

Love Hate 31

Chapter 31

Suddenly, Margaret recalled how her mother abandoned her and left with another man. The mockery and meanness that she grew up with were still fresh in her mind.

Giving birth to a child was a sensitive topic to her, because it was an enormous responsibility for her, and it was not something to be taken lightly.

However, Margaret was eager to be set free from the life she lived, where she was captivated by her sins. After pondering between the two tough choices, she finally decided what was best for her. "All right."

Christopher's pupils dilated as he boiled with rage. He clenched his jaw and relaxed it before continuing, "Can you even make me sleep with you? As long as you can't get pregnant, you don't even have to think about getting away from me!"

Margaret took a deep breath and stepped toward Christopher, then reached out her shaking hands to unbutton his shirt. Her eyelashes were shivering out of nervousness, and she was too afraid to look him in his eyes.

Margaret never figured out what Christopher was to her. He used to be a guardian who took her in and nurtured her for many years. Now, he had become her husband.

Margaret could not undo the button because she was in a panic. The fluctuation in the man's breathing, however, told her that he was impatient.

At her wit's end, she stood on her tiptoes and kissed Christopher on the corner of his lips.

Yet, she did not notice Christopher's expression darkening. *Is she that eager to flee from my side?*

"Enough!" Christopher pushed Margaret away and swept the tea set off the table violently. The shattered glass splattered onto Margaret's ankle, and blood immediately flowed from her wounded skin.

The pain caused Margaret to frown as she staggered to balance herself. Shocked and helpless, she looked at Christopher.

After seeing the injury on Margaret's ankle, Christopher instinctively raised his hand, but he quickly lowered it again and looked away, "Do you think I'll touch a woman who's been touched by another man?"

After finishing his sentence, he went into his walk-in closet and changed his clothes before leaving without even looking back.

Margaret stared at the mess on the floor for a long while before regaining her senses. She realized her ankle had been soaked in blood.

At that moment, Elizabeth pushed the door open and entered the room, then treated Margaret's wound worriedly. "Meg, did you argue with Mr. Lewis again? That's how his temper is, so you must be more obedient."

A bitter grin crept onto Margaret's face. "I'm already trying my best, and I do whatever he wants me to do." *Why is he still angry at me?*

Elizabeth stayed silent for a few seconds before speaking reluctantly. "The incident that happened three years ago hurt him a lot. Men are always like that, Meg. You must try to warm their heart when they have something that they couldn't get over. I can tell that he likes you."

Margaret remained speechless. *Can I warm Christopher's heart? No, I don't think so. It can be done by anyone else, but not me.*

Christopher did not return home throughout the night, and Margaret only managed to fall asleep when it was midnight.

Margaret woke up the next morning and went to work without having breakfast. After noticing a stack of documents on her desk when she reached the office, she knitted her brows together. "Whose documents are these?"

The colleague sitting beside her whispered, "Mr. Carter assigned you these tasks. Did you make him angry? He almost assigned you all the workload in this department. I'm afraid you'll have to work overtime today."

Margaret did not complain about it and knew the exact reason she was being treated that way. She sat down and started working.

During the lunch break, Margaret received a text message on her phone: *I'm Megan Jenkins' mother. Can we meet up at Mocha Cafe? I'll be waiting:*

Margaret tried to recall who Megan Jenkins was, but to no avail. She replied: *I don't know Megan Jenkins.*

She received a reply immediately: *It's fine as long as I know who you are. See you there.*

The image of the lady walking alongside Christopher at the airport appeared in

Margaret's mind. At that point, she was intrigued to discover the truth behind the situation.

Chapter 32

During the lunch break, Margaret left her workplace and went to Mocha Café. She noticed that the customers there were all from the upper-middle class, and the environment in the café was serene.

As soon as she stepped into the entrance, she received another text message that read: *I'm sitting at table four near the window.*

Margaret glanced around the café and saw a middle-aged woman dressed in expensive black leather sitting at table four. The woman was looking at her phone with her head slightly lowered, so Margaret could not see her face clearly.

Margaret walked toward the woman and sat down across from her. "Are you Megan Jenkins' mother?"

After the woman lifted her head, Margaret froze at that instant.

"Yes. My name is Hannah Collins. How should I address you?" The woman, Hannah, smiled politely. Her status as a rich man's wife was displayed through her gracious demeanor.

Staring at the familiar yet strange face, Margaret felt as if she was being choked on the throat and could not speak.

Hannah frowned slightly. "Don't be so nervous. I need your help with something, but it's not that serious. What would you like to drink?"

Margaret clenched her fists and did not notice her nails had sunk deep into her palms. She took a while to regain her composure and said, "Let's skip the formalities, Mrs. Jenkins. What is it you need my help with? Just tell me directly, as I'm busy."

