

Chapter 63 Childish Behavior

Rachel was absolutely furious with Victor. She gritted her teeth and fantasized a thousand ways to kill him. And after a while she was much calmer and even managed to fall asleep. When she opened her eyes again, she realized that the car was moving. They were finally on the way back to the hotel.

She turned to look at the seat next to her. Victor was there, his eyes closed and the first two buttons of his black shirt unbuttoned, giving her a perfect view of his collarbone. She couldn't stop herself from thinking that he was so very sexy right now.

His eyes suddenly flew open then, as if he had sensed Rachel's gaze. Startled, she looked away, turning her head to look out the window.

Her stomach gave a loud rumble in protest, reminding her that she was starving.

To get to the hotel they had to pass by a busy outdoors market. There were stalls selling all kinds of street food and through the slightly open window, she could hear clearly the vendors fishing for clients. The smell that drifted in was tantalizing, especially that of spicy prawns on a stick.

Being pregnant, she got sick with the faintest smell of food, so she hadn't had a normal meal in days. And when she managed to eat something, she would just throw it up minutes later.

But today, she felt no nausea at all at the smells that wafted from the food stalls. Maybe it was because she was really starving, or perhaps spicy prawns were too damn hard to resist. The growling of her stomach was so loud now that everyone in the car could hear it.

Rachel kept looking outside her window, pretending that nothing had happened. Victor had been typing a reply to a message on his phone when he heard it. He paused, fingers poised over the screen.

"Grrr!"

There it was again. Rachel's stomach was growling.

Victor immediately called out to the driver. "Stop the car."

The car pulled over in the blink of an eye

and Victor turned to Rachel. "I'm in the mood for some spicy prawns. Go get me some."

Rachel's eyes widened in disbelief and she took a look outside. Not too far away, there was a stall selling spicy prawns. There were seven or eight people waiting in line so, obviously, it was a popular one.

Waiting in that line would take too long!

She was hungry and tired, and she wasn't in the mood of standing around in line. But she was certain that if she refused to do Victor's bidding, he would once again threaten to

destroy the Bennet Group. She was under his thumb and he knew it, so she had no choice but to do as he said.

Giving him her best fake smile, she said, "Of course! I'll be back in a minute!"

She threw the car door open and climbed out. As she walked towards the stall, she drew a lot of attention, dressed in a gown and wearing high heels.

"Mr. Sullivan, the doctor warned you not to eat prawns and shellfish. You are allergic to them. Your throat will close up and..." Ivan started, looking cautiously at Victor through the rearview mirror.

"I know," Victor interrupted him curtly.

"Then why did you..." Ivan looked perplexed, but stopped talking immediately, noticing the look Victor was giving him.

He got the message and stopped talking, trying his best to hide his curiosity.

Ivan had in Victor's employ for two years now. He knew when to mind his own business.

Victor rolled down the window, rest his arm against the window frame and saw Rachel standing in line for the spicy prawn.

In her long, white dress, she looked ethereal and graceful, standing out in the non-descript crowd. Victor couldn't help but think of her in Dennis' arms, dancing and enjoying herself at the party tonight.

He felt a hot surge of jealousy stirring inside him. He threw his phone to Ivan and barked, "Send these to the KD Group."

Ivan caught the phone and glanced at the screen. His face transformed into a shocked grimace. "Mr. Sullivan, this is evidence that Dennis embezzled the KD Group's money. "

Things like that were a pretty common occurrence in most companies, so that wasn't what shocked Ivan. It was the fact that Dennis had been selling company secrets to their rivals, and he had access to pretty much everything due to his position as project manager.

If the senior executives of the KD Group knew all that, they wouldn't let Dennis get away with it easily.

Firing him would be the least they could do to him. Suing him for a lot of money as compensation would be ruining his life. Victor wouldn't reveal how he got that evidence, even if Ivan had the nerve to ask. He was used to ordering people around, like a king deciding whether someone would live or die.

Ivan felt the night breeze growing colder at that thought.

Looking at Victor through the rearview mirror, his heart sank. He had just realized that he didn't really know anything about his boss. He thought he knew pretty much everything about the man after working for him for two years, but it turned out that he knew next to nothing.

He had always feared that Victor might be manipulated by other members of the board, but now it seemed that he didn't need worry about it. After all, the man had found out what

Dennis had done without breaking a sweat.

But if Victor wasn't wary of the board, why did he tolerate them and did nothing to expose their shenanigans?

Rachel's returned snapped Ivan out of his reverie.

She got into the car, with a bag of spicy prawns in her hand, looking a little tired. With her fake smile still on, she turned to Victor. "Well, here's your food, Mr. Sullivan. Enjoy!"

"Just throw it out," Victor said without even glancing at her.

"What?" Rachel looked down at the food container with a puzzled expression. "Didn't you say you were in the mood for spicy prawns? I waited in line for ten minutes to get it. Why throw it out? You were never going to eat it, right? You just wanted to have some fun with me, have a good laugh. Someone should probably have told you years ago that such behavior is childish."

"Rachel, need I remind you that you are just an employee of mine? You have no right to question my decisions. All you need to do is obey my orders. If you think you can't do it, you could always quit," Victor said, a dangerous look crossing his face.

Rachel glared at him, tightening her grip on the container. After a couple of moments, she managed to calm down a little and said, "Alright, I'll throw it out!"

She was about to get out of the car and find the nearest trash can, when Victor said in a low voice, "I don't have time for this. You can do it when we get back to the hotel."

Then he turned to the driver and told him to get moving. Rachel glared at Victor, gritting her teeth all the way to the hotel, trying not to jump at Victor and smash his face in.

Twenty minutes later, the Bentley finally arrived at the hotel, driving directly into the underground parking. Rachel got off the car and used the elevator to get to her hotel room, so she didn't find any trash can. She ended up carrying the food all the way to her hotel room.

She sat on the sofa and rubbed the soles of her feet, looking at the box of prawns. The longer she looked at it, the angrier she got. She grabbed it, ready to throw it into the trash can when her stomach growled again.

The smell made her mouth water.

It was pretty late at night, and the hotel was far from the downtown, so she couldn't even order takeout.

She hadn't eaten anything all day. Even if she didn't want to eat-which she did- the little one inside her had to eat something. 'Anyway, he won't know if I threw the prawns out or not. And I hate wasting food.' Rachel put the container back on the table, opened it and began to eat.

Victor decided to return to Apliaria the next day.

But he didn't do so alone... Alicia accompanied him. She was a graduate student in the Apliaria University- which was located in Apliaria- and she decided to go with Victor, even though her classes wouldn't start for another month.

Chapter 64 Caroline's Scheme

In the private plane, Alicia cut some fruit and served them to Victor. Worried that he had been dealing with business for too long, she closed the lid of his laptop directly.

A hint of displeasure flashed in Victor's eyes when he looked up at her.

Taking a seat across him, Alicia smiled sweetly. "Victor, have some rest, and eat something. Work can wait. You are a human, not a machine."

