

## Be Gentle 2181

### Chapter 2181

Luca let out a sigh helplessly. Nina was so close to living a happy life, but someone stabbed her in the back at this time.

Sue added, "I'm afraid that she might overthink now. After all, her past is her deepest wound. It's cruel for someone to use this against her. That's..."

Sue felt helpless and angry at the same time. There were no words that could describe how upset she was.

Luca did not know what to say either.

Although Percy protected Nina well, after their conversation last night, Luca could sense that Nina was still sensitive. She would still feel worried and insecure.

Now, such awful things had happened to her.

"Luca, is there anything we can do for her?" Sue was overwhelmed.

"Let's show more concern for Nina. There's nothing we can do about the reporters. Things aren't as simple as they are. The reporters are looking for her now..." replied Luca. She knew what kind of people the Mallory family was. They were probably annoyed after getting exposed this time, thinking that Nina had brought shame to the Mallory family and ruined their reputation.

They might come looking for trouble.

"That's all we can do for now." Sue let out a deep sigh. There was a knock on her office's door, and she said to Luca, "Luca, I have something to deal with. Talk to you later."

"Okay." After Luca hung up the call, she carefully browsed the news article again. She did not read the comments, but she knew what the others would be talking about even if she did not look at them.

Percy's status was not lower than Luke's in A City.

Percy insisted on being together with Nina. Many people were envious, displeased, and jealous of Nina.

There was no doubt that the netizens were criticizing Nina.

her head helplessly while reading the news

glanced at the time. She wanted to comfort Nina, but she had something more important things to do at hand. Hence, she picked up her phone and sent a message to Nina: [I saw the news. Are

sent the message, only seconds passed before she received a reply from Nina: [I'm alright.

have to finish my experiment. I'll look for you after this.] Luca replied. She knew Nina well. Even though Nina said she was fine, nothing was alright deep down in her

did not wait for Nina's reply. She left her phone in the office. After putting on her white coat, she headed to the

of researchers was already in the laboratory getting ready to conduct the next stage of  
began to work after she greeted

worked the whole morning until the afternoon.

did not really leave the laboratory. Even their lunches were ordered by Zoey. They continued with the  
research after they ate their lunch in the staff room of the

error had delayed their research progress too much. That was why they were racing against time, trying  
to catch up with

Luca had promised to fulfill the request of Watson's general

the office's working hours ended, Luca walked out of the laboratory. She let the researchers get off work  
on time today as the research progress was going

looked at her phone when she returned to her

*There was* only one unread message from Nina. She tapped on it and read the message. It was Nina's  
reply to her message from this morning: [You don't *have to*.]

**Luca looked** down. There was not even a message from Luke today.

**Luca smiled** bitterly. What was she expecting from him?

*It was* normal for Luke not to contact her. Was that not the case? The passion they felt for each other in  
the beginning would only last for a few days, then it would fade as time went by.

Luke's heart had always been with Bianca.

**Even** though Luca's true identity was Bianca, her looks had changed. She could not win Luke's  
heart anymore.

Luca did not leave immediately.

**Uncle** Zander would fetch the kids from school after class. Aunt Neile would take care of the kids when  
they were back at the villa. Luca opened the news and glanced at the articles.

The saga continued...

*Furthermore, the* papers and websites that were reporting about this matter seemed to be increasing. It  
was as though Percy was not doing anything to stop this at **all**...

**Luca furrowed** her brows. She wanted to ask Percy about this. Why did he not make any moves in the  
first instance and let things **escalate**?

Although they were writing about Nina's past and there was nothing more that could be looked into,  
talking and making a big deal out of Nina's past would hurt *her badly*.

**Even so**, Luca could not possibly question Percy *about this*.

had something else in mind. Besides, if Luca questioned Percy herself, it would not be of much help to

out a sigh and turned off the computer. She left the office after tidying up to the villa. The kids were already in the villa after Uncle Zander sent them back here. They were doing their homework in the

Neile was preparing dinner in

Luca, you're back!" Tommy lifted his head and looked at her. He said with a smile on his  
you doing your homework?"

nodded and handed his book to Luca, "Ms. Luca, I'm done. Please help

I'll help you check your homework." Luca put her briefcase aside and began checking

making sure everything was correct, she imitated Luke's signature and signed on the last page of the homework. Then, she handed it back to

and Rainie were done doing their homework

Luca helped them sign as well.

Luca, you look tired..." Rainie was so attentive that she noticed the weariness on Luca's

busy with work today." After Luca signed on the last page of the twins' homework, she returned their books to them and said, "Put your books in your bags. Otherwise, you might forget to bring them to

## **Chapter 2182**

Luca was doing experiments in the study the entire time. The kids did not come upstairs to disturb her either.

Only when the alarm rang did Luca stop doing her experiment. She disinfected her hands and walked out of the study.

Luca ran into the kids when they were making their way upstairs.

"Ms. Luca, have you finished your work?" Tommy smiled cheerfully and came forward to hug her.

Luca stroked Tommy's head and looked at Lanie and Rainie, "Come on. Go clean yourself up. It's time for bed."

"Okay, Ms. Luca," the three kids replied at the same time.

Luca returned to her bedroom. She got herself cleaned up at the same time as the kids did so. Then, she tucked the kids into bed.

Her phone rang when she was about to do some reading before heading to bed.

Could it be Luke?

Luca could not suppress the quiver in her heart. She picked up her phone and looked at it. It was Nina who called.

She quickly answered the call and said, "Nina, what's wrong?"

