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Looking at them, Maisie could more or less guess what had happened, but she did not ask anything.

Erwin turned his head, put his hand on her shoulders, and said, “Khan and I still have something to attend to. so Zee, you can go back first.”

Maisie nodded and saw them away.

At the same time, Cherie rushed up to her and said while huffing heavily, “Mrs. Goldmann, so you’re here.

I thought you had gone somewhere.”

“What’s wrong? Cherie took a few seconds to calm herself down before saying rapidly, “Mr. Goldmann isn’t doing very well now, and Elder Master Goldmann wants to see you.”

Maisie hastily followed Cherie to the room. Inside the room, other than Quincy and Titus, she did not know the rest of the people. She reckoned that they must be the members of the Night Banquet.

Nolan was lying on the bed. His face was pale, and his forehead was filled with sweat. A specialist Titus had hired was checking his body temperature. After getting his body temperature, he turned and asked Quincy, “When did Mr. Goldmann start to have a low fever?”

Dumbfounded, Quincy replied, “Mr. Goldmann was

looking a little bit under the weather when he came back this morning.”

Maisie was stunned. ‘This morning? Could it be that he started to have a low fever last night? Titus turned his head around and stared at Maisie.’ Nolan was at your place last night. How did you take care of him? Why didn’t you notice that he had a low fever?’

“...” Maisie’s lips were trembling slightly, and she did not know what to say. She was the one who had asked Nolan to stay with her last night. She had not dared to get close to him since he had wounds on his body. Besides, he had not told her that he was not feeling well when he woke up this morning either.

The rest of the men turned their heads and looked at her. They could more or less guess who she was, but they were interested in her since this was the first time they met her.

Titus hissed exasperatedly after he heard what she said, “Nolan hasn’t been having a peaceful day since he started a relationship with you. Sooner or later, you’ll get him killed!”

The atmosphere in the room became tense.

The way the group of men looked at Maisie changed when they heard what Titus said. For them, Nolan was the successor of the Night Banquet, and as his wife, she must not be too weak.

After Nolan had come to Stoslo, he had gotten shot, and now he fell sick. He had been with Maisie last night, and Titus had been nurturing a grudge against Maisie after Nolan was shot. Therefore, he pushed all the blame to her right now. Maisie felt suffocated and had a hard time breathing after what Titus said. It seemed to her that he made her the villain of everything because she was related to the de Arma family.

The specialist gave Nolan some medicine, and then he went out to talk to Titus. Maisie stayed in the room and stood by the window. She looked at Nolan, whose face was pale from his illness, and felt a tug at her heart.

It was all her fault.

Cherie walked up to her and comforted, “Mrs. Goldmann, please don’t feel bad about yourself. Elder Master Goldmann didn’t really mean it. He’s just too angry, so don’t take everything he said to your heart.”

Maisie forced a bitter smile on her face and said, “I know. But it’s really my fault for not taking good care of him.”

Nolan only woke up in the afternoon.

His heart trembled when he saw Maisie was sleeping beside his bed. He stretched his arms to stroke her face.

When Maisie felt someone was touching her face, she lifted her head up and met Nolan’s glance. “You’re awake?”

Nolan nodded. He suddenly felt itchiness in his throat and turned around to cough.

“I’ll get you water.” Maisie stood up and walked away. Soon, she came back with a cup of water.

Nolan took the cup and drank it. After he felt better, he asked, “Have you been here the whole time?”

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“Yeah,” Maisie lowered her head and replied, “I’m sorry. I didn’t know that you had a low fever.”

Nolan reached out and put his hand on the back of her cold hand. There was a smile tugging at the corner of his lips as he said, “I don’t want you to worry about me, so I didn’t tell you. I’m the one who should say sorry, Zee.”

After all, he was hiding a secret from her.

He knew he was infected with the virus, and now he was in the infection period. He would experience symptoms such as persistent low fever, hemoptysis, and deterioration of health. He had only three to four years left to live.

Just when Maisie wanted to say something, Titus appeared. “Nolan, you’re awake!”

“Yeah.” He nodded.

Titus glanced at Maisie and ordered, “You, go out. I have something to say to Nolan.”

Maisie pressed her lips tight and did not say anything. She rose to her feet and went out. Nolan looked at her figure, and light slowly left his eyes.

It was only when both of them were left in the room that Titus asked, “Tell me honestly. What is going on with you?” The specialist had told Titus that Nolan’s condition was weird. A normal person with a low fever would recover after they slept and sweated for a night. However, it was not the same case with Nolan. It had been the second day, yet he hadn’t recovered, and the specialist was worried.

