

Royal Contract 1061

Chapter 1061 A big fat NO

She felt her world spin around her. Then, there was only darkness. The next time she opened her eyes, she was lying on a bed with curtains surrounding her.

She was alone.

She blinked her eyes, adjusting them to the bright light as she recalled what had happened to her. She could tell she was in the hospital by the look, sound, and smell of the antiseptic around her.

But why was she there again? She recalled attending her appointment with the doctor regarding her pregnancy. But how did she end up lying in this bed?

She was still trying to figure it out as she focused her eyes on the people behind the curtains. Everybody seemed busy minding their business until someone entered her tiny cubicle.

"Mike?" She had to close her eyes as she tried to figure out why he was there. Then, it all came crashing down.

The memories pushed through the forefront of her mind. She finally remembered the scene on the lobby floor. She heard something happened to Gerald. But was it real?

"How are you feeling?" Mike asked her as he walked over to the side of her bed. He stood beside her with concern in his eyes.

She looked at him as questions formed inside her head, but she could not seem to voice them out, not wanting them to be true. But staring at his face, her fear only grew.

.....

Quickly, she shifted in the bed, scrambling to stand up. "I am fine. I have to see Gerald." She told him. She did not want to believe what she had heard unless she saw it with her eyes. It must be a mistake.

"No!" Mike stopped her. "You are not going anywhere." He placed his hands on her shoulders, preventing her from slipping out of bed.

"Not until you have some rest. You collapsed on the lobby floor and bumped your head on the counter. You sustained a mild concussion." He explained, making her move her hands on her forehead to feel the bandage plastered on her skin.

"The doctor said you should not be moving around." He continued to tell her as she finally felt the pain and realized it was the source of her mild dizziness.

"But I need to see Gerald." She told him as tears welled up in her eyes. The reality was finally sinking in as she stared into his eyes. "Tell me that it is not true."

She remembered what she heard, but it could be a figment of her imagination. She could be confused by her pregnancy, the hormone imbalance, and everything the doctor said about her condition. She could have made a mistake.

However, the look he gave her almost crashed her heart to pieces. It seemed to confirm her fear. Mike did not even need to tell her in words what he had already expressed on his face.

"No..." She had no other words as the full impact of what she discovered hit her hard. "You are lying." The denial was evident in her words. "You are mistaken."

She wanted him to tell her that she was wrong. Her assumptions were incorrect. Gerald was not even here in the first place. She heard a different name, and it was not his.

But the following words he said confirmed her most dreadful fear. "I am sorry, Haley." He grabbed her hands and squeezed them firmly, allowing the warmth of his skin to transfer into her cold, trembling fingers.

"Sorry for what..." She did not understand. She left him in his apartment last night. What happened afterward?

"How did he..." She could not even finish the question. But she had to know because she could not understand.

She pulled out of his hold and grabbed Mike on his shirt. "How? It just did not make sense." He was not sick. Was it an accident? Or did someone hurt him? No, not hurt him, but she finally burst into tears as the pain engulfed her.

He pulled her into his body, cradling her into his chest. But it was not enough to appease her. Mike was not Gerald. He was not the man she needed by her side.

Then, the thought that she would never have the chance to see him again. The possibility of them getting back together or at least for him to know their child had died with him.

"Gerald is not dead." She continued, but Mike kept his mouth shut as he comforted her.

"Tell me that is not true." She started drumming her fist into his chest, willing him to tell her otherwise. She could not accept it. "You are lying." She shouted as tears flooded her eyes. "Gerald is not dead." She kept repeating as she became hysterical.

Then, the hospital staff came charging into her small space, crowding around her. She felt her body push back to the bed as they injected something into her skin.

"No..." She wanted to shout when she realized what was happening, but her mind turned fuzzy as her vision faded until the darkness swallowed her.

She wanted to shout that she had to protect her baby, but nobody heard her. She was afraid they were hurting her unborn child, but she lost consciousness before she could utter anything else.

She had already lost the man that she loved. She could not lose the only thing he left behind that would remind her of the time that they shared. It did not matter what he said and what happened.

She would always believe that he loved her. Their child was a product of love and not just an affair. That what they had was real. She suddenly regretted saying that she did not want him to marry her. Because, in her heart, that was all she ever wanted.

Now, it was too late for her. The man she loved was dead, and she had no way to say all these things to him anymore. She could not turn back the clock.

She would never see him smile again.

She would never talk to him.

She could never tell him how much she loved him.

She had lost him for good.

Did she even want to live without him? She realized the answer had to be a big fat NO.

Chapter 1062 Not coming back alive

She could hear voices and noises around her but not as loud and chaotic as before. This time, she was aware of what was happening even if she maintained her eyes closed.

Her mind replayed the earlier events, forcing her to accept that it was a fact and not just a dream. But her heart refused the horrible idea that she would not see Gerald again. It was just too painful.

But she tried to calm herself down, reminding herself she had no right to be selfish. She might be hurting, but her child did not have to suffer the same fate. She had to think of what was best for her child and not her. She did promise to prioritize her welfare over anything else.

"Hey, Haley," She heard his voice again, but not the man she wished to see. But having no choice, she finally opened her eyes and stared at the man who was the bearer of the horrible news.

Still, she had to face him. She had to be strong and find out what had caused Gerald's death. Then, she would have to decide what to do with her life and their child. Somehow, she had to move on from this.

It would probably feel impossible now, but for her child, she would make it possible. Because deep in her heart, this was what Gerald would want. He would wish her to move on and take care of their unborn child.

