

In Love With My Evil Stepbrother Chapter 78

Chapter 78:

Happy Rotting In Hell The rest of the time is a blur. I vaguely heard that Katherine made a short speech about herself but I couldn't understand a single word that she said. My mind seemed to be shut down all of a sudden.

Katherine, my best friend in Boston, the girl I've known for almost 4 years, is Eason's mysterious fiancé?!!!

But how is the even possible? So when did this thing settle? Ms. Griswold talked about finding Eason a marriage partner three years ago, so did Katherine already know that she was going to marry Eason back then? Why didn't she say anything to me? Even if it just became serious recently, she still had plenty of chances to tell me today!

Why the fuck did she keep her mouth shut?!!

I look up numbly, trying to find Eason in the crowd and see his reaction toward this. But he is not standing by the piano anymore. He's nowhere to be found now.

The buzzing conversation around me becomes louder again as I finally realize that Mr. Ramirez's opening speech is over. A few people approach where we sit and try to congratulate Katherine on her engagement.

I suddenly jump up, heading towards the front door.

"Natalia!"

Someone should behind my back. I don't know if it's Katherine or Alex. But I didn't look back.

I push open the heavy wooden door with all my might and rush outside. The winter wind in Boston is freezing and I'm only wearing a tube-top dress. But weirdly I can't feel the cold, probably because all my senses were shut down all together with my mind.

Someone catches up me from behind and grabs my shoulder, "Nat where are you going!"

It's Alex.

I shiver looking at him. He sighs deeply before asking me bluntly, "you and Eason were together for a while three years ago right?" I close my eyes helplessly. I'm not surprised that he knows. He was already suspecting a long time ago.

“Natalia, what are you thinking? Eason is not a nice person. You know as well as I do. I assume you guys had already ended it, which is great. So just ignore him, let him marry anyone he wants and kick that asshole out of your life one thing for all. Isn’t it what you want right now?”

I grab his arm, almost clinging on him to stand straight because I’m shaking like hell. “No, no you don’t understand...yes we ended it. But why does he need to marry Katherine? Of all people, why Katherine!” If his fiancé is a total stranger, I can probably act calm about it and send them my blessing. But knowing that person is Katherine opens a gate to all my dark feelings.

There’s a hint of pity in Alex’s eyes. “I’m shocked, just as you are. Katherine managed to keep us all in the dark. But I heard that her family is really well-off, especially her dad’s side. So it also makes sense.”

Yes it makes sense. Because all those girls, Katherine, Valerie, and all Eason’s exes, they are are pretty, rich, privileged and smart. They are all perfect matches for Eason. I have nothing to compare to them. Those girls make me feel little.

“Just like it go Nat,” Alex tightens his grip on my shoulder. “The business with those upper-class people...it’s messed up. Why make your hands dirty meddling it? You deserve something much better.” “Alex...”

Before I get to say anything else, a slim figure appears behind Alex’s back. Katherine elegantly approaches us smiling, “There you are. Alex, can I have a moment with Nat?”

Alex hesitates but eventually lets go of me. He gives me a worried look before leaving

Me and Katherine stand face-to-face to each other in the cold wind. The smile on her face is warm and sincere as usual, but it suddenly makes me wonder if she ever treated me like a true friend.

“You rushed out before congratulating me first,” she slowly begins. “What’s wrong? Are you not happy for us?”

“How long have you known?” I ask staring at her. I’m tired of circling around and just went straight for the point.

She blinks, innocently. “That I’ll probably marry Eason one day? A long time, actually. That’s why I asked to be transferred into his school, because I want to get to know him before everything finalizes.”

“What?!” I gasp, stunned and furious.

She knew the first time she met Eason?

“Of course I knew,” she giggles lightly. “Why else do you think we became close so quickly? Don’t get me wrong Nat, i like you a lot. But I never make friends for no reason.”

And then suddenly, everything clears up for me, like a fog being lifted over the hidden secret

She knew she was going to be Eason's fiancé. That's why she chose my side, determinedly, when I got singled out by Valerie's little group. That wasn't because she really liked me, but because she also hated Eason's girlfriend.

I also remembered our little trip to the beach house, the time when she invited Eason without asking me first. She said that it was an honest mistake. But now I've realized that she probably just wanted to spend more time together with Eason.

I stare at her pretty face and feel goosebumps appearing on my skin. For all these times, she stays close to me and Valerie without saying anything about her relationship with Eason, because she knew she's going to the final victor.

