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Chapter 142: The Look of Love

Timothy had a very long dream.

During the past two years, he had never allowed himself to reminisce about his time with Samantha. In that dream however, he had a broad view of everything that happened and dreamt of each scene that he spent with Samantha.

Those were all happy times.

Samantha was a woman who had left a deep impression on his mind for as long as he could remember. It was all because his grandfather frequently told him the story of how Samantha chose him during her one-year-old catch.

At the time, his grandfather had snapped a photo of Samantha grabbing his thigh, and the old man would then force him to look at the photo whenever the story ended. Timothy was always urged to comment on whether or not she was attractive and pretty.

His opinion was that all children looked the same. Who could possibly tell if they were pretty when they were still so young?

He initially did give half-hearted answers but soon began to feel annoyed. He could no longer be bothered to show even a little bit of deference to his grandfather and told the old man that she was an ugly girl.

His grandfather huffed in anger and glared at him every single time.

Not one to give up, the old man asked Old Master Larsson to take photos of Samantha every single year, which he then showed to Timothy.

Timothy and Samantha had never met each other since they were babies, but he had the chance to witness her gradual changes from childhood to womanhood.

Her facial features developed slowly with each passing year while her skin became fairer and suppler. Meanwhile, her figure became slenderer and her smile was characterized by her eyebrows which turned into little arcs.

Timothy's grandfather said that Samantha was becoming increasingly beautiful, but Timothy disagreed. At most, he said, she was only slightly prettier than when she was a kid and was lucky not to grow up ugly.

When Old Master Larsson's family moved to Imperial Capital and lived next door to the Barkers, Old Master Barker brought her over to pay them a visit. It marked the first time Timothy ever saw Samantha in real life.

The little lady looked very bold. Her round eyes glanced all over the place until she finally fixed her gaze on him. That was when he saw the look of amazement in her eyes.

He was no stranger to such looks because girls around him had almost always looked at him that way ever since he was a child.

Timothy sized her up surreptitiously.

She looked much more beautiful in the flesh than in the photos, but that was the extent of her beauty.

Her eyes, however, were very captivating.

It should not come as a surprise that she had sharp eyes. After all, she had her eye on him since she was one year old.

Aside from Old Master Larsson and Samantha, he had a bad impression of the Larssons because they did not even bother to hide their avaricious nature. It was utterly disgusting how obvious their greed was.

Everyone wanted to set him up with Samantha, and she had already begun to change the way she showed up in front of him. Most of the time, she followed him and stuck to him closely.

He neither liked the Larssons nor had any interest in Samantha, or perhaps another way to put it was that indifference came naturally to him. That factor, when considered along with his parents' unfortunate marriage, shaped him to have little interest or feelings toward women.

He never looked at a woman twice. It was for Samantha and any other member of the opposite gender.

No one could have expected him to end up falling for Samantha.

Samantha threw caution in the wind and stood in front of him to block the bullet, forcing him to look at her and subsequently making it difficult for him to look away anymore.

He never gave her any response, yet she was willing to ignore everything.

At that moment, he thought that it could have been God's will that he grabbed her during her one-year-old catch. From then onward, their fate would forever be entwined with each other.

Since that was that, he could grab her too.

He had never been in a relationship and knew absolutely nothing about getting along with girls. Many times he remained quiet, but her weird ideas came by the dozen and she always dragged him along to do those stuff with her. Never once did she act cold toward him.

Noisy and hot-tempered, she was just the kind of character that he disliked. However, he was more than willing to listen to her, watch her cause trouble, and satisfy her requests.

He unknowingly smiled whenever he saw her smiling and calling his name.

He thought to himself, 'This is probably what love looks like.'

That dream was so sweet and happy that he wanted to stay here forever and never wake up.

At least, not until he heard Samantha's crying.

...

Tears rolled down from the corners of Samantha's eyes and she closed them shut. After a while, she let go of Timothy's hand, but his fingers grabbed her ever so lightly at the very last moment.

Samantha was so shocked that she looked over, but his fingers had relaxed once more and stopped moving.

She could not ascertain whether or not it was an illusion.

However, she continued to hold his hand and spoke in a voice that belied her anxiousness, "Can you hear me, Timothy?"

"You have to hang in there. You must wake up! Grandma is waiting for you. I'm waiting for you, too! Timothy, you have to wake up! You can't just leave us like that!"

Timothy's eyelashes trembled slightly when she ended her sentence.

Samantha watched intently as she held her breath for a few seconds. On that occasion, she saw his response with crystal clear clarity.

She hurriedly freed her hand and pressed the call bell above the bed.

The doctors rushed over at once and Samantha reported the situation immediately. "Doctor, I spoke to Timothy earlier and he had a bit of response."

“Okay, we’ll check Mr. Barker’s condition right now. You should step out.”

Samantha did not dare to wait a second longer and pleaded with them, “Please save him.”

She then turned around and walked out.

Rather than returning to her ward, she guarded at the door and did not even blink as she stared unwaveringly at the door of the ward.

Ronald hurried over, looked at her, and said worriedly, “Mrs. Barker, your body still needs to recuperate. Go back and rest. I’ll stay here and notify you as soon as I get any news.”

Samantha shook her head unhesitatingly, “I’m fine. I’ll just wait here.”

Ronald sighed softly, knowing that nothing he said could persuade her. He made no further remarks and rushed off, only to come back about five minutes later with a chair.

He put the chair down and said, “Please take a seat and wait.”

Samantha accepted his gesture and sat down slowly. “Thank you.”

The wait took more than half an hour, and Samantha’s heart was all tensed up due to all that waiting. It was then that she saw the doctor opening the door and walking out.

She got up right away and walked to the doctor, “How is he?”

The doctor took off his mask to reveal a gentle expression. “Mrs. Barker, your husband has made it past the risky phase. When he wakes up, there shouldn’t be any serious problems.”

Ronald breathed a sigh of relief and asked, “When will Mr. Barker be able to wake up?”

“His body is still very weak right now. While it’s important to continue observing him, there’s nothing much to worry about anymore.”

“That’s good. That’s very good news.”

Ronald looked at Samantha happily, but then saw her body sway before collapsing softly.

He exclaimed, “Mrs. Barker!”

He hurriedly reached out to support her and looked anxiously at the doctor. “What’s happening to her, Doctor?”

Ronald did not want something to happen to Samantha when Timothy had finally managed to get through the danger!

Chapter 143: A Dying Flash of Lucidity

The doctor said calmly to Ronald, "Help her to sit down. I'll check her condition."

Ronald carefully helped Samantha to sit on the chair. The doctor bent down and gave her a quick check before saying, "Not to worry, it's nothing serious. Her body just couldn't get used to it when she was finally relieved from all her sadness and anxiety. That's all there is to it. Just send her back to the ward and make sure she gets proper rest."

Ronald could not help but wipe away the cold sweat on his forehead. He nodded repeatedly and said, "Yes Doctor, sure thing!"

...

When Samantha next opened her eyes, the sun was shining particularly bright outside. She turned her head slightly to soak in the warm rays.

The door of the ward was pushed open and the sound of footsteps came in.

She looked over instinctively and there was a hint of disappointment when she saw the visitor was Rochelle.

"That disappointed to see me?" Rochelle acted as if she was complaining.

Samantha held back her emotions right away and beamed with a smile. "Of course not, I'm so glad to see you!"

"Now that's more like it!"

Rochelle walked over, helped her raise the front half of the bed up, then placed a pillow on her back so could lean back more comfortably.

She looked closely at Samantha's face and asked in a soft yet concerned voice, "Are you okay?"

"Don't worry. It's just a graze."

Timothy had taken the blow from those fatal attacks, and had he not done so, she would be the one lying unconscious with no sign of waking up anytime soon.

Rochelle knew what Samantha was thinking and so held her hand and comforted her. "That scu— I mean, Timothy...has already weathered through the risky period, right? He'll be fine once he wakes up. You don't have to worry so much. He won't die so easily."

