

My Dreamy Old Husband Chapter 1471

Greg was thunderous as he yelled, "You're going to let them off the hook like that?"

The security guard stepped aside and watched Carmen and Poppy leave before turning his attention to Greg with a raised brow. "What would you have me do instead, sir? Kill them?"

With that, he turned to leave and did not bother to stay for whatever retort that Greg would have.

An outraged Greg threatened loudly, "I'm going to file a complaint against all of you!"

"Have a nice day," the guard replied nonchalantly before he exited, leaving Greg high and dry at the entrance.

"You—"

Greg wanted to rush after the guard to confront him, but he refrained from doing so when he remembered that there were more important matters at hand. With that in mind, he turned to address the mogul, who was still sitting in the private booth.

After all, it was the mogul who deserved every bit of Greg's attention.

He was about to sit down so that he could resume his conversation with the mogul when much to his surprise, the latter abruptly stood up and started toward the door.

"Mr. Adams, where are you going?" Greg asked with widened eyes as he scrambled after him. However, the other man did not respond as he left the booth.

Greg picked up his pace as he tried to catch up to the mogul. He lowered his stature and began to explain frantically, "Mr. Adams, what happened just now was an accident! The thesis really was written by Flynn. If you don't believe me, we can go somewhere else and I'll have him discuss the contents of the thesis with you. M-Mr. Adams—"

The man said nothing despite Greg's efforts to convince him. He was powerful and untouchable and not even the likes of Greg, who was the head of Stafford Group, could ever measure up to his stature.

At a young age, the mogul had managed to build a business empire that was powerful beyond imagination. His accomplishments were legendary and the same had been circulating for the past decade. There would undoubtedly be more stories of him in the next ten years, although he would have achieved countless other milestones by then.

He was once known as the teenager with the highest net worth in the world.

Now, he was one of the youngest to have made it to the top of the millionaires list.

He had lost his parents and his brothers at the tender age of ten; as a result, he was forced to take over the family business as the director of the conglomerate. The rest of the world thought that the Adams Group was on its way to its demise, seeing that it was desperate enough to push a child into taking over the business, but the same youngster proved to be far more capable than perceived. Time and time again, Adams Group had thrived miraculously under the boy's leadership and achieved success that was far beyond anyone's expectations.

Even though he was in his fifties, Greg could not even hope to compete against a man as accomplished as him.

Greg never thought that he could ever meet a big shot like him—not by his own efforts, at least. In fact, they could never have crossed paths in the current lifetime if it had not been for the invitation from Adams Group.

The only reason why the mogul had wanted to see Greg in the first place was because Flynn's thesis on the future of insurance, which was featured in a journal publication, had caught his eye. Even the director of Adams Group—otherwise known as the king of international insurance—was impressed with how the thesis provided a fresh perspective and a new insight into the topic.

The thesis was well-structured and meted out cogent reasonings, thus alluding to the author's in-depth research on the insurance industry. Aside from the obvious fact that the author of the thesis had acquired first-hand information for the dissertation, he was also able to succinctly state his findings and draw a clear conclusion. The author was strong in his delivery and offered a refreshing outlook through his work. The mogul was further convinced of the author's talent after pursuing his few other theses.

Furthermore, there was information to show that the author was an honors high school student whose remarkable academic performance was bolstered by the many awards he had won.

Seeing as the mogul happened to be collaborating with Stafford Group and upon discovering that they kept in touch with the Clarks, he had asked Greg to arrange a meeting with the author in person. Who could have thought that the meeting would come with a plot twist instead?

However, he could not say that he was completely surprised by how things had turned out. It made sense that the theses were written by the girl; the possibility of it was neither far-fetched nor unexpected. In fact, if she was indeed the one who wrote the thesis, he would think she was rather behind on her development.

After all, she came from a family of exceptional talent.

Meanwhile, Carmen and Poppy were standing on the pavement outside Audistin while they waited for the bus to arrive.

Carmen extended her arm and revealed the kids watch on her wrist. "It's already ten. I think it's too late for us to catch a bus," she said with a frown on her face.

However, before Poppy could give an answer, an expensive car drove out from the garage and pulled up in front of them. The door opened and Flynn angrily alighted from the vehicle before he charged toward them like a rabid dog. He then growled, "Do you realize what you've done, Carmen? What you did back there cost me a huge opportunity—did you know that? Did you know that? Are you trying to ruin me because you can't have me?"

Flynn was losing his mind. The reason why Greg brought him to Audistin in the first place was because the mogul had taken an interest in his thesis and wanted to meet him in person. Flynn had been ecstatic because most people would kill for an opportunity like that, but Carmen showed up and ruined everything for him.

His fists were clenched as he marched over to her.

