

Read Once Bitten, Twice Shy online free

Chapter 202: You're the Only Woman I Want

Samantha's heart could not stop beating violently even though she had already put forth that question. She did not know whether Timothy would tell her the truth.

She really did not know how to face him anymore if he denied it.

Timothy looked at her calmly for a few seconds, then shifted his attention from her tense expression to her unconsciously-clenched hands. Rather than answering right away, he reached out to take her hand and loosened her clenched fingers one by one to avoid her getting hurt.

He then opened his lips and answered, "I do."

'I do...'

That simple two-worded answer eased Samantha's heart slightly.

At least he did not show any intention of lying to her.

"Then... Then why didn't you tell me about her before?" Samantha asked. Her dark pupils stared intently at the man's face to ensure that not even the smallest expression could escape her attention.

Unfortunately, it was impossible to see through his emotions because of the distant look in his eyes and an indifferent expression on his face.

The man opened his lips and answered concisely. "There's no need to."

That answer caused Samantha's heartbeat to quicken once more as her heart leapt right up to her throat.

What did he mean by 'there's no need to'?

Was his relationship with Harmony so insignificant that there was no need to introduce them, or was their relationship so meaningful that he did not want to tell her about it?

Both those possibilities were worlds apart from each other.

"Timothy, you..." Samantha unconsciously began asking.

Before she could finish speaking, Timothy's low and deep voice interrupted her at once. "What is it you really want to ask, Sammy? Just ask."

Samantha had to admit that Timothy had super sharp perception. He could still notice that something was off even though she had hidden her emotions.

Truth be told, going around in circles was not something that anyone wanted. It was best for her to be frank about it since he could already see through her.

However, Samantha pursed her lips slightly and prefaced her question by saying, "You have to tell me the truth."

Timothy patted her head lightly with his palm and answered huskily, "Of course."

Samantha took a breath and asked her question in one go. "Aside from being friends, is there anything else going on between you and Harmony?"

After a pause, she solemnly added a few more words. "I'm talking about the kind of relationship...between a man and a woman..."

Timothy listened quietly to what she said and smirked slightly, as if he was amused. "My answer is the same, Mrs. Barker. I'm a married man."

That was the same direct answer he used regarding the time the beautiful woman came up and struck a conversation with him some time ago.

Samantha accepted it at the time, but she was far from satisfied in the present scenario.

"I want a clear and unequivocal answer, Timothy." Samantha stared at Timothy stubbornly. "Now answer me: yes or no!"

Seeing the seriousness in Samantha's eyes and her almost imperceptible anxiety, Timothy's little smile sank and there was a serious glow in his black eyes. He stared at her deeply and answered in no uncertain terms, "No."

Samantha looked up at him and asked again, "Are you sure?"

Timothy answered again in a firm tone, "No."

Samantha finally believed that Timothy was telling the truth. He was the one taking the lead in the marriage, and if he really liked Harmony so much and wanted Harmony to replace her, he did not have to put on such a charade in front of her at all. He would have felt that it was beneath him to even lie about it.

While Samantha was still deep in thought, her body felt light all of a sudden and she gasped before snapping back to her senses.

Realizing that Timothy had lifted her up, she looked at him in surprise and asked, "What are you doing, Timothy?"

He lowered his gaze at her but did not say a word. Instead, he took large strides towards the side of the big bed before throwing her onto the soft mattress.

Before Samantha could react, his tall body had already covered her and confined her body firmly under his.

"Timo— Tthgnnh..."

He had planted his lips on hers and gave her a deep kiss.

Sometime later, he finally let go of her after she was almost out of breath. There was even a charming little grin when he broke the kiss.

Samantha panted as her moist eyes stared at him.

He pressed his forehead lightly against hers and there was a surge of charisma in his dark eyes. He opened his lips and spoke in a voice that was hoarse yet pleasantly magnetic, "Seems like I've made you overthink because I've been too busy recently.

"Since you have your doubts about me, I have no choice but to use my body to show you that you're the only woman I want."

As soon as he said that, he gave her another firm and unbridled kiss...

...

The next day, Samantha strained to lift her eyelids after her alarm had rang five times.

She stared at the white ceiling above and was in a daze for a full five minutes before her consciousness came back little by little.

As she tried propping her body up, her arms felt limp halfway through and she collapsed right back.

Timothy was the beasts of beasts...

Even if she still had a tiny sliver of doubt about Timothy's words the previous night, that doubt had disappeared completely and she now believed him a hundred percent.

His ravenousness had thoroughly convinced her that he was not having any affairs.

Since she had to go to work that day, she eventually gritted her teeth and got out of bed. Her legs were shaking as she walked to the bathroom, and it was not until she took a hot bath that her entire body felt a bit at ease.

After coming out of the bathroom, she changed into office attire and grabbed her bag before heading downstairs.

Aunt Julia saw her and smiled. “Good morning, Mrs. Barker. Breakfast is—”

It was already getting late and Samantha did not want to be tardy after only starting work at the television station for a couple of days. She immediately interrupted and said, “I’d have to skip breakfast today, Aunt Julia. I have to go or else I’ll be late. I’ll go to the station and eat once I’m there.”

Aunt Julia swiftly grasped her and said, “That won’t do. You have to eat today’s breakfast.”

“Huh? But Aunt Julia, I’m really running late...”

“Don’t worry, Mr. Barker knew this would happen so he told me to pack it up after he was done preparing it. You can just take it and go. The driver is already waiting outside too, you won’t be late.”

Did Timothy personally prepare breakfast for her?

Aunt Julia handed over the insulated lunch box to Samantha. “Make sure to hold it tightly. Mr. Barker woke up early this morning to prepare it for you. Alright then, have a nice day at work.”

Samantha felt all warm and fuzzy as she carried the insulated lunch box and got in the car.

She could finally breathe a sigh of relief after Timothy’s recent actions.

Old Madam Barker seemed to be correct—it was all a relentless, one-sided affair from Harmony.

Samantha had nothing to fear as long as she was in Timothy’s heart. They went through a lot just to have a fresh start and their relationship was finally on the right track. She would not let anyone or anything destroy their marriage.

When the car arrived at the entrance of Lychee TV, she got out of the car and walked in.

As soon as Samantha entered the elevator, someone followed her in from behind.. Samantha raised her eyes and happened to see Harmony's pure and innocent-looking face.

Chapter 203: I Love You Too, My Wife

Harmony seemed to be everywhere.

Samantha was in a good mood that day and did not even bother to glance at Harmony. The last thing she wanted was to have her wonderful day ruined by that woman.

Harmony made it a point to wait there for Samantha to arrive. She wanted to be the first to enjoy looking at Samantha's hollow-eyed appearance after an insomniac night.

After Rochelle came to make a fuss with her the day before, she received news that Rochelle had investigated her some time ago and found out a bit about her history with Timothy. Since Rochelle had knowledge of that, it was almost certain she would tell Samantha too.

When Timothy received a text from Samantha during the tea session and was asked to go home, Harmony was confident that her relationship with Timothy had come under Samantha's scrutiny.

After that, she deliberately sent the text to Timothy and uploaded the photo on WeTalk just so Samantha would see all that.

She wanted Samantha to experience an agonizing and heart-wrenching insomnia.

However, Harmony's looked at Samantha's face and saw not even the slightest trace of listlessness. On the contrary, Samantha's face looked unusually moist and extremely supple, as if it could bedazzle a person simply by the virtue of its dewiness and beauty.

Harmony was in disbelief. Could the pallid appearance have been covered up by makeup?

She stared grudgingly at Samantha for a few seconds, only to have her heart crushed.

There seemed to be no trace of makeup on Samantha's face and there was no lipstick at all. Samantha's skin was so delicately moist that her pores were invisible and there was even a little blush on her fair face.

Harmony's expression sank.

Could it be that Samantha did not see the photo she uploaded or the text message she sent the night before? Samantha might have missed it on that occasion, but it was impossible that she would continue missing it repeatedly.

All Harmony had to do was show it one more time in front of Samantha.

Harmony suddenly let out a painful hiss and reached into her bag to take out the tube of ointment. She did not hold it too firmly and ended up letting it drop to the ground.