Samantha unconsciously looked at her.

Rochelle smirked and explained, "Because he's the same as Jonathan. Scourges that haunt us for centuries on end!"

Samantha was speechless.

Even though those words did not sound too pleasant, Rochelle had a knack for comforting her.

Samantha smiled ever so slightly.

A thought crossed her mind and she asked, "Hey Chelle, what happened to Penelope?"

Speaking of Penelope, Rochelle's eyes sank a little. That darn woman might well have gotten her way had Timothy not been near enough to protect Samantha in time. In turn, Timothy would not have been there had Rochelle not endeavored to give Timothy another chance by calling him to come over and pick Samantha up.

If something happened to Samantha, Rochelle would most certainly skin Penelope alive!

"She was arrested for assault and attempted murder. Now she's just waiting to be jailed!"

Penelope only had herself to blame for that.

However, Samantha frowned slightly and said doubtfully, "Based on my understanding of Penelope, she wouldn't have lost it just like that. Her state of mind was really odd that day, and she was unusually strong. The expression she had was very strange too, unlike her usual self."

Rochelle replied, "When the police came to take statements, the bartender and manager both said that she had been coming there to drink quite often recently. She must have had too much to drink and went bonkers after getting drunk."

"Was it really just because she had too much to drink?" Samantha still had a puzzled look.

Would one's mental state be off after drinking too much?

“Why do you ask? Is there something wrong?” Rochelle asked in reply.

Samantha felt that something was not right but could not put her finger on what it was exactly. In the end, she could only shake her head and say, “I must’ve been overthinking.”

“Alright now, no more worrying about Penelope. What you need is rest.”

“Okay.”

Rochelle sighed gently. “I really hate hospitals. Get well soon, alright?”

Samantha felt the same way too. “That makes two of us. I hope that I, and the people I love, will always be free from illness.”

...

In the other ward, Timothy opened his heavy eyelids slowly. Since it had been quite a long time since he saw light, he narrowed his eyes and closed them slightly before opening them once more.

“Mr. Barker, you’re awake!”

A joyful weeping rang in Timothy’s ears. A man rushed over, hugging him immediately and crying as if he was Timothy’s wife, “Sob, sob! Mr. Barker, you’re finally awake! I was scared out of my wits! I don’t know what I’d do if you were dead!”

Timothy lowered his gaze and looked at the teary, snotty Ronald. He decided that it would be better to die right away.

He took a deep breath and said in a firm but soft tone. “Go. Away.”

Ronald felt cherished more than ever when he heard those words. He straightened himself up and spoke sobbingly, “Mr. Barker, if scolding me makes you better, then by all means, scold me as much as you want!”

Hearing Timothy’s scolding was better than seeing Timothy lie there weakly.

Timothy was speechless and his head hurt a little.

He initially thought that Samantha would be the first person he would see after opening his eyes. After all, she was the one who woke him up.

Unfortunately, the person before him...was an eyesore.

He could not be bothered to entertain Ronald and glanced around the ward. Samantha's figure was nowhere to be seen and his eyebrows frowned unknowingly.

"Have you been here the entire time?"

"What? Oh yes, I have! I've been keeping watch over you the entire time! I never left at all!" Ronald patted his chest and spoke with conviction to show his undying concern for Timothy.

Timothy's expression instantly sank.

In that case, did all the crying he heard while in a coma come from Ronald? Did that also include the phrase 'I'll never mention divorce to you again, and I'm willing to give you a baby'?

His expression became worse.

Ronald's heart practically stopped beating after seeing how Timothy appeared to be on the verge of fainting. "Mr. Barker, you... Are you suddenly seeing a light at the end of a tunnel? I... I'll call a doctor!"

If Timothy died, his annoyance toward Ronald would have made him spring back to life.

Timothy closed his eyes, took a deep breath, and said, "I'm fine."

He paused for a few seconds before asking hesitantly, "Where's Samantha? Where is she?"

Timothy only fainted after making sure that Samantha was safe. Her condition was probably stable, so why was she not there?

Was it so difficult to even get the slightest bit of pity from her even when he was about to lose his life?

"Mrs. Barker? Mrs. Barker is in another ward. She's probably awake now. I'll tell her that you're awake."

Ronald then turned around, walked out of the ward, and closed the door gently.

...

At the entrance of the hospital, a fair-faced woman got out of a car with a bouquet of lilies and walked into the hospital. Dressed in a tailored light-blue dress, her long black hair draped over her back and contrasted against her delicately fair skin.

Her stunning figure drew the attention of many passersby.

She walked up to the nurse's station and smiled at the nurse before asking softly, "Hi there, I'd like to ask, which ward is Mr. Timothy Barker in?"

The female nurse was awestruck by the woman's smile and came to her senses only after a few seconds. She answered immediately, "Please hold on while I check that for you."

The nurse did a search on the computer and told the woman where to go.

"Thank you."

The woman then started making her way to Timothy's ward.

Chapter 144: She's Untamable

Ronald opened the door, walked into the ward, and said to Samantha before he could even catch his own breath, "Mr. Barker is awake!"

Samantha's mind went blank for a moment then the dim glow in her eyes lit up slightly.

Timothy would be fine as long as he woke up.

"I... I'll go over and check on him," she said, then lifted the blanket and prepared to get down from the bed. A moment of carelessness caused her to pull on the wound and she groaned as a result.

Rochelle shook her head as soon as she saw that. "Why the rush? It's not like he can run anywhere!"

She nevertheless stretched out her hand and helped Samantha to get down.

Samantha smiled at her and offered, "Do you want to go and see Timothy together with me?"

"I'd better not." Rochelle refused outrightly. "Timothy might've done good this time, but his name is still on my blacklist. I'll give him a chance to treat me to a meal if and when he becomes a dutiful and responsible husband."

After a pause, Rochelle then continued, "You take care of yourself. I want to see you up and about the next time I come here."

Samantha nodded. "Okay."

Rochelle turned to Ronald, raised his chin, then ordered in a royal manner, "Could you be a dear and help your boss's woman up."

Her aura immediately spurred Ronald into submitting to that request. He stepped forward right away and held Samantha in a gentle yet deferential manner, only stopping short of addressing her as 'Your Highness'.

"See you, Sammy."

Rochelle said those three words, put on her sunglasses, then walked away on her high heels.

Ronald looked at Rochelle from behind and could not help but express his awe. Beautiful women had a certain charm, but such a high-bred and glamorous aura was truly daunting.

It was no surprise that even a man like Jonathan could not tame her...

Ronald then retracted his gaze and helped Samantha out.

Samantha's heartbeat quickened as they came closer to Timothy's ward. By the time they walked to the door of the ward, Samantha unconsciously stopped walking.

Ronald was surprised. "What's the matter, Mrs. Barker?"

Samantha had no clue what was wrong with herself. She was relieved and elated that Timothy had woken up, but she did not know how to face him for a moment.

That was probably how it felt to be uneasy despite having a sense of longing.

She took two deep breaths to ease her heartbeat and prepared herself mentally before lifting her foot, pushing the door, and walking in.

The ward was very quiet. Timothy was leaning against the bedhead. His face was still very pale and his lips seemed to lack blood flow. The man's eyes were closed, though she did not know whether he fell asleep because he was still too weak or whether he was just taking a nap.

Samantha trod more softly because she was worried it might wake him up.

Ronald helped her to walk over and sit on the chair beside the bed. Seeing as Timothy had gone back to sleep again, he said very softly, "I'll leave you to keep Mr. Barker company then. Excuse me."

"Okay."

Ronald tiptoed out of the ward and closed the door behind him gently.

...

Samantha looked at Timothy and noticed that he was breathing very gently. His chest rose very little, and without the electrocardiogram that was displayed on the monitor beside her, she would have been a little worried as to whether or not she had been hallucinating.

His farewell in her dream was a gigantic scare for her.

Simply thinking about it was traumatizing enough for her heart to start palpitating.

She did not know if she could bear it if Timothy did not pull through and remained in a coma along with Corey.

