

Happiness 459-468

The Promise of Happiness

Chapter 459 The Playful Old Man

Thomas was equally surprised to see Yandel at a stone-gambling market.

“Yandel...” Thomas said, his gaze trailing off toward Natalie. “Aren’t you together with Melissa? What are you doing with your... secretary?”

Yandel eyed Yeva and smiled.

“Come on, Mr. Nichols. You’re a married man yourself, but I see you’re still having fun outside. We work hard every day, so we should also play hard.”

Thomas originally wanted to barrage Yandel with criticisms because he was cheating on his daughter, but now that Yandel called him out, there was no way Thomas could do that. It would be too hypocritical for him to denounce what Yandel did, so the old man just smiled.

“Melissa is good, but she’s got a temper. My secretary is way better,” Yandel remarked, pinching Natalie’s face.

Yandel did this because he wanted to play along with Natalie, but his fingers were actually shaking when he did that.

Even he could not tell why.

Natalie took his cue and lowered her head in embarrassment.

When Yeva saw this, she felt she was challenged.

She crossed her hands around Thomas and asked him, “Do you think I’m better than your old wife?”

“What are you talking about? Watch what you’re saying,” Thomas said seriously, but his words amounted to no threat.

“What do you mean? I don’t care what you do when you’re with her, but you’re with me right now. You have to at least make me happy when we’re together,” Yeva replied. “Besides, you know I’m behaving like this because you pamper me too much.”

Thomas knew full well that Yeva was someone full of drama.

Sometimes he wondered why he even fell for Yeva. Perhaps it was because men tend to want a breath of fresh air once they hit a certain age. They got bored of women who take care of the family and started looking for women whom they had to take care of and pamper instead.

Thomas softened his tone. “You’re prettier and more attractive than Yvonne. I really hope you’re the one I married instead of her.”

These words disgusted Yandel.

Meanwhile, Natalie’s fists were already clenched so tightly that her palms started becoming pale.

Is he for real? Not only did he not act like a father, but he also behaves so ingratiatingly with this woman.

Despite Natalie's loathing for the two of them, the emotions in her eyes quickly faded and she wore a smile.

"Mr. Moss," she said to Yandel, "Look at that! Isn't it exciting? I want to take a bet too. Do you think you can chip in some money for me?"

Yandel looked at her in the eyes and knew what she was thinking.

"How much would you like to bet, honey? I can buy as many jade stones as you want. I'll even buy everything they have if that makes you happy!"

"You don't have to, Mr. Moss," Natalie replied coyly, darting her gaze at Yeva.

Their eyes met briefly, but the amount of pride and sense of superiority on both sides were telling.

Yeva was provoked. She could not stand it anymore.

She felt an urge to win this passive fight, so she tugged Thomas and said, "I want to do it too! They only cost a few thousand a pound. I really want to give it a try. I've suffered enough because of your wife. I should at least get some compensation."

Over and over again, Yeva brought up the fact that she had always had to stay hidden from the public eye because of her status as Thomas' mistress. To her, this was a glitch in their relationship that she could not seem to overcome.

She could not understand why Natalie could enjoy better treatment when both of them were mistresses of other men. Yeva felt she was entitled to the same treatment too.

As for Thomas, he was a calculative man himself. He knew how low the odds were of having these stones turning out to be real jade, so he was contemplating if he should just buy Yeva a limited edition handbag instead.

"What about a designer handbag?" he asked.

Natalie saw through Thomas right away. "Mr. Nichols, you're Dexmed Pharmaceutical's owner. Why don't you just play big this time since you're already here? You can't just buy her a bag. You should at least show some sincerity."

Chapter 460 Making Small Sacrifices For Big Gains

Thomas finally took a good look at Natalie.

Thomas did not even pay attention to her the last time she came to his place with Yandel.

Now that she spoke, Thomas observed her and realized that her demeanor was no second to Yandel himself.

Not only were her features exquisite, but she also gave off a forbidding and confident vibe, compelling people around her to listen to her.

Since Thomas got to where he was today because of the Bayer family, he had things easy for most of his life. This was the first time he felt he was ensnared by someone younger than him.

When Yeva heard what Natalie had to say, she stomped and complained, "I don't want handbags! I want to buy some jade stones. I insist on that! It's either you get me that or you sleep with your old wife for the rest of your life. I'm not seeing you ever again."

