

Go After 611

Chapter 611

“Yadriel glanced at Sergio, and his face darkened.”

“Sergio, I know what you’re thinking about. You have to stop thinking about being with Belle, or you’ll ruin yourself, Yadriel said with a harsh tone.”

Sergio trembled a little as there was something complicated in his gaze.

“If Belle really had the ‘Ocean Heart’ with her, then what would Yadriel do to Belle? Sergio didn’t want to imagine that. He could never hurt Belle.”

“Dad, I understand. Sergio lowered his head in the face of Yadriel’s scolding.”

He did not dare to spend another second under Yadriel’s stern gaze. Sergio left dejectedly.

“He’s really good-for-nothing. Yadriel sighed as he watched Sergio leave. How could Sergio be so foolish to fall for a woman? Moreover, on top of that, it was an unrequited love!”

“Thinking that it was a matter of time for Sergio to suffer a loss, Yadriel’s heart ached.”

“It was normal for people to fantasize about beautiful things. If Sergio found Belle gorgeous, then Yadriel would be perfectly fine for Sergio to fantasize about her. However, it can’t be to the extent of falling head over heels for her!”

Edgar snuck in through another door as soon as Sergio left.

“Chief, it seems that Mr. Xanthe is driven by his emotions. Edgar sighed.”

“That’s right. It is a fatal weakness for a politician. He’s an amazing son, but he’s stubborn. Yadriel sighed helplessly.”

“Chief, don’t worry. Mr. Xanthe seems blessed, and I’m sure he won’t suffer much in his future. Edgar consoled Yadriel before asking, ““Chief, what should I do about Calvin?”””

“A fierce light flashed in Yadriel’s eyes as he heard that. He smiled sinisterly and said, ““He’s basically courting death to be against me during this critical period of time. He shouldn’t blame me for not showing him mercy then.”””

Yadriel then approached Edgar and whispered something in his ear. Edgar nodded and left the room in no time.

Thunder filled the sky as lightning started to crack from a distance.

In the office of the Ink Garden.

“Belle was sitting on the office chair, checking out the monthly report. Her fingers were clicking on the calculator.”

A typhoon was approaching.

“The wind was getting stronger, making one feel chilly.”

“A strong wind entered through the window, causing the window and the door to creak.”

Belle lifted her head slightly and brushed a lock of hair from her face. Liya was seen passing by the window. The clicking of her heels was accompanied by the howling of the wind.

Belle frowned at the sight of Liya.

Belle felt disgusted when she thought of Liya.

She then buried herself in work.

The clicking of the heels were headed towards the office.

“Belle, you’re here, loyal to your work. Liya chuckled as she entered the office. She leaned over the desk, cupping her cheeks with her hands, blinking her innocent eyes at Belle.”

“Her perfume was too strong and sharp. Belle felt disgusted at her scent. It was even worse when the wind blew in, drifting the scent towards Belle.”

Belle looked up and saw Liya’s red lips as well as her heavy makeup. It was as if her makeup would collapse at any time with her smile that wide.

Belle’s bright eyes condensed into a cold gaze as she stared at Liya.

“Liya’s gaze was a little out of focus, and there was an evil vibe from it. It was nothing compared to the bright and smart vibe Liya emanated when she first started to work under the Harvey Group. Belle was disgusted at how much Liya had changed. She could tell that there was something bewitching about her.”

“Is there something I can do for you? You know that I’m working now, Belle asked coldly with a neutral expression.”

“Belle, you seem to hate me, but aren’t we family? We share the same husband. Liya blinked her eyes and pouted, deliberately trying to please her.”

Belle felt goosebumps all over her body as she felt disgusted to hear that. “Shut up. What family? Stop saying nonsense.”

Belle stood up as she wanted to leave the office. She didn’t want to stay a moment longer with that disgusting woman. She felt suffocated to be in the same room as her.

“Belle, isn’t that the fact? You can’t erase that fact even if you refuse to acknowledge it. Liya giggled as she took a step forward to block Belle’s path. She then said, ““Don’t leave just yet. I have something to ask of you.”””

What are you trying to do? Belle couldn’t help but to raise her voice when she saw Liya blocking her path.

“Liya clearly wasn’t bothered by Belle’s harsh tone at all. She just clicked her tongue and said, ““Look at you, looking all so superior just because you’re now the head of the household. You look so dignified as you make all the decisions in this place. I envy that.”””

“Belle glanced coldly at her, clearly looking annoyed, Belle lifted an eyebrow. ““Did you come all the way here just to tell me this?”””

“Yes and no. Liya dragged her voice and said with a smile, ““Now that we share the same husband, can you stop treating me this coldly? You’re now the head of the household. You can at least offer me some benefits in return, can’t you?”””

I see it now. You’re here for this! Belle said with a sneer. She finally understood Liya’s intention.

“That’s right. Look, I’m not here to complain to you. I have no job, and no company is going to offer me a job either. I haven’t been paid for a while, and look at me now. I’m penniless. I can’t even bring food to the table. Can you please be so kind, and offer me some help? Liya pleaded shamelessly as she fiddled with her fingers.”

“You reap what you sow. Do you not understand this? How are you different from beggars on the street? Liya, you’re a top student. You should be doing something meaningful and creative with your own talents instead of begging shamelessly for someone to help you. This isn’t the right way, Belle said seriously with a cold expression.”

“But, Belle, don’t you see that I’m in trouble now? We are family. Can’t you help me? Liya wasn’t bothered at all by Belle’s words. She continued to plead for Belle’s help, and even extended her arm to get hold of Belle.”

Belle felt disgusted and swung her arm away. Belle then tried to walk past Liya in order to leave the office.

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“Belle, just give me some of it. Liya immediately panicked and held Belle’s hand when she saw that Belle was about to leave. She had to get some cash from Belle no matter what. She then said, ““Belle, it’s not your money. Why do you have to make things so difficult?”””

“Belle was furious with her attitude, and she immediately shoved Liya’s hand away and left the office.”

“However, Liya continued to hold onto her and kept shouting.”

“Disgust surged within Belle’s heart as she felt like something was rushing up from her stomach. All the pulling and tugging caused Belle to sprain her ankle, and she was falling backwards.”

“Madam, watch out. Lomen immediately jumped in from the opened window. He got hold of Belle just in time and then shouted at Liya, ““Let go of her.”””

Liya trembled after being shouted at by Lomen. She loosened her grip on Belle.

“What do you think you’re doing? You b*tch, Paige yelled as she rushed in. She was there coincidentally, and she saw Liya pushing Belle until Belle fell backwards. Paige turned pale at that moment. Thankfully, Lomen appeared just in time and got hold of Belle. Paige was terrified and furious. ”

How dare Liya try to make a fuss under their roof? The entire Harvey family had been protecting Belle all this while. How could she!

“Mom, you’re here. I was talking to her. Liya felt guilty under Paige’s presence. She immediately forced a smile.”

“Shut up, Paige said with a trace of anger on her expression. She then lectured, ““Don’t think that we aren’t aware of your intention for moving into Harvey Group. Let me tell you what, I know what you’re planning.”””

“Liya forced a smile to hide her embarrassment, and said, ““I’m staying here because of Grandma’s will. I only want to marry Calvin. I don’t have any other ulterior motives.”””

“Paige snorted and glared at Liya coldly. She then turned around and held Belle’s hand as she asked with concern, ““Belle, are you okay?”””

“Mom, I’m fine, don’t worry, Belle said with a comforting smile.”

“Paige twitched her eyebrow and said in a loud voice, ““Belle, if anyone is trying to milk something out of our Harvey family, then you will have to be our gatekeeper, and do not allow those with ill intentions to succeed.”””

“Belle cast a glance at Liya and said firmly, ““Don’t worry. I know what to do. I will not let them milk anything out of us. Or else, I wouldn’t be fulfilling my responsibility as the head of the household.”””

“Paige smiled and said, ““That’s great.”” Paige then held Belle’s arm and said sweetly, ““I’ve made you some nutritious soup today. It’s best for this weather. Shall we?”””

“Sure. Thank you, Mom, Belle said politely before heading outside with Paige. They left the office while laughing and chatting.”

They blatantly left Liya behind and ignored her presence.

“D*mned old woman, Liya cursed. She was jealous and spiteful to see Belle being that close with Paige. She murmured to herself, ““Wait and see. You’d better watch out. I’ll make you pay for looking down on me.”””

“Liya didn’t manage to get anything from Belle that day. She then returned to her room in frustration. She threw her purse and sat on the couch, groaning. She clearly looked furious.”

“If things went on like that, Liya would never achieve anything by living under that roof. Calvin disliked her, and there was no one else in the Harvey family who welcomed her arrival. Even with Sophia’s will backing her up, it didn’t seem possible that Calvin would end up marrying Liya.”

“She was right. If she didn’t get to marry Calvin, despite extending her stay there, then she still won’t be able to milk anything out of it.”

“The guest room for her was nothing at all when compared to the mansion Oscar bought her. Even the food could not compare to those she had with Oscar. The Harvey family was a noble family, but they wouldn’t have exquisite cuisine for every meal either.”

“On top of that, Belle was still the head of the household. She had been Liya’s nemesis since forever. Liya had never liked her, especially when Belle was always the perfect wife, mastering not only household chores but also managing the entire Harvey Manor. She organized the manor until it was

elegant yet not wasteful. The manor was kept clean and tidy. She also kept tabs on the household expenses. She would spend a lot when it involved socializing events, but on normal days, she wouldn't waste a cent. Harvey Manor was much more structured than before under Belle's leadership."

This was exactly what Liya was frustrated about!

Liya was already used to the lavish lifestyle. She had already felt uneasy even though it was only her second day in Harvey Manor. She felt as if her freedom had been taken away and couldn't even get to enjoy a night out. That frustrated her.

Liya was sprawled on her bed as she shut her eyes. She started to plan something again.

It took her so much effort to return to the manor. She could not let that all go in vain. She wouldn't be satisfied to have to end up like that.

There was a soft knock on the door.

Who's it? Liya asked impatiently.

"It's me, Letty. A woman's voice could be heard outside the door."

What's the matter? Liya sat up and frowned.

I've brought you something to eat. Letty sounded gentle.

"Liya was outside for the whole day. She was already getting hungry. Therefore, she was delighted to hear that. She immediately got up and opened the door."

"Surely enough, a helper named Letty had brought over desserts and snacks, which were all Liya's favourite."

Liya was all smiles to see that.

Which section are you working in? Liya grabbed a snack from the tRhys and popped it in her mouth as she asked in a muffled voice.

"I'm from the Ink Garden's kitchen, Letty replied with a smile."

"Why are you sending food to me then? Liya was curious. Not one helper in Richard Manor liked her. They all treated her as if she was different from them. Now that Letty was being kind to her, Liya felt as if she had met an alien."

