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In the past three days, Nolan had not messaged nor called Maisie. He had not even appeared before her.

Cherie put the lunch box on the table and replied, "The doctor said you're weak now, and you're having symptoms of miscarriage. Therefore, you need to recuperate first before you can leave the hospital."

Maisie did not say anything in return.

Cherie approached her and led her to the bed. "Mrs. Goldmann, right now, all you need to do is eat something. Come and have some. It won't taste good if it gets cold."

Maisie did not have a good appetite recently, and she would vomit whenever she consumed something. Stephen was worried about her, so he had searched through the Internet and prepared a healthy meal for her.

Even if she really did not have the urge to eat anything, she still forced herself to eat some for the sake of her baby in her womb.

Maisie lifted her head to look at Cherie and said, "Thank you for taking care of me and delivering meals for me these days."

"Don't mention it. This is what I should be doing, Mrs. Goldmann," Cherie replied, flashing Maisie a big grin.

Maisie replied with a smile and continued, "You should stop calling me Mrs. Goldmann. You can call my name."

Cherie had gotten used to calling her Mrs. Goldmann and felt it would be weird if she did not call her so. She thought for a moment and said, "I'll call you Zee, then!"

Maisie smiled. "Sure. As long as you like it."

In the afternoon, after Cherie had left, Maisie headed to the garden downstairs. She sat on a bench by herself, basking in the warmth of the sun.

Most of the people in the garden were hospitalized elderly people, and there were very few young people like her.

It was only when a figure appeared in front of her that she lifted her head. She seemed a little bit taken aback as she said, "Mr. Boucher?"

Grinning, Helios replied, "You look much better now."

Maisie was stunned for a moment, and then a grin broke across her face. "Right? This is all thanks to the hospital. They take good care of me."

Both of them stood out a lot in the garden under the shower of the warm sunlight. The man was handsome and had a regal air about him, while the woman was elegant and gentle to the outsiders. They were the perfect match for each other.

Suddenly, a silver-haired old lady wearing the same hospital gown walked past them. When she heard their conversation, she smiled and then asked, "Is this your wife, son? Is she sick?"

Maisie's face flushed in embarrassment. Just when she was about to say something, Helios smiled and replied, "You've misunderstood, madam. She's my friend."

The old woman looked somewhat disappointed. She looked at Maisie and said, "He's so handsome. If you don't make a move on him sooner, he might get taken away by other girls. At that time, I'm sure you'll regret it."

Maisie did not know what to say.

Fortunately, the old woman had shifted her attention to Helios and did not continue the conversation. She studied him for a while and said, "Boy, you look so familiar. You look like the man on the television."

Maisie's heart skipped a beat, and she turned to look at Helios. She had been meaning to ask why he was not wearing a mask.

However, Helios just took out the black spectacles frame in his suit pocket and smiled gently at the old lady. "You're talking about Helios, the best actor, right? Well, I get that a lot. Many people said that he looks a lot like me."

Maisie chuckled when she heard what he said and lowered her head to hide the expression on her face. She wondered how it felt for Helios himself to tell someone that "Helios, the best actor" looked a lot like him.

The old woman was long past the age of idolizing a celebrity and rarely paid attention to the news about the entertainment world. She knew about "Helios" because she used to watch TV series with her granddaughter.

"You're right. He looks a lot like you. If my granddaughter sees you, she might not be able to distinguish you two even if she's a big fan of Helios."

"Really?" Helios narrowed his eyes and put the black spectacles frame back into the pocket on his chest. After that, he walked up to the old lady.

Helios was standing at 6.1 feet tall and looked a lot taller when he stood beside the old lady. He grabbed the old lady's hand and said,

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Since your granddaughter is a big fan of Helios and he looks a lot like me, why don't we take a photo together and show your granddaughter how much we look alike?"

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The old lady's face lit up with delight. She pulled her phone out and said, "Really? Thank you so much, son."

Helios took a selfie with her, and the old woman had them farewell after taking the photo together. Helios put the black spectacles frame back on and said, "Phew, that was so close."

Maisie chuckled. "Well, you're the most famous and popular actor after all. I can't believe that you would swagger into the hospital without wearing a mask. Are you not afraid of getting recognized, Mr. Boucher?"

Fortunately, the old lady did not pay attention to the entertainment world as often as the young people. Otherwise, he would certainly be busted.

If someone recognized him, Maisie was certain that the entire hospital would fall into chaos.

