

## **Marrying 501**

Chapter 501 Charisa's Numbered Days.

"Mom hid her illness from us..."

Beckham lifted his gaze, his eyes drawn to the woman behind the glass isolation door.

It was the first time he'd seen her since their painful separation nineteen years ago.

He had yearned for her return for nearly two decades, clinging to the belief that she still loved him, but he couldn't understand why she'd leave him.

Beckham had always believed Charisa was under duress, forced to leave by some unspeakable circumstance, and that she would one day return.

But...

When he learned about Charisa from his father, a wave of guilt, helplessness, and regret washed over him.

Beckham ached for a reunion with Charisa, to make amends for the sacrifices she'd made over the past nineteen years, to embrace the daughter they'd created together.

His father mentioned her tarnished reputation, hinting that Charisa wouldn't be accepted and regarded as Mrs. Tanner again, even if they reconciled.

It was no secret that Charisa had been involved with several men in the past, back when she was still a Miles.

But Beckham didn't care about her past.

He knew Charisa had been coerced, violated, and mistreated.

None of it was her fault.

His love for her was an unyielding force, resilient against the storms of her past.

Before setting foot in Adania, Beckham had painted countless reunion scenarios, envisioning them locked in a tearful embrace, their hearts pouring out their unspoken longings.

But Beckham never imagined that their reunion would be under such dire circumstances, with Charisa lying unconscious behind a glass barrier. At the same time, he stood outside, a helpless. observer.

Tears streamed down his face as he gazed upon the woman imprisoned within the sterile chamber.

A flood of memories from their shared past and youthful days washed over him, back to their innocent childhood and wedding after college graduation.

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Charisa had expressed her preference for successful men.

So, Beckham sacrificed his musical dreams and aspirations of becoming an independent musician and devoted himself to the Tanner family business.

But she....

Beckham had accomplished every desire she had ever expressed except for shielding her from harm

He had failed in the past, and now, what of the future?

Could there be any future for them?

Seeing her father's devastated form, Cherise's hands clenched into tight fists.

The man behind her pulled her into a comforting hug.

Cherise initially stiffened, taken aback by the unexpected gesture, but Damien's familiar scent soon calmed her anxieties.

She nestled into his arms and whispered. "Did I

"Did I do something wrong.

"No, you didn't."

Damien's gaze shifted from Charisa in the ICU to Beckham, who was sobbing uncontrollably outside the glass door. "You did nothing wrong

"They've lost too many precious years."

"If you hadn't spoken up... they might have missed each other for the rest of their lives."

"Sharing this final journey is better than living with a lifetime of regret."

By now, Cherise couldn't stop weeping, her heart overwhelmed by the weight of life and death's cruel interplay.

She didn't want to, and she wasn't ready to!

Ironically, she had always aspired to be an exceptional cardiac surgeon.

Now, her mother lay battling an incurable heart disease.

Was this some cruel cosmic joke? Was fate mocking her?

Throughout the night, Beckham remained steadfast, his vigil unbroken, his gaze fixed on the woman behind the glass door

## Chapter 502 Mourning for Charisa

“How will Aunt Charisa react when she wakes up and sees you all like this?” Zachary’s voice echoed through the room, his words cutting through the thick tension.

He glanced at Cherise’s tear-stained face and Beckham’s ashen complexion, his tone laced with concern.

“Do you all wish for Aunt Charisa’s premature demise?” Zachary’s question hung in the air, casting a shadow over the room.

Cherise sniffled, recognizing that Zachary’s harsh words were meant to jolt them out of despair.

Still, they stung like a slap to the face.

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Beckham slowly turned his head, his dark eyes meeting Zachary’s gaze. “You’re right,” he acknowledged, a faint smile gracing his lips. Then, without another word, he turned and walked

away.

He approached Cherise, extending his hand to her. "Come with me," he said softly.

Damien watched them leave without a word, his heart heavy with worry.

Beckham led Cherise up to an empty hospital room. He called for a doctor, requesting sleeping pills for both of them. "We need to rest and regain our strength," he explained to the doctor. "Then we can go see her."

Cherise pursed her lips, her voice barely a whisper as she nodded in agreement. At this moment, she had no choice but to follow Beckham's instructions.

After ensuring Cherise was settled into bed, Beckham lay on the adjacent bed and closed his. Soon, Cherise's breathing deepened into a steady rhythm, her exhaustion finally taking over.

eyes.

Beckham lay awake, his mind flooded with memories of Charisa's radiant smile from her teenage years. Sleep eluded him, even with the aid of sleeping pills. His love for her was a flame that burned so brightly it overshadowed his physical weariness.

Nevertheless, he compelled himself to rest his eyes for a while.

