

Are Mine 171

[Chapter 171](#)

The driver started the ignition.

Back at the office, Abel devoted his time to his work.

However, his hostile expression made all the managers reporting to him feel like they were stepping on thin ice.

In the afternoon, Abel called everyone for a meeting to discuss a new project.

Halfway through the meeting, Oscar arrived unannounced.

Everyone in the conference room stood up.

Oscar waved his hand and said, "Don't mind me. Continue."

He sat down at a chair close to

the wall and listened in on the meeting. His smile grew wider and wider.

Judging from the scope of the project, the person he chose to inherit the company had not disappointed him.

After the meeting ended, Abel helped Oscar walk to his office.

He poured a glass of water for his grandfather and placed it on the coffee table.

Abel sat down on the sofa next to Oscar and asked, "Grandfather, what brings you here today?"

"Nothing. I just wanted to see how things are."

"I see. How is the condition of your body?"

"I'm fine. I haven't heard from you in a few days, and I was wondering what you've been doing."

Abel was silent for a while. He guessed that Oscar must have heard some news.

"I'm glad that you're managing the Ryker Group well, but you shouldn't forget the contract between you and me."

Abel fixed his gaze on the glass of water on the coffee table. He did not look at his grandfather.

He knew Oscar was talking about the contract they had signed back in the hospital.

He would not have to marry Alana if she was fully cured in a month. Otherwise, he would have to marry her.

“Can the Wonder Doctor treat Alana in a month?”

Abel shook his head. He had not managed to set an appointment with the Wonder Doctor yet.

“She can’t do it? That’s weird, considering she can even save me from the brink of death...”

“The Wonder Doctor isn’t accepting any appointments,” Abel said. “She said she’s focusing on her research for the next month.”

“Hahaha!” Oscar laughed. “I can’t help you with that. Looks like luck isn’t on your side.”

Abel did not reply. His gaze was frigid.

“So what about our contract?” Oscar asked. “You willingly agreed to it.”

“I won’t go back on my word.”

“Good.” Oscar stood up. “That’s what I want to hear. A real man like you should not renege on a promise. When do you plan to propose to her? I’ll let the girl know, so she won’t be so worried.”

“I can’t promise a date yet,” Abel said while frowning. “This is a serious matter, and I should discuss it with my parents first.”

“Mm.” Oscar nodded. “That settles it. I’ll be waiting for your good news.”

“Let me see you off.” Abel stood up too.

“Don’t worry about me,” Oscar said and waved his hand. “I’ll do a quick tour of each of the departments before I leave.”

“Take care, Grandfather.”

Oscar walked out of the office with the help of his assistant.

Abel sat back defeatedly on the sofa.

Grandfather wants the date of the proposal from me. What should I do?

Why can’t you help me, Wonder Doctor?

Abel took his phone and dialed

Benjamin’s number.

Benjamin was still at the café, tending the rooftop garden.

Sam had placed his blue roses in a vase. It was a beautiful contrast with Abel’s red roses.

One of the phones on the coffee table began to ring..

Benjamin saw that the call was from Abel.

He knew that Abel must be asking him about the Wonder Doctor.

Benjamin did not want to answer the call when Emmeline was nearby, so he declined the call.

“Are you busy with something else?” Emmeline said while

pruning some twigs. “You should go if you’re busy. I need to pick up the three boys soon too.”

“Should I pick them up for you?” Benjamin asked.

“No,” Emmeline said.

“I’ll be leaving then.” Benjamin picked up his coat that was hanging on the swings.

Before he left, he turned around

and said, “Can I ask you

something?”

[Chapter 172](#)

“Okay? What is it? Well, look at you, acting all serious.” Emmeline looked at Benjamin.

Benjamin replied, “It’s about Janie. Please go easy and spare me.”

“Janie is a good kid. She’s pretty and outspoken. She’s honest with her feelings.”

“She’s not for me.”

“Um... I’ll think about it.” Emmeline gave a nod.

Benjamin pulled the glass door and walked out.

Sitting in his ride, Benjamin dialed Abel’s number.

“Mr. Ryker.”

“Mr. York, has Wonder Dogtor made an appearance?” Abel asked.

“I’m sorry, but not yet,” Benjamin answered.

“But time is not on my side anymore.”

Benjamin furrowed his brows. What are you trying to say, Abel?

You had flowers delivered to Emmeline, and now you can’t wait for Alana to get better so you can marry her.

Abel, am I wrong about you?

“My hands are tied, Mr. Ryker. I can’t help you.”

Abel’s heart dropped. There was

nothing more he could say.

Benjamin hung up the call, feeling bad for Emmeline.

Ms. Louise, can't you see the person Abel is?

He's a player. He's trying to have his cake and eat it too.

