

N Destiny 2301

Chapter 2301

“Zacharias is fortunate to have escaped this. He’ll be alright. Ren patted Josef’s shoulder and comforted him.

At this moment, the door to the ward opened. Three doctors came out one after another, talking in low voices. When they saw Ren, they immediately approached with serious expressions.

Shirley strained her ears to listen to their conversation. The doctors implied that there didn’t seem to be any internal injuries for Zacharias. Only the external injuries were severe and he needed rest.

“Great-uncle, can I go in and see him?” Shirley urgently asked, to which Ren nodded. “Go see Zach.”

Josef couldn’t help but ask, “Who is this young lady?”

“I am a friend of Mr. Zacharias, Shirley replied politely.

“She’s my grandniece and Richard’s daughter,” Ren explained. Josef looked at Shirley with a touch of tenderness. “Miss Lloyd, thank you for visiting Zach.”

Shirley nodded, then took advantage of their conversation with the hospital staff to quickly walk toward the ward. She gently pushed the door open and saw the nurse still organizing medicines. On the white hospital bed lay Zacharias.

He had closed his eyes and was resting. In just five days, this man already seemed worse for wear. His pale skin looked even paler against the white backdrop, which was likely due to significant blood loss. His hair was somewhat disheveled and fell over his forehead. His arm was exposed, and on his right forearm, a wound with stitches about ten centimeters long was visible.

Suddenly, Shirley felt a surge of sympathy for him. He might hold a high position, but he also faced danger frequently.

The nurses finished their tasks and left. Shirley stood beside the man's bed, not making a sound to avoid waking him. She simply bent down to take a look at the wound on his shoulder. It looked like three ugly black centipedes crawling on his clavicle.

When Zacharias sensed someone at his bedside, he abruptly opened his eyes. He visibly flinched when his dark gaze met a pair of clear blue eyes.

"Why are you here?" Zacharias asked in a hoarse voice. How did this girl manage to get in?

"Great-uncle brought me in," Shirley replied. There was a hint of pity in her eyes as she asked, "What exactly happened?"

"While driving, someone triggered a suicide bomb. My car was flipped over. If the bodyguards hadn't put an explosion-proof suit on me, I might not have made it." Zacharias calmly recounted his experience, but his eyes revealed deep pain and anger.

Two lives had to be sacrificed to save him. Shirley's eyes couldn't help but fill with tears. Lives were sacrificed?

She crouched down and comforted, "We'll find out who's behind this. They won't get away with it."

Zacharias closed his eyes. "You should go."

"If you need me to stay and take care of you, I can," Shirley said. At this moment, she couldn't care about her personal grievances with him. She was his subordinate, and she had a duty to take care of him.

Zacharias looked at her, his gaze lifting. "You're willing to stay and take care of me?"

She nodded in response. "I'm willing to stay."

A small smile curved Zacharias' lip. "Alright, then. You can stay."

At this moment, Ren and Josef entered together. Shirley stood up and made way for them. However, she felt it was inappropriate to stay here any longer, so she left first.

She left Ren to comfort Zacharias and walked up to Roy before asking with concern, "Captain Barlowe, how are your injuries?"

"I'm alright. It's just a forehead injury," Roy replied. He also realized that Shirley's identity was not that simple.

"I will stay to take care of Mr. Flintstone," Shirley said, to which Roy nodded. "Mr. Flintstone needs someone to take care of him."

Shirley hadn't expected that within just a few days, Zacharias would face such a crisis.

Ten minutes later, Ren was escorted out by Josef. He said to Shirley before leaving, "Shirley, I heard from Zach that you'll stay to take care of him. Please take good care of him for me."

Chapter 2302

"Yes, I will take good care of him." Shirley nodded and assured Ren. Josef then escorted Ren out. Shirley hadn't entered yet when a nurse approached her, "Miss, Mr. Flintstone is asking for you to come in."

Shirley nodded and walked toward Zacharias' room. She pushed open the door, and Zacharias was already sitting up.

Shirley immediately asked, "Are you able to sit? Shouldn't you lie down first? The doctor said you might have a concussion."

"I've been lying down for three days. I don't want to lie down anymore." Zacharias' gaze was clear and calm. He didn't look like someone with a concussion. Shirley couldn't help but ask, "Do you want something to eat now?"

"I'd like some light food," Zacharias said. He was truly hungry.

“Wait a moment. I’ll ask the nurse to bring some for you,” Shirley stated and went out to find the nurse. The nurse said she would quickly return with some food.