Beckham smiled as he thought of Charisa waking up to see him looking put together and well.

"Ari..." The man's voice trembled as he softly uttered her name, a solitary tear tracing down his

cheek.

Over thirty-five years, their tapestry of life had been woven with threads of their first meeting, their blossoming love, their wedding vows, and the birth of their precious daughter.

It was a journey etched with an enduring love that defied the boundaries of life and death. If you live, I'll share your life. If you die, I'll accompany you in death.

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Cherise's slumber was fleeting, replaced by an awakening at Damien's gentle touch.

"I know Uncle Beckham had asked me not to disturb you," Damien told her, kissing her tenderly.

"But I believe you might prefer witnessing your parents reunion rather than continuing your slumber"

Cherise's drowsiness vanished in an instant, her eyes widening in dis

With renewed vigor, she sprang from the bed, assisted by Damien's steady hand, and rushed towards Charisa's ICU, her heart pounding with anticipation.

Cherise's body, still weak from sleep, betrayed her, and she stumbled as she attempted to stand. Damien, ever watchful, reacted swiftly, scooping her up in his arms and carrying her towards Charisa's hospital room.

Cherise was surprised to find that while she had been asleep, Charisa had been moved from the ICU to a regular hospital room. The room was still under heavy guard, and Zachary stood at the entrance, a faint smile playing on his lips as he observed their arrival.

"So, you decided to bring her here after all," Zachary remarked with amusement. I thought you'd consider Bunny's well-being and let her rest a bit longer."

Cherise pursed her lips, her eyes flashing with determination. "No worries, there'll be plenty of sleeping time later"

“But missing my parents’ reunion... The thought of missing out on such a monumental occasion would make her regret.

“It didn’t quite go as planned,” Zachary informed her, gesturing towards the hospital room. “They nearly came to blows.”

Cherise’s heart raced as she pushed open the door, eager to witness the reunion she had longed

for

Inside the hospital room, Charisa sat upright in the bed, her eyes fixed on Beckham with a mix of anger and resentment. “We’ve been divorced for over two decades, Mr. Tanner. I hope you’ll respect my boundaries and refrain from further interfering in my life!”

Chapter 503 Caring for Charisa

Beckham, his eyes twinkling with amusement, approached Charisa with a steaming bowl of mushroom soup.

“I’m not here to disrupt your life, Charisa,” he stated with a charming smile. “I’m here to tend to my daughter’s mother; her wedding is just two days away, and you, as her mother, should be present,” he gently reminded her. “Your absence would be a disappointment to Cherise.”

Despite her frail appearance, Charisa’s eyes sparkled as she retorted at Beckham. Her demeanor, usually reserved and aloof, softened slightly during their exchange.

Cherise observed their interaction, a myriad of emotions swirling within her. She had always perceived her mother as a distant, unattainable figure. Despite knowing Charisa was her biological mother, Cherise felt a deep chasm between them.

Watching Charisa lean against the headboard, her expression a blend of frustration and vulnerability, Cherise couldn’t help but question her perceptions.

Perhaps there was more to her mother than met the eye. Perhaps, beneath her aloof exterior, Charisa harbored hidden depths of emotion.

Cherise thought of Damien, a man often perceived as standoffish and reserved. Yet, in her presence, he transformed into a playful rogue, always up to his mischievous antics.

Perhaps... this was the real Charisa, the person she revealed only to those she genuinely loved and considered equals.

As Cherise was lost in her thoughts, Beckham sensed the unusual mood in the air. Although slightly annoyed by Damien's intrusion, he maintained his composure and addressed Charisa, "Our daughter is here, Charisa. Shouldn't I take good care of you so you can be in top form for her wedding?"

When caught off guard by the unexpected suggestion, Cherise could only manage an awkward nod in response.

Charisa, laced with helplessness, protested, "It was just a simple cold-induced fainting spell. There's no need for such a fuss."

Cherise's gaze darted to Beckham, their eyes meeting silently. Beckham's expression was one of quiet appeal, urging for her cooperation.

Clearing her throat, Cherise addressed her mother, "But fainting from a cold can be serious, Mom. You've been preoccupied with the wedding preparations and haven't taken care of yourself."

"Let Dad take care of you while I focus on the wedding details," she suggested, her tone laced with concern.



Charisa's face hardened into a frown. "I don't need him hovering over me! I have Zac...

"Unfortunately, Zac has been roped in by me, too," Cherise interrupted unapologetically.

Charisa was left speechless. Why was everyone hell-bent on having this shameless Beckham look after her?

Before she could complete her sentence, Damien interrupted Cherise, "Auntie, if you're not entirely confident in Uncle Beckham's ability to ensure your safety, I'll be happy to step in as your caretaker and tend to my future mother-in-law's needs."

