

Mute Bride 231

Chapter 231 Something of Yours

“What is it?” “There’s an agreement file in the bedside dresser.” Rachel bent down and started going through the dresser. “Which one?”

“The black one.” “They’re all black.” “Keep searching. It was the business plan we discussed during the meeting.” Upon seeing a familiar file, she grabbed it and got back up while saying, “Is it this one...”

Before she could finish her sentence, her cheek bumped into something. When she turned her head while Justin was lying on his stomach, she eliminated the distance between them as the tips of their noses brushed against each other, sharing a breath of air. All of a sudden, the air in the room turned hot.

Upon Justin’s close-in, Rachel’s primitive instinct acted up before she forcefully shoved him away.

After letting out a muffled yell, Justin fell back to his bed. “What are you doing?”

“I should be asking you that instead!”

As her heart palpitated, Rachel leaned against the wall while her body shook. She thought about how they had almost kissed, and her mind continued to dwell on it.

Before Justin could say anything, she tossed him the file and swiftly exited the ward.

The door slammed shut with a bang before Justin forced himself up and revealed a smile.

On the other hand, Rachel had yet to calm herself down as she was leaving the hospital.

Justin must have gone insane! How is he so different already? During that unintentional yet intimate moment earlier, she almost went in for the kiss.

And that was the most fearsome incident that had happened ever since her return to Riverdale.

Regardless of the memory loss, he's still Justin Burton—he's not someone else.

After repetitively reminding herself that, Rachel started her car and navigated into the night as it got even darker.

Meanwhile, in the living room of the Hudson Residence, Jefferey had just ended a call with Arthur.

"What did he say?"

Amber asked with an eager tone.

To that, her father replied, "He wants both the families to meet up for a discussion to decide on the wedding day when Justin is discharged from the hospital."

"Really?"

Amber was visibly on cloud nine.

"Don't get this excited. All this time, did you even care to visit him in the hospital?"

Upon hearing that, the woman was taken aback.

When she had heard about his hospitalization, she had actually gone to visit him once. However, since Justin was unconscious at that time, she stayed for a bit and promptly departed. "He just woke up this morning, so I didn't manage to go..."

"If you delay your visit any further, I think that it'll affect your marriage with him in no time."

“What’s that supposed to mean?”

“The hospital staff informed me that Rachel was there.”

“Why is she there?”

“To please him, of course—any man would buy that.”

Amber was visibly disturbed as she shouted, “How shameless of her!”

“There’s something else.”

“What is it?”

“Do you happen to know anyone called Mr. Wayne?”

Amber was suddenly taken aback by this, but she deliberately quizzed, “Mr. Wayne? Who are you referring to?”

“I’m talking about Mr. Wayne from Golden Herbs Enterprise. Why did Gunny inform me that you went to see him in private? What business do you have with him?”

“Me? He must have mistaken somebody else for me. There’s no way I’d have any connections with that scoundrel.”

Jefferey let out a cold snort and stated, “He’d better have. I warn you, Amber—no matter what you did in the past, handle everything from now on cleanly. Although the Burton Family has controlled the spread, Justin’s injury and Mr. Wayne’s capture on the news are obviously connected.”

They’re connected? At once, Amber’s heart skipped a beat. It was a wonder to her how Justin had managed to break his own leg with bodyguards by his side.

I've only told him about Rachel, though. Was it because of her?

Late at night, Rachel was rolling on her bed as she failed to fall asleep.

Suddenly, her phone beeped and showed a message notification.

After pressing on the message, she saw a photo taken in a restaurant. After zooming on it, she got anxious and hastily dialed a number.

"Hello? What's the photo about, Victor?"

"That's what I was about to ask you! After hearing about the abduction from Samuel and seeing the news surrounding Mr. Wayne, I was immediately reminded of something I saw in a restaurant. I simply snapped a pic of her when I saw her, but I didn't pay any attention to it at the time."

He continued skeptically, "I'm not mistaken, am I? That's Amber, right?"

"You're right. That's her." Rachel's tone was rather dull.

All this while, she had suspicions toward Mr. Wayne's sudden occurrence after so many years. Now that she had seen the photograph, it was evident someone was pulling the strings from behind.

The next day, Rachel went to visit Justin.

Upon exiting the elevator, she saw Amber at the entrance of the ward.

Just as she expected the so-called loyal girlfriend would be making her appearance at such a time.

"Rachel?"

Before Rachel could say anything, Amber shot her a resentful glare. As the piercing sound of heels striking the floor filled the room, she then rebuked, "You actually came, huh! You must be addicted to being the third wheel, aren't you?"

"Took the words right out of my mouth." Upon leering at Amber, Rachel then countered by saying, "Weren't so hooked on becoming the third wheel back then that you actually obtained your spot?"

"Cut the crap!"

Amber gritted her teeth and said, "I'm telling you this—I'll let go of the past, but you cannot step foot into this hospital again, and you're to cut off all contact with Justin. Otherwise, don't blame me for teaching you a lesson!"

As if Amber had thought of something, she suddenly calmed down and boastfully exclaimed, "By the way, Justin and I are getting married. That's what Old Mr. Burton called Dad for, at the very least. If you behave yourself, you might get an invitation."

"If Justin were to know that you met Mr. Wayne in private, do you think there would even be a wedding?"

The visibly shocked Amber then questioned, "What the hell are you talking about?"

Rachel swiftly pulled out her phone and swiped to the photo that Victor had sent her. She then continued calmly, "You cheated on Noah previously, and now there's this issue with Mr. Wayne. However, I'm not going to show all my cards just yet. You can't even clean up your own mess, yet you're throwing threats on me!"

"It's... the photo's fake! Justin would never believe you!"

Rachel replied casually, "That's true. Photos and videos can be forged. But you know what, Amber? After all these years, I happen to find something of yours very useful."

While Amber was still processing those words, a burning thermos jar was tossed onto her chest.

“Ahh!”

A shriek thundered across the hallway.

As she was screaming, the container of food splattered across her chest. Her dear, vegetable-stained Chanel suit resembled a piece of scrap cloth straight out of the trash bag.

“Are you nuts?”

“You could simply say that you do not wish me to visit President Burton, but did you really have to do this?” Before Amber could continue, Rachel’s voice echoed through the corridor.

At that moment, Frankie stormed out of the ward and saw the scene of an opened lunch box with its components splashed on the ground. Meanwhile, Rachel was squatting on the ground as she cleaned it up.

Chapter 232 You Still Haven’t Officially Married Into the Burton Family

“Miss Hudson, are you okay?” “Have you gone blind, Frankie? Asking her whether she’s all right?” Amber was in disbelief. “She flung that lunchbox at me. Didn’t you see her do that?”

Frankie walked past Amber, looking as though he hadn’t heard the woman. “Don’t clean up anymore. You’re not hurt, are you? Mr. Burton asked for you to go inside.”

“It’s fine.” Rachel’s head was lowered. “Since the food’s all on the floor now, he can have the hospital’s food for lunch instead.”

“What is this act, Rachel?!” Amber was on the verge of an aneurysm from her anger. “Get up and explain yourself properly!”

With that, her hand moved toward Rachel. Just as she was about to make contact with her, Rachel gave a shout of surprise and crashed onto the floor, butt-first.

“You!” Amber’s expression was unbelievably ugly as she stared at her own hand, still held aloft in the air.

She hadn’t even touched Rachel.

“Stop right there!” called a cold voice from behind. Justin had appeared behind her at some point and gripped Amber’s hand. Meanwhile, his face was stormy.

“Justin!” Amber’s expression shifted. “It’s not what you think it is. I didn’t touch her at all, and she fell by herself.”

“I saw it all clear as day—you pushed Miss Hudson,” Frankie said with certainty as he eyed Amber.

Amber was so furious that she nearly got tongue-tied. “You’re spewing nonsense! You’re in league with that mute. You came just at the right moment, Justin. You have to fire Frankie today. He can’t tell fantasy from reality anymore. Does he not have eyes? He even sided with that woman and framed it on me!”

“Has he framed you? What did Frankie accuse you of?”

By then, Frankie had helped Rachel up. Although Rachel had gotten some of the food on herself, her expression was calm. On the contrary, it made others pity her even more. “Mr. Burton, Frankie didn’t do anything wrong here. I really shouldn’t have come over every day to waste everyone’s time.”

“So long as you’re self-aware about it!” Amber glared at her balefully. “Don’t you know your place? Anyone can see what your motives are for getting close to Justin.”

“Enough!” Justin coldly cut Amber off. “You still haven’t officially married into the Burton Family. And even if you have, what right do you have to point fingers at my subordinates?”

Amber was taken aback. She had been with Justin for so many years now; although he was civil to her most of the time, he had never been so harsh with his words before. In an instant, she panicked.

“Justin.”

Justin coldly dodged Amber’s hand. “I don’t want to see you for the next few days. Go home. Frankie, escort her.” After delivering that frosty reply, Justin then reached out to Rachel and gripped her arm. “Stop cleaning and come with me.”

