

A Lifetime With You –

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Chapter 317 - The Auditors Arrival -

MH Group headquarters...

The staff in the company has been running around here and there from the moment they clock in. The higher-ups were barking their commands and instructions while the others tried their best not to stand out lest they would catch their supervisor's attention and end up as a punching bag.

The accounting company was going to send a team over to help them with auditing and everyone in MH Group was anxious, especially the accounting department.

At this time, there were a group of people preparing to welcome the team in the lobby. Director Victor Cui stood in the lobby along with the manager with a bright smile on his face as he was waiting for the team to arrive.

This was the normal scene that would happen once every year.

Even though Director Cui didn't need to come out personally to greet the people from the accounting company, he would still come out to make sure that the team would receive a warm welcome. For Director Cui, he wanted everything to be perfect. He wanted the team who came to do the auditing to be happy.

The director was busy instructing a few accountants to tidied up and make their presence look professional when he noticed that someone was missing from the scene. He swept his gaze around the lobby and finally stop when he saw the manager.

"Where is Accountant Ye?" the Director asked. "Hasn't anyone told her that she should be here and welcome the team? I told you I want everyone here to welcome the team."

The manager wiped the beads of perspiration on his forehead with the back of his hand. He has been running around from the moment he arrived in the company and was agitated with the way the director kept on barking his order at him. Turning around, the manager found one of the accountants and asked. When he came back to Director Cui's side, there was a hint of hesitation on his face.

"Director Cui..." the Manager bit on his lips before he continued. "Accountant Ye did not show up at work today."

"What?"

"The others said that Accountant Ye had taken an emergency leave. Probably something happened to her child at home," the Manager tried to explain.

Director Cui stared back at the manager with a dazed expression and snapped out of his trance a second later. He let out a snort before he paced around the lobby to check on the preparation.

At this time, the elevator slid open. The surroundings suddenly turned quiet and the sounds of footsteps echoed when the people came out.

Director Cui put on an amiable smile on his face as he walked over to the man. "President Mo," he greeted. Then, he glanced at Assistant Shawn and nodded.

"Has the team arrived?" Neil asked. His gaze swept across the lobby for a few seconds before he settled at the Director.

"President Mo, they should be arriving here soon." Director Cui stared at his boss for a few seconds and noticed that something was a little strange. "President Mo, are you going to wait and welcome them as well?"

"That's a good idea," Neil nodded. "Since I'm already here, I might as well wait and welcome them to the company."

Director Cui opened his mouth to say something, but Neil had already turned to speak with his assistant. Suddenly, Director Cui was regretting that he had asked the man such a question.

If he did not mention the matter, then the president would not think of waiting for the team to arrive with him, right?

The director was getting agitated. No matter how he tried to speak to Neil, the man continued his discussion with his assistant in a low, voice. Director Cui hesitated before he decided to step closer. However, the moment his gaze met the president's icy gaze, Director Cui subconsciously backed down.

The elevator opened with a ding again. This time, the sounds of laughter could be heard even before the people came out.

Director Lance Feng from Project Development and Director Moses Huo from Business Development walked out of the elevator at the same time. The moment they saw Neil not far away from them, the laughter gradually stop and the smile on their faces froze.

The two directors walked over to their boss and greeted him. "President Mo."

Neil merely spared them a glance and a nod before he continued his discussion with his assistant.

Seeing the iceblock expression on Neil's face, the two directors felt a shiver down their spine. Instantly, they turned to their friend, Director Cui, for an explanation, but only received a shrug.

The three friends huddled together to discuss the sudden change of situation.

"Why is President Mo here?" Director Huo asked.

"I don't know. He said that he was going to stay and welcome the team of auditors with us." Director Cui stole a few more glances towards their boss, feeling a little bit lost.

Director Cui had planned to speak a few words with the head of the auditor and reminded him of a few things that he had forgotten to say a while ago. But with President Mo's presence, how would he dare to mention anything? That would be suicide!

"Then..." Director Feng grew anxious. "Have you reminded the head of the auditor?"

"I haven't." Director Cui heaved a long, exasperated sigh. "That person is unreachable since yesterday. I am planning to remind him today." A deep frown appeared on his face. "Don't worry. I will find a way to talk to him later."

Hearing his words, both Director Feng and Director Huo was at ease.

At this time, there was a little commotion coming from the outside.

Someone had announced that the team of auditors had arrived and Director Cui quickly shouted some instructions for the staff to welcome them. His body suddenly grew frigid when he sensed that their president was standing next to him.

"President Mo, they're here." Director Cui forced a smile.

"Mmm... I know."

Everyone's attention turned towards the entrance as they waited for the auditors to walk in.

Director Cui put on the best smile on his face as he was going to greet them. However, just as the team of auditors entered the lobby, the smile on Director Cui's face gradually faded.

The three directors exchanged their glances when they could not recognize the people in front of them.

Director Cui turned to the Manager and whispered, "What's going on? Why did you welcome the wrong people?"

The Manager felt his sweat trickled down on his back, but he could not find a word to explain.

Soon, the man who was leading the group stopped in front of Neil and smiled. "President Mo." He stretched his hand for a handshake.

At this time, Director Cui picked up his courage to step forward. "Excuse me, but you are...?"

The man turned to Director Cui with the same amiable smile. "Hello, I am Miles Gu, from CY Accounting Firm."

"CY..." Director Cui was momentarily speechless. "But, isn't Mr. Chu and his team was the one who was supposed to come over today?"

Miles looked at him with a puzzled look. "You are...?"

"Director Victor Cui from Accounting."

"Director Cui." The smile on Miles Gu's face widened. "Haven't you heard? Yesterday, Mr. Chu and a few staff under him were fired. Mr. Chu was found guilty of altering some accounts and now they were all facing several charges of fraud and misappropriation of funds. Yesterday.... there was a massive shuffle in the company."

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Director Cui along with the two others was startled upon hearing the news. For a few seconds, none of them were able to function well. The only thing they can do was to watch as their president led them into an elevator. Soon, the manager and the rest of the staff rushed up to head over to the meeting room where the auditors will be stationed for a week until the auditing is done.

As soon as the door closed, the three directors began to look at each other. Each of them had a tense look on their face.

"Mr. Chu is not leading this time's auditing," Director Huo spoke. He looked at his friends anxiously. "What do we do now?"

Director Cui sent an annoyed look at his friend, wishing that he would shut up. At this time, his brain was working hard to find out a solution to their problem and his voice was disturbing him from thinking clearly.

A thought came to his mind and Director Cui then recalled how he was unable to reach for Mr. Chu's phone from yesterday.

Of course, what Director Cui and the other did not know was that Mr. Chu and a few people under him were taken to the police station for an investigation. Thus, their phone was taken away from them.

Director Cui quickly took a deep breath to calm down. "Relax. Even if they have changed the auditors, they wouldn't find out anything wrong with the accounts."

Director Feng looked back at him with a frown. "Are you sure?"

"Accountant Ye had already prepared what needs to be prepared." Director Cui answered and snorted. "What are you worried about?"

At this time, the phone in Director Cui's pocket started to ring. He quickly answered the call and his expression changed upon hearing the reminder from the manager that he need to head up to the meeting room.

When the three directors walked into the meeting room, the auditors from CY Accounting Firm had already taken their seats. The computers were set up for them and the thick pile of papers was arranged in front of them.

At the side, Miles Gu was having an amicable conversation with President Mo.

Director Cui did not know what the two were talking about, but once she laid is gaze on the pile of paper, he suddenly had a premonition. His heart grew restless and his instinct told him that he shouldn't stay in the room for too long.

He tried to calm down and turned to look for the manager. "Contact Accountant Ye for me. Tell her that she needs to come over to the company now." He hissed.

The manager nodded before he scurried away.

Director Cui watched as the auditors started to organize the documents on the table and took a deep breath.

He was sure that he had let Accountant Ye cover up everything that needed to be covered. There can be no mistake at this time or else, he and everybody else will have to face the consequences.

As the thought came to his mind, Director Cui walked out of the meeting room. He needed to find a way for him to escape just in case something bad would happen.

The auditor will spend a minimum of one week working on the pile of papers. It should give him some time to work on an escape plan...

Once Director Cui walked out of the meeting room, Neil glanced at the man and his eyes narrowed dangerously.

He then exchanged a few more words with the new auditor before he left the room with Assistant Shawn. The moment he stepped out from the crowd, Neil tapped his finger on the phone and sent out a few messages.

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A faint smile curled on her lips as Jamie read the message from Neil. She quickly replied to his message and slid the phone back into her pocket. Then, she adjusted her vest and ran her finger in her short hair.

The moment she walked into the cafe, several ladies who have been hanging around the place turned their heads to look at her. Sensing their gaze, Jamie then turned to give them a playful wink. The room was suddenly noisy with the sound of the ladies whispering.

Jamie let out a chuckle. Then, she walked upstairs and walked over to the corner. She pulled a chair and sat down. Her long legs crossed and she leaned back on her chair in a languid manner. "Accountant Ye." Her voice contained a trace of laziness.

The woman in front of her quickly looked up. On her face were traces of tears and fatigue. Accountant Ye looked straight at the short-haired woman in front of her and suddenly, her gaze turned sharper.

"Have you made your decision?" Jamie tilted her head sideways. The smile on her lips stretched out when the woman in front of her did not reply. Her fingers tapped at the table twice. "If you are still reluctant, I cannot find a way to help you and your family."

Hearing Jamie mentioning her family, Accountant Ye finally snapped out of her trance. She wiped her face with the back of her hand and looked at Jamie with a sharp gaze. "The thing you told me last night, will you be able to promise me?"

"Of course. I give you my word. Once you agree, your daughter will receive the she needed. Your family will be given protection. I will not let Director Cui or anyone touch them. The authorities will not be looking for them."

Though she had made her decision earlier, she still wanted to hear Jamie's assurance that her innocent family will not receive any consequences of her deeds.

A few years ago, when Director Cui had approached her with his proposal, Accountant Ye was very reluctant to be a part of it. Though the reward was tempting, her moral conscience did not allow her to agree.

However, her youngest daughter was suddenly admitted to the hospital and the doctor said that she will need a lot of money for her surgery. In the end, Accountant Ye had succumbed and had agreed to help Director Cui and the others to alter the numbers on the account. In exchange, she was given a lot of money for her daughter's surgery.

In the beginning, Accountant Ye had thought that it was a one-time thing. Who would have thought that Director Cui was threatened her with that matter and had wanted her to help him alter the number again?

It didn't take her a long time to agree. After all, her daughter's condition did not improve much even after surgery.

Accountant Ye had thought of quitting a few times, but in the end, she had stayed and continued to work with Director Cui. All because she knew that Director Cui will not let her go as she had known too many of his secrets.

When Jamie had approached her and spoke of what she had done in the last few years, Accountant Ye was scared. She had thought of reporting Jamie to Director Cui, but in the end, she did not take any action.

Accountant Ye had thought that, even if Jamie had reported her to the police, she would be relieved. At least, the heavy burden she was carrying for the past few years would be lifted.

She did not think that Jamie would come to meet her with an offer that she could not refuse.

Accountant Ye closed her eyes for a few seconds. "I agree," Accountant Ye said.. "I will do anything you ask and help in any way that I can."

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When Director Cui heard that Accountant Ye was unreachable, he began to panic. The woman was the one who was responsible for most of his business and transaction. She was supposed to show up when the auditors showed up and assist them during the auditing.

However, from the first day that the auditors had appeared, Accountant Ye could not be contacted. None of those who were closer to her in the company knew where she had gone to. Director Cui had sent a few men to look for her and later found out that the woman seemed to disappear into thin air.

Her family members had suddenly disappeared and their neighbor said that something happened to the sick daughter, thus, the family decided to move away in one night. No one seemed to know where they went to.

Hearing the news, Director Cui was infuriated. His first thought was that Accountant Ye had done something wrong with the accounts and had run away because of that.

He then asked the manager to check on it and found that everything was what he had wanted. Only when the manager had assured him that there was nothing wrong with the documents that Director Cui could lower his guard down.

Accountant Ye had done what he wanted and nothing can be traced back to them.

Perhaps, something did happen to Accountant Ye's daughter causing her to move away in a rush. Anyway, as long as he will be safe, Director Cui did not care what happened to Accountant Ye.

The only problem was that... Without Accountant Ye, he will need another reliable person to help him manage the accounts soon.

After three days of the auditing process, Director Cui and the others began to relax.

The auditors were working hard as they should have. The process was smooth and it seemed that there was no problem with the accounts. Even if there was something wrong with them, it doesn't seem that this new team could find anything wrong with the accounts.

Director Cui visited the meeting room which was occupied by the group of auditors and watched them as they worked through the window glass. His gaze fell at the new auditor who had replaced Mr. Chu and thought that it was better this way.

If Mr. Chu had appeared, then, he will have to hand him over a large sum of money as per their agreement. Now that the man had not appeared, Director Cui could pocket that money for himself. Wasn't it better this way?

As the thought crossed his mind, a wide smile appeared on his face.

Director Cui recognized the woman who had just come out from the meeting room and stopped her. He gave the woman a look over and asked, "How is everything inside? Everything is well?"

The woman was a little startled when the director had stopped her. She has been working for the company for a few years and this was the first time that the director had taken the initiative to speak to her.

"Director Cui," the woman lowered her gaze. "Everything is going well inside."

"How is the new team? Did they make anything difficult for you?"

"No." The woman shook her head quickly. "The team that they sent this time is very professional. I have learned even by standing at the side to assist them."

Director Cui continued to listen to the woman praising the new team as he watched them from behind the glass. After watching the head of the auditor for a while, he then began to notice that something seemed a little wrong.

The anxious look on the auditors' face told him that something had happened. Suddenly, the group gathered around the head of auditors and it seemed as if they were discussing something on the paper.

"What... What's going on in there?" Director Cui asked.

The woman finally stopped her rambling and turned around to look into the room. A frown appeared when she noticed that they were gathered at the front. "Director Cui, I will go and check."

Director Cui nodded but did not make a move. His eyes continued to watch the situation inside the room as he waited for the woman to come out and tell her what had happened.

At this time, Director Cui heard footsteps coming from behind him. He turned around and was surprised to see that the president and his assistant were walking towards him.

"P-President Mo," he greeted.

Neil swept his glance towards the elderly man with his usual iceblock expression.

"President Mo, why are you here?" Director Cui asked.

"This is the first time that the new team is sent over for auditing. Of course, I will have to check out how they are doing." Neil narrowed his eyes as he continued to look at the situation inside the room. "But, what is going on inside? Why does everyone look... restless?"

"President Mo, I'm not too sure myself," Director Cui said. Before he could say more, President Mo had walked over to the meeting room and entered. Anxious, Director Cui then followed him closely.

The moment Neil entered, everyone in the room stopped in whatever they were doing.

Miles Gu was the first to snap out of his trance. He stood up straight, walked over to Neil, and greeted, "President Mo."

"Is everything alright in here?" Neil asked.

A deep frown appeared on Miles's face. "While looking at the figures in the accounts, we noticed that something does not seem right. Although it was not very noticeable, the figure in the accounts did not match."

Neil's expression turned cold and the temperature in the room dropped down several degrees. "What do you mean?"

"President Mo, look here." Miles Gu pushed the swiveling chairs to another side and turned the computer to face him. He then started to show and explain to Neil what was wrong with the numbers and then, pulled a few papers on the table to compare.

Director Cui's face began to pale as he continued to hear the man's explanation. He had wanted to stealthily back away and leave the room, but Assistant Shawn was standing too close behind him. Even if he wanted to text the others and warn them that something had happened, Director Cui did not dare to make a move.

"Mr. Gu, what are you mean?" Neil asked after the man finally stopped after a lengthy explanation.

Miles took a deep breath. "President Mo, someone had tempered with the number in the account. I suspected that someone has been stealing a large sum of money from your company."

Neil's gaze turned darker. His eyes swept at everyone in the room before he finally stopped at his assistant.. "Assistant Shawn, call the police."

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After the new auditors had pointed out the problem in the account, Director Cui and the two others became anxious. The three of them knew that sooner or later, someone would found their secret and they will be facing a lot of trouble.

Within a short time, the investigator had come over to search the Accounting Department. Documents, computers, and a few other possessions were confiscated. Everyone in the Accounting Department was asked not to leave the city. The manager as well as most of the senior accountants were taken to the station to help with the investigation.

The three directors began to make plans to escape. They tried to find anyone who had received money from them to help them find a way to leave the country, but at this time, no one wanted to be associated with them.

Even if they wanted to escape, they would not be able to leave the city as Henry had a few people to keep an eye on them.

When Director Huo was stopped at the airport, trying to leave the country, the others who had their share in this matter became scared. However, there was nothing that they can do but to stay down low.

It was not known who had leaked the news, but someone posted the news on a blog, and later, the news began to spread that MH Group was investigated. The netizen was quick to come out with their speculation. At this time, Neil's name was dragged into the mud and someone had accused that he had his involvement in this matter.

However, an unnamed staff had then disclosed that it was President Mo himself who had reported this matter to the police. The police stepped up to verify this matter and advised the public not to come out with theories that will only disturb their investigation.

At this time, Neil had issued a warning through his lawyer that he will not hesitate to press charges against anyone who had the intention to malign him or the company.

The netizen became obedient for a while, but the discussion did not stop.

As the public continued to guess what was going on, a woman who claimed to be a senior accountant in MH Group stepped forward. Through the live stream video on one of the popular news channels, the woman revealed the corruption in MH Group that has been going on for a few years. A few directors' and senior managers' names were mentioned and the police were quick to investigate them. The three Directors were obviously among those who were investigated.

Accountant Ye then appeared at the police station to give her statement and was quickly put under the police's custody.

The public became excited at this sudden development. Seeing the faces of the directors and managers on the screen, the public started to criticize them. They wanted to know what they have done, how much they had stolen from MH Group, and which big shots were involved with those directors.

The netizen was quick to do their job and soon a few ministers' names and high-ranked officials in L City were mentioned. Even if they had taken a picture together with one of the directors, their past scandal would be all dug out.

For a while, the ministers and high-ranked officials were annoyed that they have once had an intersection with one of the directors. Because of them, they were suddenly put into the spotlight. Fortunately, the public did not focus on their matter for too long.

This matter became a sensational topic in L City. Even the higher-ups from Capital City had kept their eyes on this matter.

Two weeks have passed but the public would not stop speaking about this matter.

Of course, Charles Tang had used his connection as Rainmaker the blogger to make a louder sound. As long as the bloggers keep on coming with more news on this matter, the public would not stop talking about it.

On that day, the clock has just struck at midnight when the Rainmaker posted a piece of news that had shocked the people in L City

Their most well-respected and clean figure in the city was mentioned as having his involvement in this corruption. The man was said to receive a large sum of money and lands in exchange for a few favors.

In the beginning, the public had refused to believe this news, however, with the evidence that Rainmaker had provided, they had no choice but to trust the credibility.

It caused an uproar among the public and they started to criticize the man.

Before afternoon, Attorney General Leng was taken to the police station to assist with the investigation. The man came out of his office with a calm expression on his face. He looked up straight at the camera and threatened to press charge against everyone who had malign him.

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The cemetery...

Neil Mo stood in front of Adam and Claire's tomb with an unreadable expression on his face. He sensed Hazel's movement beside him and quickly snapped out of his trance. Slowly, he took a step back and watched as his parents stood in front of the tomb.

It was the couple's death anniversary and he was taking Hazel and his parents to visit the tomb. Because of Edith's condition, she was not allowed to come along and had stayed at home to accompany her Grandpa.

Early that morning, he received news that Charles released the Attorney General's news on the internet and the post quickly went viral. Because this matter was under public interest, the police were quick to do their job and apprehend the Attorney General.

As he continued to watch Hazel offering her respect to her parents, the phone in his pocket started to vibrate. Neil stepped aside to the corner where he often stood to wait for Hazel and looked at the caller ID.

His eyes narrowed and Neil swiped a finger on the screen. "Miss Jiang."

"President Mo, I received news that a few people will be visiting the General Attorney to help him with his situation," Jennifer Jiang did not waste any time to report the news to him. "The directors might not be able to do anything but with Attorney General Leng's power and influence, it would not be hard for him to escape."

His expression turned darker upon hearing her words. "We cannot allow that to happen."

"No. We will not let that happen, " Jennifer agreed.

"Is everything all set?"

"My friend is ready to speak and reveal what had happened during those years she had worked under the General Attorney," Jennifer said. "When that happens, we will release a few other materials to the authorities as well to the public about his disgusting behavior."

There was a brief silence between them before Jennifer spoke again. "Should we continue?"

"Let's do it as according to plan."

Jennifer chuckled on the other line.. "I'm on my way to pick up my friend and let the show continue."

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In the police station...

Attorney General Leng tugged at his sleeve and buttoned them properly. He glanced at the officers with disdain and he was secretly making plans to make their life difficult.

Yesterday, the police had come over to his office with an arrest warrant. As a law-abiding citizen, Attorney General Leng had no other choice but to follow the police back to the station. Before he left, he had instructed Secretary Liu to contact his lawyer to help him out of his situation.

The lawyer one of the top lawyers in the city and had a high winning percentage in his record.

When Attorney General Leng saw his old friend, his heart quickly was at ease. With his friend's help, it would not be long before he can get away with the accusation.

The Attorney General sneered when he thought of the reason he was taken to the police station. Previously, he had a few dealings with Director Feng and the others. He did not think that because of their carelessness, he would be implicated in their problem and had to face all this bullshit.

