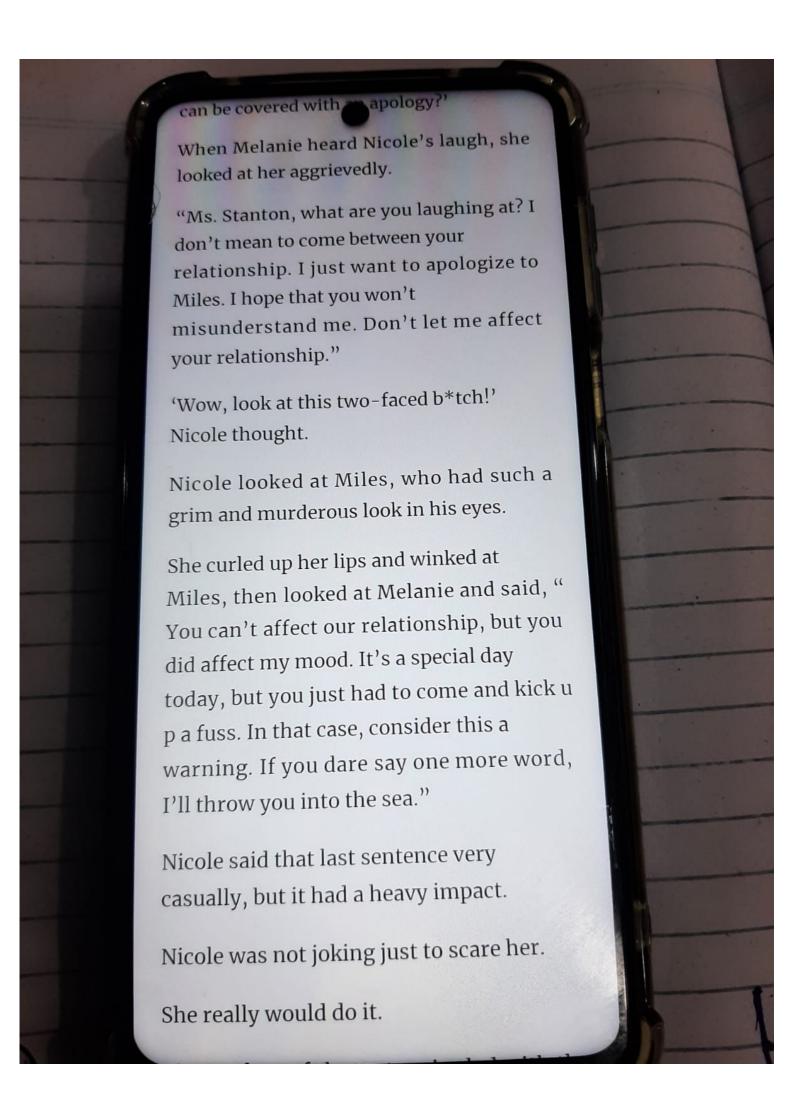


"I... I had no choice!" Melanie gnashed her teeth. Nicole slowly said, "Oh? You had no choice but to take your boyfriend's money to spend it on other men?" At the mention of her ugly past, Melanie felt embarrassed. Melanie had only chosen the wrong man, s o why should she be penalized for it? "Even if I did make a mistake, I can still talk to Miles so that he'll forgive me..." "Forgive you?" Two men slowly walked down from the spiral staircase. It was none other than Miles and Nathaniel. Miles' face was glum and extremely cold. His eyes were sharp as he narrowed them dangerously to glare at Melanie. "I'm nice enough not to call the police on you. You still owe me more than \$ 300,000, yet you still have the nerve to ask for forgiveness?" When Melanie saw Miles, she was clearly



one really would do it.

The surface of the water rippled with the cold wind. It looked a little eerie.

Melanie looked at Nicole warily and looked up at Miles, who had no intention to help her. He just looked at her condescendingly and mockingly.