Rachel froze slightly.

An indignant Amber tried to follow them, but Frankie stopped her. “This way please, Miss Amber.”

Amber nearly blew her top as she stared at Frankie’s frigid expression. “You did that on purpose, didn’t you? Who do you think you are, speaking up for that mute? You think you’ll get a promotion because of that?”

However, Frankie took her jabs in stride. He simply beckoned at her without humoring her with a reply.

For the past few years, he observed all that had happened to Justin as a third party, and he took notice of Amber’s actions too. He had promised Arthur that he would stay silent about Justin’s amnesia because he knew too much.

He could not leave the Burtons, and he certainly could not leave Justin, for he would be the first person Amber would strike at mercilessly once he left this sanctuary.

Meanwhile, Rachel followed Justin and entered the room.

“Did you scald yourself anywhere? Let me take a look.”

"I'm fine." Rachel drew back her hands. The back of her right hand was slightly red from the soup that had splashed on it. However, it was nothing compared to Amber's scathing remarks. She was just going all in with this pretense, for this would just make it seem even more realistic.

Didn't Amber love to play this trick back then?

"What do you mean by that?" Justin had an angry look on his face. Without another word, he pressed the buzzer and called for a nurse to treat Rachel's hand.

"It's nothing serious, and there aren't any blisters either. Since the weather has been rather hot recently, just be careful not to cover your hands," the nurse said after she rubbed some burn cream on Rachel's hand.

"Got it, thank you."

Once the nurse had left, Rachel lifted her head and looked at Justin, who was sitting across from her. "Don't you want to lie on the bed instead?"

His leg was still in its plaster cast as he sat on the couch. With nowhere for him to put his leg up properly, the couch seemed overly cramped. He had sat across Rachel and watched her closely as the nurse treated her burn earlier, which made Rachel feel uncomfortable.

He ignored her question. "You were like this in the past too. Why don't you fight back when people beat you down? Why do you hold everything back?" Justin asked.

Rachel furrowed her brows. "What's the point of that question?"

"Isn't Amber your sister? Why are you scared of her?"

"She's no sister of mine." Rachel's eyes darkened a little. "I'll help you over to the bed."

Justin frowned as he took in Rachel's expression, feeling as though he had said the wrong thing.

It had been a while since Rachel returned to the country, but he hadn't heard of her returning home once. Not only that, he never heard anyone mentioning that Jefferey had another daughter during the whole time he had amnesia.

To her, the Hudsons were probably not her family.

Justin couldn't be bothered to think too much about this for now. He simply arrived at the conclusion that Rachel's hesitance toward the Hudsons was due to Jefferey's favoritism toward his own biological daughter and the unequal treatment that he gave Rachel.

"Slow down." Rachel helped Justin onto the bed with one hand supporting his arm. The two of them were close, and the indelible scent of orchids wafting under his nose once again engraved itself into

Justin's mind. All of a sudden, he found himself unable to look away.

Rachel was very pretty. Her features were defined, yet they were also harmonious and balanced, which was a classic beauty indeed. When she smiled, the dimples that formed made her look all the more refreshing. Yet, she rarely did so, and even when she smiled, there was also a veneer of fakeness to it, something that he couldn't quite put his finger on.

Was she like that in the past too?

That question once again flashed across Justin's mind. When he realized what had happened, his heart suddenly thumped rapidly.

Lately, he would unconsciously try and guess how Rachel used to be back then when she was with him.

Was she always so compromising, always swallowing her true feelings?

"Justin." Rachel's voice drifted by, pulling his mind back to reality.

“What?”

“How long are you going to stare at me for?”

When Justin noticed Rachel’s quiet, serene gaze, his mind once again descended into franticness.

“Was I even staring?” he immediately denied.

Rachel glanced at him. “Really? Don’t you feel tired from standing like that?”

It was only then that Justin realized that he had been standing by the bed all this while without moving a muscle. He promptly sat down, his expression stiff.

Chapter 233 There’s No Making up for the Past

Rachel poured him a glass of water and placed it next to his bed. Then, with well-practiced movements, she took out some papers from the cabinet and set them aside. “If there’s nothing else, I’ll be leaving then. Frankie will be here later with some new food for you.”

“Why are you in such a rush? Have you been busy at work recently?” “Yes, it’s been very busy. I’ve been keeping tabs on this one project.”

“In that case, leave it to others.” Justin’s tone brooked no argument. “You only have one task, and that is to take care of me.”

“I won’t be coming from tomorrow onward.”

Justin promptly stood up right after that. “What did you say?”

“I hurt my hand, so I can’t cook.”

"That's it?" Justin stared at her. "I can still eat hospital food if you can't cook, but you must come every day to take care of me. I ended up hurt because I saved Samuel, so you have to take responsibility for this."

"I think that Amber was right; I should indeed know when to pull myself back. I shouldn't have gotten so close to you. Coming to the hospital every day with food for you will make people's tongues wag. You have a fiancée, so leave this to her in the future," Rachel said with a straight face.

"Are you angry with me right now?"

"No, I'm simply laying it to you straight, Mr. Burton. I think you should clarify what our relationship is. I am your ex-wife, and the only person connecting us is Charlotte."

Justin looked at the woman before him. All of a sudden, he felt a kind of disappointment that he couldn't describe. She clearly was the one who started it all, but now, he actually couldn't quite leave everything behind.

"I'll be taking my leave then," Rachel said when she saw how Justin remained silent.

"Stop," Justin called after her. "Even if Charlotte is the only reason we have common ground, I am still your superior. I am now commanding you as your superior to stay behind and take care of me."

"The Burton Group has no such rule."

"I make the rules." Justin's expression darkened. "Unless you want to stop working at the Burton Group, you'll have to follow my orders."

"You're being unreasonable."

Justin didn't seem to have heard her. "Go down to the cafeteria now and get me some food. Also, I want pork rib soup for dinner."

Rachel's forehead was screwed up in a tight frown. After standing there for a while, she finally made her way over to the hospital's cafeteria.

The uncomfortable expression on her face vanished without a trace the moment she left Justin's ward. In the meantime, coldness bubbled up in those quiet eyes of hers.

For the next week after that, Rachel spent the rest of her time outside of working hours caring for Justin.

"Frankie, is President Burton the same person we remember?" The secretary promptly stopped Frankie right after dropping off some papers for Justin. "He just smiled when I asked him to sign those papers."

Frankie's expression was composed as usual. "When finance made a mistake in their data, Mr. Enfield personally came over, expecting to be scolded. Guess what Mr. Burton said to him?"

"Of course President Burton chewed him out. There's a chance he might've even fired Mr. Enfield on the spot."

"No, President Burton said to be more careful next time."

The secretary's eyes widened. "For real?"

"Why would I lie to you about this?"

"Did he get a personality swap? Has the hospital been spiking his food or something?"

"What's with that nonsense?" Frankie tapped the secretary's head, but then he thought about it. "Still, you're right. There's a particular medicine that's being used to treat his condition."

As he spoke, he saw Rachel walk down the corridor while chatting with Julian.

“Miss Hudson, Dr. Peters.”

Rachel greeted Frankie back.

“I’ll continue working then. Let’s leave together once I’m done with work. Wait for me.”

“Sure.”

With that, Rachel stepped inside Justin’s room. The moment she did so, she saw Justin sitting on the couch.

“Why are you up? Did you feel uncomfortable lying down?” Rachel asked casually while she placed the lunchbox on the table. “The pork ribs down in the hospital cafeteria aren’t half-bad. I got you some, so

give it a try.”

“You didn’t cook again today?” Justin questioned her.

“I had no time for that. The contract signing for the project is today, so I had to sign it. I asked Julian beforehand to go to the cafeteria and set the food aside.”

Justin’s expression instantly darkened at the mention of Julian’s name.

“Have a taste.”

“I won’t eat it!” As he spoke, Justin flung his arms out. He had moved them a little too far out, for he ended up knocking over the cutlery that Rachel held in her hands. They clattered to the floor with a loud sound.

The atmosphere instantly tensed up.

After a few moments of standing there stiffly, Rachel crouched down to pick up the cutlery.

Upon seeing her crouch down before him, Justin suddenly felt regretful. “You don’t have to pick it up.”

Rachel seemingly didn’t hear him.

Justin then bent down, intending to pull her up. However, Rachel suddenly darted back like it was part of her instincts. When she looked up, an obvious look of fear crossed her eyes. Although it was just a brief moment, Justin clearly saw her fear.

It wasn’t the first time, though—moments like this cropped up frequently. Sometimes, inadvertently, or when she wasn’t paying attention, she would often look like she was scared when he tried to touch her. It seemed like muscle memory to her.

“I’ll get you a new set.” Rachel’s expression had already returned to normal.

All of a sudden, he asked, “Was I awful to you in the past?”