Luca had a feeling that something must have happened if Nina was calling at this hour after the incident this morning.

you asleep?" Nina asked. She was worried that she would

not. Would I have been able to answer the call so quickly if I was asleep?" Luca comforted her. Nina was such a person—careful and afraid to trouble others.

the entrance of your villa district. Do you mind opening the door for me?" Nina asked. She had pressed the visitor doorbell, but no one answered. She thought that it was either Luca was asleep or she was on the first

at the entrance?" Luca was surprised. She quickly jumped out of bed and wore her wool slippers. "Hold on there. I'm going to get you now."

have to come over. I know the directions. You just have to open the gate for me." Nina sounded tired. Luca could hear her voice slightly shivering when she listened to it

me a minute." Luca headed downstairs immediately to open the district gate for

you, Luca. I'm walking in now," replied

I'll be waiting for you at the door." Luca knew something must have happened to Nina. That was why she came here.

on her coat. She grabbed another coat, thinking that Nina probably did not wear enough layers to keep herself warm before she walked out of the house.

let out a sigh on the other end of the line. It was especially quiet on this cold, snowy night. She could hear Luca's footsteps, and she said, "Luca, you don't have to come out so soon. I'm still

all the way here?" Luca

**"No.** I hailed a ride to come here. Let me walk to your house first. You should go back into the house to keep yourself warm. I'll call you when I've arrived." Nina sniffed. A gust of cold wind blew past Nina, making her nose dry and itchy.

*Nina continued* to head toward the villa after she hung up *the call*.

Luca did not listen to what Nina said. She carried the coat and walked to the door *gate*.

*The villa* district was huge, and Luke's villa was located at a more remote location. That was why Nina needed some time to arrive at the villa no matter which gate she came from.

**Luca** glanced at her phone and continued to wait at the door gate.

15 minutes later, Luca saw Nina come walking toward her. She noticed that Nina was wearing flimsy garments under the lights of the dimly lit street lamps.

Luca frowned. She came up to Nina and draped the coat over her. "Why didn't you put on a few more layers to keep yourself warm since it's so cold **out here?**"

Luca had been holding the coat in her arms, keeping it warm. Nina could feel the warmth when Luca draped the coat over her. She gave an embarrassed smile and said, "Can you please take me in for tonight?"

"Sure. No problem. But you'll have to tell me what happened." Luca held Nina's hand and closed the door after they got into the *villa*.

Nina remained silent and followed Luca to the villa.

Luca was not in a rush to question her, so she only asked, "It's late. Have you eaten **dinner?**"

Nina's pale lips curled up. She had been outside for a while, and it was freezing. Her lips were slightly purplish. She replied, "I had some."

roughly knew what Nina meant by that. Hence, she said, "Sit down. Let me get you a warm glass of milk. I did not want to trouble Luca at first, but she listened to her and shut her mouth when she noticed the look on Luca's

was the same as how Bianca had taken care of

into the kitchen and got Nina a warm glass of milk. She took some snacks that were prepared for Tommy and the others. Then, she brought them to the living

some. Don't tell me you have no appetite. It's freezing out there, and you barely ate anything. Your body won't be able to take it. Aren't you thinking of improving your health?" Luca was worried that Nina would refuse to eat. Her tone was a little

Luca." Nina picked up the glass of milk and took a sip. The warm milk warmed her body, and she felt much better. She looked at the snacks on the table and said embarrassingly, "Aren't these snacks for the nothing to eat at this hour. Just eat them. The snacks are everything we have for now. I'll ask Aunt Neile to go to the supermarket to get some groceries," said Luca. She picked up one of the snacks and would have to eat it once Luca

watched Luca open the package and put the snacks in her hands. Nina said helplessly, "Luca, are you treating me like

you one?" Luca picked up another bag, "Come

I'm eating. But stop opening the snacks. I won't be able to finish them all. You know I don't eat much." Nina took the bag of snacks from Luca and put it on the coffee table. "I'll have this one."

## **Chapter 2183**

"Most of what the news articles wrote about me are true." Nina took a deep breath as she was not afraid that Luca would know about her past.

It was because she knew Luca would not do anything to hurt her even if she knew everything.

"Mr. Mallory should already know about your past. He's not making a fuss out because of the news articles, right?" said Luca. Percy knew Nina well, just like her.

"No, he's not. He's been busy handling the matter the whole day. It's still a hot topic on the internet, and it's not because he's not doing anything to stop it. He's planning to find out who was the one to expose the information to the reporters and proceed with the next step." A bitter smile swept across Nina's smile. She agreed with Percy's way of handling the matter.

After all, only a few knew about Nina's past. They should be able to find out who was the mastermind behind all these soon if they were to look into it. After that, they would implement the next plan. That would be the best.

Now, everyone knew about Nina's past, so it did not matter who wrote about her and published it.

"Then why did you..." Luca hesitated. Nina agreed with Percy's way of handling the matter, so there was no need for her to run away from home.

"Percy's parents came to our house. Percy was there too, and he told his parents that he didn't care about my past in front of his parents. He even told them that he'd marry me. Madam Mallory fainted when she heard Percy say so. It was so chaotic. Percy only came back in the evening after sending her to the hospital. He told me to pack my luggage after he came back. He wants to get our marriage certificate abroad." Nina recalled what happened, but there was a hint of desolation in her eyes.

