

## **Marrying 991**

### Chapter 991 Revelation's Weight

"Guiding you towards the zenith of your existence with this revelation?" Damien's inquiry held a weighty tone. "I'm not one to indulge in altruism; there's little purpose in engaging in trivial matters for strangers," he declared with a detached air.

With those words, he turned on his heel and departed, Cherise cradled securely in his arms.

Caleb remained rooted to the spot, watching Damien's departure, his urgency demanding release. "This morning, I received communication from the DNA testing facility!

"The disclosure illuminates that the child your spouse, Cherise, recently embraced as her own is the clandestine offspring of her and Sebastian!

"Are you truly inclined to disregard this revelation without further consideration? Really?"

Damien halted abruptly in his stride, casting a piercing glance back at the audacious journalist who remained undeterred. "And who might you be to presume entitlement to classified information from the DNA testing facility?"

Caught off guard, Caleb faltered momentarily.

The authenticity of the source did indeed warrant scrutiny...

"The origins of my intelligence are inconsequential: what holds significance is..."

"Why, pray tell, would the provenance of your intel be deemed inconsequential?" This time, Cherise found her voice nestled in Damien's embrace.

Struggling to extricate herself from Damien's grasp, she continued, "To my understanding, DNA testing necessitates voluntary consent. Upon application, the facility is entrusted to safeguard the confidentiality of the findings."

Her earnest gaze bore into Caleb's conscience. "Hence, the source of the revelation bears paramount importance. This raises questions regarding the credibility of the testing facility and the integrity of its examiners.

Caleb's countenance paled imperceptibly. "But..."

"Furthermore. Cherise drew a deep breath, her resolve unwavering. "My husband disclosed to me that he dispatched samples of the child's and Sebastian's hair for comparison, as Sebastian adamantly asserted his paternity.

"However, neither my spouse nor I ever sought a DNA analysis. Thus, who conducted the test unbeknownst to us?

"In a scenario where neither party availed themselves for testing, how can the results be divulged to you? Is this examination truly impartial and just?

"I harbor doubts that a facility lacking in ethical rectitude could furnish results of unequivocal accuracy"

Cherise's rapid succession of assertions left Caleb utterly dumbfounded..

Never had he envisaged Mrs. Damien to be so eloquent.

Witnessing Caleb's pallid silence, Cherise drew a deep breath. "Let us bring this to a close. Should anyone dare to propagate future rumors insinuating that Alexis is the illicit progeny of Sebastian and myself, brace yourselves for a missive from our legal representative!"

With that pronouncement, she turned, clasping Damien's hand in preparation to depart.

"What if it were I who made such a claim?"

At that juncture, a frigid male voice reverberated through the room.

All eyes turned to behold Sebastian, ensconced in a wheelchair, garbed in pristine white, being wheeled gradually into the midst of the gathering. "Cherise, the child undeniably belongs to you and me. Why do you vehemently disavow it?"

Cherise narrowed her eyes. "That's preposterous!"

Even in the absence of her recollection, she remained steadfast in her conviction that she would never conceive a child with someone as loathsome as Sebastian!

"And why?" Sebastian yawned, adjusting himself in the wheelchair, his gaze casually drifting towards Cherise. "Five years past, heartbroken by Damien, you terminated your liaison with him, took up residence with me in Lermille, conceived my child, and delivered in Lermille Hospital..."

There lingered a trace of wistfulness and nostalgia in his gaze. "How could you so readily forget?"

With that, he tapped his temple as though a sudden realization dawned upon him. "Ah, I neglected to mention you were drugged by Damien, resulting in the loss of all your memories."

Marrying the Man in the Dark

Chapter 992 Labyrinth of Memories

Cherise furrowed her brow at him, her tone edged with skepticism. "What did you just say?"

"I said the DNA test results are unequivocally accurate. Sebastian reiterated softly, his gaze fixated upon Cherise with a blend of reluctance and sorrow.

"We were once deeply enamored, but now you scarcely remember me."

"Cherise, your indifference wounds me deeply..."

His earnest gaze and the sorrow evident in his eyes elicited a subtle tremor in Cherise's form.

Confusion clouded her thoughts.

She glanced between Damien and Sebastian. "You..."

Despite the logical inclination to dismiss Sebastian's assertions, Cherise found herself swayed by the

sincerity emanating from his gaze. Each of Damien's gestures of kindness flooded her memory, ver

Sebastian's earnest demeanor seemed devoid of deceit.

"Are you implying... that we were in love?" she questioned incredulously.

"Yes," Sebastian affirmed, his voice tinged with resignation. "Yes."

Under Damien's penetrating scrutiny, Sebastian retrieved the agreement signed by Damien's grandfather and Cherise. Take a moment to peruse this."

Frowning, Cherise accepted the document.

