

## **Kissed AOM 1601**

### Chapter 1601

Corinne had never brought Bryan and his siblings on faraway trips because she was worried about their safety. She insisted they should wait until they were older. As a result, the three of them had never gotten the chance to witness mountains or rivers.

He marveled at the paintings and said, "If these are already so beautiful, I can't even imagine how awesome it would look in real life. I wish I could see it in person."

Lilin was reminded of Sophia's 'control freak' nature when she saw his longing expression. Sophia rarely allowed him to venture outside.

He had a very challenging upbringing. As if being taken away from his biological mother right after birth was not bad enough, he had to be raised under the watchful eyes of a heinous stepmother.

"I'm not even that good at art. The painting by my art teacher is so much closer to the actual scenery. Let me show it to you," Lilin said. Since she was too young to take her little nephew to experience those sights in person, she was very keen to share the artwork with him.

She retrieved her painting, selected a piece, and presented it carefully to Bryan.

"Here it is! This was painted by my art teacher. It's more realistic than mine," Lilin said.

"Wow!" Bryan exclaimed. He was completely captivated by the stunning scenery in the painting. It never crossed his mind that such beautiful places existed. At that moment, he resolved to bring his family to see those incredible landscapes in the future. He admired every inch of the painting until he noticed a signature-Nellie Nymphaea.

Bryan's eyes lit up. "Is Nellie Nymphaea your art teacher?"

Lilin was a little surprised that Bryan noticed that. "She is. I'm surprised you can read at such a young age!"

Bryan did not intend to show off his ability to read. Nellie Nymphaea's name was very familiar to him because his home contained plenty of her paintings. They were said to be the work of Corinne's mother who was also Bryan's grandmother, and Corinne cherished those paintings very much. Struck by the similarity of the signature to the paintings at his home, he wondered if Lilin's art teacher was his grandmother. "Can I have this painting, Aunt Lilin?" Bryan asked earnestly with a sincere and pleading gaze.

Lilin empathized with his family situation which formed a barrier to him exploring the world, so she readily agreed. "You can have it if it's yours! Just promise me that you'll cherish it, have it framed, and keep it safe. My teacher's paintings are very valuable."

Artwork that bore Nellie Nymphaea's signature was incredibly valuable, but her teacher did not seem to mind that very much and frequently gave away her paintings to her students. Lilin had a stash of her teacher's paintings as a result, and she was happy to give one to 'Benjamin'.

Bryan was elated to hear that. "Thank you! My Mommy loves Nellie Nymphaea's paintings. She'll be super happy if she gets this!"

Lilin's expression soured as soon as she heard that. "Did you just say you were going to give this painting to your mom?"

"Yeah." Bryan nodded. "She loves Nellie Nymphaea's paintings!"

"Then I'm not going to give it to you," Lilin said. She had a change of heart and immediately took the painting back before returning it to her folder.

## Chapter 1602

When Bryan saw the painting being taken back, he gazed at Lilin in confusion and asked, "Didn't you say you were going to give it to me? Why are you taking it back?"

Lilin rolled her eyes and replied annoyed, "I agreed to give you the painting, but I didn't say you could give it to Sophia." She harbored a very strong resentment toward Sophia and believed that the woman did not deserve to be given that painting.

Bryan felt a bit disheartened. "But Sophia isn't..." he tried protesting but stopped himself before he could finish his sentence. He could not afford to reveal his true identity as it

might make things troublesome for his father. He decided to wait until he could put Corinne in touch with Lilin so she could purchase the painting.

Lilin was eager to hear what 'Benjamin' was about to say and urged him, "Finish your sentence. Sophia isn't...?"

Bryan shook his head and replied, "No, forget about it, Aunt Lilin. You're right. I shouldn't use the painting you gave me to make Mommy happy. I don't want the painting anymore. You should focus on your homework. I'll go back to my Daddy's room."

The disappointment on his face was unbearably depressing, so Lilin called out to him, "Hey! Wait..."

Bryan turned and asked, "Yes, Aunt Lilin?"

Lilin took the painting out of the folder again and handed it to him. "Here. Take it."

