

Mute Bride 391

Chapter 391 Can't Just Be Friends

Rachel went straight home. No one was home, so the house was empty. Lately, the two children stayed with Gloria, while Jolly had moved in with Leroy after a fight against her parents.

The originally crowded apartment now seemed deserted. Julian's words echoed in her ears, causing her brain to buzz as she sat slumped on the sofa.

To say that she didn't know his intentions was simply self-deception, but to say that she had always known Julian's intentions wasn't true either.

Anyone who had seen what she was like six years ago wouldn't think that Julian would fall in love with her.

She was disabled, a mute who couldn't even speak when she wanted to.

She was an illegitimate child whom her family had cast out in cold blood, someone who had no dignity to speak of.

Whether it be her qualifications or family background, any ordinary man wouldn't choose her, not to mention someone who was a young, promising doctor like Julian.

She leaned against the sofa, took a deep breath, then slowly exhaled.

Even now, she believed that Julian wasn't in love with her but probably sympathized with her. Moreover, they had perhaps grown dependent on each other after spending time together for so many years.

The next day, as soon as Jolly arrived at Hudson Pharmaceuticals, she rushed into Rachel's office and exclaimed, "What's going on? Chris, what's the situation with Julian? Why did he call me so many

times last night?”

Rachel was startled from her work and looked up from behind the computer.

Now it was Jolly who was caught off guard. “And what’s up with you? Didn’t you get any sleep last night? Look at those dark circles!”

“Don’t get me started.” Rachel yawned, not in good spirits.

Jolly pulled out the chair in front of her desk and sat down. “Tell me. What’s going on with you two? I was in an argument with my family last night, so I didn’t check my phone at all. I called Julian early in the morning, but he had already gone to a meeting. I’m guessing it was related to you. Tell me the truth. What’s going on?”

Rachel recounted everything that had happened the day before.

“This...”

The corners of Jolly’s mouth twitched. “Are men so brainless when they fall in love?”

“What do you mean?” Rachel was confused.

“There are so many opportunities and ways to confess. He just chose the worst time possible. Doesn’t he know that women hate emotionally unstable men? He really made a bad move!”

Jolly sighed and played the part of a relationship expert. “I’ll lecture him another day. How can he do this? He even announced in front of your ex-husband that you’re his fiancée. As your best friend, I didn’t even know that you’re his fiancée!”

Knock, knock, knock.

Rachel knocked on the table. "Jolly! Can you be serious for a moment? We're talking business here! I don't even know how to face him now!"

"What's so hard about this? Nine of my ten buddies have a crush on me, and eight of them have confessed to me, but we still drink and party together. What century are we in? We're long past all that!"

Rachel rolled her eyes so hard that only the whites of her eyes could be seen. Then, she held her forehead after being rendered speechless. "Asking you for help is a waste of my saliva."

After Jolly was called unreliable, she became serious again.

"Why are you overthinking this? This kind of thing isn't something that women need to consider. If Julian is really meant for you, he'll find a way to solve it."

"What if he insists?"

"What? Are you really not going to give him a chance? Chris, it's not that I want to criticize you, but men and women can't have a completely platonic friendship, especially after leaving school."

"Even you think Julian and I can't be just friends?"

"You may be able to, but obviously, Julian can't."

Rachel frowned slightly, and when she thought about something, she hesitantly spoke about her concerns, "I always had the feeling that Julian is different from before."

Jolly was rather careless about details that she wasn't focused on. "What's the difference? Didn't he just become the president of Burton Group? He's no longer the world-saving doctor. The fluctuations of the business world would inevitably bring out sharpness in him. He's managing a company, not doing charity work. All right. I repeat, don't overthink this."

Jolly leaned back in her chair. "Anyway, aren't you going out together this Saturday? You can talk things out then."

"Can I not go?" Rachel's face scrunched up when she was reminded about the outing on Saturday.

She wasn't good at rejecting people, so she would try to show her stance before things deteriorated beyond her control, but she didn't know what Julian thought.

"Why? We're all friends!"

"You just said that we can't be friends!"

"Don't twist my words." Jolly suddenly had a mischievous look on her face as she leaned closer. "Actually, I have another way. Do you want to hear it?"

"What is it?"

"I can call Ormand over too. Then, when the two of them fight, he might not bother you anymore, just like when we were in Montenegro."

"Jolly! Don't you dare! Don't you think the situation is messy enough?"

After finally persuading Ormand to return home, she didn't want to bring him over again.

With Ormand's rowdy and feisty character, he would definitely get into a fight against Julian. This wasn't Montenegro, where no one would think twice, no matter how dramatic one was. It was different here.

"I was just throwing ideas out! Haha. Look at how scared you are." Jolly stood up. "My dear President Hudson, get ready for the meeting. Everyone's waiting."

Rachel exhaled forcefully and calmed down. "Let's go attend the meeting."

She cast her immersion in the matters of love aside for the time being, as she couldn't delay work matters.

Meanwhile, executives were gathered in the large conference room at Burton Group.

"I have doubts about our cooperation with Carter Enterprise. Obviously, the price of materials from the same supplier can be even lower. Why do we use the building materials provided by Carter Enterprise? Their price is even 2 percent higher than market price."

After Julian became the largest shareholder of Burton Group, Carter Enterprise suspended its acquisition plan for Burton Group because Julian took the initiative to show goodwill and cooperate with Carter Enterprise so that they could complement each other. It was a win-win situation for both sides, which earned them more stable benefits than Burton Group's acquisition and Carter Enterprise's expansion.

This way, it solved Burton Group's worries and also won the hearts of the board of directors.

However, the problem gradually became prominent, and soon it was discovered that Carter Enterprise's interests were too high. As a result, the recent few collaborations almost squeezed all of Burton Group's profits dry.

A marketing executive asked Julian, "According to these calculations, we aren't getting any profit at all. It's not conforming to the laws of the market at all. Are we doing this for nothing?"

Julian remained silent.

Robin immediately refuted the executive. "Manager Hoult, didn't you attend the first few meetings? It has been said that this is to achieve a good cooperative relationship with Carter Enterprise, so losing out a few percent of profit is nothing. This is done with consideration for the long-term benefits."

"A contract to give up on our profits is enough to express the sincerity of our cooperation. If we let them win every time, we might as well be acquired! If President Burton were here, he definitely wouldn't agree to this."

After he mentioned 'President Burton', Julian raised his head, and his gloomy eyes slowly fell on the manager—Charles Houlton.

"What did you just say?"

Chapter 392 Start a New Empire

There was an oppressive chill in Julian's eyes, which made Charles shudder fiercely. "I mean... I mean..."

"I don't need to know what you mean," Julian said in a dispassionate voice. "Starting tomorrow, you don't have to come to work." Everyone was stunned.

Charles had been working in Burton Group for ten years, and he had never made any significant mistakes. On the contrary, he was strict and responsible when working.

But Julian actually fired him!

Charles was stunned as well. "But, President Peters, why?"

"I'm the largest shareholder of the group. By bringing up 'President Burton', are you saying that I'm not qualified to manage the company? Am I not worthy of being your boss?"

"That wasn't what I meant. I was just saying that..."

"Say no more. Since I'm not qualified to be your boss, I won't delay you from finding another job, Charles."

Charles' face paled. After a while, he couldn't hold back anymore and said, "Julian, this isn't a dictatorship! What right do you have to fire me? I'm going to file a complaint to the board of directors!"

“Even if you complain to the Ministry of Labor and Social Security, it’s useless. However, you can give it a try.”

As soon as he said that, everyone was in disbelief.

“President Peters, you’re crossing the line. Charles has been working in Burton Group for ten years. Doing this will only deeply disappoint us, long-term employees.”

“That’s right.”

“Exactly.”

Whispers were coming from the audience.

“Disappoint long-term employees?” Julian was unconcerned, and he sneered coldly, “If you’re already disappointed, what’s the use of me forcibly keeping you here? Keep you so that you can stab me in the back in the future?”

“President Peters, what are you talking about? We all work for Burton Group.”

“Really? Don’t you work for Justin?”

Several people speaking up for Charles wanted to say something, but Charles interrupted them.

“Forget it. All of you don’t have to speak up for me. Since President Peters has already given the order, I can’t convince him no matter how I explain myself. So, I’ll just leave.”