As she pored over its contents, her pupils dilated, expanding in astonishment.

Her own signature adorned the agreement.

Damien's grandfather had shouldered her grandmother's medical expenses, and in exchange, she pledged to wed Damien and bear his progeny...

"We were classmates back in junior high," Sebastian interjected, presenting Cherise with a photograph capturing their shared moments from that time. "Our love ran deep until the Weiss family took me away, leaving you behind in Shawbury."

"And later, you were purchased back by the Lenoir family with money," he continued, his words casting a shadow of disbelief over Cherise's comprehension.

Cherise's grip tightened around the agreement as she hastened to Damien's side, unfolding the document before him,

Her hands trembled slightly. "Is this... is this true?"

"It is," Damien confirmed, his lips pursed with an air of solemnity.

Throughout this tumultuous revelation, no one had divulged the circumstances of her initial encounter with Damien.

Nobody.

Not Damien himself, nor Frances, nor any member of the household staff!

Even Zachary, who professed to be family, had maintained a silence veiled in secrecy!

She had harbored the illusion that her relationship with Damien was a conventional love story, a typical marriage between two souls.

However, the contract laid bare before her exposed the stark reality-that her union with Damien had been nothing more than a transaction orchestrated by their families.

His kin had provided the funds, and she had consented to bear his offspring.

Was that all there was to it?

Was that truly... all?

Outside, the sun illuminated the world with its radiance, yet within Cherise's heart, a storm raged.

The truths presented to her were brutal to accept, and the realization that her marriage had begun under such circumstances was even more agonizing.

"The agreement holds true," Damien acknowledged, his voice tinged with a note of anxiety. "But my sentiments for you are genuine."

Cherise turned to meet his gaze, finding solace in the depth of his affection.

Memories from their shared past since the advent of her amnesia flooded her mind-Damien's unwavering kindness, his tender care. Such sentiments, she realized, could not be feigned!

A man who portrayed a facade of aloofness to the world yet exhibited warmth and devotion in her presence what were those emotions if not love?

However, as Cherise hesitated, Sebastian's voice pierced through the tumult. "Do not allow yourself to be deceived by him.

"Cherise, do you recall why you initially terminated your relationship with him?" Sebastian's query caught her off guard, leaving her at a loss.

Cherise was taken aback, shaking her head in disbelief

If she couldn't recollect the circumstances surrounding their separation, how could she hope to navigate through this labyrinth of memories?

## Chapter 993 Betrayal's Bitter Truth

"It all stems from the replacement wedding you and Damien had," Sebastian revealed, his words laced with calculated precision.

"During that event, his own sister viciously attacked your biological mother, plunging a knife into her chest."

Sebastian clearly came prepared, and as he uttered these words, he flung a substantial stack of documents onto the table. "Furthermore, your biological mother has been grappling with a heart condition for numerous years."

"The severity of the stab wound sealed her fate, leaving no chance of survival. In your fury, you parted ways with Damien."

"Subsequently, you found solace with me, even bearing my child and bringing new life into this world. Yet, Damien intervened once again, reclaiming you as his own."

"I pursued you to this city, and upon our reunion, Damien administered a drug to you, resulting in the loss of your memories and effectively ensnaring you like a caged bird." Sebastian revealed, his eyes reflecting the anguish of his words.

"Cherise, even if you cannot recall our shared moments now, I hold onto the hope that one day, you will recollect the memories we cherished together."

"No... it can't be true!"

Cherise recoiled instinctively; her gaze averted from the second batch of documents Sebastian hurled her way.

Fear gripped her...

Fear that his words held truth...

Instinctively, she sought Damien's reassurance, her voice quivering like a frail kite on the verge of collapse. "He's lying, isn't he?"

Damien strode towards her with purpose, his lips tight with resolve, yearning to enfold her in his arms.

But as he moved to embrace her, Cherise deftly sidestepped, evading his reach.

Stepping back, she maintained a cautious distance from Damien and Sebastian, her voice trembling as she pleaded, "Stay back, both of you. Don't come any closer,"

Raising her gaze with a mix of hope and uncertainty, she turned to Damien, seeking confirmation. "He's been deceiving me, hasn't he? How could our relationship... how could our marriage be based on such deception and transaction? And your sister... she's a good person..."

In a murmured soliloquy, she grappled with the overwhelming revelations. Finally, she lifted her gaze to meet Damien's, her voice trembling with uncertainty. "Tell me... none of this is real, is it?"

He understood that the temptation to reassure her, to refute Sebastian's claims outright, was strong.

Yet, he couldn't bring himself to deceive her at this moment.

The repercussions of such falsehoods would only deepen her anguish when confronted with the truth later on.



Taking a steadying breath, he chose honesty over expedience. "Some of what he said holds truth, while some are distortions."

