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"Wait, what did the bastard mean? He doesn't have the nerves to come home or he wants us to sit and wait until he gets home?"

"The traffic is usually at its peak at this hour, I suppose he is still stuck in a jam," Charlie's mother replied.

"Let me go make a call to Sir." Penny then went to get the phone.

When the call was answered, the expression on Penny's face started to change before she could even say a word. After a while, she stuttered, "What...what...what did you say? Sir... he was in an accident?"

Even though Penny was stuttering, everyone heard her loud and clear.

Josiah had a car accident!

Meredith who was walking down the stairs with Nia heard the news. She froze in her steps, nearly tripping over the staircase.

With one hand holding Nia, Meredith quickly put the other hand on the railing.

It was inappropriate for her to rush to the phone to ask the person on the call whether it was true that Josiah was in a crash, nor could she show that she was too worried. All she could do was compose herself.

Tightening the grip around Nia's hands, she walked down the steps firmly and slowly.

She was about to ask something but she met Charlie's eyes who were staring at her.

Charlie was looking at her coldly and Meredith had no choice but to swallow her words.

Penny got off from the call and she sounded concerned, "Ma'am, it was Walter. He said that Sir got into a car crash while on his way here."

"Huh? How did this happen?!" Josiah's grandmother stood up after hearing Penny's conversation on the phone, and now, she dropped back onto the couch, in shock.

Meredith rushed over to her and then asked Penny, "Penny, are you sure you heard it correctly? Josiah had a car accident? Was it serious?"

Feeling as if she was on pins and needles, Penny almost teared up. "I heard it from Walter. Walter said that Sir had lost a lot of blood that passed out on the spot. He is now sent to the hospital."

"Why is it another car accident again? What is happening to our family these days?" Josiah's grandmother was feeling distressed. "This won't do. I have to go see him, I have to..."

"Mom, calm down," Charlie's mother comforted her, "perhaps Joe only passed out because he was hit. Let's not overthink it and scare ourselves."

"Mom, it's not like you can do anything to help, being there. It's better if you stay at home and wait for the news."

"No, no," Josiah's grandmother shook her head as tears ran down her cheeks. "I must know how Joe is doing. I have to be there with him."

Seeing how his grandmother was greatly distressed, Charlie asked, "Mom, when I got into an accident the last time, was Grandma this concerned and distressed too?"

Charlie's mother was silent.

Josiah's grandmother did not say anything either.

Both of the ladies turned to look at Charlie with a stunned look on their faces.

Charlie pulled into a smile and said, "Grandma, Mom, I just want to let you know that it is easy for someone to pass out when being hit as the impact is too large, but this doesn't necessarily mean that his life would be in danger. Just like how it was for me back then. Who knows, Josiah might regain his consciousness soon, so there is no need for you guys to be too worried."

Weeping, Josiah's grandmother asked, "But what if Joe...loses his legs just like you?"

"What's most important is that he is alive and he can always slowly get used to living his days without his legs. I remember that this was what you said to me back then."

Josiah's grandmother and Charlie's mother had not been spending a lot of time with Charlie hence they did not notice the sarcasm behind his words. But Meredith knew exactly what he meant.

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Meredith hurriedly added, "Grandma, don't take it to heart about what Charlie said. I'm sure Josiah will be fine."

Josiah's grandmother nodded but she grabbed Meredith's hands and said, "Edith, I understand what you guys are trying to say but I still want to go see him. Would you please come to the hospital with me?"

"Grandma..."

"Stop. I will not change my mind." Josiah's grandmother started crying.

At the sight of her tears, Meredith nodded. "Okay, I will go with you."

Was Meredith reluctant to go deep down?

No. She did want to go visit Josiah.

Even though Josiah and she were already divorced and Josiah did let her down many times, he was after all Nia's father and he had been of great help to her lately.

She was a human with feelings after all. Right now, Meredith prayed that Josiah would be okay and she too wanted to check on him.

Meredith looked at Nia, wanting to explain the situation to her when she realized that Nia was staring at her with tears welling up in her eyes.

