

Chapter 136 Cooking Personally

Not long after, I was dragged into a car.

When the car drove away, I heard Louise's voice.

"If you try to hurt her, I'm going to kill all of you!"

Inside the car, they didn't tie me up or gag me. They just left me sitting between two men, confident that I wouldn't be able to escape.

"Where are you taking me?" I asked, wary and confused.

Linda's gigolo on my left touched his chin, smirking at me.

"What's the matter? Are you scared? If you're such a coward, don't try to be a detective. It's dangerous, little lady."

I thought of the evidence in my phone and held it close.

Moments later, the young man's phone began to ring.

When he answered the phone, he glanced at me and said, "Yes, Mr. Thurman, she's in my car."

After hanging up the phone, he fell into silence.

We must've been on the road for over an hour based on how long it felt. Finally, we got out of the car in a strange place. Obviously, this wasn't an urban area.

There was an old yard ahead of me, but the car parked at the gate looked quite luxurious.

"Mr. Thurman, I've brought the woman," the young man shouted at the gate of the yard.

Not a minute later, Layne appeared at the door.

His arms were bare, and he was wearing an apron. He appeared to have just been cooking.

Truth be told, I had never had a good impression of this man.

He glanced at me and smirked. He seemed to be in a good mood.

"Our guest is here. Why don't you invite her in?"

Since several people had me surrounded, I had to go in. Thus, I braced myself for what was about to happen.

The moment Layne went back to the yard, I lost sight of him.

The yard was quite spacious. In the middle of it, there was a large beach umbrella, and a table and some chairs were beneath it. There were some fruits in the basket on the table.

As soon as I sat down, I felt uneasy. It was then that I heard the sound of a car pulling over outside the yard.

"Layne, come on out!"

The moment I heard the familiar voice, I looked up and saw Louise entering the yard.

Layne's men displayed a respectful attitude towards her.

"Mr. Thurman is cooking right now. Since you've agreed to eat here, he decided to personally cook for you," one of the men said.

I was confused. Did Louise come here to have a meal?

Not long after, Louise noticed me. She walked towards me, and sat down beside me, giving me a pat on the shoulder.

"No need to worry, Eve. We'll be fine."

After a while, Layne came out, carrying a well-cooked dish.

Once he set it on the table, I saw a plate of crayfish that looked really scrumptious.

Layne glanced over at Louise with affectionate eyes.

"I'm glad you're here," he said.

The way he spoke sounded like they were old friends.

Louise sneered, "I only came because you were threatening me."

Layne didn't seem to mind her attitude. He just went back to his room to put on a T-shirt before coming out and sitting with us.

There was a plate of freshly baked bread. Layne took one piece the moment he sat down.

From time to time, he would pick up food for Louise and he would even peel some crayfish for her and put it in her plate. His actions caused an uproar among his subordinates.

One of them had his sleeves rolled up and held a beer in hand. "Mr. Thurman has never been this considerate towards any woman. Have you seen him be this nice to a woman?" he asked.

"Nah. We haven't," the others echoed.

Annoyed by their discussion, Louise said, "Well, since you assholes threatened to hurt my friend today, I'm going to get back at you someday."

Layne grabbed a beer bottle and gulped half of it down. Then, he put the bottle down heavily, glancing at the young man who was Linda's gigolo.

"Ramsey Martel, I told you not to hurt her. Did you think I was talking bullshit?"

None of them dared to utter a word. It seemed like they were all afraid of Layne.

Ramsey appeared to be a cunning young man. "Mr. Thurman, you misunderstood me. I was merely toying with them. I know that Louise has some grudge against Linda, so I helped her gather some evidence. If you don't believe me, here, take a look."

Afterwards, he took out his phone and played a video for us. We could all hear the sound coming from the video, and soon, everyone at the table broke into laughter. Layne was chuckling, but Louise and I weren't amused.

"Damn! What a slut!" said one of the men.

Louise glared at Ramsey and asked, "How did you know we were at the parking lot?"

After a moment of hesitation, he replied, "Linda received a message from your father's assistant. Your dad must've been drunk at the time, so his male assistant was holding his phone and saw the messages. Linda has been having an affair with your dad's assistant for a long time."

