

Love Like You Never Loved Before Chapter 531-540

Posted by **chapter novel**, 49 Views, Released on July 13, 2022

As Julia promised before, she started planning my wedding with Christopher for me. She wanted to discuss it with Nathan but changed her mind when Isabelle returned. My mother was, after all, the more suitable person to be discussing my wedding with.

“What say I invite your mother for lunch? That way, we can get to know each other a little more. I mean, we’re going to be in-laws soon anyway. As for your father, I’m going to send someone to inform him. Whether he decides to come or not, that’s up to him. What do you think?” suggested Julia to me in all seriousness when I met her at the Lane residence.

In all honesty, I did not have much to say about the arrangements. Parents of the newlyweds were usually expected to be at the wedding, and mine were no exceptions. It was not like I could have a wedding without informing my parents.

“Thank you for the arrangements, Mrs. Lane. We’ll just do it your way. I’m fine with it.” My mother-in-law was so considerate that she had even considered my feelings and my relationship with the Tanners. I would be nitpicking if I were to find fault with her suggestions.

“You know what? Why don’t we make it a grandiose wedding? Go big or go home, right?” Christopher offered his own suggestion as he rubbed his chin.

“Can we not? I’d prefer to keep this just between our two families. We’ll have a good meal and enjoy each other’s company.” With a fork in my mouth, I shot down Christopher’s idea. “My mother is low-key, so I think she’d prefer our wedding to be a more private event.”

“Sure, that works too.”

Just like that, we made up our minds. I told Isabelle all about the wedding the next day, and she seemed fine with it. Still, she sighed when we were shopping, “You were just a little girl when I left you. Look at you now. All grown up and about to get married. The time has finally come for my daughter to leave me.”

“I’ll always be your little girl, even after I’m married.”

“We’ll see about that,” responded Isabelle with a soft smile.

With Isabelle and Christopher both at my side, I felt like the luckiest woman then. At least until I received a message from Benjamin, which reminded me that I had promised to send the man off at the airport. I knew it was something I had to tell Christopher, or else he would explode with jealousy.

“Hey, why don’t you go to the airport with me tomorrow?” I decided to try my luck after informing Christopher of my promise to Benjamin.

“And why the heck would I do that? I can forgive the man for being stupid, but he tried to hurt you. He should be thanking me for not giving him a good beating because that’s what he deserves.”

Christopher had not forgotten what Benjamin did to me at the Lane residence. Otherwise, Crystal’s trickery on Benjamin would not have been blown wide open. My husband always knew how to hold grudges, especially when it came to matters that involved me.

“You knew he only did it under Crystal’s influence. Besides, that’s in the past now. We’re just sending the man off. It’s no big deal.” Leaning against Christopher’s chest, I fiddled with the man’s bony fingers. After a moment of silence, I added, “If you don’t want me to go, I won’t.”

I knew better than to upset my husband over someone insignificant to me like Benjamin. After all, Benjamin was half the reason why Crystal could get to me.

“Just go and be done with it. I don’t want that man near you when this is over. Not even an inch!”

After getting up early in the morning the next day, I gave Isabelle a call. It took a while before the call was finally answered. From the other side, I could hear what sounded like smashing porcelain. “Mom? What’s going on over there?”

“It’s nothing. I just got a little careless. Give me a minute, and I’ll call you right back.” Isabelle put her phone down and wrapped her thin nightgown around her tighter. For a brief moment, the bruises hidden underneath them were revealed.

She stared at the man standing right in front of her as a cold gleam flashed in her eyes for a split second. In the next instant, she put on a pitiful expression

and begged in a shaky voice, "Please. I'll do whatever you say. Just calm down."

The man stepped forward and grabbed Isabelle violently by the hair before warning her coldly, "You better! Or else, you'll quickly learn the cost of disobeying me."

As Julia promised before, she started planning my wedding with Christopher for me. She wanted to discuss it with Nathan but changed her mind when Isabelle returned. My mother was, after all, the more suitable person to be discussing my wedding with. "What say I invite your mother for lunch? That way, we can get to know each other a little more. I mean, we're going to be in-laws soon anyway. As for your father, I'm going to send someone to inform him. Whether he decides to come or not, that's up to him. What do you think?" suggested Julia to me in all seriousness when I met her at the Lane residence. In all honesty, I did not have much to say about the arrangements. Parents of the newlyweds were usually expected to be at the wedding, and mine were no exceptions. It was not like I could have a wedding without informing my parents. "Thank you for the arrangements, Mrs. Lane. We'll just do it your way. I'm fine with it." My mother-in-law was so considerate that she had even considered my feelings and my relationship with the Tanners. I would be nitpicking if I were to find fault with her suggestions. "You know what? Why don't we make it a grandiose wedding? Go big or go home, right?" Christopher offered his own suggestion as he rubbed his chin. "Can we not? I'd prefer to keep this just between our two families. We'll have a good meal and enjoy each other's company." With a fork in my mouth, I shot down Christopher's idea. "My mother is low-key, so I think she'd prefer our wedding to be a more private event." "Sure, that works too." Just like that, we made up our minds. I told Isabelle all about the wedding the next day, and she seemed fine with it. Still, she sighed when we were shopping, "You were just a little girl when I left you. Look at you now. All grown up and about to get married. The time has finally come for my daughter to leave me." "I'll always be your little girl, even after I'm married." "We'll see about that," responded Isabelle with a soft smile. With Isabelle and Christopher both at my side, I felt like the luckiest woman then. At least until I received a message from Benjamin, which reminded me that I had promised to send the man off at the airport. I knew it was something I had to tell Christopher, or else he would explode with jealousy. "Hey, why don't you go to the airport with me tomorrow?" I decided to try my luck after informing Christopher of my promise to Benjamin. "And why the heck would I do that? I can forgive the man for being stupid, but he tried to hurt you. He should be thanking me for not giving him a good beating

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I looked at the phone, feeling doubtful. Mom sounded rather strange just now. It felt as if she was trying to hide something. I could not help but wonder if she had fought with Mark.

However, a while later, Mom called again, sounding more relaxed this time. She told me she was having breakfast just now and had accidentally spilled her oatmeal, almost scalding herself. She reassured me that she would go to the restaurant with Nathan later, and asked me not to worry.