With that, Charles slammed the door and left.

The remaining few people exchanged looks, and some even threw down their cards and yelled, “I quit too!”

“I’m leaving too!

In the blink of an eye, one-third of the people in the conference room were gone.

Robin’s forehead was beaded with cold sweat. “You’ll regret it!”

Julian still appeared indifferent as he swept his gaze over the remaining people. “Who else wants to go with Manager Hoult? I won’t stop you.”

He leaned against his chair, looking much more indifferent and resolute than Justin did in the past.

Although Justin was strict with employees, he at least cherished talents and would never fire employees based on his own preferences, not to mention long-term employees who had been working in the company for at least a decade.

The whole room was silent for fear that they would be the next ones to be fired if they said the wrong thing.

Not everyone was as bold as Charles and the others. Although they too had moral integrity, most of those who came out to work had families to support. Even if they were dissatisfied, they still had to bite the bullet most of the time.

As soon as the meeting ended, Robin anxiously reminded Julian, “President Peters, isn’t it too hurtful to do this? What if we can’t keep them? These are all executives in important positions, and as soon as they leave, they’ll be taking away a lot of customer resources too.”

“There would be consequences to keeping those who don’t intend to stay here. So, it’s time to change the company’s structure.”

Julian glanced at all the Burton Group employee cards that were left in the middle of the conference table. “Inform the Human Resources Department that they need to step up with the recruitment

starting today. Regardless of age and qualifications, they can work for Burton Group as long as they're capable. We'll judge them based on ability."

"We're not looking at their level of education anymore?"

"No."

Robin hesitated. "But, the main focus of Burton Group is high-precision talents. If they don't even pass the threshold of academic qualifications, the quality of the company's talents will be seriously reduced. By then..."

Before Robin could finish speaking, he was so frightened by the look Julian was giving him that he shut his mouth.

"I'll make the arrangements now."

"Hm."

After watching Robin leave, Julian sat in the empty conference room for a long time.

After a certain period of time, he picked up all the discarded employee cards on the table and tossed them into the trash.

Whoosh! All of them were thrown away.

From today onward, Burton Group would truly belong to him.

It was already late autumn, and all the leaves had fallen off the sycamore trees on both sides of the entrance to a summer resort in the western suburbs.

A black sedan passed by the fountain in front of the villa and stopped at the entrance. A figure in a suit and leather shoes got out of the car and hurried in.

“President Burton!”

Justin was practicing calligraphy in the study, and as soon as he wrote the last stroke, he was interrupted by the sound of a door opening. The pen in his hand trembled, and it ruined one of the

letters.

He stared at the ruined letter, finding it a shame that there was an ink dot on the last stroke.

“President Burton, something bad has happened!”

Frankie ran in, sweating profusely.

“What’s the matter?” Justin changed a new piece of paper without raising his head.

“Julian laid off one-third of Burton Group executives. Unfortunately, these executives aren’t forgiving folk either. Besides losing a large number of employees, the clientele has also been taken away!”

“Is that so?”

Justin took a pen and wrote down ‘mediocrity’ with total concentration.

“How can you still have the heart to practice calligraphy? The company is in chaos!”

Frankie was extremely speechless to see Justin writing calligraphy in such a calm and relaxed manner.

It was a fact that the person in question was not as anxious as the spectators.

It wasn't until he finished writing the last word that Justin set down his pen and wiped his hands with the towel next to him. "What do you think of this word?"

"Stop it. How could I possibly be in the mood to look at that?"

"We have to be calm when facing problems. What did I teach you last time?"

"I can't be calm right now. President Burton, you're not just going to watch Julian bring about the collapse of Burton Group, right?"

"No," Justin said tonelessly. "You underestimate Julian. If he dares to do this, he will have the ability to see the end of it."

"Different industries have different specializations. Dr. Peter's medical skills are good, but we're talking about managing a listed company. What does it mean to fire one-third of the executives? Isn't he just messing around? Even the stock market is unstable!"

"One must be ruthless to have a change of appearance. But then, he can do what I can't."

"What on earth are you talking about?"

"Since young, he had never been cultivated by Old Mr. Burton to be the heir of the Burton Family, so he has no relations with the board of directors. He has no supporters and no backers."

"Isn't that a disadvantage?"

"It's a disadvantage, but also a new way out. If he dares to build an empire when there isn't one, then the whole empire will belong to him."

Justin picked up his calligraphy work.

The wind blew in from the outside, rustling the paper.

The words 'mediocrity complicates' were written in one go, and they were smoothly written.

Frankie still didn't understand. "Well, all I know is that Burton Group is in a mess now. So many people are hoping that you can go back. So why don't you think it over again? At the very least, you're the vice president."

"There's no need for that. He can take Burton Group if that is what he wants."

As he spoke, the autumn breeze was blowing outside the window, while Frankie had a look of incredulity on his face.

Chapter 393 They're Even Now

"President Burton."

Frankie stared at Justin in disbelief. "Burton Group is the work of generations of Burtons. Are you just going to hand it over? And to Julian?"

Justin merely replied, "Julian is also a member of the Burton Family."

Frankie took a deep breath. "President Burton, there's something I didn't want to bring up because you wouldn't let me check, but now it seems like I have to. If Julian is a Burton, who is his biological father? Others don't know, but I figure you should."

Justin frowned slightly.

After Jason's incident, Julian sent Sue abroad at once. Even he couldn't contact her. It wasn't hard to figure out the relationship between Julian and Jason.

“Have you ever thought that President Hudson had nothing to do with Old Mr. Burton’s death? Perhaps —”

“That’s enough.” Justin interrupted Frankie and said in a low voice, “Don’t bring this topic up again.”

“But Old Mr. Burton was clearly poisoned. Are you going to continue deceiving yourself? Whether it was President Hudson or Dr. Peters who did it, this is murder. They can go to jail!”

“There’s no evidence, so who are you planning to send to jail?”

Justin shot Frankie a glance, startling him.

Justin continued, “There’s no need to talk about this, and there’s no need to tell me about the affairs of Burton Group anymore. I’m not interested.”

Frankie was taken aback. “Are you saying that I have a big mouth? Fine. I won’t say anything more in the future. Just treat it as me coming here to gossip because I was too bored!”

Once he finished his rant, Frankie left in a huff.

He was obviously rather frustrated at the very least.

When leaving, he bumped into Gloria, who had just arrived. She saw Frankie coming her way and politely greeted him, “Assistant Beckham.”

Unfortunately, Frankie was utterly livid, so he nodded indifferently, greeted her, and stalked off.

Gloria was confused.

What's up with him?

In the study, Justin was still looking at his calligraphy work.

As soon as Gloria entered, she asked, "What happened to Assistant Beckham? He ignored me when I talked to him. Did you scold him?"

"No."

His answer was concise, with no intention of explaining whatsoever.

"Why are you here?"

"Oh." Gloria lifted the pastries in her hand. "I bought some pastries from Levain Bakery. There are croissants and other stuff in here. I'll put it here for you."

"You know I don't like sweet stuff."

"It's not for you."

Gloria rolled her eyes at him. "This Saturday, bring this to Triburg Valley when you come to find us, then give this to Charlotte and Samuel."

"This Saturday?"

Justin was slightly startled. "Don't you have something planned for Saturday?"

"What? You know about it?" Gloria stared at him in surprise. "We do have something planned. Who told you that?"

“Rachel mentioned it, so I won’t pick Charlotte up this week.”

“Miss Rachel met with you? What did you all talk about?”

“Nothing much. We just had a meal together.”

“You even had a meal together? Didn’t I say that Miss Rachel’s attitude toward you has improved? It’s different from before. You have to take advantage of this opportunity. This Saturday, why don’t you take the initiative to—”

“I’m not going.”

He interrupted Gloria with three decisive words.

Initially, Gloria was excited to arrange some activities, so when she heard this, she felt as if her enthusiasm had been splashed with cold water, causing her expression to change. “Why aren’t you going? Are you backing out again?”

“Rachel’s work and life are very tiring, and she hardly gets any rest. You guys have fun. I don’t want my presence to bring any unhappiness.”

“This is all your assumptions. How do you know that she’ll be unhappy to see you?”

