a sudden.

"Excuse me, ma'am," said Allison, dropping the brush back before she could apply the powder on Selene's face. She scratched the back of her palm before intending to take

the brush back but the itch came again. "Why did my hand suddenly become itchy," she mumbled under her breath.

C 36

It Was Michelle

As soon as Allison managed to finish Selene's makeup, Natalie gave her the dress she would change into. After that, they made a few minor changes here and there before Selene wore her shoes.

Once she was ready, she thanked them both and left the makeup room.

Michelle glanced at Selene's shoes as an evil smirk pulled on her lips.

'I can't wait for those shoes to break,' she thought to herself as she continued staring at them.

Mia who was behind Michelle noticed her staring at Selene's shoes and asked, "Michelle, why do you keep staring at those shoes? Do you want them?"

Michelle snorted. "I can never want such shabby shoes," Michelle replied. The shoes Selene was wearing were not like the modern heels. It was made with fancy old green cloth. It looked more like sandals than heels.

Mia shrugged and kept quiet beside Michelle, not wanting to anger the latter, especially after what she had done the previous day.

Liam stared at Selene, taking in her beautiful frame with the royal gown. She looked like a real-life queen. He continued to stare at her, refusing to blink as if she would disappear if he did.

He hasn't gotten the chance to introduce himself properly to her yet. The only time they spoke was when they were in their scenes and when he introduced himself.

He sighed, wishing he would get the chance to speak to her more properly.

Martha nudged Liam on the hand, grabbing his attention. "What are you looking at?" She asked him, looking in the direction where his view was and it landed on Selene. "She looks beautiful doesn't she?" Martha asked.

She and Liam have been friends for a long time since both of them started their careers from scratch. They were best friends who strived together until they achieved their dreams. Now, they were both one of the most famous actors in Radiantia.

"I don't know," Liam responded. Without giving her the chance to say anything else, he added, "I will be going ahead."

He left while Martha stared at his retreating back with a faint smile that didn't reach her eyes. She sighed before she left as well.

When director Jeunes arrived, everyone immediately got into position.

"ACTION!!" He screamed through the microphone. Unfortunately for him, the people near him had anticipated that word so they closed their ears in advance.

Selene walked out of the palace, intending to leave and go back to her father's kingdom before she got married to King Ardine.

King Ardine had the bodyguards try to stop her but they didn't dare to since the queen was glaring at them, daring them to touch her.

She was still the queen and she could have them punished if they dared touch her.

King Ardine continued to plead for her forgiveness but she didn't pay any attention to him.

As Selene was about to take one more step, she felt her shoes break, turning her ankle at an odd angle as she yelped in pain.

Michelle smirked from where she stood, staring at Selene.

Immediately, everyone came to Selene's help. Since Liam was the closest to her, he helped her stand up but she couldn't walk so he had to carry her.

Selene's eyes widened in shock when she found her feet lifting away from the ground. But the shock wasn't enough to suppress the pain she felt in her right ankle.

Everyone was amazed when they saw Liam lift Selene off the ground. The girls blushed, wondering how strong he was. They covered their mouths as they murmured between themselves, wishing they were in Selene's position.

Liam gently settled Selene on the chair that was arranged by the crew.

"What happened?" Director Jeunes asked, his face and everyone's face etched with confusion

At first, she was acting without any problem before she suddenly yelped in pain.

"My shoe broke," said Selene, wincing in pain as she tried to balance her feet on the ground, but she couldn't. The pain was burning too much. "And my ankle bent," she added, closing her eyes to try to suppress the pain.

Everyone's eyes landed on a piece of the shoe that was where she fell then looked at her left, where her ankles were bent.

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"How did your shoes break?! Didn't the stylist check everything before she gave you the shoes?!" Director Jeunes barked, obviously annoyed with the turn of events. His lead actress had been injured due to the carelessness of one of his crew members. "Where's the stylist?" He questioned out loud.

Natalie rushed out when she heard her name being called by other people.

When she saw Selene's ankle which didn't look normal, she gasped.

