

# Chapter 01. Charm

*Her eyes-sharp like a knife slashing souls.*

*Her skin-fair like the finest jewel.*

*Her hair-dark like the darkest coal.*

*Her beauty-unmatched by any damsel.*

*.*

*Her eyes-magnificent and full lips-majestic*

*Her figure-God-given and Heaven-fated.*

*Inked lace on her chest and metal lace on her dress; All to charm and enchant-to make their love to her their faith.*

*.*

*On her flank, two magples and a lotus dwell,*

*Enhancing her charm, reigning above any man and woman.*

*Heavenly lotus hidden below her navel.*

*Her name-Mae Kru Bulan.*

.

Her thin, perfectly shaped, dark red lips have moved constantly since the ritual began. Now, a middle-aged woman's shoulder was showing red ink from a long tattoo needle inside the school of ***Mae Kru Bulan***, a woman of great merit who'd inherited tattooing art from her ancestors.

Not just in the district or Phop Phra, but almost everyone in Tak province knew her. When it came to white magic, magic that enhances one's popularity and reputation, Sak Yant, and Long Na ["], she was the go-to person.

Of course, these things were personal beliefs that couldn't be forced upon anyone. Mae Kru's tattooing skills were meticulous and beautiful, unmatched by anyone. She was also renowned for her ability to bring back husbands who'd strayed to their secret lovers.

Mae Kru had tattooed many famous celebrities. It was well-known that Mae Kru Bulan didn't perform charming spells for those who wanted to steal someone else's man or use it for improper purposes. She was popular among women.

Rarely did she tattoo men unless they had a feminine heart. She despised men who used their charming spells to manipulate women, violating the moral codes she upheld, which would degrade the power of magic in both the student and the teacher.

The school was a single-story wooden house with good ventilation and a natural cool breeze. The floor was covered with a large, thick carpet to welcome students and visitors. It was also used for rituals.

The school wasn't completely enclosed; the front had a waist-high gate, making the building visible from the outside. The surrounding area was plain concrete with a shoe rack on the side. It resembled a typical magical master's school with a high chair for Mae Kru and revered Por Kae masks, Buddha image, flower trays, incense, candles, and various offerings.

But the most striking feature from the first step inside was the statue of Ruesi Ta Fai and a large incense pot standing at the front. The actual living quarters were adjacent to the school, a modern two-story concrete house, but no one had ever seen inside as it was private. One would only see the school and the exterior of the house.

On a typical weekday evening, it was normal to see only a few women visiting the school, unlike on weekends when many people came.

Mae Kru Bulan's beauty could be described as the epitome of Thai femininity, with a captivating and unforgettable face. If she walked by, one would turn back for another look. Her sharp, almond-shaped eyes were always sparkling, making it hard for any student to joke around with her.

She was a woman approaching thirty but showed no signs of aging. Her teardrop-shaped nose was a feature many women desired.

Because of this, she was the object of many men's desires, but mysteriously, no one could get close to her for more than seven days.

Despite her deep, stern voice, Mae Kru was quite polite and had a calm demeanor. People often saw her at major temple events in the province.

The needle was lifted from the woman's skin to refill the red ink prepared beside her. Suddenly, everything came to a halt when a woman with an oval face, sharp eyebrows, striking eyes, and a noticeable black mole under her left eye walked in unannounced.

Her clean appearance suggested she wasn't local. She walked straight in, past the revered statue, and stopped to ask loudly:

**"Who is Mae Kru Bulan?"**

Her confident demeanor and serious expression indicated she had something important to discuss. Her arrival without knowing who she was looking for seemed odd, drawing everyone's attention in the school. Her intimidating presence softened as she became unsure under the scrutiny.

The slender woman sitting on the wooden platform raised the needle in a wal to pay respect to her own spirited teacher before placing it on a golden tray and turning to address the newcomer. It was fortunate she'd just finished tattooing the yantra.

**"What do you want?"**

Just a glance into her eyes revealed she was just another person coming here for help, but Mae Kru's voice remained calm. What was intriguing was the sense that this woman had a natural charm, making her easily desirable, yet her face and eyes were filled with sadness and worry.

"I need to speak with you privately. It's an important matter."

Her voice was hesitant, unlike her initial confident entrance, but her determined gaze remained. The unusual tone made everyone in the school exchange glances.

"Alright, whatever it is, you'll have to wait until everyone here has left. If you can't wait, then leave. Everyone has their own troubles to resolve."

Mae Kru's response was patient and calm, knowing this was the newcomer's first visit and unaware of the proper conduct before the many sacred items.

The woman sighed softly, lowered her head in thought, and then looked back at Mae Kru, who was still watching her, revealing her beautiful face.

"Girl, why don't you come inside and sit? Standing there isn't proper,"

Suggested a woman in her forties near the door, whispering to avoid causing any offense to Mae Kru before seeking help.

"I'll...wait in my car. How long will it take to finish here?"

The addressed woman politely crouched, responded calmly, and walked out.

Mae Kru's eyes followed her every move, noting how she respectfully gave a wal to the statue she'd previously ignored.

***Thud...***

A deep sigh escaped as she sat back in her car, her sharp eyes looking at herself in the mirror, contemplating something, then glancing at the small Buddha image on the dashboard.

"If these things are real, why would the Buddha teach people to do good?"

She muttered, disheartened, leaning back to rest from the day's exhaustion. As the sun set, the rituals concluded. Mae Kru remembered she had another matter to attend to but didn't expect the woman to still be waiting after several hours.

**She stepped outside to breathe the evening air and had a student go to check the car.**

They confirmed that the woman was still waiting in her black five-door car parked nearby.

The tall woman's black sneakers touched the ground again as she approached, her height of about 170 centimeters becoming clearer without the roof's shadow.

Mae Kru's stern, calm eyes scanned her face in detail, feeling an unexpected liking for her eyes, perhaps because no one had ever stood up to her with such a demeanor before.

With a slightly taller frame, just about two to three centimeters more, the person in front of her had no choice but to lift their chin to converse with her, inadvertently seeing her plump lips up close.

Aside from the many men who tried to get close to her or her students, this was another gaze that made her feel oddly curious. It also made her wonder why this woman had come here. If she came here for a charming spell, she'd say it certainly wasn't necessary for someone with such a beautiful face.

"You're Mae Kru Bulan, right?"

The tall figure asked, seemingly aware that barging in and asking bluntly during a ritual might be a bit rude. This time, she asked in a much softer tone.

"Tell me the reason that brought you here. A person without faith has no reason to come to a place like this."

Mae Kru's voice was low and somewhat haughty as she asked, looking directly at the visitor's face and eyes without flinching, causing the visitor to avert her gaze.

"Something impossible has happened, and someone said you might be the only one who can help. I'm Peem. I'm a police investigator. You can call me Peem or Lieutenant Peem. Sorry for being a bit rude, but if you can really help, you'd really help us in dealing with bad people. I heard from people at the station that you're a good person. If asked nicely, you might agree to help."

Finally, the awkward statement explained why she seemed so brash, but now she was being polite.

"And if I'm not a good person or don't intend to help, what will you do, Lieutenant?"

It wasn't a teasing remark but rather a threatening one.

"What do I need to do for you to help? Name your price, and I'll pay it."

The eager negotiation seemed out of place, making Mae Kru's calm eyes show noticeable displeasure.

"Leave before you get into trouble."

The slender, tall woman tuned back toward her house, ready to walk away.

"And isn't this place built to play on people's superstitions for money? Or do you have enough that you don't care anymore? And who said Mae Kru Bulan is charitable? It's all lies... The things people come here to worship don't even exist..."

The angry words echoed loudly, causing Mae Kru, who'd turned away, to stop and turn back quickly, ready to respond. But seeing the red eyes and tears streaming down the woman's cheeks made her anger vanish instantly.

**"What do you want?"**

It wasn't that she'd never seen anyone cry before, but she was used to seeing people wail in despair as if they were about to die right in front of her. This was the first time her strong heart felt weak upon seeing tears.

"Bullets that should've stopped the evil deeds of bad people twice didn't fire, even though the gun was fine. If it's not beyond your power... please give me an answer... what should I do?"

The words came from deep within, spoken with a firm voice through tears. It was rare to see a policewoman of lieutenant rank standing there crying, her eyes full of confusion and hopelessness.

"I'm not a magic mistress; I can't help. The truth is, your gun might be faulty. This place is full of superstitions; there's no need for you to waste time here."

"But your father once helped a police officer."

"Do you believe that what you're thinking exists, or are you just looking for answers?"

"....."

"Stay here for a night. I'll give you an answer as compensation for your time."

Mae Kru spoke, glancing toward her school to indicate where the lieutenant would sleep that night.

Note:

Book Title:

**FORMIDABLE EYES**

# Chapter 02. A Bell

"**If there's a way to catch the wrongdoer and bring them to justice, I'll do it...**But right now, no matter where I look, everything just seems confusing."

It seemed like this officer really had no idea what she was facing, agreeing to stay here so easily, even though this place was somewhere no one dared show disrespect.

"Trying to ask what you can't see for help when you have no faith in it, what can help you? It's no different from the helped not trusting the helper."

As Mae Kru finished speaking, the tall figure lowered her head in understanding and contemplation. She then turned to look at the statue of Ruesi Ta Fai that she'd walked past without paying respects.

She paused for a moment, staring at the statue that seemed more imposing the longer she looked, driven by some subconscious impulse. Her action also made the slender figure beside her turn to look.

Lieutenant Peem raised her hands and gave a respectful wai, bowing her head gracefully as she should've done from the start. Mae Kru, standing nearby. glanced over and realized that this woman wasn't as stubborn as she'd initially thought.

"More than other religious teachings, I believe in goodness. No matter the religion or sacred entity in this world, if it guides people to do good, it's considered auspicious and worthy of worship. And if what's in front of me can help someone with the intention to rid the land of evil, then it's worthy of being revered."

The determined eyes of the tall figure were filled with curiosity as she spoke, making Mae Kru feel even more compelled to do something, even though she didn't know the details yet. At this moment, Lieutenant Peem hadn't even glanced back at her, still staring at the statue of Ruesi Ta Fai.

"I can't promise I can help, but if you stay here tonight, I'll try to find a way. Lieutenant."

"Then, we have a deal."

The lieutenant responded immediately without hesitation, turning to meet the eyes of the beautiful woman.

"Do I have to call you Mae Kru like everyone else?"

"You don't have faith in me, so it's not necessary."

"Sorry, I just moved here. I should follow what the locals do."

"Let's get through tonight first. You mightn't want to come back here again."

Mae Kru's calm yet threatening words didn't faze the tall figure at all, likely because she had bigger things on her mind. It was clear she had many worries yet to be expressed.

"If I get through tonight, I hope you'll keep your promise."

At this moment, it was Mae Kru who was filled with questions. An officer had suddenly appeared at her school, asking for help, and she'd found herself sympathizing and agreeing to help.

This was a small challenge in her heart, wanting to know what the lieutenant wanted her to do to help catch the criminal. She also wondered if the determined woman, who claimed to be good, could stay here until morning, given that she didn't seem to believe in what she held sacred, though she wasn't disrespectful.

After about two hours, the lieutenant drove off for personal errands, promising to return immediately after.

Mae Kru Bulan went about her usual routine, reciting prayers before sunset and returning to her home within the same compound.

Mae Kru Bulan needed to cleanse herself, eat, pray before bed, and relax after a day of tattooing her students.

The sound of car tires on the ground and headlights shining into the house indicated that the lieutenant had indeed returned.

As the host, Mae Kru Bulan came down from her room on the second floor to meet the person she'd been thinking about, wondering if she'd dare to stay as promised.

***Thud!***

The car door closed, revealing a familiar face. Though they'd just met, she remembered it well. The lieutenant was dressed more comfortably but still modestly, ready for bed, indicating she'd gone to prepare herself for the night.

The faint smell of mosquito repellent wafted in as if knowing the real enemy tonight.

"I brought a pillow and blanket just in case, though. I wasn't sure if you'd allow it.

"Sure, but tonight won't be as cold as you think. It might be so hot you can't sleep. Bring as little as possible, just your car keys for a quick escape."

Mae Kru's mocking, threatening words didn't scare the tall woman, who seemed calmer than during the day.

The tall figure carried her pillow and small blanket, following Mae Kru to the school door. The sound of keys jingling softly as the latter unlocked the door.

The lieutenant scanned the school, filled with Por Kae masks and Buddha images, along with small statues she didn't recognize.

"Why don't you make the fence or door more secure?"

As Mae Kru pushed the door open, the lieutenant asked, noticing the waisthigh door offered little security.

"Are you worried about my safety or my belongings?"

Mae Kru replied softly. turning to look at her.

"Whether it's your belongings or yourself, you shouldn't be careless. This house doesn't seem to have any men or anyone else living with you."

The lieutenant's words made Mae Kru Bulan chuckle. Most of the things here, excluding the large masks and statues, were offerings from students, not her personal property. These items weren't prone to theft due to the mysterious consequences.

"Maintaining public order is a police duty, but citizens should protect themselves, starting with their own safety. I'm warning you because you're a woman."

The lieutenant stood firm, trying to convey her good intentions, while Mae Kru listened silently.

"Then I should be safe tonight with you here."

Mae Kru's words seemed to have multiple meanings, but they didn't make the lieutenant overthink. She decided to take off her shoes and enter the school, looking for a place to sleep, likely choosing to lie sideways to the Buddhist altar.

"May I use this fan?"

The lieutenant placed her pillow on the carpet, asking the slender figure by the door.

"I think you should turn your head the other way. As for the fan, I'll allow you to use it because I'm starting to like you now."

"...."

The lieutenant was about to move her pillow as suggested but paused, considering what she'd heard.

The female officer wasn't a teenage girl, as she was already twenty-seven years old. She was also sharp and quick-witted due to her job, but she didn't dare think anything strange in front of the sacred.

"I'm saying this to prevent any misunderstanding. I'm here for help, not to become your student."

She spoke politely, with a slight smile for friendliness. Mae Kru Bulan, with her good figure and charming eyes, likely had many admirers, but her words didn't seem to imply anything inappropriate.

"You should be glad. I don't like people easily, and it's better than being hated by me."

Hearing that emphasized the strange feeling in her heart and made her think about things she shouldn't. The lieutenant turned away to prepare for bed. Mae Kru closed the door as usual without locking it or using a padlock, then walked back to her own house, which was just a few steps away.

Mae Kru Bulan opened the small meditation room door inside her house to peek at the statue of the kuman thong adorned with a body chain on the lowest shelf of the altar. She smiled warmly but with a hint of desire that lingered in her thoughts like never before.

**"Thong..."**

Of course, there was no one else living in this house except Mae Kru Bulan, the owner. So, there was no answer if one were to ask whom she was calling out to.

## "Yes, Mother...?"

The soft voice of a young boy's voice answered immediately.

"She wants to know if you really exist... go greet her for me."

## "Sure, Mother. Who is she?"

"I will find a father for you. Go now, she's waiting..."

With these words, there was no further response.

The slender figure gently closed the door without even stepping inside, then turned back to her bedroom as if nothing had happened.

In the middle of the pitch-black night, a gentle breeze still blew, making the alr circulate. A small blanket helped keep out mosquitoes and the increasingly cool air. The tall figure felt exhausted. After lying down for a while, she began to drift into sleep without thinking about anything.

*Clink~... Clang~ ...*

Just as she was about to fall into a deep sleep, she was startled awake by the sound of something moving quickly around the school.

In a split second after she opened her eyes, the first thing she did was grab her phone to turn on the flashlight and instinctively reached for the pistol holstered at her waist. The tall figure was very sure that the sound she heard was the jingling of a bell from someone's wrist or ankle.

If it were a thief or a burglar, they shouldn't come with such a thing. The flashlight from her phone continued to shine in the direction she aimed, trying to find the source of the noise.

Lieutenant Peem stood up to walk to the school fence and peeked out to look for the source of the sound. But there was only darkness and silence as an answer. Not even a pet like a dog or a cat was in sight, only the sound of her own breathing.

Part of her wanted to go out and see for herself, but she was afraid of breaking the agreement to stay inside until morning.

All she could do was take deep breaths to calm herself and keep her mind from wandering too far with curiosity.

***Clang~...***

Before she could lower the light from her phone, the sound came from behind her again, quickly and clearly, penetrating her senses. Lieutenant Peem turned around swiftly and pointed her gun confidently, but strangely, there was nothing there.

"So, you want to play like this..."

She muttered, lowering her gun as the feeling of emptiness no longer felt so overwhelming.

It was as if something was creeping closer to her, making her think that maybe she wasn't really alone here, or perhaps someone was trying to mess with her to prevent her from staying the night.

# Chapter 03. Desire

"If you're a human, come out now. What do you want? Or if you're not and you really exist, please don't disturb me. Tomorrow, I'll make merit for you."

The lieutenant looked up at the Buddha image at the top of the altar, then raised her hands to give it a wai and grasped the golden amulet hanging around her neck. She walked to turn on the lights, illuminating the entire place.

The lieutenant's calm eyes scanned the masks arranged in order before sitting down calmly.

"If this is a good omen, let my coming here guide me to the answer. Protect me from all misfortunes. Let me stay here until morning. Let me successfully eliminate the evil, and I'll worship you..."

This time, it wasn't the Buddha image but the eyes of the Por Kae mask that the tall figure was staring at. Even though it might seem like just an art piece that couldn't move, she still wondered if it was just her imagination or some psychological reason that made the eyes of this thing seem alive.

After finishing her sentence, her fingers pressed the light switch off, bringing back the darkness so she could go back to sleep.

## Clang~

The sound of an ankle bell passed by the bedroom door, surprising Mae Kru, who was lying on the bed. She didn't expect the kuman thong to return so quickly, and she hadn't heard the sound of a car starting. She got up to check if the black car of the female lieutenant was still parked outside the bedroom window and found that it was still there.

A sly smile appeared on her face, full of curiosity. She wanted to know why the little kuman thong had given up on the lieutenant so easily, which was unusual.

"Why did you come back so soon?"

Mae Kru Bulan's stern voice said softly as she stepped back to the bed.

## "Por Kae wouldn't let me in, Mother. He forbade harming her. If I don't listen, there would be consequences."

She didn't understand why she smiled again upon hearing that. She thought of the kind, sharp-featured face of the lieutenant as if she'd been enchanted herself.

"Lieutenant... how good a person must you be. Let's see if you'll fall for me or not."

## "Do you like her, Mother?"

"She's different from anyone I've ever met. Maybe... we're meant to be. Your Por Kru said that when the time is right, that person will come. She has both the charm and the exact marks on her face. Now we finally met... You made me wait so long."

## "Mother, you're more beautiful than any woman. Everyone would fall for you, especially if they're the destined one."

"Just wait. Within three days, it'll happen."

. .

In the countryside, people start their day before the sun rises. At 5:30 AM, Mae Kru's house door opened as usual to offer food to the monks. But today. something different was that there was a tall woman sleeping in her school, making her walk in to check if she was really asleep or unconscious from fright.

She opened the door to find the lieutenant sleeping soundly. Looking around, there were no signs of movement or anything unusual. She slowly moved in before sitting down beside her to wake her up before anyone else saw.

Just a fingertip touch on the arm, and the tall figure woke up immediately as she was a light sleeper. She sprang up in surprise, her nose touching the nose of the person sitting in front of her.

Confused by the sudden wake-up and groggy, the female lieutenant didn't know what to do. She left everything as it was for several seconds until she smelled a floral scent, though she couldn't identify what kind of flower it was. The fragrance brought her back to her senses, and she quickly moved her face away.

"Sorry... I wasn't careful."

The tall figure quickly apologized, stammering. She raised her long fingers to brush her hair away from her face awkwardly, trying to avoid the gaze of the person in front of her. She decided to grab her phone to check the time, regaining her composure and avoiding the unintended touch with Mae Kru Bulan.

"Lieutenant, you seem to have slept better than I thought,"

The slender figure remained seated and spoke in a firm voice.

"Then, you should keep your promise."

The female lieutenant immediately reminded her of the promise as soon as she regained her senses.

"We'll talk after I finish offering food to the monks,"

Mae Kru said firmly before getting up from her seat.

"Where can I buy the offerings, or is there a nearby market?"

"Wash your face and get ready. If you want to offer the food, do it with me. Consider it making merit together."

"W-what?"

The tall figure asked again, confused.

"Or do you mind?"

"No, I just wanted to be sure. In case I need to buy it myself next time."

The sharp-eyed woman seemed to be polite and quiet if you got to know her better.

Moreover, the closer you looked, the more you saw the inner beauty through her clear eyes. Her manners showed she was well-raised. Or maybe because they talked under the moonlight last night, she didn't notice that this morning, without makeup, the lieutenant had become a sweet-faced woman with big, round eyes.

"You talk as if you'll do it every day."

Mae Kru's sparkling eyes stared at the person in front of her, almost without blinking, making the tall figure unsure where to place her hands.

"Yes, I'll do it whenever I have the chance, but I just moved here last night and had to sleep here."

What she meant wasn't complicated. She just wanted to say she didn't know where anything was because it was her first time here.

"I cook every morning. No need to buy the food. You'll be here for several more nights. I'll wake you up."

"...."

No one would hear such words and not be stunned with curiosity. This was another time she heard a sentence that could be misunderstood, spoken with a serious, calm face. It left her speechless, even though it shouldn't be like that.

"I'll stay here just tonight."

The tall figure quickly declared before more misunderstandings arose, but Mae Kru turned away as if uninterested and walked out without saying anything.

After putting on her shoes, she quickly followed the slender figure to the door but didn't enter, fearing it'd be rude. Mae Kru turned back and nodded lightly in permission, so she decided to take off her shoes at the door and walked in.

Inside, the house was entirely different from the school. The furniture and decorations were modern, with a sofa, appliances, and electronics, like a middle-to- upper-class home. There were no strange, scary worship items as she'd imagined.

After knowing the bathroom's location and washing up, Lieutenant Peem walked out, intending to return to the door. But she saw Mae Kru carrying a silver tray from the right room, so she offered to help. Mae Kru handed it over without objection and led the way barefoot to the road in front of her house.

.

"What makes you so charitable?"

While watching the monk approach with a composed demeanor, the slender figure asked the lieutenant beside her.

"Miss Pichapat Ruechakun, she was my sister. She passed away last year."

The tall woman's calm voice answered, conveying her inner feelings, not just words.

"I'm sorry to hear that."

"Suicide is a grave sin, but I hope those who drove her to it suffer even more."

Mae Kru's eyes remained fixed on the lieutenant's eyes, which clearly showed anger and deep-seated feelings. Her voice was strained, even though the person beside her didn't turn to look.

"To make merit for the passed away, the giver should have a pure heart so that what is grave may lighten."

Mae Kru finished her sentence just as the monks walked up and stopped in front of them. Lieutenant Peem glanced at the stern face of Mae Kru, who was also standing there.

However, she was busy placing items from the tray into the monks' alms bowls and didn't say anything until she was done. Then, she handed the ladle to Peem to scoop the food herself before gently touching her arm.

***Ayu wanno sukhang phalang.....***

. .

**With Mae Kru Bulan's morning duties completed by six o'clock, the two of them walked back into the house to seriously discuss what the lieutenant wanted.**

On the long sofa in the downstairs living room, Lieutenant Peem was already waiting as Mae Kru had instructed.

Not long after, the house owner, who'd taken the tray away, returned with a small, silver bowl filled with water, holding it with both hands.

"I brought you some water to drink. Think of it as an apology for making you sleep in the cold all night,"

She said, sitting down beside Lieutenant Peem and handing her the bowl. "Thank you... but honestly, it wasn't that bad."

Lieutenant Peem smiled slightly in gratitude before taking the bowl and drinking from it to be polite. Mae Kru's lips curved into a small, satisfied smile, but she remained silent. The bowl was placed on the table in front of them, and the lieutenant's intense eyes turned back to the slender figure who'd suddenly moved closer, catching her off guard.

"Speak. I'm listening."

It seemed the proximity was too close, causing the lieutenant to shift back a bit to maintain decorum. Strangely, the lieutenant seemed unusually comfortable with her, which was frustrating.

"My middle brother just passed his exams and got his rank. We went on our first mission together to catch some criminals, but they escaped. The guns of the officers, including my brother's, suddenly jammed. Ten officers searched the area again but found no trace of the criminals."

The slender figure remained still, showing no reaction or emotion, allowing the lieutenant to continue.

"Almost a month later, we got a lead when the criminals struck again. I was determined to catch them this time. We planned meticulously and blocked all exits. A gunshot rang out. I prayed it was one of them who got hit..."

Lieutenant Peem paused as if a lump had formed in her throat at the memory of that day before continuing.

"But it wasn't. It was my brother, lying in a pool of blood right in front of me."

Mae Kru's stern eyes softened slightly, showing respect for the lieutenant's grief and acknowledging the sacrifices made by officers.

"The moment I saw him, I was terrified, afraid he wouldn't make it. I remember their faces clearly, their eyes full of mocking and disdain, unafraid of the law. One of my hands touched the blood on my brother's body, and the other gripped the gun tightly, aiming at the enemy in front of me. They kept smiling at me with glee. I fired my gun over and over, but fate wasn't on our side."

Tears she couldn't hold back began to flow down her cheeks. The slender figure didn't want to see this, so she boldly grabbed the lieutenant's jaw, turning her face to meet her eyes, their noses almost touching.

"If fate had been on your side, we wouldn't be meeting today..."

"Just tell me if you can help me or not."

The firm voice made it clear she wanted an answer. Not pulling away or removing the hand that was touching her face without permission was the utmost respect and honor for Mae Kru, who was known to be quite reserved.

"Tonight... stay here with me... and I'll give you what you want. But if you don't come to see me, don't expect to sleep peacefully."

# Chapter 04. Mine

"Is this about what I asked for? Why do I still have to stay at the school?"

The tall figure asked, gently pushing Mae Kru's hand away from her face.

"Not at the school, but here, at my house."

Mae Kru Bulan's fierce eyes locked onto the other person's, speaking with a tone that was more of a command.

"Why?"

At this moment, the lieutenant was starting to get frustrated, even though she was already overthinking the situation. The woman in front of her kept talking about staying here, ignoring her request.

"Then why are you here..."

Mae Kru also wasn't much of a patient person. Realizing her wishes were being opposed, she was equally irritated.

"A retired police officer I consulted earlier told me that your father once helped him catch a criminal who has magical powers. That's why I came here even before going to the station."

"But my father has passed away. You need something to kill someone. If I help, it means I share the karma of killing. But alright, if you have good intentions for people, I'll find a way to help. Do you think those things are easy to make, that you can just demand them as you please?"

"I'm sorry. I was only thinking about my own needs."

"I don't want any money."

"Still... I have to repay you if it works. My brother is in a coma, and I've been transferred here. I can hardly do anything. At least I should do something useful for the case."

"If you didn't do anything wrong, would you be transferred?"

"It wasn't a transfer order from my superior but from my mother. I had to move to ease her worries. She feared I'd be in danger, too. But I know the hideout has moved close to this province, so I asked the higher-ups to transfer me here. Now that my mother thinks I'm safe, I can work more freely."

"You must be from Bangkok. I've seen many privileged officers like you.

They don't work hard; their skin isn't rough like those who do real work. They just ask others to help and then take the credit."

Mae Kru spoke with a slight shake of her head with disdain.

"I'm not a coward, not weak, nor running from problems. But I have many things to do. Staying at someone else's house often isn't appropriate. And even if I stay, I don't know how I can help."

Part of her feared that if she said something to upset the other, she might refuse to help. But she couldn't help but argue to explain the reality, so she took a deep breath to calm herself before responding.

"Start from here."

Mae Kru's slender hand placed on the left side of the other's chest as she spoke, causing the person to look down at her hand.

"What do you mean..."

"A strong mind, faith, and belief."

"I've always believed in my abilities, but goodness often doesn't side with righteousness."

"I mean, I want you to believe in the Qualities of the Buddha and goodness..."

"....."

Mae Kru's words struck a chord with the lieutenant, leaving her silent. But Mae Kru's sharp eyes caught something hanging from Lieutenant Peem's necklace. At first glance, it seemed like an ordinary gold necklace with an amulet, but it was actually a Garuda amulet carved from gold. This explained why the person she was interested in hadn't shown any signs of being captivated by her beauty.

"Let's go. I want you to taste the food I cooked."

Mae Kru's usually calm eyes widened, and her voice snapped the person who was lost in thought back to reality.

They walked into Mae Kru Bulan's kitchen, which was clean and modern, equipped with an electric stove and a smoke extractor, resembling a condo or a luxurious city home.

The homeowner opened the lid of a pot containing spicy pumpkin curry, scooped some thick curry with a ladle, and then used a long spoon to take some from the ladle.

Seeing the long spoon in Mae Kru's hand approaching her mouth, the tall figure was even more puzzled about why she had to do this. But not wanting to offend her again, she moved her lips to taste the soup.

"Yes... it's delicious."

"Then eat before you go to work. They might say I'm heartless, letting you starve."

"It's okay. I usually don't eat breakfast. It's late, and I just moved here. I don't want to be late. Thank you for your kindness."

That was the most polite way Lieutenant Peem could decline. And it was true that she usually didn't like to eat heavy meals early in the morning. "After work, come straight here. I'll explain how I can help. This knowledge was passed down from my father. I'm not as skilled in this as my brother, so I need to review some techniques. If I try to perform it without preparation, it could drive me insane. You came here without knowing what I'm capable of, so don't keep testing my patience, or you'll regret it. If you ask around, you'll find that I never invite anyone into my home. Why don't you understand what I want?"

The lieutenant had gotten used to Mae Kru's stern tone, so she could only listen calmly, not wanting to ask why refusing breakfast was such a big deal.

"I'll find out what your school is good at and how to repay you. I'm sorry, but I really have to go."

The tall figure bowed slightly to emphasize her apology before walking out calmly.

'Are you pretending, or do you really not know? Lieutenant Peem... will you cooperate willingly, or will I have to force you?"

.

.

**At the police station...**

"Let me introduce Lieutenant Peem, a police investigator who will be stationed here temporarily."

The captain introduced the woman who'd just arrived for the first time following a prior announcement.

"Nice to meet everyone. Please take care of me."

"I can take care of your heart, too, Lieutenant. I'm Sergeant Major Piak. Born and raised here, I've been stationed here for decades. If you have any questions, feel free to ask me."

The chubby, older man introduced himself with a friendly smile, seemingly harmless.

"Language, Sergeant Major, or you'll get into a fight with your wife again. Don't mind him, Lieutenant. If you have any questions, you can ask him. The work here isn't as hectic as in Bangkok. Someone skilled like you will adapt quickly. As for the case you want to work on, I have some concerns, too. Please be careful. I understand that the higher-ups want the case closed quickly. I'll help as much as I can. If they come into our area, let me know immediately. Most importantly, don't get hurt while working on this case. I've been instructed to take good care of you to avoid any issues with your mother."

"Thank you, Captain. But please treat me like any other officer. I'm here as your subordinate."

"Hearing that makes me feel better. Sergeant Major! Show the lieutenant her desk. I have to run some errands in town."

"Yes, sir!"

The captain walked out of the station immediately after that.

"This way, my beautiful lieutenant."

"Please, just call me Lieutenant Peem."

"Sure, Lieutenant. By the way, why do you want to work on such a serious case?"

"Because I... hate rape cases the most."

The tall figure stopped walking and answered seriously, causing the accompanying officer to turn and look. He saw the fierce, intimidating eyes of the new lieutenant and didn't dare to ask further.

The lieutenant's desk was similar to those of other officers, but it was known that investigators rarely stayed at the station, so there were no large storage cabinets or shelves.

"Sergeant Major Piak, do you know Mae Kru Bulan?"

"Just talking about her gives me chills... She's the real deal in Phop Phraboth in beauty and magical charms. Here, let me show you a picture of a celebrity who is her student. Look at these beautifully tattooed yantras. Unfortunately, she doesn't tattoo men. Do you know her?"

He didn't just talk but also showed a picture of a famous actress.

"Why? I want to know anything about Mae Kru Bulan. Can you tell me?"

"Mae Kru is a reserved person; she doesn't go out much, though you might see her at the temple or the market. She can be very harsh when someone says something she doesn't like or asks for help with something she disapproves of. She's kind and stunning, too. Even though she's almost thirty, she still looks young. If you meet her, you'll see for yourself. My wife has been her student for years. She got a tattoo on her wrist, and since then, her business has been booming. She respects Mae Kru a lot."

As the conversation continued, it seemed like they were getting along better. The lively storytelling made the chat so enjoyable that even the officers around them seemed eager to join in.

"Why doesn't she tattoo men? What kind of things does Mae Kru dislike?"

"About four or five years ago, a group of men tried to break into Mae Kru's house to rob and rape her. There were about ten of them, but they couldn't find her. When the police arrived, it turned out she was in her bedroom the whole time. Strange, right? The men confessed everything without much questioning. Seven days after getting out of jail, they started dying one by one-either from illness or car accidents. The last one even died while ordained as a monk. Since then, no one has dared to mess with her."

"Sergeant Major, do you really think it's all connected?"

"Whether you believe it or not, don't disrespect it."

"Doesn't she have any relatives to stay with her?"

"Since Por Kru passed away, she's been living alone. She has a brother, but she never talks about him, so no one knows where he is. Many people have tried to get close to her-good-looking and well-off men-but she hasn't liked anyone. Recently, a wealthy man tried to propose to her with a car, land, and money, but he had to take it all back. My wife told me this: Mae Kru dislikes anything immoral, like cheating. She supports using her teachings for good, but if you use them to deceive people, you'll end up ruined."

"Thank you, Sergeant Major. You...seem to know a lot. You must be very dedicated to your work."

"Thank you, Lieutenant. I'll go do some paperwork. Call me if you need anything."

"Sure."

Even inside the police station, with air conditioning in almost every room, the scorching heat of the summer was unbeatable.

But as the clock's short hand pointed to noon, it wasn't too much for someone determined to brave the high temperatures to get there.

A top-model white car is parked in front of the station. The door opened, revealing the slender white legs of a woman wearing a brightly colored traditional skirt with a silver belt and a cream-colored short-sleeved blouse with local embroidery. Her hair was neatly tied back as she walked to the station's entrance.

"Lieutenant, someone is here to see you. But... I think I know her."

"What..? Who?"

"Why is Mae Kru here to see you?"

"She's here to see... me?"

Not just the officers but even the lieutenant herself was surprised to hear that.

"Yes, she said if you don't come out, you'll regret it. You should go, Lieutenant. It must be urgent; otherwise, she wouldn't come here. How do you know her? Are you also one of her students like my wife?"

"It's not like that. Excuse me."

Thinking she might get some progress on what she'd asked for help with, the female lieutenant quickly got up from her chair to meet her.

# Chapter 05. Restless

"I forgot that you don't have my number. Did you get any news? Is that why you're here?"

Lieutenant fired away the questions quickly as soon as they met.

"I told you I'd talk about that in the evening. This is my break time. I heard you liked the food, so I brought some for you. There's the main dish and fruit. If you don't want to eat here, you can come to eat at my place."

"What...?"

The sweet-faced young woman exclaimed loudly when she realized the reason Mae Kru Bulan had come all the way here was just to bring her a lunchbox, instead of something more important.

"If you don't like something, just throw it away. I don't know what you can eat, so I brought everything I made. Take it."

It seemed the slender figure didn't quite understand and did things more impulsively than expected.

This wasn't how Mae Kru Bulan should be treating her, and she was ignoring the things that should've been said first, knowing full well that it was something she was very anxious about.

"I don't need food, and I don't have that much free time,"

Lieutenant Peem's voice began to tremble with displeasure, but she held it back as much as she could.

"Why? Are they working you so hard here that you can't even eat? If you don't eat anything, where will you get the energy to work?"

"I need to ask you why you came here for something like this. Do you know how serious I am about this? You act like it's a joke that you can talk about whenever you want. Are you willing to help or just teasing me?"

"You think I'm joking? If I wasn't willing to help, why would I close the school? If the person interrupting my ritual wasn't someone I desired this much, I would've kicked you out. You mightn't even make it home. Just because I gave in, don't take it for granted. If you have someone you love, then get the hell out of my sight, and don't let me see you again."

"I'm sorry for being rude. Really, I am. But what does me having someone I love have to do with this? Does it affect dealing with those people? I just don't know."

"I see that we're meant to be, and your eyes tell me you haven't loved anyone yet."

"Yes, I don't have a lover, but I still don't understand."

"Or do you despise me because I'm a woman?"

"...."

She could hardly believe what she was hearing, standing there speechless, not knowing which way to move. The handle of the white tote bag was shoved into her hand before Mae Kru Bulan walked back to the white car parked out front.

The lieutenant looked down at the bag containing the food box, still standing there even after Mae Kru's car had driven away. She swallowed her saliva, feeling something hard to describe. Mae Kru's clear and articulate words echoed in her ears, repeating over and over without stopping.

"Lieutenant!"

"Y..Yes, Sergeant Major?"

She jumped in surprise at the voice of Sergeant Major Piak, who was standing next to her desk.

"What's wrong? Why did Mae Kru come to see you here? Or are you dazed because someone put a spell on you, and you asked Mae Kru to drive it out?"

"That's nonsense, Sergeant Major. Who'd do that to me? I just have a case I want Mae Kru to help with."

"Phew... you scared me."

"Have you eaten yet? I'm not very hungry, so you can have this. Someone gave it to me."

"Why, I do. It'd be a waste to throw it away. I'll take care of it, Lieutenant."

Hearing that, she handed over the bag she'd just received, but she was surprised again when she saw the sergeant major pass the bag between his legs[\*].

"What are you doing. Sergeant Major?"

"Well, you can't just eat anything someone gives you. What if it's cursed? You, being so pretty, need to be extra careful. If you get cursed, you could fall head over heels."

*"Sigh..."*

A big sigh came from her, filling her lungs, as she massaged her temple, feeling overwhelmed by everything happening around her.

Right now, it wasn't just the unresolved case but also unexpected romantic issues mixing in. Lieutenant Peem wasn't someone who had problems with her job or money, but she had many worries in life, leaving no time to think about love.

If she were someone who cared only about rank and position, she'd probably be in a higher position by now with her abilities. But she wasn't overly ambitious, so she forgot about her career advancement.

Seeing that her current rank of Lieutenant was flexible enough for now, she was quite preoccupied with the unresolved case.

By late afternoon, around 4 PM, the case progress report and necessary documents were neatly organized. She had some mental space to think about the events of the day.

She caught sight of the plastic food container that had been washed and returned, reminding her of Mae Kru's words even more. But avoiding the issue didn't seem right. It was better to talk it out.

Before the end of the workday, Lieutenant Peem's black car arrived in front of Mae Kru Bulan's school. Just a glance through the tinted window confirmed that the school was indeed closed, as Mae Kru had said.

.

***Beep... Click...***

Her finger pressed the remote to lock the car before she walked to the house door, her heart pounding since she got in the car and grabbed the steering wheel.

It wasn't that she wasn't open-minded about love between women, but she never thought she'd experience this so suddenly, and from Mae Kru, whom people respected and revered, of all people.

.

***Knock! Knock!***

Her knuckles rapped on the door, seeking permission, and she heard a cold voice from inside.

"Come in."

The door opened to reveal the slender figure sitting still, arms crossed, on a chair, doing nothing. She was in casual clothes, a clean white T-shirt tucked into loose white pants; the image of the ritualistic Mae Kru Bulan attire she was used to seeing was no more.

She looked like a normal, attractive, and cute woman, making her unintentionally admire her, but her stern, almost angry face held her back.

"I brought the food container back,"

She said softly, hoping to ease the situation, placing it on the table in front of her.

The slender figure didn't say anything, just tipped the bag to look inside.

"Did you throw it all away or eat it all?"

"I wasn't very hungry, so I didn't eat. I gave it to Sergeant Major instead of wasting it."

"I brought it for you, not for someone else. If you don't want to eat it, throw it all away. Don't give my food to others."

The slender figure immediately got up and walked to the kitchen. Lieutenant Peem followed closely, sensing the strong anger and hurt in the other person.

"...."

The food stored in the fridge for reheating was thrown into the trash, and the fridge door closed. Mae Kru's eyes focused on the rice cooker, still warm as if freshly made, and it was about to be dumped, too. Shocked and feeling guilty, she grabbed Mae Kru's hand, even though only the soup was left.

"Please don't throw it away. I'll eat it."

Of course, this woman was quite strong, but she used her strength to hold Mae Kru back from dumping the rest.

"There's nothing left to eat,"

The slender figure replied through gritted teeth, not looking at her even though she was standing right in front of her.

"Just rice and soup are enough. I'm not picky. Please, have mercy on me. I haven't eaten anything, and I'm very hungry now. I didn't mean to hurt your feelings, and..."

Before she could finish, Mae Kru interrupted.

"I don't love easily. When I love someone, I love deeply. Don't do this. Don't touch me, or I won't let you go."

"Uh..."

Her hand quickly released Mae Kru's soft hand but took the pot with her.

"I'll serve you the rice."

"Thank you..."

Hot rice was placed on a plate, and the aroma hit her nose, making her realize it wasn't just about being polite; she was genuinely hungry.

As she poured the soup over the rice, she looked up at the slender figure standing there, wondering how well she knew Mae Kru Bulan or how well Mae Kru knew her to say such things. She wasn't just strict but also very impulsive.

"You gave all the meat to someone else, leaving yourself with just rice and soup."

"It's okay. This is already very appetizing,"

She smiled slightly, looking at the plate of rice.

"What do you want to eat tomorrow?"

"Me? Are you asking me?"

"There are two of us here. Who else would I ask? How did you pass the police exam if you have to ask such silly questions?"

"I just wasn't sure. I didn't think you'd ask something like this. Why are you so harsh?"

The lieutenant tried to smile but quickly dropped it. She wasn't angry at the person in front of her at all. Her voice was soft, almost sounding a bit sulky. Being raised well, she wasn't used to such blunt words.

"I wasn't that harsh. I just asked so I could make it to your liking."

"You don't have to cater to me. Just do it the way you usually do."

"If it's not to your taste, if it's not delicious, don't beat around the bush."

"It's delicious; I just don't want to bother you."

"I want to make it for someone I desire. Why do you have to worry about that?"

"Uh... this is getting complicated. How should I put this?"

The tall figure spoke with a weary tone, feeling awkward and not wanting Mae Kru Bulan to keep bringing this up.

"It's just... we just met, and we barely know each other. I don't mind that you're a woman, but right now, I'm troubled. My brother is in pain. I shouldn't be thinking about this kind of thing right now."

"Whether you're a cop or a doctor, if he doesn't wake up, are you going to stay miserable like this? Has the criminal you're looking for shown up yet? If the person shot wasn't your brother, would you be like this? Was your brother forced to become a cop? If one wants to protect others, they can't be afraid of danger. Do you think he wants to see you suffer because of him? What kind of person would he be then? But whatever... I'm just an outsider."

These words made the tall figure feel a lump in her throat, but they also made her understand Mae Kru Bulan's character better.

Even though she'd just said such harsh words, she walked into the kitchen, took eggs from a box, cracked them into a dish, and reached for some seasonings, making it clear she was going to make an omelet.

Rice topped with a hot, fluffy omelet was surprisingly delicious. Maybe that's why Sergeant Major Piak kept praising the food and repeatedly asking where it came from. It wasn't just polite praise; it was genuinely good.

From the first bite to the last, every movement was watched by the calm eyes of the other person, making her eat quietly because she didn't know what to say.

"If the person you're looking for has some kind of magic that makes them bulletproof or stops guns from firing, you'll need to melt silver bullets to counter it. I've only done it once, but I've reviewed the texts thoroughly. You just need to find the materials for me."

Hearing this, the woman quickly put down her spoon and listened intently, happy that Mae Kru Bulan finally brought it up.

"What do we need?"

"I'll tell you when you're in my room. I'll prepare pajamas for you."

"N-no, it's okay. / [\*] brought some."

The tall figure quickly raised her hand to object, but it was also the first time she heard the sweet-faced lieutenant refer to herself like that.

"Then I'll go take a shower and let you prepare yourself. I want to smell better when you're close."

Before she could finish her sentence, Mae Kru stood up from the chair, stepped closer, placed a hand on her left ear, and then kissed her right temple.

"...."

She didn't know what to be more shocked by-the words or the actions. By the time she realized it, she only saw Mae Kru Bulan's pants as she walked up the stairs.

And she dared to say she wanted to smell better, even though the sweet scent of flower pollen was already filling her nose whenever they were together. In fact, she'd smelled it since she opened the door.

# Chapter 06.Stairway to Heaven

The tall figure's pitch-black underwear was hidden between a long-sleeved white shirt and black shorts meant for sleeping tonight. She prepared the clothes from the car to return to the house once more, choosing to shower in the downstairs bathroom.

While showering, thoughts of Mae Kru Bulan swirled endlessly in her mind. It was a mix of hesitation and an attempt to find reasons and answers, but none came. She herself didn't know what these feelings were.

Of course, the lieutenant felt something; she was human, not a statue that could feel nothing, after all. But it wasn't that she was blushing, either. She thought it was better to have someone like her than hate her. From now on, she'd try to act as normal as possible.

Upstairs, at the bedroom door where she'd been clearly instructed to go, the sweet-faced lieutenant stood in front of it to calm herself. Her hand grasped the golden handle, pressing it to open the door. This was the first time the tall figure would see Mae Kru Bulan's bedroom.

Her heart pounded like never before, trying to convince herself it was just excitement. Mae Kru Bulan's sharp face turned from the bed, her eyes inviting yet stern as usual.

Just the gaze felt like a touch all over her body. Her hands became clumsy. and she quickly turned to close the door.

She didn't know if it was normal for Mae Kru or if she was just imagining things. The long-sleeved, shiny white nightgown revealed a cleavage even if she didn't intend to look. The white lace bra underneath was visible, and her smooth, pinkish skin glowed under the soft light. Her eyes caught a red ink tattoo on her chest that she'd never seen before.

"Is it that troubling..."

Mae Kru's voice was soft, not as stern as usual, almost sounding hurt. It wasn't troubling, but any normal person would feel awkward in this situation, especially someone as polite as Lieutenant Peem.

"Where should I sleep after we finish talking?"

The tall figure might've meant the guest room or the sofa downstairs. She scolded herself for bringing up sleep so early in the evening.

"Where else? I invited you up here so you'll sleep with me."

"Uh..."

"What you need is here. Do you want to see it now?"

"Yes."

She pushed aside her chaotic thoughts to focus on what she needed. She stepped toward the slender figure, who patted the bed, indicating where to sit. Lieutenant Peem sat beside her, receiving a piece of paper from Mae Kru Bulan:

4 parts Iron

1. parts mercury
2. parts copper1 part gold

15 parts silver

2 parts peacock ore

1 part zinc.

"Get these. In three days, it'll be Buddhist Holy Day. I'll perform the ritual then. Don't tell anyone I'm helping. No one must know I'm doing this."

The lieutenant nodded with understanding and carefully examined the paper. noting only the ingredients.

Her hope to deal with the wicked and her trust in Mae Kru was fully restored, feeling progress in getting help.

"Did you write this yourself?"

Lieutenant Peem usually talked about cases, but this question made the slender figure look at her, not understanding the intent.

"If I said no one should know, who else would I have written it?"

"I just wanted to say your handwriting is beautiful. I usually see such handwriting only in calligraphy contests."

"Tell me your full name."

"Phitcha Ruechakun."

Looking at the paper again, she understood why. The handwriting was sharp and elegant, typical of Thai script. Knowing she was being praised, she went to the bedside table, grabbed a blue pen, and wrote Lieutenant Peem's name on the paper, showing it as proof.

"I believe you now... You really wrote it yourself."

A slight smile appeared on the lieutenant's face, making her even more charming. Mae Kru Bulan spoke clearly with a slight local accent, adding to her unique charm, and her handwriting was rare and beautiful,

"Take off your necklace and give it to me."

She extended her slender hand toward the tall figure.

"What...?"

"Just to keep it safe. I'm not taking it away. I gave you what you needed, and I want what I need without disturbing the sacred protection you have. Please give it to me."

It wasn't a threat but a sincere request, with pleading eyes making it hard to refuse.

The tall figure nodded slightly, deciding to lift her arms and unhook the gold necklace, handing it over.

Lieutenant Peem's necklace was wrapped in a thin cloth and placed at the head of the bed, every move watched by its owner.

