MY WIFE IS AN ALOOF BEAUTY

Chapter 1741 Illegal Detention (Part Two)



"Mr. Xia. Here is the ice pack you asked for. Is this okay?" William walked in the office without even knocking on the door, because he was in a hurry. Rain had instructed him to bring it as soon as possible.

"Yes, that's just all right. Hand it over to Tiana," Rain said, nodding his head to Tiana. He thought it was really a good idea to take William with him to CY Technology. He was such a good employee who did everything that was asked of him to do, efficiently, perfectly and quickly. His job was impeccable.

"Here you are, Miss Ke." William handed the ice pack to Tiana without saying anything else. Though he was curious why her face was all red and swollen, he didn't say anything about it. After all, it was none of his business. He was not the big boss of CY Technology, and he understood his place, knowing when he should keep his mouth shut.

"Thank you, William." Tiana took the ice pack from William's hand. She couldn't help but lower her head, feeling quite embarrassed that he had to see her like this.

"You are welcome. I should go back to work now. If you need anything, just call me, Mr. Xia," William made a slight bow and said to Rain in a polite tone.

"Go ahead." Rain waved his hand, gesturing for him to continue his work. But all of a sudden, he called after William, making him stop in his tracks and look back at him with confused eyes. "Wait. Please find me some ointment for her cheek too. Thank you, William." "No problem, Mr. Xia." Though William answered in an obedient tone, he was getting more and more confused inside. He had thought that Rain didn't like Tiana and wasn't in good terms with her. But why was he being so nice to her all of a sudden today? He couldn't understand, but it was not in his position to question it and even say it out loud. He just had to do what Rain told him to do and ask no questions.

Of course, Rain couldn't know what William was thinking about. He just star

sues. The truth was, she felt so lost, which was worse than the pain on her face. She was like a kid who suddenly lost everything she had and became homeless. But Rain saw through her. She was really a bad liar.

"Here. This is the ointment that I asked William to get for you. It's good for your face. Try putting some on," Rain said while handing the ointment to her. He could easily see through her lie, but he didn't want to make a big deal out of it and embarrass her. He could understand how hard it must be for her to be treated like this by her own mother. He knew that she must feel betrayed and very disappointed. But he didn't know how to comfort her and he wasn't sure if he should. So he just kept his mouth shut and pretended to believe that she was telling the truth.

"Thank you." Tiana was really touched by his actions. He could have done nothing to help her and he did not have the obligation to do so. But he still tried to help despite the feud between him and her family. She almost cried again because of this. But she just tried her best to contain her emotions and calm herself down. She didn't want Rain to see her cry any more. It just made her look weak and useless. So she just turned around and walked back into the bathroom with the ointment that Rain gave her.

MY WIFE IS AN ALOOF BEAUTY

Chapter 1742 Illegal Detention (Part Three)



As soon as she disappeared behind the bathroom door, Rain got lost in his thoughts again. He was considering how he should deal with this thing with Tiana. He really wanted to help her get through this problem. If her crazy old mother, Sheena found out where she was, she would surely be taken back and be forced to marry that old man. He just had to do something to stop it. Tiana shouldn't have to be used as the sacrificial lamb and marry the old man for the sake of her family! Rain wouldn't let this happen to her. He didn't know why he was so keen on helping Tiana, but his gut told him that it was the right thing to do.

In the evening, Rain gave Edward a call, asking him for a favor.

"What's the matter?" Edward picked up the call and walked out on the balcony. Daisy just got out of the shower and was blowing her hair so it was a bit noisy in the room. He stepped out so that he could hear Rain better.

"Yeah. Can you do me a favor? Can you talk to your father and ask him to check if Tiana is really Sheena's biological daughter? I have a feeling that she might have been adopted." The more Rain thought about this, the more Rain believed that there was a big possibility of Tiana being an adopted child. He didn't think that it was possible for a mother to do such a vile thing to her own daughter. Besides, he never thought that Sheena really cared about the young Tiana. Her motherly love always seemed a bit fake to him.

"Are you serious? Why? What's going on?" Rain's words piqued Edward's interest. He also wondered, since when did Rain start to care about anyone from the Ke family. Why did Rain care about Tiana so much? He just couldn't make sense of it.