He paused, his gaze unwavering, "However, to provide the best possible care, I'll need to review your medical history thoroughly."

The man said, shaking his head in distress, "I remember there should be some records in the city library..."

Damien's words sent a chill down Charisa's spine. She knew Damien would not be underestimated; his sharp intellect and resourcefulness were evident. If he set his mind to investigating her health, he would undoubtedly uncover the truth. And if he knew, so would Cherise. The consequences of such a revelation were too terrifying to contemplate.

Resigned to her fate, Charisa reluctantly agreed. "Do as you see fit..."

"After all," she added, trying to keep her voice steady, "he's practically got nothing but time on his hands. I'm sure he wouldn't mind caring for things around here."

"Sounds good," Damien said with a smile, pulling Cherise close. "So, how about it? Do you want to stay with your parents for a while longer, or shall we head home first?"

## Chapter 504 Bumping into The Difficult Tristan

Cherise's lips tightened into a thin line. A part of her yearned to stay, to bask in the comfort of her parents' presence.

But reason prevailed. As a daughter, she understood the importance of granting her parents the privacy they needed for their reconnection.

With a contrived smile, she turned to Beckham, "Well, Dad, we should probably head out now. Please take care of Mom."

Beckham's reassuring wink conveyed his message. "Don't you fret, my dear. With me here, she's in capable hands."

After bidding farewell to Charisa, Cherise returned to the car with Damien.

Cherise leaned back in the passenger seat as they merged onto the highway, her gaze drifting toward the passing scenery. Her mind wandered through the labyrinth of memories, intertwining the past and future of Beckham and Charisa's bond.

Suddenly, the unfamiliar landscape outside the window caught her attention.

Cherise's brow furrowed, "Where are we going?"

"The Lenoir Residence, Damien replied.

As Damien brought the car to a halt, he gallantly opened the door and retrieved a stack of invitations from within. "Despite the Lenoirs' disdain for me," he confessed, "I've always considered them family."

Today, the sight of Cherise Shaw interacting intimately with her parents tugged at Damien's heartstrings, stirring a deep-seated longing for the parental love he once knew. Yet, all that remained

were the bitter remnants of a shattered relationship, a void mirrored by his mother, Maeve's unwavering disdain.

Drawing a deep breath, Damien extended his hand towards Cherise. "Let's deliver these invitations and head home, shall we?" he suggested. Damien extended his hand to Cherise Shaw, guiding her out of the car. Still reeling from the emotional encounter with her parents, Cherise nodded silently and followed him out of the car.

They approached the imposing Lenoir Manor only to find the front door firmly shut.

Cherise's mind drifted back to her first visit to this grand residence, accompanied by Tristan.

The present, however, held a starkly different atmosphere.

As Cherise hesitated before knocking, the door swung open, revealing Tristan, his one visible eye betraying a mixture of surprise and disdain. He had likely not anticipated encountering Cherise and Damien at this juncture.

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"What brings you here?" Tristan said, his lone eye darting between Cherise and Damien with a hint of hostility.

Damien's brow furrowed in response. "Nick," he began, calling Tristan by his childhood nickname.

"Don't call me Nick, Tristan snapped, his voice dripping with disdain. Tve forfeited that privilege long ago!"

Tristan's eyes flashed with fury as he gestured towards his bandaged eye. "This is your fault!" he growled, his voice dripping with bitterness.

Tristan's sudden accusation shattered Cherise's composure. Her fists clenched at her sides as anger coursed through her veins.

Her fists clenched tightly at her sides, her voice resonating with defiance, "You dare to blame us for your eye?"

"Listen up. Tristan! We owe you nothing! You said yourself that if you ever laid a hand on me again, you'd end up like Damien, blind. It was your father who chose Lenoir Group over you."

"So, pause and reflect, did we force you into this wager? Did Damien compel your father to blind you? No! It was your father, and you made those choices; how can you blame us!? Can you believe after what you guys did to him, Damien still wanted to invite the both of you to our wedding?"

With a deep breath, Cherise snatched the two invitations for Raymond and Tristan from Damien's hand. She flung them at Tristan, "Your presence is your choice!"

Her emotions were in turmoil, a volatile mix of anger and frustration.

No one should dare provoke her!

After her outburst, Cherise, in a fit of fury, pulled Damien into the Lenoir Residence, leaving Tristan stunned and speechless.

Chapter 505 To Attend Their Wedding or Not?

Tristan lingered at the doorway, his gaze trailing Cherise and Damien as they vanished. A frosty sneer formed on his lips, "Fu king imbeciles."

