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Henrick shook his head and barked, "Convey my orders that no one is to mention the wedding. No matter what, the dead takes precedence, so we'll have Shandie's funeral first before we talk about the wedding later."

"Understood!" The new butler hastily left to execute his orders.

Despite his slow-wittedness, he was rather efficient in performing his tasks. Soon enough, no one in the manor dared to mention that matter, for the previous butler's fate was still vivid in their minds.

Just after Arielle and Vinson drove away from the Southall residence, the car that was driving Louisa and Cindy finally arrived at the manor gates about half an hour later.

The moment Cindy alighted from the car, she sensed something amiss. White flowers hung above the door as though a funeral was in progress.

Hmm? Why would there be a funeral at home?

When she strode in anxiously, she

immediately caught sight of the wreaths that were placed everywhere.

Her heart abruptly jolted, and her joy at returning home waned.

Someone in the family has truly passed away?

She unconsciously clenched her hands into fists. But in the next moment, her apprehension was swiftly replaced with delight at the thought that popped into her mind.

I reckon that Henrick must have kicked the bucket! After all, there are only four people in this family. He smokes and drinks heavily, so he has quite a number of minor ailments though there's nothing major. Besides, he's impulsive and irritable, so he might collapse anytime. Therefore, it's not entirely surprising if he suddenly contracted some illness and passed away!

Cindy's heartbeat abruptly sped up, and excitement gripped her.

If he's dead, Arielle came from the village, so she doesn't have any inkling of laying claim to his inheritance. At that time, I can

bribe the lawyer and have him give Southall Group to me legally!

Right at that moment, she was even tempted to start laughing uproariously.

No wonder Louisa came back with me! It turns out that Henrick is dead! I initially thought that it'd take some time for me to get my hands on Southall Group, but I never thought that God would be so good to me and hand it to me on a silver platter! This is truly a miracle! I'll soon be able to take Shannie away to stay with Matthias! As for Southall Group, I'm going to change its name to Cindy Group at once after seven days have passed since his death!

"Cindy Group..." Cindy muttered to herself.

What a wonderful name! And I'm sure Maureen, who was far superior to me back when she was alive, never would've thought that the company that she painstakingly brought to glory would end up becoming Cindy Group in the end. If she's looking down at us from heaven, she'll surely be so irate that she keels over and dies again!

Ever since Arielle came back, she had never been this happy in a long time. As

she got all the more worked up, she couldn't help laughing aloud. "Haha..."

Coincidentally, one of the help in mourning attire walked out.

Upon noticing the smile on Cindy's face, he was instantly floored.

Why is she still grinning in elation despite the death of her daughter? Don't tell me that the rumor of Shandie being Cindy and Henrick's biological daughter is actually

false? But even if so, she raised her ever since young. How could she still smile so brightly when Shandie has passed away? She's not worthy of being a mother at all!

As soon as Cindy lifted her head, she spotted the chagrined expression on the man's face. Her expression went frosty. Frowning, she demanded hotly, "What kind of expression is that?"

I know I'm not supposed to laugh since Henrick is dead, but as the help, what right does he have to look at me with such a gaze when Henrick is dead? When I take over this house completely, he'll be the first person I dismiss! I'm going to fire all those who are dense and disobedient! Anyway, I'm

going to have the final say here in the future! I can do whatever I want! After I've dealt with the few insignificant figures, I'll make a move against Arielle and Vinson!

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The help felt a chill traveling down her spine as Cindy stared at her. She immediately caved in. 'I'm sorry, Mrs. Southall. I could've seen it wrongly. You should head in and see for yourself.'

With that, she hurried away.

As Henrick had released news about Shandie's death, many guests had arrived to pay their last respects to her in the backyard, where her coffin was placed. Everyone working in the residence was busy serving the guests and had no time to talk to Cindy

Cindy stared at the help's back in a sinister manner and memorized her features before entering the mansion.

There was a mournful air about the mansion.

Cindy sighed. We've been married for years, and I used to love him. Though I'm glad he's dead, I still feel bad about it. Life is short, so I must live for myself! Hmm, where's the coffin, though? Is his body still at the hospital mortuary?