Abel was the last one to clock out of the office.

He returned to Ryker Mansion.

"Abel?"

Surprised by her son's sudden return, Rosaline was over the moon.

"I'll get the chef to make your favorite dinner."

"Sure." Abel nodded his head and pulled Rosaline to sit.

"Mom, I need a moment with you."

"What's on your mind? Don't be a stranger to your mom." Rosaline patted her son's hand.

Abel replied, "Grandad wants a date for my engagement to Alana."

Rosaline fell silent and frowned. "Abel, have you made up your mind on the matter?"

"Why do you ask, Mom? Didn't you want me to settle down with Alana?" Abel said.

Rosaline nodded. "Honestly, I did, but I'm having second thoughts now."

"Why?" Abel was taken aback by his mother's change of attitude.

She had been urging him to tie the knot with Alana since forever, hoping to hold a grandchild in her arms one day.

Why the sudden change of mind?

"I can't put it into words, but there is something amiss about Alana. Timmy isn't close to her anyway. Name me a mother who doesn't feel for her child. Somehow, Alana falls in that category," Rosaline answered.

Oddly enough, Abel got the same feeling.

He even believed that Emmeline behaved more like a mother to Timothy than Alana did.

It was a pity that Emmeline was not, though.

"But there's no mistaking that she's Timothy's mother. I had a DNA test done on them in secret," Rosaline remarked.

"The only woman I ever touched was Alana. Mom, don't get any other ideas."

"The truth is hard to swallow."

"So Mom, I need your help in this." Abel held his mother's hand.

“Let me have it, son. How can I help you?”

“I need you to stall Grandad. Don’t let him pressure me into getting engaged to Alana. I’ll have time to turn things around.”

“Alright. I’ll figure something out. Consider it done,” Rosaline answered.

“Thanks, Mom.”

“Don’t mention it. Get upstairs for a rest. You can come down for dinner with Timmy once the food is ready,” Rosaline lovingly uttered.

“Okay.” Abel gave a nod. His mother gave him strength.

He believed that by postponing the engagement, he would eventually find some sort of solution.

Besides, Abel was not exactly breaking his promise to Grandad.

Meanwhile, it had been two days since Alana saw Abel.

Alana was bored in the hospital.

She wanted to know if Abel was with Emmeline.

Alana wondered if Abel had gone back on his promise to marry her.

Restlessness stirred within Alana the more she thought about it. Overcome by her emotions, Alana gave Abel a call.

“Abel, I’m bored in the hospital. Are you so busy that you can’t even visit?”

“I’ll come over when I’m done with the tasks at hand,” Abel replied.

Alana could not believe her ears. Was Abel coming to see her on his own accord?

Were pigs flying?

[Chapter 173](#)

Alana got up in a hurry and washed her face before applying powder.

She painted her face to bring out the discoloration and fragility. Her delicate presence was tainted with frailty.

Abel arrived an hour later.

He also brought her imported fruits.

If Luca was there, he would say that he simply bought the fruits without much thought.

Alana was overjoyed.

“I knew you were thinking of me, Mr. Abel. I knew you would visit.”

“Yeah. How are you doing?” Abel

remained callous.

Hanging her head low, Alana choked with sobs, "The injury doesn't hurt that much anymore, but it's suffocating when I try to breathe. I often feel breathless."

"I will find a way to make you feel better. You got injured from saving me," Abel responded.

Alana bashfully replied, "Don't say that. We'll be a family soon. Besides, we have Timothy."

Abel let out a soft sigh.

He had Timothy with Alana while Emmeline had three children with Adrien.

The messy relationships were the biggest obstacle between them.

Haunted by the past, Abel and Emmeline could not open their hearts fully to love again.

"Mr. Abel, don't worry about my health. I can go on with the engagement party. Have you picked a date?" Alana said.

"I'm here for this reason."

Abel added, "Can you let me know your preferred dates? Mom and Grandad want to look at the dates that would suit everybody's schedule."

"Great. So that's what Madame Ryker and Grandad are occupied with. Here I was, worried for nothing."

"We can get ready to be engaged once my mom will run through the suitable dates and discuss them with Grandad and the wedding planner."

"I'll text you the dates later." Alana's bright eyes belied her illness.

"Okay. I got to go. Business calls," Abel uttered.

"Don't let me take up your time,

Mr. Abel. I'll text you now, so you'll

get the message in a bit."

Abel rose to his feet and exited the ward.

Holding back her thrill, Alana texted all the possible dates she could think of to Abel.

Abel forwarded the message to Rosaline.

Rosaline wrote to her son, "Don't worry. I've paid off the wedding planner and consultant."

"

Simon Faughn cried, "Cut! That's a wrap for today."

Everybody ended the fighting

scene.

