

Reborn 981

Chapter 981 Contact

“Just tell me the room number and I’ll go ask her myself.”

Manuel gave her the room number, after which she turned around and headed for the door.

“Wait,” Manuel grabbed her arm.

“What?”

“I’ll come with you.”

“No need, just wait outside the room for me. You make me nervous.” Susan refused, “I can’t perform well with you around.”

“How are you supposed to ‘perform’?” Manuel was confused.

“Anyway, don’t follow me.” Susan insisted.

“I’ll walk you to the door at least.” Manuel persisted.

Susan sighed in resignation and nodded her head. The two of them walked towards Besse’s room together.

“Okay, now you can go back.” When they reached Besse’s door, Susan urged him to leave.

“I meant to wait for you at Besse’s door,” Manuel explained himself

This guy was too clingy.

Susan was forced to let Manuel escort her to Besse’s door

“Now can you leave?” she asked once they arrived at their destination.

“When you come back later give me a call so I can pick you up.” Manuel reminded her

“Manuel! It’s only a few steps away from here!” She exclaimed in frustration,

“You’re pregnant now. I’m worried about your safety.” He replied seriously.

“What is there to worry about? Am I not fine?” She questioned him.

“You forgot how we had an abortion last time.” He said sternly.

Susan became angry and embarrassed, saying, “Manuel! Are you still holding onto that child?”

“... No... I’m just trying not to have history repeat itself.” He surrendered.

“I knew it! You remember this whole time!”

“No, I don’t.”

“Then why did you mention it again?” asked Susan. Her eyes started turning red as tears welled up inside of them.

“Alright, alright, I won’t say anything more, just come back early, okay?”

She got what she wanted and smiled brightly at him. She loved seeing how much he doted on her even though he couldn’t beat or control her.

“That’s enough then. You should go now.” Said Susan

“I’ll watch until after you’ve gone inside.”

“Manuel...” Susan was a bit impatient.

With no other options left, Manuel turned around readying himself to leave but suddenly lowered his head and kissed her passionately.

It caught Susan off guard but also made her heart race faster than usual. She wondered why Manuel suddenly became so bold.

“Don’t stare too hard at Doyle,” Manuel warned seriously

“So that means all along your intention was this?” Susan laughed slyly.

“You are a married woman, you should abide by the rules of marriage.”

“Okay.” Susan surprisingly didn’t argue with him, “Besides, Doyle isn’t even staying in the same room as Besse, right?”

“What if he was?”

“I get it, you’re jealous.” Susan pushed him playfully and said, “You should go back now.”

If he didn’t leave soon, they would be up until dawn.

Manuel eventually left. Susan took a deep breath after watching him go. No matter what would happen, she must give herself a clear answer.

Just as she was about to knock on the door, someone called her from behind.

“Susan?”

She turned around and saw Besse standing there with a smile on her face. She didn’t resemble Hannah, and when she saw her smiling face, Susan felt like crying for some reason.

As every minute passed, Susan was more convinced of that answer in her mind.

“What are you doing here?” Besse asked her with surprise in her voice

“I came to find you.” Susan controlled her emotions and replied calmly.

“To find me?” Besse seemed confused.

“Can I come into your room?”

“Of course.”

She walked over to where Susan stood and opened the door of an opulent suite that only had one person living in it, who was Besse herself.

“What about Mr George?”

“Doyle just finished dinner with me but had some work stuff to take care of, so I came back first. Are you looking for him?” Besse asked casually

“No no, I’m here for you.” Susan quickly clarified.

Besse smiled. She seemed used to dealing with people with a personality like Susan’s.

“Sit down for a while, let me get some drinks for you. What do you want?”

“Coke... never mind, I’m pregnant so just give me water please.”

She gave up the beverage, in case Manuel would scold her again.

“Sure thing.” Besse smiled again before going off into another room.

Her smile made all sorts of emotions well up inside Susan.

With glasses in her hand, Besse returned.

“I can hardly tell that you’re pregnant.”

“Really? Am I not getting fat?”

“Nope.” Sitting next to Susan, Besse also drank water too.

“The main thing is your condition doesn’t look like that of an expectant mother.” Added Besse.

“Manuel says that too.” Susan pouted.

“Your husband spoils you,” Besse commented

“How did you know?”

“I’m not blind.” Besse teased and said, “Last time when I saw you at the banquet, Mr Johnson never took his eyes off you. He was alert with you around, I saw his little movements when he was protecting you.”

“Is that so?”

The happiness on Susan’s face was conspicuous. She thought she was lucky enough to marry Manuel in the end.

“By the way, what are you asking me for?” Bessie asked.

They started chatting harmoniously.

“Oh, I brought you some cake.” Susan handed the cake to her.

Bessie was a bit stunned and asked, “Just came for giving me the cake?”

"I just came from a child's birthday, so I had the cake."

"You mean the little boy named Sal?"

"How do you know?! Oh, did you meet Salem at the amusement park today?"

"Yeah, his name is Salem... Is he okay now?" Besse asked with concern.

"It's just a graze. But even though it's a graze, Oscar is too incompetent. He hasn't taken his son out once a year and a half. Now he finally took him out to play, and he let Sal get hurt. How can he be a father?" Susan complained.

Besse's face changed a bit and she said, "Is Oscar Salem's father?"

"Don't you know that? Haven't you met today?"

"He was wearing a cap and a mask, I didn't recognize him."

"Can't you recognize him?" Susan suddenly became a bit serious.

Besse frowned, feeling that Susan was a bit strange at the moment.

"Isn't this weird? I'm not familiar with your commander after all."

"But," Susan said in a choked voice.

Inexplicably, Besse was very gloomy about Susan's tears.

Chapter 982 She Isn't Hannah

"But we all think that you're so familiar to us." Said Susan.

Upon hearing this, Besse's heart started racing madly. She looked at Susan in confusion.

"You and Hannah are so similar." Susan couldn't help but blurt out. There was nothing that could be kept hidden for too long.

Besse unconsciously pursed her lips together. Oscar had said the same thing before, but later on, she went back and carefully examined the photo of Hannah and indeed felt a strange sense of familiarity herself, but there was no resemblance between them.

Why did they keep saying that she was similar to Hannah?

Before that, she thought Oscar was just trying to flirt with her intentionally by saying so. But, from the moment Oscar approached her, she could already feel his unusual feelings towards her. And the dinner that day confirmed what she had been thinking all along. Although she didn't know why Oscar would have feelings for her in the first place, love at first sight wasn't something that happened easily to someone, who held such high power over their country.

"I don't look anything like her." Besse remained calm as Susan's emotions started getting out of control.

"But other than your appearance, everything else is the same." Susan continued speaking through tears, "After being close to you during the dinner party and seeing how different you were from Hannah's

appearance, it made me think I might have mistaken you for her. But I thought a lot, I can't shake off this feeling of familiarity from you."

