

## Be Gentle 961

### Chapter 961

Half an hour later, Luke presumed Bianca was asleep when he heard her breathing slow down. He picked up the phone on the bedside table and sent a message to Jason. [I want everything you can find on the CEO of the developer for St. Heckler on my table tomorrow morning.]

Jason was coaxing the twins to sleep. After he received Luke's text, he immediately replied: [Okay, Mr. Crawford.]

Kari was awakened by the notification. She opened her eyes in a daze and muttered, "Dad."

Jason put his phone away. He was a workaholic. Even if he was asleep, his phone would never be on silent mode. That was so that he could attend to Luke's requests at the first instant.

He apologized. "I'm sorry, baby. Did it wake you up?"

Kari glanced at her sister who was sleeping next to her and found that Teri was still asleep. She shook her head and said, "No, Dad."

"Baby, go back to sleep." Jason tucked her in, then gently rubbed her belly and soothed her.

Kari smiled sweetly and closed her eyes. "Okay, good night, Dad."

"Good night." For the past few weeks, Jason would visit the twins every night. His relationship with Sue had eased a lot.

When Kari fell asleep, Jason tiptoed out of the bedroom and gently closed the door.

Sue was sitting in the living room applying a face mask. Her expression turned slightly cold when she saw him.

She asked, "Kari and Teri are asleep?"

"Yeah." Jason walked over and intended to sit next to her, but he was afraid that she would be offended, so he sat on another single sofa.

Sue lifted the mask, threw it into the trash can, and patted her face again to promote the absorption of the essence.

in his heart and thought that Sue was cruel

"Have you been in contact with the CEO of the developer for

talked to his subordinates before but I don't have much contact with him. All I know is that his name is Steven and he's not from around here." Sue had been caught up with work when Bianca was out of the office. She was not able to give the twins her full attention because of

when Jason appeared and took the initiative to take care of

how she scolded him and how cold her glares were, he still silently cared for their

empathized with Jason and had talked to Sue privately. "The twins need their father's love, you shouldn't

reflected on whether she had been too harsh on Jason. Her attitude gradually improved, and they were able to exchange a

Sue asked, "What's wrong?"

asked me to find out everything I can about him." Jason had started

patting her face and replied, "Why are you involved? Is it because of something that happened

shook his head. He only did what he was told and never asked

puzzled and wanted to reach out to Bianca. She paused when she realized that Bianca was

was going to get ready for bed

Sue took a look at the time, cleared her throat, and said coldly, "It's late, it's time for you to **head back.**"

**Jason was** taken back. He sighed and said, "*Sue...*"

**The tension** with Sue had eased, but their relationship was merely like ordinary friends.

Her face was radiant after putting on the mask. She was more charming than she already was. Jason did not want to be her friend; he wanted to be her husband, stay by her side, and watch Kari and Teri grow up as **one family.**

*Before he* finished speaking, Sue knew what he was thinking about and said sternly, "If you leave any later, there might be a misunderstanding. My life is very peaceful now. I don't want to be disturbed, especially by your ex-wife."

*When she* mentioned Bailey Quarrington, Jason *frowned.*

Bailey had never stopped harassing him. Whenever they had a conversation, the only thing she would talk about was their reconciliation.

*He had* no intentions of doing so. His heart that once belonged to Bailey was now occupied with Sue. Bailey was stubborn and refused to stand down.

She thought that they had enough love between them to keep their relationship going.

Seeing that Jason had yet to take action, Sue stood up and opened the door. "I don't want to quarrel with you. If you want to see the twins again, **please leave.**"

She wanted a quiet and peaceful life. She just wanted the twins to grow up healthily.

Jason could not guarantee their safety, so Sue decided that she would be the one to protect her **children.**

*Bailey* loved Jason so much that she was on the brink of obsession. Sue was destined to suffer if she chose to pick a fight with a **crazy woman.**

It did not matter that she still had feelings for him or that this situation made her heart ache. Sue had sworn never to ask him for help. She would be there for her daughters.

sighed, stood up, and walked to the door. He looked at her and saw the stubbornness on her face. He raised his hand, trying to touch her

Sue dodged his approach.

his hand awkwardly and said, "Good

waited for him to go out and closed the door without

left, Sue leaned back against the door. Holding back her tears, she listened to the footsteps behind the door getting farther and farther. She took some deep breaths before she stood up and walked into her

...

The next day.

six o'clock in the evening, Bianca received a call from

are you done with work?

stunned that he was here. In the past, Luke would let her know in advance if he came. Today was the only time that he did not do that. She immediately saved her documents and said, "I'll pack up and meet you

"See you."

quickly cleaned up her desk and went downstairs. She saw the Land Rover parked right in front of the entrance, and Luke was sitting in the car smoking

opened the door of the passenger seat and went in. The tobacco smell woke

## **Chapter 962**

Bianca's eyes widened as her spoon fell on the table. The red tablecloth was covered with cream.

Luke went slow, unlike his past enthusiastic self, and licked the cream from the corners of her mouth little by little.

Bianca could not breathe. His slow-paced kisses were heavenly.

Her heartbeat sped up and eventually lost its rhythm.

She felt like she was in the clouds. She could feel her body, but it felt like nothing else was in her mind as she indulged in his graceful warmth.

One of their phones rang, disturbing their kiss.

Luke slowly moved away. He held her face in his hands, rubbing it gently with his fingers.

Their love was in the air. Bianca gasped lightly. After her cheeks were rubbed by him, they turned even redder. She was swept off her feet by him.

Luke looked at her affectionately but did not say anything. He answered the phone.

Jason said, "Mr. Crawford, he's at Club Gravity."

