

Love the Second Time Around Chapter 21 - 25

Chapter 21

I sniffled, staring at him sadly. It was weird that he showed up here, but at least I wasn't alone anymore, so I went into the car as he told me to.

However, he didn't even look at me after I got in. "Drive," Dominic told Calvin.

Calvin revved the car up right after I settled down, and I looked at Dominic. "Were you following me?"

"Don't get ahead of yourself. You pulled a prank on me and made a run for it. I'm just here to get my employee back."

Well, he had a point. Dominic was a fierce guy, but at least he was better than that bastard Julius.

Thanks to him, I was feeling slightly better, so I stole some glances at him.

Dominic was still as inscrutable as ever, and he was looking straight ahead. His eyelashes were so long that I couldn't help but keep staring at him.

Then he pointed out my rude behavior without even batting an eye, "Stop staring at me. If you keep this up, you're gonna drool all over in the car."

His remark enraged me, and I roared at him, forgetting the fact that I was his caregiver. "Can't even look at you? Why did you show your face then? It's not like I can do anything else other than ogling it. Besides, I can ogle whoever I like. It's none of your business anyway."

"Of course it is my business. I'm not your boyfriend or anything, so you staring at me makes me uncomfortable. No, to be precise, I feel disgusted."

Wow, I couldn't believe he just insulted me right off the bat. Was he like a talk show host or something? Damn, I wanted to bite him, but I held my rage down and shifted the topic to his life.

My gaze turned toward his crotch deliberately and asked, "Does it still hurt?"

I asked that because I saw him holding his crotch when he crashed into the coffee table. Since it was getting out of control at that time, I had to escape.

His face fell when he heard my question. "Damn you. Do you want it to still hurt?"

Hey, I didn't say anything. If anything happens, it's on you. Even so, I apologized, "Sorry for that. It won't happen again, I swear."

Dominic didn't accept my apology, so he kept mocking me, "So, chased out of the house, huh? You can't go up against your husband and his mother, not when you're this weak. I wonder why, though? Did you use up all your edge when you dumped me?"

He sounded as cool as a cucumber, but I was hurt by what he said. The breakup wasn't something I would like to mention, so I didn't understand why he kept mocking me with it. Hey, if it was anyone's fault, it was yours, okay?

"Stay out of my business and stay in your lane." I looked outside the window, refusing to continue the conversation.

"D'you think I like this? I'm just trying to keep you alive so I can collect my debt."

"Hah, I won't die that easily, and I'll clear my debt. But get off your high horse. You're the same kind of scumbag as he is. The only difference here is your goal."

At that moment, I was getting more and more frustrated. I just got out of a big fight, and now Dominic kept mocking me. Curses. Is fate trying to pull a prank on me?

Upon that, Dominic was stunned for a moment, then he commented coolly, "Yeah, scumbags live the longest, so I guess I'll keep being one. Can't let you off that easily, can I?"

Infuriated, I shut my eyes, trying to block his face out of my sight. He was getting insufferable, so I wanted to leave right away. "Stop the car!"

Calvin ignored me, of course, so I shot Dominic a glare, but all he did was arch an eyebrow. Left with no choice, I slumped back against the seat. "Where are you guys taking me to?"

Dominic answered unhesitatingly, "I have an appointment tonight, but my partner got into some trouble, so she has to sit this one out. Well, I have to get someone, so that's why you're here."

Huh? Aren't I just a caregiver? This is way above my pay grade. "No. That's your problem, not mine," | refused.

"I'm not asking for your permission. You owe me, so you're in no position to negotiate," he answered matter-of-factly

That was the last straw. I stared at him angrily, asking, "What do you want? I told you I'd clear your name, but you said no. That's not my fault, so why do you still dwell on it after all this time? Are you a man? Just get this over with!"

As soon as I finished, I hurled my phone. “Do you want me to die for you before you’re satisfied?”

Dammit, my luck was as rotten as it could be. Why was everyone threatening me left, right, and center? Was I really that much of a pushover? Was that how everyone thought of me? Nothing but a pushover?

I thought Dominic would fly into a rage after that, but to my surprise, he was still as calm as ever. His resting b*tch face was still as annoying as usual too. But that was really weird because he used to be someone who loved to laugh, and he was always happy.

Fast forward to this day, and Dominic looked like he overdosed on Botox. He had the same expression 24/7, and I knew if I had to see him every day, I’d probably get depressed.

“Well, if you’re not going, then forget it. Galaxy Corporation’s boss is attending the party tonight, so I was going to help you out with your copyright and see if they would give you a bigger cut. But since you’re not interested in money, then please get out.”

Hearing that, I froze up for a moment. Yes, he was doing it out of goodwill, but I wasn’t selling my copyright anyway, so there was no need to accept his help. I was going to get out, but then I remembered Julius’ threat.

