

The Taylors? Not so much. Only Nigel's eldest son resembles a human. He's truly kind to Madeline. Everyone else sees her as a servant and looks down on her, yet they take all she has to offer. I never treated my adopted kids that way. That still makes them trash. F*ck them. He snorted with scorn.

Sebastian smiled. "Now I really want to know what Michael will do once he knows you're his daughter."

His own daughter was treated like a servant by the Taylors for so many years, and she was even forced to undergo an IVF process before she could even get herself a boyfriend just to save her cousin. Michael might be a gentleman, but he protects his own like no tomorrow, and he's really proud. Wonder what he'll feel once he knows the truth.

...

It was a shocking afternoon for Michael, who was in his residence in Wendel City. He was spacing out in his study, the file Dan faxed him sitting on his desk. When they had the video call earlier, he was shocked to see Dan looking so injured, and he asked who did that.

Dan did not answer. Instead, he went on an incoherent speech about how Angie was Cameron's daughter instead of his, and how his real daughter was Madeline. He was shocked, and he asked what Dan meant.

Dan flailed his arms in frustration, but he refused to answer. He only hastily said he would fax a file over.

When Michael read through the file, he understood what Dan told him earlier. He's right, and this file proves it. Angie isn't my real daughter; Madeline is. No paternity test needed either. I'm sure she's my own daughter.

He compared Angie and Madeline's photo to his, and he realized that Angie did not resemble him at all. However, he could see some shadow of him on Madeline's face. He never suspected that Angie wasn't his daughter, as no one

mentioned it before, and he never thought her not resembling him was a problem either.

She might not resemble him, but she had his wife's looks, and it was normal for girls to inherit their mother's looks. Who'd be crazy enough to suspect that their kid isn't their kid? But when that suspicion did arise, he went around to look for evidence and realized that not only did Angie not resemble him, she didn't resemble his parents either. She had no features of the Wendels at all, but Madeline did resemble Michael's mother when she was young.

As Angie resembled his wife, he never suspected that she wasn't his child. I see. She resembles Crystal not because she's our kid, but because her real mother—Cameron—is Crystal's half sister.

Cameron looked slightly similar to Crystal. And Angie only resembles Crystal because she resembles her real mother.

Crystal was a legitimate child, but Cameron wasn't. They might be half sisters, but they were born to be enemies. Cameron despised Crystal, so she gave birth on the same date and in the same hospital as Crystal on purpose. Then, she did a switcheroo while the Wendels weren't looking.

Which means ever since then, her daughter took my girl's place and has been enjoying everything the family has to offer, while my real daughter was exiled? She suffered under the hands of Cameron and Xander, almost died on the streets, then Dan saved her only for the Taylors to treat her like a... a servant? She toiled under them, and they insulted her? She's my only daughter! My princess! But she suffered because of my moment of oversight! He felt his heart torn asunder with pain and fury.

He couldn't accept that truth, but when his men reported back with the data they gathered, he was forced to accept it. They tracked down the witnesses listed on the file, and they confirmed that Cameron had said the Taylors were all fools multiple times in front of them. According to them, she played the Taylors like a fiddle, and she said her daughter was born to be a princess. They said Cameron

looked arrogant and smug when she said that, but they only thought it was the ramblings of an alcoholic, so nobody took it seriously.

Well, that's it then. Madeline is my real daughter. Our real daughter. The girl I thought was my daughter is actually someone else's child.

He was the head of the Wendels. He was courageous, smart, and enjoyed success at a young age. The last few decades were more or less the same thing— enjoyment and happiness. It had been a long time since he lost his cool, but that day, he lost it. The man, in his fury, swept everything on his table away onto the ground.

If Cameron was in front of him right then, he would tear her apart limb from limb. He didn't care what kind of grudge she and Crystal had, but involving an innocent child was going too far. She secretly sent her daughter into my family to enjoy the best life has to offer while my own child suffers the worst life has? How dare she?

His face was white with anger, and he was trembling. It took him a long time, but he finally calmed down. Vengeance wasn't the first thing on his list. He would have that sooner or later, and he would make sure it was a satisfying one. That wasn't the most important thing for him right now. The most important thing was to do a paternity test to see if Madeline was his daughter.

He was ninety-nine percent sure that Madeline was his daughter, but he needed to do that test so he could feel at ease and prove it to everyone else. After all, bloodline was something that could never be treated lightly.

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Chapter 32 Argument

“Jonathan's right,” Joseph said. “Just like how Mom and Cameron are enemies, that's how it'll be with Angie and Madeline. Angie has been bullying Madeline for years. Once Madeline finds out that Angie took her place as our sister, do you think she can get along with Angie? Do you think she can do that once she knows everything that Angie has is supposed to be hers?”

He answered his own question, "I don't think I can if I were in her place."

Michael nodded silently. He shared the same sentiment. Madeline was her real daughter, while Angie was the girl whom he had spoiled for more than two decades. If the paternity test showed that Madeline was his true daughter, then the best case scenario for him and his wife would be Madeline coming back into the fold, and they could still keep Angie around.

They were rich. Even if they had more kids, they could still afford it. The problem was, Angie and Madeline were enemies. Just like what Joseph said, Angie had bullied Madeline for years.

Everyone thought Madeline was Cameron's daughter back then, and Cameron was an illegitimate child. Even though Madeline was a legit child, since Crystal was Cameron's nemesis, Angie never did like Madeline ever since Dan took her into the Taylor household. She kept trying to chase Madeline out.

Dan was in his rebellious phase at that time, and going against everyone was what he liked. The more someone didn't want him to do something, the more he would do that exact thing. Angie wanted to chase Madeline out, but he refused. He even made her cry because of that.

Madeline was supposed to sit with them during meals, but Angie threw a tantrum and splashed a whole bowl of food in her face, chasing her off the table. Ever since then, Madeline never did sit with them for meals anymore. On top of that, ever since Madeline knew how to cook, Angie loved to order Madeline to cook for her.

Every time they went to the Taylor Residence, she would ask Madeline to cook. Nigel spoiled Angie, so he actually told Madeline to cook for the whole family. Every time they visited, Madeline would be the one to cook the whole family's meal. He never felt bad about it because it had nothing to do with him, but now it broke his heart. Why should my daughter cook for Cameron's? If Crystal finds out about this, she'll be livid.

Madeline used to avoid Angie like the plague and let Angie do as she pleased, but once she knew she was the real darling of the Wendel Family, she would never get along with the usurper who had taken her place for more than two decades.

But I did raise Angie like she's my own for two decades. I'd probably even cry if a pet of mine died, let alone a human whom I've loved as my own. He couldn't chase Angie out, and the fact that he had to choose between Angie and Madeline made his head hurt.

"What should we do?" Cedric frowned. "We can't chase Angie away. Cameron's evil and twisted, yes, but Angie is innocent."

“She is innocent,” Connor said. “But Madeline’s the victim here. She suffered a lot because of Cameron’s twisted actions. Angie, on the other hand, has gained from this. Because of what Cameron did, she took Madeline’s place and enjoyed the life that was supposed to be Madeline’s.”