Hannah was bothered by Margaret's stony tone, but she maintained her facade. She gracefully picked up her coffee cup and took a sip before speaking "My daughter is in a relationship with Christopher, so please stay away from him. Judging from your outfit and appearance, I don't think you're the right fit for a gentleman like Christopher, I'm sure he'll dump you in an instant when he's sick and tired of you. If that's the case, you won't get any benefits, will you? What is your price?"

Margaret sneered, "I would like to know how you got my contact details."

"You don't have to worry about that. We can discuss the price. If not, just pretend that I've never been here today." Hannah fidgeted with the diamond ring on her finger

nonchalantly.

"I'm just wondering why you didn't do a thorough background check on me and figure out my identity while you search for my contact details. You should've found out who I am before you came here!"

Margaret exclaimed while her voice quivered unnoticeably.

Hannah was baffled by Margaret's reaction as she watched the latter leave the café. She then called Megan. "You only gave me that woman's phone number, but have you looked into her background and found out who she is? I met her today, but she seemed unfazed when I talked about money with her. She's quite difficult to deal with."

Megan snorted disdainfully and replied, "Why is it important to know that poor looking woman's identity? I don't care, Mom. You must make her vanish from Christopher's side! I hate her so much, and I get angry just by looking at her face!"

Hannah could never refuse Megan's requests. Smiling, she promised the latter before hanging up the call. Immediately after that, she dialed another number. "Investigate someone for me."

After returning to the office, Margaret ignored the growls of hunger sounding from her stomach. Her head was filled with Hannah's face, and she could not believe that this was how she reunited with her long-lost mother. At that point, she sank into a turmoil of anger and disgust.

Many years had flown by. Margaret had already grown up and her appearance had changed. Even if Hannah could not recognize her, she could still recognize the former immediately. After all, Hannah's face was engraved in her mind.

Yet, there was one thing Margaret could not seem to understand. Since Hannah abandoned her when she was six years old to marry another man, Megan must be at least seven years younger than her. However, Megan did not look underaged at all.

If Hannah took such good care of Megan, even if the latter wasn't her biological daughter, what am I to her?

"Margaret, are you planning to work overtime and not go home?" Gavin came over to Margaret to monitor her after noticing the latter lazing around her desk.

Margaret sat up straight and continued working without even batting Gavin an eye, causing the latter's expression to darken, "Your husband is so daring. He visited our company just to kick me in my stomach. Let me get this straight, Margaret. As long as you work here, you must do whatever I ask you to. I want you to learn that there

are consequences to your actions!"

Chapter 33

Upon hearing Gavin's words, Margaret's body stiffened. "What did you say?"

As soon as he recalled that matter again, Gavin swelled with rage. "You didn't know? Stop pretending. My modus operandi is an eye for an eye. Just wait and see!"

Margaret was stunned at that instant. *Christopher came to my company and gave Gavin a beating? Is that a joke? Such news is too earth-shattering to me!*

Seeing her reaction, Gavin thought she was terrified and cooled down a little. "It's not too late to apologize to me. Perhaps I'll forgive you."

In response, Margaret shot a glance at him and spoke indifferently. "Mr. Carter, I'm busy. Please stop disturbing me."

Gavin cackled out of rage when he heard those words. "Y-You're really... Okay. Very well. Go ahead and get busy then. You're not allowed to leave the company before you finish your work!"

After the working hours, the employees left one after another.

It was as though the entire world was against Margaret during that time as she was the only person that had to work overtime. Except for the dim light in her working spot, the surroundings were pitch-black. As a result, the enormous office area looked a little ghastly. Someone had already turned off the heater earlier as well.

At midnight, Margaret finally could catch a breath and leave. The second she arrived at the exit, she saw Hannah standing upright in the snow. The latter's proud aura during the day had vanished at that time.

Margaret's heart was devoid of any emotions at that moment. As she was about to turn around and leave, Hannah dashed toward her and grabbed her wrist. "Meg..."

"If you want me to leave Christopher, go and tell him yourself. It's not that I won't leave. It's that he won't let me go! I only have one question for you. Is Megan your biological daughter?" Margaret felt disgusted while speaking.

When Hannah heard that question, she was seemingly hesitant to reply. Seconds later, she answered while brimming with tears, "Yes..."

That answer caused Margaret's heart to skip a beat. She then shook Hannah's hand off instantly and uttered in a heightened voice, "You had already given birth to

Megan when you were still with Dad? How absurd! You disgust me!"

From what Margaret remembered, Hannah and her father had separated early on. She never thought Hannah would do such a disgraceful thing in secret during that period.

"I—I'm sorry, Meg. It's all my fault. Put all the blame on me. Thankfully, you're doing well during all these years. As your mother, I'm happy for you. Christopher is a good person. You must've had a great life being with him. I'm relieved.." Hannah tearfully choked out.

