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Clarissa's lips twitched upon hearing what Jeremy said. It was as he was implying something.

She looked at him and gave him an awkward smile. "It's my fault. I'm sorry."

"Don't apologize to me. I'm not sure what's going on between you and Matt, but Matt has been behaving as if the whole world has done him wrong."

Jeremy did not know what happened between the couple, but he could sense the awkward tension between them.

Admittedly, Clarissa acknowledged that she was partially at fault, but she had not been able to find a chance to talk to Matthew.

She did not expect to meet him at the charity event either.

Upon noticing how quiet Clarissa was, Jeremy said, "It has been three years, Clarissa. I really thought your relationship with him is over," he continued, "To most men, three years are nothing, but Matt doesn't think of it that way. He has always lived his life to the fullest, hence, every day counts. Since you have no intention of severing ties with him, then don't waste time playing hide-and-seek with him anymore."

"Got it." It was quite unusual for Jeremy to give this kind of advice, but Clarissa appreciated it.

Instead of lingering on the same topic, Jeremy decided to talk about her manuscript, Joshua, and even Verona.

Jeremy then left after dropping Clarissa off at her hotel.

Clarissa returned to her room and sat down in a daze. She did not even bother to change her dress.

She sat on the couch for quite some time and waited for someone to come knocking on her door but to no avail.

Despite feeling utterly crestfallen, Clarissa stood up and retrieved her phone. She looked at Matthew's number for a while and wondered if she should give him a call.

The more she stared at the screen, the more anxious and upset she became. All of a sudden, she bounced up from the couch, grabbed her coat, and ran out of her room.

It was a cold night, and she did not have a car. She had no choice but to stamp her feet repeatedly to keep herself warm while standing at the entrance of the hotel. She picked up her phone and tried to call a cab.

The weather in D City that night was freezing. The coat she put on did little to keep her warm, and her whole body was trembling.

To make things worse, it began to snow.

Clarissa looked up and cursed the weather.

Soon, a cab arrived. Clarissa immediately got into the car and told the driver to go to the Zen Highlands.

The driver with a local accent kept trying to strike up a conversation with Clarissa, but so many thoughts were running in her mind that she just nodded in agreement throughout the journey.

Upon noticing how cold Clarissa's response was, the driver stopped talking and focused on

the road.

They soon arrived at the Zen Highlands. A violent gust of chilly wind hit Clarissa the moment she stepped out of the cab.

She wrapped her hands around her body, walked to the gate, and pressed the doorbell. Unlike in the past, she now no longer had the permission to go in and out of the house as she wished anymore.

Upon hearing Clarissa's voice, Julia immediately ordered someone to drive her in. It took her another fifteen minutes to reach the villa.

Julia instantly prepared some warm water for her. She looked at Clarissa, and tears welled up in her eyes. "You're finally home, Miss."

Clarissa, who was still shivering, held the warm cup with both hands and said in a trembling voice, "Don't cry, Mrs. Lawson. Is Matthew around?"

Julia was taken aback. "Mr. Tyson seldom comes here anymore. Have you not been in touch with him?"

Clarissa shook her head. If Matthew is not back, where else did he go?

Just when she was still deep in thought, the sound of a car's engine emerged from the door. "I think Mr. Tyson is back." Julia immediately went up to welcome him. Clarissa put down her cup, stood up, and followed right behind.

"You're back, Sir. Miss is here too..."

Matthew stepped into the house, and he immediately saw the pale-faced young lady, who stood under the living room's chandelier and kept shivering involuntarily.

A line formed between Matthew's brows as he took a glance at her attire.

Upon seeing his knitted brows, Clarissa opened her mouth cautiously and said, "I'm sorry for interrupting..."

Before Clarissa could complete her sentence, Matthew went up, carried her in his arms, and walked upstairs. "Fill up the tub with warm water, Mrs. Lawson."

"Oh, all right!" Julia replied right away. Oh, silly me. Why didn't I think of this earlier?

In the blink of an eye, Matthew removed Clarissa's clothes and put her into the tub. Initially, the water was so hot that she nearly wanted to get out, but her body got used to its temperature after a short while. A few minutes later, she finally felt much better, and her pallid cheeks turned rosy once again.

