

Go After 1031

Chapter 1031

As she walked out of the ward, Raeleigh made her way to the staircase. She did not like taking the elevator. As she stopped at the entrance of the staircase, she was bewildered to find Zorion tagging along.

"Are you alright?" Zorion asked. "Left something in the ward, huh?"

Raeleigh shook her head and said, "Nah. Anyway I'm not leaving yet."

Instantly, she felt bad. She thought that she had intentionally created a window of opportunity for Deanna. She looked at Zorion and said, "I'm meeting Scarlette. You don't have to keep me company."

Scarlette was standing at the entrance of the ward. She walked towards Raeleigh the moment she saw her. "I want to buy something," Raeleigh said. "Come along with me."

"Let's go," Scarlette said. "It just so happens that I want to buy something too." She then took Raeleigh by the arm and walked towards the staircase. With hands in his pockets, Zorion stood and watched as Raeleigh left. When she was out of sight, he turned around and walked to the corridor. Then, he took a seat, crossing his legs.

As he leaned against the wall, Raeleigh's calm face crossed his mind. He could be seen flashing a smile.

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As they went down the stairs, Scarlette asked, "What do you want to buy?"

Raeleigh thought for a moment. "I'm not buying anything," she said. "Let's take a stroll."

"Raeleigh, are you alright?" Scarlette said as she raised her hand to touch Raeleigh. Raeleigh grabbed her arm and said, "I'm alright. I just feel like taking a stroll."

"You left the moment Deanna arrived," Scarlette asked curiously. "Are you trying to avoid her though?"

Raeleigh remained tight-lipped. She did not wish to talk about it, especially not to Scarlette since she was a blabbermouth.

Raeleigh thought that it was best to keep it to herself.

Scarlette's character was...

Raeleigh shook her head. She reckoned that it was best to keep mum about it and not to let the cat out of the bag lest more problems ensued. Bemused, Scarlette looked at Raeleigh and asked, "Raeleigh, am I driving you nuts?"

Raeleigh gave her a clear-eyed gaze and said, "Nah."

"I don't think so," Scarlette said. "Anyway, I couldn't care less. Honestly, I think something's bothering you." Scarlette then turned around and took a seat. She was a girl who was comfortable in her own skin.

"It felt so uncanny to cross paths with you," Scarlett said. "Why in the world would I befriend someone like you?"

"What do you mean?" Raeleigh said with a smile. "I'm a good friend." At that moment, Scarlett could be seen stroking her chin. "Are you sure about that?" she said sceptically.

"Of course I am," said Raeleigh. "Otherwise, you wouldn't have befriended me."

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Scarlett was at a loss for words. She often found herself to be outsmarted by Raeleigh.

As Raeleigh looked at her watch, she said that she wanted to head back to the ward. Then, they bought something at the shop before making their way to the ward.

Scarlett went to her room while Raeleigh headed straight to Santiago's ward. She was holding a watermelon.

As Zorion walked out of the bathroom, he saw Raeleigh holding a watermelon as she stood at the entrance of the ward. She was about to enter the ward.

"Hey, you've bought a watermelon," Zorion said. As Raeleigh turned around, Zorion reached out to take the watermelon. In doing so, he unintentionally touched her hand. Raeleigh pulled away immediately.

Zorion had just washed his hands, so his hands were somewhat cold. Raeleigh put her hands behind her back and raised her head. "Yeah," she said. "It looks fresh."

Raeleigh pushed the door open and walked into the ward. She saw Deanna and Santiago sitting face to face, but she could not hear what they were talking. As she walked in, she said, "I bumped into an old lady selling watermelons. Life hasn't been easy for her, so I bought two watermelons to support her. Deanna, would you like to have some?"

Deanna stood up and said, "It's been a long time since I last ate watermelon. I can't remember whether it tastes sweet."

"It looks fresh," Raeleigh said. "Scarlett said watermelons of this variety taste great. Let me cut it." Raeleigh then proceeded to cut the watermelon and handed a few pieces to Deanna. While Deanna was nibbling on the watermelon, Santiago said that he wanted to go to the washroom. Raeleigh did not manage to eat the watermelon.

"Let me help you," Raeleigh said as she put the watermelon on the table. As Deanna saw Raeleigh helping Santiago, she stopped nibbling on her watermelon. She walked towards Santiago and held his arm. "It's okay, I'm good," Santiago said as he got down from the bed and put on his shoes.

"I'm..." Before Deanna managed to say anything, Santiago chimed in, "There's plenty of watermelon. Help yourself since you love watermelons."

Then, he walked to the bathroom. As soon as Raeleigh helped him walk to the washroom, she said, "Let me know if you're not feeling well. I'll wait outside."

As the door was closed, Santiago said, "Well, I'm not feeling well now, as I pee. Come in."

Raeleigh blushed. Annoyed, she turned around and said, "Shall I call Jepherson then?"

Santiago chuckled. "Sure, call him!" he said.

Irritated, she stopped talking. People should not be too serious when interacting with someone like Santiago. Otherwise, they would find themselves flying into a rage.

"When Jepherson's here, I'll get him to find someone who can help you then," Raeleigh said, her voice as gentle as ever.

Santiago did not say anything. As this was a small washroom in a ward, Raeleigh could clearly hear what he was doing. She could tell that he was taking a dump.

Raeleigh raised her head and directed her gaze towards Deanna and Zorion. Deanna's face was tense, suggesting that she was unhappy.

Santiago was her brother-in-law. They were not a couple. "What's with her feeling downcast though?" Raeleigh thought.

"Zorion..."

Deanna was visibly upset. She stroked her head and said, "Zorion, I'm feeling giddy."

Zorion frowned. "Why the sudden dizziness though?" he asked.

While Zorion was walking towards Deanna, she rolled her eyes back and collapsed.

"Deanna," Raeleigh screamed. Flabbergasted, she yelled as she walked towards Deanna.

Immediately, Zorion held her in his arms and carried her to the bed. "Call the doc, hurry up," he instructed.

Raeleigh dashed out of the ward. At that moment, Santiago walked out of the washroom and saw Deanna unconscious on the bed. Her face was pale. He then directed his gaze at the watermelon.

Chapter 1032

Raeleigh was able to get hold of a doctor quickly, who then checked on Deanna alongside some medical officers. The preliminary medical examination confirmed that it was due to food poisoning. Subsequent testing was required to determine the exact germs that led to the food poisoning.

Zorion carried Deanna to the observation unit. Not long after the preliminary screening, the doctor came to the conclusion that the food poisoning was caused by a substance called tetramine.

"What are we supposed to do now, doc?" Zorion said. He was pale and expressionless as he stood outside. Comparatively, Santiago was a lot calmer. Raeleigh stood beside Zorion. She looked agitated.

Four people were in the ward. Deanna was the only one who was down with food poisoning. She ate a piece of watermelon before she succumbed to food poisoning. Raeleigh was the one who brought the watermelon.

A thought crossed Raeleigh's mind. Then, she looked at Scarlett and said, "Scarlett and Hadrian, bring the leftover watermelon here. Let's have the doctor examine it."

Puzzled, she then headed straight to the ward alongside Hadrian. At that moment, the doctor could be seen answering Santiago's questions.

"We're trying our level best, working against the clock to help her with some detoxification," the doctor explained. "The outcome is dependent upon the patient's willpower though."

The doctor proceeded to treat her as soon as he replied. Raeleigh stood aside, claspng her hands tightly. She wondered why she had been consistently going through a spate of bad luck. If Deanna's life was in jeopardy, then she would be devastated.

Scarlette dashed over and handed the watermelon to the doctor. She followed as the doctor left to examine the watermelon. Hadrian tagged along too.

When he saw Raeleigh looking distressed, Santiago walked towards Raeleigh and comforted her. "No worries, it's gonna be alright."

Raeleigh looked at Santiago and said, "I was the one who bought the watermelon. I was merely trying to help the poor girl. Never have I thought that somebody has intentionally contaminated it."

"It's gonna be okay, it's gonna be okay," Santiago said reassuringly. Raeleigh was unsettled, so much so that she croaked. Santiago immediately clasped her in his arm to soothe her nerves.

Raeleigh closed her eyes and leaned on his shoulder. Grief-stricken, she could barely breathe properly.

"It's gonna be okay," Santiago assured repeatedly. Raeleigh nodded. Deanna was still in the emergency room by the time Scarlette and Hadrian were back. They were at a loss for words as they beheld the scene before their eyes.

Zorion was gritting his teeth as he looked at them. It was an icy look. Momentarily, Scarlette had a feeling that he was disgusted and that something bad would ensue.

"Raeleigh," Scarlette greeted as she walked towards Raeleigh. Raeleigh looked at her and said, "I'm alright. Deanna's gonna be alright too."

Santiago loosened his hold and let her go. Then, he cupped her cheeks and said, "Listen, Deanna's a blessed girl. Very much blessed. It's been said that someone who manages to come through an ordeal unscathed is indeed someone who is blessed. That's Deanna. She's going to get through this."

Raeleigh nodded. "Deanna's gonna be alright," she said. "Yes, she will."

"There you go," Santiago said. "That's right, be positive."

Zorion raised his head and looked at Santiago. He closed his eyes and said a silent prayer, hoping that Deanna would make it through.