Helios smiled and did not say anything.

He did not stay here for long. After walking her back to her ward, he said, "I need to go back now. Remember to take care of yourself."

"Alright," Maisie replied as she nodded.

When he was walking away, he suddenly thought of something and said, "If you need anything, call Ryleigh."

In other words, she could call Ryleigh if she needed anything, and Ryleigh would let him know.

She nodded and said yes.

Although she appreciated Helios' help, she did not want to bother him too much. After all, Helios was an influential figure in the entertainment world, and the last thing she wanted was to get him into a

scandal again.

After Helios left, Quincy showed up, and Maisie's face turned sour.

She knew what the document was in Quincy's hand. "Do you want me to sign the divorce papers?"

Quincy was stumped, but he soon nodded. He put the divorce papers on the table and said, "Ms.

Vanderbilt, you should sign. This is the best for both you and Mr. Goldmann."

He knew how much Maisie loved Nolan and how deeply Nolan was in love with her. However, he was certain that Maisie would not leave when she learned about that matter. Nolan just did not want her to suffer.

Even if Nolan was going to die in another few years, he still put Maisie's wellbeing in the first place.

Maisie fell silent for a while and said softly, "Okay. I'll sign."

Quincy seemed a bit surprised when Maisie said she was going to sign. That said, just like what he had said earlier, this was the best outcome for both of them.

Maisie took the divorce papers and signed her name on them. She did not even take a glance at the content. After all, she was not interested in whatever he was going to give her. She said, "I don't want the shares. He can give them to whoever he wants. Since he's the one who insists on getting a divorce, tell him don't regret his decision in the future.

"He's the one who abandoned me. He's the one who gave up first, and he's the one who broke his promise. He has shown me his determination and ruthlessness. I'm tired. I don't want to hold on anymore. I'll set him free. He can be the Nolan he used to be, and he and I are no longer related."

Quincy wanted to say something to her, but he swallowed the words back to his stomach pit in the end. He took the signed divorce papers with him and left the ward.

Maisie sat beside the bed for a long time, even after Quincy had left. She felt so much pain in her heart that it seemed like someone was stabbing her heart with a knife when the thought of her no longer having any relation with Nolan surfaced in her mind.

He had decided to pull himself out of the quagmire known as love, but she was still struggling and eventually falling deeper and deeper.

Several days later, the doctor did another checkup on her. After ascertaining that the child was healthy and she no longer needed to be hospitalized for observation, Stephen went through the discharge procedure.

Cherie was waiting in front of the entrance in the car. Stephen helped Maisie to put her stuff in the trunk and said, "Zee, let's go home."

Maisie nodded. After that, Stephen went into the car first. Just when she was about to get into the car, she suddenly felt an intense gaze on her.

Maisie subconsciously turned her head around and saw a woman wearing a face mask staring at her not far away.

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Maisie was stunned. Even if half of the woman's face was covered by the face mask, the coldness in her gaze and the evil aura she exuded had told Maisie who she was.

Rowena! Isn't she at Stoslo? When did she come back?

"Zee?" Stephen called out to her when he noticed that she did not get into the car and had been looking into the distance.

Maisie turned to look at him and said, "I think I saw..."

However, by the time she turned her head back, the woman was gone.

Stephen looked toward the back again, but there was no one there. She asked, "Who did you see?"

Maisie opened her mouth, and the word "nothing" spilled out of her lips.

'Did I see the wrong person?'

Rowena should be at Stoslo, and Nolan knew everything she had done, so would she still have the nerves to return?

Maisie did not think so.

With that thought in mind, she entered the car. Cherie started the engine, and the car started to move forward.

However, when Maisie was inside the car, a bad hunch was stirring in her heart. She had a feeling that something was going to happen.

She put her hand on her flat stomach as she looked at the ring on her finger. She still couldn't bring herself to remove the ring..

Slowly, she removed the ring from her finger. The refracted light from the window fell on the translucent ring. While she fell into thoughts as she looked at the ring, a huge sound echoed abruptly in her ears, and the world in her vision turned upside down. Before she could do anything, a surge of excruciating pain as if all the bones in her body were broken came and overwhelmed her.

There was a buzzing noise in her ears, and her lower abdomen was racked with pain. She could feel that something was flowing out of her body, but she couldn't move herself no matter how hard she tried.

"Dad... Dad..." She called out to Stephen weakly.

