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Her lips were soft and plump with an extra hint of sweetness from the alcohol. He was fully captivated.

Natalie wasn't aware that she had been kissed. She only knew that there was a cooling sensation on her lips that she liked very much. Subconsciously, she placed her arms around his neck and continued seeking that coolness.

Her behavior was like some sort of encouragement to Shane. He had lost his rationality and was purely driven by instinct.

After the kiss, he placed one hand behind her head and the other around her waist. Slowly, he laid her down on the sofa with his body pressing against hers.

They went all the way that night.

It wasn't until dawn the next day, Shane woke up from his sleep.

He stood by the sofa and took a glance at the woman who had fallen asleep due to exhaustion. A wave of mixed emotions took over him.

Soon after, he reached out and grabbed his clothes from behind the sofa. He went back to his room, took out a blanket, and covered it on top of Natalie. Then he turned around and headed to the bathroom quietly.

After his shower, he went out of the bathroom while drying his hair. His phone that was on the coffee table kept vibrating.

He walked towards it and hung the towel around his neck. Jacqueline's name appeared on the phone screen when he picked it up.

"Hello," Shane answered the phone. His voice was husky and sexy, so much that it would send chills down one's spine.

Jacqueline broke into tears. "Shane, where are you?"

Shane glanced over at Natalie who was fast asleep. He pursed his lips. "I'm at the office."

Jacqueline quietened after listening to his reply. After a few seconds, she asked, "Why didn't you come to the restaurant last night? I thought you said you would come and I was waiting. Why did you break your promise?"

Shane pinched his nose out of guilt and said, "I'm sorry, it's my fault. I'll make it up to you."

"How are you going to make up to me? It was my birthday yesterday. Shane, you're too much. Jackson and I kept calling you last night but you didn't pick up the phone. Do you know how worried I was?" Jacqueline scolded angrily and hung up the phone.

Shane put down the phone and flipped through the call logs. Jacqueline and Jackson had called him many times indeed.

It was around the same time when he was with Natalie.

With his thoughts ruminating, Shane could feel his head aching and he rubbed the sides of his temples.

At the same time, there were some sudden movements coming from the woman who was on the sofa. She let out a low hum and opened her eyes. Starring at the bright ceiling, she was a bit confused. "Where am I?"

Shane gawked at her and his pupils shrunk. "My apartment."

"Why am I in your apartment, Mr. Shane?" Natalie raised her arms and gently rubbed her swollen temples. She attempted to sit up straight.

Once her body moved, she yelled out in pain and fell back onto the sofa. The fall had her feeling dizzy and bits and pieces of memories from the previous night started to appear in her mind.

She didn't feel good after knowing what she had done with Shane last night.

Natalie turned her head stiffly and stared blankly at the man in a white bathrobe who was by the sofa. Then, she managed to utter after a moment of pause. "Mr. Shane. Last night we..."

"I'll be responsible for what had happened last night!" Shane passed her clothes to her.

Natalie took the clothes and placed them on one of the sofa's armrests. Then she covered herself with the blanket and sat up with determination. "There's no need. I don't need you to be responsible!"

Shane squinted. "What did you say?"

Natalie lowered her eyelids, covering the bitter look on her face. She said coldly, "I was saying, I don't need you to be responsible. We are all adults and sometimes things like this happen. Let's just think of it as an accident."

"Accident?" Shane's face darkened and his lips pursed.

Hearing what she had said, was it normal for that to happen between a man and a woman?

Or was it because it's normal for her to have such an accident with other men as well?

Thinking of that, Shane gripped onto the towel so tightly that the veins on the back of his hand started bulging. He looked devastated.

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Natalie had no idea what was going through his mind. She only knew that she didn't want him to be responsible and ended up hurting his man's pride. She bit her lips and said with determination, "That's right, that was an accident. What else can we do? You claimed that you'll be responsible which means you'll just give me money. Don't tell me you're going to marry me?"

After hearing that, Shane remained silent and didn't say a word.

Natalie laughed upon seeing his reaction. "See, you're not saying anything which means I'm right. What you meant by taking responsibility was to give me money. However, that money would be an insult to me and I wouldn't accept it. So it's better for us to treat that as an accident."

Having said that, she looked away and attempted to get up from the sofa.

But once her feet touched the ground, she lost control of both her legs. With a shriek, she fell forward.

Shane took a big step forward and caught her. "Where do you want to go? I'll carry you."

Natalie fell into Shane's arms. She could smell the scent exuding from his body and listening to the gentleness in his voice, had her feeling the urge to cry.

