

## **Marrying 981**

### Chapter 981 Fragments of Memory

Cherise swiftly reached for her phone, leaning against the bay window in her bedroom, where crimson leaves danced outside. "I have a question for you... Did I pursue Damien?" she inquired.

On the other end of the line, Zachary paused before responding, "Did Damien tell you that?"

Cherise nodded solemnly. "Yes. He claimed... that I fell for him at first sight and shamelessly chased after him," she confessed, a blush coloring her cheeks.

Attempting to mask her embarrassment, Cherise coughed lightly. "But that's how Damien portrayed it. I tried asking the household staff, but they were too afraid to speak up..."

"Of course, they wouldn't dare," Zachary sighed, his voice tinged with frustration.

"Damien is shameless. Between you two, it was clearly he pursuing you. He even knelt in front of Elvis in the Shaw's village, begging Elvis to let you marry him, and only then did you agree to marry him."

Cherise was rendered speechless.

"Is that true?" she murmured, seeking confirmation.

"Absolutely," Zachary affirmed, his tone gentle.

"If you doubt me, feel free to ask Damien and inform him of our conversation."

Cherise fell silent, processing the revelation.

"Is there anything else you want to know?" Zachary inquired softly.

"Yes," Cherise replied, biting her lip. "There are several things."

Zachary's voice came through softly, offering, "If you desire further insight, I can arrange for Lyra to book a flight for you to visit, and we can discuss matters together."

After a brief moment of contemplation, Cherise responded, "Never mind. I have three children here who require my attention. Damien is always occupied. It would upset them if I left."

"Three children?" Zachary inquired, his tone reflecting surprise.

"Yes," Cherise confirmed with a smile.

"My son, Soren, my daughter, Serafina, and a recently adopted child from a welfare home named Alexis."

There was a pause on the other end of the line before Zachary questioned, "Alexis... Is that the child's original name, or did you change it?"

"I didn't change it," Cherise clarified, her lips pursed in curiosity. "Why do you ask?"

"Have you located him?" Zachary furrowed his brow, then added with a smile, "What about your close friend Lucy? Has she met the child?"

Cherise reflected for a moment. "I believe she has," she replied, a memory surfacing.

"But the Alexis I adopted seems particularly fond of Lucy. He even asked me to assist him in finding a way for Lucy to adopt him."

"And you agreed?" Zachary inquired.

“Yes, I did,” Cherise affirmed.

“But... I’m uncertain how to approach her. What if she isn’t fond of children or isn’t prepared for the responsibility of raising them?”

“She won’t be; you should go ahead,” Zachary encouraged.

“Perhaps a DNA test with the child would sway her decision in favor of adoption.”

Yawning, Zachary’s voice betrayed signs of fatigue. “Since you’re hesitant to visit, I won’t press the matter. However, remember that I’m here to assist you whenever you need me,” he assured her.

“Indeed, I will always be your family,” he concluded warmly before the call ended.

After concluding the call, Cherise remained seated, her gaze fixed blankly on the TV drama.

Despite the conversation, her anxiety lingered. If anything, it intensified.

Why does it seem like everyone she converses with has been hiding something from her since her memory loss?

The reluctance to openly discuss her past left her feeling adrift, clueless, and vulnerable.

At that moment, she couldn’t help but feel lost, like a fool trapped in the shadows of her own life.

Chapter 982 Venturing Out

Inhaling deeply, she rose from her seat, resolved to seek some fresh air.

She couldn’t continue to stagnate like this!

Remaining cooped up at home lost in her thoughts, felt suffocating, like a surefire path to insanity!

Frances furrowed her brow, voicing her concerns, "Madam, Mr. Lenoir advised against venturing out casually... it's too risky outside..."

Cherise pursed her lips, glancing towards Blake perched on the second-floor railing, "But he'll accompany me. That should be alright, right?"

Blake raised an eyebrow at the suggestion. "Going out?" he echoed before promptly leaping down from the second floor. "Sure!"

Ever since Cherise lost her memory, Damien had insisted she remain confined at home.

This directive also restricted Blake's movements as her personal bodyguard.

