

Happiness 278-287

The Promise of Happiness

Chapter 278

Natalie felt embarrassed for being carried around, even though she was a grown woman.

As for Samuel waking her up, she had no clue because of how drunk she was.

“W–What about my gown?”

“I changed it,” he said. “Did you know, while I was helping you change, not only did you kiss me, but you also had your way with my body?”

“That’s impossible!” Natalie denied vehemently.

Even though she had low alcohol tolerance, she liked drinking and knew she was not a bad drunk.

She figured she most probably fell sound asleep after the alcohol got to her, so there was no way she would latch onto Samuel or do anything intimate with him.

“You don’t believe me?”

“I don’t.” Natalie looked straight at him.

She was confident that she would not do something like that even if she were drunk.

“Fine. I’ll show you proof.”

Samuel proceeded to unbutton the first few buttons on his shirt and pulled his collar down with his slender finger to expose the hickeys all over him.

Although they were not obvious, the surface they encompassed was still massive. On top of that, they were all over his chest, so it could only be her doing.

Did I do that?

Natalie was at a loss for words. She was sure that Samuel was bluffing a moment ago.

The only thing she could do was bury her head into her collar and silently cursed herself for being unhunged.

The next time I drink, I need to lock the door! This must never happen ever again!

09:40 –

G:

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Lo and behold, under her shirt, there were marks on her body too.

But those marks were not pink. They looked more like bruises to Natalie than hickeys.

On top of that, it was all over her body.

The night before, even though Samuel did not penetrate her, he did, however, do everything else.

He stared at her lips and was reminded of the soft and sweet sensation he felt.

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A surge of lust welled up from inside him.

This time, Samuel did not hold it in and instinctively grabbed Natalie's chin, pulling her in for a kiss.

In the quiet cabin, the only thing that could be heard was their heavy breathing as they kissed.

Natalie was sure that she was not the only one that could hear it.

"T-There are people here," Natalie muttered.

"This is my private plane." Samuel looked at her. "Billy, Sarah, and all the cabin crew are in the economy cabin. No one will come in here without my order. No one will see or hear anything that happens in here," he responded in his hoarse voice before he once again sealed her lips with his.

"Mmm..."

It was then that Natalie realized just how unrestrained wealthy people could get.

Inside the cabin, she was afraid that things might get out of hand.

She instinctively wanted to break free.

However, Samuel saw through her and grabbed hold of her hands, pinning them right above her head to prevent her escape.

With that, he reclaimed her lips and continued kissing her.

Even though he had already done a lot the night before, Samuel still could not suppress his primal instinct whenever they were alone.

09:40 – EG:

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When they arrived at Dellmoor International Airport, Natalie's lips were red and a little swollen, while Samuel looked exceptionally refreshed as the satisfaction lingered in his eyes.

From that moment onward, the entanglement of their lips could no longer satisfy him. He wanted to do much more than that. So much more.

Naturally, Natalie knew nothing about what Samuel was thinking. All she could think about at the moment was fetching her two kids from the Bowers residence.

Suddenly, she spotted Thomas and Yvonne's silhouette at the airport.

From the looks of it, they had just returned from a vacation because Yvonne was carrying a variety of the latest limited-edition products from a variety of well-known brands.

As soon as Natalie saw them, hatred started welling up from within, and she clenched her fists.

The loving affection they showed each other was a huge contrast to how Natalie's mother had suffered on her deathbed.

"Nat..."

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Natalie stared at Thomas and Yvonne in a daze.

Her gaze was filled with disappointment. When Samuel called out to her, she did not even hear him.

"Why are your hands so cold, Nat?"

Samuel covered her hand with his large hands. However, he realized that not only was she clenching her fists so tightly that her knuckles turned white, but her hands were also freezing to the touch.

Natalie bit her lips tightly, unable to utter a single word.

Not far away, Thomas and Yvonne glanced in their direction and spotted Samuel immediately.

He was wearing a black windbreaker. With his tall frame and physique, he was like a model. Even if one did not look at his face, he would be in the spotlight wherever he

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went.

Furthermore, his face was so handsome that it was obvious he was not an average **man**.

When Yvonne and Thomas saw Samuel, they waved at him excitedly, as if they had just seen their future son-in-law.

"What a coincidence to bump into you here, Samuel!"

Thomas had a very stern appearance. However, from the moment he saw Samuel, he could not stop grinning. Yvonne reacted in the same way too. Like a mother-in-law gazing at her son-in-law, her affection for Samuel increased the more she looked at him.