The ointment just so happened to fall right by Samantha's feet and it was hard for Samantha to not see it.

She recognized at a glance that it was the same tube of ointment Harmony's posted the day before, the same one that Timothy bought for her.

"Ah, my hand hurts so much that I have butterfingers now," Harmony muttered softly to herself. She then squatted down and picked up the tube of ointment very slowly, before unscrewing the cap and squeezing some on her fingertips. She then wiped the back of her injured hand and continued muttering, "I'm lucky to have someone who cares about me and bought this specially for me. This is some good ointment. It feels cool as I rub it on and the pain disappears right away."

Samantha's lips twitched as she glared coldly at the act Harmony put on.

Irrked at Harmony's endless attempts at stirring trouble, Samantha decided to join in the fun too.

Samantha's hair was originally draped behind her back, but she put aside the insulated lunch box she was carrying and then removed the hair tie from her wrist by holding it between her teeth. She then raised her hands and gathered her hair skillfully, before using the hair tie to secure her high ponytail. Her fair and slender neck was exposed, and so was the suggestive dark red patch on her right nape.

Samantha's fair and delicate skin had been obscured by her hair earlier and the mark was hidden from view. Once her hair was tied into a high ponytail, the reddish mark stood out like a sore thumb.

Harmony's pupils contracted when she looked over and she felt as though she had been struck by a heavy punch.

She was initially quite confident that those seeds of doubt she sowed would condemn Samantha to an agonizing night of wild guesses. However, the end result seemed to be far from her expectations and Samantha appeared to have had a passionate night with Timothy!

Harmony clenched her hand unconsciously but continued to smile, as if she had not seen anything.

Samantha smirked when she caught a glimpse of Harmony's expression from the corner of her eyes. She entered her WeTalk, tapped on Timothy's chat, and sent him a voicemail.

"Hubby, I'll make sure to eat the lovely breakfast you made for me. I love you."

Samantha deliberately emphasized the last three words 'I love you'.

After hearing that, Harmony could not help but look at the insulated lunch box that Samantha had picked back up again. Did Timothy—a man who would never step into the kitchen to cook—actually make breakfast for Samantha?

Harmony felt that Samantha had deliberately made such a remark just to piss her off.

Perhaps none of the WeTalk messages Samantha received in the past were from Timothy and it was all just an act! Samantha might even have two phone numbers which she used to exchange those messages.

What a cheap, clumsy trick!

Harmony smiled mockingly as she thought of all that.

Seconds later, there was a notification ringtone from Samantha's phone. She clicked on the message and saw a voicemail from the other party. "I love you too, my wife."

The man's voice was low, deep, and extremely pleasant. It seemed to echo in one's ears and anyone who heard it would blush uncontrollably as their heart began to race. It was a form of sweetness overload.

The smile on Harmony's lips froze for a brief moment. Her pure and beautiful face became distorted immediately, turning gloomy and ugly.

Samantha snorted lightly. 'You're pissed now, aren't you! Everybody knows how to be affectionate, but then again, I'm not trying to show off or anything...it's just my daily routine!'

A ding was heard and the elevator had reached the third floor.

Samantha put her phone away, held her loving breakfast, and walked straight out of the elevator without even looking at Harmony.

Harmony froze on the spot and bit her lower lip, which had almost turned pale due to the sheer amount of force in her bite. She then held back her jealousy and anger, took a few deep breaths to calm herself down, then walked out of the elevator.

Unexpectedly, Victoria walked in Samantha's direction as she set foot into the office lobby.

Victoria had her own office room because she was one of the company's main anchors, but her office was not on the third floor. Victoria showing up there came as a complete surprise.

Samantha was excited to meet her idol so suddenly but she did not let her excitement show up. She maintained a calm expression and smiled as she greeted the woman in a polite and reserved manner, "Hello, Ms. Goldman."

Victoria's ever-stoic expression did not change much. She merely glanced at Samantha and gave a slight nod before continuing to walk outside.

Harmony happened to see that scene when she walked in and laughed contemptuously. Victoria paid no attention to Samantha even though the latter had won the competition; by contrast, Victoria had previously intended to take Harmony under her wing.

Did Samantha really think that she could get everything?

Harmony wanted to show that she was the one who caught Victoria's eye and was slated to be the future star of Lychee TV! She wanted Samantha's eyes to open wide and see reality!

Harmony lifted her hand and adjusted her hair swiftly. A beautifully brilliant smile spread across her face and she stepped forward while greeting Victoria sweetly, "Good morning Ms. Goldman."

When Victoria responded to the greeting, Harmony could exchange a few words with her to show that she was different. Unfortunately, Victoria walked past her without even looking, as if she was nothing more than the air inside the room.

Harmony was extremely stunned and her eyes widened slightly. Did Victoria not hear the greeting or was Victoria unable to recall her because she was swamped with work?

Harmony could sense that some of the colleagues were looking in her direction.

Victoria had, at the very least, glanced at Samantha earlier. It would be even more embarrassing if Victoria merely ignored Harmony and walked away!

Not one to give up, Harmony maintained her smile and stood gracefully in front of Victoria while continuing, "I'm Harmony Johnson. We've met before, Ms.. Goldman. You mentioned wanting to invite me over for some tea? Do you remember that?"

Chapter 204: You Disappoint Me

Victoria finally raised her gaze and looked at Harmony. She seemed to finally remember who Harmony was and said insipidly, "Harmony...the one who won the competition but was disqualified due to the unfair advantage gained by robbing someone else's results. I remember now."

She spoke in such a succinct and articulate manner that it sounded as though she was making a news report.

Everyone there fell silent at once, but they were soon unable to stop themselves from laughing secretly.

Victoria was notorious for her grudges and scornfulness, traits which everyone saw first-hand just moments ago.

Harmony was asking for it. She insisted on flaunting in front of Victoria and ended up getting severely humiliated.

All sorts of emotions appeared on Harmony's face as she went from one expression to the other, all of which were extremely ugly.

Her eyes turned red all of a sudden as she adamantly opened her mouth to try and explain herself, "Ms. Goldman, there's been a misunderstanding about—"

Victoria shot her a cold glare and did not buy that excuse at all. She remarked scathingly, "Since you ended up here at Lychee TV, it'd be best to set your mind on the right path and work hard. Get rid of all those disruptive thoughts."

She did not even give Harmony a second glance before leaving after making that remark.

Harmony stood rooted to the ground. She clenched her fists tightly when she saw everyone's mocking gaze and heard everyone's ridicule.

From the corner of her eye, she spotted Samantha smiling at one side, causing her anger and resentment to shoot through the roof.

Neither Samantha nor Victoria should be let off for what they did.

The day would come when she would step on all of them and stomp them to death!

“Why are you all standing around? Don’t you need to work?”

Suddenly, a voice came from the hall, drawing the attention away from Harmony and to the source of the voice. When everyone saw that it was the head of the anchor department, everyone immediately shelved their nosiness and slinked back to their desks to continue working.

The department head walked over and looked at Samantha, then at Harmony, asking, “Are you two the new anchors?”

Samantha recognized that the department head was her immediate superior. She had gone through the list of personnel in the anchor department and committed each of them to memory.

She stepped forward and introduced herself, “Hello, Mr. Lewin. I’m the new anchor, Samantha.”

Harmony adjusted her emotions and forced out a smile, “Nice to meet you, Mr. Lewin. My name is Harmony, I’m new as well.”

Carl Lewin, the department head, nodded and said, “Put your bags down and come in for a meeting.”

He turned his head and said to two other anchors who were at their desks, “You two, come along as well.”

They responded in unison, “Okay.”

...

In the conference room, Carl sat on the main seat while the other more experienced anchors sat on his left and right respectively. Samantha chose to sit second from left while Harmony sat opposite her.

Carl asked, “You all know each other, don’t you?”

The four of them nodded.

“Good. Let’s not waste any more time then.”

Carl picked up a small remote control and pressed a button. The screen in the conference room lit up and a piece of news was shown on it.

Samantha and the others looked over.

Everyone was well aware of the news being shown on screen. It was the hottest news at the moment, involving the only son of the wealthy Cornells—Selby Cornell. He was a famous university professor and physicist who was accused of sexually assaulting his student Ms. Willoughby.

