

## **Marrying 1031**

### **Chapter 1031 Cooking for Beckham**

Cherise felt a warmth enveloping her heart as the man's deep voice filled the room with its gentle timbre. No one could resist the soothing resonance of his words. She bit her lip, contemplating. "Well, I suppose it's not entirely out of the question..." She didn't want to dismiss Damien's suggestion. After all, she was open to trying other ways to regain her memory. She wasn't willing to allow Damien to have his way with her.

"But..." She paused, locking eyes with Damien. "My dad just arrived in Adania today, and we're set to head to Shawbury tomorrow. I don't think that's very nice, is it?" Despite her memory loss, Cherise understood the significance of spending time with her loved ones.

"He's leaving tomorrow."

Cherise's eyes widened in surprise. "He's leaving tomorrow?"

"Yes," Damien affirmed, his gaze slightly distant. "He's headed to settle some old scores on a Mediterranean island."

Cherise nodded thoughtfully. "I see." Though she didn't fully understand what Damien meant by "old scores," she understood the gravity of the situation. Beckham had his priorities, and her father's urgency to resolve the conflict spoke volumes of its importance to him. As his daughter, she couldn't stand in his way. She took a deep breath and asked, "How about inviting Dad for dinner tonight?"

"That's a great idea," Damien agreed, nodding. "Why don't you make some pierogis?" With a playful pinch to Cherise's cheek, he added, "Both he and I adore your pierogis."

Cherise nodded. "Sure!" With that, she ascended the stairs to change. But on the way up, a thought struck her, prompting her to turn to Damien again. "And what about Sebastian?"

Damien reassured her, understanding her concern. "He won't come to any harm. Your father has his limits. Although everyone in Sebastian's life has abandoned him, his life won't be in danger. Your father mentioned putting him in a vegetative state, and that's precisely what will happen. So, no need to fret."

Cherise was dumbstruck. Do you think this is reassuring! “I think... it will be challenging to care for Sebastian if he ends up in a vegetative state,” Cherise noted, her lips pressed together. “Why don’t you just confine him to a mental institution like Ian... It’s no easy task to care for someone in a vegetative state.”

“That could pose a challenge,” Damien chuckled. “Sebastian is much more cunning than Ian. A mental institution won’t be enough to contain him.”

Cherise had already set the steaming pierogis on the table as the sun dipped below the horizon. This was her first time reuniting with her dad after her amnesia, and Cherise was meticulous in her preparations. Following Damien’s suggestion, she made pierogis, her signature salmon dish, and various other dishes.

Standing by the dining table, Cherise surveyed the sumptuous spread and smiled with satisfaction. Despite her memory loss, she hoped her father could feel her affection for him upon seeing the delectable meal she had prepared.

door. “I’ll do it.”

Frances understood what Cherise was thinking of and stepped back with a smile. “Sure, Mrs. Lenoir. Please go ahead.”

Taking a deep breath, Cherise hurried to the door with a smile, eager to greet her father. “Dad...”

“Dad?” Lucy’s voice rang when the door opened. She tilted her head, peering at Cherise. “Is Mr. Beckham in Adania?”

Cherise blinked in surprise. “Oh. It’s you.”

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## Chapter 1032 You Saved My Life

Lucy shrugged, bypassing Cherise to enter the room. It seems like you're not too happy to see me."

"You've changed. You used to like me before you lost your memory," she continued as she strode into the living room.

Then, standing in the middle of the room, she immediately noticed the spread of food on the dining table. She walked

over briskly and casually picked up a pierogi before popping it into her mouth.

"It tastes good, and it's just as I remembered. Your cooking hasn't lost its touch," she remarked before waving to

Frances."Could you bring me a set of utensils? I'm feeling a bit hungry."

Frances smiled and nodded, "Of course! Ms. Staber, please help yourself."

Cherise pursed her lips, quickly taking a seat before Lucy. "What brings you here... is there something you need?"

Although she knew Lucy had always been a good friend, she had no memory of their past, having only met Lucy two or

three times. She could not be as close to Lucy as she seemed to expect.

Unfazed by Cherise's distance, Lucy continued eating pierogi. She said casually, "I'm here to take Alexis away."

Cherise frowned, recalling that Alexis had mentioned liking Lucy during their last conversation. But...

"Are you sure about this?" she asked.

