

N Destiny 2361

Chapter 2361

She believed that look meant that Zacharias remembered her. Imogen's lips curled into a smile. She would gradually make Zacharias remember her, and one day, he would appreciate her and keep her by his side.

In the evening, Josef personally came to visit Zacharias. When he saw Shirley dressed as a bodyguard standing at the door, he first looked surprised and then greeted her, "Miss Lloyd, what are you doing here?"

The last time, he thought Shirley had visited his son as a friend, so he was shocked to find her at his son's residence again.

"I'm interning here, Mr. Flintstone. I'm currently the Vice President's bodyguard," Shirley replied. Josef instantly understood and nodded. "Oh, I see!"

While Zacharias and his father talked in the study, Shirley looked out the window at the starry night, lost in thought.

In the study on the third floor, after discussing official matters, Josef couldn't help but think of Shirley. He turned to his son and said, "Zach, you should look after Miss Lloyd when she's interning here."

"I will." Zacharias nodded.

"She's no plain Jane! It would be even better if you could befriend her," Josef said. Though Zacharias' position as the vice president was secure, it would be great if he had the Lloyds support.

"Are you suggesting I pursue her?" Zacharias saw through his father's intentions at a glance. Awkwardness quickly overcame Josef, but he eventually nodded. "I am, but it depends on you."

"Alright, I'll pursue her," Zacharias said with a nod, surprising Josef. "Are you saying you like her?"

"I do!" Zacharias admitted unabashedly.

Josef nodded, pleased that his son had good taste. Now, the question was whether this young lady from the Lloyd Family would take a liking to Zacharias. Nevertheless, he believed Zacharias' chances to be significant, for his son was an eligible bachelor.

"Well, I'll take my leave," Josef said. Zacharias escorted his father downstairs, and when he saw the girl guarding the door, a slight smile played on his lips. Shirley opened the door for Josef and said, "Take care, Mr. Flintstone."

"Alright. Until we meet," Josef said affectionately and then looked back at his son before leaving.

After the door closed, Zacharias called out to her, "Don't just stand there. Come have a cup of hot tea." However, Shirley remained standing, principled, and committed to not slacking off during work hours.

The man was already seated on the couch, waiting for her to join him. However, after a few seconds, he realized Shirley hadn't even turned her head.

He let out a sigh and went to her side. With his long arms, he embraced her, and before Shirley could react, she found herself pulled toward the couch.

"Zacharias, don't," Shirley exclaimed, reflexively addressing him by his first name out of annoyance. A chuckle escaped Zacharias as he argued, "You ignored me."

"I'm working. Can't you respect my job?" Shirley was exasperated. Zacharias seated her on the couch and took a seat across from her. "From now on, consider this place your home. No need to work."

"That won't do. What if you won't sign my internship report on my last day?" Shirley was genuinely concerned he might resort to this tactic, and then she would have to extend her internship to stay by his side.

"I wouldn't dare not to sign your internship report. Don't worry." Zacharias reassured her, though the young woman had given him an excellent idea.

If I don't sign her report, she will continue to stay by my side, right? Right, I'll have to gather some leverage against her for later use. Shirley looked up at him. "Do you promise to sign?"

"I promise." He nodded.

Chapter 2362

"She got seven stitches. I've advised her to rest at the hospital," Shirley replied. Zacharias nodded. "I see. You should check in on her."

"I will," Shirley assured, taking another sip of the hot tea. It was already around 10.00PM at this point. Just then, the sound of a car could be heard outside. Shirley immediately got up and went to the door, where she saw Tony hurrying over against the cold wind.

Shirley opened the door for him, and he said, while rubbing his hands together, "Goodness, it's freezing! Uncle Zacharias, are you okay? I came back specifically to check on you."

Zacharias wasn't the least bit glad to see this third wheel and said, "I'm fine. You can go home now."

However, having just got here, there was no way Tony would leave immediately. He grinned and said, "I'm not going anywhere! It's freezing outside. Your place is the best. There's food and drinks, and it's cozy!"

Tony didn't like being alone either. Despite having a spacious flat, it felt deserted, with only him living there. He much preferred his uncle's place.

"Goddess, you look even more beautiful today." Tony complimented Shirley, who corrected him, "Call me Shirley."