After enduring prolonged periods indoors, he began to feel as though he were growing stagnant like mold creeping into the corners of his existence.

"Then let's go!" Cherise exclaimed with a bright smile, her eyes sparkling as she hurried upstairs to change.

Frances interjected, standing in the doorway with arms outstretched, attempting to dissuade Cherise, "Perhaps it's best if you reconsider, Madam... It's too perilous outside..."

Frances seemed to believe that Cherise didn't fully grasp the severity of the situation. With a deep breath, she proceeded, "Mr. Lenoir warned that numerous individuals are outside, eagerly awaiting the opportunity to mock and ridicule you. And others harbor ill intentions, seeking to cause you harm."

But Cherise remained resolute, brushing aside Frances's concerns. "It'll be fine, Frances. Perhaps many outside don't even recognize me. Besides, with Blake by my side and nothing to hide, no one would dare to harm me in broad daylight, right?"

With determination, Cherise bypassed Frances and disappeared into the dressing room.

Amidst Damien's selected attire, she chose a casual ensemble of navy blue overalls paired with a sunny yellow t-shirt. A white duckbill cap and short jacket completed her look.

"Frances, don't fret," Cherise reassured with a sunny disposition. "I'm just stepping out with Blake. Everything will be fine."

With that, she took Blake's hand. Together, they ventured out of the house, leaving Frances feeling powerless.

She reluctantly reached for the phone to inform Damien of Cherise's departure.

"Sir, Madam and Mr. Blake have left..."

I can't prevent them..."

The man on the other end of the line was engrossed in a meeting.

Upon hearing Frances's report, he furrowed his brow slightly. "Let her

go."

She had never been one to stay cooped up at home for long, and the extended confinement was undoubtedly taking its toll on her mental well-being.

Yet, despite his acquiescence, he promptly instructed Mr. Hampson to deploy additional personnel to monitor their movements.

“Blake, do you have any usual haunts?” he inquired as they stepped outside, Cherise relishing the fresh air and sunlight.

The sensation of venturing out was truly invigorating!

Blake hesitated, then replied, “There’s a place I frequent.”

Cherise’s eyes brightened. “Take me there!” she urged eagerly.

Blake nodded in agreement. “Alright.”

He led Cherise to the library at Adania University.

“Do you enjoy reading?” she asked as they walked.

Cherise frowned slightly, observing Blake’s quiet demeanor.

Though her memories were sparse, she perceived him as a reserved and capable young man.

Blake blushed faintly, shook his head, and led her to a secluded corner. “I prefer people- watching.”

“People–watching?” Cherise echoed, joining him and casually picking up a magazine from the table.

As she flipped through the pages, she noticed the recent dates and almost every headline was related to her.

Page by page, Cherise sifted through the magazines, gradually comprehending why Damien

had kept her indoors and her information closely guarded,

#### Chapter 983 Blake's Affection

So... Such was the perception others held of her—flirtatious, seductive, feigning innocence, and repulsive.

Confronted with these unfounded allegations, Cherise harbored no anger, merely finding them absurd.

The time for wrath had passed when she had already elucidated the situation with Sebastian to Damien.

Now, confronted with these accusations, she couldn't help but find them bemusing.

There were too many who blindly trailed the crowd, too many who propagated rumors.

What mattered to these individuals, who had never even crossed paths with her, about her relationship with Damien, lifestyle, or character?

With a deep breath, she cast the magazine aside and turned her gaze, only to find Blake fixedly staring in a particular direction.

She furrowed her brow, trailing his gaze—towards a young female student.

Innocent and charming, adorned with large glasses and double ponytails, she emitted a cute and pure aura.

With brisk steps, she approached the desk diagonally across from them, deftly retrieving a thermos from her backpack and rising to pour water.

From Cherise and Blake's vantage point, they could admire her lovely profile.

Blake sat beside Cherise, silently observing her, his admiration and fondness evident in his gaze.

It appeared that the locale he often mentioned visiting was where he sought glimpses of this girl.

Finally venturing out, she found herself dragged by an enamored teenager to see the object of his affection.

Sensing Blake's gaze, the girl completed pouring water and made her way over, striding towards Blake.

