

Reborn 951

Chapter 951 Four Years

Four years passed.

A stylish woman with two little ones in tow walked into a luxurious hotel in the Capital of Northfield. The woman yelled into her phone, "Manuel if you dare to yell at me again, I swear I'll take your son and jump off a building!"

Manuel was furious with Susan, who ran away from home when she was still in the third month of her pregnancy. Moreover, she took his cousin's two kids with her-Salem Wells and Una Wells.

"Send Sal and Una back." Manuel tried to keep a soft voice while talking to Susan. He dared not to provoke her.

"What's wrong with taking them out for some fresh air? My Sal is cooped up inside studying all day long. If he doesn't get out soon enough, he'll turn into Oscar, who never smiled!" Susan complains indignantly, "I didn't even want to bring Una Wells with us but Sal insisted on taking his little sister along."

"Where are you now?"

"I'll be back once we're done playing around. Don't call me again. Don't affect my mood! The doctor said that pregnant women need positive emotions..."

"Don't eat ice cream or barbecue or street food..." Manuel tried again before Susan hung up on him.

After hanging up the phone, she took an oversized ice cream cone from Salem and started eating it leisurely.

"Aunt Susan, is Uncle Manuel mad?" asked Salem. He heard their conversation on the phone.

"He's just stingy," Susan said nonchalantly.

Today they argued while travelling from Kensbury City to the Capital since Manuel restricted her freedom to eat the food she wanted. Moreover, he was constantly talking when she was walking. So, in anger, she bought a plane ticket straight here and then went over to Oscar's house to bring Salem and Una out.

Salem and Una were almost five years old now but had never been seen by the media, so nobody recognized them.

"But Aunt Susan," Salem continued in his young voice which belied mature words, "You should still avoid cold food since you're pregnant; it isn't good for the baby brother or sister."

Salem was becoming more and more like Oscar as he grew up. There was almost no trace of Hannah left. The thought of Hannah caused Susan's heart to ache uncontrollably. She never even considered that Hannah would die, let alone in such a mysterious way.

She still remembered the day four years ago, when Manuel's face looked different than usual, with red eyes. She thought Manuel had cancer or something similar. After questioning him, Manuel finally told her that Hannah had died.

At the time, she didn't believe it. How could someone as healthy as Hannah just die? But when she went to visit her at her villa and found it empty, she realized it was true.

Later on, she went to the Capital where she learned that Hannah had died in the sea with Lillian, which meant Lillian killed her. However, there were no bodies found for either of them; only a photo buried under Hannah's grave.

During that time, Susan did not see Oscar at all because he was busy trying to save his own life after being critically injured. Although Susan didn't know what had happened with Lillian and Hannah, she wished Oscar would die for a moment. She thought Oscar must have something to do with Hannah's death. But in the end, only Oscar survived.

After lying in bed in the I. C. U. for half a year, Oscar appeared in front of people again. At the same time, Salem was brought back by Oscar from abroad. Little Salem initially rejected Oscar. And so did Hannah's parents. Salem was the only hope for them to live, perhaps. Oscar did not force Salem to live with him but allowed him to stay with his grandparents, Miguel and Michelle, in Kensbury City. But since then, no matter how late Oscar finished his work every day, he came back the Cooper Manor in Kensbury.

At first, though, Hannah's parents wouldn't allow Oscar inside their home but eventually relented after seeing Oscar wait outside the house for a whole night, leave the next morning and come back to Kensbury again in the evening. And that had lasted for years.

Eventually, Hannah's parents softened their hearts and let Oscar go into their home. They allowed Oscar to have contact with Salem too. At first, Salem rejected Oscar but eventually, he grew close to him.

Blood ties were hard to sever.

Another year went by. When Oscar fainted during a live TV interview due to exhaustion from his dedication in coming back every day to be with Salem in Kensbury City, the incident shocked Northfield and everyone believed that Commander had collapsed because of overwork. Only Hannah's parents knew the real reason behind it. Sometimes, Oscar came back as late as two or three o'clock in the morning.

Finally, after much compromise on both sides, they agreed and handed over Salem to Oscar, who brought his son back home with him to the Capital.

Fortunately for them all, Oscar was not completely insane yet. He understood how important Salem was for Hannah's parents so he made sure that every week they had some alone time together, even if it meant bringing him twice a week sometimes just so that they wouldn't miss out on seeing their grandson grow up.

The following years were peaceful under Oscar's leadership. Northfield prospered, while Susan finally emerged from her grief over losing Hannah.

She sighed heavily then patted Salem's head affectionately. Though Salem took after his father both physically and personality, Susan couldn't deny the charm of this little boy, who always drew attention from many ladies who wished their children could look half as good as this little boy did.

"Okay fine," Susan said to Salem, finally relenting. She didn't want to hurt his feelings.

"Mm-hmm!" Salem replied while smiling sweetly. His smile looked like Hannah's.

Chapter 952 A Lovely Pair

Looking at Salem's familiar face, Susan squatted down to hug him. Only Salem could slightly comfort her inner grief over Hannah's departure.

Thank goodness. Hannah left behind Salem. She even wondered if Hannah chose to die with Lillian because she had Salem. She was so smart, she must have known that as long as Salem was there, no one would have any suicidal thoughts.

"Aunt Susan, you're pregnant and can't hold me." Salem quickly refused with a serious expression on his little face.

Susan didn't feel anything about being pregnant now. The first time she was pregnant, she felt like throwing up all the time, but this time there were no reactions at all. She thought it might be a false pregnancy, but when she went on maternity leave, the doctor said the fetal heart rate was good.

"Uncle Manuel loves kids so much, don't disappoint him." Preached little grown-up Salem.

Susan secretly rolled her eyes at Manuel's love for children too. At least he couldn't get enough of playing with Salem and Una Wells. Every time he saw those two kids his whole demeanor made a refreshing change; Susan even envied the two little ones for it. She envied even more that Manuel treated Una Wells so well too, despite her being an enemy's daughter, while she thought that he couldn't forget Una's identity just because Oscar fathered both of them together.

Every time Susan complained angrily about it, Manuel would say that because how much he loved spending time with Salem meant treating Una well too, and Salem asked for that.

And let's face it-Una Wells was quite likeable. Not only did she look pretty and charmingly delicate in appearance, but also had a great personality. Every time Susan saw them together following after each other calling out "auntie" or "uncle", hearing their sweet voices made everyone unable to resist smiling along. Besides, Salem also took care of Una very well, afraid that if they didn't get along then only would make things worse for that little boy instead.

In short, they gradually began treating Una equally naturally due to the family atmosphere. It wasn't just Susan and Manuel, whose attitudes had changed from initially rejecting Una's presence to accepting her. Hannah's parents now fully saw Una as part of their family circle too.

Susan pursed her lips, thinking maybe she was getting ahead of herself. Right now she was unhappy with Manuel pretending to love children so much. When they first got together, Manuel had promised her that they would have a baby in six months. But after Hannah's death, Susan was too depressed to think about planning for a baby. It wasn't until a year later that she began to feel like herself again and

suggested to Manuel that they start trying for a baby. However, every time she brought it up, he would just give her lip service and never follow through with any plans. And so it went on for year after year.

