

This Time, I Will Get My Divorce, Mr

Chapter 161

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“Are you sure?” Rose asked with a faint smile. Toby hardened his tone as he responded for a second time. “Of course! I’ve already said that I had no regrets in the past. I didn’t have any regrets back then, and I won’t have any regrets in the future.”

“Oh, is that so? I see.” The old woman nodded without commenting any further. He said that he has no regrets and will not have any regrets in the future. Is he sure about that? The old lady chuckled. I sure hope he doesn’t feel embarrassed when he looks back at his own words.

“By the way, I hope you can keep our conversation with Sonia today a secret. You should keep your mouth sealed, especially with Tina and the Gray Family, do you hear me?” Rose warned Toby with a stern look in her eyes. He could tell that he would be in trouble if he ever went against her words.

“I got it. I’m not going to tell anyone about it. I’ve already promised Sonia that I won’t help the Grays, so I won’t mention anything to them,” Toby replied as he lifted his chin.

“Alright. Then, you should...” Before Rose finished her sentence, she caught sight of the pineapples lying by the front of the bed. The old woman smacked a hand against her bed. “Sonia forgot about her pineapples!” Rose exclaimed.

Toby’s eyes glinted; he had been aware of the fact that Sonia had forgotten about her pineapples from the very start. Yet, he didn’t remind her about it. Consuming pineapples could potentially lead to uterine contractions, so Sonia wasn’t supposed to have any of it.

“Hurry up and bring some over to Sonia. She’s probably still on hospital grounds now.” Rose shoved a basketful of pineapples into Toby’s arms before she urged him to go after Sonia. Toby agreed to hand it to Sonia, but he simply passed the pineapples to

one of the hospital staff members once he walked out of the ward.

Meanwhile, Sonia was still waiting for a cab outside the hospital. All of a sudden, she caught the strong smell of meat that came from a barbecue restaurant opposite the hospital. Everyone else had their mouths watering when they smelled the scrumptious scent of meat, but Sonia's expression changed as she felt nausea building up within her. She immediately covered her mouth before she rushed over to the bushes by the side. Then, she lowered her body to vomit, but nothing much came out apart from mouthfuls of stomach acid.

Sonia knew that it was her body's natural response to her pregnancy; she would feel a strong urge to puke whenever she inhaled any strong or oily scents. "Blergh!" She had only felt better for a short while before she felt nausea assailing her again. That made her lower herself to vomit once more. Her entire face was pale, and cold sweat trickled down her forehead; she was clearly suffering.

Toby found her in such a state the moment he walked out of the hospital. With a grim expression on his face, he headed over to the nearest store to buy her a bottle of warm water. "Are you okay?" he said as he edged closer to her. He opened the bottle cap and handed the water to her.

Sonia didn't want to accept his kindness at first, but she gave in as she couldn't tolerate the sour taste in her mouth. With the water he gave, she gargled her mouth twice and waited for the sour taste to wear off before she began to drink some of the water. She felt much better after a few gulps of water, and the uneasy feeling in her stomach seemed to have disappeared. Thus, she could finally let out a sigh of relief. "I'm fine. Thank you for the water, President Fuller. How much is it? I'll bank transfer the amount to you." She pulled her phone out as she spoke.

His expression darkened immediately. "There's no need for that. It's just a bottle of water."

"Of course there's a need for me to pay you the money. I can't just accept your kindness without any reason." Sonia opened her purse to pull out some cash when she saw that he refused to receive her

bank transfer. "This money is for the water and the car ride over to the hospital." She pushed one of the largest bills she had into his palm.

The air around Toby seemed to freeze when he spoke. "Are you really that desperate to cut all ties with me, Sonia?"

She eyed him puzzledly. "Isn't that a good thing? We can call ourselves a divorced couple, but in other words, that just means that we're two people who have nothing to do with each other. Since that's the case, I believe we should cut all ties so that neither one of us owes the other person anything. Wouldn't that be ideal for both of us?"

Toby clenched his fist as he found himself at a loss for words. She's right. We're practically strangers who aren't related to each other in any way. What she's doing isn't wrong, but I just feel really displeased for some reason.

"Alright, President Fuller. I'll make a move now." Sonia wasn't interested in his thoughts, so she simply tightened the bottle cap before she walked past him. Then, she headed back to the spot where she had been trying to hail a cab earlier. However, she only took two steps before she was struck by a sudden wave of dizziness. Toby rushed forward and held her up the moment he saw her staggering. "Are you okay?" He managed to stop her from collapsing onto the ground.

His brows were tightly knit, and his eyes were filled with concern for her. Sonia was shocked when she first realized it, and she even wondered if she was hallucinating for a moment. After blinking her eyes twice, she saw that he was still looking at her with the same, concerned expression in his eyes. That's weird, she thought. Does he actually care about me? Is he losing his mind, or is there something wrong with this world?

"I'm fine." Sonia shook her head as she pulled her arm away from him.

"You nearly fainted moments ago. How could you say you're fine?" Toby asked as he stared at her ghastly pale face.

"It's really nothing. My blood sugar's low, that's all," Sonia replied flatly. That was what the doctor told her when she last went for a

check-up—she knew she would experience bouts of dizziness whenever her blood sugar was low. It was a pretty common side effect of pregnancy, so Sonia didn't feel too bothered by it.

"Are you sure?" Toby still looked rather worried.

"Yeah," she mumbled with a nod.

"What should you do to make sure that your blood sugar levels don't fall too much?" he continued asking.

Sonia sneered in response. "I'm not Miss Gray, President Fuller. I don't think it's appropriate for you to be so concerned about me, right?"

He sucked his lips inward. "I just don't want my grandmother to get upset. She'd be worried if anything happened to you," he muttered.

Sonia stopped smirking when she heard what he said. "Alright. There isn't much to be done. I just have to eat to make sure my blood sugar stays at a normal level, that's all," she said with a sigh.

"What type of foods do you need to eat to do that?" Toby looked at her.

When she heard that, she tilted her head sideways. There was a look of slight uncertainty on her petite face. "Um, candy, I guess?"

Toby tugged his lips into a smile. "I thought you'd know the answer to that question."

"I'm not a doctor. Why should I know the answer? Forget it. Why are we even having this conversation? I'm leaving now. Goodbye." Sonia waved at him before she turned to leave. Before she could take her first step, Toby reached his arms forward and lifted her into a bridal-style carry.

After freezing for a moment, Sonia felt her entire face turning beet red as she tried to wrestle her way out of his arms. "What are you doing, Toby? Put me down!"

Toby tightened his grip around her as he strode directly toward his car. "I'm sending you home."

"I don't need you to send me home. I'll get my own cab. Let go of me." Sonia kicked her legs up in the air while she pounded against the man's chest with both her arms. Toby frowned when he felt himself losing grip of her. "I'm going to drop you if you keep moving around. You wouldn't want that to happen, would you? Do you know what will happen if you fall now?" He lowered his gaze to stare at her.

Sonia subconsciously fell silent when she looked deep into Toby's dark pupils. "W-What do you mean? Do you know about—" she mumbled with a look of surprise on her face.

"You might hit and injure your head. Tomorrow's the day of the final decision for partnership. Would you want to miss out on that because of an injury?" Toby interrupted her words.

Sonia stuck her lower lip into a pout. What? So, all he meant was that I might get injured? I was surprised because I thought he knew about my pregnancy. It'd be suspicious if he actually knew about it; even Charles doesn't know about it yet.

"Well, I wouldn't fall if you just let me down, right?" she grumbled with a hostile expression.

Even though he heard that, he didn't respond to her. He opted for such a gesture because he knew that she'd never agree to get into his car otherwise. Still, he couldn't let go of her, for he knew she'd leave the moment he placed her down.

Soon enough, Toby brought Sonia to his car. He had to lower her down as he needed to get his car keys out to unlock the car. Sonia seized this opportunity to turn around and leave. However, Toby immediately knitted his brows before grabbing onto her arm and tugging her backward.

"Ah!" Sonia let out a shriek as she felt her back pressing against the car door. Toby pressed both his palms to frame her head as he glared at her with a serious look in his eyes. "Are you going to do that again?"

Sonia was so annoyed that she couldn't do much but sneer at him. "What exactly are you trying to do, Toby?" She glared at him with her large eyes.

"I'm trying to send you home!" he uttered in a slow and clear voice.

Sonia felt anger boiling within her. "I just said that I'll get my own cab. I don't need you to send me home. Don't you understand what I'm saying?"

Toby shifted his gaze away. "I'm just following my grandmother's orders to send you home. Get in the car." He then lowered his hands and pressed a button on the car keys to unlock the door.

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Sonia squeezed her brows together. "Did Grandma ask you to send me home?"

"Yeah." Toby's eyes glinted for a moment as he spoke.

"She told you to send me home when we were in the ward earlier, but she no longer insisted on it after I rejected the offer. Why would she change her mind and make you come after me? You aren't lying, are you, Toby?" Sonia eyed him with a suspicious look.

He pulled the car door open as he spoke. "No. It had turned dark, and Grandma was worried about you walking around on your own, so she told me to come after you and send you home. Alright, just get into the car. You don't want Grandma to get worried, do you?"

Sonia fell silent for a while before she let out a sigh. "Fine. Okay." She lowered her body and got into the car. Toby relaxed his eyebrows a little when he saw her entering the car. It looks like she believes what I said. He closed Sonia's door for her before going around the front of the car and getting into the driver's seat. "Are you heading back to the Bayside Residence?"

