

Too Much To Bear, My Love Chapter 891 - 90

Chapter 891 Dead

Stephanie glowered at the woman in front of her as she shouted, "Jolin Wright, I'm going to kill you!" The next second, she charged at Jolin, only to have the latter turn sideways and kick her in the rear.

Unsurprisingly, Stephanie lost her balance and fell to the ground with a loud thud. Many of the foreigners who were happily shopping away stopped in their tracks, with some even rushing forward to lend a helping hand. Jolin, however, beat them all to it and quickly helped Stephanie to her feet.

"Oh, how careless of you, Ms. Stephanie. I can't believe you tripped while walking," Jolin remarked as she smoothed Stephanie's clothes down and explained the situation to the foreigners in Erihalese.

Once the crowd had dispersed, she hastily ushered Stephanie into the car. "Ms. Stephanie, I strongly suggest that you stop these pointless endeavors. You've been utterly unscrupulous, yet Boss chose to go easy on you because you're his sister. You still have a few hundred grand in your bank, don't you? If you spend it wisely and look for a stable job, you'll be able to live comfortably."

Stephanie leaned against the car seat, her chest heaving up and down with rage. "Drive!"

Jolin merely shrugged.

Oh well, I still have plenty of time with Stephanie anyway. I'll teach this spoilt brat a lesson and make her realize what it feels like to be alone and helpless!

Sure enough, it didn't take long before Jolin fulfilled what she set out to do. Stephanie even resorted to becoming an escort when she became strapped for cash, resulting in her being sexually abused at the hands of a sadistic millionaire.

Left on the brink of death, she was rushed to the hospital, where she embarked on a long road to recovery. Alas, the assault had traumatized her so much that she was reduced to a shadow of her former self.

Even as Jolin crossed her arms and stared at the woman on the hospital bed, her eyes were void of sympathy. If Stephanie weren't so insistent on living a luxurious lifestyle, she wouldn't have ended up in this sorry state!

"Congratulations on still being alive, Ms. Stephanie," Jolin said with a wry smile.

Upon hearing that, Stephanie finally stirred and cast a soulless glance at Jolin.

"I want to go home, Jolin. Will you take me home?" she muttered as tears poured down her cheeks. "I've realized my mistake. Please tell my brother I'm sorry and that I won't plot against him or Amelia ever again. Persuade them to let me home, I beg of you."

Despite the desperate pleas, Jolin remained unruffled.

"Sorry, Ms. Stephanie, but Boss has ordered not to let you back as long as you're still breathing," Jolin replied while shrugging nonchalantly. "However, if you decide to take your own life, I promise to help cremate your body and send the ashes back home. Your parents might be a little sad to learn about your death, but with two grandkids to keep them occupied, I'm sure they'll get over it soon."

A tinge of anger instantly flashed across Stephanie's once-lifeless eyes as she glared at Jolin.

"Dream on, Jolin! There's no way I'll die before you! One of these days, I'll return home and destroy you with my own hands," she said through gritted teeth.

The more Jolin wants to see me dead, the more I'll fight to stay alive! I want everyone who despises me to know I can be just as strong and resilient even without the Clinton family backing me!

"Oh, that's disappointing to hear, Ms. Stephanie. I was still wondering when you'd think enough is enough and decide to end it all. Who knew you were such a tough little cookie? Then again, if you weren't tough, you wouldn't have become an escort, would you? Tsk, tsk..." Jolin scoffed.

"Get out!" Stephanie bellowed as she flung a pillow at Jolin with all her strength.

Even though the pillow smacked Jolin right in the face, it did nothing but make her sneer even more condescendingly.

“Save your strength, Ms. Stephanie. Didn’t the doctor say you have to rest as much as possible? After all, you’ve sustained quite a severe genital injury after the brutal assault. You don’t want the wounds to reopen, do you?”

“Get out!” Stephanie screamed, this time louder than before. The next second, however, she began gasping and wheezing as the pain from her wounds intensified.

Jolin, on the other hand, remained in her spot.

As sadistic as it seemed, she had to admit she enjoyed seeing Stephanie in such a wretched state.

After Stephanie had fully recovered, she was so desperate for money that she tried looking for a secretarial job. Sadly, the long working hours and low wages couldn’t support her expensive lifestyle. In the end, she decided to hook up with yet another multi-millionaire. What was most unfortunate, however, was that she contracted a sexually transmitted disease from the man. Needless to say, Stephanie could feel the world crumbling around her when she heard the doctor’s diagnosis.

She was the daughter of the prestigious Clinton family, yet she had become disease-ridden and was now nothing more than a rich man’s plaything. How much more pathetic could she get?

Stephanie truly wanted to kill the millionaire, but she was also rational enough to know that murder was a crime. She suppressed her rage and continued to stay by his side, using the money she made off of him on her ever-growing hospital bills.

Seeing how Stephanie had to visit the hospital frequently, Jolin couldn’t help but feel a contrasting mix of sympathy and disgust for her. After all, it was undeniably sad to see the young lady, who once had everything, become so down and out.

“Ms. Stephanie, I can’t believe you’re still staying with that rich old man despite your condition. Is that what you call professionalism? Or is he that good in bed that you can’t bear to leave him?” Jolin asked, lips curled into a smirk.

Stephanie instantly shot her a death stare. “Don’t worry, Jolin. Not even STDs will kill me that easily. Have you forgotten that I’m still waiting to watch you die?”

“Haha. I’m afraid your wish might never come true, Ms. Stephanie.”

As luck would have it, Jolin’s words hit the bullseye.

Stephanie and the millionaire were getting kinky in the bedroom later that night when the latter, having overdosed on performance-enhancing drugs, suddenly keeled over and died. Despite Stephanie's pleas and struggles, the millionaire's bodyguards swiftly dragged her to the police station.

Jolin, who was waiting outside the house, witnessed Stephanie being escorted into the police car and immediately gave Oscar a ring.

"Stay on her trail. I'll send someone to Ustrana in a bit," Oscar ordered.

With that, Jolin did as instructed and followed the police car.

Oscar proceeded to inform Olivia about everything Stephanie had done while overseas.

Alas, the more Olivia listened, the more she frowned in disappointment. She had given Stephanie the means to have a comfortable life in Ustrana, yet the latter continued to play with fire and land herself in hot water.

However, Stephanie was still her daughter, and Olivia couldn't stop worrying about her.

"Oscar, your father and I intend to fly to Ustrana. No matter what Stephanie's done, she's still our daughter. I can't sit by and do nothing when she's in trouble," she muttered.

To her surprise, Oscar didn't stop her.

"Mom, I'll arrange for the best lawyers to go with you and Dad. Hopefully, we'll be able to get her back here for the trial. I'm not too sure about the current situation, either, so it'd be good for you guys to check it out in person."

Even though Oscar's words were comforting, Olivia still couldn't shake off her worries and anxiety.

"Oscar, I know your sister has made many mistakes abroad, but I want to bring her back. Otherwise, if something were to happen to her, I wouldn't be able to live with the guilt."

Oscar's expression remained unchanged as though Olivia hadn't said anything important.

"I hope you won't blame me, Oscar. Stephanie's my daughter and your sister. I can't leave her to fend for herself abroad."

Upon hearing that, Oscar broke into a smile. "Do what you like, Mom. I won't object if you want to bring her back. There's no need for you to feel guilty about it."

That said, I'd still get to decide if Stephanie comes back dead or alive.

From the moment Oscar had sent Stephanie abroad, he had decided never to see her back alive. He had made many plans and laid many traps, but none of those was to allow his sister to return to a life of luxury. He knew that Stephanie would never turn over a new leaf, and as long as she was around, the lives of Amelia and Tony would always be in danger. That was a risk Oscar refused to take, so the only option left was to eradicate his sister.

If Stephanie stayed abroad obediently, he would spare her life, but if she insisted on returning, he would have to be cruel.

A wicked glint flashed across Oscar's eyes.

Unfortunately, Olivia thought Oscar had forgiven Stephanie and felt immensely relieved. At her age, her greatest wish was for her family to be safe and happy as she surrounded herself with her children and grandchildren. As such, she couldn't hide the joy of finally having her daughter reunite with them.

"Oscar, are you really not angry about your sister coming home?" Olivia asked hesitantly.

Oscar burst out laughing and shook his head. "Mom, back then, you were the one who suggested sending Stephanie abroad. Now, you're also the one who wants to bring her home. I have no objections whatsoever. Also, please don't worry that I might do anything to her. I won't be so heartless as to ignore Dad's and your feelings. Do whatever you like. What's most important is that you and Dad are happy."

Needless to say, Oscar's words touched Olivia's heart and soul.

That's my son! What a fine, big-hearted young man!

"Oscar, I'm so happy to hear you say that. Do you know how afraid I was that you might hate your sister? You and Stephanie are both my children. I'd be devastated to see anything happen to either of you."

"Mom, I'll let her off if that's what you want," Oscar replied.

Ha! I can let her off, but if I got someone else to do the dirty deed, whatever happens to her wouldn't be my problem!

Of course, Olivia couldn't read her son's deepest, darkest thoughts. She was so enthralled by the prospect of having her family together again that she didn't even notice the change in Oscar's gaze.

When Olivia and Owen finally arrived in Ustrana for Stephanie, the Ustranian police informed them that the latter had passed away in the early hours after roughhousing with her fellow inmates. In the end, all Olivia saw was her daughter's cold, stiff corpse.

She stared wide-eyed in disbelief, unable to accept the truth.

As the fact that her daughter was gone for good gradually sunk in, Olivia fainted from the pain and shock.

Thankfully, Owen caught her in time and sent her back to the hotel after instructing his lawyers and bodyguards to handle the matter.

Their family doctor gave Olivia a quick check-up and determined that she had only fainted from the traumatic shock. Other than that, she was perfectly healthy.

Waving his hand wearily, Owen ordered the doctor to leave the room as he sat beside his wife.

He was just as sad about Stephanie's sudden demise, but at that point, he was more worried about Olivia's well-being. Their daughter's death would undoubtedly be a heavy blow to her. That was why he had chosen to take her back to the hotel and let their lawyer and bodyguards settle the rest at the police station.

Racked with exhaustion and anguish, Owen let out a heavy sigh.

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Chapter 892 Adoption

Olivia only regained consciousness at night. As soon as she opened her eyes, she stared at Owen with anguish, seemingly recalling that Stephanie was dead.

"Owen, is Stephanie... What I saw just now wasn't a dream, was it?" she asked wearily. Owen helped her to sit up and thoughtfully took a pillow for her to lean on.

“Stop overthinking, Dearest. Stephanie is gone. I will get the lawyer to follow up closely. If it’s true that someone was behind her death, I will not let those police off easily,” Owen promised grimly.

Olivia looked exhausted. If she had known that Stephanie would die in Ustrana, she wouldn’t have sent her abroad back then. She couldn’t help but think she was somehow responsible for Stephanie’s death.

“Owen, it’s my fault. Stephanie wouldn’t have died if I hadn’t insisted on sending her abroad.” Olivia was overwhelmed with guilt. She felt a tightness in her chest and raised her hand to clutch it.

Owen’s heart ached when he saw that. He hurriedly took the medicine box and poured a few pills for her.

“Olivia, don’t overthink it. It was Stephanie’s own doing. The lawyer just called and said she was summoned to the police station for playing those stimulating games with a local tycoon that led to his sudden death. Later, she had a complicated relationship with a female prisoner in prison, and you know what happened after that.” Owen frowned as he spoke.

Stephanie’s sudden passing indeed saddened him. But after he learned about the unpleasant things about her, he was angry and felt that she had brought death upon herself.

A glint of sorrow flashed across Olivia’s eyes.

“I’ll leave everything to you. I hope we can transfer Stephanie’s body back to Chanaea as soon as possible. Now that she’s gone, Nolan has become a motherless child. I really don’t know how to tell him the truth when he grows up later.”

“Get Oscar to adopt him. No matter what, Stephanie is his sister. He will not just sit back and leave Nolan in the lurch. As for the Walker family, we will never give them the child,” said Owen.

Olivia closed her eyes and nodded gently.

That was all they could do. Her daughter had breathed her last, and she herself would never abandon her grandson. Even though Noah was still around, she had no intention of letting Nolan cross paths with the Walkers.

The two families were at odds with each other now. There was no way she would hand Nolan over to them.

After Owen's lawyer spoke with the police, Owen was informed that Stephanie's sudden death was caused by overexcitement during sex, which was the same as the tycoon. Since both of them had passed on, the police allowed Owen to transfer Stephanie's body back to Chanaea.

The next day, Owen and Olivia returned to the country on their private plane together with Stephanie's body. They told the public that Stephanie had died from injuries sustained during a robbery when she traveled abroad.

The Clintons held a small and warm funeral for Stephanie. After the relatives and friends of the Clinton family left, Olivia leaned against Owen's chest and looked at their daughter's tombstone sadly.

"I will miss you every day until we see each other again, Stephanie. Don't be so wilful when you're there. Your dad and I won't be able to protect you. Put on more clothes and don't catch a cold..."

Stephanie's death made Olivia appear much older than before. Wrinkles could be seen at the corners of her eyes.

"Don't be sad, Olivia. You still have Tony and Nolan," Owen said.

Tony sensibly walked up to Olivia and held her hand. In a gentle voice, he said, "Grandma, I'll keep you company and protect you. Don't be sad."

Olivia gazed down at him and scooped him up. Holding the boy tightly in her embrace, she began to weep silently, the tears she had been suppressing streaming out.

Tony patted her with his tiny hand, silently comforting her.

Standing at the back, Oscar and Amelia looked at Olivia, who was crying, solemnly. Something glimmered in Oscar's eyes. He could feel mixed feelings churning within him, but soon, he recomposed himself.

He never regretted what he did, but seeing Olivia heartbroken made him feel guilty. After all, he was the reason Olivia was crying over her daughter's grave.

Sorry, Mom. I did that for Amelia and Tony. Please forgive me.

Olivia was still sobbing with Tony in her embrace when she suddenly put him down and said, "Let's go back." However, right after she said that she collapsed to the ground.

Oscar swiftly scooped her up and hurried toward the car, driving her back to the Clinton residence.

The family doctor was already waiting for them. Once they arrived home, the doctor quickly checked on Olivia. He told Oscar that grief had weakened Olivia's body, which caused her to faint. She would recover as long as she take good care of herself. However, only Olivia herself could mend her own heart. He advised Oscar to console Olivia and help her cope with her loss. Otherwise, her grief might turn to depression.