Julius wanted me to cough up five hundred thousand for him, or else he wouldn’t sign the papers, and he would harass my family at their workplace as well. It seemed like I really needed the money.

Even if I couldn’t give him five hundred thousand, at the very least, I had to cough up the betrothal gift. Eventually, I made a decision. Just when Dominic was about to tell Calvin to stop, I smiled at him.

“Wait. I can be your partner for the night. No big deal!”

Dominic saw through my acting, and his face fell. He clicked his tongue in disgust, but he said nothing more to me. A short while later, we stopped before a classy boutique. Calvin then went to take the wheelchair in the trunk and helped Dominic up.

I tugged on his sleeve, whispering concernedly, “I don’t have any money on me, so I can’t afford any clothes here. Can I attend the event without a dress?”

Dominic shot me a look of disdain. “What? Do you think you can attend the ball wearing nothing but

your dolman? This is tacky as hell.” –

I quickly looked at my getup, which was a simple one. I was wearing a dolman, a pair of jeans, and a pair of sneakers. It was the typical getup of a student.

He glanced at me for a moment, then he “graciously” announced, “Alright, don’t waste my time. I’ll buy a dress for you, but I’m putting this on your tab.”

Oh God, please no. I have a bad feeling about this. “How am I paying then?”

“Take a guess.” He gave me a smile that sent a chill down my spine.

Crap.

“Can I say no?”

Upon that, he gazed at me sharply but answered in an eerily calm tone. “You can try.”

Love the Second Time Around Chapter 22

Chapter 22

Evidently, what Dominic meant was if I didn’t value my life, then I should go ahead and reject him.

Needless to say, I still wanted to live, but I was also not willing to cooperate. After all, women do not think with the bottom half of their bodies. What we had was already in the past, so I couldn’t understand why he kept pestering me.

I could only blame myself for being a fool. Being married was one of the worst decisions that I had ever made. It not only restricted my freedom but also blinded me. For the past few months, I felt like a bird locked up in a cage. If only I loved myself more back then, maybe I wouldn’t have ended up with a b*stard like Julius.

After imagining one hundred and one scenarios of Julius’ death, I suddenly felt a smack at the back of my hand.

Huh? Did Dominic just smack me?

I innocently rubbed the back of my hand while staring at him, scolding, “Are you crazy? Why did you hit

me?”

Dominic raised his eyebrows slightly at that, looking all smug but deadly attractive at the same time.

“Hello, earth to Liliana. Clearly, your heart is somewhere else. Do I even matter to you?”

“Of course you do. But you said so yourself that my heart is somewhere else!” I lashed back at him. After I blurted it out, I realized I shouldn’t have said that. I glanced back at him, who was beside me, and I could feel the pressure from his gaze.

“My heart is suffocated by money, so how could I be thinking of anything else?”

I carefully added another sentence to save my previous statement. After seeing disdain on his face, secretly breathed a sigh of relief. Then, I quickly picked a black dress and went to the fitting room.

After putting on the dress, I came out of the fitting room, feeling flustered.

Since I wasn’t paying attention while picking clothes, I chose a dress that had a huge side split up to my thighs. What was worse was that it also had a deep V neck. Great, that’s just great-everything is

out in public. You know what? I might as well don’t wear any clothes!

However, the lady assistant next to me seemed a little worried that I might not buy the dress. Thus, she continuously threw praises at my figure and complimented how elegant I looked while wearing the dress.

Although I did not say anything, it was quite apparent that I liked what I was hearing. After all, I could see that stupid grin on my face from the mirrors. After a while, I told her my decision. “1-I... this... I want t-this.” For some reason, my tongue decided to fail me, and I lost the ability to articulate.

Immediately after I finished speaking, Dominic’s cold voice came in like a bucket of cold water splashed onto my head.

“It’s better not to wear anything than to wear this. Why don’t I just grab a black robe for you so you can run naked at the party instead?”

With my fingers tightly clutching the dress, my face flushed red at his remarks. If you don’t want to buy it, then don’t. Why do you have to yell out your snide remarks?

At that, I waved my hand in anger. “I change my mind; I won’t be getting this anymore. This is obviously just a long lingerie robe! What’s the point of having so much fabric that covers nothing?”

After saying that, I realized that I might have seemed a bit too out of place. Flustered, I raised my head and discreetly glanced at Dominic. Wait a minute... Is he... laughing?

What the heck? Dominic's actually laughing at me?

Doesn't he hate me?

I couldn't believe my eyes. Thus, I blinked a few times and looked at his face again, and it was back to the previous aloof expression.

Seeing that, I was relieved. For a moment, I thought I was seeing things.

