

Secret Admirer Finding True Love After Prison

Chapter 341 – 350

Chapter 341 Blood for Blood

Bianca froze at Meryl's question, a shiver running down her spine. "Meryl, are you still blaming me for favoring Lydia?"

1/4

"You've never raised a child, so you wouldn't understand what it's like for me as a mother. I've poured my heart and soul into raising her from a tiny baby, treating her like my own flesh and blood.

"It's like having a cat that suddenly goes missing. Wouldn't you feel heartbroken? And she's not just a pet; she's a living, breathing person!"

"Now I get it. What should have been yours was stolen by her

and her mother.

"And Lydia? She's been living off everything I've given her, all while playing both sides, pretending to be so innocent..."

Meryl fell silent, the weight of Bianca's words sinking in.

Discovering that Lydia's affection was nothing but a facade left Bianca feeling hollow.

After dinner, they prepared to send Bianca home.

As they reached the door, Chandler stepped out to fetch the car.

Night had fully fallen, and a brisk wind whipped through the air, invigorating yet biting.

Chapter 341 Blood for Blood

It was hard to believe that just half a month ago, everything seemed normal.

With the Aniston family gathering under one roof for the holidays, it was anyone's guess what drama might unfold.

A sudden drop of icy water landed on Meryl's head, startling her.

2/4

“Strange, it’s not even **raining**,” Meryl muttered, glancing up just in time to feel another drop trickle down her collar, sending a shiver through her body.

She instinctively wiped her neck, squinting as she looked up again to see what was going on.

“Watch out!”

Bianca’s cry pierced the air as she instinctively shoved Meryl aside.

Meryl stumbled, barely regaining her balance, when a massive ice chunk crashed down right where she had been standing.

The ice was larger than she’d imagined, having fallen from five **or** six stories above, shattering into pieces upon impact.

If Bianca hadn’t reacted in time, the consequences could have been devastating.

A chill ran down Meryl’s spine, and she felt a cold sweat trickle down her back.

Bianca was still shaken, her heart racing.

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She had only spotted the danger **a** few seconds before it happened.

3/4

Chandler rushed over; concern etched on his face. “What’s going on?”

His strong hand rested on Meryl’s shoulder, his tone filled with worry.

When he saw the shattered ice on the ground, understanding dawned on him quickly.

“Get **in** the car, both of you,” Chandler instructed firmly.

Meryl nodded, climbing into the car with Bianca.

Chandler lingered for a moment, **his** gaze fixed on the ice remnants, his eyes narrowing with suspicion.

In the dead of winter, it was easy for ice to form outdoors, but this was the city center, right outside an upscale restaurant. Establishments usually had staff to manage and prevent such

hazards.

So, the likelihood of this happening was slim to none.

And then there was the shape of the ice.

Chandler crouched down for a closer look. Normally, icicles would taper into a triangle, but this one, even in its shattered state, he could see signs of it being artificially created.

He clenched a cigarette between his teeth, biting down on it as he sparked a flame, lighting it with a flick of his lighter.

Chapter 341 Blood for Blood

Taking a couple of steps outside, he glanced up, scanning the building above.

4/4

It was a mixed-use building, towering over twenty stories high. In the darkness, his eyes locked onto a pair of mysterious ones watching him from above.

Standing in the dimly lit corridor on the fifth floor, the man casually puffed on a cigarette. Unlike Chandler's refined and dignified demeanor, this man exuded a distinct air of roughness.

The poor lighting concealed his expression, but even from a distance, the swaggering arrogance he projected was palpable.

Chandler abruptly crushed his cigarette underfoot and exhaled a cloud of smoke.

With a swift motion, he unfastened the top two buttons of his suit and sprinted up the stairs with lightning speed.

The man on the fifth floor was momentarily stunned, struggling to process Chandler's sudden move.

After all, even with a decade of training at the police academy, Chandler couldn't outrun him on a five-story climb.

However, the man quickly took another exit, leaving Chandler to arrive at the spot he had just vacated, finding only the scattered cigarette butts on the ground.

In the puddles of water left behind, a bold and defiant message read: [Blood for blood.]

Chapter 342 Burden

Seeing Chandler return with a grim expression, Meryl couldn't help but ask, "What's wrong? Where did **you** disappear to?"

"Nothing," Chandler replied, sliding into the car and shutting the door behind him. "I'll have a few bodyguards look out for you, just in case."

Meryl's eyes widened in surprise.