Sonia's gaze was fixed on the view outside the window as she gave him a soft grunt of agreement. Toby pressed his lips together before he started the car. On the way home, Sonia didn't say a single thing; she didn't wish to talk to him, nor did she have much to say to him.

Meanwhile, Toby tried to steal a few glances at her through the rearview mirror. However, her expression was barely visible due to the dark shadows in the car. He wasn't used to Sonia being this quiet. They would ride in the same car in the past, during the six years they had been together. Back then, Sonia still loved Toby; she would always try to start topics of conversation with him while they were in the car. Toby, on the other hand, wouldn't pay much attention to her. Sometimes, he would even tell her to keep quiet when he felt like she was talking too much. That's exactly what she's doing now—she's keeping quiet, and she's no longer trying to initiate topics of conversation with me, Toby thought. He felt his chest tightening.

With that thought in his mind, Toby's lips twitched for a moment before he spoke up. "Are you and Charles planning to get married?" He surprised himself by starting a topic; he had no idea what made him do it.

"Hmm?" Sonia froze for a second. She was clearly puzzled by his abrupt question. "I don't know," she said while shaking her head.

Toby's eyes lit up immediately. Before he could conceal the slight joy in his eyes, Sonia continued with the rest of her words. "I guess I might get married to him in the future. He's really good to me; even his parents are really nice to me. I'm sure I'd live a really happy life if I get married to him."

Toby tightened his grip on the steering wheel as a rather displeased look found its way to his face. He could tell that she was mocking him and the Fuller Family. However, he couldn't deny the fact that Charles was indeed good to Sonia. Toby knew that Sonia would live a better life if she got married to Charles. That was the truth, yet Toby felt uneasy and frustrated whenever he thought about it. He loosened his tie before he spoke in a hard and cold tone. "Is that so? I wish you the best then."

“Thanks, President Fuller. I wish you and Miss Gray a long and loving relationship as well,” Sonia said with a smile. He pressed his thin lips together and kept quiet after that. A long and loving relationship? Oddly enough, Toby disliked the good wishes that Sonia had just offered him. It wasn’t because there was something wrong with the term itself; it was simply because he didn’t want her to be happy for him and Tina.

Both of them fell silent on the trip home after that. The atmosphere in the car seemed even heavier than before. Sonia could sense that the man was in a bad mood, but she couldn’t—nor did she wish to—understand why. She simply decided to plug in her earphones and listen to music instead. Toby could tell that the mood was getting rather gloomy in the car. She was the one who made him unhappy, yet she heartlessly listened to her music without showing any concern for him, and that made him mad.

Soon enough, they arrived at the Bayside Residence. After Toby pulled the car over, Sonia opened the door and got out. She stood by the side of the road for a short moment before she let out a soft cry. Then, she fished her purse out once more before she pulled out a bill and knocked on the car window. Toby rolled down the backseat’s window before he turned to look at her from where he sat on the driver’s seat. “What is it?” There was a hint of anticipation in his voice.

“It’s nothing. I just forgot to pay you for the car ride.” Sonia gave him a perfunctory smile before she threw the money in through the car window. She then strode off in the direction of her building. Toby glanced at the back of her figure before he turned to look at the money lying on his backseat, which made him frown and purse his lips.

The next day, Daphne came into Sonia’s office after Sonia arrived at work. “Mr. Coleman is here to see you, President Reed.”

“Zane Coleman?” Sonia halted her movements just as she was about to put her bag down.

“Yes,” Daphne said with a nod.

“What’s he doing here?” Sonia pulled her chair back to sit down.

“Mr. Coleman didn’t tell me much, but he said that he has something he’d like to talk to you about,” Daphne replied.

“Got it. Please send him in,” Sonia uttered as she turned her laptop on. Zane wouldn’t visit me for no reason. It seems like what he’s about to tell me must be important, Sonia thought. Moments later, Zane walked in with a file in his hands. He didn’t look anything like his usual lazy and playful self. Sonia couldn’t get used to the stern expression on his face.

“Please take a seat,” she said as she pointed toward the chair before her. “Please get Mr. Coleman some coffee,” she told Daphne as she turned toward the latter.

“Alright,” Daphne replied before turning to leave the office. Zane and Sonia were the only two people in the room after that. “I heard that there’s something you’d like to talk to me about. What is it?” Sonia looked at him.

“Do you remember that time when you nearly fell off a horse?” Zane asked as he pushed the documents toward Sonia.

“Of course,” Sonia uttered with a nod. Her soul nearly left her body when that happened; how could she forget such an incident? “What you’re about to tell me... Does it have anything to do with me falling off the horse?” Sonia asked.

Zane nodded. “It wasn’t an accident that you fell off the horse.”

“What?” Sonia froze just as she was about to look through the documents. “Did you say that it wasn’t an accident?”

“That’s right. Someone was behind it,” Zane replied with a serious expression.

“How could that be? Charles told me it was an accident. Furthermore, you were around while we were investigating it.” Sonia frowned.

Zane leaned back in his chair. “That’s right. We did conclude that it was an accident when we first investigated the matter. However, when I went out the second day to walk the horses...” Zane told her all about his encounter with the musk pills.

Sonia clasped her palms together after she heard the story. "I see," she muttered. Controlling a horse's behavior from afar, making it lose control and throw me off... Such a tactic would indeed make others assume that it was an accident. No one would link this to Tina, and they wouldn't have proof to show that it was Tina even if they managed to connect the dots. Tina never went to the stable, and she never laid hands on any of the horses, after all. This is exactly like the time when Tina used a poisonous snake to harm me. It looks like the beating she got that night wasn't enough for her! That's okay. I'll combine all of Tina's attacks and put them together with the Gray Family's actions. I'll get revenge all at once!

"What's in here?" Sonia took a deep breath to contain the anger within her before she asked Zane that question, and he looked at her. "I thought you'd lose your temper after finding out about this," he uttered.

"Well, of course I'm mad, but there's no point in losing my temper. I'd rather add this to the list of things she has done before I get even with her once and for all," Sonia hissed through gritted teeth.

Zane chuckled. "That's really smart of you. The documents consist of DNA fingerprinting comparisons. The fingerprint on the glass bottle belongs to Tina."

Sonia hastily pulled the documents out and went through them. "This is proof of Tina hurting me intentionally. Would you be nice enough to hand them over just like that though? Tell me; why did you help me investigate all of this? What are your intentions?" Sonia didn't believe that Zane had gone through all this trouble just because he cared about a friend and wanted to protect her. They weren't even good friends, anyway.

He clapped his hands as he let out a laugh. "Ah, it's definitely easier conversing with smart people. You're right; I do have other motives. However, I don't think I'm asking for anything too much."

"Tell me about it." Sonia lowered the documents and crossed her arms in front of her chest.

Zane's expression grew serious once more. "I'd like you to hand this case over for me to handle it. You're the victim here. That's

why I came all the way here to inform you of this and give you a heads up. What do you think? I've shown you enough respect, right?"

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Zane could have just handled it on his own; he didn't have to travel all the way to visit Sonia if he didn't respect her. However, Sonia didn't answer his question about respect. Instead, she knitted her defined brows into a slight frown. "You want to deal with this?"

"That's right." Zane nodded.

Sonia chuckled. "This is my business, isn't it? I appreciate that you helped to uncover the truth and find evidence for it, President Coleman. But I'm really curious about why you would want to handle this matter? Does this have anything to do with you?"

"I'd like to clarify something. I'm not doing this for you; I'm doing this for myself." Zane held a hand up as he spoke; he seemed worried that Sonia might misunderstand him.

Seeing that made her roll her eyes at him. "Well, tell me about it. I'd like to hear your reason."

"It's really no big deal. I'm sure you know that the Coleman and Gray Families are no longer on good terms. You probably also know that the Colemans lost to the Wallaces this time. We didn't manage to dominate the market with our products." Zane squinted his eyes to form a threatening glare as he spoke.

Sonia was surprised to hear what he said. "What? Didn't you guys manage to do it? Charles told me that the Coleman Family managed to get sufficient funds just in time. The Wallaces had about the same amount as you guys. How did you end up losing to them?"

"It's all due to the Gray Family." Zane knocked his knuckles against the table. "Both the Colemans and the Wallaces found our last investor at the same time. This business was willing to invest its funds, but it didn't announce whether it had chosen the Colemans or the Wallaces. However, we found out that the business had secretly invested in the Wallaces, so the Colemans lost in the end. We also learned that the Gray Family was a distant relative of the CEO of that business."

"Are you saying that the Gray Family was the one who gave them orders?" Sonia frowned.

Zane held his chin up. "That's right. Our family has been working hard to dominate this field, and we were just about to succeed when the Gray Family ruined it all. We're not going to let them off so easily. However, it's tough for us Colemans to do much since we are one of the well-respected families. That's why I decided to use your horse accident as an opportunity for us to attack the Grays."

"I see. I understand now." Sonia nodded.

Zane edged closer to her. "So, do you agree with this? I may have my own intentions, but I'm also taking revenge for you in some ways."

"I know, but I don't need you to avenge me in any way. I'm planning to go against the Grays myself. I hope you didn't forget about all the grudges between Triforce Enterprise and Paradigm Co., and me and Tina," Sonia reminded him.

Zane fell silent for two seconds after that. "Why don't we partner up, then?"

"Partner up?" Sonia's eyes lit up for a moment.