"Okay, we'll be over." Luke ended the call, took her hand away from her face, and held it. "Let's go, they're there."

"Yeah." Bianca nodded and touched her face with one hand. She was warm, and he knew she was blushing hard even without looking.

Luke was a master when it came to flirting with Bianca. As long as he tried, he had her around his fingers.

they paid, the couple left the restaurant holding

Luke drove to Club Gravity.

Bianca looked at the colorful signs. It was dark and the lights were brilliantly bright. The place gave off a cheap and

she did not go out much, she had heard about the infamous Club

was well-known in A City not because it was high-end but because of the transactions that

looked at Luke and wondered why he would agree to attend an event at a place

wanted to work with him knew that he was resistant to infamous clubs

at the wrong place? Bianca glanced at the other two

go." Luke took her hand and showed her that they were at the

at a loss. Did the other party insist on this venue? Who was this partner who got Luke

walked into the club. The waiter's eyes lit up and he immediately stepped forward. "Hello, do you have

swept over the place and he saw Jason standing not far away. "I'm here to look for

them at the same time. He smiled and walked over. He politely said to the waiter, "We can help

**The waiter** nodded and turned around to *leave*.

Luke asked, "Where is he?"

"Mr. Crawford, they're in A303. This way." Jason had familiarized himself with the place just now and led the way.

*The three* of them walked into the **private room**.

"Go in." Luke did not stop even for a moment.

**Jason** knocked on the door politely, then opened it and **walked in**.

**Bianca walked** in after Luke. When she saw the people in the room, she looked at the man next to her *in shock*.

*It was Mavis and Steven. What in the world?!*

*Luke* held her hand tightly and walked toward the sofa to sit *down*.

Bianca acted calm and sat next to him. Fortunately, they were some distance away from Steven and the bottle **girls**.

"Ms. Rayne? What are you doing here? I told you yesterday that I'm not free today." Steven looked dissatisfied. He held one bottle girl in each arm and demanded an answer from Bianca, who was the only one he knew among the lot.

He was having fun, so he became annoyed when he was interrupted by the group of strangers that barged in. He stared at Luke with a look of disdain and then looked at Bianca *again*.

Steven left last night, he had tried to hint at her but she only arrogantly turned him down. She simply gave him a few bottles of wine and left. In just one night, she seemed to have hooked up with someone else. That man was dressed well and

cursing at Bianca in his

up, surprised when she saw Luke walk in. Since she left T Corporation, the only way she could find out what he was up to was through newspapers

had not seen him for a long time, and her heart was beating like

are you..." Mavis could not hold herself back. Her voice was soft and

her with a chilly tone, "I'm here for Mr.

as though she was splashed with cold water. She was finally awake. Her eyes became filled with hatred at the interlocked hands of the husband

He came here for Bianca.

Mavis hated it.

robbed her of her one true love, and now, she wanted to snatch business from her! How dare

met Mavis' gaze. Luke was the center of attention wherever he went and that led to a lot of people staring daggers

retracted her gaze and pretended that she did not notice her hatred. She sat upright and trusted that the man next to her would have

moved his fingers, and the two interlocked

## **Chapter 963**

'Just how useless is Bianca?! How dare she run a company when her capabilities are still lacking? She's begging Luke for help just because she failed at securing the partnership. The man I love is working hard to manage T Corporation but he even has to deal with such trivial matters on her behalf now?! Not only does she not share his worries but he has to help sort out her problems as well. Bianca is not qualified to stand beside Luke!'

Bianca felt nothing when she heard Mavis' sour and accusatory tone.

No matter how much Mavis made it seem as though she was involved with Luke, it was all fiction.

Bianca trusted Luke and turned her head to look at him tenderly.

Luke looked at Mavis indifferently as he replied, "Ms. Laviere, my wife is not interested in your kind of business meetings."

He said it mockingly as he glanced at the bottle girls in revealing clothing.

Mavis was taken back and felt ashamed. She was not a fan of places as such, but she had to cater to Steven's preferences.

She was well aware of Bianca's tricks. She took a deep breath before she said, "Mr. Crawford, do you think of me as a fool? I'm well aware that Brilliant Architectural Design LLC is competing for the St. Heckler project and you're here to help her secure it. Here I am fighting tooth and nail for my livelihood. Look at her taking the shortcut and asking you for help. Do you think that's fair? What's more, Steven has a meeting with me tonight, not with her."

Bianca was irked at Mavis, but she told herself to hold back.

Although Bianca was surprised that Luke brought her here and had no clue about it before arriving, she was sure that they were there for something other than the St. Heckler project.

Luke could sense that Bianca was ticked off. He rubbed the back of her hand with his fingers, and his gentle movements calmed her inner restlessness.

smiled and calmed down as she processed Mavis'

Luke looked up again, his gaze turned colder as he said, "I'm her

thinking of 101 ways to kill Bianca. 'This incompetent woman doesn't deserve his

not here for Brilliant Architectural Design LLC. Mr. Doyle, I believe you have something for Mr. Steven?" Luke stopped talking to Mavis about things that he thought were a waste of time. He was willing to give her five minutes considering that they had once worked together but would do nothing beyond

handed the document in his hand to Steven, who was still enjoying himself with alcohol and girls. Even when the three of them walked into the private room, Steven had not stopped drinking or touching

Steven asked, "What's this?"

the lawyer's letter from Mr. Luke Crawford." Jason smiled and acted

was stunned and asked, "Why am I getting a lawyer's

my wife and her associate yesterday." Luke turned around and put his arms on Bianca's shoulder, declaring

was stunned too. Then, the corners of her mouth gently raised into a smile. 'This was his plan

to a place like this because of the grievance she suffered yesterday. Her mood was bright as she looked at Steven's

*However, Steven replied cunningly, "Do you have any evidence of what you're accusing **me of?**"*

*"Every private room in the Westin Hotel has security cameras. Here's the evidence that you asked for, Mr. Steven. See you in court," Jason answered on Luke's behalf.*

*Steven hurriedly pushed aside the bottle girls next to him to take a look at the lawyer's letter.*

*Under the colorful lights, he could barely read the contents.*

Seeing that his goal had been achieved, Luke helped Bianca stand up and they walked out of the private room **together**.