Upon seeing this, she instinctively backed away with what appeared to be panic in her eyes and asked, "Are you going to hit me? I'm warning you—my mom's a farmer and my dad used to be a construction worker. Strength runs in our family's blood. I won't hesitate to kick your *ss if you take one more step toward me!"

However, Flynn was like a beast filled with rage and he paid no heed to her words.

Kimberly, on the other hand, was watching the show from the sidelines as she stood with the men who worked for Stafford Group. This little wench has some nerve, she thought.

If everything had gone as planned today, Flynn would have piqued the mogul's interest and it would not take long before he could start paving his way to success, but any chance of that happening was non-existent now; the wretched peasant girl even had the audacity to take credit for his work.

Flynn was a well-known honor student who won countless awards and all his dissertations had astounded the academic world. He had a bright future ahead of him that was paved with opportunities. The Clark Family had almost crumbled away into nothing, but that was before they formed a union with the Fletchers, thereafter producing a genius like Flynn. It was only a matter of time before the Clarks reclaimed their place in the social hierarchy.

The opportunity for their glorious comeback had presented itself today, but Carmen came along and ruined everything.

Kimberly fumed. This lowly b*tch doesn't even know how much trouble she's caused!

As of now, Carmen was backing away from Flynn, but just as he swung his fist at her, she whipped out her ancestral Taser and swiftly ducked under his arm. She then shoved the Taser against his stomach. On the other hand, Poppy leapt into the air and jump-kicked Flynn with such force that it sent him flying.

She had been waiting for that day for a year, one month and ten days.

The *sshole had taken advantage of the fact that he looked like Taylor Murray—who was Poppy's godfather—and posted videos of himself acting flirtatious online, thereafter becoming an influencer. He even went to the extent of asking social media marketers to hype up his image as an honor roll student who not only looked like Taylor but was also a powerful heir to a huge family fortune.

Poppy wanted to spit at him because he had neither money nor power. In fact, he was an heir to nothing more than a disgraced family name!

Her godfather could have retired from the entertainment industry for over a decade, but he was still known all over the world. His movies still held the highest ratings and they were

also the most-watched movies of all time. It was his work that still garnered the most discussion among fans and movie buffs alike. Anyone could easily gain their fifteen minutes of fame if they were so much as associated with Taylor, including Flynn.

If it had not been for those flirtatious videos over the internet, Carmen would never have known about him. She certainly would not have given up on earning her second Bachelor's degree overseas to return and attend high school.

Finally, after months of waiting, Poppy could finally beat Flynn into a pulp!

After having been electrocuted with the Taser, he now lay spreadeagled on the ground. The two girls then lunged forward and wasted no time in beating him up.

Carmen had moved on; all the theses she'd written for him, the competitions she'd entered on his behalf and the prize money that was rightfully hers—she no longer cared about any of these.

So, all that was left for her to do was to punch and kick him to her heart's content. Goodbye, first love.

Meanwhile, a couple of luxury cars had driven out of the garage and were pulling up by the pavement. One of the cars had its windows rolled down and the person watched the scene from within the shadows while his green eyes glinted with amusement.

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Nobody would have expected that those two girls were courageous to attack Flynn in front of the Staffords. Just as the men from the Staffords moved to defend the fallen boy, the security team from Audistin rushed out onto the streets and effectively blocked their way. The head of security was looking extremely displeased with them.

"What are you doing? Are you trying to start a fight outside Audistin?" he barked.

Audistin had a formidable reputation. The Winstons and Fletchers ran the place and the Michels were rumored to have shares in the business as well. The clubhouse was backed up by crime organizations and the military; word had it that the security team was made up

of soldiers who retired from the special forces, former secret agents, and bloodthirsty mercenaries. As such, one would naturally avoid causing a scene anywhere near the club.

Panicking over the safety of her fiancé, Kimberly pointed an accusatory finger toward Carmen and Poppy—both of whom were still throwing punches at Flynn—before shouting, “They’re the ones who started the fight!”

Those were the same security personnel from the club earlier—they did not dare to leave their posts until Carmen and Poppy safely made it home.

They had been watching from inside the club when the fight started, but they immediately rushed out when they saw that Staffords’ men were about to attack the girls.

“It’s hardly a big deal if it’s between minors,” the head of security countered coldly, acting as if he could not see the nearby fight that was going on.

Upon hearing that, Kimberly’s eyes widened in shock. She was now certain that the security had been dispatched by none other than their opponents and it seemed as if they were intent on watching Flynn being beaten to death.

As the security held them back, the men who worked for Stafford Group could only watch from the sidelines as he continued to brace himself against Carmen’s abuse.

However, just as she gained momentum in the fight, her eye caught a startling flicker of green from the car parked by the side of the road.

