

Be Gentle 1011

Chapter 1011

Meanwhile, Leia stepped out of the elevator and turned around to urge Charmaine. "You're so slow. Walk faster."

Charmaine gritted her teeth. She would not have carried Leia's bags if not that Leia had paid for her shopping. Those bags were very heavy.

"You're walking too fast," she could not help but grumble.

Leia stopped walking and waited for her. "Why are you slower than a pregnant woman? Stop fooling around, Charmaine!"

'I'd like to see if you can walk as fast when you're carrying ten shopping bags!' Charmaine thought.

When Charmaine got closer, Leia started walking again. "I'll be going to the hotel for a tasting session with Brody. Do you want to come?"

"Sure," Charmaine replied. She was not going to let go of a chance to eat delicious food, and she was also quite curious about Leia's fiancé. If she got to know him better, he might introduce her to a wealthy man.

Leia and Charmaine found their car in the parking lot. When Leia was about to get into her car, a woman suddenly stopped her.

"Why are you?" Leia held her bulging stomach. The sudden appearance of that stranger had given her a shock. She patted her chest as she regarded the woman in front of her.

The woman had the face of an Internet celebrity. Her features were delicate, but a discerning eye could tell that she had performed plastic surgery. Her clothes were considered high-class.

That person was none other than Hera Sanchez. "Are you Leia Norman?" She asked.

"Can I help you?" Leia thought that the woman was her fan. She might have retired from the entertainment industry, but she had her supporters.

something to ask of you. Follow me." Hera glanced at the photo in her hand. The woman in front of her was plumper than her face in the photo because she was pregnant, but Hera was sure that she was indeed

crazy? Why would I follow you just because you told me to? Get lost." Leia did not show any courtesy toward the woman. From that woman's behavior, she could tell that the woman was not

showed no intention of going away. She blocked Leia from stepping closer to her car and said, "We'll only need ten minutes of your time, Ms. Norman. If you don't follow us, we'll have to use

that the woman had mentioned "we," so she looked around. She noticed two burly men standing not far away, and she could guess that they were the same gang as the

trembled in fear. "Who... who are

to laugh when she saw Leia's sudden change in attitude. "You're Bianca Rayne's younger I'm not very close to her!" Leia said. There were no other people around to hear it, so she did not mind they were looking for trouble with Bianca, they should not have looked That was what she wanted to hear. "I was expecting you to at Charmaine at the side, who was also trembling in fear. "Do you want to talk here, or shall we go over was afraid. "I can talk to you, but please don't we won't hurt you," Hera

Leia saw that she was not a bad person, so she followed *her*.

Charmaine breathed a sigh of relief when she saw that they were not here to find trouble with them. She tried to eavesdrop on their conversation, but they were too far away.

A while later, Leia returned, smiling. Hera and the two men had already *left*.

Charmaine pretended to be worried while asking, "Did they hurt you?"

"**No**, it's all a misunderstanding." Leia waved at Hera as though they were very **close friends**.

Hera was secretly shocked. Why would they seem so close only after a *few minutes*?

Knowing Leia's arrogant character, Charmaine knew that she would not be so close to a stranger if she did not have something to gain from their relationship.

"**Um... what** did she say to you? How could it be a misunderstanding?" Charmaine tried to find out more.

"**Charmaine**, isn't there enough gossip for you in the entertainment industry?" Leia opened the car door and sat inside. "Let's go. We're **running late**."

Brody's family ran a business, and because of their influence, he was not fond of people **being late**.

Charmaine decided to keep those questions for another time. She put the shopping bags in the boot, then sat in the side passenger **seat**.

not help but be more and more curious when she saw the smile on Leia's face. What could they have talked about in those few short

not looking for gossip, Leia. I'm worried about you. They don't look like good people," she could not be bothered to reply. It did not matter to her if those people were good or not. Anyone who wanted to harm Bianca was good in

Hera had offered Leia cooperation.

Bianca, but she did not want to attract too much trouble at this critical juncture, so she did not accept told her that she did not have to do much, only provide Bianca's location whenever she was

thought about it. The other party was not asking for money or effort, and she could see that Bianca was harmed just by providing information, so she agreed

tasting session at the hotel, Leia

came in through the door while carrying multiple shopping bags. When she saw Queenie knitting a sweater on the couch, she greeted her,

her head and saw that Leia had gone shopping again. She could not help but reprimand her, "Why did you buy so many things, Leia? Have you forgotten what I

annoyed. Naturally, Queenie had been telling her the virtues of frugality and

wanted to be frugal, she would not have married

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Leia grumbled under her breath when Queenie rejected her offer.

The handbag was not meant for Queenie anyway. If she did not want it, Leia would keep it for herself. She put the handbag back into the shopping bag and said, "Can I discuss something with you, Mom?"

Queenie picked up the knitting needles and looked at her. "What is it?"

"The wedding date is getting close, and we're still overwhelmed with work. I was thinking of getting Bianca to help me with the gown fitting and the guest list," Leia said.

To help Hera, Leia had to lure Bianca out somehow. However, it would be suspicious if she asked Bianca to meet her without any reason.

Asking her to help out at the wedding was the best excuse.

Queenie stopped knitting. They were indeed quite overwhelmed with the preparations. She had started knitting the sweater before she met the Hilton family, and she was not done with it yet.

She would not have the free time to pick up her knitting needles if Leia had not gone to the hotel for the tasting.

She would be happy if Bianca could help out, but she also knew that Bianca had to take care of her own family and career. "Your elder sister must be very busy. We'd better not bother her," she said.

