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"Switch on the heater," Shane tapped on the back of the driver's seat and commanded sternly.

"Yes, sir." Silas immediately did so before promptly turning to look at Shane.

Silas was so shocked to see the disheveled state he was in that his glasses slipped from his nose bridge. "Oh no, Mr. Shane, you are completely wet."

Natalie was straightening her skirt when she heard that, which prompted her to freeze momentarily before shifting her gaze to Shane.

That was when she realized that he was indeed completely wet like what Silas had said. Stunned, she was so touched that she was rendered speechless.

With his jacket protecting her, only her shoes and the edges of her skirt got a little damp. In comparison to his utterly soaked state, she was definitely way better off.

By now, Natalie was moved and guilt-ridden at the same time.

She removed the jacket from her head and handed it to Shane. "Mr. Shane, use this to dry yourself. It's dry on the inside."

"Alright." Shane did not reject her offer and grabbed the dry part of the jacket to rub his hair.

As Natalie stared at him, she could not help but blush a little. His white shirt had turned translucent in the rain, which showed off every line and curve of his muscular body.

Mr. Shane is well-built indeed!

That night when they slept together, she was so drunk that she did not see anything. What a pity...

Biting her lip, she sighed with slight regret.

“What are you looking at?” Shane had already finished drying his hair and turned to look at her with his dark eyes.

Natalie sprang up and waved her hands in denial. “N-No... nothing...”

“Really?” Shane narrowed his eyes doubtfully.

Natalie quickly averted her gaze and nodded immediately. “Really!”

She would never tell him that she was fantasizing about his body.

“Is that so?” Shane looked up and shifted his gaze away from her, seemingly believing her.

Placing her hand on her chest, she discreetly heaved a sigh of relief.

Shane sneaked a look at her relieved face and broke into a tiny smile.

In fact, he knew that she was staring at him when he was drying his hair.

There was no way he could have ignored that burning gaze.

Instead of exposing her for ogling him, he merely tossed his jacket on the seat.

A corner of the jacket brushed against the back of Natalie’s hand. She looked at the crumpled jacket and frowned a little. “What a pity, this jacket has been ruined by the rain, and you can’t wear it again!”

As a fashion designer, she could not bear the sight of a designer item being ruined.

“I’ll just throw it away. It’s no big deal,” Shane fixed his hair and replied nonchalantly.

Natalie folded the jacket neatly. “Let me compensate you with a new one.”

“Compensate me?” Shane raised a brow.

Natalie nodded. “Yes. After all, this jacket has helped protect me against the rain.”

"Since you insist, go ahead then." Shane looked up at her.

Natalie bit her lip hesitantly. "It's just that my compensation will not be as expensive as the one you have. Your clothes are all customized by top designers, so..."

"But you can customize it too, can't you?" Shane said casually as he rested his elbow on the car door.

Natalie pointed at herself. "Mr. Shane, you want me to make a suit for you?"

"Yup." Shane nodded slightly.

Natalie looked troubled as she replied hesitantly, "I could, but its value would still..."

"The value doesn't matter as long as the quality is good. I've seen the clothes that you have made, and your skills are on par with Daniel's," Shane assured her in a gentle tone.

Hearing his encouraging words, her heart was filled with warmth once again. "I know. Thank you for your confidence in me, Mr. Shane. I will compensate you with a suit as good as this one."

Shane looked up. "Alright, I look forward to it then."

In a short while, they arrived at her apartment and the rain stopped at the same time.

Natalie got out of the car and watched them drive away before she entered the apartment.

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Yulia opened the door for her when she got home.

Natalie was shocked. "Mom, it's so late. Why aren't you asleep?"

"I was just watching television. Anyway, there's something I want to tell you." Yulia removed the facial mask on her face. "I am planning to leave the country tomorrow. Jared's doctor called me this afternoon to say that he has been feeling unwell lately. I've got to go and take a look, or I won't feel at ease."

Natalie nodded. "Alright, I'll send you to the airport then. I'll go and take a shower first."

"Go ahead." Yulia dismissed her with a wave.

Thumping her shoulders, Natalie headed to the bathroom after getting her pajamas from her room.

After breakfast in the morning, Yulia brought Sharon to kindergarten while Natalie took Connor to the studio.

On the way, she received a call from Shane.

Natalie hesitated before answering, "Mr. Shane."

"Ms. Smith," Instead of Shane's voice from the other end of the line, it was that of a gentle, middle-aged woman.

Natalie was stunned as she suddenly remembered who that voice belonged to. "Mrs. Wilson?"