Nolan was not going to hide it from Titus, so he said, “I was infected by the virus.”

Titus’ expression changed after he heard what Nolan said.

“I hope this will be a secret between you and me, Grandpa. Don’t tell anyone about it, including my father, the kids, and Zee,” Nolan added plainly.

Titus closed his eyes and took a deep breath. Then, he said through gritted teeth, “How Were you infected?” Nolan then replied flatly, “The bullet that hit me had the virus on it.”

“Why can’t you be more serious about your own life? You’re the only one we can rely on in the Goldmanns. Do you expect us to depend on those three little kids?” Titus hissed exasperatedly.

Wayion and Colton were the descendants of the Goldmanns, but they were stilt kids. Were they going to lose their father at such a young age?

Titus clenched his fist tightly and continued. “Do you know there is no cure for the virus? Your greatgrandfather and great-grandmother died because of the virus, and now you tell me that you’re infected? I really should not have allowed you to start a relationship with Maisie. Once a person has a soft spot, they will become weak.”

He sighed deeply. “Sure enough, there’s a reason why your father refuses to let you take over the Night Banquet. Both of you are too much alike.”

No matter if it were Natasha in the past or Maisie right now, they were “weapons” that other people could use against the Goldmanns, and they had succeeded. It was because of Maisie that Nolan had been infected.

Nolan fell silent for a long while and said, “I’ll file a divorce with her.”

Titus was taken aback. In surprise, he looked at him and said, “What did you say?”

Nolan lifted his head and said plainly, “I’ll give half of my shares under my name to the kids and her. After I file a divorce with her, we’ll raise the kids together. After all, even if they’re members of the Goldmanns, they are her kids, and she has the right to raise them.”

Titus did not say anything. It went without saying that he knew why Nolan wanted to get a divorce with Maisie.

Maisie stood outside for a long while. She did not know what Titus was talking to Nolan. After a short while, the door was opened up from the inside, and Titus walked out of it.

“You can go in now.”

After that, he left. Maisie was kind of surprised that Titus did not scold or criticize her anymore.

She went back into the room.

Nolan was looking outside through the window with glassy eyes. She did not know what was on his mind, but he looked so weak and frail. This was the first time she saw Nolan in such a weakened state. He looked just like a beautiful porcelain that would break into pieces at the slightest touch.

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After a long while, Nolan parted his lips and said, "Let's get a divorce, Zee."

Maisie froze, and her brain went blank for a moment. She looked at him in disbelief and stammered, "What... What did you say?"

Nolan withdrew his gaze and turned his head around to look at her. There was no emotion in his eyes as he repeated, "Let's get a divorce,"

'Divorce...'

Maisie felt as if someone had stabbed her in her heart. She had never expected that Nolan would want to get a divorce with her one day, She bit her lower lip and tried her best to calm herself down. "Why? Can you give me a reason?"

She set her eyes fixed on Nolan, trying to get some message from his face. However, his pale face was apathetic, and his eyes were deep like the blue sea. There was not the slightest change of emotion in them at all. "No reason. I'm just... tired of you."

Maisie clenched her fists at her sides. She felt as if someone was peeling her heart away, and it was so painful that she could barely breathe. "Tired of me... huh?"

Nolan did not say anything in response.

Maisie took a few steps and approached him. Her long eyelashes had covered the emotion in her eyes as she smiled weakly. "You must be kidding me, right? Is it because Grandpa has told you something?"

"Grandpa is my family, and you don't have the right to know what he said to me. I'm the one who wants to get a divorce with you, and he has nothing to do with it. All you need to do is say yes," Nolan replied, his

eyes cold. “Don’t worry, you can still take care of the kids after our divorce. Besides, I’ll transfer half of the shares of Blackgold. It should be enough to last you a lifetime.”

“Nolan!” Maisie grabbed the collar of his shirt, and her eyes turned bloodshot while her hands were shaking profusely. Her voice was laced with sobs as she said, “What do you take me for? It was you who said you wanted to marry, and now you want to get a divorce? You’re lying to me, right? When you said you want to get a divorce, you’re lying, right!? You must be hiding something from me...” “Do you know that a woman like you who likes to ask a lot of questions is annoying? Do I look like I’m lying when I tell you I’m tired of you?” Nolan sneered coldly and pulled her hand away expressionlessly.

After he dusted the collar of his shirt, he continued coldly. “I’ll get Quincy to prepare the divorce procedures once we return to our country. You’ll get everything that you deserve.”