Leia was not going to let go of the opportunity that easily. She held Queenie's arm and said coyly, "But she's my elder sister, Mom. Let's just ask her. We'll think of something else if she's really too busy."

Queenie frowned. She used to think that her daughter was adorable whenever she behaved like that.

Now that her daughter was pregnant, Queenie felt somehow annoyed when she heard what her daughter said. Even though Leia was about to be married, she still thought that the world revolved around her.

that her mother did not speak, Leia said coyly, "Mom... Bianca isn't busy at

she was not close to Bianca, Leia needed her mother's help. Bianca would not necessarily agree if Leia had asked

Queenie could say anything, Jack came in through the front

are you back, jack?" Queenie put her knitting needles down and stood up. Jack would not usually come home during lunch

a cup of tea for

took off his coat, gulped down the tea, and said, "Do you know? Something happened to the

it?" Queenie was instantly worried that something bad might have happened

heard that a thief broke into Crawford Manor the day before yesterday, and Louis Crawford's daughter was injured." Jack immediately went home after he knew about it. "Let's pack up. We'll go to

kneaded her hands and said, "That's so serious. Why didn't Bea say

Luke might not be born of the same mother, they were nonetheless related by blood, and as Bianca's parents, they had the obligation to visit the young girl in

even care about that. Why would she tell you?" Leia stood up and propped her

frowned and looked at her daughter. "What nonsense are you talking

He thought that Leia should have known better. If Old Master Crawford heard that, he would misunderstand.

"I'm not talking nonsense. I saw her walking around in a shopping mall with another woman today. If she still has the mood to go shopping after the incident happened, I don't think she cares at all." Leia would not let go of any chance to slander Bianca in front of **her parents**.

Shopping? Queenie was confused. It was a workday, so why would Bianca be **out shopping**?

Jack glared at Leia. If she did not watch her mouth after marrying into the Hilton household, she would eventually learn her lesson the *hard way*.

However, Jack had to get back to work after the lunch hour. He did not have the time to discipline Leia. After Queenie changed her clothes, they left the house.

Glaring at her parents' backs, Leia's gaze became *gloomy*.

...

Meanwhile, while Bianca and Vivian were having lunch together, Bianca received a call from her company, saying that she had to go back and handle some *matters*.

Vivian said that she had nothing to do at the hotel, so she wanted to go along with Bianca.

Bianca took the opportunity to invite Vivian to her house **for dinner**.

Vivian hesitated.

why she was hesitating. "Gordan will be coming to my house for dinner too. Wouldn't you want to come along?"

for your invitation." Vivian smiled when she heard that Gordan would be going too. She nodded and accepted Bianca's

went to the school to pick up Rainie and

elder children. They're twins," Bianca introduced the children to Vivian. "Lanie, Rainie, this is Aunt Vivian. She is from

and Rainie greeted Vivian in

was delighted to see the angelic faces of the two children. "I've heard that your children are very good-looking. Indeed, they're

"I think that your future children will be good-looking

did not know why Vivian looked so different from her younger brother, but she could tell that their family had

me, Sis." Vivian touched her

me. All children are angels." Bianca was genuinely thinking so; she was not joking or flattering

with what she said. She felt inexplicably happy looking at the two children sitting quietly in the

She really loved children.

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Rainie nodded her head earnestly. "You look nice, Aunt Vivian. Mommy said that we shouldn't lie, so I'm not lying to you. Isn't that so, Lanie?"

Lanie was not as talkative as his sister, though he nodded and said, "Mm."

Vivian's smile became wider as she said to Bianca. "I love your children, Sis."

They were true angels.

"Tommy knew that you're in A City since yesterday. He's been saying that he wants to meet you," Bianca said. Her children seem to be very friendly toward Vivian.

"I miss him too," Vivian said with a smile. Her heart felt warm as she took the milk bottle in her hands.

Bianca drove the car back to the mansion. She did not see Luke's car in the garage and knew that he was not back yet. As she unfastened her seatbelt, she gave him a call.

The call was answered after two rings. "Bea." Luke's resonant voice came in through the phone.

"Are you still in the company?" Bianca asked.

"I'm on my way back," Luke said. "There's a bit of traffic, so I'll be delayed."

"Alright." Bianca glanced at Vivian and saw that she was staring at herself. She continued asking, "Will Gordan be joining us for dinner today?"

"Mm." After Luke gave his reply, Bianca could hear Gordan's voice over the phone. "I miss your cooking, Sis. Remember to cook something delicious."

He sounded cheerful, very much unlike the anger he had displayed over the phone the night before.

glared at him. "My wife is not your

he said to Bianca, "Don't mind him, Bea. Please ask the caretaker to cook more food

Bianca said with a smile. After the call ended, she told Vivian, "Don't worry, Gordan is also on his
you, Sis." Vivian nodded and smiled

her, Gordan was the perfect man. She had always thought that her ideal place was next

don't really know what Gordan likes to eat. Would you want to help me in the kitchen?" Bianca

what Vivian was thinking. She would be happy to cook for the man of her dreams, even if it might be

Vivian nodded. "It'll be my pleasure."

She would do anything for Gordan.

sitting on the couch playing with toys. When he saw Vivian, he pounced on her. "Aunt

down and carried Tommy in her arms. "I haven't seen you in a while, Tommy. You've grown

reached around and hugged her neck. "I miss you so much, Aunt Vivian. Do you miss

"I miss you. I think about you every day." Vivian tapped his cute little nose. She was happy to see him.

Tommy blinked excitedly and said, "If you miss me, did you bring me presents?"

