

## **Marrying 321**

### Chapter 321 Unrelenting Agony

Back then, there was a stark contrast between Mandy and Cherise. Little did she know, the elegant Mandy, oozing confidence and aloofness, had been meticulously molded to perfection. Little did anyone know, deep down, that a vulnerable little girl was residing within her. After all, she was merely nineteen years old.

As for Cherise, who was also nineteen, had her thoughts occupied with books and exams. day in and day out. However, the nineteen-year-old Mandy had already gone through the most excruciating pain.

“I won’t let that happen,” Cherise sighed deeply gently patting Mandy’s back. “My husband... your brother-in-law, he’s remarkable; he’s capable of anything. You need to trust us, alright?”

Mandy smiled softly, her voice barely above a whisper.

She remained silent for a while before eventually locking eyes with Cherise. “I don’t believe in him-I believe in you.”

With those words, the young girl’s features underwent a sudden distortion. A sharp surge of pain washed over her, causing her to unconsciously convulse and grasp Cherise’s hand, unintentionally leaving it crimson.

“Cherry!” Jacob rapidly approached, but Mandy clamped down on Cherise’s hand, turning it bright red.

Her complexion paling from the pain, Cherise showed no inclination to withdraw her

hand.

If it hurt me this much, then Mandy must be experiencing something far worse.

Cherise had witnessed her grandmother suffer heart attacks, but it was never like this, never this agonizing.

She closed her eyes and, after a moment, fixed her gaze on Jacob. "Is our only option to plead with S to destroy that control terminal?"

Jacob furrowed his brow. "Not exactly. My team found that the chip controlling her was manufactured by the Tanner Family in Europe. Given their knowledge of chip production, they likely possess the means to deactivate it."

"Dame has already established contact with the Tanner Family," Jacob continued, "but....it seems they are unwilling to share the method of deactivating the chips."

Cherise pressed her lips together. "What if Damien and I approach S?"

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Considering she was Damien's real sister, perhaps he could persuade her...

"No, you mustn't..."

Amid her agony, Mandy lifted her head and shook it in response to Cherise's proposal. "Absolutely not..."

"But..." Cherise said, then pursed her lips, her heart aching watching Mandy's distressed expression.

"If possible, do everything you can to never cross paths with her in your lifetime..."

"She..." Mandy closed her eyes and left the sentence unfinished.

Fleeting recollections of S' words floated hazily in her mind: "The fire that happened. thirteen years ago was actually related to the Shaws. That woman is utterly unworthy of marrying my younger brother."

Cherise's discomfort lingered as she traveled back to her villa from Jacob's clinic. The haunting image of Mandy's anguish was etched deep in her thoughts. She could vividly picture Mandy, her hands tangled in her hair, ruthlessly banging her head against the ground and walls. The sheer intensity of her suffering was unmistakable. Even Cherise, who prided herself on her physical strength, knew that managing Mandy's torment would have been impossible without Jacob's assistance. Mandy was clearly enduring pain that would have driven anyone else to desire death.

Cherise clenched her hands tightly, the skin on her palms paling under the pressure. Before encountering Mandy's suffering, each time Damien spoke of his sister, his words had been imbued with admiration, describing her as beautiful and gentle. Cherise had never fathomed that Damien's sister, who had rushed back from abroad to celebrate Damien's birthday and discuss business, could harbor such cruelty.

It was becoming increasingly clear that those who had genuinely endured profound pain and harbored hatred were at risk of psychological turmoil.

Mandy's words continued to echo in Cherise's mind, still vivid in her memory.

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## Chapter 322 The Tanner Family

"Promise me, you won't ever meet Damien's sister," Mandy implored, her eyes brimming with desperation. "We have no conflicts, but just because I was of some use to her, she cast me into hell."

"And you..." Mandy's voice trailed off, but Cherise could discern the unspoken words. It was highly likely that Maeve, Damien's sister, strongly disapproved of her and Damien's relationship.

