

The CEO's Ten Million Dollar Wife by R.C.BRIE

Chapter 71

Chapter 71 The Petrov Mafia

"You lost your right a long time ago" Levinia mutters with a chilling coldness capable to inflict fear on anyone.

"My life will not be long. I'm already a setting sun, Anya. And I've been dreaming of your forgiveness. I wish I could have it before hell claims my soul" he whispers. He has to tilt his head to contain the threatening tears to fall.

"Love." Daniel pleadingly whispers. He doesn't want to meddle but he witnessed how the man fought his demon the moment his wife opened her mouth.

"He doesn't deserve my forgiveness, Daniel" she snapped at him instead.

"Anya... Lucien was brought to us safe. Please, that's all that matters now" Donovan also interjected

"What about the past Vavan? Can you just forget how this man kill our mother? It's because of him that we were orphaned. It's because of him we have to leave home" Levinia spat at her brother while glaring at him.

"He had suffered enough, Auntie Anya. It's been so long. Please. Find it in your heart to forgive" Arvin tries to pacify his angry aunt.

Levinia glares at the three people convincing her to forgive. Her anger is not just directed at the old man but also at them this time.

"I witnessed my mother take her last breath in my arms. I saw how she fought to live, for me, for you... and for that useless man... Now tell me how could I forget it all. How could I forget the fear I felt that night, waiting for that useless man to come...but he didn't! He was somewhere fighting together with those egotistical people like him...fighting a useless war. He doesn't care that same war claimed my mother's life!" Levinia growled.

Speechless, they all watch her outburst. Like a deranged woman, she angrily pointed her fingers at the old man.

"I tried to be there Anya..." the old man whispers dejectedly.

"But you're too late. She was long gone when you came" she mutters with a clenched jaw.

"I cannot redo the past... No matter how I blame myself. No matter how I suffer, I cannot bring Angela back. But I protected your son, I fought the devil not to claim him. I vowed to bring him back to you, which I failed to do with your mother" the old man weakly counters.

"I failed to protect her but I will never fail to protect you, Vavan, and your families" he continues, a tear escaping his eyes.

"My son almost dies in your land, you call it protection? We don't need you. After all these years, you still bring danger to my family. Don't you dare come near us again" she hatefully exclaims.

"Anya..." he weakly whispers.

"He is still your father, Levinia" a stern voice interjected and one of the men stepped forward. He is younger than the old man but equally intimidating.

"I don't have a father" she snickers.

“Why do you think the Wrights were soaring high? Because of your husband’s money? His connection? Think again Anya” the cold chilling voice of the man sipped in everyone’s core, even Daniel

“Your puny influence and massive wealth will not bring you to this state where you are almost untouchable. Haven’t you thought about why the Wrights are leading everything in this country? Why you’re invincible? Why your system is impenetrable? Why does no one dare to challenge your spot in the business world? Think hard Anya” the man continues as he meets her cold gaze mirroring his.

“With just your husband’s money will not bring you to this kind of peak all the Wrights are enjoying. The world is a battlefield. You need warriors who know how to defend you. People are naturally greedy and greed could dictate deception...pretense. The sparkle of money is undeniably blinding and anyone could steal your spotlight with the little chance they have. However, why do the Wrights continue to soar high?” the man tauntingly asks Levinia who remains quiet.

“Have you asked your cyber team about how easy the acquisition of information is for them? And how tight it is to acquire information from your system? Have you experienced a breach in any Wrights system?” another man steps forward. The younger one who is the same age as Arvin.

“I don’t think so. Your cyber team has an easy job. But no one is capable to breach your system. Why?” the young man asks with a mysterious smile.

“Because the Petrov system has been embedded to the Wright’s system without us realizing it “Daniel was the one to answer, although he was in a daze by all the information being revealed.

The younger man just smirks at Daniel but did not confirm him. Instead, he gestures his fingers like typing on an invisible keyboard.

“For several decades now, no other businessmen are bold enough to challenge your spot in the business world. You are the god of this country, haven’t you noticed it?” the other man spoke again. His eyes were alternately looking at the four across them before it stops at Levinia.

“Your father has been crazily protecting you, Levinia Wright. You and Donovan may have changed your name into Deutche but your blood speaks otherwise. You may forsake us all, but you cannot forsake the blood of the Petrov in your veins. You and Donovan are the heirs of the Petrov Mafia” calm yet dangerously, the man beside the old man mutters.

Silence rules as they duel with cold gazes. Despite all the new information laid in front of them, Levinia remains adamant. She meets every eye of her supposed family. Her father, Carlos Petrov, the Godfather of Petrov Mafia. Her uncle, Carlisle Petrov, her cousins, Donny and Sullivan, and her nephew, Barry, who is a cyber specialist together with his mother.

“Even now, you are showing you are a Petrov, Anya. Only a Petrov could have this kind of fearlessness in you” Carlisle smirks.

“We protected Lucien the best we can, but he insist on fighting side by side with us. It is in his blood to be a fighter. But those cunny bastards had been lucky, they got into Lucien and our brother. Timmy missed the bullet in his heart but Lucien didn’t. But we did our best, Anya. Our doctors are of the best in the world. They could mend even the impossible and Lucien was just an easy case. And we all know you will hate us more if

we didn't bring him back. He is family, Anya. Though you see us as savages, we value our family" Donny earnestly explains.

"He is my heir, Anya. Though you and Donovan have turned your backs from us, you cannot forsake the Petrov blood in your children's veins. Lucien had acknowledged it even Arvin. I hope you will reconsider. I won't meddle with your peace, I won't drag you to the dangerous life we have, but please, don't forbid us to be a family" Carlos pleaded to his daughter.

"Carlisle will lead the territory once I'm gone. The world will not know the true connection of the Wrights and Deutche with the Petrov, but business. You won't be caught in the Mafia war again... even your children. Live your life like you used to do while the Petrov will protect you and your families" he added while he alternately looks at Levinia and Donovan.

Levinia stares at her father and she realizes the cruel world he had endured. Scars adorned his old wrinkly face like a trophy of his bravery. Though he still looks imposing and intimidating, he is already an old man. Weak. Feeble.

Carlos Petrov is the man who rules the Mafia world for several decades. Feared by many but weak when it comes to his wife and children. His heart will always melt for his wife Angela and his children, Anya and Vavan.

But one unfortunate night destroyed their perfect family. Caught in the Mafia war, their home was attacked. Despite being surrounded by security, without Carlos at home, they were slaughtered. Donovan was brought to safety, while Levinia and their mother were almost caught, if not for Angela's skills in fighting. But with a lot of enemies and a daughter, she was protecting, she was caught up. She was severed while protecting Levinia until their men came back for them. But too late, Angela had endured a lot of wounds and only gave up her last

breath when she had ensured her daughter was safe. ,

It's the night Levinia hated, together with her father. After the attack, they were hidden. She and Donovan were declared dead despite being alive. And a month after they buried their mother, they were brought to France. The Deutche family adopted them, which is what Levinia wanted. After their father's return, she didn't fail to show how much she hated him. Pushing him away and does not accept any comfort while she mourns her mother's death. She blamed him for what happened.

When she was asked what he could do to appease her, she asked to be taken away from him.

She declared she was no longer a Petrov. She hated being a Petrov. She saw the pain in her father's eyes but she no longer cares. Her heart is more painful than to mind his remorse.

After a few days, she and Donovan were secretly brought to the other country and was raised by a different family.

Though they are both aware that the Deutche is still their father's man, Levinia was already appeased from being far from his father's grasp. And far from the Mafia wars that claimed her beloved mother's life.

"I can't redo the past but I can make it right for my children. I'm mourning the death of your mother until now. You know how I love her, how I love you both but this is my world even before you were born. Angela and I had ruled this world and I cannot turn my back from my people" he added with misty eyes and a wistful smile.

“It’s a circumstance that put us in this situation, but Angela and I both understand the danger. We vowed to protect you even if it means losing our life by doing so. We have long accepted that this life will lead us to death, that one of us will go first than the other or both of us, together. But we have made sure you will live normally. I never dream of this life for you, Anya. You know you are my precious princess and I never oblige Donovan to be part of this, though his blood has been calling him” he softly continues. His eyes drift to Levinia and Donovan, asking them to hear him.

With what he said, Levinia turn to Donovan who has also turned to look at her.

“This is my blood, Anya. No matter how far I go, my blood is pulling me back to where I should belong. I gave Arvin to you for his safety. Live your life as you used to, let me and our family protect all of you” Donovan readily explains without her asking.

“Van...?” disbelief, she whispers.

“I’ve been doing jobs for Petrov for years. It’s in secret Anya, don’t worry. It’s my choice, father or anyone has nothing to do with my decision. Arvin and Diane know about this and they let me be” Donovan seriously added.

“I vowed to mother’s grave to protect you. I know mother is happy with our choices. Let the

past be buried, Anya so we could face today and tomorrow with a clearer perspective. Life must go on. Let us not imprison ourselves in the dark past. We lost a lot of chances to be happy as a family, please, let’s try this time” he pleaded with her sister before turning to Daniel for help.

“Love...” Daniel whispers trying to convince his wife.

“Excuse me... it’s time...”

Before Daniel could talk, they were interrupted by the doctor approaching them.

Turning to the man, Levinia looked at him in question.

“It’s time the patient wakes up” the doctor calmly announces.

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Chapter 72

Chapter 72 His Recovery

Everyone was anxiously waiting as they gather around the bed where Lucien lay unconscious.

“Why is he still not awake?” Carlos glares at the doctor.

“He will be Mr. Petrov” the doctor confidently replies.

They could see the doctor’s confidence but it doesn’t ease their anxiousness. They need to see Lucien is indeed waking up.

“He is just in an induced coma to give his body time to recuperate from all his wounds. He has been stable and out of danger a week ago so there’s nothing to worry about. He will wake up as scheduled” the doctor explains for everyone’s benefit. He could feel the tension in the atmosphere but he and his team were used to it.

They are the top-tiered medical team of the Petrov Mafia, nothing is impossible as long as there is still a flicker of life in someone’s body.

Their grueling wait ended upon seeing Lucien’s eyes move and he started to stir.

Levinia grasps her husband’s hand as they waited for their son to come around. They

eagerly watch as Lucien battled with his heavy lids until he had succeeded. Several times, he keeps on opening and closing it until it obtained focus. While all of them are patiently waiting.

With his stable vision, he stares at the ceiling, adapting to the light. It's been another grueling wait before his eyes roll to the side, trying to look around.

He remains unmoving, unable to feel the rest of his body. Only his eyes wander around the dim -lit room until his gaze caught the familiar faces surrounding him.

Staring at the tearful eyes of his mother and father, he tries to speak but cannot. He struggled but all he got is to open his mouth without words.

"Lucien, it's fine. Don't force yourself" Levinia dashed to his side with Daniel following behind.

Her brimming eyes stare at her son's clear eyes staring back at her. She caresses his face as tears started to fall.

"Lucien... I can't believe you are here...we've been waiting for your return" she tenderly whispers while a weak faint smile grazed his lips as a response to his mother.

"Z...z...i...a" he tries to talk with his weak fading voice.

"Lexie is at home with Lucas. They have been waiting for you, Lucien" Daniel was the one to respond as his wife is sobbing with tears.

"Your family is doing good, though worried. Lucy has been asking for you all the time but we manage to make him understand. We tried to make them stay in the mansion but Lexie insisted to return to the penthouse. She wanted to be near you. But we have been constantly visiting them. Dominic is also with her" Daniel added while trying to compose himself. Tears threaten to fall but he was unconcerned.

Lucien's eyes were set on his father as he talks about his family. Tears started to brim his eyes but a faint smile brushed his lips.

"Lexie is a strong woman. We are so proud of her. You have nothing to worry about them" Levinia spoke after she had composed herself.

As a response to what his parents were saying about Lexie, he gently nods his head.