Lucy nodded. "He has been with you and Damien for too long. Sooner or later, someone will use him against you."

She explained the situation as she ate the pierogi, "I've arranged for a DNA test. The results show that Alexis has no biological connection to you or Damien. But as you know, the false test Sebastian forged has caused quite a stir."

"But that one was fake," Cherise countered. She pursed her lips and continued, "What harm could a false test result do?"

"You're too naive," Lucy chuckled. "Memory loss makes you so innocent."

"You see, many people don't care about the facts. They care about what outcome serves their interests. It doesn't matter who the child's birth parents are. What matters is that there's a test result claiming he's Sebastian's illegitimate child with you."

Lucy continued, "Even though Sebastian's fortunes have declined, and your status is only Damien's wife, the more vulnerable the situation, the more people will try to exploit it to unsettle Damien. And besides, the child is still young. You can't keep watching over him forever. If someone starts gossiping around him in the future, it will be detrimental to him"

Once she was done speaking, she let out a satisfied burp and picked up a nearby drink to take a sip. "So, it's best that the child leaves with me."

She continued, "Once he's no longer with you, far fewer people will attempt to manipulate him. Furthermore, he won't be subjected to gossip."

"After all, I..." She paused. "After all, I'm unable to have children myself, so adopting a child is understandable."

Cherise's eyes widened in shock. "You... How could..."

"It's a long story," Lucy interrupted.

She smiled, patting Cherise's shoulder. "Once you regain your memory, you'll understand the whole matter. If it weren't

for you back then, I might not have just lost a child and my ability to conceive. I might have died."

With that said, she smiled sweetly at Cherise. "So, not only are you my good friend, but you also saved my life."

Cherise was too stunned to speak. She desperately wanted to know what had happened to Lucy.

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Chapter 1033 He Found Me

What enabled her to speak so casually about a pain that most women struggle to talk about for the rest of their lives? What could have caused her to lose a child, her ability to conceive, and nearly her life?

"All right," Lucy said abruptly.

Seeing what looked like pity in Cherise's eyes, Lucy suddenly found the pierogi in her mouth less appetizing. She grimaced. "I'm fine now, aren't I? Why are you looking at me like that? I don't like it."

She signed before continuing, "It's been many years. I've moved on. I'm happy now."

The air around them grew eerily quiet.

Lucy smiled faintly. Her gaze seemed to drift past Cherise to some distant place. "Being infertile isn't so bad. My dad stopped pushing me to go on blind dates, and whenever some guy bothers me, I just whip out my medical certificate. It saves a lot of hassle."

Cherise pursed her lips, uncertain of what to say. After a moment, she took a deep breath and threw herself into Lucy's embrace, holding her tightly.

This sudden hug caught Lucy off guard.

"What are you doing?" Lucy exclaimed, unsure about where to put her hands.

But after a moment, she chuckled wryly. "You're making me nervous like this. Did you lose your memory and develop a crush on me or something? I'll have you know, even though I can't have kids for the rest of my life, I'm still a straight woman who enjoys looking at muscular men!"

Still, Cherise embraced Lucy tightly, trying to channel her warmth to her. "I don't remember what happened to you. But Lucy..."

Cherise took a deep breath and continued, "I'll always be your friend. Even without my memories, I'll always be your friend and support. Thus, no matter your sadness or troubles, I'll always be here to listen."

"I..." Lucy hesitated, "I don't know what to say."

"As long as you understand," Cherise said softly, "that's all that matters

Lucy's stiff posture gradually relaxed. She chuckled ruefully. You're impressive, as always. You see through me even though I put on a front."

After saying that, she closed her eyes, and tears silently streamed down her cheeks. "He found me. I'll leave tomorrow. This time, I have to escape to a much farther place. I actually... came to say goodbye."

Lucy's words left Cherise utterly stunned.

Cherise did not have to ask to know that the "h" Lucy referred to was the person who had hurt her the most. She couldn't even bear to mention his name.

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Chapter 1034 New Mother

"Mom!"

The moment the servant who went to pick up the children opened the door, Serafina darted in. Following behind her was a composed Alexis, and Soren, who was bringing up the rear, carried both his and his sister's backpacks.

"Lucy's here too!" Serafina dashed straight into Lucy's arms. "Lucy, I missed you so much!"