Yandel sniggered. "Aw, Mr. Nichols, it seems like this lady is angry. You should do something. These stones aren't that expensive. Besides, who knows you'll really be lucky today? I would just buy a few if I were you."

Thomas was caught between a stone and a hard place. On one hand, his mistress was pressuring him; on the other, Yandel was projecting himself as if he knew better.

The bells were ringing at the stone-gambling site.

This further stoked Thomas to take a rash decision. "All right! Let's try our luck today!"

"Yay! I knew you wouldn't let me down!" Yeva exclaimed in thrill when the final verdict was given.

A sly smirk curved on Natalie's lips.

Finally, she could see sweet revenge delivered. She felt the hatred in her heart could finally be appeased.

Meanwhile, Samuel had been watching the four of them closely. He had got his new cup of tea, and Weston was pedantically attending to him.

He realized that Samuel had not taken his eyes off the screen ever since he started watching it. In fact, Samuel did not even spare a look at Weston.

"Mr. Bowers—"

"Stop talking."

Before Weston could continue his explanation, he was already cut off.

He looked at Samuel helplessly, not knowing what his next recourse should be.

Samuel was already in a foul mood when Yandel put his arm around Natalie's shoulder.

Yandel was Natalie's trusted confidant and employee. Besides, Natalie and Yandel must be up to an important task now that she put on a mask, so Samuel could not help but wonder what was it that moved the both of them to take such a resort, but it still vexed him as time passed.

Although Samuel knew it was all an act, he still felt an urge to go over and just cut off Yandel's arm.

Calm down, they must be doing this for a good reason, but seriously, do they have to do this?

Why must they even be having such skinship?

The veins on Samuel's forehead bulged in agitation. He lifted his arm and sat back, but again, he accidentally pushed the cup off the table, yet he did not seem to be perturbed at all.

On the contrary, Weston was the one who hunkered down to pick up the pieces. The earlier cup was of a phenomenal price, yet this cup was even way more precious.

"Achoo!"

Again, Yandel sneezed.

"Did you catch a cold?" Natalie asked.

"No. I just feel like my nose is itchy."

Yandel had a premonition that Samuel had already blacklisted him.

This kind of sixth sense might sound unbelievable to some, so Yandel did not share his concern with Natalie.

The two couples walked over to the place where people sold jade stones.

Yandel waited patiently as Natalie picked a few stones.

He was aware that Natalie knew what she was doing. Although Natalie's skills might have gotten rusty after so many years, he still believed that she would be able to help him break even.

As for Thomas and Yeva, the latter was a dilettante when it came to jade stones.

She could only judge based on the outer patterns of those stones, going with those which looked the most appealing.

She chose those with beautiful rinds and made up her mind. "I want these. I think we'll get some jade from one of these stones."

Since Thomas had already given his word, he went ahead and placed an order for those stones without weighing in his opinions.

As for Natalie, he gestured at Yandel and waited for him to lean closer before she whispered in his ear.

"Ask Ross to arrange with the seller to change the sequence of the jade stones. Also, ask the seller to exchange Thomas' seventh stone with my seventh one."

"Why?"

Natalie shot him an evil smile. "I'm making small sacrifices for big gains."

Chapter 461 This Is Supposed To Be Hers

After that, Yandel went to see to it that Natalie's order was carried out.

He and Thomas placed their respective orders for about ten pieces of jade stones each.

The seller weighed the items and named the price. Yandel readily took out about a few million and made his payment, but as for Thomas, his expression betrayed his reluctance. What a waste of money. It will all go to the drain if there's no jade at all.

I'd rather buy a handbag than stones that do not even promise any returns.

Thomas thought the whole thing was purely a gamble of fate, but he could not go back on his word since that would be too shameful for him. Besides, Yeva was constantly sweet-talking to him, so he had no other choice but to proceed with the plan.

Now that they made the payment, the final step would be to reveal the results.

"Mr. Nichols," Natalie said, "there is only one machine to carve out the stone. What about I go first?"

"Why not?" Thomas replied, so Natalie went ahead and picked one stone and asked two of the workers to carry it over.

First, they ran some water over the raw stone to bring down its temperature. Then, they used a sharp and spinning handsaw blade to cut through it.

Everyone awaited the outcome anxiously as the workers set to work. Usually, the chances of having jade in raw stones were rare.

About ten years ago, Natalie saved an outlaw's wife.

In return for her kindness, he taught her all the tricks he knew about stone-gambling. That was how Natalie came to know about this craft and the ways to go about swaying luck to her side.