“What’s that supposed to mean, Connor? Are you ditching Angie? We practically watched her grow up. You can’t abandon her just like that.” Cedric was displeased. “Dad, Jonathan, Joseph, Connor, I don’t mind even if you tear Cameron apart limb from limb, but Angie is innocent. She knew nothing about this. She didn’t ask Cameron to do the switcheroo. We spent two decades with her. That must mean something. Guys, I don’t care what the results are. Angie will always be my sister, and this house will always be her home. I don’t care what you think, but I will defend her.”

“Calm down, Connor.” Jonathan frowned. “Why are you so worked up? I know you want to defend Angie, but what about Mom? Have you ever thought about how she would feel? Cameron switched her real daughter out just to get back at her. If she tries to send Angie away after knowing the truth because she can’t face her, are you going to argue with her? Are you going to turn your back on her for Angie?”

Cedric shut up. Angie was important, but not as important as his mother was. His mother had a heart condition, and it would palpitate at times. His father, him, and his brothers always took great care of her. They would never make her angry. A moment later, he muttered defiantly, “She loves Angie the most. Mom won’t ever abandon her.”

“That’s because she thinks Angie is her own daughter, and she’s the youngest of us all,” Jonathan answered coldly. “But now she’s not. Not only is she not Mom’s own daughter, she’s also her nemesis’ child. Do you really think she can love Angie the same after she finds out about this?”

“I think she can...” Cedric answered stubbornly.

But not even he believed that. His mother could be paradoxical. She was sweet and kind, but she also had a strong sense of justice. To them, she was the gentlest, most gorgeous, and most reasonable mother in the world, but to Cameron, she was a cruel tyrant.

Before their mother was married, she had her father and brothers to keep her safe, and after she got married, she had Michael to protect her. She wanted for nothing in life, and she had no enemies, save for Cameron. Asking Mom to accept Cameron’s daughter and love her like she’s her own? Come on. That’s impossible.

Michael massaged his forehead. “Keep this a secret from your mother. She must not know about this before the results are out.”

The brothers nodded.

Michael stood up. "It's almost time. Jonathan, come with me to Dusktown. We will meet Madeline. Cedric, stay with your mother. Before I come back, she must not know about this."

Jonathan and Cedric nodded.

He then told Joseph and Connor, "You two focus on work. Once we have news, Jonathan and I will inform you."

Joseph and Connor nodded.

Once arrangements were done, Michael and Jonathan left for Dusktown on a private jet.

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Chapter 33 Mentally Tired

It was a happy afternoon in the Hart Residence. Philip kept asking Madeline about the twins and their days before they came to the residence. Madeline entertained him, and he laughed out loud sometimes.

An hour flew by. Philip, who was still asking all the details about the twins, suddenly changed the topic. He looked at Sebastian and Madeline. "Why don't you two get registered?"

"What did you say, Mr. Philip?" Madeline didn't understand what he was saying. "Register what?"

"What do you mean 'register what'?" Philip said matter-of-factly. "Marriage registration, of course."

"I am sorry? Marriage registration?" She was surprised, but she smiled. "You must be joking, Mr. Philip." I've only known Sebastian for a couple of days, and we have only spent a few hours together, but you want us to get married already?

"I am not." Philip looked at her seriously. "Do you want them to call the boys illegitimate children?"

Madeline paused. They were only two words, but it hurt her where it was the most painful. She had suffered for years because she was the daughter of an illegitimate child, and she wouldn't wish her boys to tread the same path.

"No matter what the reason is, illegitimate children are always looked down upon in Dusktown," Philip answered slowly. "If you don't want the boys to suffer that fate, you'll

have to get registered as Sebastian's legal wife. Even if it's just a fake marriage and you guys get divorced in a few days, that'll still make the boys legit children, and they won't have to suffer any discrimination."

Madeline was tempted to agree. She could do anything for her sons. As long as they could be legitimate kids and never tread the thorny path she did, she could even sell herself and become a servant, let alone get married. She looked at Sebastian, "Is that fine?"

Philip looked at him as well. He might look calm, but he was actually quite nervous.

He wasn't sure if Sebastian would agree. He knew his son well enough to know that he wouldn't. After all, Sebastian disagreed even though all he wanted was for him to go on a blind date back then. He had flown into a rage and threatened Sebastian, but he still failed. This time around, it was a marriage. That was a bigger hurdle than a date, but he hoped Sebastian would agree.

The kids were too adorable, and he didn't want them to be labeled as illegitimate children. Madeline was a good lady too, and she was a great match for Sebastian. If they can get married, they'd be a family. How good is that? And after they get married, the kids can stay here with Sebastian. I can also pass away in peace once that happens. He stared at his son and awaited his answer with bated breaths.

Sebastian looked at Madeline for a silent moment, then he nodded. "Yes."

Philip couldn't believe what he was hearing. "What did you say, brat?"

"Dad!" Sebastian shot his father a resigned look. "I'm a father now. Can you at least show me some respect and don't call me a brat?"

Philip snorted. "Even if you're a grandfather, that still doesn't change the fact that I'm your old man." He looked at Sebastian. "I can call you whatever I want."

Well, I can't say anything about that. He's my father.

"And stop changing the topic." He glared at Sebastian. "I didn't hear what you just said. Say it again."

Sebastian sighed. "I said I'll get registered with Maddie."

"Maddie? It's been like, what, a couple of days? And you already have a nickname for her?" He patted Sebastian's shoulder and looked at him mysteriously. "Well, so you're not a total idiot." He muttered, "Oh, I get it. So you were lying when you said you weren't interested in women and relationships. Work is the only thing that can give you satisfaction? Bull. In the end, you just don't like the girls I chose because they're not as

pretty as dear little Maddie here. I'm a man of culture, but my son cares only for a woman's looks? How disappointing."

Honestly, Dad, this is why I don't want to talk to you sometimes.

Philip might have muttered under his breath, but he was close enough for Madeline to hear him. She smiled. She thought Philip was a kind and interesting man. He loved his son and her boys deeply, and she respected people like him a lot. She felt close to him too, as if he was her own father who cared about her.

The household was a nice place as well. Philip might mock Sebastian a lot, but she could see that Sebastian was Philip's whole world, just like how the boys were hers. He could mock his own son, but nobody else could.

Sebastian treated his father well too. He might be a cold, uncaring man to the world, but he wouldn't get impatient with his father, nor would he retort when his father mocked him. Instead, he would always listen to whatever his father had to say.

Philip might look like he had a lot to complain about his son, but they were actually a happy family. It was a great relationship, and Madeline could truly smile at that.

She liked the Hart Family. The boys would have a really happy childhood if they grew up here. Because of that, she was delighted and thankful that Sebastian would want to marry her. Just like what Philip said, even if they were divorced shortly after the marriage, it wouldn't change the fact that her boys had become legitimate children.

She was Sebastian's first wife, and her sons would be the direct descendants of Sebastian. Even if they were to get a divorce, her sons could still stay with them without any questions asked, and they would grow up happily. Though, she would like it if the marriage were to go on for just a bit longer. She wanted her sons to live in a family where both parents were present and married.

