

Be Gentle 671

Chapter 671

T Corporation.

Bianca named the development project Longing Greens. She was longing for a man, waiting for a man.

The man was the indelible mark in her heart.

Her heart was like a barren field, and he was like the rain.

When Longing Greens would be completed in the future, she hoped that her rain would come back to her too.

...

Construction work on Longing Greens started, but T Corporation faced another problem.

They had temporarily removed themselves from the collaboration project with Vivi Group because of certain problems. Now that news about Luke's death had spread, Vivi Group took the opportunity to seek compensation from T Corporation for breaching the contract.

Bianca was not going to let Vivi Group get what they wanted.

She immediately called an emergency meeting and decided that they would pursue all legal avenues.

While legal proceedings were ongoing, T Corporation ran into problems with its funding chain. Without funding, construction work on Longing Greens could not continue.

under Bianca's leadership was stuck in a tough

In the CEO's office.

past two days, Bianca had been overworking herself to solve the funding problems. The most uncanny thing was that no bank was willing to lend money to T Corporation. Bianca suspected that someone must be pulling

could not find out who it

the CEO's office and saw Bianca's frustrated expression. "Are you still thinking about the funding problem, Ms.

her pen down and stared at Jason. "Any good news from the investors,

shook his head defeatedly. "It's strange. No bank is willing to loan money to T Corporation, and our major clients have been keeping silent. They either say that they're facing financial problems themselves or give some other lame excuse. Ingrates, all of

clenched his fist and punched the desk. His aggrieved expression made

However, that was all within expectation.

poured a glass of water for Jason and asked him, "Mr. Doyle, how about if we look for partners or investors and get a loan from the capital market through

Jason did not agree. "That's possible, but anyone intending to finance T Corporation would also want to manage the company too. When that happens, you'll have to reduce your shares and profits in the company. You've only bought the shares not long ago, and now you're selling them again. I can't say that I agree with that idea."

Bianca lowered her gaze and continued thinking. She was faced with difficulties because she did not want to let go of the shares of the *company*.

She also thought of looking for financing solutions from Percy and Jim, Luke's good friends. In fact, the two of them had offered to *help*.

However, she did not want to owe them a debt of *gratitude*.

The two men might be Luke's good friends, but they were shrewd businessmen and would not enter a loss-making deal. They might not scam Bianca because she was Luke's wife, but they would want a big share of the profits too.

Longing Greens was a major project, and the projected profits would diminish greatly.

After careful consideration, Bianca rejected their offers.

"Mr. Doyle, what do you think of private financing?" After considering the options, that seemed to be the only viable **one**.

"**The private** financing market is heavily scrutinized now, and it'll take three to five years before the government legalizes it, not to mention the general public has been wary of such schemes after a series of legal disputes that stemmed from private financing. It's not that easy to get money from the general public, and it's very prone to financial mismanagement, not to mention increased scrutiny from the Securities Commission," Jason made a thorough analysis.

"We won't succeed if we don't take certain risks. Illegal funding schemes might pose a systemic financial risk to the economy, but there are certain gaps in the current regulations regarding private financing. A fund is considered illegal if it promises returns of twenty percent or more, so we'll have to limit our returns to about fifteen percent. That should still be attractive enough for the general public to invest, and we can continue with the project as long as we receive enough funding. The early stages will be tough, but I can guarantee that the project will make a profit," Bianca **said confidently**.

read many books about economics and management lately, trying to find an exploit to finance the that Bianca had already made up her mind, Jason did not continue persuading

that Mrs. Crawford was not as weak and frail as she seemed. He was eager to see her bring T Corporation to new

...

Jack returned home, he saw Leia in the kitchen, wearing an apron and learning how to make soup from Ms.

had not been making any public appearances lately because of all the negative press. Whenever she appeared, she would be instantly bombarded by swarms

to be a good girl and wait at home for the right opportunity to make

career was in peril, and her parents were not happy about her recent behavior, especially her father, who seemed to be more distant toward her. Leia did not want the situation

That was why she behaved herself.

had never done any housework before, but she had started to learn cooking from her mother and Ms. Lang. Indeed, her father seemed to be appeased by the change in

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Jack was not surprised by Queenie's decision.

Even if she did not mention it, he would discuss it with her some time soon anyway. They needed to be reunited with their birth daughter.

Jack sighed and said, "I'd love to be reunited with our daughter too. A few days ago, I met Bianca at Bay Town. It hurts to see her right in front of me, but I can't get any closer to her, and it... breaks my heart to see her so thin and haggard."

Queenie washed her hands with the tap next to the easel, then returned to her rattan chair and massaged her neck. "I don't think I can wait any longer, Jack. We should go to visit the Crawfords this weekend, tell them the truth, and reunite with our birth daughter!"

She had chronic cervical spondylosis. If she lowered her head for extended periods, she would suffer from intense sharp pain in her neck.

Seeing what his wife was doing, Jack took off his coat, placed it on the rack, and began to massage Queenie's neck and shoulders.

To alleviate his wife's pain, Jack had learned physiotherapy techniques during his free time from a renowned physiotherapist. No one had expected the exalted Mr. Norman to do that for his wife.

Queenie knew that her husband loved her. Over the years, she had returned his love.