Matthew stood beside her and watched her bathe as he was worried that she might catch a cold.

Suddenly, Clarissa tilted her head and noticed Matthew was looking at her. Awkwardness instantly filled the air the moment their eyes met.

Matthew turned around and stepped out of the bathroom while Clarissa covered her face with her hands to hide her embarrassment.

Clarissa got up from the tub when she noticed her skin had turned wrinkly. She put on a bathrobe, wearing nothing beneath it, and walked out to the room.

Since Matthew was not around, she quickly opened the closet. To her surprise, all her clothes were still there. She froze for a moment and put on a set of fresh clothes.

After stepping out of the room, she took a glance around the house but still did not see Matthew.

She then walked to the study and realized the door was not fully closed. She opened the door, entered the room, and saw Matthew sitting behind his desk. The man probably heard her coming in but did not look up as he was engrossed in his work. Clarissa pouted and sat in front of the desk. She stared at him and kept mum. Matthew continued ignoring her and focused on his work. How long more is he going to stay mad at me? Clarissa placed her arms on the desk, rested her chin on her hands, and looked at his gloomy face. "Are you still mad?" Matthew did not give her any response. Clarissa pouted. She lifted one of her arms and walked her fingers to the back of his hand.

She gently tapped his hand with her index finger to get his attention. Her fingers then continued to harass him by crawling all over it. "Why are you still mad at me? I always thought you're a man who doesn't hold grudges." "I know it's my fault. Can you please don't be mad at me anymore?" she pleaded, "Uncle Matthew?" "Hubby?" Despite everything she had done, Matthew still ignored her. She had no choice but started chanting 'hubby' repeatedly. With all the harassment going on around him, Matthew could no longer stay focused. He looked up and gazed into her beautiful and innocent-looking puppy eyes. In the meantime, her fingers were still dancing on the back of his hand. Matthew pulled his hand away from her and massaged his forehead. Clarissa was not ready to give up. She squinted, looked at him, and tried to please him with a smile. She did it exactly like how Damian would do to her when he wanted her to do things his way. A corner of Matthew's lips curled up when he thought of Damian, but the smile instantly disappeared when he pulled himself together. "I know it's my fault, and I should have more faith in you instead of questioning you. Why don't you punish me if you're still mad at me? Feel free to punish me for all my wrongdoings," Clarissa said in a sincere tone. She continued to look at him with hopeful eyes. After a short while, Matthew's mouth finally twitched. "Okay." Clarissa was not exactly sure what his response meant, and she could not tell if he was still angry. "So... you forgave me?" Clarissa asked sheepishly. He responded with a grunt.

And?
Clarissa pouted and looked at him desperately. "Are you not going to kiss me or hug me?" Matthew lifted his head and stared at her for a while. That stare instantly made Clarissa's cheeks blush. "I'm tired now, and I want to go to bed. You carry me to my bed." If he still refuses to move, then he must still be mad at me! Matthew looked at her blushed face and stood up right away. He walked around the desk and carried her in his arms. Clarissa's face beamed with satisfaction, and she giggled and

wrapped her hands around his neck. She even pulled herself closer to him so that he could feel her warm breath on his neck.

Matthew brought her to the bedroom and put her on the bed. He then put a blanket over her, sat on the edges of the bed, and stroked her face. "Sleep tight."

"Are you not going to sleep?" she asked.

"I have to get something urgent done by tonight," he replied.

After all the efforts I've put in to bring him here...

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After Matthew left, Clarissa rolled on the bed repeatedly from one end to another and sighed.

Oh my God, he must have thought I'm desperate for his touch! This is so embarrassing! What have I done?

Oh no!

How she wished she could dig a hole and bury herself right away when she recalled the smirk on his face before he left.

He must be thinking that I am blo*dy desperate. I'm sure he's judging me right now!

She suddenly remembered something people always said—women are hornier in their thirties.

Oh, my God! Agh!

She tried hard to recover from her embarrassment, but she fell asleep after some time.

