

Chapter 24: DNA Test

BACK TO THE PRESENT.

"Taxi! Taxi!"

Samantha was panting as she made her way to the driveway of the Wright Diamond Corporation. As soon as a taxi came forward, she hailed it and rode, asking the driver to go to the children's school.

The entire time while she was in the backseat of the car, Samantha was teary-eyed thinking about the horrible mistake that led to her father abandoning her.

Her lips trembled, and she wound up covering her mouth as she thought, 'So it was Ethan Wright? It was him.'

She realized how the resemblance between her son and Ethan was not a mere coincidence at all.

While her taxi was stuck in traffic, Samantha had many questions in her mind.

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Why did father never found out about Ethan?

How did Ethan know?

Was he angry at her for leaving him a hundred-dollar bill?

How long did Ethan know?

Was that the reason why he employed her? Was he out for revenge?

But why did it seem like he was being kind to her and the kids?

Sadly, her questions could only be answered by the man himself, and here she was, just like what she did years back, she was once again... running away from him. 4

"Miss, are you okay?" The taxi driver asked while studying Samantha from the rearview mirror.

At that point, Samantha was already gasping for air and her tears were flowing down her cheeks. She said, "Yes - yes. I'm fine."

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She quickly wiped the wetness on her face, taking deep breaths to calm herself.

"Thank you for your concern." Looking out the window, she asked, "Are we nearly there yet?"

"Ah, no, miss. We got caught in traffic, going in this direction. The other way would have been better, but we already missed the last exit," reported the driver.

Samantha checked the time and saw how it was still early anyhow. She did not mind the time inside the taxi. At least, she had the time to ponder on the truth that had recently been unraveled to her.

Fortunately, despite the busy streets that day, Samantha arrived at the North Bright Academy a few minutes before dismissal.

Her mind was so occupied with thoughts of Ethan Wright that she failed to notice the same Black Maybach car parked just outside the school.

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Waiting by the lounge, specifically for parents to remain, Samantha saw how the kids' teacher had come out, but to her shock, someone else was with them!

"Mommy!" Called Kenzi while waving one hand at her. The other was holding Ethan Wright's hand. "Daddy came to fetch us."

"Hi, Mommy!" Greeted Kyle.

Ethan walked out with both Kyle and Kenzie, holding each of their hands. He had that usual blank expression while locking eyes with Samantha.

All of a sudden, all eyes were on the tall and handsome man with dark hair and intense eyes, walking out with children that were evidently his, especially Kyle. The attention easily included Samantha, seeing how Ethan and the children were walking in her direction.

As soon as he stood a meter from her, he said, "Let's go. Get in the car, Samantha. We need to talk."

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Her jaws fell, realizing how the man had practically dropped the formalities between them.

Part of her was thinking of a way to flee again when Kyle called for her attention, "What's wrong, Mommy? Are you and Daddy in a fight again?"

Her mouth opened, but words came out. Ethan beat him to it and said to Kyle, "We are not fighting Kyle. Are we, Samantha?"

Clearing her throat, Samantha answered, "Umm... No. No sweetheart. We... we are not fighting."

"Let's get inside the car," said Ethan.

Samantha had no choice but to follow Ethan, not wanting to alarm her children. Besides, after the taxi ride, she realized how much she wanted to ask Ethan about that night and a lot more.

The second the children entered the car, Ethan's driver swiftly turned to ogle at Kyle. His eyes shifted from the boy to his boss before saying, "Mr. Wright..." Clearly, he did not want to offend the

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man, that he merely said, "What a fine-looking boy that is... Just like you."

"Hmmm," said Ethan as he got in the car, following Samantha.

"Good noon, Miss Davis, it's nice to see you again," Edgar greeted. "Are these the children that I have heard so much about?"

With her face utterly turning white, Samantha acknowledged, "Yes, but... I would not know how you heard... about them."

"Hi, I'm Kenzie. I'm Mommy's look alike and Kyle is Dad's look alike!" Kenzie interrupted, smiling sweetly at Edgar.

"Oh, how nice," remarked Edgar. He looked at Ethan while utterly puzzled, but since his boss said nothing, he no longer reacted.

While in the car, driving their way to The First Diamond Hotel, Kyle said, "Daddy, you should really call Mommy, honey, or sweetheart. That's what other parents call each other."

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"Or Sam," suggested Kenzie. "Dad? Grandma Matilda and Grandma Diana call Mommy Sam."

Ethan just blankly stared at Samantha, who practically avoided his gaze the entire drive. He said without looking at the children, "I'll talk to your Mommy about it later."

Heartbeats later, they made it to the hotel and up to Samantha's condominium, where once again, Diana, Samantha's aunt, was caught by surprise by Ethan's presence.

It was when the children changed into their clothes with Dianna that Ethan took the chance to speak.

Sitting in the living room, Ethan said, "I want to know everything, Samantha... Everything... why did you even go to my room that night?"

Samantha frowned and said, "We are not even sure that we - you know - "

"I had you checked. Even if your father tried to hide what happened to you, I

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have men who can dig up the truth," said Ethan. "In any case, a DNA test will prove everything."

"So perhaps, to clear all our doubts, why don't we have a paternity test," Ethan repeated.

"Why would you even be interested?" Samantha asked. "Everything was my fault. I was drunk and without logic, who got lured into another man's room by my own stepsister and I got pregnant!"

"Even if you really are the father, I am not asking for you to take responsibility," Samantha said. "We - we don't really need to have a DNA test."

That shocked Ethan. He leaned forward and looked her in the eye, saying, "I don't understand you, Samantha... Something in me, including the turn of events in my past, is suggesting that I am the father of both Kyle and Kenzie." 4

"And because of that, I want to confirm it... Because if I am their father, I have the right to know... lastly, your children deserve to know." Ethan's mouth

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deserve to know." Ethan's mouth twitched before he added, "You can forget about me... but think about your children."
" "

"We can talk about the rest later, including the details of the past, but what's important right now... is to get a DNA test done," he concluded.

Ethan's last words made Samantha think deep. Somehow, she understood how Ethan was right.

If he was the father, it did not seem like he would run away from the responsibility. Especially with how he was approaching her.

She acknowledged how her children deserved a father.

Samantha just remained silent for seconds before taking a deep breath. She said, "Okay... Okay."

Ethan nodded and said, "Good. Let's leave after lunch. The DNA test will only take 24 hours."

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Chapter 25: The Results

At MEO Braeton Medical Clinic.

"Open your mouth, Kenzie," instructed Samantha while standing behind the laboratory representative who was to swab on the twin's inner cheeks.

"Ah." Kenzie opened her mouth and giggled as she was being swabbed.

Only after she was done did Kenzie react by giggling, "That tickles." Turning to her brother, she urged, "Your turn, Kyle."

"What are we doing, Mom?" Kyle asked while taking a seat. "What is this about?"

"Ummm." Samantha suddenly had no words to say. It was because she had long lied about their father that it was difficult to explain, having a DNA test.

"We are having a medical test, Kyle," Ethan interfered, seeing how Samantha was struggling to say the words. "We just need to check on some family history medical conditions."

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The earlier frown from Kyle disappeared, and he said, "Okay, Daddy. If you say so."

Samantha was thoroughly relieved. It was thanks to Ethan's aid in addressing the matter. Somehow, she felt as though he really knew how to be the father of her inquisitive and genius boy.

After Ethan gave his blood and swab samples, he brought Samantha and the children back to the First Diamond Hotel, merely dropping them off at the lobby as he had much work to do.

Before getting off of the car, Ethan called, "Samantha."

'There he goes again, calling me informally.' She could not help but think of this while holding on to the door.

"Regardless of the outcome, I - I still need help during dinner this Saturday with the Songs," Reminded Ethan.

'Saturday, that is two days away,' Samantha mentally calculated. She nodded and said, "I - I understand, Mr.

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Wright. I already promised... Thus, I will help you."

"Ethan," he said out of the blue.

"Excuse me?" Samantha clarified.

"Call me Ethan," he answered.

She did not know where it came from, but she swore, she felt her cheeks were burning with just the idea of calling this man by his name. She awkwardly refused, "I - I don't think I can do that."

Samantha saw the clear displeasure on his face, but she did not take back her words either.

Soon enough, Ethan suggested, "Tomorrow then... that will change everything... including... calling me by my name.... Goodbye, Samantha."

Watching the car drive away, Samantha shook her head and walked inside the hotel where her kids were waiting with her aunt Diana.

In the evening of that day, Samantha could barely rest. She wanted to tell her

grandmother about Ethan Wright, but if the results were negative, it would just be another dismay. So she opted to keep things for herself... for now.

She forced her eyes shut while laying on the bed, resting next to Kenzie.

Kyle took the other end of the bed by the wall and it was only after checking on him did Samantha realize how her son was still awake.

He had apparently been hiding under the sheets while on his tablet.

After seeing the brightness of his gadget beneath the blanket, she called for him, " Kyle? Are you still awake? We still need to go to school tomorrow?"

Samantha had about three weeks before she would officially start to work for The Wright Diamond Hotel. She was given ample time to adjust to the new city before preparing for the hotel's grand and official opening.

So aside from getting her kids into a new school, she wanted to make use of that

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time to bond with Kenzie and Kyle.

"Kyle?" Samantha repeated. "Give me your tablet."

Kyle just turned off his tablet and said, "Sorry, Mom."

"What were you doing? Why were you still up?" Samantha could not help but probe after seeing her son's sad face.

She was already holding the tablet when her son finally spoke, "Why - why did Daddy request for DNA test? Google said, it is a way to tell your biological father?"

Kyle frowned and struggled to ask, "What's the difference between Daddy and a biological father?"

Samantha's world crumbled. She thought she had escaped this analytical part of Kyle, but apparently not.

She determined that Kyle must have heard it from the laboratory technicians earlier how they were going to perform a paternity test.

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"Well, um." Samantha choked on her words. She silently asked herself, 'How do I say this?'

After taking a deep breath, Samantha said, "Kyle... it's - it's like what your Daddy said. It's because it has been a long time that me and your Dad wanted to be sure that you have the same... medical condition as him! That - you are as - healthy as him!"

Kyle just looked at her while sitting up.

"A biological father is the same father that gave you the genes! The genes that turned you into a boy! And there is no difference between your Dad and the biological father because he is."

Samantha's brows drew together before adding, "He is one and the same."

When Samantha learned how Ethan might be the father of her twins, she just wanted to resume her life without him, but now, after having this conversation with Kyle, she earnestly hoped that Ethan was in fact the father of her twins.

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'He has to be... or else I'm dead,' She muttered silently.

While she liked how her kids were smarter than the average, this was the part that made her uneasy.

Seeing how unresolved her son seem to be, she added, "Kyle... Can we - can we talk about it tomorrow?"

Kyle was already lying back on the bed. He turned to his mother and said, "Okay, Mommy."

"Goodnight, Kyle. I love you," said Samantha.

"Night, Mom," Kyle answered. "I love you too."

After a minute, however, Samantha heard her son asked, "Mom... Daddy is our... Daddy, right?"

Samantha bit her lip. Her eyes panned from left to right, wondering if she should already tell all the truth that night, but recalling how everything had unfolded. There was a big chance that Ethan was really their father.

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Her lips quivered as she opened them and then she said, "Yes, Kyle... he is your father." ③

The next day, after taking the children home from school, Samantha went back down to the hotel lobby where Ethan's car already awaited.

They were going to MEO Braeton Medical Clinic and get the results together.

She was nervous as hell, and after getting inside the car, she could tell that Ethan was equally anxious.

Ethan was constantly looking out the window while tapping his hand against his knee. Samantha, on the other hand, kept rubbing her palms together and blowing against her hand.

They both made the journey in silence, merely greeting each other before turning mute.

When they arrived at the medical clinic, they were given a private room that

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would allow the two of them the chance to reveal the results.

It was because the medical clinic belonged to a college friend of Ethan that they knew how to treat him well, that and the fact that he was Ethan Wright.

The laboratory supervisor personally handed the results in front of Ethan and Samantha as they both sat in front of a round table.

The two of them stared at each other for seconds before Ethan asked, "do you want to read it first?"

Samantha nodded and said, "Yes... Yes, I do."

She grabbed two envelopes, one for each child. She took a deep breath while slowly pulling out one result.

At the top of the DNA report was a bunch of numbers that did not have meaning to her, but at the bottom, was the official result.

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Gently and with her voice breaking in and out, she read, "In all analyzed PCR systems... Mr. Ethan Wright." She gulped before resuming, "does show the genetic markers which have to be present for the biological father of Kyle Davis." ③

Tears easily welled in her eyes when she continued, "Base on biostatistical analysis performed, the probability of Mr. Ethan Wright being the biological father of Kyle Davis is > 99.9999 %." ⑤

Samantha frantically opened the second envelope and read the results for Kenzie. While she knew she did not have to, she just wanted to make sure there were no mistakes.

Kenzie's paternity test came back with the following results; "In all analyzed PCR systems, Mr. Ethan Wright does show the genetic markers which have to be present for the biological father of Kenzie Davis. Base on biostatistical analysis performed, the probability of Mr. Ethan Wright being the biological father of Kenzie Davis is > 99.9999 %." ⑥

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A tear fell down her cheek and Samantha remained silent after having read the result.

She stayed there, repeatedly reading the papers until it finally sank into her; Ethan Wright was the father of her kids. There was no doubt about it now. 6

She turned to Ethan and softly asked, "Do you want to - read it yourself?"

"I heard you," responded Ethan. "I want to... go to the mall and buy the kids something before we meet them, can we do that?" 5

"Mr. Wright, I - "

"Ethan, Samantha. Call me Ethan," said Ethan.

While staring into Ethan's intense eyes, Samantha answered, "Ethan."

Chapter 26: I Am Your Daddy

"Ethan, do... Do CEOs have the time to shop?" Samantha could not help but ask as soon as they arrived at the most exclusive mall in Braeton City.

'He means well,' she thought, but she just could not get over the fact that he was willing to be out of his office to buy Kenzie and Kyle their childhood wishes.

While Ethan was about to get out of the car with Samantha, he said, "Edgar will help us carry the bags, and you heard me call the mall's manager, right? They will assign me a shopping agent for us to easily find what we need. We won't take long."

"You - you really did not have to do this," said Samantha.

"I - I don't know... I feel like... I owe them so much more," Ethan said. "So I just have to do this."

Samantha saw the puzzled look on the driver's face, but it was not her place to claim Ethan to be the father of her kids.

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She just let him think whatever he wanted as they made their way to the lift from the parking area.

The second they arrived at the ground floor, they approached an information booth where they were met by a lady with an outstanding stance, walking confidently and gracefully in their direction.

The lady's hips swayed as she approached and with a seductive grin, she said, "You must be Mr. Ethan Wright. My name is Angela and I'll be your shopping agent for today - "

"I prefer a male shopping agent," said Ethan with an irritated tone and a frowning face. "I think I made that clear to Mr. Edwards." 5

He readily made the call to the mall's manager and berated at how he wound up having a girl approach her.

With eyes widening, Samantha said to Ethan, "She - she seems fine?"

Samantha's words granted her a glare from the man that she ended up looking at Edgar, the driver.

Edgar then leaned over to her and said, "He doesn't like it when women clearly want to impress him."

"Oh," said Samantha. Barely a whisper, she muttered unwittingly, "It's a good thing... I don't want to impress."

Though she said it so softly, Edgar heard her and chuckled. He answered back, "No, Miss Davis. I don't see that in you either... So... keep up the good work."

Samantha, "..."

It took another five minutes for a male agent to arrive, and only then did they start.

"Kenzie mentioned she wanted a dollhouse," Ethan said to Samantha as they made their walk to the nearest toy store. He turned to the male shopper agent and said, "I want the biggest one there is."

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Drawing her brows together, Samantha said, "If it... will fit in the living room."

"Samantha, what does Kyle like?" Ethan probed, leaning towards Samantha.

She turned to lock eyes with Ethan as they made the walk and said, "He - he likes gadgets and books. He likes learning new things and playing like he knows the computer." ②

"How well does he read?" Ethan probed.

"Oh, very well." She laughed and said, "Too good."

For the first time, Samantha saw a clear smirk on his face. She then heard him say, "My mother told me that I was already reading computer books when I was five."

He scoffed and added, "He must take a lot from me."

"I - I suppose," Samantha answered, also in awe at his tale.

Ethan did not only buy the dollhouse and several computer books for kids, but he

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also bought them new pairs of shoes and bags. He remarked at how he thought the kids' school bags were a little worn out that it did not slip his mind to buy new ones.

After just two hours, they were done and on the way back to the First Diamond Hotel.

Yet again, all eyes were on Samantha. There was no way around it since they had several shopping bags to carry, including Kenzie's gigantic dollhouse box.

They needed the help of the hotel staff to bring everything to Samantha's condo unit.

"Where do you think, Mommy went?" Kenzie asked her brother while looking at the balcony sliding doors.

"I don't know. She said it was important," Kyle responded while shrugging.

The two were in the living room, watching national geographic on TV.

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Diana carried a plate of cookies on the living room table and told the twins, "Don't worry, your Mom is coming back and she is... coming back."

They saw as their grandma Diana cried outright, halting her words. 4

"Are you okay, mama D?" Kenzie asked.

To avoid confusion from their grandma Matilda, they made the kids call Diana their mama D.

Kyle was also immediately taken aback. He stood up and caressed Diana's arm and asked, "What's wrong?"

Diana quickly wiped the wetness on her face and said, "Your Mommy is coming over with your Daddy and I believe... they have gifts for you!"

"Wow! Did you hear that Kyle?" Kenzie's eyes glistened as she put both her hands on her cheeks. She said, "I'm so excited!"

Kyle just forced a smile at her sister and said, "Hmmm."

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Diana was unsure what the boy meant with his awkward expression, but she was for sure happy. She was happy that finally; they knew who the children's father was, and Ethan Wright had no opposition.

As to why he was so calm about being an instant father, she did not care. What mattered to her the most is that the twins finally had a father to call.

It took only twenty minutes and Diana finally noticed how someone was seemingly at the door. As she suspected, Samantha had opened the main door, and she arrived with a hotel personnel, carrying shopping bags and a huge box.

Behind them was Ethan Wright.

"Mommy! You are here!" Kenzie exclaimed, rushing to the door.

It was right after the hotel staff left when Ethan walked in and said hello to the children. With his impassive face, he said, "Hello, Kenzie... Kyle? I brought gifts for you."

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"Daddy!" Kenzie was once again the first to jump at Ethan, hugging him outright and asking to be carried in his arms.

Ethan embraced Kenzie tightly, caressing her back, and only then did he manage a smile. He wound up taking a deep breath, appreciating the little girl's hold and baby scent.

When Kenzie let go, Ethan unknowingly caressed her cheeks and said, "You are so pretty, Kenzie."

"Just like Mommy!" Exclaimed Kenzie while raising her arms.

"Yes, just like Mommy," Ethan said outright, no longer minding his words.

Samantha, "..."

Ethan put Kenzie down and revealed, "As promised, I bought you the dollhouse and we will set it up. I'll help you set it up with Kyle."

"Daddy, you are just the best!" Kenzie announced, giving him another hug on his waist.

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When Ethan saw how Kyle did not necessarily run up to him that time, he went past Samantha and approached him by the sofa. He said, "Kyle? What's wrong?"

"Your Mommy told me that you like computers, so I bought you computer books for kids and a new school bag and shoes," said Ethan. He placed both his hands on Kyle's shoulders and said, "Do you want to see?"

Kyle looked at his mother strangely before turning his attention to Ethan. He pouted his lips and asked, "Are you - are you really my Dadd?"

Watching from behind them, Samantha covered her mouth with her hand. She could not believe her son was still dwelling on what he had found out yesterday.

Ethan did not know where it was coming from, but because he was sure now that he was their father, he nodded assuringly to Kyle and said, "Yes, Kyle. I am your Daddy." ☹

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Kyle looked down and maintained his pout. He asked, "Then why did you never visit us?"

Kyle's query granted a sigh from Ethan. He embraced Kyle without another word and explained, "There are things... that we can't explain yet to you. Because you are still so young."

Caressing the boy's back, Ethan promised, "But from now on, I swear... I'll see you... every day." 4

'Every day?' Samantha nearly choked at Ethan's words. She wondered how he was going to follow through on that.

Chapter 27: Call Me Sam

Serving a steamed grouper fish on the table, poured with oyster sauce and sesame oil, Ethan's expression turned soft, looking at his special dinner inside Samantha's home.

It took him more than an hour to set-up Kenzie's dollhouse, even with the help of Kyle, who was pretty keen on identifying where the parts go to, despite being a boy with other interests.

Samantha was unsure if Ethan was okay with the fish that she remarked while sitting next to him, "Mr. Wri - I mean, Ethan... You probably prefer Salmon, but I just don't have it right now. This is a grouper fish, but the red tomato kind so it's still good."

Ethan Wright rarely smiled in his daily life, but he managed to pull through and looked up to Samantha's charming face. He said, "I also like this kind of fish."

While he expressed words of acceptance, he sneered for a second before telling, "I - I just don't like soy."

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"Oh! Haha!" Diana, who was sitting across Ethan, could not help but remark. "Like father and son!"

"Kyle also does not like soy either," revealed Samantha. "I use oyster sauce all the time."

Ethan nodded before caressing Kyle's head and said, "I'm not surprised." He returned his gaze to Samantha before glancing at Diana. "Thank you for having me for dinner."

As usual, Ethan thought the food was divine. The fish just melted in his mouth and the sauce to it was made with just the right amount of blend. What he especially delighted on was how his children ate several carrots with cheese canapes before their meals.

Ethan acknowledged how Samantha taught the children to eat well.

It was only after dinner that Ethan and Samantha finally had the chance to talk about what happened almost six years ago.

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It was Diana who had to accompany the kids in the living room while Ethan and Samantha spoke by the balcony, closing the glass windows on purpose, giving them the privacy they needed.

They both sat on a chair while gazing at the city lights when Ethan started the probing, "So tell me again, how was it that your sister lured you into my room back then?"

Without looking at Ethan, Samantha bit her lip before answering, "She - she gave me a lot of drinks." She blushed, ashamed of why she was even drinking in the first place. "Actually, back then, I had a boyfriend. His name is Clayton Brown."

"For the two years since we were dating, he has been asking." She paused before resuming, "asking that we... we make love."

"And so that was the night that my stepsister had fully convinced me to give in to Clayton, but... apparently, she had other plans."

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"The drinks she was giving me, made me so intoxicated, and back then, I remember feeling so hot. I could not understand myself and so when she guided me to your room, saying it was Clayton, I just. " ③

Taking a deep breath, Samantha said, "I don't know why I did not even bother to turn the lights on. I - I was just feeling so strange that - "

"You were drugged," suggested Ethan. "That's what most likely happened."

Samantha glanced at Ethan shyly and said, "That must have been the case, but I realized that too late."

Just after a second of pause, she added, "Of course, my stepsister denied everything, including walking me into a room of someone I don't know. And I tried to tell father this, but he never took my side. To him, I had the intention, all along. Even the idea of sleeping with Clayton provoked him."

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She found herself gasping before continuing, "What if - who knows if it was someone else - "

Samantha's expression reflected a wave of clear anger as she turned to Ethan and said, "It's not that I'm saying, I'm lucky that it was you, but thinking about the possibilities... what if -"

"I understand," Ethan finished for her. "It could have been worse."

Ethan was still unsettled over the idea of Samantha having a boyfriend in the past. Moreover, how she had planned to give herself that night. Somehow, it did not sit well with him.

He could not understand why he was so irritated of that fact when... it was not supposed to be his business.

Hearing Samantha described how it could have gone badly for her that night, he could not help but agree. The night with him might as well be the lesser evil for Samantha.

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Samantha resumed telling about how her stepsister told the Military Academy of her pregnancy and it resulted in her dismissal. That was how her father turned the military camp upside down, in search of the man whom she slept with.

After which, she revealed, "It became easy for my boyfriend to dump me." She scoffed and resumed, "that would have been understandable, except, he immediately hooked up with my stepsister after he found out I was pregnant with another man." 5

There was a moment of silence before she spoke again, "I'm sorry that I just left that morning. I was scared, and I hated myself. I did not know what I was thinking - leaving you a hundred-dollar bill."

She pouted her lips before asking, "Were you - angry with me?" 9

Her probing grated another silence.

Ethan crossed his legs and turned to Samantha. Only then did he answer, "I

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was... back then. I thought, who does this woman think she is?!"

Massaging his nape, Ethan told, "But really, I had gotten to know you a little Samantha, and you did not strike me as someone who was a - forgive my language, but truth be told, I honestly thought you were a tramp when you just left after having sex with an unknown man."

That made Samantha's eyes grew wide, but she accepted. That was exactly how it looked like. Everyone in the military camp saw it that way too.

"I did not want to be associated nor acknowledge the fact that I had." His eyes tightened when he said, "A one-night stand with such a woman."

Samantha bit her lip and with eyes beaming at him, she revealed, "That was... my first. So rest assured, I am not soiled in any way." ③

"Hmmm," said Ethan. Inwardly, he gratified at that fact, but he kept his opinion to himself.

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"But I wonder why... why my father never found out about you?" Samantha asked.

"I paid the hotel manager to delete all surveillance pointing to my room and any other videos that included me in it," admitted Ethan. "Also, the room that I stayed at was under another man's name."

"I also told my friend that I got myself together after a few hours of rest and left the hotel," said Ethan. "I was confident that no one would know and since then, I never checked with the hotel again."

"Oh." Samantha found herself gaping at her hands. She raised her knees and clutch it to her chest before telling, "So that's why. Of course, Ethan Wright would know of a way to conceal everything."

"Your father must have given you a hard time," indicated Ethan while looking at her wistful face.

Samantha nodded and confessed, "He kicked me out of our home and left me

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outside the door while it rained. Since then, he never attempted to contact me... nor find me." ⑤

Talking about her father, Samantha's emotions just overflowed without control. She wound up sobbing and said, "Can't - can't a daughter make a mistake? Was my sin that grave that he had to abandon me?"

Sniffing her tears away, she told, "Ethan, I had nothing back then. I was only twenty-one. He did not even give me access to my trust fund. I was pregnant, alone, and had no money."

After wiping her tears away, she said, "Only my grandmother aided me from a distance. It was with her help that I got on a flight to Monroe City and stayed with my aunt. It was there that I gave birth and tried to make up for my mistakes."

Meanwhile, hearing of her account, Ethan felt a pang in his chest. He was sorry for Samantha, especially since he was partly to blame for her misery. ⑥

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He recognized how it was not her fault that she wound up in his room, that faithful night. She did not deserve the kind of mistreatment his father gave her.

Yes, he was angry back then, but after knowing Samantha and meeting the children, it was a whole different story altogether.

He reached for her hand and gripped it tightly. He told, "I don't know how to comfort you, but... let me just say this... Everything is about to change, Samantha. Do you believe me?"

For seconds, Samantha just looked at Ethan and said, "Sam." She smiled and added, "You can call me Sam."

Chapter 28: Proud Husband

I am very surprised at how... you are well accepting this," Samantha announced.

Ethan let go of Samantha's hand and gazed out at the city lights. He said, "Don't get me wrong, I was taken aback, but you see... My parents raised me well. I have very family-oriented parents and grandparents."

"In my father's home, he has taken in the entire household as part of his family - rather, he treats them like family. It's the same with my mother," Ethan resumed. "If my parents could accept strangers into their home and let me call them aunt and uncles - a brother even."

He turned back to Samantha and explained, "The man who looks after the security of our mansion, I consider him my brother as we grew up together. He is the son of our old driver who passed away while working for my father."

"What I am saying is, we make families out of strangers, how much more for our

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very own... flesh and blood. Moreover, the children are innocent and they are very intelligent kids... It's not something to be ashamed of."

"My mother would never abandon me for having children outside marriage. I can guarantee you that." He frowned and added, "She might... even be excited."

"Huh?" Samantha could not help but wonder why he said so, but she decided not to probe further and said, "I mean... that must be nice... having such a family."

It was because Ethan was about to turn thirty-three and being the only child of his parents, Amanda and Daniel Wright were now wishing for grandchildren.

Many times, they had asked Ethan to date, even setting him up on a blind date on two occasions. Sadly, he just did not like the kind of women surrounding him.

It would seem to Ethan that the women in Braeton City were all... too eager for him, and it irked him. This was part of the reason why he always had that distant aura attached to his name. In as much as

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possible, he did not want to attract unnecessary nuisances, especially women.

Checking the time, Ethan said, "It's getting late. We better plan for tomorrow's dinner now."

"Oh, yeah. I forgot about that," Samantha told, but before they began, she just had to tell, "Ethan, thank you so much." ②

She smiled and told, "I never expected that when I meet the father of my kids, it would be this... relieving. Can I just say, I am... so happy to have met you."

Ethan's mouth twitched before he admitted, "I suppose... the relief is mutual, Sam."

On the night of the dinner with Mr. and Mrs. Song, Ethan and the kids were already waiting in the one-carat conference room of the First Diamond Hotel.

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Since the kids always thought that Ethan had been secretly there for them, just working in another city, there was really no need to orient them.

When the Song couple arrived, Ethan got up from his seat and shook their hands. He said, "Mr. and Mrs. Song, these are my children, Kyle and Kenzie... which... you have already met."

"Hello, again!" Greeted Kenzie with a bright smile. She waved at the guests and said, "I hope you love your dinner here."

"Hello," Kyle said briefly.

"Oh, the boy is a man of few words," teased Mr. Song. He looked back at Ethan and remarked, "Really, an amazing copy of you!"

As the Song couple took their seats, Mrs. Song asked, "But where is your... wife?"

"She will be joining us in a few minutes," revealed Ethan before turning to the hotel staff by the door. "Have the food served, please."

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While waiting for the meals to be served, Mrs. Song could not help but interview Kenzie, especially seeing how eager she was to converse. She asked, "Little girl, do you like going to a theme park?"

"A theme park?" Kenzie asked before putting a finger on her chin.

"A theme park is where you ride rides like the rollercoaster on TV," told Kyle.

"Oh, yeah! I saw that on TV!" Kenzie gave that dreamy look after sighing. She said, "I'd really like that."

"You see, there isn't a theme park here in Braeton City, so the kids have not gone to any," revealed Ethan. "But I've been telling them about it."

"Well, tell me, Kenzie... what would you like the theme park to include should you go?" Mr. Song, this time probed.

"Hmmm." Yet again, Kenzie pondered, putting a finger on her chest. She told, "I think... I want the biggest dollhouse where I can play a doll and dress like a princess!"

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The Song couple laughed and said, "Yes, well... we can do that."

"Really? That's great!" She leaned over and whispered to the Song couple, "Daddy bought me a big dollhouse and I loved it!"

The Song couple laughed at Kenzie's excitement before turning to Kyle. Mrs. Song asked, "What about you, little man? What would you like to experience?"

"I have always been curious about roller coasters, so I'd like to try one." He frowned and corrected, "Maybe a smaller version."

"Yes, that's right. There is a smaller kind, fit for children your age," told Mrs. Song. "What else? What else do you like?"

The Song couple wound up questioning the kids. Ethan barely made an effort, and it was from their exchange that Ethan formed ideas of what the new theme park should include, given that it was what his children wanted.

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While they were engrossed in listening to the twins, a food attendant arrived, holding a tray of food for their starters.

Samantha also came, wearing a chef's uniform, looking radiant and still elegant despite being behind the kitchen to prepare the meals.

"Good evening, Mr. and Mrs. Song, I'm chef Sam and I'll be personally serving your food tonight," Samantha said with a glistening smile.

"Oh, hello. That's very personalized, Mr. Wright. I like it," said Mrs. Song.

Returning her attention to the chef, Mrs. Song remarked, "You are such a beautiful lady for a chef!"

That made Ethan force a smile. He could not be more proud.

He cleared his throat and softly said, "This is my wife... Samantha. She is also the executive chef for the First Diamond Hotel."

"Ohhhhh!" The Song couple exclaimed at the same time.

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"How lovely!" Said Mrs. Song. She leaned over to punch on Ethan's arm and said, "You sure are a lucky man, Mr. Wright."

"I am very proud of my wife," admitted Ethan.

"Mommy is so beautiful, right? Just like me!" Kenzie announced before adding, "And Daddy? He - he."

With a sigh of adoration, Kenzie added, "He is just the best Daddy and I love him."

Kenzie's remark granted a chuckle from the couple. She was just too adorable not to miss.

"It's nice to meet you, Mr. and Mrs. Song," greeted Samantha. "I hope you enjoy your meals. I just need to make your desserts and once done, I'll be joining you shortly."

"Well, you should not cook since we are having a special dinner with your family," insisted Mrs. Song.

The truth was, it was part of Ethan's plan. With Samantha mostly away, questions

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will be reduced, avoiding any possible errors in their act.

Samantha maintained her smile. She looked at Ethan and placed a hand on his shoulder. She said, "We really wanted you to have a personal experience, dining with us and we want nothing but the best. So, please... allow me to cook for you. It was I who insisted to prepare for your dinner tonight."

Pointing to her children, Samantha said, "I hope you enjoy the company of my children, though."

It took another forty-five minutes for Samantha to return. This time, she was dressed in a sky-blue dress, beautiful, complimenting her blue eyes.

When she joined in, it was her time to dig in, yet again, minimizing the questions thrown at her.

However, despite only acting it out, Ethan and Samantha knew they were bound to be asked. So when the question came up about their marriage, they had both agreed to partly tell the truth.

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"So how long have you been married? There was absolutely nothing that we could solidly find out about Mr. Wright's marital status - in fact, nothing of his personal life as well!" Revealed Mrs. Song.

"Well, the truth is... Samantha and I were apart for some time. It was only recently that we have reunited," admitted Ethan. "Circumstances led us to our separation, but we are glad that we found our way back to each other."

"And especially, the children, they are the reason why I wanted to have this theme park built here in Braeton." Ethan put a hand on his chest and added, "I feel like, I needed to make up for the lost times."

"Yeah, Daddy is busy working," Kyle interrupted.

It would seem as though the Song couple understood how it was a sensitive issue to discuss around the children, but they did not doubt how the kids were Ethan's, especially since Kyle was an exact young version of him.

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"We understand... I guess we can talk about it another time when the children are not around," said Mrs. Song. "We don't judge the circumstances you and your wife went through."

"But it's good that you have the right motivation now. At first, we were really worried about how you can manage the theme park without knowing what it is for." Mrs. Song put a hand on her chest and told, "Because for us... the theme park that we want is a place for a family to spend time together - heal and just... be entertained."

"Don't worry, we have already decided to partner with you, Ethan... as long as... on our next visit, we will still see your kids!" Suggested Mr. Song. 2

"Oh, definitely," said Ethan. "You can count on that."

Ethan was so overwhelmed by how he got what he wanted through the dinner that he turned to Samantha, putting his arm around her. He said, "Honey, did you hear that?"

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Samantha blushed and turned to Ethan. He said, "Congratulations... Honey." ②

The next thing she knew, Ethan was already leaning forward, aiming for a kiss, and it utterly made her chest drum against her ribcage.

'Oh, my God! This was not... part of the plan.' In her head, she was screaming, but what can she do but accept the unauthorized kiss, for they were in front of Mr. and Mrs. Song.

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Chapter 29: Melted Ice

While preparing breakfast the following day, Samantha was in a daze.

Her mind just could not get over the mere peck she shared with one, Ethan Wright. The same man who happened to be the father of her kids.

Her beautiful face was glancing at the kitchen wall, utterly in deep thought.

After Ethan brought them back to the condominium that Saturday night, he explained that he wanted them to be convincing. Hence, the sudden and unplanned kiss.

"Mommy! I don't eat burned eggs!"

Scolded Kyle, seeing how his sunny side up was getting overcooked.

"Oh! Oh, my goodness!" Exclaimed Samantha as she took out both eggs in the pan and throwing them directly into the garbage.

Samantha wound up cooking another set of eggs for her children.

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"Thinking of... Someone?" Diana leaned over to tease, raising her.

It made Samantha glare at her aunt and said, "No! No, not at all." After breaking two more eggs on the pan, she said, "I am just... so overwhelmed at how everything turned out to be."

"Aha," said Diana. She turned to the children who were equally elated and said, "I'm so happy for the children."

Samantha nodded and fluttered her eyes as she said, "Me too, aunt... Me too."

After having a joyous breakfast together, Samantha received a call from Edgar, Ethan's driver.

She was surprised to learn that he was instructed to bring the kids to school and back or take them anywhere the kids needed to go around the city. On the phone, Samantha said to Edgar, "That's really not necessary, Edgar - "

"Miss Davis, Mr. Wright had informed me of the relationship he has with your children. I must disagree with you. Little b

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y little people will know that they are Mr. Wright's children and they will be subject to unwanted prying and media harassments... You'll need to accept the terms of having Mr. Wright as their father," Edgar explained.

"This is for the children, Miss Davis. Besides, I'll lose my job if I do not ensure that you and your kids are not brought back home safely," added the driver.

Yet again, Samantha was stunned. Now, they had a personal driver! She utterly thought it was crazy that she wound up shaking her head.

She sighed heavily and said, "Okay, Edgar. Thank you."

Throughout that day, Samantha received more shocking surprises.

After lunch, deliveries were made, coming from a membership shopping store, bringing several fruits, vegetables, pastries, and other groceries, covering food, toiletries, and bathroom utilities, all of which were premium brands.

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"Wow," exclaimed Diana. She leaned over to Samantha and declared, "I think... we are set for two weeks?"

"I can't believe this," Samantha muttered.

"Believe it... That's what happens when you sleep with a rich man," teased Diana while keeping her voice down. She elbowed Samantha and said, "Good for you!"

"Seriously, aunt. That's not funny," Samantha responded.

When all deliveries have been settled inside the kitchen, the shopping agent turned to Samantha and said, "Miss Davis, my name is Carl, by the way, I am your personal shopping agent."

He took out his card and handed it to her before saying, "Anything you need at all, just let me know and I can bring it to you. Of course, Mr. Wright wishes to assure you that all expenses will all be paid by him."

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She reluctantly took the card and said, "Thanks, but this is just too much already."

The shopping agent knew nothing of Samantha's relationship with Ethan. He was used to the life of the rich and famous and knew when to keep his mouth shut. He just smiled and announced, "Mr. Wright had already set the grocery deliveries to every week. So unless you instruct me of what to buy, I'll just choose whatever I think you need!"

He smiled and added, "So you see, it may be best for you to tell me what you'll need."

"Ah." That was all Samantha could say, realizing she did not seem to have a choice. "Then... I'll call you and let you know."

Carl smiled and said before leaving, "Have a wonderful day, Miss Davis, and see you again... next week."

"Look, Kyle! Muffins!" Exclaimed Kenzie while grabbing the set of pastries and

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bringing it to the dining table. "Let's eat!"

"I want the orange muffin," told Kyle. He placed his tablet on the surface of the table and asked, "Are all these from Dad?"

"Yeah, they are from your, Dad."

Samantha could feel the relief in her heart, knowing that she was not lying this time around. Ethan was their father.

She sat next to Kyle and also grabbed a muffin and just before she ate it, she instructed her son, "Tell your Daddy, Mommy says thanks and you guys also thank him for all his gifts today, plus... your very own private car."

"An expensive one at that," she muttered softly.

"Okay, Mom," said Kyle. She bit on the muffin and chewed it down before opening his tablet.

He opened his WhatsApp and sent a message to Ethan. He said, "Daddy, thanks for the food and for uncle Edgar taking us to school and back home! You are the best, Daddy!"

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Ethan replied after a minute. He said, "You are welcome, Kyle. I am very busy today, but I'll drop by to see you just for a minute, okay?"

"Okay, Daddy," Kyle responded.

"By the way, Daddy, Mommy also says thank you," Kyle reported.