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Chapter 34 Thunderstruck

"Alright, alright, enough." Philip waved his hands impatiently. "We have no time to lose. Get registered right away. If someone asks, say you're married a long time ago and lived separately because of disagreements. Now you have made up, so you came back. My grandsons will be legitimate children then. I won't butt in about how you do this, but I won't let anything happen to my grandkids."

Madeline thought, You just told us to get registered right away, and that's 'not butting in'? But I'm fine with that. Getting her sons the 'legitimate children' status was too tempting, and she gave in, so she looked at Sebastian.

Sebastian nodded. "We'll go right away."

Philip snorted and rolled his eyes. "Never knew my son's a sucker for good looks. Shallow! How disgraceful!"

Well, you can call me shallow all you want, because you're my dad. He looked at Madeline. "So, do you have your IDs?"

"Yep," she said. "But we can't go right now. We have to wait until the boys wake up so we can tell them where we're going. Buddy will cry if he doesn't see me when he wakes up."

"It's fine." Philip waved them off. "I'm here to keep an eye on them. If they want to see you when they wake up, I'll just call."

"Um..." Madeline hesitated.

"Let's do as Dad says," Sebastian said. "The more you stay with them, the less confidence they'll have when the time for you to leave comes. If you leave them alone a few times and come back within the time limit, they'll know you'll come back no matter where you go. It'll be easier for them to accept it when you have to be separated from them for a few hours every day eventually. Once you settle down, it's time for them to go to school, and you can't stay with them all day, can you?"

Madeline was still hesitating, but she was convinced in the end. What Sebastian said made sense. The boys were growing up, so what she had to do was build their sense of security up so they could be independent instead of overly relying on her. Now, they would get nervous and anxious the moment she was out of their sights. "Okay." She nodded. "Let's do this."

She left the kids to Philip and took her IDs before she went with Sebastian to the Civil Affairs Bureau. Sebastian was driving.

She looked out the window while she was on the way there, and she felt like everything was a dream. All of a sudden, she was getting married to a man whom she just met. She would never have thought of this even in her wildest dreams. But even if this is a dream, it's a good one. My boys will be legitimate children very soon. No matter what happens to this marriage, at least the boys won't be looked down on because of their background. She held her IDs tightly, her heart filled with excitement.

Suddenly, her phone rang. She took it out and frowned when she saw who the caller was.

Sebastian noticed the look on her face, and he glanced at her phone screen. It read, 'Uncle'. Oh. Nigel. The Taylors' leader who looks smart but actually got played like a fiddle. He smirked. He could see that his life would be really interesting for a very long time. His life before this was dull and without excitement. He preferred the excitement.

Madeline sighed almost inaudibly, but she took the call. "Hello, uncle."

"Madeline..." He called Madeline's name, but he couldn't say anything else. The words were stuck in his throat like a fishbone.

After Phoebe got into trouble, he came to Dusktown all the way from Worrick, but the moment he came to the Taylors' base in Dusktown, Dan came to him, looking distraught and sad. He said Madeline could be Crystal's real daughter, and that Angie was just a fake. He told her Madeline was most possibly the Wendel couple's real child.

The news shocked him, and he couldn't believe that it was real. But when Dan sat down before him and threw all the proof in his face, he had to believe it. The clues lined up perfectly, and the explanation was logical. When he came to that conclusion, he had plopped down on his chair and fell into a trance.

If Madeline is Crystal and Michael's kid, that means she's my own niece. And how did I treat her all these years? Like a servant whom anyone can order around. Phoebe and Isabel especially. They don't even think of Madeline as human.

The first two years after Madeline came, Sam was studying abroad, he was busy with work, and Dan went on a globetrotting adventure, leaving only Phoebe and Isabel as masters of the house. They had almost tortured Madeline to death.

When Sam came back, Madeline was nothing but skin and bones. She had injuries all over her body, and she was almost dying. Sam flew into a rage and chastised Isabel. That made those women hold back. Sam then sent Madeline to a martial arts class so she could learn how to defend herself. Even so, that only made sure Madeline wasn't beaten up physically.

The mental torture never stopped, even until she had left the Taylors. They saw Madeline as less than trash, saying that she was a stain on the family name. They said the Taylors had raised her, and that was already kind enough, so they justified working her to the bone. 'Debt repayment', they told him.

He was busy with work, and he couldn't care less about the drama between women, so he let Phoebe and Isabel do as they liked. He too shared their opinion. Since Madeline was Cameron's daughter, and Cameron's mother destroyed his parents' relationship, he saw no point raising a homewrecker's granddaughter.

If it weren't for Dan going against him in his younger days and threatening to do something outrageous unless they took Madeline in, he would rather feed their leftovers

to the dogs instead. Just like what Phoebe and Isabel had said, he thought it was already magnanimous enough for the Taylors to raise Madeline. She was just the granddaughter of a homewrecker. He couldn't and wouldn't raise her like a young miss. That was what he thought.

Because of that line of thought, Madeline was only a young miss in name, but a servant in reality. He never cared about her, as he thought that was what she deserved. Reality, however, decided to teach him a punishing lesson. The girl whom I have mistreated for so many years is my real niece and not a homewrecker's granddaughter? Gods. How am I supposed to face Madeline now? How am I supposed to face Crystal and her husband?

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Chapter 35 Laugh

He held his phone, feeling guilty and confused.

Madeline felt curious that her uncle would stop after he called her name out. "Do you need anything, uncle?"

"Oh yes, um, yeah, I have something to say." He snapped out of it and said hoarsely, "Madeline, I've heard about all of it from Dan. And I'm..."

He wanted to apologize, but then he thought, The test isn't done yet. What if Dan got it wrong? If she's not Crystal's daughter, that means Cameron is still her mother. He changed his mind and said instead, "And I know Phoebe has gone too far this time, but she has received her punishment. Please, for my sake, can you forgive her this once?"

Madeline thought it was a weird thing to hear. She had known Nigel for many years, and it was the first time he talked so softly with her. And he's negotiating? If it's in the past, he'd be roaring at me and ordering me around. 'Madeline, I order you to let Phoebe out!' 'Madeline, do this or you're an ungrateful cur!' 'Madeline, the family raised you. It's time to repay your debt. You cannot do this to us!' 'Madeline, we spent a lot of money raising you. No matter what we do to you, you deserve it. You should be thanking us instead of complaining about anything. You'd better not do anything bad, or else.'

She had heard all this so often that she could already memorize them all, but to her surprise, her uncle changed his attitude today. She knew why that happened. All hatred and love happened for a reason. Someone's story could be drastically changed if they had a different background.

She held her phone, but she had no idea what to say. Before this, all she could do was say yes, for they had told her many times that she would have died without Dan's help.

They said the Taylors gave her everything she had, and she had to give her life even if they wanted her to. All she could do was say yes, but now she wanted to say no.