She picked up a piece of watermelon with a fork and brought it to Victor's mouth. She looked at him expectantly, waiting for him to eat it.

From the corner of his eye, Victor noticed Rachel watching them. He opened his mouth and let Alicia feed him.

"Sweet, isn't it?" Alicia asked, her eyes lighting up.

"It is," Victor answered casually. His attention was not on the woman across him, but on Rachel.

She glanced at them, then lowered her head and continuing to play with her phone, as if she didn't even notice the flirting between Alicia and Victor. Victor's eyes darkened and he felt a pang of disappointment somewhere in his heart.

"I'm glad you like it. More?" Alicia picked up another piece of watermelon, ecstatic that Victor was paying attention to her. She didn't even notice the change of expression on his face.

Glancing at the piece of fruit as if it had somehow offended him, Victor said, "I don't want any more. Why don't you eat it?"

"But I made this for you. Victor, why..."

"I don't like being disturbed when I'm working. I'll forgive you this time. I hope you won't do it again." Victor interrupted her, opening his lap top screen.

The smile froze on Alicia's face.

If Victor had talked to her like that two years ago, she wouldn't have minded. But last night, she had seen him fuming when he saw Rachel dancing with another man. He had grabbed that bitch's arm in a possessive way and left the party with her without any explanation.

And today, he was so cold with Alicia. She found that she couldn't stand it. After all, she was the prized daughter of the Schultz family, loved and spoiled all her life. She was arrogant and willful and she had never been treated like this before.

Her eyes started to swim with tears and she sulked. "I'm sorry. I won't bother you any longer." She stood up and took a seat on the sofa on the other side of the cabin, glaring at Rachel the whole time.

The plane landed at the Apliaria International Airport in the afternoon.

After disembarking, Victor ordered Ivan to make sure Alicia got to the Apliaria University safely. She seemed unwilling to leave Victor's side, but she didn't really have a choice. She got in the car reluctantly, but then she suddenly got out again and walked directly to Rachel. "You won't win this time! Sooner or later, he will realize that I am the one for him! Just wait and see," she spat out, her eyes full of hatred.

Meanwhile, Alice was looking at Rachel's physical exam results.

There was a knock on her office door and a moment later, the door opened a crack. "Miss Jenkins, this quarter's..."

"Get out! I am busy," Alice barked impatiently.

The employee's face turned pale and he quickly closed the door.

A great clatter accompanied the man as he retreated hastily, and he realized what it was after a minute or two; everything that had been on Alice's desk had been swept off and thrown to the ground.

Furious wasn't enough to describe what Alice was feeling right then. She crushed the report in her hand, her neat and long nails almost piercing the paper.

She had asked Wilson to arrange a physical examination two days ago in order to get her hands on Rachel's blood.

The two tubes of her blood were not used for a simple regular blood test, but to detect the HCG levels in Rachel's blood. That would tell Alice for certain if that bitch was really pregnant.

Suddenly, her phone rang.

Alice took a look at her phone and answered it in a hoarse voice, "Mom... She is really pregnant. What do I do? What now?"

"I'm on my way there. Meet me in five minutes. You need to stay calm and don't let anyone see you are upset, okay?" Caroline reminded her daughter

Alice bit her lower lip and murmured, "Okay, Mom."

She hung up the phone and took several deep breaths before she left the office, her high heels clicking on the marble floor.

In the first-floor cafe, Caroline had already found them a table. She sat there looking elegant and poised. When she saw Alice, she waved her over.

Alice walked quickly towards her mother and didn't even wait until she had taken a seat before she asked, "Mom, what should I do now? This child can't be born!"

"Alice, I've told you many times. No matter what happens, you must stay calm," Caroline said and took a sip of her coffee.

"How do you expect me to do that? Victor would rather take Rachel on a business trip than me... If he finds out Rachel is pregnant with his child, he will run back to her," Alice hissed.

"Mom, you must help me. It took me a lot to get where I am today."

"Really? What is it?"

An evil smile appeared on Caroline's face. She motioned for Alice to get closer and then whispered her well designed plan in her daughter's ear.

"We will tell Rachel that Jack is sick to trick her into going to the hospital. I'll arrange for someone to wait for her there and knock her out. Then, she will be taken into the OR to have an abortion. While that is happening, you call Victor and tell him you just found out that Rachel is getting rid of his baby."

"No! Are you nuts? I can't let Victor know she's pregnant! That's exactly what that bitch wants! "

"So what? By the time he finds out, the baby will be gone! And when Victor hears that Rachel decided to get an abortion without even telling him, he will be pissed off. When he sees her come out of the OR with his own eyes, he won't believe a word she says," Caroline said, looking excited at how well-thought-out her plan was.

Rachel would be in a world of trouble!

"How could Victor ever believe the woman who killed his own child? He will surely kick her out of the Sullivan Group, and the Bennet Group will be crushed. Without Victor's support and protection, she is nothing. You can do whatever you want to her."

Alice lowered her eyes, lost in thought. She could almost see Rachel kneeling in front of her, begging her to spare her. An evil smile formed on her lips.

'Rachel, you will suffer as I have suffered!'

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Later that night, after Rachel got home from her trip, Abby looked her up and down carefully. "Miss Bennet, can you turn down going on business trips in the future? You look thinner than ever and you've only been away for two days," she said, concern etched on her face.

Chapter 65 Stood Up For Abby

"Really?" On the contrary, Rachel felt her appetite for the past two days had been much better. Now, she wasn't sure if this was because the food in Yaprye suited her better or because her baby finally decided to cut its mother some slack.

"Of course."

"Then, I'll be sure to eat more from now on," Rachel promised with a smile. Then, she changed into her slippers and said, "I'm getting sleepy, Abby, so I'll rest for a while. Wake me up when dinner is ready."

Abby nodded. "Don't worry, Miss Bennet. I'll cook a meal you'll enjoy."

Rachel smiled and nodded, and then she made for the bedroom. However, she stopped after a few steps, as something had occurred to her. Without turning around, she asked, "By the way, how's Andy's divorce case going?"

Abby, who was just heading for the kitchen, stopped and replied, "Oh, he won the case. The husband won't be getting even a penny after the divorce. Mr. Torres said he won only because you provided him evidence of the husband's affair." After a slight pause, she smiled and asked, "Miss Bennet, how on earth did you get those photos of that man having an affair?"

"Well." Rachel smiled. "It was easy. I spent quite a bit of money to get a private detective to investigate."

"But Mr. Torres said his client had hired a private detective, too, but couldn't get any evidence despite having the husband followed for three months. On the other hand, the private detective you hired found solid, admissible evidence in just a few days. He is pretty skilled!" Abby said with admiration.

A bright smile appeared on Rachel's face, but she said nothing and went upstairs to the bedroom.

Unbeknownst to Abby, her assessment was spot-on. Rachel's private detective was more than capable—he was Quintin, the second-best hacker in the Red Hackers Alliance.