“Today’s filming went on without hiccups. You were awesome today, everybody. A special mention to Emma for her excellent stunt work.”

Emmeline was gleeful.

She was beginning to love her job as a stunt double.

At least, it was a great release for

Emmeline. She could let it all go and feel the weight of the world lifted off her shoulders.

“Get out of your gear and you’re free to go home,” Simon uttered, feeling satisfied with the job well done.

Emmeline got changed out of her costume in the tent, and put on her bike outfit.

She walked along the street and ran into Adrien leaning against his sports car, waiting in front of Pizzeria Draghi.

“Emma. I just got off work. Why don’t we pick the kids up together and have dinner as a family?” With Emmeline approaching, Adrien suggested with a smile.

Tilting her head, Emmeline checked him out.

The man was dressed in a gray suit. The conspicuous and muted tone masked his presence as an overindulgent heir.

Emmeline smiled.

It appeared she had gotten through to him.

However, it was a bit harsh to leave him incapable in that department.

Still, Emmeline did not intend to give his manhood back.

It was best if she worked on him further before jumping into decisions.

Adrien grew shy from the direct staring.

“Emma, I’ve really changed. Don’t be so critical of me.”

Emmeline nodded her head. “You look good. I see an improvement in your energy levels and overall demeanor.”

“I think so too. I wouldn’t see you if I didn’t see any progress,” Adrien replied

“Alright then. Since you’ve changed for the better, you can pick the kids up and have dinner together,” Emmeline said.

“Yay!”

Adrien spread his arms open and ran to Emmeline to give her a hug.

[Chapter 174](#)

Emmeline grabbed his shoulders and turned Adrien around. Facing his ride, Adrien ended up giving his sports car a Kug.

“Emma, can’t I hold you? I’m the father of your children, you know!” Adrien got up from his car hood.

“Let me stop you there. Don’t bring that up again. I agreed to have dinner together as a friend. We can cancel dinner if you get other ideas. You can forget us being friends,” Emmeline replied.

“Okay. I won’t think otherwise. We can start with friends.” Adrien put his hands up in surrender.

“Okay. My bike is up ahead. I’ll head home for a change of clothes. Wait for me outside the café.”

“Alright!” Emmeline’s wish was Adrien’s command.

Just before pulling his car door open, he flirtatiously called out to Emmeline.

“What do you want now?” Annoyed, Emmeline looked back.

“Emma, put on something pretty.”

With a scowl, Emmeline was about to tell him to beat it.

Reading the room, Adrien swung his door open and jumped inside.

Emmeline rode her bike, traversing along the road.

Driving behind, Adrien tried to keep up, but he soon lost track of her.

It took fifteen minutes before Emmeline was back in the café.

She parked the bike in the garage. and went upstairs to wash up before putting on a white dress.

By the time Emmeline arrived downstairs, Adrien had pulled up at the front.

He opened the glass door for Emmeline with a bright smile.

Emmeline gave him a skeptical look. “Why do I get a feeling that you’re up to no good?”

“No. I think you’re beautiful.

Whatever you wear beats all the

dolled-up women,” Adrien

answered with a grin.

“Save the sucking up for someone

else. Stop it before I change my mind,” Emmeline remarked.

“Of course, of course! I’ll shut up. I’m very well-behaved. I’ll do whatever you say.” Adrien bowed and scraped.

“Why are you still talking?” Raising a brow, Emmeline raised her hand.

Adrien put his hand over his mouth. He then waddled his way to the car and opened the door to the backseat for Emmeline.

He had asked the chauffeur to drive the extended Rolls Royce today, so he could take the kids for dinner.

Adrien even had children’s seats installed in the back.

“Emma, the seats will stay permanently in the car I can do the school runs now. It’s safer,” Adrien looked at the children’s seats and blabbered.

“You have everything thought out, but I should remind you not to get any ideas about the children.”

Adrien was stumped. Despite his urge to speak, he noticed Emmeline’s grimacing face.

He shuddered, knowing that he should not rush into things. He should keep his cool instead of getting ahead of himself.

Adrien held back and swallowed his thoughts.

After picking up the kids from kindergarten, Adrien directed the car straight to Struyria Banquet.

The food there was on par with Nimbus Hotel. It was a great joint.

They were seated in a private room, and Adrien called the server to order Emmeline and the kids’ favorite food.

Sitting behind the table, Adrien could not stop smiling at Emmeline and the three children.

He lived his life as a jerk five years ago, and his misdeed gave him a beautiful family.

Although Adrien could not recall the details of his encounter with Emmeline, he had a family he could brag about for a lifetime!

Did he save the world in the previous life?

If Abel had known the truth, he would defend that he had saved the world instead.