He has been following the news about MH Group from day one and was aware of everything that has been going on. It was just that... Attorney General Leng did not expect that the directors would get caught. He had thought that those people would at least be smart enough to cover their tracks that would lead to him, but who would have guessed that those directors would be stupid enough.

Those people wanted to give him money and he only wanted to help them with legal matters. What was wrong with that?

Fortunately, he was someone with influence and could still get out of this predicament.

The door was suddenly pushed from the outside and soon, his lawyer walked in. After exchanging a few words, Attorney General Leng walked out of the room with his lawyer following behind him.

He snickered as he walked past the officer who has been accusing him of that crime in the interrogation room a while ago. His lips curled into a smile as he was approaching the glass door.

In just a few steps, he would be free. His lawyer had guaranteed that he could help and push all crimes to the three directors and wash his name from this crime. Attorney General Leng was sure that he would win.

However, just before he was able to reach the door, an officer with a burly figure stopped just in front of him.

Instantly, Attorney General Leng's face turned ugly. "Move aside!"

The officer stared at the Attorney General's face and his expression grew cloudy. "I'm sorry, but you cannot leave this place."

"What are you doing?" the lawyer stepped forward. "Attorney General Leng is allowed to leave this place. He has been cleared of all charges." Pulling a few papers from his briefcase, the lawyer started to wave them at the officer's face.

The officer curled his lips into a smile that did not reach his eyes. "I'm sorry. But you really cannot leave this place." He glanced at his partner and soon, his partner start to wave a paper to the lawyer. "Attorney General Leng, you are under arrest."

Attorney General Leng stared at the officer with his eyes wide. "What do you mean by this? Don't you know who I am? Do you not want your job? I'm telling you, with one phone call, I can make you no longer able to stay in this city!"

The officer ignored his word and instead, pulled out his handcuff. Then, he started to read the Attorney General's new charges and his right.

His face turned pale when he heard about his new charge. "R*pe and assault?"

"Attorney General!" The lawyer tugged at the man's arm. "Tell me this isn't true." He waved the paper in front of the Attorney General and his expression grew uglier.

The old man stared at the paper and started to read the words on the paper. Suddenly, Attorney General Leng felt a lump in his throat. "This is not true!" His eyes were looking at his lawyer with his sharp gaze. "You go and find out just what the hell is going on!"

"I will help you and tell you what is going on," the officer said. "Last night, when you were spending your time in that room, a woman named Susan Xiong uploaded a post claiming that she worked for you a few years ago."

Attorney General Leng felt his breath hitched upon hearing that name. It has been a few years since the last time he heard that name. Why did she have to appear now?

"You wouldn't believe what she said in that post." The Officer let out a chuckle. "Miss Susan Xiong had admitted that all charges against you are true. Other than the evidence we gathered, the lady had provided us with more evidence."

"It was all lies!" General Attorney Leng shouted, causing a commotion in the police station.

The police officer cocked his head and smiled. "Furthermore... that lady had said that a few years ago when she was working under you, she had found out about your corruption. When she talked to her direct supervisor..."

"Shut up!" General Attorney Leng looked at the officer angrily.

"When she talked to her supervisor, you then arranged for a private meeting with that lady where you then assaulted her." The officer's expression turned gloomy by the time he finished talking.

"That's a lie!" Attorney General Leng hissed. "I don't know who that lady is, but clearly, she was just trying to get some attention using my situation."

"That lady came over to the station a while ago," the officer spoke. "A report has been made. Whether it is a lie or not, as the officer in charge, we will have to keep you here to investigate. Attorney General Leng, I hope that you can understand my position."

Attorney General Leng's face turned red with anger and his chest heaved up and down as he tried to steady his breathing. He stared at the officer for a long time and realized that he had never seen his face before. "Who are you? I have never seen your face before! What is your rank here? Do you even know who I am?"

"Attorney General Leng," his lawyer called. "Stay calm. I will go and check what is going on. I promise, once I return, I will let you out from here."

He took a deep breath as he looked at his lawyer and slowly, Attorney General Leng nodded before he went away with the new officer.

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Neil leaned on his swiveling chair and his gaze turned darker as time passed by. On his computer screen was the live stream of the shocking news of the Attorney General's new charges.

The journalist has been camping out of the police station on the day that the three directors were caught. Therefore, when the lady appeared at the station to give her statement to the police last night, the journalist did not waste any time writing what needed to be written and published the news.

The public went crazy again with this sudden development. Some had thought that this lady was just an attention seeker, while others urged the police to investigate things clearly. Assaulting and r*pe were very serious and they hoped that if the accusations were true, then the Attorney General should face his crime.

With the new accusation, Attorney General Leng's reputation started to crumble even before the police could investigate things clearly.

A while ago, Neil received news that the Attorney General's lawyer has been running around to find a way to help his client out of his situation.

It was then that another woman had stepped up and claimed to be the Attorney General's victim as well.

This woman was no other than the victim that Mike and George had persuaded to come forward a while ago.

By this time, Neil was sure that the lawyer, who had just found a way to drop the bribery charge from Attorney General Leng would be at loss.

Of course, this was not the end for this matter. Soon, before the lawyer can do anything about the Attorney General's new charge, the bloggers who were working with the Rainmaker will release a few news. Then, evidence that Mike had collected all over the years will be released.

The netizen will play their part and soon, the truth about what happened in Z Town years ago would finally be revealed. The Attorney General will soon have murder linked to his name.

A soft knock was heard coming from the door. When Neil looked up, his wife had walked into his study with a faint smile on her face and a tray of refreshment in her hand.

Instantly, the dark expression on his face disappeared and a matching smile appeared.

"Are you still working?" Edith asked sauntered towards him and placed the tray on a spot on his desk. "Are you hungry? I brought you some snacks."

"No. Just watching some news. Leave the snacks there. I'll eat when I'm hungry." He spread his arms and waited for her to come over to his embrace. But instead, his wife walked around him before she draped her arms around his shoulder, hugging him from behind.

Neil let out a chuckle. "What are you doing? Come over to me." He patted at his thigh, motioning her to sit down.

"No. I'm heavy. Hugging you like this is enough."

He peeled her arms away from him and led her until Edith was in front of him. Then, with a soft tug, Edith was sitting on his lap and her arms quickly find their way and rested on his shoulders. Neil pulled her head closer so that they were resting on his chest. He buried his nose in her hair and pecked at her cheek.

"Not heavy at all," Neil said.

Edith giggled. Seconds later, the smile on her face disappeared and a frown appeared on her face. "Oh!" Edith retracted her hand and placed it on her stomach.

"What's wrong?" Seeing the change in her expression, Neil was worried.

"Nothing." Edith flashed him a smile. She reached for his hand and placed them on her tummy. Then, she continued to watch his expression changed.

"The baby is kicking," Neil said. The look in his eyes was pure happiness.

"Mmm..." Edith nodded.

"Does it hurt?"

Edith shook her head. "It doesn't hurt. Perhaps, the baby only wanted to say hi to daddy."

The smile on his lips stretched wider. Neil began to caress her tummy and rained his kisses on her face.

Edith turned away when it was starting to feel ticklish. She glanced at the news on the screen and a slight frown appeared on her face. "Is everything going well?"

"So far, everything is going well," Neil said. "But, we should not look down on his lawyer. That man is very capable."

"It will be alright." Edith patted his cheek and kissed the corner of his lips.

Although she did not take part in his plan, Neil would often speak of them in front of her and Edith knew of everything that happened to the Attorney General.

A few days ago, Edith was in the living room, accompanying her father-in-law and her grandfather to watch the news when she heard that the Attorney General was taken to the police station as he was facing a few bribery charges.

Seeing the old man's calm expression on his face made her feel disgusted, but knowing what will happen to him later, Edith began to relax. Her grandfather has worked hard for years trying to find evidence against this man, and Neil too was working to find evidence for Adam and Claire's death.

Neil and his team were planning to hit the Attorney General every time the man find a route to escape his crime. With so many accusations and under the public eyes, the authorities and higher-ups could never let this matter pass, or else, they will have to face the public's wrath.

The Attorney General's backers will have no choice but to abandon him.

Then, he will find a way to entice the people who were working closely with the Attorney General to find out more about his brother. Someone like Secretary Liu should know a lot of the Attorney General's dirty secret. After all, he was one of the Attorney General's most trusted men.

Soon, the matter about what had happened in Z Town when she was still a little girl will be out. With new evidence, the authorities will have to re-investigate the case openly,

and soon, they would find a link between those murders with the serial murders in L City.

The truth about her mother's death will be revealed, and so will the other women.

At this time, there was nothing else that they wanted other than for the Attorney General to face his punishment. He had harmed too many people and he needed to stop.

...

In the police station...

The reputable lawyer with a high percentage of winning, Jordan Peng walked into the station with his expression darkened.

He has been working hard for a few days to find a way to help the Attorney General to get out of his predicament. In the beginning, it was easy for him to do his job. Using his connection, he found a few people who are willing to pull some strings for the Attorney General. After all, everyone had a good relationship with him.

After spending a long time in their line of work, they could understand that accepting some money under the table was something unavoidable.

So what if the Attorney General had done that as well? Unlike the netizen, they were not surprised.

However, none of them had expected that the Attorney General would be accused of r*pe.

When they heard about this matter, the other who had agreed to help him, in the beginning, started to pull away. No one wanted to be associated with such a case. Everyone had their mother, sisters, and daughters. If they started to defend a pervert, then how will others view them?

Lawyer Peng was frustrated. No matter how he had asked the Attorney General to tell him the truth, the man would rather kept his mouth shut.

He was forced to investigate on his own and soon, discovered a few dark secrets....

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Lawyer Peng heaved a long sigh, dreading his meeting with the Attorney General. At this time, the expression on his face was no longer the same as it was a few days ago when he came to meet the Attorney General for the first time after he was taken to the station.

After learning of what the Attorney General had done, Lawyer Peng was tired. His manner was no longer as confident or arrogant as before.

The last few days, he has been doing a lot of thinking. After the first rape accusation, another woman had appeared at the police station to file a report against the Attorney General. Then, there was the third accusation and the fourth.

At this time, Lawyer Peng did not know how many women have become the man's victim. But, no matter how he tried to find out from the Attorney General, that man would not tell him anything.

It was then that he met a few of the Attorney General's men. His secretary did not want to say anything, but his driver had let out a few clues and thus, Lawyer Peng found out that the Attorney General liked to hire a woman to accompany him. Later, he would bring them to a club and would always stay in the same private room.

From a staff of the club, he then learned that the Attorney General had some weird hobby. He liked to torture the women before he slept with them.

Apparently, this matter has become an open secret for everyone in the club. Even though they were aware of it, none of them dared to report it. Anyway, nothing would happen to the Attorney General when they filed a report, but instead, they might lose their job.

One of the club staff who chose to be anonymous had once seen what the Attorney General did and he could not bear it and later choose to file a police report. The next day, he was beaten by a group of men and later, was accused of stealing from the customer before he was fired.

When Lawyer Peng heard how the women would be found half-dead in the room the next morning, his face turned dark. He tried to find some of those women to ask, and heard that the allegation was true.

Suddenly, Lawyer Peng became dispirited.

Like everyone else, he too looked up to Attorney General Leng. But after he heard their stories and saw the evidence that they have provided, the image that Attorney General Leng had in his mind started to crumble. The respect he had for that man gradually disappeared.

Lawyer Peng halted when he noticed a man blocking his path. Looking up, he realized that this man was the same police who had apprehended the Attorney General just before he could walk out of the door.

"Lawyer Peng," the man nodded at him as a form of greetings.

"You are..."

"Captain Steven Qi," he offered him a handshake.

A light flashed in Lawyer Peng's eyes. He scrutinized the man in front of him and noticed that, unlike the first time they ran into each other, this time, the man was in his uniform. The badges on his uniform showed his rank. Previously, this man was not in his uniform and he did not pay too much attention towards him.

"You're new here," Lawyer Peng said.

"Mmm... I was transferred here a few weeks ago."

Lawyer Peng continued to study the man in front of him and suddenly thought that the captain looked a little familiar. His eyes and nose resembled a respected figure in the country. "You're not from Y City, are you?"

The smile on the captain's lips widened. "Lawyer Peng, you are smart."

Lawyer Peng was a little startled that he had guessed it right. He let out a chuckle and asked, "What? The Qi family is planning to spread their influence in L City now?"

"We have no such intention," the captain said and chuckled. His transfer to this city was due to a special request by a member of his family. Later, they thought that it would not be a bad thing to let him keep his eyes on some people in the city.

Seeing the deep frown on Lawyer Peng's face, the captain's smile stretched up. "Lawyer Peng, a word of advice from me. If you want to keep your job and reputation, you should drop that troublesome client of yours. You might be able to pull some strings, but we are not going to back down and let him go."

Lawyer Peng did not answer but he had a feeling that the person in front of him had investigated and knew about Attorney General Leng's heinous act. He swallowed his saliva and curled his lips into a faint smile. "I came here to meet my client."

Captain Qi stared at the lawyer's face for a while before he led him towards one of the rooms.

...

When Aaron came over to the apartment, he was surprised to see the number of boxes lined up at the corner. He turned to Grandpa Mike and asked, "Are they moving out?"

"Mmm..." Mike nodded. "The baby will come out soon. They wanted a bigger place so that the kids will be able to run freely.

A while ago, Mike was informed that both Edith and Neil were planning to move out to a new place. Although this apartment had excellent security, he would still find it uncomfortable to live among the brick and stones.

Previously, he had seen the new place. It was big, but what Mike liked the most about the place was the large courtyard. There are spaces for the kids to run around and the place gave off a relaxing feeling.

As Aaron walked in, he saw that his old friend was walking down the stairs and his eyes grew wide. "I haven't seen you in a few weeks, and you've grown bigger."

Edith stared back at her friend with a threatening gaze and seconds later, Aaron got a slap on his arms from Mike.

"Where is my granddaughter big? Aaron Li, if you talk nonsense, you can leave now."

Aaron touched his nose. "Grandpa, I did not mean it that way. It hasn't been a long time since I saw Edith, but her stomach has gotten slightly bigger than the last time." Seeing the dissatisfaction on Mike's face, Aaron quickly held on to the old man's arms.

"Grandpa, I'm guessing that your great-grandchild should be a very healthy kid."

Hearing Aaron's words, his heart softened a little bit. Mike snorted and walked over to the living area. He took a seat and looked at Aaron again. "Why did you come here to see me?"

Aaron went over to sit down next to the old man. "Grandpa, the higher-ups wanted you to come over and help us with the case again."

Mike raised a brow. "What's wrong? The last time, didn't you guys said that you have nothing more to ask?"

"Recently, a new captain was transferred to the station and there has been a major shuffle in the team," Aaron said. His eyes grew dark. "Some of the guys were pulled out and transferred away when they were found guilty of some crimes. Later, we found out that they have been messing with the investigation files.. This is why the higher-ups wanted you to come over and help. Grandpa, will you come?"

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Lawyer Peng could not hide the fatigue in his face.

In the past few weeks, he has been running around here and there to help the Attorney General to get out of his situation. The moment he brought up Attorney General's name, the others would straightaway declare that they would not be able to help the Attorney General with his case.

A few of them had advised for him to let go, but when Jordan Peng thought of his past relationship with Attorney General Leng, he thought that he could not just back away. When he had just started, the Attorney General had helped him a lot until he reached his position.

Lawyer Peng thought that he should not be ungrateful and leave the Attorney General when he was at his lowest. Lawyer Peng was not that heartless. Attorney General Leng might have committed some mistakes, but this was not the reason for him to forget the man's kindness.

Heaving a sigh, Lawyer Peng began to pick up a few documents on his desk. The look on his face turned serious as he tried to find any loophole that would allow him to protect his client.

After spending almost an hour, a knock was heard on the door.

A while later, his assistant walked into his room with an anxious look on his face. "Lawyer Peng."

Hearing his assistant's trembling voice, Lawyer Peng lifted his head and massaged his temple. "What's wrong with you? Why did you look so anxious? Did you find anything useful for me?"

"No. Lawyer Peng, there's trouble."

Lawyer Peng quickly sat up straight and a deep frown appeared on his face. "What kind of trouble?"

"You need to switch on the news," the assistant said.

Lawyer Peng sighed tiredly but his hand soon reached for the mouse on his desk. He turned to the computer screen and started to click on an icon. Soon, the news appeared on the screen and the reporter's voice filled in his room. His expression changed as he continued to listen to the report.

"This is impossible," Lawyer Peng whispered. His hand reached for his phone and Lawyer Peng started to check at some of the news portals.

Similarly, the news on the front page of the website was the same as what the reporter had spoken: Attorney General Leng was suspected to be involved in the serial murder that had rocked L City a few months ago.

"Just... what on earth is going on? How did Attorney General Leng was involved in a murder? A serial murder?"

As a few more victims had stepped up to speak against Attorney General Leng, the police found that the way the Attorney General had tortured had a few similarities with the bodies they found.

At this time, the police were investigating whether the two cases were related.

Lawyer Peng continued to listen to the news and soon, his body slump down to his seat.

...

Attorney General Leng did not know what was going on. He had thought that he would be sitting in the police station for at least a couple of days, but it has been a few weeks and he was still detained.

He shouted a few cursing words and demanded them to let him free, but none of them seemed to listen to him. He was the reputable Attorney General, but at this time, the people around him keep on looking at him with disdain in their eyes.

At this time, Attorney General Leng heard footsteps heading towards him. A deep frown appeared on his face as he recognized the man.

Not too long ago, this man had pushed him back behind bars when he was supposed to leave this place.

He remembered this man well and later, he heard that this man, Captain Steven Qi, was transferred to L City after the previous captain decided to retire early.

However, Attorney General Leng did not believe that the previous captain had decided to retire early. He has been lived long enough and seen a lot of things. It was not hard for him to figure out that someone had pulled out his connections. After spending his time alone in his cell, he figured out that someone had set him up.

His mind reeled as Attorney General Leng was trying to figure out which of his enemy would have such power to pull such things, however, he could not think of anyone.

"Jeffrey Leng, your lawyer is here to see you."

He watched as an officer unlocked the cell before he followed the officer to a room. When he walked inside, Lawyer Peng was waiting for him. A frown appeared on his

face as Attorney General Leng noticed something different about his lawyer, but he could not put his finger on it.

"You haven't come to see me for a while," Attorney General Leng said. "What's going on? Don't tell me that you have no way to help me."

Lawyer Peng pursed his lips. He glanced at the officer and nodded. He took a deep breath and motioned towards the chair in front of him. "Sit down."

Attorney General Leng chuckled when he noticed the lawyer's discourtesy. He slid into the metal chair and raised a brow. "What's going on with you? We haven't seen each other for days and you already show disrespect towards me?"

Lawyer Peng stared back at the old man's face. The room was filled with silence for a while and Attorney General Leng began to feel slightly uncomfortable with the way Lawyer Peng was looking at him.

"What is it?" Attorney General Peng coughed dryly and his tone began to soften a little bit. "Lawyer Peng, tell me that you have found a way to get me out of here. I told you that you can meet a few people who can help me. How did it go? Did they agree?"

"Jeffrey Leng, I am here to tell you that I can no longer represent you."

"What?" Attorney General Leng was startled by the way the lawyer had called him. It took him a few seconds to process his next words. His expression grew darker. "Why not?"

Lawyer Peng pulled out a few documents from his briefcase and slid them across the table.

The moment Attorney General Leng read about the serial murderer, his expression grew pale. "No. This is not true." He looked up at his lawyer anxiously. "It is not me. Lawyer Peng, you know me. I am not capable of doing anything like this!"

"Apparently, I didn't know you enough," Lawyer Peng said. A chuckle escaped him. "You don't need to deny it anymore. Last night, your secretary had come forward and confessed what you have done. There is evidence."

"No. I have been set up!" Attorney General Leng said. "You have to help me. Aren't you the best lawyer in L City?"

"Jeffrey Leng, you are done. I might be the top lawyer in L City, but even so, I cannot help you," Lawyer Peng said. "At this time, no one will accept you as a client.. Jeffrey Leng, from now on, you can only defend yourself."

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Once Attorney General Leng was linked to that serial murder, the public became enraged again. Those who still had thought that they could do something to help him finally gave up. With that, Jeffrey Leng was removed from his position and his assets were frozen.

Later his wife and kids had left him. The family made a sudden decision to migrate to another country, leaving the former Attorney General behind.

With Secretary Liu's confession, Jeffrey Leng's disgusting hobby was exposed. The public found out that Jeffrey Leng had used both money and women as a means to win others' support.

The club he frequently visited to torture those women, was forced to close down as the public was enraged that such an establishment would help to hide such an act. Because of this, the club was under investigation and a few hot shots were brought to the police station for different offenses.

Of course, with Rainmaker and his circle of group intervention, the public did not pay much attention to the other hotshots and instead, focused on Jeffrey Leng. The public was disgusted with Jeffrey Leng's behavior and they continued to scold him online.

The family and friends of the victims soon managed to gather a large number of people and held a demonstration, demanding for the authorities not to be partial towards a disgusting man such as Jeffrey Leng.

From this investigation, they later found out that Amanda Shen had visited this club before she died. At this time, she was close to Secretary Liu and had followed him to meet the Attorney General.

However, during this visit, Amanda had accidentally overheard some conversation she was not supposed to hear and had found out about Jeffrey's disgusting secret.

Jeffrey Leng had kept her in his private room where she was tortured for a few days. Later, Amanda had tricked the person who was supposed to send her food and was able to escape. She managed to call Neil before she was recaptured and had met her death.

With details on Amanda's death was exposed, the police were quick to link it to the serial murder where four women had died.

A week after the matter was exposed, the authorities suddenly announced another shocking news. The police found a link between the serial murder in L City with the one in Z Town years ago.

