

# My mute bride

## Chapter 501

“Have you brought this up with anyone else?”

Gloria shook her head and advised Victor upon seeing his complicated gaze. “Perhaps I misheard their conversation. Even if they’re love rivals, there’s no reason to go that far. Besides, didn’t the police determine the car crash to be an accident?”

“Hopefully.” Victor suddenly felt uneasy. He was just an average guy; in fact, he was the most average one among their group. If he hadn’t met Rachel, his life would just be plain mundane, and perhaps he would never experience such machinations.

No one would want to think evil of a person, but within their circle, it was safer to overthink. Anyhow, everything can wait until after the wedding, Victor thought. He didn’t want Gloria to worry about this and ruin their mood for the wedding.

It was close to the dead of the night, and as the bachelor-bachelorette party was coming to an end, everyone gathered for a group picture. After taking the picture, Rachel looked around. “Where’s Ryan?”

Justin took a gander inside the villa. ‘I called him, but he said he’ll sit this one out. He’s probably inside with Samuel.’

“Is Samuel paying him any attention?”

“The boy’s building Legos. When I went to get them, neither said a word, only minding their own business.”

“Like father, like son, huh?” Rachel hugged her arms at that. “I don’t get Ryan, though. Why won’t he stop approaching Samuel when he knows he’s just going to be snubbed? Though Samuel’s his biological son, he never raised the boy. Hell, he didn’t even know of his existence. If he really feels attachment for Samuel, what has he been doing all this while?!”

“Perhaps humans rely on kinship much more when they’re vulnerable.”

His words stumped Rachel for a moment. She wasn’t sure why, but her heart suddenly twinged for a second. Charlotte was probably the only family Justin had left that he could rely on.

Justin checked the time and suggested, "It's getting late. Go ahead and get some sleep. I'll be here watching; Samuel will be fine." While speaking, he pulled out a chair and sat down.

From where he was sitting, he could see into the villa as he watched Ryan and Samuel's back. Rachel decided to join him and sat down beside the man. "It's still early. I can't fall asleep just yet."

Surprised, Justin took a look at Rachel for a while before the corner of his eyes lifted into a smile. "Another bottle?"

"Sure."

With that, the two shared another bottle of wine. The next day, though the wedding would be held at the summer villa, they still stuck to the tradition of a groom picking up his bride.

Hence, right after the bachelor-bachelorette party, Jolly shooed Victor back to his home. As the best man and the only groomsman, Leroy was sent away with Victor too. "Apparently, the two stayed wide awake almost the entire night."

Inside the room, the makeup artist was putting makeup on Gloria when Jolly held the hem of her bridesmaid dress and slumped next to Rachel, sharing her text with Leroy enthusiastically.

"I swear I can't stop laughing, Chris. Victor was still wide awake at 2.00AM, but guess what he did? He made Leroy watch the drama Leroy acted in. Don't you think that's bullsh\*t? Is he not feeling nervous? As if!"

"Are you sure it's not the other way round?"

Gloria shot her a disgruntled glance. Though Victor was a little goofy, no one but her was allowed to make fun of him like that.

"Do you even think that's possible? Leroy has so many fans; why would he need Victor to help him boost his drama's viewership?"

"Many a little makes a mickle. Perhaps he doesn't want to miss any chances of boosting the viewership."

For once, Jolly didn't bicker with Gloria since it was the latter's wedding day. "Whatever, come at me all you want. Either way, the groom won't be able to come in if he doesn't give enough red envelopes."

At that, Gloria glared at Jolly through the mirror. "Don't get greedy. We're just doing this for the festivity. Don't go overboard."

“Oh, come on. The more, the merrier. I won’t get another chance after today, you know.”

“Rachel! Do something about her!” Gloria could only seek Rachel’s help when she was fighting a losing battle against Jolly.

Rachel chuckled. “She’s just messing with you. Hurry up and sit back down. Victor and the guys are already on their way.”

It was only then Gloria sat still, but she couldn’t help mumbling, “I’m really fine with just a simple ceremony. I mean, look at how everyone is running around with me. Why send me to Victor’s from here when we’d be coming back anyway?”

“If everyone keeps things simple as you do, all the traditions would be long gone.” Jolly was surprisingly serious for once. “There’s a reason why some of these traditions are retained.”

Rachel nodded in agreement. “Though your parents and Victor’s are no longer around, we should still follow the tradition. Although your brother didn’t say anything, I’m sure he wants to see you get married.” “Yeah, Victor is not marrying into your family;

how can we skip this part?!” With how Rachel and Jolly echoed one another, Gloria’s eyes turned misty, and the woman felt touched.

“Hence, Victor has to give us enough red envelopes if he wants to come in.” Just like that, the touching ambiance crumbled with Jolly’s words.

“I dare you!” Livid, Gloria glared at Jolly. Later, Jolly handed Gloria a hand fan after Gloria had changed into her wedding dress and sat on the bed. Rachel, on the other hand, went behind Gloria and put the two handmade kitten rag dolls on the pillow.

“Gosh, they’re so cute! Where did they come from?” Jolly exclaimed and reached for them.

“Don’t touch them!” Rachel slapped the back of Jolly’s hand. “They’re wedding dolls. If you want them, you have to get married.”

While rubbing her stinging hand, Jolly whined with indignation and said, “Well, I want a pair when I get married. I want it to be bigger and better.”

“They aren’t from me,” Rachel commented.

“Who is it from, then?”

At that, Gloria rolled her eyes at Jolly. “That’s for me to know and you to find out. Am I supposed to introduce all my friends to you?”

“Stingy!” Jolly pouted, swearing she would give Victor a hard time and ask for a few more red envelopes as revenge. Just then, a babel of voices came from outside the room.

“They’re here, they’re here!”

Out of everyone in the room, Jolly was the most excited, lifting her skirt as she dashed to the door to make sure it was locked.

Moments later, a knock came at the door.

“Open the door!” Leroy and Hernandez cried out in excitement. “The groom has come for his bride.”

To that, Jolly shouted behind the door, “Do you think we’re going to open the door just because you want us to? Don’t you know what you’re supposed to do?”

The next second, a stack of red envelopes appeared from the gap beneath the door.

“Of course we do!” It was Leroy’s voice. “The red envelopes first.”

“One, two, three, four...” After Jolly counted the number of red envelopes the guys handed over, she shouted, “We have a bunch of girls in here. Is this all you’re giving us?!”

All of Gloria’s colleagues were with the trio in the room. As most of them weren’t native, they had never experienced such a wedding custom. Upon hearing they could get money, each of them became more excited than the other.

Gloria, on the other hand, grew anxious. “Rachel! Do something about her!”

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## Chapter 502

Rachel held Gloria back. “Relax, they’re just messing around.”

Jolly, however, wasn’t just going to stop at the red envelopes. She had prepared a whole lot of props outside designated to ‘torture’ Victor and the guys. “You guys have to do the hula dance and send us a video of it!”

The outside sounded pretty rowdy. Then, Hernandez's voice came. "Have you forgotten that Leroy's the best man?"

"Yeah? Well, I don't care who's out there today. Even my dad will have to dance if he's a groomsman." Jolly's words led the other girls in the room to guffaw. Outside, the guys did as they were told resignedly.

It was soon before the video of Victor, Leroy, and Hernandez doing the hula dance in pink tutus was sent to the group chat, and Rachel and the other girls thought it was seriously hard on the eyes.

Even Gloria failed to hold back her laughter. "Right, we've done what you asked. Can you open the door now?"

"Dream on! I'm just getting started. There's still a bunch of props out there."

With that, Jolly fished out the game list from her bag, which was exaggeratingly long like the cartoons depicted, leading Gloria to become seriously agitated..

Before Jolly could even finish relaying the rules of the game, Gloria held her skirt up, ran to the door, and opened it despite Rachel's attempts to stop her.

Shouts and whoops burst out in an instant, and the guys barged right in, causing the massive room to be packed like canned sardines.

"Hey!" Jolly stumbled to the side before she snapped in exasperation, "Gloria, are you so scared of not being able to marry yourself away?!"

"Abduct the bride!" Someone could be heard shouting, leading Victor to immediately run away with a barefooted Gloria in his arms.

"Her shoes! I spent the whole night hiding her shoes!" Jolly cried out in exasperation as she stomped her feet.

Rachel was the only other person left in the room at this point. She patted Jolly's shoulder and urged, "Come on, take the shoes out and bring them to Gloria."

It was impossible to force the bride and groom back into the room when it had come to this. As exasperated and unwilling as Jolly was, she obediently got the shoes she had so arduously hidden the whole night and brought them downstairs.

Though it was a mere formality, Gloria's eyes still turned red-rimmed from oncoming tears when she bid Rachel and the others goodbye after getting into the wedding car. When she noticed Justin standing away from the crowd, looking all alone, tears instantly pooled in her eyes.

“Justin!” she suddenly shouted. Amidst the babel of voices, the crowd followed Gloria’s line of sight to the back and tacitly made way.

Justin was carrying Charlotte in his arms while seeing Gloria and Victor’s wedding car off, so when Gloria suddenly called out to him, it rendered him somewhat stupefied.

“Come down, Charlotte.” Rachel beckoned to her daughter, who sensibly came down from Justin’s arms at once. With that, Justin went up to the wedding car.

“What is it?”

Gloria held his hand. “Justin, no matter what happens, I will always be your sister.”

“Isn’t this a fact?” Justin smiled. “Why suddenly

bring this up? It’s a happy day today, so you should smile.” “Mm.” Unable to utter a word, Gloria nodded.

non-stop.

Justin looked further into the car at the man sitting next to Gloria. Victor rarely wore suits, and he looked exceptionally handsome in his white tuxedo, no longer looking like the punk he used to be.

“Go on.” Justin waved his hand toward them. “Don’t miss the hour. You’ll be back in the afternoon anyway.”

Following that, the car started as the engine bellowed. Victor, who had been silent all this while, suddenly said to Justin, “I’ll take good care of Gloria, Justin. You’re my brother now as much as you have been hers all these years.”

His words left Justin stupefied for quite a while, and by the time he came to his senses, the wedding car had already driven a slight distance away. He could even see Gloria wiping her tears away through the tiny rearview mirror.

Suddenly, he fell into a bit of a trance. He suddenly recalled the day he picked up Gloria from the small town in the north twenty- plus years ago. It was the first thing he did after taking over Burton Group.

She was a scrawny kid at the time, abused and very much underfed. She was already five or six years old then, yet she was tiny. When he got to her, she was squatting on the floor, washing her entire family’s clothes..

Before arriving, he thought he would let her continue living her life if she had a good one. But at first glance, he instantly knew he had to take her with him. Following that, in the next twenty-plus years, Gloria was nearly his only support.

All these years, rather than saying he adopted Gloria and raised her, she had instead been keeping him company, giving him the comfort he scarcely had.

"They're gone." A familiar voice came from beside him; it was Rachel. Justin came back to reality and hummed a response, unsure of what to say.

"Although they'll be returning in the afternoon and Gloria hasn't married off far, she's still getting married, nonetheless. It still feels different, doesn't it?" Rachel commented.

"A little." Justin slowly settled down. "But since she's married to Victor, I'm greatly assured."

"Are you?" Don't you think Gloria can do better? I seriously doubt you're pleased with Victor."

It seemed that all parents and elders would think so. With how excellent their children were, they only deserved the best, and as opposed to Gloria's name as the piano prodigy, Victor was just an average elementary school teacher.

Justin shook his head in disagreement. "Gloria prefers the simple life. She grew up simple as well, unlike us."

Slightly stumped, it took Rachel a moment to finally understand what Justin meant. She recollected her first meeting with Gloria. The young girl was dressed like an average girl next door, and after years of knowing her, Gloria still dressed very plainly like she had no desire for the finest things in life.

On the one hand, it had to do with her nature, and on the other, it was also likely the kind of lifestyle she had developed over the years.

"The best would be to live the most mundane life. It's something that most people can only wish for," said Justin, leading Rachel to nod in agreement. "Yeah."

Speaking of which, she now wished to live such a life as well. Sadness crept on the two as they chatted. However, the feeling didn't last too long as the wedding car returned once more sometime before noon, and everyone came back to attend the wedding ceremony merrily.

There was a saying that minor mishaps would inevitably happen during a wedding, or it wouldn't be right for the big day. As proven, the maid of honor had gone missing. at a crucial time. Worst of all, the wedding ring was with her.

"Where's Jolly? They're exchanging the rings soon, and Victor's ring is with her." At that, Rachel grabbed Hernandez. "Hernandez, have you seen her?"

"She said she was heading to the washroom not too long ago."

“Heading to the washroom at a time like this?!” Leroy tried calling her to no avail, so he said at once, “Don’t worry, Chris. I’ll go and find her.”

Meanwhile, at the northeast corner of the summer villa, a phone lay on the lawn with its screen flashing an incoming phone call. However, the owner couldn’t answer it.

Jolly struggled desperately. Her eyes were already red-rimmed, but she couldn’t make a single sound as her lips were sealed by a piece of black duct tape..

Just a moment ago, two men in suits covered her mouth and held her hostage the second she came out of the washroom.

Her arms had been tied behind her back at this point, and one of the kidnappers was squatting in front of her, tying her ankles together with a rope.

“Stay still, or you’re going to suffer.”

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## Chapter 503

“Miss Carter, I suggest you behave and work with us, or things will only get worse for you.”

What do you guys take me for? An idiot?! I’d still suffer even if I work with you guys! “Mmph...” Jolly stretched her neck strenuously, expressing her wish to say something..

At that, the two men in black exchanged a glance before one of them muttered, “Boss” order. We take what we need and leave. Don’t cause a ruckus. She’s the golden child of the Carter Family, after all.”

You guys might as well just say it right next to my ear! I’m not deaf! Jolly mused. After discussing openly for a while, one of the men in black turned to Jolly. “We have a few questions for you, and you’d better behave.”

To that, Jolly nodded with a frown. Even if she didn’t want to cooperate, she didn’t have a second option either. “You have a wedding dress that you took from the cruise, don’t you?”



Jolly's heart skipped a beat upon hearing so. "Do you or do you not?" the questioning man in black reiterated. This time, he pointed at Jolly's nose and behaved rudely.

Jolly nodded after coming back to herself, leading the men to exchange a glance. "Where is it?" the questioning man in black pressed on.

Where is it? Her frown deepened.

With Ryan, of course! She had handed it to him before alighting the cruise. If it weren't for these guys, she almost forgot that Ryan had written down an IOU and still owed her a batch of diamonds!

I should tell him to pay up. Then again, he's seriously ill now. I wonder how his surgery's going. If he dies, would it mean that this debt will be written off?

In that short moment, Jolly's mind had already conjured up countless thoughts. Of course, the two kidnappers didn't know this woman was still leisurely thinking about the money her ex-boyfriend owed her when she was being kidnapped. They bore into her, waiting for her answer.

"Where is it? Answer us!" Losing patience, the questioning man in black reiterated.

"Mmph!" Jolly stretched her neck toward the two kidnappers, and her eyes were already nearly popping out of her eye sockets. Idiots! How am I supposed to say anything when I'm like this?! Ventriloquy?

It was only then the questioning man in black realized. He pointed at her nose and warned,

"Don't you dare scream, or I'll mangle you." As soon as he finished speaking, he ripped off the tape on Jolly's lips. Jolly exclaimed in pain, believing they had ripped the top layer of her lips away.

"Shut up!" The kidnapper pointed at her lips with a warning. Jolly took a deep breath. As utterly aggrieved as she was, she could only yield submissively.

"Where's the dress? Tell us!"

"It's at my place."

"You'd better not trick us!"

"Why would I do that when I'm already like this?! Why don't you guys follow me home and see for yourselves if you don't believe me?"

The kidnappers exchanged a glance and came to an agreement at once. With that, they put the tape back onto Jolly's lips, then chucked her into a van that stored wedding supplies. Needless to say, they snuck in as members of the wedding planning team.

However, little did they expect Jolly to chuck something from behind her back before they closed the car door. Back inside the summer villa, the ceremony was already about to commence, but the maid of honor and best man had gone missing, and the rings were nowhere to be found.

When Hernandez rushed back, Rachel asked, "Have you found them?"

"No, I don't know where they've gone. I can't reach Leroy's phone anymore either."

"How can this be?!"

Jolly had gone missing first, and now, Leroy was gone too. Rachel's brows locked into a deep furrow. Just then, Justin came over from the banquet. "What's wrong? Did something happen?"

"The rings are missing."

With that, Rachel recounted the issue concisely. "Even these two unreliable ones are nowhere to be found. Worst of all, they're the maid of honor and best man!"

Justin furrowed his brows slightly and said gravely, "Anyhow, they wouldn't just disappear into thin air. Alright, here's what we'll do. Hernandez, you act as the ring bearer and deliver the rings later."

"The problem is that the rings are gone too."

"It's okay. It's just pro forma. The rings don't have to be the ones they bought, so we'll get a backup."

"You have a backup?" Rachel was surprised. Shortly after, Justin returned with a wedding ring box he had grabbed from his study's safe and handed it to Hernandez, who opened the box in front of Rachel. When he saw the wedding bands, he couldn't help looking surprised. "Sh\*t, you actually have them. Why would you buy them for no reason?"

"These aren't your wedding bands, are they?" asked Hernandez, who was a straight talker. Then, he looked at Rachel before shifting his gaze to Justin.

Taken aback, Rachel wanted to deny it, but Justin spoke before she could do so. "Why do you talk so much? The ceremony is about to begin. Hurry up and go inside."

Hernandez checked the time. Indeed, he had to rush over right now. Roses of pink and blue spread across the lawn, making the place a sea of flowers as it enveloped the guests in it. On the white- carpeted aisle, Charlotte and Samuel, the flower girl and page boy, each held a basket and threw a handful of petals every couple of steps they took. Behind them, Gloria held Justin's arm as they walked down the aisle.

Gloria had lost her parents at a young age, and she didn't have any siblings either. More than that, she had long lost contact with her relatives. Hence, there wasn't anyone of the sort on the guest list; Justin was the only family she had left now.

On the other hand, Rachel was seated in the front row, watching Gloria through the sea of flowers while she lamented in her heart.

Come to think of it, she, Justin, and Gloria were tied together because of the wildfire twenty- plus years ago. Their story began with the wildfire and closed with a not-so-perfect but still satisfactory ending.

Amidst the sounds of everyone's blessings, Justin gave Gloria away to Victor before walking down the altar.

Victor wasn't an extrovert, so it was clearly unrealistic to demand him to propose to Gloria one more time in front of so many unfamiliar guests when it even took him a long time to kiss his new wife. In the end, Gloria was the one who held his head and forced a kiss on his lips while the crowd cheered.

With a flushed face, Gloria turned to her colleagues and threatened, "Alright, I'll kiss him. Another word and I won't toss my bouquet!"

The crowd guffawed in response.

"Another kiss. Kiss him!"

"Kiss!"

In the end, Gloria refused to toss her bouquet. As soon as the ceremony was over, Gloria went to Rachel with her bouquet. "What's going on, Rachel? Where's Jolly?"

That woman had been mumbling about wanting to catch the bouquet before going to bed. As such, Gloria even deliberately kept it for Jolly.

Rachel was still trying to reach Jolly's phone right then, and she had grown anxious at this point. "I'm looking for her too."

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## Chapter 504

“Sorry, the number you’re calling cannot be reached at the moment. Please try again later...” Both Jolly and Leroy’s phones had been unreachable for a long while now.

After making another couple of attempts, Rachel gave up and decided to check the villa’s surveillance cameras.

At that, Gloria and Victor offered to go with her, but Justin stopped them. “You two stay here. You still need to attend to the guests, after all. I’ll go.”

With that, he chased after Rachel.

“Me too!” Hernandez turned to follow after Justin as he spoke, but Gloria reacted quickly and grabbed him. “Forget about that. The two of us alone can’t manage everything here. We’ll need your help.”

“With what?”

“You’ve gotten familiar with the girls from my orchestra, haven’t you? You’ll have to help me send them to the hotel later. They’re all flying back tonight.”

Gloria held a tight grip on Hernandez and dragged him along with her, leaving him no choice but to watch Justin and Rachel leave far away. Meanwhile, Rachel and Justin made their way to the security room.

Many had come to attend the wedding, and to avoid any accidents, they hired an extra team of security. Also, the surveillance cameras within the villa had been retested, so in theory, no cameras should be malfunctioning.

“Here.” Rachel pointed toward where Jolly appeared on the screen. At that, Justin ordered the guard to switch the camera. “This was an hour ago,” he said with a frown.

“It’s about the same time as Hernandez mentioned earlier. She should have been at the washroom an hour ago.”

The footage had indeed shown Jolly entering the villa. However, there were no cameras inside. Following that, they sped up the footage by ten- folds until an hour later, when there was still no sign of her.

“How is this possible?!”

“Play it again,” Justin ordered the guard. This time, they sped up the footage by five-folds, and as they watched, Justin suddenly raised his hand. “Stop.”

In the middle of the screen were two men carrying a massive box out of the villa, heading toward the west gate.

“Do you suppose that’s...” A thought hit Rachel instantly as her countenance turned awful. Justin reacted even quicker. “Find out who these two are.”

With that, the guards got digging. Meanwhile, half an hour had passed since Jolly was chucked into the van, which had arrived near Carter Residence.

“Is it really in your room?”

“What will I get from lying to you? It’s in the safe in my room. I’m sure you know how expensive that dress is. I have to keep it safe, don’t I?”

“You have guards stationed at the gate of your house. How are we supposed to go in?”

“You can just let me go in and get it.”

“As if we’re going to let you do that. What do you take us for? Fools?” One of the kidnappers glared at Jolly. “Do you think we’d let you go in and call the cops?”

Jolly frowned in response. “Well, what do you suppose then?”

“Tell them you’ve sent me to get something. Later on, call and tell them you’ve asked me to open the safe in your room.”

“I never let just about anyone into my room.”

The next second, a sharp blade was pressed against Jolly’s neck, leading her to change her words in two shakes. “Well, it’s mainly because my room is a mess. If you guys don’t mind, go ahead... go ahead...”

Only then did the kidnapper put the blade away.

“Stay here and keep an eye on her. We’ll keep in touch.” With that, he handed the blade to the other kidnapper and got out of the van.

Through the window, Jolly could see the kidnapper walking toward her house, and the sentry came out of the guard house to talk to him. Moments later, a ringtone resounded through the van.

“Miss Jolly, have you asked someone to take something from home?”

Right when Jolly was about to speak, the staying kidnapper patted her face with the blade a couple of times, which served as a warning. Having no other option, she bit the bullet and admitted, "Yes, just let him in."

"Alright, Miss Jolly."

"Go on in."

Following the sentry's voice coming from the other end of the line, Jolly was forced to watch the kidnapper enter her house.

Jolly couldn't run away even if she wanted to when her hands and legs had been tied together. Thus, she actively approached the staying kidnapper. "I know who sent you guys. Let me go, and I'll give you double the price she paid you."

"Save it. You rich people are the most scheming. Do you think I don't know you'll call the cops as soon as I free you?"

"Don't you know that you'll be sentenced to jail time for kidnapping? What will you do when this comes to light?"

"Why do you talk so much?"

The staying kidnapper was not a man of negotiation. Thus, he ripped a piece of duct tape, planning to seal Jolly's lips shut again.

"Hey, hey, don't. What if your accomplice calls when he can't find the safe?"

"Behave and keep your mouth shut!"

Jolly scrutinized the staying kidnapper. He was wearing a black face mask, so she couldn't make out any distinct facial features apart from his eyes.

After looking for a while, she discovered a burn. scar on his right temple, and she made a mental note of it. Meanwhile, the kidnapper, who entered the Carter Residence, had successfully arrived at Jolly's bedroom.

While leading him inside, the nanny asked, "What does Miss Jolly want you to grab? Just tell me, and I'll find it for you. Don't rummage through her things."

"I don't know what it is either. She just told me to get it from the safe. Speaking of which, where is it?"

"The safe?" The nanny was somewhat stumped. "How would I know?"

"I'll look for it myself, then. You can leave now." Not giving the nanny a chance to speak, he locked the door from inside and began rummaging through the room. Snubbed, the nanny frowned. Does Miss Jolly have a safe in her room? How come I've never heard of it?

Back inside the van, Jolly felt so stuffy that she was suffocating.

"Hey, I need to use the bathroom."

"Don't try anything."

"I really need to use the bathroom!"

The kidnapper glanced at her upon hearing that. "There's no bathroom around here. Hold it in."

"There's a mall nearby. Take me there!"