"The contractual marriage is indeed factual."

"The incident involving my sister stabbing your mother is regrettably true."

"Our separation for five years is undeniable."

"However, your involvement with him is categorically false."

The world crumbled around her.

Cherise felt as though her entire world had shattered.

Since the onset of her amnesia, Damien had been her anchor, her steadfast guide for so long.

In her eyes, Damien had always been her sky-steady, dependable, and immutable.

She had placed unwavering trust in his words, believing in the sincerity of his actions.

She had always believed that the bond between her and Damien was built on love, just as he had professed.

Whether it was her pursuit or his, she had always viewed their relationship through the lens of love.

But she had never anticipated that her marriage with Damien would unravel in such a manner.

Not only was their marriage fraught with such revelations, but a deep-seated enmity existed between her and Damien?

She recoiled instinctively, her gaze fixed upon Damien with a mixture of disbelief and betrayal. "You"

Silent tears traced a path down her cheeks, the anguish of realization etched upon her features. "So, from the beginning, you were deceiving me, weren't you?"

Deceiving her into believing they were in love, fabricating the notion that they had always been together, and concealing the existence of any obstacles between them.

"I didn't lie to you."

Chapter 994 Truths Unveiled: Confrontation

Damien drew a deep breath and spoke with conviction. "With the exception of a few jests, I've always been truthful with you, Cherise."

His dark eyes met hers firmly, his expression unwavering. "I've never deceived you, not in the present."

He continued, gentle yet resolute. "Earlier, when you questioned me, I could have easily dismissed Sebastian's claims as fabrications to earn your trust. With your trust in me, with the feelings you hold for me, you would believe me, wouldn't you?"

Cherise tensed visibly, grappling with conflicting emotions.

Yes...

She would have readily believed him if Damien had outright denied Sebastian's accusations.

But he didn't.

Damien drew a deep breath, his steps deliberate as he approached Cherise, his voice gentle. "Cherise, please consider this carefully."

"Every time you've sought answers about your past, I've promised to disclose everything gradually once the timing was right."

"I've never lied to you."

The way I've treated you, I've simply chosen not to reveal certain things rather than actively deceiving you.

Cherise's lips tightened, her hands slowly unclenching

Despite this, she instinctively retreated, creating a considerable distance between herself and

"Excessive secrecy," Sebastian remarked nonchalantly from his wheelchair positioned behind her more detrimental than deception."

Perhaps Cherise and Damien's responses didn't align with his anticipations, prompting the man his trump card directly.

With a signal, the individual behind him presented evidence of Charisa's demise and a photo depicting Maeve stabbing Charisa at Cherise and Damien's wedding.

"Cherise," Sebastian's tone was firm, his words laden with implication. "Had I not revealed the truth today, he would have perpetually obscured it from you. Can you condone such secrecy?"

He paused, allowing the weight of his words to sink in. "Your mother's life, the injustices she faced, and the marriage treated as a mere transaction-all hidden from you. Don't you see? If he had kept all of this from you, you would have willingly spent your life with him."

At this moment, Damien and Sebastian found themselves at opposite ends of the library hall, their presence commanding attention.

Cherise stood between them, a pivotal figure caught in the tension between two opposing forces.

Despite the disbelief etched across her countenance, her body subtly gravitated towards Sebastian.

Damien's eyes narrowed ever so slightly, a subtle indication of the turmoil within.

The body's instinctive reactions are often telling and cannot deceive those attuned to them.

Despite Cherise's current hesitation to distance herself from him, there lies a logical belief in Sebastian's words within her.

As for delving into the complexities of their shared past, Damien found himself at a loss, unsure of where to even begin unraveling the intricacies of their history.

The man could only close his eyes momentarily, collecting his thoughts before addressing Cherise.

"Cherise," he began, his voice tinged with a mixture of remorse and sincerity.

"Throughout our journey together, whether I treated you with kindness or failed you, you should understand by now." He paused his words carrying a weight of emotion.

"I hold you in the highest esteem, cherishing your presence and valuing you deeply. For quite some time, I've regarded you as someone I want to share a lifetime with."

Sebastian sneered contemptuously, his tone dripping with sarcasm. "How delightful," he remarked derisively.

"I'll concede, your affection for her is genuine, and I trust you wouldn't intentionally harm her." He paused, his expression hardening.

"But is it your genuine feelings that drive you to desire her to forget all the anguish, to let an amnesiac and spend her life with you?"

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"Damien," Sebastian continued, unfazed by the venom in Damien's glare, "Your love seems rather self-centered, doesn't it?"

Damien's icy gaze bore into Sebastian, silencing him with a sharp retort. "Enough!"

Sebastian was momentarily caught off guard, his composure shaken by the intensity of Damien's hateful glare.

But the moment of vulnerability swiftly passed.

