

Chapter 1003 The Broken Hands

Loraine and Marco exchanged glances, both disconcerted. Given their prestigious standing, it was unusual for them to be denied entry, especially in such an impolite manner.

Loraine was particularly puzzled by the young man's behavior. Initially, he had been cold yet courteous. Why then did his demeanor shift so drastically upon viewing the photo?

With these thoughts swirling in her mind, Loraine's face grew stern. She suspected that Ghosthand was connected to the necklace, but the vehement reaction of his son upon seeing it raised further questions.

Despite her persistent knocking, the gate remained unanswered.

Loraine cast her gaze downward, feeling a mix of disappointment and frustration.

Discovering a significant clue only to be met with a locked gate would dishearten anyone.

Noticing her dejection, Marco spoke softly. "Should I call someone to open it for us?"

Loraine shook her head, her expression somber. "Let's keep our investigation discreet. We're here to inquire, not to impose our will through force."

Furthermore, the young man's initial reaction suggested not only his exceptional skills as a craftsman but also a strong sense of pride. Forcing the gate open might only push the truth

further out of reach.

Realizing his error, Marco felt a twinge of embarrassment and nodded, choosing not to argue. As Loraine turned to leave, he followed, ready to escort her home.

Loraine turned to him, a faint smile playing on her lips. "I only promised to allow you to join me in finding Ghosthand, not to have you escort me back. Since I failed to see him, there's no need for you to take me back."

Marco's face fell, a look of disappointment mingling with a silent reproach as he gazed at Loraine, as though he felt betrayed by her lack of concern.

Unseen to him, Loraine's smile broadened slightly.

Despite Marco's usual facade of compliance, Loraine knew he was far from submissive. If that were the case, he wouldn't have ventured out to the suburbs yesterday in search of her, nor would he have shown up here today.

She was curious to see what he would do next.

True to form, Marco straightened up, adopting a grave expression as he followed Loraine. Clearing his throat, he shifted the conversation to more pressing matters.

"I've heard the Wilson family is organizing a business gathering next month. Has the Universe Group been invited?"

Loraine nodded, feigning surprise at his question.

With a stern tone, Marco declared, "If you go, I want to be your male companion. I don't want you facing any danger at that party."

Both knew well that the Wilson family's banquet wasn't likely to extend an invitation to Loraine as a gesture of friendship.

Loraine arched an eyebrow and remarked with a hint of irony, "Remember, you're still keeping your whereabouts a secret from the Cruz family. Showing up at the banquet could really infuriate the head of the Cruz family."

Marco's smile widened as he squinted. "I planned to reveal who I am eventually. Now, I'm quite eager to see Melvin's face when I show up."

The Cruz family had been thrown into disarray by his absence. He hadn't hidden to avoid them; on the contrary, he just wanted to operate solo and strike at them more effectively.

The Wilsons' gathering was an undeniable opportunity, where the affluent and influential would converge.

If Melvin discovered his true identity as the president of Solar Company, the firm rivaling the Cruz family and undercutting their deals, it would enrage Melvin, despite his usual pretense of composure.

Both Marco and Loraine seemed to picture that moment simultaneously and shared a laugh.

Loraine looked away, her voice icy. "It doesn't bother me if you attend as the Solar Company's president. But as my male companion? The Cruz family might just eliminate me on the spot. Thanks for your concern though."

Marco nodded with resignation. At that moment, they came to a crossroads. Just as Marco was about to guide Loraine to his car, she waved her hand dismissively. A car that had been waiting at the curb promptly pulled up to take her away.

After the car left the bustling Campus Street, Marco couldn't help but sigh deeply. He frowned, memories of their recent conversation floating back to him.

Loraine was clearly going to the Wilson family's banquet. Marco

knew he had to be there too.

He called his assistant, his voice low and urgent. "Did we send our RSVP to the Wilson family for the invitation? Tell them I'll be there in person this time."

It was a momentous occasion. The mysterious president of Solar Company would make his first appearance at such a public event. No one could predict what ripples this would send through the currently tranquil Zodiac.

Unbeknownst to them, the gate the young man had just closed creaked open again.

The young man with a strikingly handsome face lingered where Marco and Loraine had stood, his expression turning stormy. He shut the gate with a resounding thud, turned, and entered the room where he gently used a warm towel to clean the arms of an elderly man sitting in a rocking chair.

This elderly man's hands, once capable of creating countless masterpieces, were tragically cut off at the wrists.

The young man's gaze was icy and filled with sorrow as he murmured softly, "Dad, they're coming back. But don't worry. I won't let them harm you again."



