

The coldness in Patricia's eyes left Zac bewildered and a little scared. An ominous feeling that he was about to lose something suddenly descended on him.

Before he could say anything, however, Patricia let out a sigh of relief and smiled faintly. "But, it's all over; I understand that now. There's no need to waste my life for someone who doesn't love me."

Zac's heart sank in silence. He could tell from her words that she no longer loved him!

There was no longer a place in her heart for him!

Zac's sunken heart throbbed as a crack appeared from which a terrifying suction force emanated, pulling in all his thoughts before sealing itself shut, leaving

him with no way to express them.

Patricia calmly looked into Zac's glassy eyes as though nothing of note had happened. She stared at him for a moment and then took a deep breath, after which she turned around and walked away without another word.

Her footsteps jolted Zac from his reverie. He shot to his feet, intending to rush up and stop her, but he did nothing. He just stood there and watched her leave.

As Patricia walked away, her words resounded like thunder in his mind. They could no longer return to what they once were, and the love she had for him was long gone.

"You don't love me, Patricia?" Zac muttered as he looked into the distance with empty eyes.

After walking out of the doors of the Reynolds Group building, Patricia stopped and took a few deep breaths. Nursing a heavy heart, she looked back at the office on the top floor, a trace of sadness visible in her eyes.

It had finally ended. She was tired of whatever they had between them, be it love or hatred. All she wanted was to live a normal, peaceful life.

Patricia returned to Skyline Corp. late. She sighed, knowing that the manager would chew her out. However, to her immense surprise, the manager didn't make things difficult for her; it was as though he had taken the wrong pill. He expressed his concern that summarizing the financial statements had left her fatigued, so instead of a reprimand, he told her to take the rest of the day off.

The manager's sudden change left Patricia

speechless. She couldn't help but suspect that her frequent meetings with Kareem lately were responsible. She guessed the manager had misunderstood their relationship—thinking she was Kareem's close friend—and feared that she would snitch on him to Kareem.

A bitter smile appeared on her face. She didn't think anyone would believe her if she explained, so she kept quiet.

Since the manager had been kind enough to let her take the rest of the day off, she didn't complain and accepted the offer. Her choice was also influenced by Jack's constant insistence that she should invite him to a meal.

"Patricia, do you like the food here?" Jack asked as he slowly sipped his wine and watched her out of the corner of his eye. He had insisted that she invite him

to a meal, but the moment they got here, he paid the bill.

Patricia nodded slightly as she gracefully chewed her steak. There was no trace of a smile on her face.

Her sullen expression made Jack frown. He ate the piece of steak he had just cut and gently asked, "What's wrong? Why are you unhappy? Is it because of Zac?"

His question was phrased casually, like something he could freely ask any friend of his. However, a glint of displeasure flashed in the depths of his eyes when he said Zac's name.

"What does it have to do with Zac?" Patricia coldly replied, as though she hated hearing Zac's name.

Unbeknownst to Patricia, her cutlery quivered when

she heard Zac's name, as she had subconsciously balled her hands into fists. Her eyes turned cold as their focus switched to Jack.

However, her subtle reaction didn't escape Jack's eyes. He saw it clearly.

"It has nothing to do with him? How come? You were in a relationship with him, after all. Weren't you head over heels in love with him before?" Jack asked, sipping his wine after a light shake of the wine glass.

"That's all in the past, Jack. I'm here for this meal, not to listen to you say all this," she replied, frowning as she lowered her head to eat.

However, her appetite disappeared the moment she heard Zac's name. The piece of steak she put in her mouth now tasted like rubber.

Today's sudden news, which she had yet to digest, might have also played a part in making her meal difficult to swallow, Patricia guessed.

Her reprimand made Jack's lips curl up into an evil smile for a moment, but she didn't see it. He shrugged his shoulders and looked apologetic. He continued sipping his wine and didn't speak again.

Since Jack fell in love with Patricia, he knew of her feelings for Zac.

Back then, his parents saw through him and intentionally sent him abroad. He thought Patricia would be happy with Zac, but that didn't seem to be the case now...

Now that he was back, there was no chance he would let this opportunity go.

Jack's eyes lit up with resolve as he watched Patricia eat. At that moment, he wanted nothing more than to embrace her.

Patricia didn't look up from her meal, but she could feel his burning gaze on her. She already knew since he went abroad that he loved her.

However, she was in love with Zac back then and wouldn't accept anyone else. Even now that her heart belonged to no one, she had no plans to accept Jack. She knew his family hated her.

Patricia struggled to finish her meal, and just when she thought she could leave there smoothly, two unwelcome guests suddenly arrived.

A man and a woman walked into the restaurant hand in hand; it was Zac and Lyndsy! Patricia stood up quickly to go to the bathroom before she was noticed,

but Lyndsy called her out in a loud voice before she could slip away.

"Patricia, you're here too! Jack, you're back? Why didn't you come see me first? You just went to see Patricia,"

she grumbled with a wry smile, pointing at Patricia. Her words implied that Patricia was talented at seducing men. First, it was Zac, then Kareem, and now, Jack.

Patricia took a deep breath, suppressing the anger in her heart, and slowly sat down. She looked back at Lyndsy, but Jack spoke before she could offer a rebuttal.

"I had no choice. You were too busy with your business to accompany a man," he replied with a cold smile, furrowing his eyebrows.

The casual reply obliterated her accusation. Although Jack hadn't intended to speak up for Patricia, his response left Lyndsy with no leg to stand on.

Lyndsy scowled at Jack for stopping her from venting her anger. If he had said nothing, the bitch's image would have suffered a tremendous blow.

She knew how much Jack loved Patricia. Now that he had sabotaged her plan, then...

Lyndsy's eyes glimmered as a thought popped up in her head. The corners of her lips curled up into a complacent smile.

'That's right. One is Jack, and the other is Kareem. In time, Zac will see this bitch's true colors; only then will he understand how good I am.'

"I had no choice as well. Zac is more charming than you, after all,"

Lyndsy replied with a sweet smile, wrapping her arms even tighter around Zac's like a spoiled child.

Zac kept a straight face. It was as though the drama had nothing to do with him. His fierce stare was focused on Patricia and Jack.

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Chapter 232 If You Want To Thank Me, Then Be My Company



Zac knew only a little about Jack. From what he could remember, Jack had lived with the Sampson family as a child and grew up together with Patricia.

Zac frowned slightly. The recollection made him find Jack, who was sitting with Patricia, a little annoying.

Jack smirked on the inside when he saw Zac's face contort; he was happy to accept the look of displeasure. The corners of his lips slightly curled upward as he stood up and stretched his hand out to Zac.

"Nice to meet you, Mr. Reynolds!"

"Nice to meet you too, Mr. White," Zac coldly replied without sparing the outstretched hand a glance. He didn't intend to show Jack any respect.

Jack shrugged his shoulders and smiled at Patricia. "It had been long since I left the country, Patricia. You could at least show some hospitality by keeping me company for one day," he gently said.

Patricia frowned at him. It was apparent he had taken advantage of the tense situation to make his offer in hopes she'd agree.

She glanced at the other two for a moment, looking a little hesitant. Then, after silently considering the request for a bit, she nodded, albeit reluctantly.

Lyndsy was secretly pleased to see this. To her, anything that worsened Zac's impression of Patricia was a welcome development.

"Then let's go," Jack said. He grabbed Patricia's wrist and led her away without so much as a glance at Lyndsy and Zac.

As Zac watched Patricia walk away, his seething fury caused his chest to tremble, and he clenched his hands into fists to suppress his rage.

He wanted nothing more than to rush up to her and demand that she elucidate her relationship with Jack. However, he just stood there and fumed, remembering what Patricia said earlier—words that made him suddenly feel unqualified to question her.

