

## **Marrying 211**

### Chapter 211 Romantic Feelings for Cherise

She was sure of it! Even if Damien had no romantic feelings for her, he certainly wouldn't be interested in those girls who passed him notes.

"So here's the question," Lucy interjected while rubbing her aching stomach. "if you're so dead set that Damien's into you, why do you keep bickering with him? Trust issues aside, you're his top pick, right?"

Cherise hesitated and turned her face away. "It's not the same."

Having a crush on someone was one thing, but cherishing her as a serious priority was a different story. Her frustration didn't stem from Damien's lack of romantic feelings but from his inability to see her as his own or as part of his real family.

"Assemble!"

While Cherise was lost in thought, the PE teacher arrived. Lucy pulled her to attention, and she quickly joined the others in forming lines.

"As agreed in the previous class, we will be conducting physical fitness tests this time," the PE teacher announced with his expression stern. "However, I have some last-minute business to attend to today, so I've arranged for a substitute teacher to oversee the fitness tests."

The teacher's gaze shifted meaningfully over Cherise's face. "Now, let's welcome our substitute teacher for this class, Mr. Lenoir!"

Mr. Lenoir?

Cherise frowned, and an ominous feeling welled up within her. She raised her head.

Sure enough, the man walking toward their group, dressed in gray sportswear, was none other than Damien.

However...

Cherise pursed her lips; this was probably the first time she had seen Damien in sportswear, except for when he practiced martial arts. Apparently, attractive people possessed the knack for looking good in whatever they wore.

His sportswear, matching that of the balding PE teacher, assumed an entirely fresh allure on him, almost like he were a supermodel effortlessly strutting down a runway rather than just in everyday attire.

“Wow, the new sub-teacher is a real heartthrob!”

“Yeah, and he’s got a fit body too!”

“Did you check out his eyes? So intense! Oh, he’s looking over here, he’s looking over here! Ahhh!”

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The girls’ chatter was relentless. Cherise bit her lip; having a handsome husband could be quite

the hassle.

“Hello, everyone. I’m your sub for today,” the man’s deep voice echoed, sending more girls into fits of excitement.

A daring girl at the front said, “Mr. Sub, do you have a girlfriend?”

Holding the attendance list, the man hesitated briefly, then glanced up, his eyes skimming past Cherise. I’m sorry, but I’m already married.”

“Ah?”

The girls collectively mourned. “He’s so young to be married...”

Lucy playfully nudged Cherise with her shoulder. “Did you hear that? It’s the sound of broken hearts all around.”

“All those hearts? You’re the heartbreaker here.”

Cherise bit her lip, a mysterious sense of joy bubbling up inside her.

With a subtle smile, she stole a glance at Damien, who had his eyes on her. Their gazes locked, and he grinned at her before returning to the attendance list.

“Lucy Staber.”

“Present!”

“Cherise Shaw.”

“Here.”

“Leticia Wright.”

“Present.”

Cherise stood still, observing as Damien continued calling out names. It was a side of him she hadn’t witnessed before.

He had cast away his previous facades, unveiling his genuine self. In every move and gesture, he exuded confidence, aloofness, and that undeniable handsomeness.

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## Chapter 212 I Don't Need Special Treatment

Damien was very different from how he used to be.

Cherise looked at him, entranced. In the past, she had never noticed this energetic side of the man who was always in a wheelchair. Could it be that she was the reason for his change?

Cherise shook her head, abruptly interrupting her train of thought. What had she been thinking? Even the truth about Damien's eyes was uncovered by her, with Damien merely acknowledging her discovery. How could she be so naive as to assume she was the cause of his transformation?

With these musings, a sensation of loss swelled within her heart, like ink saturating paper. It weighed on her until Lucy tugged at her arm and said, "Let's go!"

Only then did Cherise return to reality; it was time for the physical fitness test.

Due to her short stature, her starting position was toward the rear, and she happened to be in the last group of students participating in the 800-meter assessment.

Observing the students who went before her, visibly fatigued and sweating, Cherise felt an inexplicable pressure mounting within her.

Positioned at the starting line, Lucy clenched her fist and cheered her on. "You've got this!"

Cherise's gaze involuntarily shifted to Damien. He had stripped off his outer layer, revealing a white T-shirt identical to hers. With a sun hat, stopwatch hanging around his neck, and the attendance roster in

hand, he emitted a youthful vibe, more like a fellow student helping out than a teacher conducting an assessment.

Cherise's heart quickened.

Sensing her gaze, Damien smiled gently at her. "Get ready."

Cherise refocused her attention and fixed her gaze ahead. With the whistle's shrill sound, she and the other girls bolted off.

Yet, strangely, just halfway around the track, the girls' pace in front of Cherise began to dwindle. Although Cherise maintained her initial speed, her thoughts wandered to Damien, her mind drifting.

Two of the girls collided in a moment of distraction, and due to inertia, Cherise found herself sprawled on the ground. Strong, masculine hands steadied her shoulders just before her face could meet the unforgiving earth.

While her face was spared a painful collision, her knee took the brunt of the fall, slamming onto the rubber track with an agonizing thud that furrowed her brows.

Damien lent a hand and inquired, "Can you keep going?"

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Cherise clenched her teeth and responded, "Yes."

Giving up halfway wasn't in her nature, especially not for a minor scrape.

"Perfect, Damien said with a touch of admiration.

“Let’s patch you up now and have you complete the test separately. I’ll also inform the PE teacher about your situation. If you make it to the finish line, you’ll pass.”

Cherise shook her head. “No thanks,” Pass or fail, she didn’t need any special treatment.

Damien gestured to Lucy. “Let’s patch her up. We shouldn’t delay the other students.”

“Are you going to run again later?” Lucy questioned, frowning as she applied a band-aid to Cherise’s leg. “They might pass you since Damien’s your husband, even if you don’t make it.”

“With an injury like this, they really should consider passing you.”

Cherise shook her head. “It’s just a minor injury, and I don’t want any special treatment.”

“Plus...” She observed Damien as he meticulously recorded the results for the other students, occasionally glancing her way. “It’s just 800 meters; I’ve got this.”

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## Chapter 213 Cherise Running Solo

Lucy sighed. “But you’ll be running solo later; everyone’s done. Are you sure you still want to go for it?”

“Don’t sweat it.” She gave Lucy’s shoulder a reassuring pat and smiled. “I can handle a solo run.”

After recording the results for the other female students, Damien strolled over to Cherise and Lucy.

Cherise didn’t want to delay any longer. She swiftly got up and asked, “Is it my turn now?”

“Yep.” Damien nodded, taking a few strides and glancing nonchalantly at the scrape on Cherise’s knee. “You’re absolutely sure you want to run, right?”

With precise determination, the girl nodded. “Absolutely!”

The three of them headed to the starting line on the track. Damien handed Lucy the stopwatch hanging around his neck and the result record book. “You keep time.”

Lucy widened her eyes in surprise. “And what about you?”

The man chuckled softly, positioned himself at the starting line next to Cherise, and elegantly stretched his muscles. “I’m running with her.”

Lucy and the other girls were taken aback. Cherise’s treatment seemed unusual. After her clumsy tumble during the solo run, it almost seemed like she was getting special attention! And now, a handsome teacher was about to run with her? Not fair at all!

Some female students teased, “If we had known, we would’ve pretended to trip too.”

“I know, right! If I could get the sub teacher to run with me, I’d purposely trip...”

Lucy furrowed her brow, turned around, and glared at the students behind her. She added, “Even if you did break your leg, the teacher wouldn’t flinch, believe me.”

Several students bit their lips and fell silent.

Cherise gave Damien a concerned look. “Are you sure about this?”

Damien had been in a wheelchair for years, and Cherise was skeptical about his legs handling an 800-meter run after all that time.