*Without warning, Mae Kru moved to the foot of the bed, placing her knee between the lieutenant's legs and straddling one of her thighs. Though stunned, Lieutenant Peem quickly grabbed her waist with both hands, fearing she might fall.*

*Lieutenant Peem's nose brushed against her chin as she looked up, the sweet scent of flowers filling her nostrils; it was the scent of Mae Kru Bulan's body.*

*The slender figure's sharp eyes looked down at her with clear desire. A soft breath from Mae Kru's lips blew across Lieutenant Peem's forehead, up to the top of her head, feeling the warm breath on her face.*

*Their eyes met at close range, and the tall figure's face flushed. She never realized Mae Kru could be this beautiful. By just touching her clothes, she felt the slender, curvy body. Though she was always aware of what was happening, she didn't say nor do anything as if she was lost in a trance with just the two of them.*

*Mae Kru's thin lips kissed her forehead again without resistance from the lieutenant. She saw the confusion in Lieutenant Peem but knew nothing could express her desire more clearly. Her long fingers gripped the slender waist more firmly, showing mutual satisfaction.*

*Under the soft light, human instincts took over. Both Lieutenant Peem and Mae Kru Bulan had desires within them.*

*They weren't naive girls unaware of what would happen if they continued.*

*Mae Kru was beautiful, with* *a captivating face and body, easily drawing her in. Though unsure, the lips above continued to kiss her cheeks, nose, and eyelids. The feeling was warm, something she'd never experienced before.*

*It felt like the warmth would burst into flames as their lips touched, initiated by the one above. Their eyes met again before closing together, letting nature take the wheel.*

*With overflowing desire, she couldn't resist the soft, warm lips of the other She didn't want to stop there, tilting her head to deepen the kiss.* *Frustrated by the lack of progress, Mae Kru moved from her neck to her face, urging her to part her lips.*

*The lieutenant complied, allowing a deep, passionate kiss. She began to adjust, feeling the same rising desire after tasting the hungry kiss.*

*The sound of smacking lips grew louder as both parties began to suck on each other's lips, alternating with the flicking of their hot tongues, intertwining and rubbing against each other inside their mouths, searching for the sweetness that ignited a fiery sensation.*

*Mae Kru's hands roamed all over the lieutenant's neck, face, and head with delight. Similarly, Lieutenant Peem's hands began to boldly explore the other's body as if wanting to indulge in their own desires for once without any reservations.*

*Having broken away from the lips to* *catch a breath, the slender figure quickly moved down to the neck. The clean scent of the lieutenant's body pleased her greatly. But soon, she moved back to press a kiss on the lips again. After sharing a passionate kiss for a while, their lips found a perfect rhythm without needing any guidance.*

*Mae Kru's hands pushed the other person down to lie flat on her own white bed before climbing on top and pressing her lips down to deliver an uninterrupted, passionate kiss.*

*Their hot tongues continued to flick back and forth hungrily, having been away from such activities for quite some time. The collar of the lieutenant's shirt was pulled open, revealing one shoulder and smooth skin covering the collarbone, which looked so enticing it was hard to resist biting.*

*"Mm..."*

*The tall figure let out a startled moan when she felt a bite on her neck and a nibble on her shoulder. Besides unbuttoning the other person's shirt, she quickly stripped off her own clothes.*

## "Take it off."

*A soft, husky command whispered in her ear, instructing the other person to unhook her bra. The tall figures, having abandoned her polite and considerate demeanor since the passionate kiss began, reached up to unhook the slender figure's bra with ease.*

*The full, firm breasts were revealed, causing a moment of mindless staring. One pink, erect nipple was guided by its owner to touch the face of the person below, rubbing against the lips, nose, and all over the face. This teasing and challenging act made it impossible to resist biting. The slender figure, enjoying the teasing, was flipped over to the bottom but seemed proud of successfully seducing the female lieutenant.*

*Immense strength was conveyed through the kiss, with full lips savoring the sweetness of the slender neck, including the erect nipples that were next in line to be attended to.*

## "Mm....~"

*Lieutenant Peem's face nuzzled along the slender neck, up to the back of the ear. The kiss was intensified with sucking, causing a sharp, pleasurable*

*pain at times, making the recipient moan softly. She barely noticed when her body was positioned perfectly between the other person's legs.*

*Looking down, she saw the slender figure's tattoo, finding it sexy rather than strange, as she wasn't one to believe in such things. She then kissed all over the chest, nearing the desired spot.*

*Mae Kru Bulan didn't just have large, overflowing breasts; her flat stomach was equally captivating. The hot tongue touched the erect nipple, then switched to licking and sucking until it was wet. One hand continued to squeeze and knead the breast playfully.*

## "Mmm..."

*The moans grew louder, making the listener feel increasingly hot and restless. She moved up to share a passionate kiss, exchanging heated touches.*

*Meanwhile, the slender figure grabbed the strong wrist of the other person, the one kneading her breast until it felt sore, guiding it down to slip inside her thin underwear. kneading it against her wet part instead.*

*Their lips parted to catch a breath, and the tall figure's eyes explored the sharp, beautiful face of the person in front of her, who was panting and even moved up to bite her own lip, making her want to repeat the action over and over. The long fingers felt the wet flower and knew exactly what she wanted, so she used her fingertips to rub the slender figure's love bud continuously.*

## "Mm...! Lieutenant...~"

*The sweet moan made the internal heat surge instantly. She'd never known she could feel so intensely about this. Her fingers pressed and trembled, spreading along the flower uncontrollably, while her lips kissed and bit the white neck, forgetting to hold back. Fortunately, Mae Kru didn't mind and even spread her legs, lifting them up for better access.*

## "Lieutenant Peerm..."

*While saying that, she cupped the tall figure's face to look into her eyes again. The lieutenant stared into the sparkling eyes of the woman in front of her, now devoid of any intimidation, leaving only a gaze worthy of cherishing.*

## "Yes...?"

*The tall figure responded with a sweet voice, making Mae Kru smile. Having seen Mae Kru Bulan's smile for the first time, the lieutenant couldn't look away.*

*Realizing it, she felt the slender figure's thumb brushing her lower lip.*

## "Have you ever tasted lotus juice?"

*The soft, husky question, combined with the gaze directed downward, made her follow to see the answer. She realized that Mae Kru Bulan had a tattoo resembling a lotus flower below her navel. The tall figure glanced at the body she was touching, including the lotus under her wrist, swallowing hard without saying anything, just looking back into those eyes again.*

## "If you think it's dirty, you don't have to do it for me."

*The soft, pleading voice of the slender figure made the person above smile widely, showing her beautiful teeth. With the mood taking over, the sweet face of the lieutenant displayed a warm and kind smile naturally.*

## "I don't know if I'm as hard to love as you, but if someone touches what I've touched after this... then I'll think of it as dirty."

*Their lips met again with a smile before the lieutenant's face began to descend along the white chest, ready to savor Mae Kru Bulan's sweet lotus juice.*

# Chapter 07. Challenge

The chirping of small birds flying past the roof woke the lieutenant from her slumber, wrapped in a thick blanket that covered her bare body. But there was no sign of the homeowner. The lieutenant tried to muster the strength to get up from the bed, holding the blanket to cover her chest.

Her body felt completely sore, especially around her shoulders and wrists, prompting her to shake them lightly to ease the muscles.

Reflecting on the cause of his fatigue, she raised both hands to her head: she remembered almost everything that had happened. She couldn't believe he'd actually done such things.

Her face flushed, and she couldn't think of what to do if she saw the person she'd spent the night with. The first thing she needed to do was to get dressed properly before going anywhere.

She hurriedly ran down the stairs, aiming to get to her car as quickly as possible, but had to stop abruptly when she saw the slender figure walking in with a silver tray in hand.

"I was just about to wake you up. Where are you running off to?"

Mae Kru Bulan asked with a calm voice. She'd already showered and done her makeup, while the lieutenant looked like someone who had just been through a battlefield.

"I was just coming down, not going anywhere. I was going to get my work clothes from the car."

"So, are you not going anywhere or just going to get your work clothes?" "Did you go to offer food to the monks?"

Feeling groggy as if she'd just started working, she quickly changed the subject, realizing she was starting to talk nonsense.

"Miss Pichapat Ruechakun, I've already sent the merit to her. You were sleeping soundly, so I didn't want to wake you."

"You remembered the name after I said it just one time?"

"I was forced to memorize prayers since I could remember. Why wouldn't I remember the name of my lover's sister?"

"Don't say that. The term' lover' is..."

It's true that their relationship had gone beyond normal boundaries, but calling her a lover seemed too soon for her. She feared saying something hurtful and regretting it later, especially since Mae Kru was standing there, listening intently.

"What about it?"

"Today, I have to stay at the quarters... the one the authorities prepared for me. I haven't been there since I arrived. My clothes haven't been washed either."

"Put them in the basket. I have a washing machine. I'll wash them myself.

Staying at the quarters isn't mandatory. Didn't I tell you that you must stay here?"

The slender figure from last night seemed like a different person now. The familiar stern voice returned as her words seemed to irritate her.

"No matter how much you like me, you have no right to force me like this,"

"What's so uncomfortable about my house?"

"It's not that..."

"I made breakfast. If you don't want to eat, I'll make coffee instead."

Once again, Mae Kru ignored her intentions and walked into the kitchen. Lieutenant Peem followed, hoping to have a proper conversation.

But when she saw Mae Kru Bulan pick up a fork and bring a piece of dark fried pork belly to her mouth, even holding her hand under it, she didn't want to say anything that might hurt her feelings. After all, she'd just had a fight over the food the day before.

"Mmm!!"

The lieutenant almost forgot her irritation. The sweetness of the marinated pork and its tenderness spread throughout her mouth, making her exclaim in disbelief.

"Tell the truth. No need to spare my feelings."

"It's delicious. I want some rice, but I need to brush my teeth first."

"I thought you said you don't eat breakfast? What do you want now?"

"Hey, I'm complimenting you. Why can't you speak nicely for once? Last night, you spoke so sweetly."

"I don't like discussing bedroom matters. And I'm just like this. How am I speaking poorly to you? I just asked normally. Do you want me to speak politely to everyone? I can't do that. Why would you say I'm scolding you when I cater to you in every way, not to mention that I won't neglect bedroom matters, either? I won't even criticize you if you leave me hanging and then fall asleep."

Mae Kru was the one who had avoided the topic first, but now she was the one bringing it up. It seemed that Mae Kru's stern voice might just be her normal tone, as what she was hearing now seemed like real scolding.

"I... I'm not the type to talk about it. Thank you for making breakfast for me. Let's not discuss other matters. It'll be better for both of us, right?" She could only respond with a dry smile, feeling her face flush. It wasn't that she was incompetent in such matters.

*But satisfying Mae Kru Bulan to the fullest was beyond her capability. especially since it was her first time underestimating her own strength.*

*Last night's lesson taught her that the woman in front of her didn't enjoy adventurous intimacy. She preferred simple positions but desired multiple climaxes in one night.*

*Despite all of that, she still got up and walked around as if nothing had happened. She went to bed early and woke up at dawn, unlike the city women.*

"Aren't you going to get your clothes? I'll pack a small meal for you. Will you come here for lunch, or should I bring it to you?"

"N...No, it's okay. I'll go after I get dressed. I'm not a child who needs meals delivered. I'll find something to eat myself."

Hearing that, she looked down at the food on the plate for a moment before turning back to the lieutenant.

"Fine. Maybe today's food isn't to your liking, or you've found something better outside. I asked what you liked and disliked, but you didn't answer. Why, then, did you say you didn't mind my cooking? Are you a liar?"

"I wasn't lying. It's really delicious."

The truth was, she resisted her orders because she didn't want Mae Kru Bulan to control her as she pleased, even if she did it out of concern.

"Go get your clothes. I'll throw these away."

"T-throw away?"

"Why would I keep it? It'll just go spoiled."

"It's not that I don't want to eat your cooking, but my schedule is irregular.

When I'm out in the field, I can't always come here. If you bring it to the station, I mightn't be around. Just pack it, and I'll heat it up when I'm on break."

Knowing she was upset, the lieutenant softened her tone to avoid confrontation.

"I'm on break from noon to half-past one. If our schedules align, come see me at home. You won't find me at the school."

"Do you want to see me that much?"

"You don't love me, so how would you understand?"

"...."

She knew it well. Mae Kru's words made her look away, unsure of how to respond without hurting her feelings.

"Don't feel guilty. I won't let the one I love slip through my fingers. I'm giving you a chance to love me willingly. Otherwise, I'll make you love me myself."

"Stop it. I know you're skilled in this, but even if I don't believe in it, don't do anything weird to me. And all the food you make, I'll pass it under my legs as I was advised. Even if you could do that, don't expect it to work."

"Heh."

It was unusual. Normally, she'd retort harshly, but now she chuckled softly.

"What's so funny?"

"If I were to do that, Lieutenant... it'd be when I think I've lost my charm.

Those spells aren't permanent. For someone like you, my beauty is enough."

"Wow... Are you saying I'll eventually fall in love with you someday?"

The tense atmosphere in the kitchen eased into playful banter as the lieutenant teased her with a laugh.

Mae Kru Bulan didn't scold her. She crossed her arms and stared into her eyes, ready to teach her lover a lesson in verbal sparring.

"Do you like my lotus juice?"

She stepped closer, her eyes sparkling like the night before.

"You said you wouldn't talk about it. I'm leaving now. Don't throw it away;

I'll eat it."

Knowing she couldn't win, the lieutenant decided to leave quickly.

. .

From Mae Kru Bulan's school to the Phop Phra police station, it only takes a few minutes because it's just over a kilometer away. So, there's no need to rush. Lieutenant Peem wore a white T-shirt covered by her favorite black denim jacket from a famous brand.

Her jeans matched the color of her jacket because she had to switch out another jacket for washing. She'd applied sunscreen and light makeup, instantly bringing back her sharp beauty. Her hair was neatly tied back, with two strands left to frame her once-sweet face.

Walking downstairs, she saw the dining table with the TV on next to the kitchen. Following the sound, she saw Mae Kru watching the screen. It reminded her of her own mother, who liked to watch TV while eating or drinking something.

Thinking about this typical behavior of an older woman made her smile to herself again, but she was caught by Mae Kru's sharp peripheral vision.

"What are you smiling about?"

"Nothing."

"Liar..."

"Do you like listening to the news?"

Since she was genuinely smiling, she had nothing to argue about. On the TV screen, early in the morning, it was a news program discussing various societal issues.

"So I can know what's going on in the world."

Mae Kru said, placing her hand on the back of the chair next to her, signaling for the lieutenant to sit down. The tall figure didn't want to do anything she was told, so she chose to stand.

"I cooked this for you, and you're not going to eat?"

Caught up in her defiance, the lieutenant forgot she'd asked Mae Kru to prepare the meal for her. She quickly sat down, realizing that in front of her wasn't just one dish; there was also a glass of water and a cup of coffee.

"Do you do this every day?"

"Por Kru didn't eat store-bought food. He usually cooked for the monks and kept some for himself, As he got older, I had to take over. Now that he's gone, I still want to do it. If I don't, I feel bad, fearing Por Kru might struggle. My father taught me that even after he died, I should continue this practice for my own good and for the students. There are many sacred things here, and it's not a burden. I also enjoy cooking for my husband [\*]."

"Can you leave out the last part? This morning, you called me your lover, and now you're calling me your husband. We should give each other a chance to get to know each other first. If you find someone you like more than me, I'll be happy for you. Don't close yourself off like that."

"I won't let anyone touch what's mine, just like you said. You're already mine. If you go to someone else, I won't tolerate it. I only have one lover at a time. Who else would I be involved with?"

"I'm not saying you should be involved with anyone else. Let's eat. I don't want to argue."

"...Or do you fancy someone else besides me?"

"If I did that, I'd have to plan my escape. Right now, I'm not thinking about anyone else. I want to focus on solving this case."

"If you think you can escape me, go ahead and try," Mae Kru said, picking up a cloth bundle and gently putting a necklace back on the lieutenant.

"I almost forgot that. Thank you."

"Don't take it off except when we're sleeping together. If anyone tells you to take it off, don't, unless it's a respected monk."

"Yes... I hardly ever take it off since I got it from my father."

Lieutenant Peem's intense eyes looked down at the necklace, feeling the warm touch of Mae Kru who held her head and kissed her temple, cheek, and neck. She didn't resist and felt an inexplicable warmth.

"The criminal you're after, what has he done?"

Mae Kru asked, still holding Peem's neck.

"Sexual assault on multiple fifteen-year-olds, robbery, drug dealing... and I hate these cases the most. That's why I always take on these cases. I've never failed a case. They need to know there's law and order, and the youth of our nation shouldn't suffer because of these scumbags!"

# Chapter 08.Superstitious

At the police station

"Good morning, Lieutenant,"

The chubby man greeted the lieutenant as soon as he saw her walk through the door.

"Good morning, Sergeant Major. I have a lot of matters that need your help today."

"Happy to help, Lieutenant. Oh, I see you brought lunch again today. You never tell me where you buy it from, or did you make it yourself?"

"I can only make boiled eggs and omelets. I didn't buy it; someone gave it to me. Where do you usually eat during breaks, Sergeant Major? Or..."

The tall woman glanced at the bag full of food containers before turning her attention back to her conversation partner.

"I usually eat at the local food stalls around here."

"I heard you have a wife. Doesn't she cook for you?"

"She gets up early to open the store. She doesn't bother with me. It's better this way. My wife is a nag and can't cook to save her life. It's better if she doesn't cook, or it'd just go to waste. But she's hardworking. Don't tell anyone I said this, or I'll get an earful."

The officer, who was gossiping, leaned in to whisper, ensuring his secret wouldn't get out.

"I don't even know your wife, Sergeant Major. I won't say anything, but you shouldn't talk about her like that; she might feel hurt if she finds out."

"Or maybe you already have a husband but are keeping it a secret, Lieutenant?"

"N-no, I don't have one."

"You're probably too busy with work. At your age, why don't you find a boyfriend? You're so beautiful; let Mae Kru cast a spell for you. You'll have guys lining up."

"Why don't you try telling her that, Sergeant Major?"

"Uh, Lieutenant..."

Lieutenant Peem sighed softly and walked toward the stairs without waiting for a response. She knew exactly who Sergeant Major Piak was referring to and could imagine how things would turn out if they actually went through with it.

In the small meeting room of the police station, during working hours, photos and personal information of suspects involved in drug trafficking and child rape cases were spread out. They were coordinating the progress of the case and planning the arrests. One of the suspects was originally from Tak province.

The relatives, who'd been summoned for questioning, confirmed they hadn't been in contact for a long time. They only found out about the crimes through the news.

But Lieutenant Peem was convinced that the suspects would find a way to hide in familiar territory where they knew the escape routes well.

"Sergeant Major!"

The door swung open without a knock, interrupting the meeting. An eager officer called out to Sergeant Major Piak, who was seated in the room. "Uh... sorry, Lieutenant."

"It's okay. What's the urgent matter? You look alarmed."

"We received a report that a student is exhibiting signs of possession and has injured a teacher at school. The teacher has been sent to the hospital. The student's parents have been called, but the child hasn't calmed down.

The mother took the child to see Mae Kru. Should we go check it out, Sergeant Major?"

"I'll go myself. Why did the mother decide to do that? Coordinate with the school to get the full story. Sergeant Major, come with me."

"Yes, Lieutenant."

With that, the meeting was immediately adjourned. All documents were left on the table, and the three officers quickly walked out of the station, almost running. to the scene to verify the situation.

*Namophutthaya*

*Mapha tana pha ka sa cha*

*Sapphethawapisachewa*

*Alawakathayoplya*

*Khakkhang talapattang thisawa*

*Sappheyakkha*

*Palayanti sakkassa wachirawuthang*

*"Wessuwannussa khathawuthang alawakassa thu...."*

*The sharp tip of the knife, adorned with a script, was pointed at the middle of the child's head, but not with enough force to create a wound. Mae Kru's lips kept reciting a chanting while her eyes stared into the child's eyes with a threatening and formidable look.*

## "RETURN MY STUFFI OR I'LL FUCKING KILL HER! STOP CHANTING!!! AAARGH!!!"

The elementary school girl spoke in a voice that was beyond her years and screamed at Mae Kru Bulan. One arm was held by her terrified, crying mother.

The other arm was held by her homeroom teacher, who looked extremely worried. The surroundings were filled with teachers from almost the entire school, creating an atmosphere of panic.

The girl's eyes were wide open, staring defiantly at Mae Kru without fear. Her immense strength made it difficult for those holding her to keep her restrained.

. .

A familiar black car sped into the school. The female lieutenant jumped out of the car without even closing the door, showing her police badge as she ran through the crowd into the school. The ritual was almost complete.

In her anger, the tall woman grabbed the girl's face with both hands, telling the homeroom teacher to step aside so she could assess the situation quickly.

Assessing injuries is basic knowledge for all police officers, and Lieutenant Peem, who excelled in both theory and practice, couldn't stand to see the girl in such a state, especially in a place like this, due to her parent's decision.

"The child is having convulsions and can't control herself. Why did you bring her here? You're a civil servant; why didn't you take her to the hospital?"

Her voice was low and angry, directed at the teacher in the khaki uniform holding the girl's arm. She continued to hold the convulsing child, who was screaming loudly.

## "I'LL FUCKING KILL HERI!!"

***CHOMP!***

The girl's teeth sank into the lieutenant's arm with all her might when she was freed. Mae Kru Bulan continued chanting, ignoring the chaos.

"Ugh!"

Lieutenant Peem cried out in pain but gritted her teeth and endured it.

*Mae Kru Bulan grabbed the girl's head and blew air from her mouth onto her head. The girl, who was biting the lieutenant's arm, immediately calmed down and went limp in her arms.*

*Lieutenant Peem looked up at Mae Kru Bulan's stern eyes, which were wide and serious, unlike the woman she knew. Despite her shock, she maintained her composure and quickly picked up the small girl.*

"Who is the child's mother?"

"I am," the tearful woman raised her hand.

"I'm taking the child to the hospital. If this happens again, you must take her to a doctor immediately, understand?"

"My child is possessed. How can I take her to a doctor?"

"Sergeant Major!"

"Yes, Lieutenant!"

"Show us the way to the hospital and take the mother with you."

The tall woman carried the girl to her car amid the stares of the onlookers, who were about to follow.

"Mae Kru, please help my child. I believe she's really possessed,"

The father pleaded with Mae Kru Bulan, even though his daughter was being taken away.

"She's a police officer. Let her do her job. I'll do what I should,"

Mae Kru Bulan replied calmly before turning to pay respects to the shrine behind her.

. .

The hospital was only a little over three kilometers away. The doctors and nurses, already informed, quickly took the girl in for a thorough examination but found no physical cause for her condition.

The mother's and homeroom teacher's statements confirmed that the girl was healthy and a bright, cheerful child. She was a third-grade student, too young to fake such behavior.

"I'm the school principal. I have some preliminary information."

"Hello, Principal. I didn't expect you to come in person."

"When a student has a problem, I have to be here. My teachers told me you brought the child from Mae Kru's school."

"Yes, I did."

"I understand, Lieutenant. We have to consider both perspectives. Our teachers should've brought the child to the hospital first, but you should've asked for the parents' consent."

"I don't think it's wrong for the parents to believe in magic, but they should've brought the child here first."

"Let's wait until she wakes up and then discuss it. I've consulted to find the cause."

"What do you think caused this, Principal?"

"You're the only one who doesn't believe in this thing. See for yourself and help us analyze. Even if you don't believe in it, don't dismiss it. Handle this carefully to avoid criticism."

"Thank you. I'll take my leave now."

"Alright."

The tall woman walked to the girl's bed, where she was still asleep. The mother looked at her with concern, understandable given her worry for her child.

"If my daughter doesn't get better, I'll take her to Mae Kru."

"Alright..."

It was just a short response from Lieutenant Peem, who still believed in the medical skills of the doctors here.

"Here, Lieutenant,"

Sergeant Major Piak said as he walked over, showing a picture on his phone. It revealed a broken, little statuette of a traditional Thai dancer, which was used as an offering for spirits, seemingly having fallen from a height, with its head shattered into pieces.

"Why are you showing me this?"

She asked.

"The teachers at the school concluded that it was probably due to the kids playing around that area. A rubber ball they were playing with hit it, causing it to fall and break. No one dared to touch it, so they wanted to invite Mae Kru to help handle it."

"Why is everything turning out like this?"

"I think you should get your wound treated first, Lieutenant. It looks like you're bleeding."

Sergeant Major Piak suggested.

The lieutenant had been so busy that she forgot she was injured. When she looked down at her arm, she saw blood seeping through her shirt. It wasn't very noticeable because it was on a dark-colored shirt. Upon closer inspection, she was even more puzzled at how a young girl's bite could penetrate through thick denim to reach her skin.

"I'll get it treated later. I want you to..."

***ARGHHHHHH!!!***

*A loud scream interrupted her, startling everyone. The young girl had gotten up, her eyes bulging as she pulled at her hair. Her mother and the nurse rushed to restrain her to prevent self-harm.*

The doctor ran in, lifting the girl's eyelids, which had rolled back so far that her pupils were barely visible, and shone a flashlight into her eyes.

"Doctor, what's happening to my daughter?"

The mother shouted, causing the atmosphere to become chaotic again.

## "FUCKING GIVE ME BACK MY STUFF! RETURN MY THINGS!"

The girl screamed, her voice filled with rage and vulgarity, repeating the same words over and over.

The doctor instructed the nurse to bring in a sedative to calm the girl down.

"I'll get whatever you want, just don't kill my daughter..."

The elderly woman sobbed, raising her hands in a wai above her head. The tall figure watching couldn't bear it any longer. She took off the necklace she was wearing and placed it around the girl's neck.

**"If you really exist, why are you harming the child? She doesn't know anything. If you want something, come to me."**

She said.

As soon as she finished speaking, the sedative was injected into the girl. Before the syringe was even empty, the girl calmed down and fell asleep again. Even the doctor turned to look at Lieutenant Peem in surprise. A sigh of relief escaped as they saw the innocent child finally at peace. "Lieutenant, saying that could put you in danger, you know?"

The elderly woman said with concern, and all eyes turned to look at Lieutenant Peem.

"It's okay. As long as the child is safe, that's all that matters. You believe that, don't you? I'll take my leave now. Sergeant Major, keep me updated on the child's condition." She instructed.

"Yes, Lieutenant,"

Sergeant Major Piak replied.

Lieutenant Peem's tense face stepped out of the hospital to breathe in the fresh air and find a quiet place to carefully consider everything that had happened.

For her, she could only think about what kind of madness this was, from the case she was handling to the situation with this young girl.

"Lieutenant Peem,"

A stern voice called out, making her turn around.

***SMACK!!!***

Mae Kru Bulan's hand struck her face with full force as soon as she turned. The impact was so strong that her head turned to the side, and it stung and went numb immediately.

"**You may not believe in what I do, that's fine, but don't ever disrupt my rituals again. It's a disrespect to my skills and my teachers. When the time comes, you'll be the one in trouble, and even I won't be able to help you."**

# Chapter 09. Anger

**"So you're saying that if a ghost is unhappy, it can just kill anyone it wants?"**

The lieutenant was already quite angry, and this slap felt like throwing fuel on a blazing fire. She wasn't angry about the pain from the slap; she hated that something like this happened to an innocent girl.

"Everything has a reason and a consequence. Without me... someone as stubborn as you wouldn't be able to stay here."

"And someone like you thinks this is justified?"

The tall figure gritted her teeth and stared back with her own anger before walking past and heading to the parking lot, driving away.

.

The sound of the engine died down in front of the government quarters, as per the coordinates given. It was a two-story wooden house for the government officials, one of many lined up close together at the end of a dead-end street. The houses on both sides faced each other, but only a few seemed occupied.

Being furious, she didn't notice or care about any abnormalities. The tall figure opened the door, which wasn't locked with a padlock.

Inside was an empty space with clean tiled floors. In the middle of the house, a wooden pillar connected the upper floor. Climbing the stairs, she found nothing but two doors, likely meant for two occupants.

Some corners were still dusty and cobwebbed, but there were signs of cleaning, indicating that someone had lived there before. The tall figure opened one door and found a single bed with just a mattress with no sheets nor blankets.

Lieutenant Peem placed her bag beside the bed and sat down on the mattress, looking around with a sense of frustration. The last person she wanted to see now was the one who slapped her. If she decided to leave with the case unsolved, it'd be like running away from problems. She had to stay to prove herself, at least to help that innocent girl, as her mother believed, to avoid any doubts.

After finishing her tasks for the day, Mae Kru Bulan drove to the police station to find her lover, but no one knew where she was. She asked for help to contact the lieutenant and told her to meet her at home. Now, Mae Kru Bulan sat quietly in front of the revered teachers' masks, in a respectful posture, alone in the school.

"Thong,"

She called out softly, eyes still fixed on what was in front of her.

**"Yes, Mother...?"**

"Go check on her. She's probably angry because I hurt her. She hasn't come back yet."

**"Yes, Mother."**

"Por Kru, you said my partner is stubborn, but I didn't think she'd be this stubborn and defiant with me."

Her worried eyes glanced at the setting sun, holding a necklace that its owner had carelessly left behind to help someone else.

.

## "P' Peem"

A voice called out, waking the tall figure who had dozed off in the dark. She quickly grabbed her phone from her pocket to use its light to find the switch.

***Click!***

A small sense of relief came with the light, revealing everything around her. But the lingering feeling was the certainty that the voice she heard was real, not a dream, and it was her sister's voice. She remembered it well.

She pushed open the door and turned on the upstairs light.

*"P' Peem."*

"Pat..."

This time, she was sure. The voice came from the next room. She tried to open the door, but no matter how hard she pushed, it wouldn't budge, as if locked from the inside. There wasn't even a creak; it was tightly shut. She let go of the doorknob, realizing she couldn't open it.

***Bang!***

The door of the room she'd been in suddenly slammed shut, startling her.

***Creak...***

The slow, grating sound of the door opening was piercing. Her eyes turned red from the shock she'd never experienced before.

Lieutenant Peem's peripheral vision slowly turned to the door she'd tried to open earlier. She prayed it wasn't what she thought. Her hands were cold and numb, unable to move. It defied scientific explanation. So much so that she couldn't calm herself down.

But the door was opening, the one she'd just tried to open and let go of seconds ago. It seemed to invite her to look. Her dominant hand gripped her gun for reassurance, and she took a deep breath, looking into the empty, dark room.

She knew she should be scared, but Lieutenant Peem just realized what others might've thought long ago: she might be haunted. Or maybe a spirit was really following her. Her thoughts turned into determination. She decided to step into the room without thinking twice.

***Clink~***

## "Please go back to my mother..."

She swallowed hard at the clear voice behind her. Just one more step, and she would've entered the room, but she stopped and turned to the empty space behind her. There was no one. She shook her head to regain her composure. Even if it was possible she was hearing things, she was fully aware and had all her senses.

## Clink~

The sound of ankle bells came from downstairs. She remembered hearing this sound before and quickly found the answer in her mind. The fear vanished, replaced by anger. If anyone could summon a ghost to torment her here, it had to be that woman.

## Clink~ Clang~

"Alright, Mae Kru Bulan's ghost, show yourself."

She stepped back from the dark room and ran downstairs, hoping to find the source of the bell sound.

The scent of scented water hit her nose as she stepped on the first stair and grew stronger until she had to wipe her nose. But she wasn't scared as her anger consumed her. The surroundings were silent, with no sounds of life.

The downstairs was dark, lit only by the faint moonlight.

***Click!***

The only light from the upstairs bulb suddenly went out, leaving her in darkness. Luckily, she had his phone's flashlight to find the downstairs switch.

***Clink~***

***Clink~***

## Clink~

*It wasn't the sharp bell sound she was looking for but a similar jingling.*

***ThudThud!***

The loud thud sounded like someone stomping their heel, followed by the jingling.

***Click!***

She bravely turned on the downstairs light, staring at the comer of the house. She was sure the sound came from there.

***Thud-!***

## Clink-

In her entire life, she never thought she'd see something like this. If she told anyone, would they believe her? Or was she hallucinating?

A woman in traditional Thai attire, with sabais draped over her shoulders like a dancer.

Someone like this usually performed to preserve the beauty of classical dance in ceremonies, but this one was facing the wall, gracefully dancing, showing only her back.

***Thud!***

## Clink-

Her heel stomped again, confirming it was her making the sound while dancing. The beautiful headdress on her head slowly dripped red, blood-like liquid more and more, soaking her head, neck, and clothes.

Lieutenant Peem's red eyes stared, unable to move despite trying. The dancer lifted her foot and stomped again, tilting her body and head as if about to turn and reveal her face.

At this moment, she couldn't speak or close her eyes. It was as if someone was forcing her to watch the graceful dance and movements. In just a second, she'd see her true face.

A warm hand covered both of her eyes, plunging everything into darkness. Another hand wrapped around the waist, then placed itself on the chest of the tall figure from behind, offering comfort in just a split second that the face turned back,

The dancing ghost lunged toward the tall figure. But it had to stop abruptly when the eyes it met were the furious eyes of Mae Kru Bulan, staring back at its horrifying face.

## "If you touch my husband, I shall burn your soul to ashes."

The lieutenant's paralyzing stiffness vanished instantly. The vengeful spirit dissipated before Mae Kru's eyes like dust blown away by the wind. The slender hand slowly released from the eyes and moved up to stroke the head instead while the other arm still held the waist tightly.

"What... was that?"

The lieutenant stood still, asking in a shaky voice, as if in temporary shock, but not crying out in fear.

"Dear khwan, wherever you are, come back to my lover,"

Mae Kru Bulan said, pressing a kiss on Lieutenant Peem's head. The warm touch of the lips helped restore full consciousness.

She didn't know anything anymore. Since the injustice occurred, it felt like everything forced her to come here to face these things, not to mention the woman people called Mae Kru and what happened before her eyes-why did these things have to happen to her? Why did she have to get involved in these matters? Why did these things happen to her family when she should've caught the criminal long ago?

Lieutenant Peem, who always upheld justice and followed procedures without fail, now found herself helpless. She couldn't even catch a criminal, let alone help a young girl without relying on spiritual intervention. It was pathetic, but it wasn't surprising that an ordinary person would be extremely confused when faced with such events.

The tall figure grabbed the hand holding her and pulled it away with all her strength before stepping out of the house. Fortunately, she always kept her car keys on her belt, and they were still there.

## "Should I follow her?"

"I already asked the guardian spirit in the car to let you in. Go. Don't let her be in danger."

## "Yes, Mother."

"If you were a ghost, I would've scolded you. But since you're my husband, I don't want to reprimand you and make you sad,"

Mae Kru said in a frustrated tone, but she wasn't mad at her lover at all.

Though Lieutenant Peem was younger, she was old enough to control her emotions. She was serious at work, but it was puzzling that when they were together, she often acted spoiled like a child. Suddenly, a smile appeared on Mae Kru Bulan's face as she stepped out of the house. Her round eyes looked up at the moon, which seemed more beautiful than ever tonight.

*I don't feel annoyed by her at all. I'm happy to see her face close by. People say every couple faces problems, and this is nothing compared to the obstacles I've faced in life. What I feel is that I haven't felt lonely since she came into my life just a few days ago.*

*I thought I was happy with what I had, but I realized how lonely I was only when I had someone to sleep beside me. Even if she wants to go or has to go, I don't want her to ever leave my side...*

# Chapter 10. Homeless

Even though it felt like she'd been in that house for a long time, when she looked at the clock, it was only a little past 8 PM. The car slowed down as she saw the houses and the wide sky. It was as if she'd returned to the normal world of humans.

The bright lights of the roadside shops caught her attention, and she decided to stop, hoping that something cold to drink might help. Out of the corner of her eye, she saw cans of alcoholic beverages in the fridge, reminding her of another thing that Mae Kru Bulan despised.

Normally, Lieutenant Peem wasn't one to enjoy such drinks unless it was a social gathering with friends, an official celebration, or some important event that required drinking. But this only made her more frustrated because she found herself thinking about that woman again.

Lieutenant Peem decided to open the fridge and grab a can of beer, thinking that maybe a bit of intoxication could help clear her mind for a while. She knew she shouldn't drink while planning to drive, so she decided to head to the police station first.

***Click!***

Her sharp eyes stared at the building in front of her as she raised the cold beer can to her lips. One hand gripped the steering wheel while her eyes looked at her phone on her lap. She knew that if she called her mother now, the person on the other end would be extremely worried. The things she was dealing with and what had happened to her brother were already heavy enough for the woman she loved most in her life.

A deep sigh escaped her lips, loud enough to hear her own dry breath. She downed the beer in her hand, but it didn't make her drunk; it just lightened her head a bit.

"Oh, is that you, Lieutenant Peem?"

An officer greeted her and stood up as she walked into the police station, even though it was past working hours. "I was just looking for a place to rest for a bit,"

She replied.

"Why here? Why don't you go home?"

"Is there a hotel around here?"

"No, only in the city."

"That's the answer. I'm homeless."

"I don't get it..."

The officer looked at her in confusion but didn't press further as the lieutenant walked past the reception area.

While she was trying to manage her emotions quickly, she saw a bag of food on her desk.

She hadn't eaten again today, and the food inside was probably spoiled by now since it'd been sitting there since morning.

She sighed again before sitting down at her desk. The air conditioning wasn't on because it wasn't working hours, and it was a shared office space. Turning on the AC just for herself wouldn't be appropriate. She took off her shirt to use as a pillow, trying to nap on the desk. It was uncomfortable, stuffy, and hot, with no breeze at all.

Looking at her arm, she saw dried blood she hadn't cleaned yet. Frustrated, she couldn't sleep. If she were in the bustling city, finding a room would be easy. Here, it was the opposite. She tried hard not to let her city habits affect her work, but it was tough.

***Click.***

"Here she is, Mae Kru,"

The officer who'd greeted her earlier opened the door to show Mae Kru Bulan where she was before returning to his post.

Lieutenant Peem sat up straight, put her shirt back on, and tried to look composed. Mae Kru Bulan approached her, leaning down.

"What are you doing here?"

Lieutenant Peem asked sternly without looking at her.

"How could I sleep knowing you're struggling like this?"

"It's just for tonight. Tomorrow I'll find a room. Even if I have to go back to the quarters, I don't care. I don't need help from someone high and mighty like you."

Despite her sarcastic words, Mae Kru Bulan saw them as endearing

"Why are you so angry with me? Is it pride? I spoke out of concem. If I were as high and mighty as you say, would I be here to bring you back? You were wrong to disrupt the ritual. I have teachers I respect, just like the law books you hold dear."

Lieutenant Peem, who was standing firm, softened immediately at Mae Kru's gentle words. She tried to hide her feelings, but Mae Kru's soft touch on her head made her forget to push her hand away.

"Let's go home, dear,"

Mae Kru said, their noses almost touching. Lieutenant Peem couldn't believe these words came from Mae Kru Bulan.

"If you stay here, I won't be at peace..."

"Consider it making up for slapping me. But just for one night."

She said, touching Mae Kru's cheek gently, showing understanding.

"Did you drink?"

Mae Kru asked, surprised.

"Yes, I drank before coming here,"

Lieutenant Peem admitted, blinking to adjust her emotions and standing up straight.

"Let's take my car then,"

Mae Kru said, leading the way without looking back to see if Lieutenant Peem was following. Feeling guilty, Lieutenant Peem followed, knowing she hadn't done anything terribly wrong. She'd drunk but wasn't a burden to anyone.

There was no conversation on the way. Lieutenant Peem, no longer angry, didn't dare to speak first. Soon, Mae Kru's white car was parked beside the house.

"Go shower and freshen up. I'll treat your wound after,"

Mae Kru said, surprising Lieutenant Peem, who thought she'd hidden her wound well.

"I don't have any clothes left,"

Lieutenant Peem replied softly, feeling guilty.

"Take mine. I'll wash yours. They'll dry by morning. Why did you bring so few clothes? Are you not staying long?"

"I was in a hurry and grabbed only a few. My mom is sending the rest. They should arrive tomorrow or the day after."

"Are you hungry? You didn't eat the food I packed."

"I'll eat tomorrow. It's late."

"Let's go. It's getting late. I'll bring you the pajamas."

"Okay,"

Lieutenant Peem said, feeling awkward as Mae Kru kept her distance. She knew Mae Kru disliked alcohol but didn't think it'd be to this extent.

After showering, Mae Kru brought her clothes to the bathroom door. It was a white T-shirt and comfortable long pants, along with white lace underwear that was way too big for her, making her smile dryly but having no choice but to wear them.

Mae Kru Bulan always dressed modestly, whether at home or out, with clean white clothes that smelled sweet like flowers. Even without her wearing them, they smelled nice.

"She must really like white color,"

Lieutenant Peem muttered as she dressed.

Entering the bedroom, she felt at ease, thinking back on the day's stress. The bed was as clean and white as she remembered, with a cozy atmosphere. Mae Kru sat on the bed with a first aid kit, and Lieutenant Peem sat down, knowing what to do.

Lieutenant Peem seemed unusually quiet since arriving at the house.

"I thought someone would've treated your wound at the hospital,"

Mae Kru said.

"I was too preoccupied to care,"

Lieutenant Peem replied.

The dark yellow antiseptic solution was dripped onto a cotton ball before being gently dabbed on the wound where sharp teeth had pierced through.

"If that ghost were still alive, I'd have to kill it myself for hurting my loved one."

It was unclear if this was Mae Kru Bulan's way of flirting or something else, but it made Lieutenant Peem's face flush with embarrassment.

Despite trying to suppress a smile, her sharp eyes caught everything. She didn't tease, avoiding another argument. Even though her face was red, she'd likely deflect as usual.

"How can you blame just that ghost? If ghosts are real, one of them in that house must be yours."

"I'm not the type to send a ghost to harm my own lover unless you went to sleep with someone else. Even if that were the case, I'd deal with you myself; no need for ghosts."

"Threatening and false imprisonment are crimes. Aren't you afraid of the law?"

"Would you do those things to me? Put me in jail and go sleep with someone else?"

"I was just... joking... Since coming here, I only know the police in the station and you. Who else would I sleep with? I don't even have a place to stay, can't you see? So, will you tell me if you really sent a ghost there?"

In truth, this was Lieutenant Peem's way of not hurting Mae Kru Bulan's feelings, even if it didn't make much sense.

"Thong is Por Kru's kuman thong. When he passed away, he entrusted me to take care of him. He doesn't harm anyone and follows to help you. He's not a malevolent spirit."

"Kuman thong..."

"When you're in danger, just call him."

"Can you really call a ghost that easily? Like... I can call him and see him right away?"

"You challenged the spirit and saw it with your own eyes. What more do you need to see to believe? Or do you want to see the kuman thong? I can perform a ritual for you if you promise not to faint and worry me."

"I've never attended such a ritual. Why did I still see it?"

"It was a ghost with high malice, combined with being challenged. If your luck isn't strong enough, you might go insane. That's why I told you not to take off the necklace, but you never listen."

"But it helped the child."

"Fine, as for my kuman thong, it's okay if you don't believe in him. He respects you like a father but isn't mischievous. Don't be afraid."

"F-father?"

The tall figure said, pointing to himself.

"He respects me like a mother."

"How should I tell my own mother? I went to work and suddenly got both a child and a wife. And don't take my words seriously. I was being sarcastic. I'm not a father of anything."

"Then what do you see me as?"

"..."

"Do you know I want to sleep with you every night? Don't intentionally push me away like this. I can't sleep with someone who drinks and can't stay with someone whose morals don't match mine. I don't want to force your feelings..."

"I'm not usually a drinker. I was...just...angry. It was a lot of things piling up, and I thought you might've sent a ghost to scare me."

Even while speaking, she didn't understand why she felt the need to explain and felt so guilty.

It was normal before coming here to drink when there was a reason.

**"I love you and care for you. I don't want anyone, ghost or human, to touch you. I want you to be mine and mine only. And the reason I remained single was because I was waiting to be yours."**

The words **'I want to kiss you'** echoed loudly in her head, and she believed the person in front of her felt the same just by looking into her eyes. But they could only sit still and stare at each other. Both the tall and the slender figures tried hard not to touch each other. At this moment, everything seemed perfect.

"I've prepared the bed for you. You sleep in this room. I'll sleep in the meditation room. My house has only one bedroom."

Mae Kru quickly ended the conversation and stood up, but Lieutenant Peem's long hand reached out, grabbed her waist, and pulled her onto her lap.

"Thank you."

The sincere words were spoken in a sweet voice as she looked up at the slender figure on her lap. She could feel Mae Kru Bulan swallowing hard before pushing herself up and quickly walking away without a word.

Lieutenant Peem seemed to forget that she'd declared she had no romantic feelings for Mae Kru. At this moment, watching the slender figure walk away, she couldn't stop smiling.

# Chapter 11.Coincidence

**The clattering sound came from outside.**

It was just loud enough to know that someone was moving around. It was probably Mae Kru Bulan who'd woken up to cook. But no matter how light a sleeper Lieutenant Peem was, with the sky still pitch dark and feeling exhausted, she decided to sleep a bit longer before getting up for work.

## Clink~ Clank~

Her eyes, which had been tightly shut, flew open immediately upon hearing that familiar sound again. The tall figure got out of bed at once to walk out of Mae Kru's bedroom, already knowing that the source of the sound was likely Mae Kru's kuman thong named 'Thong' if the person who mentioned it wasn't making it up. She didn't know which room the sound was coming from.

She only heard a faint sound like a child laughing joyfully. Her slender hand grasped the doorknob and opened it immediately, expecting to find the source of the sound, but there was nothing there. There was just a Buddhist altar with a Buddha image and an arahant image.

Out of the corner of her eye, she saw a folded mattress in the corner of the room next to a small fan. This meant that Mae Kru had slept in this room last night with only a small fan and a thin mattress.

She thought that the homeowner would have more comfortable bedding for herself, but it wasn't so. The mattress was only three feet wide, unlike the large bed she'd sacrificed for her to sleep on.

In the right corner near the incense pot, she saw a statue of a boy that people often regarded as a kuman thong, wearing a body chain across both shoulders, with hair tied in a topknot, shirtless but wearing golden jong kraben. The figure wasn't as scary as she thought but looked rather cute and mischievous. In front of it were offerings. The lieutenant knelt on one knee to get a closer look, her eyes scanning the area.

"Are you the spirit that saved me from the ghost dancer? Why haven't you reincarnated yet.....Where are your real parents... Are you forced to stay here?"

The only response she got was silence, with no supernatural sounds or miracles occurring.

A handful of crispy pork skin was tossed into the boiling oil, and soon, it puffed up into delicious-looking pork rinds right in the pan. The slender figure flipped them a few times to cook them evenly before taking them out to drain the oil.

"Last night, I heard my sister calling me."

While she was focused on cooking, Lieutenant Peem's voice floated from behind, with a question lingering since she hadn't seen her face yet.

"Some ghosts have a lot of power and can disguise themselves as others, whether animals, children, or relatives we know."

Mae Kru turned off the electric stove and replied before turning to the voice's owner, who was leaning against the door frame.

"So why did you decide to live like this? Don't you want to go out and socialize and live a normal life like others? Not that this is bad or anything. I know everyone finds comfort in different things."

The lieutenant decided to ask something she hadn't planned to but did so politely and considerately

"My father was a Por Kru, respected by the villagers. At that time, I didn't quite understand, but I respected him a lot because everyone worshipped him. Over time, some people started to dislike him, calling him superstitious or a fraud. Sometimes, they found him scary

I started to dislike these things as I grew older. When I was thirteen or fourteen, I fell seriously ill. No matter how much treatment I received, I never fully recovered. The doctor said I wouldn't live long. If I were someone else, I might've died already.

I remember I was so thin my skin clung to my bones. My father took me to make a wish and a vow with Ruesi Ta Fai, asking for his help. Suddenly, I started to get better as if by a miracle. There were times I didn't believe it, stubborn like any teenager.

But the first sip of alcohol made me collapse and fall ill again. I wanted to survive with a doctor's hands, too, so I could go out with friends and live like others. But these things are in my blood. The only way to escape is to wait for death.

I decided to take over my father's duties and survived a second time. I once wanted to die to end it all. Por Kru told me to live, to remain virtuous, and to take care of myself because my soulmate had been bom. He told me to wait for them... that when the time comes, we won't miss each other."

*It might sound superstitious like a fairy tale, but every word Mae Kru Bulan spoke made her believe wholeheartedly without any doubt.*

"If the person you're waiting for isn't me, like... there could be a misunderstanding, you don't have to worry. Just tell me straight if you've found that person, and they make you happy. I'll be happy for you. Right now, when you say you love me, it might be because you've waited so long for someone, and I just happened to be here."

Mae Kru listened until the end without saying anything in response. She chose to walk up to the person in front of her, reaching out to hold the tall figure's hand and placing it on her own palm.

Then, she used her other hand to separate the pinky finger from the ring finger, revealing a small red birthmark on the tall figure. She knew she had a red birthmark since birth, located at the base of her pinky finger between the grooves, but she never paid much attention to it because it wasn't harmful and could happen naturally.

"Even after we did it, haven't you ever noticed this? There might be an even bigger coincidence."

Thinking it was impossible, the tall figure understood what she was implying and quickly turned her hand over to look. She found an incredible coincidence. The red birthmark on Mae Kru's pinky finger was similar in shape and size.

Mae Kru Bulan hooked her pinky finger with the same finger of the other person, and their birthmarks matched perfectly. After a moment, she let go and turned back to cooking, leaving the tall figure standing there, stunned. She was confident that the red birthmark wasn't something that could be artificially created, and it was unreasonable to create it.

Besides, hardly anyone in the family knew or noticed it, and Lieutenant Peem had never intentionally told anyone about it, especially Mae Kru, whom she'd just met. All this time, she saw it as just an ordinary birthmark. Even her classmates didn't pay attention to it.

"It's just a coincidence. Don't overthink it. If you haven't showered yet, I'll go upstairs to shower. Otherwise, I won't make it in time to offer food to the monks."

"I'll shower downstairs then. I want to offer food to the monks today, too."

"Drink plenty of water to flush the alcohol out of your system. Wait for the sun to come out before collecting your robe. Wear my underwear for now, I've prepared it for you."

The lieutenant nodded lightly in response but still stood there, stunned.

"I... don't like durian because of the smell, shrimp paste, and cha-om, too.

But I can eat fermented fish. Actually, I like Isan food, but it shouldn't be too spicy. If it's delicious but painful, I'll endure it. I also have a sweet tooth."

"So that's why you like sweet marinated pork."

"Something like that. Today, I've told you now. Sorry for making you sleep uncomfortably like that, even though you're the homeowner."

"I wasn't uncomfortable."

"What should we do about the ghost dancer?"

"I'll take you to the car and return her things. You can come along if you want."

"Yes... I was planning to check on things, too."

The atmosphere in the house today seemed better than usual. The looks exchanged during every morning task indicated that someone was starting to open up and believe in many things. Even though she didn't show it much due to her nature, she wasn't stubbornly opposing everything like before.

After throwing away the spoiled food, she got a new bag of food containers for lunch. The scent lingering on her clothes was the sweet fragrance of the slender figure, reminding her of when Mae Kru Bulan put the necklace back on her and kissed her temples. It lingered in her thoughts all the way while taking Sergeant Major Piak to school together.

.

***"Mother."***

"Yes?"

## "Father made merit for me today."

The slender figure driving smiled softly with joy. Her eyes glanced up at the rearview mirror to meet the mischievous, cute face of the kuman thong with radiant skin in the back seat.

"She's kind... One day, she'll understand and accept it."

.

.

.

An elementary school, Phop Phra

In front of the spirit house, next to a small shrine of the local spirits, a table was set up for placing savory and sweet foods, fruits, and drinks as offerings. Smoke from the incense in Mae Kru Bulan's, the teachers', and the girl's hands slowly rose into the sky.

While Mae Kru was leading the prayer to apologize to the sacred beings, she planted the incense in her hand before uncovering a white cloth to pick up a new dancer figurine. She walked around the table to the shrine, raised it to give a wai above her head, and chanted something only she could hear. When she finished, she placed it in the empty space inside the shrine.