Once the food was served, Adrien waited ingratiatingly on Emmeline and the kids.

He brought them food and poured them beverages with the biggest smile on his face.

The only thing that would have made his life better was if the kids called him daddy.

The kids addressed him by name.

“My dear children, I’m your real father, not Abel. You shouldn’t be calling him Daddy. He’s just your mommy’s friend.” Adrien ecrunched his face.

[Chapter 175](#)

“You got it wrong. Abel is our daddy. You’re Mommy’s friend,” Sun said with a serious face.

“That’s right. I think so too.” Moon earnestly bobbed his head.

“Concur!”

Sun uttered, “I knew Abel was our daddy right from the start. There’s no mistake.”

“So you’re only a family friend.” The three babies concluded.

“Say something, Emma.” Adrien sought help from Emmeline.

“I have no say in this.”

Picking out the fishbone for the kids, Emmeline remarked, “The kids will be the judge. They will eall you dad when they feel you meet their standards.”

“Alright then. I will continue to change for the better so I can be a qualified father” Adrien cheered himself on.

“Here’s to your success.”

Emmeline raised her glass at him.

Adrien was filled with glee. “Can I take it that we can be more than friends when I succeed, Emma?”

“Blegh!” Emmeline spat out the juice in her mouth. She hurriedly grabbed a napkin to cover her mouth.

“Adrien, I told you not to get any ideas, or you can forget dinner.”

“Alright, alright! Let’s just eat. I

won’t think about it.

“That’s more like it.” Emmeline split the deboned fish among the three children.

With the pleasant dinner coming to an end, Adrien looked at his Patek Philippe watch.

“Emma, it’s not even nine o’clock yet. Why don’t we walk around the shops?”

Emmeline knew there was a street of shops nearby.

Both sides of the street offered a variety of services, ranging from products and food. They could even get entertainment from buskers as well.

In short, it was a colorful place of

sights and sounds.

Emmeline asked the children if they were interested in going.

The three boys were happy to

have some fun..

“Let’s go,” Emmeline said.

Over the moon, Adrien hopped over to pick Sun and Moon up.

Emmeline carried Star in her arms as they ventured to the bustling street.

“Emma, do you see anything you like? My treat,” While strolling along, Adrien asked.

Emmeline shook her head. “Nothing caught my eye.”

“Adrien, are you ignoring us? I see lots of toys.” Sun pouted.

“I saw the toys too. Look at the colorful mud dog!” Moon exclaimed.

“Did you see the monkey mask?” Star excitedly clapped.

“As your daddy, I must get you those toys,” Adrien jumped in.

“Correction – you’re not our daddy.” Sun was firm on that note.

“That’s right. You can’t call

yourself our daddy just because we let you buy us toys,” Moon stated.

“Uh-huh. You’re just a name to us. Your performance will decide whether you get the promotion,” Star uttered.

“Emma, they are unrelenting.” Adrien turned to Emmeline for help.

“The future will tell if you’re up for the task. You can quit now if you have no patience,” Emmeline replied.

“No! No! I have patience. I have a lot of patience. Just wait and see.”

While talking, Adrien bumped into a young and hot woman.

The woman, dressed in a skimpy outfit, was bent over, picking out a knick-knack from a street vendor.

Adrien ran straight to the woman’s round *ss cheeks.

The woman staggered and lost her footing.

With one hand still holding Star, Emmeline steadied the woman from falling.

“Mr. Adrien? Oh, it’s you! Long time no see,” The hot woman blurted.

Following the sudden cry, another ravishing woman jumped on Adrien to hug him.

Since Adrien had his hands full with Sun and Moon, he quickly turned to the side.

“It’s really you, Mr. Adrien. It has been a while since you have been to the Imperial Palace.”

The ravishing woman’s eyes were
beaming.

Adrien was their money tree. The man was generous, and the workers at the Imperial Palace
made more than a few dollars off him,

He was embarrassed, to say the least.

What were the odds? He ran into two courtesans from the Imperial Palace.

“I don’t have time for you. Get out of the way,” Adrien said as he tried to keep his balance.

“Oh, my, Mr. Adrien. You’re carrying children. Who do these brats belong to?”

The workers from the Imperial
Palace took notice of Sun and Moon in Adrien’s arms.

They knew that Adrien was an eligible bachelor, so the kids would not be his.

[Chapter 176](#)

Tsk. You’re the brat!’ Sitting in Adrien’s arms, Sun angrily chided.

“Your whole family is brats!” Moon and Star yelled at the Imperial Palace’s workers.

“Oh, you have mouths on you,
uneducated brats.” The women
raised their brows.

“Bam! Bam!” Emmeline furiously kicked, not once but twice.

Before they knew it, the two-
tesans from Imperial Palace
fell flat on their faces.