"No, I'll call you Goddess, or if you prefer Aunt Shirley, I can call you that too," Tony joked. Shirley's face turned red, and she glared at Tony. "Don't you dare."

Zacharias couldn't help but hide a smile and watched Shirley playfully interact with his nephew.

“Why can’t I? You’ll be my uncle’s sooner or later,” Tony said confidently.

“Excuse you,” Shirley scolded. Tony immediately rushed to Zacharias, clutching his head and saying, “Uncle Zacharias, save me!”

“Fight your own battles.” Zacharias certainly wouldn’t save him. Tony sat on the couch with a smile and poured himself a cup of hot tea while saying, “I’ve sent Jesslyn home. You won’t believe this, Uncle. She cried the entire way back.”

“Why was she crying?” Zacharias asked with squinted eyes.

“Why else? She doesn’t want to part with you, of course! She likes you so much, Tony replied. At that, Zacharias cleared his throat, “I only ever see her as a sister.”

“I know. You like my goddess. I know that!” Tony grinned. “Jesslyn knows she’s no match for my goddess, too, so she gave up on pursuing you.”

On the side, Shirley clenched her fist as she warned, “Tony, stop making things up.”

“I’m not making things up,” Tony argued with a quirked brow. “It’s a public fact that my uncle likes you!”

Shirley felt a playful gaze directed her way, and she glared at Tony. “Well, I don’t like your uncle.”

“Why not? Is it because you think he’s too old?” Tony asked directly, and Zacharias turned grim at once. This kid just has to bring this up. Is age even a matter?

Lo and behold, Shirley replied, “Yes, I don’t like guys much older than me.”

Alas, a certain someone’s face turned even grimmer. How dare this girl despise me so openly, too? At that, Tony turned to Zacharias with amusement and commented, “Wow, Uncle, to think you’d face rejection too!”

The urge to laugh surged within Shirley, too, but she held it back as she watched a certain someone chuck a cushion at Tony while grumbling, "Go to your room."

Chapter 2363

Shirley cleared her throat. Zacharias wasn't old; he was just much older than her.

"Well, you are older than me," Shirley said diplomatically, leading Zacharias to grunt. "So, you do think I'm old."

Shirley looked up at the man under the light. He was in the prime of his life, and men like him only became more charming with age.

"No, no, you're not old," Shirley argued. It won't do you any good if he gets seriously irritated. Just go along with him, Shirley!

Of course, Zacharias caught the insincerity in her reply, and his mood soured by the second. At that, he got up and said, "Come upstairs with me."

Shirley checked her wristwatch. It was already half past ten. "You go ahead and rest, sir. I'll go to my room in another moment."

Zacharias went upstairs, and Shirley breathed a sigh of relief. She stayed downstairs for a few more minutes to make sure he had gone upstairs before deciding to return to her room to rest.

and sexy. She pushed open the door and was about to turn on the light when, in the dimly lit room, a tall figure pressed against her. Her red lips were covered by the man's large palm.

Shirley's beautiful eyes widened slightly, and in the next moment, the man released his hand over her lips, and his lips took possession of hers with a sense of punishment.

In the dim light, the man's strong and tall body exuded a powerful and enveloping aura. The air was filled with his masculine pheromones, and tension hung in the air like an intricate web that enveloped

Shirley. It was full of temptation, making her want to escape, yet she willingly stayed trapped in this web, enjoying the man's deep affection.

Her jacket fell to the ground, and her arm had somehow climbed onto the man's shoulder. The back of her neck was held by the man's large hand. The feeling of being completely controlled made her go soft all over.

Despite knowing it was forbidden, she couldn't break free.

"Zacharias..." she called out the man's name, breathless. The man let out a low chuckle, his forehead touching hers, and his hot breath scattered on her face. "Do you like it?" he asked.

Shirley turned her face away as if resisting him, but deep inside, she couldn't answer whether she liked it or not. Most likely, she did, or else she wouldn't have stopped struggling and allowed him to kiss her for so long.

"Get out of my room," she said hoarsely, her voice filled with frustration.

"Can I sleep here tonight?" the man asked, taking advantage of the situation. Shirley almost instinctively refused, "No!"

Zacharias grinned at that and said, "Alright, goodnight." He then cupped her face and planted a kiss on her forehead. The affectionate kiss left Shirley rooted to the spot until the man opened the door and left.