However, when she slowly cracked her eyes open, she saw her father was lying on the seat listlessly with blood seeping out of his head. Maisie's heart skipped a beat, and she could hear footsteps coming from outside. Someone opened the door and dragged her out of the overturned car.

"No..." Maisie forced down the pain and stretched her arm toward her father. While she was being taken away, she saw a pair of hands drop from the driver's seat. It was Cherie. Her eyes were wide open as she stared fixedly at her, but the light was slowly leaving her eyes

She was dead.

"Save them..." Maisie sobbed while shouting hysterically. She wanted to rush over to save them, but the person behind her did not give her a chance.

Bam!

Maisie's pupils constricted.

The car exploded before her eyes, and fire spewed up high into the sky. Soon, the people in the car were consumed by the flame.

"Ahhh!"

Lying on the ground, Maisie broke down and cried. Then, she slowly lost consciousness.

At the Goldmann mansion...

"Zee!" Nolan suddenly cracked his eyes open and dissolved into a violent fit of cough.

"Are you awake, young master?" Alfred came in. When he saw that Nolan had awakened, he hastily went to call the doctor.

The doctor came in and took his temperature. At the same time, Titus and Quincy arrived as well.

Titus hastily went to his bed and asked, "How do you feel, Nolan?" 1

Nolan continued to cough a few times. After he had finally come around, he asked, "How long have I been unconscious?"

Quincy replied, "Mr. Goldmann, you've been unconscious for a week."

He was stunned when he heard what Quincy said. He lowered his head and mumbled, "A week... The doctor pulled the thermometer out and said, "Mr. Goldmann's body temperature has returned to normal."

It was only then Titus heaved out a sigh of relief. He slowly rose to his feet and said, "Maisie has already signed the divorce papers."

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Nolan was taken aback by the news. His face turned dark, and he clenched his fists tightly.

'She has already signed? That's good, then....

"Elder Master Goldmann, Quincy, this is bad!" A bodyguard appeared outside of the room. His chest was heaving up and down rapidly, his face pale.

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When the bodyguard saw that Nolan had woken up, he stammered, "Mr... Mr. Goldmann."

Titus frowned deeply and asked, "What happened?"

The bodyguard took a look at Quincy and then Nolan. He did not know how he should tell them the news, but he still took a deep breath and said, "Ms. Cherie, M s. Vanderbilt, and her father... When they were on their way back from the hospital, they ran into... a car accident. When we arrived there, the car was already burning."

Quincy grabbed the collar of his shirt and shouted agitatedly, "What did you say!?"

"We... We just received the news too. About an hour ago. All of them, including Ms. Cherie, were in the car

Quincy froze, and an expression of disbelief appeared on his face.

"Nolan!" Titus returned to his senses only to find that Nolan had gone down from his bed and was rushing out.

At the scene of the accident, the police officers pulled a barricade tape to keep the crowds away and shut down the intersection. All the vehicles had no choice but to change their route.

After the firefighters and paramedics arrived on the scene, they immediately started putting out the fire and saving the people. The vehicle was burned to the point that there was nothing left but its frame.

Nolan wedged through the crowd and dashed to the front. The police officers tried to stop him. "Sir, please stay out-"

"Get out of my way!"

Nolan pushed them all away frantically. Just when the police officers were going to get him under control by force, one of the police officers recognized him and stopped them. "Wait!

"Mr. Goldmann? What are you doing here?"

Nolan paid him no mind. He dragged himself toward the car with heavy steps and fell on his knees with a plop.

The police officers were stunned.

"Zee, Zee, I know I was wrong. Please come back.

Please don't leave me. Zee... We're not getting a divorce anymore. Please don't leave me alone..." Nolan broke down and bawled his eyes out.

He had been the cold and regal Mr. Goldmann in front of everyone. However, he was kneeling in front of the car right now and crying out loud like a kid.

Everyone in the surroundings instantly recognized him.

"Is that... Mr. Goldmann?"

"I thought Mr. Goldmann had gotten a divorce with his wife? Then what is he doing here?"

"Could it be that his wife was in the car!?"

There were a lot of discussions in the crowd.

It was only now that his bodyguards arrived.

"Mr. Goldmann, please get up."

When they tried to pull him up from the ground, he pushed them all away.

"Get lost! Get away from me!" He continued to say to himself, "I can't live without her. I can't... Zee.."

When the firefighters retrieved the charred dead bodies from the car, Nolan rushed forward despite many people holding him back. The police officers put both of the bodies into body bags, and when Nolan saw them, he was stunned.

