

Chapter 1349 Manipulating Marco Into Dealing With...

Keely sensed the fury radiating from Marco, and an unexpected blend of jealousy and satisfaction stirred within her. His fierce concern felt like a small victory. Yet, it also reopened old wounds, reminding her of past hurts that lingered beneath the surface.

She couldn't help but wonder if Marco's scolding of her once was because Loraine had been whispering poison in his ear.

The thought brought a sly smile to her lips. If Marco was so invested in her well-being, surely his intervention would be enough to tip the scales against Loraine. She could already envision the inevitable outcome: Loraine, utterly undone. The prospect filled her with a thrilling sense of power.

As Keely's mind raced with schemes to manipulate Marco into dealing with Loraine, she adopted an innocent expression. "Even though I don't remember anything, I certainly don't want anyone ruining my reputation. I also wouldn't want to drag the Wilson and Torres families into this mess..."

Marco, his voice dripping with feigned concern, asked, "So, what do you want me to do?"

Keely watched Marco intently, every flicker of his expression feeding her confidence. "You don't need to do much," she said smoothly. "Just find a way to stop the woman—maybe send her to a hospital or a quiet retreat for a while. Let her rest for an extended period."

Marco's gaze hardened slightly, and a faint, unreadable smile curled at the corners of his lips. "So, you're asking me to get rid of her?"

Keely's heart raced; that was exactly what she wanted to hear.

Yet, she knew she had to tread carefully.

With a facade of kindness, she replied, "Oh no, not at all! You know me; I'm not like that. I'm compassionate by nature. But if we don't teach her a lesson, what if she thinks I'm easy to bully? I just meant to send her away for a while, not to end her life."

Her words portrayed her as the perfect victim—pure, innocent, wronged. She knew exactly how to shape her image.

Marco, seeing through her subtle scheme, decided not to call her out. Instead, he nodded and said, "Alright, we'll do it your way. But now that she has upset you, I will ensure she learns a lesson."

Hearing Marco's response, Keely felt a wave of relief wash over her, a spark of joy igniting within. Her heart swelled with gratitude and triumph, urging her to act on impulse. She reached for Marco's hand as she said, "I knew you'd always be the one to protect me."

But before she could touch him, Marco casually sidestepped, causing her hand to drop back to her side. "Don't worry," he said coolly, a glint of determination in his eyes. "I'll make sure you get justice."

Keely's hand lingered awkwardly in the air for a moment, a brief sting of disappointment flickering through her. Yet she quickly brushed it aside. Marco had made his position clear; his actions spoke louder than any gesture could.

She plastered on a smile and asked, "You've been a bit busy lately. Is Eplistan keeping you busy? Are you planning something against them?"

Marco fixed her with a significant look before inquiring, "Why do you ask?"

Keely felt a faint flush creep into her cheeks, but she quickly masked her unease. "Oh, just curious," she said, keeping her tone casual, even as her eyes revealed the deeper turmoil simmering beneath the surface.

Marco didn't pursue the topic any further. Instead, he spoke with a deliberate irritation, saying, "I've already looked into it. If Eplistan had not requested your visit, you would not have suffered. So yes, I intend to handle them—and the Dury family as well."

Keely's eyes sparkled with surprise and joy. "So, you're doing this... for me?"

Marco fought to keep his distaste in check, choosing his words with care. "That's right. I've already reported the Dury family to the authorities. I intend to limit Eplistan's business operations until they provide a proper resolution."

Keely realized just how vital the import business was to Eplistan; halting those operations would deliver a crushing blow.

She kept this information in mind, then tried to make an invitation to Marco, hoping to strengthen their bond.

"Why don't you come over after work tonight? I could cook us a nice dinner."

Marco's brow furrowed, and without missing a beat, he replied, "I have work to finish. I'll be staying late."

Keely opened her mouth to protest, but Marco had decided it was time to wrap up the conversation. He subtly gestured to Carl, who had been waiting just outside.

Carl, observing Marco's cue, stepped into the office with purpose. "Boss," he said, "everyone in the conference room is ready and just waiting for you."

Marco nodded. "I'll be there in a bit."

Turning back to Keely, he softened his tone just a bit. "I have to go now. We'll talk later."

Though feeling a twinge of dissatisfaction, Keely knew she had accomplished her goal for the day. She offered a faint smile and nodded. "Alright."

As Keely left the building, her phone buzzed with a call from Mr. K's man.

"How did it turn out?" asked the voice on the other end.

Keely shared everything she had learned, her voice smooth and measured. Then, she asked, "Could you find out who Marco plans to send? I need to follow up to ensure everything goes smoothly."

"Okay," the man replied curtly before hanging up.