Natalie's face became pale.

She lowered her head and glanced at Samuel's hand, which was holding her hand tightly.

"Let go of me."

"I said, let go of me." A cold glint flashed across Natalie's eyes.

As Samuel did not want to force her, he let go of her hand.

However, a second after he released Natalie's hand, she turned around coldly and left.

Staring at his empty palm, Samuel narrowed his eyes grimly.

He strode behind Natalie without wasting a second.

When Yvonne and Thomas saw the charming Samuel chasing after an average looking girl, they were struck dumb.

“Hubby, what’s going on?”

“Nonsense!” Thomas retorted coldly, “How would I know?”

Without turning back to look, Natalie kept lowering her head and running forward.

Indeed! Since I’m wearing a hyper-realistic mask, I can force myself to act like a stranger who doesn’t know Thomas and Yvonne at all. However, why must I force myself to suppress my hatred for them? Isn’t this torturing myself? There isn’t enough tension for me to confront them directly yet. I do not need to put up an act with them in the airport’s VIP passageway. Also... I’ve finally seen Samuel’s true colors. That jerk! Seeing how nice Thomas and Yvonne treat him, they’ve definitely taken him as their son-in-law. Considering Samuel’s capabilities, they wouldn’t have dared to act on their own wishful thinking and assume that they’re his parents in-law—unless he was not against it from the start.

At that moment, Natalie suddenly realized how foolish she was.

Why was I dumb enough to trust Samuel? I owe him a favor because he saved me. However, I can repay his favor through other means. There’s no need to sacrifice myself. Still, it’s not too late. It’s a good thing that I’ve seen his true colors.

When Natalie ran out of the airport, someone grabbed her wrist forcefully.

“Who’s that?”

When Natalie turned her head around, she unexpectedly saw Samuel standing there with a cold glint in his eyes.

Her chest heaved while she tried to catch her breath from the run. However, Samuel stared at her calmly, showing no signs of exhaustion. It seemed like he had been following her all along..

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What did you see: Why did you suddenly run away;”

‘aragnose, indifference

though Secade’s heart was aching her grans filled with so sir, can you please let go of me

Her sudden politeness caused Samuel to fronti.

Why are you calling me ser

“We are just acquaintance Mr. Bowen Natalie lifted her head and continuei iciiv,

As the head of the Bowers family, you are a very powerful man. I'm addressing you politely as a sign of respect for your dignified status, sir.

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Natalie's lips were still swollen. When she kept addressing him as "sir," Samuel's temper immediately rose.

Very well! Very well indeed!

Samuel moved his grip from her wrist to her hand.

Unsatisfied with just holding her hand, Samuel pried open her clenched fist. He then interlaced his fingers with hers and held her hand firmly.

"What are you doing?"

"Since I have a dignified status and you respect me, you have no right to reject me."

"You."

Natalie stared at Samuel speechlessly, wondering how she should draw boundaries with him.

She held a grudge toward Yara.

Even if she was her twin sister, she would never forgive Yara.

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"Let go of me."

"No."

Natalie tried to free herself from Samuel. Not only were her attempts futile, but he even tightened his grip.

"Return to the Bowers residence with me."

"Why should I?"

"Are you abandoning Xavian and Clayton?" Samuel narrowed his eyes and threatened coldly, "I can afford to raise four children. I'll make them take my last name, Bowers, in the future."

Natalie shot him a menacing glare the moment she heard that he wanted to snatch Clayton and Xavian away.

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"Who said that I'm abandoning them, Samuel Bowers!"

"Follow me back, then." Samuel said, "Otherwise, if they ask me where you've gone to, I'll say that you're abandoning them."

“You’re threatening me, Samuel.”

“If that’s what you think, just listen to me.”

Natalie’s weakness Xavian and Clayton.

She could ignore Samuel, Thomas, and the rest, but she could never stop caring about her dear children.

Samuel knew her Achilles’ heel so well that she had no choice but to follow his every whim.

Billy parked the Hummer at the entrance of the airport.

Although Natalie had agreed to follow Samuel back to the Bowers residence, she did not agree to sit in the back seat with him.

When she instinctively opened the door to the front seat, she realized that the door was locked. She could not pull it open no matter what.

Knock! Knock! Knock!

Natalie knocked on the car window, signaling Billy to unlock the door.