Comical was the word Margaret felt about those words. She responded, "Mother? You don't deserve to call yourself that! By the way, didn't you urge me to leave Christopher and hand him to Megan earlier? What's wrong? Have you changed your mind?"

Hearing that utterance, Hannah averted her gaze slightly. "Christopher has indeed taken you in for many years, but I don't think you're compatible with him. I'll be honest with you. The Jenkins family is in a bad situation. They have to depend on Christopher to get back on their feet again. It took a lot of effort for your sister to have a relationship with Christopher. It's tough for me, and I have my reasons as well. Please, I'm begging you, Meg. Leave Christopher!"

Margaret bit her lip and remained silent for a while upon listening to those words. She even had a nauseating feeling when Hannah addressed her as "Meg" since it sounded similar to "Megan."

"I've told you. Go to Christopher directly if you want me to leave. Stop wasting your time pleading with me. Also, let me make myself clear. I will not leave! Christopher is my husband! We're already married!" With that, Margaret turned around and departed with tears trickling down her face. Now that things had come down to this, she would rather not meet Hannah again.

Chapter 34

After walking for some time, Margaret heard a car honking sound coming from behind.

As she thought it was Hannah, she decided to ignore the honk. Shortly afterward, the car pulled over next to her. It was not Hannah but Noah. He peered out of the car and told Margaret, "Get in, Mrs. Lewis."

Margaret wiped away the tears that had dried up subconsciously and looked toward the backseat. She could vaguely see Christopher's stagnant silhouette.

Once Margaret got into the car, her cold body heated up gradually. She hesitated for a split second before questioning, "You knew from the start that Megan and I have the same biological mother, right? Is this also your revenge?"

Christopher answered flatly, "It's fine if you want to think of it that way."

The car fell into dead silence following that short conversation. A few moments later, Margaret laughed all of a sudden. "Christopher, I suddenly feel an intense hatred toward you.."

That was the first time she had the nerve to say she hated Christopher aloud.

In response, Christopher moved his long fingers slightly, his expression unclear in the dark. "Hating me is not a bad idea."

Margaret could not see his current expression clearly, nor did she understand the meaning of his words. However, her desire of leaving him was growing at that moment.

Soon after returning to the Lewis residence, Margaret took a shower in the bathroom downstairs. She then went back to the room and lay down on the bed.

Subsequently, Christopher walked out of his private bathroom and sat on the chair before the floor-to-ceiling window out of habit. His hair was still wet at that point. It also seemed like he had no intention to leave the room.

None of them mentioned the unpleasant conversation in the car further. Christopher would never take the initiative to explain everything about that subject, whereas Margaret did not have the mood to think about Hannah again.

Meanwhile, the thought of sleeping on the same bed with Christopher made

Margaret nervous. Coupled with the incident during the day, she felt agitated and had trouble calming herself down.

Not long after, she heard a crisp sound coming from a lighter, but no smell of cigarettes was in the room. Margaret glanced toward Christopher and saw that he was putting down the cigarette. From the look on the man's face, it seemed like he was pondering something.

Suddenly, Christopher's phone rang. Every single note of the ringtone felt ear piercing in the quiet night.

He answered the call and placed the phone next to his ear. "Hello?"

"Are you not going to meet me tonight, Christopher? I miss you.." Megan's coquettish voice sounded on the other end of the line. Even though her voice was soft, Margaret could still hear it to a certain extent.

"Christopher! You should sleep now!" Margaret sat up and chimed in before Christopher could say a word.

She raised her voice and made sure that Megan could hear what she was saying.

In truth, Margaret had no idea what was in her mind when she blurted out those words. It just so happened that an impulse propelled her to do that intentionally.

Raising his eyebrows, Christopher cast a sidelong glance at Margaret and said to Megan, "I'm busy tonight. Bye."

Following those simple words, he hung up the phone straight away and stared at Margaret while wearing an ambiguous smile.

Although he uttered nothing, his gaze managed to instill a sense of guilt in Margaret. Thus, she lay down swiftly and covered herself with the blanket. "I—I'm going to sleep first."

Immediately afterward, Margaret sensed Christopher climbing into bed. She closed her eyes tightly, wondering if he would make a fuss about what happened just now.

A few seconds later, Christopher wrapped his strong arms around Margaret's waist and spoke in a distinct voice. "I'll give you a chance tonight."

That sentence caused Margaret's body to freeze. Then, she turned around slowly toward Christopher and put her arms around his neck.

Looking at the man inches away from her, she told herself repeatedly that she could leave as long as she got pregnant and gave birth to a child. Yet, she still could not move on to the next step. A thought then struck her mind as she uttered blankly, "You haven't dried your hair yet..?"