The sound of a slap rang through the room. The red weal on Nolan’s face that was getting clearer and clearer with every passing second signified how hard Maisie had slapped him. He clenched his fist tightly. The pain on his cheek was nothing compared to the pain in his heart.

Maisie’s eyes were red around the rims, and tears were dangling at the corner of her eyes. However, she forcibly held the tears back and said, “Nolan, you’re definitely not thinking clearly right now since you have a low fever. I’ll not agree to get a divorce with you. Don’t even think about it.”

After that, she turned around and left the room, slamming the door shut.

Nolan couldn’t hold himself back anymore and broke out in a violent fit of cough. A few drops of blood fell on the snow-white bed sheet, and

when he opened his palm, other than a few drops of blood, there were also deep marks caused by his fingers.

Maisie was not the only one who felt the pain. He was in pain as well. If it weren't because he had no other choice, how would he want to get a divorce with Maisie, as well as say those hurtful words in front of her face? How could he let her go?

"Zee, please forgive me..." A drop of tear fell on the back of his hand. It was a sleepless night for Maisie. She turned and tossed on the bed for a long time before sitting up. She looked at the bustling nightscape through the window with her heart filled with many thoughts. She didn't believe that Nolan would want to get a divorce with her, and she was certain that there must be other reasons.

When Maisie arrived at Nolan's room the next day, she saw a housekeeper cleaning the room.

"May I know where the guest that stays here is?" Maisie asked the housekeeper. "He checked out from the room this morning," the housekeeper replied.

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Maisie smiled and said thanks to the housekeeper. After that, she returned to her own room, where Cherie was packing her stuff. She asked, "Call Quincy and ask him where Nolan is." Cherie was stunned. That being said, she still pulled her phone out and made the call. Maisie did not know what Quincy had told her, but Cherie seemed surprised. "I thought your flight was in the afternoon?"

Quincy said something and hung up the call. Cherie turned her head around and said dumbfoundedly, “Mr. Goldmann and the others have already returned to the country.”

When Maisie’s face turned dark, Cherie asked carefully, “Zee, what’s going on with you and Mr. Goldmann? Did something happen yesterday?”

Cherie remembered that Maisie had been furious after coming out of Nolan’s room. She had not even had her dinner. She asked Quincy about it, but Quincy refused to tell her anything.

“He wants to get a divorce with me.”

“D... What? Divorce?” Cherie walked up to her. “Mr.

Goldmann wants to get a divorce with you? Are you sure he’s not joking?”

Even Cherie felt that Nolan was joking. It went without saying that Maisie thought the same as well.

However, Nolan had changed his flight without telling her in order to avoid her. Could it be that he really wanted to get a divorce?

‘Is he really tired of me?’

On the plane, when Maisie was flipping through the newspaper, she saw the news about a doctor and a few nurses who had been shot dead in the hospital. The hospital was the one that Nolan had been admitted into.

She was shocked when she saw the news. Only now did she see the light why Erwin had told her that Stoslo was not very peaceful lately.

‘Could it be the same group of people? But why did they kill the nurses and doctor?’ Maisie asked inwardly. It was already nighttime by the time they arrived at Zlokova’s airport. Maisie did not return to the Blue Bay villa or the Goldmann mansion. Instead, she returned to Vanderbilt manor.

Stephen was getting ready to sleep. When he heard that someone was knocking on the door, he went downstairs and opened the door. He was stunned for a bit when he saw Maisie was standing outside the door with her suitcase. “Zee, you-”

Maisie gave him a hug, cutting him short. “Dad, I’ve returned...”

Stephen was stunned once again. However, he had a feeling that Maisie was a bit under the weather, so he stroked her head and asked softly, “Alright. So, did something happen?”

Maisie shook her head and replied with a smile, “I’m fine. I just miss you very much. Dad, can I sleep at your place tonight?”

Stephen took a look at Cherie, who was standing outside the door. Cherie greeted him respectfully, and he responded with a nod. After that, he said to Maisie, “This is your home, so of course, I won’t say no if you want to sleep here.”

Maisie took her suitcase and went upstairs. In the meantime, Cherie received a text message. (Mr. Goldmann asks me to ask where you guys are.)

Cherie replied, (Mrs. Goldmann has returned to the Vanderbilt mansion. Quincy, can you tell me why Mr. Goldmann wants to get a divorce with her?)

After a short while, Quincy replied, (Don't ask. This is not something you should know. Mr. Goldmann wants you to stay by Ms. Vanderbilt's side. From now onward, you'll be working for Ms. Vanderbilt. If anything happens to her, remember to report to us.)

