

# HUNTED HONEYMOON: A ROMANTIC COMEDY ADVENTURE

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## CHAPTER 1: THE MORNING AFTER

Richard opened his eyes slowly. Smiling, he gazed tenderly at Megan who was snuggled in his arms, sleeping like a baby. They were in the bedroom, after having spent their first night as husband and wife.

Four months ago, they met under strange circumstances, when he saved her life from killers hired by her crazy-junkie grandfather who wanted her wealth all to himself. Since then, Richard had put her under his protection, having been smitten by her beauty, intelligence, and yes, her quirky temper. Despite their initial animosity and different backgrounds, they found themselves falling for each other as together, they escaped death from the hands of her grandfather, inadvertently putting an end to a drug cartel and its notorious drug lord. Their serendipitous encounter also brought justice to his brother's death and the discovery of the nephew he had long been searching for.

Each day they had been together only deepened their feelings toward each other, and after the first month, they were already talking about marriage. Their families and friends approved and were truly ecstatic.

At least, their friends on *his* side. Those rich, snobbish "friends" of hers led by "Her Highness" Melanie Stockton, who always treated him like he's going to run away with Megan's money, had argued that they've only known each other for a short time and suggested they wait for a year or so before taking the plunge.

A suggestion which both of them took no heed because, well, Melanie and her group can argue all they want on the length and strength of their relationship, but both of

them knew, in their heart, that they were meant to be. That each was the other's The One. He loved Megan, and she loved him, and to hell with her so-called friends.

They didn't prolong their engagement. Besides, there was no reason for them not to marry. His parents and her father gave them their blessing. Both of them were single and at a marriageable age, he being twenty-nine and she being twenty-three.

Their wedding yesterday had been nothing short of magical. Their families, loved ones, relatives and friends were there to celebrate their union, sharing succulent food, dancing, laughing and telling stories. It was a joyous occasion.

Alas, also present there were people whom he didn't know nor care for.

Being an heiress to a large fortune, Megan's wedding was covered by the media and attended by some prominent personalities. At first, when she casually mentioned it during their wedding preparations, he was against it. He never liked the limelight, preferring his precious privacy. He was also used to hiding behind the shadows, a habit he acquired through the years of protecting his father's CIA career.

But Megan explained to him that the cameras will only cover the wedding ceremony, and that if the political and wealthy luminaries won't be allowed to attend the reception, they might take offence, which in turn, may have a negative effect to their many businesses. Grudgingly, he had consented.

He put his foot down, though, at being interviewed. He flat out refused to face the camera and a reporter, even with Megan. He was glad she didn't insist on it. If only for that, he endured the long hours of grinning from ear to ear, shaking strangers' hands until it hurt, and listening to boring conversations all throughout the reception.

At last, when all the guests had gone at almost midnight, they drove back to Megan's mansion to get ready for their flight to Japan.

The mansion was empty when they arrived. They had the place all to themselves. The servants had been given their day off, though it took a little bit more effort in shooing away Megan's nanny, Allison, or more popularly called Miss A. They had to threaten to fire her if she did not leave the mansion temporarily and give them privacy.

Alone at last, Richard carried her lovingly in his arms and walked up the long, winding staircase leading to the bedroom. They sat on the bed first, sharing stories about the guests, meeting new relatives and acquaintances, appreciating the food, laughing at a few wedding blunders.

Until they ran out of things to say.

He then took her hands to his, just holding them. Cupping them on his own cheeks, he whispered, "I love you." Then he kissed the center of her palms, one after the other, his eyes never leaving hers. It was his signature tender gesture for her alone, a silent promise of his love and devotion to her.

Lowering his face to her, he was about to kiss her lips when she blurted out, "May I go to the bathroom first?"

He stopped and frowned. "Huh? Why? You can take off your gown here. I'll help you." He smiled naughtily, the dimple on his left cheek cutting deep.

"Well, bathrooms are used for peeing too, you know," she replied, giving him a reprimanding look.

"Oh." He cocked his head. "Okay. I just thought you were nervous, that's all."

"Me? Nervous? Psh! Why would I be nervous?" she scoffed, before literally scampering off to the bathroom, with her wedding gown trail in tow.

His eyes followed her as she went into the bathroom and heard her lock the door. He started to strip, laying his tuxedo and the rest of his clothes neatly on the couch nearby.

