

This Time, I Will Get My Divorce, Mr

Chapter 76 - 80

Sonia smiled as she stood up. "Thank you, Rebecca. If it weren't for your help, I wouldn't know what to do."

Paradigm Co. needed at least a billion in order to operate at any given time. She wouldn't know where to amass the necessary funds if the banks insisted that she should repay the loans. Therefore, she was grateful that Rebecca had settled the problem for her.

Upon hearing that, Rebecca waved her hand. "You don't have to thank me, President Reed. I'm your employee, so it's only natural that I should help relieve you of your burdens."

Sonia let out a chuckle as warmth coursed through her heart. Then, Rebecca's lips moved, for she was about to say something, but her phone rang right at that moment. She picked up the call with a serious expression after checking her phone. "Hello?"

"Miss Harper, we found another place that the young master might have spent time at. Would you like to visit the place?"

"Sure. I'll buy an air ticket right away." After hanging up, Rebecca glanced at Sonia. "President Reed, I have to apply for a leave again. I have an important errand..."

"Go on." Sonia chuckled before speaking. "I'll be waiting to buy you a meal after you come back."

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“Thank you, President Reed. I will be taking my leave after arranging for a driver to pick you up.” With that, Rebecca tucked her phone away and left the room.

Meanwhile, Sonia took her cutlery and continued with her meal. When she figured that the driver that Rebecca had arranged for her should have arrived, she paid for the bill to get ready to return to her company.

Right when she stepped out of the room, the door across from her room opened to reveal Toby and Tom walking out from within. Both of them were startled when they saw Sonia, and the same could be said of her, for she wasn't expecting to see them there.

“President Fuller.” Sonia was the first to break the silence by greeting Toby a little apathetically, while Toby nodded in response to that.

Tom pushed his glasses up before smiling at Sonia. “Miss Reed.”

“Hello, Tom.” Sonia returned the gesture.

All the while, Toby furrowed his brows, uncomfortable with their exchange. She would smile at Tom, but she always greets me with a poker face. He emitted a chilly aura that caused Tom to shiver before subconsciously putting distance between them.

Since Sonia had no intentions to speak to either of them, she left for the elevator after greeting them. Toby also marched forward. Then, they waited for the elevator in silence. None of them spoke, so the atmosphere between them was depressing.

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Tom felt pressured when he glanced at Toby, who was on his left, and then at Sonia, who was on his right. Why must they bump into each other? Tom rubbed his temple to soothe his headache.

A chime indicated that the elevator had arrived. Sonia entered first, with Toby and Tom following behind. Upon entering the elevator, Tom made a conscious choice to stand in a corner and diminish his presence.

After the elevator doors were closed, they started to descend through the floors. Suddenly, the lights on the ceiling flickered a few times, and noises of electricity zapping could be heard.

Tom raised his head while he gulped. "Will the elevator be alright?" He sounded uncertain.

As soon as he said that, the elevator shook violently. Sonia let out a shriek as her face paled due to fright. Because she was wearing heels, she couldn't keep her balance when the elevator rocked. Not only did her body sway around, but she even sprained her ankle. She could even hear the sounds of her bone dislocating.

Sonia was getting cold sweat, while her face contorted with pain. Right when she was about to topple over, an arm looped itself around her waist from behind her, and that made her freeze in place. "What are you doing?" Her voice was hoarse from the ordeal.

Immediately, Toby pulled her into his arms so that her back was against his chest. "Don't move. Lean against me and stand still," he ordered in all seriousness. Seeing that Sonia tried to pry his arm away from her waist out of reluctance, he spoke once again with a voice filled with authority. "Do as I say if you don't want to twist your other ankle."

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That made Sonia pause her movements. He knows that I sprained my ankle! She wasn't sure how she felt about that, but she stopped trying to wrench herself free from his protective embrace. Instead, she leaned against him docilely, for she didn't want to have to go to work in a wheelchair in the case that she did twist both of her ankles.

The shaking went on for around two minutes before everything finally died down, and the elevator was able to reach the ground floor smoothly. When the sunlight filtered in the moment the doors opened, Sonia could feel her hanging heart finally settling down in her ribcage as relief washed over her.

Meanwhile, Tom tidied his clothes and marched out of the elevator in the lead to hold the door for them so that it wouldn't close on the other two people. When Sonia lowered her head to check on Toby's arm on her waist with a complicated look, she inquired calmly, "Can you release me now, Mr. Fuller?"

"Sorry." Toby removed his hand.

After Sonia regained her footing by supporting herself on the wall of the elevator, she shook her head. "You don't have to apologize to me. I should be the one to thank you for helping me just now."

