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Levant studied her hesitant expression and began to panic.

No...I have to make her agree to this!

However, before he could say anything, one of his maids walked in and told him that he had a visitor.

With that, Levant stood up to leave. "Get some rest. I'll be back soon."

As he walked out of the room, Nicole sighed heavily.

I wonder how he's going to deal with Evan...

Evan...

The more she thought about that name, the more she felt conflicted on the inside.

It is obvious that Levant will not let him go so easily...

This is all your fault, Evan!

You brought this upon yourself.

Feeling irritated, she stood up and walked over to the bedroom.

However, before she could put her hand on the handle of the door, it flew open and Juan ran in while panting heavily. She was shocked out of her wits.

"What's wrong, Juan?" she asked.

"I saw the bad woman, Mommy!" Juan said, struggling to catch his breath.

"The bad woman?"

"Yeah, that Susan woman. I saw her talking to Levant! I don't think they're up to any good," Juan explained.

Levant and Susan? Why would they be together?

Nicole was rather surprised by the news.

Juan whipped out his phone and showed her a picture. "Look! I took this picture of them in secret. I'm pretty sure that's Susan!"

Nicole took a good look at the photo and raised an eyebrow when she noticed the two people in the picture were indeed Susan and Levant.

How did they know each other?

She cracked her head over the matter. Could it be that she is here to see Levant in the hope to rescue Evan?

That's not entirely impossible.

Right, she is definitely here for Evan. She will go all out trying to save him. After all, she is the one he will be spending the rest of his life with. Well, who am I to get involved though?

"Thanks for telling me, Juan," she said with a smile while ruffling his hair. "You can go now."

Juan nodded and walked out of the room.

Meanwhile, Levant watched as Susan disappeared around a corner with a smirk on his face.

She's one wicked woman! I'd never have guessed that she would use such ruthless methods to get what she wants!

I'm sure Nicole will give up all hopes on Evan and come back to me once she witnesses this amazing act we've planned out for her!

He scoffed and gestured to one of his henchmen. "You there! Go and..."

"Yes, Mr. Levant."

That night, Nicole sat alone in the bedroom. She was trying hard to clear her mind of that cold face of Evan but to no avail.

In her opinion, Evan was a tyrant that would do anything to achieve his goals.

He could torture her until she bled and cried for his mercy, and he would even resort to impersonating another person just to keep her by his side.

Is he what people would call a cruel lover?

It is too bad he is such a ruthless character. How I wish he would show me only his loving and gentle side; I am sure we would have been very happy together.

A tiny grin appeared on her face as she thought of his love, only for it to be wiped off by a sudden gust of wind.

Wake up, Nicole! He has nothing to do with me anymore! Just stop thinking about him...now and forever...

She got up to see her kids but was stopped by Levant, who rushed in looking panicky.

"Nicole! Susan wants to meet Evan! Do you think I should allow her?" he asked, sitting down on the couch in the room.

Nicole fell silent. A few seconds later, she replied, "I don't know. It's up to you."

Levant could tell that she was conflicted about it, and it irritated him to see that she still cared about Evan. Most importantly, his relationship with Susan.

He clenched his fists as a mysterious grin appeared on his face.

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"I wanted to stop her, but she kept crying and telling me about how she missed him...I couldn't stand to see her like that," Levant said. "Who knows what kind of underhanded tactics she might use to rescue Evan? Nicole, I need you to keep an eye on her. Can you do that for me?" Nicole was a little taken aback. Why is he asking me to keep an eye on Susan?

What more, what could she even do to rescue Evan from such a heavily fortified place?

Something smells fishy here. Levant has something in mind.

"Just humor me for once, will you?" Levant pleaded.

Nicole fell silent. Alright then...I guess it'll be a good opportunity to find out what exactly he's planning to do.

"Sure," she said, nodding.

Levant's eyes lit up. Let the show begin!

Nicole followed Levant to the courtyard where he locked Evan and the Hidden Masters up, and the first thing she heard upon entering was Susan's pained cries.