"Miss Liya, you've been appointed to marry the head of the family in Old Madam's will. I hope that I can do something to make you like me, so that I will have someone who has my back in the future, Letty said with a smile. Her words sounded natural."

"Liya thought that she made sense. So, she nodded in response, but shook her head and said with a sigh immediately after, ""I'm afraid that you've come to the wrong person. Belle is in charge of Harvey Manor. Meanwhile, I'm nobody. No one is happy to see me.""

"To her surprise, Letty smiled disapprovingly and said, ""Miss Liya, that's not true. Do you know why Belle is still in charge? That's because Old Madam adores her! Lexie was kicked out because Old Madam

didn't like her. But you? You are appointed in her will to marry to the head of the family. This proves that Old Madam likes you too. You are basically on par with Belle. Why is she the one who's respected and in charge instead? In my opinion, you have to work harder, and you will get to turn the tables around. I believe in you."""

"Letty was being flattering but Liya found that her words made sense. Her mood was lifted. She then grabbed her purse and gave Letty two hundred dollar notes as she said, ""You have great eyes. This is a bonus for your great performance today. If you keep up with this, then I promise there's more to come."""

Letty took the dollar notes with a wide smile and kept them in her pocket.

"Miss Liya, since you're so kind to me, let me tell you something else."

"After saying that, Letty then deliberately kept quiet and kept Liya in suspense."

What is that? Liya was curious to know.

"It's like this. Letty lowered her voice into a whisper as she took a step forward and asked in a mysterious way, ""Have you heard of a treasure named 'Ocean Heart'?"""

Treasure? Liya widened her eyes upon hearing that. She grew excited.

What is 'Ocean Heart'? Is it valuable? Liya asked excitedly.

"Of course, it is priceless, and there are a lot of people out there searching for it. If you get hold of the treasure, then you don't have to worry about making a living anymore. You can even be among the richest, Letty said in an exaggerated manner, driving Liya even crazier."

Where is this treasure now? How can I get it? Liya asked in a hurry as she grabbed Letty's arm.

"There's no need to rush. I can explain to you slowly. Letty put on a mysterious smile and said, ""No one else knows about this treasure besides Old Madam, not even Paige. Only those approved by Old Madam will get the chance to learn of its existence. It is rumoured that the treasure will be handed over to the wife of the head of the family, who also happened to be the eldest grandson. With Calvin being the eldest grandson as well as the head of the family, it only makes sense that Belle gets the treasure."""

Liya's face darkened upon hearing that. There was a dangerous glint shining in her eyes.

"But Miss Liya, don't worry. Now that Old Madam stated in her will that Calvin has to marry you, you will get a chance. After all, you are also the wife of the eldest grandson. But then, it depends on your ability whether you get it or not, Letty explained further."

"Liya's eyes immediately lit up. ""Letty, then what should I do to get the treasure?"""

"Letty paused for a while, clearly processing something in her mind, before she whispered, ""It's simple. Just get Sophia's approval, and you're good to go."""

"Liya was startled to hear that. No one else but her knew about the truth regarding Sophia's will. She knew that Sophia would never approve of her, whether she was conscious or not. Liya would never stand a chance against Belle. Liya wasn't that ignorant. She knew that it was not going to work."

Liya immediately shook her head and denied the idea.

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“In fact, it isn’t necessary to get Old Madam’s approval. We just have to get hold of the treasure. Sophia can’t recognize anyone anymore. So, this is our best chance. Finders keepers. Not many people know about the treasure, not even Madam Paige or Mr. Hudson. You just have to think of a way to get hold of the treasure. Then, who is it to say that you can’t keep it as your own? Letty persuaded. She noticed that Liya was a little dejected, and her persuasion made Liya nod in agreement.”

“You did well today, and I’m glad you came to me. How about this? You’ll follow me, and I’ll offer you benefits when I stand firm one day. Liya was delighted to get this information, hence she made an offer to Letty.”

“Upon hearing this, Letty seemed overjoyed as well. She smiled widely and thanked her repeatedly.”

“By the way, do you have any idea where the treasure is kept? Liya immediately asked as she thought of the question.”

“I don’t know about this, but I assume that it’s with Sophia. It’s with her all this while. So, it will only make sense if she keeps it near her place, Letty said after a round of thoughts.”

“It should be at Sophia’s place. Liya thought to herself. Wasn’t that obvious? However, Letty was just a maid. Liya shouldn’t expect her to know that. Thus, she said, ““That’s okay then. Just come to me if there’s anything.”””

“Sure, Mrs. Harvey, Letty called out affectionately before leaving with a smile.”

“Miss Yates? I’m Letty, Letty found a quiet corner before making a phone call. She lowered her voice to a whisper and said, ““I’ve already told Liya about the treasure today. I think she’ll make a move soon.”””

“Great, Zoella said. She had been resting on her bed ever since her miscarriage. As soon as she received the news, she smiled sinisterly and said, ““Keep an eye on her from today onwards. Once she gets the treasure, do whatever you need to snatch it over, even if it means you have to kill her.”””

Rage built in her eyes. Zoella gritted her teeth in anger as she was reminded of the night she was schemed by Liya.

“Don’t worry, Miss Yates. No one likes her in Harvey Manor. Even if I were to make my move on her in public, no one will stand up for her, Letty said with a smug look.”

“Great. Zoella nodded and said, ““You will be of her service before she gets the treasure. After all, she’s the only one who can enter Sophia’s bedroom.”””

Sure. I will have to hang up first. Someone else is coming. Letty hung up the phone in a hurry as she heard footsteps approaching.

“Zoella smiled sinisterly and made another call after pondering for a moment. ““Libby, send someone to keep an eye on Liya whenever she’s out. Let me know immediately if there’s anything.”””

“After the two phone calls, it seemed as if the hatred Zoella had towards Liya finally lessened a little. She sighed as she shut her eyes.”

“Meanwhile, Liya was in high spirits after learning about the ‘Ocean Heart’. Before this, she was still finding ways to milk the benefits during her stay in Harvey Manor. She knew that her days were numbered, and she would have to leave without getting anything in return. However, now that she knew about the treasure, she wouldn’t need Calvin anymore once she got hold of it. She could be rich on her own. Moreover, with Sophia’s will backing her up, it was her right to get hold of the treasure.”

“Thinking of that, Liya lay down happily in bed. Her mood improved, and she fell asleep without her realizing it. Recently, she seemed to like sleeping a lot and couldn’t get enough sleep no matter what.”

“Later that night, Lomen returned to the Ink Garden, and he ran into Belle. ““Lomen, where did Liya go today?”” Belle asked.”

“Madam, Liya went to the salon during the day and had lunch at a French restaurant. She went shopping after that. It was a wild round of shopping. There wasn’t anything odd, Lomen reported his findings in detail.”

“Belle frowned. It was only in the morning when Liya told her that she needed money, and she made it sound like she was struggling financially. However, why was she spending lavishly then? Who gave her the money to do so?”

“By the way, Madam, Liya went to a seaside villa today, and she was driving a luxury car. I saw her returning to the villa as if she was the hostess of the villa. I was dumbfounded. How could a woman like her own such things? Lomen gasped as he was suddenly reminded of his findings that day.”

“Belle was puzzled too. If Liya owned that much assets, then why was she still trying so hard to get a place in Harvey Manor? Why did Liya put on such a pitiful act? Was she really that greedy? Did she really own all that stuff?”

“On top of that, Belle was also concerned about Liya’s huge transformation when they finally met again.”

“Lomen, please investigate what Liya did after leaving Harvey Manor and if she owned the villa and the car you mentioned. If yes, then who bought them for her? Like what she told me earlier, she hadn’t been working for months and was not paid at all. Belle immediately gave out orders as she thought of these questions.”

Lomen pondered for a while before nodding.

“After Lomen left, Belle was still not at ease. Everything about Liya was too weird. She was obviously lazy and penniless. So, how could she afford to own a villa?”

Hudson and Calvin had each given Liya a piece of expensive jewelry back at their wedding. Could it be that she sold the jewelry and got rich?

“Belle couldn’t confirm that, and she didn’t dare to make assumptions either. She could only wait for Lomen’s investigation for the time being.”

“The night was murmuring, leaving behind a sense of loneliness in the air.”

It had been two days since Calvin left for Capital City. She wasn't aware of the situation over there. Calvin would only tell her the good news. She wouldn't get to know about the actual situation if she asked him.

"Now that every useful person in the Harvey family was already put to use, Belle couldn't get hold of his situation."

She sighed lightly and headed back to her bedroom with a heavy heart.

"It had been peaceful for Rosa in the past few days. However, without knowing why, General Perry stopped calling her to ask her to return. He also no longer brought up the marriage with Sergio anymore."

"Rosa was once again back to her optimistic self. She was happy and carefree. However, with Liya wandering around in Harvey Manor, Rosa was annoyed at her sight. She had to find an opportunity to get rid of Liya. That was the only thing that irritated her recently."

Rosa couldn't understand Hudson's and Calvin's intention of allowing Liya to move into the Ink Garden. Were they trying to tarnish the reputation of the Ink Garden?

"Coming out of the shower, Rosa hummed a song while drying her hair with a towel. Her cheeks were flushed."

The old-fashioned chandelier lighted up the entire room with the blazing white light.

"After drying one side of her hair, Rosa started drying the other side."

It was at that moment that she let out a high-pitched scream. She looked up and saw a tall figure leaning by the door frame with his arms crossed and a faint smile on his face.

"Who are you? Rosa shouted with her widened eyes.

Rosa, it's me,"" Martin replied with a lazy tone and a pursed smile."

"What are you doing here? Rosa asked. She blinked her eyes, and once she confirmed that it was indeed Martin, she was in a panic as she threw her towel away before covering her chest with her arms."

"D*mn it. Rosa was wearing a lace skirt after coming out from a shower. She didn't even wear a bra inside. She did not expect a man to appear in her room. Moreover, his gaze was roaming all over her body."

That was too much.

Rosa hurriedly turned around and ran back to the bathroom with her heart pounding. She stared at her reflection in the stone mirror. She was actually blushing.

But why?

It had been so long since she felt so overwhelmed with those emotions. It took her a long while to calm down finally. She got changed and stayed inside for a little while more. This d*mn Martin. Had he left yet? She didn't want to go out and face him.

“Rosa, can you come out now? Martin said just as Rosa was contemplating whether or not she should head out.”

Rosa’s cheeks were even more flushed upon hearing that. It seemed as if Martin was standing outside the bathroom.

“Martin, how can you enter my bedroom like this? Rosa sounded slightly annoyed from inside the bathroom.”

