

## **Seduced 181**

### Chapter 181

“Lulu, don’t go. Hear me out,” Matthew called out angrily and chased after me.

But I wasn’t in the mood to talk to anyone. My pace quickened when I heard his footsteps. I hoped that a pair of wings would grow on my back and take me away from this gilded cage.

And since I was in such a hurry, I didn’t check where I was going. I ran into the person who was entering from the living room.

The other person rubbed her forehead with a hiss. “Ouch! Today is not my day at all. It’s not just me, is it? Huh? Luna? Are you alright? Why were you running?”

“Helen! Are you hurt? Sorry, I was running and didn’t see you.” After I greeted Helen, I walked past her, cutting off further interaction.

“I’m fine. I’ll feel better after I massage the area. Where are you going? I couldn’t talk to you just now, so I came back to look for you. Should we admire the flowers in the garden? It’s beautiful over there,” said Helen as she clung to my arm.

My small conversation with Helen allowed Matthew to catch up to me. He grabbed my other hand forcefully, so much so that I couldn’t shake his grip off.

I saw pain in his eyes. Agony, even.

Alas, I could never be the one to soothe his pain.

I wasn’t rejecting Matthew out of my own will. It was just that his world wasn’t able to

accommodate me.

Helen saw Matthew's hand around my wrist. She smiled bitterly and let go of my arm. Her eyes became wet as she took half a step back.

I wanted to explain everything to her. I wanted to console her, but I couldn't. Regardless, from now on, Matthew and I would be ex-classmates and nothing more.

I would leave their world. It was up to their destiny whether they would end up together or

not.

Some would say that I was too cruel. Matthew had loved me for so many years. Couldn't I make compromises for him?

While I appreciated Matthew's love and loyalty, I would have to face his friends, his family, and the mundane daily life if I were to get together with him. Dealing with his family day

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after day would turn me crazy.

"Lulu, those are unimportant people. You shouldn't..." Matthew tried to explain further, but I was not having any of it. Embellish it however he wanted, facts couldn't be changed.

"Matthew, I've made up my mind." I turned around to face him.

What had happened had happened. There was no need to continue this waltz. I wanted to end things now so that both of us could move on.

“Let’s just be ex–classmates. That’s my answer.”

“No, Lulu. Don’t give up on us because of what those naysayers said. I don’t want us to just be ex–classmates. I like you. I want to spend my life with you. Don’t reject me so soon, Lulu.”

Matthew’s grip on my wrist tightened. He began to prattle on out of panic, “You’re the only one I want. I’ve never cared about what they said. I call the shots for my own love life. No one can tell me who to date. Lulu, don’t give up on me.”

I fell silent and shook my head with a smile.

I was disappointed in his family.

His marriage could bring Loxley Group to greater heights. His family could and most definitely would tell him who to date.

I didn’t want to wake up to his family’s insults or reprimands every day, not even if I was fed with all the riches in the world.

I was sorry, but I couldn’t spend my life with Matthew.

Chapter 182

“Matthew, I did consider dating you. I considered spending the rest of my life in a joyous union with you. But you saw what happened just now. I have no place in your family. We’re from two different worlds.

“You look down on my world, and I can’t tolerate yours either, let alone be a part of it. Being ex–classmates is the best choice here. Matthew, let’s not see each other anymore.”

I broke free of Matthew’s grip and left stubbornly, leaving the heartbroken man behind me.

I was devastated too when I turned around. I regretted attending this birthday party.

It was never my wish to hurt someone who had been loving me for years. I didn't have it in me to break his heart, but I had no other options. I was just a person, and I had my dignity

too.

Matthew's parents had trampled on my dignity.

My eyes were red and misty. I bit my lip hard to stop the tears from falling.

I could cry, but definitely not before those who looked down on me.

Helen looked at me and then at Matthew. Her mouth opened several times, but nothing came out of it. In the end, she caught up to me and said, "Let me walk you out."

"It's okay. I know where the door is." I declined Helen's kindness and made a beeline for the

entrance.

Paying no heed to his parents' angry demands, Matthew grabbed his car keys and caught up to me. "Let's leave this negative space. I'll come with you. We can order what we want to eat on the journey."