Clarissa slept comfortably throughout the night.

After a night of snow showers, the sun shone brightly and warmed the bed. It was so comfortable that she refused to get up the next morning.

After staying in bed for a few more minutes, she finally rolled out of it.

Nothing much in the Zen Highlands had changed. Clarissa was pleased that it still looked the same as how it was three years ago.

Upon seeing Julia and the other maids downstairs, she felt a pang of guilt.

It was the same guilt she felt toward Matthew.

Matthew and I had so many memories here. I wonder how he felt every time he stepped into this house in the last three years.

Her expression turned grim. If I were in his shoes, I would feel miserable too.

Clarissa let out a long sigh and curled up her body.

All of a sudden, she looked up as she felt someone was rubbing her head. Matthew sat down, carried her, and placed her on his lap.

He inched closer and kissed her forehead. With a deep voice, he asked, "What's with the sigh? Are you upset?"

He spoke in a calm voice and appeared to be much gentler than how he was last night.

Matthew might have forgiven her, but somehow, Clarissa was not pleased with the turn of events. "How can you forgive me easily?"

He should have punished me, taught me a lesson, and screamed at me instead.

How could he let me off so easily after what I've done?

She grabbed his hands and said, "Why don't you slap me? Please don't forgive me so easily."

Even if you want to ignore me for a period of time, please do so.”

Matthew gave her a puzzled look and pinched her cheeks. “Do you still want to fight with me? And you still want me to ignore you?”

Clarissa got instantly tongue-tied. She pouted and shook her head. “No...”

“So what exactly do you want?” Matthew asked.

“I just felt you’re being too nice to me.” Clarissa could feel all the love from him as she looked at the gentle expression on his face.

“I’m pretty sure the last three years must be hell for you. I’ve been so mean to you and even fought with you because I didn’t believe you,” she said, “It’s all my fault, yet you forgave me easily. It just doesn’t feel right.”

“You’re upset because of this?” Matthew grinned and pinched her cheek. “Since you’ve learned from your mistakes, please be a good girl and behave from now onward. Don’t throw tantrums anymore, okay?”

“Hey, I didn’t...” she hesitated and decided to admit her mistake, “Fine. I’m sorry for what I did to you.”

Upon gazing into his dark eyes, Clarissa instantly swallowed her anger and kept mum.

He’s right. I can be a little willful at times.

The corner of Clarissa’s lips quirked up. “Okay. I’ll behave and be good from now on.”

Matthew lowered his head and gave her several tap kisses on the lips. “Be a good girl, and I’ll be nice to you.”

It was as if he was talking to a child.

Clarissa wrapped her hands around his neck and kissed him passionately.

The worst was finally over.

After breakfast, Clarissa leaned against Matthew and asked, “Don’t you need to go to work?”

“You’re home now. I don’t want you to be upset when I’m gone.”

Clarissa was very touched by his thoughtful words.

It looks like the perfect man does exist! What have I done to deserve a man like Matthew?

Clarissa went up, embraced him tightly, and stuck her tongue into his mouth.

Matthew was taken aback by her passion at first, but of course, he reciprocated her affection.

Verona woke up the next day after spending a night with the highest bidder at the auction.

Though she was not particularly intimidated by Clarissa’s threat last night, she could not help but recall the gift Clarissa had promised her.

She waited till noon but had yet to receive the so-called gift from Clarissa.

Verona smirked. I knew it. That imbecile woman is just good at threatening people.

Since she’s not going to walk the talk, it’s my turn to teach her a lesson.

Verona leaned forward and said to the man in a coquettish voice, “Someone bullied me last night, and I’m still pretty upset about it. Can you avenge me, Mr. Weils?”

The man, Donald Weils, seemed to be in a good mood. “Tell me who it is! I’ll teach the person a lesson.”

“She’s a screenwriter. When I went for a casting call many years ago, she sabotaged me and caused me to lose my dream role,” Verona explained, “I bumped into her recently, and guess what? She ganged up with others and humiliated me...”

She continued making up stories but did not reveal who the screenwriter was.