Everyone was on tenterhooks as they waited. At exactly ten o'clock at night, the lights in the operating theater were finally turned off.

Raeleigh walked towards the operating theater right away. The doctor walked out of the operating theater. After a brief pause, he said, "The patient needs a blood transfusion. Who's her next of kin?"

"I'm her twin brother," Zorion said. The doctor took a breath and said, "The patient is in a stable condition. In the meantime, she has to undergo hemodialysis where we'll draw blood out of her body to filter it. We need someone to donate some blood to her."

"Right, I got you," Zorion said. "I'm her brother. That shouldn't be a problem. We share the same blood type."

"Great, come along."

Then, Zorion went to the operating theater alongside the doctor. The lights in the operating theater were turned on once again. Raeleigh stood outside and stared in bewilderment. "I've got Deanna in trouble," she thought. "Looking at it now, I've actually put Deanna and Zorion in trouble."

Zorion could be seen lying on the operating table as he waited anxiously. Deanna was lying next to her.

Zorion felt a pang of guilt as he looked at her pale and bloodless face. He held her hand and said, "Don't be afraid, Deanna. I'm right beside you."

Deanna did not respond. At that moment, her blood was being drawn out of her body. The doctors could not help but to be moved as they looked at these siblings.

"Why in the world did she have to put up with this ordeal?" Zorion thought.

In their years of medical practice, they had never seen someone as good-looking as these siblings.

Santiago grabbed hold of Raeleigh and led her to take a seat. Scarlett looked at Raeleigh before calling Hadrian to come over.

Santiago lowered his head as if he was deep in thought. As he tapped his temples, he thought that the incident was not as simple as it seemed. He had been staying in the hospital. Deanna and Zorion's visit to the hospital had been spontaneous. Hence, he surmised that Deanna was the scapegoat bearing the brunt of an evil plan devised by someone.

Santiago gritted his teeth. After pondering for a while, he concluded that someone had devised an evil plan to hurt him, not Deanna.

"Hadrian, check the CCTV footage and see if there are any suspicious-looking people coming into the hospital," Zorion said. "If there's none, then get the word out that I have been poisoned to death."

Hadrian was astounded, so was Scarlett. "Go," Santiago instructed.

"Shall I inform Mr. Jepherson?" Hadrian asked. Santiago scowled at him and said. "I can make my own decision, can't I?"

"Of course you can," Hadrian replied. Then, he left immediately. Santiago turned around and looked at Scarlett and said, "Look after Raeleigh."

"Sure, Mr. Santiago," Scarlett said earnestly. "No worries, I'll make sure nobody hurts her." Santiago sneered. "You sure? I think she needs to look after you too."

Scarlett was speechless. "How blunt can Mr. Santiago get?" she thought.

Santiago turned around and looked at the entrance of the operating theater. The lights were finally off. When the doctor walked out of the operating theater, he looked relieved as he took off his surgical mask. "It's been a successful surgery," he said reassuringly. "No worries."

Raeleigh stood up and heaved a sigh of relief.

While the doctor was dispensing some advice, Zorion and Deanna were being wheeled out of the operating theater. Zorion could be seen clasping Deanna's hand. It was not until when they reached the entrance of the operating theater that he decided to loosen his grip and let go.

They were wheeled to the intensive care unit, so that the risk of post-operative wound infection could be minimized. Raeleigh went along immediately. Scarlett followed suit. As they arrived at the intensive care unit, Santiago disconnected from all forms of communication. In a matter of seconds, the entire Capital City was shocked to learn of his sudden tragic passing.

At Harvey Manor in Capital City.

Paige was trembling as she called Santiago. However, she was not able to reach him.

"Jepherson, where are you?" Paige said as her heart skipped a beat. "Jepherson, where are you?" She was so distressed that she could be seen trembling as she talked. Santiago was her grandson after all.

All the servants were on edge as she yelled. Amidst the commotion, Lennox called Jepherson, asking him to return as soon as possible.

At that moment, Jepherson was in the Harvey Group's company car. As cool as a cucumber, he was resting with his eyes closed.

Chapter 1033

Stuart gazed at Jepherson in the rearview mirror. "Why is Mr. Jepherson quiet?" he thought. "This is such shocking news. Yet, he's calm and collected. That's surprising indeed."

"Mr. Jepherson hasn't been particularly close to Mr. Santiago, but..."

"But they're siblings after all."

"Could it be true then that Mr. Jepherson hates Mr. Santiago?"

As they arrived at Harvey Manor, a group of reporters could be seen waiting at the entrance. Be that as it may, Jepherson refused to wait in the car. At that moment, the crowd of reporters had surrounded the car. Stuart got out of the car immediately and went to the rear door panel. Then, he lifted the door handle. Jepherson got out of the car. He had always been his unapproachable self, where he came across as cool and stone-faced. Right then, he looked exceedingly intimidating. There was an aura of regality about his demeanor. No reporters dared to come closer. Instead, they retreated.

Stuart lowered his head. Thank goodness Santiago's passing was a made-up story. Otherwise, Jepherson would have regarded these reporters' invasion of privacy as adding insult to injury and subsequently had them pay for it.

"Excuse me," Stuart said. "Mr. Jepherson's not feeling well."

Stuart then motioned the crowd of reporters to disperse. Those reporters had wanted to bombard Jepherson with a slew of questions. Ironically, no one dared to approach him at that moment. Jepherson was gazing around, as if trying to pinpoint the murderer who poisoned his younger brother to death. His gaze was one which could send chills down one's spine.

After gazing around for a few seconds, Jepherson strode towards the manor. Stuart tagged along. Jepherson headed straight towards Ink Garden. Stuart instructed someone to close the gate as he made his way to Ink Garden.

Broken-hearted, Paige could be seen sitting on the couch as she clenched her fist and thumped her chest, lamenting the passing of her grandson.

She had been exceedingly agitated, so much so that her eyes were bloodshot.

The servants had been restless too. They had always felt that Paige did not take a liking to Santiago. Looking at it then, it was clear that she held Santiago dear.

While Paige was grieving, the servant standing by the entrance yelled, "Mr. Jepherson. Mr. Jepherson's back."

The servant burst into tears. Paige raised her head immediately. As soon as Jepherson walked past the entrance of the Ink Garden, he shouted, "Buzz off."

It was the first time that Jepherson told them off. Nonetheless, they did not take it personally. They were able to empathize with him since he had just lost a brother.

"Mr. Santiago has always been a domineering man," they thought. "However, he has never gotten into mischief at home."

The servants wiped the tears off their cheeks and left. Stuart stood by the entrance, ensuring that no one would come in.

"Oh, dear. Where have you been?" Paige said. "Your younger brother has..." Saddened, she almost burst into tears as she spoke.

It was not the case of her own son kicking the bucket. Nonetheless, it was equally saddening to find that her grandson had passed on. Paige had never endured such grief and loss. Hence, she shall not let this pass.

Jepherson walked in and hurried towards his grandmother. He sat down and held Paige in his arms. "No worries, no worries," he said. "Santiago's safe and sound."

Tears were rolling down her cheeks. As soon as Jepherson assured her, she stopped crying.

Stunned, she gently pushed Jepherson away. "Jerry..." she said, thinking that her grandson had gone berserk.

"It's true, Grandma," Jepherson said convincingly. "I swear I'm not lying."

Dumbfounded, she stared at Jepherson. After a long pause, she wiped the tears off her cheeks. She was then feeling rather dubious about her grandson's untimely death.

After thinking for a moment, she said, "Tell me, what the h*ll is going on?"

Her mood changed instantaneously.

Stuart could be seen lowering his head as he stood by the entrance. "One shall not mess with the Harvey family, as theirs is a powerful clan in Capital City," he thought.

As his grandmother collected herself, Jepherson explained the situation. He bent the truth as he explained. In short, he clarified that Santiago was safe and sound and that Deanna was the one who had been poisoned. Thanks to Zorion, she had managed to cheat death.

It all started when Scarlett bought two watermelons. Deanna wanted to eat some, so she proceeded to cut the watermelon. Santiago went to the washroom. It was then that Deanna passed out after taking a few bites.

He pinned the blame on Scarlett as he did not wish to implicate Raeleigh in the incident.

Upon hearing Jepherson's explanation, Paige still looked a little concerned. Nevertheless, she was not as concerned as before. After all, Deanna was not a member of the Harvey family.

She was able to compose herself as she spoke calmly.

"Oh, dear. That's so mischievous of her," she said. "Thank goodness she's able to make it through."

As she wiped the tears off her face, she started to look elegant again.

After a brief pause, Jepherson said, "She wasn't being mischievous. Nobody knew something was amiss with the watermelon."

"Scarlett won't see this old lady taking pity on her. I mean, there are plenty of old ladies everywhere that aren't that kind. What should we do about this, to give her a proper lesson?"

"I've reprimanded her," Jepherson said matter-of-factly.

"I suppose the Cole family is involved, isn't it?" Paige said, looking visibly irritated.

"The Cole family has gone overboard," she said.

Looking stern, Jepherson did not respond to Paige's remarks.

"They have been such a scourge," Paige said. "I happen to know that some higher-ups have had some issues with the Cole family. If we were to intervene, then I have reason to believe that they'll be toppled. We need to bite the bullet and get rid of them."

"Frankly speaking, their ruthlessness must have stemmed from years of being consistently callous to other people."