"Yes, I am serious. Today, in front of the company, I heard Sheena talking. She used a wrong word that made me suspicious about it. She must have slipped unintentionally," Rain answered in a serious tone. If Tiana was indeed not Sheena's real daughter, then so many things would make sense. He really hoped that Edward's father could help him find the truth about it.

"Oka

Drugged one night by her ex-boyfriend, a mysterious man took advantage of her in an ecstatic night filled with sex.

To take her revenge, she married the man, and used him.

"As long as I'm alive, I'm still his legal wife, while all of you are just his mistresses."

She remained adamant even when he was involved in scandals with other women.

Eventually she stormed off after she learned that he had betrayed her again.But life brought her back to him a few years later, to his astonishment.

t astonished him, suddenly not knowing what to say or do next. In Daisy's mind, it was not a big deal to admit this to her husband from time to time, if this would make him shut up. She didn't have to win the argument all the time. In fact, even if it appeared that she lost but she got what she wanted, then she was the one who would have won.

"Umm..." Edward was at a loss for words all of a sudden. Never had he thought that Daisy would bluntly admit to him that yes, she was indeed afraid. It was not like her to admit fear and defeat without even putting up a good fight.

Seeing his reaction, the corners of Daisy's lips curled into a smug smile. She had made him tongue tied, not knowing what to say. She had stunned him! It

was rare and this made Daisy very proud of herself. Well, it seemed that sometimes, one didn't have to always struggle to get the upper hand and win. Sometimes, maybe just admitting defeat would turn out to be surprising results.

But on the other hand, Edward wouldn't be himself if he just completely gave up that easily. He was stunned for a minute but he regained his thoughts and quickly grabbed Daisy right before she was about to walk out of the door. He gently pulled her towards him, and Daisy, who was not prepared for his sudden moves, fell into his tight arms with a startled look on her face. So she did not win after all.

MY WIFE IS AN ALOOF BEAUTY

Chapter 1743 Illegal Detention (Part Four)



"What are you doing? Let go of me, Edward!" Daisy tried to struggle and get away from his arms in a deadlock. But as soon as she looked into Edward's charming eyes, she just lost her strength and couldn't do anything about it. She wanted to bury herself in Edward's loving arms and never leave. Her whole body quivered as if slowly melting under his gaze.

"Don't you think that, if Justin really wants a little sister, we should just give him a sister?" Edward smirked while saying these words. He looked at Daisy with intense eyes, trying to gauge her reaction.

"Give him a sister? It's not like we can make a daughter out of thin air. Do you think that it's that easy? Oh yes of course, you do think it's easy. Your job is done in the next five to ten minutes while I'm stuck with it for 9 freaking months. No thanks! Besides, we can no longer have another baby." Daisy

rolled her eyes at Edward's words in annoyance. Did he really think that it was that easy? Did he forget that he already had a vasectomy before? They couldn't have any more kids.

"You don't understand. It is not as complicated as you think. Do you have any idea that with today's technology, everything is possible? Besides, we still have the winning card," Edward said in an easy tone with a smile on his face. He knew what Daisy must be thinking right now. Yes, he did have a vasectomy. But he asked Jerry before the operation if this was reversible. He had promised him that yes, he could have a baby again if he changed his mind and wanted one.

"A winning card? What are you talking about?" Daisy asked in confusion. She had no idea what he was talking about. And his smug smile annoyed her to no end. She didn't like the feeling that Edward was hiding something from her with no intention of ever telling her.

"You will know it soon, my dear Senior Colonel Ouyang." Edward couldn't help but lower his head and kissed Daisy gently on her lips. In his mind, he considered this talk as a preemptive strike. He wanted another child, and he considered that Daisy already said yes.

"Huh. Whatever. Let go of m

Drugged one night by her ex-boyfriend, a mysterious man took advantage of her in an ecstatic night filled with sex.

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She remained adamant even when he was involved in scandals with other women.

Eventually she stormed off after she learned that he had betrayed her again.But life brought her back to him a few years later, to his astonishment. thing ridiculous.

