

Marrying 762

Chapter 762 Second Time in Ziphon

A warm wave washed over Cherise. She'd considered bringing the kids but decided against it. Zachary was hurt because of her, and their visit to Miles Manor would likely be met with cold shoulders. She was prepared for that, knowing she was at fault.

But Soren and Serafina were innocent, and she didn't want the Miles' judgment and potential mistreatment to taint their hearts.

To her surprise, Soren had shown remarkable maturity by suggesting they visit their grandfather, Clinton. instead.

Taking a deep breath, she walked forward and embraced the children. "Remember, listen to your grandpa and great-grandpa while you're there. Be good, don't cause any trouble, and be nice to Aunt Mandy, okay?"

Serafina wiped away a tear. "Yes, Mommy! You have to make sure Uncle Zac gets better. Ren said Uncle Zac will be getting married soon. And he promised if he does, he wants Ren and me to be the flower boy and girl! Don't forget!"

Cherise smiled and playfully pinched Serafina's cheek. "Of course, sweetie!"

Serafina glanced at Soren, then tiptoed closer to whisper a secret in her mother's ear, "Mommy, when are you going to marry Mr. Handsome? Then I get to call him Daddy!"

Cherise blushed, momentarily speechless.

"Soon. As she scrambled for a reply, a deep voice echoed behind them.

The next moment, a man's arms were around Serafina. "Would you like to be the flower girl, Serafina?"

Serafina's eyes lit up. "Yes! Ren and I agreed that if Mr. Handsome and Mommy get married, we'll be the flower boy and girl!"

Soren's face turned beet red when he heard his sister's words.

He shoved his hands into his pockets, trying to be cool, and looked away with a huff. "Who wants to be a flower boy with you?! I don't even like the idea of them getting married!"

Serafina's eyes welled up with tears. "Boo-hoo! Ren broke his promise! You were the one who told me to ask Mommy when will she get married! Ren was the one who said he wanted to be a flower boy, and I, a flower girl! And now you're saying you never said that?! You're a big liar, Ren!"

The little girl wiped away her tears, her twin ponytails bobbing with her sobs, looking absolutely adorable.

Cherise couldn't help but chuckle. She knelt in front of Soren and teased him with a playful smile. "What's going on here, my dear? You should never bluff your sister."

Soren turned away, his cheeks still rosy. "I was just saying... I don't care when you two get married, but I don't want to call that guy Daddy"

After calming the children down, Damien swiftly arranged for a private jet to fly Lyra and the unconscious Zachary to Ziphon.

This was Cherise's second time in Ziphon. Her last visit had been five years ago, after Charisa's passing. Time flew by. It was hard to believe it had been five years already. Yet, the city seemed frozen in time, unchanged.

Since Cherise had informed Zachary's father beforehand, representatives from Miles Manor were waiting for them at the airport.

Zachary's stepmother, stepbrother, and a clearly upset Kareen were among them.

Zachary's mother had passed away years ago, and his father had remarried. As the first wife's children, he and Kareen weren't the favorites at home, which explained their close bond with Charisa.

Chapter 763 Meeting The Other Miles' Family Members.

The first who emerged were Mr. Kolson and Mr. Hampson, pushing a gurney with Zachary lying on it.

"Zac!" Kareen screamed, her eyes red and puffy. She lunged forward and threw herself onto the gurney. "Zac, wake up! Zac?!"

Desperation filled her as she frantically shook his body. Memories of their last conversation flooded back. He'd told her he was going to Adania, worried about Cherise and Damien after their reconciliation.

"What does it matter if she's doing well or not?" Kareen had snapped back then. "Enough about her! She's not worth your time!"

But for the first time ever, they'd argued. Having lost their mother young, they'd always been each other's rock. Zachary never raised his voice to her, always indulging her every wish.

"Hey, listen," he'd said sternly, "Even if you hate Cherise, she's Aunt Charisa's only daughter! Belittling her is belittling Aunt Charisa! She should have been there for Cherise, but she lost her. Instead, she raised us."

"We wouldn't have the life we have now out Aunt Charisa. We'd have been thrown out by that wicked woman, Patricia, and her son raised us. Now that she's gone, can you honestly say Cherise's fate doesn't matter to us?"

Kareen was rendered speechless. She hung up and felt guilt gnawing at her.

Now, here was Zachary, the one who had argued with her and gone to see Cherise, lying injured after an accident in Adania.

Seeing Kareen shaking him violently, Cherise frowned. "You could hurt him like that," she said gently.