That cleared up my doubts. I must have been overthinking. Christopher had been going through his wardrobe for a long time, unable to decide what to wear. "Eve, what do you think I should wear later? Should I wear something more formal? Or is it better to wear something casual that gives off a youthful vibe? It's my first time meeting your mom after all. I want to give her a good impression."

I almost laughed when I heard “youthful vibe.” Randomly, I chose something casual that was currently in trend and passed it to him. “Just this is good enough. You’re meeting my mom, not going on a date with me. Why do you need to look so handsome? Others might think that you’re going on a blind date.”

“Isn’t this equivalent to a blind date? It took us so much effort to settle my mom. I have to make sure that your mom doesn’t find fault with me; otherwise, who knows when we can finally get married!” Christopher held up the outfit which I had picked out for him in front of himself and said in dissatisfaction, “This feels too frivolous. I’m not wearing it.”

“My mom won’t think that way. Let’s go now. If not, we’ll miss the flight.” I tugged on Christopher’s hand, dragging him away from his pile of clothes.

When we arrived at the departure hall, I spotted Benjamin from afar. He was looking around and he seemed a little anxious. Pacing back and forth, he looked up intermittently. Looking disappointed, he gazed at the ground again.

It was my first time sending someone off at the airport. That could be because I did not have any close friends. I had specially dressed up for the occasion and brought along a present. Glancing at the time, I urged Christopher to hasten his steps, realizing that it was almost time for boarding.

When we trotted over, boarding procedures had already started. I saw Benjamin turning away, looking dejected. Immediately, I shouted, “Benjamin!”

He turned around at once and his eyes lit up when he saw me standing in the corridor, still trying to catch my breath. He jogged over toward me and said emotionally, “I thought you aren’t coming.”

“Why would I do that? I’ve already promised you that I’ll be here. This is your farewell present. Safe trip!” I said with a smile, passing him the gift.

“Thank you, Yvonne! I appreciate it!” Benjamin’s gaze was fixed on me as he looked at my white maxi skirt and the pink hair clips I was wearing. He seemed to be in a daze as if he was reminiscing.

“You’re welcome. Just hurry up and leave. Don’t look for my wife if there’s nothing urgent. She’s a very busy woman,” Christopher said, feeling displeased. He had stepped in between us and pulled me into his arms, blocking Benjamin’s view of me.

This guy must be jealous again. I shrugged helplessly and said apologetically, "Don't mind him. He's always like that."

Benjamin snapped out of his daze and let out a bitter laugh. A moment later, he seemed relieved as he said, "I don't have any right to mind. Last time, it was me who... Oh, forget it. Anyway, remember to send me an invitation if you get married. I'll definitely fly back to attend your wedding."

"I'm glad that you know you have no right to mind. I think you need to get your eyes checked! You should only come back after you're cured..."

"Ahem!" I coughed a few times, interrupting Christopher. What's wrong with this man today? Why is he provoking Benjamin? Does he really want to start a fight?

Benjamin was known for having a hot temper. In fact, his temper was even worse than Lyle's. However, he seemed so calm today. Looking at my fingers, which were interlocked with Christopher's, he had a serious expression as he said to Christopher, "Both of us are lucky enough to meet an angel. Since you have found her, I hope you'll always treat her well."

"Of course, I will. I will do that for the rest of my life." Christopher crossed his arms in front of his chest and lifted his chin. "All right, time for you to go. The plane is not going to wait for you."

I looked toward the departure gate. Indeed, the people who were queuing up a while ago were all gone. There were only two airport staff members remaining, and reminders for passengers to proceed to the boarding gate had been broadcasting.

"Yvonne, will you be happy?"

I looked at the phone, feeling doubtful. Mom sounded rather strange just now. It felt as if she was trying to hide something. I could not help but wonder if she had fought with Mark. However, a while later, Mom called again, sounding more relaxed this time. She told me she was having breakfast just now and had accidentally spilled her oatmeal, almost scalding herself. She reassured me that she would go to the restaurant with Nathan later, and asked me not to worry. That cleared up my doubts. I must have been overthinking. Christopher had been going through his wardrobe for a long time, unable to decide what to wear. "Eve, what do you think I should wear later? Should I wear something more formal? Or is it better to wear something casual that gives off a youthful

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When Benjamin arrived at the departure gate, he suddenly turned around and looked at me, as if he was waiting for my reply.

I nodded and gave him my brightest smile. "I am very happy now."

Benjamin froze for a second before replying with a smile. Finally, he disappeared into the crowd after passing through the departure gate.

I lingered at the spot for a while more, trying to catch a final glimpse of the man. Noticing that I wasn't leaving, Christopher tugged at my hand and pulled me toward the exit. "What are you looking at? He's just a fool who does whatever he likes and is now leaving the country after all is lost. How close are the two of you anyway?"

"Why are you acting so harsh today?" I sighed.

"Hmph! So what if he's your first love? Is he sure if his first love is you or Crystal?" Christopher was unrelenting. "If that Wilson guy did really humiliate you then, I would have killed him and Benjamin as well."

"Who knows, maybe you've already dealt with that Wilson guy using your own ways." I was aware that ever since then, that man's family had been having financial difficulties and not long after, they left Avenport altogether. "Let's hurry. I still have to take Mom to the restaurant. Isn't that more important? Let's not talk about such miscellaneous stuff now."

"Yup, these are just miscellaneous stuff!" Christopher smiled when he heard that. I wasn't sure what else he had in mind, but I noticed that he was grinning wildly.

I had a really bad feeling as I looked at his expression. Whenever he had that look on his face, it would be because he had done something bad. I could not help but ask, "Is there something I should know?"

"Oh, nothing much. I just swapped the gift you prepared for Benjamin."

"What did you swap it with?"

"A note, warning him not to have any funny ideas on my wife, and that he should know his place."

"You're kidding me!" I gaped in disbelief. Just as I turned around, I saw a plane ascending into the air and disappearing into the clouds.

What else could I say? Like a grown kid, Christopher behaved willfully sometimes, doing anything he could to make sure I was happy. He would also not hesitate to deal with anyone who took advantage of me. I had to admit that he could appear to be a little petty at times, but I still could not help feeling blissful.

At five o'clock in the afternoon, I stood outside the hotel's entrance while glancing at my watch from time to time. Finally, I spotted Nathan's car stopping in front of the entrance. Immediately, I went up and called out excitedly, "Mom?"