"You think you're still a rich young lady?" The kidnapper got pissed off. "Who do you take me for? Your driver or your servant?! Don't even think about it. Do it here if you have the balls."

While looking exasperated, she managed to grab the handle with her hand still behind her back.

She wasn't sure how long she had been waiting, but as soon as she saw someone passing by, she pushed the door open at once and fell behind.

"Help me!"

Startled, the middle-aged man stared at Jolly for a long time but still couldn't respond to what was happening.

Jolly's arms and legs had been tied up, and it was evidently a kidnapping. Moreover, an adult male's arms reached out from the van very quickly and violently dragged her back inside.

"Help!" Jolly shouted toward the middle-aged man. "Call the cops!"

It was evident the man didn't want to involve himself in trouble as he fled at once. Just before Jolly was dragged into the van, a car pulled over on the opposite side of the road and out came a few men who looked like bodyguards.

"There!" One of them shouted as they pointed to Jolly.

"Put her down!"

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## Chapter 505

The sky had gone completely dark by the time Rachel and Justin managed to get ahold of Jolly. At this time, the other guests who came for the wedding had already left. Victor's colleagues all resided in Riverdale, so they didn't have much trouble traveling back and forth. Gloria's colleagues, on the other hand, were flying back at night, and they had all been sent to the airport.

After Gloria sent her colleagues away, she and Victor rushed back to the summer villa from the airport, and they sensed the tense atmosphere as soon as they came through the door.

Jolly had already made herself comfortable on the couch like nothing had happened to her at this point-that is, if one overlooked her beyond-grim face.

"What happened?" Gloria asked, baffled. "Victor and I found Leroy's car blocked off at the villa entrance when we came back. The sentry said Justin banned him from coming in. Jolly, you're the one who gave the order, didn't you? It's freezing out there. What's with all of this?"

"He's a grown adult capable of looking after himself. There are tons of places he can go to if he doesn't want to freeze his a\*s off. Who does he think he is to come to my friend's house and play victim?!"

Gobsmacked by Jolly's heartless words, Gloria exchanged a glance with Victor, who stood next to her.

What in the world is going on?!

Hadn't Jolly and Leroy been all lovey-dovey and inseparable all this while? How did things flip so suddenly?!

At that, Gloria slumped onto the couch, sitting next to Rachel as she whispered, "Rachel, what happened?"

"It's a long story." Rachel's gaze was filled with mixed emotions. She didn't know where to begin explaining either.



"I'll do it." Justin took over, not wanting Rachel to be in a tough spot. "Jolly was kidnapped by two guys who snuck in here during the wedding ceremony. However, nothing bad really happened since Leroy showed up in time with his men."

Justin left the wedding dress part out since it was better for fewer people to know about the cruise incident. Jolly was the Carters' only daughter, so it was within reason for desperate kidnappers to do her harm.

"Well, wasn't that a situation where the hero saved the damsel in distress?" Gloria was even more baffled. "Isn't that a scene you've been longing for, Jolly?"

"Longing for my a\*s! I never thought about. dating someone from the underworld! That guy's a sham!"

Jolly's words shook Gloria to the core. "T-The underworld?"

Victor and Hernandez were visibly shocked as well. This is absolutely ridiculous! Rachel's gaze remained complicated. "It's a long story as well."

"You guys long knew about this, but no one thought about bringing it up with me, eh?!" Jolly glared at Rachel. "Why is everyone hiding something so important from me?"

Rachel was at a loss for words. She feared Jolly questioning her the most. She wanted to bring up Leroy's background the moment she heard it from Justin, but she kept hesitating. Plus, she never found the right time to mention it to Jolly. More than that, she also thought it was best if Leroy told Jolly himself.

"Calm down, Jolly." Frost laced Justin's face, having had enough of Jolly's attitude. "Rachel had your best interests in heart. Your parents know about this as well. They didn't tell you about it either, did they? How would you have reacted if they told you frankly?"

"I-" Jolly gritted her teeth, and her face turned grimmer. She had been a rebellious one all her life, absolutely unwilling to do anything she was. forced into. The Carters wanted her to break up with Leroy because of his background, and the only reason they didn't mention it to her was that they assumed Jolly would not give a damn about her boyfriend's family and background.

Since that was the case, what change would come from Rachel telling her?

"More importantly, he should be the one telling you this since you two are dating," said Justin matter-of-factly. "We're considered outsiders. He's the one who should be frank with you, not us."

Jolly clenched her fists in response, her brows locked into a deep furrow. It pained Rachel to see her like this, and so she coaxed her like a child. "Perhaps you should

hear Leroy out. It's not like he has done the irredeemable. No one gets to choose the family. they were born into, right?" she said.

After a long while, Jolly finally nodded. 'I'm going out for a while.'

Everyone heaved a sigh of relief after watching. her head out. "Goodness, Gloria held her chest. 'I thought she was going to flip. That got my heart beating."

Hernandez echoed by saying, "If it were in the past, she'd have gone ballistic and insisted on a breakup if she found out her boyfriend hid something from her."

"What underworld were you guys talking about?" Gloria couldn't help wanting to satisfy her curiosity. "Isn't Leroy an A-list celebrity? What does he have to do with the underworld?"

"He's the young master of Lush." Justin's voice wasn't loud, but it carried multitudes. Gobsmacked, Gloria's eyes widened upon hearing that. "What did you say?!"

As a non-native, Hernandez was naturally clueless. "What's Lush?"

"They're a gang based in Enistan," Rachel explained, "and these organizations are legal there as they are closely knitted to the economic development in the country. Lush has the largest developmental scale, after all."

In other words, it was an underworld gang.

"Burton Group had a collaboration with Leroy not long after he dove into showbiz, and I learned about his not-so-normal background by chance. As such, I had Frankie do some digging," Justin added.

Everything had been fine until they started digging and nearly landed themselves in deep sh\*t back then..

Leroy had Lush's power behind his back, but for some reason, he grew up in Riverdale and later entered showbiz. However, judging from his. career development all these years, he didn't seem to have any ties with Lush.

"Do both of you know about this?" Gloria looked at Rachel and Justin with surprise. 'Jolly's parents too?"

Rachel nodded in affirmation. "I learned about it a lot later, just before Springfest. Before that, I couldn't understand why her parents would oppose their marriage either."

'I don't know much of the details," Justin commented. "However, the infighting in Enistan's gangs is pretty severe. Naturally, Lush is no exception. The reason for Leroy

to live all his years away from it all surely isn't simple. Mr. and Mrs. Carter are envisaging Jolly's safety."

Jolly was all they had, and this girl grew up pampered. She never had to worry about the necessities in life. Even if she would never marry her whole life, they could continue to support her just fine. Why give her away to a man who couldn't even be certain of his own safety?

It was only then that Gloria understood the whole thing. At that, she took a gander outside. "But knowing her, I don't think she'll see this as a problem."

"Indeed." Rachel nodded in affirmation. Despite her worries, she still said, "It's all down to her now. This isn't really something we can help her with."

Just then, a phone rang, and Justin answered the call after checking the caller ID. "Hello?"

"Alright, I got it. Thanks."

"Yeah, she's fine."

Then, the caller said something that got Justin turning grave. "Do we still have nothing on the two guys?"

While Justin was on the phone, Rachel's brows locked into a deep furrow, and she clenched her fists tightly after hearing his words.

She knew the call was from Ryan. After learning: of Jolly's disappearance in the afternoon, Ryan instantly took his men out with him to search for her as well. He was just a step behind Leroy. Now, he was still digging into the situation since the wedding dress was currently in his hands.

She had a feeling that a new storm was brewing.

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## Chapter 506

Right after hanging up, Justin relayed the situation with the cops to Rachel. "The van was found abandoned in the suburbs, and the kidnappers have gone under the radar.

So far, they haven't managed to identify them yet, but if my guess is right, the Jockey Club is probably behind this."

"Is it because of the wedding dress?"

Justin nodded in response. As Gloria and the others knew nothing of the cruise incident, they were bewildered by where the conversation was heading. "What wedding dress? How does this have something to do with a wedding dress right now?"

"It's nothing, really. Jolly happens to have a priceless wedding dress with her. It's a master's work, and it's worth a fortune. Someone has their eyes on it, so that is why this happened."

"What wedding dress are we looking at that's worth kidnapping someone for? A past century's collector's item?" Gloria still couldn't wrap her head around it. However, Rachel didn't explain further.

Seeing that it was getting late, she urged everyone to go to bed. "You've all had a long day, go and get some rest. There's no need to worry since everything's fine."

Gloria wanted to press on, but Victor stopped her. "Come on, let's go. Let's not add trouble to the issue."

"Okay."

Hernandez yawned. "I'm going to go to bed too."

With that, everyone left, leaving Rachel and Justin still in the living room. "I'll go and check on the kids." Rachel put her cup down and went to Samuel's room.

The nanny had already showered the children, but it hadn't reached their bedtime. Plus, Charlotte refused to go to her room and wanted to stay with Samuel, so the two played in his room. As soon as Rachel opened the door, she found the kids sprawled out on the carpet.

Fortunately, all the rooms had underfloor heating, or they would surely catch a cold when they fell asleep on the floor like that.

A helpless Rachel went in, and just as she was about to pick Samuel up, Justin's voice came from the doorway. "I'll do it."

He hadn't spoken loudly, but it was still clear against the silent night. While Rachel was in a daze, Justin had already entered, carried Samuel to his bed, and picked Charlotte up to bring her back to her room. The kids had gotten so big now that Rachel really had a tough time carrying them herself.

After Justin went out, she tucked Samuel in and scrutinized the child she had watched grow up. Indeed, he looked a lot like Ryan. It came as no surprise that Mariam was certain of his parentage upon first glance despite having never seen him before.

At the thought of Jolly's ties with the Sutton Family, Rachel couldn't help getting worried. The sound of a door opening outside pulled Rachel back to reality, and she went out to find that Jolly had come back in, barefooted as she slumped onto the couch.

"Where's Leroy?" Rachel looked toward the main door.

"He left."

"It's already so late at night. Where is he going?"

"The hotel."

Seeing that Jolly was rather collected, Rachel sat down. "How did it go with him? Have you guys made it clear?"

"I want to reconsider."

"Are you talking about the wedding?"

"Yeah."

Rachel was surprised by her answer. "I thought you wouldn't have minded his background."

"It's not about his background but the fact that he hid that from me. Even if he's a murderer, he shouldn't hide anything from me. I've long made it clear to him that no matter the reason, I absolutely despise deception."

"Though I get you and think Leroy should've dealt with this better, I still want to speak up for him." Rachel's eyes were gentle yet unyielding. "If he insists on keeping this from you, he could've chosen not to save you."

The fact was that Leroy actually used his identity and background to save Jolly. Jolly took a deep breath and slowly exhaled, looking torn. At that, Rachel patted Jolly's shoulder. "Don't think about it for too long. This isn't like you."

"I know. I'll figure it out before my parents come back."

After having been through so much, Jolly matured significantly, no longer flipping out as soon as she encountered an issue. Her cool composition got Rachel feeling multitudes.

For some reason, she felt unfortunate for Leroy. If Jolly had met him before Ryan, she would surely be obsessed over this mad love, and nothing would be able to stop her from being with the man she loved.

It was too bad Leroy couldn't witness that side of Jolly. Perhaps, apart from Ryan in the past, no one else would be able to witness it ever again.

"Enough about that. Have they caught the kidnappers?"

To that, Rachel shook her head. "They got away too quickly. Apparently, they are nowhere to be found. All there's left is an abandoned van. However, they've taken the fingerprints in the van for analysis. If they had any previous convictions, the cops should be able to find them from their archives."

Jolly nodded musingly. "By the way, what about Ryan?"

"He's still running around because of this. Those diamonds are in his hands, after all. He's the one in the most dangerous situation now."

"I'll have him send the batch of diamonds to the Investigation Bureau tomorrow."

"Are you fine with that?" Rachel was surprised.

"It's not mine to begin with, anyway. The important thing is to be alive. What's the point of possessing so many diamonds if you're dead? Am I going to encrust my urn with them?"

"Tsk!" Rachel chided, "Can't you have a little sense of taboo? We're still in the middle of Springfest here, you know."

"Springfest is pretty much over. It's time to dive back into work tomorrow."

"Yeah. Just like that, another Springfest is over."

Jolly and Leroy still weren't on speaking terms even a week after Springfest, and perhaps because Jolly had shifted her attention from love, she actually managed to land a hundred- million deal for Hudson Pharmaceuticals, alleviating the company's liquidity issue.

"I've got to hand it to you, Jolly. To think you can get acquainted with a client by going to the gym." Rachel couldn't help praising Jolly as she looked at the contract. "Your parents will surely think you've grown up if they see this contract."

No one would believe that Jolly actually got the deal from someone running on the treadmill alongside her in the gym.

“Even I had a hard time believing myself. We were just chatting, and he said his friend’s company is looking for a batch of medical equipment. I thought that sounded promising, so we continued chatting, and I ended up bagging the deal.”

“Either way, you’ve done a good one. I’ll treat you to dinner some other day.”

“Why some other day when we can do it today?”

“I can’t.” Rachel packed up and got ready to head out. “I’m meeting Justin tonight.”

“Huh?” Jolly’s gossip mode instantly switched on upon hearing so. “What’s going on between you two? You rarely join him for dinner.”

“What the heck are you thinking?” Rachel rolled her eyes at Jolly. “He’s about to head up north to work on Burton Group’s issues. The kids and I are going to bid him farewell, and it just so happens that I have something to give him.”

“What is it?”

“Burton Group’s shares.” Rachel grabbed a document on the table. “It’s supposed to be his in the first place. I’m sure he needs this more than I do now.”

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## Chapter 507

After realizing she was skimming through an equity transfer agreement, Jolly handed it back to Rachel, saying, “I bet he’ll turn you down. He’s a bit of a male chauvinist, so he wouldn’t take back what he has given out.”

Rachel frowned in response. “Charlotte doesn’t need this now, though.”

“I suggest you change it to an entrusted shareholder agreement. That way, he can manage and execute the share rights on behalf of Charlotte as one of her guardians. Apart from the trading rights, everything else is still in his hands.”

Rachel pondered on her suggestion for a while before deciding. “Alright, I’ll do as you say then.”

Likewise, she thought Justin wouldn't take back the shares. Jolly leaned against the couch and sighed. "Honestly, Chris, I envy you a little now."

"What's there to be envious about?"

"That you don't have any relationship problems."

Jolly turned and lay on her stomach against the armrest, looking at Rachel with crystal-clear eyes, "Why have you never loved anyone else apart from Justin?"

"Maybe it's because I don't live as passionately as you do."

Rachel took the freshly printed papers from the printer, then replied to Jolly with a smile, "You may be envious of me, but do you know how many are envious of you?"

"Envious of my blindness?"

"Envious of your courage to love and hate, as well as your ability to let something go."

After securing the document, Rachel grabbed her bag, ready to head out. "Alright, let's not get envious of whoever. Your mom and dad are landing tomorrow, aren't they? You'd better think about how you should discuss Leroy with them."

Though Jolly claimed to still not be on speaking terms with Leroy, based on Rachel's observation, there had been a few nights where Jolly only came home after midnight, and the clothes she changed out of the next day would either smell like Texan barbecue or Asian hot pot.

Well, she'd be a Dutchman if Jolly said she hadn't been out with Leroy for late-night suppers. Meanwhile, Justin and the kids had been sitting in the restaurant for a while when Rachel arrived.

"Over here, Mommy!"

Charlotte waved at Rachel as she stood on her chair. However, Justin brought her down and reprimanded her for stepping on the chair with her shoes on.

"My shoes are clean, though!"

"Even if they are, you can't do that."

"Hmph!"

The moment Rachel arrived at the table, she found an indignant Charlotte with her arms crossed in front of her chest and head turned away from Justin.



“What’s going on?” Rachel rubbed her fingers against Charlotte’s cheek. “Has someone upset our little princess? Look at your puffy little cheeks.”

“Daddy snapped at me.” The little girl pouted. “Is that so? Why don’t we punish Daddy by not giving him any ice cream later?”

“Okay!”

“I only told her off for stepping on the chair with her shoes on,” said Justin helplessly. “How am I in the wrong now?”

“Why snap at her when you could’ve just told her?”

“I didn’t, I swear.”

“You did!” Charlotte glared at her father. “You were like a big, bad meanie!”

On the other hand, Samuel put all his attention on his juice, looking like he was siding with Charlotte unconditionally. There was no way he was going to stand up for Justin. Alas, nothing Justin said or did would help him clear his name now.

He turned to Charlotte, feeling helpless. “You sure have gotten yourself two great backers.” At that, Charlotte stuck her tongue out at him, looking all smug.

In actuality, Rachel would normally be the one to educate Charlotte on her behavior away from home, and she would be assertive about it most of the time despite wanting to go soft on the little girl. However, it was a special day that day, and she felt bad for Charlotte when she saw her cherubic little face, for the little girl still didn’t know her father would be leaving Riverdale soon.

“Have you ordered anything yet?” Rachel asked.

“I’ve ordered a few,” said Justin as he handed the menu to her. “See if there’s anything you want.”

“I’ll just have a glass of juice.”

Rachel couldn’t be bothered to look through the menu as she pulled out the entrusted shareholder agreement and handed it to Justin. “This is for you.”

He opened the folder and frowned upon seeing its content.

“Don’t turn me down just yet.” Rachel spoke up before he said anything. “I was originally planning to return the shares to you, but I doubt you’ll accept them. As such, I took Jolly on her suggestion and did this. Charlotte’s still little; she can’t make the decisions, and

I'm not part of Burton Group, nor do I want to get myself involved with its issues. I still think it's better if they're in your hands."

Moments later, Justin closed the folder and put it aside. "I'll take it."

"Isn't this much simpler?" Rachel smiled. Halfway through their meal, the kids went to the play area to play with the slides, leaving Rachel and Justin at the table.

"When are you heading off?"

"Tomorrow."

"So soon?"

"The plan was to leave today, but the kids' new semester only starts tomorrow, right? No harm done staying another day, lest she kicks up a fuss."

"She'll kick up a fuss even after you leave tomorrow."

At the thought of Charlotte's indignant look, Rachel couldn't help chuckling. "You'd better be prepared. She'll definitely call and snap at you after she finds out."

"If only she's as sweet-natured as Samuel. Maybe she'll be an easier child if she grows up with you."

"Why would you say that?" Rachel glanced at him. "Charlotte's a sweet child too. She's just a little more bratty in front of you because she knows you spoil her. She's an angel outside."

"Are you sure? I heard from Victor that she already caused a ton of trouble soon after starting school. Victor's the one who usually settles it for us, seeing that we're swamped with work when the other parents went to complain to the school."

"Well, she's just a kid. It's fine if she's a little mischievous."

The two weren't quite sure what to make of Charlotte and her 'glorious' feat in school.

As night fell, the neon signs lit up one after another, illuminating the city's nightlife. However, away from the crowded places, the private kitchen in a quiet old alley added a hint of warmth to the liveliness.

Meanwhile, a tall figure stood in front of the window of a hospital ward. Behind him came Edison's voice. "President Sutton, we've already found everything out. Here's all the information."

Ryan took the envelope from him and pulled out a fresh piece of letter-sized paper. On it was the detective's investigation report on Leroy's background. It was different from the one Justin had gotten way earlier; this one was evidently more interesting.

"It seems that they don't really think much of him either."

"Why would they when he's just an illegitimate son? Otherwise, he wouldn't have grown up with just his mother, and he wouldn't have to work as a model later to support them both. However, who'd have thought they could never produce an heir on their side? Now, the old man's on his last legs due to his serious illness, leaving the woman to take charge of the gang. If they don't bring him back and turn him into their puppet, the people below won't listen to her."

"In other words, they do want him to go back."

"That's right, or they wouldn't send people to protect him. No doubt things will turn chaotic on their side if an opposing gang manages to get to him."

Ryan fell into deep thought after hearing Edison's words. "Whether he goes back or not, the situation here will still be in my favor."

After Edison left, Ryan made an overseas call. "Hello? It's me."

His face reflected against the window, and his eyes seemed to be stamped with an inborn aloofness.

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## Chapter 508

Later on, Justin, Rachel, and the kids left the restaurant. Though Charlotte had been upset with Justin during dinner, she was now in his arms, fighting to stay awake while yawning continuously.

After Rachel opened the car door, Samuel consciously climbed into his safety seat. "Charlotte, say goodbye to Daddy," said Rachel.

"Bye-bye, Daddy."

The little girl held Justin's head and gave him a big wet kiss on the cheek. Justin kissed her forehead in return and put her into the car, buckling her seatbelt for her as well.

"Go to bed early when you get home, okay? Don't stay up late, and you have to eat your meals with the nanny whenever your mommy's busy."

"Okay, Daddy. You're becoming very naggy." Charlotte yawned while complaining, then said groggily, "Daddy, don't forget to pick Samuel and me up this weekend."

"Alright," promised Justin, giving her a hug before closing the door.

"Drive safe."

Rachel nodded in acknowledgment. "Come back often if you can. Charlotte will miss you."

"Sure. Take care of yourself."

"You too."

The weather had gotten warmer after Springfest, but the nights were still chilly.

The two chatted in front of the car for a long while before Rachel drove off, leaving Justin standing by the entrance of the private kitchen. With his hands in his pockets, he watched the tail lights gradually shrinking into a tiny, glowing dot before getting into his car. Justin would be leaving Riverdale by the next sunrise.

The so-called North Riverdale simply meant north of Riverdale. It sounded close to Riverdale, but in reality, the headquarter of Burton Group's subsidiary in North Riverdale was very far away. A train ride would take up to ten-plus hours, and a flight would take over three hours. Thus, driving back would clearly be unrealistic.

Rachel believed Justin would have to go back on his words even though he had promised Charlotte to pick her up on the weekend..

The following day, Rachel and Jolly searched left and right for Richard and Marilyn at the arrival hall of Riverdale Airport.

"Isn't the flight supposed to land at 2.30PM?" Jolly checked her watch. "What's up with that?"

Since Richard and Marilyn said they would be landing at the airport by 2.30PM, Rachel and Jolly came to pick them up at the airport. However, it was already fast approaching 3.30PM, yet they were nowhere in sight.

"I'll go and ask for their flight information. Try calling your parents again." With that, Rachel headed to the information desk.

"Hi, I'd like to inquire about some flight information. Has this flight landed?" Rachel handed her phone with the flight number displayed on the screen to the staff behind the desk.

"Please hold on. Let me check."

"Thank you."

A moment later, the staff looked up at Rachel and said, "The plane landed on time an hour ago."

"Is that so? Thanks."

Knowing Mr. and Mrs. Carter, they would've at least texted us if their flight landed an hour ago. Rachel thought this was weird.

Meanwhile, Jolly was still trying to reach her parents but couldn't get through no matter how many times she tried. "Chris, I can't reach my parents. Did you manage to find out anything?"

"The staff said the plane landed an hour ago."

"What's going on?"

Just as Jolly was about to make another call, her phone rang, and the caller ID made her eyes light up. "It's my mom."

Unfortunately, before she could even feel at ease, an unfamiliar male voice on the other end of the line made her frown.

"Is this Miss Carter?"

"W-Who's this?"

"That's beside the question. Now, Miss Carter, you must be anxious when you still haven't managed to pick up Mr. and Mrs. Carter, am I right? I'm calling to let you know that they're perfectly safe now, and you don't have to worry."

"What have you done to my parents?"

Jolly's ghastly face startled Rachel, and the former's words pierced her eardrums too. Has something gone wrong?! Rachel grew nervous in an instant.

“Relax, I’ve merely asked Mr. and Mrs. Carter to stay a little longer. However, as for whether they can successfully take the next flight home, it all comes down to you, Miss Carter.”

“What do you mean?”

“You’re still young, Miss Carter. Why do you want to drag yourself into a situation you have no control over? There are so many good men in this world. There’s more than one way to skin a cat. Do you want to see your family suffer for your choices?”

Aside, Rachel’s heart skipped a beat upon hearing so. “What in the world are you trying to say?” A little obtuse, Jolly couldn’t catch what the caller was implying.

“I won’t beat around the bush anymore, then. Break up with Leroy, or I guarantee something like this will continue to happen.”

Jolly’s pupils shrunk instantly, and she balled her free hand into a fist, clenching it hard.

“Who the heck are you?!”

“Think it over, Miss Carter. This is just a warning.” With that, the caller hung up. “Jolly.” Rachel reacted quickly and supported the woman.

“Chris, what should I do?”

“Do as he says first,” Rachel said at once. “The most important thing now is having your parents return safely. We’ll figure out the rest after that.”