A trace of warmth seemingly still lingered in the air. Shirley bit her red lips, pushed her slightly disheveled hair behind her ear, and picked up her jacket from the floor. She shook it out and then walked over to her wardrobe.

After hanging up her jacket, she entered the bathroom, turned on the light, and under the soft glow, she saw a version of herself that was sensual and enchanting. Her cheeks had a rosy tint, her eyes had a seductive sparkle, and she exuded a charming aura.

Shirley bit her lips, becoming even more enticing as if this version of her only appeared after being intimate with Zacharias. But he's so clearly exasperating! He schemes against me constantly! Ugh!

Chapter 2364

Inside Imogen's room, she noticed that Imogen had bandages on her back and was wearing loose clothing, but her complexion was quite good.

"Mr. Flintstone wasn't shocked, was he?" Imogen asked.

"He's fine. He even asked me to convey his regards to you," Shirley replied. Imogen's eyes lit up instantly, and she asked somewhat abashedly, "Really? Is he really concerned about me? Does he remember me?"

Shirley nodded. "You blocked that attack for him. Of course, he remembers you."

Imogen pursed her lips as a smile graced her face. "I didn't block that attack for nothing, then. What matters is that Mr. Flintstone remembers me."

As Shirley observed Imogen's happiness, she inexplicably felt a pang in her heart. Does Imogen like Zacharias that much?

Imogen keenly noticed Shirley's momentary distraction and decided to appear even more happy. "I hope I'll have another chance at protecting Mr. Flintstone."

"Well, I hope there won't be a next time for such danger, for both you and him. None of you should get hurt," Shirley replied. Imogen smiled and said, "You're right."

Imogen looked at Shirley enviously and commented, "Shirley, I really envy you! You can be with Mr. Flintstone all the time, accompanying and admiring him."

"Being by his side isn't as easy as it seems; it comes with a lot of pressure," Shirley argued.

“What are you afraid of? I see that Mr. Flintstone treats you very well! Besides, due to your status, he must treat you differently, right?” Imogen remarked with a smile.

Shirley smiled back and said, “Well, I hope these three months pass by quickly. I don’t like being confined to one place; I prefer the feeling of freedom.”

“Shirley, you don’t actually have to do an internship. You’ll still have a great future ahead either way. It’s me who needs to gain experience through internships to pave the way for my future,” Imogen openly expressed her envy and longing.

“Well, you keep up the good work. You will definitely graduate successfully,” Shirley encouraged. Imogen nodded and said, “Let’s both work hard together.”

Shirley glanced at the time and realized that she had spent half an hour here. Then again, Zacharias didn’t urge her to return, so she decided to stay.

“Are you in a hurry to go back?” Imogen asked. Shirley shook her head and replied, “No. I’ll take a little break here.”

Imogen nodded. “Alright.”

After having breakfast, Tony didn’t see Shirley and curiously asked Zacharias, who was sitting there reading the news, “Have you seen my goddess, uncle?”

“She went out.”

“You have to be more enthusiastic in pursuing her, Uncle! Don’t tell me you don’t know how to win a woman’s heart.” Tony immediately leaned over. He believed that with Zacharias’ status, appearance, and charm, winning a girl’s heart should be a piece of cake. From what he saw, Zacharias still hadn’t managed to make Shirley his girlfriend.

“Do you know, then?” Zacharias turned to him.

“Of course I do! I’m a veteran. I’ve had my fair share of girlfriends. If not ten, at least eight,” Tony exaggerated, though in reality, he had only ever pursued an older woman but ended up being dumped.

Zacharias immediately warned, “Mind you, don’t fool around.”

At that, Tony grinned and suggested, “Would you like some pointers, Uncle?”

“Sure, I’ll hear you out.”

“First, girls love little surprises like being given flowers for no apparent reason or something nice like jewelry or lipstick. Second, girls love to be praised and pampered. You must compliment her often, such as her hair, eyes, figure, and so on.”

Zacharias nodded. “Go on.”

“Then, make time for her. Go out and spend some quality time, just the two of you.”

“Go out?” Zacharias frowned.