Damien reassured her with a smile. "If you're up for it, so am I."

Cherise pursed her lips. "Don't expect a leg massage tonight if you're in pain. I won't do it."

She then remembered their ongoing silent treatment and turned away without saying more.

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Damien smiled and said, "Then I'll massage myself."

Cherise hmped and didn't respond.

"Ready... Beep!"

Lucy signaled the start of the run with a sharp whistle, simultaneously setting Cherise and Damien into motion from the starting line.

Damien's long legs glided gracefully and swiftly over the rubber track, commanding the attention of every female student present.

As more gazes zeroed in on him, Cherise's discomfort deepened. It felt like the entire class of female students had their eyes on her during the 800-meter dash.

She clenched her jaw and decided to pick up her pace, choosing not to keep pace with Damien.

Damien effortlessly caught up. "Running so fast can affect your breathing."

She ignored him and continued her stride. As they ran, a persistent ache began to churn in her abdomen. Cherise furrowed her brow; could her overdue period decide to arrive now?



No, not during the run! She gradually slowed her pace, but the pain didn't ease.

With the finishing line approaching, Cherise gritted her teeth and pushed through the discomfort. "Are you okay?"

Damien noticed her condition. "Don't overexert yourself."

"No," Cherise pursed her lips. "I can't quit halfway."

She didn't want to run the 800 meters again.

Chapter 214 Was Cherise Pregnant?

Besides, it was just her period, nothing major. But why did it hurt so much this time? She felt a cold sweat break out, and the pain gradually drained her strength.

Damien held her hand. "Listen to me. Don't push yourself."

"It's not much farther," she said, determination in her voice despite her eyes moistened with

sweat.

Finally, at the very last second, Cherise collapsed at the finishing line before reaching the physical assessment standard time.

There were small, scattered red spots on her bottoms. Damien's eyes darkened, and he quickly lifted her. "Where's the school clinic?"

Lucy rushed over, assessed the situation, and tremblingly dialed 120 on her phone. "The school clinic won't cut it! What if it's not her period but a miscarriage?"

The word 'miscarriage' hit like a thunderclap, momentarily freezing Damien.

Lucy explained, "Cherry mentioned earlier that her period was late. I suggested she buy a pregnancy test, but she didn't take it seriously, saying it might not be accurate. Given the situation. now, if it's indeed a miscarriage..."

Before Cherise could finish her sentence, Damien had already swept her into his arms and bolted out of the gym.

Curious female students soon congregated. "Cherise had a miscarriage? Does she even have a boyfriend? And she had a miscarriage?"

"A top student with an impeccable reputation, getting pregnant before marriage and suffering a miscarriage? This is major news!"

Lucy had no time for idle chatter with these girls. She set down her belongings and swiftly trailed after Damien.

Damien's embrace was warm and reassuring.

Despite her weakness, with her eyes closed, Cherise could feel the frequency of his heartbeat in his chest while he ran. There was the sound of the wind and his slightly heavier breathing in her

cars.

Even with her eyes closed, she sensed his swift pace. She creased her brow and softly said, "Slow down."

“Your legs may not handle this.”

Damien probably didn’t expect her to be awake. “It’s my fault. I should’ve known better, and I

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never considered you might be pregnant...”

Had he thought of it or suspected it, he would have never allowed her to partake in physical. education class. He would’ve canceled the class, ensured she didn’t go out alone the previous day, and evented her from going through emotional turmoil.

Cherise shook her head. “Relax; it’s probably just a delayed period. It’s not that easy to get

pregnant...”

“Please don’t talk right now!”

He took a deep breath. “We’re almost there; hold on a little longer.”

Soon, Cherise felt a shift in her surroundings.

“Doctor!”

His voice took an unanticipated urgency, unlike his usual distant and icy demeanor. Ordinarily, he spoke with a remote, aloof tone. Still, at this moment, his appeals to the doctor were laden with the desperation of a family member trying to save a loved one.

“Damien.”

Before the doctor arrived, she tightly grasped his arm. "If I mean so much to you... why couldn't you trust me?"

Damien, soaked in sweat and gasping for breath, was taken aback by her words. Before he could respond, the doctor rolled a gurney over to them.

He gently placed her on the bed. "She suddenly experienced severe abdominal pain while running."

The doctor wheeled Cherise into the emergency room.

#### Chapter 215 A Miscarriage

As the emergency room door closed, Damien exhaled deeply, leaned against the wall with one hand, and closed his eyes. If Cherise had a miscarriage because of the physical evaluation, he would never forgive himself. It was his negligence that led to the current situation.

When Cherise was pushed out of the emergency room, Lucy hurried over with Cherise's belongings in her hand, accompanied by Blake.

Cherise lay on the bed, looking as pale as a sheet.

"Doctor, how is she? Why did she bleed?" Lucy approached the doctor and asked while pushing Cherise back to the ward.

The doctor shook his head. "She was only pregnant for two weeks, but she miscarried."

Damien's legs felt shaky, and he almost slumped onto the floor. Cherise couldn't bear to see his agonized look. She held his hand and muttered, "It's not your fault."

“You should reflect on yourself!” Lucy shot a fierce glare at Damien, pushed him aside, and pushed Cherise back to the ward with the doctor.

Cherise’s gaze had not left Damien’s face. She had never seen him this desperate and distressed.

He stood tall at the ward door, looking lonely and desolate.

The door was like an invisible barrier that separated them into two worlds.

Cherise’s heart ached when she saw his disheartened look. Both of them didn’t expect her to be pregnant. She failed to take care of herself.

Damien had lived alone for a long time and wouldn’t understand these things. She didn’t even tell him about the delay in her period because she felt embarrassed. Thinking back, if she had told him earlier, the miscarriage might not have happened. After all, he was prudent, unlike her.

Cherise knew the miscarriage was not entirely Damien’s fault. However, Damien was so remorseful that he didn’t even dare to look at Cherise.

Finally, Cherise couldn’t bear it any longer. “Lucy, please ask him to come in. I’d like to talk to him.”

Lucy frowned. “Cherry, it’s his fault that you had a miscarriage. Why do you want him to come in?”

Cherise pouted. “He’s not the only one responsible... I didn’t think of it either...”

Seeing that Lucy refused to go, Cherise glanced at Blake. “Go and get him.”

Pressing his lips, Blake walked out of the ward and tugged at Damien’s sleeve. “Dame, come in.”

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Damien lifted his eyes to look at Cherise before entering the ward

“Please don’t blame yourself. She held his hand. “I have the biggest responsibility.

Please stop blaming yourselves, both of you.” The doctor spoke up. “Didn’t you know that the patient took abortion pills yesterday, which caused the miscarriage?”

Abortion pills?

Cherise, Damien, and Lucy were dumbfounded.

“Doctor, are you sure you’re not mistaken?” Lucy’s eyes widened in shock. “Two of them were unaware of the pregnancy. While we were rushing to the hospital, they thought it was a menstrual cramp. How could Cherry take abortion pills?”

Cherise shook her head. “I didn’t take any pills yesterday.”

The doctor furrowed his brows. “My diagnosis can’t be wrong. Your symptoms are exactly the same as the others who had abortion pills. It’s just that your pill took effect a day later. Please think carefully. Did you take any medicine yesterday?”

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Chapter 216 A Coffee From Ian

Lucy still found it unbelievable. “Doctor, isn’t it caused by intensive exercise?”

The doctor heaved a sigh. "I guess you're students from the nearby medical school. If you're at medical student, you should know that one pill is enough to cause a miscarriage when the woman is only two weeks pregnant. If it's caused by intensive exercise, most would only show signs of miscarriage but not such severe bleeding. Moreover, her blood test result just came out, showing residual drug components in her body."