"

Bryan was pleasantly surprised. He took the painting and stared at her in slight confusion. "Are you sure?" "Yes." Lilin nodded and said, "You can have it! Feel free to do whatever you want with it. It's yours now!"

Bryan beamed with joy. "Thank you, Aunt Lilin!"

Lilin then added, "Ahem! I heard that your father caught a cold. It's probably not a good idea for you to be in the same room with him. You wouldn't want to get infected!"

Bryan did not seem worried at all. He stated confidently, "It'll be fine. I'm a healthy boy, and I have a strong immune system! See you later!" He dashed out of the room with the painting.

Lilin watched 'Benjamin' from behind as he left. The more she observed him, the more he seemed to differ from the Benjamin that she knew. They were like two similar people

with vastly different personalities. When Bryan exited Lilin's room, he ran into Sophia who just happened to come out of Adam's room.

Sophia stopped him and said, "Don't run! Where are you going?"

Bryan never liked Sophia, and his youthful innocence was replaced by blatant disgust when he laid eyes on her.

"I'm going back to see Daddy," he replied sullenly.

Sophia knew that he was not Benjamin, and she had no qualms about losing her patience with him since Zachary was not around. "What are you holding? Show me!"

Bryan did not want to show her the painting and immediately hid it behind his back. "It's a painting Aunt Lilin gave to me. I want to show it to Daddy!"

Sophia found it strange that Lilin would be kind enough to give her 'son' a painting. She felt that something was off and reached out impatiently, saying, "What painting? Take it out and show it to me first!" Bryan frowned. "No! I want Daddy to see it first!"

#### Chapter 1603

Sophia grabbed Bryan and pulled the painting from behind him. She then pushed him away and examined the painting. As she laid eyes on the artwork, she came to realize that it was just an ordinary landscape painting.

Bryan was infuriated after his painting was snatched away. He attempted to jump up and reclaim it, but Sophia's taller stature made it impossible for him to reach it. He yelled, "Give it back! Give that painting back to me!"

Sophia turned the painting over to see if there was anything out of the ordinary on the back, but the painting was rather normal like before. However, the irate expression on Corinne's child delighted her greatly and she deliberately withheld the painting from him to revel in his misery.

Their commotion eventually caught the attention of Adam, Melinda, and Lilin.

"What's happening, Sophia? Why is the boy making such a fuss?" Adam asked sternly as he came out of the room with his hands behind his back.

Sophia smiled at her father and explained, "Don't worry about it. He insisted on running out on his own, and he got upset when I tried to stop him."

Melinda looked sympathetically at the profusely sweating 'Benjamin' and waved to him. "Come here, Benjamin. You shouldn't run off on your own. I'll put on some cartoons for you, okay?"

Bryan never took kindly to Sophia, and he was never going to consider Adam and Melinda as his grandparents. He ignored Melinda's invitation and continued to jump and reach for the painting in Sophia's hand, demanding, "I don't want to watch cartoons! I want my painting back; give it back to me!"

Melinda was not angry at him-just helpless.

Adam, however, was peeved by what he perceived as the child's lack of respect. He grumbled, "Is this how Zachary spoils his children? Not even an ounce of manners! Does he usually behave like this with you?"

Sophia sighed a little dejectedly. "I'm used to it, Dad, but he's not acting out because of Zachary. Zachary is very strict with him, but I wonder just where he inherited this rebellious streak from." Adam immediately recalled the child's origin from Sophia's last sentence and had a newfound repulsion for him. There was nothing likable about someone who was clearly not of his blood.

At that moment, Lilin came forward and defended her nephew, "I think Benjamin is a very good boy. He's not as stubborn as you say he is."

Sophia glanced at Lilin in disdain and retorted, "How well do you know him, anyway? You've barely even spent any time with him. Have you seen how bad his attitude is usually?"

"I might not know what his attitude is like most of the time," Lilin began, "but I know that he's upset right now because you took away the painting that I gave him. Of course he'll throw a tantrum if you don't return his belongings!"

Adam and Melinda were immediately drawn to the rolled-up painting in Sophia's hand. Sophia was holding it high to keep it out of 'Benjamin's' reach, and 'Benjamin' was jumping desperately to try and take it back.