“Right.” Tony chuckled. “I forgot you can’t just go anywhere, given your status. However, you can reserve the entire venue! Say... Golf! Yes, if she doesn’t know how to play, you can hold her from behind and teach her. Bada bing, bada boom, you’ll secure yourself a girlfriend after a couple more dates!”

“What’s next?” Zacharias thought Tony’s advice sounded rather legitimate.

“Next, take her to the movies and enjoy good food! You can watch movies at home, and if you cook for her personally, I think she would be very touched.”

Chapter 2365

“Alright, you can go home now.”

“Why?”

"I need to spend time alone with her. You're too much of a third wheel."

Tony was stumped. Have I said all that just to be kicked out? "Can you get any more heartless, Uncle Zacharias? I promise you won't even know I'm here."

"Stay away for three days," Zacharias said.

"But I just arrived last night," Tony complained. Zacharias glanced at his wristwatch every now and then, calculating the time. She has been gone for almost an hour. Where did she go? She's not secretly seeing someone outside again, is she? Zacharias picked up his phone and dialed a certain woman's number.

"Hello?" she answered.

"Come back," the man requested, his tone gentle but authoritative. Shirley, who had been slacking off and playing with her phone at Imogen's, sighed after receiving the call. "I'm heading back now," she said to Imogen.

"Was that Mr. Flintstone?" Imogen asked.

"Yes. He might have an assignment for me," Shirley replied.

"Go on, don't keep him waiting," Imogen told her. At that, Shirley got up and left, and Imogen watched her retreating figure, her smile gradually fading. When Shirley returned to the living room, Tony immediately greeted her. "Goddess, you're back."

She walked up to Zacharias and asked, "Mr. Flintstone, is there something you need?"

Zacharias didn't have any specific business. It was his rare day off at home, so he made a casual excuse. "Join me for lunch at my family home."

Shirley blinked in response. Your family home?

“Can I refuse?” she asked. “You can have the others escort you.”

Zacharias had a friendly expression, but the words that came out of his mouth left Shirley speechless.

“I don’t want anyone else but you,” he said.

At that, Shirley could only agree, “Alright, I’ll join you.”

And so, Zacharias dialed his father’s number and said, “Dad, Miss Lloyd and I will be coming home for lunch.”

“Great, please bring Miss Lloyd with you!” Josef was more than glad to have Shirley over. Zacharias stood up and said, “I’ll go upstairs to change.”

Tony took the opportunity to strike up a conversation with Shirley. “Goddess, what do you think of my uncle?”

“Think of him in what way?”

“His looks, physique, status-are all of these satisfactory to you?” Tony inquired, trying to gauge Shirley’s feelings for Zacharias. Shirley squinted her eyes and thought for a moment. “They’re fine.”

“You can only imagine the number of women who tried to win my uncle’s heart in the past. Who’d have thought the person to win his heart in the end would be you?” Tony teased her. Curious, Shirley asked, “He had many pursuers in the past?”

“Yeah! There were tons. As far as I know, every woman who had dealings with him wanted to be with him,” Tony said matter-of-factly.

At that, Shirley couldn’t help overthinking. No wonder that guy is so good at kissing. He must have had many romantic encounters in the past.

She bit her lips, and an unexpected feeling of annoyance began to surface, even unbeknownst to herself.

“Seems like your uncle is pretty popular with women,” Shirley remarked. Tony grinned and said, “But he only has eyes for you! Those girls from before, he wouldn’t even spare them a glance.”

However, Shirley didn’t buy his claim. She huffed, “Sure, he’s never spared them even a glance.”

Immediately, Tony defended his uncle. “It’s true! You’re the first girl he’s pursued, and I believe you’ll be the last one because he will marry you.”

Shirley cleared her throat in response. “Am I supposed to marry him just because he wants to marry me? I have no plans on getting married.”

Coincidentally, Zacharias overheard her as he descended the stairs, and he frowned. Who is this girl waiting for?

“Goddess, guys like Uncle Zacharias are hard to come by. You should just marry him. You won’t regret it.”

Shirley couldn’t help but burst into laughter at Tony’s attempt to promote his uncle. Just then, the sound of footsteps rang out from behind them, and the two quieted down immediately.

Zacharias ultimately decided to bring Tony along.

Chapter 2366

“Come on, let’s go back for lunch.”