Rachel shook her head with a smile and closed the bedroom door behind her. When she sat down on the bed, her phone rang.

She took the phone out and checked the caller ID for only a moment before swiping the red button on the screen, instantly decline the call. Her expression didn't change even once. But before she could turn her attention to other things, the phone rang again. It rang only once, though, because she had declined the call again.

However, the caller refused to give up, calling again right after the previous call was declined. The person seemed determined to reach her and wouldn't take "No" for an answer. So, Rachel answered the call this time, albeit with a cold expression.

"Rachel, why the heck did you reject my previous calls and take so long to answer this one?"

"Do you know our father is in the hospital now?" Alice hollered on the other end of the line. "Jack is in the hospital?"

"Now, I know," Rachel indifferently said as she casually relaxing against the headboard.

"Then, come to the hospital right now!" Alice hissed in a loud voice and hung up the call before Rachel could reply.

Rachel sneered at the phone. Then, swiping the screen, she navigated to her call logs, located Alice's number, and blocked it.

The next day.

A loud bang reverberated across the archive as the door was slammed open. "Rachel!" Alice bellowed, storming in the room in her high heels. "Why didn't you come to the hospital to see our father yesterday?" she screamed.

Abby was sorting out some materials for Rachel when the door was slammed open. Taken aback by the yell, she quickly hurried over and greeted the angry guest, "Hello, Miss Jenkins." Alice ignored her at first and looked around the archive. When she didn't see Rachel, her expression darkened even further. "Where's Rachel?" she asked Abby.

"Miss Bennet went to deliver the documents. Do you mind telling me what you want Miss Bennet for, Miss Jenkins? I can pass on a message..."

"Clap!"

A sharp sound rang out as Alice slapped Abby across the face in rage.

The sudden strike forced Abby to turn her head sideways. The sting caused her pupils to dilate and water. "Miss Jenkins, how could you..." she muttered in shock.

"What? You are just a lowly servant. Why can't I slap you?" Alice asked with a sneer. "You are such a traitor. Do you really think Rachel can protect you? Dream on! She can't even protect herself."

Alice cackled with a wicked grin. Ignoring her stinging cheek and watery eyes, Abby grabbed Alice's hand and demanded, "What do you mean, Miss Jenkins? Why did you say Miss Bennet can't protect herself? Is something wrong with her?"

Alice's face contorted in disgust, and she wrenched her hand away. "Don't touch me! You're disgusting!"

Tears filled Abby's eyes as she whimpered. Alice's words seemed to imply that something terrible would—or already had—happened to Rachel, and she couldn't bear the thought of that. Overcome with anxiety, she turned and ran out of the archive in search of Rachel.

Rachel was on her way to the archive, having just returned from delivering the documents. A silhouette in the distance caught her attention. She squinted her eyes and saw it was Abby running towards her.

"Abby? Why are you here?" she asked in surprise. As Abby struggled to catch her breath, Rachel noticed a crimson hand imprint on her cheek. She quickly walked over and asked seriously, "Who slapped you?"

"Miss Bennet, you're fine! That's great!" Abby exclaimed with bright, teary eyes. Seeing Rachel here, safe and sound, filled her with relief, and she no longer had the strength to hold back her tears.

'You're fine? Why would Abby think I was not fine?

Was something going to happen to me?'

Rachel thought with a frown. Seeing Abby cry so pitifully, she couldn't bring herself to ask what had happened. Instead, she quickly took a piece of tissue paper out of her pocket and wiped Abby's tear-streaked face.

"Gee, Rachel, you're so affectionate!" Alice sneered, walking out of the archive.

When Rachel saw her, she instantly understood what had happened.

She cupped Abby's cheek, comforting her. Then, she walked up to Alice and looked her dead in the eye. "Alice, did you slap Abby?" she coldly asked.

"Yes, I did. So what? Yesterday, I asked you to go to the hospital. Why didn't you go? Do you know our father waited for you in the hospital the entire night? Since you didn't listen to me, I came to teach you a lesson on our father's behalf. But I couldn't find you, so I taught this little traitor a lesson. What's wrong with that—"

A sharp sound rang out

as Rachel slapped Alice hard.

The resounding slap made Alice gasp. She cupped her cheek and looked at Rachel in shock. "Rachel, how dare you slap me?"

Another loud sound echoed outside the archive.

Rachel had slapped Alice again!

"It seems I have shown you too much mercy that you now think I don't dare do anything to you," Rachel coldly said, walking over menacingly. "I slapped you twice because you shouted at me."

Alice's cheeks burned, and her eyes turned red with madness. "Rachel! You're a bitch!"

Rachel, who didn't take kindly to that insult, slapped Alice multiple times in quick succession.

Alice's face had swollen up, and her ears were ringing. Even moving her lips caused her tremendous pain.

Rachel massaged her sore wrist with a haughty expression. Looking down at Alice with a cold expression, she said, "I slapped you even more because you slapped Abby. You need to pay back with interest."

"Bitch, I'll kill you!" Alice screamed maniacally and charged at Rachel, disregarding the gutting pain she felt.

"Look out!" Abby yelled.

Rachel sneered and stepped sideways in the nick of time, dodging the attack. As Alice ran

past her, Rachel grabbed her wrist and tugged it with all her might.

Bang!

"Ahhhhhhh!"

Alice crashed to the ground with a scream. Her back hit the ground so hard that it seemed all her organs were on fire.

The pain was so intense that she curled into a fetal position. Rachel walked up to her and coldly said, "If you try something like that again, Alice, I'll make your life a living hell."

The pain Alice felt was so intense that she wheezed. When she heard Rachel's warning, she froze in horror, feeling as though all the blood in her body had stopped flowing.

Without another glance at her, Rachel walked up to Abby and led her back to the archive. When they shut the door behind them, Rachel brought out a medical kit to treat the wound on Abby's face.

She took a small gauze pad out of the box, but Abby stopped her, taking the gauze pad away. "I don't need the ointment, Miss Bennet. It's not a big deal."

"It's not a big deal? Will you still think it's not a big deal when your face is disfigured? You silly girl. Stop squirming, or I won't be able to apply the ointment evenly," Rachel scolded, snatching the pad back with a frown. Then, she began dabbing the pad on Abby's wound. She didn't do it gently, though, so Abby's subtle gasps could be heard within the archive.

Rachel glanced at her and asked, "Does it hurt?"

"Yes, it hurts."

"That's right," Rachel said in a stern tone. However, she began dabbing the wound carefully and gently after that. "You must remember this feeling."

Chapter 66 Dad Wants To See Me

Abby turned her eyes to the ground. She lowered her head and said in a low, guilty voice, "I'm sorry I'm so useless, Miss Bennet."

Rachel finished applying ointment to Abby's wound and threw the used swab in the trash. As she turned her head back to Abby, she saw the sad, hopeless expression on her face. Rachel sighed softly as she said, "Abby, I'm not blaming you for what happened. I just want you to remember this. Remember how much this hurt. If something like this ever happens again, I want you to fight back. And if you can't fight, you need to run as fast as you can. Do you understand me?"

