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Despite his bantering suggestion, Matthias didn't think Heather would be willing to let him visit the Langston Residence. He wasn't hopeful about this, but he had a little bit of anticipation deep down inside after the string of surprises today.

As she stirred the coffee with a spoon in her hand, Heather looked at Matthias while exuding an alluring charm. They looked at each other, but Matthias couldn't fathom the message in her eyes for a moment.

"Do you like to hide from the snow at the Langston Residence?" Heather's eyes flickered as an unspeakably seductive charm emanated from her.

"In that case, why don't we go to my place instead?" Matthias asked suggestively in return. In any case, he just wanted to be with Heather, but he didn't know whether she understood what he meant.

Heather stopped what she was doing. "I'm not interested."

Her resolute reply extinguished all Matthias's fantasies. It seemed that Heather was still who she was, so Matthias shouldn't cherish any fanciful ideas. However, just when he felt disheartened, she suddenly said, "I like the night view from your villa's rooftop." She recalled the previous candlelight dinner as if it had just happened yesterday. Time really flew in a rush, and many things had become history.

They tacitly spoke implicitly and conveyed—by implication—what they really thought. "Well then, may I have the pleasure of inviting you to enjoy the night view from my villa's rooftop tonight?" Matthias asked.

"I'd like to watch Evan dance." Heather made a request.

Matthias looked in her direction while feeling rather depressed. It really made people feel helpless that Heather would actually make such a request.

"If he can't, why don't you do it instead?" Heather suggested while trying to imagine the scene in her mind, though she truly couldn't imagine it.

Matthias waved his hand at once. He was bad at dancing, so it would be better to sacrifice Evan instead. Having made a deliberate choice, he hurriedly sent Evan a text message via Messenger while Heather wasn't paying attention. 'Is it okay if you dance?' At this moment, there was nothing that he couldn't betray.

Evan looked at the text message in bafflement. What is Matthias up to again? How should I reply to this message? It wasn't difficult for him to dance, but he couldn't give Matthias a perfunctory reply since the latter had thrown him the question in all seriousness.

Meanwhile, Matthias gave Heather a nod after getting an affirmative answer from Evan. "Evan is a superb dancer."

When Heather heard this, she knew right away that Matthias was exaggerating. She didn't believe his words, but she didn't care about the details since she was only looking for an excuse to go to Matthias' place. She couldn't refuse such a kind invitation from him, but the trip would be worthwhile since she could watch Evan dance later.

A trace of a smile played on Heather's lips. Matthias really used every trick in the book in order to please her, and he would even probably say yes without hesitation if Heather wanted to watch him dance instead. "How long have you bought the entire place out?" she asked him.

"For the entire afternoon." The corners of Matthias's lips turned up slightly. He didn't want to be disturbed by anyone when he was with Heather. In fact, he even wished that they were the only ones left in the entire world.

"Would you mind ending this boring buyout ahead of time?" Heather asked.

Her question was tactful, but Matthias recognized the deeper meaning behind it. This was exactly what he wished for; he couldn't wait to take Heather back to his villa as soon as possible. He gave her a meaningful stare; how could he not feel more than flattered when she repeatedly held out olive branches today?

After leaving the cafe, Heather didn't walk toward her car. Instead, she got straight into Matthias' car.

Heather had been cozying up to Matthias the whole time, and such a test was nearly more than his heart could withstand. He almost wondered if this was a dream, for Heather appeared so unreal beside him. He reached out and touched her cheek, and she didn't dodge his sudden intimate gesture this time. She could even feel the warmth of his fingers.

Heather's skin is still so fine and smooth. I wonder how she takes such good care of it, Matthias thought to himself as he retracted his hand. He unconsciously touched his face, and it was so different from Heather's. After all, a man's skin could never be as fine and smooth as a woman's. Besides, how could Matthias's skin be as supple as Heather's when his entire face was tight?

The pair was in perfect harmony along the way. Heather looked out the car window from time to time, whereas Matthias kept quiet with tacit understanding. It seemed that both of them hadn't recollected themselves after the light touch just now. When Heather glanced at Matthias occasionally, there was a look of tenderness in his eyes.

Just then, a barely perceptible scent assailed Heather's nostrils, and she leaned over and picked up the cigarette beside Matthias. She didn't know when he started smoking, nor had she noticed it before. She looked at him while holding the cigarette. "You smoke too." She was a little surprised. After all, she had never smelled cigarettes on him.

Matthias took the cigarette back from her. "I smoke only once in a while." He smoked only because he had been somewhat distraught earlier. In reality, he seldom smoked on a normal basis since smoking wasn't a pleasure to him.

