

Mr. Edwards' Unraveled Life

Chapter 771

The wife sent the payment fast. "Let's add each other as contacts. We need cleaning three times a week. If we're out, maybe daily. I'll ping you."

"Sounds good. I'm heading out," Jayde said, stowing the cleaning gear in the utility room and leaving.

High-end places were nice—stocked with tools, so she just showed up.

"Honey, that new skirt? Looks amazing, matches your glow. You're prettier every day," the man cooed to his wife behind her.

He lived large—city-center penthouse, cushy job—not from his own hustle but a savvy marriage.

In his head, his wife was a pig, but to her face? He sang her praises.

Jayde, though...

He'd missed his shot with her today, but there'd be other chances.

At the law firm, Bonian sorted files, then met his client.

They hashed out case details. The client leaned in. "Lawyer Lepage, you gotta win this. Can't lose. Besides your fee, I've got a little something extra for you. Hope you'll take it."

He slid over a bag stuffed with gold bars.

Bonian didn't bite.

He didn't even peek inside, pushing it back. "You're my client. I'll fight to win—no extras needed. It's my job."

"Thank you, Lawyer Lepage, thank you," the client said, bowing out, grateful.

His girlfriend waited outside. They linked arms, heading to their car.

Bonian watched, memories stirring.

He and Jayde used to be like that.

Good or bad, they'd share it all—celebrate wins, tackle losses together.

Now? They were this.

He was hunting for more work to bury the thoughts when his phone rang.

Same ringtone as four years ago—unchanged.

For a split second, he thought it was Jayde.

He grabbed it, checked the screen. Wishful thinking.

"Briggs, what's up? Got time to call?" he answered.

"Ran into some trouble. Need a favor—can you loan me some cash?" Briggs's voice wavered, like he was holding back.

Money was just digits to Bonian.

"How much?" he asked, no hesitation.

"I need..." Briggs trailed off.

Bonian waited, then nudged. "Just say it. We've been tight for years—I know your deal. Name a number, and it's yours."

Briggs was his college buddy, both law majors.

Post-grad, Bonian went lawyer, Briggs judge. Work kept them close.

During the four years without Jayde, Bonian leaned on him, drowning sorrows over drinks. A loan? No big deal.

They were brothers.

"Alright, straight up—100,000 dollars, cash. Meet at the bar tonight? Bring it then," Briggs said.

"Why cash? I can wire it—easier," Bonian said, puzzled.

Briggs paused, then explained. "It's for my grandma. She's over 80, can't read, no phone. Only trusts paper money. Help me out, man."

"Cool, usual spot tonight," Bonian agreed.

He could use a drink to numb the noise.

He hit the bank, pulled the cash, stuffed it in a paper bag, and drove to the bar.

He'd been a regular here for four years, tight with the staff.

The second he walked in, a woman in a skimpy outfit sauntered over with a drink. "Mr. Lepage, you're here! Got some new wines—wanna try?"

"Pass," Bonian said, not glancing her way.

She didn't quit, sidling closer. "Fruit plate, then? Or, if I'm not your type, we've got fresh faces—each with their own vibe. I'll hook you up."

They all knew who he was.

Lepage family heir—loaded.

Land him, and you're set.

Bonian stopped cold. "I said no. You deaf?"

"Alright, I'm gone. Call if you need me," she said, slinking off, peeved.

She glared at his back. She'd dressed to kill—every guy was staring, except Bonian, icy as ever.

Who was the woman who'd tamed him?

Bonian headed to the back booth. Briggs was already there, table loaded with beer and liquor.

"What's eating you? Bad day?" Bonian asked, sitting, chugging a beer.

Briggs dodged the question. "You're pounding drinks already. Thinking about your ex again? Four-legged frogs are rare, but women? Dime a dozen. Why pine for Jayde?"

Not just him—Bonian's whole crew, guys and girls, thought Jayde was punching up.

She was pretty, sure, but Bonian? Tall, rich, sharp—no flaws.

She didn't just fumble him—she kicked him to the curb. Why obsess?

"It's been four years. No way I still love her," Bonian said, lying through his teeth.

Chapter

Briggs saw right through him but didn't call it out.

He hadn't dragged Bonian here to drink—there was another play.

He eyed the bag beside him. "Bro, you bring the cash?"

"Course I did. You never ask for money—how could I say no?" Bonian handed over the bag. "100,000 dollars, fresh from the bank. Exact count. If your grandma needs more, hit me up."

"No need to talk loans. Pay me back if you can, or don't sweat it."

Briggs gripped the bag, hesitating.

Unzip it, and there's no turning back.

Bonian was a solid friend—treated him like family. But no matter how rich a brother was, he wasn't you rich.

After a beat, Briggs unzipped it, spilling stacks of cash.

He dumped it on the table, counting roughly.

