

Our Billion 671

Chapter 671-Perhaps Ezekiel had hidden it somewhere or that it was with Catelyn.

The bracelet had to be the key to some sort of secret for Lola to place such importance on it.

Cedrick returned to Mason Group, just in time for Alex to complete the research on Quinn's background.

"Master Cedrick, I've looked into Quinn's background." Alex stood before Cedrick's office desk with a serious expression, "while I was at it, I noticed that someone was trying to erase her history."

Cedrick scowled. "Do you know who it was?"

Alex shook his head. "I beat them to it. That person dropped everything when they noticed they were set for failure."

Cedrick took the report and glanced through it.

There was nothing much worth hiding in Quinn's past. Just like how she introduced herself, she grew up with her father. They were poor and lived in a small remote village, she was not a particularly bright person, but her father had insisted on sending her to school, she failed the exam for university, however, so her father spent half of his lifetime's savings to send her to a medical college.

It appeared that she had not worked in the medical field after graduation, so her employment history was left blank, she might have worked a few part-time jobs, but there were no records of them.

Cedrick's frown deepened when he glanced at the column that stated Quinn's mother's name.

"Sunniva Hills?"

“Yes. Rumors had it that Quinn’s mother gave birth to her before she was twenty, and her parents didn’t get married because her mother wasn’t of age then. We’re not sure what happened afterward, but she just vanished,” Alex explained.

“Vanished?”

“I asked the locals, and they said Sunniva Hills had always been ‘high maintenance’, so she probably ran away with another man because she thought Quinn’s father wasn’t enough.”

Cedrick listened intently and stared at the photo of a young Sunniva, a playful smile slowly appeared on his lips.

‘Sunniva Hills?’ he thought. ‘Stella Hills... It’s no wonder she’s so tolerant with Quinn. Quinn isn’t her niece; she’s the daughter she had abandoned all those years ago! Now that Quinn has come to her, it’s only natural that Stella is trying everything she can to make it up to her daughter...’ “Master Cedrick, do I need to keep digging?” Alex asked.

“It’s fine. I have a rough idea of what’s going on now.”

Even if Stella had abandoned her husband and daughter, Catelyn had nothing to do with it. Quinn would only be digging her grave if she continued to behave the way she did.

Meanwhile, at Deluxe International.

Maribel had gone through the trouble to change into a dark dress with a coat hanging on her shoulders. The dress was slim-fitted, which outlined her alluring figure. Confident that she was irresistible, she was certain that she could replace Catelyn and successfully get Deluxe International to sign the contract.

When she arrived at the building, she had thought that Philip would be receiving her and was even prepared to be taken advantage of, but to her surprise, he frowned when he saw her.

“Why are you here?” he asked.

Maribel had once participated in one of the business conferences and had met with Philip a couple of times before. He had always appeared to lust over her, so she did not understand why he seemed appalled by her presence at this moment.

A seductive smile formed on her red lips as she said, "Director Clark called in sick today, so I was told by Mister Wilson to come to her place. I can keep up with the conditions Director Clark discussed with you."

"Called in sick, you say?" Philip repeated in annoyance. "Why didn't you call first?"

"This doesn't affect the cooperation between our companies."

"The point is, I am not the one meeting Catelyn. It's—"

Before he could say another word, a secretary came out of the elevator and asked, "Mister Philip, is she here? Miss Kingsley is starting to lose patience."

Chapter 672-There were many in Deluxe International that shared the last name Kingsley, so the employees there addressed Philip as 'Mister Philip' instead.

Philip's frown deepened.

When Maribel heard that she was meeting Windy instead, she extended her hand at the secretary before Philip could explain, saying "Hi, I represent VSA Group."

"Sure. Please follow me." The secretary shook her hand and led her into the elevator.

Philip darted forward as the elevator door started to close and yelled, "Wait, no! That's not the woman Miss Kingsley wants to meet..."

Maribel followed the secretary to the top floor of the building.

The top floor was renovated into a sky garden with a private pool and library; the interior was elegant and sophisticated.

She could not help but gulp at the fact that she was about to meet the legendary Miss Kingsley.