Besse also seemed emotionally affected by this conversation now. She could also feel a sense of familiarity from Susan too.

"Are you... trying to escape from Oscar?" asked Susan with concern.

"What do you mean?"

"Is it because you don't want him controlling your life anymore? Did you get plastic surgery because of him?"

Tears streamed down Susan's face.

"I won't tell Oscar. Your secret is safe with me." Susan continued.

"No," Besse said as she shook her head. She was trying to keep calm at that moment.

"I don't know what you're talking about. I didn't know you, or Oscar."

"How could that be? We grew up together, you can forget Oscar, but how could you forget me?!" Susan said with teary eyes.

She failed to accept the fact that her best friend, Hannah, was dead. At that moment, she was so sure of herself that Besse was Hannah.

"Susan, calm down, okay?" Besse held her hand and comforted her, "I may look a bit like your friend, but I'm not her. And I'm leaving Northfield for Jolencami tomorrow."

Susan looked at Besse with longing eyes. From her expression, she felt that Besse wasn't lying to her. Besse truly didn't know Hannah.

"Don't cry, you're pregnant." Besse handed a tissue and wiped away her tears gently, "It's not good for the baby."

"Hannah always treated me so well like you," Susan murmured.

Besse's hand paused slightly.

"When I was little, I always got into trouble but had less courage than anyone else afterwards. So I would hide behind Hannah every time something happened because she always protected me," Susan continued emotionally, "When I fell or got hurt from wrestling around as a child, it was always Hannah who comforted me and wiped my tears away for me. At one point in my life, I even thought that Hannah might be my mother reincarnated."

Besse couldn't help laughing.

What had been a sad story became comedic after hearing it from Susan's perspective.

"But then, Hannah died unexpectedly." Susan said before breaking down again as soon as the word 'died' left her lips.

Tears streamed down uncontrollably from both of her eyes now.

Besse also felt somewhat uncomfortable upon hearing about death. She realized that something must have happened to cause them to mistake someone else for their beloved friend. This moment of grief seemed all too familiar as if they were experiencing death themselves.

"I've always believed that she still exists in this world somewhere, which is why when seeing you just now made me think you were her..." Susan tried hard to hold back more sobs while speaking through gritted teeth.

After some time passed by with only sniffles filling up the silence between them did Susan finally manage to calm herself enough to say, "I know you're not lying."

Besse watched as redness crept up on both of Susan's nose and eye sockets.

She wanted desperately to say something comforting but instead decided against it since they'd already decided on leaving Northfield anyways.

"Maybe it's just wishful thinking on my part." Taking in one deep breath, Susan was dissuading herself from insisting on the first idea she had.

"I filmed Sal's birthday video, I was hoping you were Hannah..."

Susan trailed off mid-sentence before shaking her head slowly and said, "... never mind."

Besse was interested in the video but she held back her words.

"Would you like to eat the cake? If you don't want it, you can toss that. Manuel doesn't allow me to eat too many sweets." Susan looked at the cake and said.

She felt sorry for Salem that she failed to bring his mom back.

"Okay." Bessie smiled.

Susan got up to leave. Besse walked her off to the door and said, "Do you need me to walk you to the room?"

It was an instinctive concern for Susan.

Susan looked at her and said, "Apart from Manuel, the only person in the world who was so worried about me was Hannah."

Bessie remained silent.

"If you come to Northfield in the future, remember to come to me. I'm not for your bag or limited edition, I think we can be friends."

Bessie nodded and replied, "Okay."

However, she was not sure whether or not she would come to Northfield again. But she couldn't refuse Susan's kindness.

"I'm leaving. I wish you a pleasant journey tomorrow."

“Thank you, Susan.”

“Goodbye.”

“Goodbye.”

Bessie watched her back, standing at the door. Unexpected tears welled up in her eyes. Only when Susan disappeared in her sight did she close the door.

After she sat down on the sofa again, she gazed straight at the small cake in front of her.

That was the little boy, Salem’s birthday cake.

She put a small piece into her mouth. It tasted good.

Suddenly, she seemed to have a picture of Salem’s birthday party in her mind, with tears falling from her eyes.

Chapter 983 Manuel’s Try

Susan returned to the room and upon seeing Manuel, she burst into tears. Manuel was a little overwhelmed by her tears, and he stepped forward to embrace her. Susan leaned on his chest and cried, almost to the point of losing her breath.

“What’s wrong?” Manuel asked her gently. Susan kept crying without saying a word.

“Don’t cry, Susan.” Manuel wiped her tears and held her as they sat down on the sofa nearby. Susan can’t seem to stop. Tears kept falling uncontrollably. Manuel felt a bit helpless and asked, “What exactly happened? People who don’t know might think your husband is dead.”

“You’re not allowed to die!” Susan became serious and said, “If you dare to die in front of me, I’ll-I’ll beat your body.”

Manuel chuckled and indulged, “Don’t cry anymore. You’re crying so hard that it hurts my heart.”

Susan held back her emotions. Manuel, this man, could be gentle at times and that made her unable to resist.

She sniffed her nose and wiped away her tears haphazardly, saying, “Besse is not Hannah.”

“Didn’t you already prepare yourself mentally a long time ago?”

“I thought I was okay, but when it hits me, it still hurts so much. It’s like... Hannah died all over again.” Susan said, struggling to hold herself together.

“Susan, please, don’t cry, okay? You’re pregnant now.”

Susan tried to control herself since she knew that was not good for the baby.

But just at the thought of things about Besse, she was completely overwhelmed by the desperation inside.

“How can you be sure that Besse is not Hannah?” Manuel asked her as he wiped away her tears.

“She told me that she is not Hannah and that she doesn’t know me or Oscar. I even asked her if she purposely her appearance to avoid Oscar and pretend not to know us, but she denied it. From her expression, I don’t think she was lying to me.”

Manuel fell silent for a few seconds at that moment.

He asked, “Besides these, have you asked her anything else?”

“What other things?” Susan was puzzled.

“Like, her past life. Or... whether anything unexpected has happened to her.” Manuel said tentatively.

“No,” Susan shook her head, her tears blurring as she looked at Manuel, “what’s the point of asking these questions?”

“Not much.” Manuel decided, not wanting to say too much.

He was afraid Susan would be disappointed.

“Come on, go to take a shower and go to bed early.” Said Manuel.

“I don’t want to go, I’m feeling uncomfortable.”

“I’ll help you.”

Susan looked at him with some shock. Then she asked, “Are you gonna do something? The doc said I can’t have sex in three months.”

Manuel ignored her question and picked her up. Susan hastened to clasp his neck.

“Manuel, if you dare to do something, I’ll tell your mom later!” she threatened.

“Don’t worry, I am not interested in a pregnant woman.”

