

The Life of A Billionaire's Wife chapter 161-170

Chapter 161

"Is there something to celebrate today? Why is there suddenly a firework display?"

"Man, I bet it costs a lot with that much fireworks."

"Could it be that another billionaire is proposing to a young commoner?"

"Pffi. You've read too many of those cheesy stories."

"I mean, who's to say? How do you explain the long firework display then?"

"It's been going on for twenty minutes. When will it end? Is there more?"

"Beats me."

"Let's wait and see."

Walking through the crowd, Veronica was amused by what the people were buzzing about. *What great imagination!*

It wasn't until they squeezed through the crowd and back to the side of the road that their surroundings got a lot quieter.

"Thanks, Xavier. I really enjoyed the fireworks."

"Don't mention it."

"Though I see you as my brother, hey, short reckonings make long friends."

Veronica giggled and suddenly glanced subconsciously across the road. With that, she turned back to Xavier, saying, "Wait here. I'm gonna buy something across from here."

"Okay." He thought no further of it and stood waiting there just like that.

Then, he heard his ringtone. With that, he fished his phone out to find Melissa calling. His little sister had called a good few times throughout the night, and he finally answered at his time.

"Melissa, W

"Xavier Crawford; where the hell are you? I made a feast seeing as it's your birthday today, but I can't believe you decided to go AWOL?!" Melissa roared, wishing she could teleport to the other end of the line and give her brother a piece of her mind.

“Sorry, my phone was on silent. I didn’t hear your calls.”

“Yeah, right, like I’d believe that! Don’t think I’ve got no idea what goes on in that little mind of yours! Veronica’s leaving soon. You must be with her right now. Am I right, or am I right?”

As Melissa had gotten closer to Veronica, some of Veronica’s personality had rubbed off on her, leading her to speak a little presumptuously like Veronica would.

“I’m not.

“You swear?”

“I swear.”

“Bullsh*t! As if I’d believe anything you say!“,

“You’re a girl; don’t speak like an uncivilized ape. Better correct that habit, or you won’t be able to find yourself a husband.”

“Veronica is much worse than this, yet you still cling to her. Double–standard piece of sh*t. Whatever. Bye!” Melissa furiously hung up on Xavier.

Xavier couldn’t help scoffing as he realized she was right.

Seeing as Veronica had yet to return, he sent a text to his little sister. ‘Thanks for remembering my birthday, Melissa. I’ll go back in a bit.

The Crawford Family consisted of so many, but Melissa was the only one who remembered his birthday–no, she was the only person in the world to remember his birthday.

Shortly after, Veronica crossed the road back to him with a couple of paper bags in her hand.

Seeing that, he asked, “What did you get?”

“It’s a secret.” Veronica deliberately teased him before leading him further forward

Since she frequently jogged around the area, she knew there was a gazebo up ahead with numerous stone pieces of furniture where people could sit and rest. After a ten minute walk, they finally arrived at the seating area by the road.

Veronica dragged Xavier to the gazebo with a row of stone tables and benches. Although there were already people, there was still much space to occupy.

"I'm tired. Let's take a break there." She pointed to the seating area at the roadside. With that, the two walked further ahead and found a quiet spot to sit.

As it was rather cold lately, there weren't any mosquitoes or other bugs around, so they didn't have to worry about getting bitten.

"Why here, of all places?" Xavier was baffled.

Veronica answered, "Well, I got a little hungry, so I went and bought some supper. Let's eat."

As she spoke, she took out a small box from one of the paper bags and put it on the table. Then, she opened it to reveal a golden Pikachu cake.

"It's a mini cake. I bought it especially. I loved this when I was a kid. Too bad we weren't well off, so I was always reluctant to get one." While talking, she fished out a candle and put it on the cake before lighting the candle up with a lighter.

Xavier couldn't help feeling bewildered, having no idea of Veronica's plans.

"What are you waiting for? Make a wish!" Then, she pointed at the cake. "I'm all about rituals, you see. As a kid, I'd always make a wish whenever I ate cake. C'mon, let's make a wish together?"

"You sure it works this way?" Xavier was entertained.

"Of course! C'mon, cut the crap; hurry up." While urging him, Veronica put her hands together and lowered her head to make a wish.

After being stupefied for a while, he finally obliged and copied her. As he slowly closed his eyes, he thought this could be considered the first birthday Veronica had celebrated with him.

But little did he know, when he closed his eyes, Veronica mischievously opened one of hers, peeping and observing his every gesture. Seeing he was done making a wish, Veronica hurriedly shut her eyes, pretending as if she still wasn't done with hers. A few seconds later, she opened her eyes and looked at Xavier. "You're done? Well, that's fast. Didn't you make three wishes as you should?"

"I'm not as greedy as you."

"You're trying to say I'm not as rich as you, aren't you?" Veronica teased, then said, "Now that we've made our wishes let's blow out the candle together. Hehe, I know it's a small cake, but hey, a ritual's a ritual."

Xavier nodded, then lowered his head with Veronica, ready to blow the candle.

“I’ll count, and we’ll blow together on three.”

“Okay.”

“Alright. Ready... One, two, three!”

As

she was done counting, she pretended to go for the candle, and Xavier’s actions were almost in sync with hers. Only, she didn’t actually blow it out.

Xavier extinguished

the candle, and as he was about to say something, Veronica started clapping and singing, “Happy birthday to you, happy birthday to you, happy birthday my dear friend...”

At last, it finally struck him that they *were* actually celebrating his birthday. Instantly, he was touched, and his heart warmed, but at the same time, he felt inexplicably poignant.

Though Melissa had never forgotten

his birthday in the last three years, she had always prepared the dinner celebration back in the Crawford Residence, which he never went back for. In other words, he still didn’t celebrate his birthday, much less eat cake. This was his first birthday celebration since his mother’s passing. What was more, Veronica was the one who prepared the cake and wished him a happy birthday. How could he not be touched?

“Happy birthday, Xavier. May you look better than ever and take your business to greater heights, so you’ll one day be on the list of the wealthiest people on Earth.” exclaimed Veronica.

“Thanks.” While he felt moved, he questioned, “Did Melissa tell you?”

“Hehe... Yeah. She’s a sweet sister to you. You better treat her right.”

She removed the candle as she spoke. Then, she fished out a mini cake kuite from the paper bag, ranting as she cut the cake, “This cake may be small, but it’s from Red

- House. Do you know how expensive it is? 39 for one, goodness sake! I know you don! have a sweet tooth, and it’d be a waste if I got the big one. Hence, this size. Well take

half each. Just nice, no?”

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Then, she waved the tiny plates in her hands, saying, “I had to pay five bucks for these plates and the candle. What do you think? Are you surprised?”

Xavier, never this happy his entire life, beamed as he listened to her rant. "Thank you," he said earnestly.

"C'mon, thank—yous are for strangers. You're rich enough to put on a firework display while I can only afford to get you a small cake and have a heart-to-heart talk. I just hope you won't mind."

"Of course not." Xavier shook his head.

After slicing the golden Pikachu cake in half, she put one half onto the paper plate, then handed it and a fork to him, saying, "Here, your birthday cake. Eat up."

Xavier said nothing and left Veronica hanging a couple of seconds before he finally took the cake from her and ate in silence with his head bowed.

Veronica then grabbed a fork and ate her share.

"How does it taste? Good?"

"Yeah."

"Ha! What did I say? I only pick the tastiest." She was clearly on cloud nine.

But little did she know, though Xavier ate the cake, it was tasteless to him as he had been so touched by Veronica's gesture that he failed to savor it.

After they had demolished the cake, she handed him a napkin to wipe their mouths with. Accordingly, she pulled something out of the other paper bag. "Here. This is for you. Sort of a birthday present."

"What is it?"

"See for yourself." With that, she handed the small black box to him.

He opened it after accepting the box to find a men's rhodium-plated tie clip. It was arrow-shaped, and a delicate gold chain hung loosely at both ends of the shati. The design was minimalistic, but it would look perfectly well on a suit.

"This tiny thing cost me almost three hundred bucks. Though it didn't cost a fortune, I've put a lot of thought into getting you something. Just leave this at home. Don't wear it out in public, or it'll lower your social status."

"No, I like it."

“Keep it somewhere in your home then. If you’re seen wearing this, your social status will surely drop.”

Veronica genuinely thought so. After all, Xavier was a young master of the four big families of Bloomstead. People would surely tease him for wearing a three-hundred buck accessory.