“If anyone else had experienced those things five years ago, they wouldn’t be happy.”

“Then, why did she have a meal with you? You haven’t been back for long, and even I haven’t eaten with you yet, but Miss Rachel has already had a meal with you? That means that it’s all in the past.”

Justin had a complicated expression on his face as he repeated what Gloria said in a low voice, “It’s all in the past.”

He still remembered when Rachel said that they were 'even' now, referring not only to hatred but also to gratitude or resentment.

"I don't care. You have to come this Saturday. You'll definitely regret not coming. Julian is closely pursuing Miss Rachel now. If you don't work harder, it'll be too late."

"Aren't they already engaged?"

"Engaged? Who told you that?" Gloria frowned. "Are you kidding me?"

"They're not engaged?" Justin was surprised momentarily.

"If Miss Rachel's engaged, I'll definitely tell you right away. Who said they're engaged?"

When Justin heard this, he suddenly remembered Rachel's surprised look when Julian said 'fiancée' in the restaurant.

They're not engaged.

"What are you thinking about? If Miss Rachel could accept Julian, she would have accepted him long ago. Why wait until now? Your imagination is running wild from staying home all day. No way. You will be in attendance this Saturday. I will send you the address."

Gloria immediately took out her phone and sent Justin the gathering address on Saturday.

Ding! Justin's phone rang, and a message from Gloria popped out.

"It's settled then. Remember to bring the pastries when the time comes. Both Charlotte and Samuel love them."

After that, Gloria left in a hurry.

Soon, it was Friday night.

As the gathering was located in an old town at Triburg Valley, which was 100 miles away from the city, they all went over at night and stayed in the old town for two nights.

Initially, Rachel planned to drive there on her own, but as soon as she packed her things and went downstairs, she saw a car parked at the door.

When their eyes met, the atmosphere was a little awkward.

She asked with difficulty, "Why are you here? Didn't we decide that everyone will drive there on our own in the group chat?"

Julian simply said, "Give me your things."

Rachel was still stunned when the sound of doors opening sounded behind her.

Jolly dragged several bags out. "Julian, what are you standing there for? Hurry up and help me. They're cumbersome. Put all of these in the car."

Rachel was even more stunned. "We're just going there for two days. Why are you bringing so many things?"

"They're all essentials!"

As she saw Julian silently stepping forward to help, she didn't need to think to know that Jolly had called Julian over to be their workman.

It took the three of them half an hour to move the things into the car. The trunk was stuffed full, bags fully occupied the passenger seat, and even the legroom at the backseat was so full that Rachel and Jolly pretty much had no place to rest their feet.

“Jolly, are you moving houses? Even if you’re moving, why did you ask Julian to help and not your boyfriend?”

“Why? Are you distressed?”

Jolly didn’t even consider the fact that Rachel and Julian were still at an awkward stage. When she said that, the atmosphere in the car turned stilted.

The atmosphere, which had finally eased, went back to how it was at the start just because of her remark.

Rachel reached out and gave Jolly’s thigh a fierce pinch.

Chapter 394 A Quarrel Between Best Friends

“Ow!” Jolly yelped, then narrowed her eyes at Rachel. “You pinched...” Before Jolly uttered ‘me’, Rachel’s stern eyes frightened her, so she obediently kept her mouth shut.

“You haven’t eaten yet, right? There’s a bag in the back with sandwiches and drinks.” Julian’s voice sounded from the front. Rachel immediately responded, “Thank you.”

Jolly’s expression suddenly changed as she glared at Rachel in dissatisfaction. Then, she flipped through the paper bag of food, and she held a sandwich and milk tea in one hand each. “Julian, you’re so meticulous in everything you do. Won’t any woman who marries you be eternally happy? Don’t you think so, Chris?”

Jolly was a grudge holder, and she held a grudge for being pinched in the thigh.

Rachel was helpless. “Of course. Julian has always been an excellent person.”

“Not only is he professionally excellent, but he’s also very good at relationships. After five to six years, even stones can be worn by water droplets. Don’t you think human hearts will be tempted too? Julian, I remember there were tons of people pursuing you when you were abroad. Why didn’t you fall for any of them? Perhaps it was my fault, too, for always leaving Samuel in your care.”

Jolly talked a lot today, and Rachel frowned whenever she spoke.

There were certain things she couldn’t say in front of Julian, so she could only take out her phone and send a message to Jolly. ‘Have you lost your mind? What nonsense are you talking about?’

Jolly deliberately ignored the message when she received it as she carried on eating the sandwich, biting as if she was biting a person.

Julian said, “We’re still far from Triburg Valley. If you girls are tired, you can sleep for a while. I’ll call you when we arrive.”

Rachel nodded. “Okay. If you’re tired, I can take the next shift for driving.”

Jolly rolled her eyes at Rachel and leaned against the chair before falling asleep.

Rachel was baffled by her actions.

It was already dark by the time they drove from Riverdale to Triburg Valley.

When they arrived at the parking lot of the old town, a few people came down to help them carry their luggage.

“Miss Rachel!”

From a distance, Gloria and Victor brought the two children over to greet them.

Rachel waved at them.

“Mommy!” Charlotte rushed up at once and threw herself into Rachel’s arms. “Mommy. What took you so long? Samuel, Aunt Gloria, and I have been here for a long time!”

Charlotte and Samuel had been living with Gloria lately, so they came with Gloria and Victor.

Rachel explained, “There was a bit of a traffic jam on the road. I guess many people came to Triburg Valley because it’s the weekend.”

Gloria said, “I understand. But, Miss Rachel, I need to tell you something.”

“What is it?”

“I invited Justin over too.”

Rachel was slightly startled, but before she could speak, Jolly’s voice suddenly rang out from behind as she fumed, “Who chose this place? It’s almost winter, and there are mosquitoes. It doesn’t make any sense at all!”

Rachel frowned.

“Miss Carter, why don’t you return now? So you can still make it back to the villa.” Victor was a little slow to react, and he even complained, “You brought quite a lot of things.”

He cast a sympathetic glance toward Julian when he saw the trunk full of stuff. “Dr. Peters, who did you help with moving?”

Before Julian could speak, Jolly threw Victor a bag, slamming it right into his chest. “Why do you have so much to say? Carry this.”

Victor was puzzled. "What's with you?"

Gloria frowned and was about to say something, but Rachel stopped her. "Ignore her."

The others didn't know, but Rachel did.

Jolly was close to Julian, and she had always felt that Rachel should be with Julian, so whether she was joking or being serious, she would always lean toward Julian.

However, she had never seen Jolly have such a huge reaction before.

Rachel thought for a while. Perhaps it's because she heard about Justin coming here?

Rachel didn't have time to think about it as the group of people helped move their luggage to the homestay.

As they walked, Gloria said, "We rented a small courtyard. Everyone can choose a room. We can have a barbecue in the courtyard at night. By the way, we'll be having hot pot tonight."

"Isn't it too late to be eating hot pot?" Jolly glanced at her. "If we were going to have hot pot, why did we come here? There are so many places back in Riverdale. Shouldn't we eat some natural and pollution-free food when we're here?"

Gloria said, "Someone helped prepare it a long time ago. The chickens, ducks, beef, and lamb are all raised by nearby farmers. The vegetables are also picked from nearby. Someone even hand-picked them and even washed them in person. Is it up to your standards, Miss Carter?"

As they chatted, they arrived at the entrance of the courtyard.

Across the stone-paved courtyard, they could already smell the fragrance of the hot pot, and in the living room facing the door, a figure in an apron was bustling around the dining table.

Jolly's face immediately collapsed, and she unceremoniously exclaimed, "It's haunted!"

Gloria immediately ignored her and welcomed everyone in. "Come. Come in. Set everything aside first. Wash your hands, then let's eat. The children are hungry."

Whoosh! Jolly immediately threw the suitcase in her hand aside and entered the side room.

Bang! The door slammed shut, and she couldn't didn't come out anymore.

Everyone was taken aback by her dramatic actions.

Rachel was going to advise her, but Julian stopped her. "I'll go."

She thought about Jolly's temper and the fact that she was angry with her, so if she went in, she would be pointing the gun at herself. So, she nodded and let Julian go.