“Who else are you interested in then?” Susan called out.

“...”

Manuel realized that he had made a mistake.

The next morning came early. Besse got up and had breakfast before leaving Northfield with Doyle. She couldn’t describe her feeling last night. Anyway, she had stayed up all night long.

She went to the breakfast room as usual since she was used to having three meals a day. Even though she slept late last night, she still woke up early this morning.

Doyle was a night owl and usually had trouble getting up for breakfast, so Besse didn’t want to wake him up and came alone instead.

She made herself some breakfast at the buffet table and sat down just as a man’s voice rang out, “Can I sit across from you?”

Besse looked up and smiled lightly, “Of course.”

“Thank you.” Manuel sat across from her.

“Where’s your wife?” Besse asked casually.

“She’s still sleeping. I don’t want to wake her from her dreams yet so later on I’ll bring her breakfast back upstairs.” Replied Manuel.

“Mm-hmm.” Besse nodded approvingly. Even though they were strangers, it was clear how well he treated his wife.

“Susan told me that today is your last day here.” Started Manuel conversationally

“My flight is at 11 o’clock this afternoon so after breakfast we have to go straight away.” Answered Besse without hiding anything from him because talking with this couple felt natural enough for her

“She cried herself out last night when she returned home.” Revealed Manuel while smiling indulgently as he spoke of Susan’s emotional state.

“Oh really?” There was some perfunctory tone in Besse’s voice since she was kind of tired now.

“She said that she mistook someone else for her friend,” Manuel murmured while observing every move or action of Besse’s.

He didn’t think it could be Hannah before either since he knew how devastatingly catastrophic that explosion had been. There wasn’t much hope left for anyone surviving such an explosion.

Even if he saw Besse again later when Susan firmly insisted that Besse was Hannah, he always felt that it was not. He even gave Susan a lot of information to dispel her idea, but yesterday when Susan confirmed that Besse was not Hannah, he suddenly felt that the possibility of Besse being Hannah was very high.

Facing her so closely now, Manuel had been more convinced of a sense of familiarity. He shouldn’t have questioned Susan before. After all, Susan and Hannah had known each other for so many years, Susan should be the one who knew Hannah best.

However, Susan was too simple. She believed what others told her easily. So now, she had denied her first idea about Besse’s identity.

“Yes, she mistook me for someone.” Besse continued, “I’m sorry, I let her down.”

Manuel could tell that Besse was not lying.

He asked, “Have you ever had any accidents before?”

Bessie’s brow furrowed slightly, feeling that the man in front of her was much more sophisticated than Susan. She felt a sense of crisis.

“I don’t mean to inquire about your privacy.” He quickly explained, feeling natural that Besse was on guard against him. “I just feel that many things have become increasingly strange, so it could be more than a coincidence.”

“What do you want to say?” Bessie asked bluntly.

“Have you lost your memory?”

Bessie's heart was stunned. Besides her, Doyle and Doyle's mother, there was no one else knowing that she had lost her memory.

Chapter 984 A Sweet Couple

Manuel would speculate so boldly, just because there were too many things that could no longer be explained. The first thing that made him suspicious was that Besse and Doyle slept separately.

According to the information, they had a very good childhood relationship and had been together since the age of 18. However, Jolencami was a country with progressive culture, and it was impossible for the two to maintain a simple boyfriend and girlfriend relationship for so many years. However, when they come out together now, they choose to split up, which might be a problem.

This was where he began to suspect Besse's identity.

Secondly, from today's contact with her, it could be seen that what Besse said to him was not deceiving him, that was to say, Besse did think that she was not Hannah.

Finally, if Besse were Hannah, she would never pretend not to know Oscar. Although that was not the point. More importantly, Hannah couldn't give up her son and her parents.

The only possibility was that Besse was Hannah, but Hannah was currently in a state of amnesia.

She forgot all of them. Although it was a bit incredible, this was the only most reasonable explanation he could think of, to explain why Hannah became Besse and why she turned a blind eye to them.

He looked tightly at Besse sitting across him.

She still remained silent and gave him no answer.

After quite a while, Manuel gave up. If she was Hannah, with her intelligence, even if she lost her memory, she would still be able to discover a lot. However, if she chose to ignore everything, it could only indicate that she didn't want to know. Thus, she didn't give him any response.

Manuel suddenly took out his phone, which caught Besse's attention.

"Let me show you a video." Said Manuel.

On the screen was the scene of Salem's birthday party yesterday. He sent himself the video with Susan's phone.

As Besse saw Salem, her heart suddenly ached.

"I never thought to disturb your life. I just think you should know about your past." Said he.

Besse looked at him and said, "You're so sure, am I the person you're talking about?"

"Actually, I think you should be clearer than us now, otherwise... you wouldn't be in such a hurry to leave."

"I left just because of Doyle." Bessie retorted.

"No, you know best what it's about."

When Besse was about to say something more, MANUEL put away his phone and said, "I'll pack it up and eat with Susan. I'm afraid she'll be lonely when she eats alone."

Besse didn't speak again. She just watched his back.

Silence fell upon her.

She thought Manuel was very good at negotiating. His seemingly gentle words are actually very incisive. She looked out the floor-to-ceiling window at the scenery outside. He was right indeed-she knew best why she agreed to leave Northfield immediately for Doyle.

Manuel returned to the room with breakfast in hand when Susan was still sound asleep.

The woman who cried herself hoarse last night slept better than anyone else. In contrast, he couldn't fall asleep all night long as he kept thinking about whether Besse was Hannah or not. He got up early this morning and started searching for a lot of information, even hacking into Jolencami's confidential network to search for relevant information about Besse, but there wasn't much information available on her profile. Some of them seemed intentionally erased by someone else.

The more it was like this, the more suspicious it seemed. So early in the morning, he deliberately went to "bump into" Besse. Actually, all truths lie within those involved.

Manuel put down breakfast and walked over to Susan's bed.

"Susan," he called out softly.

Susan frowned slightly before turning over again and continuing sleeping.

"Eat first before you sleep again, or you'll get hungry." Manuel said gently.

Susan failed to throw a tantrum because of his charming voice. She lifted off her blanket with an annoyed expression on her face as she looked at him, "I haven't woken up yet."

"I know."

"Then why did you call me?" Susan huffed.

"I'm afraid you'll get hungry."

"But I'm not hungry!"

"But I am."

"If you're hungry then go eat..." But before she could finish speaking, Susan widened her eyes in surprise.

She was almost smothered by Manuel's kiss.

Last night they almost had sex. Fortunately, Manuel held back then.

She feared that he wouldn't be able hold himself back in this early morning.

Susan was right.

Her naughty hands slipped under Manuel's shirt while their tongues intertwined passionately between their lips. Inside the room, the temperature obviously rose, and their breathing became increasingly rapid.