However, despite knocking a few times, the car door was still locked.

“Don’t make things difficult for Billy.” Samuel opened the door to the back seat for her. “He won’t dare to open the car door for you without my permission.”

Natalie took a deep breath before bending down and entering the vehicle’s back seat.

When she and Samuel entered the Hummer, the atmosphere became unbearably awkward.

When Billy alighted the plane, he had not realized anything wrong between both of them. Within the blink of an eye, they had become so hostile with each other.

Billy kept reminding himself that he was nothing but an emotionless driving machine.

However, Natalie and Samuel’s presences were too strong that he still broke out into cold sweat.

It was after he heard the sound of the partition in the car rising that he heaved a sigh of relief, feeling like he had just been pardoned from death.

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After the partition was raised, it separated the front and back of the car into two separate worlds.

Natalie leaned against the car door closely. From the moment she entered the door, she had never spared Samuel a single glance. Instead, she kept staring at the scenery outside the window.

Samuel was not dumb.

He immediately realized that Natalie was distancing herself from him.

He could already guess that the reason for Natalie's aloofness had something to do with the Nichols family.

However, as he did not know what had happened between her and the Nichols family, he was clueless as to why her reaction was so dramatic.

Since she was unwilling to go over to him, he would move closer to her.

Samuel leaned over, forcing Natalie to cower in a corner.

"Why are you hiding from me?"

"You're overthinking." Natalie averted her gaze and added calmly, "I'm not hiding from you, nor do I want to be close to you."

"You don't want to?"

"Yes."

Natalie raised her head and nodded solemnly.

When Samuel saw that, he became very frustrated.

You don't want to be close to me? Dream on! That's impossible—be it now or in the future!

Samuel moved away from her slightly. Just when Natalie thought he had understood her intention and was willing to keep a distance from her, he suddenly bit her lips

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As a result of Samuel's sudden aggressiveness, Natalie's lips were slightly torn from the bite.

The metallic taste of blood started to intermingle with their breaths.

However, Samuel deepened the kiss instead of stopping as if he wanted to reach the depths of Natalie's soul.

It was a kiss meant to punish Natalie, but for some reason, Samuel thought that her lips were so soft and sweet that he could not get enough of them.

On the other hand, Natalie opened her eyes and stared at Samuel, who was kissing her so fiercely that she was forced to a corner of the car.

She felt like a hole had formed within her heart, through which a gust of cold wind was being sucked in. It was so chilling that it hurt. However, her rationality and composure came rushing back to her at the same time.

Right from the start, she and Samuel were from different worlds.

Samuel did not understand her true self.

At the same time, she knew nothing about him.

Who is Franklin and Sophia's biological mother? What's his relationship with Yara? Does Samuel truly like me? Or is he just eager for something fresh and would abandon me after he's tired of me?

Natalie rarely thought about these questions. However, when she seriously considered them, she realized that she had no answers.

Samuel only released her from his arms after a long while.

Panting like a wild beast, he raised his head and captured the hint of coldness and aloofness in Natalie's eyes.

"Samuel, I'm grateful that you protected me in regard to the Todd family in Livingsfill." Natalie cast her gaze downward and mumbled, "Now that we've returned to Dellmoor, everything should be back to normal. Regardless of whether you care about it or not, I'll think of other ways to repay the favor to you."

"Natalie Nichols, are you trying to provoke me on purpose?"

Samuel was so furious that he called Natalie by her full name.

"I'm not, but I have no control over what you want to do."

"I said that either you can either give up your body or your heart to me to repay the favor." Samuel pinched her chin and stated domineeringly, "Everything else is out of the question."

"In that case, I won't repay the favor. Just pretend that you've done some charity."

Natalie was shouldering too many burdens.

Even if Samuel treasured her a lot, she would never involve herself with her enemy's ally.

She had been too careless in Livingsfill. Thomas and Yvonne's timely appearance reminded her of the fact that she and Samuel belonged to two opposing parties.

"You must repay the favor."

Natalie remained silent for a moment.

"Don't worry. I have enough time and patience to drag things out with you."

Samuel slid his finger from Natalie's chin to her lips. Stroking her lips carelessly, he spoke in a deep and hoarse voice.

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A glint flashed across his eyes, and it was filled with a man's lust for a woman.

Naturally, Natalie understood his intentions.

However, she could never respond to him.

The Hummer stopped behind the Bowers residence.

Natalie and Samuel got out of the vehicle before entering the house one after the other.