Rachel’s hands tensed up slightly, cutlery safely in her grip. “Why the sudden question?”

“Sometimes, I feel like you’re afraid of me.”

“You’re overthinking it. Why would I be scared of you?” Rachel pretended to shrug casually. “Do you think it’s because you raised your hand against me or something?”

“Have I ever been violent toward you?”

He was direct, and Rachel was actually at a loss for words.

Indeed, he had been.

There were several instances where he nearly strangled her to death. In fact, that suffocating sensation would still occasionally show up in her dreams. No matter how she tried, she couldn't get to the surface, making it seem as though she was drowning.

Needless to say, her silence explained everything.

Justin's temples twitched. He couldn't imagine how he could have been violent toward this frail and skinny woman before him. Just how terrible had he been in the past?

"Is it because you've been cooped up too long in the hospital?" Rachel's voice pulled his mind back. "Don't think about it anymore. I'll just get you some new cutlery."

Rachel hadn't even moved when Justin suddenly grabbed her arm.

"I'm sorry."

She turned her head back in shock, and her eyes met Justin's. "Regardless of how I treated you before, it's all in the past now. Since you're back, I'll do all I can to make up for my past mistakes."

Justin's sincere gaze did not mesh with his cold, handsome face. It was like a 17-year-old soul was living inside his body instead, thinking that he could start afresh by acknowledging his mistakes and atoning.

However, not everything in the world could be resolved with just a simple 'sorry'. People should apologize when they should, but the recipient of the apology also had the choice not to forgive them.

Chapter 234 History Is a Cycle

After Rachel left the ward, Justin looked down at the back of his hand. Her warmth still lingered there from when she had smacked his hand away.

The sunset outside the window couldn't have come at a better time, and the evening sun dyed the entire sky lovely warm hues. At that moment, Justin's lips curved up into a shallow smile. A gentle warmth settled on his face, warming away the coldness.

People should look ahead, and the past was not important.

Justin wasn't sure how much time had passed, but Rachel didn't come back. He was about to press the buzzer and ask a nurse about this when Frankie suddenly knocked on the door and entered. "Mr. Burton."

"Why are you in such a rush?"

Frankie was supposed to deliver some papers, but he had worked up a sweat running here. "I just came from the parking lot. I saw Miss Hudson being taken away by some people from the villa."

Justin's expression changed.

At the same time, Rachel was sitting inside a black Rolls-Royce with a spacious interior. The world outside the car zoomed past her.

The sound of a ringing tone reverberated inside the car. She gripped her phone and glanced at the old butler next to her.

"Can I take this phone call?" she asked, neither panicked nor comfortable with the situation.

When he saw the name 'Julian' on her phone screen, the butler nodded his head. "You may, Miss Hudson."

Rachel answered the call and said, "Hello, Julian. Something has come up at the last moment, so I can't go back with you. Sorry about this, but please pick up Charlotte and Samuel for me and send them home."

Julian's voice drifted over the speakers. There was a hint of anxiety in his voice. "Are you okay? Where are you now?"

"I'm fine. Don't worry about me."

Rachel never once mentioned that she had been kidnapped throughout the conversation.

An hour later, the car arrived at the Burtons' summer villa. Ever since she first stepped into the car, Rachel more or less knew the reason behind this trip—it certainly was not a simple trip meant for fun.

"Old Mr. Burton, Miss Hudson is here."

"Come in."

"This way, Miss Hudson."

The Burtons' butler opened the door to the study and beckoned her inside.

Before she entered the room, Rachel glanced at the electronic password lock through the corner of her eyes.

She hadn't been able to enter this room prior to this visit. Indeed, it seemed that she could only get an open invitation by getting close to Justin.

The moment she stepped inside, she caught sight of an old man with white hair sitting behind the desk there. He was reading a book, but when he saw Rachel come in, he marked his place with a bookmark and set the book aside. He crossed those withered hands of his and placed them on top of the desk as his heavy gaze settled on her.

"Sit."

Rachel sat down across the desk.

“It has been a while. I heard that your muteness has been cured. Congratulations.”

“Your mind is still as sharp and healthy as ever. I believe the same goes for your physical health?”

“Not quite, but it doesn’t matter. I simply wish for my descendants to surpass their potential and manage the family business well when they inherit it.”

“You’re a fortunate man to have so many excellent children and grandchildren.”

It was a normal conversation, but the politeness they employed was like a series of dancing blades.

Indeed, Arthur was a man who had seen a lot in life. He was solemn and calm as he poured Rachel a cup of tea, unfazed. “I heard that you have been caring for Justin recently. I should thank you properly.”

“It’s fine. It’s my duty, after all.”

“No.” His words took a turn. “Where should I begin with the word ‘duty’? Have you forgotten that you and Justin have divorced? You guys are no longer tied together, you know.”

Rachel showed a small smile. “You’ve misunderstood me. When I said ‘duty’, I meant that it is my duty to repay kindness that’s been shown to me. He did get hurt because of me. So, I shall repay this debt with kindness as well. Taking care of him until he has recovered is something that I should do.”

“Is that really what you think?”

Arthur pressed a button on the remote under his desk, and the projector behind Rachel lit up. Security camera footage began to play on the projector screen behind her. It was during the day of the birthday banquet at the summer villa. Rachel had avoided the guests and crossed the banquet hall before heading into the deserted side hall by herself. She had even attempted to open the door to the study, but she failed in the end, and Justin had discovered her.

“How would you explain this, Miss Hudson?”

However, being discovered so quickly was within Rachel’s expectations. “You saw it too. I was looking for something.”

“What were you looking for?”

“Don’t you know what it is?” Rachel looked at Arthur calmly. “If that incident from five years ago had been resolved, I wouldn’t have come back to cause this bit of trouble for you. You have the evidence for Hans’ death, don’t you?”

“It turns out that you actually returned for the evidence. You’re a sentimental one.” Approval flashed across his eyes. “If it wasn’t for how special you were, then it wouldn’t have been out of the question for Justin to marry you.”

“You don’t have to flatter me, for I am an ordinary person. Isn’t this the same as the last time you called me here back then? Remember when you wanted to make a deal and get me to leave Justin?”

History was a cycle, and it was shocking how similarly events could play out.

After her forced marriage to Justin back then, Arthur had also brought her over to the study and forced her to sign the divorce papers since he felt that she had been affecting Justin too much.

Today, he was doing the same thing—even the tactics he used were the same.

The old man replied, “I do indeed have the evidence. If I hand it over to you, will you immediately leave Justin and never show your face to him again?”

The corner of Rachel’s lips quirked up. “You are still the same as ever with your love for trickery.”

“What did you say?”

"I don't have to bring up the number of cameras and audio recorders hidden around this house, do I?" Rachel surveyed the room, and her gaze promptly landed on the mini camera on the bookshelf across her. "You planned to bait me here and play the recording to Justin, making him think that I only got close to him because of some ulterior motive. You wouldn't have to give me anything, and you'd get to remove yourself from the picture easily—just like how it was back then."

Arthur's expression stiffened. The awkwardness he felt from having his plans exposed was clearly written on his face, and he gave a dry cough. "You're smarter than you used to be."

"I do learn from my mistakes. Your family was the one who taught me everything, after all." Rachel smiled. "It's better to be a bit more honest when striking a deal."

Arthur's expression darkened. After a period of silence, he spoke. "I can give the evidence to you, but I need some time in case you renege on your word," he said solemnly.

"You have time to think it over. You're not the sole person I'm relying on."

"What do you mean by that?"

"Julian told me that Justin's amnesia is a kind of retrograde amnesia. His memories are being intermittently cut off, but he can still remember some things. You probably don't want him to remember what he has forgotten, do you?"

"How dare you!" Arthur's expression instantly shifted as he smacked the desk hard and stood up. That was his Achilles heel, and he had no way of hiding it.

Rachel had returned to her home country for some time now. While she hadn't made any progress in her other pursuits, she could clearly see how well Arthur had kept Justin's amnesia under wraps.

To the old man, there was nothing better than having Justin put his rage and hatred behind him and throw himself entirely into inheriting the family business. That was why he absolutely didn't want Justin to recover his memories. To that end, he was willing to let Amber marry into the Burton Family—after all, she didn't want Justin to remember either.

Chapter 235 End The Engagement With Amber

"I loathe it when others threaten me!" Arthur was incensed as he pointed at Rachel's face and rebuked her by saying, "Do you think that you can walk out of this place unscathed today?"

"Since I even bothered to come all the way here, I've naturally made ample preparations. If you dare to lay a hand on me, I won't be the only one going down—you'll be affecting all the Burton Pharmaceuticals resources that I own too," Rachel answered in a bland tone.

"You think that I'll cower because of that? So what if the entire Burton Pharmaceuticals crumbles?"

"I have the Carters backing me as well. Are you sure you won't bat an eye when they breathe down your neck?"