While she was deep in her thoughts, the secretary opened the door to the only office on the floor and announced respectfully, "Miss Kingsley, Director Clark is here."

Maribel's heart raced, so much so that she only heard the word 'Director', thinking that the secretary was referring to her.

She took a deep breath and put on a perfect smile before entering the luxurious office that was the size of a small football court, where a woman was resting against a lounging chair, she slowly opened her eyes at the sound of the door opening and turned to stare at Maribel.

"Hello, Miss Kingsley. I'm here to represent VSA Group to sign the contract. It's my pleasure to meet you. I share quite a few hobbies with you; I like going to Golden Stallion club, too."

Windy had heard of Catelyn before but had never met with her in person. She lifted her gaze lazily and asked, "You like going to the Golden Stallion club as well?"

"Yes." Noticing that Windy was interested, Maribel added, "I have a few contacts that are excellent in every aspect. If you're interested, I can get them to keep you company."

Windy scanned the woman before her up and down and decided that she looked cheap, which made her wonder as it did not seem like David and Cedrick would be interested in this sort of woman.

"You seem to be quite a player. Does your husband not mind?"

'Husband?' Maribel thought. Her expression darkened slightly as she said, "I'm not married."

Windy lifted an eyebrow. "Why bother lying to me? I'm quite interested in your husband, actually. If you are willing to let him keep me company for two days, I can agree to changing the spread of benefits to fifty-fifty between our companies."

Maribel was shocked. "But I'm really single..."

"If you aren't that interested in closing the deal, I guess we can just call this off," Windy gave her one final warning for trying to play dumb.

Maribel started sweating profusely at the pressure and was about to explain when someone else knocked on the door.

"Miss Kingsley, it's me!" Philip called out from behind the door.

Windy was done with the woman before her. she had thought that Catelyn would be more amusing, but she was disappointed to say the least.

Chapter 673-Philip stepped into the office and instantly started to panic when he saw Maribel standing before windy. "Miss Kingsley, I didn't get the chance to clarify, but Director Clark is on sick leave today. This is Maribel Lionel, the Associate Director."

Windy had not noticed that difference as she had only heard the word 'Director'. The faint smile on her lips dropped as she said coldly, "So you're telling me that I've wasted my time talking to a fake?"

Philip held his breath nervously. "I'll take her outside right away! I'm sorry for wasting your time, Miss Kingsley."

"Miss Kingsley, Clark isn't here, but I'm authorized to represent VSA Group as well. I—"

"Go back and tell Catelyn Clark that her absence has upset me. Our companies will not be cooperating this time. That land means nothing to me," declared windy.

A few bodyguards came in to take Maribel out. Not knowing how the situation had escalated to this point, Maribel frantically tried to explain, but the bodyguard covered her mouth and started to drag her out of the office.

Naturally, Catelyn had no clue of what had happened to Maribel in Deluxe International as she was on the way to pick her children up from kindergarten before heading to the hospital to visit Stella.

Quinn refused to leave the hospital, and once Catelyn was gone, she snuck back into Stella's room and woke her up in tears.

Stella's head was pounding, so when she saw Quinn sobbing, she turned dazedly to look at her.

"Mom, you need to help me..." Quinn fell on her knees next to Stella's bed.

Stella instantly snapped out of her dazed state. "Quinn, what...did you just call me?"

Fighting back the disgust she felt, Quinn repeated pathetically with tears in her eyes, "I was wrong, Mom. I shouldn't have gotten angry at you. I should've known that you were only trying to look out for me. I don't have Dad now, and you are my only family left. Let's not be angry at each other, okay?"

Feeling a lump in her throat, Stella hesitated for a while before muttering, "So you don't blame me anymore?"

'I don't blame you?' Quinn scoffed mentally. 'I still do, duh! Getting you on my side right now is the priority now, though.' Quinn nodded. "You gave me life, why would I blame you for anything?"

"My sweet girl, stop kneeling and get up..." Stella tried to pull Quinn up, but Quinn stubbornly remained still. Her tears scrolled down, leaving behind trails on her cheeks.

