

This Time, I Will Get My Divorce, Mr

Chapter 491

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Chapter 491 Charles's Invitation

"Why don't we get someone to run an investigation?" Charles suggested.

Sonia nodded in response. "Of course. We have to look into this. I won't be able to sleep well if we don't dig deep to find out all that we can about them." Jessica and her mother were in hiding, while Sonia was out in the public's eye, after all. Sonia wouldn't even have found out about Jessica's return to Seafield if Charles hadn't found out about Jessica. If I didn't know that they were back, I wouldn't even have the chance to react in time if Jessica and her mother were to do something to me. Now that I'm aware of their return, I have to investigate their whereabouts, so that I can be prepared if they try to do anything to me.

"Who's going to do the investigation? Should we hire a detective, or..." Charles's voice faded off. "Let's get a detective," Sonia replied after thinking for a moment. "Jessica showed up near Paradigm Co.—I believe she was trying to gain information about us. If we send our own people over, she might recognize one of them, so I think it's better if we hire a detective."

"That's true. There's a private detective office that I'll pass by on the way back later, and I've heard good things about the place. I'll go ahead and arrange things since it's more convenient for me," Charles offered as he poured himself a glass of water.

"Okay. Sorry for the trouble. By the way, what brings you here?" Sonia asked.

"Daphne," Charles replied as he pulled a chair over to sit down. "She told me that you seemed troubled by something and she was a little worried, so she told me to come over and take a look," he explained.

Sonia wasn't sure whether to laugh or cry after hearing him. "I was just feeling rather moody. I didn't expect her to think that something was up with me."

"She cares about you a lot," Charles commented.

"I know. I'm really touched by her actions," Sonia said with a firm nod.

"Are you really okay, darling?" Although Sonia claimed that she was just a little moody, Charles still checked on her as he was worried.

This time, Sonia gave him a slight nod. "I'm really okay."

"Why were you in a bad mood, then?" he asked once more.

She massaged her temples as she spoke. "It's nothing much. I just felt rather displeased because I felt like I was tricked by someone."

"Who did it?" Charles leaned closer as sparks of curiosity lit up in his eyes.

Upon hearing his question, Toby's gorgeous face and sharp features surfaced in Sonia's mind. She seemed dazed for a short while. When Charles realized how she was zoning out, he raised his hand to wave it in front of her eyes. "What are you thinking about, darling?"

When she came back into reality, she immediately lowered her gaze to conceal the emotions in her eyes. With her head low, she forced a smile. "It's nothing." That's weird. Why did I just think of Toby? Sonia shook her head lightly as if to fling Toby's image out of her mind. Then, she took a sip of water from the glass on the table in order to calm herself down.

Charles narrowed his eyes as he observed her entire series of odd facial expressions and actions. A cryptic look flickered in his eyes, but he quickly pretended as if nothing had happened. "Oh! By the way, I need your help, darling," he uttered with a smile.

"What is it?" Sonia lowered her glass as she looked at him puzzledly.

He grinned cheekily as he leaned closer to her. "I need you to be my partner for an event."

Spurt! Sonia couldn't control herself and spat out the water that she was drinking as she was too surprised by his words. Charles squeezed his eyes shut as the water struck his face. His entire face was covered in water, and there were even water droplets dripping down his chin.

Sonia knew that it was her mistake. After sticking her tongue out in embarrassment, she pulled a few pieces of tissue out of the tissue box to dry the water on his face. She only apologized once she made sure that his face was clean. "I'm sorry. So sorry! I didn't do that on purpose."

"Darling..." Charles had a rather helpless expression on his face, and there was a hint of resentment in his eyes as he gazed at her.

Sonia giggled bashfully. "I'm sorry, Charles. I really didn't mean to do it."

Charles rubbed his face before reaching up to fix his hair. His hair had been combed backward, and he had used wax to make it stay in position. This hairstyle made him look especially cool, like one of the gangsters in old movies. But after Sonia spat water in his face, his hair had gotten wet and messy. He no longer looked as smart and neat as he did before.

Yet, Charles couldn't help but laugh when he saw Sonia's flushed face. Forget it. She's so cute; what else does she expect me to do? I can't do much apart from forgiving her, right? "It's fine. It was just some water. I'll tidy myself up later," Charles uttered carelessly while waving his arm.

Sonia got up and headed to the storeroom to retrieve a clean towel for him. “By the way, you were saying something earlier. You wanted me to be your partner, right?”

“Yeah,” he replied as she took the towel and began to clean himself. “There will be a few famous figures coming from overseas tomorrow, and one of them is pretty close to my dad. He gave my dad an invitation but my dad has no plans to go, so he suggested that I go in his place. He wanted me to get some exposure to the scene. I agreed to it, but I then found out that those foreigners are known for being playboys that like to enjoy their nights out. They requested each guest to bring a female partner, and you’re practically the only female friend I have—” Charles gave her a lengthy explanation.

“I don’t want to do it.” Before he could finish, Sonia spoke up to decline his request.

“I’m glad that you agreed... Wait, what?” Charles widened his eyes and stared at her in surprise. “What did you say, darling? Did you say no?” He had assumed that she would agree to his request, and he was about to celebrate it. However, he then realized that she had rejected him. The surge of joy within his chest immediately turned into ice.

With a stern expression on her face, Sonia gave him a nod. “Yeah. I said no.”

“Why?” He held onto her arm, but she pulled away from him. “Well, I previously agreed to go to the same event with Toby. Now that he says that I don’t have to go with him anymore, things would be really awkward if I went to the event. It’d still be weird even if I went as your partner. Do you get where I’m coming from?” she uttered.

“What? You agreed to be Toby’s partner previously?” Charles’s voice turned louder as he was surprised by her words.

“Yeah,” she replied with a nod.

“When did you agree to that? Why didn’t you tell me about it?” Charles clutched her shoulders and began to shake her.

She felt her head spinning as he shook her, so she quickly pushed him off as she answered his question. “What’s there to tell? Anyway, I won’t be able to accompany you for this event. You can find someone else.”

“Please, darling. I can’t find anyone else.” Charles didn’t want to find anyone else and insisted on having Sonia as his partner.

However, Sonia was just as stubborn. “I would’ve accepted your invitation if you had asked me to go to some other event, Charles. But I really can’t do it this time. First, I’ll feel extremely awkward to see Toby there. Secondly, I promised Toby that I wouldn’t show up in front of him, so I’d be breaking my promise if I went there tomorrow. What would he think of me then?”

“Well...” Charles parted his lips to speak, but no words came out of his mouth.

She patted him on the shoulder. “You should find yourself another partner, Charles.”

He let out a long sigh. “Well, since you’re in such a situation, then I guess I have no choice but to do that.”

Sonia gave him a smile, but she no longer said anything after that. After a moment of silence, Charles’s phone began to ring. He glanced at the screen to see that it was his assistant calling him. “What is it?” He picked the call up immediately.

“Mr. Lane is here at the company, President Lane. He wants you to come back,” the assistant uttered once the line got through.

Charles frowned. “My dad is at the company, huh? What’s he doing there?”

“I don’t know. He didn’t explain himself. Just hurry back, alright?” the assistant replied.

He massaged his temples as he spoke. “Okay. I’ll head back immediately.” After ending the call, he turned to look at Sonia. “I need to go to the office now, darling. You can contact me if you need anything, but I’ll leave for now.”

“Sure. Drive safe.” Sonia bid him goodbye and stood up to send him out of the office. She only returned to her desk once she made sure that he had entered the elevator.

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Chapter 492 Lily

Sonia curled her lips into a bitter smile when she thought about how Charles had invited her to the same party. What’s going on? I’m glad that I rejected him. Otherwise, Toby might think that I went to the party with the intention of appearing in front of him. Hmph! I’m not going to give him the opportunity to look down on me!

Yet, for some reason, Sonia felt her chest tightening whenever she thought about Lily, the girl whom Toby had asked to be his partner. Sonia pulled her chair back and sat down before she moved her mouse to search for Lily’s social media profile. When Sonia saw Lily’s posts of luxury bags, cars, shoes, and makeup products, she couldn’t help but squeeze her delicate brows together. Lily’s personal profile literally screams, ‘I’m proud of being rich’. This is so typical of a nouveau riche. Well, I don’t think she’s a good fit for Toby. Her looks, her family background, and her personal values don’t seem to match Toby’s at all. They

don't suit each other! If Toby actually gets married to Lily someday, I'm definitely going to question his taste in women.

"President Reed!" Someone knocked on the door, disrupting Sonia's train of thought. She was shocked by the sound, and she hastily shut the window of Lily's profile before she looked at Daphne, who was standing by the door of Sonia's office.

There was a panicked smile on Sonia's face. "W-What is it?" Sonia stuttered. Sh*t. Why am I acting like a guilty person? I was just scrolling through someone's profile—what's wrong with that?

Daphne had no idea why Sonia was so flustered, but she didn't think too much about it. "President Dafoe's assistant got me to tell you that you need to go to his office for a meeting."

