

A Lifetime With You –

Chapter 381 - 412

Chapter 381 - The Gossips Accelerated -

Once they arrived at the restaurant, Alex helped to pull a chair and the two ordered several choices of breakfast. Their food arrived and Hazel heard her stomach growled. After sampling the dumpling soup, Hazel had to admit that the food in the restaurant was indeed tasted good.

"Last time, you mentioned that as your boyfriend, I should treat your friends to a meal," Alex said. "Have you decide on the date yet?"

Hazel thought about her roommates' discussion a while ago. "Un. Will you be free next Wednesday?"

"I'm free." He did not have to check on his schedule to know that he would be free for Hazel. Anyway, his main purpose to stay in B City was to accompany Hazel.

"Then, I will tell the girls to get ready and pick a place to have a meal."

Alex smiled before he helped to pick up a steamed bun and placed it on Hazel's plate.

Unbeknownst to them, someone from Hazel's class saw them together and had snapped a few pictures of the couple together.

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After her class ended, Hazel went to find her professor in his office. She spent almost half an hour discussing her assignment and finally looked up with a smile on her face when she finally figured out what she was going to do next. Just as Hazel was about to pick up her books and leave, the professor called her name and Hazel stopped in her tracks.

"Professor Jiang, what's the matter?" Hazel asked. She studied the old man's face and saw the hesitation on his face.

The Professor let out a dry cough before he looked at Hazel again. "Nothing. It was just that... I heard a few students discussing some rumors previously."

Hazel frowned and wondered what was the Professor trying to tell her. "What rumor?"

A heavy sigh escaped him. "Recently, there were rumors that said that you are dating others for money. Are you... on short of money?"

Her expression turned darker. Hazel had not thought that the people in the school gossip forum would be talking about her in the open to the point that even her Professor would hear about it. "Professor Jiang, is that what you thought of me?"

"Of course not." The Professor's expression turned serious. "Hazel, you are a good student who is very consistent in your study. I am only mentioning this because I am worried about you. Whoever you choose to date is your own personal matter. However, I just hope that this matter will not be affecting your studies. This is your final year after all."

Hearing his explanation, Hazel began to calm down. She was afraid that her Professor would misunderstand her after hearing those rumors. "Professor Jiang, don't worry. There are reasons why rumors are called rumors. I am indeed in a relationship, but it was not as what the others said and I am not going to jeopardize my future because of this. I know that my studies are my top priorities."

Professor Jiang heaved a breath of relief as he listened to Hazel's explanation of her situation. "If that's the case, then don't worry. I will ask the school to investigate this for you and hopefully, they can stop the rumors from spreading around. Since this is clearly a libel, I will ask someone to investigate the matter and bring that person who slandered you to authorities."

Hazel flashed him a grateful smile. "Thank you, Professor Jiang."

After she left the office, Hazel took out her phone and began to check on that forum again. It seemed that there were thousands of more posts since the last time she had visited the forum.

Hazel went through a few of those posts and laughed. In the recent posting, there were pictures of her alighting from Alex's AUDI and pictures of her in a fancy restaurant with Alex a few days ago. Her face was clearly shown, but Alex's face was pixelated. Then, the poster had claimed that she was dating someone way older than her because she needed money.

Under the posts, the number of people who wanted to slander her was more than those who wanted to defend her.

Then... someone dared to say that the only reason she befriended Eira was because of money. One part of the reason that Eira did not want to stay in the dorm was that she wanted to avoid Hazel as she was tired of being used.

Her expression darkened when Hazel saw that the poster had even dragged her friends into this matter.

After thinking about it for a while, Hazel checked at the time and decided to find her Eira. At this time, she was sure that Eira should be at the basketball court with her team.

When she arrived at the basketball court, Hazel saw that both Crystal and Michelle were seated at their usual spot. The two of them seemed to be in a deep discussion that they did not even notice her presence. Hazel walked closer and saw that her roommates were browsing through the forum. Noticing that the two were posting on the forum to defend her, Hazel felt her heart warmed.

Crystal was the first to look up. She noticed a shadow looming and was surprised to see that Hazel was standing behind her. She poked at Michelle on her waist and soon, the two girls were staring at Hazel with their eyes widened in surprise.

"Hazel... When did you get here?" Michelle asked.

Hazel glanced at the phone in their hands and a soft sigh escaped her. "You don't have to post anything under that rumors."

Both Michelle and Crystal hid their phone behind their back at the same time. However, Hazel had already seen what they were doing. Knowing that it was useless to hide things from Hazel, the two decided not to hide again.

"What are you going to do about this?" Michelle asked.

"Hazel, you cannot let those people go," Crystal said. "The last time, we decided to ignore this matter and thought that sooner or later, they were going to stop. But look at it now. This matter is getting worst. The gossips have accelerated to this point."

Hazel lowered her head. She could not think of anyone that she had offended. She could not understand why would people wanted to harm her like this.

"I talked to Professor Jiang earlier. He said that he will help me to look into this."

At this time, Eira walked over to the girls as her team was taking a break from practice. Seeing that her roommates were discussing something with a serious look on their faces, Eira had wanted to surprise them. Her gaze stopped at Crystal's phone screen and was surprised at what she had seen.

"What the?" Eira grabbed the phone in Crystal's hand and started to go through the forum.. Her expression changed a few seconds later and a cursing word escaped her.

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Because of this rumor, Hazel and her roommates gathered as they thought of a way to suppress this rumor.

Although Hazel did not pay too much attention to this rumor, she is, after all, a girl. Michelle and Crystal both agreed that such a rumor could hurt her in the future.

While Michelle and Crystal were looking at the computer and contacting the people who would want to help, Eira pulled Hazel at the side.

Because of this rumor, she had decided to return to the dormitory and spend her night there later.

"Those people are too much! Why don't you just tell them about your parents?" Eira asked in a low voice. However, if one listened carefully, they would be able to detect the anger in her voice.

The original poster had made up a story that Hazel was an orphan who was in need of money. This was why she wanted to date someone with money.

"I'm sure that once everyone knows that you are the heiress of MH Group, they would not dare to speak any of this nonsense," Eira continued.

Hazel rubbed at her neck, feeling a little tired after looking at the messages that were slandering her. "I know. I guess that was the only way." She looked at Eira and flashed her an apologetic smile. "I'm sorry. I even get you implicated in my matter."

"Why are you apologizing? They didn't hurt me. The person who was hurt most in this incident is you."

Hazel heaved a sigh. She still couldn't understand who would be that free to spread such a rumor about her. Rather than cleaning up the rumor, Hazel was more interested in the people who were editing and spreading those photos.

According to both Michelle and Crystal, the original posters had used a fake account to slander her.

They can always suppress such rumors and Hazel could always show the proof that she was not such a woman. However, what Hazel wanted the most was for the person who was responsible for such action to face the consequences of his or her activity.

Hazel thought that it would not be fair for that person to get away just like that. Next time, this person might find a way to harm her again.

"It's not impossible if you wanted to investigate the people who were posting those rumors," Eira said. "I can ask my dad to help me. He knows people who can look into this stuff."

Crystal looked up from the computer screen and turned around to look at her roommates. "I'm hungry. It should be dinner time in a while. What do you girls want to eat? Should we order something?"

"Chicken wings!" Eira answered without hesitation.

Then, the girls began to discuss their dinner.

At this time, Hazel's phone started to ring. She looked at the caller ID and her lips curled into a smile upon seeing Alex's name. Hazel walked over to the balcony, pressed the phone to her ear, and heard Alex's voice.

"What are you up to? Have you eaten your dinner yet?"

"Not yet." Hazel glanced at her roommates who were in the middle of discussing their meal.

"Are you still busy studying? How about I bring you dinner instead? What would you like to eat?"

Hearing his voice, Hazel felt her mood lightened up. The unpleasant feeling she had from earlier after reading those posts in the forum gradually disappeared.

"Are you sure you want to bring me dinner?" Hazel asked. "I am discussing with my friends. If you want to bring me dinner, you will have to bring for my friends too."

"Not a problem. Just tell me what they wanted to eat. I'll deliver them afterward."

Hazel let out a giggle upon hearing his words. Her gaze fell on the computer screen a few distances from her and a frown appeared on her face. "Alex?"

"Hmm?"

"Actually, I don't feel good."

"What's wrong?"

Hazel hesitated for a while. Then, she lowered her gaze and spoke. "Someone bullied me."

The hand that was holding the documents halted and there was a deep frown on his face as Alex continued to listen to the details.

An hour later, Hazel sat in the student's area while watching the man in front of her, tapping something on the computer. Hazel cupped her cheeks with both hands and propped her elbow on the table as she continued to look at him. A smile curled on her

lips when she saw the serious look on his face. Hazel thought that Alex looked exceptionally handsome at the moment.

When Hazel told Alex about her situation, Alex had offered to help her and find the person who was responsible for posting such rumors.

Someone was slandering his girlfriend. As the boyfriend, Alex could not just stand there and do nothing.

Fortunately, Alex was someone who knows his ways around the computer. After all, the He's family has been in the computer and technology industries for years. As someone who often helped his father at the company, Alex had learned a few things from his father as well.

It did not take Alex a long time before he finally stopped working on the computer. He read the details on the computer and turned to Hazel again. "It's all done."

Hazel raised a brow. "That fast?"

"Hmm... It wasn't too difficult to find the original poster," Alex said. "Perhaps, she was not expecting that anyone would be able to find her."

"Who is it?"

Alex turned the computer to face her. "Vivian Xia."

The frown on Hazel's face deepened. "I don't know any Vivian Xia." She grabbed her phone and gave Crystal a call.

"How is it? Did you figure out anything?" Crystal asked the moment she picked up the phone call.

"Crystal, do you know Vivian Xia?"

Crystal turned to Michelle and the two had a brief discussion.

"Hazel." It was Michelle who spoke at this time. "I heard the last time, Vivian tried to chat up with your boyfriend when he was waiting for you downstairs. Previously, I heard that she was a little dissatisfied that you had stopped her from chatting with your boyfriend." Michelle let out a dry cough. "I heard from others that Vivian has been spreading words that Alex showed his interest in her until you showed up."

Hazel was a little stunned when she heard Michelle's report.

Just based on that, the girl wanted to smear her reputation and dared to make up such stories about her? How stupid!

Alex looked at his girlfriend's expression and raised a brow. "What are you going to do with the evidence?"

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A few days later, the school gossip forum exploded when Hazel finally came forward to clarify her family background. Everyone was shocked! No one expected that Hazel would be the heiress of MH Group that was famous in L City.

Hazel was someone from a wealthy family. There was no reason for her to find another rich man to support her life!

From the beginning, Hazel had mentioned that her parents had both passed away. Perhaps, it was because of that that everyone around her had not paid too much attention to her background.

It has been years since Hazel's parents passed away and none of them would remember anything that happened a long time ago. No one expected that Adam Mo and Claire Fan to be her parents.

Of course, some people had refused to believe in that story and thought that Hazel was bluffing. However, Eira then stepped out and verified the story. Zhang's family and Mo's family have been friends for years and had a few project collaborations. Eira had no reason to lie.

Once the bystanders read the story about Hazel's childhood, everyone started to feel sympathize with her.

How old was Hazel when her parents passed away in that tragedy? She was very young! They could not imagine what it would feel to suddenly lose both parents at the same time. From a young age, Hazel had lost the people she could depend on.

It was not easy for Hazel to grow up to be the person she was now.

The students began to change their opinion on Hazel and a few of Hazel's classmates spoke up for her. Although Hazel was from a wealthy family, she was always humble and never showed off. She had good upbringings and her classmates had a good impression of Hazel.

More positive stories about Hazel came out and the students started to call out the original posters for posting such disgusting news.

A day later, the school received another shocking news. A student named Vivian Xia was exposed to the original posters that had slandered Hazel.

Vivian was quick to deny the accusation. However, a lawyer from a reputable firm personally showed up and notified her that Hazel had filed a lawsuit against her for slandering! This incident happened in the cafeteria during lunch hour where there were too many students around.

No matter how Vivian wanted to hide, she could not do so. Some of the students had pulled out their phones and recorded this situation. In just a few minutes, everyone in the university, including the professors and staff were talking about this matter.

Vivian began to shout that she was set up and that she had nothing to do with this incident. However, someone had posted the evidence on the forum that pointed to Vivian as the person who spread such dirty gossip.

The students were once again in shock. Initially, they were still wondering if the lawyer had found the wrong person, but with the evidence, no one wanted to say anything.

No one would guess that a demure person such as Vivian would do such a thing. Both Vivian and Hazel had no previous grievance. To think that Vivian would pull such a stunt because of a man she barely knew... The students began to look down on Vivian.

Some people who were not on good terms with Vivian began to expose her lifestyle and scandal. It was shocking to see that Vivian was not as demure as they had thought. It was clear that the person who wanted to date for money was not Hazel.

Even if the university wanted to stop the students from talking, this matter was already bought to the police's attention. Moreover, with Zhang's family watching over the situation, the university could only let Vivian defend herself.

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In one of the famous restaurants in B City, four women and one man sat around the table.

Hazel watched as her friends started to eat the food on the table and nibbled at her food softly. A while later, a spoonful of crab meat appeared on her bowl. Hazel looked up and saw that Alex was looking at her with a smile on his place.

"Eat more," Alex said.

"Oh." Hazel nodded. She clipped the crab meat with her chopstick and put them into her mouth. Soon, the sweet and fresh taste of the crab meat filled her mouth.

"Brother-in-law, seeing the way you treated Hazel makes me feel relieved. It's good that Hazel is happy with you."

Hazel began to choke on her food. She grabbed the drinking water on the table and took a few mouthfuls to calm down. Then, she stared at Eira with a shocked expression. "What brother-in-law?" Her voice was a whisper.

Eira Zhang, can you speak properly?

Contrary to Hazel's reaction, there was a wide smile on Alex's face.

Eira saw the shy look on Hazel's face and decided to tease her further. "Hazel, we are sisters. Naturally, we should call your man as our brother-in-law."

Hazel felt heat crept to her face. First, brother-in-law, and then... her man? Hazel thought that she could not get used to this.

"That's true." Michelle nodded. "I heard that the two of you have been together for years. Sooner or later, you will be married. It's not too early to call him as our brother-in-law."

Hazel turned to Michelle speechlessly.

She might know Alex for years, but the two of them only got together recently, alright!

"Brother-in-law, thank you for your treat tonight," Crystal decided to join in the fun.

Alex stretched his hand to Hazel and gave her a gentle squeeze. Then, he looked at her roommates again and smiled. "Thank you for looking after Hazel the past few years. If you need any help, please don't hesitate to find me."

Seeing that Hazel's relationship with her friends was good, Alex was at ease. He had watched the way her friends had stood up to protect his Hazel when someone wanted to bully her and he began to have good impressions on Hazel's roommates.

The group began to chat amiably as they eat. By the time their meal ended, Hazel's face was red as she had to listen to her friends' teasing.

Alex sent the girls to the dormitory and the girls quickly ran away to escape after thanking Alex for his treat, leaving the lovers behind.

Hazel looked at her roommates retreating and pouted. She turned to Alex and spoke, "Alex, I wanted to file a complaint."

"What's wrong?"

"You joined the girls and bullied me!"

Alex laughed when he heard her words. "Then, what do you want me to do? How do you plan to punish me?"

Hazel gritted her teeth and turned around. "I'm not talking to you."

"Alright. Don't get angry." Alex tugged at her hand and pulled Hazel into his embrace. "I'm just very happy."

Hazel stopped struggling and buried her face into his chest. His scent began to fill her nostrils and Hazel began to relax. "What are you happy about?"

"That you choose to trust me with your trouble." Alex smiled. "I'm happy that your friends called me brother-in-law."

"Why are you happy about such a thing?"

"Guess?"

Hazel lifted her head and met his dark gaze. Hazel swallowed when she saw something that she could not decipher in his eyes. "I-I don't want to guess."

Alex let out a long breath. "Hazel Mo, I really, really like you."

Her heartbeat accelerated. Meeting his gaze and having her holding her so close to him while listening to those words made her head a little jumbled up.

Hazel bit at her lips as she continued to look into his eyes as if searching for something.. A couple of minutes passed and soon, Hazel stood on tiptoe and pressed her lips against his.

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Hazel pulled away after that brief kiss. Her cheek reddened and her eyes were looking into his with curiosity as if wondering how that kiss had made him feel.

Alex certainly was not expecting that Hazel would kiss him. After all, his Hazel was such a shy girl. Her face would get as red as a tomato right after her roommates had teased her. Therefore, Alex was very sure that Hazel would not take the initiative to kiss his lips.

The last time did not count. It took Hazel a while to gather her courage to kiss his cheek, but the kiss had landed on his lips instead. It was an accident that let him taste their first kiss.

Therefore, when their lips met again, Alex was a little stunned that he was unable to react well.

"Alex?" Seeing that the man in front of her had not reacted, Hazel was a little worried.

"Hmm..." Her voice seemed to snap him out of his trance. His gaze began to move from her eyes lower to her lips. The memories of their brief kiss resurfaced in his mind again and his heartbeat accelerated.

He had never expected that just staring at her lips would make him unable to think straight. Alex struggled to snap out the thought out of his mind, but he could not stop looking at those luscious lips. He was well aware of how soft her lips would taste, the sweetness and the fragrant taste...

At this time, the angel and devil on his shoulder began to offer their advice.

Feeling his scorching gaze on her lips, Hazel intuitively took a step back and bit her lips as if to hide them away from his eyes.

A slight frown appeared on his face when he could no longer see her lips.

"I-I should go now." Hazel tried to get out of his embrace but found that his arms around her body were tightening instead. Her eyes were looking everywhere except at him.

His throat bobbed up and down. His body felt a little uncomfortable. Alex thought that until he can meet her lips again in a kiss, he would not be able to calm down.

With that thought in mind, Alex tugged at her hand and called, "Hazel."

"Huh?"

Just as Hazel lifted her head to look at him, Alex lowered his head to her to claim those lips in one sweep motion.

The moment their lips touched, Alex felt as if his surroundings turned quiet. The angel and devil who were busy advising him on what he should do earlier had suddenly disappeared. At this time, the only thing he knew was that he was kissing Hazel again.

This was the second time that they have kissed.

It was still a little awkward as their first time. But this time, Alex had learned to be careful and not to bump their forehead and nose. His hand moved to cup her face, holding them so that Hazel would stay in place. Then, his lips started to move.

His kiss was a little hesitant as he was unsure about what he was doing. However, even if he was still inexperienced, Alex refused to let this kiss ended abruptly just like it had the last time.

He did not care whether Hazel was going to laugh at his inexperience. All he wanted now was to taste her lips.

Everything then was purely instinct.

It was moist and sweet. It was nothing like he had ever tasted before. The scent of her filled his nostrils and he was craving for more.

His heart hammered against his ribcage. His head was full with the need to kiss her. The softness of her lips was slowly driving him crazy.

God, kissing Hazel felt magical.

Alex pulled apart for mere seconds as he was giving them the chance to breathe. Staring at her reddened cheek and misty eyes, he then returned to meet her lips again.

As though he could not get enough of her, Alex began to tightened his arms around her waist and tried to pull her closer to his body. The only thing that preventing him from pulling her closer was her hands that rested on his chest.

This time, he started to nibble at the bottom of her lips, working on his magic as silently begging for her to return his kiss.

Meanwhile...

Hazel was a little stunned. Her CPU was overloaded again and she was having a hard time processing what was going on. Hazel was fully prepared when Alex had lowered his head to kiss her again. However, she was not expecting to be kissed for a long time.

Time passed and seconds turned to minutes.

Her heartbeat accelerated and Hazel was aware of the heat that started to build inside her. There was a feeling that she could not describe. His kisses were slowly tormenting her, leaving her with the need of wanting more.

A soft gasp escaped her the moment Alex nibbled at her lips. Her mind went blank and something warm began to spread all over her body. It was slowly killing her.

Unable to comprehend the change in her mind and body, Hazel began to part her lips, allowing him to deepen their kiss.

It was hot. And sweet. And Irresistible. It was turning her world upside down and her senses were melting with his kisses.

Aware that her legs were slowly turning weak, Hazel grasped at the front of his shirt to keep herself in balance, and slowly, her hands began to move up until her arm snaked around his neck.

This action only pulled them grew closer. A low groan escaped him as Alex felt the softness of her chest pressing against his body. His body began to tremble and their closeness was burning him. The hands around her waist tightened as Alex tried to fight against a new emotion that was building inside him.

After a moment that seemed like an eternity, the two began to part. Their foreheads rested against each other. His gaze was on her reddened face, while Hazel had her eyes closed, as she tried to catch up with her breath.

Seeing the way Hazel had licked ad her lips, his eyes darkened, and the desire to kiss her again was ignited. However, seeing her slightly swollen lips, Alex tried his best to control his emotion.

"Are you alright?"