"Okay." Manuel released Susan from his embrace as she clearly remained unsatisfied.

"Are you awake?" Manuel asked her.

"So you only kiss me to wake me up?!" Susan exclaimed angrily.

Manuel was too cunning.

"Not just that," Manuel stated.

Susan looked at him and said, "After all, it's hard for me not to be tempted by you."

Manuel laughed. Susan suddenly felt that her pregnancy was not a test for Manuel, it was a test for her.

"I'll take you to wash up."

Susan did not resist anymore. This kind of drowsy way was too effective for her.

Susan finished washing up and sat down at the dining table in her room to have a meal. Manuel was peeling the eggshells for her. Susan drank milk while staring at his slender fingers, lost in thought.

"What are you looking at?" Manuel noticed Susan's gaze.

"Your hands."

"Does something catch your eyes?" Manuel chuckled a bit.

"That's it, they look good." Susan affirmed.

Being praised, Manuel couldn't help but glance at his own hands, which were slender and fair-skinned.

"Besides, they're very flexible." Susan added.

Manuel pause a bit.

"They're good at peeling eggs." Said she.

Manuel looked startled.

Susan looked at his expression and grinned evilly, "Manuel, did you just have a dirty thought?"

"No," Manuel denied.

When he lied, his ears turned red.

"You must have misunderstood." Susan teased, "Why are you so dirty-minded?!"

"Susan," Manuel said with a serious expression.

Susan really loved Manuel's shy and timid appearance. No matter how many times they did it, and no matter how beastly this man was in bed, as soon as he put on clothes which was a mask for him, Manuel would turn into a frigid gentleman instantly. And that made Susan want to torture him in bed.

Chapter 985 Say Goodbye

When they were flirting with each other, the phone suddenly rang.

Manuel glanced at the incoming call and put it through, "Theodore."

"Besse and Doyle have gone to the airport."

So Besse still chose to leave.

He said, "I see."

"Can it be that you are also in a trance?"

Firstly, it was Oscar who suspected that Besse was Hannah; later, it was Susan; and now it was Manuel.

"No," Manuel denied, saying, "I have something else to do. Got to go."

"Mhm."

Manuel put down his phone, still feeling a bit thoughtful. Susan scrutinized him and asked, "What did Theodore call you for? He didn't want you to cheat, did he?"

Susan thought perhaps pregnancy was a perfect time for men to cheat on their wives.

"I asked Theodore to help me keep an eye on Besse."

"Why did you pay attention to her? Didn't you look disdainful towards me? Didn't you say that she couldn't be Hannah?" Susan was a little excited.

Manuel didn't tell her that he went to see Besse this morning.

"But it's no use doubting now. I confirmed it last night. They were not the same person. You realized it was too late." Said Susan.

Manuel echoed with her but he was thinking about Besse's, or Hannah's decision. He was hesitant about probing into Besse's identity.

At the Capital International Airport, Besse and Doyle arrived at the airport where assistants helped them check-in for their flight while holding hands together.

"Are you angry?" Doyle suddenly asked when noticing how distracted Besse had been throughout their journey here.

Besse snapped out of her thoughts and forced a smile, "No."

"When we get back home, let's go travel again." Doyle suggested optimistically as they waited nearby for their boarding announcement.

"What about next season's new products?" Besse teased him.

“It won’t be missed by just one or two days.” Doyle shrugged nonchalantly before adding, “It takes more than just one or two days for inspiration anyway.”

“Can you generate an idea in a day or two? We should a few days off when we’re back , and we should focus on the work then.” Said Besse.

“You love your work even more than me.” Doyle complained.

She sighed afterwards, as she felt everything else besides design seemed unfamiliar lately, causing an indescribable fear within herself like she didn’t belong in this world anymore. And so, she always went to do things she was familiar with.

She said, “I don’t want to be scolded by your mother every time.”

“She’s just too strict. You see how she always pushes us for new design ideas, but we never drop the ball. She’s just worrying for no reason.”

“If she didn’t push you, maybe you would drop the ball.”

“Am I that unreliable?” Doyle was angry.

Besse smiled and said, “No, of course not.”

Actually, he wasn’t at all. Doyle took his work seriously and was completely responsible. He wasn’t a playboy who didn’t care about anything.

“Boss, all the paperwork is done.” An assistant came over respectfully and said.

Doyle nodded slightly and took Besse’s hand as they walked towards first class security check-in area together. After they finished security check-in procedures together, Besse looked outside for a moment before leaving. They were leaving now; there was an indescribable sense of oppression in her heart that made her feel uncomfortable.

Suddenly she saw someone familiar from afar, who was wearing a duckbill cap and mask while holding onto a little boy named Salem. It must be Oscar. Susan had told her about him before.

Their eyes met briefly.

Her heart trembled inexplicably.

She had always thought that she only had special feelings towards Salem, but after spending some time with Oscar on several occasions, it seemed like something special might have developed between them.

“Besse?” Doyle walked a few steps ahead of her and noticed that Besse hadn’t caught up yet.

Besse snapped out of it quickly, hiding any hint of tears in her eyes behind an excuse, “Just thinking about some new product inspiration I got earlier.”

“What kind of inspiration?” asked Doyle curiously as he held onto Besse’s hand tightly.

They walked away from Oscar’s sight.

He failed to say goodbye to her in the end. Perhaps, he just didn't dare to walk over to her, since he had been there for long. At this moment, Oscar thought she might be happier when she was with Doyle.

"Dad?" Salem called out to his father. He didn't understand why Oscar would take him out of the house without Una. Although Una was taking a piano lesson now, he still didn't understand, let alone why he was brought to the airport. He was wondering whether his father would take him to the plane.

At that moment, he saw that beautiful lady in the distance.

In fact, he had found that his father's eyes had been looking at her, but Oscar did not come close to her as if he was afraid of being found by her. Until she went to the security check, Oscar took him in his arms and moved closer.

Oscar had been silent, with his eyes fixed on that lady all the time. Even though she finally saw them, Oscar still remained silent.

Now she had gone, and his dad was still standing there, motionless.

Salem couldn't help calling him.

"Wave your hand, Sal." Said Oscar.

Wave your hand to wish your mom a pleasant journey and all was well.

Salem don't understand, but still waved his arms, as if he was saying goodbye to someone.

"Dad?" Ann waved for a long while.

"Mhm."

Then they turned around and left.

Besse and Doyle were waiting inside a VIP room at the airport. They were killing time with their smart phones.

Besse's mind was all about Oscar and Salem, who were outside there looking at them a moment ago. She couldn't forget Oscar's eyes, with a great sense of loneliness in there eyes.

For a second, she even had an illusion that she had abandoned that man in a cruel way.

And she remembered what Manuel had told her before.

She should learn about her past, not Bessie's past, but Hannah's past.

Besse looked back at Doyle. She was wondering whether Doyle would lie to her.