"Nia, darling…" She walked over and pulled Nia into her arms. "Don't worry, your Daddy will be fine."

"Mommy, I also want to go see Daddy," Nia started sobbing.

Even though Nia had not said a lot earlier, she heard it loud and clear that her father had lost a lot of blood in the accident.

She too was just as worried as the adults.

Before Meredith could say anything, Charlie said, "The hospital is full of bacteria and you will only get in the way with so many of you there. Edith, I think it's better if you stay at home with Nia and let my mom and grandmother visit Josiah instead."

Charlie did not want Meredith to visit Josiah at the hospital.

The adults understood what Charlie was implying.

Charlie's mother naturally took her son's side, and said, "Charlie is right. Meredith, you stay home with Charlie and Nia. I will go to the hospital with Grandma."

Meredith felt slightly disappointed but still, she nodded.

"I don't want to stay at home. I want to go see Daddy," Nia sobbed.

Pulling Nia into a hug again, Meredith comforted her, "Be good now, Nia. Daddy needs a lot of rest and we will only bother him with so many of us there. Let's go see Daddy once he gets better, okay?"

"Mommy, I will be quiet, I will try my best not to wake Daddy up." "No, darling. You will still bother your Daddy."

"... You're a bad person, Mommy!" Watching Charlie's mother and her grandmother leaving, Nia stomped her feet angrily and ran upstairs.

Meredith wanted to go after her but she came to a stop and went to see Josiah's grandmother off.

"Grandma, be careful when you get down from the car later." After making sure that Josiah's grandmother was settled into the car, she hesitated before finally adding, "Let me know if anything happens."

Josiah's grandmother was too worried to say anything else. She simply nodded and urged the driver to start driving

Charlie's mother then said to Meredith, "Take good care of Charlie."

After seeing them off, Meredith returned to the house.

Meredith felt slightly uncomfortable to see Charlie who was having dessert at the dining table as if nothing had happened. Josiah got into a car accident but Charlie did not seem to be worried about him at all.

Even if Josiah and he were not close, he did not have to be this cold toward Josiah, right?

She could not help but ask, "Charlie, don't you want to know how Josiah is?"

Charlie lifted his head, looked at her, and shook his head. "Edith, why should I care about how he is?" "Because...you guys are cousins after all."

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"Yeah, you're right that we are cousins. But we didn't grow up together nor were we ever in touch," Charlie smiled and went on, "and this is why when I got into the accident back then, Josiah didn't even blink an eye, and neither did he once visit me."

"Oh wait, he did, just that one time. I remember he came when you were around." Charlie paused then added, "We'll go see him once he is moved out from the ICU."

Meredith was rendered speechless.

Charlie was right that Josiah did not go to see him right away after he got into the accident. And it was because of this that Meredith suspected that it was Josiah who was behind the accident.

But Josiah did ask about Charlie's condition. He just thought that it was inconvenient for him to visit Charlie.

"Edith, do you want to eat something?" Charlie asked.

Meredith replied, "It's alright. I'll go upstairs to check on Nia."

"Okay. I hope she'll feel better soon." Charlie then put away the dessert.

Meredith walked upstairs.

Nia was crying heartbrokenly with her face buried in her arms and her shoulders shaking.

Walking up to Nia, Meredith placed her hand on Nia's back and comforted her, "I'm sorry Nia. I don't mean to stop you from going to the hospital. It's mainly because you're still young and the hospital is not a place that you should go often."

"Think about it, Nia. Grandma is already feeling heartbroken and distressed. Wouldn't they be more stressed if they had to take care of you?"

Nia sat up abruptly and with tears rolling in her eyes, she asked, "Mommy, Daddy lost a lot of blood, is he going to die?"

"He won't, darling. Your father is a tough man."

Josiah survived every single time when Meredith tried to kill him. Meredith did not think that a mere car accident would take Josiah's life.

"But he passed out and was even sent to the ER," Nia sobbed even harder, "Mommy, what if Daddy dies? | will not have a father anymore and I'll be really sad."

"Silly girl, didn't I just say that your Daddy will not die?"