"I got it. I'll go immediately," Sonia answered with a nod. Daphne turned to leave, and Sonia tidied up her desk before she hugged her laptop in her arms and walked out of the office.

It took nearly two hours for Sonia to be done with the meeting. When she returned to her office, she received a call from Charles. "I really can't find another female partner, darling. Could I borrow Daphne for a day?" Charles asked.

Sonia looked up to glance at Daphne, who was sitting just opposite her office. Daphne was busy organizing documents, and Sonia watched her work as she giggled into the call. "I'm fine with that. Daphne was your secretary in the past, and you only transferred her over to help me, right? I can pass the message to Daphne, and we'll see if she's willing to go with you."

When Daphne heard Sonia mentioning her name, Daphne immediately lowered the documents in her hand. "Is that President Lane, President Reed?"

Sonia smiled. "Yeah. He has to go to a party tomorrow, and he's looking for a female partner. He was wondering if you'd be interested in being his female partner."

"Me?" Daphne pointed at herself as terror flashed in her gaze.

Sonia nodded slowly. "Yeah."

"No, no! I can't do that!" Daphne looked as if she had just received the greatest shock of her life. She got to her feet and gestured to show that she wouldn't be a good fit for Charles. How could I be Charles's female partner? Usually, guys would bring their girlfriends or close friends to a party as their plus one. I'm not Charles's girlfriend and neither am I close to him, so how could I be his female partner?

"Why not?" Sonia glanced at Daphne confusedly.

"I... I..." Daphne lowered her head as she clutched onto her old-school, black A-line skirt. She stumbled on her own words without being able to explain herself. Can I say that I'd long for Charles even more if I were to become his female partner for that night?

Sonia didn't know what was going on in Daphne's head, so she assumed that Daphne was just nervous because she had never been someone's female partner at a party. "Don't worry. You just have to go there to have a meal with him and a few famous figures. You don't have to be afraid."

"Why can't you go, President Reed?" Daphne turned to look at Sonia. "I bet Charles initially wanted to ask you to go with him, right?"

With a smile, Sonia decided to be open about her situation. "I can't go there because Toby will be there tomorrow." Daphne didn't have much to say after hearing Sonia. President Fuller is going to be there—that explains why President Reed isn't going. I guess it can get pretty awkward for ex-spouses to meet in such a setting.

"So, why don't you be Charles's partner for tomorrow? He'd have to go alone if you're not joining. He doesn't want to bring women he isn't familiar with, and you're the woman he knows best after me." Sonia spoke in a sincere tone as she glanced at Daphne.

Daphne felt genuinely impacted by Sonia's last sentence. I come in second place after President Reed. Does that mean that I actually mean something to President Lane? This might not be love, but at least it's some form of a relationship. In the end, Daphne responded with a nod. "Okay. I'll go with President Lane tomorrow."

Daphne clutched to the sides of her skirt. Her palms were sweating, and her heart was racing because of how nervous she felt. She was finally getting the chance to have some form of close interaction with Charles. Even if it was a one-time event, it was enough for her—she could look back on this memory for the rest of her life. At that thought, Daphne lowered her head and let out a happy smile.

Sonia pressed her phone against her ear and told Charles Daphne's answer. Charles uttered something else through the line before he ended the call. "He'll bring you for a makeover tomorrow," Sonia told Daphne after she put her phone away.

"Okay." Daphne's voice was as soft as a mosquito's buzz, and she immediately looked down to continue organizing her files after she replied to Sonia. However, if one were to observe her thoroughly, one would see that her hands were trembling. It showed that she hadn't calmed down yet. It made perfect sense—how could anyone feel calm when they were just asked to go to a party as their crush's partner?

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Meanwhile, at the Fuller Group, Toby narrowed his eyes when he heard Tom's reply. "Did you just say that Charles will be attending the social event tomorrow?"

"Yeah." Tom pushed his glasses up the bridge of his nose. "I checked the event name list earlier, and I saw Charles's name there. I'm sure he'll bring Miss Reed over tomorrow."

Charles fancied Sonia, so it made sense for him to pick Sonia as his female partner. Toby quickly put two and two together, and he pressed his lips together tightly at the thought of Charles and Sonia attending the event the next day. His expression had turned sour, but his words were incongruent with his face. "He can bring Sonia if he wants to." Toby had previously stated that he wouldn't stop Zane from going after Sonia. The same rule applied to Charles as well. I'd like to see who suits Sonia better—Zane or Charles? For the next three years of my life, at least I'll still be able to keep an eye on the guys chasing after Sonia. But Carl... Toby's face darkened at the thought of Carl.

Toby had never once thought that Carl was a good match for Sonia. Carl seemed like someone who had a dark side, and he even had a severe mental disorder. He had recently been diagnosed with dissociative identity disorder. A man like him was simply too dangerous for Sonia, and Toby couldn't imagine how things would turn out for Sonia if she were to date someone like Carl.

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The next day, Toby brought Lily to the hotel where the social event was hosted. When they got to the venue, most of the guests had already arrived. Toby scanned the crowd before his gaze landed on Charles and the woman beside him. Charles hadn't brought Sonia along, but a woman Toby had never seen before.

What's going on? Toby knitted his brows. Why isn't Sonia the one who's with Charles? When Lily realized that Toby was frozen in his spot, she held onto his arm. Her cheeks were flushed, and her eyes were sparkling as she addressed him in a sweet voice. "What is it, President Fuller?"

Toby frowned even more. A hint of annoyance flashed in his eyes for a brief second before it disappeared. "It's nothing," he replied in an icy tone. After he finished speaking, he parted his legs to continue walking into the room. Lily clung onto his arm as she pressed her full breasts against his skin. She pretended that she wasn't doing it intentionally, but it was clear that she was trying to seduce him.

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Chapter 493 Put on the Spot](#)

When Charles caught sight of Toby and Lily, he curled his lips to give Toby a smirk. "President Fuller, your taste in women seems rather different nowadays. I have always assumed that you liked people like Tina, who look all innocent, weak, and pure. How did you end up with such a hot and feisty girl like her? On top of that, it seems like you guys also enjoy flirting with each other in public."

Toby's expression darkened the moment he heard Charles's words. Immediately after that, Toby turned to give Lily a glare. "Let go of me." He would have pulled his arm away from her, but he was worried that her dress would slip off her chest as she was wearing a strapless outfit. If that weren't the case, Toby would have certainly shoved her away instead of speaking to her so nicely.

Lily didn't seem to realize how displeased Toby was, so she pouted unhappily when she heard his orders. "I'm your partner, President Fuller. Holding hands—"

"I told you to let go!" Toby cut her off heartlessly. The air around them seemed to turn cold, and Toby's expression looked grimmer than before. The iciness in his tone of voice was too obvious to be ignored. Lily shuddered at the cold aura surrounding them, and she unconsciously let go of Toby's arm. Her face had turned into the color of paper.

Toby spoke without any expression on his face. "I told you about this before. I just want you to stand still and look pretty, okay? Don't you dare mess things up for me—I've already told you that I will immediately cancel the partnership with the McRae Family if something like this happens. I can't believe you completely ignored my orders."

"I'm sorry, President Fuller. I... I'll learn from my mistakes." Panic spread across Lily's face when she heard Toby's threat to cancel the partnership with the McRaes. "I really won't do this again, President Fuller. Please don't cancel the partnership—my dad will murder me if that happens." Lily was on the verge of tears because of how worried she was. I completely regret what I did earlier. In the past, I was only able to admire this man from afar—I never had the chance to be so close to him. Now that the guy of my dreams chose me as his female partner and that he's even considering marrying me, I'm too elated to think straight. That's why I did what I did. Furthermore, even if Toby noticed my actions, I would have never expected him to expose me in front of others. There are so many people here. He should've considered my dignity.

However, Lily was clearly wrong. Toby didn't care about her pride and dignity at all as his actions put her on the spot. For the past 20 or so years of her life, she had never felt as embarrassed as she did at that moment. She instinctively covered her face, but her neck and ears had turned beet red.

Charles, who had been watching the entire scene, felt rather guilty and sorry when he saw the look on Lily's face. He was the one who had provoked Toby, after all, which meant he was the reason Toby targeted Lily and placed Lily in such an awkward situation. Once Charles recognized that he was at fault, he no longer lounged around just to enjoy the show. Instead, he straightened his back and cleared his throat before speaking. "Well, Toby, she might have made a

mistake, but I don't think you have to cancel the partnership with her family, right? Isn't that a little too heartless?"

Toby shot Charles a cold glare. "Mind your own business. You have no right to stick your nose into my matters." With that said, Toby pulled a chair out to take a seat. Lily hurried to Toby with her head low, and she pulled out the chair beside him to sit down. He's still insistent on canceling the partnership. I guess I'll have to continue begging him once this event is over.

