

The Promise of Happiness Chapter 12

Chapter 12

Samuel glanced at Natalie briefly with a meaningful look in his eyes. With his lips slightly raised, he said, "Ms. Nichols, your vigilance is truly over-the-top. However, what are you afraid of? Are you worried that I'd want something from you?" Natalie was feeling extremely uncomfortable under his gaze. The man's eyes were focused on her face as if he was trying to stare right through her soul. Finally, she understood why he was rumored to be an immensely dominant and difficult-to-deal-with man. None of the people who were once targeted by Samuel was able to escape from his clutches. It wasn't that she didn't take him seriously before this, but she simply didn't want to be associated with such a dangerous person in any way. At that moment, Gavin came in and reported, "Sir, the meal is ready." Samuel's lips were slightly curved upward when he said, "Ms. Nichols, let's dine together. Have a taste of my chef's work." Natalie didn't try to reject, merely following Samuel into the dining hall to have their meal. The dining table was laden with all sorts of delicacies. Right after she took her seat, she began digging in. Although she was pleasantly surprised by the chef's cooking, she still managed to control herself while she ate. Thus, she survived the session without any incident. Right as she was almost done with her food, Samuel's phone began vibrating. "Please excuse me," he said. "Go ahead." When Samuel left, Natalie was finally able to relax for a bit. *I can't believe I managed to finish the meal without Samuel making things unnecessarily difficult for me. Could it be possible that I was the one who was being too paranoid? Did I really think of him too badly?* She was just about to finish her food when she felt something cool and soft on her calf all of a sudden. *What the hell?* Natalie looked downward, only to see a snow-white snake twirling itself around her calf, slowly inching its way up her leg. Its eyes were clear and amber-colored, and it kept flicking its tongue from time to time. Natalie was unlike Yara, who grew up in the city. Before she turned nineteen, Natalie had been living in the countryside. There would always be snakes in the fields and rivers, so she wasn't afraid of the snake. She had even caught snakes for fun with her childhood friends back then. However, when she came to the city, she rarely had the chance to see snakes anymore. She put down her fork and pried the little fellow that was wrapped around her leg off herself before lifting it right in front of her face. Then, she caressed the snake's head gently while saying, "Hello, little guy. You look special. Are you an albino?" She was planning to take the snake home with her if it didn't have an owner. Xavian would love to keep it as a pet. "You're not afraid of Moony?" A childish voice could be heard. "M-Moony?" Natalie's sight shifted from Moony to a little boy, who was standing at the door of the dining hall. The little boy had pretty looks, and his dark eyes were fixed intently on her. His good looks were even comparable with that of Xavian and Clayton's. Upon closer observation, she noticed that the little boy looked somewhat similar to Xavian and Clayton. Maybe it was because of this similarity that made her smile slightly. She took Moony in her hand and walked toward Franklin before squatting down in front of him. "Is this snake yours? It's cute!" Natalie was smiling when she looked into the little boy's dark eyes. "Is its name Moony?" The little boy pursed his lips and snorted. "You're unattractive, but you're rather brave. At least you're better than those women who screamed when they saw Moony." "Here. I'll return it back to you." Natalie placed Moony on Franklin's small palms. Franklin snorted again, never once averting his eyes from her face. "I called you unattractive just now. Why are

you not mad at me?" As Natalie had a hyper-realistic mask on her face to make her appear ugly, she wasn't the slightest bit bothered by the little boy's harsh words. "Well, it's a fact that I'm unattractive. Therefore, there's no reason for me to be mad about it." She rubbed Franklin's head, which was bristly because of his short hair, while she spoke. "Moreover, I'm already ugly. Won't it just make me uglier if I still get angry about it?" Franklin was already five years old. Still, his head had never been touched by anyone other than his grandfather. His father had never touched him, whereas others wouldn't even dare to think about it. Even the woman who gave birth to him would be frightened by a few words from him. Thus, she would never approach him. An indescribable warmth surged in the boy's chest when Natalie caressed his head. It was a feeling he had never experienced before. "Y-You..." He clenched his little fists. "Hmm? What is it?" Natalie paused her action before lifting her head to look at the boy, who seemed to be struggling with something. "Woman, you touched my head! You'll have to take responsibility." Franklin stared straight into her eyes as he spoke. "Be my woman from now on. I swear that I'll take care of you to the best of my abilities for the rest of my life. No one will dare to bully you!" "Pfft!" Natalie couldn't stop herself from letting out a snort. *This little fellow is only about the same age as Clayton and Xavian, yet he confessed his feelings to me just like that?* What was funny was that the little boy was so adorable, yet he said something so domineering like he was the president of a company. The contrast was so jarring that she couldn't stop herself from laughing. "Why are you laughing?" Franklin puffed up his cheeks and stared at her in all seriousness. "There aren't a lot of women who can meet my standards. You're the first. Since both Moony and I find you acceptable, you should stay by my side from today onward." Natalie could just imagine how enraged this child's father would be if he were to hear this. While she was in the middle of her thoughts, a tall and lean figure came in from the living room. The man's eyes were stern and frosty as he called out, "Franklin Bowers."