And it wasn't just because of her change in background. Phoebe was arrested because Sebastian called the cops on her. She had no right to drop the charges and let her out for obvious reasons, but she couldn't tell Nigel that, for that would mean antagonizing the whole Taylor Family and making an enemy out of them for the Harts. No matter what would happen to her and Sebastian, he had helped her out this time. He had called the cops on Phoebe to help Madeline out, and Madeline would not repay that kindness with malice.

A long silence later, Nigel said tentatively, "Madeline? Are you there?"

"Yes," she said. "Uncle, I'm sorry. I—"

Just when she was about to say no, Sebastian suddenly extended his hand. "Give me the phone."

Madeline was surprised. "What?"

He smiled. "Trying to bust Phoebe out, isn't he? Hand it over. I'll deal with him." He took the phone from her and turned the speaker on. "Hello, Mr. Taylor. I'm Sebastian."

Nigel was surprised. "Mr. Hart? Y-You're with Madeline right now?"

"Obviously, yes." He leaned against his seat, an elegant smile curling his lips. "Mr. Taylor, you should have enough power to find out that I was the one who asked my men to call the cops on Phoebe. But still, you called Madeline instead of me. Do you think she's a pushover? Are you trying to bully her?"

Nigel frowned. "That's a bit heavy, don't you think? I called her because she's the cause of the whole thing. You might have misunderstood something."

"Is that so?" Sebastian smiled. "Yes, she might have been the cause, but I was the one who sued. As long as I don't drop the charges, Madeline can do nothing about it. So..." He smiled again. "What will you do? Ask Madeline to beg me to let her go? If I don't do that, you'll be blaming her for failing her task, then you'll hate her for this, won't you? If that's what you had in mind, then I'm sorry to say that you're a big bully, Mr. Taylor. And it's quite shameless of you too."

Nigel's face was red with embarrassment. "What do you mean, Mr. Hart? I won't do something like that."

"That's for the best." He crossed his legs, his elegant smile still curling his lips. "And now let me tell you something seriously. I am suing Phoebe no matter what you say, and nobody can help her. You don't have to waste your time begging Madeline for help."

She's not as powerful as you think. Not even you can pull this off, and yet you asked a girl in her early twenties to do it for you? My, that's not too gentlemanly, don't you think? Not too brave as well."

"Y-You..." Nigel stammered in anger, and his face was white with fury.

It had been a long time since someone talked to him like that. He was the Taylors' leader, and Taylor Corporation was on the list of top one hundred companies in the world. The Taylors were also the top family in Worrick, and they were worshipped by many. Nobody has ever mocked me in front of my face. How dare he? But he couldn't snap back at Sebastian.

Taylor Corporation was the top company in Worrick, but it was still no match for the bigger and stronger Hart Corporation. On top of that, Sebastian's father was a senior statesman who had contributed largely to the nation. Although he was retired, he was still influential. He was a national treasure, and nobody would be stupid enough to go against him or his family. Furthermore, Philip had a lot of students, and all of them were probably more powerful than the Taylors. He would never go against the Harts unless he wanted to destroy his own family.

More importantly, the Harts had the moral high ground in this case, but he didn't. Philip might be a respected statesman, but he had to be reasonable too. If Sebastian was in the wrong, not even Philip could defend him. No matter how powerful Philip was, he too had his own enemies. If the court of public opinion swayed in the Taylors' favor, they could work with the Harts' enemies and fight with them.

Not in this case, however. After Sebastian called the cops, he went through the legal procedure and sent out his company's legal team to deal with the matter. There was nothing he could use against the Harts. He had no other way but to shamelessly ask Madeline for help, though that only gained him a mocking session from Sebastian.

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Chapter 36 Flawless Man

He hadn't felt so embarrassed in a long while. His face turned pale for a moment before his blood rushed into his cheeks, making them burn as if he had just been slapped a few times. He parted his lips to speak, but he couldn't find a good comeback.

Sebastian chuckled. "I'll tell my assistant to send you my number in a while, Mr. Taylor. If you'd like to talk about Phoebe, I'd gladly have that conversation with you. I hope you don't contact Madeline for matters regarding Phoebe from now on. Madeline's just a poor little girl who's no different from a maid in our family. How could you expect a maid to help you complete something even you aren't able to do?" He curled his lips into an elegant smirk. "Am I right, Mr. Taylor?"

Nigel was so furious that he felt like he was about to burst. His hand was trembling as he clutched his phone. He couldn't seem to argue against Sebastian's words at all. What can I say? Can I say that I'm not related to you while Madeline is? Can I say that I wanted Madeline to help me save Phoebe because of that? But as Sebastian just said, Madeline isn't well-respected over at his house, so she wouldn't be able to convince him to let go of Phoebe. What can I do? Can I order Madeline to convince Sebastian to let go of Phoebe? Can I tell her that she'd be an ungrateful pig otherwise? Yet, Sebastian said that if I did that, I'd be bullying the weak and that I'd be shameless to do so! I'm the chairman of Taylor Corporation; can I embarrass myself like that?

Sebastian was too good with his words—he could easily make someone lose their temper! Right then, Nigel felt like Sebastian had completely destroyed and shattered him. After uttering a few perfunctory statements, Nigel ended the call and wiped his forehead to find that he was soaked in sweat.

Sebastian returned the phone to Madeline after he saw that the call had ended. “If Mr. Taylor cares about his reputation, he'll probably stop looking for you and asking you to save Phoebe.”

Madeline wore a complicated look in her eyes as she stared at Sebastian. This guy... It's good enough that he has stunning combat skills, but how could he also be so good at talking?

“Why are you looking at me like that?” Sebastian shot her a sideways glance before smiling. “Do you suddenly find me handsome?”

Madeline was speechless for a while. Does he think one would suddenly find him handsome? Doesn't he know that anyone with eyes could easily see how good-looking he is? Especially when he's fighting and arguing with others... That's when his handsomeness comes with a hint of darkness. Sebastian is really a child of the Gods, huh. He has a good family background, he's handsome, he's good at fighting, he's smart, he's good at talking... I haven't seen a single one of his flaws yet. What is he, if not God's favorite child?

Sebastian eyed her amusedly when he saw her remaining silent for a while. “Why aren't you talking?”

“...Thank you.” She didn't know what else to say. Furthermore, she didn't really wish to talk to him. He was too strong and too eloquent... She couldn't win him in both physical and verbal fights, so she figured it'd be best if she didn't speak!

However, Sebastian didn't let her go so easily. He gazed out the car window for a while before he looked back at Madeline. “We're some distance away from the Civil Affairs Bureau, and it'll take about ten more minutes to arrive. Why don't we have a chat?”

Since you're about to be my wife, perhaps we could talk more to get to know each other."

"Sure... What do you want to talk about? Do you want to know about Quincy and Joel's earlier days?" Although her sons never made any such claims, she was aware that they wanted to have both parents as their other peers did. Fate had somehow pulled them together and miraculously allowed the two young boys to unite with their family again.

Madeline hoped that Sebastian could get to know the two boys a little better so that he could develop a closer bond with his sons. "I am genuinely interested in Quincy and Joel's childhood, but I've already heard my father talking about it for two hours with you. I think that's enough for today, and we can talk about it another day. I'd like to talk about Phoebe instead," Sebastian said.