Gavin walked over. "Hello, Mr. Samuel and Ms. Natalie."

"Hello, Gavin. Have Xavian and Clayton been good? What about Sophia and Franklin?" Natalie's voice became gentler at the mention of the four children.

"They're very obedient," replied Gavin with a smile. "The two young boys are very polite and considerate. They're so likable! They miss you a lot too, including Mr. Franklin and Ms. Sophia. They've been looking at your photo and crying their hearts out."

Natalie was rendered speechless.

Well...

At the thought of the four kids looking at her photos and sobbing sadly, Natalie was amused.

"Are they upstairs? Let me go up and see them."

"Yes."

Natalie ignored Samuel, who was standing behind her. After speaking to Gavin, she turned around and went upstairs.

Samuel's gaze became grim as he stared at her back.

Why is she so gentle to the four kids but so eager to cut off all ties with me? I'm worthless to her, huh?

However, he still followed behind Natalie and went up the stairs.

Natalie felt comforted when she saw Sophia, Franklin, Xavian, and Clayton.

As the other boys always gave in to Sophia, she was the first to run to Natalie and jump into her arms.

"I've missed you so much!"

Sophia was an adorable and sweet child. When she stared at Natalie with her teary eyes, Natalie felt like her heart instantly melted.

However, when Sophia spotted the wound on Natalie's lips, she could not help but exclaim in surprise and point at it.

"Why are your lips hurt? Is it painful?"

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Natalie only remembered how Samuel had bitten her lips in the car when Sophia mentioned it.

Although it was not bleeding anymore, it might have left a scab.

“Well...”

Meeting Sophia’s clear gaze, Natalie blushed in embarrassment.

How can I explain to a five-year-old child that this is due to a kiss?

When the other three kids heard that Natalie’s lips were hurt, they gathered around and stared at her lips simultaneously.

Franklin asked, “How did you get hurt?”

Xavian chimed in, “Does it hurt? Should I get you some anti-inflammatory medicine?”

Clayton, who was the sharpest, frowned and asked, “Mommy, the wound on your lips is quite deep. Did something bite you?”

The four children were only five years old, so they were naturally clueless about passionate matters among the adults.

Their clear eyes were only filled with concern and anxiety. It was evident that they had no other inappropriate thoughts.

The more they acted like that, the more Natalie was unable to come up with a good excuse.

“A bug bit her lips,” explained Samuel as he leaned against the door casually.

Although he was the culprit, his gaze was filled with calmness and indifference. As a result, his lie sounded more like a fact.

As Sophia had admired Samuel since she was young, she never doubted anything he said.

“What a powerful bug! It’s so mean!”

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Sophia puffed her cheeks angrily.

Blushing, Natalie glanced at Samuel exasperatedly.

However, he merely met her gaze indifferently, not showing any hints of guilt for bullying her or lying to the kids.

More importantly, he was staring at her with a meaningful look, as if she was his prey that would inevitably end up in his belly.

Quickly averting her gaze, Natalie said, “Clayton, Xavian, you’ve been staying in the Bowers residence for a long time now. I’ve already settled the matters over in Livingsfill, so you’ll go home with me tonight.”

Naturally, Clayton and Xavian were delighted that they could go home with Natalie.

However, after spending a week with Franklin and Sophia, they had developed a close relationship with them.

“Mommy, can we go back after a few more days?” asked Xavian tentatively.

“No.” Natalie shook her head and asserted, “This isn’t our home. We’ll have to return to our own home eventually.”

Xavian and Clayton exchanged glances, knowing that their mother had already decided.

Although they were reluctant to part with Franklin and Sophia, their mother was the most important person to them.

“Mommy.”

“We understand.”

Xavian and Clayton went to pack their suitcases reluctantly, deliberately dragging their time while doing so.

Standing beside Natalie, Franklin frowned and asked, “Did Daddy make you angry again? Is that why you’re so eager to leave?”

Sophia chimed in softly, “Can’t you spend more time with us?”

Natalie bent down and looked them in the eyes.

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Stroking Franklin’s and Sophia’s heads, she explained, “I don’t have to stay here in order to see you. I promise you that even if I go home with Xavian and Clayton, we’ll still meet regularly.”

Looking at how Natalie spoke to Sophia and Franklin, Samuel could not help but feel jealous of his own t wins.

On the contrary, she always looked like she wished for nothing other than to escape whenever she saw him.