Martin was standing by the bathroom. The corner of his mouth twitched a little as he heard her words.

Am I not allowed to look for you for something? Martin sounded a little helpless. “Please come out already. I need to tell you something.”

You can look for me tomorrow. Why did you have to break into my bedroom? Rosa asked with frustration as she opened the door to the bathroom.

“I have to tell you now, or else I’ll forget about it by tomorrow. Martin smiled casually. It was as if he wasn’t bothered by her frustration.”

Rosa could only glare at him helplessly.

“Let me ask you, how did you get in here? You can’t do this again, or else I’ll tell Uncle Hudson.”

“Martin shrugged his shoulders and spread out his hands. He said in an aggrieved tone, ““I got in through the door. I’ve called out to you so many times, but you didn’t answer. So, I just pushed the door open.”””

“Through the door? Rosa gasped. She remembered clearly that she locked the door, and it was an auto-lock. So, how did he open the door?”

“With that in mind, she glanced at Martin in doubt.”

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“Why are you looking at me like this? Martin asked as he touched his face and eyed Rosa up and down. earlier, she was out of the shower and in her pyjamas, but she had changed into the outfit she had worn during the day. Martin restrained from a burst of laughter and said, ““Look at you. You don’t even have a nice body. Why are you covering yourself up? No one will even bother to look at you.”

Martin gave her a sideways glance. He was clearly asking for a fight.

Rosa was pissed off.

“Anger surged within her. She was chilling in her room after a shower. Not only did he barge into her room and peek at her in such a revealing manner, he also criticized her with such harsh remarks. That was too much of him.”

It was not her personality to let someone bully her like that.

“Rosa’s face sank as she glared at him with her almond-shaped eyes wide open and said, ““Martin, I could have kicked you out for breaking into my bedroom, but I didn’t, and it was out of respect for Grandma. You should be apologizing, not mocking me like this. What do you even think of me?””

“Martin noticed the flush in her cheeks and the rage in her eyes. He knew that she was angry. Thus, he said with a chuckle, ““Rosa, I’m just messing with you. You don’t have to be that serious.””

You’re annoying. Rosa snorted with a furious expression.

“Look at you. You’ll age faster if you continue to be angry. You’re already 26. Stop acting like a teenager, or else you’ll end up scaring every suitor away. Martin chuckled and patted her on the head as he said in a gentle tone.”

“Scaring everyone away? Rosa was even more annoyed to hear that. Wasn’t it because of him that she was still single at her age? How dare he make fun of her? He was too much. She shoved his hand away and said, ““Men will be lining up for me if I give them a chance. Take Sergio for an example. He’s a better man than you’ll ever be, yet I’m not interested in him at all. I am an attractive woman. I am not in a rush to get married.””

“Martin choked a little upon hearing her words. He was in a daze. Then, he said, ““No matter what, you will end up being married to me. You are mine. Although you are much older now, don’t worry. I will still keep to my word.””

Martin spoke with deep affection and without shame.

“Rosa was greatly annoyed and said, ““Martin, I told you that we won’t work. I’d rather die alone than marry you. You should give up.””

“Rosa wanted to walk away after saying that, but Martin blocked her path.”

“Get out of my way, Rosa said in a rude manner.”

Martin was hurt by her cold and harsh words. His heart ached. He could only freeze in place and inspect her with his head tilted to one side. He didn’t intend to step out of her way.

Rosa grew impatient. She shoved him away and stepped out to her bedroom.

“Martin was shoved a couple of steps back. In a hurry, he grabbed her hand and caught up to her.”

“Let me go, Rosa said. They were already by the couch, and Martin was still grabbing her hand. She could not shove him away at all. He was stuck onto her like a piece of chewing gum. She got impatient and annoyed. So, she punched him in the chest as she yelled in rage.”

“Martin was somehow in a daze. As if he was addicted to it, he didn’t want to let go of Rosa’s hand at all. Heatwaves were spreading within his body, and his cheeks were flushed.”

“Just as Rosa landed a punch on his chest, Martin took the opportunity to grab that arm. With his other free hand, he held her waist. After losing balance, Rosa fell on the couch, with Martin falling on top of her.”

“His body was lying on top of hers. Their gazes met, and their noses were almost touching.”

“Rosa, don’t treat me like this, Martin said with his breathing heavy. His gaze was drifting to and fro.”

“Rosa was pressed onto the couch by Martin. She couldn’t move at all. She was flustered as she stared at him with her widened eyes. Martin’s cheeks were flushed, and he was staring at her with his dark and hazy gaze. She couldn’t read his expression at all, but she felt a sense of danger. She panicked.”

“Martin, get lost, Rosa shouted out of panic. She wanted to shove him away, but he was holding her hand, and he was lying right on top of her. She could only yell at him like that.”

“Meanwhile, Martin could no longer restrain himself. He finally, got the woman whom he had always been thinking of for a few years, underneath him, and he couldn’t hold back his desires at all.”

“Martin stared at Rosa’s red lips, as his mind got blurry and hot-headed. He couldn’t help himself but to lower his head and lock lips with her.”

Rosa widened her eyes in shock.

She couldn’t even come up with anything before her lips were caught in a soft and gentle kiss by Martin. He found his way to break in her lips and explore further in the kiss.

There was a loud rumble in Rosa’s head as her mind went blank.

“His kiss was aggressive and reckless but also gentle. He took her breath away within just a couple of seconds, and Rosa couldn’t even tell the time anymore.”

“Rosa, I love you, Martin whispered in her ear after kissing her wildly and passionately, as if he wanted to inhale all of her scent.”

“He caught her Tristanobe in his lips, sucking and nibbling on it. His hot breath slowly moved down her neckline. There was no end to his passion in claiming her.”

“It was not until his hand was on her chest that Rosa finally came back to her senses. She shoved him away with all of her strength as she cried out, ““Martin, you’ve gone too far. I will not forgive you for this. I’ll tell Uncle Hudson that you took advantage of me.”””

“The agony in Rosa’s tone gradually awakened Martin, who had already fallen into a deep slumber. He finally returned to his senses and stared at the crying woman in front of him with a blank expression.”

“Let me go, Rosa cried in shame as she punched and shoved him away with all of her might.”

“In a daze, Martin was finally shoved aside. Rosa quickly got up. She covered her mouth and ran away in tears.”

“Rosa. Martin let out a weak cry as he watched Rosa escape the room in panicked tears. He lay on the couch, and had lost all of his energy. He shut his eyes and punched hard on the couch.”

“D*mn it, what the h*ll was he doing?!”

“Rosa was running away in tears, and as she rushed into the corridor, she ran into Belle, who was in deep thought and was heading back to her bedroom.”

“Rosa, what’s wrong? Belle asked in surprise as she saw Rosa running away in tears.”

“Rosa was ashamed and anxious, and her mind was in a daze. She ignored Belle and simply ran outside in tears.”

“Rosa, Belle called out. She was in shock. She had never seen Rosa like that. She immediately ran after Rosa. It was nighttime and dark outside. She was concerned if Rosa would run into danger.”

“Belle, don’t worry. Leave her to me. Martin’s anxious voice could be heard from behind Belle. She paused midway upon hearing his voice. Belle could roughly figure out what had happened. She stood on the spot and saw Martin walking over with a guilty expression.”

“Martin, what happened? Did you make her cry like that? Belle asked with a stern tone.”

“Martin’s face turned pale. He gaped, but no words came out of his mouth.”

Belle shook her head after taking in his reaction.

“Martin, a girl is to be coaxed. Haste makes waste. You shouldn’t break her heart like this, no matter what, Belle said. She was worried that Martin was pushing Rosa to her limit. That would only make things worse for him. Rosa was from a noble family. She wasn’t a seasoned veteran, and she had high self-esteem. She could never accept Martin if he was acting too aggressive.”

“Martin was blushing, down to his neck. The darkness in his gaze terrified Belle.”

“In reality, although Martin had a flawed past, he was neither a pervert, nor did he attract many women like Calvin.”

“Martin’s good looks didn’t pale in comparison with Calvin. However, due to his gloomy personality, he didn’t get to attract many women in his life. Martin was someone who would keep everything to himself. He always walked with his head down and never opened himself up to anyone else. Back in those days when he liked her, he was stubborn and aggressive, even knowing that it was wrong to do so. It took a long time for him to turn around in the end.”

“Now that he was in love with Rosa, it was assumed that he would be as stubborn and aggressive as before. He wouldn’t be able to move on until Rosa got married and started a family with another man.”

“Flirting might not be Martin’s strength. On top of that, his gloomy personality would make people around him feel that he would sooner or later abandon the whole world. If he fell for Rosa using his own approaches, would Rosa accept him for being that way?”

“With so many obstacles between them, could they get a happy ending?”

“Even if Rosa were to fall for Martin, it wouldn’t be enough too without getting General Perry’s approval. General Perry had always been strict in maintaining their family structure. He was from the military and would always stand by his words. Rosa was aware of that as well, or else she wouldn’t have agreed to marry Sergio.”

“Belle, please help me comfort Rosa. I was out of control. Martin begged Belle with his mortified expression. His eyes were sorrowful and lonely as he said, “”I am not in the right place to beg for her forgiveness.”””

He then turned around and walked away.

“Belle stood there watching him leave. He was a man, yet he looked like a child at that moment as he seemed lonely and helpless. In every man’s heart, there would always be a child. Belle could only agree to that saying after seeing Martin’s reaction. He looked dejected, like a child who had admitted his defeat for not winning Rosa’s trust and understanding.”

“After walking away for a few steps, Martin turned around and said to Belle stubbornly, ““Belle, I love Rosa. I don’t think there’s any wrong with this.”” He then walked away without chasing after Rosa.”

Belle froze in place.

“Indeed, no one could tell what was right or wrong in love. Only the involved parties could tell if they were a perfect match or not.”

“Rosa had a bright and easygoing personality, whereas Martin was gloomy and quiet. She was an extrovert, while he was an introvert. They would complement each other if they were together.”

“Belle had that thought. Perhaps Sophia had already seen it this way before Belle did. After all, Sophia approved of their union, whereas Calvin and Belle were somehow forced into a marriage.”

“However, it was apparent that Rosa and Martin were still trapped in a maze and couldn’t notice that.”

“Belle pondered for a while before shaking her head, to come back to her senses. Out of concern for Rosa, Belle headed towards the direction she ran off to.”

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“By the pond in Ink Garden, Rosa was sitting on a bench with her face buried in her knees, sobbing.”

Belle walked over and sat down beside her.

“Rosa, tell me, what’s wrong? Belle stroked her hair and asked gently.”

“Hearing Belle’s voice, Rosa looked up and buried her head in Belle’s shoulder as she broke down in tears.”

