

Married by Mistake: Mr. Whitman's Sinner Wife
chapter 1856

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"Shirley, what's wrong? Do you feel unwell?"

"Heh, hehe..." Shirley chuckled bitterly. "Retribution."

She uttered the word with great effort. Carter frowned.

"What nonsense are you talking about?"

"The fourth stage of the poison is flaring up." Shirley was breathing heavily; her speech was indistinct.

Carter froze instantly. He took this moment to look closely at Shirley's face, and he began to panic.

"Where's the anti-toxoid test reagent? I went to your lab and saw that you've finished it. Didn't you inject yourself with it?"

Carter asked incoherently.

Shirley lifted her tired eyes and, through her blurred vision, saw Carter's anxious face.

"Yes, it's finished. And yes, I've injected it, but it's not inside me."

Shirley displayed a relieved smile as she spoke.

"I've done so much harm to others without benefiting myself. This is the first time I've experienced being a good person, and it turns out that it feels pretty nice. No, this doesn't really count. I'm just making up as best as I can for the wrongdoings that I've done in the past."

When Shirley was done speaking, she laughed at herself, then effortfully moved her finger to operate the wheelchair.

Jeremy, who was next to Shirley, immediately realized something after listening to what Shirley had said.

It seemed that the anti-toxoid test reagent Shirley had given him was the only one.

The reason she had been in such a hurry in asking him to inject Madeline with it was that she was worried that Carter would show up and prevent it—it was not because of any other reason.

Carter seemed to understand as well. "Shirley, what did you say? Are you saying that you've

handed the anti-toxoid test reagent for AXP6g to Jeremy?"

"Was I wrong for giving it to him?" Shirley asked with a cold smile. "Eveline shouldn't suffer this pain. I've already woken up, so Carter, it's time for you to wake up too."

"What did you say?" Carter's gaze gradually darkened.

Shirley's attitude, however, was unchanged. "Carter, if you want to obtain something or someone, you have to go through the proper means in obtaining them, and this applies to everyone. I finally understand this principle, and you should understand it too."

After Shirley's voice had fallen away, Carter immediately let out a scornful laugh.

"Heh."

He laughed mockingly, then his gaze darkened suddenly as he grabbed Shirley's shoulders tightly. He gritted his teeth, suppressing the impending outburst of his fury, and asked crossly.

"Shirley, you've truly gone either insane or mad! You need the anti- toxoid test reagent for AXP6G more than Eveline now!

"Have you forgotten that you're pregnant now? If you don't use it in time, you and your baby will be in danger!

"Do you want our child to be born with disabilities?"

Carter asked forcefully. He seemed furious but in reality, he was concerned.

That was right. He was concerned.

As for Jeremy, he was shocked to learn that Shirley was pregnant and that the child belonged to Carter.

Jeremy had never expected Carter and Shirley to have this relationship.

Furthermore, he had not expected Shirley to have handed him the only vial of anti-toxoid test reagent.

That meant that she and her child would certainly suffer harm.

At the thought of that, a trace of pity appeared in Jeremy's heart.

However, the pity was not for Shirley but the innocent child in her womb.

Shirley, however, was laughing at that moment. "Carter, you're wrong. The child in my womb never had a chance to come into this world."

Married by Mistake: Mr. Whitman's Sinner Wife
chapter 1857

When Jeremy heard that, he was surprised yet again.

Similarly, Carter was dumbfounded, and his grip on Shirley's shoulders loosened. "Shirley, what do you mean by this? What do you mean?"

Shirley lifted her wet, red eyes and chuckled bitterly.

"I never wanted to give birth to that child in the first place."

"I lied when I told you that the poison will affect the child's growth. All I wanted was to get my hands on the ingredient for the anti-toxoid test reagent for AXP6G."

"What did you say?" Carter looked at Shirley in disbelief as she said that.

"Now that I've already achieved what I wanted, there's nothing left that I can't bear to part with anymore."

The light in Shirley's eyes darkened slowly.

"Something bad happened to Addy and Cathy because of me, and they're no longer here now. There's no longer anyone in this world who truly cares about me or cares for me. I don't need the anti

-toxoid test reagent anymore. I just want to finish the end of my journey in peace."

Every word Shirley spoke drained her, and when she was done, she pressed the switch on the wheelchair and moved forward on her own.

The rain did not lighten, and Shirley's figure in the wheelchair looked abnormally frail.

Carter immediately chased after her, and so did Jeremy.

"Shirley, what did you say? Did something bad happen to Adam and Cathy? What happened to them? Tell me!" Jeremy questioned anxiously.

When Carter saw that, he went forward to stand between Jeremy and Shirley.

At that moment, Carter, his face and entire body drenched in rain, looked dark and cold. "Jeremy, stay away from her! "

Of course, Jeremy ignored Carter. Presently, Jeremy

only wanted to know Adam and Cathy's situation.

It was just that when he was about to ask for clarification, Carter reached out his hand to stop him.

Jeremy was no pushover. No one could stop him just because they wanted to.

However, Shirley let out a sudden cry of pain.

Carter immediately lowered his head to look over and saw Shirley clutching her heart, her body curling up, seemingly in debilitating pain.

"Shirley! "

Cater instinctively called out Shirley's name in a concerned tone and carried her in a bridal carry,

then ran toward a car that was parked not far away.

Jeremy wanted to chase after them to find out what had happened, but when he saw Shirley being in such a pained state, he stopped.

He was not worried about Shirley. However, when he thought about her handing the last anti-toxoid test reagent over for Madeline and her choosing to endure the poison with the child in her womb, he believed that Shirley wanted to turn over a new leaf.

Nonetheless, he could not forgive her. He could not forgive everything Shirley had ever done previously.

Jeremy went back into the house and called everyone he knew to enquire about Adam.

Dr. Adam Brown was fairly well-known in Glendale. However, Jeremy asked everyone he knew and no one knew anything about Adam's recent situation.

Jeremy also called the hospital that Adam worked in. The hospital told him that Adam had not been coming into work for some time, and they did not know why.

No one knew where Adam went or what happened to him.