Bianca, sitting in the back seat, immediately chimed in, "Did something happen?"

Just days had passed since Meryl's kidnapping, and the thought sent a chill down her spine.

She had only recently learned that the kidnappers had even used explosives.

Chandler said as he buckled his seatbelt, "I might have ticked someone off during a mission back at the academy. It's better **to** be safe than sorry."

He didn't elaborate on the details of the mission, but Meryl understood that it was likely classified information.

She thought, "Wait a minute... they **use** codenames during missions to protect themselves and their families.

Does that mean they know who he is?"

Chapter **342** Burden

burden."

"Burden?" Chandler frowned. "What are you talking about?"

It struck him then—how many times had Meryl been dragged into trouble because of him? The thought darkened his expression.

2/4

Clearly, the adversaries were aware of his vulnerabilities, which was why they kept targeting Meryl.

They had crossed a line.

As they drove, they passed a pharmacy.

Bianca suddenly said, "Why don't you drop me off here? I overindulged at dinner and could use a little walk. I'll grab a cab

home later.”

Meryl raised an eyebrow.

She thought, “Overindulged? With that tiny portion?”

As soon as the car halted, Bianca opened the door, but as she stepped out, she stumbled slightly.

Meryl caught the movement in the rearview mirror and immediately focused on Bianca’s feet.

“Did you twist your ankle?”

Earlier, when the ice fell, Bianca had been so focused on pushing Meryl out of harm’s **way** that she hadn’t considered her own safety.

Chapter 342 Burden

planned to buy some ointment and nurse it at home, but stepping out had made the pain all too real.

3/4

Bianca replied, a bit sheepish, “It’s nothing serious. I’ll just rest for a couple of days, and I’ll be fine.”

Meryl shook her head and settled back into the car.

As the door closed, Bianca felt a wave of disappointment wash over her.

Just as she turned to leave, the car window rolled down.

Meryl leaned out, resting her chin on her hands. “Why are you still standing there? Get in!”

Bianca blinked in surprise, turning back to meet Meryl’s **gaze**. Her voice trembled slightly, “Meryl...”

Meryl tilted her head and turned to Chandler. “Mr. Aniston, could you please take my mom to the hospital? I think she needs to get checked out.”

Chandler nodded without hesitation.

Bianca was taken aback, her heart racing with a mix of shock and joy.

She thought, “Meryl is... is she actually worried about me?”

She wants to take me to the hospital herself?

And she just called me... Mom?"

Chapter 342 Burden

not wanting to cry in front of Meryl.

4/4

She thought, "My daughter is so kind-hearted. After everything I've done, she still cares."

The winter night was chilly, but inside the car, it felt like a warm embrace.

The heater blew gently against her face, stirring emotions that made her eyes misty. Bianca lifted her hand to wipe her cheeks, only to find them wet with tears.

Write your comment

Chapter 343 Malcolm's Predicament

1/4

Malcolm had spent two nights at the hotel, and the third day marked the holiday.

During the festive days, with **no** way to return home, he could only stay at the hotel.

News of the incident at Julia's house had spread like wildfire through Kingdom, and everywhere he went, people pointed and whispered.

And it wasn't just Kingdom; the online buzz was deafening.

It turned out that someone had secretly recorded the whole thing, posting it online for the world to see.

In **this** day and age, beating up a mistress wasn't exactly rare, but when it involved a wealthy family, the gossip took on a **life of** its own, quickly trending **on** social media.

People dug deeper, uncovering the truth about the swapped daughters, and Malcolm felt a headache brewing.

Online, keyboard warriors were having a field day, hurling insults at him that made him question his very existence.

Malcolm thought, "What does **the** whole swapping thing have to

do with **ma2**

Chapter **343** Malcolm's Predicament

2/4

They say I'm heartless and cruel. How could I be so brutal to **my** own daughter?"

The insults were relentless, dragging his ancestors through the mud as if they were responsible for his current predicament.

The worst part? While they called it "blurring out" the footage, anyone who knew him could easily recognize it was him on the screen.

The Stone family had relatives calling Malcolm left and right, wanting to know what was going on.

Even Sandra called, sobbing about how someone had vandalized her flower shop.

At first, Malcolm didn't want to engage. After all, the whole swapping debacle was her doing. Yet, somehow, he found himself shouldering all the blame.

However, he thought about the flower shop; it was his investment, and he felt a pang of responsibility. So, he sent someone to check it out.

To his surprise, it wasn't Bianca's doing **at** all; it was **just** some enthusiastic internet users.

