

The World 751

Chapter 751: Medicinal Improvements And The Development Of The Cure For Eternal Slumber (6)

Now, both of them were completely soaked—drenched in layers of thick, glistening white semen that clung to their bodies like paint on a canvas.

They lay sprawled across the floor, breathing heavily, their chests rising and falling with each shaky inhale. Their breasts bounced subtly with every pant, the softness of their flesh heaving under the weight of exhaustion and lingering pleasure.

The sight of them—utterly ruined, sweat-slicked skin shimmering under the dim lights, their naked forms coated in used condoms—was maddening. It was arousing to the point of absurdity. More than it should've been.

Their expressions were slack with euphoria, eyes half-lidded and completely glazed over with that unmistakable look of debauchery. Their tongues lolled from their mouths lazily, as if they had lost the strength to reel them back in.

Used condoms were draped over their bodies like accessories of sin, stretched across their thighs, bellies, breasts—some even stuck to their skin, glistening with slick residue. The scene was soaked in eroticism, like a painting drawn straight out of the deepest fantasies.

"Ah... That felt good, Master~..." Trisha murmured, her voice slurred and dripping with satisfaction. Her tone was almost childlike in its dreaminess, as if the pleasure had melted her into a daze she didn't want to escape.

"Glad you like it," I replied, my gaze lingering on her.

Slowly, she pushed herself upright. Her movements were languid, almost drunk on pleasure. Strands of damp hair clung to her cheeks and forehead, framing her dazed face perfectly. Her expression was a portrait of someone utterly ravished—flushed skin, swollen lips, and that distant, satisfied stare.

Something about seeing her this sweaty, this fucked-out, was almost unbearably hot.

"Ahh... I know we're collecting this for research, but I want a taste... So sorry, Master," she said softly, as her fingers reached toward one of the condoms resting on her stomach. The latex was swollen, still sagging from how much I had poured inside it, despite already cumming multiple times.

She pinched the base carefully between two fingers, lifted it until it dangled in front of her face, then raised it even higher—until it hovered above her open mouth.

With a slight tilt, she angled the opening and let the thick, white cum slowly slide out in a single string. It stretched as it dropped, then landed with a wet slap onto her tongue. She closed her eyes as she let the semen pool there, savoring the taste before she began to swallow.

"Ah, m-me too..." Maya whispered, her speech as slurred and broken as Trisha's. She too reached for a condom on her thigh, lifted it with trembling fingers, and mirrored Trisha's movement.

Watching both of them drink my semen—mouths open, tongues waiting, the white liquid dripping down like nectar—was something beyond surreal. It felt like I was watching a scene that couldn't possibly be real. Something out of a dream. And yet, it was happening right in front of me.

They treated it like it was a delicacy—savoring the taste, letting it slide slowly into their mouths with desire in their eyes.

"Well, I guess the condom really works well," I muttered under my breath, still mesmerized by the sight.

"What are your thoughts about it?" Trisha asked, wiping her lips with the back of her hand, a small grin still lingering.

My thoughts? Honestly, I had already approved of the product from the beginning. But now that I had tested it personally, experienced it from start to finish, I could say with certainty—it was excellent.

The texture of the rubber was noticeable, yes, but it didn't detract from the experience. Not at all.

It didn't feel like a barrier—it was more like a light wrap. The friction was still there. The heat, the tightness, the pleasure—it all translated through. It dulled the edge only slightly, but never enough to kill the sensation. Not once.

Overall, it was a damn fine product. And releasing it into the world? That would be a win for us. A big one.

Leonamon's growth had been impressive lately. With projects reaching production phase and test subjects—like this one—showing promising results, I was confident we were ready for the next leap.

The world was heading toward inevitable war. Tensions were climbing globally. We had to prepare. That meant giving Leonamon every advantage as well as every edge.

Automaton development, like the Republic was focusing on, was a priority. A war of machines instead of people—if that's where the battlefield was headed, then fine. I'd meet them there.

Leonamon had already begun studying Anna as a core model. Zoey and Chloe were contributing too, analyzing her systems and compiling data. That alone gave us a significant head start.

If the Republic wanted a war of machines, I'd give them one. On our terms.

After wrapping up my feedback to Trisha—affirming the product's effectiveness and the way it preserved reproductive control—I glanced back down at their naked, glistening bodies.

And then an idea came to me.

A wicked one.

"Well... to commemorate this breakthrough, why don't we take a picture?" I said with a playful grin forming on my lips.

I bent down and fished my smartphone out of the pants that had been tossed to the floor earlier.

"Now, strike this pose," I instructed.

They followed without hesitation.

Both of them spread their legs wide, their pussies on full display, glistening and flushed, with piles of used condoms surrounding them—some still dripping, others half-folded or stuck to their thighs. More condoms lined the sides of their hips like trophies of the night.

To add a little flair, they lifted their arms, shielding their eyes with the backs of their hands, while clenching multiple condom sachets between their teeth—grinning slightly as if showing off the product itself.

Even though their faces were hidden, their bodies made it obvious what had just occurred.

And despite the lewdness of the pose, one thing stood out clearly—there wasn't a single drop of cum leaking from their pussies. No mess. No spills. Just stretched, satisfied holes and clean containment.

The product had done exactly what it was supposed to do.

It was the perfect ad shot. Explicit yet informative. A visual that said everything without needing a caption.

But even so, showing this to the world? That wasn't something I wanted.

I didn't want to put the women I had out on display for public eyes.

Mm... But maybe a toned-down version—something suggestive, teasing, but not too revealing—could work for promotion. Maybe even a video, with cuts that hid the most explicit parts.

Something tasteful.

Something powerful.

Something that would sell.

Chapter 752: Wake Up (1)

After several long and meticulous weeks, the research had finally come to an end. And now, in our hands, we held what might be the key to awakening Zeruel's mother from her deep, unending slumber.

It was in the form of a pill.

Not a syrup. Not a vial of liquid.

But a small, unassuming pill.

There was no telltale sheen of fluid, no scent or texture to give away its origin. It looked perfectly ordinary—just like any over-the-counter capsule you'd see in a pharmacy. But we knew better.

The original base material, my semen, had undergone heavy refinement. The sperm cells—the actual sperm themselves—had been extracted entirely, removed and discarded during the process. The rest had been liquified and purified, leaving behind nothing but the essence, the concentrated life force.

The result? A pill that didn't look, feel, or taste like semen at all.

Still, even with the transformation, there was no denying the truth.

That whoever took this pill would, in a way, be consuming semen.

But honestly, was there even a point in bringing that up now?

The focus was on the cure, not the source.

Right now, the research team was finishing their analysis of the pill. They were meticulous, running tests over and over again, leaving no margin for doubt.

According to the data, my semen contained a powerful life force.

And since the Eternal Slumber Disease drained the very essence of one's life, using that life-rich substance as a countermeasure had turned out to be not only viable—but promising.

The pill, being formed from that essence, was now a candidate for the cure.

And thanks to its appearance, there was nothing about it that would hint it had ever been derived from cum.

No one would ever have to know.

Morally speaking, the act had already been sanitized.

All sperm cells were removed, and only the energy was retained.

