

Mute Bride 261

Chapter 261 Getting Hurt Again

Rachel frowned. Continuing to ignore the man, she picked up another tent pole, asking, "Victor, which side should this belong to?" Victor replied, "Over there. Just put it through."

"No, you can't put it through directly." Justin dug out a connector from the bag next to him. "Connect it to this first."

Reaching the end of her patience, Rachel immediately tossed the tent pole aside. The tent pole produced a dull sound as it dropped to the ground and bounced back up. "Since you're so good at it, do it yourself. I'll go gather some firewood," she said. Then, she turned around and left the campsite without looking back.

At first, Victor wanted to go after Rachel, but Justin grabbed him before he could do so. "What are you doing, Mr. Wade? Come and teach me how to pitch the tent."

Victor shook him off peevishly. "Don't you know how to do it yourself?"

"I'll only pitch one tent. If you can bear the sight of me sharing a tent with Rachel tonight, then leave as you please."

"In your dreams!" Victor immediately decided to stay. "I'm gonna keep a close eye on you even if I won't get to sleep tonight. Don't you dare think about taking advantage of Rachel! You can fool her about what the hell you're coming for, but you can't fool me!"

Justin confessed right away, "Indeed, I came for Rachel, and I'm not denying it. Why would I fool you?"

"Bah!" Victor gave him a scornful look. "You think Rachel's gonna fall for you? You and whose army? I'm telling you, Justin—Rachel will never choose a scumbag like you again even if she's blind!"

Justin retorted, "Who else is Rachel gonna choose if she won't choose me? You? She's got quite a lot of men protecting her, eh?" Including Victor, there are already three men revolving around Rachel at

present. All of them are reckless and courageous men who itch to risk their lives fighting me for Rachel's sake, he thought.

"Rachel can marry anyone, but there's no way she'll marry you again," Victor said coldly after hammering the tent peg into the ground. "There's no way I'm gonna sit by and watch what has happened back then happen again."

Justin was totally uninterested in what had happened back then. Seeing Victor hammering the tent peg busily with his head down, he looked around and left quietly.

Meanwhile, Rachel went to gather firewood alone in the mountains. In the dry weather, there were many dead branches on the ground, so she didn't have much trouble gathering them. In the blink of an eye, the back basket behind her was full.

"Mommy!" Just then, Samuel trotted up to her. "Mommy! Charlotte is missing!"

Rachel was startled. For a moment, she thought Samuel was joking with her. "Samuel, I don't have time to play hide-and-seek with you two right now. Just be good and go back to the campsite and go to Victor after playing on your own for a while, okay?"

"It's true! Mommy, Charlotte really is missing!" Samuel looked very anxious. "Charlotte ran away just now, saying she wanted to see if there's any squirrels in the mountains, but she hasn't returned yet. Also, I can't reach her by phone anymore!"

Rachel finally stopped gathering the firewood. She asked Samuel what had happened at the time, saying, "How much time has passed since then?"

Samuel replied, "It's been a long time. When Charlotte came, she heard there were little squirrels in the mountains, so she brought lots of nuts with her. You were quarreling with Justin just now, so she ran away on her own since nobody was watching over her."

"That girl is simply reckless!" Rachel put down her back basket right away. After running a few steps, she looked back and asked, "Which way did she go?"

Samuel hesitated for a moment before pointing in a direction up the mountain. "That way."

"I'll go there right away. Samuel, go back to the campsite at once and ask the other teachers to help search for her."

"Okay," Samuel replied. As soon as he promised Rachel, Justin emerged from behind the ancient tree behind him; the man and the boy gave each other a knowing high-five.

Having given Samuel the instructions, Rachel immediately went searching for Charlotte. The sky was darkening at the moment. If Charlotte went deep into the mountains by mistake, even if there weren't any wild animals around, she might get killed by a snakebite.

Rachel went all the way up the mountain, heading in the direction Samuel had pointed to in search of Charlotte. "Charlotte! Charlotte!" she shouted. Just then, she heard a rustling sound behind her. "Charlotte?" She looked back, only to frown at once when she saw a tall figure catching up to her from a distance. "Why are you here?"

"Samuel told me that Charlotte had run out here."

"Yeah, he said she had gone this way in search of squirrels or something." Rachel looked around. "Are there any squirrels on this mountain?" For a moment, she couldn't care less about the old scores between her and Justin. The more people there were searching for a kid, the better, of course.

Justin replied, "Squirrels are probably in the woods on the mountain. Let's look for her in the woods."

"That makes sense." Rachel immediately turned to go deeper into the woods.

"Give me your back basket."

"No, it's not necessary."

Justin snatched the back basket from her without allowing her to say no. "Let's go."

Rachel had no time to argue with him either. Worried sick at the thought of Charlotte having gone missing, she headed into the mountain woods while calling Charlotte's name along the way. "Where could she have gone? Can't she hear us calling for her?"

"That girl is smart. Perhaps she couldn't find any squirrels and has gone back on her own."

"Why aren't you worried at all? Charlotte's so little; what if anything bad happens to her? What if there are snakes on the mountain?"

Seeing how worried Rachel looked, Justin suddenly regretted having gone along with Samuel's plan to trick her in such a way. However, what was done was done. If he were to confess to it at this very moment, the consequences would be unthinkable. As a consequence, he could only try to divert the subject by consoling her, saying, "Charlotte isn't that plucky, and she's not strong either. She wouldn't dare to go too far, so don't worry."

However, Rachel knew very well how time was of the essence when a kid got lost in the mountains. "No, that won't do. I've got to go back to the campsite and ask the others to help search for her."

"Rachel!" Justin grabbed her at once.

The two were standing on a mountain slope, so their footing wasn't steady in the first place. Not only that, but Rachel happened to step on some moss. When Justin grabbed her, she slipped and fell backward with a cry of alarm.

Justin failed to hold Rachel steady in time, so he ended up becoming a cushion for the latter as she fell right on top of him. "Mmph..."

Rachel instantly came to her senses when she heard a groan beneath her instead of feeling hurt as she had expected. She hurriedly picked herself up, asking, "Are you alright?"

Lying perfectly still on the ground with deep furrows in his brow, Justin looked like he was in agony.

“Did the wound open up? Let me take a look.” Rachel was at a loss for what to do. The wound on Justin’s back hadn’t healed completely yet. Don’t tell me he’s got another injury on top of the preexisting one at the moment, she thought.

“No, you don’t have to. I’m fine.”

“Don’t play the tough guy. The school has brought the school doctor here with us. Let me call the school doctor over.”

“Rachel!” Justin stopped her. “I’m fine, really. Just help me up.”

Rachel dared not exert too much strength on the man either. She carefully helped him up, asking, “Are you really okay?”

“My foot hurts a little.”

“Sprained your ankle?” Rachel crouched right in front of Justin while rolling up his trouser leg. “Which part of your foot hurts? Is it this part?”

Immediately, Justin played along by letting out a gasp. “Uh-huh.”

Chapter 262 There’s No Future

“It doesn’t seem like there’s anything wrong, though. Could it be that you fractured a bone or something?”

“It’s not that serious, I guess.” Justin stretched out his hand toward Rachel. “Let’s go back with you helping me. I think Charlotte must’ve gone back by now.”

Rachel wanted to search for Charlotte, but she couldn’t leave Justin here in such a state. Having no alternative, she decided to take him back to the campsite first. If Charlotte didn’t return to the campsite, she would come back to search for her.

“Just rest assured, Rachel. Charlotte fears the dark more than anything else, so there’s no way she’ll wander outside on her own for such a long time. She must’ve gone back.”

“Let’s hope so.”

With that, the two headed back with Justin’s arm resting on Rachel’s shoulder as she supported him. As the man was nearly 190 centimeters tall, it didn’t look like Rachel was propping him up. Instead, it looked more like he was holding her hostage. In fact, there was no way Rachel could help him up if he didn’t hold himself upright.

“Actually, I’ve always wanted to find an opportunity to talk to you.”

“Talk about what?”

“I’d like to formally apologize to you for what has happened in the past. I know that I used to be mean to you, and I can never make up for that, but I’ll do my best. Just give me a chance for Charlotte’s sake.”

Rachel frowned. “How much do you remember about the past?”

“I asked Frankie about it, and he told me part of the story. In short, I was mean to you.”