Shyly, she glanced at him and spoke, "Have you been busy lately? I haven't seen you in a few days."

Blake blushed and attempted to reply but his nomies hetraved him.

Witnessing his unease, Cherise swiftly interjected, "He sustained an injury a few days ago and has been recuperating. It's not that he declined to come.

The girl regarded Blake with surprise, concern knitting her brows. "You were injured? Are you feeling better now? What happened?"

Blake's blush deepened, his words stumbling, "It's nothing, really."

"Well, as long as you're okay...

The girl delicately retrieved a candy from her pocket and placed it before Blake, her lips forming a subtle pout. Tve been keeping these for you since you've been absent.

Cherise counted the candies, noting there were seven or eight.



So, this girl had been diligently saving a sweet treat for Blake daily, eagerly anticipating his

return?

The tender display of youthful affection sparked a tinge of jealousy in Cherise.

Are you... his girlfriend?"

As Cherise pondered the longing for love as exquisite as the moment, the young woman beside her interjected. "He's never brought you here before, so I assumed he didn't have a girlfriend...

You...

Cherise locked eyes with the girl, who remarked. "You're gorgeous.

With that, the girl gracefully turned and departed.

Blake sprang to his feet, his urgency palpable. "Wait!"

Far from subdued, his voice resonated throughout the library, seizing the attention of all

present.

With clenched jaws and a voice quivering with emotion, he asserted. "She's not my girlfriend!"

"She's my sister-in-law!"

The girl pivoted, her expression puzzled as she turned her gaze to Cherise. "She's... your sister-in-law?"

But this woman... she appears even younger than I...

As tensions mounted, Cherise reluctantly rose, closing the distance to the girl and extending her hand. "Hello, I'm Cherise Shaw, a mother of two."

The girl stood frozen, speechless.

"Cherise Shaw!?"

Suddenly, a sharp voice sliced through the air of the library. "Cherise!? Is she the one mentioned in the magazine, the Cherise who cheated on Damien!?"

#### Chapter 984 Campus Intrigue

That individual's resounding voice seized the entire library's attention, focusing it squarely on Cherise.

The once tranquil library instantly morphed into a bustling marketplace filled with whispers, discreet snickers, and open mockery.

Amidst this cacophony, Cherise heard every word.

She pressed her lips together, her hands clenched tightly by her side.

While she had always maintained the belief that she shouldn't heed the words of others and knew she shouldn't allow the gossipmongers to affect her, the unpleasant voices stirred a deep rage within her.

After all, ignoring such matters entirely was an impossible feat, wasn't it?

“Let’s go.”

Blake took a decisive step forward without uttering another word, positioning himself protectively in front of Cherise. He then turned to the girl with twin ponytails and inquired, “Is there a back exit here?”

The girl was taken aback by the unfolding scene before her.

Upon hearing Blake’s query, she snapped back to reality, nodding vigorously. “Yes, yes, there is! I know where it is!”

With that, she instinctively attempted to gather her belongings, hesitating as she clutched her backpack.

Gathering her resolve, she dropped the backpack, hurried over, and took Cherise’s hand, apologizing profusely. “I’m sorry... I’ll lead you out.”

Through the girl’s eyes, Cherise sensed a profound self-blame.

Perhaps this young lady believed she bore the brunt of responsibility for the current predicament.

Cherise gently squeezed the hand holding hers and offered a reassuring smile. “It’s not your fault.”

“Ms. Shaw.”

As Cherise prepared to depart, another young woman rose, holding her phone aloft, tapping

Charica’s shoulder with a smile “I’m Emma Raumolde a student from the journalism

frowned at her, already disinclined to comply,

However, Emma preempted Cherise's potential refusal with a faint smile, swiftly posing her question. "Ms. Shaw, what do you think of the rumors circulating about you online?"

"Numerous critics assail you for flouting conventional etiquette and morality, accusing you of mistreating your husband and employing a hypocritical strategy to subject him to excruciating pain under the guise of acting in his best interest," Emma articulated, her tone measured and seemingly impartial, yet subtly laden with disdain for Cherise,

"There are also those who suggest that you are indulging in your promiscuous inclinations while effortlessly resolving the crisis facing the Lenoir Group, both simultaneously," she continued, her words probing.