Back in the room, Shirley looked at the man’s injured right forearm. Until the wound healed, he would find many actions inconvenient.

“Does the wound still hurt?” Shirley asked.

Zacharias nodded. “Yes.”

Shirley could only look at him with concern. Zacharias suddenly added, “But it hurts less when you’re here.”

Shirley was taken aback. He was injured so badly, and he still found the energy to tease her. At this moment, the nurse brought over some food.

After placing it down, the nurse left. Shirley looked at the man’s arm and asked, “Can you eat by yourself?”

Zacharias shook his head. “No. You’ll have to feed me.”

And so, she picked up the plate and scooped up a spoonful of food. Seeing that it was still steaming, she blew on it before bringing it to the man’s lips. Zacharias’ lips curled into a smile. He obediently cooperated and ate the food.

“Aren’t you afraid of revealing your identity?” Zacharias asked while eating. “I didn’t think that much,” Shirley replied truthfully. After hearing about his injury, her inner worry made her want to see him at once.

He squinted and smiled. “Are you so worried about me?” he asked.

She raised her head and replied seriously, "Of course I'm worried. If anything happens to you, we all share the responsibility."

Zacharias listened, and his eyes showed a hint of displeasure. "Why can't you admit that you care about me?"

Shirley choked for a moment. "Alright! I care about you, but it's only the kind of relationship between a subordinate and a superior. Understand, Mr. Flintstone?"

Zacharias chuckled. "You still care about me nonetheless." Shirley brought the food to his lips. "Finish the food before we talk."

He then finished the plate of food. Having just woken up and due to the excessive blood loss, he obviously lacked strength. However, he looked at the girl beside him and found himself reluctant to fall asleep.

"Shirley, can I call you 'Shir'? Zacharias suddenly asked with a smile. Shirley immediately refused. "No!"

Only her family could call her that affectionately. He couldn't. Just now, your great-uncle asked us how we met. Guess how I answered?"

"How did you answer?" Shirley asked nervously.

"I said we met when we were kids," Zacharias said. "We met when we were kids? How?" Shirley argued. If he's going to lie, he should at least provide some evidence! Zacharias' deep eyes locked onto hers. "We did meet when we were kids. You just don't remember."

"Really?" Shirley's eyes widened in disbelief. We actually met when we were kids?

She quickly asked, 'When did that happen? Why don't I have any memory of it?'

“That year, you were only four years old. You were just a little thing, so how could you remember?” Zacharias couldn’t help but recall her chubby appearance at the time. She was incredibly cute. This made him wonder if their children in the future would be just as adorable.

Shirley also instantly recalled pictures of herself at four years old. At that time, she still had traces of baby fat, and she was a little chubby girl. Her mother even said she was stubborn and refused to have her hair combed and kept running around with messy hair like a little wild child.

Chapter 2303

A flush crept up Shirley’s cheeks. Did he meet me when I was in that wild state? He must have vivid memories of my childhood antics, as he was around ten years old at the time, so he surely remembers how unruly I was.

“How did we meet?” Shirley asked, curious.

“We met in the White House garden. I was there with my father as a guest. I got lost in the garden, and that’s when I met you. You took my hand and led me back to the hall,” Zacharias said with a smile, his eyes filled with nostalgia.

Hearing that they once held hands when she was a child, Shirley felt her face grow even warmer. “Was that the only time we met?” Shirley inquired.

“How many times would you have liked us to meet?” Zacharias countered.

“No, once is enough. I was quite mischievous and playful as a child, so I probably left a bad impression on you,” she quickly muttered. At that, Zacharias smirked. “You were adorable as a child! Just a little chubby.”

Shirley, hearing the description of her childhood, look from him, felt a bit indignant. “Who wasn’t chubby as a child? I bet you were chubby too!”

“I happen to like chubby kids,” Zacharias added.

Shirley decided not to argue about this. At least, him saying this would dispel any suspicions Ren might have about her and Zacharias.

“So, when did you recognize me?” Shirley raised an eyebrow.

“I recognized you from the first moment I saw you,” Zacharias stated. “I’ve changed so much since my childhood, and yet you recognized me instantly?” Shirley was skeptical.

Zacharias had a knack for recognizing people, and this woman was so outstanding that it was hard not to notice her.

“In my eyes, nothing has changed.” The man raised an eyebrow, indicating that his memories of her as a child were quite vivid.