"If you just wanted a new statuette to replace the old one, you could've asked nicely..."

The lieutenant, standing at a distance, muttered softly.

"Uh... I know you're not afraid of ghosts, Lieutenant, but maybe we should talk about this outside? Even if we bring a new statuette, we can't just put it there. Everything needs to be done properly."

"Well, I'll try not to say anything that gets me into trouble."

"I'm glad to hear that. Oh! Since we've run into Mae Kru, let's wait here.

You can apologize for what you did yesterday. People here respect Mae Kru, and you should, too. It'll make them like you more."

"Speaking of yesterday, wait, Sergeant Major-"

"Mae Kru!"

Before the Lieutenant could finish, the officer standing with her turned to call out to the slender figure walking by. She approached with a calm expression.

"The lieutenant wants to apologize for yesterday, Mae Kru."

"Are we really doing it like this, Sergeant Major?"

"I'm listening."

Lieutenant Peem didn't want to mention that they'd just parted ways at the station a few minutes ago. She kept her composure as she was on duty.

"I apologize, Mae Kru. I'll be more careful next time."

"I don't hold any grudge."

"Oh, Mae Kru, could you please help with something? Lieutenant Peem just transferred here and doesn't believe in ghosts at all, not to mention that she's still single. If you have some time, I'd like to bring her to you for a blessing. Maybe it'll attract some suitors. She asked me to tell you yesterday"

"D-did I say that, Sergeant Major?"

"You did say that yesterday morning, Lieutenant"

"I didn't mean for you to actually tell her."

"No need to be shy, Lieutenant. Mae Kru's blessings are powerful."

"Does she want a lover that badly?"

"I was just joking. I didn't think you'd take it seriously, Sergeant Major. And I don't want a lover that badly."

"Alright then, this evening, Sergeant Major, bring the lieutenant to the school. I'll give her a blessing she'll never forget. She'll remember my name for the rest of her life."

The slender figure's voice dropped, and her eyes, initially annoyed, now held a chilling intensity.

"Thank you, Mae Kru. I'll bring the lieutenant to the school right after work."

"Thank you very much, Sergeant Major,"

The lieutenant replied through gritted teeth, trying to avoid her gaze.

"You're welcome, Lieutenant. It's nothing. She is the best here."

"I was being sarcastic."

"Oh..."

Mae Kru Bulan, seeing no further business, walked away without a word. The tall figure glanced after her, unsure if she was angry.

.

**The quarters.....**

"Why are we here, Lieutenant?"

Sergeant Major Piak asked as Lieutenant Peem parked in front of the house.

"I forgot something here."

With that, Lieutenant Peem got out of the car, prompting the lower-ranking officer to follow suit.

"Do you live here, Lieutenant?"

"Why, Sergeant Major?"

"Everyone knows these old quarters are scary. You have to renovate them yourself. I thought you'd find a better place. Not many people stay here."

"Thanks, Sergeant Major! For telling me now. Thanks a lot."

It wasn't a shout of anger but a trembling voice through gritted teeth.

"I'll wait here, Lieutenant."

"Don't even think that. Lead the way, Sergeant Major... You're the local, aren't you? We came together, so we go in together."

"You aren't afraid of ghosts, but I am."

"We're both police officers, Sergeant Major. Stop talking about ghosts."

"Do I really have to go in, Lieutenant?"

"Either come with me, or I'll leave you here."

"Uh... I'll go with you, Lieutenant. Or are you starting to get scared?"

"I said I'm not scared."

"Whatever you say..."

# Chapter 12.Until You're Happy

**The young lieutenant followed Sergeant Major Piak into the house without saying a word until they reached the upper floor.**

But before opening the door to get her bag, her eyes caught sight of that door again-the one she'd tried to open before but had found it locked for no apparent reason.

"Is there something wrong, Lieutenant?"

Sergeant Major Piak asked.

"Why..is there a padlock on it?"

She questioned, staring at the large padlock that was locked from the outside, making sure she wasn't seeing things.

"Probably because no one has lived here for a long time. If there were two living here, they could probably open it,"

He explained. As she listened, Lieutenant Peem stepped into the room where she'd slept the previous night to gather her belongings, turned off the switch, and walked out briskly.

"Lieutenant, wait for me!"

Sergeant Major Piak called out, realizing too late that the lieutenant had already started down the stairs. He hurried to catch up.

**At the police station**

After finishing their business, Sergeant Major Piak took her around various hotspots in the district and nearby areas, including the home of one of the suspects, where only two elderly people lived. The time had passed into the late afternoon.

"Thank you very much, Sergeant Major,"

She said.

"You're welcome, Lieutenant, even though we didn't get many leads,"

He replied as they stepped out of the car and headed back into the police station building.

"Nothing is ever useless, Sergeant Major. They just committed a crime, and based on their history, they take breaks like this. I'm sure they're not in Bangkok anymore. Even if they're not here, I'll hunt them down until I find them,"

She said with seriousness.

"It's been a long time since I've seen such a dedicated officer like you here.

I'm glad to help, Lieutenant."

"I'm just doing my duty."

"Are you thirsty, Lieutenant? I've seen you drinking water all day. You've gone through several bottles on the way back."

"That's normal for me. I drink a lot of water. It's not because anyone told me to."

"I was just asking if you were thirsty, not if you were doing it because someone told you to."

"I'm just thirsty, that's all."

As they were talking, a bright pink motorcycle approached, driven by a slim woman with sun- tanned skin, her hair tied to one side. She wore a neon green tank top, short denim shorts with frayed edges, and colorful hair clips in her blonde hair, along with flip-flops.

Her face was heavily made up, with bright red lipstick and thick, arched eyebrows that made Lieutenant Peem look twice in astonishment.

***Click!***

The woman kicked the stand of her motorcycle and parked it.

"Dad! Mom asked me to tell you to pay the electricity bill!"

She shouted before even getting off the bike. Once off, she put one hand on her hip and handed the bill to the officer standing next to the lieutenant

"Oooh, who's this, Dad?"

She asked, her annoyed eyes turning to Lieutenant Peem, who stood still beside her. She batted her eyelashes and moved closer, causing the tall figure to step back.

"Are you a new officer? So cool and tall with such loooooong fingers. You must be from Bangkok, seeing that you're so fair-skinned. And your eyelashes are long, too. I'm Plai-fha,"

She introduced herself, winking at the lieutenant, who tried to look away but couldn't escape her gaze.

"Hey, Priaw! Where are you going with that makeup? I thought you were a circus monkey.

Don't be rude, Sergeant Major Piak scolded, causing the young woman to turn her annoyed eyes to her father.

"Dad! I'm trying to find you a daughter-in-law!"

She retorted.

"Lieutenant, this is Priaw ["]. Her mother named her that because she craved lemons while pregnant. She's my daughter,"

He explained.

"Okay, Sergeant Majo."

The tall figure replied with a dry smile, unsure of what to say, and quickly clasped her hands behind her back.

"Do you have a boyfriend? You're already a lieutenant, but you look so young. My dad is old enough to be in the grave and still a Sergeant Major," She continued.

"Watch your mouth. Sure, I'm just a sergeant major, but I raised you. Focus on your studies instead of wandering around. Why aren't you at school today?"

He asked.

"I had menstrual cramps this moming,"

She replied.

***VROOM! VROOM! VROOM!***

The police station was unusually lively today, with the roar of another motorcycle approaching before the rider was even visible.

***VROOOOOOM!***

***VROOM! VROOM!***

Lieutenant Peem raised a hand to cover her ear as the noise pierced her nerves. Finally, the source of the sound arrived-a tomboyish woman, about 150 centimeters tall, wearing a tight black shirt that looked uncomfortable, with one ear pierced wide.

She wore rust-colored jeans and had light brown hair styled in a stiff, unmoving quiff. Her red motorcycle had modified tires and golden bolts.

"Wassup, Dad!"

"Who's your dad? I only have one child,"

Sergeant Major Piak replied immediately.

"Damn, Sergeant Major, that hurts."

"Why are you following me, Stephan? We broke up. Stop bothering me. I love someone else now."

"Come on, Plai-fha, give me another chance. We just broke up yesterday. I don't believe it."

"Here's my new girlfriend,"

Priaw said, pointing at the tall figure without asking.

"Take your time, Sergeant Major. I'll go handle some paperwork. Please check Stephan's bike for proper registration and insurance, and your daughter's, too,"

The tall figure said, sighing lightly and scratching her eyebrow before heading back into the building.

"Uh, yes, Lieutenant,"

Sergeant Major Piak replied, bowing his head in acknowledgment. It was a subtle reminder of his negligence in his duty.

**Lieutenant Peem's desk**

As she sat down at her computer, she noticed the time in the corner of the screen. The workday was almost over, and she still hadn't found a permanent place to stay. She quickly typed on the keyboard to search for nearby hotels or safe rental rooms and jotted down phone numbers.

"Am I disturbing you, Lieutenant?"

Sergeant Major Piak asked, approaching her desk with a worried expression. The tall figure, who'd just hung up the phone, turned to him with a concerned look.

"Is something wrong. Sergeant Major?"

She asked.

"I wanted to apologize for my daughter's behavior."

"Oh, I thought it was something serious. It's fine. I didn't take it to heart. Just remind her to be careful when driving."

"Phew, that's a relief. I was worried you'd be mad at me. I've taught her about this time and time again, but she never grows up,"

He said, and Lieutenant Peem nodded in understanding.

"Don't worry about it, Sergeant Major."

"Since the workday is almost over, shall we go?"

"Go where?"

"To Mae Kru's school, of course. We promised to go. We can't not go."

"You promised, not me."

"I have a family. Why would I go? If you don't believe in these things, you should see for yourself. If we say we'll go and don't, people won't trust us."

"Is it that serious, Sergeant Major?"

She asked.

"It's just a quick visit. It won't hurt. Or are you scared?"

"Me, scared?"

"I told you Mae Kru is strict. Maybe you're afraid to go."

"If there is someone who isn't afraid of Mae Kru Bulan, it's me."

"You're brave, Lieutenant W. Where are you going now?"

He asked as she suddenly got up and walked quickly behind him.

"To wash my lunchbox, Sergeant Major. We're going to Mae Kru's school, right?"

"And what does that have to do with your lunchbox?"

He asked, confused. Though she didn't answer, it was clear that she was the type to take on a challenge.

**Mae Kru Bulan's School**

It was perfect timing. Mae Kru had just finished a ritual for her last student of the day and was about to leave the school. She saw Lieutenant Peem's familiar black car pull up. Her sharp eyes watched as the tall figure stepped out of the car, her hands resting on her lap.

As her lover approached the school, her lips began to move, and her sharp eyes followed every step.

*"Na-yearn for me. Mo-be enchanted.*

*Phut-be crazy for me.*

*Tha-cry for me.*

*Ya-come to me.*

*Phuttho-love me.*

*Thammo-love me.*

*Sangkho-love me."*

.

.

The intimidating eyes looked down at the tall figure walking in and sitting down in front of them, as instructed by the person accompanying them. Lieutenant Peem's heart was pounding unusually hard since stepping into the school.

Before this, she'd never entered here as a student with Mae Kru Bulan fully dressed in her ritual attire in front of her like this. Even though she tried to calm herself, the gaze looking down at her made it hard to breathe properly.

"Move closer, Lieutenant,"

Sergeant Major Piak said, even though she thought she was already sitting quite close. He nudged her back to make her move even closer.

"What are you afraid of?"

The calm voice asked, filled with immense challenge.

"What is there to be afraid of? I'm only here because of Sergeant Major's promise. I don't want to attend any ritual,"

Lieutenant Peem, unable to bear the feeling of being intimidated, straightened up and looked back with a firm but polite tone.

"Now that you're at my school, how can you leave without doing anything? Let me chant a spell, and then you can decide what you want to do."

The lieutenant couldn't afford to lose her face. Being confident that a single sentence of spell wouldn't affect her life, she moved closer to the seat and raised her hands in a prayer gesture, following the whispered instructions from behind to get it over with.

The slender figure leaned in until their noses almost touched, then grabbed her praying hands and pressed her fingertips to the cleavage of her chest.

Even though it was covered by fabric, she knew what part of Mae Kru Bulan's body she was touching. She glanced between the full lips and the intense eyes that were now softening in front of her.

One hand reached to the back of her neck, gently caressing.

## "Do you know what a sattabut is?"

Mae Kru Bulan asked in a soft, seductive voice, just loud enough for the two of them to hear. She moved her face closer to whisper the next words into her ear, letting the breath from her lips brush against her sensitive nerves.

Her face flushed, feeling like her blood vessels were pumping more than usual. Her heart pounded loudly, her mind filled with images of lovemaking and the body in front of her. Her light breaths turned into heavy gasps, and she had to blow out her mouth to help herself breathe. She swallowed a large gulp of saliva, feeling parched, not resisting any touch. "Go back first. I still have a long ritual to perform with her,"

Mae Kru, who'd just moved away from the person in front of her, told the other officer.

"Then... I'll go back first, Lieutenant."

"Yes... you can go ahead,"

The tall figure nodded slightly. She spoke without turning back but looked down at the carpet instead to avoid the woman's gaze above. In just a moment, the plump officer moved out of the school.

"I won't do it since you don't like these rituals. I won't do it for someone who doesn't want it. For you, it's enough that I'm the only one infatuated."

The lieutenant was sweating and scratching her neck unconsciously, remembering the whispered words that said:

***'My sattabut is for you alone to taste'.***

"Last night, my heart was in great suffering. Don't you want to do the same thing as me?"

"I..."

"Let me know the true feelings in your heart, no lies."

**"Go... wait in the room. I'll take care of myself and then come... to tame you myself until the suffering is gone, until... you're happy."**

# Chapter 13. Sattabut

**The lieutenant knew well who was behind the door in front of her.**

Once she stepped in, she'd meet the person in this room. There was no shallow feeling, only the lingering emotions from last night waiting to be continued. It mightn't be love yet, or perhaps it already was.

But at this moment, she was well aware that she also wanted the other person to some extent.

As long as she didn't abandon her duties or cause trouble for anyone, her age was appropriate for opening her heart or sharing love with someone who was equally willing.

## Bzzz~~

The phone vibrated, showing an unfamiliar number not saved in her contacts.

"Hello, is this Ms. Phitcha who booked the room?"

"Yes, you can keep the deposit... I won't be able to make it..."

Today, even if Mae Kru didn't order or request, she wanted to stay here with her all night. It might reveal her feelings after this time passed.

***Click...***

*It was normal to feel a bit nervous, knowing the purpose of entering the bedroom. Mae Kru Bulan removed her golden hairpin, letting her straight black hair fall and sweep over one shoulder.*

*She sat on the other side of the bed, turning to look at the sharp face and sparkling eyes staring back at her with a gaze that was both seductive and inviting. She mightn't have smiled, but her calm face did a good job of stimulating adrenaline in the lieutenant's body.*

*After closing the door, Lieutenant Peem walked around the end of the bed to the table in front of her, pausing for a moment without saying anything or looking back.*

*Her slender fingers lifted to remove her badge from her neck, placing it on the table, followed by taking off her jacket and folding it over the back of the chair. She then reached to remove her necklace, placing it on the badge before turning back to the slender figure sitting there.*

*Today, Mae Kru had worm a pure white dress since the morning. Though it was modest, it was infuriatingly flattering to her figure, making it clear that Mae Kru Bulan didn't need to dress provocatively to be desirable.*

*Her dominant hand rested on the bed as she leaned in to meet the other's eyes up close again, making her think:*

## 'How can she be this beautiful...'

*The room was chilled by the air conditioning, but it couldn't cool the rising body temperature.*

*Her lips pressed a kiss on Mae Kru's forehead for the first time, feeling that she was doing something lovely without any reluctance. It was time to return the kisses on Mae Kru Bulan's body, whether on her face or neck, as she often did.*

*Clothes were being removed piece by piece as her lips began to kiss, delivering her soft kisses through the hot tongue that probed into her mouth, pushing in deeply and intertwining to intensify the emotions together. Meanwhile, Mae Kru lifted her hips to allow her to remove her skirt completely, then broke the kiss, trailing down her graceful neck and full chest with firm pressure.*

*The slender body leaned back, placing her hands to support herself, watching every action of the tall figure on her skin. The heated feeling spread to her lower abdomen, sending shivers throughout her body every time she was kissed on her torso. Mae Kru watched her lover's lips delicately kissing her flat stomach while fingers caressed the lotus tattoo under her navel, moving along her thighs and pelvis, which were anly covered by underwear.*

*She was a woman who was both sweet and charming. In serious moments, she appeared cool and smart. The small mole near her eye made her face look adorable when she smiled as her eyes closed and her cheekbones lifted into a crescent shape.*

*Though she rarely smiled, her thick eyebrows, large round eyes with long lashes, and sharp, enviable nose made it a moment for the slender figure to admire her lover passionately.*

*She was filled with happiness as the person in front of her responded to everything she wanted without needing any guidance, even though they'd only made love once.*

*Mae Kru's foot was placed on Lieutenant Peem's collarbone, making her feel pampered by her lover without any genuine disgust. The lieutenant kissed her ankle and toes, eliciting a gasp.*

*The lieutenant looked up at the slender figure, surveying her pleasing body, not completely covered in tattoos but leaving plenty of space to see her fair skin, especially the smooth, flawless legs that she kissed.*

*Lieutenant Peem had learned a great lesson in taming Mae Kru Bulan from the previous time when she'd failed miserably due* *to rushing. Foreplay was just a greeting, and the first or second round of satisfaction was merely foreplay. She had to caress and tease without missing a beat, sustaining the intensity until the end. It might take a long time before she'd finally surrender in her arms.*

*And when the romantic affair was due to end, it was time for the perpetrator to take responsibility for her actions. Lieutenant Peem placed her foot on the floor before stepping onto the bed, positioning herself between the slender figure's legs to force them apart.*

*The lieutenant's hands grasped Mae Kru's sides under her chest to lift and move her body to the center of the bed. She never thought Lieutenant Peem had enough strength to lift her off the ground.*

*In just one breath, Mae Kru was straddled by Lieutenant Peem's body, making her breathless as she'd never seen this side of her. She looked at her like a predator playing with its prey, or perhaps it was the first time she'd seen her doing something like this. It suited her nature of not letting go of criminals.*

*Lieutenant Peem's eyes looked down at her thin lips that was like the cover of a case file, indicating the direction of the details inside. The passionate kiss pressed down immediately, much stronger than the previous night.*

*Her tongue slipped into her mouth, sucking so hard that she barely had time to swallow her saliva, and it was swallowed down the throat of the other, leaving her mouth dry and her tongue stinging from the forceful* *suction. There was no chance to retaliate.*

*Her long, smooth fingers, soft like a noble's skin, squeezed and caressed the Sarika Kuu Dok Bua tattoo along her side, pulling down her underwear without looking.*

*A deep sigh escaped as she let her chest heave to catch her breath. The touch Mae Kru received was what she desired, as even though she regained her breath, the spreading sensation of arousal flowed through her body. She was lifted to sit so he could easily unhook her bra, pulling her hips to straddle his thigh.*

*"Mmm~"*

*A sweet moan escaped immediately as her breasts were spread apart by the tall figure's face, wanting to leave red marks with her mouth.*

*The plump petals she often used to entice her stubborn lovers weren't touched by the leg but by the tall figure's dominant hand, probing her long fingers into the moist slit.*

*"Ahh~"*

*Her teeth bit down, drawing in air and letting out a satisfied hiss at the touch. Fluids flowed from her love channel, lubricating the fingers and trembling deep inside, making her grind her hips, begging for the teasing fingers to enter.*

*The sweet sensation at her nipples continued as they were sucked and squeezed as if to stimulate the milk to flow out. It wasn't painful but felt tight enough to bear.*

*At first, she arched her chest, offering no resistance, sometimes moving away to rest, hoping the lieutenant would switch sides.*

*It seemed she understood, switching to lick the other side, showing her pinkish-red tongue. Instead of sucking the whole breast, she licked with her thick tongue, flicking the erect nipple time and time again.*

*Mae Kru felt like she was at her limit because the heat of the tongue was so intense. The sensation was so overwhelming that it was almost torturous. Unable to bear it any longer, she decided to grab the lieutenant's hair and push it down.*

*One hand pressed against the back to prevent any escape, while two fingers began to tease and rub at the love channel without penetrating, causing nails to dig into the nape of the neck.*

## "Lieutenant,

*The voice was husky but clear. The ears, showing signs of torment, made the tall figure smile with satisfaction before pulling her lips away from the peak of the chest and looking up at the sharp eyes staring back, with the body positioned higher on the lap.*

## "I've been off work for an hour now..."

*The soft reply, coupled with a comforting smile, made the slender figure even more infatuated with her lover's face.*

*The thumb brushed against the moist lips of the tall figure while gazing into the curious eyes of the lover, waiting for an answer. It seemed that Lieutenant Peem really liked being called that.*

## "When will you finally put them in..."

*There was no verbal response to the question, only action. They leaned down to kiss again, pulling their hand away from that part of her. But there was no doubt, only interest in the warm, soft kiss received.*

***Pop!***

*A sound echoed nearby, like the opening of a plastic bottle cap. This was another small but important matter for the couple. It wasn't that she was disgusted, she was merely concerned for the slender figure. Last time, she used only her own saliva, and when done continuously for a long time, she feared the other might get hurt. It took less than a minute to avoid any displeasure.*

*Cool gel dripped onto the tall figure's fingers, touching the love channel, causing a slight shudder but also a good feeling at the same time. The long fingers slid in easily to the base. The hips continued to float, tightening around what was inserted. Fingertips dug into the neck and shoulders of the one providing the sensation.*

## "Mmm!"

*It didn't feel itchy like before, but a tight, overwhelming sensation that tensed every muscle.* Once *she was used to it, she rested her face on her lover's head, hearing the husky, arousing moans next to her ear.*

*The fingers began to move rapidly, curling to press against the sensitive spot of the slender figure. The moans in the throat were more pleasing than any sound ever heard. The trembling moans when the pace quickened were even more intoxicating. The steady rhythm seemed to please her.*

*The lieutenant maintained this perfect pressure, allowing Mae Kru Bulan to enjoy the prolonged pleasure as desired. There might be some teasing thrusts, but she still stroked her head in satisfaction.*

*She alternated with pulling in for a kiss to release the thrilling sensation inside the moist love channel, then exhaled hot breaths on the neck, mingling with the soft moans next to the ear that fueled the fire in her heart*

*The utmost happiness fo*r *the slender figure wasn't about the climax but the prolonged torment. Even when the fingers wrinkled from the continuous wetness, the lieutenant used the less dominant hand to take over, with Mae Kru helping to grind the hips. This led to a seductive body swaying with arousal.*

*When it was time for the next round, the lieutenant switched back to the dominant hand. The long fingers trembled rapidly with full force, being tightly gripped. Mae Kru's pale body, with red, bruised breasts, twisted in agony as she bit her own lip, tilted her head back, and moaned in sobs as she neared the peak.*

## "Hrk! Mmm!!"

*The shuddering tremor throughout the body, along with the fluid flowing down to the palm, signaled the end of the foreplay. There were no stern, intimidating eyes, only a loving gaze filled with happiness, smiling before kissing the forehead as a reward.*

***"Ah, mmm...!! Nghnn... Stay here with me."***

## "With you here... where else would I go..."

*A passionate kiss was exchanged between them while the rhythm of love continued unhurriedly. The sound of fingers hitting the wet love channel accompanied the moans in the throat.*

*At the same time, the hot tongues were licking each other. When the tall figure teasingly moved away, Mae Kru quickly grabbed the hair at the nape to reclaim the soft tongue for herself.*

# Chapter 14. Silver Bullets

## Bzzz~~

The phone's vibration woke Mae Kru up at the usual time, but this time, the tall figure was also awake. She reached out to grab the source of the noise on the bedside table while the slender figure beside her was still groggy.

"Do you have everything ready for the ritual today?"

She asked, her eyes barely open, causing the tall figure to jolt awake.

"That's right; it's today!"

Her sharp eyes turned to the slender figure, still under the thick blanket, her body bare.

"Did you forget? Why are you so surprised?"

"I didn't forget, I'm just excited that it's finally today. I thought three days would be a long time. Everything needed was prepared on the first day,"

She said, sliding back under the blanket and gazing at the adorable sight before her. Usually, she saw Mae Kru Bulan with makeup, but seeing her like this in the morning, she looked the most harmless.

"After your ritual, I have work to do. I might be back late, so stay home and wait for me."

"Are you going alone? What do you have to do?"

"I always go alone. It's work with the temple, making merit, and just sitting around. Or do you want to come with me?"

It seemed that the passion from last night had dissipated, and Mae Kru Bulan's serious tone returned as she fully woke up.

"I have a meeting with the captain. Temple work is probably nothing much, I'll just do some documents. Sitting and chanting like an old person isn't my thing."

"Do you think everyone doing that is an old person, Lieutenant?"

Her body hair stood on end, and she felt a shiver down her spine as she was called by her rank, even though it was common.

"Some old people are still beautiful. No need to get angry."

"What do you mean, Lieutenant Peem?"

She wanted to fix the situation, but in her panic, she might've chosen the wrong words. It seemed like Mae Kru was genuinely angry now.

"You're in the category of young people who still look good... I was going to ask how you take care of yourself. Your age is... I mean, not that... you still look..."

"Lieutenant Peem."

The lieutenant shook her head slightly to regain her composure, realizing this was her last chance to respond.

"In all my life, you're the most beautiful person I've ever met."

She smiled as if she was just joking, but in truth, she was observing her reaction like a measuring device, unsure if her final answer had been heard.

"I'm not scolding you. Everyone ages. I was just teasing. And I wanted to tell you, Lieutenant, that people these days die easily. Around me, they rarely die of old age. Mostly, they die because of careless words."

She swallowed hard, not understanding why Mae Kru Bulan's teasing made her sweat in the air-conditioned room. She'd never thought of being afraid of her before and tried to convince herself that this wasn't fear.

"If I skip the shower and makeup until after offering food to the monks, it could save some time."

She rubbed her chin with her slender fingers, calculating as she spoke.

"Shower after giving alms I'll go cook..."

What the lieutenant was thinking wasn't about herself but about both of them. She leaned down to kiss her, giving a warm touch before moving her body over hers.

.

***O burning desire like fire burning soul***

***Fuels sweet words-passion overwhelms.***

***Concupiscent palms peel away the clothes from high to low.***

***Bosoms clutched and clenched; instinct takes the helm.***

***Luscious sea inundates Love Valley.***

***Heavenly flesh explores the Delta.***

***Mellow moans echo in ecstasy.***

***Now, I've got you, my inamorata.***

.

After their morning activities, which invigorated their bodies, Mae Kru Bulan's schedule changed slightly. She had to choose quicker meals to prepare.

***Ayu wanno sukhang phalang.....***

The monk's blessing marked the end of the daily routine. Lieutenant Peem led Mae Kru to the car to check the materials needed for the ritual, ensuring everything was all set.

"What's that bag?"

"Oh, it's my clothes and personal items that arrived yesterday. I didn't have time to bring them in."

"Take it inside. If I have time, I'll arrange it. Just grab what you need for today. I'm going to shower."

"Yes... I mean, yes..."

Mae Kru heard the hesitation in the lieutenant's voice, understanding that she thought she wasn't planning to stay. But she agreed anyway, even in such a moment.

"Go shower. I'll bring it in... but can I at least pay rent? I feel uncomfortable staying for free. Consider it helping with groceries."

"Do whatever makes you comfortable, Lieutenant. I just want you to stay here."

Mae Kru walked into the house, leaving her unsure of what to say to make her understand. She scratched her eyebrow, a habit when she was unsure.

A gentle, refreshing breeze blew. She looked around, her eyes stopping at the statue of Ruesi Ta Fai in front of the school, remembering the stories Mae Kru had told her. Lieutenant Peem slowly walked closer, examining it carefully.

. .

It was typical of Lieutenant Peem to talk about rents and such things, but it was she who felt more insecure, not wanting to lose her.

Now, after spending the night together, she climbed the stairs, still not hearing or seeing Lieutenant Peem bringing things into the house, making her anxious enough to go back down.

She looked around the house, still not finding the lieutenant, so she walked to the door to check if her car was still there.

It was, indeed, still parked. She sighed in relief, finding her just a short distance away.

"What are you doing?"

Lieutenant Peem paused, tuming to see her standing by the door next to the school.

"I saw it was dusty, so I used a clean cloth from the car to wipe it. Things people worship should be cleaner. Or... is it forbidden to clean it?"

Lieutenant Peem did it out of goodwill, now unsure if she'd done something wrong, especially as Mae Kru walked toward her.

"It's the right thing to do. It's not forbidden..."

Instead of scolding, Mae Kru hugged her waist from behind, resting her chin on her shoulder, even though she had to bend slightly as she was taller.

"Aren't you going to shower?"

The lieutenant asked softly, turning to look at her.

"Ruesi Ta Fai has strong powers, dispelling black magic and curses."

"And... he doesn't dispel you?"

"I'm starting to believe that if you die young, it'll be because of your mouth."

"I didn't know, so I asked. I didn't mean any disrespect. If I die, the country loses a good cop."

Her hug tightened, her face pressing against her cheek.

"Everything in the world has a solution, and so the things unseen by the eye, too. There's good and bad. He dispels the bad. Understand?" "Do you know what I'm thinking but afraid to say, fearing he might hear?"

She whispered seriously.

"Go on."

Lieutenant Peem leaned in, whispering softly into her ear.

"Not just good, but ecstatic..."

She let go, shaking her head, walking back to the house, fearing they might really argue.

Though she had similar thoughts, she felt shy from her teasing, escaping before they both might die before the right time.

"Uh... sorry. It just popped into my head. I guess I need to make more merit. Don't be mad. I didn't mean it."

Seeing the statue's eyes staring at her, she quickly raised her hands to apologize.

.

.

**Sam Ngao District**

The closer they got to their destination, the more they saw the region's landscape, filled with mountains and trees of all sizes along the way.

She didn't know if this was the peak of their love, but the atmosphere in the car was good. They talked deeply about many things, mostly about life in Bangkok. Mae Kru listened intently, not interrupting.

At first, they sat properly, but Mae Kru Bulan decided to reach out and hold the lieutenant's hand. After that, Lieutenant Peem held her hand the entire way. Even when she had to shift gears, she'd do so and hold her hand again.

***Thud!***

The car door slammed shut after a winding journey of over two hours. In front of them stood a raised wooden house on an uneven ground. The surrounding area was devoid of other homes; if there were any, they were quite a distance away. Grass grew wildly everywhere except for the house itself and the entrance path.

"When I was a kid, I lived here. This was the old school of Por Kru, my father."

The lieutenant surveyed the surroundings, which was just an old wooden house that hadn't been used in a long time. It didn't look scary or unusual.

"It's good you moved. There are hardly any houses around here. If you got sick, it'd be tough, especially being a woman living alone."

While speaking, she didn't waste any time and grabbed a box of equipment from the back of the car, having learned the basic steps on the way there.

*Walking around to the back of the house, they saw an area resembling an open storage shed, enclosed tightly with wooden planks except for the front, which didn't even have a door.*

*The roof above was almost entirely rusted corrugated tin. Mae Kru's expression changed to one of serious determination. She held sixteen incense sticks in her hand and lit them skillfully with a lighter.*

*The red incense sticks were planted into the ground, with the lieutenant standing nearby, watching closely. Then, they both walked back to the storage shed and began preparing to light a medium-sized, old-fashioned iron smelting furnace using coke as fuel, It was clear that this place had been used to forge iron or bullets before, as there were nine-millimeter bullet molds lying around.*

*The furnace fire roared to life, radiating intense heat. Seven types of minerals were laid out in order on the table. Mae Kru had clearly instructed, emphasizing twice, that no matter what questions arose, the lieutenant shouldn't interrupt the ritual and wait until it was completed.*

*The metal crucible was grasped with long tongs and placed into the flames.*

*Soon, it turned a glowing red from the soaring temperature. Lieutenant Peem stood at a distance, occasionally glancing over but refraining from disturbing her ritual as instructed.*

*The sound of chanting or some kind of spell, unfamiliar to him, emanated from Mae Kru Bulan's lips in a commanding tone, repeating over and over.*

*As various minerals began to be poured into the crucible, the flames continued to blaze intensely. The solid materials melted into a silver liquid, and the chanting persisted.*

*There wasn't even a moment to catch a breath. The seven minerals were nearly all melted together, ready to be poured into the two nine-bullet molds, making a total of eighteen bullets.*

.

***Sattathisa***

***Awuthangrittha***

***Anuphawena***

***Patchechiwitang***

***Mamapata***

***Winassanti***

***Mama-a-u***

# Chapter 15. Trance

Mae Kru recited the incantation throughout the bullet casting process until it reached the almost final stage. A small, long stick resembling a brush, but not commonly seen in the market, with a white bristle tip, was dipped into the prepared golden ink. Mae Kru delicately touched the soft tip and began to write script adeptly onto the bullet, all while chanting the incantation

"This isn't something to be done carelessly. Use it only when necessary"

Mae Kru handed the wooden box containing the inscribed bullets to Lieutenant Peem for use, also instructing her on the spell to accompany the bullets before firing, in case her loved one might need to use them herself.

"If there are many of those people in this world, and they commit vile acts, what can we do if the police don't have enchanted bullets?"

Lieutenant Peem looked at the wooden box in Mae Kru's hands, not yet accepting it, and asked with a trembling voice.

"In science, there are tiny molecules that can't be seen with the naked eye and require magnification. The vast ocean still hasn't been fully explored. You must first believe that things beyond human capability exist. Faith is formless. How would we know something is evil if we don't first understand the fundamental virtue? People create everything from the belief that it can happen. You just need to believe and have faith. This world...still has the power of good; hence, the evils have the duty to destroy faith."

Her calm and clear words reflected her pure and clean thoughts, which reassured the tall figure listening. She then reached out to take the box and store it in the car.

"Thank you, Mae Kru."

This was the first time Lieutenant Peem addressed her with such respect, surprising her quite a bil.

"If there's no urgent business, I'll go upstairs to sweep the house and pay respects to Por Kru before leaving."

The tall figure closed the car door and looked up at the house.

"Yes, there's still a few hours left. We just need to allow time for traffic. But I have a question..."

"Por Kru also cast magical items here. I know you might wonder about that. I come here once or twice a year on special days. Por Kru was bom here and died here. His ashes are kept in this house, not taken to a temple or anywhere else. When there's a chance, I come to visit... My mother is at the temple."

"Has she passed away, too?"

"I thought you'd ask that. My mother became a maechi after Por Kru passed away, so she stays at the temple. But not many people know who my mother is. She was very beautiful, and Por Kru was very possessive of her, so she rarely met anyone."

"Judging by the daughter, even without saying, one can guess she must be very beautiful."

The slight smile on her face indicated that her words might've lightened her mood, even if she didn't smile broadly.

Stepping into the house, Lieutenant Peem picked up a broom to help lighten the load, then cleaned the area around Por Kru's ashes. It mightn't have been a grand gesture, but she wanted to repay Mae Kru Bulan's kindness.

Upon closer inspection, she noticed something strange. The old wooden house, though uninhabited, wasn't dusty. There was a constant breeze, yet no dirt, leaves, or cobwebs were present.

The wooden planks creaked loudly underfool, and she tried to step as lightly as possible. During this, she saw Mae Kru calling her over. Lieutenant Peem lifted her foot to step onto the raised wooden floor, higher than the house's veranda where she stood.

"Por Kru in, my father."

Lieutenant Peem looked up and respectfully bowed her head. Above was a picture of a large man with a stem, intimidating face, likely an old photo, as the colors had faded. The background resembled Mae Kru's school but with more items, indicating it was taken inside this house, which used to be Por Kru In's school.

Mae Kru noticed the awkward demeanor of the person beside her, unsure of what to say in. front of her father's picture. A smile formed at the corner of her mouth as she looked at her lovingly.

"When I was little, I liked to sit there."

Mae Kru Bulan pointed to the raised floor she'd just cleaned and walked over. The lieutenant lifted her gaze and bowed again to ask for permission before following her to sit beside her.

Mae Kru's head leaned against her lover's chest, and the tall figure turned to support her, allowing her to rest comfortably. Both legs, initially on the lower wooden floor, were lifted to stretch out but remained slightly bent. Lieutenant Peem, sitting behind, wrapped her arms around her slender waist, looking down at her with a gaze she'd never given anyone before.

***No people, no noise, just a gentle breeze amid nature and the two of them.***

.

Looking back, she saw only her lonely figure here. Now, in her place, she was with her. Her eyes sparkled as she looked at her lover's face, who was also gazing at her. Slowly, she raised her hand to touch her smooth cheek, gently guiding her closer.

*Their soft lips moved toward each other again, sharing a sweet kiss filled with love. Though it was nothing more than a passionate kiss, it lasted a long time as they were lost in a world devoid of everything around them. It was a moment to embrace their happiness tightly.*

.

**At the police station**

"Any updates, Lieutenant?"

The high-ranking officer at the head of the meeting table asked the female lieutenant sitting to his right.

"I've coordinated with the border patrol police, Captain. If they get any additional information, they'll inform us immediately."

"I'd like to know why we haven't caught them yet. Lieutenant Peem, you've encountered the criminals before. Do you have any useful insights?"

The captain asked the female officer again.

"I'm not sure if I should say this, but it shouldn't be in the report or released to the media. It might sound like an excuse."

"Go ahead, Lieutenant. I know you're a capable officer."

"Could it be possible that... they're using magic or have magical items?"

Her gaze met the man's eyes, and she spoke seriously, indicating she wasn't making baseless claims.

"I'm surprised that someone as modern as you believe in this. From what I've heard about you since you arrived, it seems quite the opposite. You know this can't be in the report, but do you truly believe it?"

She couldn't predict what the right answer would be, but she was willing to be seen as superstitious for once.

"If it's invisible and unprovable, believing in it shouldn't hurt, right?"

No one expected these words to come from the city woman.

"See, Captain? Finally! The lieutenant is starting to believe in this stuff. Mae Kru is amazing! One spell and our beautiful lieutenant changed her mind."

Sergeant Major Piak quickly added with satisfaction.

"Not too much, Sergeant. We're police officers. We can believe in these things, but they can't be written in the report. Don't you know how harshly kids criticize on social media these days? I don't mind anyone's beliefs. As the lieutenant said, believing doesn't hurt. But everything must be within the justice system. Let's investigate this case seriously so we can close it. As for the minor cases the lieutenant has taken over, it's lightened my load for other cases. Thank you."

"Yes, Captain."

"I have nothing more. You're dismissed."

"Yes, Captain."

The high-ranking officer left with an officer, likely to handle other important cases. Lieutenant Peem gathered the documents to file them properly.

"Lieutenant."

Sergeant Major Piak, who'd become quite close to Lieutenant Peem, moved closer to the opposite side of the table as if he had something important to say.

"Yes, Sergeant Major. What is it?"

She paused from her documents and looked up.

"I want to invite you to see something. Since you're in Tak, there's an important event you shouldn't miss."

"What event?"

"The annual festival. Today is the last day, and there's a parade. Do you know about it?"

"I've never heard of it."

"I knew it! Lieutenant, you must've never been to a temple fair like this before. They call it the 'Poy Luang Phra Borommathat Chedi Sri Muang Chod' festival. It's at Wat Thai Samakkhi. It's a big event every year, packed with people. There's a huge music stage. Think of it as helping to keep the peace at the event, Lieutenant."

"Sergeant Major, if you want to go, just go. I plan to finish up some paperwork quickly and then sneak back to that house for another look. With such a big event, everyone will be flocking there. The criminals might take that chance to do something."

"Lieutenant, don't you think they might show up at the event? It's a big merit-making event, Lieutenant. It's auspicious. Especially since we're dealing with a case involving some mysterious elements, maybe we could ask for some divine help."

"You're going too far, Sergeant Major. It's not that mysterious. I believe in it, but I'm not superstitious. I make merit almost every morning. The other day, you told me to seek help from Mae Kru. Now you want me to go to a temple fair. To catch the criminals in this case, we need a lot of things. If I keep going here and there, when will we catch them?"

"It's not the same, Lieutenant. This is a religious thing. Even Mae Kru goes to enhance her prestige."

"What... what did you say? Mae goes to the temple fair?"

"Yes, but call her Mae Kru, Lieutenant, not just Mae. Mae Kru goes every year. She's on the temple committee."

"It's not a temple fair with chanting and meditation, attended only by the elderly, right?"

"Of course not, Lieutenant, it's lively and bustling. Young men and women go and have a blast. In front of the stage, you can't tell whose kids are whose. Just because you see Priaw, don't judge too quickly. The handsome guys and pretty girls here are just as good as those in the city. There's plenty of food. I've seen you eating only boxed meals. I guarantee your heart will be full of merit and your stomach full of food."

"Alright, I'll go."

"Uh... I thought you'd be more resistant than this."

"I want to see the face of the person who said they'd just pray and sit around quietly."

"And... who do you mean, Lieutenant? Maybe I know them."

"Never mind. It won't be hard to find."

"Uh... did I say something wrong?"

Sergeant Major Piak asked, his voice uncertain because Lieutenant Peem's normally calm face suddenly turned serious about the festive event.

"No, thank you for inviting me, Sergeant Major. I'll take my car. Let me put these documents away first."

"Yes, Lieutenant!"

His voice was firm as he saluted, feeling pleased that he managed to pull Lieutenant Peem away from her work to enjoy the local event.

Even though she initially seemed uninterested, she swiftly strode out of the meeting room.

# Chapter 16.Watermelon

As they entered the bustling district of Mae Sot, the sound of loudspeakers began to penetrate the car intermittently. The streets were filled with various parades, some with serious floats and others with traditional Thai musical instruments like long drums. Beautiful young women danced gracefully in unison.

There were children, teenagers, and the elderly, all having fun, creating a lively atmosphere that made Sergeant Major Piak, who was sitting with the lieutenant, show signs of excitement, swaying along until he couldn't help but laugh.

"Is that the krua taan?"

Lieutenant Peem noticed something that was present in every parade- a bouquet of money arranged into various beautiful shapes used as an offering.

"Yes, Lieutenant. They will parade to the temple. Would you like to join them?"

Sergeant Major Piak, swaying his head, asked the young lieutenant cheerfully

"Sergeant Major, you seem so happy. Weren't you supposed to be stressed about the case with me?"

"Lieutenant, police officers are human too. Others have to work and need days off. You should, too. You're so young. Your brows are already furrowed. When we work, we give it our all. When it's time to rest, we should find happiness and motivation so that we can have the strength to work. Being a lieutenant is already an achievement. You should be very proud of yourself. If, by now, the criminals are smiling somewhere, and we, who protect the public, are the ones suffering, who'd want to be a police officer? After work, we need to live our lives and be with our families. You should have time to see your boyfriend. If you have a boyfriend and only work, you might end up arguing or breaking up."

"Breaking up?"

Sergeant Major Piak rambled on, but the tall figure only focused on the last sentence.

"Of course. One day, when you have a boyfriend, you'll understand. When you're with your loved one, you should talk about good things. If you bring work home, it only leads to frustration. We deal with bad people, and talking about it often can make us irritated and tired, leading to stress. From my twenty-three years of experience of marriage with one child."

And upon reflection, it was true as Sergeant Major said.

*The times when I let go of the heavy pressure I placed on myself felt like a real rest, and when I stopped talking about work or other people's issues while being with her, it was truly good. I'm not abandoning my duties, not being selfish, not turning my back on my family. I'm just...taking a break and searching for the meaning of happiness in my own life.*

*Even though I'm Thai, I didn't know such beautiful traditions existed. Looking out of the car window made me feel proud. This is the country I'm protecting. It should continue, be passed on, and be bettered.*

*People living simple, peaceful lives, singing, dancing, and having fun. Smiles mixed with laughter. The happiest memories of my life were probably from high school because I just thought that when I grew up, I wouldn't be able to have fun anymore. I hadn't heard my own laughter since then.*

*"Our country is truly beautiful, Lieutenant. There may be bad people, but there are still good things and good people for us to take care of and protect."*

*.*

The tall figure nodded slightly, and when thinking about the times spent with Mae Kru Bulan, a smile appeared unknowingly. The feelings in the words began to turn into longing.

"Sergeant Major,"

While trying to find a parking spot, she decided to ask Sergeant Major Piak since she trusted him.

"Yes, Lieutenant?"

"What if I like women? What do you think, Sergeant Major?"

"There it is! I knew it! Priaw told me she could see it in your eyes. What can I say? Even though I'm old, my heart is still young. The world has come a long way. My daughter also likes dating women. Have you seen that Stephantom?"

"It's Stephan, Sergeant Major."

"Her name is Si-Ew, Lieutenant. Stephan is what she calls herself because she thinks it's cool. But they don't study much, so I want them to stay apart. Why didn't you tell me earlier, Lieutenant?"

"I wasn't hiding it, but I didn't like anyone that way, so I didn't know how to say it. I just think that, for me, it depends on who the person is."

"So, do you have someone you like now?"

"Well... kind of."

"Don't tell me you like...!"

Sergeant Major Piak's eyes widened in shock.

"You know?"

"Do you like Priaw, my daughter?"

"Oh, Sergeant Major... you scared me. No."

"I thought I'd get a lieutenant as a daughter-in-law, but I forgot. You probably don't like circus monkeys."

"Don't be too harsh on her. She's still your daughter, Sergeant Major. She might just need time to improve her makeup skills as she grows older."

"I think you'll be popular. Soon, the station will be full of pretty girls. You have good looks, good hearts, and so charming."

"Please, I still want to have a place to sleep. And I'm not that charming."

The tall figure unbuckled her seatbelt and immediately opened the door to get out of the car.

. .

The entrance to the temple was filled with noisy parades, so they had to walk in. Many high scaffolds were set up to install colorful lights as far as the eye could see. Most women wore traditional outfits, beautifully blending Thai culture with that of Myanmar.

Sergeant Major Piak, who'd probably been here many times, still looked excited, pointing out things to Lieutenant Peem, boasting about how crowded it was in previous years or nights.

He couldn't help but tease, pointing out beautiful women in the parade, each with different stunning looks.

Lieutenant Peem had to lightly punch his arm to playfully threaten him to stop encouraging her to flirt with this girl or that girl. But knowing it was just a joke and seeing the wide smile, something he hadn't seen since she moved here, he teased her even more.

"Or... do you like fair-skinned women?"

His mischievous eyes glanced, hoping to get an answer from the tall figure.

"Enough, Sergeant Major. Stop teasing me. Are we going to make merit today?"

Previously, she might've scolded with her eyes, but this time, she had to speak up, though her tone lacked seriousness.

"I'm happy to see Tak girls make you smile, Lieutenant."

"If you don't stop. I'll really make you go back alone, Sergeant Major."

It was because she kept smiling while talking that Sergeant Major Piak got even more carried away. Though he stopped teasing with words, he still teased with his eyes, pointing out the dancers at the entrance.

Inside the temple grounds, the booming bass and echoing voices indicated that a large music stage wasn't far away. In front and beside the temple, traditional Thai orchestras played lively tunes, making it hard to decide which side to listen to first.

The sea of people made it seem like finding someone here wouldn't be as easy as I thought.

"Lieutenant, who are you looking for here?"

"Oh, right."

"So embarrassed by the girls that you forgot, huh, Lieutenant?"

"Sergeant Major, you're the one distracting me."

"I didn't do anything. It's the girls."

"Don't mention this at the station, Sergeant Major."

"Yes, ma'am! I won't mention it at the station."

"Okay, where should we go first?"

They'd gone out of the station in the evening, and by the time they found a parking spot and got in, it was already dark. Not being a local, she didn't know where to start.

"Let me take you around first. The ordination hall must be packed with people. Once the youngsters go to the music stage, I'll take you to pay respects to Luang Por Tan Jai. The golden ordination hall is magnificent."

Talking about the golden ordination hall gave me the answer that it must be the tall, shining structure I was looking up at now.

"I'm a bit thirsty."

"Then you must try the famous watermelon smoothie. I'll take you there. It's sweeeet and refreshing, I guarantee it, Lieutenant."

"Is it that good?"

"Follow me, Lieutenant."

The lively atmosphere and curiosity from attending such an event for the first time in her life made the lieutenant eager to know where Mae Kru Bulan was. But she'd probably find her eventually.

Knowing she was helping as a temple committee member, she might be busy. It was also good to meet many local police officers who maintained order and exchanged ideas and useful information about Tak province, though not in a serious work context, with Sergeant Major Piak helping to build relationships.

The market area was filled with numerous stalls on both sides, offering delicious food and sweets Though there were many people, it wasn't as crowded as she thought

And no wonder Sergeant Major Piak wanted to invite her to this smoothie shop.

The vendor wearing a red spaghetti strap top, had a chest as big as the watermelons displayed at the front. She put on heavy makeup, and her neckline was precariously low. It was hard to tell if it was intentional or not.

While waiting for her order, Lieutenant Peem tried hard to look elsewhere, awkwardly scratching the end of her eyebrow with her fingertip.

She'd never felt like this before, especially around another woman. It'd always seemed normal. It wasn't that she was thinking anything inappropriate; she was just puzzled why she suddenly couldn't look al something like this anymore.

Maybe she should just look at her. It was just a woman's body, after all. She wasn't going to lose to something like this. She'd seen plenty in her life without feeling tense.

For a brief moment, she forced herself to look at the smoothie being blended, hoping to stand naturally and not pay attention to things she shouldn't. But she quickly had to look back at the watermelons, even raising her hand to shield her eyes. Her gaze stubbornly drifted to the cleavage instead of the blending smoothie.

"Do you want anything else, Lieutenant? I saw you looking around."

"Sergeant Major, get the smoothie for me. I'm going to check out the temple to calm my mind."

"Sure, Lieutenant. I'll catch up with you soon. Don't wander too far."

"I'm not a child, Sergeant Major."

Seeing Sergeant Major Piak laugh in response, she walked away to breathe easier.

.

.

**The closer she got to the temple, the more she found herself squeezed between young men and women, her shoulders brushing against others constantly.**

Music played non-stop, and the scent of incense and candles mixed with the perfume of the women at the event filled her nostrils. As she admired the surroundings, her sharp eyes unexpectedly caught sight of a beautiful woman. It felt warm, like coming home, reminiscent of scenes from movies or dramas. The people around seemed to slow down, making her stand out clearly. Long tables lined up in front of the temple wall held trays of flowers, incense sets, and donation boxes.