"Why are you so dense, Evan? Why did you have to go after the Wicked Palace's treasures? What's the point of all this?" Susan asked, her voice trembling. "What should I do now? Should I ask Ms. Nicole to help me? I don't think she knows that you impersonated Levant to look for the treasures. Maybe she'll agree to help me rescue you if you sweet-talked her?" "Why don't you try that?"

A long period of silence followed.

That was Evan's voice.

Nicole stood rooted to the ground in shock.

Susan's desperate cries revealed to her that Evan had impersonated Levant just to search for the Wicked Palace's treasures, and not for her sake.

Did he just tell her to ask me for help?

Huh! How can he be so shameless!

Nicole's face darkened while Levant stared at her with a smirk.

She's falling for it! That wasn't Evan at all! It's just a random person that sounded like him.

Everything's going smoothly!

"I can't stay here for long but don't you worry. I promise I'll try my best to rescue you," Susan said. "You have told me that you will throw a huge wedding for me and I know you will keep your words! You have my trust, Evan..."

This is one great piece of information. They're getting married?

Didn't they already have one in K Nation? It looks like that is not enough and therefore, they will be having another one back home. He's set on making her his legitimate wife.

It was as though someone had reached into her chest and crushed her heart into pieces. Her face turned paler than a sheet when Levant spoke up all of a sudden.

"That man has the audacity to go after the treasures in the Wicked Palace!" he growled.

Nicole stayed silent and strained her ears to listen to more of the conversation.

"I haven't forgotten about my promise, Susan," 'Evan' said. "I'll definitely keep my promise."

Susan nodded vehemently and hugged him close. 'Evan' stroked her face and leaned down to kiss her on her fiery red lips.

They became entangled in each other's embrace just seconds later.

Nicole's jaw dropped. Why is he acting like a playboy to Susan as well?

So...that's what he really is?

She chuckled sadly and turned around to walk out of the courtyard with Levant hot on her heels, smirking uncontrollably.

He caught up to her after they exited the courtyard and pretended to check on her out of concern. "What's wrong, Nicole?"

Nicole shook her head.

I bet that was all part of Levant's plan to put up an act to make me lose all faith in Evan...

She looked into Levant's eyes. "That wasn't necessary, you know. I've lost hope in him since ages ago."

Levant stopped dead in his tracks and stared at her in confusion.

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Levant opened his mouth to explain, but Nicole did not give him a chance. She quickened her pace and walked away from him.

On her way back, all she could think of was the passionate kiss Susan and 'Evan' shared.

It made her heart twitch painfully.

The first thing she saw upon arriving at the living room was Kyle standing in the middle. She took a deep breath to hide her sorrow and smiled at him. "It's getting pretty late, Kai. You should go to bed."

"Mommy, I found the courtyard where Daddy and those four uncles are being held at. They told me that they'll be fine, and that I should go back before anyone finds me," Kyle said. "Will Daddy be fine, Mommy?"

Nicole frowned. "When did that happen?"

"Just now. I just came from there."

Nicole stared at Kyle in bewilderment.

Just now?

Wasn't he messing around with Susan...

"Are you sure, Kai? Did you see Susan?" she asked.

Kyle pondered over it for a moment before shaking his head. "She wasn't there, Mommy! Trust me!"

Nicole fell silent.

What the hell is going on?

Kyle's next statement came as a huge shock to her. "Mommy, I think Levant's been bullying Daddy... Daddy has been wearing Jeremy's clothes, and I don't know where are his clothes."

That reminded Nicole of the scene she had just witnessed back at the courtyard.

The man that was supposed to be Evan had been standing with his back facing her, blocking his face from her view. He wore Evan's clothes, and his voice sounded very similar to that of Evan's.

Could it have been ... an imposter?

Levant had practically dragged her there, and she started to wonder if it had all been a mere act.

She was very unsettled at the thought of that.

Giving Kyle a serious look, she said, "Kai, keep your mouth shut about this. Is that clear?"

Kyle nodded. "I promise I won't tell anyone about it. Daddy told me to keep it a secret too."

After Kyle returned to his room, Nicole walked back to her own bedroom with a puzzled expression on her face.

She tossed and turned on the bed as she pondered over every single thing that happened that day.