"Think I'd short you?" Bonian asked, casual.

Briggs shook his head. "Not worried you'd skimp. If you did, whatever. I'm worried you'd overpay. We're tight, but facts are facts—I asked for 100,000, and you gave 120,000."

He slid two stacks back. "Don't need to do that."

"It's out of the bank—keep it. Call it a gift for your grandma," Bonian said, not taking it back.

Briggs nodded, raising his glass. "No words needed, man. We're not going home sober tonight."

They drank, glass after glass, oblivious to a guy nearby, camera rolling, catching the whole deal.

Two hours in, Bonian lost track of how much he'd downed.

Beer at first—barely buzzed him, like water. The more he drank, the sharper his head got.

Jayde's face kept flashing.

He switched to liquor.

A few bottles later, he was finally smashed.

"Bonian? Yo, wake up! I'll get you home," Briggs said, shaking him.

No response. He reached for Bonian's phone.

As he went for the fingerprint unlock, Bonian's eyes snapped open.

They locked gazes.

Briggs dropped the phone fast. "Good, you're up. Thought you were out cold. Was gonna call your folks to grab you. Don't know your new place, so I couldn't drop you off."

His family was regular—years as a judge barely covered a small house's down payment.

Bonian? Different league.

His family's wealth meant endless homes. He could crash anywhere.

Briggs felt a pang thinking about it.

"I'll call my ride. How you getting back?" Bonian asked, scrolling his contacts, landing on Jayde's number.

Wanted her to come get him.

"I'm not as gone as you. I'll grab a cab—easy to book online. Wait for your ride, or bounce now?" Briggs asked. He'd mostly watched Bonian drink.

Didn't touch much himself.

"Don't wait. Go. Text me when you're home," Bonian said.

"Cool, I'm out," Briggs said, walking off fast.

He glanced back, sighing.

He wanted to be real with Bonian, but their worlds were miles apart.

Even a lifetime of grinding wouldn't get him to Bonian's starting line.

He wanted better—nothing wrong with that.

Jayde got home from her shift, collapsing on the couch.

She was beat.

But checking her WeChat balance? Worth every ache.

"Sis, you're wiped. How much you pulling in like this?" Emmie said, moving to rub her shoulders.

Jayde waved her off. “You’re pregnant. Doctor said rest. No way I’m letting you play nurse.”

“It’s just arm movement—not exercise. I hate seeing you this tired,” Emmie said, bummed.

Bryan was slammed daily, Jayde juggled jobs. Emmie? She was the slacker.

“Sometimes I feel like I’m wasting away, just sitting at home,” she sighed.

“You’re not me. No weight on you. Why grind? I’d kill for your life,” Jayde said, her smile bitter.

It wasn’t Emmie’s support she envied—it was her freedom.

If Lele was healthy...

Her earnings could go to fun stuff—kindergarten, playdates, park trips—not hospital bills.

“Find a good guy, and the load’s lighter. We could all hang out—how fun would that be?” Emmie said, dreamy.

Jayde just smiled, silent.

Emmie’s world wasn’t hers. She’d seen too much, knew better.

Bonian played the perfect husband for Emmie, gave her the fairy tale.

But if he dropped the act one day...

Her phone rang—Bonian.

It was on the coffee table. Jayde lunged to hang up.

But Emmie saw the screen. “That’s Bryan’s number. Why’s he calling you this late?”

She grabbed the phone and hit answer.

Chapter 773

Jayde’s stomach dropped. She was terrified Bonian would spill something he shouldn’t.

Emmie hit speaker as soon as the call connected.

Silence on the other end, just faint breathing.

“Bryan, where you at?” Emmie asked, impatient.

Bonian’s voice slurred, heavy with booze. “At the bar. Can you come get me?”

"I'm on my way!" Emmie said, dropping the phone and bolting upstairs to change.

She missed Bonian's next two words.

"Jayde."

It was his old nickname for her.

Back when they were together, he'd call her that constantly—until the breakup.

Jayde froze, panic spiking.

Thank God Emmie was already gone. If she'd heard, she'd lose it.

Jayde grabbed the phone and hung up.

Emmie was back in minutes, throwing a jacket over her pajamas. "Sis, come with me to grab Bryan. I can't handle him alone—he's plastered. Must've called you by mistake."

Jayde wanted no part of this.

Her sister rarely asked for favors—this was a first. Saying no would feel cold.

With Emmie's pleading, Jayde caved, hopping in a cab with her to the bar.

They found Bonian slumped over a table, surrounded by empty bottles.

"Holy crap, how much did he drink?" Emmie said, her heart sinking.

He was killing himself for work, chugging like this, not giving a damn about his health.

She rushed to him. "Bryan, I'm here. Let's go home."

"Get lost," Bonian mumbled, lifting his head.

Seeing Emmie, he shoved her hand away.