"Mike," Haley acknowledged his presence as she attempted to move her hands. Thankfully, her fingers easily bent, forming a fist. Then, she wiggled her toes while her hands instinctively moved to her belly, feeling if there was pain or something wrong with it.

So far, her body seemed to function normally, and she was in no physical pain except for her heart. But that was different. The doctors could not cure her broken heart even if they tried.

"Are you ok now?" He seemed alarmed by her condition. "How are you feeling?" He stayed at the side of the bed, standing, but he did not attempt to touch her again.

.....

"I am calm if that is what you are asking." She remembered that she had been hysterical, causing her voice to be slightly hoarse.

"I am sorry if they had to sedate you, but the doctors are afraid you might hurt yourself." He explained, but she understood her situation.

She had no plan to react that way again, not when her baby would be in danger with her carelessness. She decided that she had to focus on her baby now because he had left them.

She could not do anything about him, but she still could give their child a life and a better future than what she and Gerald had. She could still give their child a chance to be happy, even if she had to raise her child alone.

"That is ok." She told him as she pushed herself into a sitting position. Automatically, he assisted her, putting pillows behind her back to support her.

"Tell me how else I can help you." Mike offered as he stayed standing by her side. "Gerald was like a brother to me. And it breaks my heart to lose him in this way." He looked down as if he did not want her to see his eyes.

Maybe he was afraid that she would read the pain in their depths, and she would break down and cry again. But that ship had sailed, and she was cruising another boat to another destination. She had to accept his death and move on.

"How did he die?" She calmly asked him. She could see him looking up, probably surprised by her tone.

She did not know that she could also sound so composed. But maybe because their child was giving her an act of additional courage to face this extraordinary ordeal.

"Do you want to know because it is not..." He paused as if he could not continue. "Maybe it would be better if you did not know." He proposed. "I will deal with all the arrangements..."

"Please tell me how he died." Haley stopped him from the rest of what he was saying to her because that was not what she wanted to hear. "Please." She added when she could see his reluctance.

"Ok," Mike finally responded with a nod and a deep breath. Then, he started talking again. "His body was found with one gunshot wound in his chest and badly burned."

It was not what she expected to hear, but she was not completely surprised. She knew Gerald had received a few death threats from his high-profile cases.

She had warned him to take it seriously, but he always disregarded them as nuisance threats. He kept telling her that he had it under control. She had nothing to worry about, but now, look at the result. He was dead.

"Do they have a suspect?" She could not help but ask, but she doubted if she would be in danger. But she wanted the culprit to pay. Gerald did not deserve to die like that.

"Not yet. The police are still investigating the scene and all the possible angles." Mike informed her. "Don't worry. We will find whoever did this."

His hand extended to her arms and tapped them gently.

"I do hope they make them pay." She only hoped the authorities would catch the culprit and the mastermind behind his death. "Wait, you said badly burned?" She asked, suddenly realizing something.

"Yes," He nodded in affirmation.

"How did they know it was him? Was his face still recognizable?" She badly wanted to see him and confirmed for herself. Maybe they had his identity wrong. But if the body was not him, where was he?

"I know what you are thinking, but it is him." Mike seemed determined to assure her that they did not make a mistake. "I wish I could tell you it is not him, but I know my friend."

"But there is the slim chance that it is not him." She insisted, hoping against hope that they could be wrong.

He took out his phone and started scrolling through the screen while she waited anxiously. Then, he leaned forward, handing the unit to her. "That is the things they took from his body. The one they could save before it was all burned."

She scanned the items saved on his phone and looked carefully at the images one by one. There was no doubt that it was his slightly burned wallet. His identification card, credit cards, and a picture of them that she put in his wallet.

She was surprised that he had kept it, which almost made her cry. But she swallowed hard and blinked several times, refusing the tears to come out. She had to push past the pain as she continued to look at the rest of the evidence.

She saw his favorite ring and the watch she also had given him. But that was not new since she had seen him wearing it before she left. "They could have planted all this and made it look like it was him."

She must have seen many movies with such plots, but she could not help trying to find an excuse to declare him alive. It was easier to think that he was somewhere alive than to confirm that it was him down in the morgue.

"I wish that is the case, but the authorities are trying to confirm his identity through his dental records and other ways," Mike told her with that solemn look in his eyes.

It seemed he had finally resolved that his friend was not coming back alive.

Chapter 1063 Through the front door and not the back door

His heart almost stopped when his phone rang, and the hospital called him. He thought that they were calling about Rosella. He was excited and dreadful at the same time, knowing it could be good or bad news.

"I will be on my way," David informed whoever was on the other line.

It appeared the police found a card that said the body they had in possession worked for his company. They just needed confirmation of his identity and to contact any relatives.

He quickly prepared to go to the hospital after receiving such news. He still could not believe what had just transpired. He knew it was possible in their profession but hearing it happened to someone close to him. It still sounded surreal.

Thankfully, it was not about the woman he loved. Still, it was horrible news since Gerald was a good partner and a friend at some point in their lives before he discovered his other identity.

"Evan, I am heading out for a few hours. If you need me, I will be at the hospital." He did not bother to tell his partner about the situation since Evan had plans to leave and visit his fiancée.

He did not want him to cancel his trip unless he had confirmed that the body they found dead was indeed Gerald. In the meantime, he would keep to himself, not even planning to inform Dani, who only had her baby.

There was still a chance that the authorities made a mistake. But he wondered if Haley already knew about it. But like the rest of their friends, he would only tell them once he had proof that Gerald was dead.