She held it in and refrained from showing. After regaining her composure, she stepped back. "There's no need for that, Mr. Shane. I can manage myself."

Grabbing her clothes from the armrest with one hand while holding tightly to the blanket with the other, she stumbled out the door.

After leaving Shane's place, Natalie arrived in front of her own apartment and she pressed the doorbell.

Yulia's voice traveled from the other end of the door. "Who is it?"

"Mom, it's me." Natalie answered loudly.

Upon hearing her voice, Yulia quickly opened the door. The moment she saw her face, she was so stunned that her mask fell off her face. "Baby Girl, you..."

"Mom, don't say anything. Just let me in." Natalie urged, blushing in embarrassment.

Her legs were so weak she could barely stand.

At that moment, Yulia came back to her senses and quickly stepped aside. "Oh, quickly come in."

Natalie rushed inside the house and went to the bathroom straight away.

Yulia picked up her mask and shut the door behind her. She followed her, stood out of the bathroom, and asked, "Baby Girl, who were you with last night?"

"Mom, can you please stop asking?" Natalie stood in front of the mirror and stared at her body that was covered in red markings. She took a deep breath.

"How can I not ask? I'm your mother. Yesterday you told me you went out for a meal with Joyce, I thought you spent the night at her place. Instead, you went out with some guy and God knows what had happened. How can I not find out who is he?" Yulia banged on the door angrily.

Natalie's ears buzzed. As soon as she was about to reply, Yulia said in a concerned voice, "Nat, were you bullied?"

Natalie didn't know if she was about to laugh or cry. "It's nothing, it was just an accident!"

"What accident?" Yulia frowned. Just when she was about to question further, the doorbell rang again.

She turned her head and glanced at the hallway. "Natalie, I'm going to see who's at the door. You better come clean to me after that and tell me what happened last night, hmph!"

After that, Yulia turned around and walked towards the entrance. She opened the door.

Shane was standing outside and there was a small bag in his hand. "Aunt Yulia."

"Shane, why are you here?" Yulia looked at him curiously.

Shane did not answer and handed her the small bag. "This medicine is for Natalie."

"For Nat?" Yulia reached out and grabbed the bag. She took a look inside and saw the name on the medicine. Her facial expression changed and then closed the bag. She stared at him with anger. "So it was you who bulled Nat!"

She should had known.

If it were some other man, Nat wouldn't have been so calm and had gone to the police right away.

Shane lowered his eyes and said, "I'm sorry Aunt Yulia, I..."

"Just leave!" Yulia pointed towards the lift. "And I thought you were a good person. Who would have thought I was so wrong. You still came after Nat even though you have a fiancée, how horrible. Leave, you're not welcome here, go!"

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While saying that, Shane was pushed until he was about thirty to forty centimeters away from the entrance, then she slammed the door.

After closing the door, Yulia noticed the small bag in her hand. She snorted in disdain and wanted to open the door and throw away the bag.

But after a moment of careful consideration, she pursed her lips and decided not to do so.

"Mom, who was that?" Natalie came out of the shower with a towel wrapped around her body. She saw Yulia's angered look.

Yulia stared at her and uttered, "Who else could it be. Your companion from last night."

After hearing that, Natalie choked and lowered her head embarrassingly. "Mom, don't say that."

"Hmph, am I wrong to say that?" Yulia pressed her forehead irritably. "Explain now, he has a fiancée and you ended up with him..."

"Mom." Natalie yanked Yulia's sleeves carefully. "I know I'm wrong, don't be angry. It was really an accident, it won't happen again."

"Since you've said it, you have to honor your words. You knew how much I hated homewreckers and I don't wish my daughter to end up being one." Yulia shot Natalie a stern look.

Natalie agreed and nodded. "I won't!"

"Alright then." Yulia's expression calmed down. She caressed the back of her head and passed her the small bag. "This is from Shane. Go and apply it before it gets infected. I'll go and wash my face."

After Yulia had left, Natalie opened the bag curiously and took out the contents one by one. When she saw it was medicine for her to apply around that area, her face blushed.

"He's quite attentive." Natalie smiled and murmured to herself.

Afterward, she took out the last box of medicine from the bag and looked closely at the name. She immediately froze.

Shane was attentive indeed, so much that he did not forget to prepare contraceptive pills as well.

Was he so worried that she might get pregnant?

Natalie gripped the box tightly. Even though Shane's intention was clear for her to take the contraceptive pill, he wasn't wrong for doing so. However, she didn't feel good deep inside.

Without much hesitation, Natalie sighed and opened the box. After she had read the instructions a couple of times, she popped two pills into her mouth and downed them with the glass of water on the coffee table.