Paige could not take it any longer.

"Now that Deanna has fallen victim to their cruelty, someone else could eventually find themselves in a similar predicament," Paige added. "The Cole family has been rather scheming. Had Scarlett not bought the watermelon, they'll eventually cook up another devious plan. For this reason, one should get rid of them lest more people fall prey to their underhanded evil plans."

"I'll think about it," Jepherson said. "Let's see who'd gloat at us as we put up with this plight. Grandma, keep in mind that Santiago has indeed 'succumbed'."

As Jepherson patiently explained, Paige said with a smile, "No worries, I get that."

"Alright then, I'll get some rest," Paige said. "Get the little rascal to call me later." Feeling a little doubtful, she hoped that she had not been deceived.

"Have a good rest, Grandma," Jepherson said. "I'll get him to call you later." After Paige left, Jepherson sat for a while before making a phone call.

Chapter 1034

Calvin frowned as he received a call from his son. "Is Deanna alright?" he asked, quirking his brow.

"She's doing well now, but we shouldn't remain silent any longer," Jepherson said as he strolled along the walkway. After a brief pause, Calvin said, "Mr. Atkinson's not going to let this go if he knows what happened to Deanna."

You've been negligent though," he added. "I'll meet up with Raeleigh one of these days."

"Well, come back if you would like to," Jepherson said as he smirked.

"I may not be able to leave once I'm back though," Calvin said. "What's more, you aspire to build a successful career. As your father, I need to back off, so that you can prove to others that you're worth your salt."

Jepherson smirked. He then turned around and glanced at Stuart. Stuart immediately lowered his head as he happened to overhear the conversation.

"Older people are indeed wiser," Stuart thought. "Other than Mr. Calvin, nobody can outwit Mr. Jepherson."

Jepherson flashed an awkward smile and said, "Come back, you're still young at heart."

Amused, Calvin said, "It hasn't been easy to sneak out. Over the years, your Mom has been looking after you and your brother. As her husband, I have to do something to cheer her up."

"You intend to travel around the world for the rest of your life, don't you?" Jepherson said with a smile.

"Nah, I don't think so," Calvin said. "Well, you're doing very well in your career. I shouldn't be back then. Figure out how to solve the issue by yourself."

His wife was getting out of the pool when he hung up on Jepherson. Belle slung a towel on her shoulder and walked towards Calvin. As she sat down, she asked, "Who called?"

"Jerry," Calvin said as he gently caressed her before kissing her. "What have you guys been talking about?" Belle asked.

"He said he's been missing you," Calvin said. Even though he was lying, he did not blush. He could be seen pulling his wife's swimsuit and lowering his head as he snuck a glance. Nothing much had changed

over the years. If there was one noticeable change worth mentioning, then it was her charm. She had grown more charming over the years.

Calvin lowered his head and kissed Belle's neck. He clasped her in his arms and kissed her. Belle had wanted to ask him about his phone conversation with Jepherson. However, it slipped her mind when he kissed her. As she was not able to push him away, she gave in.

Jepherson put his phone in the pocket. Then, he turned around and headed straight to Ink Garden to have a rest.

Come evening, Paige was awake. She woke Jepherson up. Then, he rang Santiago.

"What's up?" Santiago asked as he glanced at the clock. He wondered why Jepherson called him at that hour.

"Grandma's been worrying," Jepherson clarified. "Have a few words with her." Jepherson then handed the phone to Paige. Still a little nervous, she did not speak immediately. Now that she was convinced that Santiago was safe and sound, she did not feel the urge to talk.

"Hello, Grandma. Are you there?" Santiago said.

Paige snorted and said, "Why didn't you call me?"

Though she was irritated, she remained gentle.

"Be sure to look after Raeleigh."

Santiago hung up on her. Paige could only hear a beep.

Paige was exasperated, so much so that she wanted to throw the phone away. Nonetheless, she kept her cool as she realized that she had not been courteous either.

Paige turned around and headed back to her room. Jepherson followed suit. While she was heading back, she turned around again and asked Jepherson, "That girl by the name of Raeleigh. I wonder why she likes Santiago? Is it because he hails from a rich background?"

Jepherson thought for a moment before turning around to look at Paige. "I don't think so," he said. "A charming beauty herself, she could have married Zorion if money is what she's after. Zorion's rather well off too."

As she thought about what Jepherson said, she concurred with him.

She could see that Zorion was a sincere man who truly loved Raeleigh.

"Be that as it may, I have a feeling that Raeleigh does not truly love Santiago," Paige said. "Although he likes to fool around, he's likely to be a faithful partner as your parents are faithful partners themselves who remain loyal to each other over the years. I'm worried that Raeleigh will take him for a ride. Santiago's gonna be devastated if she were to leave him for another guy eventually."

Paige's concern was not entirely baseless. After all, the Harvey family was a well-to-do family. The last thing she wanted was a gold-digger marrying into the family.

In retrospect, Paige regretted intervening in her son's marriage many years ago. She realized that she had neglected her daughter-in-law.

"Raeleigh's not a gold-digger."

"What makes you think so?"

Jepherson turned around and returned to his room. Paige shook her head in disappointment. "What's with the two grandsons' defensive behavior?" she thought.

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"Did I wake you up?" Santiago said as he laid his phone on the desk and looked at Raeleigh, who was awake.

"Nah," Raeleigh said.

"Well, I guess you haven't been sleeping then," Santiago said as he stood up. He put his phone in his pocket and walked around the ward. Then, he turned around and walked towards Scarlette.

Scarlette was half-awake. "Scarlette, get some food," Santiago said. "I'm hungry."

Raeleigh stopped her the moment she got up from her seat. "Off you go to bed," Raeleigh said. "It's late into the night. The Atkinson family will get someone to send some food tomorrow."

Santiago furrowed his brow and said, "Hurry up, Scarlette. Go."

Scarlette then hurried to buy some food.

Shortly after that, she was back with some food. As she handed Santiago the food, Raeleigh walked over and said, "Let me dig in first. I'm hungry."

Amused, Santiago then let Raeleigh help herself. After tasting each dish and being convinced that nothing was amiss about the dishes, she then asked others to eat.

Santiago crossed his legs and looked at Raeleigh. "So, you're still alive," Santiago said.

Bewildered, Raeleigh did not respond to his remark.

Scarlette almost burst into laughter. Santiago could be seen holding the spoon and knocking on the table before he dug in. Raeleigh frowned and said, "Hey, what's with the knocking?"

"Do you have a problem with that?" Santiago said.

Santiago then dug in. Raeleigh followed suit. Scarlette and Hadrian were sitting on the other side of the ward. They started to dig in too. It was silent as everyone helped themselves with the food. Raeleigh felt a little tired after the meal. In spite of the fatigue, she found herself not being able to fall asleep. She leaned against the wall and stared into the intensive care unit.

Santiago woke up at the break of dawn. He realized that Raeleigh had not been sleeping. "Hey, get some sleep," Santiago said as he kicked her calf.

Raeleigh looked at him and said, "Why are you being rude? I'm your sister-in-law."

“Right, so you’ve finally admitted that,” Santiago said with a smile as he crossed his arms. His face was pale. As he had just woken up, he looked like a young schoolboy. Raeleigh knitted her eyebrows and wondered why he was blessed with such good-looking features on his face.

Raeleigh fell into a stupor. Santiago could be seen forming a circle with his thumb and index finger as he yawned. Puzzled, Raeleigh raised her head to look at him. Santiago then poked her forehead.

Raeleigh lowered her head as she held her forehead and groaned in pain. Santiago then quirked his eyebrows as he stood up to take a bottle before gulping a few mouthfuls of water. After that, he put the bottle on the table, turned around, and laid his hands on Raeleigh’s waist. She groaned in pain for a while before raising her head. Scarlett wanted to help her but she refrained from doing so as she was afraid.

“Mr. Santiago’s an idiot,” Scarlett thought. “Since Mr. Jepherson’s not around, he takes the opportunity to bully Raeleigh.”

Chapter 1035

Raeleigh raised her head after groaning in pain for a while. They were standing opposite each other. Santiago furrowed his brows and gave her an indifferent look as he waited for her to remove her hands off her forehead. Nonetheless, Raeleigh showed no signs of wanting to let go. Santiago then walked towards her. She was still holding her forehead. Irritated, Santiago then grabbed hold of her arms as he lowered his head to stare at her.

Santiago was stunned as Raeleigh glowered at him. It was not that her gaze was frightening. Rather, it was because he noticed that there were bruises on her forehead.

Santiago knitted his brows repeatedly and said, “Hey, it was just a flick.”

Raeleigh stood motionlessly. She was alright, merely feeling a painful sensation on her forehead.

Santiago glanced at Scarlett. She knew something was amiss. However, she didn’t dare to walk towards Raeleigh.

“Can you stop fooling around?” Raeleigh said.

Santiago clasped Raeleigh’s arms. He then glanced at Scarlett and said, “Get the doctor.”

Just as Scarlett left, Raeleigh said, “I’m alright. Why the h*ll did you get Scarlett to call the doctor though?”

Santiago thought for a moment. He then grabbed hold of his smartphone, tapped the camera application, and handed it to Raeleigh to take a selfie. She was astounded as she looked at herself.

“Is that a bruise?” Raeleigh asked, with her face turning pale.