'Why? Why is this happening?'

Even though both of the dead bodies were burned beyond recognition, he could recognize that one of them was Cherie and the other was Stephen.

He held Cherie's hand with a trembling hand as if he was saying a final goodbye to her.

"Mr. Goldmann, there are only two dead bodies in the car. Also, we found this," a police officer said as he handed the ring inside a sealed bag to Nolan.

Nolan took over the thing in the bag.

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The ring had lost all its luster after being burned by the fire. It looked dull, and there were cracks everywhere on its surface.

He gripped the thing tightly. "Zee..."

In the hospital

"Dad, Chere. No, save them!" Maisie jerked up from the bed and froze. There was an IV needle on the back of her hand, and her clothes had become the hospital gown,

She subconsciously touched her cheek, and a stinging pain spread from the spot wrapped by gauze.

Why am I in the hospital? My dad, Cherie, I thought I was..."

Maisie gasped when the scene returned to her head. She pulled the needle out of the back of her hand, Even though blood began to seep out of the hole, she paid it no mind. When she got down from the bed, her legs gave way, and she fell on the floor

At the same time, a voice came from the door. 'Do you think you can walk out of the hospital in your current condition?'

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Maisie was taken aback. She raised her head up and looked at the man before her. The man had a clean face and a pair of piercing blue eyes. He looked about the same age as Erwin, and he also exuded the same regal aura as Erwin.

He was wearing a dark gray striped suit with a peacock blue tie and a tie clip in the shape of a snake. The man squatted down and helped her get to her feet. He looked at her face for a short while and chuckled, "You indeed are her daughter. Both of you are so alike."

"Who are you?" Maisie asked in confusion.

"Did Erwin not tell you about me?" The man helped her get back to her bed. He stared at her for a

moment and said faintly, "Well, I guess he hasn't told you anything."

He pulled a chair and sat with his legs crossed beside the bed. He put both his hands on his leg and said, "I now go by the name Henry. Erwin is a member of Metropolis, and he's my most trusted member. I asked him to stay by your mother's side and protect her."

He paused for a moment and glanced at the Ouroboros ring she was still wearing to protect herself.

Then, he pointed at it and asked, "Did Erwin give you this? It seems to me that he's the one who taught you self-defense skills."

Maisie subconsciously touched the Ouroboros ring on her finger.

'Uncle Erwin is this man's underling? If he's the one who asked Uncle Erwin to protect Mom, then that means he is....

"You're Strix?" Maisie asked, her voice filled with shock.

It only occurred to her that the man before her was "Strix," who had gone missing from the medical world for more than 10 years.

He had not actually gotten off the grid. Instead, he had changed his identity and had become the head of Metropolis?

He didn't deny or admit it, but Maisie knew that he was Strix.

After knowing that he was Strix, Maisie looked at him, and it was only then she saw the light why her mother still couldn't get over Strix after marrying Stephen. He was once her mother's love interest, and she reckoned that they must've loved each other very much.

He must have been a handsome man when he was young. After all, his appearance didn't seem to have changed much after all these years.

He just looked a little bit older. He had transformed from a young man into a mature middle-aged man.

He looked even more charming and dignified

He was about the same age as her father, but he looked much younger than her father. When Maisie thought about her father, her face turned pale. "My father and Cherie-"

"I'm sorry."

Strix lowered his head, his voice low. "We wanted to save them, but there was not enough time.

Someone was trying to kill you all, and if I hadn't arrived at the nick of time, you wouldn't be here talking to me now."

As he was talking, he looked at her. "Although we managed to save your life, about your baby, we've already tried our best."

Maisie sat frozen stiff on the bed as tears began to roll down her cheeks.

Her father and Cherie had been devoured mercilessly by the fire. She couldn't even protect her baby.

Her shoulders were shaking, and she was having a hard time breathing. She felt a pang in her heart and cried out in a choked sob.

She was alone now after her father died.

Strix pulled out a silk handkerchief to wipe away her tears. He said, "Come with me to Morwich. From today onward, I'll take care of you like you're my own daughter."

One week later...

Nolan sat on the chair with a gloomy face. He looked dejected. Whenever his phone rang, he hoped that it would be the phone number he was expecting, but he was disappointed every time.

When he noticed Quincy calling him, he picked it up, and Quincy's voice rang out. "Mr. Goldmann, we've searched through all the hospitals in Bassburgh, but we still couldn't find Ms. Vanderbilt."