By the fourth year, Susan couldn't take it anymore. She took Manuel's condoms from the bedside table and poked holes in them with needles until finally, she got pregnant. Manuel was dumbfounded when he found out since he had been so careful. Susan explained what she had done and felt like she had finally gotten revenge for all those years of being denied the chance to have a child. But being pregnant was not at all what Susan expected. Manuel seemed like an entirely different person now that he would be a father. She didn't know how many faces this man had-he turned into an overbearing father-to-be overnight, demanding that Susan read books every day and insisting on strict meal times with no spicy or strongly flavoured foods allowed, and even forcing her to drink nutrient soup which she hated. He also made her speak softly so as not to wake the baby while still in utero and walk slowly because he claimed the bouncing might give their unborn child brain damage.

Was he getting back at her?

"What's wrong Auntie?" Salem asked worriedly when he saw how angry Susan looked.

"Nothing." Said Susan, trying hard not to let herself get too upset about it all. After all, she chose this husband herself.

She took Salem by the hand as Una Wells held onto Salem tightly from behind; sometimes Salem's kindness towards Una made her jealous.

"Auntie is taking you guys out for some fancy food." Said Susan, smiling brightly despite everything else going on inside of her head.

"Yay!" The two children replied happily in unison with their cute voices, making everything seem better somehow.

Susan felt like such a winner holding hands with both Salem and Una; nothing could bring down this moment. Looking around, she basked in the envy of those around her. She was enjoying this feeling.

The three of them stepped into the elevator and rode up to the floor of an upscale restaurant.

The waiter respectfully led them to a beautifully decorated private room with a stunning view overlooking The Capital through its floor-to-ceiling windows.

"Sal, is that where Dad works?" asked Una.

Susan began taking their order while both kids curiously looked out at everything outside.

In truth, what child didn't want to go out and play? It was just that no one took them out.

"No, it should be over there," Salem pointed in another direction. Una excitedly looked over there and asked, "Sal, can we see Dad from here?"

"It's too far away for us to see." Replied he.

"I really miss Dad. Do you miss him?" asked Una.

"Mhm."

“Dad is always so busy and never takes us out,” Una said with some discomfort in her voice.

“Dad isn’t just busy; he is special, so he can’t appear casually outside. And for our privacy protection, he can’t take us outside either.”

“What’s privacy?” Una was much more innocent than Salem and didn’t understand what it meant.

Salem patiently explained to her, “It means something that other people can’t see.”

“Are we not good enough? Why can’t other people see us?” Una still didn’t understand why they had to hide away like this; she felt wronged by it all when she spoke about it aloud.

Susan listened intently as she took their order. Even she couldn’t help but feel moved by their conversation. Everyone thought Oscar’s children were exceptional since birth, but who knew how much freedom they had growing up under such high leadership?

After finishing taking down their orders, Susan walked towards them.

“It’s not because you’re bad or anything like that,” she told Una gently, “it’s because you’re too good! Your dad worries someone might try to take you away from him if others saw how amazing you are.”

Una blinked at Susan.

“Your dad loves you very much!”

Chapter 953 Meeting Little Bunny Again

Susan often didn’t want to say anything good about Oscar. But when it came to the matter of their two children, she couldn’t bring herself to speak ill of him. After all, he was truly good to them. He gave all his love to them. It could be said that besides work, Salem and Una were everything in Oscar’s life.

Under Susan’s comfort, the two children’s moods improved a lot. The three of them enjoyed a fancy meal together and were filled with joy.

“Auntie, can you take me and my brother out more often?” Una blinked her big eyes with anticipation as she asked.

Susan wanted to but Manuel might not allow it.

“I’ll try my best,” Susan replied reluctantly so as not to disappoint the two children.

Una smiled brightly; their innocence was hard for anyone to resist. But truthfully speaking, Susan didn’t like Una very much. However, at that moment, she couldn’t help but stroke her head indulgently.

After lunch, Susan left with the two little ones from the private room they had been dining in when a woman walked past them who seemed strangely familiar. The feel of it caused Susan to pause for a moment before turning around abruptly. Tears welled up in her eyes suddenly without warning. Without a second thought, she led the two children to catch up with that woman.

“Auntie, you can’t run!” Salem called out. The little boy was worried about Susan when she went outside alone, let alone Uncle Manuel.

Susan quickly caught up with the woman. Before she realised she made a mistake, that woman turned back, causing Susan's throat to tighten up. Desperately trying to figure out what exactly was going through her mind, she told herself that miracles wouldn't happen every day.

The woman looked at Susan and smiled slightly asking, "Are you looking for me?"

Susan shook her head saying, "I mistook you for someone else."

The smile on that woman's face was beautiful yet unfamiliar. After all, her face was still unknown territory despite how similar their backs might have appeared.

"You have such cute little kids." Said the woman kindly.

"Thank you." Replied Susan, whose voice sounded different than usual.

It was just another back after all, one that looked almost identical from behind.

The woman gave a shallow smile and turned to leave. Susan watched her walk away, hoping for a miracle.

"What's wrong, Auntie?" Salem asked, confused. Susan never cried easily in front of them.

Susan regained her composure and wiped away her tears, saying, "Nothing, I just got a piece of grit in my eyes."

Una chimed in with a blunt observation, "That's how they always do it on TV."

Susan sighed and took a deep breath. She didn't want to burden the two children with her emotions. "Let's go watch an animated movie." She suggested.

"Yay!" The two children cheered as Susan led them away.

As they left, the woman who had been mistaken by Susan for someone else continued to watch them go.

"Besse, what's wrong?" A man blocked Besse's view of the departing trio.

"Nothing," Besse replied nonchalantly.

"The press conference is in one week; Doyle insists on letting you make an appearance, please don't stand him up again!" The man sounded worried.

"I'll try my best." Besse smiled indifferently.

"Missy, please don't make things difficult for me again! If you stand him up this time around, he might just drive me insane." The man seemed to be at his wit's end.

Besse didn't respond, instead, she looked out of the window at the Capital City below, which was bustling with activity yet so unfamiliar to her.

Meanwhile, Susan took Salem and Una to see an animated movie. As they were leaving the cinema, the event organizers suddenly appeared on stage along with the cartoon characters, and voice actors to interact with kids present there.

“That’s Little Bunny!” Una exclaimed excitedly, “I love Little Bunny! She voices that cute little rabbit!”

Susan also noticed Little Bunny. Unexpectedly, a big celebrity like her would attend such events. She had heard that Little Bunny was known for being very dedicated in showbiz circles, which explained why she had become so popular over four years.

The children present were all eager to ask questions and take pictures with their idol and the cartoon characters onstage. Una also wanted to join but was stopped by Susan, who knew where lines needed to be drawn. She had to leave with them in this unsafe atmosphere. Fortunately, Una was obedient enough, so she reluctantly followed Susan out in the end.