After that, with a placid smile, he persisted, reminding Damien of the weight of their shared past. "If I hadn't spoken up, could you truly move beyond the shadows that linger from your history?"

Damien's response was swift and cutting, his words laden with regret. "Perhaps I shouldn't have merely crippled your legs previously."

## Chapter 995 Unraveling Deceptions

While Sebastian had a penchant for dredging up the past in any circumstance, Damien found himself unable to follow suit.

Here, the assembly comprised entirely of journalists.

Surrounded by journalists both inside and outside, each one acting as a potential megaphone, he refrained from delving into Charisa's history.

If Damien were to reveal the details of Charisa's past troubles to Cherise, particularly how Charisa instructed Elvis to start a fire and cause harm, it would open a Pandora's box of consequences.

Such revelations would impact Cherise and implicate several families associated with those events.

The Tanner, Miles, Lenoir, and Shaw families would all be thrust into the spotlight, facing scrutiny and potential scandal.

This was especially concerning considering Charisa's tragic demise five years earlier.

As Cherise's husband, Damien couldn't bear the thought of Charisa's affairs being discussed and ridiculed.

"Is it too difficult to explain? Or are you deliberately avoiding it?"

"Is it that you can't explain or that you haven't found a way to explain it?" Sebastian's smile was taunting, his words cutting.

With a furrowed brow, Sebastian's hand moved to massage his temple, a troubled expression clouding his features. "This shouldn't be happening," he murmured.

"Damien, it's been nearly a week since you drugged Cherise to erase her memory, hasn't it?" Sebastian's tone was accusatory, his words cutting through the tense atmosphere like a knife.

"What's the holdup? Still haven't concocted a plan to deceive her after all this time?" He pressed, his gaze unwavering as he awaited a response.

"Or is it..."

His slender eyes briefly flicked towards Cherise, a silent challenge shimmering within their depths. "Or do

you dare to believe that Cherise will obediently adhere to your commands, naively trusting that this web of deceit will never unravel? Have you yet to contrive a scheme to ensnare her with falsehoods?"

Sebastian's words ignited murmurs among the assembled onlookers, their whispers like a faint breeze through the room.

Cherise remained motionless, her fists clenched tightly at her sides.

Raising her gaze, her eyes now tinged with the crimson of raw emotion; she locked onto his.

"Is what he said true?" she demanded, her voice quivering with vulnerability.

"If..."

She sniffed, tears tracing silent paths down her cheeks. "If any elucidation exists for past events, I implore you to disclose it to me now."

"If there's no explanation," she continued, her voice tinged with resignation, "then the truth remains: your sister's actions at our wedding caused harm to my mother, and our union was nothing more than

a transaction..."

Cherise's fingers trembled with the magnitude of this revelation. "Then... how could I love you?"

A profound darkness shadowed Damien's eyes, casting a somber hue upon his countenance.

He pressed his lips together tightly, his voice carrying a restrained air of pride.

“Return with me,” he implored, his voice laced with desperation. Till clarify everything. I’ll explain, but definitely not here.

“You’re stalling, aren’t you?” Sebastian interjected, his sneer cutting through the tension.

On the journey back, you’ll have ample time to craft your lies. Or perhaps you have no intention of explaining at all. You could simply erase Cherise’s memory once again, using drugs to wipe away this inconvenient truth. Then, you’ll still be the man she loves, and she’ll continue to follow you blindly.”

Sebastian’s words delivered the final blow, shattering Cherise’s fragile

trust in

in Damien.

Lost in the whirlwind of doubt, she found herself unable to grasp the true essence of Damien, let alone Sebastian.

Confusion clouded her mind as she struggled to discern her own emotions and the reality of her situation.

In the midst of the chaos, neither man’s words resonated with sincerity.

“Cherise,” Damien pleaded, his gaze imploring her to see beyond the turmoil.

He conceded, recognizing that in the span of thirty years, he had never stooped to such depths of compromise.

Yet, in that pivotal moment, he clung to a flicker of hope, praying that the Cherise before him would recognize the enduring bond they had forged and choose to accompany him back home.



But hope was a fragile thing, easily shattered by the harsh realities.

“Cherise,” Sebastian delicately curved his lips into a smile, his slender eyes unwaveringly locked onto Cherise’s visage. “Damien has been deceiving you.”

## Chapter 996 Confronting Fate

“But for me, I’ve been awaiting your return,” the man spoke with a gentle smile, extending his hand towards Cherise. “Come back with me. I’ll unveil the truth about your relationship with Damien and the love we share.”

Sebastian’s words left Cherise feeling torn.

Indeed, Sebastian arrived bearing the truth.

After all, he exposed revelations that Damien had kept hidden from her.

Could Sebastian be her true love, her past choice?

With a steadying breath, Cherise began to move towards Sebastian.