Arthur's expression was stormy. He had nearly forgotten that Rachel was now the president of Carter Enterprise's adopted daughter. Everyone knew just how much both the president and his wife adored her; in fact, they loved her no less than if she were their own flesh and blood.

"I think you should be able to see that I wouldn't have returned to this country if it wasn't for that incident with Hans. Since you want me to leave, the best way would, of course, be to hand me the evidence so I can get this over with. I'll then gladly leave without you needing to remind me about it." Rachel stood up. "To me, Riverdale is just a place filled with pain. I am not attached to this city." As she spoke, loud noises could be heard outside the study.

"Young Master, your grandfather is currently in discussion with his guest. You cannot go in."

"What is he discussing that needs Rachel here? Rachel!"

Rachel's brows furrowed, and a complicated look came over her face.

Arthur glanced at the locked door. "I can hand the evidence to you, but I need some time to do so. Until then, I hope that you will be able to behave yourself. You must not so much as breathe a word about the past," he said in a low voice.

"That's a given."

Now that she had said those words, the both of them came to a tacit agreement. Rachel then opened the door.

Justin was outside, sitting in his wheelchair. An undercurrent of anxiety could be seen marring his handsome features. The moment he saw her, he immediately pulled her over and checked her from all angles. "Are you all right?"

"You haven't recovered yet, have you? Who allowed you to come all the way here?" Arthur's voice could be heard scolding Justin from inside the study.

Justin's eyes darkened as he immediately pulled Rachel behind him to shield her. Even when confined to a wheelchair, his personality was as forceful as ever. "Grandpa, why did you bring Rachel here?"

"I called her over so that I could have a word with her. Do I need to report something like this to you?"

"If you just wanted to talk to her, couldn't you have done it over a phone call? Why the racket? Why get the butler to retrieve her?" Justin's tone was harsh and pressuring.

"What's with that attitude? What does having a talk with her have to do with you? I should be able to ask her a few questions even if she is an employee under the Burton Group, no? I have made my decision—I will have her transferred to a subsidiary away from the headquarters!" Arthur stated, incensed.

"What?" Justin's expression turned stormy. "She is under my jurisdiction. Apart from myself, no one is allowed to transfer her anywhere!"

“You wilful child!” Arthur smacked the top of the desk hard. “Do not forget that you are still engaged to Amber. The wedding will be held at the end of the year! Don’t you know when to stop avoiding your responsibilities? Have you not seen what the media has been saying about this?”

Ever since Justin and Rachel announced that Samuel was their son during that press conference, countless speculations and theories had popped up online about their relationship, their hatred for each other, as well as their love. At the same time, the Burton Group had taken advantage of all the publicity to push sales. But now, Arthur actually blamed the media for making up stories out of thin air?

Justin scoffed coldly. “You didn’t voice any objections when the initial marketing plan was unveiled, and now you’re kicking Rachel aside since you think she’s in the way? How does it feel to be as heartless as you are?”

“How dare you... Is this the way to speak to me?”

Justin drew in a deep breath. “You don’t have to worry about my engagement with Amber. I have already gotten someone to handle the paperwork. Once I have recovered, I will announce that the engagement is canceled.”

Arthur was so furious that he shook. “Are you canceling your engagement because of this woman?”

Justin held Rachel’s hand right in front of Arthur. “You heard that right—I want to end my engagement,” he said boldly and honestly as Rachel looked on in shock.

“You insolent thing!”

Justin and Rachel had only just stepped out of the study when an inkstone flew out after them along with Arthur’s furious, breathless yells and the family butler’s soothing tones. The two of them didn’t look back and left the summer villa.

Justin kept holding Rachel’s hand throughout the entire trip back. Although the air conditioning inside the car was on, sweat kept pouring from his hand.

Rachel frowned. "There's no one around to see us now. It's okay to let go, right?"

However, Justin gripped her hand tighter. "What did my grandpa say to you?"

"What do you think?"

"He wants you to stay away from me, am I right?" Justin's expression darkened a little. "You don't have to care about what he said, and the only one you should listen to is me. If my grandpa's servants call you over in the future, don't go. Just tell me and I'll take care of it. No matter what he says, never agree to whatever deal the old man offers."

When he noticed that Rachel remained silent, he frowned deeply. "You promised him something, didn't you?"

A slight pain spread throughout the hand that Justin gripped. Rachel glanced at him. "What deal do you think your grandfather has offered me? What kind of deal do you think could be even more advantageous than us being together? Throwing a hundred million bucks at me?"

"What is a hundred million? As long as you stay with me, the entire Burton Group will be ours in the future," Justin said.

"That may not be set in stone. We might not be able to stay together until the end. I won't even have that one hundred million then, never mind the Burton Group. Wouldn't that be a massive loss for me

then?"

"You actually thought about that?" Justin stared at her and squeezed her hand hard. "Don't you trust me? Alternatively, do you not trust yourself?"

"Ouch," Rachel gasped under her breath.

Justin immediately loosened his grip. "Where are you hurt?"

Nevertheless, she remained silent.

Soon, night had already fallen. The world outside the car zoomed past them through the windows as they journeyed from the suburbs to the city proper. Six years of experiences zipped around Rachel's mind; many of the scenes were blurry, blending with each other seamlessly.

"Rachel."

"Yeah?"

"They said that I was terrible to you back then, but I can't recall anything."

"It's fine if you can't remember it."

"That's not what I meant." Although Justin's voice was by her ear, it sounded a little distant. "Ever since I first saw you and found out who you were to me, I felt like you were a significant part of my old memories. While I can't bring myself to verbally acknowledge it, and while I truly can't remember it either, my subconsciousness is telling me that you are important to me."

His life had initially been rigid and unchanging. He had followed the path that had been laid out for him. Under the arrangements that his family made, he would soon marry Amber. And yet, Rachel had to

return right at this moment. Those initially lost memories had seemingly begun to slowly peek out from whatever corners they were tucked away in.

He couldn't remember anything about his time with Rachel in the past, but he could remember his feelings. Evidently, he liked her.

When he still didn't hear anything from Rachel after a while, Justin turned his head to take a look, only to see her leaning back in the seat with her eyes closed. She had fallen asleep without him noticing, and she looked so serene and at peace.

Justin's eyes dulled, and he felt a little disappointed. A moment later, he took off his jacket and draped it over her shoulders.

Chapter 236 She Would Never Give In

After silence had descended inside the car for a short while, Rachel gradually opened her eyes. From the corner of her eye, she saw that the man by her side was currently resting with his eyes shut. Hence, she turned her face to the side and glanced at the night scene outside the window. At that moment, there were flashes of red illuminated in her eyes.

Earlier on, when Justin had said all those words, she nearly fell for it and she nearly trusted that there wasn't any hint of ugliness in their past. For a split second, she had thought that they would be able to start afresh in everything.

However, that was essentially impossible. One without their memories could proceed with life without any burden, but she was different. There was no way that she could trust the words of someone who had lost his memories, so she would not give in. She would finish off the things that had to be done as soon as possible and then leave Riverdale; thereafter, she would no longer step foot back here.

On the other end at the Burton Residence, Arthur remained in a fixed position in front of his desk for quite some time even after Justin and Rachel had left.

"Sir, have a sip of your tea. Why are you so concerned? I can see that Miss Hudson has a kind heart and I don't think there's going to be a problem if she gets together with Young Master."

"You don't get it. If it was Rachel from six years ago, then I would definitely choose to turn a blind eye. However, so many incidents happened back then and Justin nearly lost his life because of this woman. Hence, they must not enter into a relationship again."

Arthur's brows furrowed tightly as he continued, "I'm indeed quite surprised at how Rachel has turned out to be after all this while being away. After all, she was a mute and the least favored illegitimate daughter of the Hudson Family, but she managed to ascend to her current position in just five years.

Furthermore, she also became the goddaughter of the Carter Family, so it's quite obvious that she possesses a tenacity that's unlike any ordinary person."

"Doesn't this indicate that she's very outstanding?"

"Justin doesn't need an outstanding partner by his side. He just needs someone who'll do as she's told and not create any trouble for him. You've seen his state when that incident happened back then, which is why Rachel must not be allowed to come back. Justin must not recall the past."

"So what do you plan to do?"

"Get me that item."

The butler was slightly stunned but he did as he was told and went to unlock the safe. Taking out a brown paper bag from it, he passed it to Arthur and murmured, "It's been five years since the incident. Are you sure that you still want to bring this up?"

"Since Justin insists on calling off his engagement with Amber and there's no stopping him, then we can make use of this to sever all ties with the Hudson Family. There's really no point in keeping all of these items under lock and key."

"I'll compile everything and send it to Miss Hudson."

"Alright. Don't forget that some items in here shouldn't be retained. Make sure you sort things out properly."

"Don't worry, sir. I understand."

...

One week later, Justin was discharged from the hospital.

“Rae’s not here yet, is she?”