With that, he turned his attention to the invitation lying forgotten on the ground. He stooped to retrieve it, scanning its contents. "Well, well, they're getting hitched?"

Tristan scoffed as he carried the two invitations back home, presenting them to Raymond, who was leisurely sipping tea on the sofa. "Hey, Dad, Damien and Cherise are planning a wedding.

"I'm aware, Raymond replied, reclining on the sofa, his eyes closed, a hint of frostiness on his lips. "Given the commotion he's causing, who in Adania isn't aware they're planning another wedding?"

He reached out to take the invitation, examining the names listed. "Well, well, Cherise, also known as Charlotte Tanner?"

"Since the Tanner family has publicly acknowledged her as one of their own, it implies... she is that man's daughter."

Raymond narrowed his eyes, a cold smile playing on his lips. "Hold onto these two invitations."

Tristan's one remaining eye widened in disbelief as he exclaimed, "You're seriously thinking about going?"

He had only brought the invitations back to poke fun at them with his father. He never expected Raymond to think about attending their wedding!

Raymond's decision to attend Damien and Cherise's wedding seemed utterly absurd to Tristan. How could his father be so foolish even to contemplate it? Anyone with common sense would know it was a colossal blunder.

As if sensing Tristan's bewilderment, Raymond rolled his eyes in exasperation and gave Tristan a swat on the head. "Honestly, Tristan, you're not exactly the brightest bulb in the chandelier, are you?"

"If you had a smidgen of intelligence, even if not an abundance of it, as long as you were as sharp as Damien, I wouldn't have to keep everything from you."

Tristan's face clouded with confusion. Then at least explain your reasons to me! I honestly don't see the point in attending this wedding!"

“Because we’re about to witness a grand spectacle, Raymond declared with a sneer, tapping his finger against the coffee table. “Tristan, you may not be aware, and in fact, many people are oblivious to this, but the mastermind behind the car accident that claimed Damien’s parents’ lives was Mendoza.”

Tristan remained puzzled. “Mendoza?”

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“Indeed, Raymond Lenoir confirmed with a cold sneer. “The world is just a tapestry of coincidences, wouldn’t you say?”

“Even if Damien can forgive Cherise’s adoptive father for the arson, can he ever forgive Cherise’s mother for plotting against his parents?”

Tristan’s eyes widened in disbelief. “You mean, they...”

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Before he could finish his sentence, Tristan’s expression turned sour once more. “Wait a minute. Didn’t you claim earlier that their death... was your doing?”

Raymond’s lips curled into a faint smile, “Not at all, he explained, his tone tinged with melancholy. “I was merely a pawn in a much larger game.”

And with that, he delved into that night’s events, recounting the Tanner Residence’s infiltration by a group of six youthful, spirited friends...

That woman at the Tanner Residence was a vision of captivating beauty. Her stunning looks, melodious voice, and flawless complexion left an indelible mark on his memory.

The sensation of her long legs draped over his shoulders, a memory forever etched in his mind’s tapestry.

Raymond never imagined the woman he met that night would ascend to such extraordinary. power. With calculated precision, she eliminated the men from that fateful evening, eventually becoming the formidable matriarch of the Miles family.

The creeping realization of his impending demise loomed like a dark cloud, signaling the inevitable arrival of his judgment day.



To his surprise, the Miles family came to him, desperate for information about his brother.

A vivid flashback flooded his mind, transporting him back to when he was young, brimming with life yet lacking social standing.

He was a nobody, his presence inconsequential, his company unwanted.

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Chapter 506 Hansen Lenoir

The people around Raymond were snobbish, only interested in associating with those who had made their mark in the business world. Take his beloved brother, Hansen Lenoir, for instance.

So, when Raymond was yet to establish himself, he assumed his brother's identity and swindled his way across Europe under the guise of Hansen.

As a result, when he found himself in bed with the alluring woman from the Tanner family, she also believed Raymond was Hansen.

Interestingly, Raymond was in a protracted feud with Hansen during that period. Hansen constantly urged him to work hard like a seasoned professional.

Work hard?

The Lenoir family members had been running the Lenoir Group since their youth. Was there a need to work hard??

So, with bitterness, he revealed Hansen's whereabouts to the Miles family.

In the end-Hansen and his wife met with a fatal car accident, leaving no survivors.

And Raymond emerged as the sole heir of the Lenoir family.

From that moment, Raymond realized he had crossed a point of no return in his life.

So, he embarked on a path of vengeance against Maeve and Damien, straying from the path of morality....

Reflecting on the past, Raymond let out a soft sigh.

“Things seem to be getting more and more intriguing.” And Raymond believed fate was on his side.

At present, Damien’s heart and soul were now entwined with Cherise, his hopes and dreams. inextricably linked to hers. How would he react upon discovering that Cherise was the daughter of his sworn enemy?