"Yes, it's me." Mrs. Wilson nodded.

Connor blinked. "Who is it, Mommy?"

Natalie put her finger up to gesture for him not to speak.

Connor immediately nodded and held his tongue.

Smiling at him, she asked the woman, "Mrs. Wilson, how may I help you?"

Why would Mrs. Wilson use Shane's cell phone to call me?

"You see, Ms. Smith, sir developed a fever last night. It went up to thirty-nine degrees, and he is still not awake yet. In his dreams, he kept calling out for you, Ms. Smith," Mrs. Wilson said worriedly as she took a look at the large black bed, where the handsome man with the pale face slept.

Natalie was shocked. "Calling out for me?"

"Yes."

"W-Why would he call out for m-me?" Natalie's heart was racing.

Mrs. Wilson smiled ruefully. "I'm not sure about that, but could you come over and take a look at him?"

"But..."

"Please, Ms. Smith!" Mrs. Wilson was practically pleading with her, leaving her no room for rejection.

Hence, Natalie had no choice but to oblige as she forced a smile. "Alright, I'll go over shortly."

With that, she hung up.

Connor tugged at her sleeve. "Mommy, is Mr. Shane ill?"

"Mm-hmm, he has a fever, and I've promised his housekeeper that I would go and see him. Baby, you..."

"I'll go too." Connor looked at her with resolve.

Natalie raised a brow. "I thought you didn't like Mr. Shane anymore?"

"No, I don't like him, but he used to be very nice to Sharon and me, so I should visit him now that he is ill. Moreover, I want to see where he lives too," Connor said while squeezing his little fists.

Natalie stroked his nose. "Alright! I'll bring you there, but you'd better not be mischievous and cause trouble!"

"Alright, alright," Connor replied.

After about forty minutes, they arrived at Shane's villa.

Natalie was just about to press the doorbell at the entrance when the door swung open.

After that, Mrs. Wilson walked out with an apron on. “Ms. Smith, you are finally here!”

“So sorry to keep you waiting, Mrs. Wilson.” Natalie smiled awkwardly.

Mrs. Wilson welcomed them into the house. “Not at all, Ms. Smith.”

“Hang on, Mrs. Wilson. I have one more person with me.” Natalie grabbed her arm and stopped her in her tracks.

Mrs. Wilson turned to her and looked around. “Where is this other person?”

“Right here.” Natalie pulled Connor out from behind her.

Lowering her gaze to the boy, Mrs. Wilson’s face was filled with astonishment.

“This... this...” Mrs. Wilson pointed at Connor with disbelief. “Could he be you and sir’s...”

Natalie had expected that she would react that way. With a glimmer in her eyes, she waved her hand and denied, “No, I had him with another man.

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“Another man?” Mrs. Wilson furrowed her brows, clearly not believing her words.

Why does this kid look exactly like sir?

How could he be someone else’s child?

Natalie knew what Mrs. Wilson had in mind, but she did not explain further. Instead, she merely lifted her hand from Connor’s head and changed the topic. “Alright, Mrs. Wilson, bring me to Mr. Shane. Didn’t you say that he called out for me?”

Fortunately, Mrs. Wilson did not dwell on the matter and quickly cleared a path for her. “That’s right. Do come in quickly, Ms. Smith.”

Natalie responded with a murmur and held Connor’s hand as they entered the villa.

Following that, Mrs. Wilson brought both of them to the master bedroom located on the third floor.

When they entered the room, Shane was fast asleep on his bed. As Natalie stood by his bedside, she could not help but reach out to touch his forehead when she saw his pale face and heard his rapid breathing.

However, she frowned upon touching him. "He is burning up. Didn't you get the doctor?"

"Yes, we did. The doctor has given sir an injection." Mrs. Wilson sighed.

Leaning on the bed, Connor's bright eyes never left Shane. "Mommy, Mr. Shane is fine, isn't he?"

"He's fine," Mrs. Wilson answered before Natalie could say anything, "it's just that his fever has not subsided yet."

Right then, Natalie's gaze fell on the rubbing alcohol at the headboard. "His fever should cool faster if we wipe him down, right?"

Mrs. Wilson nodded. "Yes, that was what the doctor said before he left. It's just that sir has never allowed anyone to touch him, so I can't even help wipe him down. Unless Ms. Smith..."

Natalie gaped when she realized what Mrs. Wilson was suggesting. "Mrs. Wilson, you are not asking me to help wipe down Mr. Shane, are you?"

Mrs. Wilson smiled as she rubbed her hands against her apron. "That's right, that was what I had in mind. I don't have a choice either, Ms. Smith. Since he was calling out your name even in his dreams, he should fine with you touching him."