"Miss Bennet..." Abby's eyes filled with tears.

"Abby, I can't always be there every time someone you bullies you. The best I can do is punish those who hurt you. But what happens one day when I don't even know who to punish? I've never expected you to protect me... All I ask is that you protect yourself," Rachel said earnestly.

"I will do my best, Miss Bennet," Abby answered softly.

Rachel gave an affectionate smile, reached out and gently ran her fingers over Abby's head. "I think you've made great progress. Maybe I'm just being too demanding. Take your time; do things your way. I have full faith that one day, you'll be strong."

There was no denying that Abby had already started to change for the better. Rachel could account for that. She remembered that in the past Abby had been too timid to speak up for herself when she was getting bullied.

But she was still worried. While Abby was making good progress, she needed to learn how to protect herself quicker. Ever since Rachel had taken Abby and Andy to be her friends, she'd started to care about them more; to the point where she was always afraid that she wouldn't be able to protect them from getting hurt. In the past, she wouldn't have given them a second thought.

The Rachel from the past was cold and indifferent. She wouldn't have cared if someone got hurt or bullied... But not anymore. Yes, Abby had changed. But so had Rachel.

Abby and Rachel went to the company's canteen for lunch. They enjoyed their food and idle banter, and once they were done, they decided to head to the archive for a little break. They'd just stepped into the hallway when they noticed a familiar figure standing there.

"Why is Mrs. Jenkins here?" Abby said in surprise. "Is she here because of what happened to Miss Jenkins this morning? What are we going to do, Miss Bennet?"

Rachel smiled calmly. In a casual, almost conversational tone she said, "What else can we do but let her do as she pleases? If she wants to get justice for her daughter, let her. The only thing I'd be able to do for her is give her a solid slap as well."

"That's allowed?" Abby said and turned to look at Rachel. She wasn't surprised by what she'd said, and she was also inclined to believe her. Rachael was different now. After all the unbelievable things she'd already done, Abby wouldn't put it past her to make good on her word.

If Rachel wanted to smack her stepmother in public, she probably would.

Rachel just smiled in response.

Abby frowned at her, then looked towards Caroline again. She took a deep breath to steady her words, and then said seriously, "This time, I will help you. Don't worry, Miss Bennet."

Caroline spotted them as soon as they stepped into the hall. She gracefully walked over to them, her elegant, handmade cheongsam hugging her body in all the ways that were flattering. "Rachel," she called gently as she approached.

"Are you here to seek justice for your daughter, Caroline?" Rachel asked coldly.

Caroline's hands tightened on her handbag. She narrowed her eyes at Rachel for a moment, like a predator sizing up their prey, then quickly regained her composure. She wanted nothing more than to tear Rachel apart at the moment. The sight of Alice's red, swollen face staring up at her from the hospital bed had been enough to make her bloodthirsty. Caroline wanted to hurt Rachel the way she'd hurt her daughter. Not to mention the fact that Alice's coccyx was fractured because of how hard she'd hit the ground. It was enough to make her blood boil, and she was only just barely managing to keep her rage contained.

The only thing preventing her from beating this bitch Rachel black and blue was the baby in her belly. Caroline put up a good front, soothed her anger, and chose to play the victim. "I know this was probably Alice's fault. As her stepsister, it's understandable that you'd want to teach her a lesson every now and then. Alice told me that her fall had nothing to do with you. She said she was just being careless and ended up hurting herself."

Rachel arched her eyebrows in disbelief. She could hardly believe Alice would say something like that. But she didn't voice her thoughts and chose to stay silent.

"I'm actually here to ask you a favor, Rachel," Caroline said, and quite suddenly, she started to tear up. "I know you don't like me and Alice. And because of this, I know you dislike your father at times." Her voice was strained as she tried to fight back the urge to cry.

The hall was starting to get crowded as lunch break ended and workers returned to their offices. Caroline was speaking loud enough that it attracted more than a few curious stares. Some people even stopped to listen; though they did their best to pretend that they weren't eavesdropping.

Rachel smiled in a way that would have been encouraging, had it not been for the mocking light glittering in her eyes. She crossed her arms and tilted her head, feigning interest in what Caroline had to say.

"Your father wants nothing more than for you to go and visit him in the hospital. Rachel, I'm begging you. Please go and see him. Even if it's just once. I can't bear to see him so upset and disappointed... Please..."

As Caroline spoke, the tears she'd been trying to hold back slipped down her cheeks. She stepped forward and reached out to take Rachel's hand.

Rachel stepped back, twisting her body away.

"Rachel..." Caroline's eyes flooded with tears again as she stared desperately at Rachel. She looked like she was barely holding back from throwing herself on the floor and kneeling before her.

The onlookers all switched their gazes from Caroline to Rachel. Their expressions turned cold when they saw how she was behaving. They'd all harbored secret thoughts that Rachel wasn't a good person, but now she was giving them more reasons to believe they'd thought right.

Rachel stared expressionlessly at Caroline's pitiful face for a long while.

'She's a lot better at playing the victim than her daughter is. What makes her think Jack wants me to visit him? He's a cold-hearted bastard. I find what she's saying impossible to believe.

There has to be something more to this. Otherwise, why would Caroline and Alice keep trying to convince me to go to the hospital to see him? Now Caroline has gone so far as to try and manipulate the public opinion to force me to agree.'

As she stood there mulling through her thoughts, something suddenly occurred to her. She thought back to the strange check-up from a few days ago that had been arranged way ahead of schedule.

Her eyes narrowed suspiciously, and her expression darkened. "You said Dad wants me to visit him in the hospital?"

"Yes," Caroline said with a nod. "You know out of all of us that your father cares for you the most." She held Rachel's gaze as best she could, trying to mentally will her to look past the obvious guilt in her heart, and the light sheen of sweat on her forehead. She was afraid that Rachel had seen right through her lies.

When had this bitch's eyes gotten so sharp?

Caroline was starting to find it difficult to breathe through her anxiety. It felt like something was constricting her chest, and pushing down on her shoulders.

"Okay, I'll go to the hospital with you."

Rachel only agreed because she wanted to find out why Caroline and Alice were willing to go through so much effort to get her to go visit her father.

"Miss Bennet, I'll go with you," Abby said, feeling suddenly concerned. She had the suspicion that Caroline and Alice were up to no good, and she didn't want Rachel to go alone.

"There's no need for that. I'll be just fine on my own," Rachel said. If something did happen, there was no way Rachel could guarantee Abby's safety. It was better that she just went alone.

"But-" Abby protested.

"Why don't you go home and cook something nice? I'll be back before you know it," Rachel said, giving Abby a comforting pat on the shoulder. With that said, Rachel and Caroline left. They went outside and hailed a taxi to take them to the hospital.

The drive was awkward and silent. The most interact they had were the intermittent glances Caroline threw at Rachel's belly.