Soon enough, the social event came to an official start. Most of the well-known figures at the event were there to meet Toby—they all wanted to work with Toby on their new projects. Charles, on the other hand, only got a chance to be exposed to such powerful people because of his father's connections. However, Charles realized that he couldn't understand the other guests' discussions about their new projects at all. The Lane Family wasn't involved in the same field of business, so they had never explored such topics. At the same time, Charles was also well aware of the fact that the social event had nothing to do with him—he wouldn't be invited to be a part of such projects even if he could fathom what they were saying.

The Lane Family couldn't afford to provide such a huge sum for such projects as they were struggling with their own internal affairs. They would have to declare bankruptcy if they were to invest in such projects. Therefore, Charles merely listened to their conversations for a long while. He came to a point where he felt like sleeping, and he had to take his phone out just to prevent himself from dozing off. With his phone on the table, Charles sent a message to Sonia to tell her about what had happened with Toby and Lily earlier. He phrased his text in a playful manner.

Sonia was organizing some documents in her office, and she straightened her back after she read the contents of Charles's message. Lily seduced Toby and got herself embarrassed in public? Sonia's eyes widened before a serious expression formed on her face. It seems like Toby and Lily aren't getting married, then. If they were planning to get married, Toby wouldn't have embarrassed his wife-to-be in public. That's why I think their marriage is impossible. All of a sudden, Sonia felt a weight being lifted off of her chest. She had even curled her lips into a grin without realizing it.

When one of the assistants entered Sonia's office, she quickly realized how happy Sonia seemed. "You're finally in a good mood, President Reed," the assistant commented boldly.

"Finally?" Sonia froze for a second before she touched her own face. "Did I look like I was in a bad mood before this?"

"Yeah." The assistant nodded. "When you came to work today, you seemed like you were in a bad mood. You were frowning as if you were worried or concerned about something. However, all of those emotions have disappeared now, and you look so much more relaxed." This assistant usually worked under Daphne's orders, but she had come over to help Sonia with some matters since she was replacing Daphne's absence today.

Out of all the people in the office, the assistant had spent the most time with Sonia today, so she had the opportunity to observe Sonia's mood throughout the day. Sonia was stunned to hear that she had been in a bad mood for so long. According to the assistant's description, Sonia had been in a bad mood for most of the day, and she had only relaxed a little after receiving Charles's text. She believed that she felt relieved after concluding that Toby and Lily would never get married to one another. Does that mean I'm happy because Toby and Lily won't get married? At that thought, all sorts of mixed emotions surfaced in Sonia's eyes. Why should I be happy after knowing that they won't get married? What is there to be happy about?

Sonia grew more frustrated the more she thought about it. Finally, she lowered the pen in her hand and massaged her temples to force herself to calm down. "Are you here to collect these documents?" she finally asked.

"Yes, President Reed." The assistant nodded.

"Take whatever you need and you can leave after that. I'd like to have some time on my own," Sonia ordered.

"Okay." The assistant had no idea what was going on, and she didn't know why Sonia was acting so oddly. After shooting Sonia a puzzled glance, the assistant took all the files into her arms before she left the office.

Sonia only opened her eyes when she heard the door closing. "Sonia, oh, Sonia. What are you doing?" she cried to herself as she grabbed her own hair. She had the sense that something was wrong with her—she would experience all sorts of random, inexplicable mood swings that she had no control over. I don't know what will be of me if things go on like this!

After taking a deep breath, Sonia lowered her hands to grab her phone. Just then, she received a call from the detective, whose number she had saved after Charles sent it to her shortly after he left yesterday. Sonia's expression stiffened as she hastily picked the call up.

"Hello, am I speaking to Miss Reed?" A middle-aged man's voice came from the other end of the call.

Sonia parted her lips to reply. "Yeah."

"Greetings, Miss Reed. Yesterday, a man came over and told me to investigate someone. He told me to inform you once I find something," the detective explained.

"Yeah. So what did you find?" Sonia narrowed her eyes as she questioned him in a stern voice.

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Chapter 494 Jessica's Intentions

"We found out that the person of interest, Miss Jessica, arrived in Seafield the day before today. She has been staying in Hilton Hotel since then, and she was in her room for the entire time until yesterday afternoon, when she headed out to visit Paradigm Co. and Marina City for a while. After that, she went back to the hotel, and she hasn't left since then." The detective reported all of his findings.

Sonia knitted her brows. "Are you saying that she stayed in the hotel for most of her trip?"

"Yeah." The detective nodded. Sonia lowered her gaze as her expression darkened. That's not right. That doesn't sound like Jessica at all. A nicer description of Jessica would be that she's a lively and outgoing person, while a harsher way to describe her would be that she's a busybody who can't seem to sit still when she's at home. Based on Sonia's understanding of Jessica, Sonia was certain that Jessica wouldn't be able to stay in the hotel for such a long time.

Furthermore, the places that Jessica had visited one day ago were Paradigm Co. and the area where the Reed Residence used to be located. It was impossible for Jessica to return to Seafield just so that she could visit these two spots. Sonia narrowed her eyes as she continued questioning the detective. "Can you see what she's doing in her hotel room?"

"I'm afraid not. Hilton Hotel has pretty strict rules about ensuring their customer's privacy. If she doesn't step out of her room, I won't be able to tell what she's doing," the detective explained as he shook her head. Sonia wasn't disappointed with his answer as she had expected this to be the case. She only asked the question to try her luck. Who knows; the detective might have some tricks up his sleeve, right? She didn't feel dejected despite not being able to gather such information on Jessica.

"You can't tell what she's doing in the room, but I'm sure you can find her check-in details, right?" Sonia asked again.

"Yeah, of course," the detective replied without any hesitation.

"Great. In that case, I'd like to know if she's staying alone or if she's staying with another person," Sonia uttered.

"She's alone. I checked her booking details—she booked the room for one person. Also, apart from the hotel staff, no one else has entered her room in the past few days," the detective answered.

Suspicion flickered in Sonia's gaze. What's going on? Didn't Sandra come back with her? The detective continued speaking while Sonia was still puzzled over the situation. "By the way, Miss Reed, I also found out that Jessica got the hotel staff to help her purchase a flight ticket from the airport this morning."

"A flight ticket?" Sonia leaned her body forward. "Is she going to leave Seafield?"

"Yes," the detective replied. "I went to ask about it when the hotel staff returned from the airport. Jessica told the staff to buy a flight for today at 4.00PM, to the Republic of Mesania."

"Republic of Mesania..." Sonia muttered to herself before she raised her head. "I got it. Thank you so much. I'll transfer you your fees in a while."

"Alright, Miss Reed." Once the call was over, Sonia threw her phone on her office desk before leaning against her chair and looking down at the ground. What is Jessica doing all of this for? She comes back out of nowhere and stays in the hotel for nearly three days, leaving her place only once. Even then, she only strolled around Paradigm Co.'s area before going to the Reed Residence. She doesn't have the keys, so she couldn't have gone into the place. At most, she walked around outside the area, and she headed back to the hotel after that. Today, she's planning to leave Seafield. It may seem like Jessica returned to take a look because she misses home, but I know her too well, and I know that she's not that sort of person. There's definitely some other reason she's back here. Yet, her actions don't seem to tell me what brings her back, so I can't figure out what's going on. But regardless of her intentions, I know that I have to be on my toes.

At that thought, Sonia picked her phone up to give Charles a reply. 'Okay, I got it. Stop sending me updates about Toby. I'm not interested. That's all; I'll go back to work now.'

Charles curled his lips into a smile when he saw Sonia's text. 'Okay, okay. I'll stop it. Good luck with work!' He sent his text over before keeping his phone away to look at all of the other guests at the social event. Charles pouted as he watched Toby and the other well-known figures chit-chatting in a casual and playful manner. As much as Charles hated Toby as a person, he had to admit that Toby was an extremely talented and outstanding person he could only dream of becoming.

Although Charles and Toby were from the same generation within the field, Toby was certainly at the tip of the pyramid if they were to disregard family backgrounds and make comparisons in terms of pure skills. Anyone who belonged to Toby's generation grew up feeling frustrated and shocked by Toby's outstanding skills and talent. Most of these individuals grew up in families who compared them to Toby, and anyone who tried to compete against Toby would eventually be faced with total defeat.

That was also one of the reasons most of these people, apart from Zane and Tim, were seldom friendly with Toby. However, they could keep their distance from Toby while acknowledging that Toby was a talented man—that was precisely what Charles was doing all along. When Charles found out about Sonia and Toby's

marriage six years ago, he had been sad over it, but it didn't take long for him to accept the truth. He loved Sonia, but what he hoped for the most was her to be happy. Charles believed that Toby, who was better than him in all aspects, would be a better match for Sonia.

Yet, it turned out that Toby was a b*stard who had completely let Charles's down. Furthermore, Toby was practically an idiot when it came to love—he couldn't tell the difference between good and bad, and he ended up bullying Sonia for six whole years. Charles grew increasingly furious as he thought about the matter, and he couldn't stop himself from sending Toby a fierce glare.

