

Mute Bride 151

Chapter 151

On the corridor of the second floor, Justin walked toward the entrance of the master bedroom. There wasn't any movement in the room whatsoever. He couldn't believe that Rachel was able to sleep like a log since it had been so long after he brought Amber back. Suddenly, he felt anger rising within him.

A tipsy Justin opened the door with a loud crack. "Rachel!"

There was no one in the room, but he could hear the sound of water splashing. When he noticed the water seeping out from the slit of the bathroom door, his expression changed.

"Rachel!" He rushed toward the bathroom before noticing that the door was locked. After he kicked the door open, he immediately saw the body in the bathtub while the bloody water continued to drip from the tub. There was a blood-stained dagger on the washstand, and the stain had already dried.

Rachel had already lost consciousness as her head rested on the side of the bathtub with a peaceful look. However, her left hand was still submerged in the water while blood continued to flow from her wrist.

Justin's mind went blank in that moment as his expression hardened. Then, he dragged Rachel out of the bathtub with a loud splash and roared, "Prepare the car!"

When he ran into Amber, who was wrapped around a towel, she shrieked before staring at what happened in disbelief. "Justin!"

"Move away!" he snapped, causing her to move away in fear. Without explaining anything, he carried Rachel downstairs before he yelled, "Get the car ready! We are going to the hospital!"

He had never expected her to attempt suicide by slitting her wrist. Rachel really hates me to the core, huh? She would rather die than to talk to me, nor is she willing to stay in the same house as I do.

Meanwhile, Amber ran after them before she watched as Justin carried Rachel into the car and sped off, leaving her to stand at the doorway wrapped in a towel like a fool.

“Miss Hudson, the weather is chilly and you’re going to catch a cold if you wear like that.” Jennifer’s voice rang out behind Amber.

As she was unable to release her pent-up anger, Amber snapped, “Who are you to tell me what to wear?”

“I was just trying to be nice. Are you still staying over tonight? I can tidy up the room for you.”

“That’s not necessary!” Why would Amber still want to embarrass herself further when Justin had already ditched her here?

Amber’s face was dark as she returned to the room and slammed the door with a loud bang. A while later, she changed her outfit and left the mansion in Southwind. She contacted someone on her way back. “How’s the investigation on what happened 20 years ago?”

The person’s reply was unheard.

“Send the documents to my place now.”

The other party’s response was muffled.

Rachel had a dream. In her dream, she was standing on the lawn of a farmhouse. It was a sunny day and she felt the warmth under the sunlight. As she looked around in confusion, she spotted a familiar figure wearing a blue floral dress standing at the vegetable plot on the lawn.

“Rachel, don’t you feel hot standing under the sun? Be careful as you could get a sunburn! I don’t want to lose sight of you in the midst of charcoal!”

Grandma? Rachel was stunned as she watched Nancy harvesting vegetables on the ground.

“Rachel, I’ll make buns with eggs and vegetables for you tonight since that’s your favorite dish. I’ll go and grab more eggs. You need to eat more in order to grow taller.”

Grandma! Rachel cried as she ran into Nancy’s embrace while Nancy ruffled her hair in confusion. “Why are you crying? Who bullied you again? Let’s go, I’ll fight them off for you.”

Grandma, you’re still alive. I thought that I won’t be able to see you anymore.

“My child, what are you even talking about? I’m just fine.”

She snuggled into Nancy’s embrace as the smell of cooking eased her. Then, Nancy patted Rachel’s back. “Rachel, why are you behaving like a child now? I still have to leave someday as I won’t be able to be with you forever.”

No! I want to be with you, Grandma.

“My child, death and parting is a natural course in the human circle. Without me being by your side, you have to learn to take care of yourself and stay strong, no matter what happens.” Nancy’s voice became softer and softer. “Rachel, remember what I said. There’s only hope when you’re alive.”

Grandma! Rachel’s eyes snapped open, but the bright lights shining on her made her vision blurry.

“She’s awake! She’s awake!”

A woman’s familiar voice rang out. It was Jennifer announcing, “Mr. Burton, Mrs. Burton is awake.”

Rachel’s vision slowly cleared. Upon hearing the sound of the door opening, she saw Justin entering before he sat at her bedside. They were the only two souls left in the room after Jennifer left.

When Rachel tried to sit up, she found out that she couldn’t move her body. However, when she moved, a piercing pain shot up from her left hand while her wrist felt like it was about to snap into two.

“Stop moving.” Justin’s voice echoed through the room before he held her back by grabbing her shoulders. “Lie down and stop moving if you don’t want to die.”

After he said those words, he suddenly thought of something and chuckled coldly. “How could I have forgotten? You wanted to die anyway. I guess the pain doesn’t matter to you.”

A stunned Rachel followed the direction of his gaze to her left wrist, which was wrapped in bandages. Her right hand was connected to the IV drip and she couldn’t move either hand at all. This was a hospital, the place that she had frequented the most in the past six months-all thanks to the man in front of her.

“You hate me, don’t you?” Justin’s finger dug into her shoulders. “Do you think that you can make me feel bad by attempting suicide? Don’t be delusional!”

Rachel tried her best to ignore the stabbing pain that she felt and looked away, refusing to meet his gaze. Still, he reached out to grab her by her chin and forced her to turn to look at him. “I’m telling you that I won’t let you die. You can try doing this again, but I’ll save you every time you try to attempt suicide. The Burton Family has more than enough to feed a useless person, so let’s see who can torture the other even more.”

At this moment, Rachel felt chills from the man’s cold gaze, but she met his eyes with an almost numb and calm look.

As he was angered by her unaffected gaze, Justin tightened his grip on her. “Why are you looking at me like that? Don’t you want to live anymore? Shouldn’t you hate me? You should stay alive if you do. Do everything that you can to get your revenge for your grandma and Hans. Didn’t you think that I killed them? Hate me, then!”

However, she didn’t react at all. It was as if she had lost her sense of pain as well. I don’t hate you.

Since he wasn’t the cause of Nancy’s death, he hadn’t done anything wrong to her. There wasn’t any

conclusion to Hans’ death at this stage, so Rachel couldn’t hate Justin for that too. Nevertheless, she owed him way too much now, which made it useless for him to keep her alive any longer.

Rachel's calm gaze was unwavering, making it feel like she was looking at nothing.

When Justin noticed that, his hands suddenly shook a little. He observed that the energy in his hands was completely drained. Although she was right under him, it also felt like she was miles away at this moment.

Chapter 152

"Rest well at the hospital. I'll ask my men to watch your ward 24/7, so you won't be able to die," Justin coldly mentioned before he left and closed the door with a loud slam, causing the room to shake a little.

It was pretty soon after that when Jennifer entered.

"Mrs. Burton, why are you still being so stubborn with Mr. Burton?"

Nevertheless, Rachel rested her head on the pillow as she remained silent.

Then, Jennifer rolled up Rachel's bed and opened the thermal bottle that she brought. "Mr. Burton had someone prepare this chicken soup for you because he said that you'll surely be hungry once you're awake. You don't even know how long you've been out cold and Mr. Burton has been guarding your side the entire time. Come on, have some soup."

Yet, Rachel, who was pale, looked away.

Jennifer sighed. "Why would you torture yourself like this?"

Torture myself? Rachel wanted to laugh when she heard that. Am I the one torturing myself? For the past six months, is the humiliation that Justin brought upon me still not enough? I'm sick of giving up all my pride just to be humiliated. All I've wanted is to die but that can only be wishful thinking now.

It was in the afternoon when Amber entered Jefferey's office with a document file.

“Miss Hudson, the president is still in a discussion. You can’t just enter as you wish.”

“Dad!!!”

The secretary looked anxious as Amber barged into the office while he was in the midst of a discussion with his client. “President, Miss Hudson insisted on entering and we couldn’t stop her.”

A frowning Jefferey apologized to his client, “That’s about it for the contract. I’ll arrange for someone to draft a new version of the contract as soon as possible.”

“Glad to work with you.”