“Thank you for all of this.”

“Oh, c’mon, we’re friends. Alright, now that we’ve celebrated your birthday, I have to get going. I have to go back to my parents’ tomorrow. I should turn in early.”

She indeed had to go back to her hometown the next day, but the ticket she got was scheduled at eleven in the morning. She didn’t have to rush at all. Nonetheless, she had to savagely get back at *someone* for *something* before she left. Despite her intention to drop her vengeance, some people just wouldn’t stop until they saw her dead.

“I’ll give you a ride.”

“Nah, it’s cool. I’ll get a bike share.” With that, she got up, bid him goodbye, and left, not giving him a chance to argue.

After seeing her off, standing where he was, he looked down at the gift in his hand, pulling a gratified smile unknowingly. It was indeed a happy birthday.

Veronica didn’t ride back to her rented apartment as she had already terminated the lease. So, she wouldn’t be able to stay for the night even if she wanted to. Her destination was Dragon Creek’s Villa. She didn’t even need to guess who was behind the car accident earlier that night. She was hours away from leaving Bloomstead now. So, it was only right that she returned the ‘favor!

She was riding a bike, after all, so it was already forty minutes later when she finally reached her destination. Dragon Creek’s Villa was a first-class neighborhood, so its security system was of the utmost standard. Hence, without an access card, she wouldn’t be able to enter. In the end, she found a secluded corner and infiltrated the area by climbing over a wall.

– vulv

As guards were patrolling the area, she carefully avoided them and easily found herself at Larson Residence,

Veronica stared blankly at the lit room on the second floor, then squinted as she stood at the gates of the monumental villa. With that, she checked her watch to find it was already half-past eleven. Surely Rachel and Floch were already fast asleep.

Veronica then scouted the area, and after ten minutes, she effortlessly showed up on the balcony of Tiffany's bedroom on the second floor.

Click! As it was already late at night, Tiffany killed the lights and got ready to hit the bed.

But just when Veronica was about to enter, she heard Tiffany's voice. "Have you gone to bed, Matthew?"

Matthew? Matthew Kings? Veronica's heart skipped a beat, utterly shocked. Was she on the phone, or could Matthew actually be physically present?

"Well, I can't fall asleep. I miss you."

"Yeah, I'll go to bed soon. Can I see you at Spinfluence Group tomorrow?"

"You're the best, Matthew. Goodnight, then."

"Bye."

Though Veronica hadn't a clue what Matthew said, knowing it was a call, she heaved a sigh of relief. Then, she pushed the door to the balcony gently and slowly sneaked in.

As Veronica tiptoed, Tiffany didn't notice a thing, even if the room was deadly silent. It wasn't until Veronica was close that she saw her twin sister scrolling through Twitter while lying on her side, facing the bedroom door.

Amidst the darkness, a cold glint flashed and the next second, Veronica put a hand over Tiffany's mouth while pressing the dagger against Tiffany's neck with the other.

"Mmph..." The ambush left Tiffany jumping out of her skin, struggling violently. "Mmph... Who are you... Help..."

She trembled and shrieked, but given her strength, she was no match for Veronica. Besides, with her mouth covered, her resistance did barely anything.

"Stop moving if you want your face intact!" Veronica sternly reprimanded.

That voice... Veronica! Tiffany was horror-stricken. She wasn't expecting Veronica to still be alive, and certainly not for her to sneak into her bedroom.

However, an icy dagger was right at her neck. Be it as Tiffany may be horrified, she feigned calmness and asked, "W-What do you want?"

"What do I want?" Veronica snoried. "I've already forgone everything you had done to me in the past, but instead

of stopping, you sent someone to murder me. Do you think I don't have the guts to end you, Tiffany Larson?"

*This di*mned ticked baich!*

As much as Veronica mulled over it, she could never figure out why Tiffany wanted her dead so badly.

"Mmph_ * Tiffany shook her head, wanting to say something.

'Shout, be my guest. Feel free to call Mommy and Daddy over if you're not worried that your throat will be sliced open," Veronica warned, then moved her hand away from her sister's mouth.

Following that, she disgustedly wiped her hand on Tiffany's sheets as though her palm was stained with Tiffany's saliva.

Seeing Veronica had moved her hand away, Tiffany wanted to shout for help. Alas, the coldness on her neck sent a chill down her spine, petrifying her.

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Especially now that she was bearing Matthew's child, she had to protect it at all cost before she got into the Kings Family. Hence, she couldn't afford to be reckless.

"You deserved it, Veronica. Tell me you don't. You knew I was engaged to Matthew yet you're still living with him in Twilight Condominium. What are you if not a b*tch? You don't have what it takes to get into the Kings Family, so you'd resort to becoming a shame —

Ah!" As Tiffany was venting the frustration in her heart, she was stopped by Veronica's slap on her face."

"I'll give you a chance. Choose your words carefully."

Oh, was the smack vehement and agonizingly stinging!

Tiffany gritted her teeth and glared at Veronica who was in the dark. "You're a slut, a slut who's always trying to seduce Mat—*Slap!*"

"One more chance."

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"You're still a b*tch no matter how many chances you give me, you shame—*Slap!*"

"Again!"

“You shame—*Slap!*”

“Try again.”

“Don’t you...” After receiving a series of smacks, Tiffany, despite her desire to go on insulting Veronica, did not want her perfect face marred, so she consequently stopped lashing out with her venomous tongue. Vexed and upset, she ranted, “I warned you to stay away from Matthew a long time ago, and you’re just asking for death.”

Hearing that, Veronica was enraged as her knife—holding hand uncontrollably shuddered. In a brief moment, the devil within her was goading her to finish Tiffany off as revenge for her family.

Tap, tap... Out of nowhere, faint footsteps were heard closing in.

In response, Veronica glowered and slightly raised her brows, staring at the bedroom door. The next moment, the door was pushed open, followed by a click, and the lights were turned on, illuminating the entire bedroom.

Floch and Rachel thought they heard something from their room and noticed something was odd before storming downstairs. Unsurprisingly, Veronica came. When they saw Veronica—her foot on the bed, her left arm supported on her knee, and her right hand holding a dagger against Tiffany’s neck—Rachel was thoroughly dismayed.

“What do you think you’re doing, Veronica?!” Floch, who was utterly shocked as well, shakingly pointed his finger at Veronica. “Put down the knife. You’re trespassing private property. All it takes is a call to the cops and you’ll earn yourself a life sentence!”

“Waa... Dad, Mom, you’re finally here. Waa... H—Help me! Call the c—Ah!”

Before Tiffany could finish her sentence, Veronica gave her a couple more swings on her face, left and right. Two splendid slaps.

“What did I say about shutting the f*ck up?! What are you, f*cking deaf?” Veronica furiously rebuked. She raised her stony eyes and shot the Larson couple, who were standing by the door, a piercing, icy gaze. “I have truly underestimated each of you. The lowly Larsons, doing anything they want, even hired thugs to butcher me. Aren’t you so disheartened to find me still breathing?”

Resentment—

all there was in her mind. Veronica severely thought she must have been the unluckiest woman in the world to have been born as the biological daughter of the Larson couple.

“B—
Butcher you?” The couple were dumbfounded as they peered at each other. They faced each other and tacitly turned to Tiffany, realizing what had happened.

“Ever since Randy’s bone marrow donation, you’ve been coming at me a great deal of times, so I’m gonna be deeply sorry for you if I don’t return the favor tonight.”

Tonight, Veronica came to the Larson Residence without any plans of leaving Bloomstead in peace. If she left without giving the Larsons a lesson, she would really be seen as a wimp, a coward.

“W—
What are you trying to do?” Floch pointed at her. “I’m warning you, don’t do anything stupid!”

“Waa... I’m scared, Mom...”

Although Veronica had once gone all psycho on Tiffany and roughened her up, she had never been this **acrimonious**,

Tiffany panicked, fearing that Veronica just might take her life as the result of her emotional outburst.

“Huh, finally learning to fear?” Veronica belittlingly scoffed. Her red, grinning lips were uncannily unnerving. With that, she searched her pocket and pulled out a lighter, raising the lighter in her hand and flicking it.

“What are you doing?”

“Don’t be rash, Veronica! Tiffany is your own sister!”

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“V—Veronica! Are you crazy? What are you trying to do?”

The three Larsons’ faces blanched. At no point in their lives were they this affrighted.

