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*Chapter 242: Waiting to Be Jailed!*

Samantha frowned slightly.

Harmony followed Samantha's line of sight and noticed someone's presence there too. She glanced at the person's face and saw that it was Victoria.

A random staff member might want to avoid being dragged into the mess, or perhaps they did not want to invoke Samantha's ire by testifying against her and siding with Harmony.

Victoria, however, was different.

Although Victoria was a serious and unaccommodating person who was difficult to get along with, she was also famous for her vengefulness and moral conscience. She could not possibly ignore everything after seeing with her own eyes how Samantha beat Harmony up!

'You're just waiting to be jailed, Samantha!'

Harmony seemed to cling to her last ray of hope as tears streamed down her face. She looked at Victoria with great anticipation and pleaded, "Ms. Goldman...you... You just saw Samantha beating me up right? My entire body is hurting so much right now. Could you send me to the hospital and help me to call the police!"

Victoria would become a witness if she called the police, and the process of putting the blame on Samantha would be much easier.

There was no way Samantha could escape!

Victoria looked at Harmony first and glanced up and down to get a good view of Harmony's tragic situation.

She subsequently shifted her attention to Samantha.

Samantha felt a little startled when she first saw Victoria's presence, but that feeling had since been replaced with calmness as she stood there and made eye contact with Victoria.

Victoria was intrigued and curled her lips to ask, "Aren't you scared?"

Samantha had never expected that to be Victoria's first question.

To answer that question, Samantha did feel a little flustered when she saw Victoria for the first time.

Nevertheless, it did not take long for her to calm down again.

She did not regret giving Harmony a violent beating that day and even enjoyed it considerably.

Although she knew that violence was not the answer, the best way of dealing with that kind of a villain was to use the simplest, crudest and most direct method—which was violence.

Samantha smiled slightly. “I don’t regret it at all.”

Given another chance, she would definitely beat Harmony up even more ruthlessly!

Victoria stared at her for a few seconds before saying, “What happened earlier... I didn’t see a thing.”

Samantha was stunned to hear that remark.

Harmony exploded all of a sudden and stared at Victoria in disbelief. “Ms. Goldman, what are you talking about? You clearly saw it!”

Victoria turned to her. “Which one of us do you think knows better when it comes to the question of whether I saw it or not? I meant what I said, and I said I didn’t see a thing.”

Harmony’s face changed drastically and she could not help but yell angrily. “You’re a highly respected person, Ms. Goldman. How can you live up to your reputation if you associate yourself with someone like Samantha?”

Samantha was elated when she heard that.

Harmony could change her tune faster than a chameleon changes colors and would make insinuations at those who did not help her. She really felt that everyone should go along with her and help her, acting as if the entire world revolved around her!

Victoria smiled disdainfully and ignored Harmony’s remarks. She turned to Samantha and said, “Do you have time to spare, Ms. Larsson? Let’s have a cup of tea together.”

Having tea with Victoria was a privilege few were able to get.

Amazingly, Victoria decided not to testify for Harmony and even invited Samantha to have tea with her under such circumstances.

After the initial shock, Samantha could not help but nod with a smile. "I'd be happy to. It's truly an honor."

"Let's go to my office." Victoria did not look at Harmony again and turned back to head into Lychee TV.

Samantha could not be bothered to look at Harmony either. She adjusted her clothes a little and started walking after Victoria.

Harmony watched helplessly as the two people disappeared before her very eyes. She was so angry that her eyes were red and her body was trembling.

She used to be the anchor that Victoria had the highest hopes for. She was supposed to be the first to be invited for tea! In the end, Samantha had snatched that away from her!

'Why!'

'Why must Samantha always take everything away from me!'

'B\*tch!'

'That damn b\*tch!'

...

Victoria's office was on the highest floor in Lychee TV. She was the company's highest-ranking anchor and was second only to the general manager.

Therefore, she and the general manager each occupied half the space at the top floor.

She had a separate elevator too, naturally.

Victoria led Samantha to her elevator and went straight to her office space.

There were only one or two people scattered in the huge office space and none of them were at their seats. It came as something of a surprise for Samantha.

She was curious why there was no one there during working hours.

As they entered the office, Victoria said, "Sit wherever you like."

Samantha nodded, walked to the sofa, and sat down.

She glanced across the office and marveled at the magnificently grand furnishings. A large bookcase was situated on one wall and contained books of various genres. There were signs that the books had been read too.

Her favorite anchor did not disappoint.

Samantha still had a bit of a fangirl mentality toward Victoria and felt a little nervous about facing her idol after having finally calmed down.

She gulped softly to stop herself from showing her nervousness.

Victoria came back with the equipment to prepare tea and sat down opposite Samantha. She then skillfully prepared the tea by boiling the water, brewing the tea, and poured it into the cups.

The aroma began to fill the air.

Victoria poured a cup of tea and put it in front of Samantha. "Try it."

"Thank you." Samantha held the cup with both hands and blew on it before taking a sip. A delicious fragrance immediately filled her mouth and left a pleasant aftertaste.

"It smells amazing and tastes just as delicious too," she lavished a generous amount of praise.

Victoria picked up her teacup and sipped her tea. "I'm glad you like it."

Samantha took another sip before raising her eyes to look at the woman. She then asked bluntly, "Why...did you help me earlier, Ms. Goldman?"

Based on Victoria's character, upholding justice ought to have been the likeliest scenario.

Victoria did not seem at all surprised that she would ask that question. She answered indifferently, "I wasn't helping you. I just...turned a blind eye."

People in the communications industry had to have principles and a moral baseline.

Harmony secretly resorted to various despicable methods to mislead the public opinion all for her own selfish interests. She got innocent people into trouble and even showed no hesitation in committing illegal acts.

People like that were utterly contemptible.

At the end of the day, she was nothing more than a sewer rat hiding behind those she had manipulated. Since she was getting others to do her dirty work, she would never receive any punishment and would be untouchable in the eyes of the law. Why then, should Samantha not be allowed to hand down punishment?

“All of you might think that I’m a stern and resolute person, but I was actually more ruthless than you are right now, thirty years ago.” Victoria revealed her own secrets and was upfront with Samantha without a second thought.

Those words came as a complete shock to Samantha.

She had never imagined that Victoria used to be a hot-blooded young woman...

The person she admired really was an amazing individual!

Victoria topped up Samantha’s cup with more tea and looked at Samantha with a scrutinizing gaze. “There is one other thing you wanted to do when you decided to come to Lychee TV today, right? Besides dealing with Harmony, of course.”

Those words sounded more like an affirmation rather than a question!

*Chapter 243: I Know You Wouldn’t Say No*

Victoria’s remark no longer came as a surprise for Samantha. After all, the fact that Victoria could reach such heights in her career was proof enough that her judgement—both in terms of a person’s character or of a certain situation—should not be underestimated.

Samantha nodded and said, “Yes. I’m going to hand in my resignation.”

She joined Lychee TV full of enthusiasm but was disappointed time and again despite joining the company of her dreams.

Nothing and no one seemed to conform with her worldview and principles, be it her department head, colleagues, or the way the station handled problems.

For her, being an anchor was not just a job—it was an ambition. If she continued to stay there, she would either assimilate into the environment there or would have to face the same situation again the next time it happens.

If that was going to be the case, she might as well leave right away

.

Victoria smiled. “You have the same temper as I had when I was young. Even our experiences are similar.”

“Ms. Goldman... have you...ever thought about leaving Lychee TV too?” There was a hint of surprise in Samantha’s eyes.

As a fan of Victoria's, Samantha knew Victoria's professional experience like the back of her hand. She remembered that Victoria had always been with Lychee TV.

"Not once. Plenty of times," Victoria corrected.

"...What? Why?"

Victoria chuckled softly. "Their ideas weren't in line with mine, and I can't stand the sight of those old men."

The so-called old men she spoke of were the group of higher-ups in the station.

Every time an accident happened, all they thought about was abandoning their pawns and protecting themselves. It was always a case of pushing others to shoulder the blame while their own hands remained clean, and they would do anything as long as the station's interests were not affected.