"Ms. Selene, what happened to you?" She asked, worry etched on her face. But Selene was in too much pain to open her mouth to speak.

Kace went to her to try to rub her feet but she wouldn't let him near it.

"Selene's shoes broke while she was acting, how on earth did that happen?" Director Jeunes questioned the young girl, whose heart was already beating loudly in her chest.

"What?" She gasped, her eyes also landing on the parts of the shoes that were in different locations. "I promise you, director, I always check the clothes and shoes that Ms. Selene wears. I don't know how this happened," the girl panicked.

In a situation like this, a lot of people might think she had done something like that to sabotage Selene and the movie. It had been a regular occurrence in the movie industry.

Tears flowed out of her eyes. Director Jeunes was a serious man who didn't like any mistakes in his movies and she believed she had messed up.

"Well, how do you explain how the shoes broke?" Director Jeunes questioned, his eyes glaring at her, expecting an explanation that she didn't have.

"I might have an idea who was behind this," Kace suddenly spoke and everyone's attention went to him. "It was Michelle."

It Was An Act

"I might have an idea who was behind this," Kace suddenly spoke and everyone's attention went to him. "It was Michelle."

Michelle who was trying her best not to laugh out loud at seeing Selene's state immediately stiffened. Her face went pale when Kace called her name as everyone's gaze was on her.

"What nonsense are you talking about?" She questioned Kace, high on alert at his accusation even though he was right. "I would never do that to Selene, Kace. She's my friend."

Kace sighed, his eyes focused on Selene's ankle as he tried to massage it for her. He could see that the ankle wasn't completely bent at an odd angle which was good news. But the pain was still there.

"Are you sure about that?" Kace questioned her. Director Jeunes and the rest kept quiet, wanting to see where this would lead. Director Jeunes wanted to find out immediately who was behind the accident that happened to his lead actress, Selene.

"What nonsense are you trying to say here, Kace? Selene's my friend," Michelle repeated, hoping that Kace would just drop the topic but she knew that was impossible to achieve. She tried to maintain her pure reputation in front of everyone by looking as pitiful as possible. She forced some tears out of her eyes as she added, "Why would I even do that to Selene?"

Kace turned to look at her, a smirk on his lips as if anticipating that question since he started accusing her.

"There are many reasons why you would do this to Selene," he started. "For example; when she got the role but you didn't? You are an A-list celebrity, Michelle, so it must have been a huge slap on your face while a noob like Selene got the biggest role in the movie and you didn't." He paused, letting the information sink into her ears and the ears of everyone else.

"Plus what happened yesterday," he added. "She slapped you when it wasn't even in the script. I'm sure that must have hurt your ego. So you decided to get revenge by doing something with the shoes."

Michelle's eyes opened wide in shock. She had never expected Kace to analyze everything so well and end at the last bus stop. Michelle felt as if her cupboard had just been opened, and all her secrets had been let out.

She thought she had done everything so well that nobody would pin any kind of blame on her. But she should have expected Kace to always be around her and open up her closet filled with secrets.

Michelle stared around her and found all the crew and cast looking at her with confusion as they waited for her to defend herself or say something at least.

All that Kace had said made sense and she hadn't imagined that he would come to Selene's rescue, else she would have already practiced earlier on how she was going to reply to his accusation.

"I didn't do anything," she said, her voice barely audible since it was muffled by her silent cries. "Yesterday, Selene came to me and apologized for the slap and I forgave her immediately. I'm not the kind of person to hold a grudge against people," she added, tears streaming down her eyes as she hoped they would believe her, especially director Jeunes.

If he doesn't believe her, then that would be the end of her participation in the movie. People are going to tweet about what she did and her fans are going to hate her for it. So she internally prayed that Director Jeunes would believe her.

"Michelle is not the one behind this," Selene suddenly spoke and everyone's eyes were on her. "We are friends and friends can't possibly do such a thing to another friend," she added.

Kace stared at her, wondering why she would say such a thing. He could see through Michelle's lies and fake cries but he couldn't understand what was going on in Selene's mind.