Within a few minutes, Natalie's stones were all processed, but to her dismay, her endeavor was fruitless.

Eight out of them turned out to be just regular stones, while the other three were small yellow jades. Their colors did not look promising and could only be sold for about tens of thousands in the market.

Yandel spent millions on the pile, but only clawed back tens of thousands of returns. They were running a huge loss.

Yandel was startled when he found out about the result. He had no idea what Natalie was trying to do since given her capability, there was no way she would make such a glaring mistake.

Natalie looked over at him and complained, "What are you looking at? I thought you said you'd do anything to make me happy just now? Don't tell me you're regretting spending the money now. I'm buying more! I just don't believe I can't have luck on my side today."

Yandel was not in the position to stop her.

"Sure. Go ahead."

Natalie looked at him with confidence. "Just you wait and see. I will make sure I bring some real good jade home today," she promised, patting his shoulder.

When Thomas saw that Yandel had made a fool out of himself when he lost the best, he came over and talked smugly. "It seems like your lover is running low on luck today. I hope things get better for both of you in the later round."

What an *sshole. Yandel cursed at the old man in his heart, but for courtesy's sake, he still smiled at him. "Thanks, I hope so."

After Yandel's stones were all checked, it was time to move on to Thomas and Yeva's stones.

Since this was Yeva's first stone-gambling experience, she was so nervous she held on to Thomas' hand.

Likewise, the man was equally fidgety. He was afraid that things would turn out just like what happened to Yandel. If that happened, it meant that he had invested a fortune in some trash.

The first six jade stones were disappointing.

Four of them were just regular stones, and the other two were studded with yellow jade. Even so, the color was worse than Natalie's, and could only be sold for a negligible amount of money.

When Thomas and Yeva saw the workers hauling the seventh stone over to the machine, they prayed earnestly in their hearts that there would be jade in it.

They held their breath as the workers cut through the crust of the stone. When they saw what they had been waiting for so far, the seller looked up, crying out, "There is jade in this one!"

A streak of bell rings followed immediately.

When Yeva heard the bells, she was so excited she shrieked in joy. "Honey! We got it! I told you we would get lucky today!"

"You're so smart, Honey!" Thomas was over the moon as well. He hugged Yeva and gave her a big sloppy kiss on the cheek. "You're my lucky star!"

Thomas had already given up on unrealistic expectations when the first six stones turned out to be just rock. He harbored no hope of ever recovering his loss, but when he found out that the impossible just happened, he was exhilarated beyond measure.

Meanwhile, Yandel was disgruntled when the result was announced.

No one knew better than him that the seventh stone belonged to Natalie.

The jade expert went on the stage to talk about the piece of jade.

According to his observation, he said that it was premium jade despite the uneven color of the jade. However, given that there were impure composites on the side of the jade, that would be a big setback for asking for a higher selling price in the market, yet despite all this, this single piece was worth tens of millions.

Thomas took the jade over, rubbing its surface with a victorious and greedy grin on his face.

Chapter 462 It Looks Exquisite

As for the remaining stones Yeva picked, they all turned out to be just normal ones, yet regardless of the outcome, they were already satisfied when they found out that they at least scored a piece of jade from the pile.

“Honey,” Yeva said, “I want to go for another round. I’m pretty sure I’ll get another jade this time too. Who knows I’ll get a better piece?”

Thomas thought about all the money he just made and saw no harm in trying again.

“Sure! Let’s do it!”

Another round of careful deliberation took place between the two as they cautiously picked out more raw jade stones from the pile of rocks.

“Boss, what exactly is your plan?” Yandel asked with his voice low, putting his hand on Natalie’s shoulder.

“You’ll know later,” she said with a nasty smile. “We just need to watch and wait.”

Yandel had absolute trust in Natalie, so since Natalie was positive that her plan would work out, he suspended his doubt and just smiled. “All right. I’m waiting.”

This time around, Thomas and Yeva’s appetite was getting bigger. They chose more than twenty pieces the second time.

Seeing that business was thriving, the jade expert analyzed the stones passionately before the workers carved them out, yet when the results were shown, Thomas and Yeva were completely dismayed.

Not only was there no premium quality jade, but there also was not even a single piece that carried jade.

The money they spent on the second batch offset the amount Thomas gained from the jade they won.

“What a shame!” one of the onlookers commented.

“Come on. This is normal in stone-gambling. They make and break people. That’s why people are so addicted,” another commented.