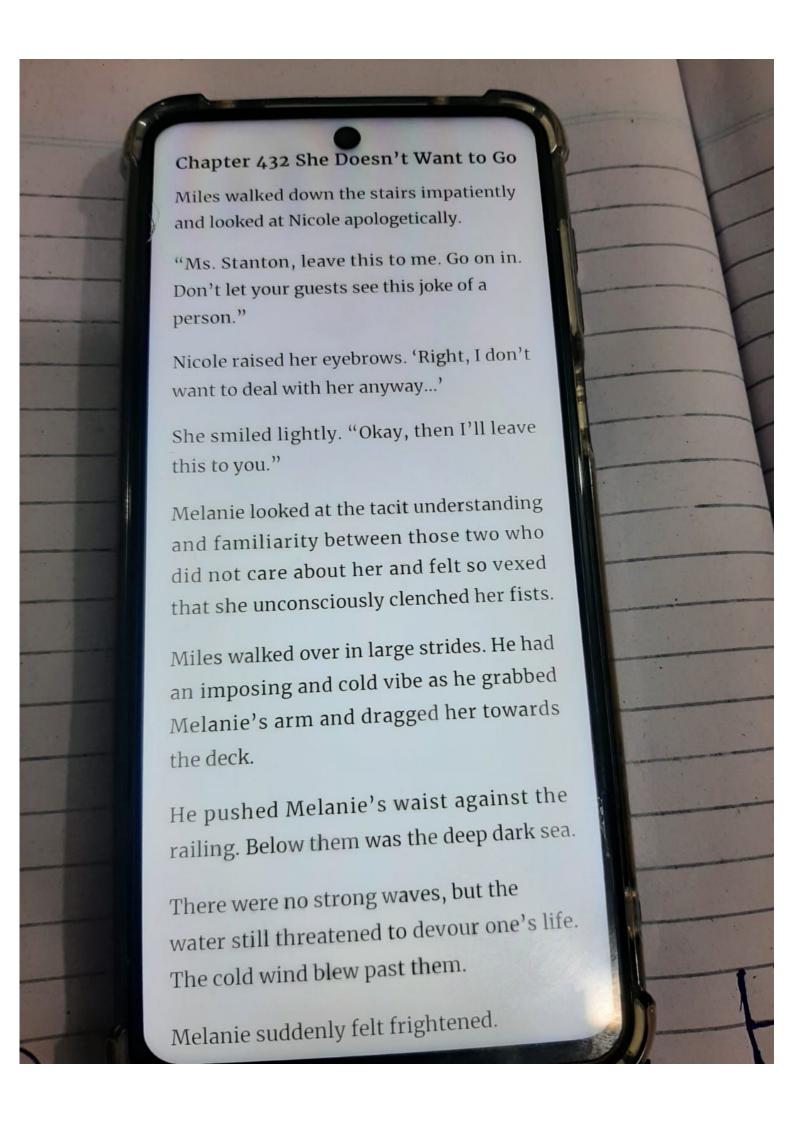
She had completely overestimated her self -worth.

Melanie bit her lower lip and looked a little miserable as she glanced at Miles.

"I..."