Confused, Cindy stopped a maid that was

heading out. "Where is the coffin?" she demanded.

The maid was none other than Larrisa.

She blinked guiltily at the sight of Cindy. Calming down, she answered politely, "It's in the backyard."

Larissa's answer only served to heighten Cindy's confusion.

After all, according to the local customs, an elderly person's coffin should be placed in the hall. Only the younger generation's coffin would be placed outside.

Henrick's the oldest in the family, so his coffin should be in the hall. Why is it in the backyard?

Cindy shrugged off that thought. She wasn't at home, so it was perfectly normal for Arielle, Shandie, and the help to not understand the local customs. The young

people must've thought it was inappropriate for the coffin to be placed in the hall and moved it to the backyard instead. Clearly, the family can't make do without me!

Her eyes were twinkling with mirth as she

made her way to the backyard.

On the way there, she glanced at her attire. After a brief hesitation, she decided not to change.

No one knew about the funeral, so she didn't have to put up an act.

In fact, she had no intention of putting on mourning clothes for Henrick.

She headed for the backyard and bumped into Louisa

Louisa suffered from rheumatoid arthritis. Her legs would hurt when the weather got bad, and she'd have to walk slowly. As it was a rainy day today, she soon fell behind Cindy.

Cindy was no longer afraid of Louisa when their eyes met.

Louisa can't complain to Henrick now. He's dead, and there's no way he'll come back to punish me. I even went out to celebrate Maureen's death with a drink back then. There's no way I'm afraid now that Henrick's dead!

Nevertheless, Cindy was sensible enough to put up an act so that Louisa wouldn't interfere with the inheritance.

Louisa might be a nun, but no one would refuse money.

The smugness in Cindy's gaze faded away as she greeted Louisa. "Louisa, you should've informed me earlier. How can I accept this? My life is in tatters!"

Calmly, Louisa uttered, "I told you to do charity work, but you refused to listen to me. After the funeral, be benevolent and do good deeds

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"Mm, got it. After the funeral, I'll make a donation to a school," Cindy offered with a sugary sweet smile.

Louisa nodded and fell silent.

Though she despised what Cindy did, Shandie had just passed on. I should not make it worse for her.

As Louisa didn't talk to her sharply as usual, Cindy thought the former had backed off without Henrick's support.

Feeling smug, Cindy's lips twitched upwards in an imperceptible smile.

Parting her lips, she said, "Louisa, take your time. I'll head to the coffin to take one last look. I have prepared a speech."

"Sure." Louisa dismissed her with a wave. "It's the last goodbye."

Cindy murmured in acknowledgment and hastened her footsteps.

She couldn't wait to take one last look at Henrick and tell him she had had enough of him over the years. It was time to get back everything that belonged to her.

There was a long path leading from the mansion to the backyard. Cindy scurried along the path and suddenly heard noises when she was ten meters away from the backyard.

Coming to a halt, she stared in disbelief at the huge crowd. Why is the backyard this

crowded?

Cindy glanced around and spotted a few higher-ups from their company. Some of their business partners were milling around. Even Russell was there.

Huh? How did they know when I didn't even inform them? I should've listened to Louisa and put on my habit instead of wearing a flashy dress if I knew guests had arrived. Goddamn it, why didn't the help tell me that there are so many guests here to pay their respects?

When Cindy was about to head back to change her attire, someone spotted her and yelled, "Mrs. Southall!"

Everyone promptly looked in her direction.

Cindy froze. It was too late to return and change her attire now.

She regretted not listening to Louisa's advice.

Clenching her teeth, she strode forward so no one would accuse her of feeling guilty.

If someone gossips, I'll just tell them I've just returned from the monastery and have no idea what happened.

Thus, she schooled her expression into a look of despair and entered the backyard.

Indeed, someone instantly chided, "Why are you dressed in a flashy dress at a funeral?"

Cindy pinched her thigh when no one was noticing and forced out tears. She used her sleeves to wipe her tears away and replied, "I've been in the monastery all the while and only found out about this when I arrived home. There was no time to change my attire..."