“Belle’s heart ached. That year on New Year’s Eve, she also cried while hiding in a corner, heartbroken. Martin betrayed her just as she first started to fall for someone. She was in pain after being humiliated by the one she loved.”

Belle regretted keeping that from Rosa. She wasn’t a good sister figure to Rosa. How should she comfort Rosa that night?

“Belle, I want to leave here tomorrow. After crying for some time, Rosa looked up at Belle and said firmly, with tears still welling up in her eyes.”

Belle was startled. Her gaze was dark and gloomy. Rosa had been helpful all that while. She couldn’t bear the thought of Rosa wanting to leave that place.

She wanted Rosa to stay with her forever! She was unwilling to part with such a nice girl!

“Rosa, can you tell me why? Why do you want to leave? Belle held her in her arms as she said gently, ““No matter what, I hope you don’t rush yourself into a decision. Don’t act on impulse.”” ”

“Rosa sobbed. She was terrified of Martin’s actions from earlier. It wasn’t the first time, yet it was the worst by far. She couldn’t stay there any longer, or else she could never picture what might happen in the near future.”

“General Perry might kill her if she let him take advantage of her. General Perry would never forgive her for tarnishing the family reputation and honor. This could never happen to their family, given their status in Capital City. Her reputation was already tainted after terminating her marriage.”

“Rosa gaped, but she couldn’t come up with anything. How could she talk about that? She could only break down in tears again.”

“Rosa, I know that you’re a kind and sweet woman. If you look up to me as an elder sister, can you let me help you with your troubles? Belle asked in a gentle tone after letting out a low sigh.”

Rosa sniffed with her cheeks flushed. She didn’t know how to bring that up.

“Rosa, sometimes you can’t run away from your problems. Trust me. I might be able to help you. Belle rubbed on her trembling shoulders and continued to say with a gentle tone, ““Rosa, I can’t thank you enough for helping me all this while. I wouldn’t want you to leave our side at times like this. You know, the problems with the Harvey Group, and with Grandma’s situation, I have to be there, and I’d be glad if you can stay with me. But, of course, I won’t be that selfish to keep you by my side if you insist on leaving. I just hope that you can calm down for a moment and listen clearly to your mind. Don’t act on impulse and regret it in the future.”””

“Rosa gradually calmed down upon hearing Belle’s words. Her mind was slowly clearing up, but her heart was still in a mess. She didn’t know what to do.”

“Rosa, are you troubled because of Martin? Belle asked once Rosa had calmed down.”

Rosa glanced up at Belle. Concern and doubt filled her gaze.

She didn’t know how Belle managed to read her mind.

“Belle noticed the doubt in her eyes, but she couldn’t read the concerned gaze. With a smile, Belle said, ““Rosa, I have way more experience than you in being heartbroken. I can understand how you feel, but please remember, running away does not solve your problems for you. We have to be brave enough to face reality.”””

“Belle chose to escape to another country in the past, and her father died upon her return. She had been living in regret ever since. If she didn’t choose to leave, then would her father still be alive if she agreed to divorce Calvin?”

“Belle, I can’t face Martin anymore. He never cherished me back then. So, what’s the point of him trying to do it now? My father will never approve of us, and Martin has been trying to take advantage of me every now and then. I can’t stay here anymore. Belle, do you know how I feel? I really want to stay and help you, at least until Grandma passes away. She had been nothing but kind to me, but I can’t do this anymore, Rosa said with a sob and a blank expression.”

“Under the dim streetlights, Belle could still see traces of embarrassment and blushing in Rosa. Although she seemed uncomfortable, she looked more in a daze than anything. Belle’s heart felt heavy at that moment.”

“It was apparent that Rosa was still puzzled by her own feelings. If Rosa chose to leave, then she might live in regret. Perhaps, Belle could convince her to stay, and eventually, make Rosa see through her feelings. With that thought in mind, Belle said, ““Rosa, it’s true that Martin broke your heart, and it’s normal if you and your father can’t accept him. It’s normal for us women to be serious about our concerns, but now, I really need you. My advice for you is to stay while you still can. Moreover, if your father is still forcing you to marry Sergio, with you going back home, then you can only be considered giving in to him. Also, with Grandma’s condition right now, she might leave at any time. Do you still think that you should leave at this moment?”””

“Belle observed Rosa’s face while she said that, taking in every slight change in her expression. After noticing that Rosa didn’t look as stubborn as before, a thought appeared in Belle’s mind.”

“Rosa, don’t you worry. I will neither allow Martin to get near you nor take advantage of you from now onwards. If he still does so, then I’ll tell Uncle Hudson myself and have him locked up in a room to reflect on his actions. Otherwise, I can just send him to one of our overseas branches and have him work his a*s off over there. What do you think? Belle held Rosa’s hand in hers and asked with a serious tone.”

“Belle, can you really do that? Rosa asked with a weak voice. To her, Martin was like a ghost who would creep into her mind at any time. She didn’t believe that he would want to leave.”

“Rest assured. Trust me. You can sleep with me starting tonight. With me by your side, that Martin b*stard won’t dare to come near you anymore, Belle said with great confidence.”

“Rosa thought for a while before nodding and said, ““Alright then, I’ll trust you. I’ll help you get rid of Liya that b*tch too.”””

“That’s great, thank you, Rosa. Belle was delighted to hear that. She laughed and held Rosa’s arm as she said, ““Come on, let’s get some sleep. It’s getting late.”””

“Rosa finally broke into laughter, and for a moment, she forgot about Martin.”

“However, later that night, Rosa could not sleep.”

“Belle slept soundly beside her, but the only thing Rosa could think of was Martin. She felt that he was creeping into her mind, and that he was like a snake, wrapping her up tightly, as she tried to shove him away. She was insecure and annoyed.”

“His heavy breathing and tender touches, the sweet words he whispered to her, and his strong arms wrapped around her. She could still feel his body pressing on top of hers and the way he was aroused.”

“Rosa, I love you. The words he said lingered in her mind for the whole night. She couldn’t get rid of it, no matter how much she tried to resist. She was close to getting insane.”

“Rosa somehow fell asleep without her knowing. All of a sudden, she heard, ““Rosa, I love you,”” ringing in her ears again. She sprung up in shock. Rubbing her eyes, she realized it was already the next morning. Belle was already away from the bed.”

It should be time for breakfast.

She freshened up in a hurry and headed to the dining hall with dark circles under her eyes.

“As expected, the dining hall was almost fully occupied by the Harvey family, leaving only hers and Martin’s seat empty.”

“Rosa glanced at the vacant seat, and with panic, she withdrew her gaze.”

“Rosa, take your seat. It’s breakfast soon. Belle immediately held her arm and said with a wide smile as soon as she saw her.”

Sure. Rosa sat down right beside Belle.

“Rosa, didn’t you sleep well last night? Belle asked in concern as she noticed the heavy bags under Rosa’s eyes and the exhausted look on her face.”

“No, it’s not that. Rosa shook her head in denial and lowered her head.”

“However, Belle’s question had already garnered some attention from the others towards Rosa.”

“Rosa, are you used to living with us? Hudson asked in a kind manner as he looked over at Rosa with a wide smile.”

“Uncle Hudson, I’m fine. You all treat me well, Rosa replied politely with a smile.”

“Great. Hudson nodded with a smile. ““You have a kind heart, and you’re sticking around even when we’re going through a crisis. We are touched to have you, and we thank you.”””

“Upon hearing that, Rosa blushed and said, ““Uncle Hudson, Grandma and the Harvey family have been nothing but kind to me. I should repay your kindness.”””

“Well, it shows that you’re a grateful kid if you know how to repay someone with kindness. Paige nodded and praised.”

The breakfast session was harmonious and cheerful that morning.

“By the way, where’s Martin? Belle asked as she saw the vacant seat. She couldn’t help but to be reminded of what had happened the previous night.”

“Martin has some matters to attend to. Madam Madeline will be visiting Mother today in the Ink Garden. Carmella will be coming too. They will be visiting the Emerald Garden as well. I’ve sent Martin out to purchase some decorative items, so that we wouldn’t be embarrassing ourselves upon their arrival, MLexie immediately explained as she noticed that everyone was glancing at Martin’s vacant seat.”

Belle was startled. She didn’t know Madam Madeline would be visiting.

“Madam Madeline called me last night. I am Martin’s mother. So, she wanted to discuss things between Carmella and Martin with me. We’re trying to let them meet today, MLexie explained further.”

Everyone else finally understood the bigger picture.

Did Martin agree to this? Evan frowned and asked. He didn't sound pleased.

"Carmella is a smart young lady. She has her own business, and her fashion company is operating worldwide. The brands she created are legendary in the fashion industry. With a strong family background and a strong career like this, she's taking the initiative to get to know Martin. How can Martin say no to this? He's not a teenager anymore. It's time for him to settle down. Moreover, we need him to start a family before we can discuss further on the Harvey family's inheritance, don't we? MLexie said casually with a pout. She clearly wasn't bothered about Evan's concerns."

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Evan was unhappy to hear that.

"From what you just said, you're into this because of how wealthy the Newton family is, aren't you? You like Carmella because of this, don't you? This is Martin's marriage we're talking about. Why does it matter if you like it or not? No matter how amazing Carmella is, that's because of her own effort. Martin has just started building his career. Will he be happy to be with Carmella? Madam Madeline has always been a snob. The Newton family won't be where they are today if it weren't for their connections. Do you know that none of their youngsters got married out of love? Just take a look at Maxim. Do you really think that Martin and Carmella will fall in love with each other if you arrange this for them? You can't do this without informing Martin beforehand, Evan said. He was reminded of his own marriage, which was also arranged by Elmore for the sake of building the Harvey family business. There was no love at all between him and MLexie, and that was exactly why he didn't like being at home. His arranged marriage had also led to many more unfortunate events. Evan didn't want the same history to repeat in his son's future. He wanted Martin to marry someone he loved and lived happily with his spouse."

"MLexie looked wronged after hearing what Evan had said. She replied, ""Evan, what you said won't work anymore. Martin has been like this since he was a child. Just how much time did you spend with him as a father? He got himself in trouble, and you were in Africa. Now that he's an adult, shouldn't we at least try our best to find him the perfect match? Are you happy to see him being alone for the rest of his life? With his personality, how can we expect him to start a family on his own? He won't even approach the ladies, and the ladies definitely won't want to approach him too with him looking gloomy all the time. Do you think that there is a line of women waiting for him to pick them?"""

"MLexie's words sounded logical, but Evan looked even more upset. He felt as if she was embarrassing him in front of the entire family. He was about to come up with something, but Hudson interrupted and said, ""Well, to be fair, we should leave this to fate. Now that Madam Madeline decided to pay us a visit, we shouldn't reject them, right? We won't be giving them any respect if we do so. We should at least meet them, and let things happen naturally. Who knows? The two of them might happen to like each other actually. With them being adults, they'd know what to do. Let's stop dwelling on this, shall we?"""