She terrifies me

"What's that face?" she is still smiling briskly. "Are you mad?"

"...A little, yes." I say sternly.

"Well, I'm sorry for keeping it from you. But that's why you are mad at me, right? And not for some other reasons?"

I clench my jaw and stare at her warily. Does she know what happened between me and Eason? Surely if Alex can find it out, so can she.

As if knowing what I'm thinking, she chuckles and grabs my hands with hers. Her fingers are icily cold, like a snake licking my skin. "Gossips fly quickly in this town," she says fondly to me. "But I never let those gossips bother me, because I know that some of them aren't true and some of them are already ancient histories. We can still be close friends, Nat. And you are still Eason's sister, which basically makes us family. So are you willing to give me

your blessing? As my family?" I gaze at her, silently. She is a calculated and manipulative hypocrite. I have no doubt that if I say no to her now, she'll tell Mr. Ramirez and everyone else on me right away. This is a battle I don't stand a chance winning. "Fine, I forgive you. And you have my blessing." Yet before her face lights up completely with a smile, I continue, "Because you are a mean and vicious person just like Eason, which makes you guys a perfect couple. Happy rotting in hell."

With that said, I shake her off firmly and walk to the house without looking back.

It takes me a few days to fully accept the fact that Katherine and Eason are going to be engaged.

And the worst part is that Katherine starts to show up frequently at our house after the announcement. Oftentimes, when I come downstairs, there she is, sitting in the living room with Ms. Griswold and Mr. Ramirez, talking enthusiastically about the engagement ceremony that's about to come up.

Eason, on the other hand, showed very little interest in this whole engagement thing. He acts as if Katherine is still his old classmate from high school and not his fiancé. I don't know what he has been thinking, and quite frankly I don't think I should let myself care anymore.

If he's fine with marrying an evil hypocrite, why should I care?

I plan on leaving Boston sooner to stay away from this whole mess. A day before my departure, while I'm sit in the kitchen having breakfast with the whole family, Katherine shows up unannounced again.

She says she wants to go shopping for engagement ring.

Mom cheers enthusiastically, "Oh great! I can come with you and give you some advice if you like. People have said that I have very good taste in jewelry." I sigh internally staring at my coffee. Poor mom, she's probably the only person in this room who has absolutely no clue about anything,

"Actually..." Katherine looks over to Eason, who is checking his email and showed no interest what she has been saying. "...I was thinking maybe Eason could come with me?"

Mr. Ramirez agrees with a nod, "Of course. He should be the one buying the ring.

Eason, please go with Katherine today." Eason keeps his eyes on his phone and says flatly, "I can't. I have things to do." "Eason, this is the engagement ring. It's kind of a big deal," mom says disapprovingly. "Surely you can take some time off and go with Katherine?"

Eason slightly raises his brow, giving no comments on what mom said. The room lapses into an awkward silence. And right at this moment, Katherine speaks up smiling, "It's OK. If Eason can't come, maybe Natalia can accompany me?" What? I snap my head up from the plate and glare at her. Why is she dragging me into this? "I just need a shopping partner," Katherine continues lightly. "Nat, you don't have anything else to do today right?" That little bitch deserves a round of applause. She knows how to put on an act. I don't know how she can still smile at me, especially after what we said in the yard a couple days ago I want to scold at her, tell her to fuck off. Yet before I do that, I suddenly notice Mr. Ramirez staring at me, his eyes deep and dark like an X-ray.

He wants to see my reaction on this.

Shit.

I quickly swallow back those cursing words and puts on a casual smile, "Sure. Why not."

If that little bitch can act, so can I.

“You know what?”

Eason suddenly puts away his phone and turns around to me smiling, “I’m actually free today. I’ll come with you two.” “Oh great!” mom claps excitedly. “Go buy something nice and pretty dear.” I sigh again, this time out loud.

This is not great. This is the opposite of great,

This is like hell.

After breakfast, we go to the largest shopping mall in town together. This is the weirdest shopping team ever. Katherine has been trying to talk to Eason the whole time, but he just keeps ignoring her, like what he did in the restaurant to his ex.

It makes me laugh seeing how hard Katherine tries, but it also makes me wonder. Apparently Eason has no feeling for Katherine. Can he really stay married to someone he hates for 50 years and more?

Or maybe rich people’s marriages just work very differently than ours.

Upon arriving at the mall, Katherine drags us to the largest jewelry store, probably the most expensive one too. She shows a great enthusiasm in everything she sets eyes on in that store. And pretty soon it occurs to me, she’s not only shopping for engagement ring, but also necklace, earrings and brooch.