"Which of these perspectives do you find alignment with?"

Emma's composed demeanor and seemingly impartial words thinly veiled disdain for Cherise.

Blake furrowed his brow. "Are you asking for trouble?"

The girl with twin ponytails, Emma, swiftly intervened, seizing Blake's arm and shaking her head. "This is Emma... we shouldn't antagonize her..."

With that, she promptly pivoted and extended an apology to Cherise. "I'll guide you out."

Cherise glanced at the students barricading all exits, a faint smile touching her lips. "No way out."

All avenues were sealed,

She naturally trusted that Blake possessed the capability to find a solution to guide them out and facilitate their departure.

However, what would be the headlines the next day if she took that course of action?

That she had dispatched someone to employ force and harm these university students?

Until then, rumors would undoubtedly proliferate like wildfire,

With a serene smile, she instructed Emily to console Blake, then turned her attention to the female college student named Emma. "If memory serves me right, Adania University was also my alma mater."

Suppressing a small yawn, she located a chair, settled into it, and gazed up at Emma standing nearby, "Are you affiliated with the journalism department? And what year are you in?"

#### Chapter 985 Cherise's Challenge

Emma's brow furrowed, a subtle indication of her perplexity. "Third year," she confirmed.

The palpable aura emanating from Cherise unsettled her deeply.

An uneasy tension settled in Emma's core, manifesting in the nervous nibbling of her lip.

Realization dawned upon her with a jolt.

Though it was evident she held the role of interrogator, why did she find herself unexpectedly assuming the position of being interrogated?

"Oh, third year?" Emma echoed, her voice tinged with uncertainty.

Cherise's smile remained intact as she probed, "Since you've graced our halls for three years, I presume familiarity with our school motto?"

Emma pressed her lips together, hesitating before reluctantly acquiescing to Cherise's inquiry. "Our school motto... it's to absorb, heed, uphold, follow, enact, embody wisdom."

Cherise's smile widened subtly. "You've committed it to memory quite admirably. Yet, one must ponder, why do you not abide by it?"

Taken aback, Emma glanced up at Cherise, her confusion evident. "How can you assume I haven't adhered to it?"

Cherise's smile persisted as she countered, "Then, allow me to pose this question: absorb, heed, uphold, follow, enact, embody wisdom. Among these virtues, does any justify the indulgence in idle gossip about others' lives?"

Emma faltered, caught off guard. "But what people say online..."

"People's musings online are but idle chatter, relishing in the speculation of others' private affairs. Does that grant you a license to do the same?" Cherise's tone remained composed yet firm.

A mere few sentences from Cherise were enough to send Emma into a stuttering spiral of uncertainty.

After contemplating, Emma delicately bit her lip and met Cherise's gaze. "I did mention that I'm a journalism student. I simply require your assistance for a practical interview," she explained, her tone tinged with a hint of urgency.

Emma continued with a subtle glimmer of pride in her eyes, "Surely, you wouldn't withhold your cooperation, would you?"

story intrigues me—it's only natural," she added, her words carefully chosen.

Cherise maintained her affable smile. "Certainly, if your ambition is to merely revel in reporting on others' private affairs and stirring online controversy."

“I’m more than willing to accommodate your request,” Cherise assured, her demeanor composed.

“If you have any further inquiries, let’s address them together. I’m prepared to share aspects of my life openly; transparency and sincerity are paramount,” she offered graciously.

Emma found herself at a loss for words.

She pressed her lips together, acknowledging the eloquence of Cherise’s response.

Further probing would inevitably cast her as a reporter intent on prying into private matters and igniting online debates.

Yet, refraining from further interrogation wasn’t a concession to Cherise but a testament to her transparency. “As your senior, I’m prepared to share my life openly. Transparency and sincerity are my guiding principles,” she reiterated.

Narrowing her eyes, Emma studied the woman before her.

Cherise defied the foolish rumors that preceded her.

Bold, intelligent, and composed, she embodied the essence of Mrs. Lenoir.