Jacob had jokingly suggested that approaching Maeve and offering divorce from Damien as a bargaining chip might lead to her agreeing to destroy the control terminal. Cherise had no doubts about the possibility, but she couldn't take that path. She had made solemn vows during her marriage to Damien

in front of Old Mr. Lenoir, promising that she would never pursue a divorce. Even in Old Mr. Lenoir's absence, she was determined not to part ways with Damien easily. Regardless of his sister's opinion of her, her decision would remain resolute.

Thus, only one course of action remained: seeking out the members of the Tanner Family.

Upon her return to the villa, Cherise found Damien sitting on the couch, engrossed in his laptop screen.

She approached him. "Honey, what are you looking at?"

He lifted her gently and settled her onto his lap. "Jacob should have told you. The chip responsible for controlling brainwaves is manufactured by the Tanner Family in Europe."

Cherise nodded in comprehension. "Have they responded?"

Damien nodded and directed her attention to the invitation on the laptop screen. "They've invited me for the birthday celebration of Beckham Tanner, the head of the Tanner Family."

Cherise appeared surprised. "Are you closely acquainted with them?"

Damien shook his head. "Not particularly. But my European company has engaged in some business dealings with the Tanners. They're likely aware that I'm the driving force behind these enterprises."

He cradled her face and bestowed a tender kiss upon her lips. "Should I bring you with

me?"

Cherise appeared taken aback and hastily shook her head. "I better not... I've never attended formal events and am unfamiliar with upper-class etiquette. What if... I

embarrass you?"

Moreover, foreign locales were utterly foreign to her.

"As my wife, you must learn how to navigate such occasions." He held her, soothing her gently.

"What if someone slips something in my drink, and I'm spirited away by another woman?"

And you

weren't there to protect me?" His voice, resonant and magnetic, held a hint of a smile. Cherise pursed her lips and playfully mimicked his cheek-pinching gesture by applying it to his face. "I can't read minds. How could I possibly tell which drink is poisoned and which isn't?"

Damien chuckled and planted a tender kiss on her cheek. "But you did promise to protect

me."

"It's my first time visiting that country, and it's for your sister, Mandy. Don't you think you should accompany me?" Damien suggested.

Cherise pouted but ultimately agreed. She understood that Damien simply wanted to take her out for a change of scenery and relaxation. Nonetheless, she genuinely needed a break to clear her mind.

"How is she doing now?" Upon receiving her assent, Damien tenderly kissed her on the cheek and inquired.

"She's not in good shape." Cherise pursed her lips and proceeded to describe Mandy's condition to him. "Seeing her like that... it truly pains me."

## Chapter 323 Give it Our All

Cherise bowed her head, releasing a deep sigh before meeting Damien's gaze. the Tanner Family's birthday banquet?"

"When is

"In a week," Damien replied, exhaling with a sense of gravity. "We should depart tomorrow. The Tanners are very particular with customs and etiquette. We should move in well in advance to avoid being late."

Cherise pursed her lips and nodded, her mind gravitating toward Mandy's predicament. "What are we going to do about Mandy? We can't just let her suffer any longer."

Ever the reassuring presence, Damien consoled her while affectionately stroking her head. "Don't fret. I've already arranged for the chips extracted from her to be securely stored. When she was at Sequoia, her body couldn't receive signals, which indicates that remote. areas can obstruct these signals. The Wools knew that she had previously visited Sequoia. It would raise suspicion if we sent her back to that same place. My team has been scouting for other locations."

He sighed, his voice heavy with concern. "Jacob will look after her until our return."

Cherise nodded, feeling relieved that Mandy would be left in capable hands. "How long will we be away?"

"A week," Damien answered, sealing his response with a tender kiss upon her lips. "We will return after the birthday banquet. So, we must persuade the Tanners to provide us with the method to deactivate the chip in Mandy's brain within the week."