Luca did not know where that came from. Nina had just told her that she wanted to marry Percy last night. Was it not good that Percy suggested bringing her abroad to get their marriage certificate?

to be together with him for ages. You have the chance to spend the rest of your life with him, but you're running away now?" Luca asked in an unbelievable

her legs, let out a deep sigh, and said, "Luca, you have no idea what I want. The marriage I want is the kind of marriage where I can receive everyone's blessing and everyone agrees with it. This is not the right time to get married. The whole world is against it, but he insists on going against the world to be together with

what Nina meant. Nina ran away for the sake of her

lost Mallory Corporation just because he married Nina, she would regret it even if he would

just like Jack asking Luca not to marry Luke with the information in his hands back then. She wanted to be together with Luke at that time. She chose to bear the pain no matter how heartbroken she was at the thought of Luke possibly facing imprisonment after he got together with her. That was why she rejected him at the

it merely for Luke's

was the same as what Nina was

made it clear that if Percy insisted on marrying me, he'd lose a seat at the table in the Mallory family. Although he told me that he'd be fine without Mallory Corporation and he can't live without me by his side, it's still a fact that Percy was born with a silver spoon. He's capable, but it'll be difficult for him if he loses the support of the Mallory family. Perhaps he'll regret choosing me one day in the future. That's why I want to get the Mallory family's permission and support before we get married rather than make him lose everything he has just because we want to get married." Nina

"Did the two of you fight?" **Luca continued.**

"It's not really a fight. He's too stubborn now. He said we should head to New York and sign the marriage certificate immediately. I didn't want to do so, so I came out. I didn't bring anything with me when I came out. That's when you came into my mind..." said Nina. She had been choosing between Sue and Luca regarding who she should ask for help. She eventually chose *Luca*.

**After** all, Sue was quite confused now.

"You should've informed me at the first moment. It's not a good idea to run away from home without putting on enough garments and not bringing your ID along with you. What would Mr. Mallory do if anything had happened to you?" Luca shook her head, stood up, and cleaned the table. "Spend the night here tonight. You can stay here tomorrow if you don't feel like going back yet. No one knows you're here, after all. No one will *disturb you*."

"Really? I'm allowed to stay here?" Nina was worried that she would disturb **Luca**.

"Yes. For as long as you wish." Luca assured her. She pondered for a moment, turned around, and added, "But you have to tell Mr. Mallory your whereabouts so that he doesn't have to worry about you. He's not the one who exposed your past to the press this time. The two of you have different perspectives on marriage. You'll have to face him after this ends. Talk to him when the time comes."

"**Okay**. I will. Thank you, Luca." Nina looked at Luca with *gratitude*.

*Luca* smiled and replied, "Wait for me to clean this up. Then let's go **upstairs**."

nodded. She picked up her phone after Luca walked into the kitchen. There were more than ten missed calls and a bunch of unread messages. Nina did not return the calls, nor did she read those messages. She knew Percy was talking about everything they had talked about

sent him a message: [I'm at Luca's place. Don't worry. I'm not going back for now. The reporters at the door are

off her phone after sending the

saw Madam Mallory going to Percy's villa and making a scene there.

that, Madam Mallory fainted and she was sent to the hospital. Nina had no idea how the reporters found out about it, but it was being reported on the

this, Nina thought the reporters were good at investigating and finding out what had happened. Even the private detectives were not as good as them. If it were not for her running away from the villa at night and there being no reporters waiting outside at the time, Nina would not have been able to get out of the villa.

Madam Mallory was okay. She was only suffering from hypertension, and she fainted because she did not take her medicine on time.

out a sigh of relief after knowing that she was fine. If anything happened to Madam Mallory because of her, she would not know how to face Percy.

## Chapter 2184

Nina nodded and said in a soft voice, "Okay. I'll be quiet."

The two of them walked into the bedroom one after another.

Luca opened the closet and took a new set of pajamas and underwear. "Your figure is almost the same as mine. These are new. Hurry up and take a shower."

"Thank you." Nina sniffed and took the clothes that Luca handed to her.

Something came across Luca's mind, and she said, "Hold on. Let me get you a set of new towels and toiletries."

Luca walked out of the bedroom and headed to the storeroom to get a new set of toiletries and towels. Aunt Neile had prepared all these.

Luca returned to the bedroom and handed everything to Nina. She said, "Off you go. You can use the shower gel, shampoo, and skincare products in the bathroom."

"Luca, there's no doubt I'd fall in love with you if you were a man," Nina playfully joked with her.

Luca was amused by Nina's joke and pretended to be serious as she said, "No way. I'm not going to fight over a woman with Mr. Mallory. I'm sure I'll lose."

"Hey, stop teasing me." Nina pouted, turned around, and walked into the bathroom.

sat beside the bed and glanced at her phone. It was

were still no messages from

Was he mad at her?

...

Langdon's house.

was in a good mood. She was humming a song while she strolled into the living room. Then, she frowned when she saw Jean sitting on the sofa. She asked, "Aren't you asleep

you been?" Jean crossed his arms in front of his chest with a gloomy look on his

asked me out. That's why I went out. Why? Can't you sleep without my company?" Marie sat down beside him and leaned on his shoulder, giving him a flirtatious

pushed Marie away in disgust and asked, "You went out? Did your friend ask you to head to the bar and get a

on Marie's face changed at once. She even went to the hotel to take a shower to remove the alcohol smell on her before she went back to prevent Jean from finding out that she

"Huh? Can't we go to the bar to talk?" Marie refuted without denying that she went to the bar.

**"What were** you and your friend talking about?" Jean looked at **her sideways.**

**“Just** the same old. Women are always upset about men and money. I was just comforting her and we had a few drinks together.” Marie thought Jean said something like that because of the alcohol smell on her.

“Hah, Marie, is it so hard to admit that you’ve been messing around?” Jean’s expression was sulky. Did she really think that Jean had no idea *about it*?

**Marie was** released from prison a little earlier than he was, but he knew as much as she **did**.

**The** look on Marie’s face turned gloomy at once. She said, “What do you mean? I was just out having a few drinks with my friend, so how was I messing around with someone else? Besides, I don’t have any money to go to the bar. My friend was the one who gave me the money.”

“Are you really broke?” Jean forcefully grabbed her wrist and gave her a menacing look.

*“I’m broke.”* Marie frowned. She wanted to pull her hand back, but Jean was too strong.