I take a quick peek at those price tags and almost faint. God, if we are buying off everything she asked to see today, she might max out Eason’s credit card...or not. Eason has more money than I can possibly imagine. He is the last person I should be worried about right now.

I glance sideways at the future groom, who is sitting in the corner checking his phone, not giving a damn about the fact that his fiancé is looting the store.

OK that’s it. I need air.

L

I stand up quietly from my seat and exit the VIP lounge. There’s a private restroom for customer in the store so I don’t need to go outside.

Just when I close the door to my little stall, the restroom’s door opens up again. Two people come inside talking. Judging by their conversation, they are salespeople in this store.

“So I heard Ms. Booth come in today?”

Ms. Booth? My ear perks up. That's Katherine's last name. Are they talking about Katherine?

"Yes. And who would have thought?" the other says in a voice of contempt. "I can still remember the ugliness when she got forcefully removed from our store last time. She's got big nerve coming back here."

I cover my mouth in shock. Oh iy god.

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Chapter 79: Wicked Old Crone

"Why was she removed from our store again?" the other saleslady asks on time. The same question I am wondering.

"She ordered several pieces of fancy jewelries but can't make the final payment. The manger offers to resell those jewelries on her behalf, yet she didn't like that option either. She kept telling us to show her some respect because her family is very respected in town."

"Is it?"

"Well, yes, a few years ago. But the Booth family is going downhill and is facing financial crisis right now. Oh her poor fiancé. If he marries her, he'll face so many troubles, like money wise."

"Her fiancé is so hot. I think he can do so much better..."

And then they leave the lady's room together.

I stand still in my little stall, taking a time to process what I just heard.

So Katherine is only marrying Eason for his money? Does he know about this? Does Mr. Ramirez and Ms. Griswold know??

bet Eason doesn't know. He didn't even bother to get to know Katherine, let along her family. But one thing for sure is that his mother must know. She must have gone through a thorough background check before choosing Katherine as Eason's marriage partner.

I suddenly feel a wave of rage surging up inside of me.

How could she!

Even though she divorced Mr. Ramirez years ago, she is still

Eason's mother! How could she ruin Eason's happiness like this?!

And Eason...that dumb ass! He should at least get to know Katherine a little better and then he'll know what kind of a mess he is going to marry.

Eason may have a nasty personality, but I've got to admit that he is smart, hardworking, and very talented in business. Such a brilliant person doesn't deserve to spend the rest of his life paying for his wife's family debt.

I storm out of the restroom and go back to our VIP lounge. When I step inside the room, Katherine is just admiring her ring under the light.

The huge diamond on that ring almost blind my eyes.

I stride over and grab her hand roughly.

She jerks up a bit, "Nat! What's the matter?"

"How much is this ring?" I stare her straight in the eyes.

She slightly frowns, a hint of uneasiness on her face. The saleslady beside her answers, "Miss, it's a 10 carat, cushion cut diamond ring. The most exquisite quality, very classic style-"

"How much!" I cut her off and snap.

The saleslady quivers and answers quickly, "A-about 1200,000 dollars."

More than a million dollar.

And just for a fucking diamond ring?!!

Anger clouds my head almost immediately. I glare at Katherine and ask sternly, "This is very expensive. Can you afford it?"

Katherine blinks a few times and I catch a fleeting panic passes her face. But she quickly composes herself and smiles, "It's expensive, yes, but it's worth the price. Diamond like this has collection value, common knowledge. I'm sorry that you didn't get the chance to

learn these things.”

Oh now she is laughing at my background.

That bitch. I can't believe I treated her as my friend.

“Why are you mad, Nat?” Katherine asks while acting innocent. “Don't you want your future sister-in-law to have the best in the world? If you truly love your brother-”

She emphasizes the word “brother” purposely.

“-then you shouldn't act this way.”

I can see mockery flickering in her eyes.

Just then, Eason, who has been sitting by the corner silently the whole time, finally rises from his seat and walks to us. He places his arm around Katherine's shoulder and turns back at me, his green eyes slightly narrowing.

“What's the matter?” he asks.

“Oh, nothing.” Katherine leans her head against Eason's chest and smiles, “Nat was only concerned that the diamond I chose is too big and too expensive. Can you tell her it's the standard size and value for family like us?”

Family like us?

Now every word she said becomes a stab at my heart.

Eason keeps his eyes on me, his face unreadable. I move anxiously on my spot under his intense gaze. Is he mad that I'm meddling his business?