Mae Kru Bulan wore a white outfit with a maroon traditional skirt contrasting her skin. Her hair was neatly pinned up with a beautiful hairpin, with a lock of hair left loose on one side, making her even more attractive. She sat in front of a wooden donation box, behaving with the decorum typical of her nature. She helped an elderly woman arrange flowers on a golden tray before returning to her seat.

## 'Didn't you say you'd just sit around... why do you have to look so beautiful?'

It was a thought in her head that she didn't realize she'd spoken it out loud. She continued to watch her from a distance, not taking her eyes off her, feeling both admiration and pride in her, even though she didn't know she was being watched. She smiled widely countless times that day, but this was the longest-lasting smile

Mae Kru wasn't pretending to be good or trying to get people to worship her. It was just because she was herself, as she always was. Mae Kru Bulan, whether in front of her students or out of sight, was just herself; she might've fallen in love with her already and only just realized it now.

# Chapter 17. Soulmate

**"There you are. Here, the soothie, Lieutenant."**

The chubby officer didn't have to look long for the lieutenant who came with him. He found her easily due to her distinctive appearance. "Hold on, Sergeant Major. Should we go check that out?"

Lieutenant Peem stood with her arms crossed, watching intently. She signaled Sergeant Major Piak to look at something that seemed out of place. A large group of teenagers and middle-aged men crowded around a table, blocking the view of Mae Kru and obstructing people trying to get flowers, incense, and candles to offer to the Buddha image.

"These guys are always causing trouble. I'll go check it out, Lieutenant."

"Alright,"

Lieutenant Peem replied in a firm tone.

She wanted to go herself but hesitated since it wasn't her jurisdiction.

.

.

**In front of the table with offerings and a donation box**

"Come on, Mae Kru, when will you tattoo a man? We won't misuse it. We may look rough, but we're not bad people. We make an honest living."

The middle-aged man persisted despite Mae Kru's displeased expression.

She remained silent, not wanting to engage in the conversation and tarnish herself.

"Get out of here! Mae Kru said no, so it's a no. Move along! This is a religious event; don't ruin it."

An elderly woman sitting nearby helped shoo them away, waving her hand in annoyance.

"What's going on?"

Sergeant Major Piak walked around to the back of Mae Kru's chair to investigate.

"These guys are pestering Mae Kru for a tattoo,"

The old woman answered for her.

"Come on, don't bother us. We're just talking to Mae Kru nicely."

"Hey, if you're not here for the merit-making, then move along."

Sergeant Major Piak, known for his kindness, was familiar to many of the local youths, so they didn't take him seriously.

.

.

***FWEET!!***

A loud whistle from behind cut through the music, making all the teenagers turn to look.

"If you're here to pay respects to the Buddha image, please grab what you need and move along. This is a public space. Crowding like this blocks the way and disturbs others"

Lieutenant Peem, the source of the whistle, finally spoke up, her voice stem and commanding.

"Who's this pretty lady? We're not bothering anyone. No one's complaining."

A tall, bold man wearing a thick gold chain walked through the group toward Lieutenant Peem She'd been observing the tense situation, understanding that no one dared speak up for fear of trouble.

"I'm complaining right now."

Her sharp eyes met the man's without a hint of fear, even as he approached closely.

"I like strict women Or maybe you want to do some good deeds with me? A pretty lady like you has got a boyfriend yet? Maybe I'll make you mine."

He reached out to grab her chin.

***Grab. Twist. Thud!***

Lieutenant Peem didn't want to resort to this, but she couldn't let a thug disrespect her. She grabbed his wrist, twisted his arm, and kicked his knee, making him kneel.

Her swift and agile move shocked everyone watching. She then lifted her jacket to reveal the gun at her waist, indicating she was a police officer.

"Police brutality! You can be sued for this!"

The young man shouted, pointing at her.

"Threatening, harassing, and defaming others is a crime. There are plenty of witnesses. Want to file a complaint? I'll get a lawyer."

"Ouch, ouch! It hurts!"

The man cried, ignoring everything but the pain in his twisted arm.

"I know you're strong. The police station has plenty of space for strong people like you. Use your strength for good, Bullying others isn't cool" Lieutenant Peem released him, and as he stood, he stared at her, signaling his men to stay quiet.

"I'm really interested in you now. See you at the station. I'm Suea, handsome and rich"

"Then use your money for some good deeds."

"Hey, go put some money in the donation box. I want to make merit with this pretty officer."

He shouted to his men, pulling out a thousand-baht bill to donate.

"I've done as you suggested, officer."

His cunning eyes were still fixed on her. Annoyed, she turned away, sighing loudly to show her irritation

"Let's go! We don't want to make the pretty officer angry."

As the leader left, his minions quickly followed. Lieutenant Peem hadn't expected this outcome.

"That was amazing, Lieutenant. You handled Suea perfectly... No wonder you're a favorite among the ladies"

Sergeant Major Piak praised her, walking over as she approached, not noticing her annoyed glance.

"Do you believe me now that sometimes you're too kind, Sergeant Major?"

Lieutenant Peen moved to the side of the table near the donation box to avoid blocking others, noticing Mae Kru sitting quietly, not even looking at her.

"I was strict, but did they listen? Here's the watermelon smoothie you wanted, Lieutenant."

The chubby officer handed her the drink.

"You must really like big watermelons."

***Ueeeegh!!***

Mae Kru Bulan's icy voice and piercing gaze made Lieutenant Peem choke on her drink. The stern look was more intimidating than when the men were pestering her earlier.

"I've tattooed Tuptim many times. That's why you want to drink her watermelon juice"

Her cold voice sent shivers down Lieutenant Peem's spine.

"Please throw this away, Sergeant Major. It's too sweet, not good for my health."

Lieutenant Peem handed the drink back to Sergeant Major Piak.

"It seems fine to me. Or do you not like sweet things?"

Sergeant Major Piak looked at the drink, disappointed.

"Have you made merit yet, Mae Kru?"

Lieutenant Peem asked politely.

"I've made merit with the temple, but I'll pray for another hour before leaving. Have you made merit yet, Lieutenant? Or were you too busy becoming a favorite among the young and old?"

Mae Kru Bulan's seemingly normal question carried hidden meanings that Lieutenant Peem understood well.

"It's like you can see everything. Honestly, since she attended your ritual, she's changed a lot. She's happier and believes in magic now. At first, she didn't want to come, but when she heard there were beautiful ladies, she decided to come right away."

"Uh... Sergeant Major, that's not..."

"On the way here, we passed a parade of beautiful dancers. The lieutenant smiled so much. I've never seen her smile at work. Today, she smiled the widest. I could barely hold my laughter. When we bought a watermelon smoothie from Tuptim, she blushed so much."

Before Lieutenant Peem could finish, Sergeant Major Piak continued, hoping to praise Mae Kru.

"Sergeant Major..."

Lieutenant Peem's stern voice was now quiet as if she was struggling to breathe.

"Don't worry, Lieutenant. You told me not to tell anyone at the station. This is just Mae Kru She won't spread it."

At this point, scratching his eyebrow until it bled wouldn't help. She rubbed her temples, feeling more hopeless than when she couldn't catch a criminal. "Which girl do you like, Lieutenant? Tell Mae Kru now that you're here."

"I used to think I had divine protection that keeps me safe. But now I see my bad luck is right in front of me."

Lieutenant Peem looked at the officer in front of her, feeling utterly defeated.

"Did Mae Kru predict bad luck for you?"

Sergeant Major Piak asked, alarmed.

"Stay here, Lieutenant. When I'm done, I'll take you to pray. It mightn't just be bad luck, your fate could be at stake."

Mae Kru's voice was low and serious:

"Sergeant Major, take my car back to the station. If I don't show up tomorrow, continue working on the case for me."

"Don't say that, Lieutenant. You're safe with Mae Kru."

"Thank you, Sergeant Major. If I could turn back time, I wouldn't be close to you."

"Lieutenant, you're quite the joker now. Still thirsty? I'll get you another drink."

"It's alright, Sergeant Major. My throat isn't dry. Instead, it's soaked with blood."

"Oh! Want to come to the front of the stage with me, Lieutenant? I'll show you the girls dancing. My mischievous daughter is here too, but I don't know where she went."

"The view here is nice enough, Sergeant Major. Go find your daughter. No need for me to go there. I won't be able to escape death anyway."

The tall figure handed the car keys to Sergeant Major Piak and gently pushed him to hurry away from the area.

"How will you get back, Lieutenant?"

"I'll get back somehow, Sergeant Major. Just go quickly."

And so, the female police lieutenant turned into a donation box attendant, not much different from a temple committee member. Lieutenant Peem stood awkwardly behind the chair of the slender figure, who hadn't turned to speak a word to her even as the crowd thinned out.

"Well..."

Feeling overwhelmed by anxiety, the tall figure squatted down beside the chair, using the table as cover, and lightly tapped the slender figure's leg with her fingertip. The woman looked down.

"The truth is, I came because I knew you'd be here. At first, I said I wouldn't come because I thought it'd be a small temple event where you'd just sit and pray. And the big smiles were just because I admired the culture."

Lieutenant Peem tried to explain every word carefully. The slender figure on the chair didn't respond; she just placed her hand on her head and gently stroked it. Then, she put it back on her lap. Although feeling a bit better, the lieutenant still wasn't sure what the other was thinking.

"Mae Kru, you can go home now, so you won't get back home too late. My granddaughter will come to help."

Mae Kru Bulan nodded in agreement, picked up her small handbag from in front of her, and got up from the chair. Seeing this, the tall figure followed her out.

Holding a basket of fruit, she walked alongside the slender figure. The chaos seemed to disappear instantly, and time felt like it slowed down. The beauty of the temple's art was fully visible now that the crowd had thinned.

The statue of Rahu stood prominently at the temple entrance, surrounded by beautiful wood carvings and numerous sacred objects worshipped by the people. There were also many statues of Vessavana. The golden ordination hall stood majestically in front, with a white cement floor inside and a red ceiling adorned with intricate patterns, resembling an ancient hall.

Kneeling down to pay respects, one could see the golden Buddha image under the nine- headed naga, with arahant statues behind. The meticulously decorated baci displayed the community's cooperation and deep faith in the temple.

Inside, there were no real incense or candles. After paying respects and making wishes, they placed the fruit basket down and walked back to the door. Strangely, the path was almost deserted for a moment.

The lieutenant's eyes were still fixed on Mae Kru Bulan, who was lifting her skirt to step out of the temple door, her heart continued to silently praise her until she reached the front

Her beautiful face and radiant eyes were full of happiness. For the first time, she saw her smile with her own eyes, confident that she held no grudge.

. .

*"****Phuttha. Thamma. Sangha. May the Buddha and the angels protect you. May the divine power grant you luck and wealth. Namo phutthaya. May your charm lead you to great things in life. May you be safe when traveling. If Evil comes to obstruct your life, I pray they're defeated. When you face hardships in life, I pray they won't be too harsh on you. May all your karmic enemies from your past and present spare you. May you be protected from all accidents. May your career prosper. When you desire something, I pray life grants you each and every one of them. And lastly, may you...be with me till death do us part..."***

. .

Eyes that once held only loneliness now gazed at the beloved face, conveying almost all the feelings in her heart.

***"This is it, the widest smile... in the world..."***

The lieutenant raised her finger to point at her own lips.

# Chapter 18.Put in her Mouth

**"Oh, what a coincidence..."**

Before they could walk out together, a petite young woman darted in front of the tall figure, twisting and turning.

"Priaw..."

Lieutenant Peem exclaimed in surprise, not expecting to see her here.

"As soon as my dad said you were here, I ditched my friends and came running because I missed you so much, Lieutenant."

"Calm down, Priaw. Go back and focus on your studies to make your dad proud."

"Mae Kru, please help me. Since you've already warded off bad luck for the lieutenant, can you also make her love me? I promise I'll study hard, Mae Kru."

Mae Kru had been watching from the beginning without showing any displeasure, knowing that Priaw was a local girl often seen around and had heard her name from her mother's complaints.

"The lieutenant likes someone who's curvy and voluptuous. Someone skinny like you mightn't be her type I suggest you not to bother her, she has an evil spirit following her."

"Evil spirit!!"

The young girl exclaimed in shock. Even the lieutenant, knowing it might be a prank, was startled by the intensity of the joke.

"Yes, an evil spirit. If you get too close to her, it might strangle or gut you. Today, the spint is holding back because it's a merit-making day. Don't let it do such a thing to you."

The lieutenant's lips, which had been smiling widely, were now pressed tightly together, understanding the spirit Mae Kru had mentioned and fearing the atmosphere on the way home. Seeing Mae Kru walk ahead without waiting, she hurried to catch up.

"L-lieutenant, do you really have an evil spirit following you?"

"Y-yeah, Priaw. You should go. The later you stay, the more dangerous it might be."

"Are you worried about me, Lieutenant?"

"No... I'm worried about myself. Excuse me."

With that, the tall figure hurriedly followed the slender figure.

.

.

**Inside the car...**

"Are you hungry? Have you eaten anything?"

The lieutenant behind the wheel asked, noticing the gloomy atmosphere.

"Have you ever seen me eat dinner?"

"Now that you mention it, no."

"That's because I don't eat."

Though not angry, the tone suggested lingering displeasure

"Sorry for upsetting you."

Lieutenant Peem reached out to lift the siender hand of the person beside her, kissing the back of it repeatedly, holding it close to her nose, inhaling the familiar scent, and kissing it again.

"I'm not upset, and you didn't do anything wrong. I'm just possessive of what's mine."

The tall figure smiled widely, showing teeth, glanced over, and kissed the back of the hand again.

"Did you bring Thong to the temple fair today?"

The sharp eyes looked surprised, not expecting the question.

"I had him guard the house. Couldn't bring him along."

"Is it true that kuman thongs like to drink red syrup?"

"And you like watermelon smoothie."

Hearing this from Mae Kru, the lieutenant smiled widely and laughed, confident that the possessiveness was real and endearing rather than annoying.

"Why does the watermelon smoothie story always come up? There's nothing sweeter than..."

Though more expressive with Mae Kru, the tall figure, being naturally shy about such matters, hesitated to joke about it, especially since Mae Kru disliked such talk.

"How can I believe that?"

"I'll prove it to you tonight."

Though unspoken, the exchanged glances conveyed mutual understanding.

"Are you happy being with me?"

"Whether working or driving to see you, I always think of your face."

"If you tell anyone, they'll think I casted a spell on you."

The lieutenant smiled and laughed again, which the slender figure noticed. It went without saying that the lotus in Mae Kru Bulan's heart was blooming happily.

.

**Mae Kru Bulan's House**

*The kiss, which was a greeting, began downstairs as they entered the house. The woman in traditional attire turned and kissed her lover without warning.*

*The car's engine had just cooled down outside, but the heat within Lieutenant Peem's body was just beginning to rise, eagerly returning the kiss. Their tongues intertwined, exploring each other's mouths.*

*Their lips pressed tightly until the slender figure pushed the tall figure's face away, searching for an answer. She stopped the kiss she iniliated, lightly patting the tall figure's chest, signaling to calm down.*

"So this is the person who just tamed Suea of Mae Sot."

The tall figure smiled, shaking her head, not expecting Mae Kru Bulan to tease about it.

"Well, the city thugs carry a gun, and the reason I was mad was because he approached my lotus first."

The slender hand caressed the tall figure's cheek, smiling at her lover's serious expression, not expecting Lieutenant Peem to be so fiercely possessive.

"He's influential here. I want you to be careful"

"Don't underestimate me. No one is above the law. In Thailand, we're all under the same law rich or poor, wearing a golden necklace or not. Don't let me see that again, or I might break the law myself."

"If you want a golden necklace, I'll buy you one."

The slender figure laughed softly.

"And if I don't want that, but..."

The tall figure's lips and face moved closer until their noses touched. Mae Kru's hand quickly intervened, preventing another kiss.

Lieutenant Peem looked up at the slender figure, who left her hanging and walked up the stairs, perhaps teasing her back. Did she know that doing this only made the fire in her burn more strongly?

With the bedroom and bathroom separate in Mae Kru Bulan's house, the tall figure found the slender figure holding clothes from the wardrobe, about to enter the bathroom. But before she could get in, she was caught and hugged from behind.

"I'm all sweaty... and won't sleep comfortably."

It was a reasonable excuse, as the slender figure had mentioned hating the smell of sweat ppreferring to be clean before touching her lover. Of course, the lieutenant didn't intend to join the shower. knowing Mae Kru mightn't like it.

"If you keep teasing me... there will be consequences."

The whisper wasn't a statement but a soft breath in the slender figure's ear by Lieutenant Peem. Then, she released Mae Kru from the embrace to let her enter the bathroom.

.

After half an hour, the bedroom door opened, revealing Mae Kru Bulan in her usual nightwear, which seemed inappropriate for sleeping.

Lieutenant Peem, having finished her shower shortly before, sal against the headboard, checking her phone but putting it down as Mae Kru climbed into bed beside her.

## Clink~

The ankle bell rang, but she didn't pay attention to its proximity.

"He seems to know you asked about him, so he came "

"Is he in this room?"

Feeling strange, her eyes stopped at the foot of the bed.

"He's in the room, laughing."

"Laughing at what?"

"Watching us together."

"Oh... cheeky kid."

"He said you missed me."

The slender figure's voice softened, hoping the tall figure wouldn't feel scared.

"So he's your spy. I was only just saying, 'When will she get out of the bathroom?'"

Right after she said that, Mae Kru kissed the lieutenant's forehead as she approached

"Who said there will consequences tonight?"

The challenging tone was typical of Mae Kru Bulan, whom Lieutenant Peem knew.

"Can you ask the kuman thong to leave? What happens next isn't for kids." "He heard..."

*Their tongues touched before their lips met. Their bodies moved closer, almost merging into one.*

*Without the lengthy preludes, the lieutenant's hands roamed and squeezed her lover's body without regard for propriety. Her embarrassment was no more since the last time. She wanted to see her lover's bare skin.*

*Imagining the graceful Mae Kru Bulan in public, her possessiveness fueled the night's passion.*

*And there were enough to make her leave bruises all over her breasts, overlapping the old ones that hadn't yet faded. The scanty clothes she wore were meant to cover just enough to excite the eyes and imaginations, even though she knew they'd soon be discarded without care.*

*Both of them were on their knees, their stomachs pressed and rubbed against each other, creating a thrilling friction throughout their bodies. Neither side was willing to give in, yet they pushed harder until one inadvertently squeezed the lieutenant's slender arm, leaving red finger marks.*

*They exchanged passionate kisses, alternating with neck nibbles. Mae Kru let the lieutenant leave love marks as she pleased while also supporting her own breasts to feed into her mouth. One hand squeezed and kneaded the other's buttocks, unwilling to let go; the other hand clung tightly to the waist as if afraid she'd disappear.*

*She knew the lieutenant wanted to show that no one or nothing could please her more than her. But when her nipple slipped out of her mouth, or she licked but missed the spot she wanted, she showed frustration. Only when she put it in her mouth would her face light up with satisfaction, like when she cooked a dish to her liking.*

*Her lips sucked and licked, wet but not annoyingly sticky, because she'd soon suck it back in and dry it in her mouth. The sensation alternated between thrilling and sharp pain at her nipples Sometimes, it tickled so much she had to moan.*

*Seeing her lover using the tip of his nose to nuzzle her pink nipples with such fervor, she wondered where the lieutenant got such strength. But it fulfilled her great desire to indulge in camal pleasures with her. The more she saw how much she craved her body, the happier she became.*

*"Are you happy seeing me bruised like this? It takes time for me to do my makeup."*

*It wasn't a scolding but a curious question. The lieutenant's lips trailed kisses up again, deliberately sucking hard under her sharp jawline.*

*She had to layer an expensive foundation with concealer and top it with powder to cover these marks while the lieutenant just lay there with satisfaction, watching her battle with her reflection in the mirror for a long time.*

*"Okay... I won't do it anymore,"*

*He replied in a soft voice.*

*"I have students. If they see these, it won't look good."*

*Her hand still caressed the lieutenant's face, hoping she wouldn't misunderstand.*

*"Letting yourself be surrounded like that, don't you think it wouldn't look good either? I thought I wouldn't bring this up again."*

*At first, she didn't know the source of the lieutenant's immense strength, but it turned out she was displeased about something, yet she hadn't told her.*

*The lieutenant turned away, looking at something else, clearly trying to control her emotions.*

*"If you don't tell me, how will I know what you mean?"*

*This time, the lieutenant didn't answer but turned back to kiss her lips instead. She kissed her back, not wanting to upset her. Her immense strength visibly weakened, so she decided to pull away, ending the kiss herself.*

*She moved to sit against the high pillows at the head of the bed, pulling her to sit close in her embrace.*

*They needed to talk it out, as continuing would only leave both of them uneasy.*

# Chapter 19. Sweet Words

**The lieutenant continued to sit nestled in the one-arm embrace of her lover, who was currently pressing kisses on her temple and neck and using the other hand to gently stroke her head, helping to calm her mind.**

"What are you upset with me about?"

The slender figure rested her sharp chin on the shoulder and leaned her cheek against it.

"I'm not upset it's just... I was afraid...,"

The tall figure replied softly, sounding worried.

"Since I've known you, I've never seen you afraid of anything. If I can help, I would."

Even though Mae Kru turned the lieutenant's face to look at her, Lieutenant Peem still chose to avoid eye contact.

"I know you're respected here, so I don't want to overthink about such a little thing and get irritated."

Lieutenant Peem said in a flat voice.

"And what's the little thing you're overthinking about? Because right now, it seems like a big deal to me,"

The sweet voice of Mae Kru trying to comfort her lover gradually became firmer and more intense, as speaking kindly didn't seem to get the truth out. "Today, you still love and want me, so you order me to stay. One day, when you're bored, you'll probably kick me out without a second thought."

"I love you so much; how could you think about me like that?"

The arms that were hugging immediately let go in anger. Her fingers lifted the strap of the fallen bra back onto the shoulder, thinking that tonight they'd surely sleep with their backs turned to each other.

## "Before, I thought I didn't love you, so I didn't care. Now I know I truly love you, and that's why I'm scared..."

A deep sigh was released along with a bowed head, not saying anything about being pushed away.

Mae Kru Bulan's heart was pounding so hard it couldn't be hidden. Her eyelids blinked rapidly in disbelief, but she didn't expect that when she said that, it'd feel so wonderful.

Throughout her life, she'd heard many beautifully crafted sweet words but felt nothing.

This was the first time she said she loved her, and it was from the person she'd been waiting for, even if she didn't know if she truly existed.

"Can you...say that again for me?"

"I'm sleepy,"

The lieutenant said, burying her head in the pillow and closing her eyes tightly as if nothing had happened.

***Whack!***

The slender hand lightly slapped the arm in frustration.

"Get up. I know you're not sleepy. Don't lie to me."

"Hey! Assaulting an officer is a crime, you know?"

She said, pretending to cry out loud and laughing when she saw Mae Kru pouting, something she'd never seen before.

"I heard you say you love me clearly just now."

She shook her arm to make her get up, and with affection, she sat up and turned to her.

"Well, you did hear it."

"Will it hurt to say it again?"

"I love you... I love you the way I've never loved anyone before. I truly love you,"

She said, looking deeply into Mae Kru's eyes.

"Then why did you make me worry?"

"Who should be worried... why did you let those people surround you without doing anything? Not even telling them to leave. I watched the whole time, and I had to handle it. Normally, you're not one to back down. Letting them harass you for so long makes me wonder why you didn't think to make it serious"

"If I say something, it'll be harsh, and I know it'll cause chaos. If I hadn't promised to go before meeting you, I wouldn't have gone, and you should know why. Do you think I'm not afraid? If you accidentally like someone else, I'd do some terrible things."

"You don't have to do anything because if anyone bothers you again, even if it's a sin, I'll handle it myself"

"If reincarnation is real, I'm not surprised why it took so long for you to be bom. You were probably repaying karma."

"And... what's wrong with having a younger lover?"

"You haven't fully satisfied me,"

She said, their faces getting closer as they spoke. After talking it out, the sweet, teasing tone returned, along with the unresolved emotions.

"Who knows? If I get serious, maybe I will,"

She said, grabbing her leg and pulling her onto her lap.

"At this age, how can I compete with you? Show me. Even if you suck me red all over, I won't complain."

.

***Rip!!***

*The sound of Mae Kru's lace underwear was the response to the deliberate challenge, even though she knew how the lieutenant would react before it got too late in the night, it was time to give the lieutenant the sweet lotus juice to savor before bed.*

*She lowered herself until the lieutenant's tongue touched her love channel. Her fingers gripped the base of the other's hair. The other hand held the headboard. The lieutenant pulled her hips down, not letting her tense up so her tongue could reach the deepest part.*

## "Mmm-"

*Her sweet moans echoed in the room, alternating with trembling groans. Mae Kru ground her hips against the lieutenant's tongue's rhythm.*

*Every time the lieutenant sucked, it sent shivers through her body as if she was draining her strength. She bit her lower lip, her face filled with agony.*

*The long fingers slipped in without warning, wiggling rapidly until she had to lift her hips to retreat, but the lieutenant pressed her down. She felt the wetness of her own love channel being licked dry. The fingers pressed her sensitive spot, his wrist shook to* *extract more sweet juice.*

## "Ah... mmm!"

*Mae Kru moaned. The long fingers still stroked her heavenly lotus under her navel, making her pelvis tense with pleasure. The hand moved up to squeeze her breast, leasing her nipple playfully. She liked to squeeze it hard until her white breast flesh overflowed between her fingers, alternating with light caresses, making her anticipate the touch.*

## "Hrk ! Mmm..."

*When the lieutenant heard her sobbing moan, she knew she was at her limit, combined with her hand gripping her hair tightly.*

*But the pain only made her tense her fingers more, feeling her clench around her, confident she had enough strength for more rounds until Mae Kru collapsed on the pillow with exhaustion.*

## "Ahh!!!~"

*Her body trembled, then convulsed, releasing clear fluid for her to savor. She licked every drop, not letting any go to waste.*

*Her breath came out in soft gasps, filled with happiness. She looked down at the lieutenant. who was savoring her sweet juice with eyes closed, her hand now stroking her head.*

*Her loving eyes gazed at Lieutenant Peem, who now had her under control. Not only was she as obedient as she thought, but sometimes, she was surprisingly fierce and daring to resist. Most importantly, she met her intimate needs excellently.*

## Bzzz~~

The phone vibrated, waking them at the usual time. The lieutenant still lay on Mae Kru Bulan's warm chest, but her ears were alert, you hearing the sound and feeling her move, dialing someone.

***Bzzz~~***

## Bzzz~~

"Who are you secretly calling so early?"

The voice came from her chest, even though the speaker hadn't opened her eyes.

"Come on... You just woke up, and now you're picking a fight with me? What kind of person are you? If I were sneaking it. I'd have gotten up already."

"It's so early. Normally, you don't call anyone."

## "Ye, Mae Ku, what ya like?"

A man's voice with a broken Thai replied. It was likely a worker from the neighboring country.

"Get the usual: vegetables and chicken, add pork belly, pork neck, and find me some ripe papayas to make som tam for my husband. Get nice ones."

## "Mae Ku, ya haf husban?"

"Yes, a police officer. Be careful. Speak Thai properly. While talking, she glanced at him, smiling mischievously in her chest, seemingly in a good mood, before ending the call.

"What's his name? If you tell me, I won't go to the market to check his work permit."

"His name is Kham. He pushes carts in the market. When I'm too lazy to go myself, I have him deliver fresh produce every three or four days."

Lieutenant Peem, still not fully awake, moved up her body, kissing Mae Kru's white chest and the cleft between her breasts.

"I'm starting to wonder if being Mae Kru makes you this rich,"

She said, squinting up at her. her restless hands squeezing her breasts and sides.

"I donate all of the money offered to Por Kae and the service fee. As for the lump sum, I invest."

"And where do you get the lump sum? I might have to audit your assets."

"When my students succeed and do well in business as they wish, they give me what they want. I don't force them."

"Are you laundering money, Madam Market Owner?"

"Lieutenant, you really know me well."

"If I don't investigate my wife, then who would I investigate?"

"Don't tell that to others, I don't like to brag. I don't want anyone to know."

"Beautiful Mae Kru, you are under arrest. From now on, there will be a search of the assets on your body. You have the right to not say anything, but you are allowed to moan. Give me a sweet smile, and I'll reduce your sentence by half."

With mischievous eyes and hands, she grabbed her own T-shirt from the bed and tied the slender wrists together.

She knew she was just teasing to get something. Even though she wasn't very good at or fond of this kind of thing, she didn't think to stop her since she didn't tie her up tightly. She saw it as the happiness of her lover, who'd already disappeared under the blanket.

## "Mmm~"

The slender figure slipped out of the bondage and grabbed a big pillow instead, as both legs were spread and raised.

Since it was the weekend, Mae Kru's school was busier than usual. Lieutenant Peem's car was still parked at the station, which was good because it didn't block the entrance and didn't raise any questions.

The tall figure planned to stop by the station in the afternoon and then organize personal belongings as Mae Kru had instructed. Until now, she was still lying on the bed, napping due to exhaustion.

## Bzzz~~

The vibrating phone woke the tall figure immediately, and it was almost noon.

"Hello, Mom...

***"Just woke up, dear?"***

"Yes, Mom, I'm a bit tired."

***"Is Captain working you hard? I told you, it's tough out there. Why don't you request a transfer to the province where your grandma lives?"***

"Mom, I'm a police officer. I can't just transfer as I please."

***"What's the big deal with that?"***

"Mom..."

***"You're not involved in that case anymore, right, Peem?"***

"How's my brother?"

## "The doctor said he's the same..."

The voice on the other end sighed deeply.

"Okay..."

***"Promise me, Peem. If I lose you too, I'll probably go crazy."***

"Don't say that, Mom. I'm safe and sound here. You don't need to worry."

## "Where are you staying? You never send me pictures."

"Mom... if I..."

Her hesitant voice wasn't because she didn't want to tell; it was because she didn't know how to explain it.

## "I have to go now, Peem. I need to go to the shop. We have a lot of customers today. Once they catch those criminals, I'll make sure they transfer you back. I can't be at ease with you so far away."

"..."

***Click!***

Around the same time the call ended, the bedroom door opened by a slender hand.

"I heard you talking to someone."

"It was my mom. She called."

"Why haven't you gotten up to shower yet?"

Mae Kru glanced at Lieutenant Peem's bag at the foot of the bed, still untouched.

"I was about to get up. I guess I slept too well. The air conditioning was nice."

"I'll go make us some food. You go shower, and I'll handle this."

"Oh... sorry."

The tall figure smiled sheepishly, realizing she hadn't unpacked anything yet. To make up for it, she quickly got out of bed and walked over to the slender figure, hoping to steal a kiss, but she raised her hand to stop her.

"I'm still on duty."

Lieutenant Peem smiled widely, understanding what she meant, and nodded lightly it meant they had to wait until she finished her duties as Mae Kru for the day before they could do anything like that.

# Chapter 20. Losing

**"Wow...! Since I was born, I've never had som tum this delicious. This is my new favorite dish."**

With just the first bite, the tall figure's eyes widened in surprise. The papaya weren't crunchy like usual; they were soft and tender, yet the flavor was still tangy.

"The papaya are almost ripe, making them sweet but not very crunchy. You like it sweet, but I didn't want to add too much sugar, so I just added thick tamarind juice to enhance the sweet and sour taste. It's still spicy but not burning."

Lieutenant Peem listened intently, putting down her spoon and resting her chin on her hand, her sharp eyes filled with admiration and affection.

"When we were casting bullets, I went to pay respect to your father. If you have some free time... I'd like to invite you to visit my mother..."

Her voice was sweet and warm, and the gaze they shared was filled with pure feelings. The stem face of the slender figure responded with a happy look. Both of them smiled without realizing it, and their shyness made them quickly look away in different directions.

"Thank you... Everything you made is truly delicious."

The compliment came with a smile, and knowing that the slender figure felt just as embarrassed but tried to hide it made the feelings inside swell even more.

.

.

## Bzzz!!!~~

The phone vibrated, showing the caller ID as Sergeant Major Piak

"Yes, Sergeant Major?"

## "There's an important update to the case, Lieutenant! Where are you right now?"

"What happened... Can you pick me up at Mae Kru's school?"

Knowing it was about the case, she immediately stood up. The tall figure grabbed the jacket draped over the chair, ready to meet the caller.

## "Got it, Lieutenant!"

He hung up immediately.

"I'm sorry."

"Go ahead, don't worry. Take care of yourself. Just don't let me find out you're taking unnecessary risks. If something happens to you, I'll be in pain, too."

The tall figure smiled gratefully, nodding slightly as a promise to take care of herself, then ran out immediately. Mae Kru Bulan's eyes followed with concern, even after her loved one had walked out the door.

Lieutenant Peem's black car drove up to the gate. Sergeant Major Piak opened the door and ran out to let Lieutenant Peem take the wheel. The car backed into the school's yard to turn around before speeding off, kicking up dust.

"What's the update, Sergeant Major?"

"Priaw showed me a picture of the guy hitting on her junior, and Kra-ting was in it, too. Here it is, Lieutenant."

The photo on the phone was a candid shot from the night of the event, taken in the dark with reflected light, but it was clear enough to be certain.

"Does Captain know about this?"

"Not yet. I just saw the picture and called you first."

"I can't believe it. He's a fugitive but still has the nerve to go out and have fun."

Lieutenant Peem gritted her teeth in anger, veins popping on her forehead, as she dialed the higher-ranking officer to coordinate with the local station for a swift capture. Once the brief was over, the car's speed increased, hitting a hundred with no sign of slowing down.

"Take it easy, Lieutenant. I want to die of old age."

"Can your daughter still contact that junior?"

"I had her call, but no answer. It's a school holiday, and if she's not home, I'm really worried."

"Then, Sergeant Major, try to contact the girl's parents."

"Yes, Lieutenant."

"If she just went today, there might still be hope. But if she went with them last night, all I can do is pray."

"Priaw rushed to find you, so she doesn't know if her junior went with them or not."

"That's why I worry about the youth in our country..."

Her hands gripped the steering wheel tightly, her voice heavy but trembling with emotion.

"I got the number, Lieutenant!"

"Give it to me, Sergeant Major."

.

.

***Beep...***

***Beep...***

As the phone rang, her heart pounded with anticipation. It might be a common case, but it was very sensitive for Lieutenant Peem.

## "Hello, who is this?"

An elderly woman's sharp voice answered.

"Hello, I'm Lieutenant Peem from the police station..."

## "HA!!! Is this a call center scam? Are you trying to steal my money? I'm already in a bad mood, you scoundrel! People like you won't end up in a good place, I'm telling you. I hope you all rot in hell."

The tall figure's mouth dropped open at the outburst before the call was abruptly cut off. Already angry, this only made her more frustrated. "Scammers have made it hard to tell real cops from fake ones."

"L-let me have Priaw call, Lieutenant. She's been to the house before."

"Whatever you do, hurry up." Lieutenant Peem sighed deeply.

.

.

**With less than half the distance left before they entered Mae Sot, the car's speed made the trip much quicker.**

The urgency increased when Priaw's information revealed that the girl, Faii, was a tenth-grader with good looks.

On the night of the incident, a man in his twenties approached her, bought her drinks and snacks, and exchanged contact information, but they didn't leave together as Faii went home with her family.

That morning, she asked to go out with friends but wouldn't say who that friend was. Her behavior was unusually aggressive as she'd never raised her voice at her mother.

But this morning, the argument escalated, and she stormed out on her motorcycle. Her mother, angry, didn't try to stop her, thinking it'd only lead to more harsh words.

Sergeant Major Piak and Lieutenant Peem exchanged weary looks, waiting for Faii's friend to provide more information.

.

## Ding!~

"We got something, Lieutenant!"

.

.

**A bustling marketplace...**

Two police cars' sirens blared since they'd departed from the station before silencing as they entered the suspect area. Several officers on motorcycles followed. The area was crowded, being near a market.

Based on the information and local police tips, they headed to a shophouse.

The ground floor openly sold weed. Several officers, including Lieutenant Peem, stormed in and spread out. The mezzanine was a storage area.

***Bang!!!***

*An officer kicked open the door of an upstairs room, finding the unconscious girl on the bed.*

"Sergeant Major! Follow me!!!"

"Yes, Lieutenant!!!"

While local officers checked the bathroom and tried to wake the girl, Lieutenant Peem ran out, followed by two or three officers.

***Thud, thud, thud.***

The tall figure sprinted up the stairs to the rooftop, instinctively finding a slightly open door. The bright sun hit her eyes as she reached the top.

She saw a man jumping over the fence between buildings. The building she was on had a high metal fence. Lieutenant Peem quickly climbed over, followed by two officers.

"Stop!!!"

"As if he's going to stop for us, Sergeant Major!"

The tall figure jumped down, chasing the man over the high wall.

Sergeant Major Piak, seeing he couldn't climb, ran back down to try to cut him off. Lieutenant Peem closed the gap, just two buildings away.

The shocking sight was the man jumping off the back of the building. Lieutenant Peem leaned over to see what would happen.

It was Kra-ting, no doubt, landing on a parked car, clearly in pain but trying to escape.

Lieutenant Peem couldn't let him go. Seeing a blue tarp on the next building, she climbed over and jumped, aiming for the tarp. The two officers looked at each other in shock.

Realizing it was too dangerous to follow, they ran down the building's stairs. The tarp, unable to hold her weight, collapsed, sending her rolling to the ground.

## "Ugh!"

It wasn't pain, and there were no injuries, just the wind knocked out of her from the impact.

But when she heard the footsteps of the man jumping down from the roof of the car, she gritted her teeth and quickly got up, running after him. Her eyes were fixed solely on her target, no matter how she had to weave through the crowd.

The fugitive ran at full speed into the market, which was bustling with vendors and shoppers, causing chaos along the way.

Goods, merchandise, and people were all pushed and bumped into, scattering everywhere. As the direction of the fugitive's escape became clearer from the commotion, several police officers quickly spread out, trying to surround him and assist Lieutenant Peem, who was closest to the suspect.

Children and women who got in the way were injured to varying degrees. Many items were thrown and destroyed to obstruct the path of the tall figure chasing after him.

Even though she tried to jump over or dodge obstacles to avoid getting hurt, she still ended up with several injuries. The worst was a vase that was deliberately thrown at her, but she was lucky enough to dodge it just in time.

Muttering something under her breath, she saw a police car blocking the way ahead. An officer got out of the car, pointing a gun and shouting for the man to stop, but it was no use. Instead of stopping, the man jumped over the car's hood and continued running tirelessly.

Lieutenant Peem had no time to talk to anyone and kept running, weaving through the crowded street. Sometimes, she had to dodge motorcycles as she entered narrower alleys.

The grim-faced man glanced back to check if anyone was still following him and saw the tall figure close behind. The lieutenant kept her eyes fixed on him, not slowing down until they reached a two-lane road with no traffic.

On the other side was a school fence with no students around since it was Sunday. The man climbed the school gate, and Lieutenant Peem quickly jumped up, grabbing his ankle. But she was kicked in the arm and had to let go, then swiftly climbed after him.

The sound of sirens blared behind them, signaling that more police cars were arriving. But from past experience, she knew she couldn't let the suspect out of her sight.

Her eyes stayed locked on the man's back as she gritted her teeth and sped up, entering the building. To her right was a wall, and to her left were numerous classroom doors. They reached a dead end where the stairs to the third floor were blocked.

The tall figure drew her gun and slowed down when she saw the suspect stepping back from the stairs and turning to face her.

"You really are something, following me all the way here... Haven't you learned your lesson? You think I'm just going to walk into jail for you? You think you can shoot me?"

The grim-faced man stared fearlessly, drawing a long knife from his waist and pointing it at her.

## "Move, and I'll shoot,"

Lieutenant Peem said in a low, threatening voice.

"You bitch... too bad you have to die before I get to fuck you."

The tall figure saw the man's lips moving as he muttered something, then lunged at her with the knife. And just a meter away, the knife's tip was about to reach her.

**"Itthiratchatang namoputthaya ma a u"**

***Bang!***

# Chapter 21. Sweet Drink

***Clang!!!***

The long knife that was almost plunged into the lieutenant's body fell, dreating a heavy metallic sound.

**"Aaahhh!!! Damn it!!! You bitch!!"**

A bullet was fired into the right side of the man's chest, with Lieutenant Peem intentionally avoiding a fatal shot even though it would've been easy at this range. The burly man fell to the ground clutching his chest and writhing in pain. Dark blood flowed over his hand as he screamed curses in rage.

"Wait for your buddies in jail, I'll drag them in myself."

The tall figure stood over him, glaring down with fierce eyes.

**"Aaahhh!!! They'll fucking kill you, you bitch!!!"**

She lifted her foot and then placed it on Kra-ting's head to disempower the magic according to belief, ensuring nothing strange would happen during his capture.

"Phew, if you have time off from being a cop, you should compete in athletics, Lieutenant."

Sergeant Major Piak, who'd run in panting, spoke up. The tall figure lifted his foot off the head and turned to look, shaking his head slightly.

"I'm Lieutenant Colonel Chon."

"Hello, Lieutenant Colonel. I'm Lieutenant Peem,"

The tall figure responded to the local officer who'd just arrived.

"Not bad, Lieutenant. You walked into a tough job right away."

"If I were really good, I wouldn't have let him escape here,"

Lieutenant Peem said, glancing at Kra-ting being taken away by the officers.

"You're not hurt anywhere, right, Lieutenant?"

"No."

"The guardian has come to pick up the girl, but my men say her condition isn't good, and she is still not fit to talk yet. Do you want to check on her?"

"I assessed her visually and didn't find any injuries."

Lieutenant Colonel Chon didn't respond, only showing a worried expression followed by a sigh.

"You're in top shape, Lieutenant."

Sergeant Major Piak continued to whisper praise to the lieutenant, giving a thumbs-up and a wide, admiring smile.

"Good thing I got some sleep before coming."

"So, what were you doing that kept you up?"

"Let's go see the girl."

"Yes, Lieutenant!"

Sergeant Major, already impressed with the lieutenant's work, admired Lieutenant Peem even more after seeing this.

.

.

**At the local police station...**

"Priaw! Why the hell did you come along?"

"Come on, Dad!!! I wanted to see if Faii was safe, so I came with her mom. What's wrong with that?"

The small girl's sharp voice immediately retorted.

"Don't scold her, Sergeant Major. Thank you, Priaw. You were a big help. You deserve praise."

"Aw... Lieutenant..."

From arguing loudly, she suddenly became shy and sweet.

"This way, Lieutenant Peem."

The officer who'd helped catch the criminal gestured toward the interrogation room and led the tall figure inside.

## "Let me go, Mom. Let me go."

As soon as the door opened, they heard the sobbing cries of a pretty young girl held by her middle-aged mother.

"He tricked you, Faii! I'm your mother. He tried to rape you. Why are you still crying for him? To hurt me even more?!!"

"It might be shock from the trauma. Please calm down, ma'am."

Lieutenant Peem walked around to get a clear look, bending down to see the vacant eyes of the girl sitting in the chair. "I'm sorry, officer. She's never been like this before,"

The mother said, wiping her tears in frustration.

"Faii, he tricked you. Are you that infatuated with him?"

Priaw touched her younger friend's shoulder, worried but also puzzled, confident that her friend had only encountered the criminal once.

## "Let me go! I want to see him! Where the fuck did you take him!!!"

The girl screamed at Priaw with angry eyes, flailing her arms until she broke free from her mother's grasp. Both Lieutenant Peem and the officers had to help restrain her.

"Faii, what's wrong with you? Are you possessed? I'm your friend."

Even Priaw was shocked, backing against the wall in fear.

"I raised you. I'm your mother. What do you want from me, Faii? Do you think he's better than your own mother?!"

The mother's patience was at its limit, filled with both anger and sorrow. But everything happening now was out of a mother's love. The tall figure, trying to calm the girl, understood the mother's feelings well, even if she had cursed her on the phone.

"I think this isn't normal, Lieutenant,"

Sergeant Major Piak said, hoping for agreement.

"I don't want to think that way, Sergeant Major."

"Dad, could Faii really be possessed?"

Priaw's words reinforced Lieutenant Peem's thoughts. The officers in the room exchanged looks, seemingly on the same page but hesitant to speak out. Lieutenant Colonel Chon then walked in to check.

"I've seen many shock victims in cases like this, but never with these symptoms."

Even the Lieutenant Colonel looked puzzled.

"Ma'am, would you allow us to take your daughter to Mae Kru Bulan's school? I'll ensure her safety. I know you're angry out of concern, but right now, she's in a bad state. Your daughter needs emotional support."

Sergeant Major Piak looked at the tall figure in surprise, not expecting such a suggestion from Lieutenant Peem, spoken without any prompting.

"Are you saying my daughter is possessed?"

"I can't confirm that, but you've raised her. Has she ever shown these symptoms before? Or... are those looks in her eyes really your daughter's? If so, I won't take her."

"My daughter... will she go mad, officer?"

The mother's anger subsided, replaced by tears of worry.

"Should we hurry, Lieutenant? Mae Kru won't perform rituals after sunset."

"Do I have your permission, Lieutenant Colonel?"

"I'll handle the perpetrator. You take care of this. I've already coordinated with Captain."

"Yes. Let's go, Sergeant Major."

"Yes, Lieutenant."

The girl continued to struggle as they led her to Lieutenant Peem's car.

Sergeant Major Piak removed his amulet and pinned it to the girl's collar. The tall figure ran ahead to the car to back it up to the door to save time.

***Clang!!***

As the door closed, the lieutenant heard the faint sound of an ankle bracelet in the car, but she wasn't as surprised as the first few times.

"Did Mom send you? Tell her I'm coming. Wait.. Why don't I call her myself... Geez, I'm getting more superstitious every day."

The tall figure muttered to herself while backing the car out.

"But I do wonder if not calling would really work. Would this be considered me challenging her?"

.

.

**Mae Kru Bulan's School...**

Lieutenant Peem's car drove in, followed by the guardian's car driven by an officer to avoid drawing attention with a police vehicle.

The tall figure glanced at the cars leaving the school, remembering that today would be busier than usual. She felt guilty for not calling ahead in case Mae Kru was still performing rituals or tattooing.

**"Aaahhh!!!"**

Lieutenant Peem flinched slightly, glancing at the girl in the back seat who suddenly screamed after being quiet the whole way, still incoherent and only talking about wanting to see the criminal.

The tall figure opened the door and ran around to help Sergeant Major Piak and the mother with the girl. As they looked into the school, it seemed the last student was just leaving.

Lieutenant Peem removed her shoes and walked in. Mae Kru Bulan, sitting there, raised her hand to stop her from speaking. She was dripping candle wax into a large silver bowl, chanting.

**"Let me go! I want to see him! Let me go! I said LET GO!"**

Mae Kru turned to the screaming girl with calm eyes, not asking any questions.

"Mae Kru, please help the girl,"

Sergeant Major Piak pleaded. The tall figure sat awkwardly beside him. "Does she have anything that doesn't belong to her?"

"What do you mean, Mae Kru?" The mother asked, confused.

"This bracelet, who gave it to you?"

Mae Kru asked sternly, staring into her eyes.

"Don't touch it. It's mine!!!"

"Lieutenant, go start a fire by the school. There's a clay firepot."

"Quick, Lieutenant,"

Sergeant Major Piak urged the tall figure, who still looked confused.

"Sergeant Major... I'm not good at starting fires. Can you go? I'll watch the girl."

The tall figure replied, embarrassed.

"Alright, Lieutenant! I'll go start the fire."

Sergeant Major Piak handed over the girl to Lieutenant Peem while Priaw helped hold her down.

Mae Kru Bulan reached down to remove the bracelet from the girl's wrist, but she struggled and swatted her hand away. Seeing this, Lieutenant Peem used her strength to pull it off and handed it over.

Mae Kru slowly wrapped a white holy thread, linked with the Buddha statue, around the girl's head, who continued to scream loudly, her thrashing growing more intense.

"What did they make her eat?"

"They gave her a lot of things, Mae Kru, like meatballs and juice,"

Priaw, who'd witnessed the event, quickly replied.

"Go buy a glass of sweet drink."

As soon as Mae Kru said that, Lieutenant Peem turned to order the police officer sitting behind her. He nodded and quickly ran out.

Mae Kru hooked her finger around a necklace and lit an incense stick, holding it in the same hand. She placed her other hand on Faii's forehead and began chanting a spell, which the lieutenant could only make out the words 'Namotassa.' It was an invocation that sounded familiar, but she didn't really know what it did.

Screams and a barrage of curses erupted continuously. After a while, when the incense was nearly half burnt, Mae Kru blew air from her mouth onto the girl's head, moving upwards.

Suddenly, the violent thrashing ceased immediately.

"Take her to the door."

Mae Kru instructed, pointing to the school's entry door. Everyone holding the weakened girl helped carry her to the door, with the slender figure following with a large bowl of water.

"Got it, Lieutenant."

The police officer returned on a motorcycle, holding a glass of sweet water.

Mae Kru placed the bowl of holy water on an empty wooden table next to the school fence.

She then took the water from Lieutenant Peem and squeezed the girl's mouth open to pour the sweet red water in.

**"Ugh!!!"**

Before finishing the glass, the girl vomited all the sweet water she'd ingested. Mae Kru Bulan handed the bracelet to Sergeant Major Piak to burn. She then lifted the bowl, possibly containing holy water, and poured it over the girl, soaking her.

"Oh, my baby girl. Mae Kru, will she be okay?"

The mother, holding her daughter in her arms. looked up tearfully and asked.

"The clothes she's wearing, burn them when you get home. If you find anything that doesn't belong to her, burn it without hesitation. Make a lot of merit. Don't let her accept or carelessly eat anything given to her."

"Yes, Mae Kru. Thank you for helping her. Those bastards are truly evil, they even harmed such an innocent girl."

The tall figure watching, seeing the girl calm down significantly, sighed in relief.

"I'm sorry, officer. I didn't know you were really an officer and cursed a lot when you called."

"It's okay. Next time.. try to listen before cursing. I'd appreciate it."

"So kind. How cute!"