Oh, Matthew. Did he have to do this? He could leave with me today. But what about tomorrow? What about next week? What about his future?

I halted, and he did the same next to me.

There were countless emotions in his eyes. The pain made him look extra desperate.

I felt bad for him.

If he was the chubby boy I knew and not the heir of the Loxley family, perhaps we could have a happy ending. But he was the heir to his family. He was destined to leave a legacy. Matthew couldn't just abandon his parents and those here watching the drama.

Admittedly, none of those people liked me. They antagonized me the first moment we met.

How many couples could remain together when their families viewed the other as mortal enemies?

Matthew's mother had made it clear that she'd never acknowledge me. Her disdain toward me was palpable. Even if I was willing to endure it for Matthew, his mother and I would inevitably get into arguments in the future.

Matthew could defend me once or twice. But could he do that forever? When his passion for me died down as time went by, would his love turn into resentment?

Of course, it would. I knew it would.

Only bad endings awaited us. So why not cut ties now before years of attachment turned into the source of our heartache?

I didn't want to do Matthew wrong. I wanted to break things off properly with him.

"Go back, Matthew. Your family and friends are inside. You can't abandon them. Our relationship ends here."

I had become calmer. I could see the whole picture now. I knew the right thing to do to minimize the pain.

“I can abandon them, Lulu. Because you’re my world.” Matthew stared into my eyes. The agony and sorrow in his eyes were apparent.

Chapter 183

“Sure, you can do what you want, but I don’t want this relationship. I don’t want to spend the rest of my life being doubted, belittled, and insulted. And I dread to see the day you regret the decision you make now.”

Matthew wanted to continue arguing, but I silenced him by shaking my head.

I had made up my mind and would not be dissuaded.

This birthday party had killed the relationship between Matthew and me before it budded.

Unfortunately, I couldn’t help Matthew anymore. There was no future for our love.

“Trust me, Matthew. I’ve truly considered being with you. I considered loving you like you loved me. But there’s a gulf between us. I don’t want to be an accessory to your successes, nor do I want you to abandon your family for me.

“If you do that, we can never be truly happy even if we’re together. So let’s end things here. No need to chase after me. You know me. Once I make a decision, I’ll never change my mind.”

Something inside his eyes shattered into a million pieces.

I wasn’t in love with Matthew, but saying goodbye still hurt a lot.

For once, I gave Matthew an embrace. I hugged him as tightly as I could to convey all my guilt and lament to him. This was the final hug.

Matthew responded to my hug with his own. He held me tightly as well, as if he was melding me into his body so that we could be together forever.

Then, he rested his head next to my ears and whispered, "Oh, Lulu, my dear Lulu. I can never love another woman as I love you. If I could turn back time, I wouldn't have made you meet my family this soon. I regret it so much, Lulu. So, so much."

He planted a kiss on my hair. Then, I felt warm liquid on the skin near my ears.

It was his tears.

"I'm leaving now, Matthew. Take care." Fearing that watching Matthew suffer would make my heart go soft, I fled the scene.

Goodbye, the chubby boy in my high school life.

Tears came gushing out of my eyes.

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Leaving the main gate, I bade farewell to the boy who once wrote 11 love letters to me.

I felt sorry for him. His devotion was denied the chance to develop into something fruitful.

But the fault did not lie in us. The fault lay in the difference between our worlds.

Matthew did not chase after me. But I could feel that his gaze still lingered on me even when

I was far from his house.

Goodbye, the chubby boy who used to follow behind me.

The apartment was empty and soulless. Helen was at the party. She probably wouldn't come back tonight.

After I bathed, I buried myself under the sheets and texted Zara.

"Why are you sulking?"

"I lament the relationship that was snipped off before it could bud."

"Don't be cryptic."

I relayed what had happened between Matthew and me to Zara. She laughed at me instead."

I can picture it already. A chubby boy was trying his best to catch up to you on a running

track. When he finally reached you, you turned around and kicked him back to where he started. Luna, you're so cold."

Was Zara even my friend? Urgh.

During my slumber, I heard someone open the door. Helen staggered into the room groggily. She reeked of alcohol.

She stood before my bed as if she wanted to tell me something.

Chapter 184



I pretended to be asleep and ignored Helen.