A pair of green eyes stared in her direction from within the shadows. The green was so captivatingly familiar that it drew her gaze toward the car and distracted her from the fight.

The pair of green eyes also looked at her and in that moment, Flynn’s cries of pain as well as Poppy’s string of profanities melted into the background. The longer the owner of the green eyes and Carmen stared at each other, the more she felt as though time and space no longer existed. There was an unspoken conversation that seemed to hang in the air between them, as if their souls tried to convey every single thought and emotion to one another.

She recognized those piercing green eyes as well as that car—the vehicle was the brainchild of the first-ever collaboration between Michel Group and Ronney Group. Michel Group’s extensive experience in arms-manufacturing and advanced technology combined with

Ronney Group's prowess in aesthetics culminated in the final design for the car. The model was essentially refined armor—elegant on the outside and tough within.

The concept of the car was a sensation after it made its debut, which piqued the interests of many of the world's richest men. The limited edition model was sold out before it could even hit the market, resulting in a huge triumph for the collaborating parties; the way in which they had combined both art with advanced defence technology was an iconic breakthrough for their respective industries.

Sophia was the one to suggest the initial concept so that she could include it in one of the collections of her 'Premium High-Tech' project.

Over the course of a decade, she and her brother, Linus, had worked together to realize all of her designs. Premium High-Tech was now renowned as a pioneer in the industry and paved a bright future for luxury goods and technology alike.

At the current moment, the car that was idling by the side of the road was a premium collector's edition, which was launched to commemorate Premium High-Tech's tenth anniversary. There were only twelve of those in the world and the cars were so exclusive that only those who knew a higher-up in the company could get their hands on them. In fact, the owners of those twelve cars had maintained extremely close relations to the manufacturer.

Carmen was more than familiar with the profiles of those twelve clients and there was only one person among them with green eyes—Bailey Adams.

She did not think that she would see him outside the club.

Now that she thought about it, they had not seen each other for a decade. In fact, the last time she saw him was before Michael's cryopreservation.

After that, Carmen had left for her studies abroad and did not meet Bailey ever since.

He mostly kept a low profile and not even the media could get any pictures of him; she wondered what he looked like after all those years.

She was still staring in his direction when Flynn snarled, "What the hell do you think you're doing, Carmen?"

Snapping out of her reverie, Carmen remembered that she was supposed to be beating him up. She attacked him with a deadly kick to the face—a move which was passed down through the generations in the Fletcher family—and sent him flying while bringing a satisfying end to the battle.

Greg came out at that moment and he was shocked by the scene before him. The security guards immediately confronted the men from Stafford Group, causing a ruckus as they shouted abuse at one another. Within minutes, both parties were on the verge of a brawl. Seizing upon the diversion, Carmen and Poppy fled the scene with the dog.

With the dog in tow, the girls walked past the aforesaid luxury car. The curious dog then jumped up and stood on its hind legs before resting its paws against the edge of the car window. It looked as though it was getting ready to leap into the vehicle.

The mysterious passenger reached out with a pale, slender hand, and his long fingers fell upon the dog's head to stroke its fur.

As he did so, the bracelet he wore slid down his wrist, revealing the three apricot kernels that adorned it.

"Come on, you stupid dog!" Poppy grunted as she pulled on the leash, forcing the dog to abandon its efforts to clamber into the car. As they left the scene, Carmen found herself turning to look at the car a couple more times until she finally lost sight of it, but the person in the car never made an appearance.

The ground was wet after the spring shower and both girls were treading carefully as they made their way home. The dog walked alongside them on its leash. There was a faint scent of spring that lingered in the otherwise dank and shabby alleyway.

She was silent throughout the journey home. All she could think about were those green eyes and its owner.

It was such a pity that she did not manage to catch a glimpse of his face.

Poppy, on the other hand, was reliving their triumph from earlier. "That was more like it! You might have been cheated on, but good for you for standing up to him!" she said with fierce approval. "I've been wanting to beat that b*stard up for the longest time! He's nothing but a disgusting creep! He can't even begin to compete with my godfather!"

It was late at night by the time both girls returned to their respective homes. Carmen braced herself as she opened the front door. She then sighed in her heart upon seeing her family members waiting for her in the brightly-lit living room.

The robot whirred as it hurried over to pick up the dog and bring it for a bath. Meanwhile, she gripped onto the strap of her backpack as she entered the living room. “Mom, Grandpa, Grandma, Uncle,” she greeted dutifully. “I’m home.”

Her mother, Sophia, walked toward her in haste. “Darling, where have you been? Your grandpa told me that you went out with Poppy after school.”

Carmen’s chest tightened. She did not respond while walking toward the staircase and she rolled her eyes in frustration when Sophia pestered her for an answer. Why bother asking if you already know?