Chapter 986 Expose Plagiarism

Doyle instantly felt Besse's gaze on him. He turned to her and asked, "What's up?"

Besse's eyes flickered.

"Another burst of inspiration?" Doyle joked.

Despite his sometimes bad temper, the sincerity in his expression and the simplicity of a big boy still made her believe that Doyle was not lying to her.

She said, "No, I just wanted to ask how much longer until we board?"

Doyle looked down at his watch. "About ten minutes. Are you bored? Do you want me to sing you a song?"

Besse smiled slightly.

She knew that Doyle's kindness towards her was genuine and not fake. She shouldn't let other people influence her doubts about him. Besides, deep down inside she didn't want to know the so-called "truth."

"I'm tone-deaf so don't poison my ears with your singing," Besse declined.

"You actually hate my singing? Believe it or not, when I get back to Keelung Cami I'll learn how to sing on pitch," Doyle said angrily.

Besse thought he could really do it if he wanted to.

"I don't hate it! It's just too quiet here and I'm afraid of disturbing others," Besse surrendered.

Doyle smiled brightly. "That makes sense."

So how could such a straightforward man deceive her? How could he lie seamlessly? Perhaps she was overthinking things again...

As she turned back towards her phone, it suddenly rang.

She answered the call from their assistant Lu Se who informed them of some bad news: The Angel collection haute couture show they were going to release in Karami had been accused of plagiarism. Besse's face visibly changed.

"What happened?" asked an anxious Doyle.

But before Besse could say anything else, Doyle snatched the phone from her hand and began asking for more details about what had happened.

Doyle naturally believed in Besse unconditionally when it came design talent; he knew very well that after waking up from the car accident she became even more talented than before – almost like knocking some sense into herself! Of course this kind of thing made him feel amazed but also terrified at once – after all experiencing something like this once would be enough for anyone's sanity!

Doyle hung up the phone in anger and opened the news on his mobile. As soon as he entered, he saw that the news had instantly made headlines with the title, "Designer Besse's 'Angel' collection steals the show, suspected of plagiarism." He clicked on the article and saw a few comparison photos. On the left were Besse's works, and on the right was a designer named "Phantom's" work. Although there were differences in detail handling between both works, their similarities could be seen at first glance.

The work by "Phantom" had been published eight years ago in a fashion magazine from Northfield but hadn't caused any sensation at that time since aesthetic standards weren't as high back then. Therefore

it went unnoticed and wasn't given much attention later when this designer didn't produce anything outstanding either.

Now suddenly brought to light again, it caused an uproar immediately. It wasn't unreasonable for Northfield media to exaggerate its coverage to protect its country's design copyright since Besse launched her "Angel" collection first in Northfield while being accused of copying another local designer.

Besse hadn't thought deeply about it yet when her phone rang unexpectedly. She looked at who was calling before answering, "Luther."

"Miss Besse, I've received calls from global media magazines all asking about your plagiarism issue; I managed to dodge them all so far but now there is another hotline call... What should we do?"

"You shut down your phone for now."

"Yes," Luther replied hastily before hanging up.

Someone else called during their conversation too; after hanging up with Luther she dialed back, "Hello?"

"Besse what is going on? How come your work looks so similar to Northfield Designer? All our pre-ordered 'Angel' collections clients want an explanation or they will send us legal letters demanding compensation." The director of operations called her asking about what happened.

"I don't know what's going on either; I just received notice myself."

"You have got to solve this problem quickly! Otherwise we can't explain things clearly enough for our clients – not only Angel series but also all other series you designed are affected by this incident! In just such a short period of time we've already cancelled fifty orders related to your designs!"

"Okay," Besse agreed.

She hung up the phone and looked at Doyle.

Doyle had also answered countless calls by now.

But this one made him stand up and walk away.

Besse didn't need to think twice about who it was from.

It was Doyle's mother, Queen Carol.

Doyle only listened to her, even though they seemed to be arguing right now.

Besse knew that Doyle was probably explaining things to her on the phone, but they both had their own opinions and ways of handling things, which led to arguments that lasted a long time.

Finally, Doyle hung up the phone and angrily stomped his foot on the ground.

"What's wrong?" Besse asked as she approached him. She smiled in an attempt to comfort him.

"I'm so angry," replied Doyle with obvious frustration in his voice.

"Who made you angry?" Besse laughed a little bit more as she tried calming him down.

“You can still laugh? Don’t you see how everyone is talking about you outside right now?”

“But you believe me,” Besse smiled back at him confidently.

Doyle felt something stir inside of him when he looked into her eyes again: “I believe in you.”

“That’s enough for me,” nodded Besse with satisfaction.

“The problem is my mother doesn’t believe in you!” exclaimed Doyle furiously once again: “After all these years of knowing how talented you are!”

Besse couldn’t help feeling some emotional turmoil herself over this situation too.

Other people might not trust her abilities but she thought that both Doyle and Queen Carol should have faith in her work.

“How did the queen react?” asked Besse curiously.

“She said that although there may be similarities between designs sometimes due to coincidence or inspiration, it’s almost impossible for two designs like yours and ‘Phantom’ to be so similar unless it was plagiarism.”

Besse pursed her lips together tightly; deep down inside she knew that Queen Carol wasn’t entirely wrong either because after all these years working within design circles herself – such coincidences were rare without plagiarism being involved somewhere along the line!

But no matter what anyone said – she hadn’t plagiarized anything! It would have been foolish for anyone who knows anything about design principles or ethics – let alone someone like herself who has worked hard building their reputation over time -to do something so stupid!

“She didn’t say outrightly accuse me of plagiarism though,” added Doyle quickly noticing how upset his girlfriend had become: “She just suggested maybe subconsciously seeing ‘Phantom’ before could have influenced your work without realizing it.”

Chapter 987 Besse chooses to stay alone

Besse knew what Queen Carol meant. She wanted her to admit to the plagiarism in front of the media but in a clever way. For example, she could say that she had seen it before but didn’t pay much attention to it until she designed something similar herself.

“I haven’t seen it,” Besse told Doyle seriously.

She was sure that if she had seen the design before, she would remember it. And there was no way she would borrow someone else’s design. If she had seen it before, then why would her design be so similar?

“I know,” Doyle nodded quickly. “I believe you too. But maybe...”

Doyle hesitated.

Besse looked at him.

“Maybe because of your amnesia... after all, this is an eight-year-old design and you may not remember whether you’ve seen it or not.”

“If I can’t remember anything from my past, why would I remember this particular design?” Besse asked rhetorically.

“Maybe subconsciously...” Doyle looked at her.

Besse stared back at him.

“Forget about it.” Doyle suddenly gave up. “You’re right. Since you don’t remember anything from your past, there’s no way you could have remembered this particular design either. Let’s go back to Jolencami first and talk more when we get there.”