It was pure, in a clinical sense.

And with the absurd amount of semen I'd donated for this cause, the team had enough to create a massive reserve.

The current estimation was that the stockpile could last a thousand years if properly managed.

At the moment, I was standing beside Doctor Natasha.

She had once been a respected physician at Milham Hospital—before it had been destroyed in that tragic fire set by the Prince. After that, she relocated and ended up working at Leonamon.

She had proven her skill in more ways than one, adapting quickly to her new environment.

She had now been with us for a year. And from time to time, I asked her to perform checkups on my women's pussies, treating her like our unofficial gynecologist.

Though she grumbled whenever I made such requests, she had grown used to it. These days, she barely even complained.

"Everything seems to be set, Master," Trisha reported, her voice calm but filled with a quiet confidence. "All preparations are complete. The pills passed every inspection. We've researched them thoroughly, and we found no complications at all."

No complications.

That alone was enough to make my chest tighten.

"So, what's the next step?" I asked, my voice steady despite the weight of the moment.

"Well, the next step..." Trisha began, brushing a few strands of hair behind her ear, "would be to test it firsthand—to actually administer it and observe the result. There's still uncertainty, of course. But unless someone takes the pill, we'll never know if it truly works."

I exhaled, slowly. "I get it... but we can't just use it on Zeruel's mother right away if it's still in a trial phase, right?"

She looked me in the eye, her expression calm but unwavering. "Well, technically... the only way to prove its effectiveness is to give it to someone who is afflicted with Eternal Slumber. That's the only real test that matters."

So we didn't have a choice, huh?

It was a hard pill to swallow—no pun intended.

The stakes were enormous.

The consequences, unknown. But doing nothing wasn't an option. We wouldn't know the truth unless we tried.

"I'll call Zeruel here first," I said.

We couldn't move forward without her.

While waiting for Zeruel, I decided to take Gabrielle out for some fresh air.

She was six months—no, almost seven months—into her pregnancy now.

And she looked beautiful.

Her condition had progressed wonderfully. Her belly had grown round and firm, visibly larger than before. In just two more months, we would be welcoming our child into this world.

She sat comfortably in her wheelchair as I pushed her slowly through the hidden garden tucked away inside the Leonamon company tower. I didn't want her straining herself with unnecessary movement, so I made sure she could just enjoy the scenery while staying relaxed.

The air was fresh and clean, the garden quiet and secluded. Flowers bloomed along the path, swaying gently in the breeze.

"Are you feeling well, Gabrielle?" I asked, slowing my pace beside a small patch of wild roses.

She turned her head and smiled at me, radiant as ever. "Better than before. Actually, I feel great. I'm really excited for the baby to be born."

Her voice was soft, but filled with warmth.

I couldn't help but smile back. "Yeah... me too."

Soon, I'd be a father.

That thought—simple as it was—sent a strange warmth through my chest. There was anxiety, sure. Plenty of unknowns. But at the same time, just the idea of holding my own child... it made something inside me ache in a good way. I genuinely couldn't wait.

"Fufufu... Master, I can tell you're looking forward to it," she giggled.

"Well, being a father is exciting, isn't it?" I said with a grin. "Although, if we're being honest, I think you are way more excited than I am. Right?"

"Fufufu... Maybe," she chuckled. "I feel like I've finally become yours—completely. Body and soul. Carrying your child... it makes me feel whole. Though... not fully yet. We still haven't done it in this condition, after all."

She shot me a teasing smile, one hand gently caressing her belly.

When she said it like that, with that sly little grin on her face, I couldn't help but chuckle softly.

"Well, you don't have to push yourself. But if you're planning to surprise me with it one day..." I leaned in slightly, smirking, "then I'll gladly accept the offer."

Chapter 753: Wake Up (2)

After a while, Zeruel finally arrived.

Her breathing was ragged, chest rising and falling with every gasping breath as if her lungs were on fire. Strands of her long hair stuck to her damp cheeks, and her shoulders trembled lightly from exhaustion. She must have sprinted here with everything she had with no hesitation as well as no rest.

She stood there, catching her breath, sweat glistening on her forehead under the soft glow of the nearby crystals. Her body heaved slightly, and the way she clutched the worn bag in her hands said enough.

Judging by its contents—bundles of wrapped vegetables, a few jars, and other small items—she had clearly been shopping at the market. It wasn't hard to imagine that she had been on her way home, and the moment she heard the message, she dropped everything and ran.

So she ran... all the way here. Without stopping. From the Market City to the Academy City. That wasn't a short walk—let alone a sprint.

"I-I'm here..." she panted, her voice soft, slightly hoarse from running.

The distance between the two cities wasn't something to take lightly. It was a brutal, exhausting trek on foot, especially nonstop. But Zeruel had managed to do it, unflinching. That alone showed just how much this meant to her.

Of course, being a swordsman—and having the Blessed Sword ability at that—meant her stamina was on a completely different level from the average person. But still... this level of urgency, this sheer effort...

"L-Leon, you said the medicine was done?" she asked, still panting slightly, her brows furrowed as her voice trembled just a little.

She stepped forward, getting closer, her legs a little shaky from the run—but halfway toward me, she suddenly stopped. Her eyes widened faintly as the realization hit.

She was drenched in sweat. Her blouse clung to her back and chest, outlining her curves, and small beads of perspiration were running down the sides of her neck.

Her face immediately turned bright red.

With an awkward expression, she backed away a few steps, looking anywhere but directly at me.

I noticed, but I didn't comment. I just ignored it. Still... I wasn't going to lie—the whole scene was kind of funny. Cute, even.

"Yes," I replied calmly. "Right now, we're about to see whether it works or not. But we can't confirm anything until we actually test it on a real patient. That's why we asked you to come here."

She swallowed hard, the sound of her nervous gulp audible.

"Y-You're going to use it on my mother... even though there's no real guarantee it'll work? And there's also a chance it might fail, right?" she asked, her voice wavering with anxiety.

As expected, she already knew.

I wasn't surprised. In fact, I expected this much from Zeruel. Her instincts, especially when it came to things like this, were second to none. She was sharp and perceptive.

I nodded slowly, giving her the confirmation she sought. "That's the exact problem we're facing. While we've processed the medicine and it's been deemed safe, we won't truly know its effectiveness until someone afflicted with the Eternal Sleep takes it."

I met her eyes directly.

"In this case, your mother has to be the first one—the trial subject. But I'm not going to move forward without your decision. If you don't agree, we can delay everything. We'll just search for another way."

Another way... sure. But that other way would take time. Too much time.

This illness—the Eternal Sleep—had plagued this world for centuries. No known cure existed. Magic couldn't reverse it. The only known solution until now was a magical implement that merely sustained life, not restored it.

Waiting meant possibly letting her mother rot in limbo for years, or possibly even decades.

And judging from the look on Zeruel's face, she was thinking about all that—deeply.

On one hand, the thought of growing old while her mother remained stuck in sleep was horrifying. Never speaking again. Never waking up. Just wasting away, trapped between life and death.

On the other hand, this medicine wasn't a certainty. It might fail. Or worse—it might harm her mother's already fragile body.

It was a terrible choice.