The doctor sighed. "You should take care of yourself, knowing there's a possibility of conceiving. Look how sad your boyfriend is now,"

With that, the doctor shook his head and walked away, leaving Cherise stupefied.

Little did she expect the miscarriage was caused by drugs...

They departed from the Shaw's village yesterday morning and only arrived in Adania in the afternoon. Then, she took a nap at home and was asked out by Ian...

Suddenly, she knitted her brows. Yesterday, all she ate was breakfast at Sarah's place, the dinner Frances prepared, and... a cup of coffee Ian ordered.

That coffee was placed on the table before she arrived and had turned cold when she drank it.

A chill ran down her spine. Cerise shivered. No... It's impossible... How could Ian...

However, besides Ian, she couldn't think of other possibilities. Sarah wouldn't harm her; neither would Frances.

After eliminating all other people, the remaining person had to be the answer, even if it was improbable.

Damien glanced at Lucy and asked, "Where did you bring her to yesterday?"

Lucy was startled. "I didn't go out with Cherry yesterday."

Following that, the two turned to look at Cherise, who was ashen-faced.

She bit her lips forcefully. "I... went to meet Ian yesterday."

It was Ian who told her Damien wasn't blind, and he made a bet with her to test Damien.

It was Ian who gave her that cup of coffee.

Jan... How could this happen....

"Ian Philips?" Damien narrowed his eyes and smirked coldly. He believed Ian would commit such an act.

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"D'mn it, as hole! I've told you, he's up to no good!" Lucy smashed what was in her hand onto the ground.

"How could you secretly meet up with him?!"

Cherise pressed her lips. "He said... he wanted to talk to me about Damien's eyes..."

Lucy gasped, "So, was he the one who told you Damien wasn't blind, and that's why you argued with Damien?"

Cherise lowered her head. Although she didn't want to admit it, she nodded.

"I've told you he's unreliable, but you insisted on trusting him! You even brought Damien to see Dr. Johnson, claiming he could heal Damien's eyes. See what happened now!"



Cherise bit her lips and remained silent. She was at a loss for words to defend herself. It was her fault she thought Ian was diligent and had an excellent character, so he would never harbor evil

intentions.

She had placed too much trust in his character.

Damien furrowed his brows when he heard Lucy and Cherise's conversation. He walked out of the ward and called Sarah.

"Sarah, I'd like to ask about Dr. Johnson from the neighboring village."

Sarah was startled. "Dr. Johnson?"

"Yes." Damien closed his eyes and asked, "I heard he's a well-known gynecologist. Is that true?"

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## Chapter 217 A Hypocritical Weakling

Sarah smiled. "Yeah. Dr. Johnson is an expert in gynecology. Many women from the nearby villages would come to him. He even claims his pulse diagnosis technique is so advanced that pregnancy test kits can't match his accuracy!"

After hanging up the call, Damien leaned against the wall as a dangerous, frosty smirk rested on his lips.

The truth was Ian took advantage of Cherise's trust in him and plotted this scheme.

Ha! Ian Philips!

Around five in the afternoon, Ian was about to get off work. He stood in the corridor and called Cherise multiple times but failed to reach her.

Even if something happened and she blocked his original number, she hadn't seen his other number, so she wouldn't deliberately reject his call.

However, he couldn't reach her through both sets of numbers.

"Ian!" Just as Ian was perplexed, the director's voice came forth.

He lifted his head to see the director standing next to a tall man in white, staring at him and saying something. The man was tall and thin, but one could tell his body was well-built.

He wore a pair of glasses. However, the aura he emanated was not refined but overwhelming.

Ian didn't remember seeing a young, handsome staff in the research institute.

All the while, he thought he was the most handsome guy in the institute.

Frowning, Ian kept away his phone and walked to the director. "Yes, sir?"

"Mr. Belcourt, this is Ian Philips." The director introduced them to each other with a smile. "Ian, this is Mr. Lennon Belcourt. He just returned from overseas and wants to ask you some questions."

Then, the old director patted Lennon's shoulder and left. "I'll leave it to you guys to solve your problem."

After the director left, Ian stared at Lennon with a frown. "What's the matter, Mr. Belcourt?"

Ian wasn't short, but when faced with Lennon, he was overwhelmed by the latter's height and vehemence, which made him feel uncomfortable.

Lennon looked at Ian with a half-smile. "It's not a good place to talk here. Shall we head outside?"

Ian nodded.

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He thought Lennon intended to have a talk in a quiet place, like a cafe. Little did he expect Lennon to bring him to an empty space behind the institute.

Ian arched his brows. "Mr. Belcourt, are you sure you want to talk here?"

"Yeah." Lennon elegantly took off his jacket and threw it aside. Then, he rubbed his fists with a cold smile. "I don't have to choose a special venue to beat you up, right? The director is my distant relative, so I promised him not to stain his institute, but it doesn't mean I won't stain its backyard!"

As soon as he said that, he punched Ian in the face. When Lennon was abroad, he enjoyed going to the fighting arena and practicing boxing during his free time. He was an experienced fighter.

Clenching his fists, he roughed Ian up mercilessly. Ian instinctively wanted to run away, but Lennon wouldn't allow him to.

"Why are you punching me?!"

Ian shielded his head and was completely defenseless.

Lennon booted him emphatically. "Normally, I disdain roughing up someone like you, a hypocritical, bookish weakling."

## Chapter 218 Go Ahead and Hit Me

“But since you dared to harm an innocent woman and child, I can’t let you off!” Lennon punched. Ian while scowling, “You’re a medical student. You should understand how precious lives are. Cherry is only two weeks pregnant, and you spiked her drink, causing her to lose the child. Aren’t you ashamed of doing such an act?!”

Only then did Ian understand this man was Damien’s friend. He came to punch him because Cherise had a miscarriage!

Enduring the severe pain, Ian guffawed. “So, that drug worked!”

Damien took advantage of Cherise and made her marry him because she was from a poor family. He’s a jerk! Cherise shouldn’t bear children for a jerk! It’s worth being beaten up if she indeed had a miscarriage!

Jan’s laughter further irritated Lennon. He punched Ian in the face mercilessly. “How much hatred do you have against Cherry that you have to treat her like this?! She drank the coffee from you because she trusted you, but you used her trust to harm her!”

“I can’t let her bear children for a jerk! It’ll ruin her life!”

Gnashing his teeth, Jan glared fiercely at Lennon and became pathological. “Go ahead and beat me up to vent your anger. No matter how you beat me, it won’t change the fact that Cherise had a miscarriage. I can’t be happier!”

Lennon clenched his teeth and launched another fierce punch.

Ian lost his balance and slumped onto the ground, but he was still laughing. “Go ahead and hit me. I don’t care!”

It had been a while since Lennon was this infuriated. He went forward and kicked Ian ruthlessly. "Don't assume the matter will be over after today. I'm warning you; this is just the beginning!"

Lennon shook his hand fiercely, picked up his jacket from the side, and left.

Ian lay on the ground and couldn't bring himself to his feet. The smile remained on his lips. Despite being beaten up, he was thrilled that Cherise had lost her child.

"Ian!"

After Lennon walked away, a young lady stood up from a nearby bush with her phone in her hand.

She scurried over to help Ian get up. "Who's that man? He's so violent!"

"Mia?"

Jan frowned. In the rays of the setting sun, he saw clearly that this was an intern from the research institute. They joined the institute at the same time. The girl had always been attentive to him,

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but he didn't bother about her.

He sighed and stood up with Mia's help. "It's okay. I can handle it.

Mia was indignant. "Let's call the police. I recorded it when he beat you up. We have evidence, so the police will surely arrest him."

Ian was surprised. "You took a video?"