"And Natalie is not the one at fault either. It was just a simple mistake. The shoes do look old and the wood probably gave up holding my weight so it broke," she continued.

She stared at director Jeunes.

"No one was at fault here, it was just the bad condition of the wood the shoes were made with."

Everyone was shocked but no one was more shocked than Michelle.

'Has she always been this stupid?' Michelle wondered.

But she was also glad that Selene was able to cover up for her. If any second had been wasted, she was sure director Jeunes would have fired her from participating in the movie.

"What a beautiful friendship they have," said one person.

"Even though she was in pain, she managed to bite through it so that she could save her friend."

People started murmuring around them, admiring how their relationship was.

"I see," director Jeunes suddenly spoke. "If that's the case then I think I should be yelling at whoever made these shoes. He's so incompetent," he added.

His eyes went to Natalie who was crying her eyes out, and apologized.

"I'm sorry for yelling at you earlier, Natalie."

Director Jeunes might be a renowned man but he knew when to apologize whenever he was wrong.

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"It's no problem, sir," she nodded in understanding, wiping her tears. "But I think we should call a doctor immediately for Ms. Selene," she added.

"No it's okay," said Selene. "It still hurts but I think I only need to put ice on it in case it swells."

"Please take care of yourself, Selene. You can have the rest of the day to recover," said director Jeunes.

After that, Kace helped Selene up and took her to the car. Michelle was about to follow them but was immediately stopped by Kace.

As soon as they entered the car, Selene stared at Kace as she asked with a grin stretched on her lips, "So, how was my acting?"

C 38

An Invitation

Kace stared at Selene, confusion written all over his face.

"What do you mean by acting?" He asked her.

Selene moved her feet around, showing she wasn't injured while Kace stared, eyes widening even more.

"What the hell?" He cursed.

"There's nothing wrong with my feet at all. I saw Michelle staring at my shoes earlier when I came out of my dressing room. She didn't know I caught her staring at it so I guessed she must have done something to the shoes," Selene explained. "So I just

pretended to fall and the heels broke. My guess was right, she did mess with the shoes,” she added, resting her back on the car seat, and sighing out loud.

Meanwhile, Kace still hasn’t digested all that Selene had just told him.

He had been worried that Xavier was going to skin him alive because he wasn’t able to protect Selene from Michelle’s games. But after hearing Selene, he sighed even louder, resting on the car seat as well.

“You scared the hell out of me, Selene,” he mumbled.

“I didn’t know I was going to do that myself. I just wanted to see her reaction when I fell.”

“You could have punished her by letting director Jeunes kick her out of the movie. I’m sure that would have been the best thing to happen to her,” said Kace. He was hoping that Michelle would be kicked out of the movie since she was so wicked, she nearly broke someone’s ankle all in the name of jealousy.

“Remember, I have to be in a good relationship with her. So far, she hasn’t invited me to the Harrison mansion again. And there’s no way I can get into the Harrison company building without an invite. Maybe I need to get closer to Mr Harrison,” she mumbled the last word.

A faint smile pulled on her lips before she added, “I’m still busy with Michelle at the moment and I will wait for her to invite me again. But if nothing happens after a few weeks, I will have to change my target.”

Kace frowned. “What do you mean by changing your target?” Kace asked, confusion written all over his face.

“Jack,” she mentioned. “Jack will be my new target.”

Kace didn’t quite understand what she meant by calling her brother’s name. From her expression, she didn’t seem to want to continue the conversation so he decided to drop it.

“It’s a good thing Director Jeunes gave you the rest of the day off,” he said, igniting the engines of the car before they zoomed off from the shooting site.

Selene got home and found the house empty as usual at that time. Except for the faint noises the maids made from the back.

Kace didn’t stay to keep Selene company. He still needed to see the condition of the criminal Amanda hadn’t killed yet. She was playing with his skin by pressing a hot iron on it before he left the hideout. He could only hope she hadn’t killed him yet.

Since there was nothing for Selene to do, she decided to go take a nap. It was just afternoon.