Of course, it was Priaw's voice, praising as she moved closer and leaned in to snuggle. Seeing this, Lieutenant Peem immediately stood up, causing Priaw to fall to the ground.

"Uh... please watch the girl, Senior Sergeant Major. I need to check on Sergeant Major. Not sure how far the burning has gone."

She swallowed hard as she hurriedly stepped toward Sergeant Major Piak, avoiding the stern gaze watching her.

"Yes, Lieutenant!"

# Chapter 22. Son

**The girl was taken back to rest after her frenzy had subsided and she had returned to normal.**

She'd give her statement at the police station tomorrow instead. Only Lieutenant Peem, Priaw, and Sergeant Major Piak remained to offer sincere thanks and apologies for the unannounced visit, which had caused many students who'd come for rituals to leave before they could be performed.

"Why didn't you take the girl to the hospital, Lieutenant? Why did you bring her to me?"

"Well..."

"The lieutenant herself said she'd bring her to you, Mae Kru."

"Enough, Sergeant Major. We haven't talked about the last time."

"Good heavens!"

"What is it, Sergeant Major? You startled me."

The tall figure jumped when Sergeant Major Piak, standing beside her, suddenly exclaimed loudly.

"Priaw said that you had an evil spirit following you. I completely forgot. Mae Kru, could you check if that spirit is still around?"

"It's still there and will be for a long time."

"Mae Kru, saying that will scare people," the tall figure smiled dryly and spoke calmly.

"Will it be dangerous for the lieutenant, Mae Kru? Especially since she's working on risky cases right now."

"How risky, Sergeant Major? Tell me so I can give her something good to protect her."

The slender figure standing in front of her own office asked in a flat tone.

"It's not that risky, Sergeant Major. I'm used to these kinds of cases. It's fine, Mae Kru."

"Not risky? Today, you chased down a criminal, and he was armed."

"It was just a small chase. The criminal got tired and tripped over his own feet. I'm perfectly fine, not hurt at all."

Lieutenant Peem tried to blink a signal for Sergeant Major Piak to stop talking, but he didn't notice and continued speaking.

"It was like a movie, Mae Kru. She jumped from a three-story building. If she hadn't shot to stop him, she might've been dead."

"Sergeant Major, you're exaggerating. It was a low-rise building, and the criminal's knife was as small as a pinky finger. I could've fought him barehanded. It's getting late, Sergeant Major. Shouldn't you go home to your wife? She must be missing you."

The tall figure gritted her teeth and forced a smile, lowering her voice in a commanding tone.

"If it weren't for the lieutenant, my junior would be in trouble. I want to repay the lieutenant with my own body."

Priaw chimed in.

"Your fates are incompatible. The closer you get to her, the more trouble you'll cause the lieutenant. I suggest you stay away from her. You, too, Sergeant Major... If you don't want that spirit to torment the lieutenant, try to warn her. Her fate isn't compatible with women, especially the beautiful ones. The more beautiful they are, the more vicious the spirit becomes. Avoid them. Follow my advice, and you'll have saved the lieutenant from that evil spirit."

Mae Kru spoke sternly to Priaw before turning to Sergeant Major Piak standing in front of her.

"I see. Thank you, Mae Kru. I'll make sure she stays away from beautiful women as much as possible. And if she has to work on a case involving women, I'll make sure she doesn't touch them unless absolutely necessary."

Mae Kru nodded slightly, indicating that what Sergeant Major planned to do was the right thing. Lieutenant Peem just stood there scratching her eyebrow, hoping Sergeant Major Piak wouldn't say anything more.

"Are our fates really incompatible, Mae Kru?"

Priaw, who'd been sulking with her head down, decided to look up and ask again for confirmation.

"Who do you think I am?"

"The lieutenant has been quite charming lately. Will she be okay alone?"

"Thank you, Sergeant Major, for worrying about me so much. But it'd be great if we could avoid talking about that spirit for now. And I'm not charming."

"If you're worried about the lieutenant being in danger, tell her to stay here. Don't let her go anywhere."

"Stay here? With you, Mae Kru?"

"Yes. After work, have her come back immediately. Don't let her wander anywhere."

The stem voice was full of decisiveness.

"The lieutenant is a good person... She shouldn't have to deal with this. She came all the way here and hasn't been taken anywhere. She works all day. Just taking her to a temple fair made her so happy. Isn't there a way to get that spirit out of the lieutenant, Mae Kru?"

"....."

The sharp eyes immediately looked at the slender figure's face with concern, as expected. Even though she didn't say anything and just stood still, her answer was clear.

"I'm here to work, not to play around. Don't say that, Sergeant Major. As for that spirit, I'll handle it myself. With Mae Kru here, what are you worried about?"

"Yes, Lieutenant. But can you stay here?"

"Of course, Sergeant Major. Why wouldn't 17 We should be thanking Mae Kru for caring about my life so much..."

Sergeant Major Piak smiled and raised his hands to thank Mae Kru, who graciously accepted. The tall figure said goodbye and discussed work briefly until Sergeant Major took his daughter and left.

.

.

"Is there any papaya left?"

Lieutenant Peem asked as the slender figure was about to enter the house.

"I'll make it for you."

Mae Kru spoke softly and walked into the house, followed immediately by the tall figure.

In Mae Kru's kitchen, she was opening the refrigerator door to find something to make for dinner for her lover. Two long arms wrapped around her from behind, and a face rested on her shoulder. The slender figure glanced back before pushing to close the door.

"If I really want to go somewhere, I'll just go where you can go with me."

The gentle voice was meant to soothe Mae Kru's worries. Their eyes met, and they saw Mae Kru Bulan's face, now content as always.

"Are you still happy being with me?"

"Why do you ask me this every day? When I say I love you, I mean it."

"I never believed it before. Now I do. Aren't you afraid I'll put a spell on your food?"

"If you make it, I'll eat it all."

The plump lips moved closer, almost touching the other's lips.

"You're all sweaty. Even if you don't smell, you should shower before thinking of doing anything."

"Sergeant Major should know that this is sadder than not going out."

"Didn't you say you weren't hurt?" Mae Kru rolled up the lieutenant's sleeve to examine a bruise.

"I got this on purpose to get sympathy from you."

"Liar. I'll hit you."

"Are you a violent person, Mae Kru Bulan? I thought you'd be comforting me. Emotional pain is worse than physical pain. How could you hit me?"

"You have more tricks up your sleeve every single day."

**Clang...~**

"Is he spying on us again?"

The tall figure released the hug and looked around.

"He's not spying. He's here to get what you owe him."

"Get what?"

"If you use him, you must offer something to him. Didn't you send him to tell me about the girt?"

"REALLY?!!"

The tall figure shouted and covered her mouth in surprise.

"If you use him, you must do the offering ritual yourself."

"Kuman thong, what a wonder. This is better than a carrier pigeon. I probably don't need a phone anymore. So, the reason there was a free schedule was because of him?"

"When will you stop mocking me?"

"Sorry... What should I offer?"

"Anything, toys, clothes, or food."

The tall figure placed a hand on her chest, looking around in disbelief.

Lieutenant Peem took out a keychain, which was the key to a motorcycle, as she was only going to a nearby store. This was the first time the tall figure would use a two-wheeled vehicle since arriving here.

It might feel a bit awkward, but she consoled herself that it might blend in and be more convenient than taking a car.

"Whatever, let's do this. Even using a phone still requires a monthly fee."

She twisted her wrist to start the bike and awkwardly turned on the lights. Luckily, Mae Kru's bike was automatic; just a twist and it was all set. The store was at the end of the alley on the left. She still couldn't believe all this, but she rode until she reached the store.

"Auntie, do you have any toys?"

The tall figure asked the shopkeeper, bowing slightly for the trouble.

"Over here, pretty girl. Take your pick."

The plump shopkeeper walked over and pointed to another shelf inside the store. Hearing that, the lieutenant walked around to choose.

"Is it for your son, dear? He looks quite energetic."

"Yes... What?"

Lieutenant Peem wasn't sure who the auntie was talking to, so she peeked up and saw the shopkeeper looking at her empty bike.

"He'll grow up handsome Is he naughty, dear?"

"Uh... Thank you. Not... very naughty."

This time, she turned back to talk to herself. The tall figure looked at her bike again to be sure.

She could only hope it was Mae Kru's kuman thong and not some other ghost. But she didn't want to say anything, fearing the shopkeeper would be scared. She quickly grabbed a toy car, snacks, and red soda as soon as she thought of it and hurried back.

After paying, she walked back to the bike, wanting to ask the shopkeeper where the kuman thong was sitting so she wouldn't sit on it. But it was a question best left unasked.

"Hold on tight. I'll speed up on the way back. But if you can teleport, I recommend that. We came together, but we can return separately."

The tall figure smiled awkwardly before straddling the bike to hurry back and retum the kuman thong to Mae Kru.

## "Kickstand!"

"Thank you, Auntie."

Lieutenant Peem shouted back and folded the rearview mirror down to avoid seeing anything.

After finishing the delicious dinner, which the lieutenant savored with hunger, Mae Kru Bulan lit incense to tell Thong about the offerings the lieutenant had bought. Once she was done, she went to take a bath.

## "Peem!"

*The voice on the other end of the line barked angrily.*

"Yes..."

## "I just moved to a condo to get away from your mother. Why does she keep bothering me? Is your mother crazy? What does she want? Or does she really want a divorce?"

"Please calm down, Dad. I'll talk to Mom. You just want to be alone and at peace, right?"

## "Are you siding with her, too? What do you mean by that? Are you agreeing with your mother now?"

"Dad, I don't mind how much money you spend if it makes you happy. But I want to know if you really spent nearly a million baht to buy a car for someone else."

The lieutenant tried to keep her voice as gentle and calm as possible, even though her heart ached with pain.

***"I'm your father, Peem. Do I need to report every baht I spend to you and your mother?"***

"I don't have any more questions... How are you doing now, Dad?"

***"Daddy..."***

"Whose voice is that?"

## "I have to end the call now. I just had the TV on. Tell your mother to stop calling and yelling at me. I'll come back when I feel like it."

The lieutenant's eyes burned with tears as the call ended. She knew that wasn't the sound of the TV or anything else her father claimed. It was the voice of another woman on the line, and she clearly heard her father shushing her.

She quickly turned her phone face down when she heard the door open and saw the slender figure walk in.

"Wearing that... Are you trying to seduce me?"

Lieutenant Peem squinted and teased.

"I wear this every night."

"You're beautiful, have a great figure, and are a fantastic cook. I'm so happy I could cry."

The slender figure, who'd just sat down on the bed, looked shocked when she saw tears falling from the lieutenant's eyes, even though she was still smiling broadly.

"Why are you crying?"

"I'm just... happy. So lucky to have met you."

It seemed the lieutenant didn't even realize she was crying, so she quickly wiped her tears with her arm, forcing a smile that didn't reflect true happiness.

"When will you stop lying to me?"

"I'm serious... If you weren't here with me, it'd be really terrible."

The person in front of her blinked repeatedly to hold back tears. The slender figure moved closer on the bed and kissed the lieutenant's forehead, looking into her eyes to make sure she'd hear it loud and clear.

**"Do you know how much I love you?"**

**"And do you know how much I love you right now?"**

# Chapter 23.How Long Can You Last

**"If you don't want to tell me, that's fine. But don't act like I don't know something happened."**

"Only you can see through me... It's not that I don't want to tell you. I just don't want to talk about it right now. Can you hug me tight? I just want to be happy with you and not worry about anything..."

Without hesitation, the slender figure pressed her lips to her lover's, lifting her face to receive the passionate kiss. Her hot tongue slipped into her mouth with familiarity.

*Her hands lifted the hem of the lieutenant's white T-shirt, pulling it over her head before kissing her again. She took a moment to fully take in her body with her eyes. Normally, Mae Kru was the one being undressed first, so she rarely had the chance to observe the lieutenant in detail. The smooth skin, moderately built chest, and black underwear were all in view.*

*The lieutenant also had a defined abs without even needing to flex. Her fingers traced over the abs, finding them firmer and more solid than she'd imagined, making her want to touch them even more.*

## "Mmm..."

*Lieutenant Peem let out a moan from her throat as she felt a kiss on her stomach.*

*"Tonight... just stay still."*

*Mae Kru lifted her face to give the command, her voice soft and husky, sending shivers through her body. As she spoke, her sharp chin rested on her stomach, making her too afraid to move,*

*"Your hands are meant for sacred rituals. Don't..."*

*Lieutenant Peem knew exactly what she meant, and she wasn't in the mood to do such a thing for her right now, fearing she wouldn't satisfy her.*

*"I'm just a person. Before I met you, didn't you wonder how I managed? I know how to make you happy."*

*Mae Kru kissed the lieutenant again before she stepped off the bed and opened the bottom drawer of the vanity. Inside were lubricant gel and a clear glass rod.*

*"Uh... we can just cuddle. Don't strain yourself."*

*The tall figure seemed to realize her fate immediately, her ears turning red with embarrassment. She moved up to the headboard, speaking nervously and raising her hand in a gesture of polite refusal.*

*"You used to call me a tattoo artist, and I've never used a tattoo machine. Do you think I can tattoo my students all day without any effort? Try to get through this night."*

*"It's... not the same. This is embarrassing."*

*"What is there to be embarrassed about? You've done it to me many times without any shame."*

*Not waiting for her to make excuses, Mae Kru moved closer and kissed her to silence her.*

## "Mmm..."

*The strength she once had as a leader now melted away. Her muscles didn't respond to her thoughts. Before she could react, Mae Kru's fingers slipped under her underwear to her intimate area while her palm gently caressed her.*

*Despite her deep-seated resistance due to always being the one in control, her body didn't listen. It followed the touch. She failed to notice that she was now completely naked.*

*The index and ring fingers spread her soft, white skin, revealing the pink petals inside. The middle finger pressed and rubbed it until it was soaked with her fluids.*

## "Ah...! Mmm~"

*Her eyes blurred, and her thoughts turned white. Mae Kru moved from her lips to her neck. nibbling with her sharp teeth.*

*"I love this sound from you. I want to see how long you can last..."*

*She whispered a challenge in her ear. Though she heard every word, she had no strength to resist. Her lips nibbled the earlobe, her tongue playing inside her mouth, making her move away with ticklishness. She followed her, licking her ear while her other hand held her neck, preventing her from escaping.*

## "Mmm!~"

*Seeing the lieutenant squirm only pleased Mae Kru more. She wasn't fond of something like this when being on the receiving end, but she enjoyed it while she was in control.*

## "Hrk...! Mmm!!"

*The lieutenant bit her own lip, crying out as the glass rod was pushed deep inside her. It was tight and painful, her hands clawing at the pillow and sheets to release the intense sensation spreading through her body.*

*Tears welled up in discomfort. The lieutenant pulled Mae Kru close, their lips meeting again, muffling her cries. Warm tears streamed down her cheeks. Despite her struggle, Mae Kru didn't stop This wasn't the time to stop. She could only stroke her head to comfort her.*

*"To find happiness, we must endure suffering. Say sweet words to me, and I'll be kind..."*

*She looked at the lieutenant's twisted face, wiping away her tears, her wrist gently moving the object in her hand.*

## "Don't stop loving me. Right now... I love you so much,"

*Said the lieutenant.*

*Their lips met again, the sweet taste now mixed with a metallic tang from the bitten lip.*

***"If I love someone, I love them to death. Don't ever think of betraying me."***

## "Mmm!!! I love you this much. If I dare betray you, show me no mercy."

*Her tear-filled eyes looked up at Mae Kru, emphasizing her feelings through her gaze.*

***"I remember every word."***

## "And I mean every word."

*The night was filled with love and passion. When love is pure, reasons become unnecessary.*

*No matter the past or present, and despite the consequences of their actions, she was confident in her overwhelming love when they were together.*

*Their exhausted bodies lay in each other's arms after their passion. The lieutenant repaid the happiness she received last night as the alarm clock rang, as she still had time to inhale her scent before starting a new day.*

.

.

"So... which do you like more, that thing or my fingers?"

"How can you ask that? Of course, I like what you do more. Even if you use it, I don't like it as much."

It was normal for them to playfully argue in the morning, but it was just teasing. She firmly stated that she preferred her fingers over the glass rod, which was only used when necessary.

After breakfast, Mae Kru Bulan told Lieutenant Peem to meet her at the school before heading to work. She had no objections, following her to the school filled with teacher spirits and sacred items.

"I want you to carry this, just in case."

The lieutenant looked at the black leather bag in her hand before taking it and pulling out a sharp, curved knife, often called a shaman's knife.

Both sides were engraved with untranslatable characters, they were yantra that Mae Kru Bulan had inscribed herself. The blade was made of new, shiny steel, unused, and had a dark wooden handle.

It was around thirteen inches long and perfectly balanced.

"Even though I'm a police officer, I've never thought of using my power to decide someone's fate. I only catch them so they face their punishment."

"I know you don't want to kill anyone. But for those whom bullets can't harm, a knife won't work either. Do you understand? Keep it close, and I'll be at ease."

Seeing it was for her peace of mind, she smiled broadly and accepted it. "This knife is pure, inscribed with auspicious spells. Your name is engraved as the owner. Anything evil that touches it may perish. Wandering spirits or those with powers will be destroyed. I've never made one for anyone. I give it to you so you can keep it close. The more you do good, the stronger the power will be. If you misuse it, you'll be ruined. Don't challenge it; don't doubt or disrespect it. Don't step over it, and don't let anyone play with it. Don't let it touch saliva. Most importantly, don't let it touch the blood of black-haired animals. If you break any of these rules, it'll be tainted."

There was no reason to doubt anymore. Hadn't she been able to fire the gun that time, she wouldn't be alive to see her now. She looked at the blade with complete faith, knowing it was time to stop doubting Mae Kru Bulan.

"The first day we met, you told me to have faith. That same day, I lost faith. Today... not only do I turn back to faith, but I also believe that there are truly dark forces in this world."

The lieutenant finished speaking and lifted the knife to pay respect to its power before putting it back into a leather bag and tucking it behind the gun holster she always carried.

"Mae Kru,"

Lieutenant Peem said, looking up at the slender figure sitting on the long bench.

"What is it...

"I once said that if I caught the criminal, I'd worship Ruesi Ta Fai. Yesterday, we actually caught one of the criminals we've been looking for, but I thought it'd be best to study this thing first. Would that be okay?"

Mae Kru Bulan lowered her eyes and smiled softly.

"When Thursday, the Teacher's Day, comes, I'll lead you through the proper ritual. It's better to keep your vow."

"So... today, can I just pay respect in a simple way first?"

"With faith, you can pay respect anytime. Go light five incense sticks, pay respect, and then place them in the incense pot."

Hearing that, the tall figure didn't hesitate to follow the instructions. She moved to light the incense sticks and pay respect to the statue. After finishing, she walked back inside to pay respect again.

Her eyes glanced at the specific prayer inscribed on the vertical marble slab. Mae Kru, who was watching, saw that the tall figure seemed to have finished, so she grabbed her hands, which were still in a wai position, to keep them there.

*"Say 'Namotatsa phakhawato arahato samma samphutthatsa' three times, then say 'Namo phutthaya' repeatedly until I tell you to stop."*

*Hearing that, she followed without questioning. In her mind, she recited the words as instructed by Mae Kru Bulan with great focus. Besides her own voice, her ears echoed with the long prayer coming from the slender figure's lips.*

*.*

*.*

**At the police station.....**

"Good morning, Lieutenant!"

"Good morning, Sergeant Major. You look bright today."

"What did you bring for lunch today, Lieutenant?"

The tall figure squinted at Sergeant Major Piak, who seemed unusually cheerful today.

"Kaeng som with shrimp and papaya, omelet, and some fruits. Why, Sergeant Major? You're smiling so much. Has the girl given her statement yet? Why are you just standing there smiling."

"Come on, Lieutenant, I should be asking why you're not in a good mood. Yesterday evening, Captain received a report that a criminal from Kra-ting's gang was forging documents to flee across the border but was caught. Captain handed your evidence to the investigation team and asked you to get the preliminary report from Lieutenant Colonel Chon. The higher-ups also sent a message praising you for catching Kra-ting. Didn't you check your messages?"

"Really, Sergeant Major?!"

"Don't you usually have your phone with you all day. Lieutenant?"

Sergeant Major Piak was also surprised because he didn't think the lieutenant would actually miss it.

"Well... I've been going to bed early lately, so I turned off the message notification but kept the call notification on. Why didn't you call to tell me, Sergeant Major?"

"Is this my fault now? Who'd dare to disturb you after work hours, Lieutenant? As for Faii, my daughter said she's back to normal but can't remember anything. She only remembers talking to Kra-ting and that she'd already rejected him once because she didn't like him. She'll give her statement today."

"Hurry up, Sergeant Major! What are you waiting for?"

"Lieutenant, you're getting weirder by the day."

Sergeant Major Piak stood watching Lieutenant Peem, who ran back to the car.

# Chapter 24. Invisible

**"Boss, there's a cop here to see you."**

A man's voice rang out, enthusiastically calling for his boss. Suea, who was overseeing his subordinates loading goods, turned to look but wasn't surprised. With a cigarette in his mouth, he walked out to see for himself. When he reached the front of the shop, instead of being surprised, he smiled widely with satisfaction.

"I was thinking of finding some time to visit the station. You came to see me instead, Ms. Officer,"

He said, his arrogant eyes staring at the beautiful lieutenant standing in front of him, waving away the cigarette smoke before tossing the butt aside.

"Just call me 'Lieutenant.' Let's not beat around the bush. I'm a police investigator. I'm here to check on some assets you recently acquired. I suspect they might be stolen goods."

"You're in such a hurry, beautiful Lieutenant. Go ahead, I'm innocent. Come inside. The deeper, the better. The longer, the better,"

Suea said with a menacing face, leaning in close, causing Sergeant Major Piak, who was standing behind, to tense up. But Lieutenant Peem seemed unfazed.

Walking into the shop, they found various types of fertilizers and agricultural equipment, just as the preliminary information suggested.

Suea's family owned the shop, which was quite well-known and influential. They also owned an ice factory.

"What do you want to know, Lieutenant?"

Suea asked as they entered his office, which had a desk with documents, shelves, and an LED TV. Suea walked around to sit at his desk, leaving Lieutenant Peem and Sergeant Major Piak standing.

"Have a seat, or my dad might say I didn't treat the officers well,"

Suea said, gesturing for the lieutenant to sit. After assessing the situation, she decided to sit down.

"Did you buy any valuable items from this man?"

Lieutenant Peem asked, placing a photo of a recently arrested suspect on the desk.

"Just...a bracelet, about a week ago,"

Suea replied.

"Didn't you find it suspicious?"

"He used to work for me a long time ago before he quit. He said it was the last thing his parents left him, and he needed money to start fresh. I felt sorry for him, so I bought it at a higher price than the market. I have proof. Does that still count as buying stolen goods?"

"Do you know your former employee is a fugitive involved in multiple crimes?"

"How would I know? He'd disappeared for years."

Though it seemed unconvincing, his eyes didn't avoid hers, and he confidently showed financial records as evidence.

"Do you know anything about these people?"

Lieutenant Peem asked, showing more photos.

"They look familiar, but I don't know any of them."

"How can they look familiar if you don't know them?"

"Are you here to check assets or gather information on suspects? If I give useful information, what do I get?"

"You'll be considered a commendable citizen. Satisfied?"

Lieutenant Peem said, still observing the tattoos peeking from under Suea's clothes.

"They might look familiar because when he worked here, we went across the border to get tattoos together in Myanmar. He brought his friends, and some of my employees went too. If I remember correctly, it was just these two. He used to stay at his wife's house when he worked for me, but I don't know if they're still together. His mother-in-law passed away,"

Suea said, pointing to two photos.

"Where are they?!"

Lieutenant Peem asked urgently, standing up.

"Do you think they'd stay to get caught after getting so much money?"

"They look familiar, but I don't know any of them."

"How can they look familiar if you don't know them?"

"Are you here to check assets or gather information on suspects? If I give useful information, what do I get?"

"You'll be considered a commendable citizen. Satisfied?"

Lieutenant Peem said, still observing the tattoos peeking from under Suea's clothes.

"They might look familiar because when he worked here, we went across the border to get tattoos together in Myanmar. He brought his friends, and some of my employees went too. If I remember correctly, it was just these two. He used to stay at his wife's house when he worked for me, but I don't know if they're still together. His mother-in-law passed away,"

Suea said, pointing to two photos.

"Where are they?!"

Lieutenant Peem asked urgently, standing up.

"Do you think they'd stay to get caught after getting so much money?"

Lieutenant Peem knew the bracelet was stolen property, and the person they were looking for had already been arrested. However, to expand the investigation, it was best to keep that information confidential.

"One more thing... where did you get the tattoos?" "Would a beautiful lieutenant like you believe me?"

Suea smirked.

"Why go to Mae Kru Bulan when there are other places?"

"Lieutenant, you wouldn't understand. The qualities of power are different. Mae Kru specializes in charm, while Por Kru focuses on invincibility."

"Por Kru..."

This piqued Lieutenant Peem's curiosity even more, as she'd never asked Mae Kru about these things.

"I told you you wouldn't know him."

"Sergeant Major, do you know him?" she asked her companion.

"I know there's something like this, but I don't know about the Por Kru, Sergeant Major Piak whispered.

"Then tell me who your Por Kru is, where he is, and his name."

"Are you interested, Lieutenant?"

"Do you want to know how invincible you are? I'll help you find out,"

She said, revealing the gun at her waist. Suea's confident demeanor faltered slightly as he swallowed hard.

"Every time we meet, you show me your gun. Why not show me something else?"

"Tell me."

"Can't you speak nicely?"

"Mr. Suea, please cooperate with the authorities."

"That's better."

.

After gathering all the information, it didn't take long to mobilize forces with the Crime Suppression Division to inspect and apprehend the remaining suspects. Several police cars and vehicles were parked on the street, with many officers moving toward a two-story wooden house as per the coordinates and information received.

**"Police officer! Open the door!"**

An officer shouted at the door of an old house. Locals said it'd been abandoned for a long time, but some heard noises from there, thinking it was haunted.

**Bang!**

**Bang! Bang! Bang!A**

Hearing noises from inside, confirming there were people hiding in there, the officers shot the door lock to break in. They saw a window open and quickly ordered a search and pursuit. The back was a forest, but not vast enough to get lost. They could still hear and communicate by shouting.

**"Stop! I said stop!"**

"Not running this time, Lieutenant?"

Sergeant Major Piak asked as Lieutenant Peem stood with her hands on her hips, looking around inside the house amid the chaos.

"If others can do it, let them,"

She said, drawing her gun and heading upstairs.

"What if their guns won't shoot again, Lieutenant?"

"I gave them the bullets. I just keep a few for myself." "Huh? Didn't you say it was hard to get those bullets?" Sergeant Major Piak asked, following her.

"Do you expect me to shoot every criminal myself?"

"I just..."

*Shh...*

Lieutenant Peem raised a finger to her lips, signaling for silence, then motioned for Sergeant Major Piak to follow at a distance. He drew his gun and followed closely as ordered.

Entering an empty room, her sharp eyes caught sight of a wooden wardrobe. Officers had checked it earlier but found no suspects, so they went to reinforce the search outside. She approached the wardrobe and quickly opened it.

***Whoosh!***

***Bang!***

Both were startled to find a man hiding inside. He swung a knife, and she dodged but got cut on her stomach. She shot his leg, making him fall out of the wardrobe.

**"Aaaaaargh!"**

Officers rushed upstairs to join them.

"What happened?"

Lieutenant Peem sighed, pointing to the suspect writhing on the floor.

"Sorry, Lieutenant, but how could this happen? I checked thoroughly."

"Well, we found him. Take him away,"

She said, stepping over the suspect's head as officers took him away.

***Bang! Bang! Bang!***

She looked out the window, confident they'd found the suspects, leading to a shootout. She didn't want to criticize the officers for missing the suspect earlier, knowing they did their best.

"Lieutenant, are you okay?"

Hearing Sergeant Major Piak's concerned voice made her forget about her slash, She didn't feel any pain at all. Lieutenant Peem lifted her shirt to look at the wound on her abdomen, only to find a small scratch.

Even she could hardly believe her eyes. The thin T-shirt, tucked into her pants, shouldn't have been able to protect her from the knife's edge.

She remembered feeling the sharp cut on her abdomen, and the knife was sharp enough to slice through the shirt in one go.

"Can I take a look at the wound?"

"N-no, it's okay, Sergeant Major. It's not that bad."

"How can it not be bad? I saw it with my own eyes; it cut deep into the flesh."

"It must've been a trick of the light, Sergeant Major. If it were serious, I would've screamed."

"Someone like you? Scream?"

"Let's go check on the officers downstairs."

"Yes, ma'am!"

***Allow me to discuss another case that has been the subject of much public debate.***

Recently, we received a report from Police Major General Nopwiphon Wisitbancha regarding the work of the officers earlier today. Progress has been made in apprehending suspects in a series of murders, robberies, and sexual assaults on girls.

Five suspects have been arrested, and efforts are underway to capture others in the same group. It is expected that it won't take long to round them all up.

However, the officers cannot provide interviews or detailed information at this time as it remains confidential. Once all suspects are apprehended, further details will be disclosed to the public.

"With this much progress on the case, you should be smiling ear to ear, Lieutenant. Why the long face? You've received so many compliments you can barely read them all,"

Sergeant Major Piak said cheerfully, placing a cup of coffee on the table.

"Why won't they talk? They're more afraid of us than they're of their own crimes, even though they'll be in prison for most of their lives. Pressing them harder won't help, either,"

Lieutenant Peem said, looking both stressed and worried.

"Is something bothering you, Lieutenant? We have enough clues to catch the remaining suspects. I don't see why you're worried. We'll definitely catch them all,"

Sergeant Major Piak reassured.

Lieutenant Peem lowered her head slightly, deep in thought, not saying a word, just sitting there quietly.

"Get ready to head back, Sergeant Major. Thanks for the coffee. It's been a long day, and it's past time. I have something I need to find out before I can leave."

"Aren't you going to rest a bit, Lieutenant? We can continue tomorrow."

"It's okay. It won't take long."

"Uh... I have something to ask, Lieutenant."

"Yes?"

"Are you really going to stay at Mae Kru's house?"

"Why?"

"My wife told me that the market is buzzing with rumors that Mae Kru has a husband. Everyone was surprised. Or maybe she's had one for a long time, but she never revealed it. How could no one have seen him?"

"Maybe she just got one."

"Then why would you be a third wheel there?"

"Ahem."

"I mean, if she has a husband, wouldn't it make you uncomfortable to stay there? I'm worried about you. How can someone else stay in a house with a couple? Mae Kru is acting strange, letting you stay there when she's so protective of her home."

"Maybe she's a good person."

"Have you ever seen him, Lieutenant?"

"Uh..."

"See! I knew it. She must keep him a secret."

"Are you that curious?"

"Everyone is, Lieutenant."

"What do you think he's like?"

"Mae Kru isn't unattractive, and she's a good person. If she has a husband, he must be really good. She wouldn't look at any lowlifes."

"You know, Sergeant Major, since we've known and worked together, I've never heard you say anything that pleased me this much. I'll let all your past mistakes slide. Go home, take a shower, and rest easy."

Lieutenant Peem said, standing up and patting Sergeant Major Piak lightly on the shoulder.

"Yes, Lieutenant! But... what did I say?"

# Chapter 25. Vile Sorcery

***GRRRR!! BOOM!!!!***

The sky roared with a deafening thunderclap, shaking the ground beneath. Lightning struck the earth, illuminating the surroundings as if it were broad daylight for a fleeting moment. The rain began to pour heavily, accompanied by fierce, howling winds.

As evening approached, there was still no sign of the lieutenant. Mae Kru's eyes scanned the food on the table time and time again with worry, though she understood the duties that kept her away.

Today had been particularly chaotic in their province. Thanks to Lieutenant Peem's efforts, many criminals had been brought to justice with no chance of escape. She reached for her phone to check the time again, not intending to call or rush her in any way.

The headlights of a car shone through the open door, making her think it was her beloved.

She got up from her chair to grab a towel she'd prepared, worried the lieutenant might be soaked and could catch a cold.

The towel slipped from her hand and fell to the floor as she walked back to the door. She saw the silhouettes of two tall figures, one of whom wasn't human. They were unfamiliar, and even the kuman thong hadn't come to warn her of intruders as usual.

***BOOM!!!***

In the split second that the sky lit up, she saw a burly man in black with fierce eyes like a wild beast. He had a beard, but his pale skin revealed tattoos all over, even up to his neck. She noticed a pair of headless tigers tattooed on his chest.

She looked up at the inscriptions around the doorframe, understanding why they hadn't barged in. Though not thieves, they were probably here for a more sinister reason. They weren't shamans looking to test their skills either.

## "Bulan! Are you coming out, or do I have to kill the maechi first?"

Amid the pouring rain, the telepathic voice of the man standing there pierced through her senses. It was her brother's voice, though he looked nothing like his former self. She couldn't stand still any longer when he threatened to kill their mother if she didn't come out.

## "You ungrateful bastard,"

She muttered, not the least bit afraid. She walked out to face him at the door, already soaked to the skin.

***"I thought I'd leave you alone, Bulan, since you're my sister. I know you wrote the inscriptions on those bullets."***

## "And how does that concern anyone?"

She retorted, glaring at him with equal fury.

*"If you want to test your skills against me, I'll show you. You shouldn't have done such a thing. Why did you help the police catch my students? It's none of your business, Bulan!"*

He pointed a finger covered in inscriptions at her, standing at the door.

***"My knowledge is for giving respect, not sharpening for a light with vile sorcery. Don't think you can compare,"***

She said, her words dripping with contempt and her eyes fierce.

## "Such a sharp tongue, you wretch. Today, I'll kill you and use my skills... to kill every cop who respects you."

His sharp eyes glared at his sister, who'd grown into a full-fledged Mae Kru from a near-death state. She'd been furious but composed until now, her face and body turning red with rage.

Seeing the golden aura emanating from her body, he smiled slightly. Mae Kru Bulan was awakening her inner strength. The only way to master powerful skills was to defeat a true practitioner.

His rough hand clenched loosely as he began chanting in a strange language. She knew he wasn't here just to test his skills but to take her life for his dark sorcery

***SNORT! SNORT!!***

A massive black buffalo, as tall as the burly man, appeared. Its blood-red eyes, sharp horns, and body covered in red inscriptions pawed the ground, ready to charge

**SNORT! SNORT!! SNORT!!**

The enchanted buffalo charged at her, but the small kuman thong appeared, pushing its head with all its might before it could reach her

## "Ugh! Don't touch Mother!"

The kuman thong shouted, struggling to hold back the buffalo. It slid back, nearly reaching Mae Kru, when a tiger's roar echoed. A glowing tiger appeared, leaping to bite the buffalo's neck, making it vanish.

***"Magic tiger from Por Kru! Father did give it to you. When I asked for one, he wouldn't let me have it. Good riddance. The skills he gave you are useless."***

## "He didn't consider you his son, and you're not my brother, Zai,"

She spat.

Hearing that, he ran at her and choked her with both hands, lifting her off the ground. His strength cut off her air, making her lose consciousness. She tried to pull his hair with her small hands.

***BOOM!***

It wasn't thunder but a gunshot fired into the air.

## "The next shot won't miss your head,"

Lieutenant Peerm said, standing by the Por Kae statue, aiming her gun at his head. She held the gun firmly with both hands, but another burly man, who didn't look like a Thai, blocked her aim. Seeing him approach with a menacing look, she knew talking was useless.

***BANG! BANG! BANG! BANG!!***

Bullets pierced through the rain, hitting his shoulders and legs. His eyes still stared at her, and he kept walking, unaffected by the bullets or any sign of injury. There wasn't even a drop of blood.

***BANG! BANG! BANG! BANG!!***

Nearly emptying her magazine, she kept shooting, but he didn't react. Suddenly, his pale face disintegrated into dust before her eyes. He wasn't human but a ghost.

***Ack!***

She swallowed hard, shocked but regaining her composure when she saw Bulan's body thrown to the ground.

***"You wanted to see me. Today, I'll show you. What you have only strengthened me. Die, both you and the teacher who helps you." Click, click!***

Though trembling with rage, her eyes turned red with anger when she realized her gun was out of bullets.

## "What now...? Bulan wasn't so great, was she? Do you want to die first, or should I kill her first?"

He taunted, gripping Bulan's hair and lifting her again.

She clenched her fists, watching her beloved being dragged by someone with a similar face She bit her lip, pulled a necklace from her neck, wrapped it around her hand, and aimed at the burly man again.

***"If I have to watch my lover die before my eyes, I swear I'll stop believing in everything, even the law and goodness, and may we die together."***

## "I wondered why Butan never had a husband. I'd break her heart into pieces with my power. Ha! A woman, that's why. Did you hear that, Bulan?! She wants to die with you,"

He sneered, holding her in a chokehold. Their similar height made the option of shooting him almost impossible.

"Run away..." She whispered.

***BANG!!!***

His dominant arm jerked, releasing her. Lieutenant Peem's bullet pierced his left arm, blood splattering. Even he looked at his wound in disbelief.

***Click!***

The gun's slide locked back. It wasn't a misfire, it was the last bullet.

She stared at the man as the rain lessened. His body was covered in tattoos. He had to be Mae Kru's brother, despite the beard hiding his face.

***"Zai, a fugitive from a murder case twelve years ago, brother of Mae Kru Bulan... walked here to be captured."***

## "You must be the one who wants to test my skills, chasing my students here,"

He said, drawing an inscribed five-luk keris from his waist.

She took a deep breath, threw her empty gun aside, removed her jacket for better movement, and drew her own knife.

She stepped on her wet shoes to remove them, standing barefoot on the wet ground. She gripped her knife tightly, holding it in a reverse grip, the blade pointing down.

Her eyes, full of focus and determination, watched the man approaching. He was just another criminal she'd faced before.

The slender figure gathered the remaining strength to push herself into the house while Zai and the lieutenant ran at each other Naturally, the faller figure was at a disadvantage in terms of strength, but what she had going for her was agility and far superior combat skills. The curved keris, designed for stabbing, was extremely dangerous

The tall figure waited until the last moment, then twisted her body to dodge. She saw the outstretched arm coming in for a stab and deflected it, using the blade to cut deep into the flesh. The man, using the other hand, tried to grab the lieutenant, but with agility, she ducked and moved behind, slashing at the side before moving away.

## "Ack!"

***Thud!***

Fueled by anger that made him forget the pain, he spun around and kicked the tall figure square in the chest. The body staggered back until it hit the iron post at the front corner of the school. She had to push herself away to avoid the knife that came thrusting in again.

The pain in her chest forced her to use both hands to brace against the statue of Ruesi Ta Fai for support. As her body began to slow down, she turned back and quickly grabbed the thick wrist because he lunged at her too quickly for her to dodge.

Her dominant hand braced her own wrist, the knife's tip pointing up toward the man's face, while the tip of the keris was also just inches away from stabbing her throat.

Both of them gritted their teeth, pushing with all their might. Their eyes locked in a fierce stare. The tall figure continued to push, her body trembling. It was fortunate that the other had many wounds. Yet, he still had a lot of strength left. The tip of the keris pressed closer and closer, just inches away

***Thud!***

A large rock was thrown at the man's back, making him turn to see Sergeant Major Piak, dressed only in a tank top and Thai loincloth, standing there with a mix of bravery and fear, but not running away.

***Thud!***

The lieutenant used this moment to twist her neck away from the kens's tip, letting it stab into the concrete instead. She then extended her leg and kicked with full force, using the statue for support.

Seeing the opponent start to stagger, she quickly pushed off the statue, jumped with her whole body, using her left foot to propel herself, twisting mid-air, and swung her dominant leg to kick the head with full force, hearing a loud impact.

***Thud! Clang...***

The large body fell to the ground immediately, the sharp keris slipping from his hand at the same time. The tall figure, just standing up, saw the lips of the fallen man moving as if chanting something. The fire of rage flared up inside her, even though her body was drenched.

"***Stop chanting that filth!"***

## "I said stop chanting!!!"

Even Sergeant Major Piak was shocked, having never seen Lieutenant Peem this angry before.

This was the same person who made dozens of women worship his dark magic, the same person who left her brother as good as dead, and possibly the same reason she had to part from her sister forever. Worse, he almost killed her lover, who was his own sister, right in front of her.

The sharp knife of the tall figure, who was now straddling the man, pressed into his chest, causing blood to gush out, soaking his chest. The muscular arms of the man below tried to push back with all their might despite the agony. The enchanted knife, cutting through flesh, caused his blood to boil throughout his body. Yet, he continued chanting in the tall figure's face, calling forth his spirit minions.

***"Go to hell!!"***

# Chapter 26. Period

**"Ahhh!!!"**

The chanting abruptly turned into a scream of pain..

**"Die!!!"**

***Whoosh!***

"Lieutenant!"

Sergeant Major Piak, seeing Mae Kru cover the head of the large man with some cloth and press down while chanting, quickly grabbed the lieutenant before she could kill him right there.

**"Namotatsa phakhawato arahato samma samphutthatsanamonamotatsa "**

**"Sergeant Major!! Let go!!!"**

**"Ahhh!!!"**

The chanting that pierced his mind made everything go dark.

**"I'll fucking kill you! You scum!!!"**

**"Don't, Lieutenant!!!"**

Even though his hand was scratched and bleeding, he wouldn't let the lieutenant do something reckless in a moment of rage. He knew Lieutenant Peem wasn't someone who'd execute a criminal, and this was just a fleeting moment of uncontrollable anger.

"**Arahang Sammasamphuttho phakhawa phutthang phakhawanthangaphiwathemi."**

Mae Kru's hands continued to press down on the man's head, her lips chanting swiftly and fluently without missing a beat.

**"Ahhh!!!"**

The man's skin began to redden as if it were burning. Underneath, something seemed to be moving rapidly, like a living creature. His arms and legs stretched out, convulsing violently

**"Namome sukhato namome sopatti namosukhato choti chasanyatta cha samkawa patchupanna panchaphutta seti nabosukhatocha anakhata namamichang sapphapa**

**kewa yakkha peda phuta parita parokhata chakkhane wa chamtayamang manussanang sappha kothawitha winassanti thasa tancha payang mukkhang bukkhapatto"**

Mae Kru's fingers trembled with the force of the man's convulsions. Her chanting grew louder, and suddenly, she saw a mass of dark spirits, animals, and other entities.

They rushed from all directions, colliding with the man's body. She heard screams and the wails of spirits

**"Phayasate kammena winassanti..."**

Mae Kru released her hands from the man's head, his body still convulsing in a horrifying sight as whatever was inside him consumed his flesh.

Two police cars arrived with sirens blaring, and officers rushed out. The tall figure's eyes still glared with contempt.

**"Let go... Sergeant Major."**

Sergeant Major Piak, who'd been holding the tall figure tightly, saw that she was calming down and released her. Lieutenant Peem ran to her lover, kneeling and hugging her tightly.

"I'm sorry... I'm sorry... I'm sorry...".

She kept apologizing, her hand gently stroking Mae Kru's head, ignoring the criminal being carried away

## Tap, tap, tap~

**"Lieutenant Peem..."**

The captain, who'd run through the light rain, called out in shock but received no response.

"I'm sorry..."

Mae Kru's hand cupped her lover's cheek, feeling even more pained seeing the bruises on her neck.

"Where does it hurt. I'm sorry.."

Mae Kru's voice trembled with emotion, asking her lover with deep concem.

"No need to apologize. No matter how vile your brother is, I know what kind of person you are..."

.

.

**Hospital...**

"He died, Captain. His body couldn't handle it and passed away as soon as he arrived."

Captain nodded, relieved that Lieutenant Peem was safe but also exhausted from the series of events.

"Where's the lieutenant?"

"Getting treated. She has injuries, especially on her feet, and a large bruise on her chest Luckily, no bones are broken or fractured, Captain."

The tall captain nodded and walked out of the criminal's room to the wound care unit.

**Wound Care Unit......**

"Why didn't you inform anyone before barging in like that? You're a police officer. At first, I thought it was thunder, but then I realized it was gunfire. You were almost in serious trouble. What if I hadn't arrived in time?"

Sergeant Major Piak hadn't stopped scolding the lieutenant since the treatment began.

"Enough, Sergeant Major. I already apologized and thanked you. It was an emergency: I didn't have time to call you. It was raining too. Stop nagging like an old man."

"How can I not? How old are you? Why were you so reckless? If something happened to you "

## Squeak~~~

The door opened, and someone walked in, saving her from the scolding.

"Captain, thank heaven you're here. Please take Sergeant Major out."

"You deserve it. Think about what would happen if something happened to you. My life would be chaotic. I have to report this to the higher-ups. Even though we caught the criminal, acting alone like this..."

The more he spoke, the more his emotions rose. But looking at her face, he sighed, not wanting to say more, remembering what her surname was.

"You can report it, but don't tell my mom."

"That's what I wanted to hear."

"Write that you and Sergeant Major Piak made the arrest. I was observing from a distance. Make it sound heroic so Sergeant Major can get a promotion."

"Don't try to change the topic. Captain put his hands on his hips, looking stem.

"Just don't tell my mom. The rest is up to you, Captain."

"Oh, about Mae Kru..."

"It's okay! I was there. I'll handle her interrogation mysell, okay?"

"Do you know that since you arrived, I haven't had a moment to breathe?"

"It's in the news, Captain. Our station is famous now. You need to practice smiling for interviews. Your right side is very photogenic. I'll give you all the credit for leading the operation."

Captain pushed his tongue against his cheek, then held his chin.

"This side?"

He asked, turning his right side to her.

"Yes, very handsome. None of this would've happened without you, Captain."

"Well, I'll report to the higher-ups. And keep this quiet."

"Who is your mom?"

Sergeant Major Piak, who'd been listening, asked curiously.

"Just a regular shopkeeper."

"Oh... then why did Captain..."

"No more questions, Sergeant Major. As for you, Lieutenant, rest as the doctor ordered until you're fully recovered. Don't let me see you at the station. The remaining criminals will be handled by the officers. Understand?"

Captain stood in front of her, pointing his finger to emphasize his point.

"Yes, I won't show up. Don't worry."

.

**Hospital Waiting Area....**

The tall figure walked out of the wound care unit, seeing her lover waiting, still soaked. Feeling guilty for being late, she wished she'd returned sooner

Her eyes welled up with tears, thinking about what could've happened if she hadn't heard the call of the little kuman thong.

"What was that cloth?"

Lieutenant Peem asked, sitting beside her.

"My mom's sarong. I kept it..."

"Let's go home..."

"Do we have to go to the station first?"

"Let's go home, shower, and get comfortable. You're soaked, you'll catch a cold..."

"You're crying again..."

She gently wiped her lover's tears

"Let's go home. I miss your warm embrace. We'll deal with everything else later."

Mae Kru nodded immediately, not wanting to see any more tears.

Captain ordered the officers to take them home. There was curiosity about why Lieutenant was staying there, but it seemed personal, so they didn't ask.

Even though showering with a foot injury was tricky, she acted as if it didn't bother her to avoid worrying her lover.

In front of the vanity, their bodies covered only by towels, they took turns drying each other's hair, taking hours because of the frequent interruptions by longing kisses.

Though their eyes were tired, the warmth returned to their embrace. Naked under the thick blanket, they held each other. This time, Mae Kru rested her head on her lover's chest, receiving gentle, tender kisses.

"Don't blame yourself."

"I should've come home right after work... if I'd come back sooner....

"I'm not dead. I'm right here with you "

"What did you ever do to him?"

"My brother and I are seven years apart, so we weren't close. He focused on learning my father's magic since I was little. Even when I was sick, he rarely visited. When I got sick again, he disappeared. My father ordered no one to look for him and said he was no longer his son. I didn't understand then. My mother said he didn't want my father's skills and went to learn elsewhere. When my father died, I was afraid he wouldn't know and be sad if he didn't come, so I decided to find him. I asked the police for help but couldn't find him. My mother said to cremate Father without waiting. The next time I saw him was like this."

"Was it because of the bullets?"

"He's become a bad person now. You did what you had to do, and I knew what I did."

"Can you take a break tomorrow?"

"Even if you didn't tell me, I planned to rest. It's almost to the school break anyway. I'll just take a longer break."

"What is the school break?"

"I'll close the School for nine days from the end of each month. When it's that time of the month, I won't perform any rituals."

"What do you mean by 'that time of the month'?"

"Don't you have it, too?"

"Oh... your period."

The slender figure didn't respond; she just moved closer to rest her head on her neck,

"Wow... when your period comes, you get so moody. And it comes around the same time as mine, too." "I'm not like that."

"Is that really possible?"

The tall figure looked down at the person in her arms and asked in disbelief.

"Yes, dear... I've never been in a bad mood during that time."

"What did you just say?"

The tall figure had to lean his ear closer to make sure she heard correctly.

"Are you very tired?"

"Just... a little. What do you want?"

## "I want you to do that..."

Lieutenant Peem's face turned red all the way to her ears when she heard Mae Kru Bulan's soft voice for the first time. She never thought Bulan had this side to her. She understood the meaning well and had no objections at all.

"Captain ordered not to show up at the station until the wound heals. It's actually just a small wound, but now I know how to act weak. Be careful, or you won't be able to get up to offer food to the monks tomorrow."

"Tomorrow... I want to visit my mom..."

What should she do? The more she looked, the more her heart raced.

"Sure, we can go anywhere... Are you being affectionate? Do you know how dangerous that is?"

"I don't know..."

Her full lips pressed a passionate kiss, and she quickly moved to straddle Mae Kru, her hand sliding from her chest down to her flat stomach and then to the sweet lotus of her lover.