Isabelle got out of the car, followed by Nathan. However, he was looking rather awkward. Not letting it bother me, I greeted him placidly, "Hi, Dad!"

Nathan briefly acknowledged my greeting without saying much. He looked a little older than the last time I saw him. I knew that what Crystal had done had caused a huge blow to the Tanners. Otherwise, my dad would not have to do so much. Recently, it seemed like the Tanner family had gotten into some trouble again, but I was not very sure. It was possible that Mom was involved in it as well, but I had absolutely no intention of interfering.

I should leave it to my parents to settle the issues between them themselves.

"Nice to meet you, Mrs. Goldstein. My dad is already waiting upstairs. Please follow us," Christopher greeted my mom respectfully as he held my head and gestured with his other hand.

“I’ll just call you Chris if that’s all right. You look like a fine young man!” Isabelle complimented.

That was the best five-star hotel in Avenport and the interior of the hotel was lavishly renovated. We headed toward the private room which we have reserved in advance. When Julia saw us entering the room, she stood up with Gordon and said enthusiastically, “You must be Yvonne’s parents. Since it’s our first meeting, let’s—”

“Isabelle?” Before the woman could finish her sentence, her expression changed drastically after scrutinizing my mom. With a change in the tone of her voice, she said, “It’s you? You’re Yvonne’s mother?”

“Julia! You’re Chris’ mother! How is this even possible?”

Isabelle’s expression darkened as well, the smile on her face completely gone. Suddenly, she pulled me away from Christopher and raised her voice as she yelled in agitation, “Eve, I won’t allow you to be with Christopher. This woman is the one who caused your Uncle Robert’s death. She’s our enemy. You can’t be with our enemy’s son.”

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The smile on my face froze instantly. I had never expected that the first meeting between our parents would turn out that way. Not only did Mom and Julia know each other, but there was also even such history between them. A strong sense of foreboding nagged at me as it suddenly dawned on me that there was still a long way ahead for Christopher and me.

I forced a smile and asked in a trembling voice, “Mom, what... what did you just say? Could there be a misunderstanding?”

Completely losing her composure, Isabelle stared at Julia coldly, with deep resentment clearly shown in her eyes. “Julia, so you’ve married into the Lane family, huh? Hah! I can’t believe a vicious woman like you would end up marrying so well. Do you really think that the past is the past and no one will remember it?” she yelled in her high-pitched voice; her words were as sharp as knives.

Isabelle had changed into a completely different person from a while back, coming across as prickly and cold. She squeezed my hand tightly and said through gritted teeth, “How could you still get married and have children without even feeling an ounce of guilt after killing my brother? Haven’t you had any nightmares in all these years? Do you not feel bad at all? Even if you managed to deceive everyone, it doesn’t mean that you’re innocent. Do you really think you can get away forever after taking someone’s life?”

Feeling as if she was hit by a brick, Julia staggered a few steps backward after being bombarded with accusations from Isabelle. The color drained from her face as she looked at me in disbelief. “What are the odds that you’re Isabelle’s daughter and that man’s niece? I can’t believe this is happening.”

“You mean you can’t believe that you killed my brother because of your selfish desire?” Isabelle bellowed.

“Mom!” I tugged at her sleeve gently. My mind went blank. That was definitely not the harmonious dinner I had imagined us having earlier on. What’s going on? Uncle Robert passed away before I was born. All I knew was that the Anderson family used to be a very powerful and prominent family.

Is Julia really the one who caused Uncle Robert’s death?

“Eve, my dear, there’s no way you can be together with the son of our enemy,” Isabelle said, pointing at Julia. She then continued in a harsh tone,

“This woman caused the downfall of the Anderson family. She’s a murderer! There’s no future between you and her son. Let’s go!”

“No, Mom! What’s going on?” I screamed as I tried to shake her hand away. I did not want to leave. I wanted to stay with Christopher. We were going to get married.

“I’ll tell you about it when we get back. Anyway, I will never agree with the two of you getting married. I don’t care who you marry, as long as it is not Julia’s son.” Isabelle raised her head aggressively, her expression twisted with hatred and sorrow.

“Wait!” Christopher caught up with Isabelle and pulled me toward him. Turning to look at Julia, he asked anxiously, “Mom, it’s a misunderstanding, isn’t it? Tell me!”

Being questioned by her son, Julia staggered and looked like she was about to fall. Taking a deep breath, she leaned on Gordon for support and shook her head. She looked at me with complicated emotions in her eyes and said, “If I knew you were Isabelle’s daughter, I wouldn’t have agreed to you dating Chris. I didn’t know that Isabelle is Nathan’s ex-wife.”

“Hah! Are you feeling guilty now? You should be. I remember you being much more arrogant and overbearing in your younger days, not showing respect to anyone else,” Isabelle sneered.

“Mom!” Christopher was starting to panic. “Could you quickly clarify? There has to be some misunderstanding, right?”

“Misunderstanding?” Julia looked at me before turning to Isabelle. Looking downward for a moment, she then looked back up with tears glistening in her eyes. “There’s no misunderstanding. Isabelle is right. I was the one who killed Robert. I was the last person who saw him before he was found dead in Centurion Tower.”

“Is this real?” I was momentarily stunned and too shocked to react. It felt like a joke that Christopher and I had become enemies.

“Mom!” I looked at Isabelle, feeling lost. I was hoping that she would tell me they were just playing a prank on us.

“Let’s go!” Isabelle dragged me along as we left the private room. I followed her soullessly. I could not imagine any possibility of a future between Christopher and me, given such circumstances.