Hazel tried to open her mouth to reply, but at this time, her lips were a little swollen from their kisses. "Hmm..."

Alex raised his hand and his thumb started to caress her swollen lips. "Sorry. I should be gentler."

Her cheek turned a shade darker. "Shut up."

A faint smile appeared on his lips as he wondered what was going through her mind at the moment.

"I should go in before the girls would worry," Hazel spoke once she was able to compose herself.

"Alright." A frown appeared on his face as he did not want to be apart from this girl. Taking a deep breath to control himself, Alex gave her hand a gentle squeeze and pecked at her forehead.. "Go in."

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The moment Hazel entered her dorm room, she could see her roommates' eyes looking at him. Noticing the strange smile on their faces, Hazel immediately figured out what happened.

They knew!

Her head felt a little dizzy as blood rushed to her head. Meeting her roommates' gaze, Hazel was feeling a little shy.

"Alright. Alright. Stop teasing her," Crystal said as she blocked Hazel from the other's view. Then, she turned around and started to examine Hazel's lips closer.

Hazel instinctively bit at her lips. She knew very well that her lips were swollen after that kiss and she was embarrassed to let them see her lips after she had kissed Alex for a long time.

"You don't need to hide," Crystal said. "We all an adult here. We could guess at what happened by looking at your reddened face, Hazel."

Hazel raised both hands and touched her face. Although she has been spending a long time outside, her face was too hot. Hazel could almost imagine the look on her face at this moment.

"Anyway," Michelle spoke. She stood up from her seat and smiled. "We saw what happened."

"You saw?" Hazel wished to dig a hole and hide. This was too embarrassing.

Michelle started to laugh. "You spent a long time downstairs and Eira was worried. She went down out of the concern and saw what was going on. Once she returned and tell us what she saw, we had to spy on you from the balcony. But don't worry. It was very dark and we cannot see too well."

Hazel watched her friends speechlessly. She almost could not believe that they would be spying on her.

"Hazel..." Eira went over and latched into her arms. "Tell me. How does it feel to kiss him?"

"Is he good?" Michelle started to ask.

Hazel narrowed her eyes dangerously at her roommates. "I'm not talking to you girls."

The girls began to laugh.

She decided to ignore their teasing and walked into the room. She put her bag on the table and caught a glimpse of her face in the mirror. Seeing her appearance in the mirror, Hazel let out a gasp.

Her lips were too swollen! Just how much force did Alex use to kiss her? Suddenly, Hazel was embarrassed to go out and meet people. If the swelling did not go down by tomorrow morning, she might as well consider skipping class!

However, once she recalled the upcoming tests, Hazel knew that there was no way that she can skip her class.

"Don't get mad," Michelle said. She patted Hazel on her shoulder and smiled apologetically. "You always had a serious look on your face. It was rare to see that shy look on your face. Just one look on your face, we can see how much in love you are with Alex."

"Uh-huh," Crystal agreed. "Ever since you started to date, we've been seeing this look on your face a lot. I think... you are really happy dating Alex."

"You can see them on my face?" Hazel asked.

"You might not realize this, but after you started to go steady with Alex, you've been smiling a lot," Crystal said. "You are glowing. You have this look that screamed: 'I'm in love' on your face."

Hazel shook her head as she thought that Crystal was teasing her. Hazel glanced at the mirror again. Her reflection showed her an image of a girl with a reddened face and a shy smile on her face. She looked closely and realized that there was something different on her face. However, Hazel could not pinpoint what they were.

"It's nice to be in love," Eira said with a sigh. "Maybe I should start thinking about dating as well."

Hazel turned to her friend and her lips started to twitch. "Are you sure you can think about dating? The moment any boys tried to approach you, your brother would appear and stop them."

Eira laughed as she tried to imagine her little brother's appearance out of nowhere to stop her from dating. However, this was not impossible. Her little brother might be a few years younger, but he was a little overprotective.

Hazel took her pajamas and went into the bathroom to take a shower. When she came out again, her friends were already sprawling in their bed, doing their own things, and getting ready for bed. Hazel took her phone and saw that Alex had texted her that he had safely arrived at his apartment.

After thinking for a while, Hazel decided to send him a text.

"My lips are swollen. I have no face to meet people."

"I'm sorry." Alex's reply came back a few seconds later. "This is my fault. Next time, I will let you bite me back."

Hazel gritted her teeth when she saw his reply. "Who wants to bite you?"

She put down her phone on the table as she was too lazy to talk to him. After a minute has passed, her phone buzzed again and this time, it was a phone call from Alex.

"Are you angry?" Alex asked as soon as the phone was connected. His voice sounded a little deep as he was speaking in a low tone.

Hearing his warm voice, her anger had dissipated. Hazel walked over to the balcony to hide from her roommates. She looked at the scenery outside and answered, "Not angry."

"If it makes you feel a little better, my lips are swollen too," Alex said. "I still have to go to the office tomorrow."

"Then don't go to your office."

A chuckle escaped him. "Would you want to accompany me then? You can skip your class and I can skip work. Then, let's go on a date."

"Alex He... are you trying to be a bad influence on me?" Her lips curled into a small smile.

"Well, I just missed you."

Her heart jumped and Hazel lowered her head upon hearing his words. "We just saw each other a while ago."

"I know. But as soon as we apart, I wanted to see you again." He took a deep breath as he recalled pulling the girl into his arms. "It would be good if I can have you by my side all the time."

The corner of her lips tilted up. "I really did not think that you could be such a sweet-talker."

"Mmm... I ate something sweet earlier."

Hazel did not think too much about it and asked, "What did you eat?"

"Your lips."

Her face felt hot again. "I'm not talking to you anymore. Alex He, I'm hanging up."

Alex laughed on the other line. Recently, he began to have this habit to tease Hazel. Her reddened face gave him an urge to bite at her cheek. "Alright. I won't tease you anymore.. Just go to bed early. Tomorrow, I'll come to you and deliver your breakfast, alright?"

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A few days before her parents' death anniversary, Alex picked her up and they both headed back to L City together. On the trip back, the two spent their time chatting about various things before Hazel finally dozed off in the passenger's seat.

Because she was planning to head back to L City, Hazel has been busy catching up with her assignments before she could ask for a few days off from her professor. This morning, she had to get up really early as they wanted to arrive at L City quickly. As soon as she sat in the car, Hazel could no longer fight her drowsiness.

When she woke up again, the vehicle had entered L City.

Hazel rubbed at her eyes and swiftly turned her head to one side to check if she had drooled in Alex's presence. Seeing that there were no such thing, Hazel turned to Alex again and the two exchanged a glance briefly.

"You're awake."

"Hmm..." Hazel pursed her lips. "Sorry. I fell asleep. Are you tired?"

A chuckle escaped him. Alex stretched his hand and patted at her hair. "It's alright. You should get a rest. You haven't been sleeping well this past few days to finish your assignment."

"But I still feel bad to let you drive me back to L City," Hazel said with a sigh.

"Then, how about giving me compensation?"

Hazel narrowed her eyes at him. "I'm sure it wouldn't be anything good."

Alex burst into a laugh. Then, he pointed a finger to his cheek. "How about a kiss here?"

Hazel poked at his cheek and said, "Concentrate on the road first. I don't want to be a distraction and cause an accident."

Her parents got into a car crash and passed away. Of course, Hazel would look seriously on this matter. She had reminded Alex a few times to take a rest whenever he felt tired and told him to always be vigilant on the road.

Alex heaved a soft sigh when he heard her words. Then, he held on to the steering tightly and focused on the road.

"Alex," Hazel called after a brief silence between them.

"Hmm?"

"Two days later... do you want to come with me and visit my parents?"

Alex glanced at her face and saw the serious look on her face. A warm smile curled on his lips. "I'd like to."

Hazel let out a long breath. Earlier, she was a little worried that Alex was going to reject her. The two of them have been friends for a long time, but this was the first time that she had asked him to come with her to visit her parents.

"Then, you can come over and pick me up. We'll head over together with my uncle."

Hearing her mentioned her scary uncle, Alex started to tremble. He could almost imagine the cold air emitting from that man's body when he showed up with Hazel.

"Auntie Edith won't be going?" Alex asked. At least, with Auntie Edith's presence, the atmosphere would not be as scary.

"Auntie Edith is pregnant with twins and the doctor asked her to take a lot of rest. My uncle would not let her come with us," Hazel said.

Alex took a deep breath and assured himself that he should not be scared of Hazel's uncle. Although the man could petrify anyone with his cold gaze, he is still Hazel's uncle. If he wanted to be with Hazel, he would have to get used to that man's presence.

Moreover, he had done as the man had asked him to do. He had patiently waited until he was old enough before he pursued Hazel and at this moment, the two had a very good relationship. Hazel's uncle cannot do anything to prevent him to go after Hazel anymore.

A while later, Alex pulled over his vehicle and parked in front of the house. He helped Hazel with the door and helped to pick up her luggage.

When they entered the house, Edith walked out and greeted them with a warm smile on her face.

"Auntie Edith!" Hazel walked over to hug her. However, once she saw her auntie's bulging stomach, Hazel had to stop herself. "Oh my!" Hazel lifted her head to look at her auntie again. "I haven't seen them in a few months and they're getting bigger. No wonder my uncle is too worried."

Edith laughed. "Alright. Come over and give me a hug."

Hazel wrapped her arms around her auntie's shoulder and kissed her cheek. "Auntie Edith, I missed you so much."

Edith pulled away and turned to Alex. "How's the drive?"

"Auntie Edith," Alex greeted. "It was fine. The road is clear."

"That's good." Edith nodded. She glanced at the clock and spoke, "It's almost lunch hour. Alex, would you like to stay and have a meal with us?"

Alex hesitated.

The corner of her lips turned up when she saw his hesitation. "Hayden and Hayley are both at school and Hazel's uncle is at work. There's a new project that they are working on and he won't be coming back for lunch."

A glint flashed in his eyes when Alex heard that the man would not show up. "Then, I'll tell my mother that I'll be having my lunch here."

Seeing that her Auntie had turned to head over to the kitchen, Hazel walked over to go with her. "Auntie Edith, what are you making? Let me help you."

"It's fine." Edith waved her hand. "There's a lot of help in the kitchen. Your uncle hired a few more helpers after we entered the second trimester."

Hazel peeked into the kitchen and noticed a few new faces around.

"Go ahead and accompany Alex. He's a guest. Don't leave him alone."

"Oh." Hazel nodded obediently before she turned around to find Alex again. Entering the living area, Hazel found that Alex was chatting with her Great-Grandpa. Her lips turned up and Hazel went over to the old man.

"My little princess. You're back."

Hazel let out a little giggle before she hugged the old man. "Great-Grandpa, I miss you." Her tears threatened to come down upon noticing that the man had turned thinner than the last time she saw him. Hazel sniffled before she forced a smile. "Great-Grandpa, what did you two talk about?"

"Nothing much." Mike turned to Alex again and frowned. "I just thought that this boy looked a little familiar. He said that we've met before."

Hazel was a little stunned.

Auntie Edith and Auntie Lily were best friends and Alex had met with her Great-Grandfather a few times while they were growing up. She did not think that her Great-Grandpa would have forgotten about Alex.

"Little Princess, did you return to bring back your boyfriend?"

Hazel quickly composed herself and smiled. "Hmm... Great-Grandpa, the last time, you told me to find a boyfriend quickly. I found one and brought him home to let you see. Great-Grandpa, this is Alex He, my boyfriend. What do you think?"

Mike squinted his eyes as he continued to observe Alex. A few seconds later, he started to nod his head, giving his approval.. "Not bad."

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After the lunch was over, Alex followed Hazel upstairs and the two ended up in her bedroom.

Once he entered the room, Alex could not stop looking around. This was the first time he had entered her room and Alex was fascinated to look at everything around him.

Hazel's room was neater than what he had imagined. The moment he walked in, Hazel's sweet scent filled his nostrils and Alex thought that he might get drunk by inhaling them too much.

There was a lot of pink stuff around. A few plush toys of various animals were arranged neatly on the sofa beside the bookcase. At the side of the room was a tall, glass case with assembled Gundam model arranged neatly.

Alex walked over to the glass case and his gaze stopped at the model at the center of the case. He recognized the model as the one he had gifted to her on her birthday a long time ago. The pink model that his mother had helped him to buy.

At that time, he did not have too much money in his hand and he had talked to his mother to use the money in his bank.

As the thought came to his mind, Alex was a little stunned. How old was he when he had persuaded his mother into buying a gift for Hazel? At that time, the pink model was rare and expensive, but the moment he saw it, Alex was sure that Hazel was going to like it.

Suddenly, he wondered if he started to like Hazel from that early age.

"What are you looking at?"

Alex turned around and saw Hazel was staring at him inquiringly. "Just admiring the models you assembled."

A soft laugh escaped her as Hazel turned to look at the glass case. "Mmm... I did not expect that I would collect this much." She poked him on the arms and said, "Isn't this is all due to your influence?"

Alex pulled her closer to hug her from behind. Then, he kissed her on the cheek. Before he could enjoy having the girl in his embrace, Hazel wriggled out and looked at him with a playful smile on her face.

"Let me tell you a secret."

His brow raised. "What is it?"

"The only reason I was interested to listen to you talking about assembling this model was because of Auntie Edith," Hazel said. "Once I heard you said that Auntie Edith is good at assembling the model, I thought... I should give it a try."

There was a complicated look on Alex's face.

"What's wrong?" Hazel tilted her head to one side.

Alex heaved a soft sigh. "And I thought you were genuinely interested."

Hazel laughed when she saw the disappointed look on his face. She patted her hand on his chest and said, "Don't be disappointed. After working on a few models, I think this hobby is quite enjoyable. See... I assembled a few of them after you taught me how to do it once."

Alex stared at her for a long time. After a while, the corner of her lips turned up. "But this is also good. If it was not because Auntie Edith you would not take the initiative to talk to me. Then, we wouldn't be this close." He turned her around to face him and pushed a few strands of hair behind her ears.

Seeing the way Hazel was staring at him, Alex then leaned closer and gave her a soft kiss.

Hazel closed her eyes and put her hands on his shoulders as he continued to kiss her. Once she was satisfied with the kisses she received, Hazel pulled away and stared at Alex with a playful smile on her face.

Before she came into her room, both Great-Grandpa and Auntie Edith had returned to their room to rest. Knowing that there would not be any surprise visit to her room, Hazel was not too shy to be alone with Alex.

After staying in his arms for a while, the smile on her face gradually disappeared. Hazel ran her fingertips on his cheek and asked, "Alex, are you not sad that Great-Grandpa seemed to forget you?"

Alex wrapped his arms around her body and pulled her closer. "It would be a lie to say that I'm not. Are you afraid that Great-Grandpa would forget you soon?"

Hazel did not answer and instead, lowered her head and buried her face in his chest.

Although Hazel did not have any blood relation with her Great-Grandpa, the old man had treated her as his own kin. When she was little, her Great-Grandpa had always played with her and taught her self-defense skills. Seeing that his health had deteriorated every time she came home, Hazel felt sad.

Moreover... her grandparents were getting older. Hazel became helpless at thought of how she might not have a long time with them. Her parents had left her early and soon, people she cared about will no longer be around.

Alex lowered his head and kissed her on top of her head.

With her parents' death anniversary approaching in a few days, Alex could understand that there were too many things in her mind and her mood was a little off.

However, at this time he could not find a word to ease her mind. The only thing Alex could do was to hug her tightly and channel his strength to her. At this time, Alex made a silent promise to accompany Hazel until they were both old.

After spending his time at the house for a long time, Alex decided to head home to avoid rush hour.

When he reached home, his mother was in the living room, arranging a few stuff. Alex walked over to his mother and sat next to her.

"You're back." Lily smiled. She turned her head to the door and raised a brow when she looked at Alex again. "You didn't bring back my daughter-in-law?"

"Mom."

Lily started to laugh. Recently, she found that teasing her son was too interesting. This was the first time that Alex had a girlfriend. Although her boy would always put on a serious look on his face, he could be a little timid when she started to tease him with Hazel.

"How long will you be staying in L City this time?" Lily asked.

"I'll head back to B City on Sunday," Alex answered. "On the day after tomorrow, I will accompany Hazel to visit her parents."

"Mmm... You go ahead and accompany her. She will need a lot of support. As her boyfriend, it is natural that you should accompany her."

"Un. I know."

Lily let out a sigh. Then, she turned to her son and smiled.. "Since you are going to be in L City for a few days, tell Hazel to come over and have a meal with us, alright."

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Alex showed up at Mo's residence early in the morning. He alighted from his vehicle and took a couple of deep breaths before he walked over to the door and pressed the doorbell.

The door swung open and his expression turned frigid upon meeting a certain iceblock.

Alex inhaled sharply and muttered, "Good morning."

Neil narrowed his eyes as he looked at the pig that was eyeing his little cabbage. After a while, he stepped aside to let him in. "Come in."

Seeing that the man had let him in without saying anything much frightened him. At this time, Alex was wondering if he had perhaps misheard things, or perhaps, this was a trap. If he walked through the door, would he end up being killed instead?

"Alex, you're here." Edith walked out from a corner and looked at him with a smile. She sauntered towards her husband and wrapped her arms around his waist. Then, she looked at Alex again. "Come on in and join us for breakfast." Seeing his hesitation, she then continued to persuade, "Hazel is still getting ready. She should come down soon."

Alex clenched his fist. He glanced at Neil before he entered the house and followed an auntie towards the dining area.

Edith watched as Alex went farther inside and turned to her husband. There was a warning look on her expression. "Play nice."

"I did not do anything," Neil said with a sigh. He noticed that there was no one around and sneaked to press kiss her on her slender neck. His eyes darkened when he heard her soft hum.

"Quit playing around. The kids are still around." Edith turned around and poked her husband on his chest. "You're going out with Hazel and Alex later. Don't make trouble for them, alright?"

Neil raised a brow. "You don't trust me?"

Edith cupped her hands on his cheek and tiptoed to kiss his lips. "Iceblock Mo, I'm just afraid that you were going to frighten that poor boy if you continued to wear that cold expression."

Neil laughed upon hearing that words. It has been a while since his wife had called him 'Iceblock Mo'.

Her hands started to pull at the corner of his lips, making him smile. "There. This expression is better." Edith leaned forward to peck his lips again. "My handsome man."

Neil was slightly in a daze as he recalled the first time his wife had done something like this. At that time, she had a little drink and spoke to him honestly about liking the look on his face when he smiled.

He thought about how his wife liked him smiling and his lips tilted into a warm smile.

"Hazel is now dating Alex. Don't make things difficult for him, alright?" Edith reminded him again.

"You... liked that boy?"

Edith laughed. "I watched Alex as he grew up. How can I not like him? Besides... what matters most is whether Hazel liked him or not. Since Hazel chose to be with him, how can I not like him? Hazel is a smart girl. I believe in her choice."

Neil pursed his lips, knowing that he could not win an argument with his wife.

After a while, Hazel walked down the stairs and grabbed something light for breakfast as she did not have an appetite. Then, the three of them walked out to head to the cemetery.

Neil looked at the couple in front of him and was a little unhappy. However, he still remembers his wife's reminder not to make trouble for Alex and had no choice but to keep his mouth shut.

Moreover, it was Hazel's parents' death anniversary and he did not want to make his niece unhappy. Even if he had a few words that he wanted to say to Alex, Neil decided to wait until later.

Neil looked at Alex's AUDI parked at the side and turned to Hazel. "You go and take Alex's car. I will let the driver take me to the cemetery."

"Uncle, we are not going together?" Hazel asked.

"Hmm... I still have to go to the office afterward," Neil said. "It would be convenient if we go out separately." He glanced at the helpers who were helping to carry a few stuff to Alex's car and turned to Hazel again. "I'll head over first and wait for you there."

Hazel thought of the situation and agreed. She hopped into the passenger's seat and sat quietly as Alex drove to the cemetery.

When they arrived, Hazel cradled the bouquets in her arms and let Alex help her carry a few other things. Her uncle had arrived a few minutes earlier. From a distance, Hazel could see that her uncle was talking to her parents and had a few drinks.

She hesitated and decided to give him a few minutes to be alone. Once she saw that her uncle was no longer talking, Hazel stepped forward and stopped in front of the tomb. She placed the bouquet down, gave her parents her bow and stood beside her uncle.

Neil looked at his niece and put his arms around her shoulders, patting her softly and Hazel leaned on his shoulders.

The two of them stayed that way for a long time as they stared at the tomb. No one knew what was going through their mind.

After a while, Neil heaved a long breath before he looked at Hazel. "Alright. I have to go now. Don't stay here for too long."

Hazel nodded. "Un. I know."

Neil hugged his little girl and kissed her forehead. Then he gave her a light pat on the shoulder and turned to Alex. "Look after her."

Alex was a little surprised when the man spoke to him. However, he quickly composed himself and nodded. "I will."

Both Alex and Hazel watched her uncle as he left with the driver following him closely by his side. Once her uncle was no longer visible, Hazel turned to look at the tomb again.