Just then, Frankie had just packed up Justin’s belongings and handed them to the secretary to bring to the car. Then, he explained, “Miss Hudson has an important meeting today and she just called to say that she won’t be able to make it. I’ll be sending you home.”

“What meeting is so important?”

“Don’t you remember? It’s the meeting with the medication wholesalers to negotiate the pricing. Miss Hudson has slashed the price by two percent lower than the original base price. This is a great preliminary preparation for the start of our planned price war. Miss Hudson’s amazing!”

“But of course! Who was the one who hired her?” Justin crowed, feeling very smug. Over the past few days, he increasingly felt that Rachel had a lot of attractive points that captured one’s attention.

Her work performance was undoubtedly great; furthermore, she was humble and gentle in person, and she also managed her subordinates with firmness. That being said, she was not a nasty boss. In the future, she was definitely going to be a great help for him, whether at home or at work.

At that moment, Frankie noted Justin’s elated expression. “Mr. Burton, I’ll send you home right now.”

“No, let’s go to the company.”

Upon hearing that, Frankie was significantly speechless.

It was noon and the meeting had just ended. Rachel sent the wholesalers off with a handshake. “Lisa, send Mr. Riley downstairs.”

“Sure.”

“Miss Hudson, someone is waiting to see you outside.”

“Who is it?” Rachel collected her documents and asked, “Did the person make an appointment?”

“He claims to be your father. You should hurry up and go out to take a look for yourself.” As soon as Rachel heard that, her expression darkened slightly.

Three days ago, Justin had called off his engagement with Amber. Apparently, he had merely instructed his personal assistant to call and inform them. As such, it was no wonder that Jefferey was hopping mad by Justin’s lackadaisical approach.

At that moment in the Burton Pharmaceuticals’ office, Jefferey barged into the office as he shoved the security guards aside. “Where’s Rachel? I want to see your director Rachel Hudson!”

“Get her to come out right now!”

“Miss Hudson is in a meeting. You can’t enter without permission!”

“Why can’t I enter? I’m her father!”

Suddenly, Rachel walked out of the conference room amid the chaotic scene and she snapped at him, “What’s with the commotion?”

As soon as Jefferey saw Rachel, he glared ferociously at her. “I can’t believe that you’d dare to come out and see me! I’m here to teach you a lesson today! You’re such an ungrateful, unfilial w*nch and you deserve a beating!”

Meanwhile, Rachel stared at him with a cold expression. “I’ve been back in the country for so long and this is only the second time we’ve met each other. Are you about to lay hands on me now? You should at least give me a reason, don’t you think?”

“I knew that you came back with bad intentions! First, you took Amber’s job and now, you’ve also gone after her fiancé! You’re her elder sister; how can you behave so shamelessly!”

Suddenly, there was an uproar in the office. At that moment, Rachel maintained her composure and she glanced at the security guards. "Let go of him."

"Miss Hudson?"

"It's fine. Let go of him. I don't believe that President Hudson would dare to lay hands on his own daughter in broad daylight as we stand here at Burton Pharmaceuticals." This time, she addressed him as 'President Hudson' to essentially remind him of the entire Hudson Pharmaceuticals' reputation.

Just then, Jefferey's expression stiffened and he clenched his fists tightly. She's threatening me to be conscious of Hudson Pharmaceutical's reputation.

"There are so many people waiting for us to put on a show. President Hudson, is this the reason for you causing this commotion right now? Did you invite members of the press to join you? Or is there someone you trust who's secretly recording some footage? Do you plan to edit the footage and then post it on the internet?"

With just a few sentences, Rachel managed to easily point out his despicable ways.

Meanwhile, Jefferey was raging mad and his expression was thunderous. "If you still consider yourself a daughter of the Hudson Family, you shouldn't conduct yourself so shamelessly!"

"Am I the shameless one? In the past, wasn't it because your darling daughter, Amber, had taken offense at Justin's ugly looks and difficult personality, which was why I was forced to marry him in her place? You threatened me with my grandma's life. If I refused, then I would have to stand there and watch as she lost her life."

As soon as she said that, everyone in the office started to whisper amongst themselves.

"So that's what actually happened! I feel bad for Miss Hudson!"

"President Burton used to have a scar on his face. I've heard this from Sandy before she left the company."

“He’s inhumane! He sold off his daughter!”

“Both of them are his daughters, so how can he be so unfair?”

“Look, he’s come here to create trouble too. He must have intended to embarrass Miss Hudson! This is too much!”

Just then, the crowd’s remarks rang out and Jefferey clearly heard everything. Truth be told, this was all beyond his expectations. He had originally expected that since Amber had five years of history working for Burton Pharmaceutical, she must have built up relationships with some of the people here. However, he didn’t expect Rachel to win the favor of the crowd in just a few months’ time. No one stood up for Amber at the moment.

And so, Jefferey instantly lost his temper. “This is not true! Rachel, I’ve brought you up for the past twenty-odd years and is this how you repay me? I must teach you a lesson today! I...”

At that point, he had lost his reasoning. From the corner of his eye, he suddenly saw a pair of scissors by the side and he immediately grabbed it before hurtling it toward Rachel.

Chapter 237 Raised an Enemy

Suddenly, there was a cold glint that flashed out amid the loud cries of the crowd. Rachel instinctively took a step backward but she did not move fast enough. Suddenly, the pair of scissors came flying right at her.

She lifted her arm to block it but in the very next moment, she was forcefully pulled into a pair of arms and held in a tight, protective stance. Surprisingly, the pain that she had expected did not hit.

She heard a muffled grunt from the top of her head and the familiar voice that rang out caught her by surprise. She lifted her head, only to see Justin.

She wasn't sure when he had appeared behind her and right now, he held her tightly in his arms with his back facing Jefferey.

Rachel stared at him incredulously and she couldn't quite come to her senses for some time.

'Clang!' Suddenly, there was a loud clatter and the scissors fell to the ground behind them.

Meanwhile, Jefferey's voice, which was full of anger and dismay, rang out, "Justin, why did you—"

"Are you alright?" Justin asked instead, his thoughts only on the woman in his arms.

It was at that point that Rachel finally came to her senses. "I'm fine. How about you?"

However, Justin grabbed her hand and stopped her from examining his wound.

"Where are the security guards?" He turned around and exclaimed coldly, "Hurry up and get this lunatic out of the place!"

"Me?! A lunatic?! I'm Rachel's dad! Justin, even if you don't marry Amber and choose Rachel instead, that doesn't change the fact that I'll be your father-in-law! How dare you lay your hands on me?!"

"I've never seen any father like you who would lay hands on their daughter. I'm already being lenient for Rae's sake by not calling the cops on you!"

Meanwhile, the security guard kept a tight hold on Jefferey, but the latter went on a crazy tirade. "How dare you touch me? Justin, you're such a beast! My darling Amber spent five years of her life with you and ended up with nothing! That's five long years and this is how you treat her?"

"Rachel Hudson, I should have just let you die in that fire twenty-five years ago!"

"I've raised an enemy for myself! I have indeed raised an enemy!"

Just then, Jefferey's loud cries dimmed until they finally disappeared.

"Everything's fine now." Justin held Rachel in his arms and covered her ears as if by doing that, he could protect her from hearing all those callous words.

Sometimes, only those who were the closest to you would know the most painful spot to inflict pain.

"President Burton, you're bleeding!" As Frankie rushed over in a hurry, the first thing he noticed was the wound on Justin's back.

There was a huge, gaping wound on Justin's back from being slashed by the scissors and instantaneously, the blood stained his shirt bright red as it trickled down his back.

Just then, Rachel noticed the bloodstains on the ground and she finally came to her senses. "Why is there so much blood?" It was at this point that she saw the gaping wound on Justin's back and she exclaimed, "Call for an ambulance! Hurry!"

At the hospital, Justin endured seven stitches to his back.

"Come back one week later to remove the stitches. Make sure that the wound does not get wet. Do take a seat for a short while and if everything is fine, you can leave after that."

"Thanks."

After Frankie had sent the doctor out, he glanced at the two in the room and coughed before saying, "Uh—I'll go and get the medication. Miss Hudson, could you please help me keep an eye on Mr. Burton for a short while?"

With that, Frankie hurriedly darted out of the room.

And so, Rachel and Justin were the only two left in the room. She stared at the wound on Justin's back and saw that the horrendous scar—about the length of an index finger—that ran down his back, resembled a centipede. Upon seeing that, she furrowed her brows.

"It's fine. It doesn't hurt that much." Justin grabbed her hand. "I forgot to ask, though. Were you hurt? Jefferey's a lunatic! How could he have laid hands on you?"

Rachel merely shook her head. "I'm fine. Amber is his precious daughter and she's been pampered since young. You made her wait for five years in vain and now you've decided to call off the engagement too. You've caused the entire Hudson family, not just Jefferey, to become the laughingstock of Riverdale, so how could he possibly take this lying down?!"