*"Luke..." Mavis did not expect this to happen. She stood up and called out to Luke.*

*Luke did not turn around. It was as if he did not hear anything as he left with his arms around Bianca.*

Jason stood there, put his smile away, and said solemnly, "Mr. Steven, please read through the document in detail. Our team of lawyers will be in contact for the **next steps**."

*"This is slander!" Steven's scalp went numb. All he wanted was a good time. He did not expect that things would get to this stage.*

*"Aren't you forgetting something? We have evidence in our hands. Ms. Laviere, here's a gentle reminder to please be mindful of your words. After working with Mr. Crawford for so long, you should understand that although Mr. Crawford loves his wife, he's not what you said he is," Jason warned her. If it were not for Mavis' outstanding work that aided in Luke's career, he would have held her accountable for everything she **just said**.*

**Mavis** sank into the leather sofa, her face turning **pale**.

and closed the door on his way

had lost the mood to drink and shouted at the bottle girls to leave. He was feeling at a loss as he scanned through the

is T Corporation a company that I should be concerned about?" Although Steven had heard of T Corporation, he was not aware of

Mavis was upset. However, it was uncertain whether it was because of Luke's indifference toward her or because of what she said to

the kind of person he was, but jealousy made her say something she should not

Bianca's fault! Else, I would never have lost the superficial generosity and grace that I've always shown

Steven heard that, he immediately took out his phone and searched for T Corporation... After seeing T Corporation's portfolio and Luke's photo, he felt chills

over for me," Steven whispered. T Corporation was one of the largest groups in A City. It would take nothing for a powerful company like T Corporation to crush him.

more, he had failed to control his heart and hands the day

was upset. He thought that he would not have pissed Bianca off if he did not agree to today's meeting with

I wouldn't be in this mess if I hadn't agreed to meet you today. You'll get this sorted out for me." He wanted to drag her into

## **Chapter 964**

Mavis was speechless and thought that he was brainless. It was obstruction of justice to bribe a lawyer!

'What's more, he doesn't know who Walter is and what he's capable of. He won't be bribed so easily.'

"I'll introduce you to a lawyer. If they pursue the case, give her a call." Mavis took out a pen and wrote down Shandra Cullen's contact information.

Among everyone in A City, Shandra was the only one who could put up a fight with Walter.

Steven frowned and looked at Shandra's contact information. He was miserable.

Mavis saw his miserable face. Although she knew that he could not escape the lawsuit, she still wanted to win the project to prove that she was better than Bianca. She pretended to be optimistic and said, "Steven, don't worry. Shandra is really good. She wins almost every case she takes on, but..."

"What?" Steven was hanging onto her every word.

Mavis said, "She's picky with her cases. However, if you tell her that the lawyer representing the other party is Walter, she'll take your case."

Steven touched his fat chin and asked curiously, "Why is this? Did something happen between them?"

Mavis was too lazy to explain it to him. "Why does it matter as long as she can help you win the lawsuit? Steven, I need to head off. Have fun. I'm going to get the bill. Do you want me to ask the two ladies to come back in?"

Steven was no longer in the mood. All he wanted was to contact Shandra and get the matter sorted. His beer belly shook as he stood up and said, "No, Ms. Laviere. You've caused me such trouble, I don't think there's a chance for a partnership for us."

He blamed the lawyer's letter on Mavis. He would not have hesitated for so long if they did not hike up the price on purpose.

he had not hesitated, he would not have had dinner with Bianca

left, Mavis was enraged and did not hold back. "You fat \*ss! How dare you blame me for your horniness?! I shouldn't have recommended Shandra to you. You deserve

Steven left Gravity, he immediately called

was taking on a lot of lawsuits and currently working overtime. She wanted to turn Steven down, but when she heard that the lawyer representing the other party was Walter, she hardly considered it before saying yes. She shared the address of her office and asked him to come over



to get the lawsuit out of the way, so he asked the driver to send him to the  
across from Steven, handed him a cup of coffee, and said, "Did you bring the  
have it here." Steven was in awe of Shandra's beauty but did not dare to think about it. He needed her  
and worshipped her as

could not afford to lose this lawsuit as he would end up with  
scanned through the lawyer's letter and frowned as she asked, "Did you do anything to Bianca  
didn't! It's slander!" Steven denied the

his twinkling eyes, Shandra put down the lawyer's letter and asked, "If you want me to help you fight  
this lawsuit, it's best you be honest. Did you or did you not do it? What did you

*Steven* was stunned and had no choice but to confess under her watchful eyes. "I touched their hands  
and waist. It's not that big of **a deal!**"

"If the two of them were bottle girls, it wouldn't be a big deal," Shandra said coldly and sipped on *her*  
*coffee*.

**Steven seemed** to be the kind of man who took advantage of women. He had chosen the worst person  
he could lay his disgusting hands on.

**As a** woman, Shandra hated men like these. If the other party had hired Walter as their lawyer, Steven  
would never *win!*

Steven was speechless. He picked up the coffee cup and took a big mouthful before asking, "What  
should I do **now?**"

**Shandra** asked, "Do they have any evidence **against you?**"

*Steven* remembered Jason's words. There was security footage that captured him taking advantage of  
Bianca and **Nina**.