Alex stepped closer to her and let the girl lay her head on his chest. Sensing that her mood was not right, Alex decided to keep quiet. A frown appeared on his face as he was reminded of what Hazel had told him about her parents' death.

Subconsciously, Alex held the woman in his arms tighter, channeling his support to her.

After a while, Hazel tilted her head up and watched Alex's profile from the side.

As if noticing her gaze, Alex lowered his head and met her eyes. A faint smile curled on his lips and Alex lowered to peck at her hair.

Her eyes fluttered. Hazel pulled away from him and chuckled. "I forgot."

Alex shot her an inquiring gaze. "What did you forget about?"

Hazel did not answer and instead, intertwined their hands together and held him tightly. Then, she turned to the tomb again and spoke, "Mama, Papa, let me introduce you. This is my boyfriend. Alex He."

Alex turned to Hazel, slightly surprised by her introduction. Seeing her expectant gaze, Alex then turned to look at the faded photograph.. "Uncle, Auntie, Hello."

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The sun was up high by the time both of them left the cemetery. Alex helped Hazel into the passenger's seat and slid into the driver's seat. When he put the keys into the ignition, Alex noticed the way Hazel was looking at him and turned to look at her.

Alex let out a chuckle. "What is it?"

"Do you have to go to the office after this?" Hazel asked.

"No. I told my dad that I won't be coming in today," Alex said. He grasped her hand and planted a kiss on her wrist. "Today, I'm going to accompany you. What do you have in mind?"

Hazel lowered her head for a few seconds, then spoke, "Do you want to come home with me? Not the place where I'm staying with my uncle and Auntie Edith, but the place where I stayed with my parents."

Alex watched the person beside him and nodded. "Alright."

Based on Hazel's instruction, the two of them finally reached her house. As they stood in front of the house, Alex took his time to look at the house where Hazel had lived with her parents years ago.

This was his first time coming over and Alex could not help but wonder about Hazel's life when her parents were still around. If it was not because of the tragedy, then, Hazel would be happier.

Just as the two walked over to the house, the door swung open from the inside and an elder lady walked out.

The moment she saw Hazel, her eyes brightened up and her lips stretched into a wide smile. "Young Miss! You're back."

"Auntie." Hazel greeted.

The older lady looked at Hazel from head to toe and patted her hands a few times. Her eyes started to redden and her nose sour. "Did you went over to the cemetery?"

"Hmm... I just came back from visiting my parents," Hazel said. "Auntie, are you well?"

"I'm just the same." The older lady heaved a soft sigh. It was at this time that she noticed that a tall man was standing beside them. The elder lady looked at Hazel inquiringly and asked, "Young Miss... This is...?"

Hazel turned to Alex and her lips curled up into a smile. She stretched her hand and pulled him closer. "Auntie. This is my boyfriend. Alex He."

Alex tried to conceal the joy on his face as he exchanged her greetings with the caretaker. Every time Hazel introduced him as her boyfriend to the people around her, Alex became elated.

The older lady gave Alex a look and her head bobbed as if giving her approval. "That's right. You are old enough to bring home a boyfriend." She let out a sigh in content. "If both Master and Madame could see you now, they would both be happy."

Hazel replied with a faint smile.

"Come in." The lady ushered them in. "Have you eaten yet? How about staying around for lunch. Auntie will prepare your favorite food." She halted and there was a hesitant

look on her face. "Ah... You're already this grown-up. Auntie did not know what is your favorite food now."

"Auntie, you can prepare anything. Alex and I... we are not picky."

The lady nodded. She left for the kitchen and left both Hazel and Alex alone. After all, this was Hazel's house and she did not need to stay around unless if Hazel needed her.

Hazel walked over to the side table and started to look at the letters. After she had sorted out all the important documents, Hazel turned around and found that Alex was staring at the big portrait of her and her parents from the time she was three.

"What are you looking at?"

Hearing her voice, Alex turned around and flashed a smile. "Mmm... Baby Hazel is too adorable."

Her cheek turned a little pink upon hearing his words. She hit him playfully on his arms and heard his laugh. Suddenly, she was pulled into his embrace with his arms around her waist and his chin rested on her shoulder. Hazel began to relax against his broad chest.

"You have your mother's look," Alex said as he looked at the woman in the portrait.

Hazel turned her head sideways to look at him and felt his lips brushed against her cheek. "I heard that a lot."

"But your eyes resembled your father the most." A thought crossed his mind and a chuckle escaped him.

"What is it?" Hazel narrowed her eyes at him.

"I just thought of something." Alex paused. He turned to look at Hazel and stared into her eyes for a long time. "Whenever you're angry, the look on your eyes would resemble your uncle the most."

Hazel frowned. "Uncle Neil?" She watched him nod and started to touch the corner of her eyes, as she wondered if he was telling her the truth. She looked at the portrait again and thought that her eyes really did resemble her father. However, Hazel did not know how she would look like when she was angry.

After staring at the portrait for a while, Hazel wriggled out of his embrace. Seeing that it was still too early for them to have lunch, Hazel decided to take Alex around the house for a tour.

The house stayed the same, but some of her childhood memories had slowly faded away. The two of them finally stopped at Hazel's old bedroom and Alex began to look around. Just like the other room, Hazel's childhood room was full of pink and animal plush toys. There were a few old toys at the side and a small castle as her playground.

Alex could almost imagine Hazel as a little princess running around the place. "You like pink."

Hazel laughed at his words. She looked at the clean bed sheet and sat down. After a while, Alex joined and sat down beside her. He tugged at her hand and soon, the two of them fell on the bed together.

Because this was the bed that she used when she was a little kid, the size was a little smaller and the two of them had to stay closer.

Hazel stared into his eyes and felt her heartbeat grew faster.

Alex tucked a few stray hairs behind her ear and asked, "How are you?"

Hazel was a little startled upon hearing his question, but soon, a faint smile curled on her lips. "I'm alright. Just that... I haven't been sleeping well."

"I can see that." A deep frown appeared on his face as he traced the dark circle under her eyes.

Lowering her gaze, Hazel then shifted closer to his body. "I had those dreams again. About the scene that I saw in the hospital. And then, I woke up and could not fall asleep again."

Alex thought of the scene that Hazel had watched before his parents passed away and knew that the girl was talking about that one. He wrapped her body in his embrace and his hands caressing her back as if coaxing her. "It's alright. It's in the past now."

"I know. But when I dreamed about that scene again... I was scared. I thought that if I close my eyes again, I will be forced to see it again." A chuckle escaped her. "I was worried that the man was going to turn around and kill me in my dream."

Alex was distressed as he imagined how frightened Hazel was. "I'm here now." He continued to speak a few words to assure her that everything will be alright. Then, he leaned in and started to rain his kisses on her face. His fingers ran in her long tresses and soon, Alex saw that Hazel was staring at him with a dazed look. "If you're tired. You can sleep. Don't think of anything. I will stay here and guard you."

"You don't mind?" Her voice sounded a little lazy. After Alex had run his fingers in her hair and rained his kisses on her face for a long time, Hazel began to feel a little sleepy.

His lips curled into a smile.. Alex kissed her eyelid and whispered, "Just sleep."

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Hazel went back to the residence and found that her Auntie Edith was in the garden, looking after some flowers in the garden. She walked over and looked at the flowers.

"You're back," Edith said. She turned around and smiled. "Have you eaten?"

"Un." Hazel nodded. "We dropped by the old house and the auntie made something for us to eat." She looked around and noticed that the house was a little quiet. "Where are the others?"

"Hayden and Hayley are working on their homework," Edith said. "Your uncle is still at the office."

"He's been very busy recently," Hazel pointed out.

"He wanted to settle a few important works before he can take a long break." Edith rested her hand on her tummy. "He said he wanted to accompany me before the twins came out."

"He's worried."

"Hmm... things will get busy again after the twins came out. There is a lot of preparation to do as well." Edith heaved a sigh.

Looking after one baby was tiring enough. She did not know if she would be able to look after two babies at the same time. When she had Hayden and Hayley, the two were very active. If it was not for her mother-in-law's help and auntie that they hired, Edith was sure that she would go crazy.

Hazel looked at Edith's stomach. "Auntie Edith, did you found out the gender of the twins yet?"

Edith raised a brow at her. "What do you think the gender will be?"

Hazel stared at Edith's bulging stomach for a few seconds and tilted her head to one side. "Girls?"

"The doctor said the twins are boys."

Hazel heaved a long sigh. "I thought that my uncle would like it more if he had more daughters."

Edith laughed as she was reminded of her conversation about raising pigs and cabbages with her husband. At that time, Neil had said that he would prefer boys. It turned out that she was pregnant with boys.

"Having you and Hayley are enough. When the boys are old enough they can help to look after their sisters," Edith said. A faint smile curled on her lips. "How is your relationship with Alex? Is everything going well?"

Her cheek blushed. Hearing his boyfriend's name, Hazel was reminded of how she had woken up earlier and found that Alex was staring at her. Hazel could remember the feeling of waking up in his embrace. The way Alex was staring at her was so gentle that it makes her heartbeat accelerated.

She thought of how Alex has been staring at her sleeping face and was embarrassed. Suddenly, Hazel was worrying whether she would drool or snore when she slept.

Alex then kissed her forehead before he went to the restroom to wash his face.

It took her a while before she finally snapped out of her trance. Hazel thought that sleeping next to Alex was pretty comfortable. His body was warm and she liked his scent. Most important thing was that... that dream did not appear.

"Looking at your face, I'm guessing that your relationship is going very well," Edith pointed out.

"Auntie Edith."

Noticing the girl's cheek turned a shade darker, Edith decided not to tease her anymore.

Fortunately, a vehicle drove over and parked. Seeing that her husband had returned from the office, Edith put the garden scissors on the side table before she walked over to him.

The moment Neil alighted the vehicle, there was a deep frown on his face. "What are you doing out here?" Neil asked. "Didn't the doctor said you have to take a lot of rest?"

Edith heaved a sigh and pulled a face. "I was bored. Walking around the garden could help to lift my mood."

Neil felt slightly guilty upon hearing her words. These days, he was too busy that he had not spent his time with his wife. He wrapped his arms around her waist and kissed her cheek. "This weekend, I'll accompany you for a walk, alright?"

The couple exchanged a few words in a low voice before they finally noticed that Hazel was standing not far away from them.

Neil flashed his niece a smile and asked, "Did you went to the old house today?"

"Un." Hazel nodded. "I went to check at the letters and bills."

"If you need anything, don't hesitate and tell me," Neil said. Then, he turned to his wife again and his expression turned gentler. "Let's get inside. It's not good for you to spend a long out here.

...

Her body sweated profusely.

Hazel was aware that she was in a dream, but no matter how she tried to wake up, Hazel was unable to do so.

Once again, she was forced to watch the moment where her parents were murdered by that man. She watched as the doctor injected something into their IV bag but was unable to stop him.

In the end, Hazel watched as her parents' health deteriorated until they were no longer breathing. The doctors and nurses rushed into the room to check on her parents, pushing her aside until she was unable to see her parents again.

Hazel woke up.

Her breathing labored and her body trembled. Her body was cold and wet with her sweats.

Hazel pulled her knees closer to her chest and buried her hands in her palms. She tried to dispel her dream, but the scene kept on playing on her head over and over again.

Tears filled her eyes and her shoulders quivered as she forced herself to forget the scene she was forced to witness.

Whenever it was around her parents' death anniversary, Hazel would have these dreams for a few nights. Though this had happened many times, Hazel would never get used to it.

After taking a few deep breaths, Hazel finally calm down. She closed her eyes tightly and opened them again. Her mind was a little clearer this time, but she was still frightened of what she had dreamed.

Hazel grabbed her phone on the side table and looked at the time. It was two in the morning.

Though she was sleepy, Hazel found that she could not fall asleep as she was worrying that she would have those dreams again.

A face appeared in her mind and Hazel hesitated. After a few seconds, Hazel finally sent out a message.

"Alex, are you awake?"

A minute has passed and Hazel heaved a sigh when Alex did not reply.

It was two in the morning and it would be strange if Alex would still be awake at this time.

Just as she was about to give up and try to fall asleep again, her phone screen lit up.. Hazel picked up her phone again and found that Alex had requested a video call with her.

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The moment she saw the name on the screen, Hazel felt a wave of relief washing over her. After taking a deep breath, Hazel swiped her finger on the screen.

In just seconds, the screen turned black.

Hazel squinted as she tried to check whether the call was disconnected, but then, she heard his voice.

"Hazel?"

Her heartbeat gradually calmed down. "Un." At this time, Hazel could see some movement. She figured out that Alex should have his lights off, which was why she could only see the dark. Then, she realized that his voice sounded a little groggy.

"Sorry. Were you sleeping just now?"

"It's alright." Alex cleared his throat a few times. "Were you having a bad dream again?"

"Hmm..."

"Are you alright?"

"It's okay. Just that... I cannot fall asleep without having those images in my mind and then... I thought of you." Hazel let out a long sigh as the guilt of waking him up surrounded her. "I'm sorry. I didn't think that I would wake you up at this time."

"Don't be sorry. I'm glad that you would think of me," Alex said. "Hazel, you can call me anytime you want. I will always be there for you."

Her heart was filled with warmth and her lips curled into a faint smile. There was a movement on Alex's side and a while later, she was able to see his face in the dark. Hazel let out a chuckle when she saw his eyes turning into a slit.

"What are you laughing at?"

"Nothing." Her hands stretched up and Hazel tried to poke at his nose through the video. "I just thought that... this is how your face would look like when you just woke up from sleep." Her head tilted to one side. "It's not that bad."

Alex laughed. His heart was more at ease upon seeing that her mood had improved a lot. He thought of the scene earlier that day where Hazel was sleeping in his embrace with a peaceful look on her face and suddenly, Alex could feel his body grew hot.

His throat bobbed and Alex lowered his gaze so that Hazel would not notice anything strange. Then, he took a few deep breaths.

"It felt a little strange."

Alex looked at the blurry image of Hazel in the dark. "What is strange?"

"How is it that once I heard your voice, my mind was suddenly at ease?"

His heart skipped a beat. Suddenly, Alex had this urge to meet his girlfriend face to face. He wanted to hold her in his arms and kiss her. However, noticing the time, Alex could only suppress his desire.

Alex pressed his lips into a thin line and suddenly, he exhaled a long breath. "Hazel Mo."

"Mhm?"

"Suddenly, I had this urge to see you." Alex noticed how her eyes grew wide and continued, "Hazel, I miss you."

Her eyes fluttered and her heartbeat sped up.

It was dark at night and the two of them has been speaking in a low tone. Because of this, Alex's voice sounded a little deep and seductive.

Hazel bit at her lips to calm down and spoke, "I miss you too."

His eyes grew dark and his jaw clenched. "Do you want to see me?"

Hazel hesitated. There was a long pause at her side as Hazel was considering his question. "Yes." She opened her mouth to give him reasons why they could not see each other at this time, but Alex had spoken again.

"Then, wait for me for ten minutes. I will arrive at your doorsteps soon," Alex said.

"Ah?"

"Didn't you say that you wanted to see me?"

Hazel wanted to decline, but reasons quickly faded as Hazel continued to look at Alex. At this time, his eyes were no longer a slit, and instead, it looked like he has been wide awake. Hazel clenched tightly at her blanket. Then, she answered, "Okay. I will wait for you."

The video call ended and the screen turned dark. Hazel stared at her phone screen in a daze. For a while, she was unable to believe what just happened.

Did she just agree to meet up with Alex in the middle of the night?

Hazel looked at the time again. Then, she seemed to recall that Alex had told her that he will arrive at her doorstep in ten minutes. Swiftly, Hazel jumped out of her bed and switched on the light.

She looked at the mirror and was glad that the light was still off when she was on a video call with Alex earlier. If Alex had seen her bird nest hair, would he still want to see her?

Aware that she was looking like a mess, Hazel started to scramble to find proper clothes to wear and make herself presentable.

Her heart raced at the thought that she will have to sneak out to see Alex. At this time, everyone should be sleeping and Hazel did not want to accidentally wake up anyone. If anyone saw that she was going out at this time, then, there will be questions, and Hazel was not sure if she could answer them.

It felt as if she was going on a secret rendezvous!

Her cheek turned red again and Hazel was excited.

Her phone screen lit up as she was combing her hair. Hazel picked up the phone and saw that it was a text message from Alex, informing her that he had arrived at the door.

Hazel grabbed her purse and phone before she tiptoed to come down. Alex's AUDI was parked outside with his light off. She walked over to his car and Alex quickly alighted to help her with the passenger's door.

Once the two were seated inside the car, they turned to look at each other with an anxious smile on their faces.

"Did you tell anyone you're going out?"

Hazel shook her head. "No." She looked at their intertwined hands and said, "But I left them a note. Just in case they would come to find me."

Alex chuckled at her answer.

"Where are we going?"

...

Meanwhile, in a certain bedroom...

Edith turned around when she noticed that someone had walked into the bedroom. She rubbed at her eyes and saw that it was her husband.

"What are you doing?" Edith patted at the empty spot beside her. "It's late. Come to bed."

Neil looked at his wife with a complicated expression.

"What is it?"

"Hazel sneaked out just now."

Edith glanced at the clock and saw the time. "This late?"

"Hmm..." Neil nodded. "That boy, Alex picked her up."

Hearing that Hazel was with Alex, Edith was more at ease. "Hazel is a grown-up. She trusts Alex and knows how to protect herself. It will be fine." Seeing that her husband was hesitating, Edith flashed him a faint smile. "Darling, they are grownups. They know what they are doing. Even if you don't like Alex, you should have a little more trust in Hazel."

His expression gradually softened. Neil took a deep breath before he walked over to his wife's side.. "I hope you're right."

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Alex's AUDI finally pulled over once they reached the hilltop.

He glanced at the woman beside him and stretched his hand to hold hers. Seeing the anxious look on her face, Alex sort of understood her feeling at the moment.

A few minutes ago, her adrenaline pumped. and she was feeling excited, sneaking out in the middle of the night with him.

Now that she had calm down and was able to think sensibly, Hazel was feeling guilty about sneaking out behind her uncle and auntie.

"Should we head back?"

Hazel snapped out of her thoughts and turned to Alex. Her gaze softened and Hazel shook her head. "It's fine. We're already here. Let's just stay here for a while."

Alex tilted his head to one side as he continued to watch her. If Hazel mentioned heading back, he would definitely turn around and send her back to the residence.

A long sigh escaped him. "I am really a bad influence on you, aren't I? If your uncle heard that I helped you to sneak out..." Suddenly, Alex did not know what will Hazel's scary uncle do to him.

Hazel laughed when she heard his words. "My uncle isn't that scary. He is someone who will understand if you talk to him slowly."

Alex merely smiled. He looked out the window and said, "Do you want to go out and walk around?"

It was at this time that Hazel chose to look out the window and noticed their surroundings. Her eyes widened and she was a little surprised upon seeing the night city view. Turning to Alex again, Hazel nodded and the two alighted the vehicle.

As soon as she stepped on the ground, Hazel felt something warm draped around her shoulders. Looking up, Alex had put his jacket around her body.

"Wear them or you'll get cold," Alex said.

Hazel lowered her gaze and nodded. "Un." She wrapped the jacket tightly on her body and instantly, Alex's scent filled her nostrils. At the thought that she was being hugged by Alex, her cheek turned a little red and her body warmed.

Alex stretched his hand to hold hers. He led her and walked along the path and soon arrived at a small park.

Hazel looked around and was surprised to see that there were a few groups of youngsters hanging around the place at this time. A few couples walked around the park, enjoying the night scenery.

"I didn't expect that there will be many people around at this time," Hazel said.

"Mmm... There are always a lot of people hanging around here with their friends." Alex led her to the spot where they could watch the city's view.

The city light from the distance looked absolutely beautiful. Hazel stood behind the railings and stared at the view in front of her in awe.

"Most of them would spend their time here until sunrise," Alex continued.

Hazel turned and looked at Alex with her eyes wide. "You can watch the sunrise here?"

Seeing her excitement, the corner of his lips turned up. "Mmm... Do you want to stay around and watch the sunrise?"

Hazel paused and hesitated as she considered his question. After a while, she nodded. Her grip on his hand tightened. "Let's stay around." She looked at the city view again and asked, "How do you find this place?" A thought came to her mind and Hazel tilted her head to one side and a teasing smile curled on her lips. "Don't tell me that you've taken your previous girlfriend here?"

His eyes narrowed and Alex pinched at both her cheek to express his anger. "What previous girlfriend?"

"I'm sorry. I was just teasing you." Her words were a little incomprehensible as her cheeks were stretched up.

Seeing her misty eyes and reddened cheek, Alex was a little satisfied. Finally, he let go of her cheeks and turned to pull her into his embrace. "Hazel Mo I only liked you in the past and will continue to like you in the future. Do you understand?"