Bianca shook her head helplessly when she heard her son asking for presents directly. If Luke heard that, he would scold the *little boy*.

Vivian felt a little awkward. She had bought some presents for Tommy at the Moscow airport, but she did not bring them along with her because she was not expecting to visit Bianca's house.

Tommy seemed disappointed. "You didn't?"

"**She did** buy you presents, but they're with Uncle Gordan," Bianca *said*.

Tommy looked at his mother. "Mommy, why would Aunt Vivian's presents be with Uncle Gordan?"

"Aunt Vivian is Uncle Gordan's fiancée, which means that they're a family. It's not surprising if her belongings are with him," Bianca said with **a smile**.

"Yay! I'll wait for Uncle Gordan to come then!" Tommy clapped her *hands excitedly*.

"**Alright**, you'd better get on the floor. Aunt Vivian needs to help me in the kitchen," Bianca said while picking up Tommy, who was clinging onto Vivian like a koala. "Go and play. Daddy and Uncle Gordan will be here **soon**."

"Okay, Mommy!"

Vivian was overjoyed seeing Tommy's happy expression.

a few more glances at the boy as she walked toward the kitchen. She felt envious

had a loving husband and a happy family. Was she rewarded for something good she

came in through the driveway when the two women were busy in

the mansion and exclaimed, "The surroundings are not bad. Do you have an

wanted to move in so that he did not have to face Vivian in

but don't think about it." Luke parked next to Bianca's car and candidly dashed his

not going to steal anything from your house. Why won't you let me stay here?" Gordan was getting frustrated. Luke had never pried into his

was somehow trying to match him with

be a bad influence on my children, and their studies will be affected. Most importantly, you'll intrude upon my personal life with my wife," Luke said as he stepped out of the

followed suit. "You already have three little third wheels in your house. Why would you care about one more big

mind it because you're the 'big one.'" Luke stepped into the house. When Tommy saw the men, he ran over and hugged Gordan's leg.

and picked him up into his arms. He looked at Luke provocatively. "Looks like your son likes me more

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"Vivian?" Gordan instantly frowned when he heard that name. "Why can't she leave me alone?"

Bianca and Vivian were bringing dinner out of the kitchen when they heard what Gordan said.

Vivian's smile froze on her face. She knew that Gordan did not like her, but her heart ached when she had to hear him say that.

She seemed dejected as she placed the dishes on the table.

Bianca looked at the two and sighed. "Gordan, I've invited Vivian here for dinner."

Gordan might not be happy, but he dared not offend Bianca. After all, she was the woman he respected the most.

He looked at the dishes that Vivian brought out and said mockingly, "Can that be eaten? Did you drug the food?"

Vivian shook her head and explained, "I didn't."

Ray had drugged Gordan in Moscow because he wanted to help his elder sister hasten her relationship with Gordan.

Even after Gordan was drugged, he locked himself in the room. From then on, he thought that Vivian had drugged him.

Vivian tried to explain her innocence to him, but it was no use. Now that he mentioned it, it made her feel terrible.

"I was the cook for all the dishes, Gordan. Vivian was only helping. Don't be so paranoid, Gordan." Bianca looked at the two people and hoped that she could ease the tension.

She did not expect that reaction from Gordan when he found out that Vivian was in the kitchen.

even touch the finished dish. You... don't have to worry," Vivian said. She did not want Bianca's efforts to felt even more annoyed looking

ran over and tugged Gordan's pants. "Uncle Gordan, I don't want you to be so nasty to Aunt speechless. Why did that child like Vivian when she was

that it was quite embarrassing to be reprimanded by a

did not speak up for Gordan. Instead, he said, "Don't just stand there.

go of Gordan's pants and ran upstairs. "I'll get Lanie and Rainie down

"I'll bring the rest of the dishes out of

a little awkward. "I'll help,"

awkwardness did not go away at the dining table. The people ate their meals in total

Rainie could sense the tension. They quickly finished their food and said that they had to go upstairs to finish their

Only Tommy was eating happily.

Bianca took a napkin and wiped off a bit of mashed potato on his chin. "You should eat slower. It's better for your **digestion.**"

"Okay, Mommy." Tommy flashed a bright smile at Bianca and *continued eating.*

After dinner, Gordan immediately went to Luke's study. He said he wanted to continue the investigation.

Vivian helped Bianca clean up and said that she wanted to leave *first.*

"**Aren't** you waiting for Gordan?" Bianca **asked.**

"No. I'm feeling a little tired, and I want to go back and rest. I think he'll be here for quite some time," Vivian said. She was already satisfied that she got to eat dinner with *Gordan.*

Bianca could see that she was indeed tired. She took out several shopping bags from the car boot. Those were all Vivian's purchases.

"I'll get you a cab," she *said*.

"Thank you, Sis." Vivian was touched.

She booked a cab for Vivian and told the driver Vivian's destination. After watching the car leave, Bianca returned to the house.

Gordan happened to be coming down the stairs. He did not see Vivian in the living room. He sneaked into the kitchen to take a peek and did not see her there **either**.

He saw Bianca coming in through the door. "Where's she?" He asked with a *smile*.

Bianca was quite angry about Gordan's behavior earlier. "Who?" She pretended not to know who Gordan was **referring to**.