In the end, under Dominic's request, he chose a lavender halterneck dress, which screamed elegance with the right amount of skin showing

I had to admit that he had great taste. The dress hid my insecurities, which was my flat-chestedness, and at the same time, accentuated my shoulders and slender arms. To be honest, I was delighted with the outfit.

After we finished shopping, I went to the said hotel with Dominic. Calvin didn't follow, though; probably because wasn't used to these kinds of events, so I had to wheel Dominic in myself.

When we arrived, the dinner party had not started yet, but the hall was already full of celebrities. While we were waiting, I saw several familiar faces that often appeared on the screens.

What kind of dinner party is this? It was very visually pleasing for a person like me, as I usually would not pay much attention to the fashion community.

In other words, there were many good-looking men at the dinner party.

I was always a firm believer in appreciating all types of beauty. And because of that, I loved all stunning and clever men.

That was also the main reason why I could put up with Julius. His appearance stood out among all the other men, so I chose to be with him.

Although everything went downhill with him eventually, my appreciation for gorgeous human beings had always stayed the same. It stubbornly stuck with me for twenty-seven years.

"Be careful not to flood this place with your dripping saliva. If you like looking around that much, maybe I will hammer your eyeballs on the wall so that you can look at handsome men every day."

Dominic's voice had always been invigorating. Hence, that sentence alone woke me up from my fantasies.

At the same time, someone walked over, and I happened to know this person as well. He was a good looking young man, and I even binge-watched his television series a while ago.

He raised his champagne and said gently, "You're here, Dom. Is this your girlfriend? She's very cute and elegant."

That guy was really good with words. However, Dominic didn't seem to like other people complimenting me, so he just said plainly, "She's my caregiver."

He even gave me a provocative look after saying that. I glared back at him, but he ignored me and waved at another man not far away.

"Yo, James Dalton, since I'm here now, let's sign the contract right away."

The man called James Dalton heard Dominic, turned around, and looked at us. His full and thick eyebrows made him even more charming than he already was, and he seemed like a talented young man.

When I was still lost in my thoughts, he was already in front of us. Just then, Dominic smacked my hand once again, and I yelped in pain.

"Are you daydreaming? Can't you see that James is greeting you?"

Feeling aggrieved, I touched the place where he smacked and glowered at him. To my horror, I realized that James was waiting in front of me with his hand extended toward me, so I quickly reached out to shake it.

"Hello Mr. Dalton, I'm Liliana. Nice to meet you."

James smiled at me, then he teased Dominic.

"So this is the fabled mischievous little girlfriend you were talking about."

Um... What?

Mischievous little girlfriend? So that was how Dominic described me in front of them?

Before I could gloat about it, Dominic denied everything. "It's not her. She is just my caregiver. We don't know each other very well either."

"Oh..." James responded. Instantly, my heart felt like a Titanic that collided with a glacier, sinking into the depths of the ocean.

I turned my head and looked to the other side. Then I heard James mention another person's name. A name that felt like a knife stabbing through my heart.

James asked, "I heard Camille Madison will be coming back soon. She came back to marry you, right?"

Love the Second Time Around Chapter 23

Chapter 23

Camille Madison was a name that haunted me for the longest time.

I thought that I would never meet her again. But alas, who knew she would come back or even intended to marry Dominic.

A bitter smile formed on my lips upon that. But what was I to say? After all, they were together from the very beginning, and it would be weird if they did not end up married.

I lowered my head to hide the sadness in my eyes with my bangs. However, it seemed like it wasn't enough, so I kept cursing myself in my mind. Lilianna, get a hold of yourself, you dummy. You already knew what was going to happen five years ago, so why are you even upset?

But it was easier said than done. My heart throbbed as if it was dripping blood.

"Yes. Our parents are quite agreeable with each other. I guess it won't be too long before it happens."

Dominic's soft voice exploded in my head like a clap of thunder. I was stunned for two seconds, then continued to keep my head low.

All of a sudden, he turned to me and chided, "Hey! Is there money on the floor? Your head is almost stuck to your chest, for Pete's sake... I'm aware of your insecurities about that area, but even if you're ashamed about it, there's no reason to be that upset."

I felt like a fool being deliberately dragged around and hurt by Dominic with thousands of knives. Although I was quite a heartless person myself, it didn't mean that I could endure being ridiculed by him all the time.

Upon that thought, my heart clenched in agony.

Hence, I unapologetically kicked his wheelchair out of spite. And because I was not used to wearing heels, I couldn't control the strength in my legs. Whoosh! In just a split second, that beautiful crystal embellished heels flew off of my feet.

And it finally landed about five meters away from Dominic, elegantly.

I stood still with one foot bare, but Dominic's wheelchair went in circles due to the strength of my kick.