Inside, Damien’s grandfather, Peter, sat engrossed in a chess game with his sister Maeve.

Once shrouded in mystery, Maeve had shed her veil, her face now a familiar sight to the household staff. Despite the constant stares, she carried herself with quiet grace.

Peter, his eyes still focused on the chessboard, broke the silence. “Quit overthinking. You’ve made your choice; now embrace it fully. Let go of the past and live in the present.”

Maeve, her brows furrowed in contemplation, remained silent.

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irritated disrupted the pensive mood. Grandpa, Sis," he greeted them, his voice laced with a hint of nervousness.

Peter looked up. "Have you come to deliver the invitations?" he inquired.

Damien nodded, placing two elegant invitations on the coffee table. "One for you and one for Sis." he explained.

"I intend to spend the rest of my life with Cherry, and I hope you can all be there to witness our

union.

Damien's intentions weren't self-serving; it was just a wave of envy that washed over him whenever he saw Cherise's family reuniting with her one by one.

His family had shrunk over the years, leaving him only a few relatives.

Despite past disagreements with Raymond, Damien knew he wasn't the one behind the fire that had taken his parents' lives. He would like to consider Tristan's partial loss of vision as an odd, somber balance to the tragedy that had struck their family.

As Damien and Cherise planned their wedding, he yearned to reconnect with his estranged sister. Maeve. He approached her with a genuine smile, "Sis, it'd mean the world to me if you could be there for our wedding?

Maeve's silence spoke volumes as she turned her head away, her lips emitting a soft hum in response to Damien's plea.

"Your sister is in a state of flux right now," Peter explained with a knowing smile. "she's having difficulty coming to terms with your choice to marry Cherise."

With a gesture towards Cherise, Peter invited her to join them. "Come, sit with us."

Acknowledging her acceptance with a nod, Cherise pursed her lips and sat beside Peter.

"I always knew you were kind-hearted, Peter affirmed, pouring Cherise a cup of coffee. "back then, I sought a bright and cheerful spirit like yours to balance Damien's somber nature."

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Chapter 507 Please Speak Favorably of Damien More

"Who would have thought that your true identity would pave the way for Damien's future business endeavors?"

The old man chuckled heartily. This is indeed a blessing in disguise for the Lenoir family."

With a gleam in his eyes, he continued, "The entire family will be there to witness your wedding. Not a single one of us will miss it!"

His voice softened as he leaned towards Cherise, "But, dear Cherry, I hope you'll speak favorably of Damien to your parents in the future. You see...

"Grandpa, your groveling attitude is off-putting. It's entirely up to Cherise whether or not she chooses to help Damien. Don't make our Lenoir family look like we're begging for scraps!"

Unfazed by her disapproval, Peter retorted coldly, "So, your bowing down to Beckham Tanner wasn't an act of begging for scraps, was it?"

He sighed wistfully and continued to gaze at Cherise with a smile, "Damien hasn't been actively involved in business for many years. His only venture is the Shaw Group, which bears your name. In the future, you must encourage your parents to mentor him more."

Cherise was taken aback, instinctively turning her head to look at Damien. He offered her a subtle smile.

Cherise sat in the passenger seat as they drove back, her gaze drifting out the window as she asked. "Are Maeve and your Grandpa unaware of your overseas businesses?"

The man shrugged casually, "Well, there's no need for them to know."

Cherise pursed her lips, "No need?"

At the Lenoir Residence, Peter practically begged Cherise to get her parents to look after Damien.

But the truth was, as Lennon pointed out, Damien's overseas conglomerates and businesses were second only to the Tanners.

Lennon also mentioned Damien's rare ability to strategize from thousands of miles away in Adania, expanding his business empire to such heights.

Many in Europe hailed him as a genius.

Yet, in his grandfather's eyes, this universally acclaimed genius was almost a fool, needing his wife's constant support through her family's influence.

Cherise pursed her lips, turning to Damien, "Doesn't your grandfather's misunderstanding bother you?"

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Damien shook his head lightly. "I'd rather everyone think I turned my life around with your parents' help."

Cherise was surprised "Why?"

Damien smiled faintly, his head bowed. "This is the first time I will understand how much I need you."

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While she couldn't help but feel their relationship had taken on a bit of an old-married-comple vibe his words always managed to touch her heart

Taking a deep breath, Cherise turned to face Dummies. Honey, you're amazing?" the exclaimed

"Okay enough with the mushy muff Damien chuckled grly caressing her soff, radiant fare Close your eyes and get some rest. The winding is in a day and I want you to be the most beautiful bride

"We will see through your mom remaining days with your dad

## Chapter 508 A Harmonious Union

Cherise's eyes welled up slightly as she held Damien's hand resting on her cheek. "Thank you," she said softly.