The netizen was quick to find out that before Jeffrey Leng had risen to his rank, he had served a few years in Z Town. The timing of his service matched with the year of that event and later, they found out that there were more than ten women!

Soon, his former assistant was apprehended to help with the investigation.

One of the news channels had described what Jeffrey Leng had often done to those women and had come out with a list of his crimes. A long list of his previous dealings came out as well as the list of the women who had died in his hand. It was rumored that there might be a few more victims, but no one could be really sure.

With the list of witnesses and evidence, no matter how good he was in court, Jeffrey Leng could not find his way to escape his punishment.

...

At this time, Edith was seated in the living room as her eyes wandered around the new, unfamiliar surroundings.

A few days ago, the movers came to pick up their stuff and they were now living in the new house. This place was a lot bigger than the two apartment units that she had lived in for the past few months. Because this place was bigger, Neil had employed a few people to look after the house. Moreover, his parents and Grandpa Mike will be staying with them for a period of time. It would be better if there are more people to look after them.

With so many people living together, Edith thought that the house has become a lot livelier.

Hearing a movement coming from the front door, Edith turned around and saw that her grandfather had come in. A gentle look appeared in her eyes as she greeted, "Grandpa."

Mike looked at his granddaughter and smiled. "How are you? Have you eaten yet?" His gaze rested on her stomach and Mike heaved a sigh. "Don't starve my great-grandchild. You must remember to eat in time."

Edith giggled. "Grandpa, I have eaten." With the nanny that her mother-in-law had hired to look for her diet, how can she miss her meals?

"That's good." Mike continued to stare at her stomach and felt a little uneasy. It was the same feeling he had experienced the last time his daughter, Rachel, was pregnant with Edith. He could not stop worrying.

"Grandpa, did you come back from the police station?"

"Mmm..." Mike nodded.

The past few weeks, Mike has been visiting the police station to help with the serial murder investigation. Years ago, Mike was the one who was leading his team to investigate the murder. Since he knew a lot of details regarding the murder, the investigation team had chosen to consult him. With the evidence that Mike had collected in the past few years, it was not hard for them to link that Jeffrey Leng to that murder.

"The investigation was done. In a few days, his trial will start," Mike said. "I heard that no one wanted to represent him and he chose to defend himself in court." Mike's expression turned darker slightly. "Although he might be good in court, he cannot win this one. We will make sure that he will not be able to plead for leniency."

As the two continued to talk regarding Jeffrey Leng's case, Hazel ran over happily towards them. The little girl saw Mike in the living room and her face brightened up. "Great-grandpa, you're back."

"Mmm..." Mike patted her on the hair. "Did you practice what I taught you while I was away?"

"Great-grandpa, I've practiced," Hazel said. "Auntie Edith had helped me with a few moves. Later, I will show it to you to see." The little girl turned to Edith and rubbed her face on Edith's arms. "Auntie Edith, I've arranged my stuff in my bedroom. Help me to see if it's alright."

Edith went over with Hazel to her new bedroom to inspect the little girl's arrangement for her room. The corner of her lips twitched upon seeing the large glass rack that Neil had built so that Hazel could display the Gundam model she assembled.

Her eyes caught the sight of the folder on Hazel's table. It was then that Edith recalled that the auntie at Hazel's old house had handed the folder to Neil before they left.

Edith reached to grab the folder and looked at Hazel. "What's in here?"

Hazel followed her gaze and her expression shifted slightly. "My drawings." She took the folder from Edith and hesitated. "Auntie Edith, would you like to see them?"

Before Edith could react, Hazel had pulled out the stack of papers in the folder. The little girl stared at the picture of her parents that she had drawn with a dazed expression.

Seeing the look on her face, Edith then pulled Hazel into her embrace and watched as Hazel goes through her past drawings one by one.

Almost all of the drawings in the folder would contain the picture of Hazel and her parents. Edith could see just how much Hazel loved her parents and how much she must be missing them at the moment.

At this time, Hazel might not understand much about what had happened to her parents, but later, when she grew up, Edith and Neil planned to tell her the truth. As her parents' daughter, Hazel deserved to know the truth.

Her movement halted when Hazel saw a few papers that were not supposed to be in her folder. There were many words on these papers and she could not understand most of them. Hazel turned to Edith and asked, "Auntie Edith, what is this?"

Edith glanced at the papers and as she read the words on the documents, her expression started to change.

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While the investigation on Jeffrey Leng was going on, Neil was busy with the matter of his company. The auditors noticed a lot of problems in their account after Accountant Ye had revealed the corruption going on in the company. To plead for leniency, Accountant Ye had revealed a few documents that she was supposed to destroy.

The accountant had admitted her wrongdoings and as promised, Neil had promised some leniency for her case.

Once the new auditor had pointed out the problem in his company, Neil decided to conduct a large scale on the problematic departments and people. In the end, a few people were fired.

The employees who were dismissed unjustly like Edward Xiao was called back to give out their statements against their bosses. Later, Neil had offered to return to the company and only one-third of them had chosen to accept it. The others were enjoying their current life and lifestyle and were satisfied to get the justice they deserved. With the compensation that Neil had given and a clean name, they only wanted to live life peacefully.

As soon as Edith walked into the lobby, the receptionist quickly noticed her and her bulging stomach.

It has been a long time since they have seen her at the company and was surprised upon realizing that she was pregnant. They quickly confirmed that Edith should be the President's wife and had stopped showing up at the company for a long time because of her pregnancy.

After exchanging a quick nod with the receptionist, Edith walked towards the President's elevator to wait.

"Edith Qian!"

Edith quickly turned around upon hearing that someone had shouted out her name. Turning around, she was surprised to find Autumn Feng walking over towards her.

At this time, the woman's appearance was no longer as it was in the past. Her previous silky and smooth face now showed her tiredness. Her hair was a little fizzy and the clothes she wore were no longer as expensive. It actually took Edith a few seconds before she was able to recognize Autumn.

Autumn halted on her track when she saw Edith's stomach. At this time, it was as if she had forgotten what she was going to say.

Seeing the way Autumn was staring at her stomach, Edith instinctively moved her hand to cover her stomach. If the woman wanted to do anything at this time, the most important thing for her was to protect the child in her belly.

Autumn snapped out of her trance when she noticed that Edith was keeping her guard on her.

The elevator dinged at this time. Seeing that the woman was about to leave, Autumn moved to grab Edith's hands but soon noticed that she was only able to grab thin air. Looking up, the receptionist who was sat behind their station earlier was now protecting Edith behind their back.

"Madame, are you alright?" One of the receptionists had asked Edith, while the other was on guard against Autumn.

Edith nodded and thanked the receptionist upon noticing what they had done.

"M-manager Feng?" The receptionist who was guarding against Autumn finally realized who she was. Judging from her appearance at this time, the receptionist had thought that she was a crazy person who wanted to harm others. It was because of this that the receptionist had stepped forward.

"What Manager Feng?" Her friend poked her on the waist.

It was at this time that she realized that Autumn Feng was no longer working at the company after the matter regarding her father, Director Feng, was exposed.

Even if Autumn Feng was not related to the corruption, she was not thick-skinned enough to stay at the company and faced others mocking. However, after her father was detained, his assets were frozen and the family had suddenly lost a place to live. Autumn had to use her savings to find a new place to live as well as to bail her father.

These days, her family had to live in a smaller house. Autumn had tried to find a new job, but once they knew who she was, none of the big companies dared to hire her. In the end, Autumn could only choose to work at a smaller company after hiding her background.

Autumn watched as Edith was about to step into the elevator again and quickly went forward, but her movement was stopped by the receptionist again.

"Miss Feng, I will have to ask you to leave before the security will come and drag you out," the receptionist who was guarding Edith spoke.

Just then, footsteps could be heard and Autumn could see the security heading over towards them. Autumn stared at Edith helplessly, knowing that she would not be able to come close. Suddenly, Autumn drop down on both knees. She stared back at Edith with teary eyes and a pleading gaze.

Autumn's sudden movement startled Edith and she stared at the once proud and arrogant woman in shock.

"Edith Qian, please... I have no other choice but to look for you. Help me to talk to President Mo, alright? Tell him to be lenient to my father, alright?"

Edith was stunned upon hearing her words. "Miss Feng, I'm sorry. I will not be able to help you. I won't get involved in the company's matter."

"Please. Just take it that I'm begging you," Autumn continued.

"Miss Feng, if you can ask those workers who had been wronged by your father to forgive him, then I will try to talk to my husband."

Autumn stared at Edith with a complicated gaze. She had heard about her father's crime and knew that while he was the Director of Project Development, her father had pocketed a lot of money. He had stolen the money that was meant for the construction workers. Her father had opted for cheaper materials and neglected the safety of the workers. She had heard that a few people had died and were seriously injured after an accident.

When those people finally found out that their wages were not meant to be that little, they were angry and had cursed her father along with those who were involved in this matter. There was no way that they would want to forgive her father.

Seeing that the security had arrived to grab Autumn, Edith thanked the receptionist again before she walked into the elevator.

As soon as the elevator stopped, Assistant Shawn was already waiting for her outside the elevator as usual.

"Madam," Assistant Shawn greeted. He glanced at her bulging stomach and asked, "When will the baby come out?"

Edith put a hand on her tummy. "The baby should come out early spring next year."

Assistant Shawn smiled as he realized that it was because of this that his boss has been running around here and there to prepare the wedding banquet. "I heard that someone tried to cause trouble for you downstairs. Madam, are you alright?"

"I'm alright. The others are quick to assist me," Edith said. "Is President Mo inside?"

"He's in his office. Madam, you may go in."

After thanking Assistant Shawn who had sent her over to Neil's door, Edith rapped her knuckles on the door and pushed the door open. As soon as she walked in, Edith was stunned to see that Neil was inspecting the wedding photos they took the other day.

Turning around, Neil was surprised upon seeing his wife. "Why are you here?" As he walked over to her, a smile appeared on his face and Neil leaned forward to peck on her forehead.

Edith cocked her head and said, "I miss you."

A chuckle escaped him. Neil reached to hold her hands before he leaned in to kiss her lips. When they parted, Neil glanced at her bulging stomach with a frown. Because of her pregnancy, he did not dare to pull her closer.

"The studio had sent over the photograph just now," Neil said as he tugged at her hand.. "Come on, let's take a look at them."

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Edith stared at the photograph in the frame with a dazed expression. She did not expect that the photo would turn out really good. In the photograph, she was seated on a chair while Neil stood behind her with his arms wrapped around her shoulders.

In the picture, she was looking shyly at the camera while Neil had his gaze on her. His gaze was full of doting.

Looking at the picture, Edith felt her cheek burned slightly. Though she was used to the way Neil would stare at her, it was a different feeling to see him with that look on his face through another perspective.

"I look at other photos and thought that this one is the best," Neil said. "What do you think?" A thought came to his mind and Neil paused. "If you don't like this one, we can choose another one." He let her sit down on his leather chair and pushed the photo album to her.

There were hundreds of photographs in the book and each of them had a different pose and facial expression. There were a few pages of her in the dress alone, and then, there were photos with the three of them.

Previously, Neil had said that he wanted to let Hazel in the photograph as well as their flower girl. It was because of Hazel that they met and had the chance to be together. As their little matchmaker, how can she not be in one of the photographs?

After browsing through the photos, Edith put the album aside and turned towards the photo frame. "Un. I think I like that one better."

The smile on his lips widened. "Then, we'll choose this one and use it for the wedding." Neil put the album aside and watched as Edith stood up and headed over to the sofa.

"I thought you might be skipping your lunch earlier today," Edith pulled the paper bag on the table and took out a few lunch boxes. "Come over and eat first. It's not good to let your stomach empty. Have your dinner earlier."

His gaze turned warm as he looked at her. Neil walked over and sat down beside his wife. "Did you come here to deliver food for me?"

Edith smiled as she continued taking off the lid. She accompanied him to eat and waited until he had finished. Then, Edith turned around to grab her bag and pulled out a stack of paper.

Neil was cleaning the lunch boxes on the table when he saw his wife holding the papers. He raised a brow at her and asked, "What is that?"

"Do you remember the last time we went over to your brother's house?" Edith asked. "That auntie gave you a folder with Hazel's drawing."

He thought about the matter and nodded.

"Earlier, I was accompanying Hazel to look at a few of her drawings," Edith said. "Then, we found this stack of paper slipped inside the folder. Neil, I think your brother, Adam had hidden them with Hazel's drawing."

The moment Neil heard his brother's name, he quickly put the lunch boxes down and reached for the papers. He scanned for the information and after a while, his eyes turned darker.

After his brother had suddenly passed away, Neil had heard a few rumors and knew that before the accident, his brother was looking into their hospital project on the west side of the city.

MH Group wanted to venture into other business other than property development and construction. Once this hospital is completed, it will become the first hospital under MH Group. The public's eyes were on this project the moment they announced it.

It will be the company's first hospital project and they were collaborating with a few big groups. A large sum of money was invested in this project and everyone was waiting to see it complete. The new hospital was expected to share the burden with L City's Hospital.

However, according to that prosecutor, Jennifer Jiang, Adam found out that some people had stolen a large sum of money from this project. He was investigating this matter in secret and had found shocking evidence.

They were planning to reveal this matter to the public, but before Adam could have done so, he was involved in an accident and passed away. Meanwhile, Jennifer Jiang was taken away and had managed to escape. She had to live in hiding as she was afraid that those people would kill her.

Neil had tried to search for the evidence and thought that perhaps their enemy had managed to destroy them after Adam died. He did not expect that Adam would be hiding the evidence in Hazel's drawing folders.

After spending her time for a long time in the office Edith left the headquarter with Uncle Tang driving her home.

An hour after Edith left the headquarter, Neil entered his SUV and drove over to the detention center. When he arrived, his friend, Henry was waiting for him in the parking area. Henry walked over to Neil and gave him a look over. A heavy sigh escaped him when he saw Neil's darkened face.

"I've looked into the matter," Henry said. "The youngsters who died in that accident a few months ago were working under Secretary Liu's nephew."

Neil lowered his head. The first time he saw the name on Adam's document, Neil had thought that the name was a little familiar. It was then that he recalled the youngsters who had died in that accident.

A few hours ago, Neil had given Henry a call and explained the situation to him. He then asked Henry to look into a few matters and told him to meet him at the detention center with the investigation report.

"Previously, Secretary Liu's nephew and his gang were also the same people who had tried to cause trouble at the hospital construction site. If your assumption is right, then, someone had asked those youngsters to cause trouble for Adam on the night of the accident."

Neil looked at the stack of paper in Henry's hand with a solemn look on his face.

"Are you going to talk to him?" Henry asked.

"I need to find out the truth."

Henry nodded before he followed Neil into the building.

As soon as they arrived an officer greeted them with a polite smile on his face. "What can I do for you?"

Before Neil could answer, a voice came over from behind them. "I'll take care of this."

Turning around, Neil quickly recognized the man as Captain Steven Qi, who was recently transferred from Y City. Seeing that the Captain seemed to know the man, the officer quickly walked away to continue his job.

"President Mo, why are you here?"

Neil scrutinized the man in front of him and spoke, "I came to meet Secretary Liu. Do you think you can help me and arrange for a meeting with him? There are a few questions that I would like to ask."

Steven was silent for a while. Then he nodded. "Come with me.. I'll help you and arrange a meeting with him."

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Neil sat down in the room with Henry accompanying him. Various thoughts went into their mind, but no one said a word. Previously, Secretary Liu had testified against Jeffrey Leng's and revealed his corruption and disgusting behavior.

Although they were all taken into the detention centers and will be punished for their crime, Neil was still unaware of the truth about what happened to his Adam and Claire.

After Adam had passed away, Neil has heard that his brother was investigating the hospital project and found something. He had tried to find the evidence that Adam had gathered and had tried to search for them in Adam's study. However, he could not find anything. Neil didn't expect that his brother would hide the evidence inside his daughter's drawing folders.

On the evidence that Adam had collected, it was revealed that the directors had pocketed a lot of money from that project. While Adam was investigating the corruption, he found out that Director Feng would often meet up with Jeffrey Leng and had given the man a lot of money.

To build that hospital, MH Group had bought a few lands around the area, including some old shop lots. During their discussion, MH Group had agreed to purchase their land according to the price that they have agreed on.

He did not think that once he had handed the matter for Director Feng to handle, the man would pocket the money meant to purchase those shop lots. Director Feng had then had purchased those land at a price lower than what they have agreed on.

Jeffrey Leng had helped to suppress those landowners with legal matters. When the landowners had wanted to fight back, Jeffrey Leng had helped to hire some thugs to create trouble for them.

It was Secretary Liu who had found those thugs. The group of thugs was the people working under his nephew.

After talking with the landowners, Adam had later found out the names of the thugs and had compiled everything under the evidence that he was gathering.

The door creaked as it was pushed from the outside and Neil snapped out of his trance. His expression turned cold as he watched Secretary Liu entered the room.

"President Mo?" Secretary Liu stared back at the man in surprise. It was already a little strange that he would receive a visitor during the non-visiting hour. When the officer told him that someone wanted to see him, Secretary Liu did not expect that he would see Neil in this room.

Neil stared at the man in front of him with his cold eyes. At this time, Neil could not help but think of how suitable the uniform look on Secretary Liu's body. The man had caused a young girl to lose her parents. He deserved to be in prison!

The officer led Secretary Liu to sit down before he stood at the door to guard.

"President Mo, why are you here?" Secretary Liu asked. He could sense that something was not right with the way Neil was staring at him and Secretary Liu was starting to feel a little uncomfortable.

The silence in the room lasted for a while until Neil chose to speak.

"Bruce Tian, the youngster who died in an accident a few months ago worked under your nephew, right?" Neil said. "Secretary Liu, did you remember him?"

Secretary Liu frowned as he thought that this name sounded familiar. A few seconds later, the expression on his face changed, knowing the reason for Neil's visit at this hour.

"Before my brother, Adam passed away, he was investigating the corruption with MH Group hospital project and found the evidence that would bring Attorney General Leng down," Neil said. "He wanted for Adam to stop investigating and had sent a few people to find trouble and had asked you to find those people. Bruce Tian was one of those guys."

Secretary Liu pursed his lips. "You're here because of your brother."

Neil did not answer but only kept his gaze on the man in that detention center's uniform.

Secretary Liu chuckled. Although he wanted to deny this, he was already in the detention center as Jeffrey Leng's accomplices. He had volunteered to testify against that person and was promised leniency, but Secretary Liu was aware that he would still have to face the consequences for what he had done. He might as well admit to all the crimes he had done.

Taking a deep breath, Secretary Liu then said, "Yes. That person worked under my nephew. But President Mo, you have to know that we have no intention for that accident to happen." His posture was straight as he spoke. "Attorney General Leng asked me to find my nephew to scare Adam. We only wanted him to back down and stop investigating. You should know that Attorney General Leng was planning to enter politics. The time was crucial and he could not afford to have a bad reputation."

Neil's gaze turned darker and the temperature in that room dropped a few degrees.

"Those guys gave him some warning, but Adam refused to listen," Secretary Liu said. "That night, my nephew and his men went to look for Adam. They were going to

threaten him to stop investigating, but Adam got away. Those men wanted to chase after him and that was how the accident happened. President Mo, we did not expect that the two of them would get into an accident and Adam would die."

Neil spent more than an hour in the detention center. When he got out of the building, the sky has already turned dark. Henry had volunteered to drive him home, but Neil had rejected him. He drove back home with a dark look on his face as he kept replaying his conversation with Secretary Liu.

Once he pulled over at the parking spot, Neil sat in his SUV for a long time in a daze. There were just too many things that happened on the day and he had received a little too much information. At this time, Neil thought that his brain was a little overloaded.

He did not know that his brother was threatened to stop his investigation. He was unaware that there were people who would look for Adam and tried to cause trouble.

Neil tried to recall the last few months before Adam passed away. Every time they met, Adam would always have a smile on his face. He did not look as if he was encountering any problem. However, Adam was always like that. No matter what it was, he would always have that bright and sunny smile on his face.

At times, Neil was a little jealous that Adam was able to hide everything under that smile, but at this time, Neil thought that he hated that Adam would always smile. If only he was a little more attentive, perhaps he would discover that Adam was facing those things.

If only Adam had found him and discuss things together with him, would things be different?

The house was dark when he entered. An auntie greeted him before Neil went upstairs to the bedroom. His steps halted at the door when Neil saw that his wife was sitting at the bed with a book in her hand.

Edith looked up when she heard the movement. She put down the book on the bedside table and walked over to Neil. She gave him a look over and heaved a breath of relief upon finding that he was fine and that there was no smell of alcohol around him.

"Did you go to the detention center?" Edith watched him nodded lightly and held his hand. "How was it?"

Neil did not answer. Instead, he pulled her closer and buried his face in her neck. His heart grew calmer as he smelled the familiar scent, his heart "Stay.. Let me hug you for a while."

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Mike Qian has been attending Jeffrey Leng's trial from the first day it began. Because of Jeffrey Leng's reputation, the public has been following his case closely. The family and friends of the victim had come over to watch the trials. The media was following this high-profile case. Everyone wanted to see him punished and not get away with his crime.

As there were many victims, in this case, it was expected that the trial would take months before the jury will come up with the verdict.

At the beginning of the trial, the shameless man had pleaded himself not guilty against all accusations. Jeffrey Leng stood in the court with his expression devoid of emotions.

As Mike was leading his team to investigate the murders in Z Town years ago, he was called to give his testimony. Years ago, Jeffrey was aware that Mike was investigating him and could recognize the old man when he showed up at the court.