"It's nothing." Toby's gaze dimmed when he noticed the distressed look on Sonia's pale face. Then, his gaze travelled downward to her swollen ankle. His heart tightened at the sight of it. "Your ankle..."

Sonia looked downward to check on it before trying to move her ankle a little. As soon as she did so, an excruciating pain shot up from her ankle and then spread throughout her entire body. She grunted as beads of sweat formed on the surface of her skin. Even though her breathing picked up, she feigned nonchalance as she smiled. "My ankle's alright."

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You call that alright? Toby's lips were pulled into a thin line when he noted the beads of sweat on her forehead. After that, he bent down to carry her in his arms bridal style before stepping out of the elevator.

On the other hand, Sonia was dumbfounded. When she snapped back to her senses, she started to struggle. "Toby Fuller, what are you doing? Put me down now!"

"Don't move, or you might fall off my arms!" Toby reminded her with a frown on his face.

Either due to anger or shame, Sonia's face turned a shade of scarlet while her body was all stiff. "Then you should put me down."

"Can you walk if I do that?" Toby swept a glance at her leg.

Although Sonia choked on her own words, she quickly regained her composure and let out a huff. "It's none of your business."

"This hotel is part of Fuller Group. As the boss, I am responsible since you got injured here," Toby replied.

Behind them, Tom could hardly calm down as he gazed at their backs. He already noticed back when they were in the elevator that Toby was also having a hard time balancing himself, but he tried his best to protect Sonia nonetheless. When Toby came to know that Sonia had sprained her ankle, he even had a worried look on his face.

From what I saw, I think President Fuller has feelings for Miss Reed. Tom was pondering about the situation when he heard Toby calling out to him. Putting away his thoughts, he then walked toward the lounge area in the lobby.

"President Fuller."

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"Get us some ice packs," Toby instructed.

With a nod, Tom obeyed his instructions, and the ice packs arrived shortly. Toby sat down after taking them, and then bent down to pick up Sonia's injured leg to place it on his own lap. Just when he was about to remove her heels, she pressed on his hand. "President Fuller, I can do this on my own."

Sonia wasn't sure what he was up to for treating her so nicely all of a sudden, nor did she plan to find out the reason. If he had done that way back, she would probably be moved to tears, but that wouldn't happen now. After all, her heart had gone cold with apathy, so she wouldn't feel anything just because he decided to be nice to her.

Therefore, Sonia removed her leg from Toby's lap before taking off her heels to put the ice packs on her ankle to ease the pain. Toby pulled his lips into a thin line when he noticed her actions, slightly irritated by her reluctance to comply with him. Although he knew he didn't like it when she deliberately tried to distance herself from him, he couldn't place a finger on the reason.

"President Reed, I have come to fetch you!" All of a sudden, a familiar voice came through from somewhere nearby.

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When Sonia and Toby looked up, they saw Zane walking toward them while twirling the car keys on his fingers. Toby narrowed his eyes as he glanced at

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Zane and Sonia with a frown on his face. Why would she get Zane to fetch her? Since when has their relationship progressed this far?

On the other hand, Zane was surprised to see Toby. "Why are you here with President Reed, Toby? Are you two on a date?" He pointed at the two of them teasingly.

After setting the ice pack aside, Sonia rolled her eyes at him. "Stop spouting nonsense. I came for a business negotiation and just happened to bump into President Fuller."

"Is that so?" Zane caressed his chin in disbelief. Seeing that Toby said nothing to affirm or deny the claim, Zane pouted, bored by the uneventful exchange. Then, he was startled when he saw Sonia's swollen ankle. "President Reed, what happened to your leg?"

"I sprained my ankle," Sonia replied casually while putting her heels back on.

Zane tutted. "The sprain looks quite severe. You must have hurt your bones."

"So, your next mission will be sending me to the hospital." Sonia raised her head to look at him.

Zane acted as if he were Sonia's underling. "Yes, boss!"

Sonia also got into character when she reached her hand out to him. "What are you waiting for then? Come help me up."

"Okey-dokey!" Zane stepped forth to help Sonia up from the sofa.

All the while, Toby had a glum look on his face as he watched their interaction. When Zane rested his hand on Sonia's waist, the aura Toby emitted was so

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cold that it could have easily frozen someone over. However, neither Sonia nor Zane noticed Toby's abnormal attitude.

Having sprained her ankle, Sonia could hardly stand. Any slight contact with the ground would cause excruciating pain, so she wasn't in the mood to take in her surroundings. At the side, Zane was supporting her carefully to prevent her from falling over, so he wasn't paying attention to anything else either. They didn't even bid Toby goodbye as they made their way to the lobby entrance.