A few hours later, she woke up to the sound of her phone ringing.

Frowning, she mumbled, "Who could be calling me now?"

She checked the caller, a smirk pulling on her lips when she saw that it was Michelle.

"The green snake is calling."

She picked it up and Michelle's soft and gentle tone nearly made her puke.

"Selene, I've been trying to call you for the past hour but you weren't picking up. I also texted you but you didn't reply to any of my texts. I was worried that something worse might have happened to you, are you okay over there?" Michelle asked. She made sure her tone seemed like that of a person who cared about another.

Selene copied her tone too, sounding weak and gentle as she replied, "I was asleep and I just saw the call right now."

"How is your leg? Should I come over to your house? I want to take care of you," said Michelle. She had just realized that she didn't know Selene's address or much about her yet. Except her name and that she wasn't Anastasia.

On the other hand, Selene had to cover the speaker of her phone before she pretended to barf.

"How does she not get irritated with her voice? Can she not hear herself?" Selene wondered before she released the speaker.

"I'm not at home," she lied. She couldn't afford to have Michelle come to Xavier's mansion and see her there. "I went directly to a friend's place. She helped me with my leg," she added.

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"I see," Michelle hummed from over the phone, her expression disgusted with what she was going to say next. "How about I pick you up from your friend's place and we will go to the Wallace mansion?" She suggested.

When Michelle had first met Selene, she only wanted to be closer to her so that she could find out if she was Anastasia or not. But now that she knows that Selene isn't Anastasia, she needs to still be on good terms with her so that Selene won't start suspecting her of sabotaging her shoes earlier.

'Wallace mansion,' Selene thought.

"Would it be alright if we went there?" She wondered. She had not spoken with or heard from any of the Wallace family after old Wallace's birthday party. And she couldn't help but feel pressured when she heard their names. They were still her inlaws after all.

"Of course, there's no problem at all. I'm their daughter-in-law after all and you are my friend. I'm sure they would love to see you again," Michelle responded.

Selene gave it some thought, wondering if she should inform Xavier about it but then remembered she was ignoring him. Instead, she decided to text Kace about it after the call.

"Sure, I would love to see them again," Selene replied.

C 39

Task Seems Difficult

At the hideout, Kace was inside the torture room where Amanda had been playing with the criminal Xavier caught for her. She had bags under her eyes which only meant she hadn't slept a wink last night. Neither did the criminal.

Her brown hair was styled into two pigtails above her head and she had a lazy look on her face, tired from trying to force out information from the criminal.

Xavier was also there, his hands wrapped around his chest as he let Amanda deal with the criminal. He was her toy after all.

The air was mixed with roasted flesh and dried blood.

"I'm only asking you for one thing, sir," Amanda spoke, her voice sounding very girlish. If anyone apart from their team heard her, they would have thought she was a sweet little girl who couldn't hurt a fly, talk more of torturing a human until they died. "I wouldn't want to give you the same fate as your friend who died yesterday. All I just need is a name from you, it's that simple sir," she added.

The man who was seated in the chair couldn't even move, talk more of opening his mouth to speak but either way, he didn't want to talk.

Amanda had wanted him to sit in the electrical chair but Kace had opposed it with the thought that she might get frustrated and kill him.

Amanda took the hot iron and pressed it on the man's chest and he screamed in pain. His shrieks of pain were so loud that Amanda had to press the hot scorching iron on his mouth to keep him from screaming any louder.

After that, she carried the hot bucket of water and poured it on him.

"You are stressing me out sir," she said, her voice still sweet as her lips stretched into a smile.

Kace received a text from his phone. He pulled it out to check the message. His face pulled into a frown when he did.

Xavier noticed his expression and stared at the phone, his face pulling into a frown as well.

"Michelle invited her to the Wallace household?"

**

Selene took a seat on a bench she found on the street as she waited for Michelle.

She didn't have any friends that she went to see as she lied to Michelle. So to avoid her asking about such a friend, she left the estate where Xavier's mansion was built. And moved even a few blocks further down so Michelle wouldn't suspect anything.