The vandals even filmed the whole incident, and a wave of applause followed online, as if they were celebrating **a** victory.

Sandra's shop had always catered to high-end clients, and now, it faced damages worth **over** a million dollars.

Malcolm had no choice but to swallow this bitter pill.

He figured it had been three days; surely, Bianca's anger had simmered down by now.

So, he checked out of the hotel early, ready to head home.

But when Malcolm arrived, he was met with an unexpected sight.

Not only was the door locked, but it also had a custom sign hanging on it reading: [Malcolm and Dog, Keep Out.]

John did it.

The sign was embedded in the doorframe, making it impossible to remove.

Malcolm's jaw tightened, and he mustered the courage to knock on the door.

"Get that sign off the door!"

John's voice rang out, dripping with arrogance. "Malcolm, are you still thirsty for blood? Want me to bring you a bowl? I've got plenty.

"What, you still have the nerve to show your face here?"

Malcolm replied, trying to keep his tone steady, "It's the festival today; we should be celebrating as a family. Just open the door

for me."

"Ha! Don't you have another family to celebrate **with**? Why

Chapter 343 Malcolm's Predicament

4/4

"I've cut ties with Sandra. I haven't seen her in days. My heart is still with your mother. Just let me in to talk to her, even if it's an apology, it should be face-to-face, right?"

John spat, saying, "Get lost! Go wherever you please."

Under normal circumstances, Malcolm wouldn't have taken this kind of disrespect.

But this morning, he discovered his bank card was locked, and he had to use the driver's card to pay for the hotel.

Losing his patience, he insisted, "Open the door! I need to talk to your mother."

Suddenly, the door swung open.

Bianca stood there, holding a cup of coffee beans, and without missing a beat, she splashed the grounds right in Malcolm's face.

B

Write your comment

Chapter 344 A Thousand

Malcolm forced a smile, trying to keep his temper **in** check. “Honey, **you** splashed me with water, so are we good now?”

He reached for Bianca’s hand, hoping for some semblance of reconciliation.

Bianca shot him a fierce glare, her eyes blazing with anger.

Seizing the moment, Malcolm stepped inside. “I’ve thought **it** over, and I realize I was **wrong**. **I** was blinded by Sandra. I had no idea about the baby swap back then. If I had known, I would’ve stopped her.”

Without a word, Bianca slammed a divorce agreement in his face.

“I don’t care about your mess with Sandra. It’s time to split the assets. Just sign.”

Malcolm’s eyes

your mind?”

widened in disbelief. “Divorce? Are you out of

He thought to himself, “Divorce means restructuring Celestial Ventures Group. The losses would be catastrophic!” /

“Yeah, I’m **crazy**. I go insane just thinking about all the pain Meryl **has** endured over the years. You owe it to both of us, Malcolm. You’ve been in debt to us for life. Not kicking **you out** with nothing is me showing you mercy. It’s divorce or nothing!”

Chapter 344 A Thousand

2/4

With no money in his account, he had nowhere else to turn, so he called Lydia for help.

It was a holiday, and the Aniston family was preparing for their reunion dinner.

Lydia was pacing back and forth, anxious about seeing Dalton later.

When she picked up Malcolm's call, she casually said, "Dad, why don't you stay at Mom's place for a bit?"

"No way! Going to your mom's right now would be like walking into a firing squad!"

Malcolm thought, "After Sandra's flower shop got trashed, her address was leaked online.

If I stay there, it'll only add fuel to the fire.

Besides, Bianca will go ballistic if she finds out I'm at Sandra's.

The best move **right** now **is** to distance myself from Sandra.

Maybe Bianca will give me another chance if she sees I'm trying to make amends.

Women are emotional creatures, after all."

Bianca's family was wealthy, something Sandra could never compete with.

Malcolm knew how to weigh the pros and cons; there was no way he could afford to divorce Bianca, especially with a massive

Chapter 344 A Thousand

like Celestial Ventures at stake.

The financial fallout would be disastrous.

3/4

"Lydia, could you send me some money? I'll just crash at a hotel. for a few days," Malcolm said.

Lydia was taken aback. She hadn't expected her father to ask her for money.

But since he asked, she couldn't refuse.

After hanging up, Lydia quickly transferred some cash to Malcolm's account.

[Dear Customer, your account has received a transfer of 1000 dollars from Lydia. Current balance: 1048 dollars.]..

Malcolm could hardly believe his eyes.