That was why their marriage lasted.

massaged Queenie, he said, "You should paint less so you wouldn't be bothered by neck pain so often. Moreover, you have sensitive skin, and there are many chemicals in oil paints that can cause allergies. Have you forgotten about that time when you had to be rushed to the hospital because you stayed up all night

He reprimanded Queenie.

nonchalantly when she was reminded of that embarrassing episode. "That's already so long ago. Why are you mentioning it? Oil paints nowadays have far less harmful chemicals than before, and the risk is negligible. Painting is my favorite hobby and quitting it is impossible. I'd give up my business before I give up

in oil painting in college, and Jack knew how much she loved painting. The first time he met her, she was sitting among the bushes painting flowers. Her elegant demeanor and the lifelike painting made him fall in love with her at first

graduated, Queenie never stopped painting, even though she became a businesswoman. She had entered her works in various international exhibitions and had gotten gold awards on multiple occasions. Her works were highly sought after by collectors and art institutions both in and out of

Ziegler was an influential name in the artists' circles of

also brought her trouble. Many people sought to commission her for huge sums of money, and some people even tried to give her bribes under the pretense of commissioning her. Queenie had declined such offers, and Jack had declared that any illicit deals made under the pretense of art would be

True to Jack's word, several bribers had been arrested and punished this way. Eventually, those schemers gave up on the idea after seeing that nothing would sway their principles.

Jack continued to knead Queenie's shoulders. "Our daughter has inherited your artistic talents. I've never seen her paintings, but I've seen her house design for Father. Father is a picky person, and many renowned designers could not satisfy him, except for Bianca. I think that our daughter is a truly talented designer."

Queenie nodded in agreement. "Of course. Even if our daughter might not be the best, she would still be considered one of the best. Do you know why I want to fetch our daughter back from the Crawford family?"

"Because she has lost her husband. You're afraid that the people from the Crawford family might bully her, and we can be her support," Jack guessed.

Queenie gently held Jack's hand, turned her head to look at him, and shook her head gently. "That's only one of the reasons. Allison Tanner is an arrogant and materialistic woman. Our daughter might be her daughter-in-law, but she has always treated Bianca with contempt and hostility because of me. She blames Bianca for Luke's death and says that our daughter has brought bad luck to her son. If not for Old Master Crawford, she would definitely drive Bianca out of the household without hesitating..."

Jack's eyes widened, and his hands paused. "How dare she! Even if my daughter leaves the Crawford family, it's because she wants to, not because she's forced to. She can come and talk to me if she wants to do that!"

Queenie smiled and patted Jack's hand, telling him to **calm down**.

up from her chair, went to the shelf next to her, took out a document, and handed it to her

the document, not sure what to expect. The more he read it, the more surprised and happy

hands were trembling uncontrollably. "When... when did you

was taking care of Bea, I picked up two strands of her hair and took it to the hospital for a DNA test. I've confirmed that Bianca is indeed our birth daughter. Jack, the main reason I want to formalize our relationship with Bianca is that I found out that she's facing financial difficulties, and I hope that we can help her. My poor girl has suffered so much since she was young, and when she finally found happiness,

an accident took her husband's life away. It's not easy for her to raise three children on her own. I can't bear to see our daughter in trouble and not

Jack already knew that Bianca was his birth daughter, looking at the physical report with his own eyes gave him

"Alright, Queenie, let's do it your way. We'll get Bianca out of the Crawford household as soon as we can. I was bringing a plate of cut fruit for

stood outside the door and overheard what her parents were talking about. She was mentally prepared for the eventuality that Bianca would return to the Norman household, but she still felt that twinge of

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When she heard her daughter sleep-talking, Bianca could not help but reach out and gently hold Rainie's hand.

The little girl's hand was slightly cool. Bianca tried to warm it with her hand.

Rainie sensed her mother's grip. She moaned softly and opened her eyes.

"Mommy?" She called out coyly, still half-asleep.

Bianca tucked her daughter into the blanket and said gently, "Are you awake, Rainie? It's still early. You should continue sleeping."

Rainie rubbed her eyes with her other hand and said expectantly, "Mommy, is Daddy home yet? I dreamed of Daddy just now. He bought many toys for Big Bro and me, and he also said that he'd bring us to the theme park... Mommy, Daddy has been on a business trip for so long. When will he be back? I really, really miss Daddy..."

Bianca tried hard not to cry when she heard her daughter say that.

She patted Rainie's head and said softly, "Daddy will come back. If you finish your food and go to school every day and listen to what Mommy says, Daddy will come back soon."

She would rather not lie to her daughter, but if an adult could not accept the fact that Luke was gone, a young child would not either.

felt that the lie was necessary, but she did not know if she could maintain it for

did not know when Lanie woke up. The little boy stared at his mother and sister with his beautiful eyes while listening to

awake too, Lanie? I'll get some warm water for you two ..." Bianca's gaze wavered when she noticed that her son was looking at her. She got out of bed and went out of the

was more mature, and he would not be as easily convinced as his sister. Bianca felt guilty every time she saw her son's

kitchen, Bianca poured some warm water into two cups. While she walked past the living room and was about to go up the stairs, she saw Lanie waiting for her at the staircase in his cartoon print

you up? Quick, go back to bed," Bianca

to ask you a question, Mommy," Lanie stood there, straight as a tree. His gaze was as sharp as Luke as he stared at

put the cups down and crouched to Lanie's

hugged her son's tiny body and asked, "What would you like to ask

The little boy pressed his lips and hesitated for a while before asking the question, "Mommy, did something happen to Daddy? Is he never coming back?"