The person coughed awkwardly. "Oh, I see. Go pay your last respects before it's too late, then."

Nodding, Cindy walked toward the coffin as tears pooled in her eyes. She didn't even

look at the body and promptly collapsed beside it, bursting into noisy tears.

In one corner, Henrick was talking to Russell when he noticed Cindy's outfit. He frowned in displeasure. If there weren't people staring, he would've marched over and given her a big fat slap for showing up at a funeral inappropriately dressed.

However, he couldn't bring himself to reprimand Cindy after seeing how she was sobbing sadly.

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Before Henrick could comfort her, he heard her hollering, "Rick, how could you leave me alone?"

Henrick staggered to a stop in shock. What did that b*tch just say? Was I hearing things?

Cindy continued wailing, "You're the head of our family. Now that you're dead, what will happen to us? You b*stard! You promised to take care of me forever when we got married. Why did you leave me this soon?"

Her words rendered Henrick and everyone else dumbstruck.

Especially Louisa, whose lips parted in shock.

Has Cindy lost her mind? Instead of mourning her daughter, why is she cursing Rick?

Suddenly, realization dawned on Louisa. She must've gotten it wrong!

Finding the situation both amusing and embarrassing, she shut her eyes and fled the scene.

I shouldn't show up here. After all, Shandie's birth was a mistake. Cindy spoiled her rotten, so it's a good thing that she's dead. At least she won't humiliate the Southall family further

Before anyone could notice her, Louisa left the scene. Henrick had to face everyone's curious looks alone, his face crimson red.

Henrick wasn't at all embarrassed; he was actually seething with rage.

Does that b*tch want me dead for real? She must've had that thought for ages! I shall teach her a lesson today!

Henrick quivered in anger, veins popping out of his forehead. His eyes were burning furiously, but his expression was as icy as an iceberg.

Clearly, it was the calm before the storm, signaling that Henrick was about to lose it.

The help stood aside and dared not make a sound.

Cindy was still sobbing. "How could you leave me alone? I won't forgive you even if we reunite in the afterworld!"

If she had said those words at Henrick's funeral, the onlookers would have felt sorry for her. Alas, they only had the same thought now-Cindy Moore had gone nuts.

Henrick finally blew up.

Without a care for his reputation, he stormed over to Cindy, tugging her hair and hitting her head against the coffin.

Thump! Cindy felt a flaring pain and momentarily lost her vision.

The moment she regained her sight, she saw the man tugging her hair. Henrick?

The man's face was ghastly pale. Though the sun was shining on him, it struck her as an ominous sight.

"R-Rick..." Cindy's eyes widened in utter horror and alarm.

Is Henrick's ghost haunting me in broad daylight? So ghosts do exist!

She promptly shrieked, "Ah! It's a ghost! Someone, help me!"

Those words from Cindy caused Henrick's

countenance to darken even more. That was the final straw.

Even the air he breathed in felt scorching to his lungs.

Henrick took in a deep breath before hitting Cindy's head against the coffin again. "I'm still alive! How dare you curse me? You shall die ahead of me!"

Cindy's ears were ringing as blood trickled down her forehead.

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"Enough! Stop it!" Russell leaped into action and dragged Cindy away from Henrick.

Pain squeezed her head, and she felt her legs go limp. Russell had to support her.

Clenching his jaw, Henrick declared, "Russell, stay out of this. I shall beat her to a pulp today!"

Russell stood in front of Cindy in a protective manner. He had one arm before her and another on Henrick's chest. "Rick, calm down. You'll have to go to jail if you kill her."

Henrick regained his composure at his words. The menacing glare in his eyes faded away.

"That's right. Take a few deep breaths to calm down," Russell advised.

Cindy stood behind Russell, watching as the raging Henrick simmered down. She took one look at Russell, who seemed torn. Her mind turned blank briefly before the wheels in her head started turning.

If Henrick isn't dead, whose funeral is this?