The cold wind whipped through the **air**, ruffling his wig.

He thought, “I used to send Lydia money in the millions during the holidays, and now I’m in such dire straits that my beloved daughter can only spare me a measly thousand?”

What the heck?

This isn’t even enough to cover the hotel bill I charged to **the** driver’s card this morning.”

Frustrated, he called Lydia again.

“Hey, Dad, did you not get the money?” Lydia asked, puzzled.

Chapter **344** A Thousand

4/4

“Lydia, why is it only a thousand dollars? Did you forget to add a couple of zeros?”

For someone in his position, a thousand dollars wouldn’t even cover one night in a decent hotel.

Lydia furrowed her brows. “Dad, I’m stretched financially. I need to use a lot of money here at, and **my** mom also asked for money yesterday. Alright, I’ll transfer a bit more to you.”

In a matter of minutes, Malcolm received a transfer of 10 thousand dollars.

A cold breeze swept through, making him shiver as he held the phone, standing alone in the chill.

Just a fortnight **ago**, he had transferred 30 million dollars without even blinking.

At this moment, Malcolm felt a mix of emotions, realizing his long-time favoritism towards Lydia had become a joke.

Write your comment

Chapter 345 I Told Him

News from the police came through after two long days of interrogation: Rocky had changed his story.

1/4

He flatly denied any collusion with Lydia and refused to admit **he** had taken any money from her

.

Unfortunately for John, all the evidence he had recorded in the villa had mysteriously vanished.

Meryl rested her chin on her hand, gazing out the window.

She thought, “If only Dalton would come forward to testify....”

But once he found out Lydia had been with Rocky, he wouldn’t just sit back and take it.

Yet, it’s been days, and there’s been no word from him.

Maybe, since Lydia’s pregnancy is safe, Dalton has softened.

After all, they’re still married, and old feelings can’t just disappear.”

Lost in her thoughts about the baby, Meryl picked up her phone and called Anne.

“Hey, Anne, how’s the baby doing?”

Chandler, just stepping **out** of the bathroom with a towel in hand, paused mid-stride.

Chapter 345 I Told Him

He strained to listen, but Meryl was clearly keeping her voice low, making it hard to catch what she was saying.

Chandler opened the bathroom door and stepped out.

Seeing him, Meryl quickly wrapped up her conversation with Anne and hung up, smiling, “Wow, you’re done already?”

Chandler couldn’t shake the feeling that something was being kept from him.

“I’m all set. You should hurry too; we still need to head to the Aniston Villa.”

Meryl nodded as she walked toward the bathroom.

2/4

Chandler, holding his phone, stepped out onto the balcony and dialed Dante’s number.

After three rings, Dante picked up, his voice heavy and tinged **with** despair. “What’s up?”

“What’s the situation with you and Anne?” Chandler asked.

Dante fell silent, staring at the divorce papers he had just signed.

He had given **in**, ready to let Anne go and free himself in the process.

“We’re divorced,” Dante said, lips pressed together.

“Did you get the divorce certificate?” Chandler frowned.

“Not yet. I’ll pick it up this afternoon,” Dante replied.

Chapter 345 I Told Him

“Maybe the baby is still there,” Chandler added.

3/4

Dante froze for a moment, then realized what Chandler meant. “Who are you talking about? Anne?”

Chandler said, “Yeah, I overheard Meryl talking to Anne on the phone.”

Before Chandler could finish, Dante bolted out the door.

The sound of the door slamming echoed on the phone, and Chandler shook his head in resignation.

“Thanks, Chandler,” Dante said hurriedly, still clutching the phone.

“Sure,” Chandler replied, knowing he was risking Meryl’s wrath by sharing this news.

But Dante had been in such a dark place lately that it felt right to lend a hand.

After hanging up, Dante raced toward Anne’s place, while

Chandler tightened **his** grip on his now-blackened phone screen, instinctively glancing back.

Just then, Meryl emerged from the bathroom, freshly washed and looking radiant.

Their eyes met, and Chandler felt a flicker **of** guilt flash across his face before he quickly looked away.

Meryl didn’t seem to notice.

Chapter 345 I Told Him

She walked into the dressing room, and just as she finished getting dressed, she felt a warm embrace from behind.

“Hey, babe,” Chandler murmured, planting a soft kiss on Meryl’s hair, his lips brushing against her ear.

The sudden intimacy made Meryl shiver slightly, but she steadied herself and asked, “What’s going on?”