Without responding to her words, Christopher kissed her soft lips right away. Their breaths were getting heavier as time elapsed.

At one point, Margaret's eyes met with Christopher's inadvertently. She discovered that his usual undecipherable eyes had a layer of intimacy in them at that moment and knew that he was enamored of her.

Chapter 35

During that time, Margaret had no thoughts about escaping. She shifted her hands onto Christopher's chest and could feel a warm temperature on her palms. It was like the temperature she felt when she was young—familiar and comfortable yet at the same time unfamiliar and distant.

For some inexplicable reason, she was also afraid that Christopher would suddenly remember that she had already lost her virginity three years ago. She conceived that he would disdain her and regret giving her a chance if that happened.

To prevent that from happening, Margaret wrapped her legs around his waist in desperation. Simultaneously, she furrowed her brows when she felt a sudden pain in her stomach and remembered that she had not eaten anything the entire day.

Since she did not want to squander such a golden opportunity, Margaret continued to endure the pain. Unfortunately, the pain was too intense and caused her to sweat profusely.

Noticing that something was wrong with the woman underneath him, Christopher stopped what he was doing and asked, "What's wrong with you?" The impatience concealed in his hoarse voice was seemingly about to blow up.

"N—Nothing..." Margaret took a sharp breath when she replied, and Christopher noticed that.

Other than that, he could also see her pale face. Consequently, that layer of affection faded from his eyes, and his gaze turned indifferent. "Is it gastric pain? Did you not eat anything?"

As she could not hold the pain any longer, Margaret nodded.

Without hesitation, Christopher got up, changed his clothes, and left. Anyone could tell that he was furious when he went out.

Shortly after Christopher's departure, Elizabeth went into the room hurriedly with the medicine in her hand. "Hurry up and eat this, Meg. Gastric pain is torturous. Your body is too weak, though..."

Margaret adjusted her unkempt pajamas and chuckled mockingly at herself before taking medicine. *Christopher has zero patience with me, but he's like a completely different person in front of Megan. Haha.*

At around three in the morning, Christopher was in Nocturne Bar.

He drank so much alcohol that his eyes were getting blurrier. The people beside him, Steven and Casper, looked at each other in bewilderment.

Eventually, Casper could not take it anymore. "Hey, Christopher. That's enough. You've been drinking like today's the last day of your life. What in the world is wrong with you again this time? I still have to head over to the recently-acquired company to appoint positions tomorrow. You're causing me to stand my father up! Am I not courting death by doing that?" |

Staring at the liquor in the glass, Christopher recalled Margaret's look when he was on top of her earlier. *She's willing to suffer through all that pain to get pregnant and flee from me. How desperate does she want to leave?*

At that thought, he downed the liquor in one go and threw the glass to the floor. "Sh*t!" Immediately after that, he leaned against the couch and fell into a stationary state.

Upon hearing Christopher's swear word, Steven had a frightened expression. "Did you hear what he said just now, Casper? After all these years, this is the first time I heard profanity coming out of his mouth..."

Casper let out a sigh and replied, "He must be venting his anger. Anyway, what are you waiting for, Steven? Call his wife."

Margaret was in deep slumber when she received the call. As she had just relieved her gastric pain, she was reluctant to move a muscle out of exhaustion. "H-Hello?"

Steven explained resignedly, "Um, Christopher is drunk, Margaret. Is it convenient for you to come over? It's the same location from last time..."

At that instant, Margaret was wide awake. *Christopher has only been gone for less than two hours. And he's already drunk?*

"A-All right. Hang on a moment. I'm coming over now." While she was speaking, she had already jumped out of bed and began changing her clothes.

By the time Margaret arrived at the bar with Fredrick, Casper and Steven had already helped Christopher out to the door. Margaret adjusted her coat and walked over to them, "Thank you."

Casper smiled faintly in response. "Don't mention it. We've been buddies for more than ten years. By the way, are you working at Soaring Design?"

Margaret did not understand why Casper would ask about her job. Nevertheless, she nodded and answered, "Yes."

Hearing her reply, Casper made no further comments and assisted her in getting Christopher into the car together.

On the way back, Fredrick reminded, "Mrs. Lewis, keep an eye on Mr. Lewis vomiting since he has drunk a lot. If he vomits here, he might get rid of this car."

Chapter 36

"Okay," said Margaret. She agreed with Fredrick, as that was definitely something Christopher would do.

This time, he was as drunk as a lord. He did not wake up even after returning home. After putting him in bed, Margaret tumbled right onto the bed. Exhausted, she no longer wanted to move a muscle.

The next morning, Margaret was awakened by the alarm. Her first instinct was to turn it off, preventing it from disturbing Christopher's sleep.

However, she realized that Christopher was embracing her tightly when she tried to move.