Kareen slammed to a halt, her eyes red and narrowed as she glared at Cherise. "Don't you tell me what to do! My brother went to Adania to see you; he was perfectly fine! Now he's back like... a ghost of himself!"

Grief finally spilling over, Kareen raised her head, her eyes locked on Cherise as she started towards her, her voice thick with anger and despair. "This is all your fault! Give me back my brother!"

She looked like she might attack, but a dark figure stepped between them – Damien.

"Kareen, calm down," Damien said, his voice firm yet calm. "This isn't Cherry's fault. We've looked into what happened to Zac. It's true; it's connected to Cherry only because your brother chose to save her. He's a hero, but you can't blame the person he rescued for needing rescuing."

Kareen's eyes remained red, but a flicker of understanding passed through them. "Even so, you both still have to take some responsibility! Zac was perfectly healthy when he went to see you, and now... look at him! Don't you dare try to shrug this off!"

Damien held his ground, neither retreating nor advancing, forming a protective barrier around Cherise.

Lyra, watching the tense scene unfold, hesitantly approached Cherise, tugging at her sleeve. "Is that Zac's sister? She seems... quite intense."

Chapter 764 I'm His Fiancee

"She's not normally like this," Cherise said quietly, "but Zachary getting hurt has her all wound up."

Despite their constant bickering, there was no denying Kareen's princess-like fragility. Zachary treated her like a queen, and while she could be a bit high-maintenance at times, she was generally a gentle soul.

"Well... this wasn't exactly the picture-perfect wedding scene," Lyra admitted, her voice laced with worry about her future as Mrs. Zachary,

Cherise couldn't resist teasing her. "It's not too late to jump ship, you know."

Lyra shook her head resolutely. "No way! A promise is a promise. And I won't regret it! Not for a second!" The stubborn set of her jaw reminded Cherise of her younger self. A faint smile touched her lips as she reached for Lyra's hand. "Don't worry."

Meanwhile, Zachary's stepmother spotted the tense standoff between Kareen and Damien and nudged her son.

Chad cleared his throat and stepped forward, trying to calm Kareen down. "Hey, sis, relax. Isn't this a little bit much for our guests?"

Kareen glared at him. "Get lost! It's not your brother who's lying there hurt!"

Chad's smile faltered momentarily but quickly returned. "But he needs to get to the hospital, no? If you keep arguing here, it could delay his treatment."

Kareen froze, released her grip, and barked at the bodyguards behind her. "What are you guys standing around for, like a bunch of morons? Get my brother to the hospital now!"

The bodyguards sprang into action, scooping up the gurney and whisking Zachary away.

Kareen turned back to Cherise, her voice icy. "This isn't over!" With that, she stormed off.

Lyra swiftly released Cherise's hand and followed after Kareen. "Wait, I'll come too..."

Kareen raised an eyebrow, giving Lyra a dismissive once-over. "Who are you?"

"I... I'm his fiancée," Lyra stammered.

Kareen frowned, pondered for a moment, then scoffed. "Fiancée, huh? So you're the one my brother had a fling with and then had to marry, huh?"

Lyra lowered her head, her fingers nervously picking at the straps of her backpack. "Yes, that's me..."

Kareen sneered. "Loyal, I'll give you that. Fine, come with me."

After Kareen left with Lyra and Zachary, Chad approached Damien. "Mr. Lenoir, my father was thrilled to hear you were coming. He's prepared a feast at our home. Would you and your wife care to join us?"

Damien nodded. Their primary reason for this visit was to apologize to the Miles family and discuss Zachary and Lyra's wedding. A visit to the Miles Manor was definitely necessary.

"Excellent! We'll take you there now." Chad smiled and led the way.

Zachary's stepmother, Patricia, remained by Chad's side, her gaze constantly drifting towards Damien. This behavior became even more pronounced once they were inside the car, a spacious Lincoln limousine.

Cherise, Patricia, aka Mrs. Miles, sat on one side while Damien and Chad occupied the other. As Cherise sank into the plush leather seat, she couldn't shake the feeling that the middle-aged woman beside her, barely fifty years old, was fixated on Damien, her eyes following him as if he were the only man alive.

Chapter 765 Auntie Pat Smitten with Dame

Cherise couldn't help but recall Heather's words from their encounter at the lab, "Every woman in Adania, from teenagers to grannies, is crazy about Dainien!"

Suddenly, the Truth of her statement dawned on Cherise. The middle-aged woman beside her, practically drooling over Damien, was a living testament to Heather's claim.