Sophia looked at Lilin and said with a smile, "See, this is another one of our misunderstandings. I'm not keeping it from Benjamin. I'm just worried he might've taken it secretly. I took it from him because I wanted to return it to you!"

Lilin frowned as her dislike for Sophia grew deeper. No mother would immediately jump to the conclusion that her child was a thief. She once thought that Sophia would love Benjamin in the same way she loved the man whom she had used all sorts of nefarious means to keep to herself, but it appeared that she had underestimated Sophia's evilness. Sophia's selfishness was an inextricable part of her that did not change, even toward an innocent child.

#### Chapter 1604

Lilin walked up to Sophia with a frown and looked up at her sister, who was much taller. She stretched out her hand and said, "You wanted to give back the painting to me, right? Well, give it." Sophia did not notice anything peculiar with the painting, and she was not prepared to argue with Lilin in front of Adam. After all, she had just promised her father that she would get along well with her sister, so she happily returned the painting to Lilin.

Lilin rolled her eyes at Sophia after taking back the painting. She then handed it to 'Benjamin' in front of everyone and said, "Here! Take better care of the painting I gave you next time!" Bryan's unease improved slightly after he took the painting back. He pouted and said, "Thank you, Aunt Lilin!"

Lilin replied, "You're welcome!" She then turned to look at Adam and said, "See, Dad? Benjamin is a very sensible, polite little boy. Some people just don't know how to teach their children!"

Adam had a slightly contorted expression, while Sophia gritted her teeth after hearing the sarcasm in Lilin's words.

Lilin ignored Sophia and held the boy's hand. "Come with me. I'll bring you to your father's room!"

Bryan nodded and said, "Okay." He left obediently with Lilin, while Sophia was left to deal with Adam's scrutinous gaze.

Once they left the suite, Lilin looked around to make sure Sophia was not following them. She then whispered to 'Benjamin', "I know you're not Benjamin."

Bryan's expression froze. He stiffened, and he looked at Lilin with shock and guilt.

His reaction all but confirmed Lilin's guess. "I can see that you hate Sophia as much as I do."

Bryan had a very good first impression of Lilin and felt that she was not a bad person, so he decided to come clean and nodded earnestly.

"I knew it!" Lilin smiled.

Bryan was a little puzzled. "How did you know?"

Lilin explained, "When I gave you the painting earlier, you happily told me that you wanted to give it to your Mommy. I thought you were referring to Sophia, but after I saw how angry you were when she took it from you, I knew right away that Sophia isn't your Mommy."

"Aunt Lilin, is it okay for you to keep this a secret even though you're not really my aunt?" Bryan asked.

"Of course I can! My lips are sealed," replied Lilin assuringly. "If I wanted to expose you, I would've already done it in front of everyone back there."

Bryan believed her and said, "Thank you!"

Lilin then asked, "Could you tell me why you're here and where did the real Benjamin go?"

Bryan scratched his head in frustration and replied, "Well... We got switched up by mistake the other day. I'm pretty sure the real Benjamin is at my house now..." He described the entire situation to Lilin, who found it hard to believe. Two identical children could not possibly have existed in the world. There was more to it than met the eye.

All of a sudden, Lilin had another thought. "Do you have a photo of your mother? I want to see what she looks like."

Bryan shook his head and replied, "I don't have one now, but I can assure you that she's very beautiful!"

#### Chapter 1605

Lilin could imagine just how beautiful Benjamin's mother was to be able to give birth to someone like Benjamin. She did not ask any further questions after escorting Bryan to the door of the suite. "Go in and be with your dad. I won't tell anyone your secret."

Bryan thanked her again and opened the door to go in. Meanwhile, Lilin stood alone in the corridor, deep in thought. She had a strong feeling that the boy bore a striking resemblance to someone she met when she was younger. Though she was initially unable to recall who it was, his description of being mistakenly taken triggered a memory from many years ago.

During that year, her parents got into a heated argument, and her mother ran away from home with her in a fit of anger. However, they got into a car accident on the way. Her mother's life was in danger, and an urgent blood transfusion was needed. Her mother had a rare blood type, and the hospital's blood bank did not have enough supply of that particular blood type.