"You say that every time, kiddo." Lucy chuckled helplessly, retrieving three exquisitely wrapped chocolates from her bag. "I came in a rush this time and didn't bring any gifts. But here are the chocolates I received at the last academic conference. You can have them."

"Thank you, Lucy!" Serafina kissed Lucy's cheek before running upstairs with chocolates in hand.

Soren smiled wryly as he watched his sister run away. Then, he approached Lucy and took his share of the chocolate. "Lucy, you seem preoccupied."

Lucy instinctively touched her face. "Is it that obvious?"

"No." Soren shook his head, grinning. "But I can read between the lines, and I can tell you're troubled. And can't think straight!"

Lucy shot him a wry look. "You're too perceptive for your own good."

Cherise looked helplessly at her son. "That's enough. Go upstairs and keep your sister company. Lucy and I need to talk to Alexis."

Soren pursed his lips and glanced at Alexis before heading upstairs with the chocolate and backpack in tow.

Lucy waited to hear Soren closing the door upstairs before smiling and waving over. "Come here."

Alexis blushed as he approached Lucy and took the chocolate she offered. "Miss, why do you wish to talk to me?"

"Don't call me Miss anymore," Lucy chuckled. "From now on, call me Mom. Come on an adventure with me, and I'll show you the wonders of the world outside. How does that sound?"

Alexis' big eyes lit up immediately. "Really?"

Then, he glanced at Cherise gratefully. "You weren't lying after all!"



Cherise chuckled awkwardly. "Well, you see... I keep my promises."

Lucy frowned at her.

Cherise cleared her throat, saying. "Actually... Alexis mentioned before that he really likes you. So, I promised him that the next time I saw you, I would ask if you wanted to adopt him..."

this little guy too."

She pinched Alexis's cheek with her finger. "Since you like me and I like you, how about you pack your bags and follow me, your new mom, on a fun adventure?"

Alexis nodded eagerly. "Okay!"

With that, he leaped out of Lucy's embrace and hummed a tune as he happily went up the stairs.

Meanwhile, Lucy reclined into her seat and smiled faintly as she watched Alexis disappear from view.

At that moment, Lucy only knew that Alexis was an orphan Cherise adopted in Lermille. She was unaware of the truth about her connection to the child.

Once Alexis went out of her sight, Lucy turned to Cherise. "By the way, when you regain your memory, remember to write me an email and tell me the true story behind this child.

Cherise pursed her lips and nodded earnestly. "I will."

Since Alexis had only been living in the Lenoir residence for a while, he naturally did not have many things.

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Chapter 1035 Leftovers

All his clothes and belongings, along with the toys and gifts Serafina and Soren had given him, barely filled one suitcase.

Thirty minutes later, Alexis reappeared before Lucy, fully dressed and wheeling the suitcase. Lucy, stood up and took the suitcase from Alexis's hands. "I've made arrangements for the adoption. procedure. I'll make sure Alexis has a proper family."

She paused briefly before continuing, "But I'll probably change his surname to avoid unnecessary complications. He'll be called Alexis Staber."

Cherise nodded. She understood. Lucy was a single woman. If Alexis did not have her surname, it would lead to speculation and gossip.

"I'm fine with that!" Alexis chimed in before Cherise could speak. "I'm happy with whatever my mom names me!"

Cherise did not know what to say. She could not help but wonder if this kid was too clever for his own good. However, from the look in Alexis's eyes as he watched Lucy, Cherise could tell that he truly liked her.

After seeing off Lucy and Alexis, Cherise found herself pondering silently. Lucy, Alexis.

When I named Alexis all those years ago, did I choose this name because I hoped he would be like Lucy? Did I choose the name because its meaning reminded me of Lucy?

She scratched her head, realizing how troublesome it was to lose her memory. Otherwise, she would not have been perplexed about why she gave Alexis that name years ago. How she wished she could remember everything about her past immediately.

But as she recalled how she remembered something about her past that day because Damien kissed her...

Her cheeks turned red.

Not long after Lucy left, Damien returned home with Beckham. Accompanying them was Damien's close friend, Lennon.

As they settled around the table, Lennon was surprised to find his plate of pierogi only half the others. He furrowed his brow and looked at Cherise with discontent. "Cherry, even if you came here for dinner, there's no need to treat me like this, isn't there?"