Quinn's tears struck Stella's heart like lightning.

This was her daughter. Throughout all the years they had been apart, she had never stopped dreaming about reuniting with her daughter, and now, Quinn had finally admitted that Stella was her mother.

“Mom, I messed up. If you won’t help me, this might just be the last time you see me,” Quinn said.

Stella frantically grabbed onto Quinn’s hands and said, “What do you mean, you messed up?”

“I... Back when I first came to Sapphire city, I worked part-time in a studio and accidentally broke an actress’s bracelet that looked just like the one cousin Catelyn has. I heard that it’s extremely expensive and that the actress is asking me to compensate for it. Otherwise, she’s going to kill me!”

Stella felt as though she was seeing stars. “Who is this actress? I’m going to call Cedrick. He should be able to help you...”

“Don’t!” Quinn stopped her. “Cousin Catelyn hates me already, and if they find out that I messed up, I might even lose my job!”

Chapter 674-“But...” Stella was conflicted.

“I can understand if you don’t want to give me that bracelet. That belongs to cousin Catelyn, after all.” Quinn sniffled sorrowfully. “Just remember to hold a funeral for me if I die...”

“Don’t say that, you silly girl! It’s not that I don’t want to give you the bracelet. It’s just that—I sold it.”

Quinn stood up abruptly in disbelief. “You sold it?!”

Stella lowered her gaze in embarrassment and stuttered, “That bracelet was meant for Cat, and because she was too young then, I locked it in a safe with the bank out of fear that we’d lose it. After that, Ezekiel needed money, and I was worried that the bank would confiscate all our money, so I sold everything...”

“Does Catelyn not know about this?”

“That bracelet was kept in the safe for over a decade. How could she possibly remember?”

“Where did you sell it to? Can we buy it back?” Quinn asked anxiously.

Catelyn brought the twins to the hospital to visit Stella and noticed that Stella’s eyes were red as though she had cried, she tried to ask about it, but Stella refused to talk, so she decided to ignore it.

That night, Cedrick came over to pick Catelyn and the twins up from the hospital; he even brought along a few private nurses to look after Stella.

The twins swiftly got into the back seat of the car while Catelyn sat on the passenger’s seat to keep an eye on Cedrick since she spotted the bruise under his eye.

As soon as she took her seat, Cedrick suddenly pressed up against her.

Her eyes widened in shock and she almost forgot how to breathe, but the next instant, Cedrick simply grabbed the seat belt and buckled it up for her before circling around the car to sit on the driver’s seat.

Catelyn’s heart skipped a beat as she thought that he was about to kiss her in front of the children. ‘Oh my god, I must be out of my mind!’ “Mom, our kindergarten gave US an assignment.”

Ollie’s voice pulled Catelyn back to reality. She turned around dazedly and asked, “what kind of assignment?”

Miles poked his head out and grinned. “The teacher asked US to grow our plants and record their growth. When school starts next year, we’ll all play a short documentary video of our plants, and the best performer gets five red flowers as a reward.”

‘Five red flowers?’ Catelyn thought to herself. ‘Oh my, that’s quite a reward!’ She had always been dedicated when it came to cultivating her children’s hobbies, she tugged at Cedrick’s clothes and suggested enthusiastically, “Let’s not go home yet and go to the flower market instead.”

Cedrick, however, did not seem interested. "There are plants at home."

"Those are Mom's," Miles argued, his eyes glittering with anticipation. "Ollie and I are going to grow our own and write journals on it so that we can win the reward."

Cedrick scowled. "It's winter now. Are you sure you two won't accidentally kill the plants instead?"

"Your sons are confident. You shouldn't try to bring them down!" Catelyn glared at Cedrick for not supporting the children.

Miles lifted his chin proudly. "We won't let you rain on our parade!" Cedrick checked the time on the navigation system and made a turn at the next road light towards the flower market. Though it was winter, there were still a large variety of flowers in the flower market.

"What about a cactus?" Cedrick suggested as he followed the other three around.