His lids are still heavy and seeing his family once again, comforted him. Knowing Zia and Lucy are fine immensely relieved him. They are his last thought before he lost his consciousness during the siege. He had expected he might not make it back to his family but he was relieved he made it.

Closing his eyes, he succumbs to sleep again. But his act alarmed his parents. Abruptly turning to the doctors, they questioningly look at them.

"He is still recuperating. He is just asleep, but this time in the normal process of sleep. Once the medicine wears off, he will be a lot better once he wakes up again. His vital is great. He is a fighter" the doctor explains, relieving everyone around.

With Lucien asleep, they all settled on the receiving area in the corner, which they haven't noticed earlier.

"His wife...will we send for her?" Donny asks.

"Let's wait for Lucien to decide. I don't think he will let Lexie see him in this state. She is in a delicate situation and might affect her seeing Lucien like this " Daniel explains while he comforted his wife.

"We will be leaving. We have a lot to do back there. But the doctors will be left here to monitor Lucien's recovery. Another week and he will be on his feet" Carlisle spoke beside Carlos who becomes very quiet while staring at his sleeping grandson.

“Thank you for bringing Lucien back. For ensuring his safety. His wife and his children owe you the completeness of their family” sincerely, Daniel mutters. Regardless of what happened, he owes his son’s life to his wife’s family. They may have been divided by the painful past but he cannot ignore the fact that his children bear the Petrov blood.

“I will never allow another life taken away from Anya. He will hate me more and there’s no more room for it in her heart” Carlos whispered without looking at anyone but Lucien. Silence rules as they all don’t know what to say. It’s been a deep pain that even time hasn’t healed.

“Everything I said, it will be done. Daniel Wright, take care of my princess and my grandchildren. After this day, we will only be associated by business. No one will know about us being family” Carlos calmly spoke before standing and walking away with his cane. Without looking

Carlisle looks around before his gaze stopped on Levinia who meets his gaze with calmness.

“He had suffered enough. I hope one day you will find it in your heart to forgive him, to forgive us. It won’t be long before he will be leaving this world. I hope he will depart with your forgiveness” he earnestly spoke with a faint smile before standing and following Carlos. The rest followed after gesturing a farewell to everyone.

Silence ruled the room after the men departed. Levinia remains solemn in her seat while the men respect her silence.

“Lucy will be ecstatic when he sees his father” Levinia whispers with a wistful smile.

“Surely, he would” Arvin smiles at his aunt. No one mentions the Petrov anymore. They wanted to focus on the fact that Lucien is safely home. His recovery will be easier with his family around him.

After several hours, Lucien woke up again. And this time he is more sober than the first time. His parents together with Arvin and Donovan did not leave his side and patiently waited.

“Z...Zia...” he whispers.

“She is in the penthouse. She doesn’t know” Daniel explains.

“D...don’t...tell...her” despite the difficulty, he tries to speak

“Yes, of course. We will wait for your full recovery” Daniel nods and smiles at his son.

He still can’t believe how Lucien looks with all the medical machines attached to him. Never did it occur to him the possibility of losing his son.

“Gab.....want...to see...him” he added.

“I will send for him” Daniel readily replies while gesturing for Arvin to make the call.

After his instructions, Lucien closes his eyes again. He still feels weak and he is most of the time sleepy. And in no time he fell asleep again.

“It’s normal. He is still recovering. But after today, he will be more receptive and awake most of the time. His body is still trying to adapt after his long sleep” the doctor explains upon seeing the worries on everyone’s faces every time Lucien sleep.

Just like what the doctor said, the succeeding days become more promising for all of them. Every passing day, Lucien would lose an apparatus as he is getting stable. No more life support

machines and he was allowed to have a soft diet after four days. Another couple of days and his doctor foreseen he could be on his feet. His recovery is quite fast.

Another week had passed but Lexie is unaware Lucien had come back into the country. But unlike in the previous weeks, she is more focused on Lucy and her pregnancy. She had set aside her despair for Lucien's disappearance and focuses her time on taking good care of herself, especially her pregnancy.

"Hello, little man. How are you?" Samantha greeted Lucy the instant she and Levinia enter the penthouse?

"I'm doing great, Auntie Sam" he grins, squaring his shoulder to his aunt.

"Aw, our little Lucien" Sam gushed at him while placing a kiss on his pinkish cheek.

"We will accompany you to your prenatal checkup, Lex" turning to Lexie, she smiles.

"Yes, Sam. Thank you and this little man here wanted to accompany me too" Lexie smiles at her grinning son.

"I want to protect you and my baby brother while papa is away" Lucy exclaims bravely.

Taken aback by what her son said, she tensed. Sam and Levinia mirror her predicament. They haven't expected Lucy has such thoughts.

"Papa will be home soon, my love" Levinia spoke while caressing the boy's face, oblivious of Lexie's sudden attention on her.

"Really grandma? Papa is coming home?" excited, Lucy raves at his grandmother.

Realizing what she said, she smiles at the boy. Though her heart ache to see the excitement of the boy, she had given Lucien her words. At this time, she cannot tell him and his mother the truth.

"We are all praying for papa's return and God will listen. Are you always praying for papa, my little Lucien?" luckily, she had the chance to retract her words without lying.

"Yes, grandma! Mama and I are always praying that papa will come back to us. He still doesn't know he already made me a baby brother" Lucy proudly responds with a grin.

"In that case, God will listen to Lucy's prayer because you've been a good boy. He will return papa soon. God knows Lucy and baby brother are waiting for their papa" Levinia calmly explains before placing a kiss on the boy's forehead.

"For now, let's go and we will accompany mama to her doctor. The baby in her tummy must be healthy like our brave little Lucien" she added before standing to pull the boy to his feet. She deliberately avoided looking at Lexie, afraid she will reveal her facade.

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Chapter 73

Chapter 73 Retribution

Since they left the hotel, they were engaged in random conversation mostly about Lucy. Later did Lexie realize they are taking so long to arrive at the hospital.

Looking outside the window, she noticed a different path. They are on an unfamiliar road before the vehicle stopped at a tall gate that opens for them.

Confused, she turns to Levinia and Sam but they are busy with Lucy, unbothered about where the vehicle was going.

She waited as they passed by a series of tall trees before a magnificent structure appeared from afar. Like the Wright mansion, it was castle-like but with a modern design. A massive well maintained garden added to its magnificence. Looking around, she could only see grandeur. Whoever owns the place surely has great taste.

"Mom? Where are we going? Whose house is this?" totally confused, she peeks outside when the vehicle drove through the elevated driveway.

She waited but got no response from either Levinia or Samantha until the car halted in front of a massive door. Remaining to be confused, she tries to call the attention of the two women but they seem to be avoiding her.

"Mom..." she calls her when the door opens.

"Let's go, Lex" Sam went out first with Lucy, leaving her no choice but to follow.

Outside, she looks around the entire place. And her face brightens with pure admiration. How she wishes they have this kind of massive space. Lucy could run around and she will have the chance to do gardening, though the garden is already perfect.

For someone who was raised in a village surrounded by farmlands, she had an interest in plants and raising some domestic animals. And the place could be perfect for some goats, like what Lucy have back home.

"Mama, they are so rich. When I grow up, I will buy you and papa the same house as this one. Then I will bring Bubbles and Snow to our new house" Lucy raves, him too, looking around in pure astonishment.

"Who is Bubbles and Snow?" Sam curiously asks.

"My goats. I also have chicken. Blue, Straw, Wild, Berry, and Capers" Lucy grins while Levinia and Sam look at him amusingly.

"Nice names" Sam mumbles.

"Mama names them" he grins widely, proud of her mother.

"Just as I thought" Sam chuckles before glancing at her.

Lexie scratched the unexisting itch on her head while grinning. She names the chicken for fun.

"Whose house is this grandma?" Lucy saves her with his question.

"Come, let's get inside" Levinia just smile instead of answering him. She holds Lucy by the hand while Samantha holds Lexie as they walk towards the door. She was confused but she let Samantha bring her beside her mother and Lucy.

They are midway when the door opens to the grandiose entryway. But it's not the magnificence of the place that astound her but the figure standing not far from them.

"Papa!"

Lucy cries out before running, his arms were raised ready to be picked up by his father. But Gabriel appeared from nowhere and pick him up instead. Not expecting what happened, Lexie becomes confused. With furrowed brows, she intently stares at Lucien, and by then she noticed something amiss with him.

He was paler and quite thinner than the last time she was with him. She watches him interact with their son and she hasn't missed how he favors his chest when Lucy reached out to hug him. What made her more suspicious is the way Gabriel become too attentive to Lucy. He even pulls him immediately after the hug, not giving the boy the chance to cling to his father.

She was too absorbed in observing the three when Lucien's tender eyes turn to her. His eyes speak of a month worth of yearning and she was instantly drowned. She melted under his gaze. She missed him so much, words were not enough to explain it.

Unaware her feet took a step, she slowly walk closer to him. Like walking on cloud nine.

"Mama, Papa is here!" she was just awakened from her trance when Lucy babbles excitedly.

Glancing to smile at her son, she stands a few feet away from Lucien. Her vision blurred from the tears brimming her eyes. Her throat hurts from all the emotions raging inside her. While their gazes lock, she has to gulp hard the painful lump that keeps on reappearing.

“Zia..my doll” for a month, she hears his voice again and it’s heavenly.

“My love...” her quivering voice came out a whisper. Her throat is too constricted and her chest is in an uproar.

She is so happy seeing him looking fine, though her gut is telling her something is amiss. Nevertheless, the moment is perfect for her and him. For their son.

Quickly, she closes the gap between them but she made sure to be careful with him.

She carefully wraps her arms around his waist as she slowly hugs him.

“I missed you so much” she whispers with a trembling voice. She was so careful not to squeeze him tight and put pressure on his chest. She doesn’t know what’s going on but seeing Gabriel’s worried face proves her suspicion.

“I missed you so much too, my lovely doll” he whispers back as he buries his face on her neck. Inhaling her sweet scent he missed so much.

“Welcome back. You will tell me later, right?” she whispers.

“Yes, I will” he assures her.

Still careful with him, they continue to hug each other while the others watch with misty eyes. The reunion of the family is a scene to be remembered. Chokingly emotional yet wonderful. It’s a silent celebration as Lucien and Lexie continue to be locked in each other’s embrace while in tears. Even Lucy behaves and was watching happily.

Lucien’s hands were restless as they caressed Zia’s face and neck while their foreheads were joined. He can’t get enough of Zia, he needs to feel her. He is afraid he is still in a dream about his family. It’s what kept him fighting. Zia’s beautiful face would always fill his unconscious thoughts while Lucy’s laughter made him stronger to endure the dark days of just being confined in his dream.

“Lucy” his raspy voice called for his son who readily reach out to him. But Gabriel tightens his hold around the boy and instead, he moves closer so he could hug his father again. Lucien wraps his other arm around Lucy while the other is with Zia. His movement is not as brisk as before. And it didn’t miss Lexie’s earnest interest. Lucien is a lot weaker though nothing changes with him physically, aside from faint scars scattered around his face.

“Papa is weak to carry me?” curious about what was happening, Lucy asks Gabriel.

“Ahm, yes, my love. Papa is tired from his long journey. Mama and Lucy will take care of papa first until he becomes very strong again to carry our brave little Lucien” Lexie was the one to explain to her son upon seeing Gab’s conflicted expression. Not to mention the tension she suddenly felt from Levinia and Sam.

Staring at his mother, he seems to be lost in his thoughts before he turns to his father.

“I will take care of you, Papa. You will be strong again. Uncle Gabriel will carry me for the meantime” like a man, he assures his father amid the adult’s wonderment.

“Thank you, buddy. Papa needs Lucy and mama’s care. I miss you two so much. I love you my little brave boy” he reaches for his son’s face to caress.