In the room, Maisie was taking her clothes out of her suitcase. Stephen appeared outside of the room and looked at her. "Are you sure nothing happened. Zee?"

Maisie froze. She turned around to meet his gaze and said, "Nope. Nothing happened." "If nothing happened, then why did you come back here as soon as you returned from overseas? Did you get into a fight with Mr. Goldmann?" Stephen sighed. "You young people are

"Dad," Maisie cut him short, "What do you say if I get a divorce with Nolan?"

Stephen was taken aback. "Divorce?"

Maisie forced a smile on her face and continued. "He wants to get a divorce with me, but I said no. There's no way he can get rid of me in this life."

Stephen did not say anything anymore after he heard what Maisie said. He figured that he shouldn't get involved in the relationship

between Maisie and Nolan. Besides, he could see that his daughter had truly fallen in love with that man.

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However, at the same time, Stephen did not want his daughter to get the short end of the stick. Before he left, he said, “Zee, you don’t necessarily need to always put other people before you. Even if you get a divorce with him, this will always be your home, and the door of the Vanderbilts will always be open for you.”

Maisie was stunned. She lowered her head and smiled.

She knew what her father was trying to say. He did not want her to get hurt too badly, but she just wanted to know why Nolan wanted to get a divorce. Before she got the answer, she would not give up so easily!

In the past, it was him who refused to stop hounding her, and this time, it was her turn!

The next day, at Blackgold...

After Cherie told Maisie that Nolan was in the office, Maisie dressed up nicely and headed to Blackgold with a lunch box.

Quincy was taken aback when he came out of the office and saw the beautiful and elegant woman walking in his direction. “Ms. Vanderbilt you...”

He knew Maisie had been a beauty, but she rarely put on any makeup ever since she started a relationship with Nolan. Therefore, he was slightly surprised to see her in her full makeup.

Maisie pointed at the door and asked, “Can I go in?”

Quincy did not know what he should say. After all, Nolan had not said she couldn’t enter his office. However, before he could answer anything. Maisie had pushed the door open and walked into it.

Nolan was reading his document. He did not raise his head, but he knew it was her since he had heard her voice outside the door.

Maisie put the lunch box on the table.

He asked faintly, "How can I help you?" "You haven't eaten anything yet, right? These are the snacks that I made myself. Do you want some?" Maisie asked as she opened up the lunch box.

He took a glance at it and replied simply, "Put it at the side first. I still have something else to attend to."

Maisie closed the lunch box and pushed it aside as Nolan told her to. She then looked at him fondly and said, "It's fine. You can do your work. I'll stay here and look at you."

Nolan was flipping through a document and froze. However, he did not say anything. Maisie did not bother him while he was working. She just occasionally browsed the books displayed on the shelves behind him or looked around at the decorations in his office. In short, she was looking around the office. Seeing that she had no intention of leaving, Nolan frowned and lifted his head to look at her. "If you don't have anything else to do, you can leave first."

"Am I bothering you?" Maisie withdrew her gaze and met his eyes.

Nolan looked at her. He realized that she had put some makeup on her face, and she looked as pretty and alluring as the time he saw her.

Even he was having a hard time peeling his gaze away from her now.

Maisie leaned forward, half of her body propped on the desk as she looked at him fondly and chuckled. "I thought you had no interest in me

anymore, Mr. Goldman. I never thought I would still be able to affect you.”

Setting his jaw tightly, Nolan picked up the document, pulled himself away from her, and refused to look her in the eyes.

Maisie lowered her head and bit her lip. She refused to give up just like that. As such, she got to her feet and walked toward him. She took his document away, and before Nolan could do anything, she sat on his lap and wrapped her arms around his neck. Her voice was soft and alluring as she said, “Nolan, let’s not get a divorce, okay?”

Nolan did not reply.

Even if she was sitting on his lap, he did not have any feelings at all. Well, it was not true that he did not have any feelings toward her, but he forcibly suppressed all his feelings for her.

Maisie looked at his lips. Just when she was about to kiss him, he suddenly turned his head sideways, grabbed her arms, and pulled her away from him.

Maisie was shocked.

Then, he said with an expressionless face, “The badger game doesn’t always work on men, especially when the man is no longer

interested in you.” “No longer interested...”

Maisie stood frozen stiff on the spot. She clenched her fist tightly, and after a long while, she smiled. “Are you sure about that?”

Lifting his head, Nolan looked at her and squinted his eyes. “Why don’t you give it a try? Let’s see if your charm still works on me or not,” he said

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Maisie kissed his cold lips again, clung to his body, and seduced him with subtle hints.

She thought she could do so but soon realized that she was wrong.