Toby immediately sensed something, and he frowned as he turned around to look at Charles. "What are you looking at?" Charles hissed before rolling his eyes at Toby.

Toby squeezed his brows tighter together before he tore his glare away from Charles. "Please go on," he uttered to the foreign guests who were sitting with him. The other person naturally continued with their topic after hearing Toby's instructions.

The social event ended about an hour later. Toby had managed to plan out a few collaborative projects with a few different big shots from overseas, and they were all satisfied with the arrangements. They had drunk a few bottles of wine to celebrate this, and it was late at night by the time they were done drinking.

Most of the foreign guests were staying in the same hotel, so the only people who had to leave the location were Toby, Charles, and their respective partners. Toby didn't pay any attention to Lily as he parted his legs to stride toward the hotel's exit. Charles walked with Daphne behind them, and he clicked his tongue when he saw what Toby was doing. "Toby sure is cold toward his female partner. If he doesn't want Lily as his partner, why did he ask her in the first place?"

"I have no idea," Daphne replied as she shook her head. Lily could hear both of them talking behind her. She bit her lip in anger and shame before she clutched onto her expensive handbag and hastened her footsteps to go after Toby, her heels clicking on the floor. "Wait for me, President Fuller!"

Toby walked on as if he couldn't hear her at all. He only slowed down when he walked out of the revolving door at the exit. He pulled his phone out to get Tom to send his car over. When Lily caught up with him, she heaved a sigh of relief as she saw that he had stopped at the exit. She stopped a few feet behind him to fix her messy hair because she wanted to look her best when she was talking to him. She had to get him to change his mind about canceling the partnership.

However, the revolving door behind Lily spun suddenly, and the door hit her back as she had been standing too close to it. She felt her body being pushed forward without any control, and fear spread across her face as she realized she was about to fall. However, at the very next moment, she realized that Toby was standing just in front of her. The fear disappeared from her expression and was replaced with excitement and desire.

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Chapter 495 Lily's Grand Plan

This was clearly an accident—Lily didn't fall toward him on purpose. Any regular gentleman would definitely reach out to catch me in his arms, right? Lily had desired to be physically close to Toby even before they attended the social event, and she had done some secret preparations in order to achieve this. However, she had been too careless when they first arrived at the venue, and she had accidentally infuriated him. That's why I wasn't able to have any intimate contact with him throughout the night. Well, I guess God's on my side this time! God just gave me the perfect opportunity to get close to Toby. Does that mean that God supports our relationship? Are we a match made in heaven?

Lily could finally proceed with the initial preparations that she had made for the night. At that thought, Lily erased all the excitement and joy from her expression and returned to the fearful and panicked look she had on earlier. She didn't want Toby to realize anything odd about her expression, or else all her efforts would go down the drain.

"Save me, President Fuller!" Lily shouted at Toby with a slight tremble in her voice to seem as if she was extremely scared. However, Toby didn't hear the slightest hint of fear in her tone—it sounded more to him like she was eager and impatient for him to save her. She's excited to have me catch her in my arms. Annoyance flickered in Toby's gaze as he parted his legs to step aside.

When Lily saw what Toby was doing, she widened her eyes and stared at him with disbelief. She couldn't believe that he was such a heartless man. He didn't bother to protect her, and he didn't seem to show any desire to save the damsel in distress at all. Is... Is he really a man? Despite this, Lily wasn't prepared to give up on Toby yet. She had to cling to him and fall on top of him. Otherwise, all that would greet her was the cold, hard floor in front of her.

If she were to fall flat on her front, the silicone implants in her nose and the silica gel in her breasts would be crushed. Just imagining that scenario made Lily's face turn pale. The moment Toby tried to avoid her, she speedily grabbed onto his right arm before she threw all of her weight into his arms.

Ka-chick! At that very moment, a man who looked like a paparazzi pressed the shutter to snap a picture from his spot behind the bushes. He managed to capture the scene of Lily falling into Toby's arms. The man took a look at the picture he snapped before he grinned to reveal his yellow teeth. His small eyes turned into straight lines as he chuckled and kept his camera away. With his body hunched, he sneaked away from the site.

When Lily felt her phone vibrating, she glanced at the bushes where the man had been located. Then, before Toby could lose his temper and shove her away, she

immediately let go of him and stumbled two steps back before steadying herself. Her expression was one of utter shock, and tears welled up in her eyes as she quickly bowed to Toby. "I'm sorry, President Fuller. I didn't do that on purpose. I'm so sorry..."

Toby didn't respond to her and simply narrowed his eyes to give her a hostile glare. She could feel his stare burning into the top of her head, and a chill ran down her spine as her chest tightened. He's... not going to hit me, is he? Lily immediately straightened her back before she took another two steps back. "President Fuller..." she muttered as she gazed at him cautiously.

"You can go home and tell Vincent that we don't have to proceed with the partnership. He can come to Fuller Group tomorrow to break the legal contract." Toby took a disdainful glance at his wrinkled sleeves as he spoke in an emotionless voice. If his left arm wasn't in a sling, he would have taken his jacket off and thrown it away. How disgusting, he thought. I tried to avoid her, yet she managed to grab onto me. It's obvious that she had it all planned out. I know that I can't do much to a woman, but at least I don't have to be kind toward Vincent anymore.

Lily's face was drained of color once she heard Toby say that he wanted to terminate the contract. She knew that it would be completely useless for her to continue pleading with him. If he had already made plans to break their legal contract, then it was clear that Lily had no chance of changing his mind. She had messed things up once more. If she had tried to beg him earlier, she might have been able to change his mind.

However, her act of clinging onto him had ruined all her chances of a partnership forming between the Fuller and McRae Families. Dad's going to kill me when he finds out about this! Lily shuddered at the thought of her aggressive and violent father. However, she quickly recalled something else. Her eyes glinted for a moment as she calmed herself down instantly.

"I got it, President Fuller," she replied in a meek voice as she looked at Toby. Toby ignored her and simply took another glance at his wrinkled sleeve before he knitted his brows and walked toward the Maybach parked by the side of the road. Lily had come to the venue with him, but she no longer dared to follow him to the car. He's probably going to chase me out if I try to go with him.

She was self-aware enough to stay rooted in her spot, and she merely watched as he got in the car. Once the Maybach drove off, she pulled her phone out to make a call. She was greeted with the rough voice of a middle-aged man. "How's the social event with President Fuller, Lily?"

She bit on her bottom lip and suppressed the fear in her chest as she spoke into the phone. "I ruined our company's chances of working with Fuller Group, Dad. President Fuller wants you to go to Fuller Group to break the legal contact tomorrow—"

"What?" The man's voice turned harsh and loud upon hearing Lily's words. "You're an idiot, Lily McRae! I worked so hard to get this partnership! How dare you ruin it for me?! Do you want me to skin you alive?"

Lily's face was as white as asheet, and fear was eating up her insides. But for the sake of her upcoming plans, she took a deep breath and pushed her fear aside. "I know I'm at fault, Dad. But I have a plan to fix this," she uttered in a shaky voice.

"What's your grand plan this time?" The man clearly didn't have any faith in her.

She clenched her fists as she explained herself. "I got someone to take a photo of Toby and me being intimate with each other. We can upload the pictures onto the Internet and make them go viral. Perhaps President Fuller and I will really get together after that."

Vincent's eyes lit up upon hearing her words. There was no longer any aggressiveness in his voice after that—he had returned to the role of a kind and loving father. "Okay, great. That sounds like a good plan. Good job, Lily."

Lily heaved a sigh once she realized that her father had forgiven her for ruining their partnership. Her heart had been about to leap out of her throat earlier, but she finally calmed down after the call. "Thank you, Dad."

"Alright. Where are you now? Hurry home so that we can discuss how to go about with this plan," Vincent ordered.

"Okay." Lily ended the call and took a few more deep breaths before she walked down the stairs and headed to the side of the road.

The next day, Sonia had just arrived at the office and walked out of the elevator when she saw a few people standing outside her secretary's office. All of them had their phones in their hands, and they seemed to be discussing something excitedly. Sonia only managed to hear a few keywords, such as 'President Fuller' and 'engagement'. These words sent Sonia into a bout of panic, and she hurried over to the crowd of people before addressing them in a stern tone. "You guys should be working now. Why are you guys gathered here? Shouldn't you be working at your own desks?"

Most of the people there were her secretaries and her secretaries' assistants. Their office was right next to hers, and it was a huge space with Daphne as the head of the area. Their faces fell when they heard Sonia's voice, and they immediately kept their phones away. The crowd dispersed, and they hastily formed a line to greet Sonia nervously. "Good day, President Reed. We're heading off to work now."

With that said, the staff members hurried off to their office. Sonia watched as most of them left, and she finally held onto the arm of one of the female assistants once the crowd was almost gone. "What were you guys talking about earlier?"