"But how would you know? You're not God."

"Yes, but I am a doctor. And a doctor would know."

"Really?" Nia wiped away the tears on her shirt.

"Yes, sweetheart," Meredith pulled her into another hug and said, "trust me okay? Let's stop crying now."

For the sake of calming Nia down, Meredith could only lie.

Nia finally stopped crying.

Lifting Nia off the bed, Meredith said, "Let's go down and get something to eat, hmm? You must be hungry.

"Mommy, I don't want to eat."

Nia was still worried about her father and she did not have the appetite to eat.

But Meredith still walked her out of the bedroom because Charlie was still waiting for them downstairs.

At the sight of them, Charlie asked gently, "Is our Nia feeling better?"

Nia sulked, "Papa Charlie, I'm not okay. I am worried about my Daddy."

"Don't worry, Nia. Your Daddy will be fine," Charlie took Nia into his arms, tapped Nia's nose gently, and said, "now put away that sad little face of yours, your Daddy will be heartbroken to see you like this."

"That's what I want. I want him to feel heartbroken when he sees me like this." Nia pouted her lips.

"Silly girl."

Charlie then said, "It's getting late now, let's eat." Getting no response, Charlie turned to look at Meredith to find her staring blankly at her phone screen.

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There was a flicker across his face. He then called out to her, "Edith."

"Hmm?" Meredith came back to her senses and put her phone back into her pocket. "What's wrong?"

Charlie replied gently. "Dinner is ready. Let's eat first."

"I don't think that it's a good idea," Meredith pointed toward the door and said, "Grandma and your mom are not back yet."

"Don't worry. Josiah is admitted to Crest Care Hospital. I'm sure they'll be taken good care of and dinner will be prepared for them." Charlie patted Nia's head and said, "Besides, it's already getting late. Nia and you must be hungry."

Meredith did not feel hungry at all. She did not even have the appetite to eat because she was too worried.

But she was worried that Charlie was hungry, so she listened to him and started setting the table.

The dining table used to be lively but it was just the three of them tonight.

After putting some food on Nia's plate, Meredith started eating without tasting or enjoying the food.

Charlie placed meatballs into Meredith and Nia's plate and said to them, "I've asked the chef to make the meatballs just for you two. Eat more, okay?"

Meredith looked at him and said, "You should eat too, Charlie."

"I will. It's new year's eve tonight, we should enjoy our meal," Charlie added, "it's a pity that Josiah is in the hospital, if not, we'd be able to drink as much as we wanted to."

"Yeah." Meredith forcefully tugged at the corners of her lips.

If Josiah did not have a car accident, it would be an awkward and uncomfortable gathering for the family, but now that he was injured, the night seemed even longer.

Meredith could not finish her meal. "I'm done, eat more okay? The both of you."

Nia too put down her cutleries and said, "I'm done too."

Charlie looked at Meredith and Nia, then picked up a slice of turkey and put it into his mouth.

"Seems to me that the both of you are worried about Josiah," Charlie put down his fork and said, "fine, I'm done eating too."

"Papa Charlie, are you not worried about Daddy?" Nia was puzzled.

She did not know about the feud between Josiah and Charlie. Nia only knew that they did not really interact much with each other.

"Of course, I'm worried too. But you'll still have to eat, right?"

Charlie took a napkin and wiped Nia's lips when they heard a loud clang.

Startled, Charlie looked up to see Meredith drop a plate on the floor.

Meredith had always been meticulous and careful, but she knocked over a plate as she got up from the dining table.

She seemed to be lost in her thoughts.

"I'm sorry, you guys must be startled." Meredith bent over to pick up the broken pieces of the plate.

"Edith, be careful not to cut your finger." As soon as Charlie finished his sentence, Meredith let out a gasp.

"Are you okay, Edith?" Charlie helped her stand up and realized the blood on her finger.

"I'm fine, it's just a small cut." Meredith hurriedly pulled her hand from Charlie's grip.

"Edith, why do you look so out of it today? Is it because you're worried about Josiah?"

"It's not that..."

"Then what is it?"