But then I remember what I heard in the lady's room and suddenly find some steel.

I'm doing this for a reason.

“Eason, can I talk to you for a minute?” I ask.

Katherine straightens her back a little, looking nervous. She tries to say something, but Eason lets go of her almost immediately.

“Let's talk outside,” he says.

We find an empty room down the hallway and close the door. I'm still planning on how I should tell him, but he turns around facing me and shoots first, “Why are you messing with my fiancé?”

I'm immediately infuriated.

"Messing with her?" I raise my voice in disbelief and roar. "I'm saving you, you dumb idiot! Do you know that her family is

carrying huge debts and is probably counting on you to save their ass? You are nothing but a money bag to her! Don't get fooled!"

He frowns, "What debt?"

Just as I expected, he doesn't know.

I take in a deep breath and continue, "Ask your mom, or Mr. Ramirez. Or at least do some investigation on her yourself. I'm sure there's something hidden—"

He suddenly takes a step toward me before I finish, closing the gap between us. I jerk up and move back. But he doesn't stop till he traps me between the wall and his chest.

"OK there's a money problem," he stares at me closely, his voice strained. "But why do you care?"

"What are you talking about? Back away!"

I try to push him away, but he stands still.

"Even if there's a money problem, it's between me and Katherine. Why do you care?" he questions me sternly.

"Because! I don't want you to get fooled and sacrifice your marriage and your lifetime of happiness! Isn't it obvious?"

"Exactly." He pushes me, breathing heavily. "Why do you care about my marriage and my happiness? I fooled you, I played you and I lied to you. Now seeing someone else doing the exact same thing to me should give you some sort of a satisfaction. Why are you acting so mad?"

I glare at him, my jaw dropping.

This conversation is not going where I want it.

"You are missing the point," I try to bring his focus back. "I'm talking about Katherine and her family. Do you hear me?"

"No, this is the point," he replies stubbornly. "The point is, why do you still care about me?"

His bright green eyes raid across my face as if he's trying to search for an answer. Yet, honestly, I don't know the answer to his

question myself.

I don't know if I still care about him.

Maybe a little bit.

Well, a lot, actually.

Maybe it has exceeded the appropriate amount of caring I should have for my brother, which makes me panic.

I suddenly shove him aside and shout angrily at him, "Fine! Marry her! See if I care!"

Then, without waiting for his reaction, I lunge at the doorknob and run outside.

Rage is burning inside of me.

Does that vicious little bitch think she can play me like a fool and marry into this family that easily? No, ain't going to happen.

I'm done being the push-over. I won't have one more person walk all over me like that.

The first thing I get home is to cancel my ticket back to New York. I need a few more days to complete my plan. Liam said he was going to visit me after Christmas. I'm afraid that I won't be able to meet

him there.

After I tell him about my plan, he sighs deeply.

"You said you have something to do in Boston," he slowly asks me. "Does like little something involves Eason?"

I lapse into silence, not knowing what to say.

"Natalia, you've probably heard this a million times but I'm telling you this again anyway: Eason doesn't deserve you. Walk away from him."

"I know, but..."

I bite my bottom lip in frustration. I don't know why, but suddenly today I have an urge to defend him.

"...but Eason has changed a lot. He started a company on his own, even sold his sports car for that. He has done nothing bad to me since we met. He isn't that mean rich brat anymore."

Liam laughs bitterly on the other end. I can imagine that he is probably shaking his head in disapproval right now.

"We'll forever hold different opinions on this Natalia," he said. "And let me guess, you still love him."

I hold my breath involuntarily, my heartrate quickening. It's a lot more frightening hearing this from someone else.

But yes, he is right.

I do still love Eason.

I keep telling myself that I've moved on from Eason, but the truth is that my heart is still trapped where it was three years ago. It's

too hard for me to set eyes on another person after Eason. That handsome, brilliant and proud bad boy is almost impossible to forget.

"I will take your silence as a yes," Liam says lowly on the other end. "This is probably too late. But let's just say if you hadn't run into him this time, do I stand a chance with you?"

"Liam..." I'm a little stunned.

I know he probably has a thing for me, but we both choose not to break it. I once thought that he would never say anything about it, until just yet.

After a long pause, I finally speak up slowly, "Liam...there isn't an if."

If there is a "if," I'd choose not to go back to Boston three years

ago.

But there isn't.

H

Liam sighs again, "You are right. I just kept thinking if I made a move on you a little sooner, maybe we would be together already. But I didn't want to force you into anything, like what Eason did."