Cherise glanced at the plate of pierogi before Lennon and realized it was the one Lucy had eaten earlier. After Lucy left, Cherise's mind was so occupied with Lucy that she forgot to bring a new pierogi for Lennon.

She smiled awkwardly, saying, "Um, I'll ask Frances to get you another plate. My friend, Lucy, came see me just now and sat on your spot. She ate half of the pierogi, and I forgot to bring you a new

Cherise's words instantly silenced the entire dining room.

Lennon pursed his lips, carefully guarding his half-empty plate. "That won't be necessary. I'll just eat this half."

The air became strangely still.

Cherise waved at Frances awkwardly. "Can you get Mr. Belcourt a new plate of pierogi." After all, it was not right to let guests eat leftovers from one's friends.

Lennon pressed his lips together and replied hoarsely, "I said, there's no need to change it. I'll eat this."

Cherise bit her lip, glancing at Lennon in confusion before looking at Damien. Damien returned her gaze and shook his head. But this only deepened her confusion.

Why did he shake his head? Was it because it was something acceptable? Did I make Lennon angry that he said those words?

But it makes sense. He came to his friend's house for a meal, only to find the friend's wife had served you someone else's leftovers. I would feel uncomfortable too.

## Chapter 1036 Bitter Smiles

Would Lennon think that she was humiliating him?

A sense of unease crept over Cherise at this thought. She bit her lip.

"Mr. Belcourt, I didn't mean to... You know that I suffer from amnesia. After I lose my memory, I often find myself confused. Somehow, I keep forgetting about social cues and etiquette..."

She turned to him with a sincere gaze. "Please don't take this to heart. Don't feel bothered by this. I'll ask Frances to change this for you..."

Frances pursed her lips as she approached and reached for the half-full plate of pierogies before Lennon, only to be met with his glare.

His eyes narrowed, and his tone was cold. "I said there's no need for that!"

He lowered his head. Gazing at the food on the plate, a bitter smile filled his face as he began to eat.

Cherise was speechless.

She innocently turned her eyes to Damien and mouthed, "What should we do?"

"Ignore him."

Damien narrowed his eyes and said plainly, "He has a tendency to blow up like this."

He glanced at Cherise. "What did Lucy come for?"

"She came to take Alexis with her."

Cherise pursed her lips. "She said that they'd found her. So, this time, she's going somewhere they would never find. She won't return for a while."

Her reply caused Lennon to pause momentarily from eating.

After a moment, he forced another bitter smile, lowered his head, and began stuffing the pierogies into his mouth.

"Um, Mr. Belcourt, please be careful not to choke."

Worried that Lennox was enraged, Cherise kept an eye on him while talking to Damien.

She could not help but give Lennon advice when he began wolfing down the pierogies.

Lennon stopped while keeping his head lowered, asking, "Did she mention when she would re

"Ah." It took Cherise a moment to process that Lennon was talking about Lucy.

Is Mr. Belcourt and Lucy acquainted?

She looked at Lennon carefully. "Are you acquainted with Lulu as well, Mr. Belcourt?"

Lennon furrowed his brow and mustered a wan smile. "I'm not sure if you can say we're acquainted," he said.

"Cherise."

Beckham, sitting at a side quietly, could sense Lennon's apprehension. He interrupted the conversation to stop Cherise. "Have you remembered anything lately?"

Cherise pursed her lips and promptly responded, "I did recall some things, but there isn't much that I've remembered, and the memories are hazy."

"Very well."

Beckham nodded.

"Damien told me that you'll be heading to Shawbury tomorrow. That's a good plan. I will be traveling to Europe for a while for some work. If visiting your former residence helps with your memory, when I return, I'll take you to visit the Tanner Residence and the places where your mother and I used to bring you."

Cherise nodded earnestly. "All right. Then I'll rely on you, Dad."

“There’s no need to say thanks between a father and his daughter.”

Beckham smiled and lifted the wine glass on the table. “Let’s toast for our wishes to come true.”

Damien nodded, raised his glass, and clinked it with Beckham’s. “I toast for your safe journey,

Beckham.”

Lennon set down his spoon and raised his glass as well.

Beckham shot a look at Lennon.

“There’s no need to be so downhearted, you young one. Losing something important to you is not frightening; What’s worse is staying in the situation and refusing to do anything to salvage it.”

