

Warning My Mommy is A Savage! by Seeking A Peaceful

Chapter 170-200

Chapter 170

HollyOak Entertainment was the top dog in the industry. Where would their artists go if they terminated their contracts?

The assistant quavered from head to toe before she inhaled deeply and added, "Charmine just tweeted... Miss Milan... I think you should look at it yourself..."

She was too terrified to break the news.

Kelly immediately took out her phone and checked Twitter. There it was; Charmine's tweet that read,

(Hollyoak and Fortune Entertainment have formed an alliance to crush me. Haha! You're foolish to think that you can destroy me. Within ten days, whoever signs with RisingHawk will get a whole hundred percent of their earnings, and you even get to decide the terms of your contract. For those who decided to work with my company, you'll get a Dovegg diamond ring, limited to the first ninety-nine people!)

Though she was basically blown off from the internet and the tweet did not become one of the trending posts, Charmine still had her dedicated fans to viral her post. Of course, the comment section quickly exploded.

[Boss Jordan is da boss! Show 'em whatcha got!]

(Even being the lowest quality diamond, a DovEgg would cost a few hundred thousand. Ninety -nine DovEggs???? That's just insane!!)

(Boss Jordan, are you hiring? I could be a janitor. I don't need a whole diamond ring, just throw me some scraps!)

What was even more infuriating was that Charmine followed up with another tweet.

(Whoever retweets my tweet will stand a chance to win a house in the city of your choice.)

That was too good of a deal to pass up. The property value in the city was insanely high; a square foot could easily cost five figures. To get a new house basically meant getting rich quick!

All too soon, everybody retweeted Charmine's post. Just like that, Charmine was trending online once more. 2

Kelly scowled; the blood in her veins ran like lava. Was Charmine crazy? She was burning through her fortune to start a war with them!

Understandably, Claire panicked. “Miss Milan? What do we do now? If all our artists leave, we’re doomed!”

“You don’t say. Aren’t you the crisis expert? Deal with this right now!” Kelly commanded coldly.

Claire was flabbergasted. What could they possibly do now?

Right at that moment, many of HollyOak’s artists barged into the room. They all said the same thing, “I want to terminate my contract. Right now!”

Under Hollyoak, these artists earned 40 percent from their work and yet still had to pay their managers and assistants. If the full payment was 50 million, they would only get 15 million.

If they signed with RisingHawk, they would get a full 50 million! Even after deducting their team salaries, they would still earn a lot more than staying at Hollyoak.

In an attempt to resolve the situation, Claire spoke up, “Don’t you remember the terms of your contract? Breaching the contract means you’d have to compensate the company for one billion! Can you afford it?”

“Charmine said that she could pay that for us first!” one artist snapped back.

That one reply instantly shut Claire up. She looked over to Kelly helplessly.

This was her first time dealing with such a mess. She was at a loss of words.

“Stop looking at me!” snapped Kelly. “I merely threw money into the company! Where is the chairman? Where is he? He needs to step out and deal with this sh*t!”

“There’s no need for that! We want to terminate our contracts no matter what! We even brought the money!”

The artists threw their contracts on the table one after another. “Sign it, and we’ll pay you right now. You can instantly make a fortune with so many billions.”

Kelly was livid. She could hardly believe what was happening.

Charmine had even lent them money to pay for these artists’ penalties! Kelly needed an escape plan, and fast!

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Kelly's eyes burned with anger as a million thoughts raced in her mind; she struggled to find the best answer for her difficult predicament. It did not take long before she growled, "I don't have the company's seal with me. The chairman took it. We'll talk about this later."

Kelly did not wait for a reply as she walked toward the door.

The celebrities in the room immediately sprang into action as they blocked her way. "You can't leave! You're the largest shareholder of the company, and we'll only be needing your signature!"

"You've been taking advantage of us for a long time! We have money with us this time, so why won't you just sign the paper?"

"Sign the papers! You can't leave if you don't sign them!"

They effectively barricaded her exit.

Left with no other choice, Kelly yelled, "Security! Security!"

Just like that, securities barged in and Claire stepped forward to protect Kelly from the mob. They eventually made it out, though not without a scuffle.

Both of them were a mess after that commotion. Their outfits and hair were messed up as though they had been in a warzone.

Claire straightened her outfit once they got into a car and sighed in relief. "Thank god you were smart. Things could've turned very ugly back there!"

"Hmph! Charmine would be naive if she thought her little stunt could put me down that easily. Call every high-level personnel. Nobody is going back to the company, and nobody will sign those bloody termination papers!"

"Roger that."

With that, all the artists could do was to wait at the company. They could only hope that some managers would somehow appear and sign their termination papers.

Kelly needed to defuse the company's crisis before she could deal with Charmine.

Charmine received the news as she was watching Chris do his homework.

She walked out to the balcony to answer Eric's call. "No biggie." Charmine chuckled. "Even if they couldn't terminate their contracts, we've achieved our goal, no?"

Eric frowned. 'What goal? Oh, of course. Their initial goal to ostracize Charmine.'

After Charmine's tweet, both companies should be busy dealing with their internal crisis. They would not have the time to bother Charmine.

Many parties were afraid that Charmine would monopolise the industry. If they were to boycott her at the moment, all their artists would flock to RisingHawk.

Moreover, her company was handing out Dovegg diamond rings! Every artist placed profits first in their priority list. Even if others were loaded with cash, they would be idiots to turn down a free diamond ring.

All of a sudden, everyone started sending her offers in hopes they could work with her again.

"One stone, two birds. Not bad. I've screened through all endorsement invites and made the first round of selection, so you can choose from there," commented Eric. "Now that Tiffany is out, it's time for you to rise and conquer the market."

"Don't worry. When she's back, I'll make sure she has no place in the industry." Her luscious lips curled into an alluring grin as she hung up the call.

In just a few seconds, Eric sent her a list of well-known brands from various industries like cosmetics, fashion, eyewear, and the likes. He then added in his notification to her that read, [Amor Group's shooting location is at Greenwish Park, close to the Phoenix Hotel. You'll be staying there for a night.)

Charmine could not help but trembled when she read the name of that hotel: Phoenix Hotel.

It had been five years. Could she face the ghost of her past?

Perhaps she could find leads of what actually went down at that time.

She regained her composure and started to research about Amor Group.

Amor Group was one of the most popular brands in the fashion industry. Their niche was on bridal gowns and their designers were very professional and dedicated. Tiffany used to be their ambassador.

Tiffany had a sculpted figure and a graceful temperament, just like a princess out of a fairytale. Her regal bearings captivated the hearts of many fans.

Charmine smirked. She must replace Tiffany, no matter what. She convinced herself that she was strong enough to handle one night in Phoenix Hotel.

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Charmine then sent an ultimatum to Eric: (It's a yes to the Amor Group.) Eric instantly made

the arrangements after Charmine's answer.

Charmine then walked back inside from the balcony after the matter was settled, and she saw Momo staring blankly at his book on the table. It seemed as though he was troubled.

Charmine then walked toward the boy, When she got close enough, she gently asked, "What's wrong, Momo? Do you need help?"

"Mm... Momo needs to write about 'family'. Momo needs to write about Daddy, Mommy, Grandpa, and Grandma. Momo has Mommy, but Momo doesn't have a...grandpa and a grandma," muttered Momo, a deep frown on his face as he spoke.

Charmine was puzzled at the boy's answer. "You sure Momo? That can't be. Mommy remembers my Momo having awesome Grandpa and Grandma."

She knew that Chris' grandfather was from a family of doctors. He was renowned for his medical skills and had come a long way with awards throughout the years. His wife, Chris' grandmother, was born into a family that specialized in perfume-making. They were highly knowledgeable in crafting fragrances, and they even had one of the signature perfumes sold at a nine-digit price tag.

"Still, they don't seem to love Momo..." Momo trailed off, his reply sounded rather weak and sad.

Charmine's brows were raised; this was the first time that she heard Momo speaking in such a manner. "Look, Momo. Everyone loves Momo because Momo is a lovely kid, do you hear me?"

Any shred of happiness on Chris' face began to fade as he muttered, "Grandpa and Grandma don't like Momo. They said my mommy was a bad woman, so they think Momo isn't a good kid too. They also said Momo is a jinx and won't live past the age of eight..."

Charmine's heart wilted at the sight of a saddened Momo. She quickly carried Momo into her arms and said, "My Momo is the cutest and most obedient baby in the world. If my Momo, it means they have problems with themselves. Of course, my Momo can surely recover. God loves Momo as Mommy does. He'll surely let you live for a hundred years. Let's not listen to what people say about us, okay?"

With innocent eyes, he stared at Charmine and said, "Really? Momo isn't a jinx?"

Charmine stroked his hair and assured, "Of course! Momo's always the best. Promise Mommy that Momo will never get upset because of what others told you, okay? Always remember that you're born to live for yourself, even if others don't recognize you for who you are. By the day that you're strong and powerful to get back on your feet, they'll regret everything they've done to you."

"Yes, Mommy. I promise!" He joyfully bounced in her arms, and the usual cheerful disposition returned. Joy was once more reignited in his eyes as his lips spread into an adorable smile.

"Good boy. Now, quickly finish your homework. Momo can write about Daddy and Mommy. As for the part about Grandpa and Grandma, well, just write about them in shorter sentences," advised Charmine.

"Yes, Mom!" He left her arms and quickly went back to the table for his homework.

Her heart felt like it was clenching when she looked at him.

He was just a five-year-old boy, but he was already working hard on Grade 4's homework during this summer holiday. She thought the children from the Bailey family were always born with a silver spoon in their mouth. 1

Who would have thought that Momo-a member of the Baileys-did not even have a mom, not to mention the unfair treatment from his grandparents.

The more she dwelled on the thought, the more she felt sorry for Momo.

'It had to be because of his seizure. Looks like I'll have to talk with Anthony.'

"Mommy will go and have some fruits for Momo. You stay here with your homework, okay?" she spoke as she headed upstairs.

In the room, Anthony was working at his desk with eyes narrowed in focus.

She was awestruck by his look. This was the first time she saw him in such a solemn aura. He had all the beauty a man could possess though not for his features, yet for the light in his eyes and the gentle warmth of his soul. Anthony raised his head as she knocked on the door. "Come in," he invited.

Chapter 173 Charmine walked into the study room and sat on the couch.

"I'm here to ask about Momo's grandparents," she began. "Momo has said some things to me about them. Why did it sound like they dislike him? I thought his seizure is related to this. If we were to get him healed, we need to first get rid of his troubles that affect the heart."

Logically, the child-Chris-would still be Anthony's even if it was through in vitro fertilization surrogacy. The child would still be the Baileys'. His grandparents had no reason to hate on him.

Anthony's face sunken while he thought of this. The world thought that the child was birthed through surrogacy, but he was not.

Five years ago, Anthony-under the influence of drugs-slept with a girl in the Royal Banquet Hotel

The upper class viewed it as 'shameless', and Anthony's grandparents and parents were utterly repulsed by the girl he slept with.

Anthony could still make out the image of that girl: soft, sweet, and delicate like a little bunny. He could not help but fall for her.

After the incident, he searched everywhere he could, high and low... All to no avail.

He managed to find Chris in that same year during one fateful winter, in a mortuary, and the poor infant was with weak breath. His heart clenched in sympathy and he decided to bring Chris home. Chris managed to survive as he was placed in an incubator.

Anthony later on found out that he was his son, flesh and blood, during a blood transfusion.

Anthony was all too sure that the same girl was the mother; she was the only one who he had slept with. The incident then led to a cat-and-dog life among the Bailey family members.

Everyone thought that the child would bring hardship to the family because he was ill; they believed the mother was a jinx. Some even held the belief that the girl wanted to take advantage of the Bailey family.

The Baileys were always so smart, wealthy, and aristocratic. That was why having Chris in their family was a shame to the family name. The idea of Anthony having Chris by his side aroused strong opposition from the family. Their distaste for the boy made them pressure Anthony to send him overseas.

Anthony fought against all odds to keep Chris by his side, and it was because of this that would not visit the family's residence.

Charmine's question made Anthony tongue-tied. Should he tell her that Chris was his, no IVF involved? Should he tell her that Chris was the fruit of his and another girl's relationship?

Would she be able to accept his past affair? He feared the truth would only make her hate him.