Some men might have easily bought her story but not Donald. "You mean the screenwriter who was with Ms. Zaha last night?"

Verona was taken aback. Does he remember Clarissa? She must have seduced him with her slutty look!

"Yes, Mr. Weils. She's gorgeous but absolutely vicious. Can you teach her a lesson on my behalf, please?"

Donald grinned, stood up, and put on his clothes. He then turned around and looked at Verona. "I don't mind teaching her a lesson if she's just a nobody, but she's a well-known screenwriter. Also, didn't you see how close she was with Mr. Smallwood last night?"

Verona's eyes darkened for a moment before responding with a laugh. "That's just how Mr. Smallwood is with any woman. Are you afraid of him?"

Donald chuckled. "I have to admit that I'm terrified of him."

Verona was not ready to give up. She got down from the bed and wrapped her hands around him.

Yet, without hesitation, Donald pushed her away. "I'll get someone to transfer the money into your account later."

He then turned around and walked away, leaving Verona alone in the room.

Fine! I'll do it myself!

She called her manager, Maxdon, and tried to convince him how Clarissa looked down on both of them.

Just when she finished complaining, Maxdon instantly reprimanded her. "Are you mad? I've always allowed you to do things your way because I believe you're smart enough to know what you're doing. And now you're complaining about her?"

He continued, "Yaala told me about last night. I've warned you not to cause trouble, but you didn't care. You just want to offend the whole world. Do you know who Yaala is?"

Verona's frustration kicked in. She shouted, "Who cares about her anymore? She's just an old hag!"

"Shut the hell up! How dumb are you?" Maxdon raised his voice.

"Oh, so now I'm dumb? I wonder who insisted on becoming my manager?" she sneered, "You chose me in the first place, but now you treat me like trash? Don't you know that I'm now famous and will one day replace Yaala for sure? I can easily find myself another manager if I want to!"

What she said had rendered Maxdon speechless. How dare she talk to me like this?

Verona thought Maxdon was intimidated. She let out a cold laugh and continued, "If you want to continue to serve me, you do as I said."

"I might not be able to take Yaala down now, but I definitely am capable of destroying a screenwriter," she said, "I want you to use your network to sabotage her, and I want her to be out of showbiz. She'll have to pay the price for offending me. Go and do as I said now!"

Verona then ended the call. Maxdon looked at the screen and burst out laughing.

She's the dumbest woman I've ever encountered.

Maxdon always knew Verona was not easy to deal with, but he had been turning a blind eye to all the things she had done in the past because of the potential he saw in her.

He had not been paying attention to her lately because he was busy managing the other celebrities under his wing.

Seeing how arrogant she had become ever since she became popular made him question if he should continue to become her manager.

She has great potential, but she must change her attitude first.

But he no longer had high hopes for her upon witnessing Verona's condescending attitude.

At that point, Maxdon made up his mind.

While he was still deep in thought, he received another call. Upon hearing what the person said on the other end of the phone, his expression turned even more grim.

Verona doesn't know her boundaries at all.

Maxdon went straight to his superior and told him he did not want to manage Verona anymore. He even advised the management to stop investing in her career as she was bound to stir trouble for the company.

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Clarissa wasn't being soft-hearted and kind towards Verona. Instead, she just forgot about what she did for the time being.

It was already evening time by the time she thought of her.

Last night, she had even threatened to give Verona a big surprise in the morning. However, she only remembered it now. Verona might think that I'm just bluffing.

Forget it! So what if I was late for the surprise? As long as I keep my words and put them into action.

With that thought, she immediately gave Yael a call. She didn't want to rely on Matthew to settle this issue.

Clarissa wasn't able to kill Verona's career with her current status in the entertainment industry. But there was still something else that she could do.

She decided to ban Verona from taking any role in any of her work.

After that, her studio issued a statement regarding this issue, making it clear that Clarissa Studio would not collaborate with Verona in the future. With that being released, she was then officially in opposition to Verona.

In the industry, even if they secretly hated someone to the core, no one would show it to the public.

It was rare for a studio to clearly show that they were against certain artists. It was even unprecedented.