“Doyle, I don’t want to leave.” Besse suddenly spoke up.

Doyle’s expression changed visibly.

“I don’t want to go back until we figure things out.”

“Besse, you promised me that we’d leave together.” Doyle couldn’t hide his emotions anymore.

“Before all of this happened, yes! But now that something has happened like this, I need to understand everything first.” Besse said firmly. “You were right earlier, maybe something subconscious from eight years ago made me think of a similar idea and caused me unintentionally plagiarize someone else’s work. If that is indeed the case then I will apologize!”

“Besse...”

At that moment airport staff came over, “Mr George, Miss Besse, please board now.”

Doyle nodded and grabbed hold of Besse’s hand, “I’ll help investigate everything for you; let’s go home for now though. Staying here won’t do any good as people here won’t understand nor care about your past experiences or who you are as a person.”

“Doyle! You know what kind of person I am. I can’t leave like nothing ever happened. Karami will be ruined if we just abandon our market stall in Northfield!”

“I won’t.” Doyle said slowly, “Our brand has its influence, and it won’t disappear just because of you. Besides, your designs are not limited to the Angel series. There are many other series that are better than Angel. They won’t overlook them.”

“Is that from a business perspective or a political one?! Will Northfield ban our brand’s sales in Northfield for the sake of their rights?”

“No way.” Doyle firmly stated, “Northfield is eager to establish commercial trade with Jolencami. If they ban our brand, they will cut off our trade route. I believe Northfield wouldn’t make such a mistake.”

“Even so, I have already hurt our brand now. My assistant’s phone has been ringing non-stop and the operations department is also notifying me that my situation has affected Karami’s sales as a whole. At least, it’s serious now! I don’t want to be a stain on Karami.”

“So staying here will solve the problem?” Doyle asked her,” After investigating thoroughly and finding out that the Angel series was indeed an original creation by ‘Phantom’, can you change anything? Except for apologizing to the original author before doing anything else, there is nothing we can do right now. We should go back and think about how to minimize this impact.”

“If I am suspected of plagiarism, I will announce my withdrawal from Karami,” Besse said word by word.

Doyle paused.

Obviously, there were some emotional fluctuations.

“Besse, it’s not your fault. You don’t have to shoulder all responsibility yourself; besides, my mother didn’t blame you either, she just hopes we can resolve this matter perfectly.” He said calmly.

“Doyle, I know you’re good to me. I also know what you’re thinking, but I want to stay here, I think dealing with what happened in Northfield while being in Northfield would be best.” Besse refused stubbornly.

Of course, Doyle knew what she meant. Besse’s staying would show sincerity in clarifying things and personally apologizing to the author in Northfield, which would have better public relations effects externally. But he didn’t want her here. One reason was that she had become abnormal since coming to Northfield, and another reason was his concern about her facing verbal abuse while being in Northfield. However, Besse insisted.

Doyle took a deep breath He said, “Okay, I’ll stay with you.”

Besse’s personality was also very clear to him. She didn’t want to involve anyone. Even less did she want to cause harm to others because of herself. So since he couldn’t change her decision, he could only choose to support her.

“Doyle, you go back first.” Besse was very serious.

Doyle’s face visibly changed. He might have been a little frustrated just now. But now he was furious. “How could I let you stay here alone?”

“Listen to me,” Besse anticipated Doyle would be very excited. “First, this matter is just a simple confirmation and not complicated at all. I can handle it on my own. Secondly, this matter involves designer plagiarism. You are also a designer and I don’t want the conflict involved in your original design work dragging you down as well. Plagiarism is the biggest scandal for designers regarding original design work; I don’t want it affecting you...”

“Besse.”

“Let me finish,” Besse interrupted him. “Lastly and most importantly, Karami is currently in turmoil because of my situation. Your mother has been accompanying your father on external interviews during this time and doesn’t have the energy or resources to deal with internal issues within the group right now, you must return home and stabilize things.”

Doyle seemed hesitant at this point.

“So far, this plagiarism incident should be Karami’s first major negative event in such a long time; the group doesn’t have strong PR capabilities, even if what you said earlier about market brand influence, and there are many objective factors that won’t affect Karami too much politically hold true, but have you considered competitors? When they encounter such good opportunities, will they not take advantage?” Besse spoke logically,” Doyle, this isn’t an emotional moment right now. And, I promise that I will take care of myself so that you won’t worry.”

Chapter 988 “Hero Time”

Doyle was ultimately persuaded by Besse. When he left, he repeatedly reminded her to take good care of herself, not to force herself and not to solve anything that she couldn’t handle. He promised to come back as soon as he finished dealing with the group’s affairs. Besse nodded and saw Doyle off.

After Doyle left, Besse also left the airport on her way back to the hotel. However, a group of reporters suddenly rushed towards her just as she stepped out of the airport. Her eyes narrowed at how well-informed they were about her whereabouts.

She was instantly surrounded by them.

“Miss Besse, do you have anything you want to say about plagiarizing designer Phantom’s work?”

“Miss Besse, will Karami directly remove the Angel series from their shelves?”

“Miss Besse, did you ever think that your plagiarism would be exposed when copying Phantom’s work?”

Countless questions drowned out Besse.

She looked coldly at the excited reporters in front of her for a long time before one asked again, “Miss Besse, can you please answer our questions?”

“How can I answer all your questions when all you do is talk nonsense?!” Besse snapped back with an irritated and overwhelmed-looking.

The reporters were taken aback and looked at each other before falling silent.

Besse continued speaking, “Firstly regarding my Angel series being accused of plagiarism from Phantom’s, I admit there are many similarities between our works but the Angel series is indeed my design. I am also puzzled why our works are so similar...”

“Are you really puzzled or just trying to cover up?” interrupted another reporter rudely.

“I stayed in Northfield after this incident because I wanted to find out what happened.” Continued Besse.

“You stayed because maybe it’s just a threat against Phantom since Phantom is still an unknown small designer while someone like yourself who is already famous does not need such petty competition.” Said another reporter smugly.

“If Phantom isn’t capable enough then doesn’t Northfield have any capability either?” retorted Besse.

“On your turf here in Northfield, what else could I possibly do to bully Phantom?!”

“What are your plans now that you’ve decided to stay behind?” asked yet another reporter.

"If it is indeed my fault, I will apologize and may even resign from my job at Karami. But if it's not my fault, of course, I will fight for my rights."

"Phantom's work was from 8 years ago, and you released your work recently. What else needs to be said?" The journalist sneered.

"So you've already decided that I plagiarized? What's the point of me saying anything now?" Besse spoke slowly and with great force.

The journalist was left speechless by her response.

"Excuse me!" Besse didn't want to waste any more time with the journalists; it was clear they wouldn't understand her.