“Alright, Uncle!” Tony nodded. The convoy, led by Roy, was already ready. Since they were heading to Flintstone Estate, which wasn’t too far away, only two security vehicles accompanied them.

Imogen looked out from her dorm's floor-to-ceiling window, watching the two cars departing from the Flintstone Residence. A strong sense of loss welled up within her. She believed that one day, she, too, would become an indispensable part of Zacharias' life.

Shirley sat beside Zacharias in the car, feeling more relaxed since they were only out for a meal. After about half an hour, the convoy entered the Flintstone Estate's courtyard. It was an older area with no tall buildings around, so it exuded a serene atmosphere, free from the hustle and bustle of the city.

Shirley stepped out of the car, and Zacharias turned to her, saying, "Let's go! I'll show you around my room."

Shirley appeared calm on the surface, but deep down, she felt a growing sense of anticipation. She was surprised to find herself eager to learn more about this man.

"Grandpa Josef!" Tony called out as he walked into the hall, where Josef emerged. "Tony, you've come too."

Shirley immediately greeted Josef. "Hello, Old Mr. Flintstone."

"Miss Lloyd, welcome to our home. Please come inside."

"You're too kind, sir," Shirley said. Josef's overly enthusiastic welcome made her somewhat bashful.

"Dad, I'll take care of her," Zacharias said. Old Mr. Flintstone nodded, and Tony said, "Grandpa Josef, let's play chess. There's still some time before lunch is ready, right?"

"Do you think you can beat me?"

"Well, I've come to learn from you, haven't I?" Tony said and headed toward a side room where a chessboard was always set up.

Meanwhile, Zacharias took Shirley's hand as they headed upstairs. Out of panic, Shirley attempted to pull her hand away, but Zacharias held it tightly, making it impossible for her to break free. So, she could only let him lead her upstairs.

"Zacharias, let go of me. I can walk on my own." she whispered. Once they reached the second floor, Zacharias released her hand and walked toward his bedroom door. He opened it and invited her in, saying, "Come in! Let me show you around."

Shirley entered. She used to think her father had the most trophies in his room, but now it was Zacharias'. On a long table, there were trophies of various sizes that he had won. On the wall, there was a photo wall featuring pictures of him from childhood to adulthood. Shirley admired the photos, but suddenly, her breath caught in her throat.

Good heavens, what is that?

Mortified, Zacharias covered one of his childhood photos. He was a little over a year old at that time and was dressed in open-crotch pants, bearing everything that needed to be hidden.

"Don't look at this one." The man blushed. In a rare moment of catching him off guard, Shirley reached out and moved his hand away. "Why won't you let me see it? You invited me to look around, right? Move your hand away."

She pulled his hand away and stared at the photo with great interest. The toddler in the picture looked absolutely adorable. However, as Shirley looked at it, she began blushing.

Very quickly, she looked away and turned her attention elsewhere.

Zacharias took the chance to take the photo away, deciding to keep it out of sight. He didn't mind letting her look at it if she wanted to, though.

After spending about fifteen minutes in Zacharias' room, Shirley went downstairs. She heard laughter coming from the side hall and couldn't resist her curiosity. As she approached, she found Tony and Josef playing chess. Shirley stood by with great interest to watch.

Clearly, Tony was still too young and naive. He became proud after capturing one piece, but little did he know that Josef had a powerful move coming up. By the end of the game, Tony suffered a crushing defeat.

Chapter 2367

“Don’t worry about it. There’s still some time before lunch is ready. Let’s just play for fun.” Tony mainly wanted to find some sense of accomplishment playing against Shirley, for he believed he could win a game and regain some dignity.

Josef happened to receive a phone call, so Shirley pulled up a chair and sat down. Tony eagerly prepared to start the game.

Shirley, lacking experience, played based on the few techniques she knew. As the game progressed, she realized she had miscalculated a move and lost.

“Haha! I told you my skills aren’t bad!” Tony boasted. Shirley propped her chin on her hand and started taking the game more seriously. Just then, a tall figure entered from behind. Shirley looked up and made eye contact with Zacharias, who pulled up a chair and sat next to her.

Tony became anxious. “Uncle Zacharias, you can’t interfere. This is our duel.”