“It’s not a big deal. They’re just old-minded, conservatives against the idea of an IVF surrogate child,” he replied as he sipped his coffee. “Momo had been having seizures since he was born, and the elders thought he was a jinx because of that.”

‘Is that really all?’ Charmine frowned and continued, “Mr. Bailey, you still have to sort this out. It’s bad enough that Momo grew up without a mother figure, and it doesn’t help that his grandparents dislike him. How can he even bear such a burden at this age? A child who grows up with his father isn’t enough... He needs a proper family.”

Anthony eventually nodded. “You’re right, Ms. Jordan. I’ll have a talk with the elders, see if I can change their perspective on the matter.”

Charmine knew Anthony was a man of his word. She then left at ease to get Chris a fruit platter.

It was only after Charmine left did Anthony allow his worries to roam free.

‘What if Charmine knew about my past? Will she still get along happily with me? 1 ‘What if she finds out about the girl? What should I do?’ 1

Overwhelmed with doubts and questions, he took up his cellphone and sent a text through WhatsApp.

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Anthony sent a text to Luke that read, (Find that girl, ASAP.)

He had to at least know the girl’s identity so he could offer her compensation, all so she would never again stumble into his life.

His, and Charmine’s.

The girl might plan to persuade members of his family to accept Momo as quickly as possible if she behaved well to their liking. She might even earn their trust and love.

Not wanting to think twice, Anthony posted some of Chris’ photos into his feed.

“Wow! What got into you, Bro? You never updated your feed since you registered your account, and now you’re updating it?” asked Nial in surprise.

His feed was instantly flooded with comments.

(Momo is all grown up! So cute!) commented Aunt Mary.

(He looks like a smaller version of Anthony. Sigh! How good would it be if his mother was McKenzie.) Mrs. Bailey commented.

[Stop being disgraceful to the family with these photos!] commented Mr. Bailey.

Anthony

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ed the notifications before he resumed his work.

Morning came soon enough.

Charmine got out of bed while Chris was still sleeping.

Today's photoshoot was at Greenwish Park for the bridal endorsement. She planned to visit Phoenix Hotel right after the photoshoot to investigate the incident from five years ago.

She kissed Chris on his little cheek and went out, followed by Anthony.

"Take good care of Momo. Tell him that I'll be back tomorrow afternoon," said Charmine.

"I'll have Luke send you there." Anthony took out his phone and was about to text Luke.

"It's okay. It's just a short photoshoot session. I'll just go with my trusty Kawasaki," said Charmine as she walked through the door.

Anthony accompanied her to the car park and, before she left, advised, "Drive safe."

"Don't worry, I'm good on the roads. Take good care of Momo." Once she secured the helmet on her head, she promptly left the residence.

Eyeing him in her rearview mirror, Charmine's curled into a small smile.

It felt rather good to have someone sending her off to work

"Get someone to protect her secretly. Today, I'll go to the Royal Banquet Bar for the investigation by myself," instructed Anthony in his call with Luke after he sent Charmine out of his sight.

"Yes Sir."

Situated in the middle of nowhere, the prehistoric-themed Greenwish Park was decorated with everything that was expected-pavilions and bridges along a river. Entry

to the park would usually come with a fee, but the entire park was booked by Amor Group for shooting today.

The company even reserved a room at Phoenix Hotel for Charmine's team.

Stopping by at the hotel's lobby, her mind wandered back to five years ago.

Those years were a nightmare. Phoenix Hotel was the place where she lost her virginity. Like a shy wallflower that busted out of its shell, the incident made a 180-degree change to her life.

She was no hypocrite, but she was aware that the world had no tolerance for this.

A woman who has been raped and went under an abortion... Everyone would have spat on her. The incident would stay with her for the rest of her life and forever be her Achilles' heel. 3 Suddenly... "You're here, Charmine," a gentle voice pulled her out of her thoughts.

Chapter 175

Charmine turned her head and saw it was Amor Group's founder and designer, McAmor Houston.

An independent 25-year-old woman, McAmor Houston was from one of the prominent families in Shelburne, and she founded her bridal business when she was just 16. With only nine years' time, she was able to make Amor Group the top bridal brand.

Alas, she was not the cream of the crop in the Houstons. That would be the eldest daughter, McKenzie.

Ranging from languages to arts, finance investment to even stitching or pottery, McKenzie was a jack-of-all-trades. She was the golden girl.

It was also said that McKenzie was the Baileys' approved daughter-in-law, a match made in heaven with Anthony.

Charmine's heart went susceptible to jealousy when she thought of this.

"The makeup artist is already in the make up room waiting for you," said McAmor, humbly yet nobly at the same time.

"Okay." Charmine followed the assistant to the room located on the first floor.

There were various cosmetics products displayed on the dressing table while the wardrobe was filled with different kinds of bridal gowns.

The room was slightly different from that one room five years ago, and this could mainly be the crux of the matter if Charmine was to get the clue for the incident.

“Could you please share with me the photoshoot theme for today?” asked Charmine.

“Today is mainly on outfit-testing and styling,” explained the assistant, “and we’ll go with a laid-back themed photoshoot under the sunset setting. Tomorrow, we’ll do it during sunrise and voila, it’ll be a wrap!”

“Alright,” said Charmine, and the team began to prep her for the day.

“Steep more of yourself in Ms. Jordan’s styling to fit in her strong charisma. She can definitely pull off our outfit,” commanded McAmor to the stylist.

Turning around to Charmine, McAmor continued, “Today’s theme is a little bit different. Guci is always loud and vibrant, but today’s focuses on the fineness and beauty of the bridal gown. You’ll get yourself prepared so that we won’t waste others’ time.”

McAmor was condescending yet concerned altogether. Deep down, McAmor was not a fan of Charmine. To her, Charmine was an egomaniac who did not fit in with the gown theme at all. Nonetheless, she had no choice but to have Charmine due to Charmine’s ranking as the hottest celebrity in town. Everyone thought that having an arrogant artist in the bridal gown would definitely create a buzz. That was why *McAmor* had to give in.

1

“No worries. I don’t usually take in projects I can’t handle. I’m more worried that i’d damage my reputation by taking up your project,” mocked Charmine.

McAmor’s face was pulled down. She could not understand how an arrogant person like this could pull off the gown’s elegance.

However, Charmine was always into her stride when she was at work, and that impressed the

rest.

Throughout the time, Charmine would either be resting on the rocking chair or fanning herself. She had that incredibly delicate face, with long silky hair that hung above her waist like flash lightning. Her face was like a perfect labyrinth that momentarily led everyone away from their troubles. Strolling around the landscape, she was so beautiful that people would have made her into a national park if they got their hands on her.

She was more reserved as compared to Tiffany.

Charmine was honest, unlike other pretentious celebrities; a woman who was cold as ice yet remained soft and sweet like honey. She was an icon of maturity that

transcended age. She looked so ethereal that everyone could hardly take their eyes off of her.

It was meant to be a four-hour photoshoot, but it was done in two hours. Knowing that everything went on smoothly, *McAmor* left the set.

Charmine was sitting sluggishly under a shade while waiting for the evening shoot.

“Ms. Jordan, wouldn’t you want to bring along a personal assistant?” someone asked out of curiosity. Leaning on the rocking chair, she spoke, “What for?”

Chapter 176 “I’m here to massage and fan you. I don’t mind running errands for you as well.”

“Is a photoshoot so tiring? I recalled there being many more jobs which are even more tiring than this. However, I don’t see any one of them getting an assistant to massage them during

work?”

The crowd was dumbstruck but she continued, “Hiring many assistants can make one look cool but I feel like it’s just to show off. This bad culture within the entertainment industry should be fixed.”

The rest were blindsided, somewhat full of admiration at her honesty.

Within the circle, it had always been a norm for the artist to have a personal assistant by their side. They even liked to have a personal makeup artist even when the photoshoot team already had makeup artists available. Now with her words, she had made the rest of them realize that there were still lots of occupations out there that were potentially more tiring than being an artist—farmers who worked under the scorching sun, researchers who worked overnight, architects, and more.

“You’re right, Boss Jordan. You’re the best artist I’ve ever seen.”

“Boss Jordan, let me get you a drink! Don’t worry, I’m not doing this to worship you, I just admire you so much!” 1

“Let me know if you need help. I’ll give it my best!”

The crowd gathered around Charmine, praises flooding out from the bottom of their hearts.

“I was supposed to be the ambassador, but it was called off all thanks to Charmine. Now, she’s even getting all of the crowd’s affection!” Staring far from Greenwish Park,

Tiffany ground her teeth and clenched her fist angrily. She could feel a rush of adrenaline flowing through her body.

'Why! She's not supposed to be here!' She smashed the cake in her hand, a look of hatred burning in her eyes.

Ronnie froze in fear as her face turned as white as a sheet. "Ms. Tiffany, have you forgotten that we're here for this?" she mumbled while handed over the cake to Tiffany.

The cake reminded her about what had happened yesterday. Her legs were sore as she had been kneeling the whole night yesterday. Throughout the time it had happened, she had been pretending to cry and was begging for forgiveness. She even pretended to faint just to make sure her apology would be accepted. She knew that this was her last resort to secure her fame and reputation.

"Go and get a new one!" she ordered coldly.

"But the nearest cake house is at least seven kilometers away..." Without even finishing her sentence, Tiffany just glared coldly at her.

Cold sweat glistened on her furrowed brow as she hurriedly opened the car door and got down. She was left with no choice but to go do as she said.

"Veronica, shut the door," yelled Tiffany. 5

Her words hung enigmatically in the air. She then realized that Veronica was no longer with her anymore.

Jogged back to the time when she was eight, Veronica startled her with the truth that she was not the Jordans' biological daughter. At first, she was down in the dumps as she hoped the truth could be buried forever. It was later that she realized Veronica had revealed this piece of information for her sake. If the truth was found out at a later time, it could shock the world. She would be cast out from the Jordans' without a cent. The truth would eventually erase all her efforts. 1

Since then, she induced Charmine little by little to stabilize her status in the Jordan family with Veronica's assistance. For Tiffany, Veronica resembled her mother who understood her well and was willing to compromise with her bad temper. She was always at ease when she was with Veronica. She did not have to put on a mask and could just be herself.

Now that Veronica was sentenced to jail, she could not even see her anymore. She was all alone now, with no one to rely on or talk to.

'Charmine! All of this has happened because of her!' She shifted her angry glare to Charmine's direction as her eyes narrowed.

The burning stare lasted for as long as it took her to think of the most brutal method she could use to tear Charmine down.

Chapter 177

The afternoon rays were causing her to feel sleepy. She decided to take a nap after the crew left.

When she had checked into the Phoenix Hotel at night, she was planning to look for clues on the incident.

Five years ago, her plan was to trap Tiffany in jail for poisoning them and have the cops deal with her. She believed that Tiffany would choose to tell the truth rather than lose all her standings and reputation. However, things did not go as well as she had expected. Veronica knocked Charmine's socks off with her faithfulness toward Tiffany by taking responsibility for all her guilt. 3

'It's impossible for her to tell the truth just to save Veronica now.' Charmine knew that the guy was the only one who could prove her innocence, but Tiffany must have hidden him somewhere. She needed to find the guy through her own methods! There must be someone who knew who the guy was in the hotel five years ago.

"Sister..." A soft-spoken voice echoed behind her while she was still trying to figure out what had happened five years ago. It was Tiffany in a white dress.

Charmine gave her the cold shoulder, but Tiffany still walked in her direction, sounding guilty, "It was my fault then. I must have either been mad or utterly depraved and wicked. I am here to apologize to you. Look, I've gotten you your childhood favorite-matcha cake." 1

Tiffany's words struck a chord deep within her as a sudden chill shot down her spine. Charmine immediately went ballistic because her favorite cake had always been strawberry cake.

When they were kids, they always had two types of cakes for their birthday and one would be matcha-flavored.

It was made with finely ground powder of specially grown and processed premium green tea leaves. The matcha cake would cost a few hundred thousand bucks.

Being a wolf in sheep's clothing, Tiffany would always share the cake with Charmine so that everyone would praise her for her kindness. Since that was the case, if Charmine was to reject her offering of kindness, she would have been blamed for her ungratefulness. She knew she was the adopted daughter and did not have a say in anything. She could only make peace with it, which was why everyone thought she loved matcha cake as a child.