The alarm was still blaring unceasingly. Wriggling cautiously, she tried to break free from his arms. All of a sudden, a hand reached from behind her to turn off the alarm swiftly before resting on her waist again.

Anxious, Margaret flinched and wondered if Christopher was awake. After some time, she moved again as Christopher did not budge at all. The man then said, "Don't move."

Her body immediately tensed up. "I-I'm going to be late for work."

Still not wide awake, he rubbed his face against her neck before changing his position and continuing to sleep.

Startled, Margaret immediately covered her neck, and she could still feel the lingering warmth in her palms. *Was that really Christopher? He was as tame as a lamb!*

Only after seeing Christopher facing her with his back motionlessly did she dare to get off the bed. Her heart was still fluttering from what he had done just now.

With dark circles under her eyes, Margaret arrived at her workplace. She looked extremely worn out. As she had worked overtime the day before, she did not have enough time to rest. On top of that, she had to go through the trouble of going to fetch Christopher at the bar last night.

Since she had nothing to do in the morning, she utilized the free time to rest, laying her head on her desk.

Amid her drowsiness, someone knocked on her desk. She raised her head to see

Gavin's revolting countenance. "A new boss is coming today. Scram back to your house if you want to sleep. Stop being the rotten apple in our company!"

Margaret forced herself to sit up straight, albeit her eyelids were still heavy.

Although she knew that Soaring Design was acquired by someone, she was nothing but an employee. Thus, she did not care about who the new boss was.

She thought the new boss would make a grand entrance upon arrival. However, nothing happened throughout the morning. When she was about to get off work, Gavin knocked on her desk again. "Mr. Flemmington's looking for you."

Margaret stood up and headed to the CEO's office with Gavin following behind her. Perceiving the excitement and obsequiousness on his face, she felt an ineffable revulsion.

Gavin scurried forward and knocked on the door before her. A familiar voice came from within. "Come in."

Before Margaret could work out where she had heard the voice before, she had already set foot in the office. Upon seeing Casper, she was stunned. "You..."

Casper cast a smile at her. "From now on, I'm your new boss. Don't expect me to show favoritism toward you. I won't bring my personal feelings to work. Please have a seat first. I have something to discuss with Mr. Carter."

Gavin was flabbergasted by the fact that Casper and Margaret were acquainted with each other. Growing anxious, he promptly flashed a subservient smile and stepped forward. "Mr. Flemmington, what's the matter?"

Curving the corners of his mouth, Casper looked affable, adding a touch to his handsome appearance. Even Gavin, who was also a man, could not take his eyes off him. Then, to his surprise, Casper said tepidly, "Get your salary at the HR department and leave."

The smile on Gavin's face instantly stiffened. "W-What? Why? Did I do something wrong?"

Raising a brow, Casper answered, "No. I just find you an eyesore."

Gavin's face blanched. He thought the new boss was good-tempered, as the latter always had an amiable smile etched on his face. However, never had he expected a bolt from the blue.

Before he left, he threw a venomous glare at Margaret.

Margaret, however, responded with a shrug. She had nothing to do with that decision.

After Gavin had left, Casper said to her, "You don't have to work in the evening. Go back and get some rest. It must have been tiring to take care of Christopher last night. I'm not bringing personal affairs into work. In fact, if you're not feeling well, you won't be able to concentrate on your work. Therefore, you should take care of yourself before returning to work."

Margaret intended to explain that Christopher was actually quite docile last night, but she was indeed tired. Thus, she thanked him gratefully, "All right. Thank you."

When she returned to the Lewis residence, she entered the living room to see a charming man on the couch. She was surprised, as Christopher, the workaholic, would usually be out at this time.

Vacillating between greeting him or not, she pondered for two seconds before making up her mind and marching upstairs directly.

Seeing that, Christopher glowered in fury while putting down the magazine in his hand. In the end, he suppressed his anger upon seeing Margaret's exhausted look.

It was then a message popped up on his phone. He glanced at it to find that Casper sent it. The message read: *I've followed your instruction and sent her home early to rest. I've also fired Gavin. Remember that you owe me a meal.*

Without giving a reply, Christopher threw the phone aside. Had he known that she would give him the cold shoulder, he would not have asked Casper to let her off work early.

Margaret immediately went to bed after arriving home. She was awakened by a call

from Jodie at around eight o'clock that night. Upon seeing who the caller was, she was surprised. "Jo?"

On the other side of the phone, Jodie exclaimed in exhilaration, "Meg, I'm back! I'm at the airport now, and I'll be meeting you tomorrow! Are you free to meet up tomorrow?"

Without a second thought, Margaret replied, "I have to go to work tomorrow. I'll meet you after work."

In fact, she had always been managing her time wisely. Hence, she knew very well what she should do at a certain time, and she would adhere to her timetable.