Rachel was only about a month pregnant. Her stomach was still flat with no bump in sight. Caroline turned her head to look out the window. An unspeakable wave of jealous rage rose in her when she thought back to the results on the report.

'How is it that this little bitch is so lucky to get pregnant after just one night of sex? If she hadn't ruined Alice's plan that night, Alice would have been the one sleeping with Victor! Alice would have been pregnant with Victor's child. Not Rachel. I would have been Victor's mother-in-law, and grandmother of the future successor of the Sullivan Group. 2

I would have been the envy of all the other rich, upper-class ladies...

But this little bitch ruined everything.

This baby has to go. She can't keep it. She can't! I lost to you before, Elise. But I won't allow my daughter to lose to your brat. Never!

Caroline's fingers twisted violently in the strap of her bag. She gritted her teeth and took a deep breath to try and suppress the wild hatred coursing through her veins.

Chapter 67 Traffickers In Ward 1206

Caroline struggled with her wildly changing mood the entire drive to the Municipal People's Hospital. What was even more infuriating was Rachel's relatively calm demeanor. She'd spent the entire 10-minute drive playing on her cellphone, not so much as changing her expression.

If Caroline had looked at Rachel's phone, she would have seen there were codes constantly popping up on the screen.

As the taxi approached the hospital, it slowed down. By the time it reached the gates, it was crawling along at a safe pace for an area with so many pedestrians. It pulled to a stop in front of the in-patient building. Caroline got out the taxi first. She hurried around the side and opened Rachel's door for her.

"Here we are, Rachel," she said pleasantly.

As she got out of the taxi, Rachel glanced towards the crowd gathered near the entrance of the building. She subconsciously slipped her phone into her pocket to keep it safe. She'd only just pulled her hand out when her phone started buzzing.

She narrowed her eyes coldly.

"Your father is in Ward 1206 on the 12th floor," Caroline said. "He's been waiting the entire night for you to visit. I'm sure he's going to be overjoyed to see you. I won't be coming with you. I think the two of you should have some alone time. I'll be waiting here for you when you're finished." She smiled warmly at Rachel as she hung her hands innocently in front of her body.

Rachel gave Caroline a sidelong glance, then nodded stiffly. Without a word, she headed up the steps that led into the building.

Caroline leaned up against the taxi, watching as Rachel disappeared among the crowds of people. The warm, tender smile she'd had a moment ago slowly warped into something twisted and evil. A malicious light glimmered in her eyes, making her look almost demonic in a way.

She slipped her hand into her pocket and pulled out her phone. Her fingers fluttered quickly over the screen as she typed out a message, saying, "She's on her way. Once your mission is complete, I'll transfer another 500,000 dollars to your account."

As she clicked send, she saw Rachel suddenly whirl around to face her. "Caroline," she called. Caroline was so surprised that she fumbled her phone, nearly dropping it onto the ground. Once she had the device firmly clasped in her hand again, she raised her head to look up at Rachel. She hoped she wasn't as pale as she thought she was, and she hoped she didn't look as guilty as she felt. "What... What's wrong, Rachel?" she stammered.

Rachel smiled sweetly at Caroline's guilty expression. "Nothing is wrong. I just forgot to ask

you something."

"What is it?"

"Is my dad really sick in hospital?"

The smile that Caroline had been trying so hard to keep on her face froze. She felt her heart lurch in her chest, and then squeeze tight. She slowly moved the hand holding her phone behind her back. "Of, of course he is. Why would I lie to you about your father's health?" she said anxiously.

"I just wanted to make sure," Rachel said with a half-smile. Then she turned around and carried on walking towards the building.

Caroline only released the breath she'd been holding once she could no longer see Rachel in the crowds. Her muscles felt suddenly weak from the guilt, and from the way she'd tensed up. Before anything else could happen, she climbed into the backseat of the taxi and took a few deep breaths to steady her breathing. Then she took out her phone and read the message that had just come through. That malicious spark ignited in her eyes, and the evil smile curled over her lips again.

Rachel took the elevator and waited patiently for it to arrive at the 12th floor.

The elevator made a soft pinging sound as it pulled to a stop and the doors slid open. Rachel stepped out and made her way to Ward 1206, navigating by looking at the numbers on the other wards. When she stopped outside Ward 1206, it was to find that the door was closed, and that the curtain was drawn over the small window in the door. She couldn't see inside.

But she didn't open the door. Instead, she leaned her shoulder against it and fished her phone out her pocket. She opened an Internet browser and logged onto a website.

On the way to the hospital, Rachel had hacked into the hospital's security system. Currently, she was watching the surveillance footage from Ward 1206, and she already had a very good idea of what was happening behind that closed door; even though the video quality wasn't that good.

Jack wasn't in the room. But there were three men standing near the door, waiting for her to come in. Rachel's expression turned grim and she sneered down at the footage on the screen. If she hadn't been so discreet in the beginning and hacked into the system, she may not have left the ward alive.

Rachel pressed her lips together in consideration, trying to decide what the best course of action was. As an idea slowly formed in her head, she put her phone in her pocket and straightened up. Then she ran to the nurse station shouting, "Help! Somebody help me! Security! Is there anyone who can help me?"

Her performance was enough to startle the nurse on duty. The nurse straightened up, at full attention and said, "Miss, what happened? What's wrong?"

Rachel reached out and clutched desperately at the nurse's hand. "Someone is after me. My father is in a great deal of debt and wants to sell me to pay it off. I'm scared! They're going to

take me and sell me to a brothel! Please! Help me! They're human traffickers!"

"Traffickers? Human traffickers?" The nurse's face went pale as she listened to Rachel's story.

Rachel pinched herself hard without the nurse seeing. The sharp pain was enough to bring tears to her eyes so she looked like she was crying. "Please, please help," she begged pathetically. "I don't want to be taken away! I don't want to be sold like some type of animal..."

"What's wrong? What happened?" said a familiar, gentle voice.

"Dr. Jimenez!" the nurse said, her relief all too obvious. She glanced at Rachel's tearful expression, then quickly explained everything Rachel had said to her.

As Clara listened to the nurse's explanation, a small frown formed on the corners of her lips. She looked towards Rachel and studied her carefully, trying to decide whether she was telling the truth or not. With a small inkling of doubt she asked, "Traffickers? Are there really human traffickers here?"

"Yes!" the nurse said angrily. "These traffickers are getting bolder and bolder by the day. What type of person comes into a hospital to kidnap people? How dare they, in fact? Dr. Jimenez, we can't let them go so easily!"

Rachel hadn't managed to get a word in between Clara and the nurse's conversation. She was still too surprised by Clara's sudden appearance.

Her eyes were still glittering with tears from when she'd been pretending to cry, only adding onto the pity the nurse already felt for her.

"How many of them are there?" Clara looked towards Rachel with an unreadable expression.