Lennon raised his head and met the earnest gaze of the middle-aged man. “I think it’s too late for me. to do anything.”

## Chapter 1037 Triggers and Temptations

Beckham shook his head.

“You’re young. It’s only too late if you’re at my age and in my situation. If I had been braver, smarter, and tried harder when I was young, maybe the situation would have changed.”

With a hint of regret in his eyes, the man continued, I had so much time, so many years... and yet I never noticed her existence... It was already too late when I finally found her. You’re luckier than me. At least you know she’s still alive. She’s still living somewhere out there.”

Lennon forced a bitter smile.

“I’m still going to do what I can. It’s just that...”

For Lucy, perhaps even doing whatever he could was far from enough.

The harm he caused to her was irreversible.

Even though he only realized how much he had hurt her in the end.

“Keep going.”

Beckham clinked his glass against Lennon’s lightly to encourage him.

Cherise followed Damien’s lead and clinked her glass with Beckham, followed by Lennon. “Mr. Belcourt, I don’t know what you’ve been through. But don’t lose hope. You can do it!”

Lennon chuckled self-deprecatingly. “I will.”

After dinner, Cherise and Damien sent the two men out.

“I hope I’ll get my memories back quickly.”

With a hand resting against Damien’s arm, Cherise watched as they drove away. “I feel like I’m living in a fishbowl.”

Damien raised his hand and pinched her cheek. “Why do you feel like you’re in a fishbowl



“I feel like a fool, completely isolated from the world. I have no idea what happened to Lu know what happened to Lennon, and I don’t know what happened to Dad. The more I mec are related to me in the past, the more I feel that losing my memory is a terrifying thing.”

Damien smiled and gently clasped his large hand over hers. “Don’t worry. You’ll remember eve sooner or later.”

Cherise pouted. “I really wish I could wake up with all my memories restored.”

The man frowned as he remembered something. He looked down at Cherise.

“You just told your dad that you remembered something earlier, right? Do you still remember what happened when you recalled that memory? Jacob said that for your type of amnesia, there will be triggers to help you recall your memories.”

Cherise was silent.

Was her intuition correct? Her trigger would be him teasing her.

Thinking of the incident in the car today, her face turned crimson again.

“Mrs. Lenior, your face is very red...”

Furrowing his eyebrows, Damien lowered his head and intently fixed his eyes on the woman’s crimson face. “Are you thinking of something naughty?”

Cherise quickly turned her head away while avoiding his gaze. “I don’t know what you’re talking about.”

She quickly broke free from his embrace and scurried back into the villa.

Damien stayed in his spot, smiling faintly as he watched her.

He was much luckier than Lennon.

Because he was aware of Cherise's feelings for him from the beginning, and he was well aware of his feelings for her.

There was no hurdle between them apart from the misunderstanding half a decade ago.

Even though she had lost most of her memories, she was still the abashed girl who would blush because of him.

Watching the petite figure entering the villa, he sighed and quickly followed with wide strides.

The following day, Cherise was roused by Damien kissing her.

#### Chapter 1038 Entourage to Shawbury

Cherise's eyes fluttered open, still groggy from sleep. She could barely see the man on top of her before his hungry kisses stole her breath away.

Damien's dominant, suffocating kiss left her breathless. She gasped as memories flooded back, throwing her for a loop.

Cherise attempted to push him away, but she soon gave up and let him have his way.

The flashbacks and the familiar scent told her, without even looking, that the man shamelessly violating her against her will was Damien.

Seeing her submission, Damien smirked with amusement. "Thought you would put up a bigger fight."

“Tired from trying,” Cherise mumbled, her voice tinged with a strained facade of annoyance. “Besides, what’s the point? I can’t escape anyway. Might as well just enjoy it.”

Her blunt honesty made Damien laugh. He playfully pinched her cheek. “So, finally admitting you enjoy my kisses, huh?”

Cherise blushed and turned away, a whirlwind of emotions swirling inside her. “I didn’t say that. Just simply accepting what is.”

Damien’s passionate kiss triggered a flood of sweet memories. Memories of their past intimacy and the undeniable pleasure they shared. Honestly, there was no point in denying her own feelings. She secretly enjoyed these moments with him.