Nolan was indifferent. If it were not for the restraint he had been renowned for and proud of, then he must have lost his interest in her.

Maisie distanced herself from his lips slowly. She could feel a slight discomfort with each and every breath she took.

‘Should I choose to believe that he has really grown bored of me and doesn’t love me anymore? Or, is this his way of forcing me to leave him?’

She clenched her fists tightly. “Nolan, what if I say I won’t give up?”

Nolan was taken aback, but the surprise disappeared in a flash as he turned his head away. “You should go back first.”

Maisie stepped forward and hugged him.

Nolan’s body tensed up while his hand that was in midair clenched slowly into a fist, suppressing his urge to embrace her tightly in his arms.

Maisie's voice sounded light. "Nolan, I don't believe that you no longer love me. Even if you don't, I'll.. I'll

find a way to make you fall in love with me again."

The astonishment in Nolan's eyes quickly disappeared. Although his love for her had never declined, he still acted ruthlessly.

He pulled Maisie away from his arms, "Go back first. I'll go and pick you up in the evening. We still have to play the parts that we should play in front of the kids."

Maisie pursed her lips. Although she felt a little disappointed, at least, they still had one last bond connecting the both of them—the children. She could not help but laugh at herself when she walked out of the office.

'We can only maintain this "relationship between us thanks to the kids.

'Nolan... Is he really serious about this?'

After Maisie left, Quincy walked into the office with some documents while Nolan was smoking a cigarette in front of the window. There were already a few cigarette butts in the ashtray.

It was the first time Quincy had seen him smoke so much.

"Mr. Goldman, about this divorce agreement, are you really..." Quincy knew that Nolan was doing this for Maisie's sake. However, as an outsider, even he could see how much Nolan cared about Maisie. But because of how much he cared, there was nothing else that he could do apart from this.

Even the divorce conditions were designed to safeguard Maisie's future as half of the share of the entire Blackgold Group would be hers to own after this.

In a low and deep voice, Nolan said, "Put it on the table."

Quincy placed the agreement on the table.

Nolan then took a long drag on the cigarette in his hand, turned around, and flicked the ash on the tip into the ashtray. "Is there any news from Stoslo?"

Quincy replied, "Elder Master Goldmann has captured all their men, but Daniel had already abandoned those people. It's obvious that Daniel won't do anything for those men. As for the doctor and nurses who were murdered in the hospital, it seems that they want to hide the virus from the world."

Nolan frowned. "What about the prince?"

Quincy added, "Prince Roger hasn't made a single move for the time being. This should be because he's afraid of startling the royal family."

King Miller was still in power in the royal family. Ever since the incident involving that eldest princess back then, the Millers had been going against Prince Roger, who desired to expand his influence among the royal family. Hence, if the Millers were to find out that Prince Roger had a hand in the scheme, it would be difficult for him to get out of this mess unscathed.

No matter what, the princess and the Millers were related by blood, and she was the only princess. Thus, even though Prince Roger was related to the Millers too, he was still only an illegitimate child. His biological mother was only a maid who had tried her best to find her way into the

king's chamber and succeeded. Prince Roger could not inherit the throne because of his ineligible identity.

Prince Roger had been living a simple life for decades. He had plenty of people who would do his dirty work for him, so he never needed to show up. What's more, the Kents' objective was obvious—they were supporting Prince Roger to achieve their own desired goals.

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Nolan moved the ashtray aside and tapped the table with his fingertips. "Does Hernandez know about this?"

He was referring to what had happened to Maisie in Stoslo.

Quincy paused for a split second and then replied, "I think Hernandez should know."

Maisie was soon taken to the Lucases, and she somehow managed to guess why Hernandez was looking for her.

Larissa led her to the study, where Hernandez was standing in front of the window with his hands behind his back. He then asked without even looking back, "Were you and Nolan attacked in Stoslo?"

Maisie gave off a faint smile. "Your information seems to travel at lightspeed."

"Heh, Stoslo is a territory under my watch, anyway. They reported the news to me right after they received the news. It seems that those people can't hold back anymore."

Hernandez turned around calmly, and his gaze landed on Maisie. “I’m correct, after all. Although I won’t use you to deal with the Goldmanns since you and Nolan

are together, the other party won’t be as soft-hearted a

Maisie stepped forward. “Sir Hernandez, have you ever thought that you might have been misled about the matter between the Goldmanns and the de

Armas?”

Hernandez’s expression looked stern and displeased.” Are you still going to explain for the Goldmanns?” Maisie knew that mentioning the Goldmanns would make Hernandez unhappy, but she had always wanted to ask so that she could get all the details sorted out. “Okay, then I’ll ask you directly, does the kidnapping of Nolan’s mother from 15 years ago have anything to do with you?”