4/4

Chandler hesitated, his lips twitching. “There’s something I need to confess.”

“Yeah?” Meryl replied, curious.

“I overheard your call with Anne.”

Meryl paused, her composure slipping as she forced herself to ask, “What did you hear?”

Chandler replied, “I called Dante.”

Meryl’s facade cracked. “You told him?”

Write **your** comment

Chapter 346 Inner Conflict

Chandler nodded honestly, his expression sincere.

Meryl paused for a few seconds, then suddenly said, “Chandler, you could have kept this from me.”

If he hadn’t mentioned it, she would have remained in the dark.

“I don’t want to lie to you,” Chandler replied, his voice dropping slightly.

Telling Dante was a matter of loyalty to a friend, but confessing to Meryl was about his commitment to their relationship.

He felt no guilt for his decision.

Seeing Chandler’s open demeanor, mixed with a hint of guilt in his eyes, Meryl felt her heart soften.

She wrapped her arms around his waist and nestled her head against his chest. “You...”

She thought, “How can I be mad at him when he looks like this?”

Besides, Anne has decided to stay in the country, and it’s only a matter of time before her belly starts to show. Dante will find out sooner or later.”

Meanwhile, at the Aniston Villa, Lydia stood on the second floor. Watching Dalton’s car pull into the driveway, she instinctively clenched her fists.

Chapter 346 Inner Conflict

After Charlotte had hidden her away in the villa for over ten days, Lydia’s pregnancy had stabilized, but her heart was far from at ease.

Dalton’s feelings about the baby were still unclear. He hadn’t stormed into the villa yet, likely out of respect for Charlotte.

Recalling that fateful morning sent a chill down her spine.

2/4

Several bodyguards had barged into her hospital room, ready to drag her to the operating room for an abortion, with the doctor already prepping the instruments.

Malcolm and Bianca had rushed over, but the guards hadn’t even acknowledged their presence; Lydia was still pushed into the operating room.

She had never imagined Dalton could be so ruthless.

Dalton didn’t even flinch at the thought of losing his child.

He didn’t bother to show up himself; he simply sent his men to handle it.

Fortunately, Charlotte arrived just in time to stop the bodyguards.

Afterward, Lydia was taken to the Aniston Villa, where she had been holed up for half a month.

During **this** time, Lydia hadn’t seen Dalton. Several times, she had thought about calling him, but each time she held back.

Charlotte insisted that **it** was best for her to stay calm. “He needs

Chapter 346 Inner Conflict

Lydia had reluctantly agreed.

Today was a holiday, and the Aniston family had a tradition: everyone had to come home for the celebrations.

Lydia felt a wave of anxiety wash over her.

She was about to face Dalton.

Despite the last ten days of silence from him, she knew it was only because she was at the villa.

3/4

When Lydia heard a noise from downstairs, she quickly left the window and lay back down on the bed, feigning weakness as she gently closed her eyes.

But minutes ticked by, and after ten long minutes, Dalton still hadn't stepped into the room.

Lydia bit her lip, opening her eyes to glance at the maid beside her. "Can you check what's going on? Why hasn't Dalton come in yet?"

The maid nodded and hurried out, returning shortly after.

"Mr. Dalton Aniston is playing chess with the Sir Aniston. He said he wouldn't be coming up."

Lydia instinctively clenched her fists, feeling a pang of disappointment.

"Got it," Lydia replied, her voice barely above a whisper.

The chess game dragged on for the entire morning, and it felt as

Chapter 346 Inner Conflict

Dalton had completely forgotten about her, his wife.

4/4

Lydia's emotions were a tangled mess. On one hand, she hoped Dalton might notice her; on the other, she was terrified of the

encounter.

The inner conflict was overwhelming and hard to pin down.

As lunchtime approached, a servant came to escort her downstairs for the meal.

Under normal circumstances, Lydia would have been careful and reserved with the Aniston Villa

.

But now, as she was pregnant, even the staff at the Aniston Villa treated her with greater respect, and Charlotte hadn't ordered her around at all.

Lydia enjoyed this newfound deference. It made her feel that once the baby was born, she would have a stronger standing.

This only strengthened her resolve to carry the child to term.

B

Write your comment

Chapter 347 Starting Your Own Business?

1/4

“Dalton...”

As soon as Lydia stepped out of her room, she spotted Dalton emerging from the study across the hall.

Her room was conveniently located near the staircase, making it impossible for him to miss her.

Dalton was chatting with Dylan, seemingly engrossed in a discussion about their recent chess game.