"Because you are a better person than he is."

"Yeah I think I am."

We both laugh out together. The atmosphere lightens up immediately.

Before hanging up, Liam says to me, "Go fight for that asshole, Natalia. He doesn't deserve you, but you deserve to get whatever you want in your life."

I smile briefly at his pep talk. Liam is a good brother. I own him so much.

After the call, I go back to my plan immediately. I have to find a

way to prove that there's something wrong with their marriage. I don't know any of Katherine's family. So my only possible breakthrough is Ms. Griswold, who is behind this marriage the entire time.

To be honest, that woman terrifies me. She despises me, like I'm a piece of trash. But today I feel more empowered than ever. It's about time for me to stand up to those powerful bullies in my life.

I grab something from my bag and hurry to the front door again. On the way, I bump into my mom.

"Where are you going!" she shouts after me. "Today is Christmas Eve! Promise me you'll be back on time for dinner!"

"I will! Don't worry!" I should back.

If my plan goes successfully as I expect.

Eason mentioned to me that Ms. Griswold is staying at a fancy hotel downtown, and she'll be coming to the Christmas party at our house tomorrow. I call for a cab and tell the driver my destination.

30 minutes later, I stand inside of the hotel lobby, thinking about a way to bribe Ms. Griswold's room number out of the receptionist's mouth. Before I can come up with a plan, a couple walks inside just on time.

What are the odds.

It's her, holding hands with her male companion.

I quickly dodge to the side and keeps my eyes on them. I see Ms. Griswold handing the hall boy a shopping bag and asking him to drop this off at their room, 2709.

Fantastic.

I watch them closely as they talk. Odd, her companion seems very familiar to me. Have I seen this man before?

Eventually they kiss goodbye and Ms. Griswold heads to the elevator alone. I wait for her to leave, then walk over to the reception desk.

“Hey,” I pull out the sincerest smile and say to the receptionist. “I have a special delivery for Ms. Griswold, 2709.”

The receptionist checks her computer and frowns, “You sure you have the right room number? 2709 is under the name Mr. Booth.”

Booth?! That’s Katherine’s last name!

I stare dumbfounded at the receptionist for a few seconds and suddenly realize everything.

Mr. Booth, her male companion who seems very familiar to me...

I’ve never seen that man before. But I’ve met his daughter, who looks exactly like him.

The man Ms. Griswold is dating is Katherine’s father.

No wonder...no wonder she wants Eason to marry Katherine.

Fuck! That wicked old crone!

The receptionist stares at me and frowns warily, “I’ll have to make a call to the room before letting you up.”

“No problem.” I slowly reveal a cold smile. “Tell her. The delivery is from Natalia Moore.”

Chapter 80: Christmas Gift

“Come in,” Ms. Griswold steps aside and lets me into her presidential suite.

The room is enormously large. While I’m still carefully studying the layout of the room, Ms. Griswold already walked past me to the liquor cabinet and poured herself a scotch. “So,” she takes her seat and crosses her legs, “Why do you need to see me?”

Her eyes are full of distant. She doesn't even hate me. She just thinks that I'm a dirt that doesn't deserve her time and attention.

"Well?" she urges me. "Hurry. I don't have all day."

So I speak, straightforwardly, "Call off their marriage now." She pauses for a short moment, and then burst into a booming laughter. She laughs so hard that her scotch spilled out. "Oh dear, oh dear," she shakes her head still laughing, "Are you coming here to beg me? If you are, at least give me the proper attitude, like crying, pleading, dropping to your knees?" "I'm not here to beg you," my jaw tenses. Yet she carries on as if she didn't hear me, "Your mom was really good at it you know? She begged me to give up on Shawn. She begged so hard that I almost feel sorry for her"

I stride over and snatch her glass of scotch. The next moment, I smash the glass onto the floor, causing her to jump up from her seat and scream.

"You crazy little bitch!" she yells at the top of her lung. "What are you doing!"

"Do not insult my mother," I point a finger at her panic face. "You thought I didn't know what happened? My mom met Mr. Ramirez after you two were divorced. She doesn't need to beg you to give up on Mr. Ramirez, because he already left you a long time before that."

Her face is twisted with fury and embarrassment, "You disrespectful little shit-"

"I would have poured that scotch onto your face if you weren't Eason's mother. Now, sit and listen to me!"

I point at the sofa and command her. I'm a little shocked at how brave I am right now. I used to be terrified of confrontations. I tried to avoid it at all costs. Yet now, I'm bossing around Ms. Griswold. God I'm proud of myself.