"Un." Her heart warmed and Hazel found that she could not stop smiling.

"It was Tyler who introduced me to this place," Alex said. "He liked hiking and found out that there was a path for hikers to climb up here. Years ago, he make me come with him to hike up to watch the sunrise. It was then that we found out that some people would come over to this park just to walk around. This area is pretty safe with guards patrolling around. Because of that, the two of us would come over and hang around to watch the city view at night a few times."

"So, this is like your secret base with Tyler."

"Mhm..."

A soft laugh escaped her.

Alex looked at the girl in his embrace and saw the teasing look in her eyes. He immediately understood what she was trying to imply and narrowed his eyes. "Hazel Mo. What was that look in your eyes?"

Seeing the way he was looking at her, Hazel immediately turned away. Her hands covered both her cheeks as she was afraid that he was going to pinch at her cheeks again.

Although it did not hurt, Hazel thought that it was embarrassing as they were in public.

His eyes darkened. Hazel had both hands cupping her face and her lips were pouting. Alex put his hands on top of hers before he leaned in to kiss her lips.

Her hands were still at her cheek and Hazel could not find a way to escape. After being kissed by Alex for a while, her mind turned dizzier and she started to reciprocate to him.

In a distance, a group of youngsters started to cheer when they saw them kissing.

Hazel snapped out of her trance and pulled away. Her hands were still covering her reddened cheek. "Look. It's your fault that they were laughing at us."

Alex did not care about their teasing. He merely wanted Hazel to stop having a strange thought in her mind. He needed to tell her that the person he liked will only be her and that was why he has to kiss her.

Seeing that she was embarrassed, Alex pulled her closer and let her hide her face in his chest.

Once Hazel had calm down, Alex pulled her closer and the two chatted as they waited for the sunrise to come. After a while, Alex began to notice her droopy eyes. He pulled her over to a bench and sat down.

Alex wrapped his arms around her shoulders and let her lean on his body. It did not take a long time for him to see that Hazel had fallen asleep.

A faint smile appeared on his lips.. Alex leaned to kiss her forehead before he continued to hug her and guarded her as she slept.

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Hazel came home after her uncle had gone out to the office.

The moment she saw her Auntie Edith at the corner with a book in her hand, Hazel felt a little guilty about sneaking out and not telling them anything. Suddenly, Hazel had lost her courage to speak.

"You're back," Edith was the first to speak.

"Hmm..."

"Have you had your breakfast?"

Hazel was a little stunned at the question. She was expecting to get scolded, but her auntie only asked whether she had eaten with her usual warm voice. Facing this situation, Hazel felt the guilt intensify.

"I ate a little before coming back," Hazel said. She hesitated and asked, "Auntie Edith, are you not going to ask me where I go?"

"Didn't you left a note in your room?" Edith smiled. She saw the look on Hazel's face and tried her best not to laugh.

Hazel lowered her head. "Then... Is my uncle angry when he found that I had suddenly gone missing?"

"He did not think that you went missing."

"Ah?" Hazel wondered if her uncle was unaware that she was not in her bedroom.

"He saw you sneaking out with Alex last night."

Her expression grew frigid. Hazel certainly was not expecting her uncle to see her leave the house in the middle of the night. Then... since he had seen her sneaking out, would he not get angry?

That was the first time that Hazel had tried to sneak out and she was feeling guilty about it.

Seeing the look on Hazel's face, Edith decided not to tease the girl lest she would continue to worry. Hazel has been such an obedient little girl. Edith thought that it was interesting to see that Hazel had sneaked out.

"Come over here." Edith waved her hand and patted the space beside her. A soft laugh escaped her as Edith watched the way Hazel was walking over with her head lowered.

Hazel sat down and was pulled into Edith's embrace.

"Out of all my children, you are the one I would worry about the most," Edith said. She helped Hazel to tuck a few strands of hair behind her ears and continued. "And you are also the one that I trust the most."

Hazel bit at her lips. She had always known that her uncle and auntie had treated her like their own child. It was because of this reason that she was feeling guilty.

"I believe that both your uncle and I had taught you everything you need to know. You are grown up enough to know what you are doing," Edith continued. "As long as you are sure that you are safe and you know how to protect yourself, we won't stop you from doing whatever you want."

"I'm sorry," Hazel said. "I could not sleep last night and then, after talking to Alex, I just thought that I wanted to see him."

Edith flashed her a teasing smile. It felt that it was not long ago that Hazel was still hesitating about dating Alex. In just a few months, Edith could see that the kids' relationship had gotten better.

It looked like Alex's decision to stay in B City is the right one. He had wanted to stay closer to Hazel and pursue her and it looked like his patience to wait and pursue Hazel had finally paid off.

...

Hazel went back to her room after talking to Edith for a while. Her phone rang just as she had come out of the bathroom. Hazel looked at the screen and her lips curled when she saw Alex's name.

"Did you get into trouble with your uncle and Auntie Edith?" Alex asked.

"No. They were fine with it. However, Alex..."

"What is it?"

"My uncle saw me when I sneaked out of the house last night."

Alex halted when he heard her words. His heartbeat accelerated as he could sense an incoming danger. However, Alex quickly calm down and composed himself. Even if Hazel's uncle was going to scold him, Alex was ready for it.

It looks like he will have to arrange a meeting with Hazel's uncle soon.

The two chatted for a while and Alex assured Hazel that he did not mind getting into trouble with her uncle for her.

Once they hung up the phone, Alex made a phone call to Edith and explained to her what they were doing sneaking out. Although his mother and Hazel's auntie were best friends, he did not want them to misunderstand his intention towards Hazel. He really liked Hazel and hoped that perhaps soon, once she had graduated, he can propose to her.

Fortunately, Auntie Edith trusted them. After assuring her that he will not do anything to hurt Hazel, Alex hung up and get ready to head over to the office.

He was going to stay in L City for a few days to accompany Hazel and he should take some time to visit the company and looked into a few documents.

Previously, Alex had promised his father that he would not neglect his responsibility just because he wanted to pursue Hazel. Anyway, if he was someone who was that irresponsible, there was no way that Hazel's uncle will allow him to continue to court Hazel.

To be with Hazel, he needed to be the best.

Alex arrived at the company and was greeted by his assistant. Seeing the anxious look on the man's face, Alex had a sense of foreboding.

"What's wrong?" Alex asked when his assistant continued to hesitate.

"That... President Mo of MH Group is here to see you."

"What?" Alex was unable to hide his surprise. "Where is he?"

"President He... Your father heard of his visit and invited him to his office," the Assistant reported. "Both of them are now in the President's office."

A deep frown appeared on his face. Alex could sense that Hazel's uncle had come over to find him because he had instigated Hazel to sneak out with him. Although Auntie Edith was cool about it, it does not mean that Hazel's uncle would think the same.

Alex was aware of how much the man cared about Hazel.

He went to his father's office and rapped his knuckles on the door. Soon, Alex heard his father's voice and he pushed the door and walked in.

Two pairs of eyes were looking at him, and Alex had to play it cool. He greeted the two men and looked at Hazel's uncle anxiously.

"You're here," Ethan spoke when he saw his son. He glanced at Neil and frowned at his son. "Hazel's uncle came over to see you, but I told him that you would only come to the office in the afternoon."

"I need to talk to you," Neil said. He stood up and walked over to Alex.

He took a deep breath and smiled. "Sure.. Please come with me."

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Alex looked at the man in front of him and could guess that the reason for his appearance at this time was related to Hazel. Hazel had said that her uncle had seen her when she snuck out with him early in the morning and Alex was preparing himself to face the consequences.

However, a few minutes passed between them but the person in front of him had not said a word. With each passing second, Alex found that he was growing agitated. He knew very well that the man in front of him was trying to test his patience.

"Don't worry. I only have a few things I have to say to you. It would not take too long," Neil said. He took a sip from the coffee and continued. "You should know why I came here to find you." He did not wait for Alex to reply and continued, "I already know that Hazel and you are in a relationship."

Alex was aware that Neil would know about them. After all, he had accidentally seen the man's message on Hazel's phone.

"Since Hazel had agreed to be with you, then I would not say anything or try to stop you."

Although Neil was not too happy that Hazel had agreed to date Alex, Neil decided that he should not do anything to stop him. His wife was right. Hazel is a grown-up and knew what she was doing. Moreover, Alex was someone that they have watched for years. Rather than seeing Hazel dating someone they were not familiar with, it would be better if Hazel dated someone they know.

Meanwhile, Alex was surprised that Hazel's uncle would give his permission to date Hazel without making things difficult for him. He could not help but think that there was a trick behind this.

The corner of his lips turned into a smile. Neil was aware of what was going through Alex's mind at this time. "What? You think I would make things difficult for you?" His brow shot up. "Am I such a person?"

Of course, Alex could not say what was truly on his mind.

However, a few years ago, when he had the intention to pursue Hazel, was it not this man who had come over and stop him from going through with his plan? If that was not considered as making things difficult, then what is?

"I have told you that once you grew up, I will not stop you from pursuing Hazel," Neil said. "However, that does not mean that I will stop from keeping my eyes on you." There was a brief pause between them before Neil spoke again. "The most important thing for me is Hazel's happiness. Alex He, if you dare to hurt Hazel, you will have to face me."

"Uncle Mo, you don't have to worry. In this life, I will not do anything to hurt Hazel."

Neil merely chuckled at the boy's response. The two of them had a long way to go. Although he was aware that Alex liked his niece, he could not be too sure about what will happen in the future.

"It's good that you think of it like that." Neil paused as a thought came to his mind. "However, I still did not appreciate you and Hazel sneaking out in the middle of the night. Hazel is a girl and the city at night can be dangerous."

Alex nodded obediently. "I understand."

As he got nothing else to say to Alex, Neil stood up to leave. However, just as he was approaching the door, a thought came to his mind and Neil turned around.

"I heard that you have helped Hazel when someone tried to create a problem for her in B City."

"Yes. Hazel said told me that she ran into some trouble and asked if I can help her to find the person who was responsible for it," Alex said. He was unaware of how Hazel's uncle would know about that matter. After all, his role in helping Hazel was very minor.

"You don't have to be surprised." Neil chuckled. "President Zhang is a good friend of mine. Since her daughter was somehow implicated in that matter, of course, I will know about it."

Neil had heard bits of the accusation on Hazel. He was upset when he heard that there were some classmates who had mocked Hazel for being an orphan.

Hazel was five years old back then, but Neil could still remember how his wife had told her how Hazel had cried because one of her classmates had said that she was unwanted. He would never want Hazel to be sad because of her status again. However, he did not expect that once his little girl had lived far from him, she would be facing some grievance.

Although Hazel did not mind their mean words, it does not mean that he would feel the same. Neil was very angry when he heard the news. He was the one who had asked his friend, President Zhang to help him and arrange for the best lawyer to sue that girl for defamation.

Neil nodded. "Thank you for helping Hazel."

In the beginning, Neil did not like it when he heard that Alex had moved to B City to start a company. He knew very well that Alex had a hidden agenda for moving over to the city. However, at this time, Neil was relieved that Hazel would have someone to look after her when she ran into trouble.

Once he had finished what he wanted to say, Neil swung open the door to leave.

His movement halted when he saw Hazel stood in front of the door. His niece had her hand raised up as she was about to knock on the door.

The moment their gazes met, the two of them were unable to hide their surprise.

"Why are you here?" Neil asked.

Hazel was flustered upon seeing her uncle in front of her and she was not expecting to see him here. Moreover, she was aware that her uncle had seen her sneaking out last night and she was still worried that her uncle would be upset. Seeing that he had shown up in Alex's office, Hazel was worried that her uncle came to make things difficult for Alex.

"It's lunch hour. I came to accompany Alex for lunch," Hazel answered.

Didn't they just meet a few hours ago?

His eyes narrowed as Neil could sense the girl's distress. It seemed that she was really worried about her boyfriend.

"Uncle, why are you here?" Hazel asked.

"I came to discuss something with Alex."

Hazel tilted her head to one side. "About what?"

"Just some matters about cabbage."

"Ah?"

Neil laughed at her reaction. "Go on in. I still have to head to my office."

Hazel snapped out of her thoughts. "Oh. Okay."

Neil paused for a while and asked, "You're going to return to B City this weekend, right?" He watched her nod and continued, "Come over and see me before you head back.. I have something to talk to you."

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Hazel was still in a little muddle-headed after meeting her uncle at Alex's office. She was still unable to process that she had run into her uncle until Alex appeared at her side.

"Alex, what did you and my uncle talk about?" Hazel asked.

"You." Alex bopped at her nose.

Her eyes grew wide at his answer. "What did my uncle say to you?" Hazel took a step back to give Alex a look over. Although her uncle has always been a gentle person, at this time, Hazel was worried that he had come to beat Alex because of her.

Alex thought of an appropriate reason. "He heard about that incident in B City. He came to thank me for helping you up to find that instigator."

"Oh." Hazel was certainly not expecting her uncle to find out about that incident.

Initially, Hazel was planning to keep quiet about it. She did not want her uncle and auntie to worry. Anyway, the incident has passed and her name was cleared. However, she recalled that her uncle and Eira's parents had a good relationship. It was impossible for her uncle not to hear about it.

"Why are you here?" Alex asked. He pulled Hazel closer to him and a playful smile curled on his lips. "You... miss me?"

Hazel narrowed her eyes and punched him lightly on his arms. Her expression showed that she was very shy. "Who misses you? I came over because your mother asked me to come."

Alex tilted his head to one side. "My mother?"

"Hmm..." Hazel nodded. "She asked me to accompany her to shop around. She said Ellie's birthday is coming soon and she wanted my help to choose an appropriate gift."

It was at this time that Alex recalled that it will be his sister's birthday in a few weeks. However, at that time, he should be in B City to accompany Hazel.

"Then, can you help me to choose a gift for her as well?" Alex asked. He grabbed his wallet and passed her his card. "Just use this. Buy anything that you think Ellie would like."

Hazel stared at the card for a while. Then, she tilted her head and raised a brow. "Alex He, the expression on your face is telling me that you have just remembered your sister's birthday."

"You're right. If you don't remind me, I might forget."

Hazel clicked her tongue at him. Her gaze then shifted to the stack of papers on his table and the words she wanted to say stuck in her throat. Hazel was aware that Alex has been busy looking after his new business in B City as well as learning to manage his father's company. But still, the man always made time for her.

Suddenly, Hazel was feeling slightly guilty. Wasn't it because of her that Alex did not have enough sleep? He had to work hard while accompanying her.

Hazel bit at her lips and leaned to hug him. Her head rested on his chest and his scent filled her nose. Recently, Hazel thought that she began to like Alex's scent a lot. Surprisingly, his scent had a calming effect on her.

"What's the matter?" Alex asked. He combed her hair with his fingers and bent to kiss the top of her head.

"Alex He, you are so good to me."

Alex let out a soft chuckle. He could not understand why did her mood had suddenly changed. However, decided not to mind it. His girlfriend was acting coquettishly with him and Alex found that he was enjoying this.

"You're my girlfriend. If I'm not good to you, then who should I be good to?"

Hazel did not answer and instead tightened her hug around his body. After a while, she finally pulled away. "Alright. Go ahead and settle your work."

"You're leaving now?" There was a hint of disappointment in his tone.

Hazel stared at the man in front of her and chuckled. "No. Your mother asked me to wait for her here. She said she had an appointment with a friend somewhere around here and it will be convenient for us to meet here. Alex, will it be alright if I stay here for a while?"

His eyes brightened up. "Of course you can."

Hazel sat down on the sofa and played with her phone as she waited for Alex's mother to show up.

Alex was satisfied that he was able to see the person he liked whenever he looked up from his computer. The smile on his face widened and his fingers moved swiftly on the keyboard.

After waiting for half an hour, Alex's mother finally showed up.

Lily glanced at the two kids and held her laugh when she saw the dissatisfied look on her son's face. It was clear that Alex was enjoying his time alone with his girlfriend and was not too happy knowing that his mother had come to kidnap his girlfriend away.

"Hazel!" Lily went over to her and smiled. "Sorry. Have you waited too long? My appointment lasted longer than I thought."

"Auntie Lily, it's not that long." Hazel picked up her bag and walked over. "Anyway, Alex is here to accompany me."

Alex watched as the two chatted for a while before he walked over. He turned to his mother and asked, "Mom, where are you going?"

"Don't worry. I will only take Hazel to walk around the shopping mall to choose some gifts for your sister. Once we get what we are looking for, I will hand Hazel back to you."

Hazel's cheek turned a pink upon hearing Lily's words.

It was at this time that Hazel seemed to notice that this was the first time that she had met Alex's mother after she had agreed to date him. Suddenly, Hazel did not know how she should act around his mother.

Before Hazel was able to adjust her feelings, Lily had already linked their arms together.

Lily flashed a teasing smile at her son and looked at Hazel. "Come on. Let's go."

Alex did not have the chance to protest. He watched the two of them left his office and could only hope that his mother would not scare Hazel. His mother was too playful and

Alex was worried that she was going to tease his girlfriend until Hazel was embarrassed.

Once the two left the building, Lily asked the driver to take them to the mall. The two of them walked around for a while before Lily took Hazel to a jewelry shop.

A shop attendant quickly greeted them and brought them over to look at the displayed jewelry.

"Hazel, come over." Lily pulled her over to the counter.. "See which one you like best."

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Hazel followed Lily to the counter and looked at the jewelry displayed. "Auntie Lily, what are you planning to buy to Ellie?"

Lily let out a long breath as she continued to browse through the jewelry. "I'm thinking about buying a new bracelet. What do you think?"

Hazel followed her gaze and nodded. "A bracelet sounds good." She looked at the rows of bracelets and quickly noticed a few designs that Ellie would like to wear.

"Help me choose which design would be appropriate," Lily said. "I'm already this old, You youngsters have different tastes. You are close to Ellie as well. You should understand her preferences as well."

"Auntie Lily, you're not old at all. Your skin looks good. If you stood next to Ellie, people would think that the two of you were sisters."

Lily giggled happily at Hazel's words. "You have a sweet mouth."

The shop attendant came forward and introduced to them a few designs that would look nice for teenagers like Ellie. After looking at them for a while, both Lily and Hazel were down to three choices.

After looking at them for a while, Hazel finally helped to choose a simple-looking bracelet for Ellie. Then, she chose a few charms that Ellie might like. Hazel's relationship with Ellie was good and she knew a bit about the girl's preferences.

Once they were done choosing, Lily went with the shop attendant to settle some bills and Hazel took the chance to look around the store.

Alex had handed her his card, hoping that she would help him to pick out a present for his sister. Hazel seemed to recall that Ellie and Hayley have been discussing a newly released bag and decided to look at them later.

Her steps halted something in the display caught her attention. Hazel stared at the bangle on display and was smitten. The design was simple, but the small diamond at the center made it look expensive.

"Did you fancy anything?"

Hazel turned around and smiled when she heard the voice. "Auntie Lily, are you done with your payment?"

"Mmm... they are helping me to wrap up the gift." Lily looked at the bangles in the case. Then, she waved for the shop attendant to come over and pointed to the bangle that Hazel has been watching for a while.

The shop attendant took out the bangle from the display and handed it to Lily.

"Hazel, come. I noticed that you have been looking at this bangle for a while. Take a look if this will suit you."

"Ah?" Hazel swiftly composed herself and shook her head. "Auntie Lily, I was just looking around."

"It's fine. They are still wrapping up the gift for Ellie. Come. Take a look."

After a brief hesitation, Hazel finally went over to look at the bangle. Her eyes sparkled when she got a closer look at the bangle. The design and style were definitely something she liked.

The shop attendant helped her to put the bangle on her wrist and Hazel continued to admire the piece.

Seeing that the bangle looked nice on Hazel, Lily did not hesitate to ask the shop attendant to help them pack up the piece as well.

"Auntie Lily, are you buying this one as well?"

"Mmm..." Lily nodded. "It's for you."

Hazel was about to say a few words of protest when Lily put her hand on hers.

"I know that you can buy this piece yourself, but I want to buy this as a gift for you," Lily said. "Please don't reject this." Her lips stretched into a smile. "I always look forward to the day that Alex would bring home a girlfriend."

Hearing that Lily was mentioning her relationship with Alex, Hazel was shy again.

"I have watched the two of you grew up together and was relieved when Alex told me that the two of you are together."

Hazel lowered her gaze. "I did not expect that I would be together with Alex."

"Well, thank you for giving Alex a chance. If Alex tried to bully you, tell me. I will help to set him straight."

Lily had wanted to tease Hazel, but at the thought that her son would be upset if she continued to make his girlfriend shy, Lily can only hold back. "Both of you are staying in B City. Auntie can only hope that you will help me to look after Alex."

"Auntie Lily, I will definitely help you to look after Alex."

Lily flashed a relieved smile when Hazel did not try to reject her gift. This can be considered buying a present for her future daughter-in-law right? Just thinking about her son will bring Hazel back home as her daughter-in-law in the future made her happy.