Oscar nodded in acknowledgment and asked the maid to walk the family doctor out.

Owen requested Amelia to stay for the night and take care of Olivia. Then he summoned Oscar to the study.

"You've seen it, Oscar. Your mom is overwhelmed by sadness after Stephanie's death. Although your mom always said that Stephanie was reckless and that Isabella instigated her to drug you, she did not have any bad intentions." Owen sighed. "Let's drop this topic. Stephanie will not come back to life anyway. I have something else to discuss with you today, which I think it would be better if you give me your word."

"Go ahead, Dad," said Oscar.

"Your sister has passed on, and our family is at odds with the Walker family now. There's no way we will hand Nolan over to the Walkers. Your mom and I don't want Nolan to be an orphan. Since he is your sister's only son, we hope you can adopt him and treat him as your own child." Although it was a discussion, Owen spoke with absolute certainty. It was as if he was only informing Oscar, and the latter had to accept it.

Oscar stared at him intently and asked, "Dad, are you forcing me to say yes now?"

"Basically, yes. But I won't force you if you don't want to. I only hope you can treat Nolan better and provide him with material needs and education," Owen said.

Oscar nodded. He pondered for a while and finally agreed.

"I'm fine with adopting him and making him Tony's brother. I'll treat him as my own child and I won't let him suffer."

Owen patted Oscar's shoulder and smiled in gratification. "Thank you, Oscar. No matter what misunderstandings you had with Stephanie, she is no longer around now. It's time to let bygones be bygones."

Oscar nodded in response.

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Chapter 893 Care To Explain Yourselves

Owen patted Oscar's shoulder. "I know you had a problem with your sister, but she's gone now. Be nice to Nolan. One day, your mother and I will grow old too. Have a proper talk with Amelia. I know she's a kind and sensible woman."

Oscar smiled faintly and did not say anything. After Stephanie's funeral, Oscar talked to Amelia about adopting Nolan. The topic didn't surprise her, but the first thing she thought about was Noah.

The Walker family was being oppressed by the Clinton family at that moment. Despite that, they remained powerful. It was unlikely the Clintons could successfully adopt Nolan if Noah decided to fight for the boy's custody since he was his biological father.

"I don't disagree with the idea of taking in Nolan as our child, Oscar. But Noah's still alive. If he wants Nolan, we don't have many chances of winning the lawsuit," Amelia said.

"There's nothing you need to fret about. I'll handle this. No doubt the Walkers are like cats on hot bricks right now. They'll be too busy dealing with their predicament. I believe Noah may use Nolan's custody as leverage to convince me to spare their family. I'll bait him to give up on Nolan on his own accord before delivering him a fatal blow," Oscar said confidently.

His latest plan was to ensure the Walker family wouldn't be able to rise again. Even if the Walker family were victorious in getting Nolan's custody, he wouldn't hesitate to strike them hard enough that they would no longer be able to rise again.

As the saying goes, mercy to one's enemies is cruelty to oneself. There was no way he would allow his family to be harmed again.

Oscar had married and divorced Amelia twice, and he had no intention of increasing that number. No matter what happened, he would do his best to provide her with the best life possible.

"You didn't have a hand in Stephanie's death, right, Oscar?" Amelia thought about the situation and found Stephanie's death odd. After all, Stephanie was the precious daughter of the Clinton family. It wouldn't make sense for her to accompany ugly rich men for money unless someone was withholding her fortune.

"I only helped fan the flames. Whatever she did with those tycoons was her business. I gave her hundreds of thousands each year. If she had planned her finances well and had a proper job, she wouldn't have died. She only has herself to blame for her death," Oscar replied plainly.

Amelia knew that, of course. However, she still sympathized with Olivia's sorrow. The older woman's health wasn't that great to begin with, so if it deteriorated because of Stephanie's death, Amelia was afraid Oscar would feel guilty.

"Don't worry. I know what I'm doing. Mom still has Tony and Nolan to take care of. Nothing will happen to her." Oscar pulled Amelia into his embrace.

Patting her head, he continued, "I'm fine as long as you don't think I'm so cruel that I drove my own sister to her death." The notion of killing Stephanie had never crossed his mind. He just wanted to eliminate the possibility of her returning to the country. It never occurred to him that she would stoop so low.

He firmly believed her death was brought forth by her own hands. However, she was still his sister, so her death still affected him in some way.

"You feel sad about her death too, don't you, Oscar? She's still your sister, after all," Amelia said. I refuse to believe he's so heartless that he's not even sad about her death.

"Of course I do. Nothing will change the fact that she's my sister. Despite having committed plenty of mistakes over the years, some minor, some severe, she was pretty cute when she was just a child. She would follow behind me and call out to me adorably. We were really close back then," Oscar said somewhat solemnly.

He paused, then resumed, "I had a hand in what happened to her in Ustrana, but I never wanted to take her life. If she had grown as a person, I might've personally picked a pretty great foreign man as a groom for her after two or three years."

Amelia patted the back of Oscar's hand. She knew he truly meant what he said.

"You have me by your side. We'll take good care of Nolan, ensure he stays far away from trouble, and provide him with the best education possible. This will be our effort to make up for the suffering Stephanie went through and the life she could've had. I disliked her in the past. Without her and Isabella, our marriage life could have been smooth. But then I thought I wouldn't have known how much I love you if not for them."

Oscar hugged her even more tightly as they watched the scenery outside the window.

Just as Oscar predicted, Noah tried using Nolan's custody as leverage for negotiation.

Inside a private dining room, Noah removed his sunglasses. His facial hair made him look despondent.

"How have you been doing, Oscar? Since Stephanie's dead, I want to get custody of Nolan. After all, he's my son, and I, as his father, should raise him, shouldn't I?" He went straight to the point.

Crossing his legs, Oscar revealed a half-smile as he stared at Noah.

Noah's exasperation grew when he saw how composed Oscar was.

The more annoyed he was, the calmer he appeared.

"I'm willing to forfeit Nolan's custody on the condition that you spare the Walker family. If you do, I promise I won't harass the Clinton family again. Both our families will be strangers to each other once more. What do you think?" His proposal was exactly what Oscar had foreseen.

Playing with his slender fingers, Oscar glanced at him. "I didn't know your wife and son were that worthless, Noah. They aren't even as valuable as your company even though it's on the verge of bankruptcy."

"Stephanie's dead, Oscar, and I believe you guys will never hand over Nolan to me. My family's in deep trouble right now, and you want him under your care. I don't think there's anything wrong with me using him as a bargaining chip. In exchange for my company's survival, you can have his custody. It's a win-win situation for both of us. That's the best outcome we should strive for."

"And if I say no?"

Noah's expression changed slightly. His hand, resting on his leg, trembled.

"You've pushed me to the brink, Oscar. I think you know better than anyone else how Stephanie died. If I ask people to spread rumors about the cause of her death to my parents, I bet they'll get suspicious even if it's untrue. But if you have mercy on the Walker family, I promise we'll leave this city and move the company somewhere else. We won't bother you again."

As Oscar glanced at Noah, he put his leg down, leaned forward, clasped his hands, and smiled. "Okay, I can help you out."

Noah was stunned. He didn't expect that Oscar would agree to his request so easily, so much so that he suspected a trap was afoot.

Oscar was so sly that he was concerned it was another ploy by him despite the fact that he was the one who approached Oscar for negotiations first.

"I can give you one million. Even if you do go bankrupt, it'll be enough to cover your daily expenses," Oscar uttered plainly.

Noah's expression changed again. Oscar's generosity was putting him in a really bad mood.

"I know what you're trying to do here, Oscar. Since you reject my proposal, I'll be seeing you in court. I refuse to believe you're so powerful that the law can't touch you," Noah sneered as he stood up.

Then he turned around and left.

As expected, Oscar received a subpoena a few days later. At the same time, news about Walker Group's tax evasion was reported when authorities looked into the company's financial record. Noah was so caught up in his company's problems that he didn't even have the time to attend the court battle over Nolan's custody, thus spelling the end of that dispute.

Noah was exhausted from having to handle so many matters at once. Once again, he only left the company very late at night.

Just as he stepped out of the building, a car parked in front of him.

When the door was opened, a man unfamiliar to him stepped out of the vehicle and informed coldly, "My employer wishes to meet with you. If you want to save your company, you'll enter the car right away. They believe you'll be interested in meeting with them because you both share a common enemy—Oscar Clinton."

Glancing at the stranger, Noah then lowered his head and got into the car at the thought of something.

“Sit tight. I’ll need to shake off the paparazzi stalking you first. I’ll be impressed if you can turn the tides for your company after being surveilled for so many days,” the man said.

Turning around, Noah saw there was indeed a car following them.

His expression darkened as he pursed his lips. He didn’t need to guess to know who sent those people.

“Relax. I can shake them off,” the stranger assured confidently.

Just as he ended his sentence, another car coincidentally blocked the one following them, giving them time to escape.

“How did you know I was being followed?”

“I’ve been observing you secretly for a few days, so of course, I know. I also know Oscar’s trying to drive you into a corner. There’s no way he’ll let you go that easily,” the man answered.

Pursing his lips, Noah stayed silent.

The stranger drove them to a private club. Upon parking the car, he unfastened his seatbelt and approached the door next to Noah. “We’ve arrived, Mr. Walker.”

Noah was brought to the most hidden private dining room in the building.

A scowl set on his face when he stepped into the room and saw the people inside.

“Care to explain yourselves, June? Ms. Larson?”

He felt as though he was being toyed with.

June, who was sitting with his legs crossed, twirled the wineglass in his hand and pointed at the couch. “Sit. Let’s have a talk.”

Noah’s hands curled into fists as he gritted his teeth resentfully. He sat on the couch and asked in frustration, “Tell me, what are you two up to? I don’t have the time to play with you.”

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Chapter 894 An Unbridgeable Abyss

“Obviously, I called you here to discuss what to do about Oscar. However, if you’re willing to offer yourself up for slaughter, you’re welcome to walk out that door anytime,” June said, pointing at the main door.

Glancing at the door, the troubled Noah began to calm down. “June, not only have you lost your company trying to take Oscar down, but you have also vanished into thin air. Do you really think you’re still a match for him?” Noah sneered while crossing his legs.

June fiddled with his fingers and pretended not to have heard the snide remark. “I didn’t vanish into thin air. All I did was return to my country undetected and borrowed some powerful resources from my family. My lying low was part of my plan to launch a more devastating counterattack.

As of now, I want him to feel smug about himself so that when he lets down his guard, that’s when we’ll strike.” June’s tone brimmed with confidence as if he could already envisage Oscar’s defeat at his hands.

After giving June a doubtful look, Noah was certain of his evaluation of the former’s strength—it wasn’t enough to take Oscar down.

“Mr. Walker, you have no other choice but to work with us if you want to save your company from ruin. The dire circumstances you’re in couldn’t be more obvious to me.” June’s lips curled into a smirk.

With a slightly darkened expression, Noah took a small sip of wine. “I didn’t reject the idea of collaborating with you although this is clearly a Hail Mary. That said, you have to tell me what your plan is first.”

“I’m in no hurry at all. We’ll wait till your company is on the brink of bankruptcy before we return to this topic. That will allow you to rise from the ashes,” June said in a nonchalant tone.

The response triggered a fit of rage from Noah. F*ck you and your rise from the ashes talk. As of then, he was being driven up the wall by government officials who were incessantly blackmailing him by conducting daily checks on him. Every time they did, he

had to treat them to a meal in a luxury hotel and every meal cost a bomb. Despite being fully aware that he was being extorted, he remained helplessly at their mercy.

“June, it’s clear to me that your offer was never sincere. I’ll be taking my leave now. Come back when you’re really serious. There’s a big mess in my company waiting for me to clear up, so forgive me if I don’t have time to waste on listening to you and Ms. Larson rattle on,” Noah replied. He then got up and left.

June made no effort to stop him.

Once he was gone, Jennifer sat upright with an insidious smile on her face. “He’s leaving. Aren’t you going to stop him?”

“Why should I? It’s his company that’s going bankrupt. He’ll come back if he intends to save it. There’s little I can do if he insists on continuing on the path of destruction. Anyway, how is that girl whom you paid to get plastic surgery doing? If I recall correctly, her name’s Rory Sanders. It’s time to put her to good use. Otherwise, the money spent on her will be nothing but a waste,” June said, taking another sip of wine.

“I’ve already put her to work behind the scenes. As a rising star, she has plenty of opportunities to attend banquets together with rich businessmen, making it easy for her to run into Oscar. Also, you can rest assured that she’s a cunning girl who knows her way around men.” Jennifer got to her feet and walked up to the window. As she gazed at the colorful neon lights outside, her eyes narrowed and her face turned cold.

June sneered and gave Jennifer a thoughtful look.

“Jennifer, you’d better not have groomed an ingrate. After using your money for plastic surgery and leveraging your network for movie roles, she has now become a starlet. In the event she becomes too big-headed and refuses to obey you, your efforts would have gone to waste. Don’t you forget that.”

A vicious glint flashed across Jennifer’s eyes.

“Don’t worry. I’m no longer the same person I was before. I’d failed to protect my mom because I wasn’t ruthless enough. Now that she’s dead, I’m not going to let her dying wish be unfulfilled. After giving Rory everything she has, I obviously have my way of keeping her on a leash. I have in my hand nude photos of her and pictures of her before and after the surgery. And I keep close tabs on her family too. If she doesn’t want to be exposed or see the lives of her family threatened, she’ll have no choice but to take orders from me. Do you really think that I’m foolish enough to groom a stranger without any countermeasures?”

Giving Jennifer's silhouette an approving look, June curled his lips to reflect the good mood he was in.

"Jennifer, you have grown more devious, but I like the way you are now. You used to be so indecisive, causing your mother to lose her life," June said as he walked up from behind and wrapped his arms around her waist.

No sooner had his hands made contact than her body froze. When she tried to struggle free, he responded by tightening his hug.

"Let go, or that's the end of our cooperation."

June refused to comply. Instead, he planted kisses on her pale and slender neck.

Narrowing his eyes, he murmured, "Jennifer, your scent is as fragrant as ever. Compared to Cassie, you're just like a porcupine with a body that's covered in spikes."

His words caused Jennifer's hair to stand on end and her eyes to glisten with resentment.

After bursting out of his grasp with all her might, she followed up with a slap on his face.

