

A Beauty With Multiple Masks Chapter 1751

“Hurry up and leave. You guys still have one minute.” With that, Mark left in a hurry.

Arielle and Vinson did not know why Mark had let them go, but they were running out of time. Since Mark had distracted those who wanted to capture them, the duo seized the opportunity and fled the apartment.

When they arrived at the parking lot, Arielle swung open the car door while Vinson placed Lorraine, who was on his back, into the backseat. Arielle, too, sat in the backseat to take care of Lorraine.

“Vinson, take us to the hospital,” she said.

While Arielle and Vinson were busy handling Lorraine, Aaron and his team followed Monisha to carry out some investigations.

When he saw the warehouse packed with military arms, his heart fell further deeper into despair.

The queen mother has so many military arms!

Did Father not know about this?

Aaron narrowed his eyes. He could not figure out what Nancy was up to.

She’s already Turlen’s queen mother, the second most powerful person in Turlen apart from the king.

What else does she want? What else does she want to do?

She’d been controlling Father and even ruling Turlen alone for so many years. Is that still not enough?

Why does she still need so many military arms?

If Arielle hadn’t found out about this by chance, half of these would’ve been seized by someone else.

The thought of how Nancy’s actions could bring permanent harm to Turlen made him lose control over his emotions.

“Stay here and watch over them. If anyone comes to move them, snatch it away from them,” Aaron instructed in a low voice and walked off.

He feared he would lose control over himself and kill Nancy if he continued looking at the military arms.

Meanwhile, the doctor examined Lorraine at the hospital. Her wound was inflamed since it was not dealt with in time and she was locked up in a dark and damp place. On top of that, she was having a fever. Hence, the doctor bandaged her wound and gave her an IV drip.

Since she had no friends or family there, so Arielle offered to stay back and look after her even though the doctor told Arielle that Lorraine would only wake up on the second day.

Arielle did not want to leave Lorraine alone at the hospital even if the latter was only going to wake up on the second day.

Vinson's cold gaze had a trace of warmth as he looked at his wife.

She's always so kind. That's why I keep falling for her.

"Vinson, why do you think Mark let us go? Is he not afraid the Duke will find out about his doings?" Arielle could not grasp the situation.

"You silly woman." Vinson tapped her head gently, causing her to turn around and glare at him unhappily.

She snorted and said, "The fact that you still fell for such a silly woman makes you sillier."

Vinson was stumped.

Seeing his reaction, Arielle smirked.

"Didn't you hear? Mark and Linda were having an affair. The Duke is the only person they fear." Vinson paused briefly and told her about his speculation.

"I'm thinking Linda might be Duke's woman, and she and Mark love each other..."

Although Vinson did not finish his sentence, Arielle felt that his suspicion was pretty close.

It's likely that Mark is doing this to get our help to defeat the Duke. That way, he can be with Linda.

Then again, regardless of if their suspicion was correct, they were fine with anything, as long as Mark's actions were beneficial to them.

Meanwhile, a cold voice rang out from the dark corner of the apartment. "Why did you do that? Why did you let them go?"

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Mark felt dejected when he saw Linda's indifferent expression.

Does she care so much about the Duke?

Her attitude toward me changed when all I did was let a few people go.

"Linda, I have my own reasons for doing this." Mark was quite heartbroken.

He did all that for the sake of their future.

"Your own reasons? What reasons? Don't you know that you're betraying His Grace by doing that?" Linda yelled with a suppressed voice.

"Linda, we already betrayed him the moment we slept together..." Mark looked at her intently.

Linda staggered a few steps back in a daze upon hearing his words.

Have I already betrayed His Grace?

"Linda, I love you, and I cannot live without you. Do you know how heartbroken I am to see you with him?"

Mark stepped forward and held her tightly in his arms, his scorching tears falling on her neck.

His Grace clearly doesn't love her. He just uses her as a tool to satisfy his desires.

Why can't he allow us to be together?

When Linda felt his hot tears, her heart clenched, and she slowly hugged him back.

It's all my fault. I'm the one who took the first step.

"Mark, I'm sorry. I shouldn't have raised my voice at you. I'm just too worried about you. If the Duke finds out..." said Linda softly, nestling in his arms.