"Mm hmm. We can be partners since we're both going against the Gray Family. You need power and skills to do this, but you don't have any of that now. How do you expect to get even with them? Are you going to wait for Paradigm Co.'s business to be further developed? How sure are you that Titus isn't going to attack you midway? By the time you've built your business, he would have

expanded his Triforce Enterprise. You'd never be able to go after him, let alone take revenge on him."

Zane's words left Sonia speechless. He's right. I'm growing and improving, but that doesn't mean that Titus is going to remain stagnant throughout this period. It's going to be a long journey for me; it's impossible for me to get revenge any time soon.

Zane knew that his words had hit the spot when he saw the woman falling silent. He continued after taking a sip of coffee, "That's why you should work with others who share the same hatred for the Gray Family. Your plan to get revenge won't happen any time soon if you do it on your own. I believe I'm your best option as a partner. I have power and can provide you with all the help you need. You'll be able to get revenge just by partnering with me for a year. How does that sound?"

Based on the amount of power the Colemans had, it was easy for them to deal with the Gray Family. They could manage to turn Triforce Enterprise bankrupt within just a month. However, The Colemans weren't allowed to do that. The Gray Family wasn't just a well-known real estate company in Seafield; it was famous even on a national scale. It had over ten thousand employees. If Triforce Enterprise were to go bankrupt, a huge number of people would lose their jobs, and the officials would run investigations on this matter. Once it was revealed that the Colemans were the ones behind it, they would get in trouble, so it simply wasn't worth the risk.

Therefore, the best way forward was for the Colemans to secretly gain leverage over the Grays by gathering evidence of their illegal acts. Such evidence would serve as the Coleman Family's means of launching an attack and gradually destroying the Gray Family from there. It was a much slower process but also a much safer one. By the time the Gray Family realized that they were being attacked, Triforce Enterprise would already be in the hands of someone else, and the employees wouldn't lose their jobs as the company wouldn't go bankrupt. That way, the officials wouldn't run any investigations, and the Gray Family would still lose everything they had. That was the perfect plan that Zane had in mind.

Naturally, Sonia managed to consider all the factors that Zane had considered regarding the situation as well, so in the end, she let out a long sigh. "I guess I have no choice but to work with you."

Zane beamed as he reached his hand to her. "Don't worry. I promise that you'll benefit just as much from this. You don't need to do anything about the horse incident. I'll handle everything from here. You can continue to assume that it was an accident and keep this information to yourself. One year later, when the Gray Family begins encountering issues, I'll let you know the right time to launch your attack. You will send them the final blow."

Sonia looked down at Zane's hand without giving him a handshake. "Aren't you worried that President Fuller might go against you if you carry out this plan? The person he loves the most is in the Gray Family after all."

"The person he loves the most?" Zane raised an eyebrow before he curled his lips into a thoughtful smile. "Do you really think Toby loves Tina?"

"What do you mean by that?" Sonia looked slightly perplexed.

Zane chuckled. "Why don't we make a bet?"

"A bet?" Sonia sucked her lips inward.

He nodded. "That's right. Let's bet whether Toby is really in love with Tina. I'm betting that he isn't."

"Did you take your pills today?" She shot him a peculiar glare. "You must be crazy to say that Toby isn't in love with Tina."

"You're the one who forgot your pills. I'm seriously betting that he doesn't love Tina. We will get our answer to this bet a year later. We'll see if Toby ends his friendship with me after all of that happens." He wore a confident smile as he spoke.

Sonia pouted for a while before she smiled along with Zane. "Fine. Since you seem so eager to lose this bet, I'll play along with you. What are we betting?"

Me, losing? A playful look surfaced in Zane's eyes. I'm pretty sure I'm not going to lose. "I haven't thought of what to bet. We can talk about it a year from now—when the results are about to be revealed," Zane replied after giving her question some thought.

“Okay,” she said with a nod. Only then did she reach her hand out to shake his hand. Zane had large palms, and he had extremely tan skin. The back of his hand was tan, while Sonia had pale and fair skin. The contrast between the skin tones was more evident when the both of them shook hands with each other.

An electric current seemed to run through Zane’s heart when he held the woman’s small hand in his own. Before he realized what he was doing, he squeezed her hand to feel her soft and warm skin against his. It felt good for him to squeeze it; her hand was so soft that it almost seemed like she had no bones. He gave it another two squeezes before he could stop himself.

The corner of Sonia’s lips twitched a little when she saw what he was doing. “Do you enjoy squeezing my hand, President Coleman?”

Zane froze the moment he realized what he had just done. His ears turned red as he hastily let go of her hand and placed his own hand behind his back. “Uhh, well, that... I’m sorry. I just thought your hands felt really nice to squeeze, so...”

Sonia couldn’t decide if she should laugh or feel annoyed at that moment. My hand felt nice to squeeze, so he just continued squeezing it as if I was some soft toy. I never knew he could be such a childish guy! she thought.

“No worries. You should bring the evidence along with you, President Coleman.” Sonia waved him off to show him that she didn’t mind. She then picked the documents from the table before passing them to him. Since she had agreed to let him handle this matter, there was no use for her to hold onto the evidence.

Thus, he took the documents from her. “Alright. The Coleman Family will gradually infiltrate the Gray Family from now on, and I’ll update you whenever we make any progress. You’ll have to lend us a helping hand if we ever need you to do so, of course.”

“Sure,” Sonia replied. They were partners, after all; she wouldn’t reject his request.

“Alright. I’ll make a move now,” Zane muttered. Sonia walked him out of the office, and he headed straight for the elevator. While waiting for the elevator, he couldn’t help but revisit the moment

when he had been holding onto Sonia's hand. For some reason, he missed the tender and soft feeling he felt when he was with her.

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Zane couldn't stop himself. He lifted his hand to his nose and took a sniff to inhale the faint, pleasant scent that lingered on his palm. Immediately, he knew that it was the smell of Sonia's perfume that had remained after they shook hands. The perfume smelled fresh and elegant, just like the aura that Sonia gave off.

He couldn't help but want to inhale the scent for a while longer, and that was precisely what he did—he lowered his head a little to smell the perfume on his hand. While doing so, he pictured Sonia in his arms, with his head pressed against the space around her neck. He could imagine the whole scene where he'd be able to smell the perfume on her body.

Zane felt the tips of his ears turning red as his heart rate began to increase. At that very moment, his body jolted in response to the sudden ding of the elevator. Charles walked out from inside with a thermos in his hand. He nearly bumped into the person before him as he hadn't expected anyone to be standing outside the elevator. Fortunately, Charles managed to stop just in time to avoid knocking into Zane.

"Why are you here?" Charles asked puzzledly when he saw that the person in front of him was Zane. "What are you doing here?"

Zane's expression darkened as the mesmerizing scene in his head had been disrupted. He looked even grimmer when he recalled Charles and Sonia's relationship. Therefore, Zane only scoffed before he strode into the elevator without replying to Charles's question. Charles cocked his head sideways as a series of question marks popped up in his head. "What's going on?" I didn't insult Zane in any way, did I? Why would that brat, Zane, stare at me like I was his enemy? "Is he crazy?!" Charles rolled his eyes as he couldn't comprehend the situation. After a little more grumbling, he headed directly toward Sonia's office.

“Hey, baby.” Charles pushed the door to enter the room. Sonia had been going through some documents, but she raised her head when she heard his voice. “What are you doing here? Are you done with your work at the office?” she asked. It was rare for Charles to visit the office ever since Paradigm Co. was able to manage on its own. He had his own company to handle, after all. “There’s nothing much going on today. I’m here to send you food. My mom made some braised ribs, and she got me to send some over as she knows that you like it a lot.” Charles held up the thermos in his hands.

Sonia’s eyes lit up immediately. “Braised ribs! I haven’t had that in a long while. Do help me thank your mom!”

“Hurry up and try it. It’s going to turn cold soon.” Charles placed the thermos on her table before twisting the top open. The strong scent of meat lingered in the air the moment he opened the top. Just moments after that, the smile on Sonia’s face stiffened as her face turned visibly pale after inhaling the smell. Then, she hastily clamped a hand over her mouth before she pushed her chair back and ran off to the toilet.

“What’s going on?” Charles was utterly stunned by her sudden actions, and he only came to his senses when he heard the sound of her vomiting in the toilet. He immediately lowered the bowl and cutlery in his hand to help her out in the toilet.

By the time he got there, Sonia had her hands pressed against the sink for support. She lowered her body to puke, and she looked weak and frail after throwing all of her food up. “What’s the matter, darling?” Charles frowned as he stared at her worriedly.

Sonia caught her breath and shut her eyes for a while before she leaned her body against the wall beside the sink. “I’m fine,” she replied weakly.

“How could you say that you’re fine? You’ve puked so much that you look like you’re about to faint. Look at how pale you are! No, I have to call for the doctor to come.” Charles took his phone out to make a call as he spoke. She immediately opened her eyes and reached forward to push his arm down. “There’s no need for that, Charles. I’m not sick.”

"You're not?" He gazed at her confusedly. "Then..."

She let out a sigh. "I guess I shouldn't hide this from you any longer. You'll find out about it sooner or later anyway. I'm pregnant."

"Ah, you're pregnant. I thought..." Charles's voice faded off as he realized what was wrong with his sentence. "Wait, you're pregnant?!" The pitch of his voice increased as he widened his eyes to stare at her.

"Mm hmm." She nodded.