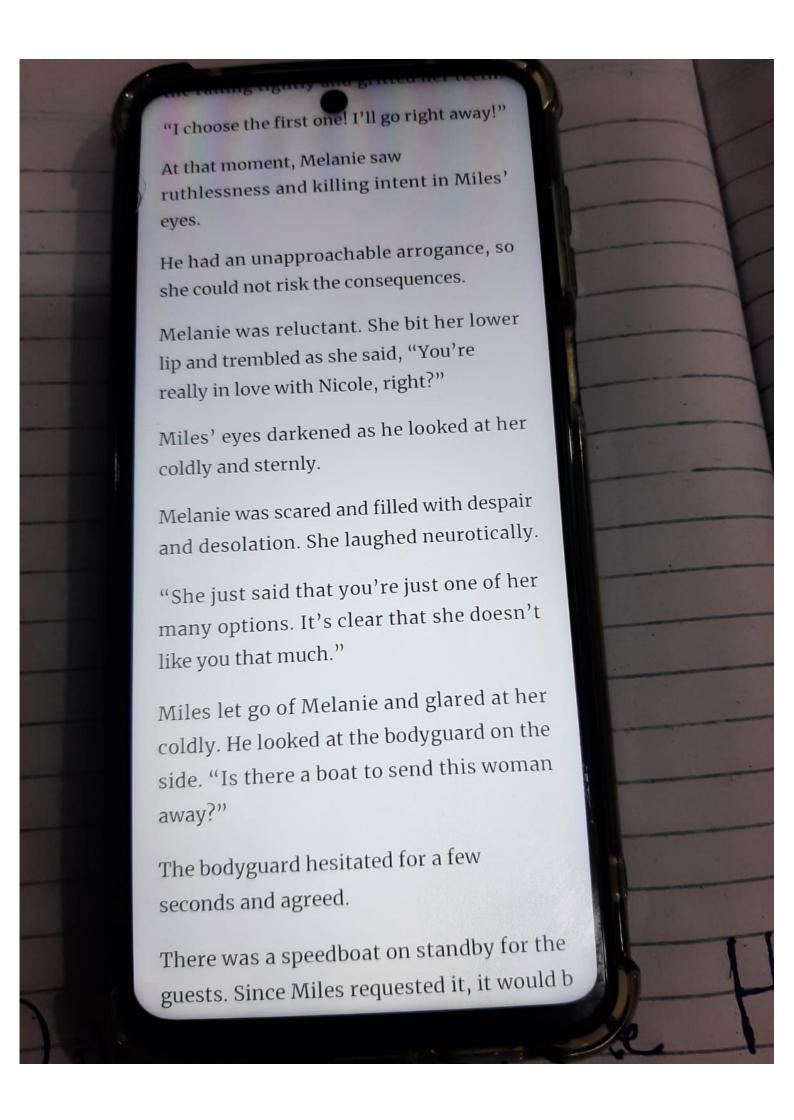
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She clutched the railing with a deadly grip as her voice trembled. "Miles, w-what are you trying to do?!" Miles was shrouded in gloom and a piercing chill. He kept pushing her downward. Miles sneered. "Melanie, I'll give you two choices. You can either disappear from my sight forever or... I'll throw you down from here." For the first time, Melanie could hear such obvious hatred in his voice that was devoid of warmth. She could feel the coldness seeping into her bones. Melanie suddenly panicked and looked up. They were far from the shore, and behind them were Nicole's bodyguards. Even if Melanie was thrown off the deck, n o one would save her. She would just drown, and no one would know. Melanie felt instant regret. These silly tricks were useless on Nicole

and Miles. Miles did not loosen his grip. It would take no more than ten seconds to throw Melanie over the railing. He was just waiting for her to choose. Would he dare to? Miles might not have dared to throw someone off-board before. Since his identity as SW Corporation's only heir was revealed, he was no ordinary person. Melanie also knew from mingling with Colton's circle that nothing was impossible with money and power. Thus, this might not be difficult for Miles. The cold wind pelted her face as her heart pounded violently. Her blood felt frozen a s panic and fear invaded her consciousness. She was scared. "So?" His voice came from hell. This was not the same Miles she was familiar with back then. Melanie's eyes turned red as she clutched the railing tightly and gritted her teeth. "I choose the first one! I'll go right away!"



