

# Love Amidst the Shadow

## Chapter 15

I uneasily turned to Mom, but she was wiping her tears off with her head lowered, so I couldn't learn anything from her. Hence, I turned to Dad and speedily questioned, "What are you on about, Dad? I'm your daughter! You should know me better than that!" *Crash!* The glass of water on the table was swung onto the floor. Dad's eyes intensely reddened. "You're not fessing up, are you?" As he was speaking, he went looking for a broom, just like how he used to "lecture" me back when I was a child. Seeing that, Mom grew apprehensive and hastily said to me, "Vivi, Mr. Meyer paid a visit just now and told your dad about the fiancé situation with Miss Turing. Oh, my child, how could you do such a thing?" *Mr. Meyer? As in Johnny? How'd Johnny know about me and Emil?* Before I could figure it out, Dad found a broom and tensely glared at me, yelling, "Say, Vivian, how did I raise you all these years? I lived my entire life as an honest man, only to be ridiculed by some random man on this very day! Think you're something, huh, Vivian?!" Knowing there was no way I could defend myself, I kneeled down and brushed my tears off, staring at him. "I'm sorry, Dad. I was wrong. Please punish me." He raised the broom in his hand, and just like back then, he forcefully struck it on me, hitting me as he sobbed. Mom, on the other hand, was also crying. I was clenching my teeth and soundlessly enduring Dad's "teachings." I knew there was nothing I could do to lessen his exasperation, so I wouldn't make a sound. Each strike was harder than the one before. Panicking, Mom tried to stop Dad, but he was too infuriated to listen to her. Watching as wounds were left on my skin, she jumped onto him to stop him and screamed, "Stephen, stop! You're gonna kill her!" Sadly, her attempt was disregarded as Dad sternly exclaimed, "With all those shameful things she did? Killing her is only mercy!" As the broom broke, he tossed it away and went to grab a feather duster before coming back to continue beating me. Mom was shocked. Forcibly, she grabbed Dad and wailed as she screamed out of her lungs, "Vivi just miscarried! If you keep beating her, you're gonna lose her forever!" Dad was stunned. The feather duster in his hand fell onto the ground as he peered at me, his voice breaking. "You even bore that b\*stard's child?" Tears fell from my eyes as I endured the pain. I didn't dare to speak a word. Met with my silence, Dad ferociously grabbed Mom and interrogated, "What now? Tell me what's going on!" Mom stuttered as she laid out everything she knew. After listening to her, Dad froze as he grew vexed before asking me, "Tell me, Vivian. How did you get the money for Adam's chemotherapy?" I lowered my head, not daring to say anything. He let out a sigh and paused momentarily before adding, "How did you get your money for the last two years?" Receiving no response from me, he was maddened. He swept everything on the table onto the floor as he roared at me, "Tell me!" I was running out of breath from crying. I stammered, "T-They're from E-Emil..." All of a sudden, silence filled the room. "Stephen? What's wrong, Stephen?" At Mom's anxious voice, I swiftly raised my head, only to witness Dad's blanching face. He was gasping for air, and his hands were trembling as he clenched his chest before eventually collapsing to the ground with both his eyes rolled

up. Dumbfounded, I shakingly looked for my phone and called the ambulance, while Mom was holding Dad, yelling his name as she underwent a mental breakdown. Alas, Dad was struggling to catch his breath, gasping rapidly. Adam, who was in his room, came out, only to be baffled by his messy family. After calling the ambulance, my first instinct was to give Dad an emergency resuscitation, so I went up to him to attempt to help. However, he gripped my hands, as if he had something to say, but he couldn't even blurt a word. His suffering pained me. I muttered, "I'm sorry, Dad. I swear I'll listen to everything you say next time. I promise I'll be good. Dad, please, don't scare me!" His breathing was weakening and slowing down, and the light in his eyes seemed to be getting dimmer. While Mom and I were frightened and panic-stricken, the ambulance arrived. After Dad was carried into the ambulance, Adam grabbed my hand. He was obviously terrified. "Vivian, what happened to Dad?" I gave him a hug, urging him to stay put at home and that I would come home very soon, before getting into the ambulance. In the hallway outside the surgery room of the hospital, Mom was crouching on the ground, burying her head in her arms as she cried her lungs out. She mumblingly repeated, "How... How did a fine family turn out this way?" I stood beside her. Nonetheless, I was still trembling. As much as I wanted to say something, I ultimately failed to utter a single word. *Thump!* At this moment, the door to the surgery room opened, and the doctor walked out.