"The faint smell of tobacco smells good, actually," Heather suddenly remarked. She recalled the faint smell of tobacco on someone; it occurred so long ago that she had almost forgotten the smell of tobacco mixed with the man's perfume. She didn't know why she would think of that person. What seemed to happen a long time ago came into her mind as if it had just happened.

"Is that so?" Matthias smiled an unnatural smile as he couldn't help feeling that there was something else behind the meaningful look in Heather's eyes. Perhaps she wasn't someone who had never experienced love between man and woman as she appeared to be. After all, she was a mature woman, and women of her age would more or less have scars left on them after having loved someone. At the thought of this, he felt a dull ache in his chest; it really made him feel uncomfortable to think that Heather had been attracted to someone else before. "Do you like the smell of tobacco?" He tossed the cigarette aside as he suddenly hated cigarettes even more.

"Only the faint smell of it," Heather answered emphatically.

Matthias forced a smile, and his reply sounded forced. "Okay." It seems that Heather once loved a man who had a faint smell of tobacco on him just as I've guessed, he thought to himself.

The topic seemed to be brought up specially to make conversation, and Heather finally understood how awkward Matthias felt back then. Making conversation when there was nothing to talk about was the most tormenting thing ever, and Heather didn't expect that she would also find herself in such a predicament one day. Before she realized it, she had tried to please Matthias. This was why love was both irresistible and annoying; she was such a proud person, yet she would think of how to please someone else.

Heather's heart always wavered at such a moment. She would probably think of ending the relationship for good—love was particularly tormenting, and to continue being in a relationship was a journey that brought both pain and joy.

"You're averting your eyes. What are you worrying about?" Matthias began to learn how to pay attention to Heather's little gestures since they could reflect her inner thoughts just as they did at this moment. He didn't know why, but he was surprised that Heather actually wanted to run away. They were about to reach the villa soon; he was going to take her to his home, yet he had a bad feeling about this.

Just then, Heather asked in a self-deprecating manner, "Do you think someone like me is unworthy of love, Matthias?"

Matthias looked at her with determination. "Why are you denying yourself?" He hoped he could give her courage so that she wouldn't escape from their feelings for each other again. "Everyone has the right to love; it's just that some people give up this right," he said in all seriousness as if teaching her how to love.

"Sometimes, I really think that love is very boring, Matthias." Heather talked about what had been troubling her. She wanted to be close to Matthias, but she also wanted to stay away from him at times. Such ambivalence almost tortured her terribly.

"Since when did you start thinking of such nonsense, and since when did you become so unsure of yourself?" Matthias raised an eyebrow at Heather. He would've probably wavered or felt disappointed in the past, but he no longer did so. He had researched this for a long

time; even though he lacked practical experience, he had figured out the mental state of a woman in love at the very least. He couldn't think about this from his perspective as a man, so he tried to view this from Heather's perspective. Had there not been so many complicated factors between them, there probably wouldn't have been so many messy situations, nor would Heather have become unsure of herself. After all, she was such a self-assured person.

The car came to a complete stop outside the villa. After getting out of his car, Matthias opened the car door for Heather, who hesitated for a moment before stepping out of the car as well. As they walked toward his villa, they ran into Evan, who happened to walk out of the place and was surprised to see them. "What a surprise it is to see you here, Miss Langston," he said.

"Well, Matthias invited me here," Heather replied before smiling at Evan. "Besides, my being here shouldn't come as a surprise to you. Aren't you going to dance for me?"

Evan was stunned. "Dance?" he asked. "Why would I dance for you?"

Heather frowned. "That's what Matthias has promised me; I wouldn't have been here otherwise," she replied before turning to look at Matthias with a raised eyebrow. "Would you like to explain this, Matthias?"

Upon hearing her question, Evan turned his gaze to Matthias as well.

"Didn't you tell me that it's okay for you to dance?" Matthias asked Evan.

"Yes, you did," Evan responded. "But you didn't tell me that I'd be dancing for someone."

Matthias fell silent for a moment. "Well," he explained, "Heather said she'd like to watch you dance, and I agreed."

"That's right." Heather nodded. "That's why I'm here. I'll be leaving if you're not going to dance, Evan."

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Matthias looked at Evan sympathetically. He didn't know what Heather would do next, but it seemed that he could only trouble Evan for this. In reality, he was looking forward to it deep down inside as well. Even though a dancing man wasn't worth watching in his opinion, he hadn't seen Evan dance for a long time.

Obviously, Matthias had sold Evan out to please Heather. Upon realizing what had happened, Evan looked at Matthias furiously. So what if he was an all-around butler? Matthias couldn't make him do whatever he wanted him to do.

Seeing how the two buddies had fallen out and turned against each other, Heather smiled unapologetically. "Aren't you two getting inside?" She entered the villa first on her own. Then, she pricked up her ears and listened as Matthias and Evan whispered to each other.