**"Is there?"** Shandra asked. It was a simple question but he was taking a long time to answer. She  
thought that it was a waste of her time.

**"Yes,"** Steven replied, "But I didn't go overboard..."

"When you chose to do it, you should've known that there was no going back. The judge won't judge  
you based on how many times you touched her," Shandra stood up and said indifferently, "I can't help  
you with *this case*."

*Steven* was stunned and replied, "Why?! Mavis said you can help me win the lawsuit!"

stand a chance to win if there's a chance to start with. No one can help you with this case. They have  
witnesses and evidence. Mr. Steven, I suggest that you apologize to Mrs. Crawford. If Mr. Crawford  
insists on holding you accountable, no one can help you," Shandra said and gave her assistant a

turned off the recorder. There was no chance of winning this case. This wretched man was wasting their

was in despair and said, "Is there no other

your most sincere apology but don't have too much hope. As a man who loves his wife a lot, Mr. Crawford will never allow anyone to take advantage of his wife." Shandra's words were reasonable. Although she wanted a showdown with Walter in court, this case was doomed from the start. She was not stupid enough to let pride get in her head.

...

and Bianca returned home and

knew that Luke would have a lot of things to attend to since he left work early to pick her up. She tiptoed over and gave him a gentle kiss. Then, she turned and walked into the children's

three children were asleep, Bianca sneaked a look when she passed by the study and saw that Luke was still

went back to the bedroom, took a shower, and sat on the bed to

Luke was done with his work and went into the bedroom, Bianca was leaning on the bed and her eyes and smiled. "My love, are you done for the

## **Chapter 965**

"Go to bed if you're tired. If you're still awake when I'm done showering, we'll..." Luke's thin lips touched her forehead lightly, his kiss carrying a touch of charm.

Bianca's face turned slightly red. She lifted the blanket and said, "I'm going to bed, good night."

She lay down, covered the quilt, closed her eyes, and stopped looking at his teasing eyes.

Luke rubbed on her cherry lips with his fingertips and whispered, "Come on now..."

Bianca blushed and turned to her side so he could no longer touch her. "I hung your pajamas in the bathroom. Go take a shower."

"Okay." After he tucked her in, Luke stood up and walked to the bathroom.

Bianca heard the sound of the door closing and moments later, there was the sound of water running in the shower. She was filled with happiness. She picked up the phone on the bedside table, sent a message to Nina, and fell asleep.

The next day, Bianca returned to work and held a meeting to work out the company's development plan for the next quarter.

Halfway through the meeting, the assistant at the front desk knocked on the door and walked into the meeting room. "Ms. Rayne, Mr. Steven is looking for you outside."

"Take him to the reception room." Bianca's expression remained unchanged. She knew that Steven would come to her, but she did not expect that he would be so impatient, just like Luke had guessed.

When Luke got up in the morning, he had mentioned that Steven would be visiting Brilliant Architectural Design LLC today.

thought Steven would take some time to process it and show up in a few days when he was desperate. However, Steven made an appearance earlier than expected.

The assistant at the front desk closed the door and took Steven to the reception room as per Bianca's instructions. She passed him a cup of coffee before

continued with the meeting, and they eventually wrapped things up and

the employees left the meeting room, Nina went to Bianca and asked, "Bea, do you think he's

nodded her head and said, "Even if we had a five-hour meeting, he'd still

gave her a thumbs up. She was surprised when she received Bianca's text last night. She thought that Percy ruined things beyond repair and their partnership was as good as

go, accompany me to the meeting room." Bianca put away her laptop and walked out of the meeting room with

two went to the

was slumped on the sofa. His body occupied most of the two-seater sofa. Perhaps it was because he was getting impatient while waiting, he even took off his

frowned in disgust. 'Does he think of our office as his home?' She put on a smile and said, "Mr. Steven, sorry to keep you

*Steven* immediately put on his leather shoes, buckled the edges of the shoes with his fingers, and stood up. He tugged on his wrinkled suit before reaching his hand out while saying, "Ms. Rayne, Ms. Langdon, good **morning.**"

*Bianca* remembered that he had just fumbled with his shoes and ignored his hand. She sat across from him with Nina and said, "Steven, what can I do for *you today?*"

Steven retracted his hand in embarrassment, sat down, and smiled at Bianca and Nina. He was here to **apologize.**

*He had* not apologized to anyone since he started his business. Even after practicing several times in his heart, he could not bring himself to say **it.**

Steven was chuckling awkwardly.

**Nina** enjoyed this look of fear on Steven. It was what he deserved after he harassed them last night. She said, "Mr. Steven, why aren't you speaking? Are you here to tell us that your company has decided to work with ours? You shouldn't have made the trip here! You could've just given us a call instead of coming all the *way here.*"

**She** was being cheeky. After all, she was humiliated by Percy just because he could not control his *hands.*

Steven shook his head quickly and said, "No, I'm here to apologize to the two of you."

Bianca and Nina were both quiet.

