

Chapter 12

Not many people knew about Marcus's shotgun marriage, except for his family and a few close friends, including Leonardo and Cameron.

In the past, when Leonardo asked him about it on the phone, he would always answer with a smile, "When I go back to my country, I'll bring her home."

Ever since he got cheated on, Marcus could only feel disgusted when thinking about that woman, and didn't want to talk about her with anyone. "What do you think?"

Leonardo begged, "Marc, please satisfy my curiosity."

"Leon, don't you know Marc's personality? If he doesn't want to talk about it, it must not be a big deal." Cameron seemingly answered casually, but every word was probing the real situation between the couple.

Cornelia was also curious about what was going on between the president and his wife.

Because his boss didn't talk about his wife in the past few days.

Marcus could easily see through Cameron's little schemes, but he lost interest and looked at Cornelia, "Let's go."

Leonardo, "You're leaving already?"

Marcus, "Not in the mood anymore."

Leonardo asked, "Besides work, what else can you be

interested in?"

Marcus didn't answer, just got up and walked out, with Cornelia hurriedly following.

As they reached the hall, they were surrounded by a group of people, all holding up their wine glasses to toast Marcus.

Cornelia finally realized why he hid in the room. Attending other people's banquets and dealing with these people was indeed annoying.

"Sorry! President Hartley is feeling unwell and can't drink today." Cornelia stood in front of Marcus, blocking anyone who dared to toast him.

If she couldn't block them, Cornelia would drink for Marcus.

Marcus was too eye-catching, and everyone wanted to build a relationship with the Hartley Group's president. People kept coming over to toast him, as if he was the protagonist tonight.

Cornelia accompanied him in exchanging pleasantries with so many people, her head getting dizzy from drinking.

"President Hartley, why does it feel like we're escaping?"

"Dummy." Marcus replied.

She blocked so much wine for him, and he still called her stupid. Cornelia felt wronged but didn't dare to show it. "If President Hartley thinks I'm stupid, then I'll be stupid."

Marcus looked down at her...

For tonight's banquet, she changed out of her usual simple

work clothes and wore a sky-blue dress, her hair still tied up in a bun.

The dress was plain, but her figure was good enough to show off her perfect body curves. Because of the alcohol, her delicate face and slender neck were flushed, making her look innocent and sexy at the same time, very different from her usual competent image at work.

At first, those men came to toast Marcus, but later many were toasting her, their gazes greedy and lewd. She didn't notice and kept drinking one glass after another.

He could have stopped them, but he didn't. He wanted to see how foolish she could be. If she didn't improve, she would eventually be eliminated.

He looked away, "Do you think everyone is worthy of drinking with me? If I don't want to drink, who can force me?"

Cornelia, a little drunk and emboldened, said, "President Hartley, why didn't you say so earlier? You let me drink so much."

Blaming herself for not being smart enough, she also blamed him. Marcus raised an eyebrow and asked, "Are you the assistant, or am I?"

Cornelia had no answer.

She had only thought that he absolutely couldn't drink, so she stood in front of him, not letting anyone get close.

But she forgot that one look from him could make those people back off.

She laughed, covering her embarrassment with a smile.

Ayden was already waiting in the car at the door. Seeing them coming out, he hurriedly got out of the car.

Marcus sat in the back seat, and Cornelia took the passenger seat.

Marcus glanced at the empty seat next to him and said, "Where do you live? Let Ayden drop you off on the way."

Cornelia burped and waved her hand, "Thank you, President Hartley, but there's no need. Someone is picking me up. Just drop me off at the main road."

Last time she took a taxi alone at night without telling Zack and Abigail, they gave her the cold shoulder for a day.

So when she found out she was attending the banquet with Marcus today, she quickly messaged them. Zack said he would pick her up in the evening.

Marcus casually asked, "Your husband?"

Cornelia was stunned, realizing he heard her conversation with Leonardo earlier.

Her husband in name only had disappeared long ago. There was no way he would pick her up.