Nolan did not say anything and hung up the call.

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Nolan picked up the divorce papers that Maisie had signed, and his hand almost crushed the corner that he was holding on to.

'Zee has really left. And I'll never get to see her again...'

All the media outlets were reporting was the incident where Nolan was crying hysterically in front of the car involved in the accident a week ago. The media speculated that Nolan's wife had died in the car accident, causing quite a commotion among the public.

The three children who were kept from the truth rushed back to the Goldmann mansion and came to the room. Wayion stepped up to Nolan and shouted, "Where's Mommy?"

Nolan did not look up and did not respond until Wayion saw the divorce papers on the floor. Titus and Mr. Cheshire came to the door of the room, and they did not know what to say to comfort the three children when they saw them.

Wayion sang the divorce papers onto Nolan. "Give us our Mommy back!"

Daisie and Collon were petrified by how their elder brother reacted.

But judging from the atmosphere, they still could not believe that their mother was really gone.

"Wayion, it's not your father's fault." Titus could not bear to see his grandson take all the blame and explained in a deep voice, "It's all because of me."

Wayion turned around and glared at him ferociously. "I hate you!"

Titus was startled, while Wayion had already sprinted out of the room.

Titus yelled in a sharp tone immediately, "Stop him!"

The bodyguards stopped Wayion. Although Wayion punched, kicked, and even bit them, they could not afford to let him go.

Titus turned his head and glanced at Wayion. "If you had the ability to protect your mother, she wouldn't have gotten into this trouble!"

The short and straightforward sentence stunned Wayion completely.

His tiny body was filled with loneliness and despair as his small fists were tightly clenched.

'Yes, I'm not old enough, and I don't have the power. I can't even protect Mommy. That's why those people dared to bully Mommy!'

Wayion turned and stared straight at Titus, and his glare looked stern and ruthless. "I'll become strong one day, and I'll make all those people who bullied Mommy, Colton, and Daisie pay. I'll make sure that they'll beg for a quick death!"

Titus was taken aback. He then lowered his gaze, walked toward him, and gazed at him condescendingly. "You're the one who made yourself this promise."

Wayion looked determined. "Yes!"

Titus then said to him, "Then stay by my side. You'll have to suffer in order to obtain more power and become stronger if you want revenge."

Mr. Cheshire stepped forward, feeling that it was a little inappropriate. "Elder Master Goldmann, he's still a boy."

Titus scoffed wryly: "Of course I know he's still a boy, but Nolan, Nicholas, and I will continue to age and die someday. And when we kick the bucket, who will care if they're just children?"

Colton and Daisie were astonished.

'What does Great-grandpa mean? Daddy... Does he have only a few years left to live?'

Two months later...

At Morwich, in the Hanns Palace of the City of Saint Page...

Maisie was sitting on a garden bench. A sea of purple irises could be seen blooming all over the place, and the elegant floral fragrance pervaded the whole garden with the help of the breeze. It was very soothing and made one feel at ease.

Several maids stood not far away from Maisie, and all their gazes were fixed on her. They were surprised by Maisie's foreign appearance and existence. "She's the daughter that Mr. Henry brought here, isn't she?"

"Daughter?" One of the maids asked, "Mr. Henry adopted her?"

Another maid replied disdainfully, "Mr. Henry doesn't surround himself with a lot of women. So, don't you think it's too scary to have a daughter appear out of thin air all of a sudden?"

"She hasn't spoken to any one of us after arriving here for so long."

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The maids laughed. "Maybe she doesn't understand what we're saying?"

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They thought that because Maisie did not understand them, they could rest assured and act presumptuously. Unexpectedly, just as these maids were chit-chatting excitedly, a voice came from behind them. "You'd better shut up before Mr. Henry gets angry."

The maids trembled, and their gossip came to an abrupt end. When they turned around and saw that it was Maggie, the housekeeper, they all bowed their heads respectfully and did not even dare to say another word before they hurried back to their respective workstation

The housekeeper pushed the frame lying on her nasal bridge to adjust her glasses and walked behind Maisie. "Miss, you're here. Mr. Henry is looking for you."

Maisie turned to look at her. Maggie was in her 40s and the housekeeper of the Hanns Palace. She was dressed meticulously and adequately

Seeing that Maggie was still waiting, Maisie slowly got up and walked up to her. Her beautiful eyes still looked dimmed and lifeless. "Bring me there."