Just then, a nurse knocked on the door and entered, holding a tray of medication as she addressed Zacharias. “Mr. Flintstone, here’s your medicine. Please take it on time.”

Seeing the medicine, Zacharias instinctively furrowed his brows. He didn’t like taking medicine. The nurse left, and Shirley got up to pour him a glass of water, saying, “Take your medicine!”

“I only have some superficial wounds. There’s no need for medication.” Zacharias tried to come up with an excuse to avoid taking it.

Shirley got serious as she stated, “You definitely need to take the medicine. Doctors don’t prescribe it without reason.”

Zacharias pursed his lips, wondering if she was here to take care of him or to monitor him.

Reluctantly, he took the medicine. Afterward, he felt even more drowsy, but he really didn’t want to sleep.

“Keep me company for a bit,” Zacharias said as he lay down. Seeing his eyes grow a bit hazy, Shirley realized he was tired.

“I can see you’re tired. You should get some rest,” she suggested.

“Tell me how you met Cole,” he asked bluntly. Shirley was caught off guard. This man had definitely looked into Cole’s background. In the end, she declined to answer. “I’d rather not say.”

“I want to hear it,” Zacharias insisted.

Seeing his interest, Shirley had no choice but to share. “I met Cole at the training base. He was my team leader, and we underwent a three- month training together. During the training, I developed feelings for him, and likewise, he liked me. It’s as simple as that.”

Zacharias let out a sigh, murmuring, “He appeared three months earlier than I did.”

Shirley didn’t quite catch what he said. She furrowed her brows, asking, “What are you talking about?”

“What do you like about him?” Zacharias asked. He seemed completely alert when discussing this topic because he was genuinely interested.

Treating Zacharias as a friend, Shirley thought for a moment before saying, “You don’t need a reason to like someone. When you like someone, you just do. It’s about liking everything about them.”

Zacharias nodded in agreement, his gaze locked onto Shirley. “Exactly. I agree with you. Liking someone means liking everything about them.”

Suddenly, Shirley met his eyes. She quickly looked away. Why is this man staring at me so intensely?

Chapter 2304

“Go to sleep! Let’s stop talking.” Shirley got up to pour herself a cup of tea. Zacharias observed her moving around the room, and gradually, his heavy eyelids closed as he drifted off to sleep.

She returned with her tea and found him already asleep. She tried to be as quiet as possible to avoid waking him.

After Zacharias fell asleep, a few beads of sweat formed on his forehead. Shirley thought it might be a reaction to the medicine. She gently adjusted his covers and used a tissue to wipe away the sweat.

Suddenly, his right hand instinctively grabbed her wrist while he was lost in his dreams. He mumbled in a semi-conscious state, "Don't go."

She was startled. Initially, she tried to pull her hand away but couldn't do it too abruptly as this man's arm had just undergone stitches and bandaging. She held onto his hand with her other hand, soothing him until he let go and sank into a deeper sleep.

She finally sighed in relief and wondered what nightmare he was having.

After a while, Shirley stepped outside to catch a breath. Freddie was sitting outside. He had narrowly escaped danger this time as he had stayed behind to gather information locally, which delayed his return by two hours. This twist of fate had kept him out of harm's way.

"Hello, I'm Freddie Hurst, Mr. Flintstone's assistant," he greeted her.

"Hello, I'm..." Shirley almost said her real name, but she quickly corrected herself. "I'm Imogen Young, Mr. Flintstone's personal bodyguard."

The man studied her, thinking that this must be why Zacharias seemed absent-minded during his trip.

"Miss Young, it's nice to meet you." Freddie smiled. Shirley nodded. Just then, Josef approached from a short distance away. After looking at Shirley, his gaze immediately softened. "Miss Lloyd, thank you for taking care of Zach."

She forced a smile. She then turned to Freddie and said, "I misspoke earlier. My last name is Lloyd."

Freddie was momentarily taken aback but quickly realized that there was only one Lloyd Family with the privilege to appear by Zacharias' side. "So, you're Miss Lloyd. I apologize for my earlier impoliteness," he responded, showing even more respect instead of anger.

"Mr. Flintstone, hello," Shirley greeted Josef. Though she hadn't met him before, she had seen him on television.

"Miss Lloyd, I have some urgent matters to attend to. I'll be leaving shortly, and I'll leave Zach in your care. Thank you for your help." Josef looked at her with a mixture of fondness and expectation.

If his son could form a relationship with her, it would be a valuable asset for his son's stability in political power. After all, his son was young, and despite his abilities, he had attracted some negative attention in his current position.