“Alright.” Jolly clenched her teeth. However, before Jolly could figure out what to do about her relationship with Leroy, she suddenly got a call from Marilyn.

“Jolly.” Marilyn’s voice sounded the second Jolly answered the call. Flabbergasted, she asked in a shaky voice, “Mom, are you and Dad okay?”

“We’re fine. It’s just that something went wrong with the lift at the airport over here. Your dad and I got stuck in it, so we missed our flight and had to wait for the next one. However, there wasn’t any signal in the lift. We managed to open up a gap and asked the staff to call you with my phone. Who’d have thought we were saved as soon as the staff ended the call?”

Jolly gritted her teeth upon hearing Marilyn’s words, unable to utter a word. At that, Rachel hurriedly said, “We got the call, Mrs. Carter. Are you guys okay now?”

“We’re fine. We’ve changed the flight. Alright, I’m hanging up. Richard and I are boarding now. It’ll probably be pretty late by the time we reach Riverdale, so don’t

bother picking us up anymore. We'll get a taxi ourselves. You girls should sleep early, okay?" After Marilyn hung up, the screen dimmed.

"It's all okay now. You heard your mom; they're already getting into the plane." Rachel patted Jolly's shoulder.

"I still don't feel easy. I want to wait for them here."

"It'll be around midnight by the time they land. Are you sure you want to wait here?" Rachel checked the time. "How about this? We'll go back first, then come over when it's almost time."

Jolly shook her head, looking beyond awful. "He said this is just a warning."

In other words, if she refused to break up with Leroy, more 'accidents' like this would continue to pop up.

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## Chapter 509

"Don't rush to a decision just yet. We should talk to Leroy about this first." Rachel held Jolly's hand. "Also, don't let your imaginations run wild. At the very least, you have to know what's up with his family and who was behind that call. We can't let others threaten us for nothing, don't you think so?"

Jolly nodded in agreement. "Okay."

"Let's not wait here for your parents anymore. They'll surely be worried about you and assume something is up if they see you here in the middle of the night."

"Yeah."

"Let's go home, then. I'll contact Leroy."

"Sure." After much persuasion, Rachel finally successfully calmed Jolly down and took her away from the airport.

Later on, Richard and Marilyn arrived at Riverdale in the middle of the night. As soon as they got home, they texted Jolly and Rachel and even sent them a picture of the souvenirs they got, telling them to come and collect it themselves.

“There you go. There’s no need to worry anymore,” said Rachel while comforting Jolly. “Get some sleep. Leroy will come to the company tomorrow. We’ll sit down and talk then.”

Jolly took a deep breath. “Chris, can I sleep with you tonight?”

“Of course.”

Rachel hugged her at that. In the years before returning to Riverdale, she and Jolly would often fumble and hug while sobbing from a meltdown after taking care of Samuel. At that time, it really felt like they only had each other.

Early the next morning at Hudson Pharmaceuticals, Xander left and closed the door behind him after bringing some refreshments into Rachel’s office, giving the three some personal space. Meanwhile, Leroy sat across from Rachel and Jolly, looking like a legit interrogation.

“I’ve already gotten someone to dig into it, but nothing has come up just yet.” Leroy took pains to speak up. “I’m really sorry. I didn’t think Mr. and Mrs. Carter would be dragged into this.”

Knowing it was tough for Jolly to put her thoughts to words, Rachel spoke on her behalf. “Now that things have come to this, we’ll be able to get ourselves ready sooner the more we know. Regardless of whether you still want to be with Jolly, you should be a little more open about this now, don’t you think so?”

Leroy’s gaze was enveloped in a mix of emotions. He was a bright and warm guy, but even his brows were locked into a deep furrow at this time; it seemed like a frosty fog had enveloped the warm, spring sun.

On the other hand, Jolly hit the roof. “My parents nearly lost their lives, and you’re still keeping things to yourself? Just what sort of dark secret does your family have that you can’t speak of?!”

“That’s not what I mean. I know I should’ve told you long ago.”

“Say it, then. We’re all ears.”

Richard and Marilyn’s near-death incident gave Jolly such a massive blow that she couldn’t talk about this calmly.



"I'm sure you guys know what Lush Enterprise does, so I won't go into that," said Leroy. "Strictly speaking, I don't have anything to do with Lush Enterprise in the first place. I've lived with my mom in Riverdale my whole life. I had no idea who my birth father was until I was twenty. After my mother's passing, someone from Lush found me and called me their young master."

The guy had come to persuade Leroy to return to Enistan, and this only happened a few years ago.

At that time, he had only begun modeling, working part-time while doing his bachelor's degree to pay for his tuition. One day, the counselor sent him to the dean's office, where a man in a suit greeted him deferentially, calling him his young master. He even asked Leroy to return to Enistan with him and inherit the family business.

"I didn't know anything about Lush back then. I thought it was just some simple company where the boss had no direct descendants, so they remembered my existence. However, my mom had suffered so much through the years. If he had appeared sooner, she might not have died..."

At that, grief laced Leroy's eyes. Rachel thought from the bottom of her heart that this man was truly gentle. Even when he was talking about his mother's death and his resentment toward his father, he was still gentle. His sadness outweighed his resentment.

"Did you go back?"

"Once. I went back with that guy. I wanted to know what kind of guy my birth father was." Leroy followed that assistant to Enistan. That was his first time eating in a palatial residence and the first time he met his birth father. But very quickly, he found out his father was suffering from cancer and wouldn't live for long.

"He wanted me to stay, as well as that woman."

"That woman?" Rachel was puzzled. "His wife. The guy who came looking for me in Riverdale was actually her subordinate."

The old man succeeded Lush's tradition in keeping his head in work, having not much interest in women. All these years, his missus was the only woman he had around, but they had no children.

"They probably didn't have any kids, so they brought me back and even arranged a marriage for me. If I stayed, everything would go according to their plan."

Rachel wasn't sure how to feel after hearing Leroy's words. She thought it was a sentimental father-son meeting, but who'd have thought it was just an exchange of interest?

Anyone could tell the old man and the woman's wish for Leroy to go back to them wasn't out of the so-called kinship, but because the old man was on his last legs. A gang that stressed bloodline inheritance like Lush would need someone to take over after the old man passed, even if that person would inevitably become a puppet.

If Leroy had agreed to stay, a marriage would inevitably be bestowed upon him, but who would eventually rule Lush? Perhaps it would be the underboss or even that woman, but anyhow, it would never be Leroy, the illegitimate son.

"I came back to Riverdale after that visit and never went back again."

Leroy had explicitly turned down the old man and the woman's generous invitation, for he would rather be an average Joe and live his life earning every penny honestly. Despite them saying that they wouldn't force Leroy, but in reality, they never gave up.

Six years ago, Leroy's career in showbiz suddenly rose by leaps and bounds. Countless resources were thrown in his way; any script he was given would be a big production directed by a big shot, and his concerts would sell out in a snap...

Jolly frowned in response and couldn't help asking, "Are you trying to say that your birth father sees an importance in you?"

Leroy shook his head. "Do you guys understand what 'kill by flattery' means?"

It was to send someone up into the heavens, only to have him plunge into hell when he least expected it—that was what the woman was doing.

"Starting from two years ago, that woman had her men engage with me frequently in all sorts of situations. She has invaded every single corner of my life."

A life like that was horrifying. One wouldn't know when their manager or assistant would suddenly become someone else's spy, reporting their every move...

At that point, Rachel and Jolly had gotten a good picture of things. "The one who threatened Jolly was one of her men, wasn't it?" Rachel asked. Jolly bore into Leroy as she waited for his answer.

He took a deep breath and slowly exhaled with his head hung low, looking as though a massive boulder was weighing on his shoulders, making him unable to look straight into the eyes of the people in front of him. "Probably."

Apart from that woman, he couldn't think of anyone else who would do something like this. "Why couldn't you have told me any of this sooner?" Jolly continued to bore into him. "If you had told me sooner, I might have been able to warn my parents. We might have been able to figure something out. Why would you choose to hide this from me? Do you think I'm not worthy of knowing any of this?"

‘Jolly, let’s break up.’

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## Chapter 510

Jolly had never expected that Leroy would break up with her. It had been more than twenty years since she was born, but no one had ever dumped her before. When she was in a relationship with Ryan in the past, she was the one who left without saying anything and ditched him.

Although she was burning with fury, she found it hard to vent her anger. “What did you just say?”

Leroy looked up. “We’re really not a good match. I’m sorry. Let’s end it here.”

Seeing that Jolly’s expression was gloomy, Rachel said, “You have to think it through, Leroy. You can’t break up with her just because you feel like doing it.”

“I’ve given it some serious thought. It’s been a pleasure getting to know all of you. Thanks, and sorry.” After finishing his words, Leroy rose from the chair, and Rachel did the same.

“I’ll take my leave now.” He then directly left the office. Just when Rachel wanted to say something, Jolly cut her off and snapped, “You have no right to break up with me! I was the one who was supposed to say it! Let’s end it here, then! I didn’t want to be with you to begin with!”

Like a lioness whose fur was standing on end, Jolly was infuriated. After the man was gone, she turned to look at Rachel and said, “How does he have the nerve to break up with me? I was supposed to say it. He has no right to do that to me!”

“Jolly.”

“He crossed the line. He’s a terrible guy just like Ryan!” Jolly kept cursing at Leroy for a long time before she suddenly took a seat and hung her head low. “How could he break up with me just like that?”

Rachel patted her shoulders. “Don’t you want to break up with him as well? He did it so that you didn’t have to. Honestly speaking, he has done you a favor.”

All of a sudden, Jolly wrapped her arms around Rachel and cried her eyes out. While patting her back, Rachel placated her by saying, "Just cry it all out. You'll be fine."

As she consoled Jolly, she took a glance at the couch across from her where Leroy's coat was placed. On such a chilly day, he had left the place without even taking the coat with him. How was it possible that he was such a cold-hearted man?

Before the meet-up with Leroy on this day, Rachel knew that Jolly was prepared to break up with him.

Jolly was indeed a fervent woman who could do anything for the man she loved, but she would never let her parents take the risk alongside her. Leroy's identity and background meant that she would be faced with various risks by getting together with him, and her parents would definitely be affected. She could never be so selfish.

Once she was done crying, she wiped the tears off her eyes and uttered, "Don't tell my parents about it. I don't want them to worry."

"No problem."

"I'll tell them that I broke up with Leroy peacefully sometime later."

"Sure, you have the final say."

"It's fine even if we don't fall in love, right?" Jolly lifted her head. Her eyes were red and swollen, looking like two peaches. "We have kids and our own careers. Our future is bright."

Rachel had the urge to tell her that it was indeed fine even if she didn't fall in love, but the fact that there was a man she loved but couldn't get was her biggest source of suffering. "You have a point. You're doing fine on your own."

"It's not fine!" Jolly suddenly started bawling again while cursing at Leroy. "That b\*stard!"

A helpless Rachel passed her a piece of tissue to wipe her tears. She wondered when this situation would end.

In the afternoon, Rachel had to pick up the kids from school.

"Mommy!" Charlotte was the first to rush out of the crowd as she crashed into Rachel's arms like a rabbit. On the other hand, Samuel, who was behind her, was as slow as a snail.

Rachel beckoned to Samuel to get him to walk faster. After all, it would be hard for her to drive the car out of the school compound when more people gathered at the

entrance. Just then, a bashful figure was seen appearing beside her. "Are you Charlotte's mom, Madam?"

A startled Rachel looked down and saw an adorable young boy gazing at her with his head tipped back. He appeared sheepish as his face was all red; it was as though he had summoned his courage to speak to her.

"Why are you following me?" Charlotte immediately got out of Rachel's embrace and glared at the young boy with childish vigilance. The young boy's face turned a shade redder. "I- I'm sorry."

"The entrance is pretty wide. How could you say that he's following you?" Rachel pulled Charlotte's hand. "You can't be so fierce to your schoolmate."

"It's fine, Madam." The young boy hurriedly shook his head. Charlotte ignored him as she urged Rachel to leave immediately. "Let's go, Mommy. I'd like to have some French fries."

"Say goodbye to your schoolmate, then."

"Let's go, Mommy!" Charlotte wasn't willing to do as she was told. She then turned her head and shouted, "Hurry up, Samuel! We're getting some French fries."

A helpless Rachel could only leave this place with them.

"Madam!" The young boy ran after them. "Madam."

A puzzled Rachel asked, "What's wrong?"

"What are you doing?" Impatience was written all over Charlotte's face. "Why do you keep following us, Freddie?"

"I..." the young boy muttered, but he couldn't bring himself to say what was on his mind. "What on earth do you want?"

Unable to take it anymore, Samuel yawned and said, "He wants to invite you to his birthday party this weekend."

The young boy appeared even more bashful. It was then Rachel understood his intention as she bent down and asked, "Is it your birthday this weekend?"

"Yes." The young boy nodded solemnly. "Can I invite Charlotte and Samuel over?"

"Sure, but you have to tell them about it yourself. I can't decide for them." Rachel put on a smile and patted Charlotte's shoulder, hinting at the girl to respond to her classmate.

There was a fierce expression on Charlotte's face. "Did you follow me all day just to tell me this?"

"Huh? Yes." The young boy was visibly shy as he looked meekly at her and Samuel. "Can you two come?"

Samuel didn't like attending parties, so he shook his head. "I'm not going." The young boy instantly sported a disappointed expression and appeared uneasy. "A-Alright. I'm sorry."

Perhaps he believed that since the two of them grew up together, Charlotte would also turn him down as Samuel wasn't going to the party.

Therefore, he never asked Charlotte about it as he was ready to leave while feeling dejected. Charlotte placed her hands on her hips and snapped, "Hey, you haven't asked me yet."

"What's wrong with you, Freddie?"

The young boy was startled for a moment before asking, "Can you come?"

"Is there any cake? I love strawberry-flavored cakes."

"Yes, my mommy said that she's going to make a three-layered strawberry cake. There will also be your favorite strawberry chocolate."

"That sounds great." Charlotte nodded with pleasure. "I'll see you, then."

"Alright!" The young boy bowed his head excitedly. "See you! Goodbye, Charlotte's mom."

Meanwhile, Rachel was dumbfounded while she stood to the side. She soon came to her senses and said, "Goodbye, Freddie."

Is Charlotte some kind of socialite or princess at school? Just by looking at the way Charlotte bossed the young boy around, one might think that the birthday party was actually for her. Who in the world would take part in a friend's party and still demand what kind of cake had to be prepared?

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## Chapter 511

Rachel was relieved that Charlotte had agreed to go to her schoolmate's birthday party this weekend; that way, she would be able to tell her that Justin wouldn't be in Riverdale at a later time. Charlotte would forget about it when she was exhausted. By delaying the revelation, Rachel could let the young kid enjoy some happy days.

Meanwhile, to make sure that Jolly wouldn't stay at home and become shrouded in misery, Rachel brought her out for meals almost every day.

"Have a taste of it, Godmother. It's delicious." Charlotte's hands were covered in grease when she picked up some French fries and dipped them in the ice cream before stuffing them into Jolly's mouth.

"Oh! Good grief! Thank you!"

"What do you mean by good grief?"

"It's just an exclamation."

"What is an exclamation?"

"It's like saying 'Wow!' or 'Fantastic!', just things. like that."

It was difficult for Jolly to take care of a kid, but it was the best idea to distract her. Samuel didn't need anyone to take care of him. After he learned to walk, he would help cover Jolly and Rachel up with quilts in the middle of the night from time to time. Therefore, Charlotte's naughtiness finally proved to be useful at this point.

After all the dishes were served, Rachel started taking photos of them. While feeding Charlotte some food, Jolly asked, "When did you become one of those people who would take photos of the dishes before having them? You hated those people in the past."

"I'm sending these photos to Justin. I suppose he misses the kids now," Rachel replied without lifting her head, then sent all the photos to Justin. Jolly uttered impassively, "I think he misses a certain someone, not the kids."

"Can't the food keep your mouth shut?"

"How can you be so fierce to me when I've just fallen out of love?"

"Have more food, then. I'll pay the bill."

"Stop treating me in such a perfunctory way." Jolly shook her head as she watched Rachel reply to the messages. "Well, it's spring now. I guess it's the season to watch Animal Planet."

Rachel wasn't interested in responding to her. After Jolly's breakup with Leroy, whenever she saw the secretaries speaking to the new male apprentices in the office, she would go over and ask about their progress. She would also tell them to find out whether their horoscopes were a match.

If Jolly keeps doing this, everyone in the office will go mad while she's still clear-headed, Rachel thought.

Darkness finally descended. Le Grandeur was a city in the north where it would take a person three hours to travel from Riverdale by plane. The lights outside the office gradually went out. Other than Frankie, who was still handling some documents, Justin was the only one left in the office. After he was done going through the documents, he leaned against the chair and stroked his temples. There was a hint of tiredness on his face.

He had to start everything anew in this place. Even though he had brought with him the name of Burton Group, he hadn't managed to gain a footing here due to various reasons. There were quite some predicaments he had to face.

The office here was about half the size of the previous headquarters of Burton Group. Not only were the windows small, but the smell of new furniture also lingered in this place.

Frankie was initially displeased with this place as he wanted to tear down the walls and get the office renovated, but the suggestion was turned down by Justin. They were just starting out with this new company, so it was pointless to do anything that didn't yield any meaningful results. He didn't have any demands when it came to the looks of the office.

Not long after he closed his eyes, his phone screen suddenly lit up and displayed Rachel's messages. There were more than ten photos that showed the kids having a meal under some yellowish lights. Charlotte insisted on stuffing French fries into Jolly's mouth while the woman sported a look of disdain.

'Today, Charlotte's schoolmate invited her to attend his birthday party this weekend. Did you know what she said?'

'She demanded the kind of cake she wanted, and she even asked the young kid to prepare the snacks she loved.'

'Those who have no idea what's going on might think that she's a princess who is visiting her subject's house instead of attending a birthday party.'

The messages kept popping up on Justin's phone screen. He slowly scrolled down as though he didn't want to finish reading the messages so soon. He wasn't aware that he no longer looked tired as there was a faint smile on his face.



‘Have you had dinner?’

Justin subconsciously typed that he hadn’t had his dinner, but he deleted it at the last minute. The message he sent was, ‘I’m going to have my dinner.’

‘You have to have your meals on time. Be mindful of what you eat.’

‘Alright, you too. You’ve been working hard lately.’ After that, Rachel did not send him any more messages.

Justin stared at the phone screen for a long time before he took another look at the photos sent to him by Rachel. The kids were having – fast food like pizzas, which didn’t look like a healthy meal. Rachel was good at persuading others to eat healthily, but she would spoil the kids when it came to their food choices.

Just then, someone was heard knocking on the door. Frankie said, “It’s getting late now, President Burton. I’ll order a meal for you.”

“Order a pizza, then.”

“Huh?” Frankie thought he heard it wrong.

“I’d also like some spaghetti, a fried chicken platter, and iced juice.” Justin listed the food he wanted nonchalantly. He looked at the phone screen as though he was going through the menu of a fast food restaurant.

Frankie scratched his head. Although he was puzzled, he didn’t ask any questions. He nodded and said, “I’ll order everything right away.”

It would take the delivery guy some time to send their food to this place, so Frankie decided to report to Justin about the progress of the project. “All other problems have been solved except for fire control. It entirely depends on the subjective view of the other party. If they don’t approve it, our proposal will be dismissed directly.”

“Arrange a meal with Mr. Miller this weekend.”

– “President Burton...” Frankie was hesitant. “You’re fully aware of what Mr. Miller is like. Other than being an alcoholic, he also loves going to those places...”

“It’s fine. I’ll have a meal with him this weekend.”

Frankie had no choice but to agree to it while feeling bitter in his heart. One of the reasons for the north’s stagnant economy was its geographical environment. Other than that, corruption was rampant in those departments. Although such a problem existed in all parts of the country, it was the worst in the north.

Justin was born with a golden spoon, and he was the heir to the Burton Family. He could basically do anything he wanted in Riverdale, so there had never been a need for him to entertain any corrupt officials over dinner.

However, he had to start everything anew in this place. “There’s one more thing, President Burton. Julian has returned to Riverdale.”

“How long did he stay overseas this time?”

“He spent the entire spring overseas. From what I’ve gathered, he visited your aunt at the nursing home once, and he left Montenegro after that.”

“Where did he go?”

“According to his flight information, he came back from Los Anglia. If it wasn’t a direct flight, he probably changed planes in Seranka.”

Justin frowned. If his memory served him right, the elderly couple from the Carter Family had spent the spring holidays in Seranka. An idea flashed through his mind, but he couldn’t quite grasp it. “What is Leroy doing lately?”

“He has turned down all his jobs for the next few months. His company told the media that he’s taking a break due to health reasons. I’ve talked to them, and they said that they’re not going to expose the news that he and Miss Carter have separated for the time being. However, negative comments about Miss Carter have started circulating online following his break from work.”

“Talk to the media outlets that are on good terms with us and tell them not to write about it.”

“Don’t worry. I already called them yesterday, and they’re willing to not write anything about Miss Carter for your sake.”

Justin nodded and set his mind at ease.

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## Chapter 512

Rachel was always concerned about her friends as she would do everything she could to take care of them.

After Justin left Riverdale, he was most worried that she would be distressed over Jolly and Leroy's affairs. After all, no one could make any predictions when it came to love, and her concerns might do more harm than good..

They were considered outsiders, after all. All they could do was reduce the criticism against Jolly and Leroy while protecting their privacy.

After the meal was delivered, Justin said to Frankie, "It's getting late now. Go back and get some rest. You can continue working tomorrow."

"It's fine. I still have some documents to go through. I still have to work even if I go home, so I'll just stay here a while longer." As soon as Frankie finished speaking, his phone started ringing. He took a glance at it and hung it up. Justin asked, "Was it your wife?"

"Yes." Frankie scratched his head bashfully. "Go home now and call your wife and daughter. Don't always hang up on her. Conflicts can easily arise as you're in a long-distance relationship with her."

Frankie replied, "It's fine. She's an easy-going person. She's just worried that I can't get used to life in the north." Justin uttered, "It must be tough for you to come here with me."

"What are you talking about, President Burton? I've been working for you for years, and you've been treating me well."

Frankie started working for Justin after he graduated, and they had been through thick and thin over the years. Although he was Justin's subordinate on paper, they were actually best friends. Therefore, even though he was given a better offer by Julian, he steadfastly decided to follow Justin to the north. Just then, Frankie's phone started ringing again, and Justin urged him to go home.

"I'll take my leave, then."

"Alright."

As soon as Frankie reached the door, Justin suddenly called out to him and said, "Frankie, it won't take long before we'll go back to Riverdale, Tell your wife and child to rest assured."

Frankie was startled for a moment, then his eyes were slightly covered in tears. Solemnly, he said, "I believe you."

Regardless of what predicaments they faced, he had the confidence that Justin would lead them to solve all the problems. They would definitely go back to Riverdale one day.

After Frankie was gone, Justin removed the wrapper around the pizza. He started having his meal while looking at the photos sent to him by Rachel. The table lamp cast a layer of softness on his usually cold-looking face.

Soon, it was the day of the birthday party on the weekend. In the morning, Rachel urged Jolly to quickly prepared herself outside the bathroom.

“Can I not attend?” “You have to come with me. I’m worried that I’ll come home and find you unconscious after consuming too much alcohol.”

“Do I look like such a fragile person to you?” Jolly’s voice was heard coming from the bathroom. “We broke up a long time ago, and I’ve gotten over it.”

“I’m glad that you’ve gotten over it. I’ve prepared some clothes for you. Get changed and put on some proper makeup.”

“Are you saying that my makeup is usually tacky?”

Ten minutes later, Jolly got changed and came out of the bathroom. Rachel gazed at her with satisfaction. “That’s great. You finally look like a godmother now.”

“Can’t I look like a mother?”

“A mother would never wear a dress and head out with the kids.”

“Why?”

“Have you forgotten what happened after I told you to take care of Samuel for one day when he was two years old? You were wearing a dress that day.”

Jolly’s face fell as she recalled the horrible memory. At that time, Samuel just learned to walk, and Rachel had only started working. She was tormented by Hernandez at work on a daily basis, and Julian happened to be too busy to take care of the kid. That was why she had asked Jolly to look after Samuel.

It was the first time Jolly headed out with a kid on her own, so she had never thought about how difficult it would be. On that day, she still put on her mini skirt and carried Samuel to school. She had even brought Samuel into the laboratory, not knowing what would soon happen to her.

