

My mute bride

Chapter 601

The manager carefully observed Sandra from head to toe. "But, Miss, the boss has asked the chefs to make dinner for you when she knows that you're here. The food will be served soon. It's been a while since you last came. Why don't you accompany her for dinner?"

"When she has so many people to keep her company? It'll be redundant for me to do that." She was firm with her decision. "I'm busy. Grandma is still waiting for me."

"Miss, the boss is feeling under the weather these days. She keeps coughing. Please ask her to visit the doctor."

"She deserves it for all the bad deeds she has done."

"Miss!"

"Fine, fine. I'll go. Stop addressing me like that too. I'm not a bargirl." With an impatient expression, she relented and gave her word before hopping onto the shuttle cart.

Watching the shuttle cart leave, the security guard, who had stopped her, was still in a daze. The head of security smacked his staff's head with a cap. "Did you realize that you almost lost your job today? I wouldn't have been able to help you!"

The security guard covered his head. "What's going on, sir? I haven't seen her before. Why is the manager calling her 'Miss'?"

"She's the boss' daughter, and it's rare to see her around here. It's not been long since you started working here, so it makes sense that you don't know her."

"Which boss?" Although the security guard was a newcomer, he was aware that Westhill Racecourse was owned by two people.

"Mrs. Bowman.' The security head exclaimed, "But they don't look alike at all. Mrs. Bowman is such a gentle woman and yet, her daughter is so fierce."

'Mrs. Bowman?' The security guard's eyes widened, for he had had the honor to meet the beauty in person once. Similar to the element of water, she seemed delicate and every movement of hers was gentle. In spite of her old age, she had an air of elegance. How could she be compared with that rustic and rude kid?

The security head knew what the man was thinking, and he threw him a glance. "They don't look alike, right? By the way, she is Mrs. Bowman's only daughter. Mrs. Bowman pampers her so much, but she doesn't appreciate it. Let's put it this way-if Miss fancies it, Mrs. Bowman will give her the whole racecourse without a second thought. However, she doesn't want it! I can count the number of times she visits this place with one hand."

"Why?"

"Of course it's because-"The security head realized something, and he smacked his subordinate's head again. "Stop prying and get back to work."

Having said that, he strode away and left the security guard rubbing his head at the same spot. Why can't I ask a question when you're the one who brought it up?

Meanwhile, the shuttle cart was driven to the south and had reached the entrance of a two- storey house. Sandra entered the house with the manager. She had only been here a handful of times, but she was still uninterested in the place. With her eyes fixated to the front, she stepped through the door as her countenance turned solemn and her hands formed a fist.

"Mrs. Bowman, Miss Huges is here." As soon as the manager finished his words, the sound of hasty footsteps resounded in the house..

"Sandra." The woman sounded surprised. "Come on in and let me take a look at you. It's been a long time since I last saw you. You've become thinner and grown taller."

Sandra avoided the woman's hand as the woman intended to hold her. Taking a step back, her visage darkened. Since Julia was rejected when the manager was still around, she felt slightly awkward.

Still, the sensible manager pretended that nothing had happened and excused himself. "Mrs. Bowman, I shall head off to my position now. It's been a while since Miss Huges came. Please enjoy your time together."

"You should stay for a meal together."

"I'm fine. Thank you, boss."

After the manager left, her gaze on Sandra grew fonder. She intended to pull Sandra's hand, but at the thought of the girl's repulsive reaction, she gave up. "Come, sit. The chefs made your favorite tomato soup and grilled salmon for dinner."

However, Sandra turned a deaf ear to her caring words. "I'm here for the money, that's all."

Julia was slightly stunned. "Sandra, can't you just have a meal with me?"

“Grandma is still waiting for me at the hospital. Is this more important than someone’s life?”

The atmosphere became tense in a heartbeat. Julia asked a maid to bring over her phone to make a phone call in front of Sandra.

“It’s me. Please give Dorothy a single room with a caregiver to take care of her 24/7. The medical bills will be on me. Just ring me if there’s a problem.”