She stretched out her hand slowly and placed it lightly on Timothy's hand. It was still very cold, but it was considerably better than when he was inside the intensive care unit.

There was a small bit of warmth at least.

If nothing else, it made her feel that he really was alive.

Her heart gradually reverted back to calmness. She withdrew her hand gently because she was worried that she might disturb him too much, but the man seemed to have sensed something as soon as she moved. He grasped her hand, just like when they were inside the intensive care unit.

Samantha froze immediately and did not dare to move.

She raised her eyes and looked at Timothy again. She thought that he had woken up, but he remained asleep and continued to hold on tight to her hand.

Samantha stared at his hand and did not pull her hand back. Instead, she pulled the chair closer to the bed and allowed him to hold her.

A woman appeared at the door to the ward, and since the door was not latched, the woman could easily push it open almost halfway.

She peered in and immediately spotted Timothy lying on the hospital bed. Her gaze then shifted to Samantha, who was sitting by the bed. Finally, she gazed intently at them holding hands.

The scene was so loving.

She stood at the door for about a minute. As she lifted her foot and was about to walk in, she saw Timothy frown for a moment before slowly opening his eyes.

Her footsteps froze right that instant.

Timothy's consciousness was still hazy after waking up. He could feel himself holding something and slowly started to regain his senses. As soon as he opened his eyes, he saw Samantha sitting next to him.

The two of them made eye contact.

Samantha never expected Timothy to wake up so suddenly and was not yet mentally prepared. She did not know what to say at that moment and ended up blurting out a nonsensical remark, "It was you. You...were the one holding my hand..."

She felt like biting her tongue off as soon as she said that. What rubbish was she talking about!

Timothy had a dumbfounded look and twitched his lips. He did not know whether to laugh or feel irked, but he asked in a low and hoarse voice, "Is that seriously the first thing you're supposed to say to me after I've finally woken up?"

He might not have been expecting her to hold him and cry, but she should at least say something nice rather than make that kind of remark.

Samantha knew she was in the wrong and naturally did not refute it. She had earlier unloaded everything that was on her mind, but her brain had since turned blank and she could not think of anything to say.

After a silence of more than ten seconds, she finally strung a sentence, "Thank you for saving me, Timothy."

Her tone might be stiff, but those words came from the heart at least.

It was hard to come by someone who would willingly sacrifice their own life to save another in a life-and-death moment.

Timothy's black eyes stared intently at her. He opened his thin lips and emphasized every word in his sentence, "Samantha, that's not the first sentence I wanted to hear after waking up."

"Then... What do you want to hear?" Samantha could not think of anything.

The light in Timothy's eyes dimmed slightly when he saw her expression. He raised his eyebrows slightly and asked her a question instead of answering hers, "Is thanking me all that you have to say to me? Don't you have anything else you'd like to tell me?"

Samantha was at a loss. She blinked her eyes and felt even more confused.

Why was Timothy so difficult to satisfy even after he had gone through hell and back?

Timothy's patience was wearing thin and his voice became deeper. "Alright, let me ask you then. When I was still unconscious, didn't you say that you'd promise me anything if I woke up?

"Didn't you say that you won't mention divorce to me anymore and that you were willing to give me a baby?"

Chapter 145: Let's Live Happily from Now On

Samantha was utterly speechless. She did not expect him to hear her words so clearly despite being unconscious.

She only blurted out everything that was in her heart because she was anxious and worried at the time. It was not as though she expected it to work. When Timothy posed those questions to her, Samantha's inner cowardice appeared again.

Her expression flickered several times and she gulped twice. At the end of the day, she did not have the guts to admit it and could only whisper, "I didn't. You...must've been dreaming, I guess."

'She didn't?'

Timothy frowned. Could it really be a dream he had during his coma?

However, he clearly remembered that Samantha's voice had woken him from his dream. If she had not spoken beside his ear, he would have probably indulged himself in that dream and never willingly woke up.

Timothy looked intently at Samantha and spoke again. "Look at me, Samantha."

"What?" Samantha raised her head subconsciously and happened to make eye contact with the man.

Timothy's words were very clear. "Look at me and answer me again! Was I really dreaming?"

Samantha bit her lower lip. She opened her mouth and closed it again, until finally she replied in a most unconvincing tone, "Yes."

Timothy smirked.

He stretched out his hand, tapped her forehead with his slender finger, then said in a husky voice. "You're lying, Samantha."

He was not always able to tell whether she was lying or telling the truth, but at that moment, he could clearly see that she was lying.

Samantha's long curly eyelashes trembled relentlessly. She closed her eyes for a few seconds, then opened them and looked at Timothy.

There was a look of affirmation in her eyes. She straightened her neck and said, "You're right. I lied. I...I said all that. It was real, and you weren't dreaming."

Back at the intensive care unit, when she held his cold hand and watched him lying quietly on the hospital bed, she had let go of whatever conflicts they once had.

Deceiving herself was no longer possible.

Why was she so afraid of Timothy's death? There was one answer to that and one answer only—she still loved him.

Regardless of how much or how often she repressed, restrained, or denied her true feelings, everything spilled out at that exact moment.

After she spoke, she could not help but lower her eyes and wait quietly for his next sentence.

Would he taunt her or warn her like before? Or would there be a different result?

More than ten seconds later, Timothy still remained quiet and motionless. She could not help but look up furtively and take a peek at Timothy.

Little did she expect to look straight into his bottomless eyes.

Timothy was looking right at her and there seemed to be a countless array of emotions surging within those pupils. She could not discern what was on his mind and became inexplicably more nervous as a result.

Another period of time had passed. It felt as though a century came and went, but then it seemed as though everything happened within the span of a second. The man finally opened his mouth and said, "Okay."

'Okay?

'What did 'okay' mean?'

Samantha froze for a moment and was dumbfounded.

It took Samantha about a minute to understand that Timothy's 'okay' was a response to everything she said when he was unconscious.

In that case, what did 'okay' really mean?

Was it merely a response to acknowledge her words, or...?

As Samantha pondered over everything, she heard the man's voice once again, "Samantha, let's...live happily from now onward."

As soon as he completed his sentence words fell, Samantha's black pupils widened abruptly in disbelief.

Did Timothy just...confess?

Old Madam Barker told her that Timothy liked her, and she also felt that Timothy had changed recently. There was also his selfless act of giving up his life to save her.

However, his inexplicable abandonment two years ago became a thorn in Samantha's heart, making her afraid to continue having feelings for him.

After all that, Timothy suddenly told her—using clear and easy-to-understand language no less—that he wanted them to live happily from then onward?

Samantha's heart skipped a beat. She looked at Timothy, licked her dry lips, and asked softly, "What are you... What are you talking about, Timothy?"

She really could not believe it.

Timothy looked at Samantha before him and remembered all of a sudden that she had the same silly look when he agreed to be her boyfriend for the first time.

Her round eyes stared at him and she asked him what he was talking about.

Timothy's eyes were slightly stained with joy and he repeated his remark, "I said, let's live happily from now onward."

After a pause, his voice softened even more as he asked, "Okay?"

He was willing to let go of what happened two years ago because he wanted to start over again with Samantha.

During that moment where he disregarded his own life to protect her, he finally came to realize that perhaps he cared more about that woman than he thought he did.

People sometimes took things to heart because it was too difficult to forget.

Since that was the case, he did not want to keep it all in and make life difficult for himself anymore. He did not want them to hurt each other and miss out on each other.

Samantha heard it clearly the second time.

Timothy really wanted to start living happily with her.

Those words were sweet enough even though there was no 'I love you' or anything of the sort.

Although...

Samantha's delicate eyebrows frowned ever so slightly.

Timothy saw each one of her expressions and clenched his hands tightly. The glow in his eyes faded a little and he asked, "You...don't want to?"

Did he have no place in her heart?

"No, that's not it!" Samantha shook her head unconsciously and flat-out denied it.

She wanted to of course, but there were some doubts in her heart.