The pictures of the women that he became his victim appeared on the screen one by one, but Jeffrey saw no remorse in his expression. However, his gaze shifted the moment the picture of Rachel Qian appeared on the screen.

Among the victim that he had caught, Rachel was the only woman who had managed to escape.

Fortunately for him, the woman was later hit with a car and the rain had destroyed any evidence that will lead anything to him. That year, after Rachel had escaped, Jeffrey had to restrain himself from having fun with the women. Every time he was almost close to killing those women, his assistant would remind him not to make any move as they were in hiding.

Later, those women were released before he could kill them and they were given a large sum of money as compensation. Jeffrey had threatened those women not to go to the police. The women understood that against someone with a lot of power and influence like Jeffrey, there was no way that they would be able to get justice. Thus, they chose to keep their mouth shut.

It was only a few years ago when he was transferred to L City did the habit came back. At first, he could still restrain himself not to be too rough. However, he had accidentally killed a woman, and his blood began to boil again.

Jeffrey did not think that Mike would be able to link Rachel's death to him.

It was only after learning Rachel's name that he was able to figure out that the woman who had escaped from that time was Mike's daughter.

A chuckle escaped him.

No wonder Rachel was very defensive towards him. No matter what he tried to do, no matter how much he would torture Rachel, that woman would always fight back. It turned out that her father was a police officer.

Jeffrey seemed to recall his intention to keep Rachel's lives longer because of her fighting spirit. Usually, those women would give up once they could no longer tolerate the pain, but Rachel was different. The more Rachel had resisted him, the more exciting it was for Jeffrey. Perhaps it was because of that that Jeffrey would remember Rachel even after years has passed.

His lips curled into a faint smile as Jeffrey recalled that woman's daughter.

He had always thought that Edith Qian seemed a little familiar the first time he saw her. It was not until his former assistant had reminded him that Edith resembled that woman who had escaped that Jeffrey was able to figure out that the two were related.

No wonder he had felt a certain connection when he saw Edith. Whenever he saw her, Jeffrey always wanted to talk to her. When Edith was in front of him, he would start to imagine a lot of exciting things.

It was fate that led him to meet Rachel's daughter, wasn't it? It would be a waste if he did not take his chance.

Unfortunately, he was a little too late. He found out that Edith was married to President Mo. Even if he wanted to mess up with that woman's daughter, it would be too much of a problem considering Edith's status as Neil Mo's wife.

Jeffrey continued to stare at Mike who was answering the prosecutor's questions and narrowed his eyes. At this time, he still refused to believe that no one among his friends would not help him. He was still confident that he would be able to get out of this situation with only a slap on the wrist.

After four hours of the court session, the judge announced the court to be adjourned and the people started to leave.

The officer escorted Jeffrey to leave the court. As he was nearing the crowd, Jeffrey slowed down and stopped. His eyes were looking straight at Mike until the man was looking back at him.

Mike was discussing some matters with his friends when he noticed that Jeffrey had stopped in front of him. He looked up and frowned upon noticing the disgusting smile on Jeffrey's face.

"Officer Qian," Jeffrey nodded.

The officer who was escorting Jeffrey pushed him forward, asking him not to delay their time.

"Slow down," Jeffrey turned to the escorting officer. "I have something to say to an old friend."

The escorting officer glanced at his friend and spoke, "Make it quick."

"I really did not expect you to be Rachel Qian's father," Jeffrey said. His tone was low. In the noisy court, the others would not be able to hear their exchange unless if they were near the two of them.

Hearing the man spoke his daughter's name made his blood boil. Mike clenched his hands into fists as he tried to suppress his anger. Fortunately for him, Aaron and George were accompanying him. George put his hand on Mike's shoulder, to stop him from making any move that he would regret later.

Jeffrey sneered when he saw that the old man was not going to reply to him. "Officer Qian, please send my regards to your granddaughter."

"You!" Mike lurched forward to beat the person in front of him, but George had once again restricted his movement.

"Mike! No!" George whispered. "He's only trying to provoke you."

"When the charge against me is dropped, I will come and find her," Jeffrey said.

"Don't listen to him," George continued to whisper. "He won't have a chance to get out. We have worked so hard to get this far. Don't give that man a chance to anger you. It's not worth it."

Jeffrey laughed before he continued to walk away with the escorting officers guarding him closely.

As soon as that person had disappeared from his gaze, Mike turned around to his group of friends with a dark face. "We cannot let the judge go lenient on him. Unless if that person is sentenced with a maximum penalty, I cannot be at ease."

"Don't worry." Jennifer Jiang, who was seated with Mike earlier during the trial, spoke. "He is delusional. There is no chance that he will escape his punishment.. We will fight until he is sentenced to death."

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In of the hotel room of one of the prestigious hotel in L City...

Edith leaned on the chair with her eyes closed as the makeup artist was working on the makeup on her eyes. She has been sitting on the chair for two hours and her waist was getting a little sore. Moreover, the little guy in her stomach was a little active as if he was excited to join in the wedding.

A knock was heard coming from the outside. Hazel, who was sitting on the sofa with a book in her hand slid down and walked over to the door. "Who is it?"

The assistant who was in the room, accompanied Hazel to open the door. Lily entered the room with a big smile on her face and exchanged polite greetings with the assistant. She shifted her eyes to Hazel and her eyes brightened at the sight of Hazel in her dusty rose tulle dress. Her hair was styled into a low ponytail and a flowery crown rested on top of her hair.

"Hazel, you look like a princess," Lily said.

The little girl laughed happily. "Today, I'm a flower girl."

"You're the cutest flower girl today." Lily nodded. "Alex is in the banquet hall with his little sister. Would you like to see him?"

Hazel thought about it for a moment before she spoke, "Later. I still wanted to stay and look at Auntie Edith in her dress."

"Auntie Edith still hasn't worn her dress yet?"

Hazel shook her head. "She's still doing her make-up."

The two of them walked into the room together and the moment Lily saw Edith sitting on the chair, a loud gasp escaped her.

"Oh my god! Edith Qian, you look beautiful!" Lily spoke as she came closer. She began to inspect the makeup on Edith's face and nodded, giving the makeup artist her approval.

Her make-up was delicate, her cheek was rosy and her lips were moist and pink. At this time, her face was brimming with radiance. Her long hair was styled into a half up and half down with soft curls. A few small, white flowers were weaved into her hair, giving her a romantic air.

"You're here." Edith smiled when she saw her friend. "I thought that you might not be able to come."

"Nonsense. You're my best friend. Of course, I have to come and give you my support."

Edith scanned her surroundings and was surprised to see that Lily had come alone.

"Where's your little girl?"

A couple of months ago, Lily finally gave birth to a baby girl. Although Lily was very happy now that she will have a daughter to play dress-up with, the newborn baby was a little too sticky and would always cry at night. Fortunately, Ethan had employed an auntie to look after the baby, or else, Lily thought that she might go crazy.

"She's with her father," Lily said. "Alex is looking after her, she'll behave."

Among everyone in their family, the He family's little princess would listen to her brother the most. The first time Alex had seen his little sister, he was a little disappointed that she was not as cute as he had imagined.

Fortunately, as time passed by, the little girl's skin was no longer as wrinkly as it was on the day she was born. Seeing that his sister had grown cuter, Alex was satisfied and he had willingly volunteered to look after her.

The two friends chatted as the make-up artist continued to do her job. After half an hour, she announced that her makeup was done and Edith stepped into her wedding dress.

Lily helped to pull the zip behind her and Edith turned around to look into the mirror. Her breath stuck in her throat the moment she saw herself. "Lily," Edith called her name.

"Yes?"

Edith laughed as she shook both hands. "I'm nervous."

...

When Edith walked towards the banquet hall, her grandfather was waiting for her in front of the door along with the wedding planner and Hazel. Edith halted when she saw her anxious grandfather in his suit. It was the first time she had seen him dressed like that and she was a little stunned.

As if noticing that someone was watching him, Mike turned around and gasped when he saw his granddaughter standing in front of him. Suddenly, Mike felt his eyes grew hot and her nose sour. His baby girl was getting married and he could not contain his emotion.

The last time, his daughter, Rachel only got herself a wedding certificate with her husband. They did not manage to have a wedding before her husband died. Therefore, this will be Mike's first time to walk someone into the hall.

"Grandpa..." Edith walked over to him and her grandfather pulled her into his embrace.

"Don't cry," Mike coaxed. "Let's not ruin your make-up."

Edith giggled at his words.

"I still cannot believe that I'll have to hand you over to Neil," Mike said. He took a deep breath and exhaled loudly. "If your parents are still alive, they would be happy for you."

As Mike continued to coax his granddaughter, the wedding planner walked over to tell everyone to get into places. As soon as the music was played, Hazel walked into the banquet hall carrying a basket of flowers in her hand.

When the wedding planner gave her the cue to enter, Edith took a deep breath and held on to her grandfather's arms as they both entered the hall. Around them, were her close family and friends. Fresh flowers in soft pink and white were decorated in her left and right. The banquet hall was decorated prettily, giving off a romantic feeling, but at this time, Edith could not look away from the man who was waiting for her at the end of the aisle.

Various thoughts came into her mind as she walked this short distance from the door to her husband.

The first time she met Neil, Edith would never guess that she would soon fall for him. The man was someone who would rarely put a smile on his face. He was cold and people would call him an iceblock behind his back. But after living together with him during her time as Hazel's caretaker, Edith found out that this man could be a warm person to the people he cared about.

At the beginning of their relationship, Edith merely wanted to give herself a chance. He liked her and she liked him. After the two get together for a while, Edith found that her feelings towards him only grew.

All the small things that he does for her, even his smile and the way he made love to her... everything made her love him even more. Every time she turned to look at this man, her heart would thump loudly as if it was about to burst.

Neil swallowed when he saw his bride entered the hall. At this time, Edith was wearing an A-line wedding dress. The bodice was full of lace, and the tulle skirt was hiding her bulging stomach. Neil found himself in dazed as he watched her taking slow steps towards him.

With Edith, Neil had learned a lot of things. He was clueless the first few months that he had to live with Hazel. However, it was this woman who had taught him how to be... warm.

Living with her, Neil began to lower his guard, and soon, he had let her into his life and his heart. Neil could not remember when was the moment that he started to fall for Edith. Perhaps, it was on the day that she had given him a drunk confession, or perhaps it was earlier than that.

Neil met her at the stairs and Mike spoke a few words to remind him to take good care of his only granddaughter. It was only after Neil had given his promise that Mike was willing to hand his granddaughter over to him.

The moment he held her hands, Neil stared into her eyes and was mesmerized upon seeing her face up close. "Edith Qian?"

"Huh?" Edith flashed him an anxious smile and asked, "Neil? What's wrong?"

Neil leaned forward and whispered, "The moment we stepped onto the stage. The moment we say yes, you can never back down or regret."

Edith let out a chuckle. "We already have a marriage certificate and the child will come out in a few months."

Neil let out a light laugh. "Even so, are you willing to accompany me in this lifetime until we both get old?" His eyes were looking into hers as if searching for the answer.

Her heartbeat accelerated as Edith continued to look into his. In his eyes, Edith could see the reflection of herself and a thought came to her mind. At this time, Edith knew that as long as she stayed by his side, this man would do anything that he can to protect her and make her happy.

Tightening her grip against his, Edith then answered, "I'm willing."

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Two months after the wedding, Edith gave birth to a healthy baby boy.

The little guy was born somewhere around midnight. Edith was accompanying Hazel to play around the house when she suddenly started to have a contraction. Her face was pale and Hazel started to panic and had called the auntie to see what was going on.

Both Lucas and Sophie had returned to Z Town after the wedding and only Mike had stayed around as he needed to attend the court.

When Mike heard that his granddaughter was about to give birth, he started to join Hazel and panic. It was the auntie who had called Neil and the ambulance.

After almost seven hours in the labor room. The baby finally came out and everyone outside the labor room let out a breath of relief.

Neil took one look at his son before he went to check on his wife. Her face was sweaty and her hair plastered on her face. Seeing the tired look on her face, Neil leaned forward and pecked on her forehead.

When Lucas and Sophie heard that their grandson had come out a week earlier than expected, the two of them hurriedly went back to L City.

It was the first grandson for both Lucas and Sophie. At the thought that they now have a pair of a boy and a girl as their grandchild in the family, the two of them were very happy.

The first time Mike saw his great-grandson, his eyes started to sting and his nose soured. He had never thought that he would live long enough to see his great-grandson. Seeing the little boy swaddling in his arms, Mike thought of how he should teach the little boy to fight when he was old enough.

What happened to his daughter and what Jeffrey Leng had spoken about his granddaughter would still haunt him. It was good to have a great-grandson. Perhaps later, the little boy would help him and protect his mother and his sisters when he grew up.

After spending more than a month in the confinement, the little guy was then revealed to their family and friends. Neil had introduced his son as Hayden Mo and just like his father, Hayden was a quiet guy who rarely showed too much expression on his face. Whenever the grownups would tease her, Hayden would choose to stare at them. The look in his eyes was as if he was judging their action.

Edith sat on the bed with the little boy in her arms and patted his back. He had just drunk his mother's milk and was now sleeping soundly. Edith held the little boy in her arms and inhaled the milky smell on his body. A warm smile curled on her lips when she saw his little mouth slightly pouting and moving as if he was still suckling his mother's milk.

The little boy was a little fat, but he still won't stop thinking about eating even in his sleep. Seeing that he continued to sleep soundly, Edith handed him over to the nanny.

Glancing at the clock, Edith then walked down the stairs and planned to wait for Neil.

As soon as she walked into the living area, Edith found that her grandfather had returned from the court and was asking Hazel about her school. The trial has been going on for months, and her grandfather had never missed going to court.

Seeing that her Auntie Edith had come down, Hazel ran over to her and wrapped her arms around Edith's waist.

"Auntie Edith, is baby Hayden asleep?"

Edith nodded. "He fell asleep after drinking some milk."

Hazel lifted her head to look at her brother's room. She wanted to play with him, but the baby would be asleep most of the time. Heaving a sigh, Hazel then walked over to the kitchen to look at what the auntie was cooking.

"I saw the news. I heard that the judge has given out his verdict today," Edith asked her grandfather as he Hazel had disappeared into the kitchen.

"Mmm..." Mike nodded. He swallowed the food in his mouth and looked up.

"Fortunately, the judge is sensible enough to sentence Jeffrey to death." His voice was low as Mike did not want Hazel to hear their conversation. "In a few months, he will be executed by firing squad."

Edith was stunned to know that the judge had come up with the verdict.

After she gave birth to her son, Edith was busy and did not have much time to follow Jeffrey Leng's trial. Although her grandfather would often update her with the case, Edith did not think that the trial would end so soon.

She was a little surprised to hear about the death sentence, but Jeffrey Leng had killed and harmed too many people. It would be ridiculous if he could get away with those evidence against him.

The judge's decision was well praised by the public. The family and friends of the victims gathered and cried with tears of relief upon hearing the sentences. Meanwhile, Jeffrey Leng was in a trance upon receiving his sentences.

Up until the end, he would still say that he was innocent and believed that someone will come to rescue him. When he was dragged out of the court, Jeffrey Leng had shouted and screamed for the first time he was taken by the police. He was acting like a maniac.

It seemed that he was in disbelief that he will be executed by firing squad. He could not believe that in a few months, he was going to die.

Hearing stories about Jeffrey Leng from her grandfather, Edith was very sure that the man was very sick. It was unbelievable how he can act like a good person in front of others and turned into a demon when he was with a woman.

After having her dinner, Edith went back to her room to rest. A frown appeared on her face as she felt a little pain in her chest area. She looked at her swollen chest and was not surprised to see that her bra was slightly wet.

Picking up the device on the bedside table, Edith started to pump out the milk to reduce the swelling on her chest. It was a little painful, but at the same time, it made her feel a little relieved when the milk came out.

At this time, the door was pushed from the outside. Neil walked in and Edith froze as their gaze met.

His gaze stopped at the device in her hand and slowly, trailed towards her swollen chest. Because she had just given birth and was breastfeeding their son, her chest had grown up in size. Neil looked at the scene in front of him and swallowed.

"The freezer is brimming with Hayden's milk," Neil pointed out. He was aware that after his wife had pumped out the milk, she would store them in the freezer for Hayden to drink later.

Edith lowered her head and the tip of her ears turned slightly red. "I don't know what the auntie has been feeding me. It just won't stop flowing."

He took off his coat and walked over to the bathroom to freshen up. When he walked out, his wife was still struggling with the machine.

After watching her for a few seconds, his throat felt parched and his chest felt a little stuffy. He walked over to his wife's side and without realizing it, Neil put his hand on top of Edith's as if he was going to pull that machine away from her.

Edith raised her head and was startled upon meeting his gaze. "What's wrong?"

"Is it still painful?"

Edith nodded at the thought that he was worried about her. "It is. Unless the swelling came down a little bit, I won't feel comfortable." She continued to look into his eyes and felt that something doesn't seem right with the way her husband was looking at her.

"Let me help you."

Before Edith was able to say anything, the device on her hand was taken away and the man had lowered his head. Suddenly, Edith let out a sharp gaze and tightened her grip on the mattress.

A few minutes later, Edith tugged at her clothes as she looked at the misbehaving person.

A knock was heard on the door and the nanny announced that the baby was hungry. Edith walked over to the door and took the little boy from the nanny. As soon as she was seated, she pulled aside her clothes to let the baby drink.

After a few seconds, Hayden pulled away and started to cry. As if knowing the reason that he was unable to suck out his meal, Hayden moved his head to look at his father and continued to cry, feeling a little aggrieved.

He was still a baby and could not eat anything else, but a shameless someone was fighting for his food! Baby Hayden was angry!

Seeing the way his wife was looking at him, Neil quickly looked away and handed over the bottle with the milk that she had pumped out earlier.. Neil let out a cough and said, "At least, these won't go to waste."

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Alex He could still remember the first time he saw Hazel.

On that day, Headmistress Fu had come over to their class and announced that the little girl was going to join their class. Hazel Mo was supposed to enter another class for those who were a year younger than him. However, Headmistress Fu had said that Hazel's comprehension would allow her to enter another class.

Because Hazel was younger than everyone else, their classroom teacher, Auntie Edith, had reminded everyone to look after this little sister.

His first impression towards Hazel was that she seemed like a good, obedient kid. He saw her in class and admitted that she was a very smart girl

From the moment Hazel entered the class, the others started to gather around her. The female classmates wanted to act as her big sister, while the boys were attracted to her look.

Alex admitted that Hazel was a cute girl. She always had a dazzling smile on her face whenever he saw her at school.

She would often show up in class with a twin tail. Most of the time, she would always have bunny-shaped hair clips or a hairband on her hair. The little girl looked so fluffy giving the others an urge to pinch at her cheek.

Anyway... Alex decided not to mind the new girl in his class. He was aware that the two of them were in two different worlds and a girl like Hazel would not talk to him. After all, most of the girls in his class would not care to play with him. He was used to it.

After a few months, Alex noticed that Hazel has stopped going to school. Auntie Edith had only said that something was going on in her house and she was unable to show up at school.

A few days before Hazel had returned to school, Auntie Edith had told everyone that Hazel had lost her parents in an accident. She had reminded everyone to treat Hazel gently and as an elder brother and sister, no one should bully her and instead, everyone should treat her nicely.

On the day Hazel returned to the kindergarten, Alex noticed that there was something different about her.

When she returned, Alex could no longer see the dazzling smile on her face. The talkative girl had suddenly become quiet.

The new Hazel would choose to sit alone in the corner, minding her own business. At this time, the only classmate she would talk to was Megan Xiao. When Hazel returned, Auntie Edith would often look after her and the two became very close.

He had once run into Hazel at the mall. At that time, he was surprised to see the girl was with Auntie Edith and a scary uncle. It was later that he learned that after Hazel's parents had passed away, Hazel has been living with that scary uncle.

Alex had thought that perhaps, Hazel's personality change had something to do with that scary uncle. If he had to live with someone scary as that uncle, Alex was sure that he too would turn into a timid boy.

When they see each other at school again, Hazel had asked why did he like to play with his robot by himself.

It was at this time that Alex had mentioned his hobby to build Gundam robots. Surprisingly, Hazel had shown her interest in his hobby.

For a few seconds, Alex was stunned. There were not a lot of people who would think of his hobby as interesting. Building and assembling them would require too much time

and patience. Most kids around their age did not have the patience to sit still in one place and focus on building them. Or else, things would not be great.

When Hazel had shown her interest, Alex was excited.

It was the first time that someone had asked him about building them. Even though Hazel did not know too much about Gundam, Alex had patiently explained to her what he knew.

At that time, he did not pay attention too much to Hazel. Alex only knew that there was someone who would enjoy his hobby and there would be someone who he can talk to.

Later, whenever Auntie Edith came over to his house to meet with his mother, she would often bring Hazel over as well. Whenever Hazel come over, he would often take her over to his playroom and the two would build those models together.

In just a few months, Hazel became very good at assembling the model and there were times when Alex would worry that she would soon be better than him. When he thought that it would be difficult to find someone who shared the same interest with him, Alex decided not to mind about this matter too much.

After spending their time together, the two became closer and Alex started to pay attention to her. Slowly, Hazel began to talk and smile a lot, although it was not as much as it used to be.

Alex then realized that he liked seeing the smile on her face and would get distressed whenever he saw the tears on her face. If he could, he would like to see her with a smile on her face all the time.

Across the University entrance, a tall man was seen standing under the big, weeping willow tree. From his standing posture and the way he would have glanced at his wristwatch before he turned to look at the entrance, the passerby quickly thought that he was here to wait for someone. From his soft gaze and warm smile, as he continued to stare at the entrance, the passerby assumed that this man was waiting for someone important. For example... a lover.