She had never been allowed to make her stance since young, and all of that had been caused by Tiffany! 1

“You’re making your amends with this matcha cake?” She stared at her coldly.

“This is from Yukkuri. They’re well-known for their matcha cake. Please, have a taste...” said Tiffany pretentiously.

Charmine cackled loudly as she mocked her sarcastically, “Oh c’mon, Tiffany. You’re apologizing with just matcha cake? Does that mean you’re only worth the price of a matcha cake?”

Tiffany was startled. She had never expected Charmine to turn her kindness into garbage. She felt like biting Charmine’s head off but for the sake of her scheme, she resigned herself and murmured in a voice that was full of grievance yet sounded sincere, subtly glancing at Ronnie who was hiding behind them.

“I’m sorry, my dear sister. I just want to sincerely apologize to you. It’s not the price that matters. I hope that you can accept my sincere apologies. You should be worn out. Here, try it.” While handing the cake out, Tiffany tried to splash the pollen in her hand onto Charmine.

Chapter 178

It was pollen from the tulip.

Her memory drifted back to the incident five years ago.

That was when she woke up and found out herself in a room full of tulips. The tulips looked wonderful that first springtime. She thought the sight of tulips was her life’s pleasures that year. However, reality slapped her in her face during winter on the day she was supposed to get engaged.

Since then, she was allergic to tulips. Tiffany must have known.

‘She must be plotting this on purpose so that there will be issues during the photoshoot.’ Charmine started putting the pieces together.

Thump! The cake fell to the floor. Tiffany took a few steps back to duck and stumbled.

She stared at Charmine, full of deviousness in her eyes. “Ah!”

She shrieked as her body fell right into the pond.

“Help! Help!” Tiffany was waving for help. Now, everyone’s attention was diverted to the pond.

“Charmine, you’re way too much this time!” It was Joey. 1

“Help! Somebody, please save Tiffany!” Joey yelled for help.

People were running around. Some were making calls, while others searched for tools to help. The situation was chaotic.

The shimmer of sunlight rippling on the water’s surface teased and mocked how vulnerable Tiffany looked.

Rescued by a lifeguard, she was shivering in the cold. Her eyes were puffy and tinged red. The paleness of her face made her seem fragile.

She gasped for air despite how much the coldness would freeze her from inside out and begged, “Mom, please, don’t put the blame on Charmine. It’s all my fault. I can understand even if Charmine won’t accept my apology and hates me to the core. I won’t blame her.”

Slow, desolate tears streamed from her unblinking eyes and dripped steadily along her cheek, “I’m sorry, Charmine. I’m here to apologize to you sincerely. If that’s not enough, please do whatever it takes to make yourself better. You may even push me down the pond again. I just hope that you’ll accept my apology and forgive me.” Tiffany sounded remorseful for what she had done.

Charmine was up in arms. Her grip on the railing tightened and she stopped, afraid that she would really push Tiffany into the pond this time as she tried to contain her emotions.

She knew that Tiffany had purposely set this up-the pollen and the drowning.

She knew that if she was to defend herself at this moment, no one would believe her.

Charmine’s silence made Joey blow her top. “You promised me that you’d be kind to Tiffany yesterday. Look what you’ve done now! I know she’s at fault, but she made up for the way she’s treated you. She kneeled to you for a night until she fainted and the first thing she did when she came to her senses was to apologize to you again. How can you be so cruel to your sister!” she shouted angrily at Charmine. The bond she has just built with Joey yesterday seemed like a distant memory now.

Chapter 179

Charmine felt as if she had been cut loose, no longer deemed worthy of Joey’s love.

“So you’re not gonna give me a chance to explain as usual and just assume that I’m the one who pushed her? Again?” she whimpered helplessly, reminding Joey of the memory they had made yesterday where she had a good conversation with Charmine.

“Enlighten me? C’mon, Charmine. I saw what happened with my own eyes. What else can you explain?” spluttered Joey.

“What do you expect when you’ve already perceived that I’m the one at fault? Do you think that I’d just push her if I wanted payback? With the evidence I had yesterday, I can easily send her to jail. I pushed her out of revenge? Hah! What a joke!” huffed Charmine.

She gazed coldly at Tiffany, somewhat furious. She then ripped her eyes away and walked back to the shade where she had been resting earlier. She was back to being left alone. 1

“I don’t think Charmine would do this. There must be some misunderstanding going on.” The crew was chatting amongst themselves about it.

“Shoving Tiffany into the pool would only make her choke a bit and Charmine herself would have to bear the consequences. It isn’t worth it.”

“You know, we can’t just judge a book by its cover. Some people appear to be kind but who knows? They might be a cunning fox deep down.”

“Looking at Tiffany right now makes me think of the time when she stood out for Charmine. Such a hypocrite!”

People were now drawn into their own guessing game as they no longer believed that Tiffany was as pure as snow since the incident. They even felt disgusted with her fake kindness. 1

If that conversation did not happen yesterday, Joey would have believed what Tiffany had said. Charmine’s decision to not hand over the evidence or snatch Julian away from Tiffany at such a difficult time had caught her off guard. It seemed that Charmine was not so bad after all. 1

The blame left Charmine to mourn her way through the park alone, and there was an uncomfortable feeling that gripped at Joey’s heart. She could have been able to swoop in and defend her, but she did not. She felt her gut clench a little when the situation sank in.

She turned to Tiffany and said, “Let’s go home and get changed.”

“Mommy, do you still think I was the one who set this up? You know I don’t know how to swim. I swear I didn’t do it on purpose...” Tiffany tried to implore Joey to change her mind. She sounded so pitiful that people would have felt sorry for her.

“No, my dear Tiffy. You know that I love you. However, I believed that Charmine did not do it on purpose. Look, if you were so unforgivable, she would have had you sacked from the industry much earlier.”

“You saw it, didn’t you, mommy? I’d never set her up. Maybe she’s not in the good mood and that’s why...”

“That’s enough, Tiffany. Anyhow, she didn’t mean to push you down. Let’s go home quickly. If not, we’ll have a hard time fighting off the paparazzi again,” said Joey while grabbing Tiffany’s hand and darting away.

Tiffany was aggrieved. She knew that Joey believed Charmine this time.

With no effort at all, how could she win Joey’s trust so easily?

‘She doesn’t trust me like before anymore.’ She clenched her fist, trying hard to suppress her

rage. 1

Once they got home, Ronnie took her to get changed.

“Where’s the video! Show me the video!” Tiffany rudely demanded toward Ronnie after Joey

left the room.

“Ms. Tiff... Tiffany.” Ronnie’s lips barely as she handed the cellphone over to Tiffany.

In the video, it showed Charmine sweeping away the cake from Tiffany. The angle did not capture Tiffany being pushed by Charmine into the pond.

Her initial plan was to upload the video of Charmine pushing her into the pond onto social media and with that, she could also show it to Joey. However, she had not managed to capture the particular moment. She was jinxed. 1

“Are you dumb or something? Do think these f*cking photos and videos captured from such f*cking bad angles are going to be useful to me? Get out of here, you miserable wretch! Scram!” Burning rage flowed through her body like a deathly poison, screeching and demanding to be released from within her in the form of unwanted violence. She was like a volcano, erupted and exploding with anger. Without an ounce of control, she threw objects around the room, breaking them. 1 Ronnie crouched in her shadow as a primeval instinct took over.

Chapter 180

The shattered glasses cut through her hands. Blood could be seen seeping out of her wounds. The pain shot up her arm like fire as she burst into tears.

Tiffany was annoyed by her whimpering. She felt really upset as all her efforts had been in vain. If Veronica was here, this would not have happened.

She knew she no longer could rely on Ronnie as she would put her in trouble.

'I'll do it myself!'

She put on an evil grin as she thought about Charmine's weaknesses.

[Go on with the thing-the Phoenix Hotel]

She sent the text after she left Ronnie by herself and walked to her wardrobe.

Meanwhile, Ronnie was trembling in pain. She covered up the wound so that no one could see it. While wincing from across the room, she bumped into Charmine who had just come back home.

'Isn't she Tiffany's assistant? Why is she in tears?' Charmine was curious but without much questioning, she simply minded her own business.

After Joey left Greenwish Park, Charmine took off the lonely mask she had been putting on.

'Hmph, you thought you were the only one who knows how to fake sympathy? Well, I might not be as gross as you but just a bit of acting is not an issue for me!' She grinned.

Apparently, Charmine did walk away and kept her silence on purpose to evoke sympathy from Joey. It had worked. With this, Tiffany would not be able to trick her that easily anymore in the future.

She went back to the hotel after she wrapped up her sunset photoshoot.

"Ms. Jordan, this is your room for tonight," said the assistant as they handed over the room card for Room 909 over to Charmine.

Her face darkened as she received the room card. It was the room she had stayed in five years

ago.

What a coincidence!

The assistant noticed an abrupt change in Charmine's expression and asked, "Is everything alright, Ms. Jordan?"

"It's nothing. Rest well, everyone." She proceeded to her room after brushing everyone off.

Getting closer to the room while walking along the corridor, her heart pumped vigorously against her chest even though the incident had already happened five years ago. Charmine thought she should be brave and mature enough to handle all sorts of issues including this, but she was wrong. She still felt insecure and anxious when it came to this.

To ease her anxiousness, she convinced herself, 'Perhaps I can get a clue about the incident today.' She took a deep breath and slowly entered the room.

The Presidential Suite was tidy and had an overwhelming and extravagant ambiance as soon as she entered. There were bottles of wine laid out in the living room, whilst the bedroom was decorated with European-style bedding. The room looked exactly the same as the one five years ago but did not feel the same.

How nice would it be if she could travel back in time. She would take a good look at the man's face.

Creak! The door creaked open. A middle-aged woman entered the room with the food and beverage service cart.

"Hello! This is a meal provided for you from the production team."

Coming back to her senses, her eyes lit up hopefully when she saw the woman.

Every part of her froze while the rest of her thoughts caught up with her.

It was her!

The one who delivered food to them five years ago. She might have known something about that night.

Chapter 181 Charmine held back her anticipation upon seeing the woman as she walked to the table and sat down on a chair. "Come in," she beckoned.

Aunt Cherrie pushed the dining cart forward and placed the dishes on the table one after another. "Have you worked here for long?" Charmine cool-headedly started the conversation. "You look very familiar."

“Why, yes! I’ve been here for at least ten years. Kindly don’t judge me with my old age; I’m more reliable than some of these girls who might spill dishes, however nice they are,” Aunt Cherrie beamed proudly.

Charmine noticed Aunt Cherrie’s honest and friendly disposition. She went along with Aunt Cherrie as she agreed to her statement and added, “Oh yes, I prefer people who are reliable workers. Can you sit with me? I’d like to ask you something.”

“Oh? Well, ask away,” she answered, pleasantly surprised and liking the flattery.

Aunt Cherrie knew Charmine was the Diamond Boss and that she was also a superstar here to shoot advertisements. She dared not offend anyone from the entertainment industry.

“I’d like to ask about something that happened five years ago,” Charmine got down to business. “Please sit here and think about it carefully.”

Five years ago?

Aunt Cherrie’s expression morphed into an expression of anxiety as she recalled an incident that happened five years ago.

Charmine was in the same room five years ago, was she not?

It never occurred to Aunt Cherrie that the plain-looking ugly duckling Charmine would become who she was. She sat next to her and asked, “What does Ms. Charmine want to know?”

“Do you remember Valentine’s Day five years ago? Who was in this room?”

The room was a presidential suite, and people who entered the room were distinguished guests who made an impression on her. However, Aunt Cherrie merely chuckled and said, “Oh you know I’m old. How could I recall something that happened five years ago?”

“Valentine’s Day is a special day, and anything that happened would definitely make an impression on you; I daresay ten percent more than usual,” came Charmine’s reply.” Moreover, you were responsible for delivering breakfast to this room five years ago. You accidentally knocked over a vase outside and had to pay five thousand bucks as compensation. That would’ve been a large sum to you, thus surely you’d remember that day clearly.” 1

Charmine spoke methodically and took out a bank card from her bag. “There’s half a million here,” she added, “and it’ll be all yours so long as you give me some clues.”