After he sent the client off, Jefferey closed the door to his office and glared at Amber. “You’re getting even more outrageous now. Don’t you know that I was in a meeting? Do you know how bad the consequences are for barging in like this?”

Still, Amber couldn’t be bothered. “Dad, I’m here to ask you something important.”

“What kind of important issues can you have?”

“Did you ask your men to set fire on Somerset Mountain 20 years ago?”

Jefferey was stunned. “Who told you about this?”

“I’m asking whether you did it or not!”

“Probably. What’s wrong?”

“Do you know that the fire almost caused Justin to burn to death? He was kidnapped and brought to Somerset Mountain back then. And because of you, he almost lost his life!”

“Really? That happened?”

Jefferey frowned before he lowered his head to brew his tea.

“Dad!”

Upon noticing Jefferey’s calm look, Amber felt odd before she accused, “Dad, you knew about this all along, didn’t you? You knew everything all along!”

“What’s with that attitude? So what if I do? Who doesn’t know about Justin’s abduction back then when it was so publicised?” He slammed his tea cup on the table. “Does he hate the Hudson Family? He should be hating his kidnappers instead! We are not even related to what happened! When I obtained the permit to develop Somerset Mountain back then, I had every right to do whatever I wanted on that land! How should I know that those human traffickers had hidden him in the mountains?”

“Was that really what happened, Dad?” Amber scanned Jefferey’s face. “Was it that simple?”

“What are you implying?”

“That Grandpa Irwin guy from Somerset Mountain. Why did you bring him over to Riverdale?”

Upon hearing her words, his eyebrows twitched a little. “Who told you about all these?”

“That’s none of your business.” Amber clenched her fists. “Dad, just tell me what you’ve done! Why do you know that human trafficker? Are you related to the case back then...”

She knew that the Hudson Family had illegal deals, which was why she was already imagining the worst case scenario.

Jefferey then slammed his fist onto the table. “What are you even talking about? Are you blaming everything on me just because you wanted to get married to Justin Burton?”

“Dad, I’m already engaged to him. Why are you still keeping it a secret from me?”

“Fine. Since you want to know it so badly, I’ll tell you about it! You’re right; the reason why Justin hates the Hudson Family so much is because of the fire at Somerset Mountain. I know he hates me, and that’s why I never believed that he genuinely helped us out. Because of that, I have done everything that I could to avoid you getting married to him.”

Amber’s face turned pale before she grabbed the couch’s armrest to sit down.

“Still, I never expected Rachel, that pesky betrayer, to actually gain Justin’s fancy after she became married to him. That’s the reason why I asked Irwin to come to Riverdale. I just wanted to remind him about what happened twenty years ago so that Rachel won’t have a chance to escape from us and crawl to the top of the Burton Family.”

Amber was confused. “Dad, I don’t understand. How are Irwin and Rachel related? Would Justin and Rachel’s relationship even be compromised once Irwin arrives in Riverdale?”

“My daughter, you don’t know this. Before Rachel was taken back to the Hudson Family twenty years ago, Irwin was her neighbor. In fact, they were extremely close, so she would surely protect him over Justin!”

Is that so? Amber looked deep in thought. “That doesn’t make sense, though. That wasn’t what Gloria told

me.”

“Who’s Gloria?”

“That’s not important.” She urged anxiously, “Dad, someone told me that the reason why Justin hates us is not only because his life was almost taken by the fire, but the fact that the fire killed one of his friends.”

“Friend? What friend? Somerset Mountain is a rural area and there’s barely more than ten families in the village, so how could he have a friend there?”

“Apparently, it was a girl around the age of 7 or 8. She helped him to escape from the human traffickers and was his lifesaver. However, she died in the fire, so that’s the reason why he wanted revenge on us.”

“That’s impossible. No one died in that fire!” Jefferey denied, “Moreover, the village was where all the human

traffickers gathered together. There’s no one else who stays there besides those human traffickers as well as the kidnapped boy, so where did that girl appear from?”

“How could that be? It was a village after all. Wasn’t Rachel taken from that place?”

Suddenly, Jefferey looked like he recalled something before turning to Amber in shock. “What did you just

say?”

“Huh? I said, wasn’t Rachel...” Amber’s facial expression changed as she trailed off. “Dad, could it be that...”

If what Jefferey had said was true, and no one died in the fire 20 years ago, there was only one family left in the village beside the human traffickers. So, who else could that girl have been?

Despite not knowing much about what happened two decades ago, Amber knew that Rachel’s vocal cords were damaged in the fire and she was brought back from Somerset Mountain by him. How could that be?!

Amber met Jefferey’s gaze in disbelief and saw a similar look of shock in his eyes as well.

The girl whom Justin tried to seek revenge for all these years was none other than Rachel

Chapter 153

“Are you sure that Justin wanted revenge on the Hudson Family for a girl?”

Jefferey’s voice was filled with disbelief as it took Amber a long time to return to her senses. “I’m sure.”

There was no reason for Gloria to have made up a story about someone who never existed to lie to her.

After he was quiet for a while, Jefferey’s eyes suddenly brightened. “Since Rachel isn’t dead, Hudson Pharmaceuticals’ crisis would be resolved if we tell Justin about this.”

“Dad, what are you even thinking about? How could you tell Justin that? It’s true that Rachel isn’t dead and allowing them to reunite with each other might reduce his hatred toward us. However, have you ever thought about how we treated Rachel? Do you really think that she will say nice things about us in front of him?”

He was immediately taken aback.

Then, Amber continued, “By then, new grudges will be piled on old ones. Justin might seek revenge from us along with you canceling our engagement! We can’t have Rachel around any longer!”

Upon hearing that, Jefferey’s hands started to tremble before he accidentally hit his cup, causing his tea to spill all over the table. “Amber, what are you planning to do?”

“Removing all obstacles to prevent future troubles, obviously! Didn’t she want to die? I’ll help her out then!” Amber’s eyes were filled with hatred.

She had never expected that the entanglement between Rachel and Justin had happened all the way back in the past. If he discovered this, all of her own plans would turn to ashes and she might never be able to see the light of day anymore.

Amber would rather die than to see Rachel living a better life than her!

“No way! I still need her around! Moreover, she’s still one of the Hudson Family and your sister. As long as she’s still here, Justin would allow us a chance at survival, no matter what happens in the future.

Jefferey was a businessman, so he was more calculative. At that moment, he instructed, “Amber, listen to me. I will never allow you to hurt her!”

“Dad!”

“That’s enough! Leave it at that! No one is allowed to speak of it anymore!”

While giving Jefferey a look filled with hatred, Amber snapped, “Dad, you don’t even care about me!”

Then, she ran. There’s no one whom I can rely on beside myself.

On the other hand, Rachel hadn’t been eating or drinking for the past two days in the hospital. As a result, she looked frailer than before.

“Mrs. Burton, please just eat something. What about some soup?”

I don’t feel like eating

“How can you do that? You won’t be able to function without eating anything. The doctor has already said that it will take a long time for your injuries to heal and you still have to stay in the hospital for a while for them to observe your condition!”

Rachel had slit her wrist and as she had injured her artery as a result, she received seven stitches and couldn’t move her left hand for the entire time.

It wasn’t as if she wanted to move anyway.

“President Burton.”

The bodyguard’s voice rang out from outside.

Rachel’s pupils immediately constricted as she clenched her hands before the pain that shot up caused her to become sober.

“Mr. Burton, you’ve arrived.” Jennifer quickly rose to her feet while she held the bowl of chicken soup with a helpless look.

Upon noticing the bowl of soup that she was holding, Justin frowned a little. “Hand it over to me. You may leave now.”

“Alright.”

After that, he sat by the bed while he carried the bowl of soup. Then, he scooped some of the soup with the spoon to blow it a little. “Come on, have some soup.”

However, Rachel stoically looked away, only leaving him with her side view.

“What are you trying to do?”

I don’t want to eat.

“You don’t want to live anymore, huh?”

As he stared at her, Justin immediately grabbed Rachel by her chin after realizing that she wouldn’t react. Then, he forced the chicken soup down her throat while she grunted in pain. Gulp, gulp, gulp.

