

My Baby's Daddy

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With that, she was led by the man to the underground parking lot before heading for the Presgrave Residence.

On their way there, Anastasia told Elliot about Alex's appointment as Tillman Constructions' president

Elliot asked right away, "Do you need my help?"

Anastasia replied, "No, I don't need it for the time being. I want them to give themselves away." She knew that if Alex were to leave Tillman Constructions, it would be difficult to get anything on them. As long as they still coveted her father's company, they would definitely give themselves away one day. I'm not gonna let off those who hurt Dad!

"Alright, I'll pick some capable men for you." Elliot decided to let her take care of it on her own. As long as she needed him, he would always be by her side.

Christmas Eve was supposed to be a day for reunions, but Anastasia's heart was heavy when she thought of her father, who was still comatose in the hospital. Still, she would never give up as long as there was still hope for him.

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She spent the night sleeping with her son at the Presgrave Residence. Jared was very obedient and well-behaved to the point where it made her feel sorry for him. Knowing that she had to look after Francis, he didn't cry or throw hissy fits at the Presgrave Residence.

Meanwhile, Hayley was staying alone in the master bedroom of Alex's apartment. Alex and Erica had registered their marriage and were officially husband and wife now, but Hayley believed she could capture his heart with her surgically altered face. Erica was merely a tool for him to get rich, as well as the source of Hayley's current expenditure.

Thanks to her flair for having men eat out of her hand, Alex lavished money on her. Erica had always looked down on his background, so she treated him like dirt. On the contrary, Hayley appeased and worshiped him, making him unable to resist her.

It was early morning, and the six financial officers of Tillman Constructions' finance department had just clocked in for work and were gossiping idly. Suddenly, six men and women swarmed into the office. Dressed in business attire, they all gave off an air of shrewdness and competence with bright and piercing eyes.

Anastasia came in from behind them before saying to the financial officers in the office, "Sorry, but you all will be laid off as required by work. Don't worry, we'll give you your due by offering you three months of wages as compensation."

"Why are we laid off, Miss Tillman?!" a female employee asked angrily.

"That's right! It's not like we committed any mistakes. We're doing well at our job!"

All Anastasia could do was apologize to them. With that, the whole finance department was reshuffled and its employees were all replaced by the ones sent by Elliot. Now working for Anastasia, these people started to settle all of Tillman Constructions' accounts over the last three years.

When Alex hurried to the scene, all his previous subordinates had already been replaced with Anastasia's people who were sitting in the office. "Miss Tillman, your people don't understand Tillman Constructions' accounts. It's easy for mistakes to happen," he said, forcibly suppressing his anger.

"I know that, so my people will start by settling my dad's accounts over the last three years. If anything wrong happens, I'll take responsibility for it," Anastasia replied with folded arms.

He let out a sigh and asked, "Miss Tillman, are you displeased because I've taken over your dad's position?"

However, she replied, "Nope, Mr. Hunter. I just thought that you can only do so much. Since you're handling the company's projects, it'll be difficult for you to take care of the company's finances, so I'm here to take over to ease your burden."

Alex couldn't do anything about her. However, his previous plans to transfer Tillman Constructions' funds fell through. Anastasia was having control over the company's core department, and the new employees she had brought with her were definitely financial elites trained by Elliot, so Tillman Constructions' accounts were going to be as clear as day.

A murderous glint flashed across his eyes. He didn't want to lay a hand on her, but she had indeed become an obstacle to his money-making. "Well, in that case, Miss Tillman, I'll leave the finance department to you. You can come to me if there's anything," he replied with superficial friendliness while concealing his anger.

Anastasia nodded. "Alright."

At this moment, her cell phone rang; she darted a glance at its screen before picking it up. "Hello?"

"Are you free? Take a look at today's morning news."

Walking toward the French window, Anastasia pleaded with the man, "Come on, just tell me what happened. I'm quite busy."

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"Riley has been sentenced to death. Aliona and her people aren't able to escape legal punishment as well."

"Serves them right. But how did he get sentenced to death?"

"They brutally killed Lucas' son abroad, so Lucas sued him. He was sentenced to death at the first trial for multiple crimes."

Anastasia closed her eyes. There's also the death of my mom and the kidnapping of Elliot when he was a child. This guy deserves death for having blood on his hands, she thought.

"How are my people doing at their job?"

"They're very professional."

"I'll pick you up and take you to the hospital this afternoon."

"Okay." Anastasia nodded.

Meanwhile, Alex was in his office, but he was in no mood to work at this very moment. He wanted to get rid of Anastasia so that he could have complete control over Tillman Constructions by manipulating Erica. However, he was fearful of Elliot's power and influence. After all, Anastasia was Elliot's sweetheart. If anything were to happen to her, he'd probably get to the bottom of it.