He didn't want her—only Jayde.

Emmie stood there, stunned. "Bryan, it's me! Your fiancée!"

Bonian didn't budge.

Emmie was just a game. If he could've let Jayde go, he'd never have touched her sister.

"Bryan!" Emmie's voice cracked, hurt.

She didn't drink, didn't get what being wasted felt like. Did it really mess you up so bad you couldn't recognize your own people?

Bonian looked past her, reaching for Jayde.

"Emmie, let's get him home. We'll sort it out when he's sober tomorrow," Jayde said, grabbing his hand, waving Emmie over.

They each took an arm, hoisting him up.

At the exit, the hostess chirped, "Mr. Lepage, come back soon!"

Bonian ignored her. Emmie didn't catch that "Mr. Lepage" was her beloved Bryan.

Outside, Jayde pulled out her phone to call a cab.

Bonian's arms snaked around her waist, his body pressing into her back. They looked like a couple.

Emmie's face twisted, cycling through shock and doubt.

Even she couldn't miss this.

The call could be a mix-up, but this? Was he too drunk, or was this his real feelings slipping out?

Had he fallen for her sister?

The thought hit her like a truck.

"You've got the wrong girl. I'm not Emmie," Jayde said, shoving Bonian toward her sister.

Bonian's face soured.

He wanted Jayde—Emmie was nothing to him.

"Why're you pushing me away?" he grumbled.

"Bryan, you're mixed up. I'm your fiancée," Emmie said, her voice breaking.

She stormed over, yanking his hand to her waist. "Sure, my sister and I look alike, but you can't keep screwing this up!"

Once, twice—fine. But this was too much.

Bonian moved to shove her off.

A cab pulled up. Jayde jumped into the front seat.

Bonian lurched toward it, stumbling. Emmie rushed to open the back door, guiding him in.

In the car, Bonian slumped, passed out.

Emmie didn't wake him, letting him sleep. When they reached the house, she hauled him upstairs alone.

It was a struggle, but she didn't ask Jayde for help.

Jayde already felt like crap—she couldn't pile on now, trailing quietly behind.

"Sis," Emmie said, finally getting Bonian to the couch. "I'll stay here with Bryan. Crash upstairs, get some rest."

Jayde heard the edge in her voice—Emmie wanted her gone.

"Alright, you rest too," Jayde said, heading to her room, shutting the door.

Just Emmie and Bonian now.

Emmie was pissed at first, but the reek of alcohol on him softened her. "I told you, I don't need all that money. I just want us together, happy. Keep drinking like this, and you're not coming home."

She didn't want her kid's dad to be a drunk.

Bonian was out cold, deaf to her.

In his dreams, he was back four years ago. This time, Jayde didn't take the money and run.

She tore up the check, stood by him.

Their love grew, they got married, had a perfect kid.

A smile crept onto his face, pure bliss.

Emmie returned with hangover soup, nudging him. "Bryan, wake up. Drink this, then sleep."

"Kid..." Bonian mumbled, voice soft.

Emmie's cheeks flushed. She placed his hand on her belly. "The baby's fine—we're good. Few more months, you'll meet them. I hope it's a girl. They say girls take after their dads. If she's like you, she'll be gorgeous."

Emmie rambled, thirsty by the end. She grabbed a blanket, spread it on the floor, and slept beside him.

Chapter 774

Bonian stirred the next morning.

A blanket was draped over him. Was Jayde the one who'd taken care of him?

He sat up, then saw Emmie on the floor.

"You're up? You were so trashed last night, you passed out cold. Took everything to get you home. Tried waking you for hangover soup, but you were gone," Emmie said, awake now.

She tidied the living room, then brought throat-soothing soup from the kitchen. "You're probably sober, so skip the hangover stuff. Drink this—it's good for your throat."

"Don't need to fuss," Bonian said, setting the bowl on the coffee table, untouched.

He scanned the room. Just them. Where was Jayde?

He wondered, so he asked.

"Bryan, I don't know if I should say this... Why're you so hung up on my sister?" Emmie said, hesitating but diving in.

Maybe he didn't see the issue.

But his words hit her wrong. She felt uneasy.

"You're my fiancé, and Jayde's our sister. I'm glad you treat her like family, but you two need boundaries. She's just crashing here for now—she's got her own life. We don't need to hover."

Bonian's brow furrowed.

Was Emmie trying to leash him?

"You saying I'm stirring up trouble?" he shot back.

"That's not it—don't take it wrong. I just mean we've got our life, she's got hers. We should focus on our little family," Emmie said, scrambling to smooth it over.

Bonian's patience thinned. "Enough. I've got work."

"Go do your thing. I'll clean up. Come home early—I learned some new recipes online. Wanna cook for you," Emmie said, forcing a smile as he left.