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Chapter 496 Toby's Getting Engaged

When the female assistant felt Sonia holding onto her, she thought she was about to be brought in for a lecture. Fear had just crept into her when she heard Sonia's question. "What? Weren't you about to reprimand me?" She was stunned.

The corner of Sonia's lips twitched. "If I were to scold anyone, it would be your leader. What use is it for me to scold any of you assistants?"

The assistant let out a sigh of relief before she smiled. "You're such a nice person, President Reed."

"Enough with the nonsense. Tell me—what were you guys talking about earlier?" Sonia repeated her question.

"Oh, yes. We were talking about how President Fuller from the Fuller group might be getting engaged again," the assistant replied.

"What?" Sonia's pupils shrank as her body stiffened. "Toby is... getting engaged?" The assistant was new to the company, so she wasn't aware of Sonia's past relationship with Toby. However, the assistant could sense a rather peculiar change in Sonia at the mention of Toby. "Yeah, that's what the Internet says," the assistant replied without thinking much of Sonia's change in demeanor.

"The Internet?"

"Yeah. A media website uploaded an article today, and it included pictures of President Fuller hugging another woman. The media predicted that President Fuller might have good news to announce soon..." The assistant continued talking, but Sonia no longer heard anything that she said. All Sonia could think of was how Toby might be getting engaged again.

With a dazed look on her face, Sonia turned around and walked to her own office. The assistant hadn't finished speaking, so she tilted her head sideways when Sonia walked off without dismissing her. "President Reed is acting really weirdly. Why does she look as if her soul has just left her body?" The assistant couldn't make sense of the situation, so she simply shrugged before returning to her desk.

Once Sonia got into her office and stepped behind her desk, she reached her hands out and felt for her chair before sinking into her seat. Once she sat down, she remained paralyzed in her seat for a long while, almost as if she had completely lost her mind. Her gaze was empty as she stared at her computer. There was a tightness in her chest that wouldn't seem to leave, and her face was burning so much that it stung her skin.

Just the night before, Sonia had assumed that Toby wouldn't get engaged, yet reality slapped her in the face the very next morning. He's still going to get engaged! And he's getting engaged to...

Sonia clenched her fists before she leaned forward to turn her computer on and search for the news article that her assistant had been talking about. Since it was news about Toby, Sonia was certain that it would make the headlines. Indeed, once Sonia turned her computer on, the pop-up at the right lower corner of her screen indicated the news of Toby's engagement before she even went to her browser.

She hastily clicked on the notification, and she was led to a website called 'Entertainment First'. She glanced at the first few lines of the post. 'According to our sources, the Fuller and McRae Groups are arranging for a union of their families. Our editors assumed that these were rumors all along, but we just received solid evidence that supports these statements! These are no longer rumors—it's the truth! An engagement is about to happen between the Fuller and McRae families. Congratulations, Miss McRae!'

There was a picture attached at the bottom of the post. Sonia's fingers trembled as she clicked on the image, which revealed a shot of Toby and another woman standing in front of a hotel. The woman was holding onto Toby's arm, and she was resting her upper body against his chest. Toby, on the other hand, had his head lowered to look at the woman—it was clear that he was gazing at her lovingly.

There seemed to be a romantic touch to the atmosphere of the picture, and it looked like a shot of a loving couple. Miss McRae... Lily McRae... Sonia let go of her mouse and slumped back into her office chair as she dug her teeth into her bottom lip. He's really getting engaged to Lily, huh. Now I know why he decided to let go of me, and now I understand why he no longer needs me to care for him. It's because he's in love with Lily and is getting engaged to her. That's why he's letting go of me, and that's why he no longer needs me. He'd be disloyal to Lily if he remained in contact with me, right?

Although Sonia didn't think that Toby was at fault in this matter, she still felt an uneasy feeling in her chest. There was a dull ache that wouldn't seem to leave her alone. Her eyes stung at the sight of Toby and Lily together in the picture. After a long while, she finally straightened herself and shut the webpage. She had assumed that she would be less troubled once she stopped staring at the picture, but she realized that her actions were pointless. She only grew more frustrated as she sank deeper into her own thoughts.

All of a sudden, her phone began to ring. She picked the call up without checking the caller ID. "Who is it?"

"It's me, darling. Did you see the news? Toby and Lily are getting engaged." Charles's enthusiastic voice came from the other end of the line.

Sonia tightened her grip on her phone. "I saw it," she replied flatly.

"Aren't you surprised?" Charles couldn't sense the difference in Sonia's tone, and he stared at his computer screen as he continued blabbering excitedly. "Darling, did you know how rude Toby was toward Lily when we were at the social event last night? I can't believe they're getting engaged now! Tsk. What is going on in his mind, darling? Why is he getting engaged with Lily if he doesn't like her? How

does he benefit from this engagement? The McRaes are a relatively poor family, so why would he be interested in them? Furthermore, the Fuller Family is so powerful, they don't need to arrange for marriages with any other families around here. Getting married to another family would only delay their business's growth, so—"

"What makes you think that their marriage is solely to benefit their families? What if it's true love?" Sonia curled her lips into a mocking smirk.

Charles chuckled. "True love? Stop kidding, darling. How could Toby and Lily be in love with each other?"

"Why not?" Sonia lowered her gaze so that no one could see the look in her eyes. "As you said, the McRaes aren't doing that well, and there's no reason for the Fuller Family to be interested in them. If they get married, the McRaes won't be of any help to the Fullers, and they would have to depend on the Fullers' support to survive. Toby isn't someone who'd choose to put himself on the losing end, and he isn't someone who can be forced to do things he doesn't wish to. I'm sure that no one forced him to get married to Lily, and I'm sure that he's not doing it for the sake of benefiting the Fullers. In that case, it has to be true love."

"True love..." Charles' lips twitched, and he turned speechless for a moment before he found his voice again. "I think you make a lot of sense, darling. I don't have an argument against your point."

"That's because what I'm saying is the truth."

"I know, but I just can't wrap my head around the fact that Toby's in love with Lily. When I was at the social event last night, I could see the hatred in his eyes as he glared at her. That's what made me suspect if this engagement is even real," Charles uttered as he stroked his chin thoughtfully.

"It has to be real. Otherwise, he'd step forward to clarify things, right? It's nearly 10.00AM now, yet he hasn't done anything. That has to mean that this is the truth," Sonia uttered with a blank expression.

"I guess so." Charles nodded.

Sigh. "Alright, Charles. Is there anything else? I'll end the call otherwise. I'm really tired, and I need some rest," Sonia explained. She wasn't just mentally drained; she was also feeling rather dizzy after all that happened. She had to lie down and calm herself down to regulate her own emotions. She also wanted to understand why she got so emotional after finding out about Toby's engagement.

This time, Charles realized that Sonia sounded rather peculiar. He knitted his brows and was about to ask her about it when he realized that she had turned silent on the other end of the line. He held the phone in front of his face to see that his screen had already been lit up to show the past incoming calls he received. That was how he knew that Sonia had ended his call.

Meanwhile, at the Coleman Residence, Zane had been browsing news articles when he saw the one about Toby. His eyes nearly popped out of his sockets, and he immediately contacted Toby after that. "You must have lost your mind, Toby! Are you seriously getting engaged to Lily?"

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Chapter 497 Rose's Interrogation

"Who's getting engaged?" Toby wasn't at Fuller Group today—he had decided to stay home and rest in the penthouse that he was temporarily staying in. He was dressed in a black pajama set and was resting on the couch by the balcony when he received Zane's call. He had been flipping through a finance magazine, but any calm and peace he felt disappeared once he heard Zane's words, and he frowned.

Zane responded to Toby while staring at the huge television in front of him. "You, of course. You're getting engaged to Lily."

"Why aren't I aware of my own engagement?" Toby's sulked, and the air around him seemed to turn a few degrees colder. What's up with this guy? He isn't just starting rumors about my engagement; he's even matching me with that disgusting woman from yesterday. My taste is way better than that!

When Zane heard what Toby said, he paused for a moment before he calmed himself down to speak. "Toby, are you saying that you're not arranging a marriage with the McRae Family? The engagement is just a false rumor, right?"

"I've never said anything about arranging a marriage with the McRaes, so how could I possibly be engaged?" Toby pursed his lips. "Who told you about this engagement?"

"The Internet," Zane replied. "It's all over the news. All of the websites are claiming that you and Lily are getting engaged. I called to ask you right after I saw an article. I can't believe it's all fake! Sh*t. The media site that started this sure has some guts! How dare they report fake news?" Zane continued rambling about media ethics, and a flash of anger surfaced in Toby's gaze as he narrowed his eyes.

People are spreading false rumors about my engagement with the McRae Family on the Internet, huh? How did false statements like these get onto the Internet? A steely look formed on Toby's handsome face as he ended Zane's call and left the couch to walk to his study. He turned his computer on to search for the news articles related to his engagement.