It had been a forceful flick. That explained the intense pain she felt.

Raeleigh sat down and returned the phone to Santiago.

“I’ll be staying over to look after Deanna for the next few days,” Raeleigh said. “I guess your brother won’t be dropping by.” Sitting cross-legged, Santiago asked, “What do you mean?”

Raeleigh glanced at Santiago and said, "Don't you ever do that again lest you land yourself in trouble."

Raeleigh felt that Santiago was lucky to be living in the modern era, for he would be deemed a bane in ancient civilizations.

Santiago was amused. Leaning against the wall, he put his hands in his pockets and squinted as he raised his head. "Well, it's not my fault then. Your skin is too tender to begin with. Had it been thicker, you wouldn't have had bruises."

Raeleigh was absolutely speechless. As she looked at Santiago's troublesome face, she wanted to give him a beating.

In the end, she resisted the urge to do so.

She glanced at Santiago before directing her gaze towards Zorion and Deanna. Zorion had woken up. He remained in the intensive care unit as he did not want to leave Deanna alone.

Soon after that, Scarlett came in alongside a man in his forties. He was holding something. He hurried to check on Raeleigh. "What kind of hard object did you knock into?" he asked as he looked at her forehead.

Raeleigh glanced at Santiago contemptuously. "Is he considered a hard object?" she asked.

As the doctor bandaged the bruises, he informed that she should stay out of the water and that she should be alright in a few days' time. Then, he left.

After the doctor left, Raeleigh rested for a while. She then stood up and looked into the intensive care unit. Deanna had not woken up. Zorion had been sitting quietly and showed no signs of wanting to leave her.

Raeleigh accompanied him for the better part of the day. She continued keeping him company after having her dinner. At that moment, Santiago's cell phone rang. He handed it to Raeleigh.

"Answer the call," he said.

Raeleigh took the cell phone and answered the call.

"Hey, I'm here, where are you?" Jepherson asked calmly as he walked. Raeleigh looked at Santiago. She had not expected that he would be here so soon.

After a few seconds, she said, "I'm in the fifth ward."

"Which level?"

"At level six."

Jepherson then hung up the phone and asked Stuart, "Are you sure it's here?"

"Yeap."

As Raeleigh returned the phone to Santiago, she looked at him and said, "You're gonna be in deep sh*t."

"Well, it's not that I did it on purpose," Santiago lied.

“Well, then. Explain yourself to your brother,” Raeleigh said.

Raeleigh then took a seat. She crossed her arms as she fell into a daze. On the other hand, Santiago could be seen sitting cross-legged. His expression was one of indifference.

It did not take Jepherson long to reach level six. He walked out of the elevator as it reached level six. Soon after, Raeleigh looked at the elevator, and she saw Jepherson making his way to the fifth ward.

Jepherson was glancing around as he looked for the fifth ward. After a while, he saw Raeleigh. As he walked towards Raeleigh, she stood up.

“What happened to your head?” Jepherson asked as he gently knitted his sword-like eyebrows. Scarlett remained silent.

Jepherson then turned around and looked at Scarlett. Immediately, Scarlett lowered her head. “This has got nothing to do with me,” she said. “You’ve got to ask Mr. Santiago.”

While Santiago was thinking, Raeleigh said, “It was an accident. I knocked into the corner of the door. It almost tore my skin. I reckon I’ll be alright, but Santiago insisted that I should see the doctor.”

Jepherson raised his head and glanced at Santiago. He smirked as he was amused. Remaining as cool as a cucumber, he did not look at Jepherson.

Jepherson thought for a moment before reaching out to pull the gauze gently. “Damn, that’s serious. Do you fancy a place six feet underground?”

Raeleigh was startled. She looked at Jepherson and wondered how he knew Santiago was the one who injured her.

Jepherson bandaged the gauze attentively. He then looked at Santiago and said, “One more time and you’ll be dead meat.”

Santiago raised his hand and jammed a finger in his ear. “Well, I didn’t expect that she wouldn’t be able to dodge in the nick of time,” he said.

“Going by your logic, a victim of a homicide is dead for the simple reason that he does not attempt to kill the murderer in the first place.” Jepherson’s words sent chills down Scarlett’s spine. “Is Mr. Jepherson going to kill Mr. Santiago?” she thought.

Santiago thought for a moment and said, “Fine, I won’t do that again.”

Raeleigh turned around to look at Santiago. “It’s surprising indeed to find him coming clean and owning up to his mistakes,” she thought.

Jepherson was pleased. Even though he seemed rather indifferent and insouciant at times, he was keenly perceptive.

Scarlett was frightened. Granted that she was not the one who caused the injury. Notwithstanding, she should be called to account for the fact that she was tasked with looking after Raeleigh in the first place. It was a dereliction of duty now that Raeleigh was injured. Considering this, she thought that it was completely justifiable if Jepherson were to punish her.

"I'm alright," Raeleigh said as she grabbed hold of Jepherson's arm and led him towards the opposite side of the ward. By doing so, she hoped that Jepherson would let Scarlett off the hook.

As they reached the opposite side of the ward, Jepherson glanced at the intensive care unit and asked, "How's Deanna doing?"

"She hasn't woken up," Raeleigh clarified. "The doctor said she should be alright if she wakes up within three days." Raeleigh felt that it was tormenting indeed to wait for three days.

It was especially tormenting to Zorion for he was under the weather.

After standing for a while, Jepherson turned around and walked towards Raeleigh. "Hey, come over here," he said.

Raeleigh trailed after him. Jepherson seemed to know that she did not like taking elevators as he led her to the staircase.

As Raeleigh went down the stairs, she said, "It wasn't entirely Santiago's fault. I...umm..."

Just as Raeleigh wanted to say something, Jepherson grabbed her by the arm, pulling her to a little corner where they could not be caught on the surveillance camera. He clasped her tightly in his arms as he lowered his head to kiss her lips. Raeleigh resisted. "It's too public, what if someone were to come in anytime?" she thought.

"No... Please... Stop it..."

Raeleigh pushed him away. However, Jepherson refused to let her go. Eventually, he gave in. While he was gasping for breath, he clasped her hands and slid his hand down, touching her thigh.

Raeleigh snatched her hands out of his grasp as she gave him a surprised and coy look. "You're..." she said.

As soon as she started talking, Jepherson laid his lips on hers, giving her a French kiss. As much as she wanted to resist, she found herself giving in to his tenderness.

In a matter of seconds, she blushed as Jepherson caressed her hands.

While he was breathing heavily, he whispered in her ear, "Wear a skirt next time."

Astonished, she soon realized that Jepherson had wanted a quickie.

Raeleigh glowered at him. However, he seemed to take pleasure as he basked in her glare.

After kissing for a while, Jepherson retreated. He then grabbed hold of Raeleigh's arm and went downstairs. As soon as he found an unoccupied ward, he led her in and locked the door. Then, he bent over to carry Raeleigh. Scared out of her wits, she did not raise her head. She kept resisting, saying that she did not want to be put on the bed. At that moment, Jepherson had a light-bulb moment. He carried her and walked towards the entrance of the ward. Amazingly, they had a quickie by the entrance of the ward.

Soon after that, Jepherson led Raeleigh to the washroom. Both of them had an obsession with cleanliness. As she left the washroom, Raeleigh raised her arm and took a sniff. She noticed that there

was a distinct body odour. It smelled like the scent from Jepherson's body, although she was not completely sure.

Raeleigh trailed along as Jepherson walked out of the ward. She was feeling a little uncomfortable.

It was not the case that she detested being around Jepherson. She was merely not used to it. Since she had made up her mind to enter into a relationship with Jepherson, she did not want to waste time nitpicking and making a fuss. Love is but a commitment to stick to each other through thick and thin. Although marriage is a way to cement the commitment, she opined that a relationship should be built on true love. True love is the only foundation upon which every relationship will flourish. Nothing else mattered. Not even marriage vows.

Raeleigh glanced around as he trailed along Jepherson. Neither patients nor medical officers were spotted on this floor. It seemed that this floor had been reserved for special purposes.

Jepherson walked for a while and stopped. Then, he turned around to look at Raeleigh, waiting for her to catch up. As Raeleigh came closer, he extended his hand. Raeleigh then held his hand as they walked hand in hand.

"What's on your mind?" Jepherson asked. Raeleigh thought for a while and said, "How did you come to know that Santiago hurt me?"

Jepherson flashed a smile. "Well, eyes are the windows to the soul. I could tell by staring into his eyes."

"Seriously?"

"Well, let's just say that he can communicate through his gaze."

"Why can't I tell then?"

"We grew up together. so it's self-explanatory."

"It sounds like he has no way of hiding from you, huh?" Raeleigh asked in curiosity. Jepherson shook his head and said, "Not necessarily. I can't see through his false pretense all the time."

Raeleigh did not carry on probing. After all, it was not appropriate to pry into someone's private life.

She then steered the conversation to the watermelon incident. "I think the sinister scheme was plotted against Santiago," she said.

"I'll look into it," Jepherson said. "Stay over here for a few days. I'll pick you up once Deanna's alright. The Harvey Group is going to put Dream into production. We need your participation."

"Must I participate?" Raeleigh said. Visibly taken aback, she had not expected that she would have to take part.

Jepherson turned around and said, "You're the automotive designer for the company. Because of its one-of-a-kind design, we need you to take part in the manufacturing process."