Mia nodded and showed him the video.

The recording started when Lennon beat him.

After the video finished playing, Mia frowned. "He's too much! All you did was abort the woman's child. I'm sure she must have done it willingly, right? Ian, you're a kind man. You can't possibly abort her child without her knowing. I bet the woman didn't tell him the truth!"

Ian narrowed his eyes and nodded. "You're right."

"Is he the father? He seemed so angry."

Chapter 219 Please Say Something

Mia became more enraged. "We should make a report to the police! He came and beat you up without understanding the situation!"

Ian shook his head. "Forget about it. He's powerful. Even if we submit this video recording to the police, they might not file a case..."

Mia pressed her lips. "Right. His outfit doesn't look like one of the commoners. What about this – I'm considered an influencer on Twitter. I can post the video online and pressure him to apologize to you. 'Rich man roughed up a doctor. How does this title sound?'"

Ian shook his head and wore an evil smirk. "Put it this way 'Rich man slept with his buddy's wife and roughed up the doctor after the woman miscarried.'"

Mia's eyes widened in shock. "That's shocking news! The woman who was pregnant is his buddy's wife?"

In the hospital.

Cherise leaned against the bed with her cheeks flushed, looking at Damien, who was massaging her legs. "I'm okay. You don't have to do this..."

After Lucy left, Damien had been massaging Cherise's legs for almost an hour without saying a word.

Even if he was not tired, Cherise became restless.

He was right her legs were indeed painful previously. But after the massage, her legs only felt warm.

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"Damien." She called out to him softly, but the latter did not respond.

"Hubby."

Only then did Damien lift his eyes to look at Cherise.

"Say something, will you?"

Cherise stared at him and nervously bit her lips. "I feel anxious when you're silent..."

"I know it was my fault. I shouldn't have concealed the intention of returning to my hometown this time. I shouldn't have lied to you that I was visiting Dr. Johnson for a gyne checkup. I shouldn't have met Ian behind your back and drunk his coffee... It was all my fault. I admit my mistakes. Please don't remain quiet."

Around five in the evening, Damien went outside to make a call. After that, he stayed by her side without saying a word.

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He diligently attended to all her requests but remained silent throughout.

At first, Cherise was reluctant to talk to him because of the matter of his eyesight. She didn't want to forgive him easily.

However, she gradually became flustered when Damien continued remaining silent. She thought he was angry because he had all the reasons to be.

He didn't deem her a family member and hid the truth about his sight from her. Meanwhile, she mistrusted another man and caused them to lose their first child, who was just a two-week-old embryo....

Cherise became nervous and kept talking to Damien, but he didn't respond.

"Hubby!" The young lady pouted and suddenly straightened her back, wanting to hold Damien's

hand.

However, the sudden movement gave her a dizzy spell. She instinctively pressed her temples and closed her eyes to relieve the dizziness.

"Stay still." Damien frowned and pressed Cherise onto the bed. Cherise took the chance to hold his hand and gently kissed him on his lips, sending an electric pulse through his body.

Stunned, Damien looked at her.

With reddened cheeks, Cherise gazed at him shyly. "Hubby, please stop being angry... I was wrong. I promise not to repeat the same mistake..."



The woman was petite and looked innocent.

Looking into her dark and sparkling eyes, Damien frowned. "You silly girl."

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Chapter 220 A Resolved Misunderstanding

She was the one who was injured. She was the one who was hurt and hospitalized.

Yet she was concerned about his feelings. She pulled at his arm, hoping he would be soothed.

"Don't you like silly fools?"

She pursed her lips and clung to his arm. "Don't be mad at me."

Damien sighed helplessly. He raised a hand and caressed her soft, white face. "And you? Are you still mad at me?"

Cherise paused and realized that he was referring to his eyes.

She shook her head at once. "I'm not! Not anymore!"

"I'm not mad at you either."

His voice deepened as he pulled her closer. "I'm mad at myself."

He placed his chin on her shoulder. "I'm mad at myself for letting things get to this point. At first..."

He shut his eyes. His voice was filled with pain.

“At first, I asked Frances to prepare the food you like and instructed the butler to send away all the servants. I was planning to explain about the eyes. Before we went to the countryside, I got Jacob to form the best team of opticians overseas. I wanted them to create a plan and prepare a reasonable reason for my eyes to be ‘healed. But I didn’t want to lie to you. Before everyone else knows that my eyes are all right, I wanted to tell you there was nothing wrong with my eyes the whole time. But Ian beat me to it.”

Cherise hugged him. When she noticed the sorrow in his voice, her heart ached as though it was pierced by an arrow.

When they argued the night before, she was unaware of the truth. She thought it was just an excuse when he said he was planning to reveal it to her then.

But now that she thought back...

Before everything happened, Damien instructed Frances and had her prepare a table full of food. The servants were dismissed, too.

It was not just an excuse. He was telling the truth.

Last night, he planned to accept her wholeheartedly and lay all his secrets before her.

Yet...

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Cherise pursed her lips. “I was wrong, honey...”

She did not give him a chance.

She trusted Ian too much.

In the end, she did not give him the opportunity to explain himself, nor did she give him the chance to care for their unplanned child.

She hugged him tightly. "It's my fault. I'm wrong. I wasn't a good wife. I'm not a good cherry. I'm at bad cherry..."

Damien chuckled at her babbling.

He sighed softly. "Cherise."

"Mmhmm."

"You must tell me when you meet any other man."

"Mmhmm."

"You mustn't lie to me when you meet other women."

"Mmhmm."

"You must tell me when your time of the month is late."

Her face immediately flushed as red as a ripened apple.

"Can... can I tell Frances?"

He released his hand and pinched her round face.

“Frances will report to me anyway. Do you think you should tell me yourself, or should I hear it from another person?”

Her face reddened even further. “I’ll just... tell you myself then.”

“Good.”

He hugged her and gave her a peck on her forehead. “Are you sleepy?”

“A little.”

She yawned.

She had been drowsy since some time ago.

But Damien was silent the entire time, so she could not sleep.

2/3

Now that their misunderstanding was resolved, she began to relax and felt herself getting sleepy.

But she took the opportunity and wrapped her arm around his neck. “Sleep with me!”

Chapter 221 Lennon’s Baby

“Alright.”

A light smile spread across the man's cheeks. He caressed her silky hair until her breathing became even.

"Mr. Lenoir."

Cherise had just drifted off to sleep when Greg knocked on the door. "There's a video circulating online. I saw it, and it's not pleasant news about Mrs. Lenoir. Should we do something about it?"

Damien frowned and gently lay Cherise on the bed. He put on some clothes and went out to the corridor. "What video?"

The butler handed his phone over to Damien.

The first thing that popped out at Damien was the title: 'Wealthy Man Sleeps With Close Friend's Wife, Assaults Doctor After Miscarriage.'

"Lennon went and beat up Ian?"

He returned the phone to the butler without watching the video.

"Yes."

The butler furrowed his eyebrows. "The video is circulating on a lot of platforms. I suspect some unknown forces are pushing it behind the scenes."

The man walked slowly to the end of the corridor. His eyes were fixed on the sky as he chuckled. "Let's make a show of blocking it first. Let them think I'm intimidated by this."

The video of Lennon's assault was trending in one night.

Wealthy man sleeps with close friend's wife, assaults doctor after miscarriage.

Every part of the title was enough gossip for the month!

Early the following day, Damien was feeding Cherise oatmeal in bed when Peter called.

Cherise glanced at the phone's screen and gave Damien a puzzled look. "Did you tell Grandpa about my miscarriage?" she asked in a low voice.

He shook his head. "No."

Cherise pursed her lips, relieved. She answered the call.

But when the call went through, Damien snatched the phone from her.