Shirley didn’t ask for Zacharias’ help either, but as she picked up a piece to make a move, she heard a light cough from the man beside her. She turned to look at him, and he smiled, reaching out to pick up her piece and placing it in a different position.

“Uncle, you...” Tony glared in frustration.

Zacharias smirked. “Any problem?”

“None at all. I can still outmatch you two!” Tony said, squinting and analyzing the game intently.

Shirley originally didn’t stand a chance, but with Zacharias sitting beside her, she suddenly gained a sense of confidence. It seemed as though she didn’t need to worry about losing; she had developed a mentality that she would win for sure.

Tony played each move very seriously. Actually, he was rather experienced. Shirley habitually turned her head to the man beside her, and only after receiving his approval would she make her move.

After one game, Tony lost again. Shirley, on the other hand, was delighted. The feeling of victory was pure and joyful.

“Let’s play again. I’m sure I can’t keep losing to you guys, Tony said with increasing determination. As Shirley picked up a piece, unsure where to place it, a warm hand gently held hers, deciding a position for her.

Her heart skipped a beat. The warmth from the man’s hand seemed to penetrate her soul, both alluring and heartwarming. Moreover, this sense of being controlled reminded her of the feeling of kissing him—of willingly surrendering to him, which was a delightful and wonderful sensation.

Tony didn’t notice the peculiar atmosphere on the other side of the chessboard. He had no idea that while he was focused on the game, the couple across from him engaged in affectionate behavior.

Even though Zacharias was flirting, he remained level-headed, and by the end of the game, he broke Tony’s carefully designed chess formation.

“I give up,” Tony conceded, frustrated. Coincidentally, lunch was ready, too.

“Mr. Zacharias, Mr. Tony, lunch is ready.” A servant announced to them. Hungry, Tony stood up and said, “Come on, it’s time to eat!”

Shirley stood up with Zacharias, staying close by her side. His behavior of prioritizing her made her feel as though she hadn’t come to Flintstone Estate for lunch as a bodyguard but as his girlfriend, meeting his parents for the first time.

When the notion came to her, Shirley couldn’t help blushing. With Tony bringing a lively atmosphere to the table, lunch wasn’t dull.

“Zach, try not to make public appearances again. I was really worried about you this time,” Josef said.

“Understood.” Zacharias nodded. Then, Josef shifted his gaze, which was laced with a smile, toward Shirley. “Miss Lloyd, thank you very much for being with Zach, taking care of him, and protecting him.”

“Just doing my job,” Shirley said, feeling somewhat embarrassed.

“You’re not getting any younger, Zach. As important as work is, you need to consider your love life,” Josef reminded.

Tony, on the side, immediately chuckled. “Grandpa Josef, don’t worry. Uncle Zacharias already has someone he likes.”

Chapter 2368

Josef’s eyes instantly lit up. “Oh! Really?”

“It’s true. Uncle Zacharias is in the middle of pursuing her. No need to worry about his love life,” Tony hinted.

Shirley, face flushed, lowered her head and focused on her food. She wished Tony would stop talking about that. Oh, how mortifying. Moreover, she could sense Zacharias’ eyes on her.

“Wonderful. Glad to know that Zach has it at the back of his mind.” Josef nodded. He could tell from Zacharias’ gaze that he liked Shirley. That said, he wouldn’t mention it explicitly.

However, he was worried that Shirley might not be interested in Zacharias. As excellent as his son was, love couldn’t be forced. What if Zach’s not her type? Besides, Miss Lloyd can marry any man she wants!

As Zacharias had a meeting in the afternoon, he returned to Flintstone Residence after lunch. Shirley, on the other hand, asked Tony to send her to her grandmother’s house.

Zacharias wouldn't take her along on trips now anyway, so she had plenty of free time. After dropping Shirley off at her grandmother's, Tony went off for some fun but was also asked by Shirley to pick her up later.

He was more than happy to be of her service, for he had already recognized her as his future aunt-in-law, though she was only three years older than him.

At her grandmothers', Shirley was a cherished child. Ava not only prepared delicious food for her but also bought her gifts and even clothes.

"Look at you, dressed like a tomboy all the time. How will any boy like you?" Ava complained.

"If nobody likes me, I won't get married then. I'll stay with my parents and you, turning into an old spinster." Shirley teased her grandmother.