## "Mmm~~ Peem..."

*"Yes... what should we do? I'm blushing."*

*The tall figure looked down at the pleading face of her lover, who was moaning sweetly, calling her name.*

## "I love you, dear. I really love you."

*"I'm head over heels in love with you. It's more intense than being charmed by magic."*

*Seeing this made her even more smitten. The slender figure didn't respond but gave a mischievous smile, looking extremely happy.*

## "Ah... a little harder, please."

*This was almost the first time she heard Mae Kru Bulan speak in a central dialect, which nearly made the tall figure melt, her ears tuning red.*

*"Do you know that if you get possessed, I won't be able to find anyone to exorcise you? Is this the real you? Confess now."*

*She pressed harder, rubbing the love button and shaking her wrist rapidly.*

## "Ah... ah! This feels so much better.."

*Without saying a word, Mae Kru pulled the lieutenant's neck down for a kiss, pushing her tongue in for her to suck easily. There was no need to ask Lieutenant Peem how much more attached she was to Mae Kru Bulan now. Normally, she was calm and deep, making her even more attractive. When her period was coming, she turned into another person, sweet and cuddly, making her want to keep her close. No one could make her love her more than this in her life.*

# Chapter 27. Body

**Mae Kru's delicate hands gathered her lover's hair, twisting it up before securing it with a wooden pin, then adorning it with a real gold pin, and finally removing the wooden pin.**

This was the first time the lieutenant would wear traditional local attire. Lieutenant Peem's sweet face complemented the outfit flawlessly. She might've worm skirts or dresses many times before, but it was entirely different from the sarong she was now wearing

Mae Kru adjusted the stray hairs at the front with her fingers, pressing a kiss on the head. The slender figure turned to look in the mirror and meet the lieutenant's eyes. She wrapped her arms around the neck from behind, causing the tall figure to lean back. Both were dressed in white cotton, differing only in the color and pattern of their sarongs.

The atmosphere was easy, it was a time when their love was ripening. There was no formal proposal like typical young couples, but what they had was proof enough of how much they needed each other. Their definition of love was simply having each other by their side.

Just seeing the face of the one they loved brought more comfort than anyone else's embrace.

The scent they wanted to inhale for a lifetime, the touch they couldn't imagine living without if lost. They might've just met not long ago, but they were mature enough to understand their feelings. That understanding was what mattered.

"Do I look like a Tak girl?"

The lieutenant asked, turning left and right to find the best angle to boost confidence.

"As long as you're the one I love, that's enough."

With that, she pressed a kiss on the forehead, the bridge of the nose, and the lips. The light lipstick mixed with the darker nude shade of the slender figure, making both their lips the same color.

***Clink....***

The kiss, which was becoming hard to stop, broke apart, and the tall figure chuckled. Mae Kru Bulan smiled and shook her head lightly, understanding that a mischievous child had probably sneaked in to watch again.

But it was good that he came; otherwise, they might've had to cancel their merit- making plans for the day. Before setting off, the slender figure performed a small ritual to cleanse the blood in front of the house, scattering rice mixed with flowers around.

.

**Wat Phra Borommathat, Ban Tak....**

The Sukhothai-era art of the golden, gleaming temple sparkled beautifully in the sunlight. After making merit at several temples, the journey was filled with smiles, Being a weekday, there weren't many people around, making it easy to walk comfortably.

Even though the weather was hot, it didn't feel burdensome at all.

Whenever she looked, there were always sparkling eyes looking back. Lieutenant Peem raised her watch to check the time, pausing for a moment, unsure if she should speak up.

"I made up my mind, and I think Maechi would agree with cremating him right away, no need for prayers. He had bad things in him, it'd only trouble the monks. I'll just make merits for him."

Though the lieutenant hadn't asked yet, Mae Kru turned to answer as if she already knew what was on her mind. And it was true there weren't any prayers for the late Por Kru Zai.

They'd only have a simple funeral and cremate him immediately. Even though Lieutenant Peem hated this person, once he passed away, her vengeful thoughts gradually faded.

"What about you? Will you attend his funeral?"

The tall figure didn't say anything but nodded lightly as an answer before setting off back to Phop Phra to get everything done.

On the way back, not much had changed. The only noticeable difference was that Mae Kru Bulan seemed quieter, not talking as much as on the way there.

The funeral was held at a small temple in the district, attended only by monks, the undertaker, and hired helpers. It was quiet and devoid of people. The slender figure watched the coffin being circled around the crematorium calmly but didn't join in

What Lieutenant Peem was looking at now was a thin woman in white holding a picture of Zai. The tall figure sighed softly, feeling a mix of emotions.

This was the person she'd hunted down. In the end, humans all die. The villain was eradicated, but she didn't get her bright, cheerful brother back. His actions caused a lot of trouble for many people.

"Why is it that, despite being a Por Kru, no one came to his funeral?" Lieutenant Peem asked softly while watching.

"As far as I can see, there's only one... his mother the calm voice replied without turning to look.

"There's no purer love than this, even if her child was so wicked."

"If one day it's my funeral, will you come?"

"Why do you say that?"

"Lieutenant Peem... we humans, whether born with great merit or heavy karma, can't escape it. Whether it's me or you, one day, we'll die and part. That's why I want to be with you for as long as possible. When the mind ceases, it might be completely dark. Right now, our eyes still see the light. Don't live in sorrow like wandering spirits. Hurting others won't bring happiness. Besides Por Kru and my mom, I've never loved anyone... pure love for me is like that, too. It shouldn't cause anyone sorrow even though I don't want you to go anywhere."

"Why do you always think I'll leave? Let's talk about something else. It's disheartening, you know."

"Don't be disheartened by me."

"And when you threatened you'd send ghosts to haunt me, you weren't serious, right?"

"I was serious, and it won't just be haunting. I can love deeply, and I can hate as much. Don't you know my nature?"

"Who'd do that I don't have any love left for anyone else, and I won't leave you either."

Her lover's words were clear, even as she stood still, contemplating some reasons in her mind.

At the marble table under the shade of the temple, a thin maechi walked holding her son's picture to her quarters before coming out to the slender figure and sitting down, looking at the two who were sitting on the ground. Her wrinkled face bore a striking resemblance to the slender figure as if they were cut from the same mold.

Her fair skin didn't lose its beauty, and it was clear that she must've been more beautiful than any woman in her youth. She has a gentle demeanor.

The sternness of Mae Kru Bulan must've come from her father.

"Are you angry with me, my beautiful daughter?"

She asked her daughter, who was watching. in a soft voice

"What would I be angry with you about?"

"I gave birth to him, but his body and mind were his own. He carried heavy sins. Don't curse him; forgive him so that your karma will tie with him no more. His merit is exhausted,"

Maechi spoke softly, gently stroking her daughter's head and cupping her cheek with a smile.

"You must be troubled."

"Letting him continue his sins would trouble me more."

The tall figure watching smiled along.

"Is there anything you need? I'll bring it for you."

"I'm content with what I have. I don't need anything. But who is this? May I know?"

Her warm eyes turned to Lieutenant Peem, sitting with her daughter.

"Look closely, and you'll see... like I see,"

The slender figure also turned to look

"She has divine power protecting her. If Por Kru were here, he'd slap his knee in amazement. It's rare. Your father said my beautiful Bulan would have a lover with such a figure. He also said: 'If you don't believe me, live and see for yourself. Don't rush to follow me. Today, I see that he spoke the truth. You've waited long, and today, you've met. Take good care of each other."

Though the tall figure didn't fully understand what she said, she looked at Maechi with a smile.

"I believe Por Kru spoke the truth, and I believe..."

"Bulan, look at your father and me. One day, you'll die. If you believe Por Kru spoke the truth, believe in your lover."

Maechi's words created much curiosity, but she dared not ask.

"What have I done wrong... can't I defy fate just once?"

"Spirit and body must part when the time comes. You know this well. When it's time to let go, you must let go..."

"I don't know... myself either. Do you know how much I love her?"

"How could I not know my beautiful daughter's nature? Take care of her. Bulan only has love to give, no ill intentions."

**"Yes, I love her very much, too."**

The mother's smile appeared with warmth upon hearing this, lifting her hand from her daughter's head to place it gently on the tall figure's head before both bowed and left, watched by Maechi until they were out of sight. "And I believe your father won't let his beautiful daughter and me suffer."

Inside the temple with a large Buddha image, Maechi in white sat down, hands raised in prayer, reciting various chants thoroughly. Her eyes lifted to the golden head while her hands remained in prayer.

**"I dedicate all the merit I've accumulated to Bulan. She's done good things and helped many people. If she faces heavy misfortune, may it turn to good. May the heavy become light. She waited for so long to be happy. May she never part from her lover."** After saying that, she prostrated three times.

.

**Mae Kru Bulan's house....**

"I'm so full I can't move."

The tall figure, who'd just eaten two bowls of rice, raised a hand to rub her stomach.

"Eat until you're full. Don't overeat. Save some for the next meal."

"What can I do? It was so delicious I couldn't stop eating."

Even though she was scolded, she still picked up a piece of pineapple and popped it into her mouth. The slender figure moved the fruit plate away before shifting to sit sideways on the lieutenant's lap. Of course, she'd never done anything like this outside the bedroom before.

"What day is it today?"

Lieutenant Peem wrapped her arms around her waist, supporting her, before moving her face closer.

"Today, we get to spend the whole day together for the first time "

"That's true "

Happiness shone clearly in their eyes, and no words were spoken. Only a peaceful silence remained. Their eyes locked onto each other, it was like a silent expression of love. They just wanted to gaze and admire the beauty of their lover for a while.

Their noses gently touched, and they slowly closed their eyes.

"Do you know that if we keep doing this, we might end up having a love scene on the chair or the dining table?" The lieutenant said.

"You knows I don't like that"

"Then let's hurry and clear the dishes before we can't."

"Why, dear?"

The tall figure's gaze now seemed to devour the person on his lap entirely. The small voice of Mae Bulan returned, along with a face and eyes that were irresistibly cute, deserving to be devoured.

"Because I'm going to eat you right here and now."

Even though Mae Kru already knew, she still pretended to ask. And sometimes, the lieutenant had to be frank. She smiled mischievously and teasingly until she was kissed, realizing it was better to help clean up quickly and head upstairs.

And just then, Lieutenant Peem's phone rang, so she had to excuse herself to take the call The slender figure, having finished everything, decided to go upstairs to freshen up.

It wasn't unusual for Mae Kru Bulan to call it a day early and go to bed at dusk. Lieutenant Peem had gotten used to spending time with her like this, so there were no issues with it. Part of it was wanting to be with her without any desire to go out and have fun elsewhere.

After showering, she walked up to the bedroom. But this time, what was different was the slender figure lying under the blanket, facing away on the bed. The tall figure saw this and quickly stepped closer, puzzled.

"Is something wrong?"

When she peeked at her lover's face from behind, it made her heart sink. Tears welled up in the clear eyes, though they didn't fall.

"Who did something to you?"

The tall figure asked with a trembling voice, fearing something had happened to her.

"I can't do it anymore..."

Her sharp face was pouting, her eyes sad and dejected, trying to pull the blanket over her face, but the tall figure grabbed it.

"You scared me... Is it your period?"

Without saying a word, she pressed a gentle kiss on her lover's head.

Feeling her nod, she understood and concluded the reason for her actions.

"You once asked if I was disgusted by you. Today, I'll prove it. Can you go somewhere with me? Don't let us both suffer."

These words were a soft whisper that the tall figure used to tell her lover while pressing her nose to inhale the scent behind her ear and nape. The body's response, along with the dry breath, indicated that the slender figure was suffering even more than usual when teased like this.

# Chapter 28.The Depth of Love

Inside the spacious bathroom, the area was divided into wet and dry zones. The silky nightgown was discarded carelessly onto the floor. This time, even though it was more than she needed, she surrendered willingly.

Once aroused, her body, now only in underwear, followed the tall figure who led her to sit against the corner of the bathroom under the shower, pulling her hand to sit between her legs.

Her fingers grasped her lover's jaw, turning her to receive the sweet kiss, distracting her from what was to come next. Her long, slender hand hooked the edge of her panties and slowly pulled them down.

"There's nothing to be ashamed of it."

Mae Kru was still unsure and broke the kiss to confirm if the lieutenant was really going to do this. Her sharp eyes glanced at the bright red blood on the cloth without any disgust, placing it in the corner of the wall beside her.

Then, she grabbed the showerhead, letting warm water flow over Bulan's sweet petals, then rubbed away the remaining blood with her fingertips.

## "Ahhh..."

*A breath escaped her lips from the tingling sensation that shot up to her lower abdomen, making her spread her legs wider. She leaned back and reached up to pull the lieutenant down for a kiss she desired.*

***Pop.***

*After turning off the warm water, the lieutenant quickly opened the pink plastic bottle and squeezed the clear gel onto her two fingers.*

## "I love you."

*With those words, she inserted her long fingers deep inside Mae Kru, hitting her sensitive spot.*

## "Hghnnn..!!!"

*The slender body opened her mouth, moaning in front of Lieutenant Peem, who watched her lover's face contort with pleasure. Her eyes were so sexy that she wanted to keep her all to herself. Her fingers began to move in and out, even as fluids started to flow, pressing hard enough to feel the inner walls of her love canal.*

## "Why didn't you say it back?"

*She wasn't really upset; she just wanted to tease her back for making her lose control when she saw her biting her lower lip and moaning sweetly.*

## "Hmmm... Please don't stop..."

*The soft voice pleaded as her fingers paused, even though she was already trembling with pleasure. Mae Kru reached down to grab the lieutenant's fingers, pushing them in herself*

## "Say you love me."

*She allowed her to move the fingers as she liked while she kissed her neck and shoulders, then moved down to kiss her back, which had some tattoos. It wasn't that many from what she saw every night.*

## "I love you... Ahhh...! I love you so much, only you. I love you, Peem. Do you hear me?"

*Not only satisfied, but her heart also pounded so hard it felt like it'd burst. The lieutenant grabbed her nape, pulled her close, and kissed her deeply, even though she knew she might not like it.*

*Her wrist shook as she pressed hard, wanting to crush her in her hand.*

*Strangely, at this moment, Mae Kru didn't resist but responded well, moaning and clinging to her, leaving red marks on her skin.*

*The clear gel began to change color, and red fluid started to ooze out, dripping from her fingers as she moved in rhythm. She glanced at it without any concem.*

*Her bra had disappeared without her noticing. Her other hand squeezed the breast, enjoying the feel. Though it looked normal, who would've known Bulan had such a figure?*

*Her sweet moans continued without pause. The fingers kept pressing, wanting her to remember this pleasure for a long time. Her inner walls clenched tightly, not letting go*

*Just looking at Mae Kru's flawless, fair-skinned body and her heaving breasts made her want to release her energy. Her neck turned red from tension and the marks she made.*

*Her pelvis twisted after being tormented for a while, clenching tightly, even with fluids inside.*

*The lieutenant rested her chin on her shoulder, admiring her work as she neared her climax.*

*Her other hand left her breast and slid down to the tattoo below her navel, rubbing and pressing as she was used to, then pressing her love button with her thumb.*

## "Ahhh!!! Peem... Hghnnnn!!!"

*Her loud moans echoed, her eyes burning as she looked at her lover's hands, then her face, feeling tortured until she couldn't take it anymore, her body convulsing.*

*After her spasms subsided, she received a comforting kiss from her lover. The lieutenant reached to turn on the warm water again, gently washing away the red fluid and treating her tenderly as if preparing for the next round. She cherished her sweet lotus so much she didn't want to let go.*

*Again and again, they did it until they were exhausted. As women, they understood each other well. A new sanitary pad was placed in her underwear skillfully, and she dressed her herself, starting from her feet as she lay on the bed.*

*Her lips and nose pressed a loving kiss on her lotus tattoo. Her sharp eyes watched every action, making her eyes well up with tears from the love she felt. She climbed over her, kissing her forehead before Mae Kru Bulan fell asleep from exhaustion.*

## "I love you...so much..."

*The soft voice was filled with deep love, making the one above yearn even more, her eyes burning with tears for no reason. Amid the flowing tears, the lieutenant kept her eyes on Mae Kru face, afraid she'd disappear. She didn't understand why she was crying because of love, but it happened.*

*"Why... did we just meet? If I'd known earlier, I would've courted you since kindergarten."*

*She gently stroked her cheek, understanding her trembling voice. She felt the same, having just understood the depth of love after almost thirty years.*

*No words were needed. All she wanted was to hold her close and let exhaustion take them both into sleep together.*

*Soon, as her eyes closed, she felt warmth from her chest. She liked to lick or suck her nipple lightly before sleeping on her chest every night. In the morning, she often found it still in her mouth. Just stroking her head was enough to send her to slumber. Some nights, just a few strokes, and she'd fall asleep before her.*

*.*

*.*

***Bzzz! Bzzz!***

Both Lieutenant Peem and the slender figure woke up to the vibrating phone. It was almost time for them to wake up anyway. She reached for the phone on the headboard. They were close enough to hear the conversation.

## "Peem"

"What's wrong. Mom?!"

Hearing the sobbing voice on the other end, the lieutenant was shocked.

*"Peem, can you come to see me today? He really has someone else and hit me... He's never been like this. Peem, I can't take it anymore. I can't stand him anymore."*

"He hit you? Dad did that?"

Her heart sank to her stomach. Her mother's heart-wrenching cries made her almost collapse.

## "Wahhh!!!"

"Okay. I'll come see you today with my lover. Don't cry, Mom. If he's still like this, then divorce him. If he thinks someone else is better than you... let him go."

The slender figure quickly wiped the tears from her lover's cheeks, knowing how much pain she was in.

## "I miss you, Peem. I have no one left..."

"Don't cry. I'll come right away."

As she spoke, she held Mae Kru's hand, pleading with her eyes for her to come along. The slender figure nodded gently.

**Mae Sot International Airport...**

Their luggage was packed into one bag since they weren't staying long. The slender figure wore a white T-shirt, covered with a long-sleeved suit and matching pants, her hair parted in the middle and tied back, looking more formal than the lieutenant, who wore just a shirt and light-colored jeans: She looked like a businesswoman.

With Mae Kru's tall, slender figure, the lieutenant was confident her mother would like her at first sight. She carried herself well, knew etiquette, dressed modestly and cleanly, and smelled so good that she couldn't help but lean in to sniff her shoulder during the flight. Of course, she got a scolding look from Mae Kru Bulan, but it was worth it

In just about an hour, they arrived at Suvarnabhumi Airport. The chaos and the crowd, including foreigners, hit them like tsunamis, making them dizzy. Even though they were still in the same country, it seemed like they were in a different world.

Quickly, they hurried out to wait for the car that was coming to pick them up. It was a sleek, long black car. Inside, it was quiet, cutting off the noise from outside. The seats and the cabin were spacious and comfortable.

"Ms. Peem, when are you coming back to Bangkok? Madam is having a tough time lately. I heard the culprits are starting to get caught, aren't they?"

The driver, an older man dressed quite well, asked while glancing at the rearview mirror.

"I just went there. Are you already asking me to come back? The countryside is peaceful. You should try it sometime."

"I can go for a visit, but living there is a different story. Ms. Peem, is it tough living there?"

"Not at all. I'm very happy. Actually, I just realized I like the countryside."

"Don't let Madam hear that. She might feel terrible, thinking you're not happy at home. And this... is your friend?"

"No, this is my girlfriend,"

The tall figure said, lifting their held hands as proof.

"Y-your girlfriend? Ms. Peem, you have a girlfriend? I've never seen you interested in anyone before."

"I wasn't interested before, but now I am. I know she's this beautiful, but she's really my girlfriend."

"Ms. Peem, you're not unattractive yourself. Many people like you. Does Madam know about this?"

"I told her, but I'm not sure if she was listening. Let's hurry, I'm worried, too."

"Alright."

"This is Uncle Sorn. He's been taking care of the three of us siblings since we were kids. His wife was our nanny, helping Grandma take care of us while our parents worked. You'll meet them at home, but Grandma isn't there. She's staying with my aunt in the countryside. She said she felt lonely here because we all go to work, but there she has things to do." The slender figure nodded lightly in acknowledgment.

"I'm just a driver, really. Ms. Peem makes it sound so grand."

The journey back was probably normal for Lieutenant Peem, but for her, who rarely traveled, it was uncomfortable and awkward. Thankfully, her lover held her hand the entire time, and she didn't say anything to upset her.

She kept her worries inside, understanding that the lieutenant's mother was in trouble, and as her daughter, she had to come.

The tall gate slid open automatically. She wondered if this was really the home for a family of five because it could easily accommodate dozens of people. She never knew how wealthy the lieutenant was.

In her neighborhood, this would be called a mansion. But in reality, it was just a large, grandly decorated house, not quite a mansion. The high fence was surrounded by tall trees, blocking the view from outside. There was also a fountain at the entrance where the car was parked.

"Waaah! Peem!"

"Mom..."

The tall figure gently let go of her lover's hand to embrace her mother, who rushed toward her with tear-streaked eyes.

The slender figure, though feeling a bit uneasy seeing her lover let her go like that, tried to understand the context and showed no outward reaction.

# Chapter 29. Mother

**"Why is it that lately. you make decisions without consulting me at all?"**

Madam Ratchaphee asked her daughter, who was sitting on the sofa next to her, accompanied by a tall, slender young woman who claimed to be her girlfriend. Throughout her life, her eldest daughter had never done anything behind her back like this before.

"Mom, I just have a girlfriend. It's not like I'm doing anything wrong or causing trouble for anyone."

The tall figure tried to explain with a voice filled with respect and concem for both sides, clearly worried.

"Peem, can't you see how much this is troubling me?"

The mother placed her hand on her chest, seeking sympathy and emphasizing that before meeting this woman, she'd always been her daughter's number one.

"Mom, I'm here with you now, and I still love and care for you. Nothing has changed at all."

Lieutenant Peem understood her mother's worries well. In her vulnerable state, she was simply afraid that her daughter would love and care for someone else more.

"Why does everyone like to treat me this way?"

"I brought her here to introduce her to you, to show you that I love you, love you the most, more than my own life"

The lieutenant's lips slowly uttered comforting words to calm the woman in front of her while holding her mother's hand with both of hers. The slender figure remained silent, waiting for the mother and daughter to sort things out, aware that her lover's mother clearly saw her as a stranger.

Even though she started to feel a bit upset-if it were another woman, she might've fought back-with this woman, it seemed like there was no way to fight back.

"I don't care. Until I'm sure she's suitable, you can't be together. And she's a woman too. Even if I somewhat understand, doing things behind my back like this isn't right."

Since her daughter insisted on continuing the relationship, she had to resort to her usual tactic of being difficult, which always worked.

"Mom, I'm not better than anyone else. Saying things like this isn't nice. It's like we're looking down on her."

"Peem, you've never spoken to me like this. I've always chosen the best for all my children. Now that you're grown, both your father and you just want to hurt me. If Phu were here, he wouldn't treat me like this."

Besides starting to get angry, she also mentioned her son, who'd been in the hospital for two months.

"Mom, she doesn't love me more than you. We've only been dating for a short time. Until you're comfortable, we can take things slow. Right now, you're going through a tough time, and I have to care about you more than anyone else."

The slender figure had also made her choice and didn't want her lover to show aggression toward her mother, which would only make things worse.

"Don't call me mom. Call me like everyone else. I raised her, so I know she loves and cares about me more than anyone. And you shouldn't interfere in my family's matters. Even if she tells you, you don't need to pity me. I,

Ratchaphee, don't need anyone's sympathy."

Even Peem was shocked by her mother's words, turning to look at her lover with concern. The slender figure did nothing but raise her hands in a wai gesture to apologize for calling her mom and then sat quietly.

"I'll go see Dad, and then we'll leave."

Lieutenant Peem's firm voice spoke. She turned to look at her mother, whom she now thought had gone too far. Her look was one of disappointment, awkwardness, confusion, and anger like never before.

"See how much you've changed my daughter? Are you satisfied now?"

"Mom, if there's anything, talk to me. If there's a fault, it's mine. Why did you speak to her like that?"

"If this woman is so important to you, then go. Take her and leave. Don't come back to see me."

The lieutenant gritted her teeth, almost ready to leave, but the slender figure held her hand, pressing it down to keep her from getting up.

"Mom, if I say I'm happy with her, will you allow us to be together?"

It wasn't a voice of anger but a trembling one, filled with teary frustration.

"Is our home so unbearable that you've never been happy until now? I must be really terrible in your eyes."

Finally, the tears she'd been holding back flowed, causing Madam Ratchaphee's deep emotional turmoil. She wondered what had caused her daughter such pain-was it concern for her or for the woman sitting next to her?

"If you're going to see your father, tell him that if he wants to spoil that whore, he should use his own money. He has no right to use family money or the money I've invested for the children. I'm getting a divorce... and Peem, come stay at home tonight"

"I wasn't planning to stay."

"What's wrong with you, Peem?! This is your home. Or do my words mean nothing anymore? Do you want me to die of heartbreak to satisfy everyone in this house?"

The slender figure squeezed her lover's hand tightly, signaling her to control her emotions.

"Okay... I'll stay here tonight."

"If you weren't my daughter, would you have what you have today? Maybe this woman wouldn't care about you as much. Think carefully, Peem. People respect you because of your lieutenant rank or because of our family's money... You know how much I suffer... You're my last hope, the reason I want to keep living..."

Her heartless words cut deep into the lieutenant's already fragile heart. She couldn't believe they came from the woman who claimed to love her more than anyone. It was both an insult and a reminder of her own inadequacy. She felt numb, unable to argue anymore.

Madam Ratchaphee also felt a pang of regret for her harsh words, realizing she'd never hurt any of her children like this before. Feeling cornered, she left the room in a huff, unwilling to apologize.

The lieutenant exhaled softly, holding back her sobs with all her might, before turning to her lover, who sat beside her, and pressing her hand to her cheek for comfort.

Her lover said nothing, but every tear from the lieutenant felt like acid on her own heart. She held her emotions firmly, appearing unaffected.

.

**In the luxurious car of the Ruechakun family...**

"My father is a high-ranking police officer... quite famous. He's a good man and kind, and he never said anything to hurt Mom. He loved the family and cared for Pat the most because she was the youngest. Pat loved him, too, because he spoiled her. She was a sweet, affectionate, and smart girl who'd just graduated from an exchange program and was about to study abroad at the same university we attended. Then, the incident happened... She used Dad's gun to shoot herself when a video leaked She disappeared for three days. Everyone was heartbroken. It wasn't just one video, not just one person It wasn't just really leaked but sold in private chat groups. When we found out thousands had bought it, even I was at a loss I didn't know how to erase it from the world..."

The fire in her eyes burned painfully. The slender figure listening turned to look out the window, unable to bear it.

"He couldn't eat or sleep, tormented for months. He had to take a leave. Everyone understood. including Mom. She never complained about his drinking or anything. I understood and was equally heartbroken. At first, we thought his condition was due to grief, but in the past few months, he changed drastically, becoming almost unrecognizable It was more than the family could bear. We didn't want them to separate, but we didn't know what to do. We tried everything, negotiating, pleading, but nothing worked "

Tears continued to flow down her face like a river.

"Don't worry about how I feel. Don't hurt your mother. She raised you with all her might, so she loves and cherishes you. Time will heal things. Right now focus on your family."

Her lover's words were like a balm for her heart, giving her the strength to keep going. Her red eyes turned to the slender figure, and she realized she'd chosen the right person to love. Her love grew even stronger.

The large condo stood amid the bustling area, teeming with people and close to a Skytrain station. Lieutenant Peem asked the tenant of her own unit to come down and meet her so she could go up to her father's room, whom she hadn't been able to contact. This room used to belong to Phu. It was a room her mother had bought for each of the siblings. Once she reached the door, she decided to ring the bell immediately.

The person who opened the door wasn't her father but a beautiful, Thaiwestern woman with a high-bridged nose who looked like she could be a professional model. She wore a bright red dress, short enough to reveal her thighs, with a plunging neckline that went down to her cleavage. This sight left Peem quite startled.

"Who is this?"

The woman turned back into the room to ask before the lieutenant's father emerged, looking surprised to see his daughter there.

"Peem,"

He called out in a low, somewhat displeased tone.

"Is this her?"

"It's not what you think. You should leave now,"

He softly instructed the woman, still being considerate to his daughter standing there.

The woman grabbed her bag and left. The lieutenant stood silently, but Mae Kru's sharp eyes caught sight of a tattoo on the woman's nape and right shoulder blade as she walked past. She recognized it well, along with its power.

The three of them moved into the living room. Her father seemed quite uneasy but didn't want to say anything, unsure of who the beautiful woman accompanying his daughter was.

"Dad, why did you hit Mom?"

The lieutenant broke the silence, wanting to get to the bottom of things.

"Your mom kept yelling at me non-stop, then started yelling at everyone else, repeating the same things over and over. I told her to stop, but she wouldn't. What was I supposed to do? Your mom isn't the same either. It's not fair to blame just me."

"Mom said... if you want a divorce, she'll do it. Just don't touch the shared assets."

"That might be better than how things are now. I'm happier here than at home."

"Does that woman really make you happy, Dad?"

"Would you understand if I told you?"

"Of course, I would. If I didn't, I would've yelled at you at the door. I understand what it's like to love someone. I just want to be sure. It's not about doubting your concern. One day, if you give her everything and have nothing left, will she leave you?"

Her father lowered his head, contemplating. He thought his daughter would've been furious upon seeing that woman, but now she was calmer than he was.

"I feel like I can't live without her. It's like I'd die. Do you really understand me, Peem?"

It was heartbreaking, but compared to what she'd been through, she tried hard to understand and not do what had been done to her. Her father had always done his best, and he hadn't been happy since losing his other daughter. As a daughter, she now felt the right thing to do was to respect both sides' decisions rather than let the conflict continue.

"Dad, if I were to have a lover, would you mind?"

"Why would I mind? You're grown up. You should've had one long ago if not for your mom."

"It's not about Mom."

"Go ahead. Maybe you'll finally be happy with someone."

Even though his face had changed a lot, looking more haggard and wom, his eyes were still the same. He was still the father who loved and cared for his daughter.

He seemed much gentler now, different from the first moment she saw him, especially after that woman left.

# Chapter 30. Vomit

**"Who is this woman? Is there a problem?"**

The slender figure continued to scan the room until the owner of the room had to ask. Lieutenant Peem introduced her without any embarrassment, saying she was her girlfriend.

**"Peem... you like women?"**

"I only love her. I don't feel the same about other women."

The well-built man just nodded, not saying or asking anything further.

"I'll be right back. I need to use the bathroom."

"Okay..."

The slender figure pulled her lover's sleeve to bring him closer once the room owner was out of sight.

"Try sneaking into the bedroom. Check the drawers or under the pillow. If you find anything strange, let me know."

"Don't tell me..."

"I didn't teach you to be superstitious. Just check it out. It mightn't be what I think."

"Okay."

The tall figure wasted no time and quickly left.

It wasn't long before the room owner returned and sat down, looking for his daughter, who wasn't there. The father asked the slender figure, who replied evasively that she wanted to check around to see if her father lived comfortably.

"There's no need for that. She's stayed in this condo before."

"Dad..."

Before she could finish her sentence, the tall figure returned, immediately calling out to her father.

**"What are you doing?"**

"Dad, can I ask you for a favor?"

Lieutenant Peem returned to her seat while asking.

**"Go ahead."**

"I have to go back to Tak tomorrow morning. Can you come to dinner at home tonight? We can also discuss the divorce properly. You can stay here as long as you want. This time, I'm asking you myself. Mom has nothing to do with it. I've never asked you for anything."

And it was true that the lieutenant had never asked her father for anything, whether it was material things or something else. She always did everything according to her mother's advice and wishes, except for becoming a police officer. That was her dream and pride, wanting to be skilled and help others like her father.

If this could help end the conflicts, it should be done. The lieutenant was the only one who could stop that woman from ruining her and her loved ones' lives.

**"Alright... I'll go, for your sake."**

"Thank you... I'll wait for you downstairs."

The person in front nodded in response, and Lieutenant Peem led Mae Kru out of the room and straight to the car.

"I found this. It's the strangest and scariest one. Here."

Back in the car, the tall figure quickly pulled out a small iron figurine shaped like a woman sitting with her legs spread and painted red in the private area.

"I told you to sneak a look, not steal things. Don't just grab anything."

"Well... I didn't know how to explain it, so I just took it. It seemed easier. There was nothing under the pillow, but I found it in a bag hanging there. It must be that woman's bag."

"Some things, if held properly, can be good. Some can bring trouble. She'll know it's missing soon.

"Let her. How can something this scary be good?"

"Are you scared?"

"Don't disrespect these things. I tricked Dad into coming home, hoping you could help."

"Hmph."

Even though she knew who she was talking to, she couldn't help but tease. And it wasn't like the slender figure didn't know that her lover did this to cover up her inner worries.

"Please... even if he doesn't show symptoms like that girl."

"Do you know that the knowledge of these things has many branches?

Some have immediate effects, while others slowly consume the true self. His darkened face, losing the aura of a high-ranking officer, may indicate that he's about to get hurt."

The tall figure's face showed a forced smile before the slender figure gently patted her lover's head to ease her worries.

"You did the right thing by telling him to come home. I'll help as much as I can."

"Yes, tomorrow we can go home. I'm sorry, on behalf of Mom. I'm really sorry."

"Don't worry too much. Focus on the current problem. Just stay with me."

"I love you this much; where would I go? Even when together, I still miss you."

A faint smile soothed the cracks in their hearts.

Even the tall figure missed Mae Kru Bulan's home despite it not being as comfortable and grand as her own.

.

.

**The house of the Ruechakun family.....**

As expected, when they entered the house, Madam Ratchaphee showed displeasure at seeing her husband. She even turned her face away, not wanting to look.

"I invited him. If there's going to be a divorce, it should be discussed properly. I respect both your decisions."

Lieutenant Peem, noticing the tense atmosphere, quickly spoke to let her father into the house.

"There's nothing to discuss."

"Mom "

The tall figure pleaded softly.

**"If Peem hadn't invited me, I wouldn't have stepped foot here."**

"Good."

The slender figure saw her lover's tense face, sighing repeatedly, and could only stand and watch, even though she wanted to hug her tightly.

"I'm very hungry. Is there anything to eat?"

"I had your favorite dishes prepared. Or should I order from a restaurant?"

"No need. Whatever we have is fine. Is Auntie in the kitchen?"

"What do you want, Peem?"

"I'd like a small separate meal for her. She doesn't eat with others."

"What's wrong with her? Does she think I want to eat with her? Is she just being picky, or does she have a disease?"

"She doesn't eat with others because it'd be leftovers [\*]. She's not sick."

"Leftovers? The food was just made."

From mild dislike, the eyes staring at the person in front now clearly showed prejudice.

"It's okay, Ms. Ratchaphee. I'm not hungry. Please eat. You might want to discuss family matters privately."

The slender figure spoke calmly to cut off the issue.

**"What's the big deal? Peem didn't ask you to do it."**

"What right do you have to interfere in my family's matters?"

**"One day... you won't have anything or anyone left, not even Peem."** "What do you say, Peem? I want to know, too. Will you leave me for this woman?"

Hearing this, the fire in her heart flared up even more.

"Let's go inside. I'm not leaving anyone, not Dad or Mom. Let me take her to rest in my room first. I'll be right back."

"Do whatever you want. You never ask for my permission anyway. Do as you please."

"If it makes you uncomfortable, I'll take her to a hotel."

"What does this woman have that's so special? Or do you think she's pretty and can get anyone? I can find someone prettier for you."

"If you don't stop insulting her, I'll really leave."

"Go ahead. I can't talk about her, can 1?" Madam Ratchaphee crossed her arms in displeasure.

"Apologize to her."

The slender figure commanded softly, gritting her teeth.

"What she did was wrong. And..."

"I said, apologize to her. If you don't, we're done here."

The sharp eyes stared into her lover's.

"...."

"At least you know some manners."

"I'm sorry, Mom."

The lieutenant raised her hands to give a wai properly.

Both went up to Lieutenant Peem's bedroom, and the first thing she did was hug the slender figure from behind as soon as the door closed, inhaling her lover's scent along her neck and ears as if they'd been apart for a long time.

"What's wrong?"

Her lover's sweet voice made the hug even tighter.

"Why am I so weak? I want to take you back right now. I brought you here to suffer."

"I'm not suffering. We'll go back tomorrow. Boil an egg for me and put this golden plate in their pillowcases."

"But Dad isn't sleeping here."

"Do as I say."

The tall figure nodded and didn't question anything.

. .

Mae Kru Bulan knew that if she stayed in sight, it'd only cause more arguments between mother and daughter. After receiving the boiled egg, she asked the lieutenant to give it to her father, but she chose to stay quietly in her room, allowing the family to discuss matters privately.

At the dining table, there was only silence, no conversation, and no one thought to eat. The atmosphere was so tense it was hard to breathe. Lieutenant Peem started the meal by serving food to both her parents.

"Please eat something. Don't be mad at me. After all, I love you both the most in my life."

The mother, being consoled, seemed to calm down a bit and decided to eat. Before the father started eating, Lieutenant Peem took the opportunity to serve him the boiled egg, saying she made it herself and wanted him to try

it for his health. Without suspicion, he ate it without hesitation, **"Blaargh!!!"**

And what happened immediately left everyone at the dining table, including the maid who rushed in to see, utterly stunned. The tall figure barely managed to push her chair back in time. The father vomited onto the floor right in front of everyone, and what came out wasn't just food scraps.

It was blood mixed with stomach acid, emitting a pungent, fishy smell that almost made others gag.

Both the lady of the house and the maid, as well as Lieutenant Peem, felt nauseous but couldn't stop the vomiting that flooded the floor.

## "Blaargh!!!"

What was even more shocking was that this time, the vomit consisted of thick, almost black blood, along with clumps of hair, fingernails, and pieces that resembled some kind of flesh. But the most horrifying part was the fragments of unidentified bones. He vomited with such force that his body shook. and just as he was about to collapse from the chair, Lieutenant Peem managed to catch him in time.

"What the hell is going on here?! Go get the doctor!!"

"Yes, ma'am!"

No matter how angry she was, seeing the man she once loved collapse in pain made her quickly grab hold of him tightly. Her eyes stared at the mess on the floor in fear.

It wasn't long before the doctor arrived at the house. After a quick examination, no abnormalities were found in his body. If he hadn't ingested those things himself, it was beyond reason to explain how they ended up in his stomach. After administering medication and vitamins, the doctor advised rest due to his weakened state.

"If the patient doesn't improve, send him to the hospital. For now, everything seems normal."

"Yes, Doctor."

Taking advantage of the moment when her mother stepped out, the tall figure slipped a small, inscribed piece of golden plate into her father's pillowcase while he was still unconscious. When she saw the woman return, she quickly asked if her father could stay here until he got better and requested to postpone the divorce.

Madam Ratchaphee, though not entirely pleased, wasn't heartless enough to kick a sick man out. She didn't verbally agree but nodded slightly, showing she wasn't too interested, before walking back to her room. Lieutenant Peem stayed for a while until the maid came to help, then hurried back to her room to be with her lover.

As evening approached, not seeing any sign of her child, who should've come to see her, made her even more anxious. She left her room to make her presence known, showing that she was still displeased. The tall figure should've come to see or spent this time with her distressed mother. Out of habit, she forgot to knock and, assuming her maternal privilege, opened the door.

She saw a young woman in a towel applying lotion to her legs on her daughter's bed. The slender figure was equally shocked and could only sit still.

The hand on the doorknob slowly pulled the door shut without saying a word, maintaining a calm face as if nothing had happened, though the tattoos on the woman's body remained vividly in her mind.

"Yes, ma'am?"

"Captain, I need to know who the woman with Lieutenant Peem is, and I need an answer as soon as possible..."

# Chapter 31. Premonition

**Madam Ratchaphee's bedroom.....**

"You went to see me?"

The tall figure, freshly showered and having just learned the news, quickly got herself together and headed straight to her mother's bedroom.

"I thought you weren't going to come to see me."

Her mother, still sulking, turned her head away with a dismissive gesture.

"I'm here, Mom. I just finished showering."

"Why did it take you so long to come see me?"

"I was discussing Dad with her. If Dad really got cursed, it means he's been harmed. We need to help him. I want you to talk to him nicely one more time. He mightn't even realize what happened to him."

"Is she that important? Do you have to tell her everything that happens in this house? And Peem, you're a police officer. Why are you thinking about such superstitions?"

"Mom, it's real. We might get the old Dad back."

"The old Dad is dead since he brought that woman into our lives. A whore from who knows where."

Her voice was filled with bitterness, and she clenched her teeth in pain.

"I think if you talk to Dad nicely, things might get better."

"And what about now? Have I not been nice? I've been so kind, yet he betrayed me. Even my kids risked their lives protecting others. No one ever thought about how I'd feel!"

Tears overflowed, accompanied by a loud, angry outburst that echoed through the room. Her face and eyes were filled with anguish and bitterness.

The image of a happy family from the past was now shattered beyond repair. The mother's heart, filled with festering wounds, felt like it was burning to ashes and extinguishing constantly.

"Mom..."

At this point, the daughter couldn't stay silent. She hugged her sobbing mother tightly.

"What do you want me to do? Tell me. What do I have to do to make you happy?"

Her clenched fists pounded her chest in a fit of despair. Her body shook with sobs. It was the ultimate pain of a woman who'd lost her beloved daughter, a well-raised son, and a husband who was once the family's pillar. She felt like she was losing the last light in her life.

The guilt in her heart surged like a giant wave crashing a small boat against the rocks, shattering it into pieces. She couldn't even dream of sailing into the ocean again.

"I'm here now, Mom. I'm here..."

She knew she was the only emotional anchor for her family now. She could only cry inside.

She wasn't the kind of child who would leave her mother to drown in pain. She couldn't prioritize her happiness over her mother's.

"Tonight... stay with me, Peem..."

"Okay. I'll just grab my things quickly and come right back."

After her mother calmed down, the tall figure returned to her room to explain what had happened to her lover. She always managed to reassure her, never showing any signs of sarcasm or resentment. She only expressed understanding and urged her to return to the grieving woman, spending time with her until it was time to leave.

.

.

By morning, Police Lieutenant General Phakin woke up with a bright face, not suffering from the usual headaches. Lieutenant Peem, about to leave, rushed to her father, followed by Madam. Ratchaphee, who still maintained a distant demeanor. **"Peem..."**

"Yes, Dad...?"

"I..."

The tall figure looked at the man in front of her, who seemed confused about the place and the people around him. He raised his hand to his head in bewilderment.

"Can you hear me, Dad?"

**"I can hear you... Is this real or a dream?"**

"Are you so blinded that you can't tell the difference?"

**"I don't know."**

"If you don't know, how would I? Or should we ask that woman?"

**"Who...?"**

"If I told you that woman might've used a charming spell on you, would you believe me, Dad?"

"Have you been brainwashed, Peem? Why are you talking like this again?"

**"That woman..."**

As he spoke, memories began to flood in. Some images were so unbelievable that he couldn't accept they were his actions.

"Have you gone crazy?"

**"Can you stop insulting me for a moment? I'm begging you."**

"Mom, please. Dad just recovered. Talk to him nicely."

The tall figure continued to gently persuade her mother to calm down and speak to the man without sarcasm.

**"Peem..."**

"I understand. For now, Dad, you should stay home until you're fully recovered. This house is still our home. You made mistakes, and I believe there might've been influences that led you astray."

"Even after all this, you're still siding with your father, Peem?"

"I'm not siding with him, Mom. But he's still my father, the man you loved all your life. I can't abandon him. And if Dad insists on going back to that woman, I'll personally take both of you to get a divorce. But please, believe me, none of us want that to happen."

**"I love you, Peem..."**

Her father, tears streaming down his face, regained his senses. Seeing images of his children as they were young made his heart ache as if he'd just lost his daughter yesterday. The embrace of the respected officer brought warmth for the first time in months, and he didn't argue about his mistakes. "I love you too, Dad

**"I'm sorry, Peem... You, too. I'm really sorry. I failed as a father and as a husband..."**

Hearing the long-awaited apology, the woman felt her heart soften, though the wounds he caused were too deep to forgive easily. She turned away and walked out of the room.

Both of them said farewell, but it was clear that the homeowner only acknowledged her daughter's goodbye.

The husband, now burdened with guilt, couldn't say much. Explaining that she helped her father would only lead to more arguments. At least now, it seemed like they got the old Dad back. Things might improve.

Throughout the drive, the lieutenant kept glancing at her to ensure she was okay. Their hands remained clasped. In just a moment, they'd be back at her home, where she'd feel safer and more comfortable.

The lieutenant never intended for her to face such a situation. She couldn't blame her mother, the only one at fault was herself. She kept thinking of ways to cheer her up

"We're almost home. I miss your cooking."

As they drove, she tried to lighten the mood. She kissed the back of her hand, which had been silent until now.

"What do you want to eat?"

"Guess..."

"Are you going to say 'me?"

"How did you know?"

"Why did you sneak to see me last night? I told you to stay with her." "Mom was asleep. I couldn't sleep either. If I had to stay until morning, I would've died from missing you."

Around 2 AM, after Madam Ratchaphee fell into a deep sleep, Lieutenant Peem couldn't leave her lover alone. She sneaked in to cuddle until dawn before sneaking back before her mother woke up.

"I.... couldn't sleep either."

Hearing that made Lieutenant Peem smile widely. Mae Kru was subtly confessing that she missed her just as much. She playfully kissed her arm, pulling her closer.

"Why are you pulling me?"

Her soft, scolding voice sounded so endearing to her that she couldn't help but laugh. Just that, Mae Kru Bulan became her old self, and the lieutenant felt like she had her old lover back.

One day and one night apart had weakened her heart like never before. She thought she was strong, but she realized that Mae Kru Bulan was just a mere ordinary person in the eyes of her mother.

Her tears were worthless if compared, and she had no right to shed them

*Why do you despise me so much? What did I do to trouble you? What sin did I commit? The love I gave. I never gave to anyone else. Why do you look down on my love so much?*

"Normally, you already smell nice. Even when you sweat, you still smell good. Especially right after you shower, you smell even better. You need to give me a break sometimes, you know?"

"What break do you need?"

A small, delicate hand reached up to caress the cheek of her lover lying on the bed. She knew well that Lieutenant Peem was trying to cheer her up and coax her into admitting her worries. But for her, there was no time to dwell on such feelings.

She hadn't done anything wrong and was a good daughter to her parents, as she should be. Her sharp eyes gazed closely at her lover's face, reminding herself that right now, it was just the two of them, as it always had been. There was nothing to worry about.

"A break... from being too obsessed with you."

"I've never thought about taking a break"

"I'll try talking to my mom."

"Okay... I can wait...

**"I love you."**

**"I love you, too"**

Their lips met for the first time that day, a touch they both craved more and more. Two hands embraced their lover, not letting go throughout the night. Whether it was their long lovemaking or the repeated declarations of love, the only difference was the feeling that bound them tighter than ever before.

.

.

The night of shared pleasure extended into the early morning. They were still wrapped in each other's arms. They talked about the places they wanted to visit together that day, whether it was the waterfalls in the province or the local market she'd never been taken to.

"So your family opened a gold shop. That's why your mom is so protective of you"

"It's a family's shop, not even mine. I'm just a cop with a modest salary, I still need to rely on you for food for a long time. Or I could just give you my entire salary. Just give me food and a place to stay in exchange"

A hand gently stroked the head of the tall figure resting on her chest. It was only now that she realized Lieutenant Peem was actually the heir to a famous gold shop and also owned several Japanese restaurants in malls. She'd mentioned it for the first time, not to boast, but because she didn't want her to feel like an outsider.

**A new morning always seemed bright.**

The chirping of birds was as loud as usual. The slender figure, preparing a tray for food offerings, walked out to open the door and let the sunlight in.

But what was different this time was the person standing in front of her. The eyes staring at her were like arrows piercing through her chest. It wasn't the face of a friendly visitor but one filled with anger and resentment. It was the look of disdain, the same look she'd once used to regard something detestable

***"Mae Kru Bulan, where is my daughter?"***

# Chapter 32. Promise

**The dreamy mood the had vanished completely.**

Even though she prayed for nothing to happen, she couldnt escape reality The overlapping emotions overwhelmed her heart, leaving her unsure of what to do next.

"Captain Mom Wisat are you doing here?"

The tall figure who'd just followed her out asked in shock.

"There's an onter to transfer you back to Bangkok...today."

The man who delivered the order was also quite uneasy. Even though he had a rough idea about their relationship, thers nothing he could do to help because it was an onder from the higher-ups, no matter how ndicutous it seemed.

"I don't mind if my daughter loves a woman, but at least she shouldn't be involved with some crazy shaman."

"Mom."

"Stop it, Peem! If I'd known earlier, I wouldn't have let ther step foot in our house if you want a girlfriend. I"ll find one for you, and she'll be better than this. This doesn't even include the fact that her brother made your brother a vegetable."

"It has nothing to do with her. She didn't know anything about it, and she's not a shaman like you think. She helps people, even helped Dad."

"See! Maybe it was her who cursed your father. And I don't believe that in just a few weeks of being here, you could love her this much if she hadn't done something evil to you!"

The woman shouted in anger, her body trembling.

**"Ma'am..."**

"Quiet, Captain. I entrusted you to take care of my daughter, and this is how you repay me?"

Captain's face was heavy with worry, not wanting to say anything. He knew that if people found out he'd brought someone to insult Mae Kru at school, hundreds or thousands of students wouldn't stand it, especially the celebrities who respected Mae Kru like a deity.

"I guarantee it with my life. She'd never do such a thing."

"Do you know that the more you say something like that, the more I think she has the same evil nature as her brother? Wake up, Peem. Come home."

"I won't leave her, just like I wouldn't leave you and Dad..."

The feeling of sadness surged intensely inside her, but it was nothing compared to the slender figure standing still, suppressing her emotions with all her strength. The lieutenant's warm hand reached out to hold her lover's hand tightly, emphasizing to her mother.

"Phitcha, I order you to come home."

The stern look in her eyes was like needles piercing her heart, and no matter what, she wouldn't let her daughter stay in this environment any longer.

"Mom... I can't live without her..."

Her voice was a soft plea, filled with anguish, as her vision blurred with tears. The tightness in her chest felt like someone was stepping on it. She could feel the slender hand in hers trembling.

"I never thought you'd do this to me, too, Peem."

Tears of heartbreak flowed uncontrollably, like a flood. The tall figure was devastated by her mother's words, even more so because they came from someone she loved dearly.

"What do I have to do for you to believe that I never intended any harm to your daughter?"

Her voice was calm and clear, but only her lover standing beside her could sense the underlying tremor.

"Let go of my daughter until I'm sure you haven't cursed Peem. No contact because you might play dirty behind my back. Do you dare, Bulan?

Consider it a favor to me. Or if you want anything. I'll give it to you."

"When will you stop insulting her? Since...."

"Go back..."