The student made the accusation two days ago on Waybo and the professor responded by calling it slander. The university had also asserted that the professor was someone of good moral standing and would never do something like that.

The news spread like wildfire and shot to the top of the trending news category. Netizens each had something to say about the matter and the entire situation was a complete mess.

Carl waited for them to digest everything before saying, “This news has garnered widespread attention but the truth is still unknown. All major media companies are investigating with urgency and our TV station is no exception.

“Your task—all four of you—is to dig into this. Whoever finds the most information and prepares the best press release will eventually be given the chance to report this.”

As soon as he said that, the eyes of all four anchors lit up slightly.

The news involved points of interest that included, but were not limited to: a wealthy family, a teacher against a student, a student against a university, accusations galore, and the question of professional ethics. If either of the anchors could uncover the truth and report about it, they stood a chance of making a name for themselves through that one broadcast alone.

It was something any anchor would want to fight for.

After a pause, Carl dropped another bombshell. “Ms. Goldman came over earlier to inform me of her desire to select a successor. Anyone who earns the chance to report this news would certainly make a big impression on her. All the best, everyone.”

The answer was unanimous. “Understood.”

Samantha walked out of the conference room. When she returned to her work station, all she could think about was that news.

She came to Lychee TV to realize her dreams and ambitions. It was hard for her to control her excitement after welcoming her first challenge.

Furthermore, she stood a chance of becoming Victoria’s apprentice if she could seize the chance to report that news. It was something she really hoped to achieve.

Samantha was determined to do her best and seize the opportunity.

Harmony went back to her work station and sat down as well. Since her seat was just beside Samantha, she could see Samantha's confident expression and found it to be particularly annoying and disgusting.

Her gaze unconsciously shifted to the insulated lunch box Samantha placed on the table. Once she remembered that it contained the loving breakfast that Timothy made for Samantha, she could not control herself from gnashing her teeth and wanted nothing more than to smash that lunch box on the floor.

All of a sudden, Harmony's phone rang.

She glanced at the caller ID. After her initial shock, she focused her gaze and held the phone, making sure to cover the screen before getting up and walking out of the office lobby.

Harmony walked all the way to the stairwell and answered only after making doubly sure that no one was around. Her voice took on a respectful tone as she greeted, "Hello."

A male voice was heard on the other end of the line. "You've been back for some time now but you still haven't made any progress in your task. 'He' is very disappointed in you."

After a pause, the man asked in a questioning voice, "Does Timothy still have his heart set on you? Or does he not?"

Harmony replied without hesitation, "Tim has his heart set on me of course. Don't worry about it. There's no need to doubt that!

"It's just..." Harmony hesitated and there was a stark iciness in her eyes. "...I underestimated Samantha. She's a master schemer and has all sorts of tricks up her sleeve, plus she knows how to get on Old Madam Barker's good side. You know that Tim is a very filial man. He treats Samantha well for Old Madam Barker's sake and—"

"The root of all this is because you couldn't handle things properly!" She was interrupted by the other person before she could finish her words.

The remark left her feeling aggrieved and somewhat angry, but she endured it patiently after remembering how she still needed to rely on the other party's power.

Harmony quelled her anger before continuing on in a calm voice.

Chapter 205: Destroying Her in One Blow!

“Give me a little more time. I’ll be sure to reclaim my position. I will become Timothy’s wife and the Barkers’ matriarch!”

A sudden thought occurred to Harmony as she smiled and grinned evilly. “Besides, I already have a plan.”

“Alright then. I hope you won’t let ‘him’ down again.”

The other person ended the call after saying that.

Harmony frowned in dissatisfaction and put her phone away angrily.

Sooner or later, she was going to straighten out all those who looked down on her!

...

Having decided on securing the qualification to do the news report, Samantha wasted no time in collecting information about Selby Cornell.

After all, the only way to gain the upper hand was to understand the people involved.

Unfortunately, the information on the internet was relatively one-sided and the information that was available to all was practically worthless.

Making contact offline was a better course of action.

Samantha clicked on the university’s official website and downloaded a copy of the professor’s course schedule. She glossed over it and saw that he had lessons for the day.

Although Samantha did not know whether Selby would show up at the university to teach after what had happened, she might as well try her luck rather than sit around doing nothing. After all, she was never going to find out anything if she just sat around idly.

With that thought in mind, Samantha immediately packed her stuff, grabbed her bag, got up, and walked out.

Anchors who were tasked with assignments were allowed to leave the office and chase leads.

As Harmony returned, she chanced upon seeing Samantha head out. An unsettling grin appeared on her lips as she stared intently at Samantha’s back.

‘Samantha can keep dreaming if she thinks she can beat me again! I’ll be sure to destroy her in a single blow this time!’

Samantha took a taxi to the university. Upon entering, she politely asked a student who was just passing by, "Hello, may I know the directions to the physics department?"

The student was surprised but replied indifferently, "It's that way."

Samantha raised her eyebrows slightly and said, "Thank you."

She walked toward the physics department and saw a group of people surrounding the entrance to the building. The cameras and microphones they held up was a clear indication that they were all reporters.

No wonder the student whom she asked for directions earlier had that expression and spoke in such a tone.

The news was a sensational one alright. The number of reporters waiting there was almost surpassing the number of students who came to attend class. It was so tightly packed that not even a fly could get through.

Judging from the situation, the professor must have come to teach that day.

Samantha thought for a moment then decided to head elsewhere instead of going over to join the group of reporters.

She soon arrived at the dining hall near the physics department and walked right in.

Since it was not yet lunchtime, the only people inside the dining hall were a few lunch ladies. They were sitting around idly and gossiping.

Samantha walked over and greeted them warmly with a smile. "Hello, ladies. How are you?"

The ladies in the dining hall raised their eyes to look at her.

Samantha's smile became even more resplendent. "I'd like to request a favor."

...

The school bell rang an hour later.

Students came out of the classroom building and walked towards the dining hall. A steady stream of people gradually poured in.

Samantha stood at one side and saw the lunch ladies asking the students whether they would be willing to do a questionnaire in exchange for some complimentary spare ribs.

The students were more than happy to fill out the questionnaire and claim their free ribs.

Samantha waited patiently in the dining hall for more than three hours. Once all the students had finished their meals and left, she got up and walked toward the ladies.

She paid them for the spare ribs, took the thick stack of questionnaires, then thanked them and turned around to leave.

After getting in the car, she logged onto Waybo and found out that the group of reporters earlier had come up empty handed, just as she expected.

Samantha put down her phone and looked at the stack of questionnaires, hoping that she would be able to collect some useful information that day.

When she returned to the villa, she informed Old Madam Barker and Aunt Julia that she already had a quick dinner in the university dining hall then went straight upstairs and headed for the study.

Samantha went through every single questionnaire in the stack and set aside those from the students of the physics department.

After separating and organising everything else, she picked up the questionnaires from the physics department and began reading the results.

Since she had not been able to hear it straight from Selby himself, she might be able to understand Selby's character through a different perspective. Those students were all Selby's students and everything they said was worth referring to.

There were good and bad evaluations, which she further separated into different piles. The good evaluations were put on the left, the bad on the right, and neutral ones in between.

She finally finished going through them after about an hour and decided to blink her eyes a little to rid herself of the fatigue.

Neutral evaluations were relatively rare and the majority of responses were positive.

Samantha frowned as a result.

Since everything was skewed in one direction, the professor was either someone with really good character or he was very skilled at pretending.

If Samantha accidentally made a wrong judgment, she would have little chance of making any progress.

Samantha drummed her fingers on the table and flipped through the questionnaires once more. She wanted to try and see if she could find any detailed information from the material she had.

All of a sudden, a pair of fingertips were placed on her eyebrows and gently smoothed the creases of her frown.

Samantha was stunned for a moment. She looked up and was surprised to see Timothy's handsome face. "Why are you home?"

She had been so engrossed in her work earlier that she did not even notice him coming in.

Timothy cocked an eyebrow when he heard her question. "Just yesterday, you were blaming me for neglecting you and causing you to overthink. Now you're asking me why I'm home after I took the initiative to come back and spend time with you today?"