Hudson tried to smooth things over as he didn't want to ruin the harmonious atmosphere during breakfast.

He managed to keep Evan and MLexie from arguing further.

The breakfast resumed.

“Belle thought about Carmella. She had seen Carmella a couple of times on TV. Carmella was not exceptionally pretty, but she gave off a strong career woman vibe and seemed too domineering. Would such a woman be a good match for Martin?”

Belle then shook her head.

“With Martin falling head over heels for Rosa, Belle doubted that he’d be attracted to other women at all.”

“Belle was still trapped in her thoughts when she heard high heels clicking on the ground. A couple of seconds later, Liya entered the dining hall with her usual heavy makeup on.”

“Dad, Mom, Uncle, Aunt, good morning, Liya greeted them with a smile before taking her seat at the dining table on her own and started eating breakfast.”

“The harmonious and warm breakfast atmosphere, which was interrupted by MLexie bringing up the wedding proposal by Madam Madeline, was further ruined upon Liya’s arrival.”

Belle had an upset stomach once she saw Liya. She could no longer eat anything.

“Rosa, on the other hand, was also in a bad mood, and had lost her appetite.”

The both of them took some small bites before exchanging glances and excused themselves from the dining hall.

They headed to the garden for a walk. They were by the entrance when they spotted Martin rushing over in a hurry.

“The three of them froze in place, with a distance not too far away from one another.”

“Martin looked exhausted. He fixed his gaze on Rosa, clearly looking embarrassed. He didn’t know how to face her again after the incident the night before. He didn’t expect to run into her.”

“Belle, let’s head there, Rosa said lightly with a cold face as she looked away, and pointed to the lotus pond.”

“Belle noticed that Martin was staring at Rosa. He was hesitating on whether he should speak up. Belle wanted to excuse herself, so that the two of them could clear things out, but Rosa was quick to react. Belle felt a little helpless at that moment.”

“Rosa tugged on Belle’s arm as they headed to the other direction, leaving Martin behind.”

“Martin stood there for a while, looking helpless all by himself. He couldn’t help himself the night before, that he forgot what had brought him to her room in the first place. He wanted to inform Rosa about his blind date with Carmella and tell her about his feelings. He didn’t want Rosa to think otherwise. Yet, things didn’t go as planned.”

“Martin didn’t know if Rosa would be bothered by Carmella visiting. He just wanted to let Rosa know that he would never agree to marry Carmella, but it seemed like he had lost the opportunity to explain himself.”

The way Rosa looked at him just then was as if he was her sworn enemy. She was icy. She must be hating him for what had happened the night before.

Martin didn't want to take advantage of her the night before. He was too carried away by his desires and couldn't restrain himself. He still couldn't believe that he would hurt her so much.

"Belle and Rosa had gone far, but Martin was still standing there with his head lowered. It took him a while to finally make way to the Ink Garden's corridor."

"Rosa, with Madam Madeline making her visit today, it seems like we will have to prepare for lunch already, Belle said. Rosa's expression was gloomy, and she was in a trance as her mind kept wandering off. Belle had been making small talk to her as they walked, but Rosa hadn't been responding much to her words. Belle was helpless and had run out of topics to talk about."

What else is there to prepare when Martin can just treat them to a meal outside? Rosa said with a faint expression.

It doesn't feel right to do that. She's here to pay Grandma a visit. The least we can do is to treat them to a family meal. Belle shook her head after a brief pause.

"They're here for a blind date. Martin should dine out with them, so that they can talk more about their future together. They can't talk much with so many eyes looking over at them in this place, can they? Rosa continued to say in a faint tone."

"Belle could tell that she sounded upset and somewhat jealous. Belle turned towards her and asked carefully, ""Rosa, if there's anything you'd like to say about Martin's blind date, just tell me, and I'll help you think of a way.""

"No, that's ridiculous. Rosa immediately shook her head in denial. ""It has nothing to do with me. Martin is an adult now. It's perfectly normal for him to go on a blind date. It's a good thing. Why would I have anything to say? This is too funny.""

"Rosa almost sounded as if she wasn't bothered at all, with her face blank."

Belle sighed lightly. She couldn't figure out what Rosa was thinking.

"At ten o'clock in the morning, the Newton family's luxurious vehicle drove into Harvey Manor. Evan and Martin stood by the entrance to welcome them."

Madeline was already in her eighties. She respected them enough to pay Sophia a visit in person. They had to be courteous.

"Nice to meet you, Madam Madeline, Evan said politely with a wide smile on his face, as Madeline stepped out of her car. She was dressed up elegantly."

"Likewise, Mr. Harvey, Madeline also greeted with a smile. She was in high spirits and still looking healthy."

Carmella was dressed in a suit and had light makeup on. She smiled politely at them. She had a tall and thin figure. She looked elegant and confident. It wasn't hard to tell that she was a stylish and modern career woman at first glance.

“Nice to meet you, Madam Madeline, Martin, who was at the side, greeted Madeline politely.”

“So, is this Martin? Madeline asked with a smile as she sized Martin up.”

“Yes, indeed, Evan replied with a humble smile.”

“Great, he’s a talented young man. Madeline was all smiles as she saw Martin’s handsome face and strong figure.”

“Thank you, Madam Madeline. Martin smiled.”

“Nice to meet you, Uncle Hudson and Martin, Carmella greeted after Madeline. She was polite and well-mannered.”

“Nice to meet you too, Carmella, Evan immediately replied with a wide smile.”

There was a faint smile on Martin’s face as he greeted her with a nod.

“After exchanging greetings, Evan then led Madam Madeline and Carmella to the electric vehicle.”

Madeline inspected the scenery in the manor as she praised. “Harvey Manor really lives up to its reputation. The greenery and landscaping are so well done and complements the building well too. It is breathtaking scenery.”

“Evan smiled. Noticing that Madeline was in high spirits, he ordered the driver to bring them on a tour around Harvey Manor before visiting Sophia in Ink Garden.”

Belle and Paige were waiting at the Ink Garden lobby for Madeline’s and Carmella’s arrival. There was another round of warm greetings before Madeline suggested visiting Sophia.

“Madeline was emotional to see Sophia finally. After all, Sophia had always been tough and wise, involving herself in many kind deeds. However, looking at her condition right then, Madeline couldn’t help feeling sad and pitiful.”

“After visiting Sophia, they led Madeline and Carmella to the reception room, and chatted with them there.”

MLexie was already waiting for them in the reception room. She was all smiles when they arrived.

“They made small talk, and Madeline was in high spirits. “

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“Martin, with us elders talking here, why don’t you take Carmella to the lounge? You two can play some chess or chat around in there, MLexie said out of concern for the bored Carmella in this environment. She was also giving them the chance to get to know each other.”

“Carmella agreed with this suggestion, whereas Martin froze in place, as if he wasn’t happy with the idea.”

MLexie urged him a few more times. Martin had no choice but to leave with Carmella.

“Martin, I heard that you’re doing well in the N&S Group now, and you’ve managed your company well since it was listed. I heard you even defeated the Jones Group, Carmella said as they arrived in the chess room at the lounge. She was praising his achievements. It seemed like she knew him well.”

“Martin sat casually without putting on any expression as he responded faintly, ““It’s nothing. It’s all thanks to Belle. Even if I did well, it’s because she trained me well.”””

Carmella definitely heard about Belle and all sorts of rumors related to her. She was interested in getting to know more about Belle.

“Belle sounds amazing. Everyone out there has nothing but praise for her. They said that no one should underestimate women from Harvey Manor. I have this feeling too after finally meeting her in person today. I do hope to get to know her more, Carmella said with genuine admiration.”

Martin smiled upon hearing that. “It proves that you have great eyes.”

Martin finally smiled at the mention of Belle. Carmella could tell that Martin looked up to Belle as well.

The atmosphere between them finally eased a little. They started with their chess game.

“Meanwhile, inside the office of the Ink Garden, Rosa was focused on her work and ignored whatever was happening out there.”

“However, the chess room at the lounge was facing Rosa’s office. All it took was for Martin to lift his head, and he would see Rosa working in the office.”

“Although he was playing chess with Carmella, his attention was focused on Rosa, who was working in her office.”

“After a round of chess, Carmella noticed that Martin wasn’t paying any attention. She saw Martin looking outside in the opposite direction several times. His gaze was complicated. He messed up in the chess game, but it didn’t seem intentional. ”

“Women were always more sensitive, and the intelligent Carmella was not an exception.”

“Martin, the Ink Garden is beautiful. Why don’t you take me out for a walk outside? Carmella suggested with a smile. She won the chess game, but she wasn’t excited at all.”

“Sure. Martin agreed upon hearing that. He was distracted by Rosa throughout the game, and he had already lost his interest anyway.”

They headed outside.

“Along their walk, Carmella was in awe of the antique vibe in the Ink Garden. She couldn’t stop praising it.”

“Soon, they went along the corridor and arrived in the living room.”

“There’s actually a lounge and an office here, Carmella said with curiosity as she observed the surroundings.”

“Rosa sat in the office, and she clearly heard their conversation outside.”

“She frowned. Fortunately, with Belle by her side, she didn’t feel that terrible.”

“After welcoming Madeline to the manor, Belle had already returned to the office. She had her own matters to attend to and was not in the mood to keep them company. Since Paige and MLexie were there to keep Madeline occupied, Belle decided to return to her work as it had nothing to do with her.”

“I didn’t know you’re working here. I’m sorry for disturbing you, Carmella said with a smile as she noticed Belle in the office.”

“Upon hearing that, Belle had no choice but to stand up. She smiled and told Martin who was following behind, “”Martin, you should bring Carmella for a walk around the Ink Garden, or you can always introduce Carmella to the restaurants or interesting places nearby. She’ll be bored if she continues to stay here.”””

“Carmella smiled casually and said, “”Belle, there’s nothing special about the food and places out there. I am more impressed with the Ink Garden itself. I’d rather spend my day enjoying the scenery since I’m already here. In fact, I can tell that Martin has high respect for you, and I’ve been dying to get to know you too. I hope I can learn more from you.”””

“Carmella was well-mannered, and the smile on her face looked genuine.”

“Belle smiled faintly and said, “”Carmella, you made me sound amazing when I’m just an ordinary woman. If you wish to visit the Ink Garden, you can always ask Martin to take you on a tour.”””

“Sure, thanks Belle, Carmella said in a sweet manner. She turned around and saw Rosa, who was so focused on work and didn’t bother to look up at them. Carmella then smiled. “”I didn’t notice you there. Hi, I’m Carmella Newton.”””