She had sent Michelle an address and the latter had texted back she was already there but Selene hadn't seen her yet.

Not quite long after, Selene found Michelle's car driving towards her.

Michelle got out of the car and immediately rushed to go hug Selene while the latter tried her best to hug her back.

"Why are you sitting down here? What about your friend?" Michelle asked like a caring friend she was.

"She had to rush off somewhere so I decided to wait here for you," Selene replied.

Michelle nodded in understanding. "Well, let's go." She helped Selene get into the car even though the latter seemed to have a hang of it.

Selene didn't work perfectly normally but she did make herself look injured by the shoe by limping a bit.

Michelle drove towards the Wallace mansion.

When Selene's eyes landed on the Wallace mansion, her eyes immediately went wide in surprise. She thought Xavier's mansion was big, but the Wallace mansion looked bigger.

The gates were bigger, the mansion was bigger and the fountain was bigger too with many beautiful flowers planted around the house.

Michelle got out of the car and helped Selene get down.

"I told old Wallace that you were coming over and she was very ecstatic to see you," Michelle informed even though she felt very bitter.

Old Wallace had never been that happy whenever she was around her. But when she had just told the woman that Selene was coming over, she immediately rejoiced and instructed the servants to get started with dinner.

"Oh really, that's nice," Selene replied. She wasn't meant to be too excited about that information so she kept her reply neutral.

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The both of them walked inside with the maids greeting Michelle while giving Selene a side-eye.

Selene's eyes caught old Wallace, Xavier's mom, and Dad sitting on the couch as they enjoyed a very good entertainment.

Selene glanced at the huge TV and found a wrestling match displayed on it while old Wallace had a very excited look on her face.

A small smile crept on Selene's face.

"Grandma, Selene is here," Michelle called, gaining their attention.

Everyone's eyes turned towards the door where Michelle and Selene were.

"Anastasia!!" Old Wallace called.

Selene glanced at Michelle and the latter smiled at her.

"Endure it for now."

It seemed the old Wallace still didn't want to start calling her Selene yet.

"Anastasia, come give me a hug," said old Wallace.

Selene limped towards Old Wallace with Michelle's help until she reached the old woman.

"What happened to your leg, darling?" Old Wallace asked, concern evident in her tone.

"There was a little accident at the shooting site today, but I'm fine," Selene replied.

Old Wallace enveloped her in a hug while Selene bowed respectfully to Mr. and Mrs Wallace. They acknowledged her with a slight nod.

"That reminds me, Xavier said he would be coming over for dinner tonight," old Wallace suddenly announced.

Michelle immediately smiled happily. Xavier didn't usually come home but whenever he did, it was to see old Wallace and have a talk with his father.

Michelle had tried talking to him several times but he would always ignore her as if she was mere air. But she never gave up.

'Xavier is coming here?' Anastasia asked herself. She had planned to ignore him the whole day but it seemed that task would be impossible.

"I'm here," they heard Xavier's voice from the entrance of the mansion.

C 40

What If I'm In Love With You

Selene's eyes glanced at Xavier before her eyes immediately tore away from him, remembering the night they nearly kissed which continued to live in her head rent-free.

"Xavier, come and give this old woman a hug," said old Wallace.

Xavier hugged old Wallace, before walking towards his mother and hugged her also. He shook his father's hand while the middle-aged man who looked more like Xavier's elder brother than a father patted him on the shoulder.

After exchanging pleasantries with his parents, Xavier moved to sit beside Selene which had the latter stiffened a little.

Michelle immediately scowled. Xavier had completely ignored her again and went to sit with Selene. She silently gritted her teeth in anger, totally regretting inviting her over to the Wallace mansion. If only she had known that Xavier was coming over, she would have worn something better so that she could grab his attention.

Michelle stared down at her casual jeans and top. Selene was also wearing a similar outfit and Xavier noticed her but didn't notice Michelle.

'That slut,' she cursed under her breath as she balled her fist tightly.

"Excuse me, I will go change," said Michelle, excusing herself.