"...No, I'm just...surprised!" Samantha hurriedly found an excuse and blinked her big eyes at him.

Timothy's slender fingers reached forward to pinch her cheek as he glanced over at the questionnaires scattered on the desk. "What's all this?"

"I'm reading the university students' opinions of Professor Selby Cornell." Samantha responded, "Our department head tasked us with investigating Professor Cornell and writing a press release. Whoever produces the best draft will be given the chance to report it on television. This is also a chance for us to make an impression on Ms. Goldman."

"Selby Cornell? The Cornells' only son?" the man asked plainly.

That tone of his...

Samantha unconsciously looked at Timothy. "That's him. Do you know him, Timothy?"

"Yes."

It should not come as a surprise that Timothy knew Selby since the Cornells had a long history as a rich family.

Samantha finally had a breakthrough!

Samantha's eyes lit up immediately. She hugged Timothy's arm and looked at him eagerly as she asked, "In that case, how much do you know about Selby?"

Timothy lowered his gaze to make eye contact with her and the corners of his lips curled up into a suggestive little grin. "That would depend on how sincere you are, Mrs. Barker."

Samantha blinked a couple of times, and became both embarrassed and angry the next second. "Timothy! It's your duty to help your wife, especially after what you did yesterday..."

He did her in all sorts of positions the night before and her back still ached as a result. If he were to do it to her again that night, she felt she would not be able to get out of bed the next day.

She was on assignment during the next couple of days and could not just let him do as he pleased.

Samantha thought for a moment and stood up abruptly. She shoved Timothy onto the chair and immediately sat on his lap. He pressed both hands over his shoulders and threatened him aggressively, "Don't even think about leaving if you don't give me a proper answer!"

Timothy's black pupils stared calmly at her. After half a second, he opened his lips and spoke in a slightly hoarse tone, "Do you really expect me to give you a proper answer after you do this to me?"

Samantha merely wanted to trap him, but she just noticed how ambiguous of a posture she was in. After coming to realize that, a blush started to appear on her cheeks.

She instinctively tried to get up, but the man had already hugged his arms over her slender waist and pressed her back into his embrace. He placed his thin lips against her ears and said in a naughty tone, "I'll answer you now that I've seen your sincerity."

"Selby....is a very honorable man."

Chapter 206: I'll Have to Disappoint You Tonight

'Honorable.'

Timothy's judgement had always been accurate, so if he could hold Selby in high regard, then it was certain that Selby was a respectable individual.

"Alright then, thank you husband!" Samantha said as she got up unhesitatingly from Timothy's lap. She then turned all her attention to the pile of questionnaires without even giving Timothy any attention at all.

Timothy was a little irked by that and raised his eyebrows. "Are you going to burn your bridges now?"

“No, of course not! You’ll always be the number one person in my heart!” Samantha responded without even turning around.

“How heartless!” Timothy squeezed her waist with his big palms. “I took the trouble of coming home today but your mind is only focused on work right now.”

Samantha’s waist was more sensitive than other parts of her body so she tried to avoid his hand a couple of times, but to no avail. Her only recourse was to turn around, look at him, and hold his face in both hands to give him a kiss on the lips. “I’m sorry I have to let you down tonight. I’ll spend some time with you once I finish this, okay?”

The man’s long fingers pinched her cheek.

He seemed to have been bewitched by her peachy, pitiful-looking eyes and nodded just like that. He even said thoughtfully, “Don’t stay up too late.”

“Yes, Sir.” Samantha playfully gave him a military salute.

Timothy released his grip on Samantha and got up. He rubbed the top of her head with his big palm before raising his feet to leave the study.

Samantha sat back down on the swivel chair and continued with her work.

...

The next day, Selby’s itinerary for the day was shared in her work chat group. He was scheduled to attend a conference in a five-star hotel. It was going to be his only public event in recent times and anyone who wanted to interview him would have to seize this opportunity.

Samantha, Harmony, and the two other anchors went to the venue in the company car, but they went their separate ways after arriving because they were all each other’s competitor.

Whatever happened after that would hinge on their own ability.

The conference would end in 15 minutes and reporters were already gathering at the door to the conference room. It was reminiscent of the scene in the university a day ago.

There were two reasons why Samantha did not go up and try to squeeze in: firstly, she might not even be able to insert herself among the tightly-packed crowd, and secondly, she might not be able to get the chance to ask her questions because there were simply too many people.

It would be better to take a wait-and-see approach before deciding upon her next move.

Time passed by quickly and the door to the conference room opened slowly.

The reporters rushed towards the door in a frenzied state and the entire place was flooded with people as soon as Selby walked out.

Microphones and cameras were all shoved into his face as the reporters soon fired off a barrage of questions.

One of them asked, "Professor Cornell, have you no plans to sue your student after she made such a serious sexual assault accusation to tarnish your name?"

A second asked, "Professor Cornell, your reputation has been greatly damaged, but all you did was make a superficial statement to deny it. Is your guilty conscience making you afraid to sue the student?"

Another reporter questioned, "The student continues to expose even more information on Waybo, saying that she would sue you if you don't own up to her accusations. Do you have anything to say about that?"

Selby's face was immensely ugly. He raised his hand to block his face slightly and opened his lips to speak in a somewhat angry tone, "Get out of the way."

The reporters were never going to let him leave without getting an answer and became even more confrontational in their line of questioning. "Professor Cornell, you've refused to talk about this matter all this while, which suggests that the assault did actually happen. Is that really the case?"

Selby's expression was filled with rage when he heard that. He looked directly at the reporter who asked that question and grabbed the man's collar while raising his fist. "Why don't you repeat what you said!"

The reporter was completely unperturbed and appeared to want to provoke him too. He grinned and said on purpose, "We uphold freedom of speech, Professor Cornell. These are all guesses on our part. You ought to explain yourself if you didn't do it, because your silence is further confirmation that you did indeed commit such an act!"

"Shut your mouth!" Selby's face reddened with anger as his breathing quickened. Even the base of his eyes had turned scarlet.

Samantha frowned when she saw everything.

The situation could not be allowed to go on like that...

Her eyeballs rolled inside her eye sockets. She decisively turned around and dashed toward the corridor.

After half a minute, the alarm bell in the hotel rang sharply.

The reporters all went blank for a moment and finally realized that something was off. After exchanging a few glances at each other, they turned around and ran out.

The scene became rather chaotic.

Many of the reporters rammed against Selby as they ran out. He was so angry that he could not find his footing and almost fell after staggering forward.

A hand suddenly grabbed his wrist out of nowhere and led him forward.

He was led in the same direction as the crowd for a short distance before immediately being whisked away to another small path. After continuing to run forward for about 50 meters, he finally stopped after seeing that there was no one else following him.

Selby looked up to see a delicate and sweet-looking face.

Samantha made eye contact with him and smiled. "It's safe here, Professor Cornell."

Selby's gaze shifted downward and he caught sight of the badge hanging around her neck. 'Anchor: Lychee TV'. A sneer appeared on his face when he saw that. "How am I safe when you're here to pry information from me too? Don't assume I'll answer your questions just because you helped me like this."

After a pause, he seemed to have gotten really angry and added coldly, "Just drop it. I won't answer any questions from the likes of you. Sensationalism is what you're after. You're not the kind who makes any attempt to seek the truth!"

Samantha did not take offense to Selby's petulant attitude at all and spoke in as calmly a tone as possible, "Professor Cornell, I admit that I came here today because I wanted to get the truth from you, but that's not the reason I decided to help you earlier."

"I just... I've also experienced false accusations like this before. I was condemned by reporters too. I only helped you because I couldn't stomach the way they acted towards you. More importantly, there are people who say that you're a good person and I believe them. That's the only reason I helped you."

"I never intended to use this as an excuse to have you return the favor."

"Heh." Selby did not believe it at all. "As if I'd believe you."

He was already on the verge of physical and mental collapse after being harassed by those persistent reporters for a couple of days now. He would never believe any words that came out of their mouths.

Samantha did not try to explain herself and simply said, "This hotel has a backdoor that you can use to escape. You'll reach it if you walk a little further down from here. Goodbye."