Just like that, Toby saw them off with a grim look in his eyes and hardened expression on his impassive face. "Investigate if the incident in the elevator was an accident or if it was deliberately targeted at us." Toby gave his orders in a merciless tone after standing up.

Following Fuller Group's development over the past few years, they did seize benefits that used to belong to other companies. Therefore, it was possible that his competitors would try to deal with him using underhanded tactics.

"Understood." Tom began the investigation right away after giving a curt reply. Soon, he came back with the results of his investigation. "President Fuller, I've finished investigating the incident. It was an accident. A problem was found with the operation of the elevator this morning, but the manager didn't stop it, nor did he inform the technicians to service it, which led to what we experienced in the elevator."

By that point, Tom was also feeling terrified when he recalled the incident. They were fortunate enough in that the elevator ended up reaching the ground floor safely. Otherwise, he dared not imagine what would have happened.

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“Bold of him to do that.” Toby clenched his fists with a sullen look on his face. “Inform the HR department in headquarters to hire another manager. Also, stop the elevator right away for service.”

“Understood.” Tom nodded.

Something flashed across Toby’s eyes before he added, “Other than that, find out what happened between Sonia and Zane.” Even though Sonia and Zane had known each other prior to that, they were never close to each other. In fact, they were almost strangers to each other. However, their relationship had improved drastically over time to the point that they could joke around with each other. Toby would never believe that there was nothing between them.

When Tom noticed the look of jealousy that fled across Toby’s gaze, he knew Toby must have been jealous of Sonia and Zane’s relationship. Despite knowing that, Tom dared not say it out loud, so he could only take his orders while pretending that he knew nothing. “Got it.”

Meanwhile, Zane helped Sonia get into the hospital and had her registered. On the other hand, Tina and a group of people came along while enjoying a conversation among themselves. It wasn’t Tina, but her good friend, Cynthia, who was the first to notice Sonia.

Cynthia tugged on Tina’s sleeve before pointing at the registrar. “Look, Tina. Isn’t that Sonia and Mr. Coleman? Why are they together?”

The smile on Tina’s face faded when she looked in the direction where Cynthia was pointing at. Although her gaze dimmed, she maintained a gentle tone of voice as she spoke. “Indeed. It is Miss Reed and Mr. Coleman. By the way, I think Miss Reed is injured.”

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Tina's gaze traveled downward before stopping on Sonia's leg, where an angry swell was evident. "Miss Stryder, did you do this as well?" Tina glanced at Melody, who was on her other side.

Melody also swept a glance at Sonia's ankle before she shook her head arrogantly. "It wasn't me."

"That's odd," Tina mumbled.

Cynthia added, "Tina, they're turning over here."

When Tina cast a glance in their direction again, she met Sonia's gaze, which caused the latter to chuckle.

Zane lowered his head to look at Sonia. "Why are you laughing?"

"I'm laughing at how small the world seems to be. I bumped into Toby at the hotel, and now I meet Tina in the hospital. What luck," Sonia replied.

When Zane saw Tina and the others coming at them, he seemed to be anticipating a show. "They're coming for you."

Aware that he was gloating, Sonia glowered at him right. Then, Tina and her gang stopped in front of her. With a smile, Tina greeted Sonia. "What a coincidence, Miss Reed, Mr. Coleman."

"Indeed." Sonia nodded calmly, but her mind was occupied; most of her attention was on Melody, who was beside Tina.

After Tina checked on Sonia and Zane, an odd glint fled across her eyes before disappearing. Then, she asked with feigned curiosity, "Why are you with

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Mr. Coleman, Miss Reed? Won't Mr. Lane be angry at you if he knows about it?"

Zane arched his brow. She's setting out to sow discord into Sonia's relationship with Charles.

On the other hand, Sonia combed her hair to the back of her ear, seemingly without the panic that she was expected to show when someone found her with another man. Instead, she replied nonchalantly, "Why would he be angry at me? I have so many suitors, so he will only better himself so nobody will snatch me away from him. He has no time to be angry."

Tina's face froze before she let out a dry chuckle. "You have a good sense of humor, Miss Reed."

On the contrary, Cynthia rolled her eyes. "That's not even humor. She's just being a shameless arse by cheating on her own boyfriend."

"What is it? Are you jealous?" Sonia watched Cynthia smilingly. "Does the fact that I have a dozen suitors, but you have none, not sit well with you?"

"T-That's not it!" Cynthia's face turned a scarlet hue.