A suitable blood donor was desperately needed, and during that critical moment, a beautiful woman who seemed to have been sent down from the heavens donated a significant amount of blood to save her mother's life. The memory of that beautiful woman's face remained etched in Lilin's mind. The eyebrows of both the real and fake Benjamin seemed to bear a resemblance to that woman.

'It can't be that big of a coincidence, right?' Lilin wondered. 'Is Benjamin's biological mother the same beautiful woman that saved my mom's life all those years ago?'

Bryan took the painting and went to the bedroom to find Zachary, who was sitting in his wheelchair while getting some air on the balcony.



"Daddy..." Bryan walked up to the balcony and called out cautiously, worried he might startle his father.

Zachary had heard some footsteps but did not turn. It was only when Bryan called out to him that he turned and asked, "Why are you back alone?"

Bryan hid the painting and said secretively, "I have something super awesome with me! You can give it to my Mommy when she comes over the next time. She'll be so happy!" Zachary raised his eyebrow and asked, "What could make her that happy?"

"Ta-da!" Bryan grinned, revealing the hidden painting. "It's this painting!"

Zachary glanced at the scenic painting his son unveiled and saw nothing particularly remarkable about it. "And your Mommy will like this painting?"

Bryan nodded enthusiastically. "Yes! She loves any artwork by this painter! If you give her this painting, she'll like you even more!"

Zachary patted the boy's head and acknowledged his good intentions. Bryan seemed blissfully unaware that Zachary and Corinne were already together. "Could you tell me why your mother likes this painter's artwork so much?"

Bryan did not wish to keep any secrets from Zachary, but he still hesitated slightly as he revealed, "You see, this painter... Well... Mommy tells us to keep it a secret, so I'm only going to tell you, okay? Don't break my trust and tell anyone else!"

Zachary nodded. "I promise I won't."

Bryan then explained confidently, "Okay, so the reason my Mommy likes these paintings so much is because this painter might be my grandma!"

Chapter 1606

"Your grandmother's painting? Where did you get it from?" asked Jeremy solemnly.

"I got it from Aunt Lilin. She told me the painting was drawn by her art teacher! Since the signature is the same as my grandmother's name, I wanted to save it for Mommy! Mommy lost her mother when she was little, so she must've thought that grandmother had passed away. She's gonna be so surprised when she sees this painting!" answered Bryan.

Jeremy glanced at that painting. "If that's so, keep it safe so we can give it to her the next time we see her."

Bryan nodded. "Okay!"

Jeremy stroked his head gently. "And remember, we should avoid talking about your mommy while we're here, understand?"

Bryan understood it clearly. As much as he was not happy about it, he still promised Jeremy anyway.

Corinne returned to the Holdens' estate.

The kids ran up to her and threw their arms around her happily.

"Mommy! Mommy! Where have you been?"

Corinne squatted and hugged them equally. "Mommy went to see a friend. Have you three been good while I'm gone and eat your breakfast like you're told?" Three little heads nodded at her. "Yes, Mommy!"

"Mommy, we all behaved very well!" said Corinne seriously. "After breakfast, we also went out with Aunt Francine to pick out some clothes for the wedding!" Corinne rubbed her daughter's head. "Good girl... Wait, what? Clothes for the wedding? Whose wedding are you going to?"

Before she could answer, Francine chimed in, "Aaron and Annie's wedding, of course! Don't you know, Corinne?"

'What?' Corinne stood up and looked at Francine in disbelief, wondering if she was joking. "Whose wedding did you say it was?"

Francine handed an invitation card to Corinne. "Here, take a look. Aaron had someone drop off the invitation this morning. The wedding's going to be in a week."

Corinne took the card and opened it. She was immediately greeted with the sight of Aaron and Annie's photo. It really was their wedding invitation, just like Francine said! 'Aren't they moving a little too fast?' thought Corinne.

Francine found it odd that Corinne had no idea about the wedding. "No one told you about this? Aren't you and Aaron close friends? Didn't he give you some hints or heads-up on such an important occasion?" Corinne silently stared at the invitation card for a while. She then turned to Francine and said, "Look after the children for me. I'll be back real fast."

She was already out of the door before Francine could reply.