“Ahh! She’s trying to kill us,” The pair shrieked.

“Beat it! I would’ve ripped your lips apart if I wasn’t carrying a child,’ Emmeline threatened.

“Mr. Adrien!”

The two Imperial Palace courtesans held onto Adrien’s leg and shouted, “Who is this lunatic? Are you going to let her beat us?”

“Mr. Adrien, we had a lot of fun times in Imperial Palace. Don’t we mean anything?”

“Shut up!” Adrien scowled. Why must these women bring up his shameful past?

“They are my wife and kids. Do you have anything better to do? Back off, or I’ll come after you myself.” Adrien readied his leg in position to kick the ladies.

“Please don’t, Mr. Adrien.” The two ladies latched to Adrien’s legs, snuggling up and acting coy.

It was not a scene suitable for those under 18.

With a grimacing look, Emmeline took Sun and Moon away, and the family of four turned on their heels to leave.

“Emma!” Adrien shook off the two women and anxiously went after the family.

“Get out of the way! Do you think you’re setting a good example for the kids? Can you leave?” Emmeline angrily stated.

“Emma, hear me out. They used to be... I’m a changed man now!” Adrien made a pained expression.

“I don’t have time for you horsing around. I’m leaving with the kids. You can stay with them.”

“We don’t want a daddy like you! Our daddy is someone like Abel,” Sun responded.

“You’re a bad influence. You fail,” Moon uttered.

“That’s right. Stay away from us,” Star concluded.

“Please, Emma. Give me another chance!” Adrien was about to cry.

Without looking back, Emmeline

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ught the kids into a cab.

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Frustrated, Adrien wanted to bang his head on a wall. In the end, he decided to vent his anger on the two Imperial Palace workers.

Nevertheless, the women were nowhere to be found when he cocked his head.

“F*cking hell! I won’t forgive you!”

Adrien whipped out his phone to call the chauffeur. “Bring the car around. Take me to Imperial Palace.”/

Once at Imperial Palace, Adrien entered the place and started smashing things.

A few of Adrien’s regular courtesans came to talk some sense into him, but Adrien gave t’ all a slap.

“You, wh*res! How dare you make me a fool in front of my wife and kids! Get your Palace Lord out here, or I’ll burn the place down!”

The Imperial Palace's courtesans

ran off in tears.

Adrien picked up a chair to smash when someone grabbed him by the wrist.

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"Who are you to stop me?" He turned around and saw the person who apprehended him was Adam.

"Adam! What are you doing here?" Adrien was dumbstruck.

"What? Can't I enjoy a good time like you?"

"Don't stop me, Adam! The

perial Palace's women have

ruined things for me. I will not rest until this place is nothing but ashes!"

"You and what army?" Adam scoffed.

"So what if I'm doing it on my

own? People can become aggressive at breaking point."

"Did you forget the fun times you shared with these women? Why are you blaming them for ruining things?"

Don't stop me, Adam. Let's tear the place down together."

"I'm not that guy." Adam smirked.

"Imperial Palace's ladies upset my wife and kids because they

walked out on me. I'm holding the Owner of the Imperial Palace accountable for this."

"Ha. You have nothing on the Palace Lord. It's said that he's the leader of a gang." Adam scoffed.

"I don't care. Adam, let's track down the leader of the gang and make him pay!"

[Chapter 177](#)

"You must have a reason to meet with him. How did the women

here ruin things for you? You look like you've gone mad," Adam commented.

Adrien told Adam the whole story.

Keeping a straight face, Adam thought to himself. Will the idiot still make a fuss if he finds out that the three children are Abel's?

No. I can't let him know, so he will keep up the fight with Abel. Alana will shut her mouth so long as I carry on with the secret. No one will find out. I don't see the point of Meriwhether Mansion earning three grandsons when Abel has nothing

to show for.

“Adrien, I won’t help you to go against the Palace Lord, but I can assist you with getting Emmeline and your children back.” Adam patted Adrien’s shoulder.

“Adam! Are you really going to help me? Adrien cried tears of joy.

“All you want is to win the woman’s heart, right? I can give you ideas.” Adam hid his wickedness behind his eyes.

Back in the café, the three kids were sulking.

“Mommy, how can we have a daddy like Adrien? It’s infuriating!”

“I doubt that we are his children. You must have gotten it wrong, Mommy!”

Yeah, Mommy! Let Abel be our daddy. Adrien doesn’t deserve to be our father.”

Emmeline sighed. “It’s out of my hands.”

“Get married to Abel. That way, Abel can be our daddy.”

“Things are not as simple as you think,” Emmeline helplessly responded.

“They are not complicated either.” Sun pouted.

“You and Abel are single.” Moon

furrowed his brows.