He thought of Erica, who had no brains and could easily be made a scapegoat. Sitting in Francis' former office, Alex was enjoying the feeling of superiority when the telephone before him rang. He picked up the receiver, saying, "Hello?"

"President Hunter, President Zimmer from the Golden Meadows Property Group is here. He says he has something to discuss with you."

Alex immediately instructed, "Show him to the conference room. I'll be there right away." He dared not snub President Zimmer, who was one of Francis' longtime clients and whom he had to keep sweet.

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After straightening his clothes, he called his assistant over and went to the conference room with the latter. As soon as he pushed the door and entered, he immediately greeted President Zimmer with great enthusiasm, saying, "Why take the trouble to come all the way here, President Zimmer? If there's anything, just call me and I'll come to you right away."

"What a fine young man who has to be treated with respect, President Hunter! I've heard about President Tillman, and I wish him a speedy recovery," President Zimmer replied. Then, he continued with a grave look in his eyes, "President Hunter, I'm here to tell you something in person. I'm afraid my company isn't going to be able to fill the order as specified in our contract.

Alex's heart tensed at once. He couldn't help but ask with a smile, "President Zimmer, we have a long-standing relationship. Is there anything that you're worried about?"

President Zimmer shook his head. "No, it's that I'm going to retire, so my son has taken over my job. He has his own ideas and wants to cancel our collaboration with your company, and I can't do anything about it. That's why I went out of my way to come here to apologize to you and tell you about it. I'm sorry, President Hunter," he said before getting up to leave.

Alex panicked involuntarily. "President Zimmer, we can still talk about this. If there's anything about us that you're dissatisfied with, we can—"

"My son has made up his mind on this, so there's no way I can talk about it," President Zimmer said before leaving.

Alex's face darkened for a moment. He knew that the cancellation of their collaboration must have something to do with his appointment as president.

Soon after that, he received phone calls from several clients, who also proposed to renegotiate their existing collaborations.

Alex was panicked by the phone calls. Not only that, but many of his clients canceled their orders in just one day, causing most of the orders Francis had secured for the company to be canceled. Alex was totally incapable of conducting business. He had thought that he could get through the year by relying on these orders. But now, he only had very few projects left at hand just days after the company fell into his hands.

It was justifiable if there was only one person who canceled their order, but now, Alex had a feeling that someone was plotting against him. Who could it be? Who would have such great capability? That person clamped down on almost all of Tillman Constructions' projects for this year.

Alex's face changed color; he thought of someone fearsome.

Elliot.

Could he be the one making trouble behind my back? If this is really his doing... Feeling tremendous pressure, Alex couldn't help but rise from his seat before heading straight for the finance department's office, where Anastasia had an office of her own and was reviewing the accounts that had been straightened out.

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Francis had been doing a good job over the past few years, so the company's performance had been very stable.

Just then, Alex came in somewhat anxiously. "Miss Tillman, I'd like to talk to you." Anastasia raised her eyebrows impassively. "Is there anything, President Hunter?" "Could you ask President Presgrave to give us a break and stop targeting Tillman Constructions? This is your dad's company, after all," Alex said in an almost pleading tone.

Anastasia frowned slightly. "I don't know what you're talking about."

"Your dad secured quite some projects last year, but now those clients intend to

cancel their orders. I only have a handful of small orders now, but they can hardly sustain the company's growth."

Anastasia seemed unruffled on the surface, but she was surprised inwardly. Did Elliot really take action against Alex? What is he up to? "This has nothing to do with Elliot. If the clients want to cancel their orders, you should look within yourself for the reasons instead of blaming him for it," she argued. Then, she mocked coldly, "Mr. Hunter, I believe nothing will happen to my dad's company as long as it's in your hands. You're such a capable person, after all."

"In that case, Miss Tillman, please ask President Presgrave if he has anything to do with this. If this is really his doing, please ask him to give the projects back to us," Alex implored humbly.

However, it was clear that Anastasia wouldn't help him. "The company's projects are your own business. I'm only in charge of the company's finances."

Alex also realized that Anastasia didn't care at all about Tillman Constructions' fate. However, he cared about it. Francis would never regain consciousness for life, which would make the company his property. Therefore, he had to make sure that the company made profits. Now that he had married Erica, he was considered one of the company's major shareholders. Not only that, but Erica intended to transfer to him the 40 percent shares Naomi owned in the company, making him the company's largest shareholder.

As soon as he left, Anastasia took out her phone and dialed Elliot's number.

"Hello?" A male voice answered the phone with a chuckle on the other end as if knowing that she would call him.

"Is it because of you that Tillman Constructions lost a few big projects?" Anastasia asked.

"Yes, it is."

"Why would you do that?" Anastasia was puzzled.