As the warm chicken soup entered her mouth, the umami taste of the soup quickly spread around her mouth.

Although Rachel tried her best to struggle free from his grasp, the chicken soup continued to flow down her throat. Let me go!

Blaargh

With a sudden burst of energy, she pushed Justin away before her eyes widened. What happened next was that she started to puke by the bedside. All of the chicken soup that was forcefully chugged came out, which caused the floor to be in a mess.

Upon seeing that, he tightened his grip on the bowl as his veins popped up.

Then, the bowl was thrown at the cabinet with a loud clang.

“Do you really want to die that bad?”

Justin was really angered to the point where he shouted at his bodyguards outside, “Get the doctors here!”

“From today onward, if you refuse to eat, you’ll be on IV drips. As long as you want to be in bed and act like you’re in a vegetative state, I’ll gladly accommodate you!”

At the same time, the doctors rushed over.

“Get her on IV drips.”

No! Rachel stared at the medical personnels with a helpless look on her face.

She would rather die than to continue living without any pride.

“Grab her and place her on IV drip!”

At Justin’s command, two nurses held Rachel down by her sides while the doctor grabbed her arm and inserted the needle into it, which allowed the nutrient solution to slowly enter her veins.

Let me go! Let go!

There was a voice in Rachel that kept shrieking and struggling. However, her weakening body couldn’t move any longer.

After the bag of nutrient solution was inserted, she looked as if she was completely drained while she gasped for air at the side of the bed.

Then, Justin grabbed her chin and forced her to look at him. “Did you see that? You won’t be able to die without my permission as I have tons of ideas to keep you alive.”

At this moment, Rachel’s eyes were filled with so much anger and hatred that she could murder him if she could.

Nevertheless, he wasn’t mad. That’s great. Just hate me instead. It’s better than being an emotionless doll after all.

After leaving the ward, Justin instructed Jennifer, “Take good care of her and do not leave her alone. Call me if anything happens.”

“Alright. I understand, Mr. Burton.”

Then, she entered the ward and started to tidy all the pillows that were thrown onto the ground.

Upon noticing that Rachel still refused to move, Jennifer couldn’t help but sigh.

The bright afternoon sunlight pierced into the room from the window and shone on Rachel's bedsheet. Nevertheless, she continued to lie on her side against the door.

When she heard footsteps behind her, she figured that it was Jennifer cleaning the room and behaved like

Jennifer wasn't there.

"Rachel."

Upon hearing the man's familiar voice, Rachel abruptly turned around to see who came.

It was Julian.

Dr. Peters, why are you here?

"Lie down and stop moving around." He helped her to lie down. "Jennifer's the one who allowed me to enter."

Ever since Rachel was admitted in the hospital, Justin did not allow anyone beside the attending doctor to see her. Even Julian was no exception. However, Jennifer had sneaked him in because she could no longer withstand the situation.

As he stared at Rachel's bandaged hand, Julian frowned. "Why did you do something like this?"

Her eyes dimmed before she forced a weak smile on her face.

"Janice has been fired."

Upon hearing what Julian had said all of a sudden, Rachel was stunned. Why?

“She attempted to arrest my brother without an approved warrant from her superiors. After they had investigated the case again, my brother was released due to lack of evidence and she was suspended by the inspectors. I just found out about it as well.”

She only did that to make me feel at ease.

Rachel’s eyes immediately turned red and she felt like crying.

Nevertheless, Julian held her hands. “Please do not cry. Although Janice is not in a suitable position to see you right now, she asked me to tell me something. Apparently, you’ll definitely get yourself together after hearing this.”

Chapter 154

“Janice said that the spy from the foreign investigation bureau has tracked Gunny down. He was the one responsible for dealing with drug smuggling for Hudson Pharmaceuticals.”

Julian looked conflicted. “She also said that the inspectors had done nothing wrong by punishing her since she had gone on the wrong track as she was too agitated. Although they don’t have enough evidence that Justin was involved in drug smuggling, it can be confirmed that Jefferey has been doing it for years. She had accidentally alerted those two this time around.”

Rachel was shocked. Did Janice tell you all these?

“Yes. She also told me that as long as the man named Gunny is caught, you’ll be able to get justice for your mother’s death and force Jefferey to receive all the punishments that he deserves.”

Ever since Rachel had been taken away by Justin from Nancy’s funeral, Julian never had any chance to meet her before receiving the news that she was admitted to the hospital from an attempted suicide.

He also heard that Rachel hadn’t been eating or drinking, so he went to look for Janice in anxiety.

Nevertheless, Julian never expected to learn so much about Rachel from Janice.

“Rachel, you have to get yourself together for your grandma as well as your mother.”

As she looked at Julian’s determined gaze, Rachel suddenly felt slightly energized.

Although it wasn’t hard to die, it was definitely harder to stay alive.

I’ll listen to you and pull myself together so that I can heal faster.

“That’s about right.” Julian sighed in relief.

Justin was pursuing a contract in his office before Frankie came in with documents.

“This is the stocking records of the batch of medicines that you reserved. I’ve already asked them to stockpile and send it out of Riverdale during the dawn. It will arrive at the port by tonight.”

“Are they trustworthy?”

Frankie nodded. “All of them have been working for you for years and are trustworthy. I just don’t know whether those men whom President Shaw has arranged on his side are trustworthy. If anything happens during the journey where they aren’t allowed to upload them

“It’s fine. It’s normal for him to be nervous since this is his first time stockpiling.”

“President Burton, is this decision too rash? The investigation bureau has been keeping an eye on us. Although they previously didn’t manage to get their hands on any evidence, if we still ship according to the set timing, I fear,”

“They better be keeping an eye on us,” the man commented nonchalantly before he changed the topic. “How is it at the hospital?”

Frankie came back from his senses. "I just wanted to inform you that Mrs. Burton is finally more emotionally stable now and she has requested for food. Although she didn't eat much, the doctor said that it's normal since she hadn't been eating for a long time and her appetite will improve soon. There won't be any need for IV drips anymore."

A surprised look flashed past Justin's eyes. "Why did she suddenly pull herself together?"

"Mrs. Burton was never a stubborn person from the start. How could she hold a grudge for so long over a couple's fight?"

Frankie's words lodged themselves into Justin's heart, making Justin suddenly feel warmth.

It would be nice if it was just a couple fight.

Justin's phone started to ring at that moment.

Nevertheless, upon seeing the caller ID, he ended the call and blocked the number.

When Frankie saw the caller ID, his expression fell as well. "Miss Hudson has been contacting me for the past two days, asking me about your whereabouts as well."

"You don't have to answer her calls," Justin repeated. "Just ignore her calls in the future."

"In the future? Are you not planning to marry Miss Hudson anymore?"

"Why are you asking so many questions? Do I have to report everything to you?"

"That's not what I meant. You can do whatever you want." Upon saying that, Frankie quickly gathered the documents and left.

On the other hand, none of Amber's calls went through.

"How dare he reject my calls!"

As she gripped her phone, Amber glanced at the building outside the car window. Although she looked arrogant, there was still a yearning look on her face when she stared at the building. The Burton Group must be loaded to be able to afford an office building in the city center at a strategic place like this. As long as I can think of a way to get into the Burton Family and be married to Justin, do I still have to worry about anything else in the future? Dad must be insane for wanting to keep a burden like Rachel alive. He's keeping her for his own benefit, but I can't have her here any longer for my own benefit.

Rachel woke up the next day and she ate breakfast.

"Mrs. Burton, you ate an extra egg yesterday! That's an improvement! Do you want more soy milk?"

It's fine. Please help me up and bring me outside to take a walk. Rachel looked out of the window. I heard that the chrysanthemum at the hospital lawn is still blooming.

Jennifer immediately caught onto what Rachel was hinting at. "I'll bring you downstairs to have a look."

Since the bodyguards listened to what Jennifer said, they didn't dare to stop Julian when she previously brought him along with her.

A field of white chrysanthemums bloomed on the lawn of the hospital.