I saw just how shocked Louise was. It was obvious that she didn't expect this to happen.

She didn't eat any of the crayfish that Layne peeled for her. Then, she put down her fork while looking at him.

"I'm full. You said we can leave after the meal, right?"

After a moment of silence, Layne took off his disposable gloves and stood up.

"I'll drive you home."

"No, thanks. I drove here, so I intend to drive home as well. Besides, you're a little drunk. Do you want to get into a car accident?" Louise argued.

"It seems that Louise cares about Mr. Thurman," one of the men bantered.

She cast that man a glare and barked, "Shut the fuck up, or I'm going to rip your tongue off."
I was worried that I wouldn't be able to leave, so I strode out of the yard along with her.
Without delay, Louise started the car once we were both inside.

Chapter 137 Practicing Driving

Once we had left, I saw from the rearview mirror that Layne was standing by the gate, staring at the direction of the car.

I could tell that he was really interested in Louise, but he didn't look like the type of man who would be truly in love with any woman.

"Lulu, you should head home and have a good talk with your father about Linda. Try not to quarrel with him. Don't forget that your goal is to drive that bitch away. Try to avoid making a fool of yourself again, okay?" I said to Louise.

"I get it. I'll keep that in mind."

She scratched her hair, seemingly annoyed.

"I just didn't expect that bitch would be shameless enough to hook up with my dad's assistant."

At this point, I didn't say another word.

Whether we liked it or not, scumbags like Linda and Shane existed within this world.

It was then that I noticed how good Louise was at driving. She was capable of driving with only one hand on the steering wheel. "Is it difficult to learn how to drive?" I asked.

She chuckled at me and replied, "Why are you asking? Do you want to learn how?"

I nodded in response.

"It's not that difficult. First, you just need to overcome your psychological fear of crashing the car, and you need to have enough confidence in yourself. If you want to learn, you'll be able to learn it. You can even ask Derek to teach you how to drive whenever he's free."

After driving me back to the villa, Louise turned the car around and left.

I was aware that she needed to do something, so I didn't invite her inside.

When I thought of Charlene and Layne, I could not calm myself down, nor could I focus on reading the books.

At dusk, Derek called me and said that he would be coming home late tonight. Fortunately, Aaron came home before it was dark.

After we ate dinner, we watched TV in the living room.

Feeling bored of sitting around, I asked him, "Is it easy to learn how to drive?"

Aaron smiled at me. "For some people it's easy, for others it's difficult. Are you interested in learning?"

I nodded at him and said, "I noticed that many women nowadays know how to drive. I believe I'm not the stupidest one of them, am I?"

All of a sudden, he stood up and looked at me. "We're both free right now. Do you want to try it?"

Upon hearing what he said, I was so excited and hopeful about the endeavor.

"Really? But, a word of warning, I've never tried to learn how to drive. I don't even know the basics yet. Is that going to be a problem?"

With a faint smile, Aaron replied, "There's no need to worry. I'll be with you every step of the way. I have years of driving experience, and I can pass on that knowledge to you."

After that, I got in his car.

Not long after, he drove to an abandoned military airport within the city.

There was a wide stretch of road ahead of us, and there was nobody else around. It was perfectly suitable for practicing how to drive.

Aaron was in the driver's seat, and I was in the passenger seat. He first explained the basics to me, as well as the names and functions of the parts of the car.

Once that was done, I exchanged seats with him.

I placed my hands on the steering wheel, anxious about this task. My palms were sweating profusely.

Upon receiving his signal, I stepped on the brakes and started the engine.

Once the car's engine was on, my heart almost leapt out of my chest.

"What should I do next? If I release the brakes, will the car suddenly rush ahead? Will it go out of control?"

Aaron noticed how nervous I was and it amused him. "Take it easy. Just slowly loosen the brake, okay? I'm the one who should be terrified right now. Haha! Look, the road ahead is really wide. You can drive however you want. Besides, my hand is on the emergency handbrake. In case something happens, I'll be able to stop the car."

Luckily, his words were enough to encourage me. I slowly released the brake and let the car move forward.

At first, I was so nervous that I was as stiff as a bowstring and beads of sweat were forming on my forehead.