“Not really.” Rachel sounded frosty. “It was normal for you to resent me back then. After all, I wasn’t the person you wanted to marry at the time.”

“So, can you forgive me?”

“Now that we’re divorced, everything that has happened during our marriage doesn’t count anymore.”

“In that case, in the future—”

"There's no future to speak of." Rachel cut Justin short right away.

However, Justin still kept at the subject, as though he didn't notice the impatience in Rachel's words. "How could there be no future to speak of? Charlotte's our future. Do you want to break her heart? Ever since she was little, her greatest wish has been to live with her own mother."

Rachel suddenly stopped in her tracks. "Do you really want me to stay with Charlotte all the time?"

"Of course," Justin replied with a straight face.

"Alright then. Give me Charlotte's custody, and I'll take care of her in the future."

Justin was visibly stunned as the fallen leaves rustled in the woods all of a sudden.

"You can't do it, can you?" Rachel's voice broke the deadlock between her and the man as she walked on while helping him by the arm again. "I'm not interested in getting entangled with you any further. Our previous agreement to stay out of each other's business is my biggest concession already."

A hint of panic crept into Justin's eyes. "Are you really not willing to marry me again?"

"No, I'm not."

"In that case, are you gonna marry Hernandez?"

"It has nothing to do with you."

"Who else are you gonna marry if it's not him? Don't tell me it's Julian."

"Justin." Rachel glared at him. "Aren't you done yet?"

Only then did Justin shut up. After walking with Rachel for a while, however, he could no longer restrain himself. “No matter what you think, my desire to remarry you is my own business, and you have no right to interfere with that.”

“You...” Rachel stopped short of arguing with Justin upon recalling how he had always been like this.

The two returned to the campsite with Rachel supporting Justin. Upon seeing them from a distance, Victor immediately came up to them. The first thing he said was, “What’s the matter with this guy, Rachel?”

“Sprained his ankle.” Rachel glanced in the campsite’s direction. “Has Charlotte come back?”

Victor replied, “You mean Charlotte? She’s been here all the time. Did she go anywhere?”

Startled, Rachel looked puzzledly at the campsite, where sounds of people singing and chatting happily could be heard. A little girl’s voice clearly stood out above the others, and Rachel could tell at once that it was Charlotte’s.

“Ahem, ahem.” Justin suddenly hemmed twice. “I told you she would come back by herself.”

Vaguely realizing what had happened, Rachel shook off Justin’s arm angrily. “So you were fooling me, huh?”

“Hey! Rachel—”

Rachel brushed Justin off and left.

Justin wanted to go after Rachel to explain himself, but Victor mercilessly stopped him. “What are you doing? Pestering Rachel when she refuses to talk to you, huh? What’s the matter with you? Did you lose your sense of shame along with your memory?” Victor had become even angrier with Justin ever since he learned about the latter’s amnesia. He hurt Rachel so much at the time, only to forget about all of it thanks to a car accident, he thought. “I’m warning you, don’t keep after Rachel like a fly, or I’m gonna

beat the sh*t out of you!” He put out his fist and waved it before Justin with studied ferocity before striding off.

That night, the school set up several bonfires and threw a bonfire party around them as the class’ students performed one after another.

Rachel and Victor sat side by side with Charlotte nestling in Rachel’s arms.

On the other hand, Justin was warned off by Victor, who bared his teeth at the former as soon as he approached the three because of how he had tricked Rachel just now. “Why are you behaving like a dog?” Justin muttered. After finding a spot to sit down in the distance, he listened to the children’s singing from afar.

The mountain was quiet and comfortable. A short while later, Samuel slipped away from the crowd and sat down next to Justin in a poised manner. “I told you long ago that Charlotte’s plan of having you save a damsel in distress wouldn’t work. I was right, wasn’t I? Now my mom doesn’t talk to you anymore.”

Justin shot a glance at him angrily. “Are you here to make sarcastic comments?”

“Nope. I’m here to help you.” Samuel sucked on a lollipop while handing Justin a lighter. “Here. This time, it’ll definitely work.”

“What are you giving me this for?”

“Come over here.” Samuel beckoned to Justin, who reluctantly leaned his ear toward him.

Halfway through the bonfire party, Charlotte began struggling in Rachel’s arms. “Mommy, I wanna take a pee.”

Rachel immediately took her hand and stood up. “Let’s go.”

There was no washroom where the school held outdoor activities, so everyone had no choice but to relieve themselves in the open. Charlotte walked a long way while holding Rachel's hand.

"Alright, Charlotte. There's nobody else here."

"Let's go a little further. What if there is somebody else who comes here to pee?"

"Okay, Charlotte, you're right. It'll be bad if you're seen." Rachel nodded, and she walked a little further with the girl. "Charlotte, if you go any further, I won't be able to see you. Just relieve yourself here; I'll stay here with you."

"Okay, Mommy. Just give me a minute while I go behind the grass over there."

"Alright, just go. Don't go too far, though."

After Charlotte left, Rachel stayed in place alone and inadvertently looked up at the sky. The weather was great, and the stars were shining brightly. Over the last 25 to 26 years since she left Somerset Mountain and came to Riverdale as a child, she had rarely had such pleasant leisure time.

Suddenly, a ray of light soared into the sky with a swoosh and burst into colorful halos in the night sky.

Rachel was slightly stunned. Right after that, she heard countless swooshes as numerous fireworks burst in rapid succession, illuminating the night sky in an instant as large fireworks bloomed one after another.

Is somebody shooting off fireworks at the foot of the mountain? Just as Rachel was stunned, she suddenly heard footsteps behind her. "Rachel."

Chapter 263 A Sincere Confession

Rachel sharply turned around with a start. "Why are you here?" she asked, before suddenly realizing something. "Were you the one who set off the fireworks?"

“Do you like them? Samuel said you like to watch fireworks very much. The conditions here are limited, so please make do with it for now. Once we go down the mountain and get back to Riverdale, I’ll take you guys to—”

“What the hell do you want?” Rachel interrupted Justin before the latter could finish his sentence. Staring at him with a look of displeasure, she said, “You’ve been following me around for so many days. What on earth do you want?”

“Don’t you know what I want?” Justin went a step closer. “If you don’t know about that, I can repeat it.”

Rachel instinctively stepped back. “I’m not interested in playing this kind of love game with you. Charlotte, are you done?” she shouted toward the grass, but nobody answered her.

Justin said, “Charlotte has gone back.”

“How could you even use a kid?”

“No, I’m not the one who used her. Don’t forget about Samuel. He’s your son, not mine.” The initially frosty expression on Justin’s handsome face was obscured by the moonlight as he stared at Rachel. “Rachel!” He grabbed her arm. “Please listen to me before you leave.”

Rachel frowned. “Let go of me.”

“Listen to me.”

While neither of them refused to budge, Rachel caught sight of the two kids hiding in the distance from the corner of her eye. They were hiding behind the grass, but they cast two long shadows on the ground as the moonlight shone on them. In consideration of the two kids, she reluctantly replied, “I’ll listen to you. Let go of me first.”

Justin let go of her. “I know you hate me. At first, I didn’t understand why, but I slowly learned about what I’d done to you in the past. I can understand it now. No matter for whose sake or for what you came back and approached me, no matter what you’ve promised Grandpa, I can understand it. No

matter what you want, I'll give it to you as long as I can. After all, I owed you a lot five years ago. If you mind the fact that I've forgotten many things, I'll receive treatment to recall everything that I've forgotten. I'm not asking you to accept me right away, but I hope that you can get along peacefully with me."

"Are you done talking?" Rachel looked at the man quietly.

Justin was startled. "Yeah."

"Since you're done talking, I'm leaving," Rachel said. Then, she walked past him and headed straight toward the campsite.

Stunned, Justin stood frozen in place. His confession, which he considered sincere, was worth nothing in Rachel's eyes. After all, words could never speak louder than actions. He had done so many things to hurt Rachel back then, so how could he possibly gain forgiveness with just a few hollow words?

Just as he was stunned, he suddenly heard a scream behind him. "Ah! What are you doing?"

Justin came to his senses at once.

Rachel had just left and was walking along the path when two hefty men popped up from nowhere and stopped her. She asked, "Who are you?"