Of course, some people might not take the statement seriously. After all, it was just a screenwriting studio. However, for those who were smart and intelligent, it was something to look into seriously.

Verona was a popular actress with a bright future ahead while Clarissa was a famous screenwriter. Of course, she wasn't the one and only screenwriter in the industry. However, she was certainly someone not to be messed with.

Meanwhile, Verona was initially selected as one of the cast members for a travel variety show. As soon as Clarissa Studio released the official statement, the TV station was rather hesitant in the decision to invite Verona to the show.

This was because the show was considered one of the most popular variety shows in the country, and it was high in the ratings. It had brought fame to a lot of celebrities since the

first season. Therefore, they were extremely cautious when casting a celebrity. TV station certainly wasn't afraid of being threatened by someone or offending anyone. If they were to choose Verona, their decision would definitely not easily be affected by a statement from a studio.

Initially, the director had just decided to let Verona be one of the cast members. He had been in contact with Verona's manager. Although they had not discussed in detail yet, both parties were likely to reach a consensus.

But today, a female producing director brought up the statement of Clarissa studio. Collaborating with Verona meant they were going against Clarissa studio. Since there wasn't any close interaction between them and the studio, they could have just ignored it. However, the female producing director mentioned something, "Boss, in my opinion, it's better for us to give up on the thought of working with Verona at this time. Let's choose someone else. Sooner or later, Verona might not be able to stay any longer in the showbiz industry."

The director was shocked. The female producing director was a capable woman. Usually, she would only talk about this kind of topic with the director.

"What's going on? You've got any inside scoop?"

She shook her head. "I don't have any, but I do have something to tell you. You have to keep it as a secret, ok?"

Then, she said cautiously, "Recently, I've taken a break and spent my vacation with my husband. We headed all the way up to the north. When we passed by W City, my husband and I bumped into Clarissa Quigley. Of course, I didn't know it was her at that time. Besides, she was with a man and a kid. They were having a meal in a restaurant."

"Do you have to explain everything in detail? Can't you just get straight to the point?"

She immediately said, "Here's the point! Do you know who the man with the pretty screenwriter was?"

"Who was it?"

The female producing director looked around carefully and whispered a name in the director's ear.

The director's jaw dropped and his eyes widened as shock overwhelmed him. After quite a while, he finally asked, "Did you say they were with a kid?"

She nodded vigorously.

Bang!

Suddenly, the director slammed the table and walked out of the office. He was yelling as he walked, "Let's find a replacement! Quickly..."

Meanwhile, the female producing director shook her head and burst into laughter behind him.

Tsk. The director should have thanked her, as well as her husband.

If it wasn't for her husband, they would not have gone to W City. In that case, they would definitely not run into that family of three. Thus, they would continue working with Verona. It was actually fine for the time being as there would not be a great impact on the show.

However, who would know what was going to happen in the future? Verona might be blacklisted in the industry for good. That would be a huge loss for them, especially if they

had not finished the shooting.

Thus, one should really be grateful for everything that happened in their lives.

Meanwhile, Verona totally didn't know what was going on. She still acted recklessly and behaved arrogantly, clamoring to change her manager. By afternoon, she was informed that Maxdon was no longer working as her manager. The company didn't even mention anything about her new manager in the future.

Everything happened in only a few hours. Verona was a little confused.

She felt a little nervous at first. However, she managed to shrugged it off after a while.

She was a new rising star. After all, the company wouldn't give up on her and take Maxdon's side. She believed that the company wasn't satisfied with Maxdon's performance either.

Hence, they wanted to get her a better manager.

Verona strongly believed in herself and the company.

Thus, Verona wasn't bothered by the statement from Clarissa studio at all.

She even tweeted and refuted the statement: Some people thought they are powerful and successful enough to manipulate everyone. Do they think they own the showbiz? Do they really think they could easily pull the strings from behind the scenes? Bring it on! A clean hand wants no washing. I have nothing to fear. I'm not afraid of being set up. I will not compromise. I will never bow down to the evil forces, even if it meant staking my own future.