It took another two minutes for Ethan to reply. He said, "Tell your Mommy Sam. If she wants to thank me... she needs to tell me herself... Over the phone... Her own phone." 6

While Kyle was eating the rest of his muffin, he did not think much of it and answered, "Okay, Daddy."

It was already after he ate an entire treat did Kyle tell Samantha, "Mommy, Daddy said you have to thank him with your own phone."

"What?" Samantha asked with a frown.

"Here," said Kyle, showing her what Ethan suggested.

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Samantha did not know why, but she found herself blushing while reading the message.

Getting up from her seat, Samantha went to the bedroom and grabbed her phone. She looked at her contacts and saw Ethan's name. It was the other night that she had it saved on her mobile.

She took a deep breath before dialing his number.

From inside the biggest conference room of the Wright Diamond Corporation, Ethan was in the middle of a meeting.

He never liked it when his meeting is interrupted, nor does he allow any of his executives to use their phones during their gathering, but that day, he was breaking his own rules.

After answering Kyle's message, he smirked inwardly before turning back his attention to his executives. He took a deep breath and resumed, "As I was saying, we need to prepare for the contract with the

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Songs and I will assign this project to Mr. Shim, since he is more familiar with the Asian culture and would most likely be able to relate to the Songs."

"Mr. Shim, I want you to be on top of contacting the office of Mr. and Mrs. Song, asking for the details they want to include in the contract so the agreement can be signed within a week's time!" Ethan added.

"Yes, sir," assured Mr. Shim.

Turning to another executive, Ethan instructed, "Mr. Denver, you'll need to temporarily take over Mr. Shim's projects."

"Got that, Mr. Wright," answered, Mr. Denver.

"John, I need you to be on top of my timeline. We need to start construction by March, in as much as possible!" Ethan said to his assistant.

"Yes, boss. And Mr. Wright, what about -" John Garcia's thoughts were halted with Ethan raising his finger. They all heard

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how Ethan's phone was vibrating against the table.

They all turned silent as Ethan said, "I need to take this. This is... very important."
"

Everyone watched, curious as to what was the important call all about. They all heard Ethan clear his throat and answer the call, "Sam, what can I do for you?"

John's eyes widened. So apparently, the important call was from the chef!

"You are welcome," Ethan said on the phone while caressing his chin. "Don't think about it that way, Sam. Anything for you and the kids."

The executives looked at each other, wondering who their boss was talking to so calmly and seemingly amused.

They all saw how Ethan stood up and turned to the window as he said, "No, I mean it... it's for you and the kids. Anyway, I'll see you tonight. I promised Kyle I'll see him... Goodbye."

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They all saw how Ethan stood up and turned to the window as he said, "No, I mean it... it's for you and the kids. Anyway, I'll see you tonight. I promised Kyle I'll see him... Goodbye."

When John saw a slight curve on his boss's lips, he sighed in excitement and thought, 'Oh my God! The ice has finally melted!'

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Chapter 30: Daddy Loves Mommy?

"Daddy!" Called Kenzie at the sight of her father. "I miss you!"

Kyle rushed with his sister, immediately hugging Ethan by the waist. He looked up to Ethan and announced, "I'm glad you came, Daddy. Kenzie and I miss you."

Ethan Wright walked in with his coat already off. He had the sleeves of his shirt folded up to his elbows and his hair was slightly disheveled.

However, while Ethan's hair was not in perfect shape, Samantha thought, 'How can this man still look so good?'

After opening the door at eleven in the evening, she could not help but stare at him. Without his coat, the shape of his well-molded torso became more evident.

It was clear to Samantha how lean Ethan was.

Hearing the children's care, Ethan leveled with Kyle, sitting on his leg. He brushed his fingers through the boy's hair and said, "Of course, I came. I

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promised, didn't I?"

He turned to Kenzie, who was ready to embrace him and carried her in his arms. "Ah, my little princess so so adorable."

"Just like Mommy?" Kenzie asked with her usual twinkling eyes.

"Yes, just like Mommy. You are... an exact copy of your Mommy," Ethan replied.

'I have got to get used to these compliments,' Samantha thought while observing the reunion.

Redirecting Ethan's gaze at Samantha, he suggested, "Sam, tomorrow, we can have lunch together in the cafe across the office. I will be busy the next few days and will be flying out to Asia on Friday afternoon."

"Oh, we don't have to. You must be busy," said Samantha.

"I promised Kyle," Ethan answered. "So I must insist. Of course, the kids can't go without their mother. So I expect to see you too."

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"R-i-g-h-t," Samantha answered awkwardly.

Looking down at the little man, he said, "When I'm away on a business trip, we can always be in a video call, okay?"

"You are going away?" Kyle confirmed with his brows furrowed.

"Yes, Kyle. Just for a few days and I'll be back on Tuesday. I'll be sure to fetch you after school and we can have lunch together again," responded Ethan.

A sigh left Kyle's lips. He asked, "Are you going to sleep here tonight?"

"Ah, no. Sweetie, your Daddy needs to go to his." Samantha realized it was an odd answer.

"But when do we live together? Don't families live together?" Kyle probed further with a frown, shifting his gaze from his mother to his father.

Samantha wondered how to explain the situation between her and Ethan, but before she could answer, Ethan beat her to it.

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Ethan said it so softly that the kids seemed to have understood.

With her gentle voice, Kenzie inquired, "How can we help you, Daddy?"

"Anything, Daddy. We'll help," assured Kyle.

"Good. Now... this is my plan," said Ethan before further lowering his voice as he discussed with his kids.

From the kitchen, Samantha had poured milk on two glasses and she took out the expensive bottle of deep water from Kona that was included in the grocery delivery.

She shook her head, still in disbelief at how she was now able to drink the said four-hundred dollar bottle so casually.

Before walking out of the kitchen, Samantha took a peek at the gathering in the living room. Her forehead creased, seeing how all three were having a secret meeting.

Barely a whisper, she raised to herself, "What in the world are those three talking about?"

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Samantha practically saw how her kids were giggling and at the end of their discussion, they each gave their father a high-five.

Walking in on them, she cleared her throat and examined, "Well... What did you guys talk about?"

"Nothing, Mommy," answered Kyle. "Just when Daddy would take us out."

"Oh," said Samantha with doubtful eyes. She wound up staring at Ethan's athletic face and for a second, their eyes locked, creating a burning sensation on her ears and cheeks.

She immediately averted her gaze, realizing how he was intensely looking back without apprehensions.

"Here's your milk guys and water for your Daddy," She managed to say.

"Thank you, Sam." Ethan gulped down half of the bottle before he told, "I better get home. It's getting late. They still have school tomorrow."

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"Of course," said Samantha. "They waited for you. That's why they are still up." ❊

The children first drank their milk before they walk Ethan out the door with their mother. While there, Kenzie asked to be carried one last time.

The little girl kissed Ethan's cheek, and it made him flaunt his attractive smile.

'Gosh,' Samantha thought while looking away to hide the blush on her face. 'This can't be happening.'

She wasn't even sure why she was affected by this man, but really, the affection he shared with her kids added to his charm. She could not deny that part, for sure.

Just as she was looking elsewhere, she heard Kenzie say, "Mommy, can you and Daddy kiss me at the same time."

Pointing to both her cheeks, she directed, "Here and here." ❊

"Um... Kenzie, your Daddy needs to go," Samantha tried to avoid her little girl's suggestion.

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"Yeah, and me too!" Kyle pleaded. "Please."

"Yes, please, Mommy and Daddy!" Kenzie asked the same.

Kyle raised his hands, asking Samantha to carry him.

With a sneer, Samantha said, "You know you are getting heavy, right?" ②

"Mommy, please. Just like other kids at school get a kiss from their parents," Kyle requested.

It was because of the repeated seeking of her kids that Samantha agreed. She carried Kyle in her arms and said, "Fine... Fine... If it is okay with your Daddy." ③

"It's fine," Ethan casually said.

"O-k-a-y. Here we go," Samantha warned.

"One, two, three!" Kyle did the counting for both of them, and Ethan and Samantha both kissed on each of Kyle's cheek.

Kyle smiled heartily after that and kissed back his parents on their cheeks.

"My turn! My turn!" Kenzie excitedly announced while bouncing on Ethan's arms. She, too, started counting, "One, two, three!"

Ethan and Samantha closed in, hoping to kiss Kenzie, but the little girl leaned back, resulting in the two, pecking on each other's lips instead. ¹⁰

Samantha's eyes widened, and she hastily pulled back while covering her mouth in shock. Ethan, on the other hand, just simply pulled back and immediately pecked on Kenzie's cheek.

"There you go, sweetie. You have your kiss," Ethan said to Kenzie.

Kenzie and Kyle were giggling at the sudden kiss of their parents. Kenzie then encouraged, "Mommy and Daddy should kiss again!"

"No. No, Kenzie. We can't do that," Samantha revealed.

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With a frown, Kenzie probed, "Why Mommy? Can't Mommy and Daddy kiss? You kissed." She put a hand on her finger, figuring out when. "The two nights ago?"

"That - that was different, Kenzie," said Samantha while struggling to find the words to say.

Having a lightbulb moment, she said, "You see, there is a limit to when parents kiss. Yes! That's it."

She turned to see the grimace on Ethan's face and immediately looked down:

"Is that true, Daddy?" Kenzie asked her father.

Ethan just glanced at Kenzie, forcing a smile. He said, "Listen to your Mommy, Kenzie."

After bidding goodbye, Samantha tucked her kids to bed. Even as they rested, she saw through the delight in their faces and heard them talk before closing their eyes.

"I just love, Daddy," said Kenzie.

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"Yes, he is the best Daddy," added Kyle.

"Daddy is handsome and perfect for Mommy!" Exclaimed Kenzie.

"Daddy loves us too, and I'm sure he loves Mommy," suggested Kyle.

Samantha was already moving to sleep when she heard her son say this. Suddenly, her eyes were wide open again.

Turning to Kyle, she curiously asked, "Do you think... Daddy loves Mommy too?"

Chapter 31: You Were My First

"Do you think... Daddy loves Mommy too?"

"Samantha did not like using her kids for information, but her poor heart could not help it.

Somehow, something inside of her wanted to know what Ethan thought about her.

"Yes, Mommy! He says you are pretty all the time!" Announced Kenzie.

"All - the - time?" Samantha asked with a frown, trying to recall whenever Ethan was around the kids.

"Yes, Mommy." Kenzie sat up and demonstrated with her hands, resting them on her face. "When Kenzie says I'm pretty like Mommy, Daddy says you are pretty."

Kenzie's answer made Samantha throw her head back on the pillow. She thought, 'He was just acknowledging his own child was pretty. It was not really a comment towards me.'

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"And Daddy always asks how you are, Mommy. We always talk about you," suggested Kyle.

Getting up to look at her son again, she asked, "In WhatsApp?"

"Yes, Mommy," said Kyle before yawning. "I'll sleep now, Mommy. You should talk to Daddy. You have your own phone." 4

"Right," said Samantha while squinting at her son.

After seeing the twins go to sleep, Samantha got up an hour after twelve. She pouted her lips before turning to the bedside table and grabbed Kyle's tablet in secret.

It was there where she read the exchange between Kyle and her father.

"Don't forget to kiss your Mommy goodnight for me, Kyle." Samantha read the message from Ethan the other night.

That immediately caught her attention. She scrolled up some more and found a

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shocking picture of her while still asleep!

Kyle had sent Ethan a picture of her and that was even before he even found out he was their father!

Samantha's heart drummed vigorously against her ribcage.

"Oh, my goodness!" She contemplated deleting the picture, but it was clear to her that Ethan had seen it, base on his response.

She wound up reading the exchange between Ethan and Kyle during that time of their chat.

"Good morning, Daddy. See our Mommy, she sleeps so nice," said Kyle.

Reading his response, however, her cheeks burned. Ethan said, "Your Mom is pretty even when asleep."

Rolling her eyes at herself, she softly muttered, "He was just... probably being polite... or not?"

Out of the blue, Kyle received a message from his father and it was fortunate that

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the boy was already fast asleep.

In the message, Ethan said, "Goodnight, Kyle. I'm going to sleep. I'll see you tomorrow. Don't forget to kiss your Mommy."

Samantha did not know what came into her, but her hands inched. She wound up replying on behalf of her son. She said, "Kiss Mommy for Daddy?"

"Yes. Kyle? Why are you still awake?" Ethan answered in seconds.

"Going to bed now, Daddy. I just gave Mommy a kiss for you," said Samantha on behalf of Kyle.

"Did you tell her it was from me?" Ethan asked back.

Yet again, Samantha's face turned red. Her insides were squealing in thrill, bringing her back to her teenage years. She earnestly wondered what Ethan thought of her, following his next messages.

She was about to answer when she noticed the tablet rang!

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Ethan initiated a video call with Kyle, and that was a call Samantha could not dare to take!

After all, she was only acting to be Kyle.

Worried that Kyle would wake up, Samantha quickly turned the tablet to mute, panting as she accomplished it.

She quickly sent a message to Ethan, saying, "Goodnight, Daddy. I'm going to sleep now."

Ethan's next reply, however, took her aback. He said, "Goodnight, Sam. I'll see you tomorrow." 21

"What the! Damit! How in the world?" She placed the tablet back on the table and said, "Whatever... I'll just deny it."

The next day, however, during their lunch date with Ethan and the kids, there was no way out of Ethan's probing.

Upon seeing the children walking in the restaurant and taking their seats, the first thing Ethan asked his son was, "Kyle, what time did you sleep last night."

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"Hmmm... before twelve, Daddy," said Kyle while getting settled next to his sister.

"Interesting," said Ethan before turning to Samantha.

"No, I think it was about one." Samantha massaged the back of her neck before insisting, "Remember we were still talking before you guys slept?"

Kyle pondered for a second before he answered, "Let's see, you were asking us if Daddy loves you too."

'Shit!!!! My own kids are telling on me!' Samantha's insides were screaming. She unwittingly turned to Ethan and explained, "Kids. Haha! Don't believe everything they say."

"But you did ask, Mommy? I remember," Kenzie said eagerly.

Gesturing with her hands, Samantha tried to describe, "It was - it was a casual conversation. They said you loved them and that you." She raised her shoulder while squinting and said, "You might love me too. Haha!"

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"So I - I just asked back like, really... Does Daddy love Mommy too?" She tried faking it as if they were having just a casual conversation last night.

"I think so," Ethan said, looking straight into Samantha's eyes.

All four of them were seated in an exclusive restaurant across The Wright Diamond Corporation, perfectly hidden in a secluded area of the establishment.

It was there where Edgar, the driver, drove Samantha and the children from school.

Following Ethan's reply, there was a moment of silence. Samantha could not tell where the answer came from, but she had an inkling, or at least she hoped, it was an answer to the question of whether 'Daddy loved Mommy too.'

While their eyes were glued together, Samantha bit her lip. Her blue eyes gleamed while staring straight into Ethan's dark brown eyes.

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e. If your father does, he can ask me himself. Will you please, step away." Ethan replied while maintaining the clear irritation on his voice.

The girl tried to hook her arms around Ethan, but the man raised his arms outright. "I!" He wound up grabbing Patricia's arm and warned, "I don't like to be touched. You know that."

"Daddy who is she - " Kyle's words were cut off by Samantha's hand, not wanting her kids to be part of the awkward conversation between the girl and Ethan.

With a clear grimace on her face, Patricia questioned, "Daddy?" She laughed and said, "You are joking right! Ethan has no kids - Ahhh! My arm, Ethan!"

"I'm having a private lunch with my family. Whoever let you in here," Ethan pointed out before looking for the restaurant manager.

'Family?' Samantha thought from across the table.

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"Excuse me, this woman is disturbing us!

" Ethan called the attention of the manager while getting up from his seat.

"But Ethan - "

Patricia's objection was once again halted by Ethan's words. He said, "I am having lunch with my family. I need you to leave."
"

"What are you saying, Ethan? Ah! Let me go!" Patricia raised her voice while the security urged her to step outside of the restaurant.

Samantha and the guests who were enjoying their lunch that day, watched as the elegant lady was escorted by the security.

It took only a few minutes for Ethan to return to their table and he said, "I'm sorry. I'll be sure the restaurant is scolded for letting her inside without reservations. It's just that they were used to her coming inside of here."

"Who - who was that?" Samantha leaned forward and softly whispered, "Was

that... your girlfriend?"

Of course, she doubted if, with the way Ethan treated her, she would be a girlfriend, but the girl named Patricia was just so beautiful and casually called him by his name. She assumed she was someone important.

Meanwhile, the question from Samantha utterly made Ethan smile and Samantha could not understand why.

Seeing Samantha fondling with her fingers on top of the table, he reached for her hand and gripped it tight. He said, "She is just a daughter of one of our board of directors. It's just because we have known each other for so long, she assumes we are that close... And no. I never had a girlfriend in my entire life. Like you... you were my first." 13

Yet again, she felt that burning sensation in her ears and cheeks.

He said it like they were already a couple, but Samantha understood what he meant.

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Still stunned by his answer, she struggled to find the right words to say. She wound up acknowledging, "Thank you for the information."

"You're welcome... I hope that was enough to reassure you," said Ethan before calling for the waiter to take their orders. "Let's eat. I'm hungry."

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Chapter 32: I Want You

"Daddy, Mommy looks so pretty today," told Kenzie with dreamy eyes and a smile not to be ignored.

She looked at her mother, and back to her father, waiting for an answer.

Ethan was dividing the chicken pops between the two kids when Kenzie remarked. It made him smile and look up to Samantha. He agreed, "Your Mommy is... always pretty." ❦

It had only been recently that Ethan had been willingly and clearly expressing appreciation, and that was towards Samantha. No one else.

"Of course, they will always think that their Mommy is pretty," Samantha countered, trying to hide the blush on her face, but the truth was, she prepared for that special lunch. ❦

She wore a dress she had not worn in years. It was one of her mother's dresses; a plain navy blue, ruffled sleeve dress with semi-plunging neckline.

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Her wavy hair was down to her shoulders as usual, but that day, Samantha put on a little makeup over her face and wore her mother's pendant. ③

Hearing Samantha's reply, Ethan just smirked at her down-to-earth personality. Clearly, she was beautiful and Ethan thought it was such a shame of the great General Davis to own up to an adopted daughter that was not even half as good-looking as his real daughter. ②

He diverted the topic to school later on and discussed with Samantha the possibility of accelerating both their children or give them special training classes, targeting their skills.

"I - I really want them to experience childhood in as much as possible. Maybe, we can consider accelerating them when they are much older." Samantha glanced at the kids who were heartily eating their chicken pops before saying, "Maybe a special training class will do for now." ③

She smiled and claimed, "I think... Kenzie would like dance classes or music classes.

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"I'd like to sing and dance, Daddy," revealed Kenzie, speaking while eating.

"Manners, young lady. Don't speak when your mouth is full," reminded Samantha before giggling at her daughter.

"What about you, Kyle," Ethan probed, but before his son could answer, he suggested, "Let me guess... computer class?"

Kyle was smiling as he was eating and nodding his head in agreement. That pretty much closed the discussion on the same topic.

"Computer class it is," Ethan concluded.

The next thing Ethan covered was his busy schedule on his business trip, but like the last talk he had with the kids, he swore to be on a video call with them at night.

Shortly after they finished their family lunch, Edgar came inside the restaurant, on cue. He meant to fetch the children and bring them to the car.

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"Let's go, kids," Announced Edgar.

Samantha was about to get up when Ethan held her hand. He said, "Sam, I'd like to have a word with you... Without the kids."

Seeing the concerned look on Samantha, Ethan added, "Edgar will take care of them, right Edgar?"

"Yes, sir. Miss Davis, don't worry. They are good kids. I can handle them," assured Edgar with a thumbs up.

"Umm... Okay," responded Samantha before returning to her seat. Her hand slowly became free from Ethan's hold.

Getting settled once again, Samantha looked into Ethan's eyes and probed, "What did you want to talk about, Ethan?"

"Sam, I - I know that I have only been a father to the kids for a few days and you may think everything is happening so fast - and trust me, I am sometimes still processing everything," Ethan told in his semi-business-like tone.

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He rested his arm on the table before resuming his thoughts, "But despite the overwhelming new circumstances - me suddenly being a father, there are two things that's clear to me."

"What - what is it?" Samantha probed while maintaining to lock eyes with him. She clearly saw the sincerity from his expression that she was eager to know.

"One, I want to be the father of Kyle and Kenzie," he answered.

"But you are their father," Samantha responded. Her brows drew together, utterly bemused.

"I don't just mean, providing for them, Sam. I mean... being there for them as a father," responded Ethan, and as he spoke, he unwittingly fixed his coat.

He sighed and leaned back in his chair before saying, "I'm not a man of many words, Sam, but I'm trying to explain things the best way I can."

"I want to see them more often and I want... I want to help you raise them as I a

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m... their father," Ethan clarified.

"This brings me to the second thing I absolutely want to have." Clearing his throat, Ethan moved closer to Samantha, resting both his elbows on the table. He said, "Sam, I want... you to consider... marrying me." 7

Samantha utterly froze at the suggestion. The words 'Marry me' echoed through her head again and again.

She felt goosebumps all over her body and her throat dried up. She blinked repeatedly and shook her head before she clarified, "Ex - excuse me?"

"I don't mean now, but we can start by getting to know each other first." His eyes narrowed before clarifying, "Although, I don't mind us getting married right now, if you'd like."

Samantha's eyes widened at the proposal. She remained silent, completely lost for words. She listened as Ethan resumed this words.

"But what I'd like you to consider is

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ultimately, giving our children a family... a real family," Ethan explained further.

"I want to give the kids my name, their every right to carry my last name. And of course, I also want... to take care of you, more than just the children," Ethan finally added. "I want to give you back your pride, being the General's real daughter, and that can only happen... if you marry me."

He took a short pause and told, "There is no one... better than me. If anyone can get through your father, it's me."

Samantha remained to stare at him, still taken aback by his proposition. While it was ideal, it was just so unexpected.

After some time, she struggled to let out her words, "Marriage is supposed to be shared by - by two people who love each other. You - you are just saying this because of the kids. I - I can see that you care for them, but - "

"No, Sam. It's not just about the kids," replied Ethan. "I also... I also want you, Sam. Aside from my children, I also want

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their mother." (13)

He said the last words so softly, they barely reached Samantha's ears.

Leaning back again, Ethan stated, "I expected that you'd be shocked, but at least... let's give it a try... How about when I return from my trip, we should... go out... just the two of us."

"Can we try that, Sam?" He repeated.

'Am I dreaming?' Samantha asked herself in silence.

Right in front of her was the perfect man, who happens to be the father of her children, asking her to marry him. It just seemed too surreal to Samantha that she could not decide on the marriage right then and there.

She had to admit though, the idea of trying it out would be a good start. If it did work out between her and Ethan, everything would be perfect for her twins.

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"You don't have to agree, going out with me right now. I understand that you want to think about it." Ethan checked the time and eyed the exit. He said, "I best get back - " 6

"Okay..." Samantha endeavored to form a smile. She puffed her cheeks and said, "I'm okay to... go out with you."

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Chapter 33: Kiss Daddy

It was because Ethan was leaving for a business trip on Friday, that he dropped by the condominium on a Thursday night. He only had a few minutes to spare, but he wanted to see the kids.

He realized how the video conference calls did not satisfy his yearning.

Ethan came in with treats for the children and a bouquet for Samantha.

When Samantha opened the door for him, he handed her the flowers and said, "Good evening, Sam. They are for you."

With a flushed face, Samantha pursed her lips and accepted the flowers. She smiled and said, "Thank you, Ethan. They are beautiful."

"Daddy!" Kenzie was the first to run to him, this time jumping at him. She easily became secured in his father's strong arms.

"Kenzie! What if your Dad did not catch you? Don't do that again." Samantha scolded, nearly raising her voice.

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"It's okay. I'll catch my little girl always," assured Ethan. "I got her, Sam."

"Wow! Daddy, Mommy has flowers! Where is mine?" Kenzie asked, acting jealous of her mother's red roses.

"Daddy bought you some donuts." Leaning over to Kenzie, Samantha told, "your favorite kind."

"Wow! I love it!" Exclaimed Kenzie with her usual twinkling eyes. Her delight granted Ethan a kiss on his cheek. "Thank you, Daddy! I love you." 3

That left Ethan smiling. He wound up answering, "I love you too, Kenzie."

Turning to her mother, Kenzie suggested, "Mommy, you should kiss Daddy. He gave you flowers!" 5

Samantha had taken the donuts and received her flowers. Her hands were utterly occupied. She turned to Ethan with eyes widening, still listening to Kenzie's persisting.

"Mommy! Kiss Daddy!" Kenzie repeated.

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"It's okay... I'll kiss Mommy," suggested Ethan. He outright put one arm behind Samantha and pulled her closer, immediately pecking on her lips.

Samantha froze in her stance. She wound up looking straight into Ethan's eyes, blinking repeatedly.

She did not approve of the kiss, but she did not hate it either. She determined it was fortunate that she could not push him away.

After two seconds, Samantha was still taken aback. She noticed how Ethan was leaning over again for another kiss, but she just stood there, like a willing victim.

She thought, 'I must be under a spell!'

The next kiss, however, wasn't just a normal peck.

It lasted more than a second, with both of them, feeling the softness and the warmth of their lips.

The last kiss easily sent chills down Samantha's spine.

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When Ethan pulled away, he managed a smile, staring at Samantha's beautiful face. Samantha, on the other hand, repeatedly swallowed air down her throat.

"Oh, how romantic!" Diana remarked, after coming out from the room. She turned to find Kyle and said, "Kyle, your father is here and he brought flowers for your Mommy!"

"Dad? You came!" Exclaimed Kyle, rushing to where Ethan was.

While Diana took the donuts and brought them to the kitchen, Samantha gawked at Ethan for seconds, watching him and the kids settle in the living room.

After getting a hold of herself, she asked, "Ethan, have you had dinner?"

"Yes, Sam. Thanks for the concern." Glancing at her, he said, "I could use some coffee though. I still have a few things to finish at home."

"Okay, got it," said Samantha before turning in the direction of the kitchen.

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Just as she made her walk, she heard Kyle ask, "Daddy, you promised we'd live together. Why is it taking so long?"

Samantha sneered, hearing that. She wound up speeding her steps, not wanting to get involved in their conversation. 2

As soon as Samantha found her way to the kitchen, she put down her flowers on the dining table and made some coffee.

As the coffee was brewing, she leaned back on the wall to stare at Ethan and the kids.

She pondered about the past few days since he proposed marriage. They had been occasionally talking on the phone, but it was because Ethan had an important project to close that they only spoke briefly each time.

Ethan did follow-through on having a conference call with the kids, however, sometimes, getting Samantha involved in their chat while he was at the office, taking a break.

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Samantha did not know how long she was stealing glances at the man, but Diana, her aunt, had already set on the plates the donuts.

Diana cleared her throat before turning to the ogling Samantha and said, "If you want to keep staring at the man, why don't you just marry him!"

Scoffing at her aunt's words, Samantha reacted, "Aunt. Keep your voice down." She grabbed a cup and began to pour coffee before saying, "I just... I just don't want to make a mistake."

With a sigh, Diana said, "I know... but don't wait too long. Find out how sincere he really is and." She shrugged before repeating, "Marry the guy. What more can you ask for?"

Diana leaned over and whispered, "A hot rich guy who happens to be the father of your kids is asking you to marry him!"

Ethan only spent half an hour in the condo. After he ate his share of the donut and exchanged a few words with his kids and Samantha, he bid goodbye, giving

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Kyle and Kenzie a very long and warm hug. He said, "I'll see you on Tuesday."

"Okay, Daddy. We will miss you," replied Kenzie while savoring the embrace of her father.

"Can I call you anytime, Daddy?" Kyle asked while looking up at Ethan.

Ethan caressed his hair and answered, "I'll call you. I'll be meeting important people and I can't afford to be interrupted, but! I promise I'll be on a video call with you every day."

"Okay, Daddy," said Kyle before hugging his father again. "I'll miss you."

After the kids gave Ethan a peck on the cheek, they escorted their father out and Samantha walked with them.

At the door, Samantha said, "Have a safe flight tomorrow, Ethan."

"Thank you, Sam," answered Ethan. "Goodbye - oh and, we are set for Tuesday evening, right? I had my schedule cleared that afternoon until evening."

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"Tuesday?" She asked with eyes widening.

As if she herself knocked some senses into her, she reminded, 'The date, Sam! Your date!'

"Oh, yes. Tuesday. That's after we take the kids out," said Samantha before smiling at her forgetfulness. Raising her hand, she asked, "Where are we - going?"

"Somewhere nice, Sam. Somewhere nice," said Ethan. Checking the time, he said, "I better go."

"Mommy! Daddy is going away! You should kiss him again!" Kenzie said with her brows drawn together. The little girl even managed to put both her hands on her waist and said, "You're going to miss Daddy!"

"Yeah, Mommy!" Kyle echoed. "Kiss Daddy!"

From behind them, even Samantha's aunt supported the call of the kids. Diana said, "Yes, Sam. Kiss the kid's father, for

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God's sake! He needs some luck on his trip!"

Samantha, "..."

"I'm okay with a kiss," said Ethan before one corner of his lips curved. "But it's okay, guys. Maybe Mommy does not want to."

"Mommy!" The kids scolded Samantha in unison.

Samantha forced a laugh and said, "Of course, I will kiss Daddy! Haha!" With her face turning bloody red, she added, "I'll miss Daddy too!"

She closed in on Ethan and grabbed him by the collar of his shirt.

Samantha could literally feel her heart flutter as she closed the gap between them. As soon as their lips met, she noticed an arm around her waist, pulling her closer to his chest.

Their eyes were both hooded and focused on each other's lips.

Ethan and Samantha wound up, sharing a two-second kiss, both pecking once and then twice.

Slowly, Ethan let go of Samantha. He caressed her cheek and pecked the side of her face. He whispered in her ear, "I can't wait for Tuesday."

"Me - me too." Feeling nothing but butterflies in her stomach, Samantha surrendered and admitted. "Tuesday, then."

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Chapter 34: Meet Ethan

Saturday 5:00 AM.

"Good Morning, Sam," Samantha heard Ethan's husky voice on the other line. She bit her lip, feeling a little excited at getting a call from him so early.

"Good Morning," she responded before clearing her throat.

"Did I wake you?" Ethan asked.

"Yes, but, it's fine. I have to prepare breakfast, anyway," Samantha answered. "How was your flight?"

Last night, Ethan only sent her a message, saying that he arrived rather late due to a delayed stop in the Middle East while refueling.

Ethan took a private jet, flying across the Pacific. He did not like sharing a space with other people, other than John and his executives.

"It was okay. It was boring as usual," declared Ethan. "I never liked long flights. On my next business trip, I'll take

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you and the kids with me."

It was a cold morning, and the sun has not shone yet, following Ethan's words, Samantha felt her cheeks turning warm.

Hearing his suggestion, she chuckled and asked, "What would we do on your business trip?"

"At least, I get to see you," he answered outright.

"Oh. Haha! Well... we will see about that." Pursing her lips at his words, Samantha opened the window curtains and realize how early it was. She asked, "What time is it there?"

"About three in the afternoon here. I had some rest before getting started. We are going to have dinner with Mr. and Mrs. Song later on. I'm sure they will ask about you," responded Ethan.

"Well, send my regards," Samantha answered.

"Of course," responded Ethan.

Samantha could hear Ethan stretch his

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arms and he said, "I need to get ready, Sam. Tell the kids I called and I'll call again later... your time. If you need to go out today, just call Edgar. Don't go around town without him."

"Okay," said Samantha. "Good luck with your meeting."

"Thank you, Sam. Take care of yourself and the kids. Bye," said Ethan before putting down the phone.

While still in her room, Samantha took a moment to look out the window, still feeling with all the changes in her life. She gasped and thought; it was now time to tell her grandmother about the father of her kids.

She had held off, telling Matilda, for she was still assessing how Ethan would take things, being the father of the twins.

Now, seeing how well it was going in such a short matter of time and how she might even end up marrying Ethan, she saw a light at the end of the tunnel. (4)

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First, she cooked breakfast for everyone, and after which; she called Matilda.

They agreed to meet at the First Diamond Hotel Lobby in the afternoon.

3:00 PM in the afternoon.

Samantha and the kids were waiting at the hotel lobby and had been for an hour. Sadly, Matilda never came nor can her mobile be reached.

"Where is grandma Matilda, Mommy?" Kyle asked after putting down his tablet on the lobby sofa.

"She's late, Mom," suggested Kenzie.

It was only after another half an hour that Samantha finally received a call, but it did not come from Matilda. Instead, it came from Stella, Matilda's caregiver.

"Hello, Miss Sam." With a sigh, Stella reported, "This is Stella, grandma Matilda's caregiver. I'm afraid that she can't leave."

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"You see... your father suspected that she might see you and gave specific orders to the camp exits not to let grandma leave. He... he even took grandma's phone," revealed Stella. 4

"What? Why can't I see her? It's her right to see me if she wanted to!" Samantha got up and walked away from where the kids were seated.

"I know, Miss Sam. I'm so sorry about this," told Stella. "The General reasoned that since grandma Matilda is already old, she should not be going out of the camp often." 6

Samantha wound up taking a deep breath. She realized how this was the effect of having seen her father last week.

Now, General Davis knew... He knew her grandmother may come out to see her.

With eyes closed, Samantha thought deep. She really missed her grandmother so, and now that they were in one city, they still could not even see each other? She had to find a way.

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When an idea crept into her mind, Samantha probed, "Wait... Isn't it that you take grandma for a stroll at the military park?"

"Yes, I do," Stella answered on the other line.

"Then, you can take her there, right? I can meet her there," suggested Samantha.

"Yes, but... can you enter, Miss Sam?" Stella asked.

"I think I can," Samantha replied. She immediately assumed Ethan's car had immunity, including the military camp.

It was just as she thought. When Samantha called Edgar, he confirmed that he can get them inside the Fort Eagle Military Camp.

In less than an hour, they were off to the southern-most part of the city.

The soldiers on guard only sought Edgar's ID, and the plates were enough to gain the vehicle entry.

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It made Samantha wonder how far Ethan's connections go.

"Miss Davis, we are here at the park. Which side do you want us to pull over?" Edgar asked as he was circling around the square-shaped military park.

"Wow! Mommy! Look! There's a swing!" Kenzie pointed to the playground area. "Oh! And there is grandma, Matilda!"

"Over there, Edgar. Do you see that old lady in a wheelchair? That is where we need to go," instructed Samantha.

"Okay, Miss Davis," acknowledged Edgar while turning to the side of the road.

"Thank you, Edgar. We won't be - Where are you going?" Samantha asked, seeing him unbuckle his seatbelt.

"Miss Davis, when I reported to Mr. Wright that I was taking you to the military camp, he gave specific orders to stay with you at all times." He cleared his throat and said, "He even ordered to get a bodyguard soon."

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Samantha, who was seated at the back with Kenzie, leaned back. She said, "That's too much."

"Well, Miss Davis. It's something that you and the boss need to talk about. I only follow orders," told Edgar before he fully got off the car.

Samantha and the kids walked in the park in their casual clothes. Trudging behind them was a tall middle-aged man in a black suit.

From afar, Matilda quickly saw the frame behind her granddaughter and as soon as Samantha stood in front of her, the old lady easily formed a frown on her face. Matilda asked, "Is this the father of the twins?"

While the kids laughed, Edgar swore he might as well commit suicide. Should the boss ever find out, he was going to get fired. Literally!

"No. No, grandma," said Samantha. Pointing to Edgar, she said, "This is Edgar."

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"He is Daddy's driver, grandma Matilda," told Kyle.

"Daddy is so handsome like Kyle, grandma," revealed Kenzie. "You'll see him soon!"

Samantha turned to Stella, standing behind Matilda, and said, "Thank you, Stella. You are just a blessing."

Looking around, Stella said, "You are welcome, Miss Sam."

In one corner of the military park, an empty gazebo could be found beneath the large oak trees. It was there where they all settled to chat.

They all took their seats from each side of the place, with Samantha sitting next to where Matilda's wheelchair was.

"Grandma, this is a picture of Daddy. He is very handsome," reported Kyle while showing his tablet. ①

It shocked Samantha how her kids had a picture of Ethan. She probed, "Guys! How do you have a picture of your father?"

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Kyle showed the photo to Samantha and replied, "It's a picture of us together, Mommy, when we had that special dinner."

Samantha sneered before she located Edgar. When she saw how he was standing two meters away, merely looking out. She asked her son, "Give me a copy, okay?"

Kenzie laughed and said, "Mommy is so silly."

"Don't - don't tell your Daddy," warned Samantha while widening her eyes at the kids.

Noticing how her granddaughter blushed with just the picture of the man, Matilda could not help but remark, "I see... so it looks like your Mommy likes your Daddy."

"Of course, grandma! Mommy love's daddy!" Announced Kenzie.

"He seems familiar though," said Matilda. "What is his name again?"

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"Grandma, he is Ethan Wright, the president of the Wright Diamond Corporation," told Samantha. "Of course, he might seem familiar to you."

Matilda was thinking deep. She tilted her head to the right and said, "If I am right, your mother was a friend with someone whose last name was Wright." Shaking her head, Matilda took back her words, "Maybe I am wrong. It has been so long ago."

Hearing her grandma mentioned about her mother made Samantha nostalgic. She stated, "I don't know much about Mom."

"I know... Anyway, it does not matter." Matilda placed a hand on Samantha's face and asked, "Let me just ask you... Is Ethan good to you and the kids? Should my time come, would I rest well, knowing that you are taken care of, my dearest Sam? This is what matters to me most."

Her grandmother's words made Samantha cry. She said, "Grandma, first of all, you are a stubborn lady. I know

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you'll still live to see the day when my kids get older."

With a smile, Samantha added, "As for Ethan. I think so... I think he is a really nice man. I hope you'll meet him soon."

"Then, I'll find a way." Matilda turned to Stella and probed, "Stella, when is my next doctor's appointment?"

"Next Saturday, grandma Matilda," answered Stella.

Redirecting her gaze to Samantha, Matilda said, "Can Ethan... meet me after my doctor's appointment?"

Samantha nodded and said, "I'll ask him if he is free this Saturday."

Chapter 35: Quality Time

The time came and went.

It was Tuesday, lunchtime, the day of Ethan's return to Braeton City.

From school, Kenzie, and Kyle, together with Samantha, were on their way to the airport to meet Ethan.

Ethan wanted to have lunch together, right after landing.

Parking by the side of the runway, the children waited while seeing several airport officers go up and down the private jet.

It did not take long for the children to see John Garcia stepping down, and they immediately knew their father would be the next.

From inside the luxury car, Kenzie said, "Let's go out to meet Daddy!"

"Yeah, I want to meet Daddy as well," announced Kyle. "I want to see his plane!"

"Mommy!" Both of them pleaded.

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"It's okay, Miss Davis, they can go off to meet Mr. Wright and they can see the plane if they wish to," said Edgar.

Only after Edgar's suggestion did Samantha and the twins get off the car.

The Maybach lingered about ten meters away from where the private jet had parked, and as soon as Ethan descended from the plane, the kids rushed in his direction.

"Daddy! Daddy!" Both Kenzie and Kyle alternately called for their father.

Samantha slowly coped with the speed of her kids, as she was wearing a dress that Ethan had sent over the condominium the other day. It also came with matching shoes that had a two-inch heel. ④

She was wearing a three-fourth-sleeved peach dress. Her top beautifully embraced her slender body while the skirt shaped her hips before it formed small pleats down, an inch above her knees. ③

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Mr. Shim, the executive who came with them, was taken aback, hearing how their boss was already a father. Ethan never told him anything, but he was used to the boss, keeping his life a secret.

Asking questions or talking about the boss' personal life was a big no-no in the company.

Thus, Mr. Shim merely smiled, seeing the kids, whereas John Garcia greeted the children and Samantha.

So far, among all Ethan's staff, only Edgar and John knew about the circumstance between Samantha and Ethan.