"Phoebe?" Madeline tilted her head sideways. "What do you want to talk about?"

Sebastian sat in the most comfortable yet elegant position as he spoke in an amused tone. "Phoebe's father is the Taylor Family's cook, right?"

Madeline nodded. "Yeah."

"Phoebe is Nigel's second wife. Sam and Dan were both from Nigel's first marriage, right? Nigel was really close to his first wife, and he hadn't planned on remarrying after he lost her. However, he ended up getting married to the cook's daughter, Phoebe. Phoebe is short, ugly, and dumb; there's nothing about her that's good..." Sebastian smirked before glancing at Madeline. "Judging by Nigel's background, he could have married a talented and gorgeous woman from a rich family if he wanted to remarry. Do you know why he ended up getting married to someone as dumb as Phoebe?" Sebastian's eyes twinkled with amusement.

"I do." Madeline nodded. "I heard that Phoebe's father died after attempting to save Dan. Before Phoebe's father died, he told my uncle that the one person he was the most worried about was his daughter. He begged my uncle to make sure that Phoebe got married so that she would have a family and a home to return to. Phoebe's father stared at my uncle for a long, long time, and my uncle had to agree to his request so that he could die in peace..."

Although Nigel wasn't that nice to Madeline, he was still a man who kept his word. After dealing with Phoebe's father's funeral, and after Phoebe was ready, Nigel got married to her. Phoebe's father had sacrificed his life for Dan, so Phoebe was welcomed to the Taylor Family despite her lack of education, her ugly looks, her loud voice, and her denseness. She was often jeered at after entering the Taylor Family, but her life wasn't bad.

Madeline's cousins, Sam and Dan, were grateful for Phoebe's father's deeds, so they weren't resistant to having her as a stepmother. They were extremely receptive and

patient with her. After that, Phoebe and Nigel had a daughter, Isabel, and Phoebe finally secured her role as a part of the Taylor Family.

Even though Nigel was harsh toward Madeline, he had done everything he could for Phoebe. Nigel was a handsome man from a wealthy family. Although he was past 40, he still looked like he was in his 30s. He had a well-built figure and was often approached by all sorts of women, but he stayed loyal to the old and ugly-looking Phoebe. He protected their marriage without uttering a single complaint about Phoebe's uneducated and inelegant behaviors, he protected and loved her generously, and he was always there to deal with the messes she made.

Madeline had to say that she respected her uncle for doing such a thing. When it came to loyalty in marriage, Nigel was practically a flawless man.

You, Me and Our Genius Twins Chapter 37

Chapter 37 Relying on Each Other?

The smile on Sebastian's face widened as he listened to Madeline's description of Nigel. Madeline felt her heart racing at the sight of Sebastian's smile. All along, she had always thought of her two sons as the most good-looking boys in the world—every other man was just passing clouds to her. However, Sebastian was too gorgeous, and he looked even more eye-catching whenever he smiled. She simply couldn't help but feel attracted to him.

When she couldn't contain her emotions anymore, she lowered her gaze and stared at his chin while speaking to him. "What are you laughing at?"

"I'm laughing at how Cameron's statement was accurate. Everyone in the Taylor Family is an idiot. They don't even know how they've been fooled," Sebastian uttered with a faint smile.

"Are you talking about my uncle?" Madeline knitted her eyebrows puzzledly. "How is he dumb? The Taylor Corporation is the largest company in the whole of Worrick, and my uncle is the chairman of the company. He's smart, he's capable, and he's charismatic. He's not dumb at all!" It wasn't easy for one to achieve success. Nigel had managed to maintain the Taylor Family's reputation and had ensured that the Taylor Corporation remained at the top of the pyramid—that itself showed how capable of a man he was. How can one associate the word 'idiot' with my uncle?

"Trust me. He is an idiot!" Sebastian rested his chin on his palm as he gazed at her with twinkling eyes. "I got some of my men to investigate the Taylor Family so that I could get to know you, Joel, and Quincy a little better. However, I accidentally stumbled upon something really interesting..." His smile was elegant and gorgeous, yet Madeline

seemed to notice something odd about it. He looks like he's smiling at our family's failures. Why do I feel so nervous all of a sudden? she wondered.

"What did you find interesting?" Her tone sounded more careful than usual as she questioned him. She had a feeling that it was bad news!

Sebastian continued smiling at her. "Just one month before Phoebe's father, Bryan, had bravely saved Dan, Bryan found out that he had cancer and could only live for another two months..."

Madeline was shocked. Moments later, she spoke up with a tone of disbelief. "Are you saying..."

"What am I saying?" Sebastian eyed her amusedly.

She noticed her palms sweating as her throat became dry. "You're saying that... Bryan was the one who staged the entire accident. He knew that he didn't have long to live after being diagnosed with cancer, and he wanted his daughter to marry my uncle. So, he hired one of the maids to drive toward Dan, so that he could charge out and save Dan... He became Dan's savior, and he sacrificed his life so that he could beg my uncle to marry Phoebe. For the sake of Bryan's peace of mind, my uncle had no choice but to marry Phoebe..."

"That's exactly it!" Sebastian glanced at Madeline with an impressed look. "That's not bad. You're brave, you have planning skills, you can fight, and you have brains! No wonder my sons are so outstanding!"

Madeline was speechless. He's praising me, but why does it make me feel so uneasy? What's wrong? Oh! Joel and Quincy are my sons! Who is he to be proud of them? "They are my sons!" she uttered instinctively.

"That's not right," Sebastian said with a smile. "They're our sons. You can't have sons on your own. Otherwise, you wouldn't have applied for sperm from the sperm bank! You can take half the credit for having Joel and Quincy, but the other half belongs to me. Your genes may be good, but mine is not bad either. Honestly, I think my genes are a little better since you lost to me!"

Sebastian's thought processes were clear, and he was extremely articulate. How does he expect others to hold conversations and develop friendships with him when he's the one doing all the talking?! She was too tongue-tied to speak for a while. "Regardless, I'll never be separated from Joel and Quincy. They're my sons, and no one can take them away! Not even you!" She glared at him as she warned him. "I know you're their biological father, but all you provided for them up until this point is your sperm. So, don't you dare think about snatching them away from me. As long as I'm alive, I refuse to be separated from them!"

“That’s perfect. That was exactly what I was thinking!” He gave her a lopsided smile before leaning forward to speak in a deep voice. “So, Miss Madeline, are you saying that you’re going to stay with me for the rest of your life?”

“Which ear of yours heard me say such a thing? I didn’t say that!” she protested.

“I heard it with both ears!” he chuckled. “Both Quincy and Joel are part of the Hart Family, so I can’t have them out on the streets without a proper name. You, on the other hand, can’t bear to be separated from them. If they stay with the Harts, wouldn’t you have to be with me for the rest of your life?”