However, Jeremy suspected that something bad must have happened to Adam and Cathy.

Anxious, he walked back to the bedroom. When he looked at the still-sleeping Madeline, he held her hand gently.

“Linnie, what do you think I should do now?”

Jeremy was sick with worry when he thought about what Shirley had said not long ago. He truly did not want to think about the worst-case scenario.

He still hoped that it was just an act put up by Shirley and Carter, hoping that Adam and Cathy were safe and sound.

Married by Mistake: Mr. Whitman's Sinner Wife
chapter 1858

Elsewhere, Carter was driving speedily back to his villa.

In hurried steps, Carter, drenched in the rain, rushed into the living room with the unconscious Shirley in his arms.

Camille and Ada, who were in the living room, were shocked when they saw Carter returned while carrying an unconscious and soaking wet Shirley.

"How did she turn out like this?" Camille, whose eyes were filled with concern, immediately instructed the maid, "Get Dr. Lane here immediately!"

The maid then carried out the order hurriedly.

While Ada stood at one side, watching the worried-looking Carter as he carried Shirley upstairs,

Camille followed Carter.

When Ada saw how worried they were for Shirley, anger rose in Ada's chest, yet a smile appeared on her face.

She could see with her eyes, of course, so she knew that Shirley had gone out in the rain.

Judging from how wet Shirley was, she must have been in the rain for a very long time. Additionally, with Adam and Cathy's deaths, Ada was certain that Shirley would not be able to keep the child in her stomach.

After Carter had carried Shirley back to the room, he swiftly found some clean clothes for Shirley and personally changed her clothes.

Camille was sick with worry at the side. " She ran into the rain? How long was she in the rain? Did she forget that she's a pregnant woman now?"

Pregnant woman.

For some reason, these two words sounded abnormally ear-piercing to Carter because he remembered what Shirley had said not long ago.

"Carter, the child in my womb never had a chance to come into this world."

As her words repeated in Carter's ears, he felt a chill down his spine.

Before long, Dr. Lane arrived.

He gave Shirley a basic checkup, and he immediately checked the baby in Shirley's womb.

However, Carter's expression was dark. "I want to know what's wrong with her."

Dr. Lane understood what Carter meant, so he gave Shirley another examination, but he did not find anything abnormal.

In truth, Carter knew Dr. Lane would not find out what was wrong with Shirley.

No one would know that Shirley had a poison called AXP6g inside of her. It was a poison she had developed, and this poison had now reached its final stage, bringing her an endless torment.

Carter, unable to continue to think any further, suddenly turned around and walked out of the room.

"Carter, where are you going?" Camille wanted to stop Carter, but he seemed to have made up his mind.

Ada was about to come over to check up on Shirley when she happened to see Carter walking out of Shirley's room.

"Carty, Shir..." Ada's lips parted to greet Carter, but Carter walked directly past her, seemingly not to have even noticed her presence.

Carter's treatment made Ada feel as if she was air, and that infuriated her. However, she did not know

toward whom she could displace her frustration, so she could only head in to see Shirley as Ada was still fuming.

Carter dashed into the underground laboratory.

He examined some of the data on the desk Shirley had been working on before, then walked to the refrigerator.

After entering the passcode of the refrigerator, he looked all over and did not find what he was looking for.

In truth, he knew very well that it was not here.

That particular ingredient inside the anti- toxoid test reagent for AXP6G was exclusive to St. Piaf and extremely rare.

Carter could not understand why Shirley wanted to hand the anti-toxoid test reagent she developed to Jeremy.

‘She must have gone insane. She’s insane!’

Carter’s rage was beginning to erupt when a maid ran hurriedly to the laboratory entrance.

“Mr. Carter, Miss Shirley Brown is awake.”

Married by Mistake: Mr. Whitman's Sinner Wife chapter 1859

As soon as he heard that, Carter turned around hastily and strode toward Shirley's room.

However, as Carter approached the room, his heartbeat became increasingly rapid with apprehension by the second.

The production of AXP6g had originally been intended for Madeline.

It contained a terrifying ingredient that would take effect and mutate upon entering the human body.

In the end, it would shatter the person's soul by inducing hallucinations, forcing the person to relive their most painful and humiliating memories.

Carter's footsteps grew heavier as these thoughts played on his mind.

He felt nervous, along with an unprecedented sense of panic.

He feared that, in a moment, he would see such a version of Shirley too.

An undignified Shirley who was trapped in her painful memories.

Carter's thoughts ceased abruptly when he arrived at the door of Shirley's bedroom.

He felt a wave of inexplicable weight upon him and, for a moment, he felt weak.

Amid Carter's hesitation, Shirley's voice drifted from the room. She sounded confused and in pain.

"What happened to my legs? Why don't they have any strength? Why?"

Upon hearing these words, Carter furrowed his brows. Something did not feel right.

He walked straight into the room without any further hesitation.

As Carter entered, however, all eyes turned to him suddenly.

Camille's eyebrows were knitted deeply as she gazed at Carter with a mournful expression on her face. "She doesn't seem to be herself. It's like she's forgotten everything that's happened lately."

Carter's heart froze when he heard that. Indeed, she had forgotten.

Indeed, the final stage of the poison was tormenting in that manner.

Carter's brows snapped together into a deep frown. Carter, intending to talk with this version of Shirley in private, was about to tell everyone to leave the room.

However, Shirley's eyes met his gaze, and suddenly, her expression changed. She looked so helpless and weak, and so forlorn.

"Carter, my legs... My legs seem to be disabled."

Carter had not expected Shirley to address himself in that tone at this particular time.

Bewildered, he looked at Shirley whose eyes were welling with tears. After several seconds of silence, Carter tentatively asked, "Shirley?"

Shirley, who did not seem to reject or feel estranged by the way Carter had addressed her, nodded and looked at Carter expectantly.

"Carter, what happened to my legs? Why can't I move at all?"

A sense of realization crept into Carter's heart. He glanced over at Camille, who had an equally bewildered expression on her face, and gave her a knowing look.