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Chapter 675-Catelyn considered Cedrick's suggestion. Cactus had natural resistance toward the cold, after all, and it was a fool-proof plant to keep and could absorb radiation, which made it a perfect plant for the twins who never kept a plant before. Her only concern was that the plant was covered in pricks and that the twins might hurt themselves.

Cedrick, on the other hand, did not think that his children would be foolish enough to hurt themselves with a cactus, but Catelyn had clearly moved on to other options.

In the end, they picked out flowers that bloomed in winter, which included a narcissus, bluebell, aloe, and money plant.

She had only wanted to purchase one type, but Cedrick had his doubts about whether the plants could survive in the twins' hands. When they crammed all the plants into the back trunk of the car, one out of ten plants had already died.

Both Miles and Ollie were furious that Cedrick was looking down on them and vowed to keep the plants alive.

While the family of four returned home after their wonderful trip to the flower market, Maribel's entire life was at risk as she returned to VSA Group with the news that Windy had terminated their cooperation.

After hearing what had happened, Hunter immediately snapped at Maribel.

"What did you promise me? You said that Miss Kingsley will agree to sign the contract, that you can replace Catelyn! Look what happened?"

"I—I'm sorry, Sir. I didn't know Windy Kingsley would be this difficult!" Maribel explained frantically.

Hunter slammed his palms against the table in a rage and roared, "I've already promised the management that the land is sold. If you've managed to screw the entire project up, you're going to be fired!"

||J__ || "Get out!" he hissed.

She bowed her head pathetically.

How would she know that Windy was hoping to see Catelyn? Windy appeared to know a lot about Catelyn, and she mentioned something about Catelyn's husband. Could Windy be interested in Catelyn's husband?

As soon as she stepped out of the meeting room, Maribel immediately dialed Catelyn's number.

Meanwhile, Catelyn was helping the twins with settling the plants in their apartment, silently sulking at the fact that Cedrick had bought so many plants that there was barely enough space on her balcony.

Cedrick sat on the couch quietly and watched over them.

Just then, Catelyn's phone on the coffee table started vibrating.

She was occupied with the plants, so she called out to Cedrick, "My phone is ringing. Can you help me check to see who's calling?"

Cedrick grabbed her phone and stilled when he saw the caller ID. He immediately hung up. Though Catelyn was not aware of what happened, he had already received intel that windy had thrown Maribel out of Deluxe International, windy even made a public statement accusing VSA Group for their lack of professionalism. Hence, Maribel was clearly calling to ask for help.

Catelyn was confused, "why did you hang up?"

"It's a prank call," he said calmly.

"I keep getting those lately! I even got calls from insurance companies and real estate agents. I wonder how they got my number?" Catelyn complained.

"Probably from that tuition website you registered for US." ollie poked his head out while being surrounded by plants, his eyes glittering like the stars in the night sky.

Catelyn's heart melted and decided to move on to helping the twins with the plants.

Chapter 676-Their hands were soon covered in dirt. Once they were done, Catelyn said to the twins, "The florist didn't give us enough fertilizer, so I'll get some more tomorrow. I'll buy a video recorder, too, for your short videos."

Catelyn and the twins were all excited, and even though Cedrick did not participate, he was proud of them.

Just then, Maribel called again.

Catelyn came in from the balcony and was about to wash her hands, she silently decided that she might need to change her number if it was yet another prank call.

Cedrick glanced at the screen and purposefully waited a while, before telling Catelyn that it was from Maribel.

Catelyn wiped some of the dirt off her hands and walked over to answer the call, but Cedrick simply signaled her to stay quiet, before answering the call on speaker.

“Director Clark, good for you! Why didn’t you tell me that you know Miss Kingsley?

She is canceling the cooperation with US because of your absence! Hurry up and figure something out!” Furious, Maribel roared, but there was no response.

It was until after a while when Cedrick finally said,” who is this?”

‘A man’s voice?!’ Maribel thought. She choked on her voice and carefully asked, “I am Catelyn’s colleague, Maribel. Are you... her husband?”

“Catelyn’s mother is sick now so she has no time for work at the moment.”

Naturally, Maribel did not accept his explanation; even if Catelyn’s mother was indeed ill, that was no reason to abandon work.