Lydia called out to him, but he didn't hear her and kept walking.

Lydia clenched her fists, hesitant to call him again for fear of annoying him.

It was Dylan who noticed her first. “Your wife's waiting for you.”

Only then did Dalton glance her way, but his gaze quickly shifted away from her face.

“Grandpa, let me help you down,” Dalton said, moving past Lydia without a second thought.

As they brushed shoulders, Lydia bit her lip, holding back any complaints. She fell in step behind them, trailing as they descended the stairs.

Dulan remarked turning to Dalton “I found your project idea

Chapter 347 Starting Your Own Business? mistake?”

2/4

He was referring to Dalton's resignation from Galaxy Holdings. Group, a topic that had been all over the news lately.

Lydia had heard the whispers, surprised that Dalton would leave such a prestigious company.

The Aniston family had many ventures, but Galaxy Holdings was the crown jewel.

Its annual revenue outstripped all the other businesses combined.

Leaving that power center seemed foolish to her.

"Why not swallow your pride and ask your Uncle Chandler to let you back in?" Dylan suggested with a chuckle.

Lydia was ready to agree. In the world of business, ego often

took a backseat.

After all, who didn't argue passionately one day only to be best buddies the next?

Plus, Dalton and Chandler weren't rivals; they were family.

For Dalton, admitting a mistake **in** front of an elder could easily pave the way back to Galaxy Holdings. It seemed worth it.

But before Lydia could voice her thoughts, Dalton replied coldly, "No thanks, Grandpa. If you think the project I mentioned is promising, why shouldn't I give it a shot?"

Chapter 347 Starting Your Own Business? clearly surprised.

Dalton nodded. "Yeah, I'm already getting things rolling."

3/4

In reality, Dalton was being modest; he was already well into the next phase of his plans.

But he preferred to keep a low profile until everything was set in

stone.

Dylan chuckled, saying, "Well, that's a refreshing change! You're moving faster and with better judgment than your unreliable father. I didn't realize you were such a go-getter."

"Thanks for the compliment, Grandpa," Dalton replied, feeling a surge of confidence.

Dylan had built the Aniston family from the ground up, turning them into the most prominent family in Kingsdom in just a few decades.

His keen insight into the business world was undeniable.

Any project he endorsed **was** bound to have potential.

Dylan cautioned, “But starting a business comes with its fair share **of** risks. There are plenty of pitfalls out there. You’re still a bit green; just be careful not to fall into one.”

Dalton nodded earnestly. “I hear you, Grandpa. I’ll be as careful as I can.”

As they continued their conversation, they reached the dining table and took their seats.

Chapter 347 Starting Your Own Business? Lydia pursed her lips, feeling utterly invisible.

4/4

It was as if she were a ghost trailing behind them without a word

to say.

The ache in her heart deepened as she realized that even Dylan, who usually avoided family drama, was aware of Dalton’s plans to start a business. And here she was, the wife, learning about it

last.

Write your comment

Chapter 348 Look Down

The Aniston family was large enough to require two dining tables for their gatherings.

1/3

As everyone settled in, Chandler and Meryl made their entrance, perfectly timed as always.

The family seemed accustomed to this routine, and no one batted an eye at their arrival.

As soon as they appeared, members from various branches of the family stepped forward to greet them, exchanging pleasantries and compliments.

But for Lydia, the situation felt uncomfortable.

She couldn’t even sit at the same table as Meryl, which stung more than she cared to admit.

To make matters worse, Cate decided to throw her weight around too.

“Lydia, why don’t you take my seat? I need to have a word with my brother,” Cate said innocently.

Lydia shot a pleading look at Dalton, hoping he would intervene.

The younger generation—Dylan’s second and third son’s children—were mostly teenagers, either just stepping into adulthood or still in high school.

Chapter 348 Look Down Dalton said nothing.

Yet Dalton said nothing.

With a heavy heart, she resigned herself to sitting among the kids.

Ethan soon joined them.

2/3

Upon seeing Lydia next to him, he shifted away, increasing the distance between them with a look of disdain.

Lydia frowned, wondering what his deal was.

She thought, “What’s his problem? Ethan’s mother is Sir Aniston’s adopted daughter who has married long time ago, and he’s here as an outsider. Is he really looking down on me?”

Noticing Lydia’s gaze, Ethan smirked. “What’s **with** the look? Got a bone to pick with me?”