“So you have the right to love,”

Star summed up.

“Haha. I suspect that you are old souls stuck in young bodies. You scared me out of my wits.”

Amused by the three darlings, Emmeline burst out laughing.

“We’re being serious here.” Sun pulled a long face.

“We’re not kidding.” Moon gave a nod.

“We’re on Abel’s side,” Star concluded.

“Alright, alright. I got to give it to you, boys. Hurry up and wash up. It’s time for bed. You have school tomorrow,” Holding back the laughter, Emmeline uttered.

With a selection of dates from the wedding planner in hand, Rosaline made her way to the Rykers’ residence.

“Dad.” She put the paper of dates on the coffee table.

“The wedding planner put together some dates suitable for Abel and Alana’s engagement.”

Oscar took the paper for a look

and widened his eyes.

“Why are all the dates for next year?”

Rosaline answered, “Yeah. I think the dates are too far away too, but the wedding planner said that a lot of businesses are booked out for the year. Plus, it seems to be a busy year for all our attendees as well. We can have the

engagement party next year or cancel it altogether.”

“Howard said that?” Making a face, Oscar asked.

“Yeah. Don’t you trust him?”

“I do, but we can’t cancel the engagement. Otherwise, I will be going back on my word,” Oscar said.

“I guess we’ll have the engagement party next year. If you think about it, it’s only eight months to the closest date,”

Rosaline remarked.

“It’s st taking longer than expected.”

Oscar uttered, “It’s better than breaking a promise. Tell Abel to explain to Alana.”

“Alright. I’ll see to it.” Rosaline courteously excused herself.

Back home, Abel had been waiting.

“Mom, what did Grandad say?”

“It’s done. Your grandad has faith in the wedding planner, but he won’t cancel the engagement. He agreed to have the engagement party eight months later,” Rosaline stated.

“Alright. Eight months is plenty of time for me to turn things around,” Abel replied.

“But Abel, I think it’s over between you and Emmeline. Don’t waste your time on her,” Rosaline voiced her concern.

“Why are you saying the same thing too?” Abel looked upset.

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“Emmeline and Adrien have three children together. Her feelings for you don’t make things any easier,” Rosaline commented.

Abel lowered his head. He shared the same concern too.

He and Adrien were cousins, and Emmeline was stuck in the middle. It was not the best position to be in.

Rosaline said, "I have someone in mind if you have no feelings for Alana. Do you remember the Murphy family from Altney? They are considered to be of equal social standing as us."

[Chapter 178](#)

"Are you talking about Evelyn?" Abel frowned.

"Yes, that's right. I seem to recall that you get along with her well. Besides, Evelyn has a thing for you."

"But I don't feel for her that way. This is closed for discussion." Feeling drained, Abel waved his arm.

"Abel, is Emmeline the only one for you?"

Abel kept to himself, but he was certain of that fact.

"Daddy, I want Emmeline to be my mommy." Timothy ventured down the stairs.

"Kids should not interfere when adults are talking." Rosaliné lovingly made a face.

"But Granny, you saw it. Alana doesn't love me. Emmeline treats me like a son."

Rosaline was without a word as Timothy got her stumped.

Feeling bad, Abel put his hands out and pulled his son into his arms. He shuffled the little man's hair.

"Daddy, are you going to make Emmeline my mommy?"

"I will try. Be a good boy now." Abel kissed his son's face.

"I will try hard with you, Daddy."

"Okay. We will succeed together!"

Abel gave a nod.

Rosaline helplessly sighed.

The next day, Abel went to the hospital and told Alana about the engagement date.

Alana's look of anticipation crumbled the moment she heard the news. She nearly fell out of bed.

"What? Eight months later? Why eight months later?"

“I’m not too sure, but this is the date given by Granddad’s trusty wedding planner, Howard.”

“Um...”

Alana held onto Abel’s hand. “Mr. Abel, eight months is a little long.

Can’t we have our engagement sooner?”

Recoiling his arm, Abel callously responded, “No. That’s the date the wedding planner put together after considering the planning and attendees. Otherwise, our other option is to call the party altogether.”

“I don’t want to cancel the engagement! Eight months, it is. I’ll wait.” Alana nearly fell out of bed again.

“Okay. I should go if there’s nothing else. You should rest,” Abel uttered.

“But Mr. Abel, can’t you stay with me a little longer?” Alana took Abel’s hand again.

got to go, so some other day,” Abel replied.

“Mr. Abel, don’t forget that I risked my life to save you.” Alana teared

With his face falling, Abel nodded. “I know, or I won’t be so patient.”

Alana let go of his hand.

She waited until Abel closed the door behind him before scowling.

Would anything change in the coming eight months?

Was it going to be a challenge to be the lady of the Ryker household?