Evan impersonated Levant, and Levant retaliated by getting someone to impersonate Evan.

They're both equally ruthless!

If not for Kyle's revelation, she would have believed everything Levant made her witness earlier.

I was almost tricked...

Was everything that happened before this a misunderstanding too? So what's real and what was not then?

She thought of John's words about how Evan had nothing to do with her being thrown into jail and tortured to hell and back.

Did he deserve all the hatred I have for him?

Didn't he insist on locking me up? I saw everything with my own eyes. What the hell is going on?

Nicole took a deep breath and forced herself to go to sleep. She felt as though her mind was shrouded in mist, making it difficult for her to discern between truths and lies.

Sheila stared at her phone screen, wondering if she should inform Nicole about the news. She didn't know what to expect but there was no other option.

She looked up at John and Davin, who gave her a reassuring nod. After taking a deep breath, she dialed Nicole's number.

Nicole picked up the phone almost immediately. "What's up, Sheila?"

"Nicole, you're the only person who can rescue Mr. Seet now," Sheila said. "We've gotten in contact with the people who could prove Mr. Seet's innocence, but someone led them away before we could meet them."

Sheila took a deep breath before continuing. "Can you trust us without the evidence, Nicole? I will prove that Mr. Seet was not involved in that incident all those years ago."

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Nicole thought about it for a second before replying, "It's getting late. Good night."

She hung up after that.

Sheila looked at her phone and then glanced at the two men. "She hung up on me. I don't know if she's willing to help us."

John sighed. "Looks like she still refuses to trust Mr. Seet..."

"If she's unwilling to help, then it'll be down to the three of us to figure out a plan then," Davin said with a frown.

Sheila stood up all of a sudden. "I'm going to the Wicked Palace. I have to see her and convince her!"

"I'll go with you," Davin said, he was worried for her safety.

"There is no need," Sheila said. "Levant will definitely send someone to track you down. I'll go there myself."

John nodded. "I think Ms. Muir should go alone on the pretense of bidding her farewell. Bringing you along would only raise suspicions."

He turned to Sheila and said, "I need you to cut back on the coaxing and just tell her a story. If she isn't moved by the story, then it would mean that Mr. Seet and Nicole were never meant to be."

"Story? What story?" Sheila asked, raising an eyebrow.

"The story that I didn't get to finish..." John said, his gaze downcast.

The next day.

Sheila arrived at the Wicked Palace early in the morning to meet Nicole. Noticing that the latter's face was rather pale, she told her to take care of herself before she cleared her throat and revealed the true intentions of her visit.

"Ms. Nicole, you're not going to like this, but I need you to listen to me," Sheila pleaded. "I'll leave after this. Is that alright?"

Nicole simply stared at her wordlessly, waiting for her to speak.

"I'm sure John had already told you the story of Evan sleeping with the urn that supposedly contained your ashes in his arms, right?" Sheila started. "Would you like to know how he brought the urn back home?"

"It had been raining heavily that fateful night. Evan unearthed the urn with his bare hands, ignoring the mud and grime that coated his arms as though his germaphobia never existed. When he finally dug the urn out, he held it close to his body, fearing that the rain would mar its surface. The elders from the Seet family had tried to stop him from bringing the urn back home, but he refused to obey their orders. He wanted to keep the urn and his love for you safe, even if it meant going against his family's wishes."

"Sending you to jail was a decision he hated himself for making. The victim had been his beloved grandfather, and you would never hear the end of it from the Seet family if Evan had not intervened."

By then, Nicole face had already turned a ghastly shade of white. Her fingers dug into the fabric of her shirt.

Sheila took a deep breath. "If this isn't true love, then I don't know what is. Maybe the two of you are just not fated to be together."

She moved closer to Nicole before continuing. "I'm done with my story, but I still have a question for you. How would you feel if you pulled the same trick in order to stay close to Mr. Seet?"

When Nicole did not answer, she decided to try another angle. "I know you aren't actually in love with Levant, and I'm sure Mr. Seet feels the same for Susan. How would you feel if you were forced to impersonate Susan just to get close to him?"