“Stop pretending. I know you’re awake,” she slurred and flopped onto her bed.

“How did you find out?” I propped myself up. Helen lay on her bed. Her glamorous attire failed to conceal the disappointment and sadness she was feeling.

“Your eyes were moving. And your breathing was odd too. You don’t breathe like that when you’re asleep.” Helen sat up and ruffled her hair out of frustration.

Her nose was red, and she spoke with a nasal voice. I wondered if the autumn wind had given her a cold or if she had cried for a long time.

Given her looks and her family background, Helen was prideful and confident. But her unrequited love for Matthew might have dealt a huge blow to her ego.

I was also certain that Matthew was the reason why she was so upset now. However, there

wasn’t much I could do.

To ask a guy who liked me to like another woman was very cruel. I couldn’t possibly do that.

“It’s getting late. Go to bed.” I turned to the other side and decided to continue sleeping.

Escapism was the perfect solution for someone who couldn’t do anything like me.

Helen lay down for a while. Then, she went to clean herself in the shower before drying her hair on the bed silently.

Later, she switched off the lights. The apartment was pitch-black except for the moonlight that shone through the window. It landed on our feet, making the environment look

desolate.

“Lulu, you truly don’t want to date Matthew?” asked Helen when I almost fell asleep.

Her voice was so soft, like the summer breeze that passed through one’s fingers.

I sighed internally. Helen had always had a crush on Matthew since she was little. Yet, Matthew liked me. Somehow, I became her roommate. What a twisted joke from life itself!

“The Matthew I know is the Matthew from high school. He was my classmate and his grandmother’s dearest grandson. But he has now become the eldest son of his family. He’ll take over his family one day. That is what divides us.

1/2

“I wasn’t sure if I should date him. What happened today only made me realize how different we both are. Helen, I’ll never date him. And his family will never allow him to date

me.”

“After you left, Matthew threw a hissy fit. He fought with his parents in front of all the guests. His father dragged him to the study to punish him. The Loxleys are infamous for their strict discipline. Matthew was severely punished, but he still insisted on marrying only

you.

“You know, he has always been an obedient kid. He never talks back to his parents, not even when he was in his rebellious phase as a teenager. But today, for the first time, he defied his parents. I was devastated to see the wounds on his body.

“But I couldn’t do anything about it because he didn’t need my help.”

Helen wiped away her tears and covered her eyes with the back of her hand. “Luna, you have no idea how lucky you are. I can only dream of the day he looks at me the way he looks at you. I idolize him. Whenever I dream of his smile, I’ll wake up with a goofy grin.

“I’ve done everything I could for him, but he never even bats an eye at me. Yet you, you don’t need to do anything. You only have to maintain your air of aloofness and smile at him. once in a while to drive him crazy.

“He’s head over heels for you. Are you not moved at all? If it were me, I’d be over the moon.”

Chapter 185

“I once swore that I’d marry Matthew. So whenever a woman tried to approach him, I’d chase her away. When I heard that he had fallen for another woman, I told myself that once I found out who she was, I’d beat her up.”

Helen sobbed loudly. I felt sorry for her.

Unrequited love was a lonely journey. Only those who had gone through it understood how excruciating it could be.

“So, why didn’t you beat me up?” I teased.

Helen knew I was joking, but she grabbed a plushie and threw it on my face nonetheless. She sniffled and said, “Because you’re so sweet. Also, it isn’t your fault that he fell for you. I

can’t beat you up. I’m not that heartless.”

My bad day was turned around after hearing Helen's words.

Among the arrogant, condescending upper-class people beyond my reach, there was still someone who treated others with kindness.

Oh, Helen. She was a sweetheart too. Matthew and she would make a great pair. I hoped Helen would never give up.

"Helen, you fight for your love. Trust me, Matthew isn't a robot. He'll notice you eventually.

"Impossible. You didn't see how crazy he was about you today. He was mad. There's no way he'll ever fall in love with someone else again. I should find a monastery and be a nun there.

I'm done with love."

I threw back the plushie, and it landed on her face. "I'm the fantasy from his adolescence that he can never obtain. But you're his future. You can make Matthew fall in love with you. I'm sure of it. Also, religion doesn't look good on you."