Meanwhile, Aaron continuously tried to ease my tension.

Once the car was running steadily, my racing heartbeat gradually stabilized.

Afterwards, he taught me how to shift gears.

It was necessary to learn when and why a driver should shift gears.

I was flummoxed while holding the gear shifting handle.

All of a sudden, Aaron held the back of my hand. It made me feel tense.

His palm felt warm and it was a little moist.

And it was big enough to wrap my entire hand.

"Never lower your head. It's important to always keep your eye on the road," he said in a gentle voice.

Embarrassed, I raised my head and looked ahead.

All of a sudden, I felt him exert some force on my hand, guiding me on how to shift the gear.

"Also, don't look down when you're shifting gears. Otherwise, the car is more likely to run in the wrong direction and cause an accident."

Aaron was like a real driving coach. He was meticulous, straightforward, and professional. It kind of made me feel ashamed that I was flustered just because he touched my hand.

Thus, I gathered my composure and concentrated on driving.

Later on, I became bolder and I even sped the car up. Soon, I was feeling the pleasure of being able to control the car's speed.

"It's not as difficult as you thought it was, right?" said Aaron.

I nodded excitedly.

It was like they said, "Time flies when you're enjoying yourself."

It wasn't until my stomach began to growl that I realized that it was already ten in the evening.

"Are you hungry?" Aaron chuckled at me.

I scratched the back of my head, feeling awkward. "A little," I replied.

"In that case, it's time to go home," he said.

Thus, we exchanged seats again. By the time we got home, Derek was still not there yet.

"I'll make some midnight snacks. I know it's not healthy to eat at this time of the night, but it'll hurt your body more if you starve yourself. Wait for a moment, okay? It won't take long," said Aaron.

Perhaps due to feeling nervous while I was learning how to drive, I felt that all of my energy had been expended.

I lay down on the sofa and mumbled, "Okay." Then, I picked up the remote control to turn on the TV, randomly flipping through the channels to choose a TV series to watch.

As time fled by, my eyes closed.

Chapter 138 Playing With Fire At Midnight

A slight yet distinct noise woke me up from my slumber.

The television was already turned off and so was the living room light. My eyes were met by the sight of pitch black darkness and I could smell a familiar scent lingering in the air.

"You're back?" I asked sleepily.

"Yes," said Derek, and then he proceeded to carry me upstairs.

After he put me on the bed, he coughed lightly and lowered his head. At the same time, a few strands of his hair also fell.

"If you feel sleepy next time, ensure you make your way back to the bedroom to sleep. You mustn't forget that there is another man in this house."

I was a little stunned by the information. "Aaron? Oh, he did say that he was going to make a midnight snack," I replied.

Derek responded, "Yes, I saw the food. The noodles were still on the table. If you want to eat, I can heat them up for you."

I, however, was no longer hungry and really just wanted to call it a night.

"No, I'd like to get back to sleep."

I instinctively wrapped my arms around his waist but then suddenly remembered the tie. I immediately withdrew my hands from him and turned over so that my back faced him.

But he quickly held me from behind. Fortunately, he didn't do anything else to me.

I was so drained that I fell asleep in the blink of an eye.

I thought it was because I was so eager to start driving a car that I even practiced it in my dream.

Well, that was until I was unceremoniously woken up from my dream by some unusual sounds.

"Eveline, are you purposely playing with fire at midnight?"

A hoarse, impatient and panting voice met my ears.

All at once, I was fully awake.

I had fallen asleep with my back to him but now I was in a position where I was leaning against his chest.

"What's the matter?" I was utterly bewildered.

"What do you think? Can't you see what you are touching?"

He brought my attention to a wholly shocking fact.

Oh my God! How did this happen?

Derek snickered and breathed heavily on me.

"I... I dreamt that I was learning how to drive," I explained abashedly. I was absolutely mortified and just wanted to bury my head in the sand.

"Learning to drive, huh?" Derek raised his voice questioningly at the end of his sentence.

"Earlier, Aaron had taught me the basics of driving. In my dream, I was steering the wheel and shifting gears," I muttered. My voice became increasingly softer as I spoke.