Ava immediately opposed this idea. "You can't think like that. There are so many outstanding young men now. Find one to marry. You'll have someone to rely on in the future, too."

At that, Ava thought of a friend with an excellent grandson, and she suddenly had an idea. "Shir, are you free this weekend?" Shirley nodded and said, "I'll have all the time in the world if you need me." Now that she was familiar with Zacharias, asking for leave was very convenient.

"Okay, reserve this weekend for me. I want you to accompany me for a meal," Ava said, temporarily avoiding the topic of matchmaking. She was afraid Shirley wouldn't agree.

She would already be on the path to success once the two youngsters met. Thus, she decided to deceive her granddaughter into going if that was what it took.

"Sure, I'll come and accompany you this weekend." Shirley nodded. Ava smiled gratifyingly. "I thought your mother was already old when she married. You should already start seriously looking now. I worry you'll get too old for the marriage market if you get too picky."

“Grandma, I’m not at the age to be pressured into marriage yet, am I?” Shirley argued, finding her grandmother’s point of view somewhat ridiculous.

“Time passes in the blink of an eye. You should hurry.” Ava had come to an age where she didn’t have much to do anymore. Now, to her, seeing her granddaughter marry into a good family was her greatest wish.

Seeing how enthusiastic her grandmother was to discuss this topic, Shirley decided to just entertain her. Either way, she had her own ideas about marriage.

“Alright, I’ll do as you say and think seriously about it.” She nodded.

Sure enough, Ava became even happier, and she got up to bring Shirley the freshly baked buns from the oven. She had learned to make pastry recently, and she was amazing at it.

She usually baked these for her friends. In no time, the table was filled with various baked goods. Shirley nestled on the couch and enjoyed her grandmother’s pastries and tea. At 7.30P.M., Shirley’s phone pinged, and she checked it to find a certain someone urging her.

‘Why haven’t you come back yet?’ Zacharias texted. ‘I’m waiting for Tony to pick me up. It’ll take another moment, she replied, so he suggested picking her up.

‘No need! Shirley immediately replied again. ‘I don’t want to make a fuss..

‘I’ll urge Tony! Zacharias decided not to press her further.

Chapter 2369

Shirley looked at the somewhat childish reply while nestled on the couch. Who could’ve imagined that it was from the Zacharias?

Just then, the television was broadcasting the news, and Shirley turned her head to see a handsome face enlarged on the screen.

It was Zacharias' recent updates, and the camera zoomed in so close that it seemed like there were no secrets. Nevertheless, he was impossibly good-looking, and even under such close scrutiny, he remained composed, exuding a restrained aura.

Shirley's gaze unconsciously shifted to the screen, and it wasn't until the footage switched that she realized she had been gawking at the man for a long time.

As for the content being broadcasted on the news, she hadn't absorbed a word. Just then, Tony's call came in, and she answered, "Hey, Tony."

"Hey, Goddess, I'm on my way to you. I should be there in about ten minutes."

"No need to rush. Drive safely," Shirley advised.

"You treat me the best, Goddess!" Tony sighed on the other end.

Shirley couldn't help but smile. Just how afraid

is Tony of Zacharias?

She stood up and told her grandmother that she was leaving, and Ava immediately packed some snacks for her. "Take these back to share with your friends."

"Grandma, you don't have to. Keep them to entertain your friends."

"I've made so much. Just take them," Ava insisted. Shirley thought it would be good to bring some back for Tony to eat and share a bit with Imogen. Carrying the packed food, she put on her suit jacket from the hangar and went outside to wait.

She didn't want to keep Tony waiting. After about five minutes of waiting outside, she saw Tony's car approaching. His flashy sports car was quite eye-catching. After she got into the front passenger seat, the two headed toward the Flintstone Residence.

Tony's car passed through a relatively empty street and stopped at a traffic light. Just then, two off-road vehicles with booming music flanked them. The driver in one of the off-road vehicles noticed Shirley in the sports car and immediately wanted to harass her.

He rolled down his car window and shouted to Shirley, "Hey, beautiful!"

Shirley lowered her window and gave him a cold stare. The driver, captivated, exclaimed, "Wow! I like this one. She's my type. Hey, let's get to know each other, pretty girl!"

Shirley ignored him, and Tony, annoyed, remarked, "These people must be drunk. Ignore them."