"Mr. Flintstone, please rest assured. I'll take good care of him," Shirley assured him. Josef nodded, then turned to pat Freddie on the shoulder. "Freddie, you've worked hard."

"This is my duty," Freddie responded. After seeing Josef off, her phone suddenly rang. She picked it up and was startled to see it was her father calling. She quickly walked to a quiet area before answering, "Hello, Dad!"

"I heard from your great-uncle that you're currently looking after the vice president, Zacharias Flintstone. How did you come to know him?" Richard's voice was filled with surprise.

Shirley's heart raced and explained, "Dad, we met a few times at some social events and became friends. I heard he got injured, and since I had some free time, I thought I'd come to take care of him."

"Shirley, did you actively offer to take care of him?"

"Yes, I just wanted to show some concern," she replied nervously. If her father found out about her impersonating Imogen during the internship, he would surely scold her.

Chapter 2305

Since Richard was always strict about discipline, he wouldn't allow Shirley to act recklessly.

“Alright! Since you’re free over there, take good care of Zacharias. Ensure he makes a swift recovery, as he’s needed to assist your great-uncle with work matters.” He supported his daughter’s decision.

“Yeah, I know, Dad.”

“Your mom would like to speak with you for a moment.”

After Richard finished speaking, a gentle voice came through. “Shirley.” “Mom, what’s up?” Shirley felt a sudden rush of nervousness. Her mother wouldn’t start prying, would she?

“Nothing. I heard you volunteered to look after Zacharias in the hospital. I was a bit surprised. Are you two just friends?”

“Yes, we’re just friends.” Shirley began to feel uneasy.

“Just friends?” Angela wasn’t entirely convinced. As a woman, her intuition told her that her daughter’s proactive care for Zacharias went beyond mere friendship.

“Mom, it’s just friendship. Please don’t jump to conclusions,” Shirley said seriously, wanting to put an end to her mother’s wild speculations.

“Alright, it’s clear that you’ve grown up, become responsible, and know how to care for people.” Angela let the matter rest.

“Mom, I’ll hang up now. Take care of yourselves!” After speaking, Shirley hung up the phone, letting out a small sigh of relief.

Meanwhile, at the base’s lounge, Angela hung up her phone. She asked her husband, “Could our girl actually like Zacharias?”

Richard understood his wife’s implication and asked with a smile, “Is that a problem?”

“Of course not; it’s not a problem at all. I’m just saying, our girl is still so young, but her taste seems pretty good.” She couldn’t help but feel that their daughter was quite fortunate. Everything seemed very promising when she considered Zacharias’ looks, family background, and prospects.

“Well then, let’s look forward to it! It’s about time for our girl to venture out on her own. We can’t protect her forever,” Richard said. Angela also smiled. They only had this one precious daughter, and they had high hopes for her future.

Shirley sat outside and chatted with Freddie, discussing their recent business trip. After learning her identity, he was cautious about sensitive topics, but otherwise, they had an open conversation.

They talked about regional development and current affairs, and before they knew it, two hours had passed.

She went in to check on Zacharias from time to time. When she went in again, she suddenly noticed his face was slightly flushed, and he was sweating profusely on his forehead. When she wiped the sweat, she discovered he had a dangerously high fever. She muttered, This is bad! He has a high fever.

Shirley pressed the nurse call button and went to the doctor’s office. The doctor immediately came to check on Zacharias.

“Immediately start physical cooling for Mr. Flintstone,” the doctor said.

At this moment, Zacharias, who had been sleeping all this time, woke up. The high fever made the corners of his eyes slightly red. His voice was hoarse as he asked, “What’s wrong with me?”

“You suddenly developed a high fever. Right now, we’ll start with physical cooling for you,” the doctor explained.

At the same time, a nurse was preparing the alcohol for cooling. One of the other nurses lifted his blanket and unbuttoned his hospital gown. Shirley watched as the doctor and nurses worked frantically, her heart pounding.

Chapter 2306

Zacharias nodded. "Let her do it. You can step out for now." The doctor exchanged a few words with Shirley before leaving the room with the nurse.

Inside the room, Zacharias reclined halfway, his slender neck slightly raised to make it easier for Shirley to wipe him down.

His hospital gown was open, revealing the honey-colored texture of his skin. His defined chest and abdominal muscles seemed to merge seamlessly. Even though he was running a high fever, he still gave off a visual pleasure of strength and power.

She diligently followed the doctor's instructions. to help him cool down. However, what was this feverish man up to?