"June, please watch yourself, or you can kiss our partnership goodbye," Jennifer snapped.

Holding his painful cheek, June raised his head and looked daggers at her.

"Jennifer, you hit me again. Don't forget we men have our pride. You'd better be wary of me forcing me on you," June threatened.

Jennifer shot him a look of disdain before grabbing her bag and storming off.

Staring at her leaving silhouette with his fiery eyes, June stroked his cheek subconsciously. "Jennifer, you'll be mine sooner or later. When that happens, let's see how I'm going to make you suffer."

Obviously, Jennifer was unaware of his designs for her. She got back into the car and slammed her hand on the steering wheel, overwhelmed by disgust. If not for revenge, she wouldn't have involved herself with a person like June. Every time she saw him, she would be filled with nothing but contempt.

After all, it was hard for any woman to love a psycho like him.

Jennifer's eyes gradually reddened as she stared out the window in boiling rage.

She had morphed into someone that even she failed to recognize.

Tossing her head side to side to get a grip on herself, she knew now wasn't the time to wallow in her sorrow. Now that she had sacrificed everything for revenge and passed the point of no return, there was no turning back for her.

With that in mind, she turned on the engine and drove back to her mansion.

After parking her car and walking to the door, she was greeted by the sight of the last person she wanted to see.

Both of them stood a distance apart, gazes locked until Jennifer retracted hers and proceeded to open the door.

"Jennifer, you're really back. I've been dropping by every day to check and didn't expect to be lucky enough to finally see you," Carter said softly as he came forward to grab her hand.

Jennifer shoved his hand aside and strode right in.

"Jennifer, we went through a lot before getting together. Are you really willing to abandon our relationship just like that?" Carter questioned, following her from behind.

Taking a deep breath, Jennifer suppressed the pain within her as she answered, "Carter, it's over between us. Please leave. You're not welcome here. I don't want the angry spirit of my deceased mom to come after you."

Carter gazed deeply at her, his eyes brimming with indescribable agony.

"Jennifer, clearly you still love me. Will you come back to me?"

"Sure, on one condition. Have Amelia drink the contents of this bottle and I will agree to reconcile." Jennifer returned to where Carter was standing and handed him a purple bottle she had retrieved from her bag.

As Carter lowered his head to look at the bottle in her hand, an unfathomable glint flashed across his eyes.

He didn't reach out to take it. Jennifer—unsurprised—retracted her hand. Perhaps I'll never be as important as Amelia is to him.

If it was in the past, she would have been saddened by his reaction. But now, such emotions had been buried in the depths of her heart.

“Carter, you should go. Don’t ever come back to see me. There’s no way I can ignore my mom’s last wish. Amelia and Oscar are fated to be my enemies. Since I must have my revenge and you have always taken Amelia’s side, there’s no way we can ever bridge this chasm between us.”

Jennifer looked up at him as if she could see right through his heart.

“Carter, to be honest, you have never forgotten Amelia, have you? Despite your repeated claims of loving me, I’m nothing but a replacement for her. At the end of the day, I’ll never take her place in your heart. You might have feelings for me, but she’ll always be the one you truly love.”

Staring at her intently, he had no words to rebut her with.

It was true that Amelia was irreplaceable in his heart. After so many years of longing for her, it was impossible for him to forget her entirely. Nonetheless, he had learned how to turn the romantic feelings he had for her into platonic ones.

“Jennifer, let’s cast the past away and start all over again. I swear I’ll treat you like a queen to make up for the wrong I have done you. Please don’t do anything foolish. I can’t bear to see anything happen to you.” Carter diverted the topic.

Sniggering in response, Jennifer gave him a sorrowful yet contemptuous look.

“Carter, you should go. It’s really over between us,” she reiterated wearily.

The night she returned to the country, her father had told her not to hate her mother who, on her deathbed, had continued to object to her relationship with Carter. The latter feared that her daughter would never truly be loved by him.

Carter had someone else in his heart whose importance outweighed that of Jennifer. A relationship with him would bring nothing but misery.

Cognizant of her mother’s concern for her, Jennifer didn’t blame the former for her stance. Instead, the emotional struggle she was going through simply wore her out.

In the end, there was an unbridgeable abyss between Carter and her.

However, the gap had nothing to do with her mother. It was instead caused by Carter's failure to let Amelia go. The deeper Jennifer's feelings were for him, the more she was bothered by Amelia's place in his heart. The issue was a ticking time bomb bound to explode.

Considering the circumstances, she felt it wiser to break up now.

Carter watched as Jennifer went upstairs. His lips parted, but he failed to find a reason to persuade her to stay.

In the end, a sigh of resignation was all he could manage before he left the mansion.

He was clueless as to how he could prove his love to Jennifer and demonstrate to her that she didn't play second fiddle to Amelia.

Upon returning to his car, Carter drove straight home.

As he took the elevator up, he was greeted by the sight of Nina the moment the doors opened.

He approached her and asked, "When did you arrive?"

Nina flashed a smile at him.

"Let's talk inside."

Carter invited her in and made her a cup of coffee.

"Thank you."

Having settled down on the couch opposite her, Carter asked, "It's really late. Why didn't you call me first? If I hadn't returned, you might have had to wait outside for a very long time."

"Not to worry. I only waited for a couple of minutes. Anyway, I just dropped by to say my farewell."

Carter cocked a brow. "Where are you going?"

"I'll be heading overseas for some time to avoid an overzealous pursuer and will return once he has calmed down," Nina said flatly.

"It's a good idea as long as you come back," Carter commented.

"Of course, I will. Don't forget that my parents are still here," Nina replied in a nonchalant tone. "Carter, is it really over between you and Ms. Larson? I noticed that you looked troubled for the past year and barely made any progress at work. If you really love her, you should renew your pursuit of her."

Her words elicited a wry laugh from Carter as he wondered how he should explain to her that the issue couldn't be solved just by courting Jennifer.

"You should just enjoy your time overseas. There's no need to concern yourself with my affairs."

"You're important to me. Of course, I care about you." Nina changed the subject. "Fine. This is your life, and I'm sure you know what you're doing. Also, I have no intention of nagging you as if I were your mother. I just need you to do something for me. Can you go to the hospital and tell James that I don't love him? It's his relentless pursuit of me that I'm trying to avoid. Tell him that I'm willing to be his friend, but he should drop the idea of us being together."

"So he's the one you're trying to avoid. I find him to be pretty eligible, to be honest."

"I don't deny it, but I just have no feelings for him. I still prefer true blue Chanaeans."

Carter burst into laughter. "It's good that you have come to a decision."

He found talking to Nina a comforting experience. Not only was she composed, but she knew where to draw the line when it came to probing someone's privacy. Her discretion in the way they interacted was why he genuinely saw her as his sister.

Too Much To Bear, My Love Chapter 895

Chapter 895 Learning To Let Go

Nina got up and walked over to Carter, massaging his shoulders as she spoke gently. "Please don't be sad, Carter. You don't act like yourself anymore. You should be high-spirited and confident, unlike the man standing before me. Why have you turned out this way? It seems like you're always forcing a smile." A heartfelt laugh left Carter's lips. "Nina, I wouldn't feel so torn if the person I'm in love with was you!"

"Come on, Carter. Don't get such thoughts in your mind. We are not compatible. I'm not your type, and I treat you like my brother. Besides, I want a man who knows combat arts.

He should also be good at games and knows how to design them. Other than that, he needs to know how to play sports like basketball and swimming. In other words, I love a man that knows how to do everything. Too bad I've yet to find a perfect man like that," Nina answered with a smile. "You prefer programmers?"

"I guess so. I admire those people who can hack into a system without facing any problems. I would love to talk to them if I had the chance, but I'm afraid they will scoff at a digitally illiterate person like me."

Carter's lips twitched as his mind wandered. I'm caught by surprise. Nina, a girl that comes from a wealthy family, has quite an interesting taste in men. Why is she so into computer hackers?

Nina retracted her hands, saying, "Rest earlier, Carter. I'm going to head home now. Don't overthink the situation. Get over Jennifer soon if there really is no chance of a future with her. After all, it sucks when men whine on and on."

Carter nodded. He stood up, wanting to send Nina home himself. However, the woman rejected his offer. "Carter, are you afraid that someone will rob me? Well, they're welcome to try if they're not afraid of being beaten up. Even though I look vulnerable and weak, I'm good at fighting, and most people can't compare me! Don't worry, okay?"

Carter was no stranger to Nina's exceptional combat skills. She was better than him as she excelled at kickboxing, mixed martial arts, and other combat skills. Even so, Carter couldn't let her return home by herself.

"Come on, I will send you home. Accept my offer, okay? As a gentleman, I can't possibly let you go home yourself," Carter insisted.

Understanding why Carter was being persistent, Nina agreed to his suggestion.

With things settled, Carter drove Nina home. While unbuckling her seatbelt, Nina glanced at Carter. "Go on home, Carter. Please remember to do the things that I told you to do. I don't wish to see a foreign man bothering me when I come home."

Carter nodded.

Nina finally alighted the car with a pleased expression.

The following day, Carter went to the hospital to fulfill Nina's order. Coincidentally, he caught Eva pestering James. He couldn't help but frown.

No wonder Nina is leaving the country. A messy tangle of relationships isn't something she's ever wanted. She's a rich, opinionated woman that knows what she wants. It seems like James is indeed not suitable to be her boyfriend.

Carter hesitated for a second before walking over. He pretended to cough to catch the duo's attention.

Eva, who was bothering James incessantly, immediately retracted her hands. It was fortunate that she knew how to stay composed before others.

Carter questioned straightforwardly, "Are you free, James? Someone sent me to talk to you."

James instantly agreed. Inviting Carter into his office, he made sure to close the door in Eva's face.

"It looks like you know your way around women, Mr. Baylor."

"Please don't misunderstand, Mr. Scott. I have nothing to do with Eva. Everyone knows I'm courting Nina!"

Carter shrugged. "I don't care about your love life. I came here to pass on Nina's words. She's heading overseas today and hopes that you won't continue pestering her when she returns."

James' expression changed drastically when he heard those words, and he spoke in an agitated tone. "What time is her flight? Why is she leaving the country? Which airline is she taking?"

Carter shoved his hands into his pockets. "My apologies, but I have no idea. I'm merely expressing her wishes on her behalf as her brother. You are not the man for her, so I hope you won't pester her anymore. If not, she will stay abroad forever."

James' face turned ashen. "No. I'm going to look for her. I will prove that I'm the man for her. I promise I will always love her and only her, and I will never be attracted to other women."

With that, James ran outdoors, staggering as he nearly fell to the ground.

Carter didn't stop him. He was sure that James wouldn't be able to find Nina. Even though Nina looked soft and gentle and seemed like she needed someone's protection, she was a capable and opinionated woman. If she had determined that she was not in love with James, she wouldn't mislead him or give him a chance to court her.

He left the office, only to see Eva waiting for him with her arms wrapped around her chest. Carter strolled over and greeted her amicably, "Hey, Eva."

Eva gazed at him while letting out a wry chuckle. "Mr. Carter, are you going to interfere in my love life too? Are you trying to ruin things for me?"

"Eva, I have no intention of doing that. Besides, I hope you and James can resolve your differences and become a couple soon. However, a relationship is not about bugging someone until they love you. I would advise you to save your love for someone else so as not to waste your time," Carter reminded.

Eva's persistence in ensuring James understood her love reminded Carter so much of the past. Hence, he couldn't help but advise her to do otherwise. That was all he could do, though. It still depended on whether Eva was willing to take his advice.

Love is mutual attraction. Hence, having a one-sided is nothing but torture.

"Thank you for your advice, Mr. Carter. However, this is my choice, and I've never thought of giving up. He will eventually grow tired of chasing after other women and return to my side. I believe James will choose me after realizing who loves him the most," Eva voiced confidently. Despite that, her eyes had traces of pain and bitterness.

With that, she turned and left. Noticing how desolate and lonely Eva looked, Carter stared at her back for a while before leaving.

Eva learned that Amelia had returned from overseas when she called the latter. She decided to visit Amelia at her house.

"Amelia, why didn't you inform me that you're back? I missed you." Eva pouted sadly as she hugged Amelia.

Amelia patted her shoulder as she chuckled. "You're a big girl already, so why are you still acting like a kid?"

"I'm just happy that you're home."

"Really? You don't seem happy to me." Amelia could sense that Eva was upset.

Eva merely responded by hugging Amelia even tighter. She was feeling lost and confused, for she and James had been going around in circles for many years without ending up in a relationship. Eva didn't know whether she should give up now. All she knew was that she would be dissatisfied if she stopped loving James now.

I'm so used to chasing after James that I don't know if I can give up on him after I've done so many things for him.

Amelia brought Eva to the couch and made her a cup of coffee. "Let's talk over some coffee."

Eva held the cup as the warmth seeped into her skin. "Amelia, did you remarry Oscar already?"

"Not yet. Oscar must be punished for his mistakes. That's why I'm monitoring his performance. If he does well, I will remarry him. If it is the opposite case, we will stay this way then. It's fun to be his lover," Amelia answered with an amused smile.

Eva chuckled as she stared at Amelia with envy.

It's fascinating how they divorced and got back together twice. They always end up back with each other eventually, and honestly, I envy their relationship. Anyone who desires to be in love will be jealous of Amelia and Oscar.

"You know, Amelia, I envy you. You and Oscar have been through so much. Back then when you decided to leave the country, I thought it was over between you guys. Who would have thought that you two would be together again now after going through so many obstacles? It's amazing, touching, and comparable to the plot in a romance novel," Eva uttered dejectedly.

Amelia gazed at her, having somewhat guessed the reason behind Eva's downcast mood. Her bad mood seems to be related to her current situation with James. Eva has been chasing after him for close to two years, yet there's still no significant change in their relationship status.

"How is your relationship with James?" Amelia probed.

Eva gave her a bitter smile. "I chased after him for another year after you left the country. However, he has zero interest in me. James only has eyes for Nina. I know I'm not as pretty as her, and any ordinary man would fall in love with her. It's just that... I resent this outcome. I love James more than she loves him!"

Amelia pulled Eva's hand over and patted it, wanting to console and advise her. "Eva, it's all about mutual attraction in a relationship. A woman might get together with a man because his efforts have moved her. However, a man is more unwavering in terms of love. If they already have someone on their mind, they ignore everything other women do for them. James has already made it obvious he doesn't want to be in a relationship with you. With that being said, there will be no good outcome even if you continue pestering him. Are you sure you don't want to give up?"