**“You’re** broke? Where did you get the money to expose her, then? Why? Have you splurged the money on drinking at the bar? Or did you give it to some boy toy you’re messing with?” Jean questioned her.

stopped struggling. She avoided his gaze the moment their eyes met each other. Then, she said, “What are you talking about? The press?”

you think I have no idea about this? Nina made the headlines today. Everything about her past was written in the news article. Aren’t you the one who told the press about it?” Jean looked at her with a hideous expression on his face. “I have evidence. Marie Rayne, be honest and don’t make me do it the hard way.”

not expect Jean to know about

humiliated when Nina treated her that way back then. Marie was so mad that she looked for the press and revealed Nina’s past. She received a sum of money for revealing

did it in secret. She disguised herself when she went to meet the press. Also, she did not tell the press who she was, and she received cash from them. Therefore, the press would not have known who she

did Jean find out about

you think you did everything perfectly and nobody would’ve found out about it?” Jean narrowed his eyes, lifted his hand, and slapped her in the face. “Marie Rayne, ruining Nina’s plans means ruining my future life. What the hell were

fell on the sofa due to the strong impact. There was blood flowing out of the corner of her lips.

not have any sympathy for her. There was no doubt that what Marie did had destroyed Nina’s hope of getting into the Mallory family. Jean was not thinking straight now, and all he thought of was beating the woman in front of him

to beat the sh\*t out of you!” Jean lifted his hand, and he was about to

**Chapter 2185**

“Even if she succeeds in becoming the Mallory family's young mistress, you’re not her. Although both of you were born to the same mother, what’s the point of defending her now when your futures are going to be worlds apart? Jean, wake up! Her good life has nothing to do with you. So, you should drag her down instead of seeing her marry rich. She wants to get rid of you to live a luxurious life, so you can’t let her wish come true!” Marie continued to provoke him after seeing him remain silent.

Jean frowned and looked at Marie.

She had a point.

Judging from how Nina currently acted, he would not have anything to do with her after she became rich.

She could not be counted on in the future.

At the end of the day, he could only count on himself. If he had to watch Nina live a good life while he lived a miserable one, he might as well do as Marie said and drag her down.

The change in Jean’s expression caught Marie’s eyes. She said, “Am I right? The press pays generously. Aren’t you short of money recently? Whatever dirt you have on Nina may benefit you greatly if you cooperate with the reporters.”

Jean lifted his arm and immediately cupped her chin.

“Why are you doing this to Nina?” Jean questioned as they had agreed to take advantage of Nina by being close to her, but now, Marie wished to take advantage of Nina.

“I... I’m just angry. I can’t stand seeing her treat you like this.” Marie tilted her head and tried to break free from his hand, but it was to no avail as he was tightly grabbing her jaw.

She never intended to confront Nina. She just wanted to rely on this fool, Jean, to take advantage of her.

However, Nina had humiliated her, which planted the idea of revenge in her mind.

she got it all figured

nothing but this house and the insurance he would get after Anna’s

she did not actually hope for Nina to be nice to Jean. In fact, the reason why she was still with Jean was that she needed a place to

to mention, she wanted to obtain this

was an old house, it was still worth a lot of money in a city like A City where the land value was

waiting for the chance to get hold of

did not believe the nonsense she was spouting. If it were not for the fact that he had no money or women right now, he would not be with a woman like Marie. She was like a poisonous snake, watching his

I don’t know what you’re up to. If you dare talk nonsense to the reporters again, I’ll pull your tongue out,” he threatened her viciously. It was not because he wanted to defend Nina, but it was for his own

go of me first.” Marie furrowed her brows as his grip was

Jean grunted and let go.

took a few steps back to avoid getting

“**You’re** destined to get nothing, but you’re still defending her? Are you stupid?” She stared at him *in bewilderment*.

**Jean sneered** as she did not know that he was defending himself.

“If I ever find out that you’re causing trouble behind my back again, you’ll be sleeping on the streets,” Jean warned her. She had no place to live, so her biggest fear right now was getting *kicked out*.

Even if she had a lot of money from selling information to the reporters, she would soon run out of funds if she had to live on the streets without a *job*.

“*I did* such things all because of you, yet you don’t appreciate it. Don’t bite the hand that feeds you,” muttered **Marie**.

*Jean* stopped in his tracks and looked back **at her**.

Marie was stunned. “Pretend you didn’t *hear that*.”

*Jean still* walked up to her and looked down at her. “Where’s the money you got for selling **out Nina?**”

“**It’s** all gone.” Marie immediately shook her head when he mentioned *money*.

“Gone?” Jean narrowed his eyes suspiciously.

“**There was** quite some money as the press was generous, but my friend asked to borrow my money. She saw how much I had, and it would be embarrassing not to lend it to her, so I did,” **Marie lied**.

sneered. “You? Lending money to other people? That’s not your

while, Marie had only borrowed from others. She never lent anyone any

first time for everything, and that close friend of mine had an emergency. How could I do nothing about it?” Marie felt that Jean’s gaze was too eerie as if he could see

to be a blockhead who was manipulated by her, so how could he have

may change, but you won’t.” Jean raised his hand and placed it on her neck, then his hand slowly moved

Marie could even react, the money was pulled out by

waved around the thick stack of money as a smile appeared on his face. “You haven’t changed at all. This stack of money is quite thick. It seems like Nina’s information was worth a

widened, and she raised her hand to grab the money. “Give me

dreams.” Jean pocketed the money with no intention of giving it to

money!” Marie’s eyes were red when she saw the money. She could have splurged for a good amount of time with that money, but it was snatched away by Jean, which made

This is the money you got from selling Nina's information. Since you didn't deposit such a thick stack of money in the bank, you must be afraid that Percy's people would find out and you'd land yourself in serious trouble when he decides to take revenge on you." Jean stared at

## **Chapter 2186**

Marie was filled with resentment as she saw him hold up the ten dollars.