The girls who walked past by would glance at him before they lowered their heads with a shy look on their faces. They wanted to take a chance to talk to him, but the moment they saw the look on his face, none of them dare to get closer.

A few minutes earlier, there was one brave student who had dared to approach him and asked for his contact number. But of course, that student was rejected. No one could hear the words that the man had said, but everyone around understood that they would not stand a chance.

Alex He took a deep breath when he noticed that those girls were staring at him again. At this time, there was nothing that he wanted other than for Hazel Mo to walk through the gate as quickly as she can.

It was not that he minded waiting for her, but at this time, Alex thought that he really wanted to see her face. It has been a while since they saw each other and he kind of... missed her.

Just then, his eyes caught the sight of the girl in a white blouse and dusty pink pleated skirt. As she walked, the skirt would sway around, attracting the attention of the people around her.

His lips turned up into a smile the moment he saw the person he was waiting for.

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From the spot he stood, Alex could immediately spot Hazel in the crowd.

At this time, Hazel was walking out of the university gate with her roommate. His eyes brightened and he was about to raise his hand and wave at her when he saw a male student stopped in front of her.

The male student spoke something to Hazel and she stared back at him with a poker face.

His eyes darkened and a frown appeared on his face when he saw the male student was blocking his vision.

"Looks like someone is here to confess to Goddess Mo again. Damn. Isn't that the basketball captain, Kevin Xu?"

"Un. Un. This time, another high-profile candidate decided to confess! Do you think that she will accept?"

"I bet that man is going to be disappointed. The last time, the campus heartthrob, Evan Yu had confessed to her during that festival. It was such a big move. In the end, he was rejected, right? This time, I think Captain Xu is going to get rejected as well."

A sighed was heard. "What kind of person do you think she liked? Do you think she prefers woman instead?"

"What's the matter? Don't tell me you wanted to try and pursue Goddess Mo?"

The girls beside him had spoken in hushed voices, but Alex could still hear them loud and clear. From the girl's words, Alex was able to gather some information, for example, this was not the first time that someone had confessed to Hazel.

Although he was confident that Hazel was not going to accept that man's confession, Alex had a sense of crisis.

At this time, Alex was silently hating that they were not born in the same year, or at least take the same course in the same university. If only he was close to her all the time, he would certainly help her to swat those flies away.

Previously, he could still do that when they were in the same school. However, once he entered university, their chance to see each other began to lessen. Then, Hazel moved to another city to study and the two of them were separated with such a long distance between them.

It was only until recently that Alex had moved to B City. His friends wanted to kick start a company. Alex had decided to invest in them and suggested them to start in B City. As that friend was originally from B City, of course, he quickly agreed. It took them a while and finally, they were able to start the company in B City.

As the investor, Alex chose not to be involved too much in the company. The only reason he had agreed was to build his chance to get close to Hazel. Whenever Hazel was in B City, of course, he will be around. Whenever she went back to L City, of course, he will follow her.

Alex continued to watch the scene in front of him. Just as the girls had predicted, the male student who had stopped Hazel in front of the gate was rejected.

Hazel continued to walk forward with her roommate, leaving the male student behind with a dejected expression. After a few steps, that male student suddenly raised his head and went over to Hazel.

Kevin Xu was not very happy that he was rejected. He was aware that Hazel Mo had rejected a lot of guys, however, he had thought that Hazel had liked him. After all, Hazel would often show up at the basketball court to watch their basketball practices.

He had thought that if he gave his confession in front of others, Hazel would at least give him some face and agreed. He did not think that he would be mercilessly rejected!

Kevin put a hand on Hazel's shoulder, wanting to force her to turn around and demand a reason why she would not give him a chance.

However, he did not expect that in one swift move, Hazel had tugged at his wrist, and suddenly, his hand was pinned behind his back. Kevin gritted his teeth and cursed as he bore with the pain.

"I don't like it when people touch me," Hazel warned him. Seeing that sweat had trickled down his face, Hazel quickly pushed him away.

Kevin glanced at his surroundings and noticed the way everyone was looking at him. His face grew red with embarrassment as he did not expect that Hazel would be able to make such a move on him. Shooting a dangerous look towards Hazel, Kevin then chose to leave the scene before he would experience another embarrassing situation.

"Are you alright?" Crystal Mao, Hazel's roommate, asked. Her voice laced with worry.

Hazel narrowed her eyes towards the direction where that male student had disappeared to. She took out a wet wipe and wiped her hand thoroughly. She did not even know who that person was, and was not interested to know him. Therefore, Hazel could not understand why he would force her to give him a chance.

Initially, Hazel had planned to let him leave without causing a commotion. He did not expect that he would try to act rough with her. Just now, the way he had gripped her shoulder was a little strong.

A soft sigh escaped her as Hazel thought of her slow reflex.

"I'm fine," Hazel answered. She threw the wipes into the trash can and smiled at her friend. "Don't worry. Come on. Didn't you say that you needed to catch a train? Why don't you go first?"

It was the beginning of winter vacation and most of the students are leaving to return to their hometown.

"What about you?" Crystal asked.

"Don't worry. Someone will come over and pick me up later." Hazel took out her phone and started to draft out a message. However, before she could send out the text, Hazel heard someone called out her name.

"Hazel Mo!"

When she lifted her head, Hazel found that Alex was walking over towards her. Her eyes brightened and a smile bloomed on her face.

The passerby turned their head the moment they heard someone called out Hazel's name. When they saw that a man was walking over towards her, their curiosity perked up and they could not wait to see what will happen next.

Everyone was betting that this man would receive Hazel's cold treatment just like the other guys have.

However, to their surprise, Hazel had grabbed her bag and stride over to the man.

"Alex! How long have you been here?"

The others who were eavesdropping on their conversation were shocked to know that the two seemed to know each other. Suddenly, they started to pay attention to this newcomer, and gossip that Hazel Mo's boyfriend was someone not in the same university spread out among the students.

"I just got here," Alex whispered. He glanced at the bag on her shoulder and raised a brow. "Is that all you're taking home?"

"Un." Hazel nodded. "This is enough. I don't need to pack up too many things. I have everything I need at home."

"Come on. We should go now before the traffic turned heavy."

"Hold on. Let me introduce you to my roommate." Hazel turned to her roommate who was staring at the two of them with her eyes wide. "Alex, this is Cristal Mao, my roommate. Crystal, this is Alex He. My best friend."

Alex's eyes darkened slightly at the introduction. He turned to Hazel's friend and the two of them exchanged polite greetings.

"Crystal, do you need a lift to the station?" Hazel asked.

Crystal glanced at Alex and noticed his cold eyes. Quickly, Crystal shook her head. "No. It's fine.. I already called a driver to pick me up."

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As soon as Hazel was slid into the passenger's seat, her phone started to chime. Hazel pulled out her phone and saw several messages from Crystal, demanding to know her relationship with Alex.

After clarifying to her that Alex is her childhood friend, another text came in, and this time it was her other roommate, Michelle Zhuang. Her movement halted when she saw that Michelle had posted a link in their roommate's group. Hazel clicked on the link and found news on her.

Apparently, the story about the basketball captain had come to confess to her had spread in the forum.

Moreover, someone had taken a few pictures of Alex and her and spread some rumors that the two are a couple. It was said that Alex was the reason she had rejected other's pursuit.

It seemed that the other students had too much time in their hands that they could spend their time gossiping all the time.

However... something tugged at her heart upon seeing the post.

Hazel knew that their relationship was not as what others had speculated. The two of them had grown up with each other and they definitely did not see each other that way.

Suddenly, she was worried that Alex was going to see the post. Wouldn't he feel uncomfortable?

Seeing that Alex had returned and slid into the driver's seat, Hazel quickly told her roommates not to spread useless gossips, and turned off the chat.

Alex started the engine and turned around. Then, he handed her a bag of drinks and snacks. "It will be a while before we reach L City. You can have something to snack on if you're hungry."

"Thank you," Hazel peeked into the bag and saw the snacks and drinks that she liked. She saw a brand of milk that she liked and drink it slowly.

The vehicle started to move and just as Alex entered the main road, he glanced at the girl beside him who was tapping her fingers on the phone. A faint smile curled on her lips told him that she was texting someone she liked.

The event he had witnessed earlier came to his mind and Alex started to worry again. The two of them had known each other for years, but he had never heard anything about Hazel's being in a relationship.

When the two of them went to the same school, he could still find out about her circle of friends or rumors circulating her, but after Hazel had entered university, Alex had lost his chance to find out about the people around her.

What if Hazel had someone she liked?

His grip on the steering wheel tightened as the thought came to his mind.

"Alex, green light."

Hearing her voice, Alex snapped out of his trance and started to drive again.

"You're alright?"

"Yeah." He flashed a smile at her before he focused back on his driving. "Sorry. I was just thinking about which route should I take."

"Just take whichever route is safer. We're not in a hurry." Hazel put down the phone she was holding. "I just texted Auntie Edith and tell her that we're on our way. She told me to remind you to drive safely."

"Mhmm... You were texting Auntie Edith just now?"

"Uh-huh. She wanted me to let her know when we leave B City."

His heart calmed down a little bit upon knowing that the person Hazel was texting earlier was Auntie Edith. Hazel's relationship with Auntie Edith was very close. At times, they looked like mother and daughter. At times, they looked like sisters.

Of course, Alex knew well that for Hazel, Auntie Edith was one of the most important people in her life.

There was a brief silence between them before Alex spoke again. "How was your study?"

"It's alright," Hazel said. "Next year, I will start to go on an internship before I can graduate."

"Have you applied to any company yet?"

Hazel shook her head. "I have a few places I'd like to apply to, but I am still trying to decide."

"If you need any help, then let me know. I may know a few people who can help you get a place."

"Alright."

A few years ago, Alex was surprised when Hazel had told him that she was going to study engineering. He had always thought that Hazel was going to take over MH Group someday and learn something that was related to their business. However, Hazel had told everyone that she was interested in building robots.

Her uncle had promised that he would support her in anything that she wanted to do.

Just that, Alex had not expected that after he had influenced her to build those Gundam when they were very young, Hazel would choose to study something related to building robots. Alex knew that Hazel still liked to assemble those models and nowadays, her model collections had grown larger than his.

Fortunately, Hazel was good at her study and would always top her class, or else, he might feel a little guilty about leading her towards this path.

After a slow crawl, Alex finally entered the highway and the journey became a little smoother. If nothing goes wrong, it should take them around four, five hours to arrive in L City.

"You have a month's break for this winter vacation, right?" Alex spoke after a while. He glanced at Hazel and saw her nodded. "A week after the new year, my class is planning a reunion. Do you want to come with me? You can be my plus one."

Hazel pondered over his words and was about to decline when she heard Alex continued.

"A few of people you know will be there too," Alex said. "In the past, weren't you close to Megan Xiao?"

Hazel thought about her friend from kindergarten and recalled the last time she saw her, Megan was departing to C Country to further her study. In the beginning, the two would still contact each other on media social. But after a few years, the two were busy with their study that they both lost contact with each other.

"Megan has returned to L City?"

Alex nodded. "I heard from Tyler that she's getting married. This time, she returned to L City to introduce her fiance to her family."

"Megan is getting married," Hazel repeated the words. Her expression showed that she was still in disbelief. It felt as if she had just graduated high school. But now, someone she knew was going to build a family.

Hazel could still remember Megan who always looked after her in class when they were in kindergarten. After her parents passed away and she had chosen to isolate herself from others, Megan had stayed around and continued to talk to her even when she did not reply. Megan was always good to her.

But they were all still kids, ah! How can one of them get married and started a family It was unthinkable.

"I'll go with you," Hazel quickly agreed. "I haven't seen Megan for years."

"Then, later, I will text you the date and come and pick you up?"

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The sky had turned dark when they entered L City. After almost six hours of driving, Alex pulled over his AUDI in front of Mo's Residence. He turned off the light and the engine. Then, Alex looked at the girl who was sleeping soundly beside him.

Hazel's face was facing him and Alex took this chance to observe her look. His gaze trailed from her eyes, nose and then stopped at her slightly pouting lips. His throat bobbed as he continued to watch her sleeping face. He has been watching this face from his childhood and Alex thought that he had never grown tired of watching her face.

His hand stretched to touch her face, but seconds later, he retracted his hand and balled it into a fist. Alex closed his eyes and took a deep breath. When he opened his eyes the look in his eyes earlier had disappeared.

Alex stretched his hand and touched her arms. "Hazel?"

The girl stirred in her sleep. Hazel opened her eyes and a faint, languid smile curled on her lips when she saw a face that she recognized. "Alex. Why are you here?"

A chuckle escaped him. "We've arrived at your uncle's house. Aren't you going to come down?"

Hearing his words, Hazel turned her head and stared at the entrance with a dazed look on her face. A few seconds later, Hazel took off her seat belt and rubbed her eyes.

The front door opened from the inside. Alex then alighted his vehicle and smiled when he saw Edith. "Auntie Edith." Alex greeted.

"You're here." Edith watched the two kids who had grown up in front of her and then, peeked into the vehicle to see that Hazel was scrambling to gather her stuff. From the look on Hazel's face, Edith could guess that the girl had just woken up. Her gaze went back to Alex. "How was the traffic?"

"Not bad. Sorry. We stopped by for a quick break a few times and was delayed."

"It's fine. As long as you're safe. Have you had your dinner? Would you like to come in?"

Alex glanced at the SUV parked at its usual spot. "No. My mom should be waiting for me at home."

Edith chuckled as she was expecting to hear his answer. Whenever Neil was at home, Alex would usually reject her invitation to go inside. She then stretched out her hand with a bag in her hand. "We received fresh crabs from Z Town this morning. Give them to your mom. Tell her to come over during the new year."

"Alright." Alex nodded politely.

At this time, Hazel finally alighted from the car. She adjusted the straps on her shoulder and leaped forward to hug Edith. "Auntie Edith, I missed you."

Edith laughed helplessly when as she patted the girl on her back. "Alright. I missed you too. Let's go inside. I made your favorite food."

Hazel's eyes brightened upon hearing the words. It has been a few months since she came home and she was missing her Auntie Edith's cooking. Although she had learned cooking from Edith, Hazel found that she could not replicate the same taste.

"Un. I'll go in and wash up first." Hazel then turned to Alex. "Alex, thank you for the ride."

The boy nodded. He watched as Hazel walked inside and shifted his gaze. When he noticed the way Edith was looking at him, Alex quickly lowered his head and coughed. "Auntie Edith, I should get going now."

"Hmm... Safe journey." Edith watched as the car disappeared from her sight and a helpless sigh escaped her.

When she walked into the house again, Hazel was talking with the two siblings with her daughter, Hailey hugging Hazel tightly. A faint smile curled on her lips upon seeing the three of them in good relationships.

"Alright, don't disturb your sister. She just arrived. Let her have a rest. Your sister is on a break for a month. Whatever it is you can discuss later."

Hailey pouted when she heard her mother's words and slowly released her arms. "Mom... Sister Hazel said she's going to take us shopping later."

"I still haven't shop for new clothes," Hazel said. "It's better to have Hayden and Hailey come with me this weekend. We haven't spent our time together for a while."

Edith walked over to the kitchen and came out with a few dishes. Hazel peeked at the dishes on the table and was surprised to see her favorite crab dishes on the table.

"Everyone has eaten. I specially set aside the biggest crab for you."

"Un. Un. Auntie Edith, you love me the most." Without wasting time, Hazel started to dig in. She peeled out the crab flesh and sighed when the food entered her mouth. This was the taste that she was familiar with. Suddenly, Hazel thought that her tiredness after rushing around to complete her assignments before their break had disappeared.

Home-cooked dishes are the best!

Edith continued to chat with Hazel about her life in B City as she accompanied the girl to eat her meal.

A while later, someone showed up at the dining area with a slight frown on his face.

"Hazel, you're home," Neil said.

"Uncle!" Hazel stared at her dirty hand and nodded at her uncle.

"Your auntie said you got home with Alex," Neil said. "Why don't you take a flight? It would save you a lot of time."

"It's fine. Alex needs to drive his car back anyway," Hazel said. "I don't feel good to let him drive alone. It's better if he has someone to talk to. At least he would not feel bored."

The frown on Neil's face deepened as he thought of various things that the two of them could do when they were alone in the car. Neil was aware that the boy had tricked his niece to accompany him on a drive. Driving the car back was his reason to spend some time alone with Hazel, wasn't it?

Sensing the way his wife was looking at him, Neil quickly looked away and left.

"How are you planning to get back to B City after the break?" Edith asked in a low voice.

"I promised Alex that I will accompany him," Hazel said. "Coincidentally, he's returning to B City around the same time to meet his partner and he would not mind someone to accompany him."

"Alright. Just don't tell your uncle about this first."

Hazel cocked her head but did not ask why. "That's right. Auntie Edith, you said you have something to tell me. What is it?"

Edith flashed her a mysterious smile.. "Let's talk later."

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Hazel woke up in the morning feeling refreshed. It felt as if it has been a long time since she had the chance to sleep in.

These days, she was too busy with her assignments and exams. It was not easy being a top student. Every night, she had to stay up late and work on her assignment. Then, she had to wake up early in the morning and go through her books before class started.

Hazel lay down on her bed lazily as she looked around her familiar surroundings. The bed in her room was very comfortable that she did not want to get up.

After rolling around the bed for a few minutes, Hazel finally get off her bed and walked over to the window.

The sunlight touched her skin gently. Hazel pushed open the window and took a deep breath. She looked at the scenery in front of her and saw that the swings that her uncle had built for her when she was still a kid were still there.

After washing up and changing her clothes, Hazel went downstairs and met the auntie who was looking over the house.

"Auntie, where is everyone?"

"Young master and young miss should be at school at this time," the auntie said.
"President Mo and madam went out together earlier this morning."

Hazel glanced at the clock and realized that she had woken up late. Her lips curled into a faint smile knowing that they had let her sleep in a while longer as she had just arrived in L City last night.

"Old Master Qian is in the dining room," the auntie continued.

Hearing her words, Hazel went into the dining area and found that her Great-Grandpa was in the kitchen, eating his porridge slowly. Hazel stood at the entrance and watched as Mike continued to eat. Suddenly, her nose started to sour and her eyes sting when she realized that her Great-Grandpa had gotten older.

After Hazel had graduated high-school, Mike Qian finally succumbed to their persuasion and decided to move in with them in L City. After all, he was old and there were some things that he could not do.

Edith was worried to let him stay in Z Town alone. Although he still had a few people to look after him, it would not be the same as having his own granddaughter looking after him.

Moreover... a few of his close friends had passed away. Edith was worried that he would be lonely.

After his great-grandchildren had coaxed him to move in with them, Mike finally agreed.

Fortunately, the house was surrounded by nature. Therefore, Mike did not feel suffocated to stay with them. These days, he stayed in the house doing nothing but lounging around. Whenever he got bored, Mike would go for a walk in the garden for fresh air and looked at the fishes in the small pond.

As if noticing that someone was looking at him, Mike raised his head and met Hazel's gaze. The old man stared at her for a few seconds as if trying to recall her face.

Mike put down the cutlery in his hand and smiled. "Isn't that my little princess?"

"Great-Grandpa!" Hazel walked in and gave Mike a hug. A streak of tear fall on her cheek as she noticed that Mike had gotten a lot thinner than the last time she saw her. When he had stared at her for a few seconds longer, Hazel was a little worried that her Great-Grandpa might have forgotten about her.

Fortunately, he would still call her his little princess.

Even though she was in her early twenties, Hazel thought that she would not get tired to hear her Great-Grandpa call her his little princess.

"When did you get home?" Mike asked. He pulled away to look at Hazel's face.

"Last night," Hazel said. "Auntie Edith said you have already gone to bed. I don't want to disturb you."

Mike patted at her hand gently. "It's good that you're home. How long will you stay this time?"

"One month. Great-Grandpa, I will accompany you every day until my vacation ended."

Mike laughed happily before he patted at the seat beside him. "Come. Have breakfast with me."

"Un." Hazel nodded. After a while, the auntie walked over with a serving of porridge and steamed bun for Hazel. "Grandpa, why did you have your breakfast this late?"

"Earlier, I was not that hungry," Mike said and sighed. "This is what happened when you get older. You won't have that much appetite. Just one serving of bowl would be a little too much for me."

"Great-Grandpa, you're not that old. Even at this age, you're strong enough to take down a bad guy."

Mike laughed upon hearing her words. "How was your study? Is everything going well?"

"Un. I ranked top three in class again."

"Mmm... my little princess is such a smart girl." He put down the bowl of porridge and pulled out a few red packets from his pocket. "This is for you. Take it."

Hazel looked at the several red packets in her hand with a dazed expression.

"Just take them. At this age, I won't be needing a lot of money."

The corner of her lips curled into a smile. "Great-Grandpa, thank you."

Hazel noticed that after Mike had moved in to live with them in L City, he had this habit to carry several red packets with him.

Mike was now living with his granddaughter and her husband. Although everything was prepared for him, as a man, Mike would still feel uncomfortable that he was not contributing anything. Since his granddaughter did not want to receive his money, he can only give them to his great-grandchild.

Auntie Edith had said that whenever Great-Grandpa gave them red packets, they are not allowed to reject them. Or else, Great-Grandpa would be in a bad mood. As he got older, Great-Grandpa became sensitive and would sulk whenever things did not go his way.

"Little princess," Mike called her name and flashed a teasing smile. "Tell Great-Grandpa, did you already have a boyfriend?"