When the call ended, she looked at her daughter. “Will this do?”

“So, you have long known that Grandma is in the hospital.”

“Yes.”

“And you didn’t answer my call on purpose.”

“If I had picked it up and settled the issue for you, would you have come to see me? Sandra, you’re my daughter that I’ve given birth to after a ten-months pregnancy. Have you ever counted the number of times you came to see me over the decade?”

Sandra turned her head away, for she was reluctant to see her mother’s bitter expression. “You’re living a good life. You’re living in a huge house with enough clothes and food while Grandma and I are depending on each other. It’s the choice we made.”

“No. I never had a choice. Do you think that I wanted all these? Sandra, I’ve done it all for your sake back then.”

“For me?” Sandra’s face fell. “Are you saying that you seduced another man and betrayed my father for my sake? Did you make him become depressed and commit suicide just for me? Don’t use me as an excuse for your nasty deeds!”

“You!” Julia raised her hand in rage, but it was left hanging midair for a long time. In the face of Sandra’s determined eyes, she could not bring herself to slap her.

She was growing old, and so was her dependence on her child; she wished to have her child by her side, unlike her younger self where she could forsake everything just for her career.

“Have dinner with me. I’ll ask someone to take care of your grandmother.” Her tone softened in the end.

“Ahem... The sudden cough echoed against the walls and Sandra’s gaze wavered at that. “I wanna go to the hospital once I finish eating.”

“Sure. Percy will send you there later. Dig in.” Julia nodded before turning toward the maids. “Add another two dishes.”

Sitting before the dining table that was full of scrumptious dishes, Sandra had no appetite in the slightest. Even though she resented this woman-who was her mother-to the bones, she had no choice but to seek help from Julia during hardships. She knew that she could not shake Julia off for perpetuity. If Julia was going to hell in the afterlife, she might also be dragged down to hell to atone for her mother’s sins.

At the same time, Julia kept putting food on Sandra’s plate. “Sandra, have this. It’s your favorite.”

“I can do it on my own. You should eat too.”

“Okay.”

Halfway through the meal, a maid suddenly approached them. “Madam, Mr. Baxter is here. He’s waiting for you in the side hall.”

Julia frowned and took a glimpse of Sandra reflexively, who was not perturbed one bit. “You should go ahead if you’re busy.”

“Sandra, I’ll be right back. Enjoy the food.”

Watching the woman leaving, Sandra set down the spoon, and her eyes dimmed.

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

Chapter 602

In the side hall of the house, Randall was fumbling with a gold ornament that he took from the cupboard.

The sound of the door opening resounded behind him, and without looking back, he questioned, “Julia, since when do you have this gold ornament? I didn’t see it the last time I came here. Why do you always hide such precious valuables from me?”

The incoming person was indeed Julia, who had no choice but to leave her daughter and come to him in case of any emergency upon receiving the news from a maid. “What brings you here? Why didn’t you inform me earlier about your visit?”

He frowned and placed the ornament back in the cupboard before facing her. "Why? Do I have to do that first whenever I wanna come?"

"I don't mean it like that. Sandra's here."

His eyes glistened when he heard that. "You should've told me earlier. It's been years since I last met her. I should see her."

"Hold on." She stopped him. "Stay."

"What's wrong?"

"It's not like you don't know how stubborn she is. She behaves no less differently in front of me."

Only then did Randall regain his senses. "It's been years, though. Is she behaving the same?"

"You're telling me. I meet her less and less as years pass. You're not the only one who hasn't seen her for a long time. I can use my hands to count the amount of her visits during the last two years. She came to me today because her grandmother has fallen sick."

"Dorothy's sick? Is she alright? Should I find someone to check on her?"

"It's fine. It's the usual ailments that come with age. It'll be alright as long as we watch her diet and routine." Julia sighed. "The problem is. Sandra. She doesn't listen to anyone except her grandmother."