1/3

"Eat a bit more. I'll talk to him."

"Ah." Before Cherise could react, he was already walking out the door with the phone.

She leaned back against the headboard, eating her food while listening to their conversation.

"She's at the hospital now. She's a patient. Come here yourself if you want to see her. I won't bring her to you?"

I suggest you watch your words as an elder. She did not lose your great-grandchild. No one knows that better than I do."

Fine, you can come over. I'll be waiting.

Do not say anything thoughtless."

Cherise frowned, perplexed.

He didn't even explain why I'm in the hospital. Why does it look like Grandpa knows the reason?

And why did he mention that the baby lost in the miscarriage is not Grandpa's biological great-grandson?

Does Grandpa suspect me?

Moments later, Damien ended the call and came back.

She raised her head, looking at him with bewilderment. "What did Grandpa say?"

"He'll come visit later."

He passed the phone to her and sat down smoothly in the chair. He picked up the bowl. "Have a bit more."

She shook her head.

"I'm full. I can't eat anymore. Is Grandpa actually coming?"

She pursed her lips sheepishly. "I haven't visited him in a while. Yet now he wants to come see

me..."

Damien scoffed. "You don't need to feel sorry for him. He's here to reprimand you."

She jolted and looked up at him with astonishment. "Why?"

Why does Grandpa want to reprimand me?

"Because of this."

The man sighed and pulled out his phone. He played the video circulating all over the web.

2/3

>tu wratched the

Sleeps with a close friend wife

ver they saying that the baby I lost is Lennon

2/2

Chapter 222 Completely Different Person

What a joke! She got pregnant six months ago. She didn't even know who Lennon was six months ago!

"Who started this ridiculous rumor?"

"Jan"



“First, from what I know about Lennon’s personality, he wouldn’t ask his people to take videos. He would rather make them team up to fight against Ian,” Damien explained, his face devoid of any

emotion.

Cherise was rendered speechless by Damien’s analysis.

Lennon was indeed someone who would do something like this..

“Secondly, the video was taken from afar. The person who took this video must have taken the video from within the woods. This doesn’t suit Lennon’s personality.”

Cherise nodded. “So this video could only be Ian’s doing... No, it has to be someone on Ian’s side. who took the video.”

“That’s right.”

Damien’s eyes softened with relief as he looked at Cherise. “As for this title...”

“No one in Adania knows of my relationship with Lennon other than the Belcourt family and my close acquaintances.”

“Even the Lenoir family doesn’t know, so how did this blogger know Lennon and I are good. friends?”

“If it wasn’t for Ian, how would this blogger, Ms. Shaw, know about my relationship with Lennon?”

Cherise felt a chill run down her spine.

Ian has transformed into a completely different person.

She had never met anyone like him before.

In high school, he was the model student everyone looked up to.

After starting work, he has changed drastically, even going to such an extent to commit nefarious deeds.

She always thought Ian misunderstood Damien but never imagined such a misunderstanding could lead to him setting up this scheme against her.

Lennon wanted to help her get revenge on Ian, but he decided to use such a despicable method

1/2

to retaliate

I told you this because this matter now involves more than just the three of us.”

Damien slowly put away their utensils and gently rubbed Cherise’s temple. “The rumors couldn’t have spread this far with a mere blogger behind them.”

“There must be someone else behind this.”

Cherise pursed her lips, her mind racing with thoughts about the situation. She knew Damien’s analysis had to be correct.

He must be right.

“Who is the one making a mess out of this?”

Damien's lips curled up at her response. "Grandpa doesn't use the internet."

"Even you didn't know about the rumor. How could Grandpa, who doesn't even go online, know about it?"

Cherise's eyes lit up as she realized something. "So it must be Uncle Raymond and Tristan?"

"As expected of the top student. Brilliant deduction."

He leaned forward and kissed her cheek. "Grandpa might say unpleasant things when he's here."

Cherise nodded. "I don't mind. Grandpa doesn't know the whole truth, so I won't take it to heart."

With her gentle and trusting demeanor, she looked like a soft and cuddly bunny.

"Are you busy? If so, go ahead. I'll explain to Grandpa."

"I'm busy enough taking care of you. How could I find time for anything else?"

Damien chuckled softly as he continued to rub her temples. "Just focus on taking care of yourself during this time. I'll take care of everything else."

"I'll be on your side no matter what happens."

He gripped her hands tightly and reassured her, "You're my

last hope."

## Chapter 223 Show Me Proof

“They can target me all they want, but I will do anything to keep you safe.”

It’s time to set things straight.

Cherise nodded, her eyes flashing with determination. “I know.”

She knew about the feud between Damien and Raymond, as Lennon had mentioned it to her over drinks.

She mustn’t add fuel to the fire, as their opponent is Raymond Lenoir.

Old Mr. Lenoir arrived in Cherise’s room with Wanda, coincidentally while Damien was away on a call.

Cherise was watching a Korean drama when she heard the door open. She looked up and greeted. them, “Grandpa, Aunt Wanda.”

Old Mr. Lenoir glared at her. “Hmph!”

Wanda immediately snickered. “Who are you calling Grandpa?”

“Do you think an easy wench like you could become Mrs. Lenoir?”

Cherise furrowed her brows and looked up at Wanda. “Aunt Wanda, what do you mean?”

“What do I mean?”

“Everyone knows about your relationship with the Belcourts’ adopted son. Do you think you can fool us?”

“What do you hope to achieve by playing innocent in front of us? You’re dragging the Lenoir family’s reputation through the mud, even though you call Grandpa so affectionately. If you really cared about Grandpa, would you have done what you did with that bastard?”

Cherise’s knuckles turned white from gripping the blanket.

Despite the accusations, she remained composed and smiled at Old Mr. Lenoir. “Grandpa, don’t you trust me?”

Old Mr. Lenoir’s eyes grew cold with anger. He grunted and sat down on the couch. “If you want me to believe you, show me proof that the baby you aborted was a Lenoir!”

Cherise bit her lip and explained, “Grandpa, would you believe me if I said I only met Lennon last.

week?”

1/2

Old Mr. Lenoir’s forehead scrunched up, and he stared directly at Cherise. “Are you serious?”

“Yes, I am.”

“What a bluff!”

Wanda coldly snickered. “The video of that bastard beating up the doctor for you is spreading like wildfire. And now the Lenoir family is a laughingstock in front of all of Adania.”

“Do you think your claims of ‘I only met him last week’ will make us believe you?”

Cherise pressed her lips together tightly. "Can you tell me what kind of response you expect from me?"

"You're adamant in your belief that I'm in the wrong, and you won't accept any of my answers. What do you want me to do? Do I need to bring my child back to life and have a DNA test with Lennon?"

Wanda rolled her eyes. "That would be great."

"Wanda!" Old Mr. Lenoir furrowed his brows to stop Wanda from going overboard.

Wanda pursed her lips, realizing she had crossed the line with her attitude. "Anyway, I won't let this go easily. The Lenoir family is noble. How can we salvage our reputation after you drop this bomb on us?"

Old Mr. Lenoir sighed heavily and looked at Cherise. "Now that things have gone this far, you must at least give us a proper explanation.

"We were never well-acquainted with the Belcourt family before. In fact, we were at odds with them recently."

"Even if you claim the baby was Damien's, it doesn't make sense for Lennon to stand up for him."

"Exactly."

Wanda crossed her arms. "The Belcourt family is still reeling from the Violet incident."

Wanda trailed off, thinking about the infamous incident.

“Anyway, the Belcourt family and our family don’t have the best relationship. It doesn’t make sense why Lennon would go so far as to beat up the doctor who aborted. your child.”

2/2

Chapter 224 The Man From the Video!

“The bad blood between the Belcourt and Lenoir families has nothing to do with my relationship. with Lennon.”