As she did, a glint of coldness flashed in Damien’s eyes.

In an instant, he forcefully pulled her back into his embrace.

“Let go of me!”

Cherise instinctively fought against the sudden embrace, wrenching herself away from his grasp. She turned to meet his gaze squarely. “Don’t lay a hand on me!”

Her eyes held a mix of unfamiliarity, resistance, and hostility, igniting a deeper intensity in Damien's gaze.

Undeterred by her resistance, he lifted her up after a deep breath, reminiscent of how he had rescued her from the trash can moments before.

But while she had been filled with happiness then, now she brimmed with defiance and resistance, evident in her expression and demeanor.

Damien held her firmly, refusing to let her resist.

"Let me go!" Cherise demanded, her struggle growing more fierce with each passing moment.

"You, the murderer of my mother!" she accused, her words striking Damien.

"You, who orchestrated my marriage!"

Each accusation pierced Damien's heart like daggers.

Yet Damien remained resolute, his demeanor serious careful, and deliberate as he carried her towards the exit with purposeful strides.

No matter what, he couldn't allow Cherise to fall back into Sebastian's grasp.

He had already made one mistake, already lost her once..

Cherise.

So, even if she hated him or resented him, he would bring her home!

“Damien.” Sebastian’s voice cut through the tension as Damien, with Cherise in his embrace, strode past him, a faint smile playing on his lips. “You cannot best me. She is mine, whether now or in the future. If she cannot be mine, I would sooner see her destroyed than with another.”

With a meaningful glance at Damien, Sebastian redirected his attention to Cherise in his rival’s arms. “My dear, I’ll be waiting.”

Unaware of Sebastian’s ominous words, Cherise continued to struggle vehemently.

Unable to break free, she resorted to verbal assaults on Damien, hurling every angry epithet she could muster in his direction.

Despite Cherise’s actions, Damien remained stoic, as if impervious to her assaults. He stood like a statue, allowing her to strike him, vent her anger upon him, without flinching or reacting.

He didn’t release his grip.

Eventually, Damien escorted Cherise out of the library.

Just before they reached the awaiting car, Damien closed his eyes wearily, instructing Mr. Hampson in a tired tone. “Take care of those journalists inside.”

“If any of them dares to spread even a whisper of today’s events, I want their entire publication brought to ruin!”

“Make it clear to them that I, Damien, possess both the means and the resolve to do so. I’m not in a forgiving mood, and no one should dare to provoke me further!”

## Chapter 997 Unyielding Embrace

After pronouncing those words, he firmly clasped Cherise's shoulders, guiding her into the car with purpose, and followed suit, enveloping her in his embrace as they settled inside the vehicle.

Throughout the journey, Cherise hurled curses at him, her anger simmering beneath the surface like a tempestuous sea.

Her ire stemmed from Damien's confining of her freedom and his inexplicable failure to offer an explanation.

Why, she pondered, did he not clarify if he was facing difficulties?

Why did he remain silent if the situation did not align with Sebastian's depiction?

Given her current feeling f

explanation he provided.

him, he should have known that she would unquestionably believe any

Yet, he uttered not a single word of clarification.

Did he truly lack an explanation, or did he feel absolved of the obligation to offer one?

What, she questioned, did he perceive her as?

An object?

A pet?

Or perhaps merely a plaything devoid of memories, past, or the capacity for independent thought?

In truth, she harbored doubt regarding Sebastian's assertions concerning their relationship.

Her instinctual response to Sebastian was repulsive, while her innate connection lay with Damien.

Furthermore, she entertained the notion that the version of herself devoid of memories held affection for Damien.

Yet, she struggled to reconcile how the former Cherise could have been entangled with Damien amidst an arranged union resembling a transaction, compounded by her parents' evident hostility.

Ultimately, wearied by the ceaseless internal conflict, she yearned for resolution.

With closed eyes, Cherise surrendered to the enigmatic warmth that radiated from Damien, a familiar and foreign warmth enveloping her in its embrace. "Damien," she breathed softly.

"I am not the same Cherise you once knew," she confessed, her voice tinged with a newfound resolve.

"I aspire to embody a clarity that discerns between love and hatred," she continued, her words trailing like delicate whispers in the still air.

"But I cannot... after comprehending the depth of those emotions, I cannot remain by your side," she

Summoning courage from the depths of her being, she exhaled a deep sigh. "Let us part ways, Damien," she murmured, her words weighted with finality.

"Promise me, we shall dissolve our union," she implored.

But Damien, steadfast and unyielding, tightened his grip on her arm. "I refuse," he declared firmly.

Cherise met his unwavering gaze as she reopened her eyes. "By what right do you oppose my decision?" she questioned, her tone laced with a hint of defiance

"Our marriage may have begun as a transaction and later entangled with my mother's life."