Aunt Cherrie's eyes widened. She had never seen such a large sum of money; she would have to work for more than ten years to obtain such an amount!

Charmine's gaze locked onto Aunt Cherrie and reiterated, "Think about it, Cherrie. Five years ago, who came in and out of this room?"

Her voice was deep as she prodded Aunt Cherrie, even pushing the card toward Aunt Cherrie as she spoke.

Aunt Cherrie eventually caved in. She pursed her lips before she began, "Ms. Tiffany Jordan and Mister Julian Cabell escorted you into the room. I was sending supper to the room next door and saw them carrying you in. At that time, I was quite puzzled because we'd usually get one man and one woman coming in. I thought it was odd that it was a trio of two women and a man." 1

Charmine's eyebrows furrowed. Tiffany and Julian? Five years ago, she heard Tiffany and Julian's conversation. Did Tiffany orchestrate the entire incident?

Aunt Cherrie was obviously lying!

She chuckled at Cherrie and said, "I'll only give half a million to hear the truth. Don't fool me."

"I wouldn't dare do that," blurted Cherrie. "Even if you don't give me money, I wouldn't dare to fool a prominent person like yourself. I remember them helping you into the room, and I remember the childish black dress you were wearing... Ahem. I'm not judging you, but that dress was indeed unusual and funky-looking, so I do remember it."

Charmine's brows furrowed; it did not seem as though Aunt Cherrie was lying. It was true Charmine wore a strange-looking dress and was the joke of the town.

Chapter 182

How did Julian and Tiffany bring her to this hotel?

Julian had to be in it together with Tiffany, but if he was present at that time, how could he have let Tiffany slip up?

Aunt Cherrie noted that Charmine was unconvinced with her, thus she continued, "Well, let me get the presidential suite's manager here to see you. Manager Brown has been in charge of this floor for years, and he knows everyone who's been in and out of it.

"I only deliver food, but Manager Brown provides guests with extra services, so he must know the incident better than me. You can go ahead and ask him to see whether I'm lying to you or

not.”

“Alright. If the story checks out, I’ll give you the money.” Charmine kept her card swiftly.

“Good, good. Still, you shouldn’t disclose the incident to Manager Brown. He’s very strict, and I fear that he’d fire me if he finds out.” With that, Aunt Cherrie stood to leave the room.

Charmine nodded.

As Aunt Cherrie left, she told her, “Remember: When he comes, open the door for him.”

The door closed shut and the room fell silent.

Charmine stared at the dishes on the table but found herself without appetite.

She did not know if Manager Brown would have any clue or if he would echo the same sentiment as Aunt Cherrie. While Aunt Cherrie did not appear to be lying, the story did not seem to align.

What detail did she get wrong?

Meanwhile, at Royal Banquet Hotel...

The building was a thousand meters away from Phoenix Hotel, and its presidential suite was on the top floor.

Anthony stood in front of the window and looked at the luxurious bed in his room. Five years ago-during Valentine’s Day-he robbed a girl of her innocence on this very bed. Who was that girl? Why would she disappear without a trace and without leaving a single clue in her wake? 1

Nial was usually quite capable, so why could he not figure this out?

At this moment, Nial brought in Chris.

“Brother, I’ve found all the staff who were here five years ago.”

As he spoke, about ten staff walked in and stood before him, their heads hung low in fear.

Anthony turned around and stared at the group. He asked coolly, “Five years ago during Valentine’s Day, who was the girl in this room?”

“Mr. Bailey, we really don’t know.”

Everyone gave the same answer with their gaze downcast in fear.

Anthony sighed and prodded, "It'd be best if you think before you answer. I have a hungry alligator back at home in my pond."

Everyone heard this and went pale, their beings shook in fright.

Rumor had it that Mr. Bailey was cold-hearted, and he even kept an alligator for a pet. Who would have thought the rumor was true?

What if Anthony Bailey was unhappy with them and fed them to the alligator?

A female staff member piped up, "Mr. Bailey, I really don't know who that girl was, but he should know." She pointed at a man standing next to her. Anthony's gaze darted to the man pointed at.

Chapter 183

The man that was pointed at donned a nice suit. He was the manager of the Royal Banquet

Hotel, Michael

When Michael saw that the waitress pointed at him, he went weak at the knees. "Don't talk nonsense!" he blurted. "I was just a lowly sweeper five years ago. How would I know who came in and out of the presidential suite?"

"That's precisely why you'd know. Five years ago on Valentine's Day, I was supposed to be on duty till five in the morning when my boyfriend asked me out. I wanted to spend Valentine's Day with him, so I swapped shifts with you. 2

"Not only were you on night watch that night, but you were also responsible for that floor. You would've seen people coming in and out of the floor!" she exclaimed.

Michael was flabbergasted at the waitress's impeccable memory, and he began turning pale as fear washed over him.

Anthony's gaze darkened as his gaze swept over him.

"Looks like you want to meet my alligator. Nial, take him."

"Okay." Nial reached out to pull him.

Michael was so alarmed that he scrambled onto the floor. He fell to his knees with a thud. "Mr. Bailey, please spare my life!" he pleaded. "I really don't know who the girl was. I didn't see her, I swear...!"

“Then why did you hide the fact that you were on the night shift? Why did you feel guilty?” Nial pressed on.

Nial, a doctor, could guess how people felt based on their eyes.

As he felt like he was cornered, Michael started sweating profusely. He eventually managed to reply, “... I was on shift. During the shift, I...fed some medicine to Mr. Bailey...”

Michael shook violently in fear as he tried to explain the situation to Anthony. “Ms. Tiffany wanted me to feed you the medicine. I had no guts to do it whatsoever, but she threatened and lured me. She said that if I didn’t help, she’d get me fired from my job and that I’d be unemployable forever. Because of this, I snuck in the medicine to your drink. 1

“Mr. Bailey, it was my fault! I’ve lived in fear for so many years now, afraid that I’d be discovered. I dare not ask for anything; only that you spare my life. My wife is pregnant, and she’s almost due. She and our child can’t live without me!” he pleaded fearfully.

Anthony turned his gaze to Nial whilst Nial eyed Michael carefully. After a while, he said, “ Brother, he really is telling the truth.”

That meant that five years ago, the medicine was fed to him by Tiffany instead of the girl...

Anthony looked at Michael coolly and said, “If it was Tiffany, why was the one who entered m

y room a different girl?”

“I don’t know why. At that time, I was already so afraid after putting the medicine in your drink. I was afraid of getting into trouble! Ms. Tiffany told us not to disturb you guys, so I just left and hid at the stairs. I really don’t know what happened next,” Michael explained solemnly.

Anthony’s expression sank. The only choice left was to investigate and interrogate Tiffany. 1

He got up and walked out, but he stopped right next to Michael. “Your wife is going to give birth, and it’s time to go back and take care of her,” he concluded before he left.

Michael fell to the ground on his knees... He was fired.

Michael assessed the situation at hand and looked at it from a different perspective: He drugged Mr. Bailey but managed to keep his life. Getting fired was god’s grace to him.

“Thank you, Mr. Bailey!” He knelt and bowed to him with gratitude.

The three Bailey men went inside an elevator and headed for the ground floor.

Chapter 184

“What a coincidence that the entire surveillance system broke down that night and left us without clues.” commented Nial. “Only Tiffany can tell us what happened. Do you want to

meet her, Brother?”

“No, just go by yourself and find out what happened,” came Anthony’s reply.

Nial’s eyebrows furrowed. “Where are you going then?”

As they exited the elevator and entered Royal Banquet Bar, Anthony fixated his gaze on the distant Phoenix Hotel.

“I have other matters to care for. Take Momo with you.”

“No, no, I want to be with Daddy! Daddy said he’d bring me to Mommy!” Chris immediately clung to Anthony’s legs.

Anthony looked at the kid stuck to his legs and patted his little head. “Good boy, why do you want to come and disturb your mother and me? Are you going to be our third-wheeler?”

“Hm...” Chris pursed his lips and said indignantly, “I promise to be quiet and sleep next door

“Go with Uncle Nial,” persuaded Anthony. “I need to find out your birth mother’s identity and compensate her so that we can be with your Mommy forever.”

Chris’ face lit up with joy at his father’s plan. If his birth mother returned, Mommy would have to leave. He did not want her to leave; he liked her too much!

“Okay! I’ll go!” As he finished, he held Nial’s hand and ran away at high speed.

Anthony drove up to Phoenix Hotel. 1

While Phoenix Hotel was a five-star hotel, it was on a smaller scale of five-stars. A truly high end person would not stay there; he himself had never been there.

For Charmine’s sake, he visited the hotel for the first time.

In Room 909, Phoenix Hotel...

Charmine had forced herself to take a small bite as she patiently waited inside the room.

The doorbell rang not long after. Charmine went to look through the peephole and saw a man standing at the door in a suit and leather shoes. There was a badge on his chest that stated Manager'.

This was the manager Aunt Cherrie talked about. Charmine then opened the door and invited him in.

Manager Brown entered and bowed his head in respect. "Ms. Charmine, are you looking for m

e?"

"Yes. Please, sit."

Once he entered, Charmine closed the door and sat on the other end of the sofa. Charmine did not beat around the bush as she got down to business. "I heard that you're the manager of this floor, and that everyone who comes in and out will be registered."

"Our hotel mandates that everyone should register first. We need to ensure our guests feel comforted," remarked Manager Brown. "Every time a distinguished guest visits us, we'll provide a gift. For example, the gift of the day is a cup." Manager Brown passed a beautifully packaged porcelain cup to Charmine and continued, "We applied such a rule so we could prepare gifts from our warehouse for you. With that, we'll record the name of the occupant and even details like how many guests they're staying with. This is so that every customer is satisfied."

Charmine looked at the cup and vaguely remembered that she was given a small gift as she was leaving the room five years ago.

However, Julian disliked the low-end gifts from the hotel. Instead of accepting the gift, he sent her out to buy new ones. At the time, she thought Julian was being nice to her, but who knew if Julian just did not want to bring home anything related to the hotel.

After all, every single item could have been evidence against Tiffany.

She collected her thoughts, looked at Manager Brown, and asked, "Then do you remember how many people have been in and out of this room for the past five years?"

1 "Well..." Manager Brown's expression sank.

Chapter 185

Charmine assumed that the manager in front of her needed a little financial push, thus she offered, "Don't worry, i'll reward you for the relevant information."

Manager Brown remained stoic; his character did not emit the greedy aura that many would have. "That's not necessary," he dismissed her offer. "I'm just trying to recall the incident scene by scene."

After much thought, he looked at Charmine and asked, "Ms. Charmine, don't you feel dizzy?"

Charmine was confused. What was that question for?

All too suddenly, Charmine felt dizzy as her body felt like it was heating up. She felt her logic slipping away.

Drats! She had been drugged by Manager Brown!

"Do you have a death wish?!"

With the strength she had left, Charmine picked up a vase next to her and tried to throw it powerfully at Manager Brown.

Before she managed to do so, however, she felt powerless and went limp. She collapsed on the ground like mud, and the vase fell on the ground with a loud crashing sound as it shattered into pieces.

The drug was powerful!

Manager Brown stood up and pulled at his bow tie. The warmth on his face disappeared instantly, and it was replaced with an evil smirk.

"Ms. Charmine must be antsy to investigate what happened five years ago because that man made you feel good, no? Don't worry, I'm not bad myself. I'll make you feel good tonight."

As he said this, he unbuttoned his shirt and headed toward Charmine. He sat beside her.

Charmine uttered weakly, "You... You have a death wish...! This is illegal... I'll make you pay for this!"

"What do you mean 'illegal'? Ms. Charmine, you checked into the hotel and inquired Aunt Cherrie about our special services. Once you heard about how talented I am, you asked for me. The surveillance cameras will show that you opened the door for me and invited me in!

“You rich people love to prey on young men like me. It won’t be difficult for people to connect the dots and believe my side of the story!”

Manager Brown smiled evilly and started to pull at Charmine’s clothes.

Charmine’s brows furrowed; it was all a ruse! Even Aunt Cherrie was part of the plan!

It was true that she asked for Manager Brown and opened the door for him to invite him in. Once realization dawned on her, she feared that –

At that moment, Manager Brown had torn her clothes apart.