Damien’s low voice rang through the room just as Wanda curtly accused Cherise.

Cherise’s gaze snapped to the source of the gravelly voice.

Damien and Lennon stood by the door, exuding an assertive and unwavering aura.

Wanda’s eyes widened in surprise when she saw that Damien was not in a wheelchair.

She scoffed and turned to look at Old Mr. Lenoir behind her. “Dad, did you notice something different about Damien?”

“His eyes were cured recently.”

Old Mr. Lenoir squinted at Damien, his composed voice layered with surprise. “His eyes are cured?”

“Yes.”

Wanda curled her lips. "I only found out yesterday afternoon. I thought Damien would come home to share the good news with everyone, but..."

"If we hadn't come to find him, he might have forgotten all about his grandpa and uncle!"

Old Mr. Lenoir's face fell slightly. "It is my fault."

Damien's lips curled into a cold sneer. He slowly made his way towards Cherise and sat down beside her. "I should have made a phone call after I announced to the public about my eyes."

The man picked up the apple on the side table and began to peel it for Cherise. "But Cherise was distraught yesterday after the abortion. I had to care for her, so I completely forgot about it."

Old Mr. Lenoir's face turned ashen at Damien's comment.

Wanda rolled her eyes, disbelieving. "Are you suggesting your wife is more important than the Lenoir family?"

Damien lowered his head and continued to gracefully peel the apple in his hands. "I have nothing else to explain if that's what Aunt Wanda thinks."

Wanda's face twisted with exasperation in an instant.

She was upset with Damien for not informing his family about his recovery, but he dared to respond that Cherise was more important to him than his family!

1/2

He was clearly defying her!

He's so obnoxious now that he can finally see after ten years!



She's always been critical of him, but he never dared to speak up against her.

She scoffed at him. "Unfortunately, she still got pregnant with someone else's child despite having your affections."

"Mrs. Lenoir, you must be accountable for your words."

Lennon icily emphasized through gritted teeth; his forehead creased with annoyance.

Only then did Wanda notice the stranger standing by the door: Lennon Belcourt, the man from the video!

Wanda chuckled menacingly. "How dare you come here?"

"My buddy's girl is at the hospital. Why would I be ashamed of coming here?"

Lennon walked into the room and marched over to a chair, where he sat down and stared coldly at Wanda. "Damien knows about my relationship with Cherise. There's no need for you to drive a wedge between us."

Wanda spat derisively, "You!"

Old Mr. Lenoir raised his head and fixed his eyes on Damien, who was engrossed in peeling an apple for Cherise. "What are your plans now that things have gotten so big?"

Damien remained silent, continuing to peel the apple.

Old Mr. Lenoir tapped his walking stick on the ground. "This is no small matter! It will damage the Lenoir family's reputation!"

“We’re a noble family who’ve kept our reputation clean for over a hundred years! I won’t tolerate such disgraceful rumors!”

“I give you three days to come up with an answer that satisfies me, or I won’t let you off easily!”

Old Mr. Lenoir scoffed as he stood up.

Behind him, Damien gently passed the peeled apple to Cherise. “If Mr. Lenoir thinks I don’t deserve to be part of the Lenoir family, you can erase my name from our family tree.”

2/2

Chapter 225 Do You Have Any Evidence?

“After all, I have never gained anything from the noble reputation of this family.”

As soon as his words left his mouth, Lennon furrowed his brows. “Damien!”

Old Mr. Lenoir’s face twisted in contempt and condescension.

He turned around and glared at Damien. “Are you admitting that Cherise had an affair with someone else, and that’s why you want your name erased from our family tree.”

“That’s not what I meant.”

Damien chuckled softly. “I have investigated the source of the video uploaded last night. It was a publicity stunt created by a media company called Baymedia, which is affiliated with Uncle Raymond’s company, Raetec Group.”

“The Lenoir family would go to such lengths to spread false rumors about my wife and intend to punish me for bringing shame to our family’s name.”

“I don’t see a reason to keep my name under our family tree.”

“I could even help Uncle Raymond save some money from sparing him the financial burdens of prolonging a publicity stunt.”

Wanda’s face immediately fell when she heard Raymond’s name being mentioned.

“Damien, how could you taint your uncle’s name? Is your uncle someone who would do something like this?”

Damien curled his lips into a smirk as he stared at her without saying a word.

Old Mr. Lenoir furrowed his brow and glanced at Wanda. “Which of you two is telling the truth?”

Wanda gritted her teeth, her heart pounding in her chest.

How did Damien find out about Baymedia?

She was the one who asked Baymedia to keep it under wraps so no one would figure out their plans.

However, Damien discovered that Baymedia was behind the incident and even revealed their relationship with the Raetec Group.

Was he aware of this all along? Or did he really have such great connections?

Despite getting caught, she maintained her calm and composed demeanor as she stared at Old Mr. Lenoir. “Dad, Damien must be mistaken.”

There's no way Raymond would do something like this,"

"Damien is a member of the Lenoir family. If Damien's reputation is tarnished, it will impact all of us greatly."

Old Mr. Lenoir's brows were furrowed as he pondered how much truth there was in her words.

He turned his head towards Damien. "How can you accuse your uncle of scheming against you? Do you have any evidence?"

"Of course."

Lennon, who was watching the scene unfold from the side, smiled amusedly. He passed the documents in his hands to Old Mr. Lenoir. "You can see for yourself."

These documents detailed the shareholdings of each shareholder and the steps involved in the preceding day's publicity stunt.

Old Mr. Lenoir's face grew grimmer as he flipped through the pages. In the end, his brows knitted into a tight knot as he stared coldly at Wanda. "You're the biggest shareholder of Baymedia?"

The edges of Wanda's face tensed up at the sudden announcement.

Wanda hurriedly leaned closer to read through the contents of the documents.

Her face flushed red.

How did Lennon get his hands on these documents?

Lennon gave her a smug smile in return as if he had seen through the confusion on her face. "Mrs. Lenoir should know that I handle high-stakes projects overseas."

"If I can't even investigate such a small matter, how do you think I'll survive in that industry?"

Wanda fell silent.

There was nothing she could say to defend herself now that the evidence was crystal clear.

"Hmph!" Old Mr. Lenoir threw the documents to the ground and spat. "No wonder you were eager to share this news with me this morning. This was all part of your plan!"

Wanda gritted her teeth, her eyes welling up with tears. "Dad, you can't blame me for this."

"You were the one who chose Cherise for Damien. If I didn't involve the public, you would've forgiven her immediately."

## Chapter 226 Fractured Bonds

"I did this for the sake of my late brother and sister-in-law. I didn't want them looking down from above, seeing Damien, a lonely man stuck with a wife who cuckolded him. And all of you were so kind... Wanda said, her voice filled with regret.

"It was unfair to Damien," someone murmured sympathetically.

Damien's face hardened, then a bitter smile curved, and he laughed disdainfully. "Well, I must really thank Aunt Wanda for her concern."

Wanda raised her chin defiantly. "You're welcome!"

She did pick up on the sarcasm in Damien's voice, but at this point, she had no choice but to swallow her pride and agree.

"Spreading baseless rumors with a baffling video without investigating the truth... Aunt Wanda's affection for me truly knows no bounds," Damien sneered, casually wiping the apple juice from Cherise's lips with his hand. "Oh, speaking of which, were you too busy to contact me?"

"Is it really that difficult to confirm the situation with a simple phone call?"

As the anger boiled up inside Wanda, her face grew even darker.

Old Mr. Lenoir raised his hand. "Enough, everyone, stop arguing!"

He glanced at Wanda, "Make sure your people behave. Have that Baymedia company shut down!"