She had always liked Hazel. The girl was obedient and had good manners. She always had a good relationship with Hazel and the girl would accompany her and Edith to shop. The most important thing was that Hazel is someone that her son liked very much.

"Let me tell you a secret."

Hazel stared back at Lily curiously.

"Alex would probably not mention this, but he had liked you from high school. Back then, he had wanted to tell you about his feelings, but someone had stopped him from doing so."

"Someone stopped him?"

"Hmm..." Lily nodded and did not attempt to reveal who that person was. "We all thought that the two of you were too young to get in a relationship. Your uncle wanted you to focus on your study and I thought that the two of you should be allowed to experience the world outside first. After giving it a thought Alex then agreed that he will not start to pursue you until he had graduated. We did not think that after a few years, he would still like you."

Hazel was surprised that the others had long known that Alex had liked her for years. She continued to listen to Lily's story and was astonish at Alex's patience to wait for her.

Once the shop attendant helped Hazel to remove the bangle, Lily asked the attendant to help her to wrap up the bangle and she settled the bills together.

Afterward, the two continued to walk around and Hazel finally helped Alex to pick up a gift for his sister.

Seeing that Hazel was waving her son's card, a faint smile curled on her lips, however, Lily decided not to say anything.

Somehow, she had a hunch that her cunning son had made a plan to hand over his card to Hazel and would not take it back in the future.

After walking around the mall for almost three hours, the two of them were finally done with their shopping. Lily turned to Hazel and asked, "Hazel, you are going back to B City in a few days, right? How about having dinner at our place today?"

Hazel gave it a thought and finally agreed.

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Alex returned home and was surprised to find that Hazel was in the kitchen with his mother. The two of them were preparing something for dinner. The smell of something spicy wafted through the room and Alex immediately knew that his mother had invited Hazel to accompany her to eat something spicy again.

In their family, both Alex and Ellie followed after their father. They could not tolerate spicy food. However, his mother was someone who loved to eat them.

In the past, whenever his mother wanted to eat something spicy, she would always invite Auntie Edith to eat with her. After a while of eating with them, Hazel had built her tolerance for spicy food and would accompany the two women to eat.

Although Alex had tried to eat them, he could not bear the level of spiciness that his mother had always liked.

Noticing that someone was standing at the kitchen entrance, Lily turned around and smiled when she saw her son.

"Mom," Alex called with a helpless tone.

"I asked you to bring Hazel back home to have a meal together, and you haven't said a word to her." Lily narrowed her eyes at her son. "In the end, I have no choice but to ask her myself."

"Mom, I told you that I will ask Hazel to come before we headed back to B City," Alex said.

Lily watched her son with a hint of dissatisfaction. "You're just too slow."

Hazel stood at the side and smiled as she watched the mother and son's exchange. She had always thought that Alex's interaction with his mother was very amusing.

Sensing that his girlfriend was staring at him as he continued to argue with his mother, Alex was a little embarrassed. He let out a cough and escaped.

Lily watched his son's retreating gaze with a triumph look in her eyes. When she turned to Hazel again, Lily did not miss the way the girl was looking at her son.

Although Lily wanted to tease Hazel, she also knew that the girl would easily get embarrassed. The purpose of having Hazel have dinner with them was to let her be more at ease.

Once Ethan came home, the family had dinner together with Hazel as their guest.

Because Hazel had come over frequently to their house since she was a little child, no one felt awkward to have her around. Ethan had always treated her gently and Lily was very excited to have someone who can accompany her to eat spicy dishes. With Ellie around the table, the atmosphere in the He's residence was very lively.

Alex watched this harmonious scene with a mixed feeling. He was glad that his family liked Hazel and had treated her as family, however, he was not happy that everyone around was trying to snatch her attention away from him.

His father was busy asking her about her studies. His mother was busy shoving more food into her bowl. And his sister, Ellie would not stop trying to talk to Hazel about some new cafe nearby her school. His girlfriend did not even spare a glance at him.

In the end, he could only continue to eat silently. Because he was not in a good mood, the food he ate was a little tasteless.

When he looked up, Alex noticed that his sister was staring at him with her eyes wide.

"Big brother, when did you learn to eat spicy food?" Ellie asked. Her tone was filled with awe. "And you eat so much of them!"

Hearing his sister's question, Alex shifted his gaze towards the food that he had been eating for the last few minutes. His sense returned the moment he saw the chicken coated in red, spicy sauce clipped between his chopstick.

Suddenly, Alex could feel the numbing spice on his lips and tongue. His face grew hot and his throat started to hurt. The food seemed stuck on his throat and Alex immediately stood up and headed to the kitchen to spit out. He washed his mouth thoroughly and drank a lot of water to neutralize the spiciness, however, it doesn't seem to work.

"Don't just drink water, it won't help you."

Alex turned around and saw that his girlfriend was staring at him with concern.

Hazel walked over to the refrigerator and pulled out a chocolate bar. Then, she broke the chocolate into tiny pieces and pushed them into his mouth.

"Try to put them over your tongue. It will help to neutralize the spiciness better. I can't find any milk, but a piece of chocolate will help." Hazel continued with a serious look on her face. Once she saw that Alex had stopped panting from the spiciness, she grabbed a tissue paper and helped to dab the sweats on his face. "Why are you so careless? You know that you cannot eat spicy food, but you continued to eat them."

A warm feeling spread from his heart as Alex continued to listen to his girlfriend's nagging. The spiciness in his mouth gradually toned down.

Alex tried the best to stay still as Hazel continued to help him wipe his sweats. The corner of his lips turned up as he was enjoying his girlfriend's attention.

Hazel paused when she realized that the situation does not seem right. She looked up and met Alex's burning gaze. Just like that, she was pulled into his embrace.

She was still trying to figure out what was happening when she heard his voice.

"You keep paying attention to everyone but me." His voice was low and a little hoarse. "I was unhappy and did not realize that I've been eating too much of that spicy chicken."

Hazel looked up and saw that her boyfriend was looking at her with pitiful eyes. The look she was giving her was as if he was an abandoned puppy.

"Hazel, you were busy chatting with the others and didn't even look at me."

Her lips twitched when she understood what happened. "Alex He, I did not expect that you can very childish."

"Well, I can only act childish in front of you."

Hazel bit her lips as she tried to suppress her laughter. She pulled away from him and looked at his face. "Are you feeling alright now?"

"I feel better." His lips and tongue felt thick, but it was not as painful as it was before. His gaze fell on her lips and a playful smile appeared on his face. "I heard that eating something sweet will help to neutralize the spiciness."

Hazel placed her finger on his lips. Her eyes narrowed. "I also heard that splashing a bit of vinegar on your tongue could help to reduce the spiciness. Alex He, have you not drink enough vinegar yet?"

Once they have finished their meal, Alex happily took the task to send Hazel back to her uncle's place.. After giving his boyfriend a goodnight kiss, Hazel went into the house and was startled when she ran into her uncle as she was going upstairs.

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Neil glanced at the clock before he looked at Hazel again. "Did you had dinner with Alex and his family?"

Earlier, his wife had told him that Hazel would not join them for dinner as she will be having dinner at the He's residence. He did not think that Hazel would return home earlier.

"Hmm..." Hazel nodded. The grip on the phone in her hand tightened. She was reminded that her uncle had seen her sneaking out last night and was a little embarrassed about it. Then, in the afternoon, she had run into her uncle at Alex's office.

Would her uncle think that she was too sticky to Alex?

Neil stretched his hand and patted her hair gently. "Then, go on and take a bath. Have an early rest."

Hazel was surprised when her uncle did not say anything to her. Seeing that her uncle was about to turn around, Hazel tugged at his hand.

He turned around and looked at her inquiringly. "What's wrong?"

"Uncle, didn't you say that you have something to talk to me?"

Neil stared at his niece and smiled. "Do you have time now?" He watched her nod and stepped aside. "Then, come with me to my office."

Hazel followed him to his office and sat down on the sofa. She watched as he took a seat and could not help but wonder what did he wanted to talk to her about.

Suddenly, Hazel recalled her conversation with Alex's mother earlier that day.

Auntie Lily had mentioned that her uncle did not want her to date in high school when he found out that Alex had liked her. Although Hazel had known that Auntie Edith might know about Alex's feelings, Hazel would never guess that her uncle was the first to know about it.

"How are you and Alex?"

Hazel was prepared that her uncle might want to ask her about her relationship with Alex, but hearing him talking about it felt awkward.

"We're... good."

Neil noticed how her cheek turned pink as he mentioned that boy. Anyone could see that Hazel had feelings for that Alex. It was rare for Hazel to have this shy expression when she talked about a boy.

The shyness on her face was almost similar to her mother. Years ago, when Claire and Adam had just dated, Claire would often have this expression on her face whenever she looked at Adam.

Suddenly, the words that he wanted to say to Hazel were stuck in his throat.

"You really like him."

Hazel stared at her uncle with her eyes wide. She... did not expect for him to be straightforward. "Un." Something warm spread in her heart as she thought about Alex. She really, really liked him.

After changing their relationship from friends to lovers, Hazel began to really watch him and noticed the things that she had previously missed about Alex. For example, he had a really nice smell, and that his voice can be soothing and will be able to calm her. He was also getting better at kissing her.

Hazel was not sure that the word 'like' is enough to express her feelings towards him.

Neil took a deep breath. "Then, what is your plan?"

Hazel tilted her head to one side. "My plan?"

A soft cough escaped him. Neil thought it was awkward for him to have this conversation with Hazel. However, regarding Hazel, Neil would rather listen to

everything through her mouth. He wanted to know what was in Hazel's mind and what she thought about Alex. "Your relationship is good. Then, are you planning to marry him?"

Hazel's face turned darker shades of red and her ears burned. She could almost imagine some smokes coming out of her ears. She had never thought that she would be discussing marriage when she walked into her uncle's office.

This question... she did not know how to answer. Can she not answer?

Previously, Alex had mentioned marriage and she had said that she will think about it. She had not thought that far ahead.

"Have you not discussed this matter with Alex?" Neil asked when his niece did not answer.

"Alex had mentioned about this previously," Hazel answered. "I told him that we have just dated and it was too early for me to think about marriage."

Neil was a little unhappy that Alex had mentioned marriage at their early stage of dating. However, he was relieved when he heard Hazel's answer. In the end, he was not prepared to let this cabbage leave his side. He wished that he would have a little more time to dote on his niece.

He was reminded that he had caught Hazel sneaking out last night and was suddenly concerned about her. However, his wife is right. Hazel is a grownup and she knew what she was doing. In the end, Neil did not speak out his concern. He should put his trust in Hazel.

"If you wanted to think about marriage, at least wait until you have graduated," Neil said. This was what his brother would like too, right?

...

After spending her time talking to her uncle about her relationship with Alex, Hazel returned to her room and took a long, hot bath.

Last night, she had snuck out with Alex and in the afternoon, she had gone out with his mother to shop around. It was only after spending her time at the He's residence that she had returned home. She did not have enough sleep and her body was a little tired. However, once she thought that she had spent her time being with everyone she loved and cared about, Hazel thought that it was all worth it.

A long sigh escaped her as Hazel leaned on the bathtub.

Marriage, huh? She really hasn't thought that far.

Did she like Alex that much that she wanted to marry him and spend the rest of her life with him?

Hazel closed her eyes and thought about this question.

In the end, she figured that she could not imagine her life without Alex by her side. Thinking about him with some other girls made her chest hurt.

She really liked being around him. When they were together, Hazel wanted to get closer to him. Whenever they parted, she found that she was looking forward to seeing him again. When they were not together, she would often find herself thinking about him.

The feeling was too overwhelming.

Once she had changed her mindset about Alex, once she was conscious of him, her feelings towards him continued to grow. It was like the dam was broken and the feelings kept pouring out.

It seemed.... that she had really fallen in love with him.

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After they both returned to B City, Hazel was immediately busy with various assignments and tests. Hazel's field of study was quite difficult and as one of the top students in her course, her professor was expecting a lot from her.

The time for her to meet up with Alex was reduced, but Alex would still show up in front of her dormitory every morning to give her breakfast. Sometimes, the two of them would go on a date to the library.

Although there was nothing that Alex could do but watch as his girlfriend continued to read her books, Alex had never voiced his complaint. After all, with his presence, he was able to stop those who had wanted to get close to his girlfriend.

Ever since Hazel had revealed her identity as the MH Group's heiress, there seemed to be more boys interested in her. Even if they would never have the chance to pursue Hazel, everyone was looking forward to building a friendship with her.

If one had a good relationship with her, then afterward, it would not be that hard to find a job through Hazel's connection. Unfortunately for them, it was not an easy task to approach Hazel.

Even if her boyfriend was not around, Hazel was someone who will let others take advantage of her.

In the afternoon, Hazel had just finished her test when she noticed her Auntie Edith had posted something in her circle. Seeing the post about the twins, Hazel quickly walked over to a corner and gave her auntie a call.

The call went through after a few seconds. After exchanging their pleasantries, Hazel immediately asked about the twin's well-being.

From the latest checkup, the doctor had confirmed that both mother and babies are in good condition. It was the first time that anyone in the family had a twin and they were all excited.

"Auntie Edith, are those really the baby's footprint?"

Earlier, Hazel had seen the post where she could see one of the twin's footprints on her Auntie Edith's stomach. She was excited and was looking forward to meeting the twins soon.

"You've seen them?" Edith laughed. "The boys are very active recently and have been kicking around. That was the first time that we could get a clear picture of the footprint."

Hazel heaved a long sigh. She was far away from them and was unable to see that footprint with her very own eyes.

"Auntie Edith, there is still a couple of months before you gave birth, right?"

"Supposedly, yes. But the doctor said that with the twins, I might have to enter the labor room sooner," Edith said. Moreover, there was a possibility that she will have a cesarean instead of natural birth.

Hazel thought about her schedule and was regretting that she would not be able to return to L City to look at the babies. "Once I started my internship, it would be hard for me to come back."

"Speaking about your internship, have you start house-hunting?"

"I haven't. Alex said that he is going to help me to look for a place to stay," Hazel said. "There is still a time to look for a place."

"Just remember. The most important thing is safety, alright?"

The two exchanged a few words before they hung up. Hazel stared at her phone for a few seconds before she sent out a text message to Alex.

Hazel went to the cafeteria and found her roommates. The four of them were having meals together when Hazel's phone started to chime. Seeing the name on the screen, Hazel went to a corner to pick up her phone.

"Sorry. I was in the meeting earlier," Alex said the moment the phone was connected.

"It's alright. It was nothing important."

Alex heaved a soft sigh. To him, everything about Hazel is important. However, just now, the company was facing some trouble and everyone had to gather in the meeting room to discuss their next step. As he was concerned about some matter, Alex had joined the meeting and had forgotten to bring along his phone.

"You don't have class afterward, right? I'll come over and pick you up in half an hour. Is that okay? Let's go and see the house."

Hazel checked at the time and immediately agreed to his words. "Have you looked at the place yet?"

"I have. It's a good spot. The location is convenient and close to several facilities. The most important thing is that the place isn't that far from your internship company. I think the place should be suitable for you."

"Well then, I will trust your judgment."

Alex laughed upon hearing her words.

Realizing that she did not have a lot of time before Alex was going to pick her up, Hazel went back to her dormitory to put down her bags and changed her clothes. She was tying up her long hair into a ponytail when Alex's message came to tell her that he was waiting for her at the usual place.

Hazel looked at her reflection one more time before she grabbed her purse and sprinted to meet with her boyfriend.

Just as she was nearing the vehicle, Alex alighted and frowned when he looked at her. Initially, he wanted to scold her when he saw her running towards him. However, the moment he saw the smile on her face, his anger quickly disappeared.

After running for a short distance, her cheek had turned red as Hazel tried to catch up with her breath.

"What are you running for?" Alex asked. His tone was full of pampering.

"I did not want you to wait for too long."

Alex let out a helpless sigh when he heard her answer. He stretched his hand and gave her cheek a soft pinch. "I would not mind waiting for you a while longer. Next time, don't run around. It's dangerous. What would happen if you fell?"

Hazel stuck her tongue at him. "I'm not a child."

"I know that. But an adult could also fall if you're not careful."

Hearing that his boyfriend had started to nag, Hazel exhaled a long sigh and could only resign to her fate. Fortunately, it was lunch hour and there was not a lot of passersby as most of them were having lunch at the cafeteria. Or else, it would be embarrassing to let others see this scene.

"Alright. I know. Next time, I won't run around anymore.."

A smile curled on his lips. "Un. Good girl." Alex leaned forward to peck at her nose and turned around to help her with the door. "Come on in."

Hazel slid into the passenger's seat and waited for Alex to enter.

"Have you had your lunch?" Alex asked.

"I ate a little." She was having her lunch before Alex had called. Then, the moment he said that he was coming, Hazel had told her roommates that she needed to leave and her food was half-finished.

"Then, accompany me to lunch first. Then, we'll go and look at the house, alright?"

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After having lunch together, Alex drove towards a residential area. He pulled over at the parking lot and brought Hazel upstairs to look at the house.

Hazel looked at the signboard and thought that the name of the apartment seemed a little familiar, but she could not remember where she had seen it.

She was busy telling Alex about her conversation with her Auntie Edith earlier that she failed to notice that Alex had led her into the elevator and used the residence access card. The two of them finally reached their floor and reached the door. Alex keyed in the password and led her into the house.

As soon as Hazel walked in, she started to go around the house to look at its condition and such. Looking at the layout and decoration of the place, Hazel was immediately satisfied.

The place was exactly as what Alex had told her. It matched her style and it was closer to the company. She could reach the company in ten minutes by bus.

Hazel was just about to ask a few questions about the place when she noticed that they did not come into the place with an agent. It was at this time that she started to realize the strangeness of the situation.

"What's wrong? Alex asked when he saw the strange look on Hazel's face. "You don't like this place?"

"No. That's not it." Hazel bit her lips and walked over to Alex. "I just remember that there are a few questions I need to ask... then I just realized that we did not come over with an agent or the landlord. Alex, how did we get in?"

Alex laughed at her question. "The landlord did come with you."

"Ah?" Hazel tilted her head to one side. She wondered if she was too distracted that she had not seen anyone coming over with them earlier. She looked around and was very sure that they did not come over with anyone.

Was Alex trying to trick her?

He grinned when he saw her expression. "Well, the landlord is in standing in front of you."

Hazel stared back at Alex and blinked. "You?"

"Mhm..."

"You're my landlord?"

"Yes, it's me."

Her mouth agape as she stared at Alex in disbelief. "This is your property?"

"Mmm... I bought this place last year after I moved to B City," Alex said. "As I said, the place looks great and was close to local amenities. It's not too bad to invest in properties."

Hazel did not know when did Alex start to have the interest to invest in properties.

"What do you think of this place? I think the style would suit you." Just like a real estate agent, Alex started to tell her the advantage of choosing this place. Once he was done, Alex turned to his dazed girlfriend and could not stop himself from pecking at her lips. "The most important thing is that your next-door neighbor is a good person."

"You even know the neighbor?"

The smile on his lips widened. "Mmm... You know that person too."

Hazel looked at him quizzically. The people that they both were familiar with should be someone from L City, right?

The look on his girlfriend's face was too adorable that Alex was having a hard time trying to bite at her cheek. Alex burst into a laugh before he pinched at her cheek. "It's me."

Hazel stared back at him like a lost bunny. She was not expecting this plot twist. It was then that she realized the reason she had thought the name of the apartment building to be familiar. Previously, Alex had mentioned this place to her. He had told her that she is welcome to find her anytime she wanted, but she never found the time to visit his place.

If she stayed at this place, then it will be convenient for her to meet Alex every day and night. As the thought came to her mind, Hazel was both excited and shy.

She narrowed her eyes at him and gave him a look over. "Alex, tell me the truth. Did you plan this? Did you buy this place knowing that I was looking for a place to stay?"

"Of course not." Alex chuckled. "It was a coincidence. Initially, I bought this place for privacy."

The apartment had two units per floor and he had occupied one. Since Hazel needed a place to live before her internship began, of course, he was going to offer his place.

He would be happier if Hazel wanted to move in with him. But knowing Hazel, Alex decided to take a slow step at a time. The most important thing was to make her comfortable.

Previously, he had asked Hazel to come over to visit his apartment in the past, but Hazel had rejected his invitation. Alex thought that at that time, they had just begun to confirm their relationship and Hazel was shy. Afterward, he had never asked again.

Anyway, it does not make any difference even if she was staying next door. As long as he knew that she was close to him, Alex would be at ease.

"What do you think of this place? It's not bad right?" Alex continued to sell the place to his girlfriend. "Once I heard that you are looking for a place, I asked someone to redecorate this place to your taste. I thought you might like it."

Hazel stared at the man in front of her and after a while, a playful smile appeared on her lips. "Then, Mister Landlord, would you consider giving me a huge discount?"