“I love you too, Papa. I missed you so much. Also mama. She always cries at night. But mama will not cry anymore because you came back. I’m so happy, papa” Lucy raves but his eyes got tearful.

Hearing his son, he pulled Zia closer and lovingly placed a kiss on her temple.

"I'm here now, my doll. Sorry for worrying you and our son. This won't happen again. I love you so much" Lucien whispers against her skin. Tears seem to be unending, they continue to fall like a waterfall. But unlike before, it's tears of happiness, relief, hope, and gratefulness for bringing Lucien back to them.

"No matter how long, I will wait for you. I know you will always find your way back to us. Thank you for coming back. That's the most important, you came back safe" she responded with a smile, despite her quivering voice.

"With everything that has happened, I realized life is too short. I can't let the days pass without giving you the best I could offer" he moves slightly away facing her. She tenderly looks at him, seeming to be memorizing his handsome face. She let herself be drawn to his loving gaze when what he did next surprised her.

"Alexzia Montes Wright, will you marry me again? This time, it's the wedding I dream to offer you and what you deserve as the most precious woman in the world for me. It's the wedding not just on paper but a vow in front of God and our families. This time, the world will witness our wonderful love"

Kneeling while holding a splendidly sparkling ring, he raised it to Lexie who had unwarily stepped back while gaping in pure shock. Her trembling hands were cupping her wide-opened mouth. She was too stunned and it took her a while to come around. Unlike Lucy who is happily clapping his hands with his wide smile. Despite not fully understanding what his parents were doing, he was so ecstatic while watching them.

"It's been long overdue, but I want the world to know you are my wife, my queen to this castle" Lucien continues with a tearful smile. He doesn't want to waste time anymore. He almost died without telling Lexie they are still married, so he won't be continuing the same mistake.

Tomorrow is uncertain, all they have is the present. He must live the present the best he could with his family. He will decide to be happy every waking day. He will look forward to every dusk to have another morning after dawn. Life is so short to mind all the trivialities. Every chance he got, he will tell his loved ones how much he loves them. He will show them how much they mean to him.

Getting more confused, Lexie stares at him with furrowed brows.

"This castle?" she whispers.

"Yes, our castle, Zia. Where we will raise our children. We will make a home out of this structure. This place will be the silent witness of our love and will be filled with wonderful memories" he readily explains.

Two and a half years of construction. The dreamhouse he created in his mind has come to

reality. And it's for Zia and their children. He planned the whole thing right after he broke all ties with Ellen. He braves the uncertainty in his heart despite being unsure Zia would have him back

He has already started his foolishness when he registers their marriage instead of nullifying it with the divorce paper Zia signed. Even before he made up his mind, his heart had already decided and it's been leading him since then. And he never regretted any part of his foolishness.

Although still overwhelmed by what is happening, Lexie remembered something. She is so happy and no words could define how she feels. But there are things Lucien must

understand. Bending towards him, she cups the hand holding the ring. “You know I will take everything you give me, Lucien. You never fail to make me feel to be the most important woman in the world” sincerely, she responded to his proposal. She gave him her sweetest smile before moving closer near her ear. “However, I’m so inclined of kicking your ass for not telling me we are married all this time. You made fun of me for a long time, Mr. Wright. I kinda need some fierce retribution for what you did” she whispered in his ear that only he could hear. The sweetness she earlier had was suddenly replaced by a chilling coldness, making Lucien tense.

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Chapter 74

Chapter 74 Announced

Lexie could not get enough of the ring around her finger. Indeed Lucien gave her the rarest kind of jewel most women, including her, were not aware it even existed. Sparkling around her ring finger is a pink round brilliant cut 61.5-carat diamond, framed in solid platinum. She knows nothing about rare stones, but Sam gave her a hint of what Lucien had her.

With her vague assumption, the ring cost another fortune. The stone size and fiery sparkle are making her nervous to wear it. She can’t understand Lucien’s frivolousness but she has no way of stopping him.

Despite being inside the elevator climbing up to the third floor where the master’s bedroom is located, she can’t get enough of staring at the ring.

They are taking a tour around the mansion, starting on the third floor. Where, according to Lucien were allocated for the master’s bedroom, Lucien’s office and gym, her workstation, and a family room with a complete home theater.

Lucien together with Gabriel who is carrying Lucy was leading the tour while she was left with Sam and Levinia.

“It’s a hundred million dollar ring” Sam mumbles as she links her arms on Lexie who tenses at what she said.

Smiling at her sister-in-law, she slowly drags her to follow the others. Lexie is in a daze while she kept on glancing at the ring. Who could blame her? In her finger lays a hundred million dollar fortune.

“The price is nothing. Lucien could buy you everything. He had been moving all his influence to acquire the rarest jewelry he could get hold of” Sam added seeing her dazed bewilderment.

“He loves showering you with such extravagance. Let him be, Lex” smiling, Levina placated: her. Her discomfort is quite obvious.

“This is too much, mom. What if I lost this. Holy cow, this is a hundred million dollar ring. I should not wear this when washing dishes, it would be ridiculous” she incredulously raves.

“Why would you wash dishes? We have people to do that” amused, Sam asks.

“Back in the village, we don’t have helpers. I would usually do everything alone, Sam”

not insulted by Sam's words, she casually counter with a shrug. Sam and Levinia look at each other before heaving a sigh. They are already aware, that Lexie has a very humble life back where she came from. But it never affects how they perceive her as

a person and wife of Lucien. She is a great person and no one had ever doubted why Lucien loves her so much.

"Lucien will never allow you to lift anything in the kitchen or do any household chores. He could pay hundreds of helpers. All you have to do is focus on making your designs and taking good care of him and Lucy" Levinia seriously mutters. Though she is not imposing on her, her words sounded like a warning.

"We appreciate our household help and we don't belittle, but you are Lucien's wife. You deserve every luxury money could offer. And your time will not be enough for taking good care of our little and big Lucien. Soon, you will have a third one" Sam smirks while winking at her.

She becomes speechless until they enter the master's bedroom. And seeing the elegance around them, she becomes more dumbfounded. If the penthouse is already a luxury to her level of taste, she can't explain their bedroom.

An enormous bed is a focal point of the entire place. She hasn't imagined beds could have such size. If Lucien aims for a royal ambiance, he nailed it. She feels like a queen simply being inside the room.

A sophisticated combination of warm gray and beige color gave a warm rich ambiance to the entire room. Even the beddings and all its gloriously stacked pillows feel so comfy even by the mere sight.

Amid the grandness of the bedroom, one particular side caught her attention.

Strategically positioned facing the bed is Bared Soul. Her painting sold for ten million dollars.

Previously, she thought the painting was something she would be ashamed of. But seeing it adorned their bedroom and being given life by the elegant lighting, she thought otherwise. Bared Soul is the memory of all her struggles. She bares how her heart was shattered after she left the capital...after leaving Lucien. Her eyes reflect all her pains and the dim future she had foreseen without him. And it's also a lifetime's remembrance of her body while carrying Lucy. Yes, she was pregnant with Lucy when she had the pose for Dom. It's a celebration and at the same time a realization that no matter what she would do, she will never have the man she loves. But it was four years ago.

Her life has made a full turn. She had already mourned the death of her love for Lucien but destiny has a different plan for their love story. Who would have thought that the arrogant CEO Billionaire will fall in love with someone like her?

"Mama! Your painting is here too!" Lucy's voice brought her back to the present.

"Papa, you saw how beautiful my mama is? I am inside her tummy when uncle Dom painted her. I am still a small pea, right mama? You said you are sad because you lost papa in the crowd "he turns to his mother with twinkling eyes.

"Yes, little love. You are still my baby pea when I had that. I am happy and sad at the same time during that time. I have you but I lost your papa" she smiles at the boy before turning to Lucien, feeling his gaze on her. She doesn't want to hide anything from Lucien anymore.

"You and mama are in one painting, my little Lucien. This is so wonderful!" Levinia

happily exclaims with misty eyes. She had been curious about the painting since its acquisition during the auction but she was never ready to know another truth about it. If Levinia was ecstatic and amazed, Lucien's chest suddenly felt heavy. It constricted to its painful beat. The night he acquired the painting, he haven't slept well. He was so curious about the kind of emotion he was seeing in Zia's face in it. He could almost feel her emotion. His heart ached together with the pain and yearning reflected in her eyes. "You will never be alone from now on, my doll. You will always have me and all our family" walking closer to her, he cups her face and placed a kiss on her waiting lips. "I was never alone, Lucien. I have mom, dad, and Dom. But I yearn to be beside you to tell you I have your child. But it was impossible. I endured the pain because I will he have the greatest remembrance from you... Lucy. He made me stronger" she tearfully smiles. Too late to stop the tears, they fell down her cheeks.

"You are a strong woman, no doubt about that. And thank you for cherishing Lucy regardless of what I did" he whispers as he nuzzles his face to hers.

"You didn't do anything wrong, we have both understood what we did. I knew fully well the agreement I entered. And never did I regret any part of it. It's a game I willingly played and enjoyed. It was a splendid experience, however, I was not prepared when my heart speak otherwise" she smiles despite her tears.

"You are lovely, my doll. No man is strong enough to resist you and I am just a weak man. Unfortunately, we started on the wrong foot. If only I was honest and had set aside my doubt from the beginning, I could have proposed earlier. I could have admitted how I feel for you. We could have known earlier our hearts speaks the same language. But we have a lifetime together, we will make the best out of our forever" he hugs her tight, though he was being cautious.

Silence rules while the two hug each other after their whispered conversation. The others brought Lucy to the balcony with the magnificent view of the back lawn.

"We have a pool! And playground! I have my own playground, mama! There's a monkey bar too, Papa! This is amazing" Lucy has been gushing at the view below while the others were entertaining themselves with his enthusiasm. Smiles were plastered on their faces as they watch him.

Hearing their son's ecstatic voice, Lucien and Lexie slowly walk toward the group with smiles on their faces. They could hear the happiness in their son's voice and it was swelling their hearts with so much joy.

"Thank you for this great surprise. If I am just dreaming, please don't wake me up. I want to spend this lifetime with you even just in a dream" she whispers as she slowly leans on Lucien's shoulder.

"We will continue to be asleep if this is just a dream. I don't want to wake up too. I'm so afraid to find you not beside me. That would be a nightmare, Zia" he softly retorted while watching his son from the door of the balcony.

"Papa, if you are healthy again, you will hold me while I cross the monkey bar?" Lucy turns to him and excitedly asks.

"Of course, buddy. We will cross the monkey bar together" he responded with an excited smile.

"We will swim too?" Lucy continues.

"Yes, swimming too. We will play at your park together. Papa made it just for our little

brave Lucy” he amusingly assures his son.

“Can we bring Bubbles and Snow here, mama? Also Blue, Straw, Wild, Berry, and Capers?” he continues with his enthusiasm, bringing happiness to the people around him.

“Bubbles...snow? Who are they, your friends, son?” he curiously asks while eagerly waiting for him to explain. His friends have unique names. “They are his goats and chickens” Samantha was the one to reply while chuckling. She was so amused by the animals’ names.

“Ohhh” Lucien doesn’t know what to say.

“Ahm...goats and chickens... They are animals, we love animals. They have nice names too...” he added with an amused smile while trying to be ecstatic.

“Lexie names them” Levinia amusingly interjected, earning her a gaping gaze from Lucien. While Lexie awkwardly grins at him.

“Oh... Great names for farm animals. I didn’t know animals like them could also be named. I thought it was just dogs and cats...and maybe horses” he shrugs. Though amused, he doesn’t want to openly show it so as not to embarrass his two angels.

“Lucy loves his pets” she mumbles with a sheepish grin.

“We will bring them all here once we go home to the village” he casually mumbles but his words earn him Lexie’s questioning look

“I want to visit the place of my beautiful wife. I want to see where my son grew up. I want to meet the people around my family when I was not able to be with them” looking at her, he sincerely stated.