Moments later, a message flashed on Emma’s phone, prompting a smile to tug at her lips. “In that case, Cherise, I’ll take my leave,” she announced.

“If you feel inclined to depart, then by all means,” Cherise responded calmly, though a subtle tension lingered in the air.

Emma knew Cherise’s respite was short-lived.

The live broadcast of their interview had garnered attention, with reporters gathering outside the library.

At Emma's directive, the students blocking the exit parted, allowing Cherise.

passage.

Raising an eyebrow, Cherise remained seated, her gaze fixed on Emma. "Your sudden generosity is quite unexpected. It's almost unsettling," she remarked, a hint of curiosity in her

tone.

"Letting me leave so easily—it's—unlike you, isn't it?"

Chapter 986 Facing the Storm

Emma chuckled softly.

"You're quite clever, Cherise.

With a graceful stride, Emma approached the window, peering at the swarm of reporters gathered outside the library. "While I may lack the finesse of a professional journalist, feel free to decline my inquiries, challenge me, or even put me on the spot.

"But," she paused, turning back to face Cherise with a playful smile, "what about those reporters out there? How do you plan to handle them, Cherise?"

Cherise furrowed her brow, rising slowly to join Emma at the window, her heart fluttering with a hint of panic.

Oh dear.



Were all those reporters gathered for her?

Inwardly, Cherise grappled with a sense of unease.

She had glimpsed the motto of Adania University when she and Blake entered through the school gates.

Having recently watched dramas, Cherise had picked up the notion of challenging Emma.

However, with her limited memories and difficulty adapting, dealing with Emma was one thing, but facing hundreds or even thousands of reporters outside presented an entirely different challenge.

Cherise's palms grew sweaty.

Sensing Cherise's discomfort, Emma's confidence swelled. "Is something bothering you, Cherise? Afraid to confront those reporters?"

"With your professed transparency and honesty, I'll offer you an escape route. Why not just leave?" Emma's smirk was unmistakable.

Cherise maintained her composure, offering a serene smile to Emma. "Did I imply fear?"

"It's just," she continued, settling back into her chair and idly playing with her phone, "if you don't release me, I can't leave. And if you do, then I should? Wouldn't that be rather embarrassing for me?"

Emma was momentarily speechless, her smugness tempered by Cherise's calm demeanor.

"You're merely posturing, Emma retorted, her tone sharp.

“Admit it, Cherise. You’re apprehensive about facing those professional journalists downstairs.”

As the lone challenger to Cherise’s confidence, Emma found herself supported by those present.

her stance.

“Come on, make your way downstairs already.”

“Heh, you think you can intimidate professional journalists like us college students? Think again.”

“I wonder if Mrs. Lenoir will keep up her bravado when faced with real reporters.”

“It’s fascinating. She’s clearly in the wrong, but she’s still putting on a front. Talk about audacity.”

“Exactly. She wouldn’t dare to betray Damien openly if she weren’t so bold!”

The chorus of voices echoed one after another, filling the room with their opinions.

Blake, his fists clenched and unclenched at his sides, seethed angrily.

Cherise sensed Blake’s simmering rage, knowing full well he was on the brink of exploding

Were it not for her and Emily, he would have torn these people’s mouths apart!

Fiddling with her phone, Cherise maintained a composed exterior, though inwardly turmoil churned.

Communication within the library had been blocked, rendering her unable to reach Damien!

Casting a glance at the embarrassed Emily and the boiling frustration in Blake's eyes, Cherise understood that remaining would only escalate the situation.

With a deep breath, she offered a graceful smile and rose to her feet. "It's not a matter of fear," she began, her gaze briefly meeting Emma's.

"But it's not for you to dictate my actions."

## Chapter 987 Escape from Chaos

"I'm heading downstairs now, not at your request, but because I've grown weary of sharing this stuffy air with all of you in this study room," Cherise declared firmly.

"By the way, has there been a change in leadership with the principal and the dean of this school?" she inquired, her tone assertive.

"I'll ensure they review the surveillance footage here so they can witness the disregard for privacy

among

the students of Adania University," she added before gracefully turning to leave, her departure exuding poise. "I recall the library's surveillance also captures audio."