"Three," Rachel answered as she looked up at her. She held the doctor's gaze for a moment, trying to place where she'd seen her before, because she was almost certain this woman was more than familiar.

"Where are they?"

"Ward 1206. I came to visit my father. When I peeked into the window at the door he wasn't there. Only those three men. I was lucky that they didn't see me when I looked in." Rachel wasn't sure whether Clara believed her or not. But right now, she didn't care. Clara had asked questions, which meant she was either committed to helping her, or was invested enough to entertain her story for a little bit longer.

When Rachel continued to study Clara, the doctor reached out her hand and rested it gently on Rachel's shoulder. "It's alright. Don't be afraid," she said in a soothing voice. If she didn't believe Rachel's story, she was putting on a very convincing performance that she did. She asked the nurse to put a call through to the security office, and ask them to send some guards up.

While this was all happening outside Ward 1206, the three thugs that Caroline had hired were still patiently waiting. One of them started to get restless and glanced down at his phone to check the time. He frowned as he said to the other two, "We've been waiting for

half an hour already. Where is the target?"

"I'm starting to get a little suspicious as well, boss. I think we should call our employer and ask what's going on. This can't be a trick, right?" one of the other thugs said.

The leader, the man they called "boss", raised the bat in his hand and gently knocked them on their heads. "Calm down. She's already paid a deposit. I don't think she would have done that if she was just playing the fool. Just think, once we're done here, we'll be another 500,000 dollars richer! We won't have to work for the next few years! We will be free to enjoy ourselves as we see fit! Keep your chin up and have faith."

The two lackeys immediately stood a little straighter and looked towards him. "Yes, boss! Understood!" they said in unison.

As their voices died down, the sound of footsteps echoed from the corridor outside. The boss, gestured them all to silence, then held his index finger to his lips as an extra precaution. The three of them hunkered down into combat stances, sticking close to the wall, ready for action.

The door knob turned, and slowly the door opened.

They couldn't properly see who'd entered the room from the positions they were in, but they stayed still until the figure stepped inside. They exchanged glances with each other, nodded, and rushed towards the person.

"You little bitch! You kept me waiting for so long- Ouch!" the boss cried and immediately cringed away from the pain.

"Ah!" one of the other men screamed.

"Ouch! Who hit me?" the second one cried.

More cries of pain and shock rose from the three thugs.

Sounds of struggling and fighting came from the ward. But it didn't last long. It died down after a few moments, leaving behind an eerie silence. The three thugs were cowering on the ground in front of two security guards. They had fresh bruises blooming on their faces, and swollen, split lips from where they'd been hit.

Rachel and Clara stepped into the ward once they knew it was safe.

"Dr. Jimenez," said the head security guard as he approached them, "what would you have us do with them?"

Clara didn't answer him. She turned to Rachel and raised her eyebrows in question. Rachel carried on with her pitiful act by lowering her head, and saying in a pathetic voice, "Dr. Jimenez... Would you mind if I asked them some questions? I... I can't believe my father would sell me to these people... I never thought he was this cruel and heartless..."

Chapter 68 Femoral Artery

Clara nodded at the security guard and said, "Tie them up first, and leave this lady alone for an interrogation."

The daughter of that security guard was around the same age as Rachel. Knowing what had happened to her, he felt really bad for her. With a nod, he replied, "We'll be waiting for you outside. Don't worry. They're not gonna hurt you again."

"Thank you, sir." Rachel forced a smile.

These security guards were all veterans. It only took them a moment to tie up the three goons, and then they walked out of the ward.

The last one to leave was Clara. She even closed the door for Rachel.

Once the door had closed, the innocence and vulnerability in Rachel's eyes turned into a steely gaze. She picked up a shard of the vase that had been shattered during the fight earlier, and she approached the three people struggling on the ground, and squatted down.

The way she moved slowly made her seem more intimidating, and it frightened her adversaries.

Her gaze sent shivers down their spines. One of them noticed the shard of vase in her hand, and his pupils quivered. "What... what are you planning to do with that?"

Rachel fiddled with the shard in her hand. Its sharp tip glistened beneath the sunlight. And as they stared at it, fear overcame their hearts.

With a sinister smile, she pointed the tip of the shard on at the man's thigh. "What do you think will happen if I plunge this shard into this part of your leg?"

"Y-you... I..." The man was breaking into cold sweat, and his face was as pale as a ghost. He couldn't utter a word while looking back at her.

"Since you don't know, allow me to educate you," Rachel said in kind tone. "You see, there's a blood vessel here called the femoral artery. Three centimeters beneath your skin here, I can stab right at it."

At this point, the man was trembling. "Don't! You can't do that. Murder is a crime!"

Rachel blinked innocently. "Don't be so nervous. I'm not even done talking. Anyway, have you ever seen a fountain? I bet you have. But it doesn't matter if you haven't. Because once I cut your femoral artery, your blood will gush out like a fountain. If the cut is deep enough, perhaps you'll see your own blood splattering onto the ceiling. Around five or six minutes of agonizing pain, you'll die from extreme blood loss. Doesn't that sound fun?"

As she spoke, she suddenly strengthened her grip on the vase shard. The tip of the shard pierced through the man's cloth, grazing his skin. Instantly, the man felt the writhing pain and all color drained from his face. Due to the pain and fear of getting hurt, he screamed,

"No! No, please!"

"Shush." Rachel put her index finger to her lips to hush him, and smiled maniacally.

The man's eyes widened in horror, and beads of sweat fell from his forehead. "What... what do you want? I'll tell you whatever you want. Just please don't kill me. I'm begging you!"

"Who said I was going to kill you? Didn't you say that murder is a crime?" Rachel grinned, drew back the shard of glass, and stared daggers at the three people. "I'm only teaching you about human anatomy."

Each of these men were now too scared to utter a word. To them, the woman standing before them was not human, but a demon originating from the furthest depths of hell.

"Now that I'm done teaching you. Let's get to the point, shall we?" Rachel sat on the floor cross-legged, fiddling with the shard of vase with her fingers. "Tell me, what was your original plan?" she asked.

When she finished talking, the three goons exchanged glances. They were all hesitant to tell her the truth.

Rachel wasn't in a hurry, so she smiled at them one by one. From time to time, she would fiddle with the shard of glass by flicking it with her fingers. Each time her well-manicured nails knocked on the shard, it would make a harrowing sound.

To the goons, every time they heard that sound, it felt like a countdown to their deaths.

The man who Rachel threatened to cut earlier was scared shitless, so he was the first one to speak. "We... we were planning to knock you unconscious or drug you once you arrive."

"And then?" Rachel looked at the second goon.

Noticing her gaze, the man trembled and said, "And then we'll pretend to be doctors and send you to the operating room. After that, we're supposed to send our client a message. She will then arrange a doctor to perform a surgery on you."

Rachel's eyes glinted with malice. "What surgery?" she asked.

Finally, the third man chimed in. "An abortion."