Guess I'm just really mad at what she did to Eason, Anger gives me courage.

She stares at me, astonished. To my surprise, she sits down eventually under my command and snorts, "What else do you have to say? Their marriage is settled. There's no way I'm calling it off."

I decide to cut to the chase, "I know you are after Eason's inheritance. Katherine's family is carrying huge debt. Only the Ramirez's money can get them out of their deep hole. Call off their marriage now or I'll tell everyone about this."

She sneers, "That's your big reason? Wake up to the real world dear! All upper-class marriages are based on either money or title. Eason has money and Katherine has title. It's a win-win."

I looks at her coldly, "I also know that you are dating Katherine's father."

That's when her cocky smile freezes up. I carry on, knowing that I've pushed the right button, "You are trying to use Eason's inheritance to save the Booth's family, right? How do you think Mr. Ramirez will react to this? If he finds out that his ex-wife is ganging up with her lover to steal his money? I guess he wouldn't be very pleased."

She narrows her eyes dangerously, like a predator setting eyes on its prey. But I'm not afraid of her anymore. Between the only two people in this room, I'm the younger and stronger one

She slowly rises from her seat, approaching me. "You've got a lot of nerve meddling our business, young lady. Do you know what you are facing? We are fucking powerful people. I can stamp you out like a fucking cockroach if I want to."

"Oh yeah?" I whisper back, staring defiantly into her eyes. "What can you do?" "OK if you really want to know...oh you are studying at Columbia University, right? And you have a student loan? Can you still afford a school like that if your student loan is revoked?" she cuckles.

My heart sinks. This is low. "No you can't," I try to stop myself from panicking, "You can revoke it based on no grounds. It's against the policy -"

"Policy my ass. Policy and law are only used to control normal people like you. For powerful people like us, it'll only take me a phone call to the university board to destroy your academic life. Now get it?"

I eye her furiously, my hand curling up into a ball

My angry expression pleases her and she continues even more excitedly, "oh and you have a stepbrother Liam right? I heard that he is currently working at a law firm in Chicago. What if I tell you that a senior partner at that law firm also happens to be my friend? It's very easy to fire a junior attorney like him."

"Don't you touch him!" I snap.

"Look, I'm not the one here seeking trouble, OK?" she points her finger at my chest and laughs coldly. "None of this would happen if you just step aside and pretend you didn't see anything. Go find someone ordinary and boring. My son is way out of your league."

She knows about me and Eason!

How could she know? When did she know!

Did Mr. Ramirez tell her? No, I doubt it...he knows that we have a rough relationship, so he would never do anything intentionally to deteriorate it.

So she must have lown for a very long time.

And then, something flashes across my mind, and I cry out in shock, "The letter...the flower... the message! It was you!!"

11 there really is a tyysterious someone who took away the letter and flower Eason Sent me three years ago, it could only be her.

She is the only one who had the full access to the entire liouse. She was also around the house a lot, which means that she could easily use my phone to text Lason and deleted the message afterwards.

And most importantly, she is the only person who bales une enough to orchestrate the whole thing

Faced by my accusation, she lets out a short and shrill laugh.

"It took you long enough to find out, didn't it?" she shrugs her shoulders. "That move wasn't clever, but it was still enough to keep you two separated for years. I did it once. I can do it

again."

1 stare at lier, my body shaking. How could she-how could a mother do something like that to her own son?!

"You are his mom for god's sake! Have you ever thought about what's good for him?!"

"I have! That's why I'm asking him to marry Katherine instead of you!" she stares at me critically and snorts. "You think you deserve my son, you little scumbag? I've already lost my husband to that whore. I'm not losing my son again to her daughter!"

My chest moves up and down rapidly because of anger. She lets out a sneer and goes into the bedroom. Moments later, she comes back with a letter in her hand.

I suddenly realize what it is. I can't believe she still has it after all those years.

"You can have this, on one condition." She waves the letter in the air, like luring me into a trap. "You promise. You will never tell anyone about anything we talked about today." My eyes follow the letter involuntarily, "I promise."

She studies my face, carefully judging if I'm telling the truth. Moments later, she hands me the letter, "Remember. It only takes one phone call to destroy both you and your brother's futures."

I snap the letter away from her and turn around to leave. She giggles behind me, her voice full of mockery, as if she's laughing at my complete failure. I hurry out of her room, running down the hallway and straight into the elevator. When I make sure no one is around, I carefully take out something from my pocket.