But the journalists weren't going to let her go so easily. They blocked her path and continued to provoke her, "Miss Besse, are you feeling ashamed? As an internationally renowned designer, this scandal has damaged your reputation."

"You just said that you would voluntarily resign from Karami. Is that voluntary or were you fired by them? You're just trying to save face!"

"Karami has suffered significant losses because of you. They can't just let this go without holding someone responsible."

"Are you still in Northfield because Karami no longer accepts you..."

Besse was truly annoyed with the journalists. They purposely looked for contradictions to make their news more sensational. She looked at the reporters who had surrounded her and demanded, "Move aside!"

"Miss Besse, please answer our questions."

"Is there no law in Northfield anymore?" Her eyes narrowed as she spoke sharply. "Can I sue all of you for violating my human rights?"

"We just want to know the truth about what happened." One reporter replied defensively.

"That's something for the police to investigate. When did it become your job?"

The reporters were starting to feel uneasy under her intense gaze.

"One last time, move aside!" Her eyes turned cold as she emitted an aura that made people shiver.

In reality, even though they were reporters who weren't afraid of much, they never expected a foreigner like Besse could be so bold on their turf.

Despite being deadlocked like this, neither side wanted back down. The journalists felt somewhat indignant.

How could a foreigner be so arrogant on their territory?

Besse waited for two minutes. Seeing that the reporters in front of her showed no sign of backing down, she picked up her phone to call the police. Just as she was about to take action, someone suddenly pushed the reporters away.

The reporter was caught off guard and Besse was also surprised. She watched as a man wearing a duckbill cap and a mask appeared in front of her and took her hand, pulling her away from the reporters.

The reporters were stunned by his strong presence. He was not someone they wanted to mess with. They watched as he led Besse into a black car and drove off.

Once inside the car, Besse shook off Oscar's hand. She knew it was Oscar Wells; no one else had that kind of aura.

"How am I supposed to deal with this? The reporters will write all sorts of things about me if you take me away like this, Mr Commander!" Besse asked him sternly.

She had just seen him push aside the reporters who almost fell over in shock. Anyone looking for an angle could easily spin it so that it looked like she hired people to attack the journalists.

Oscar looked at Besse and saw how angry she was trying hard to suppress it all inside herself. He took off his hat and mask, thinking maybe she didn't recognize him, just like she didn't recognize him last time at the amusement park.

"Are you doing this on purpose just because I'm discrediting a designer of your country? Can't you stop being so sneaky?" Besse said sarcastically.

She couldn't help but feel angry after being exposed for plagiarism; she had been suppressing her anger until now even when confronted by journalists earlier today. But facing Oscar right now made everything boil over uncontrollably within herself.

"No." Said Oscar.

"What do you mean?"

"I won't let them report anything," Oscar said while staring at her eyes. His words were low but resolute, "I won't let them report anything."

Chapter 989 Besse Stays at Oscar's Place

Besse was stunned by his gaze. It was so sincere and determined that she felt like she shouldn't question it. She pursed her lips and chose to remain silent at that moment. She couldn't help but direct her anger towards Oscar.

But at that moment, Oscar was helping her out of the situation. Besse suddenly fell silent while Oscar spoke up, saying, "I will give you a satisfactory answer to this matter."

Besse was surprised by his offer, "You'll give me an answer?"

"I have a responsibility to investigate what happened in Northfield." Replied Oscar.

"It's not necessary." Besse refused directly. "It's just a small matter. Mr Commander, you don't need to handle it personally. I can take care of it myself."

Oscar looked at Besse as she refused without hesitation.

"I hope you don't get involved in this matter at all." Continued Besse firmly. "I don't want anyone to be forced into submission because of your power or influence."

"I believe you didn't plagiarize..."

"I know Mr Commander wants to talk about trade exports with Jolencami, but everything has its limits. I hope you won't cross the line for personal gain."

Besse thought that Oscar helped her only because he wanted Jolencami's cooperation on trade exports.

Oscar kept looking at Besse with his eyes fixed on hers, while Salem sat quietly beside them throughout their conversation without interrupting them even once.

"Could you please drop me off at my hotel?" asked Besse.

"Sure thing." Nodded Oscar before turning towards the driver and instructing him politely, "Take us back to the hotel."

The car ride became quiet again after their brief exchange of words until Oscar spoke up again, "Sal."

Oscar knew Salem was embarrassed while being ignored during their conversation.

"Dad?"

At this point, even Besse shifted her attention towards Salem who had been sitting there silently all along since they got into the car together earlier today. The boy's voice made her somewhat regret what she had said a few moments ago-Besse was afraid that what she had said to his dad when she was in a temper would have made Salem uneasy.

"Is there going to be an arts festival happening next week?" asked Oscar.

"Yes, Una and I have shows planned. Una will play the piano so she's been practising these days, and I'll have a poetry slam."

"Are parents invited to attend?"

"Yes," Salem nodded. "But if you are busy, you don't have to come."

Salem's maturity touched Oscar's heart. Not just Oscar, but even Besse felt a bit guilty listening in on their conversation.

"I'm not busy. I'll attend." Oscar assured him.

"Really?" Salem's eyes lit up with excitement. He didn't want to trouble the adults by asking them to come, but he was secretly thrilled that his dad would be there for him.

"I'll tell Una when we get home. She'll be so happy!" Salem couldn't contain his joy any longer.

“Okay.” Oscar smiled at him as they continued chatting in the car. Their conversation helped ease some of the tension in the vehicle as they arrived at their hotel.

Besse opened her door and was about to step out when Oscar grabbed her hand suddenly. She furrowed her brows slightly at his touch before he quickly let go and apologized for startling her.

“There are reporters outside.” He explained himself before Besse noticed them herself.

Groups of journalists were waiting outside for her arrival with cameras ready and microphones poised for questions.

Besse visibly paled at the sight of them all waiting there just for her attention.

“Do you want me to find another hotel?” asked he.

Besse nodded. Anything would be better than being hounded by these reporters all night long.

The driver took them away from this hotel towards another one nearby.

As soon as they arrived though, people started recognizing Besse immediately again, taking pictures and whispering things behind their backs. They appeared to be so indignant. She tried ignoring it all while checking into this new place.

The employee saw who she was and then said rudely, “I’m sorry, miss, but we’re fully booked tonight.”

Besse frowned deeply after hearing this news since it seemed strange that such a large hotel wouldn’t have any rooms available right now especially since it wasn’t peak season yet either.

“What about other rooms besides the presidential suites?”

“All our other rooms are full too, unfortunately...”

Besse looked at the staff.

The staff appeared very respectful, “We apologize for bringing you a bad experience.”

Besse took back her ID without saying anything and turned to leave.

She walked out of the hotel lobby and saw the black car was still there. Besse didn’t want to get in the car, but then she saw the driver get out and walk over. “Miss Besse, please get in the car.”