She just did not want Mark to betray the Duke. After all, they were both groomed by the Duke, and they both knew the Duke's way of doing things. If he found out, the consequences would be unimaginable.

Upon listening to her words, Mark let go of her, cupped her face, and kissed her passionately. He pushed her against the wall and clasped the back of her head. Subsequently, he unbuttoned her shirt and lowered his head to peck at her seductive lips.

Linda was afraid they would be discovered. Hence, she restrained herself from making any noise and reached to clutch Mark's hair, yearning for more.

"Mark... Mark..."

After a few intimate moments, Mark wrapped Linda in his embrace and kissed her lips. "You should just pretend that you don't know anything about me letting them go."

"Mark, what are you trying to do? Please don't do something that can't be undone." Linda pulled away from his arms.

"Don't worry. I know what I'm doing. Be careful on your way back," said Mark while helping her to straighten her clothes.

Linda glanced at him and left.

Mark's expression turned grim amidst the darkness. Ever since the Duke forced himself on Linda right in front of Mark, he had lost all loyalty and respect toward the Duke.

Two days later, Monisha led a group of men to the warehouse to move the firearms. When the guards stationed at the warehouse spotted them, they immediately surrounded them. After a fierce and intense battle, the firearms were all taken away.

Back in the apartment, Nancy was livid when she learned that all the firearms had been looted.

"Monisha, didn't you go with the Duke's people? Why would the firearms be taken away by someone else?"

Monisha didn't expect something like that to happen as well. After all, no one knew about it apart from them and the Duke's subordinates.

"Your Majesty, I have no idea how that happened either," replied Monisha.

"You're involved with this, right? You put up an act on purpose, right?" questioned the Duke, who immediately came to Nancy's room after knowing that the firearms had been stolen.

Why would I put up such an act?

Nancy was annoyed by his question. At the mention of putting up an act, Nancy gave the Duke a doubtful look.

Is all this part of his scheme?

Perhaps he is the one who self-directed this show. He did this as a cover-up for the sake of the firearms.

Why is he so cruel?

I have promised to give him half of the firearms. Why did he still take away the rest that belong to me?

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"Why are you looking at me like that? Do you think I'm the one who stole the firearms?" asked the Duke when he noticed Nancy's suspicious gaze.

His sharp gaze was focused on the woman.

Taking note of Nancy's silence, the Duke's expression turned gloomy. "I'm not that shameless. I've promised you that I'll only take half of the portion. I'll never go back on my words."

"Then who do you think took the firearms? No one knows about this other than the two of us and our subordinates," said Nancy with a grim look on her face.

At that moment, she wasn't worried about falling out with the Duke. Since the firearms were gone, so were her confidence and power.

The Duke regarded her silently as well.

If it wasn't either of us, then who took them? Which one of us leaked the information?

At that moment, both of them suspected each other and did not believe the statements of the other party at all.

"Your Majesty, this happened in your territory, and those firearms are yours. I have sufficient reason to believe it is you who self-directed this show. No one dares to pull dirty tricks on me, and you're the first to do so!" The Duke stared intently at Nancy.

Nancy was so angered by his accusation that her chest hurt.

Why would I put on such a show?

I still need him to help me in returning to the palace to become the queen of Turlen.

Why would I be so stupid to put on such an act to steal his firearms?

I did think about pulling some dirty tricks, but he ended up discovering my intentions before I could even do it!

In the end, I still decided to give him the firearms. Now that the firearms are gone, I'm as angry as he is. How can he suspect me?

Nancy was infuriated by his suspicion. "You're right. This is my territory. But I can't even move freely now, and I don't have many people under me. Why do you think I have the capability to plan such a show? Since neither of us took the firearms, then you should go and investigate who took the firearms."

She paused for a moment and continued, "I believe that with your ability, you can definitely find out the truth."

The Duke gazed at her before turning around and walking out.

"Your Majesty, do you think the Duke will believe that the firearms were really stolen by someone?" asked Monisha after the Duke left while wearing a darkened expression.

"Where do you think the firearms could have gone?" asked Nancy with a sullen face. "They must have been stolen by him. He purposely came here to falsely accuse me."