Keely's lips curled into a smug smirk. Moments later, a notification flashed on her phone, providing the information she had been waiting for.

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Chapter 1350 A Lake-blue Dress

Three days later, in disguise, Keely approached the leader of the operation. Skipping any pleasantries, she cut straight to the chase.

"I'm from the Wilson family," she declared, her gaze steady and unyielding. "There's been a change of plans. Marco sent me to deliver the message."

The leader sized her up, a smirk playing at the corners of his lips. "You're from the Wilson family? Really? And Mr. Cruz sent you? That's hilarious," he chuckled, shaking his head. "Do you really expect me to believe this nonsense?"

Keely calmly pulled out her phone and dialed Damon's number, prepared to prove her identity.

After a brief conversation, she hung up and shot the leader a cold, disdainful look, her confidence radiating as she awaited his reaction. "Well," she said, her tone sharp and impatient, "do you believe me now?"

The leader's demeanor changed instantly. His mocking expression vanished, replaced by a fawning attitude as he bowed slightly. "My deepest apologies; I didn't recognize you just now. What instructions do you have from Mr. Cruz?"

Keely reached into her bag and produced a small vial of pills she had prepared earlier. "It's simple," she said, her voice as chilling as her gaze. "When you send Alice to the sanatorium, ensure she takes these. They'll keep her silent... permanently."

The leader paused briefly, caught off guard by her request, but quickly composed himself and nodded. "Certainly, Miss. Is there anything else you need?"

Keely considered for a moment before replying, "When the time comes, I want to be there and check on Alice myself."

The leader nodded eagerly, slipping further into his sycophantic demeanor. "Absolutely. It will be taken care of."

Feeling satisfied, Keely turned to leave but paused at the doorway, her tone turning serious. "Remember, this operation is confidential. Marco doesn't want anyone else involved. Do you understand?"

The leader smiled ingratiatingly, nodding eagerly. "Rest assured. Your instructions are perfectly clear. I won't breathe a word, not even under threat of death."

His compliance brought Keely a sense of satisfaction.

She nodded as she left, certain that everything was now in motion. What she didn't foresee, however, was that the moment she walked out the door, the leader would contact Marco and disclose every detail of her plan.

But Marco was anything but surprised. He had suspected from the beginning that Keely was up to something evil. In fact, everything he had told her in the office had been a carefully crafted ruse. The information she found about the operation was nothing but a fabrication, meticulously designed to ensnare her.

However, Marco didn't expect that Keely would be malicious enough to attempt to take Loraine's life.

Hearing the leader's report ignited Marco's anger, but it quickly gave way to relief. He had already taken measures to protect against Keely's schemes.

Now, it was simply a matter of watching her dig her own grave.

Marco instructed the leader to keep a close eye on Keely, making sure she remained oblivious to the fact that her plan was falling apart. He then promptly contacted Vincent to share the news.

Vincent's fury mirrored Marco's as they rapidly concocted a plan to reveal Keely's deception. Their objective was to expose her false identity in front of both the Torres and Wilson families at the sanatorium.

The next morning, Loraine was getting ready to accompany Rita to the recording of a music variety show.

Just as Loraine was about to step into the car, Rita's phone rang. After checking the screen, Rita turned to Loraine and said, "Hold on for a moment."

With that, Rita stepped away to take the call, leaving Loraine by the car.

A few minutes later, Rita returned, this time holding a striking lake-blue dress in her hands.

She handed it to Loraine. "Here, put this on before we leave."

Loraine blinked in surprise. "What's with the sudden change of the dress?"

Rita fibbed. "The production team just called and mentioned that the lake-blue dress would really pop against the set for today's shoot."

Loraine nodded. However, as she examined the dress, a strange sensation washed over her. Some intimate scenes began to flicker in her mind, leaving her momentarily disoriented.

She faintly recalled herself in a dress like this, lost in a passionate embrace with a man. The details were murky, yet the memory radiated an unmistakable intimacy that sent shivers down her spine.

Her cheeks flushed as she slipped into the dress in the car, a rush of warmth flooding her. Despite her best efforts to remember the man's face, it frustratingly eluded her.

Could these be fragments of her lost memories? Who was the man involved in intimate moments with her? Could he have been her former lover?

The harder she tried to grasp the memory, the more elusive it became, and a dull ache began to throb in her head.

Frustrated, Loraine shook her head, trying to banish the unsettling images from her mind. She couldn't afford to dwell on those thoughts, not with the recording looming ahead. The lake-blue dress hugged her figure, its vibrant color a stark contrast to her swirling emotions. Gathering her resolve, she joined Rita, and together they headed off for the day's shoot.