Helen then cried herself to sleep. I, on the other hand, did not feel sleepy at all. I spaced out

while watching the stars outside.

The night sky was mesmerizing. I took a photo of it and posted it on my social media.

Within a minute, I received a notification on my phone. Colin had texted me.

"Still awake?"

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“Yeah.”

“What happened? Is something bothering you?”

“I’ve cut ties with Matthew. We’re now just ex–classmates.”

“Why are you upset? Because you regret it? Or do you miss him a lot now?” For some reason, Colin sounded snarky.

“Neither. I just feel bad. He cried when I left. He has loved me for so many years, but I can’t return his feelings. I feel like I’ve done him wrong.”

“He isn’t strong enough to get out of his situation, so don’t feel guilty about it. I’m glad you cut ties with him now. Dragging it out would’ve only prolonged his suffering.”

“Colin, most people would ask me to protect Matthew’s feelings. You’re the opposite. You just want the drama, don’t you?”

Colin didn’t answer my question. Instead, he asked, “Do you know what kind of boyfriend you want?”

“Someone decent who treats me kindly and spoils me like a princess. Someone who will continue to pamper me even when we have a kid. Oh, and ideally five or six years older than

me.”

“Are you describing me?”

“Please, Colin. You’re my friend. You can’t turn into my boyfriend.”

“Never say never. If I work hard enough, what’s impossible will become possible.”

“You’re teasing me again. Hmph! I’m going to sleep now.”

I switched off my phone and closed my eyes. My cheeks were burning.

This bastard, Colin, was teasing me again.

It rained during the night. The soft pitter–patter woke me up.

The smell of alcohol still lingered in the room. Helen slept like the dead, so I had no choice but to get up to close the window.

Chapter 186

It rained for three days straight, and the temperature dropped as a result.

As it was getting cold, I put on thick winter clothes before I did my daily commute of going to the apartment, lecture hall, and cafeteria.

Helen stopped coming back to the apartment the second night after the incident. I was all alone in the cold apartment.

When I was bored, I’d talk to my friends. More often than not, I’d be texting Colin.

It wasn’t that I was neglecting my friends, but they all had a boyfriend. They didn’t have time for me. Colin and I were both single, so we were like each other’s support group.

On the fourth day, I had a lecture in the morning. As soon as I entered the lecture hall, I saw my classmates gossiping about something excitedly.

“So what’s the good news? Did they increase the scholarship amount or something?” I found a seat at the front of the lecture hall. Then, I took out the textbooks from my bag and placed them on my desk. I also took out the draft I drew yesterday so that the lecturer could

evaluate it.

“It’s much better than that.”

“The Professor Ash King is teaching here now. Do you know him? The same Professor King who was very successful when he was young and is even more successful now that he’s old!”

Professor King? Wasn’t he my guest lecturer at Lincoln University? He was Colin’s thesis supervisor too. It was thanks to him that I became so successful in the arts industry.

Was he teaching at Jesselton College now? How come Colin didn’t tell me?

I was delighted by the news, of course. It brightened up my gloomy morning.

Just when I figured I should call Professor King to ask when he would be dropping by, the bell rang.

I sighed and put my phone away. The corners of my eyes caught a glimpse of the lecturer walking in, and my jaw fell to the ground.

The subject of the mass gossip appeared before everyone with a thick stack of reference books. He looked all dapper and dashing.

No one told me that Professor King was coming. What a surprise!

1/2

“Miss, please close your mouth. In my class, being pretty doesn’t mean you can break the rules.”

Everyone turned their heads to look at me.

Was being beautiful a crime now? Why put me on a pedestal?

I pouted but didn’t dare talk back.

Professor King adjusted the glasses on his nose. His shrewd eyes hid the joy and playfulness from seeing me. “What? Are you too happy to see me here?”

All my classmates looked at me, bewildered. They were probably confused as to why an

ordinary, meek woman like me could draw the professor’s attention on his first day here.

I stared at Ash and rubbed my face. When I opened my eyes again, he was already standing next to my desk

Luckily, I wasn’t wearing any makeup. I highly doubted my makeup would remain intact

after I rubbed my face like that.

I tilted my head and looked outside. Then, my gaze returned to the professor. I failed to stifle the excitement within me, so the corners of my lips curled as I said, “It’s been a while, Professor King.”