Carmella took the initiative to extend an arm towards Rosa in an enthusiastic manner.

Rosa could no longer remain unperturbed.

“She stood up and reached out to the extended arm as she said with a smile, “”Hi, I’m Rosa Perry.”””

You’re Rosa? I’ve heard a lot about you. Carmella smiled widely.

Rosa couldn’t help but to wonder where Carmella heard about her. Why did she sound so enthusiastic? It was as if she had known Rosa for a long time. She didn’t even know her that well!

“It was nice meeting you, Rosa said with a polite smile. She could only keep her curiosity to herself.”

“Belle, since the elders are chatting over there and we youngsters are gathered over here, why don’t we take a walk outside? I understand it’s currently working hours, but you’re not in the company. You can take this as a chance to relax out there. Let’s spend more time together, shall we? Carmella was in high spirits as she proposed this to Belle.”

“That’s a great idea. Martin immediately agreed. He didn’t want to be alone with Carmella, and with this suggestion, he could get Rosa and Belle to tag along with them. He looked more cheerful than before.”

“Belle was in a tight spot. It didn’t seem right for her and Rosa to tag along, when the elders wanted Martin and Carmella to get to know each other.”

“There’s no need for that. I’ve been here since I was a child, and I’m already familiar with this place. You guys can head out. I’m busy. Rosa rejected coldly. She sat back down on her own and started working again with her head lowered.”

Martin’s face darkened.

“Rosa, can’t you treat this as keeping me company for my visit? The more the merrier. Carmella wasn’t angry at all although she was rejected by Rosa, she invited her again with great patience.”

“Belle lifted her head and saw Martin’s darkened expression. She knew what he was thinking. If Rosa refused to tag along, then he would never agree to be alone with Carmella in the garden. If this were to happen, then Carmella would feel that she had been ignored, and might notice that something was off. Things would be worse by then. With that in mind, Belle walked over to Rosa and held her hand in hers, smiling as she said, ““Rosa, it won’t take long. Let’s just head out and clear our minds for a while, shall we?”””

“Belle, I am really not in the mood for a walk. We haven’t even checked the accounts when the end of month is already approaching. We will only end up taking more time. Rosa was forced to stand up. She noticed that Martin was staring at her. His gaze was bright, as if he was hoping for her to tag along. Rosa’s heart raced, and her cheeks blushed slightly. She looked away in a panic. She was flustered.”

“It’s fine. I’ll help you by then. Belle smiled and laced her fingers through Rosa’s. She then smiled at Carmella and said, ““Let’s head out then.”””

Carmella happily nodded.

Martin led them out.

They were walking along the corridor as Sergio approached them.

Seems like you all are having fun together. May I join? Sergio asked Belle when he met the young and lively group of people.

“Martin’s expression darkened as he saw Sergio. His jaw clenched, and he wished he could kick Sergio out.”

“However, Sergio wasn’t bothered at all despite knowing that Martin was not happy about his presence. Not only did Sergio ask Belle for an invitation, he also started introducing himself to Carmella in an enthusiastic manner.”

“Carmella wasn’t aware of their relationship, and she believed that the more the merrier. So, she nodded and invited Sergio along.”

They then started to walk around Harvey Manor.

They started from the Ink Garden and then headed to the other gardens.

“Along the way, Martin wanted to move closer to Rosa, but Rosa didn’t want to be with him and was basically sticking to Belle. On the other hand, Sergio was trying to follow Belle. Thus, the scene looked a little hilarious.”

“If Rosa headed left at first, Martin would try to approach her but Rosa would run off towards the other direction, keeping a distance away from him.”

“As for Sergio, he followed Belle around. With Rosa sticking around Belle and Sergio following closely, it seemed as if Sergio was protecting Rosa instead.”

Martin could only tag along with a heavy heart. He couldn’t even approach the three of them.

Chapter 618

“Martin, I heard that Mr. Xanthe is Rosa’s fiance and General Perry had already given his approval for them. Am I right? Carmella asked in envy as her gaze fell on the three of them. They looked great together with their good looks.”

“Martin was already upset as he couldn’t approach them. Upon hearing Carmella’s question, he felt even worse. He then answered coldly, ““I don’t know about that. Didn’t hear about it.”””

“Carmella replied with a smile, ““Mr. Xanthe and Rosa are both the children of famous generals in Capital City. They match well. I actually envy them a lot after hearing about their marriage.”””

Martin felt even more terrible upon hearing her words. His face tensed as he lowered his head and walked in silence.

“Rosa was clearly steering away from him. She wouldn’t let him approach her. No matter where they were headed to, even if they were taking some small breaks in between, Rosa would make sure to keep a distance away from him. On top of that, Rosa didn’t even bother to smile at him.”

“Martin was already dejected. With Sergio chuckling and laughing occasionally, he felt even more irritated.”

“Harvey Manor was built to be a large-scale park. After walking around for a while under the hot sun, they were already drenched in sweat. There was a pavilion near them. Carmella then suggested they ride around on bikes. She said it would be more fun.”

“Sergio, who was already in high spirits, immediately agreed. Rosa had always been cheerful and bright, and after taking a walk, she seemed to be in a better mood, and she nodded in agreement to Carmella’s suggestion.”

“Carmella, of course, was delighted to see that.”

“Meanwhile, Belle smiled and said, ““You guys have fun. I can’t ride on a bike.”””

“Everyone knew that she was pregnant, and they didn’t force her.”

“Belle, I can take you on my bike instead. Sergio suggested. He didn’t want Belle to be left alone.”

“There’s no need for that. I can take her with me. Martin rejected coldly on Belle’s behalf. He was not that foolish not to see through Sergio’s intention. Moreover, Belle was pregnant with a Harvey family baby. Martin wouldn’t be at ease to let Sergio get close to her.”

“Belle smiled lightly and said, ““Martin, you should focus on accompanying Carmella today. She’s our guest. I can tag along in the electric vehicle. You should join them for the bike ride.”””

She did not satisfy either of them and turned around to leave in an electric vehicle instead.

“Martin somehow agreed with her decision. It was the best choice for her to tag along in an electric vehicle. After all, it was more comfortable than a bike.”

He glared at Sergio before leaving to choose his bike.

“Martin, I haven’t ridden a bike for years. My skills might be a little rusty. How about you take me on this instead? Carmella eyed the couple’s bike on the side and suggested to Martin.”

“Martin glanced at Rosa, who was already on a bike and had left the scene.”

Sergio also picked his bike and rode away.

“Left without a choice, Martin could only agree to Carmella’s suggestion.”

“It was obvious that Carmella didn’t know how to ride a bicycle. She was clumsy. With Martin riding on the same bike as her, all she had to do was to sit in her seat. They rode downhill along a slope. It was refreshing as the breeze brushed past them.”

“Ah, Carmella called out as she extended her arms and enjoyed the breeze.”

“Martin had been riding around Harvey Manor on a bike since he was a child. It wasn’t a difficult task for him. He also extended his arms as they rode down the slope. The bicycle headed downwards due to its momentum, and they were already ahead of Rosa, who was riding on her bicycle carefully.”

Rosa was a woman after all. She was slightly afraid to be on a bike all by herself and pressed on the brake when going down the slope. Even Belle was already catching up to her pace in the electric vehicle.

“Belle, where’s Calvin? I haven’t seen him in the past two days. Sergio approached Belle on his bike and asked casually.”

“Belle’s gaze darkened, but her expression was neutral as she replied calmly, ““He has to wrap up some business deals in the company. He’d be occupied with that for a while.”””

Sergio nodded.

“Sergio, I haven’t seen you for the past few days. What were you up to then? Aren’t you keeping an eye on the Harvey Group? How would you not know about Calvin’s whereabouts? Belle asked without being subtle.”

“Sergio looked a little embarrassed and replied with a smile, ““I was back in Capital City. Something came up.”””

“Back in Capital City? Belle’s heart trembled a little as she glanced at Sergio. Sergio was back in Capital City, and Calvin was there too. What happened to Calvin then? She hadn’t received any phone call from him yet that day!”

“Sergio, you should accompany Rosa more. She’s riding on her own with all these slopes. It wouldn’t be easy for her. Keep an eye on her and make sure she doesn’t fall and injure herself, Belle said casually to Sergio as she stared towards Rosa’s direction.”

Sergio knew that Belle was finding an excuse to steer him away. He laughed helplessly and rode towards Rosa.

There was a long uphill slope afterwards.

Martin turned around and happened to see Sergio chatting happily with Rosa. He was jealous at that sight and felt terrible. He slowed down his pace as he wanted to wait for her.

It was strenuous to ride uphill. Rosa clenched her teeth and tried her best to step on her pedal. She looked ahead and saw Martin not too far away from her.

“Carmella was sitting on her seat, with her legs crossed and arms extended, as she enjoyed the breeze with a wide smile.”

“Rosa, are you okay? Carmella asked with concern as she spotted Rosa making a lot of effort to step on her pedal. Rosa’s cheeks were flushed, and she was already drenched in sweat.”

“Sergio was riding beside her casually, and he couldn’t bear seeing Rosa like that. She was his fiancé, after all. Sergio then said, ““How about you hop on my bike instead? This uphill slope seems too much for you.””

There was no backseat on his bike. The only way Sergio could take her with him was to let her sit in front of him.

Rosa would never want to sit with Sergio like that. She shook her head and continued stepping on her pedal in a stubborn manner. She wasn’t bothered by anyone else. Sergio could only let her be.

“Rosa, this uphill slope is a little too difficult to tread on. Why don’t you hop on Mr. Xanthe’s bike instead? Carmella advised. She was still sitting on her bike casually while enjoying the breeze. Sergio was Rosa’s fiancé. Carmella couldn’t understand why Rosa refused the idea.”

“There’s no need for that. I can do this, Rosa replied. She looked up and saw Carmella smiling brightly at her. Carmella was dressed in her own designs, and she looked elegant. She didn’t even have to step on any pedal. She sat there looking all elegant and casual. Rosa somehow felt that her smile was too dazzling. She didn’t like how confident Carmella was. She stepped even harder on her pedal, trying her best to get ahead of them, so that she wouldn’t have to feel that annoyed again.”

“Finally, she overcame the uphill slope, and they were now riding on a smooth path.”

A victorious smile flashed across Rosa’s face.

“Meanwhile, Martin slowed down and followed behind Rosa. It was as if he was trying not to provoke her. Carmella talked about the fashion trends and the overseas business operation with Martin along the way.”

“Carmella was talkative but with a clear mind. She had a great judgement on the market. She was knowledgeable, and she knew how to grasp the targeted audience as well.”