Regardless, Veronica was still intimidatingly glaring at them. She then bent down and lit up the sheets that were enveloping Tiffany. The sheets—made of hundred percent genuine goose feathers—instantly flared by the insignificant flame.

“Fire, Floch! Q—Quick, ask for help!”

“Mom, help me... Waa... I don’t wanna die...” Realizing Veronica meant business,

Tiffany was scared sh*tless and almost pissed her pants. How could she, who was pampered all her life, ever had to encounter such an abominable situation?

“Don’t move!” Veronica intensely yelled, “Well, I dare you to. One flinch and I’ll slit her throat. What, scared of this puny flame? What about the fire you set on my house that day? Have you ever considered sparing my life back then?”

IRY

“Waa... Mom, help me! I’m scared!” Watching as the sheets burned, Tiffany speedily kicked her goose feather sheets to the ground, but dared not to move her upper body, knowing an accident could lead to an injury. She bawled her eyes out, muttering, “Why aren’t the smoke detectors working?”

“Don’t worry. Even if your house burns down today, the smoke detectors aren’t going to go off, because...” Veronica revealed an apathetic, spine-chilling grin. “...I turned off your water system.” Since she had come all the way here, she had no desire to let them off easily. No matter what happened, these vicious Larsons had to be taught a lesson.

The goose feather sheets rapidly incinerated, and the carpet on the floor, made of sheep wools, ignited along. In the blink of an eye, the fire promptly blazed.

Floch and Rachel, on the other hand, were scared to death. The latter started screaming out of the room. “Harris! H— Hurry up and go turn the water system on! There’s a fire! Hurry!”

“Waa... No...” Tiffany was absolutely terrorized. With her eyes extremely reddened, she bit her lips. Feeling as if Death was coming to get her, she speedily dropped all of her pride and pettily pleaded, “I’m sorry, Veronica. I’ve been so wrong! I shouldn’t have done all those things to you. I’m really sorry!” As if her soul had left her body, Tiffany aggressively apologized, “I was jealous. I was jealous you’re able to be so close with Matthew. Waa... Please don’t kill me. I have Matthew’s child in me. If I die now, he’ll surely come for you.”

At once, Veronica sneered. She lifted the dagger in her hand and tossed it away. *Thump!* It was nailed into the wardrobe right beside Floch. In that instant, as her movement was so swift, the dagger flew straight toward the man, who broke out in a cold sweat.

Thud— The dagger wasn’t deeply struck into the wardrobe, yet rumbles could be heard.

With the threat of the dagger gone, Tiffany sprung out of bed and strongly fell onto the ground before crawling miserably toward the door. “Boo... I’m cursed...”

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Rachel's heart ached terribly at the sight of the sorry state Tiffany was in. Immediately, she helped Tiffany up, saying, "Don't be afraid, Tiffy. I'm here. I'm here, so you'll be fine."

Tiffany flung her arms around Rachel as if clutching at straws while crying her eyes out in Rachel's arms. "*Sob, sob... I was scared to death! Mom, I'm so afraid.*"

The fire was spreading fiercely in the room without restraint as raging flames sent plumes of thick smoke billowing toward the ceiling. Still, Floch and the others could see the murderous expression on Veronica's stony face across the flames.

Veronica threatened, "If you do that again, I'll drag all of you Larsons to hell with me even if I'll die for that!" She was so consumed with rage that she nearly lost her head. Even so, she knew deep down that Tiffany was pregnant with Matthew's baby. If anything wrong happened to Tiffany, Elizabeth would be upset, and the Kings Family would be concerned. *Old Mrs. Kings has saved my life, so I'm gonna let Tiffany off this time for the sake of her baby. However, if Tiffany does it again, I might kill all the Larsons. Who cares if I'll go to jail because of that?*

The gushing hot air in the room hit Veronica in the face, and the burning sensation brought her back to reality. Concealing the chilliness in her eyes, she turned around and walked to the bedroom balcony before disappearing into the night.

Seeing that she had left, Rachel gave Floch a meaningful look. Both of them had a grave expression, but they kept silent.

Tiffany cried for a while before noticing that she was no longer hearing Veronica's voice. When she looked back, she realized that Veronica was gone. She couldn't help but snarl, "What are you two waiting for? Call the police! Why aren't you calling the police? Veronica has almost killed me!"

Floch shook his head with a sigh. "If we call the police right now, the police will look into this matter, and the Kings Family will definitely be alarmed. You have to think this through, Tiffy."

Just then, the servants had turned on the water system. Activated by the fire, the sprinkler system sprinkled water on the room, lowering the temperature in the room and slowly putting out the fire.

Rachel heaved a grave sigh. "That's right, Tiffy. You also know how much Old Mrs. Kings likes Veronica. Have you thought about how to explain this if the Kings Family looks into this matter as well?"

“W-What do you mean?! Am I really your daughter?” Tiffany yelled hysterically while stamping her foot in anger. Losing control of her emotions, she screamed as if she had gone insane, ranting, “You two don’t love me at all! You’ve never loved me... Aah!” .

Slap! With deep furrows in his brow, Floch raised his hand and slapped Tiffany across the face. He blasted her angrily, saying, “I’ve warned you repeatedly not to touch Veronica and to think twice before doing anything, but you went against my warning and laid a hand on her when you shouldn’t have! Do you know that she nearly stabbed me to death just now? If anything bad happens to her right now, once Old Mrs. Kings looks into it, you can just forget about marrying into the Kings Family. Just look at yourself-you look no different from a madwoman! Is this your current mentality after I spent so much money every year to have you learn etiquette? If you don’t do anything about that temper of yours, I’d say you wouldn’t even last a year in the Kings Family! Do you even understand what it means to marry into a distinguished family? Do you think it’s easy to be the matriarch of the Kings Family?! You’re nothing but a hopeless good-for-nothing!”

For the very first time, he furiously lambasted Tiffany, which was perhaps out of his disappointment with her. After finishing his speech, he shot Rachel a glare, saying, “Talk about spare the rod and spoil the child. Just look at how well you’ve brought your daughter up. Hmph!” With that, he turned around and left the bedroom.

Stunned, Tiffany stood in place, her cheek swollen and aching with a burning sensation from the slap just now. What Floch had just said reverberated in her mind. She cried bitterly, but she had to admit that Floch’s words made sense.

Marrying into a distinguished family means there will be lots of trials and difficulties awaiting me. I’ve got to be steadier. Otherwise, when I marry into the Kings Family and face even greater danger, how am I gonna take care of things by myself without Dad and Mom’s support?

Having been lashed out at despite her innocence, Rachel sighed in dejection.

Just then, Tiffany said tearfully, “Mom, I-I’m sorry. It was my fault for being impulsive. *Sob... Sob...* I just... I just couldn’t stand the sight of Veronica, that b*tch, trying to steal Matthew from me. *Sob... Sob...*” Tiffany had always been spoiled rotten by her parents ever since she was little, so she had never been reprimanded like she was on this day. Although she felt wronged, after some self-examination, she felt that her parents had said that for her own good.

“*Sigh.* Alright, alright, stop crying. Look at your face. *Sigh...* Let’s go. I’m gonna apply some ice to your cheek to reduce the swelling.” Rachel shook her head before going downstairs while taking Tiffany’s hand. As they went downstairs, she sighed repeatedly in frustration. “You’re going to get married to Matthew very soon, so we

mustn't let anything bad happen at this point. Even if you want to get back at Veronica, you should've done so after you've secured your position in the Kings Family. Sigh, what your dad said was right. We've spent a lot to teach you etiquette every day and did whatever we could to nurture you, but your impulsiveness is gonna land you in trouble one day."

Feeling guilty, Tiffany pursed her lips and sobbed, "Sorry, Mom. It was my fault for being too impulsive."

Mom is right that I've been too impulsive. I should've waited until I married into the King's Family and secured my position before laying a hand on Veronica. By the way, if Veronica is really on good terms with Matthew, will she tell him about what has happened tonight? No, she won't. If she wants to tell him about it, why would she come over and take action by herself? So, even if Matthew lives with her, he only does so not because he has feelings for her but because he purely wants to sleep with her, huh?

At the thought of this, Tiffany felt much more balanced. The next instant, though, she couldn't help feeling angry. *In what way am I inferior to Veronica, that b*tch? Why would Matthew want to sleep with her but not me? Is it because that b*tch is good in bed?* She indulged in all kinds of conjectures before feeling that this conjecture might be the closest to the truth.