Cherise bit her lip and nodded resolutely. "Let's give it our all?"

“Wholeheartedly,” Damien confirmed. He playfully pinched her cheek and asked, “Do you find me intimidating now?”

The question took Cherise by surprise. “What made you think I would?”

“With my sister being that cruel...” Damien sighed. “Do you find me intimidating too?”

Cherise shook her head fervently. “No, you’re wonderful. You are the finest person I’ve ever met.”

Damien smiled, affectionately ruffling her hair. “Then I will strive to be the best.”

Cherise nodded, embracing his neck and planting a steadfast kiss on his cheek. “My husband is the best!”

“Actually, there’s something I’ve wanted to ask you.” Damien broached the topic with a

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hint of amusement. “Yesterday, I mentioned my intention to adopt Mandy as my sister. But why is it that I’ve become her brother-in-law just a day later instead?”

Cherise blushed and hesitated. “Well... fundamentally, isn’t it the same thing?”

little

Damien persisted while pursing his lip playfully, “It’s not the same. In the future, when we quarrel, she’ll take your side.”

Cherise blinked. "Um... What if we, well, just don't get into arguments?"

Before departing for Europe, Cherise paid a visit to her school. She had a particular

in mind: to offer a sincere apology to her tutor.

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Just half a month ago, she had taken a two-week leave from her studies due to health issues. Unfortunately, she found herself in need of another week and three days of leave soon after.

Her tutor, accustomed to her frequent absences, addressed her sternly. "Ms. Shaw, consider this your final reminder! When you return after this ten-day vacation, you'll be

on the brink of your final exams! Last semester, you had straight A's in all your subjects. If your grades slip this semester, there'll be no mercy from me!"

Cherise offered her tutor an apologetic smile and replied, "I completely understand."

Her tutor maintained a firm stance, emphasizing the importance of action. "It's not enough to merely understand. What truly counts is taking action!"

With a stern look, the tutor continued, "Make sure to bring your textbooks, and don't neglect your studies!"

Cherise nodded earnestly, committing these instructions to memory. As she packed her luggage at home, she dutifully placed her textbooks in her suitcase.



## Chapter 324 First Flight

“Madam, wasn’t your trip to Europe meant to be a getaway? Why then...”

Why bring textbooks?

Homework, perhaps?

Cherise chuckled sheepishly, “The finals are approaching... I need to prepare for it...”

Moved, Frances quietly unpacked the books. “Madam, you are truly a hard worker...”

Head bowed, engrossed in her phone, Cherise silently nodded.

On the screen, a list was sent from Lucy.

“I want postcards from Europe!”

“Designer clothes from France!”

“British comestics!”

“And... Perfumes!”

Overwhelmed, Cherise retorted, “Sis, you never wear perfumes.”

“Right.”

Silence befell Lucy, but not for long.

"I don't care, I want it! Consider it my alluring post-singlehood!"

"And don't forget everything else I listed!"

Resigned, Cherise acquiesced helplessly. "Alright, I'll buy them all."

Post-chat, she took a screenshot of the list and forwarded it to Lennon. "Your move."

Lennon was left with o

"Fine, I'll get them."

words.

Lying in bed, phone in her hands, Cherise could not contain her grin.

Damien entered the room and caught the sight of his wife giggling like a silly kid over her phone.

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He approached her leisurely, sat on the bed, glimpsed at the phone, and affectionately ruffled her hair. "Little smarty."

Embarrassed, Cherise stuck out her tongue. "Anyway, I have no clue about the stuff she'd asked for."

"Lennon's lived here for years; surely he knows better."

Damien smiled faintly. "We'll see."

With that, he picked up the phone and showed her the chat.

Seconds later, Lennon sent him Lucy's wish list.

"Do me a favor at your convenience."

Cherise was speechless.

Annoyed, she snatched Damien's phone and replied in a voice message. "Lennon Belcourt, can you put in a little effort?"