"Why does he want to accuse you?" As soon as Monisha asked that question, her eyes widened. "Is it to dissuade you from doubting him?"

As Nancy nodded, Monisha grew even more terrified of the man.

The firearms are already in his hands, yet he still came over to accuse Her Majesty and acted as though he did not get any benefits out of it.

This man is frightening!

Meanwhile, at the palace, Aaron could not help but smile triumphantly after learning that the firearms had been stolen.

Celeste, who came to send him supper, asked him why he was so happy when she saw him beaming. After learning that Aaron had stolen Nancy's firearms, Celeste was glad for him as well.

She asked, "How did you know that Her Majesty had firearms?"

Complex feelings surged within her heart when her son told her where he got the information.

Back then, when she first knew that Aaron had a crush on Arielle, she even sent someone to deal with Arielle. Though she didn't endanger Arielle's life, she caused the latter to get hurt.

"Aaron, since you are the king now, I think it's time to announce her identity as the princess!"

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Aaron was stunned upon hearing what she said.

"What did you say? You wanted to announce her identity as the princess?" Aaron looked at Celeste in disbelief.

Celeste looked at him and nodded.

"She has really helped you a lot, and I don't know what can we do to thank her. I believe when your father was alive, he wanted to reveal her identity too. However, he was not able to do that due to some reasons. Now that you're in power, you can announce her identity and also fulfill your father's wish when he was alive."

"Thank you, Mother!"

Overjoyed, Aaron walked up to hug Celeste. He had actually wanted to announce Arielle's identity since a long time ago. However, he did not make the move as he had been thinking about how to convince Celeste.

He did not expect that she would take the initiative to bring this up. This was indeed good news to him.

Celeste patted her son's back gently. Everything she did was because of him. She was willing to acknowledge Arielle's identity because the latter treated her son well.

The next day, Aaron went to Arielle's place early in the morning. Arielle quickly welcomed him in when she saw him outside the door.

She then poured him a glass of water and asked him curiously, "Why are you here so early in the morning? Did something happen?"

“Last night, Mother suggested that I announce your identity as the princess. So, I’m here to ask for your opinion. What do you think? Do you want to reveal your identity?” Aaron took a sip of water and looked at her.

Then, he added, “Mother told me that it was also Father’s wish to announce your identity when he was alive, but he didn’t get to do so due to various reasons. Now that I’m in power, nothing can stop me from publicizing your identity.”

Arielle did not expect Celeste to suggest making her identity public.

A strange feeling emerged in her heart as they used to fight against each other, and Celeste even tried to harm her. However, she did not object to the announcement of her identity. After all, it was a recognition of her mother’s identity and a fulfillment of her late father’s wish.

“Let’s announce it then!” Arielle said, narrowing her eyes.

Hearing that Arielle was willing to announce her identity, Aaron’s lips curled into a smile.

Since it was impossible for them to become a couple, they could still be siblings for a lifetime. He would treat her well and protect her on behalf of their father for the rest of his life.

“Then, I shall go back and have them choose a suitable date to make the announcement.” Aaron spoke with a grin.

Arielle nodded. She had no comments on that and decided to leave it to Aaron to make the decision.

“Have you gotten the firearms?” She remembered that last night was the date that Nancy and the others mentioned.

“Yes, I’ve gotten them last night.” Aaron beamed at the thought of that.

Arielle nodded. The queen mother must be so mad right now.

“Where is the organ trading market? Did you send someone there?” She could not wait to destroy that place.

All the misfortunes would only stop when there was no more trading going on.

As Arielle brought this topic up, the smile on Aaron’s face gradually disappeared. The matter was a little tricky and not easy to deal with.

Noticing his reaction, Arielle asked, “Is there a problem?”

"It's a little difficult, but I can handle it. You don't have to worry about that," reassured Aaron, looking at her.

The next moment, he suddenly frowned and asked, "The two of you haven't had a wedding ceremony, right?"

She nodded. They only registered for their marriage, but they had not held a wedding ceremony yet.

"Then you..."

Before Aaron could finish his words, Vinson came out of the room while wearing an anxious look. "Sannie, something happened..."

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It all started from the day before.

After the Duke came out of Nancy's room, he sent someone to investigate the stolen firearms.