The three of them had just left the cinema when Susan’s phone rang. She glanced at the caller ID and answered, “Little Bunny.”

“I just saw you.” Came the voice from the other end.

“You saw me from that far away?”

“I even saw Commander’s two kids.”

“Yeah, Una Wells said she wanted your autograph.” Susan joked.

“Okay, I’ll write one for her next time.”

“Thanks on her behalf then.”

“If you’re free later, do you want to grab dinner together? It’s rare for Mr Johnson to let you come to The Capital.”

Susan pursed her lips. Manuel’s dominance was well-known even by Little Bunny. They had quite a bit of contact with Little Bunny before. The business and entertainment circles were two interconnected circles; Little Bunny also endorsed many products for Phillips Bank. And it must be said that when Little Bunny was in the entertainment circle before, Susan chose to support her behind-the-scenes and gave her some resources. Although she didn’t tell Little Bunny about it, there were no secrets in the entertainment circle. So naturally Little Bunny might have known about it. She didn’t refuse Susan’s aid. Thus, there was an added sense of gratitude towards Susan deep within her heart.

“I’m sorry, tonight might not work.” Susan regretfully declined, “I’m thinking Manuel will probably take me back to Kensbury City soon.”

“It’s okay.” Came a slight smile from the other end without saying much more. Little Bunny knew Manuel and Susan’s way of getting along too well.

“When you come back to Kensbury City next time we can get together again.”

“Sure.” Replied Little Bunny before suddenly remembering something else, “Oh yeah! Karami(an international luxury brand) is having a new product launch event in Northfield next week, and as Karami’s spokesperson in Northfield, I have two tickets if you want them. You seem like someone who likes this brand.”

Susan hesitated slightly because she didn’t know if that Manuel would let her attend.

Chapter 954 Oscar, Manuel and Theodore

Little Bunny said, "I heard that Karami's two chief designers, Doyle, who is the face of Karami and Besse, who is a new rising designer, will both be at the event. You can try to arrange a meeting with them and secure the first order for their new collection."

Susan was intrigued. Karami's haute couture was notoriously difficult to obtain. It wasn't just about having money; it required connections as well. Meeting them in person might open up opportunities for her in the future. Excited by this prospect, Susan readily agreed, "Please reserve the tickets for me. I'll be there on time."

"Sure thing." Little Bunny replied.

"What about Theodore? Did you invite him?" asked Susan.

Little Bunny chuckled lightly and said, "I haven't seen him in two or three years."

"You mean you didn't even see him when you went to see Nicholas?" Susan asked incredulously.

"When I went to see Nicholas, he was not in Kensbury City."

Susan knew what she meant. Theodore had always been unreliable when it came to matters of love and relationships.

"Well, we're used to it now." Little Bunny continued nonchalantly, "Next time I see him, I'll remind him about our divorce."

Susan replied without much enthusiasm. Although Theodore was currently successful and influential, living with a man like him would be every woman's nightmare.

"Anyway," Little Bunny interrupted her thoughts, "I have to go on stage now. Next time you come to one of our events, I will treat you and Mr Johnson to dinner."

"Sounds good." Susan hung up the phone with a sigh.

Theodore would get his comeuppance sooner or later.

"Auntie, was that Little Bunny?" Una asked curiously.

"Yes! She also promised me an autographed photo for you next time I meet her." Susan smiled warmly at Una's excitement over this news.

"Hooray! Auntie rocks!" Una jumped up excitedly.

Seeing how innocent Una was made her hold back those complicated feelings once again.

Before 5 PM that day, Susan brought Salem and Una back into Oscar's place. She didn't dare to take them out for too long in case something happened. She led them into the living room. As soon as they walked in, her face turned green. She knew Manuel would be there waiting for them. She wondered how long he had been waiting here.

Not only Manuel but also Oscar had unusually finished his early shift, and Theodore was also present. The three of them were sitting on the sofa chatting and drinking tea when they saw Susan return with Una and Salem.

There was no special emotion when they saw them come back, but Una was more excited than anyone else. She ran over to Oscar's arms and called out, "Daddy!"

Oscar hugged Una tightly. Every time Una acted spoiled in Oscar's arms, Susan felt a little uncomfortable inside. She looked back at Salem, who appeared calm and used to this kind of family interaction style. Moreover, Salem doted on Una.

"Uncle Manuel, Uncle Theodore." Said Una in Oscar's embrace as she actively called out their names.

It must be said that this little girl was very likeable. Even Manuel couldn't resist reaching out to hug her.

"Ahem!" Susan coughed.

Manuel pursed his lips, his hand retracting again. Theodore looked at him teasingly, "Manuel, you're henpecked!"

Manuel blushed under Theodore's mockery.

"Being henpecked is better than being irresponsible like some men." Susan sneered. She held onto Salem's hand as she walked towards the sofa.

"Susan, every time I see you, you're like a hedgehog. I didn't provoke you, did I?"

"I represent all womenfolk, to eliminate harm for the people."

"Susan!"

"Susan." Manuel tried to stop her gently.

"Manuel, you're helping him!" Susan pouted as Manuel softly called her name.

Susan looked at him incredulously with a face full of grievances. Manuel was speechless. She was becoming more skilled at acting every day.

"Do you want your son to lose his father right after he is born?" threatened Susan. Manuel pursed his lips again.

Theodore was surprised, "You're pregnant?!"

Oscar also seemed shocked. Everyone turned their heads towards Susan. She rolled her eyes helplessly.

"Is that unusual? What is that so shocking?" asked Susan.

It seemed like only their wives could get pregnant. Oh yeah, Oscar didn't have a wife. He would be alone for the rest of his life. Theodore was about to be fired by his wife soon too. They were both men that nobody wanted, but she didn't care about them.

"How long has it been?" Theodore asked curiously.

"Not even three months," Manuel replied.

“You didn’t tell us for three months?! Manuel, you’re not a good brother!” Theodore exclaimed, “I was going to invite you guys out for drinks tonight! It’s been so long since I’ve had a drinking contest with Susan!”

“Maybe next time.” Manuel brushed him off.

“That’s too bad!” Theodore joked again, “I thought there was something wrong with your health before! Oscar and I were discussing taking you to the hospital for a check-up.”

“You’re the one with problems!” Susan got angry, “Manuel is doing just fine, better than all of you!”

Theodore looked at Susan and complained, “Can’t you stop being so protective of your husband?!”

“Jealous?!”

“Don’t make me laugh, only Manuel would die on a crooked neck tree.”

“Who are you calling crooked neck?!” Susan got mad again.

“Susan, the doctor said don’t get angry,” Manuel called out beside her.

Every time Susan saw Theodore, they could never avoid fighting each other. But after drinking together they always reconciled in the end. Manuel admired these their childishness.

Manuel had no choice but to say, “I’ll take Susan back to Kensbury City.”

“Do you want to eat before leaving?” Theodore asked again.