**Steven** paused as he was not sure how to continue since they were not saying **anything**.

a deep breath and treated the coffee as alcohol. He took a sip to muster up the courage before he said, "I'm sorry that I behaved inappropriately with both of you. I hope that you can forgive me and let this and Nina shared a look and thought,

displeased and said, "Steven, do you know how much trouble your actions caused us last night? We're women hoping to secure a business partner, not bottle

you're not!" Steven said quickly, "I couldn't control myself after drinking. I mean... the two of you are really

did you just say?" Nina did not think that it was a compliment. Being drunk did not excuse

keep my mouth shut." Steven shook his head and hurriedly took out two sets of documents from his bag. "Ms. Rayne, should we proceed with signing the

picked up a copy and took a look at it. It was the contract that they had previously discussed. She flipped through it and looked up at him suspiciously. "Are you

thought about it and I believe that the design concept of Brilliant Architectural Design LLC is compatible with St. Heckler. Ms. Rayne, I sincerely want to work with your firm." Steven gave a

and replied, "Steven, why do you suddenly want to cooperate with our company? If I remember correctly, Ms. Rayne's husband sent you a lawyer's letter yesterday. Is that why you're

had laid it all out, Steven could do nothing but smile and say, "Ms. Langdon, you're a smart woman. There are some things that we don't need to be so direct about,

## **Chapter 966**

"What's the number that you have in mind?" Steven wailed in his heart and was prepared to be slaughtered.

"How about a five percent increase?" Nina said the price that she and Bianca had discussed.

They were businesswomen. They could not afford to be soft-hearted when faced with men like him. They also wanted to teach him a lesson.

Steven felt his heart ache. A five percent increase would mean that the planned budget would burst. He wanted to try his luck and said, "Ms. Langdon, isn't five percent a little too much?"

"It is, but if you were seeking cooperation with T Corporation, their asking price will be more than this." Nina smiled, showing no sympathy for him.

Steven gritted his teeth. He knew that she mentioned T Corporation on purpose.

Nina added, "What's more, leaving aside the partnership, if you go to court, you have to compensate and lose much more than that."

When Steven left Shandra's law firm last night, she had mentioned that if he went to court, he was doomed to lose. Due to the other party's identity and status, the amount he had to compensate would be about the same as the price Nina was currently proposing.

If he compromised, he could still get something out of it and his reputation would not be damaged. After weighing his options, Steven agreed to their request. "Okay, let's go with a five percent increase."

Bianca asked the front desk assistant to come in.

The assistant opened the door and walked in.

her, "Print two copies of the contract with St. Heckler. The price needs to be revised, please increase the original price by five

give me a moment." The assistant nodded and made the necessary changes. After a while, she printed the contracts and sent them to the

Bianca took them, the paper was still hot. She put the two contracts on the solid wood coffee table and said, "Steven, have a read. If there are no concerns, let's sign the

at the price and did his best to keep his cool. It was a big loss and he would need to figure out how to explain it at work. He had always exploited others but for the first time, he was exploited by

originally looked down on women, now deeply regretted

took a closer look at the terms of the contract, confirmed that they were the same, and signed his name on the last page of the

also signed her name. She handed one of the copies to the assistant and said, "Put it on my

Rayne." The assistant took it and walked

heart was bleeding. Seeing that he had things sorted, he confirmed with her again. "Ms. Rayne, the lawyer's

keep the lawyer's letter. I'll inform Mr. Walter to stop pursuing the case. You can rest assured." Seeing that they were done, Bianca stood up and wanted to shoo him off. "Steven, thank you for choosing us. We'll make sure that you'll be satisfied with the

"**Happy to** do business with you, I won't take any more of your time. Good day." Steven was crying and mourning in his heart, but he had to put on a smile and leave the office with the contract in *his hand*.

*After Steven* left, Bianca returned to her office, took out her phone, and sent Luke a message to update him on the matter. She also asked him to contact Walter *Long*.

**Nina** opened the door and walked in while praising Bianca. "As usual, I'm impressed. Our financial reports will **look great**."

Bianca looked at Luke's brief reply and guessed that he was busy. She put the phone away and looked at her friend. "This contract has always belonged to our **company**."

If it were not for what had happened, they would have already started *designing*.

Nina nodded in agreement and sat on the chair opposite Bianca, saying, "By the way, this project seems to be quite large. Do you plan to work on it **yourself**?"

"I plan to give the newbies a chance. I'll lead this project, but the newbies will be responsible for the main design. I want to spend more time with the kids." Bianca smiled as she thought of her three *angels*.

"*Alright*." Nina nodded. Bianca's kids were still young. If she had to take care of all the projects, there would be a lot less time for her to take care **of them**.

Nina asked, "Do you have anyone *in mind*?"

**Bianca thought** about it for a while and said, "I want Sue and Shireen to be involved. I think Shireen's designs *are good*."

and agreed. "Although Shireen only started working not too long ago, she's talented. Even Mr. Yarbrough, who's infamous for being difficult, was impressed with

"Let's proceed with

nodded and sat in a comfortable position with her legs crossed. "By the way, do you know who I bumped into when I went

kept the contract in the

"Hera Sanchez, the school

She knew who Nina was talking about.

she's living a good life and probably went for plastic surgery. Why did the universe allow such a horrible woman to live such a good life?" Nina sighed. When she saw Hera yesterday, she was signing up for a VIP membership. She was generous and directly handed the credit card to the clerk without

time I went on my honeymoon with Luke, I also saw her. She was with her boyfriend." Bianca thought of the fat and greasy man named

me guess, is he a local tyrant?" Nina

Bianca was not interested, especially when Harvey did what he did when Hera was taken away by the immigration

## **Chapter 967**

Nina looked at her and asked with a bright smile on her face, "What's the matter?"

Bianca smiled and replied, "It's nothing. It's just that you should be more mindful in situations like these. I don't want Mr. Mallory to misunderstand."

She felt bad that Steven affected their relationship.

Nina said cheekily, "Don't worry, not every man is a piece of trash like Steven." She muttered in her heart, 'Who is Percy to misunderstand anything?' She had no feelings for Percy.

Sue and Shireen knocked on the door and walked in. Both of them were holding their laptops.