“Rosa wanted to stay away from them, but she was too exhausted. She could only let them follow behind her. She had no choice but to overhear their conversation. They were approaching yet another

uphill slope. Rosa hadn't recovered from the previous uphill slope but she was once again stepping hard on her pedal."

"However, she couldn't get rid of them no matter what."

"Rosa, don't rush yourself. Belle was also following behind in her electric vehicle. She saw Rosa acting stubbornly and stepping hard on her pedal again despite not fully recovering from the previous uphill slope. Belle was concerned about that. She was about to ask Rosa to join her in her electric vehicle, but she gasped instead."

"Rosa was too focused on stepping on the pedal that she didn't even notice the ground they were riding on. Her bike ran into a rock, and she was thrown off balance. She didn't have much energy to steer into another direction, or perhaps she was too exhausted and annoyed to do so. Together with her bike, she crashed aside."

"Rosa, watch out. Belle gasped. She couldn't reach out to her in time, and could only see Rosa falling down with her bike."

"With a loud thump, Rosa crashed to the ground with her bike."

"Ouch, Rosa let out a cry as she lay on the ground. There was a great surge of pain spreading to her torso from her leg. She couldn't get up."

"Rosa, Martin gasped. He had been watching her closely, but she didn't bother to cast a glance at him. He felt terrible about that. Upon hearing Belle's cry, his heart clenched as Rosa crashed to the ground right in front of him. The loud thump and Rosa's cry almost stopped his heart."

He quickly stepped on the pedal to get closer to her. He jumped off the bike and ran towards her.

"Rosa, are you okay? Is it painful? Martin asked nervously as he lifted up the bicycle that had fallen on top of her. He carried her in his strong arms and let her rest on his knees as he sat on the bicycle."

"Rosa's face was a little pale, and her forehead was covered in sweat. She seemed as if she was in pain and that broke Martin's heart."

"Rosa, you should be more careful. Sergio also rushed towards them. He frowned at the sight and said, ""How can you injure yourself when riding a bicycle? Can't you watch out for danger? You should stop riding the bike if you don't know how to.""

"Shut up, Sergio. Martin was furious upon hearing that. How could he still be blaming her when she was in such great pain? He didn't even bother to ask about her. If Rosa was to marry him, then what would her future look like?"

"Rosa, are you okay? Is your injury serious? Belle rushed over in her electric vehicle. She saw Rosa lying in Martin's arms with her lips pursed and sweat covering her forehead. Judging by how pale Rosa looked, Belle could tell that her injury was not a light one. It was a cement road, after all, and it was under the hot sun. How could Rosa be fine after the crash? Belle then said to Martin, ""Send her to the medical room right now.""

"Martin finally came back to his senses. With Rosa still in his arms, he headed towards the electric vehicle."

Carmella no longer insisted on the bicycle ride after witnessing Rosa's fall. She also hopped on the electric vehicle. The whole group then headed to the medical room.

"Look at the bruises on her knees and also the huge hole in her pants. It must be a terrible fall to look like this, Belle said nervously."

"In the medical room, the doctor was busy cleaning up her wounds. The doctor was about to rip the fabric covering her knees, but her exposed flesh was already attached to the fabric. There was blood everywhere. It was the same situation as the wounds on her arm as well. Rosa couldn't help but to cry out of pain."

"Martin's heart ached at that scene. He could only hold her hands in his. His expression was gloomy, and he didn't say a word at all."

The doctor took about an hour to clean her wounds and apply some medicine. Everyone was looking over at the whole process as they started discussing that.

"Rosa's eyes were filled with tears, and she gritted her teeth to endure the pain."

Chapter 619

"Dr. Clancy, does she have a fracture to have an injury this serious? Martin asked with great concern as Dr. Clancy started bandaging her wound."

"Dr. Clancy thought for a while with a troubled expression and said, ""Young Master Harvey, it's hard to tell without the proper equipment. I'd recommend taking some scans at the hospital for further confirmation. A fracture is not something we should take lightly. With the weather being this hot, it'd take her wounds a long time to heal completely."""

Martin was anxious to hear that. He immediately lifted Rosa in his arms and ran out without hesitation.

"Belle knew that he was taking her to the hospital for further examination. So, she didn't tag along."

"Sergio, who was at the side, was somehow frustrated to see Martin carrying his fiancée away right in front of him. Although Sergio didn't have feelings for Rosa, she was still his fiancée by name. "

"Rage was building within him, but Sergio couldn't show it. He really didn't have any feelings for Rosa. He was only frustrated because he thought that Martin was ignoring his presence as her fiancé."

"On the other hand, Carmella was still looking calm all the while. She saw how anxious Martin was when Rosa injured herself. Carmella stood there in deep thought."

"Upon returning to the reception room, MLexie was chatting happily with Madeline. The atmosphere was warm."

"Carmella presented MLexie with her self-designed outfit. It looked elegant and trendy, and it fitted perfectly on MLexie, who was delighted to receive the gift."

"Aunt MLexie, if you like it, then I shall work on more designs for you and bring them to you the next time, Carmella said with a smile as she helped MLexie fold her collar."

"I like it a lot, thank you. MLexie couldn't stop smiling and thanking her. She liked Carmella a lot."

“Carmella, you should visit your Aunt MLexie more in the future. She’s a very kind woman, and she knows a lot about health perseverance. I learnt a lot from her today. You can learn more from her next time. Madeline smiled and said to Carmella.”

“Got it, grandmother. I’d gladly do so. Carmella smiled and agreed.”

“Carmella, you’re so sensible. You have a great career, yet you’re still so sweet and well-mannered. I can’t even explain how much I like you. MLexie held Carmella’s hand in hers as she inspected her up and down with adoration filling her gaze.”

Carmella’s cheeks blushed a little as she smiled bashfully.

“If you don’t mind, you can extend your stay in our Harvey Manor for the next few days. What do you think about this? MLexie immediately suggested.”

Madeline didn’t say anything as she glanced over at Carmella.

“Carmella gave a knowing smile before saying, ““Sure then. Thank you for inviting me over. I’ve always been looking forward to visiting Harvey Manor. as everyone around me kept saying that it’s a rare sight in A City. I kind of get what they meant after spending some time here today. It is a big land, and I only managed to tour a part of it today. I would really love to spend more time in this place.”””

Glad to hear that you like it here. You can stay as long as you want. I’ll ask someone to arrange a guest room for you. MLexie’s smile blossomed upon hearing that. She immediately rang up Maud and requested a guest room in front of Madeline.

“After another round of chatting and laughter, it was already time for lunch.”

Belle had already requested the kitchen to prepare a sumptuous lunch. One of the maids approached them and led them to the dining hall once lunch was ready.

“During lunchtime, Hudson and Evan kept Madeline company, and the atmosphere was great. However, Martin and Rosa were both absent.”

“Where are Martin and Rosa? Hudson asked Belle as he noticed their absence, feeling odd.”

“Belle replied in a hurry, ““Dad, during our tour in the garden today, Rosa fell from her bicycle, and her injury was quite serious. Martin brought her to the hospital for a checkup.”””

“Hudson was anxious to hear that, and he immediately asked, ““How is she doing now? Rosa is a kind, innocent, and adorable young lady. I hope her injuries aren’t that serious, or I wouldn’t know how to explain to General Perry.”””

“Madeline’s expression darkened upon hearing that. She asked MLexie, ““Mrs. Harvey, who is this Rosa?”””

MLexie replied in a light tone.

“Madam Madeline, Rosa is the youngest daughter of General Perry in Capital City. She had been close with our family ever since she was a child, and she’d often spend time here in the manor. She is now here to help us.”

“Grandmother, Rosa is the one who is now engaged to Mr. Xanthe, Carmella further explained.”

Madeline nodded and didn't say anything in return.

“Dad, don't worry. Martin has already brought her to the hospital. He will call us if there's anything. With how advanced the medical field is right now, I doubt it'd be that serious. Belle could only try to comfort Hudson.”

Hudson stopped dwelling on that topic. Everyone then started to help themselves to lunch.

“At the government hospital, Martin was finally at ease when they confirmed that there was no fracture but only minor injuries on Rosa after running a round of tests.”

“Martin, put me down. I can walk on my own, Rosa said in embarrassment. After the tests, Martin still held her in his arms as they walked out of the hospital, heading back to the manor. Everyone was stealing glances at them. Rosa blushed in embarrassment and demanded Martin to put her down.”

“Stop being stubborn. Haven't you learned your lesson after what happened earlier today? Martin's face fell. He tightened his grasp around her and said, ““Look at your wounds. You need at least a week's time for them to heal completely. You shouldn't be walking around. You should avoid friction in your knees so that your wounds can heal. You'd better stay at home from today onwards.”””

Martin still carried her in his arms as they headed downstairs to the parking lot. He only let go of her after he carried her into the car. He let her lay down on the seat and tucked her under a blanket. He then started the car and drove them back to Harvey Manor.

“Until they got off the electric vehicle in the Ink Garden, Martin was still carrying Rosa in his arms. He didn't let her walk at all.”

“Rosa saw that Martin's face was covered in sweat, and he was still looking anxious. She felt sorry.”

“Thank you, Martin. You must be exhausted, Rosa said in a low voice.”

The corners of Martin's mouth curled into a beautiful arc upon hearing that.

“Was he tired? Martin didn't feel that way at all. He was anxious and concerned, but carrying Rosa like that in his arms was his dream. He enjoyed the feeling. How would he feel exhausted?”

Anything for you. Martin gazed deeply into her eyes and said passionately.

“Rosa blushed. Just as she was about to say something, she heard voices approaching.”

The entire family was about to send Madeline away.

“They happened to run into Martin, who was still carrying Rosa in his arms.”

The blush on Rosa's cheeks spread all the way down her neck. The entire Harvey family spotted them that way. She was embarrassed!

She struggled to get down.

“Don't move, Martin said as he tightened his grasp.”

“Rosa, are you okay? Paige immediately walked over to them as soon as she saw them returning, with Belle following behind.”

“Rest assured. There are no fractures or internal injuries, but we shouldn’t take her external injuries lightly too. You guys can go ahead and send Madam Madeline away. I’ll carry Rosa back to her room to rest, Martin greeted each of them before heading towards Rosa’s room with her in his arms.”

“They ran into Sergio along the corridor. Sergio was unhappy to see his fiancée in another man’s embrace, especially out in public. He felt as if it was an insult to his ego. So, he instantly blocked their path and said, “”Rosa, how can you allow another man to hold you in public? Get down. You should let me support you instead.”””

“Sergio, get out of our way. How can we ask Rosa to walk when her wounds are this serious? You don’t seem like you know how to treat a woman. I wonder what makes you think you’re qualified to ask General Perry for his daughter’s hand in marriage. Martin gave him a sideways glance as he said in a deep voice. With Rosa still in his arms, Martin continued walking back to her room.”