Truth be told, Charisa was none of Damien's business since it was Cherise's family affair. But Damien's willingness to offer support was purely from his love and affection for Cherise. How could she not be grateful or touched by his unwavering support?

This man always considered her in every decision he made.

The traffic light turned green, and the car resumed its journey. Cherise leaned back against the seat and drifted into a deep slumber.

She had a beautiful dream. In the dream, she was a vision of elegance in a pristine white wedding dress, gracefully walking down the aisle with her father by her side. Her mother sat in the distance, her eyes sparkling with joy as she watched her daughter take her final steps toward a new chapter in her life.

Damien and Cherise joined hands and exchanged vows, promising to love and cherish each other for eternity.

But then, the beautiful dream abruptly turned into a nightmare- Maeve stormed into the wedding scene, a knife glinting in her hand, and plunged it into her already grievously wounded Charisa's heart.

Blood spilled everywhere, and the dream ended in a crimson sea.

Cherise awoke with a gasp, the horrifying scene still fresh in her mind. She found herself back in the comforting embrace of the Lenoir Manor bedroom.

Damien wrapped his arms around her, his voice laced with concern, "Did you have a bad dream?"

Cherise nodded, her face pale and drawn.

He gently stroked her hair, offering comfort, "Don't worry, dreams are often the opposite of reality."

Nestling in Damien's arms, she found comfort in the rhythm of his heartbeat.

She slowly closed her eyes, a glimmer of hope flickering within her; she noted to herself that dreams, after all, often showed the opposite of what was to come.

Two days later, Cherise and Damien's grand wedding took place at Adania's most opulent venue, the New World Restaurant.

Lennon, in honor of their union, had even personally overseen the refurbishment of the New World Restaurant.

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On the wedding day, Cherise woke up at the break of dawn.

While the makeup artist was working her magic, Lucy and Mandy engaged in their usual playful banter, teasing each other about their figures and asking for help tightening their bridesmaid

dressess.

Cherise, held captive by the makeup artist's brushstrokes, could only utter a muffled plea, "Hey, you two, can we please tone it down?"

Lucy turned her head to face Cherise with a cheeky grin. "Just this once, Cherise!" she protested.

"It's your big day, so we're allowed to let loose a little. When it's my turn to walk down the aisle, I'll be the picture of grace and poise," she winked.



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Mandy huffed, a playfully-exasperated expression crossing her face. "Why can't I be the next one to walk down the aisle?" she protested.

Lucy rolled her eyes teasingly. "Oh, please, Mandy," she scoffed. "Like anyone would want to marry you!"

Their playful banter filled Cherise's heart with joy. This was precisely how she'd pictured her wedding day surrounded by the people she loved most, sharing laughter and lighthearted

moments.

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With the makeup artist's final touches complete, Cherise, assisted by her bridesmaids, eased into the stunning patchwork wedding dress that Damien and Charisa had painstakingly created.

Standing before the mirror, Cherise couldn't help but be captivated by her reflection. The woman gazing back at her was a picture of elegance and beauty, her face glowing with an infectious happiness.

Charisa stepped into the room, drawn by the girls' infectious giggles.

Cherise was lost in her world, admiring her reflection in the mirror with a silly grin plastered across her face. Charisa couldn't help but chuckle at her daughter's antics. "My silly girl," she said fondly.

She had to give it to Elvis; he had done an incredible job raising Cherise. Her daughter was as innocent and adorable as Beckham had been, untouched by the world's harsh realities.

The father and daughter duo shared a similar simplicity, a focus on their passions, never letting the negativity of others weigh them down. It was a rare quality, becoming increasingly scarce in this cynical world.

A pang of sadness struck Charisa as she thought of Beckham. She turned to Zachary, who understood her unspoken pain. He discreetly slipped two pills from his pocket into her hand.

After swallowing the medication, Charisa felt a sense of calm wash over her.

She approached Cherise, her gaze lingering on her daughter in her wedding gown. A hint of pride

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flickered in her eyes. "Just as beautiful as I was back then, Charisa whispered.

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Chapter 509 I Do

A flicker of surprise ignited in Cherise's eyes, quickly replaced by a spark of curiosity.

She immediately strolled over and gently clasped Charisa's hand. "Mom," she inquired, her voice laced with eagerness, "tell me about your wedding to Dad. Grandpa always said you two were childhood sweethearts, so it must have been a magical day, right?"

"Our wedding..." Charisa trailed off, her gaze drifting into the distance, her eyes reflecting nostalgia.