Meanwhile, back at Rain's house, the atmosphere in the room was just too heavy. Both Rain and Annie had serious looks on their faces.

"Oh my Rain, is it the truth, really? This is serious! Did Tiana really get slapped by her own mother?" Annie just couldn't believe her own ears. She was very confused. Though she had only met Tiana once or twice before, she felt that she was not that kind of girl, brave enough to go against her own parents. In her mind, Tiana was an obedient daughter who listened to everything her parents told her. So what excuse was there for her mother to even lay a finger on her? Every sane mother would protect her delicate child from even a mosquito bite, yet Tiana's mother was treating her like a punching bag. Annie was at a loss trying to find any sense in it.

"Yes, I'm telling the truth. It is exactly what happened. Sheena wants her to marry a guy who is much older than her. And of course she wouldn't do it. That's why she got slapped. There's no other explanation." Rain shook his head in frustration. He had a lot of things to deal with which required a lot of his time and energy. These things made him extremely busy and worried. However, he just couldn't ignore Tiana and what she was going through. Adding this to his pile, he felt even more agitated and bothered. He couldn't understand how a parent could hurt her own child.

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Chapter 1744 Illegal Detention (Part Five)



"What the hell? Tiana is her own flesh and blood, that she carried in her own body for nine freaking months! She gave birth to her! Why is she so keen on marrying her off like that, sacrificing her daughter's happiness like that? I just can't believe it! What a monster that mother is!" Annie just couldn't believe it. She thought that this kind of thing only happened in the old days. She had no idea that parents would still do this to their children in these modern times. Annie's opinion of Sheena had sunk low and deep. How could these kinds of people still exist in this harmonious and supposedly civilized society?

"Yeah, I am also confused. It is hard to figure out what is going on in that crazy woman's head," Rain said in a tired voice. Just thinking of Tiana's plight was indeed very exhausting. He reached out to pull Annie in his arms. He just wanted the comfort of his dear wife's embrace. He could only handle so much and could not save the whole world. He must make peace with it.

"I understand. But you said that you didn't want anything to do with the Ke family, didn't you? So don't worry about it too much." Annie held Rain tightly in her arms. She was aware of how pressured and tired he must be. She wished that she could help him, but what could she do? She let out a silent sigh, feeling a bit helpless. She gently patted his back, trying to give him the comfort he deserved. Maybe in everyone else's eyes, Rain was a tough man who was not afraid of anything and could achieve anything. But Annie knew better. Even the toughest man had his weak moments. And she should be there for him whenever he needed her.

"Yeah. That's what I think too." Rain closed his eyes, slowly falling asleep in her arms.

As the wedding date approached and got closer, Rain started getting busier. He wanted to finish all his tasks in advance so he could focus on his wedding and finally and legitimately be with the woman of his dreams. While Rain was busy working his ass off, Tiana was not that lucky. Her family found where she had run off to and forced her to go bac

at's all. Just pity." Like Tiana said, she was really nice to Eugenia all the time. That was why Eugenia couldn't help but feel a bit guilty about what they were doing, ganging up on the poor innocent girl. They might have really gone too far this time, but there was no turning back now.

"Pity? That's funny. When she gets married to the CEO, she will become the wife of a CEO. She will live a wealthy and happy life. I really don't know what you are thinking right now, Eugenia. What, you don't want your share of the money anymore?" Hannah didn't care whom Tiana was going to marry, for she was not her real sister anyway. As long as her marriage was good for this family and benefited them, then she would agree to anything.

"Of course I want my share of money! Don't you dare think of keeping all the money to yourself!" When it came to money, Eugenia immediately forgot that Tiana, who had been really good to her, was suffering right now. She wanted money too, and she was going to get it. Nobody could stand between her and that money.

"I am not planning to. Don't worry," hummed Hannah in a mock tone. She thought that Eugenia was really fake sometimes. She even said that she pitied Tiana. How ridiculous was that? What a hypocrite! If she really pitied her, she wouldn't have helped them bring Tiana back at all. Eugenia was just as guilty as every single one of them.