He was completely dumbfounded. After a long while, he finally managed a croak. "How long?"

"Nearly two months," she replied with her gaze fixed on the ground.

Two months... Isn't that about the time when she had a divorce with Toby? Charles swallowed a mouthful of saliva before he spoke in a rather bitter tone. "It's Toby's, isn't it?"

"Let's talk outside." Sonia didn't answer his question.

After that, he nodded and helped her out to the couch for her to rest. He poured her a glass of water after helping her to get comfortable on the couch. "Have some water. You just puked earlier, so your stomach must be feeling really terrible. You'll feel better after drinking some water."

"Thank you." Sonia smiled and took the glass over. She only answered his question after taking a sip of water. "The baby isn't Toby's." Now that she thought of it, she found it hilarious how Toby hadn't laid hands on her once in the six years that they were married. He didn't love her, and he even held himself back to maintain chastity for Tina. How can I possibly be pregnant with Toby's child?

"What?" The look of confusion returned to Charles's face. He opened and closed his mouth a few times before he finally got his question out. "If it isn't Toby's, then... whose child is it?" He would've felt hurt if the baby was Toby's, but at least he would have been able to accept it. Sonia and Toby had been married in

the past, so it was no surprise if she was pregnant with his child. However, she was now claiming that the child wasn't Toby's. That made him uneasy; he was furious at the man who had made her pregnant.

"I don't know who the father is; I don't even know his name or how he looks." Sonia pressed her hand against her stomach as she gave Charles a bitter smile. "I was completely dazed after the incident, and I was so terrified. All I could do was glance at the person once before I left. I didn't even think of asking for his name." She had attempted to ask for the man's name when she got his contact details, but the man hadn't shown any intention of complying with her requests. That explained why she had no clue about the person's real identity.

Charles clutched onto her hand as he questioned her anxiously, "Did you get assaulted by someone else, baby?" He couldn't think of any other probable explanation since she didn't even know the child's father.

However, Sonia simply shook her head in denial. "I wasn't assaulted. I was drunk, and I did it with some guy while I was out of it. This happened on the night of your birthday."

Charles recalled what had happened back then. "So, the marks that I saw on your neck the next day... Those weren't what you claimed them to be..."

"I'm sorry that I lied to you, Charles," she uttered apologetically. She thought that whatever happened that night would remain hidden from everyone else as long as she never spoke about it, but she hadn't expected herself to get pregnant. Naturally, she would no longer be able to keep the incident a secret.

Charles clenched his fists before he slammed his hand against the coffee table, and that made Sonia jump in surprise. "What is it, Charles?"

"I'm mad. I'm mad at myself for not being there with you when it happened. If I were there, you wouldn't have..." Charles lowered his head as he blamed himself. His voice broke as tears welled up in his eyes. Sonia quickly took his hand into hers to check if he had injured anything. Once she was sure that he wasn't hurt, she let

out a sigh of relief. "Alright. It's not your fault. I simply drank too much that night. That was why this incident occurred."

"Did you try to look for that man after that night, darling? What if that guy's presence wasn't just an accident?" Charles asked. Tina and the rest of them were also in the club during the night of his birthday party, so Charles was worried that Tina might have been the one who arranged for the man to show up that night.

Sonia felt a shudder running down her spine before she shook her head. "I got Zane to look it up. There doesn't seem to be any issues with the guy. In fact, the guy is Zane's friend. I have his contact. Purchasing Mr. Williams's Rentoor Inc. and putting Toby's land to use—all of that was this guy's idea."

"Oh?" Charles raised an eyebrow in surprise. "So, that's the guy who did this."

"Mm hmm. Everything that happened that night was really just an accident," Sonia said.

"Hmph. Even though it was an accident, it's still a fact that he had assaulted you. I need to have a talk with Zane to ask him who this man is. I need to hunt this man down and teach him a lesson." Charles stormed out of the door before Sonia could stop him from leaving.

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Upon hearing that the sounds of the footsteps were drawing nearer, the person outside the office looked around and turned around immediately. With quick steps, he darted toward the emergency staircase. After waiting for a couple of minutes, he heard the elevator doors closing, then he sneaked out of the emergency staircase. He stole a glance at Sonia's office, whisked out his cell phone and made a call.

At Fuller Group, Tom was sorting out the documents on Toby's desk when his cell phone rang. Stopping the work in his hands, he then said to Toby, "President Fuller, I'm going to pick up a call."

Toby was typing something on his computer, and when he heard him, he grunted his approval without lifting his head.

With the permission given, Tom took out his cell phone, and his eyes sparkled when he saw the caller ID. "President Fuller, it's Cooper."

"Who?" Toby asked with a frown, not realizing whom he meant.

"That's the assistant we bribed in Paradigm the last time," Tom reminded him. "He's always sending documents to Miss Reed's office. That's why we decided to bribe him so that he would look out for news about the child Miss Reed is pregnant with. He hasn't called us previously, but he must be calling now because he has news about Miss Reed's pregnancy."

Upon hearing that, Toby jerked his head up. "Answer it," he ordered without hiding the urgency in his voice.

"Alright," Tom said and picked up the call.

"Hello, Mr. Brown." Cooper greeted Tom politely over the phone.

While waving his hand, Tom answered, "Alright, tell me quickly. Do you have news regarding Miss Reed's pregnancy?"

"Your guess is right. Earlier when I went over to deliver some documents, I overheard President Reed and President Lane speaking about the pregnancy again."

Tom pushed his glasses up the bridge of his nose as he turned to Toby. "Looks like President Lane already found out about Miss Reed's pregnancy."

Toby pursed his lips and said, "Ask him if he heard whether the child belongs to Charles."

Tom nodded and passed the message. On the other end, Cooper answered very quickly, "It's not President Lane's child. I heard President Reed saying that the child belongs to a man she

accidentally slept with on that night of President Lane's birthday party."

Immediately, Tom passed the information to Toby, whose pupils shrank at the news. A huge wave crashed over his heart. It's mine! The baby in Sonia's womb is my child!

He tightened his fists. Perhaps the news was so shocking to him that his fists were trembling from him holding it so tightly.

Upon seeing that, Tom understood the situation and he gulped. Suppressing the shock inside him, he said into the phone, "I got it. From now on, you don't—"

"No, let him continue." Toby interrupted him in a hoarse voice. "Let him keep an eye out. On top of that, have him watch her keenly. It will be best if he can find out her checkup appointment timings and the hospital she goes to. I'll double his payout."

Tom nodded and answered, "Understood."

Then, he told Cooper about Toby's offer, which made Cooper so happy that he tapped his chest and assured them that he wouldn't let them down.

After hanging up the call, Tom turned to Toby. "President Fuller, does the child in Miss Reed belong to you?"

Lowering his eyes, Toby uttered, "Yeah."

"What do you plan to do? Do you want to keep it or..."

"I'm not the one who can decide on that, but Sonia. If she wants to keep it, I'll have everything arranged for her in the dark so that she can deliver the baby safely. If she doesn't want to keep it, I'll respect her decision as well," Toby answered.

However, when he was saying "if she doesn't want to keep it", he felt a pain that pierced his chest, and he felt somewhat panicky.

"It makes sense now why you want Cooper to find out her checkup timings and the hospital she goes to. So that's why." Finally, Tom understood the reason behind Toby's efforts.

Toby merely pursed his lips and didn't say a thing while Tom glanced at Tina's picture next to the computer. He looked as though he had something to say, but managed to stop himself in time. Toby caught that, so he narrowed his eyes and told Tom, "Just speak your mind."

"Actually, I just want to say that if Miss Reed decides to keep the baby, then in the case that Miss Gray and her family find out about it, will they..." Tom trailed off, looking worried.

Based on his knowledge of Tina and her family's petty personalities, they would definitely not allow the child in Sonia's womb to live. Clearly, Toby knew about this as well, and he rubbed the spot between his eyebrows wearily. "Keep this from Tina and her family for now. As for everything else, I'll decide again after Sonia has made her choice. Find out the next time and place where she will be going for a checkup and send someone there before her to give the hospital a notice. Tell the doctor to ask her if she wants to keep the baby or abort it."

"Got it," Tom said with a nod.

With a wave of his hand, Toby dismissed him. "Go out now."

After he left the room, Toby leaned back into his chair, shut his eyes and pinched the bridge of his nose. What will be your decision, Sonia? Just then, his cell phone on the desk gave a short ring.

His eyes flew open and he sat up to look at it—it was a text from Sonia. Is she texting me now to tell me about her pregnancy? he wondered.

Reaching out his hand, he then grabbed his cell phone and opened the text. However, the content wasn't what he imagined it to be; she was merely asking if he was in the country.

'No.' That was his reply.

At Paradigm Co., Sonia breathed a sigh of relief when she saw the reply. That's great.

Then, he saw Z-H's reply coming in. 'What happened?'

After letting out another sigh, Sonia replied, 'My friend is furious after he found out what happened between us on that night two months ago, so he went to ask Zane about your identity and wants to cause you some trouble. Therefore, it's a good thing that you're not in the country.'

After reading the text, Toby smirked. 'I got it, but are you telling me all these because you're worried about me?'

What a narcissist, Sonia thought while rolling her eyes. She shook her head and typed, 'I just thought that there's no need to blow up the matter since it had passed for such a long time. Moreover, even if I'm to be worried, it'll be my friend whom I should be worried about.'

In other words, she meant that he had no place in her heart, so why would she worry about him?