Hazel was a little stunned upon hearing the question. "Great-Grandpa, I don't have one."

"Why not? My little princess is such a lovely girl. Why don't you have a boyfriend yet?"

Hazel lowered her gaze. "The subject that I'm taking is very hard. I still want to focus on my study."

Mike looked at her and sighed. "Focusing on your study is good. Just don't forget to raise your head and look around at what is in front of you once in a while. Or else, you might miss something without realizing it."

Hazel nodded obediently. "Great-Grandpa, I know."

"You're a young girl. You should enjoy your youth while you still can, understand?"

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After chatting with Mike and accompanying him to walk around the garden for a while, the old man finally returned to his room to rest. Hazel was aware that her Great-Grandpa would take a nap and wake up again in the afternoon.

Since she had nothing to do, Hazel decided to grab a car key and went to her parent's old house.

When she turned eighteen, her uncle had handed over everything that her parents had left behind, including the big house where she had lived with them before they passed away.

Hazel recalled that the auntie who was looking after the place had mentioned a few letters and documents that she needed to look at and decided to retrieve them before she would forget about it.

It took her around ten minutes to arrive. When she arrived, Hazel stood outside and stared at the building for a long time. After so many years, the house still looked the same. The caretakers had looked after the house and maintain everything as it was before.

Previously, her uncle had told her that she could move into the house if she wanted to. However, Hazel thought that living alone in such a big place would be too lonely. She would sometimes come over and live in the house once in a while but would prefer living with her uncle instead.

Of course, her Auntie Edith was relieved when she chose to continue and live with them as it was too dangerous to live alone.

Hazel walked over to the entrance and an auntie who was always looking after the house came out before she could press the doorbell.

"Auntie," Hazel greeted and flashed a smile.

The auntie led her inside and handed her over some letters and documents that she needed to see. After exchanging a few words with the auntie, Hazel decided to walk around the house.

Memories of her childhood with her parents came to her mind as she saw the big photograph of the three of them in the living room. In the photograph, she was only three and her father had carried her in his arms.

Hazel took this chance to look at her parents' faces for a long time. It has been a long time since they both passed away and Hazel was a little worried that she might forget how they looked like.

Most people would say that her face really resembled her mother the most. However, one could still see the similarities between her and her father on her face.

Her lips quivered and her eyes grew misty as she continued to look at the photograph.

When she turned eighteen, her uncle did not only returned everything that belonged to her parents to her. On that day, her uncle had also told her the truth about her parents' death.

Hazel could still remember that moment when her grandparents had told her that her parents were no longer around. She had always thought that the two passed away in an accident after returning from a business dinner. Hazel did not think that there would be a story behind their death.

Her father only wanted to uncover the truth about the corruption that has been going on in the company, but someone wanted him to shut up and an accident happened.

It was then that she recalled after her Auntie Edith had come over to live with them, there was a period where she had refused to speak because she was too frightened of something or someone.

Ever since then, she would often have this strange dream where she had witnessed someone walked into her parents' wards and injected something into their body and caused them to stop breathing.

In that dream, the younger version of her was watching everything from the side. No matter how much she wanted to stop that man, Hazel found that she could not touch him or do anything. When that man finished, he then turned to look at her with a strange smile on his face.

Hazel then woke up from her sleep with her body drenched in sweat.

Of course, Hazel had never mentioned this dream to her uncle or Auntie Edith.

After looking around the house, Hazel then left and return to her uncle's house. She recalled that everyone had gone out earlier and she did not want to let her Great-Grandpa have his lunch alone.

However, when Hazel arrived, she could see her uncle's SUV parked at his usual spot. She turned off the ignition and walked into the house. Her steps halted the moment she walked into the living area.

At this time, her Auntie Edith had her arms wrapped around her uncle's neck and the two were exchanging an intimate kiss.

Although she had always seen this scene since she was a child, Hazel thought that seeing this scene again when she was an adult gave her a different feeling. She was embarrassed, ah!

As if noticing someone else's presence, Edith pulled away and froze the moment she saw Hazel at the door. Swiftly, she took a step back and hinted at her husband with her eyes.

Neil turned and his expression mirrored his wife the moment he saw his niece. He let out a dry cough and muttered something about an important e-mail that he needed to see before he left for his office.

"When did you get home?" Edith asked.

"I just arrived." A smile curled on her lips. For the first time, Hazel thought that the embarrassed look on her auntie's face was adorable.

"You went out?"

"Hmm..." Hazel nodded. "I went back to my parents' place to look at a few letters and documents." The smile on her lips stretched out as she reached Edith's side. "Auntie Edith, your relationship with my uncle is really good."

Edith recalled the scene a few seconds ago and lowered her head to hide her embarrassment.

Hazel giggled and decided not to tease her auntie again. "Where did the two of you went to? Uncle didn't go to the office today?"

Edith lifted her head to look at Hazel and this time, her lips turned into a faint smile. "We went to the hospital."

The smile on Hazel's face disappeared and she looked at Edith with worry. "Hospital? Why?"

Edith took Hazel's hand in hers and patted it gently. "You remember that I told you that I have something to tell you?" She watched Hazel nod and hesitated for a few seconds before she spoke again in a low voice. "I'll let you be the first to know this news." There was a brief pause. "I'm pregnant."

Hazel thought that something might be wrong with her hearing.

"Earlier, we went to the hospital for a checkup." Edith reached for her purse, pulled out a photograph, and handed it over to Hazel.

Hazel looked at the photograph in her hand and was momentarily stunned. After a few seconds, her expression changed again. "Auntie Edith... this... you're having twins?"

Edith nodded slowly.

She too was not expecting that she would get pregnant again.

After they had Hailey, the two of them decided that having a pair of a boy and girl would be enough.

However, the last time she accompanied Neil to a banquet, Edith ended up drinking a bit too much. She had acted like a hooligan and had seduced her husband in the SUV. A few weeks later, Edith noticed that her period did not come and bought a few pregnancy sticks to test. The result was... positive.

She was already in her late thirty. Her two children were already in high school. The last time she gave birth to Hailey was around fifteen years ago. Of course, she was worried. Who would have thought that the doctor would announce that she was pregnant with twins!

Suddenly, Edith found herself in Hazel's embrace.

"Auntie Edith, congratulations!" Hazel pulled away and continued to look at the photo in her hand. "I didn't expect my uncle to be this good."

Edith felt the corner of her lips twitched at Hazel's words.

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On the weekend, Hazel took the two siblings to the mall to accompany her for their last-minute shopping. When they arrived, the car park was almost full. Fortunately, this shopping complex was one of MH Group's and Hazel was able to park at the privileged parking spot.

Hazel and Hailey walked around from shop to shop with Hayden obediently followed after two girls as their guard as well as a to carry their shopping bags. Since the two siblings had accompanied her, Hazel bought a few things for them as a gift.

After shopping around for almost two hours, Hazel took the siblings to a cafe to rest as well as to have their lunch at a cafe. As they were waiting for their food to arrive, Hazel looked at the shopping bags to check that she had gotten everything.

Her gaze paused at the light blue overall that she had bought earlier and took it out to inspect it properly.

"What do you think, this is cute, right?" Hazel asked.

After Hailey has grown up, most of the baby stuff has been donated away. Now that her uncle and auntie were expecting newborn babies, they would need to buy baby stuff. As Hazel walked around the mall, she stumbled upon some cute baby clothing and could not resist buying some for the unborn babies

The two siblings looked at the baby clothes in their elder sister's hand and exchanged a glance.

"I still cannot believe that I'm going to have little sisters or brothers," Hailey, the youngest of the siblings said.

When her mother had announced that she will soon have another sibling, Hailey was shocked. She had always thought that she would be the youngest in the family. But soon, there will be two babies around. Moreover... their age gap was too large!

"Don't be too sad," Hazel poked at Hailey's cheek. "In a few years, you and Hayden will be leaving for college. It's good that your parents will have someone to accompany them."

Before her Auntie Edith quit her job to focus on the siblings, she was a kindergarten teacher. Back then, Hazel was one of her students and Hazel recalled how much the kids loved Edith.

Her auntie was someone who loved being surrounded by kids. Although it was tiring to look after the children, Edith found it enjoyable. Perhaps, that was the reason she chose to quit her job to look after the two kids.

But now that the two of them had grown up, and will soon leave to pursue their study. When that time comes, her Auntie Edith will be at loss in that big house. Although her uncle loved her auntie dearly and would always accompany her, he will still have to deal with the company matters.

Perhaps it was good that they would soon have more kids. This way, Edith would not be as lonely and would find something to keep herself busy with.

Hazel shifted her gaze to Hayden and spoke, "Back then, when Auntie Edith gave birth to you, she was two or three years older than I am now." She recalled her conversation with her Great-Grandpa a few days ago and sighed. "Should I start to get into a relationship?"

Hayden felt the corner of his mouth started to twitch. "Elder sister, everyone should follow their own pace. There is no one too early or too late."

Hazel looked at the boy and raised a brow. "What are you trying to say?"

"I'm saying that you should not get married and have kids too early like our mother," Hayden said.

"Why not?" Hailey asked.

"If you have kids early, wouldn't the twins get confused as to why they will be addressed as uncle or auntie when they were still so young?" Hayden explained.

Hazel laughed at his words.

Soon the waiter delivered their food and the three of them ate their meal as they chatted happily. The crowd in the shopping mall has gotten bigger that it was hard for them to walk around. Seeing that they had everything they needed, the three of them decided that it was time to go home.

As they were nearing the entrance, Hazel saw two familiar faces. Her eyes brightened up and Hazel quickly walked over. "Auntie Lily," Hazel greeted. Her gaze shifted to the teenager beside Lily and Hazel called. "Ellie."

Lily was looking at her phone when Hazel had approached. The moment she saw Hazel and the two siblings, a smile appeared on Lily's face. "Did you three come out to shop around?"

"Hmm... We're just finished shopping around. Now that the crowd has grown, we're planning to return home." Hazel shifted her gaze between the mother and daughter. "Auntie Lily, did you come here just the two of you?"

Lily flashed a smile. "Initially, I wanted to ask Alex to accompany us here, but last night, Alex was discussing some business matter with his father until late at night. When we came out, he was still sleeping. I don't have the heart to wake him up."

"Auntie Lily, are you waiting for someone to pick you up?"

"The driver is supposed to pick us up," Lily said. "But the traffic heading to the city is really bad. It has come to a complete standstill. It would take him around half an hour to reach here."

"Auntie Lily, just tell the driver to turn around. I can drive you home."

"Mom, let's just go with Big Sister Hazel," Ellie said. "We have been standing here for a while and I'm getting tired."

Lily glanced at the siblings and after a brief persuasion, she then agreed.

Lily took a shotgun while the three teenagers sat at the back. The three of them were of close age and as they were all familiar with each other, it did not take them too long to find a topic to discuss.

Meanwhile, Hazel chatted with Lily and their talk revolved around Edith's unexpected pregnancy.

Fortunately, the traffic heading out of the city was not as bad as it was towards the opposite direction. After around twenty minutes drive, Hazel pulled over the vehicle in front of the He's residence.

Swiftly, both Hayden and Hailey helped both Lily and Ellie to carry their stuff inside the house.

"Don't just leave yet. Since you have helped us, how about staying for a while for a cup of tea?" Lily said.

Hazel glanced at the two siblings and agreed. She went into the kitchen to continue her conversation with Lily as she watched the elder lady preparing a pot of tea.

"Mom."

Suddenly, there was a slightly hoarse and lazy voice coming from the entrance. Swiftly, both Hazel and Lily turned towards the direction of the voice and found that Alex was watching them with a surprised expression on his face.

His hair was messy and the shirt on his body was slightly creased.. It was clear that he had just got up from bed.

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Hazel continued to watch Alex's dumbstruck expression for a few seconds longer. Seeing that he still had not moved after a few seconds had passed, Hazel raised a hand and waved. "Hi, Alex. Did you just woke up?"

Her voice seemed to snap him out of his trance. Alex turned around and scrambled to get out of the kitchen.

A brow raised and Hazel let out a little giggle upon seeing the way her friend reacted. Hazel turned to Lily and asked, "What's wrong with him?"

Lily flashed a helpless smile. "Maybe he was not expecting to see you here. Just look at the way he looked. It would be strange if he was not embarrassed with the way he had appeared in front of a guest."

In fact, Alex had run into Hayden and Hailey in the living house earlier. His little sister was close to the two siblings and Alex did not think that Hazel would come along with them.

Hazel smiled and the memories of a younger version of Alex, running away to his room once he saw that she had visited. A few minutes later, Alex would always reappear with a clean and neat look.

It felt as if Alex had not changed a lot since they were kids. As the thought came to her mind, Hazel shook her head.

Hazel emptied the tea in her cup and looked at the time. Noticing that she had spent almost an hour accompanying Lily for a chat, Hazel decided to call the siblings and leave.

It will be the new year in a few days and her Auntie Edith should be busy with the preparation. Now that Auntie Edith was pregnant again, everyone was worried. The doctor had reminded her of the risk of late pregnancy and she was asked to relax and not move around too much. Moreover, this time, she was pregnant with twins.

Alex walked down the stairs and found that his sister and the two siblings were no longer in the living room. He then went into the kitchen and found that his mother was rearranging the stuff she bought from the mall earlier. Hazel was nowhere to be seen.

"Mom," Alex called. He looked around and was a little disappointed when he could not find the face he was looking for. "Where is Hazel and the others?"

"She left," Lily said without looking at her son. "When you run back to your room as soon as you see her, Hazel thought that you did not want to see her. So she left with her siblings."

Alex stared at his mother with his eyes wide. "Really?" He scrambled to get his phone to call her and explain.

"Alright, I'm joking." Lily laughed. "Don't call her at this time. She should be driving at this time. Don't distract her. She had spent an hour accompanying me for a chat."

"Mom..." Alex rubbed at his neck as he watched the smile on her mother's face. It was apparent that she found the situation amusing and had wanted to tease him about it.

Alex was not expecting that he would see Hazel the moment he walked into the house. The smile on her face was too dazzling and Alex panicked when he recalled that he had

just woken up a while ago. He did not want the person he liked to see him with his disheveled look, ah!

Lily gave her son a lookover and narrowed her eyes. "Who asked you to take a long time to take a shower?"

"Why did Hazel come over?" Alex asked.

Lily clicked her tongue when she heard his question. "Your sister and I ran into her at the mall. The traffic heading towards the city was bad and the driver was unable to enter the city. Fortunately, we ran into Hazel and she offered to give us a lift. Or else, we might have to wait at the mall for a few more hours.

At this time, Alex seemed to remember that his mother had asked him to accompany her and his sister to the mall. But he had overslept.

"Sorry." Alex ran his fingers in his hair. "The discussion with dad lasted longer than I expected."

Lily placed the new towel that she had bought on the table and looked at her son with concern. "Aren't you tired, running around from L City to B City?" Her tone softened down as she spoke.

When Lily and Ethan both heard about Alex's plan to invest in his friend's business in B City, they did not have a lot of opinions. Alex had already said that he would not be too involved in the company, unless if he was required to make a big decision. Anyway, it was a good opportunity for Alex to gain more experience and learn as he was starting a new business.

However, they did not expect that Alex would buy a property in B City and decided to spend most of the time there.

In the beginning, the father and son would quarrel about this.

It was only after Lily realized that the property was very close to Hazel's university that she was able to figure out what her son wanted to do and she was able to help Alex to talk to her husband.

Ever since the kids were young, Lily had always liked Hazel and would joke with Edith that she wanted Hazel as her daughter-in-law. Now that she knew that her son wanted to pursue the girl, of course, Lily would not complain about it.

To think that her joke would come true...

It was just that, she was afraid that her son would get too tired. After all, Alex had agreed to take over his father's business when the time comes.

"It's fine," Alex said. He looked at the teacup in front of him and a teapot with half tea remaining. He poured the tea absentmindedly and took a sip. "I'm more like a sleeping partner in with my friend's company in B City. Until the business is more stable, I can just show up once in a while to check on progress." Alex looked up and saw that his mother was staring at him with a strange look on her face. "What's wrong?"

Lily glanced at the teacup that Alex had put down on the table. "That was the same teacup that Hazel had used earlier." She dead-panned.

Alex felt his breath hitched. Fortunately, he had swallowed the tea safely into his stomach. Or else, he might accidentally sprayed them at his mother!

"My God, Alex. That was an indirect kiss, ah!" Lily teased.

"Mom..." Alex felt his throat parched. He wanted to pour more tea and drink, but he seemed to remember that the cup in front of him was the same cup that Hazel had used. Alex stared at the teacup that he had drunk from a while ago and noticed the faint lipstick stain printed on it for the first time.

Suddenly, Alex did not know how to react.. He recalled that he had put his lips at the same spot and his face turned redder.

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It was New Year and the house was lively with the sounds of laughter.

Hazel walked down the stairs and caught the sight of her uncle pulling his wife away from the kitchen. The two of them argued at the corner before her uncle lifted her auntie in his arms to let her sit down in the dining area. Then, their arguments continued.

However... that argument could not be called an argument. From the eye of others, what the two were doing was called flirting.

It did not take her a long time to guess what the two of them were arguing about earlier. Auntie Edith was now pregnant with twins and her uncle was especially worried that she might overwork herself.

In previous years, their family would always return to Z Town to celebrate New Year with her grandparents. However, these days, her Great-Grandpa's health was not that good and her grandparents decided to come over to L City instead.

Because of that, her Auntie Edith was especially busy in the kitchen. Her uncle had hired a few helpers, but her auntie was someone who could not sit still without doing anything.

Even after her uncle had reminded her to rest, her auntie would still sneak into the kitchen to check on the dishes. It seemed that unless she checked on the dishes herself, she would not be satisfied.

Her uncle was helpless. Even though he wanted to scold his wife, he could not bear to do it. In the end, he could only coax his wife until she will listen to him.

The couple has been together for years and their relationship only grew. At this time, Hazel recalled how she would often worry that her uncle would not able to win her auntie's heart.

Back then, her uncle was someone who did not know how to coax a girl, but after years have passed, he had become good at it. Of course, he would only have such patience to coax his wife.

Hazel let out a giggle as she watched how her auntie was carried away. When her auntie tried to struggle, her uncle only held her tightly as he was worried that she might fall.

Seeing the way the two of them acted, a faint, warm smile curled on her lips.

It was good to see them acting lovey-dovey even if the family members were around.

Most parents would choose to hide from their kids instead of showing off their affection. However, both her uncle and auntie were not ashamed. They would never hide from their children. Instead, it was the siblings who often choose to look elsewhere. Sometimes, even Hazel thought that she would get embarrassed after watching their affections.

However, they were so in love. Why would they want to hide something like that?

Now that she thought of it... when her parents were alive, the two of them were not ashamed to show off their affection in front of her as well.

Seeing the example that her parents and uncle had set up, Hazel thought that if she met someone she like, that person should not be ashamed of showing off their affection as well.

After watching her auntie and uncle for a while, Hazel finally helped her uncle to coax her auntie to take a rest. She then walked into the kitchen and helped to prepare their dinner. Hazel had learned to cook from her auntie and naturally knew the standard that she had set.

Knowing that Hazel will look after the food preparation, Edith finally relaxed. It could be seen just how much she trusted Hazel instead of the aunties who were more professional at cooking.

Once the food was prepared, everyone sat around the table and ate merrily. The elders would reminisce the olden time and the youngsters would listen.

Mike, who usually did not have much appetite to eat had suddenly eaten two bowls of rice. Seeing the younger generation eating happily, he was in a very good mood.

After the meals ended, Mike returned to his room to rest while the others gathered in front of the television and wait for the new day to come.

On the television, the host had finally asked the artists to gather on the stage as they were going to start the countdown.

Hazel and the siblings sat up straight as they were waiting for the countdown to begin. Once the host started to count backward from ten, Hailey had excitedly counted along with them.

Soon, a loud booming sound was heard and there was a fireworks show display on the television screen. At the same time, the sound of firework could be heard outside.

Hazel glanced at her uncle and saw that he was whispering something to her Auntie Edith. Seeing that both Hayden and Hailey had gone upstairs to watch the firework show from the balcony, Hazel decided to follow them.

The surroundings were very noisy with the sound of fireworks and the night sky was full of colorful fireworks with different shapes and styles. It didn't look as if the show was going to end anytime soon.

Just as she was enjoying the fireworks show, the phone in her hand started to vibrate.

Hazel looked at her phone and saw a few messages from her friends. Hazel scrolled her phone to look at the people who had messaged her and smiled. Her movement stopped as she saw the name on her screen.

Hazel tapped her finger on that name and read his message.

"Hazel, Happy New Year!"

It was the same, simple message as everyone else had sent her, however, seeing the name of the sender brought a smile to her face. Hazel began to tap her fingers on the screen and hit send.

"Alex, Happy New Year!"

"Mom said that we will come over to your place tomorrow."

"Un. I know. I will wait for you to come."

Alex stared at the last message that Hazel had sent to him with a dazed expression. His fingers hovered over the screen. Alex knew that he had a lot to say to Hazel, but at this time, he could not decide what he was going to say to her.

In the end, he was unable to type anything.

Just as he had decided on a topic to continue their conversation, a new message from Hazel popped up on the screen.

"Alex, Good night. Sleep early."

His lips subconsciously tilted up into a helpless smile. In the end, Alex could only wish her good night before he turned off the phone and laid back on the sofa.. He can only wish for the sun to rise quickly so that he can see the person he was longing to see soon.

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Alex stood near the vehicle and stared at the entrance as he waited for his family to come out. His fingers tapped on his thigh impatiently. His mother had said that they were going to Mo's residence, but he had waited for so long and they haven't gone out yet.