As soon as Samantha said that, she turned around and left without waiting any longer.

Selby froze on the spot. Samantha said she would leave and that was exactly what she did. He watched as her figure disappeared gradually from sight. Samantha never came back even though he waited for several minutes with a slight confused look in his eyes.

Samantha left the hotel and drove back to Lychee TV.

Harmony had already returned by the time Samantha went to her work station. She glanced at Samantha and smiled oddly at her.

Samantha was wondering what that was all about when she saw Carl walking out of his office. He had an angry look on his face as he said, "Samantha, my office, now!"

Chapter 207: You Fear Me This Much?

Inside the office, Samantha stood at the desk and watched as Carl sat coldly behind the desk. She asked gently, "What can I do for you, Mr. Lewin?"

Carl had a calm expression and did not answer her. Instead, he asked coldly, "What did you do when you were out on the field today, Samantha?"

Samantha cocked her eyebrows slightly and had a rough guess as to what was going on, but she suppressed it and replied, "I went out to chase leads on Professor Cornell."

"Are you really going to continue your act in front of me?" Carl slammed the table and raised his anger-filled voice. "It wasn't easy for the professor to make a public appearance, yet I received a report that you privately let him go. Did that happen?"

It turned out to be that incident.

As for the report, Samantha knew exactly who was behind it.

That was probably why Harmony grinned so strangely at her earlier.

Both Samantha and Harmony went to the field to do their job, but while Samantha was focused on finding ways to obtain information, Harmony's focus seemed to be on Samantha and Samantha alone.

The evidence provided must have been conclusive if Harmony was behind the report, so Samantha did not deny it and came clean. "Yes. I let Professor Cornell go."

"Well now, your job was to get information, not only did you fail to do it, you even interfered with the job of the other anchors. What's the matter? Do you prefer working as Professor Cornell's bodyguard rather than an anchor?" Carl was furious.

"Mr. Lewin." Samantha looked right at him and answered solemnly, "Professor Cornell was surrounded by plenty of reporters at the time. He was deliberately being provoked because he refused to answer any of their questions. Some reporters even declared him guilty just to create a sensationalist news report. They have no intention of wanting to find out the truth. On the other hand, you tasked us to find out the truth and report that truth to the public."

"In my opinion, those reporters' actions are a violation of professional ethics. Under such circumstances, it is only right for me to help Professor Cornell out of trouble, both in my capacity as an anchor and as a bystander."

"Ludicrous!" Carl seemed appalled at her unwillingness to admit her mistakes and became even angrier. "You were sent there to get information using whatever means possible, but you allowed Selby to leave and prevented everyone from getting anything whatsoever. On top of that, you still strongly believe that your actions were righteous and you did nothing wrong?"

Samantha frowned, "Mr. Lewin, it is my duty to investigate the truth and I will find a way to do so without forcing others. I don't think I did anything wrong in this matter."

"Amazing. You're acting all high and mighty rather than admitting to your mistakes." Carl was at wit's end and immediately ordered, "Alright then, Samantha, you should reflect on your actions when you're home and write a self-review of at least five thousand words. You are to read it out in public at the meeting next Monday, and you're barred from working on the assignment before you present your self-review. It's either that or you can withdraw yourself from the assignment!"

...

When Samantha came out of the office, everyone looked at her in a different light and started whispering to each other.

Carl's berating earlier was so loud that almost everyone outside could hear it clearly.

Harmony smiled happily when she saw that.

She had not yet been on her A-game in the past and had been toying with Samantha all this while. Samantha had a false sense of victory and became smug to the point that she did not take Harmony seriously anymore.

It was time for Harmony to get payback.

Samantha's expression did not change much. She did not even look around her when she walked through the office lobby and headed for the pantry.

She seemed to be holding up well...

Harmony snorted, then got up and followed behind.

She would not pass on the chance to savor Samantha's humiliation.

In the pantry, Samantha took a paper cup and fetched herself some warm water. She drank it slowly to try and calm herself down.

Harmony walked in and leaned against the table. She had a little smirk as she looked at Samantha and everything that came out of her mouth was the same old farce she always had. "Are you okay, Sammy? Why did Mr. Lewin lash out at you so severely just now?"

Samantha was confident that she surpassed Harmony in many aspects, but when it came to being a b*tch, that was the one thing she could admit that Harmony was better than her.

Never before did Samantha meet someone who was the very epitome of a b*tch.

Samantha slowly finished her water then threw the paper cup into the trash can before turning around and looking at Harmony.

Rather than ignoring her or viewing her with disdain like before, she smiled instead and asked emphatically, "Are you proud of yourself for rubbing that cheap ploy in my face?"

After a pause, she smiled even more tauntingly, "Or is it that these cheap, underhanded tactics are all you've got to show?"

"You..." Harmony's expression changed and she immediately tried to suppress her emotions. However, she was no longer able to maintain her facade and sneered.

"You're all talk, Samantha. You joined Lychee TV and received the kind of good treatment that no one else has ever received before, yet at the same time you also set a record for being the first ever anchor to be punished on the second day of work by being ordered to present your self-review at the meeting next week. Congratulations."

"By the way, I should remind you that the general manager and all the other top brass will be there. The general manager had been really optimistic about you back then and even gave you first place to make sure that you joined the company. I'm now curious about the expression he'd have once he hears your self-review at the meeting."

“He might feel that you have destroyed the reputation he’s built up. Oh, how you’ve embarrassed him, Samantha.”

Samantha’s expression did not change at all as she listened to Harmony’s ridicule. She even laughed and made the most insipid of remarks, “You’re really afraid of me, aren’t you, Harmony?”

Harmony was stunned that Samantha would react like that and even make such a remark. “What do you mean by that?”

“You’ll either rob me of my achievements to highlight yourself or use these dishonest methods to hold me back. That’s the only way you have a sure chance of completing the assignment. You’re afraid of a fair fight because you know, deep down, that your chances of winning are zero with me around.”

“I’m not the one who’s all talk. You are.”

Her tone was faint but her confidence was unparalleled.

Harmony did not want to admit how strong of a blow it was to her psyche. Her expression sank immediately and she looked at Samantha with a bitter and resentful expression.

She gritted her teeth and forced out a nonchalant smile. “You’re free to say that if it makes you feel better, Samantha.”

“Go ahead and write your self-review. When you finish it, I’ll be done with my investigation and I’ll get the right to report it.”

“Don’t worry, I’ll give it my all. Make sure you watch it all when the time comes. I’ll be the one reporting the news on television and becoming Ms. Goldman’s apprentice.”

Harmony flashed a victorious smile as she said that and added in an insinuating tone, “Samantha, what’s mine will always be mine.. I’ll eventually get all of it back, be it this assignment or anything else.”

Chapter 208: Lacking Hard Lessons from Society

Harmony’s ‘anything else’ referred to Timothy.

That woman really was delusional.

A murderous intent appeared in the depths of Samantha’s eyes as she looked straight at Harmony. She then lifted her foot all of a sudden and approached Harmony.

The aura emanating from Samantha scared Harmony into instinctively taking a step back.

Harmony's face soured when she realized what she had just done. She stood firm and raised her head proudly to stare right at Samantha.

Samantha grinned and moved closer to Harmony while telling her slowly, "Time to wake up, Harmony. You only get everything if you're dreaming."

She left the pantry as soon as she finished her sentence.

Harmony stood rooted in place with her hands clenched tightly as they hung on either side of her body. She pursed her lips tightly and quelled the surging fury in her heart.

The one thing she hated most was Samantha's confident and determined expression. Her goal was to completely tear that to shreds!

'Let's wait and see then!'

...

Inside the villa's study, Samantha sat behind the desk and looked at a computer screen. Her fingers danced across the keyboard as she typed out a document.

Her cell phone, which she had placed aside, received a message.

Samantha spared a brief moment to glance at the lit screen while she typed and saw that it was a WeTalk message sent by Rochelle.

She finally stopped typing, reached for her phone, and tapped on her WeTalk.

[It's the weekend tomorrow. You don't need to go to work, do you babe? How about we go shopping? A couple of newly-designed bags have been released recently.]

Samantha replied quickly. [Sorry babe. Got a really busy weekend. Can't go with you.]

