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Connor grunted indignantly and swiveled his head to the side.

As Natalie wanted to teach him a lesson, she did not coax him and instead started chatting with Sharon.

After a while, Sharon blinked her large eyes and asked, "Mommy, is Mr. Shane there? I want to see him."

When she heard that, Natalie became silent for a while. "Why do you want to see him?"

"Because I like him!" replied Sharon as she sucked on her thumb.

"Does Connor like him too?"

Connor, who was no longer throwing a tantrum, nodded and replied, "Of course! I admire him a lot too. When I grow up, I want to become like Mr. Shane... No, I want to become an even more exceptional man than him!"

When Natalie saw the excited gleam in their eyes when they talked about Shane, her lips twitched as she fell into a daze.

No one understood her children better than she did. Although they looked extremely cheerful, it took a lot for them to truly acknowledge someone.

Yet, after returning back to the country, they quickly accepted Shane, which surprised her greatly. It was only recently that she realized it was because of their blood relations.

However, as she had already decided not to let them know who their father was, there was no need for them to meet.

Silently apologizing to them in her mind, Natalie smiled apologetically. "I'm sorry, darling, but Mr. Shane isn't here."

"Huh?" The children exchanged a disappointed look.

Natalie quickly changed the topic of conversation and shifted their attention away from Shane.

After ten minutes, it was time for the children to go to sleep. Hence, Natalie ended the call.

At that moment, the doorbell suddenly rang.

Natalie sprang up, wore her slippers and opened the door.

Shane was standing outside with two gift boxes. "These are for you."

"Are they... gowns?" She took the gift boxes from him and guessed what was inside by looking at the designs at the top.

Shane lifted his chin slightly. "It's for the gathering tonight."

"Thank you, Mr. Shane," said Natalie with a smile.

She was planning to visit a dress shop later, but surprisingly, he had prepared the gowns for her already.

"You're welcome. As the chief designer of Project Rebirth, your gowns should've been settled for you. Well, I'll take my leave now."

With that, he spun around and returned to his suite, which was opposite her room.

Natalie only closed the door after he left. She walked over to her bed, placed the gift boxes down and opened them.

There was a gown in one box, and a pair of silver heels in the other smaller box.

Natalie unfolded the gown, which was a scarlet off-shoulder dress. Luxuriously designed, the diamonds sewn at the waistline were dazzlingly gorgeous.

At first glance, she fell in love with it and could not help but place it in front of her body to see if it fitted her. However, she suddenly realized something. Her heartbeat quickened as she blushed and mumbled, "That's weird. How does he know my measurements?"

I haven't revealed my measurements before, right?

Could it be that he guessed them by looking at me?

Natalie blushed even further at that thought and a strange feeling surfaced within her. After all, it was embarrassing knowing that a man knew her body's measurements so well.

However, she did not mull over it for too long. As she was running out of time, she quickly placed the gown down and went to get a shower in preparation for the gathering.

By the time she finished her shower and applied her makeup, it was already nighttime.

Natalie grabbed her purse, walked out of her room in her heels and headed to Shane's room. Just when she was about to knock on the door, it suddenly opened.

Shane, who was wearing an even more formal suit than usual, appeared in front of her.

"Mr. Shane," greeted Natalie.

Casting his gaze onto her, Shane scrutinized Natalie, who looked gorgeous with her exquisite makeup. He was briefly mesmerized by her beauty before quickly regaining his composure. "The gown suits you!"

Shane's sudden compliment caught her by surprise, making Natalie slightly embarrassed. However, also feeling a little delighted, she could not help but smile. "Really?"

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"Yeah." Shane nodded slightly in response.

He had his sight locked on this particular gown the moment he saw it, thinking that it suited her a lot.

It seemed like he was right.

Natalie scratched her ear and returned the compliment. "You look very handsome too, Mr. Shane."

She did not say that out of courtesy. In fact, after dressing up, he looked even more dashing than before, emanating a dignified aura.

Connor will look like him when he grows up, right?

As she thought about it, a keen smile appeared on Natalie's face.

Shane was pleased by her compliment. However, when he suddenly spotted her smile and the way she looked at him, the atmosphere around him instantly turned cold.

Who does she see in me?

Sean?

Noticing something amiss with him, Natalie quickly returned to her senses and asked confusedly, "What's wrong, Mr. Shane?"

"Nothing." He brushed past her coldly and headed toward the lift lobby.

Gazing at his back, Natalie tilted her head, feeling extremely puzzled.

What is he angry about?

I didn't offend him, right?