“Thinking things through, huh?” Damien said, rising from the bed with a knowing smile as he drew back the curtains. Sunlight streamed into the room.

“Since my dear Mrs. Lenoir is exhausted from our ‘workout, let’s grab a quick dinner downstairs. Everyone is waiting for you, you know.’”

Cherise frowned. “Everyone? What do you mean?”

Wasn’t it supposed that the two of them were going to Shawbury?

At first, Cherise wanted to take Soren and Serafina along, but Damien insisted they go to school. Now, he mentions that everyone awaits her, and Cherise wonders what he means.

Damien said softly, “This time, we’re going with Mr. Hampson, Otto, and Blake with his girlfriend.”

Cherise was surprised. “Mr. Hampson and Otto going together makes sense, but Blake and...”

“Blake’s girlfriend is also from Shawbury,” Damien interjected, seemingly reading Cherise’s thoughts.

He kissed her forehead and continued, "Blake has quite the eye, picking a girlfriend from your hometown."

Damien pulled Cherise into his arms and explained, asked Blake if he wants to join us. After all, you

with his girlfriend. But he later discovered she's from Shawbury too and has close relatives getting married. So, he asked if he could come along,"

"So Blake's coming for his girlfriend, not us?" Cherise clarified.

Damien nodded with a faint smile. "You could say that."

"As his parents, and with us all heading to the same place, I couldn't find a reason to refuse." Cherise said.

He gently ruffled Cherise's hair and said, "Alright then. Hurry up and get ready; everyone's downstairs. waiting."

Cherise nodded and went to freshen up.

By the time they went down, it was past nine. Otto and Mr. Hampson were engaged in a cautious conversation, occasionally sharing quiet laughs.

Ponytailerella sat on the carpet, writing something on the coffee table. Blake, seated across from her, observed her with a mesmerized gaze. In his typically impassive eyes, there was now a hint of tenderness.

Marrying the Man in the Dark

Chapter 1039 Ariana's Cousin's Wedding

A smile tugged at Cherise's lips as she caught sight of Blake's lovesick, goofy expression. Back during her memory-loss days, he'd been like a brother to her

With her memories trickling back, she vividly remembered how utterly boring he'd been five years ago. Seeing him like this now made her realize how much time had changed him.

Ponytailerella finished scribbling on a page and looked up, surprised to see Cherise standing by the stairs. She jumped up and blurted, "Hi, Mr. and Mrs. Lenoir!"

A hush fell over the room as all eyes turned to Cherise and Damien.

Damien gave a small smile. "Sorry we kept you waiting, folks." He wrapped his arm around Cherise's waist and led her down the stairs. "Ready to go?"

With Damien's cue, the group was set for departure. Not many people joined them on this trip to Shawbury-just Mr. Hampson, Otto, Blake, two drivers, and two bodyguards.

Ariana leaned over to Cherise in the car and whispered curiously, "Mrs. Lenoir, do you remember me?" Cherise's smile was like sunshine. "Of course! You're Blake's 'Ponytailerella.'"

The girl blushed at the playful nickname. "It's Ariana Madix, actually. You can call me Ariana."

She looked away shyly, trying to break the awkwardness. "Um, actually, it's my cousin's wedding today. Thank you for letting me crash your ride... How about I invite you to the wedding?"

She beamed, her cheeks flushed pink. "Blake mentioned you've been stuck inside lately, and maybe need a break from the routine. It'd be awesome if you came and had some fun with us!"

Cherise had been bored out of her mind lately, with no exciting events to break the monotony. She readily agreed, "Sounds like an idea!"

She turned to Damien in the passenger seat and asked, "Honey, what do you think?"

Damien folded his arms and stared out the window, his voice a low rumble of indulgence. "Of course, I still owe you a real wedding ceremony anyway. Attending one before ours could be a good inspiration. You can see what you like and plan our wedding however you want when it's our turn."

Cherise stammered, flustered. "I, uh, I just thought it would be a fun outing, not for..."

Following Ariana's directions, they headed to the hotel where her cousin's wedding was happening. Stepping out of the car, Cherise scanned the names on the colorful archway. Her brows furrowed slightly as she mumbled, "Savannah Seagal...bride...the groom...Steve Orborn..."

Something about those names rang a bell, but she couldn't quite place them.