Lyndsy, on the other hand, was overjoyed. She looked up at Zac with a coquettish expression and cooed, "Zac, look at my sister and Jack; they're a perfect match. He has been in love with her for many years, and now that he has returned, he'll definitely woo her like crazy."

Zac was a little stunned; this was news to him. He swallowed and asked in a hoarse voice, "Does Jack really like Patricia?"

"Of course! Didn't you know that? It has been nine years since he fell in love with her," Lyndsy replied

with a smile, pretending she was thrilled for Patricia.

The atmosphere was getting a little awkward. Lyndsy was Patricia's sister, and Zac was Patricia's ex-husband—it was rather strange for the two of them to just stand in the middle of the restaurant, talking about Patricia and Jack.

Zac looked at the door once more and sneered, an unfathomable glimmer flickering in his eyes.

His expression made Lyndsy smile even wider. She believed he had begun to hate Patricia.

After leaving the restaurant, Patricia shook Jack's hand off and coldly said, "Thank you for helping me out, Jack."

"If you really want to thank me, then stay with me," Jack said, flashing her a cheeky smile as he grabbed

her wrist again and led her into his car, disregarding her protests.

Patricia knew the sort of person Jack was—if he wanted something, he'd get it, and no one could stop him.

She ended up spending the entire afternoon with him. Her body ached as though it would fall apart at any time. However, Jack didn't look tired, neither was he panting like she was.

"I can't walk anymore," Patricia whined as she hobbled over to a stone bench nearby and sat down. Then, she took in a deep breath and waved at Jack.

Jack walked over and crouched in front of her. He leaned in close and whispered, "Do you want me to carry you?" The corners of his mouth curled up into a wry smile.

His smile made Patricia frown. "Thanks, but no—I don't want to be a public enemy," she replied, turning down the offer. Then, she quickly looked away as though she didn't know him, despite his face being too close.

Her reaction made Jack snicker silently. He stood back up and sat beside her, placing his arms on the back of the bench. He looked complacent.

Patricia kept her gaze away and leisurely leaned back on the stone bench. She hoped Jack's high spirits would dissipate, and he'd let her go home.

Jack glanced at her, and a glimmer of tenderness flashed in his obsidian-colored eyes. An expression of appreciation appeared on his face as he let out a small sigh.

For many years, her appearance had remained engraved in his mind. He was forlorn only because... Zac was her first man.

That was good, though. Thanks to Zac's cruelty, he now had a chance with her.

"Patricia..." he whispered, his eyes chock-full of emotion.

Patricia heard him and turned around. When she saw the raging emotions in his eyes, she bit her lower lip in panic. How could she not understand what he intended to say, having experienced all that had happened so far?

"I have something to tell you," he continued in an affectionate tone of voice. "Actually—"

"Oh, right! I just remembered that there's a fantastic

ice cream shop nearby; they have your favorite pudding. Do you want to give it a go?" Patricia said, interrupting him with a wry smile. Her curled lips had said one thing, but her panic-filled eyes told another story.

Reading her like a book, Jack smiled and nodded slightly. He reassessed his thoughts and decided he had been too anxious. Speaking his mind now would only scare her away, so he decided it was best to talk about it some other time.

When Patricia saw the flames of passion in his eyes subside, she heaved a sigh of relief and slowly unclenched her fists. The prospect of hearing Jack say what was on his mind—which she believed would be a confession, going by the look in his eyes—had scared her.

After taking a well-deserved break to eat ice cream,

the pair hung out until it was dark outside. Then, Patricia acceded to Jack's vehement insistence to drive her home.

When the car pulled up at Patricia's home a while later, the pair alighted. Patricia smiled at Jack in gratitude.

"I'm home," she announced with a forced smile, implying that he could leave now.

A devious smile appeared on Jack's face, as he had no plans to leave. He looked at Patricia expectantly and said, "I'm already at your door. Won't you just invite me in?"

Patricia's smile vanished. Having kept Jack company the entire afternoon, she was exhausted. His sudden request triggered an emotional outburst.

"Jack, don't push it," she growled, scowling at him. Her cheerful disposition had disappeared already.

Her fiery response and glare didn't faze Jack; it delighted him instead. He knew Patricia well—she was cold on the outside and warm on the inside. It was quite easy to irritate her.

Jack shrugged his shoulders and flashed a sly smile. "Don't be angry, Patricia. I had been away for so many years—shouldn't you invite me in to have a seat now that I'm back? We're friends, aren't we?" he replied, smirking.

Patricia rolled her eyes at him. She knew him pretty well, too. Since childhood, he had been a smooth talker. When he was little, his silver tongue allowed him to escape punishment every time he did something wrong.

Patricia sneered and coldly replied, "I'll say it straight so you can understand—no way!" Then, she quickly took out her keys, opened the door, and went in, after which she slammed the door loudly, leaving Jack outside.

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Chapter 233 A Big Figh



Patricia's icy expression only made Jack smile; he didn't seem to mind it at all. He hummed a tune and walked away.

A familiar voice echoed nearby, making Jack pause. His lips curled up into a smile as he walked over with great interest. He saw someone interesting around

the corner, and his smile widened.

"Mr. Reynolds, it's you. It seems you have a lot of free time today. Shouldn't you be keeping Lyndsy company? She must be quite unhappy right now because you're not with her,"

Jack said, looking at Zac with a sly glint in his eyes. It was as though he was implying something.

Zac glowered at him but said nothing. He tried to go up the stairs, but Jack quickly blocked his path.

"Why are you going up there, Mr. Reynolds? Do you want to see Patricia?" Jack asked with a mischievous grin, watching Zac's every reaction with a stare.

The impish tinge in his eyes made it seem he was implying that Zac had to get through him first if he intended to go upstairs to see Patricia.

"Mr. Bai, my business here has nothing to do with you." Zac snarled, drawing out his words, one after the other, as he stared coldly at Jack. His patience had already bottomed out; it seemed he planned to be rude if Jack didn't get out of his way.

Jack burst out laughing as though he had heard a catchy joke. He looked at Zac with amusement and said with a snicker, "If her home has nothing to do with me, would it have anything to do with you?" His lips curled upward as he looked at Zac with an air of complacency and a provocative expression.

Zac was a taken aback a little by the relentless provocation. He scowled, but before he could reply, Jack continued, "Don't forget that you and Patricia are divorced. You have no right to get involved with her. She, on the other hand, has every right to choose who she wants to be with." Jack had spoken casually,

but his voice was firm, and his implication was clear:

Of all the men in the world, Zac was the least eligible to interfere in Patricia's life.

That meaning wasn't lost on Zac. His breath came in short bursts as he began to seethe.

"She is my woman!" he growled through gritted teeth. His gaze turned terrifying as an alarming aura burst forth from him.

Facing Zac, whose cold aura was as fierce as that of an iceberg, Jack didn't back down. Instead, he looked straight at Zac and said in a serious tone, "That was in the past. You pushed her away, so don't blame others!"

A smile appeared on his lips as he looked at Zac with gratitude. "You know, Zac, I really have to thank you.

If it weren't for you, I wouldn't have this opportunity to win her back. You have missed your only chance; there won't be a second opportunity,"

he said with a laugh. Zac frowned—the confidence in Jack's eyes, as well as his taunting words, had hit him hard.

His lips opened and closed, but he couldn't utter a word. Jack's claim, annoying as it was, couldn't be refuted, as it was true.

"Mr. Reynolds, am I right?" Jack asked with a smirk, taunting him even more with stabbing words.

He had no plans to let Patricia go, so he was relentless with his verbal assault, hoping it would dissuade Zac from pursuing her.

Zac shrugged off his astonishment and smiled coldly

at Jack. "Even so, it's not your place to lecture me. You also have nothing to do with Patricia."