"Why would you want me to dance?" Evan asked in displeasure; even his deliberately lowered voice couldn't conceal his anger.

Meanwhile, Matthias didn't know how to explain the matter to Evan. Feeling rather helpless, he said to Evan, "You dance really well."

Matthias was completely at sea, but when he thought about it, he realized that Evan didn't like to dance, and he really screwed up this time. Evan had a dancing partner who was particularly in rapport with him when he dominated the dance floor many years ago, and they naturally developed feelings for each other. When they broke up afterward, Evan had never danced since then.

Perhaps it didn't even occur to Heather that what she mentioned as a joke would remind Evan of a past that he couldn't bear to look back on. Matthias had also forgotten this incident for a moment, and it wasn't until he saw Evan being so angry right now that he remembered it.

Matthias was in a dilemma; he had never been courteous to Evan, but the situation was different this time since this incident had crossed Evan's limits. Besides, Matthias couldn't go so far. Still, he found it embarrassing to tell Heather that he had to backtrack on what he had promised her.

Evan had a rough idea of what was going on when he saw how troubled Matthias was, but he had always liked to add fuel to the fire. So, he leaned close to Matthias's ear with a scowl and whispered, "I think Miss Langston wants to watch you dance, so why don't you dance

for her instead?" Naturally, he wanted to teach Matthias a lesson when he thought of how the latter had ignored his buddy for the sake of a woman, so he wanted to watch him make a fool of himself. As soon as he finished talking to Matthias, he came up to Heather's side and said to her, "I wonder if you've heard a rumor before, Miss Langston."

Matthias was alarmed at once. It seemed that Evan was going to do something harmful to him, but it was already too late to stop him at this moment.

On the other hand, Heather looked at Evan curiously, wondering what kind of rumor she would hear from him.

When he saw that Heather was interested, Evan immediately struck the iron while it was hot. "Actually, Director Locke is a fabulous dancer. It's more interesting to watch him than to watch me dance."

Matthias hurried up to them as well. He just knew that Evan would get back at him, for Evan was very good at stabbing someone in the back.

Heather turned to look at Matthias beside her with the corners of her mouth turned up slightly; she seemed to be eager to watch him dance. On the other hand, Matthias' scalp tingled when he met Heather's gaze. Instantly, a bad feeling spread all over him.

"It turns out that you're a superb dancer." Heather smiled charmingly. Now, it seemed that Matthias was doomed to dance in front of her.

Evan winked at Matthias as he successfully gave the latter a hard time. He had always sided with Matthias in front of Heather, but it seemed that Heather had successfully turned the two buddies against each other this time.

Luckily, Matthias had quick wits. He immediately suggested, "I like dancing with a partner, but I don't have one right now." Even if he really had to dance, he would get Heather to dance with him. After all, the idea of dancing with Heather seemed nice to him.

However, Heather pointed to them both. "Isn't Evan here?"

Evan and Matthias frowned simultaneously, probably not expecting Heather to say that. As expected, they were outsmarted by the cunning lady. "I can't dance the female part," Evan

protested immediately. It was impossible for him to dance in the first place, so it was absolutely impossible for him to dance the female part.

"Haha!" Heather burst into laughter. "Why can't Matthias be the one dancing the female part? As expected, you're a bottom!"

Matthias and Evan were speechless at the same time. Heather had changed so much recently that they couldn't accept it for a moment; it was as though she had changed into a different person.

"You still remember what you've promised me, don't you, Matty?" Heather suddenly addressed Matthias affectionately.

Upon hearing this, Matthias tensed up deep down inside; he had no idea what mischief Heather was up to again. "Well..." He was in a quandary. He had reluctantly agreed to dance in Evan's place, but he didn't expect that Heather was still unwilling to let him off.

As she ignored the troubled look in Matthias' eyes, Heather said on her own, "In that case, it shouldn't be a big deal for you to dance the female part for a while."

Evan couldn't help but laugh when he heard this. Is Heather really not here to pull a prank on Matthias? he thought to himself. On the other hand, Matthias gave Evan a look to remind the latter to unite with him against Heather.

However, Evan turned traitor at the critical moment. He didn't want to dance ever again, but he didn't mind sacrificing himself if he could watch Matthias dance the female part. "I don't mind dancing if Director Locke is willing to dance the female part." He passed the buck to Matthias again.

The latter was surprised that Evan would turn traitor to him. This is really infuriating! he thought to himself.

Heather looked at Evan with satisfaction upon hearing his words. Only then did Matthias realize that she was full of mischief. It seemed that he and Evan really didn't know much about the other side of her personality, so they had to uncover more of this hidden side in the future.

Now that Evan had left no room for maneuver, Matthias could do nothing at all. At this moment, Heather urged Matthias again, "You see—Evan has agreed to it, Matty." There was a sly look in her attractive eyes.

