

Chapter 1157 A Grand Engagement Party

On the other end of the phone, Francis was seething with anger at Loraine's response. Before he could berate her, Loraine hung up.

She wore a sly, self-satisfied smile, imagining Francis's infuriated expression. She then blocked his number.

Buoyed by her bold move, Loraine felt her spirits lift.

Noticing Marco's lingering frown from Francis's words, she embraced him and reassured, "Don't mind what he said. There's no need to be upset."

Marco responded with a smile, wrapped his arms around her, and kissed her gently. "I'm not upset, and I won't argue. I'll show you how much I love you through my actions," he whispered.

Loraine nestled into his embrace, her thoughts drifting to the delayed engagement party.

As the weather brightened and the amusement park project neared completion, their plans for the engagement celebration solidified, bringing her moments of joy amidst the turmoil with the Wilson family.

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Once engaged to Marco, she felt liberated from the expectations of the Wilson family.

Resting against him, she scoffed lightly, "Had I known the true nature of the Wilsons earlier, I wouldn't have bothered investigating them."

She shared her feelings openly with Marco, not concealing her disappointment.

"During my investigation into the origin of the necklace, I often wondered about what my grandfather's family might be like... only to discover they were the Wilsons."

Loraine's expression darkened as she said with a hint of disdain, "Who would have guessed the Wilson family could be so selfish and indifferent? It's no wonder my mother left her family!"

Marco listened attentively, then tenderly kissed her forehead and murmured, "Loraine, without you, I might have become just another indifferent man obsessed with wealth. But you've shown me the joy of being with someone I love."

Caught off guard by his words, Loraine looked up, momentarily forgetting their proximity. As she did, Marco's lips brushed gently across her face, finally meeting hers.

Words became unnecessary as they kissed, sharing a gentle, intimate connection.

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Two months later, the ocean beach theme park, a joint venture between Universe Group and Solar Company, was inaugurated.

The long-awaited engagement party of Marco and Loraine was held amidst the park's grandeur, a celebration planned for nearly half a year that unfolded spectacularly.

On this warm summer day, ocean breezes swept through the park, enhancing the scenic beauty around them.

Business associates of both Universe Group and Solar Company were present, alongside relatives and friends of the couple who gathered in Zodiac.

The park resonated with laughter, rivaling the grandeur of a royal wedding.

The day's refreshments were prepared by chefs from the Geranium, and photographers from prestigious studios captured the festivities. Notably, the renowned Michel was the photographer for the couple.

The attendance of notable figures from various industries was a testament to the couple's influence, surprising many who had not realized the extent of Loraine's and Marco's connections.

At the moment, Loraine was in the dressing room, applying her makeup with visible nerves, even more

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so than on her previous wedding day.

She and Marco were about to make their love official with an engagement, and at times, Loraine felt as though she was living a dream.

Next to her, Jennie was discussing Loraine's makeup and jewelry with the artist, her face alight with excitement—seemingly more animated than Loraine herself.

After a moment, Jennie leaned in close, catching Loraine's gaze in the mirror. "Lorrie, you look stunning today. I like you so much, I almost wish you weren't getting engaged!" she half-joked.

She reflected on the past. When Loraine and Marco had first married, they had done so secretly, without even a ceremony to celebrate with friends and family.

Now, everything was falling into place, and the engagement party was nothing short of lavish.

Loraine responded with a shy smile, her cheeks tinting with a lovely blush.

Tears welled up in Jennie's eyes as she quickly dabbed them away, smiling through the emotion. "Lorrie, I'm truly happy for you."

Recalling their past struggles, Loraine felt a mix of emotions. "Jennie, thank you for always being there for me," she said earnestly.

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"Of course!" Jennie chuckled, then added thoughtfully, "And Marco, well, he's changed so much. I never thought I'd say this, but he's really turned things around. You're going to be very happy, Lorrie."

Lorraine nodded in agreement. Just then, Remy entered the room and approached her. "Ms. Torres, there's a girl outside who seems unwell and is asking to see you."

Chapter 1158 Ariadna Shows Up

Loraine was perplexed. A girl who seemed unwell was asking to see her?

Suddenly, she thought of someone and urgently requested Remy to fetch the girl.