"But..." Looking troubled, Natalie bit her lip and was about to speak before Mrs. Wilson interrupted her with a pleading look on her face.

"Ms. Smith, since sir let you have his jacket last night, please do him a favor."

There was nothing that Natalie could say to that, so she agreed with a bitter smile, "Alright, I'll do it."

Did I just shoot myself in the foot?

“Thank you, Ms. Smith. Child, come downstairs with me, and I’ll get you something to eat.” Mrs. Wilson grabbed Connor’s hand gleefully.

Connor glanced at Natalie and accepted Mrs. Wilson’s hand obediently after Natalie nodded in approval.

The two of them then walked out, leaving only Natalie and Shane in the room.

Letting out a long sigh, Natalie turned to look at the man on the bed again.

It was evident that he was feeling very uncomfortable. His chest was heaving up and down, and his thin lips were slightly agape, revealing his heavy breathing. Besides that, his neck was moist with beads of perspiration on it. The droplets flowed down his Adam’s apple before disappearing into the collar of his pajamas.

Natalie touched his neck to find that it was sticky and even his collar was drenched.

“Why are you perspiring so much?” Natalie muttered. She scanned the room to locate the bathroom before getting a basin of hot water.

After placing the basin next to the bed, she picked up the medical-grade rubbing alcohol and poured some into the water. She then swirled it with her hands and soaked a towel into the solution. After wringing it dry, she wiped down Shane’s face, cleaning up his perspiration bit by bit.

After wiping him down, she tossed the towel into the basin. Then she picked up a brand new fever patch and stuck it onto Shane’s forehead.

Then, she began to feel slightly troubled because it was time to wipe down Shane’s body.

“Oh well...” Natalie rubbed her temples and glanced at Shane, whose brows were tightly knitted. She took a deep breath before removing his blanket and bending forward to unbutton and remove his pajamas.

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At the sight of his muscular torso, she held her breath and blushed involuntarily while her heart raced.

Even though she had already seen his body last night, there was still a thin shirt covering it, so it was not as visible as it was now.

As her gaze fell on his muscular, well-defined abs, she could not help but run her fingers over them.

After that, she came to the realization of what she had just done and smacked her own face exasperatedly. It took her a short while before she calmed herself down and wrung a towel to wipe him down.

That took about half an hour.

“Pfft....” Natalie stood up and let out a long breath. With the towel in one hand, she used her other hand to pound her rather sore back. After wiping down Shane, she was so exhausted that she felt like she had just returned from the warzone with beads of sweat all over her body.

Natalie gazed down at the man and smiled helplessly. Then, she covered him with the blanket again and prepared to pour out the water in the bathroom.

However, he suddenly tugged onto the edge of her blouse the moment she got up.

She could not move and fell backward haphazardly. With a scream of surprise, she landed on his body, forcing a groan of pain out of him.

“Mr. Shane!” Natalie’s pupils constricted as she immediately turned to check on Shane without a care for her own sore back. She was worried that he would sustain internal injuries because of her fall, while he had not even recovered from his fever yet.

Just as Natalie lifted the covers and was about to check Shane’s chest, he suddenly opened up his eyes. Then, he glanced at her for barely two seconds before looping his arm around her waist. With one fell swoop, she was in his embrace, and his eyes were shut again.

“Mr. Shane? Mr. Shane?” She nudged him lightly to get him to release her.

However, he fell asleep again and had no reaction. It was as if she had imagined the whole scene of him waking up.

But she knew it wasn’t her imagination since his arm was still around her waist.

Natalie could smell the alcohol on his body. As she felt his breath on top of her head, her heart thumped wildly.

She did not expect things to end up like this by just helping him wipe down his body. Hence, she was somewhat panicking.

The moment she looked up at him, she was stunned by how attractive he was when he slept. With that, her panic dissipated and her tensed body loosened up.

She raised her hand from his chest and placed them on his face. Then, she ran her fingers gently across his brows with a bittersweet feeling in her heart.

This was the man she loved, and he was her children's father. Unfortunately, there was another woman in his heart.

She knew very well that she should keep a distance from this man and forget about him. However, she could not stop the urge to get closer to him. She had no idea how things would turn out thereafter.

Sighing, Natalie smiled bitterly, feeling lost and anxious at the same time.

Soon, her woes were interrupted by the sudden sound of a phone ringing.

As Natalie's hands trembled, her body tensed up again with a pang of inexplicable guilt. She immediately pushed Shane's arm away from her waist and got to her feet.