As far as he was concerned, no one had the right to stop him from pursuing Patricia, regardless of their past breakup.

"You..." Jack glared at Zac and clenched in fists. His ragged breaths belied the rage he felt.

Zac's smug reply made his emotions reach boiling point, spilling into violence. Unfortunately, Zac didn't see the strike coming. Boom! A sharp sound rang out as Jack's fist collided with his jaw. "You think you have the right to say that, Zac? Haven't you hurt her enough? Do you want to hurt her again?"

he bellowed. Zac stumbled a few steps backward, holding his jaw. A copious amount of blood dribbled down both corners of his lips. There was even a red

fist print on his cheek.

He spat out a mouthful of blood and massaged his jaws. Then, he flexed his arm and stared coldly at Jack. Now that the gloves were off—with his assailant making the first move—he wasn't going to stop.

"I won't let her get hurt again. I'll treat her well," he replied coldly, swinging his fist ferociously at Jack in retaliation.

Jack smiled proudly and moved his body one step to the right, easily dodging the punch. Then, he saw Zac sneer and felt a forceful strike connect with his abdomen.

Saliva sprayed from Jack's mouth as he coughed loudly and bent over in pain. He looked up at Zac with a serious expression. His smug disposition from before had vanished. He now knew he had

underestimated his enemy.

He spat out a mouthful of blood and stood back up. He wiped his mouth with his arm and sneered.

"You won't let her get hurt again? Then what have you been doing? Is being with Lyndsy for all this time your way of preventing Patricia from getting hurt?" he shouted and charged at Zac.

This time, Jack's attack was a little dull, and Zac, who quickly noticed this, easily dodged the punch. However, he didn't swing back.

"Why aren't you saying anything? Why aren't you fighting back? Do you admit I'm telling the truth?" Jack taunted with a sneer.

Zac frowned. He couldn't explain his actions. Back then, he was only putting on an act to teach Patricia a

lesson. He wanted her to get jealous.

However, Patricia had reacted much differently from he thought she would. She was calm from the very beginning. Her mask of indifference made it appear as though nothing had happened.

This infuriated Zac. In his anger, he irrationally accepted Lyndsy's advances.

If Zac admitted this to anyone, he was sure it would trigger a fit of laughter.

"It has nothing to do with you," Zac replied with a frown, a glimmer of anger flashing in his eyes. Apparently, he was pretty upset about it.

Jack smiled proudly, happy he had pissed Zac off. "Zac, you can try to get whatever you want, but remember—nothing comes easy in this world," he

said with a sneer.

He threw another punch unexpectedly and hit Zac in the chest.

Zac groaned but didn't fall over. The muscles on his face contorted as he struck back right away. He moved to his left in a feint and struck Jack's collarbone with his right hand. Jack groaned in a mixture of pain and annoyance.

However, before he could retaliate, someone screamed at the top of their voice, startling him and Zac.

"You two..." Standing nearby with a trash bag in her hand was Patricia. She was staring at the two men in disbelief.

She hadn't expected to come outside and see Jack

and Zac fighting fiercely at the gate of her house.

"Patricia..." Jack and Zac said at the same time.

Suddenly, they realized something and quickly stuffed their hands in their pockets with awkward smiles on their faces. "We..."

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Chapter 234 Drunk Man



"I'm not interested in your excuses.

Just get out of here, both of you," Patricia barked, glaring at Jack and Zac. With the trash bag in hand, she marched past the two men and went downstairs, heading to the trash can.

She couldn't help but wonder if both men had nothing better to do. 'How could they fight each other like that at this time of the night? Did they forget they were adults?'

Jack and Zac followed her downstairs, each wanting to explain themselves to her. However, as they could sense her displeasure, they didn't say anything.

"Didn't you hear what I just said?" Patricia threw the garbage bag into the trash can and turned to glare at the two men, both of whom had followed her downstairs.

Jack suddenly laughed out loud and tried to explain himself, but when he saw the cold expression on Patricia's face, he immediately went quiet. Zac said nothing; he chose just to observe her.

Patricia coldly walked past them, heading back to her apartment.

Jack and Zac watched her go back upstairs in silence before glaring at each other one more time. Then, both men turned around at the same time and walked away in different directions.

Unwilling to stay longer than necessary, both men left quickly, and neither of them noticed the sharp pair of eyes that had watched them the entire time. The eyes had watched Patricia, too, albeit with resentment.

When everyone had gone, someone slowly crept out of the shadows—it was Lyndsy. She stamped her feet in frustration and murmured, "Patricia, you bitch! Bitch!"

She had hidden nearby earlier, hoping to secretly watch Jack and Patricia get closer to each other, but

witnessed the fistfight between Jack and Zac instead.

"What a bitch!" She glared at the direction of Patricia's apartment and wanted to argue with her so badly.

The thought of preserving her good image prevented her from causing a scene. She could only suppress the impulse in her heart and grumble quietly.

Suddenly, Lyndsy's phone rang, jolting her back to reality. She checked the caller ID and frowned when she saw it was Kareem. However, she swiped right on the screen to answer the call.

"Mr. Reynolds, what can I do for you?"

she said, but Kareem didn't answer. Instead, some vague noises resounded through the phone, and she couldn't make sense of it.

She decided to hang up, but at that moment, a polite voice echoed from the other end of the line.

"Are you Mr. Reynolds's friend? He is drunk, yet he insists on driving." The caller identified himself as a waiter. He gave her his current address and hung up the call.

Lyndsy put her phone away and frowned. She didn't have a choice but to help Kareem, as they were partners now.

As she readied herself to go pick Kareem up, a vicious thought came to her mind: what would happen if she got the drunk Kareem and Patricia in the same bed?

The thought began to shape itself into an idea that Lyndsy was pleased to concoct. After putting the final touches on her plan, she was eager to enact it as

soon as possible.

Lyndsy made haste to the address the waiter gave her and found Kareem there. He was in an embarrassing state, and she found him revolting. She even had the urge to kick him.

"Gosh! If you're a lightweight drinker, then don't drink at all. You're such a burden," Lyndsy snarled, frowning as she helped him into the car. Then, she drove back to Patricia's apartment.

On the way, Kareem kept muttering Patricia's name in drunken slurs. This came as a shock to Lyndsy, and she couldn't help but wonder, "Did Kareem fall in love with Patricia?" It was just a guess, though. She couldn't help glancing at Kareem through the rearview mirror.

It was apparent he had been out drowning his

sorrows in wine. This made her more confident that her guess was close to the truth.

When they pulled up at the apartment building Patricia lived in, Lyndsy got out of the car, opened the back seat, and kicked the drunk man unhappily. "Hey! Kareem! Wake up!"

Kareem opened his eyes with a start and swayed in an attempt to sit up. Then, his eyes landed on the woman at the door, and he smiled awkwardly and slurred, "Lyndsy, why are you here?"

The corners of Lyndsy's lips curled up into a wry smile, and she said with a slight cough, "Well, I've done my job as a friend by bringing you to Patricia's apartment. Whatever you choose to do is up to you."

Kareem narrowed his eyes in confusion. He wanted to say something, but his lips opened and closed

repeatedly without a word, as his mind was blank.

Lyndsy sighed and pulled him out of the car unceremoniously. When he could steady himself, she patted him on the shoulder and said, "Do a good job, Kareem." Without giving him a chance to speak, she entered the car and drove off, leaving him alone.

Kareem turned around and scrunched up his eyes to look at the apartment building. Then, he wobbled towards the door with much effort.

He didn't know what was wrong with him tonight. He could drink two bottles of red wine without getting drunk, but tonight, he got tipsy after one bottle.

As he downed glass after glass, all he could think about was Patricia and Jack together. The longer he thought about it, the more bitter he felt. He kept drinking to stifle the pain and got drunk after only one

bottle. The preceding memories eluded him. When he came to, he was already here, at the apartment building Patricia lived.