“Do you think he will continue betting? He just needs another jade to earn back all his losses this round.”

Thomas was already upset enough, but when he heard the comments spectators made, his blood boiled in rage.

Those people and their filthy mouths! No wonder my luck is bad today.

He convinced himself that he would get lucky if he were to try again.

Driven by their earlier victory, Yeva was also acting impulsively. She encouraged Thomas to go for another round since neither of them felt like they should give up now that they won something.

Thomas agreed without any hesitation and pulled Yeva close to his side as they started picking some stones again.

Enthusiastic and confident as they might be, the third round was devastating.

They chose more than twenty untreated stones, yet none of them showed anything promising.

Thomas was flustered, but the angrier he got, the more he felt an impulse to make back all he had lost. "I can't believe it! I'm sure I'll be able to get something back!"

Yeva did not stop him. Instead, the two started choosing stones the fourth time, and again, the result was disheartening.

Within just the span of an hour, Thomas lost one hundred million in total.

He gained nothing but a mountainous pile of rocks. His face paled and his knees almost gave way, yet despite how pitiful he looked, Natalie felt no remorse.

Instead, a satisfying smile curved on her lips as she looked at Yandel. "Mr. Moss, I've picked a new batch of stones. Why not we give it one last try? The jade expert has nothing to do now anyway."

Yandel looked over and found out Natalie had only picked three.

The truth was, it was not that Natalie did not want to choose more. It was simply because the quality of the stocks available was not the best.

When the man saw that Natalie only came with three stones, he did a botchy job explaining the stones since they looked insignificant to him, but his jaw dropped the moment he saw a hint of green color when the blade cut through the stones.

His whole face lit up and he rang the bell again.

He was even more delighted when the whole stone was cut away. Everyone was stunned by what they saw.

The jade was as green as an apple, and everyone was in awe.

Chapter 463 A Painful Loss

The expert swallowed hard at the sight.

This was the best jade he had seen over the past six months.

The crowd gathered around, marveling at how exquisite that piece of jade looked.

"This is incredible! I can't believe what I'm seeing."

"This can sell for two million, man!"

"Three million, to be precise. By the way, I'll really buy this if they're selling it."

As for Thomas, he had just incurred a painful loss earlier on. When he saw that Yandel had his best luck just from the first stone itself, he ground his teeth in jealousy. In fact, he was so overtaken by his emotions he was at a loss for words.

Interested buyers flooded Yandel with questions, but the latter had no time to entertain them. "Sir," he said to the man, "what about you proceed with the other stones? There are two more."

The seller did as he was told.

Two strong men carried the second one over and the seller started making some remarks as they cut the rock.

The first cut did not show anything exciting, yet as the blade went deeper, a flare of greenness came from within.

"W-What? It's green too!"

The seller quickly collected himself and reached for the bell again.

Ring!

The bells elicited a smile on Natalie's face.

By the time the rock was polished into a jade, they found out that it weighed a whopping five pounds.

Although it was still not on the same level as imperial jade, it was still a magnificent and perfect piece of its own.

The jade looked clear and glistening under the reflection of light, and no one could contend that it did not look superb.

This was prime jade. It required no further crafting because it was beautiful on its own.

The whole crowd was charged with excitement.

"This is not imperial jade, but it's equally rare!"

"Oh my gosh! This is worth even more than the first one! They can sell this for hundreds of millions!"

"What is this? They've got all the luck!"

As for Thomas and Yeva, they looked down on Yandel and Natalie when they won during the first round. Thomas totally disregarded them and busied himself with the stones earlier on, but now that he saw how successful their bet was, intense jealousy and anger gripped him.

Meanwhile, Yandel was completely preoccupied with what just unfolded before his eyes. He could not believe that Natalie was this good.

The latter elbowed him in his chest, looking at him begrudgingly. "Come on, ask the man to cut the last one!"

Yandel collected himself and nodded absent-mindedly.

Since Natalie was under disguise, Yandel would have to take the lead now.

He hid his astonishment and put on a confident front.

Everyone was looking forward to what would happen next.

Even the seller himself felt feverish because of the thrill. He took a few deep breaths and asked his men to lower the blade.

It went directly toward a piece of yellow jade.

Although it was still jade, the result was still not as good as the previous two.

The crowd was slightly disappointed, yet in hindsight, they knew having two green jades was already good enough.