Unable to figure it out, Natalie sighed exasperatedly and quickly jogged after him.

The gathering was held in the Fashion Hall. Not only were numerous famous fashion critics present, but there were also many fashion designers.

Some of them even brought their own designs along to showcase them at the gathering.

Scrutinizing the design drafts enviously, Natalie could not help but mumble, "If I had known earlier, I would've brought some over too."

When Shane overheard her, he turned around and glanced at her. "The fashion show for Project Rebirth is where you will shoot to fame. This is too insignificant of an event for you to showcase your designs."

"Are you that confident in me, Mr. Shane?" Natalie raised her eyebrows in surprise.

"I'm confident in your designs." Shane grabbed two glasses of red wine from a waiter's tray and passed one to her. "Let's go and invite some critics."

"Okay." Natalie nodded. Holding onto his arm, they weaved between the critics.

After roaming around the hall, they managed to invite more than a dozen of internationally renowned fashion critics.

This number greatly exceeded the number of critics required for a fashion show.

Hence, both of them stopped inviting people for the rest of the gathering. Instead, they headed to the lounge with their glasses of red wine to rest.

However, at that moment, the ground suddenly trembled violently.

As Natalie was wearing heels, she lost her balance and was about to fall onto the ground.

Shane's expression turned tense as he unhesitatingly tossed his glass away. Grabbing her wrist, he forcefully pulled her into his arms.

"What's happening? Is there an earthquake?" Natalie's face turned ashen as she saw the shaking tables around her. She could hear shrieks of fear, loud noise of objects crashing onto the ground and the shattering of glass echoing through the hall.

Although Shane was not as terrified as her, he also looked on edge. "Yeah. This country is located in an earthquake zone, so it's a normal occurrence. However, I didn't expect us to be caught in one so quickly after arriving."

"What should we do now? Will the building collapse?" Natalie's voice was trembling.

As she had never encountered such a situation before, she could not help but feel afraid.

"The building's structure is very sturdy, so it won't collapse. Let's just wait for the earthquake to pass." Wrapping an arm around her waist, he propped his other arm on a table to help her regain her balance.

He sounded very calm when he said that, as if an earthquake was just a trivial matter. For some reason, Natalie's fear diminished greatly.

She leaned against his chest quietly. Breathing in the faint fragrance on his body, she could not help but close her eyes.

She had always wondered why his scent felt so familiar to her.

It turned out that it was because she had smelled it on that night five years ago.

The earthquake ensued, showing no signs of stopping.

Shane quickly scanned his surroundings, planning to find an unobstructed exit and leave this place with Natalie.

However, at that moment, he suddenly heard a huge creaking noise above him.

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When he raised his head, he saw that the huge crystal chandelier on the ceiling was on the brink of collapsing onto them. There were only a few electrical wires holding it to the ceiling.

However, the wires were already extremely taut. It was obvious that they could not withstand the weight of the chandelier for a long time.

Indeed, the wires snapped in the next instant, sending the humongous chandelier crashing onto them.

Shane's eyes widened as he quickly shoved Natalie away.

Natalie collapsed onto the floor a distance away, clueless about what was happening. The pain caused her to gasp loudly.

On the other hand, when Shane pushed her away, he missed the perfect timing to dodge and the chandelier crashed right onto him.

Utterly dumbfounded, Natalie's mind became a complete blank. A long time passed before she managed to return to her senses. Crawling to Shane's side frantically, she yelled with bloodshot eyes, "Mr. Shane! Mr. Shane!"

However, he remained silent. Lying under the chandelier limply, his eyes were shut and his face was terrifyingly pale. His body kept trembling, which was evident that he was severely injured.

Natalie quickly tossed her heels aside and stood up, planning to lift the chandelier up and rescue him.

However, it was so heavy that she could not move it at all and even grazed her palm.

Overwhelmed by anxiety, she burst into tears. "Hang in there, Mr. Shane. I'll call for help!"

As she spoke, she released the chandelier and prepared to leave.

However, the moment when she spun around, Shane suddenly coughed a mouthful of blood as he lost his consciousness.

He only woke up two days later.

As he stared at the white walls, he instantly knew where he was. However, when he tried to sit up, he grunted in pain due to his wound.

When Natalie heard him, a delighted look flashed across her face. She quickly placed the kettle down and rushed to the hospital bed. "You're awake, Mr. Shane."

Silas, who was standing at the balcony, also hung up the call and entered. He exclaimed excitedly, "Mr. Shane!"