She shut the door, started breakfast, then brought some to Jayde upstairs. “Sis, try my cooking.”

“You’re killing it—better than some hotel chefs,” Jayde said, half-teasing, half-serious.

Emmie grinned, brushing it off.

She’d come up for more than breakfast.

When Jayde was nearly done, Emmie spoke. “Sis, didn’t your landlord yank your place last time? That’s a contract breach. He owes you the deposit, leftover rent, and a penalty. Did he pay up?”

“Nope,” Jayde said, shaking her head.

It was a lie—Bonian forced her to move in, not some landlord.

No penalty, no breach.

The deposit came back because the landlord was decent, knew she was struggling with a sick kid, and cut her slack.

“Forget it, then. I’ll cover you. You shouldn’t eat that loss,” Emmie said, pulling out her phone to send money.

Jayde couldn’t take it.

Emmie had already loaned her a ton. She couldn’t just keep mooching.

“Sis, if I was alone, maybe. But I’ve got Bryan, and I’m pregnant—we can’t all live together forever. Take this. It’ll cover half a month’s rent,” Emmie said, insistent.

Jayde caught the hint. Emmie wanted her out, just didn’t want to be blunt because they were sisters.

Made sense. Engaged, starting a family—who wouldn’t want their own space? Extra relatives cramped things.

Plus, Bonian’s behavior? Even without spilling their past, Emmie was picking up vibes.

Jayde wanted out, but if she even looked for a place, Bonian would lose it.

She wasn’t scared for herself, but Emmie and Lele were her weak spots—ropes tying her down.

Seeing Jayde’s silence, Emmie softened. “Sis, I was just talking. Don’t take it to heart. We grew up tight—you’re my only family.”

If someone had said she'd push her sister out, she'd have laughed.

But since last night, the thought had crept in. Distance might keep things clean—Bryan wouldn't see Jayde, and last night's mess wouldn't repeat.

"Emmie, I can't take this. Keep it. I'll scout for places soon. If I find a good one, I'll move," Jayde said, returning the money.

Mrs. Lepage's three-month deadline loomed. No matter what, Jayde had to cut Bonian off by then.

She'd move out, no lie to Emmie.

"Don't rush. Find a good spot with a fair landlord, then move. If not, stay. No rent here—less stress," Emmie said, chatting a bit more before leaving with the dishes.

Jayde watched her go, her chest tight.

Without Bonian, she and Emmie would be so happy.

She shook it off, packed up, and headed to work.

Today's gig: handing out flyers in a heavy mascot costume.

It was brutal. The headgear was bulky, the weather steamy—she'd be drenched in sweat fast.

But the pay was sweet.

A few hours morning and afternoon netted 200 bucks a day, lunch included, paid daily. If she finished early, she could squeeze in a cleaning job, then hit the hospital to see Lele.

Chapter 775

"Please, come with us," a public official said, stepping toward Bonian, handcuffs glinting.

Bonian was lost.

He hadn't done anything illegal. Why were cops at his door?

And with cuffs?

He dodged instinctively. "You got the wrong guy."

"You Bonian? We've checked your photo—it's you. Don't resist. Come quietly, no games," the official barked.

They wouldn't show up without ironclad proof.

"Give me a reason," Bonian said, still clueless.

To the officials, he was playing dumb—a worse offense.

"You know what you did. You're a lawyer, neck-deep in the law, but you break it yourself?" the lead said. "Confess, and it's lighter. Fight, and it's worse. Don't mess with us."

Bonian had no choice but to go.

At the station, they marched him to an interrogation room. The chief himself ran the show.

A wiry man in his fifties, glasses sharp, eyes sharper. "Bonian, right? You and Briggs—what's the deal?"

"College buddies. Stayed tight after graduation," Bonian said, unsure why it mattered.

He'd answer anything now.

"You're close. Close enough to pull him into your schemes? Work together?" the chief pressed.

"Never crossed my mind. Never did it," Bonian said, his face hardening.

Just friends, nothing shady.

The chief wasn't buying it, firing off more questions.

Bonian answered, steady.

The chief's face darkened, slamming the table. "You've got nerve, lying to my face. We've got proof. Look at these."

Photos: Bonian and Briggs at the bar, bottles and cash stacks on the table.

"You saying I bribed a judge based on this?" Bonian said, the whole thing absurd.

"I loaned him that money. He needed 100,000 for his grandma. I pulled 120,000—extra 20,000 was my call. How's that a bribe? Ask Briggs."

The chief stared, then spoke. "You've got it all neat, huh? But Briggs reported you himself. Said you bribed him to sway a case. Who's lying?"

Bonian froze.

He thought the chief was bluffing until he played the video. Briggs's face, clear as day.

Bonian watched it twice—no edits, no tricks.

Was he still drunk from last night?

Why would Briggs do this?