Three outcomes. Three impossible variables.

But eventually, she lifted her eyes and looked at me again.

"L-Let's do it," she said.

"You sure?" I asked her again, my tone serious.

"I..." she began, hesitating. Her voice wavered, as if still unsure. "I think... my mother would want to recover. She'd be willing to do anything if it meant waking up again."

"I'm not asking what your mother would want," I replied, narrowing my eyes slightly. "I'm asking what you think. You're the one who holds the right to decide. No one else."

Her throat bobbed as she gulped.

She didn't answer right away.

Instead, she took a long, deep breath and closed her eyes. I watched her carefully, saying nothing. I could feel her mind drifting—lost in thought, weighing pain against hope.

And then, slowly, she opened her eyes again.

They looked different this time. Steadier. Clearer. The doubt in them had faded, replaced by resolve.

"Let's do it," she repeated, more firmly.

That was the answer I needed to hear.

Hesitation had no place here. If she had gone into this half-heartedly, there was no way we'd proceed. Because if something went wrong and regret took hold of her, the emotional weight might have been too much.

That's why I needed her to be certain.

And now, she was.

With her answer given, we made our way toward the facility where her mother was currently being cared for.

The hallway was quiet, the air cold and sterile. When we entered the room, her mother lay on the bed, still and unmoving, the sheets tucked neatly around her.

She wore a clean hospital gown, her pale skin catching the light of the room's lights. Her face looked serene—too serene, like someone just frozen in time.

Beside her stood the magical implement—a large crystal, pulsing faintly with stored life force. Tubes extended from it, connected to various parts of her body. It was the only thing keeping her alive.

Chapter 754: Wake Up (3)

She looked peaceful. Almost like she was dreaming.

I gave Trisha a nod.

She stepped forward with slow, careful movements, holding a small pill between her fingers.

Raising the pill over the woman's face, she gently opened her mouth and slid the pill inside.

Then, using a technique that helped unconscious patients swallow, she guided the pill down the throat successfully.

It was done.

"Now, let's wait for more obvious signs of change," said Trisha, eyes fixed on the patient, voice steady.

Zeruel, meanwhile, stood frozen beside me.

She stared at her mother with trembling eyes, shoulders slightly hunched. Her hand reached out slowly and gripped the fabric of my sleeve—tight and desperate.

She held on like I was the only thing grounding her in that moment.

And I let her.

I didn't pull away.

I let her hold me.

After several hours passed, still... there were no changes.

No movement. No reaction.

Nothing to suggest even the faintest shift.

It wasn't entirely unexpected. A part of me had already braced for this. And yet, in the depths of my chest, I had still clung to the fragile hope that something would happen. A twitch of a finger, a shift in her breathing—anything to tell us it was working.

But there was nothing.

Despite the months—no, nearly a year—of painstaking research, despite everything poured into creating that single pill, it seemed like it had all amounted to nothing. The silence in the room screamed the truth we didn't want to hear.

When Zeruel finally realized it, her posture visibly collapsed.

Her shoulders slumped down like all the tension had drained from her spine. The slight quiver in her lips, the tightness in her jaw, and the way her eyes sank said everything—she was crushed.

I could see it written all over her face.

It was disappointment.

It mirrored my own.

This result... it was the very thing I had been dreading.

If this had worked—if this one pill had done what we had believed it could—it would have been revolutionary. It would have shattered the eternal slumber crisis. An illness that had stolen lives across nations, something even the most powerful healers and spellcasters couldn't cure, could've finally had a counter.

That was only if it had worked.

But it didn't.

Still, I took a small breath and told myself one thing: at least there were no visible side effects. That alone was the only silver lining. A bitter one, but still... something to hold on to.

Trisha quietly excused herself from the room. Her voice was flat, almost cold—not from anger, but from suppressed sorrow.

She had put in so much work. Hours upon hours of sleepless nights. Tireless effort alongside the best minds we had access to. All of it driven by the belief that they were close—on the verge of a breakthrough.

To watch all of that vanish in silence... it must've hurt deeply.

Zeruel, meanwhile, said nothing. She didn't cry. She didn't rage. She just silently moved to the seat beside her mother's bed and sat down, her movements slow and heavy.

She reached out, took her mother's limp hand in hers, and stared at her face in silence.

Her thumb gently brushed across her knuckles.

There was so much she wanted to say, so much she had probably rehearsed in her mind... but all of it got stuck somewhere in her throat. Instead, she just sat there—expression heavy, eyes searching for signs that weren't there.

"I'll excuse myself," I said softly, stepping toward the door.

But then—

"Please... stay with me for a while," she said, her voice quiet and trembling.

I paused, my hand frozen in mid-reach. The quiet crack in her tone gripped something in my chest and made me turn back to her.

She wasn't looking at me—her eyes were still locked onto her mother's face—but the weight of those few words kept me rooted in place.

I took a slow breath, turned fully around, and walked back. Without a word, I sat down beside her.

Her mother still lay motionless. Her chest rose and fell with shallow breaths. The sound of gentle breathing was the only thing in the room, like a faint whisper of life that mocked our efforts.

The pill hadn't done a thing.

I reached over and placed a hand on Zeruel's shoulder—

She didn't flinch. Instead, her hand moved, gripping my opposite shoulder—and then she pulled herself into a hug.

Her arms wrapped tightly around me.

It wasn't desperation. It was something deeper—like she needed something, someone, to keep her from unraveling.

I didn't say anything.

I didn't pull away.

I just let her.

And then... the tremble started.

Her body began to shake in my arms, and a soft, muffled sound escaped her lips—a quiet sob that quickly broke into more.

She clung to me harder, burying her face into my shoulder. The warmth of her tears soaked through the fabric.

I gently placed my hand on the back of her head, fingers threading through her hair as I cradled her closer.

I let her cry.

I didn't try to stop her. Didn't offer empty words.

Because there was nothing to say.

I sat there in silence, the weight of failure and pain pressing down on both of us.

Then—just barely—I caught something in the corner of my eye.

A flicker. A shift.

The faintest creak echoed from the bed. The sound was so subtle that at first, I thought I imagined it. But then, slowly, the sheets rustled... and the mattress dipped slightly from shifting weight.

The figure lying still for so long... was starting to move.

Bit by bit, her upper body rose—slowly, unsteadily—until she was upright.

Her limbs trembled. Her expression was hazy. Her strength was almost nonexistent. And yet—she did not ask for support.

She sat up on her own.

Her eyes fluttered open, cloudy and dazed, searching around the room until they locked onto us.

"...Zeruel?" she asked.

Her voice was strained, dry from disuse, but unmistakably alive. It held emotion.

Zeruel pulled away from me instantly, spinning around in disbelief.

Her eyes widened, her mouth parted, and she stared—frozen.

"M-Mom?" she choked out.

Emotion swelled in her voice, threatening to break her entirely. The despair she had buried beneath her skin only moments ago was now morphing into something too overwhelming to contain.

Her mother smiled, though it wavered with weakness. "You've grown..." she said softly. "How long have I been asleep?"

To her, it must've felt like a single night of sleep. A blink. A breath.

In reality... she had been gone for over a year.