A number of articles with similar contents popped up once he ran a search. He scrolled through the titles to find more than ten thousand comments on each of

the articles that reported about his engagement with the daughter of the McRae Family. The attention and fame that this piece of news was getting were no less than the top celebrity scandals in the country.

Toby twisted his face into a frown, and he exuded a forbidding aura as he continued scrolling the news. He had never been someone who enjoyed publicity, so he was thoroughly annoyed by all of the comments he saw online. However, he knew that he wouldn't be able to get the situation under control when it was still such a hot topic. All he could do now was wait.

He shut his eyes to suppress the frustration he felt, and he only opened his eyes when he felt slightly calmer. When he clicked on one of the posts, he immediately understood the reason for all the false rumors about his engagement with Lily. There was a picture online that seemed to be taken from an odd angle which made him look as if he were hugging Lily. The image of him giving Lily a 'fond' gaze had been snapped by some paparazzi, and the paparazzi immediately assumed that he was in a relationship with Lily. It seemed like that was how all of the rumors started.

Once Toby figured that out, he quickly noted a few media companies' names. There were still sparks of anger in his eyes as he took his phone over to give Tom a call. However, before he could dial Tom's number, he received an incoming call from Rose.

"I saw some articles about you getting engaged to that girl from the McRae Family, Toby. Is that true?" Rose asked in a stern voice. Before Toby could say anything, Jean's worried voice sounded through the call. "It's false news, isn't it, Toby? You can't get married to someone from the McRae Family. Their family is going downhill, and a union of our families would only—"

Before Jean could finish speaking, she was cut off. Moments later, Rose's voice sounded through the call. "Just ignore your mother, Toby. I want you to be honest to me. What's going on here?"

"It's false news," Toby uttered as he massaged his temples. Rose's expression didn't change on the other end of the call—she looked as stern and strict as she usually did. However, her tight grip on her walking cane loosened a little after she heard what Toby said. "So... You aren't getting engaged to Lily, right?" Even her tone sounded gentler than it did before.

"Yeah, I'm not." Toby nodded.

"That's good," Rose replied with a smile. I knew it! My precious grandson would never fall for a girl like Lily. The McRaes might not be as sly and cheap as the Grays, but they aren't much better than them. If Toby really decided to get engaged with Lily, I would genuinely suspect that he has some sort of mental issue.

Jean had been listening to the call from beside Rose, and she felt herself relaxing once she heard that Toby had no intentions of getting engaged to the girl from the McRae Family. "That's great," Jean uttered as she patted the spot in her

chest where her heart had been pounding. "I'm glad that it's a lie. What could the McRaes do for us if they were to become in-laws with us, right?"

Rose gave Jean a disdainful stare. "Benefiting from others is the only thing you have in your mind, huh? I want you to get out of my sight!" Rose smacked her cane against the ground to make loud clanging sounds. Jean had always been afraid of her mother-in-law, so she shrank back when she saw Rose losing her temper. Before Rose could say anything more, Jean scurried away to avoid her.

Once Jean was gone, Rose shifted her focus back to Toby. "Well, if it's a fake, then how do you explain those pictures? Why were you hugging that girl?"

"The pictures aren't fake, but they aren't real either. Those images were taken from a different angle, so they managed to make us look intimate with each other. However, the truth is that Lily tripped and fell, and she clung to my arm as that happened. I didn't touch her at all." Toby shot an icy glare at the pictures as he spoke.

Rose was rather surprised to hear his explanation, but she quickly nodded. "I see. If it's all false rumors, then you should step forward to clarify it soon. Things won't look good if you take your time to do this. People might start thinking that it's the truth. Furthermore, aren't you trying to go after Sonia? Your chances of success will be lowered if Sonia sees the news."

Toby's facial expression stiffened upon Rose's mention of Sonia. That's right. Sonia. I'm sure she has seen the articles about my engagement by now, right? How did she react to it? Is she unhappy about it? Does she feel uncomfortable because of it? I doubt so. She's probably happy to hear that I'm getting engaged—she's finally able to get rid of me, right?

"Toby? Toby?" Rose shouted into the phone when Toby went silent for a while. "Are you there?" she asked.

Toby came back to his senses before he lowered his gaze and spoke in a rather husky voice. "Yeah. I'm here," he replied.

"Take my advice and clear your name as soon as possible, okay?" Rose repeated herself. "Okay," Toby replied with a nod.

"That's all, then. You should drop by the house tonight. I heard Jean saying that you haven't returned to the Fuller's Residence in nearly two weeks. You've been out so much. You should come over for dinner and a reunion tonight," Rose uttered. Toby agreed to visit before he ended the call and lowered his phone from his ear. He was about to call Tom when he realized that there was a new text on his phone.

It was a text from Tyler, and Toby opened it to find a 20-second-long voice note. Toby couldn't contain his curiosity, so he tapped on the voice note to play Tyler's loud and worried voice. "Sh*t! Sh*t, bro! What's wrong with you? How could you get engaged to Lily just like that? Didn't you say that you liked Sonia? Aren't you supposed to chase after Sonia? Did you change your mind already?"

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Chapter 498 What's Up with the Pictures?](#)

Toby's face darkened upon hearing his brother's words. How could I ever lose feelings for Sonia? That's impossible! I've loved her for more than ten years, and my feelings have never changed. In fact, my feelings for her have only grown stronger over the years. I've never imagined myself losing feelings for her. Toby lowered his head to send a text. 'There's no such thing. It was all a misunderstanding.'

Soon enough, Tyler replied with another voice note. "A misunderstanding? What's going on here, Toby?"

Toby pressed his lips together tightly as he continued typing. 'Stop asking so many questions. This has nothing to do with you. Just focus on your competitions, okay? You need to return to the country once you're done with your basketball tournament. I have some stuff to tell you.'

"What is it, Toby?" Tyler didn't understand what was going on. This time, Toby no longer replied to his text. Instead, he exited his Messenger application and gave Tom a call.

"President Fuller." Tom picked the call up almost immediately.

With his thin lips pursed, Toby spoke in an icy tone. "You know all about the news online, right?"

"I do. I wanted to call you earlier, but you were on another call," Tom explained.

"I want you to get the public relations department to cool things down for now. Also, I want you to use Fuller Group's official social media account to clarify this matter. After that, I need you to hunt down the paparazzi who took the photos," Toby ordered.

"I got it, President Fuller." Tom nodded. Toby then ended the call and put his phone aside.

It only took about 30 minutes for the hype on the Internet to die down. Many of the news articles about the Fuller and McRae Families were taken down and replaced by other articles. Meanwhile, Fuller Group also made an official statement on their official Facebook page.

'This is an official statement regarding the various articles published on 'Entertainment First', 'Scream for Entertainment' and other news websites. The

articles claim that our president, Mr. Toby Fuller, is getting engaged soon, but the company hereby announces that such articles are completely false. President Toby Fuller currently has no plans of getting engaged to anyone, so all the articles are nothing but rumors and speculations. We hope that you, as responsible netizens, can stop the spread of these rumors. On top of that, the false articles published by 'Entertainment First' and other websites have caused huge damage to President Toby Fuller's reputation, so our company has already taken legal action against the companies that were involved in this matter. We hope that you guys take note of this announcement.' The post was made along with two photos attached to it—one was a lawyer's letter while the other was a court summon.

Many of the netizens were shocked to see these images online. They immediately understood how severe the matter was—Fuller Group was actually going to court with those media sites. Since the court had already issued the relevant summons, the media sites would have no choice but to deal with things in court.

It only took a short while for this entire incident to spread across the Internet. Soon, everyone found out that legal action was taken against the media sites that had started false rumors about Fuller Group. The media sites that had posted reports about Toby's engagement but had yet to receive a lawyer's letter immediately started deleting all their previous articles. Even some of the netizens who had made comments were deleting their likes and comments on the false posts as they were afraid that they would somehow get involved in this matter.

Just like that, most of the news about Toby's engagement was removed from the net—it was almost as if a huge broom had swept the entire Internet clean of these rumors. Instead, the various media sites began to fill Fuller Group's official account with their lengthy messages to express their apology. Most of these posts were written in a heartfelt and emotional tone. The media sites had no choice—they didn't enjoy making apologies, but they would rather do that than start a fight with the undefeated Fuller Group.

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It was lunchtime at Paradigm Co. when Sonia stepped out from a meeting. Daphne closed her folder and tagged along with Sonia as she spoke. "What would you like for lunch, President Reed? I'll order you some food."

Sonia massaged her sore neck. "I want something bland. I don't feel like eating much."

"Sure. You can rest in your office, and I'll send your meal over in a while." Daphne pulled her phone out to search for deliveries as she spoke.

"Okay," Sonia said with a nod. The delivery arrived 30 minutes later, and Daphne brought the meal over to Sonia's office. Sonia picked the cutlery up and began to eat while scrolling through her phone. Right then, a news article popped up on her screen. She glanced at it for a brief moment before her eyes widened. Toby's engagement was a lie? How is that possible?