Chapter 1745 Negotiation (Part One)

"Everyone, shut up! Arguing like this is not helping! Why don't we stop wasting spit and actually think of ways to get her to agree with our plan. How are we going to send her there when she absolutely refuses to marry that old guy?" Sheena said loudly as she abruptly stood up and banged the table with both her hands. Tiana's yelling was still going on. It ate at her already distressed mind.

"I don't see what the problem is. We could just knock her out," Cyrus blurted out, running out of patience. At first he didn't want to contribute to the discussion, since hearing Tiana's crying made him feel guilty. Tiana was his little sister, despite all their problems. At that moment, he just couldn't ignore her miserable voice and act like he didn't care about her at all. He wasn't that evil of a brother. However, his heart was touched only for an instant. Reality sunk in and hardened his sympathetic heart. He desperately needed this exorbitant amount of money to recover his merciless losses from the stock market. In light of the imminent bankruptcy that loomed over, he no longer hesitated to join the plan to set his sister up.

"Easier said than done. The glaring flaw in your solution is how the hell are you going to knock her out? Don't tell me you'll just do a karate chop down her neck. Such a heartless thing for a brother to do to his little sister! I, on the other hand, haven't even considered such a method," Vance replied sarcastically, fully intent on getting on his brother's nerves. Seeing his wife buckle under the weight of the embarrassment caused by Hannah's words, Vance couldn't help but avenge her by giving Cyrus a hard time.

"Dumbass! There are other ways other than a karate chop, less stupid ones. Have you been isolated all these years to not know of a sleeping pill?" Cyrus barked. He looked at his brother with scorn in his gaze. All of this was because of his stupid yo stupidity and ugliness. So it's all my fault now?" Sheena asked, quivering with rage. Her voice was shrill and cold. At that moment all her blood went up her head and she was ice cold with anger. She always knew that she never looked as beautiful as Fiona Xia, and this had always been a painful scar in her heart. No one had dared broach it for so many years, not even her husband. She never expected this to come from her own son. How could he bring it up knowing full well how affected she was by it. He just tore the scar open and even deepened the wound. He just stabbed her with his sharp words.

"No, Mum! You're drifting off-topic again. Let's just deal with Tiana right now," Cyrus immediately offered. He sensed the coming onslaught from his mother and tried to save the situation. 'It's better to go back to the task at hand. Otherwise, God knows how she would react if she is as furious as this, ' Cyrus thought to himself.

Meanwhile, in the second floor of the Ke mansion, Tiana was prone beside her bed. She was agonizing over the fact that the family she grew up with and loved all her life were now discussing how to sell her to someone. She had no idea she had been a fish on their frying pan now, and they would never allow their paycheck to escape.





On the drive to the Ke Mansion, Rain was organizing his thoughts for the coming confrontation. The drive was painfully dull. In order to save Tiana, Rain decided he needed to come back to the wretched place which he had

vowed never to step on in his entire life. Moreover, he had to face the disgusting "family members" of Tiana and him.

When he first came about the news that his little sister had been taken back to the Ke mansion by her family, he stayed up late to think hard for a reasonable excuse to help her out, but even he failed. It was only with the unexpected help of the Mayfly did he obtain the damning evidence he needed. This was his smoking gun. So here he was in front of the Ke's, waiting to pull the trigger.

"Hmph! It's you, Rain." Vance said his name in his most venomous tone. "If I remember correctly, didn't you vow never to step into our house ever again? So why the hell are you here again? What brought you here, huh? And in case you still don't know, that spot you're standing on right now belongs to the Ke's. It's our place, not yours," Vance scoffed at Rain as soon as he saw him. It annoyed Vance greatly that no matter when and where they met, Rain always had the aura of a real prince, whose noble features and elegance were so strong that they radiated around him, and anybody would always look twice.

"Oh! You think I'm willing to stand in your house? If it weren't for Tiana, I would never have allowed myself to be in such a filthy place," Rain replied calmly but scornfully. He was no longer so easily irritated by these unimportant people and their lies. As he looked up around the huge living room, he realized the Ke's place had changed drastically over the years. The wallpapers had changed, and even the floorboards weren't as polished as they used to be. One thing that had never changed, though, was that the people who called this place home were still and always would be disgusting to him.

"Well, w

n. However, Rain dodged expertly without even breaking a swear, his face a mask of calm.