“No thanks, my mom is waiting for us.” Manuel quickly replied.

“Okay.” Oscar agreed as well. He also knew how much pressure there was on Manuel when it comes to taking care of his wife and their relationship together.

“Well, then I’ll go first.”

“Mm-hmm”

Manuel held onto Susan’s hand carefully as he escorted her away from there. Theodore watched their backs disappear into the distance. He couldn’t help but think that the two of them, who he previously thought were unreliable, had managed to live up to everyone’s expectations by having such an enviable relationship.

“I never expected that things between Susan and Manuel would turn out this well.” Theodore sighed emotionally.

Oscar remained silent throughout their conversation.

“Oh right.” Suddenly remembering something important, Theodore pulled out an invitation card and said, “An invitation card from Karami, asking you to attend their new product launch event. You interested? The chief designer behind this commercial brand is something, just give him some face. It’s not like this business brand itself matters much though.”

Chapter 955 Susan’s Guts

Oscar never liked attending any social events that weren't necessary. He usually sent Theodore in his place, and Theodore had grown accustomed to it. However, this time he hoped Oscar would go himself. The meeting was important for bridging commercial trade between countries.

"Remind me when the time comes." Oscar agreed. He was more rational than Theodore and wouldn't refuse anything he needed to do.

"Now that Manuel has left, I won't stay much longer either." Said Theodore. "I'm leaving."

"Okay."

Theodore left and Oscar watched his back before turning to Salem and Una. "Did you have fun today?!"

"It was so much fun!" Una exclaimed happily, "Auntie took us out for ice cream, we had fancy dinner, watched a movie and I even got to see my favourite Little Bunny."

Oscar smiled slightly and said, "As long as you're happy! But after spending the whole day outside, you both need a shower before dinner."

"Okay."

"Max, Zea," Oscar called them over.

"Yes?"

"Take the kids separately for showers."

"Yes, Commander."

Salem and Una followed Max and Zea to take their showers.

There was nobody except for him left in the spacious living room. Oscar was sitting there quietly for a while before getting up and heading back into his room.

Four years had passed just like that. Sometimes it seemed like time flew by too fast while other times felt like an eternity passed by in one day alone. He didn't even know what he lived for anymore sometimes. Was it just because of what Hannah had said? To take care of Salem?

In the car with Susan, who kept talking non-stop about how she despised Theodore's flirty ways, Manuel couldn't believe how energetic she could be all day long without rest.

He interrupted her mid-sentence saying, "Wasn't it tiring taking Salem and Una out with you today?"

"How can playing be tiring?" Susan retorted sarcastically.

"Don't take them away without asking Oscar next time."

"Manuel are you stupid or something?! With so many guards around Oscar's yard, do you think I could sneak off with two kids on my own? Oscar allowed me!"

Manuel felt that sometimes Susan was too smart for her good.

"Manuel," said Susan.

“What’s wrong?” Manuel asked when he noticed her sudden sadness.

Usually, when Susan became sentimental, he would get very nervous.

“I saw a woman today from behind, she looked exactly like Hanna.,” Susan said with tears in her eyes.

The image of that figure kept floating in her mind. Even though she could see that the woman’s face was not Hannah’s, she couldn’t shake the feeling.

“Susan, there aren’t miracles like that in this world.”

“But we never found Hannah’s body.”

“That’s because Oscar didn’t give orders to look for it. Maybe he couldn’t bear to see Hannah’s body and accept what had happened. But in those conditions, there was almost no chance of survival.”

“But I just feel like Hannah isn’t dead. I just feel like she is still alive.” Stubbornly insisted Susan.

“Susan, people can’t come back from the dead...”

“Manuel, are you hoping that Hannah is dead?”

“What can I say to defend myself?” Manuel thought to himself. He just didn’t want to disappoint her again and again.

“How could you be so heartless?” Susan accused him through tears.

“Don’t cry. Doctors say crying isn’t good for our baby.”

“Our baby? You only care about it now! What about me?!”

Manuel had seen enough of her irrational behaviour.

“You’re the only one in my heart. My heart belongs only to you.” He compromised.

“See! You’re lying!”

“Susan...”

“You’re always making excuses!” Susan interrupted him.

Manuel suddenly hugged her tightly. Before she could react or resist him any further, a kiss landed on a noisy and argumentative mouth of hers. Susan froze momentarily.

Usually speaking, Manuel wouldn’t be animalistic with a third person around. He acted all gentlemanly in public. And now, a driver was sitting in front of them.

Susan blinked twice before realizing what was happening. She did not refuse but instead wrapped herself around his neck passionately kissing back.

Initially intending on silencing Susan’s mouth briefly, Manuel didn’t want to go deeper. As a result, Susan tempted him and they kissed passionately. The driver in the front seat was momentarily confused as to why there was no sound of arguing from the backseat. He looked through the rear-view mirror and quickly averted his gaze. It was clear that couples argue all the time, whether it was at home or in bed.

It took them a while to separate from each other after their passionate kisses. After they parted ways, Manuel's face turned red.

How could he look so innocent and harmless while he acted like an animal in bed? People who didn't know any better would think that Susan had been bullying him all along, which made her angry just thinking about it.

"Susan!" Manuel controlled his breathing.

"Yeah?" Susan responded. Although she had just enjoyed the kisses, she still felt angry after they finished.

"I fucking love you! Can't you feel it?!" Manuel gritted his teeth and whispered into Susan's ear.

Susan was taken aback. Manuel rarely spoke sweet words or used foul language. This was really out of character for him. His face became even redder after confessing his feelings to her.

"Really?!" Susan asked with obvious delight on her face.

"So does this mean you'll spoil me with everything I want without getting mad at me or hurting me again?"

Manuel pursed his lips together and said, "Yeah."

"Well, then I'm going to attend Karami's new product launch event next week in the Capital." Said Susan playfully as she held onto Manuel's arm tightly.

Manuel stared intently at her without saying anything for a moment.

"I knew you wouldn't refuse." Said Susan, as she leaned against Manuel's shoulder coquettishly.

Manuel never thought that one day he would be tricked by someone like Susan. He wondered if her unreasonable behaviour earlier had only been done so that he would agree to attend the product launch event with her.

Of course, there was no way that Susan would admit it now.

She leaned into Manuel's arms and said, "Manuel, I feel like Hannah is still alive. I'm not trying to comfort myself. I truly believe she is still out there somewhere."

This time around, Manuel did not deny her opinion anymore. Deep down inside himself, he also hoped Hannah was alive too because if she were alive then maybe things wouldn't have ended up this way for Oscar.

Chapter 956 The Big Shot Behind Karami

Karami's global debut was held at the Capital in Northfield for a fashion release event. The influence of high-end luxury brands was undeniable in any upper-class circle, regardless of country. Tonight's banquet invited influential leaders from various fields, with a small but highly prestigious guest list.