A long silence was followed by Lennon's innocent voice. "I've never courted a girl, and I don't know what to buy..."

Fuming, Cherise shot back. "Neither has my husband! He's clueless too!"

"He knows..."

A pitiful Lennon retorted. "He recently did a huge shopping for a woman..."

His words were cut off as Damien seized the phone.

Startled, Cherise gazed up at Damien. "What did he say you bought a lot of...?"

Damien, fist to his lips, coughed lightly. "Time to go."

Cherise eyed him doubtfully, then turned her attention to Frances, who was still packing.

Unaware, Frances shook her head.

Damien became uncomfortable as he threw an awkward gaze at Frances, then muttered, "Let me get Mr. Hampson to help with the luggage."

With that, his towering shadow whisked away into thin air.

Cherise was dumbfounded.

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Is he hiding something!?

Before departing, Cherise meticulously calculated the distance between Adania and Italy on the map.

By her estimation, they would... Transit in Serenity Falls.

Yet, Damien led her through the VIP channel and straight onto a private jet.

Her first flight, a private one.

Aboard, excited and undisguised, she buckled up tightly and glanced around eagerly-she was the very picture of a child on her first flight.

Chapter 325 None of Them Last

Damien rubbed her head and said affectionately, "If you enjoy traveling, I can take you more often in the future."

Cherise's eyes sparkled. "Really?"

Mmm...

The feeling of being on a plane was pretty good, she thought.

But that notion quickly dissipated when the plane began its ascent.

So... So scary!

It felt like her heart and lungs had switched places!

She kept reminding herself. Cherise, you're top of your class. You understand the physics of a plane. You know the odds of an accident are absurdly low. You shouldn't be afraid.

But she could not help it!

Finally, heart pounding, Cherise threw herself into Damien's arms. Whimpering, she cried to him, "I am terrified!"

Damien could not help but chuckle at her pitiful look. "In that case, do we still go on these trips in the future?"

With reddened eyes, she responded, "Yes!"

Her comical response brought both Damien and Mr. Hampson into a fit of laughter.

Soon, the plane stabilized.

Cherise, tears in her eyes, snuggled into Damien's embrace and silently drifted off to sleep.

There were tear stains on her face even after she had fallen asleep.

Damien smiled helplessly and reached out to pat her head.

Silly girl.

Cherise was only awakened by Damien when they had landed.

Stepping off the plane, they were greeted by an exotic ambiance.

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She drew long breaths of the foreign air; there was something different about the air here to what Adania had to offer. She suddenly felt that a trip overseas... wasn't so bad after all.

Gwenn Tanner's vehicle was already waiting outside the airport.

As soon as Cherise stepped out of the airport, hand in hand with Damien, a woman with long, jet-black hair, wearing a strappy dress that boldly displayed her cleavage, approached them.

"Mr. Lenoir."

The woman extended her hands enthusiastically, intending to hug Damien, but he blocked her with a raised hand.

His voice was cold yet polite as he introduced Cherise. "This is my wife."

"Oh."

The woman glanced at Cherise and remarked with a hint of mockery. "Mr. Lenoir, you like them skinny, don't you?"

Cherise's face fell, but she remained silent.

Damien responded with a faint smile. "At least don't like them plus-sized."

The woman's face turned ashen pale, but she still managed a polite smile. "Let me introduce myself, Mr. Lenoir. I am Gwenn Tanner, the one who sent you the invitation."

She extended her hand. "Welcome to my home."

Damien shook her hand lightly. "Hello."

"Our car is waiting there."

The woman gracefully pointed to the vehicle behind her and turned to lead the way.

With the luggage, Blake and Mr. Hampson were slow to follow, so Damien turned back to help.

Gwenn walked ahead with Cherise.

She made no effort to hide her disdain for Cherise. "Mr. Lenoir has built an empire in Europe. I thought someone as successful as him would follow his heart more."