Early the next morning, Xavier came to the Konig Company to deal with his work, keeping himself busy all the way until 9:00AM. He wanted to finish the work at hand as soon as possible so that he could accompany Veronica to the train station.

"What's keeping you busy so early in the morning, Xavier?" Melissa pushed the door open and entered the office. After casting a sidelong glance at Xavier, who was sitting in the office, she couldn't help but let out a snort. "Hmph, I prepared dinner for you yesterday, but you never came back. How inconsiderate."

Seeing her coming in, Xavier put down the work at hand, smiling gently. "Thanks. I really appreciate your kindness."

"Tsk, it's so difficult to get you to go home for your birthday every single time," Melissa retorted. She had asked Xavier to come home for his birthday because she wanted to help mend Xavier's relationship with Hendric. However, Xavier refused to go back whenever she prepared a birthday dinner for him. Still, instead of getting angry, she walked up to Xavier and handed him a present. "Here's the present I prepared for you yesterday. Now you see how nice I am to you."

"Well, my sister is nice to me, of course." Xavier stood up and took the present before reaching out to ruffle Melissa's hair. "Whoever marries you in the future will be lucky."

"That's of course."

Knock, knock. Suddenly, someone knocked on the door and came in.

Dressed in a business suit, the man looked at Xavier, then at Melissa, before falling silent with hesitation.

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“No matter. Speak your mind.” Xavier had never thought of Melissa as a stranger.

“Understood. I’ve already investigated the incident you asked me to. Tiffany was indeed the one behind last night’s car accident,” said the man in the suit.

Melissa stiffened. “What car accident?”

“What else could it be? Of course it was an accident meant to involve Roni.” Xavier’s expression chilled. “Is Tiffany taunting her because Roni doesn’t have anyone to back her up? Go teach Tiffany a lesson.”

“Yes, Mr. Crawford.” The man in the suit dipped his head before leaving.

The gears in Melissa’s head whirred quickly. She eyed the man thoughtfully before turning to face Xavier and smile. “You can continue working. Something just came up, so I need to leave.”

“Go ahead. I still have work to do anyway.” Xavier waved at her and pointed at the present on his desk. “Thanks for this.”

“Oh come on, Xavier, why the politeness?” Melissa giggled before leaving the office with rushed steps.

When Melissa reached the elevator, she saw the man who had just left. She raised an eyebrow. “By the way, my brother told me to tell you this: he said that the baby Tiffany’s pregnant with is an eyesore. You got that?”

The man stiffened for a moment. He understood what Tiffany meant. “All right, understood. Please inform Mr. Crawford on my behalf that it will be done.”

Melissa pressed her lips into a smile, and she nodded. “My brother’s counting on you.”

That baby was indeed an obstacle. If Tiffany wasn’t pregnant, Matthew might not marry her anymore. Melissa would then actually have a chance if she wanted to pursue him.

Melissa naively assumed that if she got revenge on Tiffany, Veronica would be happy when she saw Tiffany's downfall. Who wouldn't be delighted to see someone get major payback for a huge grudge?

Meanwhile, Veronica woke up after sleeping the entire night at the inn. Alier brusting her teeth and getting herself ready, she packed her things and prepared to head to the train station. When she was checking out in the lobby, her phone rang. She pulled out her phone to see that it was a call from Xavier,

Veronica's brows furrowed. After a moment of hesitation, she answered the call. "You're not thinking of sending me to the train station, are you? Since you're calling me at this hour," she teased. Veronica initially wanted to quietly leave Bloomstead without anyone sending her off. Unfortunately for her, she had forgotten to keep the exact time a secret when she told Xavier when the train would arrive.

"I'm outside your home. Come on out. I can send you to the station," Xavier said over the phone.

Veronica was moved when she heard his gentle voice. Deep down, she knew about his kindness.

"Oh, right, I forgot to tell you that my train ride got rescheduled. I went to my friend's place at the last minute for an errand; I'll only be leaving tomorrow."

Veronica typically disliked partings with others. She always felt that they were sad, so she didn't want Xavier to send her to the train station.

"Rescheduled? Why didn't you tell me?"

"What's the big deal about rescheduling? Go home. I'm busy right now. I'll call you back later." With that, she hung up, ruining Xavier's chance to talk to her. After she checked out, she hailed a taxi and made straight for the train station.

Meanwhile, Tiffany's face was swollen from last night's beating. Bruises could be seen on her face.

As a talented woman with peerless beauty, Tiffany placed her looks far above everything. When she woke up and looked in the mirror to find her face swollen with cuts running across it, she was so startled that she promptly left the manor and rushed to the hospital. On her way there, however, a few vans suddenly cut in front of her, blocking her way.

Tiffany lurched forward from the back seat when the car braked suddenly to avoid the vans. Instantly, pain rushed through her nose. She angrily rubbed it. "Are you guys blind? Don't you know that I'm pregnant with Matthew's child? Can you even shoulder the responsibility if anything happens to the baby?"

Tiffany might be saying this for appearance's sake, but she did indeed care about the baby in her belly. She was worried that something would happen to the baby.

"Miss Larson, these... these people here... do not seem to have any good intentions." The chauffeur had seen his fair share of people in his day. He could tell with just a glance that these men had an ulterior motive.

And their target seemed to be... Tiffany.

Now that the chauffeur had voiced his thoughts, Tiffany was terrified out of her wits. She nervously eyed the men walking over to her from outside.

Knock, knock, knock. The man at the head of the pack walked over to the side of the car and began to tap away at the car window. Not only did Tiffany keep the window rolled up, but she also immediately locked the car. An inexplicable sense of danger washed over her, making her heart skip a beat in fear.

"Go! Go on! Leave this place!" She reached out to smack the chauffeur's shoulder, unable to stop herself from raising her voice.

The chauffeur checked the situation through his mirror. He shook his head and sighed. "There's no way out. How can we leave? Miss Larson, I think you should call Young Master Kings so that he can save you."

Having just been reminded of Matthew, Tiffany nodded in realization. "Yes— Yes, that's right! There's still Matthew. I should call him... yeah..." As she mumbled to herself, she pulled out her phone to dial Matthew's number.

Beep, beep— The phone beeped after she dialed his number. Before she got through to Matthew though, the window shattered. The next moment, Tiffany found her hand empty, her phone having been snatched away. The hulking man who grabbed her phone flung it to the ground, shattering it into pieces.

Tiffany was furious. "What are you doing? Why did you break my phone? Do you know who I am? I am Matthew Kings' girlfriend! If you so much as dare to touch a hair on my head, I will make sure that he crushes you all!"

Matthew was currently her only shield. She only hoped that he would descend from the sky and appear by her side, just like how he had saved Veronica that time.

"You're Matthew's girlfriend? Then we got the right one; we were looking for you." The man outside the car gestured at the others behind him, beckoning them to come over. "Take her away."

What do you intend to do? Let my lady go, or I'll call the police!" The chauffeur was supposed to drive Tiffany around, but as an employee of the Larsons, he had a responsibility to protect her. He couldn't just sit by and watch as Tiffany got kidnapped.

"Shut your trap, you old coot!" The bald man was burly and ripped, having tanned skin. His features were rather prominent; most probably he was of mixed-blood. He walked over to the driver's seat. There was a loud crash as he hurled a punch at the window. The glass shattered then, and he reached in to try and unlock the door.

But the chauffeur clung tightly to the man's arm. "No, you cannot take Miss Larson away. Mr. Larson will absolutely show you no mercy.. Ah,"

The chauffeur hadn't finished speaking yet when the muscular man grabbed hold of the chauffeur's head and bashed it against the door. With that, the chauffeur was out cold.

Chapter 166

Veronica left Bloomstead by train at eleven in the morning so that she could return to Cabot Town before four. She wanted to surprise her parents, so she didn't tell them she was coming.

Now that she was back in Cabot Town, Veronica felt overjoyed to see all these familiar sights. Even the air here smelled nice.

With her backpack

on her shoulders, she began to trek to the remote village where her family home was. In the distance, Veronica could see her adoptive mother standing by the pig pen, feeding the pigs with vegetables from a basket on her arm, Veronica had not seen this familiar scene in ages. She couldn't stop herself from jogging over to stand behind Daniella. "Mom!" she yelled.

Daniella ended up jumping in surprise from Veronica's shout. The basket she had just placed by the pig pen's fence toppled over into the pen. It wasn't until she turned around that she realized

that Veronica was calling her. Instantly, she was delighted. "Oh, my darling girl, is it really you? Why are you back? Why didn't you tell me earlier? I could have gone to town to pick you up."