Plain-Face." Gordan could tell that Bianca was not in a good

mean Vivian? She went back to the hotel first because she didn't want to disturb you," Bianca replied brusquely. If Gordan were not Luke's good friend and was not here to help them, she would have rolled her eyes at

Vivian was not familiar with A City. How did she

wanted to ask that, but soon realized that Bianca might have helped her book a cab and told the driver the destination. He felt a little more at ease after

went into the kitchen, poured himself a glass of water, and took a sip. Then, he realized that something was not right. Why was he worried

she lost her way and could not speak English well, who would bother taking advantage

was in the living room playing with Tommy. She did not know what Gordan was thinking in the

Gordan left at about eleven o'clock.

coaxing her children to sleep, she returned to her bedroom. Luke was leaning on the headboard reading

you still busy?" She lifted the blanket, sat down next to Luke, and glanced at the document curiously. It was related to the upcoming T Corporation shareholders'

remembered that she had T Corporation shares too, which meant that she would have to attend

felt quite troubled when she remembered that such meetings were full of quibbles and

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Vivian, standing behind the door, felt dejected when she heard Gordan's room door close.

She hoped that Gordan would care for her, even just a little bit...

There were no sounds beyond the door. The sound insulation between the rooms of the presidential suite was great. She could not hear what was happening in the other room.

...

By the next day, the news that Luke had enlisted Gordan's help had spread in the Crawford family.

Allison also knew about it.

She did not know who Gordan was, but she knew that he was a very capable investigator!

Gordan was a notorious figure in the international scene. If he helped Luke, he would bring unwanted trouble for her!

Also, she was running out of money. She hoped that the incident would soon blow over so that she could sell those antiques.

The more she thought about it, the more flustered she got. She drove to Bianca's office to find her.

The front desk assistant instantly gave Bianca a call on the internal line when she saw the arrogant and noble lady. "Ms. Rayne, there's a woman who wants to see you. She says that she is your mother-in-law."

'Allison Tanner?'

was surprised. Why would she look for her at her

her in." She said. Then, she stood outside her office to wait for

was not satisfied that Bianca did not come and escort her in. She thought that Bianca was rude as she followed the assistant. While she walked, she looked around her and thought that Bianca's company was so much smaller than

been wondering if Bianca was capable of starting her own company, but it turned out that Bianca was only

saw Bianca standing there, she spoke imperiously like a queen, "Why didn't you come and meet me at way please, Madam," Bianca said. She was quite calm when facing Allison's

grunted coldly and went into Bianca's

the assistant to bring a cup of coffee, then closed

Allison heard the door close, she instantly interrogated Bianca, "How could you be

was confused. She looked at her and asked, "What are you talking

Allison stared daggers at her. "I'm talking about the break-in at Crawford Manor! How could you ask that kind of person to help with the investigation?"

Bianca was silent. Apparently, Allison knew that Gordan was involved.

The people of the Crawford family should know Gordan's capabilities. He was the one who had helped Luke in the corruption case. She did not understand why Allison had such a strong reaction.

"Are you mute?" Allison was furious seeing that Bianca did not say *anything*.

"Gordan is a professional investigator, Madam. Why can't we ask him?" Bianca did not understand. She was impassive toward Allison's fury.

"*You're asking* a thief to catch a thief. Don't you think that it's ridiculous?" Allison said matter-of-factly. To her, Gordan's identity was a stain on his character.

She thought that it was a joke to ask a thief to investigate another *thief*.

Bianca remained calm in the face of Allison's savagery. "Gordan is not a thief, Madam. His investigative abilities are quite **outstanding**."

"He's still a liar and a scammer. So what if he is capable? What if he finds out who the thief is and splits the loot with the thief? How would Luke explain that to Old Master Crawford?" Allison **said**.

Bianca was getting a headache from her twisted logic. "It was Luke's decision to **involve Gordan**."

Luke as silly as you too? You're his wife, and you know that it's the wrong decision. Why didn't you object to it?" Allison continued to argue using her own logic, not caring what Bianca

was frustrated. She had never thought that it was the wrong

think Luke made the right decision, Madam. Luke could have investigated the incident himself, but he's busy with T Corporation work, especially with the shareholders' meeting coming soon. He would not be able to make any progress with the investigation, and Grandfather would blame him for that," she

might have had a criminal past, but that is also his strength. He is an outstanding investigator, and he will be able to get to the bottom of it. Moreover, he is blood brothers with Luke. He wouldn't betray Luke for his personal

livid after hearing that. "Are you purposely opposing me? You'll do what I tell you to do. Stop giving me excuses! If I say that Gordan isn't suitable, then he's

speaking very loudly, and the office was not well-insulated in the first place. Luke, who had just arrived at the company, heard the

the door to the office and saw that Allison was raising her hand at

are you doing, Mother?" He

shocked by Luke's sudden appearance and glared at Bianca. "Did you just tattle

her temples. "Madam, this place is a half-hour car ride from

not predict the future, so she would not have been able to inform Luke half an hour ago. Moreover, Luke did not tell her that he was

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"You..." Allison's face changed several shades of red because of her anger. She glared at her son, and the signs of old age appeared on her face.

Deep wrinkles appeared on her face, and she seemed to have aged several decades instantly.

That shocked Bianca. It was the second time she had seen Allison's skin change so drastically, but Allison seemed oblivious to it.

Luke was Allison's son, but ever since he reunited with Bianca, he did not ensure that her whims were satisfied, and sometimes he had even sided with Bianca to bully her.

Allison felt more and more like an outsider and a burden, and her hatred toward Bianca grew.

She thought that it was the wrong decision to leave her with Kevin Rayne. She should have tossed the baby Bianca into the sea! That would have saved her a lot of trouble in the future.

The atmosphere in the office was tense. Neither the mother nor the son was willing to back down.

However, Luke was a more composed person than Allison, and Allison found herself increasingly flustered.