"You said this wasn't you, but why are you so defensive and nervous?" Rain asked casually with a menacing smile on his face. He had got her. He was so sure of it. No matter how hard and how clever she hid the truth, there would always be a sliver of evidence left behind. This allowed him to track her and catch her by the tail eventually.

"What the hell are you talking about? I'm not nervous at all, you little bastard. If you think you can threaten me with one stupid recording, that's where you're wrong!" Sheena denied quickly, her voice quivering. All her body language betrayed her true feelings though. Her erratic movements became more and more apparent. She was sweating like a pig by now. All her strikes on him were in vain so far, so she felt the urge to act more ferociously. She flailed at Rain and attacked crazily with increased intensity.

"Stop! You stand down if you don't want the police involved! I will not hesitate for even a second to send you to the precinct if you continue to be violent," Rain's voice boomed. The command echoed around the chamber. He was losing patience because he got hit a few times. Seeing that Sheena was becoming more and more unreasonable, he got mad too.

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"Rain, even if you've got that recording, so what? You can't prove anything with this. On the contrary, we can sue your ass for slander. According to this reccording, you synthesized my mum's voice to incriminate her," Cyrus

interjected slowly. As he just thought of the idea, he felt a slight elation knowing he could contribute to his mother's defense. Nowadays, the technology had become so advanced to the point that it was actually pretty easy to find experts that could synthesize perfect emulations of other people's real voices. If it was absolutely necessary, as long as you could pay the hefty fee the experts charged, the job could be done in a relatively short time and you could decide whoever's voice you'd like to emulate. Thus, in this society, holding merely a recording in one's hand actually meant nothing in court. Cyrus was not frightened in the least by Rain's recording.

"Oh! Really? What if I tell you that I have in my possession a videotape that goes with this? Do you still think that would be slander?" Rain asked back, feeling quite relaxed. A cold smile plastered on his face. He was in no rush and had nothing to worry about. If he didn't have a smoking gun, and wasn't one hundred percent sure with what he had, he would never have stepped in this evil place. He was more than prepared to face these demons.

"Don't even try to threaten us. We didn't do this, so no matter how much evidence you think you've got, think again. This is just a minor nuisance to us," Vance spat back confidently. He didn't believe that his mother had been so careless that she hadn't even noticed she was being recorded both in audio and video. But on the slim chance that the recording was real, then the situation was really serious now.

"Whether it's useless and nonsense or not, let's try and see. But before we get to that point, I feel like we should make a deal first. Once I send

alled a criminal by everyone she knew. Deep in her heart, she had already decided. It was no question what to do.

"Fine, but please be quick. I don't have a lot of time to waste on you guys. I'm a very busy man," Rain said with a smug look on his face. He knew that he was so close to succeeding. He wasn't worried that they wouldn't agree to his terms. Actually, he was pretty sure about the outcome of this visit even at the beginning. It would have been so disgustingly easy to convict them based on the evidence he had in his hands. Prison was the last thing on their mind.

The rest of them began to murmur in discussion. Their small voices resounded through the room. None of them was willing to give up a large amount of money so easily, while they didn't want to take the risk of being sent to jail either. But they had to choose between money and freedom now since they just couldn't get both, or Rain would not allow them to get both at the same time. Was the money more important, important enough for them to take the risk of being thrown in jail? Or was freedom more important? But if they could take the risk, could they get both? Was Rain just bluffing this whole time? Or did they really have to compromise? Each one of them had conflicting ideas

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"Mum, I say we just ignore him. I don't think he really has the real evidence he claims to possess," Vance suggested. He was blinded by greed, refusing to see anything but the money.

"You shut up! Don't talk nonsense if you don't know anything," Sheena rebuked immediately as she glared at him. Couldn't he even tell if the voice played by the recording pen was his mother's?

"How about this? Let's actually try to think of a way to get the recording pen from him," Cyrus whispered this time. Just like his brother, he needed this money too, so he didn't want to lose this chance either. "Do you honestly think he's as stupid as you guys? He wouldn't dare show up alone if he wasn't prepared," Hannah replied, rolling her eyes, dumbfounded by her husband's idiocy. She felt intense regret that she had been so blind that she chose such a stupid man to marry.