"Of course. I will give you a girlfriend's discount for you." He pulled her into his embrace and spoke. "Just stay here. At least, I will be more at ease when I can look after you."

It did not take her too long before Hazel agreed. It was definitely a good thing to have Alex living close to her. Because her friends all were accepted to different companies, Hazel decided to rent a place alone.

It was dangerous to live alone and her Auntie Edith was worried about her. However, with Alex living closer to her, she could always rely on him if she encountered any trouble.

After looking at her new apartment, Hazel followed Alex next door to his apartment. It was the first time that she had stepped into his place.

It was clean and neat with minimalize style. Hazel thought that the decoration of this apartment really suited his style.

Hazel started to look around and her gaze halted when she saw something that seemed out of place.

"My sloth and rabbit!" Hazel picked up the two plush toys on the sofa and hugged them tightly.

Previously, Alex had won those toys on the claw machine for her. However, she had left them in his car and Alex had kept them with him.

"Hmm... They have been waiting for you to come over and pick them up for a long time. Fortunately, you are here now."

Hearing his words, Hazel had a feeling as if she was being tricked.

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It was the first time that Hazel had come to Alex's place. Seeing that she had no other schedule, the two of them decided to stay around and Alex was going to send Hazel back to her dormitory after having dinner together.

Alex took this chance to bring Hazel around the apartment to look at the facilities. Even though Hazel had agreed to stay at the apartment, Alex continued to tell her about the advantage of staying around. It was as if he was afraid that Hazel was going to change her mind anytime soon.

Since Alex had offered to cook their dinner, the two of them decided to head over to the nearest supermarket to buy groceries together.

As soon as they arrived, Hazel pulled the trolley and the couple entered the supermarket side by side.

"What do you want to eat?" Alex asked. He had one arm circling her waist, as he pulled her away from bumping into another customer.

Hazel began to look around as she gave his question a thought. "Let's go and see the ingredients first. At this time, there shouldn't be a lot of fresh ingredients left."

As she grew up, Hazel had always followed her Auntie Edith to the market and knew that if they wanted to get the best ingredients, they should visit the market early in the morning.

The two went to the wet market first. The supermarket was quite large and there was a selection of ingredients sold. Perhaps, it was because this market was located around the elite area, therefore the ingredients sold remained fresh. The staff would continue to replenish their fresh stock.

Hazel walked around the wet market and her steps halted as she arrived at one section. Suddenly, she turned to Alex and flashed him a strange smile.

"What is it?" Alex raised a brow before he turned to look at the ingredients on the rack. A laugh escaped him when he noticed her favorite ingredients.

"Alex He, do you know how to prepare crab dishes?" Hazel batted her eyelashes at him. The look on her face was adorable.

Seeing that his girlfriend was acting coquettishly with him, Alex did not have the heart to reject her. Even if he did not know how to prepare crab dishes, he will have to learn.

Alex stared at the woman in front of her with a pampering gaze. "I don't know how to do it. But, if you want them, I can learn."

In Alex's opinion, cooking a crab dish would not be so difficult. As long as you have the right ingredients everything would turn out okay. The thing he was worried about is how to clean and prepare them. Perhaps he should look at some videos and study how to deal with crab first before he attempted to cook them.

Her heart warmed knowing that he was willing to learn to cook her favorite food for her. Hazel leaned on his arms and lowered her head to hide her smile.

At this time, a promoter walked over to the couple with a tray of her promoted item. After greeting the couple, the promoter straightaway began to introduce the product in her hand.

"Handsome brother, pretty sister, coincidentally today we had a promotion where you can buy two bottles of this yogurt drink and get free couple mugs."

The promoter's voice was gentle and fluent. It looked like she has been repeating the same words over and over again for a long time. However, the way she spoke, there was no way for others to butt in to stop her from talking.

Both Hazel and Alex were about to decline the promoter's offer before she continued to talk.

"Don't go away just yet," the Promoter said. "Let me show you the design first." She put her stuff on the rack and pulled out the sample of the mug from the bag that she was carrying. "You see. This design is perfect for a beautiful couple like you two." She looked at Hazel and smiled. "Pretty sister, take a look."

Hazel stared at the mug and halted. When the mug was put side by side, one could see the image of two bunnies kissing could be seen. The illustrations of the bunnies were cute and adorable. With just one look at it, Hazel was smitten. She had always been a fan of bunnies.

Of course, the moment Alex saw the expression on her face, he knew that she was interested to have the mugs.

"You see, pretty sister, this pair of mugs should be perfect for you and your partner right?" The smile on the promoter's face widened. "If you like this pair of mugs, you have to make your decision fast. We are only giving out fifty sets of mugs today. Right now, there are less than ten available."

Alex looked at the promoter and thought that she was good at her job.

"We'll take it," Hazel said.

The promoter looked at Hazel with a happy expression on her face. Swiftly, she picked up two bottles of yogurt and placed them into their carts. "Thank you, pretty sister. Once

you made your payment at the counter, you can come over and meet me with your receipt. Then, I'll give you the mugs."

As the promoter walked away, Alex turned to Hazel and asked, "You like it?"

"Mhmm... The bunnies print is very cute, don't you think?" Hazel smiled. Her eyes were shining brightly. "Let's put them at your place. Next time I can use them whenever I come over your place."

Of course, Alex had no opinion about this matter.

Once they bought everything they need, the two of them headed back to Alex's apartment.

As Alex went online to look for some tutorials to clean the crab, Hazel took out the coupling mugs and put them side by side. Seeing how adorable they look together, Hazel took out her phone, snapped a few pictures, and posted them in her moments.

When she went walked into the kitchen, Alex was seriously staring at the crab. Hazel walked over to him and decided to help him out.

"Let me show you how to clean them up." Hazel tied her hair into a high ponytail. Then, she grabbed a crab and a pair of scissors. After demonstrating to Alex to clean the crab, Hazel stood at the side and watched him.

Seeing that he was cleaning the crab with a serious look on his face, Hazel let out a laugh and took a picture of him. As she browsed through her gallery, Hazel was surprised to see that there were a lot of his photos on her phone.

In just a few months, her album was filled with photos of them together.

The cooking process ended after almost an hour. Alex set up three dishes and one soup on the table and the two of them sat down together.

Alex glanced at the new mug they got earlier and a faint smile curled on his lips.. Eating dinner together like this made him look forward to their future together.

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As the weekend comes, Alex took Hazel shopping to buy some furniture and everything that Hazel might need in the new place. The apartment was empty and instead of

making his own decision, Alex had always wanted to let Hazel choose whatever she liked.

Alex drove over to a furniture shop and the shop attendant immediately greeted them amiably at the door. Hearing that the two were going to buy a few sets of furniture for a house, the shop attendant was immediately happy.

The couple was led towards the sofa area and the shop attendant started to introduce them to a few best-selling and new arrivals in their store.

Seeing that the couple started to discuss which sofa set they liked best, the shop attendant tacitly left to give them some privacy.

"I still think that we don't need to fully furnish the apartment," Hazel said. "Anyway, I will be living there for a few months. It will be a waste if we buy too many things for the house."

Alex listened to her words and a smile curled on his lips. He liked how this discussion sounded like they were looking to decorate their house together.

"It's fine. Once you graduate and return to L City, I can always rent the apartment to someone else," Alex said. "With a fully furnished apartment, it would be easier to get a higher rent."

Hazel nodded. "That's true." Her movement halted and Hazel turned to Alex with a quizzical expression. "Didn't you say that you bought that unit because you wanted privacy? Once I return to L City, are you planning to rent the apartment to someone else?"

Alex chuckled. "By the time you graduated, my project in this city should stabilize as well. Daniel won't need me to help him manage the company so much. Of course, I'm planning to head back to L City and help my dad with the company matters."

"So, it's like that." Hazel nodded.

She had always guessed that Alex was going to take over his family business someday.

A thought came to her mind and Hazel tilted her head to one side as she looked at him. "Alex, why does it feel like you're staying in B City to accompany me?" Her eyes narrowed and Hazel laughed. "I'm probably thinking too much, right?"

Alex did not say a word and merely smiled at her. "Speaking of that, the company sends me to attend a banquet in a few days." Alex tried to change the subject before Hazel would think further into the matter. "Would you come with me as my plus one?"

Hazel thought of her schedule and nodded. "Sure. I'll come with you." After the last assignments, her schedule was not as packed as before.

At this time, the shop attendant returned to ask them about their decision. After a brief discussion with Alex, the two finally settled on the dark gray sofa set. The color was suitable to match with any color and it would not look too dirty.

After choosing the dining set, the two walked into the bedroom area.

The unit that Alex had bought was prepared with a built-in closet. Therefore, there were not many items that they have to search for. After deciding on the bed frame that she liked, the two of them went to look at a few mattresses on display.

After trying out a few of them, Hazel went back to the second one she tried.

Alex watched as Hazel lay down on the mattress before he sat down beside her. "You like this one?"

"I think this is the most comfortable one so far." Hazel inched inside to create a space between them and patted at the mattress. "Here. Try and lay down and tell me what you think?"

His gaze darkened, but Alex quickly looked away. He lay down beside her and looked up at the ceiling.

"How is it? Comfortable, right?"

Alex turned around when he heard her voice. Suddenly, the two of them were looking at each other. A few seconds passed and a strange feeling rose as Hazel looked at the man beside her.

Laying down beside Alex on the mattress gave her a strange feeling.

He was so close to her that Hazel could feel his breath tickling her skin. Their pair of eyes were looking into each other. Hazel thought that Alex's eyes looked very beautiful. She could almost see her reflection in them. Suddenly, she had a feeling as if she was going to be sucked into them.

His eyes were pulling her closer to him and Hazel was fighting the urge to kiss him.

The shop attendant chose this time to return. He let out a dry cough and smiled amiably when the couple looked at him. "Sorry for the interruption. Have you made your choice? Or else, I can show you a few other choices that we have."

"No need," Hazel said. She sat up quickly and got off the mattress fast. "We like this one."

The attendant's smile widened. "Excellent choice. This is one of the best-selling mattresses we have here. In fact, most of the newlyweds would choose this one as well. The material is excellent and good for any postures. It's easy to clean, durable, and heavy-duty."

Hazel lowered her head shyly upon hearing the attendant's words. Suddenly, she was worried that the shop attendant had misunderstood her relationship with Alex.

They were not newlyweds, ah! Moreover... why does she think that the shop attendant's words seemed a little strange?

The thought made her heart skipped a beat. Hazel glanced at Alex and the memories of lying down beside him resurfaced on her mind. Contrary to Hazel's expression, Alex had a cool look on his face as he continued to talk to the shop attendant.

After settling down with the payment and the delivery, the couple stopped by a restaurant to have their lunch. Then, they headed over to the mall to buy a few things that they might need for the house.

Hazel looked at the sets of plates and bowls before she looked at Alex for his opinion. "Isn't this a little too much? Why would we need too many bowls? There are just the two of us, right?"

His expression softened upon hearing her words. He could already foresee that the two of them were going to share many meals together. "Mmm... you're right. Just buying a pair of everything should be enough."

Hazel agreed before she grabbed two sets of everything and put them in her trolley. Alex looked at the items and his eyes darkened.

Shopping and choosing things together made him really feel as if they were going to move into one place together. As the thought came to his mind, Alex made a plan to slowly integrate himself into her life.. Perhaps soon, the two would live in one place instead of two different units.

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In a few days, Alex brought Hazel to accompany him to a banquet.

Hazel had shown up at his apartment in the afternoon to tidy up the new unit. Then, in the evening, Hazel walked out of her apartment in a rose gold tulle evening dress. The skirt glittered under the light and Alex finds a hard time trying to look away from her.

"What are you staring at me for?" Hazel nudged at his waist.

Alex let out a cough and finally snapped out of his trance. A warm smile curled on his lips. "You're beautiful."

Her cheek turned a shade pink with the way Alex was staring at her. Hazel gave him a look over and said, "Well, you look handsome as well." She bit at lips to suppress her smile and tugged at his hand. "Let's go. Or we'll be late."

He offered his hand and soon, the couple walked together to the elevator and headed to the hotel.

There were a lot of people around the hall when they arrived. Since she was not familiar with the people in the room, Hazel stuck closely to Alex as he proudly introduced her as his girlfriend to everyone they met.

It was the first time for her to join Alex in a banquet. Seeing the way he was talking to the people made her see him in a new light. He was dressed handsomely in suit and tie and the way he spoke was full of charisma.

For a while, Hazel was in a daze as she watched him. When they were a child, Alex was someone who would not speak to others except for people he was close with. Afterward, the two had spent a lot of time together and Hazel rarely see him with anyone else.

Looking at Alex at this moment, Hazel had suddenly realized that the Alex she knew had really grown up.

"Are you hungry?" Alex said as he turned to her.

Hazel flashed a smile and shook her head. "I'm still alright."

Alex hesitated as he recalled that it has been a few hours since they had their lunch. Fearing that his girlfriend might be suppressing her hunger to accompany him, Alex decided to excuse himself from the others and head over to the buffet table.

"Are you not going to discuss your business matter?"

"I'm hungry. Let's go and get something to eat first."

Hearing his words, Hazel had no reason to reject him. The two walked over to the buffet table and chose a few dishes to pad their stomach. This banquet was held to give the young businessmen to mingle and build their network. Therefore, the foods prepared were light snacks and finger food.

As the two were having their meal at a corner, an elder man walked over to them and told Alex that he had someone important he wanted to introduce him to. Once Alex heard the name of the man, his eyes brightened up. Although he wanted to leave, he was still worried about his girlfriend.

Hazel would notice his hesitation and saw the look on his face. He wanted to meet that person. She poked him on the arms and smiled. "Go ahead and meet that person. I'll be right here."

A deep frown appeared on his face. After a few seconds, Alex heaved a soft sigh. "Alright. Stay here and don't go anywhere else."

Hazel narrowed her eyes at him. "Un. I know. I'm not a child."

After pecking at her cheek, Alex left Hazel at the corner as she ate her food silently. The hotel had prepared a crab in filo pastry dish and it was amazing that Hazel was having a hard time stopping eating them.

Suddenly, someone stood in front of her and blocked the light. Hazel looked up and was surprised to see a familiar face. Although Hazel could not remember his name, she still remembered that the man is a basketball captain in their university.

Instantly, Hazel was on her guard.

"Miss Mo." A faint smile curled on his lips as he greeted Hazel. "I did not expect that I would run into you at this place." Kevin Xu seemed to notice the girl's perplexed look and decided to explain. "I came here with my brother. He said I should look around and build my networking."

"Then, I hope that you will have a good time here."

Kevin did not miss Hazel's hostility towards him and he was used to it. After all, Hazel had never given him the chance to get close to her from the very beginning.

Ever since it was revealed that Hazel is the heiress of the MH Group, Kevin has been trying to approach her but had never got the chance to do so. Now that he saw her alone at the banquet, of course, he was going to take this opportunity to talk to her again.

"Don't be scared. I am not here to harm you," Kevin said. "Miss Mo, I came over to apologize for my rudeness the last time we saw each other."

Hazel lowered her gaze. Actually, she had long forgotten about what happened. The incident happened a few months ago and the misunderstanding he had for her was clarified.

At this time, a waiter walked over holding a tray. Kevin took one glass of wine in each hand and passed one to Hazel. "Miss Mo, I hope you can accept my apology and have a drink with me."

Hazel stared at the glass and hesitated.

"Please. I hope that we can forget everything between us. I promise that I will not disturb you again after this."

Seeing his insistent, Hazel stretched her hand to grab the glass. However, before she was able to reach for it, another hand had appeared and grabbed the glass from Kevin.

His gaze darkened and Kevin was about to curse until he saw the man's face.

"Apologies." Alex flashed a smile that did not reach his eyes. "But my girlfriend could not tolerate alcohol."

Hazel raised a brow, knowing that Alex was telling lies for her.

"Instead, why don't I help her to drink this wine?" Alex continued. Before Kevin was able to say a word, Alex had downed the glass quickly. Then, he looked at Kevin again. "I hope you will accept my sincerity."

Kevin noticed the hostility in Alex's gaze and decided not to fight back. Although he was frustrated that Alex had shown up and ruined his plan, Kevin knew that he will not be able to fight against Alex. Moreover... He would be dead meat if his brother knew that he came to create trouble.

His gaze shifted towards the empty glass in Alex's hand and Kevin shivered before he swiftly escaped the area.

It was only when Kevin had disappeared into the crowd that Alex began to relax. He glanced at his girlfriend and the hostility in his face swiftly disappeared. "Are you alright?"

"I'm fine." Hazel stared at his face and frowned as she recalled the way Alex had downed the wine. "But you. How could you drink a glass of wine just like that? Alex He, what if you got sick?"

His expression softened when he saw her worry. "I saw that you were uncomfortable when he approached you. I could not leave him alone with you." Alex stretched his hand to pinch her cheek. "Don't worry.. I'll be fine."

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Worried that the boy would come over and pester his girlfriend again, Alex decided to keep her close with him.

Since the moment he left Hazel's side to look for that potential investor, Alex had always kept his gaze on Hazel. He was watching her eating her food silently when the man had suddenly appeared.

Alex had recognized that man in an instant.

The last time he came to pick up Hazel before her winter break began, he had witnessed the same man confessed his love to Hazel. Back then, Hazel had rejected the man and he was not too happy about it.

Therefore, from the moment Alex saw that man, he could sense that he was trying to create trouble for Hazel.

"What are you thinking about?" Hazel asked when she saw that Alex was staring into space.

Alex snapped out of his thought and smiled. "Nothing." His hand started to adjust his necktie. Alex swallowed as he glanced at the ceiling. He was not sure if the air conditioner was not working well, but Alex thought that the temperature has gotten slightly hot and his mouth felt dry.

A waiter walked by and Alex asked him to help him to get a glass of water.

"Alex, are you alright?" Hazel asked when she noticed his discomfort.

"I'm fine." Alex cleared his throat. "Just a little thirsty after talking to a lot of people today."

Hazel watched him in skeptical, but her thoughts dissipated as the waiter returned with a glass of water.

Alex took the glass of water from the waiter and felt slightly better after drinking some water. His throat was no longer parch, however, his body still felt hot. His temperature only increased and Alex felt a little uncomfortable.

"You don't look alright," Hazel said. She has been by his side and noticed that Alex had suddenly grown quiet. Her face showed an obvious worry when she noticed his slightly reddened face. Hazel stretched her hand and placed it on his forehead. A soft gasp escaped her and Hazel quickly retracted her hand in surprise.

His temperature was too hot!

Alex let a soft sigh as he felt that Hazel's hand was cool and comfortable. He glanced at Hazel and swallowed. At this time, she was standing too close to him. Her scent filled his nostrils and his body grew warmer. His gaze shifted towards her red lips and the urge to kiss her senselessly surfaced.

He clenched his hand tightly into a fist to calm down. It was at this time that Alex began to notice that something was wrong.

"I think you had a fever," Hazel said. She started to grow worried again. "We need to go to the hospital." She wondered if it will not be rude for them to leave the banquet. But looking at Alex at this time, Hazel would not be at ease until he took him to the hospital.

Meanwhile, Alex started to think of what had happened. His gaze darkened as he recalled grabbing that glass of wine from that boy. He had down the wine to stop the boy from pestering Hazel. Alex scanned the hall to look for the boy, but he could not see him.

It did not take him too long to figure out what had happened. It seemed that the boy had done something to that wine. His target was Hazel, but Alex had become the victim when he snatched the glass and drank the wine for Hazel.

"Alex?" Hazel continued to call his name. "What's wrong with you?"

Alex turned to the Hazel again. He lowered his head and inched closer to her. However, he stopped as they were inches apart. "Take me to the hospital, please."

His voice was hoarse and Hazel knew right away that something had happened. She wanted to question him, but after looking at his expression, Hazel decided that the most important thing was to take him to the hospital first.

As they both walked out of the hotel, Alex took his phone and dialed Daniel's number. He told him that he had was not feeling well and had asked Daniel's help to apologize to everyone as he had left without saying a word.

When they reached the car park, Alex knew that he could not drive in his condition. He handed his car keys to Hazel and halted the moment their hands touched.

His heartbeat quickened. Alex swallowed hard before he pulled her closer and started to kiss her lips. He was unaware of what he was doing. The only thing he knew was that her body felt cold and he needed her to cool down.

Hazel struggled to get out of his embrace. The way he was kissing her was rough and Hazel grew scared at what was happening. This was not the Alex that she knew.

With a few swift moves, Hazel slipped out of his embrace. His face was pressed to the vehicle and both hands were pinned on his back. It was one of the moves that her Great-Grandpa had taught her.

Hazel took a few deep breaths to calm down. "What is wrong with you?"

It was at this time that Alex snapped out of his mind. He bit his lips until it was bleeding and spoke. "Hazel, please. Take me to the hospital."

Hazel loosened her hand on him. "What happened to you?"