Then, he turned his gaze to Damien and said sternly, "And if this is just a rumor, why didn't you explain yourself?"

"I don't care how you do it, but resolve this matter for me within three days!" he commanded.

Old Mr. Lenoir then gestured dismissively. "Everyone, leave. I need to talk to Cherry alone."

Wanda rolled her eyes and scoffed. "Imagine having a conversation with someone so devoid of decency. What could one possibly discuss with such a person?"

Old Mr. Lenoir shot her a sharp glaring look, and Wanda left begrudgingly.

"No harsh words."

Damien shot a cautionary glance at Old Mr. Lenoir before leaving the room with Lennon.

The hospital room door closed behind them, leaving only Cherise and Old Mr. Lenoir inside.

“Grandpa.”

Cherise leaned against the bed and said softly, “Is there something you want to talk to me about?”

1/2

“I’ve troubled you, he shut his eyes and sighed, his voice filled with remorse.

Old Mr. Lenoir sat in his chair, leaning on his cane, and shook his head helplessly. Tve already figured out what’s happening”

“Unfortunately, I’ve grown old and can’t handle it anymore.

He sighed, leaned back in his chair, and continued, “I can’t handle it, and I don’t have the right. Seventeen years ago, I didn’t handle it, and now... I have even less of a right to handle it.”

Cherise listened, feeling a bit perplexed. “Grandpa, I don’t understand what you mean

“You don’t have to,” he said meekly.

Old Mr. Lenoir sighed. “Cherise, I chose you because of your simplicity and optimistic approach to life.

In the days to come... I’m leaving Damien in your hands,” he muttered.

“He’s been alone for years, without anyone. I kept my distance to avoid causing him any problems.”

“But deep down, I know you still care for him as your grandson, Grandpa,” Cherise said earnestly.

Cherise pursed her lips and spoke with utmost clarity, “If you truly didn’t care for him, you wouldn’t have intervened in his love life.”

Her innocent eyes filled with determination, and she continued, “You arranged his first three engagements, Grandpa. I am the fourth.”

“I have witnessed many elders in the countryside who seem disinterested in their descendants’ lives, including their marital status.”

“And certainly not... like you, who insist I bear him a child within two years.”

The Old Mr. Lenoir was briefly taken aback, but a smile crept onto his face. “Well, well, I didn’t anticipate your astuteness, my dear.”

Speaking of kids...

Chapter 227 Despair and Deject

Cherise lowered her head, “But Grandpa, I’m so sorry.”

“I was already pregnant, but I... I was young and naive; I didn’t even realize I was pregnant initially.”

“That’s how I was taken advantaged of-by someone drugging me.....

Tears welled as she looked up at Old Mr. Lenoir and said determinedly. “But Grandpa, I swear. I will try harder in the future to have a child with Damien as soon as possible!”



Old Mr. Lenoir nodded slowly.

“So, you’re saying the doctor drugged you without your knowledge?” he asked.

“Yes,” she replied.

Cherise bit her lip, recounting the entire incident to Old Mr. Lenoir. “It’s my fault, Grandpa. I trusted him too much because I thought he was a person of good character and excellence...”

“Being willing to trust others isn’t a flaw,” Old Mr. Lenoir sighed and shook his head. “I’ll take care of this person.”

Cherise widened her eyes in surprise. “Grandpa...”

Hadn’t he just said he was too old to meddle with children’s matters?

Yet, now, he seemed determined to confront Ian.

“I really cannot manage this,” he clarified.

As if sensing her confusion, Old Mr. Lenoir smiled knowingly. “However, I can arrange for others.

to handle him.”

“She’ll be more than willing,” he added.

He sighed heavily and continued, “The great battle is looming, and it’s time for her to return.”

Before Cherise could unravel the mystery of the 'she' he referred to, Old Mr. Lenoir rose with the support of his cane. "Take care of yourself. A woman's body is most delicate at this time."

"I... I will," Cherise stammered, still perplexed.

"Grandpa won't keep you any longer," he said, leaving Cherise in a whirlwind of unanswered questions and enigmatic anticipation.

After Old Mr. Lenoir left, Damien and Lennon returned to the hospital room.

1/3

Lennon cagerly picked up a banana from the fruit basket Bernard had sent to Cherise and started eating. "So, what pearls of wisdom did the old man impart? Spent quite a bit of time, didn't he?"

Cherise was about to answer, but Lennon cut her off. "Let me guess!"

He imitated Old Mr. Lenoir, mockingly stroking an imaginary beard, and said in a low, gruff voice, "He probably said, 'You've done a great job! Keep staying by Damien's side!'"

"Damien's been through a lot, you know. You better take good care of him."

"And, of course, he must have told you to rest well and hurry up to give Damien another child"" he added.

He earnestly mimicked Old Mr. Lenoir, making Cherise burst into laughter.

"See, you look so much better when you smile," he continued, watching how the light returned to

her face.

Lennon looked at Cherise and shook his head. "Stop wearing that grim look; no one blames

"That's right, no one blames you."

you.

Damien gently sat beside Cherise and held her hand. "Besides these words, what else did he say?" he teased with a playful glint in his eyes.

Cherise furrowed her brow and recalled, "He also mentioned bringing 'her' back. I have no idea who this 'her' Grandpa was talking about."

Damien frowned slightly, clearly had no idea of this mysterious 'her' as well.

"Who cares? That old man enjoys his mysterious games. It's not like it's the first time," Lennon shrugged nonchalantly, munching on the banana.

Cherise rolled her eyes but was immediately distracted as her phone chimed.

It was a call from Lucy Staber.

"Cherry, you've got to get online! Ian's doing a livestream! It's driving me crazy!" Lucy's voice came through the phone urgently.

Cherise blinked in surprise and hastily hung up, clicking on the live-stream link Lucy had sent.

When she clicked on it, she saw Ian sitting on rocks by the seashore, looking utterly despaired and dejected.

"I really have no way out," he pleaded desperately.

Watching from the phone screen, Ian still had visible bruises from the altercation with Lennon. Last night. His face was swollen and discolored, making it hard to recognize him.

2/3

If it weren't for the frameless glasses he wore on his nose, Cherise might have doubted that it was

Ian.

## Chapter 228 Malicious Comments

Lennon was ruthless when beating up Ian

"I got beaten up like this, and no one cared. Tan said in a plaintive voice.

"I was just trying to do a good deed to help a junior who got pregnant, but look what happened," he continued.

"Their influence is just too great. They came to hit me yesterday, and today, the research lab I work for fired me." His voice was filled with distress, almost to the point of tears.

Cherise frowned and turned up the volume on the online live broadcast.

"I got him fired from the research institute," Damien said while leaning back in his chair, not bothering to look up, as he sliced an apple for Cherise. "I was the one who got him into that job in the first place. But he did something against my trust, so I requested that the institute terminate his employment. I don't see anything wrong with that."

Cherise pondered momentarily and agreed, "That's fair enough."

It was Cherise who had initially requested Damien's help to secure a job for Ian at the research institute. He had gotten the position solely because of the connections related to his association with Damien. Losing a job essentially handed to him through those connections when those ties were cut wasn't an unexpected outcome. But online netizens had a different perspective.

"Poor guy, don't lose hope, bro!"

"Don't stress, buddy, we've got your back for some sweet revenge!"

"@AdianaOfficial, you just gonna let them get away with this?"

"Lennon, that's cold-hearted!"

"Cherise, that's not cool!"

"Lennon, this is unacceptable!"

"Cherise, you should know better!"

A flood of comments filled the live stream.

As netizens rallied behind him, Ian sought to fan the flames of support. He exaggeratedly sighed and remarked, "Hold on, everyone. Cherise probably has her reasons."

"She has her own matters to deal with, after all..."