'She must be running to Aaron's to ask for an explanation,' thought Francine. 'Oh well, it's none of my business. I just need to look after the kids, pick out a pretty dress for the wedding, and ask Chester to go as my plus-one.'

Corinne returned to the apartment where she used to stay with Xante and Aaron. When she was about to key in the password at the door, she suddenly thought of something and rang the doorbell instead. It had been a long time since she last came back. What if Xante and Aaron brought someone back, and she accidentally saw something inappropriate? That would be a disaster! After a while, someone opened the door.

Chapter 1607

Corinne was right. The person who opened the door was not Xante nor Aaron, but it was not a total stranger either.

Sunny stood there in his pajamas, scratching his fluffy hair and looking like he had just woken up. He then yawned and said, "Oh, hi, Corinne! What brings you here so early? I thought today's the weekend." Corinne pushed Sunny away and walked into the house. She glanced around the living room and asked with a frown, "Where are Xante and Aaron?"

Sunny followed her into the living room and answered honestly, "Xante is washing her face, and Aaron moved out two days ago. He's getting married soon, right? So he moved to his new house!" 'Aaron moved out? Why, that little punk really kept me in the dark, huh?!' thought Corinne.

She sat down on the couch unhappily and gestured to Sunny with her chin. "Get a glass of water for me!"

"Yes, Corinne," answered Sunny obediently.

While Sunny was carrying the glass of water to her, Xante had finished changing and came out of the room.

"Hey, Boss. You're early."

Xante took the glass of water from Sunny and personally placed it in front of Corinne.

Corinne was really thirsty, but she only took two gulps of water. She then looked at Xante unhappily and smiled coldly. "Glad to see you and Aaron are totally fine without me! Am I now a total stranger to you? How can you tell me Aaron's getting married? I can't believe you guys are treating me like any other guest by sending me an invitation."

"Boss, I have nothing to do with it," said Xante pitifully. "I wouldn't dare to do something like that to you. As for Aaron, I also found out about the wedding two days ago when he was packing his things. I thought he'd tell you about it."

Corinne smiled indifferently. "Where did he move to?"

"To the river-view apartment that he bought last time. He plans to get married and live happily ever after with Annie there." Corinne took another sip of water. "Well, that's a good plan. And I'm impressed he came up with it himself. Well done."

The phrase 'well done' was uttered calmly, but everyone there could detect an undercurrent of burning rage within it.

Xante-who grew up with Corinne could tell she was angry, so she took out her phone and said, "Let me give him a call. I'm going to ask him to come back this instant to give you an explanation!" After that, she strode over to the balcony to make the call.

Sunny awkwardly remained where he was standing. This was the first time he ever felt such overbearing pressure-similar to his brother Lucas' from Corinne.

"Actually, Corinne, Aaron is already a grown man, so he has every right to decide on his own marriage. There's really no need to get so angry about it."

Corinne raised an eyebrow. "Do I look like I'm angry?"

Sunny felt a chill down his spine. "Um, no. You don't... I'll go get you some fruit!"

He ran quickly to the kitchen.

'Oh my god, that was a close one! She was absolutely boiling. If I hadn't run when I did, I'd probably be dead now,' thought Sunny. Meanwhile, on the balcony, Xante finally got Aaron on the phone. Judging by the windy sound from his end, he was outside. "Where are you? The boss came to our apartment to look for you!"

Aaron's voice sounded slightly different than his usual self. "What's the matter? Did she say why she was looking for me?" "Stop playing dumb! Get back here right this instant and explain your wedding to the boss!" replied Xante impatiently. Aaron laughed. "Okay, sure. Tell her I'll be right back!"

Chapter 1608

After that, Xante heard Aaron's shriek from the other end of the phone, and the call ended suddenly.

Xante was speechless. 'What the heck is that punk doing again?'

She put away her phone and returned to the living room. "Boss, I just talked to Aaron over the phone. He says he'll be here right away."

Corinne frowned with impatience.

"Say, Boss, have you had your breakfast? Should I make you some toast?" asked Xante.

Corinne glanced at Xante. She was not hungry, but she knew Xante and Sunny had just woken up and had not had their breakfast yet, so she nodded.