Nina waved her hand and said, "I'll go prepare for my meeting."

Sue watched Nina close the door and asked curiously, "Ms. Rayne, what does Ms. Langdon need to prepare for?"

"A business meeting. Sit down." Bianca gestured to the chairs opposite of her.

Sue and Shireen sat down.

straight to the point. "Our company has secured the partnership with St. Heckler Hotel. I want you two to take charge of the design. Do you have

been in the workplace for many years, so she had no objections and said, "I have no problem with

a little surprised and said, "Ms. Rayne, this project is a huge one. I'm still a newbie in the

concept is unique. I've seen the plans you designed for our clients. I believe in you, and Sue will be there to guide you. There's no need to worry." Bianca expressed her trust in Shireen and believed that she was making the right

was moved by Bianca's trust in her. Since Bianca had said so, she happily accepted the responsibility. "I'll do my best on

considered a newcomer and had less than one year of working experience. Shireen was honored to be able to participate in such a big project

noded with satisfaction and then exhorted, "The developer has given us plenty of time. You can take your time and discuss the theoretical plan before you start with the design. Although we're not that big of a company, you're free to scout for the manpower you need. Any

was the first to answer. After working in T Corporation for so many years, she was calm when faced with new projects, no matter how big

on the projector and said, "Okay, let's have a meeting now to discuss the basic

"Okay." Sue turned on her laptop and **the recorder**.

*Halfway through* the meeting, there was a loud noise outside.

**Bianca** stopped talking and listened to the noise.

"Nina! Where's Nina?!" An annoying female voice sounded *from outside*.

"Who's that?" Sue frowned.

"It's Nina's mother," Bianca replied faintly. She recognized the voice and stood up. "I'll check it out."

"I'll go too." Sue followed her. The relationship between the three of them was more than that of colleagues. They all sincerely cared about each **other**.

Bianca pushed open the door of the office, only to see Nina with her back facing them. She was trying to persuade her mom. "Mom, please *leave*."

immediately noticed Bianca, whom she had not seen for a long time. She was furious when she noticed how great Bianca looked and recalled that she sent Jean to jail. She refused to back down and shouted, "Why are you asking me to leave? You're never home! Do you think you can ignore us just because you have a great job? Nina, I'm telling you, don't even think about it! Your dad and I worked so hard to raise you. Now that you're living a good life, how could you be so unfilial to us? I'll let everyone in your company know the kind of person you

was tearing up. She thought that her mom was just making empty threats previously. She did not expect that Anna would actually show up in

avored Jean and often said that he needed to eat and dress well so that he would not lose the respect that

was nothing but an ATM

not help herself and yelled, "Haven't you caused enough trouble? This is a public place. You'll be kicked out by the security guards if you continue to disrupt my

Anna heard this, she furiously said, "You dare to have them kick me out? What did I do? I'm here to ask you for money because your father and I are starving. We can't even afford a simple meal. How can you say things like

no longer stay on the sidelines. She was well aware of Nina's situation; it was nothing like Anna had just

was filial and gave most of her wages to help her family, but Anna was a big spender and was never satisfied no matter how much Nina gave

forward and said, "Aunt Anna, this is my company. Nina has some work to attend to in a while. Would you like to go to the reception room for a cup of

## **Chapter 968**

Anna's face turned beet-red when she heard Nina's words, and she became more agitated. She could not bear to hear anyone talking bad about her favorite son after he went to prison.

She tried to claw Nina's face, "What are you saying, you miserable wretch? He is your brother. I'll teach you a lesson on behalf of your ancestors."

Nina dodged the attack while tears slid down her face. "If my ancestors knew what Jean did, they'd teach him a lesson first."

Jean had to go to prison for what he had done, but Nina had to clean up the mess that he left.

Nina had suffered for the past few years, and she could no longer pretend that she was fine about it.

Seeing that the situation was uncontrollable, Bianca told her assistant, "Get security."

When Anna heard that, she stopped attacking Nina and glared at Bianca. "How dare you!"



"You are in an office now, Mrs. Langdon. You are causing a disturbance to our work. I'm only calling the security and not the police because you are Nina's mother. If you continue to disturb us, I will call the police," Bianca warned the woman while shielding Nina behind her.

Anna would have complied if she was reasonable. Unfortunately, there was no use reasoning with her.

Even though Bianca was not part of the Langdon family, she was nonetheless disheartened by Anna's attitude toward Nina. She felt sorry for Nina, and at the same time understood that Jean's personality was largely shaped by Anna's doting.

"Very well." Anna pointed at Nina's nose. "Do you think that you're fine if someone is protecting you? Even if they throw me out of the building, I'll sit there and tell every passer-by how cruel you are to me!"

She only wanted money and nothing else.

was angered by the threat. She wiped away her tears and pointed at the door. "Suit yourself. You can tell everyone the entire story and let them know how warped you are.

guards happened to hear that when they came over. They instantly identified the troublemaker and grabbed her by her arms. "Sorry, Ms. Rayne. This is our oversight," they

to struggle and kick even though her arms were restrained. One of her shoes flew off her foot. "Nina, you heartless wretch, is that how you treat your

her eyes in shame. The most fragile part of her personality had been exposed. "Take

security guards began to carry

"You wretch, you ingrate, I won't..."

curses abruptly stopped, and she passed

security guards were shocked. They instantly put her on the floor and looked at each other. "It's... it's not our fault. We didn't do anything to her. She passed out

stepped forward to take a closer look. Anna was perspiring hard, and her face was deathly pale. She did not look like she was faking it. After detecting her pulse, Bianca turned her head around and told Nina, "Call the

flustered when she saw her mother pass out. She came to her senses and quickly dialed for

brief moment of chaos, the ambulance brought Anna to the hospital while Nina

Sue sighed and said, "Poor Nina."