He shrugged innocently. “I heard you’re pregnant. I’m just keeping my distance, you know? Can’t risk getting caught up in any drama, especially since I’ve never gotten along with your husband. What’s wrong with that?”

As he spoke, Ethan casually grabbed a younger cousin with glasses and plopped him down. “Hey, Jeremy, come sit here.”

Jeremy Aniston, Halle’s eldest son at eighteen, was preparing for the SATs in just a few months.

He was quiet and reserved, and when Ethan pulled him over, he obediently took the seat between them.

Chapter 348 Look Down

Lydia instinctively glanced at Dalton. She thought, “Will he really remain silent while Ethan is being so provocative?”

3/3

To her surprise, Dalton didn't budge. He and Cate were deep in conversation, heads bent close together, their voices hushed. Lydia couldn't make out a word.

Frustrated, she clenched her fists under the table.

Cate had positioned herself between Dalton and Lydia because Dalton had sent her a text earlier, saying he didn't want to sit too close to Lydia.

Cate might not know the specifics of their issues, but it was clear to anyone with half a brain that something was off between them. Dalton hadn't returned to the villa in days.

Cate had always looked down on Lydia.

She believed that ever since her brother married Lydia, his fortunes had taken a turn **for** the worse. His name was losing its

shine.

Cate was convinced Lydia was a jinx, dragging her brother down from his pedestal.

Her gaze fell **on** Lydia's belly. "Bro, I support you in getting a divorce. Mom must be going through some kind of midlife crisis to be fooled by her pregnancy."

She thought to herself, "**In** a family like ours, **if** Dalton wanted, to, he could have any number of women lining up to have his

child.

Chapter 349 Toast

"When I look at her now, all I see is a schemer who stirs up trouble. She's nowhere near Aunt Meryl's level, and the worst part? She's a love child."

1/4

Cate scoffed, her eyes darting over to Meryl, who was seated at the other table.

Meryl was a vision in her fluffy, double-breasted jacket, in a soft, buttery yellow that made her skin look even more glowing.

Even a girl in her early twenties like Cate couldn't help but feel a twinge of jealousy.

In high society, there was a clear pecking order, and those born into it looked down on illegitimate children.

Who would want a surprise sibling popping up out of nowhere?

If they shared the same mother, it was manageable. But if not, that was a recipe for a nasty fight over inheritance and shares.

Cate imagined herself as Meryl, wishing she could just rip Lydia apart. In her eyes, Lydia was utterly detestable.

Cate shook her head. "Let's be real. Your kid is going to come from the belly of a love child. That just doesn't vibe with your status, does it?"

Dalton remained silent, seemingly indifferent to anything

related to Lydia.

Chapter 349 Toast

2/4

His gaze was fixed on Meryl's face, and from his vantage point, he had a clear view of her.

Lydia's status as a love child was news to Dalton, something he had only learned from recent online gossip.

He felt a pang of concern that Meryl might be affected by this revelation. Just then, he caught sight of Chandler discreetly taking Meryl's hand under the table.

They exchanged a knowing smile.

Dalton observed this interaction, and his expression darkened.

"Hey, are you even listening to me?" Cate nudged him with her elbow, her voice laced with irritation..

Dalton's gaze was still glued to Meryl, and Cate thought, "His eyes are so obvious. With so many pairs of eyes on us, he should be more careful."

She was worried that the scene from Christmas Eve when Dalton drunkenly pulled Meryl into a conversation, might repeat itself. She desperately wanted to pull his attention back.

But Dalton didn't respond. Instead, he picked up his glass and suddenly walked over to Meryl.

"Uncle Chandler, Mer... Aunt Meryl, I'd like to propose a toast," Dalton said, though his eyes never left Meryl's face.

Cate's heart raced.

Meanwhile, Lydia dropped her spoon with a clatter, the sound

Chapter 349 Toast

3/4

echoing in the tense atmosphere.

Chandler raised an eyebrow, sizing Dalton up.

Perhaps because of nervousness, Dalton seized the moment to clink glasses with him, downing a drink before refilling his glass.

"Aunt Meryl," Dalton said, preparing to clink his glass with hers, his gaze drifting over her features.

But Chandler, with an air of nonchalance, intervened, placing a hand between them. "Your Aunt Meryl can't hold her liquor. I'll drink this for her."

With that, he took Meryl's glass, clinked it against Dalton's, and took a sip.

Dalton's expression darkened, but he held his tongue.

Chandler was right; with so many eyes watching, every move could be scrutinized and gossiped about.