When she helped Rachel to walk around on the lawn, they ran into Julian.

Although it might have looked coincidental, it wasn't one in this case.

"Mrs. Burton, I suddenly remembered that I still need to clean up some stuff, so I'll head back to take a look. Dr. Peters, since we are family, please look out for Mrs. Burton."

Jennifer was a kind person who knew her place, which was obvious when she tried to contact Julian for Rachel's sake.

As expected, he followed with her suggestion. "Sure, I'll take care of her."

Then, he helped Rachel with her walk. "Is your hand better now?"

She nodded. It should be almost healed since the stitched injury is starting to itch a little. The doctor said that they will remove the stitches within these two days and I'll be allowed to leave once I have rested for a few more days.

"That's great. By the way, I have something for you."

She was confused. What is it?

Then, he handed her a letter. "There's something really important inside. If you need it, I can always arrange it for you and help you to leave."

Leave?

Rachel looked stunned before she felt her heart sinking.

As Julian looked at her, she carefully opened the letter to see that it was her passport inside the envelope. This is...

"I found it when I was tidying Nancy's place. I'm guessing that you never brought it along with you."

Along with the passport was the admission letter of a famous university abroad.

"I helped you to apply for university abroad with your resume. You'll still be able to return to your studies if you're willing to and restart your life in another country."

Are you implying that you're bringing me abroad?

"Yes. However, do not feel pressured since I already intended to further my studies abroad for three years anyway."

Even if Julian never intended to bring Rachel along with him, he

didn't bring Rachel along with him, he still wasn't planning on staying in Riverdale any longer.

Still, Rachel couldn't just restart her life by going overseas and far away from Riverdale.

After going through so many things, she had already faced her reality, that is, to seek revenge from Jefferey and make him kneel for forgiveness in front of her mother's grave.

Suddenly, a woman's voice interrupted them from their conversation.

Despite everything, Amber's voice was as sharp as ever. "I can't believe you, Rachel! Is Justin not enough for you? Are you trying to seduce Dr. Peters as well?!"

What are you babbling about?

"You'll know whether I'm babbling or not when I send these pictures to Justin."

Then, she waved her phone around, showing the image of Rachel and Julian being together on the screen.

Chapter 155

"Amber? You're confusing the truth with lies." Julian tried to grab Amber's phone, but since he was supporting Rachel, Amber managed to easily avoid him.

Amber answered, "Dr. Peters, why would you be scared if you aren't guilty?"

"You"

The tension was almost tangible in the air when a figure appeared behind her. "What's going on?"

Upon hearing Justin's voice, Amber immediately hopped on the opportunity and started to make her accusation. "Justin, I was about to tell you that I came here to visit Rachel, but I bumped into them smooching. You told me that even after divorce, she's still part of the Burton Family. It doesn't look like she shares the same sentiment. Look at how happy she is."

When he saw Julian holding onto Rachel, his expression darkened.

"Justin."

"Who allowed you to come here?"

"Huh?"

Amber was stunned.

Justin spoke coldly, "You have no business here and there's no need for you to visit her either."

He walked past her to yank Rachel away from Julian before returning to the ward section.

Amber was left behind to stare at the two disappearing figures and she had only taken two steps toward them when Julian halted her. "Amber, you're a daughter of the Hudson Family. Why do you have to resort to such underhanded methods to join the Burton Family?"

“Justin is my fiancé right now!”

“Really?! Complaining about your fiancé’s ex-wife to him? I thought I was watching a drama where the concubine is trying to accuse the legal wife.”

“A concubine? Julian, you, who’s the concubine here?”

Amber was so furious that she was stomping her feet.

She had initially left Tran-Q because she couldn’t stand Julian’s coldness toward her. Her father even stressed that she would be better off marrying him instead of Justin, but she never saw the point in it.

She was unable to see the benefits about a man who continued to find faults with her and thought that he was blind to side with that woman.

Justin took Rachel to her ward.

With a stumble, she fell into a sitting position on the bed.

Miss Jennifer was tidying up the room and upon seeing the sight, she was shocked. “When did you arrive, Mr. Burton? What happened?”

His expression was dark. “Who let her out?”

She was careful to choose her words. “I saw the flowers outside blooming beautifully and since the weather was also perfect, I allowed her to take a walk outside. The doctor also said that getting some fresh air would help the patients to recover better.”

“Then, why didn’t you go with her?”

Justin’s single question had caused Miss Jennifer to break out in a nervous sweat.

Rachel stood up. I'm the one who wanted to go out for a walk. This has nothing to do with Miss Jennifer.

"Mrs. Burton."

"The outdoor type, aren't you?" Justin sneered, "I wonder what is so nice to look at out there. Is it the flowers? Or a certain someone?"

Julian is a doctor at Tran-Q. As long as I'm outside, it's not strange to run into him. If you don't want to see us together, I don't mind changing hospitals.

After she expressed everything that she wanted, Rachel lowered her hands.

"Miss Jennifer, please leave us alone for now."

Upon hearing Justin's order, Miss Jennifer hurried off.

After the door was closed, Justin and Rachel were the only ones left in the room.

"Do you really think I'd care if you contacted Julian?" He gave her a look. "I know his character better than you do. It is his principle to help the sick and needy. You are only a patient in his eyes, nothing more than a weakling to sympathize."

Rachel gripped the sheets under her.

Even though she only saw Julian as a friend, Justin's way of describing it was simply blunt shaming.

In this man's eyes, she was only a disabled person who should stay behind the scenes. He was indicating that no normal man would want her.

Rachel couldn't even retort Justin's words.

Was it not out of compassion that Julian helped her?

Upon seeing her darkening expression, Justin started to regret his heavy choice of words.

Amber's voice sounded from outside. "Justin."

The previous emotions disappeared from his face.

At this moment, she entered and soon felt the tension in the air. She then said softly, "Justin, I brought over some fruits, so I was wondering where I should put them."

"No need. She's not lacking anything here."

"I know, but I just wanted to express my concern."

With that, Amber placed the fruits on the table. "Get well soon, Rachel. No matter what, we're still family. Blood is thicker than water, right? Dad will come to visit after two days when he's done with his work."

Rachel frowned, but she didn't make a sound.

When she had learned about her origins, she had severed all ties with the Hudson Family.

"Justin, we still have to see Grandpa tonight, don't we?"

Grandpa? Rachel thought.

She felt a cold hand tightening around her heart.

Justin is bringing Amber to see Arthur? Right, they are engaged and will be married soon. Isn't it normal to meet each other's families then?

At that thought, Rachel's tight grip on the sheets loosened. No matter how awful she felt, her face was calm and void of any expression.

Justin stole a glance at Rachel. When he saw her indifference, he felt anger rising within him.

Amber took his arm. "Justin, we're going to be late. We shouldn't make our elders wait. Let's go."

"Okay."

As she heard the door close, Rachel slowly lifted a hand to her chest.

She felt that the pain in her chest was occurring far more often for some unknown reason.

Amber was still clinging onto Justin's arm when they left the hospital with glee in her heart. "Justin, is my attire too simple for the party tonight?"

He suddenly removed his arm from her grasp and coldly answered, "Didn't I ask you to wait until I'm done? Why did you come all the way here?"

Amber was stunned. "... I came here to visit Rachel. I didn't know you'd be here as well."

"Are you two even that close?"

"We"

“Since you’re not really close to her, you can quit faking it. You don’t have to come to the hospital anymore.”

With that, Justin entered the car.

Amber stood on the spot; her nails dug into her palms while her lips formed a thin line.

Even though he never praised Rachel and never even stood up for her, Amber could see how important Rachel was in his eyes.

At the thought of the various scuffles between them, Amber felt threatened. “Justin, are you free this Saturday?”

“Why?”

“My dad has arranged a charity event for me. Hudson Pharmaceuticals has funded some children’s homes in the mountain areas before and now that some of the children have made it far in life, they decided to establish a charity foundation with Hudson Pharmaceuticals.”