"Is your leg itching? Or are you having a seizure?"

Despite that, Dominic's rant did not quell my vigor. Thus, I lashed back at him without hesitation, "You think it felt good kicking you?"

I lifted my dress while limping toward my other shoe. Many had their eyes on us due to the commotion earlier, so it made the already awkward journey toward the shoe even more punishing.

Although I was embarrassed in front of everyone tonight, they didn't know who I was. So at least didn't have to protect my image.

Yet, who would've known, at that moment, a female with a charming voice suddenly spoke, "Hey, aren't you Lilitiana Zanetti? It's an honor to see you here!"

Both my hands were occupied since I was lifting my dress while wearing the shoe. As I looked up, I saw a woman half a head taller than me in a bright red dress standing in front of me.

She had the kind of face that looked beautiful but easily forgettable after a glance—the typical oval face shape with deep-set almond eyes and a high nose bridge.

The only slightly more noticeable point about her was her fair and supple skin. Though strangely

enough, the color on her neck was a few tones darker than the color on her face.

That had me guessing about her actual skin tone

Just as I was scrutinizing her from head to toe, she reached out to me and grabbed my hand.

"Lilitiana, my name is Molly Flint, and I'm an actress. I really liked reading your comics. Especially your first piece of work, it's so enjoyable that I couldn't put it down after I started reading it."

So there are people among these stars who were actually my readers... I smiled awkwardly, but I truly didn't recognize the woman in front of me. I guessed she must be a small-time actress with no more than seven to eight lines. She also had a distinct accent that was quite uncommon in this industry.

I forced a polite smile at her. But just as I was about to greet her, she had already released her grasp and extended her hand toward Dominic.

“Are you Mr. Hartnell? Oh my God. You look even better than you were in the photos. I saw your fashion show in Paris, and it was beautiful. You’re so talented...”

I awkwardly retracted my smile right then. This woman must be using me to get close to Dominic.

Ah, I guess it’s yet another one of those women. Just that fashion show in Paris, huh?

I looked at Dominic suspiciously. So he went into fashion design, eh?

The actress was still introducing herself, but Dominic didn’t seem to be the least bit interested and immediately interrupted her.

“Actress? Why haven’t I seen you before?”

And boy, was that an embarrassing moment. Molly just stood there, not knowing how to react.

After that, Dominic propelled his wheelchair toward me and said, “What are you still standing here for? Let’s go talk about the contract.”

He had ordered me around so casually, so I suddenly thought of Camille. Would he order her about as well?

At that, I turned my face away and said, “I don’t want to!”

“So you don’t want the money?”

I...

Even though I was a little shaken, I would never back down to someone like him. Therefore, I continued to look away, not willing to look at him.

What’s so great about his face? He’s just a little more good-looking than your Average Joe. But still, he’s about to become someone else’s husband soon, so why do I have to worry about him?

“Liliana, you have three seconds to think about it, or I’ll make sure that you’ll get what you deserve.”

Dominic’s voice was so threatening that it gave me goosebumps all over my body.

Forget it. I need money, and being nice never worked on me anyway. I guess that’s just how it is now...

Silently following behind James into a private room, I then bowed my head and wheeled Dominic ahead while ignoring everyone's watchful gaze.

There was already a woman in business attire waiting inside. As soon as we got seated, she handed us the contract.

"Ms. Zanetti, Galaxy Corporation sincerely wants to cooperate with you. Please look at the terms of the contract, and see if it is up to your satisfaction. If it's possible, let's make it quick so we can start our preparations for the next step."

I nodded and took a look at the contract. When I glanced under the column for broadcasting rights, an amount of three hundred thousand was written right there. Instantly, my jaw dropped down in surprise.

"Three hundred thousand?"

Isn't that too much? Despite that, I was overjoyed.

"Why? Is there a problem?"

After making a fuss, Dominic and James stared at me at the same time.

"No... No problem! I'm very satisfied!"

To prevent them from changing their minds, I quickly signed wrote my name on it.

After signing the contract, James left the room. I wanted to stand up and send him off, but Dominic stopped me. He grabbed me and pulled me toward him, but I lost my balance and sat on his lap accidentally

The smell of cologne he was wearing made me nostalgic. That alone, accompanied by his deep baritone voice, was enough to be the best-tasting poison in the world.

"Lilliana, were you jealous just now?"

Love the Second Time Around Chapter 24

Chapter 24

I quickly stood up, but he held me down again. To prevent me from getting away again, he used both of his hands to hold me.

"Dominic, what's wrong with you. Won't your thighs hurt?"

"I'd like to feel the pain, but I can't feel anything."

Those words made me stop struggling immediately. I felt an inexplicable sense of sadness.

“Tell me. When you suddenly kicked me, was it because you were jealous?”