Charmine was wearing jeans and a buttoned top. As he tugged on her clothes, her buttons burst out with a loud snap, and it revealed her beautiful figure.

Charmine clenched her fists tightly; she wanted to resist but could not even lift a finger. She was aware of her surroundings but could not stop it from happening, and it made her sick to the stomach.

Manager Brown pressed himself on her body and admired her body with a greedy look. “I’ve bedded many women before, but I’ve never slept with someone so rich and sexy. You’re utterly attractive, Charmine.”

As he finished his sentence, he lowered his head and kissed her neck.

Downright disgusted, Charmine tried to resist him by pushing him away. With the little amount of strength left in her, however, her feeble attempt made it seem as if she was playfully resisting him.

The drugs in her system held her back from expressing her true feelings.

No, no, she had to snap out of it. She had to snap out of it...!

The more she resisted it, the more blurry her consciousness became. Her mind was full of unwanted and messy thoughts. Would she once more endure the same incident five years ago?

Manager Brown had unbuckled his belt. He only had one thought in mind as he stared at the irresistibly beautiful Charmine, and it was to take her for himself.

As he was about to take off his pants, the door flung open with a loud bang, and there stood a tall figure by the door.

Charmine’s consciousness was slipping away in her dizziness. She could not identify who it was by the door; she only felt that the man was her hero who would save her.

It surprised her as she had this feeling, but seeing that figure made her feel relieved. She felt hopeful.

Anthony flung open the door and saw Charmine pinned to the floor by another man. She looked at him in a weak and dazed manner.

His eyebrows twitched. How could someone harm a woman who could not even move?! Anthony instantly rushed in and swung his fist right at Manager Brown's face.

Chapter 186

"Ah!"

Anthony's punch sent Manager Brown to the ground as his pants slipped off of his waist.

Manager Brown got back on his feet and was ready to face his attacker, but what he saw made him freeze.

It was Mr. Bailey. Burlington's Mr. Bailey was in Phoenix Hotel!

No, he had to stop panicking! He would be done for if he panicked!

He instantly explained, "Mr. Bailey, please be calm. Ms. Charmine was the one who wanted me, and everyone can be my witness. Ms. Charmine had asked me to come to her room and invited me in to sleep with her—ahh!"

He could barely finish his sentence when he received another punch to his face.

"She doesn't even want me, so why would she want you? Are you accusing my woman? Haha!" He laughed bitterly and threw another punch at him.

Manager Brown was beaten to a pulp. There were streaks of blood at the corner of his lips, and he even lost a tooth.

At that moment, Charmine croaked. Anthony threw Manager Brown out of the door and commanded sternly, "Luke, lock him up! Charmine will take care of this tomorrow."

"Yes." Luke dragged Manager Brown away by his collar.

The man dared to touch the chairman's future wife. This manager had a death wish!

Anthony shut the door and sped to the sofa.

He instantly noticed Charmine's reddened face. Her clothes had been torn apart, and she was somewhat aware it looked improper.

Anthony was quick as he took off his jacket for her.

The dizzy Charmine felt a cold body sitting next to her. As her body felt like it was on fire, she wanted nothing more than to be near the cold presence. Charmine then wrapped her arms around Anthony's waist.

Anthony stiffened and felt his heart stirred. He never had feelings for any woman all this while. Other than the girl from five years ago, Charmine was the only one.

"Just hang on," he gently told her, "Nial is bringing you medicine." "I feel... really bad..." Charmine was dizzy and felt terrible. She did not even know what she was doing as she had lost volition.

The drug was so potent. The only thing that would make her feel better was to get on Anthony's cold body.

Anthony shuddered to think of what could happen, and his face sank. He turned to her and asked, "Charmine, do you know who I am?"

Charmine did not answer. She could barely open her eyes as she was pressed against him limply. She hooked his hand around his neck and muttered, "I buy you... I don't care who you are, I can pay..."

She then touched his wide back and tried to pull away his clothes.

Her scorching breath fell on his neck, and to Anthony, it felt like fire spreading throughout his body.

Anthony realized she had totally lost her sensibilities. He should not behave in a calculating manner toward her.

He grabbed her restless hands that roamed his body and, as calmly as he could, said, "Charmine, you're testing my patience."

Charmine was already feeling uncomfortable, but when she heard his deep and magnetic voice, she wanted to pin him down.

So she did. She pressed her body against Anthony and managed to overpower him as he fell flat against the sofa.

Chapter 187 Brows raised, Anthony went rigid as Charmine pressed herself against him.

He would be lying if he did want to pounce on Charmine that sat on him in a seductive manner, but he knew Charmine all too well. Charmine would never forgive him if he took advantage of

her. 1

He fought back his urges as he shot up quickly. He then turned to carry her and walked to the bathroom.

Charmine entangled herself onto him like an octopus would. She felt so heated and wanted to satisfy herself, so she stretched out her hand to pull at his clothes.

Rip! Her grip on his chest area was strong enough to tear the white shirt at his chest area, and his taut chest was exposed.

Anthony's face sank. If this were to continue, he was afraid he would not have enough willpower to hold himself back.

He hastened his pace and quickly put her into the bathtub, adjusting the water into a cooler setting to fill the tub up. It was not long before Charmine eventually settled down and ceased to move.

Anthony had just heaved a sigh of relief when Charmine suddenly pulled at her clothes. With a sharp tug hug, she managed to rip off fabric from her clothes with a resounding ripping sound.

Charmine looked rather beguiling as she sat there with her clothes partially undone.

Anthony was stunned; this woman was torturing him.

"Charmine... I can't hold myself back for much longer."

Out of the blue, the doorbell rang. It was Nial, and he was back with medicine.

Anthony walked out of the bathroom to see him, but the moment Nial saw him, he had to bite back his laugh.

He could only laugh inwardly. After all, there was a large tear on Anthony's shirt, specifically his chest area.

What passionate and exciting things had happened when he was gone?

Anthony's face sank. "Medicine," he commanded.

“Where is your wife?” asked Nial. “After checking things, I ended up with many types of this medicine. I have to make sure which medicine it is so that I can treat her. Otherwise, it won’t

end well.”

Still, how could Nial treat Charmine in her vulnerable state?

“Just give me medicine,” asserted Anthony. “If a Bailey family doctor doesn’t have the ability to do his duty, he’s not part of my family.”

Nial was confused. How could he give out medicine without a diagnosis? Even if he was God, he would not have that ability...

However, he had never seen Anthony look so displeased. He handed over his medicine kit with ten different types of medicine.

“You have to at least describe her state to me,” Nial tried to reason. “Is she conscious? Does she have some remaining energy left? Is she dizzy or a little conscious? Can she speak?”

Anthony thought about it and said, “She seems to have quite the grip at times, but she goes limp in the next moment. While she can speak, I don’t think she’s genuinely conscious.”

Nial thought deeply and made his best guess. He chose the best medicine he had and gave it to

him.

“Brother, are you sure you won’t let me in? If she eats the wrong medicine”

Before Nial could even finish his sentence, Anthony took the medicine and slammed the door right at his face.

Nial was bewildered at his actions. Wow, his brother had the heart to shrug him off when he finally had a woman!

Anthony arrived at the bathroom, he froze. Charmine had already taken off her jeans and coat. She was only wearing a bikini and soaking in the bathtub. He entered the door and saw her fair skin and long legs....

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Anthony grabbed the towel next to him and placed it on the edge of the bathtub. He then gently lifted her chin to place the medicine into her mouth.

Fortunately, the medicine dissolved in her mouth. After ingesting the medicine, the restless Charmine stopped flailing around, and her body gradually settled in the water.

Did she fall asleep?

Once he pulled her out of the water, Anthony wrapped the towel around her before he carried her out of the room.

Greeted by the morning light, Charmine slowly opened her eyes and saw the elaborately decorated ceiling. The room was not hers, but it was strangely familiar...

This room... It was the same room as the room from five years ago!

It hit her at that moment; she was drugged yesterday!

Charmine turned sideways and saw a man lying next to her.

It was Anthony!

Still fast asleep, Anthony's face looked like a painting in the gentle morning light.

Charmine had no intention of appreciating his beauty as she instantly lifted the quilt off her body. Her eyes narrowed at what she saw next; she only had her underwear on!

Upon closer inspection, she also noted that Anthony was wearing a bathrobe. His taut chest was visible from the folds of the robe.

What...

What happened?

She glared daggers at Anthony. "What did you do to me last night?!"

Anthony's eyes opened at this, and he was greeted with the sigh of Charmine looking at him anxiously.

"What do you think happened?" he teased.

That... That tone of his!

Charmine felt like her brain was going to explode. Did she really sleep with Anthony? Did Anthony know about her dirty laundry?

No, no. Why would she be thinking about that?

What she was seeing was more important!

“Anthony, how dare you violate me!”

“Me, violating you?”

Anthony sat on the bed and threw his shirt at her. He pointed at the scar on his chest.

“Who do you think violated who? Huh?”

Charmine stared at his shirt; it did look like it was torn apart. The scar on his body also looked

Wait. Did she force herself on him after ingesting the drug?

“Well, err... We’re all adults. I was set up. Let’s just pretend like nothing happened.”

Charmine instantly shot up and ran for the bathroom.

Anthony, on the other hand, froze on his spot on the bed. “Pretend like nothing happened?” he muttered, somewhat displeased.

The thought made Charmine feel queasy. She had slept with Anthony, Burlington’s Anthony...

“If you want to be compensated for your losses, I’ll give you one million, and no more than that!”

Anthony’s face blanked at that moment. A million, she said?

Fortunately, he didn’t sleep with her last night. Otherwise, she would behave rather brutally. He might end up seeing an undignified side of her.

Anthony pressed on, “Since you’re an adult, can’t you feel if something actually happened last night?”

It was at that moment realization dawned on her as her brows furrowed.

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Anthony had a point. Charmine felt not a sting of pain or hurt anywhere in her body. Better yet, she was not in any form of discomfort.

The more she went over it, Charmine realized she did not feel anything remotely off about her body.

That meant...

“So nothing happened, then?” she asked in a daze. “You really didn’t do anything to me?”

“Don’t worry, I’m not desperate enough to take advantage of others,” came Anthony’s reply in a slightly raised tone before he walked toward the bathroom.

As he passed her, Charmine’s eyes glued onto his back in disbelief.

Was Anthony telling the truth that he did not do anything to her last night?

This man had expressed his desire to marry even when they first met. Did he genuinely not act on that desire with the given window of opportunity? 1

Charmine felt strangely touched.

Anthony exited the washroom, already donned with a fresh pair of clothes.

He handed her a bag in the locker next to her and said, “These are your clothes.”

“Thanks.” Charmine took it and headed for the washroom.

As she passed him, she stopped and asked, “Did I do anything out of character last night?”

Anthony thought of what happened last night and remarked, “What do you think?”

Charmine blushed at his insinuating tone.

She ripped off his clothes! Was that not out of character?

“Ahem! J- Just forget about it then. No need to recall anything!”

Anthony looked at her and said a simple, “Why?”.

What did he mean, ‘why? Did he still need to ask?

Charmine fumed. “Anthony, what are you trying to do? Do you want me to terminate our agreement?” 1

Amazing. The woman still dared to threaten him.

Anthony found her rather adorable with her frizzy hair sticking out. She was also more expressive than her usual cold self.

Thinking that she had to go on with her day later, he did not have the heart to tease her. He just said, "Rest assured, I've already forgotten what happened last night." He would only keep it in his heart as a nostalgic memory.

Charmine huffed and went into the washroom.

The washroom had been cleaned, and there was no trace of what had transpired the night before. Still, it did not erase the vague memory she still had with her...

When she saw the bathtub, the memory of her pulling off her clothes and Anthony holding her back replayed again in her mind.

Her heart went into a thumping frenzy. Last night was unbelievable!

It embarrassed her to no end, but she was just as angry at the thought that something terrible almost happened to her. She wanted nothing more than to kill Manager Brown!

In the lobby, Luke got a message from his phone and arrested Manager Brown. 1

Manager Brown dropped on his knees. Though he was afraid of Luke, he persisted, "I was wronged! Manager Claire had investigated it, and the footage clearly shows that Ms. Charmine asked for me and wanted special services!"

As he said this, Luke stepped forward and handed over the video to Anthony and said, "Chairman, it was Ms. Charmine who invited him. Many people witnessed it."