"Daddy, I miss you!" Kenzie exclaimed, hugging Ethan as he bent over to receive the little girl and his boy.

"How are you, Daddy?" Kyle asked.

After Ethan kissed the cheeks of both twins, he received one himself. He said, "I miss you both too."

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From behind the cuddling father and children, John Garcia sensed nostalgia, seeing his boss become affectionate for the first time. ①

Clearly, Ethan's executive assistant saw a different side of Ethan and it was the same with Mr. Shim.

"Daddy, can we see the plane?" Kyle eagerly probed, eyeing the plane from where they stood.

"Sure, son. Uncle John will guide you inside," told Ethan while turning to his assistant.

"Come here, little boss! Let me show you," John happily offered, also urging Kenzie to come with them.

Samantha had been standing before Ethan and the children for seconds, having made her way in their direction. She waited until the children went up the jet with John before she spoke, "Hello, Ethan, how was your flight?"

Ethan stretched his hand to Samantha as he spoke, "It's boring as usual, Sam."

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As soon as Samantha took his hand, he pulled her closer for an embrace, shocking her completely.

She did not pull away, however. She merely pursed her lips and placed her hands on his strong arms, sensing his manly scent. She thought, 'Damn, this man smells so good and feels too good!'

Pressing his lips against her ear, he complimented, "You look fabulous." Softly, he added, "By the way, from our meetings with Mr. and Mrs. Song, Mr. Shim might have heard me say that I am married." 4

He failed not to peck on her cheek before leaning back. Only then did he introduce Samantha to Mr. Shim as his wife.

With a flushing face, Samantha offered a handshake to Mr. Shim and greeting him at the same time.

"Ah, Mr. Wright. Your wife is very beautiful," remarked Mr. Shim.

"Yes, she is." It made Ethan proud, but seeing how Mr. Shim was still holding

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Samantha's hand, he said, "You can let go of her hand now."

"Oh, sorry, Mr. Wright. I was just in awe of your wife's beauty," Mr. Shim was quick to apologize. "I'll wait for John in the other car."

It took only a few minutes for the children to descend back down from the private jet with John and while the assistant left with Mr. Shim, the family of four left for an Asian Fusion restaurant too far from the airport.

The kids were utterly elated, having another meal-time with their Daddy, at the same time, learning new dishes they have never tasted before.

After a joyous meal, Ethan and Samantha took the kids back to the hotel where Diana was waiting for them in the lobby.

When Ethan and Samantha bid goodbye to the children, Kyle asked, "Mom, where are you going?"

"I'm taking Mommy out, Kyle," Ethan winked at Kyle before leveling with his

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son. He whispered to Kyle, "Remember, this is part of the plan so we can live together."

"Oh, okay, Daddy! Good luck," Kyle said with a smile, giving a thumbs up.

"Bye, Mommy! Take care of Daddy," said Kenzie with glittering eyes.

Her words made Samantha giggle, and she said, "I sure will take care of your Daddy." ④

"Hmmm," said Ethan.

"Bye, Sam. Mr. Wright. Enjoy," said Diana before turning the kids towards the direction of the lift. ②

For a few seconds, Samantha just gawked at the kids walking with her aunt, but soon enough, she felt a touch on her hand.

She looked down and ogled at the hand that held her. She thought Ethan's hand was soft, but it felt strong at the same time. She heard him say, "Let's go." ①

Looking up to him, she asked, "Where are we going?" ①

"First... We are going to... watch a movie," said Ethan before one corner of his lips curved up. "Kyle tells me how you often watch movies together with them... namely, the sound of music and... Mary Poppins."

The idea made Samantha laugh so hard that she snorted as they made their walk back to the car.

It was from inside the Maybach that Samantha probed, "You can manage to sit in a crowded cinema? Moreover, watch musical movies?"

With a frown, she realized they would not be going to a cinema, considering how old these movies were. She took back her words and said, "We are probably going somewhere private, aren't we?"

Ethan turned to Samantha and told, "I'm watching these movies so I know what Kyle and Kenzie like about them... and as to where I am taking you... we are... going to a cinema."

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"Hah?" Despite Samantha's asking, Ethan would not reveal.

Heartbeats later, they arrived at the same exclusive mall where Ethan took Samantha.

A mall representative guided them to the elevator, and they went straight up without interruptions, reaching the top floor.

Samantha walked hand in hand with Ethan, arriving at the second cinema.

They did not have to line up for the movie and merely made their way inside. Still, the mall representative followed behind them, carrying a bag of popcorn and two bottles of Kona Deep water.

"Woah!" Reaching the inside, Samantha's mouth fell open. There was absolutely no one... inside the cinema.

They settled in the second level of the theater, right at the very center.

The mall representative only left after handing over the popcorn and water. He

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said, "Enjoy your afternoon with us, Mr. and Mrs. Wright."

For some time, Samantha looked down and up again, making sure her eyes were not playing tricks on her. When she was certain they were definitely alone, she leaned back in her seat and said, "We are alone."

"Hmmm," said Ethan.

"Ethan, we are alone!" Repeated Samantha.

"Yes, we are alone, Sam," said Ethan before opening his arm to her. "Feel free to get comfortable... in any way you like."

"Who books an entire movie theater?" Samantha asked while widening her eyes.

Ethan wound up reaching for her hand again. He said, "Sam, I just wanted to spend quality time with you." Raising his other hand to the surroundings, he added, "This is quality time."

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Guiding her hand to his face, Ethan pecked on her knuckles and said, "In as much as possible, I want to raise the bar... really high."

Samantha chuckled and nodded. She said, "Oh, it's really high, alright!"

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Chapter 36: The Right Name

"You know... you are like Mary Poppins' bag." Samantha pursed her lips, turning to Ethan before announcing, "You come in a bag, full of surprises."

That made Ethan give out a genuine smile. He leaned over to Samantha and declared, "Speaking of surprises, you sure gave me the biggest... surprise in my life."

Samantha chuckled and suggested, "Showing up, having two kids?"

"I suppose," with his business-like expression, he said while leaning sideways, maintaining the stare at Samantha.

While munching on her popcorn, Samantha realized how rarely Ethan looked at the screen. She whispered, "You are barely watching."

"I'm listening," Ethan answered.

She glanced at him for a second and said, "You did not eat any of the popcorn."

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"I'm feeling all tired from the trip. I can't move my hands. Do you mind... feeding me?" Ethan said it so casually, it did not seem like he was making a move.

It utterly made Samantha giggle while shaking her head.

"It's fine if you don't - "

"Here," Samantha offered a popcorn, going into his mouth.

"Thank you, Sam. You are very kind," Ethan while chewing down the popcorn.

Up until the end of the Marry Poppins movie, Samantha wound up feeding Ethan a piece of popcorn each time.

As the film progressed, Ethan would ask a question, now and then.

"Ah, so this is where supercalifragilisticexpialidocious came from," remarked Ethan, seeing the part where Marry Poppins introduced a new word. With a smirk on his face, he asked, "How does Kyle like watching this?"

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"He doesn't really love it, but just watches it for my sake and Kenzie's," responded Samantha. Shifting her eyes back on Ethan, she added, "I'm surprised you are still awake, though."

Ethan cleared his throat and fixed his coat before answering, "It's a... new learning. I'm always awake when something new enters my brain."

When they reached the part of the movie where Marry Poppins sang "Stay Awake" to the children, he suggested, "I bet... you sang this to them in order to sleep."

Samantha chuckled and admitted, "Yeah, when they were three years old. It's not working now though."

"Tell me, Sam... How did you raise the children on your own? What was it like?" Ethan inquired while adjusting his torso, perfectly turning to Samantha.

The probing made Samantha sigh and put the popcorn on the other seat. After wiping her fingers with a tissue, she said, "It was hard, Ethan... It was so hard."

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Taking another deep breath, she told, "When they were born, I had maybe just two to four hours of sleep every day, even with aunt's help." 3

"They were feeding every two hours and cry out of nowhere. I just could not understand it. Back then, my aunt was still working and during the day, I was alone to take care of them." Samantha looked down and admitted, "Sometimes, I felt lost and angry at myself."

Halting her words, she gradually turned to Ethan and told, "I think... the worst part was when I could not produce all the milk they needed. At eight months, my breast milk depleted, and that was when."

Samantha became nostalgic before she revealed, "That was when I started struggling to provide for them. Two cans of milk every week, plus their diapers, vaccines. Grandma Matilda and aunt Diana aided in providing for me, but it was just not enough. Especially since grandma's funds were controlled by my father as well... Sometimes, my grandma

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would send money on time, but sometimes, she could not. Especially when she was unable to get out of the military camp."

She was feeling very emotional, recalling those trying times that Ethan had to comfort her, caressing on her back and reaching for her hand. He stated, "I'm sorry, Sam. I really am."

"It was not your fault at all," said Samantha. She forced a smile before resuming her thoughts, "Anyway, I had to earn as well. I just can't rely on my aunt and grandma." 3

"Every time, I bring the kids for a check-up with the doctor, I prepare small snacks and sell them to the mothers who were waiting for their turn. I also - I also made snacks and sell them at the apartment building while sometimes bringing them along." 5

She bit her lip before shamefully telling, "Kyle on the stroller while I carry Kenzie in one arm. The snacks that I sell goes to the spaces below the stroller."

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Samantha saw the clear grimace on Ethan's face that she explained, "Don't worry, it was a safe apartment building... and I really had to."

"Eventually, my aunt took an early retirement so she could get money in bulk and help provide for me and the kids. At the same time, she could help me look after Kenzie and Kyle," Samantha continued.

"Aunt Diana realized that I could earn good money, selling pack lunches and snacks." She shrugged before adding, "What can I say... food is really my passion."

Her words made Ethan nod in agreement. He acknowledged, "It is your gift, Sam."

"So basically, that was how we lived by. Me selling food on the side while taking care of the kids. Shortly then after, I took culinary school when the kids were easier to manage and be left with aunt Diana during the day."

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"As the kids became more aware of their surroundings, I taught them to be good and kind always, just like my grandma and how I was raised. I taught them humility and to be independent, especially since I did not have all the time in the world," Samantha proudly said.

She smiled at Ethan and announced, "Despite the difficulties, I went through, I bore two adorable, kind, and smart children." She found herself teary-eyed when she added, "I could never be more proud."

"Thank you, Sam. Thank you for raising our kids well," said Ethan while his hand slowly made its way to her face. "You did very well without me."

"But now that I am here, please let me... Let me take care of you and the twins now. More than just an obligation, let me... share your burden," he said.

As Ethan spoke, Samantha was looking straight into Ethan's intense eyes. She had utterly forgotten about the movie, absolutely in a daze in the presence of this man.

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She unknowingly touched his hand and gripped on his wrist before admitting, "Ethan, what if you'll regret - "

"What regret? I am not a fickle-minded man, Sam. When I want something, I take it and keep it forever... This is why I was never in a hurry to find someone," Ethan told.

Ethan leaned his forehead to Samantha's and closed his eyes. He promised, "I swear... You, Kyle, and Kenzie... will have all of me." ❄️

The next thing Samantha felt was her heart racing, and the fact that Ethan was slowly closing the gap on their faces, fully made her knees weak.

Ethan wound up pecking on her lips and she accepted it.

In a matter of seconds, they gently nibbled on each other's lips.

The feeling of finally kissing Ethan was so thrilling that Samantha felt goosebumps all over her body.

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She had to admit; she had dreamed about it since Ethan left. Now, it was all so real!

Closing her eyes, she was about to let go, only to be interrupted by the lights turning on.

Both she and Ethan took heavy breaths as they let go of each other, turning to face the wide screen.

They did not realize how the movie had already ended, and the next that appeared on the screen was a 'thank you' message for the both of them. It read, "Thank you, Mr. and Mrs. Wright."

Offering his hand to Samantha, Ethan said, "Mrs. Wright, it's the only name that suits you well, Sam." 5

Turning tomato red, Samantha took his hand and answered, "It sounds... right indeed."

Chapter 37: The Familial Home

"Are we going home after this?"
Samantha asked, realizing it was still
nearly six in the evening.

"No, Sam... The night is still, young,"
Ethan responded. He then moved closer
and whispered to her ear, "I have another
surprise for you."

"What is it?" She asked, turning to his
athletic face.

She nearly fainted, seeing Ethan's well-
defined jaw-lines, and while she had seen
this before, she could not help but
appreciate it once more.

Samantha found herself lost in Ethan's
intense brown eyes as he glanced at her
for a second. She heard him say, "It's a
secret. We still have two itineraries for
today."

Ethan did not miss pinching lightly on
Samantha's cheek before reaching for her
hand.

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They wound up walking hand in hand, out of the cinema and to the lift. Still, the mall attendant was with them all the way.

After the mall, Edgar drove them to the Wright Diamond Hotel where a few of the company's employees saw their boss walk hand in hand with a woman with golden hair.

Reaching the top of the company building, Samantha was stunned to see a helicopter on the rooftop. She screamed, "Oh, my God! Where in the world are we going?"

Since the propeller's sound was so deafening, Ethan could only raise his voice back in response, "It's a secret! You'll find out soon!"

It wasn't Samantha's first time riding a helicopter, but everything about it just made her nervous. Her mind could not help but second guess where Ethan was taking her, 'To the next city? An Island? It must be an island.' 2

As they lift off to another secret destination, Samantha could feel her

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heart racing. She turned to Ethan and said, "You are making my heart beat so fast?"

He merely gripped her hand and said, "I hope... in a good way."

"Kyle would love this! This is his thing!" Samantha announced, smiling from ear to ear while observing the city lights.

"Don't worry, Sam. We'll take the kids another time... This time is ours," he answered.

They were on the helicopter for twenty minutes tops, going past the city, into the harbor, and towards the sea.

Samantha guessed it right!

They descended on an island property, nearing Braeton City. It was a stunning vacation home that was known to be rented by prominent families.

The island had a rocky landscape. It formed boulders of rocks by the shores and rock-like cliffs by the edges of the place.

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On top of the island were lush vegetation and beautiful oak trees, but its highlight was probably the stunning view of the vacation home's third level, where a balcony perched.

Getting off the helicopter, Samantha could not help but took a full turn, just to appreciate the island. She took a deep breath and savored the sea breeze, surging against her elegant face.

She easily turned nostalgic when she said, "This is so beautiful." Turning to Ethan, she grabbed his arm and pressed her face against it. She repeated, "Ethan, it is so beautiful. I love it!"

"I'm glad you like it, Sam," Ethan casually replied.

Deep inside, Ethan sighed in relief. He had everything planned out before he left and he reckoned; he has never been so obsessed over choosing a place for dinner than that night.

Hearing Samantha's remarks warmed his heart. It was the kind of satisfaction only

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his parents and grandparents could give him.

They made a ten-minute walk to the mansion-like estate, made out of brick walls and stunning verandas.

The entire time, Samantha's hand rested on Ethan.

Reaching the third level balcony, Samantha gawked at the beautifully prepared candlelit dinner, and on the table, a bouquet of peach and pink roses were waiting for Samantha.

"Kyle said, you liked peach and pink," said Ethan. "Not the typical military-groomed girl, but I like the fact that you are still in touch with your femininity."

Samantha smiled as Ethan put the flowers in her hands. She unwittingly moved closer and pecked on his lips.

When she realized what she had done, she stepped back and bit her lip. She admitted, "Sorry, I was just so happy."

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The man in Ethan could not help but act on her initiative. While he was a respectable and well-composed person, his desires were rising every minute that he was spending time with Samantha.

He declared, "I deserve more... don't I?"

Samantha easily formed twinkling eyes. She chuckled at his words and gradually returned to close the gap between them.

Not minding the servers who were waiting on standby for Ethan's orders, they both shared a kiss on the balcony that faced the sea.

Samantha tip-toed to reach his height and rested her palm behind his neck. Ethan, on the other hand, wrapped his arms around Samantha's waist.

They shared not just one, but four long and breathtaking kisses.

Ethan and Samantha gasped at the end of their pecks. Only then did they enjoy dinner together under the bright skies and facing the calm seas.

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At the end of their meal, Ethan said, "It's not as good as the way you cook, but I can't have you cook on our own date."

Samantha chuckled and responded, "It's still delicious."

"It's already passed nine. It's best that we leave for our third destination," suggested Ethan. "Let's go."

The couple returned via helicopter to the Wright Diamond Corporation building and drove off to the western part of Braeton City. Samantha remembered this as the usual place for residential homes of the rich and famous.

Once again, she was left to wonder where Ethan was taking her, but soon enough, her questions were answered, right after they entered a mansion with grilled fences around it.

They drove past a beautiful lawn with lights highlighting the place.

When they arrived at the driveway, Samantha asked, "Whose house is this?"

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Truth be told, Samantha felt nervous. If that was the day she would meet Ethan's parents, she would faint outright.

Unfortunately, Ethan did not answer. He merely got off the car and let Samantha out from the other door. He told, "Let me show you this house first." 2

The doors opened for them with a butler holding the handle.

"Good evening, Mr. and Mrs. Wright," greeted the butler.

Two maids lined up to greet them as well, "Good evening, Mr. and Mrs. Wright."

'I am really getting used to this,' said Samantha.

Out of nowhere, Samantha whistled and said, "Wow!"

It was way grander than the mansion of her father. Her eyeballs were ready to pop out of her eyes, utterly in awe of the chandelier that dangled at the center of the living room.

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"Let's go," said Ethan while offering his hand. He took her first to the kitchen and revealed, "I chose this mansion primarily because of the kitchen."

"Wow! This is so huge!" Samantha could not help but exclaim, seeing the spacious kitchen with countertops that were glittering clean.

"You like it?" Ethan asked with a smile.

"For a house kitchen, yeah!" Samantha answered. "It's as fancy as the First Diamond Hotel kitchen."

Samantha leaned over to Ethan and asked, "Why are we even touring this house?"

"I'll tell you later," said Ethan.

The next part of the mansion where Ethan took her was the pool. It had both an adult pool and a kiddie pool, making Samantha become envious of the home.

"Whose house is this, Ethan? I want to buy this." With a sneer, she said, "One day." 4

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As they went from one part of the house to another, Samantha made compliments left and right. He took her to the master bedroom and utterly loved the European King bed!

The next was a room right across from the master bedroom. From there, Ethan said, "You can open it, Sam."

Samantha was reluctant to do so. She awkwardly chuckled and asked, "Are you sure?"

"Of course, Sam," said Ethan.

Taking a deep breath, Samantha pushed open the door. She turned to her right, and she felt her heart was ready to jump out of her chest. She turned to the left and then wound up crying.

She saw how the wallpapers were divided into blue and pink on each side. The names of their children were also painted on top of the bed.

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The left side was Kyle's and the right side was Kenzie's. ②

From behind Samantha, Ethan said, "Sam, the title of this house already belongs to you. You just need to sign the transfer documents for formalities. You can have this house for yourself, but if you allow it... this can be... our familial home." ①

Clearing his throat, Ethan asked, "Marry me, Sam. I'll give you everything in my will and my power... Everything you have ever dreamed of for yourself and for our children."

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Chapter 38: I'll Marry You

Samantha wasn't sure why, but she was starting to feel nervous. She kept asking herself, 'Why are we going around this house?'

She already had an inkling, especially after seeing the kitchen. Besides, what was the use of showing her such a beautiful kitchen if it was not for her? Moreover, the butler and the maids addressed them like they were a married couple.

'Stop it, Sam! You are making assumptions!' She scolded herself right before Ethan showed her the master bedroom. ①

When Ethan presented her with the biggest room in the mansion, she flushed outright. While she adored looking at the sizable bed, her mind was thinking of something else. She brushed away her thoughts and remarked, "Wow! I really am jealous of the bed." ①

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Sitting on the mattress, she remarked, "It must be... really comfortable to sleep on this bed."

She immediately eyed Ethan's reaction and heard him chuckle for the first time that night. She thought, 'This man is hiding something from me... Clearly.'

"Let's go to the other room. You'll love it even more," suggested Ethan while extending his hand to her.

"You seem to be getting used to my hold," she heard Ethan remarked after she gripped on his firm hands.

While it was shameful to admit, she did not care anymore. She was really happy that day, and she was pretty sure Ethan liked holding her hand too. She admitted, "It feels nice to be in your protective hands."

"Hmmm," answered Ethan.

Standing by the door of another room, Ethan proposed to her, "You can open it, Sam."

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'What is inside this room?' She wondered silently. 'Maybe a room full of flowers?'

Turning to Ethan, she awkwardly asked, "Are you sure?"

"Of course, Sam," Ethan answered. "Go ahead."

She bit her lip before taking a deep breath. She did not know why, but she felt like she needed to brace herself. ①

After opening the door, her gaze lingered on the right side of the room. She acknowledged how it was far better than a room full of flowers.

It made her heart beat so fast, seeing Kenzie's name beautifully painted on top of a single bed, resting on a pink wooden frame. The wallpapers were dreamy and spoke so much of Kenzie's personality.

In front of the bed was a beautiful vanity table, perfect for her little girl.

She placed a hand on her chest before turning to the right and saw how it was also well customized for Kyle.

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Like Kenzie's side of the room, he had his name on top of the blue-framed bed, but his wallpaper was decorated with night skies and robots floating out of nowhere.

Kyle also had his own study table, already equipped with a computer.

She finally realized how this home was meant for them... as a family.

It could not be helped, Samantha cried right after reaching this realization.

From behind her, she heard Ethan announce, "Sam, the title of this house already belongs to you. You just need to sign the transfer documents for formalities. You can have this house for yourself, but if you allow it... this can be... our familial home."

Clearing his throat, Ethan added to his words, "Marry me, Sam. I'll give you everything in my will and my power... Everything you have ever dreamed of for yourself and for our children." ②

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Samantha took some time to savor the moment. She turned to each side of the bed again and again, even after Ethan's proposal.

After some time, she turned to his handsome face and embraced Ethan by the waist.

She felt the caress on her back as she buried her face against his firm chest. She heard Ethan say, "Why are you crying? You deserve this, Sam. You deserve this because you took care of Kenzie and Kyle all by yourself for many years."

"I'm just making up for lost times," Ethan added while pecking on her head.

Samantha was still overwhelmed by Ethan's surprise. It was truly a surprise she never expected. She muttered in silence, 'Who in the world gifts a house?!'

"Sam, marry me... Be with me," Ethan repeated his request.

Hearing Ethan's accounts, Samantha pulled away and looked up at his gorgeous face. She stuttered as she said, "

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O - okay." Nodding her head, she resumed, "I'll marry you, Mr. Ethan Wright." ⑥

Her hands crept up to the back of his neck, and she asked, "But Ethan, will this be okay with you? I know that I like you... but - "

"We will get there... together," Ethan interrupted her trail of thought, assuring her further, "I am a man of commitment and I will never break my promise. I only ask that you be the same with me."

That special house revelation utterly melted Samantha's heart. How could she say no to the father of her children, who happened to be a respectable man? He was willing enough to give her everything, including an overpriced house! ②

Hearing him talk about commitment, Samantha told, "I have expectations." ①

"I'm listening," he answered while thoughtfully looking at her blue eyes.

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"I don't ever want to be hurt again," said Samantha. "That was why I never planned on seeing someone after having my kids. They were - they were enough to make me happy."

"I don't plan on hurting you," Ethan swore. "I swear on my life."

"I want a happy family. That was how I've always imagined my life to be. I don't like scandals, unnecessary conflicts - " As Samantha told of her worries, Ethan cut her off. ③

"Sam, I will never hurt you on purpose. If you like, I have my lawyers make a draft of all the things that you want in our marriage to be." Ethan put both his hands on her delicate face when he added, "I chose you and anything that I choose will remain by my side."

Samantha pursed her lips and said, "Okay... Okay, I believe you, Ethan. I believe you."

"Ethan Wright, I'll marry you," she repeated.

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With Samantha's double confirmation, Ethan formed a curve on his lips. He gulped and flaunted his sexy adam's apple. He said, "Thank you, Sam. Thank you."

As they were still in each other's embrace, that eventful confirmation from Samantha warranted a kiss.

Ethan leaned over and started pecking on Samantha's lips.

Samantha was already in heaven with everything Ethan had dazzled her that day, but she was even more thrilled to taste the softness of his lips once more.

She honestly thought the man's flavor was so addicting. She ended up responding while closing her eyes and eventually; she parted her lips as soon as she sensed Ethan did the same.

Standing in the middle of the room, the couple's head turned from side to side as they accommodate their breaths and their kisses. Their hands rested on each other's faces, while their eyes were often closed.

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Except for their smacking lips, everything else turned mute around them.

They only let go when they heard footsteps coming towards the direction of the bedroom.

Arriving at the condominium, Samantha was excited to tell the kids. It was already late, but she still meant to tell them either way.

When Ethan and Samantha entered the place, the lights were dimmed. It was already twelve midnight when they arrived, and she was certain her twins were already asleep.

"Let me just go wake up the kids," said Samantha.

"Wait," Ethan called while pulling her hand. He grabbed her waist and told, "I'm not done with you yet."

To Samantha's surprise, Ethan kissed her again.

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"Mmmmm." Moans easily left Samantha's lips as Ethan ate her mouth without hold.

The kiss was so heated, that both Ethan and Samantha frequently gasped for air.

The two were so engrossed with their make-out session by the living room wall, that they failed to notice how one little girl crept out of their room to get a glass of water.

When Kenzie came back, walking past them again, she reminded, "Mommy, there is a limit to kissing Daddy."

Chapter 39: Ethan's Promise

"You told her about the kiss limit," reminded Ethan.

"I know. I hate it when they remember these things... my kids are just too sharp," Samantha responded before forcing Ethan's hands off her waist. She smiled and pecked on his lips again. "Let me get the kids." ①

"Hmmm," Ethan's typical response.

Before letting Samantha go, however, he put a hand behind her neck and savored for one last kiss.

His actions made Samantha chuckle as she forced herself free from Ethan's hold. She whispered, breathing against his lips, "I'll be back."

While Ethan turned on the lights to the living room, Samantha walked in the direction of their bedroom. ②

It did not take long for Kenzie and Kyle to walk back out with Samantha, both puzzled for the late evening wake-up call. Kyle was especially still sluggish.

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"Hi guys," greeted Ethan while remaining to sit on the sofa.

Kenzie went straight into Ethan's lap and said, "Hi Daddy, are you done kissing?"

While Samantha's face burned, Ethan acknowledged, "Hmmm. Yes, Kenzie... We are done... for now."

"Come here, Kyle," Ethan called for his son, seeing him take his time.

When both the children were in Ethan's lap, Samantha took the seat in front of them and reported awkwardly, "Kids, I have an announcement to make."

"What is it, Mommy?" Kyle asked.

Samantha's eyes widened, first eyeing Ethan's reaction, but seeing how he was calm as usual, she cleared her throat and resumed her thoughts, "Daddy and I have agreed... to be together officially so... that means we will all live together soon!"

"Really, Mommy?" Kenzie asked, now fully awake. She turned to her Daddy and probed, "Is it true, Daddy?"

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"Yes, it's true!" Answered Ethan before pecking on Kenzie's cute face.

Kyle on the other hand sighed. He declared, "Well, it's about time!"

Samantha wound up laughing at the reaction of Kyle while Ethan smirked.

"You are going to live with us here, Daddy?" Kyle inquired, looking up to Ethan.

"No, Kyle. We are going to live together in a new home." Ethan glanced at Samantha before he resumed his thoughts, "We are just going to do some paperwork and complete the needs of our new home and we should be ready to move in by Sunday."
" 2

Kyle wound up counting the days with his fingers. He exhaled and said, "Five days."

"Yes, only five days," Ethan acknowledged. "It won't be long, Kyle."

"A new home?" Kenzie eagerly asked. "Is it better than this house?"

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"Oh, it's way better, sweetie!" Announced Samantha with gleaming eyes. "It has a pool!"

"Woah!" Both Kenzie and Kyle exclaimed happily.

"You'll have your own room and your own beds," told Ethan.

"Wow!" Kyle was amazed, raising his hands while he was telling.

"You are sharing with your sister," Samantha revealed.

"But I like sleeping with Mommy, Daddy," said Kenzie before pouting her lips.

"That's fine," responded Ethan. "I don't mind sleeping next to both you and Kyle, but there should be days when you let Mommy and Daddy sleep alone... Otherwise, you won't have another sister or brother." 11

Samantha's eyes widened. She leaned back in her chair, utterly shocked. She failed to think about this part of the arrangement.

Naturally, since they would get married, they would eventually... do the deed, but what surprised her the most was how Ethan was expecting to have another child!

She coughed and cleared her throat before clarifying, "You want.... another child?"

"I want a baby girl!" Announced Kenzie.

"I want a boy!" Kyle declared, producing a fist and raising it mid-air.

"No! I want a baby sister!" Kenzie struck back.

"A boy!" Kyle countered, wrinkling his nose as he leaned over to Kenzie.

"Don't worry, Mommy and I will work on having both," It was Ethan's way of easing the two's competitiveness.

While it amused Ethan, Samantha was utterly taken aback! It would seem to her that Ethan wanted two more kids!

She scolded herself in silence, 'Of course! He would want another child! He missed

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five years with Kyle and Kenzie!

Samantha was already forming frowns on her face, but before she could react, they all heard someone clearing her throat. They all turned to find Diana, smiling from ear to ear about the news.

"I'm very happy for the kids and for my niece," said Diana with a smile.

"Does grandma D have her own room too?" Kenzie asked, turning to Ethan.

"Yes! Your grandma D will have her own room," told Ethan. Turning to Diana, he added, "Of course, I took into considering how this family should be complete and I know... that my kids turn to you so much for their needs."

"I hope you don't mind, Miss Turner, that I already included you in my plans," Ethan added.

Diana laughed at being addressed as a 'Miss.' She walked towards Sam and sat next to her. She said, "I'd really hate interfering with your lives - "

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"Aunt, actually." Samantha turned to her aunt and placed her hand on Diana's. She said, "Actually, it was my idea and Ethan was fine with it."

Placing a hand on her chest, Samantha admitted while turning emotional, "Aunt, I don't know how to... live without you. You have always been there for me and the kids."

Samantha shrugged before telling, "Of course, you are free to do whatever you want, but I would be happy if you stay with us."

"Why would grandma D leave?" Kyle asked with a frown.

"Yeah, Grandma D," Kenzie echoed. "Why would you?"

"Is it really, okay?" Diana asked, shifting her gaze to both Ethan and Samantha. "I'd hate to impose. Although the truth is, I don't know what to do now that I am retired. I will miss Kyle and Kenzie, should I live on my own."

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"Of course, it's okay. Sure, we can always hire a maid or a nanny for both of them, but your guidance is really something I look forward to. Considering that Sam and I will be busy working, your presence at home will absolutely be helpful," Ethan explained.

"Aunt, what on earth are you talking about? Do you remember the days back then? I would not have made it through without you." Samantha embraced Diana's arm and said, "Aunt, whether you like it or not, I'm keeping you with me."

"It's settled then, Miss Turner - "

"Oh, please... call me aunt, Ethan. And I'll call you Ethan as well," Diana interrupted.

"Ethan it is," he answered.

"It feels so strange to be called a miss, given my age," explained Diana. "Thank you, very much Sam, Ethan. Thank you for considering me as part of your family."
"

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"No, aunt," responded Ethan. "Thank you for looking after Sam and the kids without me."

Even if Ethan did not show any emotions as he said those words, Diana felt it. She felt the sincerity in Ethan's ways.

It was when Samantha tucked the kids back to sleep when Diana had her alone time with Ethan.

From the living room, Diana smiled at him and said, "Ethan, I have seen my niece go through so much, so she could keep her babies... You may not know this, but her father wanted Sam to have an abortion back then."

"She chose to keep her babies," Diana added.

The tale of Diana utterly made Ethan grit his teeth. His eyes narrowed and his brows drew together. He inwardly thought of what kind of father was the great general to think that of his own grandchildren?

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He did not know how long he was clenching his hand into a fist, but he only realized it when Diana reached for his hand. He heard her say, "That might anger you, but just so you know... deep inside Samantha loves her father... He is her father after all." ①

"So despite the ugly past she has with Winfield Davis, consider mending their relationship," suggested Diana.

"To be honest with you, Winfield changed thoroughly after he remarried. While I am aware, he should be responsible for his own actions. What really ignited his decisions was the influence of his new wife." Diana looked back at Samantha's room before leaning forward to Ethan. She said, "I never liked Samantha's stepmother. Right from the very start!"

"Samantha, you see, she was just too kind not to see through her stepmother and her stepsister, but I always felt that they were jealous of my niece. After all, she got my sister's beauty and the attention of all the Davises," included Diana.

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Diana suddenly turned sinister! Her eyes tightened as she told, "I can just imagine the envy of their eyes when they will find out my dear Samantha is your wife!"

With conviction, she raised, "When you reveal yourselves to the General and his new family, we need to take videos of their dropping jaws, their popping eyes, and their drooling mouths!"

Adding anger to her tone, Diana closed the conversation with this statement, "They have to drool! They just have to drool of envy as much as they made Sam cry!"

"That will be entertaining," Ethan said while caressing his chin. "Don't worry, aunt. I will definitely make them... drool. That's a promise."

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Chapter 40: The Marriage Agreement

Once again, Samantha was under the watchful eyes of The Wright Diamond Corporation employees.

The very next day, Ethan set up a meeting with his lawyers to draft the marriage agreement between him and Samantha.

While Samantha took back her initial qualms to signing a legal document with Ethan, he still insisted.

It was because he wanted Samantha to feel that she was in control in going into this marriage, that he went through with coming up with a legal arrangement.

The company's CEO personally fetched Samantha from the lobby, together with John, Ethan's assistant.

Like the last, they walked hand in hand, going to the lift and into the conference room.

In front of Ethan's most trusted attorneys, he instructed, "Include in the marriage agreement all of her conditions.

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"

"Yes, Mr. Wright," both attorneys acknowledged alternately.

Samantha nearly chuckled at what they were about to do, but since that morning, she tried to sway Ethan against writing a marriage agreement. Unfortunately, Ethan would not have it any other way.

Turning to Samantha, Ethan reached for her hand and said, "Go ahead, Sam. Tell them everything you want." ①

"Ethan, are you sure - "

"We've already talked about this. Go ahead. I just don't want you to have second thoughts," he answered. "I want your full commitment and I feel, I can only do this by ensuring your terms into our marriage."

Sitting next to Ethan, opposite to Samantha, John Garcia was still in awe that his boss was willing to be tied down and it happened to be the mother of his two lovely twins.

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When he heard that they were drafting a marriage agreement, he was stunned as to how it will go.

Naturally, being Ethan's assistant, he was there to make notes for his boss. He attentively listened as Samantha gave her terms.

Struggling to open her mouth, Samantha took a deep breath. She glanced at Ethan one last time and gripped firmly on the hand that held hers. Only then did she say, "I don't like a broken family."

Her eyes widened, and she pursed her lips before she explained, "We are... never breaking up... ever."

She flushed outright after she admitted her first condition.

The lawyers looked at Ethan, expecting a counter, but the man only said to them, "Put that in."

"Okay, Mr. Wright," answered one attorney before typing it on the laptop.

Everyone turned to Samantha, waiting for more of her terms.

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Puffing her cheeks, she sighed and said, "I want... to be the only woman. Under no circumstances will my husband cheat on me."

"That will never happen, Sam. I am never a ladies' man," Ethan pointed out before turning to the lawyers. He said to them, "Put that in."

For that condition, the lawyers had no apprehensions in including it in their contract. They know exactly how Ethan was with women. They acknowledged how Samantha Davis was an exception.

Only after that did Samantha feel more comfortable with her conditions.

"I want Sunday to be... a family day. No work on Sundays," Samantha declared.

Yet again, the lawyers gawked at the great Ethan Wright. They all saw him pause at the request.

Ethan tilted his head from left to right before he cleared his throat. He agreed, "Put that in."

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Beside the man, John delighted at finally having a full free day. He exclaimed, "Yes!"

Just when the assistant rejoiced with having no work on a Sunday, Ethan said, "I suppose, John can work for me on those days."

That made Samantha utterly feeling guilty, but then Ethan said, "He gets paid overtime."

"Don't worry, Miss Davis, I love overtime, John owned up to it, not wanting to get in trouble with the boss."

After that condition, Samantha proceeded to the next, "While I know Ethan is busy, but I want us - his family to be in his priority. Should we call him, I expect an answer or a call back."

That was John's cue. He immediately said, "I'll make sure of that, Miss Davis."

"Put that in," Instructed Ethan. That was no issue for him. In fact, he was already doing that for Samantha and the kids.

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"I want us to celebrate family events, like the children's upcoming birthday," Samantha added.

"Noted on my end," John was quick to pencil it in his own reminders.

"Put that in," Ethan ordered to the attorneys, and they indicated every celebration there is, including Samantha's birthday, and their anticipated anniversary.

When Samantha noticed how they did not write Ethan's birthday, she asked, "What about your birthday, Ethan?"

"Mine is on the 20th of February," said Ethan to Samantha. "A day... you should not miss."

It made her smile at him and she confirmed, "I'll remember that... and I would not miss it for the world."

While the lawyers typed it in, John Garcia acknowledged, "Everything is all noted in my end." He smiled at Samantha and added, "Don't worry, Miss Davis. Mr. Wright, won't forget a thing!"

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Samantha did not know why, but she felt like teasing Ethan that she said, "And I want Ethan to remember these events on his own accord."

Following Samantha's words, the room utterly turned silent.

The attorneys literally feared for their lives that they both paled at the suggestion.

John Garcia, on the other hand, practically gulped down his own spew, and his hands trembled while holding his tablet organizer.

To their shock, Ethan conceded, "A good husband and father will remember these special occasions." Turning to the lawyers, he said, "Put that in."

Samantha chuckled at the reactions of John and the lawyers. She said, "I was joking at that part."

"Hmmm," said Ethan while crossing his legs. He gazed at Samantha and questioned, "Are you challenging me, my

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wife? I will remember it, Sam... Mark my word."

"Okay, I believe you," responded Samantha while flushing being called as his wife.

Samantha had a few more notable requests, but towards the last, was the most worrisome of all. She stated, "This marriage will... only be consummated when I am ready."

While Samantha utterly turned tomato red at her proposal, yet again the room fell mute. The temperature seemed chiller than a second ago.

Everyone practically heard Ethan Wright take a deep breath. After nearly two three seconds of silence, Ethan said, "Never will I force you into anything, Sam."

He turned to the lawyers and said, "Put that in."

Both the attorneys sighed in relief at the same time, closing their eyes for a second before they resumed typing it all down.

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After discussing the terms of the marriage, which happened to be all in favor of Samantha, both parties signed and made the deal.

"Now that our agreement is done, Sam... Let's go to the registry office and... make it official," Ethan said while standing up.

It was Samantha's turn to take a deep breath. Still, she had already decided.

She took Ethan's hand and said, "Okay. Let's go."

"No turning back now," Ethan said.

"Yeah." Samantha smiled and agreed. "I am... a woman of my word."

Ethan's attorneys were very efficient in working with their connections, making a schedule open for Ethan at the registry office at the very last minute.

At exactly three in the afternoon, Samantha and Ethan were legally married. Each one of them held a copy in their possession. ③

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Taking Samantha to the condominium, Ethan gave her reminders, "Next week, we can discuss the date you want the actual ceremony to be. Right now, what matters the most is to give our children their appropriate last names... Getting their last name changed will still take time."

Samantha nodded while turning to Ethan. She responded, "I understand, Ethan... and I'm not worried. I'm sure you can make the process faster."

They had covered the part of a real wedding ceremony and Ethan meant to give Samantha one, but in his views, making them a legal family was the most important.

Since the wedding ceremony took time to prepare, they temporarily got married in paper.

"And Ethan, thank you for understanding about..." Samantha sneered, recalling her last request. "About my last condition in our marriage."