A smile tugged on Sonia's lips. "Oh, really? You don't need to be ashamed to admit the truth. After all, it's normal that you would feel jealous toward someone beautiful and popular like me when you're an ugly duckling that no man wants. I won't mock you."

"You—" Frustrated, Cynthia was on the verge of tears, but she had to admit to herself that she was indeed feeling jealous.

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At the side, Zane was amused when he saw Sonia silencing Tina and her gang with a few words. I wonder if Toby is aware that his ex-wife has such a sharp tongue.

“Miss Reed.” Tina pulled Cynthia behind her. “Judging from what you said, you’re saying that Mr. Coleman is your suitor, no?”

“Tell her. Are you courting me?” Sonia elbowed Zane. In a voice that was only audible between them, she warned, “I will make your life hell if you dare mess this up.”

Zane’s lips twitched. He wanted no part in that, for he preferred to simply enjoy the show from the audience seats. Yet, he had to step in despite the headache that the situation gave him since the women around him had already dragged him into the mess. “Of course I am!” Compared to Sonia, he disliked Tina even more, so he decided he should side with Sonia.

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Tina’s eyes went wide in disbelief. He admitted to it. Is he really courting Sonia?

Other than Tina, Melody and Cynthia were also stupefied. In fact, Melody was staring at Zane like she was staring at an idiot. Both of them hailed from prestigious families, so Melody looked down on him for falling for a woman who had once divorced. He’s bringing shame upon all of the upper class society!

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“Mr. Coleman, are you sure you should be doing this? Miss Reed is...” Tina bit her lip as if there was something about Sonia that she should refrain from commenting about.

Sonia let out a snort of incredulity. “Go on, Miss Gray. What is it that you want to say about me? Are you trying to convey to Zane that I have committed certain atrocities by trailing off mid-sentence as if you’re trying to hide something?”

Tina panicked, as she never thought Sonia would expose her intentions directly, which caught her off guard. Therefore, she shook her head while explaining herself, “No, that’s not what I mean. It’s just that Miss Reed is Toby’s ex-wife, and you’re Toby’s friend, so isn’t it a bad idea to go after Miss Reed?”

“Nope. I think it’s a nice idea,” Zane refuted with a smile. “Although Sonia is Toby’s ex-wife, they’re already divorced, so it’s just normal that I would pursue her.”

“But—” Tina seemed to have something else to say.

However, Sonia cut her off. “Is my popularity that much of an eyesore?”

“No, I wasn’t—”

“If that’s not the case, you have no reason to stop Zane from pursuing me. If you think Zane shouldn’t be courting his friend’s ex, don’t forget that you and I used to be classmates in uni. According to that line of thinking, aren’t you in the wrong for going after my ex?” Sonia wore a half-smirk while observing Tina.

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Right away, Tina fell silent as the expression on her face changed drastically. What could I tell her anyway? No matter how I retort, I will only be humiliating myself.

"I guess Miss Gray has nothing to add. Let's go," Sonia told Zane.

Zane nodded while gazing at Sonia with a smirk on his face. It's obvious that Tina is trying to play the victim. Toby is the only one who's too blind to see that. Heck, he even thinks she is kind and innocent. I don't understand why he would see Tina with such rose-colored glasses.

Right before they could leave, Melody detained them. "Hold on."

Sonia narrowed her eyes. "Do you need something, Miss Stryder?"

Both Tina and Cynthia also looked at Melody, who had her arms crossed. With an arrogant look on her face, she demanded, "Are you not going to apologize to Tina?"

"Why should I apologize?" Sonia met Melody's gaze.

Melody snorted. "You had your suitor kidnap Tina, which led to her being hospitalized. Shouldn't you apologize considering what you have done?"

"What? Did you have someone kidnap Tina?" Zane was practically shrieking.

Upon hearing that, Sonia rolled her eyes at him. "Do you think that's possible?"

"I think you might just do that." Zane nodded in all seriousness.

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Sonia's lips quivered. "Get lost!" With a shrug, Zane fell silent. It wasn't until then that Sonia returned her gaze to Tina and Melody. "Why would you accuse me of having someone kidnap Tina?"

"Tina told us she heard the kidnapper saying that you're the mastermind," Melody replied.

Sonia smiled. "So you believed in what Tina said, and in order to restore justice, you had the banks cut off Paradigm Co.'s funds. Am I right?"

Initially, Sonia thought Melody only did that because of what happened when they played cards previously. However, she dismissed the conjecture as soon as she saw Melody walking beside Tina, and switched to thinking that Melody's actions might be because of Tina's kidnapping. Now that Melody brought it up, Sonia was certain that that was the case.

A look of surprise fled across Melody's gaze. "You knew?" Tina and Cynthia also had a similar reaction.