“Hand the phone to Catelyn. This has nothing to do with you.”

Snap!

Cedrick simply ended the call without hesitation and instantly blacklisted Maribel’s contact, his composure unwavering.

Reminded of the times Cedrick had hung up on her, Catelyn realized that perhaps he was trying to give her the cold shoulder. She went over to pinch his cheek without going back to washing her hands. "Cedrick Mason, it's rude to hang up on people like that! What will happen if Ollie and Miles imitate you?"

Cedrick caught onto the faint scent of dirt; his expression darkened as he immediately pulled her hands off. "Hey! Have you washed your hands?"

"No!" admitted Catelyn as she puffed her chest, her hands still wandering around on his face. "You're a naughty boy, I tell you. I'm gonna punish you..."

Cedrick narrowed his eyes and lowered his head to rub his cheek against hers until the dirt on his face was transferred onto hers.

She hastily tried to push him away, her hands wrinkling his shirt. He scowled and wrapped his arms around her waist before rubbing his newly grown beard against her. "How dare you fool around with me? Try again..." "Stop! It's tickly... Hahaha! Okay, okay, I won't do it again! IF Both Miles and Ollie had gotten used to the sight before them. They gave one another a look before sighing gloomily while running off to wash their hands.

Their parents had foregone all shame and would flirt in front of their eyes every single day.

By the time Maribel tried to call again, the call would not go through. Realizing that they had blocked her number, she paced back and forth in the office furiously.

One of the managers who was crushing on her came over and said, "Calm down, Maribel..."

"She doesn't even answer her phone now. She just told her husband to answer it before blacklisting my number! What is she trying to do?" Unable to regain her composure, Maribel gulped down two glasses of cold water.

"Catelyn probably knows that we need her and is trying to play hard-to-get," the manager said.

“Duh!” Maribel calmed down slightly and sneered. “She said her mom is sick, but I think she just wants to see me begging for her help...”

“I guess you have to be the bigger person here. Why don’t you try going to her apartment to find her?”

There was no better option at the moment. Hunter had given her the ultimatum that she would have to leave if she failed to resume the cooperation with Deluxe International. Maribel had grown used to acting all high and mighty in the VSA Group, but if she was fired, she had no guarantee that she could find a better job elsewhere.

She went to check the company’s internal system to find Catelyn’s address, which indicated that Catelyn lived in Ocean Path Residence.

She marked down the block and unit number and went over to Ocean Path Residence the next morning. She knocked on the door, and to her surprise, Quinn came to open the door.

Though Quinn was about to move away, she still had a few belongings in the apartment and had fallen asleep the night before while packing.

Chapter 677-When she saw how rudely Maribel was knocking on the door, Quinn questioned sharply, “Who are you looking for?”

“Where’s Catelyn Clark?” Maribel tried to look inside. “I work with her. Tell her to come out.”

“Catelyn doesn’t live here anymore. You have the wrong place!” snapped Quinn before trying to shut the door.

Maribel swiftly held the door to prevent Quinn from shutting it and changed her tone.

“Miss, here’s the thing -I need to talk to Catelyn. Do you know where she’s moved to?”

Quinn scanned the woman before her up and down and noticed that this felt somewhat like a confrontation. If Maribel was friends with Catelyn, she could not possibly be unaware of her new address. If they were enemies...

Quinn's eyes lit up. She was still frustrated that Catelyn had chased her out, so she exchanged numbers with Maribel and provided her with Catelyn's new address. She would be more than happy to participate in anything that could cause trouble for Catelyn.

When Maribel arrived at Green Islands, she was stunned at how insanely expensive the apartments here were.

'Why would Catelyn live here?' she thought as she suspected that Quinn had lied to her.

She went to the security guard's post and explained over and over again, but the security guard refused to let her in. Out of options, she could only try calling Catelyn using the security guard's phone, but she did not pick up.

Maribel knew that if she returned without accomplishing anything, Hunter would be furious at her, so she could only wait before the gate for Catelyn to return.

By the time Catelyn returned home from visiting Stella at the hospital, it had already been four hours.