"Well then, you can just carry on," he whispered in my ear.

I was completely flabbergasted.

The next morning, Louise called to tell me good news.

After she had gone back and showed her father the photos and recording, including the video she had sourced from Ramsey, her father drove Linda out of the house that very night.

To be honest, that outcome was within the realm of my expectations.

There was just so much evidence to back that kind of behavior up. If her father didn't show any dignity as a man, he really wouldn't ever behave as a proper man.

In that moment, it truly felt as if Louise had won a war, not just a small interim battle. But little did she know that Linda would exact her vengeance on her and her father one day.

And the way that scummy people chose to mete out their vengeance was often beyond our imagination, just as in the case of how Shane had decided to act.

That day, I stayed at home alone while Derek and Aaron went out.

At about nine o'clock, the doorbell chimed.

When I opened the door, I was met by the sight of Tina standing in the doorway.

"Tina, what are you doing here?"

Tina smiled with embarrassment.

"Eveline, I honestly didn't want to bother you. But I really can't find anyone else to help me now," she said.

I hadn't seen her in quite some time. Her belly was so much larger than I recalled and her feet were also quite pudgy from being swollen.

"Come in and tell me what you need," I said and held her by the hand.

She, however, declined the invitation to come inside. "No, thanks. Eveline, I just wanted to see if you have some spare time to come with me to the prison because I want to buy something but it may be difficult for me to carry."

I didn't hesitate to agree. I asked her to just wait for me in the living room for a short while, then I went upstairs and put on a change of clothes before heading out with her.

Our first stop was the supermarket.

It was quite apparent to me that Tina was even having trouble walking.

It really wasn't an easy thing for her. She got pregnant at such a young age without a man to support her and with no family around.

Tina bought two sets of clothes. Since it was a mandatory requirement for prisoners' clothing not to have any metal, such as zippers or pull tags, as well as no straps, it took her quite some time to find some suitable attire. After that, she purchased a large amount of food. Most of the meals were Lean's favorite dishes.

"I wanted to visit him on his birthday but I was afraid of running into his parents. They've never liked me. If I met them accidentally, I wouldn't have had the chance to see Lean at all."

I could totally relate to what Tina was saying because they had also taken a disliking to me too.

I helped her carry the two big bags and took a cab with her to the prison.

Everything that had been brought to the prison by the two of us was checked and double checked thoroughly before it could go to the prison security guards.

Chapter 139 You're Indeed Derek's Woman

It was not easy to enter this building. There was a whole tedious protocol to follow first. After what seemed like an eternity, Tina was finally able to enter and visit Lean.

I wanted to wait outside. However, Tina seemed very nervous and held my hand tightly. I immediately understood that she was worried about going in alone, so I resolved to accompany her.

Once inside, we waited in the hall, seated on a bench. Tina held her belly in one hand as her face was turned to the huge glass in the room. She stared blankly at the door behind the glass. The wait was long. As the minutes passed, I could feel Tina's nervousness and uneasiness grow.

Suddenly, the opposite door was opened. Tina immediately grabbed the edge of the table tightly. I turned my head to look at the open door and soon, I saw a bald man appear.

I was immediately struck by the difference in appearance between Derek and Lean. Maybe it was because they didn't have the same mother that they didn't look alike at all. Anyway, I had to admit that Lean had a beautiful face. What was more, he had a rather tanned complexion and seemed quite thin. I wondered at that moment whether he had always been so thin or it was because he had been tortured in prison.

When Lean saw that his visitor was in fact Tina, a slight frown appeared on his face.

He then sat across from Tina on the other side of the glass. He had a rather arrogant demeanor, lifting his chin and looking at Tina with contempt. It was definitely not the kind of attitude one would expect from a prisoner.

It must be said that he was very young. It was therefore not surprising that there was still a certain frivolity in him. This was very common among young men in their early twenties. He had certainly learned lessons here in prison. No matter how tough you are, prison definitely breaks you. Thinking about that and seeing the man in front of me, I wondered what kind of person he might have been before.

It was well known that teenage girls were generally obsessed with bad boys. Perhaps that was the reason why Tina liked him.