"For so long, Mom..." Zeruel said, her voice trembling. "So long that I thought I'd lose you... A-Are you really awake now? T-This isn't a dream, is it?"

She reached out—cautiously, slowly—as if touching her mother would cause her to disappear.

Her mother responded by raising her hand and gently brushing her fingers across Zeruel's cheek.

She wiped the tears that streamed down without pause, her touch tender and comforting.

"You've suffered so much, haven't you, Zeruel?" she said gently. "You don't have to worry. I'm awake now. This isn't a dream."

That was all it took.

Zeruel let out a sound—a strangled sob caught between disbelief and relief—as her body collapsed into her mother's arms.

Her arms wrapped around her mother's waist, tightly, desperately, as if afraid letting go would break the spell.

And then... she cried.

Loud, ugly, heartbreaking cries that echoed through the room.

All the pain she had buried. All the hope she had guarded. It came flooding out in waves.

And she cried... because the impossible had finally become real.

Chapter 755: Wake Up (4)

Zeruel's mother was immediately brought over to Trisha and Natasha, who wasted no time beginning a thorough examination.

Their expressions were focused and professional—but beneath their calm demeanor, there was a trace of awe. It wasn't every day that someone awoke after sleeping for an entire year.

They started with her vitals—measuring her heartbeat, breathing, temperature, and blood flow.

Every instrument buzzed softly as readings flickered to life, and the two worked in near silence, occasionally exchanging glances or nodding.

Then came the sensory tests.

Touch. Sight. Taste. Reflexes.

Every response was carefully observed and documented.

Astonishingly, everything came back normal.

Despite being unconscious for more than a year, her physical body showed no signs of decay or fatigue.

Her responses were crisp and clear.

As if she'd merely taken a long nap instead of being asleep for months on end.

She didn't even ask for food. Not once.

Her stomach made no sound, and her eyes held no hint of hunger.

It was strange, almost unnatural.

But perhaps... understandable, given the circumstances.

Maybe hunger didn't apply to someone like her who felt like they had slept only for a day.

Throughout the entire check-up, she kept stealing glances at me.

Her gaze was steady but warm. She smiled softly each time our eyes met.

And I had no idea why.

Zeruel stood beside me, her attention completely locked on her mother.

Her smile—genuine and full—never left her face.

It was radiant, full of relief and joy that made my chest feel oddly tight.

She looked like a little girl watching a toy being lowered by a claw machine, her older brother guiding the claw with precision. The prize was finally coming home. All she had to do was wait. Her joy was pure and unfiltered.

Honestly... I couldn't blame her.

After everything she'd gone through—the things she had to face, endure, and sacrifice just to reach this moment—this was her reward.

Her mother, alive. Awake. Smiling. Speaking. Breathing. Here.

Her tireless efforts... they weren't in vain.

She had finally earned her peace. She was living the fruits of her struggle.

When the tests were done, Trisha and Natasha gave their final notes.

Vitals? Stable. Physical body? Healthy.

Nothing unusual detected.

All readings matched someone who hadn't just been asleep for a year.

With that, they finally stepped away, giving her space to breathe.

Zeruel's mother let out a soft sigh of relief, stretching her limbs as if feeling them anew. And then, her eyes turned to her daughter again.

"H-How was it?" Zeruel asked, voice trembling slightly with anticipation.

"They said I'm fine now," her mother replied gently. "But they still want to run some more detailed tests to make sure everything's truly okay."

She let out a soft laugh.

"Honestly... I don't feel anything wrong. Are you really telling me I was asleep for more than a year?"

"Yes," Zeruel said with a small nod, her smile turning a little emotional.

"Well, I'm sorry," her mother said, expression shifting to one of regret. "I must've caused you so much work. So much worry."

"No, it's fine." Zeruel's voice cracked, but she quickly composed herself. "I'm just glad that... you're back now."

She looked like she was about to break again, her eyes shimmering. But she swallowed it down, forcing the tears away.

"I'm sure Selene would be happy," she added, her voice barely above a whisper.

"Yes... Selene," her mother repeated, as if the name had just come back to her. "How could I forget about her? She must've grown so much."

"She's going to start her first year after this current one," Zeruel explained. "She's been studying here with the others lately, and I think she'll pass the entrance exams easily."

"I see... That's wonderful. I'm excited to see her again. She must've changed a lot," her mother said, eyes soft and distant for a moment. Then, her gaze slowly returned to me.

"And I'm sorry I couldn't say anything to you earlier," she continued. "When I first woke up, I saw a stranger hugging my daughter and I... I was really confused. I've only just woken up after more than a year. Everything felt strange."

She gave a gentle smile, eyes kind and calm now.

"So let me properly introduce myself. I'm Zeruel's mother. Juna," she said warmly. "Would you mind telling me your name? I'd like to know the man who's currently in a relationship with my daughter."

"M-Mom! M-Me and Leon are not like that!"

"Not like what?"

"W-We're not in a relationship!"

"Huh? But I could've sworn..."

"H-He's just someone who helps us a lot, okay?! B-Besides, I don't think Leon's attracted to me or anything!"

She shot me a side glance—half embarrassment and half denial.

"I do think you're attractive," I replied calmly, meeting her eyes. "I confessed to you, remember?"

"T-That was...!"

"He confessed to you?" her mother blinked in surprise, then narrowed her eyes at her daughter. "And you're still not in a relationship? Why? Don't tell me you've been leading him on and dodging the question. Or... did you reject him?"

"I-I wasn't in a good mood that day, okay? It was the day you collapsed, Mom..." Zeruel muttered.

"Ah... I see. So your heart wasn't in the right place, and that's why you turned him down," Juna said gently. "But tell me... if he confessed to you again—right here, right now—would you answer him properly this time?"

She looked at me with playful eyes, lips curled in a teasing grin.

"After all, Mr. Handsome here clearly still likes you, if he's stuck around this long."

"Um, it's not because he likes me that he's here," Zeruel said hastily, glancing away. "He's here because... he owns this entire establishment."

Her mother froze, blinking in disbelief.

"Wait... really?" she asked, her voice nearly cracking from shock.

Her reaction was justified. Who wouldn't be surprised by something like that?

I wasn't even in my twenties yet. Owning a place like this—something that usually took decades to build—wasn't something people just casually did.

But I nodded silently, confirming her daughter's words.

Chapter 756: Wake Up (5)

"I-I'm sorry... I must've come off a little rude," she said, her voice soft as she bowed her head politely, the strands of her hair falling to the sides of her face. "S-So you're the one who's been helping my daughter... and even helped me recover, huh...? Um, really... thank you for everything. H-How could we possibly repay you?"

"You really don't need to worry about that," I replied, my tone calm but sincere, offering a small, reassuring smile. "I only did what felt like the right thing. I mean, I know Zeruel—and I've seen how hard she's been working. She's been juggling so much at once—supporting her little sister, trying to put food on the table, all while struggling to keep up with your medical bills at the hospital you were previously in. Honestly... she's the kind of person who deserves every bit of help she gets."