Maribel, though livid, forced a smile when she saw Catelyn. "Director Clark?

You're finally back!"

Catelyn purposely looked at her with a dazed expression and asked, "Director Lionel? Aren't you busy with closing the deal with Deluxe International? Why are you here?" Catelyn had only moved recently and not many people knew her new address, so she could not help but wonder how Maribel found her.

Maribel gritted her teeth but maintained a polite smile regardless. "Director Clark, I was wrong before. Miss Kingsley of Deluxe International is requesting to speak to you only. She's even saying that we are

unprofessional. When will you have time to pay them a visit?" "My mom is recovering from surgery, so I'm really busy," Catelyn said with a troubled expression.

Maribel could only swallow her pride and offer, "It's fine. Just let me know which hospital your mom is staying in, and I'll go look after her for you! Mister Wilson already said that we have to bring you back.

Please forgive me, Director Clark. If this project fails, we might all get fired."

Though Maribel was angry, she had not completely lost her senses. If she managed to convince Catelyn to meet with Windy, she might have a chance at surviving.

"And what if you suddenly feel like taking charge again halfway through my negotiation with them?"

"I won't! Even if Mister Wilson asks me to, I won't..." Maribel shook her head frantically as she stared pleadingly at Catelyn.

Catelyn despised Maribel's hypocrisy but knew that she could not exactly ignore the situation as her life depended on the company, so she accepted the apology and agreed to go back to the office later in the afternoon.

When Jolene heard that Maribel only managed to bring Catelyn back to the office after waiting at her place for hours, she was amused. "You should have just ignored her for a few more days! That way, she'll know who's boss..."

Catelyn burst into laughter. "If I ignore her any longer, it'll be Deluxe's turn to come after US."

Jolene could not help but sigh in silent agreement.

Before they proceeded with work, she mentioned a recent event to Catelyn. The news had reported earlier that afternoon that one of the pawn shops located north of the city had gone up in flames. Though no one had died from the incident, three people were injured, and most of the merchandise inside the shop was ruined along with the inventory.

Catelyn saw the news as well, but since no one had died, she turned her attention back to work.

According to Jolene, the pawn shop belonged to Jolene's brother-in-law, who was a member of the Cheever family. Jolene had been worried sick about the shop, and Catelyn simply stared at her in amusement.

Jolene touched her own cheek and asked, "Why are you looking at me like that?"

"So your brother-in-law is a Cheever?"

The Cheever family owned one of the companies that had been developing rapidly in recent years, but unlike the four most powerful families that depended heavily on generations of hard work, their success was a result of the current CEO of the company, who was excellent in fields like technology and antique assessment.

The CEO of Cheever Group had lost his wife years ago, whose last name was also Monroe, which meant that Jolene was the sister-in-law of Mister Cheever.

'It's no wonder that a luxury car came to pick her up that day then...' Catelyn thought to herself.

Chapter 678-Jolene covered her face with her hands, concealing her expression. "I wish he wasn't a Cheever."

Catelyn's face brightened up as if she had just smelled a pot of hot piping tea of gossip, but Jolene did not catch that. Even though Catelyn wanted to gossip more, they had to focus on their priority of finding Windy and talk about the collaboration.

Jolene would eventually open up to her again when the time was right.

However, when Catelyn called Deluxe International, her request was politely declined by the receptionist on the other side of the phone.

Catelyn had no other choice but to look for Philip.

Philip was lectured by Windy and was pissed, so he started yelling at Catelyn before she could even say anything. "How unreliable you are, Miss Clark! How could the person in charge change their mind so easily?! If you're not genuine about the collaboration, just say so..." Catelyn listened to his ramble patiently and added, "I'm aware of the mistakes made from my end, but please, could you please let me see Miss Windy?"

"Miss Windy isn't here at the moment. She went on a vacation at the beach."

Catelyn was speechless.

"When will she be back, then?" she asked.

"Miss Windy is a very spontaneous woman. She might be back in a few hours or tomorrow noon," said Philip.

"Can you please let me know when she's back?"

"If you stand me up again..."