“And that case you handled—client tied to multinational money laundering. You submitted this,” the chief said, tossing a folder.

Inside, documents Bonian didn’t recognize, plus a check slipped between pages.

With all this, even a lawyer like him couldn’t wiggle out.

He didn’t get how it came to this.

He’d compiled the case evidence himself, sent it to court. What he’d submitted wasn’t this.

Someone swapped it.

But who?

He did most work solo, except printing—he’d have his assistant handle that. Was it...

“Lawyer Lepage, the evidence is airtight. Figure out how to clear your name,” the chief said, standing, his look mixed with disgust and pity.

A young, sharp lawyer from the Lepage family, limitless future.

Ruined by his own hand.

Bribing a judge, betraying his country—either charge would torch his career.

Mrs. Lepage heard Bonian was detained.

Her first move was to spring him, but when she got the details, her heart sank. “How’d it get this bad?”

“Mrs. Lepage, I get it, but I’m running this case. Can’t let him go,” the chief said, meeting her in person. “You’re reasonable. This is too big. Please, go home.”

Mrs. Lepage barely remembered leaving the station.

In her car, she didn’t head home—she drove to a meeting spot.

A masked man waited.

“Are you insane?” Mrs. Lepage snapped, storming toward him.

"I wanted his law license yanked so he'd come home, take over the family business—not thrown in jail. Didn't I make that clear?"

"We had a deal! You agreed so fast, I thought you were legit. Now my son's locked up—get him out, now!"

The masked man turned.

Mrs. Lepage couldn't see his face or expression behind the mask.

But she felt it—he was mocking her.

"Mrs. Lepage, ever hear 'the mantis stalks the cicada, unaware of the oriole behind'? We're not family. Why would I help you? I'm no charity."

"You could've said no upfront. Why screw over my son? Why?" Mrs. Lepage said, her voice rising.

If this got out, Bonian was done. The Lepage family, too—company image trashed, stock prices tanked.

Chapter 776

Mrs. Lepage was drowning in regret.

She never should've trusted this guy. "You hide behind a mask, too spineless to show your face. What kind of man are you?"

"Mrs. Lepage, you think a little taunting will get me to rip off my mask and play your errand boy?" the masked man said, his voice cool as ice.

The more she panicked, the calmer he got.

A smirk crept into his tone.

Mrs. Lepage was unraveling. "Name your price. How much to spring my son?"

If Bonian could walk free, unharmed, she'd pay anything.

The masked man shook his head. "This ain't about cash. If money could fix it, you wouldn't be begging me."

She'd come to him because she was out of moves, pinning her last hope on him.

But he was empty-handed.

He shrugged. “I didn’t write the law, and my connections don’t touch the Lepage family’s. You’re stuck, I’m stuck. Let him sit in there—worst case.”

“How can I not freak out?” Mrs. Lepage snapped, itching to slap him.

It was her son locked up, not his. Of course he could stand there, tossing out cheap shots.

“You’re so worried, why’d you set him up? Yeah, I pulled the strings, but your money made it happen. Who really put him behind bars, Mrs. Lepage?” he said.

His words hit like a sledgehammer.

Her hands shook.

No way. She just wanted Bonian focused, not wasting time out there.

He was meant to marry Livia, take over the Lepage Group—live the life he was born for.

Everything she did was for him. How could it be harm?

What mother doesn’t love her kid?

“This is the last time we meet. I’m out,” the masked man said, turning.

Mrs. Lepage grabbed his arm. “You screw over my son and just walk?”

“Then what?” He eased her hand off. “I’ve got our chats saved. You want those online?”

He didn’t finish, but she knew the rest.

If those leaked, it’d be a circus.

The Lepage family—her life’s work—would crumble.

Their company’s image would tank, stocks would crash.

She hated it, but reality pinned her. She watched him leave.

One road closed. Only one left.

Mrs. Lepage drove home, immediately calling Bonian’s friends, summoning them over.

The news was huge—everyone dropped everything.

Within an hour, the living room couch was packed.

“Have some fruit,” Mrs. Lepage said, serving tea and snacks, her eyes bloodshot.

Nobody touched it.

"Aunt Lepage, what happened to Bonian? Give us the details—maybe we can help," Kevin said.

"He's lucky to have friends like you. I'm lost without you," Mrs. Lepage said, spilling the story.

She left out her own part, naturally.

The room went quiet, faces grim.

"I watched Bonian grow up. No way he'd do this. He's been set up," Mrs. Lepage said, her voice breaking.

All she could see now was his good side.

Sure, he fought her on marriage and career plans, but otherwise? He was golden.

"Don't worry, Auntie. We'll figure something out," Ophelia said, guiding her to the study. "Rest up. Don't burn out."

She returned, sitting beside Kian.

Kian's eyes never left her, relaxing only when she was back.

