

Marrying 491

Chapter 491 They Were Not In Love

Cherise sat at the table, her lips pressed tightly together while her hands clenched under the table.

In the brief ten minutes they had been seated, Charisa had mentioned death for the third time. Cherise's intuition strongly suggested that Charisa didn't say these words lightly.

Cherise's lips quivered, and she instinctively reached for Charisa's hand, but the woman evaded her touch with calm composure. "I'm not comfortable with physical contact."

She glanced indifferently at Cherise, then rose from her seat and walked out. "I'll go check on what they're cooking."

With those words, she left Cherise in the wake of her cold and distant departure.

Cherise's hand froze mid-air, leaving her with a profound sense of loneliness.

Biting her lip, she turned to Zachary. "She..."

Zachary's frown deepened, his gaze unusually serious. "What are you trying to say?"

"Her health..." Cherise murmured, her fist tightening.

"She is fine. Zachary's brows furrowed slightly as he looked at her. "Don't read too much into it. Aunt Charisa has been a bit more sentimental than usual lately."

"And she genuinely dislikes physical contact. My uncle passed away over a decade ago, and she has been living alone all these years. No children, no friends. She only lets Kareen and me get a bit closer. So, try to understand her. It's not that she rejects your touch. She's just not used to being touched by anyone," Zachary explained, attempting to soothe Cherise's unease about Charisa's behavior.

Cherise bit her lip, a tinge of bitterness settling within her.

She had felt a deep connection with Charisa, thinking she genuinely cared. However, Charisa seemed so accustomed to solitude that it didn't allow any space for emotional expressions.

Cherise sniffled. "So, about her... and your uncle, were they in love?"

Considering Charisa's solitary life for over a decade, she assumed that her not remarrying was due to a deep affection for Zachary's uncle.

She knew very little about Charisa. Beyond knowing that she was her biological mother and the head of the Miles Family, she had no knowledge about anything else.

When she had previously asked why her mother left her father, Grandpa had been vague. All he had said was that Charisa felt unprotected by her father, so she left.

It was not unreasonable for her to assume that one of the reasons Charisa had gotten together with the man from the Miles Family was for his ability to provide her with the sense of safety that she longed for.

But what Cherise didn't expect was Zachary's response, almost as if she was asking about flying pigs.

"Was Aunt Charisa in love with my uncle? That's the most ridiculous thing I've ever heard. "When Charisa first joined the Miles Family, Zachary was barely ten. His mother had passed away, his father was a heavy drinker, and the household relied solely on the servants to look after him and Kareen.

Once, while playing in the backyard, he wandered into Charisa's basement. It was a memory deeply etched in Zachary's mind. The dark and damp basement devoid of sunlight only had a faint glow from a single lightbulb. Behind an immense iron door was a disheveled woman, seemingly in agony and covered in blood.

Seven-year-old Zachary yelled in terror, "Ghost!"

But Charisa lifted her head. Her eyes were bright and clear as she smiled at him. "Don't be scared, little bunny. There are no ghosts here."

"Be brave, don't be afraid." The woman's gentle voice almost brought Zachary to tears.

Chapter 492 Mrs. Bunny

Her voice resonated too much like his mother's. The gentleness in her eyes and voice echoed that of his mother, with the only difference being that his mother had passed away two years ago.

"How's the weather outside?" The woman smiled at him, offering a small fruit, her hand marked with scars. "It's been a long time since someone came to see me."

Over time, Zachary developed a friendship with her and would occasionally visit the basement.

One day, while returning home with the small fruit she had given him, he bumped into his uncle, who was then the head of the Miles Family.

His uncle glanced at the item in Zachary's hand. "Where did you get that?"

"Mrs. Bunny in the basement gave it to me!"

He stared innocently at his uncle, vividly remembering the expression on his face that day—a mix of shock and disbelief.

After that, the basement bunny no longer lived in the basement. Zachary's uncle married the woman. He started calling her Aunt Charisa, and his sister Kareen followed suit.

However, the relationship between Aunt Charisa and his uncle eventually became impossible.

Finally, on a stormy night, Aunt Charisa took over as the head of the Miles Family.

Yet, even as she became cold, proud, and aloof, she remained in his eyes the Mrs. Bunny who had given him the small fruit in the basement.

“Zachary?” The voice of the girl in front of him snapped him back to the present.

Cherise bit her lip, her dark, crystal-clear eyes locked on Zachary. “What’s on your mind?”