The rage in her flared up at the mention of that. "That old hag must've spoken ill of me to Sandra all these years."

"Don't stress about it. You share the same blood and she will be your daughter forever. I bet she will acknowledge you as her mother someday."

"That's kinda hard to tell. Dorothy is Sandra's biological grandmother, but her words work better than mine."

"How much time does Dorothy have left?" The man wore an impassive expression. "If you wanna let your daughter stay by your side, it's not like there's no way to do it. Once Dorothy is gone, she will have no one to depend on except you."

Her brows knitted together. "Don't interfere with this. Dorothy is super important to Sandra, so we can't do anything to her just yet."

"Are you not going to take Sandra away with you?"

His words reminded her of the reason for his arrival as she inquired, "Why do you wanna see me today?"

"It's about the Carter Family."

"What about them?"

"It's confirmed that Miss Jolly is going to have a wedding with that celebrity. The Carter Family are in the middle of selecting the invitation cards. They have the first batch printed too."

"Is that true?" Julia's eyes brightened. "When and where will the wedding be held?"

"It'll be a month later in Tahiti."

"Tahiti? Isn't that-

"That's right. It's the area with the least reach by the international regime, as well as the closest to the sketchiest border."

No one spoke as they reveled in the good news in silence. Hence, neither of them noticed the silhouette that was hiding by the window of the side hall. The figure outside clenched her fists the moment Julia and Randall held hands.

After sending Randall off, Julia returned to the dining room, but Sandra was nowhere to be seen.

"Where's Sandra?"

The maid, who was serving soup on the table was equally confused. "She was still here a while ago. I went away to bring some soup, so I don't know where she has been."

Then, she called the security guard that was on duty at the entrance to find out that Sandra had left the place.

"What's the point of hiring you guys? You can't even keep an eye on a person!" Julia glowered at the maids in fury. "It's going to rain soon and there's no cab around the area. She doesn't even have money. Where can a little girl like her go? Find her at this instant!"

"Y-Yes."

The sky was completely dark when Rachel made two bowls of instant noodles. Justin washed the plates and cutlery once he was done eating. "I will do it."

"It's okay. Take a rest. He lightly shoved her away with his elbow before marching toward the apron that was hung on the wall. He also put on dishwashing gloves.

In addition to the small kitchen, only a pot and a few bowls were used to make the meal, so she could not help with anything even if she wanted to. Thus, she leaned against the counter while watching him wash the dishes.

She teased, "You're definitely more reliable than Miss Jolly. She doesn't wash her plates after meals."

"So, you were the one washing them when you were overseas?"

"I would do it when I had the time, but not when I was away for business trips. I remember that one time when I returned from a two-week business trip, the sink was filled to the brim with pots and plates. She used up every cutlery we had before calling deliveries to settle her meals."

"Why didn't you hire a nanny?"

"We did. It all happened when we didn't hire another one in time after the nanny was fired." Speaking of that, Rachel felt that it was hilarious despite having the urge to grumble about it.

When she returned from her business trip, Jolly was feeding Samuel food with messy hair. As soon as Jolly heard the sound of the door opening, she rushed out of the house barefooted and hugged Rachel with a tear-stained face.

"Chris, you're finally home. I thought I was going to die soon."

"What happened?"

"It's so hard to look after a kid. I'd rather go to the laboratory in the hospital and watch people dissecting a frog."

"You're exaggerating, girl. However, the moment Rachel placed her bag aside and saw the mess in the house, as though it was the aftermath of an explosion, she realized that Jolly was not joking at all.

It was because Jolly was the explosion herself; without Rachel and a nanny, Jolly was so incapable that she had turned the house into a dumping ground for her and Samuel.

"What about you?" Rachel crossed her arms as she questioned Justin about the days he babysat Charlotte. "How did you look after Charlotte during my absence back then? Was it difficult?"

“No.” He held a plate that was covered by soap: while walking down the memory lane. “But it was hectic at the beginning.”