Nevertheless, Jolly's tantrum didn't affect everyone.

As soon as he entered the house, Victor sat down at the dining table. "It smells so good."

Gloria smacked his hands lightly. "Go wash your hands! Can't you see that not everyone is here yet?"

"A little dirt never killed anybody."

"You're a teacher. What kind of example are you showing?"

After saying that, Gloria shoved Victor, forcing him to wash his hands.

Rachel smiled helplessly, just in time to see Justin bringing washed fruits out. When he saw Rachel, their eyes met, and the two nodded to each other, naturally greeting one another.

“Daddy!”

Charlotte tugged on Justin, then looked up and asked him, “Where’s my cake? Where’s my cake?”

“Not everyone’s here yet. All you’re thinking about is eating the cake. Aren’t you going to wait for Mr. Leroy?”

Justin pinched Charlotte’s nose. “Go and wash your hands. Samuel, go wash your hands too.”

The two children reluctantly went to the bathroom, leaving Justin and Rachel in the huge living room.

When Justin saw Jolly’s luggage piled up in the corner, he walked over and picked it up.

When Rachel saw this, she hurriedly said, “That’s Jolly’s stuff. Don’t worry about it. Wait for her to settle it herself.”

“It’s fine. Is it okay if I put them in this room?”

“Yes, of course.”

She was embarrassed to let him do it alone, so she pushed a suitcase into the room as well while inwardly complaining about why Jolly had to bring so many things.

Justin didn’t know that Rachel was also following behind, so he turned and slammed into her after setting down the luggage.

“Oh—”

Rachel let out a muffled grunt, then slipped backward.

“Watch out!”

Chapter 395 Secretly Got in His Way

Rachel slipped and fell while letting out a cry of surprise. A big hand firmly supported her waist, and the two of them fell together, but the pain she expected didn't come. When Rachel recovered, she realized that Justin had used himself as a human cushion and positioned himself under her.

“Are you okay?” The sound of air being inhaled came from above her head. Rachel recovered and hurriedly got up. “I'm fine. Are you okay?”

Justin shook his head, clutching his right shoulder. “I'm okay.”

“Let me take a look.”

Rachel had just touched his arm, but she noticed that his face was pale and sweaty.

This is considered okay?

“You dislocated your arm!”

Rachel hurriedly made him sit down. “Don't move. I'll call Julian.”

“Rachel!”

Justin suddenly grabbed her, causing her to grunt for being held so suddenly.

She was shocked, then hurriedly turned back and pressed his arm. “What's the matter? You can't move this arm.”

Justin said, "You know how to pop it back in place, don't you? Do it for me."

Rachel hurriedly shook her head. "I can't do that."

"Why not?"

"I learned it from Julian. I'm not the same as those regular doctors."

"It's okay. Come here."

Justin had already taken off his coat, revealing a simple white shirt inside.

At this moment, Julian was still in the side room persuading Jolly. If she went to call him, she might annoy the angry princess again.

Rachel hesitated for a while, then decided to bite the bullet and do it herself.

"Then, bear with me. My skills aren't as good as Julian and the others."

"It's okay. You can do it."

Justin turned sideways, showing her his dislocated arm.

Rachel held his wrist with one hand, then pressed his shoulder with the other before gently turning it while saying some standard comforting remarks, trying to distract Justin.

"I heard that Burton Group had a high turnover rate recently. So the headhunting company introduced all the executives to me. Do you know about this?"

“I do.”

“Is it appropriate for Burton Group to have so many employees leave at once? Although Julian has high medical skills, isn’t he lacking a little on the management side? Have you ever thought about helping him?”

Justin’s expression stilled, and he forced a smile. “He shouldn’t need my help.”

“I know that no one can accept this matter so easily. Of course, it’s normal for you to be upset with Julian, but no matter what, you’re brothers.”

Justin suddenly looked back at Rachel, his eyebrows furrowing. “Do you think I secretly persuaded those executives to leave?”

Crack! His joints moved when she exerted force, and his arm popped back in place.

Justin’s face turned pale instantly, and the words got stuck in his throat before he finished speaking.

She let go of his hand and instructed, “Try moving it.”

Justin tried to move a little, lightly at first, then gradually increasing his swings. Although there was still a faint aching sensation, there weren’t any major issues.

“It seems okay.”

“That’s good.”

Gloria’s voice sounded from outside. “Where’s everyone? It’s time for dinner. Where did everyone go?”

Rachel immediately glanced at Justin. “Let’s go have dinner.”

“Rachel.”

“Is there anything else?”

As Justin looked at Rachel’s figure, a complicated look was on his face. He was still thinking about what she said when she fixed his arm earlier.

Does Rachel think that I deliberately got in Julian’s way because I’m upset that he took over Burton Group?

“Nothing. Let’s eat.”

He didn’t ask her, reckoning that some things didn’t need too much justification, as it might take a dark turn.

When they came out, Jolly and Julian had already come in.

Julian frowned slightly and stared at Justin for a while when he saw Rachel and Justin coming out of the bedroom together.

Jolly narrowed her eyes. “You run off when it’s time to eat, yet you criticize others!”

Rachel felt helpless. “We were helping you bring your luggage into the room.”

“Who said I’m going to sleep in that room?”

“Then, which room do you want to sleep in?”

Jolly looked around, then pointed to a bedroom by the north window. “That one.”

After that, she glared at Justin. "President Burton, please move my things out of this room and bring them into that room."

"Jolly!" Rachel couldn't bear it anymore.

However, Justin answered, "Okay. I'll move them after dinner."

"Wait."

Jolly suddenly stopped Justin from sitting down. Then, she squeezed between him and Rachel in full view of the crowd before sitting down.

"Sorry. I prefer the pot with the spicy soup. Please sit over there."

Beside her, Rachel was a little embarrassed.

In fact, she didn't think much about where she was sitting, but Jolly behaved as if something was going on between her and Justin.

Fortunately, they could finally eat.

Rachel scooped some food for the two children while Julian helped as well.

With the two children sitting between them, they looked like a family of four.

Charlotte sneakily placed her vegetables into Samuel's bowl, feeling proud and thinking she wouldn't be discovered, but Justin caught her red-handed.

"Charlotte, what did I tell you?"

Charlotte froze, then pouted and reluctantly said, "I can't not eat vegetables. I can't be a picky eater."

"Then, what are you doing?"

Charlotte pursed her lips. "I don't like vegetables. They're bitter."

Justin was about to say something but was interrupted by Julian. "If she doesn't like it, don't force her. You can consume these nutrients in other ways."

Julian placed a fishball in Charlotte's bowl. "Charlotte, have a fishball. Be careful. It's hot."

Charlotte immediately grinned. "Uncle Julian, you're the best!"

For some reason, when she heard this, Rachel couldn't help but glance at Justin. She noticed a trace of disappointment flashing across his slightly narrowed eyes.

No one wanted their daughter to be closer to someone else. If this had happened in the past, Justin might have taken Charlotte away instantly.

But lately, his personality seems to have changed a lot.

Gloria suggested, "There's a Lights Festival in town today. We can go shopping after dinner."

"Yay!" Charlotte immediately clapped her hands and agreed. "I want to go see the lights!"

Beside her, Samuel nodded excitedly as well.

He grew up abroad and had never seen such traditional celebrations, so he found them particularly novel.

After the meal, everyone packed up and prepared to go out.

Julian asked as she remained seated, "Rachel, aren't you going?"

Rachel replied, "You guys go ahead. I still have some work to do."

Jolly glanced at Justin, who was cleaning up the dining table. "You're not going either?"

"I'll clean up first. Then, I'll go later. You guys go ahead."

"I don't usually see you being this eager to help out," Jolly noted, and her words were barbed. She looked back and forth between Rachel and Justin, then finally landed her gaze on Rachel. "Are you going or not?"

Her tone wasn't the slightest bit questioning but quite pressuring instead.

Chapter 396 Misunderstanding

Rachel had to back down when she saw Jolly's temper flaring yet again. "Fine. I'll go, alright, Your Highness?" "You're not being forced to."

"No, I'm not." Rachel immediately got up. "Let's go now." Jolly took advantage of the situation but played naive about it. Before leaving, she even said to Justin, "President Burton, you're free anyway, so remember to wash the bowls cleanly."