Bianca's heart wrenched when she heard her son's question. "Why do you say that, Lanie? Didn't Mommy tell you that Daddy is on an overseas business trip? He's setting up a new branch, and so he's very *busy*. *When...*"

Lanie bit his lip and interjected, "Mommy, I overheard your conversation with Uncle Gordan a few days ago. Uncle Gordan said that Daddy got into an accident, and no one has found him yet. You can fool Rainie that he's on a business trip, but I know that Daddy *is gone...*"

Bianca's heart wrenched. She did not know that her son had already known the truth and had tried to keep it to himself. He would not ask his mother about it if not that he could not hold it in *anymore*.

Bianca kissed Lanie's cute little face, tried to compose herself, and told him, "Your Daddy indeed has gotten into an accident, but I believe that he's still alive and well somewhere in the world. Lanie, you have to trust me, and you have to trust your Daddy. He's an amazing man, and nothing can stop him. He won't go missing just like that, right? Mommy has been busy recently, but soon, I'll bring you kids to look for Daddy. I believe he's waiting for us **somewhere...**"

Lanie stared at his mother's expectant gaze, nodded resolutely, and hugged his mother's neck. "Mm, I trust you, Mommy, and I trust that Daddy is still alive. He's not at home now, but I'll take care of you, Rainie, and Tommy on his behalf. I believe that we'll reunite once more, and... you shouldn't cry alone at night, alright? I'll feel sad **too...**"

"*Alright*, my beloved son." Bianca hugged her son tightly and smiled with tears in **her eyes**.

She considered herself blessed for having such a caring young boy in her times of **despair**.

...

morning, Bianca was woken up by a phone

the call. Old Master Crawford asked her to return to Crawford Manor with

extremely nervous, as though something serious

that Old Master Crawford was so nervous because he missed the children a lot. She told him that she would bring them over after they woke up from

always thought that Bianca had caused Luke's death. Now that Luke was gone, Allison's attitude toward Bianca became even worse. That was why Bianca rarely returned to Crawford Manor unless it was

call, Bianca thought hard about why Old Master Crawford insisted that she return as soon as possible. For various reasons, he rarely asked her to return to

Crawford family driver went to Bianca's mansion and waited

the twins woke up, Bianca picked up Tommy, who was still sleeping, and the four of them went back to Crawford

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"I believe you've met Uncle Jack and Aunt Queenie before, Bea, and I don't think I need to introduce them to you. They're here at home today because they want to meet you."

"They want to meet me?" Bianca looked doubtfully at Jack and Queenie. "Is there something, Uncle Jack and Aunt Queenie?"

Queenie's lips trembled. She stood up from the couch, took out a test report, and nervously handed it to Bianca.

The nanny picked up the baby in Bianca's arms.

Bianca looked at the test report. She could understand what was going on when she saw the words "DNA Test Report" on the cover page.

At the bottom of the last page, when she saw that her DNA shared a 99.9% similarity with Jack and Queenie, all her doubts instantly disappeared.

She looked at Queenie, feeling rather perplexed, and called out, "Aunt Queenie..."

Queenie looked at Bianca with sparkling eyes and held her hand, unable to contain her excitement. "I hope you don't mind that I secretly took a few strands of your hair for a DNA test. I've been suspecting it for a while now, but I've never dared say it. I'm not your Aunt Queenie. I'm your... mother."

Bianca's hands were shaking.

Tears welled up in her eyes as she saw that Queenie's eyes were brimming with tears too.

turned her head to look at Jack. He was usually a stern man, but now, his eyes were brimming

They were her birth parents.

had already known that fact. Even so, she could not help but be anxious when it came to formalizing

still remember me, Elder Sister? I'm Selena, whom you've met when you stayed over with the Normans. Aunt Queenie said that she had found her birth daughter. I thought that she was joking, but I didn't expect that you're actually my cousin. This is great news!" Selena spoke excitedly as she held Bianca's

"I..."

Bianca turned to look at Queenie.

already sobbing. "Bea, would you... would you call

trembled as she saw Queenie's expectant gaze. She did not know what

was hard for her to abruptly call someone her mother, even though she had already accepted the **Her eyes** that were as clear as stars seemed pure but *helpless*.

Queenie was slightly disappointed when she saw Bianca hesitate. She gently hugged Bianca and said, "It's okay. I know that you will need some time to accept the truth. We still have a long way in front of us, and I can afford to wait. I'm content to be able to meet my birth daughter while I'm still alive. Really."

Jack felt comforted as he watched the scene of reunion.

Now that they had reunited with their birth daughter, Queenie did not have to bear that guilt anymore, and their adoptive daughter would not *feel lonely*.

Leia, who had felt uneasy ever since she stepped into Crawford Manor, was burning with jealousy as she saw Queenie and Bianca hugging. Even so, as an actress, she knew how to hide her true *feelings*.

She walked in front of the two women, handed a napkin to Queenie, and pretended to be very happy. "Congratulations to you, Mom and Dad. You've finally found Elder Sister. We can be a happy family now. This is good news, and you shouldn't be crying. I believe that Elder Sister wouldn't want to see you cry as well... isn't that so, *Elder Sister*?"