In an instant, Sonia sat up straight and placed her cutlery down before she used both her hands to tap on the article headline that she saw. Once she went through the article, she read to understand that the previous engagement articles had been nothing but rumors posted by unreliable media websites. All the posts about the Fullers and McRaes arranging a marriage were nothing but lies, and Toby didn't have plans of getting engaged at all.

The article that Sonia was reading also included a screenshot of Fuller Group's official social media account, which showed their official statement made to clarify the rumors about Toby's engagement. Does that mean that Toby has no intentions of ever getting engaged to Lily? When Sonia realized this, a surge of joy filled her heart. Her heart raced as she quickly left the webpage to visit Fuller Group's official Facebook page. She had to make sure that this was true.

Sonia finally trusted her own eyes when she saw the actual statement on Fuller Group's Facebook page. It was even pinned on the top of their page. It's true. Toby and Lily's engagement was just a false rumor. But the pictures... What's up with those pictures? Sonia bit her lip as she sank into her thoughts for a while. Before she knew what she was doing, she opened her conversation with Toby and sent her question over to him.

However, she only realized what she had done after sending the text. What did I just do? Why did I ask Toby about his picture with Lily? He can take pictures with anyone, and he can pose however he wishes to—does that have anything to do with me? Why do I care so much about all of this? At that thought, Sonia felt herself shuddering. Her fingers flew across her screen as she deleted the text she had just sent to Toby.

However, she didn't feel any less anxious after deleting the message. She wasn't sure if Toby had already seen the message when she first sent it over. How am I supposed to explain myself if he has already seen the message? I can only hope that he didn't check his notifications.

Sonia's heart made loud thumping sounds against her chest, and she couldn't seem to slow her pulse down no matter how much she tried. She continued to stare at her phone screen as she wondered if Toby would text her any time soon. If he replied and responded to her question about the photo, then it would mean that he had read all of her texts. If that happened, Sonia would have to come up with an explanation for the reason she had posed such a question.

However, if his response was one that asked her about the deleted text that she had sent, then it would mean that he hadn't read her messages. In that case, she could just say that she had sent a text to the wrong number.

It often felt like time was stretched whenever one was waiting for something to happen. The uncertainty of the matter only left Sonia uneasy than ever. For five long minutes, Sonia's gaze was fixed on her phone, but she still didn't receive any response from Toby. Her pulse started to slow down as she calmed herself down a little. If he's taking so long to reply, it could mean that his phone isn't with him, right? It would be great if that were the case. It would mean that he hasn't seen my message at all. Even if he sees that I've deleted a message when he checks his

phone later, I don't have to worry about it. I can just say that I texted the wrong person by accident.

...

On the other side of town, Toby was in his condominium, seated with his long legs crossed on the couch. His mobile phone was in his right hand, which was resting on his knee, and he spun his phone around. His gaze was deep and thoughtful. What did Sonia's text mean? he wondered. He had been looking at all the apologies made online and was about to leave the study when his phone lit up with a new notification. He had immediately opened it when he saw that it was a notification from Sonia.

She had asked him about the photos of him and Lily, which made Toby freeze. He couldn't figure out the reason Sonia would care about those pictures or why she would send him a text just to ask about it. However, adrenaline was pumped into his bloodstream as happiness spread across his chest. My bold assumption is that she's unhappy to see me taking intimate photos with other women. Perhaps she's jealous after seeing those photos, he thought.

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Chapter 499 The Will to Live

That's right, she must be jealous. I can sense her jealousy from the way she worded her text. More importantly, she deleted the text almost immediately after sending it to me. It shows that she realized how she was in no position to ask me such a question, and it shows that she feels too self-conscious to leave the text there for me to read it. Does that mean that she's starting to care about me? Toby wondered.

When Toby realized that Sonia might be developing feelings for him, he didn't feel very happy about it. Instead, he furrowed his brows and tensed his facial muscles. There seemed to be a dark, gloomy cloud above his figure. Logically speaking, I should be happy to find out that Sonia cares about me, but fate is a cruel thing—I can't believe she's only developing feelings for me when I'm at the end of my life.

His gaze darkened as he tilted his head downward to look at his chest, where his heart was beating weakly. I was starting to lose all hope in life before this, but I have to admit that I'm starting to regain my fighting spirit now that Sonia seems to be developing feelings for me. Just the thought of this possibility gives me a reason to live—it makes me think about spending the rest of my life with Sonia.

Previously, Toby had decided to go with the flow as he searched for a heart donor. A part of him knew that he wouldn't be able to find a suitable one, and a part of him knew that he was going to die in the end. Since he thought that Sonia had no

feelings for him, he had decided to let go of Sonia and accept his eventual death. However, now that Sonia seemed to have feelings for him, he no longer wanted to die. He wanted to find a donor, and he wanted to live! But it was simply too hard to find a suitable match...

Toby's phone started ringing then. He quickly regained control over his emotions before he picked the call up. "Yes?"

"The false articles have been dealt with, President Fuller. Our company's legal department will go to court with those media companies in three days," Tom reported.

"Okay." Toby nodded.

"Also, I found the paparazzi who snapped the photos of you and Lily. He isn't under any media company—he works alone," Tom uttered as he adjusted his glasses.

Toby narrowed his eyes upon hearing this. "Which media company did he sell those photos to, then?"

"He didn't sell the photos to a media company. He sold it to Lily," Tom said in a serious tone.

"Lily?" Toby pursed his lips. "Why did the paparazzi sell it to her?"

"Because Lily was the one who ordered the paparazzi to snap photos of both of you!" Tom explained in a stern voice. "According to what the paparazzi said, Lily contacted him before the social event and ordered him to wait around outside the hotel. She wanted him to snap photos of both of you interacting intimately, and she offered him a payment of 100,000 just for the photos. Last night, he sent the photos to Lily, and Lily passed them over to the media. She was the one who told the media that you guys were getting engaged."

Toby gripped his mobile phone so tightly that it looked like he was about to crush his phone into pieces. "I see," he hissed. His eyes were burning with rage. Previously, Toby had assumed that it was a coincidence to have the photos taken in such a manner. However, he hadn't expected someone to have planned it all out behind his back. That's great! Good job, McRae Family!

Tom continued, "I believe that Lily's just using this opportunity to go viral with you, President Fuller. Perhaps she wanted to boost the McRae Group's stocks. Since you don't read entertainment news, you wouldn't have found out about the 'engagement' if no one told you about all the gossip online. If that were the case, then you wouldn't make an official statement, and the Internet would continue to believe that you guys were getting engaged. That way, the McRae group would leech on Fuller Group's reputation and grow along with us. They probably thought that they would be able to get more partnerships once their reputation improved."

Tom let out a frustrated laugh before he continued. "Now that you've clarified yourself and stated that you do not have plans for an engagement, the McRae Group's stocks might not increase in value, but they still wouldn't drop drastically. You were the one who brought Lily to the social event, and there are photos to prove it. You may have clarified the rumors about the engagement, but netizens will now start to mock and ridicule Lily's actions. Then, Vincent can claim that you brought harm to Lily's reputation, and he can ask you to compensate for her losses."

"I know," Toby muttered. He lifted his head to reveal the grim look on his face. "Vincent's plan would have been a total success if I hadn't gotten you to do a full investigation on this matter."

"That's right," Tom nodded. "If we didn't know that the McRaes were the ones who staged this whole thing, you would have given Lily the compensation, and you would have agreed to a partnership when Vincent brings it up again. I think the McRaes made a smart move this time—they found a way that would maximize their benefits regardless of the outcome. It's a shame that they're dealing with someone like you, President Fuller."

Since President Fuller found out about the truth, Vincent's plan is about to go down the drain. Conversely, if President Fuller hadn't found out about this, Vincent might have succeeded. However, President Fuller is no easy target as he's always aware of the things going on around him. He always digs deep into all the matters and looks beyond the surface of things. So, one way or another, Vincent will never win regardless of what he tries to do.

"I'll let you deal with the McRae Family, okay? Do you think you can handle it on your own?" Toby asked as he tapped a finger against the tabletop. He was tapping at a slow pace, but the sound was enhanced as it bounced off the walls of the large study that he was in. The tapping noises seemed to echo even within his heart, and it made his chest tighten.

Tom fixed his glasses once more as he beamed. "Of course. I'll come back to you with a report that you'll be satisfied with."

"That's great." Toby nodded. "Also, I want you to go to the hotel I visited yesterday, and I want you to get a copy of the CCTV footage of the entrance. With this, you'll be able to show how the paparazzi used a different angle to make it seem as if Lily and I were being intimate." Toby wanted Sonia to know that he hadn't gotten close to Lily at all, and that the photo was nothing but a misunderstanding.

"I got it, President Fuller." Tom nodded. He was about to end the call when Toby seemed to have realized something. "Hold on!" Toby called.

"What is it, President Fuller?" Tom pressed the phone against his ear once more.

"Do you have any updates on the heart donor?" Toby pinched the bridge of his nose.