The smile on my face froze instantly. I had never expected that the first meeting between our parents would turn out that way. Not only did Mom and Julia know each other, but there was also even such history between them. A strong sense of foreboding nagged at me as it suddenly dawned on me that there was still a long way ahead for Christopher and me. I forced a smile and asked in a trembling voice, “Mom, what... what did you just say? Could there be a misunderstanding?” Completely losing her composure, Isabelle stared at Julia coldly, with deep resentment clearly shown in her eyes. “Julia, so you've married into the Lane family, huh? Hah! I can't believe a vicious woman like you would end up marrying so well. Do you really think that the past is the past and no one will remember it?” she yelled in her high-pitched voice; her words were as sharp as knives. Isabelle had changed into a completely different person from a while back, coming across as prickly and cold. She squeezed my hand tightly and said through gritted teeth, “How could you still get married and have children without even feeling an ounce of guilt after killing my brother? Haven't you had any nightmares in all these years? Do you not feel bad at all? Even if you managed to deceive everyone, it doesn't mean that you're innocent. Do you really think you can get away forever after taking someone's life?” Feeling as if she was hit by a brick, Julia staggered a few steps backward after being bombarded with accusations from Isabelle. The color drained from her face as she looked at me in disbelief. “What are the odds that you're Isabelle's daughter and that man's niece? I can't believe this is happening.” “You mean you can't believe that you killed my brother because of your selfish desire?” Isabelle bellowed. “Mom!” I tugged at her sleeve gently. My mind went blank. That was definitely not the harmonious dinner I had imagined us having earlier on. What's going on? Uncle Robert passed away before I was born. All I knew was that the Anderson family used to be a very powerful and prominent family. Is Julia really the one who caused Uncle Robert's death? “Eve, my dear, there's no way you can be together with the son of our enemy,” Isabelle said, pointing at Julia. She then continued in a harsh tone, “This woman caused the downfall of the Anderson family. She's a murderer! There's no future between you and her son. Let's go!” “No, Mom! What's going on?” I screamed as I tried to shake her hand away. I did not want to leave. I wanted to stay with Christopher. We were going to get married. “I'll tell you about it when we get back. Anyway, I will never agree with the two of you getting married. I don't care who you marry, as long as it is not Julia's son.” Isabelle raised her head aggressively, her expression twisted

with hatred and sorrow. "Wait!" Christopher caught up with Isabelle and pulled me toward him. Turning to look at Julia, he asked anxiously, "Mom, it's a misunderstanding, isn't it? Tell me!" Being questioned by her son, Julia staggered and looked like she was about to fall. Taking a deep breath, she leaned on Gordon for support and shook her head. She looked at me with complicated emotions in her eyes and said, "If I knew you were Isabelle's daughter, I wouldn't have agreed to you dating Chris. I didn't know that Isabelle is Nathan's ex-wife." "Hah! Are you feeling guilty now? You should be. I remember you being much more arrogant and overbearing in your younger days, not showing respect to anyone else," Isabelle sneered. "Mom!" Christopher was starting to panic. "Could you quickly clarify? There has to be some misunderstanding, right?" "Misunderstanding?" Julia looked at me before turning to Isabelle. Looking downward for a moment, she then looked back up with tears glistening in her eyes. "There's no misunderstanding. Isabelle is right. I was the one who killed Robert. I was the last person who saw him before he was found dead in Centurion Tower." "Is this real?" I was momentarily stunned and too shocked to react. It felt like a joke that Christopher and I had become enemies. "Mom!" I looked at Isabelle, feeling lost. I was hoping that she would tell me they were just playing a prank on us. "Let's go!" Isabelle dragged me along as we left the private room. I followed her soullessly. I could not imagine any possibility of a future between Christopher and me, given such circumstances.

Posted by **chapter novel**, ? Views, Released on July 13, 2022

Am I really unworthy of happiness? Every time I think I'm finally getting the happiness I deserve, God always extinguishes my hopes.

I was in a trance for so long until the car came to a sudden halt. I was flung forward by inertia.

"Eve! Are you all right?" As Isabelle helped me back to my seat, she yelled at the driver, "Is this how you drive?"

"I'm so sorry, Mrs. Goldstein. I had to avoid a car that was running the red light," the driver apologized in fear.

"Are you hurt, Eve? Let me have a look." Isabelle cupped my cheeks and scanned my face for injuries. Upon noticing the bump on my forehead, she ordered the driver to drive us to the hospital.

I recovered from my daze and grabbed Isabelle's hand anxiously. "Mom, what went wrong? Why are Chris and I enemies now? I can't lose him, Mom. I can't!"

Isabelle's expression darkened. Feeling dejected, she leaned backward. Her gaze started to turn cold, but she tried to keep her tone neutral when she saw how devastated I was. "Don't blame me for being heartless, Eve. I have no objection to you marrying any man in this world. I will do anything to fulfill your wish, even if he does not want to marry you. But why does it have to be Christopher?"

"Why Christopher? I'm not afraid in the slightest even in the face of death as long as I can be with him. Why can't I be happy just this time, Mom?" Unable to restrain my emotions any longer, I burst into tears.

Tears streamed down Isabelle's face too. Not long after, she asked the driver to pull over. After lighting up a cigarette that she took out from her bag, Isabelle pressed it to her lips and began, "Julia and I used to be good friends years ago. You may not know this, but our family used to be one of the wealthiest. If not for what happened on that fateful day, we'll still be doing fine."

Dabbing my eyes with a handkerchief, she continued, "Your Uncle Robert was a genius. He was in charge of running the family business, and he certainly did an excellent job. If not for his passing, the Anderson family and the Goldstein family could have been equals. Alas, Julia murdered him."

She pointed at a tall building outside the car window. "That's Centurion Tower, a twenty-year-old building and the place where your uncle fell to his death. I know I don't have the right to ask you for anything since I have never taken care of you all these years, but this is an exception. I can never agree to you and Christopher's marriage."

The car was soon full of the cigarette's burned smell. "You can hate me all you want, but I will never agree to this marriage. I will not allow your uncle's death to turn into a joke."

Light rays from the setting sun cast themselves on the old building before me. I saw several construction workers preparing to demolish the dilapidated building.

Is Julia behind my uncle's death at this building?

“What should I do, Mom?” I muttered while stumbling out of the car. I could hear Isabelle’s voice behind me vaguely, but I didn’t respond because right then I no longer had a destination in my life. All I could do was stumble forward aimlessly.

For a moment, the footsteps behind me sounded familiar. When I turned around, Christopher was just standing a few feet away from me. His gaze was full of worry, his thin lips were pursed, and his brows were knitted together with sorrow.

“Chris!” Tears rolled down my cheeks again, but this time I was smiling. Somehow, I could always see him whenever I turned around.

It then hit me that Christopher was such an important part of my life that I could afford to lose everything except for him. I might not know what happened in the past, but my experiences showed me that Christopher was more important to me than I was to myself.

I ran into his arms and sobbed, “What should I do, Chris? Why do these kinds of things keep happening to me? Why can’t we be together happily ever after?”