"I've always been a clumsy person," Meredith added, "remember when you broke the plates last time? I always cut my fingers accidentally while picking up the broken pieces."

"So don't worry, I'll be fine." Meredith patted his hand to reassure him.

Charlie did not say anything further.

At the hospital.

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The lights of the surgery room were finally turned off and Josiah's grandmother got onto her feet immediately.

Seeing how Josiah's grandmother was anxious, the surgeon walked over to them and said, "Don't worry, Ma'am. Mister Josiah's condition is stable now."

"Are you sure he's stable now? His life is not in danger anymore?"

"Yes. Even though he injured his head quite badly, he was sent to the hospital just in time and his condition is stable now."

"It's the head again," Heartbroken, Josiah's grandmother sobbed, "Josiah that child had hurt his head so many times now that I'm worried that his head won't be able to function properly next time."

She then asked, "Are there any other injuries?"

"And his legs..."

"What about his legs?" Josiah's grandmother was utterly anxious.

"Don't worry, Ma'am. Mister Josiah's legs were scratched by glass but his bones are fine."

Josiah's grandmother was finally able to sigh in relief. She then asked, "Is there anything else?"

"No more, Ma'am."

"That's good then. That's good." Josiah's grandmother finally loosened up a little as Penny and Charlie's mother helped sit her down on the bench.

"Mom, the doctor already confirmed that Joe's life is not in danger anymore. You should eat something now," Charlie's mother said.

Josiah's grandmother nodded, "Yeah. What's most important is that he is fine. I was simply worried about what would happen if Joe became crippled when Charlie is still recovering."

"The doctor already said that Joe's legs are fine. Don't worry, Mom," Charlie's mother reassured her patiently.

Josiah's grandmother finally ate something and Josiah was transferred to the ICU.

The doctor advised Josiah's grandmother to go home to get some rest as Josiah was still unconscious.

In the end, Josiah's grandmother returned home.

Right when they reached home, Nia was the first to rush out of the door. Wrapping her hands around Josiah's grandmother, she asked, "You're finally home, great-grandma! How is Daddy? Was he badly injured? Will he get better?"

Nia had asked the questions that Meredith wanted to ask too.

She was holding her breath as she waited for Josiah's grandmother to answer Nia's questions.

Josiah's grandmother patted Nia on her shoulder and said, "Don't worry. The doctor said that your Daddy will be fine."

"Really? That's great!" Nia exclaimed happily. "Great-grandma, I was really worried that my Daddy would die."

"Don't worry, he won't."

"Nia, your great-grandma must be tired. Why don't you let her go into the house and get some rest?"

Meredith walked over to Nia and Josiah's grandmother and asked, "Grandma, Josiah is really okay, right?"

"Yes. That's what the doctor said."

Charlie's mother interrupted and said, "Meredith, you're Charlie's wife now so you should care only about Charlie. As for Joe, we will take care of him."

Meredith felt her heart drop. She quickly corrected herself, "You're right, Mom. I was just asking out of concern. As for Charlie, of course, I'd do my best to take care of him."

Josiah's grandmother nodded. "Meredith's right. She was just asking out of concern."

Charlie's mother scoffed inwardly.

"Grandma, let me help you get inside." Meredith put her hands around Josiah's grandmother's arms.

Charlie's mother said, "It's getting late now. You and Charlie should head back to rest now. Penny and I will take care of grandma."

Meredith had no choice but to let go of Josiah's grandmother's hand.

Josiah's grandmother returned to her bedroom with help from Penny and Charlie's mother.

Meredith then said to Charlie, "Charlie, let's go home now." "I thought that you would stay here," Charlie smiled and said to her.

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Meredith looked distraught the entire night and Charlie started feeling uncomfortable with the fact that Meredith looked distraught and absentminded throughout the entire evening.

Meredith understood what Charlie was implying but still, she insisted, "Charlie, let's head home now."

Nia suddenly grabbed Meredith's hand and said, "Mommy, Papa Charlie, can we stay here instead?"

"Why?"