"But I'm truly at the end of my rope. As someone without power and influence, oppressed by the privileged, what recourse do I have other than contemplating the unthinkable?" His words hung

heavily in the air, and he stood, peering out at the distant sea as if contemplating a plunge

The live stream feed became a sea of comments – some encouraging him to reconsider others hurling ineults at Cherise and Lennon, and some lamenting the state of society

“Ian!” A young man in white rushed to his side, grabbing Ian’s arm. “Don’t give up, no matter what Let’s figure this out together.”

“Look at all the people supporting you online. We’ll speak to the head of the institute, and hell surely listen,” A girl chimed in, her words resonating with the live chat audience.

“Let’s gather at the institute’s entrance and make our voices heard together!”

“Let’s persuade the director: it’ll make a difference!”

Cherise clutched her phone, her eyes scanning the array of comments from netizens. She was taken aback by the malice people could muster. Oblivious to the truth, they refused to investigate, letting a mere brawl video paint her as a promiscuous woman who had an affair with Lennon and was now pregnant. Their words, harsh and defamatory, poured in without remorse

“Stop reading their comments.” Damien interjected, shielding her phone with his hand. “I’ll handle this”

Cherise closed her eyes, but the hurtful words echoed in her mind. “I want. I want to deal with it myself,” she stated, her head held high as she looked at Damien with a determined gaze. “I want to reclaim my reputation and honor on my own.”

Damien assured her. “I can protect you.”

## Chapter 229 I Need to Grow

Damien knew that there was no deterring her once Cherise had set her mind on something. Yet, as a man, he couldn't bear to witness his beloved facing the deluge of those rumors. He wasn't afraid of trials or the judgment of others. His only fear was seeing her hurt.

"I believe you can and will protect me." Cherise affirmed. She gently pressed her lips together, reached out to encircle his neck, and kissed his lips tenderly. "But, my love, this all began because of me. I can't just sit here and wait for you to resolve everything on my behalf."

Her eyes shimmered as she gazed at him. "You've done so much for me already, but I can't keep sheltering myself behind you. I need to grow."

"I need to be ready for anyone who might wish me harm."

Damien, convinced by her words, could only release a deep sigh. "Alright."

Amid his concern, Damien found solace in witnessing his once young and naive wife transforming into an independent and resilient woman.

"Hey, hey, love is in the air!" Lennon teased, cupping his cheek. "My teeth are about to fall out from all this sweetness."

He snatched his phone and called Jacob. "Jacob, save me! They're drowning me in their love, and I'm here solo!"

Jacob, on the other end, let out a chuckle. "Looks like you're having the time of your life as the third wheel."

Before long, the hospital room door swung open. Jacob, sporting khaki pants and a light blue shirt leaned casually against the door frame. "Another third wheel joining the party! Am I invited?" Jacob teased.

"Of course, welcome!" Cherise chimed in, her cheeks blushing, lying on the hospital bed.

After some playful banter between Lennon and Jacob, the conversation shifted to Ian's predicament.

"I had a feeling he was like that," Jacob remarked, stifling a yawn. "He'd do anything for success. That's why I had to let him go."

Cherise pouted. "You told me you wanted him to go after his dreams."

Jacob rolled his eyes at her. "I wouldn't have been so accommodating if he wasn't your senior. I was nice because of you."

"But..." Jacob's expression darkened. "I heard some netizens are planning to visit the research institute this afternoon to pressure the director into reinstating Ian's job."

1/2

"They even want the institute to award Ian a Good Samaritan Award. The prize could support a less fortunate family for months."

"Damn!" Lennon couldn't help but curse. "So Ian, who harmed a child and spread false rumors, is now making money off it?"

"Essentially," Jacob said, lifting his eyes to glance at Damien, "Have you decided what to do?"

Damien reclined in his chair, maintaining his composed demeanor as he peeled grapes for Cherise. "Let them make a fuss. I doubt they'll manage to get his job back."

"And," he added coldly, "that Good Samaritan Award? I'm the sponsor. They'll need my approval to present the award."



“Any award Ian desires,” Damien continued, “he’ll have to face me personally and clarify his good deeds.”

Lennon frowned. “So you’re not taking any action?”

“Most likely not,” Damien replied nonchalantly, feeding another grape to Cherise. “What’s your take?”

“I’m going to confront him,” Cherise declared. She swallowed the grape and met Damien’s gaze. “If Ian has the audacity to seek not only his job but also the award, I want to confront him directly about why he thinks he deserves it.”

2/2

## Chapter 230 Life’s Regret and Unexpected Pursuits

“Alright,” Damien gently reached out and tousled her hair, his affectionate smile warming the moment. “Let’s have a meal first, and then we’ll head over to the research institute. Does that sound good to you?”

“Yes!” Cherise nodded in enthusiastic agreement. With Ian’s potential quest to regain his position and claim the prize money, the afternoon when the netizens gathered was an optimal window of opportunity. They would be there, ready and waiting for him at the research institute.

Following a delightful lunch, Damien personally chauffeured Cherise to the research institute. A few dedicated netizens had already gathered outside, their presence a testament to the brewing digital storm.

Cherise and Damien, keen to avoid the commotion, discreetly entered through the institute’s

back door.

Welcome, Mr. and Mrs. Lenoir!" Upon their arrival through the back entrance, a chorus of warm greetings resonated through the research institute. All the researchers had lined up, applauding and cheering enthusiastically to welcome them.

A headache began to creep in. The reception felt all too reminiscent of the grand event Bernard had orchestrated during Cherise's visit to the Shaw Group for an inspection.

As an unsettling feeling gnawed at her, she heard a familiar voice, "Ms. Shaw! Surprise!

Bernard's large face appeared at the end of the line. "Why are you here?" Cherise asked, taken aback by his sudden appearance.

"Because our group sponsors this medical research institute!" Bernard's innocent blink and wide eyes radiated his pride. "The director called me a while ago and said you were coming for an inspection. Since they didn't know what kind of welcome ceremony you'd like, I came to give them some guidance."

Bernard was clearly basking in his achievement. "Aren't you surprised? You didn't expect to see me here, did you?"

Cherise stumbled over her words, "Yes, I'm genuinely surprised."

Soon enough, Cherise learned that the entire medical research institute indeed fell under the sponsorship of the Shaw Group. It suddenly made sense why Damien treated this place like his backyard.

Nevertheless, a question lingered: Why did Damien sponsor a medical research institute years ago?

"Because of my sister," Damien shared, his arm still affectionately wrapped around Cherise's waist as they made their way to the director's office. "When I was thirteen, our family villa caught fire."

“In an attempt to save me, my sister sustained severe burns, disfiguring herself and causing extensive internal organ damage.”

Damien let out a soft sigh. “During that time, medical science simply couldn’t save her, so my grandfather arranged for a team of burn specialists from abroad to urgently transfer her to a different medical facility.”

“She passed away on the plane before reaching the destination.”

As Damien recounted this painful chapter of his life, his eyes reflected a deep sorrow. “So, when Lennon mentioned that a doctor he knew was planning to establish a medical research institute dedicated to rare diseases, I didn’t hesitate to provide my sponsorship.”

He sighed again, leaving the topic there.

Cherise pursed her lips and held his hand with a firm grip. “I can understand how that feels.”

Having witnessed her grandmother’s struggles with heart disease, she had been motivated to become a skilled cardiovascular surgeon. Often, life’s regrets drive people toward unexpected pursuits.

With that, they finally arrived at the director’s office. Acknowledging Cherise’s recent miscarriage and her less-than-optimal condition, the director had thoughtfully arranged the most comfortable hospital bed for her to rest on within the office.

“Thank you, Director,” Cherise expressed, feeling somewhat self-conscious yet genuinely appreciative.