Upon seeing Justin’s lack of interest, she let out a sigh on purpose. “When Hudson Pharmaceuticals decided to develop that area in Somerset Mountain to create a place for children to go to, we had to exercise notable effort as well. Now, we feel at ease to see the children doing so well.”

Somerset Mountain? He suddenly turned toward Amber. “What did you just say? The place that Hudson Pharmaceuticals funded?”

Chapter 156

Amber answered, “Somerset Mountain. Why?”

“Hudson Pharmaceuticals has funded children from Somerset Mountain?”

“Yes, we have been doing it for more than 20 years.”

“How could it be? I remember there wasn’t anyone left after the fire.”

“The fire?” She was slightly stunned. “Justin, how did you know there was a fire in Somerset Mountain?”

A frown came to Justin’s face as he feigned indifference. “It was on the news. I happened to watch it.”

Amber nodded. “Yes, it was exactly because of the fire that the whole mountain was reduced to ashes. I heard someone almost died too. My dad said that there was a hidden village in Somerset Mountain and it was home to some human traffickers. They were trying to escape security checks, so when the fire happened, they couldn’t be rescued on time.”

Justin clenched his fists tighter. “That’s what your father told you?”

“Yes, those traffickers hid in a ditch and the firemen didn’t even know there were people there. They managed to find them in the end, but a little girl almost died in the process.”

“Almost died?”

His expression changed.

“She was burned badly, but she managed to survive. My dad did everything he could to save her by sending her to hospitals all over the country. In the end, she was even sent abroad to receive treatment.”

Amber didn’t manage to finish her words before Justin grabbed her hand to interrogate her, “Where is she now?”

“She... she’s still out of the country.”

“What’s her name?”

“Justin, what came over you?”

“What’s her name?” he repeated.

“Katherine Cooper.” Amber’s features were distorted in pain. “Justin, let me go! What happened to you?”

Justin’s cold face was stiff as he struggled to believe his ears.

Katherine...

Katie...

He was taken back to the Burton Family after the fire twenty years ago. He didn’t have the ability to investigate the matter at first and when he finally rose to position as the president of Burton Group, the landscape had already changed beyond recognition.

All these years, he had sent people to search all over Somerset Mountain, but he never succeeded in finding even a scrap of information about the girl.

He thought she was dead.

He even thought she died in the fire to save him, but she was alive!

“I want to see her.” Justin grabbed Amber’s arm, his cold eyes burning with determination. “Where is she?”

Amber looked shocked. “She will be attending the charity event this Saturday. If... if you want to see her, you can attend with me this Saturday. However, Justin, what’s wrong with you?”

He never answered her as it took a long while for him to calm himself. "I'll attend the event this Saturday with

you."

The wind howled on the other side of the car window, signaling that night had fallen over Riverdale like a humongous black cloth that stretched across the entire sky.

Amber carefully retracted her hand and she looked down at the bruise on her wrist-a result of Justin's tight grip.

She felt that she had made the absolute right choice.

A girl whom Justin hadn't seen in more than 20 years was enough to shake him to his core.

If he knew that Rachel was that very girl from all those years ago, the consequences would be inconceivable.

The chill in Amber's cold eyes was reflected in the car window.

Meanwhile, at the investigation bureau, a conversation was occurring.

"Officer Hawkins."

"Don't call me that. I've been stripped of my position, so just call me by my name."

"I can't do that. The position issue is temporary and I've already acknowledged you as my only leader."

"Suit yourself." Janice pulled up a chair and sat on it. Beneath her short haircut, her features were bright and firm. "Any updates on the case that I asked you to investigate?"

"I was just about to mention that. This is taken from the case files concerning Somerset Mountain. If I were one second late, they would've been destroyed since these files had exceeded the 20-year confidentiality period."

She took the box of files from her subordinate.

Due to its long history, the box had already yellowed and it reeked of mold.

"Officer Hawkins, what are you going to do with these files?"

"To save someone."

Janice's expression was stern, but her eyes betrayed a certain compassion.

If it weren't for the limitations set on her due to her position and also the confidentiality period, she would've given those files to Rachel long ago. Perhaps if she had done so, those horrible things wouldn't have happened.

After Amber had taken Justin away from the hospital, he never appeared again for a few days.

Rachel was stuck in the ward. Even though she had gone out for walks, Jennifer never left her side.

She managed to catch sight of Julian a distance away on a few occasions, but Jennifer had always pulled her back to the ward in case history repeated itself.

After closing the door and leaving, Jennifer sighed.

The food on the tray was almost untouched.

“Miss Jennifer.”

Julian’s voice rang down the corridor.

She hastily pulled him aside. “Dr. Peters, it’s not that I refuse to help you. It’s just that Mr. Burton has warned me before; if I allow you to meet Mrs. Burton one more time, I would be done for.”

“Miss Jennifer, I don’t mean it like that.”

“Then...”

“How is she these days?”

“She’s alright. She doesn’t eat as much as she used to, but it’s way better than when she refused to put anything in her mouth.”

“That’s great.” Julian seemed panicked as he placed a folder in Miss Jennifer’s hands. “Please pass this to Rae in my stead.”

Miss Jennifer was a little shocked. “What is this?”

“Don’t worry. Even if my brother sees this, he wouldn’t blame you for anything. Just give it to Rae. Perhaps it would turn the tides.”

She was still doubtful, but she nodded and agreed to his request.

“Thank you so much, Miss Jennifer.”

“It’s the least I can do. Mrs. Burton is the kindest mistress I’ve ever served, for she has never troubled me. I also hope that she will recover as soon as possible. Well then, Dr. Peters, I’ll be taking my leave now.”

Miss Jennifer entered the ward with the folder in hand.

Rachel was sitting by the window with a foreign book.

She couldn't leave the ward, so reading became her only pastime.

"Mrs. Burton, Dr. Peters just swung by and asked me to pass this to you."

Rachel was slightly startled as she saw the black folder in Miss Jennifer's hands. What is it?

"I'm not sure either. Dr. Peters wanted you to look at it yourself."

Rachel opened it to see various photocopied documents inside. Some of the documents were blurred and after flipping through a few pages, she suddenly caught sight of the words 'Somerset Mountain Police Station'.

Somerset Mountain? Aren't these documents proving I have lived in Somerset Mountain before? Why is Janice giving me these?

She then went through a few more pages and found a newspaper clipping from 20 years ago, offering a reward to whoever found a lost child.

'The young master of the Burton Family, Justin Burton, was successfully rescued. The human trafficking nest in Somerset Mountain was discovered, but the mountain went up in flames...

The mountain was burned?

Somerset Mountain...

Upon seeing the photos in the newspaper detailing the fire, Rachel suddenly saw some unfamiliar scenes flit

across her consciousness.

“Katie, look. There’s smoke coming in that direction. Is something on fire?”

“Quickly run! You can escape after you pass that mountain!”

“What about you?”

“I have to go and tell the others!”

“No! I’ll come with you!”

Rachel held her head as a severe headache had come upon her. Where did these scenes come from? Who is that boy?

Chapter 157

“Mrs. Burton, what’s wrong with you?” As soon as Jennifer saw Rachel’s pained appearance, she hurriedly went forward.

Rachel felt as if something was about to burst out of her brain as she frantically gripped her forehead, but she failed to suppress the pain. As she let out a cry of pain, she fell to the floor.

“Mrs. Burton!” Jennifer’s face paled with fear.

The colorful world suddenly turned black and white as time wildly receded to that scene in the isolated mountainous area more than twenty years ago, where birds and animals fluttered among the mountains and

forests...

The dream that had been with her for more than twenty years was gradually becoming clearer at this moment. At this moment, the gentle silhouette that had its back to her for twenty years slowly turned around.

The woman's long hair hung over her shoulder as she revealed a warm smile and dimples on her cheeks. "Katie, didn't I ask you to stay at home with Grandma? Why are you following me up the mountain again?"

"Mom, it's too boring at home, so I wanted to follow you up the mountain to collect herbs."

"Don't fall down. Come and hold my hand."

"Okay!"