The reason why she wanted to head abroad in the first place was because she could not stand being watched by her family 24/7. She finally found respite after staying abroad for a few years, but when she came home a year ago, it was as if her old life picked up right from where she’d left it off.

It was a never-ending story—one that constantly imported the heavy use of spy drones and pinhole cameras.

When it came to spying methods, the creative brains behind Michel Technology did not have an imagination that was as limited as Carmen’s. The high-tech 360° panoramic spy-cam was custom-made for her. It seemed as if her entire family would not be content until they knew her every move. She highly suspected that any waste matter she expelled into her toilet bowl would be subject to their scrutiny as well—she would not be surprised if they decided to run lab tests on it.

Carmen eyed her mom with a solemn look again and she announced defiantly, “Mom, I’m a grown-up. I use tampons now and I might even start using condoms in a couple of months’ time. Can you please just give me some personal space?”

Upon hearing that, Sophia froze in shock.

In fact, everyone in the family was taken aback by Carmen’s words.

Carmen, on the other hand, was worn out after today's events. She went upstairs to her bedroom and made her way into the shower.

She had only just exited the bathroom when she suddenly remembered the photo album. She rummaged through her things and pulled out the thick album that was filled with pictures of her. After that, she flipped through it and finally found the one she was looking for.

The picture was taken when she was a little girl. In it, Sophia and Michael were going through their wedding rehearsal on the island whereas she was the flower girl. Bailey was also there and it was Cooper who took the photo.

Carmen wistfully stared at the photograph—they were two innocent kids on an island and their smiles were as radiant as the flowers that were in full bloom behind them as they stood hand in hand with each other.

She wondered what he looked like after all those years.

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The talk in the living room resumed shortly after Carmen retreated upstairs. The whole family could sense that it was a crucial time in her life since she was about to transition from a teenager to a young adult—a process that was otherwise known as 'the transition'.

It was at the start of the family discussion when Sophia first made the announcement that a historical revolution was slated to happen at around the same time Carmen transitioned into young adulthood.

"Carmen is going to start using condoms soon," Sophia declared slowly with a sigh. "She's all grown up now. She's no longer the kid she used to be."

Upon hearing the news, Cooper and Anna felt their hearts sink. Linus, too, looked as if he was in despair.

Carmen's words would leave the family heartbroken for an entire year.

Her generation had evolved and using condoms at eighteen was commonplace. While the adults in the family were acutely aware that it was a rite of passage, they could not help but feel as though they were about to lose their little girl—whom they had raised for seventeen years—to some filthy boar-headed boy.

Sophia figured that Carmen would be done with her shower by the time the discussion was over, so she knocked on the latter's bedroom door before entering.

She tried to come to terms with the fact that her daughter was growing up. Carmen no longer needed a nanny and she had been weaned off the bottle for years. Now, she was a teenager whose bedroom door was always locked and no one could enter without her permission.

Carmen is a big girl who wears a bra now, Sophia reminded herself.

Carmen was about to sleep when she heard the knock on the door. With a tired look on her face, she opened the door to reveal an enthusiastic Sophia.

"Darling, don't you have to get ready for finals now that it's a new school term? How about I look through the mock papers with you?"

"Mom, I graduated with a PhD," Carmen pointed out as she looked at her mother through bleary eyes. "High school exams are a piece of cake."

Sophia instantly switched topics and quipped, "I heard that you broke up with your boyfriend today. Do you want me to beat his head into a pulp?"

Carmen rolled her eyes in exhaustion before she sighed. "Mom, you can't go around beating people's heads into a pulp—it's illegal. I'm old enough to handle my own dating life, okay?"

"Oh, well... How about if we go through your thesis together?"

When she heard that, she glanced at the kid's watch on her wrist. "Mom, it's eleven! We'll go through the thesis tomorrow. Can you please let me head to bed now? I have to self-study at seven in the morning!"

Upon hearing that, Sophia began to back out of the room and responded, "Okay,—go and get some rest. I won't keep you up any longer."

Carmen lazily crossed her thumb over her index finger to form a heart. "Here's a heart. Love you, Mom."

Sophia gave her a kiss on the cheek. "Goodnight, darling."

After having sent Sophia on her way, Carmen crossed the room to her bed and sank onto it. She stared at the ceiling, which was simulated to resemble a starry night sky. I'm practically an adult. Can all of you please stop treating me like a child?

The mattress came with aromatherapy and temperature-control features and it was made to perfectly conform to one's sleeping habits, thereby bringing out the best sleeping experience. For Carmen, who was already worn out, that meant she was close to falling asleep the moment she hit the bed.

When she dreamed that night, it was as if she had traveled back to her own past.

Out of the few of her childhood nightmares, one involved her being kidnapped by someone who wanted to kill her. She was frightened and scrambled to hide under a table, which was when she heard a voice that said, "Come here. Close your eyes."