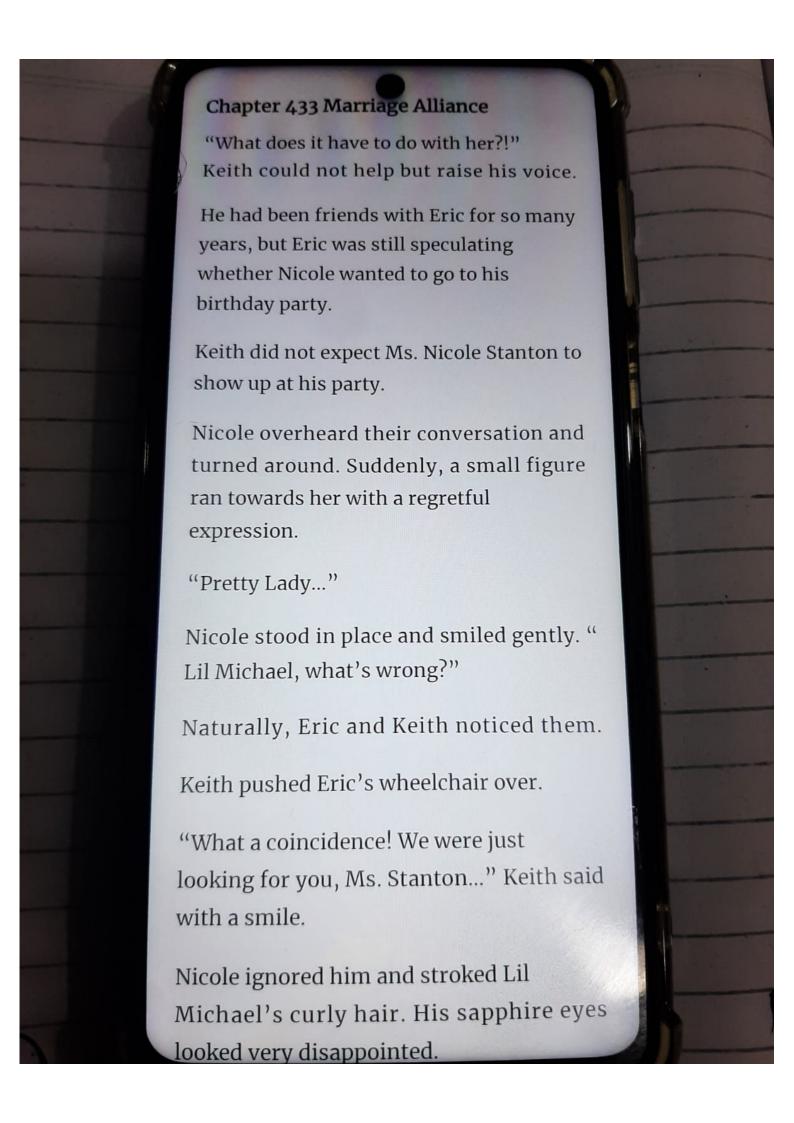
e done. Nathaniel saw Miles' face and thought about what Melanie just said. He held back the words at the tip of his tongue. 'This woman can't be trusted! Miles won't just focus on beauty...' Nathaniel thought. Miles and Nathaniel returned to the banquet hall one after the other. The butler told Nicole about every movement on the deck without missing a single detail. Nicole nodded, indicating that she knew, then turned around as if nothing had happened. She watched as Floyd and Clayton talked and laughed. She turned her head and saw that Eric and Keith were discussing something. She could vaguely hear her name. Nicole frowned and walked over. "I'm planning to party for a week in Santos Island for my birthday. Consider it a vacation..." Keith said. "I'm busy." Eric's voice was cold.

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"I'm busy." Eric's voice was cold.

"How are you busy? You're wheelchair-bound and can't even go around to meet clients. All you have is time!" Keith was not convinced.

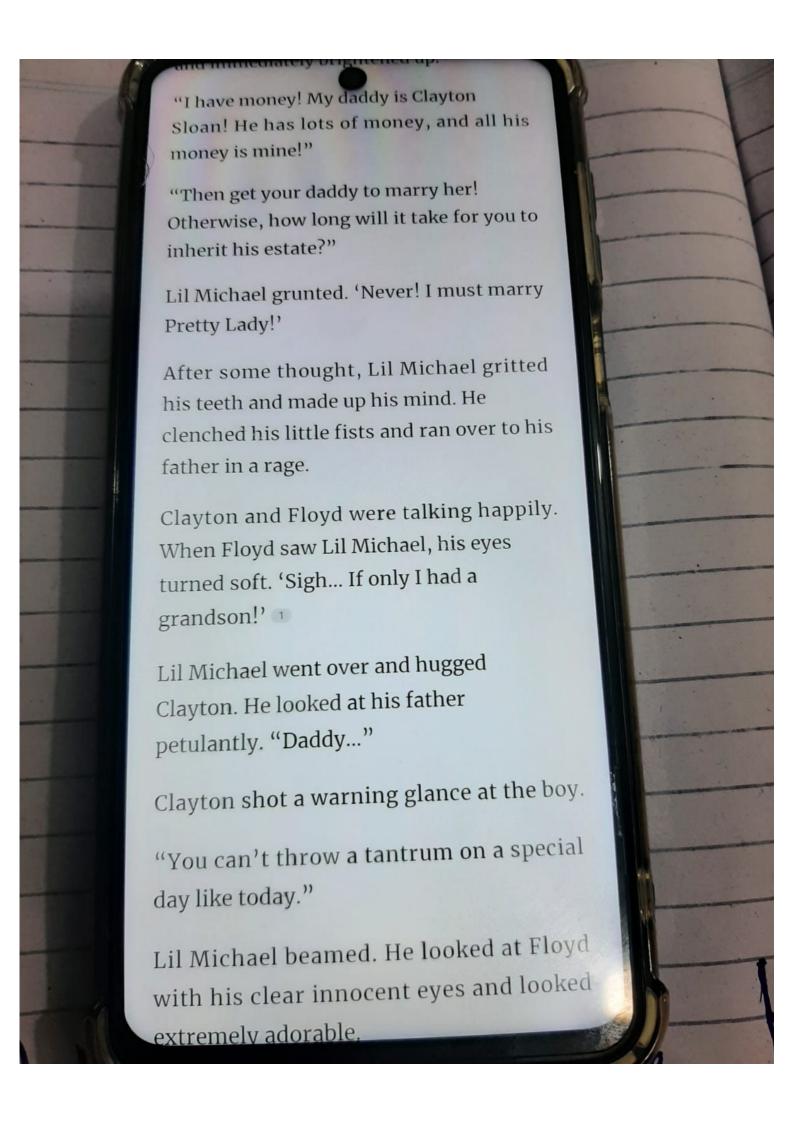
"Nicole won't want to go," Eric said seriously.