Yet, she sounded so pleasant when she spoke to Franklin and Sophia.

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Samuel suddenly started to doubt himself. *Am I that detestable?*

He went downstairs and gave Gavin orders.

Although the latter was surprised why Samuel would give him such instructions, he soon nodded in understanding.

After Xavian and Clayton finished packing, Natalie brought them downstairs. At that moment, Gavin walked over.

“Gavin...”

“Dinner’s ready, Ms. Natalie.”

“But..”

“I know

that you’re coming today, so I specially prepared a sumptuous dinner for you.” Gavin rubbed his palms together with a troubled look. “I’ve been preparing it since morning, just so you can eat something delicious after returning to Dellmoor.”

Hearing how much effort Gavin had put into preparing dinner, Natalie couldn’t bring herself to refuse.

“All right then. Xavian, Clayton, and I will stay for dinner.”

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Natalie agreed to stay for dinner.

Xavian and Clayton heaved a sigh of relief too.

“Thank you, Mr. Gavin.”

“Thank you, Mr. Gavin.”

The two of them bowed at Gavin in unison.

Gavin had never thought it was a tough job being a butler for the family since the two young boys had always been so considerate toward him.

Not only were they good-looking, but they were also very polite and elegant with their words and actions.

It was apparent that Natalie had raised them well, making Gavin look at her in a different light.

“You’re welcome. Go to the dining room and have your dinner!” urged Gavin dotingly.

“Okay!”

“Thank you!”

The two of them dropped their suitcases and dashed into the dining room.

Natalie was at a loss for words. If they continued staying there, she was afraid they would grow very attached to the place and be even more reluctant to leave.

When she entered the dining room, she saw that Samuel and the four kids had already sat down. Only the seat next to Samuel was empty.

She did not want to sit next to him, but there was nowhere else for her to choose.

After everyone was seated, the six of them began eating.

Although Samuel was eating, his gaze had never left Natalie.

The latter did not say anything and merely ate with her head hung low.

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Only the sounds of people chewing could be heard at the dining table.

Among the four children, only Sophia was still quite clueless because of her young age. However, the other three boys had already noticed the strange atmosphere between Natalie and Samuel. Though the two adults were never intimate to start with, they did not act so strangely like now. *Did they have an argument?*

For the past two weeks, Samuel and Natalie had been in Livingsfill.

The four children had already reached a mutual understanding that they would help Samuel pursue Natalie.

If they got their marriage certificate like the couples in the television shows, they would have parents and a happy family.

With their minds immersed in thoughts, the three kids ate their meal in a state of worry.

They did not know what Samuel had done to make Natalie dislike him.

On the other hand, Natalie was oblivious to how troubled the children were because of her. She just wanted to finish dinner quickly and leave the Bowers residence with her children as soon as possible.

Finally, the meal ended.

When Natalie raised her head, she saw the three boys whispering among themselves.

“Should I pretend to have a stomachache?” Franklin volunteered bravely.

“It won’t work. With Mommy’s medical skills, she’ll take your pulse and figure out the truth.” After Xavian rejected that idea, he suggested, “Why don’t I say that I’ve eaten too much and need to use the toilet?”

“You’re so dumb, Xavian! How long can you poop for? We’ll still have to leave after you’re done,” rebuked Clayton.

“What should we do then?”

“Exactly! Don’t just say empty words, Clayton. What’s your solution?”

“Well... Xavian, why don't you leave the USB drive here on purpose? When we go back, you can say that you've left the USB drive here and ask Mommy to bring us back to look for it.” Clayton thought for a long time before voicing his suggestion.

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Franklin and Xavian agreed to that idea immediately.

“Not bad, Clayton!”

“As expected of you, Clayton”

Although the three boys spoke softly, they were so engrossed that they did not notice Natalie standing behind them and overhearing their conversation.

“Very well... First, you're going to leave the USB drive at the Bowers residence on purpose, then make me bring you back here?”

Natalie asked the three boys with a smile. However, the stern look in her eyes could not be concealed.

Flick!Flick!

Natalie flicked Clayton and Xavian's foreheads right after that.

Just when Franklin thought he would be spared, Natalie flicked his forehead mercilessly.

“Mr. Franklin, although you aren't my son, you tried to plot against me with them. You won't be spared.”

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Ouch!

Franklin massaged his forehead.

For the past five years of his life, he had only been spanked once by Samuel. No one else had ever touched him.