He did not close the door after he entered the office, and Sue had been pacing outside to see what was going on inside. They said that one should not air their dirty laundry in public, but everyone in the company had already found out that Luke Crawford was not on good terms with his mother.

Bianca was getting worried that the situation might continue to escalate. She held Luke's hand gently and tried to defuse the situation. "Did you come here for something, Luke?"

She tried to change the topic to stop the fight from continuing.

Luke looked away from Allison and handed Bianca an envelope.

That was when Bianca noticed that Luke had been holding an envelope all this while. She opened it and saw the invitation letter to the T Corporation annual shareholders' meeting.

could tell that it was an invitation

could have given it to Bianca while they were at home, but he had deliberately come over to Bianca's office to deliver it. Did he not have a lot of work? What was the meaning of

angrier when she thought of that. Not caring that people were gossiping outside, she continued to reprimand Luke, "You've been bewitched by that woman, Luke. You disappoint

she stormed out of the

high heels landed heavily on the floor as though she wanted to

shocked by Allison's gloomy demeanor. It was scary to see that the noble woman seemed to age by decades in an

After Allison left, Bianca sighed. "Luke..."

not say what she wanted to say. After all, the problem was between the mother and son, and she could offer no

caressed her cheeks and closed the

here because I miss you," he said. Jason had delivered the invitation letters ready to be sent out to Luke's office

saw the name "Bianca Rayne," he instantly put aside his work on hand and drove over just to

was moved. She hugged him tightly. "I'm so glad that you're here,

Luke would always appear whenever she was in trouble. It was the same this *time*.

Luke carefully inspected Bianca's face for any signs of injury. "Did she hurt you?" He asked.

"No." *Bianca* shook her head. He had arrived just when Allison wanted to *slap her*.

"Why do you think your mother is so against Gordan investigating the incident?" **She asked.**

Luke's gaze turned gloomy. He already had his doubts, and those doubts intensified when he saw his mother acting **so strangely**.

Why was she against Gordan investigating the incident? It was because Gordan was very *capable*.

"Are you suspecting that she's behind this?" Bianca felt a little uneasy when she saw him like that.

They were husband and wife, and they could usually tell what each other was thinking. However, Bianca was not willing to suspect **Allison's involvement**.

Luke was not willing to suspect his own mother too. However, her behavior was *too suspicious*.

He held Bianca's hand and kissed it. "Let's not be bothered about it. Gordan will handle it."

Bianca nodded. Even though he said so, her unease *only grew*.

If Allison was indeed behind the incident, how would Luke be able to face Louis?

going off. Let's eat at the Westin tonight. I've already reserved a private room." Seeing Bianca's worries, Luke massaged

been very busy, so let me bring the children over,"

gazed at her gently. He would not want to leave if he was not

Luke leave the office. She thought that he would be going to look for

be his birth mother, but they were not on good terms with each other. Things would be a lot more complicated if Allison was truly involved in

"Sigh," Bianca sighed.

into the office and asked her out of concern, "Are you okay, Bianca?"

paused. Even when the door was closed, she could clearly hear the conversation inside the office. She was quite shocked to find out that the seemingly noble Allison was such a

nothing, Sue. Let's get back to work." Bianca forced a smile on her face, though she could not hide her not going to pry into Bianca's family matters. She comforted herself by thinking that she was lucky that she did not have in-laws, put the cup of coffee on the table, and left the office while closing the door behind

in her chair, staring at the computer screen in a

remembered that in the security footage, Allison had appeared in the living room before and after the

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Queenie held Rainie's hand and smiled. "Are you sure? I thought that we're eating out because you're tired of my cooking."

Jack coughed lightly and said, "You did mention that you were craving bouillabaisse yesterday."

Bianca was warmed by her parents' interaction. "Didn't Leia come along with you?"

Queenie explained, "Leia is busy making preparations for her wedding, so she couldn't come along."

Bianca nodded in understanding. "Luke reserved a private room for us. Do you want to join us for dinner?" She invited them.

"Is it a business dinner? Then we shouldn't disturb you," Jack said. He gently pinched Tommy's face; he was very fond of his youngest grandchild.

Bianca smiled and shook her head. "I wouldn't have brought the children along if it were a business dinner. It's just a normal family dinner. You should join us."

Tommy was happy to see a bigger crowd around the dining table. "Grandpa, Grandma, I'm also inviting you to join us!"

Jack and Queenie looked at each other and accepted the invitation. "Alright, alright, let's have dinner together."

They sat down around the dining table in the private room. A while later, Luke came in.

Bianca had already informed him by a message that she had met her parents at the hotel and had invited them to join in for dinner. That was why he was not too surprised.

"Dad, Mom," Luke greeted them and sat down next to Bianca.

Gordan?" Bianca asked. She thought that he would bring

went back to his hotel because he has some other business," Luke said. He did not tell her that he did not invite Gordan. After all, the dinner was supposed to be a private family

children had been traumatized by the incident in Crawford Manow, especially Lanie. He might seem fine on the surface, but he had fallen sick because of

told him that the family should spend more time together so that the children would recover is Gordan?" Jack asked. He had never heard of

Luke's friend, and he's here to help with an investigation," Bianca explained while pouring a drink for here to investigate the break-in at Crawford Manor?" Jack asked. He had asked his friend at the police department about the incident. The investigation was difficult because there were not enough was why he could instantly guess that the investigation that Bianca had mentioned was about the Bianca nodded and took a sip