Zacharias stared intently at Shirley from such close quarters, his gaze exuding a blatant seduction. She was not just any ordinary girl; she had remarkable self-control. She focused solely on her task, ignoring the alluring charmi in the man's eyes.

She reached out to check the temperature on his forehead. He squinted, enjoying the touch of her hand. She breathed a sigh of relief as he finally started to cool down.

Seeing that Zacharias continued to gaze at her, Shirley couldn't help but give him an annoyed glare. However, his intense stare didn't make her feel offended. Instead, it made her feel like a valuable piece of art displayed for his admiration, which was an honor.

Suddenly, he felt thirsty. He didn't ask her to fetch water for him, as there was already a glass of water on the nearby table. He reached out and grabbed it, bringing it to his lips to take a sip. Shirley realized what Zacharias was doing and hurriedly stopped him. "Don't drink that, it's my glass."

"After we've already kissed, you're concerned about this?" He raised an eyebrow, unabashedly sipping from her glass. She looked at him speechlessly.

“Besides me, has Cole also kissed you before?” His gaze shifted from the rim of the glass to her. Thinking back to when she said goodbye to Cole, Shirley did want to kiss him goodbye, but in the end, he only kissed her on the forehead.

“I’m not telling you,” she said haughtily. Zacharias didn’t need her to tell him. He still had pictures of them kissing on his phone.

“Give me another glass.” He handed her the glass.

Shirley took it and poured him another glass of water. After he finished it, he instructed, ‘Get Freddie in here.’”

She opened the door and called Freddie over, who entered with a briefcase in hand. Seeing that they still had work to attend to, she went outside. After a while, Freddie walked out and said, “Miss Lloyd, Mr. Flintstone wants to see you.”

Shirley went in again and saw Zacharias sitting with a stack of documents beside him. However, his right hand was temporarily immobilized. It was wrapped in bandages, and he couldn’t move it.

‘Bring me some paper and a pen,’ the man instructed her. She found them and handed them over. She watched as he started to write with his left hand.

Shirley couldn’t help but be surprised and pondered, He can write with his left hand? She watched as he wrote his name on the paper, the strokes smooth and confident..

Zacharias practiced his signature a few more times. Finally, he felt it was satisfactory. He told her, “Open the documents for me. I’m ready to sign.”

She asked, “Shouldn’t I call in Freddie to help you? I don’t know which pages you need to sign.”

“I’ll tell you.” He still preferred her assistance. Shirley picked up the top document. She watched as Zacharias directed her to turn the pages, finding the spots that required his signature. With his left hand, he took the pen and signed his name quickly and decisively.

She couldn't help but wonder if he had been left-handed as a child.

Without saying a word, she acted as the tool to help him turn the pages. She stayed by his side until he signed all the documents, then returned them to the nearby briefcase. Then, she took it and handed it over to Freddie.

Chapter 2307

When Shirley returned to the room, Zacharias suddenly made a request. "Could you wash my hair? It's so itchy."

She was taken aback. She observed the man, who had been hospitalized since his injury. Considering his usual cleanliness, he must not have had a proper bath or washed his hair for some time.

"Alright, I'll get a basin of hot water," she said. She fetched a basin of water, and he reclined on the bed. His striking face came into her view.

With her palms, she scooped some water and dampened his black hair. As her delicate fingers moved through his strands, it felt like a feather gently brushed against his heart.

Zacharias lying posture exposed his neck, showcasing his seductive Adam's apple. His thin lips were slightly pursed, and his eyes, beautifully shaped and glistening, held at captivating radiance. He seemed like an enchanting male fairy.

Shirley's gaze met his eyes briefly. Then, she glanced at his slightly upturned lips. For some inexplicable reason, her heart skipped a beat.

She wet his hair thoroughly, then started massaging it with her fingertips. His hair was.. exceptional-dense, glossy, and lustrous.

Imitating the techniques used in hair salons, she gave him a thorough wash. At this moment, there was a knock on the door.

Roy, who seemed to have something to report, pushed the door open. However, upon seeing the scene, he tactfully retreated and closed the door.

Shirley quickly washed Zacharias' hair, then used a clean towel to wipe away any excess water. She took out a hairdryer and started blow-drying his hair..

Throughout the process, he either enjoyed the sensation with half-closed eyes or kept them open, watching her. For him, it seemed like this injury had some unexpected benefits. At least he was receiving such intimate care from her.