He hobbled into the building.

After a laborious journey up many flights of stairs, Kareem found himself at the iron door of Patricia's apartment. He stared at the door in a daze for a while and didn't ring the doorbell, despite hanging his hand in midair for a long time.

In his heart, he was yearning to see her. This was the first time he had been so eager to see anyone.

After a long time, Kareem steadied himself and pressed the doorbell, after which he leaned against the wall to ease his dizziness.

Patricia opened the door and saw Kareem leaning

against the wall, exuding a strong smell of alcohol. She frowned at him and then sighed. It seemed she was going to have a long night.

First, Jack and Zac, and now Kareem?

"Kareem..." Before she could shoo him away, Kareem swayed without warning.

Patricia held him up in astonishment and called out in a low voice, "Kareem... Kareem... "

However, he didn't respond. His breaths reeked of alcohol, and he kept murmuring intelligibly.

Patricia helped him into the living room and lowered him onto the sofa. She looked at him and frowned, unsure of what to do.

She made him a cup of tea and placed it in front of

him. "Kareem, have a cup of tea; you'll feel better afterward," she said in a low voice.

Kareem frowned and waved the cup away, murmuring something she couldn't understand.

Patricia frowned at him. Although she was displeased with Kareem, it seemed there was no other choice but to let him pass the night on her sofa.

She turned around to leave, but his big hand grabbed her wrist and pulled. Patricia, who didn't expect it, stumbled backward and fell on top of him.

Kareem just wanted to stop her from leaving. He didn't expect to use too much strength, causing her to fall into his arms. However, having his arms around her felt fantastic. It made him smile.

Patricia was stunned. When she saw that his

drunken, red face was close to hers, she gasped and flushed crimson.

Other than Zac, no man had been intimate with her since she was a child. Being this close to Kareem made her uncomfortable.

"Kareem..." Patricia groaned in complaint and tried to get up, but Kareem was holding her too tightly. She couldn't get up despite trying many times, so she shouted his name.

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Chapter 235 Wildest Dreams



There was a slight flush on Patricia's cheeks. This, when added with her gentle voice, brought a smile on Kareem's face. He tightened his grip on her hand.

In spite of his dizziness, he managed to see her face clearly.

Out of the corner of his eye, he caught a glimpse of her pink lips. He chose to act purely on instinct. Raising his other hand, he touched her soft chin. With a gentle smile, he uttered, "Patricia..."

His voice stunned her for a moment. She stared at Kareem for a full minute before it finally dawned on her what he intended to do.

"Kareem, you are drunk. Don't do anything stupid." There was fear in her voice. Her heart was pounding in her chest.

"I'm not drunk. I'm serious. Patricia, will you be my girlfriend?" he asked. There was raw sincerity in his eyes. One could easily tell he felt genuine affection for her. It was like he was willing to give her the whole world.

At this, Patricia managed an awkward smile. In a low voice, she repeated what she had said before.

"Kareem, you are drunk." Having said that, she struggled a little and finally freed herself from his grasp. Biting her lower lip, she quickly walked back to her room.

"Patricia..." he called out. Patricia chose to ignore him.

She hurried to her room. A frown appeared on his face. He hadn't anticipated this reaction from her. He was devastated that she had turned him down.

"Why can't you be my girlfriend?" he asked to the

empty room. Disappointed, he punched the sofa.

For the first time in his life, he had felt sincere affection for a woman. But his luck was so bad that he had been ruthlessly rejected by her!

Kareem felt a stirring of anger. As time went by, his dizziness magnified. His head was throbbing. It was like his head was on the verge of exploding.

His eyes were fixated on the door Patricia had closed. The emotions he felt were different from anything he had experienced before.

A question kept repeating on his mind. 'Why did she reject me?'

At the same time, with her back against the door, Patricia was breathing heavily. Panic rose in her heart and her slender hand was still trembling.

"He was only drunk..." she told herself. She was trying hard to convince herself that this was the truth.

Kareem's words had taken her by surprise. She hadn't expected this man would fall for her. Not even in her wildest dreams! Her only consolation was that he uttered those words because he was drunk.

People uttered all sorts of rubbish when they were wasted. Once her panic disappeared, she felt relieved. She lay on the bed and pulled the quilt over her body.

When she woke up the next day, she was glad to notice Kareem was gone.

His departure filled her with relief and she relaxed a bit.

However, her relief didn't last very long. When she turned on the TV, there was an explosive news. Her mind went numb and she couldn't make sense of anything!

Kareem was uttering nonsense. 'Why is he saying that? Is something wrong with my ears?' she wondered, panic sweeping over her.

In the news, Kareem declared they were in a relationship! He claimed she was his girlfriend.

At that moment, she was overcome by a pressing urge to dig a hole and disappear.

"What the hell are you talking about, Kareem?" she screamed. Her piercing gaze remained glued to Kareem's face on the television. She wished she could go there and shut his mouth.

Kareem's words had brought her to the spotlight. Her reputation would be destroyed beyond repair now!

Patricia wouldn't let this go! She needed an explanation.

Quickly, she washed her face and changed her clothes. She would confront him as soon as possible.

On the other side, seeing this piece of news, Lyndsy grinned from ear to ear. She couldn't remember the last time she had been this happy! Her hunch was right. Kareem had indeed fallen in love with that little wretch!

Her joy reached its peak when she heard him refer to Patricia as his girlfriend. She played with her hair and said confidently, "See? I know very well how to deal with sluts like you!"

"Honey, what's it that's making you so happy?"

Hearing her joyful laughter, Yolanda had walked out of the kitchen. Her curiosity was piqued.

It was very rare to see her daughter like this. How could she miss the opportunity of sharing such a good moment with her daughter. Lyndsy quickly explained to Yolanda her scheme.

With Kareem in the story, Patricia wouldn't have time to pester Zac.

This thought made her happy beyond expression.

Yolanda nodded her head, extremely happy for her daughter. She proudly touched the tip of Lyndsy's nose. However, she still had a few concerns. If Zac insisted on getting back with Patricia, Lyndsy would be devastated.

She had to figure out a way to keep her daughter happy forever!

In the villa of the Reynolds family, Tina saw the news.

It incurred her displeasure and she stared at the TV in disbelief. Rage had turned her face red.

All these years, she had taken good care of her son. And now, he had announced such a news without even consulting her. It was pretty evident he didn't respect her. What was more, this woman he claimed to be his girlfriend had been married. 'She isn't worthy of being entangled with the Reynolds family, ' Tina thought haughtily.

How could she accept it?

"Kareem, you... You... You brat!" she muttered under her breath. Her surprise was so strong, she thought

she would pass out any second.

She was full of hatred and bitterness. There was a photo of Patricia on the upper left corner of the TV. At the sight of her face, fury was ignited in her heart.

"What a bitch! Why is she everywhere? I have to do something," she thought with determination.

At the same time, Zac was also watching the news. He leaned back in his chair silently. Nicholas was standing in front of him. He trembled with fear.

Although Zac hadn't uttered a word yet, Nicholas knew the tumult of emotions Zac felt. In fact, the air was brimming with the coldness that came out of Zac's eyes.

Nicholas was convinced that if he remained here another second, Zac would make him his victim.

"Boss..." Helplessly, Nicholas swallowed and spoke in a trembling voice.

Zac's sharp eyes were fixed upon him now.

Noticing the look in Zac's eyes, Nicholas managed an awkward smile. He wanted to say something, but words wouldn't come out of his mouth. He was scared out of his wits and wished to leave here as soon as possible.

Seeing how scared Nicolas was, Zac gently waved his hand, indicating him to leave. At present, he needed some alone time.