"I didn't expect him to be like everyone else, marrying someone like you for his own

benefit."

With that, she scornfully sized up Cherise. "In your city, you must be considered a socialite, am I right? Why are you dressed so casually?"

Cherise furrowed her brows in confusion. "Socialite?"

"Yes."

Gwenn sneered. "Someone as unappealing as you must be relying on family connections to be able to marry a man like Mr. Lenoir. Your parents play a part in his business, don't they?"

"Could there be another reason?"

She scoffed, "I've seen plenty of marriages like this. None of them last."

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Chapter 326 The Tanners

Cherise became blue in the face.

She coughed lightly. "Miss Tanner, there must be a misunderstanding here..."

"I... My family isn't prestigious by any means."

Gwenn stopped, turned around, and looked at her with a confused expression, as if waiting for an explanation.

Cherise pursed her lips. "I do not come from a wealthy background. It's quite modest, actually..."



"I grew up in the countryside."

Gwenn frowned in thought. "Oh, are you what they call a 'fallen noble' in your country?"

"No wonder you seem so unsophisticated."

Cherise pursed her lips, feeling that she needed to set Gwenn straight.

"You're mistaken. I am not some fallen noble."

"I'm just an ordinary country girl."

"To be honest, this is my first time abroad. I didn't have a lot growing up, and I've never seen such grandeur before."

"My husband married me, not because of my family, but because he loves me for who I

am."

Gwenn looked at her incredulously. "You're joking."

"If your family isn't wealthy, I don't understand why someone like Mr. Lenoir would be with you."

"Because she's kind and adorable, and she understands courtesy."

Damien came over, luggage in one hand, the other elegantly resting on Cherise's shoulder. "And even when she meets someone for the first time, like you, Miss Tanner, she won't make fun of them even if she doesn't like them. That's what's most precious about her."

His voice was deep and indifferent, each word light, but when put together, they felt like an intense shot to Gwenn's heart.

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Gwenn frowned and decided not to take this further. "Everyone, let's get in the car."

With Damien's thoughtful assistance, Cherise got into the car.

Damien's earlier words had rendered Gwen silent for the rest of the journey.

When the car had come to a halt, she frowned and ordered the servants to accommodate Damien and Cherise, then left without even a word of greeting.

Cherise was dumbfounded. "This woman, Miss Tanner..."

Does she lack common courtesy?

After all, they were invited by her, but she left them with the servants without a word.

"The Tanners normally behave this way; don't mind her."

Damien rubbed her head. "Let's get out, get settled, and then pay our respects to the elders of the Tanner family."

Cherise nodded and got out of the car.

Outside the car was a whole new world.

She had not expected to see such magnificent traditional architecture in this foreign land.

The grand structure reminded her of the ancient palaces she saw in the movies. Calling it a castle would not be an overstatement.

Man-made hills, streams, patios, carved corridors, and a garden full of greenery.

For a moment, Cherise wondered if she had come to the wrong place.

Is this... Not a movie set?

If not for the people in suits moving in the area, she would have thought she had traveled

back in time!

Understanding the awe displayed on her face, a servant of the Tanner family began to lead

way while quietly explaining, "Our old master loves the ancient style, and the master indulges him, so he had the house fit out to old master's liking."

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Cherise looked around in astonishment and could not help but comment, "Such a filial

son... Your master."

"Of course!"

## Chapter 327 Pampered

Cherise could not help but marvel. "That's so impressive..."

Damien affectionately ruffled her hair. "I can do that too."

Cherise gave him a sidelong glance. "I'm not going anywhere!"

He chuckled, "True that."

The pair bantered until they arrived at the room arranged for them by the Tanner family.

It was a suite akin to a presidential suite, with Cherise and Damien occupying one room. and Mr. Hampson and Blake in the adjacent one.

After the servant showed them into the room and briefly introduced the place, he turned to leave.

"Wait."

Damien unexpectedly stopped him.