Thus, this matter was decided for the time being—it didn't matter if Matthias agreed to it or not. After all, he couldn't turn Heather down at all. He stared at her happily smiling face; how could he have the heart to say no to such a good-looking face? Besides, he thought it was worthwhile since he could get the woman he loved to smile, so he couldn't say anything else regarding the rest of the matter.

Evan then stepped back so that Heather and Matthias walked side by side. Just then, Heather asked to go to the rooftop. She liked the rooftop of Matthias' villa as the Langston Family's chateau didn't have one. Moreover, she liked an open environment where she could look far into the distance. A cold breeze lifted a corner of her dress, and such a natural and refreshing breeze made her feel comfortable.

The sky was already dark in the winter. At this moment, Evan had slipped off quietly, leaving only Matthias by Heather's side. As there were only the two of them on the large rooftop, Matthias hugged Heather from behind. Smelling the pleasant scent of her hair, he rested his head on her shoulder as they completely let their guard down. "You smell so nice." He recalled the scene where he met Heather for the first time, and he still remembered the faint fragrance on her to this day.

"Your breath itches me so much." Matthias' warm breath caressed Heather's neck, creating an itchy sensation that made her feel somewhat ill at ease.

"When will you agree to be my woman, Heather?" Matthias asked Heather. He was inwardly tormented by the ambiguous relationship between them.

"When everything is over," Heather replied meaningfully.

"When everything is over?" Matthias also wished he could put an end to everything sooner, but would everything be over so easily? Apparently, that wasn't going to happen. Matthias wished he could live a peaceful life with Heather. Each day was torture right now; he was so near, yet so far away from her.

"There are too many problems between us, and I don't want to be together with you when there are misunderstandings between us," Heather replied from the bottom of her heart. She wanted a comfortable relationship, not one with a jumble of factors mixed in it.

"I also hope that I can put an end to all of this sooner." Matthias planted a kiss on Heather's neck. They were like lovers, but they were also like an unhappy couple.

"I don't know what you're planning exactly, Matthias." Since she felt that the atmosphere was pretty nice, Heather decided to be more forthright. "I just hope that you'll never betray or hurt me." She didn't want to be exploited by the person she loved, and perhaps she was already able to understand what Myra felt upon learning everything.

"You're the most indeterminate factor, Heather. I'm also afraid of being betrayed and hurt," Matthias replied while looking visibly moved. Heather seemed to have developed an instinct to take advantage of others. How could he put his mind at rest when she showed such a tendency?

"My interests are closely linked to that of the Langston Family. As long as no one hurts the Langston Family, I won't do anything over-the-top." Heather told Matthias clearly that she would safeguard the Langston Family's interests and forbid anyone from doing anything harmful to her family.

"What if it's only an expedient measure?" Matthias made an assumption.

"The Langston Family isn't a pawn in someone else's expedient measure," Heather stated resolutely. Whatever the reason was, the action of exploiting and harming the Langston Family was unforgivable.

Matthias grew more worried when he heard how Heather kept stressing that she would protect the Langston Family. She used to focus her attention on the Langston Group, but she had turned her attention to the Langston Family instead. In other words, Heather seemed to have become more attached to the Langston Family. It was already hard not to hurt the Langston Group, but it was even harder not to hurt the Langston Family. At the thought of this, Matthias became even more unwilling to lift his head from Heather's shoulder. Instead, he tightened his arms around her.

Heather was also aware deep down inside that she had gone a little too far by making such a request to Matthias. After all, Matthias had to use a lot of pawns for his plan, and the

Langston Family played a key role. Evidently, she was also worried about what choice Matthias would make. "At times, I wish to be the most ordinary one among all people," she said emotionally. If that was the case, she wouldn't have so many things to worry about.

"Me too." Matthias also wanted to live an ordinary life, but he was doomed to have a life full of ups and downs when he chose to become the head of the Locke Family.

Heather also knew a little about Matthias' past, so she couldn't help but ask, "You had the opportunity to make another choice back then, so why did you make such a choice instead?"

"I had to do that despite myself. There are people and things that you care about, and similarly, there are people and things that I care about too." Matthias thought of his mother, who died young many years ago. Would she want to see him looking like this if she was still alive?

"You and I have both embarked on a path of no return, so we can't turn back," Heather said emphatically.

Matthias turned her around so that they looked at each other. "Why would I have to turn back when you're accompanying me along the journey?"

Heather looked at Matthias unblinkingly. A romantic air surrounded them, and she smelled Matthias' scent even as she breathed.

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Heather could hear their clothes fluttering in the wind. She tried hard to gaze far into the distance as she wanted to look into the nothingness.

However, Matthias blocked her view with his own body. "Why won't you look at me?"