The two men weren't of a sturdy build, and it was obvious from the peaked caps and the black face masks they were wearing that they didn't want to be recognized. With one of them standing in front of Rachel and the other standing behind her, they stopped her and prevented her from leaving. Then, one of them drew out a knife from behind him, and the knife gleamed with chilliness in the moonlight.

Rachel staggered and fell. As she was in a panic, she couldn't muster any strength. Instead, she could only struggle to back away, and she couldn't be bothered to react to the pain when the stones on the ground rubbed against her hands. "Don't come over! I can give you two however much money you want."

However, the man with the knife closed in on Rachel without saying a word, as though he didn't hear what she had said. After signaling to the other man to grab her and cover her nose and mouth right away, he raised the knife in his hand and thrust it toward her.

Rachel's eyes widened, and her pupils shrank.

Just then, her scream was drowned out by the smack of a punch landing on someone's flesh. She clearly saw the man who had attempted to stab her being kicked away by Justin; he fell onto the muddy ground and rolled about four meters away. Not only that, but the man who had grabbed her was also seized by Justin and dealt with with a few cuffs and kicks.

The man lay prone on the ground while begging for mercy repeatedly. At the sight of the scene, the man who had fallen far away took to his heels and ran away very quickly.

Stepping on the remaining man's face, Justin asked in a chilly voice, "Who sent you here? Spill it!"

The man gritted his teeth hard while refusing to make a sound.

"What's the use of asking him like this?" Rachel got up from the ground and let go of her aching arm. Then, she picked up the knife that had nearly taken her life from the ground and held it to the man's

throat right away without hesitation. "Are you gonna say it or not?" she asked, her tone turning more ferocious by the minute, while pressing the knife deeper into the man's throat. "Who sent you here?"

The man's face blanched. "D-Don't do it! I'll say it. I-It was Master Jason."

Master Jason? Justin's expression darkened as he immediately took off the man's face mask.

The man wanted to stop Justin, but it was already too late. With a strained expression, he said, "Y-Young Master Justin..."

Rachel let out a snort beside them. "Justin, is this the 'chance' that you just asked me to give you?"

“Rachel—”

“Please save me, Young Master Justin!” The man clung onto Justin’s thigh for dear life. “All of this was Master Jason’s idea, and I had nothing to do with it. If you don’t save me, I’ll be dead when I go back!”

“Let go of me!”

However, before Justin could shake the man off, Rachel had tossed the knife directly onto the ground with a clank. After casting a chilly glance at the two men, she left without looking back. He’s one of Jason’s men. Janice is right—Jason’s got to have something to do with Hans’ death back then. That’s why he’s so anxious; he didn’t even hesitate to take risks in order to have me killed.

As soon as Rachel returned to the campsite, she called Janice and told the latter what had happened just now.

“Are you sure that he’s Jason’s lackey?”

“I’m pretty certain about it. That guy said it was Master Jason who sent him here, and he called Justin ‘Young Master Justin.’ Moreover, Justin does know him in person.”

“Jason isn’t from the underworld, after all. He’s impatient.” Janice sounded very calm as her voice came from the other end of the line. “It’s a good thing that Justin went there all of a sudden. At the very least, Jason wouldn’t dare to do anything in front of him.”

“I’m still worried. I’d like to go back with the kids first.”

“No, I’m afraid that you might be in danger on your way back. What you need to do right now is follow Justin closely. As long as Justin’s there, Jason will have misgivings about whatever he wants to do. He won’t take anyone else seriously.”

Rachel clenched her fists. “Are ordinary people’s lives nothing in the eyes of these men?”

“To them, ordinary people are just stepping stones that they can get rid of like weeds when necessary. They’ll stop at nothing for the sake of their interests.”

Chapter 264 Give You an Explanation

“Don’t worry, Rachel. I won’t let him off.” Despite hearing the resolute words on the other end of the line, Rachel felt a terrible dull ache in her heart. Over so many years, Janice had been devoting herself to clamping down on underworld gangs, but she was often met with all kinds of obstacles. There were not only external factors but also many on the inside that were shielding these gangs.

Arthur couldn’t possibly be the only person who contributed to Jason being cleared of suspicion in Nancy’s kidnapping back then, so it went without saying how many strings had been pulled for this.

Meanwhile, the night was falling, and Justin was waiting on the mountain path. Soon, his personal bodyguards arrived. “Young Master Justin.”

“Young Master Justin, this is...” The two bodyguards were Justin’s trusted men. In order not to affect the school’s activities, Justin had them stay far away from him when they came, saying that he would call them over if there was anything.

Justin kicked the half-dead henchman lying next to him. He said coldly, “Tie him up and put him in your car until I get back to Riverdale.”

The two bodyguards exchanged a brief look. “Yes, Young Master Justin.”

“Also, you two take turns to keep watch near the campsite tonight. Keep your guard up.”

“Yes, Young Master Justin.”

After giving the instructions, Justin went back to the campsite.

The bonfire activities had ended, and all the families returned to their respective tents to sleep and save their strength for the next day's outdoor sports meet.

Rachel had just finished washing Charlotte's face. After urging the two kids to get into the tent, she pulled down the tent's gauze net from the outside and zipped the tent flaps shut.

Just then, Charlotte's voice sounded from inside the tent. "Mommy, aren't you coming in to sleep with us?"

Rachel replied, "I'll be back in a while after washing my hands." After finishing her sentence, however, she sat down beside the bonfire outside. There was no smile on her face; even when illuminated by the bonfire, her face looked very grim. As she poked at the bonfire, the branches crackled audibly in the night.

Justin came back to see her sitting alone outside the tent. "Just go to sleep. I have somebody keeping watch at a distance, so nothing will happen again."

Rachel didn't even look at him. "It's okay. I'm not sleepy at all."

"If you're really worried, I'll send you guys back to Riverdale first. Outdoor activities aren't safe in the first place, anyway."

"Put off by a slight risk, huh? Is that why you didn't let Charlotte go to school?" Rachel finally looked up and stared frostily at the man before her. "Samuel is fine; he has joined a lot of such activities since he was little. But can't you tell how happy Charlotte is to come out here this time?"

Charlotte had joined almost all the activities at the campsite. Not only did she take part in every little game with great enthusiasm, but she even became one with all her little friends. She had never come out and played with so many people at once ever since she learned to speak.

"If it weren't for Charlotte, I would've left at once." Rachel took a glance at Justin. "But you don't have to worry. Obviously, your uncle is coming after me. The kids have nothing to do with this."

Justin frowned. "Once we get back to Riverdale, I'll investigate the matter thoroughly and give you an explanation."

"No, you don't have to." Rachel shot a glance at Justin. "If you really feel bad about it, then stop following me around. Just spend more time with Charlotte and Samuel during the outdoor sports meet tomorrow instead." After all, Justin was Charlotte's father, and Samuel also regarded him as his father. Therefore, the two kids would be happy to have the man keep them company during the outdoor activity this time.

Knowing that it was useless to say more, Justin could only give her a slight nod in silence.

As the bonfire crackled, the campsite became increasingly quiet, and the lights of the tents were turned off one after another. Rachel curled herself up in the chair with a yawn. Even though she was sleepy, she was unwilling to go back to sleep. She said she didn't worry that Jason might lay a hand on the two kids, but she was nonetheless afraid of the possibility.

After some time, she couldn't stay awake anymore, and her eyes closed.

Charlotte and Samuel were sleeping inside the tent when the tent flaps were unzipped from the outside. Samuel wasn't soundly asleep in the first place, so he looked at the person in a daze after being roused from sleep.

"Shh..." Justin took a glance at him before carefully putting down the lady in his arms. Then, he put the pillow below her head and tucked her in. Having done all these, he sat down beside Rachel. As he quietly watched her sleeping, he felt incredibly at ease, and he bent down to kiss her on the forehead.

Just then, a little hand came in front of Justin's lips, and he looked up to see Samuel beside him. How could I have forgotten about this little brat?

Samuel stared at Justin with big, round eyes. He asked warily, "What are you doing?"

Justin grabbed his hand and replied impatiently, "Why are you being so meddlesome? Hurry up and go back to sleep!"

"I will, but you have to get out."

"And what if I refuse?"

"In that case, I'll call Mr. Wade over!" Samuel replied while waving his cell phone.