Indeed, the video showed that Aunt Cherrie relayed the word for Manager Brown to pay Charmine a visit. The video also showed Charmine opening the door on her own free will for Manager Brown.

Anthony left the video aside and swept his eyes coolly over Manager Brown.

"You have one last chance to tell the truth," he needled, tone cold and threatening.

Manager Brown's entire being trembled in fear, but he kept remembering the voice in his head.

'If everything goes according to plan, I'll give you three million. If it fails but the blame isn't pinned to me, I'll give you ten million, but you better do it well...!'

If he failed, Anthony would not let him off the hook. He might even face jail-time!

Thus, Manager Brown's only option left was for him to persevere. Three million awaited him! He firmly insisted, "Mr. Bailey, please believe me. I'm telling the truth!"

Chapter 190 "Ah..."

At this moment, Charmine exited the washroom.

Her expression went rigid, however, the moment she saw Manager Brown kneeling on the floor. Anthony looked at her and merely said, "What do you want me to do with him?"

He did not ask her the reason or explanation; he instantly asked her what she wanted to do to Manager Brown.

Charmine was touched by Anthony's consideration. She looked at Manager Brown and sneered, "You perverted monster! Castrate him!"

This kind of man would only hurt others!

Anthony turned to look at Luke and simply said, "You heard that?"

"Affirmative, I'll get to it." Luke threw Manager Brown out.

Manager Brown was scared to death at their interactions. "Mr. Bailey please let me go! Please spare me!" he whimpered in fear. "I admit it, I did it! I won't do it again...! S- Someone offered payment for me to do it!"

Whatever he said, Charmine and Anthony no longer give two hoots.

He missed his chance to right his wrongs.

Charmine did not really need his answers; she could already guess what happened.

The only people who knew what happened five years ago were herself, Julian, and Tiffany. Julian would not cross her at this point in time, thus the only person left was Tiffany.

Tiffany utilized her trauma of five years ago to let her lower her guard and invite Manager Brown into the room. Tiffany must have arranged this carefully just to discredit her.

A despicable and shameless move on her part.

Anthony looked at Charmine and asked, "Were you looking for him to investigate something?"

Charmine froze on the spot. It was true; she was investigating something that happened five years ago. Could she tell this to Anthony?

It puzzled her why she had this thought, but she did not want Anthony to find out what happened to her. After all, they had only been together for half a year. There was a

remaining half year for the contract, and they needed to get along. Otherwise, Momo and Anthony would look at her differently.

Charmine narrowed her eyes and said, "That'd be for me to know and keep. You won't always intrude my privacy like this, would you, Anthony?" her eyes remained at as she uttered her reply with a rather threatening tone..

Anthony sensed that she wanted to keep this private, thus he backed off. "Don't worry. I respect your decision. Whenever you're ready, you can tell it to me any time."

Charmine breathed a sigh of relief, knowing that Anthony was a man of his word. If he promised not to press on further, he would see to it.

"Well, thank you for last night," she concluded. "I have an advertisement to shoot. I'll see you later."

Anthony watched as she left the room, his eyes darkening as he did.

The entire time he has known Charmine, she was always calm and straightforward. The gaze she held moments ago, however, seemed too cloudy. She was definitely hiding something.

What was it that made her all stressed out and unable to express herself?

Luke returned and asked, "Chairman, do you want me to look into this?"

Anthony's expression darkened, but he merely dismissed him with a simple 'no' and a wave of his hand.

He promised that he would respect her privacy; he would hold onto that promise.

Instead, he asked, "What happened to McKenzie Houston?"

Luke sighed. "Nial went to ask in-person last night. McKenzie admitted that she administered the medicine. She was going to go upstairs when a fire broke out in her house whilst her mother was still inside, so she was in a hurry. I went through the situation and found no evidence of it being a lie." 4

In other words, even McKenzie did not know who entered Anthony's room that night.

His eyes darkened.

Downstairs, as Charmine arrived at the dressing room, she saw a well-dressed figure inside.

Sav

The woman wore a long silk halter neck dress, and the pearl-like silk and satin texture made her skin look fair and elegant. To top that off, she had long, slightly curled hair, and it gave her the glamor and beauty straight out of a movie. Charmine's eyes twitched. Why was McKenzie here?

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McKenzie talked to McAmor in a low yet sweet voice.

Charmine could not help but think of the rumors between McKenzie and Anthony, which made her feel slightly uneasy. However, she repressed this feeling quickly and walked toward them.

As McKenzie happened to be standing at Charmine's makeup desk, Charmine had to politely say, "Excuse me, ladies."

McAmor glanced at her and said, "Charmine is here, Sister. She's our new ambassador for this collection."

Though McKenzie did not even glance at Charmine, she continued talking to McAmor, "That's settled, then. You must come to our technology award ceremony in two days." With that, she marched out elegantly without even looking at Charmine or her surroundings, for that matter.

Her heels clicked against the floor audibly, the sound resonated and clicked against the hearts of everyone in the vicinity. Everyone looked at her with adoration. McKenzie's temperament was too strong and perfect that, from head to toe, she displayed nothing but perfection. Her skin was fair like milk foam, comparable to the delicate porcelain made in heaven.

This was the first time Charmine had seen someone with such nobleness and elegance; McKenzie's prestige was different from the rest. If one was to compare her to the all-time favorite Tiffany, McKenzie made Tiffany appear rather cheap and inelegant. If one was to liken Tiffany to the holy white lotus cultivated in the greenhouse, then Charmine would be comparable to a piranha that endured heavy storms and scorching sun.

In this sense, McKenzie would be the phoenix flying over the clouds untouched by dust; elegant and noble. Her kind of elegance and nobleness was cultivated from being pampered by a favorable environment for a long period, a blessing not many could afford to experience.

Charmine sat in front of the makeup desk, her eyes narrowed as she did. Perhaps only a perfectly elegant woman like her would be able to match up with Anthony. A woman like Charmine would not appreciate the thing called 'love' anyway.

“Charmine, you have to do your best shooting for the main advertisement video today,” said McAmor to Charmine. “My sister had never been so into my work, but when she heard the ambassador was you, she came to have a look.”

After what happened yesterday, McAmor had confidence in Charmine, and her tone of voice sounded more reassured and calm.

Charmine made a small sound as a reply while her brain digested what she just heard.

‘Her sister never showed interest but came because of me? McKenzie ignored me entirely, though. Something’s up here...

After doing her makeup, Charmine and the staff went out early to take some shots at dawn.

Meanwhile, Tiffany struggled to get shut-eye. She had been waiting to hear back from Manager Brown. She had prepared the news draft and was ready to expose Charmine’s screwed up personal life sleeping with younger men to the world. Although not everyone would believe her, it would content Tiffany so long as it could ruin Charmine even in the slightest.

Alas, after a night of waiting, the only news she heard from Ronnie was that Manager Brown had been dismissed! Anthony did it himself!

It was over... All her hard work of planning and her 10 million bucks went down the drain!

On the very same day, Charmine’s shots in gowns went viral. Charmine in the gown looked utterly attractive and charming in the morning light, and it did not take long before she became the center of discussion again.

Argh! No way! Tiffany could not stand it anymore. Now that everyone was paying so much attention to Charmine, her popularity kept on increasing. Tiffany had to pull Charmine down; she had to ruin her completely. Thinking of her plan, Tiffany took out her phone and called Julian.

Upon picking up the call, Julian monotonously answered, “I’m in a meeting. What’s the matter?”

Ever since that fateful day, the day she was punished, Julian continuously gave her the cold shoulder. Tiffany felt uncomfortable and heartbroken, but she covered her emotions with a sweet and gentle voice, “Julian darling, the reason I called you is to bid you farewell. I’ve done so many things recently that I don’t even recognize myself anymore. I’ve decided to go to the rural area to reflect on myself.”

“To the rural area?” Julian frowned. “You’ve never lived outside the city since young. What are you going to do at a place like that?”

Chapter 192

“Now that everyone hates me, I just want some time to myself and do some self-reflection. When I’m not here, Julian darling has to work hard to get Charmine, alright?”

Tiffany paused slightly, and continued in an even sweeter voice, “Although Sister had lost her chastity, gave birth, and recently became Anthony’s mistress, she’s still an amazing person. If you could be with her, even if it’s not for her assets, it’d be much better than being with me...”

“What are you talking about? Why would I fall for an unchaste and morally corrupt woman like her?” Julian thought of the things Charmine did and felt more disgusted. “When are you leaving? I’ll send you off.” 1

“You don’t have to, Julian darling. Just promise me to take care of yourself, and don’t wear yourself out. Even if you don’t like Charmine, you still have to fight for her. Her assets will help you greatly and to maintain your status in the Cabell family. Call me if there’s anything, I’ll support you as always.”

Tiffany spoke with a very gentle and sweet voice before she hung up, and a proud and satisfied look appeared on her face soon after.

‘Hah! No man can ever resist a sweet and flirtatious woman! Did Julian think he would fall all out of love with me? No way!’

Tiffany went to pack her bags right after the phone call. It was her new plan to go to a rural area, but she would return in glory a month from now.

Meanwhile, Julian was confused at what Tiffany had said. She was still trying so hard to help him and support him, yet he had been treating her so coldly lately. Although Tiffany had made many mistakes, she was just trying to help him. Charmine, on the other hand...

His gaze fell on a document handed to him by Oliver: Last night, Charmine checked in at Phoenix Hotel while Anthony went before midnight.

The two of them spent the night together.

Hah! Such a disgraceful woman! She was technically still his fiancé, yet she went to stay the night with another man! So what if she was attractive? She was nothing like Tiffany! Nonetheless... With his current

situation, he needed Charmine's share and diamond mind. After all, Charmine held twenty-five percent of the Jordan share!

Restraining his resistance and disgust, he ordered Oliver, "Prepare some stuff. I'm going to Phoenix Hotel."

"Yes."

At Phoenix Hotel.

Anthony had already left when Charmine returned from her morning shooting. Tired, Charmine went straight to the bed to take a nap. Within less than an hour, her doorbell rang, and it sounded urgent. She forced her tired body to the door and peeked through the pigeonhole. She saw Julian's arrogant figure standing outside.

This douche again? He actually came?

Charmine had zero intentions of opening the door and entertaining him, she knew Julian would ring the bell non-stop. That was Julian.

She opened the door and hissed, "What now?!"

Hearing the tone of annoyance, Julian felt more disgusted. How was she ever comparable to Tiffany? He restrained himself from showing his disdain and said, "I heard you're here for advertisement shooting. I've brought you some lunch, it's your favorite food."

Julian started walking into her room as he spoke, though Charmine blocked him by pressing her hand on the door. She said with an emotionless face, "The room I'm staying in doesn't allow stray animals to enter. If you're here just to deliver food, please leave." Her tone was cold and emotionless.

Chapter 193

Julian glared at her. "Charmine, you allowed other men to come into your room but rejected me to come in? Don't you forget that we're still engaged!"

"Huh? Engaged?" Charmine asked as if she had heard the best joke, she looked at him with a mocking gaze. "Did it ever occur to you that we were engaged while you were so close and lovey-dovey with Tiffany? What rights do you have to stand here and interrogate me?"

“So you’re jealous?” Julian asked with a hint of proudness and arrogance. He knew Charmine was never over him; she merely pretended to push him away as an act of revenge.

Charmine

almost puked just by listening to his words. How could a man be so egoistic? Disgusting!

Before she could even reply, Julian continued, “Charmine, I’m here to reunite with you sincerely. I’ve already broken up with Tiffany, and she’s gone to a rural area to calm down so that she couldn’t stand between us.

“I can even get past what happened five years ago. This is the greatest generosity one would give. Do consider my offer, because other than me, nobody else would be willing to marry a woman like you.” 2

Charmine frowned. Tiffany had gone to a rural area? A proud person like Tiffany would never go to a rural area without an actual reason!

Seeing that she did not respond, Julian thought she was considering his offer and added, “You kept on saying that I’m here for your assets. Well, that was me five years ago. Now that five years have passed, with my current assets, why would I look up to your assets?”

“And think about it: How would Anthony accept your past? He’s just playing you, and a woman will eventually want to have her own family. Only I can provide you with that.” His words sounded sincere and touching. 1

Charmine’s eyes turned darker as she looked at him. “Are you sure you want to reunite with me? Are you sure that you want to marry me?”