Justin's expression was blank as he cleaned up the bowls and cutleries on the table before bringing them into the kitchen.

Rachel held Jolly back for a moment. "What are you doing?"

“I was just reminding him. What’s the matter?”

“Are you ordering a servant around?”

“Why? Do you feel bad for him?”

“Are you done? If you continue being like this, I won’t leave with you. I’ll go back and wash the dishes instead.”

Only then did Jolly behave.

It was already dark as the group of people walked through the alleys of the old town, colorful lights hanging above their heads, which made the two children ecstatic.

Victor bought lamps for the two children to carry.

“Mommy, my lamp is a rabbit!”

“Mine is a tiger!”

“The rabbit is super cute!”

“Tigers are powerful!”

“The rabbit is better. It looks nicer.”

“The tiger is better. Tigers are fierce.”

Charlotte and Samuel argued about which animal lamp was better while the adults watched in amusement.

"Children's happiness seems to be that simple." Gloria and Rachel walked side by side, watching the two children jumping in front of them with a smile. "Miss Rachel, do you think you were happier as a child?"

"It was okay. They're all different experiences."

"Then, when do you think was your happiest time after all these years?"

"My happiest time?" Rachel thought for a while, then answered, "It should be when I haven't gone to Riverdale yet."

That was when she was still living with her mother and grandmother in Somerset Mountain.

"I don't think I've told you before. Before I came to Riverdale, I lived in the mountains with my grandmother. There were very few people in that village, only a dozen families in total, and we were all far apart. When I was a kid, I didn't even have a friend. I remember that I was happiest when I met a boy."

When Gloria heard this, her heart skipped a beat. "A boy?"

"Yes. He's older than me. He stayed with us for a while because of some problems. I think he's my first friend."

"What happened after that?"

"After what?" Before Rachel could finish reminiscing, Jolly squeezed up from behind and interrupted the two of them. "It's been so long ago. We have to move forward."

Gloria shot her a dissatisfied look. "Can you walk carefully? You almost stepped on me!"

"Then, you have to be careful. It hurts when I step on someone!"

“How ill-mannered.”

“Manners have to be used with people who have manners too.”

Rachel quickly separated the two of them when she sensed that they were about to get into a fight. “All right. Let’s look at the lights. Let’s properly admire them, right?”

“No!”

Gloria and Jolly yelled in unison.

Rachel silently stepped aside helplessly, “Okay, You guys carry on.”

Both of them were grown adults, yet they were still like children, fighting whenever they met.

Rachel stepped aside, not noticing that several youngsters ran past behind her. Her arm was suddenly knocked into, causing her to stumble.

“Careful.” Julian reacted fast and quickly grabbed her arm, bringing her into the corner to protect her.
“Are you okay?”

When Rachel saw that it was Julian, she breathed a sigh of relief and smiled. “I’m okay.”

After the two of them regained their balance, they found that the few people in front of them had disappeared.

“Where’s everyone?”

Rachel looked around curiously. The few of them were probably submerged in the crowd because there were too many people, and the alley was winding and twisting.

Julian reassured her. "It's okay. Don't worry. Victor will take good care of Charlotte and Samuel."

"I'm not worried about that. I'm afraid that Jolly's temper would flare, and she would get into a fight with Gloria."

"That won't happen. Although Jolly has a bad temper, she's all bark but no bite. Besides, Leroy should be here soon. So she won't be able to walk around for long."

Rachel nodded and said helplessly, "I guess there's always one thing to subdue another."

Jolly, who wasn't afraid of anything, and whose parents couldn't control her, was extremely obedient in front of Leroy. If it weren't for Rachel seeing it with her own eyes, no one would believe it.

Julian suggested, "Then, let's go for a walk?"

"Sure."

Many people had come to the Lights Festival, so Julian asked Rachel to walk inside so as not to be hit by others again.

Rachel asked, "How's Burton Group doing? Did you bump into any problems?"

"It's all right."

"I heard that many executives have left their jobs. With such a high turnover rate, is there no impact, especially since they're all executives?"

“Even if there was an impact, we can’t help it. The people who left don’t think I can manage Burton Group well, so they have opinions about my decisions. It won’t do if we don’t get along all the time.”

“Are you saying that they don’t listen to you?”

“Well, there’ll always be a comparison since a golden pearl led before me.”

“Did Justin do anything?” Rachel frowned.

“I don’t know.” An indescribably cold gleam flashed across Julian’s eyes. “But, I heard that the executives who left the company have all gone to him, seemingly intending to start their own business.”

“Start their own business?”

“With Justin’s contacts and resources, it won’t be hard for him to do so. But I don’t understand why he took Burton Group’s employees away. After all, Burton Group is also his.”

“Did he really do that?”

Her brows were knitted when she asked, “Why did he do that?”

“Justin has always been an arrogant person, unwilling to be inferior to anyone else.”

There was a hidden meaning behind Julian’s words.

She suddenly lost interest in looking at the lights.

At this moment, her phone suddenly rang. It was a call from the office.

“Hello? Okay, I’ll take a look later.”

After she hung up the phone, Julian asked, "What's the matter?"

"There's a problem with a contract. I have to go back and deal with it. Help me inform them. I'll head back first."

"Okay, you go deal with that. I'll let them know."

"I'll leave now, then."

"Be careful on the road."

As Julian watched Rachel depart in a hurry, the warm expression on his face gradually subsided. As the colorful lights shone amidst the night, a trace of frostiness could be seen in his eyes.

Rachel did actually have to deal with the company's affairs.

However, she also wanted to rush back and ask Justin what was going on with the executives of Burton Group and whether it had anything to do with him.

If he had actually plotted against Julian, that would be too scummy.

As soon as she entered the yard, she heard Justin talking, seemingly on the phone.

"It's not an easy task to compete head-on with Burton Group for biddings, but with Burton Group's current internal strife, the bidders who are waiting and watching will be skeptical of Burton Group. However, you guys left Burton Group, and you brought a team with you, so there will indeed be a certain opportunity."

When Rachel heard this, her fingers clenched, and her heart sank.

Chapter 397 Treat a Good Friend as Back-up

Before Justin finished his call, he turned and saw Rachel standing at the door, which startled him. “We’ll talk later. I have something else to attend to.”

He hung up the phone and joyfully took a few steps toward Rachel. “Didn’t you go to see the lights? Why are you back so soon?” “If I didn’t come back so soon, I wouldn’t hear your phone call. Who was that? Manager Hoult or Manager Thompson?”

Justin was slightly taken aback. “What’s the matter?”

“I just randomly said it before, but I never thought that it would be true. So now, it seems like the departure of Burton Group’s executives is really related to you?”

“You’ve misunderstood. You’re right. Manager Hoult called me, but that’s because...”

“Because of what? Because the new company wants to retaliate against Julian and bid against Burton Group, so he consulted with you, the person who’s most familiar with Burton Group. Are you helping those people deal with Julian?”

Rachel couldn’t understand. “Even if you don’t acknowledge him as a younger brother, Julian can still be regarded as your cousin no matter what! He never caused you harm, so why are you doing this behind his back?”

“Rachel, I really didn’t do anything.”

Justin raised his hands. “I swear. I didn’t know anything about their departure in advance.”

“You swear? What do you swear by?”

“How about this? I swear by Charlotte. If I arranged all of this in advance, then I will never see Charlotte again.”

Justin appeared truthful.

If this were in the past, he wouldn't be willing to explain himself to clear such a senseless misunderstanding, but now, it was different. He didn't want to cut off Rachel's only remaining tolerance for him because of any misunderstanding.

She was surprised by his declaration.

She knew what Charlotte meant to Justin. Besides the Burton Family, Charlotte was all he had.

"You really didn't arrange the mass resignation of Burton Group executives?"

"I really didn't."

Rachel gradually calmed down, "Well, I'm sorry."

"You don't have to apologize. What I did before makes it hard for you to believe me. I understand."

"I just don't understand why those executives suddenly left Burton Group so unanimously. No matter what, Burton Group is an excellent company and won't harm their development."

Justin turned and poured a cup of tea before handing it to her. "Then, have you ever wondered why they would leave if it really won't bring them harm?"