As Cherise finished speaking, a loud "bang" reverberated behind her, indicating someone had smashed the surveillance camera,

Observing Cherise's departure with clenched teeth. Emma muttered, "Smashing it won't make a difference. Those data have already been uploaded to the cloud."

Taking a deep breath, she narrowed her eyes, retrieved her phone, and dialed a number. "Caleb, Cherise has left the room."

“Ensure she’s intercepted, make her address the online messages properly, and make her confess that she’ll do anything for any man!” she instructed firmly

If Cherise’s promiscuity is confirmed, even with the principal and the dean witnessing today’s harassment on video, they won’t step in!

Having someone like Cherise in the school is considered disgraceful, and no punishment is deemed excessive for her!

“Don’t worry,” Caleb sneered over the phone. “I already have firsthand information.”

“The other day, Cherise legally adopted a child from the welfare home. Can you guess whose child he is?”

“He happens to be none other than the illegitimate child of Cherise and Sebastian!”

“Today’s headlines will be explosive; mark my words! With this news, I’m poised to be promoted deputy editor-in-chief of the magazine!”

Emily led Cherise and Blake to the first floor, intending to exit through the back door.

However, they were surprised to find the back door also besieged by a crowd of reporters.

Uncertain of how to proceed, Cherise noticed the security guard accepting money from the prompting her to usher Emily and Blake into a nearby utility room swiftly.

The utility room was cramped, dusty, and challenging to navigate.

Peering through a crack, Cherise observed the security guards, who had accepted bribes, open the entrance door, allowing the reporters to flood in like a swarm of locusts.

As they stepped into the elevator, the reporters meticulously searched every corner, their movements adding to the chaotic atmosphere that enveloped the entire library.

“What should we do?” Emily’s voice quivered as she looked up at Cherise, her lip caught between her teeth. “I didn’t mean for this... I didn’t expect...”

Cherise offered a comforting pat on Emily’s shoulder “It’s not your fault,” she reassured. “Even without your presence, they would have found me. They’re targeting me, not you.”

Nodding in understanding. Emily took a deep breath and gestured to a chair. “Cherise, please, have a  
  
scat.”

In her nervousness, Emily accidentally knocked over the chair while reaching for a tissue.

“There’s a noise from over there!” a reporter shouted, prompting others to rush towards the room.  
“Let’s investigate!”

Emily was overcome with panic.

She looked at Cherise, tears on the verge of spilling, and stuttered, “I-I didn’t mean to...”

## Chapter 988 Undercover Escape

“What... what do we do?” Emily’s voice quivered as the reporters furrow her brow and slip out of sight.

drew closer, prompting Cherise to

Blake, his expression concerned, glanced at Emily’s flushed cheeks and teary eyes. “You little fool,”

With a gentle murmur, he embraced Emily just as the door swung open with a loud bang from outside.

The reporters, paying no attention to the room's occupants, immediately began clicking their cameras, solely focused on capturing Cherise's unguarded reaction.

Their anticipation for a flustered Cherise was palpable.

If mistaken, they would simply apologize.

But if Cherise stumbled, it would be front-page news!

Yet, they were in for a surprise.

In the dimly lit storage room, sunlight streamed through a narrow window, illuminating a couple locked in a passionate embrace atop a deserted desk.

The girl was draped over the young man's navy blue coat, her own coat slipping off her arm as her cheeks flushed.

The young man fixed a cold stare on the reporters, his expression stern, his gaze chilling. "Leave!"

The reporters hurriedly retreated, with a few lingering to peer into the room.

The utility room, though compact, provided an unobstructed view.

With only the embracing couple visible, disappointment settled over the group as they apologized and

left.

Alone, at last, Blake released Emily and closed the door to the utility room.

Cherise emerged from beneath the desk behind Emily, dusting herself off with a playful remark like we're in a drama, doesn't it?"

Blake blushed. "This isn't the time for jokes."

Glancing through the door crack at the journalists searching the area, he continued, "They're thorough. scrutinizing every passing student."