Maggie brought her to the study, and two bodyguards were waiting outside of the door

After pushing open the door, a huge white study room

that was renovated and decorated in a retro and elegant interior design was revealed. The cabinets were stashed with all kinds of books and many classic medical books,

Strix sat behind the desk under the chandelier. His desktop was neat. There was only a computer, a pen, a globe, and some documents. The only decoration might be the green frilled iguana housed in the glass tank with a forest environment setup.

Strix put down the book upon hearing footsteps and asked, "Have you not gotten used to it yet?"

Maisie's speech rate was slow. "I'm gradually and slowly getting used to it."

Strix nodded and took an old diary out of the drawer abruptly. "This is the note that your mother left behind. Do you want to read it?"

Maisie faltered for a split second, and a tiny emotional fluctuation could be seen through her unconcerned eyes. She grabbed the diary, which its cover had already discolored and turned yellow and rough, but she did not have the courage to open it.

Strix smiled gently. "Take it back with you even if you don't want to read it now. It's not too late to go through it when you think you're ready for it."

"Uncle Strix," Maisie frowned and looked up at him, "Was my mother happy? When she knew she was infected and only had a few years left, was she happy?"

This was the longest sentence that escaped Maisie's mouth in the past two months.

Strix paused for a short second and then gave off a gentle chuckle. "She had never complained about the injustice that fate had dropped upon her."

Maisie opened her mouth all of a sudden. "Then why did she leave?"

Strix got up and walked to the coffee machine beside him. After pouring the coffee beans into the machine and grinding them, he immediately poured them into the cup. "Your mother was a woman who was a pain in my butt."

He brought two cups of coffee over and handed one to her. "Even if she knew that her time was running out, she wouldn't show a tad bit of fear or even her need for me in front of me."

Maisie held the mug, and Strix walked back to his seat, sat down, tasted it, and continued with a light tone. "She thought she was dragging me into something that I shouldn't have to burden myself with, so she left back then."

Maisie did not say anything, only to listen to him say. "Love is a very complicated emotion. Both parties could be deeply in love with each other, but one of them might always think they are hurting the other party."

Maisie was astounded for a moment but did not say anything. Nolan's face even flashed in her mind. Strix saw through her thoughts and placed the mouth of the cup on his lips. "People always have to walk out of their past and look forward. This is what your mother told me before she left for good."

Maisie's eyes looked cold, and her hand that was holding the mug could not help but tighten. "I want to look forward too, but I can't let my father, Cherie, and my baby's deaths be in vain."

Only God knew that she was still being haunted by those scenes in the past two months. She would dream of her father, Cherie, and even her baby. The accident had taken away the lives of three people that she cared about deeply.

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Strix scoffed. "So, what can you do with your current ability?"

Maisie pursed her lips tightly.

He then stared at her and said slowly, "Why didn't Erwin tell you those things? It's because he knows that you can't go against those people by yourself. The incident that took place in Stoslo is only their first step."

"You know about that?" Maisie glanced at him, looking slightly surprised. Strix placed his hands on the table and squinted. "There's nothing in this world that I don't know, including the matter between you and the Goldmanns."

Maisie's expression changed slightly. She knew that Erwin might have told her things.

'Uncle Erwin once said that he's not telling me many things because it's for my own good, as he couldn't tell whether I could handle it or not:

What had happened in Stoslo a few months ago made it clear to her that those people were unscrupulous and did not care much about human lives.

The incident that she had gotten into was not what it seemed at all.

After taking some time to calm herself down, Maisie put down the mug. "You've developed antibodies, haven't you? Can you tell me about the virus? Why does Uncle Erwin say that the virus is man-made?" Strix did not plan to hide it either. "You're the successful experiment of the virus. You should have never been sick since you were a child, and you won't be troubled by any form of cancer or illness. The results found in your body are what those people want."

Maisie's fingertips trembled slightly. She even stared at him in disbelief.

Strix told her that when the sleeper virus first appeared, it could make the infected not fall ill during the one-year incubation period-it could even fight cancer. Because of this, someone kept studying the sleeper virus and experimented with it secretly even after the incident involving the princess.

Those nobles did not have the balls to use the virus on themselves, so they could only find someone to experiment with. And they had experimented in the slums initially because, in their eyes, no matter whether the poor died or survived, it had nothing to do with their interests.

Later on, some unscrupulous traders had been paid to smuggle and sell the antibody vaccines on behalf of the nobles. However, these antibody vaccines had been, in fact, the prototypes of the virus.