Madeline was speechless once more. You’re so good with words—it’s a shame that you aren’t a lawyer or a diplomat! She pushed Sebastian away as he got closer to her. “It’s not me who’s going to stay with you, it’s you who’s going to stay with me! If you don’t want to see me, you can just tell me and the boys to pack up and leave your house.”

He beamed at her for a moment before nodding. “Okay! I’ll be the one to stick to you and depend on you, then. We’re on the way to collect our marriage certificate, after all. If all goes well, we’re about to spend the rest of our lives with each other. We can rely on each other—I think that’s a good idea!”

Madeline was shocked. He gave in without putting up an argument this time! That’s unbelievable! But... What does he mean by relying on each other?

“From the start until now, my only intention is to spend time with Joel and Quincy. I never thought about relying on you!” she insisted.

Sebastian chuckled without saying anything else. He was rather surprised by the whole thing. Since Sebastian was a workaholic, he had never been interested in relationships, but after he met Madeline, he suddenly found that he was. Perhaps... Maybe... It’s possible... It’s likely... that it’s because she’s my son’s mother. I feel a sense of responsibility toward her. How can I let my son’s mother be bullied by others, right? I have to protect her.

Sebastian had ordered his men to research the Taylor Family for the sake of his sons. When he saw the reports, he felt even more protective over the mother and sons. Furthermore, he was starting to develop feelings toward Madeline after knowing her a little better. He believed that it was possible for him and Madeline to turn their contractual marriage into an actual one.

After all, he had never found a woman who interested him. She was the only one who caught his attention, and she was also the mother to his sons. If they could turn their marriage act into something real, he believed that it would be mutually beneficial to the both of them!

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Chapter 38 Thank You, I Guess?

Sebastian beamed at Madeline, and she felt her insides fluttering as he did so. She inched toward the car door to maintain some distance from him. This man felt threatening to her, and she only felt safe when she stayed away from him!

“Why are you moving so far away from me? It’s not like I’d eat you up,” he said with a laugh.

“I’m not moving away. I’m just... I think it’s cooler by the window.” Madeline, who often thought of herself as a fearless and strong woman, was trying her best to maintain her dignity in that situation.

“Fine.” He nodded. “You’re not shying away from me at all!” Despite saying so, his expression clearly indicated that he thought she was overreacting. I’m just going to play along with you because I’m the bigger person, his expression seemed to say.

Madeline was silent for a while. Why is it so troubling to be with this guy? Why does he have to be my sons’ biological father, and why can’t I ever defeat him? I wish I could beat him up! I’m not angry, I’m not angry, I’m not angry... She repeated that to herself many times before speaking to him again. “Since you knew that my uncle had been scammed by Bryan, why didn’t you tell him about it earlier?”

“Why should I do that?” He flashed her an elegant smile. “If your uncle knew the truth, he would realize that Phoebe wasn’t actually the daughter of his son’s savior. He’d find out that he’s married to a woman whose father is actually an enemy who fooled him. If I break this news to him right after sending Phoebe off to jail, wouldn’t he be glad that I sent her to jail?”

Madeline was quiet for a while. “Isn’t that good? Then, my uncle wouldn’t have to go around begging others to get Phoebe out of jail.”

“How does that benefit me in any way? Why should I please him?” Sebastian asked with a smirk. “I’d prefer watching him running around worriedly, using up all of his energy and strength to lower himself and beg others. When he realizes that he can’t save Phoebe after doing all of that, he’ll be angry, sad, agonized... He’ll stay up for nights and spend his days suffering. Isn’t that way better?”

His words left Madeline speechless. How much does Sebastian hate my uncle? She wasn’t sure what to say as she stared at Sebastian. “My uncle... must’ve wronged you in the past,” she finally uttered.

“Yeah.” He nodded calmly. “He did.”

“What did he do?” she asked. What was the terrible thing he did that made you wish such a horrible life upon him?

Sebastian gave her a stunning smirk as he spoke. “He was bad toward my sons and my sons’ mother.”

She froze upon hearing his words. This wasn’t the answer she had expected. So, Sebastian is only bad to my uncle because he’s angry on behalf of me and my sons? An unfamiliar feeling circled around her chest—she couldn’t entirely describe what she felt, but it was a mixture of sweetness, bitterness, and warmth.

It had been Madeline and her sons against the world for so long, and this was the first time someone stood up for them. All sorts of complicated emotions spread across her chest as she gazed at the man before her. “Thank you...” She wasn’t good with words, so she couldn’t think of anything else to say to him right then. If I have the chance to do it, I have to be nicer to him, in the future. Even though he seems rather... intimidating, he’s still really nice to Joel, Quincy and me. He fights for us. Whatever he said about my uncle earlier was also his way of protecting us. He told my uncle to contact him instead of me, so that my uncle wouldn’t trouble me. But...

Madeline lowered her gaze as she spoke in a soft tone. “Actually, things are a mess between me and my uncle’s families. Although my uncle has never loved me as a true family member, Dan saved my life, and the Taylor Family was the one who brought me up. Sam even helped me hire a good teacher to teach me martial arts... In other words, I wouldn’t be the person I am today if it weren’t for the Taylor Family. I... don’t think I have the right to hate them.”

“Dan only saved you in the spur of the moment. He wanted to keep you in the family because he was in his rebellious phase where he wanted to go against whatever Nigel said. The more Nigel hated you, the more Dan wanted you around to annoy Nigel...” Sebastian leaned back into a comfortable position in his seat as he continued speaking in a calmer voice. “After keeping you in the Taylor Family, he allowed Isabel and Phoebe to continue bullying you. It’s fortunate that Sam came back from his overseas studies—he’s the only one with enough of a conscience to stop Phoebe and Isabel from abusing you. Otherwise, you might have already died in the Taylor household...”

Sebastian raised an eyebrow as he looked at Madeline. “Don’t you hate Phoebe and Isabel at all?”

“Of course I do! I’m not a rock—of course I hate them. But what can I do with my hatred?” Madeline let out an exasperated laugh. “Phoebe’s father is Dan’s savior, and Dan is my savior. Dan protects Phoebe and Isabel, and the Taylor Family took care of me. I am indebted to them, so how can I do anything to Phoebe and Isabel?”

“You might not have been able to do anything in the past, but you’ll be able to in the future.” Sebastian smiled. “Phoebe was arrested for attempted kidnapping, which would

give her a sentence of at least three years. Furthermore, once Nigel finds out about the truth, he'll probably get a divorce from her. If she's lucky enough to survive prison, she'll realize that she has lost everything by the time she gets out of prison. Isabel, on the other hand..." Sebastian rubbed his palms together. "I'm interested to know if Nigel will still love Isabel as much when he finds out that Bryan wasn't exactly his son's savior, but an enemy who had plotted against him..." Sebastian chuckled. "Now that I think about it, I do feel rather tempted to tell Nigel the truth!"

Madeline was quiet again. She could tell that Sebastian was thinking about how he could hurt Nigel, Phoebe, and Isabel the most.

"Alright. The decision has been made," Sebastian said with a wide grin. "If Nigel comes and pleads with me, I'll tell him the truth! I believe his facial expressions will be epic. If you're not around, I'll get someone to record Nigel's reaction," he uttered with a smile.