As Dominic came closer and closer, I suddenly let out a laugh.

“Why would I be jealous? You’re not my husband. You can be with whoever you want and marry whoever you want. What has it got to do with me?”

Dominic squinted his eyes and inched in even closer. He looked at me for a long time, and then he slowly loosened his grip.

“It seems like you do know your place after all. Based on your current condition, I would be disgusted if you were to be my girlfriend, let alone getting married.”

Those words were quite hurtful. Regardless, our relationship was only limited to the contract. Moving forward, I would only be his caregiver, so I wouldn’t let him drag me into something else ever again.

Without saying another word, I got up and left with my bag.

“Where are you going?”

Dominic refused to let go of my hand, which made me extremely annoyed. For a moment, I actually thought of smashing his head into smithereens with my bag.

“I’m going home.”

I dropped those words on him expressionlessly and planned to leave. However, he didn’t loosen his grip.

“Which home?”

I was stunned when I heard that. He’s right-i’m his personal caregiver, so where else could I go back to?

Despite that, I was still angry. I looked at him coldly and said, “Even if I am a caregiver, I should have time off work! But right now, I don’t even have any of my own time, or would you like me to report you what you eat and what you expel every day?”

“If you dare to do it, then I’d read it.”

As always, he had a headstrong attitude. His tone was cold and aloof when he spoke.

“Come with me to the dance party downstairs. There are a lot of acquaintances today, so it’s not polite to leave early.”

Hearing that, I dropped my head and sighed. Fine. It’s inconvenient for him to go about by himself anyway.

After leaving the room, someone came over to talk with Dominic. I stood still beside him and saw an elegant-looking woman walking toward him.

“Dom, would like a dance?”

So she came to hit on him? But she must have terrible vision. Not to be mean, but have you ever seen someone in a wheelchair dance?

I examined the woman thoroughly. Although she didn’t look overwhelmingly beautiful, she was still gorgeous. She had big doe eyes that no one could say no to.

“Are you taunting me?”

As expected, Dominic’s expressions were as cold as ice.

The woman’s face tightened and showed a look of confusion. “Your legs, are they not…”

Before she had the chance to finish, Dominic’s arm latched on me and pulled me over to him. “Don’t you see that I already have a partner?”

I was dumfounded, but I still forced a smile to her.

The woman probably felt insulted. She looked at me with a heartbroken expression and ran to one side to cry.

Seriously?

While I was stunned, Dominic pulled me toward him and handed me a drink. “Do you remember the campus sorority meeting in freshman year?”

His deep voice reverberated in my ear, his eyes exceptionally sensual. At that, my thoughts went back to exactly nine years ago.

It was an event organized by our school and several other schools. Everyone had to wear a mask to participate. I was just in my freshman year, and without my usual curfew back home, I naturally wouldn’t give up the opportunity to participate.

I remembered that I painted a mask of a little prince on a whim. That night, I found a tall and thin figure in the crowd.

The man was dressed in white and wearing a fox mask. However, his eyes were as clear as the night skies.

Perhaps it was those eyes that drew me to him. Because after that, I was literally hooked. Thus, I initiated this friendship, and fortunately for me, he didn't refuse.

It wasn't until we removed the masks later that I found out that the person was Dominic, whom I owed some pancakes. It was so awkward that I wanted to bury myself in a hole.

However, that was also the reason we were here today.

Upon that thought, I raised my head and looked at Dominic. His profile shone divinely under the lights of the dance floor. It looked so beautiful as if it was a moving oil painting.

His eyes were euphoric; he must be thinking of what happened that night. But immediately after, his eyes fell straight on me.

I could hear myself gulping right at that moment.

Slowly, his face inched closer. Together with his warm breath, he got closer and closer toward me. When he was so close that I could see his long eyelashes clearly, I closed my eyes in anticipation.

Out of nowhere, I heard his voice, full of disgust and contempt. "Your makeup is wearing off, and there's a lump of mucus in the corner of your eyes."

Damn it. I will definitely get back at him for this. I should've just "accidentally" kick his wheelchair right now.

With that, I manifested the energy from my entire being to my foot, calculating how much force should exert for him to get out of my face. However, he turned the handle on his wheelchair and dodged my kick as if he had long anticipated my intentions.

Just like that, I missed my footing and slipped. What followed was a sharp pain radiating from my ankle. I looked down toward my foot and realized that not only did I break those beautiful heels, but I also twisted my ankle.

F*ck! That's just my luck.

I raised my head again, and I saw Dominic looking all suspicious.

"What happened?"

That man still had the audacity to ask me in this nonchalant manner. I wanted to lash out at him, but there were too many guests around. Though I wasn't that famous, I was still a cartoonist, so I needed to leave a good impression on the rest.