Samuel was still very young at that time, so he was curious about everything he saw. While he kept throwing things to the ground, Jolly had to follow him and pick everything up. Given that she was wearing stilettos and a mini skirt, it was expected that she would

fall to the ground. The worst part about it was that she had fallen right in front of her previous schoolmate with her bottom facing the man. It was the most embarrassing day of her life, and she didn't want to think about it again.

Jolly coughed. "Well, stop talking about it. Anyway, you'll be responsible for looking after the kids while I look fabulous at the party."

Rachel replied with a smile, "Sure, you'll be the fairest of them all." When they reached the house of Charlotte's

schoolmate, many cars were already parked in front of the entrance. As soon as they entered the courtyard, they saw a fair-looking young boy gently pushing the nanny's hand away and dashing forward. "Charlotte! You're here as well, Samuel."

A helpless Samuel shrugged. Rachel thought that Samuel had to come into contact with young kids of the same age more frequently as it would do him no good to always behave maturely. Therefore, she decided to bring him to the party.

Since Freddie was in his own house, he appeared more vigorous than when he was at the school entrance. "My aunt bought me a new game console, Charlotte. Why don't we play it together?"

"We'll talk about it later. I need some water now."

"There's juice inside." The young kids then skipped toward the house while Rachel and Jolly followed them.

Jolly took a glance at the exterior of the villa and remarked, "It's a good house, but the owners are pretty mannerless. They're not even around to receive the guests. I suppose they're the nouveau riche."

"You're invited to the party, but you still call them the nouveau riche." "Let's make a bet. I'm sure the interior design of the house must be extremely gaudy."

As they spoke, they reached the door of the villa. Just then, Freddie called out, "Mommy, Auntie, Charlotte's mom is here."

Jolly immediately kept her mouth shut as the two of them looked up and followed the voice. Freddie's mother was a young and demure-looking woman. With a smile, she gazed at Rachel and said, "How are you, Charlotte's mom? I'm Freddie's mom."

"Hi. I'm Charlotte's mom, and she's her godmother."

Rachel caught herself as she was unable to speak any further. She was unable to put on a smile as she pursed her lips and subconsciously took a glance at Jolly.

On the other hand, Jolly's smile froze as well upon seeing the figure standing behind Freddie's mother.

The last time they met the woman, they were in Sutton Manor. The meet-up turned out to be ugly for everyone while the woman watched on the side and hoped for the situation to exacerbate.

"It's been a long time." The woman beside Freddie's mother soon came to her senses as she examined Rachel and Jolly. "It's such a small world. I didn't expect to see you here."

A puzzled Freddie's mother asked, "What's wrong, Estelle? Do you know them?"

Rachel pressed her lips into a line, then said in a tone that was filled with mixed feelings, "We're just acquaintances; I've only met her once,"

"We know each other pretty well, though," Jolly uttered impassively and flashed a smile at the woman in front of her. Her gaze was filled with contempt. "Am I right, Mrs. Sutton?"

The woman's expression changed when she heard the other party calling her in such a disdainful way.

Who could have expected Freddie's aunt to be Estelle, Ryan's former wife?

They initially thought that they would never meet this woman again as they had nothing to do with each other anymore, but it so happened that they came across her over the weekend.

Is it a coincidence? Rachel balled up her fists.

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## Chapter 513

Expectedly, Estelle was infuriated after Jolly called her 'Mrs. Sutton'.

It had been three years since she divorced Ryan, but she never gave up on the title. She always claimed to be a member of the Sutton Family to outsiders, and she still lived with Mariam in Sutton Manor following the divorce.

However, Jolly's tone was full of disdain when she called her 'Mrs. Sutton'. With a dark expression, Estelle snapped, "We don't welcome you here, Jolly!"

"Jolly?" Freddie's mother became startled for a moment as the name rang a bell. When she recalled who the person was, her expression changed. Indeed, it's such a small world!

Jolly did not even frown. "If I'm not mistaken, Mrs. Sutton, it's the birthday party of Charlotte's schoolmate, Freddie. Freddie and his mom invited us, not you."

"You're in Dolton Residence. Do you think I don't have the final say?"

Just when Jolly wanted to refute her, Rachel stopped the woman. "Forget it. Charlotte's schoolmate is throwing a birthday party, so don't make it ugly. Let's go."

Since the kids had entered the house, it was fine for the adults to talk in a rather hostile manner.

Rachel then said to Freddie's mother, 'We're not going in. However, since the kids are here, it'll be hard to explain to them if we leave all of a sudden. Let them play for a while. I'll tell them that something happened and we have to leave. Is it alright for you, Mrs. Dolton?"

Freddie's mother was visibly relieved. Just when she was about to agree to it, Estelle cut her off.

"Stop pretending to be a nice person. You're Rachel, right?' Estelle swept a glance over Rachel and Jolly before sneering. "Both of you snatched other women's husbands and gave birth to their kids. That's how you cling to those men. You're just birds of a feather."

"Mind your language!" Jolly was most protective of her friends. She hadn't planned on making a scene, but she didn't expect Estelle to flare up and chastise Rachel as well.

"Am I not speaking the truth?" Estelle scoffed. "Everyone in Riverdale knows that you rely on the power of your family to cover up your dirty deeds."

Just then, a loud slap was heard as Estelle's face jerked to the side. Her eyes were filled with disbelief. "How dare you slap me!"

"Why wouldn't I dare to?" Jolly's gaze was dark as she spoke in a condescending tone. "Haven't you been telling everyone that I rely on my family to oppress you? I'm doing it right now so that your lie will turn into truth. You should thank me for that."

"You-

“Estelle, stop thinking that I have no idea what you’ve been doing behind my back for the past six months ever since I returned to Riverdale. I haven’t settled the score with you not because I’m foolish, nor am I afraid of you. I just can’t be bothered to deal with a sc\*mbag like you.”

“Stop slandering me, Jolly!” Estelle was barking like a mad person as her sister-in-law pulled her back. The noise had attracted the attention of the people at the party, so they gathered around – them.

Samuel and Charlotte caught sight of it as well, and they quickly went over. Still, they had no idea what was going on. “Mommy.”

Rachel stuffed the car key into Samuel’s hands. “Bring Charlotte to the car first. We’ll be leaving soon.” Samuel took a glance at them and asked maturely, “Are you alright? Do you want me to call Mr. Victor and Aunt Gloria?”

“There’s no need for that. It’ll be over soon.”

After a nod, Samuel took Charlotte’s hand and brought her away. Upon seeing that, the star of the party and fair-looking young boy quickly ran after them.

Presently, Rachel had no time to deal with the kids’ issues since onlookers were criticizing and talking about them.

“You’re fully aware of whether I’m slandering you or speaking the truth. Did I snatch your husband, Ryan?” Jolly scoffed. “If I wanted to marry him, you wouldn’t have stood a chance. six years ago. To put it bluntly, I dumped Ryan, and I don’t care that you got together with him and treated him like a piece of treasure. That was the case six years ago, and it’s still the same now.”

“Y-You...” Estelle’s face had turned pale. Her lips were shaking, but she was unable to say anything. Jolly gave her a sympathetic yet humiliating. look. “Are you furious? The man you’ve been conspiring to get is worthless in my eyes. Let’s go, Chris.”

As soon as she finished her words, Jolly turned around and left. While walking alongside her, Rachel couldn’t help but turn to look at the woman. Jolly’s petite yet delicate nose slightly tilted upward as she gave off a feeling of inherent nobility.

Someone like Estelle would never understand this kind of innate pride. At the entrance of Dolton Residence, Freddie’s mother smoothed things over and asked the guests to get into the house.

“I had no idea about the relationship between Freddie’s schoolmate and the woman.”

“What’s the point of saying this now? Do you want to mock me as well?”



“That’s not what I meant.”

“What did you mean, then?” Estelle shot her a glare and stepped into the house. It’s not over yet!

– Meanwhile, the fair-looking young boy was standing beside Rachel’s car with a dejected expression. “Why are you leaving all of a sudden, Charlotte? We haven’t even had cake yet.”

Samuel and Charlotte had already gotten into the car. While resting her chin on the window frame, Charlotte explained, “Didn’t you see everything? Your aunt was arguing with my mom and my godmother. We have to go home, so you’d better go back now.”

Freddie was perplexed. “Why?”

“Just ask your aunt about it.”

At this moment, Rachel and Jolly appeared. When Rachel saw the young kid standing beside her car, she felt sorry for him. “Freddie.”

The boy came to his senses and asked, “Are you going home, Charlotte’s mom?”

“Yes. I’m sorry that we can’t celebrate your birthday with you since something came up. We have to bring Charlotte and Samuel home. Anyway, I wish you a happy birthday.”

Freddie was on the brink of bursting into tears.

“But we haven’t had the cake yet.” A helpless Rachel stroked his head to placate him. “Go back now. Your mom must be worried about you.”

After she finished his words, she turned around and got into the car. A reluctant Freddie stood by the roadside and fell momentarily silent before asking, “Charlotte, will you stop being my friend from now on?”

She stuck her head out of the car and glowered at him with her crystal-like eyes. “Stop behaving like that! You’re annoying!”

Freddie pouted, feeling so aggrieved that he was about to burst into tears. Meanwhile, a helpless Charlotte scratched her head and rummaged through the space between the safety seats for some time before she found a bag. She then held it out of the window and said, “Take it.”

A dazed Freddie took the bag and saw that there was a beautiful box inside it that was wrapped with a ribbon. Evidently, it was a birthday gift..

The engine started as the red car moved out of Dolton Residence. Freddie snapped back to reality and shouted at the car, "Charlotte, I'll bring you a cake on Monday! It'll be a strawberry-flavored one!"

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## Chapter 514

In the car on the way back, Rachel was holding the wheel, but her gaze fell on Jolly. Ever since they left the Dolton Residence, Jolly had been silent, much unlike her usual self.

Rachel said, "Let's not go home for now. We can find someplace to eat, my treat. I'll ask Victor and Gloria to come, too. What about seafood? I know a restaurant that serves wonderful sea urchins."

"Great! I'm craving sea urchin risotto!" Charlotte's cheering could be heard from the backseat. Beside her, Samuel gestured for her to be quiet, but she stuck out her tongue before falling silent. "Barbecue sounds nice too. Or, we can go to a Japanese restaurant and have some sukiyaki."

"Chris, I'm fine."

Jolly finally lifted her head and glanced at Rachel. "I'm really okay. I can't bother with whatever she says. She had gone crazy just to be with Ryan, so why would I argue with a crazy person? I even pity her a little."

"What's there to pity about her?" Rachel was pissed. "It's just a divorce with Ryan, and she received enough money to live the rest of her life comfortably. So what else does she want?"

"Unrequited love is always pitiful," Jolly said, "so Ryan and Old Madam Sutton probably never told her about his heart problems or that he has to undergo bypass surgery for that." Stunned, Rachel thought for a bit, then nodded slightly. She has a point.

If Estelle knew that Ryan was hospitalized because of his heart disease, she wouldn't be laid back enough to return to her old home to attend her nephew's birthday party. She would probably stay at Ryan's sick bed all day long, serving him and waiting for him to be moved by her actions.

At that point, Rachel said, "You don't have to pity her. She's the one who brought this upon herself." Jolly heaved a sigh of relief, a relaxed expression on her face. "Yes, they did this to themselves."

She realized she was fortunate to get out of this weird circle in time.

"Let's go get some seafood. I hadn't eaten any in a while. My treat."

"Then I'll ask Victor and Gloria along?"

"Of course! Are you worried that I won't be able to pay for them as well?"

Rachel didn't say anything in reply. Meanwhile, at the Dolton Residence. After getting shamed by Jolly in public, Estelle wasn't interested in the party anymore. Instead, she shut herself in a room and refused to get out, no matter who asked her to.

Estelle's sister-in-law was a patient person, so she hastily went to her husband. "I hope nothing happened to Estelle."

"What could possibly happen? She did this to herself."

Estelle's brother, on the other hand, was a reasonable person. "It's been so long since she and Ryan divorced, but she still refused to leave his house. What a disgrace to our family!"

"Hey, don't say that. I feel sorry for her."

"Sorry? Is that reason enough for her to chase away Fred's classmate and her parents? Fred has always been an introvert, and he never had many friends in school. Now he finally found a nice little girl who's lively and adorable, but this happened. I think Estelle just wants everyone to suffer like she did!"

"Don't worry about that. I noticed that Fred seemed quite happy when he came back. He was going on about how Charlotte gave him a present. Adult matters wouldn't get in the way of children."

"That's because Charlotte was raised well. Miss Hudson was one of the most refined people I've ever met."

Since there were still guests outside waiting to socialize, they shouldn't spend too much time on this matter, so Estelle's brother said, "All right, you should just ignore her. She can live or die as she pleases."

With that, he went out and greeted the guests. Meanwhile, in the guestroom on the second floor, Estelle was smoking on the balcony. Her actions suggested that she was an avid smoker, and she even looked a little wild.

As she watched the smoke dissipate into the air, she frowned harder. She kept replaying those insults Jolly threw at her, and she grew even angrier. What right does she have?

What right did Jolly have to live a luxurious life right from birth and get engaged to Ryan early on? Even when she got pregnant, she could leave as she pleased, and even when she turned up years later, Ryan still longed for her.

Estelle turned on her phone, and after unlocking her device, an entire row of missed calls popped up on the screen. It had been a long time since Ryan willingly picked up her calls.

While she was still dumbfounded, her phone screen suddenly lit up. It turned out to be a call from Mariam. Panicking, she hastily stubbed out her cigarette, as if she feared Mariam would see it. However, it was just a call, so Mariam couldn't have seen it.

"Hello? Mom?"

"Estelle, when are you coming home today?"

"I might be home late, since it's my nephew's birthday. Mom, did you call me for something?"

"Yes, I want to ask something of you."

"Mom, we're family, so you don't have to put it like that. You can just tell me right out." Mariam fell silent on the other end of the line, as if she was trying to pick the right words.

"It's about Ryan. You haven't seen him in a while, right?"

"Yes."

At the mention of that, Estelle's heart sank as she said pitifully, "Mom, he stopped answering my calls ever since New Year's Day. I called his assistant, but they always said that he was busy. I have no idea what he's busy with."

"He's in hospital."

Hearing that, Estelle was deeply shocked.

"What?"

On the other end of the line, Mariam talked about Ryan's condition, then said, "I'm not too worried about the surgery. The Carters are powerful in Riverdale, and all the

surgeries before this one couldn't get that child to come back. Also, that child is all grown up now, so even if we forced her to come back, she might still be occupied with something else."

Estelle was still shocked at the news that Ryan had heart problems and would be undergoing surgery soon. She was so panicked that she didn't quite catch what Mariam was saying.

"Mom, where's Ryan right now? Which hospital is he in?" "Calm down. I called you today to tell you about this. You can go after I've explained everything."

Estelle was stunned.

Mariam continued, "Ryan is ill now, so he shouldn't be as stubborn as he used to be. The Sutton Family wants an heir, and the heir doesn't have to belong to that child. Estelle, if you can find a way to get pregnant, I'll be able to make the decision for you to come back."

As the words resounded in her ear, Estelle gripped her phone. Perhaps this was an opportunity bestowed upon her.

It was nightfall. In a seafood restaurant situated on Green River Street, Rachel and the others sat at a long table, which had barbecued seafood and beer piled on top. "The best season to eat seafood would be around July to August. Now, these aren't too good."

"It's already nice enough that we get to eat seafood, so what are you complaining about?"

"I'm the one paying for the food, so I can complain however I like." Jolly rolled her eyes at Gloria. "Is the food so little that it can't shut your mouth?"

Gloria was eating while she rolled her eyes back at Jolly. "Yes, what a wonderful restaurant you brought us to; it's even open air. I should eat until you go bankrupt."

"It's not her fault," Rachel explained. "I'm the one who suggested this place." Feeling the breeze would help release some emotional stress. She wasn't worried that Jolly might overthink what Estelle said. Obviously, Jolly's breakup with Leroy upset her even more.

Gloria, unfortunately, picked the wrong topic as she said, "Wait, where's Leroy? Is our celebrity too busy to come along for supper?"

The smile on Jolly's face instantly froze.

"What's the matter?" Holding her fork mid-air, Gloria was stunned for a moment. "Did I say something wrong? Didn't you two get back together?"

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## Chapter 515

"We broke up." Three simple words tumbled out of Jolly's mouth. Gloria was so shocked that she wasn't sure if she should bite down on the food she was holding to her mouth..

"Why?" Gloria finally regained her senses after a while. "Didn't you explain everything?" "It's exactly because I explained everything that we broke up." Jolly picked up the glass of beer in front of her. "So this feast is to celebrate me going solo again. Come, cheers."

Gloria looked around for a bit, then hesitantly raised her glass. Ultimately, she gritted her teeth and went along with Jolly as she downed the whole glass.

On the other hand, Rachel had expected Jolly to get drunk, but Gloria getting drunk was a surprise. Out on the street, Rachel and Victor parted ways, each carrying a drunken woman.

"Are you sure you're okay, Rachel?"

"I'm fine. It's not the first time she has gotten drunk. You should go back and take good care of Gloria. She's been through a lot."

"Okay."

"Hurry and get in the car."

Rachel drove all the way home. The two children in the backseat were reflected in the rearview mirror, sound asleep.

In the passenger seat, Jolly was also completely wasted. It was rare for her to be so quiet as she silently dozed off with her head cocked to a side. The fatigue in her expression was heart-wrenching..

The next morning in the apartment, the children were still sleeping in, but Rachel was preparing breakfast in the kitchen when she heard the news being broadcast on the TV in the living room.

"Here's some recent news. Through his studio, the famous celebrity Leroy Bennett announces his retirement from the entertainment field, making gigantic waves in the community. Yesterday, a journalist found out that Leroy was headed for Enistan all

alone. According to an ex-employee of the studio, Leroy is going to Enistan to prepare for a wedding-

Halfway through her action of cracking an egg, Rachel trembled. With a crack, the egg fell onto the countertop.

She hastily cleaned it up, but she forgot about breakfast as she swiped to unlock her phone, then looked up news from the day before. Just as expected, ever since last night, news of Leroy retirement and marriage was all over the place.

She took Jolly for drinks last night, and it was quite late by the time they came back, so they didn't have time to check the news. If she hadn't heard the news on TV, she might still be clueless even now.

She hadn't flipped through the news for long when her phone rang to interrupt her actions.

"Hello?"

"Rachel, I saw the news about Leroy. What's going on?"

It was a call from Victor, and Gloria's voice could be heard in the background, muffled. "How come he retired just like that? What's going on between him and Jolly?"

Rachel was still holding her phone when a beep sounded. Another call had interrupted their call. When she saw the incoming call, she said, "I'm not too sure either. I'll talk to you when I've got this sorted out."

With that, she ended the call with Victor, then answered the other call. "Hello? You saw the news too?"

"Yes," The man's familiar voice sounded over the phone. "Are you guys all right?"

"Jolly was wasted last night, so she probably didn't know of this. Is Leroy really going to get married?"

"I already asked Frankie to investigate this. If nothing crops up, the news must be true. There's a huge possibility that he returned to Enistan because his father is gravely ill and doesn't have much time left." Justin continued, "I just sent you the details."

Frowning unconsciously, Rachel lowered the heat on the stove and walked into the living room while she was still on the call. Then, she sat on the couch and pulled up the details Justin had sent her.

"This-

"It's the current situation of Lush Enterprise. Leroy's father, Marcus Bennett, was diagnosed – with cancer a few years ago. In recent years, Marcus rarely made an appearance in all business dealings pertaining to Lush Enterprise. Also, in the past six months, he never even appeared in public. According to the current situation, he must be gravely ill, or he wouldn't have urged Leroy to go home."

"This woman named Shannon Frazier, is she Marcus' wife?"

"Yes, she came from a prominent background. Her family owns one of the four largest companies in Enistan, Grandeur Group. She is the youngest daughter, and ever since she married Marcus, she had been helping him with business at Lush Enterprise. She's a very ambitious woman."

Rachel suddenly remembered that when Leroy came clean with them, he said that he went back to Enistan for the first time six years ago and was engaged to someone and that someone was a young lady from the Grandeur Group.

Grandeur Group...

Rachel thought for a bit. "She was the one who arranged Leroy's marriage, wasn't she?"

"That's highly possible."

"It's more than possible. Since Leroy's father is terribly ill, he wouldn't have the energy to even arrange for his own funeral. Only healthy people would consider that much. It was all done for their own benefit."

Shannon didn't have a child of her own, so when Marcus passed away, she would only have two choices left.

In the first option, she would have to leave Lush Enterprise and return to Grandeur Group, which her family owned. However, she was only the youngest daughter who was married off early on, so she couldn't compete against the younger generation even if she went back. The most she could get was to live the rest of her life comfortably.

Her other option was to continue staying in Lush Enterprise. However, Lush Enterprise would eventually appoint a new leader, and perhaps it would be the faction's second in command, or another faction would take the position. No matter what, she could only live off of other people, and she could never recover the power and wealth she used to have.

"She wanted to control Lush Enterprise like before, so first, she had to control the person who would take over Lush Enterprise. Leroy was the best choice." Rachel gripped her phone tightly. "Am I right?"

Justin said, "Correct. So Leroy can never come back."



Suddenly, Rachel thought of something. “Could it be that his studio’s announcement about his retirement was made against his wishes?”

“That’s very probable.”

“Was he held hostage?”

“It may not be so, but someone most probably got hold of his weakness.”

“Someone got hold of his weakness?” Rachel was deep in thought. As soon as she finished speaking, she was startled by the sound of a door opening. She looked up in surprise.

“Jolly?”

Gripping the door handle, Jolly stood at the entrance to her bedroom, her face pale as she held her phone. “That weakness is me, isn’t it?”

Rachel was stunned, and she didn’t know if she should affirm or deny the notion.

For the entire morning, Jolly was acting out of sorts. She called Leroy’s studio a few times and even tried to contact all the managers and assistants he had worked with, but none of them knew about Leroy’s current situation. No one could contact him either.

“Calm down, Jolly. If Leroy really did go back because of his father’s illness, there would be news of it from Enistan. When that happens, – Leroy’s identity can hardly be concealed.”

“You mean he’ll take over Lush Enterprise?”

“Most probably so. He’ll follow the orders from his family and marry someone from Grandeur Group, then continue operating under Lush Enterprise.”

The look in Jolly’s eyes dimmed. “So this is why he broke up with me, right?” Rachel looked at her. “I did say it’s probable, but accidents happen. For example, someone might object to the marriage at the wedding.”

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## Chapter 516

Whir! The plane landed at Enistan Airport. It was evening, and the clouds were burning with brilliant color. The cab was stuck in the city center, and the streets bustled outside. The crowd surged throughout the streets as double-decker tourist buses weaved in and out of traffic. The retro scenery seemed to remind people of the 90s.

In the car, two women's faces were reflected in the mirror. One of them was exquisite and alluring, while the other was elegant and calm. The cab driver couldn't help but steal more glances at them..

"And.... we're here."

"Thank you."

Once they got out of the car, the bellboy of the five-star hotel came over to them and carried their luggage. After checking in, Rachel and Jolly went straight to their room.

Upon entering the room, Rachel drew the curtains open. Victoria Harbor was right outside, and the ships passed by, forming an alluring scene of the bustling night. Rachel looked back and asked, "I got a room with a sea view. Feels like we're on vacation, doesn't it?"

Jolly just gave it a glance, for she wasn't in the mood to appreciate the view. "When can we see Leroy?"

"We'll wait at the hospital tomorrow morning. Since his father is gravely ill, he'd be there as well."

After all, Marcus was the boss of Lush Enterprise, so there should be quite a number of people guarding the hospital he was staying at. It wasn't difficult to get information.

Before boarding the flight, Rachel had already sent someone to investigate. Marcus was staying at a hospital that belonged to the Grandeur Group.

Jolly took a deep breath, then slowly exhaled as she looked at the sunset outside, dazed. "If he hadn't met me, he wouldn't have returned."

"What's the use of thinking about these things? Even if he met someone else instead of you, he'd be held hostage similarly. However, things are different now that he met you."

"Different how?"

"I believe that not many people possess your vitality to rush over at a moment's notice and to crash the wedding as soon as you put your mind to it."

One of Jolly's strengths was her ability to take prompt action. Meanwhile, in Riverdale. At the inpatient department of Cardinal Hospital, Estelle brought some soup she made, intending to deliver dinner to Ryan.

"Miss Dolton, Mr. Sutton is already discharged."

"When did that happen?" Estelle's expression instantly changed. "Wasn't he still here in the morning?"