Am I really unworthy of happiness? Every time I think I'm finally getting the happiness I deserve, God always extinguishes my hopes. I was in a trance for so long until the car came to a sudden halt. I was flung forward by inertia. “Eve! Are you all right?” As Isabelle helped me back to my seat, she yelled at the driver, “Is this how you drive?” “I’m so sorry, Mrs. Goldstein. I had to avoid a car that was running the red light,” the driver apologized in fear. “Are you hurt, Eve? Let me have a look.” Isabelle cupped my cheeks and scanned my face for injuries. Upon noticing the bump on my forehead, she ordered the driver to drive us to the hospital. I recovered from my daze and grabbed Isabelle’s hand anxiously. “Mom, what went wrong? Why are Chris and I enemies now? I can’t lose him, Mom. I can’t!” Isabelle’s expression darkened. Feeling dejected, she leaned backward. Her gaze started to turn cold, but she tried to keep her tone neutral when she saw how devastated I was. “Don’t blame me for being heartless, Eve. I have no objection to you marrying any man in this world. I will do anything to fulfill your wish, even if he does not want to marry you. But why does it have to be Christopher?” “Why Christopher? I’m not afraid in the slightest even in the face of death as long as I can be with him. Why can’t I be happy just this time, Mom?” Unable to restrain my emotions any longer, I burst into tears. Tears streamed down Isabelle’s face too. Not long after, she asked the driver to pull over. After

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"This is so twisted! You must have been cursed by someone wicked to have all these bad things happening to you, Yvonne. Oh, God. All my life I've known so many people, yet all of their miseries can't even add up to yours."

Frustrated, Sabrina paced in front of me with her child in her arms. At the sight of me keeping quiet and staring blankly into the air, she sighed and handed her son to me. "Hold your godson for me. Since there's no way of reversing

what happened, we should find a way to solve it rather than give up, don't you think so?"

I held the baby in my arms and rocked him gently. "It was only yesterday when Chris and I were discussing which wedding gown I should wear, Sabby. Just one day, and we are separated by our families' feud."

"You're definitely the unluckiest person in the world. I thought Christopher decided that celebrating April's Fool early was a good idea when he called me this morning." Sabrina clutched her head. "All of this started from the moment your mother came back! If I knew this was going to happen, I would have done anything to prevent her from returning."

Uncertain of what to say, I merely stared at Sabrina.

"Relax. I'm just joking." Realizing that she might have gone overboard, she laughed dryly.

"What should I do? I can never be with another man other than Chris. But how do I get my mom to agree to our marriage?" I could only turn to Sabrina for help as I was running out of ideas.

"I'll need time to think of something. This is no easy feat. I may have a lot of ideas but I'm just an ordinary person."

Sabrina continued pacing anxiously. After a while, she rushed to my side and whispered, "How about we give this a rest? Not having a wedding ceremony can't change the fact that you are already married to Christopher. Wait till you have your first child! Mrs. Goldstein will be so happy to have a grandchild that she will agree to your marriage."

With a hand to my head, I leaned limply on the sofa. Sabrina scratched her head and sighed.

Nothing much happened in Avenport for the past two days, including at the Goldstein residence. The Tanners should be the only ones having a problem. Nathan saw me at the hotel the other day, but he didn't say anything to me. He was gone by the time we left. I had no idea what Mom could have told him that made him so grumpy that day. I hadn't heard a word from him since then.

The latest economic news was the acquisition of a company originally under the Tanners due to bankruptcy. As I read the news, the purpose of Isabelle's

return suddenly became clearer to me. Hidden behind her gentle smiles was the promise of revenge against those who had hurt her before.

All of a sudden, she seemed so distant from the mother I thought I knew.

Then, Sharon came to my mind. She must have known something about the Andersons, given that she knew my mom a long time ago. Maybe I could ask her what happened at that time and find a way out of this mess. Sabrina was right. I should not give up easily without trying.

Sharon's mansion was refurbished. The flowers that I planted for her were gone and replaced by other flowers, making the courtyard lifeless. Since Sharon didn't like her daughter-in-law Wendy much, they were no longer staying together. In the end, she was the only one left in the mansion. All she could do was gaze at the flowers in her wheelchair alone.

I walked over to her and handed the pair of scissors on the table to her. Sharon looked up. Unsurprised, she started tending to the flowers while saying, "I met your mom two days ago, and now here you are. I'll get someone to pass you the shares."

"I'm not here for that!" Money was never of that importance to me. I had refused it the last time, and it made no difference for me to do it again.

"Why else are you here if not for the shares?" Sharon widened her eyes. After all, no one could resist the temptation of getting rich, and I own the shares rightfully.

"Could you tell me about the Andersons?"

"This is so twisted! You must have been cursed by someone wicked to have all these bad things happening to you, Yvonne. Oh, God. All my life I've known so many people, yet all of their miseries can't even add up to yours."

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“The Andersons!” Sharon exclaimed, not exactly knowing where to start with. “You must have encountered some problems related to the family to ask me that. I don’t know much about them now, but back in my days, the Andersons are one of the most prominent families in Avenport. Their power is much stronger than the Smiths and the Tanners, and that can be proven by the fact that your dad was able to make a name out of their support.”

I had never heard of this before. All I knew was that my grandparents died in an accident before I could meet them. I never knew that the Andersons were so powerful.

“Your Uncle Robert was a very talented young man. I saw him twice at parties and we had a collaboration once. Alas, his parents passed away in an accident and his investments went wrong. I guess he couldn’t take it anymore and committed suicide.”

“Did Uncle Robert really jump from Centurion Tower?” That must be the end of the Andersons’ glory after Uncle Robert’s death.

“Your mom must have already told you. It’s true. Your mom had such a hard time dealing with the loss of family and your father’s infidelity that I wasn’t surprised at all when she finally left him for good. Your mom may seem gentle and forgiving, but deep down she is a tough person who will not endure such humiliation.”

Listening to what Sharon said, my heart sank. Despite being angry with my mother, I knew perfectly well that she was in a difficult spot. Even Sharon, who was not part of our family, could tell.

However, at the thought of me and Christopher’s bleak future, I couldn’t help feeling sad.

A Porsche stopped at the gate and Lyle came down from the car. When he noticed me standing beside Sharon, he paused for a brief moment before resuming his pace. Handing some documents to Sharon, he said, “I’ve brought these as requested. All Yvonne has to do is sign on them.”

“Since Eve is here, how about we have dinner together?” As Sharon turned around and asked Molly to prepare food, I hurriedly declined, “It’s okay. I still have things to settle.”