"You don't want it? I'll take it back then." Jean saw that she did not move and was about to take back the money until she swiftly snatched it from him.

Jean smiled contemptuously.

"It's not enough," said Marie as she held out her hand.

"If ten dollars is not enough, how much do you want?" Jean frowned and was obviously unwilling to give her too much.

"Even if you're covering the costs of my stay, what about my food and daily transportation expenses? You can't leave me empty-handed. Even if I were to stay at home, I'd need money to order takeout too," said Marie.

"How troublesome." Jean took out his wallet and handed her a public transport card.

"This is..." Marie looked at the public transport card and frowned as the card could only be used for rides and not for consumption. Plus, who even took public transport nowadays?

"There are ten dollars on the card. You can take the subway when you go out. It'll last you a few months," Jean said lazily.

Marie looked at his gracious expression as he handed her the public transport card with ten dollars in it. That was it?

"My friends don't even take the subway anymore, and now you're making me take the subway? You have so much money in your hand. Can't you give me some? It's not like we eat together every day," she said with dissatisfaction.

"You don't want this?" Jean got a little impatient listening to her babble on.

had not gotten so much money, he would have thrown her out long

that, Marie took the public transport card without hesitation as she still had to get around. Although she could not get a taxi, she could not walk everywhere either,

looked at her and smiled scornfully, expressing his disdain

50 dollars. It'll cover your food costs for a week. If you don't treat others, it might even last you two weeks." He drew out 50 dollars worth of bills and placed them on the coffee table. Then, he stood up and

stared at his back as he walked into the room. Her gaze was as sharp as knives as she stabbed the man in front of her a thousand times with her

picked up the money on the coffee table and stared nastily at the 60 dollars in her hands, including the public transport

a great future ahead of her, but she became down and out because

than her, everyone else in the Rayne family was living a carefree life. Meanwhile, she was here living a life that even animals would not want

at the dollar bills in her hand and swore to herself that she would not let the Rayne family live a good

...

The next day.

Luca woke up, Nina was still

*She got* up quietly and walked into the bathroom. She closed the door lightly and started to wash *up*.

**After** Nina washed up yesterday, she tossed and turned as she could not fall asleep. Luca was worried that it would affect her health if this persisted long-term, so she gave Nina the sleeping pills she **used**.

After taking the pills, Nina fell into a deep sleep half an hour later and had not woken **up since**.

**After washing** up, Luca saw that Nina was still asleep. She thought of having Aunt Neile tidy up the guest room for Nina to sleep in as she was not used to having someone other than Luke sleep beside her.

She did not know why either.

After Nina fell asleep yesterday, Luca also took a pill to **fall asleep**.

Luca went downstairs and noticed that the children were still asleep while Aunt Neile was preparing breakfast in the kitchen.

*She went* into the kitchen and put on an apron to help Aunt Neile out. She said, "By the way, Aunt Neile, my friend came to spend the night yesterday and she might be staying here for a while. Can you please tidy up the guest room **after breakfast?**"

**"Friend?** Ms. Craw, is that friend of yours a man or a woman?" Aunt Neile looked at her **dumbfounded**.

"What are you asking that for?" Luca looked at her with a **puzzled expression**.

*"Oh,* nothing. It's just that the color of the sheets and bedding I prepare will be different if it's a female guest so that their stay would be more comfortable. As you know, women require more things than men. I'd need to prepare everything. There's not much stock left in the storage room, so I'd need to see what's lacking and buy them at the supermarket later," Aunt Neile explained immediately. She only asked in detail to report to *Luke*.

It would be okay if it were a female guest, but if it were a *male guest*...

Luke would probably be upset.

a female guest, but there's no need to prepare too much. Just the daily essentials will do. You can ask her if she needs anything else when she wakes up as it's not convenient for her to go out right now, so you need to help her get some daily supplies," said

Neile breathed a sigh of relief when she heard that it was a female guest. It was a good thing Luca did not bring a man back home. Otherwise, it would not end well when Luke

not pay attention to Aunt Neile's expression and focused on

breakfast was ready, the children

Luca preparing breakfast and looked puzzled. "Ms. Luca,

I woke up earlier today. Come over and have breakfast," Luca greeted her. She had prepared a hearty breakfast today. She put the bowls of oatmeal in front of each

that sleeping in your room..." Rainie was terrified, and her little face went pale. She had peeked into Luca's room before coming down

saw someone sleeping on the bed and thought that Luca was still asleep, so she did not wake her

explained after seeing the child's shocked expression, "That's Nina. She came over

a sigh of relief as she was shocked by that scene just now. "So it was Ms. Nina. Why

Ms. Nina encountered some problems and needs to stay here for the time being. Is that okay?" Luca consulted the three

## **Chapter 2187**

"You didn't have to get up early. Besides, sleeping a little longer is good for you." Luca served her a bowl of oats.

Nina smiled and said, "It smells so good. Would I still have gotten such a hearty and delicious breakfast if I had continued to sleep?"

Aunt Neile stood aside and smiled. "Ms. Nina, the breakfast reserved for you is still in the kitchen. Since you're awake, I'll bring it out right now."

"Thank you," thanked Nina.

Luca placed a bun on her plate using tongs and said, "That's Aunt Neile, the maid who works here. Tell her if you need anything, and try not to go out during this period of time. If you really have to go out, there are cars in the garage. You can ask Aunt Neile for the keys."

"The cars in the garage belong to Mr. Crawford, right?" Nina took a bite out of the bun and immediately gave Luca a thumbs up. It was delicious.