Chapter 1004 Move On

Loraine was unaware of the events that happened in the house. To meet with Maia, she had left some matters unresolved.

The next day, she returned to her company and resumed work. She also discreetly instructed her team to look into Ghosthand.

However, she seemed to have forgotten that Marco had offered his assistance with this investigation the day before. So, when a team member entered her office announcing that the Solar Company had sent over documents regarding Ghosthand, Loraine was momentarily surprised.

Without hesitation, Loraine opened the documents and the first thing she saw was an old photo with poor quality.

This photo appeared to be over a decade old, and the person in it resembled the young man they had encountered the previous day by about seventy to eighty percent.

The house they had visited was indeed Ghosthand's residence. The documents indicated he hadn't been seen in public for some time and his son, Nolan, was now running his stall.

If the daily supplies purchased for the house had been intended for just one person, one might have suspected that Ghosthand no longer lived there.

Nolan had inherited his father's skills and, it appeared, his preference for solitude as well. His market stall rarely turned a profit, operating quietly. Only the elderly neighbors, familiar with his craftsmanship, frequented his stall. He seemed out of place on the Campus Street.

Nolan rarely ventured out, except to buy or sell goods. He usually completed his weekly shopping in one trip, on weekend evenings.

Observing this pattern, Loraine checked the calendar and noted it was indeed the weekend following the Wilson family's banquet.

Though previously turned away, she realized she could wait for him to appear naturally.

Feeling optimistic, Loraine instructed her team to organize the day's activities, setting up surveillance for their target.

Just then, there was a knock on the door and Cayson entered. Loraine gestured for her assistant to leave and said to him with a smile, "Why are you here, Cayson?"

Cayson shifted his attention from the departing staff member and responded with a warm smile, "I heard you were back. I came to see if you had made a decision about the banquet I mentioned earlier. Are you ready to accompany me?"

Loraine suddenly remembered that she had been preoccupied during their last conversation and had dismissed Cayson with a "We'll talk about it later." Though she had decided to attend, she had neglected to inform him.

Feeling a bit guilty, Loraine considered her response about attending the banquet with Cayson.

After a brief pause, she apologetically said, "Cayson, I'm sorry..."

Cayson noticed her troubled expression, which pained him, yet he smiled and asked, "Why are you apologizing?"

Caught off guard, Loraine had no immediate answer. Cayson continued gently, "Lorrie, I've told you that I've moved on. My invitation was out of convenience, nothing more."



He looked at her with a mix of amusement and affection, like an elder brother indulging his younger sister. "You're right, we're like family. I've always seen you as the little sister I grew up with. How could I ever be angry with you?"

Loraine was taken aback and quietly asked, "Have you really... moved on?"

Cayson nodded. His eyes were warm and gentle, tinged with a mature resignation.

A feeling of warmth flooded Loraine's heart. She had always feared losing Cayson. If he had truly moved on, she felt genuinely happy.

After a moment, Loraine looked at Cayson and said, "Cayson, no matter what the future holds, as long as we can maintain our relationship like this, you will always be like an elder brother to me."

Cayson's fingers twitched slightly. He sensed a deeper meaning in Loraine's gaze, and her words seemed to carry a gentle warning.

A thought flashed through his mind. Could it be that Loraine had picked up on something about the Benton family's intentions?

Yet he wasn't certain, and he couldn't betray Jaden, who was already too far down a particular path, based on mere speculation. So, he just smiled warmly and nodded, responding, "Me too."

Loraine gave him a quick glance and then looked away with a smile, choosing not to say more.

Cayson's hunch was correct. Loraine did have her suspicions about Jaden, but she lacked concrete evidence.

At the same time, Loraine hoped that if their relationship ever reached a breaking point in the future, it wouldn't affect her bond with Cayson.

There was a brief, quiet pause between them. Then Cayson smoothly continued the conversation, saying, "I've already spoken to a dressmaker. It's a dress custom-made by a renowned local designer. You arrived in Zodiac quite suddenly, and since this banquet will host almost all the top-tier families of the country, we must consider our outfits carefully."

Touched by his thoughtfulness, Loraine sighed and thanked him sincerely.

With a smile, Cayson squinted slightly and glanced at the pile of documents on her desk. "You carry on with your work," he suggested kindly. "I'll handle the preparations."

After saying this, he turned and left the office, but his expression shifted to one of cold determination the moment he was out of sight.

Cayson, known for his gentle manner and considerate nature towards Loraine, leaned back in his chair in his own office and took a deep breath, as if he had made a decision.

Then he took out his phone and sent a message, saying, "Loraine has agreed to wear the dress."