"David, say hi to Rosella and Roseann for me," Evan told him, making him feel guilty that Evan knew more about Roseann than him. "I hope she wakes up soon."

.....

But he was trying to remedy that as he started to get to know Rosella's family a bit more. The only thing missing was Rosella, still in a comatose state.

"I will tell them," David answered his friend, letting him think that he was on his way to the hospital to visit her fiancée. For now, he believed it was the best choice.

He drove calmly on the road, taking his time as he thought of the man. In comparison to him and Evan, Gerald took on more controversial cases, especially with his pro bono.

Then, he realized his partner only used those to hide his underground organization activities. He had made a perfect camouflage of his other lifestyle, using his career as a well-decorated lawyer.

He would not be surprised if the culprit behind his death could be the people he associated with his illegal businesses. Although the authorities could not also discount the people, he had fought hard to lock behind bars.

"I am here to identify the body of Mr. Gerald Brown." He walked into the information desk.

"I am the one investigating his case." A man showed him his badge, indicating that he was the detective in the case. "Would you mind following me? I need you to identify the body."

He did not mind. He was here to assist in any way he could. But he could not discount the possibility that they were looking for suspects in this case.

He was not worried since he knew the drill. It was a standard procedure, and anyone related to the victim could be a suspect unless they had a good alibi.

"Would you mind telling me what happened?" He asked the detective, hoping to gather more information about his partner's death.

"You are a lawyer, right?" The detective asked as they neared the morgue, where he assumed Gerald's body was stored.

It was not his first time entering such a place, but he could not say that he had acquired the smell as he covered his nose with a handkerchief, preventing the foul odor of dead bodies from penetrating his nose.

“Yes, then you know the drill. We still have to investigate the cause of death. And inform only the family members. In which case, do you know anyone related to Mr. Brown?” The detective asked.

“Both his parents are dead, and he was an only son,” David told the cop as he walked toward a lifeless body covered with a white sheet lying on the cold metal plate.

“What about a wife or a child?” The detective persisted with his questions as he finally gripped the edge of the blanket on his hand. “I hope you are not queasy with dead bodies.”

“No, to both of your questions.” He answered as he waited for the face reveal.

But as expected, he could hardly identify the man’s face since whoever killed this man also decided to torch his body. Not even the hair escaped from the fire.

Then, the man pulled the blanket off the dead man, revealing the entire naked body on the table.

“Would you say after years of working with Mr. Gerald Brown that this is him?” The detective asked.

There were a few portions of his skin left untouched, but Gerald had no markings that he knew off. At least on his exposed skin. It was not like he had seen the man naked before.

“The size seemed to be the same. But other than that, I would not know if this could be Gerald.” He told the detective. He could not be a hundred percent certain.

“How did you identify him?” David asked, only knowing that they had found his calling card.

“His wallet and other identifications we found in his possession. His friend, Mr. Mike Carter, helped us identify some of his things. But we need further identification before we can rule that this is indeed Mr. Brown.” The detective told him.

David was surprised to hear a familiar name. But that was not unlikely since he knew that Gerald worked with Mike in his previous employment. Therefore, their paths might have crossed paths again.

“I am sorry if I might not be much help to you,” David stated. In his opinion, the dead man before him could be anybody.

“That is ok.” The detective assured him. “We will still be running tests on this body to match what we have on file about Mr. Brown. Hopefully, that would help.”

The other man covered the body again and escorted him outside the room. He took a deep breath when he was finally in a freshly ventilated area.

“If there is something else I can do to help, don’t hesitate to ask.” He informed the detective as they continued to walk in the empty hallways.

“Speaking of asking for your full cooperation. Do you mind if you will indulge me with several more questions before we part ways?” The detective interjected before he could excuse himself.

He already knew that the detective would still have some lingering questions. The other man still had to rule him out of the suspect lists. But that was not a problem since he was innocent and had an alibi.

"Where were you last night at around midnight?" The man asked him, point blank, without hesitation.

"I assume you wish to rule me out of the list." He asked the man, who had this silly smile, telling him that he was amused but also serious about his job.

"You know the drill." The man said as he studied his face when they finally stopped in the middle of the hallway.

"I was here last night until around three. I was visiting my girlfriend." He did not give the full details. But the nurses on duty would verify his proof.

"That is good to hear." The detective told him. "If you have any information that you can share with us, don't hesitate to call us."

David did not doubt the detective would call him soon. He was aware of the other man's reputation. The investigator was thorough with his responsibility.

But as he left the detective to visit Rosella, he could not help but wonder if the man on the table was indeed Gerald. It was hard to tell with the body's current condition.

He took his phone out, knowing that this was not something he should keep to himself. If Gerald was alive, he should be in his office, but he was not. The police should be talking to him, not him.

Therefore, there was every chance that it was him on the table. "Hello, Alex. I am sorry to bother you, but can I come over? I have an urgent matter to discuss with you." He listened to the line.

He thought that his friend would still be in the hospital. But he learned they were already on their way home after the doctors discharged the mother and son with a clean bill of health.

Then, "Give me more or less an hour. I need to deal with something first." David informed his other friend. "Anyway, congratulations Alex." He knew he should have visited them sooner.

But he did not want to rub off on the happy couple the heaviness that enveloped his heart. He was not a hypocrite. It was hard to watch and celebrate a new life when it felt like he was about to lose one.

He took the elevator to another floor and walked straight to a room. He breathed a sigh of relief to see that the woman he loved peacefully slept on her bed.

He just needed a reaffirmation that she was still alive. But he also wished she was going out through the front door and not the back door.