Hernandez snorted. “Don’t the Goldmanns say it’s me? What else do you need me to explain?”

Maisie had her expectations fulfilled. “So it was not you, right?”

Hernandez responded indifferently, “Even if it’s not me, it’s impossible for the grievances between the Goldmanns and the de Armas to end just like this.”

Maisie remained silent.

As expected, he knows what happened 15 years ago, but he doesn’t even want to explain himself when the Goldmanns suspect that it’s him. All this was just because of his hatred for the Goldmanns, so what the Goldmanns say has nothing to do with him.

‘So whether that incident had happened or not, he would still hate the Goldmanns. But at least I now know that it has nothing to do with the de Armas.

Maisie lowered her gaze and smiled. “Glad to know that it wasn’t you.”

Hernandez paused for a short while, and his expression turned serious. “I advise you to leave the Goldmanns. Now that those people already know that you’re Nolan’s wife, they won’t let you go this easily.”

“I won’t leave him. I wouldn’t be able to stand here in front of you now if Nolan hadn’t protected me at the time.” Maisie shook her head. ‘I won’t leave no matter who tries to persuade me, not even if Nolan wants to divorce me.’

“You-”

“Grandpa, this is the first time I’ve called you this.”

Larissa was stunned, and even Hernandez was surprised because it was the first time Maisie was willing to call her grandfather in such a long time.

Maisie’s attitude was not as rigid as before too. “I know you hate the Goldmanns, but maybe some of the incidents really have nothing to do with the Goldmanns-”

“They have nothing to do with some of the incidents?” Hernandez slammed the desk and questioned her loudly, “Then did I lose a leg for nothing?”

“Nolan’s great-grandfather should have amputated one of your legs when he was holding you hostage if he really wanted to do so. Thus, why bother to let you go and then do it after that?” Maisie retorted calmly.

'From what Uncle Erwin told me, I could see that Nolan's great-grandfather wouldn't kill innocent people indiscriminately, let alone a child.

Hernandez frowned. "Who told you this, Nolan?"

"No," Maisie replied, "It's Uncle Erwin. He just happens to know something too." "Who did you just say? Erwin!?" Hernandez was obviously shocked. "How did you get to know him?"

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Maisie paused for a split second before adding, "My mother knew him. He also told me that my mother died because of the sleeper virus."

Larissa covered her mouth. She was clearly in shock.

Hernandez was stunned in place, but his expression changed in an instant.

Hernandez asked Larissa to bring Maisie out while he continued to stay in the silent study. Nobody knew what he was thinking—the only

thing that was clear to others was that his expression became even gloomier as time went by.

Larissa walked downstairs with Maisie and asked out of the blue, "Maisie, is what you just said true? Your mother really—"

"Yes, Uncle Erwin wouldn't lie to me."

Maisie knew that Erwin would not lie to her about the cause of her mother's death, but she still could not help but worry about Hernandez when she thought of the change in his expression from just now. "Aunt, can you tell me why Grandpa's expression changed so drastically when he heard about the virus?"

Maisie addressed Larissa as her aunt, which made Larissa feel extremely relieved. She then reluctantly replied after a while, "I don't know. Your grandfather really didn't know that your mother had been

infected. I didn't know about that either. It's no wonder she would leave with Strix...

"Now I understand why Marina would say that only Strix could save her back then. However, Strix still couldn't save her in the end."

Larissa's eyes were filled with loss and grief as she said to Maisie, "I know that there's no cure for the virus. Even though the drugs developed by Strix can control its side effects, Marina's condition only developed when it was already a year after the epidemic..."

Larissa suddenly stopped.

"Aunt, what's the matter with you?" Maisie suddenly became worried when she noticed that Larissa's face gradually turned pale.

Larissa looked at her. "The incubation period of the virus is one year, which means that your mother was already infected the year the epidemic started. That's not impossible."

Maisie was slightly puzzled. "Why would you say that?"

Larissa explained to her, "The epidemic from 30 years ago only broke out post-first contact. It's said that the source of the infection is related to

the water reservation tank of a hotel, but your mother didn't go to that hotel at that time.

“Moreover, the people infected with the virus were no different from any ordinary people. They got to live a normal life during the incubation period. The virus won't be spread through the air but only through direct contact. It's just like the bacteria attached to an item's surface. You'll only be infected when you get in touch with that item. However, your mother had always been staying in the de Armas mansion and had never been in contact with any man before meeting Strix, so how did she get infected?”