Heather withdrew her gaze and turned to look at Matthias' face again. "When in your life did you feel most confused?"

Matthias curled his lips into a smile. "Right now," he answered honestly. Like Heather, he wouldn't have known there would be such feelings of loss in his life had he not been in an unforgettable relationship.

When Evan came with the fruit platter, Heather and Matthias were still in the same posture. They're just bullying me since I'm still single, Evan thought to himself, and his resentment as a single person was instantly unleashed. "Do you need some fruit, sir?" His voice was neither too loud nor too low, but it interrupted Heather and Matthias.

Heather freed herself from Matthias embrace, upon which the latter turned to look at Evan with a depressed expression. Evan kept making trouble for him all this while simply because he had asked Evan to dance. This is what I get for offending my buddy, he thought to himself. "No, I don't," he said in a grim voice.

On the other hand, Heather looked on as if she was amusing herself by watching them make fools of themselves. She had never seen these two men bickering since the very beginning, but she saw it today. If Matthias and Evan knew this was what Heather thought, they would probably be fuming with rage.

Fearing that Matthias would want to choke him to death, Evan backed down under his stern gaze, but Heather stopped him. "I need the fruit." Seeing that there were fruits that she wanted to eat on the plate, she naturally had to stop Evan from leaving.

Evan's mouth curved in a triumphant smile. After that, he placed the fruit platter onto the round table on the rooftop and looked at Matthias with a smug expression. This proved that Evan was even more petty than women when he wanted to, and such vindictiveness troubled Matthias a lot.

Evan left unhurriedly after doing all of this, whereas Heather sat down in front of the round table. The round table could be dragged freely and seemed convenient to use, so it was just right to drink afternoon tea at the table. As he sat down from across Heather, Matthias looked at the sly smile on her face and wondered what was making her so happy.

Heather handed Matthias an orange that she had just peeled. "Do you eat oranges, Matty?"

Matthias didn't like to eat oranges at all, though. However, Heather peeled the orange for him herself. Naturally, he couldn't turn down her offer, so he immediately took the orange, which wasn't whole, from her.

Meanwhile, Heather added, "Forgive me for stealing a few orange slices."

Matthias couldn't understand why Heather was so polite since he wouldn't mind it if she sneaked the orange whole. He then put the orange into his mouth under her stare, only to frown slightly when he realized how sour the orange was. He tried hard not to lose control of himself. How could there be such a sour fruit in the world? he thought to himself. He was amused and annoyed as Heather gave him the orange simply because it tasted so sour. Looking at the smug smile on Heather's face across from him, he felt really helpless. Since when did Heather become so mischievous?

Heather didn't forget to rub salt into the wound by asking, "Is it delicious?"

"Yes, it is," Matthias answered reluctantly.

Heather then produced another orange in her hand without Matthias noticing. This is bad, Matthias thought to himself as his pupils dilated slightly. As he had expected, she enthusiastically handed the orange to him. "It seems that you like to eat oranges. I'll let you eat this as well."

Feeling as though he had seen the smile of a demon, Matthias tried his best to control his emotions. If it were someone else who did this, he would probably have broken the person's neck. However, it was Heather who did this, so he had no choice other than to indulge her.

There was a trace of hesitation in Matthias' eyes when he took the orange from Heather. This time, he decided to stuff the entire orange in his mouth directly. If it weren't for the fact that the orange was too large, he would have swallowed it whole. However, when he bit into the orange, he was surprised to discover that this orange was unusually sweet.

Matthias's expression eased a lot, and Heather watched the changes in his expression with great interest. This is really interesting, she thought to himself. "Life is like these oranges. One would have no idea whether what happens next is sweet or not, and whether the road they take in the future is bumpy or smooth."

"You're cut out to be a philosopher," Matthias said to Heather. Heather often exuded the air of an educator unknowingly, so he wondered if she wanted to be a teacher.

However, Heather answered, "A person whose life is full of ups and downs is more cut out to be a philosopher, and I don't want my life to be full of that." She just wanted to live her life in

peace. Her life felt so long to her that she already felt exhausted, so she hoped that the next path she took in life would be smooth. Even now, she couldn't trust Matthias wholeheartedly. Matthias had been pledging his loyalty to her and trying to convince her to let her guard down, but the more he did so, the more she kept her guard up.

"So what if all the oranges on this plate are sour? Is there anyone who has such a rough life?" Matthias asked in reply. Was there someone whose life was full of nothing else but misery?

Matthias had heard that one could only enjoy so much happiness in their life. Once all the happiness in one's life was used up, all that followed would be agony. Therefore, one must slowly enjoy their happiness in life bit by bit.