Leia smiled innocently, as though she was a naive young girl.

Bianca would have been deceived by that pure smile, if not that she had fallen victim to her cruel schemes. The other people might not see it, but Bianca did not miss the hint of coldness in *Leia's gaze*.

Leia hugged Queenie's elbow and leaned on her shoulder, as though saying, "So what if Mom recognizes you as her birth daughter? She's been my Mom for almost twenty years, and you're still an *outsider*!"

smiled in response to *Leia's* instigating gaze. She suddenly hugged Queenie's other arm and smiled gently. "Of course, Mom is my mother as well as your mother. You're not the only one who feels sorry for her. As her daughter, I wouldn't want to see her

eyes lit up when she heard what

grabbed Bianca's hands and looked at her in disbelief. "What... what did you call me

winked at Queenie. "I called you

good girl. Did you hear that, Jack? Our daughter just called me her Mom..." The usually elegant and courteous Queenie fell into Jack's embrace like a small child who had received her Christmas

the gazes of the people around him and hugged his wife tightly. He was equally excited. "Yes, our daughter is

had never seen Mr. and Mrs. Norman behave that way. As far as he knew, the couple was calm and authoritative, especially Jack, who was usually stern

they had reunited with their birth daughter, they behaved like any other ordinary couple and

knew how much they suffered while looking for their

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Bianca held the children's hands, walked in front of Mr. and Mrs. Norman, and patted the children's heads. "Lanie, Rainie, greet your grandparents."

The two cute twins stood up straight and called out at the same time. "Nice to meet you, Grandpa and Grandma. I'm Lanie." "I'm Rainie."

"Oh, you're good kids!" Queenie started to tear up again. Not only did she get to reunite with her birth daughter, but she also gained two cute and intelligent grandchildren.

The usually stern Jack could not contain his emotions.

He crouched to the children's eye level, just like any ordinary grandfather.

He patted their heads and asked them, "How old are you two? Which grade are you in?"

He had already known the answers from his wife, but he would like to hear it from the children's mouths. He adored children, especially their crisp voices and pure eyes.

"Grandpa, I'm Rainie Crawford. I'm in the first grade, and I love to sing, dance, and draw, but most of all, I love taking naps..." The extroverted Rainie introduced herself first and curtsied at Jack, which made Jack and Queenie laugh.

Lanie rolled his eyes at his sister, disapproving of her acting cute.

Jack had never been so close to such a cute little girl before. On an impulse, he stretched out his arms, "Come here and give your Grandpa a hug, Rainie."

Rainie fell into Jack's arms.

Jack smelled faintly of rosin, just like Daddy. Rainie liked that

onto Jack's neck, Rainie sat on his lap, looked at his chin, and reached out to touch his stubble beard.

"Your beard is pricklier

pinched the little girl's cheek

soft cheek was as delicate as a peeled hard-boiled egg. Jack dared not use too much strength. "As long as you like

little girl's tender body smelled faintly of milk. Jack was feeling a little helpless. He did not want to move too abruptly in case he

could not help but laugh at Jack's awkward

also crouched and looked at the gentlemanly Lanie. "Lanie, can your Grandma

was not only handsome but also incredibly intelligent. He was only six years old, but he was already in the third grade. At a young age, he had won countless province-level and even national-level awards. Queenie adored that

"Mm," **Lanie** replied before being hugged by Queenie. He quite liked his grandmother, who looked similar to his mother.

Queenie felt her grandson in her arms and was sure that she was **not dreaming**.

She had finally found her daughter *and grandchildren*.

Tears slid down from her eyes and landed on Lanie's forehead.

Lanie felt something warm drip on his forehead. He discreetly wiped it with his hand and turned to look at his crying grandmother.

Instantly, he knew why his mother and sister loved to cry. They must have inherited it *from Grandma!*

...

Later that night, the Normans hosted a fabulous reunion banquet for **Bianca**.

It was held at an opulent hotel, and the event was even grander than Julie's banquet. Mr. and Mrs. Norman had reserved the entire hotel for the event, which was proof of their love for their birth **daughter**.

in A City

previous mishap, as well as Leia's blackmail scandal, were still fresh in their minds. It had been sensational

the Normans claimed to have found their birth daughter, many people were curious if that

on the stage, dressed in a suit. His stern face could not hide his excitement. "Ladies and gentlemen, I am once again honored by your presence at my daughter's reunion banquet, and I am grateful that all of you are willing to take time out from your precious schedules to attend this event. I apologize for the previous mess-up, but today, we have really found our birth daughter. My wife and I have performed a DNA test with her, and she is truly our daughter whom we have lost for more than twenty years. This is Bianca Rayne, our

waved to someone behind the curtains, and Bianca walked to the

hair was tied up in a bun, while several strands of her hair adorned her delicate and petite face. She wore pearl earrings, a silken sleeveless top, and a light green embroidered dress. She seemed elegant and

on stage took everyone's breath

doubted that Bianca was an impostor. They could see that she looked similar

mother and daughter stood together. Queenie's face was slightly plump with age, but other than that, their appearance and mannerisms were almost the

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A rather beautiful man in a suit was standing in a corner of the banquet hall. His eyes were animated, and his chin was delicate. His looks might be feminine, but his demeanor did not give other people that impression.