If it was Nancy who schemed against him because she didn't want him to have the firearms, he would make sure that she paid the price for it. However, if it was someone else, he wouldn't show mercy.

The Duke narrowed his eyes.

Half of the firearms are mine. I can't believe someone has the audacity to take my things. The person is simply asking for death...

As soon as the person who went to investigate the firearms left, the Duke's phone rang. He saw the caller ID and frowned.

"Hello?"

"Hey..."

"You're a busy man. You must have something really important to tell me since you've called me personally?" asked the Duke, smiling.

"I have a big business dealing for you. I wonder if you are interested in it." The man on the other end of the line chuckled.

The Duke laughed in response. There was no reason for him to turn down a profitable business deal.

“Of course I’m interested! Tell me! What is it about?”

“I need a large batch of stock this time. Do you have it?” said the man on the other end straightforwardly.

At the mention of business, the look on the Duke’s face instantly turned solemn.

“How many do you need?”

“Five thousand...”

The Duke frowned.

Five thousand? I’ve just sent a few batches, and! don ’t have that many in my hands at the moment.

“What’s wrong? Do you have it?” the man asked again as the Duke remained silent.

He had to get it from someone else if the Duke didn’t have sufficient stock. There was no way the Duke would say no to such a profit-making opportunity.

Hence, he said, “Yes. When do you need them?”

“In one week.”

The Duke knitted his brows again. The duration was a little tight for him.

“Can you extend the deadline for a few more days? I’ve just sent out a few batches, and I don’t have that much in my hands right now. Two weeks will be enough for me,” the Duke replied, putting on a smile.

“Okay, I’ll give you two weeks at most! This is on the account of our friendship.”

“Thank you for thinking of me when you have a business deal. You’re even willing to extend the time for me. I will personally deliver this batch of stock to you. If you have time, please allow me to treat you to a meal by then!” The Duke chuckled.

“You want to deliver the stock personally? That’s great!”

After making brief small talk, the two ended the call.

As soon as he hung up the phone, the Duke immediately instructed his men to prepare the stock. The ready stock in his hands was not enough, and he was still one-third short. The remaining one-third portion was semi-finished, which would be ready in around ten days.

In the afternoon, the person who was sent to investigate Lorraine returned.

In the meantime, the Duke no longer cared about Lorraine's matter, as his full attention was on the firearms. He had to find out who took his firearms away.

"Who does she work for?" the Duke asked casually.

"She works for Arielle."

Hearing that, the Duke immediately straightened his back.

It's her! That means the person who rescued Lorraine was also her!

The Duke knew exactly how capable Arielle was. She must have succeeded in rescuing Lorraine because she was working together with Vinson.

At that thought, his face immediately darkened as he thought of the firearms that were stolen. He believed that must have been Arielle and Vinson's doing.

"D*mn it!" he cursed.

I haven't done anything to the two of them yet, and they actually dared to steal my firearms!

Narrowing his eyes, he made a phone call before striding toward Nancy's room.

Nancy was annoyed at the sight of his arrival. However, it was impossible for her to avoid him all the time since they were living under the same roof.

The Duke noticed her expression, but he could not be bothered about that at this moment.

"I've found out who stole the firearms," said the Duke.

"Who?" Nancy immediately locked her gaze on the man.

"Arielle!" The Duke turned and left after mentioning Arielle's name.

When Nancy heard Arielle's name, her face contorted with rage.

D*mn it! It was her who stole my firearms! I will never let her off the hook!

She narrowed her eyes, and a hint of Viciousness flittered across her eyes.

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Vinson looked at Arielle and uttered in a low voice, "Something has happened to the company, so I have to go back to settle it."

A pause later, he added, "Do you want to come back with me?"

Without a hint of hesitation, Arielle replied, "Why would I stay here if you're going back? Of course I'm going to go back with you."

They were a married couple, and they should be facing any issues together. Arielle no longer wanted to be separated from him anymore. Even if Nancy had yet to be held accountable by the law, Arielle was sure that Aaron would be able to deal with the matter himself. Hence, there was actually nothing for her to be worried about if she were to leave.

Upon hearing that the two of them were returning to their country, Aaron lowered his gaze, feeling slightly upset.