It was his first time becoming a father, not to mention that it was the time he lost his memory after the car accident. He had been clueless of the child’s origin, yet Gloria consigned the baby. to him, saying that she was his daughter.

Back then, he could not afford a good night’s sleep because of the sudden crying in the middle of the night. Even after Charlotte was able to sleep through the night without any trouble, he woke up a few times at night out of habit. The sound of the baby crying kept ringing. in his ears, and he always went to check on her in the baby room.

“Ria didn’t help you either?”

“She was pursuing her studies for piano at the time. Charlotte was with me until she turned two. That was when Jolly helped me out a little bit, but Charlotte became closer with her in the end.”

Rachel chuckled upon hearing that. “I think Ria was doing it on purpose.”

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

Chapter 603

“On purpose?” Justin was baffled. “Why?”

Right when Rachel was going to answer, lightning flashed outside, which was followed. by a rumbling thunder before they heard the pitter-pattering of the rain. Is it raining?” She turned to look at the balcony and closed the windows in great haste.

It seldom poured in Riverdale during winter, let alone spring. It had stable weather-after a few heavy pours, there would be a significant increase in temperature before the people welcomed summer.

With the windows closed and the moisture in the air outside, it suddenly struck her that it had been a year since she returned to Riverdale. It felt like everything had happened in the blink of an eye.

Justin was done with the dishwashing as he pressed the button of the disinfectant cabinet and wiped his hands before leaving the kitchen. “I’ve cleaned up everything. You should go to: bed early.”

“Are you leaving already?” She turned around and pointed outside. ‘It’s raining, though.”

“It’s alright. It won’t take too long to get home by car. He took his jacket from the couch, after which he walked toward the door while reminding her, “Close the windows and doors tightly and don’t forget to lock the door once I’m gone. Be careful when you’re home alone.”

“Wait!” Rachel rushed to him to stop him. “Why don’t you leave after the rain stops?”

Justin was taken aback, for there was obviously no sign of the rain stopping at any moment. Even the forecast reported that it would pour the whole night.

However, she could not let him stay alone in the living room. So, she turned on the television to watch the movie they could not finish together previously. “Is this the movie that we couldn’t finish?”

The lights in the living room were dim whereas the movie was playing on the projector screen. In the movie, the sunlight streamed through the air and reflected into colorful rays upon the pasture, in which the couple, who had grown up together, was scampering amidst the levitating bubbles.

Literary films never failed to be soporific, it was the opening Rachel had watched multiple times and one of the main reasons she failed to finish the whole movie every single time. It was because she would start yawning when they were halfway through it.

Needless to say, this time was no exception. As he stared at the sleeping woman who was curled up at the corner of the couch, Justin’s gaze softened and he pulled the quilt to cover her exposed calves. He could not thank the rain. more than ever right now.

At the same time, the scorching sun was hanging high up in the sky in Tahiti, which was a million miles away from them.

Beneath the parasols were four figures wearing sunglasses and laying on the recliners by the beach, enjoying their holidays while sipping on fruit juices. The two adults and children were in sync as they took a sip of their drinks before fanning themselves.

Gloria turned to look at the kid beside her. “Charlotte, what do you think your parents are doing at home these two days?”

In a polka dot swimdress, Charlotte had her. legs crossed in a languid manner. “Watching movies, shopping and going out for a drive.”

“That’s so lame. Even couples in college do that, so what’s the point of it? Can’t he bring his A-game?”

Charlotte pulled down her red-framed sunglasses to reveal her sparkling eyes. "Dad's A-game is being rich."

"Tell me, how much does it even take to do those things together?"

"He needs to rent the whole cinema for a movie date, buy bags for her and drive a sports car when going out for a drive-

"Why are you being so materialistic at such a young age? Who taught you these?" The more Gloria listened to Charlotte, the more ridiculous she thought it was. After thinking about it, she guessed, "Is it Jolly?"

Jolly was the only one who favored this kind of stuff. Charlotte did not have a conception of money at the beginning, but she now knew that money made the world go round after spending some time with Jolly.