In the afternoon, Susan arrived early at the Capital with Manuel by her side. She went to Oscar's courtyard first. Because of Salem, she had been visiting Oscar's place more frequently lately. However,

every time she visited, there was always an uncomfortable feeling inside of her that Hannah's death had something to do with Oscar. But seeing how poorly Oscar was doing gave her a strange sense of balance. Sometimes she felt twisted inside.

"Auntie!" Una was watching TV in the living room and ran over excitedly when she saw Susan approaching. Manuel instinctively protected Susan in his arms just in case Una accidentally bumped into her.

"Una." Susan patted Una's head and asked, "Where is Sal?"

No matter how likeable Una was, Salem would always be number one in Susan's heart.

"Sal is still doing homework." Replied Una with a childish voice, "The teacher hasn't finished class yet."

"Oh," said Susan softly.

Oscar naturally had different approaches to educating his two children-he trained Salem strictly as an heir while letting Una grow up carefree like a little princess. Although boys should take on more responsibilities than girls according to traditional values, seeing how much work Salem had to do at such a young age made Susan feel uneasy inside. Why couldn't they take it slow?

Susan sat on the sofa feeling restless. Every minute passing made her want to rescue Salem from his teacher even more urgently.

"Don't worry," Manuel could see what was going through Susan's mind and reassured her gently, "My cousin knows how to arrange homework reasonably without being too hard on him."

Susan snorted, with eyes rolling towards Manuel sarcastically.

"Of course, you're speaking up for your family."

"Sal is my nephew." Replied Manuel helplessly. Compared to what they had gone through back then when they were younger himself included, what Salem had now was nothing compared to their past experiences under his Cousin's training methods

"Oh hey! You guys came so early today!" Theodore greeted them loudly from near the entrance door. Susan looked up and saw him dressed in a sharp suit. He always dressed like this for important occasions.

"Nice outfit?" Theodore walked over to Susan, showing off a smug look on his face.

Susan stared at him for a moment. This guy was becoming more and more flamboyant.

"Karami's haute couture?!"

When it came to fashion brands, Susan knew almost everything.

"Not bad taste!" Theodore was in a good mood.

"This suit hasn't been released yet?!"

To her surprise, this guy had gotten his hands on it already.

"It's being released today. Karami sent it over early this morning." Theodore was feeling pretty pleased with himself.

Susan was speechless. This guy had caught the attention of Karami. Karami would never flatter anyone based on their status or position. The owner behind the scenes of Karami was said to have an extremely high status and was rumoured to be from some royal family in another country, who was received by important people wherever he went-whether he chose to meet them or not depended entirely on his mood.

"Are you attending the Karami release party tonight too?" asked Susan.

"They've already sent me clothes. I have no choice but to show my face." Theodore continued boasting about himself.

Susan rolled her eyes.

"Oh yeah, Oscar will be there too." Said Theodore as he basked in self-admiration again.

"Oscar will personally attend?!" Susan was shocked once again.

"Oscar is a charmer. Isn't it natural for him to attend such events?" sneered Theodore as he looked down upon Susan.

"But isn't he busy with work all day long?"

"Don't even iron men need rest?"

"So tell me, is the rumour true that there's an astonishing background behind the owner of Karami?" asked curious Susan, who always loved gossiping.

"When do you think I'll tell you something like that?"

"Theodore, you're not straightforward enough!"

"Why don't you ask Manuel instead?" he shifted the blame onto Manuel.

"He knows?!"

"He knows everything." Theodore laughed.

As someone who could access confidential websites of a country without any problem whatsoever, Manuel could know everything he wanted.

Susan turned her head towards him.

Manuel pursed his lips. He had been completely sold out by Theodore's words.

"Why didn't you tell me?!" asked Susan.

Manuel knew but didn't tell her anything, which led her around asking various gossip questions. As Susan was lost in thought about gossip, she wondered if Manuel was mocking her beside her.

"I only know a little bit." Manuel began to make excuses, "Besides, I haven't been involved in many national events, so the information I know might be wrong."

“Manuel, are you deliberately hiding something from me?” Susan got cross.

“It’s not that big of a deal!”

“Manuel!” Susan raised her voice.

“Lower your voice, the baby might be sleeping,” Manuel said.

“Manuel!” Susan’s voice got louder again.

Una, who was watching TV next to them, turned her head curiously at them.

Manuel glanced at Theodore, who looked like he was enjoying their argument. Manuel surrendered and said, “Well, it’s not a simple background.”

“How complicated is it?” Susan asked curiously.

“It’s just like the rumours say. It’s royalty.”

“What country?”

“Jolencami.”

“Jolencami? Karami? I should have thought of that earlier!” Susan slapped herself on the forehead.

“So who is the boss? Is it the king?!”

“The queen,” Manuel replied.

“Queen Carol?!” exclaimed Susan.

That influential woman on an international scale, could often see news about her internationally. She had done a lot of global charity work, something related to women’s rights, medical internationalization, cultural heritage protection etc. Anyway, foreign media had high praise for her.

Manuel nodded his head.

“No wonder every time we see her attending an event she looks fashionably overdone. She turns out to be Karami’s behind-the-scenes boss!” exclaimed Susan as if she had just discovered some juicy gossip.

“Don’t tell anyone else.” Manuel said seriously, “Few people know this secret and few countries are aware of this.”

“How did you find out?”

Theodore laughed beside them.

How did he find out? Of course, he hacked into their internal website to find out.

“Oscar told me.” Manuel made up an excuse.

“Oscar is also such a gossip.” Susan summed up.

Theodore felt that living as simple-minded as Susan wasn’t easy either.

Chapter 957 Fashion Show

At five in the afternoon, Oscar appeared in the courtyard. He went straight to his room to change into an haute couture suit that Karami had sent him. It must be said that even at his thirty, Oscar was still so handsome. It was as if he confirmed the saying, "Don't be afraid of an older man flirting, just be afraid of a man in his thirties." Susan even felt that he was more charming now.

"Ahem," Manuel coughed lightly beside her. Susan snapped out of her thoughts. Had she been too engrossed in admiring Oscar? This habit of hers seemed like it would never change.

"The event starts at six o'clock, right?" Oscar asked Theodore.

"Yea." Theodore nodded, "We have half an hour left before we need to leave."

"Is everything arranged?"

"Everything is ready."

"Let's go then," Oscar spoke bluntly and Theodore followed by his side.

Susan and Manuel walked alone together.

"Oscar," Susan suddenly called out to him.

Oscar turned around and looked at her. In recent years, they hardly ever talked with each other. He had hardly talked not just with Susan but with everyone else too. He always got straight to the point without wasting words or being verbose.

"I'll bring Sal and Una along with me," Susan said.

Oscar nodded without refusing her request outright either way; perhaps his personality had changed since Hannah passed away.

He led Theodore away first while leaving behind a pensive-looking Susan who couldn't help but exclaim, "Manuel, why do I feel like Oscar is living such a tiring life now?"

Manuel followed her gaze but knew better than anyone else that it wasn't Oscar who was tired from life, instead, he had become numb towards everything around him over time due to all the responsibilities he carried on his shoulders for others' sake. If there weren't people depending on him or duties he needed to fulfil, he might have already disappeared four years ago.