Chapter 1064 A heart of gold

She had never felt more excited to come back to their apartment. She could see the familiar roads, buildings, and usual vendors loitering the street, but this time, it felt different.

Now, she was not just going home to her quiet apartment. She was building a family with her loving husband. They were finally taking their son home.

Dani could not wait to welcome their child and show him where he would grow up. It was not as big as the mansion she grew up in or the palace his father had lived in his entire youth. But it was a home that they planned to fill with joy, laughter, and love.

"You will love it, Ares." She whispered to the little angel in her arms while he responded with a bright smile on his lips. "You love that, Ares, don't you." She kept repeating his name, hoping he would soon identify himself with such a beautiful name.

"I think he does, Dani. Look at his smile." Alex answered for their son as he held his little finger in his hand.

She watched Ares's lips curve into what seemed to be a little smile. Some said it was just a reflex, but to her, it was a sign of approval. She knew she still had many things to learn from his facial expressions and the sounds he would make, but that was a challenge she welcomed as a new mother.

"Are we far yet?" For the hundredth time, she was impatient to reach home.

She only wanted to be alone with her husband and their child. But she knew that the house would be full of people who wished to share this momentous day with them.

She could not turn them away because these people were the reason why the universe blessed her with a beautiful son. She would not have met her husband that fateful day.

.....

She would not have ended up with him if not for her friends. They would not be happily married without the blessings of their parents. Everything fell into place because of the collective support of the people who loved them.

"Just a couple of blocks," Tom answered as she and Alex sat in the back seat with their son. "By the way, congratulations on our new prince. I elected Jaime as his bodyguard." Their chief security informed them.

She was expecting it since it was a standard procedure for Royal families to have their security detail. She remembered how she hated it before when her father put people to follow her around, but she now understood why it was relevant.

"Do you think he will like Jaime?" She asked her husband, who had been busy entertaining their son with his goofy antics.

"I think he would try to ditch him a couple of times," Alex stated, which she believed he was telling through his personal experience.

She guessed it was a normal stage that young boys and girls had to go through to test the boundaries of their freedom. But one thing she had learned about life.

Everything had a price. The more you wanted something, the higher you had to pay. And it kept growing as the stake increased. It meant the cost would be too much, sometimes more than one could afford.

Being wealthy, famous, or a part of the Royal family had its perks, but it also had a stiff price. Freedom would be one of them. Love was usually the first to suffer.

"I think you are right." She agreed with him, knowing they also almost paid with their life. But that was in the past. Their love survived the test of time.

However, she could not help but worry for his son. Would he also be as lucky as them? She hoped so because the only reason why Alex did not want the throne was because of their kids' future.

It was the reason his father, Duke Frederick, renounced the throne. They all wanted the freedom to love whoever they liked to choose. And the simpler life away from the restraint of the Kingdom.

"I think Ares would like Jaime." Tom interrupted their conversation. "He is a big softie with kids."

She trusted Tom. If he considered that Jaime would be great in securing their son's safety, she also believed him. So far, Tom had never failed them. Besides, she had seen Jaime in action.

The young man might seem terrifying in his size, but Tom was right about one thing. He was warm and cuddly with kids. However, in terms of skill, he was one of the best.

"Then, Jaime, it is." Alex declared, cooing his son until the little boy smiled again. "You see. Ares already likes him."

Soon, she was heading to their apartment floor with Ares in her arms and Alex beside her. They did not need to open the doors because they were already wide open, with banners and balloons floating everywhere while flowers and gifts scattered on the floors.

In the middle of their apartment stood the many well-wishers who came to welcome their new family member into his new home. Of course, her mother was at the front and center, together with Alex's parents. Then, most of their friends and relatives gathered around.

"Welcome, Ares!" Everyone shouted as they greeted the new prince. Technically, Ares was still a prince, but he would not be in line for the throne unless he chose to play by the Kingdom's rule. However, that was something they would discuss when the time came.

For now, he was the prince of their Kingdom. The one that her father, Ethan, built and the one that Alex was creating. Soon, he would merge these two Kingdoms and rule them by himself or with his siblings if they had more kids.

"I think our little prince is overwhelmed by your greetings." Laura shushed everyone as Ares started crying. "Come now, my darling. You don't need to cry."

Her mother quickly asked if she could hold her grandchild, and soon, Katherine also waited in line. Both tried to catch their grandson's attention. But the men quickly moved to the other side, grabbing drinks and celebrating their newborn child. It was tradition.

As the Duke, her father-in-law raised his glass to his grandson, wishing him a great life ahead while the other men toasted with him. Soon, everyone was having a great time.

"Can I hold him?" Finally, Jacky had the chance to take her turn after their parents. She could see that her friend was happy for her, but she could not read the other emotions clouding her eyes.

"Of course," Dani said as she carefully handed Ares into her friend's arms.

She was glad her friend worked hard to return to normal. It was hard to undergo a traumatic experience. She would know since she went through one herself. It might be different from what happened to Jacky, but it was equally hard to overcome.

"Hi, there, little man. I am your godmother if your mother has not told you yet." Jacky introduced herself. "Anyway, I am here to act as your second mother when your Mom is not around. So, don't worry. I have your back covered when you need one."

"Hey, I heard that." Dani raised her eyebrows at her friend, giving her a fair warning not to spoil her son. But she was happy that Jacky could now joke about it.

"Well, parents can easily overreact to small things. I am just offering my services in such situations." Jacky reasoned as she played with Ares's cheeks with her fingers.

She understood her reasoning since she was a rebellious child, too, when she was young. Anyway, she learned that parents only wanted what was best for their kids, even if it did not seem like it sometimes.