Michelle quickly walked towards her room and found Richard playing his video games as usual. His cans of soda drinks he had already consumed lay scattered on the floor as if an animal was living in the room.

Michelle glared at Richard.

'How can a twenty-seven-year-old be so deadbeat?' She wondered.

She walked towards him and tapped him on the shoulder, making him jolt.

Richard stared at Michelle, shock evident on his face since he hadn't heard her come in.

"What do you want this time?" He asked her.

"Why would you dirty our room like this? Sometimes I feel like I'm living with an animal instead of a human," Michelle spat out of anger.

Richard combed his messy hair with his hand, sighing.

"Xavier is downstairs," she informed. Richard sprang out from his gaming seat as soon as he heard Xavier's name.

"What is Xavier doing downstairs?" Richard asked her.

Michelle frowned deeply. "How would I know?" She questioned him. "You'd better behave around him, he might consider giving you a job at the Wallace company so behave," she added, picking out some clothes from the closet before moving to the bathroom.

Richard slumped on his gaming seat, sighing again.

"Why does he keep coming to this house?" Richard asked himself.

Richard was extremely scared of Xavier. He was his elder brother after all and the latter had always been harsh on him, only being lenient towards Kace.

Whenever he was around Xavier, he felt like he couldn't breathe anymore.

Sighing again, he stood up from the chair and headed downstairs.

His eyes nearly popped when he saw Anastasia also, sitting beside his grandma.

Old Wallace had pulled Selene to sit beside her which had Xavier scowl a little.

He didn't need to ask her to know she was ignoring him and he was aware it was because of what happened the previous night.

Richard continued to ogle at Selene. He felt one part of his body growing as he kicked his lips out of lust toward Selene.

'What a sexy woman,' he thought to himself.

"Xavier," Richard called. "Long time no see," he added, taking a seat beside Xavier.

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"Don't sit beside me," Xavier said, his tone firm and commanding.

Richard's butt which was about to sit on the couch, immediately paused. He didn't need to be told twice so he quickly moved to another seat.

Selene could feel Richard's gaze from the corners of her eyes as he stared at her. It made her feel disgusted and uncomfortable, especially after all that Richard had done to her in the past.

Xavier noticed the discomfort etched on Selene's face as she tried to maintain a smile for old Wallace.

"Please forgive me for always calling you Anastasia. It's just that she was a very sweet girl and you remind me of her so much," said old Wallace. She placed her hand on Selene's before she blurted out the next question, "Are you married dear?"

"W-what? No, of course not grandma. I'm not married," she replied.

"That's good because I was hoping you would get married to Xavier," old Wallace blurted out again.

Xavier nearly spat out the water he was drinking. He dropped the glass of water before he stood up.

"Selene, may I speak with you?" Xavier requested.

Old Wallace's eyes immediately sparkled in excitement as she stared at her grumpy grandson, thinking he was going to make a move towards Selene.

Selene excused herself as she followed behind Xavier. She tried to keep up with Xavier's long stride as he led her outside of the mansion, towards the beautiful garden.

"Wow," she gasped when she saw the garden. "The garden looks so beautiful."

Xavier stared at the garden before staring back at her, trying to understand what she was saying.

"It's just flowers," he said.

Selene opened her mouth, trying to find words but immediately closed it back before she would say the wrong thing.

"What did you want to talk to me about?" She asked instead.

Xavier's eyes narrowed at her. "You don't have to ignore me all day."

Selene's cheeks turned warm, blood rushing towards her ears before she looked away.

"And who says I was ignoring you?"

"We both know you are, Selene," said Xavier.

He wasn't sure what got into him the previous night but he was sure of one thing. He wanted to taste those lips.

"I don't know what you are talking about Xavier."

Selene limped towards the garden so that she could take a better look at it.

Xavier already knows about what happened at the shoot since Kace had already informed him about it. He followed behind her.

Xavier glanced around, feeling a gaze at his back. Someone was watching him and he had a good idea who it could be.

He parted his mouth to ask, "Selene, what if I'm in love with you?"