

## Chapter 1139 Benefits And Bonds

Upon hearing Francis' terms for his offer, Loraine firmly responded, "I don't agree. Keep your projects to yourself."


She was so furious that she considered hanging up the phone.

She had believed Francis to be kind, as he had stood up for her. But she was mistaken. She was very disappointed in him, even more so than she was in the other members of the Wilson family!

Francis, on the other hand, wasn't shocked by her refusal. He sighed and said gently yet authoritatively, "Loraine, you're my niece. I would never do anything that goes against your best interests. I've learned that you and Marco have gotten a divorce. That proves that you two weren't meant for each other, don't you think? Why repeat the same mistake? Marco isn't the only man in Zodiac. There are plenty of other guys out there who are perfect for you. I'll find you someone much better than him. Perhaps by then, you'll know that I'm just looking out for you."

Loraine struggled to endure his lecture. Fighting back her anger, she couldn't help but sneer at his final words.

She retorted mockingly, "The Wilson family was eager to align with the Cruz family before, right? You think Marco's so terrible now? Didn't you look into him back

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then? How come now you're saying he's no good?"

Francis responded calmly, "It's a business alliance between the two families. The bond is all that matters, not who gets married. You need to understand that I'm looking out for you because you're my niece. Kaley can be the one to fulfill the marriage arrangement. You deserve someone better."

Loraine's anger reached its peak as she could no longer bear to listen to Francis' justifications. She shot back bluntly, "Stop sugarcoating it. You're thinking that you can maximize your benefits by having Kaley marry into the Cruz family and then marrying me off to an even more powerful one, right?" She added emphatically, "You certainly know how to play your cards, Mr. Wilson!"

Francis paused for a moment, then continued as though he were coaxing a child, "I'm doing this for your own good. If that's how you choose to see things, however, suit yourself."

Loraine replied coldly, "Thank you, but don't bother. Just so you know, I only came to the hospital today to see Joseph. I might call him Grandpa, but I'll never acknowledge you as my uncle!"

She had anticipated that something would happen today, but hadn't expected the Wilson family to act so shamelessly. Francis, like a true businessman, had already started making plans for her as though she were a mere asset of the family.

It appeared Francis wanted to say something, but Loraine interjected with a sneer as a thought occurred to her. "Speaking of which, Mr. Wilson, a man as stingy

as you wouldn't generously offer me any good projects, would you? These projects are just pretexts. In reality, you just want to use them to tie me to the Wilson family. Your real aim is to merge Universe Group, isn't it?"

Francis froze, seemingly irritated that she had seen through his scheme. He coldly retorted, "You think too much."

Judging by his tone, Loraine knew she was right.

She was seething with anger, very close to cursing him out. He was so shameless!

After a brief pause, she gritted her teeth and cracked a light smile, saying, "I think you're the one who thinks too much."


On the other end of the line, Francis explained in a deep voice, "I'm not after your money. For your information, merging with the Wilson family will only benefit Universe Group. It will elevate it to a higher level."

Upon hearing this, Loraine could no longer contain her anger and was about to rain a whirlwind of insults on him when someone suddenly took her phone away.

Marco then said in a calm tone, "I guess you could say the same about all those subsidiaries of Star Group that were absorbed by Solar Company."

Francis put two and two together and asked coldly, "That was your doing?"

"If you bother Loraine again, I won't let you off so

Chapter 1139 Benefits And Bonds  +120 Points at most easily," Marco said indifferently.

He hung up the phone, handed it back to Loraine, then furrowed his brow, saying, "No need to waste your time talking to him again."

Loraine was confused. Ultimately, she chose not to ask him about those subsidiaries, and instead, said with a smile, "When did you get back? I didn't notice."

Marco pointed at the car parked nearby and said affectionately, "A while ago. I didn't want to interrupt you since you were on the phone, but then I heard Francis' utter nonsense."

Loraine couldn't help but laugh and nodded. "Indeed, his words are nothing but nonsense. Let's forget about him and head home!"

Marco ran his fingers through her hair, then turned around and opened the car door. Bowing like a gentleman, he gestured for her to hop in.

After Loraine got into the passenger seat, Marco leaned over and fastened her seatbelt. His slightly lowered eyes were serious, yet gentle, his long, thick eyelashes fluttering softly before her.

At some point, their eyes met.

Marco leaned closer to her and planted a kiss on her lips, rubbing the tip of his nose against hers.