Franklin pouted. He did not yell out in pain but stared at Natalie in a daze instead.

His classmates had always complained that it hurt to be spanked by their mothers. However, he had never experienced that ever since he was born.

The woman who claimed to be their biological mother would only try to appease them for her ulterior motives.

Although it was his first time being punished by an outsider, Franklin did not dislike it at all.

The pain on his forehead reminded him that he had a mother, just like Xavian and Clayton.

Franklin could not suppress the grin that was forming on his lips.

After teaching the three boys a lesson, Natalie wanted to explain the reason to them. However, Sophia walked toward her cutely

She lifted her fringe and pleaded to Natalie adorably, "I want to be like them."

"Huh?"

"I want my forehead to be flicked like them..."

Using the cutest voice possible, Sophia asked for Natalie to flick her too.

After listening to the little girl's request, Natalie could not help but burst out laughing.

The reason why Sophia wanted that was similar to Franklin's.

Although their father treated them nicely, they secretly yearned for a mother.

When Sophia saw how the other boys had been reprimanded and punished by Natalie, she wanted the same too. It made her feel like she had a mother, which was

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Sophia panicked when she saw Natalie and not do anything

She let out a muffled

looking at her adorable face, Natalie could not bear to lick her forehead.

Furthermore, the little girl reminded Natalie of her childhood,

Tara and Thomas lived in

the wealthy Delmore, while she and her mother, Jennie, lived in the poor countryside

She lived an impoverished life when she was a child. However, her mother instilled in her a lot of things, including how to save someone's life with medicine and how to love herself. Even when she had been mischievous, her mother had never punished her

She said that all girls were precious Treasures of the family who should never be bullied. Instead, they were supposed to be in a loving environment

Natalie then cupped Sophia's face in her palms.

"Girls are different from boys. You're supposed to be nurtured with love, Sophia"

Sophia let go of her fringe as tears welled up in her big sparkly eyes,

"Mommy..."

Natalie's heart skipped a beat.

She felt like a needle had just pierced into her heart

It was Sophia's first time calling her that after they met at the airport,

She was not Sophia's mother, so she should not let Sophia call her "Mommy" However, when she heard the little girl calling out to her, she could not resist it at all,

Perhaps...for spending time with this pair of ruins, I've treated them like my own babies unknowingly

When the four children saw that Natalie was about to leave, they were overwhelmed with disappointment

Samuel stood there with a hand shoved in his pocket His brooding gaze pierced through Natalie as if he wanted to look into the depths of her soul,

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"Are you able to ignore their feelings as long as you can hide from me!"

"Well have to say farewell at some point. Natalie avoided meeting Samuel's gaze. *Don't worry. I'll make it up to Franklin and Sophia in other ways."

Natalie grabbed her suitcase and was about to leave with Xavian and Clayton when it started raining outside.

Without any warning, the rain poured down from the sky like a heavy thunderstorm.

The rain splashed onto the windows heavily, flowing down the panes like a waterfall.

Natalie frowned as she stared at the sudden downpour.

"The rain is so heavy.... Samuel walked to her and snatched the suitcase from her hand. "It looks like even God is helping me to make you stay."

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The heavy thunderstorm came all of a sudden.

Not

only was it dangerous to drive in such pouring rain, but Natalie also had to bring Xavian and Clayton along.

Just like what Samuel said, she had no choice but to spend the night at the Bowers residence,

When the four kids heard she had to stay for another night, they leaped in joy.

However, even if Natalie was staying, it did not mean that she had changed her mind. Shooting Samuel a glance, she spun around and went upstairs.

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After bathing, she changed into a white silk bathrobe. Standing in front of the windows, she stared into the darkness of the night.

The weather was good when I came here. Why did it suddenly rain?

When Natalie opened the weather application on her phone, she realized it would be raining in Dellmoo r from that night onward.

There was even a thunderstorm and a lightning alert for that night.

Will there be thunder and lightning alongside rain tonight?

Raising her head, she gazed at the night sky. *It's just heavy rain. There won't be lightning, right?*

Just when that thought appeared in her mind, a silver flash of lightning pierced through the night sky.

The deafening boom of thunder immediately sounded afterward.

Natalie was so scared by it that she dropped her phone on the floor. Her body began trembling uncontrollably.

The trauma of her mother's death was painfully ingrained in her memories.

Since then, she had always been afraid of thunder.

Bending down, she picked up the phone and placed it on the bedside table.