At this time, his sister, Ellie finally came out. She walked over towards him and grinned as she looked at the thick red packets in her hand.

As if realizing that someone was watching her, Ellie looked up. She glanced at her red packets in her hands again and stuffed them into her handbag. "Brother, I hope that by next year you can give me a thick red packet."

Alex raised a brow, shooting his sister a questioning look.

The smile on Ellie's face stretched up. "I will pray that you can bring home a wife soon."

A chuckle escaped him when he realized what she meant. "Thank you."

As Ellie has grown up, Alex has always thought that his sister was no longer as adorable as she was a baby. However, at this time, Alex thought that his sister was a little cute.

However, even if he wanted to get married sooner, Alex was sure that a certain someone will not agree. As the face of Hazel's uncle appeared on his mind, Alex began to shudder.

Finally, after waiting for so long, his parents came out of the house. Alex heaved a sigh and slid into the driver's seat.

Lily saw the anxious look on her son's face and tugged at her husband's hand. "Hurry up. Can't you see that your son is getting impatient?"

Ethan finally followed his wife's line of guess and entered the car.

Now that their son was old enough to drive, Ethan and Lily had decided to let Alex do the task. Meanwhile, the two of them could sit back and relax in the back.

Lily leaned her head on her husband's arms as she looked at her phone. Sensing that the vehicle had slowed down, she glanced out the window and saw the traffic. She shifted her gaze to Alex and saw that he was drumming his fingers on the steering wheel.

"What are you getting anxious for? Hazel is not going anywhere," Lily said the moment she met her son's gaze through the rear mirror.

Alex did not answer and continued to focus on his driving.

He knew that Hazel was not going anywhere, but he just wanted to see the person he liked a little earlier. The last time he had seen her, he was in his groggy state. Just before he can return with a clean look, the person had already left.

Alex shifted his gaze towards the rear mirror again and caught his parents whispering to each other. Judging from the smile on his father's face, Alex could guess that his mother should be whispering sweet words again.

At this time, he was a little bit jealous of his parents.

Being a married couple is so nice. They can be together all the time and flirt whenever they wanted.

The drive to Mo's residence that was supposed to be a fifteen minutes drive took them almost half an hour. When they arrived, his parents went over to the entrance and pressed the bell, followed by his sister.

Alex took a deep breath and finally trailed after his family members.

The moment they entered, Mo's family members greeted them warmly. They exchanged their greetings and pleasantries before they were ushered inside. Varieties of food were served and Alex ate them silently.

Ellie found the two siblings and the three of them chatted about the latest movie on the theatre. Everyone chatted happily and Alex felt a little invisible as he ate the pastries silently. He did not see the person he came to see, and the others were too engrossed in their conversation that Alex could not find an opening to ask.

At this time, Hazel's grandmother, Sophie, walked into the room and saw that Alex was sitting alone. She walked over and handed him a plate of cookies.

Alex looked up and an embarrassed smile curled on his lips, knowing that he was in a trance and had not noticed that Sophie had approached him. Alex took a piece of the cookies and took a bite.

"Is it delicious?" Sophie asked.

"It's good," Alex answered absentmindedly.

A warm smile appeared on her lips as she continued to look at the young boy in front of her. "I'm glad you think so. Hazel made them this morning."

Alex snapped out of his trance when he heard her name. The look on his face was as if he had noticed that Sophie was in front of him for the first time. Alex let out a dry cough and looked at Sophie again. "Grandma, where is Hazel? Why don't I see her around?"

Sophie laughed as she had long expected the question. "Hazel is in the garden. She is on the phone with her maternal grandparents who are in F Country. Go and look for her. Tell her to come in when she finished her call."

Alex nodded. His eyes brightened, but his lips curled into a shy smile. Finding the reason to look for Hazel, Alex thanked Sophie and immediately left to find Hazel in the garden.

As soon as the boy left, Sophie shook her head softly before she walked to the kitchen. She met her son at the dining area and saw his unhappy expression.

"Mom, you're helping him."

Neil has been keeping his eyes on Alex ever since he stepped into the house and was a little happy to see the unhappy look on the boy's face. But then, his mother had to appear and ruined it for him.

"Why not? Don't you see how pitiful that boy is?" Sophie asked.

Neil thought that it would be best to let Alex suffer a while longer. At least he will know that it will not be easy to win his Hazel. Didn't they say that people will only appreciate things that were hard to obtain?

Sophie chuckled as she heard her son's thoughts. "You're about to become a father again, but why do I think that you're getting childish?"

"Mom..."

"Moreover, Hazel is not a thing. She has her own thoughts and feelings."

Neil let out a sigh, knowing that he will not win this argument with his mother. "Hazel does not even like that boy in that way," He mumbled to himself.

Apparently, his mother heard his words and shot him a fierce gaze.

"Mom, I'm doing all these for Hazel. I just did not want her to be unhappy or hurt," Neil said. "That girl had experienced too many things from childhood. I just wanted to do whatever I can to protect her."

Sophie's gaze softened as she heard his words. "Let's not forget you have made a deal with that boy. From the way I see it, that boy had already passed with flying colors. Neil, you shouldn't bother them anymore.. The kids are old enough to decide their path."

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Following Sophie's words, Alex then walked into the garden to find Hazel.

The garden in Mo's residence was very spacious. In the past, there was a lot of space for Alex and Hazel to run around. But after many years, Edith had planted many flowers and trees around the place.

Though the scenery was beautiful... but Alex had wished that the camellia bushes were not obstructing him to find Hazel.

Fortunately, it did not take him too long to find Hazel.

At this time, Hazel was sitting on the swing under that big, shady tree. The sunlight peeked through the leaves and finally landed on her face. Because of the festivity season, Hazel was wearing a light pink modern cheongsam dress with red flowers

embroidery. The swing was swaying a little bit and her long ponytails followed the movement.

If Sophie did not mention that Hazel was on a phone call with her maternal grandparents, he might have thought that Hazel was speaking to a lover because there was a breezy smile on her face.

Alex was momentarily stunned the moment he saw the scene before him. His heart was beating hard against his ribcage. It was as if everything around him had stopped and faded away. The only person he can see was Hazel.

Suddenly, he was brought back to the past where he was a fifteen years old boy.

In fact, Alex did not always know that he liked Hazel.

His mother and Auntie Edith were best friends. They would always visit each other's house and let the kids play together.

For Alex who did not have a large circle of friends, Hazel might be his first close friend of the opposite gender. Perhaps, it was because Hazel would always listen to him patiently talking about his hobby that the two of them became close.

After spending their time together, Alex thought that Hazel was a good girl and he liked spending his time with her.

The two became best friends and would talk and discuss anything.

When they were both in school, Alex was a senior who had always looked after Hazel. Though the two were not in the same class or the same year, they would still spend a lot of time together. Whenever their class ended, they would wait for each other before they went on their separate ways and this has become a habit.

The first time that Alex realized that he might have feelings for Hazel, he was fifteen years old.

That day, his mother had taken him and Ellie to Mo's residence. His sister and Hazel's siblings are around the same age and the grownups would often let them play together.

His mother and Auntie Edith were in the kitchen, preparing a meal while gossiping. The kids were playing some games in the living room. Seeing that Hazel was not around, Alex had gone out to look for her.

On that day, he had also found Hazel sitting on the swing. There was a book in her hand. She had her hair down and the wind blew gently, messing with her hair a little bit. He then watched as Hazel lifted her hand and tucked the strands of hair behind her ears.

Alex could still remember his feeling when he saw Hazel on that day. His heart was suddenly beating loudly and Alex could feel his face and ears grew hot.

He thought that the fourteen years old Hazel was very beautiful.

However, before he was able to figure out his feeling, Hazel had noticed his presence. She walked over to him and the two went back into the house where Alex had continued to tutor Hazel in the dining area.

Ever since that day, Alex has been conscious of Hazel. His eyes would always go to where she goes and he started to pay a little more attention to her. He slowly learned about her preferences.

It took him a few months to figure out his feelings.

The moment he realized that he had fallen in love with his best friend, Alex was a little excited. It took him a while before he decided to come clean about his feelings. He wanted to tell Hazel that he loved her and wanted to know whether she was feeling the same.

However, before he was able to tell Hazel anything, someone had approached him first.

That person was no other than Neil Mo, Hazel's scary uncle.

The first time he stepped into Neil's office, Alex was a little scared. The air around him was a little stifling and Alex did not know why he was called into the office.

At that time, he also wondered how did Auntie Edith end up marrying such a scary man. In his opinion, Auntie Edith was someone who always had a warm smile on her face. As her former student, Alex had never seen Auntie Edith screaming at the children. Even when she was angered at something that the children do, Auntie Edith would always talk gently.

Alex thought that meeting Hazel's uncle in the office was much scarier than the time he was called by the principal to his office.

When Neil began to speak, Alex was a little shocked.

He had always thought that he had hidden his feelings so well, but apparently, the man in front of him had seen through him.

On that day, Hazel's uncle had warned him that he was not allowed to tell Hazel what he felt.

As Hazel's guardian, Neil thought that his niece was too young to fall in love. She was so good at studying and Neil did not want her to get distracted by other things.

Most of all, because both Hazel and Alex were still young, Neil was worried that what Alex felt for Hazel was something temporary. He did not want the two of them to be in a relationship while they were still young and later, broke up once they had seen that there was so much more in life.

Although Neil was aware that he could not always protect Hazel, he did not want to see his niece got hurt. For Neil, Hazel had suffered enough as a child. He did not want her to go through another heartbreak.

Therefore, the man offered a deal to the young boy.

If Alex can wait for a few more years until he was able to support himself. When he had seen the world and still thought that he cannot let Hazel go, then Neil will not stop Alex from pursuing Hazel.

If Hazel was the first to confess, Neil will not stop them, no matter how much he disagreed for them to be in a relationship at a young age.

It was a simple deal and the fifteen years old Alex was confident that he will not change his mind about Hazel. Thus, he had agreed.

Ever since then, Alex had worked hard in his study. Years passed and Alex found that his feelings for Hazel had not faded but instead, it has only got stronger.

He had done what he promised to Neil and Alex knew that the only thing left to do was to confess to Hazel.

Alex was not sure what Hazel felt for him, but has been around Hazel for a long time and knew that she hasn't met anyone she liked.

However, he also realized that Hazel might be a little slow regarding relationship matters. Or else, how can Alex successfully swat the flies around her when they were in school?

Therefore, what Alex wanted to do now was to make Hazel fall for him. It was a mission that he cannot fail.

"Alex?"

Hearing his name, Alex finally snapped out of his trance and saw that Hazel had walked over to him with a bright smile on her face.

"When did you get here?"

Alex touched the tip of his nose and spoke, "Just now. Everyone is inside." He let out a cough. "Your grandmother wanted me to tell you to come in after you are done with your phone call."

Hazel flashed him a smile before she habitually stretched up her hands to hold his. "Come on.. Let's go inside."

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Alex was momentarily stunned when Hazel had suddenly held his hand. In the past, the two of them would always hold hands like this as they walked around. However, as they grew up, they no longer hold hands.

Now that they were back in the garden with their hands intertwining, Alex thought that they had returned to their childhood.

Alex did not say anything as Hazel continued to hold his hand. However, the smile on his face was a little transparent. Anyone who saw it would know how happy he was at the moment.

When the two entered the house, the chattering voice suddenly grew quieter.

Everyone had their attention towards their intertwining hands, each of them was trying to guess whether the two had made a progress while they were out there in the garden.

However, before their mind started to run wild, Hazel released her hands from Alex and walked over to her grandmother to deliver her maternal grandmother's New Year greetings. As if noticing that people were watching her, Hazel then looked up and coincidentally met with Lily's gaze.

"Auntie Lily, what's wrong? Why are you looking at me like that?"

From Hazel's reaction, everyone seemed to understand nothing had happened while the two of them were outside. Most of them let out a sigh of frustration, but one person seemed a little happy that the two had not made any progress.

Lily glanced at her son and smiled at Hazel. "Nothing. I just saw your cheongsam dress and thought that it is very pretty."

Hazel's smiled at the compliment. "Mmm... Auntie Edith bought this for me."

After exchanging a few words with Hazel, Lily shot her son a disappointing gaze. She had thought that after spending a long time outside with just the two of them, her son would definitely take his chance to confess.

When Alex was younger, he did not have a lot of friends. At some point, Lily was worried that her son will have a problem bringing home a daughter-in-law for her. However, once Lily was aware that Alex had feelings for Hazel, her opinion began to change. She saw how well Alex had treated Hazel and thought that perhaps her son was not that hopeless...

It turned out that her son was indeed hopeless...

He had already waited for years. When was he going to tell Hazel the truth?

Alex shot his mother a helpless look before he turned to sit on the sofa. His eyes might be watching the television, but his attention was on Hazel.

Hazel has always been good at interacting with older people. It did not take her a long time to make his parents like her.

Watching as Hazel interacted with everyone else, Alex felt a tinge of jealousy spreading. He really wanted to keep this astounding girl to his side where she would pay attention to no one but him.

As the thought came to his mind, Alex lowered his head and his hand clenched into a fist at the side. He really needed to gather up his courage again and find a way to tell her how he feels.

Even if there would be a chance where Hazel might not reciprocate his feelings, he still wanted to let her know.

The He family spent almost two hours at Mo's residence before they left. Once they arrived at home, Ethan went to his study while Ellie went to her room to rest.

Seeing that Alex had entered the house after carrying some stuff from the car, Lily waved her hand at him and asked him to follow her. Lily gestured her son to take a sit before she turned around to pour some drinks for both of them.

"Alex, why are you so slow?"

A sigh escaped him as he heard his mother's question. He could come out with a lot of reasons why his mother had wanted to talk to him privately, however, Alex was not expecting that his mother was going to ask him about Hazel.

"Didn't you see how pretty Hazel is in that dress today?" Lily continued to provoke. "What if some other guy comes over and takes her away? My son, if you don't hurry, someone is going to snatch the girl you like. I really like Hazel as my daughter-in-law."

"Mom, you don't have to worry. I know what I am going to do. I've waited for seven years for the chance to pursue Hazel. I am not going to back down easily," Alex said.

Alex was always close to his mother. Naturally, his mother knew about his deal with Hazel's uncle.

The first time Alex had mentioned the deal to his mother, Alex was a little surprised that his mother would take that scary uncle's side. He had always thought that his mother would be on his side.

His mother had told him that being in a relationship earlier might be sweet, but, once he turned to an adult, he would be more mature and have a clearer mind. Even if the two get into an argument, the two of them will know to be rational.

Alex thought about his mother's words for days and thought that his mother should be right.

Anyway, he had already promised Hazel's uncle that he would only pursue Hazel once he was qualified enough. Therefore, he can only wait.

"Mom, you know that I always liked Hazel," Alex said. "But I didn't know what Hazel think of me. Before I tell her that I liked her, I wanted to at least give her some hints so that she will be prepared." His head dropped. "I don't want to scare her. Don't worry." He lifted his head and flashed an assuring smile. "I have my plan."

Lily stared at her son and sighed helplessly, wondering when did her son turn into a foolish?

She opened her mouth to say more, but once she saw the determined look on Alex's face, Lily decided not to say anything. Since Alex already had his plan, as his mother, she could only support him.

The mother and son spoke for a while in the kitchen before Alex went back to his room.

He lay down on his bed and took out his phone. Seeing that there were a few notifications on the phone, Alex decided to check on his messages. His movement halted when he saw a message from Hazel.

"Alex, I forgot to ask. You will pick me up before we head to that reunion dinner, right?"

His lips tilted up as he thought of attending that reunion dinner with Hazel.

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"You're going out?" Neil asked when he saw Hazel walked down the stairs. A frown appeared when he saw that Hazel had put on a nice dress and wore light make-up.

"Mmm... I'm going with Alex to his classmate's reunion."

Neil was about to ask why does she want to go to Alex's reunion when his wife spoke.

"Please say hi to Megan for me," Edith said. She sensed that her husband was looking at her and explained. "Megan is one of my students and she had a good relationship with Hazel until high school. She used to come here a lot."

Neil tried to recall his niece's friends and thought of a face.

At this time, Hazel's phone chimed and a bright smile curled on her lips. "Alex is here. I better get going."

Edith nodded. "Go ahead. Don't make others wait. Have fun, Hazel." Once the door shut behind Hazel, Edith turned to her husband again. "Why are you unhappy?"

Neil heaved a sigh. "It feels as if a pig is eyeing to steal the cabbage I raised. I just don't feel good about it."

Leaning forward, Edith pinched him on both cheeks and kissed his chin. "Well, you still have another cabbage. Sooner or later, Hailey will grow up and someone will want to marry her."

His expression grew ugly at the thought that his daughter might marry someone. In the past, Neil always thought that it was good to have daughters. Girls are more adorable and sweet as compared to boys.

But now, he was starting to think that it will be better if he had boys. At least he can teach his sons to steal other people's cabbages.

"Just what are you thinking about?" Edith cocked her head and laughed.

Neil reached to touch his wife's stomach "I hope this time we'll have sons."

Edith stared at her husband helplessly. It was not hard to guess what he was thinking. "This is not something that I can decide, alright?"

Meanwhile, Alex alighted from his AUDI when he saw someone at the entrance. The corner of his lips tilted up and his throat bobbed up and down when he saw Hazel walking over to him. At this time, Hazel was wearing a dark blue skater dress with glitters on the skirt. Her hair was down with soft curls.

Alex snapped out of his trance and helped her with the door. "Hazel."

Hearing her name, Hazel paused and turned to Alex before she slid into the car. Her head tilted to a side when Alex did not speak.

"You look beautiful."

A smile bloomed on her lips. "Thank you." Hazel took a step back and gave Alex a look over. "You don't look too bad yourself. It's rare to see you dressed up formally like this." She lifted her head to meet his gaze. "It suits you."

His heart was beating erratically. Alex lowered his head and smiled shyly. "Come on. Let's get going."

Once Hazel was seated in the passenger's seat. Alex went to the driver's seat and started driving. The two of them chatted about the people who might show up to the reunion until they arrived at The Orchid, a luxury hotel under Zhang Group Worldwide.

Alex handed the car key to the valet and Hazel habitually held his arms before they walked into the building.

It did not take them a long time to find the restaurant. The voices gradually quietened down as the two of them walked in.

"Alex He!" One of the boys stood up and shouted his name.

Suddenly, the voices grew again and everyone was commenting that they have not seen him in such a long time. Some were complimenting that he had grown up to be such a handsome guy.

Once they recognized Alex, some of them who were acquaintances with Hazel began to recognize her. Almost everyone in Alex's class knew that he was very close to a junior and have seen both Alex and Hazel together in school.

Seeing that the boys wanted to chat with Alex, Hazel immediately searched for familiar faces among the girls. Her eyes brightened when she saw Megan walking over. After exchanging a few words with Alex, Hazel left his side and joined Megan.

"I haven't seen you for years!" Megan exclaimed. She gave Hazel a look over and smiled. "God! You don't look much different than the last time I see you. Still very pretty."

"I heard from Alex that you're getting married," Hazel said. "Megan, congratulations!"

A bright smile appeared on Megan's face. "Thank you. I'll give you my invitation cards later. Hazel, you definitely have to come. It will be held in summer."

"I'll try my best to be there," Hazel gave her a non-committal answer as she was unsure of her schedule. Unlike Alex and his batch who have started to enter the workforce, Hazel still had another year before she can graduate.

"Come on, I'm sure you recognized some of our friends here," Megan said as she brought Hazel to the table. Then, she started to introduce the girls. "You should remember Cindy Bai. She went to the same kindergarten with us."

Hazel flashed Cindy a polite smile.

When they were in kindergarten, Cindy had said something that made her sad. Although Cindy had apologized to her, Hazel could not forget the words she said. As they grew up, Hazel would run into Cindy a few times. However, each time, Cindy would flash a polite smile at her before she lowered her gaze and walk away.

Cindy greeted Hazel politely before she continued to chat with her friends.

Megan watched their interaction and sighed. Then, the two sat down at an empty spot and started to chat. Hazel asked Megan about her life abroad and Megan told her stories about how she and her fiance met.

"I can't believe that you are still with Alex," Megan said.

"Well, Auntie Edith and his mother are good friends. We met each other all the time," Hazel said.

Years ago, Megan and everyone else were surprised when they heard that their kindergarten teacher had married Hazel's uncle.

Megan's expression changed a little bit. "That is not what I meant."

Hazel cocked her head.

"Aren't you and Alex... a couple?"

Hazel stared at her friend with her eyes wide. "Megan... we are not like that." She grew flustered. "Alex and I... we're very good friends."

Megan raised a brow. She glanced at where the boys were gathered and caught the way Alex was looking at Hazel when he thought that no one was looking. Then, she looked at Hazel again and her lips tilted into a helpless smile.

It looked like she had stumbled into a secret.

Megan thought that the way Alex was looking at Hazel was the same as the way her fiancé was looking at her. It was full of love and affection. It was obvious that Alex did not think of Hazel as mere good friends.

Looking at Hazel's clueless face, Megan decided not to say anything.

Chapter 345 - A Chance To Pursue

Once the waiter walked in and served the food, everyone started to find a seat and they all ate and chatted merrily together. As Alex's plus one, naturally, Hazel was assigned to sit beside him.

As the others reminiscent about their teenage years, Hazel sat quietly as she continued to listen.

Just then, one of the boys suggested for them to make a weekend trip to somewhere near. It has been a long time that they had time to gather. There were a few of them who lived abroad and rarely returned to the country. Since most of them were still living in L City, those who had time decided to join in the fun.