Her wedding to Beckham was a memory etched in her heart, a vivid recollection from twenty-one years ago.

Back then, she was brimming with youthful exuberance and dreams of a shared future. She envisioned growing old with him, hand in hand, their lives intertwined in a tapestry of happiness.

They had stood before God, exchanging vows of eternal love, promising to remain inseparable, their hearts entwined in an unbreakable bond.

But fate, in its capricious nature, had other plans....

A sudden coughing fit seized Charisa, her breath catching in her throat. Zachary, ever vigilant, swiftly extended a handkerchief.

Charisa covered her mouth, a cough racking her body. The white handkerchief came away stained with bright red blood.

Mandy, standing nearby, couldn't bear to watch. She turned away, discreetly wiping away tears that threatened to spill over.

Cherise's heart ached. Life, she knew, was a cruel mistress, bringing with it aging, sickness, and, ultimately, death. Neither the doctors nor she could alter the inevitable course of nature. All she could do was provide comfort and support during her mother's final moments.

Soon, the door burst open, and Damien and his groomsmen charged in, their faces flushed with excitement and anticipation.

Lucy and Mandy had been plotting playful pranks to pull before the wedding, including hiding the bride's heels.

With a sly grin, Lucy stealthily tied one of Cherise's shoes to her ankle, the voluminous skirt of her bridesmaid's dress concealing the cheeky prank from anyone watching.

But even the most carefully laid plans couldn't escape Damien's eagle eyes. With a swift, practiced move, he pinned Lucy to the bed and reached under her skirt, retrieving the hidden heel.

Neither Damien nor Lucy had anticipated Mandy and Jacob's quick reflexes. They captured the entire scene with a click and a flash, forever immortalizing the moment Lennon pinned Lucy

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down, one hand strategically placed under her skirt.

Mandy's laughter erupted like fireworks, her sides aching from amusement. "This photo is going straight into my family album!"

"Absolutely," Jacob agreed with a mischievous grin, sending the photo to the WhatsApp group. "If Lennon ever tries to pull a runner on Lucy, we'll release this photo at their wedding."

Lennon and Lucy stood there speechless, their faces burning with embarrassment.

Cherise's brow furrowed as she turned to Damien. "There's no way any embarrassing photos of you and another woman will be making an appearance at my wedding today, right?"

Damien smiled reassuringly and took the heels from Lennon. Kneeling before Cherise, he gently slipped them onto her feet. "The only photos like that are with you."

After saying that, he looked up at her with a playful glint. "If you want everyone to see, I could..."

His expression didn't suggest he was joking.

Cherise's heart raced as she quickly raised her hand to stop him. "Don't even think about it!"

"I wouldn't dare, Damien reassured her with a subtle smile. Standing up, he effortlessly swept her off her feet and into his arms. "I'll be on my best behavior from now on."

“If you disapprove, I wouldn’t dream of it,” he added playfully.

Cherise’s cheeks flushed a delicate shade of pink.

Damien scooped her up in his arms and strode out of the room, her wedding dress trailing behind them, the stark white fabric intermingling with the crimson carpet, creating a captivating

contrast.

They strolled down the red carpet, the train of her dress gracing the ground, the white and red blending seamlessly, exuding an unparalleled romance.

The wedding car embarked on a grand tour through the wealthy city of Adania.

Every major internet media outlet and television station broadcasted this extravagant wedding live, capturing every detail of the lavish affair.

Whispers swirled that the wedding venue had been transformed into a magical wonderland by the groom’s close-knit circle of friends.

Chapter 510 Raymond Met Charisa

Buzz swirled around every wedding detail, meticulously planned and executed by the

groom.

Tales were whispered that the groom had envisioned the bride’s wedding dress the day after their first meeting, a testament to his unwavering love and dedication.

Such rumors and whispers whipped the city into a frenzy, with countless young girls swooning over the romantic tale, dreaming of their fairytale weddings.

Amidst the whirlwind of excitement, Cherise, hand in hand with Beckham, gracefully navigated the long aisle, each step bringing her closer to her groom, the man with whom she would spend the rest of her life.

Reality and dreams intertwined, creating an enchanting fusion of romance and reality.

Cherise felt a flutter of nerves; her lips pursed as she subtly glanced at Charisa from the corner of her eye.

Charisa sat there, an aura of elegance radiating from her, her lips curved into a gentle smile.

To her left sat Zachary, while the seat to her right remained conspicuously empty.

Just as Cherise began to relax and turn her gaze away, Raymond, dressed in a crisp white suit, took his place beside Charisa.

The atmosphere in the church was a harmonious blend of serenity and passion, a reflection of the love that filled the air.

The priest, adorned in gold-trimmed robes, stood at the center, his smile warm and welcoming as he addressed the couple before him.