Camille understood, then immediately instructed the servants to leave the room. When she turned around, she saw Ada, who was grudgingly standing at the side, gritting her teeth, and Camille went straight to Ada and dragged her away.

As the door closed, Carter and Shirley were left alone in the room.

Shirley looked like a frightened fawn at this moment; the charming and tough personality she had in the past was gone.

She looked at Carter, her almond-shaped eyes filled with tears.

"Carter, my legs..."

Carter hurried over to the bedside. Wrapping his arms around Shirley's shoulders, he tenderly reassured her, "Don't be afraid. I'm here. Your legs will recover soon. I promise."

"But what happened to my legs? Why are they like this all of a sudden? I can't remember anything, Carter..."

Carter had never dreamed that there would be a day when Shirley would call out his name like this.

His heart wavered slightly as his arms tightened around Shirley.

Married by Mistake: Mr. Whitman's Sinner Wife
chapter 1860

Although the situation puzzled him, it was better than what he had originally envisioned.

Due to her exposure to the rain, Shirley had developed symptoms of a cold and a fever.

Since she was pregnant, she could not simply take flu medications.

He called for the doctor to return once again. It was not until late at night that Shirley was completely settled in.

Throughout the night, Shirley softly called for Carter several times as she dreamed.

He stayed by her bed, watching her closely, not leaving her side.

To avoid disturbing Shirley's rest, Carter had only turned on a table lamp.

The warm, soft light hung over Shirley's face as she slept. Carter unconsciously raised a hand and gently caressed her scarred cheek.

"If you hadn't left me without a word back then, none of these would have happened. "Why did you make me hate you?"

"Shirley, why have you put such strain on our relationship?"

Carter spoke to himself, knowing that Shirley would not hear what he was saying now.

Similarly, Jeremy had also stayed up all night watching over Madeline by her bed.

Shirley's words remained in his mind. "At most, she'll need eight hours, then she'll wake."

Furthermore, Jeremy was concerned that the anti-toxoid test reagent might develop other side effects that could affect Madeline during this time. As

such, he had stayed awake to keep a close eye on her.

As the first glimmer of dawn shone across the sky, Madeline began to show signs of waking up.

Instantly, Jeremy's heart stirred. "Linnie."

He held onto Madeline's hand as he gently called out her name.

"Linnie, are you awake? Can you hear my voice? Linnie."

Madeline's eyelids moved, and after some time, her eyes slowly opened.

A faint ray of morning sunlight shone through the French windows. Madeline's eyebrows furrowed, and, as if the ray of sunlight pricked her eyes, she closed her eyes again.

"Linnie?" Worried, Jeremy leaned in closer. "Linnie, you're awake, aren't you?"

Jeremy expectantly looked at Madeline's face, which showed some signs of fatigue. A second later, he finally heard Madeline speak.

"Jeremy."

Madeline called out tiredly.

Eyes closed, she murmured to herself as if she was dreaming, "It seemed like I had been in a very long dream. I'd dreamt that I was sleeping continuously, and you were constantly by my side."

"Linnie, you weren't dreaming." Jeremy caressed Madeline's cheek gently. "Linnie, open your eyes slowly now. Get accustomed to the brightness first."

Madeline nodded, then slowly opened her eyes again.

The morning light was very gentle, and Madeline gradually adapted to them.

After a brief moment of disorientation, she smiled and met Jeremy's intense gaze.

At that moment, neither of them spoke; they spread their arms and fell into a silent embrace.

"I know it must have been tough for you all this time, " Madeline whispered into Jeremy's ear and planted a soft kiss on his cheek.

"Taking care of my wife is the greatest joy in my life. It's not tough." At that moment, Jeremy

rejoiced as he embraced Madeline, her warm hug instantly banished the befuddlement in his heart.

Madeline took a shower in comfort and changed into a fresh set of clothes. As she did this, she reflected on the incidents that had occurred before she regained consciousness. As soon as she had put her clothes on, she rushed up to Jeremy.

"Jeremy, where's Lily? Our main purpose for going to F Country was to find Lily. Now that we're back, where is she?"

Married by Mistake: Mr. Whitman's Sinner Wife
chapter 1861

Jeremy, cognizant of Madeline's worry and longing for Lilian in her heart, held her shoulders and gently reassured her.

"Lily's with Fabian for the moment. Don't worry, I believe that he won't hurt her."

However, Madeline did not feel relieved. "That's not the point, Jeremy. Lily is sick. She needs timely treatment."

"I know, Linnie. I know what you're worried about."

Jeremy comforted her patiently. He quickly pulled out his phone and opened his gallery folder.

"Look, Linnie. This is Lily's medical report from yesterday."

Following Jeremy's words, Madeline hurriedly grabbed the phone over and gazed down at the screen.

Lilian's medical report was the latest image in the gallery folder.

Madeline read it in detail and saw that Lilian's health indicators showed great improvements compared to the time before Fabian took her away.

Madeline, however, was still skeptical. "Jeremy, is this really the report for Lily's health indicators?"

Jeremy nodded affirmatively. "Linnie, put your trust in Fabian. He may be feeling conflicted in his heart, but I believe he's still the same Fabian we

Seeing Jeremy's certainty in his eyes, Madeline's pent-up emotions gradually began to loosen up.

"Is Lily really doing well?" Madeline asked again worriedly.

Jeremy held Madeline's hands as a hint of a smile spread across his soft, warm eyes.

"Trust me, Linnie."

"If it's trust, I trust you, of course."

Madeline nodded her head repeatedly. She indeed trusted him. She wanted to believe that it was all true.

Madeline recomposed herself and went downstairs. The moment she saw Pudding, whom she had not seen in a long time, she immediately hugged him and showered him with kisses.

"Mama," Pudding cried out childishly. Putting his lips together, he planted a soft peck on Madeline's cheek.

Madeline suddenly felt a deep sense of contentment. At this moment, however, she felt a greater yearning for her sensible, eldest son.

Unfortunately, Jackson had already left for school after she had woken up.

Nevertheless, the longing feeling Madeline had for her son was similar to Eloise's feelings for Madeline.