"Hahaha, it's only a short distance away, Mom. You don't have to do that." Veronica hugged Daniella. "I missed you so much. Did you and Dad miss me?"

Daniella smiled kindly and nodded. "Of course we did. Your father kept bemoaning your absence." Danielle let go of Veronica to take her hand and study her. "You've only been away for a few months; how are you so skinny now?" She poked Veronica's forehead. "Silly girl, you should have told me you were coming home. I would have made a nice roast for you. We don't even have any food in the house now." Then, Daniella turned to yell in the direction of the yard. "Tony? Tony? Get over here; our girl is back."

"What? Veronica is back?" Upon hearing Daniella's voice, Tony immediately walked over from the yard, only to see that Veronica was truly back. A smile instantly bloomed on his weathered face. "Oh my, she really is back. I missed you dearly."

"Dad? Are you feeling better?" Veronica walked over to Tony and hugged him, asking about his health.

Meanwhile, Daniella remembered the basket of vegetables that had fallen into the pig pen. When she turned around, she found the pigs gnawing away at the basket.

"Hey, get away from that!" Daniella yelled at the pigs after she opened the gate to the pen. She picked up the basket and left the pig pen to walk over to Veronica. Waving the broken basket around, she chastised Veronica, "Look at what you did. I'll have you know that this is a new basket." Daniella reached out and smacked Veronica's bottom. "Bad girl."

"Hehehe, Mom, that hurts." Veronica pressed her hands to her butt, pretending that she was in pain.

However, that broke Daniella's heart. "Did it hurt a lot? I didn't even smack you that hard."

"Haha, just teasing you." A grin split Veronica's face. She was in good spirits as she held her adoptive parents' hands and walked into the yard. As Veronica and Tony chatted in the yard, Daniella retrieved a chicken from the freezer and headed to the kitchen to cook it for Veronica.

After conversing for a while, Veronica eyed the chewed basket in the corner. "Dad, Crayson gave you guys this basket, right?"

"Yes, just two days ago."

"Great. I haven't seen Crayson in a while. I'll take the basket to him so he can fix it. That way, I can invite him to dinner as well."

"That works too. You should hurry; Crayson misses you a lot."

"Okay, I'll go now."

Veronica returned indoors and dug out the gift she had brought with her from her backpack. With the basket and gift in hand, she headed straight for Crayson's house.

Crayson was not originally from Cabot Town. It had been around thirty years since he came to live here. He made his home by the foot of the mountain not far from their home, where he lived practically in isolation. Crayson was most likely his family name, but no one knew his full name, not even Veronica.

Veronica walked on the mountain path. The sides of the path were teeming with foliage. A myriad of flowers bloomed among the grass, swaying in the breeze. With the azure sky high above her, it was a picturesque scene.

Veronica wanted to surprise Crayson when she reached the foot of the mountain, but he happened to be fishing leisurely by the river when she arrived.

"Why did you suddenly come to see me, you ungrateful girl?"

Crayson's long beard was flecked with white. His thick, white hair reached his neck, and it swayed in the wind. He was dressed in a loose, gray hempen shirt and a pair of linen shoes that were fully handmade. He oozed an otherworldly energy, looking like he was from a far higher realm than her. His unkempt appearance even lent an air of mystery to him.

"Hey there, Crayson. Long time no see." Veronica walked over and flopped down to sit next to him. She turned her head to face him and grinned sinisterly before reaching out to grab his beard and gently shake it. "Wow, your beard's gotten so long in just those few months I was away."

"Scoot off to the side. It took precious time for me to grow that beard, and now you're back. Don't touch my beard." Crayson glared at Veronica as he slapped her hand away. It was only then that his beard was free from her evil clutches. "What are you here for? You came to see me empty-handed. Go, buzz away. Don't get in the way of my fishing." He deliberately made himself look disgusted, but he couldn't hide the visible joy by his brows.

"You really want me to leave?" Veronica lifted an eyebrow. At last, she slowly withdrew her hand from behind her back. A bottle of wine could be seen in her grasp. She looked at the bottle and clucked. "Tsk tsk tsk... Such a lovely bottle of wine and no one to share it with me. Guess I'll just have to drink alone."

Crayson's eyes flicked over to Veronica to see the bottle of wine she held. Instantly, his fishing rod seemed far less attractive. He promptly put down his fishing rod and reached out to grab the bottle.

Veronica was quicker, however. By swinging her arm behind her, she avoided Crayson's lunge.

Crayson looked at Veronica with a raised brow. Another smile spread across his old face. Then, he jumped in the air, somersaulting over Veronica to land behind her so that he could snatch the wine bottle away.

Veronica was nimble. With a quick twist and turn, she avoided him again.

"You damned girl, don't you know that I'm a senior citizen? Didn't your teachers ever tell you to be mindful of elders and children?"

"You got that right; I'm still just a little kid. Why are you bullying me?"

"Then give that wine over!"

"Nope!" Veronica held the bottle of wine far behind her. She made a face at Crayson before breaking out into a cheeky grin.

Crayson frowned. Instantly, he hurled a punch at her. Veronica's smile melted away then. She moved to the side, her right hand snapping out to punch Crayson's chest. He blocked her attack in time with his hands and kicked at her legs to destabilize her.

Veronica backflipped to avoid his kick. As she sailed through the air, her leg swiped out to kick at Crayson. Surprisingly, Crayson remained motionless as he watched her leg come closer and closer.

Just as Veronica's kick was about to land, he reached up to grab her ankle, easily softening the blow of the kick. He then grabbed her foot and swung her behind. Veronica couldn't react in time. She was flung to the front, and then she landed on the ground, her legs wide open in a split.

Chapter 167

Having been thrown into a disadvantageous position, Veronica toppled to the ground. Still holding onto the bottle of wine, she planted her free hand onto the ground and used it to gain momentum to launch a kick at Crayson's arm.

Crayson leaned back just slightly. His hand reached out to grab Veronica's other leg. Then, as he pushed her forward, he launched a sweeping kick at her.

Having lost her balance, Veronica fell to the ground in a patch of grass.

*Useless! Not even half a year and all the skills I've taught you have been thrown to the wind?" Crayson rebuked with a grave face.

"Ouch, that hurts bad." Veronica sat on the ground and regarded Crayson with a pitiful look. "I just wanted to keep that bottle of wine intact. I wouldn't have gone down so easily otherwise, okay?"

"You're still an idiot. Don't make any more excuses."

"Geez." Veronica sighed and scrambled up. She dusted off the grass burrs clinging to her and pouted. "Fine, I was sloppy in my lessons. I'll admit that."

Prior to leaving Cabot Town, Veronica had thought herself stronger than others. She had never seriously studied while under Crayson. After meeting Matthew though, she finally realized that there were others greater than her. She couldn't even beat Matthew with her current skills; how could she even go up against Crayson?

Seeing that she was dejected, Crayson swiped the wine bottle from Veronica's hand. "Talk. Who's been bullying this student of mine? Tell me and I'll help you to beat them up to teach them a lesson," he said as he uncorked it.

"If I start taking my lessons with you seriously, will I still be able to become strong?"

"Of course."

"Really?"

"That's a given. As long as you're willing to be my retirement plan, this isn't a problem."

"Heh, don't worry, Master. I shall look after you until you're finally in the dirt," Veronica said as she walked over and hugged Crayson, smiling all this while.

However, Crayson simply sniffed the contents of the bottle after uncorking it. Immediately, his face split into a grin. "Haha, that's some good stuff. Veronica, bring me a few more bottles of this in the future as thanks." With that, he left with the bottle of wine. A few steps later, he stopped in his tracks and turned back.

Nice, Crayson still remembers me, at least, Veronica thought to herself.

The moment after she thought that though, Crayson pushed her away. "Quit blocking the path." He walked over to the riverbank and bent down to pick up his fish trap. Grinning, he mumbled to himself, "Wine and some nice fish. What a spread, hahaha..." Crayson headed straight to his home, wine bottle in one hand and fish trap in another. He had clearly forgotten about Veronica.

“Hey, old coot, have you forgotten about your student here?” she yelled at him from where she stood.

Crayson turned his head back to glance at her. “You got legs, don’t you? Can’t you walk? Don’t tell me you want an old man like me to carry you?”

He’s got a point there. She stumbled her way over. Picking up the broken basket she had brought with her, Veronica entered Crayson’s yard with him.