“It’s been a while, indeed. I read your thesis. It was very well–written. However, you need to

elaborate more on your reflections and analysis of classical paintings in the middle section.

Perhaps you can use some examples to illustrate your argument and viewpoint.”

“Yes, sir. I’ll do that as soon as possible.”

Professor Ash and I lost ourselves in the conversation. It felt like the one–on–one meeting we had in his office when I was at Lincoln University.

My classmates began whispering among themselves when they saw Professor Ash and I engaged in a friendly chit–chat.

He appraised my draft and nodded appreciatively, “Not bad. I like your precision.”

Chapter 187

Professor Ash, in his dapper outfit, walked toward the lectern in broad strides. My classmates cheered. They gossiped about their idol in hushed voices.

Professor Ash seemed to be very familiar with this kind of reception. He waited patiently until the class calmed down. Then, he said, “Hi, everyone. I’m Ash King. I’m honored to be part of Jesselton College.

“In the foreseeable future we share together, I’ll do my best to impart what I know to you. I hope you can stay sharp and keep up with my pace. Those who don’t pay attention or finish their assignments on time will have their marks deducted. This is non–negotiable.”

A commotion broke out again. This time, it was a collective groan.

Watching my classmates complain about the harsh lecturer, I chuckled.

Professor Ash was a renowned artist. In his eyes, attitude was more important than talent. My perseverance and thirst for knowledge were the reason why he specially tutored me.

That said, this didn't mean that talent wasn't important. After all, no one could teach a fish to draw.

"Sir, have you met Luna before?" a guy sitting at the back raised his hand and asked.

Professor Ash glanced at me and straightened his back as if he was presenting something he was proud of. "I was a guest lecturer at Lincoln University. Luna is the most promising student I've met in my career. She has a lot of potential. Of that, I'm sure."

A round of applause erupted. My deskmate even nudged and winked at me. I felt so embarrassed.

Professor Ash was a respected figure in the arts scene. Everyone adored and idolized him. One could even say that they worshiped him.

The lecture opened to a warm reception. Everyone took several pages of notes and learned. so many things. They also said that this was the most interesting lecture they had had. Many

continued to discuss the lecture even after it ended.

After the class, Professor Ash summoned me to his office. He gave me some feedback about my draft while I explained my thought process behind the drawing.

Before I left, he uttered a cryptic sentence, "Your moment is about to arrive."

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When I asked him what he meant by that, his lips pressed into a hard line. He refused to elaborate further.

I talked to Professor Ash for a while, and we also went to grab lunch at the cafeteria. It was around one o'clock when I returned to my apartment.

The drizzle made me feel extra chilly.

I huddled under my umbrella to prevent any cold breeze from invading my body. Then, I quickly jogged toward the entrance of my apartment building.

There wasn't anyone at the gate. When I closed my umbrella, a shadow entered my line of sight.

I lifted my face and was shocked by what I saw.

After four days, Matthew looked so different!

His skin was gray, his eyes were soulless, and his cheeks were haggard. The suit looked too big on him. He had lost so much weight, and I couldn't see the light in his eyes.

My heart constricted in pain. I wanted to hug him and make him feel better. But I know I shouldn't.

I regretted my decision so much.

If I could turn back time, I would have told him that we could never be together from the start. I would've stopped him from loving me. That way, he wouldn't have to suffer so much

now.

I gave him hope. And I was the one who crushed it.

But truthfully, the fault lay in neither of us.

"Matthew, what are you doing here?" I initiated the conversation. His devastated state made my eyes well up with tears.

Inside my heart, I had said a thousand "I'm sorry" to him.

"I have some business to take care of here. I thought I could drop by to see you. Lulu, how have you been?"

Matthew croaked. His voice sounded like rubbing two pieces of rusty metal together. He used to regard me with such lively eyes. But now, they were dim.

Chapter 188

"As you can see, I couldn't be better. You, however, have lost so much weight. Work as hard as you want and you still can't own all the riches in the world. You should look after your body. If you don't do that while you're young, you'll age very quickly and you'll regret it."

I didn't know what else to say.

No amount of consolation could mend the brokenhearted Matthew.

He looked at me and then sideways. He smiled. It was a beautiful smile, albeit a bit lonely.