It had been so long since Eloise had seen Madeline, and Eloise's eyes reddened the moment she saw her.

"Eveline, I have failed to take good care of you all this time. Whenever you are faced with difficulties or obstacles, I only learn about them afterward."

Eloise's eyes were filled with tender emotions, and her words were tinged with guilt.

However, Madeline only smiled and embraced Eloise warmly.

She never had many desires. All she wanted was for the family to be together, safe, and healthy. That would be enough.

Such a small and plain wish seemed to have become a luxurious notion, though.

Jeremy had originally intended for Madeline to rest more. After all, she just woke up.

However, Madeline, insisting that she had sufficient rest after having slept for far too long, followed Jeremy out.

In the car, Madeline learned that Shirley had given her the only tube of anti-toxoid test reagent even though Shirley was pregnant. This decision of Shirley's shocked Madeline.

"What made Shirley change and sacrifice so much? Is it because of Adam?" Madeline ventured a guess.

At the mention of Adam, however, Jeremy was momentarily stumped for words.

Married by Mistake: Mr. Whitman's Sinner Wife
chapter 1862

Presently, a piece of news came through the phone's pushed notification.

A certain suburban villa was reported to have caught fire last night, resulting in the deaths of a man and a woman.

Jeremy's heart began thumping erratically upon reading this news.

While the news article did not specify the identities of the man and woman, Jeremy had a feeling that they were Adam and Cathy.

Nevertheless, he still held onto a glimmer of hope. However, Madeline immediately recognized the villa in the picture.

"Isn't that Carter's villa in Glendale?" Madeline pointed to the picture on the phone screen.

"Is it true that Gray Villa caught fire last night? And a man and woman died as a result?"

For some inexplicable reason, Madeline's heartbeat was similarly unsettled. She also noticed that Jeremy was driving in the direction of Gray Villa.

"Jeremy, are you going to look for Carter?"

"I'm looking for Shirley. I want to know Cathy and Adam's whereabouts." Jeremy, looking ahead at the road, drove faster.

Madeline's heart seemed to skip a beat hearing that. She stared at the side of Jeremy's solemn face

and glanced down again at the news on her phone. A n aversive thought began to slowly form in her mind.

“Jeremy, could it be that the man and woman who were burned to death in the news were Cathy and Adam?”

Madeline voiced her suspicions. As her words rang through the air, she felt her palms growing cold.

“No, it’s not possible. An accident like this would never happen, ” Madeline denied repeatedly, but Jeremy’s silence only made her feel more uneasy.

Before long, Jeremy’s car pulled up at the main gate of Gray Villa.

Madeline smelled a powerful burnt odor the moment she got out of the car.

Despite the heavy storm last night, the smell was not washed away.

Several policemen and forensic experts, who were most likely here investigating the cause of the fire, were coming out of the villa.

Camille was standing at the side to receive them.

As Madeline and Jeremy approached, they heard the police confirming with Camille, "Are the names of the deceased Adam Brown and Cathy Jordan?"

"Yes, that's correct, " Camille nodded with a somber expression.

Hearing that response, both Madeline and Jeremy felt a sudden shock.

Jeremy took Madeline's hand and strode toward Camille and the police.

"Jeremy, Madeline? Why are you here all of a sudden?" Camille looked surprised. "You'd better leave quickly. There'll be trouble again if Carter sees you."

"I'm here to see Carter," Jeremy's tone was firm. "I want a clear explanation as to why did Adam and Cathy encounter such a tragic accident in Gray Villa!

"An accident is an accident. No one asked for this. Even if you looked for Carter, it wouldn't change the fact that this was an accident, " Camille explained in Carter's stead.

Jeremy, however, could not accept such an argument. In his heart, he knew that Adam and Cathy had disliked Carter.

Adam and Cathy hated it when they were dragged here by force the last time. As such, they would never have come here willingly. They must have been forced by Carter again.

Having accepted Camille's help before, Madeline did not wish to question her harshly.

Holding back her own nearly overwhelming grief, Madeline interrupted Jeremy, who was on the verge of losing his temper, in a calm tone and inquired, "Madam Gray, Adam and Cathy were great friends of mine and Jeremy. If they were really in an accident in your house, as their friends, we'd just like to know the actual reason."

As Madeline's words left her mouth, Carter's figure appeared up ahead.

With a black coat on, he walked over in a cold and indifferent manner.

"What good friends you are," he said sarcastically and continued, "since you two are so desperate for the truth, then follow me."

Married by Mistake: Mr. Whitman's Sinner Wife chapter 1863

Carter, who had suddenly appeared, immediately turned around after speaking.

Madeline and Jeremy exchanged glances and, with tacit understanding, strode forward.

Shortly after, Carter arrived in front of the house that had caught fire the previous night.

Before the accident, he had indeed restricted Cathy and Adam's movements, enforcing them to remain in this house.

It had never occurred to him that something like this would happen last night, but he felt that it was a human act.

Staring at the burnt ruins before her, Madeline could not help thinking about the fire that had taken place at Montgomery Manor.

During that time, the most painful part of the situation had been her believing Jeremy to be the one who set the fire. Of course, it was equally painful when she had thought that her biological parents were killed in that fire.

Fortunately, though, it was all just a scheme.

Madeline felt a painful tug in her heart as she thought about Adam and Cathy dying here last night.

She truly hoped that Adam and Cathy's accident was also only a scheme, that they were, in fact, safe and sound.

"Carter, did you keep Adam and Cathy locked in this house, preventing them from leaving?"
Jeremy's interrogative tone pulled Madeline out of her contemplation.

Madeline cast a questioning glance at the indifferent-looking Carter.

Despite Jeremy and Madeline's scrutiny and skeptical gazes, Carter remained completely unmoved.

"I kept them here because they were useful to me. Thus, I had no reason to burn them to death, dirtying my place in the process."

"Carter, you're ridiculous. Do you think that saying that would exempt you of your relation to this?"
The expression on Madeline's face grew a few shades darker. "Two human lives were lost

because of you, and you intend to escape responsibility with

just two simple sentences?"