"Ok. But don't turn my son against me." She warned her, but by all means, it was just a friendly banter between them.

Jacky smiled when Ares also seemed to smile at her. It was heartwarming to see her with a child in her arms. Dani knew that if anyone else deserved a child, it was her friend. She would be a great mother.

"Promise," Jacky whispered as she stared into her child's eyes.

Dani could not help but wonder if her friend was talking to her or herself. But she had sensed the joy in her tone. Something she believed was genuine happiness.

"You know what?" Jacky finally turned to her, looking directly into her eyes. "We are trying again." She said without going into details.

At first, she was confused about what Jacky was trying to say to her. She could think of many things that would fit that statement, but there was only one thing she would wish for her friend.

"What do you mean?" Although she did not want to jump to conclusions and mumble the wrong things to say.

"I am ready to try again. I mean..." She paused as she rephrased her wording. "Marcus and I are taking a shot at making a baby again."

She was surprised by the news since she was not expecting it. But she was extremely happy for her friend. She could feel the tears edging in her eyes as she watched her friend smile after her big revelation.

"I am so happy for you. I know it will not be easy, but I am here for you every step of the way." She would support her friend in this laborious task, whatever it would take.

Jacky deserved to have a child she could call her own because she might be a tough nut that was hard to crack, but she always had a heart of gold.

Chapter 1065 A dream come true

The flight home had been uneventful. She mostly spent her time on the plane sleeping her fatigue off. It seemed her companion also had the same idea, as he slept like a baby beside her.

But the best part of the flight was having his arms wrapped around her. She had never felt happier and safer in her entire life. Honestly, it felt different when she was with him compared to when she was with Ryan.

But she did not want to get her hopes too high. It was still too early to tell if their relationship would work. Nevertheless, she had never felt more alive. Maybe it was a sign that this time, it would be different.

"I guess this is your stop." Zach parked the car in front of her apartment. She was supposed to take the cab home, but he insisted on dropping her off before he went home.

"Yeah, I guess so." Suddenly, Ria felt awkward. "Do you want to come in for coffee or water?" She asked, not knowing what else to say.

She did not exactly have many backgrounds with dating or having a boyfriend. Ryan was her only boyfriend, her first and last relationship, which was not what she would consider a good example.

Anyway, she would like to give this relationship a shot and would do anything to make it work. And she hoped not to mess it up with her lack of experience.

"I want to." He extended his hand, covering hers that was resting on her lap. His face looked apologetic, making her conclude that there was something more he wanted to say.

"But..." She heard the hesitation in his voice, so she decided to help him. She could feel the warmth of his hand that seeped through her skin. It was a feeling that she never thought she would feel again. But she also felt disappointed.

.....

She had no idea why she felt this way. But her gut feeling told her that her worries were far from over. However, she tried to shake it off, not wanting to put doubts about their relationship when it hardly began.

Besides, her fear might stem from another source, remembering the situation she left behind at the resort. She could feel the terrible feeling crawling beneath her skin as she thought of Ryan coming after her.

"Hey, I truly want to join you." He probably noticed her dismay as she squeezed her hand gently before pulling it to his lips. "But I have a few things that I need to finish first."

She did not know if she should consider that as an excuse. What could be more important than spending time with her and meeting her son? Of course, there were many. At least for him.

"That is ok. I just thought..." But she decided not to finish her sentence. "I guess I will see you tomorrow at the office." She said instead.

She should not fault him if he had another life besides her. After all, they both needed to adjust to this relationship. She could not impatiently force her son on him just because he decided to give them a try.

“Hey! I am not changing my mind about us.” He moved nearer to her, leaning his face closer to her face. “Just to be clear.” Then, his fingers caressed the right side of her face, tilting her head until his eyes locked with hers.

“I am...”

“Ssshhh...” He stopped her before she could say more. “I wish to meet Edison, but I want to do this right.”

She could remember the first time he saw her son. It was not exactly a meeting she would forget. But he was right. She should not rush their situation. She should give him time to know what he was getting into when he agreed to this relationship.

“Ok.” She guessed she understood his situation as she slightly nodded her head.

Then, his lips touched the side of her lips, just a tender kiss that she barely felt before pulling away. But she wanted more. Therefore, when he kissed her again. She pushed herself to meet him halfway.

Eventually, he slowly pulled away, but she felt his reluctance. She also saw in his eyes the intensity of his desire to stay. But as he said, he had other matters to attend to, so she had no choice but to wait.

“What about you invite me to lunch on Saturday?” He suggested as he kept her still close to him. “At least it would give you time to prepare. I know we will still be swamped with work tomorrow.”

She believed it was a good idea as she mauled over his proposal. “Are you sure you won’t be busy by then?” She could not help but ask. Getting disappointed had been a norm to her that she could not help but be skeptical sometimes.

“I will not miss it for the world.” He promised. “I will even bring the wine.” But when she looked at him with a frown. He quickly revised his statement. “I meant the fruits or the milk?”

It was clear he had no idea what he was talking about as he mumbled. “Just show up.” That was all she wanted.

“I promise.” He leaned down again, kissing her but not as intense as before. “I will see you tomorrow.” He finally said, which meant that it was time for her to come down.

He offered to bring her luggage upstairs, but she stopped him when she reached the steps. She knew he seemed in a hurry, so she did not want to take up much more of his time.

“Go. I will see you tomorrow.” She repeated, giving him a quick peck on the lips before shoving him away. For someone who did not want to stay, he seemed reluctant to leave.