With his hair now dry and styled, he looked like he'd shed a few years. Typically, he presented himself with an imposing presence and a stern look. Yet today, with his jet-black hair falling gently over his forehead, he resembled a tamed tiger.

"Would you mind giving me a body wash tonight?" With his hair now clean, his greediness seemed to increase. He was beginning to feel uncomfortable all over now. However, he couldn't move his hand due to his shoulder injury, so taking a shower was also out of the question. He'd undoubtedly feel better if someone could assist him with a wipe-down

"I can discuss it with Captain Barlowe and have him assist you," Shirley smirked. Zacharias' face stiffened for a few seconds. "Forget it," he said finally, with reluctance. "I want you to do it."

She simply ignored him. "You should focus on recovery."

Under the current circumstances, it wasn't possible for this man to be overly concerned about cleanliness. Zacharias felt helpless. Suddenly, he got up and started putting on his shoes. Shirley reached out to support him and asked curiously, 'Where are you going?'

"The bathroom," the man answered. Her cheeks reddened as she mused, I should have known better than to ask.

He didn't ask for her assistance. Instead, he went on his own. As she was about to relax a bit, there was a knock on the door, and it immediately opened. A tall, elegantly dressed girl in high heels entered the room, carrying a designer bag.

Seeing Shirley, the girl narrowed her beautiful eyes. "Who are you? Where's Zacharias?"

Shirley was momentarily stunned. Zacharias had a visitor, and it was a young and attractive girl. She wondered if the girl was one of his admirers. "May I ask who you are?" she inquired politely.

However, the girl observed Shirley's attire and quickly identified her as a bodyguard. She asked first, "You're Zacharias' bodyguard, right?"

"That's correct. I'm Mr. Flintstone's bodyguard, and my name is Imogen."

"Where is he?" the girl inquired. "He's in the bathroom. Please wait a moment," Shirley replied, her tone polite.

Just then, the bathroom door opened, and Zacharias, dressed in the light blue hospital gown, stepped out. Without a word, the girl hurried toward him. In the next moment, Shirley saw her hug the man affectionately. The girl was about to kiss him on the cheek when he pushed her away with his hand.

Chapter 2308

"Jesslyn, let's not cause a scene here," Zacharias urged.

"I was so worried. After such a big incident, you didn't even tell me!" The girl complained. She just noticed Zacharias' injured arm and took a step back. "Are you seriously hurt?"

"I'm not dead," he replied. Then, he glanced at Shirley, who was silently observing. He cleared his throat and said, "Her name is Jesslyn Kurt, and she's my friend."

"What friend? I'm your girlfriend," Jesslyn protested a bit too loudly. She looked at Shirley with a hint of arrogance, wanting to establish her position against this attractive female bodyguard. She pondered, Since when did he hire such a beautiful female bodyguard? I had no idea. Shirley smiled and greeted, "Miss Kurt, hello."

"Could you please step out? We need some privacy," Jesslyn said to Shirley. Shirley was more than willing to give them their privacy. She nodded and turned, opening the door before leaving.

Zacharias' gaze followed Shirley's retreating figure. There was a hint of complexity in the depths of his profound eyes. Jesslyn assisted him, saying, "Let me help you back to bed."

He scolded her, "Jesslyn, stop acting out of place in front of me."

She looked at him with some grievance. "I'm not."

"From now on, never mention that you're my girlfriend. You grew up in my house, so you're my sister." Zacharias clarified their relationship.

"But we have no blood relation! I'm not your adopted sister, either. I just grew up in your house. We're like childhood sweethearts. I refuse to be your sister," Jesslyn retorted.

He couldn't do much about her. In his heart, she was simply a sisterly figure. However, she didn't accept this identity. He hadn't made it clear before, but today, he realized how important it was to define this relationship. At least it would prevent misunderstandings from arising.

Meanwhile, Shirley sat outside the corridor, closing her eyes to rest. Her mind, however, couldn't help but ponder Jesslyn's intimate hug with the man just now. She pondered, What's the nature of their relationship for them to be so close? Is this girl his girlfriend, perhaps? At this thought, she recalled his actions toward her these past few days.

If Zacharias had a girlfriend, his behavior would be that of a scoundrel. Though outstanding, he didn't fare well in morality and personal life.

Inside, 15 minutes had passed since Jesslyn entered. Shirley was thinking of using this time to take a short break. Just then, her phone beeped, and she picked it up to see a message from him. It contained only two words. "Come in."