"B-But... this must've cost a fortune, didn't it?" she said, her voice trembling as her eyes widened slightly, showing a mix of disbelief and guilt. "Not only did you use so many pieces of equipment, hire medical staff, and other resources... all of that must be expensive. You even gave me a place to stay here in this establishment for more than a year. T-This is something I have to repay."

"As I said," I repeated gently, "you really don't have to worry about it."

I leaned back slightly and crossed my arms, thinking for a moment before continuing.

"In fact, this whole experience led to something remarkable. A breakthrough."

Because of her case, we were able to develop a brand-new medicine—something that could actually cure the Eternal Sleep Disease. A disease once thought to be impossible to treat. And I was the only one capable of producing the key material required to create it.

"Is that... really true?" she asked, narrowing her eyes slightly, suspicion flickering behind her gaze.

It was a fair reaction. Her wariness wasn't unfounded. After all, something this significant could easily come off as too good to be true. Like I had some kind of hidden agenda.

But I didn't.

"Yes," I answered with unwavering calmness. "I understand your caution... but I promise you, I don't have any hidden motives or agendas," I said, meeting her gaze squarely.

She stared into my eyes, searching for something beneath the surface—some sign of deception, or perhaps a crack in my sincerity. But after a quiet moment, her shoulders slowly relaxed, and her expression softened. She believed me.

"Still... I really can't find a way to repay your generosity," she murmured, her voice quiet but firm. "So... the only thing I can truly offer you is my heartfelt thanks."

"And that's perfectly fine with me," I said simply. "Your thanks is more than enough."

As those words settled between us, she seemed to pause again—like she had more to say, or maybe was still weighing something heavy in her heart. But after a few heartbeats, her lips curved into a smile. A real one. This time, it wasn't strained or hesitant. It felt... honest.

"You really are a kind young man," she said softly, her eyes glimmering with warmth.

But just as we were settling into the quiet of that moment, the door suddenly burst open with a loud thud, the sharp echo bouncing across the room like a warning bell.

We turned in unison—only to see Selene standing at the entrance.

Her face was pale. Her arms limp at her sides. A paper bag, likely filled with vegetables from the market, slipped from her grasp and hit the floor with a muffled thump. The contents scattered across the floor—leafy greens, carrots, a couple of radishes—rolling in random directions.

But no one cared about the vegetables.

Because in that moment, none of it mattered.

Not when something infinitely more precious was right in front of her.

"M-Mom...?" Selene's voice cracked, barely more than a whisper.

We hadn't told her anything. She had no idea her mother was awake. Well, not yet anyway. So now, the shock was hitting her all at once.

"Selene," her mother said, voice soft as velvet, her arms slowly opening wide, beckoning her in.

I instinctively took a step back, creating space for them—this moment was theirs, and theirs alone.

"Mom!"

The next second, Selene rushed forward—her steps loud and urgent on the floor—and threw herself into her mother's arms. The sheer force of her hug caused her mother to stagger slightly, but she didn't fall. She caught Selene like she had never let her go.

"Mom... Mom... Mo..." Selene whimpered, her voice breaking as her arms clung tighter and tighter. "Mo... Uwaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaahhh... ughhh... ahhhh..."

Tears finally spilled from her eyes, and she began sobbing—loud, unrestrained, like a dam that had finally burst.

Her mother simply held her. One arm wrapped around her waist, the other gently stroking the back of her head.

"You've really grown so much..." she whispered into her daughter's ear. "I regret not being able to watch you grow, but I'm so thankful... that I finally get to see you again."

"I missed you...! I missed you so much!" Selene cried, burying her face deeper into her mother's shoulder.

"That's right. Just let it out like that... all of it."

And now I understood.

Now I understood why these two sisters would go so far—endure so much—for the sake of this woman.

Their mother wasn't just kind. She was filled to the brim with love—giving everything she had to the people she loved. She was the kind of person who would tear herself apart for her family, no matter how painful, no matter how humiliating it got.

She was someone worth fighting for.

And honestly... being here felt like I was intruding on something sacred. But even so, witnessing it was like watching the first sunrise after a year of rain.

It was beautiful.

So, I quietly stepped out of the room, letting them have their moment in peace.

After all this time—after over a year of sorrow and waiting...

This family of three... was finally whole again.

Zeruel's POV

I was happy.

No, I was beyond happy.

For the first time in what felt like forever, my heart felt whole again.

My mother... she was back. Truly back in our lives.

I had prayed, begged, cried for this day—and now, it had finally come true.

She was here.

Alive.

Smiling.

Speaking.

Holding Selene.

None of this—none of it—would've happened without Leon.

He was the one who stood by us.

Who gave everything.

Who made the impossible... possible.

No amount of money or gratitude could ever be enough to repay what he had done for us.

So I made a choice.

A decision that was final—unchanging.

I would give myself to him.

All of me—my heart, my soul, my life, my future.

Even if he didn't need me.

Even if he was already strong and capable.

It didn't matter.

Because I needed him.

And I would walk beside him, no matter what.

That... is my decision.

And it will never change.

Chapter 757: The Odd Woman (1)

There were only about three months left before the current academic year finally came to a close.

The Physical Examination had already taken place a few weeks prior. It had gone smoothly, without any real incidents or surprises. Now, all that remained were the final examinations—the last hurdle before the current second-year cadets advanced to their third year at the academy.

The air had grown noticeably colder.

Winter vacation was already well underway, and to be honest, it was drawing to its end faster than I expected.

At this moment, I was on a quiet, peaceful date with Yr.

She had mentioned wanting to try out the new seasonal cake flavor being offered at the Leonamon Cake Shop. A limited release, apparently.

She was holding my hand tightly as we strolled through the chilly streets. Normally, she'd be dozing off halfway through any activity, but today she was surprisingly lively—her steps had a slight bounce, and her expression looked brighter than usual.

She wasn't sleepy at all.

Maybe the idea of dessert was exciting enough to keep her awake.

"Ah... Leon..." she muttered softly, her voice still dragging with that ever-present sleepy tone.

"What is it?" I asked.

"My feet... they feel cold," she murmured, her words almost dissolving in the frosty air.

I looked down at her legs—and my eyes narrowed.

Her feet were slightly red, exposed to the cold far more than they should've been.

"Wait a sec... weren't you wearing boots earlier? Weren't those supposed to protect you from the cold?" I asked, raising an eyebrow.

"Boots are heavy," she replied with a pout. "I can't walk properly in them."

...Seriously?

Well, it was Yr, after all.

Even the simplest thing like wearing boots made her body feel sluggish. And somehow, at some point during our walk, she had taken them off. They were gone completely from her feet.

I didn't even notice her doing it.

"Let me carry you, then," I said without hesitation.

"Yay~" she chirped with a tiny smile that bloomed across her sleepy face.

"Wait... You really don't want to wear boots that badly? Or are you just looking for an excuse so I'll carry you?" I asked, narrowing my eyes playfully.

She blinked slowly, then grinned—half mischievous, half drowsy.

"Maybe a little bit of both," she admitted.

That sly, sleepy smirk of hers hit me right in the heart.

She was ridiculously adorable.

Honestly, if I could, I'd take a picture of her right now and frame it. Hang it on a wall. Preserve that expression for eternity.

Wait. I could do that. We have smartphones here.