The man jolted back, clearing his throat. “What did you ask me?”

Cherise bit her lip. “I asked if my mom and your uncle were ever in love?”

Zachary smiled, shaking his head. “They were the least affectionate couple I’ve ever seen.

Cherise froze as her heart tugged. “The least... least affectionate couple...” she mumbled.

Zachary nodded, lifting his hand to ruffle Cherise’s hair. “Little bunny, cherish the time when you’re still oblivious. Also... treasure the moments you spend with Aunt Charisa.”

Given her remaining time... Zachary thought.

Gritting her teeth, Cherise yelled, “But you just said she’s physically fine!”

“Can you tell me truthfully what’s really...”

“I’m alright.” Before Cherise could finish her sentence, a woman’s voice from the doorway interrupted, “I’ve just got my daughter back, and I’m doing just fine.” Charisa’s words couldn’t persuade Cherise. Her knuckles clenched, preparing to continue her inquiry, when Elvis and Sarah approached with the food.

“I’m sure everyone is hungry. Let’s have your kids and your mom join us,” Charisa said to Elvis as she joined Cherise at the table, her tone neutral.

Elvis paused briefly, then nodded respectfully, "Of course."

Soon, the place was filled with people..

Sky and Tay sat together, observing the middle-aged woman beside Cherise with curiosity.

Mrs. Shaw sat at a distance, smiling as she looked at Charisa, then at Cherise. "You two look so much alike! I've always known Cherry got her good looks from her mom!"

Charisa faintly smiled at the elderly lady. "Thank you."

"She only resembles me in looks; I'm not sure if she's inherited my intellect."

Mrs. Shaw seemed upset about Charisa's comment and retorted, "Our Cherry is very bright!"

"But her kind of brilliance isn't the same as mine. It's probably more like her father's, Charisa explained.

Equally unaware of the world's treacheries, she thought.

Chapter 493 Lost In Thoughts

Cherise pursed her lips, silently sympathizing with Beckham. Since reuniting with her father, she had often overheard her mother and grandfather comment on his intelligence. Beckham, other hand, saw himself as exceptionally brilliant. If he were to discover the family's opinion of his intelligence, it could be a harsh revelation for him. The thought brought a faint smile to her lips.

At the same time, she felt a pang of sadness, knowing that her parents would never reconcile after everything that had happened. When her mother left her father nineteen years ago to marry the head of the Miles Family, they ceased to be a family. Despite her longing for them to be a family again, their relationship issues were beyond her control.

“What’s on your mind?”

Elvis glanced at Cherise, shaking his head. “You know, she’s always like this, lost in thought while eating.”

Cherise offered a faint smile. “It’s alright. Daydreaming during meals won’t hurt-but daydreaming during work is unacceptable.” Saying this, she transferred a piece of roasted chicken. from her plate to Cherise’s bowl.

Cherise pursed her lips, bowing her head to nibble on the piece of chicken..

Aunt Sarah’s culinary skills were as exceptional as ever, bringing a sense of satisfaction to everyone dining at the table.

After lunch, Cherise’s stomach was pleasantly full. Leaning back in her chair, she played games with Zachary. Meanwhile, Charisa went with Elvis and his mother to start the procedure for changing her name.

Cherise wasn’t skilled at gaming, but Zachary was slightly better. Despite receiving criticism from their teammates, they were slowly improving.

Their immersion in the game made them lose track of time.

When Cherise regained her awareness, it was already three in the afternoon, and Charisa and Elvis hadn’t returned.

A sliver of concern arose within the young girl. Registration is known to be a hassle, but she was sure it wasn’t meant to take this long.

Her first assumption was that her grandmother might have fainted. After all, her grandmother’s health wasn’t the best; she had occasionally collapsed while she was out.

“Don’t worry so much, little bunny,” Zachary said gently, his brows furrowed as he lowered his gaze to his phone. “There’s a bit of trouble with the Adania Group. I have to leave. Let Damien take you back; Aunt Charisa needs my help with the procedures.”

After he said his parting words, he rose and left without looking back.

Cherise scrunched up her nose while watching his departure, murmuring to herself, “He’s always in such a hurry...”

She had wanted to return with him. Left with no choice, Cherise called Damien.

In the evening, Damien finally arrived, slightly delayed.

“How was your day?” The man secured her seatbelt, speaking softly.