"Responsibility? What sort of responsibility do I have?" Carter retorted. "I had them here to help me in my matters. Now that something has happened to them, I'm the one who's suffering the biggest loss."

"Carter."

Jeremy interrupted Carter in a chilly tone; a piercing stare shot out of Jeremy's cold eyes.

"I won't let my friends die without a clear understanding."

Carter seemed to pause for a while, then smiled. "

That would be best. I, too, want to get to the bottom of this and figure out who had disrupted my original plan."

His smile was faint, and his beautiful eyes had no trace of warmth or remorse.

Two people had died before him, but to Carter, their deaths seemed to be nothing more than the

withering of flowers and plants. Their deaths were not worth mentioning.

As long as he could accomplish his goals, all humans, matters, and objects were nothing but air.

There was no conscience or humanity in him.

A sudden wave of chill swept through Madeline. She found it unbelievable. Was this really the man who had rescued her out at sea the last time?

No.

Maybe he never thought about saving her.

Perhaps he had known she was Jeremy's woman beforehand. Therefore, all his actions had been planned.

Madeline did not feel her speculations were far-fetched. She had not understood Carter at first, but now that he had revealed his true colors, it was truly spine-chilling.

Carter, noticing that Madeline had been staring at him, took a step toward her, his thin lips curling up slightly.

" It appears that AXP6g's anti-toxoid test reagent has had a positive effect on your body. She's really a genius. Within a short span of time, she managed to develop a perfect and effective anti-toxoid test reagent."

Carter was obviously referring to Shirley when he used the word "she".

Hearing that, Madeline's lips pursed slightly, and her beautiful eyes flashed with cold contempt. "You play with the lives of others in your hands, yet you seem proud instead of guilty. In some sense, you and Shirley are indeed a perfect match."

Married by Mistake: Mr. Whitman's Sinner Wife
chapter 1864

Madeline raised her eyes slightly as she spoke.

"But I feel sorry for the child in her womb. It's tragic for the child to have parents like you."

Madeline's words completely wiped away the arrogance and smirk on Carter's face.

"Eveline, do you think you would be able to stand here now if Shirley hadn't given you the only vial of anti-toxoid test reagent?"

"Yes, I wouldn't be standing here. I ought to be showing my gratitude to the woman who had poisoned me and subsequently provided me with the anti-toxoid test reagent, am I right?"

Carter's expression darkened further, but he could not find a retort for Madeline's comment.

In a matter of seconds, his mind felt like a mess.

Although Shirley's current condition was better than expected, which gave him some comfort, he was still terribly upset at the thought of the poison

that was still in Shirley's body, threatening the birth of their child that was still in Shirley's womb.

At this moment, yet another layer of frustration fell upon Carter as Jeremy spoke once again.

"Carter, don't think that I'm unaware of what you're planning to do in Glendale. I'm telling you—I won't give you the opportunity. You'd better abandon that thought, return to St. Piaf, and assume your position as Viscount. "

As Jeremy's voice fell, Carter's forehead creased gloomily. His frown, however, began to relax a moment later, and the corners of his mouth lifted into a half-smile.

"I've never failed to accomplish what I want so far."

Upon finishing his sentence, he turned around in an unrestrained manner.

Jeremy calmly stared at the back of Carter's figure as Carter walked away without restrain, then spoke evenly.

"Carter, you won't always get what you want. You just wait and see."

Following Jeremy's words, Carter stopped in his tracks.

Carter, instead of turning around, continued to walk onward.

After a short walk down the road, he pulled out his mobile phone, checked his call history, and dialed Fabian's number.

However, the call could not be connected despite his attempts.

Carter frowned, irritation burgeoning in his heart.

Madeline and Jeremy stood before the burnt ruins. After a moment of observation, they then entered the house.

They wanted to look for clues or evidence to prove that Adam and Cathy were murdered. However, as they searched, warm tears filled Madeline's eyes against her volition, and her mood became increasingly depressed.

Jeremy turned around, seeing that Madeline was staring blankly out of a broken window, and walked over to her quickly.

When he noticed the glistening tears in her eyes, he immediately understood what she was feeling. In truth, he was feeling the same way.

"Linnie, don't cry. Don't be sad."

"I'm really sad." The tears in Madeline's eyes began to roll down her cheeks uncontrollably.

"Cathy and Adam had done so much for us, yet we weren't able to do anything for them when they needed us..."

In addition to feeling sad, Madeline was deeply ashamed. The tears in her eyes were already obscuring her vision.

"Maybe Adam and Cathy wouldn't have faced such a tragedy if they had never met us."

"Linnie, don't say such silly things. I believe that Adam and Cathy didn't regret knowing us and befriending us," Jeremy comforted her. "All we can do now is to find the culprit who's responsible for this arson."

Madeline sobbed quietly. "Jeremy, I want to see them for the last time."

Jeremy did not refuse, "I'll go with you."

"Okay." Madeline lifted her slender fingers to wipe the stray tears at the corners of her eyes. When her vision cleared, she immediately saw a figure walking past hurriedly outside.

Married by Mistake: Mr. Whitman's Sinner Wife
chapter 1865

Although Madeline only had a fleeting glimpse of the figure flashing past, intuitively, it felt very familiar to Madeline.

Madeline ignored Jeremy, who reached out a hand to wipe her tears, and quickly walked out.

"Linnie." Jeremy found this odd and immediately caught up to her.

Once outside, Jeremy immediately spotted a woman walking away hurriedly.

Although he could not recognize the figure from the back, he too found it familiar.

Suddenly, an image of a particular person's face flashed across Jeremy's mind. "Ada?"

"That's her," Madeline confirmed as she quickened her pace to catch up to Ada who was rushing off hastily.

"Ada!"

Madeline strode up to Ada and obstructed Ada's path.

Ada had no choice but to stop.

She looked impatiently at Madeline, who was standing firmly in front of her, and rolled her eyes. "Don't stand in my way, Eveline. Are you aware of my current status?"

Madeline studied Ada's smug and arrogant appearance, then raised her pair of beautiful cold eyes.