Hence, I had no choice but to grit my teeth and say, "It's nothing. I just twisted my ankle."

He lowered his head and glanced at my ankle. "Oh, I guess that's karma?"

You b*stard.

I cursed secretly. Why didn't I realize that he was this cunning before? Nine years ago, he resembled a harmless rabbit—a man full of compassion for others. But now... he was like a big bully wolf.

Fortunately, Dominic stopped and did not continue to fan the flames. He hugged my waist and brought me down on his lap. We then went between the bustling crowd on the dance floor and pushed the wheelchair out of the lobby toward the hotel entrance.

As soon as we approached the entrance, Calvin arrived.

Immediately, I buried my face in Dominic's arms, feeling embarrassed. A fully-abled person is sitting on the lap of a disabled person. Ugh... how embarrassing.

"Hey, you're already an embarrassment since the beginning. Get down quickly. How can I get in the car if you're sitting on me?"

Gah! This b*stard never fails to humiliate me. Though I was grumbling inwardly, I still smiled at Calvin while limping toward the car.

The entire ride was silent as soon as we departed. Halfway through the journey, I thought of Dominic's drastic changes over the years and asked, "Dominic, where were you all these years?"

Love the Second Time Around Chapter 25

Chapter 25

"I've only thought to ask after five years have passed, but why did you leave?" Dominic sneered at me.

Maybe because I was rather thick-skinned or maybe because I was feeling nostalgic that night, but I just leaned back in my seat and sighed softly.

"It doesn't matter where I go. Your memory follows me everywhere."

I was lost for a long time after the break-up. Thus, I could not think of anything else besides him.

It had happened around graduation season. At that time, everyone in the dorm was busy with their final thesis or job applications. I was the only one who had been wallowing in grief over a heartbreak, so it had been painful trying to get through each day.

Tears pricked my eyes as I recalled that time from five years ago. I lowered my head and let my hair hang over my face to hide my sorrow from Dominic.

Dominic looked away and said nothing. I could not tell if he was mad at me or if he, like me, was just lost in his memories.

Finally, the car pulled to a stop in front of the mansion, and Calvin was the first to get out. He immediately readied a wheelchair for Dominic. Calvin was a true gentleman, and like a comic book superhero, he was always there whenever he was needed.

Treluctantly got out of the car after Dominic and limped after him. Pain shot through my legs the moment I put my weight on it. I instinctively hopped a few steps, and my legs nearly gave out again.

Fortunately, Calvin was close enough for me to grab onto. Otherwise, I would have toppled to the ground.

Dominic seemed upset by this and said with a sour expression, "Are you an idiot? Why are you prancing around in high heels? Are you doing that on purpose just so you could fall into Calvin's arms?"

Before I had the chance to retort, Calvin had jumped ten feet away from me as if I had the plague.

Ugh! I wish I could hit Dominic with the pointy end of my heels! I thought to myself angrily.

When we were all safely inside the house, Calvin politely bade Dominic farewell. I looked up at him, wanting to thank him for his help, but he merely threw me a quick glance and turned tail.

Do I scare him so much?

"Don't even think about it. Calvin is still a virgin. He's not for you."

I glared at Dominic and slammed my hand on the coffee table. "Yes, I'm not a virgin, and because of that, I can't go home, and my marriage is in shambles! Are you happy now?"

Even so, Dominic refused to be provoked. "Yes, I'm happy indeed. The worst your luck, the happier I am."

"This is all your fault, and yet, nothing has happened to you! Why must I be punished for this?" I blurted out angrily. My temper flared, and I did not think twice about the words spilling from my mouth.

Upon that, Dominic's lips twitched. He rolled his wheelchair over to the couch and hoisted himself over. Then, he reached up and roughly tugged me down to sit next to him..

"Well, I can be punished for it too. Would you want that?"

How could he manage to turn this conversation around? What does he even mean by he can be punished 1000 times about to be happily married! Hmph, this man's just rubbing salt into my wound

I did not want to speak to him anymore and tried to shove him away, but it was as if his chest muscles were made of iron. That man did not budge even an inch, but instead, my fingers ended up hurting.

What are you doing? Let me go, or I'll report you for molesting me!"

"Huh! The police would be more likely to believe it if I were the one reporting you!" Dominic retorted.

Ugh! Forget it. I can't beat him with words. I turned my head away from him in a huff.

His breath felt warm on my cheek. It made my skin tingle, and my face flushed red. Luckily, all he did was give me a quick squeeze. Then, he hopped back onto his wheelchair and wheeled himself into the bathroom

After a moment, the sound of running water could be heard coming from inside. A memory from long ago suddenly surfaced, and I recalled that he had been a clean freak. He could never go to bed without taking a shower.