"Alright. I've made my decision. Let Tiana out," Sheena said solemnly after moments of deliberation. She finally accepted Rain's offer. If that was what it took to get rid of the evidence, then they would give her to him. Besides, he didn't say anything about denying them the opportunity of kidnapping Tiana again.

"Mum, is that really what you decided? Are you sure you're done thinking about it? She is worth a lot!" Vance said. He couldn't believe what was happening. He was so close to getting the money, he was unwilling to give it up so easily. All he could do was to remind his mother of Tiana's immense value.

"What's wrong? You don't listen to me now?" Sheena spat angrily as she glared at her son. Agreeing to her decision went against every fiber of his being. Was the money more important than following his mother?

"How come, Mum? Of course I'll listen to you. I'll run upstairs and," Vance sighed. "..let Tiana out," Vance continued. He then star

now, with his sister in his arms, he felt bad not because they treated her harshly, but because they were about to lose the opportunity to exchange her for the money he needed. What a cruel irony it was for Tiana to learn!

Vance replied with a faint smile. A hollow smile. He didn't know what to say. So without any more verbal communication with Tiana, he took her downstairs in silence. Tiana was surprised to see Rain downstairs. She never expected to see Rain in this house, so she thought she was seeing things since she was so weak and delirious.

"Tiana, are you alright?" Rain asked anxiously. His eyes filled with concern when he saw her being carried by Vance. He felt that something terrible must have happened to her. Why was she brought down by her brother? Why couldn't she walk by herself? 'This can't be, ' Rain thought. Tiana was the little princess of this family. Was she abused? How could they treat her like this?

"Rain? It's you! It's really you!" Tiana exclaimed in a burst of happiness when she realized this wasn't an illusion. She was so happy that her eyes started welling up. Tears began to flow down her face. She didn't even think why Rain would be here in the house he detested so much.





"There, we let her go. Now, give me the videotape and the recoding," Sheena smugly requested. She had seen everything about Tiana and Rain from her cold, brutal eyes. She didn't mind showing Tiana how cunning and manipulative she actually had been to her all this time. Whether Tiana could accept this cruel truth was beyong Sheena's responsibility now. All she cared about was the evidence in Rain's possession that could destroy her life.

"Don't worry! I'll definitely hand them over to you after we sign the contract," Rain replied. He wasn't some stupid man who got lucky. He was a sophisticated businessman who worked with Edward for so many years. He learned a lot under his tutelage. "Rain, what are you talking about?" Tiana asked in confusion. She was completely disoriented now. She had no idea what was happening ever since she had been locked up.

"Nothing that should concern you. Don't worry," Rain replied gently. He believed that it would be best if Tiana knew as little as possible between their deal, considering her physical and mental states. She was too weak to take all of this in at once.

"What contract are you talking about?' Sheena asked, also confused. She didn't know what Rain was up to.

"Of course a contract that says, from now on, Tiana would have nothing to do with you people. Otherwise, who knows when you'll attempt to kidnap her again after I turn over the evidence?" Rain replied matter-of-factly. He didn't worry that they might cheat him after the deal, because the contract he prepared was full of contingencies and no loopholes.

"What if we don't sign this?" Sheena asked increduously.

"That would be fine, too. I have more than one copy of the evidence," Rain replied passively. Trying to play tricks on him? He never knew they were that stupid to attempt this. His IQ was leagues higher than these people.

"You shameless bastard!" Sheena cried angrily. It never came across Sheena's panicked mind that Rain would make copies of the evidence. If that was true, then the plan she came up with earlier would be useless. She couldn't kidnap Tiana back anymore, which again would mean no mone

hat truly cared about her.

"But why did you save me?" Tiana asked again. She couldn't understand him either. It seemed that he gave up something important in exchange just to help her out. "Maybe for my unborn sister who died before she could even see this ugly world," Rain answered, his voice lowering unconsciously. Everyone thought that he hated the Ke's because of his mother's death. But there was something more to it than that. The deeply buried wound was about his unborn sister, who died too early. This was also the reason why his mother became depressed all those years, which finally led to her death.