"Hazel, join us," Megan said. "It's fine. Everyone here knows you. Besides, most of the girls won't be joining this trip. We needed more girls to join." She held on to Hazel's arms and blinked. "You can share a room with me."

Hazel glanced at everyone and hesitated. She was not part of their classmates and Hazel was a little embarrassed to crash in and join them.

"Come on, it was not easy for us to get together," Megan said. "In a few months, I'm getting married. I'm not sure when will I return to L City and meet everyone again."

The others heard Megan's words and started to convince Hazel to come along. Her heart wavered as Megan reasoned that it would be easier for them to distribute the room among the girls. There were odd numbers of girls. If Hazel chose to come along, then, the girls can share two people per room.

Hazel tugged at Alex's shirt and whispered, "Are you going?"

Alex nodded. "Tyler is planning to further his study abroad. Later, it will be hard to see him." Seeing the hesitant expression on her face, Alex flashed her an assuring smile. "You should come along with us. Everyone else would not mind. Besides... some of them are going to bring their partner to join this trip. You won't feel awkward."

Hazel pondered over Alex's words and agreed. It has been a long time since she hung around with Megan. Since everyone did not mind her presence, Hazel decided to join them.

The party continued and everyone began to discuss their trip. Someone mentioned that they wanted to see the sea, and another had suggested Z Town. These days, Z Town was getting popular as a tourism spot. Their beaches were beautiful and more hotels were developed.

As Hazel often went to visit Z Town and knew a few hidden gems in the town, the others started to ask for her recommendations. One of the boys volunteered to deal with the hotel bookings and everyone made a plan for what they wanted to do during this trip.

The reunion party ended after dinner and some of them began to make plans to continue the night and visited KTV.

Knowing that he still has to make a good impression on Hazel's uncle, Alex decided not to join in the fun. After parting with the others, Alex drove Hazel back to her house.

The two of them chatted about the party and the upcoming trip.

"What did you and Megan talk about?" Alex asked. He glanced at Hazel and focused on the road.

"Not much. She told me about her life abroad. Megan said I should come over and look for her in C Country. Then, she'll take me around to visit some scenic spots," Hazel said. "I've never been to C Country. Maybe I'll take her offer once I graduated."

"That sounded like a good plan." Alex flashed a smile.

Hazel recalled her conversation with Megan earlier and suddenly turned her body sideways so that she can look at Alex properly.

"What are you doing?" Alex laughed when he noticed that Hazel has been staring at him strangely. "Why are you looking at me like that? Is there something on my face?"

"There's nothing in your face." Hazel giggled. "Don't worry. Just concentrate on your driving."

"How can I concentrate when you were staring at me like that?"

Hazel swiftly retracted her gaze from him. "I was just thinking about what Megan had said to me earlier."

Alex raised a brow. "What did she tell you?"

"Megan seemed to think that we're a couple."

His heart was beating erratically. The smile on his face turned stiff and Alex tightened his grip on the steering wheel so that he can stay sober and focus on his driving.

Fortunately, he was able to control his feelings well, or else, the car might sway elsewhere and they might get into an accident.

The words were just too sudden and Alex was still shocked.

He did not think that Megan would discuss something like that with Hazel. Other than his family members, Alex was sure that no one knew that he had a crush on Hazel.

Hazel laughed. "You think this is amusing as well, don't you?"

Alex glanced at the girl beside him and forced a smile.

"Don't worry... I have clarified to Megan that we were just friends," Hazel said. "I don't know why Megan would think that we are dating."

At this time, the phone in Hazel's hand started to ring. Seeing that it was a call from her Auntie Edith, Hazel quickly answered the call and explained that she was on her way home.

Meanwhile, a deep frown appeared on Alex's face as he thought about the words that Hazel had told him.

After a few minutes, Alex finally pulled over in front of the residence.

Before Hazel could alight from the car, Alex tugged at her hands lightly, and Hazel turned to him with a puzzled look on her face. "Alex? What's wrong?"

"Hazel... What do you think of me?"

Hazel swallowed when she saw the serious look on Alex's face. Suddenly, Hazel had a feeling that something was a little strange with Alex. "What do you mean?"

"The two of us... can't we be more than just friends?"

Her lips parted as she wanted to say something, but nothing came out.

"Hazel Mo, I love you." His eyes turn gentle as he spoke those words. "I want to be more than just friends with you."

Her eyes widened. Hazel thought that she might have misheard things. "But Alex... I don't think—"

"I know that you might not feel the same way as I do," Alex spoke before Hazel finished. His hands balled into fists and Alex could feel his palms were full of sweats. "But before you say anything... before you reject me, can you give me a chance to pursue you? Three months. No. One month. In this one month, I will do my best to pursue you. By

the end of it, you can give me your answer. If you still think that you don't have that kind of feelings for me, then, I will accept your decision."

There was a long silence between them. Under Alex's scorching gaze, Hazel found that she was unable to reject him.. "I-I will think about it."

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The house was dark when Alex arrived. He walked around in the dark and finally sat down when he arrived in the living room. Alex threw his keys on the coffee table and leaned back on the sofa.

His hand touched his chest and Alex could feel his heart was still beating rapidly.

When he recalled that moment again, Alex felt a little feverish. His face turned red and his body felt hot everywhere. The feeling was as if he was a little drunk.

Alex was still in disbelief at what had happened. He was not planning to tell Hazel what he felt for her in such a situation. However, once Alex heard how Hazel had insisted to Megan that they were nothing but friends, Alex was suddenly had a sense of crisis.

If Hazel continued to think that they were nothing more than friends and finally settled that she could not see him more than a friend, then, what was he supposed to do?

He had liked Hazel for years and he could not imagine not having her by his side. Just imagining that there will be another man who will stay by her side would make his heart hurt.

In the end, he decided to say it. In an impulse, Alex had confessed to her.

Alex could not remember exactly what he had said, but he knew that he had told her that he loved her and that he wanted to be given a chance to pursue her.

Fortunately for him, Hazel did not reject him straight away. Hazel had said that she was going to think about it. It was all that he needed to hear at the moment.

As long as he had a speck of hope, Alex thought that he would be satisfied.

...

Meanwhile...

Someone was unable to sleep well. Hazel Mo walked down the stairs with her bloodshot eyes and dark ring under her eyes. Last night, Hazel was unable to sleep no matter how much she tried to.

Every time she closed her eyes, Hazel would recall the way Alex had looked at her. That scorching gaze imprinted in her mind and the words he said repeated in her head again and again. She turned to one side and then, Alex would appear again.

Hazel was caught off her guard. She had never thought that Alex would want to be more than friends with her. A lot of thoughts went through her mind. Hazel began to wonder when was it that Alex started to like her?

The sunrise up, but Hazel was unable to sleep a wink.

In the end, she decided to leave her bed and walk around. Maybe once she was a little tired, she would be able to sleep.

Hazel walked into the dining area and found her Auntie Edith sitting around as she wrote something in her book.

Sensing a movement, Edith lifted her head and smiled when she saw Hazel. "Good morning, Hazel."

"Good morning, Auntie Edith." Hazel forced a smile. She looked around and noticed that the surroundings were a little quiet. "Where is everyone?"

"Your uncle went to the office to look at a few documents. Hayden and Hailey went to a friend's house. Grandpa is upstairs taking a nap," Edith said. She stood up and turned to the kitchen. "Are you hungry? I made some dumpling soup earlier. I'll go and reheat them for you."

Hazel slid into a seat without saying anything. She laid her head on the table and stared into space. Her mind was a little messy.

Suddenly, Hazel felt a warm hand on her forehead. She snapped out of her trance and saw that her Auntie Edith was looking at her with concern.

"Hazel, are you alright?" A deep frown appeared on her face. "You don't look too good. Should I call the doctor to look at you?"

Hazel sat up straight. Her gaze shifted to the hot bowl of dumpling soup. "It's fine. I just didn't have a good sleep."

Edith heaved a sigh. Hearing that it was nothing serious, Edith was relieved. She would always worry whenever the kids were feeling unwell. "I'll make you some tea. It will help you to sleep well."

Before Edith could leave for the kitchen, Hazel had tugged at her hand to stop her from leaving. Edith turned and looked at Hazel with puzzlement.

"Auntie Edith, can I talk to you?"

Hearing her tone, Edith began to worry again. "What's wrong?"

Hazel forced a smile. "It was nothing serious. Just that, I need your opinion on something."

Edith smiled. She sat down next to Hazel and patted her on the hand. "You know that you can always talk to me about anything. Tell me. What is it that has been bothering you until you were unable to sleep well."

Hazel was a little embarrassed upon hearing her words. She was the one who wanted to talk, but now that the two were sitting, Hazel found that she was unable to explain what was bothering her.

Edith did not urge Hazel to speak and instead waited until she was ready to speak. Judging from the way Hazel had acted, Edith could sense that Hazel was troubled with this matter.

"Auntie Edith..."

"Hmm?"

Hazel lowered her head, not daring to meet with her auntie's gaze. "Last night, Alex said that he wanted to be more than friends. He said he liked me."

Edith was a little surprised that Alex had confessed to Hazel about his feelings. However, the feeling disappeared quickly as she has been expecting this day to come.

"Auntie Edith... you don't seem surprised?"

Edith smiled and decided to be honest. "I am not surprised."

"You... know? That Alex towards me..." Hazel frowned. "Why don't you tell me?"

"This was a matter of the two of you. How can I meddle in and say anything? If Alex liked you, you should hear it from him and not from someone else."

"At least I can be a little more prepared..." Hazel muttered slowly. Then, she lowered her head again.

"Is this what has been bothering you?" Edith said. A light smile appeared on her lips. Edith was not expecting that it was a love and relationship matter that made Hazel unable to sleep well.

It was the first time that something like this happened to Hazel.

Hazel nodded. Then, she started to tell Edith everything that Alex had said to him last night. "Auntie Edith, what do you think I should do?"

"What do you want to hear from me? I can give you some advice, but Hazel, I cannot help you to make your decision." Edith said. "Whether or not you wanted to give Alex a chance... it was all up to you. However.... I think you know what your answer is in your heart."

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Neil walked into the room and his steps halted when he saw his wife walked out of the bathroom. Her cheek was slightly reddened and the tip of her hair was a little wet. He closed the door behind him and walked over to her slowly. Seeing that Edith had reached for the hairdryer, Neil gestured her to sit down and helped her to dry her hair.

Once he was done, Neil put the hairdryer on the table and bent to kiss a spot on her nape. Edith coiled as she was feeling ticklish then, she turned around and pecked at his nose.

"What are you doing?"

"Baby... you smell nice."

"There is still a month before the first trimester ended," Edith reminded him.

"I know." Neil lifted her off the chair and placed her on top of her laps. Holding her tightly, Neil then buried his nose in her nape. Smelling the familiar scent, his heart became a little calmer.

"Darling..."

"Hmm?"

"Do you want me to help you?"

His movement paused. Neil bit at her ears as if punishing her. "Don't tempt me. Just stay like this for a while. I'll be fine."

Seeing the dark look on his face, Edith began to laugh happily. The husband and wife continued to stay in each other's embrace while enjoying the silence.

After a while, Neil broke the silence. "Why do I feel like there is something wrong with Hazel? Just now, I found her sitting in the library with her mind elsewhere. I had to call her a few times before she can respond. This is not the first time this had happened. Recently, she's been staring into space a lot."

"Hazel is fine. It's just that she has been a lot of thinking."

"Thinking about what?"

"Don't ask. When she's ready to tell, she will speak to you."

Neil raised a brow. "You know what is in her mind, don't you?"

Edith replied with a smile and pecked at his chin. "I know. But I promised Hazel that I won't speak about it to anyone."

...

Hazel continued to stay in the library and stared into space after her uncle had left.

There was a book in her hand, but she has been stuck on the same page for more than an hour. No matter how many times she tried to read her book, Hazel found that she could not get past the first sentences.

Her mind was too preoccupied with some matter, or rather, Alex's confession.

Auntie Edith said that she should know the answer in her heart, but Hazel was still a little confused.

She liked Alex as a friend and found that he was someone that she can be comfortable with. Among her friends, Alex was the person that she trusted the most. She can tell him anything without worrying that he will judge her.

However, Hazel was not sure if she wanted to be more than a friend with him. Being in a romantic relationship could change a lot of things for them.

Whenever they quarreled as friends, they could always apologize and then, returned to being friends. However, what would happen they were in a relationship? If they broke up, then, she would lose Alex as her friend as well.

She really did not want to lose him as a friend. Hazel wanted to continue being friends with Alex, but her feelings were telling her that the answer will only make her lose him as a friend. Alex would be too embarrassed that he will start to avoid her, wouldn't he?

Suddenly, Hazel was a little angry that Alex had told her those things. If he did not say anything, then she can continue being by his side without feeling awkward...

Hazel put down the book in her hand and heaved a long sigh. She picked up her phone to look at the time and was surprised to see that it was already late. Just how long has she been sitting in the library?

The phone on her hand vibrated and Hazel noticed that her roommates' group was actively chatting about their New Year. There was around one week left until their vacation ended but everyone was a little sad that they will have to return to the university. Everyone knew what will be waiting for them as soon as they returned—lots of tests and assignments. Just thinking about them would make them feel dizzy. They were enjoying the festivity and good food a little too much and were reluctant about returning.

Seeing that Hazel had shown up in the group, the girls started to ask her about her vacation.

Hazel was typing something when a thought came to her mind. After a brief hesitation, Hazel then tapped the send button.

The chat group became quiet for a long time that Hazel began to think that there was something wrong with her internet connection.

"Hazel Mo! Did someone confess to you again? Who is it?" Michelle asked.

"Why do I feel that this time, it was a little different?" Eira asked.

"That's right. Hazel has been confessed to many times. When did she ever want to discuss it with us? The Hazel Mo we know would ruthlessly reject that person straight away," Crystal typed.

Hazel stared at the incoming messages speechlessly.

What do they mean many times? There were perhaps one or two of them.

"Honey, there were more than one or two. I, as your classmate, had watched several boys who wanted to get close to you. However, you treated them as an invisible man," Crystal typed.

Hazel cocked her head. When did she treat anyone as an invisible man? Why can't she remember any of this?

"Let's not talk about this. I'm more curious about this new boy. Hazel Mo, tell us! Which boy confessed to you? Which faculty did he come from?" Eira asked.

Hazel hesitated as her friends continued to urge her. Then, she began to tell them about what happened with Alex.

"Your childhood friend? It was that guy from that time, wasn't it?" Crystal asked.

"That handsome guy?" Michelle quipped.

"He's actually looked better face to face," Crystal said and suddenly, the others were complaining that they were not around when Alex had shown up to pick her up.

"It was not very hard to figure out whether you're attracted to this person. Let me give you a few tests," Michelle said. "Do you trust him? Are you really comfortable being around him?"

It didn't take her a long time to answer this question. Hazel was really comfortable being around Alex. She can tell him anything and would trust him with anything he said.

"Do you often find yourself thinking about him?" Michelle asked again.

At this time, of course, she often found herself thinking about Alex. After all, she was still trying to figure out her feelings.

"That's not what I meant. Before he confessed to you, do you often think about him?"

Hazel thought about it again. She would constantly worried about him and think about him a lot. What was wrong with thinking about her best friend?

"Then... how would it make you feel if you see him being in a relationship with another girl?"

Alex has never been in a relationship with another girl.

Michelle blew a sigh. "Just imagine. When he is in a relationship with another person, then you would not be the first person he would look for whenever something happened. A happy occasion, or a sad occasion, he would share everything with another person first."

Hazel tried to imagine this scene and suddenly felt as if something stabbing at her heart. She could not bear to imagine that Alex would do everything without her.

But does this really meant that she liked him?

"Maybe you do like him a little bit subconsciously," Crystal said. "If you are still in doubt, then how about giving him a chance? They say, if you don't take a chance, you will never know. Perhaps, the two of you are meant to be together."

"That's right.. Even if this relationship did not work out, at least you would not regret that you have given it a try."

Chapter 348 - Give You A Chance

Just like Hazel, there was someone else who was unable to sleep in the past few days.

The last time Alex met with Hazel was the night he had sent her home. The two separated awkwardly because of his sudden confession. On the next day, Alex had texted Hazel as usual but the girl had told him that she needed some time alone to think.

To find out news about Hazel, he had to pester his mother and find out about Hazel's mood.

However, his not-so-cute sister then showed up and teased him about his misfortunes. Ellie then gloated that Hazel would still reply to her text.

Really. Why can't his sister be as cute as Hazel? Alex thought that her little sister has stopped being so adorable after she learned how to talk.

He was a little unhappy with their current situation, however, a large part of him was relieved that he had told her the thing that he wanted to say to her for the past few years.

But... after not speaking or texting Hazel for a few days, Alex was starting to get worried. What if this situation continued for a long time? What if they both ended up not speaking to each other forever?

It was slowly driving him insane.

For a few days, Alex has been depressed that he has not spoken to Hazel.

He can only count days until the field trip with his classmates.

Hazel had told Megan that she will come and join the class for a trip and he was sure that Hazel will not back down once she had made a promise. It seemed that he can only see her again in a few days.

After rolling around for a while, Alex finally got off the bed.

If it was up to him, Alex thought that he would really like to continue to roll around and not leave the bed. He was not in any mood to do anything, but Alex had promised his father that he will show up at the company and help him to look at a few documents.

After having his shower, Alex walked into the kitchen to find his mother.

His steps halted when he heard a familiar voice coming from the kitchen. Suddenly, Alex found that he could no longer take another step forward. He was afraid that once he walked in to find that the space was empty, he was going to be disappointed.

Alex continued to stay behind the wall as he continued to listen to the voice of his mother and Hazel discussing something about the new boutique. Even if this was only a dream, Alex wanted to continue and listen to her voice.

"What are you doing?"

A voice snapped him out of his trance and Alex found that his sister, Ellie, was beside him.

"Brother, are you eavesdropping on other's conversation?" Ellie shot him a disapproving look.

Alex stretched his hand and pinched the girl on her cheek. Swiftly, Ellie swatted his hand and took a step back. "It hurts! What are you doing?" Her expression darkened.

Hazel's laughing voice could still be heard coming from the kitchen. Alex lifted his hand and studied it. He could feel Ellie's warm cheek as he pinched them earlier. "So this is not a dream."

"Mom!" Ellie ran into the kitchen and pointed at her brother who was standing outside. "Big brother is bullying me!"

Suddenly, Alex found that every pair of eyes in the room turned to him as Ellie continued to complain to their mother about his action earlier. He had only given his sister a light pinch, but it still left a redness on her face.

His gaze met with Hazel's and Alex could see the hint of laughter in her expression. His throat bobbed and his heart started to beat a little faster.

Alex was expecting Hazel to avoid him when they met again, therefore, he was relieved to see Hazel smiling back at him with the same. The familiar smile on her face immediately warmed his heart.

At this time, Alex had this feeling as if whatever they were back to the way they were before.

"I came here to deliver something from Auntie Edith," Hazel said, then, she shifted her gaze towards the box on the top of the kitchen counter.

Lily watched their little exchange and her lips curled up into a scheming smile. These past few days, Lily and Edith have been worrying about the two kids.

Now that Hazel had voluntarily shown up at her house, Lily knew that Hazel had made up her mind about Alex. However, the two of them were acting awkwardly and Lily thought that if she did not give them a push, the two will continue to be in this awkward position for a long time.

"Alex, since you're going out, why don't you drop Hazel back at her house?" Lily said. She looked into Alex's eyes and flashed him a few hints. She had already given them a chance to reconcile. If her son was smart, she should not waste the opportunity she had created.

"You did not drive over?" Alex asked.

"It was the driver who sent her here," Lily said.

"The driver dropped me on his way to send Hayden to his friend's house," Hazel said. "He'll come and pick me up on his way back."

Lily watched their exchange and was amused to see her son turned shy. His face turned slightly red and he was a little timid to look at Hazel. If only Hazel was not around, Lily would surely pull out her phone and snapped a few pictures of Alex.

"If you don't mind, I can give you a lift," Alex said.

"Right. Go ahead. It will take a while before the driver going to return and pick you up," Lily said. "It would be better to let Alex send you home."

Hazel pursed her lips as she looked at Lily, "Auntie Lily, are you kicking me out?"

"Of course not." Lily held on to the girl's hand. "You're always welcome here. I was just worried that you would be bored staying with me."

The corner of her lips twitched. Hazel was aware of what Alex's mom was trying to do. However, if she continued to insist to stay with her, then her purpose of coming over to the He's Residence would be wasted just like that.

In the end, Hazel turned to Alex. "Alright. I'll take your offer."

His eyes brightened up and Hazel was surprised how her answer could cause his mood to change instantly.

After exchanging a few more words with Alex's mother, Hazel finally trailed after Alex to his AUDI. The two of them sat in the vehicle in silence as Alex drive her home. Alex was concentrating on his driving while Hazel kept pulling at her fingers.

They finally reached their destination, but the two of them were keeping mum.

Seeing that Hazel had no intention to speak, Alex let out a breath of frustration. He then unlocked the car, expecting Hazel to alight.

"I've given it a thought."

His heartbeat accelerated when he heard her voice.

"I still haven't figure out what I feel about you."

His heart dropped upon hearing this sentence. At this time, Alex began to prepare himself to get his heart broken.

"However, I am willing to give you a chance."

Something bloomed in his heart again. Alex felt as if he was riding a rollercoaster with the constant change of mood. Alex continued to stare at Hazel as if he could not believe what he was hearing.

"I will give you one month to convince me why I should date you." Hazel felt her face reddened as she spoke.. "If you can convince me, then I will agree to date you."