At that time, I thought that his habits were ridiculous. He was an art major for crying out loud. How could an art major focus on his work if he was so preoccupied with cleanliness?

It was because of his clean-freak habits that I had forced him to join a Wilderness Survival Club with me. The club had required us to run around a jungle every day. Although it was not as intense as the Bear Grylls television show, it was still quite the experience.

In the daytime, me, Dominic, and the other members of the club would forage in the forest and when night fell, the two of us would squeeze into a tent to talk and sing. It had been an especially happy time.

At that time, Dominic had felt very uncomfortable going all day without a shower, and he tossed and turned each night, trying hard to fall asleep. Meanwhile, I would cuddle up to him and gently coaxed him to sleep every night.

After a week in the Wilderness Survival Club, Dominic had learned to fall asleep even with the smell of sweat sticking to his skin.

Back then, he was so innocent and sweet. The head of our dorm used to call him my devoted puppy He had really adored and spoiled me in those days.

But who could have guessed that five years would change Dominic so much. Now, he no longer went a day without poking fun at me or insulting me in one way or another.

How does he even manage to take a shower while in a wheelchair?

*Ah!"

The sound pulled me away from my thoughts. Following that, Dominic rolled out of the bathroom in his wheelchair. He was wearing a white bathrobe and had a towel wrapped around

His face looked much softer at night. He had a slender neck and beneath them, his collarbones stood out prominently. All that together with the strong lines of his chest and abs under his bathrobe made for a delicious sight.

I squinted, trying to get a closer look at what was beneath his bathrobe, but Dominic tossed a towel at my head,

"Go take a shower," he commanded casually.

I suddenly realized that I had not yet removed my makeup, and it was true that I needed a hot bath and a comforting foot soak. Glancing at Dominic, I was worried if he would take this opportunity to ravish me.

Maybe I'm worrying about nothing... A typical man may make decisions with his other "head," but Dominic doesn't even have a functioning lower half! Satisfied with my own reasoning, I quickly went into the bathroom.

After splashing about in the shower for a while, I came out of the bathroom to find the living room empty of Dominic. Did he go upstairs?

I searched around and found a room at the back of the first floor. I should've known! How could he go upstairs with a wheelchair? Meanwhile, Dominic was already asleep when I opened the door and peeked into the room. He looked so peaceful laying in bed.

For some reason, I felt emboldened and tip-toed closer to his sleeping figure. Standing silently by his bedside, I gazed down at the familiar face that I had buried away deep in my heart.

I really don't understand how God could be so unfair to treat such a handsome man so kindly. His nose is still as perfectly structured as I remembered it to be, and his lips are still so soft...

The years had not left a single trace on Dominic's face at all. Instead, it had given him an appearance of maturity. Looking at him now, he seemed wiser than his years.

His eyelashes were especially bewitching; they were long enough to start a storm if he blinked his eyes too hard. My heart stirred as I looked at him.

I recalled that he slept like the dead, so I reached out my hand and gently caressed his cheek. Following the lines of his face, I ran my fingers over his eyes and down the bridge of his nose to his chin.

As a matter of fact, I had followed this exact route down his face countless times back in university. Now that I was doing it again after so many years had passed, my heart started hammering in my chest, and my face flushed red.

As my fingers trailed over his lips, the heat of his breath made my fingers tremble. All of a sudden, Dominic's eyes flew open.

Chapter 26 The Day Is Over

My eyes widened in surprise, and I retracted my hand, but Dominic grabbed my wrist and pulled me onto him. He hugged me so tightly around my waist that my body was pressed close to his.

"D-Dominic, I-I was not... This is not what it looks like. I was just trying to get rid of mosquitoes for you," I stammered.

Hearing that, Dominic's lips curled into a smirk.

"Oh really? Are you giving them a massage?" he retorted.

I flushed and stuttered an excuse, "I-I didn't want to wake you. Now that I owe you again, what would you have done to me if I had woken you up from your sleep?"

Suddenly, Dominic ran his hand up along my spine from my waist, my skin tingling from his touch.

“It seems you’re very clear on where you stand. Besides owing me for the pancakes, your debts to me seem to have grown even more. Besides, I’d helped you successfully negotiate a contract tonight, so shouldn’t you thank me for that?”

“H-how?” I asked.

“Well, a man and a woman both in bed in this position... What do you think?”

Oh my God! Isn’t the lower half of his body no longer functioning? How could he ask such a shameless thing?

I moved my face as far away from him as I could and tried to wriggle out of his arms but for naught. Instead of letting me go, he wrapped his hand around my jaw firmly and squeezed it so hard that I thought he would crush my bones with his bare hand.

“That hurts...” I complained and cursed him silently.