"They're Mr. Crawford's, but it doesn't matter," said Luca as Mr. Crawford had mentioned that if she wanted to drive, she could drive those cars anytime. He would not mind.

However, she still had not used his cars as they were expensive. Her driving skills were subpar. If she were to accidentally bump or hit something, she would be in trouble.

Moreover, those cars were too eye-catching. She might be surrounded by onlookers if she were to drive them out.

Luca preferred to keep a low profile.

"We can talk about that later. I guess I'll just be a coward and stay here for the next few days, but I can be responsible for picking up and dropping off these three cute little kids." Nina winked at the three kids.

don't need your help. Uncle Zander is usually responsible for that. He's outside right now," said Luca while glancing at the

ate breakfast a little slower as they were listening to their conversation, so Luca reminded them, "Pick up the pace and go to school once you're done or you'll be late."

The three children hastened their movements.

amused by the children's

came out with breakfast and placed it on the table. "Ms. Nina, enjoy your

the breakfast you made tastes great." Nina gave Aunt Neile a thumbs up as she thought that all these were prepared by

shook her head and smiled. "Ms. Nina, most of these were prepared by Ms. Craw. I was just

her eyes and looked at Luca. "You're

I'm not. Hurry up and eat," said Luca as she gave Tommy another bun. "Here, have

the buns are delicious. You're amazing," Tommy complimented her as

smiled and finished breakfast with the

*After breakfast*, the children went to school with their backpacks. Luca watched them leave before withdrawing her gaze to see Nina's inquisitive look.

"What's wrong?" Luca asked while putting on her jacket to get ready for **work**.

"**You looked** like a loving mother who was sending her children off to school," Nina said what she felt as Bianca used to be that **way**.

After watching Lanie and Rainie get in the car, Bianca would usually go back to minding her own business. If she was not busy, she would even take the kids to *school herself*.

At that time, Nina envied the life *Bianca had*.

She still remembered it to **this day**.

**Luca chuckled** without answering her directly and just said, "The children are so cute. You stay here. I'll go to work."

"Okay, be careful on the road." Nina watched Luca go out and was a little *envious*.

*She admired* professional women like Luca. Although she had her own career, she would never make it as far as *Luca*.

If Bianca had not invited her to Brilliant Architectural Design LLC, perhaps she would have had to rely on Percy to find a job or just be a mere employee of T Corporation.

**She would** not get far either **way**.

she used to not have a stable job because of Percy. Now that she finally had a steady job, things like this happened. She could not even enter

stop the reporters from asking more about her, Sue had to play bad cop and stop the people at the company from spouting nonsense to the reporters. If she found out that they had done so, they would

Percy was not the only one in her life. She also had these close friends who were worried about her and willing to go out of their way

seemed like the hardships she faced in the past were not enough for fate to favor her, so now, fate was playing a joke on her

more Nina thought about it, the more despondent she

what are you thinking about?" After Aunt Neile finished tidying up the kitchen, she walked out and saw Nina stare out the floor-to-ceiling window. She looked to be in low

Nina came back to her senses and saw a bag in Aunt Neile's hands, so she asked, "Aunt Neile, are you going

and by the way, Ms. Craw informed me that you can tell me if you need anything. I'll help you buy it at the supermarket," said Aunt Neile to avoid making two

go with you." Nina did not have any of her personal belongings, and she could not keep on using Luca's

she and Luca had similar body types, Luca was a little more voluptuous than her, so her clothes would not fit her very

Neile recognized her at first glance and said, "Ms. Nina, you're the talk of the town. If you go out, you'll be recognized. I don't mean anything else, but it's better for you to stay in

## **Chapter 2188**

Although she told other people that she was okay, Nina did in fact mind it.

She frowned as she saw those disgusting comments and could only sigh. She did not even have to strength to speak up for herself in the comments section.

Nina tossed her phone aside and rested her head in her hands.

If someone were to see her in her current state, they would definitely know that she had been defeated by those comments on the internet.

If she knew who was the one that made her so miserable, she would not let them get away with it.

Her phone rang.

She glanced at the screen to see that it was a call from Percy.

She knew that if she did not answer, Percy would keep calling her, so she had no choice but to pick up.

"Don't you have to work?" Nina did not ask why he called as even the stupidest person would know what he called her for.

"I'm worried about you. Are you okay?" Percy's voice was hoarse.

Nina frowned because of his hoarse voice. Did he drink a lot?

"I'm doing fine here. Which other place would be safe if even Luke's villa isn't? Have you been drinking?" Nina asked.

drank a little." After Percy finished speaking, there was almost a minute of silence. Nina did not speak because she knew that he still had something

come back. I'll never force you to do something you don't want to do again," he said. He had thought about it all night. He decided to follow her advice because he wanted to be with Nina very

was hard to get the Mallory family to agree, it was not impossible. He

I go back, won't it be a hassle to confront all the reporters at the door? I want to stay here for a while, at least until the investigation is done. I'll go back after that. Luke is out of town anyway, so it's not uncomfortable here," said Nina as she thought that staying here was

imagination would still run wild, at least she would not be surrounded by reporters if she were to go

Luca and the three kids were here. She would be surrounded

was silent, and when he opened his mouth again, his voice was full of despondence. "Nina, are you still angry with

not. I really do think that way. Plus, your parents and family won't come here to look for me..." Nina said

the Mallory family came to her door to chase her away yesterday, she was

was there to protect her at that time. However, if he was not there during that fight, she may have already been driven out by the Mallory family when there were still a bunch of reporters waiting outside the

that moment, Nina thought that if she actually got kicked out, she would have nowhere

and Jean had a falling out, so if she were chased out, she would not have anywhere to stay. She would have to sleep at a

Except, how could a hotel be *a home*?