Esteban watched, chuckling. "You two are so tight. Heard you had a fight before—must be gossip."

They looked like they'd die for each other. A fight? No way.

Even if they clashed, Kian would cave for Ophelia.

Ophelia smiled. "That fight made us closer. He's a worrier—about me, the kids. Already shopping for baby clothes."

She nodded toward her belly, months from delivery.

"Call it planning ahead," Kian said, squeezing her hand. They grinned. "Enough about us. Let's get Bonian out. This is bad—we can't wait."

"If he's convicted, it's over. We need to see him, hear his side," Cody said, knowing visits were a long shot.

"Start with his assistant. Even if they didn't frame him, they'd know something," Kevin said.

They hashed out a plan, splitting up to move faster.

Mrs. Lepage grieved in the study, splashing cold water on her face before rejoining. "Sorry for the scene. Please, save Bonian. He's my only son. If he's done, I'm done."

"We've got this, Auntie," Ophelia said, offering comfort before leaving.

Mrs. Lepage walked them out, piling on thanks, lingering at the gate.

Before driving off, Ophelia asked Kevin, "Why'd you come solo? Where's Norah?"

"She's with Pharaoh at the hospital. Late-stage cancer—tough to beat, but with a good mindset and treatment, he's got maybe five years. She's making the most of it," Kevin said, getting it.

Chapter 777

Kevin and his daughter Reina were tight, seeing each other daily. But Norah and her dad, Pharaoh, had lost years.

Now, with Pharaoh's five-year prognosis, they were soaking up every moment, building memories.

Ophelia nodded, understanding.

She waved Kevin off, then linked arms with Kian, heading to the parking lot.

"Was gonna take you on a road trip to nearby cities since work's slow. Guess that's on hold," Kian said, his gaze soft.

Having her beside him was everything.

Ophelia smiled. "No rush. Next week, or the week after. We've got time."

Young, with years to chase their dreams.

Emmie was alone at the villa.

With Jayde at work, she had nothing going on, so she cleaned. The place was massive—cleaning was a slog. She'd work, rest, repeat.

By evening, she was done.

She checked the time, then called Bonian. Just wanted to hear his voice.

Even a quick word would do if he wasn't coming home.

The phone rang and rang. No answer.

She texted, waited. Nothing.

Panic crept in.

Bryan always made time to call back or text, no matter how slammed he was.

Today? Radio silence.

Calls, texts—like tossing stones into the ocean.

She hesitated, then dialed the law firm's number—Bonian had given it to her.

She'd never used it.

First try? Invalid number.

Her mind raced.

She'd read about scams—fake companies hiring people, acting legit for months, then whisking them off for “team building” abroad, selling them to fraud rings.

Had Bryan fallen into something like that?

She had to call the cops.

Bonian hadn't been gone 48 hours, so the police weren't keen to jump in. But Emmie, sobbing, gave his ID number. “Please check. I think he's been conned—maybe taken overseas.”

“That ID...” the operator said, pausing.

She fetched the director, who took the call. “You and him—what's the relationship?”

“Engaged. Party's done, wedding's in three months,” Emmie said, spilling it all.

“Come down now,” the director said, hanging up.

He hadn't even started digging into Bonian's circle, and here was his fiancée, walking right in.

Emmie, clueless, rushed to the station in pajamas and slippers.

778

There, she got hit with a bombshell.

“You're saying Bryan broke the law? Treason? No way. That's impossible. Whatever you heard, it's fake,” she said, her voice fierce.

She wouldn't buy it.

"We've been together forever. He's good to me, takes his job seriously. He's a top lawyer. No way he'd do this. Dig deeper—clear his name."

The director waited her out, then asked, "Ms. Leung, you called him Bryan, right?"

"Yeah, that's his name. We're getting married. What's wrong with that?" Emmie said, thrown.

Was this cop seriously nitpicking how she talked to her fiancé?

The director shook his head. "It's not about marriage. His ID name doesn't match. You knew that?"

"Stop messing with me. That's not funny," Emmie said, floored.

She staggered back, trembling, staring at him, disbelief in her eyes.

No way.

Bryan was Bryan. What else would he be?

He wouldn't lie to her.

"You know his ID number but not his name, Ms. Leung. Now I'm wondering if you're tied to this case," the director said, nodding toward the interrogation room.

Emmie was lost. "If his name's not Bryan, what is it?"

"Bonian."

The name was alien to her.

They'd been together so long, and she'd never heard it.

"You knew his ID number. Didn't you notice it didn't match his name?" the director pressed.

Emmie shook her head. "I saw his ID at the engagement. Didn't think twice, didn't check. We're this far along—why would he lie about his name?"

What was the point of a fake name?

She couldn't wrap her head around it.

The director didn't answer, pushing on. "So you never spotted an issue with his real name?"