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Ethan was suddenly reminded about the consummation part of their agreement. He found himself amused and leaned over to whisper in Samantha's ear, "Sam, when we live together... I doubt you'll be able to resist me, anyway."

Samantha gasped in shock. She never expected Ethan to be capable of saying such words! She muttered, "I did not think you had it in you to tease!"

Ethan turned back to his pose and gave a chuckle. He said, "I'm just stating a fact. Just wait and see."

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Chapter 41: Little Sami

Friday Afternoon at the Wright Diamond Corporation.

Ethan and John were busier than ever.

Ethan's family was two days away from moving into their new mansion, and there was a holdup at the car company for the new Pullman Maybach that he requested.

It was a six-seater Mercedes luxury car, perfect for a family of five, including Diana Turner.

As the kids were getting older, it wasn't practical to have them sit on their laps for long in Ethan's standard Maybach. They just had to have their own family vehicle aside from his business car.

"John, tell them that they have a day to deliver the car or they are going to get a personal visit from me! Make it happen!" Ethan ordered from his desk.

"Yes, Mr. Wright! I'll... threat them if I have to," answered John before retreating back to the door.

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Just as John Garcia exited the CEO office, another figure came in.

A slender, tall, and alluring woman in her early fifties arrived. She had dark hair and dark brown eyes like Ethan. She smiled as she walked towards the CEO desk and took the seat in front.

Ethan immediately rose upon the presence of the woman and greeted, "Mother... what brings you here?"

It was Amanda Wright, Ethan's mother, the wife of Daniel Wright.

He walked over and pecked on his mother's cheek and said, "I thought you wanted to go golfing today with father."

"Why? Can't I visit my son?" Following a sigh, she admitted, "I just had to come, Ethan... because I met Patricia Johnson the other day and reported my son to be seeing someone!"

Amanda Wright's eyes widened as she looked into her son's handsome face. She probed, "Tell me, who is this woman?"

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Ethan had already taken back his seat when her mother told about her visit. He exhaled and said, "Ah... So that's why you are here."

"Patricia said... this woman has been seen with you walking while holding your hand," Amanda simulated with both her hands clasped together. She leaned closer and said, "You barely hold hands with your mother! Surely, this woman is not just a friend or a business partner!"

"HMMMM," said Ethan. He tightened his eyes at the thought of Patricia Johnson.

Aside from meeting them on one lunch gathering, he assumed that Patricia must have been with her father at the office when he and Samantha signed a contract of their marriage. It was either that or on the night that he took Samantha out on a date.

"Is she... your girlfriend?" Amanda Wright inquired with her eyes locked on Ethan. "Because from what I learned from Patricia, this woman already has children and were... apparently calling you Daddy?"

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It was because Ethan remained silent that his mother resumed with her thoughts, "I am not one to judge, Ethan. You know me, but isn't Patricia a better option?"

"Mother, how is Patricia a better option? She a scandalous woman. The fact that she approached you to get your side already tells much about her character," Ethan answered. "You haven't even met my wife yet."

"Haaah! Wi - fe? Wife? Ethan!" Amanda sat up from her seat and slammed both her hands against the table. "You - you got married without us knowing?! Son? How could you?"

"I am old enough to make my own decisions, mother... besides, I did not want her to change her mind, so I rushed things." He tilted his head to add, "As they say, strike while the iron is hot... We got married in paper."

Ethan's mother closed her mouth with her palm as she sat back in her seat. She muttered, "I can't believe I am hearing this! My son is after a girl!"

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It was never like Ethan to pursue a girl, and while it was appealing to Amanda's thoughts, she still had many questions in her head about Ethan's mystery wife.

Abruptly changing her views, Amanda Wright asked, "But Ethan, why a woman with children? What - what about." She frowned, thinking deep, before continuing, "What about little Sami? Remember that I promised you to her!"

"Mother, how old is this... little Sami? And you said so yourself, you do not know this little girl's whereabouts, so you ended up setting me on dates with other women! Besides, why would I marry someone I don't know!" Ethan snapped at his own mother.

Seeing the dismay on her mother's face, Ethan promised, "Don't worry, mother. You will learn to appreciate my wife as I have. If she won me over, I'm sure she can easily win your heart. Why don't we meet at the First Diamond Hotel tomorrow? I am meeting with my wife's grandmother and we could use the time to get to know each other."

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Amanda instantly got up from her seat, teary-eyed at her son's decision. She pointed out, "I just wished you had told me -"

"I meant to. I'm sorry, mother. I just... wanted to set things right before I introduce my family to you and father," told Ethan.

Ethan had planned to introduce Samantha and the kids right after he changed the last names of Kyle and Kenzie.

The truth was, he was unsure if it was acceptable to tell about his one-night experience with Samantha nearly six years ago.

However, given the situation right now, it would seem like Ethan had to tell the truth. He could only hope that his parents will not look down on Samantha for having slept with a stranger that fateful night.

Leaning over against the table, he said, "Look, mother. Let me explain - " 4

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"Nevermind... what's done is done!"

Without hearing Ethan's words, Amanda acted to leave before saying, "Have John tell me the time of our meeting. I just hope... you made the right decision, son."

Before slamming the door, Amanda added, "It's unfortunate that you won't be marrying little Sami." 9

Seeing his mother disappear behind the door, Ethan sighed and muttered, "Little Sami." 6

Amanda Wright told Ethan in the past that she and her college friend agreed to bind their children in marriage. It was a silly agreement between two young mothers at the prime of their marriage. 3

It was when he was thirty years old that his mother brought it up, especially since he never dated any women before.

However, his mother could not find this little Sami and by the mention of her college friend, Amanda Wright would turn emotional and cry over her friend's memory.

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He never really understood why. His mother never gave him details, nor was he interested in listening back then.

It was because Ethan's mother failed to find little Sami that she forced him on two surprise dates, hoping someone would catch his attention and finally get married.

As his parents were getting older, they expected to have grandchildren soon, but sadly, Ethan just did not find the one that caught his eye... until now.

In the evening of the same day, Ethan had dinner with Samantha and the kids at the condominium.

It was during their meal time that Ethan told, "Sam, my parents will meet you and the kids tomorrow." He gulped air down his throat before adding, "Someone reported to my mother about us being seen together and she came by the office to inquire."

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"I had to tell her that we are married," Ethan said.

Samantha fell mute for a second. While she knew it was bound to happen, she honestly wanted more time to meet Ethan's parents. Especially since she and Ethan met in the most unconventional way.

She forced a smile and responded, "Well, I suppose... it was meant to happen."

Samantha cleared her throat before excusing herself, rushing to the common bathroom of their home.

It was in front of the mirror where she took deep breaths, looking at herself. She closed her eyes, inwardly praying that Ethan's parents would accept her, despite her past mistake.

Just as she was pondering on these thoughts, she felt hands on her shoulders. She immediately knew it was Ethan's.

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"Everything will be fine, Sam. I promise," assured Ethan. "Sure, they may have apprehensions, but it's like what I said... my parents will respect my decisions and it is because they value family that I am confident, they will also grow to love Kenzie and Kyle." 3

Looking at Ethan through the mirror, Samantha told, "I don't like conflicts."

"And I promise you, there won't be one," guaranteed Ethan before pecking on Samantha's head.

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Chapter 42: The Grandparents

Saturday, 11:30 AM.

"Sam, are you coming down? The hotel staff wanted me to go to a conference room, but I prefer waiting for you in here at the lobby," Matilda Davis asked on the phone right after they settled in the First Diamond Hotel lobby.

For that lunch, they were to gather at the first-carat conference room and have a private meal together with Ethan's parents.

From the other line, Samantha answered, "Grandma, I'm heading down with Kyle we can proceed to the conference room together. Kenzie poured her water over her dress so she is changing again with aunt Diana."

"Okay, Sam. I miss you already and I am excited to see Ethan," said Matilda. "I'll see you soon."

It took only ten minutes for Samantha to come down and from the lobby they lingered for some time, waiting for Diana and Kenzie.

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Kyle sat on the opposite couch from Samantha and Matilda, playing with his tablet.

Matilda and Samantha, on the other hand, engaged in a conversation about Ethan when a lady with style approached them. This lady was tall, with dark long hair and brown eyes like Ethan.

She wore conservative, yet expensive clothes, and her face was as soft as a pearl.

The same woman stared at Samantha with brows furrowed that it made Samantha uncomfortable. Samantha could not help but ask, "Excuse me, is there something wrong, madam?"

"I'm." The lady placed a hand on her chest and became teary-eyed. She responded, "I'm sorry, but you look so much like my friend, Sarah."

"Sarah?" Samantha repeated, wondering if the woman meant her mother, Sarah Turner Davis.

The same woman glanced at Matilda and acted like she was also familiar with

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Samantha's grandmother. The lady asked, "Are you - are you Matilda Davis? I hope I am right. It's been so long, but I think my memory has not failed me yet."

"Ah, yes. Yes, I am," said Matilda while staring back at the beautiful lady.

"Oh, my goodness!" The lady sighed of relief, gasping as she recovered from an obvious shock.

"Aunt Matilda, I know it has been so many years, but it's me. I'm Sarah's old friend, Amanda - Amanda Wright? Do you remember? I used to visit Sarah in the military camp when little Sami was just two years old."

The lady who identified herself as Amanda Wright glanced at Samantha and asked, "Please tell me... are you little Sami? You must be... You look so much like Sarah."

"Ah! Now, I remember!" Told Matilda. She smiled happily at Amanda and said, "I remember you. We even visited your home once when my son was still a

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Colonel and Sarah was still pregnant."

"Yes, that's right! That is exactly right!"
Exclaimed Amanda Wright.

While Matilda and Amanda were bringing back memories, Samantha was utterly astonished. She wasn't sure, but she wondered how many Amanda Wrights would be out there. She asked in silence, 'Is this Ethan's mother?'

Samantha wound up studying Amanda Wright's features, analyzing her similarity to Ethan. She thought, 'She has to be. She has the same eyes as Ethan.'

"And this is little Sami, right?" Amanda eagerly asked, staring adorably at Samantha.

"Why, yes! This is little Sami, but she goes by Sam now." Matilda chuckled and told, "As she got older, she wanted to be called Sam rather than Sami. And as you can see, she is not so little anymore."

"Oh... I can see that!" A tear fell down Amanda's face as she walked closer to Samantha and sat next to her. She

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reached for Samantha's hand and revealed, "Oh, my poor heart. You resemble Sarah so much that it takes me back to the pain when I learned of her passing."

"Little Sami, it's me. I'm your godmother, Amanda." She wept as she added, "I'm so sorry, I was out of touch. A lot of things happened." 6

Amanda gulped and explained, "My son and I were in Europe when your mother died, and I." She gasped before revealing, "I despised your father! I blamed him for Sarah's death! Back then, I felt he should have been around Sarah more often."

"Oh," reacted Samantha, feeling pained by her tale, but at the same time, she remained awed by the possibility that she was speaking to her mother-in-law.

Just as Amanda Wright was being regretful of having not been there for Samantha, Kyle walked towards them and asked, "Mommy, who is she?"

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Amanda's attention immediately shifted to the little boy and at the sight of Kyle, Amanda paled. She got up from her seat and took a heavy breath.

Pointing at Kyle, she asked, "Why - why do you look like... my son so much?"

It was as if Amanda lost her logic that she turned to the entrance of the hotel and roared, "Daniel Wright! Come here, right this very instant!"

She took a few steps forward, making her way out of the set of sofas and right in front of her husband, Mr. Daniel Wright.

Amanda practically dragged her husband in front of Matilda and Samantha. She returned to pointing at Kyle and grilled her husband, "Look at that? Tell me, Daniel... Did you cheat on me?!" ²²

"What?!" The frown on Daniel's face became apparent. "Darling, what on earth got into you! And will you tone your voice down? There are people around."

"Then how do you explain a young boy who looks exactly like our son!" Yelled

Amanda Wright, still pointing at Kyle.

While Ethan's eyes resembled so much of Amanda's, his features mostly came from his father. Ethan was a near copy of Daniel Wright, and his presence made it clear to Samantha how these two were her husband's parents.

"Oh, no! No! It isn't that at all," Samantha tried to interfere but Amanda was only beaming at her husband. "Please, let me explain."

"Explain to me, Daniel!" Repeated Amanda.

"Don't be ridiculous, Amanda! We are always together. Why in the world would I cheat on you," responded Daniel Wright.

"Mother! What is going on?!" Thankfully, Ethan came right on time. He walked into the lobby and saw how his mother was screaming her lungs out.

"Ethan, you father - "

"Daddy!" Kyle called and ran to Ethan. The little boy gripped his father's hand

and walked with him, back to where Amanda and Daniel Wright were having an argument.

"Wait!" Amanda Wright pointed to Ethan and asked, "What is... going on, Ethan?"

"Mother, this was what I was going to tell you yesterday, but you stormed out of my office," told Ethan as soon as he stood in front of his mother.

He took a deep breath and moved Kyle in front of him. He said to his parents, "Father, mother. This is Kyle, my son with Samantha."

He pointed to Samantha and said, "This is Samantha Davis Wright, my wife."

There was a moment of silence, especially coming from Ethan's parents before Amanda spoke again. She clarified, "What? You married her? And you have a son together?" 2

Amanda Wright laughed hysterically, realizing the wrong she had done. She wound up crying as he stomped her feet. She explained, "I thought - I thought

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your father cheated on me with little Sami because the boy looks so much like you! Haha!"

"Ethan, son. You look like this! Exactly like this when you were a little boy!" Explained Amanda for her silly misunderstanding.

"What in the world was I thinking? Why did it never occur to me that the boy was Ethan's?" Amanda asked herself while still giggling at her mistake.

Shaking his head, Daniel Wright said to his son, "Ethan, you have some explaining to do. You caused your mother to doubt me because of your lack of telling!"

"Sorry, father. We can talk about it at the conference room," suggested Ethan. "People are staring at us."

"Daddy!" While there was still confusion coming from their party, Kenzie came rushing out from the elevator area, dashing towards Ethan.

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Daniel and Amanda Wright gawked at the cute little girl who called their son her Daddy. They heard Ethan say, "This is my other child with Sam, Kenzie."

"Kenzie and Kyle... are your flesh and blood... both are my children," added Ethan.

"Ohhhhh!" Amanda smacked her husband in the arm and said, "Daniel, did you hear that? There's two." 2

"I can see that," said Daniel Wright while tilting his head to one side.

Amanda suddenly had a lightbulb moment. Her eyes gleamed as she pulled down her husband's arm. She declared, "Daniel, we are grandparents!" 4

"I supposed," responded Daniel Wright.

"Hi, I'm Kenzie!" Introduced the little girl with a beautiful smile.

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"Awww... How beautiful," Amanda reacted. She then doubted if this was all real that she leaned over to her husband and whispered, "Pinch me. I may be dreaming. If I am... I don't want to wake u p... just yet. Did our son just give us grandchildren?"

"No, mother. You are not dreaming. Let's go to the conference room and have a proper talk," urged Ethan.

Chapter 43: Ethan's Admission

"So... how exactly did you and..." Forcing a smile, Amanda Wright turned to Samantha and asked, "You and little Sami became... a couple? And when?"

From inside the one-carat conference room, everyone was now seated in front of a huge round table when Amanda began her interrogation.

It was already explained to Ethan how Samantha was apparently little Sami, the same girl that his mother had repeatedly mentioned to him.

Evidently, Samantha was the same girl Amanda wanted him to tie the knot with. That ultimately cut down his worries into half, and he knew it also eased Samantha's nerves.

Hearing Ethan's parents probe about the fateful night that created the twins, Diana volunteer to take the kids away. "I think for this part of your discussion, I will let the children and I sit elsewhere." Turning to the twins, Diana urged, "Kids, let's chat on the sofa?"

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"Why? I can understand?" Kyle complained, frowning his face.

"Yes, exactly," said Diana. "Come on, Kyle."

"Kyle, Kenzie. Go with your grandma D. The adults are going to have a proper conversation... Children aren't allowed yet," instructed Ethan. "Don't worry, we will call you back when we are done."

"Fine," answered Kyle.

"Okay, Daddy. Don't take too long," said Kenzie. She then flashed her charming smile at Amanda and Daniel, waving her cute little hands at them.

"Oh, my. She is just so adorable," remarked Amanda before smiling back. She looked at Samantha and said, "She has your charms. All the way from your mother."

"Thank you, though, Kenzie has a more bubbly personality than me," Samantha shyly answered.

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While Diana and the kids, together with Matilda's caregiver, lingered a good ten meters from them, Ethan begun to discuss with his parents how he and Samantha first met.

Clearing his throat, Ethan told, "Mother, Father... Sam and I met almost six years ago... at Lance Carter's wedding. Remember the hotel in front of the military camp?"

With eyes widening, Amanda said, "Oh... That was... a long time ago, son."

"Yes, so that's how you have near five-year-old grandchildren," answered Ethan.

"And? What exactly happened?" It was Daniel Wright's turn to inquire.

Ethan gasped. His eyes wandered over at Matilda's before he started with his story, "We both got drunk... and Samantha was misled to my room, made to believe it was her's. However, she ended up crawling into my bed, unaware of her surroundings."

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"I, on the other hand, was not only drunk... Lance spiked my drink, and it acted at the feel of a woman next to me in bed. Hence your grandchildren happened," explained Ethan. "I only knew how that night had born fruits not too long ago."

"Sam, she." Ethan glanced at Samantha for a second before resuming his thoughts, "She did not have a way of telling me about the pregnancy because, I acted recklessly back then, and left her in the room alone in the morning when I woke up."

Amanda gasped and glared at her son. She scolded, "Ethan! How could you do that to little Sami?"

It surprised Samantha how Ethan changed the truth for her, but she understood. It was better that way and was more reasonable for her not to have reached out to Ethan over the years.

"Yes, son. How could you?" Daniel Wright echoed.

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With a sigh, Ethan explained, "I panicked back then. I did not know that I was." His eyes narrowed before telling, "Capable of doing it with a stranger. Moreover, at first, I thought it was Lance's scheme... I did not want him to have that triumph, knowing that I may have fallen for his trap."

Turning to Samantha, Ethan added, "So I just... left her in the morning and made arrangements with the hotel manager to make it appear that I never stayed overnight." ③

Looking back to his parents, he added, "I told Lance I only rested for a while and left the hotel. I made sure, there was no link to me and that evening at The Golden Eagle hotel."

"I'm very disappointed in you, son. How could you leave Sam just like that?" Daniel Wright hissed in dismay, shaking his head while he was at it.

From one side of the table, Matilda glanced at Samantha with a puzzled expression, but seeing her granddaughter

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purse her lips, she merely kept her mouth shut. Of course, they both knew that it was Sam and not Ethan who left early the morning after they made the twins.

"First of all, Mother, Father, I did not know Sam was little Sami. I had not even heard of little Sami until I took the CEO seat of the company. So hold your anger," Ethan reasoned. "The only reason why you are so uptight about my decision back then is because Sam happened to be your friend's daughter."

"Of course, had I known she was not someone whom Lance had purposely given a card to my room, I would not have left her that day," told Ethan.

"Now... years had passed. I had no idea how I had two children... out there... When I met Sam, I took an interest in her right from the very start back in Monroe City. When I met her kids, I felt connected to them... somehow, but what really made me realize that Samantha was that same woman whom I had been with that night at The Golden Eagle Hotel was aunt Diana's telling." Ethan narrated exactly

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how Diana had given him clues about how he could be the father of Kyle and Kenzie.

At the end of his piece, he said, "I had no qualms about Sam, I wanted her from the beginning and I wanted my children, so I convinced her to marry me. When she said yes, I grabbed the opportunity and bound her on paper... I did not want her to change her mind." ①

"Don't worry, Mother, Father, we plan to have a proper ceremony. We just needed to make it official first and change the name of the children," resumed Ethan.

It could not be helped. Ethan did not like sharing his innermost thoughts and desires, but he had to give his parents justifications for his abrupt decision to marry Samantha.

Samantha, on the other hand, was taken aback, hearing for the first time how Ethan admitted liking her from the very start. She wasn't even sure when was the start for him, but ultimately, it tickled her heart to know that Ethan may not have

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married her... just for the children.

Daniel and Amanda Wright looked at each other, nodding their heads at their son's resolution.

"Well, I suppose that was reasonable enough. I am proud that you took responsibility and took action," admitted Daniel. "Although, I had wished you told us about Sam, Ethan."

After exhaling, Amanda turned to Samantha and said, "Sami, I'm so sorry. So... you had to raise your children on your own all those years?"

"Yes, Mrs. Wright - "

"Oh, well, aren't you married? Then you can call me Mother. After all, I am your godmother from the start," Amanda pointed out with a smile.

Samantha wound up blushing before she conceded, "Okay, Mother."

"There, that is just right - but wait, how did your father take this? You getting pregnant without a husband?" Amanda probed before biting her lips.

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There was utter silence in the air before Samantha told, "No... Umm... Father he - he kicked me out of the house and gave me no access to any of my funds... even the trust fund he set up for me."

"Grandma Matilda had to send me to my aunt Diana so I have a place to stay," admitted Samantha. "I raised my children without the support of my father."

"No! No!" Amanda slammed her hand against the table and complained, "I can't believe him! How could he do such a thing? To his own daughter? To his own grandchildren - my grandchildren!"

Amanda could not help but cry before she revealed, "All the more, I detest your father!"

It resulted in Matilda to cry, broken by Amanda's words. She also thought her son was wrong for what he did to her granddaughter. She said, "I'm sorry... I could not stop him. I - could not stop my own son!"

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"No - no. No," Amanda rushed to Matilda and embraced her from the side. She comforted Samantha's grandmother, "I'm sure... it was not your fault... I'm sure... We as parents, we can only do so much... but really, it's our children who make the decisions."

After a quick pause, Amanda resumed, "It was that witch's influence! What is the name of Winfield's new vampire wife?"

"Catherine," Samantha weakly answer, sneering at how Amanda called her stepmother a vampire.

"Tell me, did Catherine have something to do with you getting mislead into Ethan's room?" Amanda probed in anger, clenching her hand at the same time.

Samantha cleared her throat and said, "Well... it was my stepsister, Annie."

"Hah! What a coincidence?" Amanda Wright showed a clear sarcasm in her expression. She pointed a finger at Ethan and instructed, "Ethan, you should put my goddaughter in a pedestal - make Winfield regret his decisions - "

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"Mother, I know what to do," interrupted Ethan.

"Well, I want... in on the plans," Amanda said with conviction while wiping her tears away.

With a heavy sigh, Ethan responded, "I'm sure you do, Mother... I'm sure you do... Just... don't get in the way, okay?"

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Chapter 44: Welcome To The Family

"Your father and I... The friendship that we used to have due to my relationship with your mother... Sadly, it has turned sour." Amanda Wright took a deep breath before reaching for Samantha's hand.

"Look, Sami - I mean, Sam. You don't need to share this part with your grandmother, but back then... I did not have anyone else to blame but your father." Amanda felt teary-eyed, and only after collecting herself did she resume her thoughts, "I blamed him for the loss of your mother."

"While I know, he did not cause her death, but you see, your father was so obsessed about climbing up to the military ranks, that he spent fewer hours at home and catering to your mother's needs."

Clearing her throat, Amanda Wright thought, "Of course, every family is different."

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Amanda and Samantha now took the same place where Kenzie and Kyle had stepped away from their earlier conversation. After the food arrived, Amanda invited Samantha over for a chat.

When Amanda learned of General Winfield's abandonment of her own child, she could not help but be frustrated for not being there for Samantha.

"Sarah always told me that Winfield was different from my husband - that he was working for the government and that I am lucky my husband is a businessman and can choose to spend time with his family rather than locking himself in the office," Amanda added while earnestly looking into Samantha's eyes.

The words of Amanda made Samantha think back. She recalled how her father constantly traveled due to him being a military official.

"Maybe - maybe, Sarah was right." A tear fell down Amanda's cheek when she said, "But, I just could not help but question him, you know. If only on that day when Sarah died. Winfield fetched her from the

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bakery, it might have been different." ②

Like Samantha, Sarah was passionate about cooking. Specifically, Sarah Davis had her own cake shop nearing the military camp. Unintentionally, this same passion passed on to Samantha over the years.

"And really... For me, the worst part of all was that Sarah and I haven't seen each other for a long time, because we chose to educate Ethan in Europe up until his high school years. So, we did not see each other personally since Ethan turned seven years old... Thus, I had so many regrets," reported Amanda. "I made it back, just right before they buried Sarah under the ground." ③

With a heavy sigh, Amanda added, "What really made me turn angry at your father was how he let that woman." Turning to Samantha, she said, "Forgive my manners, but your mother just died and i n then that vampire woman, Catherine!"

"Yes, that's right! That ugly looking thing was constantly offering her comfort

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towards Winfield. If I had known any better, your stepmother had been after your father for long! Even your mother used to express to me over the phone how that woman was always showing up on military events and finding the chance to flirt with Winfield!" At that point, Amanda's tears had already dried. Her expression turned angry at the thought of Samantha's stepmother. 4

There were seconds of silence from Amanda before she told, "So, primarily, that was how I lost touch with your father over the years."

"We only came back permanently when Ethan was ready for college and back then, life was busier than ever. My husband took full control of the Wright Diamond Corporation." Amanda shrugged before explaining, "It was late when Daniël's uncle decided to give up his reign over the business."

"So for us, coming back was really hectic and Daniel had to prove himself, being the rightful heir of the company, but don't get me wrong, Sam. I tried to visit

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don't get me wrong, Sam. I tried to visit you when we returned, but instead, I encounter that bloodsucking woman who might have drugged Winfield into marrying her and she told me how I had no business in seeing you!" Revealed Amanda with a frown.

"Really! The nerve of that woman!" She added.

"So really, Sam." Returning her undivided attention to Samantha, Ethan's mother added, "I am so sorry. If I had been there for you, at least... You would have had someone to help you with the kids!"

From everything Ethan's mother told, Samantha could not help but also be emotional. Only then did she realize there were so many things that went on beyond her knowledge. She inhaled before telling, "Thank you for sharing this with me... It makes me happy to know that someone else cared for me... other than my grandmother and aunt."

"You see, all of my relatives from the Davis side had stopped communicating

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with me after the order of my father," revealed Samantha.

Her voice started to break when she resumed her words, "And I am so thankful, that despite the... unconventional meeting between me and Ethan, you still accepted me."

"Of course, Sam. Of course!" Said Amanda with a smile. "I had to admit, it was easier to accept things, knowing that you are Sarah's daughter, but ultimately, whoever our son chooses to be with, we will accept it." 2

With a sigh of relief, Amanda tightened her hold on Samantha's hand and told, "But I am so glad that it's you!" 3

Following a laugh, Ethan's mother added, "I am so ecstatic that it is you! I feel like the heavens answered my long-time prayers!"

"When Ethan could not even date at thirty, I tried looking for you again, but you like... disappeared! I did not know what happened, but you know what?"

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With another chuckle, Amanda added, "Fate had a way of bringing you back to me... and I am so happy, Sam."

"Strangely, I am relieved both for you and my son, that you wound up in my son's hotel room!" She pointed to the children at the near table and said, "I am so delighted that I have grandchildren!"

To further ease Samantha's reluctance, Amanda called for her husband, "Daniel, come here and let's give Sami a proper welcome."

Ethan's mother embraced Samantha tightly and caressed her back. She took heavy breaths as she said, "Welcome to the family, Sam. Being a Wright is where you were meant to be." 5

"That's right, Sam." Daniel Wright also offered his arms to Samantha and said, "Welcome to the family."

Samantha awkwardly accepted the hug, but right after being in Daniel's arms, he realized the sincerity of his hold that a tear fell down her delicate face. 3

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When Amanda took her back to her hold, she was told, "Enough, crying, Sam. Today is a good day and your arrival to our family is good news."

"There you are? What were you doing in the restroom for so long?" Ethan asked after finding Samantha in the hallway.

Even before Samantha could start to eat, she excused herself to the restroom and because it took her more than fifteen minutes to return, Ethan went looking for her.

"Oh, did I worry you?" Samantha probed with her nose, utterly red. "I cried in the ladies' room."

"Are you okay?" Ethan asked while inching himself closer to her. He wrapped her in an embrace before telling, "Yes, I was worried. The last time you went to the ladies' room for so long, you wound up breaking down in tears."

"I'm fine! I'm just so overwhelmed," said Samantha before smiling and looking up t

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o Ethan's handsome face. "Your parents are so good."

"I told you... They are," told Ethan. "There was nothing to worry about."

While Samantha hugged Ethan back, wrapping her arms around his waist, she said, "I'm so happy I married you."

That made Ethan genuinely smile. He leaned over and covered her lips and despite them being in the middle of the hallway; he kissed her passionately for seconds, delighting on her succulent lips.

When he let go, he caressed Samantha's face and suggested, "I guess... I am going to get more of that... starting tomorrow."

Turning tomato red, Samantha's eyes became hooded as she admitted, "I - I guess."

Reflecting a triumphant grin on his face, Ethan said, "Himmm... Tomorrow, then."
"

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Chapter 45: Finally Together

6:00 AM at First Diamond Hotel.

"Sam? Sam. It's time to wake up."

Fluttering her eyes open, she awoke to the voice of Ethan on a Sunday morning. Samantha hummed herself up and called for him, "Ethan? How are you here so early?"

"Aunt Diana let me in, I thought I'd wake you." Ethan was sitting on the side of Samantha's bed, caressing her hand to wake.

"Oh, gosh. What if I had drool on my face? How could aunt just let you come in?" Complained Samantha while covering her mouth.

Her words resulted in Ethan's smirk and he answered, "It doesn't matter... tomorrow and the coming days, I'll see your face every day when I wake up, first thing in the morning."

He leaned over and pecked on Samantha's lips and said, "Good morning, Sam. I had the hotel bring up

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some breakfast so we can leave as soon as possible. You are all ready, right?"

She smiled at her morning kiss and answered, "Yes, overly ready. The kids have been so excited, they slept at twelve talking about the possibilities."

"Daddy? Are we going now?" Kyle was the first to wake, hearing Ethan's voice. He rubbed his eyes and glanced at his father with glee.

"Yes, Kyle. After breakfast. Wake up your sister and get ready," told Ethan.

It took only two hours for the entire family to get ready to leave after having a full breakfast. At eight in the morning, they were all down at the lobby, once again under the watchful eyes of the reception and security.

Heading out to the hotel driveway, they were stunned to see a longer Maybach car. Kyle expressed, "Woah! Is this a limo, Daddy?"

"No, Kyle. It's a six-seater Maybach Pullman. It's our family car," revealed Ethan.

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"Wow! It looks so beautiful!" Exclaimed Kenzie while being held by Diana.

Samantha, on the other hand, said, "It - it looks expensive."

Unexpectedly, A man of great stance, tall and wearing a black suit, came off from the driver's seat and opened the door at the back.

Ethan then introduced him, "Sam, this is Connor Scott. He will be the children's dedicated security. He is also my long-time friend, someone I grew up with as a child and had lived with us for long."

"It's nice to meet you, Mrs. Wright, and children," expressed Connor.

"Wait, you said this is your friend who manages the security of your parent's home? What about that house?"

Samantha asked while studying Connor. He was still like how Ethan used to be and was utterly intimidating.

"The children are the priority right now, Mrs. Wright." It was Connor who answered for Ethan. "Thus, I will serve your family from here on."

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"Next week, you will be working. So as an added help, Connor and Edgar will be bringing the kids to school, together with aunt Diana if she prefers to," Ethan explained. He caressed Samantha's back and told, "We will have all the help we need to ensure the safety and wellness of our children."

"Wow," responded Samantha. "This is beyond my expectations."

While Ethan had long expressed about having security specific to the children, Samantha was unsure of how serious he was about it. She honestly thought that Edgar was enough.

Still, hearing that Ethan requested his childhood friend, who had worked for his family his entire life, to be the main security of the children, made Samantha feel secured.

"Let's go... to our new home," Ethan suggested, offering his hand to Samantha.

With Diana in front, and the family at the back, they all rode in delight to the residential community where their new

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mansion awaited.

The kids were utterly entertained by the car's various functions and features from inside the vehicle.

"Wow! We can see the sky!" Exclaimed Kenzie, looking up to the panoramic roof.

It made Kyle remark, "This is like a spaceship car!" Lounging on his leather seat, he suggested, "And it feels so comfortable!"

It was only after Kyle had practically tried all various buttons, from windows to air conditioning and even exploring the extended desk under hidden compartments did he finally settle. He then announced, "I like this car. This is... my kind of car!"

Following a smirk, Samantha said, "I bet you do."

She was silently wondering how much it cost. "I bet... I could buy a house with this car."

"It's worth the comfort... It's for the kids and for you," reminded Ethan.

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Driving past the community's main gate, Diana and the kids were already elated.

Various homes with tall gates could be seen distancing every fifty meters apart. One could say privacy was an utmost priority for the owners of these homes.

Several 'oohs' and 'awws' could be heard, especially coming from the children, and they were jumping off their seats, just seeing the community that they will now be living in.

When they finally arrived at the massive mansion, which they shall call their home, more praises came from the twins.

"What a beautiful garden!" Remarked Kenzie. "And the house is like a building!"

"More securities?" Kyle remarked, raising his brows. His eyes suddenly lit up upon the sight of various vehicles. "And more cars?"

Ethan, on the other hand, found himself taking a deep breath. Seeing the expressions of his children, he realized how much they needed to learn about the

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life that they deserved. He leaned over to them and said, "Here, you'll live like princesses and princes, exactly how you should have been."

"But it does not mean, you will rely upon everyone, though. You must still fix your own bed and clean up after your own mess," instructed Samantha, pointing a finger at the kids. 3

"Yes, Mommy!" The kids both said in unison.

Turning to Ethan, Samantha explained, "I - I would prefer they know... the basics of taking care of themselves."

"Of course, Sam," said Ethan.

The moment they pulled over into the driveway, Edgar was already there, waiting for them. It was him who opened the car and welcomed the children first.

"Good morning, Kyle and Kenzie! Welcome to your new home!" Announced Edgar happily.

The twins rushed outside, seeing a butler and four housemaids bow in front of

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them and greet them.

Ethan and Samantha gave Diana and the children a full tour around the mansion, just like how Ethan did with Samantha.

The children's last pit stop was the twins' shared bedroom.

Standing behind the door, Samantha asked, "Are you ready to see your room, kids?"

"I'm excited, Mommy!" Kenzie exclaimed, putting her hands on her face and her eyes twinkling.

"I want to see it, now Mommy! Let us through!" Demanded Kyle.

While chuckling, Samantha held the door and swung it open! "Tadaah!"

"Woah! It's pink!" Kenzie complimented after seeing her side of the bedroom.

"And I have a computer!" Kyle ran to his desk, eager to get started.

"That is on top of your laptop, Kyle," Ethan pointed out.

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"Wow! Wow!" Kenzie rushed to her bed and bounced herself. She lay down on the bed and announced, "Mommy? Why did we have to be secret kids when this is just so nice!"

"Kenzie! I told you, Daddy needs to protect us! That's why!" Kyle reasoned from across the room.

Samantha sneered, walking next to Kenzie. She glanced at Ethan, who was helping with the computer.

"Kenzie, when you guys are older, your Dad and I... will tell you why," said Samantha while lying down on the bed, next to her little girl. "What's important is, now... we are finally together."

In the afternoon of that day, Samantha and Ethan urged the kids to rest in preparation for an afternoon swim at the pool.

While Kyle and Kenzie were dozing off, both Samantha and Ethan were unpacking their bags, ready to arrange

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their shared closet.

To Samantha's surprise, however, she found their walk-in closet, nearly filled with woman's dresses, bags and shoes in her size. She shook her head, knowing it was Ethan's doing.

"I can't believe my part of the closet is almost full!" Samantha muttered.

"Hmmm... I wonder how that happened," Ethan responded.

After Ethan finished setting up the rest of his clothes, he walked towards Samantha and wrapped his arms around her waist. He asked, "Are you happy, Sam?"

"Of course, I am. Why wouldn't I be?" She answered before turning to face him and snaking her hands around Ethan's neck. She tip-toed and pecked on his lips before saying, "Thank you so much. I've never seen the kids so happy in my entire life."

Ethan cleared his throat before asking, "I guess... I deserve a... reward." ③

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Samantha felt her face and ears burn at his request. Her eyes turned dreamy when she asked, "What kind of reward were you... thinking about - Ahh! Ethan! What are you doing?"

Without another word, Ethan carried Samantha off her feet and into his arms, bringing her out of their sizeable walk-in closet and into the bed.

He lay her on the sheets and rested next to her, merely lifting his torso up to face her beauty.

They were both silent, just admiring each other's faces.

For seconds, Ethan studied closely Samantha's angelic face and especially focused on her succulent lips. He caressed her cheek and her lips before leaning over to cover her mouth.

With only their smacks audible across the master bedroom, they shared one... two... three, and four gentle kisses.

Only after having a taste of her flavor did Ethan answered, "This kind of... reward."

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Chapter 46: Ethan's Desire

Taking a deep breath, Samantha braced herself, seeing how Ethan was moving forward. Clearly, they were in for a long and hot kiss, like he had been suggesting for a while now.

She lay on the massive bed, feeling her heart drumming against her ribcage.

Samantha was still remarkably overwhelmed at how she was in the arms of Ethan Wright.

He was handsome, clearly sexy, and smart, and he was the father of her children. This same man was now her husband, and he was looking straight into her eyes, filled with obvious desires, ready to eat her up.

His big, yet soft hands caressed her cheek and brushed his thumb over her pinkish lips. His touch granted her to tremble all over, giving her that familiar strange sensation in her stomach.

It was always this way with Ethan. With the way he touched her or kissed her, she

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often found herself in an unexplainable euphoria, one she had never known before. 2

Her eyes became hooded under the gaze of his profound brown eyes. She noticed his face closing the gap between them, and the next thing she felt was his warm and soft lips covering hers.

With both their mouths partly parted, they shared one kiss enough to send shivers down her spine. She thought silently, 'So good.'

The next kiss allowed her to taste his manly flavor, making her gasp and reach for his strong arms. She told herself, 'taste so good.'

On their third kiss, Samantha clenched into his shirt, gripping tightly against the cloth. Her inner devil said in silence, 'How I want this off!'

The fourth kiss was deeper, and she clearly had a taste of his soft tongue. That utterly made her clamp her legs together, feeling a strange thrill in between her thighs.

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'Damn, this just feels so good!' She screamed in her head. ③

Samantha felt Ethan let go of their short yet heart-pounding kisses and he said, "I wanted... this kind of... reward."

Truth be told, Samantha was unsure if it was her reward or his, but she was glad to have given it. However... it wasn't enough.

Samantha gulped before saying, "You - you can kiss me the whole afternoon." With a flushing face, she added, "If you like."

"Hmmm," said Ethan before painting a smirk on his incredibly attractive face.

Samantha noticed his hand under her chin, further raising it before he once again dove on her lips.

"Mmmm," a soft yet audible moan left her lips.

Ethan was not just kissing her. His mouth, this time enthusiastically parted, and his tongue was eagerly intrusive.

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With the taste of his tongue inside of her, Samantha felt heat run through her body and she happily welcomed his invasion.

Her hand climbed up to the back of Ethan's neck, granting him deeper access.

It could not be helped! Their tongues easily became intertwined with their smooching turning intense in each second that passed.

The melodies of their gasping and smacking lips quickly filled the space of their bedroom, adding to the fire of their passion.

Their eyes closed.

Their heads shifting from side to side, allowing each other to breathe in between as they made out.

With their bodies feeling the fever of the moment, Ethan found himself on top of Samantha. He unwittingly pressed his entire weight against her slender frame while maintaining to cover her lips.

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Ethan was wearing a casual yet expensive polo shirt that day, and it allowed Samantha to easily feel the shape of his chest and abs. It all the more excited her.

She did not know how it happened, but her hand descended to his covered chest, relishing at the solidness of his shape.