"After you left at noon, Mr. Sutton's assistant came over, whereupon he got discharged. Mr. Sutton left quickly, and it looked like something urgent."

"Where did he go?"

"Um... I'm not sure about that. Why don't you – call him and ask?" Estelle clenched her fists. If her calls could go through, she wouldn't have to ask someone about it.

Early the next morning, Rachel and Jolly hailed a cab to Grandeur Hospital. Grandeur Hospital was situated in the suburbs in the southwest region of Enistan, and it was more than an hour's journey from the city center. It was built right next to the beach, and the place was quite remote.

Once out of the car, they could hear waves crashing in the distance. Jolly frowned instantly. "Why is he hospitalized in such a remote place? Is this hospital any good?"

Rachel answered, "It's just like any other hospital. However, it's more accurate to call it a nursing home and a top-class one at that."

"Then why is he here?"

"For a cancer patient who has gone through so many years of treatment, it's essentially meaningless to continue treatment at this point. They just want to reduce as much pain and suffering as possible. It's a nice environment to stay in, and it's also a hospital under Grandeur Group, so it's probably easier to hide secrets."

Not many people knew that Marcus had cancer. After all, he was crucial in sustaining Lushi Enterprise. Once news of this got out, it would cause a huge uproar. So, to the public, he was simply in ill health and had decided to rest and recuperate here.

"Let's go." Rachel looked at the hospital in front of them.

"Okay."

The two thought that it wouldn't be too difficult to get in, but in the end, they were blocked right outside the entrance, "What's your business?"

“To see a doctor, of course.” Jolly rolled her eyes at the security guard in exasperation. “Why else would someone go to a hospital?”

“Didn’t you see the notice at the entrance? No new patients allowed within this month.” The security guard pointed at the sign behind them. Rachel and Jolly were both taken aback. “No new patients allowed? How can a hospital not receive new patients?”

“This is a private hospital, so if the head of the hospital decides that we won’t take in any patients, then so be it.”

Jolly immediately switched tactics. “Can I visit a patient, then? A friend of mine is hospitalized here.”

“Your friend?”

The security guard studied them from head to toe. “Who exactly are you, and what are you trying to do?” Jolly was about to say something when Rachel held her back.

“It’s okay. We’ll leave.”

With that, Rachel took Jolly’s hand and turned around to leave. The security guard stood at the entrance, then suddenly whipped out his walkie-talkie and said something. Rachel heard the word ‘suspicious’, then grabbed Jolly as she broke into a run.

“Wait up, you two!” Behind them, the security guard roared. A few figures also ran out of the hospital, and they all wore uniform suits and leather shoes. They were obviously not hospital staff; they looked more like gangsters. Therefore, Rachel and Jolly ran for their lives.

“I’m beat. We should be safe now.” Rachel panted as she leaned against a tree by the road. “I can’t run anymore.”

Jolly looked behind her. “We’re okay now. They stopped running after us.”

“That was terrifying.” With her last remaining bits of energy, Rachel glared at Jolly. “Are you dumb? How many people would actually come all the way here to see a doctor? You even talked about visiting a friend here? Didn’t you realize that the only patient in this hospital is Marcus? You used to be so smart. Did you leave your brains behind in Riverdale?”

Rachel kept chastising Jolly, but the latter didn’t retort as she kept looking at the hospital. “Chris, do you think Leroy is in there?”

“I’m not sure.” Rachel straightened up. “I think we should figure out a way to sneak in. We have to gather information about Marcus’ condition right now.”

“How do we get in? It’s so heavily guarded.” Jolly looked in the distance, saying calmly, “Why don’t we climb over the wall?”

“Are you serious?”

“Do I look like I’m joking?” Jolly looked gravely at Rachel. “Or do you have a better idea?”

The more Rachel considered it, the less confident she was about the idea. However, Jolly had already made up her mind and was following the path as she stalked over to the wall at the side of the hospital.

Rachel followed behind her, saying in a low voice, “It’s still bright out.”

“So what? I’ll go first. You can wait for me here.”

With that, Jolly scaled the wall by grabbing onto the bricks around her. Rachel couldn’t even stop Jolly as she watched the latter disappear over the wall.

“Jolly!”

On the other side, there was no sound from Jolly. This wall wasn’t too high, but it wasn’t low, either. Rachel was panicking now. Did something happen to Jolly?

Just when Rachel was gritting her teeth and stomping her feet, deciding to climb up and have a look, her phone suddenly vibrated in her pocket.

Seeing the incoming call notification, Rachel hastily answered the call. She crouched down behind the trees in front of her, then whispered, “Hello?”

The man’s voice that sounded over the phone was all too familiar to her. The man spoke a few words. Rachel’s eyes lit up in disbelief. “You’re in Enistan now?”

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## Chapter 517

Idyll Mountain was situated in the southwestern part of Enistan, far away from the bustling city. Compared to the city, which had one of the most expensive housing in the whole world despite its suffocating small space, the rich still preferred the metropolis.

Grandeur Hospital was located right at the foot of Idyll Mountain. A black car pulled up at the entrance of the hospital. The security guard came over to check, and the driver presented the documents.

After passing the documents back to the driver, the security guard leaned over to look at the backseat. However, there was a partition between the front and back seats of this car, and the partition was currently in place, so the security guard couldn't see what was going on in the backseat.

The security guard said carefully, "I'm sorry, but please roll down the partition. I have to verify all the personnel entering and leaving this place."

The driver looked at him in dissatisfaction. "What's wrong with you? I showed you the documents, didn't I? Our boss doesn't like meeting strangers."

"I'm sorry, but that's a rule."

"A rule? From who? Do you know why our boss is here? Who will be held responsible if the matter is delayed? You? Can you even bear the responsibility?"

The security guard's expression stiffened. He didn't know what to do. Just then, a cold man's voice came from behind the partition. "It's okay. It's a good thing to be devoted to one's work. He can check."

With that, the partition slowly rolled down. With the passenger seat in the way, the security guard could see two figures in the backseat, one male and the other female. They were both dressed with attention to detail, especially the man, who had an unusual aura. He didn't look like any common person.

"There are only two people in the documents. Pardon me, but who is this lady beside you?"

"My wife." The man took the woman's hand as he explained calmly, "If it's against the rules, I can give a call to Mrs. Bennett and have her talk to you."

At the mention of Mrs. Bennett, the security guard's face paled. "No, it's okay. Since this is your wife, of course, it's not against the rules. Please, enter,"

With that, the security guard took a few steps backward and let the car through. The car drove into the hospital.

Grandeur Hospital was huge, and now that it wasn't accepting any new patients, it looked even emptier. The employees here probably outnumbered the visitors and the patients right now. Of course, if they were right, then there was only one patient right now.

Rachel sighed in relief after the car entered the hospital. She put a hand to her chest as she said, "That was scary. The security guard saw me before, so I thought he'd recognize me."

Justin said, "Are you okay?"

"Yes." Rachel nodded, her heart still beating rapidly. "But I still don't know where Jolly is right now. If she weren't in such a rush, she wouldn't have to enter by climbing over the wall. If someone catches her, it'll be quite difficult to resolve the situation."

"I'm here."

The simple two words echoed in the car, and Rachel was stunned. For some reason, she suddenly noticed Justin still holding her hand. He hadn't let go of her ever since they entered the hospital, and she herself forgot to retract her hand..

Her palm was hot.

"Oh right, you haven't told me how you came here?"

"As soon as President Burton heard about Leroy, he knew that you and Miss Carter would come here, so he sent someone to check out Enistan right away. He didn't have time to tell you before he received the notice that you and Miss Carter had already departed, so he rushed here in case something happened to you two." Frankie was the one driving at the front, so when he heard Rachel's query, he immediately explained the situation.

He had been serving Justin for many years, so he knew what Justin was like. Justin definitely wouldn't want to say too much, so he could only put in a word for Justin so that Rachel could see more of Justin's good side.

Rachel was stunned. "You've been looking into Enistan all this while?"

"It's not a big issue; anyone can do that with the help of a detective agency. You don't have to worry about it."

"What about the documents?"

"Coincidentally, after I went to northern Riverdale, I found a business acquaintance who had connections to the Grandeur Group of Enistan. I got help from him. He and Marcus seemed to be old friends, so he gave me permission to visit Marcus in his stead, and he already told Marcus' wife about it beforehand."

"That's a huge coincidence." Rachel was shocked.

Justin nodded slightly, deep in thought. "It does seem too good to be true."

Actually, he was a little wary about asking for help from this person. After all, he hadn't completely understood the person's background yet, and no one could guarantee that this person didn't have ulterior motives or that it wasn't a trap.

However, when he heard that Rachel and Jolly were already on the way to Enistan, he couldn't dally anymore, so he could only bring Frankie with him as he rushed there. It was urgent, after all..

"President Burton, President Hudson, we're here. Someone's coming from the hospital."

The car pulled up at the entrance to the inpatient department, and someone from the hospital came to open the door.

Justin reminded Rachel, "Just stick with me later. You don't have to be nervous. Even though Lush Enterprise is an organization of gangsters, they still follow the rules here. Moreover, we're here to visit Marcus in someone else's stead."

The term 'we' included Rachel as well, so she was instantly relieved. "Okay."

After they got out of the car, a middle-aged man. came over to welcome them. He looked like a butler, and he wore a suit and leather shoes as well. He had a square face, and he spoke. politely, his demeanor humble. 'Mr. Brook's friend, Mr. Burton, I presume?"

Justin nodded slightly as he introduced Rachel. "This is my wife, Chris."

"Mrs. Burton. The butler nodded in greeting. "My last name is Richards, and I'm Mr. Bennett's butler."

Rachel nodded. "Mr. Richards."

After entering the hospital, Mr. Richards led Justin and Rachel to the ward. As he walked, he said, 'Mr. Bennett is in a dire condition right now, and he has stopped receiving visitors for al long time. On this occasion, you're welcome because you're Mr. Brook's friend. It has been a long while since Mr. Bennett last met Mr. Brook."

The corridors in the hospital were desolate, and. they rarely saw anyone else there. Only one ward had a crowd standing at its entrance. There were bodyguards, hospital staff, and perhaps some of Marcus' relatives.

From a distance away, they could see a woman with an extraordinary air about her. She wore a low-profile outfit and had short hair. Even though she was advanced in age, she still looked quite capable.

"Mrs. Bennett, these are Mr. Brook's friends, Mr. Burton and his wife."



Mr. Richards introduced the visitors to Shannon.

This woman right here was the famed Mrs. Bennett, or Shannon. She wasn't quite a beauty by normal standards. She was fair and had round features, and she looked like risen dough. However, her eyes were bright and cunning.

When she saw Justin and Rachel, she smiled as she examined them discreetly through her curved eyes. "Mr. Brook is a good friend of my husband's. However, how did you get to know Mr. Brook, Mr. Burton?"

It was both a query and also an interrogation.

Just like Rachel, Justin had never met anyone from Lush Enterprise before, but still, he remained calm and steady as he said, "I haven't known him for long, but we immediately bonded like old friends. Something came up, so Mr. Brook couldn't come to Enistan, so he asked me to pay a visit in his stead and to deliver something."

"Oh, a delivery? What is it?"

"Mr. Brook told me that Mr. Bennett is the only one who can take the item."

The look in Shannon's eyes darkened as a hint of dissatisfaction flashed across her face. Justin didn't look like a man of many words, so Shannon looked at the woman beside him instead.

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## Chapter 518

The woman beside Mr. Burton has a delicate appearance. Though she doesn't appear stunning at first glance, her temperament is gentle and demure, especially those eyes. Those eyes of hers are just so... tender.

Shannon narrowed her eyes and said flatly, "If that's the case, then I won't ask any more questions. Mr. Burton, please come in."

Rachel was going to follow Justin in, but Shannon turned slightly and stopped her very naturally. "It's just giving something. Mrs. Burton, you don't have to go in, right?"

"Mrs. Bennett." Justin frowned and was about to say something but was stopped by Rachel. She squeezed his arm slightly, but her face did not change. "Mrs. Bennett is right. I won't go in to disturb you. I'll wait for you outside."

Justin was worried, but Rachel appeared calm and composed. “Go.”

Shannon said, “Don’t worry about Mr. Burton. When you come out, I will definitely return your wife to you intact.”

“Mrs. Bennett, you think too much.” Rachel smiled slightly and added, “How could my husband be worried about this?”

Seeing how insistent Rachel was, Justin couldn’t say anything else. “I’ll be out soon.”

“Yeah.” Watching Justin enter the ward, Rachel felt nervous.

Shannon’s questioning voice came from her side. ‘Mrs. Burton, you must be quite tired all the way to Enistan, right? Why not have a cup of tea with me and take a break?’

“Sure.”

The hospital was truly a luxury infirmary under the Grandeur Group. The cafe on the first floor had baristas who came from overseas and were highly skilled in crafting perfect cups of coffee. Rachel and Shannon sat opposite each other, and the surroundings were silent.

“My husband has known Mr. Brook for more than 10 years, but he has never heard that Mr. Brook has a good relationship with Mr. Burton. Mrs. Burton, how did you come to know Mr. Brook?” Shannon was forthright with her question.

Rachel’s heart was pounding madly. She didn’t know who Mr. Brook was at all, and Justin didn’t tell her what was going on. She only knew that it was a friend Justin knew.

“I’ve never been very involved in my husband’s affairs, so I’m not too sure.”

“Don’t you ask? Do you usually not ask about Mr. Burton’s business relationships?”

Rachel nodded. “That’s right.”

“What do you usually like to do as a pastime?”

“I enjoy cooking, and I take care of the children.”

“You have children?”

“Yeah, we have two children.” Rachel smiled slightly and deliberately looked envious of Shannon. “I am not as capable as you, Mrs. Bennett, and I admire a woman like you who can help her husband manage such a large family business.”

Shannon looked at Rachel with contempt in her eyes. She took a sip of coffee and said softly, "Actually, it is a good idea for everyone to find their own position in life. There is no need for every woman to be a career woman."

Even so, her tone and gaze were clearly disgusted that Rachel was just a stay-at-home parent.

"This hospital seems to be your family's property, right?"

"Yeah."

"The buildings are very interesting. Hospitals of this style are rarely seen in the country."

"It used to be a church. My brother bought the land and developed it into a hospital. By following the previous architectural style, a church-style hospital was built."

"If you don't mind, can I look around?"

Shannon nodded. "Of course, but I still have something to do, so I won't accompany you."

"It doesn't matter. I can just walk around by myself. After all, I'm still waiting for my husband."

"Go ahead." Shannon glanced at her watch, then got up and left. Her indifference and unfriendliness were written on her face without many disguises.

Rachel felt very fortunate that she had used such a method to let this woman put her guard down on herself. Homemakers were indeed the most easily overlooked existence.

She must feel that I don't understand anything. As soon as Shannon left, Rachel sent a message to Jolly. 'Where are you? I'm in.'

The phone vibrated. 'You came in? I'm behind the inpatient building. There are many guards here. I haven't found a way to get in yet.'

'Stay there, I'll find you.' Rachel put away her phone and walked out of the cafe.

Jolly was bold enough despite knowing that there were bodyguards guarding the inpatient department. She was still wandering around without being afraid that she would be seen. When Rachel found her, she was hiding behind a bush with her bottom high in the air.

Seeing Rachel, Jolly quickly grabbed her and squatted down. "Why did you come in? Didn't I tell you to watch outside?"

“Justin brought me in.”

“Ah?” Jolly was startled. Rachel explained the matter quickly, and Jolly’s eyes narrowed. “Come on, can’t he call you earlier so that I don’t have to go over the wall? Why don’t you just bring me in?”

“No one expected that you would climb over the wall, okay? I couldn’t stop you!”

“It’s not the time to talk about this. Have you entered the inpatient department? Did you see Leroy?”

“Yeah, but I didn’t see Leroy. However, Mrs. Bennett was inside. I guess maybe she didn’t want Leroy to see Marcus so early.”

“What do you mean?”

“Until a person dies, we will never know what decision he will make. Marcus, as the boss of the Lush Enterprise, has seen everything in his life. How could he simply leave the Lush Enterprise in the hands of a woman?”

Rachel looked at the inpatient department building in front of her, then said quietly, “I guess if he has a chance to meet Leroy, he will definitely find a way to put Lush Enterprise into Leroy’s hands instead of letting him become a woman’s puppet and making the entire Lush Enterprise become the back support of the Grandeur Group.”

“Why are you so sure?”

“Do you know who the person who married Leroy is?”

“Isn’t she the daughter of the boss of Grandeur Group? Mrs. Bennett’s niece.”

“Yes, this is the crux of the problem. Mrs. Bennett will rely on the niece to control Leroy. If they have children in the future, Grandeur Group can justifiably control the Lush Enterprise.”

Rachel had met Shannon, which further verified her thoughts. This woman was one to reach for the stars; she would never be satisfied with the current development of the Lush Enterprise. Otherwise, she would not let Leroy marry her niece either.

Jolly was born into a wealthy family. Although she was spoiled since she was a child, what Rachel said was common knowledge to her.

“I have to find Leroy as soon as possible.”

“He shouldn’t be around here.”

“Then where will he be?”

“Perhaps in the villa on Idyll Mountain.” Rachel’s eyes crossed the hospital’s fence and landed on the distant mountain, “Justin told me that Mrs. Bennett has been living on Idyll Mountain all this time, so it is convenient for her to go back and forth to the hospital.”

The safest way to watch someone was to keep them under one’s nose. Jolly thought about it as the corner of her eyes swept across the inpatient department. She suddenly thought of something and asked doubtfully, “By the way, you haven’t told me yet. What is Justin doing here?”

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## Chapter 519

“Justin came to visit a patient, and he also helped a friend to deliver something to Marcus,”

“Friend?” Jolly was surprised. “Why does he have friends who are related to the boss of Lush Enterprise?”

“I don’t know the specific situation, but it seems to be something that happened after he arrived in the northern division of Riverdale. There are many kinds of people in that place, and there are many foreign-funded enterprises. It is not surprising to know some people with influential backgrounds there.”

Rachel didn’t have time to think about it. She grabbed Jolly and said, “Now is not the time to talk about this. You should find a way to get out of here first and not get caught.”

“Are you sure Leroy is not in the hospital?”

“I’m not sure, but now you have to trust me.” Rachel’s attitude was firm and could not be refused. The two squatted behind the bush for a long time before Jolly reluctantly agreed. “Okay, then I’ll go back the same way, and I’ll wait for you outside.”

“Yeah.”

All of a sudden, the sound of a car engine came from the inpatient department in the distance, and the two raised their heads subconsciously.

A silver-gray car stopped at the gate of the inpatient department, and Mr. Richards came to get the door. Then, a man and a woman got out of the car, respectively.

Jolly stood up immediately. If it weren't for Rachel's quick movements, she would have been discovered by the security guards in the distance.

"That's Leroy!" "I know! Keep your voice down!" Rachel wanted to block Jolly's mouth. "Aren't you afraid they will find us?"

After Rachel covered Jolly's mouth, Jolly calmed down.

At this time, Leroy and a young woman stood at the door of the hospital. Although they could not see the woman's appearance, her temperament seemed to be good. The only thing that made Jolly upset was the fact that the woman held Leroy's arm naturally, and Leroy didn't even refuse.

Rachel clenched Jolly's arm for fear that she would rush out now. Seeing the group of people enter the inpatient department, Jolly grabbed Rachel. "Did you see that? That didn't look reluctant at all to me! I think he looks like he's enjoying it!"

"Don't be anxious. Maybe he has to do that for the greater good."

"Does it look that way to you?"

Seeing Jolly's irritable appearance, Rachel was helpless. "Leroy has so many female fans. He used to hug fans and film kissing scenes with actresses, yet I never saw you so agitated."

"How were those the same?"

"Okay, let's stop talking about this. I'll go and see what's going on. You can find a way to get out of here first."

However, Rachel didn't get Jolly's reply for a long time. She saw that Jolly was still staring at the entrance of the inpatient department.

Rachel tugged at her in annoyance. "Do you hear me? Hurry up and leave first! I'll help you see what's going on."

"Yes."

Jolly nodded reluctantly and said unhappily, "If he really loses his interest in me so quickly, you must help me slap him in public! Twice!"

"Okay, I will." Rachel agreed, and so Jolly then walked back along the same path along the wall.

Watching Jolly leave, Rachel looked around cautiously and made sure that no one was around. Then, she turned toward the side door of the inpatient department and then returned inside.

When she was about to reach the ward, she stopped at the door. Looking up, she saw the word 'Lounge' on the door. She was stopped by the voices from inside.

It was Shannon speaking. "Your father is meeting a guest now. When the guest leaves, you can go over there."

Hearing this, Rachel knew Leroy was in the lounge.

"We only came here every day to put on a show. So what does it matter whether we get to see him or not?"

It's indeed Leroy.

At this moment, the initially gentle voice was tainted with a bit of hostility.

Unconsciously, Rachel frowned. Immediately afterward, she heard Shannon speak. "I know you are very dissatisfied, but even if you are just pretending, you have to stay here for an hour a day during the meeting time. If I don't let you go, you can't leave."

"Until the hospital gives notice of his death?"

"Shut your mouth. I can't guarantee that your little girlfriend in Riverdale will be living well."

"Don't you dare to touch her!"

There was a sound of smashing things inside. Some porcelain items broke, accompanied by the frightened cry of the young woman. As the noises came to Rachel's ear, she took a step back subconsciously and bumped into the flowerpot at the corner.

Fortunately, Rachel was quick and held the flowerpot in time so that it did not fall down. Just when she breathed a sigh of relief, the door of the lounge suddenly opened with a loud sound. Shannon held the door with one hand, and when she saw Rachel, she immediately showed a wary look.

"Mrs. Burton?"

"Mrs. Bennett." Rachel showed a surprised look. "I heard the sound of something breaking here as soon as I got off the elevator. What's the matter?"

Rachel lied so naturally that Shannon didn't take her seriously. The vigilance on Shannon's face gradually disappeared, and she said in a low voice, "I just broke a vase by accident."

"Are you hurt?"

"No."

"That's good." Rachel clutched her chest and breathed a sigh of relief. "I just arrived and heard someone arguing, which made me jump."

After saying this, she looked in the ward's direction. "My husband is out, so I'll go over first."

Shannon nodded and watched Rachel go away. Justin came out of Marcus' ward just in time to see Rachel coming toward him. Although she concealed it well, the unease between her brows was still noticed by Justin.

"What's wrong?" He lowered his voice. Rachel shook her head and tried to calm down. "How is Mr. Bennett? Are you finished talking about your business?"

From the corner of Justin's eyes, Justin saw Shannon at the door of the lounge in the distance and knew what Rachel was worried about.

"It's over. Let's go." At this time, Shannon walked toward them. "Mr. Burton, are you leaving now? Let's have dinner together."

"No, I have to accompany my wife back to the city. I've been busy with work. I haven't been out with my wife for a long time. This time we're going to travel and have a look around."

"Oh? So, you two are going to stay longer in Enistan?"

"Yeah."

"What a coincidence! Our family is holding a wedding soon. If you two are interested, please come along and enjoy the occasion."

Justin pretended to be surprised. "I saw it on the news, but I thought it was fake news by the media in Enistan. Is it true? You guys are holding a wedding at this time?"

"It'll wash away the bad luck," Shannon said indifferently. "We still believe in that. Maybe it will be useful, don't you think, Mr. Burton?"

Justin's expression was light and noncommittal. Shannon added, "That's settled then. I will send the invitation to the hotel where you live in the next two days."



Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## Chapter 520

"If the date doesn't conflict with our business, my wife and I will definitely attend. We'll leave first, then," Justin politely replied to Shannon.

"Have a safe journey. Mr. Richards, see Mr. Burton and Mrs. Burton off."

Rachel took Justin's hand and left. When passing by the lounge, she glanced inside the room through the half-opened door and met Leroy's gaze. Leroy, who had just raised his head, was shocked.

Rachel naturally withdrew her gaze. Pretending to talk to Justin, she left the hospital with him. "Mr. Richards, thanks. We're leaving."

"Mr. Burton, Mrs. Burton, safe travels."

The car drove away from the inpatient department, and Mr. Richards' figure in the rearview mirror also slowly disappeared. Rachel finally couldn't help it and asked Justin, "Did you see it just now?"

"I did." Justin frowned slightly. In the half-opened door just now, there was a young girl sobbing, and Leroy was hugging her to comfort her.

"How could he do this? How dare he do this to Jolly?" Rachel was in disbelief as her fists clenched tightly. "If he was compelled to do that, he shouldn't be looking so sincere."