"Well, he has no choice." Justin's expression turned cold at that. "I mentioned earlier that I wanted to call off the engagement, but she and the entire Hudson family insisted on waiting. I think they deserve all this!"

Meanwhile, Rachel was quite shocked to hear that. "Did you say that you requested to call off the engagement?"

"Five years ago as soon as I regained consciousness after the accident, everyone told me that Amber and I were engaged, but how could I possibly marry someone I don't even know?"

"Back then, did you not have any impression of her too?"

Justin hummed and nodded his head in response. "I had a faint impression of her but I forgot the bulk of everything. Grandpa told me that I wanted to marry her to take over Hudson Pharmaceuticals. In the end, this got overlooked and was delayed for five years."

The engagement had dragged on until Charlotte had grown older to the age where she was able to roam around and express herself. However, she had shown an intense dislike for Amber so obviously, this marriage would not be able to proceed.

Despite Justin's drastic change in personality after losing his memories, there was one side of him that remained the same, He would never pay heed to anyone he didn't care of, no matter how much the other party sacrificed themselves for him.

At this instance, Rachel suddenly sympathized with Amber. The latter had wasted five precious years of her youth on this man and the ridiculous thing was, this man didn't even remember her. Moreover, he had no plans to marry her at all.

They arrived home after being discharged from the hospital, only to discover that Charlotte and Samuel had just arrived home too after being picked up from school by the servants.

Both kids were seated on the carpet in the living room and each of them had a video game console in their hands.

As soon as they saw Justin and Rachel walk in, both of them immediately flung the consoles in their hands aside and rushed forward one after the other. "Mommy! Daddy!"

Before either of them could run into Justin and Rachel's arms, they were stopped in their tracks right in time by Frankie.

"Charlotte, President Burton's hurt, so you can't touch his wound."

Meanwhile, Charlotte had run into Frankie and she clung onto his leg. Tilting her head, she turned to glance backward and her expression was full of confusion. "Daddy, you've been in the hospital for so long. Are you still hurt?"

Samuel trailed after her and calmly explained, "As one grows old, it does take longer for them to recover."

In response to Samuel's words, Justin couldn't help grimacing. "Who are you calling old?!"

Meanwhile, Samuel sucked on his lollipop and he said in a muffled voice, “Look at you. You’ve been in the hospital for so long but you still can’t walk by yourself without my mommy’s help. Don’t tell me you’ll need her to take care of you for the rest of your life?!”

Just then, Justin’s expression changed and he retorted, “This is just for the time being!”

He couldn’t tell the two kids that he had been wounded again today; otherwise, Charlotte would surely bawl her eyes out. There were already too many things to deal with.

In the end, Rachel couldn’t take it. “Alright, you two can go and play by yourselves, but don’t have too many snacks because I’ll be cooking dinner soon.”

As soon as Charlotte heard that, she brightened up and jumped up and down gleefully. “Yay! Tonight, we’ll get to taste Mommy’s cooking!”

Subsequently, Rachel helped Justin to the bedroom and led him to take a seat on the bed. Then, she stood by the side and studied the medication prescribed by the doctor. “This should be taken on an empty stomach. Take two capsules each time. As for this one, it is to be had after meals—”

At that moment, the dim, warm light hit her face and there was a laid back and gentle expression on her face. It was as if the time had been put to a halt at this exact moment.

Suddenly, Justin grabbed her.

Rachel reacted by exclaiming loudly and by the time she had come to her senses, she was already dragged onto his lap. In this current overly intimate position, they could even clearly hear others’ hearts thudding against their chests. She got a fright and instinctively struggled to get out of his lap.

However, Justin suddenly took a deep breath and mentioned, “It’s painful.”

She suddenly realized that there were stitches on his back so she stopped moving. “Did I hurt you? Let me have a look.”

Suddenly, Justin turned over and he made use of his abdominal force to press against her.

“Umph!”

The soft, delicate silk bed sheets brushed against Rachel’s ears and there was a slightly ruffled sound. Then, there was a shadow that enveloped her and the sound that she was about to make became caught in her throat as her lips were suddenly smothered. Suddenly, her widely-opened eyes lost their focus because of the face that loomed in front of her.

Chapter 238 Who’s Hans?

The kiss came about quite unexpectedly and Rachel couldn’t react fast enough before she was pushed onto the genuine silk bed sheets. The only sound she could hear at the moment was the noise of the rustling of clothes by her ears.

Just as his huge palm traveled down her waist and moved downward, she suddenly came to her senses. Suddenly, Justin was pushed aside by Rachel and his back knocked against the bed frame. Instantly, he grunted in pain and stared at her.

“I’m sorry. Did I jolt your injury?” Even though she expressed concern with her words, that two steps backward that she took was in fact her most truthful reaction. It was hard to ignore her body’s instinctive rejection and wariness.

Just then, Justin’s expression darkened slightly. “I was too presumptuous.”

At that moment, the atmosphere surrounding them became quite tense and it seemed as if the air had turned quite still. Both of them were at a loss for what to do.

“I’ll go downstairs to prepare dinner. You should get some rest.” With that, Rachel fled the room.

Meanwhile, Justin frowned upon hearing the door shut behind her. He was slightly frustrated but mostly downcast.

Suddenly, his cell phone by the side vibrated and he glanced at the screen. As soon as he saw the name on the caller ID, he revealed an impatient look and tapped on the reject call sign.

However, the person on the other end was relentless and made three consecutive phone calls to him. Just as he was about to block that number, a text message notification popped up with a loud 'ping'.

'Justin, you've been tricked. Rachel's back here not because of work or for her child. It's because of you. She's here to seek revenge for Hans.'

Justin's eyes narrowed upon seeing the name 'Hans' and somehow, the name sounded quite familiar to him. He seemed to have heard of this name from somewhere.

A few seconds later, he placed a phone call to Amber's number.

"Justin! You're finally taking my call."

"Who's Hans?"

...

Meanwhile, Rachel popped into the washroom as soon as she reached the ground floor. Rinsing her mouth several times, she tried hard to dispel the provocative feelings surrounding her. She faced the mirror and rubbed her lips as if by doing so, she would be able to rub off the kiss from earlier on.

In the end, she stayed in the washroom for quite some time before coming out to prepare dinner. The Burton Family had a cook tasked to prepare meals so she didn't have to do much.

"Miss Hudson, I've made three dishes. Is there anything else you would like to have?"

Before Rachel could reply, Samuel ran over from the living room and said, "Mommy, I want spaghetti for dinner!"

Meanwhile, Charlotte had never tried that before so she chimed in, “I want that too!”

Just then, Rachel smiled and asked the cook, “Is there any minced meat?”

“Yes, there is.”

“Alright then, you can go and do your own thing. I’ll prepare this last dish and then we can have dinner soon.”

Just then, Charlotte rolled up her sleeves with a flourish. “Mommy, I can help you too!”

“Alright! You’re such a good girl.”

Shortly after that, both kids put down the video game console in their hands and ran into the kitchen.

Rachel took two little stools for the two of them and placed some water into the basin for them to wash the fruits and vegetables.

In fact, it wasn’t possible to expect the two of them to be of actual help. Soon after that, Charlotte started to chase after Samuel with the strawberries that she had just washed in her hands, and the whole house became quite lively.

After dinner was ready, Rachel requested for Martha to go upstairs and get Justin.

“Miss Hudson, Mr. Burton is asleep and he mentioned that he’s not hungry yet.”

Surprised, Rachel replied, “Okay, let’s have dinner first.”

“Okay, sure.”

“Charlotte, eat your vegetables.”

Meanwhile, Samuel was enjoying his spaghetti and he mumbled while eating, “Mommy makes the best spaghetti ever!”

“Have some more if you like it but make sure to eat your vegetables too.”

Rachel could clearly see through Samuel’s little trick and she placed the carrots he had picked out back onto his plate. “The two of you must take your vegetables; otherwise, you won’t get enough nutrition.”

“This is what Mr. Wade said too. That’s why he keeps an eye on me every time I’m eating.” Just then, Samuel silently heaved a sigh and he sounded like a young adult as he lamented, “Why do I have to be under close supervision whether I’m at home or at school?”

“The vegetables taste okay. Have a strawberry after eating the vegetables.” Meanwhile, Charlotte led by example and took a big mouthful of carrots. Then, she handed over a red, juicy strawberry to Samuel to coax him into eating more of his vegetables.

It was quite clear that Charlotte had changed a lot over this period of time and she was no longer as spoiled and bossy as before. Now, she was even able to be considerate of others.

After dinner, Rachel accompanied the two kids and played games with them. However, even after she had put them to bed, Justin didn’t come out of his room at all and the whole house suddenly felt quiet.

In the end, Rachel gently knocked twice on the door to the master bedroom.

“Come in,” A male voice rang out from the inside.

“Oh—are you still awake? I heard the servant mention that you were asleep.”

“I couldn’t sleep.”