"Aunt Gloria, you said Daddy must bring his A- game, but what else does he have other than that? Charlotte began to enumerate the list with her fingers. "He's neither as handsome as Leroy nor as patient as Uncle Julian. He doesn't even have Curly Weirido's skills in winning a woman's heart..."

Gloria was rendered speechless as she thought, I wonder how Justin will react once he knows this is how his daughter speaks of him.

"But your mother is not someone who will be swayed by money. She doesn't like bags, shoes, clothes and whatnots. Her only pastime is watching movies and renting the whole cinema doesn't cost that much."

"That's not completely true." Samuel turned toward them abruptly with half of his face covered by blue-framed sunglasses. In an indifferent voice, he said, "Who says that our mother doesn't like spending money?"

Not only was Gloria baffled, Victor was equally confused. Samuel continued, "I bet you don't know about this-she loves collecting seal stamps."

"Seal stamps?"

"Antique seal stamps." He gestured to describe the stamp. "I remember that she has a golden seal stamp which is this big. It dates back to centuries ago. Mom used up her annual salary and year-end bonus just to buy it. She said that a seal stamp tells a story of an era, but I don't understand and I'm not interested in it at all. All I know is that it's a waste of money to indulge in such a hobby."

He said while shaking his head like an old man because he could only buy cheap snacks that year due to that d*mn seal stamp.

Meanwhile, Gloria was absorbed in her reverie. During their days overseas, Rachel held a high management position in SG Corporation which was second to its business partners. Taking into account that she was paid with commissions for the projects she handled as the sales representative, her annual income had gone through the roof.

Therefore, Gloria could never understand why Rachel needed to share the payment with Jolly in purchasing a house.

Now, the truth was revealed-Rachel had spent her hard-earned money to buy her precious seal stamps.

Since she studied archaeology and worked as a librarian in Riverdale Library before marrying Justin, it was understandable that she had an inherent predilection for antiques.

At that moment, Gloria and Charlotte exchanged looks as they were giddy with excitement. They were worried that Rachel was void of materialistic desires and Justin would not have the opportunity to whet her preferences. However, this was his chance!

As the blazing sun shone on the beach, the waves pounded against the sand and one could see some crabs digging a home for themselves. Meanwhile, the gang of four were in the middle of concocting a plan.

The rain did not stop in Riverdale. Steven woke up shivering and sneezed as soon as he opened his eyes. "Ah choo!"

Gazing at the fluttering curtain and raindrops that were splattering into the room from the opened window, he sniffed before letting out a loud sneeze again. "Ah choo!"

I think I'm gonna catch a cold. There was no one else at home at the moment. With his head clouded by haziness, he could not fall asleep anymore and hence the decision to put on his jacket and take his umbrella to head out for some midnight snacks.

There was a convenience store nearby, so he did not need to go far. As soon as he reached the entrance, he saw a man and a girl pushing and pulling in the rain.

"It's here, not there." The strong man yanked the girl over toward an alley.

She seemed wasted because her steps were wobbly. Even though she did not scream, her body was reacting repulsively to protest, albeit feeble.

Noticing that the girl was struggling to free herself, Steven was concerned. He sprinted to them after tossing away his umbrella. "What are you doing? Let go of her!"

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

Chapter 604

Once he noticed Steven coming up to them, the man left the girl alone and ran for his life as though he had seen a ghost.

“Better watch out next time!” Steven shot daggers at the running figure which vanished into the alley. He then turned around to help the girl up while comforting, “It’s okay now. He’s gone. Are you alright?”

She nodded and squeezed out the word ‘thank you’ with difficulty, but it was left unheeded due to the rain.

“What did you say?” He could not hear her clearly, and he led her to the convenience store to take shelter from the rain.

“Welcome!”

The girl did not seem to be drunk because she did not reek of alcohol. Steven helped her into the store and toward the table. “Stay here. I’ll get my umbrella. You-”

He stopped midway as the girl looked familiar to him the longer he stared at her, as though they had met before. His expression changed when he suddenly thought of someone. “It’s you! That crazy girl!”