**At** that moment, Nina realized how insignificant she was if she was separated *from Percy*.

**She also** understood why Bianca insisted on opening the company *a few years ago*.

**It was** to give herself an extra edge.

**“Percy, I’m** doing well here. There are even three little kids keeping me company here. You know that what I need most right now are peace and quiet. I won’t have any peaceful days if I go back,” Nina added. She had a hunch that the Mallory family would continue harassing her if she went *back*.

*Yesterday*, Madam Mallory got so angry she was admitted to the hospital. There was no telling who would go looking for **her next**.

**Whoever it was**, if they got angry enough to be admitted to the hospital because of Percy’s persistence, then Percy would need to carry the title of a bad son. It would ruin his *reputation*.

*Although* she already had a lot on her shoulders and one more thing to deal with would not make a difference, this was Percy’s family they were talking about. She did not want Percy to reach a deadlock with them.

Percy took a deep breath and sighed. “Alright, you stay there for the time being. Tell me if you need anything. I’ll have Joanne send it over *to you*.”

*“Can you* have Joanne send some of my clothes over? I only have Luca’s clothes to wear right now...” said **Nina**.

*“Okay, I’ll* ask her to send them over. Call me if anything happens, and don’t hide anything from me, okay?” Percy had to compromise as she was right about some things. Even if the reporters could not get to her, the Mallory family *could*.

his family would not dare go to Luke’s house to cause

worry about me. Just go about your own business. I’m doing great here,” Nina

I’ve found the source of the report. You can rest assured that there’ll be results soon,”

smiled bitterly without letting Percy notice how

what if he found the source? Everything reported in the news was true. Her past was hideous, and Percy could not change the past, but she could not let go of him either. After all these years, her love for Percy had grown so deep it had already seeped into

her past was like scars reminding her that they were real and

healed scars opened up again, all bloody for others to see, Nina realized that her scars had never completely healed. She still could not face her past

the medicine that cured her and made her ignore the things in her

up the phone, Nina forced a smile and nestled herself on the sofa. She looked out the window to see the snowstorm. It was just like the silent storm that was going on in

...

busy all day at the company. She did not call Nina, but she had asked Aunt Neile to find out how she was

## Chapter 2189

"Pfft." Luca looked at how helpless Nina was and laughed.

Tommy shook his head and deliberately lowered his voice, "Ms. Nina, it's not like our homework is difficult."

"I know it's not difficult, but you all... I can only say that you're too smart. There's no need for me to get involved." Nina sighed.

"Yeah, they don't need tutoring, but they need someone to check their homework later. Nina, I'll go help Aunt Neile in the kitchen. Can you check the kid's homework later?" said Luca.

"Alright, I'll promise to get the job done." Nina gave her an OK gesture.

Luca turned around and walked into the kitchen.

Tommy whispered, "Great, we'll have good food again tonight."

Nina listened to the child and patted his head. She said, "Aunt Neile's cooking is also very good."

"But Ms. Luca's tastes even better!" Tommy handed his finished homework to Nina. "Ms. Nina, I'm done. Check it, please."

Nina was glad. She finally had something to do. She took the workbook and checked it while saying, "Do I need to sign at the back of the workbook?"

"Let Ms. Luca do it. She can imitate Daddy's handwriting," said Tommy as he picked up a cookie to eat.

Nina raised her eyebrows. "She can do that?"

Luca is awesome," Tommy said with

laughed and shook her head. It was not unusual for a child to adore adults, but it was unusual for a child to adore someone other than

checking his homework. Lanie and Rainie finished theirs at the same time, so she helped check theirs too. At that moment, Luca and Aunt Neile had finished

dinner table, Luca asked Nina, "Did you ask Aunt Neile to prepare the daily essentials for

all prepared, and..." Nina got a piece of meat and said, "Percy called today. I said I want to stay here to clear my mind for a while. He got Joanne to send over some clothes and skincare products, so I don't really lack

Luca was surprised. "Mr. Mallory agreed?"

to want to cling to Nina all the time. Even if they disagreed on the matter of marriage, it was not to the extent that he would agree to have Nina

busy right now and can't protect me all the time. Ironically, this place is safer than his house or a hotel. Even if the Mallory family wants to make trouble, they'll still show some respect to Luke. They won't come over," she explained to her while forcing

understood and nodded. Old Master Mallory was already guilty after everything Percy had done. Moreover, the Mallory family and the Crawford family had a good relationship. No matter how much noise the Mallory family made, they would not

listened to the adults talk and could not help but give a thumbs up while praising, "Daddy is Luca laughed and shook her head.

*Nina* patted Tommy's head and asked, "Yes, your father is awesome. What do you want to eat? Ms. Nina will get some for *you*."

"Ms. Nina, I'll get it myself. I'm not a little kid anymore! I can eat by myself. I don't need any help, just like my brother and sister!" Tommy said while standing up to get a piece *of meat*.

"*Why* are Luke's children all so obedient? It's no fun." Nina pouted and complained when she was in fact just livening up the **atmosphere**.

"*Let's eat*," said Luca. The children had matured a lot during the years she was not around them.

*Lanie's nature* was even colder, while Rainie became even more gentle and understanding. On the other hand, Tommy was still cheeky, but he had learned a lot of things. He had become more independent now instead of always relying *on her*.

After dinner.

Luca imitated Luke's signature and signed the back of the *kids' workbooks*.

*Nina* looked at her signature and was *secretly surprised*.

**She** had taken important documents for Luke to sign before, so she was familiar with his signature. At first glance, Luca's signature was exactly the same *as Luke's*.

After Luca finished signing, she told them to put the books back in their school **bags**.