Although Veronica had known Crayson since she was little, he was a mysterious man. All Veronica knew was that he was called Crayson, and he was good at basket-weaving and woodworking. He was far more skilled than the average person, and he was also a mysterious old man who knew a myriad of martial arts styles. Other than that, she knew nothing else about him.

Veronica looked at the table and chair in the yard and regarded the wooden house that Crayson lived in. She knew the table was there for his tea sessions. “You sure know how to enjoy life,” she exclaimed.

“If you like this place, you can stay here with me. I could use some company.”

“Sure, no problem,” Veronica answered as she skipped her way into the house. She surveyed the place where she had grown up. Although it had been half a year since she last saw the inside of Crayson’s house, she had to admit everything was still in its place. Nothing had changed. She then took a chair and brought it outside to the yard and sat with Crayson. There, they enjoyed the wine Veronica had brought, chatting with the pleasant breeze in the air.

Crayson took a sip of wine and nodded. “That’s good wine, all right. Soft and silky down the throat, and its aroma is deliciously pleasant. The aftertaste is lovely. Good stuff. When are you going to bring me another bottle or three of this, Veronica?”

The corner of Veronica’s mouth twitched madly. *You sure love your wine, you old coot. Do you know that a bottle costs a whole 10,000 bucks?*

Veronica had specially gotten someone to pick a bottle of good wine for her because she knew she would be returning to her hometown. It was so pricey that it made her doubt her life choices. Downing all of that expensive wine in a few gulps was such a waste.

“Hahaha, fine, fine. Since you like it so much, I can bring more for you.” Veronica nodded and smiled knowingly. Although that particular wine was expensive, Crayson was her master; this was something she should do. Even though it was expensive, she should just grin and put up with it.

“Hey, cool, don’t drink too much. My mom is cooking some chicken at home. Let’s have dinner together tonight.”

“Oho, dinner, and I don’t have to cook. Lovely, absolutely lovely. I’ll cross the mountain with you.”

“Tch... you’ve got no principles at all if some chicken is enough to bribe you, you codger.”

“Is that how a student should talk to their master?”

“Ow, Master, stop smacking my head. That hurts.”

And so, master and student crossed the mountain together. That night, Veronica’s family reunited with Crayson for a rare dinner. With some wine accompanying their meal, they chatted until the late hours of the night. Laughter reverberated throughout the Murphy Family’s living room, a warm and friendly sound.

After dinner, Tony saw Crayson off. Meanwhile, Veronica—having drunk herself silly

— fell fast asleep. The next time her eyes opened, it was already morning. She freshened herself

up a little and changed into a set of workout clothes to go for a run with her cell phone.

The paths in the isolated village were deserted. Veronica jogged leisurely. Right then, a van drove in from a distance and abruptly stopped in front of her. She frowned, warning bells going off in her head.

The door of the van opened as she hesitated. Subsequently, five or six men dressed in suits emerged from the vehicle.

Chapter 168

A few swarthy, muscular goons with stern looks on their faces began to approach Veronica. At a glance, she could easily tell that these skilled men harbored nothing but ill intentions.

She wanted to make a run for it, but the thought of currently being in her hometown, and possibly involving Tony, Daniella, or even her master, and putting them in harm’s way stopped her.

So, she decided to quickly think of the next possible thing to do. Using her quick thinking, she pretended to be unaffected by their presence. “What’s up?” she calmly asked.

For them to stop the car right in front of her could only mean one thing—they already knew who she was and where she lived. Running away was futile, at this point.

“Miss Murphy,” the man who seemed to be the leader of the pack called out. “We are here under Young Master Matthew’s instruction. We will be escorting you back to Bloomstead.” Unlike his polite tone, his eyes were chillingly threatening as they leered at her.

It was as if he was saying Veronica would be brought back no matter what.

“Didn’t he mention the reason for wanting me back?” she asked again despite fully expecting Matthew to eventually force her back. She knew that the man still wanted to have his fingers wrapped around this ‘pawn’ of his.

However, she had only returned home the day prior. She did keep her phone turned off from then on as she had planned to disconnect herself from the world for a few days, but she didn’t think Matthew would come for her so soon.

Why is Matthew in such a hurry? Could something have happened back at Bloomstead? she wondered

“We are only following orders. We don’t know the rest.” Like a machine void of emotions and thoughts, the man replied to her dully.

“Alright. Give me a moment. Let me pack my stuff and I’ll be right back.”

Knowing better than to provoke the group of men and not wanting to worry her parents and master, Veronica eventually agreed to follow them back to Bloomstead.

My apologies, Miss Mu—

” The man started to object, only to be cut off by an angry roar from Veronica. She knew exactly what he was going to say.

“Let me repeat myself. I’ll be right back after getting a few things from home! Where do you think I can run away to? You goons even found the way to my home! I’m warning you. My parents’ health isn’t at its best. They will surely be affected if they were to see you. I won’t let you off if anything were to happen to them.”

Immediately, the men started to hesitate when they saw pure rage burning on her face. After a while, the head of the group lifted his wrist, took a glance at his watch, and finally said, “We’ll give you 10 minutes.”

“Just wait!” she coldly spat before trotting back home to pack up what she needed. She then found Daniella who was currently cooking in the kitchen. “Mom, there is something that I need to take care of in Bloomstead. I have to leave now. Relay my message on to Dad too. I’ll take my leave now,” she uttered everything she wanted to say in one breath.

Even though it was still in the early hours of the morning, Tony was already out of the house, and habitually roaming around the fields.

Daniella immediately turned off the stove and put down the spatula in her hand. She then wiped the grease off her palms on the apron around her waist and held Veronica by her hands. “My child, you only just came back yesterday! What could the emergency be?” she asked, concerned.

“Umm... It really is nothing. It’s just Xavier. He...” She sputtered out the best excuse she could come up with at the moment, “He has appendicitis and is currently in surgery. I’m worried about him, that is why I was thinking of going to pay him a visit.”

Her heart, however, felt apologetic for using her friend to get herself out of the pickle. *I’m sorry. I’m so sorry! The situation calls for it. Don’t kill me, Xavier!* she silently howled.

She could only blame herself for being tight with Xavier, and for making Xavier someone that Daniella could trust.

Daniella answered thoughtfully, “Oh my, is that so? You really have to go see him then! But before that, why don’t you bring him one of our village chickens as a token of your sincerity?”

“No, that’s not necessary, Mom. He isn’t short on chickens. Okay! I really have to go now. Bye bye!” Veronica hurriedly bade her farewell.

Her skin wasn’t thick enough for her to proudly bring a chicken back to Bloomstead. It was just a lie that Xavier had appendicitis after all!

Furthermore, she doubted the thugs would spare her time to catch a chicken.

“Huh? You punk, why are you rushing?” Daniella scolded. “Let me ask your dad to send you.”

Veronica was already hopping out of the house then, but she didn’t forget to remind Daniella. “It is okay, Mom. I already called for a cab in town. I’m off! Take care of yourself?”

The older woman followed after Veronica for a short while before halting her steps. Standing by the side of the road, she could only shake her head slowly with a melancholy smile tugging on the corners of her lips. “That brat is

really concerned about Xavier, huh? She must like him a lot," she mumbled to herself before letting out a sigh. "All daughters have to leave home someday..."

Her heart then began to ache at the thought of her only daughter having to get married someday.

If only she knew that what she was currently worried about was only a lie Veronica could best come up with in the heat of the moment...

On the other hand, Veronica sprinted her way to the vehicle waiting for her, and after getting in, they went on a hurried 4-hour journey back to Bloomstead.

She was brought up to Matthew's place and locked in as soon as they reached Twilight Condominium, where a sense of familiarity immediately hit her as she stood in the middle of the room.

Then, she promptly plopped herself onto the sofa and checked her phone, only to see that she had missed a few calls from both Matthew and Xavier.

She would probably be worried if she had missed someone else's call, but to get missed calls from the two men? A pretty normal occurrence she would say.

But why would Matthew call her?

She took some time to ponder the possible reasons before finally deciding to call him back.

After giving him two calls which went straight to voicemail both times, she lay down on the sofa and started to browse Twitter on her phone.

The wait turned out to be one that went on for hours.

Her eyes watched as the hour hand of the clock hit 2, and when her tummy started making loud gurgling sounds from her hunger, she shot up from the couch and angrily banged her hand on the table. "Freaking Matthew. Is he coming or not? I'm leaving if he isn't!"