Although she had let her hair down, she was wearing the same green hoodie she did in the afternoon while getting into a fight with him at the reservoir, which was located in the suburbs.. Steven and the couples even gave her a lift to Westhill Racecourse!

But why is she here?

Steven took two steps back instinctively and observed her warily. “Are you trying to rip me off? I’m warning you-it’s going to be your bad day if you’re scheming against me!”

However, Sandra did not have the energy to raise her head to look at him, let alone listen to him talk. The grogginess plagued her head and the moment he released her, she stumbled onto the floor.

“Hey!” he shrieked in surprise and held her quickly. “Are you putting on a show? That won’t work! There are surveillance cameras in this store.”

He blabbered on and on, yet the girl collapsed in his arms weakly like she had lost consciousness. So, he placed his hand on her forehead. She's burning!

"Hey! Wake up!" He shook her twice to no avail. He turned around and saw two employees watching them. "What are you guys looking at me? I don't know her!"

"Sir, why are you telling us that? She looks sick."

"Why don't you call the police? I seriously don't know her. I only met her in the afternoon once. I'm leaving." Steven adjusted her position so that she could lean against the wall. Still, she was not in a state of mind to sit upright, so how could she possibly do that?

In the meantime, the employees' gazes on him turned complicated due to his feeble reasoning. and the fact that he was the one who brought her in. I'm afraid they'll report me to the police if I abandon her here.

He planned to leave her alone under the employees' scorching gazes, but something might happen because they were both guys. Damn it! What rotten luck!

At long last, he carried Sandra in his arms and left the place.

Just what the hell is going on? The rain poured throughout the night. It showed no means of stopping even when the morning sun had risen. As the raindrops tapped against the window, the wall of rain poured non-stop.

Sandra was sleeping restlessly. Before she fainted, her last memory was a stranger dragging her into a dark alley. No matter how much strength she mustered, she could not shake him off.

She had practiced judo for twelve years, so ordinary people could not lay a finger on her. Even so, something went wrong today; her body felt heavier right after she walked a distance from Westhill Racecourse, and toward the end, she didn't even stand a chance against a skinny man.

While she fought through the drowsiness, the image of the side hall appeared in her mind. It was the scene where her mother was nestling in a man's embrace.

"Once Dorothy is gone, she will have no one to depend on except you."

The ruthless and apathetic words rang in her head. Not even a smidgen of sympathy could be felt from them. Right then, Sandra vaguely saw someone strangling Dorothy to death as the background loomed in darkness.

"Ahhh!" she screamed as her eyes shot open. Huffing and puffing, she found herself in an unfamiliar place.

It was a classic yet luxurious European-style bedroom. The cream bedsheet was silky and comfortable to sleep in. It was worlds apart compared to the environment she grew up in.

Her first reaction was to check on herself, aside from her green hoodie, she had her clothes on, including her long pants. Except for the stain on them, there were no traces of her being sexually assaulted.

Thank goodness! Sandra heaved a sigh of relief. Meanwhile, Richard just parked his car in the garage in Carter Residence.

“Mum, Dad, I’ll call Steven over to grab the stuff.”

“Okay. Take this bag of vegetables with you.”

“Steven can take those later. It’s heavy.”

“They’re just vegetables, you lazy bum!”

Marilyn retaliated against Jolly’s excuse, yet she had no intentions to bring the things into the house herself either. Richard smiled helplessly. “Go on. Steven and I can do the rest.”

“Then, I’ll leave it to you guys. Thank you for your hard work, honey.” Although she had reached middle age, she was still child-like in front of her husband.

“My pleasure, darling.”

Once Marilyn entered the house, she saw Jolly bent over and leaning against the door of the guest room on the second floor to eavesdrop. “What are you doing?”

“Shh!” Jolly turned around and gestured for Marilyn to stay quiet, after which she rushed down the stairs and pulled her mother to hide behind the staircase.