Could it be Arielle's? She's from the countryside, so it's possible that she died after failing to adjust to the new environment

Cindy glanced around, but Arielle was nowhere to be seen. Is Arielle dead for real?

Delight, disappointment, and regret filled her heart at that thought.

She was delighted that the annoying Arielle was finally dead, but she felt disappointed at the fact that Henrick was still alive. She also regretted not finding out who was in the coffin before wailing her heart out

An array of emotions flashed across Cindy's face.

In the end, she calmed herself down and shot Henrick a pitiful look. "I'm sorry, Rick. I was too upset and got a little lost. I didn't mean to curse you."

The sight of the blood on her forehead and her tears softened Henrick's heart.

He knew how much Cindy adored Shandie,

so it was normal for her to lose her sanity now that Shandie was dead.

Sighing, Henrick realized he couldn't bring himself to yell at Cindy. He averted his gaze and said, "Forget it. Go take one last look at Shandie. It's almost time to shut the coffin."

Cindy blanched at his words. "W-What did you say? Shandie?"

Displeasure rose in Henrick's heart as he

furrowed his brows. "Of course it's Shandie. Who else could it be?"

Cindy chortled, refusing to believe his words. She lost her mind and blurted out, "Arielle's dead, right? It can't be my Shannie. Rick, you're joking, right?"

My Shannie's a healthy young girl. How could she die at a young age?

"Nonsense!" Henrick balled his fists. "Arielle's alive and well! She has just..." He trailed off upon realizing it wasn't time to reveal Arielle and Vinson's marriage. "Shandie's dead! She had a relapse last night without warning, and we discovered her dead body this morning. Hurry, go pay

your respects to her!”

“No! Impossible!” Cindy screamed her lungs out.

There’s no way Shandie dead!

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Henrick must be joking. Perhaps he’s mad and is getting back at me!

Russell had enough of her antics. He was their relative, and he didn’t want to see Henrick being humiliated in public. He parted his lips to reveal, “Cindy, Shandie’s dead. I know it’s hard to take, but it’s the truth. My condolences.”

In fact, Russell felt drained.

After getting into trouble, his daughter had kicked up a huge fuss and refused to head to the City Hall to get married. Before leaving home today, he had told the help to tie her up before bringing her there by force. I wonder how she’s doing now.

Meanwhile, Cindy still refused to accept

the truth. After all, part of the reason she schemed and worked so hard was to benefit her daughter.

There was simply no way she would accept Shandie’s death easily.

“No...” She retreated two steps back and shook her head. “Impossible.”

Henrick lost all patience and announced,

“You can see for yourself!”

Women are annoying. She’ll know when she sees it for herself!

Cindy swallowed hard and went toward the coffin.

She wanted to make sure Shandie wasn’t in the coffin.

Shandie won't die!

Her legs trembled as she made her way to where the coffin was placed slowly.

Her gaze landed on the coffin hastily before she even arrived.

Shandie's dead body was lying inside the coffin surrounded by flowers.

Cindy's eyes widened in utter horror. Her hopes were shattered, and her heart sank to the bottom of a deep, endless abyss.

"Shandie?"

It's Shandie!

Reality hit her like a thunderclap,

shattering her senses completely.

Utterly drained of energy, Cindy collapsed to the ground.

Russell instinctively tried to catch her, but she slipped through his fingers and sank to the ground.

Russell asked in concern, "Cindy, are you okay? She has passed on, so take care of yourself. You and Rick are still young; you can give birth to another child to make it up..."

Obviously, Russell was bad at comforting others.

Cindy paled and glared at him.

She wanted to yell that Shandie was her biological daughter, but her last shred of sanity told her that the secret should remain buried.

If I reveal the secret, I won't get to live.

Russell did not know why she was glaring at him that way. He scratched his head in confusion. Ugh, why did I even interfere in their family's business?

Henrick took one step forward and said, "Get up. Don't be an embarrassment."

"Embarrassment?" Cindy finally snapped. With bloodshot eyes, she demanded, "Are Shandie and I are an embarrassment to you? Are we a joke to you?"