Justin frowned. Both of them refused to budge. After a long time, however, he could only leave the tent in dejection. This brat said he wanted to help me, but all he had come up with were lousy ideas. I wonder if he really wanted to help me or if he wanted to dupe me to get back at me.

When the light in the tent was turned off, Samuel turned over and held Rachel's arm while looking out of the tent. The figure of the man outside was visible by the bonfire.

Instead of returning to his own tent, Justin sat down in front of the bonfire outside. Every once in a while, he poked at the bonfire, and it seemed that he had no intention of leaving.

At this instant, Samuel's opinion of the man changed somewhat. He's quite reliable, after all.

The next morning, the first match of the outdoor sports meet was the three-legged race.

Rachel and Charlotte had just completed their round. When Victor came over to record the contestants' finishing positions in the race, he noticed that Rachel had been massaging her arm and that something was wrong with the look on her face. "Rachel, is your arm okay?"

Rachel didn't tell Victor what had happened last night lest he worry about it. She shook her head and replied, "It's okay. Which round will Samuel be competing in?"

"He'll be competing in the next round. Why don't you rest for a while, Rachel? I'll let him compete a couple of rounds later."

"There's no need to go to so much trouble. It's a three-legged race, after all. We don't need to use our arms."

“Let me do it.” The rope in Rachel’s hand was snatched away all of a sudden as Justin’s voice rang beside her.

“You?” Rachel looked at him, dumbfounded. She found it difficult to imagine Justin and Samuel being tied together in a three-legged race.

While she was in a daze, Justin had stridden into the distance toward Samuel without giving her the opportunity to say no at all.

“Hey...” Victor yelled with the record book in his hand. Grumpily, he muttered, “There’s no way he’s doing this without expecting anything in return.”

Charlotte grabbed the lower hem of Victor’s shirt while blinking her eyes angrily. “Mr. Wade, why do you hate my dad so much? He’s very kind.”

Chapter 265 An Embarrassing Match

Victor could only speak against his will in front of the girl. “I was just joking. Are you angry, Charlotte?” Charlotte replied, “This joke isn’t funny at all, Mr. Wade. If you speak of my dad like this again, I’m really going to get angry!”

“Okay, I won’t say that anymore,” Victor replied helplessly. After Charlotte went far away to cheer Samuel on, he said to Rachel, “The only good thing Justin has done is to take pretty good care of Charlotte.”

Rachel was startled; she seemed to think of something. “She’s his daughter, after all.”

“But I feel that it might be better for Charlotte to be with you.”

“Did Jolly say something to you?” Rachel asked. Jolly would sometimes pick the kids up at school, so Victor had talked to her quite a number of times as Charlotte and Samuel’s homeroom teacher. Because of Rachel, the two soon warmed to each other.

Victor replied, "Rachel, I think you're justified in wanting to take Charlotte away. No matter what you do, I'll always side with you."

Rachel was lost in thought before her eyes were drawn to the race in the distance.

All the teams set out after the referee blew the whistle.

Justin nearly tripped Samuel as soon as he took a big stride forward. "Ouch!" Samuel hugged the man's thigh right away. "You idiot! I almost fell to my death!"

"Isn't that because you have short legs?"

Samuel's face turned livid with anger. "I'm a kid!"

"We're gonna lose if you keep arguing with me."

"We've lost already!" Samuel rolled his eyes at Justin while standing where he was with his arms folded across his chest. "If I had known this earlier, I'd rather give up on the race than join you. This is so embarrassing."

The other teams have reached the halfway mark, whereas he and I are still on the starting line, he thought. "Let's forget it. I don't want to run the race anymore," he said while bending down in an attempt to untie the strap that tied his foot to Justin's.

"It's still too early to give up! Why give up before the end of the race?" Justin replied. Grabbing Samuel's belt right away, he lifted the boy up in midair and ran toward the finishing line in big strides like a flash, quickly overtaking all the other parents.

The instant they crossed the finishing line, everyone at the scene was stunned.

"Hey! They're breaking the rules! How could anyone run a three-legged race like this?"

“That’s right! It’s a three-legged race, so how could you run the race with the kid in your arms?”

The teachers nearby hurriedly maintained the order at the scene.

Samuel covered his eyes, feeling extremely embarrassed as Justin tucked him under his arm. He kept struggling, saying, “Put me down!”

Justin put him down triumphantly as he still didn’t know what he had done wrong. “Didn’t we win the race?”

“No, we didn’t! This is so embarrassing!” Samuel shot him a glare. “I’m not gonna take part in races with you anymore!” he said, before running away. Whenever he ran into a classmate, he would say that he didn’t know Justin.

Meanwhile, the referee came over and said to Justin, “You’re Samuel’s father, right? It was against the rules of fairness for you two to run the race like that. We’ll have to disqualify you two from the race.”

“What?” Justin frowned.

“Sorry, but you can’t run a three-legged race with the kid in your arms. Both of you must run the race with both your feet on the ground to be fair to the other teams,” the referee said before crossing out Justin and Samuel’s records in the race in front of Justin, disqualifying Samuel on the spot.

Justin was at a loss for a reply.

Watching the spectacle from a distance, Rachel suddenly gave a laugh.

Justin seemed to sense something, and he looked back to see this scene.

The birds in the mountain woods were chirping nonstop in the height of summer, and the stream was gurgling on. The summer sunshine seeped through the gaps between trees, producing swaying shadows

of trees on the ground. At this very moment, however, all this beautiful scenery became the background for the smile.

As far as Justin remembered, if he wasn't mistaken, this was the first time Rachel had laughed so heartily at him.

Rachel was laughing when she saw Justin looking back at her. When their eyes met, she didn't manage to stop laughing in time. For a moment, she was startled, and she felt somewhat embarrassed.

Just then, Charlotte took her hand and snapped her out of her thoughts. "Mommy, the beach volleyball match will begin in a while. Let's win the match!"

Coming to her senses, Rachel replied perfunctorily, "Let's do our best!"

"Yeah, let's do our best!"

Rachel was dragged away hurriedly by Charlotte, whereas Victor was still standing in place while calculating the scores with the referee. Seeing that Justin and Samuel had been disqualified, he felt sorry for Samuel, but he couldn't help but want to ridicule Justin at the same time. However, when he looked up, he saw Justin placing his hand on the tree beside him for support. Suddenly, the man's face showed a hint of agony, and the instant he turned around with his back to Victor, some blood seeped through the back of his gray T-shirt.

Victor's eyes shrank slightly. Is Justin injured?

When Justin looked back and saw Victor, he frowned. Immediately, he made a silencing gesture toward Victor, signaling to the latter not to tell Rachel about it.

Victor threw Justin a disdainful look. This is unnecessary, he thought. He knew how softhearted Rachel was better than anyone else did, so there was no way he would tell her about it even if Justin didn't ask him to keep it a secret.

During the matches in the morning, Rachel and Charlotte got the second highest comprehensive score. On the other hand, Justin and Samuel finished in last place, for Samuel steadfastly refused to take part in any match with Justin again after they ran the three-legged race.

When they were eating lunch at noon, Charlotte couldn't help but mock, "You're such a loser, Daddy. How could you finish in last place? That's so embarrassing."

Samuel nodded in agreement before twisting the knife, saying, "Our placing in the sports meet doesn't matter. What matters is that we've lost face."

Justin shoved a washed strawberry into his mouth right away. "Can't you just shut up and eat?"

On the other hand, Rachel brought the food out of the serving cart, diverting the two kids' attention.

"Mommy, let me help you." Charlotte jumped for joy before running toward Rachel to help the latter take the bag containing cutlery. "What are we gonna eat for lunch?"

"Potato salad, scrambled eggs, and grilled fish."

"They're all my favorites!"

The families spread their respective picnic mats next to their tents to eat on their own.

Victor helped Rachel put down the stuff. While distributing the cutlery, he reluctantly handed Justin a set of cutlery while saying sarcastically, "You do absolutely nothing; all you know is to be waited on hand and foot."

Justin darted a look at him. "Would you dare to eat the food that I have a hand in preparing?"

"No, I wouldn't. I'm afraid that you might lace the food with poison. If I die, no one will collect my dead body then."

“It’s good that you know about that.”

Seeing that the two men wouldn’t stop squabbling with each other, Rachel interrupted them, saying, “Okay, that’s enough. Justin, stay aside on your own if you don’t feel like eating.”