Her frankness prompted Samantha to ask straightforwardly, "I see... then...why are you still here?"

"Since the company can't afford to let me go, they had no choice but to agree to my conditions and allow me to form my own team."

Victoria looked through the floor-to-ceiling windows of her office and glanced at the office space outside. "The anchors and reporters you see here work under my orders. My team and Lychee TV's anchor team are completely separate entities. My people are solely responsible to me and me alone, and they're all given freedom of course. If anything happens to them, I will protect them to the very end as long as they did not do something that goes against the law and basic morals!"

"I have five people in my team. Two of them are here while the other three have gone out to do their tasks. They're free to leave if they have assignments to complete and there's no need for them to clock in from nine to five."

Samantha suddenly realized why the office lobby was so empty. It turned out that the anchors had more freedom when doing their work.

She could not help but acknowledge the refreshing work model that Victoria had implemented. It was a very pleasant one too.

Such a model was vastly different from when she was under Carl, who liked to emphasize that he was the boss and manipulated the people under him. His employees were more like puppets than they were employees. His people could only do work if he gave the word, otherwise those who went against him would be severely oppressed.

Samantha pursed her lips slightly and said, “May I ask why are you telling me this, Ms. Goldman?”

Victoria could tell that Samantha was smart enough to know what was going on, yet she still acted with decorum and asked politely.

In response, Victoria answered kindly, “Ms. Larsson, you’re a promising individual and I admire you very much. Your departure will be a loss to Lychee TV, and I find it regrettable too.”

“Therefore, I’d like to invite you to join my team. I’ll mentor you personally and give as much room as you need for development. I will also protect you so you can rest with ease.”

She did not mention anything superficial because money and benefits would never sway those who had ideas to strive toward—it was the passion in their hearts that had to be ignited.

Samantha went to Lychee TV that day feeling extremely disappointed.

She knew that Lychee TV would take advantage of the situation and try to keep her around, considering how she had come out victorious and had since become so popular on the internet.

Even so, she had already made up her mind to leave.

Victoria, however, managed to sway her heart with those few sentences alone.

Samantha strove to achieve her dreams and it was only natural that she would hope to move forward without needing to worry about anything. In that regard, the station was supposed to provide her with a good platform and a solid backing, not deal further blows to her when she went out to do her job.

She had suffered greatly in her recent endeavor because she was attacked by those within and outside of the company.

Samantha might not have survived the ordeal had it not been for the people who cared for her—Timothy, Ronald, Old Madam Barker, and Aunt Julia.

She clenched her fists slightly as her emotions fluctuated a little.

Victoria did not rush her but waited quietly instead. She even continued to pour more tea once Samantha’s teacup was empty.

She did not have put-on airs like some of those higher-ups and valued talent more than all else. For the past few years, she had been searching for good prospects whom she

could nurture because all circles needed a steady stream of fresh blood in order to continue developing.

Victoria had been optimistic about Harmony in the past, but the latter had the wrong mindset. Nurturing a person who is inclined towards an unprincipled path would only turn them into malignant tumors.

By contrast, she did not really like Samantha in the beginning.

The first reason was because Samantha was sharper than most. A person like that could easily become egotistical and uncontrollable.

Secondly, Samantha had a reputation as Mrs. Barker, and Victoria could not be sure whether she was there to pass her days or whether she was really serious about the job.

In the end, the facts have shown that Victoria had been somewhat prejudiced against Samantha.

Samantha loved that job more than anything else, and at the same time, she stood out in terms of ability and acumen. More remarkably, she lacked ego and had a humble heart, in addition to holding on to principles that were befitting of those working in media.

She had never taken the initiative to invite anyone to join her team before, so it was unprecedented of her to offer a chance to Samantha, although it must be said that Samantha deserved it.

Samantha drank three cups of tea silently and looked up at Victoria. She then said seriously, "Are you sure you wouldn't mind if such troublesome incidents happen again in the future, Ms. Goldman?"

The implication was that such 'troublesome incidents' would happen again in the future.

Victoria smiled. "Not at all."

Samantha then asked, "Are you sure you wouldn't mind if your reputation was on the line in the future?"

"Not at all."

Samantha took a deep breath and finally said, "You do know that my loved ones were in extreme danger because of what I did, and it might be you the next time. Are you sure you won't mind that?"



The smile on Victoria's face remained unchanged and she answered without hesitation, "Not at all."

Samantha closed her eyes and opened them a few seconds later. She then stood up and stretched her hand out to Victoria, "Thank you for recognizing my worth, Ms. Goldman. I'm more than willing to join your team."

Victoria stood up and accepted the handshake while saying confidently, "I knew you wouldn't refuse. Welcome, Ms. Larsson."

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Samantha then walked out of Lychee TV's entrance.. She was just about to call Timothy and share with him the good news when her phone rang first.

*Chapter 244: Achilles' Heel*

Samantha picked up the phone, glanced at the caller ID, and saw that it was Timothy. Her eyebrows turned into little arches as she smiled and answered the call in a pleasant tone, "You called me just as I was about to call you. We are in sync!"

The man's pleasantly sonorous chuckle came from the other end of the line, causing Samantha's little heart to feel a bit numb.

He was a man who exuded charm always.

Timothy finally spoke, "Are you at the hospital?"

He asked because she had previously mentioned wanting to bring some chicken soup for Ronald.

"No, I'm at Lychee TV now."

"Oh? To hand in your resignation?"

Holding a conversation with smart people was always a breeze.

Samantha answered affirmatively and added, "I also beat Harmony up. I threw her down eight times, then I dislocated her chin and both her arms."

She repeated the entire process in detail.

There was silence on the other end, followed by an indifferent reply, "Mm."

That reaction...

Samantha cocked her eyebrows slightly and asked deliberately, "Are you heartbroken? Harmony is your childhood sweetheart, after all."

Timothy replied very quickly and said, "I am heartbroken."

Samantha felt choked all of a sudden.

The next second, his voice was heard asking, "Does your hand hurt after everything?"

Samantha's heart gradually reverted to calmness after her initial apprehension.

It turned out that Timothy was feeling heartbroken for her hand, and not for Harmony.

Samantha went back to being happy again. She chuckled and said, "Ms. Goldman invited me to join her team earlier. I agreed, so I'll be working under her from now on!"

"Congratulations, you have realized another one of your dreams." Timothy was happy for her too and her joy was contagious, especially when he listened to her laughter.

Samantha raised her chin slightly and was somewhat proud. "I'll let you treat me to dinner today."

Timothy replied readily, "It's an honor. Wait for me at the entrance. I'm going to pick you up right now."

"Okay!"

After ending the call, Samantha smiled sweetly and walked to the convenience store just beside. She sat on a chair outside and scrolled on her phone while waiting.

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Harmony went to the restroom and hid in a cubicle to tidy up her miserable appearance.

Outside the door, two employees walked in and gossiped while doing their makeup.

The first employee said, "Have you heard? Samantha was invited by Ms. Goldman to join her team."

"Goodness," the second replied, "Is that true? Getting into Ms. Goldman's team is notoriously difficult. Plenty of anchors took the initiative to offer themselves but were all ruthlessly told to leave."

“It’s true, I saw Ms. Goldman bringing Samantha to her office earlier! I heard from HR that they’ve already signed the contract and an announcement will be made soon.”

“That’s insane! Samantha really is the first rookie anchor to catch Ms. Goldman’s eye so quickly. The other five had been working for at least five years and had at least three representative works. They were only able to join Ms. Goldman’s team after being assessed and evaluated!”

“Exactly! But Samantha is very capable though. You can see how she has made a name for herself from this one incident alone. Now everyone knows she’s a top-class anchor, even the other stations are trying to poach her talent.”

“We’re lucky that Ms. Goldman has good judgment and took Samantha under her wing. Samantha is an outstanding addition to Ms. Goldman’s team, and no one else can compare to them in the future!”