Henrick's expression froze. Sensing the guests' gazes, he hissed, "What are you talking about? We brought Shandie up together, and you're my wife. Of course,

you're not a joke to me. I'm upset that Shandie's dead, but we're both adults. We don't have to cry to show our distress, get it?"

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"No!" Cindy shook her head vehemently to deny the fact. "My Shandie isn't dead. She's just asleep. Why did you put her in a coffin? Take her out!"

The guests shook their heads at her antics. She's gone nuts.

One guest remained puzzled and asked softly, "That's her adopted daughter. Why is she this upset? No matter how much she adores her adopted daughter, there's no reason for her to lose her mind. She

can just adopt another daughter, no?"

Another guest instantly quipped, "Did you not attend the Actonwards' birthday party last night? Shandie was there, and she revealed that she's Henrick and Cindy's biological daughter."

That revelation immediately attracted the other guests' attention.

"Seriously? She's their biological daughter? The timing's strange. Does that mean they got together before Maureen Moore died?"

"You're right! I thought that sounded ridiculous last night. But now, Cindy is acting like she has lost her biological

daughter for real!"

"Even if they didn't get together before Maureen died, it was wrong for Cindy to marry her brother-in-law!"

"Shh, lower down your voice. They might hear you."

Nevertheless, Henrick had heard every word clearly

His eye twitched.

Shandie didn't forget to create trouble for me before she died. I can't believe she

revealed the secret to everyone. Why did / give birth to a fool?

He had never been so humiliated in his life.

In fact, he started regretting cheating on his wife with Cindy. If that did not happen, people wouldn't be gossiping about him when he already had one foot in the grave.

Henrick's face turned several shades darker.

Alas, Cindy couldn't even hear the guests' criticisms. She grabbed Henrick and

demanding, "Get Shandie out! If she wakes up and finds herself in a coffin, she'll burst into tears!"

Indeed, Cindy had gone mad.

She refused to accept the fact that Shandie was dead and kept asking Henrick to get her daughter out.

Henrick shoved her arm away and gave her a tight slap.

Instantly, pain flared up Cindy's cheeks. She touched her face to find blood flowing down her nostrils.

"Blood..." Her legs turned to jelly, and she collapsed to the ground once again.

Finally, she regained her senses thanks to the slap.

Staring at the coffin, she finally took in the fact that Shandie was dead. It wasn't Henrick or Arielle but her beloved Shannie who died!

"No!" she wailed in desperation, her sharp shriek piercing the air. Everyone shuddered at how horrifying her wail was.

Losing all patience, Henrick summoned Alfred. "Bring her back to her room and get her a psychologist!"

"Understood!" Alfred waved his hand, and two bodyguards promptly dragged Cindy away.

"Let go! Let me go!" Cindy screamed. "I want to avenge my daughter. Someone must've killed her! It must be-"

Before she could finish, Henrick gave Alfred a look, and the latter swiftly covered her mouth.

Getting cut off mid-sentence, Cindy glowered at Alfred.

Alfred waved his other hand. The bodyguards picked up their pace and left with Cindy in tow.

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Henrick sighed in frustration.

I shouldn't have brought this crazy b*tch back! Her antics have thoroughly

embarrassed me.

The backyard once again regained its serenity after Cindy had been escorted back to the house.

"Apologies, everybody," Henrick started. "Cindy is too distraught tonight to think straight. She has made a fool of herself in front of all of you."

The crowd exchanged glances before dismissing his apology by waving their hands. "Not to worry, it's completely understandable."

"Make sure Mrs. Southall takes care of herself. You can always try for another child. It wouldn't do if she fell ill."

"You must take care of yourself too and be strong throughout this ordeal."

With the words of consolation offered by his guests, Henrick felt much calmer.

Russell hesitated before stepping forth.

"Henrick," he said, tugging his arm. "Cindy doesn't look too well, I'm afraid. We should find a good doctor to have a look at her. I'm worried for her if this goes on."

Henrick nodded. "I'll do that."