Sergio was forced to take a couple of steps back. He could only watch them walk away from him with a thoughtful expression. He didn’t stop them anymore.

“Don’t get out of bed in the next few days. Just call the servants if you need anything. I’ll let them know about this. Martin gently laid Rosa on the bed before saying in a soft tone. He then made sure that she wouldn’t be pressing on her injured limbs. He helped her adjust the air-conditioning and poured a glass of warm water for her. He even headed to the bathroom to heat up the towel before helping her wipe her face and body. He was tender and careful in all those movements. Surely enough, Rosa wasn’t willing to let him wipe her body on her behalf. She was blushing as she asked him to stop.”

“Honestly speaking, Martin was being really kind and sweet to Rosa at that moment, to the extent that Rosa might choose to forgive him, but she didn’t. Her heart was heavy, and she was still terrified by what had happened the night before.”

“Her falling off the bicycle might be due to her lack of sleep from the night before. She couldn’t concentrate, and she was exhausted. With that in mind, she was even more terrified and was unwilling to face Martin.”

“After doing all that stuff, Martin sat by the edge of the bed as he cracked some jokes to make Rosa laugh.”

“Being the second young master of the Harvey family, Rosa knew that Martin must have grown up having people take care of him. It wasn’t easy for him to take care of others and it wasn’t until that day that Rosa got to see his tender side.”

“Martin, you can leave now. I’m fine on my own. Rosa tried to urge him to leave after spending some time together. There were many people living in Harvey Manor. If he stayed any longer, then others might start speculating. She wouldn’t want to be the main topic of others’ gossips.”

Martin didn’t want to leave at all. He fixed his gaze on her face.

“Rosa, I took care of you for the whole day. Are you dumping me already? Martin said with a dark expression as he scooted nearer to her.”

"It's not like that, Rosa was a little flustered as she felt the heat radiating from his body as he was getting closer to her."

"Martin, you are on a blind date with Carmella today. It wouldn't be fair to her for you to stay by my side the entire time. I'm just trying to make things easier for you. I am fine on my own. Just go out already. I can ask the servants if I need anything, Rosa explained despite knowing that Martin wouldn't be happy about that."

"Martin's gaze darkened as he heard about the blind date. He leaned closer to her as he asked, ""Rosa, are you really okay with my blind date with Carmella?"""

Chapter 620

"Rosa looked up in surprise. ""Martin, what are you trying to imply? Shouldn't I be happy for you? You are at the right age to start a family after all."""

"You... are doing this on purpose, aren't you? Martin's face sank as he stared fiercely at her."

"I... Rosa was startled. She didn't know how much clearer she should explain things to make Martin understand. She said, ""Martin, Carmella is amazing. She's pretty, has an amazing career, and a strong family background. She is a good match for you. I can tell that you two have a bright future together. On top of that, Madeline likes you, and your Mom likes Carmella too. You two are destined to be together. Martin, you should appreciate this more. I give you my blessings."" "

"Martin did not say anything, and he stared at Rosa instead. His gaze was icy, and at the same time, terrifying."

"Rosa, it seems like I've been barking up the wrong tree. Even after everything we went through, you're still making fun of me and my blind date with Carmella. Even if what you said is right, why does it matter? I don't have feelings for her. Don't you know how scary it is to get married to someone without loving them? How good of a marriage do you think this will be? Martin said with a dark expression. It was as if he was suppressing his rage."

"Rosa looked up in confusion and said, ""Martin, you can slowly develop feelings for her after getting married. There aren't many married couples out there who got together out of love. Take Belle as an example. She went through so much to finally get to where she is today. Yet, her love life with Calvin is still not progressing smoothly, especially with Liya making her return again. I think you get what I mean now, and you know what decision you should be making. Your Mom wants you to be with Carmella, and she's right. It shows how much Madeline prioritizes your family for her to make a personal visit. This is a wonderful piece of news for you. Martin, we're adults now. We have to focus on the present. I'm already engaged to Sergio, and this is the reality we can't change."""

"Rosa advised him earnestly. She did have feelings for him, but that was back in those days when she was still young and innocent. She had always been following him everywhere he went. He was family to her. She really wanted him to be happy."

Martin's expression darkened. He stood up with a scary expression.

"Rosa, is this what you really think? Are you a fool all this while, or are you someone with a heart made of stone? You don't even understand my feelings. Do you really want to marry Sergio? He doesn't love

you at all, and he has no feelings for you. Can't you see that? Judging from what you said, you sound like you're determined to marry him. Is this how you plan to make me forget about you? Towards the end, Martin almost roared, ""Do you know the consequences of your decisions? Rosa, why can't you wake up and look at this matter seriously? You've studied abroad, and you should know better than this. You will only ruin your whole life if you marry him.""

"Martin threw the pillow in his hand onto the floor furiously as he said, ""Rosa, it doesn't matter if you don't love me or if you don't want to marry me. I admit that you deserve better than me, and I don't deserve your love, but you don't have to do this to yourself. You shouldn't marry a man like Sergio who has no feelings for you at all. That will only destroy you. It's the same for me. If I marry Carmella, then I will only end up like you do if you marry Sergio. I don't want this to happen to either of us. I used to have the same thoughts as you. But Belle taught me what love is, as well as being committed. I want to fall in love wholeheartedly. I want my life to be meaningful and beautiful. I don't want to get married for the sake of starting a family. I got to learn about my feelings for you recently. I want to make it up to you. I want to love you. I know that I was wrong, but you aren't even giving me a chance. You're looking down on me, but that's okay. I was fine with that until now. Even if we are to cut ties completely, I still won't allow you to marry Sergio. You can't marry someone that ruthless and cold-blooded. That's my bottom line in this.""

"Martin let out a heavy sigh and said, ""Rosa, think about what I've told you. You saw how Sergio reacted to you getting injured today. He couldn't be bothered at all. Didn't you see that? As for me, you don't have to worry, as I'll no longer annoy you. I just hope that you can be responsible for your future.""

"Speaking of that, Martin's eyes reddened, and he stormed out, leaving a loud thump as he slammed the door shut."

"Meanwhile, Belle was still concerned about Rosa's injury. After sending off Madeline, she rushed to Rosa's room and ran into Martin, who was storming out of the room in a fit of rage. She gasped and asked, ""Martin, is Rosa okay? What happened to you?""

"Martin suppressed his anger upon seeing Belle. He stood there and tried his best to reply in a calm manner, ""She's fine. It's just some external injuries, but she needs to rest for at least a week for the wounds to heal completely. Please help to arrange some servants to take care of her.""

"Belle nodded, but then she felt that there was something off in his words. She asked in a daze, ""Martin, what about you then? Aren't you going to take care of her?""

"Martin's gaze darkened as he put on a pained expression. He said, ""Belle, she doesn't want me to take care of her. She deserves someone better, but that someone will never be Sergio. I'll leave her to you for now. I'll be leaving for another country in a couple of days.""

"Belle was a little confused when she heard that. He was carrying her when they got back from the hospital. They looked fine just earlier, but what happened to them for him to look like a different person?"

"A quarrel must have happened. It was only normal for Martin to be carried away by his emotions that he couldn't see his future clearly. Once Belle heard that he was leaving the country, she was reminded

of something and quickly asked, ""Martin, is the second batch of cars ready yet? The international car exhibition will be held soon. You can't miss this golden opportunity.""

"Don't worry. We've been working on it. I've been especially prioritizing your model. I believe we'll see it making a profit soon. By the way, I've added two billion dollars to the Harvey Group account from our sales. You can allocate it by then. Now that the Harvey Group is going through a tough time even financially, and you can't stop the Regional Games municipal project in hand too. You need money and funding for all of those, but you can rest assured that I will back you up with my company. We can't let the hundred years of traditional Harvey family business be defeated. I'm confident."

Martin spoke with great confidence.

"Belle nodded and said, ""Thank you, Martin. I'm more confident in getting through this, now that I have you on board with your cousin.""

She smiled encouragingly at him.

"The Harvey family was in a tight position, now that they were accused of leaking confidential information, but with her foresight, she diverted his company beforehand. So, Martin's company was still able to support them through that crisis."

"After the conversation, Martin then walked away, looking all lonely."

"Belle stood there with a thoughtful look, before heading to Rosa's bedroom."

She opened the door with the key in her hand.

"She just stepped into the room, and she had already heard someone sobbing inside. The sobs sounded heartbroken and lonely."

Since when had the optimistic and cheerful Rosa started crying with her heart broken into pieces?

"Rosa, what's wrong? Did you fight with Martin? Belle asked gently as she walked up to Rosa and held her trembling shoulders."

"Rosa was still crying miserably. Upon hearing Belle's voice, she rushed into her embrace and started crying again."

"Belle sighed and hugged her tightly. Her heart ached to see Rosa like that. She didn't say anything and just allowed Rosa to cry her tears out. Once she was done crying, Belle then wiped away her tears and said in a soft voice, ""Rosa, do you trust me enough to share with me your troubles?""

"Rosa shook her head while still looking sad. She said, ""It's fine, Belle. I'm just having a bad mood. I'll feel better after crying it out.""

Belle was reminded of the scene where she ran into Martin earlier. He was in low spirits as well. She then poured a glass of water for Rosa before sitting on the bed by her side and starting a heart-to-heart conversation with her.

"Rosa, can you tell me if you still have feelings for Martin? Even if it's just a little bit? Belle asked."

Rosa lowered her head and said nothing.

“Rosa, we’re no longer teenagers. We should be making clear judgements in every situation. If you trust me enough, then tell me how you feel. I will think of a way to help you. You are like a sister and a best friend to me. I want you to be happy, Belle said tenderly.”

“Belle, it’s impossible for me to be with Martin ever again. My father will never forgive him for what he did back then, Rosa said in a low mood, wiping away her tears. ”

“Belle smiled faintly. “”Rosa, I’m asking about your feelings, not your father’s.”””

“Rosa sank her head even lower and said, “”I won’t forgive him either.”””

“Rosa, tell me. Do you look down on Martin? Do you think that he can never achieve anything in his life? Or are you still hurt from what he did back then that you can no longer trust him anymore? Belle asked with all of her patience. How could it be that Rosa no longer had feelings for Martin when she looked so heartbroken? She had always been straightforward in expressing herself. Yet, when it came to that matter, she chose to keep everything to herself.”

“Belle, it’s not because of those things. Anyway, there can’t be anything between us anymore. My father already agreed to my engagement with Sergio. We can’t afford to go against the Xanthe family. Everything I had with Martin back then was already gone by now. Carmella is eager to marry him, and I’m happy for him. She is a great match for him, Rosa said as she raised her head and stared outside the window. She had a wry smile on her face.”