After that, she let out a breath to calm her nerves down. When she finally went to the bedside and took a look at his cell phone, she saw Jacqueline's name flickering on the screen.

At this moment, Natalie felt a hint of uneasiness for some inexplicable reason. She looked down to conceal the sadness in her eyes and picked up the call.

However, before she could say anything, Jacqueline's gentle voice piped up, "Shane, didn't you say that you'd accompany me at the hospital today? Why aren't you here yet?"

"About that... Ms. Graham, I am not Mr. Shane," Natalie pushed her hair aside and said with embarrassment.

At the other end of the line, Jacqueline's smiling face turned icy cold when she heard a woman's voice instead of Shane's. However, her tone remained gentle. "May I know who you are then?"

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"We have met before. I am Natalie," Natalie replied while sitting by the bedside.

Jacqueline's hand gripped the phone a little tighter. Her expressionless face twisted into a grimace. "Ah, it's you, Ms. Smith. Why are you with Shane and picking up his calls?"

Natalie smiled at her somewhat interrogative tone and explained, "You see, Ms. Graham, Mr. Shane is having a fever because of me, so—"

"So you went to take care of him?" Narrowing her eyes, Jacqueline interrupted Natalie.

"Not exactly, but—"

"It's alright. You don't have to explain anymore!" Jacqueline interrupted Natalie once again and clutched her covers tightly.

Natalie guessed that she must have misunderstood something, but when she was about to clarify things, she realized that Jacqueline had already hung up.

"Oh no!" Natalie smacked her forehead with guilt.

I shouldn't have picked up the call on Shane's behalf had I known that this would happen!

Even if Jacqueline could not contact Shane, she might just be worried for a while, and there would not have been any misunderstanding. But now, her good intention had resulted in a disaster instead.

Natalie sighed with a slight headache. She then decided to look for Mrs. Wilson so that she could explain everything to Jacqueline. Jacqueline should believe Mrs. Wilson, right?

Natalie then put the phone away and gave Shane a glance before leaving the room to head downstairs.

Mrs. Wilson and Connor were watching television together. When she saw Natalie, she quickly stood up and asked, "Ms. Smith, you are done wiping sir down?"

Natalie nodded. "Yes. He is a lot better now, and his breathing is not as rapid anymore.

He even had the strength to hug me.

"That's good." Mrs. Wilson smiled and patted her chest in relief.

Natalie bit her lower lip as a hint of anxiety crept onto her face.

Mrs. Wilson could tell that she had something to say, so she asked her out of concern, "Are you alright, Ms. Smith?"

"I made a mistake." Clenching her fists, Natalie told her everything about her conversation with Jacqueline.

Mrs. Wilson sighed and waved her hands nonchalantly after she heard everything. "And there I was wondering what was going on. Don't worry. You can just ignore her."

"Ignore her?" Natalie gaped with shock. "But she will definitely misunderstand that Mr. Shane and I..."

"It's alright. There is nothing between sir and her, so let her be." Mrs. Wilson was not concerned at all.

When Natalie heard this, she could not help but gape in shock. "There is nothing between Mr. Shane and Ms. Graham?"

"That's right." Mrs. Wilson nodded.

"But—" Before Natalie could finish her sentence, the doorbell interrupted her.

"Ms. Smith, I'll go and open the door first. You can continue later," Mrs. Wilson said as she walked toward the door.

Natalie shook her head helplessly as she watched her leaving figure.

It seems like I won't be able to get help from Mrs. Wilson. Never mind. I'll just look for another opportunity to explain to Jacqueline then.

However, Mrs. Wilson said that there is nothing between Shane and Jacqueline. Is it because he has just canceled his engagement to Jasmine and is not together with Jacqueline yet?

She suddenly felt something tugging her shirt and when she turned around, it was Connor.

"Mommy, I want to go to the bathroom," Connor said as he looked at her.

Natalie picked him up from the sofa. "Let Mommy bring you there."

Then, she headed to the bathroom with his hand in hers.

After that, Natalie brought Connor back to the living room.

The moment she reached the living room, she heard Mrs. Wilson speaking in a slightly exasperated tone, "Mr. Sam, I've already told you that sir is ill and he can't get up. Please come back when he is awake and well."

"Hmph! Who knows when he will wake up? This is a very urgent matter, so you'd better go and wake him up!" A husky middle-aged man's voice could be heard.

They began arguing over whether to wake Shane up.

Natalie stood outside the living room with Connor by her side. She felt rather embarrassed and did not know whether they should go in.

After all, they were outsiders, so it could be rather awkward when faced with other people's family affairs.