Making use of this opportunity, Nicholas hurried out of the room as fast as he could.

Soon, the room was empty except for Zac and his

thoughts. When he first heard the news, the emotion he felt was anger. But soon, it was replaced by sadness.

Zac couldn't help but think back to what Jack had said last night. At the end of the day, he had no right to interfere in her life. It was her life and she had every right to do as she pleased.

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Chapter 236 Nothing Could Remedy The Harm



As these thoughts swarmed in Zac's mind, he had difficulty trying to rid himself of them.

"What should I do? Isn't there anything I can do?" Zac

let out a heavy sigh. He looked at the ceiling and deep resentment began to bubble in his heart.

On the other side, Patricia was sitting alone in Mance Harton Restaurant. Tapping lightly on the table, she was anxiously waiting for Kareem.

It was with great difficulty she had managed to make an appointment with him. And now, she had been here for almost an hour, yet he hadn't showed up.

'Is he going to stand me up?' she couldn't help but wonder. At first, she was elated by the prospect of being ignored by him. However, soon, awkwardness followed.

Before she could give up waiting, she saw him walking over to her. He wasn't alone! He was accompanied by a bouquet of nine hundred and ninety-nine roses. Patricia blinked at him, astonished.

"Kareem, just stand there! Don't come close. I am only here because I have something to ask you." Patricia raised her hand to stop him. Such a grand gesture would have wooed other girls. Patricia, however, felt nothing but despair.

Knowing full well the question she was going to ask, Kareem flashed her a gentle smile. "Patricia, I like you and I am very serious about you."

His face took on an affectionate glow. He had spent the whole of last night trying to make sense of his emotions for her. In the end, he finally understood what it was.

His response rendered her speechless for a few seconds. She was left staring at him with disbelief.

"Kareem, stop playing jokes. It's not funny," she said,

shrugging it off. Patricia did her level best to smile. However, there was still a trace of fear beneath it.

Kareem had anticipated this response so he wasn't a tad bit surprised. Perhaps it was his reputation that had forced her to regard him warily.

Having spent the whole night indulged in these thoughts, Kareem had come to a decision. He knew he had to make his feelings known to her. This wasn't a casual interest. He was very serious about her.

This was the reason he had gathered reporters and expressed his feelings in public. He hoped it would give her an idea as to how serious he was about her.

"Patricia, I'm not joking. I have never been more serious. I genuinely want you to be my girlfriend." He looked at her with loving tenderness.

For some reason, Patricia blushed red and lowered her gaze. She whispered, "Kareem, I..."

She had difficulty turning him down. After all, no one had confessed their love to her in such a romantic manner. In the deepest recesses of her mind, she knew she had to refuse him.

At present, she experienced a mix of surprise and happiness. But she still knew she had to turn him down.

"Kareem, thank you so much, But I..."

She opened her mouth to refuse him. Before she could finish her sentence, Kareem grabbed her wrist. He was exploding with love.

"Patricia, I know you are still doubting my feelings. And I'm okay with it. In fact, I am willing to wait. I

sincerely hope at one point you will realize how much you mean to me," said Kareem in a low voice, placing emphasis on every word he uttered. The next moment, he leaned over to her ear and placed a kiss on her earlobe.

It was a simple gesture but his heart was satiated in every way. Warmth rushed through him.

Patricia, on the other hand, was caught completely off-guard. Her mind went blank.

She was determined to refuse him, but words failed to come out of her mouth.

"Just give me a chance, okay?" he pleaded. He was a very persuasive man. Holding bright red roses, he stood in front of her, his gentle eyes never leaving her face.

The genuine look in his eyes came as a shock to her. She gently parted her pink lips, as if she wanted to say something. In the end, she closed them. It was like she had lost her ability to speak.

The silence was soon disrupted. The door was kicked open. Jack stood in front of them, his glare fixated upon Kareem.

He walked with a quickened pace and stood beside Patricia, pulling her away from Kareem.

A frown quickly wiped away Kareem's smile. "Mr. Bai, when did you become so nosy? Could you please excuse us and mind your own business?"

"Mind my own business?" Jack asked in an exasperated voice. He went on, "Patricia is my friend. She is my business." Jack looked at Kareem coldly with eyes that spat venom.

Patricia was relieved to have Jack by her side. At this crucial moment, he was the only one she could count on. She ardently wished this would come to a stop.

A cold smile crept on Kareem's face. He was staring at Jack.

"Mr. Bai, you are being ridiculous. Even if you are a friend of Patricia, you have no right to interfere in her personal affairs." Having said that, he shook his head.

Any sane man could understand that Jack too was in love with Patricia.

Kareem instantly understood why he made it his business to meddle in Patricia's personal affairs. He was mad at him for intruding his plans.

Jack, on the other hand, was red with rage when he

saw the news early in the morning. And at present, his anger had become tenfold. He wanted to beat the hell out of Kareem. He was waiting for the right opportunity to confess his love to Patricia. And before he got an opportunity, Kareem chose to outshine him!

Jack was not a reckless person. He considered things carefully before he carried on with a plan. He loved Patricia and intended to protect her at all costs.

Now that Kareem was making a move, Jack had no choice but to step in. However, a third party's intervention would only make Patricia's reputation worse.

"Yes, I have no right to meddle in her business. However, I do think, as a friend, it's my responsibility to warn her you are a playboy!" Once Jack said that, he took out a pile of photos from his pocket and threw them angrily onto the table.

"Mr. Reynolds, have a look at these photos yourself. I think you know every one of the ladies in these photos."

Patricia leaned forward and carefully scanned the photos. Kareem was sitting quite intimately with all those beautiful women. A look of repulsion flashed across her face.

'He is indeed a playboy, ' she thought to herself.

The disgust she felt didn't go unnoticed by Kareem. He opened his mouth to say something but in the end decided against it. The truth was, nothing he said could remedy the harm that was caused. He had a feeling these images would stick in Patricia's mind forever.

"Mr. Reynolds, why do you have to drag Patricia into

your absurd history of ladies?" Jack demanded coldly.

Patricia shook her head and said, "Kareem, you are behaving on a whim. Perhaps you will forget all about me in a few days."

Kareem gazed at her in disbelief. Once again, it looked like he wanted to say something. However, in the end he resorted to silence.

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Chapter 237 The Right Thing To Do



"No, I'm not..." Kareem stuttered while shaking his head. He wanted to explain himself to her, but excuses were useless in the face of these pictures; he

couldn't say a thing.

Before Patricia could say anything, Jack narrowed his eyes at Kareem and said, "Let's go, Patricia." He took her hand and gently led her away.

Kareem's heart ached as he watched the two of them hold hands and leave. It was the first time he had felt the distance between him and her widen this much.

Patricia was subjected to strange looks from other diners as she walked out of the Mance Harton Restaurant with Jack.

Without protest, she had let Jack hold her hand and lead her away, so naturally, everyone was surprised.

Moreover, that same morning, Kareem had announced that Patricia was his girlfriend. He had also given her flowers to express his love for her, but

now, she was leaving with Jack.

"Thanks a lot, Jack," Patricia said, smiling faintly. The forced smile didn't look sincere, though, and a tiny whirlpool of resentment flashed in the depths of her pretty eyes.

Jack saw the look in her eyes and frowned. Feeling depressed, he bit his lip and wanted to speak, but Patricia suddenly said, "I want to be alone." Then, she turned around and walked away, ignoring Jack's conflicted expression. All she wanted was to leave there as soon as possible.

She knew today's incident would put her in the headlines again. A ton of slanderous comments about her were already making the rounds. However, she was used to being the subject of vicious rumors and was only concerned about her mother.

She sighed and took her phone out. She was worried about Giselle, but she was hesitating, unsure of whether or not to call her.

Calling her now might incite the Lowell family's dissatisfaction.