“Lucien...we don’t have much back home. It’s just a small cottage with acres of land. It’s far from the luxury you are used to” she was reluctant about Lucien’s plan about going back to the village with him.

“There’s no hotel where you can stay there too” she added, hoping Lucien will change his mind.

“I won’t be going there for an ocular inspection. I will be going home to my wife’s place. And no matter what the situation is back there, I will embrace it. Rest your mind about trivial things, Zia. Luxury is the least of my concern. As long as I’m with you and Lucy, I will always be in paradise. I don’t care about the rest. If I need to toil and plow the ground, I will ” Lucien seriously mutters while looking straight into her insecure eyes. With misty eyes, she nuzzles her face to Lucien. She can’t believe she has the greatest husband in the entire world and it’s no ordinary man. It’s CEO Lucien Wright, the richest man in the country. Not to mention the most handsome man too.

“Thank you, my love” she whispers, basking in the bliss of how fortunate she is for having him as husband and father of her children.

“Mama!” the serene moment was just interrupted by Lucy’s panicked voice. Making both of them abruptly turn to him.

“We still have to bring you to the doctor! My baby brother needs to be checked” Lucy unceremoniously announced with his bright wide eyes.

Listening to his son, Lucien becomes so interested. He tense after he grasps what his boy meant.

“Zia..?” he whispers nervously while Lexie tenderly smiles at him.

“Eight weeks old. And we will be having a boy. Lucy is a big brother now. Another son

for you, my love” she tearfully whispers. She plans to tell him later tonight. However, she forgot she has a very excited son.

Speechless and dumbfounded, he continue to gape at her. He remains in shock despite being enveloped in her comfy hug.

“I love you so much, CEO Lucien Wright” she tenderly smiles. Giving Lucien time to recover, she remains quiet while hugging him.

The CEO’s Ten Million Dollar Wife by R.C.BRIE

Chapter 75

Chapter 75 Home At Last

“My baby is inside you again. This time I will see him grow and I could witness his birth. You have no idea how happy I am, my doll. I lost my chance with our brave Lucy, but you gave me this chance” Lucien carefully hovers above her while they are in bed.

After Lucy’s untimely announcement and Lucien had come around, they went to have her check-up. Not just the three of them but all of them, even Gabriel.

“With your plan of having so many children, you will have a lot of chances to see me grow as huge as a whale” she amusingly retorted while he sheepishly grins.

“I’m excited to see you pregnant. No doubt, you will be the most gorgeous pregnant doll” he exclaims as he showers her with tender kisses, which she immensely enjoys.

“My tummy will be as huge as the basketball ball, Lucien. I won’t be gorgeous as you think” she softly counters.

“It’s my heir inside you. In my eyes, no one could equal your beauty. I love you so much, Zia. You are my world and I won’t get tired of saying it to you” he whispers as he nuzzled his face to her.

Silence rules as they remain snuggled together. In normal circumstances, they are already making love at this time before sleeping, but Lucien is still unwell. So they have to wait.

It’s their first night together after a month of being apart and it’s bliss. They fell asleep in each other’s arms, afraid to let go.

Tomorrow they will be going home to their new house and they look forward to start creating memories in the paradise Lucien made for his family.

Earlier, he relayed in detail what happened to him during the month that he was gone. He told her everything, leaving no information behind. From the meeting, he had with Petrov Petroleum before the siege happened. Even his dreams during his induced coma.

Lexie succumbed to fear of the knowledge of his almost death. She was horrified but she can do nothing now but cry. Earlier in the shower, she saw his wounds, especially the one on her chest that got his heart. If she just allowed herself to be weak, she could have fainted. Despite the horror of what he had gone through, she was so relieved his life was spared.

She was so relieved their family was given another chance to be complete with his return. More than all the luxury and wealth in the world, she needs a husband who will be her partner in raising her children, and a husband who will be her strength as they battle with life together.

The next morning, before Lexie and Lucien could even wake up, Lucy came barging in. His two

nurses were anxiously standing at the door while Lucien let his son come in.

“He woke up early, Mr. Wright. He has been insisting to go here” Lea, one of his nurses nervously explains. It’s too early and obviously, the CEO is not even up if not for their knocking

“It’s okay, as long as he asks to be with us, bring him to our room. No matter what time it is. I don’t want him waiting for us to wake up to come to us” although casual, Lucien still sounded imposing. And it’s making the nurses more anxious.

“Yes, Mr. Wright” the nurses readily replies before the door was closed, which relieved both of them. Being in the presence of an intimidating CEO is scary.

Lucien smiles the moment he turns to see his wife and son snuggled together. Lexie still looks sleepy opposite to the energetic boy she is hugging.

“Good morning, papa, good morning mama. Good morning my baby brother...” he raves while he holds his mother’s still flat stomach.

“You are so early to wake up, my little love” hoarse from sleep, she speaks.

“I slept early, that’s why mama” he sheepishly retorted, making his parents shake their heads in amusement.

Lucy was just excited to be with his father, which is quite obvious when Lucien joined them. The boy turns to his side to hug him.

“You slept well, Papa?” he worriedly asks while caressing his father’s face.

“I slept well, buddy. Mama hold me all night. I always have a great sleep whenever mama is with me” he tenderly smiles while constantly pressing a kiss on his forehead.

“Mama will make you healthy, Papa. Don’t worry. She takes good care of me whenever I’m sick” he assures, like he was the grown-up and Lucien is the child.

“Yes, buddy. I’m not worried because I have mama and Lucy. You two will take care of papa” although amused, he tries to be seriously casual with the conversation with his son.

They had an early start in the morning since Lucy joined them in bed. They are having their breakfast beside the pool when they were just interrupted by the arrival of the group of men.

“Scary Big Ben!” Lucy suddenly yells while jumping down the chair.

Ben stopped his steps to prepare to catch the boy who came storming toward him. Like a weightless paper, he quickly picks him up with a smile despite his scary look

“I missed you, scary big Ben!” he gushes while clinging to the man. “Miss you too, little boss” Ben tenderly responded while his rarest smile adorns his face. Only Lucy could make him gentle.

“I will give you a star for taking good care of my papa. You’re a very good boy, scary big Ben” proudly, Lucy announces.

Lexie and Lucien were amused by their son and at the same time happy to see his happiness upon seeing his father’s trusted man.

“Thank you, little boss” Ben indulges the boy.

“Let’s eat breakfast, scary big Ben. We have bacon, hotdog, and nuggets. It’s your favorite. Yummy” he licks his lips while talking, making Ben chuckle. He never likes that food but he will not break the adorable boy’s heart by telling him so.

“They are delicious. The little boss needs to eat a lot to grow stronger” he placated the

boy.

“Yes, I will grow strong like my papa. Then you will protect me too if I’m already not a little boss” he readily agree and tried to go down to continue his food. But Ben did not put him down, instead, he walk to the table to bring him to his chair.

“You eat a lot, little boss,” Ben told the boy and even gave him his spoon and fork.

“Yes, I will, scary big Ben” he readily obeyed and took a spoonful into his mouth.

“I will pack the madame’s jewelry, boss” turning to Lucien, he nods before smiling at Lexie who stands up from her seat. What she did next surprised him

“Thank you for making Lucien safe, Ben” hugging the tensed man, she whispers. It was a brief hug but enough to make the fierce-looking man melt on his feet.

“Ahm” clearing his throat, he anxiously glances at the boss. He was caught surprised.

“It’s my job, Madame Wright” he spoke after he recovered.

“It’s never a job, it’s the commitment and the compassion you have towards him. I can’t thank you enough for protecting our family, though I should be kicking your ass too for being connivance to my husband for not telling me I’m still married to him” sincerely, she mutters. But her last words were whispered, afraid Lucy might hear her.

Sheepishly grinning, Ben scratches his head. He has nothing to counter the madame.

Only Gabriel Simon knew the boss was still married.

“You go pack the jewelry, Ben. Thank you” saving his man from his wife’s dagger-sharp gaze, Lucien dismissed him.

“Yes, boss. Excuse me, Madame Wright” relieved, he quickly left like he has a siege to deal with. He could face any adversary but not the gentle wife of the boss. She is a lot scary with her gentleness.

He will be more comfortable guarding the multi-million pieces of jewelry the Wright owns than facing the Madame.

After breakfast, they were set to go home to the mansion. The penthouse will just be another important place for Lucien and Lexie as they vacated it.

Before, Lucien’s home is the penthouse despite the number of mansions he has. But starting today, the newly constructed mansion will be his home with his precious family. Among all the places he owns, the new one is the closest to his heart. It was constructed from his dream of having Lexie as his wife and the little small feet they will raise. Never did he think that while he was just dreaming of the life he will have with Lexie, she was already starting it on her own. She already had Lucy without him knowing.

Several black vehicles enter the massive gate of the Wright estate while the household staff is lining the driveway to welcome the family.

Lexie has misty eyes while her son is so restless in his seat. He has been peeking outside and would gush around at whatever he will see. His restlessness is making his parents amused.

“Welcome home, my lovely doll. Why are there tears here?” gently, he wipes the tears that escaped her eyes.

“I don’t know why I’m so emotional these days. Maybe the hormones of pregnancy are kicking ” she tries to explain but she knew her tears were from the happiness swelling her heart. She can’t ask enough in this lifetime. Everything has been laid on her feet.

Lucien had been showering her with everything. Even dreams she never realized she needs.

“Maybe our second little Lucien is making his presence known” he whispers as he hugs her.

“Yes, he knows he is going home today. He is as excited as his older brother” she tenderly smiles as they both caress her still flat stomach.

They remain silent until the vehicle came to a halt. Straightening in their seats, Lucy unbuckles himself on his own. He is excited to finally arrive. He has been itching to go out but as he was taught, he can't open the door unless it was open for him. It's for his security and was imposed on all Wrights, including his mother.

The instant the door opens with Ben holding it for them, Lucy jumps out and hugs the man. A wave of gushing rang around, watching the adorable boy. But abruptly straighten their backs, seeing the CEO and his wife going out.

“Hello, I'm Lucas Alexander Montes Wright. Nice meeting you all” he waves and smiles at the staff who all smiles at him in response.

“Hello, young master. Nice meeting you” the older woman with a warm smile and chirpy voice greeted the boy.

“Mavis!”

To the surprise of everyone and startling the boy, Madame Alexzia Wright went charging and hugged the head steward.

The CEO's Ten Million Dollar Wife by R.C.BRIE

Chapter 76

Chapter 76 His Son

The night is star-studded as the celebration of the founding anniversary of the Wright Group of Companies was taking place two weeks after Lucien's return.

With all the prominent figures of the country, not to mention the Wright themselves, media companies are stationed all over the place to document the whole event. Field reporters try to find spots to do live reports aired on respective media stations.

Camera flashes were blinding but guests never failed to pose for photographers stationed at the entrance. The once-a-year celebration of the Wright Group of Companies is one of the major events the country has been looking forward to.

Socialites, politicians, celebrities, and different members of society have been eagerly waiting to receive the invitation months before the event. Only prominent figures and chosen few are given invites.

Lucien arrives with his parents and Samantha. He and his father indulge the press with a reserved smile and a casual nod while the two women waves and smile.

His dashing look did not escape everyone's interest. As of the moment, he remains to be the most sought-after bachelor in the country without anyone's knowledge about his marriage to Alexzia Montes and their son, Lucas Alexander Montes Wright.

Aside from the members of the Board of WGC, no one knew about his marriage and earlier disappearance. But despite his near-death experience, he had recovered quite fast. He returned to the office earlier last week to the surprise of his staff. But Samantha remains on his side to assist him.

Though he has been successfully regaining his physical strength, his internal wound is still a condition to be highly regarded. Up to this time, the Petrov doctors are still by his

side. In fact, they are also present at the party, but no one knows their identity. Lucien remains to be the imposing man he is. Like a magnet, admiring gazes followed his every move as he greets and meets guests together with his family.