The memory of him denouncing their marriage two years ago still bothered her. She wondered if she should ask whether there was any other reason for him to break the marriage off?

"What is it, then?" Timothy stared deeply at her.

Samantha looked straight into his eyes.

She wanted to ask him that but could not bring herself to when those words finally reached her lips.

The atmosphere was perfect, and everything might be ruined if she opened her mouth. Bad memories might resurface and he might give the same 'I got tired of playing' reason again.

Perhaps it was time for her to let go of the past and embrace the future.

After all, it had already been two years since then, and both of them were not the same people as they were in the past. They were already married too, and it might still be possible for her to hedge her bets on a new and much happier beginning.

With that in mind, Samantha gulped and got up slowly from the chair. She then smiled and borrowed a page from Timothy's book. "I'll be in your care for the rest of my life, my husband!"

'For the rest of my life...'

That was the first time Timothy ever came to appreciate the beauty of words.

Samantha was willing to leave the rest of her life in his hands.

On that occasion, he was determined to hold onto it as firmly as possible and never let go.

Timothy raised his hand and reached out toward Samantha.. His slender fingers grabbed her hand slowly, but he was just about to give it a tight squeeze when the door of the ward swung open.

Chapter 146: Cut Them Off

Both Samantha and Timothy immediately looked toward the door.

Old Madam Barker and Aunt Julia stormed in with a worried look on their faces.

Timothy and Samantha could not help but glance at each other and notice the surprise in each other's expressions.

Ronald had stopped any news outlets from picking up on their injuries, so it was unlikely for Old Madam Barker to know about it.

Samantha was the first to come to her senses. "Grandma, why...are you here?"

Old Madam Barker walked up to her and thoroughly checked her condition to make sure that she was not lacking an arm or a leg. The old lady then looked at Timothy, only to see that his face was pale and weak. A distressed look immediately appeared on the old lady's face, but at the same time, she was incensed too.

The first words that came out of her mouth were reproachment. "How dare the two of you hide this from me! I wouldn't've known about this if the hospital director wasn't an old friend of mine. Were you two planning on keeping this from me?"

When she received the hospital director's call in the middle of the night two days ago, she was so frightened that she nearly suffered a heart attack. She would not be able to continue living with herself if any of her grandson and granddaughter-in-law ended up in an accident!

Although the old lady was admonishing them, Samantha heard hints of trepidation from her tone and hugged her right away to comfort her. "I'm sorry, Grandma. We were just scared that you'd get overly worried. We're all fine now. Everything is fine."

Timothy also reached out and held Old Madam Barker's hand gently. "Don't worry, Grandma."

Old Madam Barker took a few deep breaths and could finally set her heart at ease.

Aunt Julia added, "Mr. Barker, Mrs. Barker... Please don't do that again in the future. The old lady was super anxious when she rushed over here. She kept praying on the plane and we hurried over as soon as we got off. She didn't even get a sip of water."

When Samantha heard that, she helped Old Madam Barker to take a seat on the sofa at the other end. She then went to pour her some water but was stopped by Aunt Julia. "Mrs. Barker, your body is still a little weak. Please take it easy. I'll do it!" she said, then placed a bouquet of lilies on the coffee table before going to pour some water.

She brought back three cups of water, one each for the old lady, Samantha, and Timothy.

Old Madam Barker took a big sip and finally managed to calm her anger a little.

Samantha drank half the cup of water as well. As she set the cup down, she could not help but stare confusedly at the lilies on the table.

Aunt Julia said that they had rushed over as soon as they got off the plane, which probably meant that they had no time to get any flowers. Where did those lilies come from then?

After Aunt Julia handed the cup of water to Timothy, she turned around to see Samantha looking at the lilies. Her explanation was, "I saw those lilies on the floor just outside the ward and I decided to bring them in because Mr. Barker's name was written on the card."

Someone went there and brought flowers to visit Timothy.

Curious, Samantha asked, "Where's the person who gave these?"

Aunt Julia shook her head. "We didn't see anyone!"

Old Madam Barker took out the card from amongst the flowers. Only the words 'For Timothy' were printed on the card. There was not even a signature or an inscription.

The old lady was curious too. "Who could've given these flowers? They didn't even leave their name."

She only knew about Timothy's injury through her acquaintance, the hospital director. The only other people who would also have knowledge about it were Timothy's friends Jonathan and Zachary.

Judging from their characters, they were unlikely to buy him a bunch of flowers even if they came to visit. On the other hand, it was far more probable for a woman to buy flowers when visiting a man at the hospital...

Samantha analyzed the possibilities and could not help but remark in a slightly bitter tone, "Maybe it's one of Mr. Barker's close female friends again."

'Mr. Barker.'

Timothy smirked when he heard her address him that way.

Whenever Samantha was unhappy with him, she always called him 'Mr. Barker' in a cold, detached, and courteous manner.

He used to get upset when she called him that, but he had since grown to enjoy her saying 'Mr. Barker'.

Samantha glanced at him from the corner of her eyes and saw that he was actually smiling rather than feeling penitent.

Was he that proud to have so many close female friends?

She had not been with a single man during their two-year period of separation, but he was always surrounded by women and probably could go through one after another.

Samantha started to wonder just how genuine his confession was.

He seemed to have sensed her resentful gaze and turned to look at Samantha. The gleefulness deep in his eyes became even more prominent as he curled his lips into a smile. "Come here, Samantha."

'You're asking me to go there?'

'Do you seriously have the decency to order me around?'

'Aren't you afraid that I'll leave you bedridden for another half a month if I can't control myself and end up punching you?'

Samantha stayed where she was, as if she had not heard him.

Timothy did not seem irritated at all. He merely frowned, covered his heart with his hands, and faked an agonized expression.

The next second, Samantha stood up, rushed to the bed, and asked nervously, "Are you in pain, Timothy? I'll call the doctor!"

She reached out to ring the call bell.

Timothy grabbed her hand all of a sudden and left Samantha briefly stunned. He tightened his grip on her and exerted a little bit of force to pull her toward him.

The distance between them was instantly reduced and they were so close that the tips of their noses were within millimeters of contact. Timothy stared deeply into her eyes and whispered a question, "Are you jealous?"

Samantha was speechless.

He turned out to have tricked her! A flash of anger appeared in Samantha's eyes.

Samantha initially decided to deny it when she saw the teasing look in his eyes, but before she could utter her refutation, she paused for a moment and said instead, "You're right. I'm jealous!"

Was it wrong for her to be upset about it?

"So, since you've said that we'll be living happily together in the future, you should...cut off all ties and get rid of all those random women you have out there!"

She shot back using the same words he once said to her.

The least he could do was show his sincerity if he wanted to start over.

It was important that they put their cards on the table!

If he were to continue frolicking with other women even though he had told her he wanted to have a happy life with her in the future, she would not be able to bear it and would still get a divorce.

Timothy stared intently at Samantha.

He wondered just how long it had been since he saw that arrogant side of her.

She had absolutely no idea how much he had missed her unbridled attitude in front of him.

Timothy's smile widened and he finally responded, "Okay."

It was a blunt yet unhesitant reply.

Samantha was a little stunned because she did not expect him to agree so easily.

Timothy then added in no hurry, "My wife's wish is my command."

Samantha was even more taken aback. Her feet felt a little light and she was finding it a little difficult to stand straight.

Old Madam Barker and Aunt Julia both beamed with a smile. The saying that 'adversity is the first path to truth' made infinite sense.

...

A flurry of emotions streaked past the eyes of a woman who was standing outside the door. She had seen everything that transpired. About half a minute later, an unsettling smile appeared on her lips.

She took out her cell phone rather than entering the ward.

Chapter 147: He'll Listen to You

The woman tapped the on-screen keyboard, typed out a text, then hit send.

A second later, Timothy's cell phone screen lit up briefly on the bedside table.

The woman put away her phone and turned around to leave.

...

Samantha came back to her senses and cleared her throat awkwardly. She did not know what to say so she asked, "What should we do with these flowers?"