"Is there anything else you need, Mr. Lenoir?"

"Please give me the address of this place."

He smiled faintly. "I have some personal items that will be delivered shortly."

The servant paused, then handed a business card to Mr. Hampson with a nod. "However, the Tanner residence is strictly guarded; your butler will need to meet the deliverer in person for the items to be allowed in."

Damien nodded.

After the servant left, Cherise lay on the bed, propping her chin with her hands and, curiously watching Damien. "What's being delivered?"

He just smiled. "You'll find out."

"Oh."

Cherise pouted, still lying on the bed. "Didn't you say we were going to pay respects to the elders of the Tanner family after a short rest?"

"When are we going?"

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She was so tired and wanted to rest early.

Damien glanced at his watch; a hint of a smile formed on his lips. "Relax, it won't take long."

It was not long before Mr. Hampson's phone went off, and he hurriedly stepped out.

Minutes later, he turned with a large suitcase.

"Madam, these are all prepared by the master, especially for you."

“What is it?”

Cherise yawned, got off the bed, and opened the suitcase.

Inside, it was filled to the brim with gifts for her.

Clothes, dresses, perfumes, cosmetics...

“I plan to dress you up so you don’t get made fun of again; you will blind them with your glamor.”

Damien leaned against the doorframe and said with a light laugh.

Cherise was startled, and then understanding dawned on her.

Even though she preferred jeans to go with white T-shirts on regular days, she understood that she was in no ordinary place right now.

She was here to accompany Damien to a noble banquet, so it made sense not to dress too casually. Otherwise, she would be subject to more mockery like that from Gwenn earlier.

She pursed her lips and emptied the suitcase by turning it over.

The clothes looked extravagant, clearly meticulously tailored from reputable designer

brands.

The dresses were beautiful too.

The shoes sparkled like crystals, and the heels were not too high, which told her that Damien noticed she seldom wore heels.

But...

She looked at the pile of perfumes and cosmetics and felt challenged.

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### Chapter 328 A Makeup Attempt

Damien cleared his throat lightly. "Let me handle it."

Cherise's eyes widened in disbelief. He knows how to apply makeup?

Why did she know nothing about this?!

Thus, with anticipation filling her heart, she eagerly perched herself on a chair. "Dear, go ahead!"

Damien's eyebrows contracted slightly as he unlocked his phone.

Jacob, haven't you been working on your makeup skills?' He texted.

On the other end of the line, Jacob was silent for a good while before responding. "What's up with this?"

"I bought Cherise a lot of makeup, but she doesn't know how to use them."

Another long pause before, "Are... You asking me to guide you remotely?"

"Kind of."

After sending the message, he impassively took a photo of the assortment of makeup products.

To Cherise, it seemed like her husband was contemplating the sort of look he would craft for her.

She was somewhat thrilled yet nervous.

If only there was a mirror in the room, she mused, then she could watch in real-time the artistry her husband employed.

“The transparent bottle is the toner. Start by applying that evenly on her face, came the instructions.

Damien did as he was told, spreading the toner gently across Cherise’s face.

His large and thick palm was warm, and the toner cooled within it.

The blend of warmth and coolness, along with the rhythmic thumping of her heart, made Cherise’s cheeks flush with an unfamiliar shyness.

Despite their intimate experiences, they were treading unfamiliar ground. The tenderness

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of his actions caused her heart to swell.

She had nowhere to run as he was still applying the makeup.



The pace of her heartbeat continued to pick up, and her face grew even more flushed.

The room was dauntingly silent.

Cherise felt an urge to break the ice, to alleviate the awkwardness.

She cleared her throat lightly. "Dear, make sure you make me look pretty, okay?"

Damien's brows furrowed slightly.

Just as she spoke up, his hand had faltered, leading a stroke of the eyebrow pencil astray.

With graceful composure, he took out a tissue to correct the mistake.