He did not want them to leave, especially not Arielle. After all, she was the closest person he had other than his mother.

A moment of hesitation later, he lifted his head and looked at Arielle. "Sannie, can you... Not go back there?"

His words took Arielle and Vinson aback. Arielle never thought that he would try to keep her around.

"Aaron, is there something you can't decide on, or..."

Frankly, Aaron regretted his words the moment he uttered them.

Vinson had already said that something had happened to the company and that his presence was needed there. Furthermore, Arielle was unwilling to part with him, so it was not unusual for her to want to go back with him.

"Nothing. I was just asking." Aaron curled his lips and turned to Vinson. "When are you planning to go back?"

Vinson glanced at Arielle before replying, "The earlier the better."

It seems like it's a tricky case for him to deal with.

With that thought in mind, Aaron schooled his features to a serious expression and said, "I'll prep the visas for you right away."

"Aaron!" Just as he turned to leave, Arielle called out to him.

He wheeled around, and Arielle stepped forward to hug him before whispering into his ear, "Vinson and I will be back. We're still waiting for you to find a time to announce my identity."

Aaron smiled, for she understood what he was thinking.

After Arielle let him go, she heard him say, "I'll do my best to change the laws and make the freedom for marriage and travel a dream come true as quickly as possible."

"Good man!" Arielle patted his shoulders in approval.

She was just thinking about how she should ask him to change the law, but it seemed like that was already something he was ruminating about.

Upon gaining Arielle's approval, Aaron returned to the palace in a good mood. Soon, he received a few visas, which he then told Morrison to send to Arielle's place.

As they were about to return, Arielle and Vinson both went to visit Lawrence before bidding Harvey and Sonia farewell.

"Take care. Just look for Old Mr. Jupiter right away if you need any help," Harvey said as he patted Vinson's shoulder.

Vinson, too, reached out to pat his hand in silent response.

In contrast, when Sonia found out that Arielle was going back without a set date to return, she burst into tears.

"There are plenty of opportunities for us to spend time together next time. You should take this opportunity to spend more time with your parents. When I come back here and leave next time, you'll be coming back to Chanaea with us," Arielle said as she pinched Sonia's cheeks.

Hearing that, Sonia was delighted. She had never left Turlen before, and she was eager to see the outside world.

"Come back quickly, then. I'll go back with you next time."

Arielle nodded and said her goodbyes. After that, she went to whisper a prayer to Dylan.

"Dad, I'll be going back to the country with Vinson. Once everything's over, I'll come back to see you again. Aaron's now Turlen's king. He's quite independent now, and he's stronger than you." Tears welled up in Arielle's eyes as she stared at Dylan's photo on the gravestone.

"Dad, I miss you. If you see Mom, tell her that I'm fine and don't be worried about me..."

Upon hearing that Arielle and the others were returning to the country, the Duke came to Nancy again.

“They’ll be going back to the country tomorrow, and they might never set foot in this country ever again,” the Duke said, narrowing his eyes.

Nancy’s expression darkened when she heard that.

No, I can’t let them escape!

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However, the Duke did not care what thoughts Nancy had, he only cared that he had conveyed his message.

After he left, Monisha turned to Nancy and asked, “Your Majesty, what do we do now?”

Instead of answering her, Nancy took the phone and made a call.

In the Nighy residence, Matthew hesitated when he saw Nancy’s call, but in the end, he still answered it.

“Matthew, I heard that Arielle and Vinson will be going back today. Find out what transportation they’ll be taking. I want no one to ever find their bodies!” Nancy snarled.

Matthew froze when he heard that.

But... Arielle’s my mother’s savior. How can I do something like this?

How can I do something ungrateful like this?

Promptly, he rejected her, “Your Majesty, that won’t do. I can’t do this, I can’t.”

If he did, he would be plagued with guilt for the rest of his life.

“Matthew, you have to think this through carefully.” Nancy clenched her fists when she realized that Matthew was not going to do as she asked.

She then enunciated, “If you want your wife to find out that you cheated on her with me, then feel free to ignore what I just said.”

Matthew froze upon hearing that.

“Nancy, w-what do you mean?”