"Of course, I'm aware of your status. You're merely Carter's wife in name."

A look of dissatisfaction flashed across Ada's arrogant face.

She had not expected that even Madeline knew that Ada was merely Carter's wife in name.

Upon noticing Ada appearing to be going through some mental struggle, Madeline looked at her calmly.

"Carter married you, but he cares for another woman instead—he has even fathered a child with her. In light of this plain fact, will anyone still believe that Carter regards you as his wife? "

"You..." Ada's anger was ignited instantly. "What are you trying to do, Eveline? Did you come here deliberately just to make fun of me or something?"

"I don't have time to make fun of you, nor will I do anything else," Madeline said and glanced toward the burned house behind Ada. " I just want to find

out why you were sneaking at the door and looking into the house suspiciously just now.”

” ” Ada was momentarily stunned. Instinctively, her guilty gaze avoided Madeline’s beautiful eyes. A few seconds had passed before she finally opened her mouth to speak in a domineering tone.

“What a joke! I’m Mrs. Gray of this family. The entire villa belongs to me. I’ve had too much to eat and was bored, so I decided to go for a walk in the garden of my own villa. Is that something I need to report to an outsider like you?”

After a series of angry retorts, Ada snorted coldly.

“What a troublesome early morning. People coming in and out, all merely because of the death of two insignificant outsiders. Is it worth all the excitement?”

Madeline’s emotional state had initially calmed down, but when she heard the way Ada had described Cathy and Adam, the suppressed anger in her flared up immediately.

Seeing Ada about to leave, Madeline reached out with an arm, grabbed Ada’s wrist, and pulled her forward.

Ada softly cried in pain. She was contemplating to struggle when Madeline, who was standing in front of her, startled her with a piercing glare.

“What did you just say?! Say it again! What do you mean they were just two insignificant, dead outsiders?! How is it that everybody related to the Gray family, except for Carter’s mother, so inhumane? Do two human lives worth nothing in your eyes?”

Ada, who refused to be restrained by Madeline this way, shouted furiously.

“They were indeed merely two persons of no concern. What do they have to do with me? Who cares whether they’re dead or not? It’s better if they’re dead! That way, my house will be more peaceful, and Shirley can forget about restoring her appearance or standing up again!” After yelling those words out loud, Ada felt more at ease in her heart. However, barely a few seconds had passed when she realized that she might have divulged more information than she should.

Married by Mistake: Mr. Whitman’s Sinner Wife
chapter 1866

Ada, noticing that Madeline was gazing at her strangely, drew her hand back abruptly.

"Eveline, don't you f*cking bother me any further! Otherwise, I'll have the bodyguards throw you out!"

Ada warned Madeline impatiently and turned around quickly.

Afraid that she would be caught up again by Madeline, Ada intentionally quickened her pace.

Madeline quietly stood in the same spot. Her forehead creased slightly as she watched the back of Ada's figure as Ada retreated. "She seems very pleased by this fire."

As for Jeremy, he too had an inkling from what Ada had unintentionally blurted out earlier.

"Linnie, let me first accompany you to see Adam and Cathy for one last time."

Jeremy took Madeline's hand. As for the cause of the fire, he had already deduced some theories.

Through Jeremy's connections in Glendale, they finally located where Adam and Cathy were placed.

It was the coldest place in the hospital, and also a place where no one wished to visit.

The door opened, and a chill rushed past them. Coupled with the cool spring weather, the cold was bone-chilling.

Madeline and Jeremy, however, were unbothered by this. They walked over to the two beds covered with white cloths. The mere sight of this dampened their spirits.

Madeline reached out with her hand, intending to remove the white cloth, but Jeremy gently held her hand.

"Linnie, perhaps we shouldn't look," Jeremy said, holding her back. He did this for no other reason than his concern for Madeline, who might get frightened.

However, Madeline was not afraid; instead, she was unfazed.

"Cathy and Adam were our good friends. While they were alive, they were beautiful and handsome people. Even if their attractive appearances are gone, they'll always be beautiful in my heart."

After hearing Madeline's response, Jeremy felt that his thinking had been too shallow.

He released Madeline's arm and did not stop her any further.

However, when Madeline slowly lifted the white cloth and saw an indistinguishable face, she burst into tears without warning.

That must be Cathy.

Although Cathy's lively and cheerful appearance remained, all she could do now was lay there quietly.

"Don't worry, Cathy. I promise to treat your children as my own and take good care of them. You don't have to worry anymore. I'll also make certain to seek justice for you and Adam."

Madeline made a resolute vow with every word she said.

She placed the white cloth back in place and took a look at Adam.

Similarly, Adam had been burnt beyond recognition. It was too tragic to look at.

Madeline could not bring herself to look twice. She was not afraid, but it was truly agonizing for her.

After leaving, Madeline lingered at the hospital's entrance for a long while before her emotional state could finally settle down. However, she could not accept that Adam and Cathy had been killed like this.

The following day, Madeline made her way to Gray Villa again. This time, however, she went alone.

Ada had just been surreptitiously observing how attentive Carter was to Shirley's needs. Feeling upset, Ada went downstairs and presently saw Madeline walking toward her. Ada then immediately turned around and walked away guiltily.

Upon seeing Ada's reaction, Madeline felt even more certain that something was amiss.

Madeline entered the house in a composed manner, a snarky smirk hanging on her lips.

"Mrs. Gray, you turned around to leave as soon as you see a guest. Is this the Gray family's manner in receiving guests?"

Married by Mistake: Mr. Whitman's Sinner Wife
chapter 1867

Ada had initially turned around, about to leave, but when she heard Madeline's words, her obstinate temper flared.

She turned around defiantly and when she saw Madeline already sitting on the sofa without being invited to, Ada immediately resumed her appearance as Mrs. Gray and scoffed.

"I don't need you to remind me how the Gray family receives their guests. You, though, have a complete lack of manners when visiting people's homes. You came in and sat down straightway.

Have you got my permission? I'm the female hostess of this family."

"Female hostess of this family?" Madeline smirked as she looked around. "I don't see any hostess around. I do see a pitiful woman here claiming to be the hostess of the family, though."