Never had she expected Jodie to return this soon. This surprising event made her instantly forget about her worries.

Just then, Elizabeth knocked on the door and reminded, "Mrs. Lewis, dinner is ready."

With that, Margaret ended the call and responded to Elizabeth. Elizabeth would usually change the way she addressed Margaret when Christopher was at home.

The corners of Margaret's mouth were still curving upward slightly when she walked down the stairs, a stark contrast to the gloominess in Christopher's eyes.

Sitting at the dining table, Margaret savored two plates of pasta and relished a bowl of soup, as she had a good appetite at that moment. She pondered for a while before saying, "I have some matters to attend to after work tomorrow. So, I'll be coming home late."

Christopher merely snorted coldly in response without uttering a word.

She paused briefly before adding, "Jo is back. I want to see her."

Christopher dropped a sarcastic comment. "Really? Do you want to see her, or do you want to hear about Jenson from her?"

She held her breath, then stood up and said, "I've finished eating."

Christopher cast an icy gaze at her. "Did I say you could leave?"

Margaret stood rigid under his gaze. "Is there anything else you want to say?"

"You have to come back home on time tomorrow. If you can't do that, don't even think about leaving the house." Christopher stood up and strode upstairs as soon as he finished speaking, leaving no chance for Margaret to refuse his order.

She could acquiesce for other trifles, but she must meet up with Jodie tomorrow.

At that thought, she gnashed her teeth and followed Christopher. "Christopher, I only want to catch up with Jo, that's all."

Christopher stopped in his tracks briefly. "I've asked you that question, but you didn't answer me. You only have one chance."

Flustered, Margaret wondered what to do with him. Suddenly, she remembered Elizabeth had told her that she could please Christopher by acting compliantly.

Drawing in a deep breath, she followed him again. "I'm sorry. Can you please let me go tomorrow?"

Christopher walked into his room and sat on the chair in front of the window. Taking out a cigarette deftly, he picked up the lighter and put it down the next second. He

turned to grab a book, flipping it open. In a vaguely annoyed tone, he said, "Are you begging me?"

Margaret walked to his side and stood there, replying, "Yes."

Glancing at her, he said, "Begging me after you've got on my nerves? Who taught you that?"

She did not know how to answer that question. Nevertheless, reckoning that she could not keep mum at that time, she asked boldly, "What should I do so that you'll allow me to go?"

Christopher countered with another question mockingly, "What do you think you should do to cheer me up?"

The impasse continued for some time before Margaret walked forward, took a cigarette, and put it near Christopher's lips. "I'm sorry. I was wrong."

Chapter 38

Christopher was taken aback. Shortly after, he turned his head away and pursed his lips. "Don't you know how to light a cigarette?"

When Margaret finally fathomed his meaning, she placed the cigarette between her lips amateurishly. Before she could light it up, Christopher had snatched away the cigarette, holding it between his fingers. "That's enough. I'm not free tomorrow. Ask Casper to keep you company."

Perplexed, she uttered, "Casper? Are you talking about my current boss?"

Christopher remained silent. A silent agreement. Knowing that it was a hard-earned opportunity, Margaret dared not to utter any more unnecessary things. "T-Then, I'll head to bed."

Still, Christopher remained silent. He stood up and went to the study. Only then did he light the cigarette between his fingers as he took out a picture from the bookshelf. It was a picture of him when he was eighteen years old, displaying a somber demeanor, which was inapt for anyone at that age. He was holding Margaret's tiny, frail hands, and she was only eight years old at that time. Even now, she was still weak and delicate.

The picture was taken by the media back when he brought little Margaret back to the Lewis residence. Albeit old, the picture was still in good condition.

He stayed in the study until it was late at night. In the dark, he cast his gaze onto the bed and stood still for a while, pondering. Only then did he proceed to lie down beside Margaret and wrap her in his arms.

The next day, Margaret went to her company early in the morning. Right as she sat at her desk, Megan stomped toward her out of nowhere, hitting her with her handbag angrily while shouting, "Margaret, you b*tch!"

Everyone merely watched at the side. No one tried to stop the fight.

Margaret covered her head. Infuriated by the assault, she grabbed a document within reach and flung it at Megan. "Are you crazy?"

After being slapped in the face by the document, Megan shouted in disbelief, "How dare you hit me? Let me tell you something, Margaret. You're only my mom's illegitimate child. You're not even worthy enough to be my servant! Since your father killed Christopher's family, Christopher hates you to the bone! He only wants to take

revenge on you, so stop dreaming the impossible! Why don't you just go to hell with your useless father?"

Casting a cold expression, Margaret stood up and said, "What did you say?"