Nancy softened her tone again when she heard Matthew call out her name. “Matthew, I don’t mean to put you in a difficult spot. As long as you make sure Arielle and Vinson are dead and never to be found, your wife will never find out about what happened between the two of us either.”

Matthew paled as he tightened his grip on the phone.

“Think about it properly, Matthew. Is your wife more important, or is someone who has nothing to do with you more important?” Nancy asked in a slow manner, her eyes narrowing. “Time waits for no one. If you miss the opportunity, then what happens between the two of us will...”

“Y-You...” Matthew was livid and anxious. He never thought she would use that to threaten him.

“She’ll never believe you, and I’ll never admit that I’ve been with you,” he said through gritted teeth.

“But I have photos and videos of it,” Nancy calmly said when she heard his anxious tone. “She will have to believe me.”

The veins on Matthew’s hand popped. He genuinely never expected Nancy to record something like that.

Anger flooded his veins, but there was nothing he could do about it. He could not risk it, he could not let his wife find out about his relationship with Nancy.

“How could you... How could you have filmed something like that?” Matthew hissed as he tried his best to tamp down his anger.

“Were you only with me to film something like that to exploit me?”

As Matthew said that, he finally realized that Nancy was just using him. The reality was that he never had a spot in her heart. All the love confessions she made had been fake. The only aim she had was to manipulate him and make him serve her.

“Exploit you?” A chuckle escaped Nancy. “Did I not make you feel good?”

Matthew was speechless at that.

Indeed, he felt good when he was in bed with her. That was because she knew all kinds of tricks, and that was something he had never experienced with his wife before. However, he couldn’t bring himself to do what she told him to.

He gritted his teeth and clenched his fists.

“Can we change a...”

Before he could finish his sentence, Nancy cut him off. “Matthew, you don’t have a choice.”

It was at that moment the feelings of regret crashed into Matthew.

Why didn’t I hold myself back from getting intimate with her?

If I had controlled myself she wouldn’t be able to blackmail me now...

“Matthew, don’t let me down.” Nancy sighed. “After all, I wouldn’t want to see your family ruined.”

Matthew was almost shaking with rage.

You don’t want to see my family ruined? If you don’t, you wouldn’t have used this to blackmail me. What am I going to do? Am I really going to do this to Dr. Moore?”

As Matthew stared at his hands, a dark gleam flashed past his eyes.

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They were going to go back to Chanaea, but as they were going to come back here in the future, Vinson did not ask the men he brought along with him to return to Chanaea as well. Instead, he assigned them to heed Harvey’s instructions for the time being.

The people they had brought back from the base had already been taken away to be imprisoned by the men Aaron hired. Once Nancy was caught, they would be able to charge those people guilty of their crimes.

However, they were bringing Cindy, who had been captured by Nancy’s men earlier, along with them.

At the start, Cindy planned to use Arielle’s identity to blackmail Nancy to send her to Manchernius, but after Nancy caught wind of her plans, Cindy was locked up in the house behind the palace by Monisha.

Now that Arielle and Vinson were heading back to Chanaea, they decided to take Cindy along so that the law could sentence her to life imprisonment for her crimes.

To ensure that Cindy would not cause any ruckus, Arielle fed her a special kind of drug.

“Sannie, we’ll be taking a cruise ship back this time. The flights have been halted for three days, and we’re taking the ship because the matters in the company need urgent attention. After reaching Lightspring by ship, we’ll then take a flight back to Chanaea.” Vinson had wanted to take a flight back, but unexpectedly, all flights had been paused. Hence, he decided to take a cruise to another city first.

Arielle had no objections to that as long as they reached their destination in the end.

Their original plan was only for the two of them to return, but Lorraine insisted on tagging along.

“You’re not fully recovered yet. Once you’ve healed up, go to Sonia’s place to stay,” Arielle said, trying to convince her otherwise.

However, Lorraine shook her head. “This is nothing but a scratch. I’ve been hurt more badly than this in the past, so I’m going to go back with you.”

If anything were to happen, she would be able to protect Arielle if she was beside her.

Arielle had no choice but to agree to it at Lorraine’s insistence. Thus, she asked Vinson to buy Lorraine’s ticket as well.

When they were about to leave, Harvey, Sonia, Aaron, and Xavier came to send them off.