Anyway, she was giving him the benefit of the doubt that what he had to do was important. But it did not mean it was more significant than her or her son.

For a long time, she never asked for anything for herself. Since she had Edison, it had always been about him and what he wanted and needed. She had set aside her desires.

But today, she wanted him as she watched him drive away in his car. She wished that this relationship would stand the test of time. She desperately hoped this would not turn into a nightmare but a dream come true.

Chapter 1066 No control over fate

He could not stop looking at his wife and their newborn son. He guessed this was the best feeling that any man could ever experience. His heart was overwhelmed with happiness and pride.

When he first married Dani, he knew he was the luckiest man alive because she fell in love with him and decided to spend the rest of her life with him.

But now, looking at the mother and child before him. He felt complete. Like he could die any minute now as the happiest man alive. His wife gave him the greatest treasure he could receive in this world, Ares, his son.

"I am so happy for you," Alex heard his bestfriend speak behind him. Then, he felt his hand tap him on the shoulder as he joined him in watching their wives play with his child.

"Thanks, Marcus." He turned to his friend, raising his glass to his friend. "I appreciate that." He could tell that his friend might be a little envious of him having a child, but he still showed his support despite it.

He could not blame him since he almost had one if not for the accident. But he still hoped they would have one eventually when Jacky recovered from the loss.

"Ares is a great name, and adding Ethan's name is perfect," Marcus commented as they continued their conversation.

"I also think so." Alex agreed, amused at how his son seemed to respond to his name when someone called him.

"I also think it is a great name." His father seconded as he joined them together with some of their friends and relatives.

.....

Then, he handed them a glass of the best scotch in his collection, giving everyone a toast. "It is a tradition in our country to honor the arrival of our next heir." His father stated, raising his glass in the air.

"This is to my son for becoming a Dad. I hope he will be a better father than I have been to him." Duke Frederick clinked his glass with him and then toward all the men gathering around them.

He knew it was his turn to raise his glass and make a toast based on their tradition. "You certainly raised the bar if I had to beat you, Dad." He said first, raising his glass to him.

"But this is to welcome my son into our family." He pointed his glass to his son, which Dani proudly showed to their guests. "I only wished for him to follow his dreams wherever it would lead him."

He looked at his father, thankful that he let him follow his heart rather than their tradition. Then, he raised his glass to everyone and drank its entire content.

Then, everyone congratulated him and his wife for finally having a child and building a family. It was the start for sure because he still intended to have more. But, of course, if that was also what Dani wanted.

Moreover, he also had to consider the difficulty his wife had gone through, not only during the pregnancy but the labor itself. He would not wish for another child if he would risk her life in the process.

The mini-celebration continued as a few more of their friends arrived to join the celebration. But there was something else that bothered him despite the festivity.

“Do you know anything that was happening with David?” He finally asked Marcus when they were alone, remembering the unusual phone call he had received from him. “Or with Rosella?”

Alex knew that his girlfriend was still in a coma. With Dani’s condition, he did not have time to visit his friend more often to show his support. But he believed his friend understood his situation.

Still, he could not help but wonder what made him rush to his party, knowing that he was busy at work and taking care of Rosella. He could not imagine the effort he had made to balance everything between the two and manage to keep himself sane.

He still recalled what it was like when he could not do anything every time Dani was in the hospital fighting for her life. There had been a few times now, and just recently, as she risked her life for their child.

“Nothing new. I know that Rosella still has no changes in her condition.” Marcus informed him, seemingly puzzled by his question. “Why?”

“It could be nothing, but he called earlier and sounded odd.” He could not explain it since he had no clue. “But he is on his way here to tell me more.”

He checked his watch, wondering what was taking him this long. He said an hour, but it was way past that. Still, he was just anxious. His friend was just a few minutes late. Besides, he might be in traffic or had taken long on his other errand.

Otherwise, he had no choice but to wait. He would know more if it was a problem once his friend had arrived. Until then, he would enjoy this moment with his son.

“I am sure it is nothing. Maybe some issue with the business.” Marcus assured him. It might be nothing serious, but some business matters since David handled many of their contracts.

He hoped it was the case. He did not mind losing millions as long as nothing terrible happened to any of his family members, that included his friends.

His eyes quickly shifted to his wife and their child as Dani proudly shared her experience with childbirth with their mothers. It was an experience he believed would forever be ingrained in his mind.

He was slightly surprised to see Jacky looking animated with her stories. It seemed that she was taking Dani’s childbirth quite well. It was not exactly what he had expected.

“Hey, Marcus. I am glad that Jacky seems to be getting better and better.” Alex commented as he watched his wife happily discuss babies with her friend.

"I am, too," Marcus responded with a wide grin. "'She is getting better.'" He added as he took a sip of his freshly filled drink. "And we are trying again to have a baby." He raised his glass to him with a satisfied smile.

"So, wipe that smug look on your face because soon, I will have a child of my own." Marcus seriously said with a satisfied smile on his lips. "And our children will be playing together."

That was a nice thought, he agreed. "Then, let me be the first to congratulate you. Because I know you will also be a great father." Alex could not be happier for his friend, raising his glass to him.

Everybody earned the right to bring life to this world, and he believed his friend deserved to have a child. He might start a bit off with his relationships, but he had managed to turn his life around.

His friend changed into a better man, all because of one incredible woman who had managed to tame his heart from his wild womanizing days.

"But if we are not fortunate to have one, I am still lucky to have Jacky in my life." Marcus clinked his glass with him as they watched their wives' happy faces.

He could not agree with him more. Fate could be cruel sometimes.