“All right then.” She handed the documents to me. “This is what your mom wants. Make sure to give it to her. You should give Eve a lift home, Lyle.”

I hadn’t seen Lyle in a while. He seemed to have changed and become much quieter. Other than one sentence, he didn’t say anything else on the way back.

As the car headed toward my house, I spoke. “Please drive me to the Goldstein residence.”

“Okay.” Lyle made a U-turn and continued driving. After a moment, he blurted, “I’m sorry for what happened last time. I was drunk.”

It took me a while to realize that he was referring to what happened at the golf course. I had almost forgotten about it.

“I know,” I replied shortly.

“Are you and Christopher preparing for the wedding soon? Your mom told my grandma that the shares will be your dowry.” Lyle didn’t look back because he was concentrating on the road, yet I could sense his grim tone.

After Christopher revealed our relationship to be with me, everyone thought we were eventually going to have a grand wedding ceremony. With all the blessings and envies, I thought I was going to marry him too. Who knew that the wedding would not happen after all we had been through? Lost in my own thoughts, I agreed with Lyle evasively.

All of a sudden, I saw my mom standing at the entrance of a café on the opposite road. She was talking to a man with a smile on her face, and the man was holding her hand affectionately.

“Stop the car!” I yelled.

Startled, Lyle stepped on the brakes and asked, “What happened?”

Ignoring him, I dashed out of the car and followed my mom. I still could not believe my eyes, but I recognized the man beside her as Lucas’ father. Why are they so close together? Isn’t she with Mark?

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I followed behind Mom carefully. Watching as they got into the car, I stopped a taxi and asked the driver to follow behind them. For some reason, Mom entered a hotel with Lucas' father and stayed inside for quite a long time.

I decided to take a seat in the café opposite the hotel. My face gradually turned pale as I stared at the luxury-looking door of the hotel. What's the relationship between Mom and Lucas' father?

As I pondered, more and more questions appeared in my mind. I reached out a hand to hold my head as I felt that my brain was going to explode. Three hours later, Mom finally walked out of the hotel.

This time, Lucas' father did not follow beside her. She stood at the hotel entrance as she took out her phone to make a call. A moment later, a car pulled over beside her. As soon as she got into the car, the car drove away like a flash of lightning.

Before the driver stepped on the gas, a man lowered the car window of the backseat. I saw Mark through the café window and my heart skipped a beat upon seeing the gloomy expression on his face. I don't understand. What has she been doing over the past few years? What secrets is she hiding?

I took some time to get myself mentally prepared before I walked up to the entrance of the Goldstein residence. Standing in front of the ancient-looking mansion, I could not help but feel as though I had traveled back to Avenport twenty years ago. I could see tall, gigantic trees behind the roofs. As I walked closer, I saw an antique-style mansion that smelled like decayed woods.

After greeting the security guards at the entrance, they brought me into the residence. I looked around in the living room and sat patiently on the couch. I remembered seeing Mom just now when I was still outside, so I wondered where she went as I came in.

Suddenly, a sense of curiosity surged within me. I was dying to know how Mom's place looked like, so I continued walking on the path in the backyard. As soon as I reached another house, an argument echoed from the side. "Dad, what do you mean by transferring all the shares to Uncle Mark? What about us? We've been giving all of our efforts to the family over the years, and he's going to take over the last things we have."

"Lucas, that's enough! All of these indeed belong to your uncle. I was only managing for him back then. We'll move out of here tomorrow after transferring the shares to them. Your uncle can only feel relieved with that."

"No, he'll only feel relieved after I'm dead," Lucas responded furiously.

"Shh! Keep it down! Don't you understand the current situation in our family?"

"I'm already suffering because of him! Will that be any different from death?"

I blinked my eyes slowly as I heard everything from outside. I was very familiar with Lucas' voice. When we first met each other, I had asked something about his health. He told me that accidents happened more frequently in wealthy families. It turns out that someone has set up the accident on purpose!

Lucas roared, "Dad, he has pinned you down for so many years. Do you not hold any grudge toward him? Back then, you knew he was the one who caused my accident, but you pretended to act like a fool! He gave you an excuse that he was recuperating overseas and asked you to take over his company. It seemed that he had trusted you a lot. In fact, he was only taking all your power away. You became a doll who could not do anything even though you owned part of the shares for the company. Look at you. You don't even dare to say anything. You don't think for yourself, but what about me? Do you plan to wait for me to die first before you start fighting for your right?"

"Lucas, your Uncle Mark is a capable man. He should be the one to manage the company. I beg you to stop talking about it. Our relationship will be ruined if he hears that."

"That's right. He asked Isabelle to test you just now as he wanted to know if you would fight back. Do you think I can't see what he's doing? Dad, you have a perfect opportunity, but you let it slip away like that. Do you want to see me suffer before you learn your lesson?"

Suddenly, I realized I had stumbled across some deadly secrets. Feeling anxious, I wanted to leave the house as soon as possible. However, Lucas walked out of the door with a darkened expression before I managed to turn around. He froze for a moment, but his vicious look turned calm gradually. "What are you doing here?"

I followed behind Mom carefully. Watching as they got into the car, I stopped a taxi and asked the driver to follow behind them. For some reason, Mom entered a hotel with Lucas' father and stayed inside for quite a long time. I decided to take a seat in the café opposite the hotel. My face gradually turned pale as I stared at the luxury-looking door of the hotel. What's the relationship between Mom and Lucas' father? As I pondered, more and more questions appeared in my mind. I reached out a hand to hold my head as I felt that my brain was going to explode. Three hours later, Mom finally walked out of the hotel. This time, Lucas' father did not follow beside her. She stood at the hotel entrance as she took out her phone to make a call. A moment later, a car pulled over beside her. As soon as she got into the car, the car drove away like a flash of lightning. Before the driver stepped on the gas, a man lowered the car window of the backseat. I saw Mark through the café window and my heart skipped a beat upon seeing the gloomy expression on his face. I don't understand. What has she been doing over the past few years? What secrets is she hiding? I took some time to get myself mentally prepared before I walked up to the entrance of the Goldstein residence. Standing in front of the ancient-looking mansion, I could not help but feel as though I had traveled back to Avenport twenty years ago. I could see tall, gigantic trees behind the roofs. As I walked closer, I saw an antique-style mansion that smelled like decayed woods. After greeting the security guards at the entrance, they brought me into the residence. I looked around in the living room and sat patiently on the couch. I remembered seeing Mom just now when I was still outside, so I wondered where she went as I came in. Suddenly, a sense of curiosity surged within me. I was dying to know how Mom's place looked like, so I continued walking on the path in the backyard. As soon as I reached another house, an argument echoed from the side. "Dad, what do you mean by transferring all the shares to Uncle Mark? What about us? We've been giving all of our efforts to the family over the years, and he's going to take over the last things we have." "Lucas, that's enough! All of these indeed belong to your uncle. I was only managing for him back then. We'll move out of here tomorrow after transferring the shares to them. Your uncle can only feel relieved with that." "No, he'll only feel relieved after I'm dead," Lucas responded furiously. "Shh! Keep it down! Don't you understand the current situation in our family?" "I'm already suffering because of him! Will that be any