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When she was alone during a stormy night, her thoughts would easily roam wild and that agonizing night would pop into her mind.

Rather than being afraid of thunder and lightning, she was more terrified of that nightmarish memory.

No! I must look for Clayton and Xavian!

With them keeping her company, she would be able to pull through this stormy night.

When she walked to the door and opened it, she saw Samuel standing right outside.

"Why... Why are you here?"

"I guessed that you'd be afraid of the thunder."

She had fallen asleep while hugging Samuel's leg because of her fear of thunder. However, she did not expect him to remember that.

Natalie gazed at him in disbelief.

So what? Since I've already decided to cut off all ties with him, I will not show even the slightest bit of hesitation.

Despite being gripped with fear, she put up a tough front and insisted, "Nonsense! You can leave now. I'm not afraid of thunder."

"Are you lying to me or yourself?" mumbled Samuel as he cast his gaze downward and scrutinized Natalie, who was forcing herself to stay strong.

"You're too arrogant! It's none of your business how I'm doing!"

"Fine, I'm being too arrogant."

Fury crept into Samuel's eyes as he stared at her fixedly.

Suddenly, the flash of lightning and the boom of thunder occurred simultaneously.

The thunder was horribly loud.

Natalie's mind immediately went blank. When she returned to her senses, she found her arms already wrapped around Samuel tightly.

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m tha in stonings h*

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urinumneralraysLDLD,

Since the wall was cold 99, Natalie could not help but moun out loud.

*When Samucizanced at the white sleeping, zown Kazlie was wearing he quiped. liorever, he quickly suppr
everi his lust for her*

Sizing ohtly, he swapped positions with Natalie,

His back was pressed against the cold wall as he flipped Natalie around and embraced her lightly

"I'm... I'm only.

*Natalie raised her arms to push Samud away. However, he continued standing in front of her, refusing to
budge a single inch,*

*"Do you still want to lie to me: If you lie to me, you'll have to pay a price, mumbled Samuel as he stared a
t her. Bending, down, he quickly captured her lips.*

Chapter 286

The fone of the Kiss caused Natalie to grunt in pain,

"S Sammel, vou jerk

Vatahes embarrassment urned into tury. Even so, he ignored her insults and kissed her so forcefully that her complaints murned into moans.

“What are you escaping from:” asked Samuel hoarsely before kissing her again.

Despite running out of breath, Natalie could not break free. Her mind was starting to go blank from the lack of oxygen.

Flashes of lightning pierced through the night sky irregularly. When the thunder boomed. Natalie’s body would tremble instinctively. However, other than that, the fear and anxiety that had tormented her all along seemed to have disappeared because of the kiss.

As the kiss deepened, Natalie felt her body go weak.

She had forgotten how to resist.

Although Samuel was forcefully kissing her, it made her calm down gradually.

In the room, Samuel lowered his head and hugged her slender waist through the silk sleeping gown, kissing her lips tenderly and carefully.

Previously, his kiss was filled with an intent to punish her. However, after she succumbed to his embrace obediently, his temptation to be rough toward her increased.

To be honest, his rational self only wanted to cuddle.

With such a beautiful woman in his arms, though, Samuel could not resist only hugging her

Other than the sounds of thunder, their soft pants and heavy breathing echoed in the room.

Outside, Xavian and Clayton were standing in the corridor and staring at Natalie’s room.

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Chapter 286

“Clayton, the thunder is so loud tonight. Mommy will definitely be scared...” Xavian’s eyes were filled with worry. “Should we go in and accompany Mommy?”

The moment Xavian took a step forward, Clayton pulled him back.

“Didn’t you see Stepdad entering?”

“B–

But... Don’t you know that Mommy’s terrified of thunder? Whenever she hugs us, her body would tremble! Sometimes she would even cry when she slept.” Xavian was genuinely worried about Natalie.

“That’s enough.” Clayton explained in a mature tone, “Didn’t you notice Mommy is giving Stepdad the cold shoulder? This is the perfect chance for him to coax her! We mustn’t intervene now.”

When Xavian heard Clayton's reminder, he slapped his forehead in realization.

"Clayton, you're amazing. You're the best wingman ever."

"Yeah."

Blinking, Xavian asked curiously, "Clayton, where did you get all this knowledge from?"

"From the shoots," replied Clayton casually. "It's always like this in the scripts. Every time a conflict arises, the guy will have to appear as the girl's knight in shining armor."