"But that chapter has long been closed."

Damien's eyes narrowed, his voice carrying a steely determination. "I swore an oath never to let you slip away from me in this lifetime," he asserted, his words echoing with an unyielding resolve.

"What relevance does your vow hold for me?" Cherise challenged, her voice tinged with defiance.

"I am no longer the Cherise of yesteryears!" she declared, her words brimming with a newfound sense of self.

"I refuse to be the woman who would relinquish all for love! I possess reason and intellect," she asserted boldly, her conviction unwavering.

A furrow formed on Damien's brow as he regarded her with an intensity that pierced through her defenses.

After a moment of tense silence, a faint smirk played on his lips. "Are you suggesting that the former Cherise was a woman governed solely by her emotions, devoid of reason and intellect?" he inquired,

his voice laced with a hint of amusement.

Cherise pursed her lips, nodding in affirmation. "Yes, she admitted.

A dangerous glint flickered in Damien's eyes, his expression inscrutable as he considered her re

In an instant, he drew near, capturing her crimson lips in a fervent kiss that transcended mere affection.

But as the kiss reached its conclusion, he seized her with force, his teeth harshly sinking into her te  
flesh.

An amalgam of sweetness and blood filled Cherise's mouth, the sharp pain causing her brow to furrow deeply.

"You..." she began, her voice a mixture of surprise and reproach.

With a wicked grin, Damien released her, wiping the blood from his lips with cruel satisfaction.

"Consider this your retribution," he declared, his gaze cold and unyielding.

"Given your current state of amnesia, I am displaying leniency," he added icily.

"But should I hear you degrade yourself in such a manner again, my punishment will be far more severe than a mere nip."

With those chilling words hanging in the air, the car arrived at the Lenoir Residence.

Damien wasted no time, swiftly opening the door and lifting the still-dazed Cherise, carrying her with purpose up the staircase and into the confines of their bedroom.

“Guard her closely, he instructed the vigilant sentinel posted at the door, his tone commanding. “You all are not to leave this room under any circumstance

With a furrowed brow, Cherise watched him depart, her voice tinged with uncertainty.

“Where are you going?” she inquired, her apprehension palpable.

Was he intending to confine her to this room indefinitely?

Chapter 998 Unveiling Deceptions.

“Didn’t you demand an explanation?”

The man glanced back at her with an icy stare. “I’ll procure an explanation for you,” he retorted curtly before shutting the door behind him, leaving Cherise alone in the silence of their chambers.

From behind the barrier of the closed door, Cherise listened intently as Damien issued instructions to Frances. His voice, though muffled, carried a sense of authority and concern.

“Cherise has had a mishap,” he explained calmly, his words filtering through the thick wood. “She may not feel inclined to freshen up after she fell into the trash can. Ensure she is properly bathed and dressed in clean attire.”

“I’ve arranged for Lennon to procure her favorite fragrance from abroad,” he continued, his tone unwavering. “Sprinkle it throughout the room to create a more comfortable atmosphere.”

“And...”

Pausing momentarily, Damien’s voice took on a softer tone. “Given her current state of mind, prepare a meal that she enjoys,” he instructed, his concern evident in every word.



Having conveyed his directives, Damien leaned in to murmur a few additional instructions to Frances, his voice barely audible as he imparted his final guidance and slowly left.

Cherise sank to the floor as his footsteps faded into the distance, leaning heavily against the door.

This man... even in moments of turmoil, he exhibited such care and concern, enlisting the aid of their household staff to tend to her needs.

It was difficult for Cherise to reconcile this compassionate side of him with the portrait painted by Sebastian, the man who had manipulated her amnesia and harbored a deep-seated vendetta against her.

The memory of their tumultuous kiss in the car flashed through her mind unbidden.

She subconsciously traced her lips with her fingertips

Upon her lips, the lingering sensation of the wound he had inflicted remained.

Closing her eyes, she replayed the emotions etched on Damien's face during that heated moment.

His demeanor unmistakably conveyed a simmering anger.

Yet despite the palpable anger radiating from him, Damien's actions remained restrained, limited to a passionate kiss and the sharp nip of her lip.

Cherise couldn't help but acknowledge the complexity of his feelings, realizing that his ire had been ignited by her disparaging remarks about her former self.

He only bit her in response to her perceived self-deprecation, not in reference to any judgment of her

He said that she was demeaning herself, not demeaning the former Cherise.

She realized that Damien didn't perceive her and the former Cherise, who hadn't lost her memory, as distinct entities.

This revelation stirred a pang of sadness within her, prompting a desire to shed a few tears.

Despite her newfound wariness towards him, she couldn't deny the kindness he had shown her.

She couldn't help but wonder: How deeply did he cherish his former self?

With her memory loss, she struggled to comprehend the depth of his emotions,

"Madam?"