Dalton wanted Meryl, but he knew he wasn't in a position to challenge Chandler.

Pushing too hard would only land him in an awkward situation.

After finishing that drink, Dalton went around the table, raising his glass to toast the other branches of the Aniston family, making sure to hit everyone.

But Chandler knew all too well that Dalton was only toasting everyone to get to Meryl.

Chapter 349 Toast

4/4

Chandler saw right through Dalton's subtle intentions and had no intention of letting him get what he wanted.

He instinctively glanced at the woman beside him.

Write your comment

Chapter 350 We Need to Talk

"What's up?" Meryl felt a bit puzzled as Chandler suddenly fixed his gaze on her.

"Nothing much," Chandler replied with a smile, affectionately ruffling her hair.

After lunch, Meryl began to feel drowsy, her energy waning.

"How about we take a nap at the Aniston Villa before heading back?" Meryl suggested.

After all, they had their own rooms here. Chandler preferred the quiet, staying on a separate building away from the rest of the family so they wouldn't have to worry about interruptions.

Chandler wrapped his arm gently around Meryl's waist. "You give me a kiss, and I'll carry you to the room."

Meryl blinked, momentarily caught off guard. "Huh?"

His voice wasn't low, and with the rest of the Aniston family just leaving the dining table, everyone heard him.

Surprised looks were exchanged, as if they were seeing a different side of Chandler altogether.

Dylan cleared his throat lightly, perhaps feeling the awkwardness, and buried his face in a newspaper.

The others, equally stunned, fell silent, unsure of how to react.

Chapter 350 We Need to Talk

2/4

In the midst of their astonishment, Chandler scooped Meryl up in his arms.

"Even if you don't kiss me, I'll still carry you to your room," Chandler said, his voice low and teasing.

Meryl gasped, her mind racing. “Chandler!”

“Yeah?”

“You jerk!”

She thought, “There are so many people watching. The Aniston Villa is packed today—old folks, young ones, even a kid in elementary school. This is so embarrassing!”

Chandler’s smile deepened, his eyes sparkling with mischief. “Yep, I’m a jerk, but I’m also your husband.”

With that, he strode out of the main building, carrying Meryl as if they were the only two people in the world.

Ethan exchanged glances with Dalton. “Help! Is Uncle Chandler really throwing out that kind of romantic vibe?”

Dalton’s irritation flared. “Ethan, shut it!”

After lunch, everyone scattered to their own activities.

Dalton grabbed his coat, ready to head out, when Charlotte suddenly piped up. “Dalton, you’re leaving already?”

Since his arrival at the Aniston Villa, Dalton hadn’t exchanged a single word with Charlotte.

Chapter 350 We Need to Talk

She was well aware of the tension between them.

Dalton resented her for pushing Lydia to keep the baby, especially since he didn’t want it.

3/4

When Dalton had wanted to marry Lydia, Charlotte had refused.

Now that he didn’t want her anymore, Charlotte insisted on keeping Lydia in the family.

“Dalton, everything I’m doing is for your father. As the eldest son of your Grandpa, he was sent abroad and can’t even come home for the holidays. If you have a child, it gives your father a reason to return, and we can all be together again.”

Dalton’s gaze was cold as **it** swept over Charlotte. “So you want me to make a sacrifice?”

Charlotte couldn't comprehend his perspective. "How **can** having a child be a sacrifice? It's a joyous occasion!"

Dalton's expression hardened. "My heart belongs to Meryl."

Charlotte's eyes widened in disbelief. "What did you just say?"

"Dalton, are you **out** of your mind? She's your Aunt Meryl! What are you doing? You're willing to throw away your own child for **a** woman who's off-limits?"

Dalton let out a sarcastic laugh, not wanting to engage in a lengthy argument with her.

He thought, "There's no point in explaining myself."

Chapter 350 We Need to Talk

"I'll reclaim my woman when the time comes."

4/4

His stance was clear: he wanted nothing more to do with Lydia.

If Charlotte insisted on keeping the baby, he would respect that.

But Dalton would never harbor any feelings for Lydia again, and his relationship with Charlotte would plummet to an all-time low.

Charlotte, however, remained unfazed.

She believed Dalton just needed time to come around. She thought, "Once that baby is born, who wouldn't melt at the sight of a sweet, chubby little thing calling them Dad?"

Dalton had just lit a cigarette, its smoke curling up as he reached the car. Lydia burst out of the house, hurrying after him.

"Dalton, we need to talk!"

B

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