“Damien Lenoir, do you take Cherise Shaw to be your lawfully wedded wife? To love and cherish her, through thick and thin, in sickness and health, for richer or for poorer, until death do you part?”

Damien, his voice filled with conviction, replied, “I do.”

“Cherise Shaw, do you take Damien Lenoir to be your lawfully wedded husband? To love and cherish him, through thick and thin, in sickness and health, for richer or for poorer, until death. do you part?”

Her eyes sparkling with love, Cherise squeezed Damien's hand and said, "I do."

The applause echoed through the room, a resounding symphony of support for the newlyweds.

In a quiet corner, Charisa joined in the applause, her smile masking the turmoil within. A man, sitting beside her for a while, leaned over.

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"Hello, Ms. Miles," Raymond greeted her with a hint of mischief in his eyes. His gaze drifted towards the couple at the center of the stage, a faint smile on his lips. "Remember me?"

Charisa's smile faltered, her attention drawn to the man. Her eyes widened in surprise as recognition flashed across her face.

That face...

Memories of a fateful night nineteen years ago flooded back, vivid and unforgettable. Every person from that night was etched in her mind forever.

But...

If her memory served her right, Hansen should have been dead for over a decade.

"I am Raymond Lenoir," he said, his smile unwavering. The look in her eyes told him she still remembered.

Once, such a gaze would have unnerved him. But the Raymond of today was a different man. His resilience hardened like a city wall.

"I know I resemble my older brother," he continued, his expression unreadable. "But don't be mistaken, Ms. Miles."

"I'm not the villain you met seventeen years ago. I was the one who provided you with those vital clues."

Charisa's frown softened, the wariness in her eyes subsiding. It was true.

He and Hansen were brothers, their resemblance inevitable. And she remembered Hansen's younger brother from the Lenoir family, who had aided her in her mission.

With his help, she had successfully eliminated Hansen, who was far away in Adania.

He had yearned for her return for nearly two decades, clinging to the belief that she still loved him, but he couldn't understand why she'd leave him.

Beckham had always believed Charisa was under duress, forced to leave by some unspeakable circumstance, and that she would one day return.

But...

When he learned about Charisa from his father, a wave of guilt, helplessness, and regret washed over him.

Beckham ached for a reunion with Charisa, to make amends for the sacrifices she'd made over the past nineteen years, to embrace the daughter they'd created together.

His father mentioned her tarnished reputation, hinting that Charisa wouldn't be accepted and regarded as Mrs. Tanner again, even if they reconciled.

It was no secret that Charisa had been involved with several men in the past, back when she was still a Miles.



But Beckham didn't care about her past.

He knew Charisa had been coerced, violated, and mistreated.

None of it was her fault.

His love for her was an unyielding force, resilient against the storms of her past.

Before setting foot in Adania, Beckham had painted countless reunion scenarios, envisioning them locked in a tearful embrace, their hearts pouring out their unspoken longings.

But Beckham never imagined that their reunion would be under such dire circumstances, with Charisa lying unconscious behind a glass barrier. At the same time, he stood outside, a helpless observer.

Tears streamed down his face as he gazed upon the woman imprisoned within the sterile chamber.

A flood of memories from their shared past and youthful days washed over him, back to their innocent childhood and wedding after college graduation.

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Charisa had expressed her preference for successful men.

So, Beckham sacrificed his musical dreams and aspirations of becoming an independent musician and devoted himself to the Tanner family business.

But she....

Beckham had accomplished every desire she had ever expressed except for shielding her from harm

He had failed in the past, and now, what of the future?

Could there be any future for them?

Seeing her father's devastated form, Cherise's hands clenched into tight fists.

The man behind her pulled her into a comforting hug.

Cherise initially stiffened, taken aback by the unexpected gesture, but Damien's familiar scent soon calmed her anxieties.

She nestled into his arms and whispered. "Did I

"Did I do something wrong.

"No, you didn't."

Damien's gaze shifted from Charisa in the ICU to Beckham, who was sobbing uncontrollably outside the glass door. "You did nothing wrong

"They've lost too many precious years."

"If you hadn't spoken up... they might have missed each other for the rest of their lives."

"Sharing this final journey is better than living with a lifetime of regret."

By now, Cherise couldn't stop weeping, her heart overwhelmed by the weight of life and death's cruel interplay.

She didn't want to, and she wasn't ready to!

Ironically, she had always aspired to be an exceptional cardiac surgeon.

Now, her mother lay battling an incurable heart disease.

Was this some cruel cosmic joke? Was fate mocking her?

Throughout the night, Beckham remained steadfast, his vigil unbroken, his gaze fixed on the woman behind the glass door