However, was it true in real life that the highs and lows of everyone's life were similar? In the eyes of others, a man of position enjoyed unparalleled fame and was immensely enviable, but did those at the top really feel comfortable in their position? For example, Heather and Matthias rarely felt happy, and the rare happiness was like bubbles that would burst upon being touched. Furthermore, they had to be careful when they encountered happiness. They feared that they would carelessly let happiness slip through their fingers and that their happiness was too vulnerable, so they didn't dare to make big moves. Both Heather and Matthias wondered if this was what life was or if they were the only ones living such lives.

The wind on the rooftop was getting stronger, but none of them was willing to suggest that they leave the rooftop; it was as if they were isolated in a world where there was no one else but them when they were on the rooftop. Even the air between them was filled with the scent of each other, and Heather was eager to put worldly affairs out of her mind as she just wanted to hold Matthias's gaze. "What do you want to do when everything is over, Matty?" She hadn't made up her mind on what she would do, so she wanted to hear what Matthias was going to say.

Matthias tapped the round table with his index finger. "How about being a scientist?" He recalled his dream about flying in space. He was always interested in high and new technology, after all.

Heather snorted with laughter. "In that case, I think it's better if you continue to be Director Locke." She couldn't imagine Matthias working in a laboratory while wearing a white uniform.

"Can't I be a scientist with my cleverness?" Matthias asked with a serious expression while pointing at his head. He seemed to be very displeased by Heather's ridicule.

"You lack the air of a mad scientist," Heather replied mercilessly.

Upon hearing Heather's words, Matthias gritted his teeth in anger; only Heather dared to speak to him in such a way. "I'm preparing a laboratory. I'll make what I want to study a reality with my own hard work," he declared solemnly. Actually, he had left himself a way out a long time ago.

"Actually, I wish I didn't mind how big your plan is. I don't want to take advantage of you in every possible way either," Heather suddenly said. Indeed, she approached Matthias previously with the intent of taking advantage of him.

"At last, you admit that you've been taking advantage of me," Matthias replied nonchalantly as if such a thing wasn't a big deal to him. He had long been aware of Heather's tricks; it was just that he didn't want to lose the opportunity to get closer to her, so he wouldn't grudge a thing even though he knew deep down inside that she had been taking advantage of him.

"I've been exploiting you. Do you really not care about it?" Heather looked at Matthias unblinkingly. She really didn't know what his bottom line was and why he was so kind to her.

"I'm willing to act as your stepping stone as long as I can be together with you," Matthias replied stoically. There weren't so many things to fuss over in this world. At the very least, plans were not indispensable between lovers; this was especially the case when one of the lovers was deeply in love while the other was still indecisive. At this moment, there was nothing fair to speak of.

"You don't have to be so humble. I don't want to see you acting this way." Heather felt very ashamed, but she couldn't make any changes. She couldn't stop herself from taking advantage of Matthias. After all, how could she not take advantage of him when she could even do so to Myra, her closest friend? Heather felt that she was the vilest loser, but she had to do so for the Langston Family's sake; she was only too eager to use everything she had to help the Langston Family. She finally understood what Robert thought—no matter how weak the Langston Family was, she didn't want to see the family wither away with her own eyes.

"I'm not humbling myself. If I thought I was humble when I first saw you, I think I'm worthy enough of you right now." Matthias no longer wanted to hide the truth from Heather. He fell in love with her at first sight and loved her ever since, but he was unwilling to admit it. Not only that, he even kept convincing himself that he loved Myra instead. It was ridiculous that he had actually lied to himself for so many years and even tried to revive an old dream. He tortured Heather in the beginning, only to look for an excuse to get involved with her. If he really loved Myra, he should have striven to win Myra's heart instead of wasting his efforts on Heather. As Matthias recalled his past, he thought that he had been ridiculous enough, so he didn't want to escape from his past anymore. Instead, he wanted to restore the truth about his past. He loved Heather, and he loved no one else but her the whole time.

Heather felt that she had discovered a big secret. She looked at Matthias without moving as if he would say something that he found difficult to talk about.

"I have loved you all along. If there is such a thing as love at first sight, you're the only person who I'd fall in love with the moment I set eyes on you," Matthias said slowly. He understood how his heart beat for Heather and how deeply he loved her.

"Did you fall in love with me right from the beginning?" Heather asked while pointing at herself. She found it hard to believe Matthias' words, for he was deeply hostile to her back then and had tried to steal Myra away from her. Heather didn't have someone whom she could open her heart to back then, and Myra was such a special presence, so how could she allow anyone to steal Myra away from her? At the time, she was like an immature kid who wanted to have all the good stuff to herself, treating her friend as her own property.

"That's right—I love you the whole time. I behaved like that at first only because I felt inferior. I thought I wasn't worthy of you, so I kept hypnotizing myself into believing that Myra was the woman I loved," Matthias confessed. Now that he had poured out everything, he felt much more relieved.