Suddenly, hasty footsteps could be heard from above them.

“There’s a bus stop outside the neighborhood. It’s hard to hail a cab around here because of the green travel policy.” Steven’s voice filled the living room. Sandra turned to look at him. “Where’s my hoodie?”

“I dumped it.”

“What? But it’s mine!”

“Have you forgotten that you fell in the rain yesterday? Do you think that it’s still wearable?”

“That’s none of your business. Give me back my clothes!” Her figure was discernible because she was only wearing a white singlet.

Meanwhile, the two women, who were hiding behind the staircase, looked at each other in confusion.

“Won’t you look at that attitude of yours.” Steven rambled on, “Can’t you at least say thank you? I was the one who brought you home and gave you a place to stay for the night. What’s wrong with throwing away your clothes?”

Sandra’s countenance remained grim. “Did I ask for your help?”

“Fine. Let’s just say that I was a busybody yesterday. Leave.” He was so vexed that he began to drive her away. “Get out of my sight at this instant.”

Hearing that, Jolly revealed herself at the drop of the hat. “You brat! What did you just say? How irresponsible of you to say that after spending the night with her!”

He was taken aback as he gazed at her like she was a ghost, as well as her mother who was standing behind her. “Jolly, Marilyn, since when are you back?”

Marilyn observed him and Sandra, who was standing behind him, before giving him a contemplative look. “When you said you’ve thrown away her clothes.”

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

Chapter 605

Steven was still reeling when Jolly jumped in and gave him a knuckle on the head.

“What gives?!” Steven held his head in pain.

“We heard everything,” Jolly snapped, pissed off. “This is the sort of thing you do when we’re away, huh?!”

“What have I done?!”

“You’re still not admitting it?!” At that, Jolly turned to Sandra. “Don’t be afraid, dear. I’m his older sister, and I’ll definitely do you justice.”

“What justice?” Steven was still lost.

“What justice do you think?!” Jolly turned grim as soon as she turned to her cousin. “Be it that you brought her home, but I can’t believe you don’t want to be responsible for what you’ve done. Are you even a man?! It’s still so early in the day, and you’re already shooing her away without at least letting her put on some clothes?! I bet your parents will break your leg if they hear about this.”

“What? Responsible? Hold on-

“Hold on, my foot!”

Marilyn held Jolly back. “Alright, cut it out. It’s all about free love now. It’s no big deal that Steven’s in a relationship. What’s your name, dear? Are you Steven’s classmate?”

Clearly, Marilyn was more interested in the young woman Steven had brought home. After all, she watched the young man grow into who he was today. Finally, this rascal had learned to get himself a girl, and Marilyn adored her the more she looked at this young woman.

Meanwhile, Sandra frowned. “You guys have made a mistake. We just met yesterday.”

“You guys just met, and you’ve already moved in? Is it love at first sight?”

“What? No!”

“It’s okay, we’re a pretty open family. What’s wrong with love at first sight? How romantic. Isn’t this what they always portray in the movies?” Marilyn winked at Sandra. “You still haven’t told me your name, dear.”

After some hesitation, Sandra introduced herself. “I’m Sandra Huges,” she said.

“What a beautiful name.”

“Beautiful, my a*s. You guys have really been mistaken, Aunt Marilyn!” Steven kept trying to make things straight. “She stayed over because

“That’s enough!” Jolly interjected unapologetically. “You’d better shut up! We don’t want to talk to an irresponsible guy like you. Shame on you! Come, Sandra. Let’s get you a change of clothes.”

Marilyn, too, urged Sandra to follow Jolly. “Go on. She’s my daughter, and you two are about the same size. Let her get you something to change into. We can talk later.”

Steven was rendered speechless as he looked at the two women escorting the ‘victim’ upstairs to get changed while totally disregarding him. Alas, he couldn’t clear himself off the charge no matter what he did now.