"Hazel, I'm feeling hot. That wine from earlier," He spoke with a shaky breath. "It was spiked. If you don't take me to the hospital quickly, I might do something for you. So please... take me to the hospital."

Her pupil contracted when she listened to his words. Hazel thought of the way that the basketball captain had insistently asked her to drink the wine and accept his apologies and his eyes grew dangerous.

If she had drunk that wine earlier, she would be the one in Alex's position.

Swiftly, Hazel unlocked the car and let Alex into the passenger's seat. Then, she slid into the driver's seat and looked at Alex. "I will get you to the hospital soon, but you need to try and stay focus. If you start to misbehave, then, I might not be able to get you safely to the hospital."

Alex closed his eyes and groaned to suppress his emotion. "I know."

Seeing the way Alex was tightening his hands into a tight fist, Hazel swiftly shifted the gear and speed away.

Her expression grew ugly as he thought of the culprit.. Since that basketball captain had dared to try to do something silly and harm the people around her, then he should not blame her when she retaliated.

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Once they arrived at the hospital, the doctor quickly took him into a room to give him treatment. Hazel found a parking spot before she walked into the building to find Alex. A nurse came forward to tell her that the doctor was helping Alex with an antidote and finally, Hazel was able to calm down.

Taking a deep breath, Hazel sat down on the bench and start to rethink everything that happened.

In the banquet hall, Alex had eaten everything that she had eaten. The only thing that she did not drink was that wine that the basketball captain had offered to her.

Without a doubt, some drugs were added to the wine and caused Alex to behave strangely.

After giving it some thought, Hazel took out her phone and dialed a number.

The phone call was connected after a few rings.

"Hazel, I heard that you are accompanying your boyfriend to a banquet. How is it? Did you have fun?" Eira's voice was heard as soon as the phone call was connected.

"Eira, I need your help."

"What's wrong?" Hearing Hazel's serious tone, Eira swiftly dropped her playful tone.

Hazel quickly told her friend of everything that happened at the hotel and her suspicion that the basketball captain had done something to her drink. "Eira, I need you to check on the security camera and find evidence. Can you help me?"

"Of course I can."

"Thank you." Hazel let out a breath of relief. "Sorry for the trouble."

"Don't say that. That hotel is one of ours. Checking at the security camera isn't anything troubling at all." Eira heaved a heavy breath. Her face turned ugly as Eira thought of what the basketball captain had wanted to do to her friend.

According to Hazel's words, she was unaware that Kevin would show up at the banquet. It seemed that carrying a drug with him had become a habit. Or else, Kevin would not conveniently have a drug with him as no one was aware that Hazel was going to show up at the banquet.

"Look. I'll give them a call right now and get back to you once I found out anything," Eira said.

"Un. Thank you."

"How about you? Are you alright?"

"I'm fine. I'm at the hospital, waiting for Alex to come out." Hazel rubbed at her head. "He should be fine after a while."

"If you need anything, tell me. I'll be here for you."

The girls chatted for a while before Hazel hung up. Then, Hazel called Crystal to brief her on what happened and informed her roommate that she was not going back to the dormitory.

Seeing that Alex had come out of the treatment room, Hazel stood up swiftly and walked over to him. Her steps halted as she got nearer. Hazel gave him a look over and a breath of relief escaped her once she saw that his face was no longer as red and his gaze had turned sharper.

"Are you alright?" Hazel asked. She walked over and helped him to sit down on the bench. "How are you feeling? Better?"

"I'm fine." His heart warmed when he saw her concern. Alex forced a smile and spoke, "The doctor said I need to stay at the hospital for an observation for twenty-four hours."

At this time, a nurse came out to explain to him about the procedure. Hazel listened attentively and turned to Alex again. "You stay here for a while. Let me deal with your hospitalization."

Alex nodded obediently and watched as she left. Once Hazel was no longer within his eyesight, Alex pulled out his phone and dialed a number.

"Alex," Daniel spoke as soon as the phone call was connected. "I did as you told and apologized to them. But what happened to you?"

Alex briefed what happened before he gave him a few instructions. When he finally hung up, there was a dark look on his face. The doctor's words repeated in his mind.

Whatever drug that person had added into the wine... it had an aphrodisiac effect. After consuming it once, there might be a chance that one might be depending on it. Like any other drug, once a person became dependent on it, it would only be damaging to one's body.

He could not imagine what would happen to Hazel if she was the one who had drank that wine, and he was not around her.

It seemed that the boy harbored an evil intention towards his girlfriend and Alex was not planning to let that boy from escaping.

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Hazel adjusted the pillow under him and let Alex lay down comfortably. Just as she was pulling up his blanket to cover his body, Alex stretched his hand and grabbed her wrist.

Their gaze met and the couple looked at each other in silence.

"Sit down." Alex heaved a soft breath when Hazel did not react. "I'm fine. I'm not hurt or disabled. You don't have to do things for me." He flashed her a smile.

Hazel hesitated before she leaned into him and laid her head on his chest. Her breathing gradually calmed down as she continued to listen to his heartbeat.

She could not describe the fear when she saw how Alex had behaved strangely. His gaze was misty and his temperature high. The way Alex had kissed her was rough and she could sense his desire.

If she had not learned that move to protect herself, there was no doubt that the two might do something in the parking lot. Her face grew sullen as Hazel thought of what might happen.

The two of them has been seeing each other for months and Hazel had long prepared herself that something might happen between them. However, that was not how she wanted it to happen.

Once Alex told her that the drink had been spiked, her heart turned cold. Hazel had driven past the limit to reach the hospital as soon as she can and perhaps, his car would receive a few speeding tickets tomorrow.

"Sorry," Hazel whispered. "It was because of me. If you did not drink that wine—"

"Why are you blaming yourself? It's not your fault," Alex spoke before she could finish her words. "It was that boy's fault."

He would gladly drink that wine for her. Alex could not imagine what he would do if it was Hazel who had drunk that wine. He would probably go ballistic right then, right there.

That person must be crazy to dare and harm his precious girl.

Alex ran his fingers in her hair. He was relieved to find that his girl had not tried to avoid him after what had happened. When he recalled what had happened in the car park area, Alex's expression grew solemn.

"Did I scare you earlier?" Alex bit at his lips when she did not answer. "Sorry. I lost control of myself."

Hazel sniffled. She lifted her head and wiped at her tears. "I don't blame you. It was just as you said. It was his fault. Don't worry.. I won't let him get away."

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Hazel stayed over at the hospital to accompany Alex.

When the morning comes, Eira stopped by the hospital with a few paper bags in her hand. She knocked at the door and pushed the door open to enter. Her movement halted the moment Eira saw the scene in front of her.

At this time, both Alex and Hazel laid on the bed. The man had his arms wrapped around her body as Hazel laid her head on his chest. This scene was a little too much for her and Eira was unable to react well.

When she had texted Hazel earlier, her friend had told her that she can come directly into the room. This was why she did not think of anything and had entered after knocking on the door.

Just as she was about to back away, Hazel had woken up. She sat up quickly and looked at her friend who was tiptoeing towards the door. "Eira."

Eira paused. She turned around slowly and saw that Hazel was staring at her. An awkward smile curled on her lips. Eira lifted the paper bags in her hand and whispered, "I brought what you asked me to bring."

Hazel nodded. She glanced at the sleeping Alex and her gaze turned soft when she saw that the man was sleeping soundly. Hazel placed a forefinger on her lips, signaling her friend to keep silent. Then, she went down and walked over to Eira.

"A fresh change of clothes for both of you and some toiletries," Eira explained as she passed the bag to Hazel.

Hazel peeked inside the paper bags and nodded.

"That's right. Have you had your breakfast? I bought some porridge as well," Eira said. "This is something that my grandmother prepared this morning."

She lifted her head and smiled. "Eira, thank you."

Eira waved her hand. "Hey, don't mention it. We're sisters."

Hazel placed the paper bags on the table and waved her hand to Eira, gesturing her to follow her outside as Alex was still sleeping. The two walked over to the corridor and took a seat at a quiet corner.

"When will Alex get discharged?" Eira asked.

"He needs to stay in the hospital for an observation for a few more hours," Hazel said. "But the discharge procedure can only be done in the next morning."

"You're going to stay in the hospital again tonight?"

Hazel answered her with a nod. "I won't be going to class today. I have already told Crystal and asked her to help me and relay my message to the professors." She turned to Eira with a frown on her face. "About the thing that I asked you to do..."

"It's all done. You don't have to worry about it." Her expression turned ugly as Eira recalled what she had found out. "I asked the hotel to check on the surveillance camera. It seemed that Kevin Xu had bribed the waiter to add the drug in the wine and bring them to you. The waiter had confessed that he had received some amount of money."

Hazel shifted her gaze away.

None of them had thought that the basketball captain would do something as trying to drug her. Hazel could not understand why did Kevin wanted to hurt her. She was not interested in him and had rejected him straightaway. Unfortunately, the man could not accept that and had wanted to hurt her.

However, to use drugs with an intention to harm her reputation...

Hazel could not find a word to describe that person. He was worst than a beast!

"The moment we got the evidence, I have filed a report to the police," Eira's face grew solemn as she spoke. "We heard that Kevin Xu had tried to flee from the country. He bought the earliest flight to Country F." A chuckle escaped her. "It seemed that he was aware that you will go after him once you find out that he was trying to drug you."

"I don't want him to get away."

"He won't." Eira gave a squeeze at Hazel's hand. "The police raided his place last night and found a few date-rape drugs in his possession. No matter how many lawyers he hired or how capable they are, Kevin Xu will not get away with this. This does not seem like the first time he had done such things. We will find some victims and witnesses to testify against him as well. Basically, he had ruined his future and his family when he tried to scheme against you."

Hazel continued to listen to Eira's report and heard that Kevin's Xu's family had wanted to plead for him. Kevin was in his final year and was about to graduate in a few months. However, with this incident, the university will definitely expel him. Everything he had worked for had disappeared in a blink of an eye because of his own stupidity.

No matter what his parents were going to say to her, Hazel had no intention to forgive him.

This time, she got away safely because of Alex.

Next time, perhaps she would not be so lucky.

Kevin Xu had reaped what he sowed.

Hazel did not want someone like Kevin Xu to get away with his crime. If such man was allowed to be free, then, he would find his chance to hurt her again.

Before such things could happen, she should cut off his chance to harm her.

"It's good that you decided not to show up at class today," Eira said. "I'm guessing that everyone will learn about this matter soon. Once the news spread, there will be a lot of people who will disturb you. But don't worry. I will try and figure out something."

"It's fine. There are a few days left before we leave and start the internship. I won't care about what they think of me."

Eira heaved a sigh at her answer. A thought crossed her mind and Eira sat up straight. "Hazel, there's something else that you need to know."

"What is it?"

"I heard that this matter had reached your uncle's knowledge as well," Eira said.

A frown appeared on her face. Hazel was not surprised that her uncle was going to find out about this news, but she did not expect that he would hear about it soon. As for how he had heard the news... Hazel did not have to think too far. Once she had asked for Eira's help, of course, her uncle was going to hear the news.

"I heard that he had arranged a few things on his side as well so that Kevin will not get away from his crime."

Her heart grew warm, knowing how much her uncle had doted on her.

"Un. I know." Hazel nodded. "Thank you for the heads up.. I'll talk to him later."

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After Eira had left, Hazel walked into the room again and found that Alex was still sleeping. Last night, Alex had tried so hard to resist the drug's effect and because of it,

he had lost his energy. The moment he closed his eyes, Alex had drifted into sleep and only woke up in the middle of the night for a toilet break.

Hazel checked on the paper bag that Eira had handed her earlier and pulled out a fresh change of clothes. Then, she walked over to the bathroom to take a shower. When she came out again, Alex had woken up and was looking at something on his phone.

The moment he heard her movement, Alex put the phone on the side table and stared at Hazel with a dazed expression. The end of her hair was still wet and her cheek was slightly reddened.

"You're awake." Hazel walked over and stretched her hand to touch his forehead. A breath of relief escaped her when she felt that his temperature was normal. "Are you hungry?" Hazel picked up the paper bag on the table. "Right. You haven't eaten anything since last night."

Her movement halted when Alex grabbed her wrist. Hazel tilted her head to one side and looked at him quizzically. "What's wrong?"

Alex let out a chuckle. "Why are you walking around? Sit down with me. Hazel Mo, I told you that I am not disabled." With a tug, Hazel fell with her head leaning on his chest. "I thought that you have returned to your dormitory by now. Don't you have to go to your class?"

"I won't leave you alone."

His gaze softened, knowing that his girlfriend was concerned about him. However, he did not want her to worry about him because of her guilty conscience. Last night, Hazel had blamed herself for what had happened to him. "I am not a child."

"I know you're not."

"The doctor only wanted me to stay for an observation period. I am not injured."

"Alex," Hazel spoke his name softly.

"Hmm?"

"I hate the hospital."

Alex was surprised that Hazel had suddenly brought up this matter. Hazel had caught him off guard. For a while, he did not know how he should respond.

Hazel lifted her head to look at him. When their gaze met, Alex could see a hint of sadness in her eyes. His heart ached upon seeing the expression on her face.

"What's wrong?"

Hazel took a deep breath before she spoke again, "Ever since I began to understand that dream, I began to dislike the hospital even more." Her nose started to sour and Hazel lowered her gaze again. "Alex, I was afraid that if I leave you alone, then, someone will come over when you're asleep. I am afraid that the same thing that happened to my parents will happen to you.

"It won't happen that way." Alex pulled the girl in his embrace and kissed the top of her head as if to coax her.

"I know." Hazel bit at her lips. "But I cannot help myself and think that way. Do you think I'm being silly?" She had already lost her parents in the hospital. Hazel was afraid that she might lose Alex the same way.

"Of course not. How is that silly? You're not silly at all." Hazel was worried that something might happen to him and chose to stay around to guard him. How was that silly? Alex thought that Hazel was too adorable.

At least it does prove that Hazel loved and cared for him very much, right?

"If you don't like it here, then, I will ask the doctor to let me get discharged earlier, alright?"

Hazel sat up immediately. She stared at Alex with a serious look on her face. "No. The doctor said that the drugs might affect your body. You need to stay here under the doctor's observation."

Alex watched the girl in his embrace helplessly. Though he wanted to persuade her and return home earlier, Alex did not have the heart to speak anything when he saw her expression. He liked how she was worried about him.

"Alright." His lips curled into a smile. "I will follow what you say."

Hazel was startled when she heard the pampering tone in his voice. She sat up quickly and slid down from his bed to take the container of food. "You should be hungry. Let's have some breakfast first. My friend brought some porridge. It will help you to pad your stomach."

As soon as she placed the container on the table, her hand was tugged again and this time, Alex leaned to capture her lips into a kiss. Feeling the kiss that she was familiar with, Hazel began to relax. The tension around her shoulders disappeared and Hazel began to reciprocate his kiss.

It was not known how long they have kissed, but everything around them seemed to disappear the moment their lips met. The two were unaware that someone had knocked on the door and entered the room.

That person's gaze darkened when the couple in front of him doesn't look like they were going to stop kissing anytime soon.

A loud cough reverberated in the room.

Once Hazel heard a familiar coughing voice, she pulled away from Alex and turned towards the sound. Her eyes widened when she saw that her uncle was standing there, looking at them with an unfathomable expression on his face.

Her heartbeat stopped for mere seconds.

This... who can tell her how did her uncle appear in B City?

Hazel scrambled to get off the bed. "Uncle! When did you get here?"

"Just now." Neil shifted his gaze from Alex to Hazel. The moment he looked at his niece, the coldness in his eyes suddenly disappeared. "I heard about what happened to you last night and decide to come over and settle a few things. How are you?"

He had taken the first flight to B City to visit his niece. Who would have thought that the moment he entered the room, he would catch the two of them kissing?

"I'm fine." Hazel did not dare to meet her uncle's gaze as she was too embarrassed. "It was Alex who had to suffer."

Neil had already heard about the details from President Zhang before he headed to B City. He had heard that the boy had hold a grudge against his niece just because she had rejected him.

Fortunately, Alex was around and had protected his little girl. Though he was annoyed with Alex at this moment, Neil was grateful that Alex had stayed with Hazel.

"Uncle, how long will you stay? Should I help you book a place for you?" Hazel tried to shift his attention.

"No need. I will only stay for a few hours. I came over without letting your Auntie Edith know," Neil said. "Now that I see you safe and sound, I will head back to L City and catch the earliest flight." He walked over to his niece and patted her head gently. "Don't worry about that boy.. I will help you to solve this."

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Neil left shortly after he had finished his business in B City. Because he did not want his pregnant wife to worry about Hazel, Neil had requested that the matter be settled in a low profile. Other than those who were involved, there were not many people who knew about what Kevin Xu had done.

The university was of course, happy with Neil's decision. After all, it would never be a good thing to have someone like Kevin be related to the university. No one would want to be associate with someone who had used date rape drugs. It would only drag the university's good name down.

Alex was allowed to be discharged once the doctor cleared that there was nothing wrong with his body.

However, there was a certain someone who could not stop worrying about him. In the end, there was nothing else he could do but to take a few days off work and rest at home to assure his girlfriend.

Fortunately, his family members were unaware of what had happened in B City. Or else, Alex was sure that his mother would drag his father to fly all over to B City to visit him.

With Hazel around, Alex could sit back and enjoyed her treatment. Because Hazel wanted to keep a close eye on Alex, she had decided to move earlier to the nit next door.

Seeing that he could see her face every time he ate his meal, Alex was naturally happy. The two of them spent most of their time doing nothing other than keeping each other's company until Hazel was assured that there was nothing wrong with his body.

After he was sent to the detention center, Kevin had requested through his lawyer to meet up with Hazel but his request was rejected.

Since he had harbored an evil intention towards her, Hazel saw no point in meeting him. He had done something wrong and deserved to be punished for it. Even if he wanted to apologize, Hazel was not going to forgive him.

Fortunately, she was able to avoid this drug and Kevin's plan. What if she fell for it instead and Kevin succeed in doing what he wanted to do?

Then, would he plead for her mercy as he would do now?

Kevin did not suffer alone from his stupid act. A few days after he was detained, Kevin's elder brother came to meet him in the detention center and demanded to know about the person he had offended.

It seemed that after the police had caught him, Xu's family had faced a lot of pressure from all sides. His father's political career that was about to begin had ended. Meanwhile, his brother's company that was starting to grow had almost gone bankrupt. The investors who were interested in his company had suddenly pulled out without giving out any reasons.

Some of them were willing to pay a penalty for breaching their contract rather than staying with them. It seemed that everyone wanted to distance away from their family.

However, Kevin did not dare to say anything.

When his brother finally found out about the people that Kevin had offended, he was shocked. He had never thought that Kevin would dare to offend such people.

As a businessman with a company that had only started to flourish, the brother had always wanted to attract the bigshots' attention. However, this was not the way that he hoped to get their attention.

After fighting to stay around, the Xu family finally gave up and decided to move away from B City and settled in a smaller city.

Later, Kevin was put on trial. When the judge had read his case, Kevin had pleaded not guilty. However, the evidence piled up in front of him and a few victims had stepped forward to testify against him.

The trial lasted for a few months. In the end, Kevin was found guilty and had received the maximum penalty for his crime. It seemed that he will have to stay in prison for a long, long time.

Once a bright student who had a good future in his academic and basketball had to spend his youth behind bars for years because of one stupid move.

Hazel's internship at a robotic company finally began. Because the company was not that far from Alex's company, the man had offered to drive her over and pick her up from the company.

On the first day of her internship, Alex came and picked her up in front of the company and helped her with the door. Seeing the tired look on her face, Alex let out a chuckle. "How is it? Tiring?"

"Un." Hazel nodded. "There are just too many things to learn. I did not think that it would be this tiring. Working and learning are definitely different. Alex, I think my brain is too tired to think."

Alex laughed. He stretched his hand to pat her hair. "Well, it was only your first day. You'll get used to it."

Hazel flashed a faint smile. "Hmm... After a few days, I will get used to it."

"Did anyone bullied you?"

"Of course not." Hazel chuckled. "The people are nice and helpful."

"Well, since this is your first day, let me treat you to a meal."

The smile on her lips widened. "Good."

Instead of starting the car and drive, Alex turned around and picked up something from the back seat. "For you."

Hazel was stunned when she saw the bouquet in his hand. She took the bouquet from him and sniffed at the flowers. Instantly, her expression brightened up. "What is this for? It's not a special day, is it?"

Hazel had noticed that Alex would give her a bouquet on her special days. The last time he had sent her flowers, it was to congratulate her for winning first place in a robotic competition.

"Well, it is a special day." Alex smiled. "Congratulations for going through your first day at your internship."

Hazel laughed upon hearing his words. "Thank you." She sniffed at the flowers again and felt her mood was slightly better. Leaning forward, Hazel pecked at his cheek. "Your reward."

Alex raised a brow and his lips curled into a playful smile. "Is that it?"