"Speaking of doctors," Russell continued, with a thumbs-up of admiration, "your daughter Arielle is an excellent one. If it weren't for her, I would have died from a cerebral hemorrhage last night."

Henrick was shocked. "Arielle practices medicine?"

Russell returned Henrick's look of surprise. "Don't you know that your daughter is a miracle doctor?"

"How is that possible?" Henrick murmured, his mind a blank.

Didn't Arielle grow up in the village? From where would she have learned the art of medicine?

Shocked by Henrick's ignorance on the matter, Russell immediately recounted the events of the night before. His narration was so fanciful and exaggerating that

Henrick's surprise soon turned to astonishment.

"Your daughter is amazing," Russell concluded at last with a pat on Henrick's shoulder. "You must treat her well! Don't let the incident with Shandie happen again."

Barely hearing what Russell said, Henrick nodded in a daze. Despite the humorous circumstances, he felt fearful.

How am I completely unaware that my daughter is skilled in the medicinal arts? Did she keep it from me on purpose? Why would she do such a thing? Is Arielle up to something like Cindy is? Or did she return here with a motive all along?

Henrick felt the hairs on his back standing erect as alarm bells began ringing in his head. His gaze darkened as he fought the urge to succumb to panic.

Perhaps I need to take the initiative to know my daughter better.

He clenched his fists and narrowed his eyes as he thought about his other daughter.

At that moment, Arielle, who had just emerged from the City Hall after obtaining her marriage certificate, gave a sneeze.

Rubbing her nose, she felt a sense of foreboding.

"Did you catch a cold?" Vinson asked concernedly.

Arielle shook her head. Suddenly remembering that she had left her coat in the City Hall, she said, "I've left my coat behind. I'll go get it."

Arielle turned around, but Vinson gently pressed her shoulder. "Get in the car. I'll get it for you. We'll go for lunch after that. It would be pretty messy at your house right now, you might not be able to have much to eat."

Arielle nodded. "Okay. I don't want ravioli, though." After having it for several meals in a row, she felt nauseated just thinking about it.

Vinson chuckled. "Do you think I'll take you for ravioli as our first meal as a married couple? Arielle, I don't think you know your husband well enough."

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Vinson's dark eyes glimmered mischievously under the bright sunlight, causing Arielle to feel a blush creeping across her face.

Clearing her throat loudly, she attempted to disguise her emotions with levity. "I know you are rich. I've married a wealthy old bachelor."

Vinson missed the point entirely. "Old?" he repeated with a frown. "I'm only three years older than you!"

Arielle thought it was funny to see him get riled up over their age difference. "Don't you know that three years is as much as a generational gap these days?"

Vinson's frown deepened in alarm as he took Arielle's words literally.

"I'm joking with you," she said helplessly. "You can't even take a joke."

He's taken my remark about marrying him seriously. And this time, he's sulking over the generational gap thing... I get it now. He is an obtuse guy who can't take any jokes.

Even Arielle's reassurance did not ease his

frown.

"Wait for me in the car," Vinson said rather dully. "I'll get your coat."

Without another word, he disappeared back into the building.

"Hey!" Arielle called after him, but he did not turn back. It was hard to tell if he was doing it on purpose.

Arielle scratched her head. Is he seriously angry?

She was worried that she had inadvertently offended him as she had never flirted with men before.

Just as she was feeling guilty, she suddenly noticed a car stopping by the road. Several familiar faces emerged from within.

Isn't that Yvette and Mason?

Yvette was handcuffed by the bodyguard. It was obvious that she had been forced to the City Hall against her will.

It did not take long for Arielle to deduce

that they were at the City Hall to get married.

Not only did Yvette fail to destroy Arielle, but she had also pushed herself deeper into the abyss of her own creation.

It was very unlikely that Yvette would be able to find happiness with Mason through forced marriage, given her character.

Arielle smirked at the opportunity. "Yvette, Mason," she greeted them right before the couple saw her.

Turning around to see that it was Arielle, they scowled at her.

Yvette looked as if she would like nothing more than to skin Arielle alive.

If Yvette was not held by the bodyguard, she would have pounced on Arielle and scratched her eyes out.