"Do you like collecting herbs?"

"Yes."

"Then, I will teach you a song about herb-picking, okay?"

"Okay!"

"Poria seeds, peony flowers, forsythia, dahurica, mixed with red sand..."

Rachel's lips vibrated. Despite the inability to make a sound, the memory of those children's songs suddenly became incomparably clear to her with the name of each herb echoing in her ears.

"Mom, are we not going to pick herbs today?"

"Katie, we have guests at home. I have something to tell this man, so head out and play for a while. Grandma is at the back of the mountain, so go and find her, okay?"

"Okay!"

The memories of that day also instantly came flooding back as it invaded her whole brain. She remembered what her mother looked like, how she became a mute, the man with the scar on his forehead, and the fire in Somerset Mountain that had started in the thatched hut she lived in!

"Doctor, take a look at what's wrong with Mrs. Burton."

"Let's first help her to bed."

Rachel lay on the bed as she stared at the ceiling in a daze. The doctors and nurses stood around the bed, shining flashlights into her eyes and talking to her, but she could only see their mouths moving as she heard nothing. Her ears were filled with buzzing sounds that were interspersed with the childhood she had forgotten for more than twenty years.

"There's nothing wrong with her. She's just overstimulated."

"What is that thing in her hand?" Someone spoke up, causing Rachel to snap out of it. She jerked up her hand to shield the item in her hands and looked warily at the nurse who came to take it away. The nurse was startled and turned her head to look at the doctor.

The doctor asked, "Mrs. Burton, are you okay?"

Rachel looked at the doctor in a daze and finally responded. I'm fine; you all should leave.

The doctors and nurses looked at each other.

Jennifer, you should also go.

Soon, Rachel was left alone in the ward. The information sheet in her hands was already crumpled by her tight grip. She never thought that she would remember the events of twenty years ago in such a situation. In her ears were the words of her grandmother, who once said, Memories will never disappear; you will get them back one day.

She finally remembered the children's song her mother taught her, the origin of the Somerset Mountain fire, and the guy who was hidden in the cellar. She remembered it all!

Justin was that guy back then!

Jennifer!

Rachel got out of bed and went to call for Jennifer.

"Mrs. Burton, what's wrong?" Jennifer was keeping guard at the door.

Give me the phone.

"Mrs. Burton, um..."

I need to contact Justin.

Jennifer has a difficult look. "Mrs. Burton, Mr. Burton said that you are not allowed to contact the outside world. How about this? If you have anything to tell him, I will call him and pass on the message."

Rachel frowned and looked anxious. Just tell him that I have something to say to him and it's extremely important

"Okay." Jennifer dialed the number in front of Rachel.

“Hello? Mr. Burton, it’s me. Mrs. Burton is asking when you’re coming back as she has something to say to you.”

The phone was on speaker and Justin’s voice came from the other end. “I’m busy with something right now. It can wait until I come back.”

“So, when will you be back?”

“I don’t know.” After those three words were spoken, he hung up while a busy tone echoed in the ward.

Rachel was stunned for a moment and sat down on the couch in disappointment. Jennifer comforted, “Mrs. Burton, it’s okay. He will come over when he’s done. If you have something really important, I can relay it on your behalf.”

No need. I’ll just wait for him to come back.

Rachel shook her head, a little lost in thought. This time, when she calmed down and looked at the information sheet in her hand, she suddenly felt as if she was in a trance. The great elation she had felt earlier was washed away by twenty years of time and all of it suddenly felt worthless.

Indeed, she had saved Justin before, but, so what? He had considered her his foe for so long and had tortured her all this while. Besides, the origin of that fire still came from the Hudson Family, so it was not clear who saved who and who was in debt to who.

Justin was at the charity event with many reporters on the scene at this time. Amber was dressed elegantly as a representative of the Hudson Foundation and she had also prepared a speech to speak in the spotlight. When the interview was over, she immediately went backstage.

“Justin,” she said, “I’m sorry for making you wait for me for so long.”

Justin, who wore a black suit, did not look impatient, but he only asked, “Where is Katherine?”

“Katherine just called me and said that something happened at the Summerland Orphanage and she had to rush over there to deal with it. She has asked the finance department to allocate the donation money for the foundation to me.”

“She is now in Summerland?”

“Yes.”

“Come with me.”

“Now?” Amber was slightly startled. As she glanced at the time, she commented, “We’ll arrive there after dark if we go now and we won’t be able to return tonight. Don’t you have matters to attend to tomorrow?”

“Right now.” Justin was determined in his reply. Turning his head, he ordered Frankie, “All of tomorrow’s schedule will be canceled. Prepare the car and we’ll head to Summerland.”

Upon hearing that, Amber was stunned.

In the night, the black car sped along the highway. Summerland was a four-hour drive from Riverdale and the car didn’t stop on the way at all. When the car was finally off the highway, it went straight to the orphanage at the foot of Summerland Mountain.

After Amber exited the car, she walked in with Justin while saying, “Katherine graduated from a religious college abroad. She has been working for charity organizations that help women and children ever since she graduated.”

Justin didn’t say anything until he entered the courtyard and saw a group of children surrounding a woman from afar.

“Miss Katie, look at what I drew.”

“Look at what I drew first!”

“Don’t rush, one by one!”

Amber waved her hand toward the distance and shouted, “Katie!”

Under the dim light, the woman straightened her posture and she looked in their direction. Wearing a white sweater, she had a clean and gentle face that initially showed doubt. Then, when she saw them, she immediately smiled.

Upon seeing that, Justin’s eyes stared at her in astonishment. Her pair of eyes was exactly as what he remembered from his memory.

It was her.

Chapter 158

Rachel had waited for a week at the hospital, but Justin never came. “Mrs. Burton, the discharge procedures are all done, so let’s go.”

Jennifer came over with Rachel’s bag to help Rachel, who waved her hand.

I can walk by myself.

Back at the villa in the southern Suburbs, there were two bodyguards guarding the door like usual; it felt like they were guarding a prisoner with three shifts among six of them.

Jennifer closed the door and comforted, “Mrs. Burton, don’t mind them. Mr. Burton is also worried about your safety, after all, there was an accident here before, and that,”

Before she finished her sentence, she knew she had spoken too much. “I’m sorry, Mrs. Burton, for talking about something so sad.”

If it weren't for those people barging in at that time, Rachel wouldn't have lost her baby. Her complexion was bleak as she barely smiled at Jennifer.

It's nothing. Justin hasn't returned from his business trip yet?

"Um, I'll make a phone call and ask. You can rest for a while."

Jennifer left with the phone while Rachel sat on the couch and took some newspapers from the coffee table. The villa in the southern Suburbs had not been inhabited for quite some time, which resulted in the newspapers accumulating on the coffee table during this period. Nevertheless, the one at the top was the latest edition.

Rachel flipped through it and she was attracted by the front-page headline of the financial page. President of Burton Group and Fiancée Set Up Charity Foundation to Help Lost Children.

The photo on the page showed Justin and Amber arm in arm as they smiled slightly at the reporters. They looked compatible together and the content of the interview was even more suggestive.

'It is reported that when this charity foundation was established, Justin personally donated 100 million for start-up capital as an engagement gift to his fiancée...

Rachel put down the newspaper and turned over to the older newspapers of the previous days. It was only then that she realized that all the news since half a month ago were on these, and that the entire Riverdale had known about the charity foundation he founded for Amber. While looking at the picture of the man and woman standing side by side in the newspaper, Rachel's hand holding the newspaper trembled slightly. This is what Justin meant when he said that he was busy with a business trip abroad?

"Mrs. Burton, Mr. Burton said earlier on the phone that things are almost done and he will come back tonight." Jennifer came in from outside with great enthusiasm.

Rachel, however, was no longer in the living room. A slight clicking sound of the door closing came from the bedroom and it echoed in the house.

When Jennifer fell asleep late at night, Rachel went to the backyard. The cold wind made her cheeks freeze, and just coming out of the house made her wince. She couldn't help but wrap her jacket tighter around her arms. After looking for a corner where the wind could not reach and making sure there was no one around, she took the information sheets out of her pockets. Then, she took out a lighter and lit a piece of it. Finally, she put the pile of information she brought into the fire one by one.