When Sonia saw their expressions, she smirked. "Anything that we do is bound to come to light eventually."

Soon, Melody regained her composure. "Your knowledge of this makes no difference. Paradigm Co. will be done for anyway."

"Is that so?" Sonia tilted her head. "Miss Stryder, you stepped in to teach me a lesson for Miss Gray's sake. I'm touched by your friendship. However, I don't think Paradigm Co. is anywhere near its end, Miss Stryder. On the contrary, it is your family that will be facing its doom."

Melody's pupils shrunk, but she quickly collected herself. "Are you kidding me, Miss Reed?"

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“She must be kidding. That’s just how a clown like her is. Considering the Stryders’ status, she couldn’t possibly have predicted their downfall.” Cynthia sneered at Sonia’s words.

Similarly, Tina looked at Sonia disapprovingly. “Miss Reed, you need to check your facts.”

“I don’t think she’s making things up,” Zane interjected out of the blue while gazing at Sonia with a meaningful look. After all, the certainty in her tone made him realize that she might have proof to back her claims. Something might actually happen to the Stryders. I just don’t know how Sonia knows about this.

“Zane, do you believe in what she said?” Melody pointed at Sonia while glancing at Zane with a discontented look.

Just when Zane was about to explain, Sonia took over the conversation. “You’ll soon get to know if I’m telling the truth. I pray that you will be able to maintain your friendship with Tina by then.” With that, she smiled derisively before signalling Zane to take her away. After all the talking, her leg was in so much pain that it was almost numb.

Tina and her gang didn’t stop Sonia and Zane from leaving. At the side, Melody was deep in thought with her head hung low. Meanwhile, Cynthia latched herself onto Tina’s arm while watching the two of them leave. “Tch. Despite how serious she sounded, nobody’s going to believe in her.”

“Alright, stop that. Miss Reed might be too angry after what happened to her company, so—”

Before Tina could finish her sentence, the ringtone of a phone cut her short. Somehow, Melody was feeling uneasy the moment she heard her phone ring.

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She took out her phone, and her heart sank as soon as she saw the caller ID. "Mom, why are you calling me?"

"Where are you, Melody? Are you still in Seafield?" A woman's anxious voice came through the line.

Melody was feeling increasingly uneasy. "Yeah. What is it?"

"How dare you even ask?" The woman on the other side of the line burst into tears. Her voice sounded accusatory as she cried, "You got us into big trouble. We received a report stating that one of the Stryders had interfered with another city's political affairs. Your father was taken away by the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection, and your uncles are being suspended from their duties."

"What?" Melody's expression changed drastically while her limbs turned ice-cold. As her mind was filled with what Sonia told her, her body began to tremble. It's true. Calamity has befallen the Stryders!

"I'm warning you, Melody. If the Stryders end up falling from grace, we won't be acknowledging you as our daughter anymore." With that, the woman cut the call, leaving Melody holding her phone with a blank expression while spacing out.

Tina and Cynthia exchanged a glance. With a look of concern, Tina asked gently, "What's the matter, Miss Stryder?"

Upon hearing Tina's voice, Melody snapped back to her senses. When she realized that such calamity only befell the Stryders because she helped to teach Sonia a lesson, she blamed everything on Tina. She had a malignant look on her face as she snapped, "Tina Gray, you'd better hope that the Stryder Family will come out unscathed! Otherwise, I will never forgive you!"

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After that, Melody shoved Tina out of her way to leave the hospital immediately. She had to hurry back to Norfolk to apologize to her family, or else she would be done for.

“Tina, what should we do? It’s just as Sonia said—calamity has befallen the Stryders,” Cynthia said, sounding deeply troubled by the turn of events. Instead of replying to Cynthia, Tina rubbed her aching shoulder while biting her lip with her head hung low in an attempt to cover up the panic and uneasiness in her eyes.

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How should I know what to do? If I had known about it, I wouldn’t be so nervous right now. How did Sonia know that something would happen to the Stryders? Tina bit her lower lip, her eyes dark as she glanced in the direction where Sonia left.

Meanwhile, Sonia arrived at the surgical department with Zane’s help. The doctor in the department was surprised to see her. “Didn’t you just come to change the dressing on your head last night? Why are you here again?”

Sonia didn’t expect the doctor to recognize her, so she cleared her throat awkwardly. “I came to have my leg checked this time.”

“Your leg?” The doctor bent down and looked around the corner of the table toward her feet. Upon seeing her swollen ankle, he shook his head sympathetically. “Miss, you are really having a streak of bad luck. You sprained your ankle when the injury on your head has yet to heal. You’d better go get an exorcism.”