Xante sighed with relief and walked to the kitchen.

Sunny sidled up to Xante when she came into the kitchen. "Master, why is Corinne so scary today? Did she really get so angry just because Aaron didn't tell her about his wedding?"

Xante knocked his head. "That shows how much you know. You shouldn't gossip about your sister behind her back. Now go and make some toast for her!"

Sunny rubbed his own head and shrugged. "You could've just said it without hitting me."

Meanwhile, Aaron jumped off the bungee jumping platform and got a rush of adrenaline from going up and down in mid-air like a yo-yo.

He was enjoying the whole thing so much until the staff dragged him up and untied the rope from his ankles.

"Sir, I've been instructing hundreds of people in bungee jumping every day, and you're the calmest of them all! Weren't you scared at all? Have you done bungee jumping before?" complimented the staff. Aaron smiled. "No, this is my first time, and it's so fun!"

The staff was deeply impressed. "I have to say, Sir, you're awesome!"

Aaron smiled and got off the platform to go look for Annie, who had come with him.

Annie was glaring at him from the waiting area behind the platform. She quickly ran to him and asked, "Are... Are you alright?"

Aaron looked at her pale face and smiled. "Yeah! That was quite exciting."

Annie glanced at him. "Weren't you afraid at all?"

Aaron laughed. "Why should I be scared? It's not like I don't have the bungee cord tied to my ankle. Plus, you're the one who wanted me to prove my love for you with bungee jumping? Well, now that I've done it, you should know my love for you is as real as it can get!"

Annie blinked uneasily. "I... I regret it now! I shouldn't have let you go bungee jumping. I should have asked you to go skydiving instead! Let's see if you can still stay this calm if there's no bungee cord attached to you!"

Aaron knew Annie did not mean a word she said, so he shrugged his shoulders and stroked her face with a smile.

"Are you sure? Look at you. You've become as white as a sheet just by watching me bungee jumping. Do you really want me to go skydiving?"

In fact, Annie had not recovered from the fright. She had been terribly worried from the minute Aaron stood on that platform. She regretted that she forced Aaron to prove his love with bungee jumping. What if the rope broke? She would surely blame herself for the rest of her life! No, she could not live without him, so she might jump with him.

Fortunately, everything turned out okay.

Aaron knew she was worried about him. He pulled her into his arms and comforted her, "Annie, I'm fine. If you want me to go skydiving, I'd do it for you, but not today. Right now, we have to rush back and give Corinne an explanation about our wedding."

Annie was a little taken aback. She raised her head and asked, "Why? Is she still against us being together?"

Chapter 1609

Aaron narrowed his eyes. "I don't think she's against us being together. More like she's angry at me."

Annie thought about what he meant, and she followed Aaron down the hill.

It was almost noon when they reached the apartment.

Even though they drove as fast as they could, the bungee jumping spot was simply too far away from the city.

When they entered the apartment, Xante and Sunny were chatting over coffee at the kitchen counter, but there was no sign of Corinne.

Aaron walked in, with Annie's hand in his, and asked, "Where's the boss?"

Xante, with the coffee cup in her hand, pointed to the couch with her chin.

Aaron and Annie turned around and found Corinne lying on the couch with her eyes closed. She seemed to have fallen asleep.

"Did you two come from the moon or something? It took you long enough that Corinne even fell asleep!" said Sunny mockingly.

Annie was a bit embarrassed. "Um, we... We went to a scenic spot outside of the city, so that's why we're late..."

Aaron did not answer Sunny. He slowly walked to the couch, took a blanket, and put it over Corinne. His movement was light and respectful, nothing too intimate.

Even so, Corinne-awakened by his movement-snapped her eyes wide open.

When their eyes met, Aaron smiled cautiously. "Don't catch a cold, Boss!"

Corinne glared at him, rolled her eyes, then pushed him away to sit up.

Aaron did not dare to sit down. He took a few steps back to Annie's side, readied to be lectured.



Corinne glanced at them lazily. "Out with it. How long have you two been dating?"

Annie knew she did not do anything that warranted her feeling guilty. However, at that moment, she could sense the same kind of overbearing pressure she got from Jeremy before. This time, of course, it came from Corinne.