She quickly grabbed the telephone and talked to him. She was so nervous that her hands were shaking.

I had no idea what she said, but suddenly, Lean who was also holding a telephone, turned and looked at me.

His eyes were sharp.

That look, however, only lasted a moment. He soon averted his gaze and returned his attention to Tina. I saw him move his lips but didn't have the faintest idea what he was saying. However, judging by his frown and irritable expression, I was convinced that it must be something bad. Sure enough, seconds later, Tina covered her mouth with her hand and burst into tears.

I was startled and stood up at once. I quickly took a few steps closer. Now, I could hear clearly what Tina was saying. In a low voice broken by sobs, she said, "The baby will soon be born. It is a life we're talking about. I know you would have preferred that this child was never conceived, but he is living and growing inside me. It is your child, Lean, whether you like it or not."

When I heard that, my blood ran cold.

Were men all so cold and heartless? Was it because they had never had to experience a pregnancy that they were so detached and had no feelings for their offspring?

I suddenly felt a wave of anger wash over me. Without thinking twice, I strode over and grabbed the

telephone from Tina's hand. Then I glared at Lean across the glass.

"Are you even human, Lean? Do you have the faintest idea how difficult it is for Tina to go through this pregnancy alone? Even if you can't be with her, at least you should show a modicum of sympathy. She has given up her family for your sake. Don't you feel any guilt for her? Do you have any conscience at all? You don't have to love her, but for heaven's sake at least take responsibility. Instead, you have the nerves to make her suffer despite her condition and yet you know the baby is almost due. You deserve to be imprisoned."

Lean looked furious at being scolded like that. With a gloomy face, he sneered at me.

"There's no doubt that you're Derek's wife. You're just as arrogant and supercilious as him," he said with a smirk.

In tears, Tina begged, "Eveline, please don't say that to him." Despite how much he made her suffer just now, she still stood up for him.

I felt really sorry for her.

She was still very young and loved him very much. Because of that, this despicable man allowed himself to hurt her.

At this moment, I really wanted to scold her to wake her up from the illusion. However, before I could say anything, she suddenly turned pale and grabbed the edge of the table tightly with one hand.

"My... my belly hurts," she complained weakly. Her face was twisted with an expression of pain and she slipped from the chair.

Before I could reach out to hold her, she fell heavily on the floor.

"Eveline, it hurts so much! Please help me. My baby..."

As she spoke, she held my hand tightly. Her grip was really strong. One would not believe that such strength could come from the frail and gentle Tina.

I was freaked out.

She still had a few weeks before her due date. She must have been too emotional just now and was about to have premature delivery.

Panicked, I shouted for help. Soon, several prison guards rushed in and they gently carried Tina out.

When Tina was taken away, I turned around and glared at Lean.

He had stood up and was staring in the direction where Tina was carried away.

The anger inside me was rising and I needed to vent out. I grabbed the telephone and looked him straight in the eye.

"If something bad happened to Tina's baby, you would have got exactly what you wanted, right? Perhaps you want both her and the baby to die! At least like that, she will never come to bother you again, right? There're many scumbags in this world, and I'm sure you are one of them."

After saying that, I turned around and ran out, without leaving him the chance to reply. Then, I climbed into the police car which was ready to go.

Chapter 140 He Hates Me

Tina was lying in the back seat of the police car. Her face was twisted in pain.

As the sound of the police siren sounded in a deafening din, I remembered the deep, complicated look on Lean's face before I left.

Several expressions flashed in his eyes at the same time. I saw arrogance, guilt, sadness, anger, and hatred in his sharp eyes.

Suddenly, Tina's weak voice brought me back to my senses.

"Eveline, will my baby be okay?"

Having already experienced such a situation, I could feel her panic at this moment.

I remembered that night when Shane aborted my child. At that moment, I would have given anything for someone to appear there and save my baby.

I held Tina's hand tightly and tried to comfort her. "Don't worry. The baby will be fine. We'll soon arrive at the hospital. Be brave. You'll be a mother."

Tina needed urgent care. Because of this, the police had to take her to the nearest hospital.