After that, she picked up her phone and was about to send Shane a message saying she had taken the pills and he didn't need to worry.

However, a thought popped up in her mind. If Jacqueline or Jasmine picked up his phone and saw the message, then things might turn out badly.

Therefore, Natalie deleted what she had typed in the message and exited the messaging system. She tapped on her call log that had several missed calls notification.

Looking at her call logs, Joyce had called her twice last night. Natalie rubbed her eyebrows and decided to call back.

Joyce was still asleep when she picked up her phone. She sounded drowsy and yawned. "Nat, why are you calling so early?"

"Still early? Have a look at the time." Natalie glanced at the clock that was hanging at the wall and was rather speechless. "Wake up, I need to ask you something."

Joyce rubbed her messy hair and sat on her bed. "Nat, what's the matter?"

"We were drinking together last night, how did I end up with Mr. Shane?" Natalie pursed her lips. "Do you know that had put me in a terrible spot?"

Joyce blinked. "That's because Mr. Shane offered to send you home. You were drunk last night and we tried hailing a cab for quite a while, then we bumped into Mr. Shane. I asked him to take good care of you. Why? Did something happen between you both?"

Natalie tried to find a way out due to her guilty conscience. "Of... Of course not. It's just that I threw up in his car."

Using the previous incident as an excuse to change the topic wasn't considered lying right?

Joyce laughed. "It's just vomiting in the car, what's the big deal? Just clean his car and everything will be fine. Besides, don't you like Mr. Shane? You should be happy to clean his car for him because then you'll have an excuse to see him again."

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"How did you know that I like Mr. Shane?" She stood up shockingly.

Joyce burst out laughing. "How do I know? You were shouting stuff like you wouldn't be able to see Mr. Shane anymore after you got drunk."

"R-Really?" Natalie's eyes widened in horror.

If that's the case, she could have said the same thing to Shane last night so he might have found out her feelings towards him?

God, drinking is really bad!

"Nat? Nat?" Joyce couldn't help but shout twice since Natalie had been silent.

Natalie came back to her senses and sat down slowly. "Yes?"

"I was going to ask if you're fine." Joyce pouted.

Natalie rubbed her temples. "I'm fine."

"It's good you're fine then. I'm going to hang up and go back to sleep now." Joyce yawned once more.

Natalie nodded her head. "Alright, go and sleep."

Natalie hung up and threw her phone to one side.

Yulia stepped out of the bathroom. "Baby Girl, accompany me shopping, how does that sound? I'd like to buy some things to bring abroad."

"Alright". Natalie replied while patting her own cheeks. She put away the boxes of medicine on the coffee table and went back to her room.

Half an hour later, after she had applied the ointment and changed into a fresh set of clothes, she headed out to the city center mall with Yulia.

Being a shopaholic, Yulia bought a lot of things in just a short while. Then she dragged Natalie into a shop that sells branded bags.

"Baby Girl, what do you think of this?" Yulia showed Natalie a vegan leather clutch.

Natalie took a glance at it. "The clutch is not bad but it's not suitable for daily use. It's more suitable for a banquet. Mom, don't tell me you're really attending some banquet?"

Yulia smiled and flicked her nose. "You're right. There's a charity gala tonight which is hosted by Mr. Lanner. His wife heard that I was back and she specifically invited me to attend"

"I see. This one then." Natalie nodded.

"Alright, I'll go settle the bill." Yulia also like that bag; she decided to buy it instantly.

At that moment, a proud female voice echoed from the shop's entrance. "Shop assistant, bring out your newest collection of bags."

"Who's being so rude?" Yulia frowned and her face was filled with disgust.

Natalia squinted her eyes and looked towards the direction where the voice traveled from. "It's Susan and... Dad!"

Upon hearing that, Yulia's body stiffened. The fingers around her clutch tightened instantaneously.

Natalie patted her mother's back lightly. "No worries Mom, I'm here. Let's pretend we did not see them. Let's go and settle the bill."

With her daughter's encouragement, Yulia's stiff back softened and she smiled. They went towards the cashier.

Before they managed to proceed further, Susan shouted, "Oh, isn't that Natalie? Darling, your daughter is here too. What a coincidence."

Natalie and Yulia stopped in their tracks.

Natalie smiled at Yulia. "Don't worry Mom, let me handle them."

After that, she turned around and stared coldly at Harrison and Susan. "It is a coincidence. I wasn't expecting to see both of you here. Dad, are you accompanying Susan to buy a bag?"

Harrison replied frigidly, "There's a charity gala tonight. We came out to buy some jewelry for Susan."

