

Chapter 63 No Good Intentions

Caden scoffed, "Then just take the whole bottle."

Shelia was left speechless.

She was used to Caden being blunt, but this level of directness still caught her off guard.

With a pat on Jerald's chest, she feigned kindness. "Let it go, Jerald. There's no point arguing with the younger generation."

Whether it was the effect of the medicine or Shelia's attempt to comfort him, Jerald, though pale, said nothing further.

He had long accepted that Caden's personality wasn't one to contend with.

Arguing wouldn't solve anything, and Jerald knew he couldn't risk worsening his own health.

He brushed off Shelia's hand. "Where's Joshua? Why isn't he here yet?"

Shelia offered a smile. "Joshua's always busy, staying late at work until eleven or twelve most nights. But I made sure to tell him we're having dinner tonight, so he should be back by eight."

She wanted Jerald to witness how hard Joshua worked.

Just then, Jerald's eyes landed on Alicia.

He blinked, disoriented by his illness. "Is that Alicia?"

Alicia slowly approached, her hands folded in front of her. She responded softly, "Yes, Jerald."

Jerald frowned. "Why are you acting so distant?"

Shelia chimed in from the side, eager to explain. "Alicia and Joshua have already divorced. Joshua's now engaged to Lilliana, the Green family's daughter. She's three months pregnant."

Jerald, hearing the name "Green," showed little reaction. "I don't meddle in these young folks' affairs. But why is Alicia still staying here after the divorce?"

Alicia kept her head lowered, silent.

Shelia chuckled. "Joshua feels sorry for her. He lets her stay here to look after you. And, of course, she's paid monthly for it."

Caden let out a quiet laugh at that.

Alicia remained expressionless.

Jerald waved it off, disinterested. "Let her be."

Without another word, Alicia retreated to the tea room. She mixed a packet of cold medicine with water, seeking relief from her growing illness.

As she stirred, Georgia's voice suddenly sounded behind her. "Ms. Bennett, are you feeling unwell?"

Alicia glanced back at her, her tone distant. "It's nothing."

With that, she downed the medicine in one gulp.

Georgia always made sure to put on a pleasant face, especially now that Jerald was awake. She couldn't afford to slip. "You were out in the rain for so long today. You're bound to catch a cold. Let me make you some ginger tea to warm you up."

Alicia wasn't buying it. There was no way Georgia was suddenly so kind-hearted.

"Then make enough for everyone. Shelia and Caden were in the rain too. They could use some tea."

Without a word or any sign of emotion, Georgia turned on her heel and left.

When the tea was ready, bowls were placed in front of each person. Shelia didn't touch hers, claiming she avoided anything spicy at night.

Caden was even more dismissive, not bothering to look at his.

Alicia stared at her own bowl.

The ginger tea, sweetened with brown sugar, had a comforting aroma.

But something felt off. Her mind raced.

What could be in this?

Poison? Mosquitoes?

Laxatives?

Shelia interrupted her thoughts. "Why aren't you drinking? Georgia made it with good intentions. Don't waste it."

Alicia hesitated, the bowl warm in her hands.

At that moment, footsteps echoed from outside.

The door swung open, bringing with it a cold, damp gust of wind.

Joshua had returned, earlier than expected.

Alicia's gaze flickered.

Though wet from the rain, Joshua didn't seem to mind. As he entered, he greeted his father respectfully. "Dad, how are you feeling?"

Jerald responded with a casual grunt.

Alicia stood and asked, "Why did you get caught in the rain?"

Joshua, never suspecting anything, answered as he always did.

"I had to meet a client before coming home. The car was parked a little way from the entrance, so I got wet walking a few steps."

Alicia saw an opportunity. "Perfect timing. Georgia made ginger tea. You

should have some to prevent a cold."

Georgia's face stiffened slightly.

She opened her mouth as if to protest, but Alicia turned, catching her eye and silencing her.

Without hesitation, Alicia passed her bowl to Joshua.

Shelia quickly stepped in. "It's just a bit of rain, Alicia. No need to argue. You're the one who's sick, and Georgia made the tea especially for you."

With that, Shelia moved toward the kitchen, calling for the staff to serve the meal.

Joshua ignored Shelia's remark.

He glanced briefly at Caden, and then rested his arm casually over her shoulders.

"Caught a cold?" Joshua asked softly.

Alicia forced a smile. "It's nothing serious. Do you want to try the ginger tea?"

"I'll drink it." Joshua's tone grew more insistent. "You take a sip first, then I'll finish the rest."

Alicia blinked, caught off guard. What was up with him? He was acting strange.

Pursing her lips, she rationalized that if there was anything wrong with the tea, it couldn't be too harmful.

After all, Georgia wasn't panicking, and she would have if something were amiss.

Alicia took a small sip.

As she shifted the bowl, she heard a faint sound coming from the liquid.

She paused, a suspicious thought crossing her mind.

Joshua then took the bowl from her, drinking from the exact spot where

her lips had touched.

A wave of nausea hit Alicia.

Her eyes darted away, only to lock with Caden's intense gaze.

Caden's eyes narrowed slightly as he watched Joshua drink. His lips curled into a twisted smile.

Alicia was frozen for a second before the sound of Joshua spitting the tea out broke her focus.

With a look of disgust, Joshua exclaimed, "What is this garbage?"