Old Master Crawford say anything about the incident?" Jack was very concerned about the incident. The crime rate in A City was generally low, and the incident had

the Crawfords were quite prominent in A City. Now that a thief had broken into their mansion without leaving any traces behind, the other citizens were worried about their safety, and sales of high-tech security systems had soared

took a sip of tea from his cup. Before he got off work, he and Gordan had reviewed the security footage again and found a new

"My grandfather has tasked me with the investigation," *he replied.*

"Let me know if you need any help," **Jack said.**

"Thank you, Dad," Luke said. He glanced at Bianca and took her hand that was under the **table.**

Queenie glanced at the couple and said, "We're a family now. You should let us know if you are faced with any difficulty. We wouldn't have known that Luke's brother's daughter was in the hospital if Jack's colleague hadn't **informed him.**"

"I didn't want you to worry," Bianca said. She figured that they were busy with Leia's wedding, and it was best not to **disturb them.**

Queenie shook her head in disapproval. "What should I do *with you...*"

Jack and Queenie had always thought that they owed Bianca, and so they wanted to help her as much as *they could.*

Queenie's phone rang. The call was from Leia. "Hello, **Leia?**"

"Mom, where are you and Dad?" *Leia asked.*

"We're having dinner with Bianca. Why is it so noisy over there?" Queenie asked. Leia had told them that she would be going to the wedding planner, but she sounded as though she was on a **busy street.**

Leia paused. 'Bianca again!' Instantly, she made herself sound aggrieved, "Something happened to me, Mom. Can I go **over?**"

Queenie replied anxiously. She glanced at Luke and Bianca and did not answer Leia's

left me downtown. I'm so hungry. I haven't had dinner yet." Leia pretended to be pitiful. She did not want to see Bianca, but it was a

you and Brody have a fight?" Queenie said softly so that no one else heard

so tired and hungry, Mom. Can I go over?" Leia could tell that Queenie was reluctant and hated her for that. Bianca might be Queenie's daughter, but was she not her daughter

afraid that she might disrupt

could see the hesitation on Queenie's face. "Is it

Queenie nodded.

join us for dinner if she's free," Bianca said, knowing Queenie's

told Leia the address and to be careful on her way here. Then, she ended the

be at the wedding planner's?" Jack did not seem too

quarreled with Brody." Queenie gently held his arm, thinking that he was not happy because Leia had gotten herself pregnant before

about to become a wife, yet she doesn't know how to control her temper." Jack thought that it was all Leia's fault, even if Brody might be the one in the

Chapter 1018

Queenie put her hand gently on the back of Leia's hand and said softly, "Leia."

Leia snapped out of it. Dark thoughts filled her head the moment she saw Luke. If Queenie did not call out to her, she might still be staring.

"Mom, what's the matter?" She deliberately acted as though she was aggrieved to gain pity from Queenie.

Queenie asked, "Aren't you supposed to be on your way to look for the wedding planner to go through the itinerary with Brody? Did you get into a fight?"

"It's nothing. We just had a mild disagreement about the wedding." Leia wiped the corner of her eyes and pretended to tear up.

Queenie sighed. Leia was pregnant but Brody left her downtown because of a small fight. It was clear to Queenie that Brody was not a dependable man. "Why didn't you try to talk things through? It won't do your marriage any good if you get into a fight every time there's a disagreement. Look at your sister and brother-in-law! They always talk their way through issues. I don't remember the last time they fought."

Bianca and Luke rarely fought. When Tommy heard his grandmother boasting about his parents, he smiled and said, "Lanie said that Daddy and Mommy are soul mates who never fight."

Bianca was overjoyed to hear what Tommy said. She had a big smile on her face as she reached out to touch his head.

Leia endured the fury in her heart, pursed her mouth, and said, "My relationship with Brody is wonderful but the preparation time for the wedding is too short. I'm under a lot of pressure, so I couldn't hold my temper when we got into a disagreement. Mom, you know me, this isn't the real me. If it weren't for my pregnancy and the pressure of planning the wedding, I wouldn't have acted like that..."

As she said that, she pushed out her belly to highlight that she was still a pregnant woman.

Queenie sighed to express her helplessness.

was only so much she could

wiped her tears and said, "Even now, I don't have a flower girl, I haven't tried on the wedding dress, and I'm working on the guest list and invitations at the same time. There's so much

looked at her with distress, held her hand, and tried to coax her. "Okay, don't cry. It's not great for the child if you

Seeing Queenie's reaction, Leia seized the opportunity and grabbed her chest to act weak. "Mom, can you ask Bianca to help me? I don't know if it's because I'm pregnant but I feel out of breath when I

was stunned when she heard her name being mentioned. 'Leia is asking me to

was well aware of how much Leia hated her so it did not make sense that she would ask her for

did not expect it as well and shook her head. "Bea has a lot of things on her plate recently. Leia, what about your friends? They can

Leia saw that Queenie was being so upfront, she replied, "They're all in showbiz and are busier than me. What's Bea doing? Is it because of the break-in? Bea, since you're not the one who's investigating the matter, you should be free,

met Leia's gaze and sighed in her heart. Leia was so spoiled by Queenie that she did not know how to be a decent human

"When I have the time, I'll help." She skillfully phrased her sentence in a hypothetical manner. After all, they were family and it would not be nice to turn her down directly.

Bianca thought to herself that Leia would not be so stupid to ask her for help as her presence might make things worse.

After she said that, Luke squeezed her hand to show that he was disagreeing with **her decision**.

Bianca smiled bitterly in her heart as she knew that she had no choice. She could not turn down her sister's request in front of *their parents*.

Leia smiled sweetly when she heard Bianca's reply. She said, "Thank you, Sister."