A recorder.

I've recorded every single word she said to me. I sneer internally, looking at the recorder in my palm. Yes, I promised not to tell anyone myself. But people will hear the truth from her own mouth.

I guess she still underestimated me. She should have searched me first before letting me in.

Then I open Eason's letter eagerly. My heart is thumping wildly against my chest.

I can't wait to see what he has got to say to me 6 years ago...?

When I get back home, it's almost 12, long past dinner time.

I sneak into the house quietly. Everyone has gone to bed, except Eason. He is sitting by the

fireplace when I come in, with a book on his lap.

(Where have you been?" he raises his eyebrow at me. "It's Christmas Eve. Your mom was pissed off big time."

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"Nothing," I smile lightly. "Hey Eason. Can I ask you a question?" "Yeah, of course." He sits up a bit. "Do you love Katherine?" He suddenly widens his eyes. His jaw is clenched immediately. "...What?" "I said, do you love Katherine?" I repeat my question. And before he makes a sound, I answer that question myself. "I don't think you do." He leans forward even more, a clear hint of anxiousness on his face. He stretches out his arm

and tries to grab me, but I stand up before he gets me. "Good night, Eason." I say breezily. I bend down to hug him and feel his muscle tensed up like a piece of rock under his shirt. That hug is really brief. Before he can react, I already walk away. "Natalia!" he growls lowly behind me. "What the fuck" "Just open my gift!" I wave my hand and go upstairs without turning back. That night, I go to sleep with a light mood. But a loud noise wakes me up during the middle of the night. I open my eyes sleepily, yawning, and then realize the noise is coming from the door.

Someone is pounding at my bedroom door. "Natalia! Open the fucking door!" God, does he want everyone to hear him? I hurry to the door. As soon as I open it, he storms in. "What the hell is this?" he raises my Christmas gift, his eyes bloodshot. It's that recorder with all my conversations with Ms. Griswold in it.

In Love With My Evil Stepbrother Chapter 80

Chapter 80: Christmas Gift

"Come in," Ms. Griswold steps aside and lets me into her presidential suite.

The room is enormously large. While I'm still carefully studying the layout of the room, Ms. Griswold already walked past me to the liquor cabinet and poured herself a scotch. "So," she takes her seat and crosses her legs, "Why do you need to see me?"

Her eyes are full of distant. She doesn't even hate me. She just thinks that I'm a dirt that doesn't deserve her time and attention.

"Well?" she urges me. "Hurry. I don't have all day."

So I speak, straightforwardly, "Call off their marriage now." She pauses for a short moment, and then burst into a booming laughter. She laughs so hard that her scotch spilled out. "Oh dear, oh dear," she shakes her head still laughing, "Are you coming here to beg me? If you are, at least give me the proper attitude, like crying, pleading, dropping to your knees?" "I'm not here to beg you," my jaw tenses. Yet she carries on as if she didn't hear me, "Your mom was really good at it you know? She begged me to give up on Shawn. She begged so hard that I almost feel sorry for her"

I stride over and snatch her glass of scotch. The next moment, I smash the glass onto the floor, causing her to jump up from her seat and scream.

"You crazy little bitch!" she yells at the top of her lung. "What are you doing!"

"Do not insult my mother," I point a finger at her panic face. "You thought I didn't know what happened? My mom met Mr. Ramirez after you two were divorced. She doesn't need to beg you to give up on Mr. Ramirez, because he already left you a long time before that."

Her face is twisted with fury and embarrassment, “You disrespectful little shit-”

“I would have poured that scotch onto your face if you weren’t Eason’s mother. Now, sit and listen to me!”

I point at the sofa and command her. I’m a little shocked at how brave I am right now. I used to be terrified of confrontations. I tried to avoid it at all costs. Yet now, I’m bossing around Ms. Griswold. God I’m proud of myself.

Guess I’m just really mad at what she did to Eason, Anger gives me courage.

She stares at me, astonished. To my surprise, she sits down eventually under my command and snorts, “What else do you have to say? Their marriage is settled. There’s no way I’m calling it off.”

I decide to cut to the chase, “I know you are after Eason’s inheritance. Katherine’s family is carrying huge debt. Only the Ramirez’s money can get them out of their deep hole. Call off their marriage now or I’ll tell everyone about this.”

She sneers, “That’s your big reason? Wake up to the real world dear! All upper-class marriages are based on either money or title. Eason has money and Katherine has title. It’s a win-win.”

I looks at her coldly, “I also know that you are dating Katherine’s father.”