“Ari...” Sonia tea red up as she hugged Arielle, refusing to let her go.

She seemed like an entirely different person in comparison to when Arielle first met her.

“You’re already a mother, but you’re still a crybaby?” Arielle patted her back in consolation. “I’ll be coming back not long after.”

Sonia finally let go of Arielle in embarrassment. “Don’t forget to call me after you go back.”

Arielle nodded. She would certainly do that.

Xavier temporarily could not return because of Lana’s matters. Furthermore, he was the only member of his family, and Lana’s family all resided there. He had made up his mind about staying here with Lana once the laws changed.

Vinson and Arielle gave him their blessings.

“Aaron, he’s my friend. He’s a detective, so you can contact him if you ever need his services,” Vinson said to Aaron.

Since Xavier seemed to have plans of staying there long-term, Vinson felt that it would be good to introduce him to Aaron.

Xavier never expected that Vinson would introduce him to the current king. Still, that was good news for him.

Lana's family had known yet to learn about his relationship with Lana. With Aaron as an associate, perhaps Lana's parents would object less to their relationship.

"Hello, I'm Xavier, a detective. Please feel free to contact me any time if you need my help." As Xavier spoke, he took out a business card and handed it to Aaron.

Aaron did not expect to meet a detective around, but he was pleasantly surprised.

As he took the card, he said, "Of course. I'll contact you if I need your services."

Soon, it was time for them to part ways. After Arielle and Vinson said their farewells, they boarded the ship with Lorraine and Cindy.

"It's time to go back." Arielle waved.

The ship began moving. In the blink of an eye, the people on the land turned into small black dots until they vanished from the horizon.

Meanwhile, in a car, someone was watching the departing ship with hatred in their eyes.

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On the deck, Arielle leaned against Vinson's chest, enjoying the sea breeze blowing against her face as they watched the sunset.

A few seagulls would occasionally fly over and land on the deck. More daring ones would even land on Arielle's arm.

A small smile manifested on Arielle's lips as she watched the seagull take off from her arm. She could taste the saltiness in the air, and she could feel the warmth from the setting sun enveloping her body.

The quiet, peaceful look Arielle was wearing made Vinson wish he could hide her away and keep her for himself.

"Sannie, I love you," he whispered into her ear.

Even though that was not the first time she had heard Vinson's confession, her heart still skipped a beat.

“I love you too,” she whispered back with a blush on her face.

Her shyness made Vinson fall for her even more. At that moment, he felt like kissing her. With that thought in mind, he lowered his head to peck a kiss on her lips.

Arielle’s heart lurched at his sudden action, for she could see that they were not the only ones on the deck.

“You...” Arielle gently hammered his chest. “There are so many people around...”

Vinson curled his lips as he gazed at her reddened face.

As he pressed a soft kiss on her head, he murmured, “It’s fine. No one saw it.”

Arielle huffed. Even if no one did see it, people could guess what had happened. Vinson could not help but smile, and he tightened his hold around her.

“What happened in the company? Can Mom not sort it out herself?” Arielle asked.

Vinson’s expression turned solemn the moment he heard her raise the topic.

“There are a few shareholders making a ruckus. Those are people who used to be on Dad’s side, so Mom can’t deal with them that easily,” Vinson explained, his eyes half-lidded.

He had only left the company for a year, but there were already people ready to start a revolution.

I might as well get rid of them. Their hearts are no longer with the company, so what’s the point of keeping them around?

Arielle furrowed her brows slightly.

They used to be on Vinson’s father’s side, but they’re still making a fuss. Can’t they see that Nightshire Group is getting better under Vinson’s lead?

Well, since they’re already causing chaos, they might as well continue. We’ll take the opportunity to remove these people.

As it turned out, the two of them shared the same sentiment.

“If you’re going to deal with them, then Mom, she...”

“What kinds of scenario has Mom never seen before? She’s only having trouble dealing with them because she doesn’t know how to do it without embarrassing them. That’s

why she asked me to go back,” Vinson told her as he reached out to tuck the stray strand of hair behind Arielle’s ear.

“Mom won’t say anything about how I deal with people who aren’t loyal to the company anymore.”