At that, he hit the gas, and his sports car accelerated past the traffic light. However, the two off-road vehicles behind suddenly accelerated, one on the left and one on the right, attempting to overtake Tony's car.

"F*cking hell, these people have a death wish! How dare they try to overtake my car?" Tony, full of youthful vigor, became infuriated.

He accelerated, and the two vehicles on either side followed suit. Shirley immediately said to Tony, "Don't engage with them. We don't want to harm the pedestrians."

"But they're being so irritating!" Tony said. Suddenly, the off-road vehicle in front made a turn, forcing him to brake abruptly. After all, he loved his sports car and didn't want it to get damaged. So, he had to stop on the side of the road, with an off-road vehicle blocking him from behind and another in front.

It was evident that these troublemakers from the underworld were deliberately looking for trouble. Shirley took a slight deep breath and said to Tony, "Stay in the car."

"Hey! Goddess, what are you going to do?" Tony quickly asked and watched Shirley get out of the sports car with swag.

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Just then, another person arrogantly kicked Tony's sports car. "You drive a sports car, eh? How impressive!"

"Don't touch my car!" Tony yelled, feeling anxious, angry, and distressed. Shirley immediately walked around the front of the car and shielded Tony. "Leave him alone."

"Aw, are you pissed, pretty girl? You look even prettier pissed. I like you even more like that!"

Shirley sneered in response. "You guys better leave while I'm still holding back." The eight men exchanged glances and burst into laughter. This weak woman dares to tell us to leave?

"You've got balls, girl, I'll give you that. How about you join us in our car, and we'll let you two leave once we're done with you?" The leading man grinned maliciously.

"Leave her alone!" Tony shouted in panic. Shirley was his uncle's woman and must not be harmed,

"How dare a puny loser like you ruin our fun?" These men were all thugs, and although Tony was handsome, they didn't think much of him.

Upon hearing the insults directed at Tony, Shirley squinted her eyes. Her gaze, as sharp as a blade, focused on the man who spoke.

The man, initially taken aback by her piercing look, found it amusing. What could a girl possibly do other than express anger through her eyes?

"Oh my, you're a fiery-" The man had only begun to speak when Shirley threw a punch at him, rendering him to the ground.

The others hadn't even reacted when they were, too, swiftly beaten up by Shirley before she returned to Tony's side. She opened the car door and said to him, "Get in."

Her command brooked no refusal. Tony stared wide-eyed and quickly obeyed, locking the car door behind him.

“Damn it. Get her!” The man who got beaten was their leader. He clutched his face as he spit out blood, feeling utterly humiliated, for he had never been beaten up by a woman so brutally.

Two men immediately threw punches, attempting to knock Shirley to the ground and then apprehend her for a harsh lesson. However, when their fists were inches away from Shirley, she dodged, and they hit the air. Before they could react, a powerful roundhouse kick landed on their faces, and both men fell to the ground, unable to get up.

Shirley was furious. She didn’t wait for the attackers to make a move and took the initiative. Anyone who approached her became the target of her retaliation.

“Ah!”

“Ouch! It hurts!”

“Run! Get in the car.” Some were shouting, and others were fleeing. Fear was written all over some of the thugs’ faces, and whoever Shirley caught suffered the consequences.

At this moment, someone retrieved an iron rod from the trunk and swung it fiercely toward Shirley. Her eyes turned icy, revealing a ruthless determination.

She easily snatched the iron rod away and ruthlessly struck these people. The eight men became her venting tools, each of them wailing in pain, unable to escape. Tony, inside the car, watched with blood boiling. It was incredibly satisfying. My Goddess is amazing!

After Shirley finished swinging the iron rod, she stepped on the leader’s chest, sneering, “Still want to play?”

“No, no more! Spare us! Miss, I’m sorry! We’ve learned our lesson!” The man was brutally beaten with blood oozing from a wound on his head. It was a pitiful sight.

Shirley knew these men must be notorious for their wicked deeds, so their punishment was well-deserved. However, suddenly, a stick struck her from behind.

She was about to dodge when the leader tightly embraced her legs. "Beat her up!" he commanded.

Unable to break free immediately, Shirley took a hit on her back as the man swung the stick. He was merciless, and Shirley ended up kneeling on the ground.