Feeling a little upset, Toby pursed his lips and his expression turned sullen. 'I understand. Is there anything else you would like to tell me?'

Sonia replied, 'Nothing.'

'Okay.' Toby kept his eyes fixed on the screen of his cell phone after he hit the 'send' button, but there was no reply from Sonia after he waited for a couple of minutes. Knowing that she wasn't going to reply, he couldn't help but look even more frustrated.

Even Charles had marched off to look for Zane to ask about him because of what happened that night, and she still didn't even tell him what she planned to do with her pregnancy. In fact, he really wanted her to tell him about it, and even demand that he take responsibility for it. However, she didn't do any of that and just shouldered everything by herself. Perhaps another man would have been happy about this, but all he felt was frustration.

Will it cost her her life if she just relied on me and let me take responsibility for just a little?! he thought in annoyance. He tugged his tie, a terrifying aura emanating from him.

.....

At Zane's place, Charles marched up angrily to knock on the door after hopping out of the car. The butler who opened the door asked, "Who are you, sir?"

"I'm looking for Zane!" Charles growled through clenched teeth.

Looking at him warily, the butler thought, Is this Young Master Zane's enemy?

As though having read his mind, Charles took in a deep breath, suppressed the burning rage within him and forced out a smile. "I'm Zane's friend, but I ran into an emergency, so I seemed a little fierce. Please let him know that I'm here because I have something important to ask him, please," he said before bowing.

Seeing that he did seem to be in a hurry and didn't look like he was lying, the butler nodded after a second of hesitation. "Alright, then. Please wait a while." Then, he closed the door and went upstairs to look for Zane, who was on the phone.

When he heard the butler's message, he lifted his brows and asked, "Someone is here to look for me? Who's that?"

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"I don't know either. But he's rather tall, and he drives a luxury car. He's also wearing a Hawaiian shirt..."

A Hawaiian shirt? Zane replayed the words in his head as the edge of his lips twitched, and an image slowly appeared in his mind. "I know who's that. Where is he now?" he asked.

"He's right outside," the butler replied.

"Invite him into the house. I'm coming down right away," Zane instructed, and the butler left after answering.

Holding up his cell phone again, he then said a few more things to the person on the other end of the line before hanging up and

leaving the room. He wondered about the reason for Charles's visit as he closed the door behind himself. "Hey, Charles." He greeted his visitor when he saw him seated on the couch downstairs. Scratching his head, he asked, "Why are you looking for me? You even came to my house."

After placing down the cup of coffee in his hands, Charles sprang up, crossed over the coffee table and strode up to Zane angrily. When he was right in front of him, he grabbed him by his collar and questioned loudly, "Where's that guy?"

Confused, Zane asked, "Who?"

"That jerk who took advantage of Sonia that night!" Charles bellowed, his eyes flaming red.

The expression on Zane's face changed when he heard him. "What are you talking about? Someone took advantage of Sonia?"

"Yes! On the night of my birthday, she had some drinks and your friend took advantage of her. Now, she's even..."

"Even what?" Zane asked, shoving Charles' hands away and grabbing his collar instead. "Tell me, what happened to her?" he asked anxiously.

The anxious look on Zane struck Charles as rather odd. Isn't he a little too concerned about what happened to Sonia? However, he didn't think too much about it and merely pushed him away. "Sonia is now pregnant!" he yelled. His palms had tightened into fists now.

"What?!" Zane's eyes widened in bewilderment. Sonia is... pregnant?

"Aren't you going to tell me who's that guy now?" Charles bellowed.

Zane opened his mouth, but no words came out. How could he tell him that the person was Toby?

Seeing that Zane didn't say a thing and was lowering his head, deep in his own thoughts, Charles became even more furious and his fists trembled. "Zane, are you trying to hide this for that guy?"

"No..." he uttered.

"Then tell me who he is. Never mind the fact that he didn't show his face after he took advantage of Sonia, but now that she's already pregnant, does he still plan to hide in the dark?" Charles hissed through gritted teeth.

With an odd expression on his face, Zane answered, "It's not like that. It's just that he's abroad."

"He's actually abroad?" Charles was so angry that he punched his fists together. "Hmph! Does he think that he can escape all responsibility by staying abroad? He's not even thinking about it! Call that guy now and get him to come back here!"

A look of guilt flashed across Zane's eyes. "I'm afraid that's not possible. Even though I'm his friend, we're not especially close, and he's rather mysterious. I can't even be sure that I can contact him."

"What?" Charles frowned.

Clearing his throat, Zane then said, "Well, go home first and I'll try to contact him later. If I can get in contact with him, I'll let you know, alright?"

"No, I'm not going back. Give me his contact number and I'll call him myself," Charles said, extending his hand.

Zane felt his head pounding, for he hadn't expected that Charles would be such a nuisance. How can I give him Toby's number? Who knows what will happen if he and Sonia find out that the guy that night was Toby.

In addition to that, he selfishly didn't want Sonia to find out that the child she was pregnant with now belonged to Toby. After giving it a thought, he narrowed his eyes and said, "Alright, alright. I'll give it to you, but leave quickly after that."

Then, he paced to the coffee table and took out a notepad and pen from the drawer underneath. After scribbling a string of numbers on the paper, he passed it to Charles, who took a glance at it and asked, "What about the name?"

"Whenever he's in the country, he always goes around with a made-up, fake name. So, it doesn't matter whether I write it down or not," Zane explained while rolling his eyes.

Charles clutched the piece of paper in his hand tightly. "D*mn it, he's even a foreigner. Aren't they always calling themselves gentlemen? How could he drag a drunk woman into a room? Shameless jerk. Once I contact him, I'll make a trip abroad personally and wallop him to a pulp!" he said angrily before storming out.

After wiping the beads of sweat off his forehead, Zane sighed in relief. Great, I finally drove this nuisance away. After he returned upstairs, he made a call to Toby.

As though expecting that he would make this call, the first thing Toby asked was, "Charles went to look for you?"

"How did you know?" Zane asked, surprised.

Lowering his gaze, he answered, "Sonia told me."

Realization hit Zane, and he pursed his lips. "Yes, yes, yes. I forgot that you got her contact by hiding your identity, so she would definitely give you a heads-up when Charles wants to create trouble for you through me."

The sarcasm in his voice was obvious to Toby, and that made him frown as he thought, Why is he being so sarcastic?

"Since you already know that Charles came to look for me, I suppose you also know that Sonia is pregnant?" Zane asked.

Almost two months ago, the morning after Charles's birthday, Toby had called him and asked him to delete the surveillance tapes in the club. Back then, as he was curious about why it had to be deleted, he watched them once before it was deleted, and was stunned when he saw Toby carrying Sonia into a room.

Therefore, Sonia most probably got pregnant that night.

"I know about it," Toby answered while nodding.

That answer made Zane narrow his eyes. "You sound rather calm. I suppose you're so unfazed because you knew about it a long time ago."

"Yeah," Toby muttered.

I actually guessed it right! Zane thought. "How long have you known about it?"

Toby pursed his lips and replied, "For a few days now."

All of a sudden, Zane recalled that day at the stables and he smirked. "It makes sense now why you stopped Sonia when she wanted to ride a horse that day. Looks like you already knew at that time."

"That's right," Toby answered calmly. Then, he went on to ask in a low voice, "Did you tell Charles that I was the man that night?"

"No. You asked me to delete the surveillance videos because you don't want Sonia to find out who the man was that night, so why would I tell him?" Zane replied, a dark cloud shrouding over his eyes.

"Thank you so much."

"You don't have to thank me. Now, I just want to know how you plan to take care of this matter. Are you going to remarry Sonia?" Zane asked while tightening his grip on the cell phone.

The mention of the word 'remarry' swayed Toby's heart for just a bit, but he quickly regained his composure when a thought came into his mind. "No, I won't," he said. He then pinched the bridge of his nose in exhaustion. "I've let Tina down once. I can't do it to her again."

"Let her down?" Zane repeated, rolling his eyes in incredulity. "Fine, just as long as you've come to a decision."

If this happened before, he would definitely advise his good friend to remarry Sonia. After all, she was already pregnant and Tina was really not good enough for him. However, he knew that he himself might have fallen for Sonia, so he wouldn't offer him any advice.

"If you're not going to remarry her, what about the child in her? You have to take responsibility for it, right?" Zane asked after recollecting his thoughts.

With downcast eyes, Toby answered, "Of course I'll take responsibility. If she wants to keep the child, I'll raise it together with her without her knowing it, but if she doesn't want to keep it, I'll do my best as well to make it up to her."

"That's not a bad idea, but don't you have to tell her what's on your mind?"

"I know that. When she has made up her mind about the child, I'll tell her my plans," he said solemnly.

After thinking about it for a few seconds, Zane added, "I think you shouldn't wait until that time. You should just let her know about it earlier if you want to tell her. She might not accept it if you wait until then to tell her."

Toby fell silent, and Zane sighed. "Okay, that's all I have to say. Think it over carefully."

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After hanging up, Toby placed down his cell phone, his eyes dark and depressed as he thought over Zane's words. Maybe he's right, he thought. Sometimes, some things may take on a turn beyond my control if I let it drag on until the end. With that thought in mind, he picked up his cell phone again and opened the chat room with Sonia. 'I know about your pregnancy.'

At the same time, Sonia was going through a document when her phone suddenly vibrated. She took a glance at it and was a little surprised when she saw that it was a text message from Z-H. We

just texted a few minutes ago. Why is he texting me again now? she wondered. "What did he send me?" she asked out loud before tapping on the text.