"No, no. It won't happen, I promise," Catelyn reassured him.

Only then did Philip agree to her request.

Truth be told, Cedrick was the reason Philip was willing to help Catelyn. He had no intention of looking for trouble if it was not for Cedrick.

Catelyn let out a sigh of relief upon hearing Philip's answer. All she had to do next was wait for Windy to come back. She was also thinking about using the company's name to do some charity work while Hunter was decent to her.

She then invited Joanna to the old folks' home for some volunteer work. After all, Joanne was generally keen and passionate when it came to volunteering.

It could be because of her family background, but Joanne had always been very respectful toward the elderly. However, for some reason, Joanne had politely denied her invitation for the volunteer work this time.

Catelyn did not think much of it as she thought she was just busy with work.

Unbeknownst to Catelyn, Joanne was pacing hesitantly in her room at that moment. She had made an appointment earlier for an abortion by pill that afternoon.

Joanne was lost and helpless. After all, this was her first time getting pregnant...and having an abortion.

She rubbed her flat belly. It was probably still a tiny fetus at that point, yet she was about to get rid of it.

She had no other choice. If she dragged it on any longer, it would be dangerous for both herself and the baby.

She felt sorry and prayed for the baby's soul to have better luck in their next life.

Joanne prepared herself mentally before putting on an oversized jacket and a pair of sunglasses, heading toward the private hospital.

Edwin left the Atherton Manor and went straight to the office to attend to some urgent matters. His henchman, whom he had ordered to check on Joanne's background, had reported back to him, including about her family's house address, the school she used to go to, and her past jobs.

Ocean Path Residence?

That name was familiar to him. He vaguely remembered that Catelyn lived there before, too.

"Mister Atherton, there was no record of Miss Winters' medical record. I was unable to find out whether she was pregnant or not, but..." the man hesitated as if he was afraid to carry on.

Edwin tossed the file on the desk and said, "Speak."

"I found out that Miss Winters had made an anonymous appointment for three thirty in the evening...for an abortion."

Chapter 679-Three-thirty in the evening?

Edwin looked at the time and realized that it was already three in the evening.

That idiotic woman! How could she not tell him before she decided to get rid of his child?!

Edwin hopped onto his red Ferrari and sped all the way to the hospital, running over multiple red lights. He eventually managed to arrive at the hospital in 20 minutes.

He had called the hospital earlier to inform them to not proceed with the abortion for a woman with the last name 'Winters'. However, since Joanne was a celebrity, she might have provided a different name to the hospital.

It was a private hospital, thus they were not too strict on your identities. As long as one had the money, everything could be done anonymously.

There were too many women with a 3:30 p.m. appointment. Most of them were there for a surgical abortion, but some were there for the pill since taking the pill at the hospital was safer than doing it at home.

Edwin had no idea which one of them was Joanne.

He sprinted to the gynecological operation room. The doctors and nurses were all waiting anxiously for Edwin, and all procedures at the time had been urgently halted.

Edwin was drenched in sweat, even though it was winter, and his face filled with anxiety and panic.

If Joanne had gone on and killed his child, he swore to kill her next!

Edwin paced and waited by the corridor, yet he was unable to find her.

He thought she might have been hiding, considering that she was a celebrity, so he decided to ask the head of the department directly.

The man looked through the appointment schedule as he asked anxiously, "Mister Atherton, are you certain that the woman you're looking for is Winters?"

"Yes, Winters. The pregnancy is probably around three weeks." Edwin provided all the information he had in mind.

The man looked through over and over again and lastly was able to spot a woman with the last name Winters that fitted the description, only the age provided was a year older.

"Miss Winters had completed the procedure and left the hospital."

"It's done?" Edwin was in disbelief. "But her appointment is in two minutes..."

A nurse thought of something and added, "The lady was sobbing hard, kept on telling US how the baby should not be brought to this world and begged for US to do it sooner. We had a patient who missed the appointment, so we gave her an earlier slot..."

The nurse finished her sentence and felt Edwin's bladelike glare as if he was going to murder her. She staggered a few steps back in fear.

Edwin felt his last hope had been snatched from him.