Then, his gaze returned to his wife and his son. He knew he did not want anything to ruin the smile that covered his wife's face. She looked even more beautiful with a child in her arms.

If only he could always protect her and their child, he would. But sadly, he was just a man. He had no control over fate.

Chapter 1067 Forever be part of the family

She was not surprised to see many of their families and friends who came over to welcome their first child. But as much as she loved to see them, she also felt exhausted.

She still needed to recover from her labor and the lack of sleep since she had her child. Of course, based on what she learned, it would still be a long road before she could feel close to normal again.

"I think your eyes are about to give in. Why don't you rest for a while and let me take care of my grandchild." Laura stood before her as she struggled to keep her eyes open.

She did not want to leave their guests, but her mother was right. It was getting harder and harder for her to keep herself awake. She could feel her body starting to shut down.

"Don't you mind? I don't want Ares to be a burden." Dani knew that having a child meant owning to the responsibility and not passing them on to someone else.

She suddenly felt guilty. But then again, she told herself that she was human with physical limitations. She could not be too hard on herself for admitting that she needed help.

"Hey, taking care of Ares will never be a burden to me. And don't worry, I still remember how to take care of a child." Her mother reminded her as she gently pried her baby out of her arms.

She finally conceded that she needed to sleep as she opened her mouth and yawned loudly. She could deny anymore how much her body craved the soft mattress of her bed.

Honestly, it was not easy to sleep in the hospital despite the privacy of her room and the comfortable bed they had provided. It was still not her home or her bed.

.....

"Have you seen Alex?" She finally asked her mother-in-law, who also joined them.

She strained her neck at the guests scattered in their living room area but could not find him anywhere. Jacky was talking to some of their friends, but Marcus was also out of sight.

She could only conclude that the two must be somewhere private, talking about business again. But she could not blame her husband. He had been by her side throughout her labor until they had reached home. He must have tons of piled-up work to do.

"I saw him go to his office with his friends. If I was not mistaken," Katherine answered her. But her focus had always been on her grandson as she waited for her turn to take him.

Dani guessed she had no problem with a nanny since two had already volunteered to take charge. In the meantime, she needed to find Alex before she disappeared for a few minutes, an hour or more, to take advantage of a much-needed rest.

She carefully treaded away from the living area toward the hallway that would take her to his office. He knew he would prefer to talk here because it was quieter and the privacy.

She, too, could not wait to return to work, but she decided to take some time off until she could learn to balance her career with motherhood. Of course, her child would always be her priority.

"Alex?" She knocked on his door, but it appeared nobody was inside since nobody answered her. She tried again, but still no response.

She tried the door, but it would not open. When she tried listening to the wooden panel, she heard nothing from the other side. She concluded that nobody was indeed inside.

Where could they be? She could check the kitchen or the places in the house, but she doubted they would be there. Then, an idea popped inside her head. That was more likely.

Quickly, she walked back to the stairs and went to the next floor, thinking her husband might be there. Otherwise, she would go straight to their room and crash on their bed. Then, she would worry about him when she woke up.

Slowly, she climbed the stairs and opened the door, smelling the fresh air. She could hear familiar voices floating in the air, so she knew her husband was there.

But before she could call him to alert him of her presence, she heard something that surprised her. "Are you sure it was him?" Alex asked whoever he was talking to on the rooftop.

"I am not positive, but I think it is Gerald." The voice sounded like it belonged to David as she walked closer. "I think that is his body in the morgue."

Wait! This time, she stopped in her tracks. She did not understand the full context of their conversation, but from what she heard, they were talking about her brother. And David just declared him dead.

“But you said that the only reason for them to suspect that it was him was because of his identifications. Other than that, his body was completely unidentifiable.” Marcus seemed to clarify.

She could not help but wonder what had happened to her brother as she stood immobile in her place, listening to their conversation. And if the body was Gerald, why were they keeping it from her?

“Yes...” David answered. “But they intend to do other tests to confirm his identity.” He added. “By the way, the police might contact all that may have any involvement with him.”

Dani could feel her heart thumping wildly inside her chest. Her head was spinning with the news, and her body shook with the shock. Despite what Gerald had done to her and her family, she could not disregard that he was her brother.

“What happened to Gerald?” She moved closer to the three men talking in the middle of their roof garden. They might not have noticed her before, but they were looking at her now with startled expressions.

She guessed they were keeping the news from her, thinking they were protecting her. She could not blame them. She believed she was still weak. But still, she had to know, especially if David was right.

Her father loved him, and in a way, she and her mother started to accept him in their lives. Not many might have known about their relationship, but she did. He would forever be part of the family, just like her father had always wanted.

Chapter 1068 Let me be your friend

Haley looked at the building before her, staring at the structure she had been her home since she decided to have a relationship with Gerald. It looked the same, but she knew it would never feel the same if she entered his apartment.

She could wait for him, but he would never come home. She had forever lost him, the man that she loved. Slowly, the view before her became blurry, realizing that tears had gathered in her eyes.

It did not take long as the tears rushed down her face like a waterfall. She could not stop it even if she wanted to. Knowing she had lost the only person she truly and fully loved.

“Why?” She shouted as she banged her hands on her steering wheel. “Why did you have to die?” She still could not understand why another person could take the life of another.

She finally allowed the tears to fall freely from her eyes, those tears she had suppressed in front of Mike. This time, she did not have to pretend to be strong as the pain took over her body.

Earlier, she had to act tough before Gerald’s friend. She had to show him that she could handle his death so Mike would take her to him. And she also did not want the doctors to sedate her again.