Once we arrived at the hospital, nurses quickly rushed over. Tina was put on a stretcher and rushed to the operating room. Standing alone in the hall, I felt helpless. I prayed with all my heart that nothing bad should happen to the mother and the child. Finally, I pulled out my phone and called Derek.

After I roughly explained the situation to him, he reassured me and promised to be there shortly. Indeed, less than half an hour later, he arrived at the hospital.

Seeing the red light above the door of the operating room, he knew the operation wasn't over yet. He sat down beside me and gently held my hand.

"What happened?" he asked softly.

I told him how I accompanied Tina to the prison and what happened there.

He didn't say anything and just listened patiently.

I kept glancing at the closed door of the operating room every now and then. I was really panicked and I didn't dare to imagine what was going on inside the room.

This small hospital was not as crowded as the big hospitals. The corridor of the hospital was very quiet, and that made me even more nervous.

I kept praying for the safety of mother and baby in my heart.

Tina was only eighteen years old. She was too young. I hoped that God would be kind to her.

I then turned to Derek and asked suddenly, "What happened between you and Lean? I have this feeling that he hates you."

In fact, I needed us to talk about something else that could take my mind off my anxiety right now.

Derek then gently stroked my hand's back with his thumb. It seemed as if my question had suddenly plunged him back into old memories.

"He indeed hates me."

Before Derek could continue speaking, the door of the operating room was suddenly opened. We both stood up at once and walked over.

The doctor took off his mask. His face was expressionless, which only added to my anxiety. He said in a

serious tone, "Due to the incorrect fetal position, we had to urgently perform a caesarean operation. The operation went well. The puerpera gave birth to a six-pound, seven-ounce baby girl. Both mother and daughter are fine."

I almost collapsed with relief when I heard this good news. I felt the anxiety inside me suddenly dissipate. I then heaved a long sigh of relief.

When I looked at Derek, I saw that he too seemed relieved by the news. His face had softened though he didn't show much expression.

An hour later, Tina was transferred to the ward.

Lying in the bed, she looked exhausted and her face was extremely pale.

As she looked at the little girl wrapped in a small quilt beside her, she couldn't hold back her emotions and burst into tears. I wondered at the moment whether she was crying because of Lean's cruelty earlier. I couldn't bear to see her like this, let alone see her shed tears for a man like Lean. I quickly took out a tissue to wipe her tears.

"Come on, don't cry. You are a mother now."

I had always been told that a woman should not shed tears right after delivery or a miscarriage. However, I cried a lot after I lost my baby. ①

The moment I raised my head, I met Derek's eyes.

Perhaps he was also thinking of the same thing as me, because the moment I met his gaze, I was struck by the unusual softness in them.

"Eveline, you can't imagine how happy I am to finally be able to see my baby and carry her at will. It was not easy. It was actually very difficult for me. But the joy of finally seeing my baby more than makes up for all the pain I've been through."

Tina smiled despite the tears flooding her face.

Derek made a few phone calls and soon he had a nanny who would take care of Tina and her baby.

A week later, Tina was finally discharged from the hospital and returned home. Derek and I went to see her.

By this time, Tina's daughter's complexion had already changed. The little girl was no longer all red but fair in complexion. She was really lovely.

The nanny Derek hired was a very experienced middle-aged woman. She took good care of Tina and the child.

Derek scooped the child up in his arms and tucked her in for a while.

Such a scene of love and fatherhood made me sigh with emotion.

At that moment, Derek rose in my esteem. I knew then that he was a person who knew how to limit his emotions, whether in love or in hate. Clearly there was animosity between him and Lean. However, whatever happened between them, Derek wasn't going to transfer his resentment onto this child, or onto Tina. He was the very definition of maturity and moderation.

I was glad to see that he wasn't just a cold-hearted man. There was actually a soft side of his heart. I could see it in the way he held the child in his arms. He was very soft and gentle.

The child didn't have a name yet. Tina asked Derek to name the child, but he refused. He said that it was up to the father to name his child.

After some thought, I came to the conclusion that he was right. Even though Lean had no affection for the child, it was still up to him to name the child. If Derek decided to give the child a name, the chances of him

reconciling with his brother would be very slim. ①

Tina therefore decided to give a temporary pet name to her daughter. "Lily".