She stared at her phone for a while, silently weighing her options. Then, she decided to make the call anyway and started dialing the number.

"Patricia," Giselle said, having answered the call right away. Patricia's heart ached because her voice sounded a little tired.

"Mom, how have you been?" Patricia asked softly, biting her lower lip.

She hadn't called Giselle since more than half a month ago. She was worried about her situation and

also had something to deal with herself.

"I'm good," Giselle gently replied and smiled. However, Patricia could tell she wasn't in a good mood.

She wanted to say something about it, but her mother continued, "I'm busy now, so I have to hang up, Patricia." Before Patricia could say anything, she hung up the phone in a hurry.

Before the call dropped, Patricia heard a vicious yell in the background and realized one of the Lowell family must have started giving Giselle a hard time.

She looked down at her phone's black screen and sighed. Her heart ached as she felt sorry for her mother.

A troubling thought emerged in her head that her call

had worsened things for Giselle. 'I'm sorry, '

Patricia thought, biting her lower lip with worry. Her eyes were filled with sadness as she wandered around until nightfall.

When she finally reached the door of her apartment, someone was waiting for her there. The corners of her mouth curled up, and she smiled faintly despite being visibly depressed.

"Zac..." Her voice caused Zac to turn around. He saw her and strode over.

"I have something to ask you," he said, staring intensely into her eyes. His lips trembled slightly, but his expression was unfathomable.

Her eyes turned cold as she looked up at him and asked, "What do you want to ask me?"

She had guessed what he wanted to ask her.

Zac frowned when he saw her eyes turn cold. He pursed his thin lips in the face of her icy expression.

'What else can I ask now?' He just didn't know.

Zac no longer knew what he had with Patricia, especially now that Kareem had announced that she was his girlfriend.

After waiting for a while with no response from Zac, Patricia smiled coldly and said, "Since you have nothing to ask me, I'm going home."

As she walked past Zac, he quickly grabbed her wrist, stopping her. He hesitated for a moment before whispering, "Are you truly with him now, Patricia?"

It was at that moment he realized something:

If she genuinely chose to be with Kareem, he would let her go.

Zac stared deeply into her eyes. As the flames of hope burned in his eyes, he tightened his grip on her.

.

He didn't dare to face his feelings for Patricia. He wasn't as brave and reckless as Kareem, who held a press conference to confess.

However, he... He did nothing because he wasn't sure what they were at the moment.

Patricia glanced at her wrist and then at Zac. A cold smile appeared on her face as she asked, "What does it have to do with you?" Before he could answer, she wrenched her hand away from his and walked away.

Anxiety crept into Zac's heart, and he hurried after her. "Are you truly with him?" he asked again. The fear he felt before had disappeared, and he was now determined to get an answer from her.

Patricia sneered and looked back at him. "Zac, does who I want to be with have anything to do with you? Do you have the right to inquire about my relationships?" she coldly asked.

Her face contorted in anger, yet her eyes remained cold. She had stopped and was staring straight at Zac.

Nothing she wanted or did had anything to do with him.

Zac's heart was beating like a drum. A cascading wave of sadness quickly overran the rage in his heart.

He knew she was right; it wasn't his place to ask her about her relationships. However, he still wanted to know the truth.

"Patricia, do you even know what kind of person he is? Are you really together?" Zac asked with worry. He grasped her shoulders and stared into her eyes.

Because he knew the sort of person Kareem was, he didn't want Patricia to be with him and get hurt.

It didn't matter to him if Kareem liked her or not. He just didn't want her to get hurt.

This was the first time Zac had felt this strong a need to protect someone.

"Are we together?" Patricia repeated with a sneer. A sudden rush of anger gripped her heart. His

persistence was irritating her.

She believed the rage might have appeared because many things had bothered her today. First, it was Kareem, then Jack, and now, it was Zac.

"Yes, I'm with Kareem. At least, he is good to me!" Patricia shouted. In her anger, all she wanted was for him to stop badgering her and leave as soon as possible.

Zac was stunned; he couldn't believe what he had just heard. His lips opened and closed as he murmured in disbelief, "Are... you two truly together?"

When he heard Kareem's announcement, Zac was really furious. But he later thought that if Patricia really chose to be with him, he had no right to stop her.

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Chapter 238 A Withered Flower



"Yes, Kareem will always be nice to me. After all, he loves me. He won't ever allow me to be in pain," said Patricia, gritting her teeth. She took a few small steps towards Zac.

She caught a glimpse of the expression on his face. And for some reason, she felt anger mounting within her.

'Why does it look like Zac is sad? Isn't this what he expected?' she thought to herself.

Zac, on the other hand, was stunned after he heard what she said. He stared blankly at her. His sexy lips

opened slightly but as if he had a second thought, he closed them again. He was in no position to speak.

At this point, what could he possibly say?

The very next moment, Patricia bit her lips and hurried into her house, leaving Zac alone.

Zac's eyes remained glued on her receding figure. As time went by, the intensity in them grew. Soon, a bitter smile crossed his face. For the first time in his life, he found himself in a desperate situation where he didn't know what to do.

Patricia slammed the door shut and leaned her back against it. Her breathing was heavy and labored. Try as she might, she couldn't stop thinking about the expression she had seen in Zac's eyes. She was greatly concerned.

If she hadn't been wrong, what she detected in them had been loneliness. He was akin to a child, waiting for someone to give him warmth.

Now standing in her room, Patricia shook her head with resolution. 'No. I don't care how he is feeling. I am not going to stray from my initial plan, ' she thought to herself. Their relationship was over and she wasn't going to go back to him!

She didn't have it in her to be tortured and hurt once again!

A trace of strong determination brightened her beautiful face. Taking a deep breath, Patricia tried to discard these thoughts. She changed her shoes, took a shower and went to bed.

Kareem wasn't taking the rejection well. He chose to go to the bar alone to drown his pain with the help of

drinks. The large bouquet of roses in front of him reminded him of what had happened. He was feeling dejected and spiritless.

A question kept repeating itself in his mind. 'Why couldn't Patricia accept me?'

When he had gone as far as expressing his love for her to the whole world, why couldn't she accept him?

The more he allowed himself to think about the situation, the bitterer he felt. He raised his glass and gulped it down in one go!

A woman had been watching him all along. She chose to make a move and walked close to him. Winking at him, she said in a seductive voice, "Mr. Reynolds, why are you alone?" Before giving him a chance to speak, she moved closer to him.

Kareem made no reply. Seeing how close she was to him, he raised his hand, gesturing for her to leave. Now that he had Patricia in his heart, he couldn't tolerate any other woman!

Ever since Kareem found out he had feelings for Patricia, the way he looked at other women had changed. Even those women he found to be very attractive seemed like a withered flower in comparison. Nobody stood a chance against Patricia!

"Mr. Reynolds, how about I accompany you?" Turning a blind eye to Kareem's warning, the woman insisted on pestering him.

Zac was in the same place, drinking away his pain as well. When he saw what was happening, his brows knotted in a frown. He strode towards Kareem and punched him!

"Kareem, I am well aware of your ulterior motives!"

This punch had come out of nowhere! Kareem first looked at Zac as if he was in a daze. Then he pushed away the woman who was sticking to him. When he was finally able to see clearly, he wiped the remains of the wine on his mouth with the corner of his hand.

"Zac, who gave you the right to hit me?" Kareem summoned a mocking smile, raised his chin and regarded Zac haughtily.

His day had been terrible. And to top it, Zac had shown up with a punch. Now he was going to vent his anger on him!

Before he knew, he had raised his fist and punched Zac back. He was drunk enough to lose his consciousness but that did nothing to lessen his strength. He was as strong as ever.

Zac wiped the corner of his mouth and stared at Kareem with disdain. "I can't believe Patricia has agreed to be with you! You will never change."