“I promise.” His two words sounded real and sincere. Julian was not lying. Once he married Charmine, he would be able to get hold of her assets. Besides, Charmine was a stunner herself, and although she was no virgin, he could still use her anyway. 1

Tiffany, on the other hand, was always so understanding so she would not mind about this. She would assist him in getting Charmine’s assets, too.

Charmine knew exactly what was in his mind, but thinking of her own plan, she said, “I don’t see how sincere you are. If you can pursue me for a month, I’ll marry you.”

“Pursue?” Julian frowned as his face darkened.

Charmine answered, "Yeah. I hope you don't need me to teach you how to pursue a woman, or did you think that I'd marry you right away after your sweet words, without any consideration?"

"Of course not," replied Julian. How could he miss such an opportunity to make her agree to his proposal? It was only for a month, too. Once he got past it, she would belong to him, and she would be at his disposal!

"I'll do as you please," said Julian. "Will you accept this lunch then?"

Charmine accepted the lunch and yawned. "I'm still tired, will take a nap now. You go back and start planning, and don't forget to post a tweet about you pursuing me on Twitter."

With that, she did not give Julian any chance to reject as she shut the door.

Julian was stunned by the door, his brows tightened. Post a tweet on Twitter? This woman wanted the netizens to know! Having agreed to pursue her for a month was already his greatest tolerance, but since the thing had unfolded up at this point, he had no choice but to do as she pleased.

He searched for Charmine's profile and sent her a message: [Are you sure that you'll marry me in a month?]

(Yes.)

One word. Simple and straightforward.

With this screenshot, Julian held back his resentment and left the hotel. As he walked, he texted Oliver: [Make up a tweet about love and mention @Charmine.]

Hmph. Of course he would not scratch his head to make up a tweet to please Charmine. Of course he would leave this to his staff.

On the same day, Julian's Twitter account updated a new tweet: [After so many years, it's still you. @Charmine.]

Chapter 194

Attached to the tweet was an old photo of Julian and Charmine holding hands. Although the photo only showed two hands linked, everyone could tell whose hands they were.

(This is Charmine's hand! I can tell with just one look! Only Charmine's hand is this pretty!)

(Didn't Julian and Charmine have a century's worth of bet just a while ago? How are they in a relationship now?)

(Huh? This doesn't make sense. Isn't Julian in a relationship with Tiffany? Why's he pursuing Charmine now?)

(According to sources, Julian and Charmine were together five years ago, and they even got engaged!)

[Huh? Is this a long-awaited reunion, then?]

[Probably!! They seem to go official!]

As netizens came up with many theories and speculations, the names of both Julian and Charmine trended on Twitter.

At The Palace Heart.

The atmosphere in the living room was nothing but tense. Anthony sat on the European styled sofa, his face dark and stiff. Chris sat next to him with a pout, obviously unhappy.

It was only after a while when he looked up to ask Anthony, "Daddy, do you think Mommy is falling for that bad guy? She'd usually reply or make a clever comeback."

If things like this were to happen before this, Charmine would have definitely posted a tweet that sounded along the lines of, (Reunite? Never!)

Charmine made no response today, however. His software program even showed that Charmine logged onto Twitter one hour ago.

Anthony said not a word as his expression darkened.

Clack!

It was at that moment when the door was pushed open, and Charmine walked in.

"I'm back," she said with a smile as if nothing happened.

"Mommy!" Chris jumped up, about to run over to her.

However, Anthony said, "Momo, go to the study room and do your homework."

“Hmm..” Chris pouted as he walked away in his tiny legs, turning back every so often as he walked.

Charmine sensed that the atmosphere was off, thus after Chris left, she asked, “What’s the matter?”

Anthony did not stand up as his gaze landed heavily on her. “What’s going on between you and Julian?” His voice was deep and magnetic, hinted with displeasure and jealousy.

It was not until then when Charmine finally understood what was going on. He made such a big deal out of Julian?

She changed into her indoor-shoes and walked toward him. “I let him pursue me for a month. How do you think Tiffany would feel watching her darling pamper me?”

So, she did this to agitate Tiffany?

Anthony’s face lightened up slightly as he asked, “And one month later?”

“One month later? It’ll be show-time a month later! I’ll agree to marry him, and on our wedding day, they’ll have to return the thing they owed me for five years!”

Charmine’s lips curled up into a small smirk, and though it was summer, chills could be felt when listening to her bold words. Anthony’s tightened brows relaxed slightly, although all it took was for her to speak a few words...

“Have a good rest,” he said in a low and calm voice, “I’ll knock on the door when the meal is ready.”

“No, I’m fine, I’ll accompany Momo,” said Charmine as she walked toward the study room. She was scared that Chris would be upset by the news; she did not want him to get ill again.

When she entered the study room, she saw Chris reading a report. It was about McKenzie Houston! The report included her biography, her hobbies, her hobbies, and the likes!

Charmine frowned. Why was there such a detailed report on McKenzie in Anthony’s study room?

Chapter 195

Chris reeled back in shock when he saw Charmine standing beside him. He quickly tossed the report into the drawer and nervously blurted, "Mommy, you... Did you see it?"

Charmine made a sound of response but did not press on further. She sat beside him and comforted

him, "Momo, you've found out about Mommy and the bad guy, right? Don't believe anything that's being said on the internet. It's just part of my plan."

"Really? So Mommy will be with Daddy forever and ever, and Mommy will never leave Daddy?" Chris looked at her, his eyes widened in anticipation.

Charmine's being shivered slightly when she heard those words, 'forever and ever'.

Forever? Was there such a thing as 'forever'?

She planned to stay for only three months, however...

Of course, Charmine chose to nod and keep her thoughts to herself. "Yeah, don't think too much. Just study well and live happily. Momo will have to grow up healthily, alright?"

"Yes, yes! Momo will listen to Mommy!" Chris nodded enthusiastically, his small face seemingly relieved. Chris carefully eyed Charmine's expression before he cautiously asked, "Mommy, why didn't you ask me what the report was for? It's not Daddy's; it was sent here by Grandpa and Grandpa."

"They said that in a month, when it's Grandpa's sixtieth birthday, Grandpa wants to announce the engagement between Daddy and McKenzie..."

He explained to Charmine honestly, afraid that she might be angry.

However, Charmine had expected this and she did not seem to mind. "Don't worry. I'm not a narrow-minded person. I don't mind."

Since she was going to leave them anyway, it did not bother her who Anthony got engaged with. It was not her business to be involved anyway.

Chris cuddled in her arms and said worriedly, "But I only like Mommy. I don't like anyone else, I don't want anyone to be my mommy. Momo wants to be with Mommy forever and ever!" Chris nuzzled his head further into her arms as he whined.

Charmine's softened at this. Sigh... She planned to stay with him for only three months, yet he had planned for a lifetime.

Children were simpler than adults. Charmine began to worry about what would happen after three months.

Meanwhile, Tiffany had left the Jordan mansion and arrived at a remote town out of the city.

She looked at the unappetizing hut in disgust, but she reminded herself of her plan. She had to live with it.

(Tidy up the house!" she called out to Ronnie. "I want to see a clean and tidy house before the sky turns dark!"

"Yes..." Ronnie lowered her head and cleaned swiftly.

Tiffany walked to the more spacious and clean spot, and she took out her phone to pass time as she waited. She was going to read some news, but she stumbled across the news between Julian and Charmine.

The tweet Julian posted was so touching and sincere. He seemed to be serious! She had only arrived at the remote town, yet Julian was so serious about pursuing Charmine?

'What if Julian actually falls for her along the way? No, it can't be! Julian is an egoistic man. Why would he want to be with a once-raped woman? Also, Charmine is Anthony's mistress!'

Tiffany comforted herself as she was overwhelmed with insecurities. It seemed that her plan had to proceed as soon as possible.

At night, she made a new Instagram account and posted videos of the rural scenery. It included the view of a mountain, water, farmland and people. She also spoke with her soft and gorgeous voice, "Finding peace from within while finding myself. I'm here to learn about myself while starting afresh."

A well-planned strategy to clean and restore her reputation.

Chapter 196

Tiffany's video did not have that many viewers on Instagram. After all, it was on a new account, and Instagram housed many more videos that overshadowed hers.

At Mile-End Company...

Oliver handed a proposal, a document, to Julian. "Mr. Cabell, here is a proposal arranged

by a professional relationship adviser. He said that if we follow this proposal for a month, Miss Jordan will surely be smitten.”

Julian went through the proposal, and the contents nauseated him: He had to send ‘good morning’ texts in the morning, and good night’ at night. He had to send her a different bouquet of flowers every day, and fetch her to and from work...

The proposal suggested that he made her meals, took care of a pet with her, took her on a vacation...

Julian felt sick as he read it. He had done them all with Tiffany, but they happened naturally. Were these missions to him? Moreover, he had to do them to such a disgusting woman, too?

With a frown on his face, Julian ticked on some of the suggestions and tossed it back at Oliver. “Use my phone, you’ll be in charge of these tasks.”

“Huh? Mr. Cabell, this doesn’t seem right...” Oliver blurted.

Although he knew Julian was pursuing Charmine for her assets, it still did not seem right to perfunctorily do these things. Furthermore, it was Charmine. How could he coddle up with a bigshot like Charmine?

Julian glared at him impatiently. “What now? Is there a problem?”

“No, I’ll work on it right away.” Oliver nodded and left.

Julian’s gaze fell on the document again, and his brows remained furrowed. Although he had ordered Oliver to care for at least half of the list, there were still other things which were difficult for him to do.

Whatever. He would see how Charmine reacted in the next few days before he planned anything else.

He thought Charmine would take on this chance to be snarky about it or make it difficult for him. Both he and Oliver never thought that Charmine would be so gentle and cooperative!

Although she did not reply to the messages he sent her on WhatsApp, she did accept all the gifts Julian sent to her. No matter if they were snacks, meals or clothes, she accepted them all.

Furthermore, she did not cause them any trouble in the first half of the month. As the first half of the month passed, Charmine posted on her private account, (Sometimes, going back to the past isn’t a bad thing.)

Along with her post, she attached the screenshots of Julian's texts and all the gifts he sent her.

It seemed Charmine was moved!

Julian smirked arrogantly. Women were so easy to please! All he had to do was reason with the elders of both families and secure the wedding.

Charmine's private account was followed by members of the Jordan family, and some of her 'close friends' included Tiffany.

Tiffany sat on a rocking chair and pampered herself with a yellow cucumber mask as she refreshed her Instagram feed, while Ronnie dug up the soil beside her to plant some vegetables. She did not want to go on Twitter so much as she did not want to see how glorious and successful Charmine was. The last thing she expected was for Charmine to appear on her Instagram feed, too!

Julian had been sending 'good-morning and good-night' texts to Charmine daily, and he even bought her so many expensive gifts!

Julian was hers!

No... No way! She had to restrain herself, she had to stay determined. One more month to go! She had to endure this painful period. 2

The entire internet was suspecting and doubting Tiffany, so she could not do anything but to remain low-key. Still, Charmine and Julian's current status was also widely talked about; her parents must have felt sick on her behalf!

She scrolled through her contact, about to call Joey when her screen displayed an incoming call.

It was from Julian.

Julian was calling her? Although he did text her in the past few days, he had not called her for quite a while. Had he finally thought of her?

Chapter 197

Elated by Julian's call, Tiffany answered the call and said in a saccharin-sweet voice, "Julian darling..."

"Tiffany, how are you getting on there?" Julian asked, voice somewhat concerned.

Tiffany eyed her surroundings, at the mosquitoes that flew around her, before she replied, "I'm quite well, Julian darling. Don't worry about me. How are you?"

"The reason I called is to tell you something," said Julian. "Charmine promised me half a month ago, saying that if I pursue her for a month, she'll marry me."

"Marry you? Really?" Tiffany could not control her voice and nearly screamed out loud.

Although she did not like the idea of Julian pursuing Charmine, she loved the idea of them getting married! Once they got married, with Charmine's personality, she would quit the entertainment industry for Julian and would end up as an ugly housewife. She might even give all her assets to Julian willingly!

By the time Tiffany married Julian, she would become the wife of the wealthiest man in the world!