“Speaking of which, Harmony and Samantha joined us at the same time, but Samantha performed incredibly well during this period while Harmony doesn’t really have much to show. Some people say that Harmony came in only because there were people in the station who insisted on bringing her in. I’m starting to believe it a little.”

“I believe that too. There used to be all those rumors going around about Samantha using her husband to get into the company, but it looks like Harmony was the one who used connections. It’s funny, really.”

The two of them could not help but laugh as they spoke to each other.

Harmony’s face was extremely sour. She wanted to charge out of the cubicle and rip those two women’s mouths apart.

Who were they to laugh at her?

In the end of the day, Samantha was the one who had put her in such a situation!

After the two employees had left the bathroom, Harmony walked out with an ashen look and let her hair down to cover her injured face.

She had applied for leave earlier and was going to go back to her apartment hotel to rest. After all, it was inappropriate for her to appear in front of everyone while covered in scars, otherwise people would laugh at her and make all sorts of conjectures.

However, she saw a car parked on the roadside as soon as she walked out of the entrance. A man came down from the car and that man was none other than Timothy.

The man’s shirt and trousers—both black in color—complemented his tall and slender figure, making his facial features more beautiful, charismatic, and attractive.

He was smiling faintly as he strode over and walked towards her.

Harmony's heart began thumping wildly.

She had been moved by that man from the very first time she saw him as a child. The way she looked at him remained the same, even after so many years.

Harmony could not help but lift her feet, for they wanted to walk towards him too.

Unfortunately, she had only taken two steps before seeing Timothy turn to one side and walk to the entrance of the convenience store. He went up to a woman who was sitting on the chair and stood in front of her.

The woman looked up and smiled at him.

Timothy bent down, gave her a light peck on the cheek, then wrapped his long arms around her slender waist and helped her up. He then embraced her and began walking towards the car.

His movements were so intimate, natural, and sweet that it was apparent he shared with her a blissfulness that was exclusive only to her.

Harmony stared intently until the two of them got into the car and disappeared down the road. She continued to stand still and was unable to comprehend what she had just seen before her very eyes.

As someone with a cold temperament, Timothy did not like getting too close to anyone and never truly let his guard down in front of anyone.

Could it be that he had genuinely and wholeheartedly accepted Samantha?

Harmony was not about to just let things continue that way!

Timothy should not have treated Samantha like that, nor should he behave towards Harmony in such a manner!

It was apparent that she had gone about it the wrong way before this.

She insisted on competing with Samantha career-wise and wanted to prove to Timothy that Samantha was not as good as her. In the meantime, Samantha's relationship with Timothy became more and more intimate with each obstacle that they encountered.

Her schemes had eventually become the factors through which Samantha further cemented her relationship with Timothy.

It was a case of helping someone else achieve happiness that was rightfully hers!

Harmony took a few deep breaths to ease the blow she had just received.

She had no choice but to do a thorough assessment of her own mistakes at that point. It was no wonder then that 'he' was extremely disappointed with her. She was extremely disappointed in her past actions too.

It should not have been like that!

However, she remained unfazed in the face of failure because she firmly believed that failure is the first step to success.

She had not spent the past few years living in vain.

Furthermore, Samantha had a certain Achilles' heel, and Harmony had one final trump card left in store.

Samantha's defeat was certain!

Harmony grinned maliciously and stopped a taxi.. Rather than going back to her apartment hotel, she gave the driver directions to someplace else.

*Chapter 245: I Shouldn't Have Come Back, Should I?*

After Samantha got into the car, she realized that Timothy was driving a new car, rather than his usual one.

She looked at the sign on the steering wheel and realized that it was an ordinary Volkswagon.

It was clearly not Timothy's taste.

He usually drove sports cars, luxury sedans, or high-end multi-purpose vehicles...

Samantha could not help but ask, "This isn't your car, is it?"

"Yes."

When they reached the intersection at the red light, Timothy braked and went into neutral gear before turning around to look at her. "It's not."

"Then whose is it? Where's your car?" Samantha was puzzled.

Timothy did not answer and instead kept up the suspense. "Guess."

Timothy's friends were all wealthy individuals who probably did not drive cars like that, so the answer was probably a company car or Ronald's car.

She answered what was on her mind.

The light turned green and Timothy shifted gears before stepping on the accelerator. He then paid attention to the road while remarking lazily, "Nope. None of those guesses are right. Try again."

It was a little hard to guess.

Samantha pouted and remarked off-handedly, "It can't be mine, right?"

Timothy glanced at her again with a little look of delight in his eyes. "You guessed right."

Samantha was stunned.

She was just throwing a couple of guesses. Why did it suddenly become her car?

Samantha digested his words for half a minute and asked, "What's this about?"

"It's a gift."

As soon as Timothy said that, the car had already reached the restaurant entrance. He stopped the car and took her hand to place the car keys in her palm.

Samantha looked down and stared at the car key in a daze. "Why...did you gift me a car out of the blue?"

"Well, you managed to achieve your second dream today, and as your husband, it's only natural for me to be happy for you."

Timothy placed his palm on her cheek and spoke in a sweet voice. "I know you don't like luxury cars or anything that's too high-profile, so I chose an ordinary car for you. It'll be convenient for you to travel and do your assignments out of the office."

Samantha had been thinking about buying a car before this since it was very convenient for her to have a car in her line of work. However, she did not have enough money saved and had no choice but to wait.

She never expected Timothy to have considered it on her behalf and choose an ordinary model based on her needs.

Samantha would be lying if she said she was not surprised or touched by what happened.

Timothy might not be the kind who said nice things, but he always showed his affection through actions.

Seeing Samantha's prolonged silence, the light in Timothy's eyes dimmed a little and his voice became a little lower. "What's wrong? Don't you want it?"

He knew that Samantha never used the money in his black card even after he gave it to her. The sole exception was when she confronted the madman and tricked him by transferring ten million.

Even then the ten million was returned to him after the police handled all the procedures.

It was the same as saying that Samantha had never used a single penny of his money and continued to keep their finances separate.

He used to be angry at Samantha for having her eyes only on his money, but his anger had since changed to Samantha's unwillingness to spend his money.

It felt as though she had drawn a clear boundary between them.

However, he hoped that he would forever be integrated into Samantha's life because then the question of leaving would never arise and they would be tied together forever.

Samantha returned to her senses as a smile slowly crept up her face. She took the keys and said, "Yes! Of course, I'm happy to accept my husband's gift!"

She stretched her arms out and wrapped them around Timothy's neck, following which she smiled sweetly and leaned over to give him a big smooch on the cheek. "Thank you, Hubby."

She had gone through a lot with Timothy during that period of time and she was determined to spend the rest of her life with Timothy by her side.

It went without saying that she could not keep a safe distance from him forever.

She had to accept her husband's kind gesture.

The tension in Timothy's eyes finally disappeared. He hugged Samantha in return and exerted a little more force to hold her tightly.

It was as if he was holding his entire world.

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It was ten at night and Zachary had just exited a bar.

The driver drove the car to the door but Zachary was a little sluggish after having too much to drink. The wait staff at the entrance helped him and brought him respectfully to his car.

The car then began driving toward Zachary's villa.

He reached in about half an hour because there were no cars at that hour and his villa was in the heart of the city.

Zachary got out of the car and walked toward the gate. He was just about to open the door when he suddenly saw a dark figure squatting in the shadows next to the door. Startled, he asked, "Who are you?"

The shady figure did not answer right away and merely raised her head to look at him.

Zachary narrowed his eyes and looked closer, only to discover that it was Harmony. He sighed slightly and could not help but ask, "Bunny? Why are you here?"

Harmony said nothing.

Zachary walked towards her and asked further. "Why didn't you call me when you came?"

He stood in front of her and said, "Get up. Let's go in and talk."

Harmony nodded lightly and was about to get up.

She had only gotten up halfway when she seemed to lose all her strength and collapse all of a sudden.

Zachary subconsciously reached out to help her, but Harmony let out a painful cry when he held her arm. "AHHH—"

There was clearly something wrong in her voice and Zachary frowned even more. He helped her up as gently as possible by supporting her shoulder.