Ten seconds later, Rochelle immediately gave her a video call.

Samantha accepted the call.

Rochelle's glamorous face appeared on the screen. She had just finished taking a bath and had a towel wrapped around her hair. As she was applying some skincare, she asked lazily, "It's the weekend. What could you possibly be busy with?"

Samantha put the phone aside and replied as she continued typing, "I'm busy writing a self-review."

“Self-review?” Rochelle thought that she heard Samantha wrongly. “What self-review? Why would a gifted individual like you need to write a self-review?”

Samantha explained everything succinctly.

As expected, Rochelle was furious when she heard that and nearly destroyed the cap of the skincare product she was using. “What the hell? The lows that a pretentious b*tch like her stoops to never ceases to amaze me.”

Rochelle seemed to have been too lenient the previous time.

A brazen, shameless woman like Harmony had never suffered any harsh lessons from society!

“But still, are you really going to be a good girl and write that self-review?” Rochelle frowned unhappily. “And you rejected my invitation because of this self-review?”

Samantha shrugged helplessly. “Can’t be helped. I have to lower my ego under someone else’s roof, don’t I?”

Rochelle stared at her for a few seconds before snorting. “You’re still in the mood for some jokes I see. I take it you have an idea?”

Samantha smiled without saying a word.

Rochelle’s worries immediately eased after seeing such a response.

After all, her little Sammy was no longer the same well-protected little princess who knew nothing about the world’s evils. Samantha had become smart, alert, and was capable enough to protect herself and even fight back against her enemies.

If things really went south, she still had Timothy by her side, right?

Rochelle tore open a facial mask and tilted her head back to stick the mask onto her face. She gently pressed the mask using her fingers so it was flat on her entire face and said bluntly, “If you need my help, you can—”

Samantha answered before Rochelle could even finish speaking. “Babe, I really do need your help this time.”

Rochelle looked at her immediately and responded resolutely, “Let me know what I can do.”

...

Lychee TV's weekly meeting was held at nine o'clock Monday morning. Employees higher than the position of supervisor were required to attend.

Samantha followed Carl to the large conference room on the top floor. It was filled with the heads of various departments and Victoria was also in attendance that day. She was the second last to arrive and the last person was the general manager.

The meeting officially began once the general manager took his seat.

The first order of business were the various departments' regular reports. The anchor department was sixth to present their report, and when it was almost their turn, Carl turned around and whispered a warning to Samantha who was sitting behind him. "I'll let you present your self-review once I'm done with my report. You'd better get your act together and refrain from making any trouble, otherwise..."

He did not finish the rest of his sentence, but his implications were abundantly clear.

Samantha's lips twitched but she did not respond.

"Next up, could Mr. Lewin from the anchor department come forward and present his report..."

Carl immediately stood up and tidied his appearance a little before walking onto the stage. There, he stood in front of the small table and started speaking into the microphone to give his report.

Once he was done, he paused for half a second and said, "I'm sorry, but could I have a little bit of your time please, everyone. There's something I'd like to say about the new anchor in my department, Samantha Larsson."

Samantha was well-known within Lychee TV and everyone's interest was piqued when her name was mentioned.

They had earlier noticed that Samantha had been brought to the meeting as well.

For the record, employees who have not reached a certain position were not allowed to participate in the meeting unless there was something important, yet she had already been brought to the meeting after only being employed for a week.

The general manager naturally paid more attention to matters concerning Samantha. He first glanced at Samantha who was sitting at one side, then looked at Carl, and asked, "Alright, tell us then. What is it about Ms. Larsson?"

Victoria seemed interested as well, and in a rare gesture, looked up at Carl.

The others also looked at Carl in eager anticipation of his next sentence.

Carl looked as though he was having trouble finding his words and even seemed somewhat ashamed. He licked his lips and opened his mouth, but his next sentence was directed to Samantha. "You should come up here."

Samantha did not refuse and got up obediently. She set foot onto the stage and stood before everyone.

Carl could see from her actions that she was being tactful and proceeded to clear his throat before announcing, "My fellow colleagues, I've delegated an important assignment to Samantha but she has acted against the interests of the station in the course of her duty. Aside from slacking in her work, she has also affected the work of other anchors. Furthermore, her attitude hasn't been good and she refused to admit her mistakes. I therefore asked her to reflect on herself and write a self-review, which she will now do so before all of you here today."

Everyone was left speechless when they heard what he said.

The general manager had personally saw to it that Samantha was given first prize and he was also the one who hired her. Just how audacious was she to act with such condescending and willful disregard to everyone after starting work for barely a week?

That would be utterly embarrassing for the general manager.

Could it also be possible that she was used to having her way as Mrs. Barker and therefore did not restrain herself at the station?

Why should such a person continue to be employed there?

Everyone was less than pleased.

Carl looked at Samantha proudly and urged, "Aren't you going to present your self-review? You'd have to hand in your resignation letter if your self-review doesn't get everyone's approval!"

A little newcomer anchor like herself was biting off more than she could chew if she dared to refute and disobey him.

Samantha glanced at Carl and took a step forward.. Her gaze swept across the crowd as she slowly began speaking up.

Chapter 209: Taken Off the Assignment!

"Hello everyone. My name is Samantha, the new anchor in the anchor department."

Everyone shifted their attention to her as she stood on the stage. She had a calm expression and a firm look in her eyes. There was even an indifferent little smile on her lips and she possessed her own unique aura.

Her posture was unlike that of a person who had done something wrong and allowed herself to come under public scrutiny. On the contrary, she looked like she was about to give a speech onstage.

Carl became increasingly uncomfortable when he saw the way she carried herself. He had not taken kindly to Samantha from the beginning because he did not know the inside story: all he knew was that Samantha got to where she was at Walter's expense. She was seen to be a vicious and merciless person who strove to achieve her goals by all means necessary, and one would do well to be wary of her.

More importantly, she joined the company at the recommendation of the general manager, in addition to her status as Mrs. Barker. If she wanted to climb up the ranks, then the first person to be given the boot would undoubtedly be him!

The incidents leading up to that self-review was actually a trivial matter, something that one could just close one's eyes to and leave it at that. After all, every anchor had their own approaches to doing things. Lychee TV celebrated multifaceted development as long as it was not illegal or disruptive. If good results could be obtained, the company would not interfere too much with the way their reporters or anchors did their job.

He initially wanted to use the incident to give Samantha a reminder, drumming into her the notion that the anchor department was his domain. If she wanted to work there in peace, then she should know her place and refrain from having any other ideas.

Since she did not know what was good for her and insisted on going head-to-head with him, she had no choice but to suffer the consequences of her actions.

She would most certainly leave a bad impression on everyone after doing a self-review in front of all the higher-ups. No one would come to her aid if later he came up with a reason to fire her. With that, the thorn that was Samantha could be removed once and for all.

Carl's expression turned even colder when he thought of that and looked at Samantha.

A rich wife should stay home to please and serve her husband. Workplaces were not the kind of setting that people like her could use to amuse themselves.

Samantha noticed Carl's gaze and turned around to look at him, after which her smile became even bigger.

Carl was surprised that she could still smile at such a juncture.

A bad hunch appeared in his heart.

Samantha looked at everyone again and spoke loudly, “Before I present my self-review, I would like to ask everyone to please read a piece of news before evaluating whether there is any need for me to continue with the self-review!”

As soon as she said that, Carl said, “What are you playing at, Samantha? Don’t waste everyone’s time!”

Samantha did not even look at him and continued to maintain her gaze on everyone there. She continued, “A criminal is not a criminal unless convicted. They can only be referred to as a suspect before conviction. Furthermore, a suspect is entitled to refute the accusations leveled against them and they will continue to have this right even after they are convicted. I disagree with the punishment of this public self-review so I am now asking for a retrial of sorts.”

“It takes only three minutes for you to read a piece of news. I ask only for three minutes to present a rebuttal. I believe that should be alright?”

Carl did not expect that she would play that card at the last minute and his cheeks turned red due to anger. “You...”

He suddenly understood why Samantha did not retort when he punished her previously. It turned out that she was waiting for this moment.