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"Pfft!" Unable to contain himself, Zane burst into laughter.

Sonia was already blushing because of what the doctor said, and when she heard Zane's laughter, she was even more furious. Therefore, she elbowed him squarely in the waist. "Shut up!"

"Ouch!" Zane clutched his waist in pain, his face contorting with agony.

"Woman, you hit hard!"

"You deserved it for laughing at me." Sonia glared at him coldly.

With a pout, Zane muttered, "Fine, fine! I won't laugh at you anymore."

Sonia only let him off the hook after letting out a huff. While the doctor helped Sonia relocate the joint in her ankle and applied some medicine on it, Zane was busy finding out what happened to the Stryders.

When he learned that the current head of the Stryder Family was taken away by the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection, while other members of the Stryder Family were also being investigated, he turned his head slightly to check out Sonia in astonishment. It's odd that she caught wind of what would happen to the Stryders when even I didn't foresee that.

Having overheard Zane's phone call, Sonia knew exactly why he was staring at her like that. A smile tugged on her lips as she spoke. "You'd like to know how I knew something would happen to the Stryders, right?"

"Yeah." Zane nodded rapidly. "Tell me about it."

"Nope!" Sonia rejected his request smilingly.

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For a moment, Zane choked on his own words before leaning in with a cheeky smile on his face. "Don't be like that when I helped you out during your confrontation with Tina and her gang earlier."

"I guess you're right."

"So tell me. What exactly happened?"

Upon realizing that Zane was indeed curious about what happened, Sonia stopped teasing him and gave a summary of the incident. "Wasn't Tina kidnapped? It seems like the kidnapper was one of my suitors. Therefore, Tina was convinced that I was the one who orchestrated the incident to avenge myself for this." Sonia pointed at the bandage on her head. "Meanwhile, Melody used her status as the daughter of the Stryders to get several major banks in Seafeld to reject my loan application in order to seek revenge against me in Tina's stead."

"Hold on. You're saying that Melody used her status..." Zane's eyes widened in shock.

Sonia nodded. "Yup."

It took some time for Zane to collect himself before letting out a wry chuckle. "I see. Interfering with political affairs in other cities is generally a taboo among government officials. Not even her father dared to do that, but she did it nonetheless. Her father must be utterly vexed when he knew his daughter dragged him into such a huge hole filled with crap." His comical description elicited from Sonia a laugh, which made Zane stare at her. "Were you the one who reported it?"

Sonia shook her head. "Nope. One of my employees with a prestigious background did that."

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"An employee with a prestigious background?" A look of amazement fled across Zane's gaze. "You sure got lucky there."

Sonia chuckled nonchalantly. "Yeah. I do have luck on my side." Even though she encountered many problems ever since taking over Paradigm Co., she managed to maneuver herself out of situations with the help of the people around her. Charles, Rebecca, Zane, and Z-H were all dear to her because of that. She found herself fortunate to have met them.

"With the Stryders down, Melody will definitely hold a grudge against Tina. I bet Tina will be having a hard time from now on. After all, Melody is one hell of a madwoman," Zane commented smilingly without even disguising the gloating look on his face.

A smile tugged on Sonia's lips as she remained silent. Tina, having a hard time? I don't think so. With Toby at her side, she will be well protected.

By that point, the doctor already finished bandaging Sonia up. He even gave her two crutches. Thus, she turned down Zane's offer to support her, opting to get out of the hospital alone on the crutches. When she reached the parking lot, she saw a familiar face. It was none other than Julia, who was talking to the driver.

Julia stopped talking the moment she noticed someone watching her. When she turned around with a thermos in her hand, the elegant smile on her face faded away into a look of indifference. Her eyes were full of disdain as soon as she saw Sonia.

Already used to being on the receiving end of such looks, Sonia didn't lose her temper. Instead, she continued heading toward her car while supporting herself using the crutches. When she brushed past Julia, she caught a glimpse of the necklace that the latter was wearing around her neck.

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The vintage necklace had lost its luster, which indicated that it was probably an antique from many years ago. It was surprising that the matriarch of the Grays would wear such an unfashionable necklace. However, what caught Sonia's attention was the familiarity of the necklace. She had seen it somewhere, but she couldn't recall the circumstances under which she saw it.

Without giving it much thought, Sonia got into the car. It was Zane who greeted Julia after that, whom Julia smiled at before asking, "Do you share a good relationship with her?"

Zane knew whom Julia was referring to, so he glanced at Sonia's car. "She's alright. You seem to have something to tell me by asking that question."