Julian thought that Tiffany was happy for him, so he continued, "I have some screenshots with me, and judging by her Instagram, it seems that she's touched."

"The reason I called you is that I hope you'd be able to convince your family to accept this marriage and make this happen quickly."

Tiffany's heart sank a little. The reason Julian called was to ask her to help them get married? As Tiffany thought more about it, she realized how forced and casual they—her and Julian sounded.

She repressed her sadness and continued in an understanding tone, "Julian darling, don't you worry. I promised to help you make this happen, and I'll keep my promise. I'll call Mom later and convince them to agree to this marriage."

"You're the best, Tiffany. Don't worry, once I got hold of her assets, I won't let you down," said Julian with a sweet and gentle tone.

Tiffany's lips curled up a little, and they exchanged a few more nausea-inducing sweet words before the call ended.

In an instant, the smile on her lips faded and was replaced with a mocking smile. Julian used to say things like, 'Once I got hold of her assets, I'll marry you and give you a fancy wedding, and a future with love.'

This call ended with a mere, 'I won't let you down.'

Had his promise to marry her become a duty of sorts? Had his love changed?

It appeared that Tiffany had to make another plan just in case.

She took out a diary from her suitcase and started writing with a pen. Once she jotted down some things, she phoned Joey.

Joey's caring voice came out from her phone, "Tiffany, how are you out there? Why did n't you call me in the past few days? Do you know how worried your dad and I are?"

"Mom, I'm sorry to have worried you. I only wanted to reflect on my own and to clear my mind. Please don't be worried about me, I'm doing fine, and I'll take care of myself," assured Tiffany with her sweet-girl voice.

Joey sighed in worry. "You've never left the house this long before. I'm really worried about you, and I'm worried that you might do silly things on your own."

"Why don't you come home? Everyone's forgotten about what happened, and your Grandpa had also ordered that nobody could talk about it. No one will hold it against you."

'Huh? No one will hold it against me? Why don't they return the ten percent share back to me!

Tiffany fumed to herself, though she kept her composure as she calmly replied, "I can't forgive myself, Mom, even if everyone forgives me. I'll be sure to self-reflect thoroughly this month, don't worry.

"I'm actually calling you in hopes that you'd be able to convince Charmine to rekindle her relationship with Julian." 1 "What? Tiffany, are you out of your mind? Don't you like Julian?" asked Joey in shock.

Chapter 198

"It's because I love him, Mom," said Tiffany, "and that's why I wish only to make him happy. His heart is with Charmine's, and forcing him to be with me will pain him and make him hate me. Also, their arrangement had been arranged since young. I've always been the third wheeler..."

"Don't be silly. Don't talk about yourself this way! Julian's the inconsiderate one here for having eyes for Charmine while he's supposed to be with you! Your dad even warned him about it, but he didn't listen to it!" Joey said furiously.

Even if it was okay for him to leave Charmine five years ago, he should not have ditched Tiffany regardless of how successful or powerful he was!

Tiffany hastily explained, "Mom, you've mistaken about Julian darling. I was the one who broke up with him, and I've thought this through for some time.

"I committed such an atrocity to Charmine. Nobody cared for her even back then, other than Julian. Even if I don't have Julian darling, I still have Dad and Mom.

"That's why I'm willing to let Charmine have Julian darling. It's only by watching her happy will I feel less guilty.

"Furthermore, we all know about Charmine's past. Other than Julian darling, nobody would want to marry her. Therefore, I'm willing to give up and let her have him."

Her words were so kind and understanding. Joey listened while feeling pleased and sorry for her. "Tiffany, having a daughter like you is my blessing. I'll find you a much better suitor."

"Thank you, Mom."

On the same night, Joey commented on Charmine's post,

(If you really want to rekindle your relationship, your sister has agreed. We can see that you and Julian had quite the history together.)

On the other hand, Senior Jordan sent Charmine a message that read, (I think you and Julian should pick a date to host the wedding party.)

Meanwhile, at The Palace Heart, Charmine was practicing yoga with Chris. Yoga would benefit Chris in handling his illness; yoga could soothe one's body and calm one's emotions after all.

It was then when Anthony saw Charmine's phone lit up. He glanced at it and noted the messages from Joey and Senior Jordan. Even Julian sent her a message, and it read,

(Charmine, your parents have already approved of our wedding. Are you satisfied with my behavior in the past half month? There's only half a month more to go, so if you agree, I'll start planning for our wedding.)

Anthony knew Charmine was merely laying out traps to snag her prey, but he could not repress his jealousy as Julian texted her and sent her gifts. Even the Jordan family started pestering her to marry him. Was Julian wanting to plan for their wedding?

He threw a displeased gaze at Chris, and the boy Chris—who was sitting on the yoga mat while listening to music—caught onto his father's look. Chris hastily palmed his tummy and whimpered, "Waa... Mommy, my tummy is painful! I need to run to the toilet, I'll be back in a while!" Chris shot up and instantly ran away in his short legs without waiting for Charmine's reply.

Charmine smiled helplessly, thinking that Chris was running away to slack off. Of course, Charmine had to continue her yoga. After all, something big was about to happen, not to mention the mid-year supermodels' Night of Glory. She aimed to win all major awards on that night, just to throw Tiffany off with anger and jealousy!

As she stood on the yoga mat, Charmine raised one leg and made both legs 180 degrees apart. She pulled at her raised leg as she stood on the other, with one arm stretched out to balance her body.

This was to maintain her posture and temperament. However, as she had not practiced this yoga's dancer's pose for too long, her core was unstable and she started staggering to her right.

Just when she thought she was about to fall onto her yoga mat, a strong pair of hands held onto her waist!

Chapter 199

Charmine turned back and saw Anthony behind her.

She did not know when Anthony had walked behind her. The man wore his home-clothes, which made him seem less cold and more refined and elegant.

She fell backward into his arms; her head arched back as his hands were still clasped at her waist. She was wearing a yoga top and tight yoga pants...

Charmine hastily recomposed herself when she noted that Anthony's grip was so tight, unwilling to let her go. She frowned. "Mr. Bailey?"

Anthony asked in a stern voice, "Are you really going to marry Julian?"

"Yes. Didn't I tell you before? It's a fake wedding, and it won't happen as planned," said Charmine.

Anthony's frown never left his face. "This is quite a serious matter in your hands. Do you want to gamble on such a risky thing?" His voice was deep with a hint of displeasure.

Charmine was starting to feel sore from her backward arching pose, so she pushed his arms away with all her strength and explained, "I don't think it's such a serious matter. It's just a strategy."

She sounded casual, though Anthony looked serious.

'Using such a serious matter as a strategy??

“Charmine, just say the word, and I’ll solve whatever it is you’re facing.”

She did not have to use this as a strategy!

Charmine eyed the man next to her. “Mr. Bailey, you have to remember one thing: You can use your resources to settle everything in the world except for the hearts of people. Besides, don’t you forget that when we signed the contract, we did agree to not get involved with each other’s private life. I hope you can keep your end of the bargain.”

With that, Charmine pushed him away and left.

Anthony’s eyes darkened as he watched her retreating form.

When Charmine walked past the sofa, she saw her phone lit up. She picked it up and replied to Julian:

[Yes. You may start arranging for the wedding, but I want it big and fancy. You have to announce this to the world.]

The moment Julian read her text, he tried to come up with an excuse to convince her to keep it simple. What he had in mind was to get the certificate and call it done. He did not expect to receive a request like this!

(Charmine, everyone’s more into keeping it simple these days. Also, aren’t you busy? Hosting a big ceremony would take up many days.)

[Don’t worry, I’ll cope with it.] Charmine replied.

Julian’s face darkened. She was still so arrogant and bold not long ago; it only took her half a month to become so impatient about marrying him!

Hah! She was just as he predicted. Disgusting!

When they received the certificate, he would make her pay dearly. Julian replied with a text that read, (Sure, I’ll start planning.)

Once that was done, Charmine then texted Eric, (In the next half of the month, get me some hootings or events that only take up half a day.)

Eric: [You’re busy?]

Charmine: (Yeah, wedding.)

Eric: [With Anthony?]

Charmine: [Of course not! Do you think Anthony would marry me? It's with Julian, and you know why.]

When Eric received her text, he frowned in confusion before realizing what it was about.

(You're stirring things again?)

Charmine's red lips curled up. (Yes! Stay tuned!)

Charmine would make both Julian and Tiffany pay at the wedding ceremony!

She put down her phone and saw Chris walking out. While she had told Chris beforehand of what was happening, things might turn more complicated. Charmine thought it was best to comfort Chris and reassure him.

Chapter 200

She beckoned Chris over with a wave of her hand. "Momo, come here."

"Mommy!" Chris jumped into her arms like a little pet as he looked up at her with his doe eyes. "Mommy, are we done with practice today?"

Although the moves were simple, he wanted to sleep and eat. Sleep, and eat...

Charmine ruffled his tiny head. "Look at you, you can't always be so lazy! You need to exercise for at least twenty minutes per day.

"Still, we're done for the day. Mommy needs to tell you one thing: In the following half of the month, I'll be going out with that bad guy, and we'll even discuss our wedding.

"Momo has to remember that this is just Mommy's plan, it's not real. On the wedding day, Mommy will let the bad guy and the bad woman embarrass themselves in public and make them pay for what they did to me. Therefore, Momo doesn't have to be sad and worried. You can't wear out your body, alright?"

"Okay! Okay! Momo likes to see Mommy fighting little monsters! Momo will support Mommy fully!"

Days passed and Charmine had tried on wedding gowns and hairstyles. Thankfully, Julian was always busy and disliked her enough to excuse himself from being involved. It made things easier for Charmine.

Nonetheless, paparazzi caught her trying wedding gowns and hairstyles, and the rumors of her wedding with Julian was viral on the internet that many fans directly messaged her to know the truth.

Even people like Kay, Simon Gray, and other bigshots came forward to find out more.

Charmine had a thought, and decided to post a tweet that read, (Giving up my career, all for you.)

She attached the tweet with a photo of her trying on a wedding gown.

This went viral!

The Diamond Boss gave up on her shootings and advertising jobs all for Julian, for their wedding!

The wealthiest woman in the country was marrying Julian Cabell! The couple was handsome and gorgeous respectively, and netizens were looking forward to this with wishes and pleasant words. Everyone looked forward to the marriage of the wealthiest.

At the Baileys' study room.

Nial rushed into the office and anxiously blurted, "Bro, are you not doing anything? Charmine is really getting engaged! And it's with Julian Cabell! They're official!"

Anthony glanced at her feed. If he did not know about her plan, he would have been so furious. As he looked back at it, as he knew all her plans, his lips curled into a smirk. "Not too bad."

'Not too bad?

"Bro? Are you having a fever? Are you ill?" Nial reached out to feel Anthony's forehead.

Anthony threw a cold glance over at him and tossed him an invitation card. "Remember to enjoy the show."

'Enjoy the show?

Nial frowned. What show was there to enjoy?

This did not add up. Instead of rushing over to fight for Charmine, Anthony gave him an invitation card to their wedding? He was even asking him to enjoy the show '!

Nial then noted Chris fiddling with his device, seemingly unperturbed. "Momo, what's up with your father? Has he gone crazy? Wait a minute... Why are you so calm as well?"

"Uncle Nial, don't you worry. Daddy is right: There will be a good show, so just remember to attend," Chris reassured him as if he was a little adult.

Slowly yet gradually, Nial understood something.

"You're all aware that this is part of Charmine's plan? Is she planning something again?"

Anthony did not speak while Chris merely nodded.

Nial instantly sat beside Chris and asked, "She's officially announced her wedding with Julian. What plan could there be? You've got to tell me, Momo! I'll treat you to ice-cream!"

"I'm sorry, Uncle Nial. I've promised Mommy to not tell her plan to anyone," Chris said with a serious look.

This made Nial even more curious. They did this to him last time, and they were doing it again? Why did they have to poke his curiosity every time?

He threatened, "Momo, if you don't tell me, Uncle Nial won't treat you as my nephew!"

"That's okay, as long as I've Mommy!" replied Chris with a huge grin. "!!!"

It was okay that his very own brother kept this from him, but his own nephew was keeping it from him!

Great! He really could not wait till the wedding day and see what trick Charmine had up her sleeve!