His deep voice slightly warmed Cherise’s heart. She pursed her lips, eagerly reaching up to hug his neck. “Darling, my mom is truly a wonderful mother. I’ve misunderstood her all this time.”

Ever since the incident with Uncle Elvis, Cherise’s perspective of the head of the Miles Family had always been distorted. Even upon learning she was her birth mother, Cherise hadn’t been too thrilled. However, the reassurance from Zachary and Charisa before the meal finally made her realize that she had misunderstood her all along.

Chapter 494 Gut Feeling

Charisa was completely devoted to Cherise in every action she took. She was even willing to change her name to accommodate Cherise’s desire to keep hers. She genuinely cared for her like a mother.

“As long as she treats you well.” Damien smiled, playfully tousling her hair. “Let’s make plans to spend more quality time with her, okay?”

Cherise nodded. She had something to say, but she was struck by the memory of Charisa’s earlier mention of death. Coupled with Damien’s advice about spending more time with Charisa, an unexplainable unease crept over her.

Glancing outside, she bit her lip before saying, "Hey honey, could you find out if she's actually doing okay physically?"

She felt something was off about Charisa's words today.

Furrowing his brow, mien glanced at her, then settled into the driver's seat, softly asking, "Why do you suddenly want to look into this?"

"Maybe it's just a gut feeling." Cherise closed her eyes, her instincts nudging her that Charisa was hiding something. If it was something else, it would be manageable, but if it was related to her health, Cherise wasn't sure if she could handle it. Just the thought of it made her heart clench.

"If you genuinely want to know ask her directly." Damien focused on the road. "Charisa is the head of the Miles Family, and her health directly affects their future."

"Even if I check, I won't get the real information. Details like that are usually strictly confidential." Glancing at Cherise, he continued, "But you're different. You're her daughter. If you ask her in person, maybe she'll open up."

Cherise shook her head. "But I asked her today, and she didn't give a clear answer."

"Then that's your only answer." Damien sighed. "Apart from what she's willing to share, we won't get more."

Cherise was restless the entire drive back from Clover Gardens. An inexplicable unease crept over her body, freezing her in place as if foreshadowing a terrible scenario.

This restlessness felt similar to when she left the Shaw village, only to find out later that Elvis had been arrested.

Once back at Lenoir Manor, she called Zachary to get Charisa's contact details. Now that she had truly accepted Charisa as her mother, she felt she should have her number. Relaying messages through Zachary was inconvenient. She wanted to personally assure Charisa of her well-being.

"Cherry, Aunt Charisa is in a meeting.

Zachary hesitated. "I'll pass your contact information to Aunt Charisa. Once the meeting's done, she'll reach out to you directly. Wait for her message, alright?"

Fidgeting restlessly, Cherise was about to respond when she heard a sudden commotion on the other end of the call.

"Okay, Cherry, I've got something urgent to attend to. I'll talk to you later." Before Cherise could reply, Zachary abruptly ended the call.

Listening to the dial tone, Cherise furrowed her brow deeply. She sensed that Zachary was hiding something from her. Considering Charisa's repeated references to death today and Damien's assertion that only Charisa herself would disclose her health status if she wanted to, Cherise had a dreadful premonition.

Chapter 495 Shaw Or Neller?

"Cherise"

Mr. Tanner spoke with a furrowed brow during dinner. His voice was low and filled with concern, "Do you have something on your mind?"

Cherise quickly snapped back to reality. "No, nothing."

"You're telling me there's nothing bothering you?"

Gwenn retorted with an eye-roll, her tone laced with annoyance. "You just reached for the food in my bowl, didn't you?"

Cherise was taken aback.

She quickly realized she had indeed extended her fork into Gwenn's bowl, even picking up a piece of vegetable from it.

She withdrew her hand at once, gave an embarrassed smile, and lowered her head to continue eating.

"Cherise, what did you do today?"

Mr. Tanner sighed softly and asked.

"Both your father and Damien are busy today. It's just the three of us here at dinner tonight. If something's troubling you, let me know."

Cherise shook her head. "It's... nothing."

"What else could it be?"

Gwenn scoffed, eating with an icy demeanor. "You must be reluctant to change your name."

Finishing her thought, she laughed lightly and looked at Mr. Tanner. "Grandpa, if she doesn't want to change her name and return to her Tanner roots, then stop pushing her."

"In Cherise's eyes, the last name Shaw holds more weight than our renowned Tanner family."