Later Gabriel Simon who is equally dashing in a tux joined them. And though he and Samantha have a constant tension between them, Gabriel stayed by her side, which she seems to not mind. On usual days she will glare at him but this time she let him gush on her.

The intimate atmosphere was interrupted after waves of murmurs suddenly erupted near the entrance. Heads squinted out of curiosity. Flashes of lights flooded like silent lightning. The press is seeming to be in an uproar to have the photo of whoever has arrived.

It's not long before Arvin Deutche enters the venue with the real-life doll in his arm. Donning in the sparkling flaming bloody red off-shoulder gown is Alexzia Montes. The rising fashion designer and model of Silhouettes Designs.

If some got curious about her presence at the event it was obvious based on the hushed murmurs around. Men's gazes reflect admiration while the women are filled with envy.

The designer's glamorous hourglass figure complemented the elegant, shimmering fabrics of her expensive gown. While her every step reveals her flawless slender legs from the slit that reached midthigh. Also exposing her stiletto strappy bloody red shoes.

"Is she the love interest of President Deutche of Silhouettes Designs? He is discreet about his relationship. Having a goddess for a girlfriend" one of the men whispers to his associates.

"She is the new designer of SD, Alexzia Montes. I also saw her model her designs. The only designer and model who caught Arman Varce's meticulous taste. Miss Montes is also featured in this month's Fashion Today of Madame Corsino" one of the older women casually spoke. Her smile speaks of something which her circle failed to discern. She knew whose woman she is and definitely not President Arvin Deutche's.

"Yes, I recognized her. No doubt about it, she is a goddess. Very talented too. Her designs are leading the market of SD after their launch. She is quite making a noise in the fashion world with his exceptional gift"

Eyes followed the duo as they walk to the center, unbothered by the attention bestowed on them. Arvin looks proud as he escorted Alexzia. It's a borrowed moment and he cherishes the opportunity.

Alexzia is a beauty to be reckoned with, like a life-size doll. Everything about her is perfection. Her flawless skin is seeming to shimmer under the radiance of the massive chandeliers' adorning the magnificent ceiling of the Wright Hotel and Casino. She is dashing with her fiery attire. Like a raging fire of confidence on the runway.

"You're quite obvious. You look ready to leap to devour her. Easy man, she is already yours" Gabriel casually lean near Lucien's ear to whisper. He saw how Lucien's eyes darkened with desire and possessiveness.

If everyone's attention was on the newly arrived guests, Gabriel and the whole Wright family were focused on Lucien. They all saw Lexie earlier and with the way Lucien's face becomes grim upon seeing his wife with her revealing outfit, they had expected his reaction. His possessive aura is emanating in full blast, they could taste it.

"I'm really not fond of that kind of gown, it's too exposed. It doesn't fit for my peace of

mind” he grimly mutters. Thankfully they have some distance from other guests.

“You approved and paid for that gown. They could only look but you know no one could touch even the tip of her hair” aside from Arvin, Wright’s security is just a few feet away from her, substantiating Gabriel’s words.

“I didn’t expect it to be that gorgeous on her. It’s different on paper” he snickers while he subtly scans the crowd with his sharp gaze.

Others may have thought Wright’s security is for Arvin Deutche but for those who knew, it was for the goddess in his arm.

“I saw the CEO is taking interest in the model” one of the women in the corner whispered to someone beside her.

“She is stunning, no man could miss her presence”

“Have you remembered the rumor about the CEO’s sexual inability? Do you think the model could make a difference from Ellen Johnson?” a smirk grazed the woman’s face.

“It was not proven”

“It’s a legitimate document and Ellen Johnson says so. Isn’t it obvious? They have been together for several years. I don’t think she will protect herself from being pregnant if she will have the chance to bear a Wright heir. It’s every woman’s dream. And I don’t think the CEO will have that kind of self-control not to bed her. He is not a saint unless something is wrong with his ability to do the act”

“Well if it’s true, I won’t mind if I were the model. With just the CEO’s bank account, I will be immensely pacified. I can have some happiness somewhere else if he cannot provide it” a chuckle sounded from her while she seductively fixed her gaze at the CEO.

“It was just a pity he can’t produce an heir”

“We cannot have everything in the world. He has all the money and looks. A perfect husband but will never be a father” the woman sneers.

The hushed conversation continues in one corner while everyone else was busy basking in the beauty of the model who is now in the company of Madame Carusso and her husband.

“Such beauty only deserves the rarest stones in the world” Madame Carusso whispers near her ear, making her smile.

“I’m afraid to know how much I cost tonight madame” Lexie playfully mumbles.

“Oh dear, with the engagement ring around your finger, you already cost a hundred million dollars” the old woman gently smiles as she speaks. She already knew its price but she doesn’t know the rest of her jewelry. Her earrings and the bangle around her wrist. She also has red stone adornment on her hair, which Samantha gave to her hairdresser earlier.

“Red diamond is the rarest of all diamonds, it cost more than a million per carat. With that huge stone in your ears, I could only guess but I won’t ruin your night thinking of the cost. You might hide for fear of being kidnapped. But I could give you a rough estimate, you are worth not less than two hundred fifty million dollars tonight, excluding the gown with real stones embellishment” the old woman playfully whispers.

“I don’t want to hear the rest, Madame” she nervously smiles knowing her price.

“As I was thinking. Let’s enjoy tonight. And by the way, you look ravishing, Madame Wright. The CEO’s adoring gaze has been fixed on you since you enter”

“He is adorable, isn’t he?” she giggles, making the old woman shake her head. If only she realizes the CEO’s deadly dark aura while looking around the men with devouring

gazes on her. She will be alarmed.

“He is such a possessive pain in the ass” she leans toward the old woman and playfully whispers, earning her gaping eyes from the Madame. She straightens her back and winks at the gentle lady who remains surprised by her brazenness. The gentle old lady is obviously horrified by her words but she was unconcerned. She was fully aware of Lucien’s possessiveness even before she enter. Instead of being worried, she is enjoying her husband’s inability to claim her in public. And he knew it. He saw her smirk while enjoying the attention while he is seething with jealousy.

The silent distant battle between Lexie and Lucien was just interrupted upon the arrival of another guest who created another uproar.

Walking from the entrance amid the flashes of camera lights is a dashing figure in a tuxedo who was being followed by fierce-looking security. With two hands inside his pockets, he was unconcerned about the chaos he created around him.

Looking straight ahead, a smirk carved his lips upon seeing the man afar intently staring back at him. Amid the surprise of all guests, he continues to casually stride towards the front. Unaffected by the gaping faces he passed by

“CEO Lucien Wright? But the smaller version?” someone from the crowd exclaims in disbelief, which was heard by the person who grab all the attention of tonight’s event.

Pausing midstep, he turns to the crowd and faintly smiles.

“I am not CEO Lucien Wright. I am Lucas Alexander Wright, his son” he politely counters whoever spoke.

The CEO’s Ten Million Dollar Wife by R.C.BRIE

Chapter 77

Chapter 77 Revealed Though

stunned by the boy’s statement, guests can’t help gushing at his cuteness. They are looking at the spitting image of the CEO with the same aura and it’s quite astonishing. Lucas Alexander Wright is effortlessly trying to be serious like a real man but he looks more adorable than intimidating. After he counters the one who spoke, he continues to walk toward the front with Wright security following behind. Unaffected by the attention he was getting. Lucien watches his boy with pride together with the rest of the family. The Board of Directors who are all present at the event were all staring at him with questioning eyes. They were aware of the CEO having a wife but they didn’t know he also has a son, more so a spitting image of him.

A few feet away from his father Lucy hastens his steps with a smile on his lips. “Papa...” his smile is priceless and it’s making his father swell with pride and happiness. “Hello, my little CEO” Lucien, for the first time with witnesses, wears a tender smile on his face. The well-known fierce and scary CEO is now lovingly smiling at the boy to the surprise of everyone.

“Hello, papa” Lucy replies before turning to his grandparents and Samantha. And like their usual encounters, they gush at his cuteness.

On the other part of the room amid the pool of gaping faces of the surprised guests, Lexie is quietly watching the scene. She could see different reactions to the sudden

appearance of her son and she understood their astonishment. Lucy is the greatest surprise for tonight's event after several months of being hidden from the public eye. She was too preoccupied with the scene, unaware she was being watched. "It's no doubt, you are beyond perfection. However, your son got all his father's face even his bearing" Madame Carusso whispers after leaning close to her. Slowly turning to the old lady, her thoughtful gaze fixed on her. She hasn't expected the old woman would connect her to the boy. Lucy got nothing from her features. He is all the way, a Lucien Wright

"No other woman is privileged to produce the CEO's exceptional offspring but you, Madame Wright. Your little man is equally superior to his father, no doubt about that" the old lady's smile is all-knowing.

She is too engrossed with her thoughts of what to say to the old lady, unaware of the sudden tension around her. Her attention is all on her when someone pecked a kiss on her cheek.

"You've wandered too long, my doll. Our son is waiting for you" instantly, goosebumps covered her skin as the husky voice of someone she knew too well fills her ear. Followed by the hot breath fanning her skin.

Stunned by Lucien's sudden appearance beside her, she tensed. His closeness is intoxicating her as he used to. With his arm snaking around her slender waist, she unconsciously steps closer to him.

Guests seeing the CEO approach the stunning model, breaths were held in pure anticipation. But seeing him kiss her cheek created an uproar. Surprise faces and eerie silence rule when everyone gapes at the scene.

"Thank you for taking good care of my wife, Arvz. Let's join the family" turning to his cousin, he casually nods at him.

"Excuse us, Madame Carusso. I will claim my wife. She has been out of my grasp for a long time" Lucien kisses the old lady's hand before pulling Lexie close to him by the waist.

"Of course CEO Wright, a treasure as precious as the Madame is too risky to be left unattended" Madame Carusso elegantly nods at Lucien with a gentle smile. "Indeed so precious Madame Carusso, like no other" with so much pride and love he professes while intensely staring at Lexie. Lexie who had recovered from her shock was able to giggle. And without inhibitions, she playfully pinches Lucien's nose. As his response, he fondly scrunched his nose to her. She may be used to being playful with Lucien but not with the people around them. CEO Lucien Wright is the epitome of shrewdness and fierceness in the business world, no one knew he is capable of such gentleness. And they have the chance to witness it because of the gorgeous model beside him.

"Always a flatterer, CEO Wright" her smile is so charming enough to brighten the entire place.

Arvin looks at the happiness reflecting on her face and he was somehow placated from the heaviness he felt since earlier. Seeing it clearly, only Lucien could make her happy and other men pale in comparison. It's a realization he needs to accept that he could never have a chance with Lexie, even the slightest.

"Flattering you is an understatement, my doll" he responded as he peck another kiss on her forehead. He stayed snuggled, inhaling her fragrant skin before leading her towards the rest of the family.

Arvin Deutche followed the two with a more composed disposition. There goes the woman he admires, already on the arm of her beloved. Curious and bewildered gazes followed the trio while they join the family. Seeing the CEO with the stunning model is a scene to be reckoned with and an immense surprise. Some have noticed the interest in the CEO's eyes while watching her entrance but never did they expect they have something deeper than what they saw. "Mama" Lucy immediately run to his approaching parents and raised his arms to his father. After picking up his son, two lips instantly grazed both his cheeks. Happiness is written on their faces. Flashes of cameras flooded as every photographer was in an uproar to take a photo of the family. A rare opportunity bestowed by a Wright. "The announcement will commence upon your approval" Gabriel whispers after he moves closer to Lucien's side.

"It's time, my doll. The world will know the magnificent woman who stole my heart the first time I laid my eyes on her. And the woman who gave me precious heirs" he seriously mutters while staring at Lexie's calm eyes. His gaze reflects all his love for his little family.

"And tonight, I'm ready to be claimed, my lovely CEO. Thank you for giving me and Lucy time

to cope with all these. Thank you for giving us such great regard in your prominent and glamorous world" she tenderly responded while caressing his face. Unconcerned by the eyes watching them.