“I didn’t say that I don’t feel like eating. Why didn’t you tell him off instead? He was the one who picked the quarrel first.”

However, Rachel ignored him completely and was watching the two kids eat. “Charlotte, eat your veggies. Don’t discard them in secret.” The first time she had dinner with Charlotte, she had found out that the girl didn’t like to eat vegetables.

When they were at home, she could blend the vegetables with meat puree and mix them with the other dishes. However, when they had lunch outside together, there was no way she could prepare the food with such meticulous care.

Chapter 266 My Uncle Wants to Kill You?

“Mommy, the veggies are bitter.” “No, they’re not. Only by eating vegetables will you grow taller with balanced nutrition,” Rachel coaxed Charlotte. “Whoever finishes eating the veggies first will get to eat ice cream when we get home tonight.”

Charlotte’s eyes lit up at Rachel’s words. After whisking the vegetables in her bowl into her mouth in several mouthfuls, she slurred, “I finished my lunch!”

“Slow down when you eat.” Rachel wiped the food off the corner of Charlotte’s mouth. “Have some more of the fish.” “Okay.”

Justin was somewhat lost in thought upon seeing how Rachel looked after the kids. I must have been crazy to divorce this woman five years ago. What kind of benefits can compare to having such a wonderful woman by my side?

Victor waved his hand before Justin's eyes with a peevish expression. "Hey! Have you had enough of watching her?"

Justin knocked his hand off. "I can watch her for as long as I want to. That's none of your business!"

"I can place my hand wherever I want to. That's none of your business too!"

"Picking a quarrel, huh?"

"What's the matter? You wanna pick a fight?"

Justin raised his eyebrows at once. Just as he was about to put down his lunchbox, he suddenly thought of something and shot a dismissive glance at Victor. "I'm not gonna argue with you. Don't think about taunting me into fighting with you." Rachel hates me fighting with other people more than

anything else. From today onward, I'll refrain from using violence unless necessary. "Have some strawberries." He moved closer to Rachel while putting the washed fruits next to her.

Rachel refused to go along with him, though. She darted a look at the lunchbox in his hand, saying, "You didn't touch the food at all. Are you dissatisfied with the food here? You'd better go back as early as possible lest you be famished."

"Who said that? I'm very satisfied with the food." Fearing that Rachel might not believe him, Justin ate a big mouthful of the food. Then, he praised, "You're so good at cooking. The food you make smells especially appetizing."

Rachel threw him a disdainful look.

Samuel tugged at Justin's sleeve next to him while pouting his lips toward the serving tray. "These are made by the cooks of the school canteen." It's hopeless that he tried to suck up to her and ended up rubbing her the wrong way instead.

Nevertheless, the two kids had a great time during the outdoor activity. After the activity ended in the afternoon, Charlotte won first prize in the sports meet, and she was beside herself with joy while holding a cartoonish thermos in her arms.

The girl kept talking on their way back, saying, “Look, Daddy—this is my prize! Do you know what prize this is? This is the prize for the person who won first place. I want to take part in sports meets again in the future...”

After a long while, the girl quieted down. When Rachel saw the two kids sleeping with their eyes closed through the rearview mirror, she slowed down the car and shot a glance at Justin next to her. “How did you get the car here? You can’t drive.”

“The chauffeur drove the car here, but I told them to leave first.”

Rachel was rendered speechless by the man’s confident reply.

The mountain road was very smooth with few bumps along the way, so the two kids slept very soundly.

Rachel asked, “Why do we have to go back in your car? Do you also think that your uncle will attempt to kill me again?”

Justin replied, “I’ll investigate this matter thoroughly after we get back to Riverdale. For the time being, the security at home will be heightened, so you don’t have to worry about the kids’ safety. I’m more worried about you.” One could tell from his reply, which evaded the major issue, that he didn’t want Rachel and Jason to come into conflict with one another. After all, Jason was his second uncle.

However, Rachel said, “I’d advise you not to look into the matter or get involved in your uncle’s affairs.”

“Why?”

“There are some things that Old Mr. Burton probably doesn’t want you to know.”

For a company to be as successful as the Burton Group, it had to gain a foothold somewhere. This depended not only on a business prodigy like Justin, but also the protection by some underworld connections. This was because the more successful a business was, the more liable it was to attacks. An expanded business was bound to cause market disputes. The industries of the same trade would come up with an endless stream of competitive strategies, so a careless mistake would cause the company to be uprooted. When that happened, the underworld connections would be of use. Hudson Pharmaceuticals engaged in smuggling and other crimes back then because it could no longer make money on the surface.

Rachel didn't know what the Burton Group had done in secret. At present, however, it was apparent that Arthur wanted to train Jason to embark on a dark path. Janice had told her that Arthur had the ability to let Jason stay in the Burton Group back then, but instead of doing so, he had Jason change

his name and gradually distance himself from the family. After five years, even the members of the Burton Family had almost forgotten about the existence of such a man.

Just then, Rachel heard Justin asking next to her, "What do you know, Rachel?"

Rachel replied, "I don't know anything." All she knew was that Jason wanted to kill her at the moment, so there had to be something on her that he was afraid of. What is it, then?

It was already dark when the car reached the downtown area of Riverdale. As soon as they reached the Burton Residence, they saw Dennis and the car parked at the gate from a distance.

With a slight frown, Rachel switched the car's headlights to low-beam ones and slowly pulled over to the side of the road.

Justin was annoyed as soon as he got out of the car and saw Dennis. "Why are you here?"

"Young Master Justin, did you forget about the family dinner today? Old Mr. Burton expressly had me pick you up."

"Didn't I say that I wouldn't be joining the dinner because I couldn't make it?"

Dennis raised his wrist to look at his watch. "It's still early, so you'll still be able to make it if you go right now. By the way, Young Master Julian is also there today. Everyone's waiting for you."

Justin pretended as though he didn't hear Dennis' words, though. Seeing that Rachel was holding Charlotte in her arms, he carried Samuel out of the car and headed straight into the residence.

"Young Master Justin..."

After sending the two kids back to their respective rooms, Rachel stood by the window and lifted a corner of the curtain to take a look. "Dennis is still there. He's standing at the gate."

Justin didn't want to join the family dinner at first, but a hint of chilliness crept into his eyes when he thought of what Jason had sent his men to do. "I'll come back as soon as possible. Go to sleep early with the kids."

Rachel sat by the bed and tucked Samuel in without saying a word.

The sound of the car engine downstairs slowly faded away.

Justin sat in the car, his expression darkened. "The family dinner would've ended long ago by the time I get back. Did Grandpa insist that I go back because he wanted to say something to me?"

Dennis replied, "I can't speculate about what Old Mr. Burton thinks."

"You're already able to read Grandpa's mind after working for him for so many years. How could you not know what he thinks?"

"Young Master Justin, you shouldn't go against Old Mr. Burton no matter what. Old Mr. Burton loves you more than anyone else in the world does. Whatever he does or says, it's for your own good."

"For my own good? Is that why he treats me like a fool and tells me nothing about what happened five years ago?"

“Young Master Justin—”

“That’s enough. As it happens, I have something to ask Grandpa about. There’s no need to make up so many excuses just to make me go back.”

Dennis frowned, but he couldn’t say anything else.

Chapter 267 We Have All the Evidence

Soon, night enveloped the summer villa. As Justin had expected, the family dinner had already ended when he arrived. Just as he was about to enter, he heard Julian and Sue talking inside.

“Julian, you aren’t young anymore. It’s time to start a family. You’ve met the Harper Family’s second daughter once. Her appearance, education, and personality are very good. She excels in all aspects.”

“Mom, I’m very busy. I don’t have time to date.”

“What are you talking about? No matter how busy you are, you have to get married, don’t you?”

“Your mother is right, Julian. If Coraline doesn’t fit your tastes, I’ll get someone to find someone else for you. You should meet her too and settle this important matter so that your mother can finally be at peace.”

“Grandpa, you don’t need to worry about this. I know what to do.”

“What do you know about?” Sue’s expression suddenly darkened. She accused, “I know what you’re thinking. You’re still thinking about that little mute girl, aren’t you? You’ve been bewitched by her!”

“Mom!” Julian frowned in displeasure, his expression changing as well. “Please mind your language. How could you call her a little mute girl?”