When she saw the message, her entire body turned stiff. He knew about it already? She clenched her hands into fists, then she frowned as she took her phone over. 'How did you find out about it?'

Z-H replied, 'Your friend went to look for Zane, and he was the one who told me about it.'

After reading his text, it all suddenly hit Sonia, and she couldn't help but slap her forehead. So that's how he found out! Initially, she thought that someone was working for him by her side. I suppose it's true that women's intelligence declines after pregnancy. How could I not think of this?

Her fingers flew across the screen as she typed, 'Since you already found out about it, I won't hide it from you anymore. Yes, I'm pregnant.'

'Why didn't you tell me?' he asked.

Frowning, she asked in return, 'Why should I tell you?'

Irritated at the fact that she had answered a question with another question, Toby asked silently in his head, Why? She's asking me why? 'Because I'm the child's father.' That was his reply.

Sonia pouted as she answered, 'It's true that you're the child's father, but it doesn't mean that I have to tell you about it. What happened between us started off as an accident, and so is this child. Also, we don't know each other and I don't even know who you are. I don't need you to take responsibility, so why should I inform you simply because you're the child's father?'

All of a sudden, Toby had nothing to say, and he pulled his lips into a tight line. Despite knowing that she was right, and so was her consideration, he still felt really uncomfortable in his heart.

After giving the bridge of his nose a pinch, he typed, 'Even though you don't need me to take responsibility, I still have to do it. I would like to know about your thoughts regarding that child. Are you planning to keep it or...'

His fingers came to a halt, and a few seconds passed before he tightened his fist, typed out the last few words and hit 'Send'.

When Sonia saw that he was asking whether she wanted to keep the child, she felt a tight squeeze in her heart.

Although the doctor had asked her the same question as well before this, she was completely in shock to find out about the pregnancy at that time, so she couldn't consider this question at all. However, she had to start weighing this question carefully now that the father of the child was asking her this.

Biting her lower lip, she typed the reply with trembling fingers. 'I don't know.'

On the other hand, Toby wasn't one bit surprised at her reply. The reason she hadn't been to a hospital for a checkup the past few days must have been because she hadn't come to a decision yet.

'It's alright, you can think it over slowly. Just keep the baby if you want, and I'll raise the child together with you from afar. If you don't want to keep it, I'll do my best to make it up to you.' That was Z-H's reply.

Raise the child from afar... Sonia replayed the words in her mind, and her eyes were narrowed. 'Okay, I'll think about it.'

'Let me know when you've decided.'

A lopsided smirk appeared on Sonia's face and she stopped replying, turning her cell phone off instead. Since he had mentioned that he would raise the child from afar, it obviously meant that he didn't plan to openly acknowledge the child in her womb.

In such a situation, he was either married, already had a girlfriend or a fiancée. Otherwise, it would be his family that wouldn't allow him to have a child outside. That was why he could only raise the

child from a distance and not let others find out that he was the father of the child.

Regardless of the actual situation, to her, it didn't change the fact that the child in her womb was an unwanted child born out of wedlock.

Unwanted by the mother as well as the father, this child was even more unacceptable to the family of its father. Therefore, the fate of the child was already very clear.

Placing a hand over her belly, she thought, A child should be conceived with a person I love, and not with a stranger whom I have no feelings for. I can't accept that the baby that I'm going to be giving birth to will be an illegitimate child. So...

"I'm sorry, really. I'm not a good mother, and you shouldn't have come into my womb. I'm sorry..." She apologized to the baby inside her while clutching the clothes covering her belly tightly and bearing the pain in her heart.

Just then, her office door burst open and Charles stormed in like a gust of wind with fury written all over his face.

"What happened?" Sonia lifted her head to look at him, stowing away the guilty feelings in her heart.

Charles strode to her desk, lifted her coffee cup and drank it with his head tilted back before she could even stop him. Forget it, it's just a cup of coffee, she thought. He doesn't even mind that I've drank from it before, so there's no point telling him now.

"D*mn that guy, Zane!" He cursed loudly while slamming the empty coffee cup on the desk.

Blinking, she asked, "What did he do?"

"I went looking for him to ask him about that guy. In the end, he told me that the guy is abroad."

"He's abroad?" Sonia asked.

Charles snorted. "So I asked him to give me that guy's number. Guess what happened in the end? That *sshole gave me an invalid number! F*ck it!"

Sonia chuckled. "Maybe Zane didn't do it on purpose. What if that guy changed his number?"

"Who knows? Whatever it is, this matter isn't over yet. I have to find that guy," Charles said, slamming his palm on the desk this time.

Rubbing her temples, Sonia said, "That's okay. That man already knows that I'm pregnant. It was Zane who told him and he just contacted me as well."

"Zane was the one who told him?" Charles frowned and went into a fit of rage. "Great, so it's Zane who fooled me and gave me an invalid number. Otherwise, how could he contact that guy?"

Even Sonia was stunned. "Well..." That's right, Z-H's number that Zane gave Charles was an invalid number, but he was still able to contact him. This shows that he didn't give Charles the correct number, she thought. But why would he do that?

"D*mn it, that *sshole Zane!" Charles cursed, feeling an itch in his fist as the urge to punch someone grew. "I'll definitely give him a beating the next time I see him. How dare he fool me!"

"That's enough. Set Zane aside for now. Aren't you curious to find out what that man told me?" she asked, fixing her eyes on him.

Leaning in closer to her, Charles asked, "What did he say? Did he deny it or—"

"No, he didn't deny that the child in my womb is his, and he's also willing to take responsibility," Sonia replied.

The look on Charles' face eased up a little. "That's better, and that's what a man should do. Or else, he shouldn't call himself a man. But how does he plan to take responsibility?"

"Charles, what do you think if I abort this baby?" Sonia asked instead of answering.

“Are you serious?” Charles asked with a serious face.

Nodding, Sonia answered, “Yes. I don’t want to give birth to a baby belonging to a man I have no feelings for. Furthermore, I don’t want it to be an illegitimate child. So I want to go for an abortion.”

A smile spread across his face. “That’s the way. Since that night was an accident, you shouldn’t keep this child either. This is good for you, that man and the baby. It’s great that you’ve thought it through, darling.”

After receiving the affirmation from her good friend, Sonia felt more determined about her decision to abort the baby. Taking a deep breath, she nodded and said, “That man said that he will do his best to make it up to me if I decide to abort the baby, but I don’t know how he plans to do that.”

“It must be money, without a doubt,” he uttered.

She grinned. “I thought so as well.”

“Darling, when do you plan to go for the abortion? I’ll accompany you when the time comes,” he said while looking at her.

Shaking her head, she answered, “I haven’t decided yet.” It was just a little while ago that she decided to go for an abortion, so she hadn’t thought so far in such a short time yet. After giving it a thought, she added, “I’ll do it on the day after tomorrow. I’ll be free on that day.”

“Sure.” Charles agreed with her.

Then, she checked the time and stood up. “Alright, Charles. I have to go to the hotel now. The results will be announced today for the proposal that was sent to Fuller Group.”

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"I'm coming with you," Charles said, springing up from his seat and looking very worried about her.

Feeling touched and amused at the same time, Sonia turned him down. "It's fine. I'm just pregnant, not injured. I don't need you to come with me. That's it. I'm going now." With that said, she grabbed her bag, slung it over her shoulder, and left the office. Then, she drove to the hotel.

Coincidentally, when she reached the doors of the hotel, she ran into Toby and Tom, who had also just arrived and looked a little surprised because they weren't expecting to run into her at the entrance as well.

"Hello, Miss Reed," Tom greeted.

In reply, she nodded slightly and turned to Toby to greet him. "Greetings, President Fuller."

He simply grunted a reply and stopped in his tracks, thinking to let her through the door first. However, Sonia was having the same intention to let him in first. After all, Toby was the partnership initiator as well as the owner of this hotel. No matter what, he had to be the one to walk ahead.

As a result, all three of them stood at the hotel entrance awkwardly with none of them taking the lead to go in.

In the end, it was Tom who snapped back and figured out Sonia's intentions. Clearing his throat, he then whispered to Toby, "President Fuller, Miss Reed is letting you in first. I know you want to let her go first, but as you're the initiator of the collaboration, she wouldn't go in unless you do."

Frowning slightly, Toby wasn't expecting that she would care about the rules in the business world so much. Well, if she didn't care about it so much, she wouldn't have been annoyed at Tina the last time at the resort area when Tina didn't understand this rule, he thought, and stepped into the hotel with Tom following closely behind.

Staring at their backs, Sonia heaved a sigh of relief. It's great that they're going. Otherwise, I would have broken the rules in the business world, she thought, knowing that people who broke the rules of the business world would be ostracized and despised by other businessmen. Fortunately, they were the ones who went in first in the end. After readjusting the handbag strap on her shoulder, she took in a deep breath and went in as well.

At the elevators, she pressed the button for the first elevator, but surprisingly, the light went out by itself after lighting for a second. What's happening? she asked herself. Are there any open elevator doors?

Her brows furrowed, and she was about to check which of the elevator doors were opened when she heard a voice in the front saying, "Over here, Miss Reed."

Twirling her head to the source of the voice, she saw Tom poking his head out of the third elevator, smiling at her.

At that moment, she understood the situation. No wonder the light on the button went out so quickly after I pressed it. Toby and Tom have been waiting for me at the third elevator.