Cornelia smiled and didn't say anything, so Marcus took it as a yes.

The car quickly left the villa area, and Ayden found a spacious spot to park. "Ms. Stewart, do you want to get off here?"

Cornelia nodded, opened the door, and waved goodbye, "Goodbye, President Hartley! Goodbye, Ayden!"

The car window slowly lowered, and Marcus ordered, "Throw away the stuff in the trunk."

"Alright." Cornelia, a little tipsy and unsteady, walked to the back of the car and opened the trunk.

The trunk was filled to the brim with beautifully wrapped gifts, some of which she had personally wrapped. They were all gifts that her boss had intended to give to his wife. These gifts should have been given out earlier, but now they were all piled up in the trunk, untouched.

Cornelia came back and asked, "President Hartley, aren't these gifts for your wife? Why didn't you give them to her?"

Marcus lit a cigarette and took a drag, "I won't need them anymore. Throw them away, sell them, or use them yourself, whatever you want."

Cornelia felt a sour feeling in her heart, "President Hartley, what happened between you and your wife? You love her so much, don't let a momentary impulse ruin your relationship." He used to look at his wife with such tender and firm eyes, but in just a week or two, his eyes had changed when he mentioned her – cold and disgusted. Something must have happened.

Marcus's voice suddenly turned serious, "Take the stuff and don't mention her in front of me again."

Marcus didn't wanna spill the beans, and Cornelia didn't dare

to probe further.

She went to the back of the car to move some stuff. As she bent down, she felt dizzy and her stomach started acting up. Cornelia tried her best to hold it in, as his personal assistant, she couldn't afford to embarrass herself in front of him.

Taking a deep breath, she was about to lift the stuff when Ayden came over and said, "I got this."

He was tall and strong, and quickly moved the stuff from the trunk to the ground.

Cornelia was super grateful, "Ayden, thank you!"

Ayden glanced at her expressionlessly, then turned back to start the car.

Marcus said, "Hold on, I'll have another cigarette."

He could smoke while the car was moving, but Ayden didn't question Marcus's decision to stop for a cigarette, he just followed orders.

Marcus lit a cigarette but didn't take a puff, his hand resting on the car window, tapping lightly...

Cornelia couldn't pretend she didn't see, so she held in her nausea and walked over, "President Hartley, is there anything else?"

Marcus looked up at her, "Has your ride not arrived yet?"

Cornelia replied, "There's a traffic jam today, he's been stuck for a while, but he's almost here."

As she spoke, a regular sedan approached from the opposite lane. Cornelia's eyes lit up, "President Hartley, my ride's here, goodbye!"

She happily walked towards the car, her gentle voice ringing out clearly in the quiet night, "Zack, I'm here."

Marcus glanced towards the sedan's driver, but the night was too dark for him to make out the man's face.

He threw away the cigarette and ordered Ayden, "Let's go."

Ayden started the car and drove a few meters, then looked in the rearview mirror to see the man who came to pick up Cornelia. His back was facing them, blocking Cornelia, and it seemed like he was hugging her.

Ayden said, "President Hartley, Ms. Stewart and her husband seem to have a great relationship."

Marcus didn't respond, but every word Ayden said reached his ears.

It seemed like he could hear Cornelia's gentle voice when she was talking to her husband, completely different from the serious tone she used with him.

"Hmph..." he sneered.

Ayden didn't understand why. He secretly glanced at Marcus through the rearview mirror, but his expression was calm, and nothing seemed out of the ordinary.

Meanwhile, on Cornelia's side, Zack gently patted her back, "Silly girl, if you need to puke, just do it. You'll feel better afterward."

Cornelia felt so dizzy she could barely stand, so she leaned against Zack, "Is my boss gone?"

"He's gone." Zack poked her forehead, annoyed, "Silly girl, you're gonna run yourself ragged just for double the salary."

"But money gives me a sense of security," Cornelia looked at him and smiled. As she smiled, tears inexplicably flowed out of her eyes.