They soon arrived at the magnificent Miles Manor. Chad hopped out first, leading the way.

Damien followed, instinctively reaching out to help Cherise down from the car. However, he didn't anticipate Patricia, from the same vehicle, extending her hand towards him as soon as Cherise was out. Damien was caught off guard.

"Let me help you." Cherise, quick as a whip, stepped in front of Damien, taking Patricia's hand instead.

Patricia's expression went from anticipation to disappointment. When she finally released Cherise's hand, her eyes held a hint of animosity.

Cherise ignored it. Turning to Damien, she took his hand and linked their arms, walking casually towards the Miles Manor.

She leaned in as they approached the entrance and whispered, "Looks like Auntie Pat has fallen for you big time."

As Charisa's daughter and Zachary's adopted sister, Cherise referred to Patricia as "Auntie Pat" as he and Kareen would.

Damien's brow furrowed slightly. Then you'd better be my shield."

Women had been throwing themselves at him since he was old enough to notice and, even more, had given him flirtatious looks. But a woman of Patricia's age... that was uncharted territory.

And considering they needed something from the Miles family, offending her wasn't an option.

Cherise playfully leaned against Damien's shoulder, a mischievous glint in her eyes. "What if I don't? Will the big bad Mr. Lenoir be left all helpless and pitiful?"

"Then, Ms. Shaw, I'll ensure you're the one feeling helpless and begging for mercy tonight," Damien said with a smug smirk.

Cherise wasn't amused. "Hey, can you knock it off with the threats already? Can't we talk about this like normal people?"

Damien smirked, a glint of amusement dancing in his eyes. "Not possible. This is the only way to gain your cooperation. Besides," he added with a wink, "maybe if you were a bit more...skilled...in certain areas, you might actually have the upper hand for once."

Cherise rolled her eyes, sputtering. "Who wants to be good at that anyway? Jerk."

At the Miles mansion, Walter, Zachary's father, greeted them with a beaming smile.

Mr. Lenoir," he said, "I've heard so much about you. Never thought you'd grace us with your presence! What a pleasant surprise!"

Patricia. Walter's wife, scurried over, pulling out chairs for them. As she did, her gaze lingered on Damien for a moment too long. Cherise, ever-observant, subtly positioned herself between them before taking her seat.

The table was a feast for the eyes, laden with enough food to feed an army. Chad, Zachary's brother, joined them, wearing a charming smile that didn't quite reach his eyes.

However, despite the lively atmosphere, no one seemed concerned about Zachary's well-being. Except, of course, for Kareen.

Despite the lively atmosphere and overflowing plates, the elephant in the room remained unacknowledged. Except for Kareen, nobody seemed the least bit concerned about Zachary's well-being.

Cherise tried to bring him up several times, but each attempt was interrupted by a subject change.

After a few rounds of drinks, it was Damien who finally addressed the elephant in the room.

“Mr. Miles, we’re here to discuss your son, Zachary. He was injured while trying to save my wife in Adania, and we wanted to offer our sincerest apologies.”

Walter waved his hand dismissively. “Not an issue at all! He’ll pull through this coma; just wait and see! No apologies necessary!”

Chapter 766 Not the Ideal Family

Cherise was dumbfounded. Walter’s words were like a slap in the face; his response was not what she had expected from a concerned father.

“Uncle Walter,” she said, her voice low and dangerous, “don’t you have any concern for your own son?”

Walter nonchalantly took a sip of his wine, his smile never faltering. “Concern? What’s there to be concerned about? Didn’t you all say he’d wake up eventually?”

Cherise’s anger simmered just below the surface. “Well, yes, we said that...”

“So, isn’t that settled then?” Parcia interjected quickly. “He’s not in any immediate danger, he’s not dying, he’ll wake up eventually, it’s no big deal.”

Cherise stared at them, speechless.

Walter continued, his smile undisturbed. “While Zac’s not dying, I understand Mr. Lenoir is principles. Since you’ve come to apologize, I won’t hold a grudge.”

He raised his glass. “However, I have a business proposal for Mr. Lenoir.”

“Our demands are simple: thirty million in compensation, and we’ll call it even. No one at Miles Manor will ever breathe a word about Zac being injured saving your wife or any debt you owe us. I’ll even publicly declare that Zac’s injury was his own fault and has nothing to do with the Lenoirs!”

Walter leaned back in his chair, a smirk tugging at his lips. "So, Damien, thirty million seems like a fair price, but I'm always open to negotiation."