Justin sat on the couch. He couldn't quite lean on the backrest because of the wound on his back, so he sat in a ramrod position with both feet overlapping each other. There was a stack of documents placed on his knees and he looked quite strained in this current posture.

Just then, Rachel hesitated before asking, "How about I make you some supper? What would you like to have?"

"Anything goes."

"I'll make you some spaghetti then. Both Samuel and Charlotte enjoyed it very much." After she said that, she went downstairs and prepared it before serving it to him.

"Enjoy it while it's warm."

The fragrant smell of spaghetti filled the bedroom but Justin didn't even make a move to eat. "Just leave it there."

"The spaghetti can't be left for too long. The texture won't be as nice."

She didn't get a response from him, so she followed his gaze and noticed the documents in his hand. It was a takeover proposal and from a glance, it seemed to be quite important. However, he should still be able to spare some time to take his meals despite his busy schedule.

Truth be told, Rachel had sensed that Justin seemed to be in a bad mood when she had come upstairs earlier.

"Okay, then. I'll leave you to your work." Rachel took a little pillow and shoved it between his back and the couch. She carefully avoided the area with stitches on his back. "You can lean on this. It'll be much more comfortable this way."

Just then, Justin was slightly taken aback.

“I’ll go out now.”

As soon as she said that, she turned around and made her way toward the door. However, Justin stopped her as he muttered, “Hold on.”

“What else do you need?”

“Tell me, Rachel, what is our current relationship?”

Upon hearing that, Rachel frowned. “Why are you asking me this all of a sudden?”

“I want an answer.”

“What do you think?”

“Lovers.” His definite tone shocked her. After all, if it was Justin from five years ago, he would not have said this at all.

“You clearly know why I called off the engagement with Amber. If this is insufficient to show that we’re lovers, then it’s either you’re acting dumb or you’re just toying with my feelings.”

At that instance, Rachel clenched her hand, which was by the side of her thigh, into a tight fist. However, she calmed down relatively quickly and countered, “If I’m toying with your feelings, why would I promise you that I’d move in here?”

“Your body response clearly shows your rejection.” With just a single sentence, he brought up the awkward situation from earlier.

“Is that why you refuse to have dinner? Are you throwing a tantrum?” Rachel frowned and glanced at him. Her clear eyes suddenly clouded over slightly. “Are you behaving so rudely all of a sudden because I rejected you earlier and I didn’t want things to progress further?”

“Justin, you need to be aware that I haven’t met you in five years. I can’t pretend that the past five years never existed and jump straight into a relationship with you after our broken past!”

“Is this the actual reason?” Justin then looked at her coldly as he questioned, “Who’s Hans?”

Chapter 239 I Want to Hear It From You

As soon as the name ‘Hans’ came out of Justin’s mouth, Rachel was significantly caught by surprise. She then tightened her grip of her tightly clenched fist until her fingernails pressed into her palms painfully. The pain instantly brought her back to her senses.

“Who did you talk to?” “Answer me!” Justin raised his voice all of a sudden and grabbed Rachel’s arm threateningly. “I’m asking you, who’s Hans? Why did you come back to Riverdale?”

“Why are you asking me about Hans? Why don’t you ask yourself then?” Just then, Rachel had a stoic expression on her face. “He was the only person other than grandma who treated me kindly. He moved back from abroad because of me and he helped me multiple times. However, he ended up disabled because of you. He was crippled...”

Rachel flung Justin’s arm aside as her words became much more emotional and her raised voice reverberated in the house. “Do you need me to continue reminding you of the past?!”

There was a ripping pain that came from the wound on Justin’s back and the vein on his temples pulsed furiously. “That’s why you hate me so much!”

It’s not even because I mistreated her after our marriage! It’s all because of this guy, Hans! She hates me so intensely because I crippled him!

“Is there any point in me harboring hatred against you?! Hans is dead! He can’t come back from the grave! I don’t see any point in discussing this with you any further because you have no recollection of all this. Since you don’t trust me and have your suspicions and choose to confront me because of someone dead for nearly six years, what’s the point of entering into a relationship with me then?” With that, Rachel turned on her heels to leave. However, Justin suddenly grabbed her and roared, “Stop right there!”

“Let go of me!”

“I didn’t say that you could leave!”

“What do you want from me? Let go of me!”

During their struggle, Justin suddenly hugged Rachel from behind. “I was only asking you who he is! I can’t remember anything so I wanted to confirm his identity with you. I don’t care about what others say, I just wanted to hear it from you.”

“Well, you’ve got your answer now. Is it the same as what others told you? Are you satisfied now?”

Though she was held in his embrace, her expression remained indifferent. “If you don’t trust my words, why don’t you give Frankie a call? I’m quite sure that he’s well aware of everything that happened in the past and he would never lie to you.”

“There’s no need for that.” Justin said, his tone soft.

Rachel had not hidden anything from him and every single thing that she had said was basically the same as what Amber had mentioned through the phone. The only difference in their words could not be clearly confirmed even if he questioned Rachel.

“Let go of me,” Rachel muttered coldly before she shoved him aside mercilessly.

“Amber was the one who told you all this, I presume?”

Meanwhile, Justin’s expression stiffened. “Yeah.”

“So this is what you mean when you told me that the engagement is off between the two of you and you won’t have any sort of contact with her anymore?”

“No, things are different from what you assume!”

“Tell me, then, how is it actually different? I don’t think she merely mentioned who Hans was. She must have also mentioned that Hans was my first love and I was infatuated with him since high school, huh? That if it weren’t for Mrs. Egerton’s objection, we would have gotten together ages ago, right?”

Meanwhile, Justin had a shocked expression on his face. “Why do you...”

“Why do I know all the details?!” Rachel revealed a cold smirk. “That’s because she told you the same thing when we were married to each other and you confronted me about it back then, just like how you did so earlier.”

Just then, Rachel’s annoyance and disappointment troubled Justin.

“Rae, I really don’t recall a single thing.”

Besides this sentence, he had no idea how to justify his earlier actions. Perhaps this sentence couldn’t quite justify anything either, so he added, “I’m sorry.”

“I’m tired. You should get some rest after you’re done with your meal.” With that, Rachel turned around and left the room.

Meanwhile, Justin called out to her but he didn’t manage to stop her from leaving. In the end, he was significantly frustrated.

The moment the door to Rachel’s bedroom slammed shut, she leaned against the door and the sullen expression on her face dissipated instantly. All that was left on her face was indifference.

...

The night had fallen and Amber was on guard by her phone until late at night. Finally, she couldn't take it anymore and she dialed Justin's number once again.

"Sorry, the number you have dialed is currently unavailable..."

Unavailable? Amber was momentarily shocked so she tried her luck again and sent him a text message. This time, however, there was a notification that her message was rejected.

Suddenly, something dawned upon her and her expression darkened instantly.

"Bam!" She swept everything on her desk, including her computer and cell phone, to the ground and there was a loud commotion as everything fell and smashed into pieces. Her ugly expression that was full of anger was clearly reflected on the full-length mirror in her room.

How can it be that even after mentioning Hans, their relationship isn't affected at all?! She's indeed quite good at this game and not someone to be taken lightly! I underestimated her from the start! I'm sure she must have a weak point, though!

At that moment, Amber thought of something and she made a phone call right away. "Hey, it's me. Help me find out which school Rachel's son goes to."

The next morning, Martha dropped off Samuel and Charlotte at the school entrance. "Go on in, you two!"

"Bye, Martha!"

Samuel and Charlotte carried a small backpack on their backs. Then, after Martha had left, Charlotte turned to wink at Samuel. "Samuel, I want to have the pancakes from yesterday."

Both of them usually agreed with each other when it came to food. "Let's go."

Unbeknown to Martha, every morning, after she had dropped the two of them at the school entrance, the two children would swiftly make their way across the road to buy pancakes from the breakfast stall.

“Samuel, why can’t we tell Mommy and Daddy that we ate this?”

“Mommy said that the food made by stalls like this are not prepared properly so it’s easy to get sick from eating them. That’s why she doesn’t let me have food like this.”

“Daddy doesn’t allow me to eat outside food too.”

“That’s why we can’t let them know. If we tell them about this, next time they may confiscate our pocket money. By then, both of us won’t get to enjoy such yummy food anymore.”

“You’re right.” Charlotte nodded her head earnestly. “Samuel, I want some chocolate brownies too.”

“We’re about to be late for class.” Samuel glanced at his watch. “How about you go back to class first and I’ll go buy you some brownies? Don’t forget to let Mr. Wade know that I’m in the toilet.”

“Okie dokey!” Charlotte signaled okay with her fingers, and both of them went their separate ways.

As the chocolate brownies’ stall was on another street, Samuel carried his little backpack and took a shortcut across a small alley. He seemed to be quite familiar with the place and it looked like he was used to doing this.

Suddenly, there was a tall, strapping figure that appeared at the entrance of the alley and the person blocked his path before he had even taken more than a few steps ahead.