Suddenly, Rachel's eyes darkened, and the atmosphere in the ward became frigid. With a scoff, she muttered, "Caroline, Alice, why am I not surprised? An abortion, huh? What a good plan!"

Now, the men trembled with fear and begged, "We've already told you the whole truth, so please... Please let us go! We promise, you'll never see our faces again."

Rachel got up with her brows raised. "Okay, but there's one more thing that I need you to do for me."

"What... what is it?"

"Send a message to your client, and tell her that you have accomplished your mission."

Fifteen minutes later, the police arrived and took the goons away through the help of the security office.

Clara finished her statement with the police, and walked out of the office. She was surprised to see that Rachel was outside. Upon seeing Clara come out, Rachel greeted, "Dr. Jimenez." "I thought you'd already left." Surprised, Clara asked, "Is there anything else you forgot to tell the police?"

Rachel stepped forward, and said, "No, but I was actually waiting for you, doctor."

"And why is that?"

"I need you to do me a favor," Rachel said frankly.

As Clara looked at Rachel, her eyes glinted. She subconsciously glanced at the ajar office door behind Rachel. Some police officers were still there, so Clara suggested, "Let's talk in my office."

To reach her office from the Inpatient Building, they had to go through a long bridge connecting the two buildings. After that, they continued walking for a while, and soon, they arrived at her office.

Once they were inside, Clara took off her white coat and hung it behind the door. She rolled up her sleeves and poured a cup of water for Rachel. "Here, drink some water."

"Thank you." Rachel took a sip as she looked at Clara.

Clara sat behind her desk in silence. Moments later, she said, "Those thugs didn't come here to collect what they were owed, did they? And your father didn't sell you to them, either. Am I right?"

With her elbow on the table, and her chin resting on her palms, Rachel nodded. "That's correct. They're not human traffickers, and they're not here to collect money, but they are indeed targeting me."

"They are?" Clara frowned.

"To be precise, their target is the child in my womb." Rachel glanced down at her abdomen and said, "I'm actually pregnant. And the person who hired those men doesn't want me to give birth to this baby, so she hired those hitmen to catch me and force me to have an abortion."

"This mastermind your speaking of... Who could it be?" Clara asked tentatively, her eyes blinking with curiosity.

"My stepmother."

Clara was a well-educated woman, so it was hard for her to imagine that someone would do something so sinister. She held her cup of water tighter, and it slightly deformed the paper cup.

"Dr. Jimenez, there's something I've been meaning to ask you," said Rachel.

Chapter 69 With Child

"What?" Clara asked, looking at Rachel in bafflement.

"You knew I was lying, so why help me?" Rachel paused for a moment before she added, "We... We haven't met before, have we?"

Clara looked away, a peculiar smile on her lips. "No, we haven't. To be honest, I suspected you might be lying but I wasn't sure. That's why I got along with what you said."

"I see," Rachel murmured, lost in her own head.

Clara's eyes slid to Rachel's stomach. "You said you wanted to ask me a favor. What is it?"

"I need to get an abortion," Rachel said in a low but clear voice, locking eyes with Clara.

"Y-you..." Clara stuttered in surprise, but Rachel hurried to explain.

"Please, Dr. Jimenez, just hear me out. I won't actually get an abortion. I just want people to think I did. My stepmother won't rest until this baby is dead. So, I just need her to think that it's gone. I just found out she was planning to knock me out and perform the abortion without my consent. It was pure luck that I got away. Next time though, who knows what she'll think of? I won't sit back and let her hurt me and my child."

When Rachel stopped talking, the office felt eerily quiet. Through the partway open window, a gust of wind was sweeping the curtain flimsy curtain back and forth and blowing the two women's hair across their faces.

"Okay, I will help you," Clara finally said, breaking the oppressing silence.

After making sure she saw Rachel entering the hospital with her own two eyes, Caroline went in herself, heading to Alice's room. Then they just sat there, waiting to hear from the men they had hired to put their plan in motion.

"Mom, it's been half an hour and nothing. Do you think something went wrong?" Lying on the hospital bed, Alice tried to sit up a little, as if staying still was impossible in her agitated state. The movement had her crying out in pain, her face turning white as a sheet.

Caroline stood up from the visitor's chair and hurried to her daughter's side. Seeing the forming bruise shaped like a hand on her daughter's cheek, she felt a wave of pity and tried to help Alice sit up.

"Of course not, sweetie. These people are professionals. As you said, it's only been like thirty minutes, so I guess they have already knocked that bitch out and shipping her to the OR."

This didn't seem to calm Alice's fears, though. "Just call them."

"Fine! I'll send them a message." Caroline was trying to hide her own worry. She took her phone out of her purse and typed a short sentence. 'Is it done?'

Barely ten seconds had passed before her phone chimed.

The reply was just as short as her own question. 'She is in the OR.'

Caroline breathed a sigh of relief. She showed the text to Alice. "See? I told you it would work. Now you can relax and get some rest. You'll be a member of Sullivan family soon. I will make sure of that."

Alice leaned forward carefully and hugged her mother's waist. "You are the best mom in the whole world."

"I love you so much, honey. I just want you to have everything you want," Caroline said softly, stroking her daughter's hair. "Alice, it's time for you to let Victor know. I'm just going to check how your father is doing."

When Caroline left the room, Alice made the call. Victor was in a meeting, so he had left Ivan in charge of his phone.

When Alice's name appeared on the screen, Ivan rolled his eyes. This was Victor's private number and under normal circumstances, Alice would never dare call.

He hesitated for a few seconds, but then knocked on the door of the meeting room and walked in. He bent over Victor's head and whispered, "Sir, you have a call from Alice."

He handed the phone to Victor, who

glanced at it with an unfathomable expression on his face before answering the call. "What?"

The chill in his voice was unmistakable, freezing Alice to the spot.

She swallowed her fear and affecting a pretty convincing tremble in her voice she said, "Mr. Sullivan, there is something you need to know! You must come to the hospital ASAP! Rachel is here..."

Victor snorted unkindly. "You're calling me just to tell me that Rachel is in the hospital?"

"But Rachel..."

"Alice, for the last time, I don't give a shit about Rachel." Alice suppressed a shiver at Victor's rising temper.

He was about to hang up when Alice cried, "Victor, she is pregnant!"

No sound came from the other end of the line.

Her words had stunned Victor and he just sat there, eyes wide, his mouth opening and closing but no sound came out. The hand holding his phone tightened unconsciously and he swallowed hard before asking slowly, "What, did you just say?"

"I- I..." Alice had turned pale, fear paralyzing her whole body.

"What. Did. You. Say. What's wrong with Rachel?" Victor was on the verge of exploding with rage, the veins on his temples bulging slightly.

"Rachel is with child. She is in the hospital right now. She wants to terminate her pregnancy. I just thought you had the right to know!" Alice said, using her most self-righteous voice.

Crack!

The tip of his pen broke off, leaving a small dent on the desk.

The meeting room was terribly quiet as everyone held their breath, looking at Victor. His expression would terrify even the bravest of men.