At 6 PM came Karami's press conference. The backstage was reigned by chaos yet somehow organized itself into orderliness again eventually. One particular high-end dressing room stood out among them all where Little Bunny sat getting dressed up for fashion modeling. She was accompanied by her agent, who couldn't contain their excitement any longer.

"With you becoming Karami's spokesperson in Northfield, now, Little Bunny, your fashion resources will skyrocket!"

Fortunately, everything turned out well in the end.

“Little Bunny, don’t cause any trouble for me! With so many incidents happening in the entertainment industry, be more disciplined!” reminded her agent.

“Okay.” Little Bunny was known for her good temper in the industry. She was also known for being clean. When she first gained popularity, paparazzi tried to dig up dirt on her but found nothing. She lived by a code. Over the years of filming and participating in variety shows, she never had any scandals or rumours surrounding her. The label that best described her as “dedicated.”

“You’re the only artist who makes my job easier among all these. That’s why I gave you this endorsement deal.” Said her agent with satisfaction towards Little Bunny.

Little Bunny smiled slightly and looked towards the door through the mirror.

“Linda, did you hear that Karami’s two top designers will be at today’s event? Is it true?”

“That’s what we heard from inside sources but I just went out to check and didn’t see them.” Replied Linda, who was also curious about meeting such big-name designers. After all, their status commanded admiration from others.

Little Bunny felt a little disappointed because she loved Karami’s designs and wanted to meet their designer, a man who understood women’s preferences so well according to rumours.

“Miss, it’s ready.” Said the makeup professional after finishing up her work.

“Woah!” Linda exaggeratedly complimented when seeing Little Bunny before adding, “You look stunning!”

Little Bunny smiled slightly since over-the-top compliments were common within showbiz circles.

“Little bunny, do you want us to adjust your nose? We can make it higher which would look more sophisticated.” Said Linda while scrutinizing her face.

Little bunny declined while laughing, “I’m afraid facial adjustments might affect my acting skills. Our goal is to aim for the best actress position not just popularity. You have plenty of popular artists under your management already, one less won’t make much difference.”

“That makes sense!” nodded Linda before adding, “Actually your looks are already enough despite having minor flaws which can be covered by makeup. Acting skills are still the most important.”

Little Bunny agreed with her while smiling contentedly. Luckily, she persisted in taking the path of strength over the years. Otherwise, she didn’t know how many times her face would have been compromised.

Suddenly, there was a knock on the door outside.

Linda hurried to open it.

The staff member spoke up, “Miss Little Bunny will be on stage in ten minutes as the first model to walk. Please ask her to wait as soon as possible. After the event is over, Karami invites Miss Little Bunny to attend their banquet. Please wait a little after an hour.”

“Okay, thank you.” Linda took the activity card and invitation letter and turned around to say, “Little Bunny, get ready to wait.”

She walked towards the venue with a group of staff members. After walking a few steps forwards, Little Bunny stopped in her tracks.

“What’s wrong?” Linda frowned.

Little Bunny turned her head for a glance and found a familiar figure.

“Do you know him?” Linda also looked at that person.

“No.” Little bunny turned around, “I must have made a mistake.”

Hannah’s death was told by Susan. If it weren’t for Susan telling her personally, she wouldn’t believe it at all because there were no rumours about Hannah passing away yet, and it just felt too sudden.

Little Bunny headed towards the waiting area backstage before going out onto the stage.

The show had begun when a host was doing the preamble on the stage. There were not many audiences here, including Oscar and Theodore sitting in the centre of the front row, Susan and Manuel with Salem and Una seated further back from them.

After some brief opening remarks, all lights were dimmed suddenly. Only one beautiful spotlight shone down upon a woman wearing a white diamond-studded dress, whose skirt sparkled brilliantly under the light. The model looked like an angel. The first outfit stunned everyone present. The dress on the model drew all the attention.

“She looked amazing,” Theodore commented. He seemed to be obsessed with the lady in that dress on the stage, who had a perfect shape, flawless skin and fluid movements.

Theodore glanced at Oscar sitting next to him and noticed something strange about Oscar’s gaze.

Chapter 958 Besse’s Doubt

Theodore was speechless, thinking that Oscar was disdainful of him for being attracted by women’s beauty. He didn’t deem everyone should be like Oscar, who had always been unimpressed by beautiful ladies.

Theodore continued to gaze at the model in front of him, watching her approach. Suddenly, he felt a sense of familiarity.

“Have I seen her before?!” Theodore furrowed his brow but couldn’t remember who she was.

Little Bunny gracefully strutted down the runway, flawlessly executing her performance. The audience area was dark and she didn’t see Theodore. She didn’t think he would attend such a fashion event anyway.

After finishing her walk, Little Bunny stepped off the stage and took a deep breath. Linda rushed over to congratulate her.

“Little Bunny, you were amazing! You don’t seem like much on a regular day but once you step onto that runway, you’re incredible! You have no idea how many eyes were on you just now, you’re perfect!”

Little Bunny smiled slightly and felt satisfied with her performance just now.

“Let’s go back to our dressing room and wait for the event to end,” Linda said as she helped Little Bunny hold up her dress train.

As they walked down the hallway towards their dressing room, they bumped into someone familiar from earlier. However, upon closer inspection of this woman’s face, they realized that she wasn’t who they thought she was after all, though she appeared to be another one from behind.

The woman still noticed Little Bunny’s obvious scrutiny. And she paused and began, “Miss Little Bunny, your show today was fantastic.”

Little Bunny quickly regained composure and bowed politely in gratitude, “Thank you.”

The woman smiled briefly then disappeared, leaving Little Bunny staring after her retreating figure wondering if there could be two people so alike in this world.

“Who is that?! She seems perfect for showbiz!” asked Linda.

“Don’t even bother thinking about it.” Replied Little Bunny dismissively, “Anyone who can freely walk around here must either be rich or powerful.”

“That makes sense.” Linda laughed, realizing how silly she had been thinking otherwise.

They left there, while Besse paused momentarily behind them before turning around for one last look at them, wondering if perhaps these girls knew who she was. But she was not quite sure.

“Miss!” A male voice called out urgently interrupting Besse’s thoughts.

“What’s going on?”

“Where have you been? If you don’t show up soon, the house will be demolished. You know how scary he gets when he’s angry. Can you please hurry over?” Said the man.

In just one second, she disappeared under his nose without a trace. He thought Besse would disappear as she did at every press conference.

“Where is Doyle?” asked Besse.

“He’s throwing a tantrum in your dressing room!” The man said urgently.

Besse pursed her lips and said, “Let’s go.”

“Okay.”

The man quickly led Besse to a high-end lounge. As soon as they opened the door, they heard things being thrown around inside. Besse looked down at the shattered glass of the table lamp under her feet and then looked up at the furious man in front of her.