"I searched the entire cruise ship and couldn't find your favorite white chrysanthemums..." There was a momentary silence. Nicole thought to herself, 'That's a good thing!' Keith could not help but laugh. "If you can find white chrysanthemums on this ship today, the entire crew will be fired!" Lil Michael looked at him suspiciously and asked, "Why?" Keith touched his nose and did not intend to answer. Eric rolled his eyes, then looked at Nicole. "Nicole, will you push me to the deck for a rest?" Nicole gritted her teeth. 'Is he so used to bossing me around now?!' She smiled perfunctorily. "Sure." Nicole walked over and pushed his wheelchair away. Keith shook his head and thought, 'Can't h e see that this young lady is so reluctant? I

e see that this youn dy is so reluctant? I s Ferg trying to woo her or torture her?' Lil Michael was just about to go after Nicole, but he was stopped by Keith. "Where are you going? Don't disturb those lovebirds. They're cultivating their feelings!" Lil Michael frowned. "What feelings? Pretty Lady has no feelings for Mean Mister! She only has feelings for me!" He stood there with his hands on his waist as he grunted. His clear eyes were rebellious. 'Mean Mister is not good enough for Pretty Lady!' Keith looked down at the boy. "Tsk tsk... What do you know, kid? Feelings must be cultivated. Don't you see that Pretty Lady and Mr. Ferguson are a natural pair? Look how matching they are!" He raised his eyebrows and could not help but sigh. Under the moonlight, the outstanding pair on the deck could not be more perfect. They had comparable auras and family backgrounds. If it were not for their many twists and turns, they would

their many twists a turns, they would have been the most suitable couple. Lil Michael snorted coldly and went up to shove Keith. "Nonsense! They're not a good match! Pretty Lady only likes younger guys, not old men like Mean Mister! When I grow u p, I'll marry her!" Keith's jaw dropped in surprise. 'Huh... This kid is really quite interesting!' He laughed meaningfully. "Oh, so you like Pretty Lady, huh? What a pity..." Keith shook his head, expressing regret. Lil Michael was even more infuriated. " Why is it a pity?!" Keith rolled his eyes around and smiled slyly. He deliberately teased the little boy. "It's a pity that Pretty Lady has such a strong family background. Even if she doesn't marry Mr. Ferguson, there will be other suitable partners for a marriage alliance. Anyhow, it'll never be your turn, unless you're filthy rich..." Lil Michael's eyes dimmed for a moment and immediately brightened up.