Turning his neck stiffly to look at both of them, he weakly grunted in acknowledgement. "What happened to me?"

Natalie was about to answer him when Silas interjected, "You suffered a huge impact on your back, which also injured your organs. Other than that, you've also broken two of your ribs. One of them almost stabbed your heart!"

With that, he swiveled around and glared at Natalie furiously.

Knowing that Shane was so severely injured because he wanted to save her, she lowered her head guiltily. "I'm sorry, Mr. Shane."

"What's the use of apologizing now?" chided Silas coldly. "Summon the doctor here!"

"Okay, I'll do it right away!" Natalie dashed out of the hospital ward.

After she left, Silas wet a cotton bud and moistened Shane's lips. He lamented, "Mr. Shane, she is Sean's woman. Why did you save her? Did you know that you almost died?"

Shane lifted the hand that was not attached to the IV drip and massaged his temples. "The reason why I saved her has nothing to do with her relationship with Sean. Instead, it's because she's an employee of the Thompson Group. As her boss, I have a duty of ensuring her safety. More importantly, she has saved me twice."

When he heard that, Silas opened his mouth to rebuke, but found himself at a loss for words.

Yeah, if Natalie didn't save Mr. Shane, who was injured from those stab wounds, he might have died already.

Shane placed his hand down and asked solemnly, "News about my injury is not leaked out, right?"

If Sean discovered that he was injured, he would definitely think of a way to stop him from returning to the country.

Using the excuse that he had to recuperate overseas and could not manage the company, Sean would convince those old men, who were already disloyal to him, to steal a share of his authority.

Naturally, Silas knew what Shane was concerned about. He shook his head and assured, "Don't worry, Mr. Shane. I managed to stop the news from being leaked. Although Sean is still clueless, Ms. Jasmine is investigating your whereabouts."

A cold gleam flashed across his eyes. "Why is she investigating me?"

Silas tossed the cotton bud into the dustbin. "She's probably worried because you didn't return home yesterday and she can't contact you. Do you want to call her back?"

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"There's no need for that," said Shane curtly as he pursed his lips.

Silas did not persuade him either. Instead, he grabbed a glass of water on the table and passed it to him.

Lifting his head, Shane took a few sips of the water with the straw.

When he waved his hands to signal that he had enough, Silas moved the glass away and placed it down. At that moment, his phone rang.

"Mr. Shane, it's a call from the Fashion Hall. They're probably calling about the earthquake." Silas glanced at his phone and made a guess.

Shane closed his eyes and pinched his nose bridge. "I'll leave it to you."

"Okay," replied Silas as he walked toward the door.

When he opened the door, he saw Natalie coming over with the doctor.

She stopped in her tracks and asked, "Are you leaving, Mr. Campbell?"

He adjusted his glasses and replied, "Yes. I have something to attend to, so please take care of Mr. Shane for me."

"Don't worry, I'll take care of him well." Natalie nodded.

Silas thanked her and strode away.

Gazing at his back, she tilted her head in confusion.

That's weird... Didn't he see me as an eyesore lately?

Why is he acting so courteously now like before?

Although she could not figure it out, she stopped thinking about it and led the doctor into the hospital ward.

The doctor gave Shane a check-up, changed his dressing and left soon, leaving only Natalie and him behind in the ward.

She stood beside his bed and shot him a grateful look. "Thanks for saving me, Mr. Shane."

If he had not pushed her away, she would definitely have been hit by the chandelier.

"You don't have to thank me. Didn't you save me previously too? We can call it even, then," replied Shane nonchalantly.

Then, as if he suddenly recalled something, he started sizing Natalie up. "Oh, right. I pushed you away quite forcefully. Did you get hurt?"

"No, I didn't." Natalie waved her hands quickly in denial. However, she could not help but feel touched.

Although he was severely injured, he was still concerned about her.

She did not even know what to say to him.

Shane felt relieved upon hearing that Natalie was fine. Yet, when he noticed her bandaged hands, he frowned again. "What happened to your hands?"

"Are you referring to this?" Natalie spread her hands and glanced at them. Smiling, she assured, "I just scraped my hands when I tried to lift the chandelier. It's nothing."

Shane immediately felt relieved. "That's good, then."

As Natalie placed her hands down, she suddenly heard a loud grumble.

Shane's face clouded over instantly.

Noticing his expression, Natalie suddenly realized something and chuckled. "Stay here, Mr. Shane. I'll buy some food for you."

As she spoke, she grabbed her wallet and left the hospital ward.

She returned with some food half an hour later.