She eyed him speechlessly. Thank you, but I don't think I want to see the video at all!

"I wonder when Mr. Taylor will contact me again." Sebastian's face was filled with anticipation. Meanwhile, Nigel, the man Sebastian was thinking about, was walking around with quick footsteps. He had just arrived at the hall when Dan happened to come downstairs. "How is it, Dad? Did Madeline agree?" Dan asked worriedly.

"No." Nigel was too embarrassed to tell his son that Sebastian had shamed him to a point where he couldn't even hold his head high. "Sebastian took over and stopped me from talking to Madeline," he explained in a brief manner.

"What are we going to do, then?" Dan asked worriedly. "You have to find a way to save Phoebe, Dad! How could she live in a prison? We have to get her out of that place!"

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Chapter 39 Disgusting

Nigel nodded. "I know. I'm trying to think of something."

"What other ways could there be?" Dan asked worriedly. "The whole of Dusktown is Sebastian's territory. As long as he doesn't give in, Phoebe will never be released! Dad, should we talk to Sebastian? Didn't Sebastian say that Joel and Quincy are his sons? The Taylor Family helped take care of his sons as they were growing up. Isn't this how he should be repaying us?"

"When are you going to grow up, Dan?" Nigel stared at his son exasperatedly. "We might have been able to ask him to repay us in the past, but as you said, Madeline might be your aunt's daughter. If she's your aunt's daughter, then Quincy and Joel

would be your aunt and uncle's grandchildren. If that were the case, then it'd be our responsibility to care for the two boys, right? If we try to use this to get Sebastian to repay our deeds, your aunt and uncle might hear about this someday. What would they think about us then? Do you want them to look down on us?" Nigel asked.

"What should we do, then?" Dan stomped his foot with annoyance. "Dad! We have to save Phoebe! We can't just leave her alone!"

"I'm not going to leave her alone," Nigel uttered with a sigh. "I'll visit her at the detention center and ask if she has a way to contact Madeline and beg Madeline personally. We're all family, after all. If Phoebe apologizes to Madeline, Madeline might forgive her and help her get out of there."

Earlier, Nigel was so embarrassed by Sebastian's mocking statements, he felt the urge to stick his head into a hole. He no longer dared to go to Sebastian or Madeline personally. But since Phoebe was the main person involved, it would make sense for her to talk to them. Phoebe had always been the one bullying Madeline, after all. This time, if Phoebe was willing to bow down and apologize to Madeline, and if Phoebe could be extra nice to Madeline, Madeline might just forgive her.

Nigel didn't believe it when Sebastian claimed that Madeline didn't have a say in this matter. Nigel could tell that Sebastian only uttered those things in an attempt to protect Madeline. Sebastian said that Madeline wasn't respected and had no say at his house only because he wanted to reduce the pressure placed on Madeline. Sebastian was trying to bear some of Madeline's stress. The more he did so, the more it showed that he cared for Madeline.

Nigel believed that Sebastian would listen to Madeline if Madeline was willing to speak up for Phoebe. Then, Sebastian would let Phoebe go. At least, that was what Nigel thought. Dan agreed that it made sense as well.

"Let me come along! Phoebe's stubborn, and I'm afraid she might not apologize to Madeline. I can help convince her," Dan suggested. "You can come if you want to," Nigel replied. Both father and son left the villa and headed to the detention center. After going through the usual procedures, they successfully managed to arrange a visit with Phoebe.

Phoebe, whose face was swollen and puffy, began to wail the moment she saw Dan and Nigel. "Nigel! Dan! What took you guys so long? Are you guys here to save me? Hurry... Hurry up..." She held her cuffed hands up in front of the policewoman. "Release me now! I'm free! I'm free!"

Nigel spoke in an awkward tone. "Calm down, Phoebe." When Phoebe saw how the policewoman was standing still and eyeing her with a look of disdain, she froze before turning to Dan and Nigel. "Dan, Nigel, aren't you guys here to get me out of this place?"

No. No! You guys must be here to save me, right? Hurry and get me out. I can't stay here for another second. I need to leave now! Now!"

"That's enough! Stop shouting!" Nigel barked.

Phoebe shuddered in fear as she recalled how Nigel hated it whenever she shouted. She immediately lowered her voice before looking at him with a pitiful expression on her face. "Please help me get out, Nigel. This place isn't meant for humans. If I stay here any longer, I'm going to die!"

It was too scary in there—eight prisoners had to share a room as there weren't any single rooms. There was nothing else apart from eight beds and a single toilet bowl in one room. She was the last person to be sent into the room, so her bed was right next to the toilet bowl. She couldn't block the disgusting scent of human waste even if she kept her nostrils shut.

Phoebe couldn't stand it, so she slammed her hands on the metal doors and begged for the wardens to put her in a different cell. However, no wardens showed up, and her roommates gave her a hearty beating. She was beaten to the point where she had to kneel on the ground and beg for mercy.

The other prisoners forced her to scrub the toilet bowl countless times before they finally set her free. Her whole body ached after receiving the beating, and she didn't get much sleep at all that night. Just the day before, she skipped dinner because she was angry, but her food was snatched away by one of the prisoners. The next morning, someone snatched her food away again. She was already starving by that time, so she made a report to the wardens.

The food in prison was worse than the food she fed her dogs at home. By the time she finished eating and returned to her room, the rest of the prisoners teamed up and beat her up again. She had only been inside for less than two days, yet she felt like she had never suffered as much in her whole life.

Every second of her time there was spent anticipating that Nigel and her sons would hurry over to get her out. She couldn't spend another minute in that place. "I want to get you out of here, but you need to know that we're in Dusktown and not Worrick," Nigel uttered while glaring at her angrily. "How many times have I told you to use your brain before acting on impulse? Why don't you ever listen to me? It's fine if you cause trouble in Worrick, but why did you do it here?! Dusktown is the Hart Family's territory—I'd need to have some power to be able to get you out of here!"

"What do you mean by that, Nigel?" Phoebe asked in a shaky voice. "Are you saying that you and Dan aren't here to get me out right now?! No... No, no, no..." She shook her head frantically as she grabbed Nigel's hand while sobbing. "You have to save me, Nigel. You have to get me out. I know my mistakes. I'll never do this again. I'll listen to you from now on. I'll pay attention to everything you say..." Her hands were covered in

black, slimy stuff as she grabbed Nigel's hand, and Nigel shuddered in disgust as he told himself, I have to control myself. I can't show my disgust! This is the daughter of the man who saved my son! Before Bryan died, I swore to him that I would take care of his daughter and protect her for the rest of her life. I promised that she would never have to suffer. I'm a man, and a man has to keep his word. Phoebe is my responsibility. No matter what she does, I cannot abandon her.

In the end, he pulled his hand away from her with some force before addressing her concerns. "If you wish to leave this place, there is only one way now..."

Her eyes lit up with hope. "What way is it?" she asked anxiously.

"Give Madeline a call and beg her to forgive you..." Nigel pulled his phone out and placed it in front of Phoebe.