"Lanox's not a mass-produced product," Jepherson added. "It would be produced in limited quantities. Since I have extra time to spare, I'll be able to help you keep an eye on the production progress as well

as the technical performance of the cars. But I can only do so much. Lanox is a design under your portfolio. I shouldn't be the one who has to supervise its production constantly, should I?"

"I'm the boss while you're an employee," Jepherson said. "No bosses would ever work for their employees, don't you think so?"

Jepherson was trying to reason with Raeleigh. Naturally, Raeleigh understood what he was trying to convey. As a matter of fact, she would love to be involved in the production too.

Lanox was designed by her after all. She reckoned that it would be great to gain firsthand experience overseeing the manufacturing of Lanox.

Chapter 1036

Upon their return to the intensive care unit, Raeleigh took a seat while Jepherson had a few words with Santiago. "Don't you ever hurt her again," Jepherson said before he left.

"No worries, I won't," Santiago said. Jepherson then turned around and left. He had arranged for the hospital to be put under lockdown before he got in the car and left.

At the backyard of the Cole family's home.

"Hey, Cynthia. What can I do for you?" Flynt asked. He headed straight to the backyard the moment he was told that Cynthia was looking for him. He had always been on good terms with his sisters.

"Nah, don't worry about it," Cynthia said while sitting on the bed. "I was merely asking where you have been." Ever since she learnt of Santiago's passing, she had not got much of an appetite. In fact, she had not been eating for the past two days.

She was aware that Flynt would be back that day. Therefore, she had instructed a servant to get him to meet her as soon as he returned.

"You seem to have lost quite some weight," Flynt said. "Are you alright? Let's go to the doctor if you aren't feeling well."

"I'm alright, Flynt," Cynthia said. "Something's been bothering me." Although she had been thinking about Santiago, she wanted to make an excuse that was more plausible.

"What's bothering you, Cynthia?"

They had been sharing their feelings and problems freely with each other ever since they were young. Never had they been distant to one another.

"I got wind that you've plotted against members of the Harvey family," Cynthia said after a slight hesitation. "Is it true?" Flynt replied, "Cynthia, why did you bring this up though?"

Cynthia tried her level best to remain composed. "Well, somebody told me," she said. "And I saw the news on TV. I wanted to know if you're the one who masterminded the murder."

Flynt thought for a moment and said, "I was the mastermind, but I didn't kill him."

"What do you mean?" Cynthia said. She responded to his remark with feigned curiosity.

Flynt stood up and ordered the servants to retreat. Then, he said, "I wanted to hurt him. But Santiago's a lucky guy. He managed to cheat death. The same can't be said of poor Deanna. She bore the brunt of my scheme and nTristany succumbed. Santiago's safe and sound. He's hiding somewhere. News of his untimely death has caused quite a brouhaha across Capital City."

"Right, so what are you going to do now?" Cynthia said. No longer distressed, she secretly heaved a sigh of relief. Since she was worried that her brother would see through her relief, she feigned agitation by knitting her brows. Flynt turned around and looked at Cynthia. "Don't worry about it," he said. "I'll be fine. After all, Santiago's in one piece. I don't think they'll harm me. Not that they can anyway. As much as people are expecting turmoil, I don't think pandemonium would set in so easily in Capital City."

Flynt was rather certain that chaos would not ensue in Capital City.

Cynthia secretly rejoiced. The last thing she wanted was to see Santiago and Flynt in danger.

Cynthia pondered for a moment. Then, she said, "Glad to hear that. Anyway, you've got to stay vigilant. The world is a dangerous place to live in. The Harvey family is powerful and influential. We may find ourselves in hot water if we're unable to topple them."

"Over the years, the Harvey family has formed many strategic alliances across Capital City. Their family is indeed a force to be reckoned with. I was told that they're on good terms with the Atkinson family too. Therefore, it's not easy to bring about their downfall if we aren't powerful enough to begin with."

Cynthia looked at Flynt while she was talking. Flynt then came closer and asked, "Cynthia, you seem rather occupied with matters related to the Harvey family of late. Why though?"

Discomforted, Cynthia lowered her head and said, "Well, that's because I care about you. You don't like that, do you?"

"Of course not," Flynt said. "It's kind of unusual though to find you asking me matters concerning the Harvey family. Most of the time, you'd ask if I'm doing well in life."

Flynt had always held Cynthia dear. Hence, her words caught him off guard.

"Whatever," Cynthia said. "Anyway, no matter what you do, safety first."

Feeling weak, Cynthia lay on her bed and tugged on the blanket. Then, she looked at Flynt and said, "Anything else you'd like to share? Otherwise, shoo. Lest you think I'm trying to probe into your private life."

"Come on, don't be angry," Flynt comforted her. "It's not that I would say anything that offends you." Among all family members, Cynthia had always been the one whom Flynt loved dTristany. He sat on the bed and patiently waited till her anger subsided. Cynthia then rolled her eyes at him. The two siblings did not hold grudges. They reconciled with each other after every argument.

While Raeleigh was sitting, Santiago's phone rang. She snuck a glance at the phone as Santiago was in the washroom. There was a name on the screen.

Cynthia?

Raeleigh took Santiago's cellphone and stared at it. Scarlett had always been suspicious. When she saw Raeleigh looking at the phone, she walked towards her. As she lowered her head, she saw a name. "That name's strangely familiar," she thought.

Raeleigh put the phone on the table and looked into the intensive care unit. The phone kept ringing till Santiago was back.

Worried that Santiago would suspect if she had snuck a glance at his phone, Scarlett immediately took a seat, pretending that nothing had happened.

"Why didn't you answer the phone?" Santiago asked. His phone was not password-protected. One was able to unlock it with a mere swipe. Hence, Santiago was perplexed as Raeleigh did not bother answering the phone.

Santiago took the phone and walked towards Raeleigh. He then answered the phone.

"Hello, is this Santiago?"

Cynthia spoke in a soft, shaky voice. Initially, she had been reluctant to call Santiago. However, she could not help but to call him as she had been agitated ever since knowing that he was alive.

She wanted to ascertain that he was fine.

Santiago glanced at Raeleigh before heading to the other side of the ward. "are you alright?" he said. "Something's not quite right with your voice. Are you sick?"

There was a change of expression on Raeleigh's face. Scarlett could tell that something was amiss.

Raeleigh frowned as she gazed at Santiago.

The corridor was long. Santiago talked as he walked along the corridor. His manner of speaking was not particularly odd. He was still his frivolous self as he fooled around. What was unusual was the fact that he spoke in a manner which suggested that he was being empathetic. This would certainly raise a few eyebrows.

Raeleigh looked displeased. After a while, she stood up and walked towards Santiago.

As soon as he realized that Raeleigh was walking towards him, Santiago turned around and looked at her. Then, he ended the call abruptly.

"I'll hang up."

Santiago hung up on Cynthia before she managed to respond. He then put his hands in his pockets and looked at Raeleigh. "What's the matter?" he said.

"Does Jepherson know about this matter?"

Raeleigh was visibly annoyed.

"I can't be keeping him posted on every single thing I do, can I?" Santiago said humorously. Raeleigh was not amused. Instead, she scowled at him. Santiago turned around and saw no one along the corridor. He then turned around and asked Raeleigh, "What are you doing?"

Raeleigh did not utter a single word. She then turned around and headed straight to the intensive care unit. While she was walking, her face turned pale. Scarlett had been sneaking a glance. She had no idea what happened.

Santiago scratched his head twice as he trailed along. As Raeleigh reached the intensive care unit, she sat down and glowered at Santiago.

Scarlett could tell that Raeleigh was about to fly into a rage.

Santiago sat cross-legged. His hands were in his pockets as he leaned onto one side against the chair. He looked at Raeleigh and asked, "What are you trying to do?"

Raeleigh looked at him and said, "I'll tell your brother."

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Speechless, he snorted. He remained silent thereafter.

Chapter 1037

Raeleigh reckoned that Santiago had an attitude problem.

"Well, if you don't own up to your mistakes and make amends, I've got to let Jepherson know so that he'll intervene," Raeleigh said. Santiago seemed to shrug her off. "I'm a grown-up, I know what I'm doing," Santiago said as he shook his leg. That air of nonchalance annoyed Raeleigh.

"Yeah, right," Raeleigh said. "You aren't sensible enough. Hence, you've got it all wrong." While Raeleigh was reprimanding Santiago, Scarlett wondered what happened. "What has Mr. Santiago done?" she thought. "Raeleigh has always been mild-mannered. The fact that she wants to bring this up to Mr. Jepherson is indication enough that Mr. Santiago must have done something that's rather unacceptable."

"Well, then. Hurry up, Raeleigh", Scarlett thought. "I can't wait to see Mr. Santiago eating some humble pies."

"Are you done b*tching?" Santiago said. He turned hostile all of a sudden, catching Scarlett off guard. She then stood up and said, "Raeleigh, I'm going to the washroom. Wanna come along?"

"Nah, go ahead," Raeleigh replied.

Scarlett had a feeling that Raeleigh's gaze was suggestive of her being good-for-nothing. In spite of that, she had to make a move lest Santiago took his anger out on her.

Hadrian was sitting near the elevator while Scarlett had gone to the washroom. Raeleigh and Santiago were then sitting outside the intensive care unit without the company of other people. Santiago shook his leg and said, "I'll tell him then."