Frances's gentle voice interrupted her thoughts, accompanied by a soft knock on the door. "I've brought your favorite incense. Would you like me to open the door and assist you with a bath?"

Initially hesitant, Cherise contemplated whether to open the door.

However, after a moment of reflection, she relented and opened it, allowing Frances to enter.

Frances entered the room with a gentle smile, the aroma of the incense she carried immediately pleasing Cherise's senses.

She liked it.

As Frances assisted her with the bath, she couldn't help but inquire softly, "Are you and Mr. Lenoir having a disagreement?"

Cherise nodded solemnly. "Sort of," she admitted, her expression serious.

After settling g into a more comfortable position on the bed, Cherise regarded Frances with a serious expression. "We had an argument because..." she began, hesitating briefly before revealing the truth "He discovered that Alexis is the son of my first love."

"Thud!"

A loud thud echoed through the room as the incense burner slipped from Frances's grasp, clattering the ground.

Flustered, she quickly knelt down to clean up the mess, her movements hurried and agitated. "Who would spread such falsehoods?" she exclaimed, her brow furrowing in concern.

Cherise pursed her lips tightly, "My first love was the one who told me," she confessed.

"He claimed that we were childhood sweethearts," Cherise continued, her voice laced with a hint of incredulity.

"According to him, we met in a small mountain village during junior high and made a promise to be together when we grew up." She paused, her expression clouded with uncertainty.

Frances shook her head incredulously as she tidied up the scattered items, her expression a mixture of disbelief and concern. "Madam, you've been deceived she insisted gently.

"Since when did you have a first love?"

"You've always regarded Mr. Lenoir as your true love. You once told me it was love at first sight when you met him."

"Although your marriage with Mr. Lenoir didn't originate from love," Frances began, carefully choosing her words, "you did harbor feelings for him at the time." She paused, reflecting on their journey together.

“And after your marriage, despite starting as strangers you gradually fell in love with each other over time.” she concluded.

## Chapter 999 Deceptive Depths

“Many unfortunate events may have transpired between you and Mr. Lenoir afterward,” she began, her words measured and deliberate, “but he has tirelessly endeavored to reconcile and has never ceased searching for you.”

“As for what you mentioned, Alexis being the child of you and your first love....” Frances shook her head with a knowing smile. “That scenario is even more implausible,” she asserted calmly.

Her hands tightly clasped together, Cherise tilted her head inquisitively as she locked eyes with Frances. “Why is it impossible?” she questioned, her brow furrowing with curiosity.

With a serene smile, Frances proceeded to elucidate, placing the aromatherapy machine on the windowsill as she spoke. “Such fabrications are often concocted by men who lack common sense,” she explained patiently.

Cherise furrowed her brow, her confusion evident as she continued to gaze at Frances, seeking further clarification and understanding.

As Frances positioned the aromatherapy machine on the windowsill, she turned to Cherise with a smile, preparing to elucidate. “These intricacies are often clearer to women,” she remarked softly.

faint

“Consider this: Alexis is four and a half years old this year, born just under six months after Soren and Sera.

Frances paused, allowing the weight of her words to settle. “Pregnancy typically lasts ten months,” she continued, her tone gently guiding Cherise’s understanding.

With a subtle wink, she posed a thought-provoking question. "How could you have given birth to Alexis in such a short span after Soren and Sera?"

Cherise was rendered speechless.

Frances explanation does indeed appear to be plausible and grounded in logic...

She pursed her lips, a realization dawning upon her that Sebastian had indeed deceived her.

Turning her gaze to Frances's retreating form, Cherise couldn't help but seek further guidance. "So. Frances," she began tentatively, her voice tinged with uncertainty, "if both men have deceived you, which one would you choose?"

Frances paused momentarily, caught off guard by the unexpected inquiry. However, she quickly composed herself and turned to face Cherise with a warm smile. "As a loyal servant of the Lenoir family, I would naturally advise you to choose Mr. Lenoir," she replied diplomatically.

"But I understand that may not be the answer you're seeking."

"If I were in your position," she confessed, her eyes gleaming with mischief, "I wouldn't choose either. Instead, I would feign illness to observe their reactions."

Cherise, her lips pursed in contemplation. "Just like that?" she echoed.

"Yes," Frances affirmed simply.

Frances approached Cherise and gently tucked her into bed, her movements imbued with a sense of maternal care. "I may be old and thus tend to be more pragmatic," she began, her voice soft yet

resolute.

“In situations where both parties have deceived me, I would choose the one who consistently demonstrates kindness and concern for my well-being.”

She paused, her eyes meeting Cherise’s with unwavering sincerity. “Even if he has deceived me, it may have been with good intentions rather than ulterior motives, she explained.

“However, if the individual who deceives me shows no care when I am unwell, it may indicate deeper intentions.