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Ring!

As soon as she stood up, she heard the sound of the elevator reaching outside the main door

The door then slowly opened, and there stood a familiar figure—Matthew!

Unable to hold back her anger when she saw the man, she stomped in front of him and glared. “Matthew Kings! Why did you get your goons to bring me all the way back here?”

She couldn’t believe that he had gotten those thugs to get her just as soon as she was finally on her long-awaited break from Bloomstead!

Despite her outburst, the suit-clad man only stood there with an unreadable expression on his handsome face and his captivating eyes studied Veronica before he suddenly declared, “It is my birthday today.”

The unexpected announcement swiftly earned a stupefied ‘huh’ from the woman. When she finally processed his words, however, her eyebrows knitted into a deep frown, and she eventually went off on him. “Are you crazy?! Don’t you think you are after the wrong person? What has your birthday got to do with me? I’m sure there are tons of people who are eager to celebrate the birthday of the Kingses’ heir.”

This guy probably has a loose screw! What a weirdo. We aren’t even close, Veronica grumbled to herself.

Matthew’s face immediately fell when he heard her words.

As his hands rested in the pockets of his suit pants, his grip on his phone tightened. Unbeknownst to Veronica, there was an image currently being displayed on the screen of Matthew’s phone.

In the photo, two figures could be seen seated across each other at a table of a gazebo, enveloped by the darkness of the night. It was a photo of Veronica celebrating Xavier’s birthday with him. She appeared to be singing Xavier a birthday song, whereas his eyes were closed, and his fingers were intertwined as he quietly made his birthday wish.

Matthew had come across the photo on social media late last night, and oddly enough, he began to feel peevisish as he looked at it. In fact, that had been the sole reason he had unreasonably forced Veronica to return to Bloomstead.

“I want you to celebrate my birthday with me,” he admitted.

Veronica

let out a scoff as she rolled her eyes at him. "Sure," she unexpectedly agreed with a humorless smile on her face. She then raised her right hand up and began to list out, "Why don't I provide you with a one-stop service. Give me 100 thousand, and I will prepare you a birthday cake, birthday wishes, and a birthday party."

Chapter 169

Is this damn woman a slave to money or something? Matthew thought incredulously as his face dimmed further.

Veronica couldn't have possibly taken a fee from Xavier when she celebrated his birthday for him, could she?

She had just spent over a million on Xavier at the club the other day. Matthew highly doubted she had taken Xavier's money just to celebrate his birthday after an incident like that had happened.

Despite starting to feel out of sorts at the mere thought of it, Matthew only apathetically replied, "I don't have the money."

"You don't have the money?" Veronica huffed in disbelief. "No money, no talk."

How could he dare expect her to celebrate his birthday without his financial contribution? *Maybe in your dreams*, she thought before she was hit by a sudden realization. "You brought me all the way back to Bloomstead just to celebrate your birthday with you?"

Her guess was dead on.

A trace of guilt flashed across Matthew's face at that, and his thin lips slightly parted. "You promised to arrange me and Tiffany's wedding. Who gave you permission to disappear halfway?"

Baffled, Veronica asked in return, "Didn't we come to an agreement on that? How can you go back on your own words?!"

"My own words? What have I promised you in my own words?" Matthew questioned. After taking a moment to think about Matthew's question, Veronica only shook her head and replied, "I don't think you promised me anything."

The corners of his lips began to lift as he looked at the naive and honest woman in front of him.

He then walked around her to the living room and propped himself onto the sofa. With one hand on the armrest, his other hand was placed on his k

nee and was lightly tapping in irregular intervals. His eyes held a glint of interest as he gazed at Veronica. "Tell me," he started again. "What plans do you have for the decorations in the wedding hall?"

Upon hearing his words, she could feel her blood pressure rising dangerously high as she was on the verge of spewing curse words at him at that moment.

With that, she angrily walked toward him and began to chastise him when she was standing right in front of him. "I'm not a wedding planner! Why the hell would you want me to decorate the wedding hall?"

Instead of answering her, Matthew continued, "I'll leave everything in your hands. You can get a wedding planning company if you want."

"Then why don't you hire a real wedding," Veronica started to rebuke, only to stop herself just in time when a thought flashed through her mind. She then made herself appear extremely reluctant as she nodded. "Alright. I'll do it since you requested me to. But you should give me an estimation of how much you are willing to spend. Let's be transparent about this. If not, what would I do if I went over budget and you decide to not pay up for my services?"

"Inform Thomas regarding any expenses that you need to be claimed," Matthew nonchalantly informed, to which Veronica, too, readily gave her okay.

She wasn't going to keep saying no as long as he was willing to reimburse her for the expenses.

Now in a much better mood, she said to him, "I have something else to do. Get your fiancée to celebrate your birthday with you." =

She then turned around and started to walk out of the place.

Staring at her back, Matthew was just about to say something when she suddenly stopped in her tracks and warned coldly, "You better watch Tiffany closely, Matthew. She may be your fiancée, and I probably won't stand a chance against the Kingses, but don't cross the line."

She knew that Matthew wasn't the target of her rage and that she shouldn't be telling him this, but it was getting hard for her to hold back.

With a somber look on her face, she then added, "If the day really does come, I hope that at you will at least consider the fact that I was Grandma's savior. Don't you dare ever lay a finger on my family."

It was difficult to read the myriad of emotions in her eyes, but anyone could have sensed the sadness coming from Veronica through her tone of words.

Upon hearing this, Matthew knitted his dark brows into a frown and the tapping on his knee came to a stop. "What did she do to you this time?" he growled.

His face fell, and his left hand unconsciously curled into a tight fist as his anger began to bubble up.

"Why ask me when you can ask your little fiancé?" After saying that, the coldness in her gaze diminished, and she turned around again to leave.

Matthew sat there pondering in silence for quite some time after the door to his place was shut. He eventually got up, and after getting into his car, he drove straight to Dragon's Creek Villa.

Veronica, on the other hand, was walking by the roadside while giving Xavier a call.

"Roni?" Xavier skipped the greeting as soon as he picked up the call. "You finally turned on your phone! I was so close to driving down to Cabot Town myself if I still couldn't get to you."

Needless to say, he was gleeful about receiving a call from her.

"There was something wrong with my phone. I went and got it fixed because it wouldn't turn on," she answered with a giggle.

"Where are you now?"

She could only lie to him to prevent him from asking her questions as it would only complicate things if she explained further. "I'm still in Bloomstead. I haven't gone home yet."

Knowing that she was still around, Xavier immediately offered, "I'll head over to you now."

"N—

No, it is fine," she quickly rejected. "I'm only calling you to tell you that I'm safe. I still have to meet up with my friend later. I'll see you tomorrow?"

Xavier could tell from her tone that she had something else to do, so he knowingly stopped asking questions. "Alright then."

After their call ended, Veronica phoned Yvonne, and as soon as the call was picked up, she went straight to the point without starting with small talks like they usually would. “Yvie, can you help me with something?”

“Why are you acting all bashful? What do you need my help with? Just shoot”

This was the second time they spoke on the phone after Yvonne had left Twilight Condominium.

Their first call was when Yvonne had called Veronica to tell her about the good news, which she then transferred the money right after Matthew and Yvonne had signed the contract.

“Umm... In our earlier conversations, do you remember telling me about your friend who does wedding planning? Is she any good?” Veronica asked.

Yvonne immediately knew who Veronica was asking about. “Oh, my friend was the planning director of Bloomstead’s biggest wedding planning company, but she was laid off after she got pregnant. She is a full-time mom now. Why do you ask?”

“The thing is,” Veronica began to explain, “I’m planning to open up a wedding planning company and I want to hire your friend. The pay will be high.”

Since Matthew had entrusted her to plan the wedding, and even allowed her to claim whatever expenses she had, she might as well set up a new company, and earn as much as she could from him!

After arriving at Dragon’s Creek Villa, Matthew parked his car outside the building and went for the doorbell after getting out of his car. A servant soon came out to greet Matthew with a bow. “Ah! You are here, Young Master Matthew! Come on in.”

Ignoring the servant’s passionate welcome, Matthew merely glanced over at the servant coldly and asked, “Where is Tiffany?”

“I see. You are here to see Miss Larson!” The servant happily laughed as she brought Matthew along to the main hall of the villa. “Please, come in! Miss Larson came home early because she hasn’t been feeling well. She is currently resting in her bedroom.”