With a champagne flute in hand, he smiled profoundly as his eyes were transfixed on Bianca on the stage.

The man seemed elegant and gentlemanly, but when he smiled, he gave the conflicting impression that he was a hooligan.

An intelligent-looking man in black-framed glasses who stood next to him explained, "Mr. Blatt, the woman on the stage is Bianca Rayne, the new acting CEO of T Corporation. Earlier, she had tried to compete with a plot of land near Draco Lake but failed miserably."

"Failed miserably?" The man who was addressed as "Mr. Blatt" said softly and narrowed his gaze.

He smiled ambiguously as his eyes lazily drifted toward the attractive woman on the stage once more.

His name was Vincent Blatt, CEO of Blatt Corporation. He came from an illustrious family, and he was considered a legendary character in the business world for his incredible business acumen.

He might look like a gentleman, but his business tactics were sly and underhanded. He was good at bid-rigging, and though other people despised that, they dared not openly oppose him because of his background.

"When Luke Crawford was the CEO of T Corporation, it's hard for us to get a leg-up on them. Too bad he's dead."

The man in the black-framed glasses sounded like he was gloating over T Corporation's misfortune, as though he had a huge grudge against Luke. "Luke Crawford had snatched a major client away from us only a few months ago and cost us a lot of business, and he has been tarnishing Blatt Corporation's reputation with baseless accusations. I didn't expect that he would die just like that."

Vincent smiled eerily. "Perhaps that's karma."

man in black-framed glasses understood that Vincent was not interested in the reason for Luke's death, and so he shifted the conversation topic. "T Corporation is as good as gone in the hands of a woman who can't lead at all. Ever since she took over the position of CEO, T Corporation has declined sharply in all performance indicators. Blatt Corporation and many other of their rivals have also snatched their clients. I believe that the woman is tearing down what Luke Crawford has so painstakingly built up. Should we take the opportunity to cripple T Corporation and acquire

was transfixed on Bianca's lips as she spoke into

and supple lips were perfectly curved, making a vivid contrast with her pearl-white teeth. He could not chillingly and downed the

determined to claim T Corporation. He was also interested in that woman who was also T Corporation's CEO and Mr. Norman's

still time. He could afford to circle his prey before capturing
deeply at everyone after her speech. Suddenly, she realized that someone was looking at her with a
and could not help but feel that she was a helpless animal waiting to be caught
did not like the invasive and uncouth way that man was staring at
man?" She whispered to Tina next to

Tina, as the CEO's secretary, was not only capable but also had an encyclopedic memory. She could recognize anyone influential in A City on the top of her *head*.

That was why Bianca relied on her **for information**.

Tina looked in the direction where Bianca was looking and grimaced when she noticed Vincent. "That's Vincent Blatt, the second son of the Blatt family and the CEO of Blatt Corporation. He might look like a gentleman, but he acts like a thug. Recently, Blatt Corporation has been snatching business away from us, which has caused our clients to **decline...**"

Bianca stared into Vincent's gaze as though challenging him.

Interestingly, Vincent suddenly felt an inexplicable excitement in **him!**

Bianca did not know about Vincent's thoughts.

All she wanted was to claim everything that Vincent had snatched away from T **Corporation!**

...

The banquet ended on a high note.

Bianca disregarded the protests from the board of directors and insisted on bidding for the remote mountain in Bay Town. They did not face much competition because that area was poorly connected, and their competitors were not as powerful as T Corporation. T Corporation easily won the development rights to **that area**.

Queenie invested in T Corporation to help them with their financial *troubles*.

the newly-injected funds, construction on Longing Greens soon

year later, Lines 15, 18, and 21 of the A City subway and Phase 9 of the A City Light Rail began construction, just as planned. Land prices in Bay Town suddenly increased by

major corporations regretted that they did not bid for the

other hand, the veteran shareholders of T Corporation were overjoyed by how things turned out. They praised Bianca for her foresight and stopped referring to her as the acting

One year later.

first phase of Longing Greens completed

the best scenery and the ideal geographical location, Longing Greens was an integrated development project that combined travel, relaxation, business, and

houses and bungalows had their own unique

housing unit faced the breathtaking scenery of Deer River. Longing Greens was the newest and hottest landmark of A

two of Longing Greens began construction the following year and was completed by the end of the year. The properties were all

Chapter 677

Somewhere in the Pacific Ocean was the Island of Despair.

One could not find the island on any map. Its existence was like a phantom on the gray-blue ocean surface. Constantly shrouded in fog, it was isolated from the rest of the world.

Sharp and jagged reefs like devils' teeth surrounded the island, threatening to rip apart anyone who went near.

The first rays of the rising sun appeared on the horizon.

A tall and well-built man leaned on a reef. His handsome face was like sculpted marble, and his profound eyes were like polished agate.

He pressed his lips tightly as he gazed at the endless ocean and a hidden bay in front of him.

At the edge of the bay was a large steel cage.

Locked in the cage were a thin man and woman, as well as a drugged lion.

The people were fighting bare-handed with the lion.

How could two weak and starved people be a match for the berserk lion?

The two people attacked the lion together, but they were also badly injured.