"What did you just say?" Tiana asked. She hadn't listened to him intently. As Rain spoke in an almost hushed whisper, Tiana couldn't catch what he had said.

"Nothing, let's get out of the car now," Rain replied. He had decided early on to hide his pain deep inside his heart for the rest of his life. He wouldn't easily tell anyone about his deepest secret. He didn't even mention this to his best friends.

"Well, okay then," Tiana replied, disappointed. She sensed that Rain wasn't willing to expound on the subject further, so she stopped herself from prying too much. She opened the car door and stepped outside. As soon as she put her weight on her leg, her body began to tremble. Fortunately, Rain was swift to catch her, otherwise she would have fallen on the ground the moment she left the car.



"Careful," Rain said to Tiana as he helped her walk into the house.

Annie rushed down the stairs as she heard the commotion. She saw Rain supporting Tiana by the arm. "Tiana, what happened?" Annie said.

"I'm fine. Just feeling a bit faint, that's all," Tiana replied with an embarrassed smile. Rain sat her down on a chair. She slumped down, trying to catch her breath.

"I'll tell you what happened. But right now, she needs something to eat first," Rain quickly interjected. Although taking Tiana home was not Rain's intention, he felt an explanation was in order.

"Okay. Maybe Tiana would like to freshen up a bit first?" Annie offered. Tiana looked like a mess -- her hair was in disarray, and her clothes looked sweaty and wrinkled.

Rain cast a sidelong glance at Tiana, and thought to himself that Annie had a point. "Okay, how about this? You take Tiana upstairs to freshen up while I go to the kitchen and ask them to prepare something for her to eat."

"All right. Tiana, let's go." Annie extended her hand to Annie, helping her up to her feet.

"Thank you, Annie," Tiana said, her eyes starting to water.

"Don't mention it. We're family," replied Annie with a comforting smile. Tiana felt so many emotions going through her -- it was as if her whole world had turned upside down. The people whom she had thought were her family had tried to hurt her, and then someone she barely even knew was helping and being kind to her right now!

"Huh." Tiana nodded absentmindedly.

They walked over to Annie's room with small, sure steps. "Okay, you sit over here for a while," Annie said as she guided Tiana towards the bed. "I'll just run a bath for you." Tiana sat down. Her gaze was still far off. 'What could have happened to her?' Annie thought worriedly. With a light sigh, Annie walked into the bathroom to fill the bath with warm water. Tiana was still in shock and pain. She couldn't stop thinking about what happened.

She couldn't understand why the people she had loved and known her whole life were willing to sacrifice her for their own interest. Her very own family! What did all those years with them mean now? All the laughter, affection, and priceless memories... was it just fake all along?

"Hey, Tiana. The bath's ready for you. I'll put out some fresh clothes for you to wear." Annie had walked back into the bedroom. Tiana had not moved since Annie left. Annie couldn't help but feel sorry for the p

er the abusive treatment the Ke family had given her in the past few days, she no longer had a home. She didn't want to have anything to do with that family anymore. She had just started to feel close to Rain. But now, it appeared as if that would change too.

"No, you won't lose me. I will always be like a brother to you as long as you like. I'm always here for you. Nothing will ever change that," Rain promised, smiling warmly at Tiana. He was in fact a sensitive man. It was one of his merits. However, his frivolity might have made people neglect that.

"Really? You still want to be my brother?" Tiana's face lit up, her mood greatly improving. Rain's words offered her much comfort.

"Yes, but don't you feel sad that you're no longer a member of the family?" Rain was surprised at her reaction. He could imagine that people would feel devastated at such news -- going hysterical, bursting into tears or something like that. But somehow Tiana seemed relieved.

"Why should I feel sad? You don't like the Ke family either, do you?" Tiana thought that since she was not a Ke anymore, Rain wouldn't hate her as much as he used to.

"My relationship with them is much different from yours," Rain pointed out. As much as he hated that family, they were in his blood. That would never change. He envied Tiana, and wished that he could wake up one day to find out that his life had changed like Tiana's had.

"I understand. I'm sorry. They're your real family." Tiana didn't know what to do with her life yet. But she had high hopes that she would figure it out. Things always eventually worked themselves out in the end.