However, being the stubborn mule that he was, Dominic ignored me and said, “You used to love being on top of me. Are you not attracted to the way I look now? Come on, pleasure me.”

Is he f*cking crazy? I gritted my teeth and wrenched his hand off my chin.

“Why should I pleasure you? You’re not my husband!”

As soon as he heard that, his face twisted in anger. “It seems you really miss being with that psycho. Liliana, you disgust me.”

Did he seriously just say that? Right then, I could not hold back any longer. After all, his hot-and-cold attitude was irritating me, and I wasn’t going to back down without putting up a fight.

“I disgust you? For the record, you’re the one who asked me to be your caregiver! If I had a choice, I wouldn’t spend even a minute with you!” I yelled.

Silence ensued as soon as I finished yelling, and it was suffocating. It was so quiet that, in fact, I could hear the man breathing in front of me.

“Get out if you don’t want to be here! Don’t stay in my house any longer!” Just as I was regretting my outburst, Dominic shouted coldly in reply.

Any guilt that I was feeling vanished instantly.

I jumped off his bed and proceeded to the door. But before I could walk out, Dominic caught my wrist again.

“I bought that dress for you, so return it to me.”

Upon that, I rolled my eyes in exasperation. How immature! It’s just one dress! Whatever! I don’t like this dress anyway. If he wants me to return it, then I’ll take it off!

Just as I wanted to rip it off my body, the rational part of me suddenly wondered what I would wear if I took off the dress. I then turned to Dominic and stared at him coldly, “Where are my clothes?”

With a smirk on his face, Dominic then spread his arms casually wide and answered, “Well, they were dirty, so I threw them away.”

What the hell? He threw away my clothes and won’t let me keep the ones he bought me. Does he want me to leave this house naked?

“What should I wear then, my dear Mr. Hartnell?” I asked angrily.

“How should I know? You can leave naked if you want. I couldn’t care less.” He tucked his hands comfortably under his head and looked at me eagerly.

I had never felt such fury in my entire life.

Ah, forget it! Beggars can’t be choosers. I shouldn’t let him get to me.

“Where should I sleep?” I forced the words through my lips as my head hung in defeat.

“Aww, so you’re not leaving? Well then, I’ll take you in like the little lost puppy that you are. Tsk-tsk, I really am too kind. Anyway, you can sleep in any of the rooms. Pick whichever you like best.”

Without even looking up, I knew from his cocky tone that he was holding back a smile. If he wasn’t in a wheelchair, I would have long murdered him!

“Okay, then, good night.”

I decided to sleep on the second floor to be as far away from him as possible. Any closer and I might have nightmares about him.

After that, Dominic stopped bothering me and did not say anything else. I closed his bedroom door behind me and went up to the second floor.

There were a lot of rooms on that floor, so I simply chose one and opened the door. As soon as I walked in, I was stunned. This is the bedroom of my dreams!

From the color of the walls to the adorable princess-style bed, this room was exactly what I had fantasized for the longest time. Although I was no longer a child, I still harbored the fantasy in my heart.

I happily rushed towards the huge pink bed. It was so soft and comfortable, and the sheets smelled fresh. I could not wait to roll around the bed all night.

Feeling tired, I finally slipped into a dream, hugging a large pillow close to me.

Both my body and heart had been hurt badly, and I was exhausted both physically and emotionally. Thus, I fell into a deep sleep as soon as I had closed my eye. It would have been a restful sleep if it wasn't for the demon haunting me in my dreams.

It was as if the demon was sitting on my chest, trying to suffocate me. I tried to peel my eyes open and escape the dream, but I was too tired, and I could not wake myself up. Nonetheless, the demon in my dream kept crushing my lungs.

However, for some reason, it looked a lot like Dominic.

He annoys me in the daytime and irritates me in my dreams! Ugh! That's how much I despise him!

Luckily for me, nothing else unusual happened that night other than that.

The next morning, I was awakened by a shrill ring. I reached out sleepily for the source of the sound. It was coming from the phone sitting on the bedside table.

I rubbed the sleep out of my eyes and picked up the phone.

"I've never met a caregiver who needed to be awakened by her employer! I'm hungry. Make me breakfast!"

The line then cut abruptly. A shiver ran down my spine as I remembered where I was. Argh... Sh*t! This is Dominic's house, and my life as his caregiver begins now.

I looked longingly at my big, comfortable bed and bade it goodbye bitterly. Then, yawning all the way, I went into the bathroom to wash up.

Dominic was seated on the couch tapping away on his laptop when I finally came downstairs.

Without a word, I headed straight into the kitchen and pulled open the refrigerator to see what I could throw together to make for breakfast.

What the hell? There's nothing in this fridge but beer! Am I supposed to conjure breakfast out of thin air?