Megan continued yelling, "Did I say it wrong? Everyone knows what you did with Jenson from the Swanson family three years ago. How are you shameless enough to stay by Christopher's side? If I were you, I would have ended my own life right away! I wondered who was getting in the way between Christopher and me. After some investigation, I finally found out that it was you. How disgusting!"

Having the incident three years ago recapped on the spot, the onlookers began commenting, "So, it was her. That's why I found her familiar. I would never have guessed that she's so detestable as she's quite taciturn. You really can't judge a book by its cover. Gavin tried to pursue her previously. Although she seemed uninterested, I bet she has gone to bed with him secretly. How pretentious."

"That's right. Mr. Flemmington immediately dismissed Gavin when she just joined us. Maybe she had gotten her hands on Mr. Flemmington, too. Hmph. It's great to be young. Sadly, she's just someone else's unwanted rubbish."

Hearing the snide remarks, Margaret could not tolerate them anymore. She took out her phone and looked for Hannah's number. When she was about to make the call, Megan snatched her phone and

smashed it onto the floor, "Are you trying to contact my mom? Who do you think you are? Let me warn you. Stay away from my mom and Christopher. Otherwise, you won't be able to work here anymore!"

"What's with all those noises?" Casper heard the ruckus right when he arrived at the company. The employees gathered in a crowd, seemingly unconcerned about their work. That was the first scene he saw when he set foot in the company, so it was natural for him to get angry.

Seeing Casper's arrival, Megan had tears streaming down her face in the blink of an eye. She rushed toward him and held his arm, "Casper, she hit me!"

Casper followed her finger and looked at the culprit. Right there and then, the rage on his face was replaced by helplessness. Had he known what trouble he would be facing, he would never have gone to the company that day. "Um... Megan, do you really have to cause a ruckus this early in the morning at my company?"

Megan said coyishly, "But she hit me!"

Margaret's shoulders sloped down subconsciously when she realized that Megan was familiar with Christopher's friend circle, and she even knew Casper. The two seemed relatively close.

Chapter 39

Casper could feel his temple throbbing. "Well... Does Christopher know that you're here looking for Margaret?"

Megan's expression changed almost immediately. "H-He doesn't know that I'm here. Casper, can you please not tell him about this? I promise to leave now. I also promise that I won't come here to cause trouble anymore. I'll handle the issue with her privately, okay?"

Casper waved her off. "Okay, okay. I won't tell him anything. Just leave."

Megan then shot Margaret a glare and warned, "I'll come back for you sooner or later."

Margaret returned to her seat after Megan left, and so did the others.

A thought then flashed in Casper's mind. He opened his mouth, wanting to voice it out, but no words came out as he figured that it was not something he should get involved with.

When it was time to get off work, both Margaret and Casper entered the elevator together.

"How long have they been dating each other?" she asked all of a sudden.

"Erm... Do you mean Christopher and Megan?" Casper was uncertain if Margaret was referring to the two.

Margaret nodded in reply. Casper then disclosed, "I wasn't sure about the exact time, but they were already dating when they were overseas. Anyway, why do you care?"

Margaret just shook her head in return. She knew that even if she was bothered by such a fact, there was nothing she could do about it.

After that, the two did not speak to each other. Casper then personally drove Margaret to the restaurant where she agreed to meet Jodie.

The moment they entered the restaurant, Casper subconsciously furrowed his brows. It was a working-class restaurant that he would not typically visit. When he noticed the oil stain on the table, he had the urge to turn and leave. However, when he thought of Christopher's instructions, he forced himself to stay.

"Meg. I'm here!" Jodie waved enthusiastically upon seeing Margaret, disregarding the other customers' curious stares.

A smile finally appeared on Margaret's face, and she hurried toward Jodie, who was the same as three years ago. Nothing about her had changed. She was exactly like how Margaret remembered her to be.

Jodie was not alone at the restaurant. Jack was right next to her. He was more mature now, and even the defiant side of him had vanished. When Margaret saw him, he was smiling, but the smile did not reach his eyes, which made him look unfathomable.

When Jodie noticed Casper, she was somewhat baffled. "This is...?"

"I'm Casper," responded Casper amiably, introducing himself.

After knowing the man's name, Jodie did not press on for more information. She turned to call the waiter over. "Meg, Casper, what would you two like to eat?"

Before Margaret could respond, Casper instinctively said, "Don't worry about me. Just go ahead and order." He was not planning to eat anything.

Jodie felt quite awkward when she sensed the slight disgust in his tone. As for Jack, he dropped his gaze, making it difficult for others to determine his feelings.

Margaret noticed the change in the atmosphere. Trying to put such awkwardness to an end, she quickly said, "You know what I love to eat, Jo. You can order for me."

After ordering some dishes, Jodie returned the menu to the waiter. "Can you imagine how thrilled I am to be able to return to this country? It has been three years since I last walked on this land. The fog here used to bother me then, but now I don't mind it at all. I miss this place terribly, Meg."