Raeleigh looked at Santiago. "What are you gonna tell him?" she said.

Santiago looked at Raeleigh. "Well, what do you want me to tell him?" he said.

"Tell him the truth."

“Telling the truth, that’s how I roll.”

“Is Deanna...”

“Deanna’s like a sister to me,” Santiago said. Raeleigh paused for a moment before she said, “Is Deanna your...”

“Deanna’s like a sister to me,” Santiago interjected. Raeleigh then stopped talking and remained quiet.

After sitting for a while, Santiago stood up. He took a pack of cigarettes and left to take a puff. Scarlett dashed towards Raeleigh the moment Santiago left.

“Raeleigh, what’s going on?” Scarlett asked. “What have you guys been talking about?” Raeleigh did not respond. She watched as Santiago puffed smoke rings along the corridor.

Raeleigh did not speak to Santiago for the rest of the day. They had dinner at eight o’clock in the evening. Soon after that, Jepherson called.

Raeleigh went to the washroom as she answered the phone. Jepherson was about to have a rest. He called Raeleigh to check in on her.

“Nothing much to do,” Raeleigh said. “We’ve been keeping an eye on Deanna. She hasn’t woken up yet. I’m worried since it’s been three days she fell into a coma.” Raeleigh did not say anything about Santiago. As much as she wanted to bring up what he had done, she held back.

Raeleigh did not say anything about Santiago. Jepherson did not ask about Santiago either.

“Do you miss me?” Jepherson asked. Raeleigh blushed. As she looked into the mirror, she found herself blushing as red as a tomato.

“Well, not really,” Raeleigh said. It was not the case that she was reluctant to admit that she had been missing him. Quite the contrary, she did not have the time to think about other matters since she was hung up on Deanna. Besides that, she had been busy bombarding the doctor with questions whenever he came to check in on Deanna.

Jepherson had not crossed her mind for the better part of the day.

To Raeleigh, cultivating a loving relationship is equivalent to seasoning a pot of stew. It takes time to season the stew with the right amount of condiments and herbs before one can deliver the perfect recipe.

“I’ve been missing you though,” Jepherson said smilingly.

“But it’s been only a day since we last met.”

“One day’s like an eternity to me.”

“You sweet talker.”

“Women love it, don’t they?”

Raeleigh did not respond further. Bored, she could be seen pursing her lips and cupping her blushing cheeks as she sat on the toilet seat.

"I'm travelling elsewhere. I'll be back in a few days' time. Take care. Call me up if there are any pressing issues."

"Alright, you too. Stay safe and take care."

"Okay."

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Raeleigh wanted to hang up on Jepherson as she did not feel like talking.

Jepherson let out a long sigh in response. "Are you tired?" Raeleigh asked as she knitted her brows.

"It was an intense quickie in the hospital, so I'm exhausted," Jepherson said as he turned off the light and snuggled under the blanket. Raeleigh blushed. She then hung up on him.

Jepherson flashed a smile. He called her back immediately.

Raeleigh hesitated for a moment before answering the phone. "Now what?" she said.

"I just wanna hear your voice."

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Raeleigh stopped talking as Jepherson chuckled. Although she was at a loss for words, she did not hang up on him. She listened as he chuckled over the phone.

"Can I propose to you when I'm back?" Jepherson said when he stopped chuckling.

Astounded, Raeleigh said, "I can't wait."

She remained quiet thereafter as she touched her head.

"I don't think your family would accept me," Raeleigh said matter-of-factly.

"Who cares?"

"Then, why did you get me to pretend to be Santiago's girlfriend?"

Raeleigh was very much aware that they would cause quite a stir if they were to go public with their relationship. Consequently, she would be in hot water too.

To Raeleigh, life had been rather meaningless. Nonetheless, she had tried her level best to lead a fulfilling life over the years. She had yet to have any notable accomplishments in her career. Now that her grandmother was in her twilight years, she thought that it would have been such a pity if she chose to give up then.

"Well, I changed my mind," Jepherson said. Raeleigh asked, "Why though?"

"For no particular reason."

Raeleigh did not respond immediately. She paused for a while. Then, she said, "I'm willing to trade lies for a lifetime of peace."

Jepherson furrowed his brows. "Say what?"

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After a brief pause, Raeleigh said, "As long as you aren't marrying someone else, I'm willing to stay by your side. It doesn't concern me if we aren't legally married."

Jepherson frowned. "If we aren't legally married, then our child will be born out of wedlock and will thus be deemed an illegitimate child. In the unfortunate event that I pass on, you won't be able to inherit anything from me."

Amused, Raeleigh said, "If money is what I'm after, then I would have married someone else. I'm sure you know what I mean."

At that moment, both of them remained silent. Raeleigh kept holding her cell phone. Foremost in her mind was not the pursuit of wealth, even though she did not hail from a moneyed background. She reckoned that money could not bring her everything she wanted.

Money was not the be-all and end-all in life. It had nothing to do with one's future or relationship.

She was longing for something else. Not money.

She was very certain about it.

"So, I've met a silly girl who's willing to sacrifice her life for me, yet is asking nothing in return."

"I, Jepherson Harvey, hereby swear that I would marry no one, and no one else but Raeleigh Anson in my life. In the event that I do not honor my words, I shall be doomed to a lifetime of loneliness."

"Stop talking nonsense. It's not that I had forced you to swear on it. You're used to swearing. I'm wondering if you actually remember all your vows."

Jepherson's lips twitched. "It's something important. Why can't I swear a solemn oath? Can't you be a little more serious?"

"Am I not being serious enough?"

Raeleigh felt frustrated and had misunderstood him. Amused, Jepherson said, "You sure? Obviously, you don't trust me."

Raeleigh kept silent. She then hung up on him. Upon hearing the beep, Jepherson looked at his phone. At that moment, he was so angry that he burst into maniacal laughter.

Chapter 1038

To her astonishment, Raeleigh did not see Santiago when she walked out of the washroom. All of a sudden, Santiago could be seen whispering in her ear, "Looking for me, huh?"

"Aaaahh!"

Scared out of her wits, she hurled her phone away. As she turned around to look at Santiago, her face turned pale while her heart was beating fast.

"Whoa, why are you scared sh*tless?" Santiago said. "Somebody's got a guilty conscience, huh?" Raeleigh bit her lip in anger. As she turned around, she noticed her phone had been broken.

Raeleigh hurried to pick up her cell phone, only to find that the screen had already shattered.

As she held the phone, she gave Santiago a resentful look. It had been functioning well, but right then it had gone kaput.

“You’d better pay me back,” Raeleigh screamed at Santiago. So loud was her voice that it sent chills down Scarlette’s spine.

Scarlette witnessed what happened. However, she did not dare to walk towards Raeleigh.

It had been a hysterical scream. Hesitant, she was not sure if she should help Raeleigh out.

Santiago jammed a finger in his ear and said, “Let me have a look.”

As he looked at Raeleigh’s cell phone, he said, “Take mine, how about that?”

Since he could not leave the hospital, he had no choice but to give Raeleigh his phone. Raeleigh snatched the phone angrily. Then, she walked to the other side of the ward, took a seat and tried switching on the phone.

She knew that Santiago had to stay at the hospital for the time being.

To her relief, the phone could be switched on. It was functioning well after she rebooted the setup of the system. Then, she tried calling Scarlette.

Scarlette walked towards Raeleigh to have a look at her badly smashed phone.

“Raeleigh, you must have hurled it with great force,” Scarlette said. She almost burst into laughter.

Raeleigh gave Scarlette a side glance and said, “It’ll be great if you could stop talking.”

Immediately, Scarlette cupped her mouth and said, “Note taken.”

Raeleigh then looked at her phone. Although the screen was broken, it was still functioning well.

Santiago walked towards Raeleigh. Then, he sat cross-legged and said, “I will...”

“Shut up,” Raeleigh interjected, outrightly rejected his offer to compensate her for the broken phone.

Sitting motionlessly, he remained silent thereafter.

Now that Santiago was here, Scarlette hurriedly made a move

Raeleigh kept her phone in her handbag. While she was giving Santiago the cold shoulder, she stared at the intensive care unit. For as long as Deanna was still in a coma, she was not in a good state of mind. Her broken phone didn’t quite bother her.

While she was gazing at the intensive care unit, a doctor could be seen dashing towards the intensive care unit. Raeleigh stood up immediately and asked, “What’s wrong?”

“The patient has woken up,” the doctor said as he thrust the door open and went in. Raeleigh wanted to tag along, but the doctor stopped her. “Stay here to avoid contracting pathogens,” he said.

Raeleigh obliged. At that moment, the doctor and nurses had their hands full.

Raeleigh did not know what happened in the intensive care unit. A few moments later, everyone quietened down. Someone was talking to Zorion. One after another, the nurses could be seen walking out of the intensive care unit. Immensely relieved, Zorion walked towards Deanna and sat by her side. Then, he clasped her hand and put it on his face as he heaved a sigh of relief.

Raeleigh was relieved. When Deanna saw Raeleigh, she was not particularly excited. However, she smiled as soon as she saw Santiago.

Santiago ignored Raeleigh when she directed her gaze at him. He turned around and walked to the other side of the ward. Then, he sat cross-legged and carried on shaking his leg.