Thomas and Yeva heaved sighs of relief when they found out that there was no green jade in the last stone because if it had, they would have collapsed to the ground in anger.

Just as the crowd thought that was the end, the seller suddenly cried out in all eagerness.

“W-wait! It’s a multicolored jade!”

The bell rang furiously this time around.

Three-quarters of the jade was yellow and the remaining quarter was green.

Although the green part of the jade was just as small as a person’s palm, it was none other than imperial jade.

“Imperial jade!” The expert teared up as he announced the result. He almost fainted from the shock.

“Honey,” Yeva stuttered, “we, we...” She could not bring herself to finish her sentence.

It turned out that Thomas and Yeva actually considered taking that piece of raw stone while they were picking earlier on.

Chapter 464 My Woman Is The Smartest

Thomas and Yeva missed the opportunity because they thought the rinds on the rock looked ugly.

That was how they missed the greatest opportunity ever.

Never in their life would they expect that there would be imperial jade lying underneath the unappealing facade.

Although it was small, it was worth hundreds of millions.

Thomas almost gave himself a slap in the face. Everything would be different if he had chosen that rock earlier on.

What everyone just witnessed had never once happened in that black market’s stone-gambling’s site. No one had ever won three consecutive rounds, let alone scoring imperial jade.

This is just crazy!

This is a miracle!

Onlookers found it hard to believe that they were seeing the impossible happening before their very eyes.

As for Yandel, he smiled proudly knowing Natalie was totally capable of impressing the crowd even when she did not seem to care about how others thought of her.

All she cared about was exacting revenge on Thomas and Yeva.

“Mr. Nichols, if I remember correctly, you were considering the last rock I chose, weren’t you?” Natalie asked with a hint of provocation in her voice. “Thank you for not choosing it in the end. I wouldn’t have gotten this imperial jade if it weren’t for you.”

Natalie was rubbing salt into his wound.

It dawned upon him that he and Yeva did not even pay attention to Natalie while they were picking stones, but Natalie, on the other hand, had been following their every move.

Now that she pointed out what she observed earlier, it was obvious that she was trying to rub it in.

Thomas finally lost it. “You’d better watch your tongue, young lady.”

“Excuse me,” Yandel interrupted, putting his hand on Natalie’s shoulder. “What did she say that was wrong? You have only yourself to blame for your loss. Don’t tell me a few hundred of million was too much for you to lose. You should be ready to lose some money when you bet, so there’s no good reason for you to be lashing out at her when things didn’t go your way.”

“How dare you!”

Thomas was incensed. He could not understand how life could treat them so differently. There were both in this gamble together, yet their lucks were completely opposite.

Now that he lost a huge sum of money, Thomas was caught in a tight spot. If he used money from the company, he would have to account for it; if he used his private fund, he would have to answer to his wife.

Thomas was not a gambler himself, but he had no idea what got into him that day that he just followed his heart instead of his mind, so much so that he lost the whole amount of liquid cash he owned.

Now that he thought about it, he figured there was something wrong with everything that had happened.

No one actually forced him to gamble, yet he felt like he was strung along all this while.

“We’re leaving!” Thomas shouted as he pulled Yeva out the back market.

Yeva, knowing full well that Thomas suffered a great loss because of her, followed him without objecting.

When Natalie saw them leaving in a shameful fashion, a wide smile appeared on her face.

Serve you right!

The thought of Thomas having to face his livid wife made her laugh.

After she savored those thoughts, Yandel asked her what she wanted to do with the three pieces of jade.

“Just sell them. You take the amount you spent to buy those rocks and donate the rest in Dream Corporation’s name.”

“Donate everything?” It was not that Yandel did not want to contribute to society. It was just that he felt reluctant to just give away everything.

“Yeah, you heard me right. Don’t be too greedy. This is not rightful gain anyway, so we should make proper use of it. Besides, it’s not like I am strapped. There are people who need this more than I do.”

Once again, Yandel was convinced that Natalie was the most admirable person he had ever met.

“All right. I will do as you said.”

Meanwhile, although Samuel was not present at the scene, he saw everything Natalie did during stone-gambling.

His eyes flickered with pride as he rubbed his lips, looking at the woman on the screen.

He never knew that Natalie knew a thing or two about jade.

Chapter 465 A Chance Of Redemption

That’s my woman.

A sense of satisfaction budded in his heart.

At first, Weston had no idea what Samuel was looking at, but when he saw how Natalie scored an imperial jade as time passed, he was flabbergasted.