When Grandma told him that Joanne was pregnant, he thought that Joanne had done it on purpose.

He thought she had purposely chosen not to take birth control pills and avoided him by flying to another country, and when she became pregnant, she would come back to the country and use the pregnancy against him.

However, Grandma had always wanted a greatgrandchild. If Joanne behaved and was willing to obey him, he might have allowed her to give birth to the baby for Grandma's sake.

What he did not expect was for her to get an abortion by herself while he, the father, was the last one to find out...

Edwin asked the nurse for the time when Joanne left the hospital and turned to leave the hospital, determined to find her.

If the baby's gone, they could make more...

The more unwilling she was to bear his child, the more he wanted the child!

Edwin could feel how stuffy his chest was. It was the first time he felt like he had no control over a situation.

He should have looked for her three days ago.

He might have overestimated Joanne. Maybe she never had the intention nor the intelligence to come up with the plan of using the child against him...

It was either that, or that she was not ready to give up on her career as a celebrity.

Either way, Edwin was infuriated and was ready for murder.

Just as Edwin was approaching the exit, he passed by a garden, and his eyes landed on a stone stool by the corner.

The slender figure sitting by the stool was none other than Joanne Winters.

Chapter 680-Joanne was seen leaning on the stone table with her head hanging lowly. Edwin was only able to see the side of her face from that angle and could not see her expression at all.

Her wispy figure made her look like an abandoned kitten; lonely and helpless.

It was winter, yet she was leaning on the ice-cold stone stool and table after she had just taken the abortion pill?

Did she really think she was that strong and healthy, or had she fallen asleep on it?

Joanne leaned on the table, grimacing. Her eyebrows knitted tightly together as she looked at the time, noting that it was past three-thirty in the evening.

She took a deep breath, in and out, and realized that she could not go through with the procedure.

If only Catelyn was with her.

She was still deep in her thoughts when a figure appeared at her side, effectively blocking the sun rays shining on her.

Joanne instinctively grabbed her face mask and sunglasses to put them on, but before she could do that, a man grabbed onto her wrist.

“Joanne Winters!” he snarled through gritted teeth.

“Present!” Joanne responded almost immediately, like a reflex.

She then looked at Edwin and was stunned. Her expression twisted together as if she had just seen a ghost.

“M...Mister Atherton?” she stammered. “It’s you! Are... you here to see the doctor, too?”

Edwin noted how her lips trembled, her face paled, and felt her hands cold. He suppressed his anger and took off his jacket to put it on her.

“Why didn’t you tell me?”

Joanne felt the sudden warmth from the oversized jacket. As the jacket enveloped her petite body, the air surrounding her was filled with the scent of his cologne.

She looked at him, shocked. “Tell you what?”

Edwin pursed his lips together and glared at her, as if saying, ‘Go on, keep acting.’ It •» ‘Did he know about the pregnancy?’ It was to be expected since he was the boss of a female celebrity after all.

Joanne bit her lip as her round almond eyes looked down on the ground. “Don’t worry, this won’t affect the company’s image,” she spoke. “I’ve already-“

“Who gave you the permission to abort the baby before discussing it with me?”

Edwin’s hand had formed into a fist.

Abort? Hold on. Why did she have to get his permission?

Joanne’s eyes shot up from the ground as she looked at him, perplexed.

Seeing as his face was stern and grim, she pretended to joke casually, “Ahaha, what a great boss you are, caring so much about your employee’s private life! However, this baby is mine, and it’s my choice to do so. The doctor had also mentioned to me that I’m in perfect health and could give birth to a team of soccer players if I want to...”

Edwin’s face got progressively darker by the second,” You can abort it whenever you want? Have you considered me?” “You?” Joanne blinked at him, confused.

A second later, Joanne felt a bomb had just landed on her, and her head was about to explode. Her round eyes widened as she stared at him.

She must have heard wrong.

Joanne fell silent as her eyes glued onto Edwin.

Edwin took a deep breath and took her icy-cold hand. ” Since you’re able to make Grandma happy, let’s do it. Pack your things, and let’s go to the county’s office.”