"Pardon me for being direct, but you should stay away from her, Mr. Coleman. She's an evil woman who would only bring about misfortune to the people around her." Julia could hardly hide her disdain as she spoke.

A smile tugged on Zane's lips. "An evil woman? I don't think that's the case. What led you to that conclusion?"

"Isn't the incident with Tina self-explanatory?" Julia frowned.

Zane spread his hands. "But from what I gathered, Sonia played no part in that. Even if she did, Tina was the one who dealt the first blow, so Sonia merely did that in retaliation to Tina's actions. I suppose Tina is the more evil of the two."

"You—" Julia was so angered that her face darkened instantaneously. Then, she snorted and said, "I'm only offering you advice because you're Toby's friend. It's fine if you're not taking it. I pray that you won't regret it in the future."

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With a smile on his face, Zane retorted, "It won't matter if I regret this. Most importantly, I know Toby will." All of a sudden, he bent down to whisper into Julia's ear, "Although Toby is blind to your daughter's true nature, I am not. Besides, Toby won't be blind forever, so he will eventually find out about it. What will she do when the time comes?"

Julia fell silent while staring at Zane in terror. From her point of view, he looked like the embodiment of the devil itself with that smile plastered on his face. Her lips quivered as if she had something to say, but she ended up keeping it to herself. After tightening her grip on the thermos, she left with a pale face.

Zane touched his chin as he watched Julia flee the scene. Although the smile on his face broadened, his gaze was as chilly as ever. Since Julia was Toby's future mother-in-law, Zane figured he should have been more courteous to her for Toby's sake.

However, the Grays hadn't been too nice. Even though the Grays were based in Seafeld, they bypassed the Colemans and reached out to the Stryders in Norfolk. It was a humiliation to the Colemans, so he saw no reason to be nice to any of the Grays.

"What did you tell her to scare her to the point of fleeing?" Sonia inquired curiously when Zane got back into the car.

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Zane buckled up with a smile as he replied, "It's nothing. I simply told her a horror story."

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“Do I look like someone that gullible?” Sonia stared at Zane, rendered speechless by his reply.

After starting the car, Zane wore a defeated expression as he said, “But I’m telling the truth! I can’t do anything about it if you don’t believe in me.”

“This is such a pointless conversation.” Sonia rolled her eyes before averting her gaze.

Abruptly, Zane turned to look at her. “President Reed, I just noticed that you bear some semblance to Julia.”

“Huh?” Sonia was slightly dumbfounded. “I look like her?”

“Yeah.”

“How could that be possible?” Sonia shook her head. “Stop joking!”

“I’m not joking. This is serious. The outline of your face and eyes look exactly like her.” Zane nodded solemnly before adding, “Yeah, they look almost identical. People might believe it even if you claim that you’re her daughter.”

It wasn’t until then that Sonia was certain that Zane wasn’t kidding, which startled her. However, she soon regained her composure enough to wave her hand. “Our likeness with each other doesn’t mean much. There’re a lot of people who look alike, so this isn’t that strange.”

“I guess you’re right,” Zane answered. Neither of them took the discovery to heart, so it was soon forgotten.

After that, Sonia lowered the window to allow some cold air to blow on her face. “By the way, I have a question for you.”

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“Speak.” Zane was listening to music as he drove, his body swaying to the rhythm of the music.

Rolling her eyes at the irresponsible driver, Sonia asked, “Do you have a friend whose Messenger’s username is Z-H?”

“What did you say?” Due to the loud music, Zane didn’t catch the question at first.

Annoyed, Sonia pinched the space in between her brows before yelling, “Who is Z-H?”

Screech! The car came to a stop after a screeching noise that was produced by tyres sliding across the surface of the road. Both passengers were thrown forward, nearly crashing into the windshield before slamming back into their seats when their seatbelts pulled them backward.

Sonia’s face paled. It took her a moment to recover herself before she turned to face Zane. In her rage, she slapped him on the arm. “What are you doing?”

Knowing that he nearly caused an accident, Zane released the steering wheel to rub his face. “Cough, cough! I’m sorry. It was my mistake.” I wouldn’t have stepped on the brakes in shock if she hadn’t asked about Z-H though.

Sonia rubbed her temple. “Alright, you should reveal your true identity to Rebecca. I can’t afford to keep a driver like you.”

“Please don’t repudiate me just because of a single mistake I made.” Zane watched her smilingly.

Sonia let out a dry chuckle. “Drive then!”

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With a shrug, Zane continued driving, but he kept on stealing glances at Sonia. "You were asking who Z-H is, right?"

"Yeah." Sonia nodded.

Zane scanned his surroundings. "Why do you ask?"