However, having never used an eyebrow pencil, he did not realize that the more he wiped... The larger the dark patch would grow.

Finally, he wrinkled his brows. "Cherise."

His voice was low and husky, exceptionally sexy and enchanting to her ears.

Cherise, already in a state of coy vulnerability, found her cheeks burning hotter upon hearing him call her name in such an alluring tone.

Lowering her lashes shyly, her voice was a soft murmur, "Dear..."

"Mmm..."

Damien handed her a towel. "You might want to go to the bathroom and get this fixed."

Puzzled and noting the odd expression on his face, alarms blared in Cherise's mind.

She eyed him suspiciously. "Dear, you didn't... screw up, did you?"

Damien shook his head. "No, not at all."

To him, she was an angel descended from the heavens, and he could never find her anything but beautiful.

Reassured, Cherise took the towel and stepped into the bathroom.

"Ah-!!!"

"Damien Lenoir!!"

Listening to the distraught scream from the bathroom, Damien coughed lightly and stepped out of the room. "I need to talk to the Tanners and ask if they have anyone who knows their makeup."

"You turned me into THAT and still said I wasn't ugly!"

Walking along the intricately carved corridor of the Tanner residence, Cherise could not help but make a face at Damien.

Now, she was wearing crystal chunky heels and dressed in a ladylike pink long dress. Her hair was loosely pinned up, and her face was devoid of makeup, yet she boasted an adorable look.

Damien had found a maid who did her makeup, but feeling embarrassed, Cherise decided to go natural in the end.

## Chapter 329 Doppelganger

Whatever! She didn't think she looked too bad even without makeup on!

Damien smiled softly, "You always look beautiful to me."

"Excuses!"

Cherise pinched his waist, "You're only saying that because you made me look ugly in this painting."

Damien's smile did not fade, "Of course not."

"You're always beautiful."

The Tanners had a staggering number of guest houses for their visitors to stay in when they visited.

It took Cherise and Damien more than ten minutes to walk from their guest house to the main residence.

"It's just up ahead."

A servant gestured for them to enter.

Cherise took Damien's arm, and the both of them slowly walked into the main residence.

The mansion was extremely grand and opulent

The garden grounds were entirely in an Oriental style, while the mansion's architectural design was European. It was a beautiful fusion of East and West.

Grandpa Tanner was sitting on the couch, chatting with Beckham.

Their conversation stopped abruptly when Cherise and Damien entered.

Cherise carefully eyed the two men.

Grandpa Tanner had a head of silver hair, but he was still at the top of his game.

The middle-aged man was tall and imposing. He radiated authoritative and dignified air.

The image of the two of them together was so striking that they couldn't help but attract attention.

However, surprisingly, Cherise did not feel intimidated by them. Instead, she felt a sense

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of familiarity.

Damien led her towards them. "I am Damien Lenoir. From the Adania's Lenoirs."

"This is my wife, Cherise Shaw."

"Please have a seat, Mr. Lenoir."

Beckham smiled warmly at Damien and ordered the maids to bring some fruits.

But he froze when he turned back and saw Cherise behind Damien.

“Mr. Lenoir,” Beckham asked in a hoarse voice, “The lady next to you.... Is she your wife?”

“Yes.”

Damien beamed at him, “We’ve been married for just two months.”

Beckham stared at Cherise for a good minute without moving from his seat. His eyes, filled with an inexplicable emotion.

He squinted at her and asked, “May I ask, who is Mrs. Lenoir’s mother?”

Cherise was taken aback. Her mother?

She stared back at Beckham in confusion. “You’re asking about... My mother?”

“Mr. Tanner.”

Damien took a sip from the cup a maid had handed to him. He smiled, “My wife is an orphan. Her aunt and uncle raised her. She doesn’t have any parents.”

Beckham froze at Damien’s response. Shame colored his features. “That... My apologies.”

Grandpa Tanner touched his beard and carefully examined Cherise’s face. “Yes, she does bear a resemblance.”