"I want to acquire Tillman Constructions," Elliot said.

"How are you gonna acquire it, then?" Anastasia had no objection to his methods.

Elliot sounded like he was talking about something ordinary. "Since Alex wants so much to have your dad's company to himself, I'll let him taste what it's like to be burdened with huge debts. He's got only himself to blame for asking for trouble."

"Is there anything that I can do for you?"

"No, it's not necessary. Let me do it by myself." Elliot had planned this for a long time. Alex was one of the people he hated the most because he had overreached himself by courting Anastasia. This alone was sufficient to land him on Elliot's blacklist.

"I'm checking the company's accounts, and I found some issues. The accounts don't tally; there's a difference of several million." Anastasia took charge of Tillman Constructions' finances precisely to dig up dirt on Alex. Francis trusted him very much, but had he done something behind the former's back? Perhaps she could find some issues.

"Alright. I'll come pick you up." Elliot wanted to pick her up from work.

"Okay. I'd like to go to the hospital to visit my dad."

Meanwhile, Alex was sitting in Francis' former seat. He wasn't that stupid. Instead, he smelled danger. He was suddenly becoming Tillman Constructions' largest shareholder. If the company went bankrupt one day, he would have to take on huge debts. Not only would he fail to become rich, but he would also be heavily in debt—all thanks to the tricks played by Elliot, the multimillionaire capitalist. The conjecture brought him out in a cold sweat. Just then, however, Erica called, saying, "Hey, Alex. I'm now on my way to your office to bring you my mom's equity contract before we sign the share transfer agreement."

Alex was caught in a dilemma. On the one hand, there was the temptation of Tillman Constructions' shares; on the other hand, however, there were Elliot's overwhelming capabilities. "Damn it!" Looking extremely irritable, he pushed the documents off his desk. Elliot was standing in his way of getting rich, but he was powerless to fight back.

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Anastasia had just picked up her bag and was about to leave the finance department when Erica came and stopped her face to face. "Let's talk."

Anastasia looked at her with folded arms. "About what?"

"My mom will never set Dad up, so you must've made a mistake. Please have her

released," Erica uttered between clenched teeth.

Anastasia's eyes flashed fire. "Erica, if you still have a conscience, please care about Dad instead of making excuses for your mom. He's hovering between life and death now."

Erica was visibly startled. "W-What happened to Dad?"

"From now on, you no longer have to know my dad's condition." Anastasia clenched her fists. In her opinion, Erica's actions had made her unqualified to be Francis' daughter,

"What gives you the right to not let me know his condition? H-He's also my dad," Erica protested diffidently. Then, recalling that she was here to beg Anastasia for mercy, she immediately pleaded in a softer voice, "Sis, please let my mom off! Whatever she did, she only did it in a momentary lapse of judgment! She's my mom and your stepmother, after all. Could you please let her off? Even if Dad wakes up, he'll surely forgive her."

Anastasia darted a look at her in disgust. "It's useless to beg me. You guys never treated me as part of the family, and I always treat you guys as outsiders."

Erica suggested, "In that case, Anastasia, what do I need to do for you to let my mom off? How about this? I'll give you ten percent of my shares so that you let her off." As someone who was greedy for profit, she thought Anastasia was the same kind of person as she was.

Upon hearing Erica's words, Anastasia only found them an insult to her character. She looked at Erica with darkened eyes, saying, "I'm telling you, no amount of money can save the person who hurt my dad. I want them to pay the price and get their due punishment."

"You..." Frightened by the look in Anastasia's eyes, Erica took a step back.

Immediately, she said between clenched teeth, "Even if you've got my mom arrested, my mom's shares are now transferred to Alex. You'd better forget about taking away her shares!"

Hearing Erica's words, Anastasia only felt that all she could see was the company's shares. She's so blinded by greed that she's got no sense of kinship to speak of. What a sad thing for him to have such a daughter. "Just give him the shares. I don't care about it." Her lips curled into a sneer.

Erica was angry deep down. Is there anything else that can upset Anastasia?

With that, Anastasia left with her purse. Elliot has probably arrived downstairs, she thought.

Erica returned to Alex's office with her purse. Seeing him standing before the French window and looking out the window, she happily walked over to him.

"Alex, I've brought the agreement here.

At this moment, Alex was looking at the three Roll-Royces at the company's entrance. He saw the

man who stepped out of the car in the middle, who made him feel inexplicably oppressed even from a distance away.

*Elliot? Why is he here?"

Erica's heart thumped when she saw the man downstairs. Shrouded in the last rays of the evening sun, he looked as handsome as a god as he stood there. Just then, however, she saw Anastasia walking up to him; he walked toward Anastasia as well. Putting his arm around Anastasia's shoulders affectionately, he took her bag from her and escorted her into the car.