The persistence in Ada's smile crumpled suddenly, and she glared furiously at Madeline. "Eveline, it seems like you're here to cause me trouble, aren't you?"

Madeline gave another smirk upon hearing that. "You have utterly no value to this family. Is there

anything about you that's worth my time to find trouble with?"

"You..." Ada was so furious that she nearly had an outburst!

This was clearly a deliberate attempt in provoking her! "Eveline, you..."

"Mrs. Whitman, what are you doing here again?" Camille appeared suddenly behind Ada.

Madeline's impression of Camille was the same as she had remembered; noble and graceful, Camille had a magnanimous and dignified appearance.

Madeline stood up, remembering how Camille had helped her evade Carter's tracking.

"Madam Gray, we meet again, " Madeline greeted in a polite and friendly manner.

Camille returned her smile and nodded. "Indeed, we meet again. We had met yesterday, Mrs. Whitman. Are you here again today for your two friends who passed away in the fire?"

As Camille spoke, she motioned for Madeline to sit down and instructed a servant to prepare tea and

snacks, completely ignoring Ada who was standing at the side.

That further fuelled the fury in Ada's heart.

That exchange had proven Madeline to be correct—Ada's position in this family was completely non-existent!

Even her mother-in-law disregarded her as if she were nothing more than air!

"Yes, I'm here today again because of my two friends, " Madeline explained the purpose of her visit, casting an ambiguous yet piercing glance over Ada's face.

"Because, from the very beginning, I believe that it was no mere accident—it was man-made."

"That's absolutely impossible, " Camille denied outrightly, "no one could create such an accident. "

"How can you be so certain, Madam Gray?"
Madeline gave her a puzzled look.

Ada, however, interrupted Camille's reply with a sudden, cold laugh.

"Mrs. Whitman, by saying that this was a man-

made accident, aren't you implying that my husband Carter deliberately caused this tragedy?

"The entire villa is aware that Carter had brought Adam and Cathy back. Carter was also clearly not satisfied with the both of them, which was why he'd confined them in that small house located on the villa's side grounds. If you put it that way, Carter becomes the only suspect in this case."

The moment Ada finished her sentence, Camille's expression turned dark.

"If you don't know how to speak properly, keep quiet so that no one would think that you're dumb!"

Ada pursed her lips. She had wanted to add a few more words to clear any suspicions on herself, but considering Camille's current mannerism, it would be unwise to speak again.

Madeline, however, gave Ada a skeptical look after she heard those words. "It seems that not only you have a low EQ but you also have a low IQ Mrs. Gray.

"What?" Ada glared indignantly at Madeline. "Eveline, is that the way you should speak? Are you mocking me?"

Married by Mistake: Mr. Whitman's Sinner Wife chapter 1868

"That was not my intention. Madam Gray and I merely share the same sentiment, that you should keep quiet if you have nothing better to say. Your words would bring your husband Carter trouble."

As Madeline spoke, her brow furrowed as she elegantly picked up her teacup and took a sip of black tea.

"Furthermore, in terms of people who'd benefit from Adam and Cathy's deaths, Carter won't gain anything at all. On the contrary, their deaths have caused him some significant losses. If he had set the fire, wouldn't he be shooting himself in the foot?"

"" Ada had not expected Madeline to analyze the issue from that perspective.

Ada felt uneasy as she recalled the words which she had unintentionally blurted out yesterday. She wondered if Madeline was acting this way because of what Ada had said.

Regardless of whether that was true or not, Camille, however, was clearly very satisfied with Madeline's remark.

"Mrs. Whitman is correct. There's no reason for Carter to harm others without benefiting himself. So, this was simply an accident."

"No, Madam Gray. Although the case can be ruled out for Carter, there is another suspect."

Madeline's eyes were fixed on the guilt-ridden Ada.

From the expression of Madeline's gaze, Ada could sense that Madeline suspected her. When Ada saw that Camille's gaze also shifted toward her, Ada took preemptive measures.

"Eveline, why are you looking at me? Could it be that you're suspecting me? I don't even know Adam and Cathy. What reason do I have for harming them? You'd better not speak nonsense."

Ada, revealing her malicious side, stared daggers at Madeline as if warning her.

Despite Camille's dislike for Ada, she believed that Ada was innocent at the moment.

"Mrs. Whitman, I think this was simply an accident. Ada, Adam, and Cathy were not exactly acquainted. She had neither reason nor motive to harm them."

"No, she does have a reason. " Madeline locked her piercing gaze on Ada's bewildered expression.

As Madeline spoke those words, Carter happened to be coming down the stairs.

Ada's expression instantly changed. Although she was gripped by panic in her mind, Ada knew that she had to hide it.

"Eveline, have you gone crazy?! How can you just open your mouth and slander me, accusing me of setting the fire that killed Adam and Cathy? What reason do I have for doing that? You're just too much."

Ada voiced her grievances as she turned her gaze toward the approaching Carter, whose attractive appearance was accompanied by an air of coldness, then Ada began whining.

"Carter, Eveline is insane. I've never even met Adam and Cathy before. Does Eveline think that I'm crazy, that I'd set them on fire? What would I have gained from that?"

Madeline stood up unhurriedly, paying utterly no heed to Ada's pitiful performance, and spoke in a composed manner.

"You'd have gained by ensuring that Shirley could never stand again, that Shirley's face would never regain her former appearance."

When Ada heard Madeline's reply, she could not wait to sew up her own mouth!

Her unintentional babble last night was indeed the root cause of this.

Upon hearing those words, a sudden realization dawned on Carter.

His cold, emotionless eyes stared piercingly at Ada's terrified face. "Is there anything else you would like to explain?"

"..." Ada paled. "It wasn't me. I didn't!"

"Back then, you had also denied when you disfigured and crippled Shirley, " Carter said in an insouciant tone, but each word grew colder as he spoke.

Ada, gripped by fear; felt a chill down her spine as she took a step backward.

"Carter, do you honestly have no faith in me, and you'd rather believe this woman Eveline instead?"