Aunt Julia suggested, "Find a vase and put them in?"

As soon as that suggestion was mentioned, Old Madam Barker looked askance at her. "Why, throw them away of course! How can you accept flowers from someone you don't know?"

Samantha nodded in agreement. "Better safe than sorry!"

She was never going to admit her annoyance at having to see anything from Timothy's female companions in the ward!

After all, they were eyesores that were upsetting to look at!

Timothy saw through her thoughts but did not expose her. He merely smiled and said, "Do as you please."

Aunt Julia picked up the lilies and got up from her seat. She then exited the ward and tossed them into a trash can.

Since Timothy was still somewhat weak, he began feeling fatigued and sleepy not too long after waking up. His vision started to become a little blurry too.

When Old Madam Barker noticed that, she said, "Tim should continue to rest. I'm going to head back and get some rest for myself too. Maybe calm my nerves a little. You can stay here and take care of them, Julia. Both of them are weak but I won't be able to rest easy if I leave them in other people's hands."

Julia might not be a very bright person, but she was one of the best at taking care of and serving others.

She nodded, "Yes, Old Madam."

Samantha was also injured and it was only natural for her not to do everything herself. "Okay."

"Well then, I'm leaving."

"I'll see you out, Old Madam."

Aunt Julia helped the old lady up and the two of them headed for the door.

Samantha wanted to send the old lady too, but she was stopped. "You don't need to trouble yourself. Just take it easy."

"Be careful on the way home, Grandma."

Samantha watched them leave before walking back to the bed. She helped Timothy to lie back down and pulled the blanket to cover his body.

"Samantha," the man called out softly to her.

"Yeah?"

Timothy strained to open his eyes and look at her, then said her name again, "Samantha."

Samantha was a little puzzled but she nevertheless responded to him, "I'm right here."

Timothy smiled. He no longer said anything and closed his eyes again.

Samantha was stunned for a second but could not resist smiling shortly after. Did a man as awe-inspiring as Timothy have moments of uncertainty too?

He probably called her name twice to get her response and make sure she was real rather than a figment of his imagination.

She sat on the edge of the bed, rested her chin on her hands, and focused her dark pupils on him. Life was good at that moment, and she hoped it would remain so until the end of time.

Would happiness be in store for Samantha and Timothy from that moment onward?

Aunt Julia went back to the ward after sending off Old Madam Barker, the lovable scene inside caught her eye just as she was about to push the door and walk in. It brought a smile to her face and she decided to shut the door softly instead.

It would be nice to let the young couple have some peace and quiet to themselves and she had no intention of ruining their moment.

...

The woman from earlier exited the hospital and took a taxi to the police station.

Once she had registered her name, the police officer led her to the visiting room, where she pulled a chair and took a seat. After a wait of about 15 minutes, Penelope was brought in.

Penelope looked pallid and she looked to have slimmed down considerably in just a few days. Her prison clothes were very baggy and there was not a trace of vitality left in her.

She sat across from the woman and raised her head.

A look of disbelief appeared on her face when she first laid eyes on the woman. Her eyes then widened and her gaze lit up as soon as she confirmed that the woman was who she thought it was.

Like a person who finally met the savior on the brink of death, Penelope stretched out her hand and grasped the woman's hand firmly. Her voice was urgent as she said, "Harmony, is that...really you? When... When did you come back?"

The woman, whose name was Harmony Johnson, smiled indifferently and said, "Not too long ago."

After pausing for a second, she glanced across Penelope's face before asking, "Why do you have to make yourself so miserable?"

Penelope was unable to hold back the resentment in her heart when that subject was brought up. She had no regrets about being in jail—her sole regret was failing to kill Samantha!

“It’s that f*cking b*tch, Samantha, who put me in such a f*cked-up situation.”

Since Penelope has been locked up ever since that day, she did not know what went on in the outside world, especially with regard to Samantha and Timothy. She could not help but ask, “Harmony, do you know what condition Timothy and Samantha are in right now?”

Even if Samantha did not die, she would at least suffer from some near-fatal injuries.

Harmony seemed to know what Penelope was thinking and answered slowly, “I just visited them in the hospital. Samantha suffered only a little graze. Tim’s injury was very serious so he was lucky to survive. He just came out of his coma.”

After hearing Harmony’s words, Penelope clenched her hands tightly to the point where veins were starting to surface on the back of her hand.

Timothy and Samantha were both fine but Penelope had to go to jail for the rest of her life.

‘Why! Why must I have to suffer!’

Harmony spoke in a rather excoriating manner, “Penny, you shouldn’t hurt Tim over this grudge between you and Samantha.”

“That wasn’t my intention! I never wanted that to happen!” Penelope raised her voice all of a sudden. “Timmy is protecting that b*tch Samantha at my expense! He’s being ruthless and heartless toward me, even to the point of ignoring his promise to you!”

Harmony’s eyes dimmed slightly. “Is that so?”

Penelope tightened her grip around Harmony’s hand. “Harmony, I shouldn’t be jailed like this. Help me... Help me tell Timmy to let me go. It’s useless for me to beg him, but it’s different with you. Timmy will listen to you. When you told him to take care of me in the past two years, he always treated me well and gave me whatever I wanted.”

Although Penelope had been reluctant to admit that fact up until then, she was more than willing to acknowledge it as long as she could get the charges against her dropped and avoid any jail time.

Harmony kept quiet and removed her hand little by little from Penelope’s grip.

Penelope started feeling uneasy. “Harmony...”

Harmony's voice was still very soft, but her tone left no doubt as to her intentions. "I can't help you this time, Penny. You nearly killed Tim. He has repaid my debt to the Schmidts in the past two years. I no longer owe the Schmidts anything."

Then, she spoke in a tone that belied her resentment for Penelope's stubbornness. "Penny, I gave you this opportunity after you told me you liked Tim, but you didn't make the most of it. In the end, you even pushed Tim to other women, and for this you only have yourself to blame."

"Wait, no! No, it's not like that! This is all Samantha's fault! She used all sorts of tricks to snatch Timmy away! She's the one who made me like this!" Penelope's hatred grew with every word she said.

Harmony simply ignored those remarks and said, "I'll take care of your mother. This is the most I can help you with.. As for your grudges with Samantha, you should think long and hard about what you're going to do about it."

Chapter 148: You Don't Need to Worry About the Future

Harmony got up after ending her sentence and went straight toward the door.

As she was about to leave, Penelope's soft voice rang from behind, "Will you really help me take care of my mommy?"

Harmony halted her footsteps. She assured without turning around, "I'll take care of her. You don't need to worry about the future."

'You don't need to worry about the future...'

Penelope digested those words and finally said, "I understand."

A dim light flashed in Harmony's eyes as she lifted her foot and walked out.

...

During the next couple of days, Timothy and Samantha's vitality improved steadily under Aunt Julia's attentive care. Their bodies were recovering gradually too.

Samantha was already up and about after only a two-day rest. Since all she suffered was a little graze, the toughness and tenacity she had gained during her days abroad allowed her to recover relatively quickly.

Old Madam Barker had grown used to being taken care of by Aunt Julia, so Samantha did not want to keep Aunt Julia around too long. She told Aunt Julia to go back to the villa, saying that she would be able to take care of Timothy herself.

Being the tactful person that she was, Aunt Julia knew that it was better to keep the old lady company at the villa. After all, the young couple was just starting to rekindle their love and she did not want to see their daily displays of affection.

She did not object and left accordingly.

Timothy could not afford to expend too much energy and still needed to recuperate, so Ronald generally took care of work matters on his own. When it came to important and urgent matters that he really could not handle, he would filter those that really required Timothy's attention and give Timothy a daily report.

At that moment, Ronald sat beside the bed and concentrated on reporting them to Timothy.

Samantha did not want to disturb the two men, so she went to the bathroom to wash some fruits before bringing them back out.

Ronald was no longer there when she came out.

It came as a bit of a surprise for her. "Did Ronald finish briefing you so quickly?"