"Everything in my world is dim without you and our Lucy in it. Money cannot buy me this kind of happiness you both made me feel. And your presence made me appreciate and value life more. I love you so much, my lovely doll and my brave little Lucien" he presses another kiss, this time on her moist lips before kissing his son's nose. "I love you so much too, papa" Lucy smiles while wrapping his little arms around his father's neck. With misty eyes, Lexie watches her two beloved. "Ladies and gentlemen, good evening. On behalf of Wright Group of Companies, we welcome you to this annual event" they were only interrupted by the greeting from the emcee. It is starting and there's no turning back. After tonight, she will be regarded as the CEO's wife. And she will be treated as a Wright. The thought is making her excited and nervous at the same time. She doesn't know if she could be able to survive the frivolous life of the Wrights but for Lucien and her son, she will strive. She values her privacy and simple life but loving Lucien changed everything and she is willingly embracing it.

Lexie subtly took a deep breath to compose her anxious nerves. Facing a crowd of prominent guests is not new to her. But standing as the wife of the heir of the most powerful and famous family in the country is adding to her nervous nerves. She doesn't care how people see her, but after tonight, anything she will do will be associated and might affect her husband.

"Nothing you would do could affect me or the family. Rest your mind, my love. I will protect you and our privacy. No one will bother you, even in the process of achieving your dream as a fashion designer and model" seems to have read her mind, Lucien leans closer and assures her in a whisper.

Startled by Lucien's foresight, she turns to stare at him. But she was unable to utter a word.

"I know what you've been thinking since day one. Don't worry, nothing will change except for your tail. I cannot do away with having your security to be visible this time,

you need it. I need to protect you and Lucy. Please understand” he explains without her asking anything. “I do. Thank you for your effort in doing this” with a tender smile she nods before the emcee spoke again, getting their attention.

“Chairman Daniel Wright together with the Wright family and closest friends would like to share an important feat with all of us” the emcee announced before gesturing to the Chairman who is already holding a microphone.

“Good evening everyone and welcome. Tonight, together with our entire family, I would like to welcome and introduce CEO Lucien Wright’s beloved wife, Madame Alexzia Montes Wright and our lovely boy, Lucas Alexander Wright, heir of the Wright empire” with overwhelming authority, Daniel Wright announce while scanning every familiar face. After the announcement, cheers and waves of murmurs flooded. Hunches were ascertained implying a different perspective from the CEO’s previous rumors. Some have questioned why the Wright family did not take action against whoever has spread the malicious words. Tonight they have their answers. It’s a mere rumor not worth the CEO’s time.

With his now serious face, Lucien faces the crowd. Scanning the entire hall with his unremarkable expression. He is fully aware of everyone’s surprise but he was unconcerned. He

wanted to gauge how his people acknowledge the announcement. Because these are the people his wife will constantly be interacting with. And knowing how she worries about entering his world, he wanted to clear the coast for her peace. “As you all know, I value utmost privacy. More so my wife. She is very private though she is in a glamorous world of fashion design” Lucien spoke after he was given the microphone. “She will not be bombarded at any time without her consent, especially by the press. Her security will treat anyone as a threat once you cross the boundary set for you. My wife, Alexzia Wright could be tolerant... but I am not” he added with a grim deadly warning while staring at one of the cameras focusing on him.

The CEO’s Ten Million Dollar Wife by R.C.BRIE

Chapter 78

Chapter 78 No Right to Mend the Bond

The couple left the party with the sleeping boy in the CEO’s arms. Despite having two nurses to attend to Lucy, Lucien and Lexie made sure to look after their son. Lucy fell asleep midway, so Lucien carries him around while greeting and talking to guests. It’s been a successful event, but guests prefer to gawk at the family instead of enjoying the party as they are supposed to do. They seem to not get enough of the CEO having a real-life doll for a wife and a son who looks exactly like him.

Even prominent personalities are snooping at the CEO’s affairs, still in awe of the surprise. And tonight is also everyone’s ultimate chance to witness the unknown side of CEO Lucien Wright. How he is as a father and a husband.

From all the things they got to know about the CEO, one particular revelation prevails. He is a perfect family man. A hands-on father and an attentive husband. Though his son has been well -behaved, he has been very inquisitive. But he patiently indulges.

Explaining all the boy’s queries.

He also makes sure his wife stays by his side. His hand would always find Alexzia's waist to keep her close. A possessive act, unusual to him. For several years they have been witnesses of his relationship with Ellen Johnson, but never did they see such clingingness as he is showing towards his wife. It just proves that Alexzia Montes Wright is beyond special. The only woman who captivates the elusive billionaire CEO.

Right after their departure, the remaining guests openly discussed the earlier spectacle. If they have suppressed their curiosity earlier, they were in an uproar after the whole Wright entourage left.

While they were being talked about back at the party, the couple safely arrived at their mansion. Still wearing their party clothes, both tucked their son in bed after his sponge bath and his clothes changed.

"Good night, my little Lucien" Lucien whispers near his son's ear. Despite being sleepy, Lucy smiles upon hearing his father's voice.

"Good night, my little love" Lexie snuggle her face to his cheek, pecking him kisses. And just like his reaction to his father, he sleepily smiles before he finally enters dreamland.

"He was so gallant earlier. I'm so proud of him" Lucien mumbles while watching their son sleep.

"Yes, like his father" she lovingly wraps her arms around his waist while leaning her head on his shoulder. Instinctively, he pulls her by the waist and pecks her temple.

"Let's rest too, you are tired" he mumbles while leading her toward the door. "Not too tired to make love though" she playfully whispers before he could open the door. His chuckle rumbles in his chest but she got no reply.

Reaching their bedroom, she was suddenly pinned to the door, her lips ravished by his demanding kiss.

"Ahhn.." her moan trapped in her throat as he continue to fervently attack her lips.

"I'm dying to do this since your entrance, my doll. You don't realize how alluring you are, enticing every man at the party" he whispers while nibbling her ravished lips, trailing her jaw. "I don't care about other men" she deliriously retorted.

"I know, but they are all feasting with what is mine. You are mine, Alexzia...no other men could have you but, me" he grimly mutters. He has been jealous the whole time during the party. If only he could hide Zia, he will. No man is supposed to see how ravishing she is but, him.

"I'm all yours, my lovely Lucien" she tries to pacify her man, tilting her head to give him full access to her neck.

She got no answer, instead, his punishing lips attacked hers before trailing down her neck.

Though he looks dashing in his three-piece suite, she needs to touch him. After loosening the bow around his collar, her fervent finger starts to unbutton his shirt.

Revealing the firm toned muscles of his chest down to his washboard abs.

"Ahhnn..." she moans not only from his ravaging kisses but from touching his fevered skin. Lucien is a demigod...an epitome of perfection. "I want to take you while in this dress, my doll. You gave my dick a painful night, Zia. You're such a temptress" he grumbles against her skin, sucking and marking her. "All yours, my love" she enjoys his not so gentle ministrations. The mix of pain and pleasure is adding to her need to have him deep inside her.

"Argh..." she growled after his hand snaked inside her gown, cupping and playing with

the wetness between her legs.

"You're wet, my doll" hoarse from passion, he whispers. "Ahhhn... Lucien..." throwing her head back, she enjoys his fingers rubbing her wetness. Her legs, still wearing his high heel stiletto, wobble, but Lucien held her steady. Watching her drunk flushed face, he continues his torture of rubbing her slit while teasing her entrance with the shallow thrust of his slender finger.

"You are teasing... Lucien..." she whines but she sounded more lewd than complaining. "So warm and sleek..." drunkenly, he mumbles instead.

"Argh...I want you inside me...please" she deliriously whispers. His other hand is alternately playing with her mounds, teasing her hardened bud outside her gown. He has been teasing her while ravaging her lips but it's not enough to suffice her hunger. "Then, you will have me..." swiftly, he turns her around to face the wall without removing his hands away from her body. His already wet finger continues to play with her heaven. Aside from their heavy breaths, the sound of the clinking metal fills the silence of the room. She could hear Lucien unbuckling his belt and unzipping his pants. "You can feel me, my doll? It's been hard and painful the entire time at the party" he huskily whispers as he pressed himself to her while planting a kiss near her ear.

"I want that hard rod inside me, CEO Wright..." she deliriously retorted while being plastered on the wall. She could feel his warm erection poking her already naked butt.

"Arghhh..." with one swift move, she was filled with his humongous size.

"Lucien..." she whimpers as she shudders from the sudden delicious invasion. Her fingers dug into the wall but cannot fully grasp the smooth surface. "Argh..." her moans and grunts echo while she is being penetrated from behind, digging her deep. With her leg raised, the skimpy fabric covering her wetness was just moved aside, giving his erection a way to do its onslaught on her welling wetness.

"So good, my doll" throwing his head back, he relished the feeling of being enveloped by her tightness. Her warmth is choking his member to pure bliss.

"I love having you inside me..." with her gown pulled upward to accommodate him, she closes her eyes and feels the pleasure enveloping her senses. She feels so full.

Surrendering her body in pure abandon, she embraces his every forceful thrust. Lucien, like a mad man, brought her to the bumpy road toward their peak as he pound her fast. The slapping of wet skins fills the silence of their room together with the rhythm of their heavy breaths. .

"Ahhhhnn..." her slender body is bouncing at his every thrust. Her hands were trembling as they desperately grab the wall to support herself. She was mindless of any discomfort while Lucien is bringing her to immeasurable hunger for pleasure only he could suffice.

"Ahhn...more...give me more... I'm so close...Mr. Wright..." she lewdly moans, which made him fasten his hip.

"You're squeezing me already, Alexzia. You are quick. You love to do it like this, Mrs. Wright? Just like you are still at the party, wearing your stunning gown and high heel while being pounded" he hoarsely mumbles as he digs her deeper and faster.

"The guests will enter any moment, Mrs. Wright. And they will see us like this. Will it not destroy your career if you are seen being ravaged by the Mafia Lord? You sold yourself to me and I want to be served for every penny I paid you" Lucien started a kink.

"Oh, please, my lord. Modeling is my life. Please don't let them see me like this. I will

pleasure you all night. I will be your slave just make me famous” she readily played his game as she endures his fervent desire. “Then, serve me, slave...” he dangerously mutters while pulling her closer just to bend her low. With his strong arms wrapped around her waist, he mindlessly thrust deep like a beast in heat to its bitch.

“Arghh...too deep...too fast...” she whimpered while shuddering from his violent assault.

“You’re mine...my slave. I can do everything to you. You hear me, Alexzia?” he breathlessly counters. The kink is making him more aroused and mindless.

“Ahh, yes, Mr. Wright...shit...I’m coming, Lucien... arghhh” she gasped at the sudden jolt of pleasure succumbing to her senses. The kink is getting into her as Lucien played it well. But she had dropped it when she feel her impending release. The fingers grasping the wall paled as she desperately clung to it. Momentarily, her whole body tensed and convulsed as she reached her euphoria. She almost fell to the floor after her feet wobbled and lost their strength. But Lucien firmly holds her in place as he did his last few forceful thrust before joining her in their heaven.

It was a blast. Exhausted from their journey, she slumped on the wall while he was plastered on her back. Heavy breaths fill the silence before a chuckle reverberated, coming from her.

“That was awesome, Lucien...” she chirpily whispers, despite being tired. “You are always awesome, my doll” he lovingly whispers while planting tender kisses on her bare shoulder.