"I want to spend time with my great-grandma. She looks exhausted after a long day. And I want to visit Daddy at the hospital with my great-grandma tomorrow."

"But who is going to look after you?"

"Mommy, I can take good care of myself."

Seeing how Nia was eager to stay, Meredith could not bring herself to reject her. But she thought that Josiah's grandmother might not be in the mood to have Nia around.

"Nia, darling, your great-grandma has had a long day and I'm afraid that you might cause her inconvenience if you stay with her. Why not..."

"Don't worry, Mommy, I promise that I'll be good," Nia said, "wait here, Mommy. I'll go ask my great grandma."

Before Meredith could stop her, Nia had already run toward Josiah's grandmother's bedroom.

Shortly after, Nia ran out of the room excitedly and said, "Mommy, great-grandma said that I can stay here for however long that I want. So I'm staying for the night!"

Meredith had no other choice but to let Nia have her way.

"Oh and Mommy, great-grandma wants to see you in her room," Nia said.

Meredith walked into Josiah's grandmother's bedroom.

Charlie's mother and Penny were coming out of her room. It seemed as if it was Josiah's grandmother who asked them to leave.

"Grandma." Meredith walked toward the bed and held Josiah's grandmother's hands in hers. "What's wrong, grandma? Are you worried about Josiah?"

"Joe is after all my grandson, how can I possibly not be worried?"

"But you said that Josiah will recover, right? Could it be that..."

Meredith felt her heart hanging by a thread. She was worried that Josiah's grandmother had lied to her earlier.

"No, Edith. Don't overthink it. The doctor already announced that Joe's condition is stable now."

"Then why did you ask for me, Grandma?"

"It's nothing big, really. I simply felt bad for you and Charlie because we didn't get to have dinner together on such an important occasion."

"Grandma, it's really nothing, don't worry about it." Meredith smiled and tightened her grip around Josiah's grandmother's hands and went on, "No one wanted for this to happen to Josiah. What is there to feel bad about?"

"Mm, you're right, Edith."

Meredith studied Josiah's grandmother carefully as she wondered if this was all Josiah's grandmother wanted to talk about after asking to meet her alone.

Since Josiah's grandmother did not say anything, Meredith thought that it would not be right for her to ask first.

After a moment of silence, Josiah's grandmother suddenly grabbed Meredith's hands and asked, "Edith, I need you to be honest with me. How is Charlie doing these days?"

Meredith was slightly taken aback.

She thought that Josiah's grandmother should be worried about Josiah rather than Charlie. But judging from her expression, Josiah's grandmother looked quite concerned.

"Charlie is doing fine. There are days when he would be sensitive, suspicious, and even get irritated easily. But he is still good toward me."

"Charlie had always resented Josiah since he was young. I'm guessing that it's still the same?"

Meredith was stunned again.

Josiah's grandmother asked again, "Does Charlie still think that it was Joe who staged the accident that took his legs?"

"Why would you ask this, Grandma?"

Meredith was puzzled yet at the same time, she felt an ominous feeling welling up in her chest.

Could it be that Josiah's grandmother was suspecting that it was Charlie who staged the accident to get back at Josiah? Meredith tried to recall Charlie's recent behavior and thought that there might be a possibility.

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But she did not want to start getting suspicious of Charlie just like how she did toward Josiah.

Hence, before Josiah's grandmother said anything further, Meredith smiled and reassured her, "Don't worry, Grandma. Charlie only resented Josiah because of me. But now that I'm married to him, I don't think there's any other reason for Charlie to not like Josiah."

"You haven't been in contact with Joe recently, have you?" Josiah's grandmother asked.

"Rarely." Meredith felt slightly guilty.

Even though she had not been in contact with Josiah, Josiah was the one who was concerned about her and he was also the one who stayed with her at the hospital whenever she got ill.

But Charlie knew nothing about these.

Leaving the house, Meredith and Charlie sat side by side at the back of the car.

Because it was New Year's Eve, the roads were crowded and lively. The colorful street lights would occasionally be reflected into the car.

Charlie looked as if he was tired with his back leaned against the car seat and his eyes closed.