She remembered seeing him bring in a large stack of documents.

Timothy looked at her and replied insipidly, "Why am I paying him such a huge salary if I have to do everything myself? His work must be directly proportionate to the pay he's getting."

That was such a capitalist thing to say.

He made employee exploitation sound so cultured!

Samantha chided him in her heart before walking to the bed and lifting the fruit tray to his eye level. "Which one would you like?"

Timothy lifted his chin and tapped it on the apple.

Samantha freed up the apple with her free hand and handed it to him.

A sickly expression immediately appeared on Timothy's handsome face. "My hands are still a little weak."

'Oh, is that so! You think I didn't see you sign those documents with such vim and vigor just now?'

Even though Samantha knew he was doing it on purpose, she looked at his expression and 'willingly' allowed herself to be tricked. "Okay, I'll feed you."

Samantha placed the tray down, picked up the apple, then sat on a bedside chair. She grabbed the fruit knife and carefully started to peel the apple.

Timothy leaned on the bedhead and smiled slightly as he glanced at her from the side.

He finally realized why Samantha particularly enjoyed letting him do all sorts of stuff for her in the past.

As it turned out, it was a bliss to watch the subject of one's affection being so accommodating to oneself.

Samantha peeled off the apple skin with ease and cut it neatly into four small pieces. She picked one up and was about to feed it to Timothy when she heard a voice from the television.

"Lychee TV is scheduled to organize a brand-new competition for news presenters! Winners will receive generous prizes, and the grand champion will be given a spot as Lychee TV's new anchor! We hope you'll take part..."

Samantha's attention was drawn to the television. She stared at the television screen and even stopped feeding Timothy.

When Timothy saw that he could not help but follow her line of sight and look over, although he soon shifted his attention to Samantha.

Her interest in the competition was written all over her face.

Timothy suddenly remembered that Samantha majored in communications and took part-time jobs as a news anchor when she was abroad.

If that was the case...

He opened his lips and asked, "Do you want to participate in the competition?"

The sudden question brought Samantha back to her senses. She looked at Timothy and nodded without hiding her interest. "I do."

Lychee TV rarely recruited new anchors back when she just graduated from university. She initially wanted to apply for that station because that was the station many soon-to-

be news anchors dreamed of working at. Those who could be a part of Lychee TV generally stood out from the rest.

Unfortunately, she was forced to go abroad after her marriage with Timothy was broken off and was not able to apply for Lychee TV. During that time, she did odd jobs everywhere just to make a living and did not have time to officially become a part of a television company. The only option available to her was a part-time position.

That dream of hers was something she never forgot.

However, her status had since become that of Mrs. Barker and she was unable to do as she pleased. She has to take into account the Barker Group's reputation, as well as her reputation as Mrs. Barker.

Her voice softened a little. "I...can't join, right?"

After all, if she did participate in a competition like that, she would definitely catch the eye of those overly-enthusiastic paparazzi. That would only cause Timothy and the Barker Group to make the headlines.

He hated being a constant subject of discussion and had a similar loath to making the headlines as well as the trending searches.

Timothy looked at her for a few seconds before his thin lips parted open. Rather than answering her, he asked instead, "Do you want to participate in this competition because it's your dream, or is it just...for the prize money?"

Samantha replied without thinking twice. "Because it's my dream!"

"Oh?" Timothy cocked an eyebrow and he stared at her as if he could see through her mind.

"Ahem..." Samantha blinked her round eyes and added meekly, "and because of the...prize money too."

The prize money for first place was half a million!

She did not need to worry about several months' worth of medical expenses if she had that kind of money.

Samantha was bubbling with confidence when she thought of that. "I'm not a child. Only children make choices. I'm an adult and I want both!"

Timothy seemed amused by her words and had a slightly cheerful look in his eyes.

Samantha observed his expression and saw that he was not against it. Perhaps she could try and insist on it?

She licked her lips and opened her mouth to test his response, "I really feel like trying my luck, Timothy. You know that it's always been my dream to be an anchor on Lychee TV, so...can I join the competition?"

Timothy showed no expression and he remarked in a very diffident tone, "That would...depend on your performance."

'My performance?'

There was hope for Samantha!

Her eyes lit up and she fed the apple slice to Timothy's mouth. "Have some fruit, Honey!"

Timothy narrowed his eyes disdainfully at her, as if to ask, 'That's it?'

Samantha realized that it was probably too small a gesture.

She set the fruit down, took a paper towel to wipe her hands, then placed her hands on Timothy's shoulders while saying softly, "Let me give you a massage, my dear hubby!"

However, Timothy grabbed her wrist and pulled her slightly, drawing her figure closer and making her sit right in front of him.

Timothy's limpid eyes looked at her and he spoke with emphasis on each word, "Since you're an adult, shouldn't you do something that...adults do?"

Chapter 149: Be Her Custodian

Something that adults do?

Samantha's mind went blank for a second, but her cheeks soon blushed uncontrollably when she realized what Timothy meant.

He was acting like a rascal all the time!

It was unfortunate that she had to ask his permission for that, but she was more than willing to make that small sacrifice for the sake of her dream!

Samantha took a deep breath. She then leaned slowly toward Timothy's face and closed her eyes as she planted a kiss on his cheek.

At the very last moment, Timothy turned his handsome face and the kiss fell on his thin lips instead.

Samantha opened her eyes abruptly. "You—"

Timothy interrupted her as soon as she started her sentence and said faintly, "This isn't enough."

Samantha was speechless

"At the very least..."

Only four words came out of Timothy's mouth and he had already wrapped his arms across her slender waist. After carrying her up to his chest, he kissed Samantha yet again.

Far from being a little peck like the one earlier, he gave a deep kiss that was strong, gentle, and revealed the entirety of his feelings to her. There was no longer any need to suppress his feelings and that kiss became a manifestation of his heart's desires.

He allowed her to feel him without barriers.

Samantha's first instinct was to resist, but did not dare to struggle after taking into account his wounds. In that brief moment of hesitation, she surrendered bit by bit to him.

She could resist Timothy if he ravaged her, but she could never resist his gentleness. Her breathing became heavier and heavier, and her head became dizzy as oxygen gradually began depleting from her brain. Her body soon turned limp and she could only allow him to do as he pleased.

It was rare of her to be so obedient and Timothy's gaze darkened as a result. His big palm slid slowly along the hem of her clothes and they roamed around as his kisses moved lower...

Samantha was in a daze and she did not know where to put her hands and feet. She bumped against Timothy's wound by accident and heard him groan very softly.

Her consciousness snapped back right that instant and her vision soon came into focus. She pushed Timothy away without so much as another word and asked nervously, "Are you alright, Timothy?"

The man gasped heavily after being pushed away and looked at her with reddened eyes. "Something's wrong!"

Samantha's voice started to falter. "Ah? I... I'll call a doctor!"

Timothy did not loosen his grip around her waist despite her attempt to get up. On the contrary, he tightened his grasp and made her look incomprehensibly at him.

The man's head was just above her and his hot breaths gushed all over her cheeks. His voice was low and hoarse as he said slowly, "There's nothing wrong with the wound. It's...another body part!"

Another body part?

Samantha blinked and finally came to a sudden realization. What other body part could it possibly be?

Her cheeks were already red from his kiss, but her entire face soon turned hot due to his words.

"You..." Samantha was both shy and angry. After taking some time to calm herself down, she could barely force out a sentence. "Your injury needs to heal, Timothy!!"

'You should practice abstinence, understand?'

Timothy frowned. He was obviously unhappy, but he knew when to stop after seeing Samantha's reddened face. From what he knew of her character, she would probably be wary of him during his recovery period and even avoid approaching him.

If that happened, the gains he made would not be worth the loss he had to suffer.

Then again, it was every person for themselves when it came to getting what one wanted.

"Does that mean...you're okay with it once my injury heals?"

Samantha did not know what to say.

'When did I say that? Can you please refrain from reading too much into what I said?'

"Even if you've healed..."