“Yeah, I’ll take care of myself. Go back to your apartment. I’ll get going now. It’s cold now. Make sure you cover yourself.”

“Will do. Thanks. Goodbye.” I then entered my apartment building.

There was a floor-to-ceiling glass pane at the entrance. I caught Matthew’s pitiful silhouette standing under the autumn rain.

His head was lowered, his Adam’s apple rolling up and down. Pain and misery were written

all over his face.

I knew I had shattered his heart. Sorry, Matthew.

Back in my apartment, Helen was standing by the window and looking outside.

I greeted her, but she made no response.

I looked in the direction she was looking and found Matthew, still standing under the

autumn rain.

A strong gust of wind blew, and the rain became heavier. The foliage and the tree branches shook violently as if they were trying to get rid of the foul weather.

Matthew’s lanky frame battled valiantly against the natural forces.

“Luna, he waited for you for nearly three hours,” said Helen coarsely.

“Really? He told me he had some business to take care of here, so he dropped by to say hi.” I closed my umbrella and dried it in the corridor. Then, I removed my half-wet jacket.

“You’re so oblivious, Luna. You don’t know what others have done for you. Given his loyalty, can you please give Matthew another chance? You have issues with his parents, but don’t punish him for it. He likes you. It’s not his fault, and he shouldn’t be punished for it.”

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Helen sobbed and began calling Matthew an idiot. He ignored the person who truly cared about him in life and fell for someone who couldn’t return his feelings.

She was very harsh with her words, but I couldn’t refute any of them.

Matthew was a hopeless romantic, but so was Helen.

“Luna, even if you can’t return Matthew’s feelings, as his ex-classmate, please help him. That day when his father punished him, he couldn’t even stand up straight. His back was all bruised, and he couldn’t even wear a shirt.

“He had a fever that night and barely recovered yesterday. And today, he waited for you for three hours under the rain. What has he done to deserve your cruelty? You’re heartless, Luna.

I sat on a chair in resignation. This was getting exhausting.

Why did no one ever try to be in my shoes? Why was I being reprimanded over and over again?

Did I have to be insulted and belittled by his family without fighting back?

“Helen, everyone feels sorry for Matthew. But who feels sorry for me? What have I done to earn their condescension? You know why they said those nasty words? It’s because they know I’m a powerless, ordinary woman who can’t fight back.

“They’re doing this to me when they know that Matthew likes me a lot. Can you imagine what will happen if I marry him? As soon as I entered his house, I was sneered at and disparaged by his parents. How is that fair? I’m human too, like Matthew.”

Chapter 189

“I cherish Matthew’s feelings toward me. But we hadn’t started dating each other. I refuse to be belittled, and I don’t want him to fall out with his family for me. I will not be called nasty names for the rest of my life.

“He had plenty of options. He was told to choose one option, yet he chose both. You know what that is, Helen? That’s a mistake.”

“I get what you’re saying, Luna. But seeing him so devastated and so heartbroken pains me. I know my demand is very selfish. But I don’t know how else to reduce his suffering.”

“No one can help Matthew. Not even me. He has to go through this alone. If I can’t commit to him or give him a future, I shouldn’t give him false hope. Otherwise, he’ll fall even deeper in love with me. Helen, don’t you like him too? Why don’t you keep him company in this time of need?

“They say hardships bring the best out of everyone. I’m sure that one day, he’ll notice what you’ve done for him. I firmly believe that his feelings for me are nothing but an infatuation toward a bygone past. Maybe the love has died out and only obsession remains.”

“I don’t know about all that. I just want him to be happy and to smile again.”

“Then get to know him better. When that happens, he’ll cry and smile for you. A relationship has to be earned, Helen. You’re a sweetheart. I’m sure he’ll fall for you.”

She made no more responses. Stubbornly, she stood next to the window and suffered the same self-inflicted punishment as the man in the rain. Tears rolled incessantly down her cheeks.

Another fool driven mad by love.

I lay on the bed to read my book. Suddenly, Helen screamed and dashed out of the apartment.

“Come on, Luna. Matthew fainted!”

I got up quickly and chased after her.

It was raining even heavier. The cold could seep through my bones.