"Corinne, I..."

Corinne glanced at Annie, who had turned bright red with shame at that moment. She tapped the seat beside her. "Sit, Annie. I'm not asking you."

Annie was stunned for a moment before she quickly sat beside Corinne. She was unbelievably relieved that she was not the one Corinne was angry at.

Aaron smiled helplessly at Annie for leaving him to fend for himself. He then sighed and said, "Boss, you saw the invitation card, didn't you? We're getting married soon. The wedding date has been set." Corinne glared at him. "Have you registered your marriage?"

Aaron smiled. "Yeah."

Corinne crossed her arms. "And you didn't think to discuss it with me beforehand?"

Aaron lowered his head in shame. "Sorry, Boss. I didn't want Annie to be snatched away by some guy, so I decided to get married as soon as possible. You know the feeling, don't you, Boss?" Aaron's explanation made Annie blush again. 'He doesn't have to be so frank with Corinne, does he?'

Corinne scoffed. "More like you're worried that I'm going to ruin it for you!"

Aaron laughed. "Nothing gets past you, huh, Boss. But for the record, you did badmouth me to Annie before. So there's no way I'm going to lose her again this time."

Corinne looked at him in disgust. "It's not bad-mouthing when it's the truth. Weren't you the one who didn't take relationships seriously before? Could you really blame me for telling Annie the truth?"

Chapter 1610

Aaron shrugged and chuckled. "But I've changed!"

Corinne gave him a sharp look and said, "Yeah, right. Do you expect me to believe that? You do know that a leopard never changes its spot, right?"

After that, she turned to look at Annie and asked gently, "Is Aaron blackmailing you or something?"

'Is this what the boss really thinks of me? That the only reason Annie is marrying me is because I've blackmailed her?' thought Aaron with his hand to his forehead.

Annie's lips twitched with embarrassment. She then awkwardly said, "No, Corinne... I'm marrying him out of my own free will."

Corinne frowned. "But why did you agree to marry him so quickly? Have you forgotten how he treated you in the past?"

Annie blushed. "He... He said he was serious about me, and I want to try to believe him just this one time."

Corinne was somewhat concerned and said, "You should be cautious. It is fine to date, and I wouldn't worry then. But when it comes to marriage, it's better to think it through carefully!" Annie stared at her blankly.

Aaron was really afraid that the wife he finally got back would be persuaded to leave by Corinne again, so he hurriedly moved closer and sat between the two women.

"You see, Boss. I was right not to discuss it with you beforehand. I knew you'd try to scare Annie away again!" said Aaron.

Corinne looked at him with disdain. "Didn't you say you were against marriage? Are you now certain that you're to commit to only one woman for the rest of your life? I don't

care about other girls, but Annie definitely isn't someone you can just fool around with! Marriage is no child's play!"

Aaron smiled and explained, "Boss, can we stop bringing up my past? Who doesn't have a history? In the past, I thought I'd never fall in love with any woman in this lifetime, so I valued my freedom and had no intention of getting married. Now, I have realized that I am not as carefree as I once thought. I've completely fallen for Annie. I'm willing to rein myself in for her, accept the constraints of marriage, and take responsibility for her. In short, I've already made up my mind."

Corinne looked at Aaron skeptically. "What if you let down Annie one day?"

Aaron did not want to make any vows. He had made too many empty promises in the past, which were meaningless and only tainted his feelings for Annie.

After some thought, he said, "Should that kind of situation really occur, you and Xante can find someone to castrate me!"

All three women in the living room-Corinne, Xante, and Annie-were speechless.

Sunny pulled Xante over to him and said to Aaron, "Hey! Don't include Xante in that kind of talk, okay? I don't want her to be connected with the lower body of another man!"

Xante was once again speechless.

Aaron glanced at Sunny, then looked at Corinne very seriously. "Boss, I'm really serious this time. Plus, I'm not stupid enough to mess with Annie since she's your niece-in-law! I'm pretty sure you'll stab me with a knife if I do that."

Corinne scoffed coldly. "Oh, please. You can drop the act. You wouldn't have gotten registered without telling me first if you're really scared of me!"