He was the one who ran the black market, but never in his entire life had he seen anyone this lucky.

In fact, he rubbed his eyes a few times in disbelief at what he saw happening.

“Mr. Bowers, that man might have bought the stones, but it was that woman who picked them,” Weston remarked. “It was obvious that she knows a lot about Jade. Why not I rein her in and ask her to work for us?”

Weston thought he made a good proposal and was anticipating some compliments from Samuel.

“You? Rein her in?” Samuel’s face darkened.

“You mean...” Weston was lost. Does this mean Mr. Bowers wants to deal with her himself?

Samuel did not reply. Instead, he took up his cup and threw it at Weston.

Agile as Weston might be, Samuel was still faster than him. He had no time to dodge the cup, and the cup ended up scratching his head.

“Mr. Bowers...”

“She’s mine,” Samuel said before standing up from the couch. “You stay away from her.”

Weston felt a dinging pain in his head, but that was not what he was worried about. He was more concerned about whether Samuel would skin him alive.

“Here’s a chance to redeem your mistake,” Samuel said.

“I’ll do anything, Mr. Bowers.”

“I want you to get rid of those people who are eyeing her right now. If they insist on doing anything to her, just kill them. I don’t want any harm to befall her, or consider yourself dead.”

This was more of a threat than a joke.

Knowing full well the severity of Samuel’s words, Weston saw to it that he dealt with the people around Natalie who had ill intent.

Now that her mission was completed, Natalie pulled down her mask and left the place with Yandel and the others.

“Why are we leaving so soon?” Lia asked.

“Everyone here knows we just got a fortune. It might be sweet revenge for Thomas, but we shouldn’t forget that we’re now the targets.”

Yandel knew where Natalie was coming from, so they deliberately took another way while they were leaving, yet Yandel realized something was not adding up.

“Boss, no one is following us. Don’t you think it’s weird?”

“I don’t care if it’s weird or not as long as we’re safe,” Natalie replied, relieved.

While they were on the way back, Lia and the others reflected on what they witnessed earlier, but they were still unable to believe what they saw.

“Boss, how do you know that that woman will ask Thomas to take part in stone-gambling?” Yandel asked.

“Well, that’s Ross and Lia’s doing. Men always think that everything will go smoothly as long as they love their mistresses enough, but that’s clearly not the case.”

Natalie had earlier on asked Ross and Lia to act as a couple with Yeva around. Ross pretended to refuse to bet on Lia’s behalf because he thought it was a waste of money. The two faked getting into a fight and Ross left Lia on the spot.

It was all about playing Yeva’s psychology since she might want to test the waters and see if Thomas would do the same to her.

Now that Lia and Ross recalled how everything turned out, they looked at each other and laughed. “You guys should have seen that. Yeva looked so shocked back there.”

Natalie nodded and continued. “After that, I asked Ross to change the stones so I can lure them in. Sometimes people find it hard to get over failures when they’ve tasted the sweetness of success. Greed

is a common trait for most people. To be honest, I wasn't expecting Thomas to lose so much. It's his fault because he got greedy."

Natalie managed to get back at Thomas thanks to the seamless collaboration between the four of them.

Natalie was so proud of what she did that she was still feeling happy even after she got home.

She played with the four children until Samuel came back. To her surprise, Samuel looked at her dismally without saying a word and went upstairs.

What's going on?

Chapter 466 Dry Me

When Xavian saw that Natalie was troubled, he offered his piece of opinion. "Maybe Daddy is unhappy because of work."

Franklin shook his head. "That's impossible. It's more like he's stuck in a rough patch in his relationship."

Xavian thought that was a more possible explanation as well.

When Sophia heard this, she blinked her watery eyes at Natalie. "Hm..."

"I swear I didn't do anything!" Natalie told the four children. "There's nothing bad going on between us."

"Well, we don't know if that's true, but Daddy sure doesn't look good. You should take care of him," Clayton said.

"Why not you go check on him? We can play on our own."

Natalie thought that was a feasible idea, so she went upstairs.

When she got into the room, Samuel was showering in the bathroom.

Across the granulated glass, Natalie could see rays of light from the bathroom showering on his bulky torso as water ran down his curves.

Natalie had no intention of peeping, but when she snapped herself back to reality, she realized she had been staring for some time.

"Are you there?" Samuel's deep voice echoed in the other compartment of the shower.

"Yeah."