With that, Arielle stopped worrying about the matter. She was only afraid that Susanne would be too cautious about keeping the seniors’ egos intact and thus leave them be.

When Susanne was younger, she, too, was a ruthless character. Those who were still in Nightshire Group used to strive to reach the skies with her. Yet, Vinson had only been away for a year, and they were already unable to stay collected. That made Susanne upset.

She could not help but think about how they used to be her friends and business partners all these years if she wanted to deal with them.

However, if she left them be, they would only make things worse in the company. Therefore, she decided to call Vinson and have him return to deal with it himself. After all, he was the one who owned Nightshire Group.

All of a sudden, Arielle pulled away from Vinson’s arms and took a few steps forward. She then stared at the waters gloomily. Seeing the look on her face, Vinson walked over as well.

When Arielle turned around, he saw the rare glint of panic in her eyes. “Vinson, something bad is going to happen!”

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Vinson had noticed something amiss as well. Nevertheless, he calmly looked at Arielle and said, “Go to Lorraine and the others. I’ll go to the front to look for the captain.”

With that said, Vinson spun around to leave, but Arielle stopped him.

She shook her head. “Vinson, we won’t make it in time.”

The ship was huge, and Arielle was almost certain that the ship was going to blow up before Vinson could even find the captain.

“Call Aaron and tell him to contact the captain to get everyone on board to jump into the sea with lifejackets on. Then, tell him to send his men over to start a rescue mission,” Vinson responded immediately.

Arielle nodded and fished out her phone to call Aaron and brief him about their situation.

Aaron's worry rose to its maximum the moment he learned that Arielle and the others were in danger.

"Sannie, I'll call the captain right away. Hurry up and prepare the lifejackets. I'll send someone to rescue you all."

With that, Aaron ended the call and ordered his men to contact the ship's captain. Then, he sent maritime police to rescue the passengers.

Once he made all the arrangements, he called Arielle again.

"Sannie, I've arranged everything. Don't worry. You'll be fine!" Aaron's hand was shaking badly, but he was still trying to reassure Arielle.

"I know!" Arielle was moved to hear Aaron's concern for her.

"Nancy is sly, and you really have to arrest her as quickly as possible without giving her any room to think."

Before Arielle could finish her sentence, Vinson came over with two lifejackets, and the two quickly put them on. By then, the captain had noticed something amiss, for the engines were exceptionally hot. However, he never thought that the situation was that grave until he received the call from the king's men.

Promptly, he made an announcement and told all passengers to put on their lifejackets and jump into the sea.

The passengers panicked. They swiftly grabbed the nearest life jackets before leaping into the waters.

"Boss..." Lorraine was used to life-and-death situations, so she was mostly unfazed.

The only thing she was worried about was Arielle's safety.

"Jump. If you don't jump, it'll be too late."

With that said, she shoved Cindy, who had already put on her lifejacket, into the sea. Whether or not Cindy lived would be up to luck.

Vinson held Arielle's hand tightly as the three of them leaped off the ship.

Right as they jumped down, the humongous ship blew up with the thunderous sound of the explosion. Flames licked the surface of the waters, and the shockwave created gigantic waves that swept over everyone, swallowing them into the sea.

At the same time, the nearest maritime police were rushing toward the location of the ship.

The closer they got to it, the more their hearts sank. The ship was sinking at record-breaking speed, and soon, the entire ship was gone.

“Hurry up and start the rescue operation!”

Aaron arrived at the scene of the explosion, and all the colors drained from his face as he stared at the surface of the sea.

“Did you find anyone?” Aaron asked, his heart thumping loudly against his rib cage.

He was terrified for Arielle and Vinson-afraid that something horrible would happen to them.

“Your Majesty, we’ve found ten bodies,” the captain of the rescue operation somberly said.

Ten bodies...

Aaron grimaced, and the temperature around him plummeted.

“Keep looking!” Aaron tightened his fists. “I’ll get someone to verify the total number of passengers. Regardless of whether they’re alive or dead, I want them all found!”

“Yes, sir!” the captain of the rescue operation replied before returning to his work.

Aaron remained standing on the deck as he made a call to summon over a thousand navy soldiers over. Then, he looked at the sea with a pair of binoculars, hoping that he would be able to spot the familiar figures somewhere.