He then looked at her with the help of the light from the streetlamps.

Zachary inhaled sharply when he saw scars all over her body. His drunkenness disappeared immediately and anger filled his eyes. "Who beat you up like this, Bunny?"

Harmony replied feebly. "Zac, I'd like to drink some water."

Zachary had plenty of questions and was still very angry, but he said patiently, "Okay. Let's head inside."



He helped Harmony into the villa and carefully sat her down on the sofa. After pouring some water into a cup, he came back, sat next to her, and looked at her again after putting the cup in her hand.

Her injuries became clearer under the incandescent light and looked much more shocking.

Zachary had a murderous gaze when he saw everything. He stood up abruptly and said angrily, "Who did this to you? I'll kill them right now and get revenge for you!"

Harmony took a sip of water from the cup and gently wiped the corners of her lips. Rather than answering Zachary's question, she asked in a particularly dejected tone, "Zac, do you think...I shouldn't have returned?"

Although she did not tell him who did that to her, Zachary understood when he saw her expression and could not control himself from kicking the coffee table. "It was Samantha, wasn't it?"

"You and Timmy are just friends. Why can't she ever tolerate you? Why does she have to stir up trouble again and again?"

Zachary could not control himself from picking up his cell phone. "You can't just keep enduring it over and over again. You have to let Timmy know that she's going overboard!"

Harmony grabbed his hand and shook her head. "No! Don't tell Tim! I don't want to make things difficult for him."

Zachary disapproved outright. "Look at you, Bunny. You're still thinking about others even when you're in this state. Besides, this isn't a matter of making things difficult for Timmy. The fact remains that Samantha shouldn't be going around hitting anyone! It doesn't matter if she is his wife!"

"No. There's a reason why Tim tolerates her...."

*Chapter 246: Tim Once Said That He Likes Me*

Harmony seemed to have blurted out that sentence by accident. She suddenly realized that she had said something wrong and the glow in her eyes flickered for a moment before she forcefully changed the subject. "The point is, just promise me you won't tell Tim about my injury!"

Zachary was keen enough to sense that something was wrong and instinctively pressed further, "What are you trying to say, Bunny? What do you mean when you say that Tim has a reason to tolerate Samantha?"

Harmony's eyes trembled even more as she lowered her gaze to avoid making eye contact with Zachary. She then said hesitantly, "Well... it's because Old Madam Barker likes Samantha, and Tim has always been very filial."

She mentioned the same reason before and was still using it even then. Zachary did not think much of those reasons in the past, but there seemed to be much more than meets the eye.

In that case, did Timothy treat Samantha kindly because of another reason, rather than because he liked Samantha?

Zachary could not think of a reason at all, so he said again, "Bunny..."

"Zac." Harmony called his name softly to stop him from saying anything further. "Don't ask. Just pretend you didn't hear anything, okay?"

"You..."

Zachary wanted to understand everything because he was worried about her and cared deeply about Timothy. However, he was not going to force Harmony if she was reluctant to tell him.

He frowned and felt conflicted for a few seconds before finally giving up. "I won't ask then, but I'm here for you whenever you decide to tell me."

"Thank you."

Zachary's looked at the scars on her body and said, "You still have to get these wounds treated. I'll bring you to the hospital."

"No, it's fine. I'll take care of them myself when I get home later," Harmony refused.

Zachary was not going to leave her to her own devices. "You don't need to go to the hospital then, I'll ask a doctor to come over. I won't let you decline."

He picked up the phone and made a call.

Once he was done, he turned to her and suggested, "Would you like to go to the guest room and clean your wounds?"

"Okay." Harmony nodded.

Zachary helped her up and led her to the door of the guest room. "I don't have any women's clothes here, but I can get you one of my T-shirts. Will you be okay with that?"

"Yes, of course."

Harmony went into the bathroom while Zachary went to his bedroom's dressing room to find a T-shirt. When he walked back to the guest room and stood at the bathroom door, he blushed all of a sudden when he heard the sound of water from inside.

He gulped and cleared his throat slightly. "The clothes are on the sofa outside."

After saying that, he turned around, left the guest room, and closed the door.

He still felt a little hot after leaving the room, so he immediately reached for the air conditioner remote and lowered the temperature. He then fetched himself a cold bottle of mineral water from the refrigerator and unscrewed the cap, after which he tilted his head back and nearly finished the entire bottle.

Harmony had always been a goddess in his eyes ever since they were children. He had always admired her, but that was the extent of his feelings towards her.

In his mind, Timothy and Harmony were a match made in heaven. They were an ideal couple who should rightfully be together.

He was happy enough to be the custodian of their love.

It reached a point where he was very unhappy with Samantha when she got together with Timothy. That dislike turned to pure hatred when Samantha did terrible things to Timothy.

That hatred reached its limit when Samantha hurt Harmony time and time again!

The doctor had just arrived when Harmony came out of the bathroom.

Zachary stood by and watched the doctor treat Harmony's wounds. There was nothing to worry about because the injuries were all grazes.

However, the doctor then said that Harmony had muscle and bone injuries, which came as a result of her arms and chin being dislocated on purpose before being returned to their original place. When Zachary heard that, he immediately felt like skinning Samantha alive.

How could a woman be that vicious!

He did not understand why Timothy would insist on being with a woman like Samantha after knowing the kind of vicious character she had!

Timmy had always been the one who had the highest intelligence quotient among their trio, so why did he always act like an impotent man who had fallen under some kind of spell whenever it came to Samantha!

After the doctor treated the wound, Harmony trembled in pain and her face turned pale again.

Zachary immediately walked over to her from the other end of the hall.

Samantha relied on Timothy's affection to hurt others wantonly, but with Harmony's unwillingness to let Timothy know about it, there was absolutely nothing Timothy could do for her!

Harmony looked up at Zachary.

She waited for a moment and observed him until his anger nearly reached its peak. When the timing was right, she blinked as her eye sockets immediately turned red and tears began to well up in her eyes.

Zachary heard her sudden sob and stopped walking. When he looked over to Harmony and saw her crying, his heart ached and he immediately walked up to her.

He felt somewhat at a loss. "Hey...Bunny, why are you crying? Does the wound hurt?"

Harmony shook her head and spoke in a tearful tone. "No, it's just... I remembered some stuff from the past and I couldn't control myself. I'm sorry I embarrassed myself in front of you."

"Come on, do you still need to apologize?" Zachary immediately took a tissue and handed it over to her. "What was it that you remembered?"

Harmony wiped her tears gently. "Well, Tim once told me...that he liked me and he wanted to be with me."

Zachary was genuinely surprised to hear that.

Zachary knew that Harmony and Timothy had always been together when they were children, so much so that everyone assumed them to be an item. In truth, however, only the two of them were privy to what went on between them.

That was the first time he found out that Timothy had confessed to Harmony.

It seemed unexpected even though it was somewhat expected.

"Then... if..." Zachary spoke incoherently before finally managing to pull himself together. "Did you reject Timmy? Was that why you went abroad?"

That seemed unlikely, given how much Harmony likes Timothy.

The way she looked at him was completely different from how she looked at other men.

“Why would I?” Harmony smiled bitterly. “Why would I reject him when I would’ve been so happy? It was... It was Old Madam Barker who didn’t like me. She didn’t allow me to be with Tim. Back then, Tim and I were both still young. We couldn’t go against Old Madam Barker so we had to...separate.”

Zachary was even more shocked. It turned out to be Old Madam Barker who broke them up?

“I’ve never forgotten Tim even after all these years. I know he’s married and I shouldn’t think about him anymore, but I really can’t control myself.” Harmony’s voice became hoarse. “I know that I still have a place in Tim’s heart too, and he’s trying...”

She seemed to imply something but did not make it clear what it was. She immediately continued, “The regret I have for giving up on him when we were children still lingers in me today. If I give up that easily again, I’d continue to spend the rest of my life in regret.”

“That is why I want to give it another shot..” Harmony looked at Zachary with tears in her eyes. “Are you willing to help me, Zac?”