"Get my bathrobe for me, please. It's on the bed," he said. "Or I can just come out and take it on my own."

Natalie thought about it and decided to take it for him instead.

She went over to take the black silk robe for him before drawing the shower curtain aside to pass it to him.

“Ah!”

Instead of taking the robe, Samuel dragged her on the shoulder and pulled her into the shower.

When she came back to her senses again, Natalie was already held against the wet tiles, caught between the wall and Samuel’s heaty and strong chest.

Her heartbeat was in a race.

This is too much.

“What’s wrong with you today, Samuel?” Natalie asked frantically, her eyes darting around. Don’t tell me the kids were right when they said there was something wrong between us.

“I’m not in a good mood today.”

Samuel’s mutter sounded mellow given the thick mist hovering in the enclosed area. He spoke close to her ears, sending goosebumps down her body.

Natalie had no idea she was the reason why Samuel was not happy. “What happened?”

Samuel pursed his lips and did not answer.

She was perplexed, but soon enough, Samuel relaxed his grip and threw her a towel before she could even catch a breath.

“Huh?”

“Dry me,” he said, arching his brows. “Or you’re not willing to do it?”

Natalie would really turn him down if it were any other day. After all, Samuel could do it himself but given how pissed he looked, Natalie nodded after hesitating for a brief moment.

“Don’t move,” she said.

She took the towel from him and started wiping away the water on his body.

The whole ambiance became tense all of a sudden. There was an oddity in the air and a light smell of mint wafted through the hot air.

Natalie’s eyes trailed where her hands went. Every inch of his chest, his back, and Apollo’s belt looked perfect.

Natalie’s movement slowed down and she suddenly felt a gush of heat pumped up her face.

What is this? He looks so perfect.

Natalie swallowed hard without realizing it. Her gaze became shifty as her hands went lower.

She was not even drying him properly toward the end.

“I’m done,” she said.

When she looked back up again, she was met with Samuel’s gaze.

There was desire and longing in his eyes. He looked like a beast who had just spotted his prey and was about to hunt it down.

Chapter 467 Abortion

Natalie's lips parted in fear.

Before she could even say a word, Samuel had already forced a kiss on her.

The kiss was so demanding and aggressive as if he was asking for more.

Natalie's legs started to feel weak. She stumbled backward toward the showerhead.

When Natalie's back hit the valve, she tried pushing herself away from it, but only ended up turning on the valve.

Water started pouring down on them.

"Shoot, I'm getting wet."

Natalie wanted to get away, but Samuel paid no heed. All he could think about was kissing her.

Samuel was already half-naked, so he did not mind getting wet again.

Natalie's dress was all soaked through and it became almost transparent. Samuel was aroused when he saw this.

Five hours elapsed in the shower as Samuel gave in to his desires and took her over and over again.

When they finally came out again, it was already midnight.

Natalie was so spent that she was lying in Samuel's arms.

When she went into the shower, she did not expect Samuel to pounce on her.

It turned out that this was what he wanted when he was not in a good mood.

She felt that Samuel was way more aggressive than usual as if he was punishing her for something.

Natalie long black hair flowed down her back like a train of a tapestry. It formed a striking contrast with her fair skin.

Samuel's fingers roamed thirstily down her spine as his burning gaze looked at her for more. If it weren't for the fact that she was so worn out, Samuel would not have let her off the hook that easily.

Samuel never once thought he was such a petty man, but he tended to be unforgiving when it came to anything related to her.

Natalie was exhausted after a long night of work, so she fell asleep in his arms.

On the other side, Thomas was having a hard time trying to figure out how to recover from his losses.

Yeva felt guilty about getting him into trouble, so she thought hard about how to make it up to him.

She snuggled beside him and started drawing circles on his chest with her finger, but when Thomas thought about how he lost all the money, anger seized him and he shouted, "Get lost!"

He pushed her aside right after. "I told you that piece of rock has potential, but you said that it was too ugly. I would have owned that imperial jade if it weren't for you!"

"It's true that I said that, but you're the one who decided not to buy it! You can't just put all the blame on me!"

"Yeva Jacobs, is this how you talk to me?"

"It's the truth!"

Thomas was peeved as he thought about the tens of millions he lost. He badly needed to vent his anger.

Slap!

Yeva just stared at him in disbelief.

"I put up with you for years without even asking to be your wife, and this is how you treat me? How dare you do this to me just because you lost some money? I'll go to the hospital and get an abortion tomorrow! We're over!" she shouted, standing up from the couch.