Very soon, their battered bodies were ripped into pieces and became the lion's meal...

scenes were not uncommon on the island, but Luke clenched his fists tightly to suppress the urge of destroying

one knew that the isolated island was a secret base for the League of Shadows, an elite assassin

the organization would gather people with extraordinary abilities using various underhanded methods, drug them, and transport them to the island to undergo assassination

lives were as worthless as insects on the island. Even animals were treated

way to survive was to be stronger than anyone

out of the question. The island was heavily guarded by mercenaries and various high-tech traps. Even a fly could not

of being caught

known the existence of such terrifying assassin organizations. However, he could not help but throw up when he saw Robert flay a deserter

had hypnotized him and erased his past memories, but Robert did not fully trust him. That was why Luke was sent to the

other words, he was imprisoned there with the other assassins to undergo the same

people on the island were wary of Luke because Kassy was there too, and also because Robert favored his incredibly intelligent mind. That was why Luke managed to survive in that hellish

However, when Robert and Kassy were not around, those people bullied and tormented Luke. Even though Luke had a black belt in karate, he was considered a weakling to those depraved killers, and he would be beaten to a pulp every **time**.

In the most serious case, he suffered from gastric perforation and vomited blood for an entire month.

No one tended to him.

When Robert found out about it, he said nonchalantly, "Suck it up and live, or give up and **die**."

Fortunately, Luke had studied herbology on his own in college. He managed to keep himself alive by foraging for medicinal herbs on *the island*.

To improve his situation and increase Robert's trust, he finagled countless riches for Robert through many backdoor deals with his **prodigious intelligence**.

Every time Luke sunk into despair, he told himself that he would bear with it and leave this place alive.

He wanted nothing more than to meet his beloved wife and children again.

Bianca Rayne, Bianca Rayne!

His heart wrenched whenever he was reminded of that *name*.

Luke was an arrogant and domineering man. He thought that nothing in the world could be an obstacle for him. It was only when he was imprisoned on the island that he knew how weak he **was**.

In two years, he had risen through the ranks and brought a big part of the core organization under his influence. No one knew the torment he had suffered as his power grew by the day.

was almost time to leave

got out, he would make sure that this hell on earth would

T Corporation.

went to the CEO's office to hand in some documents, she saw Bianca sitting on the Persian carpet playing catch with

dressed in a sleeveless black dress, and her hair was tied up in a ponytail. She did not wear any makeup, but her features were eye-catching. The fair and plump toddler sitting next to her feet was

reached out toward Sue when he saw her. "Auntie Sue... hug...

Tommy loved sweet stuff, especially candy.

him to eat candy. It was not good for the toddler's health, and she did not want Tommy to grow up to be a picky

the toddler was teething. Bianca did not want her son to have

doted on Tommy, even more so than her twin daughters. She felt sorry that the little boy had lost his father, and she would also bring some candy in her pocket so that she could sneakily give them

why Tommy was very clingy

Chapter 678

"I'm bringing Tommy to look for Luke in Moscow," Bianca said.

Sue's hands slipped, and the little toddler nearly fell from her knees.

She quickly hugged Tommy tightly and stared straight at Bianca. "Tommy is only two years old. He is still too young to travel long distances. Moreover, Mr. Crawford is a very intelligent man. If he is still alive, he should have come home by now. I know that you still can't accept the truth, but I believe that Mr. Crawford is no more...

"He was attacked in Moscow, which means that he has enemies there. That place won't be safe for Tommy and your son, and you'll be exposing yourself to unnecessary danger. Won't you at least think about Tommy's safety? He's still so small..."

"No, I believe that Luke is still alive. Consider it a hunch." Bianca did not accept Sue's analysis, even though it made a lot of sense.

She would not accept that Luke was dead as long as she did not see his body.

Moreover, Gordan had given her some information earlier that Luke was most likely alive.

Sue knew that Mr. Crawford was Bianca's obsession.

Bianca might not seem like an opinionated person, but no one could sway her once she made up her mind on something.

"I know I can't convince you otherwise. If you've decided on it, then you should do your best." Sue shook her head and continued to play with the toddler on her lap. "You're so handsome, Tommy. Would you want to marry Kari or Teri when you grow up?"

Sue's twin daughters were also two years old.

them Kari and Teri out of convenience. The two girls were very adorable, though one was outgoing and cheerful while the other was quiet and reserved. They had similar features, but their personalities were

it. Now, I don't have to worry about Tommy's significant other," Bianca

"Your son will grow up to be a popular heartthrob. If he has to worry about finding a significant other, what about the other

they were happily chatting, the door opened once

came in, holding a

did not show any surprise when he saw Sue sitting on the carpet playing with Tommy. Instead, he handed Sue the bottle and said, "Tina prepared some milk and was about to bring it over when she saw me. I happened to be coming here, so I took the bottle from her. You can

the bottle without looking at Jason and started to patiently feed the toddler. "Have some milk, good helpless as she watched how distant Sue and Jason

shared a pair of twin daughters, but Sue could not forgive Jason for nearly causing her daughters to lose their lives because his ex-wife wanted to save

That was already two years ago.

The atmosphere in the office became **awkward**.

Tommy, oblivious to his surroundings, continued to suck on the bottle happily and soon emptied **it**.

Bianca glanced at her watch. It was almost time to go **off work**.