Her gaze fell on Rainie and Blanche. The children would not be allowed to live when Bianca was dealt with. Leia continued and said, "Bea, I still need flower children and I think that Rainie and Blanche are the best people for the job. They're so cute and will be even more adorable when they wear a suit and a dress. The twins may also bring me luck. Maybe my second pregnancy with Brody will be **twins**."

Blanche was repulsed as he looked at Leia's 'innocent' gaze. Neither he nor his sister liked Leia.

Blanche was not afraid that he would be reprimanded for being impolite and turned Leia down before the adults could speak. "Aunt Leia, Rainie and I are too old to be your flower children. On top of that, as my dad always says that we should focus on our studies and lead by example for our **younger brother.**"

*They were indeed a little old to be flower children, but Leia insisted and said, "That's okay. Both of you are cute and beautiful. All you have to do is go shopping for clothes and rehearse the day before the actual day. It's not a big deal. Blanche, I trust that you won't turn down your *aunt?*"*

"Aunt Leia, we're not interested in being your flower children. You should look for other children. Lanie, Tommy, and I will attend the ceremony as guests." Rainie made their stance clear and made sure Tommy would be protected from her as **well.**

never been a fan of Leia and did not want to be her flower

smile froze. She did not expect that the kids would be more difficult to deal with than

had politely refused but Queenie was worried that Leia would keep on demanding, so she stepped in and said, "My friend has two grandchildren who are at the appropriate age. Leia, why not have them be your

Queenie had already offered, Leia knew that there was nothing she could do about it. 'As long as I get Bianca, the three of them will be orphans who won't know what's coming for

room was no longer harmonious because of Leia's

were done with the meal, Luke got the bill and left with his wife and daughter after using work as an apologized when they got in the car. "Daddy, Mommy,

back to look at her son and wondered why he was suddenly apologizing. She asked him, "Lanie, what's and I don't want to be Aunt Leia's flower children and turned her down before you and Daddy could say anything,"

smiled. She knew that her children disliked Leia. She would never force them to do things they did not

Chapter 1019

Late at night.

After Jack and Queenie went to bed, the Norman Residence was in complete silence.

Leia pressed her face on the door of the master bedroom, and after confirming that there was no sound inside, she tiptoed back into her bedroom. After closing the door, she turned on the lights. She was instantly caught off guard by the sudden appearance of a man!

"Ah—" As soon as she wanted to say something, her mouth was covered by Wayne. A familiar sense of fear invaded her heart.

Wayne pushed her against the door, smiled evilly, and warned her. "Don't yell. If you yell, this knife will slice through your neck in an instant!"

Leia's eyes widened and she felt the pain from being slammed onto the wall. She nodded and shook her hands to gesture that she would not scream.

Wayne glanced at Leia's bulging belly. After letting go of her, he grabbed her slightly chubby face and asked, "Is the child mine?"

"No, it's not yours!" Leia denied as the fear in her heart slowly took over her body. 'Didn't he escape abroad? Why is he back in A City?'

He would kill her if he knew that she was marrying Brody while pregnant with his child!

She had no option but to lie to him.

Wayne squinted his eyes and an evil smile flashed across his face as he said, "The child isn't mine?"

Although she was doing her best to be brave, her body could not stop shaking when she saw the sharp played with the penknife in his hand and moved it to her belly. "If it's not mine, I'll dig

don't!" Leia immediately covered her belly. She knew that he was a lunatic who would do as he said. She protected her belly and tried to squeeze a smile. "Wayne, I was only joking with

left her belly and he waved it in front of her eyes while saying, "Is the child mine or the

yours! I was just joking... Wayne, you're going to be a father!" Leia trembled as she looked at the penknife. She was afraid that it would land on her

and raised her chin with the tip of the knife. "Leia, I hate it when people lie to

child. I have a report. It's really..." Leia pointed to the bedside table and looked down. "It's in the

away the knife but did not open the drawer to get the report. Instead, he picked up the invitation card on the side table and asked, "What's

that he was holding a sample of the invitation card and was frightened out of her

marrying another man while pregnant with my child?" Wayne was beyond furious and tore the invitation in his hand to

As soon as he returned to A City, he heard that Leia was pregnant and getting married to one of the Hiltons, who were involved in international trade.

Blazing hot anger had surged uncontrollably in his gut upon hearing the news and he sneaked into the Norman Residence the **same night**.

After the last incident, the security measures of Norman Residence had been upgraded. However, it was nothing to him. After all, he had been trained in special **forces**.

"Wayne, you fled! You can't expect me to be a single mother. You don't know the kind of people my parents are!" Leia cried and said while acting pitiful.

"*You're not* allowed to marry another man. Both you and the child are mine." Wayne warned her while holding *the knife*.

"You weren't there at the time. This child belongs to you and I couldn't bear to abort it, so this was the only way I could think of." Leia kept her failed attempted abortion to herself.

Her life would be hundreds of times better if it were not for the baby. She hated the child and Wayne, so she was more than happy to get rid of them.

"Hmph, I'll kill your parents and that man right now!" Wayne said arrogantly. He already had the blood of a few lives on his hands. He surely did not mind killing a few more.

"Wayne, don't do this!" Although Leia hated the Normans, they could not die just yet. If Wayne killed Brody, her great life would come to an *end*.

"Why? You can't let go of them?" Wayne squinted, the murderous intent in his eyes clear and obvious.