"She was mute in the first place. If I knew that you've been treating her abroad all these years, I wouldn't have let you go back then."

Irritated by Sue's cold words, Julian stood up and said, "Grandpa, I have other matters to attend to, so I'll be leaving."

Arthur nodded slightly. Although he cared about Julian, Julian was not a child of the Burton Family, and it was not easy to intervene in matters involving Rachel. In fact, he hoped that Julian could get together with Rachel to save himself the trouble.

"Julian!" Sue chased after Julian in an attempt to stop him, but the mother and son unexpectedly bumped head-on into Justin who had just entered.

"Justin." Sue's face paled a little when she saw Justin. "When did you arrive?"

Julian greeted him indifferently. "Hey, Justin."

Justin said, "I just reached a while ago. What's wrong, Aunt Sue? Are you trying to get Julian a girlfriend?"

Sue replied with a smile, "Yes, he isn't young anymore. Look at you two. You're just a few years apart, but Charlotte has already grown so much, and he still hasn't found someone to date."

"I happen to know a few friends. Perhaps I could introduce some to him."

"No need." Julian flatly refused, his tone a little displeased. "Justin, I don't want to worry you about this. If you have this much free time, you should introduce them to yourself."

"But I don't need to, do I?"

Julian's brows furrowed slightly, and his usually warm eyes turned cold as he said, "I need it even less."

A cough sounded in the room, breaking the stand-off between the two.

Justin narrowed his gaze as he entered the house. "Grandpa."

Julian stood at the door for a while. Then, ignoring Sue's nagging by his side, he turned and walked away.

As soon as Arthur saw Justin, his expression turned serious. "Where have you been these two days?"

"There was an outdoor parent-child activity at Charlotte's school."

"I'm assuming that woman went with you as well."

"She is Charlotte and Samuel's mother. How is it surprising that she went with us?"

"You really didn't take what I told you to heart at all, did you?" Arthur slammed the teacup in his hand down loudly, and the tea splashed across the table as he ordered, "That woman can't continue to stay by your side. If you don't chase her away, I will go to her myself and ask her what she had promised me."

"It's my decision to keep her around. No matter what she had promised you, it doesn't count without my consent."

"You..."

"I'd also like to remind you not to worry about my personal affairs in the future."

"You better watch your words!" Arthur roared, his expression turning livid.

On the contrary, Justin looked unfazed except for his eyes that had turned dark as he continued, "There's one more thing I want to ask you. Except for business matters, do I have any history with Jason?"

"What history?"

"Don't try to hide it from me anymore. Bring him in." As Justin cast a glance outside, the bodyguard standing by the door entered with a bound skinny man and threw him on the floor.

The skinny man let out a cry of pain and was forced to raise his face. As soon as he saw Arthur, he begged for mercy profusely. "Old Mr. Burton, save me!"

Arthur rose from behind the table at once. "What's going on? He's one of Jason's people."

This skinny man was one of Jason's people. Arthur had seen him a few times and was familiar with him.

Justin said coldly, "I should be asking you that question. Why are Jason's right hand men sent to assassinate people? Is he planning to get rid of me and inherit the Burton Group?"

"What did you say? Jason sent someone to kill you?" Arthur's face fell immediately.

The skinny man on the ground widened his eyes and hurriedly defended himself, "No, that's not it. Master Jason asked us to kill..."

Before he could say anything, Justin raised his foot and stepped on the skinny man's face fiercely, asking in a chilling tone, "Did I allow you to speak?"

The skinny man's screams were lodged in his throat, like a duck that had its neck stepped on, and his face smeared a gruesome trail of blood on the ground.

Arthur frowned. "How could Jason try to hurt you?"

“We have all the evidence. What do you think?”

Justin extended his hand to the side, and the bodyguard immediately put a knife wrapped in a sealed bag in his hand. Even though it was separated by a layer of plastic film, the sharpness of the knife was very clear.

“There’s poison on this knife. I don’t know exactly what poison it is, so I’ve asked someone to analyze it. In case you didn’t believe me, I specially brought this physical evidence to you. You can also let someone you trust investigate it themselves.”

“Then, I’ll have Dennis investigate it.”

Saying this, Justin slapped the knife on the table with a loud smack.

Given his old age, Arthur rarely saw knives and swords, so he had quite a shock. Jason and Justin had been at odds for a long time and always had their fair share of rivalries, so it wasn’t unbelievable that Jason wanted to kill Justin. However, after that incident five years ago, Arthur had already warned Justin, so why would he dare to attempt it again?

“I will have this matter investigated.”

“If you’re saying that, does that mean that Jason really has some sort of history with me?” Justin lifted his foot off the skinny man and pulled out a chair to sit down. “I have enough time today to listen carefully to what you have to say.”

“What do you want to know?”

“I want to know why that arrogant Jason suddenly left the Burton Group five years ago to start some unethical entertainment businesses by himself. Why did he come back less and less often and even change his name to something like Caleb?”

There were many other things that Justin couldn’t recall.

Arthur replied, "He isn't cut out for business. Him staying in Burton Group will only cause you trouble."

"Is it that simple?"

"Of course." Arthur looked at Justin calmly. "Other than this, what other reason would make Jason leave Burton Group?"

Justin narrowed his eyes and replied, "I hope that's only the case as well."

Chapter 268 His Purpose

"Grandpa, if you have nothing else, I'll be leaving first."

"Wait a minute." Arthur placed a document on the table. "I need you to reply to the overseas branch regarding the market expansion plan."

"Just let Frankie handle the integration."

"Jean is the legal officer there."

Justin frowned and took the document after a moment. "I see. I'll send a message back there when I have time."

As he watched Justin leave with the document, Arthur's expression became more complicated.

At that moment, Dennis hurriedly rushed in from the outside. "Old Mr. Burton, this..."

The skinny man on the ground had fainted at some point. His face was a cruel sight to see—it was bruised and was even stamped with a footprint. Justin had always been ruthless, and no one in the Burton Family could compare to him in this department.

Arthur cast him a sweeping glance as he ordered, "Call Jason back."

"Now?"

"Immediately."

"Understood." Dennis didn't dare to tarry, so he immediately contacted Jason. He was eavesdropping by the door earlier. If Jason really sent someone to hurt Justin, he would definitely not be able to get through Arthur.

"Master Jason, Old Mr. Burton wants you to return here."

"I'm not in Riverdale today. Let's talk about it another day."

As the phone was on speakerphone, Arthur could hear everything. His expression darkened as he immediately roared at the phone, "You aren't in Riverdale? Where are you?"

"I went out to handle some things. Don't ask."

Suppressing his anger, Arthur asked, "When will you come back?"

"Within two weeks, maybe. A batch of shipment just arrived here, so I'll hang up first. Take care of yourself, Dad." Saying that, Jason immediately hung up.

Arthur was going red with anger, and he slammed the table. "Doesn't that make things obvious now? If he wasn't feeling guilty about something, why wouldn't he dare to come back?"

"Old Mr. Burton, you haven't found out the truth yet. You should wait for Master Jason to come back."

Arthur's expression turned serious. "Have someone to go and find out what this b*stard has been up to recently."

"Understood. I'll get to it immediately."

On the other end, Rachel answered Julian's call. As soon as he left the villa, he gave Rachel a call.

"I saw Justin at the villa. Did you two come back already?"

"Yeah."

Rachel opened the glass door leading to the balcony and walked out as she said into the phone, "Was there a family dinner at the summer villa today?"

"I wouldn't consider it a family dinner. It's merely an excuse to get everyone together and ask about recent events, then organize and exchange the resources at hand with each other. I hate going to these events the most. If it weren't for my mother... Forget it, I don't wanna talk about it." Julian rarely mentioned Sue in front of Rachel.

With such an unreasonable mother, even he himself felt disgusted.

Rachel understood what he was getting at. "Old Mr. Burton must have called Justin over so urgently because of me."

"I was just about to tell you this. Things have gotten complicated. I saw Justin's bodyguard tying someone up in the parking lot. Was that person sent by Jason?"

"Yeah, probably."

"It seems that he's going to question Old Mr. Burton about this. Jason is in trouble."

“What do you mean?”