"Oh, God!" Samantha could not help but gasp, feeling the tingling sensation of her rose, reaching its peak. She wound up, wrapping one leg around Ethan as he traced kisses down her neck.

The next thing Samantha felt was his hand, caressing her legs up to her thigh.

While Samantha moaned, again and again, his kisses moved to the crook of her neck. His actions resulted in her heart beating faster and she noticed the sudden dampness in between her thighs.

"Ethan, Ethan," Samantha called while gasping at his touch. "I'm going to have a heart attack!"

"What?" Finally, Ethan let go of his teasing kisses to check on his wife. "What

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do you mean, a heart attack?" ②

Panting at the sight of his handsome face, Samantha admitted, "My heart is beating so fast... I can't handle you... you make me... feel so hot!"

Ethan pecked back on Samantha's lips. His hands traced her shoulders and down to her arms. He probed, "Sam, do you want me to stop?" ③

She could not believe her ears. Now, Ethan gave her the power, but she wasn't sure what was the best answer. She struggled to say, "I - I don't know."

He leaned over and smacked on her lips once more before turning over to lie on his back. He sat up, leaning his back against the headboard, and suggested, "You decide."

Samantha was unsure what he meant, but soon, she heard him say, "Get on top of me and take control. You decide if we should... continue." ②

She rolled over, looking at him, ashamed.

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She suddenly felt it was better than he was in command. At least, she did not have any excuse for her actions.

"Come here, Sam," encouraged Ethan, tapping on his lap. "Sit on me."

For seconds, she panted, just staring at him and swallowing her own spew, but her insides were earnestly screaming for more; more of his taste!

She bit her lip as she sat up and awkwardly straddled on his lap. The second she settled herself on top of him, Ethan pulled her closer, making her sit directly on top of his groin area.

"Right there. Sit right there," he instructed while looking fiercely at her striking blue eyes.

She unwittingly let her hips rock him for a few seconds before she gasped and smothered her lips to his.

"Mmmmm... Haaah!" They were back to making out in no time, helplessly gasping and sighing in desire!

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With Samantha taking the lead, she took control of where she received kisses from Ethan.

She mostly settled on his tasty lips, not minding how numbed her own had become.

Samantha closed her eyes, merely focusing on their kisses. It had turned sloppy as the second passed, with both of them generously parting their mouths and their hands hastily touching each other.

She had already reached under his shirt, finally delighting in his godly frame while Ethan kept rubbing his sizable hands on her arms and sometimes reaching for her thighs.

As Samantha was in a dress, it was easier for her to touch the softness of her skin.

When Ethan reached up to her waist from under her dress, he urged her to rock on him and she willingly did.

As they made out, she moved her hips back and forth, pressing her weight

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against his obvious bulge.

She did not realize how much she was enjoying it up until she let go to gasp and moan!

Samantha threw back her head while maintaining her rocking motion. She felt the pleasure of sensing his hardness, against her peach, despite both of them still being in their clothes, merely dry humping.

It was exactly because she was so elated that she wound up reaching an orgasm, mildly convulsing and crashing in Ethan's arms.

She sighed in ecstasy while taking heavy breaths, covering Ethan's lips once more.

Ethan first kissed her fervently for seconds and after which, he let go to ask, "Did you... come?"

Looking at him shyly, Samantha's eyes were almost closed when she admitted, "Yes."

"Did you like it?" He asked, studying her flushed face.

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"I - Yes," Samantha answered back.

"Do you think it's fair that you came, and I didn't?" Ethan asked before a mischievous smirk became plastered on his face.

Samantha was catching her breath, thinking really hard. She wondered, 'Am I ready for this?'

Before she could answer, however, they heard a knock on the door.

"Mommy! I want to swim now!" It was Kenzie, eager to experience their very own swimming pool.

"Sam, you don't really have to, but I want you to know... I want you so much. I have never... wanted someone so much - desired someone so much in my life," Ethan admitted. "It's up to you." 3

Samantha was taken aback at his admission. She saw the clear yearning in Ethan's eyes that she ended up with a promise, "After the swim."

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Samantha was taken aback at his admission. She saw the clear yearning in Ethan's eyes that she ended up with a promise, "After the swim."

"Hmmm... I don't like broken promises," Ethan said with his eyes tightening.

She leaned over and pecked Ethan's lips and repeated, "I promise... After the swim."
"

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Chapter 47: This Is It

Samantha's lips formed into an 'O', silently whistling at the sight of Ethan coming out of the lanai area. He had nothing but his Calvin Klein swim shorts and held a shirt in his hand.

Her eyes shifted to another side of the pool area, thinking, 'Damn. Did he do that on purpose?'

She had never seen a man with such a small waist in her life. It was perfect for touching!

Ethan was not a big muscle-man kind of guy, but he had a well-defined torso. He formed just enough abs on his abdomen to keep him lean and stunning looking. He had just enough muscles in his biceps and on his long legs.

While Samantha tried to avert his gaze, she stole a glance or two as she pushed Kenzie's floater in the middle of the adult pool! 2

"Mommy! I'm scared!" Kenzie screamed with her eyes closed.

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"Don't be, you have a donut floater around you. Just hold on tight, sweetheart," Samantha chuckled as she caught up with Kenzie.

"Here I come!" Kyle announced, bracing himself to make a jump on the pool. He was wearing a body floater that kept him afloat even after jumping into the water!

The next person to give them a mild splash was Ethan. He dove right in, swimming in the direction of his wife.

While Kenzie and Kyle were playing with the water, Ethan rose to the surface and embraced Samantha from behind. He wrapped his arms around her waist and pecked on her cheek, as well as the side of her neck. He said, "You look... so good. I like your swimwear."

The feel of Ethan's breath against Samantha's skin sent chills down her spine. She wound up giggling and raising her shoulder to ease the tingling sensation of her body.

She answered, "Of course, it's nice. You bought it!" Turning to look at his athletic

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face, she flushed before asking, "How do you even know my size?"

"You forgot I sent a stylist to your house who got all your measurements, including Kenzie and Kyles," he reminded while pressing his lips against the side of her face. He took a deep breath and savored her scent before remarking, "You smell so good. I can't wait for the swimming to end."

Samantha was wearing a baby blue Calvin Klein triangle bikini, perfectly hugging her slender frame and taking the shape of her full breasts and behind.

It flaunted her sexy built and Ethan could not get enough of her. His arms remained around Samantha's waist.

Chuckling at Ethan's actions, Samantha warned, "Ethan, the kids are in front of us. Tame it down."

A meter from them, Kenzie remarked, "Daddy likes Mommy so much."

"Yes, Daddy should like Mommy," answered Kyle while kicking his feet and

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helping his sister move along the water.

"Hmmm." That was Ethan's response to the children's comments, giving Samantha one last peck before he joined the kids on their splashing play.

The family only lingered in the pool for an hour and a half. Everyone was ready to get dried as soon as Ethan took his laps.

Upon stepping inside the mansion, Ethan was quick to order the maids to help the children to shower and get dressed. He could not wait to bring his wife to their bedroom.

Samantha could tell he meant to devour her soon enough that she felt utterly embarrassed at his ordering.

Unfortunately for Ethan, the kids had other plans.

"But I want Mommy to wash me," said Kenzie with a frown.

"Yes, and I'll wash with Daddy!" Added Kyle.

While Samantha giggled, a hiss escaped Ethan's lips. Nonetheless, he

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recognized, he had never washed his kids... Not once! Ethan wound up agreeing, knowing he had been missing on his fatherly responsibilities.

The couple bathed and changed the twins, and after which, Ethan gave them things to do.

"Kyle, Kenzie. How about I ask your nannies to walk you around the gardens?" He checked the time and said, "There is still about two hours before we leave to see your grandparents for dinner."

"Why don't you take us, Daddy?" Kenzie asked while pouting her lips.

"Yeah, Daddy! It'll be fun!" Added Kyle.

Samantha chuckled from behind them, and Ethan wound up hissing again. He tilted his head and explained, "Kyle and Kenzie. Mommy and Daddy did not get to rest. We were unpacking earlier when you slept."

Ethan pulled Samantha next to him and added, "We both want to rest for at least... an hour. Is it okay?" He shook his head

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and added, "We don't want Mommy and Daddy to get sick now, do we?"

"Okay, Daddy," answered Kenzie. "I'll just stay in our room and play with my tablet."

Kyle shrugged and said, "I'll explore my new computer."

Pointing a finger at the kids, Ethan encouraged, "Yes, you do that guys." He acted to yawn and said, "I'm very sleepy."

Ethan held Samantha's waist tightly, turning in the direction of the door. He said, "Mommy and I are going to rest, kids. Give Mommy and Daddy some time alone, okay?"

"Okay, Daddy," said Kyle while he was already making his way to his computer.

"Do you want me to sing you a song to sleep, Daddy?" Kenzie asked with her eyes, twinkling. 5

"No sweetie, that doesn't work for adults now." Ethan yawned again and told, "We are really, really sleepy."

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"Have a good rest, Mommy and Daddy!"
Said Kenzie before Ethan closed the door to
their room.

He immediately rushed Samantha to
their bedroom and suggested, "Hurry
before anything else happens."

"Ethan, don't be ridiculous - Ahh! Stop it
with you, carrying me abruptly!" She
ended up screaming, following her
objection. She was easily swept off her
feet with Ethan's strong arms.

"Time is of the essence," her husband
answered while blazing to the door of
their master bedroom.

The second they entered, Ethan threw
Samantha on the bed and left her
bouncing on the sheets. He turned back to
lock the doors and took off his shirt,
merely throwing it on the floor,
advancing.

From the pool, both had dried themselves
with a towel and wore clothes on top of
their swimwear.

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Samantha was wearing a crochet striped swim cover-up dress that simply gave a silhouette of her frame, and beneath it was still her CK swimwear.

While watching Samantha gasped in his every step, Ethan stated, "Let me take it off."

His words made Samantha bit her lip. She gasped, feeling incredibly nervous at how he was already by the edge of the bed and climbing onto the mattress.

Still, she found the time to gawk on his manly frame and appreciate it.

She retreated, pulling herself to the other side of the bed by the pillows. She put a hand on her chest and felt its fluttering sensation. She swallowed air down her throat before she told herself, 'This is it. You are going to get eaten, Sam!'

Samantha had always wondered how it would feel like to make love with Ethan, especially since they had done it before but sadly, had no recollection of how it felt. She concluded, however, it was finally happening.

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When Ethan reached for her face, he caressed her cheek and pecked on her soft lips.

With that sweet and thrilling nibble on her rim, Samantha clenched her hands against the sheets.

Following another kiss, this time deeper, Samantha parted her mouth and accepted his intrusion, and she unwittingly spread her legs at the feel of Ethan's knees against her thighs.

She felt his hands tightening against her crocket cover and the next thing she heard was a loud tearing sound!

Her eyes widened at his actions and she berated, "Ethan! That's a Calvin Klein beach dress!"

He resumed tearing it away and said, "I can... buy you more."

Ethan did not give Samantha further chances to complain. He returned to kissing her again so fervently, and this time, his hands began to explore her body.

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With Samantha's croquet torn into half, her body was nearly bare to him. Only her swimwear covered her, but it was enough for Ethan to trace down his hand over her chest and down to her stomach.

They maintained to kiss as Ethan lay Samantha down, flat on the bed.

The second Samantha felt his hands over her covered breasts, she gasped. "Ethan!"

Ethan looked her straight in the eye and observed her strange protest. He pointed out, "Sam... where are your hands?"

Samantha flushed, realizing she had both her hands resting on his solid chest. She bit her lip and looked him in the eye, saying, "Fine! Get even!"

"Oh... I will get even," said Ethan before his hand reached for the back of her neck, untangling the strings that bound her top.

"Ohhh, God." With eyes closed, a soft and satisfying moan escaped Samantha's lips, the second she felt his hand over her bare chest.

Chapter 48: Ethan's Stamina

Samantha's hand pressed harder against Ethan's solid chest.

Under his breath, she gasped as he untied the straps of her top.

She closed her eyes while responding to his heated kisses.

At the feel of his hand, slowly descending from her neck to her chest, her body trembled in pleasure. The second she felt his hand over her bare breast, she gasped and sighed, "Oh, God!"

She could not fathom the amount of satisfaction she just felt.

His hands were warm over her breast, and he was caressing them gently, running his fingers in between her nipple, while tasting her mouth passionately.

Samantha watched as her husband let go. His eyes were hooded while looking at her with nothing but desire.

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Ethan granted Samantha another kiss before he pecked on the corner of her mouth. He moved down to her jaws and then to her neck, kissing while gently sucking on her soft and savory skin.

"Aaahhh!" A sigh of passion came out from Samantha's mouth, noticing how Ethan was slowly making it down to her chest.

His hand remained to fondle on her chest as his lips descended to the crook of her neck.

Samantha noticed how Ethan had completely pulled away her top and the torn crochet, leaving her completely naked on her torso.

She sensed him trail kisses in between her breasts and that resulted in her trying to clamp her legs together, but to her dismay, she failed to realize how Ethan was already in between her thighs.

When Ethan covered the tip of her breast with his mouth, she sighed again in delight before biting her lip. Her hands clenched against Ethan's hair,

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disheveling it with her fingers as she dug in between his strands.

Samantha's chest heavily heaved with all the sensation around her chest.

At first, she threw her head back, just sensing how Ethan was taking turns covering her peaks with his mouth, but when she noticed him swirling his tongue around her bud, she raised her head to see for herself.

Ethan was gently, yet hungrily eating her breasts, moving from one side to the other. It would seem like he could not get enough of Samantha's mounds.

Samantha did not realize how long her husband lingered on her chest, but as if she was in a trance, she awakened, recognizing how Ethan was going further down on her once more.

Barely a whisper, Samantha said, "Ethan, I'm nervous." ①

"Relax, Sam... Just let me take care of you," responded Ethan as he kissed on her abdomen.

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Ethan's hand frequently returned to her breast while he pecked on her soft skin, going down to her pelvic area.

When he reached the sight of her bikini, he sat up and announced, "Sam, I'm going to take this off now."

He watched as Samantha gasped dramatically, clearly apprehensive at what they were about to do. He pulled it down anyway, slowly gliding it aside from her slender legs.

The next thing he did was to take off his own swimming shorts and came free his angry rod.

"Oh, my goodness!" Samantha took a deep breath, turning red at the sight of his size.

Her uneasiness made Ethan climbed up to her and covered her lips. After a few pecks, Ethan said, "Relax, Sam. I'll never hurt you."

Ethan lay next to Samantha, turning her to one side and allowed for both of them to spoon.

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While one of Ethan's hands rested on the side of her face, urging her to turn and respond to his kisses, his other fondled with her breasts.

The couple remained in the same position for a minute, merely making out and Ethan carelessly touching Samantha.

Drowned in satisfaction, Samantha unknowingly spread her legs again, raising it to one side. It was a cue for Ethan to start reaching for her rose, and he did so earnestly.

"Oh, Ethan - "

"Relax, Sam. Let me take care of you," suggested Ethan, cutting off her objection.

Samantha noticed how Ethan was playing with the tip of her slit, softly rubbing it with his fingers. She utterly shivered at his touch, unable to grasp the kind of euphoria she was experiencing.

When she realized how Ethan was pleasuring her, she returned to kissing him again, shifting to her side.

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She found herself squirming at his fondling, no longer aware of her own response.

"Oh, Ethan... it feels so good," she expressed while catching her breath.

Her words encouraged Ethan more, thoughtfully playing with his wife's peach.

With Ethan's stimulation, Samantha easily found herself arriving at a conclusion. She mildly convulsed in his arms as Ethan's sped his rubbing against her clit.

"Aaaahhh! Mmmmm!" A loud and satisfying moan left her lips as she writhed in Ethan's arms.

Samantha could not believe it! She came twice already, and they had not even made love yet!

She noticed how Ethan was getting up, sitting on his knees, and finding himself in front of her.

While Samantha was still catching her breath, she flushed at the sight of him,

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palming himself. She honestly thought he was so sexy and she delighted at the fact that he was lusting on her.

Ethan moved closer and once again, she felt her heart drummed against her ribcage.

He spread her knees apart, and she quivered.

"I'm ashamed, Ethan," she admitted.

"Don't be. I've seen you before, remember?" It was his way of making her comfortable, but they both knew they barely had any memory of how they had done the deed nearly six years ago.

Samantha instead covered her face. As he completely spread her legs and held them down, she heard him say, "You are so beautiful, Sam... and you are mine... my wife."

The moment Samantha felt his hand caressed her entrance, her entire body throbbed. She thought; her insides were still pulsating and there came another mind-boggling sensation!

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The next thing she felt was a soft yet thicker tip, rubbing against her wetness.

Samantha had to open her eyes, and she wound up turning crimson red, realizing it was the tip of his manhood.

"Ahhh, Fuck, Sam. It feels so good," Ethan remarked. "I'm going in."

"Aaahh!" Following a single moan, Samantha threw her head back against the pillows, closing her eyes at the penetration.

Gradually, she felt herself getting completely filled by his size that she gasped in each push he made.

The second Ethan shoved his member all the way inside her rose, they both sighed in pleasure together.

For a moment, Ethan remained unmoved, relishing the feeling of Samantha's tightness around his length. With his eyes closed, he held on to her slender waist and felt Samantha's hands over his.

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When he opened his eyes, he saw how Samantha's face was dreamy and how she was biting her lip.

Her expression increased the flames of his desire and it did not take long for him to say, "I'm going to move now, Sam."

He lowered himself and covered Samantha's lips again, but this time, while kissing, his hips began to move back and forth.

Ethan frequently heard Samantha's gasping and felt her shuddering body beneath him.

He focused on his kisses while sometimes caressing her breasts and encouraging her to loosen up. ²

Even if this was not their first, he understood it had been a long time ago. Technically, this counted as their first over the years. He knew he had to gradually make her enjoy their love-making. ¹

Nearly a minute into his slow pumping, Ethan noticed how Samantha's hands

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were all over him again. She was especially gripping on his back and seemingly acting to reach for his behind.

Moreover, she let out more cries of desire than earlier. Ethan understood, she was already gratified. Still, he pulled away from their kisses and asked, "Sam, do you want me to move faster?"

Samantha blushed again at his inquiry. Her eyes shifted to the other side as she answered, "Yes."

Returning to her lips this time, Ethan sped his thrusting motion. He gratified in the wetness around his manhood as he went in and out of Samantha's cave.

Repeatedly, he sighed, "You feel so good, Sam. Ahhh... Fuck!"

Samantha, on the other hand, moaned louder. Her mouth could barely keep up with Ethan's kisses, wanting to express her desires with her erotic sighs.

Soon enough, Ethan came inside her womb, squirming against her rose.

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He crashed into her lips, slamming his entire weight on top of Samantha's, feeling goosebump all over his body.

While remaining inside of Samantha's rose, Ethan relished on another hot kiss, only to let go after an undetermined time.

Lying on his back, Ethan pulled his wife over to his torso. He let her rest on his chest and pecked her on her head. ①

He just lay there completely elated at making love with his wife. After a few seconds, he suggested, "Let's do it again."

"Pfft! You sure have some stamina, Ethan," remarked Samantha.

With a sly grin on his face, he took a deep breath and answered, "That's because, all my life, I saved all my energy for you... So you better cope, my dear wife."

Samantha narrowed her eyes at him, unsure if his words were meant to make her happy.

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Chapter 49: I Chose The Best

Looking at herself in front of the mirror of her vanity table, Samantha gasped and said, "I'm nervous."

She turned to Ethan and asked, "How do I look?"

"You look like... my wife," he said before smirking. ①

"Pfft! Ethan, please," she answered before studying her evening dress for the night.

Samantha wore a mint green spaghetti-strapped, cascading ruffled vintage dress that flowed down to her knees. Her beautiful shoulder blades and slender neck clearly flaunted thanks to the design of her wardrobe.

Ethan and Samantha, along with Diana, plus the kids, were going to leave for the Wright Family mansion, which was just a community away.

Samantha was apprehensive once more, as she was going to meet Ethan's grandparents for the first time.

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Taking out a velvet box from his pocket, Ethan placed a simple, yet elegant looking gold necklace around her neck.

He bent down and pecked the side of her face and stated, "You look beautiful in everything. Don't be nervous. I'm sure my grandparents will like you." 2

Following the kiss on her cheek, Samantha teased, "Another day of this and I'll conclude you are crazy about me."

Samantha only meant to kid about his constant touch and pecks, but she heard him answer, "You can have that confidence."

She found herself flushing at his response. She sighed and thought he was extremely good at making her blush.

"Let's go. The kids are waiting," said Ethan.

It took only fifteen minutes for them to reach the Wright Family estate. It was a bigger mansion than the house they called their home.

They were greeted by Daniel and Amanda Wright, right at the driveway with Ethan's grandparents, settled behind them at the mansion doors.

Getting off the car, Amanda rushed to open the Maybach door and welcomed them, "Welcome! Welcome to our home!"

"Hi, grandma! You are so pretty! You are like me and Mommy!" Announced Kenzie with twinkling eyes.

"Aww, come here, sweetie. You are just so adorable," said Amanda while aiding Kenzie off the car.

Samantha was next to come out and Amanda pecked her on the cheek.

"So beautiful. No wonder my son is crazy about you," remarked Amanda.

"Thank you," Samantha answered shyly.

"Hi grandma," Kyle came out next and greeted, kissing Amanda on the cheek.

"And what about grandpa?" Daniel called from behind, raising his arms at the children.

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"Grandpa!" The kids both ran in the direction of Daniel, giving him a sweet embrace.

"Ahh! The sweet feeling of having kids again," remarked Daniel while savoring the adorable hugs of Kenzie and Kyle.

"Ethan, go ahead and introduce your family to your grandparents," suggested Amanda with a smile.

Ethan had stepped out of the car last. He fixed his coat before making his way to his grandparents, holding Samantha's hand.

David and Amelia Wright were already in their late eighties. Although, in a wheelchair, they were both generally healthy considering their age. It was thanks to the family's lively practices that they remain vigor to this day.

"Grandma, grandpa. This is my family." Ethan guided Samantha by the waist, moving her in front of him. He introduced, "This is my wife, Samantha. You can call her Sam."

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"Sam, this is grandfather David and grandmother Amelia," added Ethan, turning to Samantha.

Amelia had a huge grin on her face. She forced herself up from the chair, and it was automatic for Samantha to aid her in her steps.

"It's alright, dear. I can still walk and stand," said Amelia. She reached for Samantha's face and complimented, "So beautiful and your hair is so glossy. She is like a model on TV."

"Oh, but grandma, I am a chef," Samantha revealed.

"I heard!" Amelia gave a wider smile while maintaining to hold Samantha's face. She added, "A beautiful chef. A beautiful girl."

Amelia winked at Ethan and probed, "So Ethan, how did you trick this lady to become your wife? Haha!"

"Very funny, grandma," answered Ethan. "Do you not have faith in your own grandson?"

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Sitting next to Amelia in this wheelchair, David Wright laughed thoroughly. He revealed, "oh, it's just that we have been betting back and forth when you will find a girl and we have already considered all the possibilities... including that you may not know how to woo a girl!"

"That's enough, father. At least now you have proof that Ethan is not only capable in business but also in choosing a wife," Daniel, butt in.

"Grandpa, it wasn't that I did not know how... I just... did not find the one that I liked in the past," revealed Ethan. "I chose only the best."

"And I don't deny that!" Amanda remarked. She rubbed Ethan's shoulder and said, "My son made a great choice."

All the praises coming from Ethan's parents and grandparents left Samantha blushing the entire time. She was teary-eyed with all the compliments that she leaned back to Ethan and softly said, "Am I really that beautiful?"

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Her words made Ethan smile.

While Samantha tried to whisper, her inquiry was still heard by many that which resulted in Amanda chuckling.

"Oh, it's good that Samantha is so down to earth," remarked Amanda.

Ethan rubbed Samantha's back and said, "Have that confidence, Sam. You are my wife. And my wife is nothing less, not one bit."

"Hi," Kenzie waved at Amelia and David from behind the conversing adults and it granted her the attention.

"Oh, this must be my great-grandchildren!" Exclaimed David. "And look at that boy! It's little Ethan!"

David nearly cried, recalling Ethan's younger years. He reached for Kyle and revealed, "When your father was younger, he played chess with me! Do you want to learn?"

"Yes! I think it's an interesting game. I have seen that in movies," answered Kyle with conviction.

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"This is Kyle, grandpa, grandma and this is Kenzie," introduced Ethan.

"Kenzie looks so adorable!" Complimented Amelia. "She takes on her mother a lot!"

"Hi, great-grandma, you are so beautiful, like me, Mommy and grandma!" Kenzie announced with a beautiful smile.

"Ah! This girl knows her game," remarked Amelia.

The rest of their party were left chuckling except for Ethan, who merely shook his head. He admitted, "She had convinced me to buy all sweet treats in the city so far."

Kenzie giggled and found her way to Ethan. She hugged him by the waist and declared, "I love, Daddy!"

"See what I mean?" Ethan said to his parents and grandparents before taking the little girl into his arms.

After introducing Diana as part of their party, Daniel suggested, "Well, let's go and... have a joyous dinner."

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As they all stepped into the mansion, Amanda took Samantha's hand and suggested to their group, "Everyone go ahead. I'm just going to show Samantha something really quick."

Amanda brought Samantha to their room, going up to the third level of the mansion, and let her sit in front of her dresser.

Samantha was unsure of what was going on, but she followed Ethan's mother either way.

Coming out of the bathroom, Amanda announced, "Here it is!"

She was holding a light-colored concealer, raising it with her hand, and it confused Samantha.

Amanda stood behind Samantha, looking at her in the mirror. Amanda smiled and gently moved her beautiful golden waves to the side and said, "you missed a spot."

To Samantha's shock, she really did miss a spot! There was one kiss mark left, just a little behind her neck! 3

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"Oh, my God! I'm so ashamed!"
Samantha covered her face with her palms, facing down.

Amanda chuckled and said, "Don't be. You are married! It's bound to happen! Even I used to call my husband a leech!"

As Ethan's mother applied a good amount of concealer on Samantha's neck, she added, "Although I'd have to say, I did not think my son was capable of this! Haha!"

"But then again, my son is a man, and mind you... men, in front of the woman they desire the most, they turn to become this unexpected beast in bed!" Amanda laughed as she revealed.

Only after covering Samantha's hickey did Amanda sit next to her and told, "But you know, our husband's weaknesses are our advantage!" She raised her hand and formed it into a fist and hinted, "We hold the power!"

"You can use Ethan's desire for you to get anything you want! Anything at all!"
Amanda smirked before adding, "Soon

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"You can use Ethan's desire for you to get anything you want! Anything at all!" Amanda smirked before adding, "Soon you'll know what I mean."

While Samantha was stunned by her mother-in-law's proposal, she argued, "Umm... I don't know... Mother, Ethan seems to know my needs before I do. There seems to be nothing that I could ask from him."

"Oh, trust me. Along the way, there will be something that you will want that Ethan will not approve of. And you'll need to use their craving for you to get what you want!" Amanda leaned over to Samantha and winked. "Trust me, it's very effective." 4

It took seconds for Samantha to reply. She gulped and confirmed, "Is it now, Mother?"

Seeing a nod and a wide grin on her mother-in-law's face, Samantha awkwardly answered, "Thanks for the... advice."

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Chapter 50: Amanda's Intuition

It was already after dinner that Samantha received another invitation from Amanda. This time, they went to the study area for a talk.

"Sam, I'm so happy that I kept my memory of Sarah all these years," revealed Amanda. She held a cardboard box, containing albums of old pictures and a flash drive that included memories of Sarah Turner Davis, Samantha's mother.

Amanda sat next to Samantha and explained, "These are some photos and videos on the flash drive. These are some of the old events where Sarah and I went together as friends are there... at least the ones that I recorded."

She grabbed a photo album and flipped it open. Pointing to the first photo, she said, "This was during our first year in college. We enjoyed taking pictures around the campus, even as we attend football games. We were always together! It felt like we were twins!"

"Wow... She is so beautiful and so vibrant!"
" remarked Samantha, looking at her mother's picture as a young lady.

"You look just like her," described Amanda with a smile. "She was kind and pure-hearted. She always saw the good in other people. And that's why I loved her so much."

Amanda pointed to another picture and added, "We went to the parks together and had overnights at our house before. We went to the beach together." With a sigh, she added, "What can I say, we were inseparable."

She chuckled and told, "Even after I met Daniel in our senior years in college. She was a constant third wheel, but back then, Daniel did not mind."

"Of course that slightly changed when she met your father," Amanda did not seem pleased with this part of her story, giving a sneer. "She always loved a man in uniform."

"Anyway, Sam." Amanda placed the box on Samantha's lap and said, "I want you to

have these. Know about your mother. She died when you were about ten or eleven - I think. If I am not mistaken. You probably have very little know-how of your mother since Winfield remarried."

The words of Amanda made Samantha nostalgic.

The truth was, as she grew older and with her father having re-married, memories of her mother were kept in the storage area, some even thrown away.

Samantha's stepmother had tried to cover-up for Sarah's absence that she had slowly forgotten how it felt like. She only realized how it was wrong for her stepmother to take Sarah's belongings away from her when she was much older and when she could no longer find her mother's photos and possessions.

"Thank you. I really appreciate this, Mother," Samantha told while looking at one picture of her mother and Ethan's mother. She smiled and declared, "You really are... best of friends."

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"Of course, Sam. And that's why I consider you my daughter," suggested Amanda. "And! What a great coincidence that you are... my daughter-in-law now!"

Putting a hand on her chest, Amanda announced, "I am the happiest that you came back into my life, our little Sami." She leaned over and revealed, "I named you, by the way. I was the one who suggested naming you, Samantha."

"Oh, and you named me, Sami," Samantha answered with a chuckle.

"Yes! That's right!" Acknowledged Amanda.

In the minutes that passed, Samantha took some time to ask Amanda about her mother before acting to leave and it was then that Amanda asked, "Do you mind asking Ethan to come and see me before you leave, Sam? I have something to tell him."

"Of course, Mother. I'll call Ethan," Samantha answered while getting up from her seat and walking away with the box of memories in her arms.

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It took just five minutes for Ethan to join Amanda, and with his mother's instructions, Ethan locked the doors behind him.

"What is it, mother? Why do I need to lock the door?" Ethan asked while taking a seat on the sofa next to Amanda.

"Ethan, there is something that I need to tell you. Something that I had been unsure of but had a strange inkling from the start," Amanda revealed. She reached for Ethan's hand and said, "Promise me... you won't tell Sam, just yet."

She took a deep breath and closed her eyes. She swallowed air down her throat and told, "Before Sarah, Samantha's mother died. She had had... a series of unfortunate events."

Ethan frowned and leaned back in his seat. He probed, "What exactly do you mean, mother? Are you suggesting - "

"The thing is Ethan, I have always suspected that Sam's stepmother may have something to do with Sarah's death," told Amanda. ②

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"Mother?! If you doubted it, how could you leave Sam in that witch's care?!"
Ethan replied with anger.

"I wasn't sure, and even your father thought I was making excuses for my yearning over Sarah," told Amanda. "I tried to investigate then, but with me away, and you at school in Europe, I did not have enough tangible resources back then. Whatever I tried to dig up, came to a dead end."

"Look, months before Sarah died, she and Winfield constantly fought about this woman. Because she was always around the military events, secretly challenging her for Winfield's attention -"

"That's nothing, mother, not unless Samantha's father was returning the attention to the woman," Ethan suggested.

"I know, but sometime before Sarah died, her cake shop had a gas leak. Fortunately, it was taken care of and one of her staff noticed this before anything could happen," explained Amanda. Pointing to Ethan, she added, "But they saw, one of

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the hoses seemed to have been cut on purpose."

With a sigh, she told, "Sadly, they did not have CCTVs back then in the cake shop," explained Amanda. ①

"Then a week before she died, she told me of how she thought she was constantly followed," Amanda added. "And if that's enough whenever she and that Catherine!"

"Winfield's new wife had threatened her indirectly." Amanda was trying to recall the words that Sarah told her in the past and said, "I'm not sure anymore what were the exact words, but it went like this... You don't deserve to be Winfield's wife. You should just leave before anything else... happens to you."

"To be honest, I somehow felt Sarah was a bit paranoid at first, but after she died, how I wished I had listened to her," revealed Amanda. She shrugged and stated, "Maybe I was wrong, but I can't help but have this intuition, Ethan... I just can't help it!"

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Amanda turned teary-eyed before saying, "I really wished that she was still alive." Tears fell down her face when she said, "God knows this so much... how much I missed her back then." ①

"Ethan, I don't know if I am right or if I am just finding a reason to blame someone for her death, but I just have this feeling... Somehow, that Catherine had something to do with Sarah's car accident," Amanda closed her statement, wiping her tears with her handkerchief.

For some time, Ethan analyzed the words of his mother. After nearly a minute, he said, "Mother, I will look into this, but it's a cold case. Of course, I'd want to find out the truth myself... for Sam."

He leaned over to embrace his mother and stated, "I'm sorry that you lost a good friend. I can see how much you cared for Sam's mother, but at least, we have Sam."

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"Whatever is the result of my investigation, know that we at least have Sam with us and you... you have beautiful grandchildren," told Ethan. "Have peace in that."

Ethan's encouragement granted more tears to flow down Amanda's face. She embraced Ethan tighter and nodded. She said, "I know... I know... It's just that... seeing Sam also brought back the memories and the pain." ²

"Ethan... find out the truth," requested Amanda heartily.

"Yes, mother... I will," answered Ethan. "For your sake and Sam's."

Chapter 51: The Executive Chef

On an early Monday morning, Ethan was walking down the staircase with a frown on his face.

When he found one maid cleaning the living room, he asked, "Where is my wife?"

"Sir, Mrs. Wright is preparing breakfast for the children," told the maid.

Ethan walked towards the kitchen, maintaining the grimace on his face. When he found Samantha preparing breakfast, he walked over to her and turned off the stove.

"Ethan!" While Samantha exclaimed, Ethan turned her to face him.

He wrapped his arms around her slender waist and said, "Sam, I am not a very demanding man."

With his eyes closed, he leaned his head and rested it on Samantha's before revealing, "I am a very busy man, and for now, I'd really like to ask that I wake up

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next to you every morning when I am around." 3

Samantha was holding a spatula in her hand when Ethan turned her over. Her hands remained raised while her body was held tight by her husband.

Hearing Ethan's words, she blushed while eyeing the reaction of the other maid inside the kitchen. She wound up chuckling and announcing, "That's it!"

"I conclude, you are crazy about me!" Samantha declared before she wrapped her arms around Ethan's neck. She reached for his lips and said, "Good morning."

"Hmmm," Ethan said with his brows drawn together. "What's good about the morning?"

"I just went down to make breakfast," Samantha reasoned while giggling. She gave him another peck and added, "I did not go anywhere. Don't worry, tomorrow, I'll wake you." 2

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"Okay," Ethan said. "I'll just take a shower. What time do you start work today?"

"Ten," Samantha answered. "Edgar will come back for me and take me to work."

After the family's very first breakfast together, Ethan left for work with Edgar. The children followed, leaving with Conner and Diana.

Samantha left last, shortly after Edgar returned to fetch her.

On the first day of Samantha's work, she was incredibly nervous. She had many considerations to take, especially the opinions of others being the boss' other half.

Cindy, the receptionist, had told her once that others were wondering how she became Ethan's wife in such a short amount of time. They had questions left and right about her background.

Were they together before she joined the company?

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Or did they just met?

Were the children really Ethan's children?

Where they really married?

Why was there no wedding?

Samantha at least addressed part of Cindy's curiosity, confirming with the receptionist that they were indeed married and the children are Ethan's. She promised, however, that the rest of the details will be unveiled in time.

Ethan, however, did make a formal announcement to the company that all employees have no right to pry on his personal life, including that of his wife, Samantha.

The fact that she was married to Ethan was out there, but the circumstances of how they met remained a mystery.

In the two hours of her day, Samantha was given an orientation, including a tour around the property. Her last pit stop was the hotel's main kitchen, standing in between The Pearl Diamond Restaurant

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and The Marigold Restaurant.

The Pearl Diamond Restaurant was the hotel's fine dining cafe, while the Marigold Restaurant was the main diner where they offered buffet meals for all their guests.

As the executive chef, Samantha was expected to oversee both restaurants, but of course, she had underlings to support her, whom she looked forward to meeting that day.

The General Manager of the First Diamond Hotel came with the HR staff specific for Samantha's introduction to the kitchen. His name was Gerard Clarke.

Calling the attention of every chef and kitchen assistant on a busy lunch, Gerard announced, "Everyone, I need your attention, please." ①

"What is it, Gerard, we are running a kitchen here! We are very busy?" complained a man, clearly in a chef higher in rank.

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The man was tall, with light blond hair, silver eyes, and a very athletic frame. He was distinctively uniformed in black chef attire while everyone else was in white.

"Today is your executive chef's first day, remember!" Reminded the general manager before telling, "I would like to introduce to everyone, Miss - rather, Mrs. Samantha Davis-Wright, your new executive chef."

The General Manager eyed everyone before adding, "Therefore, Matteo Romano's being the stand-in executive chef will end this afternoon and will officially work under Samantha as her executive Sous Chef!"

"It's nice to meet you, Mrs. Wright."

While others welcomed Samantha pleasantly, she saw the clear grimace on Matteo's face, including a few chefs behind him.

She was unsure why, but she just spoke in response to the welcome, "Good noon. Sorry to disturb you on a busy lunch, but please, call me Chef Sam." 2

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Turning to the General Manager, Samantha instructed, "Mr. Clarke, please have the hotel employees call me, just Chef Sam."

Clearing his throat, Gerard asked, "Are you sure, the boss would be okay with it?"

"I'll talk to him," she answered softly. "I don't want them to feel afraid of the fact that I am... the boss' wife." She wrinkled her nose and added, "If you know what I mean."

"If you say so, Mrs. Wright," answered the General Manager.

Returning her attention to the kitchen staff, Samantha announced, "Well, we can have our introductions later after the lunch service. I'll be joining everyone by then and aid in the dinner service preparation."

With eyes widening, she said, "I heard we have an event this evening. I'd like to join this magnificent team in the preparations, then!"

Before Samantha took her lunch that day,

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Gerard spoke to her in private from one corner of the hotel lobby and told, "Mrs. Wright. I'm sorry about Matteo's behavior."

"It's just that... he was initially hired as the executive chef, but after just a month of employing Matteo, he announced that you would be the executive chef." Gerard sneered before adding, "Matteo - he... technically got demoted, but with the same pay!"

"Oh, my goodness! Ethan, what did you do?" Samantha massaged her temples, feeling a headache her way. She realized how she may have a rival at work, even before she could even begin.

"Well, Mrs. Wright. You can always exercise your power, being Mrs. Wright," suggested Gerard. "Just... tell me if you need him out."

"Is he any good?" Samantha probed.

"Oh, he is very good and very disciplined," answered the General Manager.

"Then, he is a keeper." Samantha smiled

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and said, "Don't worry. I have been through this with the hotel I have worked for in Monroe City. I have been looked down before, but I had always proven myself."

Samantha extended her hand to Gerard and said to him, "I can turn things around." 1

While the entire kitchen was preparing for the dinner, Samantha asked for a private time for Chef Matteo.

It was from one table of The Pearl Diamond Hotel that they spoke.

"Chef Matteo, can I call you by your first name?" Samantha asked while sitting across the table from her executive sous chef.

The man, Matteo Romano, gave Samantha a blank expression and told, "You are... already calling me by my first name." 1

"Well, I did not want any awkward situation between us, so I wanted us to

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start calling each other by our first names. The same way, I asked everyone to call me Chef Sam," explained Samantha.

After a second of pause, Samantha defended, "It was just today that I learned of how my husband decided to change your designation and I am very sorry about it."

With eyes tightening, Matteo answered her, "Well, there is really nothing I can do. I already relocated here, all the way from Europe, when I was told of my demotion."