"What do you mean by that?"

"Whether they were an executive or an ordinary employee, they took the initiative to leave for nothing more than two reasons. One is that someone outside has given them a better opportunity, just like you suspected of me, and the other is that the existing environment is bad and they have to leave."

“Are you saying that the current situation in Burton Group is bad?”

Justin’s expression was plain. “I don’t care about Burton Group’s affairs anymore. If you’re concerned, you might as well ask Frankie. Julian isn’t as weak as you think. He doesn’t need my help in managing Burton Group.”

She was taken aback by his observation of Julian.

She vaguely understood what Justin meant.

Thinking back to what Julian had just said to her, she suddenly felt a chill run down her spine.

Meanwhile, Julian didn’t go and find Jolly and the others after she left.

The old town’s narrow alleys were full of people, all of whom had come to see the lights.

After making his way through the crowd, Julian walked into a deserted alley while dialing a number.

“We’ve arrived in Triburg Valley’s old town.”

There was a male voice on the other end of the line. “Where’s Jolly?”

“She and Rachel had a bit of an argument. We’re at the Lights Festival. Let me remind you that she’s not in a good mood.”

“Then, I should thank you. The timing is perfect.”

“No need to be so courteous. It’s just a mutual benefit. This is a fair deal as long as you tell me what the base bid is.”

“Fair? Aren’t you afraid that Rachel will find out one day?”

“As long as you don’t say anything, and I don’t say anything, how would anyone know?”

There was a moment of silence at the other end, then he said quietly, “President Peters, you’ve changed. You have given me a lot to think about regarding you as an individual.”

The look on Julian’s face was one of rare indifference.

He glanced at the time after hanging up the phone, and his eyes darkened.

Meanwhile, Jolly and Gloria quarreled for a while before discovering that Rachel was gone.

“Where’s Chris?”

“What?” Gloria looked around as well but didn’t see Rachel.

Victor was holding a child in each hand, and all three of them shook their heads, indicating that they had not seen her either.

“Why is Dr. Peters gone too?”

Jolly’s eyes suddenly lit up. “It seems that the two of them are avoiding us.”

Gloria rolled her eyes. “How do you know that Miss Rachel didn’t go back?”

“Go back? Why would she go back?”

“Of course, it’s to...” Gloria deliberately extended the last syllable. “Go back to work. Didn’t Miss Rachel say that there’s still work to be done?”

Jolly's expression suddenly changed. "Impossible!"

Although she said it was impossible, she panicked a little. Then, she turned back in the direction of the homestay.

"Hey, where are you going? Aren't you going to look at the lights anymore?"

"You guys carry on. I'm not interested."

Jolly rushed back home in a huff.

As soon as she entered the door, she saw Rachel helping Justin wash the dishes. One of them washed the dishes while the other wiped them dry. They cooperated well, and they were even talking and laughing.

"Jolly?" Rachel was surprised to see Jolly enter the door. "Why are you back?"

"You can come back, but I can't? Am I interrupting you?"

Jolly was filled with rage. "Chris, do you treat people as fools? If you want to get back together with Justin, just say it. Don't you know how much Julian has done for you over the years? Do you think it's appropriate to let a good friend be a back-up?"

Rachel was fiercely stunned by her animosity. "Jolly, what are you talking about?"

"You keep saying that it's impossible to have a future with Justin, so what are you doing now? Don't tell me that you're still friends. I don't believe a word of this nonsense."

"Can you calm down?"

"I'm very calm. You're the one who's not. I'm telling you objectively that what you're doing right now is simply unethical!"

"What are you being objective about? Don't you just want Miss Rachel to be with Julian?"

Gloria's voice came from outside the door, and she looked annoyed too. "You're using your status as Miss Rachel's friend to dictate her feelings. You only consider Julian's situation, but have you ever considered Miss Rachel's wishes? You're just forcing her to do what you think is best!"

"I'm forcing her?" Jolly gritted her teeth, so angry that her face was flushed. "Chris, is that what you think too?"

The veins on Rachel's temples jumped as she was forced to endure a scene like this.

What's going on?

At this moment, Jolly's cell phone suddenly rang, so she pressed the answer button. "Leroy, are you here? I don't want to stay here anymore. Quickly come and pick me up. I want to go home!"

"Hello?"

The other party said something, and Jolly's face suddenly paled. "Where are you? Hello? Hello?"

Either he hung up, or something else happened because Jolly suddenly turned around and ran out, knocking into Gloria and causing her to stagger. "Have you lost your mind?"

Finally, Rachel realized something was wrong, then figured something terrible must have happened.

"I'm going to have a look." She set down the bowl and hurriedly ran out, and she even neglected to wash her hands to catch up with Jolly while Justin chased after her.

Chapter 398 Life on the Line

“Jolly, where are you going?” Rachel chased Jolly all the way through an alley and ran into the parking lot at the entrance of the town.

Jolly looked anxiously at the distant hills, turning her head and saying, “Leroy called me and said that he got into a car accident on the mountain. My calls can’t get through now.”

Rachel was shocked, but she quickly soothed Jolly’s ruffled feathers. “Don’t worry. Call the police and the fire department first.”

“I want to find him.”

“Okay. I’ll go with you. Wait for me. I’ll go back and get the car keys.”

“I’ll drive you.”

Justin’s voice came from behind. He hadn’t even taken off his apron before hurrying after them.

He drove here on his own, and the car was parked right next to them.

Jolly froze when she opened the car door.

Rachel gave a nudge and reminded her. “Let’s go! Leroy is waiting for you.”

Only then did Jolly recover. At this moment, she couldn’t care less about anything else as she hurriedly climbed into Justin’s car.

They drove out of the town and onto the winding road.

Along the way, Rachel called the fire department.

“Don’t worry. The police have already been dispatched.”

It was completely dark. There was no one on the mountain road, and there was even fog.

They were driving fast, and the lights in the car were dim. Only the street lights on the mountain road outside flickered as they passed, shining on Jolly’s pale face.

“It’s foggy.” Jolly stared out the window, her face turning for the worse.

Accidents were prone to happen when it was foggy, and it also meant that it would be harder for the fire department to rescue him.

Where the hell is Leroy?

Rachel reminded Justin, “Drive slower. Safety first.”

“Don’t worry.”

He said those two words in a concise manner to reassure them.

Rachel held Jolly’s hand tightly. It was useless to say anything comforting at this moment.

After driving for half an hour, Jolly suddenly exclaimed, “Stop!”

Rachel hadn’t figured out what was going on yet, but Jolly pointed to a place outside the window. “I see him! Right there!”

Justin parked the car on the side of the road immediately, and the three of them got out of the vehicle.

Due to the heavy fog, they didn't see the accident on the roadside when they got out of the car. So it wasn't until they followed Jolly and ran closer that Rachel's expression changed, and her knees softened.

Justin reacted quickly and held her up by the shoulders.

At this moment, a silver sedan was shaking as it hung off the cliff's edge. The driver's seat was hanging in the air. Below that was an abyss, and a figure could be faintly seen in the driver's seat.

Jolly was so terrified that her soul nearly left her body.

"Leroy!" She dared not shout loudly or even touch the car for fear that it would lose its balance and fall off the cliff if she even laid a single finger on it.

A faint male voice sounded from the car, penetrating the mist. "Jolly, is that you?"

"It's me! Leroy, you can hear me!"

Jolly's voice was trembling, and her eyes were red-rimmed. "Are you okay?"

"I'm okay. Don't be afraid. I'm sorry, baby. My phone fell, so I couldn't contact you. I made you worried."

"Why are you still thinking about your phone?!" Jolly was about to burst into tears.

"You said that I have to be on call 24 hours a day and that I can't not answer your calls..."

"Stop talking! Stop talking!"

Jolly was almost about to break down as she turned back and shouted, "Why isn't the fire department here yet?!"

At this moment, Justin ran over with a rope. "Stop yelling. Tie this to his car."

The other end of the rope was already fastened to Justin's car.

Justin stopped talking to her and did it himself, after sensing that Jolly would be of no help in her petrified state, and tied the rope to the car's rear.

"What should we do now?" Rachel asked him.

"Let's see if we can drag the car up."