Just then, Richard came in with a bag of sweet potatoes, and he greeted Steven as he entered. "Steven, you're here?! Didn't Marilyn and Jolly ask you to help me bring the things in? Come on, help me out."

"Uncle Richard!" Steven wailed. "You have to believe me!"

"What is it?" Richard was stumped. Meanwhile, up on the second floor, Jolly took a brand new set of clothing out of her closet and handed it to Sandra. "There you go. Go on, get changed."

"No, a jacket will do," said Sandra as she waved her hand before grabbing the jacket and wearing it over her camisole sweater. "Thank you."

"Don't worry about it." Jolly felt bad and apologetic. "I'm sorry about my cousin, but I can assure you this is certainly the first time he's ever brought a girl home."

"No, I think you guys have really taken this the wrong way."

"Sandra." Marilyn sized the young girl up with a smile. "How old are you? Are you from Riverdale? Are you still studying, or have you started working?"

Marilyn's words stumped Sandra for a split second, and she suddenly remembered last night. Right now, there was nowhere else she could go.

"I just graduated and recently moved to Riverdale, ma'am. I'm currently looking for a job..."

Down on the couch in the living room, Richard comforted Steven as he said, "What's there to worry about if you've done nothing? She wouldn't frame you for something like this, would she? How could you have thought about bringing her home if you don't even have this bit of decency, am I right?"

"I don't know what she's like, though. I just met her for the first time yesterday. How could I have brought her home if I hadn't witnessed her being bullied and even passed out from it?"

"They're coming down." Richard looked up and found his wife and daughter escorting an unfamiliar young woman downstairs. She looked pretty much like a girl next door and not some evildoer.

"Have you guys made it clear yet?" Steven was desperate to clear his name. "I've already told Uncle Richard everything. I've done nothing wrong, and Uncle Richard can attest to it."

"Attest to what?!" Jolly hit the roof. "How can my dad attest to your words? Did he witness what happened last night? Don't give me your bullsh*t, Steven!"

“Jolly, how can you say that about your cousin? He isn’t like that. Marilyn’s voice was much gentler in comparison.

Steven looked gratefully at Marilyn, thinking she was backing him. “Thank you, Aunt Marilyn. Indeed, you know me well.”

Lo and behold, Marilyn held her nephew’s hand and entreated, “Steven, since your mom’s not here, I have to look into your issues now that you’re in Riverdale. I won’t stop you from dating, but that doesn’t mean you can bully a girl. I won’t tell your mom about this just yet, but I hope you can willingly confess.”

“Confess?” Steven was stupefied. “Confess about what?”

“You’d better reflect on what you’ve done!” Jolly glared daggers at him.

“1-“Steven suddenly realized something. “What did you tell my cousin and aunt?!”

“I dare you to hit her!” Jolly stood in between Steven and Sandra. “I’m warning you, Steven. Don’t you dare lay a finger on Sandra while I’m here.”

“What did she tell you guys?!”

“How do you still have the nerve to ask?!”

“Whatever she’s told us, I hereby announce that Sandra will be staying with us from today on,” Marilyn said resolutely, giving no chance for anyone to refute.

“You’ve got to be kidding me!” Steven was rendered gobsmacked. “Move out if you have a problem with it,” Jolly retorted. “Sandra will be staying with us for a long time.”

The person in question was hiding behind Jolly right then, not daring to look Steven in the eye at all.

She confessed that she had lied a little to be able to stay. But once the issue was over and things had quieted down, she would sincerely apologize to this family and ask for their forgiveness.

Steven knew nothing he said could make a difference anymore, seeing that this was now a for-sure. He just asked, ‘At the very least, you should tell me my crime if you’re going to punish me. Even if I did something to her last night, is it necessary for her to stay with us?!’

“You’re finally admitting what you did last night, huh?! It’s too late now.” Jolly reprimanded. “This girl even aborted twice in school because of you. How dare you have the audacity to do something like this?!”

“Ab- Steven’s temples throbbed and drifted his gaze toward Sandra, enunciating, “What did I make you do?!”

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

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