Abel left the hospital and took his

own car.

He did not take Luca and his chauffeur on this trip.

Neither did his sécurité detail come along.

It took mere minutes to get from the Ryker Group to the hospital.

Besides, he could use some time alone.

Abel was not in a hurry to get out of the car when he pulled up at the company plaza.

He rolled down his window for a smoke before starting the engine and driving away.

Meanwhile, there was a shoot going on in Adelmars Studios.

“You’re up, Emma,” Simon cried.

“I’m ready,” Emmeline responded.

She was supposed to jump off a building towering a dozen meters and engage in a physical fight with traitors.

Her character was a skilled doctor who went back in time.

Emmeline was hanging in the air with the help of cables.

From down below, Emmeline's white flowy dress looked ethereal in the air.

"Action!" Simon barked.

With her arms apart, Emmeline glided down from the building.

She looked like a fairy, her dress flowing with the breeze and her hair fluttering around her face.

The people down below were blown away.

Emmeline got into character, getting the thrill of her life.

Suddenly... "Cut!"

The safety clasp behind her back cracked, and the harness lost control.

Emmeline swiftly plunged to the ground.

"Oh, no! The safety clasp came unlatched!" The prop gaffer shouted.

"Watch out, Emmeline!" Simon yelled.

It was too late. Emmeline was free-falling to the ground as gravity took her.

[Chapter 179](#)

Emmeline was seconds from

hitting her head on the ground and cracking her skull open.

"Oh, no!" Closing her eyes,

Emmeline let out a scream of despair.

Nevertheless, a pair of strong arms caught her fall, stopping her from plunging to the cold, hard floor.

Someone caught her in the nick of time!

The bearer of the arms staggered backward before repositioning their balance/

"Ah! Ah!"

Clinging to her lifesaver's neck, Emmeline curled up in the person's embrace. She could not bring herself to lift her head.

"You're okay, girl."

A deep and husky voice lingered in her ear.

The voice...

Emmeline abruptly lifted her chin and met the gaze of...

Abel!

She looked up with widened eyes as she stared blankly at the man.

'A...bel?"

"That's me. Are you scared silly, girl?"

Abel looked tenderly at Emmeline
with a smile, affectionate and doting.

"What are you doing here?"

Emmeline finally got a grip on
herself.

"Thank goodness I was here. Otherwise, it will be like Humpty Dumpty has a great fall, and you'll lose your front teeth." Abel curled his lips.

"You're Humpty Dumpty!"

Emmeline felt a flush creeping up her cheeks.

Abel was amused. "Is this the
attitude you give to your
lifesaver?"

Hanging her head low in
embarrassment, Emmeline
Ruzzled in his embrace.

God knew she nearly wet her pants.

She felt safe the moment she realized she was in Abel's arms.

However, Emmeline was too stubborn to admit to it.

Abel gently put her down on her feet before tucking her hair behind her ear.

"Didn't I tell you that it's a dangerous job? You wouldn't
listen. Are you going to take my advice now?"

"I don't have a choice. I need
money." Emmeline hit him with her sparkling eyes.

"I can give you money, but you refuse to accept it.'

Emmeline had no words. Why should I take money from you? It's not like ydon't have money.

“Emma, are you okay? You scared me to death.” Simon drew close.

“I’m fine.” Emmeline shuffled her hair, soothing herself to loosen the tensed nerves.

“Mr. Ryker here saved me.”

Simon immediately expressed his gratitude, “I’m surprised to see you here, Mr. Ryker. Thank you for saving Emma. We avoided a big accident thanks to you.”

“I was just passing by. Ms. Louise should get some time off. I doubt she’s in a state to continue the shoot,” Abel said.

“I’m going to call it a day. We all need a break.” Simon broke out in a cold sweat.

How was he supposed to explain to Benjamin if anything were to happen to Emmeline?

Benjamin made it clear that he had to cease filming if Emmeline were to meet with any mishap.

God knew who on earth was Ms. Louise to have friends in high places.

She rubbed shoulders with Benjamin, Adrien, and Abel.

Abel managed the Ryker Group, a mover and shaker in the business world.

Simon raised his hand to wipe away the sweat, feeling relieved after what had happened.

“I’ll take you home.” Abel put his arm around Emmeline’s shoulders.

Following the body contact, he could feel Emmeline shaking.

“I can walk.” Emmeline’s bike was parked outside.

“But you forget that I haven’t checked on Mateo’s landscaping. How am I supposed to pay him?” Abel had come up with a plan.

“Huh?” Emmeline looked at him, finding his excuse weak but with reason.

She nodded her head. “Alright. I won’t take my bike. I can’t feel my legs.”

That was more like it.

Abel smiled.

Still, he made no comment.