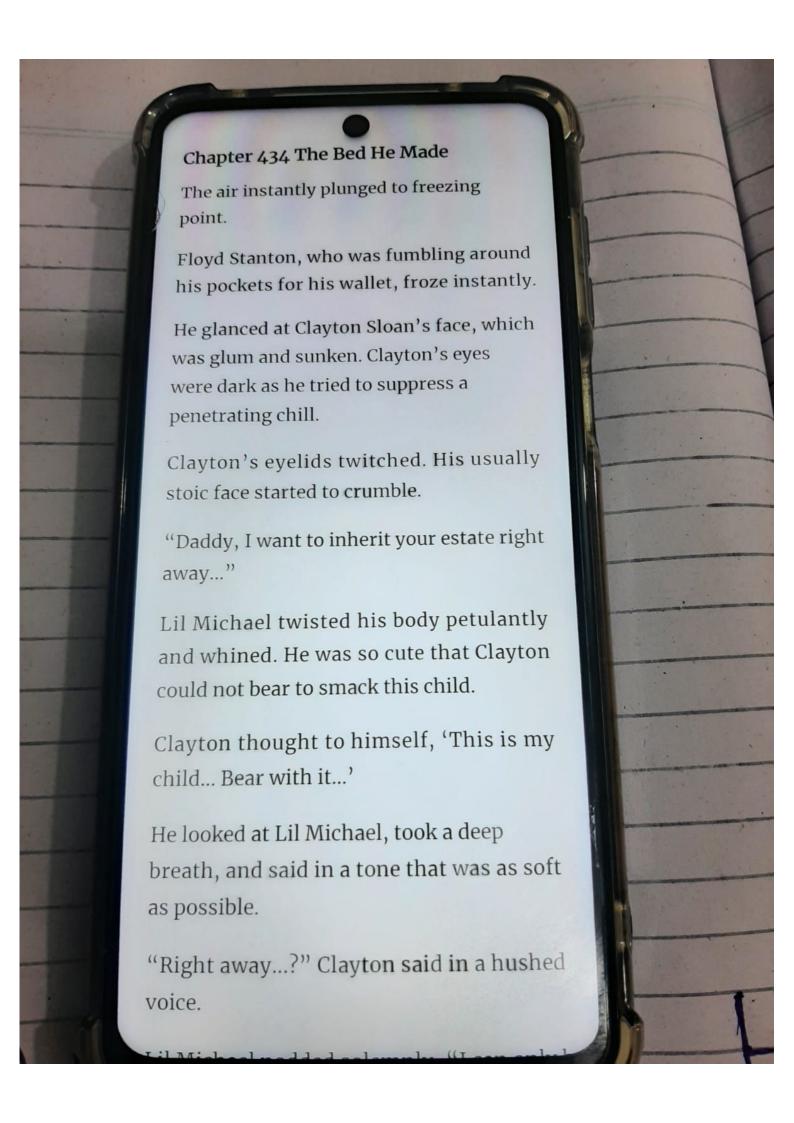
with his clear innocent eyes and looked extremely adorable.

"I know. It's Pretty Lady's daddy's birthday today! Happy birthday, Uncle Floyd!"

Floyd was overjoyed. His heart melted and thought of rewarding this kid with some money, so he fumbled around his pockets for his wallet.

Soon after, Lil Michael looked at Clayton and shook his father's arm petulantly.

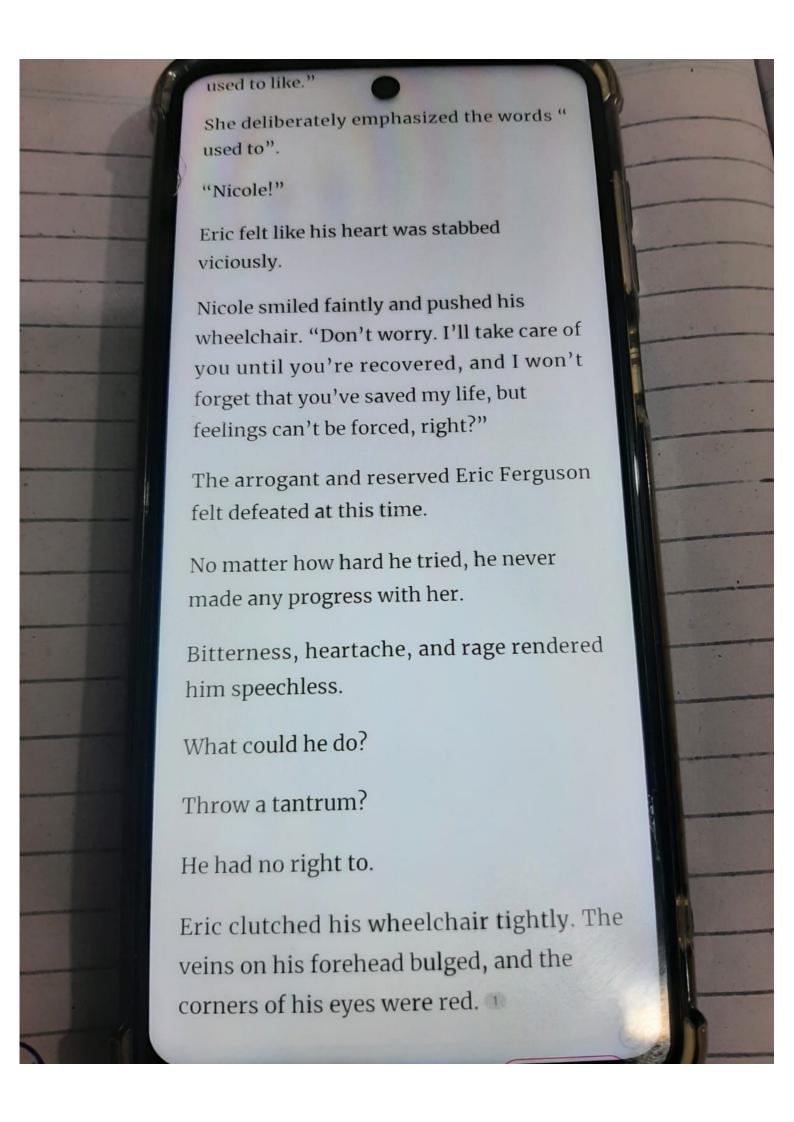
"Daddy, I wanna inherit your estate!"