*Chapter 247: Special Day*

Zachary’s heart softened when Harmony cried like a delicate little damsel.

As someone who had a penchant for defending his close friends even when they were wrong, he could not bring himself to refuse when he saw Harmony suffering as such.

Zachary sat next to her, squeezed her hand firmly, and responded without hesitation. “Okay. What do you want me to do?”

He could not be happier if he was able to return Timothy and Harmony’s relationship to what it used to be.

Samantha on the other hand was a scheming, cunning, and deceitful woman. Her recent actions had nearly discredited Timothy’s reputation and caused the Barker Group to plunge into crisis.

Behind every great man was a woman, and Samantha was neither fit for Timothy nor the Barkers!

Harmony's eyes finally had a glimmer of hope when she heard his words. The corners of her lips curled up and she answered hoarsely, "Thank you, Zac. I know you have a good relationship with Tim, so you can be rest assured that I won't ask you to do anything that'll put you in a tight spot. I won't ruin the brotherhood you have with him. I just need a little favor from you."

"Tell me and I'll make sure to get it done for you!" Zachary patted his chest and promised her.

Harmony leaned close to Zachary's ear and whispered to him.

Zachary was a little surprised to hear her request and could not help but confirm it with her again. "That's all? Are you sure?"

He thought it would have been something else altogether and was completely surprised to hear that.

Harmony nodded affirmatively. "Yes. That's all I need for now. Thank you...for your trouble."

"Okay. Sit tight and wait for my good news."

Harmony's tears finally stopped with Zachary's assurance.

Seeing that it was very late, Zachary suggested, "Would you like to stay with me tonight, Bunny? Or shall I ask the driver to send you back?"

He could not drive because he had been drinking earlier.

Harmony got up. "I'll head back. I've troubled you all night."

Zachary did not insist on her staying either. Although they were friends, being together in the same house was not entirely appropriate and it would be bad if anyone else knew about it.

"I'll see you off then."

Zachary sent Harmony to the car and told the driver to drive slowly. He stood there and watched the car disappear into the night before returning to the house.

When Zachary's figure disappeared in the rearview mirror, the delicate and pitiful look on Harmony's face disappeared in an instant. In place of it was a vicious, ruthless look.

The driver inadvertently glanced at the rearview mirror and felt an inexplicable chill down his spine when he saw Harmony's expression.

It was as if he was looking at a female apparition.

...

Timothy and Samantha feasted on oriental food for dinner. Samantha did not know whether she was feeling good because of the happy occasion, but her appetite was tremendous.

As a result, she accidentally overate and felt bloated.

Timothy did not drive home immediately but called a driver over. He walked on the street with his hands around Samantha while the driver drove the car and followed behind them.

Samantha enjoyed herself as she nestled in Timothy's arms and walked slowly beside him.

The breeze was slightly cold as it blew over and felt quite pleasant.

Samantha could not help but say, "If only time stopped at this exact moment."

She was so happy that she almost felt like she was floating.

Timothy looked down at her beautiful face and chuckled. "You don't need to stop time. We'll spend every day like this in the future."

As soon as he said that, Samantha raised her hands and covered her mouth.

Timothy cocked an eyebrow. "What's wrong?"

He thought she liked hearing those words.

Samantha clutched her mouth tighter and said seriously, "You shouldn't jinx it, Timothy. These kinds of remarks can easily bite you back one day."

She had once suffered from a situation like that too.

When she was in love before, she held herself hostage to fortune every single day. She felt that she and Timothy would always be together, hold the grandest wedding ever, and be in love forever.

It all ended up biting her back.

She was afraid of jinxing things ever since.

Timothy stared into her eyes and held her wrist gently to give her hand a gentle kiss. "We'll be the exception."

His words were firm and inexplicably convincing.

Samantha certainly hoped that they would be the exception too. She smiled and nodded, "Yes. We'll be the exception!"

Back at the villa, Timothy went to the study to deal with some urgent work matters. On the other hand, Samantha went back to the bedroom and rested briefly before going to the bathroom for a shower.

Once she was done, she inadvertently glanced at the mirror while drying her body with a bath towel. Her expression froze suddenly as a puzzled look gradually appeared on her face.

The steam inside the bathroom had yet to dissipate completely and her reflection in the mirror was not very clear. She was afraid that she was seeing things, so she hurriedly took a paper towel and walked up to the mirror to wipe away the foggy surface.

She then stood in front of the mirror to scrutinize her waist and abdomen.

During her two years abroad, her body received insufficient nutrients due to her lack of money and frequent skipping of meals. Coupled with other factors such as her frequent injuries, her body was always naturally very thin.

Old Madam Barker had been trying hard to fatten her up after she remarried Timothy but to no avail, even after feeding her all sorts of supplements and nutritious food.

More recently, everything that happened had left her in a state of anxiety and tension, and she had to move about constantly too.

Logically speaking, she should have been much thinner.

She never expected that her waist and belly would grow a little fatter.

Still reeling from her weight gain, she stretched out her hand and pinched her waist, only to find that there was a bit of extra flesh there.

It was baffling.

Did Old Madam Barker's unrelenting efforts finally succeed, or did she gain weight because she was enjoying herself too much with Timothy around?

When Timothy returned to the bedroom, he happened to see Samantha walking out with a frown and a rather convoluted expression.



He strode in and walked over to her before smoothing her eyebrows using his fingertips. "What's the matter?"

Samantha looked up at Timothy and mumbled. "I actually...gained weight!"

Women always cared deeply about their figures.

"You've gained weight?" Timothy's black pupils instinctively looked at her breasts. He examined them and said, "Gaining a little weight isn't too bad."

Samantha was speechless.

Sure enough, discussing the issue of weight gain with a man was a futile exercise!

They would never be on the same page!

Samantha covered her breasts as she blushed and reprimanded, "What are you looking at? I'm talking about my waist! My waist!"

Timothy's lips twitched evilly. "Oh really? Show me then."

'Show me' was an obvious sign that he was going to act like a rascal right there and then!

He still had stamina but her waist was still sore, so she turned around immediately to run away.

Timothy, however, had already reached out to grasp her waist and pulled her into his embrace from behind.

He placed his thin lips on her ears as he breathed all over her cheek. His hand then roamed naughtily around her waist, causing Samantha to get goosebumps all over her body.

He chuckled again. "You did gain a bit of weight."

After a half-second pause, desire filled his voice once more. "But it doesn't matter. I'll exercise with you to help you lose some..."

At the end of his sentence, he lifted Samantha in a bridal carry and walked to the big, soft bed.

...

The next day, Samantha heard a phone notification and opened her eyes with difficulty. She then reached for the phone and glanced at it.

Only then did she realize that the phone was Timothy's, not hers.

She wanted to return it to its original place, but then caught a glimpse of the sender: it was Bunny, Harmony.

The text read: [You haven't forgotten our special day, right? See you tonight.]

She thought she had misread it or was probably still dreaming in her sleep.

However, Samantha continued to look intently at the message.. As soon as she made sure that she read every single word correctly, she felt as though a basin of cold water had been poured over her head and her drowsiness disappeared in an instant.

*Chapter 248: At Your Service*

Special day?

What special day could it be?

Samantha was wondering what it could be when another notification came.

She returned to her senses and looked at the phone screen again. It was a scheduled reminder from his calendar, rather than a text message.

Samantha unknowingly clenched her hands.

The fact that Timothy had set a scheduled reminder proved that it was a special day indeed. After hesitating for about half a second, she decided to click on it.

There was nothing written in the remarks, aside from a question mark.

Samantha frowned.

Timothy said that his relationship with Harmony was that of a childhood friend and had since become normal friends at best.

As a result, the two words 'special day' was rather ambiguous...

However, Harmony was the one whose intentions toward Timothy had never ceased. She enjoyed using ambiguous words in the past that led Samantha to misunderstand. Harmony had a bad record of using words, so her remarks had to be investigated and taken with a grain of salt.

The bedroom door was pushed open and footsteps were heard.