"Loraine, you don't need a single project from the Wilson family. With my Solar Company and your Universe Group, you'll never need to worry about business partners."

## Chapter 1140 Vincent's Invitation

After returning from the hospital that day, Loraine ceased all communication with the Wilson family. Perhaps Marco had angered Francis, or maybe Francis was simply preoccupied. Regardless, he made no effort to contact her either.

Life resumed its usual pace for Loraine. She occasionally found time to discuss the TV drama in which she starred with her employees.

This TV drama brought Vincent to mind.

Vincent had been away for a roadshow in another city when Joseph woke up. Loraine kept track of his movements through his fans at the company.

He had recently returned to Zodiac.

True to form, he called her on the evening of his second day back.

Aware of the tension between her and his family, Vincent didn't pry into the details of Loraine's second visit to Joseph. However, he struggled to come to terms with the fact that Loraine was his niece. After a long pause, he finally sighed. "You're my niece! Would you mind addressing me as Uncle Vincent?"

Loraine almost hung up, her lips twitching in annoyance. Sensing her frustration, Vincent quickly

added, "Don't hang up. I'd like to invite you to dinner tonight."

Loraine hesitated. Given the recent events and the Wilsons' constant invitations, she suspected Vincent had an ulterior motive.

"It's just a personal invitation," he explained. "I want to have dinner with you and Marco, that's all."

Loraine was surprised to hear Marco's name; the Wilsons typically didn't hold him in high regard.

Yet Vincent was different. Unaware initially of Marco's ties to the Cruz family, he had spent time with him and even offered help.

She didn't decline outright but mentioned she needed to consult Marco first.

After discussing it with Marco, who had no objections, they decided to go together.

Upon their arrival at the restaurant Vincent had reserved, they found him waiting. He greeted them with a wave and beckoned them over.

Once they seated themselves across from him, Vincent glanced between Marco and Loraine, shook his head, and sighed. "Loraine, who would have thought? You really are my niece! You know what that means? It must be fate. From the moment I first saw you, I felt a connection. It seems I was right."

Loraine offered a wry smile in response, choosing to remain silent while Marco rolled his eyes, his body language clearly conveying their readiness to leave if

Vincent had nothing further to add.

Vincent, choosing to ignore Marco's gesture, continued, "This isn't just hindsight. After you brought it up, I paid close attention. It turns out Kaley isn't as innocent as I believed."

Realizing his mistake changed how he viewed things. He bowed his head, pausing before adding sincerely, "Loraine, I'm sorry. I treated you unfairly in the crew and afterward. It wasn't right of me."

Though Vincent usually appeared indifferent, his apology seemed heartfelt, catching even Marco off guard.

Of all the Wilson family members, Vincent was the only one Marco didn't wholly dislike, yet he never truly liked him either.

Marco had branded the Wilsons as arrogant and foolish, so Vincent's humble apology was unexpected.

Loraine's demeanor softened significantly. She smiled, relieved, and said, "You were misled before, and besides, that's all behind us. I accept your apology."

Vincent's smile broadened. "From now on, I'm on your side! You are my niece by blood! To show my remorse and sincerity, I'll even endorse the Universe Group project at a reduced rate."

At this, Loraine laughed, her emotions a complex blend of amusement and appreciation.

She realized that it is unfair to generalize about people. Despite the Cruz family's reputation for cunning,

Ariadna remained innocent and endearing.

The Wilsons were generally considered stingy and vengeful, yet Joseph and Vincent showed sincerity.

Loraine found herself disliking some, while others inspired and won her admiration.

In that moment, she reverted to the easygoing woman she was when she first met Vincent. She quipped, "A reduced rate? Is that all? I've poured a fortune into the amusement park construction. I can't afford your usual rates, Uncle Vincent."

Her playful emphasis on "uncle" conveyed more than just familial ties, a nuance not lost on Vincent and Marco.

Marco let out a chuckle, understanding Loraine's acceptance of Vincent but added, "Moreover, we value our spokesperson's commitment over fame."

Vincent shot Marco a look but couldn't hide his delight at being called 'Uncle.' He replied with a grin, "That's okay. I know other celebrities. Whether I'm the spokesperson or not doesn't really matter. I'm happy to help spread the word if that's what you need."

Loraine smiled softly, warmth spreading through her heart. Seizing the moment, Vincent suggested, "Loraine, how about we take a photo together?"

Knowing his intent to clarify matters after the previous misunderstanding, she nodded in agreement.

After the photo was snapped, Vincent quickly uploaded it to a social platform.