"I'm sorry, President Fuller. There's no news about that at all." Tom looked down as he responded in a guilty tone. Toby wasn't disappointed by Tom's update—he had expected such a response, after all. "You can get someone to expand the search to a few other countries. There are more than a few organ donors in this world."

Tom's eyes lit up, and he spread his lips into a grin when he heard his boss. "Have you found... the will to live, President Fuller?" President Fuller told me to look for a donor a while ago, but he has never asked me for an update. He doesn't seem worried about himself at all. Previously, I could tell that he didn't seem too desperate to stay alive—it looked more like he was just going with the flow. I've always felt troubled by this, and I've always wanted to talk to President Fuller about it, but I never knew how. I can't believe he's initiating a conversation about the heart donor right now! I'm so glad this is happening.

However, Toby didn't provide a concrete answer to Tom's question. "Give them the relevant orders, alright?"

"Okay!" Tom replied excitedly. "I'll tell them to go to a few other countries. Don't worry, President Fuller; I'll definitely find you the right donor." As long as President Fuller is willing to stay alive, I can go to more than just a few countries—I'd travel the whole world to visit hospitals if he wanted me to do that! I can even go to the most rural areas in the world just to find a donor for him.

After ending the call, Toby put his phone down before he stood up to pour himself a glass of wine. Then, he walked over to the balcony in his study as he glanced thoughtfully at the night skies. No one could tell what was going on in his mind.

Soon enough, Fuller Group's official Facebook page made another post. This time, it didn't consist of any words—the post was just a video without any captions. The netizens were suspicious when they first played the video, but they quickly understood the reason Fuller Group made this post.

The video was posted to show that Toby and Lily weren't as close as they had appeared in the picture—it was all due to the angle at which the image was captured.

The angle at which this CCTV was placed provided a clearer view of the situation, and it was obvious that Lily had been desperately attempting to grab Toby's arm. The video even showed Toby's disdainful glare at her.

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Chapter 500 She's Really in Love

All of the netizens made a joke out of the situation once they found out about the truth. 'This is epic! I can't believe this was what actually happened. The picture was a total lie!' one commented.

'Who were the ones who said that Toby and Lily are the most romantic and loving couple? Show yourselves now!' another one added.

'I knew it! Although Lily's from a wealthy family, her family is on the verge of bankruptcy. She's always showing off on her social media profile, and she acts just like an upstart. She doesn't have any substance at all! The almighty president of Fuller Group and the head of the Fuller Family would have better taste than this! He'd never date a woman like her,' one comment read.

Sonia subconsciously nodded as she read the netizen's comments. That's right. That's exactly how I feel about the situation. If Toby really fell for Lily, then it just shows that he has no taste. Fortunately, he still has his standards. Sonia let out a small smile at that thought. All the worry and concern she had for the news articles and photos had wholly disappeared after she watched the video that Fuller Group posted on their social media account.

However, she realized something odd about the situation. I texted Toby to ask about the picture earlier, and Fuller Group posted a video to clarify the situation just a while after that. It can't be a coincidence, right? Sonia pressed her red lips together and contemplated for a moment before she rejected her own hypothesis. Perhaps it's just a coincidence. Toby didn't see my message, so he couldn't have done anything about it.

Sonia was still deep in thought when her phone began to ring. She turned her head to glance at her phone, and she let go of her mouse to pick the call up when she saw that it was a call from Charles. "Charles," she greeted.

"Darling." Charles' voice sounded glum on the other end of the line.

"What is it?" Sonia tilted her head in confusion.

"It's Toby!" Charles grabbed his hair and tugged on it frustratedly. "I was overjoyed when the news of his and Lily's engagement first surfaced on the Internet. I was all prepared to buy them gifts, and I had already planned out my speech for them during their engagement. I was hoping that they would stay in love and grow old together. I can't believe Toby announced that the news was fake before I even managed to get them a gift! Ugh! I'm so annoyed!"

Technically speaking, Charles and Toby were love rivals—that explained why Charles wanted Toby to go off with another girl. If Toby gets engaged, then he won't mess with my darling anymore! Toby might have claimed to let go of my darling, but how am I supposed to know if he's lying? The only way for me to be sure is for Toby to be with another girl. But look at how things have turned out! Hah! Charles sneered to himself.

Sonia had an uneasy feeling as she listened to Charles, and she frowned slightly. "What's there to be annoyed about? Their relationship wasn't even genuine to begin with, so it's only right for him to clear things up, right? Would you prefer the public to spread rumors about you all the time?"

"Well, of course not. But this is different," Charles muttered as he scratched the back of his head.

Sonia scoffed. "How is it different?"

"Well, it's obviously because... Wait, darling!" Charles seemed to realize something halfway through his sentence, and his expression turned serious. "Darling, I just realized something. You seem to be really happy about the fact that Toby stepped forward to dispel the rumors surrounding his engagement. On top of that, you're also siding him—you immediately went against my words when I talked about Toby. Darling, you—"

"I don't care about Toby!" Before Charles could finish his sentence, Sonia interrupted him. Her heart skipped a beat when she realized what Charles was trying to say. However, her words only made Charles' expression turn gloomier than before. He let out a long sigh as he felt a heavy feeling weighing down on him. "Darling, I didn't mention anything about your care for Toby, yet you interrupted me to say that you don't care about him. Don't you think your actions are going against your words here?" Charles tried his best to make his tone sound neutral.

Sonia froze for a moment before she realized what had happened. I overreacted earlier. I feel like I'm guilty of something. Her pupils shrank when she started to catch on. Even her grip on the phone felt rather unsteady as her hands were shaking. A mixture of disbelief and confusion filled her gaze.

What's going on? Do I have anything to hide? She bit her bottom lip and remained silent for a few moments. Her answer surfaced in her mind after a while, and she parted her red lips to speak, but no words came out of her mouth. Moreover, her gut feeling told her that she wasn't supposed to reveal the answer that she had deep within her heart. If she put her answer into words, she knew that her whole life would turn upside down.

When Charles realized how silent Sonia was on the other end of the call, he knew that he couldn't lie to himself for much longer. I can't tell myself that she doesn't care about Toby anymore. The truth is that she cares for him. Maybe she has fallen in love with him again! Otherwise, she wouldn't have started an argument once she heard me talking about Toby. A bitter smile spread across Charles' face as he thought about the situation. I can't believe I lost to Toby again. I can't do anything but watch as Sonia falls for him once more.

"Hah... How useless." Charles leaned against his chair and raised an arm to cover his eyes. His lips were slightly parted as he let out a bitter sigh.

"Are you talking about me, Charles?" Sonia knitted her brows.

"No. I'm talking about myself." His voice was filled with self-contempt. I am useless, aren't I? I'm the one who has known Sonia for the longest, and I'm the one she spends the most time with. I'm also the one who fell in love with her first. Logically speaking, I should be the one who gets to be with her. Yet, I've been so weak and cowardly all along—I've never dared to confess to her or show her my true feelings. Because of this, I have to watch her fall in love twice, both with the same man. Charles had never felt so much hatred for himself.

Mom's right, he thought. I am a useless man who doesn't know how to fight for the things that I want. I'm just a worthless guy who hands his lover over to another man! Charles let out a sneer at that thought. His bloodshot eyes were glistening with droplets of tears as he removed his arm from his eyes. He forced a smile and spoke in a rather bitter tone. "Alright, darling. I have other matters to handle. I'll end the call now."

He ended the call immediately after finishing his sentence. It was hard for him to come to terms with the fact that his lover had just fallen in love with the same man again, so he needed some time to calm himself down.

On the other end of the line, Sonia stared at her mobile phone and squeezed her brows together. "Charles..." she whispered. She had no idea what Charles was going through, but she could sense that he wasn't in a good place emotionally. He sounded angry, self-critical, and exasperated... He sounded really emotional. The Charles that I know is extremely lively—it's almost like he has never-ending amounts of energy. But he sounded so pessimistic earlier... I'm worried for him.

At that thought, Sonia got to her feet and put her coat on before she walked out of her office. She was planning to visit Charles' office to check if he was alright.

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Meanwhile, both Vincent and Lily were scrolling through Fuller Group's official Facebook page in the McRae Residence. Their faces had turned as white as a sheet after they saw the clarification post and the video that Fuller Group had posted online. "What do we do now, Dad?" Lily clenched her fists and held onto her skirt as she spoke in a shaky voice. "President Fuller didn't just clear the rumors about our engagement, but he even managed to get rid of the rumors surrounding our pictures. If this goes on, do you think he might find out about our—"

"Calm down!" Vincent raised his hand to interrupt his daughter. "I'm sure he'll never find out about our little scheme. He probably just thinks that some paparazzi snapped a picture of you guys, and he probably thinks that's how the rumors surfaced. After all, no normal person would suspect that someone is plotting against them behind their back. It's no surprise that the paparazzi would snap pictures of Toby since he's so famous."