Raeleigh turned around and looked at him. "Come on, don't give her the cold shoulder," Raeleigh said. "She's not well."

"Raeleigh, what did you say?" Scarlett said as she grabbed hold of Raeleigh's arm. She had sensed that something was amiss. Raeleigh did not bother looking at Scarlett. Instead, she waited for Santiago's reply.

"Affection can't be forced. It has to come from within. For example, you don't develop affection for Zorion even though he has feelings for you. Likewise, Santiago will still love you even though Deanna has feelings for him."

"Unrequited love doesn't work. I'm sure you know better."

Santiago glanced at Raeleigh nonchalantly. He took his cell phone to reply to a text message. Cynthia wanted to know if he was recovering and when he would be discharged from the hospital.

Both of them were happily texting each other.

Raeleigh thought for a moment and said, "Not that I'm trying to meddle in your private affairs. But Deanna's still a kid. You may want to wait till she..."

"I can't wait," Santiago said. "By the time she becomes a legal adult, I'll be old then." Irritated, Raeleigh said, "What about Cynthia? Are you dating her though?"

Santiago was taken aback. He slowly raised his head and gave Raeleigh a haughty look. He seemed rather annoyed now that Raeleigh knew what he had done. Scarlett did not dare to look at him. She walked away immediately.

Raeleigh couldn't care less. She was merely a little angry. She walked towards Santiago and said, "What the h*ll are you thinking?"

Santiago stood up. He then kept his phone and walked towards Raeleigh. Raeleigh retreated. It was not until she stood still that he stopped walking.

"Mind your own business. And please don't make up stories. I take offence at that."

"I'm not making up stories. It's..."

"Shut up," Santiago said disdainfully. He then made his way to the intensive care unit. "I'll let that sink in," he said. "Please don't bring this up again."

Raeleigh turned around and looked at Santiago. Since he agreed to think about it, Raeleigh thought perhaps there was a silver lining. She decided to stop pestering him for then.

At that moment, Deanna could be seen smiling. Santiago gave her a stone-faced look. He walked to the other side of the ward the moment Zorion turned around.

“Zorion, is my condition stable?” Deanna asked.

“Yes, you’re doing well,” Zorion said as he turned around and caressed her hair before heaving a sigh of relief.

As Santiago sat, she took a seat. “I know she’s gonna be alright,” Santiago said. “But you’ve been worrying unnecessarily.” As Santiago sat, she took a seat. “I know she’s gonna be alright,” Santiago said. “But you’ve been worrying unnecessarily.”

Raeleigh looked at Santiago and said, “Yeah, right, smarty pants.”

Santiago chuckled. “Come on, you’ve got to be more cerebral.”

Raeleigh did not respond to his remark. “If her condition is critical, then Mr. Atkinson and his wife would have paid her a visit,” Santiago said. “Have you seen them though in the past few days?”

Raeleigh realized that Mr. Atkinson and his wife did not drop by.

“I’m grabbing some snacks, do join me,” Santiago said as he got up and walked out of the intensive care unit. “No, thanks,” Raeleigh said. “I’ll stay here. Deanna may be transferred to a general ward.”

Santiago did not wait. He headed straight to the elevator and brought Hadrian along. Since Zorion’s subordinates were stationed all over the hospital, they were safe and sound knowing that they did not have to worry about the Cole family cooking up some devious plans. Unless, of course, the Cole family arranged to drop an atomic bomb onto the building to blow it up.

After Santiago left, Raeleigh got herself busy to help with Deanna’s transfer. True enough, the doctor had arranged for Deanna to be transferred to a general ward. Raeleigh trailed along as she was being transferred. She did not take a seat until she had checked all the procedures of the transfer.

It was a premium two-bed ward. After all, both of them were still recuperating.

Raeleigh watched as Deanna lay on the bed. Then, she checked on Zorion. Both of them were having a rest as Raeleigh got busy with looking after them.

Scarlette could not bear the sight of seeing Raeleigh helping out tirelessly. “The Atkinson family is wealthy and could easily afford a few extra helpers,” she thought. “Why didn’t they get a few helpers to look after Zoriona and Deanna? They can’t be counting on Raeleigh alone. She’s not a servant after all. That Atkinson family’s such an exploiter.”

Chapter 1039

Santiago made his way back to the ward after he had lunch. He could be seen holding a cell phone which bore a striking resemblance to Raeleigh’s phone, except that it had more advanced features. It was a limited-edition phone.

Scarlette walked towards Santiago the moment he arrived at the ward. She then muttered under her breath about Raeleigh tirelessly tending to the siblings. Santiago patted her head and said, "Go. Get Hadrian to buy you a cell phone. It's on me."

"Aww, that's very kind of you, Mr. Santiago."

Scarlette turned around and left. Santiago kept the phone somewhere outside the ward. Raeleigh was rinsing a towel when Santiago thrust the door and went into the ward. Although it was a new towel, she insisted on having it rinsed before using it.

She snuck a glance as Santiago walked into the ward. As soon as she noticed it was Santiago, she went into the washroom again.

Santiago walked towards Zorion and said, "I'm going back to the school tomorrow morning. Could you get someone to look after both of you?"

"Raeleigh can stay over, can't she?" Zorion said as she glanced at the washroom. Santiago sniggered and said, "Well my brother has never bossed her around like a servant. What makes you think you can boss her around?"

Deanna was elated when she saw Santiago. However, she looked grim at that moment.

"That was not the case," Deanna said. "We didn't boss her around. In fact, she's the one who offered to help us..."

"Bullcrap," Santiago said as he turned around, looking visibly annoyed. Nobody had ever been that rude to Deanne. Teary-eyed, she directed her gaze towards Zorion.

"It has never been our intention to treat her like a servant," Zorion asserted. "Quite the contrary, she has been kind enough to offer us help since we're not well."

"Well, then she should stop being kind," Santiago said. "Deanna's food poisoning has nothing to do with her in the first place. Even if she did not buy those watermelons, the perpetrators would cook up another vicious plan against me sooner or later. If someone shall ever be held accountable, that would be me, not Raeleigh. Granted, I shall be held responsible. However..."

"If Deanna hadn't been abducted, then I wouldn't have been admitted to the hospital," Santiago added. "On that note, I'm sure that you could tell Raeleigh's not involved."

Visibly irritated, Zorion said, "You've been blabbering. What message do you wish to drive home?"

"Raeleigh is under no obligation to stay over to look after both of you, much less getting bossed around like a servant," Santiago said.

"For the record, we didn't boss her around," Deanna said. She had been agitated, so much so that she almost fell off the bed. However, she remained still at the moment as she was taking an injection. She has always been faint-hearted when it came to getting jabbed. It was not surprising to find her crying her eyes out whenever she got jabbed.

"Stop making excuses." Santiago brushed her off. "Raeleigh has been busy looking after you. If she were to be bedridden, then would you go so far as to stay over the hospital looking after her tirelessly?"

Dazed, Zorion directed his gaze towards the washroom door. Raeleigh happened to walk out of the washroom at that moment and overheard the conversation.

"My brother has never bossed her around," Santiago said. "I was the one who injured her forehead. He has warned me not to do that again."

"You've never been able to win her heart," Santiago added. "You wouldn't shower her with as much love as my brother did anyway. So, I guess it's been a lucky escape for her."

"It's better to let go."

Santiago turned around and glanced at Raeleigh. "Come on, you're the daughter-in-law of the Harvey family," he said. "Don't be reduced to a doormat."

Then, he thrust the door and walked out of the ward. "Get out of here," he commanded.

Raeleigh stood by the entrance to the washroom. Awkwardness was written all over her face. She did not take his words to heart as she knew that he could be ill-mannered at times.

"Rest well," Raeleigh said. "Let me have a word with him." Raeleigh thrust the door and walked out of the ward. As soon as Santiago saw her, he turned around and walked towards the other end of the corridor. Raeleigh trailed along and grabbed him by the arm.

"What's wrong with you?" Raeleigh asked irritably. Santiago replied nonchalantly, "Well, what do you think?"

Raeleigh paused for a moment. Then, she said, "I was just helping out. Nobody's in the ward. I can't let them use the unwashed towel, can I?"

"Get someone else to do it. Why hasn't Scarlett been helping out?"

"Stop being unreasonable," Raeleigh said. She was at her wits' end.

Santiago turned around, wanting to leave. Raeleigh stopped him. "If you feel like leaving, well, by all means, then go. But I can't leave them alone. I was the one who brought the watermelon. My conscience would bother me if I were to leave."

Santiago did not respond to her remarks. He walked towards the entrance of the ward and took a seat. He then handed her the phone. "Hey, take it," he said.

Raeleigh lowered her head and unboxed it. As soon as she found out that it was a cell phone, she said, "You left the hospital, didn't you?"

"Yeah," Santiago said as he raised his head to look at Raeleigh. She rolled her eyes at him. Then, she turned on the phone, walked towards Santiago, and sat beside him. Raeleigh did not seem to know how to go about using it. Santiago snatched the phone away and said, "You've been using an old-fashioned cell phone."

Raeleigh frowned. "I'm not quite a tech junkie," she said. "Otherwise, it would have been a breeze operating the new phone."

“Well, then stop being stubborn,” Santiago said. Then, he lowered his head to get his hands on the SIM card tRhys. Raeleigh handed the SIM card to him.