"Oh!" Natalie lifted her chin and said in a dragging manner. "Dad, you're so good to Susan. You'd accompany her shopping. I usually see some other man accompanying her everywhere in the past."

"What are you babbling about?" Susan said in a sharp voice and her expression changed.

Harrison frowned and gave Susan a suspicious glare.

That stare had Susan shaking in her boots. Her guilty conscience almost betrayed her.

Natalie noticed that and smirked. "Susan, why are you getting so worked up for? The other man I was referring to is your cousin. Who did you think it was?"

Susan choked. After she had calmed down, she stared at her and said, "Why didn't you just say so in the first place!"

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"You're right, Susan. I'll be more careful next time," Natalie said with a faint smile. There wasn't any hint of remorse in her tone and that greatly irritated Susan.

"Pfft!" Yulia couldn't help but burst out laughing as she witnessed that.

Her laughter drew the attention of Susan and Harrison.

Susan could not recognize her at first glance, but Harrison, who used to be his husband for about twenty years, recognized her immediately. "It's you?" Harrison gripped the dragon figurine of his walking cane and asked in a surprised tone.

"Who is she, darling?" Susan scrutinized Yulia's figure in confusion. She felt that Yulia looked familiar, but she couldn't remember where she had seen her before.

"Yes, it's me," Yulia replied while ruffling her exquisite hair.

"Mom?" Natalie was stunned for a second, not expecting her mom to reveal her identity.

"It's okay. Since we already bumped into them, then there is no point to hide. Moreover, they were in the wrong, so why should I avoid them?" Yulia had finally come to her senses. Then, she patted Natalie's hand and turned around slowly.

Upon seeing Yulia's face, Susan was shocked. She couldn't help but take two steps back instinctively and pointed a shaking finger at Yulia. "Y-You..."

Yulia stared coldly at the baffled Susan and sneered, "Susan, seven years ago, you eliminated me and became Mrs. Smith. I can't believe you are still so petty after all these years!"

"Pfft!" This time, it was Natalie who couldn't hold in her laughter.

"Darling, look at her!" Susan stomped her feet out of frustration.

"That's enough!" Harrison berated her. After that, he looked at Yulia with a complicated expression, asking, "When did you come back?"

"It's been a couple of days," Yulia replied with a faint smile.

Harrison stroked the dragon figurine and queried, "How have you been doing all these years in a foreign country?"

Yulia played with the emerald ring on her index finger and said, "Of course I've been great! You see how youthful I look now, but you..."

She sized his walking cane up and took a good look at him. Finally, her gaze settled on his silver hair. A bubble of laughter escaped her lips all of a sudden, and she said, "You look much older than seven years ago when we divorced. Why? Did this woman suck the vitality out of you?"

Yulia looked at Susan and pursed her lips.

Harrison coughed awkwardly without answering her.

Yulia's words were a huge slap on the face to Susan. The latter was so mad that she raised her hand in a bid to slap Yulia.

At that very moment, Natalie narrowed her eyes and grabbed Susan's wrist. "Susan, you better not lay a hand on my mom. Otherwise, I will make a police report to sue you for intentional assault."

"You..." Susan stared daggers at Natalie.

After a short while, Yulia patted Natalie's arms. "Alright, dear. Let go of her. Won't you feel dirty touching her?"

As she spoke, she handed Natalie a piece of wet tissue.

Natalie flung Susan's hand away immediately. As if there were germs on her hands, she took the wet tissue to wipe her fingers immediately.

Susan was triggered by the mother and daughter's exchange as the former clenched her fists and screamed, "Harrison, are you just going to let them bully me like this?"

Harrison pulled a face and retorted, "You are the one who called out to them first."

"I..." Stumped by Harrison's response, Susan stared at him and gritted her teeth in anger. "Harrison! Whose side are you on? How could you take their side instead? Or have you rekindled your love for your ex-wife!" Susan yelled as she pointed at Natalie and Yulia.

The mother and daughter exchanged a glance—their eyes filled with disdain.

Harrison felt disheartened seeing that.

It was him who did not want Yulia back then. So who was she to disdain him?

"That's enough! What the hell are you talking about? Have you got no shame?" With a ghastly expression on his face, Harrison held Susan's hand down.

A look of displeasure crept on Susan's face as she saw Harrison's action as defending Yulia and Natalie. The former pried Harrison's hand and barked, "Did I embarrass you? You were the one who abandoned her! Harrison, don't forget that I'm your current wife!" Susan yelled.

At that moment, many people in the shop were looking at them. Harrison felt embarrassed and shouted, "Y-You're so unreasonable. Let's go home now!"