Eyes ablaze with jealousy, Erica ground her teeth in hatred.

Elliot seemed to sense the gaze from the third floor, for he turned his head and shot an icy look in the third floor's direction.

Alex held his breath; the look in Elliot's eyes made him feel threatened.

After Elliot's car drove away, Erica took the agreement out of her bag. "Here, Alex. Sign it."

Looking at the share transfer agreement, Alex felt incredibly torn. He couldn't decide whether to sign it or not. He still couldn't make a guess at what exactly Elliot wanted to do with Tillman Constructions. If he obtained the 40 percent shares, he might be able to make some money. If he didn't sign the agreement now, he would be nothing.

Driven by self-interest, he lost his ability to reason, and his presence of mind flew out of the window. In the end, he stretched out his hand and signed his name on the document, becoming a slave to his desire.

"Alex, congrats on becoming Tillman Constructions' largest shareholder. I'll be depending on you from now on," Erica said before coming over to give him a sweet and charming kiss.

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Having lost her mother, Erica could only rely on Alex.

"Erica, Anastasia is checking the company's finances. I have a few external funds that I'm afraid might get found out. Can you help me when that happens?"

"Y-You embezzled the company's money?"

"About three million." Alex wasn't afraid to admit it. Erica had to depend on him now, anyway.

"What? How could you..." Erica wanted to scold him, but she could only bite back her words when it occurred to her that he was now her husband. "How can I help you?"

"Anastasia is now in control of the company's finances, so she'll definitely find out about it. When that happens, just say that you had me divert the money to your bank account for your personal use back then. You're Francis' daughter and her younger sister. As long as you claim to be the one who spent the money, nothing will happen." Alex asked her to take the blame.

Erica said reluctantly, "Okay then."

Having finished his speech, Alex asked, "Do you know what Anastasia is up to?" Then, he told her about the danger. "She had Elliot steal our clients to cause breaks in Tillman Constructions' funding chain. She wants to force the company into declaring bankruptcy."

"What? She wants to make my dad's company go bankrupt?" Erica was exasperated. "Is she nuts?!"

"As long as Tillman Constructions faces bankruptcy, it'll undergo liquidation by the bank. When that happens, every shareholder of the company will be burdened with its debts. At that point, we'll be weighed down by massive debts and be finished for life."

Upon hearing this, Erica instantly went weak at the knees. She just wanted to get some money from the company, but she never wanted to become saddled with debts. "But Anastasia herself owns 30 percent of the company's shares!" Is she stupid? she thought to herself.

"Who cares if she gets into debt? She's got Elliot backing her up. The debts will be massive for us, though. If we can't pay them off, we're gonna go to jail." Alex intentionally aroused Erica's fear since this was the only way to drive her into

action.

And sure enough, her eyes blazed with immense hatred at his words. She uttered between clenched teeth, "If she dares to make Tillman Constructions go bankrupt, I'm not gonna let her off."

"Erica, now that we've lost a few clients, our company is in danger. Hurry and beg her to persuade Elliot to stop," Alex suggested.

Erica wanted to visit Francis early tomorrow morning. She couldn't be too heartless. After all, she was now still his daughter and would remain so for life. I'm Francis' second daughter as long as the secret of my parentage isn't found out. It was night. Anastasia's heart ached in silence as she sat before Francis' bed and looked at the grayish hair on his temples. The good news was that his vital signs were stable, with no signs of

sequelae. However, it was unknown whether he could regain consciousness. The doctor said he might come round all of a sudden or remain comatose like this, so all she could do was wait patiently.

It was already about 11:00 PM when she finally left his bedside. Tired, she went back to the room, only to see the man working on the sofa. He had a laptop placed on his lap and was tapping away at the keyboard with his slender fingers. Anastasia was startled. Dressed in a black turtleneck sweater, the man seemed stony and yet charming under the light with a serious expression.

Elliot looked up at her. "You're back? Take a shower and go to sleep."

"What about you? Aren't you going to sleep?" she asked. She didn't want him to stay up late working either

Of course, Elliot wasn't supposed to sleep in her room. However, when he heard her question, he immediately looked up in surprise with incredibly bright eyes.

"Do you want me to sleep with you?"

Anastasia looked into his eyes before lowering her head in embarrassment.

"Yeah, you can."

Elliot closed his laptop and didn't care about his work anymore. "Alright, let's sleep together."

By the time Anastasia came out after taking a shower, Elliot was already waiting for her in bed, having taken a shower earlier. She watched as he changed into

gray pajamas. Dressed in lilac pajamas, she lifted the covers and got into bed. Then, she turned off the lights and naturally lay down in his arms.

Covers

The man behind her whispered in her ear in a deep voice, "I want you to stop going to work from tomorrow onward."