Arielle pretended not to understand Yvette's hostile stare. "Yvette, what's wrong?" she asked innocently. "What's gotten into you?"

"B*tch!" she screamed as she struggled. "It

was you! You plotted all of this, didn't

you?"

Arielle's eyes flashed coldly.

How dare she? Does she not remember what happened?

"Yvette, you seem to have an awful prejudice against me," Arielle protested with an irritating smile. "But it's fine. I forgive you. By the way, what are you doing here at the City Hall?"

The innocuous remark by Arielle completely broke Yvette.

"B*tch!" she howled, sounding quite deranged. "I'm going to kill you!"

However, Arielle remained unaffected. At that moment, the bodyguard gripped Yvette's elbow like he was escorting a particularly fierce dog, rendering any

further struggling futile.

To Yvette, the handcuffs were symbolic of her life imprisonment in the bonds of matrimony.

"Mason, you're here too!" Arielle's eyes met

Mason's furious ones. "Wait a minute. Are the two of you here to get married?"

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Mason gritted his teeth, unable to respond to Arielle in a diplomatic manner.

He had spent nights dreaming about

getting married to Yvette and was eager to announce it to the whole world.

After Yvette's repeated and cruel refusal to accept his hand, he finally came to the conclusion that that night was a misunderstanding-Yvette had never liked him.

With the surprising turn of events, the marriage that he was going to have

simultaneously excited and frustrated Mason. The strength of the polarizing emotions within him caused him to be on edge for the past couple of days.

He took a deep breath and growled, "That's none of your business!"

"That's right!" Arielle said abruptly as a thought struck her. "Mr. Actonward mentioned that you guys are here to obtain your marriage certificate too. Forgive me for my poor memory, and also congratulations to both of you!"

Yvette was further incensed by the

sarcasm. "B*tch! Is this a joke to you? Go to hell!"

Mason reached out instinctively to comfort Yvette. Before his hand touched her, she whipped around to give him such a fierce glare that his hand never found her shoulder.

Feeling hurt, Mason vented all of his anger on Arielle. "How kind of you to come all the way here to share our joy," he sneered, cold fury ringing in every syllable. "Now that the party's over, get lost! Or I might do something I regret!"

Arielle pouted. "It looks like there's a huge misunderstanding between us," she said

jeeringly. "Apologies, I'm not here to celebrate your marriage. I'm here to have one of my own."

She waved her red marriage certificate, the sight of which stunned Mason.

Even Yvette, who had been in a towering rage, was startled into silence at the sight of Arielle's certificate. "Who... Who did you marry?"

"It's a secret!" Arielle smiled enigmatically.

Yvette burst out laughing all of a sudden. "Hah! I knew it! Evil b*tches like you will get your punishment one day. You must be sold to a rich old man so that your father can gather enough money to rebuild his office building!"

Mason looked equally scornful. "I thought

you have high standards," he said with disdain. "Turns out you're nothing but a pawn for your father. How dare you torment Yvette like that?"

Yvette realized with a start that her marriage with Mason was miles better

than Arielle's fate of marrying an old man.

Though Mason was penniless and not very good-looking, at least he was head over heels for her.

Even if she were to sleep around, Mason wouldn't be able to control her. Perhaps he would even cover up for her.

At that moment, Yvette's mood took a dramatic turn for the better. Arielle's news felt like a gust of wind scattering the stormy clouds of Yvette's own predicament.

She felt so victorious that she even began to develop a sense of pity toward Arielle.

So what if you're pretty and are a skilled doctor? You're still going to marry some old fart! Your destiny has already been determined the moment you were born!

"Arielle," Yvette proclaimed vehemently, "you will never ever be happy in this life!"

"Her happiness is not for you to decide." All of a sudden, a low, attractive voice sounded

Yvette froze. That sounds like...

She whipped around, only to find Vinson's cold glare on her.

What is Vinson doing here? Yvette wondered before she saw the red marriage certificate in his hand. A marriage certificate... Arielle...

Yvette's eyes widened; her pupils dilated in shock.