"Quick, Miss Reed. We're waiting for you," Tom urged again when he saw that she was hesitating and rooted to the spot in front of the first elevator.

Her lips moved, and she said, "No thanks, you guys go on ahead first. I—"

"We're going to be late!" Tom broke her off hastily after Toby cast him a glance.

Hearing that, Sonia lifted her hand and glanced at the time. Sure enough, they were about to be late as there were only a few minutes left. It seemed like she had to join them and go upstairs together. Sighing, she then stepped into the elevator.

Staring at the man standing in the middle of the elevator who was exuding a strong aura, she then lowered her gaze and uttered, "Thanks."

"You're welcome," Toby replied, looking at her from the corners of his eyes.

After finding a spot in the corner of the elevator, Sonia stood straight and stopped speaking, and neither did Toby. As the subordinate, Tom naturally couldn't say a thing when he was caught in a situation where his boss was quiet. Because of that, it was so silent in the small elevator that all he could hear were the soft sounds of their breathing.

The professional smile on Tom's face gradually became stiff from its initial natural look. Goodness, please say or do something, guys, he begged silently. Isn't it a little depressing when nobody says anything?

Finally, the elevator reached with a ding, and the doors slid open. Tom was the first to get out, and he held the door open, feeling relieved. This is great! he thought. At long last, I don't have to spend more time in this suffocating atmosphere with these two!

Not knowing what was going on in Tom's mind, Sonia was the last to get out of the elevator. Then, she purposely stood there for a couple of seconds and waited until Toby and Tom had gone ahead of her a few steps before she started walking, trailing behind with a short distance in between.

Soon, they reached the conference room, and it was Tom who pushed the door open, letting Toby in, and then Sonia. Upon seeing their arrival, the people in the room hurriedly stopped chatting and turned silent.

Seated on the first left from the main seat of the conference table, Titus narrowed his aging eyes at the sight of Sonia. "Toby, why are you coming together with President Reed again?"

"We ran into each other downstairs. Alright, let's start the meeting," Toby said, pulling out the chair and taking his seat.

Knowing that he didn't want to explain any further, Titus could only let the matter go. However, his eyes were fixed solemnly at Sonia. He thought it was a deliberate act on her part that she came in together with Toby.

On the other hand, Sonia secretly rolled her eyes in her heart and couldn't be bothered with him. Instead, she flipped her notebook open and prepared to take down the meeting minutes.

From the main seat, Toby scanned over the faces of the people in the room, and after stopping a couple of seconds extra on Sonia's face, he withdrew his gaze, saying calmly, "I've already gone through all the proposals everyone handed in yesterday and picked out the most outstanding five proposals from it. The companies behind these five proposals will be our partners in alternative energy technology."

Here it comes! everyone thought as they straightened their backs subconsciously and became serious.

Sonia as well. In addition to being serious, she was also a little nervous. Amongst the two dozen or so people present, she and her company were far behind them and were an existence at the lowest level—whether it was her business competency or the strength behind her company. So, she was really not confident that her proposal would be selected.

"President Fuller, since you've already decided on the partners, please announce it already so that we all know who are the lucky ones," someone urged.

"That's right, President Fuller. Don't keep us waiting."

"Just announce it, Toby," Titus said as well, revealing the anticipation in his voice.

Yesterday, after Tina returned from submitting the proposal at Fuller Group, she had told him that he was already one of the confirmed partners. Hence, he was anxious to find out whether she was telling the truth. Ultimately, he knew his proposal, and it would be difficult to get selected with that. But there was a possibility that Toby had changed his mind for the sake of Tina and opened up a back door for him—his future father-in-law.

Nervous, Sonia gawked at Toby.

Toby felt her eyes on him, and he turned to look at her.

Not expecting that he would suddenly look in her direction, Sonia was stunned, and she cast her eyes downward before twisting her head the other way to stop herself from looking.

Seeing how indifferent she was, Toby couldn't help but press his lips together, and his tone turned a few notes more grim.
"Announce the results, Tom."

"Yes," Tom answered. With a list in his hands, he read it out loud.
"Based on the proposals, we've decided on five partners, and these five partners are Mr. Williams of Dazzle Steel Corporation, Mr. Cashmann of Supreme Incorporated, Mr. Ziegler from Linewarp Corporation, Mr. Lanster of Half Log Group, and..."

Besides the four whose names were read out, the others had their hearts in their throats. With both her hands clasped together tightly, Sonia bit hard into her lower lip, wondering, Will it be me? Her heart was pounding, and her eyes stared unblinking at the list in Tom's hands.

Tom caught sight of her gaze, and he sighed in his heart. Pushing up his glasses, he raised his voice as he announced the last spot,
"Mr. Gray of Triforce Enterprise."

After the words left his lips, sighs of disappointment echoed from the crowd. Sonia lowered her dejected eyes and gradually released her tightly clasped palms.

It's not me, she thought. Even though she had prepared herself mentally prior to this, she was still really upset when she heard the results for real.

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The whole time, Toby was observing the changes in Sonia's expressions, and for some unknown reason, he couldn't bear it when he saw her looking disappointed. However, with the quality of her proposal, he couldn't open up the back door for her no matter how much he couldn't bear it.

Knowing that he had obtained the last partnership slot, Titus laughed happily. As he knew the level of his proposal, it would be impossible to obtain a spot in the partnership. However, he still got it in the end. Judging from this, it looks like Toby really threw out his principle of not engaging in insider business for Tina's sake and opened up the back door for me, his father-in-law, he thought, the satisfaction growing in his eyes as he peered at Toby. He's really my amazing son-in-law!

On the other hand, Toby merely furrowed his brows in confusion, wondering, What's up with the look in Titus' eyes? Without pondering over it further, he smacked his lips and said indifferently, "The five partners have been decided. At this same time tomorrow, you can go to Fuller Group to sign the contract. I'm going to disclose these five proposals and let those who didn't make the cut have a look to see why they were not selected and where they lost."

"Good idea," someone agreed with a nod.

Sonia was also one of them who was in agreement with this idea, as she wanted to know as well how much different her proposal was from theirs. Despite that, she was paralyzed with shock when she saw the proposal Tom published on the public screen. "How could this happen?!" she gasped out loud subconsciously.

One after another, everyone turned their attention to her. "What happened, President Reed?" Mr. Lanster, who was seated next to her, asked in puzzlement.

Instead of answering him, Sonia was staring fixedly on the screen that was displaying Titus' proposal. "President Fuller, can you please tell me why my proposal is stamped with President Gray's name?"

What? Toby wondered, frowning and swirling around to look at the screen behind himself. After he peered at Titus' proposal and couldn't find anything amiss, he turned back again. "This is President Gray's proposal." This was the same proposal he went through yesterday that belonged to Titus.

However, a guilty look crept over Titus' face. In fact, he already saw something amiss when his proposal was displayed on the

screen—the proposal with his name written over it wasn't even his proposal. Even though he was shocked, he didn't voice it out because he could only let the wrong spiral down the wrong path. Furthermore, it had dawned on him that he obtained the partnership slot because of this proposal, and not because Toby had opened up the back door for him for Tina's sake.

Therefore, all the more reason he couldn't admit that this wasn't his proposal. Despite that, it was beyond his imagination that this was actually that wretched girl's proposal, and she even cried out loudly.

"That's nonsense, Toby Fuller!" Sonia was so mad with rage when she heard Toby say that the proposal belonged to Titus that she was shaking all over from the fury and couldn't care less to address him as 'President Fuller,' calling him by his full name instead. "This is my proposal. How dare you guys stamp Titus Gray's name over my proposal and let him claim it as his?"

When everyone heard her accusing Toby of stamping Titus' name over the proposal, they were all shocked. Narrowing his eyes, Toby asked, "So you're saying that we are the ones who changed your proposal to President Gray's?"

"Isn't that what happened?" Sonia snapped, glaring at him coldly. "I really didn't think that you guys could be so shameless," she continued agitatedly. "Just to let him have a slot in the partnership spot, you guys used such underhand tactics."

If her proposal was really terrible and was eliminated, she could naturally accept defeat with ease. However, the truth wasn't the case. In contrast, her proposal was excellent. Otherwise, Titus wouldn't have snatched it and obtained the partnership slot. Because of that, she would never let this matter rest so easily.

Looking at Sonia who was hopping mad with rage, Toby then turned to look at Titus, who was obviously looking guilty with his head lowered, and he realized that she was telling the truth—the proposal on the screen was really hers, and not Titus'. How could Titus steal somebody's proposal and pass it off as his own! he thought.

His eyes squinted dangerously, and a layer of grim, somber air started to build up around him. From this, everyone could tell that he was mad.

“I’m not the one who stamped the name,” he said in a serious tone, looking at Sonia.

Seeing how serious he seemed, Sonia felt a little appeased and asked, “Is it really not you?”

“There’s no reason for me to do this,” he answered.

Sonia bit her lip. She could tell that he was telling the truth, and she concluded, So he really didn’t know that the name on the proposal had been changed. “President Gray, since President Fuller already said that this has nothing to do with him, it looks like the culprit can only be you. Please explain to me how my proposal became yours!” she questioned in a cold voice, her eyes fixed on Titus.

For the onlookers, they couldn’t be happier if this issue blew up, and they started speaking out in amusement.

“That’s right, President Gray. Tell us, is this really your proposal?”

“Yeah, give us an explanation.”