Then Zac quickly waved his fist at Kareem, but Kareem was quick to dodge.

Patricia's words had hurt Zac. His agony was so strong he chose to come to the bar to drink. What he hadn't expected was to see Kareem here. The fact he was sitting with a beautiful woman sent him in a frenzy of rage.

He couldn't help but think Patricia was very stupid to fall for this man's words!

Zac's words had confused Kareem. He frowned and asked in a low voice, "Zac, what do you mean?"

"What do I mean? Patricia chose to be with a bastard like you!"

Zac roared, unable to keep his voice down. When Zac had tried to punch Kareem, he ended up hitting his hand against the corner of the table. The pain was excruciating and it took him a while to steady himself.

Kareem was rendered speechless, unable to make sense of Zac's words. A while later, it finally dawned on him that Patricia had lied to Zac so that he would stop pestering her!

Kareem pursed his lips, deep in thought. Then he regarded Zac but before he knew, Zac punched him on the face. His face was beginning to swell.

"Kareem, you..." Zac spat out angrily.

With his fists still clenched, he glared at Kareem.

However, in the deepest recesses of his mind, he was angry with himself more than anyone else.

Patricia had chosen a playboy over him!

This annoyed him beyond measure. It went to show that she considered this worthless man better than him.

He recalled the words Patricia had spoken. She said Kareem would love her and treat her well. He felt repulsion when he thought back to the way he had treated her in the past three years when they were married.

Kareem, who understood what was going on, tried to act along. A smug smile appeared on his face. Although he knew it was only a lie, he derived satisfaction in seeing Zac look so helpless.

"Do you want to know why? Alright! I will tell you."

Raising his chin slightly, Kareem walked towards Zac in a condescending manner.

"She loves me because of you! Because you didn't treat her well when she wanted you. No woman would forgive you for what you did in the past three years!" After he said those words, Kareem sneered at Zac. And then, he left.

Zac, on the other hand, was stunned and didn't know what to say. Kareem's words were like an invisible knife that was being thrust into his chest.

He could have refuted but he knew there was no point. Everything he said was true.

He had done something irreparable in the past three years. If he had been good to her, none of this would have happened. He had no one but himself to blame.

Kareem arrived at the Reynolds family. Tina was eagerly waiting to question him.

"Kareem, what you did today was reckless! How could you do something like that?" she demanded, gazing at him unhappily.

Instead of answering his mother's question, he flashed her a cold look. He wasn't in a mood to talk so he strode past her and headed upstairs.

Tina wouldn't let him go! She caught up with him and tried to stop him. Her questioning gaze wouldn't leave him.

After all, she deserved an explanation for what he did today!

If he told her it was some kind of a trick, she would be

relieved and give up pestering him. But if her dear son was indeed in love with that bitch, Patricia, then something needed to be done!

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Chapter 239 Better Late Than Never



"Kareem, are you really in love with Patricia?" Tina swallowed hard and braced herself for her son's reply.

Kareem made his displeasure towards his mother patently obvious.

He had a hard day today and memories of it came rushing back when he heard his mother's question.

Tina knew her son was a grown up and could take care of his personal matters. That hadn't stopped her from being concerned. There were times when she stared into his cold eyes and felt this man standing in front of her wasn't her son. Instead, he was a stranger. And today, similar emotions brewed in her heart.

"Kareem..." She tried to sound authoritative but her voice trembled as she spoke.

"Mom, it's none of your business," he spat out coldly. Having no remorse whatsoever about speaking in this tone with his mother, he left quickly.

Tina felt both hurt and angry. She bit her lips and soon a ruthless look appeared in her eyes.

"That bitch!" she muttered under her breath in disgust. When she saw them together the very first time, she

had been concerned. However, even in her wildest dream she hadn't expected her worry would turn into a reality!

She was convinced it was all Patricia's fault. She was trying to turn her son against her!

Tina's fury was so strong that she tried to come up with a plan to get rid of Patricia from Kareem's life.

'It is too late, but better late than never, ' she told herself, eager to do something. She must stop Kareem from falling deeper in love with that woman.

The next morning when Patricia woke up, she felt a throbbing pain in her head. It was like her head would explode any second. She touched her head, only to realize she had a fever. Yesterday was a chaotic day. It was no wonder she fell sick.

She lay on her bed, bereft of any strength. It was like someone had sucked her energy out of her. She couldn't get up even if she used all her strength.

"I..." She made an attempt to speak. Even the simple act of speaking was painful. She felt that something was stuck in her throat. When she swallowed, she felt intense pain.

She raised her hand and tried to find her phone from the bedside table. After what felt like hours, she gave up. It wasn't there.

Her fatigue was such that her eyelids began to droop. In a few seconds, she fell asleep again.

When she opened her eyes next, she heard a voice that she was very familiar with. Squinting her eyes, she tried to get a glimpse of him. However, she could only make him out vaguely.

"You..." Patricia said with some difficulty.

"You stupid woman. Don't you know you should be asking for help when you have a fever?" he asked, concern etched in his voice. He gently touched her forehead and tucked her in safely.

A frown creased her forehead. If she had any energy left in her, she would have argued with him. But as it was, she couldn't and soon she fell asleep again.

Later, she heard some noises and was overcome by an urge to see what was going on. She willed herself to open her eyes but in vain.

Patricia had no idea how much time had passed. She felt slightly better and was surprised to catch sight of Giselle sitting beside her. Lines of worry could be seen on her face.

"Mom... Why are you here?" Patricia asked, very surprised by her presence.

"Look at you, Patricia. You are having a fever. I don't think it is safe to leave you alone here." Giselle glanced worriedly at her daughter and touched her gently.

Patricia opened her mouth to say something, but Jack, who was standing by the door, spoke up. He echoed her mother's opinion. "Yeah, that's right. It was a good thing I found you here. Else you would have died alone in this room."

His tone was playful, but one could tell he was genuinely concerned about her.

Patricia lowered her eyes slightly and suspicion rose in her heart. Even though she was half asleep, she

vividly remembered the scene that took place before.

She had seen a man, but she was convinced that man wasn't Jack.

He had made it a point to call her a stupid woman.

The only person who reproached her in that manner was Zac.

Now she couldn't help but wonder if it was all a figment of her imagination.

Her eyes were droopy. She could have made a mistake in recognizing Jack.

But for some reason, she was slightly disappointed when she didn't see Zac around after waking up.

She looked pale and drawn. Giselle couldn't bear to

see her daughter like this. "Patricia, I am so sorry. It's my fault that I failed to take good care of you." A low moan of despair escaped her.

Patricia saw how guilty her mother seemed. She touched her gently on the shoulder and said comfortingly, "Mom, I just have a fever. It's nothing serious."

"Yes, Auntie. Patricia is all right now, don't worry. If you cry, she is going to feel worse," Jack said, trying to calm the atmosphere in the room.

His words did its work. Giselle suppressed her sadness and gently patted Patricia's hair. "Patricia, are you hungry? I will quickly cook something for you." She didn't wait for Patricia's response. Instead, she stood up and made her way towards the kitchen.

With her departure, Jack and Patricia were alone in

the room. He walked and sat by her side. After confirming she looked much better now, he let out a sigh of relief.

"How are you feeling now?" he asked in a soft voice, staring right at her.

"I feel a lot better after receiving enough rest." She forced a smile. She didn't want him to worry about her.

Jack returned her a smile. Something was bothering him and it could be clearly seen on his face.

"What's wrong?" Patricia narrowed her eyes suspiciously.

Jack's eyes met her eyes. When he spoke, his voice was low. "Were you expecting Zac?"

A look of disappointment had flashed through her eyes when she saw him by the door. When he came to her apartment, he had seen Zac walk out. It wasn't difficult to put two and two together!

