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At Margaret's house, Hye Kyo and Ariel lounged lazily on the couch, enjoying their daily dose of entertainment provided by their television. Loud chewing noises could be heard as they munched ruthlessly on the potato chips, as though they hadn't eaten for days.

“Stop hogging all the chips, you fatty,” Ariel yanked the bag from Hye Kyo's grasp, fed up with her friend's obvious inconsiderateness. Then she swept a handful and shoved the chips into her mouth. “I thought you're supposed to be watching your lousy figure?”

“I'm fit. I can eat another five bags if I wanted to,” Hye Kyo boasted with an arrogant grin. Coming from somebody else, it would've looked smug and downright disgusting, but from Hye Kyo, it almost looked admirable and borderline classy.

A snort erupted from Ariel's lips. “Yeah, another five bags and you'd have a heart attack.”

“There, there, girls. Don't fight,” came Margaret's voice from the kitchen.

Another ten minutes passed before Ariel finally popped the question that everyone else was thinking, but probably didn't want to ask. “What should we do with Gillian?”

It had been five days since the outburst that turned Gillian's life upside down in an instant. Although Hye Kyo could be said as the culprit who set the fire, Gillian didn't seem to cast the blame on her friend. Instead, she became rather inhibited, keeping to herself mostly and indulging in bouts of solitude. Call it withdrawal, but everyone could tell Gillian was on the verge of becoming a walking zombie.

Of course, at this stage, everyone knew. Even Aunt Margaret who almost fainted at the sudden news, abhorred by the fact that she had been ignorant and excluded from the obtainment of truth.

“Shouldn't you do something about it?” Ariel nudged Hye Kyo whose attention was wholly pinned on the screen.

Her friend shrugged. “Just give her space. It's what she needs, anyway.”

“You're a horrible friend, you know that?” Ariel snorted.

“I don't see you doing anything.”

“At least I'm not the one that fucked things up.”

Hye Kyo's tone morphed into a defensive one. “Hey, hey, at least I had good intentions and actually carried it out. Unlike somebody who always sits idle and criticizes everything!”

“Good intentions? It looks like you're more concerned about yourself than anyone else.”

“What's that supposed to mean?” Hye Kyo fired.

“You know exactly what it means. You were lusting after Daniel, and wanted to break them up!”

“SHUT UP!!” Suddenly, Gillian's voice echoed throughout the house, shocking the living wits out of Ariel and Hye Kyo. The silent Gillian seemed to have disappeared in a second and now in its place was a fiery girl. “Can't we have peace for once and not endless drama?”

It took Ariel and Hye Kyo a moment to recover entirely from their shock. As far as they remembered, Gillian had never raised her voice in such a manner. She wasn't exactly the type that could lose her temper so easily. Guess the ordeal had been a huge source of energy detainment for Gillian the past few days.

“Gillian, dear, are you all right?” Margaret came strolling out from the kitchen and asked with an utterly concerned tone. “Girls!” Shots of disapproval were thrown at Ariel and Hye Kyo who cowered apologetically.

“I need some fresh air,” Gillian declared and decided to leave the house. Maybe it was a bad idea after all to hide at her aunt's house. Although it was uncharacteristic of her to act like a coward, Gillian refused to stay at the dormitory and face everyone else. She didn't want to face Edison, Ruby, and especially Daniel. Perhaps the silly part of her thought that she could somehow escape everything by seeking refuge somewhere else.

Or maybe, she had really been silly all along, to think of family reunion.

Family reunion?

Pfft. Maybe she wasn't meant to have a family after all.

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Edison was sitting in his car which was parked right outside of Margaret's house. He didn't mean to fetch her whereabouts like some freaky stalker, but oddly, a part of him craved to do something for Gillian. Strange as it sounded, he didn't have a single ounce of relief when Gillian's true identity was finally revealed. If anything, guilt was the only emotion that was coursing through his body.

Perhaps, he was to blame for the mess, too. If he had done something earlier, maybe things wouldn't have spiraled out of control and both Gillian and Daniel would have been spared from the pain.