"Don't be anxious. There may be something we don't know." Rachel wanted to say something when she saw a familiar figure standing by the road from a distance.

"It's Miss Carter." Frankie's voice came from the front. Rachel and Justin looked at each other, both of them reaching an understanding. After Jolly got into the car, Rachel said nothing about seeing Leroy and the woman in the hospital, and Justin also cooperated.

"How was it? Did you see him? Is that woman the daughter of the boss of Grandeur Group? Is he going to marry her?"

Rachel shook her head. "I didn't see anything. Shannon was too vigilant, so I didn't even see what that woman looked like."

“What?” Jolly was anxious. “Didn’t you say you were going to check on them? If I knew it would be like that, it would’ve been better for me to go in. But you made me come out first.”

“Although I didn’t see the woman and didn’t talk to Leroy, I saw Leroy inside, and he saw me, so he should know now that you have come to Enistan too.”

“What’s the use of that?”

“At the very least, he’ll be mentally prepared.” Rachel clenched her fists. If it was a misunderstanding, Leroy would definitely be ready to meet Jolly and even be prepared to protect her well, but if he really failed Jolly, he would be ready to be beaten up.

All in all, it was impossible for them to come here in vain. Back at the hotel downtown, Justin went to the front desk to check in. He went to the hospital as soon as he got off the plane in the morning and didn’t have time to check in.

Originally, Rachel and Jolly were going upstairs to rest first. Before entering the elevator, Rachel suddenly thought of something. “Go back to your room first. I have to do something.”

After saying this, she left Jolly and went straight to the front desk. Justin was checking in at the front desk. When he was showing his documents as required by the front desk, a hand suddenly stretched out next to him. Rachel handed a document over and said, “Please help me change the room. I want to be in the same room as him.”

Justin was startled by the familiar voice. The front desk was also taken aback for a moment. Then, she looked at Justin subconsciously, asking for his opinion..

Justin was surprised for a few seconds, after which he nodded slowly. After checking in, Rachel and Justin went to the elevator together. Rachel explained as they walked, “Don’t get me wrong, I’m just afraid that...”

“You’re afraid that Mrs. Bennett will send someone to the hotel to deliver invitations in the next two days. If they find out that we are not staying in the same room, they will be suspicious.”

“Yeah.”

Justin said, “Actually, you don’t have to worry. We have nothing to do with her. She doesn’t care about who we are. Otherwise, it will be clear if she sends someone to check my identity.”

Rachel was surprised for a moment and quickly understood the meaning of Justin’s words.

The purpose of their arrival was just to visit on behalf of Marcus' old friend and bring something to him. It was just an errand. They could not fight against Lush Enterprise and Grandeur Group, and Shannon only invited them to the wedding out of politeness. Everything seemed to be under her control, so she had no reason to be suspicious of them.

"But what if she doesn't invite us to the wedding?"

Justin said calmly, "It shouldn't be difficult to get into a wedding with so many random people invited."

Rachel was stunned for a while before she could react. At this moment, the elevator reached its intended floor, whereupon Rachel followed Justin out and couldn't help but say, "You were infected by Jolly, right? How can you come up with such a bad idea? I thought you came here because you had a foolproof plan."

"I wanted to be ready before coming, but you two were rushing too fast for me to do that." Justin's tone was helpless with a bit of indulgence. "Room card."

Hearing Justin's words, Rachel returned to her senses, remembering that the front desk had just handed over both room cards to her. She hurriedly handed it over and said, "Here you go. Since that's the case, then I'll go back and stay with Jolly."

After saying this, she turned to leave, but before she took a step, her arm was caught..

When she returned to her senses, the man had already pulled her into the room. There was a 'click' sound of the door closing behind them, isolating the sound from outside. Justin's voice came from above her head; it was low and powerful.

"What I'm saying is that she won't come to check our identities on purpose, but if the person who comes to deliver the invitation finds out that we are not staying together, she will be suspicious."

He was very close to her. Because of the height difference, the tip of his nose almost touched her eyebrows. Rachel could even see his eyelashes clearly. If she had time, she could even count them one by one. For a while, she was speechless.

"Then... You mean..."

"During this time, you can stay here with me." Justin's hand naturally retracted from the doorknob by her side, and while walking into the room, he took off his suit jacket. "You sleep on the bed; I'll sleep on the sofa."

Rachel was still leaning against the door, her chest heaving and her mind putting what just happened on replay. Justin's mouth shape when he explained the reason to her was stuck in her mind. The thin lips that opened and closed lingered in front of her eyes.

After a long while, Justin put down his jacket and turned around when he didn't get Rachel's response. "What's wrong with you?"

Rachel shook her head. "It's nothing. What did you just say?"

"I said you sleep on the bed, and I'll just sleep on the sofa."

Seeing Rachel still looking confused and not looking well, Justin strode over, stretched out a hand, and touched her forehead. "What's wrong with you? Are you not feeling well?"

As soon as his hand touched her forehead, Rachel felt the fire burning within her. Justin was surprised. "Why is your forehead burning?"

Rachel was still stunned. She suddenly felt that she had gotten re-acquainted with the man in front of her.

She didn't even know when it started. His appearance, personality, and even the tone of his speech gradually overlapped with the gentle young man she met in Somerset Mountain more than 20 years ago.

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## Chapter 521

"Do you have a fever?"

The voice before Rachel came to her ears, pulling her back from her thoughts. She suddenly regained her senses and took a half step back in a panic. "Nope... I-I'm just feeling a bit hot here."

As she said that, she fanned her face.

Hot?

Although there was no winter in Enistan, spring had just passed, and it was not the hottest time of the year, not to mention that the air conditioner was still on in this room.

Facing Justin's doubtful gaze, Rachel panicked. "I'll go back and talk to Jolly first." With that, she turned to open the door.

"Rachel." Justin's voice came from behind. "I'll ask you to come downstairs for dinner later." "Okay." Rachel had no time to look back and simply left in a hurry, leaving only the word 'okay' echoing at the door.

Justin held the door, looked at the figure walking away in the corridor, and smiled. As soon as Rachel returned to the room, Jolly poked her head around the sofa and quipped, "What took you so long? What did you do just now?"

"Ah? It's nothing. I went to the front desk to go through the procedures for changing rooms."

"Are we going to change rooms?"

"It's not us. It's me. I'm afraid that Mrs. Bennett will send someone to give us the wedding invitation card and that person will find out that Justin and I are separated and that I'm staying with you. When the time comes, they will investigate, and things will be difficult to handle."

"Wait a minute." Jolly straightened up. "What you mean is that you-"

Jolly stretched out a finger at Rachel and pointed at her face. "Do you want to stay in the same room with Justin?"

Rachel shoved her hand away. "It's not what you think; it's all for you and Leroy's sake."

Jolly raised his brows, obviously in disbelief. "You're both single and staying in the same room. Are you sure sparks won't fly?"

"If you say one more word, I won't change the rooms anymore. Anyway, Mrs. Bennett's men will find out that we have been with you all the way. Don't have any strange ideas. If we can't bring back Leroy, you'll be the upset one."

"I was wrong." In front of Rachel, Jolly always played meek, so she immediately came up with a submissive look. "I'm just talking nonsense.. Don't be angry, okay?"

Rachel didn't actually want to find fault with her. "By the way, why don't you come downstairs for dinner later? Or do you want me to bring you food?"

"I'm not going. You can just eat with him. You have made such a big sacrifice to change rooms; how can I go with you? Will I just be a hindrance? We'll just contact each other by phone these days. Don't mind me."

Rachel looked at Jolly and sighed. "Don't think too much. It's just for a few days. If all goes well, Leroy will come back with us when we leave."

"Then what if he really falls in love with that woman and doesn't want to come with us?"

“Then, I’ll slap him for you.”

“It’s a promise.” Jolly hugged Rachel. “I knew you were my best friend.”

“It’s hot. Let me go.”

“I won’t.”

“Get off me.”

“Are you in a hurry to find Justin?”

“Jolly!”

“Okay, okay. I was wrong. I won’t say it anymore.”

Before going downstairs for dinner, Rachel sent her luggage to Justin’s room, then went downstairs to eat with him. “Will the previous check-in record be investigated?”

“Don’t worry. As long as it doesn’t reveal anything suspicious, no one will come to check on us.”

Rachel nodded thoughtfully. “Right.”

Seeing Justin pressing the elevator to the 1st floor, Rachel wondered, “Isn’t the restaurant on the 12th floor?”

“Frankie said that the food in this hotel is average, so he booked another restaurant for us. We’re going out to eat.”

“Is that so? Is it far?”

“Not far. It’s just nearby.”

There were many authentic local restaurants all over the streets and alleys, most of which were very small establishments. When Rachel sat down in the restaurant, she looked around suspiciously and then asked Justin, “Is this place really reserved by Frankie?”

The shop was very narrow and tiny, and it didn’t look like it needed to be booked in advance. They went in without a reservation before they quickly found a place to sit down.

Justin took the menu. “It wasn’t a reservation, but it was recommended by Frankie. This place is usually crowded with people, but this time we came at just the right time, so there’s no need to queue.”

“Is Frankie very familiar with this place?”

“His wife likes to come here, and she’s here seven or eight times a year, so she is familiar with the food around here.”

Rachel was a little surprised. She originally thought that Justin would not pay attention to things other than subordinates’ work, so she did not expect him to mention Frankie’s wife in such a casual tone.

“What would you like to eat?” Justin handed the menu to Rachel. “Pork chop, a side of fries, and a glass of iced tea.”

The food was served very fast, and everything that they ordered was ready in no time. For some reason, Rachel felt like she had to rush back to the company to work overtime after the meal. Perhaps it was because the food was relatively simple, and she only ordered a main.

“When I was in Montenegro, there was a restaurant just like this one near the office building where I worked. Jolly and I often went there to eat at noon. As we ate, we would complain about how terrible the boss was to each other. It lasted for around a month, then once during a company meeting, we then found out that the person sitting at the table behind us every day was actually the boss.”

Justin laughed. “That’s why I rarely eat near the office building.”

“Do you often hear people criticize you?”

“Isn’t hearing it once enough?”

“That makes sense.” Rachel blinked. “It can be deduced then that the boss of our company was really a pervert. He consistently listened to our criticisms for a whole month.”

“What happened after that?”

“Later, we both felt humiliated and never went to that restaurant again. Then, I was transferred to be a secretary to Hernandez, and occasionally when I saw the boss, I would hide from him. After a long time, I thought he’s forgotten about me, but...” Speaking of this, Rachel became angry. “Do you know what happened later?”

“What?”

“Later, the boss wanted to invite everyone to dinner and asked for restaurant recommendations. He actually booked that exact restaurant, and he teased me in public saying that I loved that place. That’s when I realized that he had been pretending not to know me!”

Rachel talked about her work in Montenegro on her own, and now she still felt ashamed when she thought about the incident. After talking for a long time, she found that Justin kept looking at her. She coughed and said, "Isn't it rather boring?"

"No." Justin actually laughed. "Do you want to order something more?"

Rachel's face darkened. "Do you think I have more embarrassing things to talk about for a long time?"

"I didn't say that."

"That's what you mean. When I go back to Riverdale, I will also try to eat at a place where my employees often eat to experience my boss' feelings at that time."

"Trust me. You're not going to enjoy the experience."

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## Chapter 522

"It seems that you have been criticized a lot."

Rachel winked at Justin and said proudly, "I'm not like you; I'm not as harsh as you are toward employees and causing lots of complaints."

"Oh?" Justin raised his brows, obviously skeptical, but he did not refute.

After a long time, Rachel really went to do as she said, and she even took him to witness it just to verify who was harsher in the eyes of the employees and was criticized more, but the ultimate results were unexpected. Moreover, she was even annoyed at the results.

Rachel finally concluded angrily that this society was much more tolerant of men than women.

After eating, it was completely dark. The roads in Enistan were not wide. Most of the narrow roads could only allow two vehicles to pass through. As soon as the green light was on, pedestrians hurried across the roads. In fact, the dazzling streetlights made the city look astounding.



“Why are there so many people over there?” Rachel pointed to the distance, where there was a large crowd in front of the hemispherical building.

“It’s the wharf. They’re lining up to take the cruise.”

“A sightseeing cruise?”

There are sightseeing cruises, while some are just used as means of transportation to go directly to the other side.”

Rachel put her hands on the railing by the road. “Speaking of which, I have never been here in Enistan before.”

“I’m not very familiar with it either. I used to only come here on business.” Justin looked as Rachel gazed toward the distance. “Would you like to go on a cruise?” he asked.

“Huh?” Rachel was taken aback by the sudden suggestion. Turning her head, she met Justin’s serious gaze. She hesitated for a moment, whereupon her eyes slowly lit up. “Sounds good.”

Sightseeing cruises did not have a long queue. After all, it was not cheap. There was an open- air bar on the deck on the 4th floor of the cruise ship, and tourists were sitting around the surrounding tables in twos and threes.

When approaching the railing, Rachel suddenly felt dizzy and frowned. Fortunately, Justin, who was behind her, was quick-witted and grabbed her arm.

“I’m fine.” Rachel felt better without looking down over the railing.

“Don’t worry, this is not Riverdale, nor is it the Jockey Club’s ship. It’s just an ordinary sightseeing boat.” Justin could see at a glance what she was thinking..

The trauma left by Rachel’s previous ship experience was too much, so when she got close to the railing of the cruise ship, she couldn’t help thinking of the scene at that time. It was from here that Amber and Noah fell off.

Although Rachel shook her head and said that she was fine, Justin still didn’t let go of her hand and dragged her to the inside of the deck. “Don’t overthink. Let’s go have something to drink.”

As glasses of cocktails glistened under the dazzling light of the cruise ship, the sea breeze blew and ruffled their hair.

Rachel fished a rubber band out of her bag and tied her hair casually with it, revealing her fair neck. Then, she looked toward the shore with her face raised, looking just like a beautiful woman in a portrait and attracting many people’s attention.

In the distance, several foreign men had already raised their glasses toward Rachel, making no secret of their appreciation and expectations for further communication. Most foreigners were eager and forthright, just like Hernandez.

Rachel just smiled slightly, nodded, and made no other response. It wasn't until Justin returned from ordering two glasses of cocktails that those men's eyes narrowed, and they couldn't help but envy him for having such a demure and elegant beauty as his company.

"This one is a little lower in alcohol." Justin pushed a glass of wine toward Rachel. Rachel took a sip and looked at Justin suspiciously. "You're lying, right? There's no alcohol in it. Did you make me a non-alcoholic drink?"

Justin was helpless. "I didn't do that."

"I don't believe you."

"Am I so untrustworthy?"

"Maybe. You've lied to me before too."

Justin was taken aback for a moment, and then when he saw Rachel's bright eyes full of smiles, he knew she was joking, and so he was relieved.

Maybe to Rachel, all the past matters could be mentioned in a relaxed tone as jokes, but he was the perpetrator, so he still couldn't be as composed as her. But he didn't get himself tangled up about it. At the moment, he just wanted her to relax.

He was even very grateful to Julian. After all, during Rachel's years in Montenegro, Julian did his best to help her cure her illness as a mute so that she could live and work normally....

Drinks were included in the tickets. To make the price worth it, Rachel ordered a few more glasses, and Justin couldn't stop her.

"It's okay. The cocktails are low in alcohol. They're just like any other drink."

Justin was helpless. Those cocktails tasted like non-alcoholic drinks, but they were actually strong. After three rounds of drinking, the ship had also made a turn and was about to return to the starting point.

Rachel was a bit tipsy after drinking the cocktails, and she became bolder. She no longer cared about the trauma she had from the railing and lay on the railing of the deck to feel the air.

Justin was afraid that she would fall over, so he followed closely. "I like it here. The weather is nice, and the atmosphere is lively." She couldn't contain her feelings.

"If you like it, we can come back next time."

"The south is great, huh? There is no winter."

"Yeah, the winter season up north could freeze you."

"Is it still snowing over there?"

Rachel suddenly remembered that Justin was in the northern division of Riverdale, where the average temperature reached the negatives in winter. Most of the reasons why the economy was not quite developed there for many years. were due to environmental and weather constraints.

Justin said in a low voice, "There was some snow before I came here. It should be the last snowfall, I think. It will gradually get warmer later."

"When are you going back to Riverdale?"

Justin was slightly startled when he heard that, then he turned to see Rachel's bright eyes looking at him very seriously. "You want me to go back to Riverdale?"

"Yes. The north is too cold, and I still prefer the south."

While speaking, Rachel staggered, and Justin grabbed her shoulder. "Be careful."

The moment Rachel raised her head, the oncoming sea wind blew her hair, and she didn't know whether it was because of the alcohol or the wind, but her eyes narrowed slightly as she appeared a little intoxicated.

Justin grabbed her shoulders, and they stared at each other for a long time. Suddenly, he couldn't help himself. He leaned down tremblingly and dropped a gentle and extremely lingering kiss on her.

When the kiss fell, Rachel's eyes were glittering with the flashing neon lights on the other side. Her thin lips were a little cold from the wind, but the temperature rose as soon as they touched his. It was a soft, fiery affection that was irresistible. The love in her heart grew vigorously in the depths, and it quickly blossomed into something more...

The strength of the cocktails seems to be a little much. Before her mind was emptied by the kiss, Rachel suddenly thought of that. But if Jolly was here, she would definitely hit the nail on the head.

It's not the cocktails that have the greatest strength but the love between you and Justin. You have been entangled with each other for more than 20 years, and you won't stop until you die. Some encounters are meant to be, and no matter how cautious you are, you cannot avoid them.

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## Chapter 523

Soon, the cruise began to sail closer toward the shore amidst the rough waves. As soon as the cruise was close enough to the bright dock, the passengers immediately went ashore, catching a glimpse of a silhouette, which turned out to be a man with a handsome yet indifferent appearance. Although the man's good looks managed to turn many heads, the passers-by would have approached him for his contact if he hadn't had a pretty lady resting in his arms.

When Justin made it ashore, he tried to nudge the lady in his embrace in an attempt to wake her up, but to no avail. It looks like the cocktail really packed a punch. Well, that isn't a bad thing, either. At least she won't be able to remember the kiss I planted on her forehead, or I'd have a hard time explaining myself.

After he tucked Rachel in and lowered the temperature of the air conditioner, but when he was about to make a move, he looked back for some reason and noticed the lady's restful look. In that instant, he felt as if there was an unseen force that kept him from walking away as he returned to the bed and sat beside it, fixing his gaze on Rachel's sleeping face. "Rachel. He gently called out to her, but the latter still showed no signs of waking up.

Then, he caressed her forehead with his hand, combing her fringe to the side so that he could have a better view of her face. While the lady's looks remained beautiful, they seemed more nonchalant than they did six years ago.

After all, Rachel used to be gentle and tender back then. Although she was considered tough, she was often timid and fearful of intimidation and oppression.

Deep down in his heart, Justin could still remember the moment when they had first gotten married six years ago. "Do you know that you're so pretty, Rachel? Our wedding night was actually the first time we met each other in twenty years, but I didn't recognize you at that time. Instead, I was blinded by my vengeance and hatred for the Hudson

Family, but even so, I couldn't deny the fact that you were indeed a lovely lady. In fact, you were the most beautiful lady I've ever seen, especially those eyes of yours."

Recounting the past, Justin couldn't help but feel a stab of pain in his heart. Your eyes were like the ones that were etched in my heart. While they have always looked like Katie's eyes, I had never thought that you were actually Katie. He then held Rachel's hands, feeling her warm and sweaty palms, which he thought was probably because they were buried underneath the blanket.

"In order to inherit the Burton Group and ruin the Hudson Pharmaceuticals, I did a lot of things that I'm not exactly proud of.

Considering the kind heart you have in you, you would probably never forgive me for what I did. However, there are only a handful of things that I regret, and one of them is the fact that I failed to recognize you sooner. Instead, I wronged you by hurting you in the years that came after that Rachel, I want you to know that I'm happy to always see you and grateful for having a daughter with you."

Justin then chuckled and added, "And a son. If hadn't mentioned Samuel, I bet you'd probably blame me for leaving him out. I should have explained this to you, but I want you to know that I've always treated Samuel as my own son. In fact, I'm so grateful for having him by your side to keep you company in my place and our daughter's. Ever since the matter with Julian happened, I've become concerned and worried whenever I see you hanging around another man. Honestly, I'd rather see you stay single for the rest of your life. Even if you're going to start your own family in the future, I'll still continue to accompany you as a friend. After all, we've been friends for more than two decades, haven't we?"

Not knowing how long had passed, Justin realized his words might have been a little too long-winded and mocked himself, saying, 'If you were awake now, I doubt I'd talk so much, not because I don't want to, but because I'm afraid that I might scare you. Charlotte said I've become more annoying than I used to be due to my nagging, and I'm aware of that. She even told me that's a sign of me getting old."

Soon, Rachel suddenly moved, startling Justin, who thought she was awake. Fortunately, she only just moved her neck a bit and changed to a comfortable position before continuing her sleep. Then, Justin took a look at the time and decided it was time for him to make a move. Thus, he tucked the lady in again, covering her with the blanket up to her chin, whereupon he switched off the lights and left.

Not long after the man was gone, Rachel, who was lying in bed, slowly opened her eyes, clearly setting her gaze on her surroundings. In fact, she had been awake all the time, from the moment they shared a kiss on the cruise where her hair grazed across his neck, to the moment he carried her in his arms and spoke his feelings to her. When the man planted the kiss on her lips, she had no idea how to react because her mind went blank at that instant.

Therefore, she instinctively pretended to be drunk and collapsed onto his arms in an attempt to get herself out of the difficult position. That way, both of them could act as if nothing had ever happened the next morning. The only thing that Rachel didn't expect was the fact that Justin would reveal his true feelings to her when he thought she was asleep. Moments later, Rachel tossed and turned in bed a few more times but couldn't fall asleep somehow.

The next morning, it was already 10.00AM by the time Rachel woke up. After going about her morning ablutions, she exited the bathroom and was greeted by Justin, who was spreading butter on the bread at the dining table. As soon as he saw the lady, he showed his concern and asked, "You're up. How was your sleep last night?"

Rachel faked a cough to cover the awkward feeling within her. "Fine, I guess. I must have been so drunk that I slept like a dead person. I don't even know how I got back here."

"Do you need any help jogging your memory?"

"What?" Rachel waved her hand when she caught on to Justin's words. "No thanks." Deep down, she didn't want to relive the moment in which Justin carried her back in his arms by hearing it

Spreading the butter on the bread, Justin said, "Don't worry. Nothing unusual happened. All I did was carry you back. With me by your side, what do you think could have happened?"

"You being by my side was exactly the problem, Rachel murmured to herself.

"What did you just say?"

"Nothing." She curled her lips upward and asked, "That's quite some breakfast you're having there. Is it from the room service?"

"Yeah." He poured a glass of milk for Rachel and slid the plate of bread with butter closer to her. "I haven't eaten this, so you could have it."

"Thanks."

"By the way, Mrs. Bennett sent someone to deliver an invitation card here before you woke up.

"Where is it?"

"Right here." Justin brought the red invitation card closer to Rachel.

Rachel then took a sip of her fruit juice and put down her glass, whereupon she skimmed through the content of the invitation card. “They’ve even taken their wedding photo. That’s fast. If Jolly sees this, she is probably going to let her imaginations run wild and bother her again.”

As soon as she flipped open the invitation card, she was greeted by the wedding photo with Leroy and his bride, whose family owned the Grandeur Group. While both of them appeared to be wearing traditional wedding attires, the arrangement represented Shannon’s idea of bringing fortune and happiness.

“The bride has quite a pretty face, although she seemed plumper when I saw her that day than she is in this picture. Anyway, I heard Mrs. Bennett hasn’t been in good health recently, which is why she’s been keeping a low profile. No wonder the press in Enistan doesn’t know much about her.”

“It seems to me that Mrs. Bennett is trying to get herself two puppets. How cunning she is!”

As Rachel was about to close the invitation card, she caught a glimpse of the guest list and frowned at what she saw. “Why are there only our names on the list? Does that mean Jolly can’t come with us?”

Justin nodded in response. “Judging from Lush Enterprise’s unique status in Enistan, I’m sure they’ll tighten the security on the wedding day to make sure no one else but only the invited guests can go in, even if the occasion may be simple. Thus, I don’t think it’s going to be easy for us to sneak Jolly in.”

“What are we going to do then?”

to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.  
Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## Chapter 524

Soon, Rachel made another suggestion. “What if we help Jolly sneak in among the waiters and waitresses?”