The past was meaningless, at least in today's situation where things already came to this point. If she revealed the truth, it would cause both she and Justin to be awkward. She could not accept that the boy she saved before murdered Hans and her grandmother. Justin probably would not accept that she, whom he had taken extreme revenge on, was the Katie for which he avenged. So, the past could never be mentioned.

"What are you doing?" A cold voice suddenly came from behind her. The man's rapid footsteps had already

arrived before Rachel could react. Thus, she hurriedly threw all the remaining sheets into the fire. The fire quickly rose high, but Justin quickly grabbed two sheets from the inferno. Although she wanted to snatch it from him, it was too late.

He suspiciously looked at her before he read the scraps of papers in his hands. Then, his expression changed abruptly. "You want to leave the country?"

Rachel was stunned; she looked at the scraps in his hand in astonishment.

Surprisingly, it was the information that Julian had given for her visa to leave the country, but she had not paid attention to it and instead burned it together with those that Janice had given her. Therefore, she hurriedly shook her head.

As he grabbed her wrist, Justin questioned amidst her cries, "Are you afraid that I would find out, which is why you are burning all these? I thought you have been obedient and quiet these days, but you've been doing this behind my back!"

No!

Rachel looked at the wall and realized that the fire had quickly burned all her identification, causing all the evidence to turn into soot. As the wind blew and scattered the fragments everywhere, she knew that she had no way to prove herself.

“No? Then, why did you burn it?” Justin suddenly raised his voice and the anger in his eyes was palpable. “Have you gone through all the process? When do you plan to leave?”

She shook her head desperately, but Justin shouted furiously, “Say it, when do you plan to leave?”

I swear it’s not that!

Even though Julian said he wanted to take her abroad, she didn’t even think about really leaving with him. Why couldn’t Justin trust her for once?

Justin ignored Rachel’s struggle as he forcibly dragged her into the bedroom. “Say, who did all this for you? Where do you plan to run to?”

Rachel was pinned against the wall and her eyes were red. Other than shaking her head and denying it, there was nothing else she could say. At this moment, the scar on Justin’s face became incomparably hideous while her vision also gradually blurred. The man in front of her gradually overlapped with the friend she made as a child before the few memories of her childhood became unmistakably clear in her mind. How was she going to tell him that they had already met long ago? Did she want to say it in such an awkward situation right now? No, she did not want to.

Tears instantly swam down her cheeks. However, he thought she was upset because he had discovered her intention to leave the country, so he was consumed with rage. “Do you really wish to run off?”

Then, he accidentally tore open her collar, revealing a large area of skin on her shoulder. Her face turned pale as she struggled to push him away. Let go of me!

As he watched her frightened gaze, Justin clearly felt her resistance too. His expression fell once again and he asked, “Who are you trying to keep your body for?”

Rachel was taken aback, but before she could react, she felt a sharp pain at the back of her head. Then, her whole body was ruthlessly pushed down on the bed. The moment that Justin tore away her clothes, she roughly signaled, Ahhh...

The sense of humiliation rushed through her blood. She didn't want this! No!

Twenty years ago, the boy had pulled her through the fire and told her not to fall asleep as they would definitely get out alive. Yet, how did he become what he was now? That was one of the few warm memories of her childhood, even as warm as Hans. Even if the memory was dusty and only remembered for a moment,

she still felt that because Justin was there, that deserted forest area had become illuminated by the sun. How could he become like this?

"Rachel, I'm telling you that now that you have become my woman, you will not be able to run away in this life!"

The fabric was ripped open in the air with a loud sound before a cool breeze drifted in through the window. Rachel shivered for a moment, and in the next second, she was held down by his weight without any ability to resist except for a hoarse cry. Ahhh!

In that instant, disappointment washed over her. The flow of her tears could not be stopped and she desperately wanted to open her mouth to tell him everything -even if it was embarrassing for the both of them in order to stop all the humiliation at this moment, but it was all too late.

Chapter 159

The window was left open, allowing the breeze to blow through the curtains. The cool wind brushed against Rachel and it jolted her awake from her nightmare. When she looked beside her, there was no one to be found.

Justin was long gone and he left nothing but destruction behind. It didn't take long for Rachel to wake up completely but that only brought her a new round of suffering. The insults he hurled at her and what

happened in the brutal night cut away at her soul like invisible knives. At that thought, she gripped the blanket tightly and cried into her pillow.

Frankie handed the document to Justin the first thing in the morning. "Here's the information you wanted, President Burton. Dr. Peters is planning to study abroad and he wants to take a family member with him as well. He applied for the spot too."

He plans to do what? When Justin saw who Julian wanted to bring with him, his face fell and he hurled the whole file into the trash can.

Upon hearing the crash, Frankie shivered in fear and he said nothing. Justin then ordered, "Go to Julian's place and take her passport."

"Sir, how do you know that he has Mrs. Burton's passport?"

"Where else can it be?" Justin roared as he clenched his fists. How dare he try to take her away without my permission? He has stepped out of line! Out loud, he said, "Frankie, I need you to do one more thing."

"Yes, President Burton."

And so, Justin told him what Frankie needed to do.

It was the Hudson Foundation's opening ceremony the next day and the event was held at Riverdale's Hotel Platinum. After the event ended, Frankie came over in a hurry and reported, "President Burton, Dr. Peters has barged into your home."

Justin, on the other hand, buttoned his coat calmly and murmured, "Let's go and take a look then."

Meanwhile at the villa in Southwind, Julian was injured and being held by two bodyguards. "Let me go, you b*stards!" he yelled. "I'm calling the cops!"

Justin came just in time to hear that. "You wouldn't have come over yourself if you thought the cops could help."

The moment Julian saw Justin, he struggled furiously and roared, "Justin Burton!"

However, the bodyguards held his arms down firmly. Upon seeing that, Justin raised his hand. "Let him go."

The bodyguards let Julian go but the latter couldn't even lift his arms. "Give me my stuff back!" he shouted at Justin.

"Your stuff?" Justin looked at him mockingly. "It's your fault you lost your stuff. Why are you making a ruckus here? And call me Justin."

"You sent someone to break into my place, took Rachel's and my passports away, and now you're denying it?" Julian was usually a mild-mannered person but Justin managed to rile him up. The former was going overseas soon, so he wanted to help Rachel out. Truth was, he had been keeping Rachel's passport with him so she could leave Riverdale anytime she wanted, but now Justin had crushed that plan too.

"Your passport, huh?" Justin took a red passport out and handed it to Julian. "I was just about to bring this up. My employee took yours by accident. Was about to give it back to you. Don't want to mess up your plan to

study overseas or your mother's going to yell at me."

Julian snatched it from him. After he took a look to confirm it was his, he asked, "Where's Rachel's?"

However, Justin merely looked at him coldly. "What does her passport have to do with you?"

"Wake up, Justin! Do you really want to lock her up in Riverdale for life? For what? Just so you can keep her as a mere mistress? That's an insult to her! What did she do to deserve this?"

“On her own? Nothing.” Justin countered. “It’s just a series of unfortunate events, really. She’s born to the Hudsons and her father gave her to me as a present, so you have no right to criticize me.”

“What if she’s the one who saved your life?”

Justin’s expression changed as he questioned, “What did you say?”

Meanwhile, Julian was shivering angrily but he held his fury down and gritted his teeth. “A girl saved you after

you were abducted back then, right? That girl is none other than Rachel!”

All of a sudden, Justin gripped Julian’s collar. “What did you say?”

“Rachel’s the girl who saved you twenty years ago. You thought she was dead but in fact, she isn’t. Jefferey took her back so that’s why you couldn’t find her, at least until now. But I guess you’re mad enough to torture the one who saved your *ss, huh?”

Justin couldn’t believe what Julian was saying and the former was petrified for a long while. When he snapped out of it, he shoved Julian away and roared, “You’re the mad one here!”