Afterwards, he sat on the bed wearing only his black boxers and waited for Megan to come out of the bathroom, his palms over his knees.

Ten minutes passed.

He started to frown, worrying if she's okay. Going to the bathroom door, he knocked at it softly.

"Honey, everything all right in there?"

Megan's muffled voice answered him from inside. "Yes, yes. I'm done peeing. I'm . . . just taking off the gown. It's so heavy."

"Okay. Do you need help in there? Because I'm very good at . . . taking off clothes," grinning as he said this.

"No, no, no. It's fine, I'm almost done. There!" There was the sound of something heavy plopping down to the floor.

"Okay. Come out here already."

"Sure," she answered, giggling haltingly. "Just a minute!"

Five minutes passed.

Then another five minutes.

Richard knocked again. "Honey? Are you okay?"

"Yes, yes."

"Then open this door and come out already. Please."

From inside, he heard her sigh heavily. Then the door slowly opened.

But not quite.

Megan peeked out from the very slightly opened door, with only half of her face showing. In a small voice, she asked Richard, "Can you turn off the lights?"

His brows lifted. "Why ever for?"

"I . . .I can't sleep with the lights on."

He grinned from ear to ear. "Honey, we're not sleeping. . . yet."

"Oh please! Please, please, please, just turn the lights off!" she pleaded, closing the bathroom door with a loud thud, almost hitting his nose.

He sighed. Humoring her, he walked to the switch and turned the lights off. The room was instantly enveloped by darkness, lit only by the soft light coming from the lampshades on the nightstands on each side of the bed. Then, slowly groping his way back, he knocked again at the bathroom door.

"The room is dark now, I won't be able to see you naked. Come out, come out, wherever you are," he cooed, teasing her.

"In a moment!" She replied in a high-pitched voice.

Five minutes went by. He could hear her footsteps walking back and forth inside the bathroom.

Letting out a deep breath, Richard muttered to the closed door, "Honey, I know you're having the jitters, and I totally understand. Come on out from there, please, and let's talk about it."

"Just a minute!"

Five minutes passed.

Frustrated and angry, Richard spoke in an ominously dangerous voice:

"Mrs. Megan Montecillo Peterson, if you don't come out this instant, I'm going to break this door open and give you a spanking so hard you won't be able to sit down for a week!"

It worked. She opened the door.

Richard quickly grabbed her by the hands and led her slowly to sit on the bed. She had already changed to her night gown.

"You're shaking like a leaf. Honey, what's the matter? Please tell me." He was truly worried.

Megan sighed, her face troubled. "It's . . . just that . . . that . . . I've read stories about, you know, some . . . doing it with hands tied to the bed, and . . . and whips . . . and chains . . . and . . ."

Richard gaped at her incredulously for a moment before breaking out in loud, hilarious laughter. He dropped to the floor, holding his stomach as he bellowed.

Megan pursed her lips. "I'm glad you're finding my dilemma funny."

Trying to hold back his laughter, he sat back down beside her and put his arm on her shoulders. "It's just that . . . I almost forgot I married a girl with the . . . ha-ha! . . . wildest imagination, accusing me of rape the first time we met, and now this. Ha-ha-ha! Thank you for reminding me!"

"Hardy har har. You're welcome," she said, smirking at him as he continued laughing until it died down to chortles.

Turning serious, Richard lifted her face to his, speaking to her in a tender voice, "You have nothing to be afraid of, love. I'm not into those things. And I will be gentle, I promise."

She smiled apologetically, ashamed that she thought of him like that. "Promise?"

He put up his palm and sincerely replied, "Promise."

Then he roamed his eyes around the room and amusedly asked, "Now, where is that . . . rope . . . I prepared?"

They both laughed merrily, all anxiety gone. Megan slapped him playfully. He caught her hand and pulled her to him, kissing her long and deep and ardent. She melted with his kiss and responded with equal passion, her fears swept aside by the warmth of his lips and tongue.

Richard had kept his promise. He had been gentle with her all through the night, caressing her slowly, unhurriedly, expressing his immense love for her in ways she'd never imagined, taking her to elevated pinnacles of deliriously ecstatic rhapsody over and over and over again.

"I saw that."

Interrupted from his thoughts, he found her already wide awake beside her. Her tousled, tangled hair was matted on the pillow, her face all at once sultry and childish, making her more beautiful than ever.