"What if it flips over?" Jolly hurriedly stopped Justin. "What if you can't pull it, or the rope isn't strong enough?"

That was indeed a possibility.

Justin looked around. "It may take a while for the fire department to arrive. How about this? I'll call them and ask when they'll arrive. Wait here."

"It's too late."

Rachel suddenly saw that the road on the cliff's edge was beginning to split, and Leroy's rear tires had started to slide toward the cliff's edge.

Jolly was instantly frightened. "Leroy!"

Rachel grew anxious. "What should we do now?"

Justin immediately got into the car without responding to them, started the engine, and drove in the opposite direction of the cliff.

There was a loud screeching noise, accompanied by Jolly's screams. Leroy's car tilted slightly, and the front wheel that had been floating sideways hit the cliff, creating a loud noise. Earth and rocks fell, making the scene all the more terrifying to watch.

The rope pulling the car was taut.

However, Justin's car was obviously not as heavy as Leroy's Jeep, so he was dragged a little and slid toward the cliff.

"No! This won't work!"

Rachel's face paled. "It's not heavy enough. Both cars will go down!"

Jolly suddenly recovered to her senses and opened Justin's car door before getting in without hesitation.

"What are you doing?" Justin glanced at her. "Go down."

"The car isn't heavy enough, right?"

"Do you think your weight is enough? Hurry up and go down. Don't create trouble!"

Jolly gritted her teeth and fastened her seat belt, "No!"

"I think the both of you are crazy!"

Rachel became an outsider in the end. She felt extremely anxious as she watched Justin's car dragging toward the cliff little by little. "You guys! Come down quickly! It won't hold anymore! It's too dangerous!"

Jolly watched through the rearview mirror as the distance between them and the cliff gradually shortened, so she gritted her teeth. "Justin, this has nothing to do with you. Get down. I'll drive!"

Justin frowned and glanced at her. "Okay. You get out of the car, and we'll change seats."

Jolly immediately got out of the car.

However, she found that she couldn't open the door when she got to the driver's seat. "Justin! Open the door!"

Justin glanced at her through the car window, his eyes set with determination.

How could he let a woman die?

Jolly was Rachel's best sister. In the past, he had indirectly killed Hans and Nancy. Today, he couldn't just stand by and watch Rachel's best friend die, right?

Jolly suddenly understood Justin's intentions, so she frantically slammed the car door. "Are you crazy? What does this have to do with you? B*stard! Come out right now! I don't want to owe you this!"

Justin was unperturbed as he stepped on the accelerator all the way to the end, and it barely controlled the speed of the car's descent.

At this moment, the rope connecting the two cars was extremely taut, and it was possible that it would break apart at any moment. The rear tires of Leroy's car were nearly leaving the cliff, so this rope was completely supporting the whole vehicle.

Rachel's heart almost jumped out of her throat as she called the fire department in a frenzy.

“Sorry, the number you’ve dialed is temporarily unavailable. Please call again later!”

“Justin, don’t let go of the gas! The fire department is almost here!”

She shouted in anxiety, fearing that both cars would fall off the cliff in the next second.

Chapter 399 Am I Not Worthy of You?

Even if the car was pulling at its maximum power, it still couldn’t stop the tires from slipping at an alarming rate. Finally, the whole vehicle moved towards the jeep and was drawn toward the cliff.

Boom! The rear tire of the jeep slipped down again. Jolly’s face was ashen as she slammed the car doors.
“Justin, come down right this instant!”

No matter how much she hated Justin, she certainly didn’t want him to die.

However, he simply turned a blind eye to all this, still stepping on the accelerator and adjusting the car’s direction.

She could only run to the cliff’s edge, crying and shouting after realizing she couldn’t persuade him,
“Leroy!”

Amidst the engine’s roar, no one could no longer hear Leroy’s response, and the engine’s noise drowned out even Jolly’s cries.

The mountain fog became thicker and thicker while Rachel dialed the number repeatedly before finally seeing a glimmer of light approaching them.

“It’s a fire truck!”

The signal in the mountains wasn't good. Although Rachel's calls never got through, the fire truck had been following the mountain road to find them. At that moment, the red fire truck was like a magic soldier descending from the sky. The firefighters rushed over with a double-layer steel cable and buckled it to the jeep as soon as it stopped.

A firefighter gestured in the direction of the fire truck, which drove backward, pulling the jeep up from the edge of the cliff in two to three jerks.

Justin turned off his engine and stopped his car.

When Leroy was rescued, Jolly rushed into his arms, crying, "I thought you would die!"

Leroy patted her on the back. "How could I die so easily? You're my lucky star. As long as you're around, my bad fortune will turn into good fortune."

As Rachel watched this, her heart finally stopped pounding out of her chest.

At this moment, the sound of a car door opening and closing sounded from behind as Justin got out of the car. Rachel looked back and saw him, then snorted.

When he followed her gaze, he glanced down and laughed as well.

Until now, he still hadn't even taken off his apron yet.

Leroy's car was severely damaged and could no longer be driven, so it was towed away by a tow truck.

"Thank you, all of you."

"You're welcome." The firefighter then asked Leroy and the others to sign a document. "Do you need us to take you down the mountain?"

"It's fine." Rachel pointed to Justin's car. "Our car is fine. We can drive it back."

"Alright then."

They watched as the fire truck left and disappeared into the mountain fog. Everything that happened in the past hour felt like a dream, and they were still in a state of disbelief.

Jolly hesitated for a while before saying to Justin, "Thank you for today."

"It's only right."

"This has nothing to do with doing what's right. From today onward, I owe you a favor."

Jolly took the initiative to extend her hand to Justin. "We'll be friends from now on."

Justin reflexively glanced at Rachel, who smiled. "Don't feel pressured. Miss Carter has plenty of friends."

"Oh? This is different. Justin saved my boyfriend, which is equivalent to saving me. This is a life debt."

"What? Are you going to pledge yourselves to each other?"

Rachel suddenly blurted out a question that stunned everyone present.

"There's no need for that!" Justin immediately refused.

Jolly raised her eyebrows. "Could it be that I'm not worthy of you? I'm the daughter of the Carter Family—the owner of Enterprise. Even if you're still the president of Burton Group, we're well-matched in economic status. Besides, you're in dire straits now!"

This was like a forced marriage.

Jolly forcing marriage unto Justin?

And she was even using her identity as the daughter of the Carter Family to pressure him?

If the media got footage of this and posted it on the Internet, it would set off another wave of gossip.

The main point was that Jolly's attitude of wanting to kill Justin as soon as she saw him made it hard for people to imagine that they could be together. This was simply a pairing that would never happen.

Rachel couldn't help but laugh when she saw how lost Justin was.

Immediately afterward, Leroy laughed too.

Justin burst into laughter as well when he saw the others laughing.

Only Jolly looked confused. "What are you laughing at? Is this funny? Or am I funny?"

Rachel waved her hand. "Let's go. Let's go home."

Justin got into the car right away.

Only Leroy was left beside Jolly. "What are you guys laughing about?"

Leroy placed his arms around her shoulder and forced the bubbling laughter back down. "Baby, I'm hungry. Let's hurry back and eat."

"Hey, you guys better tell me right now! Is it that funny? Am I not worthy of Justin? What are you doing? Stop laughing! Leroy, stop laughing! I'll be angry if you continue laughing!"

It was already late at night when the group returned to the old town.

Gloria and Victor were waiting and pacing like cats on hot bricks in the living room.

Gloria was the first to bounce up and rush into the yard when she heard the commotion outside. "You guys are back! What happened? Is everything alright?"

Rachel said, "We're fine. But, unfortunately, the signal on the road wasn't good. I was going to call you to report safety, but it never got through."

"What the hell happened?"

"It's a long story."

Jolly looked around. "Where are the kids?"

"They're asleep. By the way, have you seen Julian?" Gloria glanced behind them, looking puzzled.

Jolly shook her head. "No. Where did Julian go?"

Gloria answered, "As soon as Julian heard that you guys went out, he drove out to find you. I thought he found you!"

"We haven't seen him. Maybe we missed him."

Jolly said, "It's okay. I'll send him a message saying that we're back."

Just as she was about to send the message, a door being pushed open sounded behind them.

Julian was back, and everyone breathed a sigh of relief.