Meredith stole a glance at him as she recalled her conversation with Josiah's grandmother earlier.

She wondered if Charlie was really behind Josiah's accident.

But the Charlie that she knew was not the cruel and ruthless type of person.

Even though he had been losing his temper because of his legs and he had hurt her, Charlie would regret what he had done and would also apologize to her.

"Aren't you tired, Edith?" Charlie asked, all of a sudden.

Meredith came back to her senses and broke away her gaze on Charlie. "Not really. What about you?"

"Slightly."

Meredith held his hand and said, "We'll be home soon."

"Mm."

Meredith tried to start another conversation to fill the silence. "With Nia at your grandma's place, our home is suddenly quiet."

"Yeah, I can't seem to get used to this."

"I don't think Nia would be able to stay there for long. I'll go pick her up tomorrow evening."

"It's the holiday week, isn't it? We'll let her be."

"You're right."

When they reached their house, Meredith wanted to help him shower but Charlie rejected her again.

"Edith, I can do it myself."

"Let me at least help you remove your clothes then."

"It's really fine. You have urgent work to do, don't you? You should hurry up and get back to work." Seeing how Meredith was still worried about him, Charlie said, "I'm not used to having someone else showering for me. I get uncomfortable."

*Alright then. Be careful."

"I will."

Even though Charlie had been taking showers on his own, Meredith was still worried about him. Hence, she would avoid working in her study and work in the bedroom instead.

She would go through her emails while paying attention to Charlie's movements in the shower room.

At the sound of the shower head turning on, Meredith heard Charlie moaning in pain.

She immediately got onto her feet and stood in front of the shower room's door. "Charlie, is everything okay? Did you hurt yourself? Do you need my help?"

in the shower room, Charlie was pressing on a freshly cut wound on his leg as he squeezed out a reply." I'm fine, don't worry."

He had cut himself to relieve the built-up anger and pain in him.

Charlie had been holding back his emotions for the entire evening and he was finally able to let everything out

Watching the bright red blood seeping out from the wound, all Charlie could think about was what his mother had told him earlier.

His mother told him that Josiah's condition was stable and his legs were simply scratched by the car windows...

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While he had to be bound to the wheelchair and had to cut himself to relieve the pain in him, Josiah's legs were only scratched and cut by the glass shards.

Josiah had always been luckier than him ever since when they were young.

Charlie ran his wound under the hot water to numb the pain. After some time when he could not feel the pain anymore, he turned off the showerhead.

After struggling to put on his clothes, he heard Meredith's concerned voice again, "Charlie, are you done? Can I come in now?"

"I'm done." Charlie opened the door.

"Are you okay, Charlie?" Meredith helped to push him out of the shower and said, "Let me dry your hair."

Meredith stopped his wheelchair in front of the vanity table and started blow drying his hair.

When his hair was dried, she then moved him onto the bed and adjusted the blanket over him.

"Thank you, Edith," Charlie said while staring at her.

Meredith shook her head. "We agreed to skip all these formalities between us, right? We're husband and wife now."

Charlie's gaze deepened as he said, "Edith, will you find me a burden and leave me someday?"

"Of course not. I'm not that kind of person."

"That's a relief to know," Charlie held her hand and said, "Edith, please don't ever leave me. I'll be devastated and heartbroken if you did."

Looking at Charlie, Meredith felt rather conflicted.

At first, Charlie would want her to leave him, to stay away from a crippled person like him. But eventually, he started to change and became anxious and insecure that Meredith might leave him.

Meredith wondered if Charlie was that insecure about losing her.

She could not help but be reminded of Josiah's car accident.

She wanted to believe that Charlie was not that kind of person. The Charlie that she had known was a warm and gentle guy. She hated herself for being suspicious of Charlie.

Meredith hurriedly buried away the growing suspicions that she had of Charlie. After reassuring Charlie, she then returned to her study.

The next morning, Meredith personally made breakfast for Charlie.

While having breakfast, she said to him, "Charlie, I need to drop by the office for some work. Take care of yourself while I'm gone."

"Isn't it still a holiday today? Why are you needed back at the office?"