Edison snapped out of his thoughts as he spotted a familiar figure up ahead. Squinting his eyes, he could see that it was Gillian. Unlike before, her tough exterior was gone, and all that was left was an image of vulnerability and frailty. The image almost shocked Edison, for was this the Gillian he accused of being evil and conniving? Or did she turn into someone else? Or was she really pretending to be mighty and evil all along?

Or perhaps, he had always been biased and judged her harshly. Edison didn't know what to think of Gillian anymore.

He did, however, know that he wanted to rush out of there and give her a hug. Without a second thought, his feet carried him to her.

"Hey..." he said in a soft murmur, not knowing what reaction to expect.

Gillian's eyes suddenly turned alert.

"Look--" Edison saw her alarm and wanted to clarify that he had no bad intentions. "I'm not here to lash out at you or anything," he continued, suddenly feeling like he was at her mercy. "I just want to... well..." What the hell? Since when did he become a blabbering fool? "Well, how are you?"

Seconds passed, and Gillian's guard still did not falter.

“Are you okay?”

“What's your problem?” Gillian shot, surprising Edison. He didn't expect the hint of hostility to spark in her eyes.

His hands were raised as an automatic response. “Nothing... Just wanted to check up on you.”

Suddenly, she laughed. “Come on, Edison. Stop the act. I know you want to laugh. Go ahead. Laugh at me all you want. Tease me. Curse me. You know you want to. Now, you finally got the chance.” Bitterness edged her voice.

Edison felt like his stomach dropped. He didn't know why he was feeling so horrible when she said those things. Had he appeared to be that much of a jerk all along? A jerk who only wanted to step over others and make fun of their miseries? The description certainly didn't make Edison feel great about himself.

“I'm not going to laugh at you,” Edison said in a firm voice, his eyes staring deeply into Gillian's. “I know I may come off as a complete jerk, but believe it or not, I actually don't feel that happy that you and Daniel are in this position, you know?”

She watched him, perhaps studying his body language to detect any clues of dishonesty. Such scrutiny almost made Edison flinch, for he was not used to being gawked at like that. Not in this way where he felt like one wrong move could totally destroy him.

“Stop it,” she suddenly said.

Edison looked down at her. “What?”

“I said, stop it!”

Confusion at her hostility drew Edison's eyebrows together. “Look--”

"I don't need your pity, okay?" Gillian rolled her eyes, apparently maddened by such idea. "Who do you think you are? Think you can just come here and say this stuff? Sorry to burst your bubble, but you don't have that sort of impact on me. And never will, so a bit of advice?" Her eyes suddenly held a malicious edge to it. "Fuck off."

Stunned by such harshness, Edison found himself to be at the loss for words. Truthfully, he had no idea that she hated him this much. Sure, they had been bantering back and forth for awhile now like arch enemies, but that amount of hatred that brewed in her eyes when she said that was entirely something Edison did not expect.

Snap out of it! Edison's mind screamed. You're not supposed to be affected by her words!

"You ungrateful twerp!" Edison fired. "I was wrong to shield you all this time!"

"I didn't ask for your help," Gillian rebutted, disinclined to appear softened.

"Witch!"

Again, she rolled her eyes. "This is getting old, you know. Why don't we both just do each other a favor and disappear?"

"Oh no!" Edison wasn't done yet. "Don't think you can get away with all this. You're coming with me."

"What the fuck?" Gillian exploded, outraged at his tendency to think he could control her. "Didn't you hear what I just said."

"Yes, I heard what the fuck you just said, but you're still coming with me." Without even letting her a chance to resist, Edison yanked her wrists and pulled her with him toward the car. In her effort to resist, Gillian wanted to kick him but he saw her intention and only walked faster.

"Bastard! Let go of me!" She demanded.

Before she knew it, the car's door opened and she was shoved inside. Damn his superior strength that

God gave him. With a determination that was hard to dismiss, Edison slammed the door and jumped into his seat, making sure to hit the lock keys.

Gillian glared at him.

Edison almost felt the shivers, but it was the only way to get her to listen to him. "Look, I'm not planning to kidnap you or anything, okay? So chill, shit!"