From the corner of her eyes, Samantha saw the man's slender figure walking in and placed his phone back stealthily, pretending to have just woken up.

Timothy came over and gazed tenderly at her with his dark eyes. "You've woken up? Why didn't you sleep a little longer?"

She did not need to go to work that day because Victoria had told her to have a good rest and only come to work the next week.

"Mmmm... I've gotten used to it." Samantha had a lazy voice after waking up and pretended to complain, "It's your fault that I'm sore all over..."

That man's energy was truly terrifying.

He flipped her around in all sorts of positions until late at night and was still able to get up early for his morning exercise. There were little, if any, signs of fatigue from him and he still seemed quite energetic.

She, on the other hand, was drained of all strength.

Timothy had a joyful look as he sat on the side of the bed. His voice was filled with satisfaction when he said, "Yeah. It's all my fault."

He knew how to admit his wrongs at least.

Samantha felt somewhat relieved and was about to praise him when she heard him say, "I'll exercise some self-restraint next time."

The praise she had for him got stuck in her throat and her eyes widened all of a sudden. "Next...time? You're...already thinking about next time? No next time for you!"

Samantha thought that he had learned from his mistakes, but he turned out to have learned nothing at all!

She would have smacked him if her arms were not weak at that moment!

Timothy smiled wider when he saw Samantha's puffed-up face. He lowered his head to kiss her lips, then spoke in a voice that resembled a gentle flow of water. "Okay, yes, it's my fault. Shall I serve you right now and help you to freshen up?"

The man's voice was so seductive that it penetrated deep into a person's heart. Despite listening to it daily, Samantha would never be immune to it.

She could not even stay angry for 30 seconds.

Samantha was not going to refuse if Timothy wanted to serve her. She lifted her chin slightly and put on an arrogant air as she said, "I hereby approve."

Timothy chuckled slightly. He tapped the tip of her nose with his slender fingers and carried her up to the bathroom.

He sat her down on the vanity sink, filled her mouthwash cup with water, then picked up the toothbrush and squeezed some toothpaste onto it. Rather than handing it directly to her, he asked, "Do you want to do it yourself or should I brush for you? "

How considerate of him.

Samantha decided to take the toothbrush. "I'll do it myself."

As she brushed her teeth, the words 'special day' appeared again in her mind as she looked at Timothy.

She had been thinking about it earlier but could not figure out what special occasion Timothy had that day.

After rinsing her mouth, Samantha took the towel that Timothy handed her. She washed her face and wiped it clean, then thought of something and called out to him, "Hubby."

Timothy was shaving his beard, and his movements were so elegant that they were a pleasure to watch.

He rolled his eyeballs to one side and glanced at her, "Yes?"

Samantha pursed her lips slightly and asked, "Are you coming back for dinner tonight?"

She looked intently at Timothy's face so as not to let a single expression escape her attention.

Timothy's handsome expression remained unchanged and he replied faintly, "I have something going on tonight."

'Something going on tonight...'

Did it mean that the message Harmony said about meeting him that night was not merely her one-sided wishful thinking?

Could it really be Timothy and Harmony's special day, and would Timothy be meeting Harmony later that night?

Samantha's hand tightened but she kept a calm expression and even smiled slightly to prevent Timothy from noticing something was off.

She pretended to ask casually, "Is it work again?"

After Timothy shaved his beard, he wiped his face with a towel and turned to look at her. His lips curled up in a smile and he asked instead of answering, "What's wrong? Is this some kind of interrogation?"

"Of course not, there's nothing wrong. I'm just worried about your body! Who knows when you'll be overwhelmed if you keep focusing on work all the time!" Samantha answered glibly.

Timothy cocked an eyebrow and leaned his handsome face over all of a sudden. He asked suggestively, "Don't you know how strong my body is? Do you still need me to prove it to you right now?"

His dangerous aura came crashing over and Samantha subconsciously leaned back. She then praised him exaggeratedly, "Forget about it! Your body is awesome! The very best! Simply amazing!"

If Timothy went at it again with her, she ought to prepare herself to be bedridden for a couple of days.

Timothy smiled and stopped teasing her. He subsequently carried her up again, walked out of the bathroom, exited the room, and went downstairs.

Samantha's expression fluctuated repeatedly as she lay in his embrace.

Timothy did not give her a direct answer earlier.

After they had breakfast, the man went to the office.

Samantha was ill at ease and did not eat much as a result. When she walked to the living room, she happened to chance upon Old Madam Barker answering the phone.

It was a call from the beauty salon she frequently went to, reminding her that it was time for her appointment.

After ending the call, Old Madam Barker looked at Samantha and said with a smile, "You don't need to go to work today right Sammy? Come along with me to get some beauty treatment!"

"You've been running all over the place this past few days, so I'm bringing you to unwind!"

Samantha initially had no mood for that, but after some thought, she decided it would be better to tag along. After all, she would overthink if she spent the entire day at home doing nothing.

She nodded and agreed. "Okay. I'll head upstairs and change my clothes."

Old Madam Barker grinned and said, "Go ahead."

The car drove out of the villa and headed for the city center. It took about an hour before they reached the entrance of the beauty salon.

The old lady got out of the car with Samantha and walked into the beauty salon.

The manager had been waiting there well in advance and smiled while greeting them. "Welcome, Madam."

The manager's eyes then brightened after finally seeing Samantha. "You're here too, Mrs. Barker! It's an honor to meet you."

Samantha nodded politely. "Hello."

The manager said, "Madam, Mrs. Barker, your VIP room is ready. Right this way please."

Samantha lent her support to Old Madam Barker and followed the manager in.. After taking just a few steps, a figure suddenly walked in front of them and blocked their way.

#### *Chapter 249: Despicable*

The person who got in the way was none other than Harmony, who was wearing a light-colored dress. She had allowed her long black hair to drape naturally over her back and her face looked delicately beautiful. She stood before them while looking at them with a pair of innocent yet beautiful eyes.

She smiled in surprise when she saw the old lady and said in the gentlest of voices, "Old Madam Barker, what a coincidence to meet you here! It's been a while."

Old Madam Barker's initially pleasant mood sank at once. It was not often she got the chance to go out with Samantha and that eyesore of a person just had to show up.

The old lady's expression soured and she replied unceremoniously, "A coincidence? I think you showed up in front of me on purpose to piss me off!"

Those words made Harmony's body tremble and her face paled instantly

Samantha was slightly surprised too.

Of her impression, Old Madam Barker had always been a very amiable person, and the most she did when facing those she disliked was treat them a little less warmly. However, she would never go so far as to show her loathing because she was a very reserved person.

Samantha knew that Old Madam Barker did not like Harmony ever since she overheard the conversation between the old lady and Aunt Julia. Judging from the situation before her, it seemed that she disliked Harmony far more than initially thought.

Harmony's eyes turned red and she said aggrievedly, "Old Madam Barker, I know...you don't really like me, but our encounter today...was really a coincidence..."

With tears welling in her eyes as she spoke, she looked poignant and pitiful.

The old lady remained indifferent and even sneered, "Give me a break from your miserable act. Don't come near me if you know I don't like you."

"In the event you feel like playing tricks with me because you think I'm old and useless, by all means, give it a try."

Although Old Madam Barker spoke in a cold tone, she remained calm and carried a faint nobility that no one could ignore.

She possessed an aura that was unique to the Barkers.

Harmony lowered her gaze as a deep-seated resentment appeared fleetingly in the depths of her eyes.

Her purpose for coming that day was not to rile up the old lady. Even though she hated that old hag, she could not afford to anger the old woman for the time being.

In any case, she would make sure to deal with the hag when she finally became Timothy's wife!

Old Madam Barker did not bother to continue talking with her and said to the manager, "Lead the way!"

The manager was startled by the old lady's aura and said quickly, "Right this way please, Madam."

Old Madam Barker walked with the support of her cane and Samantha. She ignored Harmony and walked inside the VIP room.

Harmony stood on the spot and endured the derisive looks directed at her from all directions. The schadenfreude in their eyes made her grin rather than angry, but that grin did not spread across her face.