Besse hesitated for a moment but ultimately got in.

“What’s wrong?” Oscar asked.

“There are no more rooms available. Can you take me to another hotel?” Besse replied.

“Alright.” Replied Oscar, incredulous.

The car arrived at another hotel soon after.

Besse got out of the car to check in but was told that there were no more rooms available after presenting her ID card. Of course, Besse knew that it wasn’t because there weren’t any rooms left; it

was because Northfield had boycotted her under media pressure. She turned around and left the hotel again.

The black cars were still waiting outside.

She got back into one of them.

“Still no room?”

Besse remained silent; she felt like Oscar’s intelligence wouldn’t allow him not to know what was going on with her situation.

“If you don’t mind staying with me for a while.” Oscar suddenly spoke up.

He was nervous about asking this question. His fingers trembled unconsciously as he tried his best to remain calm. Besse turned around and looked at him. Oscar continued speaking, “I’m not incapable of getting you into a hotel room right now, but due to media influence, if I do so then it could have negative consequences on their reputation...”

“Okay.” Besse agreed without hesitation.

Oscar’s heart skipped several beats. He had been trying his best to stay calm all along without showing any signs of abnormality or excitement whatsoever; he simply told his driver, “Let’s go back home.”

“Yes.”

As they drove away from the scene, Besse turned her head to the other side to avert her face. She understood, sometimes, she had to yield though she didn’t intend to.

Chapter 990 A “Troublesome” Kid

The car arrived at Oscar’s castle. The castle was heavily guarded. Undoubtedly, this was the least likely place for Besse to be disturbed. It was for this reason that she agreed to stay with Oscar.

She realized that she might have been too bold, as Northfield Commander’s home was not a place where ordinary people could easily live in. But since she had come here, she decided to make the best of it.

“Commander,” Max greeted Oscar in the hall when they arrived. At that moment, he looked surprised when he saw Besse.

“Max, please arrange a room for Miss Besse to stay for a few days,” Oscar instructed him respectfully.

“Yes,” With that said, Max left the hall.

“You can sit down and wait for a while,” Oscar said to Besse as they walked towards the sofa. She nodded and sat down while he took his seat at some distance from her on another sofa nearby.

Besse frowned slightly but didn’t say anything about it. Perhaps because of her previous rejection of him, Oscar seemed very careful and deliberately kept his distance from her, which suited her just fine.

After sitting down on the sofa, Oscar turned on the TV and placed the remote control in front of Besse.

“You can choose the channel you like, I’ll go change my clothes.”

“Thank you.” She smiled politely.

Oscar then left with Salem by his side without showing any emotions or reactions whatsoever.

Besse saw them leave and she started reading the news on her phone. Those contents were going out of control. But she found nothing about Oscar and her presence at the airport earlier. Indeed, Oscar didn't have an intention, and nor did the media dare to spin him.

Meanwhile, Oscar started calming down only when he went into his room. He had been nervous since Besse agreed with his suggestion, afraid that she would regret it abruptly. Oscar even thought that was the longest journey he had ever had in his whole life, from the hotel to the castle, during which he was overwhelmed by worry, fear and torture, though she had never gone back on her words.

“Dad?” Salem felt surprised to see Oscar being numbed like this.

He remembered what his dad had been on the television-always calm and confident, no matter how big an occasion might be. He had never looked so lost as now.

Oscar snapped out of his thoughts and said to Salem, “Go take a shower.”

“Right now?” Salem was a bit confused.

“We just went out and sweated a bit. We're dirty.” Oscar explained.

Salem sniffed his clothes. “I don't smell anything.”

“Just listen to me.” Oscar insisted.

“Okay.” Salem obediently nodded. “Then I'll go back to my room and take a shower.”

“I'll go with you,” Oscar added.

“Together?” Salem was surprised. He had always been bathed by Max since he was young, so it was unexpected for Oscar to suggest they bathe together.

“Take off your clothes.” Without giving Salem any chance to change his mind, Oscar walked straight into the bathroom.

Salem felt both flattered and surprised but followed his dad into the bathroom anyway. They took a quick bath together, but Salem didn't know how his dad managed to wash him so fast; there seemed like an urgency in their actions that he couldn't quite put his finger on.

Afterwards, Oscar roughly dried off Salem's hair before letting him change into clean home clothes

Salem returned to the living room, where Besse noticed him walking in her direction, she couldn't help but laugh.

Salem's hair looked like a dandelion flower. It was completely different from how he usually looked-neat, elegant, and refined-instead, having this messy look that only children could have when they were playing around without caring about appearances whatsoever.

“You took a shower?” Besse asked through giggles at seeing such an unusual sight before her eyes now.

“My dad said I’m dirty,” replied Salem with obvious frustration.

“He must be a germophobe,” Besse commented between laughs.

“Germophobe?”

“That means he’s very clean, he would take a shower and change his clothes as long as he comes back from outside because he thought that there are germs outside. And he cleans himself and the house a lot.” Besse explained patiently.

“Not really...” countered Salem.

Besse was surprised.

“He sometimes comes home drunk without washing up first and goes to bed, he reeks of alcohol when I come into his room.”

Besse felt a bit embarrassed and said, “People won’t be sober enough to take a shower when they get drunk.”

“But sometimes when he doesn’t drink, he comes home and goes to bed directly without taking off his clothes and socks. One time Uncle Theodore told me that my dad hadn’t taken a bath or washed his hair for three days straight.”

Besse couldn’t help but burst out laughing again at hearing all these stories.

At this moment, Oscar appeared in the living room wearing clean home clothes. He heard how Salem described him.

Oscar coughed nervously. Salem turned around and saw his father, a little startled. He was just telling the truth and seemed to have upset his father.

Oscar cleared his throat and pretended not to care. He was trying to explain himself. “I’m too tired after work, so I’ll lie down for a while. After resting for a bit, I’ll take a shower. And that time when I didn’t shower for three days was because I worked overtime for three days straight and didn’t have time to wash up. When I got back from work, the first thing I did was clean myself.”

Besse found it amusing. She just let it go in one ear and out the other; she wouldn’t take it to heart. But Oscar took her seriously and made her feel embarrassed by explaining himself so earnestly.

She looked at Salem and said, “Salem come here, let me fix your hair.”

Salem walked over. For some reason, he never wanted to get close to others normally but when Besse called him over he couldn’t refuse. Besse smelled the nice scent of body wash on him, “You smell good.”

“Really?” Salem lowered his head again to smell himself, “I used my dad’s body wash.”

“Hmm... it smells great.” Besse nodded approvingly.

She carefully fixed Salem’s messy hair while he stood obediently in front of her.

Oscar watched all of this happening before his eyes, how gentle Besse looked as she smiled at Salem with such tenderness. Something that had never happened before in his life suddenly appeared right before him without warning.