Jolly told him, "We were looking for you."

Julian politely showed concern when he saw Leroy. "You're okay, right? That's good."

Then, his gaze landed on Rachel and Justin.

The two of them stood very close, their arms almost attached to one another.

Julian's eyes darkened all of a sudden.

"Well, since there's nothing wrong, let's all go inside. We bought some snacks. Those who haven't eaten should have some food. Those who are hungry can also have some..."

Jolly was about to pull Leroy in, but suddenly noticed Justin's apron and joked, "Are you planning to live the rest of your days with this apron? I don't think you need to take it off. You can keep it on for tomorrow and continue to wash the dishes after our meal."

Gloria looked back and saw Justin's apron, then laughed. "Why are you still wearing it?"

Jolly continued, "He wasn't just wearing it now. He was wearing it when he stepped on the accelerator to save Leroy in the mountains just now. I didn't feel that anything was odd at that time, but now that I think about it, it's hilarious!"

Rachel helped Justin untie the apron. "Ignore them. They're childish!"

Justin's cold face turned a bit warm, and he said casually, "I'll make some tea for everyone just to prevent any of us from catching a cold."

Rachel followed behind him. "I'll help you."

The two of them went into the kitchen together, and the room was full of laughter as they all got together to listen to Jolly recounting the thrilling rescue process on the cliff.

Only Julian was left standing in the yard, his eyes becoming increasingly gloomy.

Chapter 400 The Car Accident Was Intentional

“Leroy, you drove too recklessly. How did you crash into the railing?” Gloria brought the conversation back on track with a simple sentence in the living room.

Leroy answered, “I didn’t crash into it on my own. A car slammed into me from behind.” “What?!” Jolly exclaimed. “Then, why didn’t you just say so?” “I didn’t want to make it such a big deal.”

“How could this happen? In other words, someone hit you, then committed a hit and run? They didn’t even care about your situation?”

Jolly was rather furious. “We must report this person to the police and get them to make an arrest!”

With that, she took out her phone to call the police.

Leroy stopped her. “Jolly, forget it.”

“What are you doing? Why can’t I call the police?”

Leroy was at a loss.

The two of them were at a stalemate, so Julian helped to mediate the situation. “Jolly, Leroy is a public figure. Once you call the police, this will probably be trending news. Although the other party hit and ran, they may have been scared and didn’t really intend to harm him. If this becomes trending news and his fans stalk the driver, it would ruin their life.”

“That’s what they deserve!”

Although the words that escaped Jolly’s mouth were harsh, she silently put the phone away, then sat down in a huff. “Lucky for them. How does a person like that sleep well at night?”

Leroy hurriedly coaxed her, “They must not be able to sleep. Their conscience would haunt them.”

When he spoke, he gave Julian a nod as a show of gratitude.

It was late at night, so everyone had supper, chatted for a while, and then retired to their rooms.

After taking a shower, Jolly came out and saw Leroy sitting by the window, seemingly in a daze.

“What’s the matter?”

Leroy recovered. “It’s nothing. I just think it’s weird.”

“What’s weird?”

“The car that hit me today did it from behind. So, it stands to reason that this wouldn’t happen if I didn’t hit the brakes.”

The speed limit on the mountain road wasn’t high, and Leroy wasn’t driving fast either. He pretty much drove at a uniform speed. Even if he turned a corner, he would slow down, and it wasn’t to the extent that the car behind him would have no time to react.

“I feel that the car didn’t rear-end me because they didn’t realize, but it seemed they accelerated instead.”

“Accelerated?” Jolly frowned. “Do you think someone did this on purpose?”

“Yeah.”

Leroy nodded slightly, staring at the mountain view outside the window with a complicated expression.

Early the next morning, Rachel hadn’t woken up yet, but she was awakened by a little hand pinching her nose.

She opened her eyes and saw Charlotte and Samuel lying on her bed, where Charlotte was pinching her nose. “Mommy, if you don’t get up, the sun will toast your butt!”

Rachel rolled over in a daze. “What time is it?”

She looked at the alarm clock and found that it was only after 6.00AM, so the sun had just risen on the mountainside.

These two cheeky ones.

“Aren’t you two sleepy?”

“Nope. Daddy is making breakfast.”

“What?” Rachel sat up in surprise. “He’s making breakfast?”

Samuel nodded affirmatively. “Yeah. Don’t you know he can cook breakfast?”

Rachel was indeed surprised.

After all, Justin used to be a person who could ruin noodles and burn the kitchen just by frying eggs.

“I’m going to take a look.”

She was afraid that Justin would blow up the kitchen of the homestay and cause them a lot of trouble.

At this moment, the range hood in the kitchen was humming noisily.

Justin was frying ham, an apron tied around his waist. Several plates were on the island behind him, along with toasted bread, and a milky aroma filled the entire place.

Rachel opened the blue curtain and walked in. As soon as she entered, she could smell the fragrance.

“You really are making breakfast.”

“Why are you up?” Justin glanced at her in surprise. “Did Charlotte wake you?”

“I was just curious. Charlotte and Samuel said you were making breakfast.”

“What? Are you worried that I won’t do well and burn down the kitchen?”

“I was indeed worried that something like that would happen.”

Rachel leaned against the island with her arms wrapped around her body. “When did you start learning how to cook?”

“When I was abroad. I was bored and had too much free time on my hands.”

As he spoke, he skillfully flipped the hams. Then, after it was almost fried, he placed it on the white plates piece by piece, leaving the oil at the bottom of the pan as he cracked three eggs.

Rachel rolled up her sleeves. "Do you need help? What can I do?"

Justin looked around. "You can wash some fruits. There are raspberries over there."

"Okay."

Rachel took the fruit basket and washed the raspberries by the pond.

Through the window, Charlotte and Samuel's laughter sounded from outside.

There were a few chickens in captivity in the homestay yard, and there was a rooster who enjoyed staying on the orange tree. Charlotte had never seen a live chicken before, so after arriving here, she would crane her neck to look at the tree as soon as she was free. She was in utter awe, wholly distracted from having a proper meal.

"Samuel, do chickens live in trees?"

"Of course not. Don't you see that the other two are in the nest?"

"Then, why is this one on the tree?"

"Maybe it thinks it's safer in the tree."

"I don't think so."

"Then, why do you think it is?"

"It must be because by standing on top of the tree, it'll be louder when it crows in the morning, so it can wake everyone up!"

Rachel and Justin heard their conversation clearly from the kitchen, so they looked at each other and smiled.

He felt a little helpless. "Charlotte has never been exposed to these things, so she has never seen them."

"I don't think Samuel has much experience with this either. No one abroad raises chickens at home. They're all bred at farms."

When she was done with the raspberries, she asked, "Is there anything else I can help with?"

"There's nothing else." One by one, he placed the fried eggs on the plates. "What spread would you like on your bread?"

"What options are there?"

"Tomato sauce, salad sauce, peanut butter..."

She took a look and pointed to one of the jars. "Peanut butter."

After they were done preparing breakfast for the four of them, Justin and Rachel came out of the kitchen with two plates.

She shouted in the direction of the chicken coop, "Go wash your hands and come over for breakfast."

The two children cheered.

Rachel immediately shushed them and pursed her lips in the direction of the rooms. "Everyone's still asleep, so don't be too noisy."

Charlotte immediately withdrew her head like a turtle, then put up a finger to shush Samuel. "Keep your voice down."

Rachel shook her head helplessly in amusement.

It had been a long time since the four of them sat down to eat like this.

The surroundings outside were quiet, as most people in the town didn't get up early, so there were no people in the alley at this moment.

Justin was peeling the eggshells when Charlotte licked a mouthful of honey off the bread before saying in a muffled voice, "Mommy, are Mr. Wade and Aunt Gloria getting married?"

"Huh? Why would you ask that all of a sudden?"

"I saw Mr. Wade secretly preparing a ring."

Rachel was surprised. "Really?"

She didn't really believe Charlotte's statement, so she turned and asked Samuel, "Is that true?"

Samuel nodded solemnly. "I saw it. Mr. Wade was holding a ring box."

Rachel raised her head and glanced at Justin.

Is he going to propose?

The Novel will be updated first on this website. Come back and continue reading tomorrow, everyone!