Heather's mind was in turmoil as she recalled Matthias' thin and frail appearance back then. The unmemorable Matthias back then had now grown up into a dauntless man as if it was a dream!

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Meanwhile, Tony was sitting upright in the living room of another villa in Bradfort City. Myra's head was lowered, and the atmosphere between them was extremely tense. Tony had made a special effort to redecorate the entire living room lately to cheer Myra up. The chic Japanese-style decor was quite different from the previously affordable and luxurious European-style decor, and it gave the house an entirely new look.

There weren't any servants in the living room. Tony sipped on the tea he held up before his eyes, and its bitter taste instantly overwhelmed his taste buds. On the other hand, Myra, who was lowering her head, had an unfathomable expression on her face. None of them spoke.

"Tony." Myra looked up with a somber expression on her face.

Tony put down the teacup in his hand and stared at Myra in a daze. There was some distance between them, and this awkward distance seemed to mirror their current situation. A person's trust could crumble in an instant sometimes.

"Why would you lie to me?" Myra questioned in anguish; she didn't expect that even Tony would lie to her.

Tony's mouth curved in a wry smile. He didn't expect Myra to find out the truth in the end, and he didn't know how to justify himself. "I really have no idea how I should explain this to you, Myra." He felt very bad as well. There were too many factors involved, so he didn't know how to explain this clearly to Myra.

The successive blows sapped Myra's energy and spirit. How could a pregnant woman stand such a torment? She put her hand on her forehead as her head really hurt. Tony wanted to come up to her worriedly, but she stopped him. "Don't come over, and don't get so close to me," she said angrily.

Tony stood in place as if he was suddenly paralyzed on the spot, and the expression on his face faded bit by bit. This matter dealt a huge blow to Myra, and Tony thought he could keep on hiding it from her. Unfortunately, nothing could be kept absolutely secret in this world. "Myra, forgive me, okay?" He pleaded for Myra's forgiveness. How he wished he could rush to her side right now!

The loving tenderness that he enjoyed in the past had now become something he could only wish for. Tony regretted his actions, but there was no such thing in the world as a medicine for regret, nor could he correct what he had done wrong. Veins stood out on his hands as he

clenched his fists and suppressed his emotions. Right now, he couldn't do anything that might startle Myra. For the first time ever, he felt that the living room was so spacious that there was such a long distance between him and Myra.

Myra's voice was neither loud nor low, but it chilled Tony to the bones. "My bottom line is that no cheating is allowed. I don't care whether you did it out of good intentions or anything else, but I can't accept your lies."

Tony wished he could take a step forward, but he stood frozen on the spot since he didn't dare to do anything that would displease Myra. "Can you listen to my explanation?" He had to explain this. Otherwise, Myra wouldn't even want to look at him.

"No, I don't want to. Can you disappear from my sight for the time being?" Myra didn't want to see Tony right now. At the sight of him, she would recall his lies and Heather's betrayal. She didn't expect that the two people closest to her would actually do such a thing to her. She suddenly felt like a failure, and grief was written all over her face.

In the end, Tony stepped beyond the boundary. "Myra." He rushed up to Myra regardless of everything.

Meanwhile, she immediately stood up. With a glum face and an unwelcoming expression, she dodged Tony's outstretched hand unnoticeably and distanced herself away from him. "Don't come over." Her voice was hoarse, and her eyes were full of grief.

Tony couldn't touch Myra at all, and they seemed so near yet far away from each other. He took a few steps back on his own initiative. It seemed almost impossible to seek Myra's forgiveness right now, so he kept his emotions under control as he couldn't act on impulse again.

"I'm tired. I'm going back to my room first," Myra said while going upstairs. As her eyes swept past Tony's cheeks, it was clear from the look in her eyes that she didn't want him to follow her.

Since he knew how to behave, Tony naturally didn't go after her. He bit his lower lip hard as he had never been so disheartened before.

He looked up at Myra, who took each step with great difficulty as she walked upstairs. He was the one who had caused this situation right now. Why did I do such a thing back then?

He blamed himself inwardly. He knew that Myra hated being lied to the most, yet he did precisely that. Furthermore, it wasn't long ago that Myra learned what Heather had done to her, so this revelation came as a double whammy to her right now. Because of that, Tony really hated himself.

After leaving his home, he pulled open the car door; he needed to drive at this moment to calm himself down. As he sat in the driver's seat, he felt as though he was cut off from the outside world. Upon hearing the sound of the car engine, he recalled what had happened not long ago.

Myra had been investigating who was trying to drive a wedge between her and Heather while the latter was away from Bradfort City. Who the hell was the woman she met at the cemetery?