Thomas panicked when he heard this.

"What do you mean? You're pregnant?"

"Yes, I am! The doctor said it's a boy!"

"Why didn't you tell me earlier? Honey, I'm so sorry. I shouldn't have done that to you. I don't care about the money at all. It's nothing compared to the baby we have."

When Thomas found out that he was finally getting his lifetime wish fulfilled, he showed a total change of attitude. All he wanted now was the child.

He apologized to Yeva and promised to buy her presents just so she changed her mind about the abortion.

After Thomas left her place, he sat in his car toying with his phone, contemplating something. Before long, he scrolled down his contact list and called a number.

Chapter 468 The Mysterious King

The call took quite a while to connect, and when it finally did, a modified male voice came through the receiving end. "Hello—"

"Sorry for disturbing you so late, King." As much as Thomas was someone who had been around, he nonetheless remained exceptionally cautious when dealing with the one who he was on the phone with. "It's me, Thomas Nichols. I've something that I would like to ask for your help with."

The man hailed as “King” did not respond immediately and, instead, quietly waited for Thomas to state his business.

“I lost over one billion to stone-gambling today.”

“And?” King asked nonchalantly.

Thomas gasped, and could only fess up. “Recently, I’ve also acquired a piece of property and exhausted Dexmed Pharmaceutical’s liquidity in the process. Dexmed may face cash flow issues should this situation remain unchanged and may become insolvent as a result.”

“Are you compelling me to intervene by using threats here, Thomas?”

“You’ve misunderstood, King! How would I dare think about doing such a thing?” Thomas’ wizened face was mired in a cold sweat while he fawned, “If not for your help some twenty years ago, Dexmed Pharmaceutical would have remained in the hands of the Bayer family, so I’ve always kept your generosity close to my heart.”

He continued, “All these years, I’ve kept Dexmed Pharmaceutical’s enduring traditions going while secretly conducting all kinds of experiments at the side on your behalf. But if the company was to implode just like that, I fear that it may be unable to continue to serve your purposes in the future.”

Not once in these twenty years had Thomas ever met with King, for all of their communication had been realized exclusively through encrypted voice calls.

In spite of this, Thomas was never in any doubt of the tremendous influence King wielded.

Back in the day, he had seen for himself how his own father-in-law met his tragic demise in an “accident” for refusing to perform trials on the human body for King.

Jennie should have been the most ideal replacement after Arnold’s passing, but seeing her go off with the children to live in seclusion in the countryside led Thomas to set his own sights on Dexmed Pharmaceutical once more. That was when he fell headlong into working for King.

Over the years, he had done many things for King that contravened regulations, chiefly in the form of unethical drug trials and human experimentation.

Thomas’ intentions for mentioning these were not out of an attempt to coerce King, but a desire to demonstrate his own loyalty in a bid to win the latter’s support.

“Indeed, even if you cannot claim much credit, you do deserve some recognition for your efforts,” said King with general indifference. “I’ll help plug the hole in your finances, but know that this would be a one-off and also, for the last time. Do you understand?”

Thomas nodded furiously.

“Yes. Yes. I’ll continue to abide by your directions.”

“It so happens that there’s going to be a neural control experiment coming up. The request for the test sample will be sent to your inbox shortly, and it must be completed within a period of three months.”

“Understood!”

Before King hung up, Thomas could not refrain from airing his own concerns.

“This young man Yandel has proven himself to be quite a handful, King. At this rate, Dream’s development would sooner or later surpass Dexmed Pharmaceutical’s.”

“Is Yandel Moss, or is it the person behind him, who’s really a handful?”

“What do you mean by that, King?” Thomas sounded confused.

“Ha,” King scoffed. “So you haven’t actually figured out who it is that you’re really up against. How on earth did someone as dull as you manage to father such a brilliant daughter?”

With that, King disengaged, leaving only the hollow humming of the voice changer’s static behind him.

My daughter, brilliant?

Thomas had three daughters this lifetime, namely Natalie, Yara, and Melissa.

Natalie perished in a fire five years ago. Melissa is arrogant and impulsive. Could King be referring to Yara? How did King come to know her? Inferring from King’s tone, might it be possible that he takes a liking to her?

For a moment, Thomas felt deeply conflicted. Although Yara is Jennie’s daughter, taking her in and raising her had to be the best decision I’ve ever made. Perhaps, she might become my biggest pillar of support in the days to come.