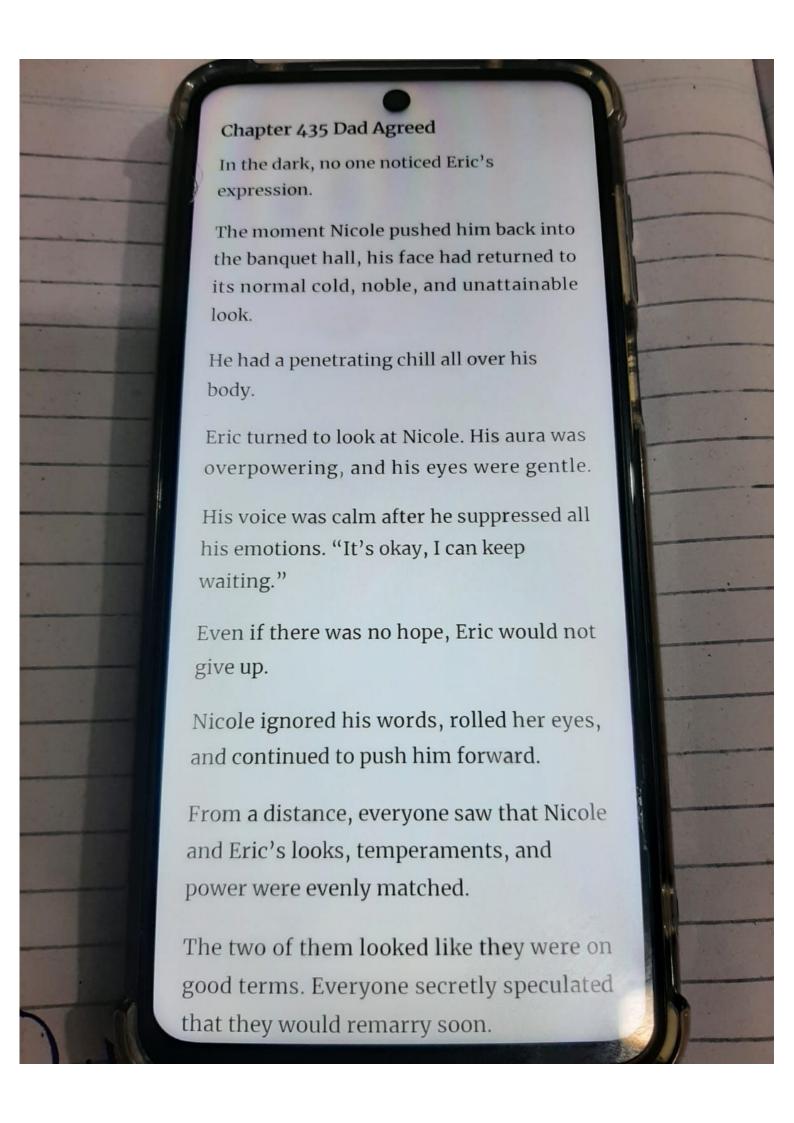


Lil Michael nodded solemnly, "I can only b e with my pretty lady after I inherit your estate!" Thus, Lil Michael thought, the sooner the better! For the sake of his pretty lady, he did not even want his father. Clayton's gloomy eyes were fixed on his son's tender little face. He tried hard to maintain his calm and poise. "Then I'll strive to grant your wish quickly ..." Clayton gritted his teeth and said sarcastically. Lil Michael beamed and asked joyfully, " When?" One second... Two seconds... Clayton closed his eyes and took a deep breath, but he could not stand it anymore. His eyes narrowed dangerously. Clayton picked his son by the back of his collar with ease. That way, he could just throw him out like a ball.

Floyd, who was next to him, spoke hastily, "Children's words have no limits Clayton smiled faintly and recollected his expression. He nodded apologetically and said, " Chairman Stanton, apologies. I suddenly remembered that I have some urgent matters to attend to at the company. I'll g o to your door first thing tomorrow to make amends." With that, Clayton simply carried Lil Michael and left with his head held high. I t looked effortless. "Ahhhhh! Daddy, I wanna kiss my pretty lady before I go..." On the deck, Nicole was dumbstruck as she saw Clayton carry Lil Michael away and wanted to ask what was going on. Before she could take two steps out, Eric grabbed her wrist. "Don't go... Think about what I said, okay?" His voice was deep, cautious, and humble.

Eric knew that Floyd Stanton would not let his youngest daughter be single forever and might consider a marriage alliance. Thus, he told Nicole that she should consider him first. After all, he had all the conditions and advantages. Besides him, who else was worthy? When Eric saw the way Nicole and Clayton were talking happily earlier, he still felt uncomfortable even though he knew that Clayton was not an option. Thus, he carefully probed this subject. Nicole lowered her eyes to look at him. She suddenly laughed. "Mr. Ferguson, all that matters is compatibility in a marriage alliance, nothing else. Even so, you won't be an option. I'm not dumb enough to put up with the same person twice." Nicole spoke slowly with a faint smile. "Besides, now that I've seen the world, m y standards improved significantly, so I n o longer have any interest in the people I