With a family like that, no wonder she had to rely on Percy. Sue wondered how many more secrets did Nina's fragile little **frame bore**.

**Bianca turned** around to address the employees, "Let's get back to work. Also, that is the end of that incident. No one shall talk about it in **the company**."

*She knew* that Nina had tried to keep her family matters out **of work**.

"Yes," Shireen was the first to reply.

"Let's continue our meeting," Bianca told Sue and *Shireen*.

"Alright." Sue nodded. She shot a glance at Shireen and went to *Bianca's office*.

In the late afternoon, Bianca received a call from Nina. While in the hospital, Anna had slapped Nina, which caused her to knock on the wall and pass out. She had only regained consciousness not *long ago*.

*Bianca* instantly gave a call to Luke and told him about what happened to Nina. Then, she asked him if he could pick up the children from school.

*Luke replied*, "I'll go to the hospital with you. The driver will pick up Lanie and Rainie."

"Alright." Bianca thought that it would be a good idea for Luke to come along with her, so she waited for him in the office.

wanted to visit Nina in the hospital, but the babysitter called her to say that Teri had fallen sick. She had to go home and take care of her

an hour later, Luke's car

sat on the side passenger seat. Seeing that he was about to drive the car to the hospital, she said, "Should we drop by Nina's house? I'd like to pack some clothes and toiletries for

sounded weak over the phone. She had to be hospitalized for a few days, and she would need those items for her daily

prepare that for her," Luke

thinking that Percy would not be so

also buy those things at the convenience store at the hospital. If she really needs anything, you can buy it for her at the supermarket downstairs,"

as he knew, Nina was staying in Percy's mansion. The mansion and the hospital were on opposite sides of the city, and it would be nighttime by the time they reached the hospital if they went to the

"Alright." Bianca nodded.

phone started ringing; it was from the

Lanie and Rainie want to talk to you," the driver handed his phone to the children in the back seat. He had just picked them up

## **Chapter 969**

Bianca understood instantly. She was also reminded of Louis's new business venture. Everyone in the Crawford family objected to it, and Old Master Crawford was even begging him to find employment in T Corporation.

Only Luke and Bianca did not object. After all, that was Louis's decision. "How is Louis's studio coming along?" She asked.

"I've heard that he managed to find enough partners. They're looking for office space now." Luke had been keeping a close eye on Louis's progress, though he tried not to interfere.

Bianca nodded. She understood that it was not easy for Louis to start his business without any help from the family. "Then we should help him wherever we can. Speaking of office space, the tenant above my office moved out not long ago. Do you want to tell Louis that?"

"I'll mention it to him tonight." Luke also thought that the location of the office was ideal and the rental was reasonable. "You're so kind, Bea," he smiled and said.

"Louis is your younger brother, and we're family. Shouldn't we help each other out?" Bianca said.

The Crawfords might occasionally make Bianca's life difficult, but Louis had never done that. He had always treated Bianca with the respect she deserved.

"You're right," Luke said emotionally. Even though Allison and Susan did not see each other eye to eye, he and Louis had always been close siblings.

"If you're free, you should try finding out Thea's measurements," he said.

Bianca could instantly guess what he was thinking. "Alright. After I get the measurements, I'll contact the tailor. I wouldn't want his daughter to lose faith in him."

They guessed that Louis would be too busy with his new venture and forget about his promise to his daughter. Also, they did not mention how Thea had torn Rainie's ballet dress.

Bianca thought that she could not ask Yuri about Thea's measurements. Yuri was an egotistical person, and she would not want to accept help from Bianca or Luke. Louis, on the other hand, was a careless man, and Bianca guessed that he would not know his daughter's measurements.

of secretly taking Thea's measurements later that weekend when they would go back to Crawford Manor. She was the one who bought her children's clothes, and she could estimate Thea's measurements more or

"Mm." Luke nodded.

hospital, Bianca and Luke bought a fruit basket in the supermarket downstairs, as well as some

was already thin, and Bianca thought that she would be losing weight in her stay in the hospital. She felt a little sorry

herself lucky to have married Luke. On the other hand, Nina could not escape her past and was a shell of her former cheerful

the fruit basket, while Bianca carried the relatively lighter supplements. They went to the reception to enquire about Nina's ward before heading

in a ward with two other patients. When they went in, the families of the two other patients were there. It was

Nina's bed was closest to the window. She lay there with her eyes closed and not moving, seemingly

heart wrenched as she placed the items on the cabinet next to

was not asleep. She opened her eyes when she heard the sounds next to her and smiled when she saw that it was Bianca. "Why did you come, Bianca, and you too,

not expect that they would come and visit her, and she felt that she had

Bianca noticed that Nina's forehead was wrapped in bandages. She sat down on the chair beside the bed and placed her hand on Nina's hands. "Does **it hurt?**"

Nina shook her head. "I'm fine. I'll just have to stay here for a few more days. You don't have to worry *about me.*"

Bianca sighed and turned her head to look at Luke.

"**I'll go** and have a smoke." Luke gave the two women some **private space.**

"Mm." Bianca nodded. After the man left, she drew the curtains around the bed to block the prying eyes of the other people in the ward. "Are you hurt *anywhere else?*"

"I bumped my forehead, that's all. I got a few stitches. The doctor also said that my leg was injured, but it's nothing too serious. I'll be out of the hospital in a few days. You don't have to be like that." Nina felt apologetic when she saw how Bianca cared for her.