"**It's getting** late. Sue, you should go and pick up Kari and Teri. Otherwise, they might throw a tantrum," Bianca urged.

"*Alright.*" Sue gently wiped away the milk stains on Tommy's lips, got up, and prepared to leave.

"I'll go and pick the girls up with you." Jason rushed up to her and stood in her way. "They haven't seen their father for a long time, and I'm sure they miss me. You won't be that cruel to deprive me of seeing them, right?"

Sue shoved him away with her shoulder and said coldly, "My children are mine alone. They don't have a father. Get out of **my way!**"

She walked away alone.

Jason stood rooted on the spot and watched her leave. He did not come to his senses for a long **time**.

Seeing how crestfallen Jason was, she narrowed her gaze and tried to comfort him. "You should try and spend more time with Kari and Teri, Mr. Doyle. At this age, they need their parents, especially the care from a father. When they become close to you, I don't think Sue would reject you, no matter how heartless she **might be...**"

thank you, Ms. Rayne." Jason nodded, feeling a

...

work, Bianca carried Tommy and waited for the driver at the

in the afternoon, the driver had brought a client to a distant destination. He stopped for gas on the way back, and that was why he was slightly

to wait for the driver in the lounge, but the active Tommy did not want to

brought her son to play near the

driving in a silver luxury car. When he drove past T Corporation, he noticed Bianca and

was dressed plainly but elegantly, and she did not wear any

so, her pure and delicate facial features were a sight to

of her gestures exuded serenity. She seemed to possess the magic that could calm

Chapter 679

Bianca hugged Tommy close to her and smiled superficially at Vincent. "Can I help you with anything, Mr. Blatt?"

Vincent had fair skin, and his features were so charming that it could even charm a dog. If he put on a wig and a dress, he would definitely pass off as a beautiful woman.

However, his sinister personality was a stark contrast with his appearance.

The Blatt's had a large extended family that often plotted against each other. It was impressive that Vincent could emerge from the conflict and gain Old Master Blatt's favor, and it was proof that Vincent was a capable individual.

When it came to deception and trickery, he had surpassed his elders.

"Better offend the devil than Vincent Blatt." That was how the saying went in A City. It showed how terrifying Vincent was.

Bianca had rejected Vincent's advances. To Vincent, nothing could offend him more.

He had tried to bully T Corporation for the past two years. Fortunately, Bianca had the support of Mr. and Mrs. Norman to keep the business afloat.

Otherwise, there would have been nothing left of T Corporation.

Vincent leaned on the car window, lit up a cigarette, and stared at Bianca. "Can't I come and visit you for the fun of it? I think that I'm obsessed with you, Ms. Rayne... I wonder why I feel so flustered when I don't get to see you? Tell me, did you poison me? Have I fallen sick?"

tried to suppress her anger as she put on a fake smile. "If you think that you've fallen sick, perhaps you should go to the hospital instead of bothering me. If you drive along this road, you'll find a hospital about half a mile away from here. Their psychiatry unit is quite well-known. Should I recommend you to a

Her mockery was blatant.

knew Bianca's personality well. He was not angry, but instead, he continued to press his lips and stare at her. He knew that she would eventually be

told herself to be calm, but the words that came out of her mouth were caustic. "Mr. Blatt, I'm already married with children. Should I show you my marriage certificate to prove that I'm married? Your actions are bordering on harassment, and that's illegal. Why must you harass a married

blew a smoke ring and said flippantly, "I'd like to clarify a few facts with you, Ms. Rayne. Number one, your so-called husband is already dead, and you are now a widow. If you're a widow, then I have the right to court you. Number two, I am courting you openly. I am not using any coercive or illegal methods, so how can you say that I'm harassing

nearly threw up when she smelled the smoke that he spewed from his

strange. She did not hate it when Luke was smoking. In fact, she was quite obsessed with his casual attitude whenever he smoked. However, she was thoroughly appalled by

saying another word, Bianca picked up Tommy and turned around

stepped in front of her like a hooligan and grabbed her elbow. "I'd like to treat you to dinner, Ms. Rayne. Surely you wouldn't decline my offer,

the post-work rush hour, and many people were leaving the T Corporation building. Many employees stole glances, but they dared not step forward and interrupt Vincent

"Let go of me, Vincent Blatt!" Bianca frowned unhappily. She wanted to shove him away.

However, the man was too strong. She could not shake him off.

Bianca was about to break out in a cold sweat.

Just when they were struggling, Tommy, who had been stuck between the adults, suddenly giggled at Vincent and stretched out his plump arms toward him. "Mister... *hug!*"

"You're a good boy, Tommy, but this mister is a bad person! You shouldn't let strangers hug you!" Bianca coaxed Tommy *patiently*.

Vincent flicked his cigarette and raised his eyebrows. He was usually not fond of children, but seeing that the toddler seemed so cute, obedient, and naïve, and how Bianca was so defensive against him, his rebellious spirit flared. He snatched the toddler from Bianca's arms and hugged him **tightly**.

The little fellow was so soft and tender, like a round marshmallow. Vincent felt quite peculiar while hugging *him*.

The toddler was not afraid of strangers at all. Instead, he laughed happily and tried to grab Vincent's *ears*.