She closed her eyes and fell into someone's arms. She could still remember the feeling of being held that way—it felt safe, reliable, and warm.

She grabbed his shoulders and she was so terrified that she crumpled his shirt in the process. She kept her eyes closed all the way, afraid to open them, but the moment she did so, she saw her parents.

The man placed her down in front of her parents and he slowly stepped back until he disappeared from view.

She was so scared that she broke into ugly sobs. By the time she finally calmed down, the man was long gone.

The next day, Carmen left the house at six in the morning while yawning as she perched on the back of Theo's bicycle.

Theo was in his forties, but it seemed like he did not age a day ever since he started using the three-step age-defying skincare collection that was manufactured through a collaboration between the Michel Medical Technology Group and Ronney Group.

When Michel Group and Ronney Group started their collaboration, the two giants in their respective industries had completely revolutionized the future for mankind. Not only did they launch the Premium High-Tech concept, the cosmetics department in Ronney Group had also partnered with Michel Medical Technology Group to produce several skincare and cosmetic products that would stop aging in its tracks. As a result, Carmen and her pets were the only ones who saw any change in appearances over the years while everyone else in the family looked the same.

Presently, Theo leisurely pedaled his bicycle with his granddaughter perched behind him as they headed down the familiar road that led to the school. His schedule was synchronized with Carmen's. He was the security guard stationed by the school entrance and every morning he would scrutinize every person who entered and left the school grounds, making sure that there was nobody suspicious among the crowd.

By six-thirty, they arrived at the school and saw that the elite institution was brightly lit. It seemed as if everyone had arrived earlier than usual.

When Carmen entered the classroom, everyone contemptuously turned to look at her, but she was used to their sneers and paid no attention to them as she walked toward her seat. She placed her bag down and plugged in her earphones to listen to music while she read her books, ignoring the malicious whispering that went on around her.

She had long been made the butt of the joke by her peers. To them, she was a shameless modern-day Cinderella who pined for a prince, but even she had been the daughter of a duke. On the other hand, her father was just a lowly security guard who was stationed at the school entrance to check the student ID tags.

Everyone in school hated Theo because he took his job seriously. He was tasked with checking everyone's student ID tags along with their accessories and make-up. Any person who was caught with heavy eye make-up would be forced to wipe it off before he would let them pass through the school gates.

The seat next to Carmen remained empty although it was where Flynn was supposed to sit. She had demanded that the teacher place her next to him on account of her excellent grades, but it frightened him instead. As a result, Flynn feared coming to school and he would only attend classes once or twice a week for the sake of it. He was terrified of running into her.

However, he had kept himself busy on the days when he was absent from school. He penned several insightful theses and every once in a while, the school would commend him for winning an award or two.

Meanwhile, Carmen's existence only seemed more diminutive with every new achievement that he attained.

However, she never bothered about any of those.

She had always been the odd one out in the school. She never wore any make-up and never cared to dress up either. The school uniform came in several designs, but her staple was the ugly school-regulation tracksuit that made her look unflattering. Her hair was constantly in a careless top-knot and she wore the same pair of canvas shoes every day.

Carmen did not have any fashion accessories or any designer items and she wore a kid's watch that had been fashionable over a decade ago. That watch was now a discontinued piece of junk—not even online shopping platforms would have it in stock.

All in all, she was a plain and unsophisticated nobody and she stuck out like a sore thumb in South Bayside High School.

Nonetheless, everyone could sympathize with her. After all, she came from a poor family and she was the only person in class who had enrolled into the school based on academic performance.

Class had yet to begin and the students in the classroom were gathered in groups of two or three as they chattered among themselves.

Just then, Flynn walked in and a hush descended over the room. However, his normally handsome face was twisted into a grimace today. Instead of resembling Taylor Murray, he looked as though he had been bashed up—his features were swollen and distorted with bruises all over his face.

He gritted his teeth and strode over to his seat before throwing his bag onto his desk. He viciously glared at Carmen and waited for the lowly peasant girl to explain herself. I want to know who gave her the instructions to screw things up for me at the clubhouse!

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Carmen would normally have made enthusiastic small talk with him by now. Instead, she remained silent, as if she had not noticed him at all.

Upon seeing that, Flynn threw himself down on the chair and opened his textbook to get ready for class. If she would not speak to him, then he would not start a conversation with her either. Fine! Let's see which one of us succumbs to the pressure first!

Everyone else seemed to have detected the scent of gossip in the air; they were now curiously peering at both Carmen and Flynn while waiting for drama to unfold.

Usually, by that time, she would have been trying to get him to talk to her. He would then give her the cold shoulder and undoubtedly be extremely irritated with her. Their exchange usually served as a form of entertainment for the rest of the class. However, there was nothing going on between them today. In fact, she was unusually quiet in the morning and barely uttered a word even as class started. On the other hand, he turned to look at her more often than he normally did.