The slender figure's interruption made the lieutenant almost not believe her ears. She even let go of her hand.

"Until this person is happy, don't let me see you again. I promise not to touch your daughter until you're sure I'm innocent. Respect for parents is paramount, and I hold this in high regard, you know this well... I promise, and it's a solemn vow. If you secretly meet me, it'll be considered a temptation that makes me break my vow, we won't be able to love each other in this life again... This short time has been enough happiness. I have waited my whole life to meet you. Meeting you means we still have some fate together. If our merit together ends here, don't come to my funeral either. I send you off here... May you live in peace, without any sorrow."

"Thank you, Bulan. I consider you still have some integrity."

"And I believe that someone like you also has integrity guiding your heart."

The retort made the mother shiver. As an elder who'd encountered many people, she knew well that her own words were being used against her. But she stood her ground, holding the upper hand.

Of course, she had no intention of returning her daughter to Mae Kru. Many thoughts ran through her mind to ensure her daughter never set foot here again. While they were negotiating, the tall figure's heart burned with sorrow. The more she spoke, the more tears streamed down her cheeks.

The slender figure tried not to look back or shed tears, but her expressionless face betrayed her as a tear unknowingly fell from one eye. Her heart was encased in icy coldness.

"Let's go. Peem."

Her hand tried to touch and grab her lover's arm, but it was too late. Her body barely responded, and through the hot tears, she saw the blurry image of her lover's back walking away resolutely.

***Click... Clack.***

Not only did the door close, but it was also locked from the inside. She didn't get to say goodbye or see her face one last time. She felt powerless as if fate had cruelly torn her soul apart.

On the other side of the door, the young woman clutched her face, collapsing in pain. Tears welled up in her beautiful eyes, and her sobs echoed in her chest, drowning out all other sounds. Her heart felt hollow and empty, leaving no room for anything else.

.

**Motherly love triumphs all.**

**From birth, she protects you.**

**If I do something to appall,**

**Surely, you'll despise me, and a flight shall ensue.**

**.**

**Though she's harsh, her love is nothing she lacks.**

**From birth, she cares for you as she cares for her heart.**

**With teary eyes, I shall hand you back.**

**This is fate, we're destined to part.**

.

**Her eyes were weary.**

Even when she reached her own home, she was still filled with heartache. Looking at her mother, there was no compassion in return. Being angry at her would be inappropriate, and pleading would be futile.

Everywhere she looked, there was only emptiness. She wished time would pass quickly, like when they were together.

"Mom what do you really want?"

Her voice was soft as she asked her mother, who led her into the house

"Your grandmother is coming today. Peem, go practice meditation with her for three days. The monks will cleanse you of any evil. Do you know how worried your grandmother is?"

"Three days... right?"

"Yes, three days."

"Okay... I'll go."

"And in the meantime, I'll find a way to help you, Peem."

"There's nothing wrong with me."

"Look at yourself now, Peem You look like a mad woman, even more so than your father. Will it kill you just by staying away from her for a while?

How can I believe she hasn't cursed you?"

The tall figure could only wipe her tears and nod in response. The only thing keeping her going was the belief that her lover would still be waiting for her, not loving anyone else.

The most heartbreaking thing wasn't being able to hug her lover at this moment when she was sad because of herself. She was willing to do everything her mother wanted to return to her and hold her as tightly as possible.

But everything here, in her eyes, had changed so much. She'd never felt her mother was this cruel before. Even though she tried to suppress her feelings, being the daughter, she was still confused.

As she sat on the bed, the pain intensified when she found that the sheets they used to sleep on together had been changed. There were no mementos, no familiar scents. She could only tell herself that it mightn't be long. Her hand rose to her chest to comfort her heart. She never knew she could sit in a daze for hours.

**"Peem, my dear."**

"Grandma."

Her voice trembled with sobs as she saw the kind face of her grandmother. The plump, fair- skinned woman with almost entirely gray hair quickly hugged her granddaughter. Madam Ratchaphee stood watching from the door.

**"Who did this to you?"**

"There's nothing wrong with me, Grandma."

**"You'll be fine, my granddaughter."**

She quickly took out a white holy thread and tied it around her granddaughter's wrist.

"Waah!"

Seeing this made her sob even more.

**"Don't cry, my dear. Don't cry. You'll make Grandma worry, too. We'll go to the temple and cleanse you with holy water. You'll be free from all misfortune, my brave girl. Don't cry, my dear. Don't cry."**

Her plump hand gently stroked her head and back to calm her down.

**"Help me, Grandma..."**

"I'll help you, dear, I'll help you. You're my granddaughter. I won't let anyone harm you. Peem, you need to stay calm, my dear. When you're with Grandma, there's no need to cry. If you cry like this, I won't know what's wrong with you. How can I help you, dear? Hmm?"

"Keep spoiling her. A spirit might possess your granddaughter."

**"Your child is crying, and you still scold her. What kind of person are you?"**

"I'm your daughter. Why are you scolding me?"

"That's the more reason to reprimand you. What so wrong with her?"

"She's covered in tattoos like a criminal. What do you want me to do?"

**"Hey! Just because someone has tattoos doesn't mean they're bad. Nowadays, young people get tattoos all the time. That singer I listen to has tattoos, and he's famous. My granddaughter is the only one who's too good."**

The tall figure nodded in agreement, feeling the warmth in her chest.

"She didn't get fashion tattoos like others. I asked you to help my daughter, not to scold me. This just makes things worse."

"Look at Mom, Grandma..."

The voice was shaky and pleading for sympathy.

**"It's okay, dear, it's okay. Cover your ears, my brave girl. Grandma will scold everyone hurting you, whether they're ghosts or people. No one will dare to harm my granddaughter, okay, dear?"**

The tear-streaked face looked up at Grandma, crying even harder.

"Get up and eat something, Peerm. Grandma hasn't eaten anything yet. How long are you going to cry? If I die, will you cry like this?"

**"You're the one who should go to the temple more often, not just wait until the funeral. Tch! She's crying, and you're rushing her to eat."**

"Wah! I don't want to eat."

**"Okay, dear, okay."**

Madam Ratchaphee sighed deeply with exhaustion before walking out the door.

"I really love her. She's a good person. Grandma, can you please believe me?"

The swollen eyes stared at the elderly woman who was hugging her.

"Of course, dear. But no matter what, she's still your mother. Make her feel at ease. If something is too much, Grandma will scold her for you. I don't mind if you have a girlfriend, but you can't just think about yourself. Peem, you're not alone. You have Grandma, Mother, your brother, and Father. It's not wrong to love someone, but you and the person you love aren't the only ones in the world. If you love that woman and she doesn't care about how your mother feels, I'll consider her unacceptable. Right now, Peem, you need to be the same Peem you used to be, the one with a clear mind. No one loves without facing obstacles. Look at your parents. Don't cry anymore, dear. If you say she's a good person. and she lets you fulfill your duties as a daughter, you need to be strong. If you continue to be the same Peem, I'll believe you."

"Yes... I won't cry, and I'll show you."

She wiped her tears with both hands, trying to regain her composure, which made her grandmother feel relieved as well...

# Misery

**It wasn't difficult to request time off for her daughter to travel down south, to the other side of the country, far away from everyone, even herself, or someone who she wanted to be as distant as possible.**

Ranong-a province filled with nature and peaceful areas, perfect for healing the mind and resting.

Another night passed, and her granddaughter's dazed condition hadn't improved. She seemed worryingly absent-minded. It didn't look like she was under a spell, she knew a bit about these things. Her face wasn't pale; she just had the eyes of someone with longing.

**"Does the outfit fit, dear? Tomorrow, we're going to the temple.”**

"Yes... it fits."

**"Are you hungry, dear? You haven't eaten anything. Or is it not to your taste?"**

"No, I'm just not very hungry."

**"Come here, dear."**

The elderly woman turned to pick up a large pillow and placed it on her lap, then patted it, signaling her granddaughter to come and lie down. The tall figure, who'd been staring at the trees and grass, decided to walk back into the room and lay down on her lap.

**"Who is she? What's her name? What kind of person is she? Can you tell Grandma, Peem?"**

"Chanwara Kritpirat, everyone calls her Mae Kru Bulan. She uses her mother's sumarme because her father, Por Kru, said it was beautiful when said with her first name. She's as beautiful as her mother, like a lotus in the moonlight. She has a strict nature from Por Kru but is very kind-hearted. She's decisive, does good, and speaks honestly. She wakes up every morning before sunrise to cook for alms. On holidays, she goes to the temple. She cooks deliciously, never neglects housework, and cleans everything herself. My clothes are always ready to wear. Sometimes, I feel guilty and have to quickly wash my underwear myself. If she sees it, she'll wash it without hesitation. She supports people's spirits and teaches them to work hard. Her tattoos are sacred. She has a Sangwan tattoo here and a Sarika Kuu Dok Bua tattoo here."

As she spoke, tears slowly streamed down her face. The tall figure pointed to various spots on her body, describing each tattoo without missing a detail. A sweet smile began to spread across her face as she recounted the events they'd shared from the first day until she fell asleep on her grandmother's lap, exhausted from the restless journey. It was clear she was in a state of sleeplessness and loss of appetite.

The elderly woman gently lifted her granddaughter's hand, careful not to wake her. She'd raised three grandchildren, but none had a birthmark like this. She never thought it might be something ancient people liked to compare.

**"A pair of birthmarks, a mark from a past life, destined to be together... Ratchaphee, if my granddaughter is telling the truth and isn't under a spell, you might be separating soulmates. Do you realize that?"**

Though she was confident her granddaughter wasn't lying, she couldn't fully believe it. How could two people have matching birthmarks in the same spot?

**A quiet temple in Ranong....**

At 3:30 AM, it was time to wake up. The tall figure had been staring at the wall all night, unable to sleep. Four nights of solitude, counting the minutes until Mae Kru would wake up.

What would she cook for the monks today? The dormitory lights came on, filled with elderly people over fifty. Phones were put away.

On the first day, they chanted, listened to sermons, performed morning and evening prayers, practiced meditation, and cleaned the temple. It helped calm the mind a bit, but in free time, she only thought of her lover's face. Seeing a lotus made her eyes well up with tears every time.

"She looks fine. I don't think she's under a spell, Phorn."

An elderly woman practicing with them nudged the plump woman watching her granddaughter.

"I still can't find an answer, but the monk said she's fine. It's her mother who's convinced."

"Yeah... In this day and age, there's still this kind of thing."

"I've seen many so-called shamans. Some are real, some are fake, Tip."

"Can someone under a spell sit and chant?"

"If she doesn't get better soon, I'll have to see for myself."

"She barely touches food. I'm afraid she'll faint."

"Sigh…”

As she watched her granddaughter under the tree, she could only sigh.

It seemed not enough. Madam Ratchaphee asked her mother to take her daughter to another temple for more practice. They argued over the phone, but in the end, she agreed and took her.

Seeing her granddaughter's face made her feel more sympathetic and eager to please, hoping to regain some freedom for her. After all, the mother wasn't the master of the daughter's life. What she did was already the utmost respect for her mother as a daughter.

No matter how hard she tried, the anxious mind couldn't fully detach from the outside world and deeply embrace the teachings. At most, she could only be more mindful and calm.

The tall figure was the same, her heart adrift, counting the days and hoping the awaited day would come soon.

**The house of the Ruechakun family…**

After two weeks off work, it was almost time to return to duty. To her surprise, her father had moved back into the house and seemed much better. Madan Ratchaphee and her husband had started talking again, though they still slept in separate rooms.

"Where are you taking my granddaughter?"

"To see a psychiatrist, Mom."

"Are you crazy? My granddaughter isn't insane."

"Even the monks couldn't help. I need to make sure. How can she return to work like this?"

"Huh?!! Are you saying this is because of me?"

"Are you blaming me?"

"This attitude is why your husband almost had a mistress. Who knows where you got it from.”

“...”

"It's okay, Grandma. You've already made an appointment with the doctor, right? I'll go. And if the doctor says I'm not insane..."

"Not yet. Even then, there are many places you need to go until you give up."

The feeling of frustration mixed with resignation grew in her when, despite many concessions, her mother still stood her ground. If they could at least communicate, it wouldn't be this torturous. The longing and deep yearning were overwhelming.

"In the end, my granddaughter isn't insane. My daughter is."

"If you're going to oppose me this much, go back to my sister."

"My granddaughter is already struggling. I won't leave, no matter what."

"Then don't oppose me."

From once talking calmly, now just mentioning this or asking about the agreement led to anger and stubborn refusal. Madam Ratchaphee's arguments with her mother grew more intense.

Her father, witnessing some of the events, could only watch his daughter with pity from a distance. He felt guilty and didn't want to argue and make things worse.

"Today, the fate led us to meet each other. Pick three cards, and they will reveal everything you want to know."

"Here..."

.

More than a psychiatrist, it was a famous fortune teller. She didn't understand how it'd be different. What could satisfy her mother?

"You're a person of merit. You might have a karmic enemy causing you pain, but you'll overcome it. It just takes time."

"A karmic enemy?"

"I won't answer these questions for the mother. I'm reading her fortune; I'll only answer the one sitting here. Do you have anything you want to know?”

"....."

The mother fell silent, showing slight displeasure at the fortune teller's response despite paying a lot for the reading.

"What must I do to be with the one I love?"

"You look worried, burdened with sorrow. The cards say to get close to an elderly woman or a female elder in the family. What you hope for will succeed. Be mindful of mental health issues, it's affecting both of you."

"I just want to know if my daughter is under a spell."

"I said she's a person of merit, meaning she's protected by sacred forces"

"That's it. Let's go."

The middle-aged woman led the way out, displeased. But as the tall figure was about to follow, the fortune teller stopped her and revealed another card.

**"Once you've overcome the obstacles, you'll find a path to happiness. Be patient... they're your true soulmate."**

It was a whisper, not meant for her mother to hear. Her heart, filled with waves of pain, heard these words for the first time in a month since they last met. It was too much to hold back tears. It felt like a glimmer of hope passing through the wind. Her weary face reflected her suffering to the fortune teller.

**On weekdays, she had to bite the bullet and work hard.**

Of course, she'd never been criticized for her work before, but now she was getting scolded for failing to do the simplest things. On weekends or during her free time, she'd go to temples, visit psychiatrists, see doctors famous on social media, or consult fortune tellers. She hardly ever got a break.

Her heart was broken beyond words. There wasn't a day that went by without thinking of her lover's face. The scent that her brain remembered was fading, only recalling it as the most fragrant flower she'd ever smelled in her life.

"Yes..."

**"It's really you, Lieutenant!"**

"Sergeant Major Piak...?"

The tall figure sitting on the bed wiped away her tears, even though it was just the voice of a police officer she'd worked with coming from the phone.

"You're so cruel. You changed your number without telling me. When you moved back, we didn't even get to say goodbye."

"Sergeant Major..."

Hearing that made her sob even harder.

"I know about you and... Mae Kru."

"Please, Sergeant Major, can I ask you for one thing?"

She bit her lip to hold back her sobs.

"Sure, go ahead.”

"Please take care of her... Don't let anything happen to her..."

.

.

***Click!***

She looked up at the door that opened and quickly wiped her tears with her arm.

"Who were you talking to?"

"A police officer from the station."

"What do you think I am? If it was about work, why were you crying?"

The tall figure had no words to explain and handed her phone to her mother to see for herself. Her mother listened just enough to recognize it was a man's voice before hanging up right in front of her.

"Come downstairs. We have guests."

"Yes,”

The lieutenant's eyes were filled with pain, and she could only do everything until her mother was satisfied. The conversations grew colder, increasing the distance between them.

Instead of feeling pity or sympathy, her mother was determined to win against her. She still believed that one day, her daughter would forget that woman. IT was just a matter of time.

"Do you remember Praw? You used to play together as kids. She's the daughter of Madam Lin, who also runs a gold shop. You met her often back then. She's grown into a lovely young woman."

"Thank you, Auntie. I went abroad to study and haven't been home much."

The slender young woman with a cute, slightly Chinese-looking face sitting at the table thanked her and smiled widely, looking shy.

"I don't remember. It must've been a long time ago. I'm sorry. Is she a guest of yours, Mom?"

"Auntie said you've been stressed lately, so she wanted me to invite you out with friends. It'll be fun.”

"I don't drink."

"What do you mean? You used to drink."

"It's okay if you don't drink. There are non-alcoholic drinks, too."

"Mom, if you want to go, Praw can take you. I don't want to go, and I really don't remember her."

The cold tone made her mother even more displeased, especially since she was embarrassed in front of the daughter of a prominent family. What the tall figure did was nothing short of intentionally humiliating her.

"I said, go with her..."

"It's okay. If she doesn't want to go, it's no big deal. We can drink here instead. Right, Auntie?"

"Really, Praw?”

"Of course. The more challenging, the more I like it."

"Great. Should I have the bar bring some drinks?"

"Yes, thank you."

The young woman's eyes still looked mockingly sweet. Her demeanor changed in an instant. Her mother immediately walked out to call the skilled chef from her shop.

"For a first meeting, I didn't expect you to humiliate me like this."

"Go back."

"I just found out that you like women. You know I've never been rejected. Are you afraid you'll fall for me, so you're using this cold act?"

"Praw, you're well-educated and from a good family. Can't you tell the difference between being cold and not wanting to talk?”

"I've never met anyone who dared to speak to me like this. You'll see you challenged the wrong person."

"If you want to win, fine. You win. Praw, you're great. You are such a treasure. We're so different we shouldn't meet again. Excuse me."

The tall figure quickly ended the conversation and walked away to her room, brushing off the annoyance even if it seemed rude.

"Spend one night together, and you won't dare talk like this. There's nothing I want that I don't get…”

# 34.Fainted

**"Peem! Peem, open the door!"**

The loud knocking continued, accompanied by shouting.

**"What is it? Isn't this going too far?"**

Unable to bear the noise any longer, an elderly, plump woman walked out in her nightgown, scolding her daughter.

"It's your granddaughter that has gone too far. She embarrassed my guest."

"If she's your guest, you can entertain her. My granddaughter wants to sleep. Who has a problem with that? Don't push it. One day, you won't have anyone standing beside you.”

"Why don't you blame that woman who made Peem so stubborn?"

"Who did what? From what I see... it's only you causing trouble!"

"Do you think that shaman is better than your own daughter?"

"I never thought I'd have a daughter who is so annoying."

The argument continued at the door. A tall figure grabbed a pillow and walked into the bathroom, which was the only quiet place. The bathtub was still dry, and there was no noise.

The gray pillow was placed in the tub before she lay down, hugging themselves tightly.

It was another night of trying to sleep with tears. No sound was as comforting as hers, no scent as missed as hers, no meal as delicious as hers, and no night as restful.

"I miss you so much…”

They were feelings that couldn't be shared with anyone. Lieutenant Peem's voice, no matter who she spoke to, was lifeless.

This wasn't the first night she slept in the tub, staring at the soap bottle Mae Kru had used, which had been untouched since. She didn't tell anyone, fearing it'd be thrown away. The only memento left slowly transformed into the face of the woman she longed for.

A smile appeared in her imagination. She gently stroked the pillow as if it were her lover's cheek.

"How was your day? Were you tired? Did you cook something? Did you make enough for me?"

"Heh... how disappointing. Next time, I'll eat the whole pot."

"Your cooking is always the best…”

Her eyes slowly closed, hoping to meet her in dreams after the self-created conversation ended.

.

.

**The police station...**

"Are you okay, Lieutenant? You seem out of it lately."

A high-ranking officer approached with a report that made less sense the more he read it, placing it on her desk.

"I'm sorry, I'll fix it right away."

"Aren't you going out in the field soon? You can do it later. If you're not up to it, I'll send someone else."

"It's fine.”

"Take some vitamins, Lieutenant. Your cheeks are sunken. Are you okay?"

The more he looked, the more he was sure something was wrong, though she wouldn't admit it. She used to be the best officer here. Now, she couldn't even write a simple report correctly. He wasn't criticizing harshly, just concerned for a long-time colleague.

"I'm really fine."

Her face was more somber than before, forcing a weak smile.

"Let me know if you need anything."

"Yes, sir..."

.

.

***Bzzz!!***

The phone's vibration stopped her as she was about to leave the station. She pulled it out and answered.

"Finally, Lieutenant. Hold the line, please."

It was Sergeant Major Piak, no doubt, but the surrounding noise was like a bustling market. His last request was to hold the line, so she decided not to hang up.

"Are you shopping, Mae Kru?"

"What is it...?"

"Well..."

***Click!***

Whether it was because he put the phone in his pocket or hand, the call disconnected before she realized it. After nearly three months of thinking her heart had gone numb from torment, suddenly, it hurt again.

No mistake, it was her voice. The one who felt more distant each day. It hit her like a lightning bolt. Her dark eyes closed, sobbing uncontrollably. Her knees hit the ground, but she didn't feel the impact. Tears that had dried up for weeks flowed again uncontrollably.

Amid the noise, it was her lover's voice, but she could do nothing. There was no strength left to stand or open her eyes.

She just wanted to know what Mae Kru was doing, if she'd eaten, if she was happy, if anyone was bothering her, and what had happened to her. She feared she was alone, feared she was discouraged, feared she'd disappear. She missed her so much...

.

.

**The hospital....**

"Keep this quiet. Peem is just unwell."

"Yes, sir!”

Her father ordered, sighing. Knowing his daughter fainted from crying at the police station, his worry turned to anger. The sparkles in his eldest daughter's bright eyes had been gone for over three months; it was almost like he was losing another child bit by bit.

Entering the room, he saw his dear daughter with IV lines. She used to be strong, a policewoman he was proud of, a sister and daughter who never troubled him.

Not seeing his mother-in-law, he guessed his wife didn't want to tell her, fearing a fierce argument. Instead, she brought the girl his daughter declared she didn't want to see, making him even angrier.

"Hello, Uncle."

"Our daughter is sick, Ratchaphee. Why did you bring her?"

He asked, unable to hold back.

"Praw wanted to visit. In times like these, they need to be together.”

"Is this really your daughter, or have you lost your maternal instinct? Can't you see what she needs? I haven't said anything out of respect, but you've gone too far this time."

"The one who sent his son to risk his life and get shot in the head must have a lot of patemal instinct."

Her eyelids opened, and she saw the bright lights and ceiling, her eyes sore from crying. From the smell, she guessed it was a hospital, waking up to the sound of arguing by her bed. Seeing the girl she'd repeatedly driven away made her even angrier. Even now, she was doing this to her

Her faith in filial piety waned. She'd made it clear that even if she liked women, it wasn't just anyone. Her gaunt face turned to her mother, suppressing her disappointment and forcing a smile.

"I wonder if my suffering is your happiness, Madam Ratchaphee."

She said with a weak voice, tears falling without sobbing. She had no strength left. They flowed from the depths of her heart. Even if it meant being an ungrateful child, she just wanted to see her once.

She pulled out the IV line, got out of bed, and walked to the door. Though they tried to stop her, her father held them back, letting her go.

"Let go!"

"You have my permission..."

"Go ahead, Peem! I'll follow and shame her there. If you go, it means she breaks the promise to me..."

Just one more step to the door, her mother's shout cut deep into her already shattered heart.

She never cared about it, even when it was unbearable. And why wouldn't she know what her lover was like?

She dragged her battered body back, kneeling at her mother's feet, hands clasped, looking up.

"Please, let me see her once. I'm begging you ”

Her mother's proud face turned away, not wanting to look. The situation and her actions forced her to be a cruel mother.

"No."

"Get up. Come on, don't do this."

Her father couldn't bear to watch, helping her up.

"What are you doing, Phakin?"

"I'm taking my daughter home. Who has a problem with that?"

"Don't tell my mom. I'm tired of fighting with her."

"If I see you bringing that girl around my daughter again, I'll have to talk to her parents about why they let their daughter roam around like a dog like this?"

"Phakin!!"

"I think that's too harsh, Uncle.”

Whether it was shouting or something else, the only concern now was getting his daughter out of the room. Her body and feelings were deteriorating to the core.

.

.

**The house of the Ruechakun Family...**

"Oh my! Kin, what's going on?"

An elderly woman exclaimed, seeing the man carrying his unconscious daughter into the house.

"I'm taking her to her room."

"Peem! What's wrong with my granddaughter?"

The voice was filled with anxiety as she hurriedly followed upstairs.

Once they reached the bedroom, the father laid the body on the bed. He saw his daughter sitting there, tears streaming down her face, alternating with sobs. She'd been in despair the whole way and had fallen asleep without realizing it. Her body was too weak to even get up and walk.

"I've made mistakes. I know I've messed up. You don't have to forgive me, but please help my child."

"Kin, it's good that you realize your mistakes and fix them. But some people... they don't even realize they're wrong. They suffer, but they drag their child's life into their own misery."

"Last week, the doctor said Phu was starting to respond. I think he can sense Peem's crying."

"There might be a miracle. As for Peem, I have to really do something this time. Stay here and take care of your child, Kin. Be someone she can lean on. If she was at the dead end and decided to do something terrible, the one who will suffer isn't anyone else."

"Mom..."

"She's practically living in hell right now. Even if someone did put a curse on her, I'd still want to give her to them if it'd make her happy.”

The plump hand gently stroked the tall figure's head, looking at her with eyes full of deep sympathy.

"Has Peem eaten anything?"

Madam Ratchaphee, who'd just arrived, turned to ask the maid who was cleaning the living room.

"I brought it up to her, ma'am, but she only sipped some water and then went to sleep."

"She's deliberately torturing herself to spite me."

"Ma'am..."

"What!"

"They say... a mother has pure love for her child. You've once walked over her head. If there was really a curse, I think it wouldn't be there anymore.”

"Are you trying to say my child is fine? Haven't you seen her condition now?"

"No, ma'am. I just feel sorry for her."

"If you have work to do, go do it... go!"

"Yes, ma'am."

Just as she was about to walk to the stairs, her mother came down, with her husband carrying a suitcase following her.

"Where are you going, Mom?"

"Anywhere but here. I can't stand seeing my grandchild living in hell like this."

"It's just one woman; what's the big deal? She just thinks you're taking her sides and wants to win. That woman might even have a new lover by now. It's only your grandchild who's still dreaming about her!”

.

***SMACK!!!***

*.*

The heavy hand struck the cheek with full force. Her eyes were red with utmost disappointment. This was the first time she'd been hit by the elderly woman in front of her. In her entire life, she'd never once been physically hit by her.

"Mom..."

She could hardly believe her eyes that the person who slapped her face so hard was really the woman in front of her.

"You heartless... You cruel... What kind of a mother are you!?"

She raised her fist and pounded her chest, sobbing in unbearable pain.

"No one can stand seeing their child suffer, Ratchaphee... I raised you. I breastfed you. When I see you hurt, I hurt too. What kind of mother are you? Don't even talk about being a mother. Are you even human? I don't know how much longer I can live. How can I die peacefully when it's like this? When will you come to your senses? You've gone too far. Do you realize that, Ratchaphee?!"

The man standing behind quickly came to support her when he saw the elderly woman sobbing and trembling. Every word she spoke was heavy, staring deeply into her eyes with profound curiosity.

It came from the pain of seeing her granddaughter's terrible condition caused by her own mother, and she couldn't do anything but watch her granddaughter wander around as her mother wished.

# 35.Extending Fate Lively Again

**If it wasn't a day to go out, Madam Ratchaphee's daily routine would be to work and then go straight back to the bedroom.**

But because today there was a social gathering with prominent people, she came home late. Since that incident, Madam Phorn hadn't spoken or contacted her daughter at all. They couldn't even face each other anymore.

The tall figure stood in front of the spirit house before asking for incense from the maid. Both maids were happy to oblige and could only watch Lieutenant Peem, who'd come out to get some fresh air in the evening for once.

"Is it okay to do this at night, Ms. Peem?"

"I just want to try. Maybe he thinks that he needs permission before he can come.”

"Who are you talking about, Ms. Peem? You're scaring me."

"Don't be scared. He's nice. I've seen a real ghost before with my own eyes. I don't know if you'll believe me."

"Why are you telling me this now?"

"One day, we'll all die. But while we're alive, we can't even see each other. I regret it every second. You, too. Do what makes you happy for yourself sometimes."

The tall figure spoke while placing the incense in the pot.

"Ms. Peem..."

"If my father asks when he gets back, tell him I've gone to bed. No need to call me down for dinner."

"Are you sure you've eaten at work...?”

***Vroom!!***

Before she could finish her sentence, a luxurious sports car drove up to the front gate.

"I guess it's..."

"Let her in. We need to talk and clear things up. I'll be waiting inside."

Lieutenant Peem sighed wearily before walking into the house, knowing exactly who the car belonged to.

"Yes..."

.

**In the living room...**

"How strange. Are you starting to soften up?”

The petite figure, after asking the maid to prepare the food, followed and sat on the sofa next to her.

"Why don't you spend your time doing something more valuable with your

life."

"I'm doing it."

"Doing this doesn't make you look valuable, Praw. It makes you look cheap. As a fellow woman, don't make me speak harshly to you."

"If you were nicer me, things might be easier."

"Do you know why? Because in my eyes, you're not important. When will you have some shame? No decent woman approaches someone else's lover like this."

"Where is your lover then? From what I know, it seems your mother doesn't approve of her."

"In my life, I've helped many people. I've never met anyone as pitiful as you.”

"Peem."

"Because you've never received love from anyone, you have to beg for scraps of love like this."

"Many people want me."

"From what I see, there's no one..."

"Get ready to have problems with your mother. You're just a fool with low standards."

"If that were true, I would've been with you already, wouldn't 17"

"Peem!"

"Excuse me..."

The tall figure got up from the sofa and walked out of the room, hoping this would be the last time she saw her. And, of course, she never touched or ate anything this woman brought, including the food in her own home. As she walked up the stairs, she braced herself for the inevitable conflict with her mother.

She placed her hand on her chest, unsure if her heart was still beating. She hadn't cried since that day at the hospital. The pain had turned into numbness, or maybe there were no tears left.

.

.

***BANG! BANG! BANG!***

***Peem!!***

The sound of banging on the door in the middle of the night startled her awake. She'd fallen asleep on the bed, making the noise clear.

## Click…

"Why did you talk to her like that?"

The first question came as the door barely opened.

"I spoke the truth. What's wrong with that?"

The tall figure looked at her mother's face and asked calmly.

"If a problem arises, what will you do?"

"So, there isn't one yet."

"Peem!"

"Let them sue, and we'll meet in court. Are we done? This is my rest time."

I Her sharp eyes stared unwaveringly before deciding to close the door, ignoring whatever her mother might say next.

"Is this how you're going to treat me, Peem...?"

Her cold, emotionless eyes stared into the darkness of the room, listening to her own breathing before forcing herself to sleep. It was the only time her feelings could rest.

On days when the pain was too much to bear, she'd sleep in the bathtub. On days when she felt she was losing her mind, afraid she might go crazy from talking to herself, she'd lie down on the bed.

Eventually, she'd fall asleep from exhaustion and fatigue from work. Lately, it'd gotten better because she'd started working productively again. She realized that burying herself in work helped reduce her wandering thoughts. She didn't know when she'd confront it again.

But she could only be angry at herself. How had she let so much time pass?

Why was she still here?

## "Why did you leave Mother?!"

The heavy pressure on her chest made her wake up, not knowing what time it was. The tall figure tried to open her eyes to see something but was still groggy. What she saw was a boy wearing a body chain across his chest, stepping on her chest with one foot, hands on his hips, looking down at her angrily.

"Thong…”

The tall figure, struggling to breathe, called out the name without hesitation, confident in her feelings. But then the figure on her chest disappeared before her eyes, reappearing beside the bed.

This time, she saw the face clearly. Pale skin with a scent like scented water and sweets, brown eyes, a mischievous face with pink lips, wearing a golden jong kraben.

He didn't look scary at all She was unsure if it was real or a dream, yet she didn't hesitate to get off the bed and kneel in front of him without fear.

"Why... haven't you come to see me?"

## "If I come, Mother will hit me."

She gently stroked his head, down to his soft cheeks, looking at him with longing. The little spirit boy sensed it, dropping his hands from his hips to his sides.

"I didn't leave her and am trying to come back. How is she…”

Seeing his sad face looking down, she knew he must've sneaked out and couldn't say much more.

"Take care of your mother. When the time comes, I'll come back. Even if I die and only my spirit remains, I'll come. In this life, I won't love anyone else. Don't think I don't love her. I love her more than my own life..."

She hugged the kuman thong, feeling his small arms wrap around her neck. Soon, he disappeared in her embrace, leaving no trace, not even a scent.

.

.

***Beep! Beep!***

The alarm clock rang. She opened her eyes again to find herself in her dark bedroom. She reached to turn on the bedside lamp and looked around the bed where she'd just hugged the little kuman thong.

She was sure it wasn't a dream. It was a real image and touch, even if she'd just woken up. It was the same time her lover woke up every morning. It wasn't close to work time; she just wanted to wake up with Mae Kru.

**"Peem."**

The man in full uniform called his daughter, who'd just come down the stairs, with his wife sitting nearby.

"Yes"

The tall figure stopped and responded.

"Are you ready for the training in Nakhon Sawan?"

"Yes, I'm ready."

"You could've withdrawn her name but didn't”

"Ratchaphee, this is Lieutenant Peem's duty. If I use my power like that, how will my subordinates respect me? You can do what you want, but as a lieutenant, she must be responsible for her duties."

It was a final word that the woman couldn't argue with. The training would last two days and one night, requiring travel to Nakhon Sawan. Seeing her father had finished, she walked out without saying a word.

"Are you satisfied now?"

"I see she's managing. She's back to work normally. I told you, with time, she'll forget her."

"She'd fed up with you, yet you still don't realize..."

The muttered words were meant to be barely heard, spoken as he grabbed his hat and walked to the door.

"What did you say, Phakin? Come back here! What did you say to me?!”

.

.

**At the police station...**

"Good day, sir."

The officer stood up straight and saluted.

"Is Lieutenant Peem here?"

The deep voice asked for his daughter.

"She's in a meeting, sir."

"Tell her to see me in my office when she's done."

"Yes, sir!"

. .

**In Police Lieutenant General Phakin's office…**

"Permission to enter, sir."

Lieutenant Peem walked in, saluted, and asked for permission.

"Have a seat, Peem."

The deep, firm voice softened, signaling that this mightn't be about work but a father-daughter conversation.

"Is there something wrong?"

"You don't have to go to the training in Nakhon Sawan."

"Did something happen?"

"It's just that you don't have to go. It's an under-the-table order from me. Do you have a problem with that, Lieutenant?"

"No, sir...”

"You have one night. Go wherever you want, do whatever you want."

Her emotionless eyes looked up at her father's face again to make sure.

"Go, dear... I want you to go."

"I can't. If I meet her, it'll make her break her promise..."

"Lieutenant Peem, you're smart. Don't you know how to be flexible? If you can't meet her yet, then don't. Go take a break and relax. Do you know that the more you act like this, the more confident that woman will feel? She'll think you can live like this. The Peem I know never gives up on anything." "I'm not giving up."

"What you're doing now is no different from giving in. As time goes by, the memories and evidence will fade. You're becoming like that. I know you love her, but do you remember how you used to love her? I can't even remember that woman's face anymore. Lieutenant Peem, you decide for yourself. I'm done here. You may go…”

The tall figure sat thinking for a moment as if making a decision, then quickly got up and ran out immediately. A faint smile appeared on her father's face as if he hoped he'd see Lieutenant Peem quickly pulling out her mobile phone and booking the earliest flight she could find.

She ran down the stairs from the third floor without even looking at the steps. Her wounded and withered heart felt like it was being brought back to life. The blood in her body surged, and the rhythm of her heartbeat returned to a lively, thunderous pace.

Even if they couldn't meet face to face, it didn't mean she couldn't go. Just being able to go back and see, to let her heart find a guiding light, to prevent her feelings from being frozen.

As soon as the plane landed, it was like she was given a new breath of life. She had to find a way to get back here, and she had to come without any doubts.

She wasted no time in revving up the engine of the rented car and heading toward Phop Phra district. The moment she had to tum on the GPS for directions, it felt like the ticking of a clock emphasizing how long she'd been away.

...She'd been away from here for too long. A wide smile spread across her face, feeling warm just knowing she was getting closer to her lover's place.

It was the happiest day of her life in the past four or five months. Just driving past the gates of temples or various places made her smile like a madwoman. She rolled down the car window to breathe in the fresh air.

The closer she got to the district, even the loud noise of motorcycles with roaring exhausts cutting in front of her sounded pleasant. Trees, grass, everything looked beautiful in her eyes.

She rolled up the window to slow down and park in front of the district police station where she used to be. Seeing the image of herself arguing with Sergeant Major Piak at the door made her burst out laughing. She didn't plan to go in or show herself to anyone. This was enough.

And at this almost evening time, surely Mae Kru Bulan would've called it a day. She turned the steering wheel down the familiar path.

# Chapter 36.Drive off Evil Spirit

**The car was parked far away, and she chose to walk in.**

Just seeing the roof of the house hidden by trees brought tears of joy that couldn't be held back. Amid the darkness, only the light from the path illuminated the way.

Lieutenant Peem walked straight in, staring at the statue of Ruesi Ta Fai, which hadn't changed at all. She raised both hands to give a wai and recited the worship prayer without missing a beat.

"Please let me return here while I'm still alive, and don't let us be separated again..."

Glancing into the school, she saw a faint image of Mae Kru Bulan sitting in her usual spot during rituals. Her feet slowly moved to the front door before she sat down on the ground, leaning against the concrete wall beside the door.

Memories from the first day vividly came back of her arriving here without knowing anything.

Images of making merit together on the street, hugging each other, and the person she loved sleeping in this house. They were so close... that her feelings were vivid.

She hugged her knees, gently swatting away mosquitoes, still unable to stop smiling. Her head leaned against the door as if she were laying it on the same old pillow.

She didn't know if doing this was cheating, but she was just being flexible with the method, not breaking any promises. She lifted her phone to take pictures of the door, the trees in front of the house, the ground, the school, and even the light bulb above or the roof of the house.

"Whether asleep or awake, you're more beautiful than anyone."

She accidentally closed her eyes for just a few hours before the light from above shone brightly. Mae Kru Bulan was awake and would soon come down. The lieutenant got up with a heart full of encouragement.

"I won't let you be lonely again. I'll come back quickly..."

She pressed a kiss on the door with all the love and longing in her heart. The strong determination returned to her. Just hearing the sounds of movement inside was enough to ease her worries. She slowly stepped back from the door, her eyes still fixed an it until the end of the path.

. .

**"Has the case of the woman in the condo been closed yet, Lieutenant Peem?"**

Her father asked when he saw the tall figure walking out from the stairs of the house.

"Yes, this morning you should see the news. It was resolved last night. Her ex did it."

"I thought the same. It was really the ex."

"Well, that's good..."

Madam Ratchaphee added.

"I think we need to have a serious talk,"

Said the lieutenant.

"About what?"

"Do you think I'm back to normal now, Mom?"

"And then what?"

You're an adult, so you should keep your promises, too,"

Lieutenant Peem said calmly. "

"It's better because you're here."

The conversation, which started well, seemed to be heating up again.

"Because I wasn't cursed from the beginning. The tall figure immediately retorted.

"Peem."

"This week, I'll give you the whole week. Take me wherever you want me to go. And if it can't be proven or this matter isn't resolved within this week..."

Her firm tone indicated this was the final ultimatum.

"What will you do?"

"Then consider me dead to you..."

"What are you saying?!"

"Do you know what it's like for someone who is cursed? That's what I'll be like. If the Peem standing in front of you isn't your Peem, then I wouldn't call you Mom either."

"Are you going to talk to your mother like this, Peem?"

"I don't see that our daughter has done anything wrong. And now, she still calls you Mom. Some children I've dealt with in murder cases have killed their own mothers. She's fulfilled her duty as a child to the fullest. Whatever method you want to use to prove it, go ahead."

Of course, this pressure made the woman extremely agitated. Because the truth was almost impossible to prove, the only place left was the one recommended, which had mixed reviews. They'd already visited all the famous fortune tellers and magic masters. She couldn't lose her face, nor could she give in to that woman.

.

**The school of hippocampus medium...**

The tall figure looked up, frowning in confusion, not knowing what to expect. Was this really the place Madam Ratchaphee trusted and believed in?

"Go in,"

The woman who followed her said, looking slightly embarrassed. "Who doesn't know that this only exists in mythology and literature?"

Lieutenant Peem turned back to ask again for certainty.

"So what?"

"Alright, sure. Maybe we'll meet Percy Jackson, too." Without hesitation, she walked straight into the school.

. .

**"Neeeeeeeeeeeeeigh! The hippocampus spirit has come into my body!!"**

The loud shout of the white-robed disciple announced for everyone to prepare.

"I just found out that the hippocampus makes this sound."

The tall figure, who'd her hands in a wai like everyone else, muttered softly to herself.

.

.

**The School of Rooster Medium....**

"Why can't they just be human?"

She scratched her eyebrows in frustration. Each place they visited hardly helped at all. They hurriedly took the fee and claimed to create miracles. If they guessed correctly, they said it was accurate. If not, they claimed their power was blocked.

The first three days of the week passed painfully. After cleansing herself, the tall figure stretched out on her bed, her dominant arm resting on her forehead in exhaustion.

"The Gamera medium, the Medusa medium, the Thor medium, what the

heck is this.... "

She muttered softly in her bedroom, recalling the list of schools she'd endured. Whatever she had to do, whatever she had to offer, she did it blindly, knowing full well that they were all fake.

The worst was when she almost punched back when one of them spat alcohol in her face, claiming to drive away bad things. But she smiled immediately when she looked at the pictures on her phone. It helped her want to keep living with purpose.

. .

**"Do you know what you're doing, Ratchaphee?"**

The deep voice scolded his wife in exasperation.

"What did I do?"

While still scrolling through her phone in the living room, searching for different schools, she replied as if nothing had happened.

"The places you took our child to are no different from scams. Peem could've reported and shut them down, but she didn't because of you. I don't mind other things, but spitting alcohol in my daughter's face is too much. Why didn't you think to stop it?"

"It was part of the ritual. How could I stop it? Why don't you go arrest them yourself if they're scammers?"

"Do you think someone like me would stand by idly like you? If that teacher hadn't had a near- fatal accident and ended up in the hospital, I would've shut it down. You know our daughter is a police officer. She has things she respects and virtues that she holds dear. Are you blind?"

"How virtuous of you."

"I'll wait to see your face the day our child doesn't even respect you." "If you can't say anything nice, just be quiet."

"Do you think I'm here because of you?"

"Then go, go to that whore!!"

The confrontation was escalating. The husband was also tired from work and didn't want to argue further, knowing she wouldn't listen. He chose to walk away to his room.

.

.

**The next evening, the family's luxury car navigated through a deep alley to a school that opened from dusk till late.**

The tall figure had never been here before. It was an old wooden house surrounded by silence with hardly any people.

Her mother said they only took a few appointments a day, not just anyone could come. The woman who followed seemed nervous and scared by the eerie atmosphere. Lieutenant Peem, feeling nothing, decided to walk inside.

**"Evil is in you!!!!**

Just reaching the door, they heard a shout from an old woman with black lipstick pointing at her. She sat on a long wooden bench, holding sacred items and offerings. As they stepped closer, the medium began to tremble violently, her eyes rolling back as if having a seizure.

"Sit down! You're disrespecting me!!"

The tall figure exhaled softly before sitting down as instructed.

"Don't speak!! I know!! I see!!"

The medium continued to shake, clutching a prayer bead necklace.

"I haven't even said anything yet..."

She couldn't help but mutter under her breath.

"You're disrespecting me!! The evil in you is dirty, vile, and will bring ruin to you and your family!!"

"Is that true?"

The middle-aged woman who came with her suddenly took an interest in these words, even though it was clear it was a ploy to identify problems for the medium to exploit.

"Born with misfortune, it must be corrected immediately!! Or you'll suffer your whole life!!"

"The only suffering is in my heart..."

She tried to look away, not wanting to meet the bulging eyes.

"Nothing you do will succeed because an evil spirit is following you. It must be eradicated!!!"

"If you meet the real thing, don't run away."

Lieutenant Peem realized she had quite a sharp tongue herself, having built up resistance from various schools.

"Is she really cursed?"

"Of course!!"

The medium shouted, stomping her foot.

"What should we do?"

The tall figure sighed repeatedly, seeing her mother earnestly giving a wai while she herself didn't even think to do so.

"I'll perform a ritual!! To expel the evil in you."

She grabbed several candles, lit them, and chanted while waving them around.

"I am the medium of Phoenix!! Be gone!!!"

"Gone where?"

She asked, clueless and curious.

"You wretched ghost!! You've come, haven't you? Face me!!"

"....."

"Ahhh!"

The woman watching screamed in shock. A large amount of melted candle wax was splashed at her daughter, hitting her arms and neck, leaving dried wax clinging to her skin.

The tall figure didn't have time to react, looking down at her burning arms but gritting her teeth to endure the pain.

"This isn't your child!! I'm forcing the evil spirit to reveal itself."

Her red eyes turned to look at her mother, wanting to see her face with her own eyes. Though she seemed shocked, she tried to maintain her composure and avoid eye contact

## Swish!!~~

"Ugh !!"

She didn't know when it happened because she was too focused on the person beside her. The medium in front of her stood up and started dancing before striking her back with a rattan cane, causing the tall figure to let out a groan. The impact wasn't as painful as the stinging sensation that pierced deep into her nerves.

## Swish!!!~~

The rattan cane was raised high, and the shaman struck down on her back while chanting a spell.

*"Wait!"*

Madam Ratchaphee's voice echoed loudly, not knowing what to do. The tall figure was about to stop her, but the increasing pain made it impossible to stand, and she was struck again, collapsing to the floor with tears streaming down her face

*"Peem...*

Out of the corner of her eye, she saw the rattan cane about to strike again.

The tall figure twisted to grab it with her hand, countering the force. She held it tightly before gritting her teeth and standing up. The medium's heavily made-up eyes stared back, but she stepped back, starting to show fear despite trying to continue chanting. Lieutenant Peem yanked the cane from her hand and broke it over her knee.

***Crack!***

"If you don't want to be charged with assault, stop now."

Lieutenant Peem's voice was low and threatening, her eyes blazing as she stared into the medium's eyes. The medium backed up against the wall.

## "Tiger. I hear a tiger's voice. There is a tiger here!!"

The medium, who was just an elderly woman in the tall figure's eyes, suddenly showed fear, looking around and covering her ears with both hands.

## "Do you hear it? Tiger's voice... There's a big tiger around here!! It's going to kill me, it's going to kill me!!"

Of course, no one else heard anything except the woman in front of them, who might be pretending to divert attention even though she'd just hurt someone.

She grabbed Lieutenant Peem's arms tightly, looking around frantically and repeatedly asking about the roar of the tiger she'd made up. There was no way a tiger could be in this suburban area.

"Don't go!! There's a tiger outside. It's going to kill me!!"

"If there's really a tiger outside, I'll call the authorities."

Despite her seemingly genuine fear and her body trembling, Lieutenant Peem didn't believe her for a second. She pried the woman's hands off and walked away without looking back.

"I'm not lying. You can't see it with your eyes!! There's a tiger here. You have to help me! You have to help me!!"

Madam Ratchaphee, who was grabbed, quickly shook off her hands and hurried after her child. The elderly woman, left with no one to turn to, quickly locked the door and covered her ears, curling up on the floor.

The roar of the tiger still echoed around the school, and only she could hear it, her body trembling as if she'd lost her mind.

***Argh!! Blargh!!!***

*She looked down at her hands, now covered in thick blood she'd coughed up.*

# Chapter 37. Regret

## "Peem"

It was the second time on the way back that the driving lieutenant heard her mother calling her name, but she didn't respond. Her eyes were focused solely on getting home, not wanting to say anything at all.

The gate opened to welcome the homeowner's luxurious car. Inside the car, it was quite dark, with only the light from the street lamps shining through, making it hard to see Lieutenant Peem's face clearly and gauge her emotions.

"Peem!”

When the engine was turned off, Lieutenant Peem opened the door and walked into the house, ignoring everything around her. It wasn't that she didn't hear the voice calling her from behind, but the deep-seated disappointment made her not want to look at anyone.

"You're back, Peem. Your grandma is here."

Her father called out as soon as he saw her. Madam Phorn quickly got up from the downstairs living room to see her granddaughter.

“...”

As she walked into the house, the bright lights illuminated everything clearly, causing Madam Ratchaphee to freeze in shock.

**"My granddaughter..."**

Without hesitation, she opened her arms to embrace the tall figure walking toward her with a forced smile. She knew that after not setting foot here for months, many things had happened.

She hugged her granddaughter, but she was shocked when she felt something soaking her back.

Lieutenant Peem's blue shirt was stained with blood from a wound on her back. This realization made the elderly mother almost choke on her guilt.

When they pulled apart, the tall figure realized she had a wound on her back. Despite the pain, her overwhelming resentment made her dismiss it as a minor injury.

"You've gone too far, Ratchaphee. You've gone too far..."

Tears welled up as she looked at the blood on her hands. Her father quickly came over and turned her around to inspect the bloody wound an her back.

"I raised my granddaughter like a princess... but her wretched mother took her to be treated like a slave."

Every word cut deep into her heart, reopening old wounds. She never thought things would turn out this way.

"Peem"

Madam Ratchaphee tried to touch her daughter, but what she got in return was a look of distance. Lieutenant Peem pulled her hand away, not letting her mother touch her as if in disgust.

"Today, I truly understand your kindness, Ms. Ratchaphee. Do whatever you want, but don't touch me... This wound won't kill me. It's worth it if it means I can be free. Just tell me when... when will you give me my life back?"

As she spoke, she didn't even want to look at her mother,

"Come on, dear... I'll take you to clean the wound while waiting for the doctor. You've sacrificed enough. From now on, Peem, focus only on those who love you. Your life isn't meant to serve or repay anyone's selfishness. For you, Lieutenant Peem, this wound is just a small scratch."

The tall figure nodded in gratitude, and her father's words gave her hope. It was strange that she barely felt any pain, perhaps because it hurt so much she was numb.

"Does it hurt a lot, my granddaughter?"

"Don't cry, Grandma. It doesn't hurt at all."

"How can it not hurt? You're covered in blood."

"It really doesn't hurt."