"Grandpa, why are you belittling yourself like this?"

Gwenn wished nothing more than for Cherise never to change her name, to never return to her Tanner roots.

In this way, no matter the truth, she would remain the only Miss Tanner in the family.

And she would not be sharing this title with anyone else!

“Silence!”

Mr. Tanner shot her an angry glare, then turned to Cherise. “Cherise, are you still considering changing your name?”

Cherise pursed her lips and looked earnestly at Mr. Tanner. “No.”

“Grandpa, I’ve made up my mind. I want to take my mother’s surname.”

“If the Tanner family wishes to announce my identity to the public and provide me with shelter, you may do it anytime. But please say I’ve taken my mother’s surname.”

Mr. Tanner was taken aback. He probably had not expected the once hesitant Cherise to have such a resolute response today.

He lightly tapped the table. “Taking your mother’s surname isn’t out of the question.

“Do you intend to take the surname Miles or Neller?”

Finishing, Mr. Tanner patted his head and chuckled in realization. “How foolish of me.”

“The name Miles was never hers to begin with. It was only after her marriage that she took her husband’s last name.”

“So, it should be Neller, right?”

Mr. Tanner mused. The name Cherise Neller is a bit of a mouthful. How about just Cherry Neller?"

Cherise replied, "I'd still prefer Cherise, Shaw."

"I met with my mother today."

"Mother..."

Recalling all that Charisa had done for her, warmth surged in Cherise's heart.

She continued. "Today, she and my adoptive father acknowledged each other as siblings, and she changed her name to Charisa Shaw."

"So, I'll stick with my mother's surname and call myself Cherise Shaw."

Her words, each and every one of them, struck Mr. Tanner in heavy blows.

He could not have imagined the extent of Charisa's love for Cherise.

To think... she changed her own name because her daughter had second thoughts about the name change!?

For a moment, Mr. Tanner was too stunned to speak.

Beside them, jealousy consumed Gwenn.

With a loud 'smack', she slammed her bowl on the table. "I'm done eating!"

And with that, she stormed upstairs.

The dining room was left with only Cherise and Mr. Tanner.

“That silly girl, Charisa.”

He sighed, shaking his head lightly. “If she didn’t want you to change your name, she could’ve just told me. I wouldn’t have persisted in the first place.”

Chapter 496 The Mysterious Vip

“Why... why did she go to such lengths to change her own name?”

She had always been like this, willing to sacrifice everything for the people she loved.

“Grandpa.”

Cherise’s lips tightened as she clenched her fists. “Can you please tell me a little bit about my parents?”

Moved by Mr. Tanner’s sentiment, Cherise’s affection for her enigmatic mother deepened.

But because her mother was usually reserved, Cherise knew very little about her.

Mr. Tanner sighed, “It’s not a story filled with happiness.”

“Your mother and father were childhood sweethearts.”

“She was an orphan when she was a little girl. Once, your mischievous father sneaked out and met her when she was only seven years old.”

“Your grandmother took a liking to her, and she brought her home as a companion for your father.”

“As they grew up, they naturally fell in love, got married, and then you came along.”

Cherise hesitated, “Then... why did they get divorced?”

It was clear that both of her parents were deeply emotional individuals.

One waited nineteen years for the other.

And the other was willing to change her name just for a daughter she had only known for a few days.

After all, they were childhood sweethearts.

So why did they break up...

“It’s because your father was so absorbed in his work that he neglected your mother’s emotional needs.”

“She felt that he couldn’t protect her, which led her to turn her attention to the Miles family.”

Letting out another sigh, Mr. Tanner put down his bowl. “Many years have passed since it happened. Just keep it to yourself.”

“Don’t bring it up or talk about it again.”

With that, he slowly made his way upstairs.

Left alone at the table, Cherise could hardly eat.

She took a deep breath and called Lucy. "I'm not feeling well. Can you keep me company?"

"Why are you upset?"

On the other end, Lucy chuckled. "You've found both of your parents, and they're even planning to have a second wedding"

"Do we have a bride-to-be with cold feet?"

Rolling her eyes, Cherise replied, "Let's talk in person. Where are you?" "I'm at work."

Lucy frowned, "Quite a few respected doctors at the hospital were suddenly summoned today. They say a VIP fainted and hasn't regained consciousness. Everyone has been called in to offer their medical

expertise."