Tears fell from Nicole's eyes.

She used to berate Evan in her mind for stealing Levant's identity, but Sheila's story made her realize how powerless he had been against fate and circumstance.

An arrogant man like him has gone this far to stoop so low.

He must have hated using someone else's identity just to talk to me.

I won't be able to do the same even if I don't have a choice.

The thought of it almost made her gag.

"By the way, there's something else that I need to clarify," Sheila said. "Remember the jar of paper stars that you said was a gift from Mr. Seet to Susan? John and Davin have taken a closer look at it after Mr. Seet mailed it over. The truth was Mr. Seet had made those stars for Susan back when she saved him and got hospitalized, but the words on them seemed freshly written. The person who wrote them is pretty adept at forging Mr. Seet's handwriting, but it's still pretty obvious that those words weren't written by him"

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"John managed to get his hands on the security footage from Mr. Seet's office," Sheila said, glancing at Nicole. "Susan had given Mr. Seet the bottle not too long ago, and he's kept it in the drawer ever since."

Nicole's face was a ghastly shade of white while her eyes were swollen and teary. After a long period of silence, she managed to squeeze out a sorrowful grin and said, "Maybe you're right, Sheila...maybe we were never meant to be..."

Sheila frowned. "Are you saying that you still don't trust him?"

Nicole fell silent.

She found the events from the previous night highly suspicious, and it made her have second thoughts about her treatment towards Evan.

It looks like this must have been a misunderstanding...

"Are you done? You may take your leave now," Nicole said calmly.

Sheila was taken aback by her words, but she had no choice but to take it. She stood up and let out a sigh as a strange feeling of irritation began to bubble up inside of her.

Why can't she just forgive Mr. Seet? Can't she see just how much he loves her? Why is she so stubborn and stuck in her own ways? Maybe she didn't deserve all that love after all...

Maybe separation was the way to go after all.

As Nicole watched Sheila stomp out of the room, tears began to spill out of her eyes.

Her tears slid into her mouth, and it tasted bittersweet.

She felt bitter about how badly she had treated Evan, and how she had gotten him into so much trouble because of all the misunderstandings. Maybe we weren't fated to be together.

However, she was moved by the intense love he had for her.

I'm sorry, Evan. I'll do everything to rescue you and make sure you leave this safe and sound, but I don't think we can be lovers anymore.

"So? How did it go?" Davin asked the moment Sheila returned. "Is Nicole going to help us save my brother?"

Sheila glared at him as her temper flared. "What kind of sister-in-law is she? She didn't even bat an eyelid when I told her that story! She even thinks that she isn't fated to be with Mr. Seet! Why is she so cold-hearted?"

Davin's face fell. What now? With Nicole refusing to help, how are we going to save Evan?

John had a deep frown on his face as well. After a moment of silence, he looked up and said, "I think it's time we gather our forces and infiltrate the Wicked Palace, Mr. Davin."

"Wait! We can't make my brother's predicament public! The Seet Group and my family will suffer a huge blow from this!" Davin exclaimed. "We need to come up with another plan."

"What plan? What options do we even have at this point?" John asked, panicking.

"The estate," Davin answered with a gloomy face and knotted brows.

"The estate?" John repeated anxiously.

Stephen had been released from the Wicked Palace by Evan posing as Levant. Even though his power was never to be underestimated, John was reluctant to place all bat on him to win in the battle against the Wicked Palace.

In fact, Nicole was dead set on marrying Levant, who was Stephen's adopted son and future son-in-law. John figured that he would be torn between helping his own family members and Evan, who was an outsider.

John decided to voice his concerns to Davin, who pondered over them for a moment. "It doesn't hurt to try, I guess. Didn't Evan let Sir Musgrave out of the Wicked Palace while he was impersonating as Levant? I'm sure he won't mind helping us out in return."

John nodded in agreement.

Sheila slammed her hand on the table. "That's right, Davin! Having him return the favor would even things out. Your brother would have nothing to do with the estate or Nicole once that happens!"

Davin turned around to shoot Sheila a look. "That's up to my brother to decide. Besides, I don't think Ms. Nicole is as heartless as you think."