different from death?" I blinked my eyes slowly as I heard everything from outside. I was very familiar with Lucas' voice. When we first met each other, I had asked something about his health. He told me that accidents happened more frequently in wealthy families. It turns out that someone has set up the accident on purpose! Lucas roared, "Dad, he has pinned you down for so many years. Do you not hold any grudge toward him? Back then, you knew he was the one who caused my accident, but you pretended to act like a fool! He gave you an excuse that he was recuperating overseas and asked you to take over his company. It seemed that he had trusted you a lot. In fact, he was only taking all your power away. You became a doll who could not do anything even though you owned part of the shares for the company. Look at you. You don't even dare to say anything. You don't think for yourself, but what about me? Do you plan to wait for me to die first before you start fighting for your right?" "Lucas, your Uncle Mark is a capable man. He should be the one to manage the company. I beg you to stop talking about it. Our relationship will be ruined if he hears that." "That's right. He asked Isabelle to test you just now as he wanted to know if you would fight back. Do you think I can't see what he's doing? Dad, you have a perfect opportunity, but you let it slip away like that. Do you want to see me suffer before you learn your lesson?" Suddenly, I realized I had stumbled across some deadly secrets. Feeling anxious, I wanted to leave the house as soon as possible. However, Lucas walked out of the door with a darkened expression before I managed to turn around. He froze for a moment, but his vicious look turned calm gradually. "What are you doing here?"

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"I'm here to look for my mom!" I replied, my gaze shifting unintentionally. I had known Lucas for quite some time, and I had always seen him as a cheerful gentleman. Therefore, I did not expect him to have such an aggressive side. However, I was even more shocked to know that Mark was the person who made him who he was today.

It was natural for feuds to happen frequently in wealthy families. Perhaps Christopher's family was the only one that was harmonious.

"H-How long have you been standing here?" Lucas lowered his voice.

"You came out when I just arrived. What's the matter?" I flashed an innocent smile. However, my palms were sweating at that moment. I wonder what kind of person my mom's current husband is. Is Mom going to feel happy together with him?

Lucas used to help me before, so I could not help but jump to my own conclusions straightaway. Subconsciously, I began to despise Mark.

“Nothing. It seems like Aunt Isabelle is not home right now. How about you try giving her a call?” A bright, heartwarming smile appeared on Lucas’ face.

“Ahem!” Suddenly, a coughing sound came from the yard. Lucas’ father walked out of the house by supporting himself against the wall. He shot me a glance, and I immediately sensed the despicable glint in his old eyes. I was terrified by his sharp gaze. It was as if he had caught me lying. He must’ve known that I have been standing here since a long time ago.

“You’re right. I came here too suddenly that I didn’t expect my mom to not be home. Haha! Let me give her a call.” I found an excuse to get away from the backyard. Then, I ran all the way to the front courtyard nervously. My heart raced as if it was going to leap out of my throat.

I had only seen Lucas’ father once during Lyle and Crystal’s wedding. Moreover, I only got to see his side profile that day. But then, I did not expect him to look that scary. His gaze was dark and vicious.

Suddenly, a figure appeared in front of me when I was panting heavily. “Why are you running so fast? Are you being chased by some bad guys?”

“Ahh!” I jumped in shock upon seeing a face in front of me. I panicked and stumbled a few steps backward. There was a big patch of soft grass underneath my feet. I lost my balance and fell to the ground.

“Eve, what are you doing? Why do you look so flustered?” Isabelle frowned as she walked over to help me up.

My heart was still beating fast. I shook my head vigorously as I stared at Mark and Isabelle, who appeared in front of me out of the blue.

Mark looked at me affectionately. He looked exactly like a loving elderly. I could not believe that he was the person Lucas had said just now.

“I was looking at the flowers in the backyard when a caterpillar dropped on my arm. I got terrified. Mom, you know me. I’m scared of those types of insects.” I took a deep breath and calmed myself down after some time.

“Well, since you’re here, come join us for dinner. Belle misses you a lot. We even talked about you this morning.” Mark chuckled softly, his arms wrapping around Isabelle’s waist. It seemed like he was seeing me as his favorite kid.

“Great idea! I’ll inform the kitchen about it.” Isabelle flashed a smile.

In fact, I did not eat much later on that night as I could not relax at the dining table. The dining room was spacious, but there were only three of us. Lucas and his father did not appear during dinner time. That’s weird. A family should have dinner together.

Moreover, the servants’ behavior was even weirder. They did everything cautiously, trembling in fear. There was also one of them who nearly broke into tears after breaking a bowl. She rushed forward to Mark and apologized again and again.

Mom didn’t bother with what was happening. However, she did not say much other than ask me to eat more. The atmosphere in the dining room was creepy. It was so tense that I lost my appetite.

“Why are you eating so little? Is the food not to your liking?” Mark asked me.

“No. I ate some snacks before I came, so I’m not hungry now.” I shook my head and changed the topic. “Where’s Mr. Lucas? Is he not coming for dinner? I saw him in the garden just now.”

“Lucas’ unwell. He prefers a quieter environment, so he usually has dinner with his father in the backyard.” I could not sense any impatience from his tone. Suddenly, he raised a brow and asked, “Are you close with Lucas?”