"What? You want me to beg that b*stard?!" Phoebe screamed. "No! I'm not going to beg her for anything! I'm only in this situation because of her and her two nasty boys! That b*stard..."

"That's enough! Shut up!" Nigel was furious to hear her cursing, and his veins popped out on his forehead as he shouted at her. "I don't want to hear you scolding Madeline, Joel, and Quincy ever again!" he said while slamming his palm on the table.

Phoebe trembled upon receiving a scolding. "W-Why?" she asked shakily. "They are the ones who got me into this state. Why can't I scold them?"

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Chapter 40 Sebastian's Logic

"Because Madeline isn't a b*stard. She's Michael and Crystal's biological daughter! Joel and Quincy aren't b*stards either—they're Madeline and Sebastian's biological sons!" Nigel growled.

Phoebe was too stunned to speak. She had been leaning forward against the table, but now, she fell back onto her seat. "What did you just say, Nigel? A-Are you drunk? Did you go drinking? W-Why are you spitting nonsense?"

"I'm not saying nonsense. Everything that I'm telling you is true..." Nigel waved his hand around dejectedly. "I'm really tired, Phoebe... We're different. You're a housewife who enjoys the life of a wealthy woman, and all you do is eat, drink, and sleep. I have to work, and I'm really tired... I don't expect you to take any of the burdens off my shoulders, but I just want you to stop causing trouble for me, okay? If you really want to get out, just give Madeline a call and beg her to put in a good word for you. You need to

make sure she gives in and agrees so that you can get out of there soon. I can't think of any more ideas apart from that."

Phoebe glared at him in disbelief. That b*stard, Madeline, is actually Michael and Crystal's daughter? Joel and Quincy are Sebastian's sons? That whole bunch of people I look down on, and the people who I scold and beat up whenever I want to... are actually biologically related to the men of the Wendel and Hart Families?

After Dan's brief explanation, Phoebe understood the sort of person Sebastian was. He was someone even Nigel couldn't afford to mess with. Crystal, on the other hand, may seem gentle on the outside, but she was a feisty and strong woman. Nigel was fond of her, so Phoebe would often butter her up and avoid offending her in any way.

In the Taylor Family, Nigel, Richard, Crystal, Sam, and Dan were people she had to respect and act carefully around. Isabel—her and Nigel's daughter—was someone she genuinely loved. So, Madeline, Quincy, and Joel were the only ones she could bully relentlessly. They were like her punching bags that she could pummel and step on anytime she wished to.

If she went out to bully others, people might scold or even sue her. The only person she could bully without facing any consequences was Madeline. Isabel and Phoebe were used to treating Madeline like a pet dog or cat instead of an actual human—they would order her around the house and criticize her whenever they wished to.

Madeline was the only person who could make Phoebe feel like she was actually in power. It gave Phoebe the taste of living life as an elegant, haughty, rich man's wife! However, now that Nigel was telling her that Madeline was actually Crystal and Michael's daughter and that Madeline was the biological child of the well-respected Taylor Family... If Michael and Crystal ever find out about all the times Isabel and I mistreated Madeline... I remember how we used to beat Madeline up really badly before Sam returned to the country.

When Phoebe thought about Crystal's seemingly gentle yet secretly hateful and fierce personality, fear spread across her face as she shuddered. "No, no, no! This can't be real!" She shook her head in panic. Madeline was supposed to be a b*stard that Isabel and Phoebe could bully and order around forever. How could the tables have turned so drastically? This can't be true!

Phoebe turned to Dan with a hopeful look in her eyes. "This isn't true, is it, Dan? Madeline is actually Cameron's daughter, not your aunt's! Joel and Quincy can't be from the Hart Family either! Your dad got it wrong, didn't he, Dan?"

"Dad didn't get it wrong, but you shouldn't be too worried, Phoebe." Dan quickly comforted her when he saw the fear in her eyes. "Although Quincy and Joel are Sebastian's sons, they are illegitimate sons who are looked down upon by the rest of Dusktown's well-known families. I'm sure the Hart Family doesn't really care about

them. Furthermore, although there's a possibility that Madeline is my uncle and aunt's biological daughter, Cameron switched her away when she was born, so my uncle and aunt have never cared for her at all. They don't have a strong relationship with each other. Your father, on the other hand, saved my life, so the Taylor Family is indebted to you."

"On top of that, you didn't know that Madeline was my uncle and aunt's daughter. They can't blame you for something you didn't know. For the sake of my father, I'm sure my aunt and uncle wouldn't put the blame on you for what you did to Madeline!"

"Do you think so?" Phoebe's eyes lit up. "If it's just a possibility that Madeline's their biological child, there's also a possibility that she isn't, right? Dan, you guys must've been scammed by Madeline. Madeline can't be your uncle and aunt's daughter. She was born to suffer in this life! She—"

"That's enough, Phoebe! You need to stop saying such things!" Even Dan's face was turning sour at that point. "I've looked at some of the Wendel Family's pictures of their older generations, and Madeline looks similar to one of my cousin's grandmothers. Angie, on the other hand, looks nothing like the Wendel Family. We're not sure that Madeline is my uncle and aunt's daughter, but all we need is a DNA test to make sure. You need to stop saying that Madeline's a b*stard—my uncle and aunt would be really angry if they heard it."

Phoebe shuddered at the thought of Michael, who would seek revenge for the tiniest matters. She kept quiet after that. Dan pulled his phone out and keyed in Madeline's number before handing the phone to Phoebe. "You should call Madeline now, Phoebe. You need to do it before the whole lawsuit starts. As long as Madeline is willing to drop the charges, you will be able to leave this place. If your lawsuit begins, you're stuck here even if Madeline stops pressing charges."

"No, no! I want to go out! I have to leave!" When she thought about her terrifying cell, she no longer cared about Madeline's birth parents. With shaky hands, Phoebe held onto the phone and dialed Madeline's number.

Madeline didn't notice her phone ringing, as she was preparing to register her marriage with Sebastian at the Civil Affairs Bureau. There were a lot of people in the hall, and there was a long queue in front of the counter where people registered their marriages.

"Why are there so many people?" Madeline felt a little nervous. She looked around the place and attempted some small talk just to calm her nerves. As she spoke, she tried her best to sound light-hearted and carefree, as if she wasn't nervous at all. "The more, the merrier. It shows that today is a good day to get married," Sebastian said with a smirk. "We're lucky, I guess."

She didn't know how to respond. I guess it makes sense!

Sebastian stayed beside Madeline as they queued up at the counter. This was rather surprising to Madeline, as she figured that someone as powerful as him could probably use his name to get an express pass to the front of the line. Alternatively, Sebastian could have told his assistant to arrange for someone to queue for them.

However, to her surprise, he stood beside her the whole time. Both of them shuffled their feet forward as the line moved. Sebastian wore a huge pair of sunglasses to cover half his face, and the people around him immediately assumed that he was some celebrity. They stole glances in his direction, and some of them even snapped photos until the Hart Family's guards stepped forward to stop them. However, that only attracted more people to stare at them.