Cherise's jaw dropped. Zachary was fighting for his life in a coma. Yet, his own father sat there bargaining like it was just another business deal. The audacity of it all was mind-boggling.

Damien's smile remained unwavering. "I think you misunderstood, Mr. Miles. We came to apologize, but collaboration with Miles Group is off the table."

Walter's smirk faltered. "No collaboration? Sure, we have an alternate plan for your consideration, too."

Chad, Walter's son, chimed in. "Well then, Mr. Lenoir can simply transfer twenty million to our account. Same difference."

Cherise clenched her fists, her voice trembling with anger. "So, you expect us to apologize with a bribe?"

Chad shook his head hastily. "Oh, no! What a misunderstanding! We never demanded money. We're happy to accept whatever Mr. Lenoir decides to give us. I can personally collect the money at your convenience, no worries."

Cherise slammed her fists on the table. "Finally, I understand why Zac and Kareen are so close to my mother and barely even acknowledge their own family."

She looked around the room with disgust. "Who would want to stay in such a place?"

Suddenly,ng cucked into place. Zachary's aversion to Miles Marior, his preference for Cherise's mother's home since cl...dhood, his eagerness to follow her to Lermite it all mesense. This was not a place he belonged.

Before coming here, Cherise had considered asking Damien for help if he didn't mind. After all, Zachary was essentially running Miles Group now, and his injury would undoubtedly impact business.

But Walter and Chad slapped her good intentions in the face, extinguishing any possible assistance. They didn't deserve it anyway. Their concern wasn't for Zachary; it was for the profit they could squeeze from his misfortune.

Taking a deep breath, Cherise turned to Walter. "It baffles me that you are so indifferent to your son's condition yet so eager to exploit it for your own gain."

Chapter 767 Business Deals

"Aren't you worried that Zachary will be devastated when he wakes up?"

Walter's face turned a shade paler.

He cleared his throat and clarified, "How could I possibly be ignorant of Zachary's plight?"

"I'm the one responsible for his medical expenses!"

"Besides, he's bound to wake up sooner or later, right?"

"I negotiated a business partnership with Mr. Lenoir to support Miles' family. Zachary will undoubtedly appreciate my efforts when he awakens. Why would he be devastated?"

He gave Cherise a mildly displeased look and said, "Cherry, if you had told me all this when you were still engaged to Zachary, I might have been more willing to listen."

"But look at you now."

"Are you worried that Mr. Lenoir may misinterpret your concern for Zachary now that you're marri

Walter's words seemed to caution Cherise about Damien's feelings, but his underlying motive to instigate trouble was evident. He glanced in Damien's direction, suggesting that he was bothered by Cherise and Zachary's relationship.

In reality, Damien was utterly unfazed.

“Uncle Walter, if you hadn’t brought up the past, I might have nearly forgotten.”

“Zachary willingly proposed to Cherry during her darkest hour became her unwavering support. Now, he’s risking his life to shield her in the face of danger

“Zachary is a lifelong friend and benefactor to both Cherry and myself.”

His piercing gaze coldly swept Walter and Chad’s faces as he spoke, “But, it appears I’ve made a mistake.”

“Zachary was the one who showed us kindness, not the Miles family.” he man snapped and stood up. He grabbed Cherise’s hand and spat, “I get Uncle Walter’s proposal. I’ll consider the collaboration when I’m damn well ready.”

“Forget this meal!”

The pair left the place in a huff, their faces contorted with fury and frustration.

Walter sat at the dining table, biting his lip in frustration. He glared in the direction where Damien had exited and muttered under his breath, “What a show-off!”

“He’s simply a man who relies on his family’s fortune!”

“Enough”

Patricia looked helplessly at Walter, then at Chad, and sighed, “Patience.”

“Have you not realized, given the close relationship between Cherise and Zachary, Damien’s relationship with Zachary can’t be strained?”

“You didn’t even pretend to care for Zachary; you just jumped straight to financial matters. Now, you’ve messed it up, haven’t you?”

After saying this, Patricia took a deep breath, hurried towards the exit, and huffed, “I’ll go out and check on them.”

“I’m furious!”

Cherise clenched her fists as she exited Miles Manor, and a wave of violent fury rose inside her.

She had not expected Zachary and Kareen’s familial ties to be so distanced and cold despite knowing they had a strained relationship with their family.

“It’s alright.”

Damien held and comforted her, “If dining with them makes you uncomfortable, we can go out for a meal alone.”