Helen knelt in the puddle, her clothes completely drenched by the rain. Her hair was plastered to her face as she tried her best to lift Matthew’s upper torso with her arms. She was careful not to touch the wounds on his back.

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Ignoring her disheveled state, she cried out despondently, “Matthew, what happened? Wake up. Call the ambulance. Call the police. Somebody! Please!”

I ran back to my apartment and called an ambulance. Then, I rushed back down with an

umbrella.

The cold rain and the gusty weather made it hard for the flimsy umbrella. Our bodies trembled in the coldness. An ambulance arrived very quickly. Matthew was carried onto a gurney, and we rushed to a hospital.



When the doctor cut open Matthew's shirt, his wounded skin had already turned white from prolonged exposure to water. Red, crimson flesh could be seen under the gnarly wounds.

It was a gory sight. I screamed and closed my eyes out of fear. Helen covered her mouth and staggered backward. She threw herself into my arms while wailing, "You see that, Lulu? He endured all this for you."

I felt awful. Matthew was such a fool. Why would he go through this for me?

I was a person with empathy. It'd be a lie if I said I wasn't upset to see Matthew in so much pain. But what could I do? A temporary heartbreak might heal, but a lifelong suffering could

turn one insane.

Matthew was one of the Loxleys, and he had very influential parents. I had no place in his world. Peace in a relationship from a one-sided compromise would not last long.

Chapter 190

Matthew's dressing was changed before he was pushed into a ward. The doctor said he had a high fever and needed to be hospitalized for a few days.

He must be seriously ill because after all the medical help, he still hadn't regained

consciousness.

"Luna, you're so cruel. He refused to see a doctor when he had a fever back at home. And to

see you, he put his life on the line." Helen kept sobbing. Her eyes and nose were red from the crying.

I felt so guilty as I looked at the sleeping Matthew. Regardless if I could return his feelings or not, I felt like I had just stepped and spat on his devotion.

I should consider myself lucky to be loved by such a loyal man. Alas, there were too many

things between us. I couldn't reciprocate his feelings.

"Helen, I'll go back now. Don't tell him that I came." I retrieved my phone from the corner of the bed and gazed at the unconscious Matthew. Then, I steeled my mind and left.

Helen chased after me and cursed at how heartless I was. She said bad karma would

eventually befall me.

Instead of arguing with her, I quickened my pace and fled.

I had a lecture in the afternoon, but I had to skip it because I had to send Matthew to the hospital. When I noticed my mistake, the lecture was already half done. I had no choice but to apply for a leave.

Professor King taught us twice a week. He was unhappy with my absence. I only managed to assuage his disgruntlement after I made repeated promises that I would draw him some artwork for his lecturing purposes.

No other person could boss me around and simultaneously be as strict on me as he.

The rain persisted. The dark clouds made everything look extra stuffy, just like what I was feeling inside. I could neither sleep nor draw, so I hid under my blanket and spaced out with

the raindrops in the background.

I must have been very lucky. Not falling in love with Matthew had spared me the insults and marginalization from high society. Unfortunately for Matthew, he was not one of the lucky ones. He had to experience this rude awakening.

1/2

At 4:15 pm, Helen sent me a photo of a conscious Matthew. He looked lifeless and defeated, unlike a young man in his early 20s.

“He was disappointed when he didn’t see you here.”

I thought for a while before typing a simple reply, “He’ll get better.”

I refused to be guilt-tripped into dating him. His family was oppressive enough that I could never live like a decent human being there. Putting aside my feelings for Matthew, my first encounter with his parents told me that dating him would be a tragic mistake.

I was content to have hung out with the younger version of Matthew. I shouldn’t destroy his

life.

If I could turn back time, I wouldn’t tell him that I’d consider it. I would reject him right

away.

My indecision was the source of his suffering. If I had told him that we could never date each other, none of this would have happened. I caused Matthew pain, even though it wasn’t my intention.

Looking at Matthew’s photo, I felt even more conflicted. Tears came bursting out of my eyes uncontrollably.

I wasn't sure why I cried either, but I felt like crying. Something heavy was inside my chest, and it was choking me.

The current Matthew was like the 18-year-old me. We were both bruised. We wanted to cry, yet no one could lend us a shoulder to cry on.