Just then, a harsh female voice cut through her thoughts. "Hey, Ariana! You said you were coming back today; your uncle must be kicking rocks at the station waiting for you now. But hey, look at you rolling

Cherise was lost in her own world until a shrill voice snapped her out. She frowned and followed the noise to see a woman in a red dress, around her age, gawking at their car.

The woman seemed to ignore Cherise entirely, focusing solely on Ariana. "You've been keeping a lot under wraps," she remarked, her voice carrying across the room. I thought getting into Adania University would have you nose-deep in textbooks, but this? Seems like there's a whole other side to this new life' that hasn't been shared. If it weren't for Savannah's wedding, we'd all still be clueless about your fancy new life with some rich Adania boyfriend

She pressed on, her tone dripping with curiosity. "That must be his car, right?"

Her voice cut through the air, turning heads and igniting gossip around Ariana.

Chapter 1040 Unwanted Attention in Shawbury

Ariana's face flushed. "Don't be ridiculous! These are my friend's family. They were kind enough to give me a ride home, so I invited them to the wedding. It's not what you think!"

The woman in red just laughed. "Sneaky, sneaky! Who offers a casual friend a ride home and then gets invited to a family wedding? They've never even met the bride! All this fancy treatment for a random friend? Doesn't add up, does it? Don't insult my intelligence. Who brings a random person home? Let alone to a family thing like a wedding?"

Just then, Damien was in the car, hung up on Jacob, and stepped out.

Shawbury wasn't exactly known for luxury cars or glamorous people. So, when Damien walked out in his khakis and sweater, looking like a million bucks, everyone stopped and stared.

The woman in red who'd been grilling Ariana practically had her jaw on the floor. After a stunned silence, she squeezed Ariana's hand way too hard.

Dressed in a vibrant red dress, the woman's eyes lingered covetously on Damien as she leaned in to whisper to Ariana. "Age ain't nothing but a number, honey! Look at him... I can practically smell the money bags! Come on, spill the beans. How'd you snag him? Check out the car, the clothes, the whole package! This guy has gotta be at least a department manager, right?"

Cherise, catching wind of her covetous tone, couldn't suppress a smirk. "Oh, you have no idea you're selling him short."

"Really?" The woman in the red dress instinctively turned towards the voice.

Only then did she notice another woman standing behind Ariana. Her eyes widened in surprise, and she called out Cherise's name in a stunt.

"Do you know me?" Cherise was surprised that this stranger knew her name.

“Of course! We went to high school together!” The woman in the red dress pursed her lips. “I used to pick on you back then... I mean, we even sat in front of each other! I’m Stella Page. Hey, don’t you remember me?” Stella frowned.

Cherise’s mind was blank, but she played along. “Yeah, yeah, of course I remember,” she mumbled.

Stella kept rambling, lost in her own world. “The couple getting married today- Savannah and Steve were classmates with us back in high school! Remember graduation? Considering how deeply they were in love, everyone assumed the gorgeous Savannah would marry the class heartthrob.

She paused and then ruefully shook her head, “But who knew the prettiest girl in our class would end up-marrying the biggest dork? Money talks, I guess.”

Stella snapped out of her nostalgic rant and turned back to Ariana, still holding her hand. “Speaking of money, how loaded is this new boyfriend of yours?”

Ariana fumbled, her face flushing. “Wait, no! Not my boyfriend’s car! Don’t jump to conclusions! It’s actually her husband’s,” she explained, gesturing to Cherise.

Stella’s eyes widened in surprise. “Wait, what? Your husband’s?”

At this point, Cherise couldn’t keep up the pretense of stay out of the drama any longer. She gave Stella a sheepish smile. “Yep, he’s my husband.”

Hearing this, Stella’s admiration for Damien quickly soured into disdain. “Well, that explains the flashy car. It’s probably rented and for show. Seems like he’s just putting on airs with his supposed wealth and sophistication, huh?”

Adding insult to injury, she continued, ‘Who would’ve thought a plain Jane like you would end up with such a vain man for a husband. Quite the surprise. But I guess you two complement each other.’

Glancing towards the hotel entrance where a wealthy relative had just arrived, Stella nudged Ariana. “I’ll go say hi to Granduncle. Since they’re your guests, why not show her in? Today’s Savannah’s wedding,



and there's a bunch of our old high school buddies around. You know the drill. See if you can slot her in with the gang."