Hazel leaned forward again. This time, her lips landed on his for a peck. "Will this be enough?"

Of course, a mere peck would never be enough. Alex leaned forward and pressed his lips against hers again. After the fire in his heart was gradually calmed, Alex pulled away and stared at the girl with misty eyes.

His lips curled into a smile.. Satisfied with his reward, Alex drove away to the restaurant that he had booked earlier.

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The sky had long turned bright when Hazel woke up. She sat up in a panic and grabbed her phone to check on the time.

A long, soft breath escaped her when Hazel realized that it was the weekend and she did not have to show up at the company.

Her body fell back on the soft mattress behind her and her body curled lazily. Hazel took a long breath as she recalled that she had survived the first week of the internship. Although the work was hard, Hazel thought that she enjoyed learning something new from her seniors.

Last night, she had turned off the alarm, knowing that she could sleep in a little longer. After working around eight hours for five days straight, her body was a little too tired and she was feeling lazy.

Hazel thought that she deserved a break after working hard.

Just as she was about to close her eyes and continue to sleep, her ears picked up a noise coming from the outside. Instantly, she grew alarmed at the thought that there was an intruder in her house.

Then, she recalled that she had let Alex hold her keys so that he could come and go to her apartment as he pleased. Hazel listened carefully and recognized that it was the sound of pots and pans in the kitchen.

After washing her face and make herself presentable, Hazel walked out of the room and found Alex standing in front of the stove, stirring something in the pot.

As if noticing her presence, Alex turned around and flashed a smile. "Good morning. You're awake?"

Hazel walked over with slow, languid steps. She peeked into the pot, wrapped her arms around his waist, and leaned her head on his back. "Mister landlord, what are you doing here?"

Alex laughed when he heard the way Hazel had addressed him. "Making your breakfast." He turned around and pecked at her forehead. "Did you get enough sleep?"

"Hmm..." Her lips turned up. "My landlord comes over to prepare my breakfast. I guess the service at this apartment is pretty good."

"You cheeky girl." Alex turned to peck at her forehead. Though he wanted to pull her into his embrace, Alex decided to focus on his cooking lest he burned their breakfast.

As Alex stood still in front of the stove, Hazel closed her eyes and buried her face on his broad back.

The scent of him filled her nose, and Hazel felt sleepier. Hazel thought that she could probably sleep while leaning on to Alex's body like this. She had never thought that Alex's broad shoulder and the scent would give her a sense of security that she would instantly let her guard down whenever she was with him.

The feeling was quite nice...

"I bought you some egg tarts earlier. If you're hungry, you can eat a few pieces," Alex said. "The porridge will be done in a while."

Her eyes perked up upon hearing that Alex had bought some egg tarts. She quickly retracted her hands and walked over to the dining table. Seeing the box of egg tart on the table, Hazel was suddenly in a daze.

The brand printed on the box told her where Alex had bought them.

It was from the pastry shop around her university area and it was quite popular. One had to queue early in the morning to buy them before they would be sold out. Previously, Hazel had brought Alex to the shop a few times and had mentioned that the shop's egg tart was probably one of the best egg tarts she ate.

The egg tart was not too sweet and the pastry was buttery and crumbly. It was a taste that she really liked.

"You went out early to buy them?"

"Mmm... I went out for a jog in the morning," Alex said. "Seeing that it was still too early, I decided to go and queue. Fortunately, I did not have to wait for too long."

Hazel did not think that Alex was telling her the truth. She had been to the shop many times, and there was never a moment where she did not have to wait for too long. Since Alex had told her that he did not have to wait so long, Hazel had no intention to say anything.

Her hand stretched to grab a piece and Hazel took a bite. The sweet and mellow taste of the egg tart filled her mouth and a soft sigh escaped her.

"Is it good?"

Hazel looked up and saw that Alex was carrying two bowls of porridge to the table. "It's good. It's perfect as always." She stretched her hand and offered the remaining half of her egg tart to him. "Do you want to take a bite?"

A playful look flashed in his eyes. Alex placed the bowls on the table and walked over. Just as Hazel had thought that the man was going to bite at the egg tart, the man inched closer and stared into her eyes intently. Then slowly, his gaze shifted to her lips before he came closer and kissed her.

Hazel was stunned and was unable to react. It took her to figure out what was happening and Hazel closed her eyes.

The kiss was soft and warm. Alex continued to kiss her leisurely as if savoring a sweet treat. Alex kissed her for a long time, tasting her lips until she became restless.

It was only then that he pulled away.

Alex continued to look at the woman in front of him and his lips curled into a smile. "Well, it does taste good." His voice sounded a little deep and hoarse.

Hazel shrank back. Alex was too close that she could feel his breath tickling her neck. At this time, Hazel did not know whether he was talking about the egg tart or her lips.

"Come on. Let's eat our breakfast."

"Oh." Hazel bit her lips, feeling his kiss lingering around. She sat down and picked up her cutlery absentmindedly.

"Be careful. The porridge is still hot."

Fortunately, Alex had reminded her about the porridge, or else, Hazel might scald her tongue. After blowing at the porridge a few times, Hazel ate her breakfast and felt her stomach grew warmer.

Alex's craft had definitely got better.

"What are you planning to do today?"

Hearing his question, Hazel looked up to meet his gaze. She thought of her schedule and shook her head. "I don't have anything plan. I'm feeling lazy. Maybe I will just stay at home and laze around."

"Then, do you want to go out?" Alex asked.

"Where do you want to go?"

Alex let out a chuckle.. "If you're not feeling too lazy, let's go on a date."

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After breakfast, Alex returned to his apartment unit to let Hazel get ready. An hour later, Alex appeared at Hazel's door and was momentarily stunned upon looking at her all dressed up.

Hazel was dressed casually in jeans and a pink top, but Alex thought that his girlfriend was beautiful like this.

No matter how long he had looked at this girl, Alex seemed as if he was not tired of her. Every time she appeared in front of him, Hazel would always be beautiful.

"Let's go," Hazel spoke, snapping him out of his trance. She stretched her hand to intertwined with his and the two walked towards the elevator together.

Alex drove to the city center and parked at the largest mall in the city.

The two of them were planning to watch some movie and walk around for their date.

It was crowded when the two reached the top floor of the mall. It was the weekend and just like them, everyone else was looking forward to spending their time with their loved ones.

"I did not think that it would be this crowded," Hazel mumbled as she looked around the space. After a while, she began to realize that there were too many kids around them.

"Mmm... I heard that a few new movies were coming out this week. I guess everyone wanted to catch up with the latest movie." Alex wrapped his arms around her waist as he led her through the crowd. There were too many people around and he was worried that some kids might bump into his girlfriend.

"Alex, look at that. They're adorable."

Alex turned to follow his girlfriend's gaze and a warm smile curled on his lips. Not far away, a small boy and girl around the age of six were holding hands as they stared at the new animation poster on the wall. As he looked at them, Alex was reminded of their childhood.

His mother would often take them to watch the movie together. Those kids were exactly like them in the past. They would often hold hands wherever they go.

Seeing the kids together, Alex turned to Hazel and pecked at her forehead.

As they had booked their tickets online, Alex and Hazel skipped queuing for the tickets and instead joined the queue to get some snacks.

Though Alex had told Hazel that she could have a seat and wait for him, Hazel insisted to queue with him together. The two of them stood in the line while holding hands and discussed the movie advertisement on the screen.

Alex looked at the woman who was half leaning on his body and could not help but smile.

It felt as if it was not long ago since he had confessed to her. At the beginning of their relationship, Hazel was still a little awkward around him. These days, Alex realized that Hazel had gotten more comfortable around him and would not mind occasional PDA.

The two of them bought a set of popcorn and drinks. Soon, they followed the crowd and entered the cinema. They found their seat in the last row and sat down. Hazel placed her drinks in the cup holder and leaned on Alex's arms.

"Are you cold?" Alex wrapped his arms around her shoulder, pulling her closer to him.

"No. I just wanted to lean closer to you."

Alex laughed. When the light in the cinema dimmed, Alex turned to steal a kiss from his girlfriend before he turned his head towards the screen, pretending that nothing had happened.

Once the movie started, the two of them watched the movie with full concentration. The two had chosen to watch a Hollywood sci-fi, dystopia movie. The plot was a little complicated and gripping. The cinematography was beautiful and the CG Effect was dazzling.

The scene changed to the part where the two lovers met after a long separation. Suddenly, there was a scene that would be inappropriate for kids to watch.

Hazel watched this scene for five seconds and her cheek turned red. Although she was embarrassed to watch such a scene, Hazel did not dare to move and shift her gaze away, lest Alex would notice her discomfort.

Her throat felt a little dry and Hazel wanted to reach for her drinks, but in the end, she could not move. She wanted to peek at Alex's reaction but found that she was too embarrassed to do so.

This was the first time that she had watched such a scene with Alex!

How can they add a scene like this? What if there were underage kids around?

Hazel snapped out of her mind as she recalled the movie rating. She had thought that the rating was due to the violent scenes in the movie. Who would have thought that there would be a scene like this as well?

Just as Hazel was wondering what she should do in this situation, her ears caught the sound of a strange sound from the side. From the corner of her eyes, Hazel saw that the couple beside her was kissing.

It was dark and Hazel was not sure if kissing was the only thing they did. Suddenly Hazel could hear the man's panting and a low groan. His voice was a little strange and without knowing why Hazel could feel her cheek turned a shade redder.

Hazel did not know where she should look. The screen was still showing an intimate scene and the couple beside her was probably doing an exciting play as well.

Fortunately, the scene on the screen did not last for too long. It was only then that Hazel released a breath.

"What's wrong?"

Hazel forced herself to look at Alex. It was dark in the cinema, but Hazel could see that the man was not as affected as she was. His expression remained calm. Hazel wondered if he was not affected by that scene between the couple, but could not muster her courage to ask him.

"Nothing." Hazel shook her head before she found a comfortable position in his embrace and continue to watch the movie. However, this time, as she leaned into his embrace, Hazel could feel that his body had grown warmer. Her head leaned on his chest and Hazel could hear his heart beating rapidly.

The scene that she had witnessed earlier came to her mind and Hazel thought that perhaps, Alex was just as uncomfortable as she was. It was just that... Alex was better at masking his expression. The two did not speak again and continued to watch the movie until the end.

Once they leave the hall, Hazel let out a long sigh. The cold air from the air conditioner blew on her face and her face was no longer as hot.

The couple walked over to a less crowded place. Hazel looked up and raised a brow. "Where are we going next?"

Alex let out a dry cough. "I want to visit the washroom first. Later, let's walk around and grab something to eat."

Hazel nodded obediently. "Alright.. Then, I'll just wait for you here."

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As Alex went to the washroom, Hazel leaned on the wall as she waited for him to return. Meanwhile, she took out her phone and started to browse through her message. At this time, her friends were discussing in the group chat about their experience in their internship.

Some of them were having a good time at their company and some of them were bullied.

Hazel replied to a few of her friends as she kept her eyes on her surroundings.

Sensing that someone was walking over to her, Hazel lifted her head and saw that a man was standing in front of her. Seeing the hesitation on the man's face, Hazel gave him a quizzical look and asked, "Can I help you?"

The man turned his head towards his friends before he looked at Hazel again. "Did you come here alone?"

Hearing his question, Hazel was instantly on her guard. Her eyes narrowed and her gaze became dangerous. If this man wanted to do something funny to her, Hazel would not hesitate to harm him.

The man let out a dry cough when he saw the way Hazel was staring at him. "If you don't mind, do you want to join me and my friends?"

Hazel followed the man's line of gaze and saw that he was looking at his friends. Seeing that the others were looking at her with a polite smile, Hazel began to lower her guard.

"I'm sorry, but I came here with my boyfriend."

The man flashed her a smile. There was a trace of suspicion in his eyes. He has been watching the girl for a while, and it doesn't look like her boyfriend was going to appear anytime soon.

Knowing that this was not the first time that he had heard an excuse like this, the man continued to ask, "Then, where is your boyfriend?"

"He stepped away for a while. He should be here soon." Right on cue, Hazel saw that Alex was heading in her direction. She waved her hand at him but failed to notice the unhappiness in his expression.

As soon as Alex arrived by her side, he gave a scrutinizing look at the man before he turned to Hazel again. "Who is this? Someone, you know?"

The man saw the hostility in Alex's eyes and subconsciously backed away. He turned to Hazel, forced a smile, and spoke, "Sorry to trouble you." Then, before Hazel was able to say anything, the man had turned around and joined his friends.

Seeing that the man was no longer around, Alex was more at ease. "What did he say to you?"

"Nothing much. He was just asking whether I wanted to join him and his friends."

Alex wrapped his arms around her waist and heaved a long sigh. "What am I supposed to do? I only leave you for a short while and come back only to find that a guy is hitting on my girlfriend."

Hazel laughed it off. She tugged at his arms and pulled an adorable look on his face. "Alex. Let's go. I'm hungry."

Alex stretched his hand to pat her hair. His gaze on her was full of doting. "Then, what do you want to eat?"

Hazel wanted to eat something spicy, but when she recalled that there was a certain someone who could not handle spicy food, Hazel decided to walk around and find a place to eat.

The couple decided to eat at a Cantonese restaurant and picked a place at the counter seat.

Alex let Hazel order their food and noticed that the girl had picked dishes that he liked. Once the waiter walked away, Alex pulled at Hazel's hand and kissed her hand.

"What are you doing?" Hazel quickly retracted her hands.

"Kissing you."

Alex had a serious look on his face, but his tone was playful. The man was looking straight at her and there was an unmistakable teasing in his eyes. Watching him face to face like this made her heartbeat grew faster and her face turned red.

Swiftly, Hazel turned her head away. At this time, her eyes caught a pair of father and daughter sitting a few tables away from them. The little girl was somewhere around five and she was chirping happily as her father continued to feed her.

Looking at this scene, Hazel was reminded of the time she had first come to live with her uncle.

When she thought about her uncle, Hazel would think about the twins. The twins should be born sometime soon. Suddenly, Hazel remembered that she hasn't bought anything for the twins yet.

Hazel turned to Alex and flashed him a smile. "Let's go and shop around. I want to look for some gift for the twin brothers."

Alex of course, had no other rejection.

After their meal, the two walked around the mall together. After visiting a few shops, Hazel finally stopped at a baby store. On the display were a few rompers with different animal prints. Hazel walked over and was interested to see that the rompers came with a small cap with the same design.

Just imagining the twins dressed up in these animal rompers made her excited.

However, there was another problem. There were too many to choose and Hazel could not make her decision.

Suddenly, Hazel seemed to understand why her uncle had always bought too many clothes for her when she was a little girl. It turned out that babies' and kids' clothing were just too cute that it would be hard for one to resist buying them.

Should she buy every one of them?

After pondering for a long time, Hazel turned to Alex and tilted her head. "Which one should I choose? What do you think?"

"Which one do you like best?" Alex asked.

Hazel picked up one piece of the clothing on display. "This Koala is adorable." Then, she picked another one. "And so is this giraffe. And this lion." Hazel let out a sigh. "I can't choose. Every one of them is too adorable."

At this time, a shop attendant walked over with a polite smile on her face. The shop attendant looked at the couple and then, towards the rompers in Hazel's hand. "Are you looking for clothes for newborn babies?"

Hazel nodded. "This rompers should be suitable for newborn babies, right?"

The smile on the shop attendant's face widened. "Madam, you are right. These rompers are suitable for newborn babies up to six months old."

Hazel froze when she heard the way the shop attendant addressed her. Seeing the way the shop attendant was looking at her stomach, Hazel knew that the shop attendant had misunderstood her.

"These rompers are our best sellers and suitable for both baby boy and girl." The shop attendant looked at the couple again and continued. "The two of you are very good-looking. I'm sure your babies would be adorable like the parents. If your baby wears these clothes, they would look very cute as well."

At this time, Hazel thought that her CPU was overloaded again.

What babies? What parents?

Chapter 412 - Rainy Night

By the time Hazel came back to her senses, it was too late to clarify to that shop attendant that she was not expecting a baby. Because of that, the enthusiastic shop attendant started to introduce a few products for a newborn baby to the couple.

The shop attendant's misunderstanding had made her too embarrassed to look at Alex.

Hazel was unaware of what Alex was feeling, but she was sure that he was feeling as awkward as she was.

Her relationship with Alex was pure and the two of them were still young. Hazel did not think that she was going to be a mother anytime soon.

After rejecting the shop attendant's offer to buy a few more products, the couple walked out of the mall carrying several paper bags from that baby store.

For the first time, Hazel thought that shopping can be very tiring. The shop attendant was too enthusiastic and she was too embarrassed.

Once they were farther away from the store, Hazel picked up her courage to look at Alex. As she was expecting, Alex had a serious look on his face, but Hazel could see that his mind was wandering somewhere else.

She wondered what was going in his mind, and whether Alex was feeling as awkward as she was.

Seeing that he was not looking at her, Hazel took a few glances at Alex.

Hazel could not deny that Alex inherited his parents' best feature. Auntie Lily is a beautiful woman and Uncle Ethan is a handsome man. Because she had grown up with Alex, Hazel thought that it would not be too difficult to imagine what his child would look like. If they had a son together, it would be best if the son inherited his good look.

Hmm...

Hazel was shocked as the thought came to her mind. A deep frown appeared on her face as Hazel tried to get the image off her mind. It seemed that after spending a short time in that baby store, her mind had become corrupted. It was all that shop attendant's fault.

She quickly dispelled that thought from her mind and cleared her throat.

The two continued to walk around for a while and finally left the mall when they could not find anything interesting.

Once Hazel returned to her apartment, she took out the clothes that she bought for the twins and send a picture to her Auntie Edith. After a few seconds, her phone started to ring. Seeing the name on the screen, Hazel swiftly picked up the phone call.

Soon, the image of her Auntie Edith appeared on the screen.

"Did you go out shopping earlier?" Edith asked.

"Un. I went to watch a movie with Alex," Hazel said. "Coincidentally, I saw those outfits and decided to buy them for the twins."

Edith laughed. "You bought too much."

Hazel heaved a sigh. "I just could not decide. Every one of them looks adorable."

Edith moved the camera and let Hazel see her bulging stomach. Coincidentally, the baby started to kick around his mother's tummy and a faint shape of his small feet. A blissful smile curled on her lips as Edith looked at her tummy. "You see that? The baby thanked their sister for the gift."

Meanwhile, Hazel was stunned by the scene that she had just witnessed. "Auntie Edith, does it hurt?"

"It doesn't hurt at all. Just... a little ticklish." Edith smiled as she looked at the pretty girl on the screen. "Alright. Tell me about your date with Alex."

"Ah?"

"Didn't you say that you went to watch a movie with Alex?" Edith said. A sigh escaped her when she thought of how it has been a long time since she had watched a movie at the cinema. Because of her pregnancy, it was inconvenient for Edith to walk around.

"Auntie Edith, we just went out to watch the movie and had a meal together," Hazel said. Her face was a little red. "Alex thought that it would be a good idea to walk around and have fun after a stressing week at the internship company."

"Mhm..." A teasing smile curled on her lips. "What a thoughtful boyfriend." Seeing that Hazel's face turned red again, Edith started to laugh.

As she grew up, Hazel became easily embarrassed. Nowadays, whenever Edith mentioned Alex's name in front of her, Hazel's cheek would definitely turn a shade redder.

The girl was too adorable and Edith was having a hard time not teasing her.

The two of them chatted for a long time and Hazel filled in about her life in B City. Now that she was no longer living in the university's dormitory, both her uncle and auntie were worried. Fortunately, with Alex staying closer to her, both Edith and Neil were relieved, knowing that there would be someone to look after Hazel.

After the call ended, Hazel went to the bathroom to take a shower. When she came out, Hazel took her phone and send a text to Alex. The two of them chatted for a while before Hazel decided to call it a night.

The two of them has been walking around for a long time and her feet were aching a little bit.

After saying her good night to Alex, Hazel went to bed and sleep.

Hazel did not know just how long she has been sleeping, but when she woke up again, she could hear the sound of the rain tapping on the window and the thunder rumbled loudly outside.

Picking up her phone, Hazel looked at the time and realized that it was just half an hour past midnight.

Feeling slightly parched, Hazel stood up and walked over to the table to pour herself a glass of water. Then, she walked over to the window and watched the scenery of the rainy night.

The sky was dark, but the city was still brightened with lights.

Just then, Hazel saw the flash not far away from her and the sound of the thunder was very loud. Suddenly, the building around her turned dark. The sleeping lamp in her bedroom suddenly disappeared.

Hazel stood still in a daze. Her heart was beating loudly against her ribcage and her body quivered. She was both shocked and frightened upon witnessing the lightning so close to her that she was unable to react.

It was only when her phone started to chime did Hazel snapped out of her trance. Seeing Alex's name on the caller ID, Hazel walked away from the window and picked up the call.

"Hazel, are you alright?" Alex's voice could be heard from the other line.