She got up and entered the room. Zacharias was sitting on the bed while Jesslyn looked at her in surprise. "What are you coming in for? Didn't I say we needed some privacy?"

Shirley clearly didn't follow Jesslyn's orders. She approached him and asked, "Is there anything you need, Mr. Flintstone?"

"Send Jesslyn to the hospital entrance for me," Zacharias said. Shirley was momentarily surprised and wondered, "Didn't this woman just arrive?"

"I don't want to go home. Zacharias, I want to stay here and take care of you," Jesslyn insisted. She had made numerous calls just to get a glimpse of him. "Jesslyn, listen to me. It's not appropriate for you to visit me right now," he said.

"Why? I worked so hard to get in, and you want me to leave after just a few minutes?" Her eyes welled up with tears. Zacharias glanced at Shirley, signaling her to make sure Jesslyn left.

Shirley had no choice. She turned to Jesslyn with a stern expression. "Miss Kurt, Mr. Flintstone has a special situation right now and needs to rest. Let me take you back."

"I don't want to. I want to stay." Jesslyn insisted on staying to take care of him.

"Jesslyn, listen to me," Zacharias said sternly.

Chapter 2309

Jesslyn pursed her red lips, torn between wanting to assert herself around Zacharias and fearing to defy him. "Fine!" she uttered while getting to her feet. With a reluctant expression, she picked up her bag and glanced at the man on the bed, her eyes filled with lust. "You're not allowed to shoo me off once your injury recovers, okay, Zacharias?" She had been abroad, busy with exams, and had returned only the previous night.

He nodded, his primary concern being her departure. Shirley followed Jesslyn to the elevator. As they waited for the elevator, Jesslyn turned and scrutinized Shirley from head to toe. "Are you Zacharias' bodyguard? Do you stick to him for 24 hours a day?"

Shirley nodded. "Yes."

Jesslyn's eyes betrayed a cautious glint. She recalled Zacharias had never had female bodyguards before. Hence, she mused, I can't believe he found a slender, good-looking female bodyguard. This might not be good news. After all, he's a respected man. If she's interested in him, she could easily win him over. "Well, I suggest that you focus on your job. Don't you dare come up with any nasty ideas in that head of yours, she uttered in a threatening voice.

Shirley frowned. "You're overthinking it," she replied. Jesslyn couldn't believe that this female bodyguard had been assigned to Zacharias. She suspected someone might have sent her to seduce him. "I wasn't in the country previously, so you might not know who I am. However, we'll see more of each other from now on. I hope I'm just overthinking it. I'm not going to let you off the hook so easily if I find out that you're interested in Zacharias," she warned in an unfriendly tone.

Shirley hadn't expected Jesslyn to be so- arrogant. "I'm just doing my job," she stated. flatly. The elevator arrived, and Jesslyn gazed at her reflection in the mirrored doors, stealing one more glance at Shirley.

Shirley was dressed in a simple bodyguard uniform, while Jesslyn wore branded items and had a face full of makeup. Despite Shirley's plain look, she didn't seem any less attractive than Jesslyn-in fact, she seemed more elegant and graceful than Jesslyn.

Once Jesslyn stepped out of the lift, she turned to address Shirley. "You don't have to walk me out. I know the way."

So, Shirley stopped and watched as Jesslyn walked away. She muttered, I don't like dealing with arrogant women like her. She then returned to the elevator and went upstairs.

It had been a long day for her, and she had been busy from morning till now.

Roy walked over from the corridor and headed directly toward Shirley. "The dining area is that way. You should grab some dinner, Imogen!"

"Thank you, Captain Barlowe. I'll head over soon," she replied with a nod. "Have you investigated the incident, Captain Barlowe? Who was the one trying to harm Mr. Flintstone?"

He knitted his brows. He wasn't supposed to reveal such confidential information to others, but he could tell that the woman before his eyes was no regular woman. He wasn't even sure if Imogen was her real now. However, the one thing that he was sure of was that this woman was a trustworthy person. "So far, the investigations show that the explosives had been purchased from some underground black market. The suicide bomber was a late-stage cancer patient and a seemingly passionate individual. He wasn't glad to see Mr. Flintstone on stage," he explained.

He added, "However, it's unlikely that one person could have caused such havoc. We suspect that someone else might have been secretly directing that person to take action. This is all we have so far."

Shirley nodded. "Thank you for letting me know."

Afterward, she returned to Zacharias' ward to find the man speaking on the phone. He turned his gaze to her when she hastily backed off and shut the door behind her. However, she still managed to overhear some part of the conversation. "I want you to run a thorough investigation on that person."