"I don't snoop his phone. He sends me money—I've never sent him any. I..." Emmie trailed off, at a loss.

The questions made it clear: she barely knew him.

Not Bryan. Bonian.

"What do you know about his work?" the director asked.

Emmie gave a bitter smile. "Before I called you, I tried his law firm. Invalid number. Thought they scammed him. Now I see I was the one in the dark. That number was fake from the start. What do I know?"

She knew less than the cops.

She'd thought she'd found her dream guy. Now?

From cloud nine to rock bottom in a heartbeat.

Chapter 779

Emmie bolted, tears streaming.

Jayde didn't chase her.

If Emmie couldn't handle this bombshell, Jayde wouldn't have either.

She needed to confront Mrs. Lepage.

Hailing a cab, she headed straight for the Lepage family's old mansion.

Her second time here.

The first was at Mrs. Lepage's invitation, flaunting the family's wealth and offering four million to make her vanish from Bonian's life.

Jayde swore she'd never return.

Today, for Emmie, she broke that vow.

A security guard stopped her at the gate. "Who're you?"

"I'm Jayde. Tell Mrs. Lepage I'm here—she'll see me," she said, steady.

She hadn't followed Emmie to give her sister space to process.

But she couldn't leave her alone too long—she had to move fast.

Seeing her calm, the guard went to report.

Mrs. Lepage's face darkened at Jayde's name.

She didn't invite her in, meeting her outside instead.

The second Jayde saw her, it clicked.

Mrs. Lepage's icy stare screamed that Jayde wasn't worthy of stepping inside.

"Out of cash?" Mrs. Lepage sneered.

Jayde's lips tightened, her voice even. "I'm here because you hurt my family. I promised to leave Bonian, to never be near him again. I kept my word."

Bonian was the one who hunted her down, setting traps.

"Me, hurt your family? Others might not know why Bonian went after your sister, but you do. I wouldn't waste my time on her," Mrs. Lepage said.

Her face didn't lie.

If not Mrs. Lepage, then who? Bonian himself?

Or... Livia?

Mrs. Lepage caught Jayde's look and scoffed. "Don't project your filth onto us."

Jayde's eyes narrowed. "We're all dirty, huh? You're the saint."

"If it's not you, fine. If it is, I won't let it slide," Jayde warned, turning to leave.

Mrs. Lepage fumed at her nerve.

But with Bonian in hot water, she let Jayde go.

Before Kevin and the others could act, the Supreme People's Procuratorate dropped a bombshell: Bonian had met judges privately, caught in corruption and bribery.

Jayde froze, reading the news.

Briggs—Bonian's close friend.

Bonian, a top lawyer, guarded his reputation fiercely.

This? She couldn't buy it.

Clutching her phone, Jayde felt sick but helpless.

The Lepage family and Bonian's friends hadn't bailed him out yet.

"Jayde, Room 09—serve the dishes," a voice barked.

She shoved her thoughts aside.

In the private room, she stopped dead.

Briggs sat across from a man in a black mask.

"You nailed it this time. Don't worry—I'll deliver everything promised," the masked man said.

Jayde's breath caught.

What was this?

She didn't hesitate, easing back, pulling out her phone to record.

She poured their drinks, ears sharp.

Briggs's voice was heavy. "Keep your promises. Just don't touch my family—that's all I ask."

The masked man chuckled. "Rare to meet someone who doesn't chase money or power."

Briggs's face stayed stone. "Swear it, and we're done. No more jobs for you."

The masked man wasn't letting go.

He slid a list across. "Get these people out. Or I spill that you framed a top lawyer. Think the public will forgive you? The government?"

Jayde's heart raced. Jackpot.

She turned to slip out, but Briggs clocked her. "Jayde, why're you here?"

The masked man's eyes turned to ice.

Jayde bolted, sprinting for the door.

She'd stumbled into Briggs with this creep.

Knowing Bonian was framed, she couldn't sit idle.

Briggs moved to chase, but the masked man stopped him.

Sipping tea, he said, “Ever hear, ‘the monk can run, but the temple can’t’?”

Briggs frowned, then caught his drift as the man’s gaze darkened. “Jayde’s got a son, right?”

Briggs got it.

The masked man dialed a number. “Head to the hospital. Grab Jayde’s kid.”

Briggs hadn’t wanted to drag others in, but now, he couldn’t let Jayde talk.

Jayde’s first move was to take the recording to Mrs. Lepage.

The masked man beat her to it.

Her phone rang—Lele’s cries.

She knew she couldn’t save Bonian now.

“I’ll keep quiet! Let my son go!” she screamed.

A cocky voice replied, “How do I know you’re for real? Tell you what—I’ll hold onto your kid.”

The line went dead.

Those monsters wouldn’t “care” for Lele.

Jayde had no choice but Mrs. Lepage.