With a small exhale, I crouched down in front of her, letting my hands rest on my knees.

"Come here, Yr."

She paused for a second, blinking like she just processed what I said.

Then, suddenly, a blush crept across her cheeks.

That was rare.

Yr hardly ever blushed. But when she did, she turned into something soft, gentle... innocent. It was almost unfair how cute she looked when her sleepy composure cracked like that.

Looking at her now made my heart flutter. It was impossible not

to spoil her.

Eventually, she leaned forward, wrapping her arms around my neck and pressing her small frame against my back. Her warmth seeped through my coat as she clung on tightly.

I reached back, sliding my hands under her thighs before lifting her up with a gentle push.

Her weight was light—almost featherlike.

"Alright then, are you comfortable back there?" I asked.

"Mm... Incredibly comfortable..." she whispered with a satisfied nod.

"You can go ahead and sleep, you know?" I told her. "I'll wake you up when we get there."

"W-We're still on a date, right...?" she mumbled, clearly conflicted. "N-Nia said that falling asleep during a date is rude... So I'm trying to stay up..."

So that's why she'd been pushing herself this whole time.

She was holding on just for my sake.

That warmth in my chest only deepened. The fact she was trying so hard not to fall asleep... it really meant a lot.

"I don't mind," I told her gently. "In fact, I want you to enjoy yourself the most."

And for her, that meant sleeping.

"R-Really...?" she asked, her voice softer now.

I nodded, smiling back over my shoulder.

With my reassurance, she let out a soft exhale and finally allowed her eyes to shut.

Her breathing slowed.

Soon, I felt her head resting against my back, her lips parting ever so slightly as she drifted off. Warm breath spread across my nape, and a faint line of drool began to form, soaking a small patch on my shirt.

But I didn't mind. Not even a little.

I just kept walking through the cold streets, carrying her on my back, listening to her peaceful breathing, watching my breath fog up in front of me.

However, there was a strange sensation creeping up my spine.

I felt eyes on me.

Subtle, but distinct.

I kept glancing back every few steps, pretending to stretch my neck, but I was careful not to make it obvious. Still, every time I looked, whoever it was quickly slipped out of view—just not quickly enough.

I'd already caught a glimpse of her silhouette ducking behind walls or slipping past corners.

She wasn't exactly good at hiding her presence.

Right now, it felt like I had picked up a stalker.

But... she wasn't making any moves.

So for the time being, I decided not to deal with her. She could follow all she wanted—I had other priorities.

Eventually, we arrived at the Leonamon Cake Shop.

I nudged Yr gently.

She stirred slightly before blinking her eyes open, her face still nuzzled against my shoulder.

Amy—the girl I had appointed to manage this shop—immediately approached us.

She bowed gracefully, eyes closed as usual, her voice calm and composed, though her expression always gave off an airy, absentminded charm.

"Welcome back, Master," she said. "Shall I prepare the usual private room?"

I turned my gaze behind me—toward the entrance.

The person who had been following me hadn't stopped.

She was still tailing me, and judging by her behavior, she was planning to come inside.

Normally, I would've gone to the usual spot—a private room specifically reserved for me and my girlfriends. A place where we could talk, relax, or... do certain naughty things.

But right now, bringing Yr into that room would've been inefficient.

Because more than anything...

I wanted to know what the hell was going through Isiliraiellyn's mind.

Why she kept staring at me from the shadows.

Why she kept following me like that.

And why... she still hadn't approached me directly.

Chapter 758: The Odd Woman (2)

We stepped inside the warmly lit cake shop, the scent of fresh pastries and sugar wafting through the air like a gentle embrace.

Amy welcomed us with her usual soft demeanor and led us toward a spot tucked away near the back.

It was a quiet table.

Although the shop was cozy and heated, the cold winter outside had thinned out the usual crowd.

Still, the place was far from empty—only three of the fifty tables were vacant.

It was just enough to give the space a soft hum of life without feeling crowded.

Amy gestured with a graceful motion, allowing us to sit down.

The soft clink of plates and the murmur of conversations filled the air around us.

Once we were settled, Amy stood with a slight tilt of her head and asked us for our orders, her eyes still closed, as always.

Without hesitation, Yr snatched up the menu with both hands and held it like a prized possession.

She stared at the cake list with excitement practically radiating off her.

Her voice, though soft, rang with a clear tone of anticipation as she ordered the cake she'd been dreaming about since she first heard about the limited flavor release.

Meanwhile, on a table just a short distance away, Isiliraiellyn had seated herself quietly.

Or at least, she was trying to be quiet.

She was awkwardly hiding her face behind a menu, her ahoge poking out slightly, her posture stiff—like a poorly disguised spy pretending to blend in.

A staff member approached her with polite cheer.

"Hello, ma'am. How may I serve you today?"

"Shh!" she hissed, placing her index finger firmly against her lips. Her voice dropped to a dramatic whisper. "Can't you see I'm currently on a covert mission?"

Covert?

Honestly, if this was supposed to be covert, she was doing a hilariously bad job at it.

Still, I let it slide. It was oddly charming.

"Also, I want this, and this, and this. That one too. Add the orange juice. And I'll take these light snacks over here."

"Understood."

So much for subtle.

Despite her attempt at secrecy, she went ahead and ordered like someone preparing for a banquet.

Then, still clinging to her role, she tried to sneak glances at me.

The menu was lifted slightly, but her eyes peeked over it—not so subtly.

When she noticed I was already staring straight at her, she quickly snapped the menu back up to cover her face again, as if that made her invisible.

It was so ridiculous, I almost laughed.

"Leon," Yr suddenly said, her voice soft but clear.

"Hmm?"

"Here," she murmured.

She extended something toward me, her hand slightly trembling.

I took it without thinking. It was... unfamiliar.

"What's this?"

"A present."

"A present?" I repeated, puzzled.

"I-It's something I made..." she mumbled, her head slowly lowering in embarrassment, her cheeks tinting a soft pink.

She was clearly flustered.

I looked down at the item in my hands.

It was an oddly shaped lump, wrapped in something that had now been stained with brown.

It looked like some sort of paste.

It was squishy and slightly sticky, and it didn't exactly look appealing.

In fact, the texture made it seem like someone had accidentally sat on it.

But then I brought it closer to my nose and took a gentle sniff.

A warm, familiar aroma hit me.

"...Is this chocolate?" I asked, blinking in surprise.

Yr nodded slowly, still averting her eyes, her entire body radiating embarrassment.

The chocolate had melted slightly, oozing from the wrapping, and it was clear it hadn't survived the journey here in pristine condition. But...

This was her gift.

Something she made—clumsily, no doubt—but with heart.

It meant more than it looked.

Yr was never the type to be overtly affectionate.

Out of all my girlfriends, she was the quietest when it came to showing love.

She preferred silence, subtlety... so for her to give me something she made with her own hands?

It hit me right in the chest.

It was kind of tragic we didn't go to the private room today, because if she had shown me this side of her in there... well, it probably would've turned into a session of fucking.

Before long, our order arrived.

Amy, with her usual calm expression, brought over the trays with surprising efficiency.