If Ferguson Corporation and Stanton Corporation joined hands, their standing i n the industry would be even more unshakable! The party came to an end. Nicole followed Floyd to bid goodbye to the guests. Eric deliberately fell behind. Floyd looked at Eric and smiled. "Go back and rest well. Pay attention to your health." He sounded very caring towards Eric. Nicole looked at her father and felt that something was wrong.

Eric smiled and nodded. "Then I'll see you tomorrow."

"Sure."

After sending Eric away, Nicole looked at Floyd in surprise.

"See you tomorrow? Dad, what are you planning to do with him?"

Floyd patted her hand and looked expectant.

expectant. "He has arranged a twenty-day round-the -world trip for me as a birthday gift." Floyd had been wanting to do this for a long time and took some time off from his affairs. Nicole frowned. "You're going by yourself?" "Of course not, you're coming with!" Floyd looked at her with an expectant and stern gaze. "You won't ditch me, right?" That gaze looked like if she dared to refuse, he would disown her. Nicole was no longer her father's favorite child. She was bumped out by Tigger! Nicole smiled charmingly. "Of course not ... I just think that it's too sudden." Floyd laughed. "Surprises are always sudden! In fact, I'm very satisfied with Eric's gift this time. He must've spent a lot of effort to plan this, so Dad agreed." Somehow, Nicole felt that Eric had an ulterior motive.

Nicole hesitantly said, "But I have a lot of things to handle at the company..." "Just give it to Grant. Kai can take over if Grant's too busy. If Kai makes any losses, he'll just have to fill in the gaps." Floyd said casually as if he did not want anything to ruin his plans. Kai, who happened to be walking over behind them, stopped in his tracks and widened his eyes. 'What did Dad mean by I'll have to fill in the gaps? Am I not his son?!' Nicole was helpless and could only agree. Consider it a free trip! Kai was resentful and trudged forward. " Dad, I wanna go too!" Floyd cast a sidelong glance at him. "Get lost!" "You can't let Lil N go... I'm the best when it comes to eating, drinking, and having fun!" Kai tried hard to prove himself. 'How can they leave me behind like this?! I wanna have some fun too! Why should I fill in for Lil N?!