Mrs. Lepage’s eyes dripped disgust. “Back again? My family’s not a charity!”

Jayde dropped to her knees, kowtowing. “Mrs. Lepage, I’m not begging for me. I’ve got evidence on my phone to clear Bonian. Please, help...”

To prove it, she played the recording.

But her every move was watched.

A video hit her phone.

Lele, sobbing, a man brandishing a knife near his hand.

A text followed: Ms. Leung, need a hint on what to do?

Jayde shook, colder and more terrified than ever.

She pinned everything on Mrs. Lepage. “You heard it—Bonian’s innocent. So is my son...”

Chapter 780

Mrs. Lepage didn't flinch at Jayde's tears.

She just wanted that recording to free Bonian.

Jayde's breakdown raised flags. "Why's this all so perfect?"

Jayde raised her hand. "I saw Briggs while working a side gig. The recording was luck. Mrs. Lepage, you think I'd mess around with my son's life?"

Her eyes were red, raw, like a cornered rabbit's.

As a mother, Mrs. Lepage saw her pain.

But if Jayde lost Lele, she'd break.

If Jayde snapped—or died—Bonian would let her go.

Mrs. Lepage saw her shot.

"Hand over the phone. I'll get people on your kid," she said.

Jayde froze, instincts screaming. "No way you'd agree so easily. You want me gone for good, so I can't touch Bonian again."

Mrs. Lepage's scowl confirmed it.

Jayde pounced. "Let's make a deal."

Mrs. Lepage could pull strings to save Lele. Bonian? He'd walk once the recording cleared him.

Jayde was too sharp—Mrs. Lepage had no wiggle room.

She called in her people.

Jayde passed the recording.

Mrs. Lepage rallied everyone to rescue Lele.

The masked man didn't expect this heat.

The kid was a liability.

He ditched Lele, but not before injecting him with a drug.

It'd force Bonian to crawl to him eventually.

The team brought Lele back. Jayde clutched him, tears flooding, hugging him tight.

Lele clung to her, trembling. "Mom, I thought I'd never see you..."

"Me too," she whispered.

She credited Mrs. Lepage's muscle, unaware the masked man had cut bait.

He called Emmie next. "Your baby's Bonian's, but he's just using you. If he knew Jayde's kid was his son, what do you think he'd do?"

His words sank like poison.

Bonian's closeness with Jayde, cozying up to Emmie just to get to her sister.

He loved and hated Jayde fiercely.

If he knew Lele was his, where'd that leave Emmie?

"You don't need to spell it out," she said, voice flat.

The masked man chuckled. "If I were you, that kid wouldn't be breathing."

Emmie hung up.

She wanted Bonian, but the idea of him turning on her scared her.

The masked man wanted her to hurt a child.

Lele was her nephew, calling her "Mama Emmie." How could she?

Two voices battled in her head.

Justice: "He's just a kid..."

Evil: "Lele's sick anyway. Jayde never cared about you. Why care about her? If you don't look out for yourself, you're screwed."

Evil ate her reason.

Justice fought: "A little kid..."

Evil struck: "Emmie, you want your baby gone?"

No way she'd lose her child.

She'd busted her ass for years, but Jayde didn't see it—flirting with Bonian at their engagement party.

Bonian was her fiancé. Her kid was his.

Only her kid got to call him Dad.

Emmie's eyes turned to ice.

Bonian's release came fast.

The recording sparked a probe into Briggs by the Supreme People's Procuratorate and police.

It was clear: Briggs and others had framed him.

Bonian walked free; Briggs went in.

They crossed paths, Bonian blocking him.

He'd never bought the betrayal. He'd never lost a case, backed by the Lepage family's power.

Briggs's move gutted him.

"Briggs, you were my brother, same as Kevin, Esteban, Cody," Bonian said.

They'd grown up together.

Briggs, a college buddy turned judge, was later but just as close.

He'd loaned him cash, no questions asked.

His trust was torched.

Briggs smirked. "Save the sap, Bonian. I lost this round."

His sentence was coming.

Worse, they'd dug up his own corruption and bribery.

All his assets—gone.

He'd seen it coming, had nothing to say.

But his grandma, who'd raised him, haunted him.

With his fall, everyone would scatter.

He turned to Bonian. “My grandma—please, for old times’ sake, get her to a nursing home. Say I’m on a work trip, not in trouble. And Bonian? Thank Jayde.”

Bonian’s face twisted at her name.

Why thank Jayde?

Who was she to him?

Briggs spoke slow. “If Jayde hadn’t been waitressing there, recording my talk, you’d still be inside. She loves you—risked her son’s life.”

Bonian stayed quiet, his chest heavy.

Jayde only loved money—a greedy, shallow woman.

Her, risk everything for him?

Briggs’s lips curled. “You dated her. Don’t tell me you don’t know who she is.”