That’s when her cocky smile freezes up. I carry on, knowing that I’ve pushed the right button, “You are trying to use Eason’s inheritance to save the Booth’s family, right? How do you think Mr. Ramirez will react to this? If he finds out that his ex-wife is ganging up with her lover to steal his money? I guess he wouldn’t be very pleased.”

She narrows her eyes dangerously, like a predator setting eyes on its prey. But I’m not afraid of her anymore. Between the only two people in this room, I’m the younger and stronger one

She slowly rises from her seat, approaching me. “You’ve got a lot of nerve meddling our business, young lady. Do you know what you are facing? We are fucking powerful people. I can stamp you out like a fucking cockroach if I want to.”

“Oh yeah?” I whisper back, staring defiantly into her eyes. “What can you do?” “OK if you really want to know...oh you are studying at Columbia University, right? And you have a student loan? Can you still afford a school like that if your student loan is revoked?” she cicles.

My heart sinks. This is low. “No you can’t,” I try to stop myself from panicking, “You can revoke it based on no grounds. It’s against the policy -”

“Policy my ass. Policy and law are only used to control normal people like you. For powerful people like us, it’ll only take me a phone call to the university board to destroy your academic life. Now get it?”

I eye her furiously, my hand curling up into a ball

My angry expression pleases her and she continues even more excitedly, “oh and you have a stepbrother Liam right? I heard that he is currently working at a law firm in Chicago. What if I tell you that a senior partner at that law firm also happens to be my friend? It’s very easy to fire a junior attorney like him.”

“Don’t you touch Liam!” I snap.

“Look, I’m not the one here seeking trouble, OK?” she points her finger at my chest and laughs coldly. “None of this would happen if you just step aside and pretend you didn’t see anything. Go find someone ordinary and boring. My son is way out of your league.”

She knows about me and Eason!

How could she know? When did she know!

Did Mr. Ramirez tell her? No, I doubt it...he knows that we have a rough relationship, so he would never do anything intentionally to deteriorate it.

So she must have known for a very long time.

And then, something flashes across my mind, and I cry out in shock, “The letter...the flower... the message! It was you!!”

There really is a mysterious someone who took away the letter and flower Eason sent me three years ago, it could only be her.

She is the only one who had the full access to the entire house. She was also around the house a lot, which means that she could easily use my phone to text Eason and delete the message afterwards.

And most importantly, she is the only person who is smart enough to orchestrate the whole thing

Faced by my accusation, she lets out a short and shrill laugh.

“It took you long enough to find out, didn’t it?” she shrugs her shoulders. “That move wasn’t clever, but it was still enough to keep you two separated for years. I did it once. I can do it

again.”

I stare at her, my body shaking. How could she-how could a mother do something like that to her own son?!

"You are his mom for god's sake! Have you ever thought about what's good for him?!"

"I have! That's why I'm asking him to marry Katherine instead of you!" she stares at me critically and snorts. "You think you deserve my son, you little scumbag? I've already lost my husband to that whore. I'm not losing my son again to her daughter!"

My chest moves up and down rapidly because of anger. She lets out a sneer and goes into the bedroom. Moments later, she comes back with a letter in her hand.

I suddenly realize what it is. I can't believe she still has it after all those years.

"You can have this, on one condition." She waves the letter in the air, like luring me into a trap. "You promise. You will never tell anyone about anything we talked about today." My eyes follow the letter involuntarily, "I promise."

She studies my face, carefully judging if I'm telling the truth. Moments later, she hands me the letter, "Remember. It only takes one phone call to destroy both you and your brother's futures."

I snap the letter away from her and turn around to leave. She giggles behind me, her voice full of mockery, as if she's laughing at my complete failure. I hurry out of her room, running down the hallway and straight into the elevator. When I make sure no one is around, I carefully take out something from my pocket.

A recorder.

I've recorded every single word she said to me. I sneer internally, looking at the recorder in my palm. Yes, I promised not to tell anyone myself. But people will hear the truth from her own mouth.

I guess she still underestimated me. She should have searched me first before letting me in.

Then I open Eason's letter eagerly. My heart is thumping wildly against my chest.

I can't wait to see what he has got to say to me 6 years ago...?

When I get back home, it's almost 12, long past dinner time.

I sneak into the house quietly. Everyone has gone to bed, except Eason. He is sitting by the

fireplace when I come in, with a book on his lap.

(Where have you been?" He raises his eyebrow at me. "It's Christmas Eve. Your mom was pissed off big time."

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