The man had an imposing figure with slightly Western features mixed with a hint of Eastern elegance. His deep blue eyes were sharp and his angular features were strikingly handsome. It was rare to see an exceptionally beautiful man getting mixed race like him.

“Don’t smash worthless things! Try smashing that crown next to it!” Besse remained calm despite everything that was happening around them.

The staff inside were so scared that they didn’t dare breathe loudly anymore. Doyle glared fiercely at Besse again, thinking she had run away once more.

“I just went to use the bathroom,” Besse said calmly.

Doyle pursed his thin lips while suppressing his anger. He could be impolite to anyone else but for her, any anger would subside within two minutes.

He spoke with these emotions, “How do I know if you’ll disappear again?”

“If I disappear, won’t I come back again?!”

“You’ve stood me up three times already!” Doyle became angry, “Can’t I have some emotions too?!”

Besse ignored his rage and ordered him instead, “Clean up this room.”

Doyle wanted to ask staff members to clean it up instead but stopped himself when he heard what she said.

“You’ll clean up. Whoever made this mess should clean it.” Asked Besse.

“...” Doyle stared at her while both held their ground against each other.

Suddenly Doyle crouched down on his body, which shocked all the present staff members who couldn’t believe what they saw from Karami’s chief designer, whose temper usually exploded like a timed bomb, yet here he was being obedient in front of Besse.

“Ouch!”

Besse frowned worriedly.

“I’m bleeding.” Doyle showed her his finger, which was broken by a glass fragment.

“Is that so hard?”

Doyle was a bit upset because he thought Besse would have comforted him since he was bleeding.

“Stand up.” Then Besse turned to the staff beside them and said, “Please clean it up.”

“Yes, Lady Besse.”

Then she sat by the dresser, looking into the mirror at herself. Doyle slowly walked over to her while being ignored.

“You won’t stand me up today, will you?” asked he.

“I’m still here.”

Doyle smiled peacefully like a sheep, while he had been roaring like a lion a few seconds ago. He had a pretty sunny smile. Sometimes, Besse just couldn't resist when she saw such a sudden change in him.

"Besse," Doyle said and reached out for her hand.

Looking at the wound on his hand, Besse took a deep breath and found a Band-aid to put on the cut. Doyle grinned at her while accepting her help.

"Besse, I know you love me."

His words caused her an impulsive decision to take that Band-aid down.

"When will we get married?" asked he.

Besse almost got choked with surprise. He started inventing things like marriage.

"How about starting preparing for our wedding after today?" asked Doyle, expectant.

Besse didn't want to discourage him and said, "Doyle, I don't remember those things in the past. I had no idea how much we loved each other, so I don't want to finish the wedding just like that. It's unfair, for both you and me."

"Is the past that important? The present time and the future are more important, aren't they?"

Besse did not answer him, since she agreed with his view. However, she was still hesitant as if there were not so many deep feelings for Doyle. She couldn't feel the profound love between the two of them in the old days.

"Besse..."

"Doyle, please give me more time."

"How long?"

Besse had no idea about it. Besides, she somehow had a sense of repulsion and unfamiliarity when facing him.

Chapter 959 Stunning Debut

Besse had the slightest intention to hurt Doyle. She could feel how good he was to her, however, she felt strange towards him.

Three years ago, she woke up from the intensive care unit and the first person she saw was Doyle. But she didn't know him, or anyone else for that matter. She had forgotten everything. As Doyle told, they were engaged and childhood sweethearts with common interests and goals. He told her that her name was Besse and a car accident had left her bedridden for almost a year, causing amnesia. Because of the amnesia, everything around her seemed unfamiliar.

Besse felt like there was more to it than just memory loss. She couldn't shake off the feeling that maybe she wasn't Besse or the woman Doyle claimed she was.

Doyle showed her pictures of "herself" before the accident but even though they looked exactly alike, something about this face scared Besse, as if it wasn't hers at all.

Besse hoped one day all these doubts would be resolved when she regained some memories back. But three years had passed without any progress in recovering them. Life still went on though as per what Doyle told her about their life together so far. She had become Karami's designer, which made sense since design came naturally to Besse despite not remembering anything else important in life or people who mattered dearly to herself before losing her memory.

"Besse," said Doyle with deep affectionate eyes fixed on hers, "don't make me wait too long, okay?"

Besse was hesitant, reflecting upon these past three years when he had been by her side every step of the way with the utmost care. Even though he usually didn't care much about other people's emotions, towards Besse, he was always cautious as if she might disappear suddenly anytime soon. She was more or less touched by what he did. She just couldn't help feeling hesitant whenever they talked about their relationship because something inside kept her resisting it no matter what.

"Okay." Replied she.

In the past three years, many things had become a reality. If memories could be restored, they would have been long ago. Besse gave herself another six months. If things were still the same after that time, she decided to let go of the past and focus on living in the present and future, just as Doyle had suggested.

Doyle couldn't help but smile brightly when he heard Besse finally agree to marry him. Every time he brought up marriage before, Besse always refused without hesitation. This time was different though; her tone was noticeably changed.

He cradled her face in his hands and planted a kiss on her forehead. Every kiss Doyle gave her was gentle and loving as if she were his most precious treasure. Besse shouldn't have doubted Doyle's feelings for her or questioned hers for him either.

"Mr George, Miss Besse, it's your turn now." Said a staff member at the door respectfully.

Besse replied with a nod and stood up from in front of the makeup table. Doyle held onto Besse's hand tightly as they walked out of their dressing room towards the runway stage.

After all of the models finished their walk down the runway came Karami's chief designers making their global debut appearance tonight, undoubtedly one of tonight's most anticipated moments.

Besse was still nervous despite having attended many fashion shows before, where she left halfway through each one without ever stepping foot on stage. This would be her first time doing so, which made it even more nerve-wracking for her.

She didn't like this part very much but every time she left early before walking down that runway, Doyle felt disappointed even though he never showed it before her or blamed her for it either. Not once did he ever do so.

Taking a deep breath inwards helped calm some nerves while holding onto Doyle's hand tighter than usual also helped ease some anxiety. He reassured her by saying, "Don't worry about anything because I'm here with you."

A smile crept across Besse's lips upon hearing those words from him, since whenever she opened up to see everything around her feeling scared or lost within herself, there was always Doyle there who made sure everything turned out okay.

"I'm not afraid when you're here." Said Besse gratefully, to which Doyle smiled even wider than before. He wanted nothing more than to lean over right then and kiss those lips passionately, however, at that moment, they heard their names being called out over loudspeakers signalling their cue to take centre stage together.

Doyle suppressed his desire and led them both towards centre stage, where everyone waited eagerly, anticipating the debut of the chief designer of Karami.

They thought it would be just like those fashion shows before, with the designer not even making an appearance. But this time, they surprised everyone.

A man and a woman walked out onto the stage, with lights shining on them. If it wasn't for their introduction beforehand, they could easily be mistaken for runway models. They were even more impressive than the models.

The man was tall and handsome while the woman was charming and alluring. Both of them had Western features but mostly Eastern contours, with a touch of exotic flair.