Eva shot Amelia a helpless look. "Amelia, even you think we are not compatible, too?"

"I've always thought so. You're a coach while he's a doctor. You love to have fun while he's mature, serious, and attentive. James likes women that are gentle and well-behaved. You aren't what he's searching for, to begin with. That's why both of you aren't fated to become a couple. Even if you guys ended up being a thing, you will be going on your separate ways in the near future."

"But I can change my personality for him."

"Eva, it's not easy to change one's character. Your true self will eventually be exposed in the future, even if you hide it perfectly now. When that happens, you guys will fight endlessly. Now, would you rather you guys stay as friends or realize that both of you are not meant to be together because you two keep fighting after you become a couple? Do you want to watch your love for him vanish slowly during the process?"

Reluctantly, Eva remarked, "Amelia, I can be happy when I'm with James."

Amelia stared at her silently until the latter couldn't refrain from lowering her head.

"Fine, I won't force you to give up on James now. Once you're tired, you can come back here to let your heart heal. After you've recovered and are ready, you can move on to start another relationship."

Hearing that, Eva was touched. "Thank you, Amelia."

"You're welcome. You will understand that failing in a relationship is not as terrifying as you thought when you get older. When I separated from Oscar a year ago, I thought it would be best for us to enter a new relationship with other people too. I was lost for a time, but I eventually learned to let go." Amelia patted the back of Eva's hand.

She continued, "We don't always end up with everyone that we fall in love with. Sometimes, we have to let down the person we loved or who loved us. It's okay to greet

them casually when we get older. That's why I would advise you not to be too hung up over James. If not, you will end up losing yourself in the process too."

Eva pondered over the words for a long while before nodding.

I think I know what to do now.

She stayed and had lunch with Amelia before bringing a lunchbox to the hospital for James.

James' anger rose when he saw the lunchbox. He had just been rejected by Nina when he went to look for her at the airport. Moreover, she even claimed that his love for her was annoying, so she decided to stay overseas for a period. Nina then told James that they could be friends if he stopped pestering her when she returned home in the future. If James refused to heed her advice, they would then become strangers. With that, Nina boarded the flight and left, not even giving him a chance to stop her.

James then returned to the hospital in despair. He had wanted to have some alone time when Eva inconveniently appeared. Unfortunately, that meant Eva would bear the brunt of his anger.

The man thundered, "Eva, can you stop being so annoying? I don't like you. I really don't! I have never seen anyone as shameless as you! My life is a mess because of you! You are the reason that Nina has left now! I hate you so much. Can you please get out of my life? Just get lost!"

Eva looked at James as her eyes slowly reddened, her heart wrenching in pain. The words had hurt her deeply. "James, do you despise me that much?" Eva asked, trying to suppress her sadness.

"Yes, I do. Very much. I will thank you if you vanish from my life right now."

Eva nodded to show that she understood. "James, I've thought about it on my way here. It's useless for me to continue pestering you if you hate me that much, so this is the last meal I've prepared for you. Worry not; I won't be bugging you from now on. I will only come searching for you after my love for you has disappeared for good. By then, I think we can be friends again."

Her veins were popping as she took a deep breath, indicating the effort Eva had used to control her emotions.

James was stunned when he heard Eva's words and didn't know how to respond for a moment.

Too Much To Bear, My Love Chapter 896

Chapter 896 Guarded

"Go ahead and eat. This might be the last time you get to eat this." Eva felt much better after airing her thoughts. She was even in the mood to joke.

James fixed his intense gaze on the woman and felt increasingly frustrated. It was as if he had lost something that was his all along.

Eva passed a fork to the man and said, "Finish it as a favor to me. Our boss wants me to go to Hawen to train the new batch of employees, and the training will last two years. As that place is currently a restricted area, we won't be able to contact anyone other than during the festive seasons. Previously, I was still unable to decide if I should go, but this is now the perfect opportunity for me to forget you."

James took over the fork. Looking at the sumptuous food in the lunchbox, which had instantly become unappetizing, he started eating.

Just earlier, he had been telling Eva to get lost. However, now that she was finally going away, he found himself feeling even more uncomfortable. However, he tried to rationalize internally that it was because of the abrupt nature of the woman's departure that resulted in his discomfort and that the feeling would be gone after a while. As such, he should be happy that he had finally gotten rid of a nuisance.

Soon, James finished all of the food in the lunch box.

Eva took the fork from him and cleaned up before saying, "I shan't disturb you any further. I'm going off now. I'm not sure if we will see each other again after I leave for Hawen, so I shall give you my blessings in advance. I hope that you will find the woman of your dreams soon. From now on, I won't be pestering you anymore."

James looked at Eva with a complicated expression.

"What's wrong? Are you missing me already? If you ask me to stay, I might change my mind and not leave," Eva said with a cheeky wink.

Even though she sounded casual, she was, in fact, feeling extremely nervous. She was fervently hoping that James would suddenly realize his feelings for her and ask her not to go. However, that was obviously just her wishful thinking.

“Going to Hawen sounds like a good opportunity for you. I hope that you will find true love soon. We will be friends forever,” James said, pretending to be relieved.

The smile on Eva’s face faded slightly when she heard that.

“Sure. The next time you see me come looking for you is when I’ve found someone I want to marry. I’ll get going now.” Eva picked up the lunchbox and waved goodbye to James blithely before she quickly left his office.

As James stared at the woman’s departing figure, he could not help but feel an immense sense of emptiness in his heart. He was unable to make sense of the discomfort that he was feeling. However, he shook it off quickly, thinking that his mind was just playing tricks on him.

When Eva went back to the neighborhood where Amelia was staying, she returned the lunchbox, which she had already washed, to her cousin.

“Amelia, I intend on heading to Hawen to train the new batch of employees. I’ll be there for two years, but I’ll be back to visit you during my vacation time.”

“You’re going to Hawen? What about James...” Amelia asked, feeling slightly shocked.

“I’ve already laid it out with him at the hospital just now. He doesn’t love me and asked me to get lost. I don’t want him to end up hating me, so I’ve decided to let go and stop pestering him. I’ve been pursuing him for two years, but he still has not fallen in love with me. That means it’s impossible between us. I’ve already agreed to relocate to Hawen. Busying myself with work might help me forget James. After all, life still goes on without him,” Eva replied softly.

Amelia patted her cousin’s head and said, “I’m glad that you were able to come to a decision.”

“I already booked my air ticket on the way back just now. My flight is at five p.m. this evening, so I should leave now. I can get my daily necessities in Hawen when I’m there.”

“Eva, you don’t have to be in such a rush.”

“Amelia, I’m worried that I would change my mind if I don’t leave soon. It took me a lot of determination to decide to let him go. That’s why it’s better for me to leave as soon as possible.”

Hearing that, Amelia stopped talking.

She personally drove Eva to the airport. When they arrived, Eva hugged her cousin with tears in her eyes and said, “Amelia, take care of yourself. I’ve given you a lot of trouble in the past, but I’ve grown up now, and I’ll take care of myself. I’ll call you when I’m free.”

Amelia returned Eva’s hug, feeling reluctant to part with her cousin.

After one year apart, she realized that Eva had matured a lot, and it was the result of the woman’s unrequited love. Suddenly, she found herself missing the confident and quirky girl who was always dressed in punk fashion. However, that girl had disappeared forever.

Amelia sighed silently. Most people would mature with the passage of time. However, there would always be some who lived in a carefree manner regardless of their age. Those were the people who were well-protected from life’s harsh realities.

If it was possible, Amelia hoped that Eva would also meet a man who would shield her from life’s perils.

“Take care of yourself while you are there. Come back here to work after you’ve recovered from your pain. If you like training others, I’ll ask Oscar to make arrangements for you to be a trainer.”

“All right. Amelia, when I return, I’ll introduce my boyfriend to you. When that day comes, you and Oscar have to help with my wedding arrangements, yeah?”

“I’ll be waiting for that day.”

The two women chatted for a while longer before Eva went through the airport security check. Shaking her head, Amelia turned around and left. Unexpectedly, she saw James outside the airport.

“Oh, James, you’re here.”

The man walked over and said, “Amelia, it’s been a while. I heard that you and Oscar had gotten back together again. Congrats!”

Amelia let out a chuckle before replying, "Thanks! I have to go now as I have something to attend to. You should hurry in if you're here to send someone off."

James stopped Amelia from leaving and gazed at her with a complicated look in his eyes.

"Amelia, don't you blame me?"

"Why would I blame you? Perhaps, you and Eva are just not fated to be together. It might not be a bad thing that Eva is going to Hawen. At least it'll be easier for her to start anew there. You don't have to feel guilty about it."

James could not help but laugh out loud when he heard that.

"Amelia, you're indeed different from everyone else. I found it a pity that you and Oscar got divorced previously. As such, it was a surprise to know that the two of you still ended up together. It feels almost too surreal."

"I think so too." Amelia looked at James and continued, "James, you're actually here to send Eva off, aren't you? I don't think you really dislike her that much. Sometimes, it's better for us to come to terms with our own feelings. Don't wait until it's too late for regrets. Eva is a wonderful girl. Other than the fact that she can be too carefree sometimes, she doesn't have any major flaws. Besides, she loves you wholeheartedly. It's such a pity that you were unable to reciprocate her love, even going so far as to stomp on it. Forget it. It's all in the past now. It doesn't matter what your feelings for her are; I just hope that you won't appear in her life again. I see her as my younger sister and hope to protect her from getting hurt. You are not good enough for her. She deserves a man who loves her wholeheartedly too."

When James heard that, there was a slight change in his expression as his eyes darkened.

After a brief moment of contemplation, he caught up with Amelia and stopped her from leaving.

"Amelia, please apologize to Eva on my behalf. Even though we can't be lovers, we can still be friends."

"James, you have nothing to apologize to her for. From now on, both of you will lead your own separate lives and never cross paths again. I just hope that you don't bother her again."

James hesitated for a second before he agreed to that.

Nodding politely, Amelia got into her car and drove off.

James pressed his lips together after Amelia sped off into the distance. There was a slight uneasiness in his heart. In truth, he did not know why he came to the airport. He just could not help but come here after receiving Eva's text, telling him that she was leaving. However, he did not go into the departure hall in the end.

James felt a sense of loss, knowing that Eva had finally left. However, he tried to comfort himself that he was feeling that way because he was not used to the woman's absence after having her chattering around him for so long.

When Amelia returned home, Oscar was already back.

"I'm home," Amelia said smilingly while walking toward the man.

Oscar wrapped her in his arms before planting a soft kiss on her forehead.

With a gentle gaze in his eyes, he explained, "Recently, someone has been spreading rumors, trying to defame Clinton Corporations' products. As such, the company's upper management had gathered for a meeting which only just ended."

Amelia frowned when she heard that. However, she had faith in Oscar's abilities. The fact that he had shared the situation with her meant that it wasn't a difficult issue for him to handle.

"Have you found out who's the one defaming our company?" Amelia asked.

"Don't worry. I know what to do. It's most likely a competitor from the same industry. Of course, it could be Noah's doing as well. It's possible that the Walker family has resorted to extreme methods after being driven into a corner by me," Oscar replied with a smile.

"It's good that you have confidence, but don't hesitate to tell me if you need my help. As the director of Royce Technologies now, I can assist you in certain aspects."

"My wife will always be my perfect partner. So when are we getting our marriage certificate again?" Oscar asked as he stroked her hair affectionately.

"That depends on your performance. Did you forget how you broke my heart in the past? I must judge your performance before I decide on that, or I'll be embarrassed to divorce

you again. A third time will be too much, and if we divorce again, I won't come back to you anymore," Amelia said in a plausible tone.

Upon hearing that, Oscar tightened his arms around her and promised, "That won't happen again. I will not let anyone trick me into hurting you and our child again. Believe me. You're the only one for me in this life."

From the bottom of her heart, Amelia trusted Oscar's words. She knew he could protect her and Tony. However, she also knew her position as an executive would naturally attract jealousy from others, who would then do everything they could to ruin things for her.

After all, those who carried treasures would always attract hungry wolves.

"Oscar, I believe you can protect Tony and me. I'm just messing with you to make you treat me better. Forget it. I'll stop torturing you with that. Let's get remarried tomorrow. I'm tied to you for the rest of our lives, so I should stop insisting on these superficial vanities. It's meaningless." Amelia smiled.

Oscar could not stop his lips from curling up when he heard that. His mood instantly brightened.

She would always indulge his occasional mistakes, which gave him even more reason to love her.

"Honey, it's my biggest blessing to make you my wife."

Amelia wrapped her arms around his waist and smiled sweetly at his words.

"Welkin Group's chairman's sixtieth birthday is happening tomorrow night. He's holding a banquet and inviting many representatives from the business world. Why don't you come with me?" Oscar suggested.

Amelia drew circles on his back with her fingers.

"Oscar, aren't you scared of people making fun of you for always going back to your exes when you showed up with the Walker family's daughter not too long ago and now with me, who you've divorced two times?" Amelia deliberately teased him.

Hearing that, Oscar squeezed her even tighter.

“Don’t worry about that. Everyone in the industry knows Isabella tricked me, the arrogant Oscar Clinton. I wouldn’t have bounced back from that if you, the ex-wife, hadn’t stayed by my side all this while. So, if I bring you as my plus one to the banquet, no one will have negative things to say about that. Instead, they will see you as a woman who’s incredibly loyal and righteous,” said Oscar.

Amelia left his embrace and blinked at him, not knowing what he meant.

“The world knows I was set up, and they made you claim all the credit. Since you chose to stay by my side against all odds, you deserve to be respected for that. I want everyone to know you’re precious to me, and I won’t trade you for anything in the world,” Oscar declared as he caressed her cheek.

Meeting the man’s intense gaze, Amelia suddenly chuckled. Oscar, who had recovered his lost memories, was still the same man she had long known.

After learning that he had done so much for her without her knowing, she could finally remarry him without any regrets.

“Oscar, it didn’t occur to me that you’re so adorable. Since you’re so lovely, why don’t we get remarried early tomorrow morning? But then, this will be the last time I agree to this. If you let me go again, I will never come back to you,” warned Amelia.

Pulling her into an embrace, Oscar had her lean against his chest to hear his irregular heartbeat as he said, “Amelia, things will be different this time. I will never let anyone hurt you and Tony again.”

Amelia leaned into his embrace and nodded softly.