Turning to Cherise, he added, "We can't stay hidden here forever."

Cherise pursed her lips, eyeing the mop and bucket in the corner. "I have a plan.

towards the exit.

Just a minute after his departure, Emily, skillfully disguised as a janitor, bore a bucket and mop in one hand while pushing a sizable trash can with the other, her trajectory slow and deliberate towards the

refuse chute located at the rear exit.

In order to maintain her guise, Emily was liberally adorned with dust and grime, effectively obscuring her true identity.

Several journalists, keen on approaching, hesitated upon encountering the bedraggled trash can and Emily's disheveled appearance.

Surely, they reasoned, the esteemed wife of Damien and paramour of Sebastian, Cherise, would not deign to conceal herself amidst such squalor, right?

Unbeknownst to the onlookers, Cherise was at that very moment crouched within a trash receptacle, pinching her nose in distaste as she listened intently to the commotion outside.

Suddenly, a flurry of rapid footsteps reverberated through the vicinity.

Initially disordered, the footfalls swiftly coalesced into a synchronized rhythm, indicating the presence of a well-disciplined unit in motion.

Ere long, the footsteps drew to a halt beside Cherise's concealed position.

A furrow formed on her brow as she sensed an unsettling shift in the atmosphere.

There was a distinct cessation in the movement of the trash can, and Emily paused; her actions stilled.

## Chapter 989 Unexpected Rescue

Cherise's heart quickened its pace within her chest, racing with apprehension.

Could it be?

Was her meticulously crafted escape plan unraveled too soon?

Contrary to the scandalous rumors that swirled around her, no journalist could have fathomed finding her concealed within the confines of such a filthy receptacle!

As the footsteps outside dwindled into silence, a fresh set of resolute footfalls approached, each bearing an air of elegant indifference.

With each approaching stride, Cherise braced herself for the inevitable.



Gritting her teeth, she resignedly closed her eyes, fully convinced that her fate was sealed.

This was the moment, the end of everything!

step

Not only had she failed to shake off the relentless pursuit of those shady journalists, but now she was about to be caught squatting in a trash can, which would undoubtedly bring immense shame upon herself.

She held the esteemed position of Damien's wife, who presided over the Lenoir Group!

The humiliation weighed heavily, proving too much to bear!

She could already imagine the scandalous headlines, picturing her grimy face amidst the garbage.

No way!

She couldn't cause embarrassment to her husband!

Lost in her distress, Cherise was startled by the sudden cessation of footsteps.

Then, as someone lifted the trash can lid, sunlight flooded in, causing Cherise to squint, clench her teeth, and bow her head in resignation.

She anticipated the journalists would either pull her out of the trash can or, at the very least, tip it over, revealing her shameful predicament to all.

But to her surprise, the person who lifted the lid remained still momentarily.

Perplexed, Cherise heard a voice from above, tinged with a mix of helplessness and amusement. "Mrs. Lenoir, want me to take this trash can home?"

Cherise was utterly shocked!

The voice-clearly Damien's-sent a surge of excitement through her, warming her heart instantly.

head tilted slightly downward, a faint smile dancing upon his lips as he uttered, "You silly girl."

Just these words made Cherise's heartache with a blend of emotions-annoyance, excitement, and tenderness-tears welling in her eyes.

Ignoring her disheveled state, Cherise stood up abruptly, reaching out to embrace Damien. "Darling... she murmured, overwhelmed with emotion.

She had assumed that the library's signal would be blocked, leaving him unaware of her predicament.

She had resigned herself to face the ordeal alone, fearing that her inability to escape would embarrass him and tarnish his reputation.

However, she had yet to anticipate his timely arrival.

"I'm sorry I'm late," he apologized, reaching out to encircle her waist with one arm while gently stroking her back with the other. "Don't cry."

"I don't mind your tardiness, Cherise replied, attempting to suppress her tears, which flowed freely nonetheless.

"I'm just... so grateful that you came to my rescue so promptly."

"No, I should have arrived sooner," he sighed as he removed bits of debris from her body.

“Had I been quicker, my wife wouldn’t have found herself hiding in a trash can disguised as garbage.”

