

## Chapter 36

### Drink This

Wearing a frown, Miles was confused about her sudden change.

When Stella noted that there weren't a lot of plants in his office, she suggested, "There aren't a lot of plants in your office. I bought myself some cactuses and flowers a few days ago online. Why don't I give you some?"

Miles put his pen down when he noticed that she was unusually chatty. Leaning back in his chair, he examined her, which made her feel uneasy.

"Would you like the plants?" She hid both her arms behind her while hanging her head low, looking like a mischievous girl.

"Okay." Miles gave his confirmation before putting his foot down. "But you'll have to take care of the plants if you put them here."

"What?" Shocked, Stella wondered how she should do that. I can't just walk in and out of here every day, can I? People will gossip about me! she thought. "B-But President Grant, the plants belong to you as soon as I give them to you, so why am I in charge of taking care of them?" She sounded confused.

"Because I want you to take care of them. Do you have any objections?" He pinned her down with his solemn gaze while explaining casually.

Narrowing her eyes, Stella realized that she had made her own bed, so she relented with a nod.

"Alright."

"Is it too much to ask?" Miles asked. "I can have someone else take care of them if it inconveniences you."

"Oh, of course not. This isn't a problem at all." Upon recalling the goal she had in mind, she was determined to take on anything. Besides, Miles spent a lot of time away from the office, nor was taking care of the plants a difficult task.

"If it's not a problem, you'll be required to come to my office every day as soon as you get the plants," Miles ordered.

To be honest, that wasn't Stella's plan, as she didn't anticipate Miles to make such a request. After she got back to her seat, she wanted to cancel the order she placed for the plants so that she could avoid getting in touch with Miles, but the seller already dispatched them when she checked her order. This is such a bummer.

She had been walking on eggshells around Miles ever since he forced himself on her. Now that her marriage was on the line, she didn't want to get any closer to him than she already had, nor did she want to get pregnant again.

On the other hand, Zane's company was being dismantled at record speed. As of late, whenever he came back from work, he smoked a lot more frequently, which caused Stella to feel pity for him.

That day, Stella clocked out at eight o'clock as she had to work overtime to design a blueprint. The elevator was about to descend when she arrived. After crying out for the person in it to wait for her, she jogged into the elevator. It wasn't until she entered it while panting for breath that she realized it was Miles who held it for her.

There was a blush on her face as she tried to not look at him. Even though the baby that they had no longer existed, it didn't wipe out the fact that they had an affair. When she was mulling over her circumstances, the lights went out all of a sudden, shrouding the elevator in total darkness as the elevator plunged downward.

Stella shrieked out of fear while tucking herself into a corner.

"Don't panic," Miles said as he took out his phone to switch on the flashlight function. Shining the light on her, he realized her face was pale due to shock. "Come here." He reached out while telling her so. However, Stella was afraid that the elevator might drop again, so she dared not move. Therefore, he stepped forward to pull her up.

As soon as she was back on her feet, she looped both arms around his neck. Then, she pressed herself against him while weeping. "I'm scared! This is scary!"

Miles held her in his arms. "Don't be. You're safe." Patting on her back, he whispered words of consolation into her ears while sticking his face close to her wavy hair. Due to how sexy he sounded, Stella's heart was pounding out of nervousness. When she was still crying, Miles held her close while taking a few steps forward to speak into the intercom on the elevator to request for a mechanic.

Before the mechanics arrived, Stella remained in his arms. Despite her initial fear, she was feeling less afraid while in his arms. Realizing the vulnerable moment they were both having, she decided it was the best moment to request Miles to let Zane and her father off the hook. "President Grant." She stood on her toes to lean against his shoulder.

"I'm here." He sounded as gentle as could be.

"Can you stop your assaults on Zane?" Stella asked. The atmosphere in the elevator was intimidating during the ensuing silence. She could hear him gritting his teeth. Under normal circumstances, he might have already made her into minced meat, but right now...

As soon as she made her request, the mechanics arrived. When they pried the door open, Stella was still holding onto Miles. Their intimate posture startled the mechanics. Seeing that Stella's face was stained with tears, they apologized to Miles, after which he led her out of the elevator without a word. She staggered along until they got into his car.