"*You...*" Bianca was exasperated. She wanted to scold Tommy, but she hesitated when she saw how happy Tommy **was**.

little fellow seems to like me. It seems like we can be good friends..." Vincent said

could finish his sentence, he suddenly felt a warm current splashing on

he smelled the faint stink of

stunned for a few seconds. When he came to his senses, the entire street could hear his angry screeches. "You little b*stard, how dare you wee on

had just finished yelling when the toddler let out several stinky farts. Immediately after that, something yellow, slimy, and stinky dropped from the toddler's butt and landed on Vincent's expensive white

"..." Vincent was nonplussed.

b*stard kid has gone too far! Not only did he wee on me, but he also pooped on

Bianca was laughing up her sleeve.

job, son! That's how you should treat

sorry, Mr. Blatt. My son is still small, and sometimes he can't control himself. I'm sorry that your coat is soiled. Feel free to use my building's washroom to clean yourself." Bianca might be apologizing, but she did not hide the glee in

Chapter 680

Old Master Crawford was lying on a lounge chair in the garden of Crawford Manor. Next to him was a cup of fine tea.

The old man loved his tea.

When Bianca came into the garden, she noticed that Old Master Crawford seemed listless.

His face was beset with wrinkles, and his gaze was hollow and forlorn as he stared at the plants.

Ever since he found out that Luke was killed, his body, which had not been in good shape, deteriorated rapidly like a wilted plant.

"Were you looking for me, Grandpa?" Bianca walked behind Old Master Crawford and gently massaged his neck and shoulders.

Old Master Crawford turned his head to look at his granddaughter-in-law and smiled lovingly. "I'm glad that you're here, Bea. I want to ask you about the latest happenings in the company, and also... have you found another significant other yet?"

He knew that Bianca was a very capable woman who single-handedly took on the responsibility of bringing T Corporation out of a financial crisis two years ago. T Corporation's performance did not decline but rose by several percentage points compared to two years ago.

Old Master Crawford was very satisfied with his granddaughter-in-law.

However, he had heard rumors that had been circulating in the company.

man placed a lot of importance on his family's reputation. He could not tolerate his granddaughter-in-law seeing someone

had wanted to talk to Bianca for a long time, but Bianca had been very busy with company affairs, and he did not want to

asked Bianca that question, he wanted to observe her

Crawford knew that his very capable and talented grandson was gone. If he had his way, he would want his granddaughter-in-law to defend T Corporation until it was time for his great-grandchildren to

was young, beautiful, and capable. He did not want to tie Bianca down to the Crawford household because of his

you hear any baseless rumors

but she continued to massage Old Master Crawford's shoulders calmly. "I don't know from whom you might have heard those rumors, but I can tell you that they're all false because the only man I love is Luke. Don't worry. Even if Luke is really gone, I won't marry anyone else. I'm content with my three

Crawford sighed and continued speaking, "I'm not blaming you for anything, and I would feel guilty if I have to tie you down to the Crawford family, but you're the only one that the Crawford family can rely on. Louis is an undisciplined kid. He might be artistically talented, but he has no business sense at all. His mother Susan is quite capable, but her personality has become twisted thanks to what my wretched son did to her, and she's not suitable to lead the company. I have no other

was reminded of Susan's

That woman wanted to harm her when she gave birth to *Tommy*.

Fortunately, Louis came in the nick of time. Otherwise, she might have claimed two lives with her **sinister plot**.

Old Master Crawford seemed to know what Bianca was thinking. He shook his head and began to reminisce. "When Zachary married Susan, she was a refined and elegant woman. It's all Zachary's fault that Susan has become what she is now. I'm not without blame too... Bea, I hope that you can forgive her. At least do that for me. I'm already so old, and my last wish is to see my family live together harmoniously..."

Bianca did not nod or shake her head. "I'm not a nosy person, Grandpa. I won't go and look for trouble if trouble doesn't come looking for me," she said.

Her intentions were clear.

Old Master Crawford felt guiltier than ever. "You're a good girl. The Crawford family has let **you down**."

"**Grandpa, now** that the company is back on track, I'd like to fly to Moscow to look for Luke." Bianca hesitated for a while before announcing her decision.

Old Master Crawford was not surprised. Instead, he looked at Bianca profoundly. "If that's what you want, my child, then you should do it. I don't believe that Luke is truly gone, but the truth... If you insist on going, I have a few good friends there, and I'll tell them to take good care of you."

...

was packing a suitcase in the living room of the Norman

that Bianca had decided to go to Moscow, and she also knew that her daughter was a stubborn one who did not change her mind once it was made

clothes and supplies in the suitcase while exhorting her, "It might be May now, but it'll be cold in Moscow. I'll pack two more coats for you. If you run out of clothes, don't spare any expense so that you can keep yourself warm. Also, I've got someone to customize this facial cream for your skin type. You should apply it frequently so that your skin won't dry up. These supplies are for Tommy. His skin is tender and sensitive, and you'd better take good care of my grandson... Right, I should ask Selena to go with you. She's a Russian interpreter, and at least you have a partner that you

could not help but walk forward and hug Queenie gently. "Thank you so

Queenie was such a loving mother.

done so much for Bianca in the past

was eternally grateful. She would never forget what her mother did for

Queenie was comforted by Bianca's hug.

not good at expressing her love with words. "You don't have to thank me, you silly girl. Let me check your room if there's anything else to pack. You can rest on