Cherise remained silent, her heart heavy with emotion.

“You silly girl,” Damien chided gently, offering her a wistful smile as he lifted her from the trash can.

Clad in a sleek, high-priced suit, he presented an image of immaculate dignity.

In stark contrast, she was drenched in filth and grime, her appearance utterly disheveled.

However, he showed no sign of concern as he cradled her in his arms, his touch exuding the utmost care, reminiscent of carrying a cherished princess.

“Ladies and gentlemen,” Mr. Hampson smiled at the gathered reporters, “I apologize for any inconvenience. My lady simply enjoys indulging in a game of hide-and-seek with Mr. Lenoir.”

Marrying the Man in the Dark

Chapter 990 Challenging Authority

“This is a private matter between them as a married couple, and it’s our fault that everyone unintentionally witnessed their private moment,” Mr. Hampson continued.

“However, Mr. Lenoir prefers to keep his personal affairs confidential, so we can only extend our apologies to all of you.”

Mr. Hampson delivered this statement with a gentle smile, emanating a grandfatherly warmth.

As soon as his words settled, the surrounding bodyguards swiftly moved to confiscate all the cameras from the reporters, forcibly extracting the memory cards.

Despite the tension, Mr. Hampson maintained his smile and gestured for someone behind him to bring a brazier forward.

In a decisive move, all the memory cards were tossed into the flames.

Some reporters appeared anxious, others reluctant, while some simply accepted their fate with bowed heads.

Despite the swirling rumors, the Lenoir family's influence in Adania remained indisputable, marking them as a formidable force.

Following the disposal of the memory cards, Mr. Hampson, with a genial smile, addressed the gathering. "I trust you're all well-versed in the workings of the news industry," he remarked. "Although these images have been eradicated, we cannot dictate your subsequent actions."

"However, he continued, his tone taking on a weight of caution, "every piece of information has its roots. Should any details of today's events resurface in the future, we will trace them back to the source. And regarding the potential consequences. I believe there's no need for further elaboration, correct?"

His words carried an implicit threat, though some among the audience remained undaunted.

Among the spectators, Caleb, Emma's brother, clenched his jaw, sensing an opportunity to assert himself.

If he could secure this exclusive story, he might swiftly ascend to the position of deputy editor-in- chief!

Fearing he might miss this chance, he summoned his courage and addressed Damien directly. "Mr. Lenoir, you're seeking to prevent the dissemination of Mrs. Lenoir's recent footage, correct?"

"I assure you," Caleb continued, "that I have no intention of revealing the video or the incident. However, I do seek an interview with both you and Mrs. Lenoir regarding the ongoing rumors.

Damien leveled Caleb with a frigid stare and inquired. "You're requesting an interview with me?"

A glimmer of menace flashed in his dark eyes, causing Caleb to briefly hesitate.

Nonetheless, he remained resolute, maintaining a serious demeanor as he pressed on. "Yes, I seek an

Damien regarded him coolly and uttered three words in a chilling tone, "Are you qualified?"

Though uttered softly, those three words resonated with Damien's deep and chilling voice, carrying a weight capable of sending shivers down one's spine.

Instantly, Caleb paled, feeling a rush of fear.

His colleague beside him hastily pulled him back, urging him to remain silent. "Shut up' Damien is not someone we should provoke!"

Despite the tremors of fear coursing through him, Caleb clenched his teeth, summoned his courage, and pressed on. "Damien," he began, his voice steady despite his internal turmoil. I'm well aware of your authority and influence, and I understand that you hold the power to jeopardize my job with

mere word.

"But, he continued, his words gaining momentum, "these rumors won't dissipate simply because you choose to ignore them! The public deserves transparency. Did your wife truly betray you? Did you condone her actions for financial gain?"

Caleb's bold statements cast a sudden silence over the room.

All eyes turned to the young reporter, recognizing the audacity of his challenge, as well as to Damien and Cherise, locked in an embrace.

Damien's eyes narrowed, a hint of frost creeping into his expression as he turned to face Caleb "Why should I justify myself to you?" he retorted sharply

"Must I provide explanations just to fuel idle gossip?"