"Since Stepdad's taking care of Mommy, let's be more concerned about Sophia."

The thunder that night was particularly loud. Even if Sophia was not as terrified of it as Natalie, she would probably be scared.

Hearing that, Xavian immediately supported Clayton's suggestion.

"Okay, let's go to Sophia."

Meanwhile, Natalie was completely oblivious to their conversation and departure.

If she knew her children were eavesdropping just outside the door, and could probably hear them kissing, she would bury her face in embarrassment.

Soon, the thunder subsided. Only the rain and wind whooshed tempestuously in the night sky

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Chapter 286

Natalie's body had already gone weak from Samuel's kisses. She did not even have the energy to throw a tantrum anymore.

Although she could glare at him, tears had already welled up in her eyes from that kiss.

As a result, instead of being intimidating, her glare was more seductive to Samuel.

"You can choose to flee from me, but you must give me a reason." When Samuel noticed her indignant look, he added in a deep voice, "It mustn't be some random excuse. It must be a reason that can convince me."

Chapter 287

A reason?

Natalie could not help but burst into laughter.

"Samuel, is it fun to toy around with me?" asked Natalie.

Turning his head, Samuel gaped at her in surprise.

Since when have I been toying around with her?

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A serious look crept into his gaze as he stared at Natalie, whose eyes were becoming red.

He had never seen her on the brink of tears, even when she was severely injured, but he was witnessing it now.

Only then did Samuel realize the severity of the issue.

She really hates me so much that she detests me touching and kissing her.

“I have no intention of toying around with you.”

Natalie scoffed in contempt. “You claim to like me, but are you sure that you can be with me together forever?”

“Why not?” asked Samuel.

“Yara has so many admirers, but she rejected all of them. She only loves you and is waiting for you to marry her. Your grandfather is very pleased with Yara being his granddaughter—in-law, too. On the other hand, he hates my guts. I have to constantly be on guard, just in case he decides to make me suffer. If I were to be caught unaware, I might be killed because of your grandfather.”

Even though Natalie did not mention how Yara had tried to kill her children by setting a fire, she was certain that her words would make Samuel realize they belonged to completely different worlds.

“Are you done speaking?”

The woman did not answer.

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Chapter 287

“You talked about Yara and my grandfather, but you didn’t even mention me at all.” Samuel stroked Natalie’s red lips with his thumb. “I only want to spend my life with you. Why should I care about what they think? Their opinions are completely irrelevant to me.”

Natalie was forced to meet Samuel’s gaze.

His face was extraordinarily handsome as he stared at her with his brooding, unfathomable gaze.

Natalie’s heart ached.

“If only either Yara or I can survive, who would you choose?”

“Questions like this...”

“Are hard to answer?”

“My answer will always be you,” Samuel uttered, pressing his forehead against Natalie’s. “If only one of us can survive, I’ll choose you too. Other than our children, no one can be compared to you.”

When Natalie gazed into his eyes, she felt as though her soul would be sucked into them.

Natalie blushed. Although her worries had been resolved, she could not help but ask, “Do you read a lot of romance novels?”

“Huh?” Samuel asked her softly.

“Your words sound like they’ve been taken out of a romance novel. It’s like you’re a domineering CEO who only cares about love and not his work...”

Carrying Natalie to the bed, the man propped himself above her body with his arms.

“Do you like it?”

Samuel was also wearing a robe. His collars fell open slightly, revealing his well defined and chiseled chest.

Furthermore, as he had just bathed, he exuded a minty fragrance that intermingled with his masculine scent. It was enough to drive one’s imagination wild.

Although Natalie liked it, there was no way she would admit it.

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Chapter 287

“Get up.”

“What if I say no?”

“You,”

Holding her hand, Samuel placed it on his chest.

“Were you jealous of Yara all this while?”

“N–No...”

Natalie tried her best to withdraw her hand, but Samuel gripped it so tightly that she could not free herself.

“Nat, I’ve never done this to Yara before.” Samuel kissed her lips and continued, “You’re the only one, be it now or in the future. Only you can look at my body, touch it, and do whatever you want with it.”

His words were overly exhilarating and dangerous.

After Samuel whispered into Natalie’s ears, she felt her face burn.

“I don’t know what you’re talking about, Samuel.”

Of course you do. You're just pretending that you don't!

"It's fine even if you don't." Samuel's breath became irregular as he continued, "I'll teach you with my body."