“Jason and Justin don’t get along, and Old Mr. Burton has been doing his best to mediate between them. After all, one of them is his son and the other is his grandson. The knife cuts both ways. Now it only depends on who will make the first move... I overheard from outside the door.” At this, Julian’s voice became solemn. “Justin said that the people that were sent by Jason wanted to kill him.”

Jason’s mistake was that when he sent someone to kill Rachel, he did not consider that Justin would also be present, putting them in a precarious situation. Now, no one could tell who exactly he was trying to kill. As long as Justin insisted on it, and the evidence was all there, Jason wouldn’t be able to argue against it.

Rachel’s hand tightened slightly around her phone. “Justin is quite clever for making that move.”

With this, Justin could get rid of more than half of Jason’s power and stabilize his position as the president of the Burton Group.

On the other end of the phone, Julian asked, “Have you ever thought that he might’ve said that to protect you, or divert Old Mr. Burton’s attention?”

“I have, but this can’t be his purpose. Isn’t covering up the truth that Jason is here to kill me a simple matter that isn’t worth mentioning for him at all?” Rachel instantly dismissed the act of kindness with a sentence. “It’s in his best interest to blow things out of proportion and get rid of Jason.”

As a man who could divorce himself and marry the daughter of his enemy for the Hudsons’ Six Ancestral Formulas back then, the most important thing to him was always profit. For him, feelings were just another part of his boring life. The only thing that could truly make him scheme with all his heart was profit and only profit.

Julian asked, “Then, what are you going to do next? I don’t think Jason would stop at this.”

Rachel replied, “Didn’t Justin want to drive a wedge between the father and son? Then let’s give him a hand.” Let the flames burn a little more vigorously.

After hanging up, Rachel was unable to fall asleep for a long time. When she was alone, she was not afraid of dealing with anything, but with two children by her side, she was worried that if she pushed Jason too far, he would do the same thing he did six years ago. She wasn't too worried about Charlotte as she was by Justin's side, but Samuel...

When Justin got home, the door of the children's room on the second floor was half-closed, a faint light peeking through. He opened the door a little and saw Rachel sitting by the bed, tucking Samuel in.

Perhaps a breeze had blown when he opened the door, as Rachel raised her head suddenly and saw him standing by the entrance. She gestured for him to stay silent before getting up from the side of the bed and coming out.

"Did you just come back?" Closing the door, Rachel asked.

Justin hummed in reply. "I'll take care of the issue with Jason. You don't have to worry too much about Samuel's safety. Worry about yourself instead. Be careful when you're commuting to and from work."

Rachel nodded. Suddenly, she asked, "Have you eaten yet?"

"No."

"I'll cook some pasta for you."

Hearing that, Justin jolted a little. As he watched Rachel's figure heading downstairs, his cold features warmed, and he immediately followed.

Rachel prepared a bowl of spaghetti, which she was the best at.

"Does it taste all right?"

"It's perfect. It would be even better if I can eat this tomorrow."

“I might not be free tomorrow.”

“What’s wrong?”

Rachel replied, “I have to go to the construction site tomorrow. The project invested by Burton Pharmaceuticals has been going on for a while, and there has been a problem with Phase Three Land. Can you accompany me?”

“Of course.” Justin agreed in an instant.

“I’m not getting in the way of other matters, right?”

“No, the investment by Burton Pharmaceuticals is a matter of the company anyway. You are responsible for your work, so I, the boss, must cooperate with you. How could I let you handle it alone?”

Justin set down his fork and said with a serious expression, “If you encounter any troubling matters like this in the future, just look for me.”

Rachel smiled at his words, but her eyes were a little sad when she lowered her head.

Chapter 269 It’s Not His Turn to Call the Shots Yet

Justin set down his fork and said with a serious expression, “If you encounter any troubling matters like this in the future, just look for me.”

Rachel smiled at his words, but her eyes were a little sad when she lowered her head. The next day, Justin kept his word and accompanied Rachel to the construction site.

Everyone at the construction site looked shocked and happy by Justin’s grand presence, and the project leader even personally ran out to greet him, showing more attention to them compared to when Rachel had come alone.

“President Burton, President Hudson, after the completion of the shopping mall here, the surrounding house prices will double as well. The apartments in our commercial building are also selling very well...”

However, Justin did not humor him. “You can just tell President Hudson about these things. I’m only accompanying her to have a look.”

His words could not make his intention any more obvious to the Burton Group’s staff.

The project leader immediately began bowing and scraping to Rachel. “Please watch your step, President Hudson.”

“No matter what, safety is the most important thing,” Rachel said as she took the safety helmet. “I’ve heard that there are still some problems with the demolition. Have they all been solved?”

The project leader confidently replied, “Of course. However, at Phase Three Land, there were a few greedy holdouts who were demanding more money. They’re asking for five million just to demolish a small, old house. Aren’t they quite the dreamer?”

“How did you settle that?”

“You don’t have to worry about that. Generally, our company’s demolition team is responsible for tricky things like this. We’ll probably be able to demolish it soon.”

Rachel raised her head and shielded her eyes from the bright sunlight with her hand. She looked around before instructing, “Safety always comes first. It’s now a critical time for the Burton Group to establish an example of charity. Never conflict with demolition households.”

“Don’t worry.”

“Careful.” Justin helped Rachel. “You don’t have to worry too much about this. All construction requirements are Burton Group’s unified standards. I’ve repeatedly instructed them not to start the work without settling everything.”

“In that case, it’s all right. I was just worried because I had heard some rumors.”

“What rumors?”

As they were talking, a worker suddenly ran over in a hurry from a distance. Because he was running too fast, he stumbled in his steps several times and almost fell.

“Mr. Holmes!”

“Liam, why are you running? What got you in a hurry?”

Saying that, the project leader introduced to Rachel, “This is Mr. Liam, the supervisor of our construction site. Liam, this is President Hudson.”

Without greeting Rachel, the worker said hurriedly, “Something happened at Phase Three Land. We had already agreed on demolishing the houses today, but the holdouts went back on their word again,

saying that they want to increase the price by one million. The guy in charge of the demolition got angry and immediately threw a punch. Now, all of them are fighting.”

“What?” Mr. Holmes’ face turned pale.

Justin said coldly, “Is this what you meant by ensuring safety and resolving everything properly?”

“President Burton, President Hudson...”

Justin led Rachel away without looking back. “Frankie, start the car. Head to Phase Three Land immediately.”

“Understood.”

Currently, the place where the incident happened was in a mess. The surrounding area had already been demolished, and most of the dilapidated buildings were only left with its foundation—except for a small bungalow squeezed in the corner. There was even a line of clothes left out to dry outside the house, showing that there was someone living there. It looked extremely out of place.

When Justin and Rachel rushed to the scene, chaos was still ensuing, and the fight was brutal.

There was a family of five living in the old house. The oldest of them all was an elderly lady who struggled to stand. She stood by the side with the help of her daughter-in-law, her hands trembling with worry. Those who were fighting did not hold back, and threw something directly toward the elderly lady.

As soon as she got out of the car, Rachel witnessed this scene, and she quickly grabbed the elderly lady without a second thought.

“Careful!” Justin rushed from behind to protect Rachel and was hit square on the back of his head by the flying piece of wood.

Enveloped in Justin’s protective embrace, Rachel heard a grunt from above her.

“Are you all right?”

Justin touched the back of his head, only to see that his large palm was covered in blood.

“Oh my god, you’re bleeding.” Rachel’s face fell. “Let me take a look.”

“I’m fine.” Justin took her hand, bringing her and the women and children to an open space that was further away. “Don’t go over there.”

In the midst of the chaos, no one saw Justin and Rachel arriving. Frankie looked around and saw the loudspeaker that was left next to him. He picked it up and went to a higher place, where he shouted, “Stop fighting! President Burton is here!”

“President Burton? Which President Burton?”

“Even the King himself can’t stop us today! Destroy everything!”

The man who led the fight was bald and brawny, with a big gold chain hanging around his neck. He sat on the excavator with a cigarette with an arrogant expression and said, “No matter what happens, we have Master Jason’s support. He said that we must settle this today, so everybody, flatten this place!”

It was only after someone had reminded the man that he saw Justin and nearly jumped out of his skin in shock.

“P... President Burton.”

Justin’s face was livid. “Master Jason? Which Master Jason?”

Justin stood on the periphery of the crowd with a cold expression on his face. His tall figure was silhouetted by the evening setting sun, an air of authority exuding off him.