Everyone was beginning to read the situation. It appeared that Carmen had upgraded her methods and she was now playing hard to get.

Hope entered the classroom just as the bell went off for self-study. Everyone scrambled back to their seats. Alpha Class was the best class in their year and their form teacher was the toughest among the faculty; it was his words that held the most authority because he came from the notorious Fletcher Family in Bayside City.

Everyone knew the four most elite families in Bayside City—starting with the Fletchers, who wielded power over the country's military. As long as Cethos remained a sovereign state, there was no way that their family would fall. Next was the Winstons, who ran the underworld that thrived against the forces of justice and thus was unlikely to perish anytime soon. Up next was the Edwards, who lay down roots all over the globe, and lastly, the golden

triangle that reigned over Bayside's elite circle—the Mitchells, the Michels and Ronney Group.

Then, there was the Yard Family, who recently returned from abroad. They were formidable as well, but they had been stationed out of Bayside City for a number of years and did not receive official recognition as a top player in the field. In other words, their forces and reputation were far more established abroad than in the local elite scene.

Therefore, with Mr. Fletcher as their form teacher, the students in Alpha Class were naturally the most obedient ones in school. Furthermore, their form teacher was a handsome young man who boasted elegantly chiseled features. While he shared a striking resemblance with Theo—the security guard by the school entrance—Mr. Fletcher was of an entirely different league from the latter. He was the best-looking teacher in the school and everyone had a love-hate relationship with him.

However, there was a chill that followed the man in the morning. Everyone was taken aback when he threw his teaching materials onto the desk and there was a deafening silence that ensued. The students peered at him cautiously and did not dare to breathe a single word.

He was usually gentle and rarely angered, but today, his face was like thunder. As his gaze swept the class, everyone could tell he was extremely furious. They began to silently pray. Whoever he's angry with, please don't let it be me!

Hope tapped the teaching aid against the table loudly as he gave everyone a pointed look. "Next week, all of you will be sitting for your first practice test of the term. Your focus now should be on your studies! Nothing else matters! Your goal is to ace the June finals, whereupon all your hard work for the past three years will be reduced to a single, crucial moment. You simply cannot afford even the slightest distraction right now! And yet—"

He broke off in the middle of his lecture, leaving everyone on the edge of their seats, and when he spoke again, it was with a pained voice. "I received a report this morning that a student was seen entering and leaving a nightclub after the self-study session last evening and he was caught drinking as well!"

Upon hearing that, the whole class went into an uproar. They began exchanging bewildered looks as they wondered who among them would visit a nightclub at a time like that. How unfortunate did this person have to be for Mr. Fletcher to catch wind of this incident?

Just as everyone was growing flustered at the suspense, Hope rapped his knuckles against the table and a hush fell over the room once more. His chiseled face was grim as he snapped, "Mr. Flynn, aren't you going to explain yourself? What in the world were you doing in a nightclub?"

It was Flynn Clark... Everyone drew in an audible breath of shock. None of them could believe that Flynn was the one who had been caught going to a nightclub!

Meanwhile, the moment he heard the word 'nightclub', he knew instantly that Carmen had been the tattletale. He could not believe that she would actually snitch on him, but he did not think that Mr. Fletcher would call him out in front of the entire class!

In fact, Hope Fletcher came from the distinguished Fletcher Family and he was also related to the Clarks. It was through him that the Clarks were associated with such a powerful family. Without him, they could not so much as clamber their way up the social ladder.

Flynn knew better than to evade Mr. Fletcher's question and he spitefully glared at Carmen. Her head was lowered and her eyes were fixed on the book before her, as if she had nothing to do with whatever was going on around her.

He abruptly stood up and retorted in a haughty tone, "Mr. Fletcher, I know it was wrong of me to visit a nightclub while I'm underage, but the adults in my family happened to have a business meeting with Mr. Bailey, the director of Adams Group. My presence there was solely a matter of expediency."

Bailey Adams... Upon hearing that, the whole class gasped. Bailey Adams is one of the most formidable figures in the business world!

The name resounded throughout the classroom like a loud thunderclap. Everyone present was a child of the elite and they were all more than familiar with Bailey's reputation. He had taken over the family business at the age of ten. He was now twenty-seven years old and for the past seventeen years, he had built a business empire that was beyond the imagination of those who were the same age as him. His business was known as the King of Insurance and as the person who was behind such a behemoth, he was a legend among legends. To meet the legendary Bailey in person and get a word or two in with him would be a privilege of a lifetime!