"I'm on duty tonight with a few other interns. Do you want to come over?"

Ending the call with Lucy, Cherise quickly got ready, put on her coat, and hailed a taxi to the hospital.

Just as Lucy had described, the familiar faces were all absent from the hospital, leaving Lucy and a few nervous interns on duty, anxiously hoping that nothing too complicated would come up.

Leaning back in her chair, Lucy gave Cherise a resigned look. "What kind of important person could gather all the renowned doctors in the city for a consultation?"

Distracted, Cherise replied, "Maybe the wealthy just want to ensure they receive the best possible treatment."

“You’re out of touch”

A male intern colleague who overheard their conversation chimed in. “Apparently, this VIP is not from Adania.” He kept his eyes fixed on his phone while casually chewing gum.

“She has a personal doctor in her hometown and didn’t bring him when she came to our city. Instead, she chose to rely on medication.”

“It turns out that she is in critical condition and can no longer sustain herself with medication alone. She fainted this afternoon, and it’s too late to fly her personal doctor over, hence this massive mobilization.”

Chapter 497 I See You

With a hint of resignation, the man let out a soft sigh. “Honestly, it’s self-destructive.”

“Those who are seriously ill should stay in the hospital if they want to continue their treatment.”

“If they don’t want to be in a hospital, they should find a peaceful place, maybe in the mountains or by clear waters, to spend the rest of their days tranquilly.”

“Why would they make the long journey to Adania without their personal doctor? Don’t they realize how fragile human life can be?”

A female intern next to him rolled her eyes. “How can you be so certain that they’re just being reckless?”

“What if they have an unfulfilled wish? And they’re here in Adania to fulfill it?”

“Why wouldn’t they bring their doctor along then?”

“Perhaps they have their reasons.”

The female intern retorted with another eye-roll. "If they're meeting loved ones for their final moments, they probably wouldn't want a personal doctor around."

"Don't be so judgmental."

With that, the female intern turned and walked away.

Lost in thought, Cherise barely noticed the world around her until an excited voice snapped her back to reality.

"Good news!"

A young nurse, clutching a notebook, rushed into the duty room. "Dr. King from our hospital has successfully saved the patient!"

"This VIP will soon be transferred to our hospital. The Director has instructed us to take shifts in the ICU for the patient. We need three volunteers. Who wants to go?"

The male doctor, still chewing gum, stepped back. "I'm not interested in serving the wealthy."

"Me neither."

"I'd rather not."

"And I..."

As everyone declined, the nurse's desperate eyes settled on Lucy. "Lucy... maybe you?"

"I have a friend here"

Lucy responded, a frown appearing on her face

“Isn’t your friend’s medical erudent to

A male intern interjected. Both of you could take shifts and learn something valuable

Lucy shot him a sharp look

Seeing that Lucy did not right refuse, the nurse hurriedly approached holding her hand. “Lucy, please

“We just need three people. With you, your friend, and one more, we’d have

Besides, the VIP’s condition is a rare case. As medical students, it would be an enlightening experience

Lucy gave an exaggerated eye-roll and turned to Cherise, who nodded in agreement

“Let’s go then

For Cherise, it didn’t matter much.

She had simply sought out Lucy for some emotional support that evening

There wasn’t much difference between staying in the ICU ward and being in the duty room.

Seeing Cherise’s agreement, Lucy sighed resignedly. “Alright, we’ll do it your

“I’ll take my friend upstairs now,

With that, she gestured to Cherise and headed to the elevator

Cherise and Lacy, along with several other medical staff, waited outside the ICU ward for nearly twenty minutes before the VIP was wheeled in

The place was bustling with people Cherise, being an extra pair of hands, was quite far away

While she couldn't see the VIP's face clearly as they passed, she was certain it was a woman.

The cascade of raven-black hair spilling over the bed was unmistakable.

"You take this prescription to the pharmacy downstairs and have them prepare the medication

The senior doctor began assigning tasks. By the time he reached Lucy, only minor tasks remained

"I have a friend here."

Lucy responded, a frown appearing on her face.

"Isn't your friend a medical student too?"

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“Besides, the VIP’s condition is a rare case. As medical students, it would be an enlightening experience.”

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With the prescription in hand, Lucy left, leaving Cherise alone in the ward.

Chapter 498 The True Identity Of The Woman

The senior doctor furrowed his brow in contemplation before glancing up at Cherise. “Fetch the patient’s family for me. I need to talk to them.”