“No, it won’t work. The Bennett Family will definitely make sure their security personnel verifies the identity of every single server during the wedding to prevent something like that from happening.” Upon a brief contemplation, Justin said in a preoccupied manner, “I suppose the only thing we can do now is to get her another invitation card.”



“What can we do about that? Fake a new invitation card?”

“Sort of, but not entirely.”

After breakfast, Justin and Rachel left home together, acting as if they were going to hang out together when they were actually trying to do something to get Jolly an invitation card. Soon, Frankie hit the gas pedal and drove into an alley shortly before they sped ahead and left the hectic city of Enistan far behind them. At the same time, they found themselves in an oppressive place that looked like a slum with a distance of arm’s length between each building.

“You might not have seen a place like this, Mrs. Burton, but this is exactly where the people of Enistan live. Don’t be fooled by the dilapidated buildings you can see here. They are actually homes to many of the people who work a decent job.” Frankie drove as he explained the situation in the slum. “In fact, this is not the worst place there is. There are many other places where each house is only separated by wires and fences. Besides that, a lot of them are only as big as the size of a coffin, although they are inhabited by three, four, or even five family members.”

“I’ve seen it on the news before.” Rachel took a deep breath, unable to believe her eyes, when she finally got to see a place like that for herself.

The next second, Justin’s voice was heard. “That’s not something surprising, considering the fact that the land here is so expensive. So, let’s not worry about them. After all, they are all capable of feeding themselves, which is why I believe they can get out of the place one day.” to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

Gosh! That sounds cruel and grim, but I guess that’s how the truth sounds. Rachel nodded in response. “I see. Where are we going now?”

“We’re going to meet a friend who is introduced by Mr. Brook. He said if we can’t get an invitation card from Mrs. Bennett, all we need is to see this friend of his, and our problem will be solved.”

“Mr. Brook? Him again?” Rachel was stunned. “Who’s this Mr. Brook? Why does he have such a wide network of connections? Why is he willing to help us so much?”

Justin shook his head. “I’m not too sure about that, but I know he is an Astronian, although he may be living in Montenegro now. In fact, he was among the few who left our country back in the day. He subsequently settled down there until the recent two years in which he decided to come back here for his business.”

“Did he tell you all that?”

“Yes, he did.”



Upon hearing Justin's reply, Rachel murmured to herself skeptically, "Can we trust him? Why do I feel so panicky on the inside?" Deep down, she couldn't see a reason for Mr. Brook's friend to help Justin since both of them were strangers to each other. In fact, she reckoned it was Justin who showed Mr. Brook more respect than the latter did to him, which made her doubt Mr. Brook's motive for helping them even more. This doesn't add up. Why would Mr. Brook help us in 'gatecrashing' someone else's wedding? Something is fishy here. "Like you said, it was him who contacted you first, so does he know you or perhaps our purpose of visiting Enistan?"

"He didn't tell me anything specific, but I guess he knows more than he let on."

"This is strange."

"I feel the same way too." Justin knitted his eyebrows as a worried expression flashed across his face before disappearing. "Anyway, we don't seem to have any other choice except this one. So, I guess we can't afford to worry too much."

Noticing the concerned look on Rachel's face, Frankie replied, "Don't worry, Mrs. Burton. Mr. Brook seems like a nice guy. When we first arrived in Le Grandeur, we ran into a lot of trouble until Mr. Brook stepped in and took care of all our problems without asking for anything in return."

Rachel paused when she heard what Frankie said, turning her attention to Justin. "Did you guys run into a lot of trouble when you were there?"

"Nah, it wasn't really a big deal. Frankie is just making a mountain out of a molehill." Justin tried to downplay that incident in the past.

"I certainly did not, Mr. Burton. The politics in Le Grandeur were so chaotic that even a simple errand could not get done because there were people who wouldn't stop messing around behind our backs."

"Frankie. Justin interrupted his assistant's words with a deep and intimidating voice.

Despite Frankie's frustration, he didn't continue his words as he kept his mouth shut and stopped right there. However, Rachel was able to guess what happened, judging from the way Frankie put his words in. Thus, she frowned and asked, "Is Julian still giving you all a hard time? He's already got his hands on Riverdale, so what does he want with a place as far as Le Grandeur?"

"It's alright." Unlike Rachel's anger, Justin appeared to be calm and collected, as if nothing had ever happened to him. "No entrepreneur is a hundred percent free from trouble. If it wasn't him, there would be someone else anyway, so don't take it to heart."

Rachel swallowed the words that were forming at the tip of her tongue. How can I take it to heart after seeing the kind of person Julian has become? At the thought of that, she

blamed herself for indirectly causing Justin to be forced out of the Burton Group and driven to a place as far away as Le Grandeur. It was all my fault. I'm responsible for the misery Justin is going through.

"Mr. Burton, Mrs. Burton, we're here." Frankie's voice was heard coming from the front seat.

Soon, the car pulled up at a narrow opening right beside a tall building where there was an alley so cramped that whoever wanted to enter had to bend over his or her body. Oh, dear! This is going to be suffocating. The next moment, Rachel stepped out of the vehicle and walked down the alley with Justin while Frankie led the way in front of them. It wasn't until they arrived at the end of the alley that they saw a plaque with the word, hotdogs', written on it. As it shook so much in the wind, it looked like it was about to fall off. "This is it," said Frankie.

A hotdog place? Rachel and Justin exchanged gazes, wondering if they were in the right location.

"Hello. Is there anybody there?" Frankie took a step forward, with Justin and Rachel following closely behind him. Unlike their dilapidated exterior, the interior of the place was surprisingly clean and decent, not to mention the aroma of hotdogs that filled the atmosphere. At the same time, Rachel seized the opportunity to touch the table, finding it squeaky clean without any oily stain at all. It seems that the owner here is pretty particular with hygiene.

"Hello, anyone there?"

It was only after a few attempts that Frankie finally got some response. "Coming. Who's there?"

Not long after that, a man with a strong and buffed build was seen walking down the stairs before he stood there and bent over, fixing his gaze upon them. With a toothpick protruding from his mouth, the man appeared to be topless as he revealed his muscular physique with a tattoo of a dragon on his left arm that gave off a menacing aura.

While Rachel was so frightened by the man's appearance that she stepped back in fear, Justin immediately stepped up and acted like a shield in front of her. Soon, the muscular guy said, "We're still not open. It's written on the door. We will only be open at 3.00PM."

Frankie mustered his courage and tried to act tough. "We're not here to dine. We're here to look for someone."

"You're here to look for someone?" The muscular guy sized the few of them up and asked, "Who are you looking for?"

Before Frankie could say something, Justin asked, 'Is Mr. Keaton around?'

The muscular guy paused when he heard Justin's question, removing the toothpick away from his mouth. He then stared at Justin and Rachel for the next few moments. "My master isn't around. Why are you guys looking for him?"

Master? Rachel sized the beefy man before her up from head to toe and wondered. If Mr. Keaton has a disciple as muscular as this guy, I wonder what he actually looks like in person. Is he a mob boss or something?

"Mr. Brook said we could come here. We spoke over the phone," Justin said.

"Really?" The muscular man was stunned, staring at them doubtfully before he turned around and headed upstairs. "Wait here until I come back. Don't go anywhere." He then scurried upstairs when he finished his words. In less than a minute, he returned and waved his hand. "Come with me."

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## Chapter 525

Rachel and Justin then followed the tattooed man upstairs. While the wooden stairway was so narrow that only one person could pass, Justin was forced to bend over like the muscular man, in order to make his way through the corner of the stairs.

It wasn't until they arrived upstairs that they realized the place had more than met the eye. As soon as they saw a corridor upstairs where the sunlight could reach, they couldn't help but wonder how the house was built because the afternoon sun was still able to shine on the flowers despite the tall buildings that were towering over the house on the outside.

Soon, they were greeted by an old man sitting on a rocking chair, who appeared to be fit as he was wearing a traditional western outfit with suspenders belt, holding a corn cob pipe in his hand. At the same time, he was seen idling around with his fish in the tank beside him.

"Master, they are here."

When the old man, Howard, heard the voice, he turned around and sized up both Justin and Rachel before his eyes eventually fell upon the lady. "Come close to me, lady. I want to take a closer look at you."

Rachel was stunned but decided that she was in no position to turn the old man down because they needed his help. Therefore, she obediently stepped forward as requested

while the old man straightened his body and looked at her face closely. "Oh my gosh! You look just like her."

"Like whom?" Rachel was confused.

"Someone who's gone for a long time."

Rachel then subconsciously gazed at Justin, wondering what the meaning behind the old man's words was. "Didn't you just say that it was Mr. Brook who told you to come here?" Howard asked.

"It's not me, Mr. Keaton. It's him," Rachel replied politely, thinking Howard's old age was the reason he thought she looked like someone who used to be close to him. I bet that's what he tells everybody.

"It doesn't matter. Anyway, I know why you are here." Howard smiled.

"We need your help, Mr. Keaton, Justin said, Howard then shot a gaze at the muscular man beside him. "Nathan, fetch me the two things I left on the table."

The muscular man, Nathan, then headed into a room and came back with a red invitation card and a black box in his hands, which were like the ones Rachel and Justin saw earlier that morning. While Rachel was left surprised by what she saw, Nathan went ahead and passed the invitation card along with the box to her.

With a sophisticated appearance, the black box felt heavy on Rachel's palms. Bewildered, she asked, "Mr. Keaton, this..."

"I wasn't planning on going there either in the first place. After all, I'm getting old, plus I've grown apart from most of my old friends, but nonetheless, the Bennett Family still respects me enough to send me an invitation card for their wedding, regardless of my decision to attend it." Howard held his corn cob pipe in his hand, his eyes filled with nostalgia as he seemingly indulged in the memories of his good old days. 'Don't worry. Just take my invitation card and the box with you. When you're there, tell them that you're there to deliver my gift on my behalf. No one will stop you.'

"Really? Isn't there something else we need to tell them?"

"No need for that. Those two things I gave you are more than enough."

That sounds promising. Nothing can possibly go wrong, I guess. At the thought of that, Rachel expressed her gratitude. "Thank you so much, Mr. Keaton."

"Don't mention it. If you want to thank me, just call me 'Howie' instead."

"Thank you, Howie."

The old man responded with a benevolent smile and said, "I have a bad ankle, so I suppose I'm going to excuse myself now, but since you guys are here anyway, you should

probably try our hotdogs. It's the best in Enistan."

As Justin was about to say no, Rachel beat him to it and said, "Then, I suppose we must try."

"Sure, let's go."

Soon, Rachel and Justin headed downstairs along with Frankie, whereupon Nathan served them with some tantalizing and freshly made hotdogs. Since Astronian cuisine was Frankie's favorite, he couldn't stop complimenting how delicious the dish was after taking a few bites. "This tastes so awesome! I swear I've never had hotdogs as delicious as this one. How could I not know about this restaurant at all? I must come here more often."

However, Nathan only responded by looking askance at Frankie. "We're closed on Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and Sunday. As for the rest of the days, we're open only if we feel like working. While our working hours start from 3 PM to 9 PM, we sell no more than 100 units every day."

In response, Frankie reacted by curling his lips upward, swallowing the words that were forming at the tip of his tongue. It seems to me that he is turning his customers away. In the meantime, Rachel chuckled aloud and accidentally choked on herself at the sight of Frankie's speechless look. Before Justin could react, Nathan came closer to Rachel with a glass of water and said, "Have a glass of water, Miss

"You don't have to call me 'Miss. Instead, call me by my name, Rachel, or Rae."

"Yes, Miss."

Rachel was helpless upon hearing the muscular man's reply. Soon, Nathan's sudden change in his attitude when treating Rachel since they met Howard upstairs got Justin and Frankie wondering what was wrong with him. After all, Rachel was the only person who had some extra dish on her plate, aside from the hotdogs. Upon finishing their meals, they left the hotdog restaurant, whereupon Nathan closed the shop and headed upstairs. "They are gone, Master."

Howard nodded and replied, "Keep your eyes peeled for anything suspicious during this period of time in which our restaurant is closed. Things are more chaotic around here, so keep an eye on them."

"Yes, Master."

When they were on their way back, Frankie mentioned Howard to the two of them. "This is strange, Mr. Burton. I thought it was you who approached Mr. Keaton, but why did he look like he seemed to care about Mrs. Burton more?"

Agreeing with Frankie's point, Justin asked, "Rae, are you sure you haven't been here in Enistan before?"

Rachel shook her head. "I was 8 years old when I first became a part of the Hudson Family. Then, for the next twenty years, I never left Riverdale until I subsequently went to Montenegro. Although I did go on a trip with the kids to some other places after that, I never really came to Enistan." Known as a shopping paradise more than a place for vacation, Enistan never really occurred to Rachel as a place to visit.

"Maybe... It was your mother who came to Enistan?"

Rachel was stunned. "You think Mr. Keaton knows my mother? How is that possible?"

"Yeah, I might have gone too far, I guess." Justin shook his head and dismissed his suspicion, thinking it was too far-fetched to be true.

"When my grandma was still around, she did. mention my mother to me, saying that she never left Riverdale like me. While her two brothers were sent abroad to further their studies, she stayed behind with my grandfather." Rachel then raised her fingers and started calculating the years. "I remember that was around the time when the first cohort of our students went abroad for their careers not long after the border was first opened.

After all, opportunities to travel overseas were few and far between at that time, and I doubt it was possible for anyone to come to Enistan from Riverdale because there was no available transportation that could take them here either."

"You have a point." Justin nodded in agreement.

"Maybe it's just a pure coincidence that I look like Mr. Keaton's bereaved family member or something. After all, anything can happen in this world even though we may have a hard time explaining them, sometimes. Don't you think so?"

"Yeah, you're right. By the way, make sure you have the invitation card with you."

"It's right here. As for this present, I wonder what's inside that Mr. Keaton is telling us to bring along."

Bound by their honorable nature, Rachel and Justin restrained themselves from opening the box without the owner's permission. As the two of them were talking to each other, they were unaware of Frankie, who was secretly peeking at them in the rear mirror in a preoccupied manner. A few moments later, the car suddenly jerked back and forth when

it was traveling halfway through the highway. While Rachel was sent forward by the inertia, Justin quickly got a hold of her before anything terrible could happen.

Justin then looked forward and asked, "What happened?"

Frankie scratched his head. "Something is wrong with the car. I can't start it."

"How come? What's going on here?" Rachel was stunned.

"We rented this car after all, and I wouldn't be surprised that it's not as reliable as ours. Anyway, just give me a moment, Mr. and Mrs. Burton. I'll check what's wrong with the car. If I can't fix it, I'll call the car rental company that we approached."

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## Chapter 526

"Alright, go ahead."

As soon as Frankie stepped out of the car, Justin was left alone with Rachel in the vehicle. The lady then looked outside the window and said, "Thank god that our car broke down here instead of acting up in the middle of the busy road. If that happened, I bet we'd cause a huge jam shortly before our car got towed away." While the location where their car broke down was at a desolated alley far from the center of the hectic city, the few of them were surrounded by residential buildings and accompanied by the sound of a foghorn, which indicated that a harbor was just nearby.

At the same time, Frankie popped the hood and examined the engine shortly before he returned to Justin and said, "Mr. and Mrs. Burton, I can't seem to identify the problem that caused our car's breakdown, but I just called the car rental company, and they said they'll send someone here with a new car."

"How long is that going to take?" Rachel asked.

"It's hard to tell. It's not like you don't know what the traffic condition in Enistan is like. It may take from 30 minutes to an hour or even longer, and it's almost peak hour soon."

"That's very long. What are we going to do here until then? Just wait?"



"I bet you probably hope that we broke down in the middle of the road instead because we're going to get help sooner that way, don't you?" Justin asked playfully.

"Come on. Are you seriously still in the mood to joke?"

As Justin responded with a pair of smiling eyes on his face, Frankie said, "Maybe I'll just wait here by myself, Mrs. Burton. You could perhaps. shop around with Mr. Burton for the time being since Pearl View City is just not far from here. I heard that's a pretty good place for shopping. So, you guys can stroll around there and have dinner before taking a walk back to the hotel. Does that sound like a plan?"

"That's not a bad idea."

"How come you have everything figured out so... flawlessly?" Rachel appeared skeptical just as Frankie's heart skipped a beat.

However, Rachel squinted with a smile and replied, "If I'm going to start a tourism agency company in the future, I'm going to let you run. it."

"Stop kidding me."

"I kid you not."

Not long after Rachel and Justin stepped out of the car, Frankie escorted both of them away until they were far away enough for him to drop his pretense. Soon, he heaved a sigh of relief and wiped off the cold sweat that was covering his forehead before sitting back into his car. Upon a brief rest, he started the engine and drove away. This is all I can do for you, Boss. You're on your own now.

Meanwhile, Rachel and Justin exited the residential area they were in and made their way toward Pearl View City like Frankie told them to. "If we didn't come here on a mission to look for someone, Jolly would probably be the happiest person among us. In fact, I bet she'd even queue up to buy the bread here every single day'

"She is probably in the hotel now."

"You bet! She just sent me a text, complaining to me how bored she is in the hotel. I did tell her to join us, but she wouldn't, thinking she could risk exposing herself that way."

"You know what? There is something I find rather strange, actually." Justin appeared to be preoccupied.

"What's that?"

"If Mrs. Bennett is trying to threaten Leroy into getting married and inheriting Lush Enterprise in Enistan, wouldn't it have been easier for her if she had just threatened him



with Jolly's safety? Instead, she went through all the trouble just to plot against Mr. and Mrs. Carter."

Rachel frowned in response as she began to see the confusion Justin was trying to point out. "Yeah, why?" She then took a moment to think about it. "Maybe she is trying to force Jolly into breaking up with Leroy by threatening. to harm Mr. and Mrs. Carter?"

"But as you can see, it didn't work that way."

"Mrs. Bennett wouldn't know that for sure, would she? After all, who would still dare to try anything silly if their parents' safety were threatened?" Rachel reckoned her logic was correct, although she wasn't quite sure how accurate her guess was. After all, she did agree with Justin that there was an easier way Shannon could have used to bend Leroy to her will.

"Maybe." Justin knitted his eyebrows. In fact, he had another speculation inside of him but was unable to prove it. Thus, he decided to keep it to himself in order not to panic Rachel.

"What's going on there? Why are there so many people over there? Let's check it out."

"Sure."

In the meantime, Ryan arrived at Enistan Greenhill Hotel after his touchdown earlier that morning, his luggage was still unpacked in the hotel.

"President Sutton, I just found out that Miss Carter lives in a five-star hotel not far from here."

"Get me a new hotel, then."

"Yes." to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

"Wait a second." Ryan's assistant was blocked by a silhouette just when he was about to walk out the door. "Getting a new hotel can wait, but please give me and President Sutton some privacy. I'd like to have a word with him."

The assistant looked at Ryan. Although Ryan frowned upon hearing that voice, he still nodded and dismissed his assistant.

"What is it that you want to talk to me about?"

"Of course it's about my purpose of visiting Enistan." Julian sat down on the couch.

"Have a seat and relax."

“Relax? Mind you, the ladies and Justin are already here. So, unless you have no problem seeing the woman you love rekindling the old flames with Justin, you can stay relaxed all you want.” When Ryan mentioned that, Julian’s eyes darkened. ‘See? If you can’t stay relaxed yourself, don’t tell me to.’ Ryan looked askance at Julian and added, “Things are simpler now than they were previously. After all, I’m sure Mrs. Bennett will never allow anyone to ruin the wedding between Leroy and the daughter of the Grandeur Group’s president. Therefore, I just need to send them a message to stop them from seeing Leroy, and nothing will happen.”

“That’s easier said than done. What makes you think Mrs. Bennett is going to believe you?” Julian gazed at him and asked, ‘Unless you’re planning to tell her the address of the hotel that Jolly lives in?’

Needless to say, Ryan couldn’t bring himself to do that because if he told Shannon that Jolly was in Enistan, things could become unpredictable and even spiral out of his control. If that happened, his plan could fail. Thus, he asked, “What plan do you have, then?”

“Just stop them before the wedding. Julian looked outside the window, setting his eyes on the reddish hue that was shrouding the evening sky, as if it was about to rain. Well, sometimes, the most difficult problem can be solved with the simplest solution.

Meanwhile, Jolly finally grew so restless that she decided to leave her hotel room on the third day of her stay. However, the bigger reason for her to do that was to buy herself a decent gown so that she could attend the wedding the next day. “It’s so refreshing outside.”

When Rachel heard the voice from her earpiece, she held her ear and said, “I told you to come out earlier on, but you wouldn’t. Look at you now. It didn’t hurt to come out and catch some fresh air, right?” Although the three of them.

were taking a stroll in the shopping mall, Jolly acted as if she didn’t know the two of them. Instead, she shopped around by herself, wearing her earpiece while talking to them via a group call

“Chris, do you mind taking a look at my dress later?”

“Which one?”

“The one in the fashion store that’s near the ice cream shop beside the elevator on the third floor. The gray one on the third rack that is on the right side of the entrance.”

“Any dress will do. It’s not your wedding day tomorrow, so just pick any random one,” Rachel replied helplessly.

“No way! I have to look prettier than the bride... I mean, that woman!”

“Women! They are slaves to their vanity, aren’t they?”

“Vanity? That’s a matter of pride and reputation. Or do you think I’m not as pretty as that woman?!”

“I haven’t seen that woman before.” Rachel and Justin exchanged gazes, tacitly understanding what each other was thinking in their minds. Deep down, both of them could empathize with Jolly, so they agreed to let her do as she wished.

“Here is a word of advice, Miss Carter. The dress doesn’t matter to you because what you need to consider when you see him tomorrow is-how to run. Do you understand?”

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## Chapter 527

Feeling sympathetic for Jolly who was still getting over the pain of her breakup, Rachel decided to help her by giving her some opinions about which dress to pick through her earphone. In the end, Jolly settled with a beautiful gray dress. “Alright, take care of the bill yourself later.”

“No problem.” Jolly’s voice was heard from the earphone. “Pick one for yourself too.”

“Any dress is fine by me.”

“No way. You need to pick a decent dress for yourself on a grand occasion like the one we’re going to be attending. Be sure to pick one for her, Justin. Do you hear me?” Jolly said in a bossy manner.

Although Justin was present throughout the call, he was silent most of the time. While he was initially planning to just be a fly on the wall, he didn’t expect Jolly to call him out like that. Nonetheless, he was happy to help Rachel in that regard. “Try this one, Rae.’ Justin clamped the green dress tightly with his fingers, showing the eye-catching fabric with a vintage flavor to the lady as he indirectly proved his good taste.

As Rachel couldn’t seem to find a reason to turn the man down, the saleswoman approached her to take her measurements, explaining with a smile, “It can be rather troublesome to put on this dress, so maybe I should come with you, Madam.”

“Thank you.” Rachel gazed at Justin. “Wait for me outside.”

“Alright.”

The saleswoman then followed Rachel into the fitting room. While the dress seemed even better on the wearer, its color perfectly set off Rachel's fair skin. When the saleswoman saw that, she couldn't stop complimenting Rachel's beauty.

"You look stunning in this dress, Madam."

"Thank you."

"I suppose that man outside must be your husband. You both make such a perfect couple."

"Do we really?"

"Not only do you two look like a perfect couple, but I'm also sure that your husband really loves you. Look at him. He carries everything for you and picks your clothes for you. In fact, men, who are willing to shop with their wives and pick clothes for them, are hard to find these days. While Rachel chuckled in response, the saleswoman added, "Oh, I wouldn't laugh at that if I were you, Madam."

I dare say that I've become quite a good judge myself, considering the years I've spent working as a salesperson here. We can tell whether a man loves his wife by just observing his reaction. Therefore, I'm sure you're in luck, Madam." The saleswoman went on and on, giving Rachel little to no chance to interrupt and cut her short.

When the saleswoman was finally told to fix her dress, Rachel opened the fitting room curtain, only to see Justin sitting on the couch with his eyes closed, seemingly asleep. Initially stunned, she quickly felt warm on the inside as she continued to set her eyes on the man. After all, Justin had been keeping her company wherever she went for the past few days, not to mention the fact that he slept on the couch at night. Therefore, she could tell that Justin must have been exhausted from the busy schedule in these few days. For that, she turned her attention to the saleswoman and said, "I'll go with this dress. Please pack it for me."

In the meantime, Justin continued to nod off on the couch until the cushion beside him began to sink. It was then that he woke up and saw Rachel sitting beside him in her casual wear. "Wait, what? Didn't you change? The dress doesn't look good on you?"

"I did, and it looked good on me too. So, I told the saleswoman to pack it for me."

"Why didn't you wake me up?"