He shook his head and responded in an icy tone, "I supposed, it pays well to be in favor of the boss, you can easily land the executive chef position with less experience."

Samantha smiled professionally at Matteo. She said, "Chef Matteo, why don't you see my work first and taste my dishes before you judge me."

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"I probably will... In fact!" Matteo stood up and removed his apron before revealing, "I will leave you to handle the dinner preparations alone, without my help!"

The corner of his lips twitched before challenging Samantha, "See if you can manage, Chef Sam."

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Chapter 52: Well Deserved!

Samantha was okay with having Matteo not aid her in the dinner preparations, but what irked her was how he had formed followers in the kitchen amongst the senior staff.

One sous chef named Deana, ten station chefs, and four junior chefs joined him in his move to test Samantha's ability to manage the kitchen. All three reasoned that they believe Matteo should be the executive chef and not Samantha. 3

Inside Samantha's head, she thought, 'The nerve! They aren't even afraid that I am Ethan's wife.'

"Well, I don't know about you but I'm afraid to lose my job!" Said one station chef, named Jane. "I'm staying."

"I'm staying too! I have two kids!" Said one of the junior chefs.

"I guess I'm doing overtime," said one sous chef named Anthony. He was meant to be off, having started worked since breakfast, but given the situation, he decided to stay.

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Most of the lower ranks chefs and the kitchen staff lingered, especially since they were afraid of getting fired.

Thankfully, none of the pastry chefs objected to Samantha's arrival and that part of the kitchen was still fully operational.

While Samantha thought the ones that remained were being sensible, she did not like the idea of them being forced to support her because of fear. She wanted to earn their respect, and she could only do that by showing them how she worked.

After looking everyone in the eye, Samantha announced, "Well, one sous chef, six station chefs, and ten junior chefs are more than enough help for me. For as long as the rest of the kitchen staff are here, I can... temporarily reassign you to support the assigned station chefs with an added incentive."

Samantha practically heard the scoff coming from Matteo and the others who chose to merely observe that evening's dinner preparation. One of the sous chef

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named Deana was particularly rolling her eyes.

As for those who stayed, she saw them gasped, worried for their long and worrisome afternoon and evening. ①

"Jane, right? Can you give me an update on the preparations for tonight's dinner?" Samantha asked, knowing that one of their conference rooms was booked for a special dinner.

Jane and Samantha settled in one corner of the kitchen, discussing the preparations needed to be accomplished. ①

It would seem to Samantha that the buffet was already set. At three in the afternoon, half of the main courses were already cooked. The sushis and the sashimis will have to be produced at the onset of the dinner opening.

For now, what she needed to worry about was the special dinner at the two-carat conference room, as well as the dining restaurant.

She gathered everyone, who remained to

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participate in the preparations and told, "I would like to announce that I am making some slight modifications on our set menus for the evening, including the orders from our special dinners."

Samantha clearly saw the shaking of heads and sighs of dismay, but she did not stop there. She told, "I've always meant to implement these changes, regardless of the help of our dearest colleagues."

"From day one, I meant to make an impression and I will do it, despite the conditions we are in. Worry not, however, because the changes I want to make are minor and are for the better. We will all receive praises after the dinner service. That! I can guarantee!" Samantha added.

"To start with, our baked Salmon would not be topped with brown butter and garnished with pesto herbs. Let's add crunchy garlic and bread crumbs to our baked sea scallops - "

"But, we have always served our main Salmon dish with honey garlic," objected one non-participating sous chef, Deana,

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raising her brow.

Samantha just turned to the follower of Matteo and smiled. She said, "You see... that's the problem. I noticed how the hotel has been serving the same kind of flavor for over two months since its soft opening. It's high time we let them have a different taste."

She resumed giving instructions on how most of the dishes will be cooked and prepared. She received objections now and then, but Samantha maintained to impose the changes, regardless of the lacking in manpower.

"Lastly, to ensure that we will not be late for our dinner service, I take away all your breaks. Pee breaks are only allowed," told Samantha. "But don't worry, I'll pay you overtime for each break time consumed in the kitchen." 2

"Team, thank you for staying with me, and... let's resume our preparations. Please follow your newly assigned stations," Samantha closed before she herself rushed in to aid in the arrangements.

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Fortunately for Samantha, there were not that many reservations at The Pearl Diamond Restaurant. What mostly kept them busy were the pre-ordered meals for the special event.

It was ten minutes before six in the evening that they were finally done with the appetizers and the salads, and they were now ready to cook the prepped main dishes.

When the guests to the two-carat conference room became filled, canapes were out of the kitchen at exactly six-thirty in the evening. Salads came out ten minutes after.

So far, they were on time.

From the kitchen, Samantha kept reminding everyone how good they were doing, despite the incoming orders from the fine dining restaurants and the demands for refills, coming from the buffet restaurant.

Samantha was only supposed to oversee the cooking, but given that they were understaffed, she had to occasionally

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take a station, especially the grill and the oven.

There were mistakes along the way, leading to some setbacks on the main dishes being served out, but Samantha asked the restaurant servers to update the tables should there be any delay.

To make up for some of the lags, Samantha ordered out some cheese platters, which were compliments coming from the kitchen.

Samantha did not care. She knew her husband could afford a house of cheese and a few hours of overtime pay! Even if she would pay for the additional expenses for that evening, she knew her husband would take care of her children.

At exactly nine in the evening, the orders for the two-carat conference concluded with their desserts, and Samantha was left to worry about the fine dining restaurant that still had six tables, occupied.

As soon as the last set of plates came out, she sighed in relief, resting her arms

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against one of the tabletops.

Jane was the first to smile at Samantha and caressed her back. She said, "Chef Sam! You did great and I love the changes to the menu!" She had her hands up and declared, "It tasted awesome!"

"Yes, we tried it too. It was a great shift!" Echoed some of the station chefs!

Anthony, the participating sous chef, gave Samantha a thumbs up. He said, "Well deserved!"

Gratified with her team's approval, Samantha smiled in delight.

She turned to Matteo and the others and proposed, "Chefs, we will still make main dishes for The Pearl Diamond customers, please feel free to give the new changes a try." She smiled and encouraged, "I hope you will like it." 2

As Samantha resumed to aid in the rest of the orders for that evening, the hotel's food and beverage manager came inside the kitchen and told, "Chef Sam. The clients who booked the two-carat

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conference room were so happy with the dinner service, they wanted to meet you in person!"

The manager leaned over and added, "Apparently, they have a food critic as one of their guests!"

"Oh, is that so? Well, let me freshen up before then. We do need a good critique! Who are the clients that I need to meet?" Samantha probed while wiping her hands with her towel.

"It's Mr. Clayton Brown and his fiance, Annie Davis," told the F&B manager. "It's their engagement party."

Hearing the names, blood easily drained from Samantha's face. She then remembered how Clayton was scouting for a place for their engagement party and she utterly forgot about it.

She did not have her phone with her and she assumed, her grandmother Matilda had tried to reach her. She sighed and cursed inwardly, 'Fuck! How am I supposed to meet them now?'

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Chapter 53: The Beautiful Chef

From inside the two-carat conference room, every guest of Clayton Brown and Annie Davis had been sighing in gratification with the food in front of them.

Starting with a plate of shrimp taco bites as their appetizer canape, they were all amused by the wonderful combination! A single shrimp was placed on top of a generous amount of guacamole, and beneath it was a taco shell just over an inch size.

They all felt the three pieces of which that were on their plates were not enough.

When the salads were served, more compliments were given to the surprisingly new flavor of the green dish.

At the table where the engaged couple sat, Annie Davis could not help but observe, "I don't remember the salad to have watermelon on it. Do you, Clay?"

After swallowing down his salad, Clayton answered, "No, even the sauce seems

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different. It tasted more... creamy and just a little sweet. They probably made some changes, but I like it."

"Oh, it's actually a good contrast to the earlier dish," remarked a good friend from the Brown family, Belinda Lopez. She was a columnist at the Braeton Daily and also known as a food critic.

Belinda had formed a good relationship with the Browns within the last four years since the paper's feature of the Brown Family, the growing Military Lineage of Braeton City.

"Hmmm... It gives me the impression that I am eating a fruit salad instead of greens," added Belinda.

"I'm sure children will appreciate this. It's a good twist," said Catherine Davis, who was sitting next to Annie.

"It's wonderful, isn't it, Belinda," expressed Matilda. She was also at the same table as Clayton and Annie, seated next to General Winfield Davis.

The ten-seater round tables composed

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four of the Davises, Clayton's direct family; his parents and his sister, Belinda, and Stella, Matilda's caregiver.

Minutes passed, and everyone was already done with their salads. The next dish they heavenly consumed was a classic creamy pumpkin soup with garlic bread crunched on top.

Matilda thought the soup was exactly how Sarah and Samantha would cook it. As she savored the scent of the soup, Matilda said, "Brings me back memories."

Almost six years had passed and even Clayton thought so himself. He frowned and remarked, "Yes, the... the soup seems familiar tasting. I mean, pumpkin soups are generally the same, but it's creamier this time and you can taste the ginger."

Winfield Davis spoke for the first time, "Anyone can cook this way if cooking is their passion... I suppose."

He looked at Matilda and saw how his mother shook her head at him. He denied the familiarity, but he knew well. The

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soup also brought him back memories. After all, this was his former wife's favorite soup to prepare in their home.

Everything the guests at that point had expressed was nothing but delight.

When the scallops were served, all the more they were elated.

"Hmmm... crunchy cheesy crumbs on the outside and everything just melts in your mouth!" Remarked Belinda. She had her eyes closed while chowing down her food.

After finishing a piece of the sea scallop, Belinda complimented the engaged couple, "You certainly chose the best venue for your engagement party. I assume you'll be having your wedding here too?"

Annie and Clayton looked at each other with a smile. It was Annie who answered, "Yes, we are. We have already made a down-payment, booking their second-biggest ballroom."

The rest of the meals were served and

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Belinda only had praises to say.

Alas, following the delectable avocado ice cream dessert, Belinda, the columnist said, "This is probably the most enjoyable meal I have had in years!" She smiled pleasantly at the engaged couple and added, "Sitting here in nearly three hours was just so entertaining and pleasing to my palate!"

Knowing this was her granddaughter's work, a wide grin easily became painted on Matilda's face. She suggested, "You should write about your dining experience here in this hotel."

"Yes, that is a good idea, Belinda," echoed Clayton's mother, Ingrid Brown. "Also, don't forget to include my son's upcoming wedding with the General's daughter, Annie Davis!"

"Yes, since this hotel is owned by the Wright family, maybe we can gain favor from them as well," suggested Clayton's father, Clinton Brown. "They are, after all, the richest family in the city."

Clinton leaned over to his son and

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suggested, "To be in favor of the Wrights meant to be in the right connections. We can have the business community support your rise in the Military ranks."

While Matilda smirked at the words of the Browns, inwardly mocking their words, the General only leaned back and suggested, "Or you can work hard and achieve success even without connections, Clayton."

"Ah, yes, General. Indeed," Clayton was quick to acknowledge, not wanting to offend his highest command.

"I certainly would want to acknowledge my dining experience in this hotel! In fact, it would be much better if we meet the chef personally, don't you think so?" Belinda suggested to everyone with eyes gleaming.

"Yes! That's also a good idea," Ingrid Brown answered.

"I agree!" Catherine Davis had the same words to say.

Belinda was so thrilled with the idea of

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meeting the chef that she also asked the other tables about their experience. Everyone in that conference room had the same pleasant words to report about the dishes.

They all wanted to meet the chef that made it all possible. Hence, they requested this from the hotel staff that was present from inside the two-carat conference room.

Minutes passed. The food and beverage manager came to meet the Browns, specifically at the engaged couple's shared table. She said, "Sorry for the wait, our beautiful executive chef is still giving last-minute directives to our kitchen staff before leaving her station."

"Our fine dining restaurant is still serving meals, you see. But she will be on her way to see you," explained the F&B manager.

"A female Chef? Beautiful, you say?"
Asked Belinda eagerly.

"Yes, she is so beautiful. She has the face of an angel - as pretty as a daisy. Most of

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the female staff here at the hotel are jealous of her grace and charm," remarked the manager. "And! She is our executive chef!"

The food and beverage manager was about to say more about Samantha, especially her connections with the Wrights, but soon enough the door to the two-carat conference room opened, and came in was the First Diamond Hotel's executive chef. ②

All eyes were on the woman wearing a black chef's uniform, walking in with her glossy and wavy golden hair. Her blue eyes twinkled as she smiled, making her way to the VIP table of the room.

Her face was so small and adorable, she looked like a doll.

A few of the guests, especially those who were in the military, immediately recognized her.

Jaws were dropping, and sighs could be heard across the venue.

When the executive Chef stood in front of

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the VIP table, the F&B manager introduced, "Everyone, this is Chef Sam, the executive chef of The First Diamond Hotel. She is the person who gave your exquisite dining experience tonight!"

Samantha forced a smile. Despite faking it, her elegance shown through.

She slightly bowed her head in different directions and greeted, "Good evening, valued guests. I'm Chef Sam. Thank you for dining with us tonight. I hope that you had enjoyed your meals as much as my team and I have delighted in preparing them for you."

Looking straight into the eyes of Clayton Brown, she added, "Mr. Brown and Miss Davis, congratulations on your engagement and your upcoming marriage. Thank you for choosing The First Diamond Hotel for your gathering venue."

"Beautiful! Beautiful!" Complimented Belinda Lopez. She placed a hand on her own chin and remarked, "The food is not only delicious, but the person who made the dishes is just so beautiful! What a

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Belinda quickly turned to the Browns and added, "Don't you think so?"

A clear frown became painted on Annie's face, but before she could react, a few more of their valued guests gave the same compliments. They appreciated Samantha's skills in preparing delicious meals as well as her dignified face.

Meanwhile, Samantha's gaze fixed on Clayton and everyone saw how the current Commander of the military arms, Clayton Brown, slightly flushed. He put a fist on his mouth and coughed before answering on behalf of his family, "Ah, yes... Yes, she is beautiful."

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Chapter 54: The Misunderstanding

Hearing the name of Clayton Brown and Annie, her stepsister, Samantha contemplated going to the two-carat conference room.

She instantly paled at the idea of seeing her stepmother and stepsister. All the more, seeing her father. However, what pushed her to present herself was the convincing of the F&B Manager. She was told, "This would be very good publicity for the hotel, Chef Sam, and I'm sure the boss would love it!"

"You seem like you are hesitating, Chef Sam." From one corner of the kitchen, Chef Matteo remained to study Samantha's movements. He could not help but probe, seeing the reluctance in Samantha's expression.

Samantha cleared her throat and replied, "It's just that... I am not used to speaking in front of a crowd, but I suppose... it's also part of my job."

She forced a smile and added, "Let me just give additional instructions to the

chefs and I'll be right behind you."

"I'll see you at the two-carat conference room, Chef Sam," the F&B Manager eagerly responded, walking away from the kitchen.

Samantha did not require that much time. She just needed to get freshened up before seeing her father. She at least desired to look presentable.

She proceeded to her locker and sent a quick message to Ethan, telling him how she was about to meet her father. She did not wait for any reply and took out her make-up kit.

After putting on some lipstick and powdering her face, she went straight to the two-carat conference room, feeling her heart racing.

As she made that walk into the hallway, she told herself, "You can do this, Sam. Make Ethan proud... Make your children proud." She took a deep breath and reminded herself, "Be proud of what you have become." 5

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When she entered the venue, she instantly saw familiar faces gawking at her. Some of them were her relatives from the Davis' side, and some were her classmates in the military academy.

She raised her chin and imposed a smile. She silently told herself that she was no longer that same Samantha who felt ashamed of her previous mistake. Besides, her supposed misreading lead her into Ethan's arms.

As she made her way to the VIP table where the F&B manager stood, she took a deep breath and searched for Matilda first.

It calmed her heart to find her grandmother. She smiled, knowing everything will be fine.

Still, she evaded her father's gaze.

Standing exactly in front of Clayton Brown, the F&B Manager introduced her as the executive chef. She also repeated her introduction and only then did she look straight into Clayton's eyes and congratulated him and Annie.

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In secret, she thought, 'You deserve each other.'

"Beautiful! Beautiful!" Samantha heard a lady, wearing glasses, gave compliments of her charms. "The food is not only delicious, but the person who made the dishes is just so beautiful! What a beautiful Chef you are, Chef Sam!"

Having heard this many times from Ethan's side of the family, Samantha took pride in the comments and said, "Thank you. I was told... I look exactly like my mother."

That was the only time she finally glanced at her father, the General. She clearly saw how he fluttered his eyes by the mention of her mother.

Next to the General was Catherine, her stepmother. Samantha saw how Catherine clasped her hand against her dessert spoon, angry at hearing about her mother. She supposed it would not be the first that her stepmother disliked the mention of Sarah Turner Davis, but it felt great to bring it up again.

"Chef Sam, my name is Belinda Lopez. I am a columnist at the Braeton Daily. I am also a food critic and may I just say, your food is delicious!" Belinda turned around at the table and revealed, "All of us had great words to say about your food!"

Samantha smiled at the tale of Belinda. She reacted, "Really?" Turning to her father, she probed, "Does the General also appreciate the dishes we served?"

There was an awkward silence coming from Winfield, and it puzzled the columnist. It was Belinda who answered on behalf of the General, "Yes! Everyone did!"

"Yes, he did child. Everyone in this room liked the dishes, right everybody?" It was Matilda who stood up, encouraging everyone to speak up.

Samantha clearly saw how her father's hands hid beneath the table. She also saw how her stepmother's jaws clenched.

Transferring her gaze to Annie, Samantha noticed how her stepsister's eyes narrowed at her.

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She also received the awkward silence coming from the Browns, especially Ingrid Brown.

Samantha used to get along with Ingrid, but now, she knew not where Clayton's mother stood.

While other guests in the conference room were giving Samantha praises, most individuals in the VIP table were in shock and unable to speak.

Belinda, on the other hand, continued with her comments, "I will definitely write a column about my dining experiences tonight and it's a good thing that I took pictures of my plate! Eventually, I'd want to conduct an interview with you, Chef Sam."

"That would be wonderful and I'm happy you enjoyed our dishes, despite only tasting a six-course meal. Miss Lopez, you could join us during our grand opening next week! We are preparing an eleven-course meal for that event." Putting her hands on her waist, she concluded, "Now that will definitely give

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you more orgasmic experience!" 1

"Oh, that would be exciting!" Exclaimed Belinda Lopez. "I will certainly be there!"

Samantha turned to the Browns and to her father and also suggested, "In fact, we would like to also invite your family, General, and Mr. Brown. We would like to welcome you and your family during the grand opening of the First Diamond Hotel."

She directed her gaze to the F&B manager and instructed, "Make sure that they receive an invitation, providing them with a VIP table at that event."

"Yes, Chef Sam," assured the manager.

"Wow! Really? You can give out the invitation?" Belinda's eyes widened. She sneered before clarifying, "I imagined the invites would come from... the corporate office."

"Oh, I have connections in the corporate office," Samantha assured. She winked at Belinda and teased, "I can even get you... a n interview with the president himself!"

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Belinda's eyes widened. She placed both her hands to cover her mouth and said, "No way! The great, Ethan Wright?!"

"Yes, the great, Ethan Wright!"
Samantha answered with a genuine smile.

"That would be fantastic!" Belinda was utterly excited with the idea that she promised, "I will certainly be there!"

"Don't believe every word that woman says!" Everyone's attention shifted to Annie Davis. She had a grimace on her face as she slammed her hands against the table.

Despite the warning stare coming from the General and Clayton Brown, holding her hand, Annie insisted to put Samantha to shame. She pointed a finger at Samantha and announced, "You have dishonored our names and you dare to show your face to us!"

"Miss Belinda, you have no idea what kind of woman she is! She does not deserve to be employed by this prestigious hotel!" Annie added.

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"That's right! Shame on the Wrights for having such an employee - a soiled woman!" Catherine Davis added, speaking with a loud voice.

"Clearly, she has come here to come in between Clayton and I! But mind you, that woman cheated on Clayton with an old ugly man! And who knows, she has become a whore all these years!" Annie had to add, screaming as her face turned red!

"That's enough! Watch your words, Annie!" The General found himself in anger, following the provocation of his wife and adopted daughter. He wasn't looking for trouble or attention that evening. He felt calling Samantha out was unnecessary.

"Now, let's not be too harsh," Ingrid Brown tried to speak, but the door to the conference room swung open, halting her words.

They all saw a tall and handsome man with the most domineering intense brown eyes, walking high and mighty,

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clothed in a custom-made suit. He did not mind the stares and whispers of everyone.

The people's attention easily shifted to an alluring, yet prevailing man as he made his way to the VIP table.

"Mr. Wright. Good evening." the F&B manager was quick to greet their CEO.

Ethan only nodded and turned his stern face into the ogling people in awe of his presence.

"Mr. Wright? Ethan Wright?" Clarified Belinda. She herself had only seen the man once in her life. It was very difficult to catch the CEO of the Wright Diamond Corporation, yet here he was, standing in front of her.

"Yes, I am," answered Ethan. He turned to the General and said, "I'm sorry to interrupt this gathering, but it's getting late. I'm here to fetch my wife." 20

Looking at Samantha, Ethan pointed to his watch and ordered, "Sam, let's go home. It's getting late."

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"Ah! Yes, honey. A moment please while I clarify the misunderstanding," said Samantha while raising her finger.

"Misunderstanding? What misunderstanding?" Ethan probed, glaring at the obvious culprit and raising his brow.

"Miss Lopez, I think Miss Davis here has mistaken me for someone else." Samantha glanced at Annie with a smile before resuming, "Isn't that right? I would not be that shameful, soiled woman. After all, I am... Samantha Wright." 10

Samantha watched in delight as Annie's lips trembled and her face paled. The same could be said with the shocked Catherine. Both of them were clearly afraid of Ethan.

"Ye - yes. I'm sorry. I - I must have mistaken you for someone else," said Annie with her voice shaking. She bowed her head and apologized, "Pardon my words... Chef Sam." 1

"Haha! What a relief! Annie and Catherine seemed like they were ready to fry you, Chef Sam! I'm glad it's all a misunderstanding," told Belinda while wiping the sweat on her forehead.

Ethan immediately shot a sinister look at Annie and Catherine Davis. His eyes narrowed, giving them a silent threat. He asked, "Did they now. Tell me again, what did they say? Soiled? Shameful? What else was said about my wife?"

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Chapter 55: Catherine's Plan

A wave of jealousy filled Annie Davis' heart.

She just heard Ethan Wright call Samantha his wife, and it shocked her beyond words.

She had met Ethan Wright on two occasions while attending special events with her adoptive father, General Winfield Davis.

However, this tall and handsome man never batted an eye for her. Yet, here he was standing in front of their table, calling Samantha his wife?!

'No!' Her head was yelling in denial!

At first, the possibility that Samantha was still after Clayton fueled her displeasure, recalling how much she adored Clayton in the past.

Annie successfully managed to win Clayton over and she had already considered herself triumphant for having taken the attention that was given to Samantha, but now... why did it feel like

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she was still a loser in comparison to her stepsister?! 6

Annie Davis's insides were screaming with envy!

She clearly noticed how Ethan Wright was giving her and her mother that nasty look, so she tried to recover by taking back her words, pretending she did not know Samantha at all.

Deep inside, however, Annie wondered if Ethan Wright knew the truth about Samantha and her past.

Just when she thought she had momentarily slipped out of Ethan's piercing stare, Belinda had to remind him, "Haha! What a relief! Annie and Catherine seemed like they were ready to fry you, Chef Sam! I'm glad it's all a misunderstanding."

Annie saw as Ethan immediately shot an ominous glance at her and her mother. His eyes narrowed as he asked, "Did they now. Tell me again, what did they say? Soiled? Shameful? What else was said about my wife?"

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"Um... No. It was... a mistake," Annie said while her voice trailed off.

"Yes, Mr. Wright. I heard that woman clearly telling Mrs. Wright that she was here." The F&B manager frowned as she reported, "That Chef Sam was here to come in between her and her fiance."

With brows drawn together, she added, "Miss Davis even suggested that Mrs. Wright may be a whore."

Ethan raised his chin at Annie before remarking, "Really? My wife a whore?"

Annie Davis felt her heart racing as she tried to reason with the man, "It - it was a mistake. I'm sorry, Mr. Wright. Forgive my words - "

"But you dare accuse my wife when you are unsure?" Ethan cut off her words. "And why would my wife be interested in your fiance? He doesn't even compare to my foot!" 22

Clayton Brown felt a lump in his throat, hearing Ethan's description of him. 3

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"My wife would never look at another man, other than me. You see, my wife's standards are way up there," added Ethan.

"Why don't you... tell your fiance how many soldiers you have slept with before marking on him and we'll know who is the real whore!" Ethan told. His indication created murmurs around the venue.

It became clear to Annie how Ethan knew who they really were and how relevant they were to Samantha's life. All of this was just an act to dismiss them and the accusations she had of Samantha.

Even Samantha would up, widening her eyes at Ethan's tale. She wondered how her own husband knew this about Annie. Of course, Samantha knew.

Annie was the person who encouraged her into having sex, but she wound up doing it with Ethan.

Getting up, Winfield Davis interfered, "Now, I think you have gone too far, Ethan

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"That is Mr. Wright to you, General," Ethan answered curtly, cutting off the General's words. He then shifted his gaze to Clayton and said, "Control your woman and put her in her proper place... or I will."

Turning to Samantha, Ethan urged, "Let's go... Honey."

When Ethan and Samantha left the room, the air remained chilly. Even Belinda felt the awkwardness around the venue. Somehow, she thought there was more to the story than what was told.

Seeing Ethan and Samantha go, Annie Davis wound up excusing herself, "I - I just need to go to the bathroom."

"I'll come with you, dear," Catherine Davis suggested, speedily getting up. She did not miss, however, to give Matilda a nasty glare before completely leaving the venue.

It was in the ladies' room that the mother and daughter discussed the earlier situation.

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"Mother? How did Sam deceive such a man! She must have fed him with lies and bewitched Ethan Wright?!" Annie screamed from inside the restroom. "Why would someone like Ethan Wright marry Sam and when? When did this happen?!"

"She must have tricked Ethan Wright! She must have!" Annie insisted while repeatedly thrusting her hands away.

"Yes! And she must have told Ethan Wright that we have wronged her!" Catherine was panting with her daughter, walking back and forth in the bathroom when she assumed, "I could see it... Ethan Wright is on to us!"

Catherine put both her hands on Annie's shoulders and suggested, "Listen to me. We must turn this around. Clearly, that Ethan Wright does not know of Samantha's past. I don't know how she did it."

With a sneer on her face, Catherine added, "We don't even know if he knew about Samantha getting pregnant! She

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must have left her child in someone else's care or have abandoned her child!" ³

Since Winfield Davis was never interested in knowing about Samantha, Matilda never shared about her granddaughter's life to anyone. The rest of the family remained oblivious of how Samantha had been the past six years.

They did not even know how Samantha had twins!

"You are right, mother. You are right. Ethan Wright must have been blinded!" Annie convinced herself. "But mother, now... what must we do?!"

Catherine was in deep thought, thinking about their next move. After some time, she formulated a plan and indicated, "I think... the best way is to... win their favor."
"

"What mother?" Annie did not like the idea.

"We must convince your father to make amends with Samantha and only after gaining her trust back will we strike!"

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Revealed Catherine. "We need to gather all the pieces of evidence about Samantha's pregnancy!"

"But how mother?! That was years ago!" Annie probed with her brows drawn together.

"Your father kept some files in his office. He sealed Sam's information in his office somewhere. Surely, I can get the information we need," assured Catherine.

"We will bring down Samantha and prove to the Wrights that she is not to be trusted! Married or not, we can still prove that she is unworthy to be Ethan Wright's wife." A smirk became painted on Catherine's face as she suggested, "Who knows... you... my dearest daughter may steal Ethan's attention after all this!" 21

"Mother! What are you suggesting?!" While Annie was shocked at her mother's proposal. Her head got over herself and could not help but wonder, "You mean, me? Become Mrs. Wright?"

"Why not?" Catherine countered.

"But what - what about Clayton?" Annie asked before biting her lip.

"Clayton? Clayton is nothing compared to the richest man in the city! Annie! Think!" Catherine held Annie's hand and replied, "You are a far worthy daughter of the General. More than Samantha!"

"In truth, her name has been tainted and all we need to do... is prove it to the Wrights!" With a sinister grin, Catherine added, "Once again, that woman will be a laughingstock... but this time, not only in the military camp but also in the entire city of Braeton!"

Annie thought about her mother's plan.

She realized how she only became interested in Clayton because he was Samantha's. And now? Samantha was with someone else far better than Clayton. Annie frowned and answered, "You are right, mother. You are right! Why settle for Clayton."

"I - I also want to be Mrs. Wright!" Declared Annie with a mischievous grin on her face.

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"It's my fault. I should have known they booked the hotel for their events," Ethan said while they were in the car, on the way home.

"I have plans, Sam. It wasn't the right time to face them. Not yet," added Ethan.

"I know. I was... caught off guard myself," Samantha answered while putting a hand on her chest. She turned to him and said, "I'm so glad you came."

A smirk appeared on his face and he answered, "You wanted me to. Why else would you tell me where you were headed."
"

Samantha chuckled and answered, "I hoped that you would."

Ethan reached for her hand and teased, "Now, do you only want to call me honey in the face of your stepsister and stepmother?"

His words made Samantha blush. She said, "I thought... it sounded more convincing."

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"Hmmm." He leaned over Samantha's face and whispered to her ear, "And because I saved you tonight, your honey gets a reward."

'Gosh, is this really Ethan?' Samantha thought while covering her burning face. It would seem as though she would once again be devoured that evening.

Chapter 56: Samantha's Confession

"Did you know about Samantha getting involved with the Wrights?" General Winfield Davis asked Matilda as she was being rested by her caregiver to bed. "Are they really married?"

He purposely came to his mother's room to talk about the daughter that he had forgotten.

"Winfield, how long has it been since you did not care for your own daughter - your flesh and blood! Why start now?" Matilda asked in return. "If you really want to know... why not speak to your own daughter?"

"Mother, does Ethan know of Samantha's past?" Winfield Davis tried to probe again, but Matilda did not answer. "If they are married, how come both of them were not wearing any wedding rings?"

It was a specific instruction coming from Ethan, not to let the General and his new family know the truth about Samantha and Ethan until they were ready to

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and Ethan until they were ready to present themselves to them. Thus, Matilda could only go around in a circle and create a lie.

"I don't know. Go ask her yourself... try to be a father for once," suggested Matilda. "Now, if you will excuse me... I need to rest, Winfield."

General Winfield Davis could only hiss at his own mother's avoidance, shaking his head as he exited Matilda's room.

He earlier received advice from his wife to mend things between him and Samantha, considering who was her backing.

While Winfield was confident that his own daughter will never have the heart to turn vengeful, it did not mean that Ethan Wright would not.

He had received word from his mother and even from a few of his relatives how wrong it was for him to abandon Samantha, but in his views; he wanted his daughter to learn a lesson. Even if he had to throw her out of his home. 4

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Walking back to his room, he signed at the sight of his wife.

"Well?" Catherine raised both her hands to ask. "What did Matilda say?"

"Mother is not talking," answered Winfield. "You know how she has been since I threw Sam out."

"I'm telling you, Winfield. We have to mend things with Samantha. Besides, it has been so long. I'm sure... she has learned from her mistakes," suggested Catherine as she climbed onto their bed. "Winfield, we do not want to be enemies with the Wrights!"

"Note that Annie is not in the military. She is an aspiring actress who needs a break in her life! The Wrights can easily pin her down and influence her sponsors not to take her!" Added Catherine.

Taking a deep breath, Winfield Davis put his hands on his waist. He recalled how his relationship with Amanda Wright had not been well since his first wife died.

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"I don't know if I can do that," admitted Winfield. "But I will try through mother's help."

Catherine smiled in approval. She nodded and said, "That's right. Slowly, we can get the chance to have the audience with Samantha and Ethan Wright. Then eventually with the entire Wright family."

She inwardly grinned and told herself, 'Then we will take down Samantha again.'

Outside a huge estate, rain began to fall half an hour before midnight.

From inside the master bedroom of the same mansion, Samantha and Ethan were getting ready to rest for that chilling evening.

Ethan was sitting up on the bed, leaning against the headboard, flaunting his fine torso while crossing his arms against his chest.

He was already in his pajamas, but he no longer bothered to put on anything on top.

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Seeing how his wife had come out of the bathroom, he cleared his throat and told, "Aside from meeting your father and stepfamily, I heard... you had trouble at the hotel. I'm going to fire Matteo."

He sneered and explained, "I was just on the phone with the General Manager."

Samantha chuckled as she sat on the bed next to him. She answered, "You don't have to. I'll take care of my kitchen. I've been through this before with the Emerald Hotel."

She shrugged and described, "Some people just cannot accept defeat that easily, but don't worry. I'll show them. In fact! I think I might have won some of the kitchen staff already."

"They really liked the changes that I made on the dishes and when I came back after the conference room visit, I saw how Matteo was tasting the new and improved dishes." She moved closer to Ethan and promised, "It won't be long, I can win him over."

"Hmmm... Of course, there is always the easiest way, and that's to fire him, including those that gave you trouble. Come to think of it, it's technically job abandonment," defined Ethan. He raised his brow and pointed out, "What if you did not manage?"

"But I did!" Recalling how her mother-in-law suggested how to use her ways to get through to Ethan, Samantha climbed on Ethan's lap and sat on him, sideways. She wrapped her arms around his neck and repeated, "I handled things well. It was tough, I admit, but I managed." ②

Samantha pecked on his lips and rested her forehead on his. She then requested, "Please, Ethan. Let me handle this."

She shifted her pose and spread her legs to straddle against his groin area, leaning her chest against his torso. She slowly touched his muscles and swore, "I'll make them work double time for the hours they wasted today."

"Trust me and let me take care of it. I don't want my kitchen to be divided, so I

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have to win them over by my own means.

" She breathed against the side of Ethan's face and pleaded again, "Please, honey."

With brows knitted, Ethan caressed her thighs and cupped one of her breasts from outside her sleeping gown. He asked, "Honey, are you trying to seduce me in order to say yes?" ¹⁰

Samantha chuckled and answered, "Is it working?"

"I meant to eat you either way. How is this seducing going to help get what you want?" Ethan asked before covering her lips.

Samantha shared one hot kiss with Ethan before she rocked on him, moving her waist as she answered, "At least, I'm taking initiative... Please hon." ³

"Hmmm," said Ethan. He gasped and said, "I'll give you... two days, but if the situation remains unresolved, I - will fire all of them if I have to."

With a sweet smile, Samantha nodded and agreed, "Two days is enough for me."

She pecked on his lips and said, "Thank you, honey."

Just before they went down to business, Ethan reached for the bedside table drawers and took out a velvet box. He said, "This was meant for when our actual ceremony would be held, but since it's out there, especially with your family's side, we might as well wear it."

Ethan opened the box and showed Samantha their wedding rings, including one other diamond ring that was meant to be an engagement ring. 3

The gold rings with diamond embellishments were designed as a set. Ethan took all three of them out and held Samantha's hand. He placed on her fingers the engagement ring and the wedding ring meant for her.

He pecked on her hand, along with her rings, and said, "I know you did not get to experience that... down the knee kind of proposal, but our situation is rather different." He caressed her small face with his other hand and added, "However, it does not make our marriage

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less strong or less valuable, either."

"Here.... your turn to put on my ring," Ethan suggested while opening her other palm.

For a moment, his words made Samantha teary-eyed that she struggled to put on Ethan's ring. When she recovered from a sudden emotional state, Samantha said, "Ethan, thank you so much for everything."

She kissed his handsome face repeatedly and carelessly before she rested her forehead on his own. She took several breaths before admitting, "I know... everything is happening so fast, but I just felt... I feel like I love you already." 2

There was a moment of silence after Samantha's confession. She had her eyes closed, afraid of how Ethan would react, but soon enough, she heard Ethan say, "Say that again, Sam."

"I - I think, I love you," she repeated.

"You think?" He asked while tightening his hold around her waist.

Samantha looked at Ethan straight in the eye, while her heart fluttered. After taking several breaths, she declared, "I - I feel so protected around you and comfortable. Not only am I crazy attracted to you, but I think I'm falling in love with you in each day that passed."

"Sam.... you don't know how that makes me so happy! One day, you'll be more certain and I will patiently wait for that day." Ethan abruptly lay Samantha on the bed and announced, "And because of that... we are going to be awake until dawn!"

"What - Ethan?" Samantha shredded beneath him as the man began to kiss her carelessly.

Just when Ethan was about to remove her sleeping dress, they heard a knock on the door.

"Mommy! There is thunder! I'm scared!"
The voice came from Kenzie.

Ethan had hungry eyes as he pulled away from their hot kisses. He complained, "This can't happen now."

"Mommy! Daddy!" Kenzie repeated, knocking at the door.

"Mommy? Daddy? Kenzie is crying!" Kyle was now with his sister, calling out to their parents.

"Ethan? The kids," Samantha gently pushed her husband off her and promised, "Don't worry. There is... always tomorrow."

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Chapter 57: You Are Mine

[WARNING: THIS CHAPTER CONTAINS MATURE CONTENTS, NOT SUITABLE FOR YOUNG READERS]

Samantha was feeling the chill around the room, hearing the rain still pouring outside the mansion, but it wasn't the only thing she sensed.

She noticed how big hands were all over her bare skin, going under her sleeping dress and how she received pecks on her face and neck. ①

Her eyes fluttered open and saw her half-naked husband putting his arms under her body. She whispered, "Ethan? What are you doing?"

"Shhhh... Waking you up," the man said while gradually lifting Samantha with his arms. "Don't worry, I placed pillows around the kids."

Samantha only had a second to look, observing her twins still dozing off on the bed with pillows around them.

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Looking back at her husband, she asked, "Where are you taking me?"

With tightening eyes, Ethan softly answered, "To the bathroom." 2

"What? What time is it? Why are we going to the bathroom?" Samantha probed while keeping her voice down.

Ethan sped his way to the bathroom without answering. He placed Samantha on the wash bin countertop and then locked the doors behind him.

He turned to Samantha and finally answered, "It's five in the morning." He leaned over and pecked on Samantha's lips and revealed, "I want to eat my wife."

After her sudden confession the night before, he wasn't going to let her off without devouring her. He just had to wake her early in the morning before leaving for work.

While Samantha's face burned, he pulled her closer to him, holding her by the waist and down to her thighs. He guided her legs apart as he settled in between.

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Samantha wound up chuckling as she tried to object, "Here in the bathroom? Ethan?"

"Here is better than in front of our children," told the man as his facial expression turned serious, earnestly studying Samantha's slender frame.

He reached down beneath her sleeping dress, holding her thighs, her bottom cheeks until her silky dress was up to her waist. He relished on the softness of her skin and repeatedly rubbed his hands against her folds.

As Ethan slowly undressed his wife, he covered her lips and halted her protests with his manly flavor. He thrust out his tongue as they kissed, quickly intertwining with Samantha's.

As soon as he took off her sleeping dress, Ethan cupped both her bare breasts with his hands and gently massaged them, sometimes playing with her nipples or trapping them in between his fingers.

"Mmmmm," a soft yet audible moan left Samantha's lips, feeling Ethan's touch on

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her chest. She felt shivers down her spine as she responded to his eager kisses.

Samantha easily became lost in the hot kiss.

Feeling the heat of their passion, her hands turned restless, moving forward and caressing on Ethan's sexy back.

She just loved the touch of his muscled frame.

When Ethan started kissing on her neck, her eyes fluttered, observing their reflection from the glass divider of their shower area. She admired the sight of his toned back as her legs spread apart for him.