Maisie's lips trembled. "So those two outbreaks were all part of their experiments?"

Strix did not deny it. "Unfortunately, all the experiments failed. The princess' savagery had brought a huge catastrophe upon her men, so she became a victim and sacrifice. I met your mother during the pandemic 30 years ago, but then she got infected too."

"Why was my mother infected?"

'If I remember it correctly, Aunt Larissa told me that mother had never been exposed to any source of infection, so how could she have been infected with the virus?'

Strix looked out the window. "Because your grandfather injected your mother with a vaccine, but I think he had also been deceived." Maisie froze in place. Even though the air conditioner was not turned on, she felt a chill shooting down her spine.

'Everything makes sense now.

'Why did the de Armas and the Goldmanns hate each other? And why did the de Armas take the blame?

It's because it was driven by those people behind the curtains. It's no wonder Grandpa's expression changed so drastically all of a sudden when he learned that Mom died of the virus too!

Strix retracted his gaze indifferently and gave off a modest smile. "You now know everything that you need to know. What you plan to do next depends on your own choice."

Just when Strix slowly got up and was about to leave the study, Maisie, who was sitting in her seat, turned around to look at him. "Uncle Strix, can you provide me with a new identity?"

Strix stopped but did not look back. "From now on, you'll be known as Alice."

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Three years later...

In Bassburgh, on a dark night...

Louis stepped into the bar, looked around at the crowd, and finally fixed his eyes on the woman who was sitting at the bar.

He immediately recognized that it was Ryleigh.

He walked over to Ryleigh and took the wine glass off her hand. Ryleigh seemed to be drunk at that time. She turned around to look at him and saw multiple images. "Why is it you? You can drink whatever you want, so why grab my wine glass?"

Ryleigh struggled to stretch out her hand to grab the glass back in a straight line, and Louis grabbed her wrist. "Maisie is no longer here, and you've been living the past three years so unrestrainedly, spending all day, everyday drinking, haven't you?"

As soon as Maisie was mentioned, Ryleigh looked away immediately. "Why did you come to me?"

Louis placed the wine glass on the table and looked at her. "Have you been in contact with Maisie in the past three years?"

Maisie had gone missing after the accident three years ago. The Lucas family and the de Armas had been going crazy since then, but Maisie seemed to have disappeared from this world.

And Ryleigh was Maisie's best friend, so they must have contacted each other throughout this period.

Ryleigh scoffed. "Did Nolan ask you to come to me for the answer to that question?"

She then looked at Louis and pointed at him drunkenly. "Do you still remember how he treated Zee back then? Have you b*stards all gone blind!?"

"Let me tell you, I haven't contacted her, and she hasn't contacted me either. You can locate her yourself if you have the ability to do so!"

She flung her arm to break free from Louis's grasp, staggered 10 get up, and left the scene, Louis dragged her back, but Ryleigh couldn't stand still and fell into his arms. She was caught off guard, raised her hand, and pushed him away. "What do you think you're doing? Are you trying to take advantage of me?"

Louis laughed out of rage. "I'm taking advantage of you?"

"Then what are you trying to do?" Ryleigh questioned him after letting off a burp.

"Did Nolan ask someone else to approach you and ask you the same question?" Louis was obviously surprised.

'Nolan has hardly appeared in front of the media in the past three years. It's rumored that Nolan has been seriously ill. In short, all kinds of rumors have been going around the circle. As for the Blackgold, he doesn't even care to ask about its operation. It's as if he's gotten off the grid as long as Maisie did!

Ryleigh flung his hand off of her again. "So what? 1."

She held onto Louis and threw up on him directly.

Louis's complexion paled in an instant as he gave off a disgusted expression.

At the Goldmann mansion...

In the dimly lit study, the man sitting in the wheelchair facing the French window was in a well-ironed suit. His eyes dimmed from the change in the brightness of the sky outside the window, and they became extremely gloomy at the end.

Quincy came in from the door and stood beside him." Sir, Louis has also gone to Ms. Hill."

"Yeah," Nolan replied calmly without even lifting his eyelids.

Quincy looked at him. "Sir, you actually found out about her whereabouts long ago. Why would you deliberately ask them to get in touch with Ms. Hill for the answer?"

'Ms. Maisie Vanderbilt, a woman who has disappeared for three years.