"You saw what?" He turned his face and body sideways to her, his right arm encircling her bare waist under the blanket as he looked down on her, grinning like a Cheshire cat.

"You were smiling smugly."

Without batting an eyelash, he quipped, "I was just thinking how hard you whiplashed me last night."

She slapped his exposed chest. "You're such a jerk! Are you going to tease me with that forever?"

"You betcha! And there's nothing you can do about it." Laughing, he caught her hand and placed a playful kiss on her palm as he continued teasing her. "So, tell me. When did you finish reading all the books on Fifty Shades?"

She pinched his side as she chuckled, her cheeks reddening. "Stop it, will you?"

“Admit it. You were curious.”

“Of course, I was.” She rolled her eyes. “Oh, okay. I read the first book. But I didn’t read all of them.”

“Sure.” He smirked.

“I really didn’t! And how about you? You’re a man. Why do you know about them in the first place? That means you read them too!”

“Nope. Someone told me all about it.”

She stared at him pointedly, her brows rising. “Someone, meaning, a girl? From your past?”

He caught her eyes and saw the fire of jealousy in them. “Uh-oh. I think this conversation’s over. Come here.” He dragged her waist toward him until their bodies were molded together.

“Now that you’re awake, can we have breakfast?” He murmured in her mouth. “I’m famished.”

Megan exhaled, her lips tightening. “So that’s the way it is, huh?”

“What?” Looking at her forlorn face, he rolled his eyes, “Oh, no... not again. What story have you read this time?”

“For your information, it’s not a story. Your mother told me to prepare myself for this, when you’d order me around to make you breakfast or something, telling me to do this or do that, basically be at your beck and call. I knew it. I knew it! It’s happening.”

He scratched his head. “First of all, my mother is also your mother now. Secondly, I don’t think I’d want you to be at my beck and call because you’re too stubborn and we’ll just argue.”

Then, grinning wickedly, he whispered in a provocative voice, "And lastly, I was thinking of a different kind of. . . breakfast," as he pulled the blanket over their heads.

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It was late afternoon when they came out of the bedroom, going to the kitchen to eat. They saw the food prepared by the household staff laid out on the table and they hungrily devoured it, taking turns in feeding each other with a spoon in between kissing.

Later, when they were having coffee, Richard asked, "Honey, is it really okay with you to go to Japan first?"

"Yes, honey," she smiled. "I want to meet your business partners. It's a really big project you got there for your company."

"Our company now, though it cannot be compared to your huge corporation," he corrected her.

"Stop that," she tapped his hand. "Whatever's yours is mine now, too."

He nodded gratefully, taking another sip of the coffee. "And whatever's mine is yours, too, honey. I'm thankful we got this offer to install our solar panels in one of Japan's popular malls. This is a really big project. I still can't believe it."

"You deserve it. SolarSon Corporation has been around for a few years now and you have a good service record."

"Thanks," he squeezed her hand. "Mr. Sakura did say Solarson was referred to him by a former client. I promise, honey, after the contract signing, we can go to Paris, just as you wanted. After all, the project will start late this year, and Walter and Paul will be the ones to personally supervise it there in Japan."

"You know you don't have to work," she mused. "We have more than enough."

"It's always been a worthy cause for me, this solar power system. You know, to help in preventing global warming. And besides," he looked hurt as he joked, "I don't want to be your paid lover."

Her eyes widened. "Never! You will never be like that to me."

"I know," he smirked, lifting a shoulder. "Because all your money's not enough to pay for my services."

She pinched him on his sides, laughing and blushing at the same time, remembering the intimacy they'd shared. "You're impossible!"

Joining her in laughter, he reasoned, "I mean, pay for my love for you! That's what I meant!" Then he stated soberly as he stared hungrily at her lips, "Let's clean up and go back to bed."

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The next day, they were late for their 10:00 a.m. flight to Japan, arriving at the airport just an hour before. They had forgotten to set the alarm clock and barely had time to eat breakfast before they hurriedly drove to their destination, making a brief stopover at Richard's office in Bonifacio Global City in Taguig.

Hastily, they fell in queue at the check-in counter. Megan checked all their baggages and found them complete, while Richard showed their passports and plane tickets to the airline officer to grant them their boarding passes.

She was about to walk back to Richard when she felt a sharp object press against her right side. A husky, menacing voice spoke closely to her ear.

"Don't scream, or you'll die."