She felt Ethan's hands around her waist again and down he went, pulling her lace underwear away from her body. She bit her lip, sensing herself utterly bare down there.

Just when Samantha thought Ethan would make love to her then, he returned to kissing her neck and settled on her breast for some time.

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More erotic sighs escaped her lips when her husband heartily ate her mounds, alternately sucking on her nipples.

Letting go of one breast, Ethan spoke, "Sam, you taste so good."

His eyes darted on her as he shifted to the other bosom. He latched on there for seconds more before he traced kisses down her abdomen.

"Ethan - Ethan, what are you do - Ahh... Oh my god!" Samantha wound up leaning back against the mirror when Ethan ate her rose.

She felt the warmth of his tongue lathering against her entrance!

It shocked her how her husband was tasting her peach, delighting in her love juice and hungrily devouring her down there. It granted Samantha to sigh in desire again and again while taking heavy breaths.

She did not think that Ethan was capable of pleasing her in between her thighs with the use of his own tongue! What

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surprised her the most was... how good it felt!

'Damn!' She screamed in secret, delighting at the newfound sensation.

Samantha found herself trembling by the feel of Ethan's tongue flicking against her clit. She watched with dreamy eyes as he did the work.

Her heart drummed against her ribcage, feeling utterly in cloud nine with his pleasuring.

The sight of Ethan extending out his tongue and sincerely rejoicing in her peach added to her desire.

There was no helping it. She noticed how her insides were throbbing and not a moment too soon; she came and her body mildly convulsed. ①

"Aaahhhh! Hmmmmm." Clamping her legs together, she ended up trapping Ethan's athletic face in between her thighs.

Catching her breath, she sighed, "Oh my god! That was... so damn good."

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Ethan stood up from between her legs and formed a smirk on his face. He probed, "You loved it, hon?"

Samantha nodded her head with her eyes flickering. She answered, "That was... amazing."

She noticed how Ethan had already pulled down his pajamas, and she knew it was about time to do the deed. She willingly spread her legs and said, "Honey, come to me." 4

Ethan's eyes turned devilish at her invitation. He replied, "Oh... I meant to."

While palming himself, Ethan moved closer, hissing at the sight of his wife's beautiful and pinkish entrance. He remarked, "You are so beautiful, Sam, and I'm glad that you are mine."

Samantha's eyes narrowed. She bit her lip before she responded to Ethan's claims, "And... you are mine."

She flushed at her own announcement, but despite being hesitant, Ethan

answered, "Claim it, Sam. Claim it... because we... we belong together."

Ethan hungrily covered her lips once more, leaning over abruptly. He carelessly relished on Samantha's tongue and lips while playing with himself.

Seconds after, he let go. He pointed his shaft in front of her hole and said, "I want to... make love to my wife every day - Aahhh!"

A cry of satisfaction escaped Ethan's lips. He threw his head back, sensing the tightness around his erection. Just by the feel of her wetness, he felt utterly elated.

Returning his focus on Samantha, he demanded, "Honey, look at me. Look at me."

Samantha earlier closed her eyes, also savoring the feel of his manhood inside of her. She opened her eyes for her husband and said, "I'm looking."

While Samantha sat on the wash bin countertop, Ethan pounded on her. He held her waist while delighting in her

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bouncing breasts and the glow on his rod. He frequently studied her desirable body and witness that engulfed his manhood.

Everything at that point added to the flames of his yearning.

Samantha, on the other hand, had her hands against the countertop, preventing herself from getting pushed against the mirror. Her body arched while also studying her husband's sexy frame.

She felt a strange tingling sensation in her peach, just checking out her gorgeous husband doing her.

To Samantha's views, it was so arousing, especially being able to see how he went in and out of her.

Moreover, with the feel of Ethan's length filling her completely, she often found herself shivering at his thrusts. She thought he was big and utterly satisfying.

It made her wonder what it was like the first time they had sex. Surely, she must have enjoyed it, having produced two lovely children. Nonetheless, she was glad she could have a taste of her

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glad she could have
husband... now and then. No longer will it
be... a vague memory of the past.

When Ethan picked up the pace,
Samantha cried in delight. She could not
fathom how she was capable of releasing
such words, but she repeatedly
expressed, "Yes, Ethan. Honey, do me
harder."

It was Ethan's pleasure!

He sped his pumping motion while
holding on to her slender waist and as he
did, he frequently leaned over and ate her
breasts.

"I'm coming, Sam... I'm coming -
Ughhhh! Aaaahhhh! Fuck!" Ethan ended
up moaning loudly, feeling goosebumps
all over his body.

While Samantha wrapped her arms
around his frame, he pushed and pushed
his manhood further deeper into her
womb and released all his soldiers inside
of her.

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When he settled his passions, he watched the mirror as he embraced Samantha tight. He fascinated by her slender frame and caressed her bare back.

Ethan kissed the side of Samantha's face and barely a whisper he spoke, "Sam, I - I just love you. I want you to know that."

Looking at the glass bathroom divider, Samantha was still staring at the reflection of their bodies against when Ethan spoke. She was gawking at Ethan's sexy back and how his buttocks practically hallowed as he pushed for the very last time.

Hearing him say he loved her filled her heart with warmth. She felt so gratified that she answered, "Honey... can - can we... do it again?"

"Mommy?! Where are you?!" They both heard Kenzie scream, making Samantha frown.

Chapter 58: The Booty Call

Samantha reported to work at seven in the morning. She wanted to observe the breakfast service at the hotel, aiding Anthony, her sous chef that day.

As she enforced new dishes and imposed new rules in her kitchen, she was at least satisfied how her executive sous chef had begun his work without complaining.

The only catch was, he was giving her a silent treatment. Still, Samantha thought the fact that Matteo was back to work meant he accepted defeat. She now only had to win his friendship. ³

With the exception of one sous chef named Deana, everyone was back to work.

Deana, the bitter and number one follower of Matteo, called in sick that day. Thankfully, it was not such a busy day.

Being a Tuesday, the rest of the morning was somewhat quiet. At eleven in the morning, Samantha found herself yawning from inside the kitchen.

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She then thought about her husband and so she leaned back on one side of the wall, just thinking about Ethan. She did not know when and how it happened, but she flushed out of nowhere. She found herself recalling being eaten down there that she felt goosebumps all over.

"Are you okay, Chef?" Jane, her station chef, caught her attention.

Clearing her throat, she answered, "Yeah... I." She turned tomato red before admitting, "I was just... thinking about my husband."

"Oh," expressed Jane. "Well, I would be blushing too if I had a husband as fine as Mr. Ethan Wright!"

One other female chef echoed, "Amen to that!"

"Chef, you should bring your husband some lunch. We are too over staff for lunch service and you mentioned you will stay until dinner service, so why not take a longer lunch out!" Suggested Anthony. He turned to Matteo and asked, "Right Chef Matteo?"

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Matteo was silent for a second, but eventually answered, "Anthony and I can take care of lunch service."

"Go, girl! Get your man!" Suggested Jane while raising her brows.

Samantha thought about it and so she decided to go with the suggestion. She said, "Okay, then Matteo and I will take care of the dinner service!"

"What kind of sloppy proposal are you giving me on a Tuesday morning?!" Ethan threw the papers in front of two managers, out on the table from inside one of the building's conference rooms.

It was late last year that they had ventured with a construction company and while they were doing well over the past few months; they were faced with a bad review following an overlook by one of the partnering company's engineers.

This left Ethan upset that Tuesday morning, not having presented a reasonable proposal.

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"We are not going to have lunch until you give me a good solution! You hear me - Who is that disturbing our meeting?!" Ethan's angry voice shifted to the loud knock on the door.

Everyone was also stunned to hear disturbance during their meeting, especially John Garcia.

If anything, everyone knew when the boss was not in the good mood, it was suicidal to cut off their meeting.

The door opened, and Samantha came in, wearing a lovely dress. Her face was red as she appeared contrite and said, "Sorry."

Raising several take-out bags, she suggested, "I wanted to have lunch with you but - "

"Let's take an hour lunch break," Ethan immediately announced, adjusting his angry mood. "But when I come back, the food that you have taken should already create a better solution to the problem."

"Um... I was thinking maybe... an hour and a half... Lunch break?" Samantha

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wasn't sure how far her husband will go, but something in her wanted to test him.

Ethan glanced at his wife for a second before changing the times, "An hour and a half." He scanned the eyes of his managers and demanded, "Thank my wife for giving you... additional time."

"Thank you, Mrs. Wright. Thank you!"

"You are an angel, Mrs. Wright! Thank you," John Garcia, who was also present, was grateful that he could eat lunch that day. He thought, yet again, it proved how much his boss treasured Samantha.

After seeing John and the managers leave, Ethan made his way to his wife. He heard her ask, "Did I come in a bad time?"

"Yes, but... You are my priority," said Ethan. "Let's have lunch at my office."

Samantha was pleased that Ethan had already made the office aware of his wife. She did not have any difficulty going into the office and speaking with the rest of the secretaries. It was like; they were all warned to give her the utmost attention required.

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It was during their meals that Samantha spoke of Ethan's temper during their meeting. She told, "Honey, I may not be aware of how bad the situation is, but you need to calm down when speaking to your people. They may be your employees, but without them, things could be worse."

Ethan swallowed the salmon that was in his mouth before he answered, "I gave them enough time to prepare, but I'll take that into consideration." He glanced at her adoringly and said, "Thank you, hon, and thank you for coming to see me for lunch." 3

"Was it okay that I came over?" She asked before pursing her lips.

Putting down his takeout box, he answered, "Of course, honey. You are my wife. You can disturb me anytime. What is my company if I leave you and my children without attention? You, Kyle, and Kenzie are my life now."

That utterly made Samantha smile. Even without finishing her lunch, she placed down her meal and walked over to the other side of the couch.

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Ethan had a small sitting area inside his office, and it was there that they had lunch together.

Samantha slowly sat on his lap and caressed his handsome face. She pecked on his cheek and said, "That's why you are so easy to fall in love with."

"Hmmm," said Ethan with a smirk. "Do I... get a reward for that?"

They quickly exchanged the flavors of their meals, kissing while generously parting their mouths. It took just seconds for them to engross in a savory and passionate kiss before they let go.

"Sam, I want you," Ethan softly said.

Samantha announced, "Will you." She flushed before suggesting. "Taste me down there again?"

The truth was, after getting some free time at the hotel, she found herself thinking about her husband, eating her rose. It filled her desire completely that it never left her mind.

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When she came to Ethan's office, she meant to get eaten, and she wasn't leaving until she got one good loving.

"Hmmm... With pleasure, my wife. With pleasure," Ethan said before suggesting. "Let me just... turn off the cameras."

Half an hour passed and Samantha was utterly overjoyed. She had that glow in her face that told; she got laid! ³

As she fixed herself from inside Ethan's private restroom, she told herself, 'Way to go, Sam!'

After putting on her make-up, she came out and sat back next to her husband. She pecked on his cheek and said, "Thanks hon, I better get going. Edgar is waiting for me. He'll take me back to the hotel."

"Hmmm." Ethan put an arm around Samantha. He leaned back and said to her, "My dearest wife... did you come here to me... for a booty call?" ²

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Samantha wound up laughing. She answered, "I would not call it that! It's just that... we were cut off this morning!"

She turned tomato red before admitting, "I could not get over it, so I came here."

Ethan studied Samantha's beautiful face for a second. He smirked and suggested, "Well then, I suppose, it's my turn to visit you during lunch tomorrow. Have the hotel reserve one suite for us tomorrow."

Samantha's giggle faded, realizing how she had just opened doors for Ethan to devour her even in between work. She swallowed her own spew and questioned, "Really? It can't wait until evening?"

Clearing his throat, Ethan told, "The lunch rendezvous was... very exciting." He smirked and added, "I want to try it again."

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Chapter 59: The Christmas Bonus

The afternoon was another quiet time for the kitchen. So Samantha took the chance to discuss with her team the upcoming grand opening of the hotel. They were two weeks away and like as she did with their regular dishes; she wanted to make some slight modifications to the planned courses.

Since they did not have any orders at three in the afternoon, nor were the reservations in the evening that significant, they tested on her alterations, cooking the required dishes according to Samantha's adjustments.

The Pearl Diamond Restaurant was made closed for their own food tasting and discussion over the dishes.

"Hmmm... This is just heaven," remarked Anthony. "Wonder why I never tried it this way!"

"I love the mix seafood dish!" Remarked Jane. "I did not think it was possible to use lemon leaves as an added aroma!"

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Samantha chuckled and said to them, " Sometimes, you learn things as you cook for your child."

Matteo, on the other hand, was the one to first taste the set of sea urchin scrambled eggs. He was silent as he chewed down the creamy dish.

Everyone waited for his approval so they all fell silent.

Matteo cleared his throat and drank a glass of water. He said, "The idea of having scrambled eggs as an appetizer appalls me." He looked down at the dish before adding, "But it's fucking good."

Claps could be heard across the restaurant and Jane cheered, "Chef Matteo and Chef Sam agreed!"

It left Samantha smiling, and while Matteo did not smile at all. He at least expressed, "the changes are good."

When everyone dispersed back into their stations, Samantha took the chance to speak to Matteo in person.

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It would seem to Samantha that he remained in the restaurant on purpose. Before she could say another word, Matteo said, "When I heard that you did not have any Michelin Star experience, I frowned. You lacked that experience to turn this restaurant into a refined one."

Matteo sighed and told, "But I will not deny that your views and your passion for food make you unique. Still, I think you need more experience in managing the kitchen. You can't suddenly take over the kitchen just because your kitchen staff turned rebellious. It would have been more practical of you to threaten us for suspension or getting fired."

"Is it? And then what? Look for new chefs to train two weeks before the grand opening?" Samantha pointed out. "I get that I may not have the sternness expected of a leader that everyone is used to... coming from you, but ... I know that I have the heart."

"My ways will be different," Samantha added. "Sure, I thought about it. Even my husband suggested letting you go, but I

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husband suggest...
want to make practical decisions."

"And with your experience, Matteo, I could really use your help." Samantha sighed and expressed, "More than just a career for myself, I don't want to let my husband down." 2

She did not know why, but she became teary-eyed as she expressed, "He brought me and my kids so much joy and contentment. So I want to make him proud. Aside from doing this for myself, I want him to be successful in the hospitality industry."

"So more than just being your boss, as a wife of your highest boss, I am also asking for your help. Work with me and let's bring fame to this hotel through the food that we make." Samantha extended her hand to Matteo and suggested, "We don't have to be friends, but we could... at least work harmoniously... Is that a deal?"

For a second, Matteo, with his rigid expression, his grey eyes, and his well-defined face, gawked at Samantha's hand. He gasped just before he reached for her hand and he said, "Fine, but I

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want to be off on Saturdays."

"Works well for me. I prefer Sundays as my off," Samantha answered.

"If Mr. Wright wants to take this restaurant to a Michelin level, he needs to hire more chefs," suggested Matteo.

Samantha raised a finger and told, "I agree, but not right now. I will, however, put up a request to hire more and so they can be ready, once our restaurants become busier." 2

Matteo nodded. He let go of Samantha's hand and said, "And about Deana. I can try, but she... she has a mind of her own."

With a smile, Samantha answered, "Thank you, Chef Matteo... Let's prepare for dinner service now."

Just as Samantha got up, Matteo implied, "You must love your husband."

He himself got up from his seat and added, "By the way you talk about him and you think... about him."

Biting her lip, Samantha flushed. She

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Biting her lip, Samantha flushed. She

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answered, "Yes... I - I do." Her smile further beamed as she told, "Rarely do we find the one we truly love, right? I feel so blessed."

Samantha did not really think she would wind up admitting her true and deepest feelings without Ethan around, but she just felt it was the most suitable answer to say.

Last night, she was still deciding how much her feelings for Ethan were growing, but somehow, a big part of her had already secretly decided.

She took a quick break, going back to the locker area, and muttered as she grabbed her phone. She said, "Maybe I really do... already love, Ethan."

Samantha sent her husband a quick text which said, "Honey, I miss you already. Can't wait to see you tonight." 2

Back at the Wright Diamond Corporation, Ethan Wright was drowned with work, having a discussion with John and a few o

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f his directors. It was his third meeting of the day.

He had his usual meticulous look on as he was speaking, "We'll need to visit Laton City next week and see how the investment is going. In the meantime - "

Ethan's words were halted, hearing "Girl In The Mirror as his ringtone."

John and Ethan's executives turned to him in shock. Even Ethan was alarmed by the sudden tone of his mobile.

He cleared his throat and sneered as he took out his phone from his pocket.

It was a call from Kenzie.

He had placed new sim cards on their tablet just recently so both Kyle and Kenzie could call him at their convenience. He answered it with hesitation, "Sweetheart, what is it? I'm in a meeting."

"Okay. I will." Putting down the phone, Ethan turned to his assistant and told, "Kenzie wants those... creamy donuts."

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"Right, I got that Mr. Wright. I'll buy them after the meeting," Answered John.

As Ethan shook his head and realized his children had messed with his ringtone. He recalled how he handed his mobile to Kyle during their dinner at the old Wright Family mansion. Instead of being upset, he was impressed by how his son made the changes so swiftly.

Nonetheless, he found it cute. It was, at least, a unique ringtone that will certainly catch his attention.

While everyone at the conference table was stunned by the CEO, suddenly taking calls in the middle of the meeting, another tone came about from Ethan's phone.

"Isn't she lovely? Isn't she wonderful..." It was another sweet song that apparently indicated any call or text coming from his wife.

Yet again, he was dumbfounded. Ethan opened his phone and saw the text coming from Samantha. His lips curved into a smile, reading her message, "

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Honey, I miss you already. Can't wait to see you tonight."

He caressed his chin, just gawking at his phone. For seconds, he remained silent, delighting in the words seen on the screen. When he returned to his senses he declared, "I am announcing an increase to your Christmas bonus!" 5

He turned to John and said, "Have HR increase the Christmas bonus by 5%."

"Really - really boss?" John Garcia probed with eyes widening.

"Yes, really," Ethan answered, smiling as he answered Samantha's text. 1

John Garcia was so pleased with the outcome of that meeting and he knew... it was thanks to the new Mrs. Wright. He silently said to himself, 'Thank you heavens for taking us to Monroe City!'

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Chapter 60: I Love You

The middle of the week was surprisingly busier for the hotel. Both restaurants of the First Diamond Hotel were packed with guests.

It was thanks to Belinda Lopez's feature of the hotel on a Wednesday morning that reservations came through in the afternoon and in the evening itself.

On a Thursday night, The Pearl Diamond Restaurant was crowded!

Samantha wound up coming home very late in the evening that day, fulfilling the very last order, not wanting to leave her team on their very first rewarding night.

Entering the master bedroom, Samantha greeted her husband, "Hey there, handsome."

"Hmmm. Is it normal for the wife to come home much later than her husband?"

"Ethan answered while putting aside his laptop.

Samantha chuckled and climbed right next to him on the bed. She, herself,

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warranted for a kiss, crashing into his arms and lips.

That prompted Ethan to wrap his arms around Samantha and caressing her angelic face.

As they kissed, Samantha spoke, "I'm so tired today." She pecked on his lips again before telling him, "I just want to keep kissing you the whole night."

"You should have let me come and see you during lunch break," told Ethan.

After another kiss on his warm lips, Samantha smiled and said, "We were so busy. We'll have to agree to change our lunch meeting if you want to see me at the hotel. Say about two in the afternoon?"

"Hmmm. Okay," he answered before locking lips with her again.

Getting lost in their passionate kisses, Samantha softly moaned as Ethan's hands turned restless. She then let go to say to him, "Honey, I - I have been meaning to tell you."

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"I." Samantha's face turned red as she looked straight into his intense brown eyes. "Ethan, I wanted to tell you."

"What?" Ethan probed, seeing her reluctance.

"I wanted to tell you that." Her face burned brighter red as she resumed, "That I love you."

She closed her eyes, resting her face against his when she added, "I am sure about it now."

The next thing Samantha felt were kisses all over her face, including on her neck. Ethan pecked on her lips once more and asked, "Tell me again."

"I love you," she repeated before giggling.

"Again," he requested.

Samantha opened her eyes and stared into his. She smiled as she touched his athletic face and told, "I love you, Mr. Ethan Wright; my husband and the father of my children... I love you." 3

Ethan wound up covering Samantha's lips so fervently. As he parted her lips, their tongues danced carelessly with each others'.

The heat of the moment led Ethan to search under her dress, but his hands were halted by Samantha's palms. She smiled and told him, "Ethan, I... Earlier today, I had my period." ①

A wave of dismay flashed in Ethan's face. He gulped as he asked, "What?"

"I had my period earlier this afternoon," she had to repeat while rolling her eyes.

"You - you aren't pregnant?" Ethan probed with a frown.

Samantha leaned back, completely taken aback by his words. She asked, "You - you wanted me to get pregnant?"

"Have I ever pulled out? I made sure I left every bit of my troopers inside," Ethan pointed out. "Are you sure?" ②

"Your troopers?" Samantha echoed, giggling at his term.

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"I am serious, Sam," Ethan said. "I want another child. I want to experience it for myself."

Samantha embraced Ethan again. She took heavy breaths before telling, "Ethan, there are so many things that I want to do now... now that I am working for your hotel."

"Our hotel," He pointed out.

"Fine," said Samantha. "The point is, I want to achieve so much more before... before we have another child."

She pulled away and told, "I hope you understand. I want to at least bring The First Diamond Hotel to fame before I start taking on leave of absence." With a sigh, she added, "Growing a child inside isn't easy. with Kenzie and Kyle, I was pretty lucky I had rest most of the time since I did not have work back then." ①

With another peck on his lips, she added, "You understand, right?"

Ethan exhaled deeply. His mouth twitched before he finally spoke, "Okay. I

understand. Nine months?"

"Pfft! Haha! No. Maybe, at least one year or more?" Samantha proposed. "Besides, we have two lovely children."

"Okay, one year," said Ethan. He frowned and seemingly retracted, "Unless there is an accident."

That made Samantha lean back and protested, "What accident?"

"Nothing," Ethan answered. "Okay, hon. I understand. One year it is."

"Thank you, Ethan. I just love you," she said.

Caressing her face, Ethan told, "I love you and I love our children."

After relishing sweet kisses and hugs from Ethan, she acted to leave his side and said, "Let me take a shower."

"Wait, tell me again," Ethan requested, keeping Samantha in his hold. "Tell me you love me."

"I love you, Mr. Ethan Wright," she said while chuckling. "And for a scary man, I

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think its cute how you want me to say it again and again."

"Again," he pleaded while closing his eyes and resting his face on the side of her neck.

"Ethan, I love you." Samantha turned to kiss his cheek and said, "Now, let me go have my shower."

A hiss left Ethan's lips, and he clarified, "Are you sure you have your period?" ¹

"Yes!" She answered while walking towards the bathroom.

Heartbeats later, when Samantha came out of the shower, she was stunned to see her children already in position on the bed. Her eyes widened at Ethan and she heard him say, "They miss you."

"Hi Mommy, why did you come home so late?" Kyle probed with sleepy eyes.

"It was busy today, sweetie." Samantha reached for Kyle and pecked on his forehead. "I miss my little Ethan."

She walked to the other side of the bed

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and settled under the sheets where Kenzie was lying down. She embraced her little girl and said, "I miss my little me too."

"Goodnight, Mommy," Kenzie said while offering a kiss to Samantha. "I love you."

"Goodnight, Kenzie, and Kyle. I love you too," answered Samantha.

"Goodnight, Daddy. I love you," said Kenzie.

"I love you too, Kenzie. I love you, Kyle. Goodnight," answered Ethan.

"Goodnight, Mommy, and Daddy," Kyle responded. "I love you all, including Kenzie."

"Oh, yeah. I love Kyle too," Kenzie said while giggling.

While the children were closing their eyes, Ethan looked at Samantha from the other side of the bed. He said, "I also love, Mommy."

Samantha's eyes were already closed, but with Ethan's words, she smiled and

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looked up to him. She told, "I love, Daddy too."

Kyle yawned and declared, "So glad we found Daddy." ①

"Yeah," said Kenzie with her eyes closed.

While the happy family was taking their sleep that night, someone from the military camp was having the worst night of her life!

"A rising star, living in the military camp under the shelter of her adoptive father, sexually gets involved with a director and a producer in order to get a role in the big screen!" Annie Davis read the article that was recently posted on the internet. She turned to her mother and asked, "Mother, what do I do?"

"They did not mention the name, Annie! Stop being so paranoid!" Scolded Catherine Davis.

Both of them were inside Annie's room, reading the article that became posted a few hours ago. They were both shocked to

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read the details included in the article, and while there was no name mention, Annie was the only starlet that lived in the military camp.

"I thought you were being careful, Annie!" Catherine scolded.

"Mother, I was." Annie answered. "And can you keep your voice down? Dad might hear you."

"This is all normal. Most starlets gets their shot by sleeping with the director or the producer. I - I am just one of them," Annie muttered. 2

"Oh, my god! What if... What if Clayton reads about this?!" Fear suddenly crept into her mind, recalling Ethan Wright's threat. "It must have been Ethan Wright! It could only be Ethan!"

Anger easily filled her eyes as Annie declared, "I'm going to make sure that Samantha pays! She must have influenced Ethan to have someone do this!"

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"Shut up!" Catherine warned. With a sigh, she said, "I'm going to convince your father to speak to Samantha about this. Don't worry, maybe this issue will die down... For now, stop being in contact with your director and producer."

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Chapter 61: The Unexpected Visit

"Chef Sam, someone... is here to see you," said one of the servers of the Pearl Diamond Restaurant on a Friday afternoon.

Samantha was just about to finish the lunch service with her team when she was informed of a visitor so formally. She frowned and asked, "Is it, my husband?"

"No, Chef... It's General Davis," said the food attendant. "What should I say?"

Feeling her heart racing, Samantha paled at the name of her father. She repeatedly flickered her eyes for seconds. Only after seeing the strange expression coming from the food attendant and some kitchen staff did she say, "Ummm... Why don't you bring him to the lobby lounge and I'll follow."

"Yes, Chef Sam."

"You okay?" Matteo asked, seeing her expression. "What's with you and the military? You had the same scared expression when you went to see the

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Brown couple."

Turning to Matteo, Samantha answered, "Ummm... It's a long story. Do you mind taking over?"

"Of course," said Matteo. "We are about done here, anyway."

Leaving the kitchen, Samantha made the slowest walk to the hotel lobby lounge. It was nearing the coffee shop where she found her father, drinking a cup of coffee while in his uniform.

When Samantha stood a meter from her father, she asked, "General Davis. I heard you asked of me? What can I do for you?"

Winfield Davis stared at Samantha blankly for seconds. He took a sip from his coffee and asked, "Is that how you address your own father?" 18

Samantha wound up looking around before she took the seat in front of him. She settled in, clearing her throat before asking, "I'm sorry, but I thought we were going to pretend like we don't know each other... just like the last two occasions when we saw each other." 3

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A scoff left Winfield's lips. He shook his head and said, "We need to have a proper talk."

"What about?" She plainly asked.

"I kicked you out of the house because you angered me with your carelessness," He reminded her.

"I get that," Samantha answered. "But can't a daughter not make a mistake? Was my sin that grave for you to ignore me all these years?"

"You have shamed me - "

"Granted," Samantha cleared the air with her acknowledgment. "I grieved and suffered the consequences, but even if I am given the chance to change everything, I would not change any."

"I have two lovely children and I love them so dearly," Samantha told. She frowned, thinking if she should tell her father that Ethan was the father, but they had both agreed to tell them at the right time.

"They brought me so much joy and I would never regret keeping them," she added.

"You have two children?" Winfield asked with a frown.

"Yes. I have fraternal twins; a boy and a girl. The girl looks like me - like mom," she made sure to include her mother, Sarah Davis, into the picture. "They are your flesh and blood... your grandchildren."

Samantha saw how her father's eyes fluttered. She heard him ask, "Does Ethan know - "

"Of course, he does," Samantha cut off her father's words. "Why would I keep that from him?"

For seconds, there was silence between them. Then Samantha asked, "What brought you here, father?"

It took another second for Winfield to speak. He cleared his throat and probed, "Are you and Ethan responsible for the scandal that came out against Annie? The

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one that is spreading all over the internet?

"

Samantha frowned at her father's probing. She inquired, "What scandal?"

"There is an article that mentions a rising starlet involved in a scandal with a director and producer. It was also shared severely on social media. The article seems to point to Annie," told Winfield. "If you and Ethan had anything to do with it - "

"What makes you think we had something to do with it, father? Why us?" Samantha shot back at Winfield. "And what if it's true? Is it not that hard to believe?"

She sneered and added, "Well, I would not be so shocked. I mean, you believed in your adoptive daughter more than your own." 4

"Enough, Samantha. What happened to you was not your sister's fault! She did not get pregnant, you did!" Winfield's voice raised, making some food attendants look in their direction. 3

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"This conversation is not going anywhere, but going back to your question, no! Our lives are too busy and occupied to be bothered by one rising star," Samantha said while getting up from her seat. "If you'll excuse me, General. I have work to do."

"Sam!" Called the general. "Whatever it was in the past. Let's forget about it. Forget about what's causing the hatred between you and your sister and I'll - I'll forget about your wrongs... Just make sure that you or Ethan had nothing to do with the scandal... And... can your husband help me clear this gossip that is going around the internet?" 7

Samantha could not believe her ears. Clearly, he was here for Annie. He was never really here to make amends with her, but her father was still here to protect her stepsister.

She took a deep breath and collected herself. She sat back down, trying to remember what Ethan told her when the time comes she would face her father once more... For now, she had to eat her

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pride.

Turning to Winfield Davis, she asked, "And where does that leave me? Am I... your daughter again? Or is Annie still your only daughter?"

"Of course, Sam. You are my daughter," said the general. "Annie is your stepsister."

"Ah, yes. That's right. I almost forgot I'm your real daughter. Sometimes I think I was the adopted one," Samantha murmured, giving a sarcastic tone. "I'll talk to Ethan and see what he can do."

"But Annie needs to be prepared, father. Since I'm back and you'll acknowledge me as your daughter, she needs to remember her place. Remind her how I am your real daughter and she is just the adopted one. Otherwise, I will not help her." Samantha got up and just before leaving she said, "After nearly six years, it was nice talking to you, father." 5

On the evening of that same day,

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On the phone, he spoke, "Aiden, you can turn down the articles and the trolls that are spreading the truth of Annie Davis... for now. I'll tell you when is the next phase."

Hearing her husband's conversation, Samantha's eyes widened. She leaned back in horror and asked, "You - you! It was you all along?!" 7

"Of course. That woman cannot badmouth my wife without getting punished," said Ethan. "That was just a warning. I have more dirt on her; reason enough for her to leave the country. I'm just waiting for her to make another attack on you and she... she will pay the price."

"How do you even know she will counter?" Samantha probed.

"Sam, she drugged you, guided you into a stranger's room. A scheme like that does not come from a normal girl. Women like her... will always be jealous, vengeful, and bitter. Trust me when I say, she will conspire against you again," told Ethan.

Ethan took out some documents in his bag and showed them to Samantha. He said, "I had the changes to the children's name done. It won't be in the government's system yet, but at least the paper works are done."

"Sam, both Kenzie, and Kyle are now a Wright. Tell your father, we will be visiting his home this Sunday... together with my parents. It's now the right time to tell your father everything," added Ethan.

Samantha gawked at the papers in her hand. She nearly cried about how Ethan made the amendments to their birth certificates. She looked at him and said, "Ethan, thank you."

"No... being a Wright is yours and our children's rights. You and my children deserve it," Ethan answered. "You are a Wright... so claim it!"

A tear fell down her cheek as she said, "Yes, I am a Wright and I love you so."

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"Hmmm. And I too." After pecking on Samantha's face, he leaned back and said, "I wonder what your father has to say when he learns I am your children's father?"

"I am... more interested to see Annie's reaction," said Samantha with a grin. "Gosh, it makes me excited and nervous."

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Chapter 62: Shameful!

From within the Fort Eagle Military Camp, the biggest estate, an old home of the Davis family, had helpers scrambling left and right in preparation for Samantha's return.

"What is all this? Why have you invited some of Sam's previous classmates? Even Clayton and his family are here," Winfield Davis probed with his brows drawn together, seeing so many people gathered in their dining room that ten-thirty in the morning.

"Well, Winfield. This is your daughter's official return to the mansion. We thought it would be nice for her to meet up with old friends and see familiar faces," suggested Catherine Davis. "I even invited some of your relatives, coming from the Davis side!" ③

"Today is a day for Samantha to rejoice, coming back to this home!" Catherine exclaimed. "That's why we prepared so much food!"

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She smiled at Winfield Davis before saying, "I can't wait to see her!"

It baffled Winfield how his wife was so eager to see Samantha. Sure, it was her idea to end the long years of silence between them, but as far as he could recall, she was never ambitious to see his daughter since the conflict between Samantha and Annie came about.

He could not help but remark, "How easy it is for you to shift your mood now that Sam is Ethan Wright's wife."

Catherine leaned back at his words. She looked around before answering, "We can't help it. It's amazing how she became Ethan's wife, but since she is, we can't be in conflict with the Wrights. Besides, it's like I said... I'm sure Sam had regretted her mistakes." 3

She caressed the arms of her husband and suggested, "Let's move on from here. Why don't you take your seat and have some appetizer while waiting for your daughter?"

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Winfield was unsure if this was the best welcome, especially since there are still matters that he and his daughter have not covered. Samantha's arrival was supposed to be a time for them to have a proper talk, more than to celebrate. However, he did not also have the heart to push away the people who were already present.

He simply took his seat and entertained the probing of Clayton's father.

Just as they were having a busy discussion, the maids came in to announce, "General, madam, a really nice car has arrived."

"Oh, that must be them!" Catherine turned to Annie and suggested, "Let's go meet them! Come on, Winfield!"

The three of them walked in the direction of the door, but to their surprise, only Amanda and Daniel Wright came out of the luxury Audi.

Amanda, in her alluring and elegant stance, looked up to Winfield and said, "Long time to no see, Winfield."

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"I could say the same, Amanda," answered the general.

"Right. These are Ethan's parents! The famous, Daniel and Amanda Wright!" Catherine eagerly remarked with a smile.

"Who could ever forget how the great Daniel Wright gave rise to the biggest corporation in the city!"

Forcing a smile, Daniel walked towards the mansion door with his wife. He answered, "Thank you for the compliments."

Daniel extended his hand first to the general and told, "It has been a long time, Winfield. Who would have thought our children would end up... getting married."

"Daniel, Amanda. It's nice to see you again," said Winfield. "This is my wife, Catherine and my other daughter, Annie."

Annie and Catherine fell bemused at the familiarity the two parties were giving to each other. Catherine could not help but probe, "You seem to... know each other well."

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"Yes, we do," said Winfield.

"I can't believe you forgot, Catherine. Well, I can't blame, you. Back then, my husband was still the new CEO of the Wright Diamond Corporation." Amanda offered her hand to Catherine and said, "I came here once and introduced myself as Sarah's friend."

Shifting her gaze to Winfield, Amanda revealed, "Your wife did not allow me to see Samantha back then."

While Winfield frowned, Catherine burst into laughter. She frowned as she turned to Winfield and said, "I - I don't remember and I must have forgotten already." She sneered and added, "There were so many people who introduced themselves as Sarah's friend and I was just being protective of Sam back then!"

When a realization hit her, Catherine asked, "So... so you knew Samantha."

"Of course, I am... her godmother," Amanda answered with a smile.

Both the jaws of Annie and Catherine

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"Yes, we do," said Winfield.

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dropped. They were planning to ruin Samantha in the face of Ethan's parents, but now they weren't sure if that was still possible. ②

"You - you are Sam's godmother?"
Annie repeated with a trembling voice.

"Yes, I am," Amanda answered.

Turning to the general, Amanda added, "Sam and Ethan are running late. There was a problem in their house that cause their delayed departure. So we can have a little chat while waiting for them."

"I see. Well, I suppose, we could catch up," said Winfield.

They all made their way to the dining table, introducing Daniel and Amanda Wright to everyone.

Pleasantries were exchanged, and special attention was given to Matilda by Amanda.

Once again, the sweet conversation between Matilda Davis and Amanda Wright made Catherine reluctant, but she had to try. For her daughter's sake and

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for her plans, she had to try to taint Samantha's reputation and put Annie on a pedestal. 4

While they were savoring fruits and some cheese platters with wine, Catherine suddenly brought up Samantha's past. She said to the Wright couple, "You know Amanda and Daniel. We are so thankful that despite Samantha's mistake in the past."

She sneered and added, "You know... having slept with a stranger who was supposedly an ugly old man. You - you still managed to accept her as a daughter-in-law. We were so worried that Samantha would never find someone who will accept her." 8

"Catherine!" Winfield warned. "Why are you bringing this up in front of everyone?"

Acting to be puzzled, Catherine turned to the Wrights and to all the guests. She covered her mouth with her hand and said, "I'm sorry. I - I was just - Oh my goodness!"

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Directing her words to Amanda and Daniel, she assumed, "You did not know about this? I - I thought you knew since Sam is married to Ethan?"

Adding more to the creased on her forehead, Catherine suggested, "That child! She never learned! Winfield wound up throwing her out of the house because of what she did. I never thought she would lie about the circumstances of her child!"

It was because Amanda and Daniel remained quiet that Catherine jumped to conclusions. Despite the warning coming from Winfield, she continued talking because Amanda and Daniel did not stop her at all.

In fact, Amanda encouraged, "Go on. Tell me more." 11

Annie, this time, became eager to add to the tale, seeing the interest coming from Amanda Wright. She reported, "It was a terrible mistake that Samantha did. While attending a wedding party, she went with another man into his room - an old ugly

man and that was how she got pregnant with a child whom we have never seen by the way."

A loud thud became audible from Winfield's end as he slammed his hand against the surface of the table. He demanded, "Why are we talking about this? I thought this lunch was to welcome Sam back into our home!"

"Oh, but Winfield. It's only fair that the Wrights know about Samantha's past. They have every right to know!" Catherine turned to the Browns and Samantha's classmates in the military academy and added, "As for the others, they already know about this."

"It's okay, Winfield, let them speak," encouraged Amanda.

Matilda, who was trying to calm herself in one corner of the table, just drank juice, knowing how it will all backfire soon. Still, she was angered at what Catherine and Annie were doing.

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"Yes, and what was really worse was how Samantha never knew about the man she slept with!" Catherine leaned closer from across the table to Amanda and Daniel. Only then did she tell, "As punishment, Winfield had to kick Sam out of our home, hoping that she would reflect on her mistakes."

"It's because you fed my son these ideas!" Matilda finally spoke, throwing a glare at Catherine.

"Why, of course, mother! Please," Catherine countered. "Sam needed to learn from her mistake!"

They all heard Amanda take a deep breath. For seconds, she closed her eyes and had her hands on the table; her face turning bright red.

After some time, she fluttered her eyes open and announced, "I think... that is just terrible."

A smile crept onto Catherine's and Annie's face while Winfield fell distracted.

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The rest of the guests from within the dining area of the Davises fell worried for what will come out of Amanda Wright's mouth. Everyone turned to Amanda, waiting for her to resume her thoughts.

Clearing her throat, Amanda told, "You know, I can still perfectly remember the words of one of Ethan's godparents. Senator Haris? Yes, he is Ethan's godparent. He is a good example to us all, being a parent and an advocate for familial needs."

Amanda smiled as she looked into the eyes of everyone at the table. She said, "Senator Haris told me and Daniel before that being a parent is a lifelong responsibility. It doesn't stop when our children are old enough to make decisions on their own." 3

"I'm sure, Mr. and Mrs. Brown still give a word of advice to their son at this age, right?" Amanda probed, hoping to get the Brown's reaction.

"Um, yes. Yes, we do," answered Ingrid Brown.

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"Um, yes. Yes, we do," answered Ingrid Brown.