Married by Mistake: Mr. Whitman's Sinner Wife chapter 1869

Upon hearing that, Carter burst out laughing, but the smile on his face seemed spine-chilling.

"Of course, I believe you."

"Really?" Ada looked expectantly at Carter who had just said he believed her.

However, in the next second, Carter's gaze darkened.

"I believe in myself. I believe that someone like you would indeed do something like that."

" " Ada's widened as she felt her heartbeat grew more erratic. Presently, Carter's eyes gaze bore a hint of ruthless murderous intent.

He cared about Shirley, and he cared about her very particularly. That was why he now believed what Madeline had said.

When Ada saw Carter closing in on her, one step at a time, Ada felt as though her heart would leap out of her mouth.

If she admitted to this, she knew what would happen to her.

However, if she did not, what other excuses could she find...

Just as she was still silently coming up with an excuse in her heart, Carter had already forced her to a dead-end. She could no longer back away.

"Carter. Carter, listen to me. It's not like what Eveline said. I didn't set the fire. Adam and Cathy's deaths have nothing to do with me. Carter, I... Ugh

Before Ada could continue, Carter suddenly reached out his hand and grabbed Ada's neck.

Ada's eyes widened immediately. Pained, she opened her mouth to cough, but she could not make a sound.

"You're really something else," Carter said sarcastically. His gaze looked calm but there was a hint of austere chill in them. "Do you think that, if Shirley were to never get better, I'd set my heart on a woman like you? Do you think you're worthy? You don't even have the right to call me by my name."

When Ada heard Carter's disdainful statements, her eyes, as well as her face, reddened. It was unclear if it was due to Carter's words or due to her difficulty breathing.

Carter did not loosen his grip because of Ada's tears and pain but increased his grip instead.

Madeline, who was watching them from one side, seemed to see Jeremy's shadow in Carter at that moment.

It was also at that moment when Madeline truly believed that Carter had genuine feelings for Shirley.

The level of concern a man had toward a woman could determine whether he would do something like this.

Ada had clearly been caught red-handed, and she also verified Carter's relationship with Shirley.

"Carter, let go." Camille walked over to talk Carter down. Although she, too, despised Ada, Camille was much calmer than Carter. "If you choked her to death, Shirley's legs and face still won't improve. Adam and Cathy won't come back to life either."

"Then I'll bury her next to them." Carter's gaze darkened and the shadowy chill enveloped Ada.

Ada opened her mouth, still intending to explain herself, but she could not utter a single word. There was only a continuous stream of tears falling out of the corners of her eyes.

Camille, frustrated at the sight, reached out her hand and grabbed Carter's hand. "Carter, listen to me, let her go first."

Carter was annoyed but for Camille's sake, he finally let go of his hand.

However, he did not merely let go. He threw Ada out fiercely. Ada crashed against the cabinet, then fell onto the floor, and let out an agonizing yelp.

Married by Mistake: Mr. Whitman's Sinner Wife
chapter 1870

Her pain was so great that she could not make any other sound. She could only curl up on the floor, coughing fiercely.

Carter walked over and stepped on Ada's fingers.

The pain brought tears to the corners of her eyes and made her bones tremble.

However, that was not the extent of Carter's punishment. He bent down. His dark aura enveloped Ada. His long and thin fingers grabbed Ada's hair. "Do you know how it feels to be disfigured and have your legs broken? Do you know how it feels to be burned alive?"

"... Cough cough. Carter, no, don't..." Ada looked at Carter in terror. "I didn't s... set the fire... I have nothing to do with Cathy and Adam's deaths. It's Eveline. It's her. She's slandering me. I really didn't "Heh..." Carter chuckled coldly, and his eyes darkened further. "Guards!"

After summoning the bodyguards, Carter pushed

Ada away in disgust, then took out a handkerchief and disdainfully wiped his hands.

"Throw her into the kennel in the backyard. Beat her if she struggles."

"..." Ada's red face turned pale immediately out of fear.

Carter meant it this time!

"N...No..."

When Ada saw the bodyguards making a move, Ada cried, crawled toward Camille, and spoke in a hoarse voice.

"Mom, please help me. Don't let Carter do this to me. I am the Grays' lawfully wedded young madam. Even if it's just in name, I'm still the Viscountess. If word about this got out, it'll be bad for your name as well.

"Also, if my maternal family knows about this, they won't let you off the hook so easily! "

Ada mentioned her maternal family in the end.

However, it would have been better if she had just kept quiet. Once she mentioned this, Camille's expression changed.

"Ada, Mrs. Whitman is right about you. You truly lack both IQ and EQ." Camille lowered her cold gaze toward Ada, then turned toward the two bodyguards and said, "Carry out Carter's orders. "

"Yes, madam." The bodyguards answered. They immediately did as they were told and lifted Ada from the ground.

When Ada realized she might experience what Shirley had experienced, she was so scared that she started to resist started babbling incoherently.

“Don’ t touch me, you beasts! Let me down! I am the Viscountess!

“Carter, my family won’t forgive you for doing this to me!

“Hahaha. Shirley will only be a disfigured good-for-nothing for the rest of her life! She will never recover in this lifetime!”

Even Madeline did not pity Ada when she heard Ada’s ear-piercing shrieks.

She knew what kind of person Ada was. Moreover, Madeline did not want to interfere with the Grays’ affair.

After Ada had been taken away, Carter stood on the spot for a while before turning toward Madeline.

“ I was right about you back then. You are indeed different from most women.” Carter’s statement sounded like a compliment, but it was not something Madeline needed.

"Even though Ada was the one who set the fire, do you think you don't have any responsibility, Carter?" Madeline asked, her beautiful eyes were filled with suspicion and contempt. "You're one of the murderers who indirectly killed Adam and Cathy."

"Heh, am I?" Carter chuckled softly in nonchalance and slowly walked toward Madeline. " So, are you going to avenge your friends by exacting vengeance upon me?"

Madeline calmly looked at Carter's smiling face that harbored malicious intentions, then parted her lips faintly and said, "Carter, I will ask you a question now. Do you dare to answer me honestly?"

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