'Over the past three years, Mr. Goldmann's condition has been fluctuating, even walking for a longer period will cause him to cough up blood, so he has to turn to a wheelchair for assistance. Mr. Goldmann Sr. and I have been taking care of Blackgold for the past three years. And although Kennedy is still there, taking care of Soul Jewelry, it still came back under Blackgold as a subunit.

"And because of the incident from three years ago, Hernandez has since then gone into a conflict with the Kents. And with the pressure that the de Armas have been imposing onto the Kents, Daniel Kent

hasn't even been able to find the time to deal with the Goldmanns in the past three years.

"Mr. Goldmann also deliberately released the news to those people, telling them that he's been seriously ill and that he only has one year left to live. And during this year, he's only worked from behind the scenes, and everything on the surface has been handed over to Hans and me

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'This is nothing more than a diversion to make those people think that Mr. Goldmann's time is very limited nowadays..

As for the Lucas family and the de Armas, all of them have been trying their very best to locate Ms. Vanderbilt. Mr. Goldmann is the only person who knows Ms. Vanderbilt's whereabouts but didn't look into it. I think it's not that he doesn't want to look. It's just that he doesn't have the guts to look for her.' Nolan's eyes looked cold and dimmed, but he did not answer.

Early in the morning...

All Ryleigh felt was a splitting headache. Her head seemed to be on the verge of exploding from inside out, and the dazzling light made her so uncomfortable that she had to raise her hand to cover her eyes. And when she opened her eyes, she thought of something and sat up in a trance.

She tidied her messy hair with her hands and could not recall how she had gotten back home last night. "You've woken up?" The voice that came out of nowhere made Ryleigh stop all her actions abruptly and turn her head around in astonishment

She then saw Louis sitting on the couch with his legs crossed. His expression looked sullen as he took a glimpse at his watch impatiently. "You're, indeed, very good at sleeping."

"Louis Lucas, why are you at my house!?" Ryleigh screamed in fright, quickly pulled the blanket away from herself to take a look at the clothes that she had changed into over the night, and questioned Louis with a frightened expression, "You... You... Are you the one who changed my clothes for me?"

Louis did not deny the statement. "With that figure of yours, what benefit would I get from peeping?"

"You b*stard!" She threw a pillow at him.

He, on the other hand, tilted his head slightly and raised his hand to catch the pillow. He then stopped talking to her and got up. "You threw up on me last night. If it weren't for the fact that you're my fiancée in name, I would've left you on the side of the road."

He walked over to the bed, threw the pillow back at her, and asked, "Where's my cousin?"

Ryleigh paused for a short second and frowned. "You deliberately waited on my couch all night just to ask this question?"

Louis did not say a word.

She chuckled, "Why would all of you think that I have the power just to know where Zee is?"

She then held back the chuckle in an instant. "I don't know sh*1."

Louis stared at her for a moment, glanced at his watch, and said in a calm tone, "You don't have to wash that coat for me, just throw it away."

After that, he turned around and left.

Ryleigh breathed a sigh of relief as soon as the door was closed. She took her cell phone out of her bag and sent a text message to someone.

Morwich, the City of Saint Page...

"Miss... Ms. Alice, I know it's all my fault. I really didn't mean to betray you. So please forgive me!" The middle-aged man kneeling on the ground shivered.

Maisie was sitting in the pavilion, drinking tea, looking all glamorous and regal, and holding a few candid photos on her left hand.

The woman that appeared in all the photos all depicted herself, and these candid photos were intended to be sold to others.

Maisie squinted her eyes. "Mr. Reyes, considering that you're already this old and have a wife and a daughter, and by the way, your daughter is only six years old, isn't she?"

The middle-aged man had cold sweat rolling down from his forehead, and his face was pale. "Yes..." "Would you be troubled if your daughter's photos were also secretly captured and sold?"

Maisie's rhetorical question left the middle-aged man speechless.

She put down the teacup, "Someone asked you to take a candid photo, right? How much did they offer you?"

The middle-aged man lowered his head. "They paid me \$1,500,000."

"Pfft, I didn't expect a few of my photos to be worth \$ 1,500,000." Maisie smirked and turned to look at him. "Do you still remember what they look like and who they are?" The middle-aged man tried to recall. "Listening to their accent, they don't sound like people from Morwich. By the way, their leader is a Caucasian, just like you."

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Maisie's hand, which was picking up the teacup, stopped in midair when a few messages popped up on the screen of her cell phone.

She swiped across the screen and opened her mouth slowly. "You don't have to come from today onward. You may leave now."