Cherise nodded, quickly weaving through the gathered crowd. “Who here is related to the patient?”

“Anyone? The patient’s family?”

“I am.”

A deep, familiar male voice asserted.

Without thinking, Cherise turned around, only to lock eyes with Zachary’s surprised gaze.

Time seemed to stand still for a moment.

Staring at Zachary in disbelief, Cherise uttered, “You mean to say... you’re the family of the patient in there?”

Zachary gave a subtle smile, a hint of helplessness coloring his eyes. “Isn’t it quite the coincidence?”

“It’s me,” he continued.

Taken aback, Cherise subconsciously stepped back.

The revelation was staggering-Zachary was related to the VIP.

It felt as if her head had been struck by a hammer, the realization resounding loudly in her mind.

So that woman is...

In a fit of panic, she shoved Zachary aside, sprinting towards the ICU.

Guards and medical staff were quick to stand in her way. "You can't go in there."

"Let me in! I need to see for myself!" she demanded.

"I have to know who's in there!"

It can't be her, it just can't!

She merely wanted to confirm that the person inside was not who she feared it might be.

She desperately wished it to be untrue!

How could it be her...It can't be... This isn't true....

She had only just reconciled with that woman, and as recently as this afternoon, she had come to terms with the realization that the woman was her mother...

It can't be...

The person simply must not be there!

“Let her in,” Zachary murmured, eyes closed, a bitter smile of resignation on his face.

In the end....

She found out.

He had thought he had done a good job keeping the secret.

Yet, he had forgotten-she was a medical student and had a friend interning at the hospital.

He never anticipated that the one doctor capable of saving his Aunt Charisa would be from the very hospital where Lucy worked.

It was unfortunate.

Perhaps this was fate.

Watching the frantic figure dashing toward the ICU, he sighed regretfully. “Aunt Charisa, I tried my best.”

Yet, in the end, Cherise could not make it into the ICU.

The doctor only allowed her to peer through the glass.

Her face was still cold, still distant-like her usual self.

Lying motionlessly on the hospital bed, her lips were dangerously pale.

Standing next to Cherise, the doctor sighed softly. "The condition Mrs. Miles suffers from is... extremely rare."

"From what I deduce, she was injected with a specialized drug during her younger days."

"She must have been administered the drug for over two days."

"It's intriguing, as most people won't last under the effects of this drug. Many who've been under its influence for over half a year eventually lose their sanity and start harming themselves."

"But she survived, even lived for many years since."

Cherise clenched her fists tightly, her heart a mix of anger and grief. "Is she suffering from a recurrence of the drug?"

The doctor shook his head. "No, it isn't that."

"It's due to her initial resistance to the drug, which damaged her heart. Over time, the strain on her heart has only increased."

"Her heart is now at its limits."

He continued with a heavy sigh. "Moreover, it's not just her heart that's been affected at this point, but her entire cardiac system."

"Even a heart transplant wouldn't save her."

Chapter 499 Months To Live

Clenching her jaws tightly, tears began to slide down Cherise's cheeks. "So you mean..."

"Your mother's time is running out," the doctor said, releasing a heavy sigh.

He lifted his hand, gently patting Cherise's shoulder. "Make the most of the time you have left with her."

"She chose not to bring her personal doctor along, fearing that you would discover her illness."

From behind, Zachary took slow, deliberate steps towards her. "Aunty Charisa once told me that she wanted to spend the remaining time she had left to see if you were doing well," he revealed softly.

"She couldn't bear to get too close, fearing it would cause you pain in the end."

"She never forced you to acknowledge her as a mother to prevent the heartbreak she knew would be inevitable."

"She was scared that as soon as you developed an attachment, she would have to leave you."

Zachary let out a faint sigh. "Cherise, don't resent her for coming into your life so late."

"Aunty Charisa never expected her body to fail her so soon."

"She had hoped... hoped to wait until she saw you with your own family, leading a blissful life, before approaching you."

"But now, it seems she's run out of time."

Hearing Zachary's words, Cherise was inconsolable and started sobbing uncontrollably.

She bit her lip hard, suddenly overtaken by a rush of emotion, and lunged forward, gripping Zachary's collar. "Why?!" she screamed.

“Why didn’t you tell me sooner?!”

“Why didn’t you inform me when we were at the Tanner residence that you were connected to my mother?!”