As soon as they stepped onto the stage, thunderous applause erupted throughout the venue. The show had reached its climax.

"That's the woman I saw last time! She's Karami's designer?!" Susan exclaimed as she looked at the woman on stage.

"Have you met her before?" Manuel asked in surprise.

"Yes! It was when I went out with Sal and Una last time. We bumped into her at a restaurant. Remember how I said she looks like Hannah?" Susan was so excited that she stumbled over her words.

Manuel frowned as he scrutinized them both. He didn't think she resembled Hannah much except for some vague similarities in her aura or vibe perhaps.

"She's not Hannah." Said he.

"I know she isn't." Answered Susan, slightly annoyed.

"If I knew she was Karami's designer, I should have talked with her more that day, and got to know each other a little bit better," Susan muttered.

Manuel didn't continue with the conversation. He was not interested in building connections with those leaders of fashion but he was willing to accompany Susan.

But then again, he suddenly felt his eyes widen when Doyle and Besse elegantly took their bows together on stage before turning around hand-in-hand to exit.

He couldn't help but stare at Besse's silhouette as if struck by lightning. He finally understood why Susan said this person looked like Hannah. From behind, they did seem identical.

It felt like Hannah herself stood right there in front of him.

He couldn't help but glance over towards Oscar sitting up front, wondering if his cousin had noticed that too.

Chapter 960 Encounter at the Banquet

On the stage, the spotlight followed Doyle and Besse's figures as they received continuous applause from the audience. The two of them stood at the forefront of the stage, bowing in gratitude. The position where they stood was very close to Oscar and Theodore, almost close enough to feel each other's breaths.

"I never thought that designers are both lookers," Theodore whispered.

Oscar didn't respond. His eyes were fixed on the two people on stage. He kept his gaze on the woman standing there. Without ever seeing her before, however, he couldn't seem to take his eyes off her.

Her smile was enchanting and it stirred something within him, but he knew it wasn't a big deal since it was just a feeling. It wasn't really about her anyway.

After their performance ended and they took their final bow. Oscar was stunned at the instant they turned around. Theodore could feel Oscar's change, which was too conspicuous to ignore.

"Oscar?" Theodore called him in a low tone. He was worried about him, who was tense with shock, according to his expression and his body.

"What happened?" asked Theodore, nervous. He hadn't seen Oscar being like this for long. Even though anything terrible happened to Oscar, he always dealt with them peacefully alone. Theodore was wondering whether nothing for Oscar was important anymore, since he had a feeling that if Oscar couldn't address some issues, he would let go. But that was just the way he felt. The truth was Oscar had never failed to solve any problems, like a numb machine that would never have a sense of accomplishment. But he was different at this moment.

There were intense emotions in him showing on the surface.

Theodore followed his gaze, and the next second, he was startled while seeing the back of the woman on the stage.

How came she looked so much like Hannah?

This silhouette reminded him vividly of their last encounter at Kensbury City during Celina's new product launch event. If not for seeing her face earlier today, he would have mistaken her for Hannah.

No wonder why Oscar reacted so strongly! The woman who had taken root in his heart appeared before him again, but it was clear that they weren't the same person. It was just someone with a similar back view. Theodore's throat tightened as he pulled out his phone and sent a message.

"Find all the information on Karami's designer, Besse."

"Got it!" came the reply.

As Theodore finished sending the message, the designer had taken her final bow and left. The fashion show was over, and the lights came up as staff invited all guests to attend an evening banquet. Everyone orderly filed out except for Oscar, who remained seated staring at where Besse had been on stage.

Her back view lingered in his mind like an unshakable memory.

“Oscar,” Theodore finally spoke up after everyone else had left, “everyone has gone.”

“Do you think she looked like her?” Oscar asked quietly.

Theodore pursed his lips, unsure of how to answer without hurting him further.

“Why don’t we go see for ourselves?” he suggested instead.

Oscar looked at him with a hint of hopefulness in his eyes.

“I’ve arranged to meet Doyle early.” Theodore continued, “We might run into Besse again.”

Oscar nodded silently but tightly clenched fists, which betrayed how much he wanted this meeting to happen. Theodore led Oscar through Karami’s banquet hall under full escort by the staff members.

The room was filled with people of high status and wealth. Of course, no one here could compare to Oscar’s prestige in Northfield. Everyone noticed when he arrived, and many approached him offering drinks or conversation but were politely turned away by Theodore, who explained that they were only attending as Karami’s guests today and hoped not to be disturbed during their private time together. Other guests respected their wishes, but would still greet them respectfully whenever they passed by each other inside the hall.

Inside the banquet hall, Susan was eating pastries with Salem and Una, while watching Oscar and Theodore from afar. She muttered, “I thought Oscar would just attend the event and leave. I can’t believe he’s staying for the banquet.”

“He probably has some official business to attend to,” Manuel said beside her.

“With whom?” Susan looked confused.

Manuel sighed. Didn’t he tell her before that Karami’s boss had a special identity?

“But I didn’t the boss.” Susan looked around but couldn’t find Queen Carol.

“Doyle,” Manuel said, “He’s the queen’s son.”

“What?!” Susan exclaimed loudly.

“Watch your tone.” Manuel reminded her about prenatal education.

Her scream caught everyone’s attention. Susan felt embarrassed. She cleared her throat and said, “So Doyle is a prince.”

“Yes,” Manuel replied calmly.

“No wonder he looks so different from others.” Susan commented, “There are plenty of good-looking people out there but it’s rare to find someone who is both good-looking and exudes such an aristocratic aura.”

“Auntie, is it okay for you to talk about other men in front of Uncle Manuel like this?” Salem couldn’t help but interrupt them.

Susan quickly explained herself, “Of course I only love you; I only appreciate others’ beauty.”

Manuel ignored them both as they continued eating cake together.

“Jealous?” asked Susan.

“No.” Answered Manuel, expressionless.

“Come on, you’re jealous. Open your mouth, feed you some cake!”

Manuel made no response.

“Oh, stop being so petty. Come on, open your mouth.” Susan offered the cake beside his mouth.

Manuel eventually gave in to her kindness by opening his mouth. They appeared to be a sweet couple but they seemed to forget the two kids with them.

“Sal, can we go get more cake?” Una whispered while holding Salem’s hand tightly so as not to disturb their elders’ lovey-dovey moment.

Salem watched as his godparents continued their sweet exchange before leading Una away towards another area, where there were more exquisite cakes.

Manuel noticed that they left but since they hadn’t gone far enough out of sight yet, he wasn’t worried about any potential danger at this eventful place. Thus, he allowed them space to play on their own without being constantly monitored or hovered over by adults nearby.

The two siblings arrived at an area filled with delicate pastries on display.

“I want that pink one.” Una pointed eagerly with small feet while trying hard to reach it. Salem was slightly taller than her but he couldn’t reach the cake on the table either.

“Is this what you want?!” Suddenly, a sweet and gentle female voice sounded beside them.