“You don’t believe me?”

Justin, however, only answered coldly, “You just made that up to save her.”

“It’s the truth. Janice gave Rachel all the info on Somerset Mountain. You can take a look if you still aren’t convinced.”

“You’re telling me that you have proof?”

“Obviously. Why do you think I know all about that story? Let’s meet up with Rachel. I’ll get her to tell you who she really is.”

Suddenly, Justin looked up at the second floor. Someone had been standing behind the curtains ever since he came back. He still didn’t believe Julian fully but in the end, he took the latter into the villa with him.

On the other hand, Rachel quickly came downstairs and she paled when she saw the injuries on Julian’s face. Are you alright, Dr. Peters? She gave him an apologetic look.

Julian shook his head. “Where’s the file I gave you last time? I need it.”

Rachel froze before shaking her head.

“You haven’t told him, huh? I knew it. I told him you’re the one who saved him. Now I just need the file to prove

Rachel was still shaking her head. I burned the file.

“You burned it?” All the color drained from Julian’s face and he held Rachel by her shoulders. “Why did you burn it? Do you know what you’ve done?” That’s the only evidence Janice managed to scrape up. If Rachel burned it, there’s no way anyone can prove that she’s Katie.

Justin looked at them coldly. “Had enough?”

“I wasn’t lying, Justin!”

“Enough!” Justin barked. “I’ve had enough of your lies! Did you forget I told you everything about Katie, woman? I’ve seen through your lies.”

“Because Rachel forgot about it!” Julian explained. “Rachel, tell him!”

Rachel teared up but she couldn't bring herself to say anything.

Meanwhile, Justin clapped mirthlessly. "If I hadn't found Katie, I would have been fooled by the both of you."

Rachel was stunned to hear that. What do you mean you found Katie?

"A month ago, I found the one who saved me. You're too late, it seems." Justin looked at them icily. At this point, if looks could freeze, the whole villa would have been turned into ice.

Rachel tried to force a smile but she couldn't. That's absurd! She never wanted to talk about her past, but someone just came along and filled the hole she left. To make things worse, Justin believed it like the idiot he was.

Chapter 160

"Do you really think I'd believe such an obvious lie?" Justin shouted, his voice echoing throughout the hall.

"You'd rather believe a stranger over your own family?"

"Just because you're my family doesn't mean you won't lie."

Julian couldn't believe what he was hearing. "Tell him what Janice gave you, Rachel." The evidence would prove what Julian said was the truth whether Justin liked it or not, or so Julian thought.

Meanwhile, Rachel had been standing there silently for a while. Since she was mute, she never had a big presence whenever it came to groups. Even though there were only the three of them, she was little more than invisible among them. Contrary to Julian's anger, Rachel looked calm. Since Justin said he found Katie, she didn't want to explain anything anymore, even though she didn't know who that 'Katie' was or how she managed to impersonate her. Simply put, there was no point explaining anything to someone who never believed her. Thank you, Dr. Peters, but you don't have to come up with these excuses.

“What’s wrong, Rachel?” Julian stared at her in disbelief. “I thought you got Janice’s package.”

Well, he says he’s found Katie and obviously, it’s not me. Rachel then made some simple gestures, but it felt heavy when she put her hand down.

Justin glanced at her and a sliver of suspicion rose within him.

Julian clenched his fists. He had been holding his fury back for almost a year now, but it finally erupted at that point and he hurled a punch at Justin. “Why won’t you believe her?”

The punch caught Justin by surprise and it hit him right in the face. The impact sent him staggering backward, toppling a chair on his way. Rachel gasped but she couldn’t stop them in time.

Even though Justin was caught by surprise the first time, he managed to launch a kick when Julian tried to attack him again as he was much more agile than the other. In the end, they got tangled in a brawl.

Panicked, Rachel waved at the bodyguards outside. The bodyguards realized something was up, so they charged inside and pinned Julian down. Rachel tried to pull the bodyguards away but she was shoved off instead

“Rachel!” Julian couldn’t move an inch since he was pinned against the floor. “Justin, you’re going to regret this one day!” he roared.

Meanwhile, Justin pushed himself up with the sofa and wiped the blood that was trickling down his mouth. “I never regret anything. And it’s getting late. Your mother’s going to be worried if you aren’t home yet.” Justin

glanced at his bodyguards coldly. They got what he was trying to say, so they dragged Julian out.

“Let me go! I can walk by myself!” The bodyguards wouldn’t go too far since Julian was Justin’s cousin, after all. Thanks to that, Julian broke free of their grasp easily. “You’ll regret this, Justin Burton!” he shouted as he straightened himself out.

A short while later, Julian revved up his car and drove away into the night, but he stopped by the roadside when he was out of sight. After that, he slowly unraveled the slip of paper in his palm. It was drenched with sweat but he could make the message out clearly. 'Take me away!

Rachel had slipped that into his hand when she helped him up earlier. A grim determination rose within Julian and he gripped the slip tightly.

Meanwhile, the servants sorted out the toppled furniture and cleared away the glass shards on the floor. It was then that Rachel got up weakly, her face pale.

Upon seeing that, Justin asked, "Do you have anything to say for yourself?" Deep down, he thought to himself, How dare she lie about Katie? How dare she get Julian involved in this?

I've said everything I should. Dr. Peters was just helping me.

"He's helping you? By making that kind of story up? And how did he find out about Katie?"

Rachel froze at that question.

Justin inched closer to her. "Did you tell him everything I told you? My, you do get along well with him."

Rachel took an involuntary step back, but he held her wrist before she could retreat.

"I know the kind of man Julian is. He is weak but stubborn. He'll never give up until he takes you away with him, don't you think?"

What little color Rachel had drained from her face and she shook her head.

"Guards," Justin said coldly.

The bodyguards who sent Julian off quickly came back. "President Burton."

"Mrs. Burton wants a change of bedroom."

Rachel couldn't believe what she was hearing, but the stab of pain that came from her wrist stopped her train of thought. "You seem uncomfortable here. I think a quiet place suits you better." Justin had a terrifyingly dark look on his face.

It was already late at night but Amber was still on the balcony, talking to someone on the phone. "Don't come back if you can help it. You'll get busted if you see him too much."

A woman answered, "I get it. When are you going to send me the rest of the money?"

"Relax. You'll get it, but not now."

"Why?"

"Justin is a paranoid man. I don't think he trusts you completely just yet. He'll use everything he has to verify your identity. You'll get exposed if he finds out I gave you money."

"What a drag!"

"A drag?" Amber sneered. "You're not the victim here, so stop it. If he believes that you're the one who saved him, you can get anything you want in the world. The money I owe you? That's gonna be pocket change. Even I have to bow to you then."

"You don't have to feel me out. I know what I have to do. You did hire me for this, after all."

Suddenly, Amber glanced from the corner of her eye and saw someone coming in. "I see. Catch you later then." She ended the call and came in from the balcony. "It's late, Dad. Why are you still up?"

"I couldn't sleep." Jefferey stood with one hand behind his back. "Who was that?" He asked as he stared at Amber

“Just a friend.”

“Aren’t you going to say anything about the furore between you and Justin?”

“Dad, you wanted me to handle the foundation. Why are you doubting me?”

“I’m not doubting you. Just worried you might drag some unrelated people into this.” Jefferey’s face fell. “I heard Justin adopted a girl you recommended as his sister.”

“She’s not his sister. Just a partner for the foundation,” Amber answered calmly. “Justin and I don’t have time to handle the foundation, so we need a professional for that. That’s why I got my friend to do it.”

“Is that really all?”

“What are you getting at, Dad?” Amber then held Jefferey’s hand and started acting spoiled. “You’re getting stricter on me, Dad. I know you don’t want me to marry Justin, but Rachel is a lost cause now. I’m just doing this for the company. How could you doubt me? I’m your daughter, you know. I won’t harm you.”

It was only then that Jefferey finally cheered up a little. “I’m not doubting you. I just don’t want you to be too rash about this. You must not make a fuss out of Rachel’s incident.”