Does Zacharias know the person who tried to harm him? She wondered as she stood at the front door.

"Come in." Soon enough, the man inside the room ordered her to enter. Shirley pushed the door and stepped in.

"Have you sent Jesslyn to her car?" Zacharias asked with one eyebrow raised.

Chapter 2310

"No. Miss Kurt didn't want me to send her off," Shirley replied.

"Jesslyn is my father's friend's daughter. Her parents got into a car crash and passed away when she was young, so my family took her in. I've always treated her like a younger sister," Zacharias explained while looking into her eyes.

"I see," she replied with a nod.

"What do you see?" he asked with his gaze narrowed. He wanted her to clarify herself. "Well, I don't care about your relationship with Miss Kurt. You don't have to explain anything to me," Shirley replied.

Zacharias was momentarily taken aback but then let out a soft scoff. "Of course, I have to explain things to you."

"No. You don't," she rebutted, "We've kissed each other, after all," he stated hesitantly. Shirley corrected him in a rather hostile tone. "That was forced. I didn't consent to it," she replied.

Zacharias raised his eyebrows and confidently countered, "We still kissed."

The room started to feel warmer as she bit her bottom lip, gazing at him. "I'm going to get dinner," she said after a while.

"I'll go with you." After finishing his sentence, he threw the sheets aside and tried to get out of bed.

Shirley quickly stopped Zacharias when she saw how careless he was with his injuries. "You're not supposed to get out of bed when you're in this condition."

"You can bring our dinner into the room, then. I want you to eat with me," he said. He wouldn't have much appetite if he had to eat alone.

"Fine. I'll bring your food over." She had no choice but to obey him. She headed to the dining area. Even though it was just catered food, they had a surprisingly wide variety of options. She got a meal for the man before she brought it to his room. Then, she set up the overbed table and placed the food before sitting beside him.

While Zacharias had his meal, he occasionally stole glances at Shirley. She eventually got rather annoyed at his sneaky actions and glared back at him. Soon enough, he finished his meal. She cleared the table and brought the empty plates out. After returning to the room, she found the doctor checking Zacharias' temperature. The man seemed to be burning up again.

"You should pay attention to your temperature, Mr. Flintstone. You have to let me know if you realize you're getting feverish again," the doctor said.

“Okay,” Zacharias replied with a nod. After the doctor left, Shirley held her palm out to feel the man’s forehead. He was indeed warmer than before.

At that moment, Freddie knocked on the door before rushing in. “Mr. Flintstone, there’s an important interview that you have to show up for tonight. I’m afraid the public might suspect something if you don’t.”

She stepped back as Freddie pulled an iPad to show Zacharias what he meant. There was an international news report that had Zacharias’ name in it. Someone raised their suspicions about him being in an accident, so he had to show up to dispute the rumors.

Zacharias knitted his brows after reading the report.

“It looks like someone is forcing you to show yourself,” Freddie commented.

“Take me to my office, Zacharias muttered in a deep voice.

“We only have half an hour until the nightly news stream. Will we have time?” Freddie asked.

“We’ll have to hurry,” Zacharias replied.

“Miss Lloyd, we’re rushing to head back to the office. You’ll have to arrange for the staff members to get us there,” Freddie uttered as he turned to look at Shirley.

“But... he’s having a fever,” she replied worriedly. She knew Zacharias wasn’t supposed to leave the hospital when he was in such a state.

“That doesn’t matter. Let’s go.” Upon finishing his words, Zacharias pulled the sheets aside and looked at her. “Bring my clothes over.” Shirley pulled a set of clothes from the wardrobe, and he ordered everyone to leave the room

“Your shoulder is injured, so you’ll need help to get dressed. Please help Mr. Flintstone, Mr. Hurst,” she uttered.

Freddie was glad to help, but Zacharias stopped him before he could do anything. “Freddie can leave. I want you to stay,” Zacharias told her.

Shirley eyed Zacharias speechlessly. Freddie was a quick-witted man—he hurried out of the room without having to be told twice.

Zacharias already had his slacks in his hands by then, so she hastily turned around. She could feel her heart pounding as she heard the sound of the man putting on his pants. This was soon followed by the sound of his belt.

“Turn around,” he ordered.

Shirley did as she was told and walked over to help Zacharias remove his shirt. Both his wounds were fresh, and they seemed like they would reopen if he made any large gestures. His condition would certainly worsen if his wounds were to be torn open.