“I’m here to look for my mom!” I replied, my gaze shifting unintentionally. I had known Lucas for quite some time, and I had always seen him as a cheerful gentleman. Therefore, I did not expect him to have such an aggressive side. However, I was even more shocked to know that Mark was the person who made him who he was today. It was natural for feuds to happen frequently in wealthy families. Perhaps Christopher’s family was the only one that was harmonious. “H-How long have you been standing here?” Lucas lowered his voice. “You came out when I just arrived. What’s the matter?” I flashed an innocent smile. However, my palms were sweating at that moment. I wonder what kind of person my mom’s current husband is. Is Mom going to feel happy together with him? Lucas used to help me before, so I could not help but jump to my own conclusions straightaway. Subconsciously, I began to despise

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"We've met at a party previously." I let out a silly grin.

"Feel free to come often when you have time. The Goldstein residence is huge, but it's quiet. There are not many people around. Oh right, you learned to draw, right? I heard you have some accomplishments. I can provide funds to invite some famous artists, and we can organize a seminar as well as an art exhibition. What do you think? Remington Fowler, the most well-known young artist in Hawen, is now in the limelight. People call him the most gifted artist. I'll invite him to support you."

Mark cared about me a lot. He was like a loving father. However, I felt extremely awkward. Fleynia was renowned for its artists. Many world-famous artists were born there. I knew Remington had represented Hawen to carry out an art seminar in Fleynia recently. As for me, I was only relatively well known. I was not good enough to attend the seminar.

"Thank you, Mr. Goldstein, for your kind intentions. But I need to sharpen my skills a little more and I shouldn't be too hasty in this matter."

That night, Mark invited me to stay overnight at the Goldstein residence. I planned to reject his offer, but he was too hospitable. I noticed Mom's expression as well. It was as if she did not want me to stay.

"Mom, Sharon wanted me to pass this document to you." I passed the document Lyle gave me to Isabelle.

Isabelle took the document, skimmed through it, and noticed my missing signature. She gave it back to me and said, "Seems like she fulfilled what I requested. This is for you. Just add your signature to it and keep it properly. I don't need this."

"I don't need this for now too." I pushed the documents away and saw that she was rolling up her sleeves to apply lotion on her hands. Noticing the bruises on her arm, I frowned and asked, "What happened to your hand?"

When Isabelle realized she had accidentally revealed the injury on her wrist, she subtly put down her sleeve and said indifferently, “I accidentally scratched my hand on a tree trunk while enjoying the flowers yesterday. Eve, how about you move in with me?”

My heart skipped a beat, and I rejected the invitation immediately. “I don’t think that’s a good idea, Mom. It’s not appropriate for me to do so.”

Isabelle’s face darkened, and she said coldly, “Is it because you are reluctant to leave Julia’s son? There are millions of men in the world. Why must you be with him?”

“Mom, I’m not sure what happened last time, but it has been a tough journey for both Christopher and me to be together until today. Can we please leave the past behind?”

“No way!” Isabelle pounded the table with her hand. “Julia killed my brother, your Uncle Robert. How can you say that? You must be out of your mind.”

“But Mom, I—” I tried to explain, but I did not know where to start. It involved a life. Why did I only find out about it now? It’s too late for me to forget about Christopher.

“No buts. Nothing can change my mind. I can promise any unreasonable and stubborn requests of yours, except this. I won’t give in to this.” Isabelle sounded assertive. When she saw my gloomy expression, she suppressed her anger and said coldly, “I know you can’t accept this in the meantime. I will give you some time. Eve, if you still treat me as your mother, you need to cut all ties with Christopher.”

“Mom, why must you force me?” I covered my mouth with my hand to prevent myself from crying.

“I’m not forcing you. I’m only stating a fact.” Isabelle stood up expressionlessly. “I know it’s been a tough few years for you. But unless you no longer acknowledge me as your mother, you must stop keeping in touch with Christopher.”

I stood rooted to the ground. Our conversation fell through yet again.

Isabelle sighed deeply and turned around to get my bed ready for me. We had no more intention of speaking to each other. After tidying everything, she took

out a box and passed it to me. Ignoring my dejected expression, she said in a low voice, "I thought this dress would look good on you when I saw it today, so I bought it for you. Give it a try and see if it's suitable."

"We've met at a party previously." I let out a silly grin. "Feel free to come often when you have time. The Goldstein residence is huge, but it's quiet. There are not many people around. Oh right, you learned to draw, right? I heard you have some accomplishments. I can provide funds to invite some famous artists, and we can organize a seminar as well as an art exhibition. What do you think? Remington Fowler, the most well-known young artist in Hawen, is now in the limelight. People call him the most gifted artist. I'll invite him to support you." Mark cared about me a lot. He was like a loving father. However, I felt extremely awkward. Fleynia was renowned for its artists. Many world-famous artists were born there. I knew Remington had represented Hawen to carry out an art seminar in Fleynia recently. As for me, I was only relatively well known. I was not good enough to attend the seminar. "Thank you, Mr. Goldstein, for your kind intentions. But I need to sharpen my skills a little more and I shouldn't be too hasty in this matter." That night, Mark invited me to stay overnight at the Goldstein residence. I planned to reject his offer, but he was too hospitable. I noticed Mom's expression as well. It was as if she did not want me to stay. "Mom, Sharon wanted me to pass this document to you." I passed the document Lyle gave me to Isabelle. Isabelle took the document, skimmed through it, and noticed my missing signature. She gave it back to me and said, "Seems like she fulfilled what I requested. This is for you. Just add your signature to it and keep it properly. I don't need this." "I don't need this for now too." I pushed the documents away and saw that she was rolling up her sleeves to apply lotion on her hands. Noticing the bruises on her arm, I frowned and asked, "What happened to your hand?" When Isabelle realized she had accidentally revealed the injury on her wrist, she subtly put down her sleeve and said indifferently, "I accidentally scratched my hand on a tree trunk while enjoying the flowers yesterday. Eve, how about you move in with me?" My heart skipped a beat, and I rejected the invitation immediately. "I don't think that's a good idea, Mom. It's not appropriate for me to do so." Isabelle's face darkened, and she said coldly, "Is it because you are reluctant to leave Julia's son? There are millions of men in the world. Why must you be with him?" "Mom, I'm not sure what happened last time, but it has been a tough journey for both Christopher and me to be together until today. Can we please leave the past behind?" "No way!" Isabelle pounded the table with her hand. "Julia killed my brother, your Uncle Robert. How can you say that? You must be out of your mind." "But Mom, I—" I tried to explain, but I did not know where to start. It involved a life. Why did I only find out about it

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