Her words were harsh. Verona was trying to show her honest and decent image to the public while implying that Clarissa was the evil force who pulled strings behind the scenes.

As soon as she posted that tweet, her fans immediately started to attack Clarissa. In no time, both her personal and studio Twitter were flooded with hateful comments. Rumors had it that Clarissa wouldn't become a famous screenwriter without riding on others' coattails. Besides, she had sold her body in order to win an award. Anyway, there were nasty comments everywhere.

Clarissa had quite a number of fans as well. Both of their fans were fighting against each other on the internet.

Usually, the company would at least release something in response, especially at this very moment. Or perhaps, other artists from the same company would say something about it. It was weird that the company did not respond at all. Instead, Verona had informed her circle of friends to support her. But, they were either in the middle of something, or not answering her phone.

Verona couldn't help but grit her teeth in anger. She was completely clueless about what was going on.

As for Clarissa, surprisingly, many people were on her side other than her studio. A lot of artists, artist's studios and those who had worked with Clarissa before liked or retweeted her tweet to show their supports, making her look much more trustworthy as compared to Verona who was fighting alone.

Therefore, some casual fans and wise fans who originally believed in Verona's words had eventually come to realize that they should give Clarissa the benefits of the doubt.

The news spread like wildfire. Clarissa didn't care about the issue at all. She didn't even notice the news until she went online.

She was grateful for those who had been helping and rooting for her. However, she had totally no idea about Verona's situation.

Meanwhile, Clarissa had already checked out of the hotel and moved her stuffs back to Zen Highlands.

She could finally feel a sense of belonging by laying on the sofa.

After being obstinate all this while, she still came back. Suddenly, she realized how childish and stubborn her thoughts were back then.

At the end of the day, she still came back to the same place.

Clarissa didn't hold in her feelings when she finally plucked up the courage to make a video call to Damian and Catherine.

They chatted for a very long time. Damian was exclaiming and grinning excitedly throughout the call. Other than that, her grandma didn't say much. Clarissa felt so much relieved.

After hanging up the call, she thought of bringing Damian back to stay with her for a period of time.

But she would definitely have to deal with a lot of challenges if she were to bring Damian over. Would he be exposed to the public? Would she be able to keep Damian as a secret? However, the walls have ears.

With that thought, Clarissa found herself in a difficult position. She lost in her thoughts while hugging on the pillow alone.

Meanwhile, Julia witnessed the whole video call. She was shocked to the core.

But fortunately, her lips were sealed. Clarissa's secret was safe with her. Hence, she didn't avoid making that call in front of Julia.

While Clarissa was going through a dilemma, she went on Twitter to check things out. Only then did she realize that some videos during the charity auction was leaked on the internet, and she had gained much attention.

However, her pictures and videos had been removed very quickly. It seemed that Matthew had taken care of it.

Even if those pictures and video were gone, the story about Clarissa Quigley and her men was spread secretly on the web forum.

Clarissa's first rumored boyfriend was Ryler Cooper. Back then in the film studio, people had been gossiping about her taking the initiative to go after Ryler.

The second man was also the most important one. Three years ago, Clarissa had a so-called fiancé, as known as the president of Tyson Corporation. However, their relationship had been complicated and confusing so far. Was he really her fiancé? Or they had actually split up silently three years ago?

Director Yates was the third one. He was the one who made Clarissa famous and made her the best screenwriter. He had been giving her all kinds of support in order to smooth her way in showbiz.

The following man was Luke Harrison. Judging from his behavior, he was clearly interested in Clarissa, He was a well-known ladies' man in D City.

Finally, Joshua was the last one on the list, He was a renowned illustrator who took Clarissa to the charity auction. Word on the street was that he came from a mysterious background. However, neither did anybody know where the rumor came from.

The five of them were not just average Joe. They had been in contact with Clarissa.

Therefore, those rumors weren't baseless at all.

Clarissa was merely a writer who wasn't even willing to reveal her face to the public. Eventually, she had turned into the talk of the town. People were getting more curious about her.

Generally, people had the tendency to be interested in the men behind a gorgeous and talented woman, as well as her love history.