On the way back, Maisie kept thinking about Larissa's words.

‘It's obvious that Mom's virus infection is too strange. It seems that it was a man-made event, as Uncle Erwin said. Now that I get to think about it, the virus infection is not a natural disaster but an invisible” weapon” that kills people.’

At this time, she received a text message on her phone.

It was from Nolan.

The dead silent atmosphere in the car made Maisie very uncomfortable. Nolan spoke next to almost nothing and would not take the initiative to start a conversation. Even though she wanted to break the awkward atmosphere, she did not know what to say.

Quincy took a glance at the rearview mirror. As an outsider, he still could not help but feel uncomfortable when he saw this.

‘Mr. Goldman has been infected with the virus because of the conspiracy of those who want to suppress the Goldmanns completely. If

Mr. Goldman doesn't divorce Ms. Vanderbilt now, he won't be able to protect her because of his current condition.

'Ms. Vanderbilt can only completely get rid of her relationship with the Goldmans when she's divorced. She will also be able to keep herself out of all this mess when the de Armas recognize her as one of their family members after this.

After all, with the power and influence that Hernandez has in Stoslo, it won't be difficult for him to protect Maisie. Those people only had the guts to lay their fingers on Maisie in Stoslo because Hernandez wasn't there. Not to mention that they'd have a chance to win the de Armas over if something were to happen to Maisie back then.'

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The grip formed by Maisie's intertwined fingers tightened as she turned to look at Nolan, who was absent-minded at the moment. "How do you plan to explain to the children that we're going through a divorce?" Nolan's body froze slightly, and his gaze dimmed." We'll talk about it when the time comes."

'Even if the kids were to hate me or blame me.' Maisie stared at him for a while and then slowed down her speech rate. "Is there no other way out of this?"

"Must we get a divorce?" He did not say anything.

Maisie clenched her hands into fists. "At least, let me know the reason behind you wanting a divorce."

Nolan frowned and said impatiently, “I’ve told you everything that I need to say.” ‘Sure enough, I can’t get an answer from him.’.

Maisie scoffed mockingly.

‘Since he wants to divorce me but has refused to give me a reason, then I won’t agree to the divorce.’

Nolan caught a glimpse of the disappointment on her face, and the hidden emotions that emerged from the

depths of his eyes made him stiffen his face.

‘She must be hurting deep down.

‘But I’m hurting too.’

The three children were all overjoyed, knowing that their parents were back. Maybe because it had been a long time, the three children were more attached to Maisie.

Daisie sat in Maisie’s arms and said with her pretty and moist eyes, “Mommy, Mommy, can we go to Grandpa’s place to see Reddy? We really want to see Reddy!”

Colton was eating potato chips. “Well, I really want to eat Grandpa’s banana loaf.”

Wayion closed the book that he was reading and glanced at him. “You only know what and how to eat.”

Colton then replied, “Wayion, it’s a blessing to be able to eat!”

Maisie looked at them helplessly. “Okay, then Mommy will take you to Grandpa’s place tomorrow.” “Mommy, aren’t you busy?” Wayion asked.

Maisie was astonished and just so happened to meet Nolan’s gaze, so she shifted her gaze away and looked at Wayion. “I’m not busy lately. I have Uncle Kennedy to help me at the company.”

“Then is Daddy busy?” Daisy turned to look at Nolan.

Nolan’s eyes narrowed slightly, and he opened his

thin lips. “I’m not busy either.”

Maisie only took a glance at him.

‘If he wants to spend more time with the kids too, can I make him give up the idea of divorce during this period?’

The children had been showing more willingness to go back to the Goldmann mansion ever since Rowena was chased away from the Goldmann mansion, and this was the first time Maisie stayed there after quite a long time.

In the evening, Maisie laid down on the bed, using her cell phone to search for a solution to coax Nolan from the idea of asking for a divorce on the Internet.

Netizen 1: If he’s asking for a divorce, it means that he doesn’t love you anymore, so it’s useless to coax him now.

Netizen 2: Why would you coax him? Do you plan to lick his boots next? What you need to do now is to kick him out of your life. It’s better to find yourself another husband.

Netizen 3: If your husband is asking you for a divorce, it's probably because he's started to think that you're unattractive, or he's keeping a homewrecker's existence a secret. Thus, you should be careful of him.

Maisie lay on the bed in despair. 'Instead of Nolan having a homewrecker out there, I'd rather believe that it's me. I might have become

unattractive to Nolan!

Thinking of how indifferent he was while they were at the office, she was a little discouraged.