She held both of her grandmother's hands, comforting her, ignoring the cries of a certain someone near them.

. .

Throughout the wound treatment, the plump woman continued to sob nearby. The wound on her back had split open by the cane. The more she looked at her, the more it pained her-so much so that the wounded granddaughter had to comfort her until the doctor finished treating her.

Feeling guilty. Madam Ratchaphee didn't dare approach and stood watching from a distance until her husband called her downstairs to talk.

"What are you going to reprimand me again?"

"You used to be a good mother and a good wife, making me feel guilty when I did wrong. When I made a mistake, I admitted it, and the first person to forgive me was Peem. Today, you've wronged our daughter. I hope you realize it and think about what to do before we lose her for good. I once thought our relationship could return to normal, but since this happened. I can't love you the same way anymore. If you keep doing this, we should get a divorce and focus only on being parents. I ask you one thing, Ratchaphee: why do you want to win over our daughter, the daughter who loves and respects you? Can't you give in to her once? Is it that humiliating?"

Tears streamed down the high-ranking officer's face. He couldn't bear to see his daughter like. this anymore and wanted to see when her mother would realize how wrong she was.

"She probably hates me now."

"Don't say that where she can hear. It's like you don't know your own daughter at all.”

. .

The elderly woman's plump hand gently stroked her beloved granddaughter's head, her eyes still filled with tears. She knew her granddaughter wasn't perfect but had never caused trouble for anyone. She was kind-hearted and always helped those in need, never rebellious to embarrass her parents, polite and gentle. Seeing her sad face broke her heart.

"Why does my granddaughter have to go through this?"

"Don't cry, Grandma. The wound will heal soon."

She knew how much the woman in front of her loved and worried about her. The pain of seeing her loved ones cry out of concern hurt more than the wound itself.

.

.

"Mom..."

The door opened before the young woman's voice called out. Madam Phorn turned away immediately, not wanting to have a fight in front of her granddaughter. The tall figure sat silently, already burdened enough.

"It's late... let's go. Peem. Dad and I will drive you there. We'll arrive by morning. There are only the afternoon flights..."

Her mother's red eyes still stared at her daughter sitting on the bed, even though she didn't turn to look back,

"Where are you taking my granddaughter now?"

"To... Mae Kru Bulan's school."

The tall figure turned immediately, hardly believing her ears, but said nothing, still in shock.

"Why didn't I stuff your mouth with ashes when you were a child, Ratchaphee?"

"Stop scolding me so much, Mom. I'm apologizing.”

Tears streamed down her face as she sobbed. No matter how fierce the argument, she couldn't cut ties or stay angry at her mother. She hoped her mother would forgive her, except this time when she was so cold to her. She also felt that her daughter was truly starting to hate her.

"Bah! That's not enough for what you did to my granddaughter. I'll scold you until I die, until you regret what you've done."

"Mom are you serious?"

The tall figure's hands trembled, not daring to be happy, still afraid of disappointment.

"Peem... please don't hate me..."

"Hate her, Peem. She deserves it. I'll help reprimand her."

Despite hearing that, she quickly hugged her mother tightly before collapsing to the floor.

"See, because my granddaughter is too good like this, you acted like such an oppressor. You should've had a child who beat you morning and night, Ratchaphee!”

Seeing the mother and daughter hugging on the floor, she couldn't help but shout, making the father smile. It'd be great if the scene included another young girl and a young man.

Today, he had power and wealth, but it couldn't help keep his loved ones alive. He had to do his best now.

"Peem, I'm sorry..."

Her voice was soft, looking up with pleading eyes.

"I want you to know her... to judge her with your own eyes, not with prejudice. I love her and want you to love her, too."

Though her hands still embraced the person in front of her, the pain inside didn't disappear instantly. The tall figure spoke warmly, though not as gently as before.

"If I were Mae Kru, I'd curse you."

"Hrk! When will you stop scolding me? You always find something to scold about.”

Not yet reconciled with her daughter, she turned to complain to her mother, who sat nearby, seemingly not ready to stop scolding.

"Baht Old people like me have a way with words. If I weren't strong, I wouldn't have raised you until you're an adult. Prepare yourself, I'll scold you about this until I die."

"Peem."

The deep voice of the man standing with folded arms asked his daughter, who seemed brighter.

"Yes, Dad?"

"So... when are you going to get married?"

"Dad!"

A wide smile of embarrassment appeared for the first time in months, making her father smile and tease her.

"Hurry, dear, before she changes her mind. Her mind isn't as good as before."

Madam Phorn stood up and nudged her granddaughter's arm to hurry her along, her face beaming with joy.

"Mom!!"

Her precious daughter quickly let go of the hug, almost causing her to stumble and fall to the ground. She immediately knew her mother had done it on purpose, seizing the moment to tease her with some sarcastic remarks.

"Let's go, dear, let's go."

The tall figure hurried over to her father, who was waving her over, completely forgetting to look back at her mother, who was still on the ground, as she was too happy.

They knew well that the tall figure would be too excited to sleep even though they planned to sleep for a night before setting off. The only way was to head straight to Tak province in their private car.

Mr. Phakin, her father, would take the first shift driving, with his daughter sitting in the passenger seat. His wife and mother-in-law would sit together in the back seat, where they could comfortably bicker.

The tall figure confessed about the case involving Kra-ting and Por Kru Zai, the dark sorcerer, for the first time, as it wasn't recorded in the report. Her father, who'd asked about it, listened intently. while driving.

It was typical for the father and daughter to discuss various cases, and capturing Kra-ting was quite big news. He'd been curious about this for a long time.

Meanwhile, Madam Phom kept praising Mae Kru along the way as if she knew her well, even though they'd probably never met. The one holding the guilt could only sit quietly because just opening her mouth would get her reproached by the plump lady sitting next to her.

**Namotatsa phakhawato.**

**Arahato samma samphutthatsa**

**Namotatsa phakhawato**

**Arahato samma samphutthatsa**

**Namotatsa phakhawato Arahato samma samphutthatsa**

.

The scent of flowers lingered on her smooth, radiant skin with every graceful movement. She sat down on the wooden bench, smoothing her skirt over her slender legs as she sat with her legs to the side.

Her hands came together in a respectful wai, and her sharp, intense eyes looked up at the revered masks before her. Her long, straight black hair cascaded down to her waist, and her nose, elegant and pointed, added to her striking beauty.

Her thin, muted red lips began to move, reciting an invocation after paying homage to the Triratna and addressing the deities.

.

*"Ukasa Imang Akkhiphahubupphang Ahangwantha Achariyang*

*Sapphasaiyang Winassanti Sitthikariya Aparapacha Imassaming*

*Phawantume Thutiyampi Imang Akkhiphahubupphang Ahangwantha*

*Achariyang Sapphasaiyang Winassanti Sitthikariya Aparapacha*

*Imassaming Phawantume Tatiyampi Imang Akkhiphahubupphang*

*Ahangwantha Achariyang Sapphasaiyang Winassanti Sitthikariya*

*Aparapacha Imassaming Phawantume Phutthangprasit Thammangprasit Sankhang...."*

**"Mae Kru Bulan..."**

Her sharp, beautiful face turned slightly, her piercing eyes glancing back.

# Chapter 38. Divine Power

**"It seems like I came at the wrong time again..."**

Her trembling hands lowered to rest on her lap, eyes fixed on the face of her lover who was kneeling on the carpet. Behind her were familiar faces she recognized well.

Her heart burned as if engulfed in flames. She tore her gaze away from the one behind and looked back into the eyes, waiting for the words to come from her lips.

"I'm in the deepest torment of my life. I came seeking help, hoping that Mae Kru Bulan would show mercy to me... to ease my sorrow and bring back happiness. Please, don't let me suffer more than this."

. .

It'd been half a year since she last saw Mae Kru. Her once slender figure had become noticeably thinner, yet she remained as beautiful as ever. Her shattered heart had been mended, and her eyes still looked at her with an unending longing. The feeling was indescribable.

She saw Mae Kru Bulan trying to speak, but she remained still, staring at her with eyes full of fear, torment, and longing, unable to move.

One knee moved closer, and the lieutenant scooped up her lover's delicate body, lifting her onto her lap. Tears streamed from one eye down her soft cheek, and she felt the trembling of her weakened body.

"Khwan, wherever you are, please come back to her quickly."

She was now once again able to smell her lover's scent. She could see her body and face again, but her voice had yet to be heard. No matter how much she suffered, she couldn't compare it to the love Mae Kru Bulan had for her. He couldn't fathom her sorrow.

"Lieutenant"

The restraint broke, and she smiled with the greatest happiness upon hearing her lover's voice. Tears welled up but did not spill over. Mae Kru's delicate hand touched her face gently.

"I missed you so much."

Her eyes conveyed that these words came from the depths of her heart.

"I was on the verge of dying. Please, let's never be apart again."

Both the speaker and the listener felt the same feelings, understanding the depth of love and the pain. The lieutenant's nose and lips pressed against Mae Kru's fragrant cheek, wiping away her tears while her hands held her close, unwilling to let go.

"What must I do to ask Mae Kru Bulan to close the school and stay together until our hearts find peace?"

"Interrupting my ritual three times, the penalty..is your life."

"All my remaining breaths... I give to you."

Their bodies leaned into each other, embracing to heal the wounds of their hearts.

**In Mae Kru Bulan's house...**

The three of them sat on the floor out of respect, not wanting to sit higher than Mae Kru, the homeowner, even though they were allowed. The plump hand of the elderly woman rested on the tall figure's head, making both pairs of eyes look at her smiling face with joy.

"I kept my promise, Mae Kru..."

Her gentle voice spoke, and she looked at the woman who was her granddaughter's beloved.

"Phorn..."

The slender figure called out in confusion.

"It's no wonder my granddaughter loves you more than her own life. The misfortune is over, and you have your lover back. From now on... may you both be happy and never part again."

The tall figure bowed down and prostrated on her grandmother's lap, and the slender figure raised her hands in gratitude, though she didn't bow. Madam Phorn also raised her hands to accept the gesture without hesitation.

"If you took her back for me without permission, I'd scold you, too... You know what you've done."

When she regained her composure, her stern voice returned.

"I'm sorry, Mae Kru. If I have sinned, it was out of love for my granddaughter. In exchange, I learned many things. And I didn't take her back without permission; her parents brought her here themselves."

Hearing this, she turned to look at the two people standing by the wall.

"I... I'm a person of my word. It's good that you didn't put a spell on my daughter."

Madam Ratchaphee replied with a stammer, still unable to meet her eyes out of a strange fear.

"Rest assured, we both willingly brought Peem here. Seeing Peem happy again makes both her grandmother and parents happy, too. We want you both to be each other's happiness. What has passed, if it can be forgiven, let it be. As for the wrongs, let them be dealt with accordingly,"

Her father added, smiling. The slender figure raised her hands in gratitude again. As a father, he raised his hands to accept the gesture without hesitation.

"I hold no grudges. If there is any resentment, it's just a question of whether Madam Ratchaphee will listen."

"Speak, I'm listening... She replied, still too ashamed to look up.

"She's a blessed person, protected by divine power since birth. Whoever her parents are considered blessed, too. But what have you done? Do you know how deteriorated that power has become?"

Her sharp eyes continued to stare, waiting for the woman in front of her to meet her gaze.

"I... don't know,"

"As a mother, how could you speak without knowing anything? You didn't know what was good or bad and accused me of doing something vile. Your daughter's power has saved you, but your carelessness could drive her mad. This is no joke; it could lead to your death without you realizing it."

"Ha! How satisfying. This granddaughter-in-law of mine."

The plump woman slapped her knee in delight, making her daughter look stunned.

"D-did you really have to say that? Wasn't that too harsh?"

"Think carefully. Your son hasn't woken up because of your careless words."

. .

***Another case? Can't you let someone else's child get shot for once?***

***You're always looking for trouble. If they die, they die. I just want to have a meal with my son.***

*. .*

Her own words struck her heart like lightning. They suddenly came to mind without her thinking or remembering. Her eyes burned, but she tried to hold back her tears. The more she looked into Mae Kru Bulan's eyes, the more her heart ached.

"Phu..."

Only her son's name came out in a sob, loud enough for everyone to hear.

"Is there any way to make things better, Mae Kru?"

Madam Phorn asked, her chest tight.

"Each person's karma must be resolved by themselves. Create ment to support yourself. If done with a pure heart, bad may turn to good one day."

She blinked a few times to regain her composure.

"I'll take her to make merit. She's done a lot of wrong. You two stay together. Come on, Kin, let's get ready to go."

"If I miss my child... what should I do?"

The slender figure understood the meaning and tone of this question well. She turned to the mother again, then gave her a wai. The woman, who'd been standing with her arms crossed, quickly raised her hands in surprise.

"You're the mother of the person I love. She respects you, so I won't be rude. She'll always be your daughter. If you want to visit or have us visit, I won't object since you raised her to adulthood. Deep down, I know you're not a bad person."

"It seems like we'll get a daughter-in-law just like you said,"

The man said, teasing his mother- in-law.

"When the day of the wedding comes, I'll make it a grand event in Tak, parading around the province. People here will know Madam Phorn. My granddaughter has good taste, not blind like her mother."

"Mom!"

The mother's voice dragged in a plea, as even a compliment turned into a jab at her.

"Hahaha! We're still here, dear. I'll send the transfer order tomorrow. Understood, Lieutenant Peem?"

The Police Lieutenant General had to call out to his daughter, who was almost merging with her lover

The slender figure turned to look at Lieutenant Peem, who was still leaning on her shoulder, breathing deeply, and feeling wet on her back, probably from her tears.

"The elders are leaving. Get ready to see them off."

"Oh! Yes. Hurry and go back already. I mean, shall we go now? I'll see you to the car."

The tall figure jolted and looked around, realizing she hadn't heard anything. She was too busy confirming that her lover was real and not a dream. The slender figure gathered her skirt to stand, and Lieutenant Peem quickly helped her up.

"Hey! You got your wife back and forgot about us old folks already, huh?"

"Oh, come on! Grandma

She jolted again, seeing Madam Phorn still sitting on the floor, unable to get up due to her weight. She quickly bent down to help her stand.

**On the road in front of the house where the car was parked....**

"Stay focused. Lieutenant. Having a lover doesn't mean you can neglect your duties. When you become a Lieutenant Colonel, we'll arrange the wedding."

"I hope you'll keep your promise"

The playful banter between father and daughter helped create a much more pleasant atmosphere. The only one who seemed troubled at this moment was Madam Ratchaphee, who'd learned a significant lesson. She couldn't understand why she'd put so much faith in Mae Kru Bulan's warnings.

"Have I ever broken my word, Lieutenant?"

The tall figure smiled, genuinely grateful.

"Both of you are grown now, so there's no need for me to warn or advise you much. Please take care of my grandchild, Mae Kru. As you're older, if she does anything wrong, don't hesitate to scold her. One day, you'll live together. When you miss us, just come to visit. Take care of yourselves. There are no more obstacles. The rest depends on how well you both can support each other. Talk and adjust slowly to the little ups and downs."

**"Heh"**

The father's chuckle escaped, causing Madam Ratchaphee to glare at her husband, who was mocking her for being scolded by her own mother again.

"You're always scolding others. Do you have anything good to say? If not, we can leave. My grandchild is about to die from missing her lover."

"You've said everything. What else should I say? I apologize for the accusations. Just love each other well. If I say too much, it might offend Madam Phorn again. If it comes to marriage, we'll discuss it in the future. If my child is happy, I'm happy, too. Just don't make her suffer. I've raised her well."

"You..."

The father said.

"I'm speaking nicely. Does it offend you again?"

"Just like her mother, huh? We'll continue this argument in the car. I'll hold back, for now, seeing as there are many sacred things around."

Madam Phom genuinely wanted to pinch her right there but held back, planning to do it in the car instead.

"How much dowry will you ask for, Madam Ratchaphee? I'll ask for her hand in the marriage myself,"

The slender figure asked in a calm voice, causing Lieutenant Peem to look surprised.

"Calm down,"

The tall figure intervened, knowing she wasn't one to joke around.

"How should I put it? Bulan, you don't need to call her 'Madam. Call us 'Dad' and 'Mom' like Peem does. You mightn't be our real daughter, but let's not be distant. Whoever Peem loves, we should love and respect, too. I consider you part of the family now. You can tell me anything. Many police officers in Tak probably know me."

"Thank you."

"Didn't know you can speak nicely."

Madam Ratchaphee said, scratching her neck and speaking vaguely, not addressing anyone in particular.

"Safe travels to all three of you, especially you, Mom,"

The slender figure said, sweeping her gaze before stopping at Madam, Ratchaphee.

"She can speak nicely, too, right?"

The man preparing to open the car door chimed in.

"Phakin,"

She said in a low voice, not entirely scolding, fearing Madam Phorn's gaze.

"Yes?"

He responded, still looking, waiting for his wife's words as he opened the car door.

"Thank you, our beautiful daughter-in-law,"

She said, though it might've sounded forced, but it brought a rare, beautiful smile to Mae Kru Bulan's face, her eyes sparkling.

"Why is the farewell taking so long

Lost in the face of her lover, she accidentally spoke out, causing all three to turn and look. confirming it was indeed the tall figure's voice.

"Get in the car. She looks like she really is about to die from missing her,"

The father said. shaking his head lightly before quickly getting into the car, starting it, and driving away swiftly. The school closing sign hung to prevent anyone traveling from waiting in vain or calling for Mae Kru.

. .

*Their lips met as soon as the slender figure's back touched the bed. The tall figure's lips were noticeably drier than before as if she were dehydrated. Their hands roamed each other's bodies hungrily. Soon, only their naked bodies remained under the large blanket.*

*The nose nuzzled her neck, inhaling her scent intensely. No matter what they'd been through, they didn't want to talk about past troubles, focusing instead on reclaiming lost time.*

"This wound... whoever caused it must suffer more"

Mae Kru's sharp eyes glanced at the bandage on her back while lifting her chin so that her lover could admire her body.

"It's okay, it doesn't hurt. It'll heal soon. But missing you, that will never heal,"

She said, her hand stopping as she felt Mae Kru's ribs protruding.

"Have you been eating?"

"Just enough to survive, waiting for you to come back... and now you're back."

"I'll stay... with you everywhere and won't let you get this thin again." ***Clang...***

"Or should I say I miss both of you?" She teased, hearing a long-missed sound.

"He didn't disobey me and secretly meet you, right?"

"I see so many ghosts lately. Do you know there is a Hippocampus medium in this world?"

"Lying will get you both in trouble."

"If I get the chance, I'd like to see if he looks like what I saw in my dreams."

Before she could finish, a soft breeze blew from her lips into Lieutenant Peem's eyes, making her instinctively close them.

"Shit!!"

Rubbing her eyes a few times, she was stunned to see a small kuman thong standing with hands on hips beside the bed. She quickly pulled the blanket to cover her chest.

## "Why are you startled? You still hugged me just then."

"A... real kuman thong."

"And you said you didn't see one. Bring the cane. I'll punish you. It'll stop you from being stubborn."

## "You cried, Mother. I couldn't stand it. And she allowed it. I wasn't stubborn."

"No, don't scold or hit him. He loves and cares for you, so he did that. If you want to hit, hit me. I gave him the permission."

"I'll also punish you for sneaking to sleep in front of my house. No need to volunteer."

"How did you know? Do you have divine eyes? Or did Thong tell you?"

Lieutenant Peem asked loudly, curious.

"Security cameras."

"Who installed them and when "

Unable to argue, the tall figure scratched her eyebrow in embarrassment. The little kuman thong had disappeared without her noticing.

"I didn't watch it."

"Then..."

Before she could finish, Mae Kru pulled her lips down to hers. The tall figure, who received the kiss, didn't want to say anything more.

Her hot tongue returned a sweet warmth, almost making her forget all pain. Their hands clasped tightly, still craving and needing this touch for a long time..

## "The lotus pond will never dry up again, day or night."

After whispering and kissing for a while, her nose began to descend her neck, chest, and the valley between.

## "Mmm..."

*Her relaxed breath escaped. The memory of her touch had been so faint she couldn't think of how long it'd take to make up for lost time. At this moment, she felt her lips kissing her lower abdomen as she used to.*

It mightn't be different from before. Life must go on, but living every day with her lover made her realize the value of life. She might find the answer to why humans are born, not just to repay karma or be blessed. Everyone's happiness is unique.

*Death might bring oblivion or leave memories of life. We still must live happily....*

*.*

*.*

"Namo phutthaya "

This chant echoed in her mind, released as a breath without sound, repeated many times.

Gold leaf was pressed onto the lieutenant's forehead with Mae Kru Bulan's thumb. After reciting the final sacred spell, she blew gently on her head as she sat on the carpet before her.

"Keep making merit, and the power will return as before."

The lieutenant looked up at her beautiful eyes, not just on the outside but beautiful even deep within her soul, before bowing to the teachers' masks behind her.

"Your knife."

Mae Kru handed back the curved, sharp knife. Her dry lips, now plump and colorful, smiled widely in gratitude, reaching out to take the knife.

Mae Kru Bulan's dominant hand rested on her cheek, lifting her face before leaning down to kiss her forehead, holding it there.

**"If I have to endure a night without you I won't sleep peacefully."**

**~The End~**

# Chapter special: Heavenly Lotus

During the three months that they were apart. Mae Kru looked up and saw the teachers' masks, she met people and students who came crawling on their knees. It eased her pain for a moment, like an anesthetic injected to numb the heart's torment.

As the day continued, the anesthetic's effect faded away. Everywhere she looked, she still saw the face of her lover. A promise is sacred. If she was her destined partner, she'd grit her teeth and wait for fate to bring her back.

**"Mae Kru! Is Mae Kru Bulan here?"**

Around noon, as she was preparing the income and expenditure account while listening to the news on TV, she heard a shout from outside the house. She put her pen down on the notebook to mark the page before getting up to see who was calling.

Opening the door, she saw a plump woman, disheveled and dirty, carrying a tattered cloth bag with visible holes. Her face lit up with joy upon seeing her.

"Are you Mae Kru Bulan?"

"Yes, it's me. I take a break from school at noon."

"Sorry, Mae Kru. I didn't know. It's my first time here."

Her sharp eyes scanned for the woman's vehicle but saw nothing. She didn't recognize her face either. "How did you get here?"

"Oh, I took the bus, Mae Kru. I came from Lopburi. I'm at my wit's end. They said Mae Kru could help me.”

"Who is that?"

A maechi, who'd just walked out of the kitchen, asked. Seeing the woman in white without hair, the visitor quickly raised her hands in a wai.

"Greetings."

The maechi smiled warmly, not showing any disgust.

"Do help her, Bulan. She's in distress, that's why she's here."

"There's a bathroom at the back. Wash your face and freshen up. Cleanliness is good for you."

Seeing the worry in her eyes, Bulan didn't want to scold her. Besides, she seemed older, which softened her heart. Another thing many didn't know was that Mae Kru Bulan was easily moved by elderly women, often thinking of her aging mother.

"Yes, Mae Kru. Can I leave my bag here?”

Her chubby fingers pointed to a wooden bench in front of the school. Mae Kru Bulan glanced and nodded.

"How are you? If you don't eat, the medicine will upset your stomach."

Seeing the plump woman walk away, the maechi turned to her daughter, who was daydreaming again.

"I'm just not hungry."

"Lying to yourself is a sin; lying to your mother is greater a sin... Bulan, she'll come back. Doesn't the longing lessen? Calm your mind. There's still work to do. No one can rush time. Por Kru must be suffering, too, if he knows. It's not that she doesn't love you. And if you fall ill, you might never meet each other again this time."

"I hung the clothes for you, Mom. Use the new ones sometimes. Don't keep using the old ones.”

"The old ones are comfortable. Where did you hide them?"

"If I didn't hide them, you'd wear the same ones."

"Even you like to wear my old clothes.

"I'm prettier than you now. Whatever I wear doesn't look old."

It might sound like teasing, but there was no smile, just a calm face, and a soft voice, not wanting to worry the maechi too much.

"If we were born at the same time, you wouldn't be as pretty as me. Por Kru brought me food every day."

"Okay, I lost."

Bulan turned to respond before walking toward the school. The maechi, watching her, smiled slightly, still worried but trying to let go. Some things require patience.

She thought of sweeping the chair she sat on but caught sight of the bag. It had a set of clothes, a bag of sticky rice with dried pork, and a bus ticket. The small zippered pocket probably held money. She said nothing and walked into the school.

"Maechi, please let me help."

After washing her face, the woman hurried out and saw the maechi sweeping leaves in front of the house. Out of courtesy, she offered to help. Bulan, cleaning a golden tray in the school, looked up at the sound. The school was open, visible from three directions.

"It's okay. I rarely get to do this. Go see Mae Kru."

"It isn't time yet. Please let me help."

"Who are you? What brings you here?"

The maechi asked, still holding the broom.

"My name is Phom. I left my daughter's house because we had problems. The more I stayed, the more I annoyed her. I've been troubled lately. They said if I came to Mae Kru Bulan, she could help with my shop."

"You must be diligent. Coming here won't make you rich if you don't work."

As she turned around, Mae Kru was already standing there.

"Mae Kru,"

Phorn called out, slightly startled.

"What do you want to sell?"

"I used to sell food, but it failed. I felt like a burden to my daughter, who lives with her husband and child." "Was the location bad? Why did it fail?" The maechi asked.

"Maybe it wasn't tasty enough, Maechi." "Does your daughter know you're struggling?"

Phorn stood silent, unable to answer.

"Her child has their own family. They mightn't be wealthy. Bulan, you should understand,"

The maechi said with a warm smile.

"In the afternoon, I have the students I promised to perform rituals for earlier. If I help you, others will see it as unfair. You might have to wait until evening. Will you wait?"

Bulan asked calmly.

"That's alright with me."

"How will you travel back?"

"I can sleep at the bus station."

"That's dangerous, Phorn, Where do you need to go?"

"She said she came from Lopburi,"

Bulan answered instead of Phorn.

"Don't think Mae Kru is heartless. Her health isn't what it used to be. She just rested her hands after tattooing the students all morning, Phorm.”

Fearing misunderstandings, the maechi explained why Mae Kru couldn't help immediately.

"It's okay. I'm the one imposing."

"Wait for me in the school,"

Bulan said, then walked inside. Her mother didn't question her actions.

"Go on. Mae Kru will find you later."

"Yes, Maechi."

Phorn went to sit at the back of the school near the gate. She looked at the sacred teachers inside. Soon, Bulan came out with a small tray holding a plate of rice, a bowl of curry with shrimp, and a bottle of water. She placed it in front of Phorn, who looked up in surprise.

"It's not leftovers. Eat it. If you don't like it, throw it away before you leave."

Bulan spoke and then walked back to the wooden bench to clean her needles, not waiting for thanks.

“...”

Phorn, in her old clothes, looked at the food and then at Bulan, who was focused on her work. She decided to eat while thinking of what to do next.

"How is it, Phorn?"

Phorn quickly put down her spoon and turned to answer Maechi.

"I've never had this before. It's delicious, the best I've ever had."

"Good. Eat it all. It'll make Mae Kru happy."

"Did Mae Kru make this?"

"She loves cooking. If there's no event at the temple, she cooks just enough to offer the monks. Sometimes, she brings some for me. Lately, she cooks extra every meal. Eat it. If not given away, it'll go to waste.” "I want to ask Mae Kru something. Can you help me, Maechi?"

Phorn asked, looking hopeful.

"You can tell me. If I can help, I will."

After a few sentences, Maechi understood what Phorn needed. She went to consult Bulan. Seeing her mother approach, Bulan gave up her seat and sat on the flour. Phom moved closer. "Dear, I have something to discuss."

Bulan nodded, waiting.

"Phorn wants to learn to cook a few dishes to make a living."

Knowing her daughter was protective of her home, she asked cautiously.

"I have some money, Mae Kru. You can have all of it. I'll sleep at a temple or nearby. I won't impose. If you need more money, I'll find it for you. I'll do any chores.”

"It's not that I trust strangers, but Phorn seems harmless. When I'm not here, I'm worried about you. Having someone around might ease my mind. If she's not good, she can leave. Helping with chores will lighten the load. If I were strong like before, I wouldn't ask. I know you're protective of this home."

Bulan glanced at the money in the bag, seeing a few hundred and twentybaht bills.

"Keep it with you, no need to give it to me,"

The slender figure, deep in thought, replied in a calm voice.

"And what do you think?"

Maechi asked Mae Kru.

"Whatever Mae Kru asks me to do, I'll do it all,"

The plump young woman quickly added, raising her hands to give a wai, but the slender figure used her palm to press down on her fingertips, preventing her from giving her a wai

"Don't do that. If you want to give something a wai, do it to my teachers, to what you have faith in. I'm not a sacred being.”

"Yes, Mae Kru..."

"I can't do everything. If you want to learn, be diligent. I'm not possessive of my recipes. I think it might be better than performing rituals that yield no results. I wake up at four every morning. Will you be able to wake up at that time?"

Maechi, who was watching, smiled. If her daughter had something to do and someone to talk to, it might lessen her sorrow a bit.

"Yes, Mae Kru. I'm a light sleeper. I'll set an alarm to wake up with Mae Kru every morning."

"Then go eat until you're full, Phorn. By half-past one, people will start coming. I'll arrange a place for you to sleep downstairs. It mightn't be very comfortable, but bear with it for a while. It's only temporary. Normally, no one stays at my daughter's house. Even if someone does, they won't come anytime soon."

Maechi, sitting above, spoke in a calm voice. At the same time, the slender figure turned her face away as if not wanting to be seen.

"Everything in this world, when it's time to let go, we must let go. I've taught you that. If you don't make peace with it, you'll only torment yourself. Waiting in distress does no good."

"If I'm not distressed, I'm not human. If I'm not happy, I have no breath. If I can let go of everything, if my mind isn't troubled, by then, I probably won't know how to love anymore..."

“...”

"Take it inside to eat. I permit it. When you're done, wash it well. I'll pay respects to my teachers."

The mother's hand gently stroked her head, sensing the tears flowing inside. She'd raised her until she was grown, knowing well that Bulan wasn't one to cry easily, no matter the situation.

A corner of the house was arranged as a temporary sleeping place for the guest. Seeing that it didn't look very comfortable, she ordered the market workers to bring a mosquito net and mattress Everything seemed to go normally.

By just past seven, the whole house was dark and quiet as if the woman upstairs had already gone to sleep. Around ten or eleven, the lights upstairs suddenly turned on brightly, waking the old woman as she wasn't yet used to the place. She heard someone's footsteps coming down.

"Maechi..."

"Oh, Phorn, did I wake you?"

"No, what do you need? I thought you were asleep."

"Mae Kru has a fever. I came down to get a cooling pad for her and to wipe her body. You can go back to sleep, Phorn."

"Should we take her to the doctor?"

"It happens often. The medicine we have is from the doctor. Once she sleeps, the fever will go down."

"Can I help you soak the cloth or help in any way? Hearing this, I can't help but worry.”

She was startled because she'd seen her well during the day. She also wanted to see for herself how serious it was out of concem and an inexplicable sense of guilt.

The mother hurriedly nodded in response. The plump woman followed her upstairs, handing a glass of water to the slender figure to take medicine.

When done, she sat on the floor beside the bed, watching Maechi wipe Mae Kru Bulan's body, whose face was flushed with fever. Just touching her hand, she could feel the high temperature.

"How can I leave you alone?"

The eyes watching were filled with unspoken words. The more she saw, the more frustrated she felt with the other side. Not long after, when the medicine took effect, the slender figure seemed to fall asleep, with her mother sitting close, stroking her head.

"Go to sleep, Phorn. It's alright. I can watch over her. I'll sleep soon, too."

She understood why the mother, who'd become a maechi, had to stay here with her daughter.

It was good that she still had someone by her side. If she were alone, she'd feel even more guilty.

For many hours, she couldn't sleep, convinced that it had to do with her granddaughter. Half of her thoughts now believed everything Lieutenant Peem had told her. Could someone like this really do something bad to others?

The more she saw the beautiful face, the more she felt she could find someone better than her granddaughter. She didn't seem greedy at all.

Before she knew it, she heard her alarm clock. A few minutes later, the lights upstairs turned on. She wondered why someone so sick would get up so early.

The slender figure walked down the stairs in her nightgown, hair neatly tied, revealing some tattoos. After washing her face, she waited in the kitchen to see what the slender figure would instruct.

"If you want to make a curry to sell, you need a flavorful curry paste. On holidays, I'll teach you how to pound it, but for today, use what I've already made."

"Mae Kru, you're sick. Why do you still get up so early? I want you to rest a bit more."

"Just focus on your own matters. Don't worry about me. Today, my mom might go back to help at the temple. If you want to help, sweep when you see it's dirty. Normally, I do it myself. I don't want to use anyone."

"It's alright. I can do it."

"There's chicken in the fridge. I'll teach you how to make massaman curry."

"Understood."

After heating the wok, she poured the coconut cream to simmer until the oil separated from it.

The slender figure did it herself, letting the old woman stir as it was an easy task.

"When I make it, I use a lot of curry paste, so there won't be much coconut cream. Simmer on low heat from the start. Don't put too much dilute coconut cream."

She reached out to lower the heat and gently touched the plump woman's hand, guiding her to stir the coconut cream more slowly.

"When making a big pot to sell, adjust everything according to the amount of chicken.”

Madam Phorn began to sense the true self of the slender figure from her sharp eyes. She also noticed the moment Mae Kru Bulan picked up the coconut milk measuring cup.

"Mae Kru, do you have a birthmark?"

“...”

The hand that was pushing suddenly stopped. She raised her other hand to look at it, not for a short time, confirming that it resembled her granddaughter's.

"Is something wrong, Mae Kru?"

"No, it's just that no one has ever mentioned my birthmark except my mother and Por Kru. I'm surprised you noticed it on my fingers."

"My eyes just caught it."

As time passed, they grew closer. From one week, it tumed into almost a month. She began to get used to Mae Bulan's sharp tongue, realizing it was just her normal demeanor.

She'd experienced her strictness firsthand for not wanting to wake up or yawning while Mae Kru was teaching. It was so terrifying that she wanted to pack up and leave, she was scarier than a tiger. On days they finished early, she'd take her to the market to learn how to pick ingredients.

She never mentioned her granddaughter, shared her inner sorrow, nor mentioned that she owned the market. If she hadn't known beforehand, she wouldn't have believed she was the owner.

Mae Kru kept her granddaughter's clothes neatly in the closet. She recognized them just by seeing them, but she only commented in her mind.

Every time she absentmindedly stared without eating, it was as if she saw someone else, but it was much more torturous because she had to endure it alone. She was so thin it was worrying.

"Phom, are you slicing to arrange on a plate? I've taught you that for a phla, you need to slice the lemongrass finely. When chewing with meat, it won't be tough."

It was a daily routine to get scolded every morning, but she felt good being with someone her granddaughter loved. Maechi thanked her repeatedly, asking her to take care of Mae Kru Bulan while she was away. But the lemongrass she was slicing now was as thin as she could make it, fearing she'd cut her fingertips.

"Lemongrass is round and slippery. Just slice it like this to get a good grip."

She took the knife to slice the lemongrass thinly along its length. When placed on the cutting board, it stayed still. She'd taught her this before, but the old woman sometimes forgot.

"If my fingers were as slender and beautiful as Mae Kru's. I could slice it as thin as paper"

"A cook isn't afraid of knives, Phorn."

"I'm holding a knife, Mae Kru. Aren't you afraid? Scolding me like this."

"Then stab me, Phorn. But if I don't die, you'll be the one who has a funeral."

Hearing that, the plump woman smiled widely, seeing the person in front of her had recovered Last night, Maechi wasn't there, so she moved to sleep in the same room as the slender figure.

Hearing sobs, she woke up and knew she had a fever again. It was the first night she got to wipe Mae Kru Bulan's body.

"Mae Kru... can you take me to the bus station tomorrow?"

"Are you leaving already?"

"I've been here a long time. It's time... to go home."

"Do you want to sell food at the market? I'll find a spot for you. The market here always has people. Save some money and then go back."

"Thank you, Mae Kru, but you've already taught me so much. I have many things to take care of. I've always been grateful for your kindness, for taking pity on an old woman like me. You've never let me go hungry nor suffer while staying here. Maechi is getting better with the phone, so she can check on you through the cameras without worry. If you get a fever at night, just turn on the light on the second floor, and Maechi will come to check on you. Don't endure it until morning."

"Today, I'll perform a ritual for you. You, too. Don't exert yourself. You're not young anymore."

"I promise, if I return, I'll use what I've learned here and bring back the most valuable thing to give to you. Mae Kru."

"You don't need to give me anything Just take care of yourself."

"When that day comes, you can decide whether to accept it or not."

"Alnght, let's stop talking and get ready for the monks' aims."

"Yes, Mae Kru,"

The slender figure said, then went upstairs to shower, leaving Phorn to continue cooking, trusting her skills as she'd taught her herself.

**At the bus hub...**

When the day came, the slender figure indeed came to see her off. The journey to the bus hub was silent, but knowing each other for quite some time, a glance into her eyes revealed a sense of unease. Perhaps this was why Mae Kru Bulan didn't like getting close to anyone.

"I intend this as capital for you. Think carefully about how to use it"

"Why? I won't accept it, Mae Kru."

"You've helped me many times, lightening my load. Take it. Do you despise my money?"

"I've never despised you, Mae Kru. Each day, I love and respect you more and more. I've always said that. I'll accept this money and keep it safe. When the time comes. I'll repay you a hundredfold."

"If you become that wealthy, don't come to see me by bus again. Travel safely." "I won't forget you, Mae Kru.”

The sharp eyes continued to watch the plump woman as she got out of the car

.

**…Present day…**

"Lieutenant!!!"

Before she could close the car door, she heard a loud call. It was undoubtedly the voice of the stout police officer she'd worked with before.

"Hey, Sergeant Major."

The tall figure turned and responded with a wide smile, looking cheerful, "Do you know how happy I am that you've been transferred back, Lieutenant? And about Mae Kru, you didn't think to tell me? How cruel of you.”

"Even then, you still managed to call me."

"I got some details from the captain that you were separated. I figured you must miss Mae Kru a lot, so you asked me to keep an eye out."

It was clear that Sergeant Major was genuinely happy and concerned for her, In this station, Sergeant Major wasn't close to many people and was often gossiped about for working slowly.

Only someone patient and kind like Lieutenant Peem understood and never criticized Sergeant Major Piak for being kind to the locals.

"Thank you, Sergeant Major. I'm happy to be back here, too."

"Lieutenant, stay longer this time, okay?"

"I'll probably stay as long as you do, Sergeant Major. Mae Kru is here, where else would I go?"

"Awwwww…”

The drawn-out tone and smile showed he had many questions and teases in mind but was holding back out of respect since she'd just arrived, and they should catch up first.

"I know you want to know how we got together, Sergeant Major."

"It's like you can read my mind, Lieutenant."

"Heh... I'll tell you first as a thank you."

Lieutenant Peem chuckled softly and shook her head. The desk seemed to have been cleaned and prepared for her. As soon as Sergeant Major Piak saw it, he quickly claimed it was his doing.

Even though it was the same old desk, and the building and atmosphere were unchanged, what had changed was the smile on the tall figure's face.

Even though it was the same old desk and the same people, why did it bring so much happiness this time? Perhaps because her once-empty heart was now full. She looked up at the clock, waiting for noon to go have lunch at her lover's house.

"Uh... Lieutenant, are you high or something?"

"What, Sergeant Major?"

"I know you're happy to see me, but I didn't think you'd smile so wide."

"Is that so..."

"I know you're thinking about Mae Kru. Do you believe me now that our country has many beautiful things for you to protect, especially..."

"Stop teasing, Sergeant Major."

"But you can't stop smiling, Lieutenant"

"Stop it~~”

"Haha, anyway welcome back, Lieutenant Peem."

"Glad to be back working with you, Sergeant Major.”

"Captain is waiting upstairs."

"Let's go then."

With a still beaming face, she nodded and led the way to report in.

**...Two weeks later...**

"Are you serious, Mom?!"

"Do I joke about these things?"

The loud voices of the two ladies echoed in front of a building near a large market filled with shops selling goods, clothes, and food.

Soon, a tall figure walked over, holding an umbrella for her lover, approaching the mother and a plump woman dressed to the nines, adorned with gold on her neck, wrists, and nearly every finger.

"Phorn, I thought you were someone else."

She'd heard that someone wanted to rent the building for business, and the tall figure had insisted on coming.

"Mae Kru, can I rent this building?"

"Are you going to sell food?"

"I'm going to sell goods, not food"

"Alright, I promised to help find a place. Many people want to rent it, but I only trust a few. If you're going to make a living, go ahead. The rent is whatever you can afford."

"Why didn't you tell me you came here to see Mae Kru, Grandma?"

"If you want to know something, you have to see it for yourself. Peem, you told me that. And now, as the granddaughter-in-law of Madam Phorn, the gold shop tycoon, you can't be without gold People will talk.”

"Look at that, Madam Phorm. You didn't do this much for me. It's not like she's getting married today or tomorrow,"

Said Madam Ratchaphee.

"Hey! What you've gotten is already a lot. I've already arranged everything for my kids. I'm old now, and I need to arrange my remaining assets in my grandchildren's names so I can die in peace. And I'm not giving Peem more than anyone else. She never asked for anything. I'm giving it to her because I see it's right. Marriage is one thing; this is for making a living. I gave promise myself."

"Mom, opening a gold shop isn't part of the dowry?"

"Yes! Marriage is one thing; this is for making a living. I opened one for you and your husband, too, didn't I?"

"What do you mean, Phom?"

The slender figure asked again.

"I told Mae Kru I'd repay a hundredfold. This gold shop is for you and my granddaughter to manage together. I give one to each of my children and grandchildren. Mae Kru, as my daughter-in-law, you should have a shop of your own. You can't refuse; it'd be an insult.”

The tall figure just stood by, smiling sweetly, holding her lover's hand with one hand and the umbrella with the other, shielding her from the sun, even though her own shoulder was burning.

"I'll put up a big sign saying 'Mae Kru Bulan's Gold Shop' and have Mae Kru bless it for good luck. I don't know how long I'll live, but I'll stay until I see my granddaughter married. Mae Kru, you take good care of my granddaughter, so I must repay you. I've eaten a lot at your house, too. I don't know the future, but if you separate, you can sell the shop and split it. I've said it here. If I die, no one can reclaim it from you. It's my gift. I don't know how much Lieutenant Peem's mother will give you, but I don't trust anyone. I handle my assets myself."

"You're giving me too much."

"I'm not just giving it to you. I'm giving it to Mae Kru, which is like giving it to my granddaughter."

"I don't know why you're playing hard to get. Just accept it. My mom will insist until you do. My daughter plans to stay here. If you stay together long, I don't want people to call her the poor Lieutenant Peem. My daughter isn't just an ordinary woman,"

Madam Ratchaphee spoke loudly without looking directly at anyone.

"Please accept it, Mae Kru. It's my sincere gift."

Madam Ratchaphee looked at the slender figure, who now looked much brighter.

"Thank you, Grandma."

"Is she the only one hot..."

Madam Ratchaphee still held the umbrella and fanned herself.

"I've made a lot of food. Phorn and Mom, would you like to come and eat? I'll get some cold drinks,"

The slender figure spoke calmly.

"I'm not stingy with my assets. Stay together long, and I'll give you more. Peem is my child."

"Thank you, Mom.”

Lieutenant Peem smiled widely, thanking her sweetly. The slender figure raised her hands in a wai, and Madam Ratchaphee accepted it and continued pretending not to care.

"I miss Mae Kru's cooking. Let's go. I'll have someone handle this. Soon, everyone will know Mae Kru is my daughter-in-law! Before we leave, we must visit Maechi to ask for her daughter's hand early."

She didn't just speak; she shouted joyfully.

"Look at that, Peem."

"She's adorable. Even I am excited about my girlfriend. Grandma can be excited about her daughter-in-law. Who wouldn't be? She's so beautiful."

She said and turned to smile at the slender figure standing beside her, making her mother roll her eyes and sigh in exasperation at her own daughter.

.

.

**Mae Kru Bulan's house...**

**"Hrk!"**

The tall figure made a sound like a sob, but it was just a whimper in her throat as she raised both index fingers to poke her own cheeks when she looked at the food-filled table in front of her.

"What's wrong. Peem?"

Her mother asked when she saw her daughter acting as if she were grieving. She herself sat with her arms crossed, not thinking of eating even a bite despite the fragrant aroma of the food wafting into her nose

"I can't eat it~~"

*Before she could finish her sentence, she saw a plate of boiled vegetables that the slender figure had just placed in front of her.*

"Why, Mae Kru?"

The plump woman holding a spoon turned to ask.

"Someone at the station commented that her cheeks were getting chubbier. She's afraid she won't be able to chase after criminals, gain weight, and lose her abs. I plan to make her run early in the morning."

"Today, Grandma is here. Eating for one day shouldn't be a problem, right?" The tall figure leaned in to snuggle, but the slender figure moved away to sit on a chair.

Almost falling, she quickly used her hand to push herself up to avoid embarrassment. The lady watching couldn't help but smile and laugh inwardly.

"Can't I have a little rice? How about some chili sauce?"

She lightly touched her lover's shoulder with her fingertip.

"Cutting carbs is good. Boiled vegetables with boiled fish, no dipping. You'll lose weight soon.

The food is for the elders.”

"If no one eats, I will. If I don't taste it, you won't know, Ratchaphee. My granddaughter-in- law's cooking is always delicious."

"Why are you praising her so much? I run a restaurant, you know. I can tell just by looking that it's ordinary."

Seeing her daughter confident in her own opinion, Madam Phorm couldn't help but look at her with annoyance.

"If it's not delicious, I'll let you pour the soup over me!"

"You said it yourself."

"Come on! Eat first, then talk."

Without waiting, she scooped the food in front of her onto her plate and immediately put it in her mouth.

“...”

"How is it?!! It shocked you, huh, Ratchaphee?"

Seeing the surprised look on the woman's face after tasting the food, it was clear that it was too delicious for her to keep her cool.

"Why don't you open a restaurant?"

Forgetting that she was putting on a wall, she turned to ask the slender figure sitting on the other side.

"I don't want to get richer, and I don't want to sell my food. I want to cook for the people I love."

Hearing that, she felt that her future daughter-in-law was being kind to her. She scratched her neck and continued eating without responding.

"Even a little sauce would be good. It's all bland."

The lieutenant blinked rapidly, pleading.

"Do you want to be like Sergeant Major Piak? If you eat bland and get sick, I'll drive you to the doctor myself."

If the lieutenant gained more weight, Mae Kru feared her lover would be the one stressing out. She didn't want to force or scold her. She even wanted her to enjoy her food.

"Mae Kru is right. Your cheeks are really chubbier. Grandma agrees."

"Oh no..."

The tall figure quickly raised both hands to touch her cheeks again.

"They're not too chubby. You're still cute. More than this, you'll be less agile. Are you going to sit and eat properly?"

In truth, she didn't hear anything after the compliment of being cute. Lieutenant Peem quickly scooped boiled vegetables into her mouth, chewing and smiling as if forgetting the taste.

"This is love. They say it even makes vegetable juice taste sweet.”

Madam Phom smiled happily. There was nothing to worry about anymore. Though the mother didn't look fully accepting of Mae Kru, she'd softened a lot. Seeing her child happy made her feel at ease.

.

**...The following month...**

**In the familiar bedroom...**

"Why did you take so long in the shower?"

The slender figure closed the door and walked to the bed, kissing the lieutenant's forehead before lying down.

"I hurried."

While speaking, she stroked her lover's head. Maybe because the lieutenant had her period, the more she had stomach pain, the more she clung to her. As soon as she got in, she snuggled into her chest.

"Why are you wearing clothes?"

"I wear them every day. If you find it annoying, take them off. Have I ever resisted?"

Usually, they did it every night. The slender figure found comfort in her lover's touch before sleeping. She liked to wear clothes for peace of mind and also to challenge her lover to undress her.

Though the tall figure complained, she started nuzzling her neck while her fingers explored her body as if it were the last time,

"I love you so much."

"I love you, too..."

"Your lotus juice is always sweet..."

"It's overflowing, waiting for you to savor.”

Without waiting, she dove deep into the pool to taste her lover's sweet juice, enjoying their intimate moments. **"Ahh!! Your mouth... So good..."**

.

**The next ordinary morning, they started their day.**

.

"Where are you?!!"

A loud call every morning when she went down to cook. Since they moved back together, not a day had passed without hearing this call.

"I'm cooking. This is my house. Where would I go?"

Mae Kru Bulan, who never shouted, shouted back this time. Hearing her reply, the lieutenant felt at ease, knowing she was still there. Soon, she'd get up, shower, and join her to offer food to the monks.

"Is she afraid that I'll disappear or something...?"

The slender figure scratched her eyebrow and shook her head lightly but smiled at the same time.

.

**At the police station.....**

"What's going on, Sergeant Major? It's so noisy."

"Good timing, Lieutenant. Tuptim went to get her hair done at Som-o's salon, and the hair straightener slipped and hit her chest, causing a blister. She insists on filing a complaint."

"Oh dear."

The tall figure, seeing the scene, quickly stepped back. The women with chests almost as big as children's heads, wearing only tank tops, were looking for someone to vent at and found their target, walking straight toward her.

"Uh....handle it, Sergeant Major. I trust you."

"Lieutenant, look at my chest. It's blistered like this. Someone has to take responsibility. I want to file a complaint!"

While saying that, she tried to show her chest to Lieutenant Peem, who quickly turned away.

"Lieutenant, Tuptim is wrong. Why should I compensate? This damages my reputation, foo She screamed out of nowhere. Of course, I was startled. That's the truth, Lieutenant."

"Sergeant Major?"

"Handle it, Lieutenant. I don't want problems with my wife. You once said if there's one person in the world not afraid of Mae Kru, it's you. I can remember that."

"People can change, Sergeant Major. I wasn't afraid before, but now she's stronger. One misstep could mean my life. Sergeant Major, you mightn't see me working here again.

Please handle it. I need to get back to massaging Mae Kru's legs.”

"Hey! Lieutenant!! Lieutenant Peem!!"

.

**~ The End ~**

**Sunyan Note:**

**Please spread the love by SHARING THIS BOOK FOR FREE**