After entering the hall, the servant walked briskly toward Tiffany’s parents and carefully announced, “Sir, Madam. Young Master Matthew is here.”

The couple sitting on the sofa had been worried about their daughter's condition the whole day, but as soon as they learned that Matthew had paid them a visit, they were off the couch the next second to welcome him.

"Matthew! You are here to see Tiffy, yes?"

"You are finally here, Matthew. Tiffy has been in bed all day. My husband and I have been so worried!" The couple started speaking one after another.

They were confused by Matthew's sudden appearance at their residence, but they soon considered the possibility of him and Tiffany having conflict with one another being the reason for Tiffany's bad state the whole day.

However...

Why did Matthew have such a sour look on his face?

"She hasn't been feeling well?" Matthew repeated. He tilted his head slightly toward the second floor of the villa, and his cold eyes squinted as he stared. "I'll go take a look."

Matthew wanted to take a good look at the woman. He was truly intrigued by how 'unwell' someone who could lay hands on her own sister be.

He then strode his way up the stairs after he said his fill.

Floch began to follow after Matthew, only to be stopped by Rachel before he could take a step. "Geez, what are you trying to do? Let the younglings handle it themselves. Where are you sticking your nose into?" she reprimanded.

ITT

"Did you see the look on Matthew's face?" Floch worriedly asked. "What if it is something serious?"

Chapter 170

"Even if something *did* happen, this is the Larson Residence, and Tiffy is pregnant with his child, so there's nothing he can do."

Rachel cast a glance at Matthew who had gone upstairs. Then, she nudged Floch with her elbow as she drew closer to him and whispered, "Why don't we take this opportunity to deepen the relationship between those two soon-to-be-weds."

“Hmm...”

Frowning, Floch pressed his lips and nodded after thinking about it for a moment. “Yeah, that’s a good idea.”

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Naturally, Tiffany and Matthew were unaware of Floch and Rachel’s plan.

After walking to the bedroom’s entrance on the second floor, Matthew lifted his hand and was about to knock on the door. Nevertheless, he directly turned the doorknob and walked in toward the end. –

“Get out! I’m asking you to get lost! Can’t you hear me?!” ;

The moment he walked in, Tiffany’s roar emerged in the bedroom. At the same time, she hurled a pillow toward Matthew, hitting him directly.

With that, Matthew waved his hand and threw the pillow onto the floor.

The pink bedroom had a princess–themed renovation. Pieces of bed drapes, which were hanging above the heart–shaped canopy bed, descended onto the pastel pink colored rug. Besides that, there were a few toy dolls scattered on the floor.

Every corner of the room presented an innocent and sweet girly vibe.

This bedroom, which had a delicate and luxurious design, was not affected by the small fire from last night at all. With every piece of furniture in the bedroom replaced, the space looked brand–new.

Matthew looked at Tiffany, who was lying on her side in the bed and covered in a thin blanket with her back facing the door.

He strode over to the bed and looked down at Tiffany, his eyes giving off a terrifying coldness.

“I asked you to get out! Can’t you hear–”

Sensing someone walking near her, Tiffany failed to suppress her anger, so she turned around and yelled.

However, it was only halfway through her sentence did she realize in a shock that the person standing beside the bed was... “M–Matthew, w– what brings you here?”

Tiffany sprang out of the bed at once, ashen-faced. At the same time, she still held her grasp on the thin blanket to cover herself.

Her eyes, which looked extremely similar to Veronica's, were filled with panic and fear. However, when she actually perceived that the person in front of her was indeed Matthew, all her panic and fear disappeared immediately,

The next second, she fell onto the edge of the bed, encircled Matthew's waist with her arms, and started wailing. "Matthew... you're finally here..."

Choking with sobs, Tiffany cried hysterically from the bottom of her heart. Anyone who saw the scene would immediately feel sorry for her.

However, no matter how sorrowfully she cried, Matthew's frosty heart was not moved even to the slightest bit.

He stood there like a statue and only asked when the woman in his arms stopped crying, "Are you done?"

Tiffany snuffled and bit her red lips with her front teeth. It was only when she opened her swollen eyes to look at Matthew did she realize his countenance was terrifyingly cold today.

Is... Is he here to question me?

"Matthew, w—what brings you here today all of the sudden?"

Tiffany clearly knew that ever since she and Matthew got engaged, he had rarely come to Dragon's Creek Villa. Despite her frequent prompt and invitation, Matthew would only come for a quick visit.

With his face filled with a horrifying frigidity, Matthew reached out his hand to list

Tiffany's chin. "Is there anything you want to tell me? Hmm?"

"Anything I want to...? I... Matthew, I don't get what you're trying to say."

Perceiving the overwhelming pressure, Tiffany knew Matthew must have come to question her today.

C—

*Could it be that Veronica the b*tch has exposed the incidents? Then what happened yesterday would... No. I'm sure Matthew doesn't know about what happened last night, otherwise, given his identity as the heir of Kings Corporation, he would definitely not allow Veronica to act in such an unscrupulous manner either.*

Tiffany guessed Veronica must have told Matthew about the staged accident, but for sure, the abduction of her by Veronica was not made known to Matthew.

At this thought, Tiffany's worry was dismissed.

Rubbing Tiffany's chin with his thumb, Matthew stared fixedly at Tiffany with his sharp eyes, which were as black as obsidian, and questioned solemnly, "Do you really not get me, or you just don't want to spill it?"

As his magnetic voice hit Tiffany's heart gently like a wooden clapper, Tiffany's heartbeat accelerated, and she was so nervous that she was almost suffocating.

"I... I..."

Gulping anxiously, Tiffany involuntarily grasped the blanket tight. Her watery eyes looked innocent and pitiful, but deep down, they were filled with unconcealable hatred and rage.

*Veronica Murphy! You b*tch! Why do you have to treat me like this?! Aren't you happy yet after ruining my everything? And you still want to make Matthew detest me too?! How can you be this vicious!*

"Sorry, Matthew... I'm sorry..."

Tiffany knew there was no way she could escape, so she closed her eyes helplessly as tears flowed down her cheeks. With her head dropped in desperation, she muttered, "I've lost my mind upon knowing Veronica is staying with you in Twilight Condominium. I... was engulfed by jealousy, so I thought of doing that on impulse..."

Tiffany was smart—she knew that it would only displease Matthew if she lied to him at this moment, so she could only admit it. Because even if she did not admit it, Matthew would become aware of it upon investigation too.

"Matthew... I know I was wrong. but I'm afraid... I'm afraid of losing you. I love you. I really love you too much..."

Crasping Matthew's wrists tight, Tiffany begged in a pathetic manner. With misery and pitifulness permeating through her eyes, she looked like a poor child who was going to be abandoned.

Anyone would've been moved at the sight of her crying. It was like watching a beautiful flower being drenched in rain.

However, Matthew had always been heartless. So, he naturally wouldn't be moved by just a few drops of tears from a woman.

"You even dare to murder your own sister. Are you thinking of killing me off too?"

Almost every day, Matthew could hear the praises from the public toward Tiffany, gorgeous, talented, brilliant, charming....

Nevertheless, it was only after getting in touch with Tiffany did he know how fake this woman was—her viciousness and malignity were totally outrageous!

"O—

Of course not. I love you, Matthew. I just care about you too much and have lost my mind. I'm sorry..."

Shaking her head non—

stop, Tiffany directly got up and knelt on the bed. Holding Matthew's hand, she continued begging without limit. "I lost my rationality because I was so jealous of Veronica. But...

I regret it now—I truly regret it now. I swear... I swear that I will definitely not lay a finger on her anymore from now on. I... I'll make sure to keep my word..."

"Do you know why she stays in Twilight Condominium?"

Matthew's eyes were filled with detest as he stood straight and continued, "Because she's worried that you guys would kill her when she is asleep. That's why she compromised and moved into Twilight Condominium."

As smart as an owl, Matthew had long been aware of the reason Veronica moved into Twilight Condominium, but it was just that he had never disclosed it.

"I thought you would repent, but you actually refuse to realize your mistakes. I think our marriage should be called off," Matthew warned.

"You can't do that!"

Panic—

stricken, Tiffany got out of the bed instantly. With her bare feet standing directly on the Persian rug on the floor, she knelt in front of Matthew and blurted, "Matthew, I was wrong. I know I was wrong. I know I've disappointed you, but I'm

pregnant with our child. Please be considerate toward our child. She can't live without a father the moment she's born..."