Jack had a premonition that Patricia wasn't well. He instantly ran into her room, only to realize she had high fever. Zac, on the other hand, didn't return after that.

Whether Zac returned or not was none of his concern. But he couldn't ignore the look he had seen in Patricia's eyes when she couldn't see him.

"What are you talking about? I wasn't expecting anyone!" She lied. She was aware her words sounded stiff. It was hard to meet his eyes so she deliberately looked away.

The way she was behaving confirmed his suspicion.

Jack was crushed and crestfallen.

Not wanting to let her know the misery he was going through, he forced a smile and tried to look normal. Jack shrugged it off and said, "I knew it. Of course you weren't."

If Patricia wanted to keep her emotions a secret, Jack would simply drop the subject. If he pressed for an answer, he knew he would only annoy her.

Patricia made no answer and the air was taut with awkwardness. There was a faint smile on her lips. She held onto her blanket. She had unknowingly let the cat out of the bag.

They chitchatted for a few more minutes and soon Giselle came to announce that lunch was ready. After lunch, Giselle proposed to go shopping with her.

Patricia was thrilled at the prospect of shopping with her mother. However, her happiness was short-lived. It was followed by concern.

"Mom, can you really be out for that long? I'm afraid..." Patricia's voice faltered. She was well acquainted with her mother's situation. If she went back home late, the Lowell family might create a fuss. They would use this opportunity to bully her.

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[REMARRY MY EX-WIFE: LOVE HEALS A BROKEN HEART](#)

Chapter 240 The Choice Will Be Hers



Patricia detested watching her mother lead such a life. Even since she was a child, her sole goal had been to protect her mother.

"It's okay. I haven't gone shopping with you for a long time," Giselle said gently and patted her head affectionately.

Patricia knew her mother was right. It had been a long time since they went out together. If she remembered correctly, last time they did that was when she married Zac. At the memory of this, she felt an onrush of grief.

Once she became Zac's wife, Tina had made it her duty to ensure she lived a strict life. It left her no time for such leisure. Tina was good at making a mountain out of a molehill. She rushed at every opportunity to demean Patricia. In a way, her situation was similar to that of Giselle. Both of them suffered under the hands of their in-laws.

At present, Patricia stared at her mother, smiled and

said, "Okay."

She wiped away her tears with her sleeve. Watching this, Jack felt sorry for the life she had led. Even though he didn't know how bad it was, he knew she had suffered a lot.

Jack's dream was to give her a good life. Once he had her, he would thrive every single day to keep her happy.

Patricia held her mother's arm sweetly. She looked like a young girl, eager to spend her time with her mother.

She was beaming with pleasure and Giselle's tender eyes never left her daughter. A soft smile flitted over her face.

Standing behind them, Jack derived pleasure in

witnessing this happy moment. He saw the bright smile on Patricia's face and was convinced that nothing in the world could be more beautiful than that.

When they arrived at a fashion shop, Patricia's attention was grabbed by a blue floral dress placed beside the door. She shook Giselle's arm and pointed towards it.

"Mom, what do you think of this dress?" she asked, brimming with enthusiasm.

Following the direction of her finger, Giselle and Jack said at the same time, "You should go in and try it on."

Patricia was pleased with their response. She gave them a chuckle and quickly walked into the shop.

When she was busy trying on clothes, Giselle put

forth a serious question.

"Jack, what do you think of Patricia?" As a mother, Giselle could tell Jack was interested in her daughter. Moreover, they had grown up together and had known each other for a very long time.

Jack wasn't prepared for this question. It had come out of the blue. He stopped smiling and put on a serious expression.

Clearing his throat, he admitted, "Auntie, I really like Patricia."

Giselle smiled and patted him on the shoulder. "I knew it. However, I can't decide for Patricia. At the end of the day, the choice will be hers. There is something I would like to remind you. Patricia has been a sensible child since a very young age. She is very persistent and puts a lot of effort in everything

she does."

When Giselle spoke about her daughter, a sob escaped her. After composing herself, she went on, "If someday you both end up together, I want you to promise me you will treat her well."

"Of course! Auntie, I promise you that you won't have to worry about it." Jack didn't have to consider before he gave her his word. After all, she was asking him to do something he had been planning on doing all along!

If Patricia would become his, he would love her unconditionally. He wouldn't let any harm befall her.

Zac, who was hiding on the other side, had overheard their conversation. He was momentarily stunned. His deep set eyes were wide and he trembled slightly.

Was Giselle encouraging Jack to chase after Patricia?

It was obvious that Jack liked Patricia.

And he always stood by her side which went to show his feelings were genuine.

His quarrel with Kareem yesterday had made him understand everything. Now all he wanted was for Patricia to live happily.

In spite of this, his heart ached at the thought of watching her become another man's wife.

These thoughts put him in a trance. Patricia walked out of the fitting room and was stunned to see him there.

Zac regained his composure when he noticed her staring at him. Their eyes met. It was the first time he

had seen her wear something that wasn't a business attire. He had to admit she looked gorgeous in it!

She was the most stunning woman he had set his eyes on.

He was bewitched by her beauty and his heart was throbbing with excitement.

Zac was out of Giselle's and Jack's view but they could clearly see Patricia. In a low voice, they called out, "What's wrong, Patricia? Why are you standing there frozen?"

Their words pulled her back to reality. Patricia quickly composed herself, feigned a smile and headed towards her mother.

"Mom, what do you think?"

Even as she spoke, she stole a glance at the spot where she had seen Zac. To her surprise, he was no longer there.

'Could it again be an illusion?' she wondered.

Jack's observation never failed him. He followed her gaze and looked over there suspiciously. He didn't find anyone, but he was still skeptical. His intuition told him that Zac must have been there a while ago. Why else would Patricia look like a deer caught in the headlights?

"Honey, you look beautiful in this dress," Giselle praised and approved the dress happily.

Jack brought his attention back to Patricia. His obsidian-like eyes twinkled and he nodded. He couldn't understand how anyone could be so beautiful!

Patricia was pretty satisfied with their reaction. She had loved the dress the second she saw it. Suddenly, she recalled the way Zac had looked at her right now. A blush suffused her cheeks.

'I wonder what he thought about my outfit. Did he think I looked good in it?'

They continued to stroll in shops for another two hours. Fatigue was creeping up on Patricia. Only a while ago she had a fever. Jack and Giselle agreed it was best to go back home now.

Jack however received an important phone call. Now only Patricia and Giselle were left in the room.

Giselle expressed her happiness at seeing Patricia look so happy today. Then an idea crossed her mind. She thought now was the time to talk about Jack.

"Patricia, what do you think of Jack?"

Patricia blinked her eyes several times. She was quite taken aback by this sudden question.

"Mom, I..." Patricia didn't know what to say. She had an inkling that Jack liked her.

Giselle held her hand gently and said, "Patricia, I know what you are thinking about. I know you are aware he has feelings for you. Look, I am aware that you are a grown woman. You are capable of choosing a partner for yourself. It's just that I think Jack is a good man. Just think about this, okay?" Giselle patted her hand gently.

She wasn't asking too much. She just wanted her daughter to be aware that she was still young. It wasn't too late to find a man. And in her case, she

was lucky to have a man she could always count on.

Patricia was absorbed in thought. She lowered her head and said in a low voice, "I know, Mom. I will think about it."

She knew her mother was saying this for her own benefit. However, what her mother didn't know was that things weren't as simple as she thought.

She had no desire to get entangled with rich families. The two rich families she had been involved with had taught her enough. She couldn't bear the thought of experiencing it once again.

Seeing the embarrassed look on her face, Giselle sighed and chose to drop the subject. After all, it was Patricia's life.

She knew her daughter could be stubborn. And

relationships were something that couldn't be forced.

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