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She could still feel his throbbing manhood inside her. Still, rock hard despite already having his release. Tonight is just the second night after they were allowed to make love. They gruelingly waited for more than a week before they could get physical with each other. And it was not an easy quest for both of them. Sparks fly every time they lay in bed without doing what they used to do. But last night was the start and they made love three times, as it was the limit the doctors had set for Lucien. Though, still, not enough, they were somehow appeased with the hunger they have to taste the heaven in each other’s bodies. “I love you so much, my Mafia Lord” she spoke after a while of enjoying Lucien’s kisses. “I am not a Mafia Lord, my doll” hearing what she called him made him tense. He doesn’t know why he use the Mafia thing earlier but he realized he was uncomfortable with it. “You are a Mafia heir, so you are a Mafia Lord” she carefully counters. Lucien told her everything about what happened during the explosion.

Including the connection, he has with the Petrovs.

“Yes, I am. But Carlos Petrov will not want me to delve into the dangerous life he lives” Lucien dazedly whispers. “We are only associated with business and we will keep it that way” he casually added while he carefully pulled himself out from her. He has to close his eyes and inhale deeply at the sensation it causes him.

“But by blood, you are family. And the old man obviously loves all of you” she tenderly smiles after she was made to face him. Their previous carnal heat was replaced with seriousness as they discuss what was forbidden to even mention in the Wright household. Lucien calmly stares at her but remains quiet. He met all the Petrovs and he could feel the connection. But he is not the right person to mend the bond. He loves his mother and he respects the deep scar of her past. He hasn’t felt her pain so he has no right to tell her to forgive and forget. Only she could decide for herself. But he also

knows she will be healed if she chooses to. It's her choice to make and nobody could dictate to her, even their father.

The CEO's Ten Million Dollar Wife by R.C.BRIE

Chapter 79

Chapter 79 The CEO's Wife

"I'll do it, sir" Lexie dashed to open the door for the old man who struggles to push it open. He is supporting his weight with a cane while his other hand was holding a cup. "Thank you, dear" tender smile framed his old wrinkly face.

"Who is with you, sir? You should not be going out alone" she smiles while she helped him with his cup. The old man holds onto the wall after his hand were freed.

"I just want to look around while I'm in the area. It's lonely being alone in my room. I want to see the beauty around" his voice is gruff but it's filled with tenderness.

Staring at the man's face, her heart went out to him. Indeed, loneliness lay beneath the bitter smile he tries to adorn his old face. She wonders where his family is. He is too old to be left alone.

"I'm waiting for someone, but he will not be around for at least an hour. We could sit together if you won't mind" she suggested not realizing why she did it. Her heart just went out for him. She was orphaned at a young age and she never met her grandparents. Having the old man around warms her heart.

"Oh, you will? That would be great. I would appreciate your company" his face brightens, making her smile.

"I also don't want to wait alone" holding his arm to support him, she smiles while leading him toward the vacant table. It's mid-afternoon and the cafe is almost empty. She helped him settle first before taking her seat across from him. "What you have here?" she casually asks while placing his cup in front of him. "Some tea...my favorite...for I don't know how long" his smile is somewhat boyish for his age. It's more of a wistful smile, making her feel warm inside. "Oh...you never outgrow it. That's cute" her charming smile, almost a giggle, adorns her face but momentarily held herself upon realizing his boring gaze on her.

His gaze is penetrating, seeming to gauge her, however, she doesn't feel intimidated or offended. His gaze is somewhat telling her something, which she could not discern at the moment. Despite how he looks at her, she doesn't feel uncomfortable being around him.

"What do you want for your drink? Coffee? You will have a treat for accompanying this old man" he playfully spoke after a while of silence. "Oh, thank you. Though you don't need to" she smiles. "It's the least I could do for having a charming and beautiful company" he playfully retorted, making her chuckle. "Well, thank you, sir. I can have fresh orange juice. I'm not allowed to have coffee" she conceded with a smile.

The old man intently stares at her before gesturing for the waiter to place her order. "I'm also not a coffee person, I'm more of a tea person" he speaks after the waiter left.

"I'm into coffee but I can't while I'm expecting" she doesn't know where she gets the faith to share something personal with the man. She just feels like telling him.

"Wow, that's wonderful. You are a great mother for nurturing your unborn. I don't fully

understand the bond of a mother to their child and vice versa but I know it's immensely strong "he excitedly exclaims but his voice quivers and his eyes become misty. Staring at him, she could see a lot of emotions crossing his old face. And it somewhat confused her. There is a yearning in his eyes, which she assumed was for someone important to him whom she resembles.

"It's also the same with the bond of the father to his child. Are you aware of the triangulation paradigm between the parents and the child?" she gently smiles upon seeing his furrowed brows. Interest reflects on his face, so she went on.

"Whatever the parent's emotions were felt by the child upon conception. The child has registers even if it's just blood, right after the sperm meets the egg" she shyly explains under his earnest interest.

"Triangulation bond already happens the moment the fetus was formed not after it was born or during the time the child is capable to understand. It's the most powerful bond between parent and child. The tiny blood inside the mother's womb could feel the acceptance and the love from the parents. Yes, it's the mother who has the chance to nurture the unborn inside her body, but it doesn't make the father a lesser parent. The child feels both parents' emotions while growing inside the womb. The bond is stronger than anyone thinks. It's undeniable" she carefully explains with a tender smile.

"I thought, fathers, have a lesser connection to the child. Most children are closest to their mother than the father as they grow up" he casually pointed out.

"Circumstances may affect the relationship between them but a strong bond will always be, arguments, unfair circumstances, and personality differences might change the course of their relationship but they can never break the bond that has been formed from conception to the time of birth. It is inside the womb where the most crucial and strongest bond was formed. Women are more open with their emotions compared to men, so it's also a factor that affects the connection with the growing child. But the bond between the three of them exists in equal degree" she added while holding the man's earnest gaze.

After talking, the old man seems to be lost in his thoughts. Silence rule between them until her order arrives, which she bet the man hasn't noticed.

Giving the man time to come around, she quietly took a sip of her drink while looking around. The place is almost empty except for her security and some men having coffee. She loves to spend her time in the cafe doing her designs whenever she wanted a new ambiance aside from her workstation.

"So, when a child forsakes her parent, there is still a chance to mend it?" after the long silence, he speaks. "Yes, there is a great chance. At a certain point, the child will realize the emptiness without a parent. Wounds could be healed. There will be scars but it won't hurt like when it was fresh. Scars will just serve as a reminder but they should not hinder you from returning to your usual life. Well, that's how I perceive it. I just don't know with others" after heaving a sigh, she casually explains. She assumes something is bothering the old man and she feels she needs to share her insights to help him.

A fond smile carves his face as he stares at her, which she meets with the same fondness.

"Time is the best healer of all kinds of wounds" she added.

"My light is fading soon, I hope I could mend the wound before it's too late" softly, he

mumbles.

Seeing the pain and desolation in his face worries her. Tears fill the rim of his lids but he is fighting it not to fall. The man is too old to be subjected to such uncertainty. But she has no right to interfere. "I don't know the situation and I'm not in the position to meddle, but I could help pray for the healing of the soul of that person. I will pray for both of your healing" cupping his wrinkly and shaky hand, she tries to comfort him. Her gesture earned her a gentle and warm smile that brighten the man's desolate face.

"Thank you, dear. It means a lot to me. Before, I believe time could heal the pain of the past but I was proven wrong. Until this day, she still hates me" with a bitter smile, he softly explains while staring at the flawless hand holding him.

"Time is capable to heal. Unfortunately, there's no timeframe for healing. It's still a matter of choice. Some people are still blinded by the pain and do not recognize they were already healed. They choose to reminisce and relive the misery than accept that time has mended their broken soul. That's how they cope with the wasted time they spent in hatred than forgiveness" she tenderly smiles. As he becomes thoughtful, silence rules again.

"But I will continue to patiently wait for her forgiveness. Until there's remaining life in me, I will wait" he weakly whispers. Giving him some encouragement, she nods while gently squeezing his feeble hand.

"I know, she will" gently, she pats the hand she is holding. She remembered something about the old man's situation and it was so familiar. "I also know someone who has somewhat with the same situation. This time it is her who cannot forgive" she continues.

"This might help you discern the situation from a different perspective... People might say, it's been a long time and she should be forgiving the person she hated. However, who are we to tell her to forgive and forget when we are not in her shoes? We don't know the pain she had endured. We don't know the anguish and misery she had undergone. She had battled not only with the unfair circumstances but also with her inner demons. It's not easy and I don't want to judge her" she wistfully added upon seeing the interest in the man's eyes. "Only she could decide what path to choose with regards to her forgiveness. I could only help by praying for her peace...for finding in her heart the bond she had with that person. They are just victims of circumstances. Actually, we all are...but to a different degree...different situations...some of us are lucky that we are spared" she added. They look at the eyes of each other and they fell into another round of silence. Both thoughts were filled with the subject of their discussion.

"I've been very patient. I tried to understand the best I can. But maybe it was not enough. The years that passed by are not enough to heal her" he softly mumbles afterward. A bitter smile carves the sides of his lips.

"Don't lose hope, sir. Nothing is impossible in prayer. I will pray for her forgiveness, I will pray for your peace" seeing the pain in his eyes, she tries to pacify him. "I was not prepared for her hatred to go this long" he mutters in defeat. "Hatred weighs us down, that's for sure but for other people, it's their refuge. It's better to deal with anger than emptiness" she gently responded. As he fell into the pit of his deep thoughts, she patiently waited in silence. His look is telling her he is pondering her words. As much as she wanted to help him, she cannot do much.

"Thank you for making me understand. I admit, that sometimes I'm angry for not getting

what I want. I'm used to it and I thought I'd been patient enough. I haven't fully recognized her struggles. I thought she is just stubborn. I haven't realized she is still hurting and it was because of me. The wound is too deep to be mended by time, I should be more patient" he mumbles after his long silence. "She will come around. She will remember how great of a person you are. We will pray for it" her warm smile reached her misty eyes. Her heart ached for the old man and at the same time for her mother-in-law. They have the same predicament but on different sides. How she wishes she knows how to solve their plight. Even her father-in-law is powerless to change his wife's mind. She just doesn't know about the old man, she just wishes someone is taking good care of him and accompanying him in his loneliness.

"If you will be in town, you can call me if you need company. I will be glad to spend time with you" she rummages her purse and brightly smiles upon finding what she was looking for. "Here, this is my personal number. You can call me if you are in town" she cheekily handed the card, making the old man chuckle while accepting it. "By the time I will be back if ever I could come back, you might be heavily pregnant. I doubt your husband will allow you to accompany an old man when you are in your fragile state" though happy with her hospitality, he counters. "Don't worry, I will make a way. I could bring my husband with me" she retorted while grinning sheepishly. "Alexzia Montes Wright" he reads the card with tenderness. Hearing her name, she playfully raises her hand.

"Present"

"A Wright..." he added and the kind of gaze he had earlier returned.

"I am married to Lucien Wright, but my husband's name doesn't define me as a person" with a smile, she casually explained.

"I know, the Wrights are great people. And he is lucky to have you as his wife. I hope the family realizes how fortunate they are to have a great person to bear their heirs" the man stares at her with unremarkable intensity.

Involuntarily, she blushes at his compliment.

"They are great people. From the start, they treated me well. I can't be more blessed for having all of them. Especially my lovely Lucien" with so much love and dreamy eyes she spoke

her heart. The man stares at her with so much fondness but she was not able to see it.

By the time she looks back at him, he already wears a calm facade. They share a gentle smile while in silence before a figure caught Lexie's eyes. Dom paused at the door and just waved at her seeing she has company. "The one you are waiting for is here" the old man also noticed. "He is Dom, my best friend. Will you be okay if I will leave you alone?" worriedly, she asks. "No worries, dear. Someone will pick me up in a while too" he assures her. "Oh, that's a relief. I don't want to leave you here alone" she smiles, relieved. "You go now, your friend is waiting. I will be fine. My nephew is almost here, don't worry about me" he gently assures her. Though with hesitation, Lexie stands up and bids him goodbye. But not before hugging him. "Don't hesitate to call me if you are in town" she added before turning away. Dom is already standing, waiting for her.