Flynn smirked arrogantly when he heard the collective sigh of envy from his peers. He was smug when he continued, "Mr. Fletcher, I'm sure you understand that there are those who

could spend their whole lives waiting but never being able to meet a man as legendary as Mr. Bailey. Wouldn't you think that it would be a shame if I missed out on this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity?"

Everyone nodded in agreement with him. Flynn had to be there, even if he faced the risk of expulsion. After all, there were plenty of other schools that he could enroll in—should he be expelled from South Bayside High School, but to miss out on a chance to meet Bailey would be akin to setting himself for a lifetime of regret.

Eager to convince Mr. Fletcher, he added, "Mr. Bailey read my thesis and saw my potential. If you don't believe me, sir, you could always ask my fiancée's father, Mr. Stafford. He was the one who arranged the meeting."

After hearing his words, everyone grew even more envious. It was one thing to be able to meet Bailey Adams, but to receive a personal invitation from him was a glorious achievement!

However, it was not a surprise that an honor student as excellent as Flynn would receive such special treatment. In the current year alone, all his theses were featured in journal publications—even Bayside University had taken notice of his work and there were rumors that his name was already in their admissions list. At the rate that he was progressing, it was only a matter of time before he captured the attention of a business mogul like Bailey.

As the rest of the class gazed at Flynn in awe, he felt like he was floating on air. He reveled in the admiration of his peers and felt important. Surely there could not be more than a handful of people who had the chance to speak to Bailey Adams—it could only happen by way of divine intervention!

Hope looked skeptical as he stood at the lectern. "Is that true?" he asked now, pushing his glasses to the top of his nose bridge.

Flynn nodded confidently. "You could always ask Mr. Stafford, who is the head of Stafford International and father to Kimberly, my fiancée, to verify my words." As he said that, he cast a deliberate sidelong glance toward Carmen, as if he hoped that she would be hurt by his announcement that Kimberly was his fiancée. However, she was impassive and she still had her nose buried within the pages of the textbook.

After a pause, Hope felt for his phone as he said, "Let me check."

He made a call and the line was picked up within seconds. Everyone thought he was on the phone with Kimberly's father, but he spoke with a crisp Bayside accent when he greeted the person on the other end. "Bailey, my man, I didn't expect you to quickly pick up the call. Did you just get out of bed?"

Everyone stared at him in shock. How is it possible that Mr. Fletcher knows Bailey Adams?

The class marveled at his powerful connections. If it were not for the fact that Mr. Fletcher was from the Fletcher Family, everyone would have thought he was bluffing.

At this moment, Hope placed the phone on speaker and everyone heard the voice that came from the other line. "I'm on my way to work. Why did you call me, Mr. Fletcher?"

The voice was bass-like—it was deep and cold, but elusive and sultry at the same time. His Bayside accent was far more impeccable than a professional voice-over actor's and he sounded nothing like a foreigner when he spoke.

Carmen's ears pricked up when she heard the voice as a chill ran down her spine. It's his voice...

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Upon hearing Bailey's voice, Hope seemed to give a loving smile. This is expected from the old son-in-law. He has become more successful over the years to the point where even Cooper is shocked.

The more successful the old son-in-law became, the prouder Hope felt—although there was still a long way for him to go.

He uttered in a straightforward manner, "This is what happened—today, someone reported that one of the students from our class went to a nightclub last night. The student said that he was supposed to meet you there, so he had no choice but to enter the nightclub. Well, I'm sure that you are aware that students, who are minors, are not allowed to visit a nightclub. However, it would be another story if it was true that it was you who requested to meet the student there."

Bailey asked, "What's the name of that student?"

Hope replied, "Oh, his name is Flynn Clark. You must have an impression of him if you have met him before—he looks a lot like Taylor Murray."

At that moment, Flynn was brimming with pride. I am someone whom Bailey has requested to meet!

Unexpectedly, the voice from the other end of the line instantly shattered his confidence. "I've never met him before."

The whole class fell silent. Flynn's expression tremendously changed and his face blanched.

As Hope felt awkward by the turn of events, he immediately apologized to Bailey.

The scene was so embarrassing that even words could not describe it. The students whispered among themselves and discussed Flynn in groups of two or three—words of disdain, suspicion, gloat and the like spread throughout the class, but none of them were positive words. Flynn, who was humiliated in public, felt so embarrassed and felt that he was being burnt in fire.

Every glance that the students cast at him resembled a handful of cumin and pepper of sin being sprinkled at him.

No, there must be a misunderstanding. Bailey was the one who requested to meet me.

He calmly thought about the events that happened and finally recalled it. After he entered the private room, before he could speak to Bailey, he was interrupted by Carmen, who rushed into the room. Then, he was driven away by the security guard.

Bailey never noticed Flynn in the first place, so it would only be natural for the former to reply that he had never seen him!