I don't care about them. Wayne, you're still a fugitive and you need money, right?" Leia was racking her brain to find a reason to change his mind. "I'm not marrying that man because I love him. What I love is his family's fortune. Wayne, if I marry him, you'll have a worry-free life with all the money that I'll be

money if I need money. You don't need to sell yourself to make money for me! I promise you a good life if you choose to leave with me," Wayne said irritably. He was insulted that she thought he could not support her and their

it's alright if I suffer a little, but I'll never allow our child to suffer. Wait until I get the money and I'll leave with you, how about that? Else, you can kill him, but only after I get his money. Then, our family can run away and start a life of our own!" Leia stroked her belly and approached him. "Wayne, I know you can make money, but you're not alone now. Our baby and I can't bear to see you working so hard for us. It'll only be a while

and thought about what

the wedding customs of A City, after the two took wedding photos and booked the venue, the man would give the woman betrothal gifts. Leia and Brody were already preparing invitations and were not far from taking their wedding

"Okay, I'll give you some time. Lie

understood what he wanted and gritted her teeth. It had taken a lot for her to heal from the trauma that Wayne left her with. She knew that her body would not be able to take it. She begged for mercy, saying, "Wayne, the doctor

far along so I'm sure it'll be fine. I'll just be careful!" Wayne had not been intimate with anyone for a long time because he had been on

doctor said that my body is weak, and my pregnancy is still unstable. Wayne, you don't want the baby to be in danger, do you?" Leia

child was somewhat Wayne's soft spot, so he cursed, "F*ck! How

Chapter 1020

Leia endured her fear, and with his sharp gaze locked on her, she nodded.

When a knock suddenly sounded from her door, Leia was shocked. She looked at the door and was not sure if she had locked it just now. "Yes?"

Queenie's voice came from outside. "Leia, why are your lights still on at this hour? Why aren't you asleep?"

"Mom, I just took a shower and I'm going to bed soon." Leia turned her head and looked at Wayne warily. He was still holding a knife in his hand.

She was afraid that he would lose control and rush out to stab Queenie. She could not afford for that to happen. At least, not yet.

Queenie's voice sounded again from outside. "Okay, sleep tight! Remember to blow dry your hair before you go to bed so you won't catch a cold."

"I will, Mom. Good night!" Leia could not relax for fear that Wayne would act irrationally.

Queenie headed to the master bedroom after she heard Leia's reply.

Leia's nerves relaxed slightly when she heard the sound of footsteps going farther and farther away.

She squeezed a smile at Wayne and touched her belly with her hands. "Wayne, I'm not trying to do anything. I'm just worried about you. You're the father of the child in my belly. I don't want anything to happen to you."

Wayne looked at her bulging belly. It was his child inside. He carefully looked into Leia's eyes and did not see fear or reluctance in them.

Leia had already concealed her true emotions.

softened as he said, "I'll be fine. Take care of yourself and my baby.

he said that, Wayne walked toward the balcony and jumped down

breathed a sigh of relief and almost collapsed on the bed the moment Wayne left her room. After she thought about it, she walked to the balcony and looked down. Wayne's figure had disappeared into the night and could no longer be

security system of Norman Residence was not

was speechless at the useless alarm system that cost more than 100,000 dollars. She began plotting on how to

picked up the phone and called

midnight, and Hera was out singing and dancing. Leia could hear that Hera was having fun and went straight to the point. "I now have an excuse to ask Bianca out, but you have to do something

to a quiet corner and raised her brows. "That won't be a problem, but it'll

my part in asking Bianca out for you. If you had the ability, you would have taken care of her a long time ago. Why would you need me to help you?" Leia listened to the other party's words and said with disdain, "As long as you can get it done, I'll be sure to pay

me some information before I agree to anything. I can't blindly do as you say." Hera lit a cigarette, took a puff,

you know Wayne Blatt?"

"Wayne Blatt? The name sounds familiar." *Hera frowned.*

"The second son of the Blatt family. Do you know who I'm talking about now?" Leia would not be in this state if she was not afraid of the Blatts and the evidence in **Wayne's hands.**

Of course, Bianca was to blame *too.*

"Oh, I've heard of him. Isn't the Blatt family as good as gone?" Hera was well-informed about the major events in A City. The worst part was that the Blatts did not even know who did it to **them.**

When news about the Blatts broke, there was already no turning back for them.

"Yes, the family is doing poorly. The second son of Blatts is on the run but has recently returned to A City. I want you to kill Wayne Blatt. I'm open for discussions on the price," Leia *said cruelly.*

The evidence in Wayne's hands and his cruelty were the biggest reasons why she could not *tolerate him.*

Leia hated being coerced. Wayne previously ruined her life, and now he wanted to ruin her wedding.

'Don't even think about it!'

"I can't make a promise right away, I have to think about it before I give you an answer." Hera then ended the **call.**

She walked back to the table and chased away some women who were having fun singing *and dancing.*

a glass of red wine and raised his brows to look at her. "Now that you've driven all my beauties away, who's going to spend the night

and replied, "You still have me. Also, I have something important to discuss with

stretched out his hand and pulled her into his arms. He then gently rubbed her chin. "What do you want to

know who Wayne Blatt is?" Hera asked while she leaned into his

had met Abel abroad. The last time she saw Luke and Bianca, she was deported on the grounds that she illegally entered the country with false documents. She was even detained for a few

that time, she met Abel who was locked up for the

he was not a stowaway. He had a strong backing, and the power he held was not something an ordinary woman like her

each other's eyes in the detention center, so they bonded after they were released. After two days of traveling in other countries, they realized that they both knew Luke after watching the

difference was that she admired Luke while Abel

advantage of their relationship, Hera told Abel that he did not need to take his revenge on
retaliated, they would be harmed in the process, so she and Maxine persuaded him to take revenge on
Bianca