“What would you like to eat?”

“Eat? I’m too furious for a meal!”

Cherise turned to Damien and barked, “Do we need to consider a collaboration with the Miles Family?” As he clenched her jaw and her eyes flashed.

“Who would want to do business with such a person who treats their son inhumanely?”

Damien ruffled her hair helplessly and cooed, “You think your husband is clueless.”

Cherise was taken aback.

She looked into Damien's eyes and stammered, "What do you mean? Are you considering a collaboration With them?"

Chapter 768 Father's Grave

Damien nodded, his deep voice laced with a comforting undertone. "I understand your disdain for them. However, they remain Zachary's true family, no matter how much you detest them."

"We're here to apologize and arrange a wedding for Zachary and Lyra."

"This wedding cannot take place without their approval."

Cherise froze, and an icy cold tension gripped.

She was consumed by anger that she had momentarily forgotten about the wedding.

"But we are being too kind to them!"

"We have no other choice; they are Zachary's family, after all."

Damien smiled and reassured, "But don't fret; we will always have the upper hand."

"I have the power to gain and make them lose everything."

His words caused Cherise to pause momentarily.

She bit her lip and asked, "Is that acceptable?"

“Absolutely. Business collaboration inherently involves risks.”

“If their venture fails to yield a profit, the responsibility lies not with me but their poor decision-making.”

Cherise finally sighed in relief as the weight lifted from her heart.

“I am craving for seared trout.”

“Alright.”

Damien smiled faintly, “I’ll have Mr. Kolson find out where the best-seared trout is served nearby.”

“Do you two fancy seared trout?”

As Damien finished speaking, the gentle voice of a middle-aged woman chimed in, “I know a good restaurant nearby. Would you like me to bring you there?”

Cherise furrowed her brow, finding the voice vaguely familiar.

Patricia stood nearby, beaming brightly, and her gaze instinctively shifted to the voice.

As usual, Patricia’s attention was fixed on Damien.

“There’s no need to trouble Mrs. Miles.”

Damien responded politely yet coolly to Patricia. He then turned around and prepared to depart with Cherise.

“Damien!”

As Damien left, Patricia felt her heart raced and her palms sweaty.

She ran towards him and asserted, “I need to speak with you.”

Damien frowned, “Mrs. Miles, I don’t believe we have anything to discuss. Please have some self-respect.”

Damien had noticed her uneasy gaze and refrained from commenting out of courtesy.

When she initiated a conversation, he naturally declined.

With that, he escorted Cherise towards the car.

“Don’t get me wrong.”

Patricia rushed over and blocked Damien’s path, her eyes pleading. “We need to talk about your father, Hansen,” she said.

Damien felt his tall figure stiffen as his stomach churned.

He turned his head, stared at Patricia, and sputtered, “You... You knew my father?”

“Yes.”

Patricia’s eyes softened as the conversation turned to Hansen and muttered, “Can I speak with you privately about your father?”

“I knew him a long time ago.”

Damien frowned, perplexed, as he looked at Cherise in his arms.

Cherise stepped out of his embrace and said sensibly, "Go ahead."

With that, she turned around and got into the car.

Patricia led Damien to a small pavilion outside Miles Manor.

There was a gentle breeze in the pavilion.

Sitting across Damien, Patricia exuded radiance as she spoke, "I heard your father passed away over twenty years ago. Is that correct?"

Damien frowned and nodded. "Yes."

"Could you tell me..."

"Where is his grave?" she asked, her eyes glinting with pleading and sorrow.

Chapter 769 The Lenoir Family Heirloom

"After all, we were in love. I want to pay my respects at his grave."

Damien furrowed his brow. "Are you saying... you were in love with my father?"

Although Damien's parents passed away when he was young, his sister would always tell him that his parents had been each other's first love. They had been together from their first date and throughout their marriage. It was a relationship without infidelity.

But now, Patricia claimed that she and Damien's father had once been in love.

"That's correct." Patricia's cheeks blushed slightly. "Now that I think about it, it was over twenty years ago. Your father and I met in a bar in Europe..."

A hint of bashfulness swept across Patricia's face as she reminisced. "He was charming, and I was in the prime of my youth, so... I had a secret relationship with him behind Walter's back."

Damien remained silent. His frown deepened.

He regarded Patricia with a somewhat puzzled expression. "Mrs. Miles, are you sure the man you were involved with was my father? Could you have mistaken him for someone else?"

Patricia immediately shook her head. "How could I possibly confuse him? Is there another Hansen Lenoir in this world, a young, successful man with numerous businesses under his control?"