The next day, the couple went to City Hall and collected their marriage certificate. They were among the rarest to be married thrice and divorced twice. Thus, the staff member at the City Hall could not resist taking another glance at them when processing their marriage certificate. Taking in their good looks, the staff member believed the two did make a great couple, and it would be a pity if they did not get back together.

After getting their certificates, Oscar took Amelia to a newly opened farmstay and had lunch together before returning to the Clinton residence.

“Did you get remarried?” Olivia smiled as she stared at the ring that Oscar had put on his finger again.

“Amelia and I collected our marriage certificate this morning,” said Oscar with a smile.

Amelia had a blissful smile on her face as well.

“Focus on building a happy life together since you’re remarried now. Don’t let any issue get in your way again. Now that Steph isn’t here anymore, my poor health won’t be able to cope with the thought of you two getting in trouble again,” said Olivia as the look in her eyes dimmed a little.

The smile vanished from Amelia’s face as she said, “Mom, once everything has settled down, why don’t we go on a family trip together? So many things have happened lately, and all of us are feeling somewhat down. I think it’s a good idea for us to get some fresh air.”

After giving it some thought, Olivia decided not to reject Amelia’s kindness and said, “Sure. It sounds great to go on a family trip once we settle everything.”

“That’s decided then.”

The couple stayed at the Clinton residence for nearly two hours before leaving. They left Tony behind to keep Nolan company. With the kids playing and laughing at home, Olivia could finally distract herself from the pain of losing her daughter.

Oscar took Amelia to get her hair done and fetched the dress he had prepared for her before heading to the banquet together.

The couple instantly became the center of attention as soon as they arrived at the venue.

Wearing a red dress, Amelia looked exceptionally alluring and beautiful with her gorgeous face and sexy curves.

Meanwhile, Oscar’s sophisticated tailored suit highlighted his tall and well-built figure. Standing together, they certainly looked like a match made in heaven.

Oscar led Amelia through the crowd, completely ignoring the gazes lingering on them.

“Old Mr. Yarbrough, I brought my wife, Amelia, here tonight. We wish you a blessed birthday, and may you be gifted with the greatest joys and the most blissful life,” Oscar said politely as he handed the gift to the butler standing behind Darryl Yarbrough, the chairman of Welkin Group.

Darryl glanced at Amelia before laughing heartily at Oscar. “You didn’t have to prepare a gift. I’m happy enough to see you here. Anyway, I assume you’ve reconciled with Amelia,

haven't you? I talked to your mother over the phone this evening, and she told me to look after your wife. It's a relief for us elders to see you two getting back together again."

Oscar smiled and said, "I was careless and got tricked by someone despicable, which was why we ended up divorced. But now, things are getting better. She is working at Royce Technologies. I heard Welkin Group has an upcoming project in collaboration with Royce Technologies, so I hope you can look out for my wife and not let things get too tough for her, Old Mr. Yarbrough."

"Look at you. It seems like you came to celebrate my sixtieth birthday, but what you had in mind was to lure me into supporting your wife. I've yet to unwrap and accept your gift. Oscar, where are your manners?" Despite his choice of words, Darryl burst into hearty laughter.

"Well, Old Mr. Yarbrough, I can't help but speak up for my wife when you're such a wise and generous man. Any benefits you can offer her are appreciated."

Rolling his eyes, Darryl said, "Amelia, you must help me teach him a lesson when you have the time. How dare he try to get so greedy with an old man like me?"

Hearing that, Amelia gave Darryl a warm smile and said, "Old Mr. Yarbrough, here I was hoping you could teach him a lesson for me."

Upon hearing that, Darryl was startled for a moment, and he laughed out loud after processing her words.

The three continued talking until the butler led Darryl elsewhere to socialize with other guests.

Amelia took Oscar's arm as they walked toward the food area. Unexpectedly, a man walked over to them with a woman on his arm. That woman had delicate facial features, but upon a closer look, she slightly resembled Amelia.

"Mr. Clinton, what a coincidence. I've heard stories about you and always wanted to meet you in person, but I didn't get the chance to do that as you're too busy. I guess it must be destined for us to meet here." The man raised his eyebrows, glancing brazenly at Amelia. "Mrs. Clinton, you do look like my plus one. Anyway, my plus one here is a rising star in the entertainment industry, and she has starred in quite a few TV dramas. Her name is Rory. Do you perhaps know her?"

When she heard the familiar name, Amelia could not help looking at the celebrity named Rory. She did resemble Amelia in appearance and way of styling. Moreover, her eyes seemed rather familiar to Amelia, as though she had seen them somewhere before.

Rory. Rory Sanders. Are they related? Amelia was reminded of the scene where she saw Rory a year ago. At the time, Rory already looked different. Hence, Amelia believed it would not be impossible for Rory to alter her appearance again through cosmetic surgery.

Something clicked in Amelia's mind that made her think the Rory standing before her might turn out to be the Rory Sanders she knew.

Ever since Isabella's scheming, Amelia had grown wary of any woman who tried to approach them. After all, she had to be extra careful so that these women would not get the chance to ruin her precious marriage again.

With that, she looked at Rory with a trace of wariness in her eyes.

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Chapter 897 The Special Invitation

Instead of looking at Oscar, Rory shot Amelia a glance and flashed a smile. As her looks slightly resembled Amelia's, the way she smiled made her look like a replica of the latter.

As Amelia watched her grin, she somehow felt an inexplicable disdain in her heart. Subconsciously, she glanced at Oscar and noticed he was staring at Rory. Amelia's heart skipped a beat because she feared Oscar would have different feelings for Rory.

"Rory, right? You should know what I like before you try to seduce me. Dressing up and getting plastic surgery to look just like my wife doesn't mean I will like you. A defective product will always be flawed. Don't imitate my wife on purpose. You're only making a fool out of yourself, and the sight of you disgusts me," uttered Oscar unwaveringly with the corner of his lips quirked up. His words sounded rather malicious to others.

Rory's picturesque and exquisite face grew slightly distorted from her grimace as she dug her slender fingers into her skin. "Mr. Clinton, she is my companion. Don't you think you are being disrespectful to me for saying those words in my face?" the man said angrily.

All it took was a glance from Oscar for the man's aggressiveness to subside. "Since she is your woman, you should stop her from hitting on other guys, especially with that face of hers after she had plastic surgery. Even if she looks exactly like my wife after the surgery, she is still a defective product," Oscar said imposingly.

Rory's expression became even grimmer. With that, Oscar took Amelia with him to the side, leaving Rory and the man. The latter's face was contorted from anger, but he dared not do anything to Oscar.

"Rory, how dare you persuade me to come over so that you could seduce Oscar? I turned out to be just your pawn." The man immediately flung her hand away and left in a huff.

Rory froze on the spot, biting her lip. Initially, she thought she could catch Oscar's attention by dressing up, but she didn't expect to be mocked by him instead.

Undoubtedly, Oscar and Amelia, who had already left, couldn't be bothered with whatever went on in Rory's mind.

Oscar helped Amelia to take some food. Seeing the faint frown on her forehead, he lifted his hand to caress the furrow.

"Stop frowning. Otherwise, it will ruin your looks," said Oscar gently.

Amelia snickered at that.

"Oscar, I suspect the actress who calls herself Rory earlier is actually Rory Sanders. I don't believe there would be that many who look like me in a city." She finally voiced out her suspicions.

Oscar caressed her cheeks. "Don't worry. She is nothing but a clown. I'll have someone find out more about her. If these people think I am someone who easily yields to seduction, they would surely lose badly."

After the banquet ended, Oscar took Amelia home and called Hugo, asking him to run a background check on Rory after Amelia fell asleep. Hugo sent all of Rory's information to Oscar in less than two hours.

It turned out Rory had indeed undergone plastic surgery, and she was the one who had taken care of Amelia before that. After she was exposed and kicked out of the company, she hooked up with Jennifer, who paid for her surgery. Jennifer also exploited her networking to gain sponsors for Rory and helped Rory become an actress in the entertainment industry. Besides that, now that Rory's facial features resembled Amelia's,

the media was spreading rumors saying she was the sister of ClintonCorporations' heir's wife. Regardless of the veracity of the rumors, the entertainment industry treated her with a measure of respect just to be safe. Anything was possible when it came to family background.

Perhaps because of such an advantage, Rory quickly rose to fame in the entertainment industry. In just a year since she made her debut, she had acted in many series and had gained many diehard fans who called her a sexy goddess.

As Oscar read the facts, the corner of his lips curled up into a smirk.

Just then, Hugo's call came in.

"Boss, I've hacked into Jennifer's computer and found many photos of Rory before and after the plastic surgery. There are also photos of her sleeping with many investors. If these photos were uploaded to the internet, her acting career would be completely over," stated Hugo.

"Go ahead," ordered Oscar.

He had no interest in playing childish games with a woman who tried to ruin his family and would nip the problem in the bud if there were any danger. Isabella's tricks had made him beyond wary. He dared not overestimate himself and underestimate his enemies' capabilities again. Any threat had to be eliminated so that his enemies wouldn't rapidly grow more powerful and threaten his family. If that happened, there would be dire consequences.

The next day, intimate photos of the rising actress Rory getting drunk with many producers and being taken advantage of while sitting in some older men's laps were all over the newspapers from major media companies. Various photos of her hit the headlines of the entertainment news. The news also spread fast on the internet. Her Twitter account—which she had only recently created—and the social platforms related to her were flooded with comments. Many were disappointed to find out about her true colors. At the same time, there were some who were enjoying the show on the internet as the matter was no concern to them.

In short, Rory became a hot topic almost everywhere in the country in a day, but her acting career was over.

Meanwhile, Rory, who had been acting arrogantly in the agency, was yanked into the office by her manager. He then took out his phone to show her the articles about her scandal spread across the internet.

“Oh my God. This is surely the end for you. Your scandals are now all over the newspapers and the internet. You have truly become famous this time, but your acting career is utterly ruined. I think it would be hard for you to start over even if you have influential people to back you up,” her manager said fretfully while walking in circles.

Rory’s expression turned grim. As she stared at the photos of her drinking recklessly with the producers and investors on the website, the words “It’s over” couldn’t stop reverberating in her head.

Everything she had worked hard to achieve might be at stake because of the scandals.

The first thought that came to her mind was Oscar. All she did was show up before him once yesterday, yet her scandals were already spreading all over the place the next day. She had always known that Oscar was so powerful that he could hide any truth as he pleased. However, she did not expect he would be so ruthless as to force someone who had only appeared before him once into a corner.

Her limbs turned cold in an instant while her mind was a mess. As her manager continued to lament and fret over the news, his voice sounded like a buzzing fly to her.

Picking up her bag, she planned to leave without looking back. Before she could do so, her manager grabbed her hand.

“Where do you think you’re going, Rory? Hordes of reporters are camping outside, just waiting for you to appear! You’ll be surrounded by them as soon as you step out of here. We’re already in a mess right now, so please stop causing trouble. Once the heat is off us, we’ll arrange a press conference to clear things up.” The manager pulled Rory back inside and added, “Right now, you need to stay in here, and I’ll go find the higher-ups to deal with the photographs.”

Rory could only purse her lips tightly without saying a word.

Her manager shot her an impatient glance and left the office to handle the issue of the photographs.

Once the man had left the room, Rory took her bag and ran out of there.

Putting on a disguise, Rory left through the back door of the building and got inside her car before driving off quickly.

When Rory reached a remote location, she called Jennifer, explaining her current circumstances.

However, Jennifer did not respond at all. Unable to withstand the dead silence over the phone, Rory could only plead desperately, "Jennifer, you have to help me this time! You've wasted so much time and effort getting me into the entertainment industry, so I'm sure you don't want me to be ruined so easily, right? That would mean all your efforts would be completely wasted."

Even so, Jennifer still remained silent.

"Just give me a response, Jennifer! If we let these photographs spread around, my career will be utterly ruined! Please help me. I'll do whatever you want me to do," Rory said anxiously as she ruffled her hair out of frustration.

Jennifer eventually spoke, though her tone was less than friendly.

"I've seen everything on the internet. It's a common trick, but for you, the damage is straightforward and effective. Come over to my place first. I've already gotten people to delete as many photos as they can," Jennifer replied in a petulant manner.

Rory heaved a sigh of relief.

She then drove to Jennifer's place.

"Rory, I found out that the photographs were sent out on Oscar's instructions. I haven't even ordered you to do anything, and yet he's made the first move already. It seems I've underestimated him. He's deliberately destroying everything that you worked hard to achieve. Are you going to just admit your defeat like that?" Jennifer said casually with her arms folded across her chest.

Rory glanced at Jennifer. It was clear that she refused to admit defeat, but there was nothing she could do. Rory had no connections in the entertainment industry, nor was she powerful enough to stand up for herself. Furthermore, with those photographs being leaked to the public, everything she had worked so hard to achieve was basically ruined. It was hard for her to accept losing everything, and she even began to despise Oscar.

The main reason Rory allowed herself to be manipulated by Jennifer was that she wanted to gain more power so she could approach Oscar herself. However, not only did the man not give her a chance at all, but he was now even planning to destroy her mercilessly. No matter what, she could not take this lying down.

"Rory, your career to stardom is technically over. Do you want to seek revenge?"

Rory merely stared at Jennifer.

Jennifer then motioned Rory over, and the latter leaned in instinctively as Jennifer whispered a few words in her ear.

After hearing Jennifer's words, Rory stared at her in confusion.

"Just do as I told you, and once Amelia is captured, I will pay for you to change your appearance. After that's done, I'll use my own connections to open up a whole new world for you in the entertainment industry." Jennifer gave Rory her promise.

Rory lowered her head as she fell into deep thought. For a long while, she was quiet.

"Rory, I doubt you'll be able to return to a job paying less than ten thousand every month after experiencing the spotlight and attention in the entertainment industry. That's not even enough to buy a luxury handbag! Moreover, you'll need to save up to even get a dress that you like. Tsk, tsk. I feel sad just thinking about those penniless days," Jennifer intentionally said as she glanced at Rory.

Rory's face turned ashen at her words.

After a long silence, she finally agreed, "All right, I promise you. I'll ask Amelia out."

Jennifer could not help but smirk, her eyes glinting with smugness.

Oscar's action had indirectly fueled the flames within Rory.

"As long as you assist me in capturing Amelia, I shall help you become an A-list artiste in the entertainment industry. Once you become powerful, nobody will think of you as a softie and take advantage of you," Jennifer promised.