The man with the big gold chain practically tumbled down from the excavator. “President Burton, why did you come here in person?”

Justin said coldly, “Do you know who I am?”

“I went to settle some matters with Master Jason and met you once; don’t you remember? Ah, who did this to your head? Who was it? Own up now!”

The man with the big gold chain glared behind him, but none of his lackeys dared to come out. With the aura of a gangster, he took out a pack of cigarettes and shook it before handing one to Justin.

Justin did not budge. His cold eyes alone sent shivers down their spines.

Just then, Frankie had already rescued the male owner of the “holdouts” from the group of lackeys. The male owner had been beaten black and blue, his appearance nearly indistinguishable.

“My son!” Seeing that, the elderly lady immediately shed tears and almost fainted.

Frankie hurriedly got someone to take the male owner to the hospital. Though Frankie repeatedly promised that they would never demolish their house before they agreed, they were still not at ease and left a pair of children to stand guard in front of the house.

The two children were still young, and the red scarves on their necks were so dirty that the color had worn off. They stood at the door in the pile of ruins like two telephone poles.

Rachel felt her heart ache at the sight, so she pulled Justin’s sleeve and said, “Hurry up and have them leave. This place is obviously impossible to live in. We have to arrange a place for these two children to stay.”

Frankie said, “President Burton, I’ll take care of things here. What about Master Jason’s side?”

“Call my grandpa.” Saying that, Justin glanced at the group of people coldly and said, “It’s not Jason’s turn to call the shots in Burton Group yet.”

The man with the big gold chain trembled, dropping his cigarette.

While Frankie stayed to deal with the rest, Rachel drove Justin to the hospital.

“Drive slowly. I’m fine.”

“How are you fine? You’re bleeding so much on the back of your head, and we don’t even know if you have a concussion or not. It’ll also be a problem if your wound gets infected.”

Justin looked at her and asked, “Are you worried about me?”

Chapter 270 Abducted and Sold by Human Traffickers

Rachel frowned slightly and avoided the topic. "Give Julian a call. He should be on duty in the hospital today." "There are so many doctors there. Why does it have to be him?"

"If you want to get another doctor and queue up with everyone else, I don't mind waiting with you." Justin pondered for a moment before he said, "Fine. Let's look for Julian."

Rachel thought he merely didn't want to queue up, but she didn't realize that he just wanted Julian to see her caring for him. In the emergency department of the hospital, Julian had already been waiting after he received the call. "What on earth happened?"

"Someone caused trouble on the construction site and injured him by mistake," Rachel explained as she helped Justin to sit down. "I'll tell you more later. Can you check his wound first?"

Justin kept holding onto Rachel without letting go.

Seeing that, Julian frowned and asked, "What? You injured your head, right? Did you injure your hands as well? Can't you let go?"

Justin was obviously doing it on purpose. "If you aren't willing to treat me, you can get another doctor."

"I didn't say that. It's my duty as a doctor." As he spoke, Julian pulled Rachel away and held Justin down. "Don't move. Let me have a look."

Though he was indeed wounded, it was only a flesh wound.

"Are you experiencing any nausea?"

"No."

“Then it shouldn’t be a big issue. You don’t need to take a CT scan. I’ll just disinfect and bandage your wound. You’ll be fine then.”

Hearing that, Rachel finally let out a breath of relief.

Looking at her, Justin said, “I told you I’m fine. You don’t have to worry.”

Rachel replied, “It’s still better to see a doctor.”

While the two of them were talking, Julian had already gotten a razor and held Justin’s head down. With incredible speed, he shaved his hair around the area of the wound off.

Justin immediately leaped up from the bed and yelled, “What are you doing?” His loud roar echoed in the emergency department, but it was already too late.

With the razor in his hand, Julian replied righteously with a calm expression, “How can I disinfect you and clean up the wound if I don’t shave your hair?”

“You’re just trying to get back at me!” Justin touched the back of his head, and he could clearly feel that it was bald. His face was livid.

“Justin, you better watch what you’re saying. I’m a doctor. How could I get back at you? There’s still a part that I haven’t shaved off yet. Come here.”

“Stay back!” Justin retreated backward, resolutely not allowing Julian to approach him as he threatened, “Take that thing in your hand away.”

“Rae, look at him...” Julian spread his hands at Rachel, looking helpless.

Rachel immediately chided, “You haven’t bandaged your wound yet. Hurry and listen to Julian.”

“Why should I listen to him? He’s not a barber.”

“He’s a doctor,” Rachel said firmly. “Enough with you. Is your hair more important than your life? What if your wound gets infected?”

Seeing that Rachel was getting angry, Justin suppressed his anger and sat down reluctantly. As he listened to the sound of the shaving razor buzzing behind his head, his cold face turned stiffer by the minute, and he gritted his teeth, yearning to bite Julian’s face off.

Once Julian was done shaving Justin’s hair, he began to disinfect the wound unceremoniously.

Rachel, who was watching by the side, inhaled a sharp breath. “Doesn’t that hurt? Be gentler.”

“It doesn’t. It’s always like this. If you don’t believe me, ask Justin.” Julian pressed Justin’s neck and poured some hydrogen peroxide on the back of his head, asking, “Right, Justin?”

Justin practically gritted the words out. “It doesn’t hurt.”

What a joke. How could he admit that it hurt in front of his woman?

After the medicine was finally applied, a piece of gauze was applied to the bald spot on the back of his head. While Rachel was out shopping, Justin took the opportunity to rest in Julian’s office.

“This is just too hideous.” Justin frowned as he looked at his reflection in the mirror.

“You’re still bothered about that?” Julian mocked while cleaning up the medical equipment. “You used to have such a big scar on your face, but you never cared about it.”

At the mention of the scar, Justin’s brows furrowed slightly. “By the way, Julian, how in the world did I even get that scar?”

After he woke up from the car accident, he had almost no memory of the scar on his face, and he felt uncomfortable looking at it, so he went to get it surgically repaired.

Julian replied, "I don't know the details, but I think you got the scar when you were abducted and sold by human traffickers when you were a child."

"Human traffickers?"

Justin suddenly felt a pang of pain in his temples as some uncomfortable scenes flashed in his mind, making his head buzz. Julian paused slightly as he packed his things, suddenly realizing that he had said too much.

Justin pressed on, questioning, "What human traffickers?"

"It's nothing."

"Julian!" Justin resisted the pain and grabbed Julian. "Why are you hiding this from me? Explain, what did you mean by human traffickers?"

"If you want to know, you should just ask Old Mr. Burton." Julian packed up his things, obviously unwilling to tell Justin more about the traffickers.

"If Grandpa was willing to tell me, do you think I'd ask you?" Justin blocked his way out.

Julian frowned. "Do you really want to know?"

"Obviously."

"Fine, I'll tell you." Julian crossed his arms and leaned on the office desk, explaining indifferently, "When you were thirteen years old, you went to the park to play, but you were abducted and sold into the mountains by human traffickers. You were only found half a year later. When you got back, you had an

injury on your face. You refused to tell anyone how you got it, and you didn't want to have surgery to repair it either."

"Why?"

"How would I know? Didn't I just tell you? You refused to tell anyone, and nobody knew what happened to you in the mountains. Your entire personality changed after you got back."

Justin's brows furrowed. "I don't remember any of this."

"If you don't, it's fine. It's not important anyway."

"If it wasn't important, why did Grandpa ask all of you to hide this from me?"

"Maybe he just didn't want you to recall those bad memories. He's your grandfather after all. He probably hoped that you could have a better life. This isn't something worth remembering anyway."

Though Julian was very young when Justin was abducted and sold by human traffickers, he clearly remembered that Justin's personality had changed drastically after he came back. He was originally sunny and gentle, but he became speechless and extremely unwilling to get close to others and was full of hostility at a young age. If it hadn't been for the abduction back then, Julian suddenly realized that perhaps Justin would've been like the person he was now.

Though the explanation made sense, Justin still felt doubtful.

"Are you done?" Rachel entered with two bottles of water, which she handed to Justin and Julian each.

Julian nodded and said, "We're done. I'm still on duty at night, so I can't see you two off."

"Go ahead. Take care." Before leaving, Rachel glanced at Julian meaningfully as she closed the door.