It was always amusing. For someone who gave off such a slow, airheaded vibe, Amy had somehow become incredibly good at handling this job. Her grace was subtle, but her coordination and timing were improving noticeably.

Also...

Her body had changed a bit.

Her ass was noticeably rounder and fuller. Her hips seemed slightly wider, her waist more defined. Her breasts, while not particularly large, had grown just enough to be noticeable.

It was likely the result of our sex... or perhaps because she was now managing her health and appearance better overall.

She must've noticed that I was staring.

Because even though she kept her head turned my way, I hadn't realized she was subtly watching me this whole time.

Her eyes were still closed, as always—but then, she slightly opened them and gave me a small smile.

A very seductive smile.

I smiled back.

Then I turned toward Yr, who was already eyeing the cake.

"Leon! Here! Try it—have the first bite!" she chirped, holding up a forkful like it was treasure.

She was spoiling me this time.

A reversal of roles—but I wasn't complaining.

In fact, I found it incredibly adorable.

I leaned forward and accepted the bite. The moment it touched my tongue, I was struck by the surprising harmony of the flavors.

It was cheesecake—but infused with chocolate.

Normally, those two flavors wouldn't blend so well. But here... somehow, it just worked. It was soft, rich, and slightly tangy, with the chocolate bringing out a deep sweetness that complemented the creamy base.

"It's good, right?" she asked, beaming.

"Yeah," I said with a nod.

She blushed again, this time smiling so brightly it almost lit up her entire face.

It was too cute.

I wanted to freeze this moment in time.

But then...

I caught sight of movement.

Isiliraiellyn was now aggressively eating the cakes she ordered, stuffing slice after slice into her mouth like a starved gremlin. Crumbs clung to her lips. Her cheeks were puffed out like a squirrel's. She drank her juice in between, gulping it down with intense focus.

Then she looked up and saw me watching her.

In a panic, she ducked down under the table.

The problem was—she had food in her mouth when she did it.

As she ducked, she choked.

And then, when she tried to shoot back up again, she slammed her head hard into the underside of the table.

"Mmghhh...!"

Panic surged in her eyes. She grabbed her throat, struggling to breathe, flailing slightly. She reached for the glass of juice—only to realize it was empty. Desperately, she tried to pour it into her mouth anyway.

Nothing came out.

She began punching her chest, her face reddening dangerously, her mouth opening and closing like a fish out of water.

Okay, this was no longer funny—it was getting serious.

I leapt from my chair and rushed to her.

Wrapping my arms around her from behind, I locked my hands just above her stomach and gave a hard, upward thrust.

She gagged.

Another pull.

Her eyes widened.

Then—finally—after a third squeeze, the food shot out of her throat like a projectile, landing on the floor with a wet splat.

She gasped—then promptly went limp in my arms.

And lost consciousness.

Seriously... what the hell was this woman doing?

Chapter 759: The Odd Woman (3)

I carefully laid Isiliraiellyn down on a small bed tucked away in one of the private corners of the cake shop.

Her breathing had slowed, gentle and steady, and her face looked calm—so serene that it almost felt unreal.

Seeing her like this, with her long hair spread out across the pillow, a soft rise and fall to her chest... it was like she had melted into the silence.

I pulled up a chair and sat beside her, just for a moment—to catch my breath after all that chaos.

And then—

"Ah!"

She shot up without warning.

There was no groggy blink and no drowsy flutter of the eyes.

She bolted upright like someone rising from a nightmare, her eyes snapping wide open in one instant motion, as if yanked back into reality by an invisible string.

"W-Where am I?! Did I get captured by the enemy?!" she shouted, her head darting left and right, pupils wide with panic—until her gaze locked onto mine.

"You're finally awake," I said calmly, keeping my tone even.

"Ah!"

She shrieked, nearly jumping again.

"W-What are you doing here?! Where am I?!"

Her voice was high-pitched, bordering on hysterical. Her tone flipped between confusion and distress like a panicked animal. For a second, I honestly couldn't tell if she was okay—but judging by the sheer energy in her reaction, I figured she was fine now.

"You were choking earlier," I explained, crossing my arms. "You kept stuffing more and more food into your mouth and started suffocating yourself. You passed out, so I carried you over here to let you rest. You can stay as long as you like."

"Ah... This is bad... I got caught... caught by the person I was observing... nghhh..." she muttered under her breath, though not exactly quietly.

You do know I'm right here, right?

"But no matter!" she suddenly said, her voice rising dramatically. "If I act fast, maybe I can still salvage this operation."

She turned to me, expression sharpening. Then she abruptly cleared her throat and threw her hand up to her face with theatrical flair.

"Fufufu, fufufufu, fuuu, fufuu... Fuhahahahahaha! Fuhahahah! Fuhahahaha!"

Her laughter echoed exaggeratedly in the room.

She lifted two fingers, placing them beside her left eye—the red one—and closed her right, the blue one, in a pose straight out of some over-the-top fantasy anime. Her expression was dead serious, as if she was unleashing some forbidden truth.

"You have just witnessed a rare phenomenon!" she declared. "I didn't pass out because of something so petty as choking—no! I blacked out because... my eye was losing control!"

No.

You 100% passed out because you choked on cake.

But fine. I'll play along.

"Your eye?" I asked, feigning intrigue.

"Yes! The Eye of the Demon God!" she proclaimed, her voice booming with conviction. "Can you not see it?! The brilliant crimson glow! The divine pulse of unimaginable power?!"

"I... can't really feel anything," I said flatly.

"That's because you are still weak!" she snapped. "Too weak to perceive it! But it's there! It's pulsing—surging with sealed chaos! Nghhhh... my eye... it's burning! Aghhh!"

She clutched her face dramatically, twisting slightly as if in the throes of a supernatural struggle.

It was both ridiculous and hilarious.

God, this was exactly how I used to act back in middle school.

...Maybe even high school, if I was being honest.

But before I could say anything more, she suddenly froze—then her expression shifted.

"Ahh... haa... ha... My eye sees something... within you," she whispered, lowering her voice to something softer, almost reverent.

Then she rose from the bed and stepped forward slowly.

And just like that, her face closed in on mine—fast—until our noses were practically touching. I could feel the warmth of her breath against my lips.

Her eyes widened, and her face lit up with red—bright, blooming across her cheeks as her breath began to quicken. Her mouth parted ever so slightly, trembling.

"T-This is... hehe..."

"What?" I asked.

"This is really something..." she breathed. "I can feel it—deep down!"

She clenched her fists against her chest.

"Y-You're the one! The person I've been searching for! You're... my prophesied partner!"

"What?"

I couldn't help it. My voice cracked with disbelief.

What the actual hell was she even talking about?

"Ahhh! I knew it! That's why... every time I look at you, my heart races! It flutters and trembles like it might burst out of my chest!" she cried out. "And the feelings were so overwhelming—I didn't know what to do! So I researched!"

She said it with absolute confidence.

"You... researched?"

"Yes!" she nodded, her hair bouncing slightly. "I needed to understand what this emotion was—why my heart trembled every time you were near. And then I discovered the truth!"

She held up a finger like a teacher delivering a lecture.

"I have something called sexual affection!"

...That's certainly a unique way of phrasing it.