Rory gave her a look, obviously wary and unconvinced by Jennifer's words.

"I've asked a lawyer to draw up a document, which I've already signed. Once you sign it as well, this document will be legally binding," Jennifer said as she took out a document from her bag.

Rory took the document from her. When she was done reading the document, her eyes widened briefly before returning to their normal state.

"You're giving me fifteen percent of the shares in Larson Group?" Rory asked in disbelief.

Jennifer nodded.

"As long as you take care of this matter for me, all of this will be yours. I won't go back on my words. If you're determined to make it big in the entertainment industry, I'll pay for you to have another plastic surgery, and then you can return to filming. You have a talent for acting, so you will definitely become a superstar someday." Jennifer's words were honey-sweet as she plied Rory with glamorous promises.

Rory's eyes flashed. It was obvious that she was tempted by the offer.

"Okay, I'll try to think of a way to lure Amelia out."

"I'm counting on you, Rory. I hope you won't let me down this time. Otherwise, everything I've provided to you in the past can also be fully revoked."

Rory nodded to show she understood.

After leaving the Larson residence, she drove to Royce Technologies and stopped outside the entrance. As she stared at the magnificent building through her car window, Rory waited for a chance to approach Amelia.

When Rory finally saw Amelia, she noticed Jolin was next to her. She was about to unbuckle her seatbelt when she became hesitant. After giving it some thought, Rory decided to keep her seatbelt on instead.

Amelia and Jolin got into the car and drove away. Noticing their car leaving, Rory quickly trailed behind them.

Rory was cautious as she followed behind their car, but because Jolin was skilled at countersurveillance, she quickly realized their car was being followed.

She froze for a moment before saying, "Sit tight, Mrs. Clinton. Someone's following us right now. I'd like to see who's the daring thug trying to harm you this time!"

Amelia nodded her head slightly.

Jolin then drove to a fairly remote place and stopped the car. Through the rearview mirror, she saw that the vehicle following behind them had also stopped.

"Mrs. Clinton, I'm going to find out who's the dimwit stalking you," said Jolin.

"Be careful."

Jolin nodded.

As soon as she opened the door, Jolin raced toward the other car without even giving Rory a chance to react.

Jolin knocking on the car's window left Rory with no choice, so she could only wind down the window and face the bodyguard.

When Jolin saw Rory's face, she was quite surprised as the latter bore a slight resemblance to Amelia. However, Rory's countenance was rather stiff. Based on Jolin's observations, she was confident Rory had undergone cosmetic surgery.

It looks like she did cosmetic surgery to look like Mrs. Clinton. She probably doesn't have any good intentions. Now that I've caught her red-handed stalking Mrs. Clinton, I'm sure she's up to no good.

"Get out," Jolin said coldly.

Rory wore her sunglasses and got out of the car.

"I'm looking for Amelia." She went straight to the point.

Jolin smiled, but her expression remained cold. She grabbed Rory by the neck and pinned her against the car.

She uttered ruthlessly, "Don't take yourself too seriously. Just because you paid money to look like Mrs. Clinton doesn't make you the one I swore to protect with my life."

Rory stared at her calmly. "I know Amelia and need to speak to her about something. You won't stop her from meeting a friend, right?"

In response, Jolin stared at her coldly.

At that moment, Amelia got out of the car and walked over to them.

"Amelia," Rory called out.

After Rory took off her sunglasses, Amelia found herself feeling disturbed when she looked at the face that bore such a resemblance to her own.

Due to the changes in Rory, both physically and mentally, she had become more and more like a stranger to Amelia. Amelia could no longer sense the same honest and down-to-earth air from this woman she knew back then.

Even as she was deep in thought, she was walking toward Rory.

"Amelia, it's me, Rory Sanders. I went to have cosmetic surgery after getting some money. However, I can tell you've already guessed who I am," Rory said.

Amelia stared at her indifferently.

"Indeed, but I don't get why you're stalking me."

"Amelia, I just watched to catch up with you. I have no bad intentions. Let's go and get a cup of coffee," Rory replied in a deliberately timid tone.

A smile appeared on Amelia's face. Just as Rory thought there was hope, Amelia shot Jolin a look. Jolin immediately pushed Rory into their car before moving to the driver's seat. Meanwhile, Amelia slowly made her way to the backseat.

Amelia said, "Jolin, let's go back to the organization. I'll let Oscar handle her first."

"Amelia, what are you doing? This is kidnapping! I can call the police," Rory cried warily.

Amelia replied softly, "Rory, didn't you seek me out? I'm simply inviting you to the organization to have a chat. It's been a while since we chatted over a cup of coffee. I miss those days. Although I couldn't get a clear picture of how you looked back in Beshya, I'm pretty sure you didn't look that similar to me then."

Rory's expression changed drastically. She did not know what Amelia was trying to do. After a year of not seeing the latter, she could no longer guess what the other woman was thinking.

"Rory, you don't have to be scared of me," Amelia stated after noticing Rory's expression from the rearview mirror.

Rory was stunned, and an indiscernible emotion flitted across her eyes.

Amelia could not be bothered with Rory anymore and closed her eyes. She fell asleep after a while.

When they reached their destination, Jolin gently woke her up.

"Rory, let's go up. I'll treat you to a cup of coffee. The coffee beans they keep here are pretty good. Since you came to find me, it would only be right for me to treat you," Amelia said as she got out of the car.

Rory felt uneasy after getting out of the car. After hearing Amelia's words, she became even more apprehensive as she could not guess what Amelia was trying to do.

Jolin gave her a push.

"Go on, Ms. Sanders. It's not a scary place, so you don't need to look as though you're facing death," she said.

Rory could only follow after Amelia. The instant she entered, her eyes widened in amazement at the luxurious and elegant interior design. She had never seen such spectacular decor before.

Taking the elevator up, they saw Kurt and Hugo the moment they stepped out of the elevator.

"Ms. Sanders, this way, please. Let me brew you a cup of coffee." Hugo made an "after you" gesture, appearing the epitome of a gentleman. However, his tone was firm, and his expression was cold.

Rory instinctively grabbed Amelia's hand.

Amelia retracted her hand discreetly. "Ms. Sanders, didn't you deliberately come and find me to catch up? I'm sure you know Kurt and Hugo too. Let Hugo treat you to a cup of coffee. I'll come over in a while."

Rory's heart started racing as she realized it would be difficult to get out of this place now.

"Amelia, I really came to catch up with you. Also, I'm a public figure now. My manager will call the police if he can't find me, so you guys can't detain me," Rory babbled nervously.

Amelia failed to stop a laugh from escaping her lips.

"Ms. Sanders, weren't you the one stalking me? You said you wanted to catch up with me, so I'm asking Hugo to prepare a cup of coffee for you. He makes good coffee, and I'm sure you will like it. As for your manager, I'll instruct someone to contact him. Don't worry. He won't say anything," Amelia said gently with a smile.

Rory grew anxious upon hearing her words. In the end, Hugo had to force her to a high-end private office.

Rory looked at the office, where she was alone with Hugo. Her heart was pounding hard.

"Hugo, we're in a law-abiding country. If something happens to me, the police will come looking for me," Rory said as she took a step back.

Hugo pointed at the couch off to the side and replied, "Sit. I just want to find out some things. If you're honest, I won't do anything to you."

Rory sat down on the couch like a puppet. Her hands instinctively rubbed her legs in her nervousness as unease flickered in her eyes.

She took a deep breath and willed herself to calm down.

Hugo placed a cup of hot coffee in front of her before walking over and sitting on the couch opposite her. Crossing his legs, he then stared at her calmly.

"Ms. Sanders, I will let you leave here unscathed as long as you tell me everything you know. However, I won't be able to do that if you hide something. I know you understand I have ways to make you wish you were dead," Hugo stated mildly.

Rory could not help but shudder. She believed Hugo's words were not just an empty threat.

If she concealed something from him, she might suffer a fate worse than death.

The wheels were turning in her head, and her eyes glistened. She tried to make a last-ditch effort, pretending to be oblivious.

"Mr. Hugo, I don't know what you're talking about. I truly only followed Amelia to talk about old times with her."

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Chapter 898 An Odd Dinner

Hugo flashed a smirk as he swept a glance across Rory. "Ms. Sanders, I've always thought you are a smart lady. Otherwise, you wouldn't have turned from an unknown girl from a small county into a celebrity. Are you going to play dumb with me? I don't have the best temper, and I'm not as easy to talk to as Mrs. Clinton. If I get impatient, I can't guarantee what I might do," Hugo said as he rotated his wrists.

Shuddering with fright, Rory was rapidly analyzing the situation. The reality was that she would be in trouble if she didn't tell the truth now. Rory had always been great at reading the situation and submitting to circumstances. Hence, she told Hugo everything that she knew almost immediately. Hugo listened and nodded in satisfaction.

"Ms. Sanders, you are indeed smart. It's no wonder that Jennifer willingly gave you money for plastic surgery to let you enter the entertainment industry. You have worked in this industry for more than a year and are no longer the naive little girl from a small county. So, I believe you have something up your sleeves while Jennifer threatens you with your photos. You can hand it to me. After that, I'll send you overseas with a sum of money," Hugo persuaded with his arms crossed.

Rory glanced at Hugo, then took a deep breath before she lowered her head to rack her brains. She was contemplating if she should give what she had to Hugo. However, judging from his attitude currently, she knew she could not refuse to hand over what she had.

"Mr. Hugo, I need a few minutes to think. This should be allowed, right?" Lifting her head, Rory tried to buy herself some time. Hugo raised his chin, but he didn't decline her request. After giving it some thought, Rory opened her bag and took out a nice-looking flash drive. Then, she handed it over to Hugo.

"Here is a video I secretly recorded, which contains the contents of the conversation between Jennifer and June. As you said, Jennifer has many things that may bring me down. If I am not prepared, I will not have a chance to fight back," Rory said.

Hugo got up to take a laptop. Then, he turned it on before inserting the flash drive. Checking the content, it was indeed a conversation between Jennifer and June about how they planned to bring Oscar down.

A smile curled the corners of Hugo's mouth. These two clowns are ridiculous. They must think they are omnipotent because other people did nothing to harm them.

"Mr. Hugo, I only did as I was told to in exchange for money. I never planned to harm Amelia. Also, I did plastic surgery to look similar to Amelia because Jennifer asked me to. As you already know, I come from a small county with no one to depend on. No connections or supporters. I had to rely on Jennifer to make it into the entertainment industry, so please spare me. I promise I'll leave immediately and never appear in front of Amelia again." Rory promised.

Hugo nodded in response.

"I can let you off. Before that, however, you need to take something. Come and have this. After that, I'll ask someone to send you home." Hugo took a black bottle from the table and poured out a few pills. Then, he offered them to Rory.

Rory stared at the pills for quite a while before she raised her head.

"What is this?"

"It's some good stuff. You only need to take it. Don't worry, as you won't die from it. As long as you stay in your hometown obediently, someone will send you medicine every year. Your health will return to normal within three years," Hugo explained.

Rory was reluctant to reach out for the pills.

"Stop wasting time. We're not harming you only because Mrs. Clinton pleaded for you. Otherwise, you wouldn't even be here talking to me since you intended to replace Mrs. Clinton. If I were you, I would take these pills as I was told, return to where I came from, and settle down with someone I like."

Upon hearing that, Rory realized she had no choice but to obey. Thus, she took the pills from Hugo's palm and swallowed them.

"I'll have someone send you to the airport later. After you land in Horington, someone will follow you in secret. If you behave yourself, I will have someone arrange a stable job that pays well for you," Hugo said.

Rory knew her dream of becoming a celebrity was shattered. However, at that moment, staying alive was more important than living the life of a star.

"I got it," she responded.

Later, Rory was sent directly to the airport. The person bought two flight tickets for three in the afternoon that day. As soon as the time arrived, they boarded the plane, and Rory was escorted back to Horington.

"Mrs. Clinton, I've sent her back to Horington as you ordered," Hugo reported.

Amelia nodded upon hearing that.

"Mrs. Clinton, I thought we could have taught a sly woman like Rory a lesson so that she will learn something from this. She might misbehave again in the future since we let her off the hook so easily." Puzzled, Hugo glanced at Amelia.

Amelia snickered at that.

“She’s only an irrelevant woman who doesn’t deserve our time and effort. We only need to send her back to where she came from. Also, didn’t you send someone to follow her in secret?”

“Yes, I did. But I’m worried she might have gotten used to the attention given to her in the entertainment industry and wouldn’t be able to adjust to ordinary life. By then, she might be up to no good once more.”

“Hugo, you agreed that she’s a smart one. She will not appear in front of Oscar and me again if she doesn’t want to ruin her future. I don’t have a problem with how she gets back into the entertainment industry as long as she stays out of my sight.”

Hugo merely shrugged after he heard that.

In his opinion, Rory was just a minor character who couldn’t kick up too big a fuss. Hence, he had no further objections to Amelia’s decision.

As soon as Oscar arrived at the organization, Hugo handed the flash drive to him.

Oscar inserted the flash drive into the laptop and listened to the files intently. His gaze grew darker the more he heard.

“Boss, we’ve located Jennifer’s whereabouts. Should we send someone to capture her now?” Hugo asked.

“There’s no need for that, at least not now. I asked you to investigate the internal affairs of June’s company. Have you gotten your hands on any information?”

Lowering his head, Hugo apologized, “His company indeed has a problem with tax evasion. However, we failed to get any of his company accounts that show substantial tax evasion. I’m sorry for my incompetence.”

“I don’t want your apology, Hugo. Carry on with the investigation. I’m giving you another month,” Oscar said with an imposing tone.

“Yes, Boss.”

Then, Oscar unplugged the flash drive and handed it to Hugo. “You keep the flash drive. When you find evidence of his tax evasion and embezzling, send this flash drive along

with the evidence to the police. Then, use it to sue them for intentionally setting up my family and me.”

Hugo nodded in response and took the flash drive.

Then, Oscar left the office to look for Amelia.

“Let’s go home. I’ve asked Mom to prepare your favorite dishes.” Oscar smiled as he held onto Amelia’s waist.

Amelia nodded upon hearing that.

The two left the organization while holding onto each other. Inside the car, Amelia received a call from Tiffany. The latter was inviting her to have dinner at Hotel Van Hutton’s private dining room number 202.

Tiffany sounded anxious over the phone. Before Amelia could ask her anything, Tiffany ended the call after telling Amelia to come immediately.