Cherise began to feel uneasy under their watchful gaze. She looked down at her feet and stayed silent.

Damien nodded and smiled, “I’m sorry, but I don’t quite understand what you’re trying to say.”

“It’s nothing.”

Grandpa Tanner chuckled, “Your wife resembles someone from our family. That’s why

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Beckham so boldly asked about your wife’s mother.”

Damien smiled faintly and replied, “Everyone has a doppelganger or two. Maybe my wife’s resemblance to someone in your family is just a coincidence.”

“My wife grew up in a small, remote mountain village near Adania. She and her family never ventured too far from home. Whereas the Tanner family spent most of their time in Europe. It’s more likely nothing more than a lookalike.”

Damien’s explanation completely dissipated any lingering suspicion Beckham might

have.

Beckham shook his head, “You have a point.”

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Chapter 330 Are You up to the Challenge?

Beckham muttered under his breath, “She was raised in luxury. So how did she end up in a mountain village?”

Such a coincidence was unlikely.

He took a deep breath and smiled at Cherise. "That may have been too presumptuous of me."

Cherise shook her head vigorously, "It's fine."

"It's my honor to share a resemblance with someone Mr. Tanner used to know."

They chatted leisurely until Damien steered the conversation back to the main topic.

"Mr. Tanner, our reason for coming, aside from celebrating your birthday, is to make a request."

Beckham chuckled, "Let me guess. You're here to find the method to destroy the control chips."

"I remember you bringing it up once in your letter."

"Unfortunately, I'm afraid I'll have to disappoint you."

Beckham looked Damien straight in the eyes and said, "You should know it cost them at pretty penny to order that many chips from us. All with the expectation that they would be able to make use of the controlled people after they reach adulthood."

"Now, after many years of investment and waiting, they're about to see the fruits of their labor. And you want me to tell you how to destroy them?"

"What do you think will happen to the Tanner family's reputation if I were to tell you?"

Beckham whipped out a cigar and lit it with a flick. "I strongly suggest you give up on the idea, Mr. Lenoir. No one from the family will tell you how to do that."

Cherise clenched her hands tightly.

“But Mr. Tanner, your chip violates basic human rights!”

“Mandy was just seven years old when they put the chip in her! She had no choice!”

“You’re essentially an accomplice in destroying her life!”

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Beckham couldn’t help but laugh when he saw the fire in Cherise’s

determined expression.

eyes

and her

“Mr. Lenoir, where did you find such an innocent wife? She has no idea how the world. works!”

Damien smirked and held Cherise’s hand. “Cherise’s kindness is a virtue of hers.”

Beckham laughed. “Can you still call it a virtue when she can’t differentiate right from. wrong, nor her inability to see the world for its cruelty?”

Cherise tightened her fist, leaving crescent marks all over her palms.

Damien chuckled, “Of course, it’s a virtue.”



“Perhaps the lady you mentioned earlier, Mr. Tanner-the one who resembles Cherise, could also be kind and innocent too.”

“What do you think about her, Mr. Tanner?”

Beckham glared at Damien.

Grandpa Tanner, on the other hand, chuckled warmly, “Don’t be upset.”

He smiled at Damien, “I was the one who invited you to Beckham’s birthday banquet. I made Gwenn send you an invitation.”

“There’s still some room for compromise on this matter.”

“In a few days, during Beckham’s birthday, we will announce a long-kept family secret.”

“The Tanner family will be indebted to whoever solves the secret for us.”

“We will grant them the power to request something from us.”

The elderly gentleman stroked his beard and grinned at Cherise and Damien. “We have our own rules we need to abide by. Money or connections do little to change our minds.”

“But it’s a different story if we owe you a favor.”

Grandpa Tanner grinned playfully at Cherise, “Little miss, are you up to the challenge?”

Cherise silently considered what he had said. Finding it reasonable, she nodded, “Yes!”