"*You must've* gotten a concussion. You'd better not get out of bed today then." Bianca knew that the hard way that a concussion was no trivial *matter.*

"*The doctor* told me that." Nina's heart warmed when she heard Bianca's **advice.**

Earlier, she felt useless as she was lying on the bed. Nobody showed any concern to her, as though she had never existed in **the world.**

*She was* bothered by the noise next to her, though it made her unable to *sleep.*

She could not ask them to keep it down. After all, it was visiting hours.

sighed when she saw the faint smile on

you get a glass of water for me, Bea? I'm thirsty."

up, poured a glass of warm water for her, and found a straw. "Luckily, Mr. Mallory prepared all these for you. It'd be

Nina laughed dryly.

wrong?" Bianca turned to look at

thought of something and continued asking before Nina could reply. "Didn't Mr. Mallory come to visit? Does he know that you're in

her head and instantly felt the pain on her forehead. She tried to bear it, but tears welled up in her move..." Bianca sat down next to her and brought the straw to her

emptied more than half of the glass before saying, "I'm not that close to him, Bea. That's why I didn't tell  
sighed again and felt genuinely sorry  
planning to tell anyone that you're in the hospital? You can't get off the bed, and there's no one to take  
care of you. That

## **Chapter 970**

"But..." Bianca hesitated.

"Don't worry, Nina. All you have to do now is to take care of yourself and get well soon. Where is your  
ID? I'll handle the procedure for you," Bianca said determinedly, not giving Nina any chance to think  
twice.

She respected Nina's decision not to tell Percy, but she would take care of Nina's other needs.

Nina pointed at the bedside cabinet. "It's in the second drawer."

Bianca opened the second drawer and found her ID. "Hold on for a while. I'll get it done for you."

Nina watched Bianca step past the curtains and disappear from view. She sighed.

Other than money, there was another reason why Nina chose to be warded in a triple-bedder. There  
were other people in the ward; it disturbed her peace, but it made her feel good.

With so many people going in and out of the ward, she would be distracted by the noise, so she felt less  
lonely.

Meanwhile, Maxine walked domineeringly along the corridor of the plastic surgery department on  
another floor of the hospital, followed by two bodyguards. She pushed open every door and ignored the  
nurses' questions.

She did not find the person she was looking for, so she went to the next ward. There were three women  
inside. Two of them were recuperating from the surgery earlier that day, while the third was Hera  
Sanchez, who was warded only today.

"Ms... Douglas?" Hera opened her eyes wide. How did Maxine find her?

her head and said brusquely to the nurse, "Hear that? We know

thought that it seemed to be the case, though she warned Maxine, "Please keep it down. You're in

why Maxine was looking for her. She had changed her number and laid low in another city for a while to  
evade Maxine. She only came back because she thought that the coast was

not expect Maxine to find her only a day after she came

not understand why a mere sugar baby could be so

shot a glare at the nurse, then turned toward Hera and smiled sinisterly. "I've been looking for you for a  
long time, Hera

was on a business trip away from A City, Ms. Douglas. Why were you looking for me?" Hera smiled and pretended to be oblivious, though she was cursing in her

not expect that Maxine was not a fool. Maxine had tried to get people to abduct her the day after the transaction. Fortunately, she was smart enough not to be cornered by those burly men. After finding out that Maxine was hunting for her, she instantly escaped to another

an idiot would stay there and wait for disaster to strike

Does your business trip require you to change your phone number? You're messing with the wrong person, Hera Sanchez," Maxine walked over and towered

"I was overseas, so I replaced my SIM card," Hera *lied*.

"Enough nonsense. Tell me, what do you have to say about the information you gave me?" Maxine said impatiently and glared at **Hera disdainfully**.

She accessed the USB drive the moment after she got home. It was indeed full of Bianca's dirt, but there was no direct evidence.

*There were* no recordings, and the photos were proven to be edited. She could not use them against *Bianca*.

*Maxine* was not an idiot. She knew that Hera did that only for profit, so she tried to find someone to **detain her**.

Hera managed to avoid her detection and seemed to have disappeared from A City. It was only when Maxine noticed Hera made a credit card transaction that she knew that Hera was back in **A City!**

"**Calm** down, Ms. Douglas. There are other people here." Hera pointed at the two other beds. The faces of the women on those beds were completely wrapped in **bandages**.

**Maxine** considered Luke's popularity and pointed at Hera's nose. "Get out of **the room**."

Hera could only comply.

**The two** women went to the end of the corridor. It was quiet there, perhaps because people who had undergone plastic surgery did not move about.

glared at Hera, then at the elevator. "Don't think of doing anything stupid, Hera Sanchez. My men are in the direction of her finger and noticed several burly men stationed there. She was

is this Maxine? Why does she seem so capable?' She thought in

told you everything I know, Ms. Douglas," Hera said, secretly wary of Maxine. If the contents of the USB drive could not deceive her, it meant that she was

had known that it was not so easy making money from Maxine, she would not have done so in the first

late. What else can you possibly know? Give me back all my money, plus interest." Maxine was not short on money, but she did not want to benefit that person. If Hera actually had any dirt on Bianca, she would have given that to her in the first

became nervous when she heard that. She had already spent all the money repaying her debts and paying for the plastic surgery. "Ms. Douglas, don't you want more dirt on Bianca Rayne? I

you have are fantasy stories! Do you think that Luke Crawford is an idiot? He won't be deceived by any claims without evidence. I've also heard that you had a crush on him when you were in high school. Do you think that you can snatch him while I'm dealing with Bianca?" Maxine grabbed Hera's

thought of that, but she did not admit to it. "No, someone as noble as Luke can only be a match for you. I've never even thought

her eyes, thinking that Luke would not be interested in a woman as artificial as