For a long time afterward, Myra's memory of that encounter had been foggy; she couldn't even remember what the woman looked like. Because of that, she even visited the hospital for a checkup. At first, she suspected that this was because of her pregnancy, and she even wondered if there was something wrong with her brain. Unfortunately, her medical examination yielded no results. The only thing she remembered about the encounter was what the woman had said to her, for she remembered the woman's words so well as if they were imprinted in her memory.

Myra was determined to find that woman again, but she could only provide limited clues. As such, the progress of the investigation had been slow. To her surprise, she saw the woman again amongst the crowd. She wanted to call out to Tony, but she couldn't say his name out loud. Even though there was a man between Tony and that woman, it was apparent that they knew each other. Therefore, Myra left in silence.

Tony didn't see Myra that day, so he didn't know that she had witnessed all of this. There were so many coincidences in this world, after all.

When Tony came home that night, Myra began to ask him difficult questions, but he didn't know that the woman was the one who told Myra the truth. He had heard from Myra that the woman deliberately tried to set her against Heather, but he didn't expect the woman to be the quiet lady beside Caleb.

"Why would you know that woman in person, Tony?" Myra's body froze as sorrow was written all over her face.

Even though Myra had made things clear long ago, Tony still clung to the slight possibility that Myra had probably mistaken the woman for someone else. As he summoned up his courage, he then asked, "You can't remember what the woman looked like, can you? Perhaps you mistook her for someone else, Myra." In reality, Tony already realized that it must've been that woman when Myra raised such a question. Caleb's relationship with the Langston Family was complicated, so it was justifiable for Caleb to do such a thing. Tony only hated himself for not telling Myra about his recent encounters with Caleb.

"You're lying to me." Myra could tell from her understanding of Tony that he was lying.

"Trust me, Myra." Nonetheless, Tony must keep this matter a secret since he couldn't let Myra know anything about this.

This was exactly why Myra couldn't forgive Tony when she discovered everything afterward. Myra didn't expect that he would also lie to her, so how could this not leave her heartbroken? As a result, her relationship with Tony hit rock bottom. Tony had been trying to mend his relationship with Myra these days, but he failed to make any progress.

Myra roughly figured out the story behind this, and it surprised her that Tony had dealings with Caleb, whom she had heard Heather talking about. The Moriarty Family's relations with the Hart Family and the Langston Family weren't considered friendly, so she didn't know why Tony had dealings with Caleb and why he kept this matter secret. However, Tony had his own difficulties, for he couldn't tell anyone the reason behind his dealings with Caleb for the time being.

This was precisely why Myra was even more exasperated. She couldn't forgive Tony whenever it occurred to her that he had been hiding more than one thing from her. Why would he treat her like that?

Tony brought his car to a stop on the expressway. Such a dangerous move could be life-threatening, but he couldn't care less about this since he was about to freak out.

He opened the car door and got out of the car to get some fresh air. No matter how fast he drove, he couldn't soothe the anxiety within him. He took a cigarette out of the car before lighting it up and blew large smoke rings. As he leaned against the car, he watched the sunset while trying to use his surroundings to alleviate his feelings of suffocation. "How should I explain it to you, Myra?" he shouted. He could vent his emotions here without scruple.

No one knew Tony as he stood on the side of the expressway, and he didn't have to care about his status. As he stubbed out his cigarette, a wind lifted up the hair in front of his forehead, and there was chilliness in his gloomy eyes.

The wind blowing from the other side of the river brought over the fresh smell of river water and gently caressed every inch of Tony's skin. He didn't know how long this situation was going to last, for Caleb's arrival had completely disrupted their peace.

Tony no longer took anything into consideration in his mind when he thought of the collaboration Heather had talked to him about. At a time like this, every family would care about their own interests. Tony wanted to preserve the Hart Group amid the unrest, and Heather had the same thing in mind since she wanted to preserve the Langston Group. However, their collaboration would bring them into conflict with each other to a certain degree. As far as the current situation was concerned, it was difficult to say what Caleb was here for.

It wasn't until the setting sun gradually lost its brilliance and the wind blowing gradually became chilly that Tony got back into his car. The feeling of losing control this time was much stronger than before. One must never mix public matters with private ones, but now, the public matters and the private ones were already so deeply mixed that they could no longer be separated from each other.

The Moriarty Family had dealt a destructive blow to several distinguished families in Bradfort City many years ago, and Tony didn't want this to happen again many years later today. Times had changed, and Tony didn't think that they necessarily had to fight against the Moriarty Family—perhaps the matter could be solved amicably. This was why he couldn't fundamentally agree to collaborate with Heather, for the Langston Family's relations with the Moriarty Family were far worse than the Hart Family's relations with the other.

Tony had calmed down a lot when he slowly drove his car on the way back. After all, everyone had to vent their emotions occasionally; even the strongest person had a weak and vulnerable side. With this thought in mind, Tony drove his car forward at a constant speed.