"Yes. See?" Amanda turned to Catherine before looking into Winfield's eyes. She said, "In fact the scriptures says, train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old, he will not depart from it." ²

"You see... as responsible and loving parents, we should not abandon our children during the days they need us the most." With a frown on Amanda's face, she added, "If that were the decisions that we all make, then what is the purpose of us parents?"

Amanda closed her speech, nearly raising her voice. A hint of anger clearly reflected in her tone. "I think! It's a shame that you both had thrown Samantha out of the house in her most trying times! You have shamed the role of a parent!"

Chapter 63: The Ugly Old Man 2

"You have wrongly represented us - parents! What kind of parents would throw their child out of their home when she is two months pregnant! What?!"

Amanda's eyes widened and her voice further raised as she added, "More than the shame of Sam's misreading, I bet people behind your back talked about the shameful act you both had done to the child you call your own!"

Amanda had been glaring back and forth at Catherine and Winfield before she added, "If Sarah were alive, she would dare not abandon her own child! Clearly, Winfield, this new wife of yours is BELOW Sarah! She and her daughter even dared to bring up Samantha's past like it was the worst sin on earth!"

Amanda's words brought about silence in the room.

Everyone saw how Winfield's pride was wounded, and how Catherine's face paled. All the more, when Amanda added, "I wonder what is more sinful, getting pregnant or murder!" 6

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Redirecting her gaze to Catherine, Amanda squinted. Her nose flared while silently accusing Winfield's wife.

The entire time, Daniel Wright only folded his hands against his chest whereas, Matilda was starting to grin at how everything had developed.

The Browns looked down their heads, sensing the anger coming from Amanda Wright.

"Wha - what are you trying to say?" Catherine's voice trembled with Amanda's words. She felt a lump in her throat before turning to her husband for help.

"What do you think... Catherine? Feeling guilty?" Amanda further tightened her eyes, looking straight at the woman.

There was clear tension in the air and while the rest of the guests were somewhat puzzled, the general found the words to say, "How has this gathering turned into an argument and a room to falsely accuse my wife?!"

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"She started it," Amanda said before twitching her mouth and rolling her eyes. She leaned back and returned to look at Winfield. "Still, I won't take back my words. You can ask any priest and other responsible parents out there! Everyone will agree with me... You were wrong, Winfield! YOU WERE WRONG!" 2

Clearing his throat, it was Daniel's time to speak. He said, "If you think... in any way, Samantha's past would affect our opinion of her, it doesn't. It absolutely does not."

A smile became painted on his face before Daniel explained, "We think... Sam is a beautiful woman with good morals, perfectly down to earth. She raised her children - not child, but two lovely children on her own and they are both good mannered."

"I am just a father-in-law, but I am proud of how Samantha raised her children. She is... a strong and independent woman, perfect for my son," added Daniel. "There is no other one... deserving to have the title of the next..."

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Mrs. Wright." 2

Amanda saw the clear dismay on the faces of Catherine and Annie Davis. She smirked inwardly, knowing how they had planned to shame Samantha all along. She silently thought, 'They are in... for more surprises!'

"Yes, Sam did a wonderful job, raising her children," Matilda cried, echoing the words of Daniel. She turned to her son and reported, "You have no idea the struggles Sam went through, having very little money as she lived by with her aunt in Monroe."

"Sadly, the money I send Sam was not enough for her and the twins to live by. She had to sell food in her apartment building while bringing her twins with her in order to earn more money." Matilda howled in tears, recalling how helpless she was for her granddaughter back then.

"She struggled, but she overcame and that says a lot about her," Matilda closed, wiping the wetness on her face.

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It was because everyone looked at the general that Winfield became aware of how his guests were moved by Matilda's tale. He felt a knife stabbing against his chest, but he still could not bring himself to acknowledge his mistake.

The general felt a lump in his throat, just contemplating at the praises coming from the Wrights and his own mother. Before he could react, a maid came in to report, "General, madam, another luxury car arrived."

Amanda took a deep breath. She reached for her handkerchief and gave it to Matilda, who was sitting next to her. She said, "Dear Aunt. It's okay now. Sam and Ethan are here! And your great-grandchildren, too! Sam's years of struggle are over."

She turned to everyone and smiled. Amanda then suggested, "It's like they say, there is always a rainbow after the storm."

A smile reflected on Ingrid Brown's face and she acknowledged, "That's true. How well blessed is Samantha."

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It was because Winfield was still having mixed emotions that he simply ordered the maid, "Guide them to the dining area."
"

"Yes, General," answered the maid.

Winfield looked at his wife and warned, "I don't want any more trouble! There is no need to bring up Sam's past!" He directed his gaze at Amanda and added, "Let's just have a peaceful gathering."

"This lunch is supposed to officially welcome my daughter back in this home," reminded the general.

Heartbeats later, they all heard a voice of a little girl, exclaiming about the decors in the house. "Wow! This place is also cool, but of course, our house is so much nicer! Mommy, are we going to meet grandpa today?"

"Yes, Kenzie... we are almost there."

Everyone could hear Samantha's voice from behind the dining area and soon enough, she appeared before them. ②

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Samantha arrived, wearing an expensive signature dress. Her hair was beautifully done, and she had that vibrant glow on her face.

They all saw how Samantha smiled confidently, despite being shocked by the presence of many in the dining area.

"Wow, I did not expect so many visitors," Samantha told. "Hi everyone, this is my daughter, Kenzie."

Kenzie waved at people sitting around the table and greeted them with a smile. Her eyes twinkled as she expressed her words, "Hi, I'm Kenzie. I'm Mommy's princess. It's nice to meet you!"

"Oh, how beautiful," remarked Ingrid Brown.

A few of Samantha's classmates from the military academy also expressed the same appreciation.

Samantha reluctantly faced her father and also introduced, "Kenzie, this is General Winfield Davis, your grandfather."

"

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Flashing her gleaming smile, Kenzie walked closer to Winfield and extended her hand. She said, "Hi grandpa, I'm Kenzie! It's nice to meet you!"

There was a moment of silence coming from Winfield, but he eventually reached for the little girl's hand and shook it. Seeing her beaming grin, he could not help but smile.

Seconds past and everyone turned shocked, a tear fell down on Winfield Davis' face before he said, "you - you look like your Mommy when - when she was little."

Kenzie chuckled and flushed before she revealed, "Yes, I'm as pretty as Mommy!"

"Yes, you are... you are indeed." The general struggled to wipe the mere drop on his face before he looked up to Samantha. With his voice breaking off, he said, "Take your seat, Sam. Where are your husband and your boy?"

"Oh, he should be here - there he is, with Kyle, my other child," Samantha said while turning to the direction of the

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living room.

It did not take long for Ethan to arrive, walking in with Kyle in his hand.

Samantha then introduced, "Everyone, you have met my husband during the engagement party of Clayton and Annie. This is Ethan and here is our son, Kyle. Say hello buddy!"

"Hi!" Kyle plainly said. "I'm Kyle. It's nice to meet you."

There was a clear confusion coming from the room. Even Catherine who was earlier angered was shocked to see the little boy next to Ethan.

For the exception of Matilda and the Wrights, everyone was gawking at both Ethan and Kyle.

It was Ingrid Brown who asked first, "Why - why does... your son look so much like Ethan?"

Only then did Winfield probe the same, "Yes, such a coincidence."

"Um... no, actually father... It is not,"

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Samantha answered before biting her lip.

"What? What do you mean exactly, Sam?"

"This time, it was Annie who probed with her brows furrowed.

"Let me answer that for Sam," Amanda cut off the awkward exchange. She looked Annie in the eye and told, "Because, it was my son whom Sam shared that night with during the wedding, almost six years ago."

"My son, Ethan Wright, was the ugly old man - the same man inside the room where you lured Samantha to that fateful night!" Explained Amanda Wright.

Seeing how Annie's face paled, Amanda leaned back in her seat and cheerfully told, "So that's how I have two beautiful grandchildren and one who looks exactly like my son! Gosh! When I found out, I was the happiest mother-in-law, grandmother, and mother in the world!"

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"No!!!! No way!!!! That - that can't be!!!" A scream left Annie Davis' lips as she stood up, throwing her utensils and porcelains on the floor! She yelled, "I perfectly recall how Lance said it was an ugly old uncle of his using the room! It can't be Ethan Wright! It can't be!!!"

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Chapter 64: Annie's Guilty Reaction

Envy flashed through Annie's eyes, seeing how Samantha's little girl easily won the heart of her adoptive father.

It irked her how Samantha could produce such an adorable young child despite having slept with an ugly old man.

Just when she thought her jealousy was at its peak, Ethan walked in, holding a boy that looked exactly like him; A mini version of the great Ethan Wright!

Annie Davis found herself gawking at Ethan and the little boy. She could vaguely hear the introductions spoken by Samantha, merely focusing on the resemblance of the two.

Finally, her soon-to-be mother-in-law broke the silence and asked, "Why - why does... your son look so much like Ethan?"

"Yes, such a coincidence," her adoptive father, Winfield Davis remarked, also looking back and forth at Ethan and the little boy.

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"Um... no, actually father... It is not,"
Annie heard Samantha answer,
practically flushing as she said the words.

It made Annie frown and probe, "What?
What do you mean exactly, Sam?"

"Let me answer that for Sam," Amanda
interfered, looking straight into Annie's
eyes.

Annie could already feel her heart
throbbing, sensing that something was
about to go down, one that she did not
like. She heard Ethan's mother reasoned,
"Because, it was my son whom Sam
shared that night with during the
wedding, almost six years ago."

"My son, Ethan Wright, was the ugly old
man - the same man inside the room
where you lured Samantha to that fateful
night!" Explained Amanda Wright,
nearly shouting into Annie's face.

Annie easily paled at the revelation. She
heard Amanda give her words of
happiness, announcing how she became a
grandmother unexpectedly.

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happiness, announcing how she became a
grandmother unexpectedly.

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While Amanda Wright spoke in delight, Annie's head was lost in confusion. Her mind went back to the time when she bumped into Lance Carter, utterly drunk during his wedding night.

More crease formed on her forehead as she recalled how she aided Lance to look for the key card, apparently belonging to his 'ugly uncle.' At least, that was what she was told.

Back then, she did not realize how Lance may have simply made-up words, especially being drunk, but when she found the key card, she grabbed it, quickly formulating a plan to lure Samantha into the same room.

Resentment filled her heart, seeing the smile and glow on Samantha's face! She thought, 'How could she be so fucking lucky?!' 5

Annie could not accept it! How could she? Did she deliver Samantha to the most eligible bachelor in the city?! 2

Her vision darkened, and she easily lost her senses!

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Clenching her hand against her utensils, Annie threw to the floor everything that was within her hold.

The smashing sounds of her plate could easily be heard across the room before she screamed, "No!!!! No way!!!! That - that can't be!!!" I perfectly recall how Lance said it was an ugly old uncle of his using the room! It can't be Ethan Wright! It can't be!!!"

Annie's face was as red as a tomato, raging in anger as she yelled.

It took about a few seconds for her to realize how she had revealed herself, noticing the silence around the room. ③

When her adoptive father stood up from his seat, glaring at her. She took a few steps back, looking around the eyes that were staring at her.

Annie's lips trembled as she tried to explain herself, "It's not - it's not what you think. I - I had a word with Lance a few years back. It - it just popped into my head since everyone was accounted for except - "

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"You can make as many excuses as you like, but the truth will prevail." Ethan directed his son to Amanda and requested to bring the children elsewhere. He knew their discussion was about to become heated. 3

Only after Amanda left with Matilda and the kids to another area of the mansion, did Ethan resume his speech. He turned to the fuming general and told, "Sam and I were both drunk and our drinks were spiked. Me by Lance and Sam by her own stepsister, Annie."

"That night was not supposed to happen, if not for Annie taking Sam into my room. It was because Annie had intentions to harm Sam, that she purposely brought her to a stranger's room while being intoxicated," added Ethan.

"Lies! Lies! You have no proof of that?!" Annie countered, pointing a finger at Ethan.

"How dare you say such a thing?! We have been through this years back. Samantha had tried to incriminate my

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daughter, but there was never a single proof that Annie did this! There was not even a single camera footage that showed Annie was with Samantha, going into a room!" Catherine had to join in the conversation.

The mother and daughter pair were left turning to the Browns and to the other guests, giving the same reasoning.

"That was because, I had the hotel manager remove most of the surveillance, but did not mean they were deleted permanently. Back then, I did not know who Sam was, and I also regretted being in such a situation. Thus, I acted to protect my name." Ethan took out a flash drive from his pocket and placed it in front of the general's table. He said, "While the hotel may not have had shown to the General the full videos of their surveillance, I - I had a copy of the deleted videos." ❶

Taking a deep breath, Ethan revealed, "This included a video of Annie taking Sam into the room where I slept."

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"Be careful, General, this is my only copy," added Ethan while looking earnestly into Winfield's eyes.

Shifting his gaze to Annie, Winfield clenched his hand into a fist. He asked, "Annie?! If this is all true, you know what will become of you!"

"Annie, is this true?" Clayton Brown also got up from his seat, recalling the night how Annie told her that Samantha declined to be with him. ²

Annie could only ignore their probing. Her eyes were glued to the flash drive, settled in front of Winfield. ²

Sweat easily formed on her forehead and she felt her whole body turning cold before she an idea crept into her head.

Out of the blue, Annie rushed to grab the flash drive, leaving Winfield taken aback.

The next thing she did was to throw it against the floor and crushed it with her feet. Repeatedly, she stumped her feet against the flash drive, making sure there was nothing left of it!

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Her guilty reaction shocked everyone!

Annie grunted while destroying the only evidence that could reveal the truth of her about that night.

"Ah! Ugh! Ah! Haha! What evidence?!" Annie pointed to Ethan and said out loud, "I'm sure you just made that up! You probably did video editing in order to make it appear like it was me - Ahhhh!"

Without warning, a slap went across Annie's face, and it came from General Winfield Davis himself. Before she could move away, she felt hands going around her neck.

"How dare you?! How dare you do this to my own daughter?! I did not have to see the flash drive, I can see it clearly in your guilty eyes!" Winfield Davis lost his temper, tightening his hands on Annie's neck. "I adopted you and raised you as my own! This is how you repay me!"

"Winfield stop! Stop!" Catherine was in tears, trying to hold off her husband, but he only stopped when Ethan spoke.

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"Winfield stop! Stop!" Catherine was in tears, trying to hold off her husband, but he only stopped when Ethan spoke.

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"Don't taint your hands over that filthy daughter of yours, General! Let her suffer the same as Samantha did instead. Death is too easy for her," suggested Ethan in his stern voice.

While all this was happening, the Browns and Samantha's classmates in the military academy were in utter shock by the development! Their eyes widened, seeing the behavior of Annie. It became clear to them that Annie was guilty. Why in the world did she have to desperately destroy the flash drive?

"Go to your room, now! Including you, Catherine!" He commanded. ③

The General promptly called for the security in the house and ordered to guard Annie's room, "Secure them until I am free to see them myself. They are not to step out of Annie's room!"

"This is your fault, Sam! How dare you come back here! How dare you?" Screamed Annie.

"Stop this, now, Annie! Stop this! You are being a fool!" Scolded Catherine.

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Everyone saw how Annie and Catherine were forced out of the dining area, both whimpering and cursing. Still, they had much foul words to say to Samantha and Ethan.

As a result of the disturbing conduct coming from Annie, Clayton left without a word and the rest of his family followed.

Since the invitee of the gathering were nowhere present, Samantha's classmates also left, merely excusing themselves and not waiting for an answer.

Yet again, the dining room in the Davis' household fell mute, but seeing a nearly empty table, the general turned to the Wrights.

Nearly a minute passed, and he finally opened his mouth. His voice was breaking in and out as he suggested, "I think... the people who are left in this gathering are - are just the right people to remain. You at least have to have a decent lunch, as it is already past twelve in the afternoon."

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"Well, my children are hungry father, let's just have lunch and finish what we came here for. We have... so much more to talk about," suggested Samantha.

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Chapter 65: The Apology

The entire lunch was a mix of silence and awkward exchange, but it was thanks to the children's optimism that the mood lightened up.

Kenzie especially walked towards the General and asked, "Grandpa, you did not eat at all. Is there something wrong?"

The little girl's pure-hearted probing and gleaming eyes made Winfield sigh. He gasped as he reached for the child's head and said, "I'm not very." He cleared his throat before resuming, "I'm not very hungry."

"But grandpa, Mommy always tells me that food is a blessing! Sometimes we only had chocolate porridge, but you have pork and vegetables on your plate. You should eat that grandpa," revealed Kenzie.

While he forced a smile at Kenzie, it all the more tightened Winfield's chest. He turned to Samantha and silently asked for an explanation.

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Even Ethan was looking at his wife, wondering what Kenzie meant.

"Um." Samantha pursed her lips as she set aside her utensils. She explained, "Um... before we moved back to Braeton, there were times we needed to save our proteins and vegetables so sometimes." She sneered before adding, "So we have chocolate porridge for breakfast." 4

She shrugged and said, "They loved it though."

"Yeah, it wasn't so bad," Kyle remarked.

"Well, that will not happen now," reminded Ethan. "Kenzie and Kyle will always have a healthy, balanced meal."

"Eat now, grandpa," Kenzie encouraged. "I'm already finished with my plate."

"Okay, child. I will. Thank you, Kenzie," said Winfield.

It was thanks to Kenzie's little chat with her grandpa that Winfield ate part of his meal, and only after their lunch did he, Ethan and Samantha move to a private room to discuss everything that had

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happened.

From inside his study, Winfield probed, "So tell me... how did you two end up getting married?"

Ethan explained everything from his first sighting of Samantha until he offered marriage. He said, "I was certain about what I felt for Sam and we have two children. There wasn't a reason for us not to be... a real family."

"I love Ethan, father. I mean, I fell in love with him in just more than a month," Sam flushed after admitting.

"So you are only married in paper," Winfield probed.

"Yes." Both Samantha and Ethan answered.

"But we are planning to wed in January or February at the latest. We have yet to save the date," Ethan explained. "We have been busy lately after moving into our home."

"We prioritized getting married in paper so I can have the children's names

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changed into mine," reasoned Ethan. He reached for his laptop bag, which he had Edgar brought in, and inside were the documents to show Winfield.

"Everything you need to see is there; the DNA test which I took against Kenzie and Kyle, our marriage certificate, and the amendments to the children's names. All of which will prove that we are... really a family," added Ethan. 2

Winfield took a moment to study all the documents in his hands. He especially read the DNA test, wanting to see the truth for himself.

He shook his head and muttered, "What a... convenient coincidence that it was you whom Sam shared with that night."

"Yes, General, but the point is... what if it wasn't me? What if whoever was in that room had ill intentions," Ethan pointed out while clenching his hand. "It could have been worst, but luckily, it was me."

"I would not even say it was luck since it brought Sam the most difficult years in her life, but at least... that night brought u

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s together," Ethan said. He reached for Samantha's hand and added, "And I am very thankful that our paths had crossed during my visit to Monroe City." 5

After a moment of silence, Winfield told, "Well, if you had not removed all the video surveillance from the hotel, I would have found out who was the man my daughter shared the night with." 2

"Yes, and I am sorry for that, Sir, but I honestly thought it was a trick by Lance to get me laid. Lance had always tried to introduce me to one of his female friends... and as you know... Sam ditched me in the morning," Ethan reasoned.

Sighing heavily, Winfield muttered while resting back on his seat, "This is really for real."

"Yes, it is," answered Ethan.

Winfield Davis took another deep breath. He rested his forehead on his fist and ran his fingers through his chocolate-brown hair. He ogled on the floor for nearly a minute before he clarified, "And Annie clearly knew - she lured you to getting

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pregnant."

"Yes, father. Even stepmother knew. Everything I told you then and now... is true. Back then, all you cared about was the fact that I got pregnant," Samantha finally spoke.

Her voice began to break as she added, "You have no idea how much I tried to explain things to you... You never believed me!"

"You have been listening only to Annie and my stepmother, not caring for the words of your own daughter." Samantha felt a tear roll down her face when she resumed, "I am your real daughter, but how come? How come you could not believe me or forgive me?"

"I was that same little girl whom you and mom took to the park occasionally. The same girl whom you tucked to bed! I was that same person whom you had high hopes for in the military, but why... why couldn't you see through all their lies and their schemes?" At that point, Samantha was already gasping for air.

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She wound up being wrapped in Ethan's arms as she cried her frustrations. It took minutes for her to compose herself with her husband wiping her tears away.

Only then did Winfield finally spoke. He responded, "Sam. I don't know. My heart back then was filled with dismay." He looked straight into her eyes and added, "I was badly hurt and that may have made me blind to see the truth."

It was Winfield's turn to have watery eyes as he pleaded, "Forgive me... my daughter." His nose flared as he struggled to admit, "Amanda is right... I should not have abandoned you, for I am... I am your father." 6

More water streamed down the general's face as he slowly kneeled down before Samantha. He grabbed her hand and rested his forehead in her fist before revealing, "I did miss you, my daughter. I did... But at the same time, I kept thinking about my aspirations for you and how it all got crushed - " 3

"Those were your aspirations, father. I never wanted to be in the military,"

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Samantha cut him off. "I only did it for you. All I ever wanted was to be a chef... And now, with my own hard work, I became one."

Looking back into Samantha's eyes, Winfield said, "I'm sorry, Sam. Please forgive me. Please allow me to make up for my mistakes."

He reached for Samantha's face as Ethan slowly let go of his wife.

While Ethan gave them the space to converse, Winfield said, "The truth is, I endeavored not to ask about you at all."

Winfield sniffed his tears away before saying, "But my pride is really way up there... I could not bring myself to even find out about you."

"I know it won't be easy, but I'll - I'll make up for the lost times and be the father to you - the right father," he added. "Please, Sam. Please give me a chance."

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Without warning, Samantha broke down in tears, flooding her face again. She thought this was all just a dream, and that with her father asking her forgiveness, would never happen.

She crashed into Winfield's arms and her chest heaved as she cried.

With Samantha's embracing him, Winfield Davis also wound up breaking down himself.

The howling of both father and daughter clearly echoed throughout the room. Their cries were so deafening, only their sobs could be heard in that same space.

"Dad - you - you don't know how long." Samantha cried some more before proceeding with her thoughts, "How long I have been wanting to hold you again."

"I'm sorry. I'm sorry, Sam," answered Winfield as he whimpered.

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Chapter 66: Ethan's Scheme

"I hate her! I hate her!" Annie screamed at the top of her lungs, stomping her feet altogether with their predicament.

"You stupid girl!" Catherine shook her daughter by the shoulder and said, "You did not even make sure yourself where you sent Sam to that evening! You should have made sure it was someone incompetent! Haven't you learned anything from me?"

Pushing her daughter's forehead with her finger, she added, "Instead, you sent her to Ethan Wright!"

For the past four hours, the mother and daughter had been arguing nonstop from inside Annie's room.

Annie has been trying to find a way to divert all the blame to Samantha while her mother repeatedly scolded her for her lapses.

"I did not know it was Ethan!" Another yell left Annie's lips.

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"Mother, what do we do now?" Annie groaned in frustration, but before Catherine could answer, the doors swung open and came inside Winfield Davis.

"Dad," Annie called for her adoptive father with a trembling voice. "You - you don't actually believe that I did it, right?"

"I heard you from outside the door!" Announced Winfield. "There is no point denying it!"

A slap went across Annie's face and it came from Winfield. It was the same cheek where her adoptive father had hit her from earlier, adding to the swell on her face. "Dad, Dad - "

"How dare you do this to my daughter?!" Winfield pointed to the door, fuming with anger. He ordered, "Get out of my house! Both of you!"

He turned to the security and instructed, "Throw them out of the house! Throw their clothes and their bags with them!"

"Winfield! Don't do this!" Catherine tried to hold on to her husband's arm,

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pleading while crying. "You can't do this to me! I'm your wife!"

"I never loved you!" Declared Winfield, his eyes filled with rage and regret. "I tried over the years and I finally know why! I've only loved Sarah and you cannot compare to her!"

Urging the security to secure the mother and daughter, he ordered again, "Throw them out of the house!"

"Winfield, please!" Water streamed down Catherine's face as she was being dragged out of Annie's room.

Annie, on the other hand, could only walk along with the security, no longer having the strength to contest her father's decisions. She could only cry dramatically, seeing how she was going to leave her home where she grew up since her mother married into the Davis.

Finding their way at the exit, they saw how Ethan, Samantha, and Amanda Wright stood by the door, along with Matilda. It was clear to Catherine and Annie that they were all waiting for their

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removal out of the Davis' house.

"You!" Annie glared at Samantha. While security dragged her out to the driveway, she pointed a finger at her and threatened, "I'll make sure you pay!"

"We will see about that!" Ethan stepped in, narrowing his eyes at Annie.

It made Annie swallow her own spew, feeling the silent threat coming from Ethan. She frowned, dwelling on how will she ever get vengeance with Ethan Wright by Samantha's side.

While they were being walked out the gate, Winfield told, "Catherine, you'll hear from my lawyers when I file for divorce! Don't stay too far!"

"No! Winfield, please! No!" Catherine pleaded again while seeing the gates close before them.

Catherine and Annie stood by the gates for minutes more, pouring their hearts out until the rain gushed down from the skies. 5

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As the mother and daughter clamored to gather their belongings from the mansion gates, Ethan raised his chin, smirking at the sight of their misery. He turned to his wife and told, "Just as the weather predicted, it will rain." 4

Samantha could not believe her ears. Even the rain was part of Ethan's plan! She realized how Ethan had orchestrated everyone perfectly that she sneered as she whispered, "I don't want to be your enemy."

A scoff left Ethan's lips. He said, "You are not and you will never be. You are my wife."

"Serves them right! Serves you right for hurting my granddaughter!" Yelled Matilda Davis, glaring at the gates. She also delighted in the struggles of Catherine and Annie before she asked the caregiver to turn her wheelchair.

Hearing her own mother curse, Winfield felt his chest tightening. He took a deep breath, feeling the hate towards himself. He also followed his mother inside the

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mansion, forever swearing not to let the same people come back to his home.

"We better get back," Ethan suggested. "The children are waiting for us."

Giving Annie one last look, Samantha nodded before she muttered, "Now you know exactly how I felt, Annie."

Annie and Catherine had been receiving strange looks coming from the residence of the military camp. Word easily spread of how the General had thrown them outside the mansion that late afternoon.

No one would give them a ride.

They both were left, soaked as they dragged their luggage in the direction of the Browns.

Clayton was the first person Annie thought of going to. After all, he was her fiance. She could only hope he was not greatly affected by everything that has happened. 4

Minutes into the path, they finally found

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themselves standing in front of a huge house.

The home of the Browns was not as big as the Davis' but it was equally significant.

Annie repeatedly rang the doorbell to the home, hoping to see Clayton.

It took about two minutes for Clayton to open the door. He came out with a long face, unwilling to look Annie in the eye. He asked, "What are you doing here, Annie?"

"Clayton. It's terrible! Dad, he - he believed Sam! He kicked us out of the house!" Annie explained with tears in her eyes. "Clayton, can - can we stay here for the meantime, I mean - we are getting married after all - "

"I'm calling off the wedding,"
Announced Clayton.

Annie frowned. Her face paled, feeling a lump in her throat. She quivered as she clarified, "What - what did you say?"

"I can't marry you, Annie. Not after what happened!" This time, Clayton's voice

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raised. He said, "You – you made sure that Sam and I split up! Everything was all your lies!"

"But Clay, you can't believe, Sam – "

"Why not?" Clayton cut off her thoughts. "Why won't I believe her now after your reaction? You were obviously guilty and the gossips about you sleeping around to get your movie screen? It has already been confirmed!"

Clayton took out his phone and showed Annie the recent article going around the internet just an hour ago. There were photos of Annie going into the hotel with the director involved.

The worse part was having a video timestamp of when Annie went in and out of the hotel, together with the director. It was not enough to prove Annie slept with the director, but it was enough for Clayton to doubt her completely.

"You disgust me, Annie! It disgusts me just thinking how I have put my dick inside your dirty cunt! Get away from

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here! You and your mother!" Yelled Clayton before shutting the door close! 4

"No! No, Clayton, no!" Annie thrust the side of her fist against the door, utterly in tears. "This can't be happening to me! This can't be!"

While Annie broke down in tears by the door of the Brown's residence, Catherine looked past the buildings and the skies. She gritted her teeth and muttered, "Sarah, this is all your fault!" 8

All the while, her thoughts remained on Winfield's words. The general never loved her. It was always Sarah! And now, Sarah's daughter managed to kick her out of the Davis household!

She grunted and screamed in the middle of the pouring rain, "I'm coming for you, Sarah! I want to slap your face as many times as I can! You wait for me, Sarah! You wait for me!"

Chapter 67: Ethan's Taste 31

[WARNING: THIS CHAPTER CONTAINS MATURE CONTENTS NOT SUITABLE FOR YOUNG READERS]

8PM at Ethan and Samantha's home.

With a smile on her face, Samantha lathered lotion on her arms. She looked at herself, facing the vanity table and muttered, "It feel so good to embrace, Dad again."

Ethan walked behind her and helped spread the lotion in her other arm. He probed, "Is my wife happy?"

Samantha had a gleam in her eyes as she turned to face her husband. She received a peck on the lips before she answered, "I'm very happy, Ethan."

She giggled while she let herself be carried in his arms and into the bed. She asked, "Did I ever tell you how happy I am, I married you? I'm not yet done, by the way."

"Hmmm," said Ethan. He lay her on the bed and began to kiss on her neck

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before he said, "Prove it."

Samantha could not help but laugh. She reminded her husband, "I have my period, remember?"

A hiss left Ethan's lips before he asked, "When will it be over?"

With flushing face, she answered, "Tuesday or Wednesday."

"Okay, then, honey. Let me just help you finish your moisturizing," offered Ethan before getting up from the bed and returning to his wife's dresser.

After grabbing her lotion, he snatched a chair, facing the side of their bed. He suggested, "Come closer."

He poured a good amount of lotion in his hands and started with her legs. He remarked, "I like this scent."

"You bought it for me, remember?" Reminded Sam.

"I'm really not that great. I have shopping agents doing this for me and telling me what's best for you," said

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Ethan. "But it is my utmost instruction to select only the best for my wife."

Samantha was already sitting up on the bed while Ethan was massaging and putting lotion on her legs. As he did, she asked, "Honey, I wonder, how did you get videos of that night's event? That was six years ago. Did you always had it with you?"

Ethan smiled and calmly answered, "The flash drive was empty. It never had a video." ¹²

"What?!" Samantha's eyes widened. Her mouth hung open before she said, "I can't believe you? What if Dad saw the flash drive?"

"I counted on Annie's reaction. Thankfully, she gave herself away even before that," Ethan told before directing, "Other leg."

"I was confident my plan would work, and it did," added Ethan.

After Ethan had moistened Samantha's legs, he reminded, "I wanted to use the grand opening as an opportunity to

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introduce you as the General's daughter as well as my wife and our planned ceremony. So I'd really like for us to decide when is the date for us to have our wedding."

"Will we have enough time to have it on January?" She asked while flushing.

"Why are you blushing? Haven't you gotten used to me by now?" Ethan probed with a smirk on his face.

"Everything is still so surreal to me, Ethan," Samantha answered.

"Sam, I want to have our ceremony as soon as possible. Speak to the event organizer tomorrow, please. I'll have John contact the wedding planner tomorrow." Ethan got up and pecked on her forehead before reminding, "Just make sure our two-week honeymoon will fall outside your monthly period." 4

"Oh, my goodness." Ethan's words granted for Samantha to blush again. It dawned to her how Ethan did not mind which date their wedding will be, for as long as he could devour her completely o

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n their honeymoon!

Returning his attention to Samantha, Ethan bent over and covered her lips for seconds. He said, "Sam, I'm going on a business trip tomorrow afternoon. I'll be back on Thursday. Do you remember?"

"Yes. I'll miss my honey," she answered while reaching for his athletic face.

"I'll miss you too, Sam," responded Ethan. "I'll be thinking of you often."

Ethan kissed her lips again, this time more passionately. Their tongues easily became intertwined, relishing in her flavor.

Seconds passed, he pulled away, breathing against her face and told, "I really want to make love to my wife, but since I can't... I wonder."

Ethan pecked again on her lips before asking, "Can my wife... use her mouth instead?" ②

Samantha's mouth fell open. Her face turned tomato red, just thinking about eating him, but it was because of his

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pleading eyes and the fact that he ate her multiple times before, that she felt obligated.

She gulped before replying, "Ummm... Okay, honey."

Seeing Ethan pull down his pajamas, her eyes turned dreamy. His manhood stood in attention before her, eager to be devoured.

Biting her lip, she gasped before holding his entire size. Her poor slender fingers could barely cover his entire girth. She wondered how this all went inside her.

Looking up to his intense brown eyes, Samantha opened her mouth. She felt the tip of his shaft, outlining her lips before her own eyes fluttered.

She started to slurp on his mushroom tip, making Ethan take heavy breaths. She heard him hiss and say, "Sam, you are doing good."

Samantha was utterly surprised by the softness of his skin that she easily delighted in tasting him like lollipop. Her hands unwittingly moved up and down,

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covering his length and feeling the hardness of his member.

She could not help but remark, "It's so hard yet so soft."

Opening her mouth wider, she put it inside and tried to cover his size. Sadly, it was far too much for her to take in. Her hand had to stimulate the rest, going to the base of his manhood while she covered half of his length.

"Careful with your teeth, hon. It's a little sensitive," he instructed while his brows furrowed.

Samantha easily adjusted, not wanting to hurt Ethan. She covered her teeth with the tips of her mouth while her tongue slurped around his member from the inside.

Several moans escaped Ethan's lips, feeling the wetness around his rod. Moreover, just watching Samantha's lips engulf his masculinity was incredibly arousing for him.

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Overwhelmed with desire, Ethan held her face then ran his fingers through her hair. He held her steady and started to slowly move his hips back and forth.

"Haaah! Sam, I love it," he remarked while his eyes became hooded.

Samantha, on the other hand, enjoyed eating her husband. She loved his taste that she wound up picking up the pace, bobbing against Ethan's length.

It did not take long for that sloppy slurping sound to echo against the room, and with Samantha's eager lip service, Ethan warned, "I'm coming, honey."

Ethan let her continue for a few seconds more, but after a while, he took over, holding his manhood. He leaned over to cover Samantha's lips as he jerked himself away.

As soon as he came, he softly moaned while crashing his lips into Samantha's. He released on the floor, fulfilling his desires for the evening. ①

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Pulling away from Samantha's soft lips, he saw how his wife still had her eyes closed. He watched as she flickered her eyes open and she licked on her lips. He heard her say, "Ethan, you... you taste good."

"Hmmm... You are free to come and taste me... anytime," he teased with a sly grin.

She smiled while her face burned and she answered, "Okay... I'd like that."

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Chapter 68: She Really Loves You

Days passed. Samantha was missing Ethan so much that she eagerly awaited his return on a Thursday.

While inside the kitchen of the First Diamond Hotel, Samantha repeatedly checked the time.

Before Ethan left, he told that a private jet was unavailable, and thus, he and John took a shared flight, booking first class on the way back to Braeton from Laton City.

Killing the time, Samantha kept herself busy, randomly tasting how the chefs have prepared the dishes for their lunch service.

When one of the station chefs, Jane, reported late for her shift, she came into the kitchen mumbling, "Sorry I'm late. There is this big traffic due to fire trucks and ambulances, rushing into the airport. Apparently, there was a flight that crashed on the runway at Braeton airport!"

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That immediately shifted Samantha's attention to Jane. She frowned and asked, "A plane crashed at the airport?"

"I don't know the details. I just heard people talk about it on the way here," answered Jane.

Samantha did not know why, but she felt her heart racing. She immediately stepped outside the kitchen and went to the lobby to hear about the news through the internet.

It was a plane, coming from Laton City that was unable to bring out its wheels as it landed at the airport. It resulted in the plane to crash landing on the runway.

From the concierge area, Samantha covered her mouth in fear. Her eyes widened in horror as she exclaimed, "Oh, my god! Ethan's on that plane!"

"Really, Chef Sam?" Asked Cindy, one of the front desk.

When Samantha could not reach Ethan's phone, she frantically called for Edgar, asking him to take her to the airport with him.

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She only left Cindy a message for everyone in the kitchen, telling them how she had sped off to the airport upon Edgar's arrival.

Panic and fear drowned her heart as Edgar drove her to the airport. She wound up crying as they were on the road while still in her chef uniform.

From inside the car, Edgar kept looking at Samantha from the rearview mirror and told, "Mrs. Wright, from what I heard, there weren't any casualties during the crash. The plane was already in its slow landing and the crew managed to get everyone out of the plane... I'm sure, Mr. Wright is okay. All the more, they will prioritize those who are in the first-class cabin."

"I." With tears running down her face, she said, "I can't help it Edgar, I can't seem to reach Ethan."

Samantha easily looked back at her memorable weeks with Ethan, being his wife, and she honestly could not imagine being without Ethan. All the more, the

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thought of her children losing their father. The idea utterly made her break down in tears.

"I'm just so afraid, Edgar. I - I can't help but be so worried." Placing a hand on her chest, she revealed, "My heart hurt so much. I just want to know that he is fine."

Edgar had to repeatedly console Samantha, who was clearly alarming about the news.

Arriving at the airport, Edgar accompanied Samantha to the arrivals area, especially speaking to representatives of the airline.

There was a long line of other concerned individuals whose family members were on the same plane.

It was chaotic. Samantha was not the only one who was panicking and being concerned for their loved ones.

On one side, a lady in a megaphone was announcing that the passengers were still being attended to. Some are still going through security checks and will be out in

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a few minutes. "Rest assured, there was no casualty during the crash. We just need to make sure there are no serious injuries, so we have a medical team checking on each of the passengers before they are brought out."

Together with Edgar, Samantha lingered on one of the benches, constantly inspecting passengers who were exiting the doors. However, after nearly an hour passed, there was no sign of Ethan.

It made Samantha utterly nervous that she returned to get in line, hoping to speak to the airline representative and hear about Ethan.

It took several minutes for Samantha to finally get in front of the counter and while there, the first thing she said was, "Ethan Wright. My husband was on the flight from Laton, riding on first class. Please, I have been waiting for almost an hour, but he has not gone through the arrivals area!" ①

"I'm sorry about that. Let me check for you," said the lady.

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"Ethan Wright?" The airline representative probed, raising a brow. "The CEO of the Wright Diamond Corporation is your husband, miss?"

"Yes! He is my husband, tell me where he is!" Demanded Samantha, slamming her palms against the counter.

"Sam! Sam! There you are." Samantha turned to find Ethan walking towards her with John Garcia.

After all the waiting, Samantha's tears had already dried up, but seeing Ethan standing a few meters from her, she cried once more. She yelled, "Ethan!"

She ran in the direction of the man with her cheeks utterly soaked and her heart throbbing.

Wrapping her arms around him, she said, "Ethan, I was so worried! Thank goodness, you are okay."

Ethan, on the other hand, accepted the embrace of his wife. He repeatedly pecked her forehead and told, "Sam, I'm fine. I did not take the flight. There was a last-

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minute opening for a private jet and we took it, despite needing to wait for half an hour."

He let go of her hold to caress her cheeks and smiled. He repeated, "I'm fine. You are not going to get rid of me that easily -"

"Don't joke about that, Ethan!" She scolded before crashing back into his arms. She still let out her tears while she eased her chest. "I was so scared, Ethan. I just found you and I was really, really scared of the news."

To console Samantha, the couple lingered at the airport's arrivals area for a few minutes more before they finally left. It was already inside the car that Samantha interrogated Ethan.

Apparently, Ethan had called Edgar earlier, informing him of his adjusted landing. He requested to be fetched, but to his surprise, his wife was at the airport to fetch him instead. That was how Ethan found himself at the arrivals area, in search of Samantha.

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