Shortly after, a pale and slender girl followed Remy into the room. Her eyes sparkled upon seeing Loraine, and she exclaimed with a beaming smile, "Loraine!"

Loraine was taken aback. She clasped the girl's hand and pulled her aside, her expression one of disbelief. She scrutinized her and asked in astonishment, "What's happened to you, Ariadna?"

When they last met, Ariadna had been slightly plump, but now she had lost considerable weight, reverting to her frail form from when she was previously ill.

Recalling how Ariadna had always mentioned her contented and secure life at her friend's place, Loraine had felt reassured and hadn't felt the need to visit. Now, seeing Ariadna's condition, she felt a surge of concern. "Has your so-called friend been mistreating you?"

Ariadna shook her head and tightened her grip on Loraine's hand, smiling. Loraine noticed that despite her gauntness and fatigue, Ariadna's eyes were radiant, and she seemed more content than during her time with the Cruz family.

"Don't worry, Loraine. My friend has been very kind. I chose to move out on my own accord and asked him to help me find a place. Though it's less luxurious, my life feels more meaningful now. This feels like the life I was meant to lead."

Loraine paused, her concern evident. "Why didn't you reach out to me for help? Look at how thin you've become... Did you come here by yourself?"

Ariadna's gaze flickered, then she reassured with a smile, "I'm alright, Loraine. My thinness is likely a remnant of my past illness; my body is still recovering. It was Marco who found my residence and informed me about your engagement party date. He thought it would be a wonderful surprise for you."

Upon hearing this, Loraine was surprised. Recalling Marco's promise to ensure Ariadna's presence at the engagement party, she couldn't help but smile warmly and affectionately tousle Ariadna's hair.

Jennie suddenly intervened, warmly embracing Ariadna and beaming, "Ariadna, even though we've just met, we already know each other! I'm Jennie. By the way, why didn't you respond after our last

conversation?"

Ariadna's gaze flickered again before she mustered a smile. "My phone broke, and I forgot to get it fixed... It's lovely to meet you, Jennie. You're even more beautiful than Loraine described."

Jennie was delighted by the compliment and swiftly changed the subject.

Loraine, however, detected the subtle shift in Ariadna's demeanor. Her eyes darkened with concern, but she maintained her composure. "Ariadna, I think it's best we have a doctor look at you. You don't seem well."

Ariadna instinctively declined, reassuring with a smile, "I'm truly fine. Today is your engagement party with Marco. I don't want to cause any fuss!"

Jennie chimed in nonchalantly, "No worries. You can rest in the room later. I'll stream the event for you!"

Grateful, Ariadna responded, "Thank you, Jennie."

Loraine gave a small, approving smile, took Jennie's hand, and they both left the lounge.

Once outside, Loraine began searching for Marco. As fate would have it, Marco was on his way to join her. After sending Jennie away, Loraine asked bluntly, "Where did you find Ariadna?"

Upon hearing Loraine's question, Marco's expression cooled as he also sensed something amiss about Ariadna.

"That's exactly what I've been meaning to discuss... Ariadna's so-called friend is a little off." Marco frowned slightly. "I couldn't locate Ariadna before, but suddenly, I discovered her whereabouts. It all seemed too easy."

This put Marco on high alert. Whoever was assisting Ariadna must be someone with significant influence and connections in Zodiac. If they wanted Marco to find Ariadna, he would; if they chose to hide her, not even the combined efforts of the three wealthy families could uncover her.

For a moment, he couldn't determine who wielded such significant power in Zodiac.

However, seeing the concern on Loraine's face, Marco moderated his emotions and reassured her, "Don't worry. At least, Ariadna is safe. I'll have our people continue to monitor her situation. But let's focus on today— our engagement party. Ariadna wouldn't want us fretting over her, so let's ensure we enjoy the celebration for her sake as well."

Relieved by his words, Loraine nodded. Recalling something Jennie had mentioned, she teased, "Marco, it seems you've grown more considerate now."

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something Jennie had mentioned, she teased,
"Marco, it seems you've grown more considerate
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Marco replied, "You're overly concerned about her,
while I'm merely trying to add a little more joy to
your day."

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