Since he was the one who was in control back then, he could easily shoot down whatever request Samantha made. With so many higher-ups present—including Ms. Goldman and the general manager—his turn to speak would never arrive.

Before the general manager could even say anything, Victoria was already a little interested and was the first to speak. “You can have three minutes. What news do you want us to read?”

The general manager had no objections since Victoria had already said the word.

“Thank you.”

Samantha smiled graciously and took out her phone. She then tapped on the phone screen a couple of times and projected it onto the big screen.

A Waybo landing page appeared on the big screen and she proceeded to tap on Selby’s account.

Selby published a new post a minute ago in which he wrote: [I have been hounded and harassed by reporters and major media companies in the past couple of days. It has taken a severe toll on my daily life as well as my physical and mental health. I know

everyone is keeping tabs on this and I'm not reluctant to reveal the truth to the public at all. Unfortunately, media companies rarely pursue the truth for genuine causes. It's mostly for traffic and popularity. I'm unwilling to let media companies who twist the truth, concoct fantastical stories and start rumors recklessly in their reports about me.]

[I have always been reluctant to accept interviews and reports from any media company, but there is one particular company that stands out from the rest. I was able to experience Lychee TV's sincerity because they were able to put themselves in my shoes. I therefore make this official announcement to state my willingness in accepting an exclusive interview with Lychee TV. Thank you all.]

Everyone gasped after reading that post, notably the press and photography department. They had also sent their people to follow up with the news but had not been able to get anything in the past few days.

Selby came from an elite background because he was a wealthy young man. Crude methods, threats, or promises did not work against him, which was why everyone constantly thought that he was a tricky person to deal with.

Never would they have thought that the anchor department could manage to convince him.

He even made a public post on Waybo to declare that he would accept an exclusive interview with Lychee TV, meaning that Lychee TV had successfully beaten the other media companies to it.

Carl never would have imagined that Selby would immediately agree to accept the interview and was thoroughly stunned as a result.

Samantha spoke again and said, "Professor Cornell has agreed to accept an interview with Lychee TV. In other words, my actions that day did not annoy Professor Cornell or hinder the work of other anchors. In light of that, isn't it unreasonable to have me conduct a public self-review for that reason alone?"

Carl came to his senses and said in a low voice, "Those are two separate thi—"

The general manager interrupted before Carl could finish, "Since the consequences were not unfavorable, the punishment can be nixed."

Carl opened his mouth to try and say something but the general manager then continued, "Everyone is paying close attention to any news involving Selby. Now that we have secured exclusive interview rights, we must do our best."

He looked at Carl and spoke in a more emphatic tone, "I have high hopes for you, Mr. Lewin."

The pressure bore down on Carl and he could not bring himself to make a protest.

He knew deep down that the general manager wanted to put a rest to that matter. Clashing with his superior was obviously out of the question.

Carl could only nod, "I understand, Sir. I won't let you down."

...

After the meeting, Carl and Samantha returned to the anchor department.

Carl's expression was gloomy and it was as if there were dark clouds over his head. As soon as they returned to the office lobby, he said in a cold voice, "Can all the anchors come in for a meeting please!"

However, he turned around and said loudly to Samantha, "This discussion will be held to decide who should be sent to conduct the exclusive interview with Professor Cornell. You can sit this one out!"

The implication was that Samantha had been taken off the assignment!

Chapter 210: It Will Be Mine!

Even though there was nothing Carl could do about Samantha at the meeting, he could easily handle her when they were back at the anchor department. It was his domain after all.

Despite having escaped from the public self-review, Samantha was not going to have it easy under his watch!

After saying that, he turned around arrogantly and strode into his office, slamming the door shut behind him.

The other two anchors had a feeling of schadenfreude as they looked at Samantha. After all, their own chances were boosted with one less competitor, and they were particularly happy because Samantha was a very strong rival.

They got up one after another and walked towards the conference room.

Harmony got up too, but instead of going in, she walked up to Samantha and smiled unceremoniously at her.

She moved closer to Samantha and lowered her voice to whisper in Samantha's ear, "Samantha, does it really matter if the general manager protects you again and saves

you from having to do that public self-review? You're out of luck in the assignment, and you're even more down on your luck on your chances of becoming Ms. Goldman's apprentice."

Samantha looked up and chuckled rather than getting angry. "Do your best then. When you get the chance to do the interview, I'll be sure to buy you a flower basket to congratulate you."

Harmony could clearly hear the mockery in her tone, but was not at all annoyed because she was confident in getting success. "I don't mind letting you in on a little secret in advance, but the reason you could escape the public self-review was all thanks to me, so you can start preparing your flower basket now! I'd be happy to accept it!"

"Sure. Guess I'll wait and see then." Samantha was still smiling.

Harmony merely viewed Samantha's smile as a desperate attempt to hide despair. She flicked her long hair back then turned around and walked towards the conference room as her high heels clacked on the floor.

Samantha returned to her desk and sat down.

A cup of hot coffee was suddenly placed on her table.

Samantha looked up to see Annabelle—the young secretary—smiling and saying warmly, "I made you a cup of coffee, Ms. Larsson. Sugar-free and extra milk, just the way you like it."

It was clearly a comforting gesture from Annabelle.

Samantha was a little surprised. Carl was the anchor department's boss and no one dared to stand on her side when he so clearly targeted her. She would even be alienated because the others feared being dragged down along with her.

She was completely shocked that Annabelle would be the first person to show her kindness.

Samantha smiled in return. "Thank you. I'll take my time to enjoy it."

Annabelle raised a fist in a cheering gesture before turning around and leaving.

Samantha watched as Annabelle left before picking up the cup of coffee. She blew on the coffee to cool it down a little before taking a sip.

The taste turned out to be just perfect.

...

Carl looked at the three anchors before him inside the conference room. Two of them had been working under him for a long time. They were loyal and obedient, but their achievements were nothing to shout about and were frankly quite mediocre.

He had no idea how he was supposed to even recommend either of them to do the interview.

The new anchor Samantha was a thorn in his side, and he knew too little about Harmony to decide whether or not she was worth recommending. As a result, he could only continue observing them.

After mulling over it for a moment, Carl said, "The ball is in your court to decide which one among you three will get the chance to conduct the interview with Professor Cornell. This means that the person who secured the interview opportunity will also have the right to report on the news. I'm sure you all know what a rare opportunity this is!"

He leaned back on the swivel chair and glanced haughtily across the three anchors. "I'll give each of you one minute to tell me why you should be given the chance to do the interview."

"Would anyone like to go first?"

The other two anchors raised their hands enthusiastically as soon as he asked that, but all Harmony did was sit there indifferently without trying to vie with the others.

Carl was a little curious and raised his eyebrows as he asked, "What's the matter, Harmony? Don't you want this opportunity?"

Harmony raised her eyes to look directly at Carl. She smiled and said in a proud, confident tone, "It's not that I don't want the opportunity, Mr. Lewin—this opportunity is already mine."

Carl seemed intrigued when he heard that. "Are you that confident that I'll choose you?"

Harmony was pretty sure of herself. "This isn't about whether you choose me, Mr. Lewin. Professor Cornell has already chosen me."

After a pause, she continued in a leisurely manner, "The reason Professor Cornell wrote on Waybo that he would only accept an interview with Lychee TV was because I specifically went to him during the weekend. He was convinced by my sincerity."

Carl was actually surprised that Selby would post such a statement on Waybo that morning and had been pondering over it while walking back to his office. Little did he expect that it was due to Harmony's efforts.

"Was it really you who convinced him?"

Harmony nodded. "Yes! I planned to let you know as soon as possible, but I didn't get the chance to do so because you went to the meeting as soon as you arrived at the company this morning."

"That's perfect, then." Carl laughed out loud. "I'll leave the interview in your hands!"

He got up as he said that and walked over to give Harmony a pat on the shoulder. "Well done, Harmony. Do your best. I'll be waiting to see your interview."

Once Harmony completed the interview and made the report to everyone's satisfaction, he could proceed to concentrate on nurturing her talents.

Harmony smiled confidently. "Don't worry, Mr. Lewin. I'll do my best!"

...

When the meeting ended, Harmony walked out like a proud peacock in stark contrast to the other two dejected-looking anchors.