Nolan opened the door, walked into the room, saw Maisie lying on the bed scrolling through her phone, and his expression stiffened.

The silk nightdress that she was wearing looked extremely thin-it fit her perfectly and accentuated her exquisite figure. Her long, curly hair was scattered on her left side, while her right shoulder strap had slipped off of her shoulder and was hanging on her upper arm. She also lifted her calves and swayed them from side to side subtly.

Nolan could feel his blood surging and boiling just because of the scene and the inadvertent action of her tucking her hair behind her ear

Nolan looked away stiffly, and only then did Maisie realize that someone was standing beside the bed, which caused her to put her phone down in shock." Since when did you come in?"

'He shouldn't have seen it, right?'

Nolan did not answer her but turned around. "I'm going to take a bath."

He then walked toward the bathroom.

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Maisie pouted, but a hint of slyness flashed across her eyes when she thought of something.

Nolan took a cold shower to suppress all impulses, and he even regretted his indecision.

‘Would I really be willing to divorce her the longer I keep her by my side?’

‘I’m not willing to let go too, but I have to.’

Nolan obviously wanted to get a divorce but still played along with Maisie when it came to the children. Maybe this was his selfishness. All he wanted was to fully occupy these beautiful moments that he could still cling to, and that was all.

Nolan walked out of the bathroom, and the scene in front of him rekindled the flame that he had just managed to suppress while he was in the bathroom, which almost broke him.

Maisie was lying on the bed with one hand propping the side of her head, but this posture was extremely enchanting and intoxicating.

Any ordinary man would have gone crazy when he saw this, let alone Nolan.

Nolan turned his face away stiffly and gnashed his teeth. “Maisie Vanderbilt, do you know what you’re doing?”

“Didn’t you say that I’m no longer attractive to you?” Maisie played with a lock of her hair with her fingertips while winking and smiling at him. “Then why don’t you dare to look at me?”

Nolan’s eyes dimmed, his expression looked gloomy, and he lowered his voice. “Stop the pointless resistance.”

“I don’t think it’s pointless.” Maisie sat up. “Nolan Goldmann, look at me.”

Nolan gritted his molars and glared at Maisie with a trace of gloom in his eyes. There were hints of stubbornness and unwillingness on her beautiful and captivating face. And while he remained unmoved, a crystal clear awareness that flashed across her eyes scorched his sight.

Maisie could not help but ask herself from the bottom of her heart, ‘I’m shamelessly standing right in front of him, butt naked, but he manages to keep a straight face, so does that mean that I really am no longer attractive to him anymore? Or has he grown tired of me?’

Her hand that was holding the nightdress trembled slightly, but she still conceded defeat in the end as she lowered her eyes, bit her lip. and put on her clothes again.

“I’ll sleep with the kids,” Maisie said with a hint of bitterness deep down.

She was about to get up when a silhouette pressed her against the bed abruptly and kissed her lips vigorously.

Maisie was taken aback. She was in pain and was almost out of breath.

“Nolan...”

Nolan’s eyes were bloodshot, and his actions gradually became more ruthless. “Isn’t this what you want?”

Maisie stared at him. Everywhere that his lips went by felt as if it was being lit on fire, scorching her heart and burning her soul.

And when she was in the mood and was looking forward to his next move, he did not move on.

Yes, he was torturing her, but she did not know that he was also torturing himself.

Nolan finally pulled himself away and turned away from her. "I'll sleep in the study."

He then walked out of the room without looking back.

Maisie froze on the bed, looking at the door that was pitilessly closed, and her heart gradually fell into an abyss.

Nolan smoked a few more cigarettes in the study. He had never been a huge smoker, but he had become more and more addicted recently. He glanced out the window, his eyes looking as gloomy and cold as the misty night.

The next morning, Nolan walked downstairs.

Perhaps because he did not see the children and Maisie, he asked Mr. Cheshire, "Where are they?"

Mr. Cheshire replied with a smile. "The young lady brought the little ones out earlier in the morning."

Nolan glanced at the delicate breakfast arranged on the table, and he knew that she was the one who had made it.

'She still prepared breakfast...

The corners of his lips raised as he gave off an imperceptible smile upon thinking of this.

At the Vanderbilt manor...

The three children were chasing around and playing with Reddy, and the yard was filled with peals of laughter.

Stephen had mixed feelings while looking at this scene.

It had been a long time since the last time when the Vanderbilt manor was this lively, especially when the kids were here. Something came to his mind out of the blue, and he looked at Maisie, “Has the matter between you and Mr. Goldmann been resolved? Does... Does he really want a divorce?” | |