Sonia lowered her gaze to hide the emotions in her eyes before explaining casually, "It's nothing. He had helped me twice ever since I added him as a friend on Messenger by chance. He told me he's your friend, so I decided to ask you since I want to know more about him."

"I see." Zane dared not even look at Sonia for fear that she might notice how sheepish he seemed. "Although he is a friend of mine, we aren't that close. I don't even know his name, since we only had a few drinks together. He has gone abroad now."

"I see." Sonia nodded. The fact that he had gone abroad meant she wouldn't be seeing him, which was a relief. She was actually dreading to meet him, for she knew they would be awkward around each other since she was quite close to Zane.

Now that she knew Z-H was abroad, she figured she had nothing to worry about. Yet, she couldn't shake a sense of dejection while she watched the scenery outside the car window in silence. Meanwhile, Zane heaved an inaudible sigh while thinking that he should go get Toby later on to get some reward from him. After all, it took him a lot to help cover up Toby's tracks.

Half an hour later, they arrived at Bayside Residence. Sonia got out of the car to enter the building while limping on her two crutches. The moment she stepped out of the elevator, the eyes of a young boy who had been squatting in front of her apartment unit lit up as he stood up.

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"You're finally back! I've been waiting for a long—What happened to your leg?" The boy stared at the cast on her leg and the crutches underneath her armpits in surprise.

Instead of answering Tyler's question, Sonia frowned while examining him. "Why are you here?"

Tyler hung his head low before muttering, "I fought with Mom. She wanted me to quit the basketball team, but I didn't want to, so I ran away."

With a smirk, Sonia questioned, "What does my place mean to you? Why are you always coming over to my place when you run away from home?"

"I have no other place to go," Tyler said uncomfortably. In fact, he had no idea why he came to Sonia's place. All he knew was that he could calm down whenever he dropped by.

"The Fullers are a prestigious family with so many estates all over the city. How could you have nowhere to go?" Sonia took out her keys. "Get out of my way. I need to open the door."

Tyler stepped aside to make way for her to the entrance. When she unlocked the door, he stood behind her as if he would actually follow her inside at any moment. Sonia paused in her movements to turn to meet his gaze. "Are you really planning to follow me inside?"

"As I said, I have nowhere to go. Let me stay for the night." Tyler lowered his gaze to look at her, seemingly intent on staying no matter what she did. Although he was a teenager, he had a height of more than 180 cm because he played basketball. Therefore, Sonia had to raise her head to see his face.

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"You can stay here if you wish to, but I have no reason to take you in for free. It'll cost you a hundred thousand per night." Sonia made a gesture of counting money.

Tyler was astounded. "A hundred thousand? Why don't you just go rob a bank?"

"What is it? Can't you afford it? Don't stay here if that's the case." Sonia spread her palms out to indicate her reluctance to compromise.

Meanwhile, Tyler's face flushed. "Of course I can afford it! It's just that I don't have money with me. Can't I just pay you next time?"

"Nope. Get lost if you can't pay right away. I don't allow debts. Besides, I don't have a reason to take in my enemy's son." With that, Sonia opened the door to go into the house.

Upon hearing Sonia refer to him as the son of her enemy, Tyler's face paled, but he recovered quickly to try to follow her inside. Immediately, Sonia closed the door until a crack was all that was left. "As I said, leave if you don't have money."

"I won't!" Tyler glowered at her through the crack. "I know my mom did you wrong. I will pay you more money next time as compensation."

Sonia smiled. "Nope." Money isn't enough to compensate for all the hurt you caused me for the past six years.

"What do you want when you're not going to make any concessions?" Tyler stomped his foot.

Sonia stared at him. "Easy. I want you gone."

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"I won't!" Tyler insisted on staying.

"Stay there if you don't want to leave. I'm not good-natured enough to let you in." With that, Sonia shut the door.

Tyler gawked at the door in front of him, seemingly finding the fact that she would shut the door in his face without hesitation somewhat unbelievable. At the same time, he was also feeling aggrieved as he slumped down on the ground while mentally complaining about Sonia's cold-heartedness. All the while, there was a tinge of regret in the mixture of his emotions as he reflected on his treatment toward Sonia for the past six years. The more he dwelled on it, the more uncomfortable he felt.

On the other hand, Sonia didn't leave after entering the house, for she kept watch from the surveillance system behind the door. The fact that Tyler was determined to stay was giving her a headache. Are the heavens sending him to torment me? Later on, she took out her phone to give Toby a call.

A peculiar glint crossed Toby's eyes when he saw the caller ID. Then, he picked up the call. "Hello?"

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