Upon reaching an agreement, Raeleigh kept the phone.

Raeleigh knew that her taking the phone signified that Santiago had given in and therefore would not leave the hospital. As she walked into the ward, Santiago waited outside.

Deanna saw Raeleigh looking rather disappointed when she turned around to find Santiago not coming along with her. She remained silent and did not query his whereabouts.

As she walked into the ward, she took a seat and kept the siblings company. However, she did not say anything. It was as if she was at a loss for words.

“Well, I guess Santiago’s right after all,” Zorion said in an attempt to break the silence. Raeleigh gave him an indifferent look. “He didn’t mean to be rude,” she said with a smile.

“Yeah, he’s just concerned about you,” Zorion said as he forced a smile.

Raeleigh felt a little uncomfortable. She had a feeling that there was something amiss about his smile. Nonetheless, she did not make a fuss about it.

On the other hand, Deanna was forthright. “Raeleigh, you love Santiago, don’t you?” she said.

Stunned, Raeleigh directed her gaze towards Deanna. She was amused as she stared into her eyes. There was something about Deanna’s gaze which tickled her funny bone.

“What are you trying to say?”

Deanna swiftly directed her gaze at the ceiling. She did not dare to look at Raeleigh straight in the eye. “Well, just admit if you love him,” she said bashfully.

Amused, Raeleigh said, “Jepherson’s my boyfriend. And both of them are siblings.”

After a long pause, Deanna looked at Raeleigh and said, “So, you don’t like him, do you?”

“Well, it’s not that I don’t like him,” Raeleigh said. “Let’s just say that I don’t like him romantically.” Deanna nodded. Then, she turned around and went to the bed to take a rest.

Raeleigh stood up and said, “It’s getting late, I’ll make a move. Have a rest. I won’t be coming over if there’s nothing pressing. You may want to get someone to look after you.”

Then, she walked out of the ward and closed the door. Santiago could be seen sitting cross-legged and crossing his arms as he leaned against the wall.

Raeleigh walked over and took off her coat. She then covered Santiago with the coat. As she took a seat, she leaned against the wall and closed her eyes.

Other than their snores, it was all peace and quiet as they dozed off. As soon as Santiago made sure that Raeleigh was asleep, he opened his eyes and covered Raeleigh with her coat. He flashed a smile, looking at her.

Then, he turned sideways and raised his head as he closed his eyes to have a rest.

Chapter 1040

Raeleigh stayed over at the hospital in the next couple of days. Although she was constantly in touch with Jepherson, she did not bring up Santiago's affair with Cynthia. However, it bothered her to keep mum about it.

Now that Zorion and Deanna were recuperating, Raeleigh wanted to return to her school.

While Santiago and Raeleigh were heading back to school, Raeleigh subtly brought up the subject of his romance with Cynthia. Although she did not speak straight from the shoulder, she nevertheless warned him to stay out of the affair.

Santiago did not respond to her remarks as he was driving. Raeleigh felt a gust of cool air even as she was seated in the rear seat.

Santiago did not immediately get out of the car when they reached the school. Instead, he could be seen yawning in the car.

Raeleigh got out of the car alongside Scarlett. She then asked Santiago, "Not getting off the car, huh?"

"I've got a personal matter to attend to," Santiago said. "Call me up if there's anything pressing. Scarlett, please look after Raeleigh."

He then closed the door and drove off.

Scarlett heaved a sigh of relief and said, "Phew, he's gone. We're as free as birds."

Raeleigh glanced at Scarlett. Something seemed to be bothering her.

Puzzled, Raeleigh asked, "Did Mr. Santiago inform where he's heading?"

"How in the world would I know?" Scarlett said. "He's always been reticent. I don't think he would pour his heart out to Mr. Jepherson, let alone us." Scarlett grabbed Raeleigh by the arm and led her to the school. Raeleigh had a feeling that something was amiss. When it rained, it poured. Hence, she had been on tenterhooks.

Raeleigh walked into the school as soon as Santiago's car was out of sight. Santiago looked at the rearview mirror. He accelerated the moment Raeleigh was out of sight.

He drove like the wind, running a few red lights.

Moments after disembarking from the plane, Jepherson received a call from Santiago.

As he made his way to the airport lounge, Jepherson picked up the call. "I'm heading to the Cole family residence," Santiago said.

"No, please," Jepherson said as he stopped walking. Stuart stared at Jepherson, who was looking rather distraught.

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The phone was beeping as Santiago hung up on Jepherson. "Off we go to the Cole family home," Jepherson said as he looked at Stuart.

Stuart immediately dashed outside. As Jepherson walked out of the airport and saw the car, he said, "We've got to stop Santiago."

"Okay," Stuart immediately got into the car. Jepherson took off his sweater. There was quite a commotion as a metallic-gRhys sports car pulled up by the entrance of the airport. "That car belongs to the Harvey family, isn't it?" the crowd of onlookers said.

"Jepherson... Jepherson..."

Some ladies screamed when they saw Jepherson.

Jepherson got into the car. As he ignited the car engine, the cars in the vicinity could be seen converging from various directions and making their way to the Cole family home.

Zorion stood by the window of the ward. Claspng his wrist behind his back, he looked out of the window and saw members of the Cole family walking into the hospital.

His phone, which was laying on his bed, rang at that moment. Deanna was lying on the bed reading a fairy tale book. The moment she heard the phone ringing, she got off the bed immediately. Then, she grabbed the phone and handed it to Zorion.

Zorion took the phone and put it to his ear. "What's up?" he said.

Zorion frowned. "Get the word out that whoever hurts Santiago, the Atkinson family will take his life for ten million dollars."

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"Zorion, who's trying to hurt Santiago?" Deanna asked. Her face turned pale. Zorion turned around to look at her and said, "No one's trying to hurt him. On the contrary, he's out there making trouble."

"What should we do then?"

"There's nothing much we can do. No worries, he'll be alright. Jepherson's back in town."

"Alright then." Upon hearing that Jepherson had returned, Deanna was relieved. She turned around and returned to her bed to continue reading. Zorion shook his head. "So naïve of her," he thought. "When is she going to be more mature?"

Zorion looked out of the window. At that moment, he was overwhelmed by a wave of emotions.

What was he going to do? As someone with a fiery temper, it would be uncharacteristic of him if he did not retaliate.

Be that as it may, he felt compelled to swallow his anger and suck it up despite all that had happened.

As he clasped his wrist behind his back, he took a deep breath and closed his eyes. "If Jepherson isn't around, then Santiago would be practically unstoppable," he thought.

Jepherson and Santiago were indeed a force to be reckoned with in Capital City. The Cole family would eventually back off.

If he were to have a brother, then Zorion reckoned that he would potentially be able to wield as much power and influence as the Harvey siblings in Capital City.

Personality-wise, Deanna was a clingy and needy girl. Considering this, he had to find someone who could help him out by tending to Deanna whenever he was busy.

His sibling could not hold a candle to Jepherson's.

Jepherson received a call from Stuart, saying that they were about to reach the Cole family home.

"I didn't stop him," Stuart said. "Mr. Santiago has arrived. But he didn't get out of the car." Stuart had gone out of the car and saw Santiago sitting in the car. As he did not dare to stop Santiago, he called Jepherson.

Stuart knew very well that it would be counterproductive if he were to go ahead to stop Santiago.

"Mr. Jepherson hasn't been able to stop him, let alone me," he thought.

"Let him be then," Jepherson said. Since he had arrived, there was no point stopping him.

"But..." Stuart did not manage to say anything as Jepherson hung up on him. A few minutes later, Jepherson arrived at the Cole family home.

Jepherson got out of the car and put on his sweater. He then walked towards the entrance of the home. Santiago had parked his car by the entrance of the home.

As he buttoned up his sweater, he headed straight to Santiago's car. Santiago was sleeping in the car when Jepherson knocked on the window. He opened his eyes and yawned before getting out of the car.

At that moment, four cars could be seen parking by the entrance of the home. They were here to protect Santiago.

Stuart did not dare to come along with Jepherson. Instead, he stood beside his car while waiting for Jepherson.

He did not have the slightest idea why Santiago did not get out of the car. The Cole family members were a little agitated to see Santiago parking by the entrance of the home. Nevertheless, they did not leave the house.

The old Lennox wondered what Santiago was up to.

The young tend to be hot-headed and foolhardy. The same could then be said of Calvin's sons. It did not bother them that their lives could be at stake at that moment.

It was easy to resort to taking someone's life.

The old Lennox frowned when he saw Jepherson. "Oh, dear. It seems that we have got not one, but two troublemakers," he thought.

The old Lennox immediately got someone to inform Brooklyn. Even though he was sleeping, he had no choice but to wake up.

"Hey, what's with you dressing like a dweeb?" Jepherson said, looking visibly annoyed.

Santiago yawned while he was primping. He did not look like one who had just woken up from a nap in the car, but rather one who had just woken up from a long night's sleep. He had unbuttoned all the buttons in his shirt, except the one near his waist, revealing his well-built chest. At a glance, he did not look like a typical 17-year-old teen.

It seemed that Jepherson's reprimands had fallen on deaf ears as Santiago ignored him. Jepherson then turned around and directed his gaze towards the Cole family's home.

The old Lennox was completely baffled. He did not have the slightest idea what they were up to.