"Were you planning on luring me into your trap?" After getting into the car, he mocked her. He had noticed her intentions when she was trying to offer him some flowers earlier that day.

Seeing that he had read her mind, Stella's heart sank, as she no longer knew how to go on. She hung her head low while fidgeting. "I'm asking this for my father's sake. He invested heavily in Zane's company. While I don't really care what happens to Zane, my father begged me... I know you did this because of the child. Back then, I didn't expect to—"

When she was about to tell him that she didn't expect to be impregnated by him, he cut her short. "Was it painful?"

With her head hung low, she was still fidgeting. She knew he was asking about the process of the abortion. Shaking her head, she answered, "I don't know."

"You don't know?" He was baffled by her answer.

Yulia only told her the gist of how the abortion went down, so she didn't know about the details. "Zane anesthetized me when I was asleep during the night when I knew I was pregnant. I was already at the hospital when I regained consciousness," Stella replied. "The physical pain didn't last for long, but the heartache hit me later on."

Clenching his fists, Miles said begrudgingly, "I will not stop. I want him to beg along the streets for food after losing all of his assets—"

"But President Grant, my father will also lose all his money if Zane's company goes bankrupt." Instinctively, she turned to tug on his sleeve.

Laying eyes on her hands, Miles asked in a calmer tone, "Did you want to keep the child?"

"Yeah." Stella's voice was more gentle than ever.

"Good girl." As he tried to caress her hair, she ducked away in reflex. He had a much softer tone than before.

"I'm sorry for being such a mentally weak person, President Grant. I am indecisive and lack my own opinion on things, so I can only drift with the tides." She tried to explain her character flaw while knowing he was still grieving for his lost child.

"You? No, you're not weak." Smiling, he refuted her claims with much certainty. She didn't know what he meant, but allowed him to drop her off at home before he left again.

Unexpectedly, the plants arrived as soon as the next day. She had bought quite a lot to liven up the atmosphere around her space, as well as to be put up for decoration. Other than that, she hoped they could help reduce the radiation emitted by computers. She ordered quite a lot to be gifted to her colleagues, including Miles.

After some thought, she picked out a cactus, a Devil's Ivy, and a false Christmas cactus that was in full bloom to be put in his office. Due to her bulk order, the seller gifted her a huge bouquet of lilies that currently lay on her office table. Due to the fact that it was obstructing her view, as well as because she didn't have a flower vase, she decided to present the lilies to Miles too, since he had a huge office.

It took her two trips to move all the flowers into Miles' office. However, she had to find a vase for the lilies as they didn't come with one. "President Grant, the lilies are a gift from the seller, but I need a vase to put them in. Do you have one in the office?" She stared at him. She was young and inexperienced, and when coupled with a naive and cowardly personality, she seemed to simultaneously hold a lot of sorrow and innocence within her gaze. It gave her watery eyes a soft and innocent glow.

Miles seemed to be busy with work, so he replied casually, "Yeah, you can search around for it." He didn't even look her way.

With that, Stella began searching around in his office. Oh, here it is. There was a huge book rack on the right side of his table, on which stood a crystal vase. Overjoyed, she took it so she could arrange the lilies into it.

Perhaps because the vase was filled with water, or because the rack was too high, the vase somehow slipped from Stella's grip, crashing onto the carpet with a loud thud before shattering into pieces.

Oh my gosh! Stella wore an awkward look on her face. It was her first time ever helping Miles with a task, so she wondered if he would discredit her as someone useless since she broke the vase. She had her back to Miles before that, so she turned around with a sheepish smile on her face. She felt awkward and conflicted over the mistake she made while waiting for his punishment to come down on her. It wasn't until she turned around to fully face him that she noticed he had been watching her.

Although he was still writing just a few moments ago, he was now looking at her with his head tilted to the side, a look of resignation written all over his face. "I-I'm sorry, P-President Grant! I didn't do it on purpose—" she stammered an apology. Come to think of it, he was her first employer.

Without a word, he summoned the janitor to clean up the mess. Just when Stella was about to leave, he called out to her. "Drink this."

"What is it?" she asked. Is he going to poison me just because I broke a vase? Isn't he being a little too petty?