Margaret felt guilty upon hearing that. "I'm sorry, Jo. It's all my fault."

Jodie waved her hand and said, "Stop saying that! I never blamed you for anything. It's just that I didn't expect Christopher to be your brother. Honestly, after what had happened... It's not his fault either. Jenson is fine, by the way. You don't have to worry about him. He's..."

"I know. Let's not talk about it." Margaret quickly stopped Jodie from continuing. She did not dare to talk about Jenson as Casper, Christopher's spy, was sitting right next to them.

All of a sudden, Casper interrupted them, "Christopher isn't her brother. To be exact, he is her husband."

Dead silence then ensued. Even Jack, who had been 'silent the entire time, shifted his

gaze toward Margaret.

Chapter 40

Jodie was shocked to hear such news. "What? Y-You married Christopher? What about Jenson?"

Margaret initially was not going to tell Jodie anything about this. At first, she thought that her marriage to Christopher was meant to appease that incident. However, she later discovered that Christopher had not made their marriage public. Hence, the idea of getting married to Christopher did not make any sense to Margaret now.

Now that Casper mentioned it, she was forced to explain. "Yes. I've become an orphan when I was eight, and he took me in. When you were overseas, we got married. We didn't make a big deal out of it. Anyway, I didn't tell you because I couldn't contact you." Margaret purposely avoided mentioning Jenson in her explanation. With how things were now, she figured there would be no future for her and Jenson.

Jodie, however, was dubious about it all. "Did... he force you to marry him?"

Margaret shook her head and smiled wryly. "No, he didn't."

Jodie then finally connected the dots. "In that case, I understand why he targeted Jenson and me in the past. It's because he likes you. There's no doubt he won't tolerate any betrayal from you. He must have been infuriated when he knew about what happened between you and Jenson. Has he treated you well? Did he abuse you? Why is there a bruise on your head? Did he do it to you?"

Following the series of questions Jodie fired at Margaret, the latter could only stare at her helplessly. "No, he didn't give me this. I accidentally knocked my head earlier. He never laid a finger on me, so don't worry. He has been nice to me too. I'm telling the truth."

The bruise on her head was actually Megan's doing. Margaret did not tell Jodie that because it would be hard for her to explain everything.

Jodie then sighed. "Frankly, Christopher is a good choice. He's handsome and rich. Moreover, you two have been staying together for so long, so you must know him well. Regardless, as long as you like him, I'll support your decision and always be by your side no matter what."

Margaret was touched. After all, she was fortunate to have someone support her unconditionally

Soon, all the dishes were served. Jodie noticed that Casper did not touch any of the food, and it annoyed her. She was also from a rich family, yet she never acted like that. Hence, in order to teach him a lesson, she served him some food. "Do eat, Casper. You're Meg's friend. That means you're my friend too. You don't have to be shy."

Casper stole a glance at Margaret before summoning his courage to try the food. The environment alone nauseated him, not to mention the food. He suppressed the urge to throw up before forcing a smile. "It's good."

Margaret knew that he was not feeling well, but she disregarded it on purpose. She was not happy in the first place to bring him along when meeting her friend, so she wanted him to suffer a little.

Throughout the entire meal, Casper's face was pale. Later, Jack went outside to take a phone call. When he returned, he informed, "I need to go now. Something's up."

Jodie hurriedly added, "I'll go with you."

Jack smiled and helped Jodie adjust her clothes. "Okay."

Though his actions showed intimacy and affection, his eyes did not reflect those feelings. They did not look like a genuine couple at all.

The four then exited the restaurant, and Casper was eager to leave. "Shall we go now, Margaret?"

Jodie felt that they did not have a pleasant meetup that day. Guilty, she said, "Meg, let's end the meeting for today. I'll arrange for another meeting soon. Since I just got back, I have a lot of matters to take care of."

Margaret nodded in reply. "Okay. Be careful on the way back."

On the way back to the Lewis residence, Casper stopped the car by the road, got down, and retched. Only then did Margaret realize that Casper was not putting on airs, but was really unwell. "Are you okay?"

Casper looked terribly sick. "I-I'm okay."

When they finally arrived at the Lewis residence, Casper left without even entering. Christopher was already home, and the whole Lewis residence was brightly lit. He preferred to have his house brightly lit whenever he was home. Seeing all the lights, Margaret felt like even the pale street lights were emitting warmth.

When she entered the residence, she saw Christopher on the couch. "I'm home," she greeted in a low voice.

As always, she did not receive a reply, and she never expected one either.

After Margaret got into the bathroom, Christopher took out his phone and replied to Casper's text. Half of his face was hidden in the dark, making it hard to tell his expression.