After Frances left, Cherise closed her eyes and contemplated deeply while lying on the bed.

She acknowledged the validity of Frances’s perspective, yet a sense of constraint weighed heavily upon her.

Confined by Damien’s control, even if Sebastian wished to provide care, he lacked the resources to do  
50.

Despite any genuine care Damien may show her, Cherise cannot easily overlook their tumultuous past.

She has evolved from the person she once was and cannot pretend to be indifferent.

At eight o’clock in the evening. Damien returned home, his laughter with the children downstairs echoing through the house.

Cherise remained confined to her bedroom, where the sounds of Damien's laughter and the children's joy downstairs echoed through the house. She could discern their shared meals, playful games, and the general revelry from her solitary perch upstairs.

Cherise, however, remained confined to her small bedroom, with dinner brought to her by Frances.

At half past nine in the evening, Cherise discerned Damien's footsteps as he exited the children's bedroom

The lengthy corridor seemed unusually quiet, amplifying the sound of his approach towards her room, one footstep after the other.

Damien was walking towards her bedroom.

Shortly after, the door swung open, revealing Damien dressed in light gray loungewear, his demeanor carrying an air of nobility and aloofness.

Furrowing his brow slightly, Damien addressed the skipped dinner. "Frances mentioned that you didn't eat, he remarked with concern

Cherise turned away, her expression resolute. "I couldn't bring myself to eat, she admitted, her voice firm "I won't eat until you provide me with answers"

Damien sighed, acknowledging the complexity of the situation. "There are numerous matters that I cannot clarify all at once," he explained patiently.

"Then explain it slowly."

Chapter 1000 Eat Properly

"Struggling with words, huh?" Her gaze shifted to him, a glint of unfamiliar animosity flickering in her eyes. "We have an arranged marriage. Why'd your sister plunge a knife into my mother at our wedding.

leading to her untimely demise?" She couldn't fathom what he was hiding. "Can't you just explain this to me?" Her words hung in the air, stark and unyielding.

"There are too many players in the game," Damien responded, a bitter smile tugging at his lips as he shut his eyes momentarily. "But if you're up for it, I can explain everything in detail."

"Are you stalling to conjure up a tale?" Cherise's lips pursed, memories of Sebastian's warning echoing in her mind. "You've had ample time on the ride home to concoct a story to fool me." As Cherise said these words, she couldn't help but recall Sebastian's insinuations. With a sneer, she retorted, "You want to explain everything to me in detail? Are you simply putting it off, as Sebastian implied?"

"If I were concocting a tale, would I go to such lengths?" Damien's eyes narrowed slightly as he advanced towards her, purposeful steps backing her into a corner against the wall. "Cherise, from this moment forward, I won't tolerate that tone from you again."

"You're disregarding my feelings, and you've never grasped how much you mean to me," he continued, his gaze brimming with a dangerous fervor. "Do you realize the magnitude of memories you've lost?"

"All of them," he emphasized. "You've lost every memory from the past two decades. We've known each other for almost six years. That's nearly two thousand days. You expect me to untangle our memories in a matter of minutes and elucidate it to you swiftly? This is utterly impossible!"

Cherise felt a jolt as Damien's gaze bore into her. She nervously bit her lip, meeting his stare with silence.

"I know you're stubborn," Damien began, his voice measured yet firm. "Once you've set your mind to something, nothing sways you. It doesn't matter how you see me now-as a stranger, an adversary, or a lover. But Cherise, heed my warning. Until your memory returns, take care of yourself. Eat your meals properly and wait for my explanations."

"Don't try my patience. You know me well enough," he continued, rising abruptly. "I have plenty of tricks to ensure you eat your meals." With a cold finality, he instructed, "Frances, prepare another meal for the lady. If she refuses, keep making food until she complies."



A chill crept down Cherise's spine. She pouted, feeling a pang of betrayal. "You were so kind to me once... Is this who you truly are?" Just days ago, she never would've imagined that Damien, who had shown her such kindness, would utter such harsh words.

"Cherise, even if you regard me as your foe, Damien's laughter cut through the air, icy and mocking. He turned away, dismissing her with a cold chuckle. "It's in your best interest to eat your meals. Otherwise, you'll find yourself incapable of seeking justice for your mother!" With that, he slammed the door shut, paying no heed to Cherise's turmoil on the other side.

Alone in the room, Cherise stared at the closed door, her expression hollow. Tears silently flowed down her cheeks as she sank to the floor in despair. She had hoped that her assertiveness would elicit some semblance of understanding from him. Yet, his resolve was unyielding. She finally realized that men were terrifying when they were being merciless.

"“14 Cherise okay?” Marve, seated downstairs spotted Damien descending and rose from the sofa. “Should I explain the situation back then to her?”