Then, it was time for the kids to watch *cartoons*.

did not accompany them this time. She went upstairs to do experiments after telling was curious, so she followed her into the

all the experimental instruments, she could not help but say, "Goodness, there are so many instruments. This can already be considered a small

prepared all of these myself. I would usually do some research here. The medicine you had yesterday and the medicine I usually carry with me were all made with the equipment here,"

brilliant!" Nina looked at Luca with deep admiration in her

not know much about pharmaceuticals, but after seeing Luca's private lab, she thought that there was definitely more advanced equipment at Watson Biopharmaceuticals, which made her respect

could even do such complex research

Luca took out an experimental sample from the small

curiously, "What are you researching right now? Is it the drug you've been that drug can only be researched at the company and can't be brought out. I'm just researching some drugs on my own. They're not rigorous drugs because they didn't go through clinical trials. They're usually just for personal use, and if they're effective, I'll give them to the people

"That's amazing," Nina exclaimed.

## **Chapter 2190**

"Okay, got it. How did they know Nina was here?" Luca's expression was stern. It seemed that the Mallory family was dead serious about wanting Nina to leave Percy.

However, how was Nina at fault?

She did not cause the misfortune that came upon her blood family nor did she have an option.

Pierre was the one who caused all of Nina's recent suffering. She was the victim!

Nina sighed when she saw Luca's sour expression. "It should be Joanne... They came for me. I'm sorry for putting you in such a difficult position, Luca. I'll go out."

"No, you stay here." Luca wanted to make a call but realized that her phone was not there. She then remembered that she left it in the bedroom.

She said to Aunt Neile, "Aunt Neile, I'm going to make a call. In the meantime, please open the door for the Mallory family and have Lanie and the others go upstairs. I don't want the Mallory family to scare them."

"Okay, I'll do it right now." Aunt Neile nodded and was about to leave the bedroom.

"Another thing, Aunt Neile, please entertain them downstairs. You'll have to leave work a little later than usual today," Luca said.

Aunt Neile replied, "Okay, no problem."

After Aunt Neile left, Luca looked at Nina and said, "You haven't done anything wrong, so you have nothing to apologize for. I'll go meet them, and you can wait here. Don't come down if you don't hear anything from me."

Mallory family is very..." Nina hesitated to continue speaking. "Luca, I can't let you face them alone. I'll do it.

I'll give a call to Mr. Crawford before I head down." After Luca finished speaking, she walked out of the bedroom and closed the door. She then went to her bedroom to grab her phone. She felt uncomfortable when she thought of how they had not been in contact for nearly two days. At that moment, she had no choice but to take the initiative to talk

did not expect that the Mallory family would pay them a sudden visit. She knew she had to inform Luke about what was happening and get his opinion on how to manage this matter that involved Nina and deal with the

matter what Luke said, she was determined to protect

made up her mind and called

her call fairly quickly. Luca did not wait for him to speak before she said, "Mr. Crawford, I need to get your opinion

silent for a few seconds before he asked, "What's

could hear the hoarseness and exhaustion in his voice. She lowered her eyes, suppressed her worries about him, and said, "I assume you know about what happened

had caused a big commotion, so even though Luke was not around, Luca assumed that he was aware as he had always kept a close eye on what was happening in A City.

Luke's response was short and simple. She blinked. If it were not for the silence on her end, she wondered if she had hallucinated his response because she missed him

"*She's staying* at your villa now, but the Mallory family is at the door. I want to shield her from them. Do you have any concerns?" Luca made it clear that she wanted to help Nina. Nevertheless, it was Luke's villa, after all. She was certain that the Mallory family knew that. As such, she still had to get his opinion.

Otherwise, she might offend the Mallory family and they would blame Luke. If that happened, their partnership would be affected.

"**Do what** you think is right. If they don't back off, deal with it however you deem fit." Luke said more words *this time*.

**Luca felt** at ease when she heard what he said. She understood that he meant for her to protect Nina and not worry so much.

"Mm." This time, she was the one who gave a brief one-syllable response. Her voice was slightly trembling and contained a hint of helplessness.

**Luke** noticed her emotions and sighed helplessly. He wanted nothing more but to take her into his arms, but he was facing some difficulties with the task at hand. He had to be here to take charge, which was why he had to go on this business trip.

"*I didn't* expect you to call me for someone else," he said.

**His** hoarse voice passed through Luca's eardrums. It was electrifying. She was at a loss, and her mind went blank as she was unsure what Luke meant when he *said that*.

"*Huh?*" she said subconsciously, her brain a blank *slate*.

"**Don't worry** about it. Remember, if Old Master Mallory is the one who came to visit and you aren't able to manage him, call Grandpa and have him step in to deal with this matter. If it's someone else from the Mallory family and you can't have them settle down, call me." Luke urged. Old Master Crawford was the only one who could ease the situation if Old Master Mallory was involved.

will Old Master Crawford be willing to help Nina?" Luca hesitated. She was unsure if she wanted to involve Old Master

already a rift between the Crawford and Mallory families. If Old Master Crawford stepped in, the rift would run deeper and it would lead to a negative impact on the Crawford

he'll help. Percy is my business partner. Grandpa will be annoyed at me if he finds out that I didn't help Nina," Luke reassured

see." Luca held the phone tightly in her hand and looked at the door. The kids were standing at the door. She could even hear the sounds from downstairs because the door was not

that the Mallory family

deal with it now,"

I'll help inform Grandpa and let him know what's going on,"

up the phone, looked at the kids who were standing by the door of her bedroom, and walked out with a gentle smile on

said, "Ms. Luca, Old Master Mallory and the others

it. Could you go to the laboratory to get Aunt Nina and stay in one of the bedrooms with her?" Luca asked the kids to accompany Nina so Nina would not launch herself into a state