Reaching Dom's side, he wraps her by the shoulder before leading her to the door. Four men immediately followed and they were met by another eight outside. "The CEO's wife is heavily guarded" a man from the other table took a seat across from the old man. The seat Lexie was previously seated. "Which is the proper thing to do. A precious gem

should not be left unguarded” the old man mutters while his gaze followed the entourage that has left. “She is expecting...another heir for the Wrights” he added with his intense gaze looking in the direction where Lexie had already disappeared. His expression is soft...and sad.

The CEO’s Ten Million Dollar Wife by R.C.BRIE

Chapter 80

Chapter 80 Grown-Ups Are Weird

“Mom called, she ask if we could gather at home for dinner,” Lucien told her after placing a kiss on her lips.

“Sure, that would be great. We haven’t invited them since we moved in” she smiles while rounding her arms around his neck. She finished her schedule for the day so she decided to pick up Lucien from the office.

“I missed you, my doll. How’s your day?” snuggling her face, he asks.

“Great, Dom and I visited the new place he plans to do his exhibit. And I met an old man at the cafe, we talk while I’m waiting for Dom. I’m just so stupid to have not asked his name” she amusingly relayed while Lucien gently pinch her nose, sharing her amusement.

“Our little pumpkin did not bother you?” he worriedly asked while leisurely rubbing her hips. “He behaved the whole time” she tenderly smiles, holding her flat stomach. She’s only thirteen weeks pregnant but their son is constantly making his presence known.

“That’s good, he knows, mama is quite busy” he smiles while he straightens on his seat, bringing Zia to sit on his lap. The vehicle has started to move, heading home.

“You sleep for a while. Mom is surely at home, busy with the preparation” he mumbles. He adjusted her in his arm to give her a comfortable position. “I love you...” she whispers before she indeed fell asleep. Contented, he smile while watching her sleep. It’s bliss whenever she is in his arms. His precious doll.

They reached home and he was right, Levinia is busy in the kitchen. But what surprised him is the presence of his uncle Donovan and Arvin. He also found his best friend in the dining room with Samantha. They are arranging the dinner wares.

Seeing Lexie sleeping in Lucien’s arms, they all become quiet. Gesturing upstairs, he went to the elevator. He will first place Zia in bed so she could rest well.

After ensuring his wife is comfortable in bed, he joined the family downstairs.

“Mom prepared so much food like a battalion will eat dinner with us” Samantha announced the moment she spotted him.

“It’s the first time we will be gathering here. We deserve to have a feast” Levinia retorted while holding a bunch of red roses. “Arrange this” handing the flowers to Sam, she glares at her.

“How could we consume everything? Even with Lucien’s staff and security to join us, there will be more” Sam rolled her eyes but did what her mother told her.

“It’s better to be prepared than be lacking later” she counters before returning to the kitchen.

Everyone left in the dining room shares a look.

“Don’t be surprised with your mother, she has been acting weird since morning” Daniel

interjected, appearing from the back with Lucy in his arms.

“Papa... Grandpa holds me to cross the monkey bar” he excitedly raves upon seeing his father. He run towards Lucien after he was put down. “You’ve crossed the monkey bar several times, you are now a professional” Lucien proudly exclaims, planting kisses on his son’s cheeks. “Yes, papa. I’m a pro” puffing his chest with pride, he declares haughtily. Chuckles reverberated in the entire place when Ben appeared at the doorway.

“Boss...”

With its tense stance of Ben, they all know something is amiss. Lucien quickly handed Lucy to Sam who was immediately pushed back and was covered by Gabriel and Arvin. While on guard, Lucien, Daniel, and Donovan step forward, waiting for the inevitable. They could hear the commotion outside but they are not aware of the extent of the situation.

They didn’t wait long when a group of fierce-looking men appeared behind Ben. Passing by Lucien’s man, the men fearlessly continue to walk until they reached their side. Stopping just a few feet from where the family was standing. Tension rises as the two groups stare at each other.

Not long, the whole receiving area was swarmed with serious-looking men. Lucien has a dangerous aura equal to his father and uncle while they continue to gauge the unwelcomed guests.

“I don’t remember we have some business to discuss inside my home, Mr. Petrov. What urgent matter do you have to come unannounced?” Lucien calmly spoke. Though his eyes reflect the chilling cold fury he felt at the boldness of the men to invade his territory.

A scoff sounded from the newcomers.

“Don’t be too haughty CEO Wright, you forgot you almost died while in my arms. We pulled you from death. The least you should do is to welcome us in your magnificent abode” one of the men retorted. “I acknowledge it and I am forever indebted but I will not tolerate impertinence in my territory, especially in my home. I don’t want to consider you a threat to my family” Lucien grimly mutters. His cold gaze scans the unwelcomed guests. Ben was stationed nearby with his chosen men while the others were all on guard as they gather outside.

“Let’s all calm down. I don’t think we had exploited our welcome CEO Wright. We are here for the invitation” the old man who had been quiet since they arrived, interjected. The tension has risen to a dangerous level as the two groups duel for dominance. Hearing it, Daniel and Lucien shared a glance. They were not aware of such an invitation if it’s indeed true. Even Donovan turns to look at Lucien, waiting for its confirmation.

“What deception is this Mr. Petrov? You, barging in, in our territory is a kind of disrespect. And I don’t remember sending an invitation. There’s no reason to” Daniel sneers at the old man with his cold gaze. They may be civil when it comes to business but outside of the negotiations, they are still rivals. Especially when it comes to personal matters involving his wife.

Tensed silence rules as the two factions continue to resist each other’s dominance.

“What are you all doing, standing there? Lucien, receive your grandfathers and your uncles.

You, young boys, help arrange the table” Levinia suddenly appears from the kitchen and was incredulous at the scene she found. She immediately instructed the men who were all surprised to even move.

Stunned, several pairs of gaping eyes turn to her in question. They were not prepared for her casualness toward the guests whom they thought she hated so much. Even the other party was stunned by her nonchalant attitude despite their presence.

“What are you all standing there? Didn’t you hear what I said? Barry, help Sam and Gabriel arrange the table and the flowers I told you to put in the vase” she ranted despite the confusion of everyone around her. Everyone looked lost as they continue to stare at her without discerning what she was saying.

“Love...” Daniel whispers in utmost bewilderment. His throat is too constricted to speak, he has to gulp hard. He doesn’t want to raise his hope but he is feeling otherwise. “For goodness sake, Daniel. Let papa and uncle Carlisle sit. You are a lousy host for a son-in law. You, Vavan, why are you frozen there? Take care of your cousins and papa has been standing long, he will be tired” Levinia continue to exasperatedly rant but her eyes were already brimming with tears.

Lucien together with his father and his uncle, Donovan, stares at his mother like she lost her mind. But despite the confusion, hope starts to kindle in their hearts.

It’s starting to dawn on everyone and the realization caught them off guard. Snatched in a web of conflicting emotions, the serious and scary men who enter the mansion earlier were now bawling their eyes with unstoppable tears. Even the godfather, who is feared by everyone. “Anya...” the old man whispers, his voice almost fading. “This is a family gathering, so I invited all the family. Lucien and his family just move in, so... I thought we should celebrate here. We have a lot to celebrate... Lucien’s safe return, their new home, our new heir, and... because my father and my family are in the city. I think it’s the best time to have a get-together... It’s been long since we see each other and...ahm.....miss everyone” Levinia casually explains but pauses several times to take a deep breath to free her constricted chest. Tears blur her vision but it didn’t stop her to look at her father with a tenderness she struggles to hide for decades.

All the men, including Daniel and Donovan, were all dumbfounded while listening to her. Unconcerned about the tears welling their eyes.

The Petrov men were trying to look upwards to contain the unstoppable tears from falling but to no avail. The old man, in front of everyone, is sobbing like he lost the biggest battle in the Mafia world. But everything is in contrast. Tears shed were because of happiness...and of the forgiveness, they have waited for so long. “You all take a seat for a while, the food will be ready soon...” she continues her calm facade but miserably failed.

“I miss my precious princess and my precious prince. I miss my Anya and my Vavan...” Carlos Petrov whispered in a quivering voice and his words were the last strand that breaks the mask Levinia wears.

“Papa...” crying, she throws herself to her father, who receives her with two open arms. His feet seem to have renewed strength as he embraces the impact of his daughter’s body.

Enveloped in her father’s embrace, she violently sobs the tears of emptiness she kept hidden for decades. Together, they cried. Together, they released all the pain in their hearts. “Papa...Anya ” Donovan strides towards the two and hugs them both. He is

immensely relieved of his sister's forgiveness. It's been the heaviest baggage they have been carrying since their mother died.

"I'm sorry, papa... I've been so stubborn" she whisper after a while she had composed herself. She clung to her father like she was ten years old back then. The warmth she doesn't want to feel from him while mourning their mother, she claimed it today.

"No, my love. It is papa who did not understand you. I'm so sorry. Papa is so sorry for letting you go this far. I should have tried hard to win you back. I allowed you to put this distance and it was too late when I realized I can no longer reach you. But you know how much I love you both. Papa is always by your side even if you no longer need me" Carlos, with his trembling voice, assures her and Donovan.

"I'm so sorry if I didn't grow up together with my age. I'm so stubborn. I let my ten-year-old self control my emotions. I'm so sorry for the lost time, Papa...I'm so sorry..." her shoulder shook with her sobs.

"My Anya... What matters now is we are together. Papa could hug you again. I could hear you call me papa. That's all I ever dreamed of, Anya. You and Donovan back in my arms and living my remaining days with you were just a dream yesterday, but today you made it into a reality.

Thank you, Anya. Thank you, my princess" he tearfully mutters while cupping his children's faces. Caressing their faces like he used to do when they were kids.

"Thank you for taking good care of your sister, Vavan. Thank you for being a father to her when I was not around " he turns to Donovan and pats his face. "It's not an easy task though papa. She is so hard-headed" Donovan playfully retorted, earning him an incredulous look from Levinia.

"I am a Petrov, who could blame me?" she incredulously counters. But instead of being triggered, everyone was warmed by her response. "Indeed, you are a Petrov. Stubborn and cold-hearted Petrov blood runs through your veins" Carlisle interjected after he had successfully composed himself.

"I'm no longer denying it. Daniel has been enduring my menace for a long time. It's time to give him rest. He has been so patient with me, I don't know if I deserve him" she conceded with a wistful smile as she turn to look at her husband.

"I love you so much, Levinia Petrov-Deutche-Wright" Daniel responded with a teary smile. "I love grandma too... I don't want her crying. Why are you all a cry baby? You are all grown ups" a small worried voice interrupted, but his incredulous look amused them all.

All eyes turn to the far corner of the dining where Lucy has been quietly watching the whole scene. "Oh, grandma is crying because she is happy, buddy" Lucien tries to explain to his son. "You too, Papa? You also cry. Everyone cries. You all cry. If mama is here, she will also cry" Lucy frowned at everyone. "We are all happy, little Lucien. We are all crying because we are all happy" Levinia turns to

her grandson after she had composed herself. Despite her sniffles, she is calmer.

"Grown-ups are weird" he mumbles with furrowed brows while looking around the people looking back at him. Chuckles resonated after everyone had composed themselves. The atmosphere had immensely improved and the tension previously engulfed around was removed. "Lucien...?" a soft voice from the stairs interrupted the already jovial interaction downstairs. "My doll..." Lucien dashed to his wife's side who is slowly making her way down. Looking fresh in her sundress and unbound hair.

Lexie had already taken a shower after she woke up alone. She assumed Lucien was downstairs helping with the dinner, thus, she plans to help too. But she was taken aback by the company they had when she was halfway down. She prefers to use the stairs to the elevator when she is alone. The moving cube makes her dizzy. Her curious gaze wandered at the strangers swarming her home until a familiar face caught her vision. "Sir...?" she whispers in pure surprise, staring at the old man beside her mother-in-law.