Nobody picked up the phone when Amelia redialed the number. Confused, she could only ask Oscar to change their destination to Hotel Van Hutton.

Without hesitation, Oscar changed their direction and headed to Hotel Van Hutton.

After getting off the car, the two walked side by side to private dining room number 202 on the second floor. Pushing open the door, Amelia saw an unexpected person.

Tiffany’s eyes sparkled with delight as soon as she saw Amelia and Oscar.

“Here, Amelia and Oscar. Come over quickly,” Tiffany said excitedly.

“It’s been a while, Amelia. You must have missed me.” A male voice sounded. Following that, Amelia was pulled into the man’s embrace. The next moment, Oscar grabbed the man by his collar and dragged him away from her.

“Long time no see, Oscar. Your way of expressing your enthusiasm is still so unique. It seems that you are getting more possessive toward Amelia, which makes me wonder what made you agree to let her study abroad for a year. But I have no complaints since I became her mentor for a year. She is an incredibly gifted lady.”

Oscar glanced at Teddy, who was busy talking away. A trace of guilt flashed in his eyes. He had heard what happened in that one year from Amelia, and that was the only reason he didn't stop Teddy from hugging her. After all, these two had a deep friendship.

"Teddy, what are you doing here? Why didn't you call me when you came to Chanaea?" Amelia asked.

"I wanted to surprise you and Tiff. So how did I do? Are you surprised?" Teddy asked.

When Amelia noticed who else was in the room, she no longer felt as happy. Derrick was sitting beside Tiffany and looking grim, while Finnick and Kate were next to him.

Never had she ever thought she would meet all the people she didn't want to see together in one place for dinner.

Tiffany got up and went to Amelia. Subsequently, Derrick followed right behind her.

Wishing to understand the situation, Amelia shot Tiffany an inquisitive look. Tiffany shook her head in response, indicating that it was a long story and that she would explain everything later.

"Mr. Clinton and Amelia, you two are here. Ever since I met Amelia at the banquet, I've wanted to invite the two of you for a meal together. Coincidentally, you two have reconciled. Let's celebrate your reunion with this meal. Please take a seat," Derrick said courteously.

After giving it some thought, Derrick welcomed Teddy enthusiastically, "Tiff and I will be your hosts since you are a guest here in Chanaea, Mr. Rice. Feel free to order anything you want later."

Plastering a business-like smile on his face, Teddy looked at Derrick.

"Thank you, Mr. Hisson. I heard Tiff and you are divorced, so I guess Tiff and Amelia should be my hosts instead. Oh, yes. I forgot to tell you that I'm pursuing Tiff now. It's your loss that you gave up on such an incredible woman, but I'm lucky you did that. Don't worry. I'll make sure to cherish Tiff," Teddy said.

Derrick's expression never changed. "You're funny, Mr. Rice. I didn't know you had a habit of dreaming."

Afraid that the two might break into a fight, Tiffany squeezed between the men and said, "Let's all take a seat."

Derrick and Teddy shot daggers at one another before they sat down.

Tiffany pulled Amelia and sat her on the other side. Naturally, Oscar followed behind and settled down next to Amelia.

Right as everyone took their seats, the waiter came in to serve the dishes.

Teddy and Derrick placed food on Tiffany's plate simultaneously. Tiffany's hand froze in mid-air when she noticed the sudden abundance of food on her plate. In an instant, she lost her appetite.

The corners of Amelia's mouth twitched as she saw the two openly vying for Tiffany's affection by treating her well.

"Have some salad, Amelia," Oscar said as he scooped some greens for her.

Snapping back to her senses, Amelia flashed a smile at Oscar. Then, she started to eat slowly.

Oscar pretended not to feel the tension at the dining table. Unruffled, he deshelled the prawns and gave them to Amelia. It seemed like they were the only people enjoying the food.

Meanwhile, Tiffany started to feel uneasy under the two men's burning gazes.

"Listen, Derrick, Teddy. Although Tiff is pretty, you can't fill your stomach from looking at her. Why don't you two eat up? Tiff stayed up late last night to rush her manuscript. I'm sure she's starving, so let her eat in peace." Amelia finally spoke up as she could not bear it anymore. There was a hint of warning in her tone.

Derrick retracted his gaze. Picking up his silverware, he stopped harassing Tiffany with his staring. As for Kate and Finnick, they had remained silent from the beginning.

When they were almost done with the meal, Kate put down her fork and wiped the corners of her mouth. Then, she said, "Tiffany, I was wrong, and I apologize for what I did. Please come back to us as our family can't do without you."

Tiffany froze with a fork in her hand. She lifted her head to look at Kate, who had just apologized to her.

If it were before, she would have been overjoyed at hearing this. Unfortunately, things had changed, and she no longer felt emotional at getting an apology.

Too Much To Bear, My Love Chapter 899

Chapter 899 An Internal Feud

Kate shot Tiffany a conciliatory smile. Then, she lowered her pride and practically begged, "Tiff, please accept my sincerest apologies. I've given the matter much thought over the past year, and I've realized I must shoulder part of the blame for the end of Derrick and Crystal's relationship. That's why I'll no longer object if you and Derrick reconcile. Please forgive me and give him another chance."

Tiffany stiffened in surprise, though she was quickly amused by the older lady's words. She replied civilly, "Thank you for your generosity, Mrs. Hisson, but Derrick and I have been divorced for a year. We've never reconnected since then, and I'm just trying to get on with my life after the split. There's nothing to forgive, Mrs. Hisson. That's all I have to say. I hope you and Mr. Hisson live a long and healthy life."

Considering her numerous conflicts with Kate in the past, it was already a feat that Tiffany managed to maintain a courteous tone with her former mother-in-law. Kate opened her mouth as though to say something, but Derrick deliberately coughed to catch her attention. She glanced at him and swallowed the words on the tip of her tongue.

Tiffany also glanced at Derrick. She clearly sensed that Kate was somewhat fearful of her son. She had no idea what had happened in the past year, but the power dynamics in the family had obviously shifted, and Kate was no longer as overbearing as she remembered.

She did have a guess, though. Perhaps it's because Derrick is formally the head of the Hisson family now. Not that it mattered to her now.

The uncomfortable meal eventually came to an end. Tiffany declared politely, "Mr. and Mrs. Hisson, thank you for inviting us to a meal today. I've got a manuscript to rush, so I shan't take up more of your time."

Before Kate could say a word, Derrick piped up, "Don't worry about it. Your manuscript is more important. But make sure you take it slow sometimes. Don't forget to eat and rest while you're rushing your manuscript. You look as though you've lost some weight, so don't skip any more meals."

Tiffany glanced at her ex-husband and gave him a slight nod.

Then, Derrick firmly dragged his parents away from the restaurant. Tiffany stared at his back, something akin to admiration flashing through her gaze.

“Tiff, he’s gone. Stop staring.” Amelia even nudged her friend for good measure.

Only then did Tiffany retract her gaze and smile at Amelia.

Amelia had already turned to Teddy and asked, “Have you booked a hotel, Teddy? Should I get Oscar to arrange a place for you to stay?”

“I asked my assistant to get me a room at a hotel I always stay at when I’m in Chanaea. I’ll head over there in a bit. You can go meet your love Oscar now, Amelia. Let Tiff and I have some alone time. Won’t you take pity on my depressingly single life?” Teddy shrugged as he replied jauntily to Amelia’s question.

Tiffany shot Amelia a look that warned her against leaving them alone.

Amelia immediately said to Teddy, “Alas, I think your wish isn’t happening tonight. Tiff is rushing out a script for an office drama, so please forgive her absence tonight. Oscar and I will clear our schedules tomorrow and be your dedicated tour guide.”

Teddy glanced at Tiffany. Then, as though remembering something, he swiftly agreed to Amelia’s suggestion.

“Get some rest then, Tiff. If you’re free in a couple of days, then I’d love to have you show me around. Don’t worry; I won’t try anything funny. Please don’t treat me like some predator. I’m a bona fide gentleman.”

Tiffany mustered a smile in response.

A moment later, Oscar sent someone to drive Teddy to his hotel. Tiffany was visibly relieved when the car left.

Amelia turned to her husband and said, “Wait for me in the car, Oscar. I need to talk to Tiff.”

Oscar wrapped his hand around her nape and pulled her in for a forehead kiss before getting into his car.

The lovebirds’ public display of affection had Tiffany cringing dramatically in response. She smirked at Amelia and complained, “You’re really rubbing it in, huh.”

Amelia merely stared at her friend quietly.

The smile on Tiffany's face disappeared, and she shrugged before explaining, "I went to the airport to fetch Teddy, hoping to treat him to a meal. I didn't expect to run into Derrick and his parents here. Everything else happened like what you saw earlier."

Amelia decided to test the waters and commented, "Teddy only called you when he came to Chanaea; I didn't hear even a hint about his travel plans. The two of you seem to be pretty close. Are you considering dating him?"

Tiffany shrugged again and denied it. "There's nothing to it. We're just friends. I went to the airport to fetch him because he asked me to. He said so many things on the phone and made me sound like some heartless villain if I refused to pick him up, so I went. But at the end of the day, I know we can never be together. Even if Derrick is out of the picture, I would never consider Teddy as boyfriend material. I prefer dating a local."

She had laid everything out in the open, and it was impossible for Amelia to misunderstand her reasons.

"You're the only person who can decide on your relationship. I won't interfere, but I have a little piece of advice for you. Teddy won't give up that easily, so you might be better off nipping his intentions in the bud."

Tiffany said wryly, "I expressed my thoughts very clearly on our way here, but your mentor seems very confident in his ability to change my mind. I think you know what I mean."

"Well, you've clearly bewitched your admirers, though your popularity with the opposite sex hasn't exactly given you decent candidates." Amelia patted her friend on the shoulder and said, "You should go home. We can talk about this tomorrow. I can tell Mrs. Hisson is softening her stance. She might try to play the emotional card to help Derrick win you over."

Tiffany lowered her eyes, seemingly lost in thought.

Amelia led Tiffany to her car and opened the door, gently coaxing her inside.

She only returned to Oscar's car after Tiffany drove off.

As she put on her seatbelt, she said to Oscar, "I thought Derrick had finally let go after a year. He must've been acting every time I saw him in the past. I think he's determined to

win Tiff over again, but Teddy's pulling out all the stops, and he's definitely a strong contender."

Oscar steered the car steadily. Turning the steering wheel at a corner, he then replied, "Frankly, Teddy has no real advantage here. Tiffany doesn't even like him. Now Derrick is a different story. She doesn't look as though she has forgotten about him at all, but his betrayal is a big hindrance toward their reconciliation. They'll need a massive breakthrough to bury their past before they can get back together."

Amelia blinked several times as she mulled over his words. "Do you have any suggestions, Oscar?"

He shot her a glance and smiled. "What do you think would happen if Derrick suffered a car accident and news of his life being in critical danger gets out?"

Grudges, big or small, became inconsequential in the face of life-or-death situations.

Amelia initially blinked in confusion, though realization soon dawned upon her.

"Oscar! What a wicked suggestion. I hate lying to Tiff, though. Let's go back to square one. Accidents are far too cliché anyway," Amelia responded after some thought.

She was not against the idea of matchmaking Derrick and Tiffany per se, but she thought it was prudent to confirm Tiffany's feelings for her ex-husband. If she acted selfishly and encouraged their reconciliation, Derrick's illegitimate child would always haunt them, and inevitable arguments about his past betrayal would slowly but surely erode their love for each other.

Oscar arched his brow at his wife's reply but did not seem to mind that she had shot down his suggestion.

Amelia fell back into deep thought. Suddenly, she asked, "Oscar, do you think I should help Tiff to reconcile with Derrick?"

"Well, they're both hung up on each other, so getting back together seems to be the straightforward solution. But let's not forget about the child who triggered their divorce. That's the main hurdle to their reconciliation. If we want a reunion to happen, we need to help Tiffany fully warm up to Derrick's child." Oscar instantly identified the crux of the problem.

Amelia nodded her head in agreement.

“Amelia, you shouldn’t interfere in this matter. Just let her make the decisions. She’s already an adult, so she should know what’s best for her. Your interventions will only halt her growth. Besides, I think it’s fine for her to stay single now. She’ll be able to find her soul mate once she wishes to accept someone,” Oscar said.

“I know that. I’ve never thought of interfering with her relationship, but I feel she shouldn’t get involved with Derrick anymore since they’ve missed out on one another. Dragging this matter further will only cause them to be reminded of their unpleasant past.”

Oscar merely patted Amelia’s head.

After they arrived home, Amelia played with Tony for a short while. Then, she asked how he was adapting to the new school and if he could catch up with his studies. Tony reported everything to his mother. She pecked him on the cheek affectionately after listening to him.

“My son is indeed brilliant.”

Tony grinned happily.

“Mommy, why don’t you sleep with me tonight? I’ve missed you.” He glanced at Oscar and brazenly attempted to snatch Amelia from his father.

Amelia patted Tony’s head in amusement.

“Tony, don’t think of your daddy as your enemy. He’s your closest family member,” she said.

Tony pursed his lips in response.

“Be good. Members of the same family shouldn’t hold grudges against one another.”

He fell silent for some time but ultimately nodded.

After coaxing Tony to sleep, Amelia and Oscar returned to their bedroom. She hugged him from behind and chuckled.

“Oscar, it seems like Tony thinks of you as his enemy. This is a result of what you did previously to distance yourself from him. Tsk tsk.”

He grabbed her hand and asked, “Amelia, why do I sense that you’re gloating?”

“Ah, you’ve caught me. I am gloating,” she chirped.

Oscar laughed out loud as well.

“Don’t worry. Regardless of how smart he may be, I have the confidence to handle him as his father. Starting tomorrow, I’ll bring him to the organization for training. I wonder if his combat skills have improved after one year of delay.”

“Actually, Kurt taught him some self-defense techniques when we were living abroad.” Amelia hesitated briefly before informing him of the truth.

Tony had made relatively good progress in polishing his fighting skills during that year. At the very least, his forms were proper and refined.

Oscar did not say a word for a few moments. In the end, he nodded slightly.

“Are you mad?”

He brushed her nose with his finger. “Weren’t you already certain that I wouldn’t be mad when you asked that question?”

“I’m busted again.”

Taking in her dazzling smile, Oscar felt his heart melting.

Holding her in his arms, he lay on the bed and dozed off. A dreamless night ensued.