"There Are some issues with the sales, I need to look into it."

"I see," Charlie nodded and then added, "also, if you're worried about Josiah, you should go see him."

He then continued eating.

Meredith looked at him as she mulled over his words.

"Charlie, didn't we agree to visit Josiah together once he recovers?" She then went on, "Could it be that you're mistaken about something? There's really work at the office that I have to attend to today."

"Am I mistaken?"

"Of course."

"I see. I only think that way because you looked distraught the entire evening last night."

"It was because I didn't know if he was dead or alive, and I was worried about him because he is Nia's father. After your grandmother said that he was out of danger, I wasn't that worried about him anymore."

Charlie seemed to be paranoid.

Meredith had no other choice but to be patient with him.

But he had gotten better over time. Back then, he would not listen to her explanation and be stubborn. But now, Charlie would try to listen and accept her explanation.

Meredith left for work after breakfast.

As soon as Meredith showed up at work, Goldie ran over to her and asked, "Miss Meredith, I heard that Mister Josiah was in a car accident at Springford Street, yes?" "Who did you hear it from?" Meredith glanced at her.

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"From Quincy."			

"And how did she know about it?"

"Quincy said that the news was published online but was taken down immediately after. I guess things work differently with big corporations, huh? They are even worried that news about the CEO getting injured would cause a commotion."

Goldie lowered her voice and went on, "I even heard that Mister Josiah's car ran into the green belt area to avoid a car that was driving in the opposite direction to the flow of the traffic. Isn't it ridiculous that people these days would dare to do such a thing when the traffic rules are so strict?"

"Perhaps the driver was drunk."

Though Meredith looked unfazed on the surface, her mind was running wild.

It was another car accident caused by reckless driving.

Meredith thought that the accident was oddly similar to the one that happened to Charlie.

After a while, Meredith said to Goldie, "Alright now, let's stop the gossiping. I need you to help me look into something."

"What would you like me to do, Miss Meredith?"

"Look into who Mister Charlie has been meeting these days."

"This..." Goldie was confused. "Mister Charlie has been cooped up at home these days, who else could he be meeting?"

Goldie was right. Aside from last night, the company dinner, and the time she got hurt on Christmas day, Charlie had not been going out a lot.

Charlie was desperately looking for her and he would not have the time or mood to be meeting anyone else.

"Help me look into the night of the dinner event. See who Mister Charlie had met."

"Sure, it shouldn't be a problem, but..." Confused, Goldie asked, "don't you think that it's easier for you to ask Lucas if you want to know about Mister Charlie's whereabouts?"

"No. I can't let Charlie know that I am looking into him," Meredith responded.

"Miss Meredith..." Even more confused, Goldie guessed, "Are you worried that Mister Charlie is seeing another girl? If so, I'd say that you're thinking too much, Miss Meredith. Anyone could see that Mister Charlie adores you very much and now that he is crippled, it is impossible for him to fall for someone else.

Goldie was right.

Charlie loved and adored her.

But she had no choice other than to look into him behind his back.

Seeing how Meredith looked upset, Goldie quickly said, "Give me a moment, Miss Meredith. Let me call the hotel."

"Alright."

After Goldie left, Meredith murmured to herself under her breath, "Charlie, I hope you don't disappoint me."

But Meredith was soon disappointed by what she heard.

Goldie told Meredith that Charlie had met Yena after he left the hotel. And it was then that Meredith felt an ominous feeling.

At the same time, her suspicions of Charlie grew even stronger.

After settling her work, Meredith went to where Yena was working.

The employees there told her that Yena had guit her job.

Meredith did not expect that Yena would actually guit her job.

She was suddenly reminded of Quinley Allison.

Two years ago, Yena was incited by Quinley and Meredith guessed that a desperate Yena might have most probably joined Quinley,

The pub was crowded and busy even in the afternoon. Meredith found Quinley attending to her guest in the private room.

At the sight of Meredith, Quinley leaned against the door with her arms crossed in front of her chest and smirked, "What brings you here, Miss Meredith? I am really busy, as you can see. I have debts and bills to pay."