...

After entering the VIP room, Old Madam Barker and Samantha changed into their salon robes and lay on the massage bed to receive a relaxing massage from the masseuse.

Samantha turned around and looked at Old Madam Barker lying on the bed beside her. Harmony seemed to have gotten on the old lady's nerves as she closed her eyes expressionlessly while staying silent.

She had rarely seen Old Madam Barker get angry ever since they got to know each other, and practically nothing could make her that furious.

Samantha suddenly remembered the information Rochelle had gathered about Harmony. Said information had been shared with Samantha.

Old Madam Barker used to like Harmony a lot and often told her to come and play at the Barkers' residence. The question was, what could possibly have happened that made her dislike Harmony to the point of hatred?

Harmony was even sent abroad at that time and was told never to return.

It was hard to justify it by saying that Old Madam Barker disliked Harmony because of the latter's family. After all, the Larssons were never of the same standing as the Barkers. The Larssons had even dropped to new lows because Samantha cut ties with her parents and had a younger brother who was plagued with heart disease.

Her circumstances were far worse than Harmony's, but Old Madam Barker never disliked her and was actually quite fond of her too.

Could it be Harmony's behavior and character that the old lady abhorred?

A supposition like that was not very convincing either. Old Madam Barker placed great importance on the way she carried herself and would not have been so discourteous for a reason like that.

Samantha considered many possibilities but could not think of what reason it could be.

She opened her mouth intending to ask, but she decided against it because Old Madam Barker was evidently still angry at that moment.

It would be bad news if a frail woman like her was overly agitated.

Perhaps it would be better to find another time to talk to her.

Samantha and Old Madam Barker enjoyed a complete three-hour package of skin and body care.



Once the treatment was complete, their bodies were much more relaxed and their skin was very supple too.

Old Madam Barker's mood had cheered up considerably after she looked herself in the mirror and saw that she looked several years younger.

It did not take much to make a woman happy.

Samantha took the opportunity to compliment her, eliciting endless smiles from the old lady, who held Samantha's hand and said, "You're a good girl, Sammy. You're beautiful, kind-hearted, and you have such a sweet way with words."

Samantha hugged her and asserted, "It's not about me having a way with words, Grandma. I'm telling the truth. Timothy is handsome because you're beautiful too."

Old Madam Barker was smiling so widely that her pearly teeth were all showing. She raised her chin proudly, "Of course."

Then, the old lady looked at Samantha's stomach and said, "So... when are you and Tim going to make a little Sammy or a little Timmy? They're bound to be the most good-looking children!"

'Sigh...she can link any conversation back to children.'

Samantha facepalmed. "We're doing our best, Grandma. All you have to do is sit tight."

Her answer was not a patronizing one. Since she was willing to bear Timothy's child, they really were working hard towards that goal.

"Okay, I'll wait."

Samantha was relieved when she saw the improvement in Old Madam Barker's mood. They got in the car and went back to the villa.

Inside the bedroom, Samantha lay on the bed and was feeling a little sleepy after scrolling on her phone for some time.

She checked the time. It was half an hour to midnight and Timothy still had not returned. He did not text or call her either.

Despite her best efforts throughout the day to avoid thinking about Harmony's early morning text, it unconsciously popped into her mind at that time.

Her trust in Timothy was unwavering. They had gone through so much together and she could clearly sense the way he felt for her.

However, that did not mean she should not be wary of Harmony.

Although she had won against Harmony a couple of times now, Harmony never stayed down and always remained standing after a defeat.

Being extra cautious was never a bad thing.

Samantha thought to herself and decided to dial Timothy's number.

The dial tone was heard, but no one answered her call and it was cut off automatically.

Samantha frowned slightly and redialed without hesitation.

In almost the same manner, the dial tone was heard briefly and the call was rejected. All Samantha heard after that was a busy signal....

*Chapter 250: He Disappeared*

Samantha called Timothy a third time but received a robotic message: 'The phone number you dialed has been switched off.'

She was a little surprised.

Since she and Timothy decided to start over and live their lives happily together, Timothy rarely left her calls unanswered, unless he was very busy at work. It was even less likely for him to ignore her first call, reject the second, and switch off his phone before the third one came.

What was the meaning of that?

Could he have ignored her calls simply because he was spending the so-called 'special day' with Harmony?

Samantha clenched the phone tightly until her fingertips were drained of blood.

Her sleepiness was all gone and she sat up while covering her body with the blanket.

After hesitating for only half a second, she lifted the blanket and got out of bed. She headed for the dressing room, quickly changed into a loose jumper and shorts, then grabbed her bag and left the room.

Both Old Madam Barker and Aunt Julia were sleeping at that time, and even though Samantha was feeling frustrated, she made sure to tread lightly when she went downstairs because she did not want to wake them up.

Once she exited the house, she got into the little white car that Timothy had gifted her. After starting the engine, she stepped on the accelerator and drove the car out as fast as she could.

There were very few vehicles on the road, and Samantha practically kept her foot on the accelerator throughout her entire drive. 30 minutes later, she finally arrived at the Barker Group.

She sat in the car for a moment and did not get off.

Her gaze remained fixed at the large and quiet entrance. She bit her lower lip and had a conflicted look.

She wondered whether it was better to live in ignorance or see everything with clarity.

A question like that would forever remain a tricky one to answer.

In the past, she would probably decide to avoid it and choose ignorance.

However, she could no longer be ignorant and act as if she did not know anything.

When her marriage was suddenly broken off two years ago and she was abandoned, she constantly over thought and doubted herself because she did not know the reason behind that decision. Her mind constantly replayed the events and caused her to go through a long period of suffering.

A good analogy would be a needle stuck in her flesh. It was not fatal, but it would be very painful if pulled out. On the other hand, it would continue to ache if it was not pulled out.

Had she not forced herself to snap out of it and face it sometime later, she would have either gone mad or lost her life while in a foreign country. It was a painful experience, but at least she managed to survive.

Samantha eventually decided to open the car door, get out of the car, and step into the Barker Group.

There was usually only one elevator in operation during the night and she did not give herself a chance to hesitate. As soon as the elevator door opened, she walked in and pressed the button for the top floor.

The ten or so seconds it took to reach the top floor felt like a century.

With a ding, the elevator door proceeded to open.

Samantha clenched her hand slightly and released it. She only lifted her foot and stepped out after taking a deep breath.

The first place she went was Timothy's office, which turned out to be completely dark inside. She even walked in and went to the lounge to have a look, but there was no one there either.

Not one to give up, she left the office and walked towards the conference room.

There were conference rooms of various sizes and she peered into them one by one from one end of the corridor to the other.

She pushed open the door to the last conference room but did not find who she was looking for.

Timothy was not in the company office, so the chances of him being busy with work-related stuff had dropped to 50%.

However, if Timothy had to socialize for work purposes, he would at least send her a text or a WeTalk message even if it was inconvenient for him to answer the phone.

Instead, her three phone calls to him went unanswered, and the phone was turned off too.

Samantha was unable to stand straight and held onto the wall to calm herself down before turning to leave.

Back inside the car, she started the engine and drove towards the five-star hotel that Timothy frequently stayed in outside.

She did not want to suspect Timothy just like that and she still wanted to believe him.

She sped along the road and reached the hotel entrance in about 15 minutes. After getting out of the car, she walked straight in.

The lobby manager recognized her and greeted her enthusiastically. "Mrs. Barker! What brings you here today?"

Samantha's heart froze when she heard that.

The lobby manager would not have been that surprised if Timothy was there.

She nevertheless insisted on seeing everything herself.

Samantha said bluntly, "The keycard, please. I'd like to head upstairs."

The lobby manager did not dare to ask any further after seeing that her expression was somewhat off. He nodded quickly and said, "Hold on, Mrs. Barker. I'll get it ready for you."

A few minutes later, the hall manager respectfully handed over the keycard.

"Thank you." Samantha took the card and walked into the elevator.

