

Love beyond the mask (Whitney) Chapter 3

Chapter 3

The man's gaze flickered back, his emotions unreadable. "You're not willing?"

Whitney bit her lip, troubled. She barely knew him, yet a child was on the way—a result of an unexpected encounter.-

He sauntered over, lifting her chin with a firm grip, admiring her beautiful, youthful face and tender red lips. "Some things I'd rather handle myself," he said, his voice a low rumble.

Whitney paused, confused.

His lips twisted into a sly smile, though his tone remained serious. "But I have a profound respect for life. We're going to have this baby."

His assertiveness took her aback, and Whitney suddenly understood his meaning. Her face flushed with embarrassment.

He strode coldly towards the door, which was suddenly blocked by an excited voice. "Little brat, if you dare come out tonight, I'll keel over right here!"

And then the sound of the door locking!

Whitney, bewildered, asked, "Who's that outside?"

"Your mother-in-law, Natalie."

Whitney was speechless.

He returned with a dark expression, pulling her towards the bed. His voice was a low, enticing whisper, "Will you play along?"

"With what?"

"Acting out our wedding night."

Speechless, Whitney looked up into his mature eyes that seemed to swallow her whole. Her cheeks burned

even hotter as she realized what he meant. "But I... I don't know how."

He frowned, then suddenly pinned her to the headboard, his hands reaching for the ties of her dress.

"Ah! What are you doing?"

"Do you know how now?" He asked, one eyebrow raised in mischief.

Giggles of delight sounded from beyond the door. "Thank the Lord, the boy finally knows what he's doing!"

Pinned awkwardly beneath him, Whitney's bare shoulders glistened like cream, and he glanced over them, his gaze darkening as he inhaled a sweet fragrance.

They were so close that Whitney could feel the power of his muscles, her ears burning with a dangerous sensation. She just wanted him to leave and feigned a pained scream.

"Take it easy, son! Your wife is carrying our little treasure!"

Looking down at her flushed face, he asked, "Are you trying to get back at me?"

Whitney's eyes were wide and innocent. "Is that enough?"

His lips curled slightly. He did not press further, standing up and releasing her.

The air of restrained desire left with him as he sat down on the sofa, casually removing his tie. His broad shoulders and long legs gave him an air of unapproachable elegance.

Indeed, this man had every right to be conceited.

Whitney huddled at the head of the bed, glancing nervously at the door. "Are we going to sleep together

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tonight?”

“Do you want to?” He asked, picking up a magazine and sparing her a glance.

Whitney did not know what to say.

Then, with a melodic chuckle, he added, “Do you think I’d stoop to touching a young expectant mother?”

The tone was sarcastic and serious, calling her a ‘young expectant mother.’

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Whitney felt a spark of anger. Was he that much older than her? She eyed his enigmatic silver mask, filled with curiosity about what lay beneath. Was it to hide ugliness or scars?

He remained seated, silent, as Whitney crawled under the covers. The room went dark with the flick of a switch.

Hesitantly, she ventured, “You seem to know everything about me, sir. May I know how old you are? Your surname?”

Silence.

He ignored her.

This man was enigmatic and difficult to get along with—his highborn mystery was something Whitney, of a distinguished family herself, recognized as the mark of a truly elite heritage.

“L.” His deep voice broke the stillness as Whitney was on the verge of sleep.

He had given her just an initial, no name. Who was this man, and why did he hide his face? Did he know her?

The next morning, Whitney was greeted by Natalie’s beaming face.

“Whitney, dear, you two are a perfect match. Tell me, did my son hurt you last night? If he did, I’ll give him a piece of my mind!”

Whitney nearly choked. Natalie was an exuberant mother-in-law, her pale complexion the only sign that belied her limited time left.

Whitney’s gaze drifted to the dining table’s far end, where a man in a white shirt and black trousers sat, still wearing that silver half-mask. His features were sharp, his lips delicate.

He was impassive, accustomed to his mother’s antics.

The servants and Natalie seemed unfazed by his mask.

This only deepened Whitney’s curiosity. Who was he, and what secrets did he hold?

Taryn tiptoed over with a handkerchief, whispering, “Madam, it’s clean as a whistle. Should I put it away?”

Whitney glanced over, not understanding its significance.

Natalie noticed her curiosity and explained with a chuckle, “It’s a bridal handkerchief used for the wedding night. It’s a family tradition. Seems the staff don’t know any better than to leave it out...”

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“Don’t bring up such outdated nonsense,” the man interjected, displeased.

He approached Whitney’s seat to grab some jam, pausing briefly to raise an eyebrow, “She was a virgin. I know that.”

“Am I right?” He leaned close to Whitney, his voice whispering near her ear.

Whitney’s earlobe turned crimson. How was she supposed to respond, especially with him lingering so close, his cool masculine scent oppressive and tantalizing?

Fearing he might say something even more outrageous, she scooped up a spoonful of the bird's nest soup and shoved it into his mouth. "Eat your breakfast and keep quiet."

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"Madam... The master has a severe case of germophobia!" Taryn was panicked.

But the man simply stared at the young woman, swallowing the spoonful of soup and walking away with a faint smile.

The calmer he was, the redder Whitney's face became. She looked at the spoon he had used, unsure whether to pick it up again.

Natalie shoved the spoon in her direction with a mischievous grin. "Go on, Whitney, eat up. It's like a sweet, indirect kiss... Oh? What happened to your hand?"

Suddenly, she was holding Whitney's right hand.

Whitney

looked down, her expression cooling. Her palm had been wounded during the abduction, and if not for her medical knowledge and the herbs she had gathered while escaping, her hand would have been ruined. She had a gift for design, and Monica had been envious of these hands!

"Why didn't you say anything last night?" The man asked coldly, noticing her injury. "Taryn, call the doctor."

When the family doctor arrived—a renowned physician from Banyan City whom even the Valentines could not secure.

Whitney was taken aback. Was this man so important that he had this doctor as his personal doctor on call?

Who in the world was he?

"Ouch!" Whitney winced as the antiseptic stung.

The man looked up from his newspaper, his long legs crossed as he surveyed her wounded hand, soft and pale. That night, her hands had been on him.

His gaze lingered, and for a moment, Whitney was unsure of everything except the enigma that was the man across the table.

The man's Adam's apple bobbed slightly as he raised an eyebrow and stood, commanding the doctor with an authoritative tone, "She's got nice hands, doc. Make sure she doesn't get a scar!"

The doctor nodded, his hands trembling slightly with the weight of responsibility.

Natalie chuckled softly, leaning in to share a moment of gossip with Whitney, "Nice hands? What's that boy thinking? His head's in the clouds!"

Whitney, blushing furiously, was forced to understand, having never before encountered such an open-minded mother-in-law.

On the other hand, the man seemed indifferent to the embarrassment he caused, casting a stern glance that ended the conversation.

Natalie immediately pursed her lips in mock offense.

After breakfast, Whitney and the man were ushered out of the house by Natalie, who firmly instructed them, "Off you go to get your marriage license! I won't rest easy until it's done!"

Outside, a Bentley was parked at the curb, and the man, ever the gentleman, opened the car door for Whitney. She climbed in, feeling somewhat out of place.

Once seated, The man's assistant handed him a laptop, and from that moment on, he did not utter another word.

Whitney was curious to sneak a peek at his laptop, hoping to glean some bit of information about him, but she did not dare to.

The ride was over before she knew it, and they arrived at the town hall.

There were not many people there to get their marriage licenses today. However, as soon as Whitney stepped out of the car, she spotted two familiar figures—Simon and Monica!