Listening to these people’s questions, Titus slammed the table and sprang up from his seat as the fire of fury ignited within him. “What else can I say? Of course this is my proposal!”

“But President Reed said it belongs to her,” someone chirped.

Titus turned to Sonia, and his eyes flashed. Trying his best to feign composure, he said, “Is this really yours just because you said so?”

“Do you think I can’t even recognize my own proposal?” Sonia retorted, chuckling from anger.

The guilt within Titus intensified, but admitting it publicly would be the last thing he did. “Fine, since you think it’s yours, then tell me how the signature on the proposal became mine in the end.

Don't accuse me of stealing it because I have been to neither Paradigm Co. nor Fuller Group. So how did I steal it?"

Stumped, Sonia was suddenly out of words to argue. He has a point, she thought. Titus hadn't been to her company, and she would always either lock the proposal in a drawer or bring it straight home every time after she was finished with a part of it. There was no way he could have bribed someone in her company to steal it, either. In addition, Toby had said that he didn't change the name on the proposal, but her proposal was now written under Titus' name. Just what the hell is going on? she wondered.

Seeing that Sonia was at a loss for words, Titus turned gleeful and added, "You can't answer me, can you? Since you have no answer for that, then you—"

"Tom," Toby interjected suddenly.

Titus' eyes darted to him, his heart fluttering with panic. Toby tapped his finger on the conference desk a couple of times and asked, "Are you the one who personally collected Miss Reed's proposal?"

"Yes," Tom answered, nodding.

Lifting his chin, Toby said, "Looks like the problem arose after you accepted the proposal."

After hearing that, Sonia eyeballed Tom nervously, her eyes filled with suspicion.

Knowing that she was suspecting whether he was bribed by Titus, Tom waved his hands hastily and explained, "Miss Reed, please believe that I didn't do anything."

As Toby's special assistant, he was not an easy person to bribe. Moreover, Toby already promised him that he would give him 0.5 percent of the original shares once he finished working for ten years. Although it was a very small portion of shares, judging from the market value of Fuller Group, that 0.5 percent of shares was worth a few billions. Hence, why would he give up billions and settle for a few hundred of thousands from accepting someone's bribe?

"If you didn't do anything, then please tell me how my proposal became his," Sonia demanded, pointing a finger at Titus. She had to get to the bottom of this issue no matter what.

Chuckling bitterly, Tom answered, "I'm sorry, Miss Reed, but I really don't know. I personally sent your proposal to President Fuller's office. On the way, I didn't pass by..." As though something came into his mind at this point, he trailed off, and his eyes widened.

Seeing his face, Toby squinted his eyes. "Did you find out something?"

Tom's mouth parted. "I thought of a possibility, but..." Then, he shifted his eyes, which was filled with a complicated look, to Titus.

Catching his eye, Titus felt his heart drop, and the expression on his face turned sullen. Clearly, he understood what had transpired.

"Mr. Brown, please say it!" Sonia pressed urgently, her eyes glued on him.

However, Tom turned to Toby instead, seeking his approval.

Toby nodded and said, "Just say it."

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Since Toby allowed it, Tom didn't need to hold back anymore. He nodded and said, "Miss Gray showed up not long after I accepted Miss Reed's proposal. She was here to hand in her company's proposal as well. Halfway through, I had to leave to make some coffee for Miss Gray, so I left all the proposals in the room, and there wasn't anyone besides her back then."

There was no need for further explanation from Tom, since everyone could see Tina was the one who did the switcheroo. Toby stared down, disappointed in Tina's behavior.

“Nonsense!” Titus shot up and glared at Tom. “How dare you slander my daughter! Toby, your assistant is spewing lies!” Titus knew his daughter was the one who did it, but he couldn’t admit to it no matter what.

“President Gray, I’m an honest man. I didn’t lie at all. If you don’t believe me, I can show you the surveillance camera’s footage,” Tom rebutted unhappily. He worked to his bone to get to where he was, so he wouldn’t slander anyone, or he would have been fired a long time ago.

All the color drained from Titus’ face when Tom said he had evidence to back him up.

Sonia mocked, “What a nice daughter you have, President Gray. She went really far to get this deal, didn’t she?”

“True. This is an... eye-opening experience, so to speak,” someone agreed.

Titus was fuming, but he couldn’t do anything. All he wanted to do then was find some place to hide, for there was nothing but humiliation for him here. He had never felt so embarrassed before, not even when he was arrested.

After all, nobody knew what he did to warrant the arrest, but this time, it was different. Everyone knew Tina did a switcheroo, and they even thought Titus was behind it. He could imagine how everyone in the circle would view him after this.

Rage was filling Titus up. He hated Sonia for exposing the truth, for not taking the hit like he wanted her to. He hated Toby for exposing him publicly, but most of all, he hated Tina for doing this.

“President Fuller.” Since Titus had lost the battle, Sonia lost interest in him. So she turned to Toby. “Now that the truth is clear, what will you do, President Fuller? Will you keep working with President Gray, or...”

Toby interrupted, "Now that we know the truth, I hereby announce that we shall no longer be working with Titus Gray. President Reed shall be our new partner from now on. Any objections?" He looked at everyone.

Everyone shook their heads. "No." Titus' spot belonged to Sonia in the first place, and not to mention Sonia's proposal was a decent one.

"What about you, President Gray?" Toby looked at Titus.

Titus forced a smile. "No, not at all." Not that I can do anything even if I do.

Toby nodded and turned back to Sonia. "You heard them. What do you think?"

"Great." Sonia was delighted, for she finally got the partnership after going through so much. Yes! I won the bet. In your face, Asher. She clenched her fists in excitement.

A smile curled Toby's lips as he shared her happiness, but the smile only lasted a moment. He was about to say something, but then Sonia blurted, "But this isn't enough, President Fuller."

Hearing that, everyone in the room buzzed with excitement. Oh ho. Seems like she's a greedy one. She's not satisfied with just the proposal and the deal, huh? Someone's in trouble.

Titus barked, "Don't push your luck, Sonia!"

Sonia glanced at him calmly. "What do you mean 'push my luck?' I'm the victim here, so why shouldn't I get fair compensation? That reminds me, President Gray. You're the perpetrator here, and not only are you not apologizing, but you're even yelling at me. That's a bit too much, don't you think?"

"Why you..." Titus' eyes were starting to roll to the back from fury.

But Sonia ignored him and turned back to Toby. "President Fuller, I handed in my proposal in your company, but yet someone still managed to switch it out. You're the boss, so take some

responsibility here. You don't want everyone losing their trust in the Fuller Group, do you?"

"President Reed is right." Someone nodded. "You should take some responsibility here, President Fuller."

Toby sat up straight. "We take full responsibility for this fiasco. I sincerely apologize for our staff's mistake, Miss Reed." Then he stood up, put his hand on his belly, and bowed at her.

Tom did the same thing. "This is all my fault, Miss Reed. I'm really sorry for this."

Sonia's mood took a turn for the better after they apologized, then she looked at Titus. "President Fuller has apologized. What about you, President Gray?"

"You want me to apologize too?" Titus stared at her in disbelief.

Sonia smiled. "Why not? Yes, you weren't the one who did it, but you could potentially be the mastermind. Even if you aren't, you wanted to sweep this under the rug and pretend the proposal's not mine. If Mr. Brown didn't bring up the fact that he has evidence, you would have insisted that my proposal is yours. Shouldn't you apologize for that?"

"President Reed is right, President Gray. You insisted that the proposal's yours, not hers. Everyone saw that too. We know what you were planning, so you'd better say sorry before things get worse for you." Someone laughed.

Titus was shivering with anger, but he couldn't retort, or everyone would think of him as a joke even more. He took a deep breath, held his fury down, and glared darkly at Sonia. "Fine, I'll apologize. I'm sorry. Happy?"

"You don't sound too willing to me, but it's already good enough that you apologized. I'll reluctantly accept your apology, then." Sonia chuckled.

That almost knocked Titus out. What do you mean 'reluctantly'? I'll get back at you for this one day!

"Tom," Toby said all of a sudden. "Tell everyone that Tina will have to make an appointment every time she wants to come to the company from now on. She's no longer allowed to come and go as she pleases."

Tom adjusted his glasses. "Yes, sir."

"Toby, you can't..." Titus gawked at Toby, for he couldn't believe what he just heard.

Sonia couldn't believe it either.

Toby looked at her for a moment before turning his attention to Titus. "This is the price Tina must pay."

Titus wanted to argue, but he couldn't.

From then on, Sonia's opinion about Toby changed a little, since she never thought he'd actually punish Tina when all he ever did was spoil her. Looks like it's gonna rain gold today.

Titus took a deep breath and said, "I don't feel so good, Toby. I will take my leave now." He'd only get humiliated further if he stayed any longer.

Toby knew he was just trying to escape the humiliation, so he nodded. "Send President Gray off, Tom."

"Yes." Tom grunted in obligation, then he invited Titus to go with him.

After Titus was gone, Toby clapped. "Let's continue the meeting, then."

Thus, Sonia sat down and went on with the meeting.

On the other hand, Titus stormed back home, obviously upset.

Julia was in the middle of her skincare routine when he came home. She was shocked to see him looking so angry. "You're early today, dear. Is the meeting done already?"

“That’s no meeting. I would have had a heart attack if I stayed there any longer.” Titus slammed his briefcase down on the sofa.

Julia took her facial mask off. “What happened?”