"You were sound asleep, so I figured I shouldn't ruin your sweet dream." Rachel took a look at the watch and said, "It's getting late now. So, let's go back."

"Relax, we're not in a hurry anyway. We can have dinner together before returning to the hotel. In fact, I've booked a table at a restaurant, and Jolly will be joining us."

“With us?”

“She’ll perhaps sit two tables away from us.”

Rachel burst into laughter when she heard that. “Is it just me or is she really acting like a thief?”

During dinner, Jolly sat two tables away from Rachel and Justin as they expected. Although Rachel tried to strike up a conversation with her, Jolly only responded with a long face and ignored the former. Soon, her voice was heard from the earpiece. “Stop staring at me like a creep. Just enjoy your meal and get on with your business.”

“I was just worried that you’d be too lonely eating by yourself.”

“Who says I’m lonely? I’m not lonely. Not at all! If you continue to stare at me like that, I’m going to take my meal away and have it in the hotel room instead.”

“Alright. Alright, I’ll stop looking at you, okay? Just enjoy your food.” Rachel helplessly took her gaze off Jolly. Then, she turned her attention to Justin and said, “Let’s hope everything goes smoothly tomorrow.”

Justin replied, “The wedding is held in the afternoon. Although there are going to be a lot of people there, the traffic should be clear. By then, I’ll get Frankie to take them to the airport straight away as we follow right behind them.”

“If anything goes wrong during the wedding, would Mrs. Bennett suspect us?”

“I don’t know.” Justin had no idea what to say since the situation seemed unpredictable to him.

While the three of them appeared to be preoccupied about the wedding the next day, they didn’t really enjoy themselves even though they were dining at a famous restaurant. Not long after that, they decided to make a move and return to the hotel. As Jolly flagged down a cab and made her way back by herself, Rachel and Justin both took Frankie’s ride back home.

“The car isn’t going to break down again today, is it? Rachel looked at Frankie, expressing her concern to him as soon as she entered the car. “Mind you, the hotel is pretty far away from here.”

“Don’t worry. I requested a new model from the car rental company, Frankie replied with an embarrassed smile. As the neon lights began to shine through the night, the busy city of Enistan started to seem lively and prosperous.

Meanwhile, Justin, who had only taken his seat for a few minutes, slowly dozed off, his head tilting to the side until it rested on Rachel’s shoulder. In the meantime, Rachel

paused when she suddenly felt something heavy on her shoulder. She then straightened her body to keep the man's head still, but at the same time, she happened to catch a glimpse of Frankie peeking at them through the rear mirror.

While Rachel's face blushed in that instant, Frankie said in a soft voice, "I didn't see anything." He murmured with a soft voice and proceeded to intentionally adjust the mirror in an attempt to convince Rachel that he wasn't peeking. When Rachel noticed Frankie's reaction, her face blushed even more.

As the few of them continued their journey back, Rachel's phone suddenly rang, shattering the reigning silence within the car. While Justin was awakened by the ringtone, Rachel slid the answer button and picked up the call. "Hello?"

"Help me, Chris!" Jolly's panicky voice was heard from the other side of the phone. When Rachel heard that, her face changed. "What's going on? Where are you now?"

Jolly responded in a hushed tone. "I don't know. where I am. I hopped out of the car when the driver took me down an alley. I'm now hiding in a dumpster."

"Send me your location!" However, Jolly's voice was abruptly stopped after some noise was heard. "Hello? Hello, Jolly!"

Since Justin was close enough to the phone, he was able to overhear what Jolly just said. Thus, he quickly gave his assistant an order. "Relax. Frankie, drive in the direction of the hotel and be sure to drive slowly so that we can see what's going on in the alleys."

"Is anything going to happen to Jolly?"

"No, there isn't. She is smart enough to get out of the car and hide until we arrive."

"Is it Mrs. Bennett who found out that Jolly is now in Enistan?"

"We don't know what's going on now, so let's not freak yourself out." Justin wrapped his arm around Rachel's shoulder to calm her down.

As the car continued to move forward on the busy street, the few of them went on to notice many more humid and dark alleys despite the prosperous-looking appearance of the place. When Rachel noticed that, she couldn't help but think that anything terrible could happen. I can't believe Jolly is now hiding in a dumpster filled with a reeking and disgusting stench. Although Rachel knew Jolly would usually not be able to bear with that, she was sure that her friend would face a fate worse than enduring some unpleasant smell if she ever stepped out of the dumpster. At the same time, the sound of metal pipes shattering a car's windows reverberated in her head as her mind went blank.

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## Chapter 528

“Where is she?”

“The car is right here, so I bet she must be somewhere nearby.”

“You can have a look there while I check this area out. Start searching now.”

Judging from the sound of the footsteps, Jolly was able to tell that there were only two people outside the dumpster. At the thought of that realization, she clenched her fists, thinking her years of experience in some novice sparring training should be enough to help her fend off some thugs. However, she wasn't confident enough to take on some dangerous outlaws who had no regard for their own safety. Not knowing how long had passed, Jolly began to hear footsteps coming closer and closer to her. As soon as the dumpster lid above her was lifted, she started to swing her fists wildly. Shortly after that, she heard a man moaning in pain and saw him covering his eyes. “Don't you dare come close to me!”

“Jolly!” When Jolly heard a familiar voice, she snapped out of her frantic state and stopped swinging her fists crazily.

“Chris.”

As Jolly wanted to hug Rachel, the latter stepped back and said, “Wait a minute. Just step out of the dumpster first.” At that moment, Jolly's body was shrouded by the reeking stench from the dumpster. Although she wished she didn't have to turn Jolly's hug away, she couldn't stand the disgusting smell that was wafting from her.

After struggling to come out of the dumpster, Jolly walked up to Justin and apologized to him. “I'm so sorry. I didn't know it was you.”

Justin covered his eye and shook his head. “I'm fine.”

“Let's get you to the hospital later.” Frankie said, “But for now, we must go, Mr. and Mrs. Burton.” Before they could react, they were suddenly blocked by a silhouette.

“Where do you think you are going?”

“Wait a second. It looks like we have three more unexpected ‘guests here.’”

“Who cares? Because that means we’re going to get even richer now.”

It turned out that there were two muscular men with a menacing look, which suggested that they were thugs who lurked in the hidden alleys around Enistan. However, they didn’t seem to be working for Shannon, judging from their conversation. Instead, they looked more like they were trying to blackmail Justin and the others for money.

In that instant, Justin quickly stood in front of the ladies and shielded them behind him. “If money is what you guys are after, I can give it to you. All I’m asking is for you to let us go.”

One of the men spat and asked, “How much can you give us?”

“How much do you want?”

“This much.” The thug stuck out all five of his fingers.

“No problem. Just let us go.”

As they didn’t expect Justin to agree to their request so quickly, they couldn’t help but feel doubtful upon hearing Justin’s reaction. “I haven’t even said how much before you agreed. Are you trying to mess with us? I want five million!”

“Sure.” Justin agreed without any hesitation. After all, his priority was to keep himself and the ladies safe, so even if he had to pay five billion, he wouldn’t even hesitate to fork over the money.

The thugs sized them up and replied, “Good. We like your generosity, but we only accept cash.”

“Five million in cash? Are you out of your mind?” Jolly lost her patience and berated the thugs. “Do you know how much cash there is for five million? Where do you expect us to get you that kind of money?”

“Do you think we don’t know that, b\*tch?!”

Fearing that the thugs would get pissed, Justin raised his hand and said, “I can give you guys this watch for you to sell it. It’s worth at least four million. If you insist on having cash, I have no problem paying you that, but are you sure you can walk away with it in one piece?”

The two muscular thugs looked at each other, whereupon one of them walked closer to Justin and said, “Throw it over here.”



Without saying a single word, Justin threw his watch at them, but just as the thug stretched out his hand to reach it, Justin immediately landed a kick on him and shouted, "Frankie!" Frankie, who was quick to react, grabbed the golf club he had taken with him from the car and swung it across the air, only to miss his target.

In the meantime, the guy who took a kick in the chest was seen with a painful look on his face. "Goddamn you! You guys are making a big mistake!" The next second, the thugs each grabbed a metal pipe and closed in on them.

Needless to say, Justin and Frankie stood in front of the ladies and shielded them behind them. "Mr. Burton, you should leave with the ladies. I'll hold them off and buy you some time."

"We'll hold them off. Rachel, take Jolly with you, Justin said.

"We're not leaving." Rachel gritted her teeth with a pale look on her face.

At the same time, Jolly also reacted with a determined look on her face. "No, we're not leaving without you all. We're all getting out of here-together!"

"None of you is walking out of this alley in one piece!" One of the thugs snarled, his voice echoing in the alley.

Nevertheless, a painful moan was soon heard from the shadows of the alley the next second. As soon as the thugs looked back, they were knocked out by someone with a brick before they could even identify who their attacker was. While the two men were down on the ground, Rachel was slowly able to make out the silhouette that was emerging from the shadows. "Nathan?"

"Miss Hudson." A familiar voice came from the shadows at the end of the alley as the person who saved them showed himself. Soon, Nathan. was seen manhandling the thugs whom he had just tied up and left in the corner. He then turned his attention to Rachel and said, "The police will find them the next morning, so don't worry about it."

Rachel nodded. "Thank you, Nathan, but how did you know we're here?"

"Master Keaton was afraid that you all would become a target for those scums in Enistan. After all, there are all kinds of people around here, which is why I was told to follow you all these few days. Guess what? It turns out that Master Keaton was right."

"Mr. Keaton?" Rachel and Justin looked at each other. Justin then said, "Please give our thanks to Mr. Keaton. I'll be sure to pay a visit and thank him in person soon."

"Not at all. In fact, I'm here to protect Miss Hudson." Despite Nathan's intimidating tattoos, he was actually a simple-minded guy who only sought to protect Rachel. After

all, if she hadn't been in danger, he wouldn't have interfered with them. "It's getting late. You should probably get back to the hotel now."

Although Rachel's mind was filled with question marks and confusion, she only nodded, knowing it wasn't the right time to find out more about Nathan's strange behavior. Concerned with Jolly's safety if she continued to stay with them, she probingly asked, "Nathan, can you do me a favor?"

"Please say it, Miss Hudson."

"Can you escort my friend back to the hotel for us?"

Nathan shifted his gaze to the lady standing behind Rachel, while Jolly freaked out and complained in a hushed tone, "Really? Are you seriously going to let this big guy take me away?"

"Relax!" Rachel seized her friend's sleeve and said, "He just saved your life."

"Nathan, she is not safe with us, so can we count on you to keep her safe? I'm worried we might run into further trouble again."

"Sure," Nathan answered. "One more thing. Can you please pick her up at the hotel tomorrow in the afternoon? Take her to the venue where the wedding is held."

"Alright."

How could he not ask anything at all before saying yes to my every favor? Rachel couldn't believe that Nathan would agree to help her so easily. However, she quickly put her confusion about that behind her, considering the dire circumstances. After Jolly left with Nathan, she took Frankie's ride back to the hotel with Justin. Sitting in the car, Rachel couldn't stop thinking about the intense encounter she just went through. "Do you guys think it was all a coincidence?"

Frankie replied, "Judging from the way they spoke to each other, it seemed to me that they were just after money."

"Or it could just be a cover to mislead whoever is listening." Justin's voice was heard echoing in the car as he knitted his eyebrows and said, "Frankie, I need you to find out where Ryan is recently."

"Ryan?" Rachel was perplexed.

"If those people had been sent by Mrs. Bennett, they would have come straight for Jolly without worrying about blowing their cover. However, if Mrs. Bennett isn't behind all this, he is the next suspect on the list, considering how much he wishes to stop Jolly. Don't you think so?" Justin replied.

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## **Read Chapter 529**

### **Chapter 529**

“What? He hasn’t given up?’ Rachel couldn’t believe what she just heard. “I thought he was undergoing a coronary artery bypass surgery? Why won’t he stop stirring up trouble even in his current condition? Why is he still trying to harm Jolly?”

“I’m not too sure about that, but for now, I guess we should let Frankie find out where he is. If he is in Enistan, I believe he is absolutely behind all this,” Justin said.

Soon, Frankie’s voice was heard from the front. “Mr. and Mrs. Burton, I’ll get on with it as soon as possible.”

Meanwhile, Julian was standing in front of the French window in his hotel room at the ungodly hour. Despite the usual approachable look on his face, he was a cunning and scheming person on the inside. Since the moment he took over the Burton Group as the company’s president, he had created nothing but chaos in Riverdale’s commercial world.

“President Peters.”

Julian could see his assistant’s reflection in the window but didn’t bother to turn around. Instead, he continued to set his eyes on the night view outside the window. “What’s the status? Have you caught her?”

“Um. No.”

Hearing how the assistant stammered, Julian sensed something wrong as he turned around with a scowl on his face. “What happened? Tell me.”

The assistant answered, “I can’t seem to reach the two guys we sent after her.”

“What? You can’t reach them? When was the last time you tried reaching them?”

“Half an hour ago. Do we need to send someone to look for them, President Peters?”

“Look for them? In whose name?”

The assistant blanched, knowing that he just said something silly. After all, the two men they sent after Jolly didn't know who they were working for. Therefore, if Julian sent someone to search for them, he could risk alerting Justin and the others, letting them know they were onto them.

Julian said, 'Call Enistan Greenhill Hotel and see if you can learn anything useful about them,'

The assistant was momentarily startled before he nodded rapidly and replied, "Alright, I'll do it now."

In fact, Julian wasn't concerned about the two men he just sent out but was more concerned about Jolly, Justin, and Rachel. After all, if they had successfully returned to the hotel, it would mean that those two men had failed their mission. Upon learning the information he needed, the assistant hung up the call and anxiously said, "President Peters, the receptionist in the hotel said they are back."

In that instant, Julian's eyes darkened. Although he had no idea how Jolly was able to escape from his men, he knew nothing could stop her from ruining the wedding the next day now that she was back to the hotel. However, unlike Ryan, Julian couldn't care less about the wedding but was instead worried that the men he sent after Jolly had given him away. "Book the air tickets. We're going back to Riverdale now."

"Now?" Julian's assistant was stunned.

"Yes, now."

The next morning, Justin and Rachel had their breakfast in the hotel room before they set out for the wedding. "I doubt we're going to stand a chance to enjoy the meal there later, so be sure to grab a bite now. Justin poured Rachel a glass of milk, gently reminding her to eat something.

"I guess we'll be fine. Mrs. Bennett doesn't know our relationship with Jolly anyway. So, if she runs away with Leroy, I bet she won't suspect us right away. So, we should have some time to try out the good food there."

Rachel then sipped the milk in her glass, speaking her mind frankly since Jolly wasn't around. 'Furthermore, we don't know whether she is going to make it either.'

"I thought you were going to teach Leroy a lesson if he won't come along with Jolly? If that's the case, I don't think you have time for that. Either way, we're going to achieve our goal.

"Hey, did you just listen in on my conversation with Jolly?"

"Hello, I've been in the group chat for as long as you have." Justin pointed at his ear.

It was then that Rachel paused and recalled the voice messages they sent in the group chat, but since Justin remained silent most of the time, she and Jolly started to forget that he was also present in the chat. This is awkward. “Relax. I was just kidding.” Rachel rubbed her nose to hide her embarrassment.

“Anyway, I don’t mind preparing a weapon for you if you need it by then,” Justin replied with a pair of furrowed brows on his face. In fact, his deadpan humor was the hardest to read because of his serious-looking expression despite the ridiculous ideas that came out of his mouth. Like Jolly had once said before, Justin would be a comedian whose sense of humor came from his poker face if he was ever going to work as one. After breakfast, Rachel retreated to her room to get changed.

The wedding was held at a resort on Idyll Mountain, which was not far from Grandeur Hospital, but even so, it was still time-consuming for them to travel from where they were to the central city. “Mr. Burton.” Frankie knocked on the door and entered the presidential suite. “Everything has been arranged. If Miss Carter can successfully take Leroy with her, both of them will catch a flight to Europe right away.”

Justin nodded shortly before he asked, “Did you find anything new about what I told you to?”

“You were right. Ryan isn’t in Riverdale.”

“Go on.”

“Ryan arrived here in Enistan on the same day as we did. In fact, he reached here almost around the same time as we did. Moreover, he switched his stay to another hotel that is about less than one kilometer away from ours.” Frankie then pointed outside the window and said, “That building.”

Following Frankie’s line of sight, Justin set his eyes outside the window and saw a hotel, which was near to the harbor, erected right on the side of the road. This is too much of a coincidence, no? “What about those two men we ran into yesterday? Did he send them?”

“I haven’t found anything out about that, but the two of them were arrested by the cops and detained in a nearby police station this morning. They both told the police that they were drunk and kidnapped last night. Nothing. else more than that.”

“Are you sure?”

“Yes. It almost looks as if they were sure no one was going to press charges against them.”

Justin appeared to be preoccupied, seemingly finding something strange in his mind. Deep down, he reckoned Jolly couldn’t afford to risk drawing too much unwanted

attention no matter what happened to her in Enistan if she still wished to see Leroy. Therefore, they didn't call the police despite the life-threatening encounter they had with the thugs the day before. However, what bewildered Justin was the fact that the two thugs seemed as if they were sure they wouldn't call the police, which he thought was why they appeared to be so confident in keeping their crimes a secret. For that, Justin was sure that they were working for someone else behind them.

"It looks like you're right, Mr. Burton. It was Ryan who sent those people here because he is the only one who knows that Miss Carter, having come to Enistan just to see Leroy, can't afford to draw too much attention."

However, Justin responded with silence for a while and said, "Wait. There is one more person."

Frankie was stunned as he didn't have any idea of who Justin might be referring to. Soon, the latter said, "Go find out whether Julian is in Riverdale now."

When Frankie heard that, he paused with his eyes wide open. "Do you suspect Dr. Peters is behind this too?"

"He's always worked closely with Ryan."

After all, Jolly had a wide connection of network behind her since her father owned and ran the huge Carter Enterprise. Therefore, any man who could marry her would naturally get his hands on those valuable resources, including the company itself. At the same time, Justin knew that Julian and Ryan had been colluding with each other to rope all the other companies across Riverdale in for the sake of their mutual interests. For that, he believed the two of them would naturally try to maximize each other's interest, considering the fact that they were on the same boat.

Meanwhile, when Justin and Frankie were talking to each other, the two men weren't aware that their bedroom door was left ajar. It turned out that a slim figure was standing outside the door. Upon hearing Julian's name, the figure clenched her fists tightly.

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## Chapter 530

When Rachel had finished changing and came out, Frankie had already gone downstairs to get the car ready. Justin was in the living room, wearing a suit with a black

badge on his lapel. Rachel's dark green gown complemented her skin, making it look glowing. Just some light makeup was enough to bring out her aura, and her movements looked as though they belonged in an aesthetic scene of a movie.

Justin could not look away, and it took a while for him to collect himself as she looked at him. He cleared his throat and murmured, "It suits you."

Rachel smiled. "Well, you have good taste." It was Justin who had picked out the gown, but he had fallen asleep in the store yesterday and missed seeing it.

"It's almost time. Let's go."

"Wait." She stopped him. "I heard you and Frankie talking just now."

When he heard that, Justin frowned, which prompted Rachel to add, "You think Julian Peters had a part in last night's events?"

"Yes."

"That's impossible. He's not that type of person. He may have some outrageous business methods, but that is when he is with strangers. What does he have against Jolly? They are friends. They even live under the same roof!" Rachel could not accept that Julian would harm Jolly, and she believed that Justin's assumptions were wrong.

"Yes, I know they are friends." Justin was calm, as if he had anticipated her reaction. "I don't mean anything else by this. If you don't want me to continue investigating, this will stop here. We just need to make sure it's Ryan behind it."

"It doesn't work like that. What's black is black, and what's white is white." She took a deep breath. "Send someone to the Burton Group offices to find Julian."

"Is this necessary?"

"Yes, it is; I have sent your secretary there. If he is still in Riverdale, that means your assumption is wrong. He would never do this to Jolly."

Rachel clenched her fists tightly as she spoke. She could understand Julian's refusal to accept his real identity immediately, thus behaving like a changed man by frantically recruiting people to build a faction and strengthen his standing. She could also understand him taking advantage of his old friendships to become closer to the Carter Family elders for his own future. However, she couldn't understand why he would do something to hurt his friend for his gain, nor did she believe he would do it.

Seeing her being so stubborn, Justin couldn't do anything. He also wanted his assumption to be wrong since it was the best for everyone involved. Before the two of them departed, Rachel's phone rang.

“Hello?”

Her secretary’s voice came from the other end. “President Hudson, I am now at the Burton Group offices. The workers say President Peters has been working here since early this morning. He is now in the conference room holding a morning meeting and will come to meet me later.”

The phone was on speaker mode, so Justin could hear everything. At that, Rachel told her secretary, “Don’t hang up later. Put your phone beside you.”

“Okay.”

Rachel had her assistant bring along some project documents to pretend to enquire about a project. In reality, she just wanted to check if Julian had always been in Riverdale. Soon, a familiar masculine voice came from the other end. “Have you been waiting long?”

Currently in the conference room of Burton Group at Riverdale, Julian had taken a short break from the meeting to meet Rachel’s secretary, Casey. When Casey saw him, she immediately waved her hand. “No, I just arrived here too. Did I interrupt your meeting? You can continue if you are busy. I can wait a little more.”

“It’s alright. Several proposals for publicity haven’t gone through, and the company is having a meeting to discuss them. It can go on without me. Why do you want to meet me?”

Casey pulled out a file at once. “These are some documents for the partner project. When doing the documentation, we found some issues, so I came to ask about it.”

“Let me have a look.” As Julian said so, he took the file and started reading carefully.

Their voices could be heard from Rachel’s end via Casey’s phone, which was placed on the table with the screen facing down. After hanging up, Rachel looked up at Justin. “See? I told you he is definitely in Enistan.”

Justin nodded in response. “Yes, he is.”

“So, what happened last night had nothing to do with him.”

“Mhm.”

Justin quickly agreed without even hesitating, in turn making Rachel panic. “Are you not going to argue?”



“You have already shown me evidence to prove it. How can I argue with that? I have no proof.” He then looked at his watch. “It’s really late. Let’s go, Rae. If you still want to discuss this, we can do it in the car.”

“So, you don’t believe what I said?”

“I do believe you.” It was just that Justin didn’t trust Julian. Even though he had taken the proof she gave lightly and still believed that there was something fishy going on in the partnership between Julian and Ryan, he didn’t show it.

Rachel didn’t want to think of Julian too badly, so Justin would play his part and allow this. She just had to see the good side of things, and he would deal with the darker side.

When they arrived at the Idyll Mountain Resort, it was almost 12.00PM, and it was time for the banquet to start..

No one could deny Justin’s taste was good; Rachel’s dark green gown had attracted the gazes of multiple men after she entered the venue. If not for Justin standing much like a glacier beside her, her phone number would be in high demand.

It was a banquet for the wealthy so naturally. plenty of socialites were there. Jolly had arrived before them and was eating someplace near the bar. Rachel was about to head over when Justin stopped her. “Where are you going?”

“I am reminding her not to drink any alcohol.”

“Just like that?”

His words made her realize this belatedly. “You’re right. We can’t do it directly.”

As such, Rachel pulled out her phone and sent Jolly a message, ‘Drinking can lead to mistakes. Do not even touch any alcohol today.’

Jolly replied at once, ‘Don’t worry, I won’t drink any.’

While they were chatting, the presenter suddenly announced the newlyweds’ arrival. As sparks from the firecrackers showered onto the red-colored carpet and colorful confetti hovered in the air, a couple glided down the spiral staircase of the resort. They were the stars for today, and they were dressed in a suit and wedding dress respectively. Leroy walked hand in hand with the bride the entire time, as if she would immediately disappear once he let go of her.

Rachel looked anxiously into the distance. Just as she thought, Jolly’s expression didn’t look good.

Rachel then said, “Why do I get the feeling there would be worse to come if Leroy did run away with her later?”

Justin agreed. “I think so too.”

“He’s spotted us.”

At that moment, Leroy, who was walking on the red carpet, noticed them, but he was surprised only for a short while. In the next moment, his gaze had shifted to the distance and he immediately recognized Jolly, who was standing in the crowd.

Immediately, he stopped in his tracks. The music was playing, the couple hadn’t finished their journey, and the presenter was still quoting expressions about past lives, yet the groom had stopped walking.

People started talking at once.

“What’s happening?”

“What’s the groom doing?”

“Is he regretting his decision and no longer wants to marry?”

It went on and on.

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.