Not only did he not manage to speak to Bailey, but he was humiliated in public today and he would even need to bear the consequences of being punished for going to a nightclub. All those were because of Carmen!

Flynn suddenly pointed at Carmen, who was beside him, and loudly reported, “Mr. Fletcher, I have something to report too—Carmen went to the nightclub last night as well and she is also a minor!”

The class burst into an uproar and everyone looked at her in disbelief. Everyone’s impression of her was a boring nerd who wore glasses all day long and never wore makeup. A girl like her actually went to the nightclub as well?

Besides, the kind of night club, which Flynn had gone to, would probably be high-end. Was she able to enter that sort of a place with her family background?

Before she could reply, a deep and adamant voice was heard from the other end of the line. “I indeed met a high school student named Carmen Fletcher who was working part time in Audistin last night. She was washing plates in the kitchen.”

The whole class fell silent again.

Bailey remembered her, but not Flynn.

After receiving a large blow, Flynn’s expression changed—it transitioned from being ashen to dark.

A chuckle broke out amidst the silence, which made everyone turn to the source of laughter in unison. It was Carmen and she was seen laughing while blocking her face with a book.

It never occurred to her that Bailey would actually remember her as well as the excuse she used when she lied to the security guard last night.

Although it was just a fleeting smile, which was quickly replaced by a stern, nerd look, the blush on her face revealed her charm as a young lady.

The man with green eyes on the other side of the phone was resting his eyes in the car. Upon hearing her gentle chuckle through his bluetooth earphone, the corner of his lips curled up into a peculiar curve.

He heard her laughter, which simultaneously made him recall her angelic voice.

“Bailey, drink some water!”

“Bailey, eat some apples!”

“Bailey, goodbye.”

Nothing about her had changed. When they were in Audistin, he recognized her the moment she appeared although they were far apart from each other. Her looks showed that she did not become uglier as she grew older.

In the classroom, Hope hung up on the call after some exchange of pleasantries. Then, his smile was instantly replaced by gloom as he glared at Flynn. How dare he lie in front of the old son-in-law!

“Flynn, from today onward, move your desk next to my table!”

Flynn, who was still immersed in his anger from Carmen’s laugh of ‘mockery’, suddenly heard those words. What? Next to his table?

Everyone was shocked as all of them knew what that seat represented—only the naughtiest and most disobedient student with the worst academic result sat there!

To an elite student like Flynn, sitting there would be a disgrace to him!

He was puzzled. “Sir!”

However, Hope changed the subject in displeasure. “Alright, let’s start our self-study session. We will have to spell 50 Spanish words in 20 minutes.”

Just like that, Flynn moved from the seat beside Carmen to the ‘royal throne’—a seat which was forever filled with the smell of marker pen—and became every subject teacher’s ‘favorite’ student.

Carmen kept quiet for the entire self-study session in the morning. She silently revised on her own and did the Spanish spelling with a calm and peaceful look.

Although she was a beautiful young lady, she seemed a little different than her peers. Perhaps it was because she had left her family and studied abroad when she was still young, which resulted in her independent character.

The classes in the morning ended in an uncanny atmosphere. The school bell rang, which indicated that all classes in the morning had ended and the subject teacher left the classroom. Before the students even rose from their seats, they suddenly heard a thunderous roar from Flynn, who had been sitting in the first row while enjoying the smell of marker pen writing on the white board for the whole morning. "Carmen, stand right there!"

Carmen, who was packing her stuff and preparing to leave, adjusted her glasses and asked, "What's the matter?"

He tried his best to look calm. There were a lot of people looking at them in the classroom, so he could not continue to embarrass himself. He uttered, "I will wait for you in the little woods on the hill behind the school."

After saying that, he took his bag and left.

Tsk, lunatic. She packed her things and left the classroom.

Everyone looked at them. All they saw in the past was how Carmen chased Flynn but was rejected by him. From the looks of it now, there could be some inside story which they did not know of.

The bunch of students skipped their lunches and swarmed toward the little forest on the hill behind the school and hid somewhere.

Unfortunately, she did not show up.

Everyone usually had their lunch in the school cafeteria during lunch time. They seldom headed out of the school to eat since their time was limited in their senior year.

In the security guards' office at the school entrance, on top of Theo's office table was a delicious lunch that had just been sent over from home. He was serving her some dishes. "Come, darling, have some more."

Carmen, who disliked the food that was served in the cafeteria, always thought that the food served at home was the best. She served him some dishes as she ate. "Grandpa, you should eat more too."

As he looked at her, he thought that she looked beautiful from all angles. She is still a dazzling little angel!

As they were having lunch, Theo seemed to have something to say. After some hesitation, he asked, "I heard from your mom that you are going to use a condom?"

"Pffft—" Carmen spat out the food in shock.