"Besides..." She gazed at Damien dreamily. "Your features bear a striking resemblance to your father's."

Damien was somewhat frustrated. "All of us in the Lenoir family share similar physical traits."

He shook his head with conviction. "Mrs. Miles, I believe you may have mistaken someone else for my father. My father was not that kind of man, and my parents had a loving marriage. Moreover, my father passed away many years ago. You shouldn't tarnish a deceased man's reputation without solid evidence."

Having said this, Damien stood up to leave.

"I... I have proof!" Patricia urgently grabbed Damien's arm and produced a cufflink from her pocket. "Look, doesn't this belong to the Lenoir family?"

Damien frowned and glanced at the cufflink. His pupils dilated in shock.

Patricia was not lying. The cufflink in her hand was indeed a Lenoir family heirloom. It was a specially crafted cufflink worn with custom-made suits during important ceremonies or meetings. There was even a small 'L' engraved on it.

Damien took the cufflink and held it in his hand. "This..."

"It's something from the Lenoir family, right?" Patricia seemed a little smug. "Damien, I understand you might find it difficult to accept this truth, but there was indeed something between your father and me..."

"We even..."

She left her sentence unfinished.

"Regardless," Patricia looked up at Damien, "I only want to know where your father's grave is and visit him to pay my respects. It's been so many years. There's no point in dwelling on the past."

She smiled and put the cufflink in her pocket. Then, she took a piece of paper and a pen from her pocket.

You just need to give me the address of your father's grave.*

Damien rubbed his aching forehead. "I'll send you the precise location of the grave later. Is there anything else?"

"Yes" Patricia pursed her lips. "It's about the collaboration between Lenoir Group and the Miles family. I hope you will consider my past relationship with your father and agree to a joint venture."

Chapter 770 The Real Culprit

"I suppose you wouldn't want everyone to know about your father's past affairs," Patricia said, meeting Damien's gaze sincerely. "My husband has always been aware of my infidelities. This is all he asks of you, so don't push him to expose the scandal to force your cooperation."

Damien sneered, "I understand."

With that, he rose from his seat and walked away briskly.

Patricia watched Damien's receding figure and sighed. "You're just like him, always walking with such strong strides."

Damien's steps faltered slightly. A glint of icy resolve flashed in his eyes.

Five minutes later, Damien was back in his car.

Cherise sat on the leather back seat, searching for the nearest restaurant with seared trout on her phone.

She looked up casually upon noticing him. "Why were you away for so long?"

"I had a rather insightful conversation," Damien grinned as he sat down and drew Cherise into his embrace. "I think I can clear my father's name."

Cherise furrowed her brow. "What do you mean?"

"Perhaps the man who assaulted your mother back then wasn't my father at all."

Cherise's eyes widened in surprise. "Really?"

She immediately put down her phone and turned to him, giving him her full attention. "What happened?"

Damien took a deep breath and held Cherise's hand before recounting everything Patricia had told him.

Cherise frowned. "How can you be sure that it was someone impersonating your father and not your father himself?"

"It's because of the way he walked," Damien smiled slightly. "Mrs. Miles mentioned that I walked with strong strides like my father."

"But in reality, my father injured his left foot in his youth, causing him to limp. He always walked slowly to conceal it. Even so, his limp was noticeable upon close observation. Thus, he couldn't possibly have walked briskly."

Cherise's eyes widened in astonishment. This was the first time Damien shared details about his father.

Now that I think about it, Mom had recounted the night of her assault before her passing. She even remembered the distinct features of the men who violated her, such as who had a beard and who had a scar on his face.

If Damien's father had a limp and was present that night, Mom wouldn't have overlooked such a noticeable trait or forgotten about it.

"That's why I believe someone impersonated my father," Damien narrowed his eyes. A cold smile formed on his lips. "Mrs. Miles claimed to have had many illicit affairs with my father. Yet she never mentioned his limp but asserted that my father walked briskly like me."

"It's quite clear," Damien took a deep breath and leaned down to kiss Cherise. "If my father wasn't the one who assaulted your mother, I would hunt down the real perpetrator and bring him to justice."

Cherise rested in Damien's embrace and felt emotional. She even forgot about her craving for seared trout.

She sighed. "That's wonderful!"

If Damien's father never assaulted her mother, there would be no more animosity between them. Moreover, once Damien finds the real culprit and brings him to justice, the Tanner family will have no reason to prevent them from being together.