He threw the pen on the ground and strode out of the room calling over his shoulder, "Ivan! Get the car ready! We are going to the hospital!"

A few minutes later, Victor's SUV was on its way to the Municipal People's Hospital.

In the back seat, Victor scanned his contacts for Rachel's number but he suddenly realized he wouldn't find it.

They had been married for two years and he didn't even have her number saved in his phone.

As hard as it was to believe, it was the truth!

Holding his phone tightly, Victor called out to Ivan. "Call Rachel NOW!"

"Yes, sir," Ivan replied and dialed Rachel's number and put it on speaker. A recorded message popped up.

"The number you have called is unavailable right now..."

The temperature in the car seemed to drop several degrees, yet both the driver and Ivan had to wipe a thin layer of sweat from their foreheads.

Victor barked, "Call her again!"

Ivan did as he was told, but no matter how many times he called, it always went straight to voicemail.

Victor clenched his fists, his veins bulging on the back of his hand. Through the rearview mirror, Ivan studied him carefully. He was sure that Victor was fighting a losing battle restraining his anger. Soon, he would explode and all hell would break loose.

Each time the recorded message came up, he was one step closer to losing it. At the same time, Alice's words kept ringing in Victor's head.

With child...

Rachel was pregnant with his child!

Chapter 70 How Dare You

Victor thought back to his conversation with Rachel that night on the rooftop. She had denied being pregnant then. She had even drank a whole bottle of wine to prove it.

If she knew she was with child, how could she consume all that alcohol endangering the baby?

The image of Rachel bending over and vomiting flashed in his mind.

It had been a month and a half since that night and now that he thought about it, Rachel had many symptoms of an early pregnancy the whole time. That night she had thrown up not because the wine had gotten to her, but because she was already feeling nauseous.

The only reason she had drank the wine that night was to hide the truth from him.

Because she didn't want to keep the baby.

He didn't really know how he felt about that. Suddenly, he remembered what Rachel had asked him that night.

'What would you do if I'm really pregnant?' He still remember the look on her face when she asked him this question.

Before he could answer, she had denied being with child and changed the topic.

Now, that question held more gravity than ever.

He shouldn't really be so angry considering he didn't care about Rachel at all. But then again, why did he feel so hurt that Rachel decided to have an abortion without even telling him? It was like he was losing something he had always craved without even realizing it.

The SUV stopped outside the hospital.

"We are here, Mr. Sullivan," Ivan said before he got out of the car to open the door for his boss.

Victor regained his composure and got out of the car. He strode into the hospital, closely followed by Ivan.

They got in the elevator and pressed the button marked '5', where the Department of Gynecology was. The elevator pinged, announcing their arrival on the fifth floor and Victor walked out with Ivan on his heels.

Checking his phone for the directions he had managed to assort, Ivan said, "Mr. Sullivan, she is in OR No. 5. She's been there for half an hour now..."

They looked up and saw that the room they needed was just two doors down, but as they started moving towards it, the doors slowly opened, and Rachel walked out.

"It is her..." Ivan murmured, looking dazed.

Rachel was completely unaware of the two men standing in the corridor, looking for her. She was looking at her phone, checking if her message had reached its receiver. A smile tugged

at the corners of her mouth.

All of a sudden, she felt a hand grabbing her wrist. Someone pushed her and her back hit the wall hard. The pain seemed to radiate from her back to the rest of her body, leaving her breathless.

She felt dizzy from the impact as her head had also crashed into the wall, yet she struggled nonetheless, but her attacker's grip only tightened. Another strong hand flew to her chin, forcing her to look up.

Rachel shook her head to dispel the dizziness and her vision finally became a little clearer. She realized who her attacker was when a familiar scent hit her nose.

A shiver ran up her spine when she looked into his eyes that were filled with malice.

She knew that look all too well. He was furious to the point that he would gladly strangle her to death.

His grip on her wrist was so painful that Rachel whimpered. Unable to control her hand anymore, the piece of paper she held in it fell to the ground.

Out of the corner of his eye, Victor saw the words at the top. 'OR No. 5. Procedure: Pregnancy Termination'. At the bottom of the page, there was the doctor's signature as well as Rachel's.

"What have you done?" The look on Victor's face was terrifying. Every syllable seemed to be squeezed out of his teeth, his eyes full of mindless rage.

"Let go of me!" Rachel struggled to escape his grasp. A bruise had already started forming on her wrist. "What's wrong with you?" she shouted at Victor.

"How dare you, Rachel! How dare you get an abortion without my consent?!" Victor was struggling to hold back his anger, veins popping out on his forehead and hands.

Rachel gritted her teeth and tried to kick Victor away. He dodged her attack but had to loosen his grip in the process, giving Rachel the opening she needed to escape his grasp. Instinctively, she took a couple of steps back as her hands flew to her stomach, as if to protect her unborn child inside. She turned around, looking at the elevator, ready to make a run for it.

"If you dare move, you'll never leave this building alive," Victor said in a low, menacing voice.

Rachel froze and turned around to look at him. Her face was pale, her eyes brimming with tears.

She watched him approach and finally stop in front of her. He grabbed her chin again, his eyes burning with anger.

"Go ahead. Why aren't you running away?"

Rachel bit her lower lip so hard it almost bled. She looked straight at him without uttering a word.

"Say something," Victor roared, shaking her shoulders.

Rachel was terrified, but forced herself to smile.

She snorted and shot back in a hoarse voice, "What do you want me to say? That I was indeed pregnant? Or that the baby is gone? Would you rather hear..."

Rachel didn't finish her sentence as Victor grabbed her chin harder.

Her jaw felt like it was going to be dislocated soon and the pain was nearly unbearable.

"How can you even say that?"

"Why the hell not?" Rachel sneered. "I don't understand why you are so angry."

Her words seem to stun Victor to silence.

Rachel went on slowly. "Have you forgotten what you said a year and a half ago?"

He didn't say anything, but the look on his face was an answer in itself.

"If you've forgotten, I'll be happy to remind you," Rachel spat at him. "You said you wouldn't allow me to carry your child. That even if by a miracle I got pregnant, I'd have to get rid of it. That we would never have a child together. Never."

Rachel paused, taking a deep breath to withstand the pain. "Do you remember now?"

Victor's eyes twitched.

She was right. These had been his own words!

He was supposed to be glad that the baby was gone. Rachel wasn't worthy to carry his child.

But then...

Why was he so angry?

After learning that Rachel was having an abortion, he had completely lost his mind.

"You didn't have the right to decide the fate of the baby alone," Victor said, trying his best to conceal his mixed feelings.

"What's done is done. The child is gone. I have proof of that."

Victor's eyes darkened. He brought her face closer. "I'll ask you one last time. Tell me the truth. Is the baby..."

"Didn't you hear me? I said the baby is gone. I am no longer pregnant. Didn't you see the paperwork?" Rachel spat at him. Her face was pale and her eyes red-rimmed.

Bang!