"And that means I desire sex with you!" she said boldly, slapping her hand over her chest, puffing it out proudly like it was some kind of award. "However... I didn't know how sex worked. So I sought further knowledge. I discovered it involves... rubbing our genitalia together rhythmically. It was confusing at first, but then I found a documentary!"

"A... documentary?" I echoed slowly.

"Fuhuhu~ Yes! A video of two people having sex!" she said, nodding enthusiastically. "And I watched it! All of it!"

Wait—what the fuck?

There's porn now? In this world?

I mean, I technically introduced the internet to this world... but still, I didn't expect porn to be so readily available.

"And now I have a solid understanding of how it works!"

She grinned.

And then, just like that—she climbed onto me.

Straddling my hips in one swift movement, her thighs settled snugly on either side of me, her weight pressing down against my lap with no hesitation.

Her eyes locked onto mine.

"So... we're going to do it!" she announced, flushed with excitement. "Right now!"

Chapter 760: The Odd Woman (4)

She stared at me, her gaze sharp and intense, her presence towering as if she were looming over me like a shadow.

Without warning, she leaned in and pressed her crotch firmly against mine.

The contact sent a subtle jolt through my body. Heat radiated from her, and her breath was ragged, shallow with hot puffs exhaling against my skin as her chest rose and fell with growing urgency.

And then...

"Mmmmmmmmm~..."

She suddenly puckered her lips to an absurd degree... so exaggerated that they almost ballooned outward, stretching open in an awkwardly wide circle like a fish gasping for air. The expression was so ridiculously forced it made her look cartoonish, her eyes half-lidded in a weird attempt at seduction.

I instinctively reached out and pushed her face away with a hand.

"W-What the...?! Why are you pushing me?!" she exclaimed, her voice spiking in a mix of genuine confusion and mild frustration.

"Well, for one thing... your face looks absolutely terrifying when you do that," I replied bluntly. "And two... I don't think this is how sex works."

"What do you mean?" she asked, her voice carrying a note of disbelief, brows furrowing.

Seriously? Didn't she realize how ridiculous this entire scene was? The fact that she was acting like this at all was baffling enough, but then again... this was Isiliraiellyn.

She was a walking enigma—someone who operated on instincts and whims that didn't make sense to anyone but herself.

Trying to predict what she might do next was like trying to catch lightning in your hands.

"Look," I started again, trying to explain patiently, "it's not like I'm saying no to the idea. I mean, if you really want to have sex with me, I could be open to it. But this... this method of yours? Forcing yourself like that, awkwardly pushing up on me—it's not going to work. Sex doesn't happen like that."

"What? I'm not forcing myself, though," she replied, blinking in confusion. "Wait, is that really an issue? I heard that if you press your crotch against the man's crotch, rub it a little, and then kiss him straight on the lips—that's the way it's supposed to happen. Was I not doing it right?"

"You were doing exactly what you thought you were supposed to do," I admitted, "but it felt... robotic. Like you were just following instructions from a manual. In a textbook way."

"Textbook way?" she echoed, her head tilting slightly to one side, puzzled.

"Yeah," I said with a sigh. "You're doing it in a way that feels scripted. Like you're copying steps without understanding them. What I'm saying is—sex isn't something you can just replicate from instructions. It's something you understand through the heart, by learning it through real connection."

"Hmm... is that so?" she muttered, her expression softening as she absorbed my words.

"You've seen me have sex before, right? Well—not full-on sex exactly, but close enough."

"Oh? You mean that time you inserted those vine tentacles into the Black Witch?" she said, without flinching. "That was sex? That's... a little scary. I don't like the idea of something foreign entering my body."

"Well, that wasn't really normal sex," I explained, scratching the back of my head. "That was more like a... fetish thing. A preference. Some people are into that."

"Hmmm... I guess sex is a bit more complicated than I thought," she muttered again, her voice low as she finally stopped straddling me.

Even though she got off me, I didn't feel any pressure lift from my body. It was strange—it was as if she weighed nothing at all. Then again, I realized she hadn't been placing her full weight on me to begin with.

I opened my mouth to continue, wanting to guide her a bit more. "I'm telling you, it might be better to—"

But before I could finish, she suddenly raised a hand and placed it over my face like a stop sign, her palm flat against my cheek. The gesture was calm but firm like an unspoken request to let her think for a moment.

"Hmmm..." she hummed thoughtfully, pacing slowly across the room, one arm folded while her fingers tapped against her chin. "I think I've got the gist of it now. So sex is something you should learn not from just reading or mimicking—but through actual hands-on

practice, right?"

"You got the general idea, yeah," I said, watching her curiously.

"I see..." she muttered, her fingers now tucked under her chin as her eyes narrowed with focus. Then, without warning, she turned toward me, flashing a smile so wide it bordered on maniacal—stretching from ear to ear in an unnerving yet energetic expression. "I know how to learn it through a much more hands-on method!"

Her body shifted with a dramatic spin as she pointed a sharp finger at me, like a magician announcing their next trick.

"Let me watch you having sex!" she declared, her voice booming with theatrical glee.

What the hell...?

How the hell did it suddenly turn into that?

But then again... knowing how her brain worked, it was probably the most logical conclusion she could come to in her own logic.

"You can use this," she said, reaching into her pocket and pulling her arm out with exaggerated flair. She struck several exaggerated poses, waving her hands in the air like she was casting a spell. After more unnecessary theatrics, she finally fished something out. "To record it!"

What she pulled out... was a smartphone.

"Record it?" I asked, raising an eyebrow. So she didn't mean watching live? She wanted a video? Well... I guess that was a little more manageable.

"Right! Record it! And then I'll study from it!" she said with pride, putting two fingers near her red eye and striking a pose so over-the-top, it was straight out of a chuuni anime.

Well... I guess I could help her with that.

She pressed the smartphone into my hand, sliding it between my fingers and nodding with full sincerity.

"And once I've learned from it, I'll become your official partner," she said with a dramatic flourish.

Then, she took a deep breath—arched her back, puffed out her chest, and let loose a hysterical, over-the-top laugh. "Fuuuuuuuuhahahahahahahahahahaha! Hahahahahahahahahahahahaha!"

She laughed uncontrollably, her hand raised near her face with fingers spread, leaving only her red eye exposed through the gap like some cartoon villain unveiling her final form.

"Then I'll leave the recording to you, Partner!" she shouted gleefully, and without another word, she sprinted toward the window, flung it open in one fluid motion...

...and jumped out.

Just like that.

Gone.

I rushed to the window and leaned out to see her below—running full-speed across the courtyard, her voice still echoing with laughter as she vanished down the path.

She was fast. Surprisingly fast.

I watched her disappear into the distance, then glanced down at the phone in my hand.

I pressed the screen—only to be greeted by a lock screen. With her wallpaper being her in a weird cartoonish expression...

Of course it was locked.

Smartphones were built with security features. Naturally, it was locked.

I sighed.

I had originally planned to tell her that it would be better if she just let me lead the pace... let me control the flow naturally since it would probably be her first time, and doing it her way would hurt her more. But, well...

I guess this could work too.

I suppose I'll just use my phone to record it instead.