It was obvious which one of them secured the chance to interview Selby.

As Harmony returned to her seat, she saw Samantha playing poker on her cell phone and made a point to say, "Would you like me to help you intercede with Mr. Lewin? I can let you tag along with me during the interview so you can play a supporting role and learn a thing or two while you're at it."

Samantha continued tapping on her phone and blurted out all of a sudden, "Royal flush!"

The word 'victory' was displayed on the phone screen.

She had ignored Harmony completely.

Harmony was not at all upset and merely sneered. "Rather than grabbing the chance I'm giving you, you decide to indulge in imaginary victories."

Samantha started a new game of poker.

Harmony felt that her attacks were going nowhere, so she snorted coldly and deliberately picked up her cell phone to call Selby's assistant.

Once the other side picked up, she smiled and said in a gentle tone, "Hi, I'm an anchor from Lychee TV. I'd like to make an appointment with Professor Cornell to do the interview."

"So that'll be this afternoon at two, am I right? Sure, no problem. I'll be there on time."

After ending the call, Harmony could sense all the envious looks coming from around her.

It fed her vanity considerably.

When Victoria ridiculed her in front of everyone, she was thoroughly humiliated and had the nagging feeling that everyone was mocking her in secret. At long last she felt vindicated after seeing a turn in her fortunes.

Harmony had always been in the spotlight, for a hale surrounded her all the time in both her career and love life.

She was certainly better than some other individuals.

Harmony narrowed her eyes at Samantha with disdain and began preparing her draft for the interview.

...

Harmony arrived at the university 20 minutes before two.

The assistant led her to Selby's office and told her to wait briefly because there was another ten minutes before the professor's class ended.

Ten minutes later, the office door was pushed open and Selby walked in.

Harmony immediately straightened her appearance and stood up to face the man.

Selby walked over.

Harmony stretched out her hand towards him. She smiled charmingly and said softly, "Nice to meet you again, Professor Cornell. I'll be conducting the interview with you today.."

Chapter 211: You Disgust Me

Selby's gaze fell upon Harmony's face and he frowned. Rather than accepting the handshake, he asked in confusion, "You?"

The smile on Harmony's face froze briefly but she composed herself at once and tried her best to say calmly, "What do you mean by that, Professor Cornell? Didn't you say that you allowed one of Lychee TV's anchors to come and do an interview with you?"

"Indeed, I did." Selby did not deny it. "But the person I want to do an exclusive interview with is Lychee TV's Samantha Larsson, not you."

Although Harmony was already starting to feel uneasy, her heart nearly stopped beating when she heard the name 'Samantha Larsson'.

Why was Samantha everywhere?

Harmony did her best to keep smiling and said, "You must be mistaken, Professor Cornell. I was the one who came to meet you and discuss this in detail. Wasn't I the one who managed to convince you of my sincerity?"

She had asked 'his' people to arrange the dinner between her and Selby, and although the professor only gave her ten minutes, her conversation with him had been quite pleasant. He did not give her an immediate answer, but the statement he posted early Monday morning could be construed as his answer to her.

Why would the professor mention Samantha's name when Harmony had put in the effort?

Selby frowned even more but his tone was still very mild, "Ms. Johnson, you are the one who's mistaken. I wasn't moved by you. I was moved by Samantha. That is why I want her to do the interview. I have every confidence that she would conduct it in a fair and impartial manner, with the intention of presenting the truth as it is to the audience."

Harmony could not stand hearing other people compliment Samantha, especially when Samantha had taken the limelight away from her.

Her expression sank instantly. She bit her lip and her tone became frigid. "Professor Cornell, when you say you were moved by her, are you referring to...the time she helped you escape the horde of reporters? If I'm being honest, she only did so to deliberately try and win your favor."

There was a conflicted look in Harmony's eyes, as if even she could not bring herself to tell him what she wanted to say. She continued in a low voice after struggling for a few seconds. "Professor Cornell, you're a good person. I... I think it's best that I remind you that Samantha doesn't have a good reputation at our company. She treats everyone as though they're beneath her just because of her status as Mrs. Barker, and she doesn't do her work seriously at all. She simply wants to use this news about you to glorify herself. You should think twice before agreeing."

Once she was done speaking, a ruthless, crafty expression appeared in the depths of her eyes when she saw Selby pull a long face.

Harmony was not going to let go of the opportunity before her.

Besides, she would never give way to Samantha without a fight!

She took a deep breath with the intention of continuing her efforts. But, before she could speak, she heard a cold remark from Selby, "Please leave, Ms. Johnson!"

Harmony thought she had misheard him and blinked. "What?"

Selby seemed fed up talking nonsense with her and shouted at the door, "Send this woman away!"

The assistant, who had been waiting outside the door, pushed the door open and walked in. "Kindly leave, Ms. Johnson."

Harmony's eyes widened in disbelief. Selby ought to have been angry at Samantha, rather than asking Harmony to leave.

Harmony started to wonder whether she had said something wrong.

Reluctant to leave just like that, she looked at the professor and hurriedly said, "Professor Cornell, why are you showing me the door? I was just giving you a friendly reminder..."

Selby wanted to spare her the humiliation at first and hardly expected her to be so insistent on pestering him. He decided to just be direct with her, "First of all, Ms. Johnson, it's basic courtesy to not talk about others behind their back, more so when Ms. Larsson is your own colleague."

"Secondly, you seem to have grossly looked down on both myself and Ms. Larsson. I didn't agree to let her interview me because she helped me out; I agreed because she used the proper channels to approach me. She wrote a five-thousand-word email inviting me to do an interview. It was her sincerity and words that moved me. An anchor who can convey such warmth with her words confirms that she has a genuinely warm and honest character."

"You said a lot of things when you had dinner with me, but your words were no different from what other reporters have said to me. People like you focus only on the sensational, not on facts and truth. Why should I choose you?"

Selby truly lived up to his name as a man who immersed himself in the academic world for many years. His words were sensible and well-founded, but to Harmony's ears, it was as if the man was harshly reprimanding her.

He seemed to be chastising her ignorance and character.

Harmony clenched her hands tightly as anger filled her eyes. Being the proud person that she was, she found it unbearable to hear such remarks, although those remarks did not seem to have stopped her from insinuating, "I guess I was wrong, Professor Cornell. You look down on my kindness because you have a good relationship with the Barkers. Samantha is Mrs. Barker after all, and it's only natural for you to trust her more."

Selby had been instilled with etiquette and teachings befitting of a gentleman since he was young. He never engaged in a war of words when he took offense and frequently deferred to reason.

However, reason was useless when encountering a shrew who could only feign stupidity...

Selby stared right at Harmony with a clear and upright expression. He emphasized himself when he said, "You don't seem to understand my choice. Not to worry, I can be blunt with you. The reason I chose Ms. Larsson isn't because she is Mrs. Barker. Far from it actually. She didn't use her status as Mrs. Barker. She came to me as an anchor who put in hard work to pursue the truth."

"As for you, I didn't choose you because you disgust me."

'You disgust me...'

Harmony's face turned pale as she trembled in anger. "You..."

The assistant saw what happened and spoke more assertively, "Please leave, Ms. Johnson, or I'll have to call security if you don't."

Harmony glared at the assistant fiercely before doing the same to Selby. Her chest rose and fell sharply a few times and she finally lifted her feet to leave.

...

Inside Carl's office at Lychee TV, Harmony stood there with reddened eyes. She then told him exaggeratedly how Selby refused her, humiliated her, and only wanted Samantha to do the interview.

Carl's facial expression seemed to have gone through the entire color wheel, with various emotions appearing in quick succession.

He slammed the table and muttered angrily, "Utterly... Utterly..."

Tears were forming at the corners of Harmony's eyes but she was snickering ruthlessly to herself. If she could not get that interview, Samantha should not even think about

getting it. She would rather no one get the chance to do a feature on the news than let it go to Samantha.

Carl was strongly opposed to Samantha too, so she was sure that her words would make him even angrier at Samantha.

When the time came for Carl to take action against Samantha, Harmony hoped to just sit and enjoy the show.

After all, smart people only needed to use their brains, and it would be such a waste not to use the pawn that was right in front of her!