Even though it was just plain oatmeal, Shane did not mind at all. He ate while Natalie fed him.

After he finished the bowl of oatmeal, Natalie gave him a few painkillers.

Drowsy from the side effects of the painkillers, he fell asleep soon.

Natalie tucked him in, sat down on a chair beside the bed and stared at him. Her gaze became unfocused as an indecipherable emotion crept into her eyes.

She still could not forget the scene of him coughing up blood and fainting after saving her from the chandelier.

At that moment, not only did she feel like her heart had stopped beating, but she also realized another terrifying fact—she had fallen in love with him. That was the reason why she was so delighted when he praised him, and why she felt disappointed when he moved away.

"Ugh..." Natalie sighed and covered her face, feeling agonized.

She felt extremely pathetic. Not only had she fallen in love with a man who had a fiancée, but she also went against her words. Despite having sworn to Sean that she did not like Shane, she was now doing the exact opposite.

However, she had already decided that she would never reveal her true feelings to anyone. After Project Rebirth's success, she would leave Thompson Group and Shane. Perhaps, her feelings for him would fade after a while.

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At that thought, Natalie smiled bitterly. She rested her head on one side of the bed and fell asleep.

However, she was woken up by a video-call at night.

Sharon pouted and asked, "When are you coming home, Mommy?"

Natalie gazed affectionately at her daughter. "I might take a while. Something happened here, so I can't return for the time being. Do you miss me?"

"Yeah, I do." Sharon nodded.

Suddenly, Connor snatched the phone away with a solemn look on his face. "Mommy, what happened?"

Glancing at Shane, who was lying on the hospital bed, Natalie's gaze flitted shiftily. "It's something about work. You children shouldn't ask too many questions."

She promised Silas that she would not tell anyone that Shane was injured.

"Okay, I won't ask anymore." Connor shrugged before adding, "Oh, right. When I was going home from school today, an old man stopped Sharon and I."

"An old man?" Natalie frowned as her expression became serious. "How does he look like?"

Sharon raised her hand quickly. "I know! He looks really fierce and has a mole here."

She pointed at her chin.

A face instantly surfaced in Natalie's mind.

Harrison, my Dad!

Natalie tightened her grip on the phone while she pursed her lips.

"What's wrong, Mommy?" Noticing that she was acting strangely, Connor stared at her and asked worriedly.

Natalie took a deep breath and quickly calmed herself down. "I'm fine, darling. Did that old man do anything to you?"

Both Connor and Sharon shook their heads simultaneously.

"No. He just looked at us for a while and left without even talking to us," replied Connor.

Although Natalie felt relieved, she still remained alert.

It was impossible that Harrison only wanted to meet his grandchildren. If he felt nothing for Natalie, he would not harbor any love for her children too.

Hence, regardless of what Harrison's motive was, the children must not attend that kindergarten anymore.

As she thought about it, Natalie stared at her children seriously. "My darlings, don't go to the kindergarten tomorrow. I'll call your teacher later to excuse both of you. After I come back, I'll transfer you to another school."

"Why, Mommy?" Sharon blinked in bewilderment.

Connor, who could vaguely guess the reason, stroked his chin and asked, "Is it because of that old man? Who is he?"

"You don't need to bother about that yet. Just listen to my instructions." Natalie showed no intention of answering his question.

When Connor noticed the solemn expression on her face, he stopped asking. He nodded and assured, "I understand, Mommy."

"Good boy!" praised Natalie.

They ended the video-call soon after.

Natalie then called the kindergarten teacher and excused the two kids from school the next day.

Before she could place her phone down, she heard Shane's deep voice. "Is someone trying to harm Connor and Sharon?"

"You're awake, Mr. Shane." Natalie quickly glanced at him. He had already woken up a long time ago and even overheard her conversation on the phone.

Shane lifted his chin slightly. "I just woke up."

"Is it because of me?" Natalie pointed at her phone.

After all, she did not leave the room when she was having the video-call.

Shane shook his head. "No, I woke up on my own. You still haven't answered my question."

Natalie pursed her lips. "I don't know if he's planning to harm Sharon and Connor. However, since he suddenly appeared in front of them, he's definitely up to no good."

"Your solution is to transfer the children to another school?" Shane continued staring at her.

"Yeah," mumbled Natalie.

Narrowing his eyes, Shane stated, "You're not solving the root cause at all. Tell Sean about your children. With his protection, they'll definitely be safe."

When Natalie heard that, she was dumbfounded. "Why should I tell Mr. Sean about Sharon and Connor?"