The elevator brought her to the floor in no time and Samantha was so on edge that she showed no sign of calming down anytime soon. It was difficult for her to control all the jumbled-up and chaotic thoughts in her mind.

When she opened the door with the keycard, she walked into the suite and saw that there was no one there either. Her mind went blank in an instant.

It was as if her heartstrings which had been pulled taut had snapped at that moment.

Samantha staggered to the sofa beside her and practically collapsed as if her entire body had been robbed of its strength.

...

The next day, Ronald was having the sweetest of dreams. He dreamed about going on a date with his crush from high school, and they were holding hands with each other as he was about to kiss her dainty lips.

When the dream was reaching that climax, he felt that he was being stared at by a penetrating gaze that caused his hair to stand on end. He raised his eyes and saw the headmaster standing in the distance while giving him a death stare.

Ronald was so frightened that his heart began throbbing. His eyelids then snapped open as he woke up immediately.

As soon as he opened his eyes, he made eye contact with another penetrating gaze. His heart began pounding and he nearly passed out.

Luckily for him, the person staring at him was Samantha and his wildly-beating heart could finally slow down again.

He had it easy because he was still recuperating.

However, Ronald raised his eyes and glanced at the clock on the wall. It was only eight in the morning, even if she was worried for him, there was no need for her to visit him that early.

It had been a close call earlier and he could have given away his first kiss!

Ronald scratched his head and asked, "Mrs. Barker, why are you here so early?"

Samantha pulled the chair and sat down. She chose a big round apple from the fruits she brought and picked up a fruit knife to peel it slowly.

She replied in a soft and gentle voice, "I'm here to visit Corey, so I might as well come over and visit you too."

Corey happened to be hospitalized at the same hospital Ronald was in, so he assumed that she came early because she had spent the night with Corey.

"You're very kind to your little brother," he praised. "And you're very kind to me too."

Samantha smiled, handed over the peeled apple to him, and said casually, "Was it a special day yesterday? I can't quite remember..."

"Yesterday?" Ronald stretched his hand out to pick up the apple and blurted out unconsciously, "Isn't it when Mr. Barker..."

#### *Chapter 251: I'll Tell*

As Ronald said that, he suddenly realized something and stopped midway. He uttered an abrupt 'Huh' and spoke in a different tone, "I don't think there's any special day. Mr. Barker didn't say anything to me..."

He then grabbed the apple and took two big, forceful bites. He chewed continuously to hide his unease.

Samantha did not say a word but merely stared right at him with her big beautiful eyes.

Her stare was a bit too intimidating and Ronald turned his head quietly to the other side in an attempt to avoid her stare.

However, he could still feel Samantha's intent stare even after turning his back to Samantha.

Her stare felt just like the headmaster's stare in his dream and he could not control himself from breaking out in cold sweat.

Samantha eventually spoke up after about half a minute. Instead of interrogating him any further, she asked nonchalantly, "Is the apple delicious?"

Ronald, who had already gnawed the apple to its core, nodded enthusiastically. "It is! It's very delicious."

“I’ll cut another one for you then.”

Samantha took another apple and peeled it with the fruit knife.

“You don’t need to trouble yourself…” Ronald said while turning around. As soon as he turned around, he could not help but tremble from head to toe.

Samantha had peeled the first apple like any ordinary person, but she no longer peeled in the same way as before. Instead, she looked like she was slicing them.

Big chunks of apples fell with each slice.

The way she sliced the apple made him feel as though she was about to slash right at him the very next second!

He did not dare to underestimate that woman, ever since he experienced her calm racing skills on the road the other day.

Samantha peeled the skin off the apple and looked up at Ronald. The corners of her lips curled up as she said, “I’ll divide it in half for you.”

As soon as she said that, she sliced the apple in half without blinking.

Ronald gulped unknowingly and reached for his neck. All of Samantha’s movements were horrifying!

Samantha handed him the apple.

Ronald’s hands were shaking as he took it.

Samantha smiled again. “I don’t need to go to work today, Ronald. I can stay here with you since I have nothing to do all day long.”

Ronald trembled and the apple fell on the bed because he could not hold it properly. “No, it’s fine. I’m fine all by myself here.”

He had a helpless and terrified expression.

Samantha seemed to not have heard what he said and looked at the falling apple. “Why are you so careless? I’ll cut another one for you.”

She stretched out her hand to get the apple again.

Ronald collapsed. “Mrs. Barker, please don’t cut any more apples. I’ll tell! I’ll tell, okay!”

He was going to cry if she cut another apple in front of him.

After all, he was just a weak, pitiful, and helpless patient!

Samantha put down the fruit knife and took out a paper towel. She wiped her hands slowly and opened her lips to say, "Talk. I'm listening."

Ronald sighed deeply and said silently in his heart, 'I'm sorry, Mr. Barker.'

Then he organized his sentences and said, "Yesterday was a special day for Mr. Barker...and Harmony."

Samantha's long curly eyelashes quivered as she remained silent.

Ronald glanced at her and continued, "I don't know much, but Mr. Barker will disappear for twenty-four hours every three months. He probably spends it with Harmony."

"Whenever that day comes, I won't be able to contact Mr. Barker and he won't let me contact him. He'll only show up after twenty-four hours. I have no idea where he goes and what he does."

The emotions within Samantha's eyes fluctuated slightly, but she was unexpectedly calm after going through an emotionally draining night. "How do you know that he was with Harmony? Besides, wasn't Harmony outside of the country before this?"

Ronald knew the conflict between Samantha and Harmony, especially Samantha's hatred and jealousy of Harmony. He wanted nothing more than to give a negative answer to Samantha, but...there was no changing a fact.

"Mrs. Barker, during the two years of absence, Harmony came back before, but her whereabouts were always hidden. Not many people knew that Harmony was in the country, but...Mr. Barker always kept in touch with her and they video called each other on certain days."

"I've been by Mr. Barker's side for a long time and I've noticed some things, but I surely can't mention things like this on a whim. If it weren't for you today...I'd have continued to keep it to myself!"

"But that's all I know about them. I don't know anything else. I swear."

That little bit of information was enough to conjure emotional waves in Samantha's heart.

'Harmony came back before...'

'Gave each other video calls...'

Those phrases were like thin needles that pricked Samantha's heart.



A certain memory appeared in her mind all of a sudden.

When she was at the villa before, she once saw Timothy having a video call with someone. At that time, she did not see who it was but remembered the voice clearly.

She later saw Harmony at the airport for the first time and felt that her voice seemed familiar as if she had heard it somewhere.

That was Harmony's voice!

Ronald's statements matched the events.

Samantha could not help but think back to what she had asked Timothy in the past.

She had asked him whether he had any other relationship with Harmony aside from being just friends.

His answer at that time was a no.

It was a confident, firm, and clear 'no'.

That answer seemed to be a resounding slap in her face at that moment.

It had been the very reason she dispelled herself of all her doubts and placed her firm belief in Timothy.

In the end, she found out that they had been keeping in touch all this time.

They even shared a special day where he would disappear with Harmony for 24 hours every three months...

Samantha found it laughable when she thought about it, but she could not bring herself to laugh.

Ronald could not help but feel uncomfortable when he saw her sudden depression and the sadness that she was unwilling to show anyone else.

He had no experience comforting a girl so he could only say awkwardly, "Mrs. Barker, I... I think Mr. Barker has his reasons. You're always in his heart, after all, and he's not a two-timing scumbag either. Don't be too sad right now. It'd be better for you to talk to Mr. Barker first."

If Timothy truly liked Harmony, he would not have married Samantha and continued helping her during all her recent troubles at Harmony's expense.

He shared his thoughts with Samantha and persuaded her, "Mrs. Barker, you and Mr. Barker have gone through so much together. I'm sure you can feel his sincerity towards you, right?"

Samantha could not deny that her uncomfortable emotions had been eased somewhat.

She was not someone who would condemn another without first seeking the truth.

Samantha nodded gently. "Okay."

...

At eight o'clock that evening, Samantha called Timothy again.. He had finally switched his phone on.