Before she could continue the second half of her sentence and say 'I'm not okay with it', Samantha noticed Timothy's menacing look that seemed to say, 'I won't plan on stopping now if you don't agree!'

Samantha could not help but grit her teeth and blasted him secretly, 'You stinking rascal!'

Her eyes rolled around in her sockets and something finally crossed her mind! She smirked, opened her red lips slightly, then replied bluntly, "It'll depend on your performance!"

A man might take a long time to get revenge, but a woman could do so within minutes!

Samantha viewed it as nothing more than an eye for an eye.

Timothy was startled because he never expected her to actually make the same remark he did.

Samantha seized the right moment to push him away while avoiding his wound. She got out of bed, backed three steps away from him, then concluded, "The decision stands! No, you can't appeal!"

Timothy leaned back on the bed, adjusted his breathing, and made a tactical concession. "Okay."

He would definitely put on a good performance once he recovered from his injury!

...

With Timothy approving her participation, Samantha began to focus on the competition.

The competition system this time is similar to a talent show. The first round was an audition, after which there would be three rounds where contestants advance after playing off against each other in terms of technical skill. Eminent anchors from the industry would act as judges for the first two rounds, but for the final round, it was those judges and the viewers' votes that determined who the grand champion would be.

After all, news anchors had to face the audience, so it was very important for them to possess an on-air charisma and receive acknowledgement from the audience!

Samantha began to write her resume after understanding the competition system.

A very large number of people participated in the competition but only 30 would be chosen from the audition. Due to its very competitive nature, the resume was a stepping stone to pass the audition. Something had to stand out and pique the judges' interest.

Although Samantha had gone to a good university, she had neither professional work experience nor had she ever worked in a large television station. As a result, she could only write down her part-time experience one by one.

Regardless of how she looked at it, the entire resume felt...a little plain.

With a laptop on her lap, her delicate brows were knit into a frown as she paused occasionally while she typed.

After going through the documents Ronald sent over, Timothy massaged his temples and looked at Samantha on the other side of the sofa. When he saw her looking all fidgety and anxious, he smiled gently and asked, "What's the matter?" "

Samantha said in a sullen voice without raising her head, "My resume doesn't look good and I'm worried about not even making it through the audition."

Timothy focused his gaze on her.

Samantha was not like that in the past. She performed exceptionally well in university. Even her professors praised her countless times with the belief that she would become a future star.

She used to be extremely confident too. At that time, she said she was going to apply to be an anchor of Lychee TV, and even if there was only one available vacancy, she firmly believed that it would be hers!

Had she not gone abroad in the past, she might already be a spectacular news anchor by then.

To think that even an audition could make her so worried.

Timothy felt a stinging in his heart when he saw Samantha like that.

He wanted to be the custodian of her dream.

"There is one way that you can definitely pass the audition. Would you like to hear it?" Timothy asked.

A way to pass the audition?

Samantha lifted her head from the laptop screen and looked at Timothy. "Are you....trying to get me in through the back door?"

Chapter 150: Here You Go, Hubby!

Timothy cocked his eyebrows. He looked back at her and said without hesitation, "As if!"

Samantha was lost for words.

Although she had never thought of using opportunistic means to realize her dreams and felt that it was beneath her to do so, she could not help but feel a little unhappy when her own husband refused her so unhesitatingly.

Other people's husbands would surely have helped their wives to handle everything!

Timothy saw through her thoughts and chuckled softly before explaining, "You're Mrs. Barker, and if I got you in through the back door, your prestige would come from your status as Mrs. Barker, not as Samantha Larsson."

Samantha understood that of course. Even though she could understand it logically, she still felt a little unhappy emotionally.

"What's your suggestion then, Mr. Barker?"

Timothy looked at her slightly puffed-up cheeks and said, "I won't open that back door for you, but I can open another back door for you."

Another back door?

Samantha knit her brows in a moment of thought and understood it soon enough.

The problem with her resume was that it did not stand out. Therefore, the so-called back door that Timothy spoke of was none other than his guidance.

How could she have forgotten that Timothy—the CEO of the Barker Group and a renowned business tycoon—was right in front of her!

He has read the resumes of countless super talented people and interviewed many of them too. His guidance would certainly bring about a qualitative leap to her resume!

The unease and dejectedness in Samantha's heart disappeared all of a sudden. She carried her laptop immediately and practically threw herself onto the bed. A humble and eager-to-learn expression appeared on her face and she said softly, "I'll have to trouble you to guide me, Mr. Barker."

"Heh."

Timothy leaned lazily on the bedhead and raised his chin proudly while striking a pretentious pose, "What did you just say? Your voice is a little soft and I couldn't hear you."

Samantha was more than willing to give in and began speaking eloquently, "Please have a look at my resume and provide your opinion, Mr. Barker!"

"What's that? What did you call me?"

Samantha changed her words right away. "Hubby!"

Her sweet, crisp voice made Timothy's Adam's apple bob in his throat.

When he next spoke, his voice had become a little mute. "What else?"

As expected, men were all scumbags who only knew how to demand more than what they had been given!

Samantha gritted her teeth but continued to sport a pleasant smile on her face. She leaned over and gave him a big fat kiss on his cheek.

Then, she acted flirtatiously like those girls on television and sharpened her tone as she said, "Could you help me, Honey? Pretty please?"

She felt goosebumps as soon as she said that.

Timothy's lips twitched. He reached out to squeeze her cheek and he said hoarsely, "You win, Samantha."

He was never able to refuse her in the first place and had no choice but to surrender when she acted all coquettish.

Guiding her to write a resume was nothing. He would even go so far as to do something as foolish as taking all the stars in the sky, if that was what she wanted.

Samantha was afraid that he would go back on his word, so she placed the laptop in front of him and said, "Here you go, Hubby!"

Timothy squeezed her cheek a little harder. Had it not been for his injury, he would have set her straight right on the spot!

He took a deep breath, suppressed the urges in his heart, and poured all of his attention on his resume.

...

A week later.

Timothy's condition improved with every passing day due to his youthful body and he was almost fully recovered already. After undergoing a doctor's examination, he could be discharged on the very same day and all he had to do was come back at fixed intervals to have his body reexamined.

Samantha could have been discharged from the hospital long ago, but since she was taking care of Timothy, she decided to be discharged together with him. Before they left, the two of them went to pay a visit to Corey.

Although Corey had not woken up yet, his physical condition had improved steadily after implementing the little saint's treatment plan.

Samantha looked at her brother and could not help sighing. "How good would it be if Corey could wake up and leave the hospital with us."

Timothy hugged her waist gently and comforted her. "Don't worry. He'll wake up because he knows you're waiting for him."

'Like me—I tried so hard to wake up when I heard you calling my name.'

For the sake of the person that he loved, he spared no effort in declining a visit from the grim reaper.

"Yeah." Samantha nodded gently.

Timothy then walked out of the ward with his hands around Samantha's waist. Unbeknownst to them, Corey's fingers moved as if he had sensed something.

The two of them walked out of the hospital and Ronald was already waiting by the car. When he saw them coming out, he hurriedly said to them, "Congratulations on your recovery and discharge from the hospital, Mr. and Mrs. Barker!"

Samantha chuckled slightly. "Thank you, Ronald!"

Love might or might not be the cause, but Samantha's smile was so beautiful that Ronald was a little dazed when he saw it. He ended up smiling like a buffoon and said, "No thanks necessary."

The next second, he felt a death stare from his boss next to him and that silly smile of his froze in fright. He retracted his gaze and opened the door of the rear seat, "Hop on in, Mr. and Mrs. Barker!"

Timothy shielded the top of Samantha's head with his hand and protected her head as she got into the car. After that, he bent over and got into the car too.

Ronald breathed a sigh of relief once the immense pressure disappeared.

His boss's possessiveness was so frightening that it sent chills down his spine!

After closing the car door, Ronald went around the car to walk to the driver's seat. From the corner of his eye, he spotted a woman's familiar-looking figure to his left and was a little stunned as a result.