"Spill, bastard. What is it that you want?"

Edison rolled his eyes. "Uh, yeah I want to rape you, that's why I locked you in here." He wanted to laugh out loud at such ridiculous idea. "Uh no. I'm taking you Daniel's."

The slightest idea of seeing the face of the person whose words slashed her heart and planted deep wounds inside, made Gillian want to jump out of the window. "No! I'm not. Let me out. NOW!"

"Come on," Edison insisted. "You do owe him a good explanation. Why make your life so miserable? Just tell him you're fucking sorry!"

"You don't understand," Gillian blurted. Edison never saw her in such panicked distress. "He would never accept me again."

"Well he won't if you don't even try!" Edison yelled.

"Why do you care?!" Gillian raised her voice just as high, unwilling to be overpowered once again. "It's none of your damn business!"

"It is!" Edison shot back. "Especially when it concerns Daniel. You bet it's my business!"

"Do you love him or something?" Gillian rolled her eyes. "Why can't you leave his family business alone?"

Edison's nose flared. "Don't ever insult my manliness, missy. And I just can't stand seeing you two like this. I'm gonna help you patch up, okay?"

Laughter was a response that Edison didn't think was appropriate. "Surprise, surprise. Edison Chen wants to help me out?" Gillian almost couldn't believe what she was seeing before her eyes. "Did you lose your brain or something? Why would you want to do such thing? Unless you're setting up another trap for me to fall into..."

"God! Not everyone is as calculative as you!" Wrong move. Edison could see that she was offended by his words. "I mean, come on. Am I that bad? If you're really Daniel's sister, then you might as well go and be his sister! What else you're going to do? Mope and fly back to the states!?"

"But he doesn't want to be my brother..."

"Since when did the Gillian I know become such a pessimist?" Edison asked.

"Shut up. Don't talk like you know me!" Gillian almost screamed, fed up with it all.

"I do know you!" Edison fired. "At least enough to tell that right now, you're being a coward!"

"Am not!"

"Coward!"

She slapped him. Hard.

Edison glared at her, but her resentment for him was far more obvious in her scorching eyes. At that moment, both of them could feel the heat that was eating them up with neither of them willing to submit to the other. Edison could see how determined she was to resist his intention and couldn't help but somehow felt amazingly relieved that at least her fighting spirit was still intact. For a moment, he was afraid that the old Gillian would never come back. In the spur of the moment, he found her breathtakingly beautiful.

He did the stupidest thing he could have done. He kissed her.

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Meanwhile, Hye Kyo decided to head out to the porch to get a breath of fresh air. Much to her astonishment, she caught the sight of Edison and Gillian in the act. Shock that suddenly morphed into sheer pleasure drew itself onto her face as Hye Kyo watched with unblushing interest.

“My, my...” Hye Kyo muttered to herself. “Who would have thought Gillian had it in her?”

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Gillian's eyes bulged out in horror as she felt his lips smacking on hers. Who did he think he was? Raging inside, she wanted to push him off and give him another deserving slap, but his hold on her shoulders restricted her movement. Five seconds. Then ten. Then an unbelievable thirty.

At last, he released her. Gillian immediately pushed him away from her as far as permissibly possible.

Edison's mind blanked, completely shocked by his own action. Why he had committed such absurdity, he had no idea. He did, however, know that Gillian's resentment had just reproduced a thousand times.

“Bastard!” Before he knew it, his left cheek was stained by five fingerprints.

“Gillian--” He wanted to explain, but Gillian would not hear of it.

“Get away from me!” She screamed.

Edison felt horrified when he saw how deep the detestation in her eyes were and immediately unlocked the doors. Gillian glared at him one last time before she bolted out of the vehicle.

When she was gone, he leaned back against his seat, feeling a throbbing headache about to attack. A sigh erupted from his lungs as Edison tried to decipher what the hell just happened.

He had good intentions to come here, did he not? He wanted to help Gillian patch things up with Daniel. He actually wanted to end her suffering. But why did he act so barbarously? Now, she only hated him even more.

He sighed. “Edison, you are one big fucking idiot.”

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