"How much for your time? I'll buy it."

"10 grand."

"I didn't expect that it'd be this cheap," Meredith looked at her with a look of disdain and mocked, "you could have been living your lavish life as a rich girl, and look at you, being a hostess at a pub. Why would you want to play with fire in the first place?"

The look on Quinley's face changed but she quickly retorted, "Who are you to brag? If I remember, your time wasn't even worth three hundred dollars when you first started here, am I right?"

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"Oh wait, you were only asked to clean the toilets of the pub, you weren't even qualified to serve the customers."

Meredith was not fazed by her taunting but instead, she smiled. "Well, you're right. I guess you're more capable than me.

"But I'm not here today to compare myself with you. I wanted to ask you about someone," Meredith cut to the chase and said, "I'm looking for her."

"Yena, that pea-brained girl? She asked me for a few hundred dollars this morning and left in a rush. I'm guessing that she's hiding underneath some bridge."

"So it is true that Yena is involved with you!"

"Yeah, what's wrong with that?" Studying Meredith, Quinley asked, "But why are you looking for her? Don't tell me it's because of Mister Josiah again?"

"How did you know?"

"Something that you need to know about me is that, even though I never got to have Josiah to myself, I've always been interested in his life. How could I possibly miss out on such happy news – that he got into a car accident?"

"Why would you think that I'm looking for Yena simply because of Josiah's accident?"

"Because Yena went to meet Charlie and she tried to drive a wedge between you guys. Plus, Charlie is head over heels for you and he desperately wanted you to stay. Hence, it is only natural that he would get his revenge on Josiah by staging a car accident, no?"

Meredith was startled.

After a while, she asked Quinley, "How do you know about all these?"

"Because…" Quinley swirled the wine glass in her hand, smiled, and said, "I'll tell you if you transfer me 20 grand right now."

Without any hesitation, Meredith took out her phone and transferred money to Quinley's account.

Quinley checked her bank account, put away her phone, and took a sip of the red wine. "Because I was the one who taught her to do so. Surprise, surprise."

Meredith's face darkened.

"Quinley Allison!" Meredith seethed as she raised her hand, wanting to slap Quinley.

It was as if she had expected that Meredith would slap her, Quinley grabbed Meredith's wrist and smirked, "Calm down now, Miss Meredith. Why would you want to hit me when you brought this onto yourself?"

She then flung away Meredith's hand and said, "If it wasn't because of you who's going back and forth between the two men, why would Josiah be hurt by his cousin? You should be blaming yourself for what happened, not me."

"Besides, I only came up with a plan for the slow-witted Yena, and it was her decision to involve Charlie. How is this my fault?"

"Miss Quinley, it seems like you're not interested in working as a hostess anymore. It's better if you're locked up in jail," Meredith seethed coldly.

"So? What can you do about it?"

"What about you, Miss Quinley? What do you think Josiah would do to you?"

"Josiah Shelby?" Quinley pulled into a smile, lamented with bitterness and resentment "Tell me Meredith do you really think that Josiah took mercy on me because he didnt lock me up in jail?

"Isnt it?

Glaring at her, Quinley seethed, "Meredith Leighton, you ve been a hostess too, haven't you? Then you should know better how tormenting it is to be one!"

"I have to face those bunch of disgusting men every day and even when I'm utterly disgusted by them, still have to keep a smile on my face and make sure that they're happy. Don't you know how it feels Or have you forgotten about it because your days have been too peaceful?*

Quinley did not know whether Meredith understood the pain and torment that she was going through, but she knew that Josiah must have known about it. And that was why Josiah kept her in this living hell rather than locking her up in jail.

Meredith said flatly. "I don't. Because no matter how poor and how hard my life is I would never stoop so low."

Back then when she decided to put away her pride, she did it for the sake of earning money for Nia's hospital bills, not because she enjoyed it.

"You don't?" Quinley studied her and nodded, "You're right. Back then even when Josiah said that he hated and was disgusted by you, deep down, he still cared a lot about you. How would he possibly allow other men to treat you badly?"