The next day, Oscar requested his subordinates to hasten their progress in targeting Noah. In lesser than five days, news of Walker Group’s tax evasion amounting to over ten million spread like wildfire. The company’s general manager, Noah, was brought to the police station for investigation. Subsequently, the company fell into chaos due to the lack of leadership. Matthew filled the top position, but the finance director swindled the corporation’s fund and went on a run. Panic-stricken, Matthew had no choice but to report that incident to the police for them to handle the situation. The media worked together to report news of Walker Group’s impending bankruptcy, causing all the company’s employees to feel anxious and fearful. Moreover, Matthew had grown used to a luxurious and laid-back lifestyle all those years, not to mention he wasn’t cut out to manage a business. As a result, he failed to host a press conference in time to address the flying rumors and didn’t safeguard the company’s rights and assets via legal means, causing the company’s share price to plummet quickly. The share price even dropped to an all-time low. Under such circumstances, most employees chose to resign, and many experienced workers were poached by other corporations with lucrative salaries. The

considerably large company in the market finally succumbed to the instability and was on the verge of declaring bankruptcy after struggling for some time.

Carol was deeply unsettled and annoyed by the turns of events. As she didn't have effective countermeasures to resolve the crisis, she could only vent her frustration on the bedbound Isabella.

"You're a jinx! Why did I give birth to a daughter like you? If you hadn't provoked Oscar back then, our family could've lived lavishly by relying on our connection with Stephanie. You just had to fulfill your daydream and infuriate Oscar. Look what you've done now. The Walker family is going to bankrupt soon because of his relentless effort to take revenge on us. Are you happy now?" Carol grasped Isabella's hair and bellowed with burning anger.

Isabella felt her body was about to crumble because of how intensely her mother shook her. Her broken limbs had yet to show signs of recovery thus far.

"Mom, calm down. I'll die if you continue to shake me in this manner," Isabella yelped weakly.

Carol disregarded her and kept moving her daughter roughly to and fro. Overwhelmed by rage, she even slapped the latter's face a few times, causing Isabella's cheeks to swell.

"I'll kill you to prevent you from troubling the Walker family. Noah finally accomplished some results in managing Walker Group, yet you ruined everything just as the company was about to become one of the top ten corporations. And now, Noah was brought to the police station because of you. You're nothing more than a jinx. I should just kill you." Carol closed her hands around Isabella's throat, choking the latter to the extent of causing her eyes to roll back into her head. Isabella almost died due to shortness of breath.

Fortunately, the nurse entered the room at that moment. When she saw the scene, she immediately placed down the medications and rushed forward.

"Please calm down, Mrs. Walker. Let go of the patient. Otherwise, she'll die." The nurse was able to pull Carol away after much difficulty. Isabella collapsed on the bed, covered her neck with her functional arm, and coughed violently. She thought that was the end of her life earlier.

Although she was in a very pathetic state, she felt it was better to pass away in peace than to survive in misery at that instant when she was facing death.

Carol panted heavily while glaring at Isabella. Then, she shouted at the nurse, "You don't have to give her the medications. I want to proceed with the discharge procedures. It's a waste of money to treat this jinx!"

The nurse glanced at Isabella, who was nearly strangled to death, sympathetically. She thought she was unlucky to deal with the Walker family members. Nonetheless, despite how piteous Isabella might be, the supply of medication had to stop once the payment was discontinued. After all, the hospital wasn't a charitable organization. Mere sympathy wasn't helpful or practical at the facility.

"Mrs. Walker, I don't have to administer these medications to Ms. Walker, is that right?" the nurse asked.

"That's right. Take them away. I'm going to settle the discharge procedure right away."

The nurse nodded. Then, she exited the room with the medications. Even Isabella's cries failed to halt the nurse.

"Mom, are you trying to kill me? You supported me when I successfully tricked Oscar in the past. You and Noah acquired plenty of benefits by relying on me back then. Now that this matter is exposed, you come here to criticize me. You've been the one to profit the most in the past year. Why aren't you mentioning that now?" Isabella uttered angrily while staring at her mother.

Carol's face flushed crimson in a fury after she heard that.

"You jinx! Don't go around deceiving others if you aren't sufficiently capable. Do you think I would've accepted the perks if I hadn't assumed you would marry Oscar? You shouldn't have been so full of yourself when you didn't have the abilities. The Walker family is going to bankrupt soon because of you. You can start begging on the street tomorrow since you look like a tramp now anyway." With that, she left the ward immediately.

Isabella gazed at the deserted ward in despair. She had schemed for so long just to end up in her current wretched state. She thought at least her family members would side with her at the lowest point of her life. Unfortunately, she had overestimated her charisma and underestimated the Walker family members' ruthlessness.

Isabella was brought back to the Walker residence before her limbs recovered. Coincidentally, Noah was also released from the police station. Unshaven and disheveled, he appeared rather pathetic. When he saw Isabella, he reacted as if he had seen his nemesis.

“Leave her on the streets for her to become a beggarwoman,” Noah uttered mercilessly.

The two maids, who were supporting Isabella, exchanged glances and hesitated.

“Hurry up and do as I say. Send her to the city center to beg there. She looks no different from a tramp right now. You two keep an eye on her in secret. Wasn’t she bathing in glory and fame previously? This time, I want her to experience what it feels like to be pitied by everyone,” Noah added.

Carol, carrying stuff into the house from outside, faltered when she heard his speech. Although she blamed Isabella for her recklessness in causing the Walker family’s downfall, the latter was still her daughter at the end of the day. She couldn’t bear letting Isabella beg on the streets. Firstly, that news would be detrimental to the Walker family’s reputation. Secondly, Isabella was her biological daughter, after all.

Too Much To Bear, My Love Chapter 900

Chapter 900 Rather Be Mocked Than Be Pitied

“You must be tired from your trip to the police station, Noah. I’ve asked the maid to prepare lemonade for you to get rid of your bad luck. You should go upstairs and rest after this,” Carol advised as she hurried toward Noah.

The latter shot Carol a glare and snarled, “I’m calling the shots this time, Mom. Don’t try to stop me. I will make sure she stays a beggar forever on the streets. That presumptuous woman deserves it for ruining my family and my company. I’ve lost everything! If I’m going down, she’s going down with me.”

Carol’s lips quivered, but she was at a loss for words. The Walker family was doomed in just a few months. The disastrous events were nothing like what they had experienced before. Nobody knew if they could manage to turn the tide successfully this time.

“Drag her out to the streets. If she doesn’t get two thousand by the end of today, leave her there to beg until she hits the target,” Noah ordered. The maids glanced at Carol. The latter waved her hand, signaling them to take Isabella out to the streets.

Isabella was devastated to hear that. “Mom, Noah, you can’t do this to me! I’m also one of your family!” Isabella yelled as the maids dragged her out.

Carol took a glance at Isabella. Despite feeling sorry for her daughter, she chose to take Noah's side. Isabella was forced into a car and taken to the city.

"Don't you touch me! I'm Isabella, the daughter of the Walker family! I'll fire you if you touch me again!" Isabella made a final attempt to wriggle herself free from the maids.

"We're sorry, Ms. Isabella. We're just following Mr. Noah's orders. If you have anything to complain about, tell that to Mr. Noah and Mrs. Walker." With that said, the driver left Isabella on a bustling street and placed a bowl in front of her.

Propping herself up with her only intact arm, Isabella felt her face redden with shame as she felt gazes fixating on her. At that very moment, she would rather die on the spot than receive pity from the passersby.

To think she was a rich and prominent lady before landing in this pathetic situation! She was too devastated to even cry.

If Isabella knew that scheming against Oscar would land her in this situation, she would have steered clear of him from the start. However, it was too late for her to regret her actions. Her family had turned against her and left her to beg alone on the streets. Alas, she reaped what she sowed.

Overwhelmed by despair, Isabella lowered her head as much as she could to avoid the piercing gaze of the onlookers.

She could even hear whispers of criticism directed at her, shattering every piece of pride that she had left.

"Look at that woman. She's begging on the streets with all those branded clothes on her? Is this something that rich people do to experience life? She must have been living a life too wealthy to be able to come up with this."

"I suppose so. These rich girls have nothing better to do!"

The passersby formed many opinions about Isabella, but no one was willing to give her any money.

Having heard their discussions, Isabella felt her face burn with shame and anger even more. Her heart felt as if it were stabbed by words.

Just as Isabella struggled to get up and run away, two pairs of heels appeared in front of her. The moment Isabella raised her head and recognized the owners of the heels, she desperately wished for the ground to swallow her up.

“Wow, it really is you, Isabella! I thought Amelia and I mistook someone else for you! What’s wrong? Why are you begging on the streets? If I remember correctly, the Walker family hasn’t gone bankrupt yet. Or is your family so poor now that they don’t have the money to feed you?” Tiffany folded her arms across her chest and mocked.

Isabella tried to crawl backward with her good arm, but she only managed to inch a little because her legs were still injured.

Amelia watched as Isabella tried to scramble away pathetically. In the end, she reached down to help the latter. However, her helping hand was immediately flung away by Isabella. At the same time, having lost support, Isabella crumpled onto the ground.

“Get lost! Get away from me!” Isabella broke down and yelled. Edging away from Tiffany and Amelia, she held her head low to avoid eye contact with them.

Amelia merely stared at Isabella while Tiffany snorted. Tiffany did not feel sympathetic to Isabella’s situation at all because she thought the latter deserved it.

“Let’s go, Amelia. Not everyone deserves our sympathy. Who knows what she will do again if we let our guards down?” Tiffany grabbed Amelia’s arm and proceeded to lead her away. To Tiffany’s surprise, Amelia shook her head firmly at her and waved for Jolin to come over.

“Help me get her in the car, Jolin,” Amelia ordered.

Jolin froze. She glanced at Isabella perplexedly, unable to comprehend why Amelia would want to help that woman.

“Jolin! Help me get her in the car. There are too many people on this street. It’s not good for us too.”

Since Amelia had given her orders, Jolin had no choice but to carry Isabella to the car.

“Babe, you know you don’t have to help her, right?” Tiffany’s eyebrows scrunched disapprovingly as she asked.

“Let’s get in the car first. We’ll talk about this on the way.” Amelia gave Tiffany a subtle smile.

Seeing that there was nothing she could do to change Amelia's mind, Tiffany followed her into the car.

As the car drove away, Tiffany narrowed her eyes at Isabella, who was slumping weakly against the car window. "Isabella Walker... To think you have reached this day! You have no idea how satisfied I am to see you in this pathetic state. How do you feel when Amelia turns out to be the one coming to your rescue at your lowest? You must be so furious, aren't you? You've done so much, but you can never be better than Amelia. What do you think this means? You think you can get away with all the evil things you've done, but now you're reaping what you sowed," Tiffany mocked.

Isabella flinched. As Isabella bit her lips tightly, her face turned ashen.

Tiffany reached out to straighten Isabella up, but the latter refused to budge. It became a tug of war between the two of them, with Tiffany pulling and Isabella dodging.

Finally, Tiffany gritted her teeth and rolled her eyes. "Isabella, you're afraid to face me because you look too ugly right now, right? You deserve this after everything you've done."

Isabella stiffened at that.

Seated in the front seat of the car, Amelia frowned slightly as she disapproved of Tiffany mocking and hurting other people with vicious words when they were at their lowest. How was Tiffany any different from Isabella before she landed in her current state?

Everyone should stay true to themselves and not be affected by other people, no matter whether they are at their highest or lowest.

"Tiff," Amelia called out, warning Tiffany to stop her mockery.

Tiffany shrugged. She understood Amelia's warning and that she was being mean, but she couldn't help feeling delighted now that she was witnessing Isabella's downfall.

Jolin drove them to a hotel. After booking a room, she reluctantly carried Isabella up to the room.

"I thought you were going to take her to the hospital, Amelia," Tiffany murmured.

Amelia glanced at Tiffany and cracked a slight smile.

"I'm not that kind, Tiff. I'm only sparing her from public humiliation. Besides, don't you think she will feel worse if I am the one saving her?"

Tiffany tilted her head and gave it a thought. After a moment, she smirked at Amelia and said, "Babe, you've become wicked."

Amelia shrugged.

Tiffany's mood turned better immediately.

"What should I do with you, Babe? I really like that you're becoming more ruthless. You have no idea how sexy you are when you're up to no good. I could never come up with this brilliant idea!" Tiffany exclaimed.

"Let's go up. I'm scared that Jolin will murder Isabella if we're not around." Amelia truly believed that Jolin would not hesitate to kill Isabella, given her temper.

"Okay, let's go."

Amelia and Tiffany took the elevator to the room they had booked for Isabella. The moment they entered the suite, they saw Isabella being flung onto the bed by Jolin. Facing down, Isabella struggled to get up, but she did not have any strength in her legs to support her.

Tiffany couldn't suppress a laugh as Isabella reminded her of a stranded fish flopping around and making futile struggles.

Isabella was the one who dug her own grave. If she had not attempted to ruin someone else's marriage, the Walkers would not have been destroyed. Since the Clintons and the Walkers had familial connections, Oscar would not do anything horrible to the Walkers because he was Stephanie's brother, regardless of how their siblings' bond was. However, ever since the fallout of the two families due to Isabella's schemes, the Clintons had taken revenge on the Walkers, which resulted in the latter's downfall.

On the other hand, Tiffany enjoyed the drama. If not for Isabella's schemes, Oscar wouldn't have destroyed the Walkers to protect Amelia, her best friend.

Tiffany cackled as she watched Isabella trying to get up on the bed. The more desperate Isabella seemed, the more excited Tiffany became.

"You look like a tortoise, Isabella. Why don't I take a few pictures of you and post them online? You look good in this posture." Tiffany grabbed her phone and snapped a few pictures of Isabella while marveling at her own photography skills.

Triggered by the sound of the camera, Isabella turned around and glared at Tiffany angrily. "Amelia Winters!" Isabella yelled. "If you want me dead, do it immediately. There's no need to take me to this hotel and humiliate me! If you think I'm going to be grateful to you for saving me just now, dream on! Either send me back to the Walker residence or send me back on the streets. I would rather beg for a living than receive your sympathy," she sneered.

Tiffany clicked her tongue disapprovingly. "Babe, you heard that? Not everyone knows how to be grateful. Now, do you understand that there's no point helping such an ungrateful wretch like her?"

Amelia was unfazed. Smiling, she said, "Hold her up and rest her head on the pillow, Jolin. Let's give her the respect she deserves, at the very least."

Jolin walked up and shifted Isabella brutally.