Harmony Johnson?

Ronald raised his head instinctively and looked over, but there was no one there.

He blinked and made sure that there really was no one. He chalked it up to a hallucination that he probably had because he had been scared out of his wits by his boss.

Harmony was supposed to be abroad, so there was no way she could possibly be there.

He shook his head and continued making his way to the driver's seat. After getting into the car, he started the engine and drove off.

At eight o'clock that evening, the audition list for the competition was released.

Her resume, which had received Timothy's guidance, sent her through the first hurdle. Samantha was then notified to attend the final interview, which was to be held the following day.

Early the next morning, Old Madam Barker made a point to let Aunt Julia prepare a confidence-boosting breakfast for Samantha to eat.

After that, Timothy drove her personally to the entrance of the television station.

Once the car came to a halt, Samantha took a deep breath, unfastened her seat belt, and was about to push the door to get out of the car. Timothy, however, reached for her wrist.

He leaned over, planted a kiss on her lips, then said softly, "I'm looking forward to hearing your good news."

One would generally cheer the other person and wish them luck under normal circumstances, but he was very direct when he made that remark, as if he was already certain that she was going to pass.

Samantha could not help asking, "Are you that confident in me?"

She was not too confident about passing the interview.

Timothy said with conviction, "I'm sure my wife will get first place."

Her nervousness not only eased, but her confidence seemed to return too.

Samantha kissed him back. "Alright, my dear husband. I won't shame your reputation and I'll make sure to bring home first place!"

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Samantha walked into the waiting hall, where countless people had already arrived. After picking a chair at random and sitting down, she heard someone calling her name.

"Ms.. Larsson."

Chapter 151: Someone I Love Dearly

The woman's tone was so distinctive and familiar that Samantha practically knew who it was as soon as she heard it.

Sure enough, she raised her head and immediately saw the beautiful woman who she met at the airport and Barrkjaer Island. She could not hide her surprise when she exclaimed, "It's you!"

People used to say that it was rare for chance encounters to happen more than once, so it never crossed Samantha's mind that her 'chance encounter' with that beautiful woman would be so frequent within such a short amount of time.

The woman smiled gently, "It's such a coincidence that we meet again."

She glanced at the seat next to Samantha and asked, "May I?"

"Oh sure, go ahead."

The woman sat down gracefully and looked at Samantha from the side before asking, "Are you here for today's interview as well?"

'As well...'

Samantha became even more surprised. "I am. It seems we were destined to meet again."

Had either of them been a man, it would have been the start of a romantic story.

Harmony nodded with a smile and said, "Let me introduce myself. My name is Harmony, Harmony Johnson."

Harmony already knew Samantha's name as the latter replied out of courtesy, "Samantha. Samantha Larsson."

“Pleased to meet you, Samantha.”

“The pleasure’s mine.”

Harmony’s black pupils glanced across Samantha’s face and she asked all of a sudden, “How’s your recovery going, Samantha?”

The sudden question stunned Samantha for a moment.

How could Harmony know about her injury when no outsider was supposed to know?

She frowned in confusion and could not help asking, “You... How did you know about my injury?”

“Ah?” A fleeting self-conscious expression appeared in Harmony’s eyes but her smile soon returned and she said, “I went to the hospital the other day and happened to see you wearing a hospital gown. Your complexion didn’t seem very good so I assumed you were ill.”

“I see. Well, thank you for your concern. I’m fully healed now,” Samantha replied. She then turned to look at the woman and ask, “Why were you at the hospital? Were you feeling unwell too?”

Harmony shook her head gently. “I wasn’t the one who was unwell. Someone...very important to me got injured and I went to visit him in the hospital.”

‘Very important person...’

Samantha could not resist asking, “Is he your boyfriend?”

Harmony raised her gaze, looked right into Samantha’s eyes, and emphasized each word of her sentence, “He’s...someone I love dearly.”

She pursed her red lips lightly and a radiant glow stained her cheeks. “And he...loves me dearly too.”

Samantha knew how fortunate a person would be if they met someone who reciprocated their love.

Harmony seemed to be one of those lucky people.

She smiled and said, “I hope that man recovers soon.”

Harmony chuckled. “Thank you. He already has and the hospital has discharged him.”

“Really? Well, that’s good.”

As Samantha spoke, the thought of Timothy appeared inexplicably in her mind. Timothy was also injured a few days ago and had been discharged two days ago because he had since recovered.

The subject of Harmony's affections seemed to have been discharged at the same time as Timothy.

Could it have been...the same person?

When that thought occurred in Samantha's mind, she laughed in spite of herself for thinking about something so ridiculous.

It just so happened that an announcement was made in the waiting hall. "The interview will be starting now. Please keep your numbers in mind. We'll call you one by one. Please come in for the interview when your number is called. We will not entertain anyone who misses their call."

As soon as the announcement was broadcasted, everyone shifted their focus to the upcoming interview.

Samantha chucked her ridiculous notions away and concentrated on making her final preparations.

Timothy, Old Madam Barker, and Aunt Julia were all so confident in her when they cheered her on. She felt obliged to pass the interview and make sure she did not fail to meet their expectations.

Samantha was number 19 and Harmony was number 20. When number 19 was called, Samantha stood up.

Harmony said to her, "Break a leg, Ms. Larsson."

Samantha smiled in response. "Thank you."

She walked up to the door of the interview room, took a deep breath, then pushed the door open and walked in.

Her ability to withstand pressure and stay calm was extremely strong, probably because she had to deal with Timothy so many times before. When she faced the interviewers, she could cope with no difficulty whatsoever and completed the interview without feeling any stage fright.

It was Harmony's turn after her. When they passed each other, she said to Harmony, "Break a leg, Ms. Johnson!"

"Thanks."

Harmony walked in with poise.

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The results were made available at eight o'clock the night after.

30 candidates were selected for the audition, but the interview was even more unforgiving. Half of the candidates had been screened out, leaving only fifteen spots.

Samantha was already on edge when she woke up the next morning. Her heartbeat accelerated even more when it was nearing eight in the evening.

Her hands were trembling as she held the laptop and clicked on the email, but at that moment, she did not dare to read it for fear that she had failed to make it.

Footsteps were heard at the door and Samantha was slightly surprised to see Timothy's return.

The man undid his tie and walked toward her.

He sat on the sofa, pulled her into his embrace, then lifted her chin and kissed her before replying, "The results of your interview are coming out today, aren't they? I have to come back and comfort you in case you don't make it."

Samantha did not know what to say to him. She gritted her teeth and punched his chest, "I'm going to make it through."

"Is that so?" Timothy cocked an eyebrow and narrowed his eyes at the computer screen. "If you're so confident, why are you scared to look at the list?"

"Who told you I was scared to look at the list? I just didn't haven't gotten round to it yet," Samantha retorted. She then forced herself to look at the screen and see the list.

However, she was afraid to go on any further after barely seeing the first name. She eventually decided to give up trying to read further and covered her eyes while saying to Timothy, "Okay, I admit it. I'm scared to read it. Could you...help me to check? Then tell me if I made it."

Timothy smiled dotingly. "Okay, I'll help you take a look."

His black pupils glanced quickly through the list.

Ten seconds later, Samantha's heart was starting to feel more anxious when she did not hear any answer from him. She could not help but say, "How is it, Timothy? Am I on the list?"

The man still remained silent.

Samantha's heart sank and she wondered if she had failed to make it.

She opened her eyes slightly and glanced at Timothy's expression. When she saw the odd expression on his face, she gulped and turned to the screen to read the list.

The name on the first line was not hers and neither was the name on the second. It was not until the second-last line that she saw the name, Samantha Larsson.

She had passed the interview!

Samantha placed both hands over her mouth and she could not hide the excitement in her eyes.

She looked at Timothy and said in a slightly reproachful tone, "What kind of expression is that, Timothy? Shouldn't you be happy that I passed the interview?"

Timothy did not seem to have heard Samantha's words and did not answer her.. Instead, his focus was on one particular name on the list.