Out of the filming studio, the pair got into Abel’s Rolls Royce.

It was mostly quiet throughout the journey.

However, the mood was calm.

Abel's timely presence not only saved Emmeline's life but also brought them closer together.

Since there was traffic up ahead, Abel slowed the car down.

He reached out and held Emmeline's cold hand.

Startled, Emmeline tried to pull away.

Abel clutched tightly to her hand.

"Ow! You're hurting me." Emmeline cried in pain.

Adrian suddenly released her.

His accidental use of force broke the spell of romance.

[Chapter 180](#)

Emmeline's return to the café with Abel took Sam, who happened to look over, by surprise.

Sam found it hard to believe that Emmeline would be caught dead with Abel.

Did the pair get back together?

As if Abel was really here to inspect the landscaping, he went up to the platform.

"Ms. Louise, what's the situation here?" Sam asked Emmeline in hushed tones.

"He's here to check on Mateo's work, and nothing else," Emmeline replied.

"Seriously?" Sam was skeptical.

Emmeline glared at her. "What's going on in your mind?"

Sam stuck out her tongue.

She refused to believe that Abel did not have other thoughts in mind.

"Emma, do you want to see if there's anything else needing sorting out?" Abel's voice came from up the ladder.

"Did you hear that? It's purely for work." Emmeline told Sam.

Blinking, Sam gave a nod.

As if she took Emmeline's word for it!

Up on the platform, Abel wore a white shirt and rolled up his sleeves.

He took off his jacket and put it on the swing.

"I had a quick run-through, and Mateo is doing a good job. Can you look at the details and see if there's anything else to be sorted out? I can let him know."

Truth be told, Emmeline could not wrap her head around the field of landscaping.

To her, all it mattered was that the flowers looked beautiful.

The tiny details were the least of her concern.

Nevertheless, she went to take a look since Abel suggested so.

Suddenly, she found something moving in the flowerpot.

Emmeline pried the flower petals and leaves aside for a closer inspection.

"Jesus Christ!" It was a centipede.

Emmeline screamed at the top of her lungs before jumping into Abel's arms.

Abel quickly secured her from falling and asked in shock, "What happened? What happened?"

"C-Centipede! Ah!"

The three things that crawled under Emmeline's skin were snakes, centipedes, and leeches.

In short, it would kill her to see any

of these three animals.

The one thing she had going was that she had not been scared to death yet.

"What's scary about a centipede?"

Abel said while carrying her further from the flowerpot.

Emmeline looked like she had seen a ghost.

"I don't want the garden anymore."

Emmeline choked with sobs, "The centipede will come and eat me if I sit on the swing."

"It's no big deal. I can get Mateo to do some pest control." Abel was caught between emotions.

"Does it work?" Emmeline clung to Abel like a monkey.

"Of course, it does. The soil has been added with pesticides, so you can get insects. All it takes is a little pest control. That's all," Abel replied.

Emmeline bobbed her head as color returned to her complexion.

She looked tenderly into Abel's eyes. "Thank you for inspecting the garden. Otherwise, I'd be dead meat."

Abel smiled. "It's only a centipede."

"To me, that's a heavyweight killer there."

Abel furrowed his brows in disbelief as Emmeline drew close for a kiss on his lips.

“This is what you get for saving me twice today.”

Dumbstruck at first, Abel was soon filled with rapture.

Today was his lucky day!

Even the centipede was on his side.

The pair got off the platform, and Emmeline slipped out of Abel’s embrace.

Abel pulled out his phone and dialed Mateo’s number.

Mateo answered, “Oh, no. I bought the pesticide, but it slipped my mind to add it to the plants, Mr. Abel.”

“You bought it? Where is it?” Abel asked.

“On the coffee table up on the platform. Why don’t I come over to add the pesticide, Mr. Abel?”

“It’s fine. I’ll do you. It will be dark out by the time you arrive, Abel answered.

“Thank you, Mr. Abel.” On the other end of the line, Mateo was grateful for the gesture...

Abel thought to himself. No need to thank me.

I’ll get an opportunity to be the hero again.

Emma kissed me just now.

“The pesticide is on the platform. Mateo bought it, but he forgot to apply it to the plants. I’ll do it now. You can rest the earlier we get it done,” Abel told Emmeline.

“Yeah, or I wouldn’t go near the platform.” Emmeline pouted as the lingering fear sat in.

“I thought you had nerves of steel. You’re not afraid about hanging midair in a harness, but you have a problem with a tiny insect.”

Emmeline kept her head down without a word.

Some girls could pass out at the sight of insects. Emmeline wondered whether Abel would believe her if she told him.

“I’ll get on the platform.”

Abel ran his fingers through her hair and rolled up his sleeves to get up on the platform.