“It’s this kid here. I’m sure of it.”

“Gosh, I can’t believe my luck! Again?!” Samuel frowned. “What do you guys want to do again? Are you going to kidnap me?”

“Again?!” The two strapping males exchanged looks with each other, seemingly confused.

Meanwhile, Samuel calmly responded, “I told you last time that you’ll end up in a horrible state if you kidnap me. After all, my daddy’s Justin Burton. Do you guys know him?”

“You little despicable brat! I can’t believe you’d go about claiming that he’s your dad! Rachel’s taught you quite well, hasn’t she?” A high-pitched woman’s voice rang out from behind the two guys and the clicking sound of her high heels tapping against the ground of the alley was clearly audible.

Just then, both men moved to the side respectfully. Meanwhile, Amber had her arms crossed in front of her as she scrutinized the kid in front of her with a disdainful look. “Who told you that Justin’s your dad?”

“I don’t need anyone to tell me that. He is my daddy!” Samuel looked thoughtfully at the woman standing not too far from him. After quite some time, he suddenly recalled who she was. “I know who you are!”

Chapter 240 I Dare You to Lay Hands on Him Again!

“Oh—do you know me?” Amber frowned. “I don’t think we’ve met each other before, though?” “We haven’t, but Charlotte’s shown me your picture and she said that you’re an annoying old witch.”

“What did you just say?!” Amber’s expression turned all of a sudden. “You little b*stard! Capture him for me!” Upon hearing that, Samuel turned around and ran off. As he scrambled to get away, he kept a protective grip on the pancakes in his arms but unfortunately, he was in a rush and the pancakes, which had been cut into smaller pieces, fell to the ground.

At the back, the tall blokes stepped on the pancakes as they chased after him.

“Bam!” Suddenly, one of them slipped on the pancakes and fell to the ground. At the same time, the guy behind him tripped over him and both of them fell on all fours. Thereafter, they struggled hard to get up from the ground.

“You two imbeciles! Hurry up and get him for me!”

Meanwhile, Samuel had already made his way to the entrance of the alley and he was quite pleased with himself. However, he suddenly saw a strapping figure right in front of him and he hastily halted in his tracks as he nearly crashed into the guy.

The clicking sound of high heels against the ground rang out once again. “You’re just a silly kid. Do you actually think that you can get away?”

Just then, Samuel’s expression stiffened. “You guys better not lay hands on me! Otherwise, my daddy and mommy won’t let you get away with this.”

“Stop with your bullsh*t! You’re just a b*stard! Just because you’ve fooled the others doesn’t mean that I’m oblivious. You’re not a Burton kid and Justin doesn’t even give a hoot about you. I can’t lay hands

on that darn girl but that doesn’t mean I can’t do anything to you!”

Amber then continued, “Once I capture you and chase Rachel away, I’ll have plenty of time to make my way back to the Burton Family.”

And so, Samuel was forced to retreat by the huge bloke in front of him while the two blokes from behind had also caught up with him. Despite Samuel being quite agile due to his size, he couldn’t quite handle all three of them as he was just a child, after all.

At that moment, just as the strapping bloke in front of Samuel reached out his huge palm to grab Samuel, the bloke suddenly screamed in pain. The man then clutched his head and fell to the ground. It was quite lucky that Samuel managed to dodge the man as he almost got crushed underneath the guy.

Samuel was stunned for a moment before his eyes brightened when he saw the person who’d just turned up. “Mr. Wade!”

Victor was currently holding onto a golf club and he reached out to pull Samuel to stand behind him. Then, he stared coldly at Amber and her two thugs who were standing across from him.

“Victor?!” Amber’s expression changed.

“I can’t believe you still recognize me. We haven’t seen each other for quite some time now, my dear ex-girlfriend.”

“Excuse me?! Who’s your ex-girlfriend?” Amber replied indignantly. “Why are you appearing everywhere?! Are you stalking me?! Hand me that little b*stard!”

“I dare you to mention ‘little b*stard’ again!” Suddenly, Rachel’s voice rang out from behind Amber.

Upon hearing that, Amber shuddered in response. She turned around and saw that Rachel had three to five hulking blokes behind her. Somehow, they had arrived unnoticed and blocked the entrance to the alley. Hence, Amber and her thugs were stuck in between them and Victor, with no path to escape.

This was unexpected to Amber, and it seemed that the hunter had now become the hunted.

“You... You guys...”

“I expected that you wouldn’t just take this lying down so recently, I’ve been here waiting until Samuel and Charlotte enter their school before leaving. I can’t believe you’re so lacking in self-restraint; you just failed in your efforts to drive me and Justin apart from that phone call you placed last night and today, you’ve gone straight after Samuel.”

Rachel moved forward menacingly as Amber’s face paled bit by bit. Just then, the latter reprimanded her lackeys, “What are you waiting for?! Get them!”

However, it was quite obvious that they were no match for their opponents. Rachel had brought along four to five guys, so the two thugs were obviously on the losing end.

Just then, Rachel spoke. “If you leave right away, I can accept that nothing happened and that I never met you two as well.”

Both guys instantly nodded earnestly. "Thank you! Thank you so much. We'll leave right away!"

"You two, stay right there!"

However, Amber's fingers flailed in the air without managing to grab hold of anyone. Meanwhile, the two guys fled the scene and left her behind.

"What are you going to do to me anyway, Rachel?!" Amber glared furiously at her. "I was the one who called Justin! So what? Don't tell me that you didn't come back because of Hans?! You have ill

intentions anyway!"

"Yes, I came back because of Hans." Rachel admitted to it readily and she countered, "So what? How does that change anything? You've already told Justin but did it make any difference?"

"That's because he's been deceived! Who knows what sort of shameless methods you've used?!"

Amber responded with gritted teeth and she glanced at Samuel by the side from the corner of her eye. "Justin must also have acknowledged this little b*stard here because of your shameless methods, right?"

Meanwhile, Rachel's expression darkened. "Victor, take Samuel away."

Upon hearing that, Victor immediately took Samuel into his arms and walked off. The whole time, he covered the child's ears to prevent him from hearing the subsequent words.

As soon as Victor disappeared from the alley, Rachel removed her watch and placed it into her pocket. Then, she turned to the blokes behind her and mentioned in a low voice, "Keep a hold on her."

Upon hearing that, Amber became quite frantic. "What are you trying to do?!"

Two men held her in a tight grip on her sides and held her tightly against the concrete wall. Before she could even yell out, there was a sharp, ripping pain that originated from her scalp.

Turned out that Rachel had grabbed Amber by the hair and the former lifted her arm to slap the other woman on the face.

“Ah!” Amber’s high-pitched scream reverberated throughout the alley and she stared incredulously at Rachel before yelling out, “Have you lost your mind?! How dare you hit me? I swear I’ll kill you if you don’t let me go right now!”

“Kill me?! I’ve been dead ages ago, Amber.” Rachel’s cold sneer was quite terrifying. “I died five years ago after guys worked together to force me to the brink. I held onto my last breath and made my way out to seek revenge for those who’ve died in vain. Do you know that I haven’t had a good night’s sleep all this while?”

Rachel held tightly onto Amber’s hair. Then, Rachel moved her face closer to the other woman and forced her to look at her. “Do you ever have nightmares of the people you’ve forced to their death? You’re also responsible for Hans’ death. If you hadn’t repeatedly sowed discord, Justin would not have laid his hands on Hans!”

“Hans’s legs were crippled by Justin, so what does that have to do with me?! Let go of me!”

“Be patient. I’ll come after each of you, one after the other.”

Just then, Rachel clicked on a video from her cell phone in front of Amber. “Do you remember this?”

“I believe I’ve shown this to you before. How can you forget about this so soon?”

Rachel dragged Amber by her hair, as if she was holding on to a bag of trash. She then practically shoved the screen of the cell phone right into the latter’s eyes. “Take a good look at it. This is of you and Noah lost in a passionate moment. The media would surely enjoy this very much, I believe?”

“Ah!” Amber’s voice broke and she couldn’t even utter anything as soon as she saw the intimate scene in the video. Instantly, she turned ashen.

“Without my reminder, you seem to have forgotten that I’ve got plenty of hold against you. You’ve gone into a frenzy because you’ve failed in your attempt to marry Justin, right? Well, I have my ways to bring you into disrepute. Let’s see who else in Riverdale would want to marry you after this!”

Amber’s eyes were red-rimmed at that point. Probably due to the pain, or because of the insults she was subjected to, or even out of fear, tears started to stream down her face. “No! It’s all my fault! I’m sorry! I won’t do this again!”

“I don’t wish for last night’s incident to happen again.”

With that, Rachel flung Amber’s hair aside disgustedly and exclaimed coldly, “One more thing—if I find out that you’re planning to go after Charlotte or Samuel again, I won’t spare your life. I’m not afraid to go to jail, so feel free to try me.”