“Why didn’t you bring me to the Miles family and introduce me to her earlier?!”

It had been over a month since she met Zachary.

She could have... she could have spent that month with her!

But now...

Drawing a deep breath. Cherise turned to the doctor, her voice wavering “How long how much time does she have left”

The doctor sighed again. “She has two months at most.”

“Make the most of it”

Two month...

Cherise’s tears Dowed freely

Two months is not enough!!!

Not nearly enough!!!

She wanted to fully embrace her as family, to take care of her, to shower her with all the love and care she missed out on for the past nineteen years.

She refused to part from her, refused to watch her slip away!

Especially to soon after they had just reunited!

Why is fate so cruel!

She had only just experienced the joy of having both her parents...

She collapsed on the ground, choking on her sobs, muffling her cries with her hands

She knew that if her cries were overheard, it would disturb her mother's rest

But she could not hold back any longer..

Just then, her phone rang-

It was a call from Beckham

"Cherise"

As soon as the call was answered, the man's stern voice spoke. Your grandfather told me about the name change"

"Do you really have such an affinity for the Shaw surname?"

"Where are you? I need to talk to you?"

Drawing a heavy breath. Cherise tried to find her voice, each word feeling like a weight on her chest

Finally, unable to hold back, she cried out, Tin at the hospital

“Dad!!”

A crashing sound echoed from the other end, as if a phone had dropped to the ground.

A moment passed before the phone had been picked up.

The trembling voice on the other end, now deeper, asked, “Cherise.... what did you just say?”

With tears continuing to fall, she took another deep breath before she whispered, “Dad...”

Chapter 500 Where Is She

“I... I mean, Mom is sick, she’s very, very ill..

“I don’t know what to do.”

The doctors... they say there’s nothing they can do.....

“They say she doesn’t have much time left....

“What should I do, Dad?”

Tears streamed down Cherise’s face. “I know you and Mom are divorced. I know you might not want to deal with Mom’s situation, but...

“Where are you?”

From the other end, Beckham’s voice trembled in an unusual wavering “Send me your location.”

“I am on my way,”

Cherise found herself unable to articulate where she was, choking on her words.

Hearing the entire conversation, Zachary grabbed the phone.

Holding the device, Zachary let out a deep sigh. “Mr. Beckham, it’s Zachary,”

“We’re at the General Hospital of the East.”

Once the call ended, he sighed again, lifting Cherise from the ground and helping her to a bench.

“You’re making it difficult for Aunt Charisa.”

Crouching down to meet her eyes, he continued, “Not only did Aunt Charisa not want you to know about her illness, she also didn’t want Mr. Beckham to know either.”

“You might not be aware, but Aunt Charisa originally married my uncle... for Mr. Beckham’s sake”

Cherise stared, shock evident in her eyes, as she met Zachary’s gaze.

“Don’t be surprised, it’s true.

Taking her hand, he continued, “There’s so much we’ve kept from you because it’s too painful to

bear”

“Aunt Charisa didn’t leave Mr. Beckham because their love faded.”

“She felt unworthy of him, so she willingly left him, married my uncle, and even took over as the head of the Miles family, all while paving the way for Mr. Beckham.”

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“All these years, the Tanner family’s prosperity owes a lot to her.”

“She knew Mr. Beckham never truly forgot about her.”

“So, she didn’t want him to find out about her condition.”

“Do you understand?”

Beckham arrived at the hospital just ten minutes after Cherise’s tearful phone call.

Seeing his frantic expression, she could almost imagine the desperation that had driven him to get there so quickly.

It had taken her over an hour by taxi to reach the hospital.

Yet, he had managed it in just ten minutes.

“Where is she?”

Worry and sorrow etched across his usually solemn face.

“ICU.”

He looked paler than a ghost. Cherise hesitated, her lips quivering, “She’s still in the ICU; she just stabilized.

When he had called earlier, Cherise had just found out about Charisa’s condition, leading to her emotional breakdown and disclosure..

But now, with him standing in front of her, her face ashen, she felt as if she might have made a mistake.

Zachary was right.

Her mother, having hidden her condition even from her, would not have wanted him to find out.

She had always made sacrifices for him, even her departure after their divorce, all for his well- being.

She surely wouldn’t want him to witness her vulnerability and burden him with that guilt.

However, it was too late for regrets. Taking a deep breath, Cherise reached out, holding Beckham’s hand. “Dad.”