Finally, she had convinced Mike to bring her to the morgue. “I would like to identify his body.” She remembered telling him.

Unfortunately, the smell of the dead bodies and the chemicals they used to preserve them had been too much for her delicate situation. Once she was inside, it was hard to breathe. But she still tried her best to be strong.

The man in charge pulled a large cabinet that stored the dead body. They covered the body in a white blanket from head to toe. She could see nothing until the man pulled the white linen cover from his face.

.....

It took everything in her not to puke right then and there. The image was just too much for her since she had not seen a dead body, especially a burned one. And the smell was just too awful.

She had to run out of there before she could check the rest of his body. It was just too much. Maybe if she had not been pregnant, it would be different. But she could not take seeing him in that way.

"How could anyone do that to another human being?" She mumbled, imagining him burning alive, shouting at the top of his lungs from the pain.

She had only seen those kinds of scenes in the movies, but she could visualize the anguish that he had gone through. She only hoped the bullet wound had killed him before whoever killed him burned him.

She understood now why Mike was adamant about taking her to see him. It was indeed a scene not for a faint heart. But she was still glad to see him. Still, she wished she could have stayed longer.

"Haley..." She suddenly heard her name. Then, she realized that someone was knocking on her window. "Open the door, Haley." He kept repeating, calling her name.

She finally realized she had been crying inside her car outside his apartment building. Then, when she looked outside her window, Mike was outside, looking concerned, probably about her.

Quickly, she grabbed a tissue pack on the side of her car and wiped her tears away. Eventually, she lowered her window to talk to Mike, who seemed relieved to see her.

"Hey, why did you rush out of the hospital? And you should not be driving." Suddenly, he unlocked the car and yanked the door open. Then, he grabbed the keys to her car. "You are not in any condition to drive."

He pointed at her current state. She could only imagine what she might look like, not caring to look at the mirror before her. But she understood his apprehension since she also believed he might be right.

"I am sorry. I could not stay in the hospital." She could not stop the image of him lying in that cold storage, lifeless. It was just too much. She knew she had to get out of there.

But going back home was also out of the question.

So, she decided to come here. But looking at the building, thinking of the empty apartment, and knowing that Gerald would not be there did not help with her condition. She was stuck with nowhere else to go.

"Then, let me drive you home." Mike offered as he took her hand, encouraging her to go with him. "My car is over there. I will ask someone to drive your car back to your place." He suggested.

"But I also don't want to go home." She did not want to see her father, who never cared about her and her feelings. "I have nowhere else to go."

She could not go to her friends. Not when she was like this. None of them like Gerald for her. She did not want to see them happy that he was gone, especially her brother, Marcus, who had always been vocal about his dislike of Gerald.

She could not think straight at that moment as her mind seemed to run all over the place. Then, she could not help but worry about her unborn baby. How was her child affected by all this?

“Do you trust me?” Mike asked her as he stared into her eyes.

Did she? She had never actually thought much about Mike.

She had seen him frequently with Gerald. She knew they were close friends. But she still did not know much about him. They might laugh about a few things, but they never talked about anything personal.

But if Gerald trusted him, maybe she could also do the same. Besides, she could not think of a possible reason not to put her faith in this man. So far, all he ever showed her was kindness and friendship. He had welcomed her with open arms.

“I guess.” She answered with little hesitation.

“You can stay with me for a few days. Just until you get your situation figured out.” He proposed. “I don’t think you will be alright on your own. So, let me help you. I know that Gerald would not want me to abandon you.”

“Let me be your friend.” He offered.

Chapter 1069 In the name of love

The office was sizzling with excitement as people talked about the great news. It appeared that a new heir was born.

Congratulations! Prince Alexander and Princess Daniella.

Welcome! Prince Ares

The message covered the front lobby of the building, written in bold letters on the banners hanging on the walls. Zach was still on the trip yesterday and did not hear the news until now.

He was happy for his boss and wife. He heard it was their first child. But he had to wait till his boss decided to come to the office before he could congratulate him. For now, he had to focus on completing his task.

“I heard that you had a successful negotiation. Mr. Stark is very impressed with the two of you.” Alona’s voice floated in the air until it reached his ears as he stepped out of the elevator. “I guess congratulations are in order.”

“Good morning, Alona.” He greeted the woman, holding a few files in her hands and a lovely smile on her lips. Then, he walked to his desk with her following closely behind him. “I think our boss is the one you should be congratulating.”

“He is not in yet, but I will,” Alona responded as she dropped the files in her hand on his desk. “For now, you deserve the praise for a job well done.”

"I think they were impressed more with her than me. Ria did a great job out there." He added before checking the files on his table. "If anyone deserves the accolades, it is her."

.....

He was speaking only of the truth. In his opinion, Ria had worked hard and had proved to them that she knew what she was doing. If anyone deserved the position, it was her and not him.

He knew that Ria deserved the position more than he did. If anyone should get the job, it was her. Besides, he never needed this job, although he enjoyed working here and learning from his boss.

"Ok. Now I am curious. What happened out there?" Alona suddenly sat on the edge of his table and stared down at him as he sat on his chair. "Tell me."

He pictured her as the queen of talk shows he had seen on tv shows, waiting for a piece of juicy information. He almost laughed at how anxious she was as she lingered in front of him.

"What?" He acted like he had no idea what she was asking. He was not a kiss-and-tell kind of guy.

"You see. I can sniff a story a mile away. From this..." She waved her fingers in front of his face. "I know something happened between you and Ria."

This time, her face changed after looking at his reaction. From the playful one, she became serious, as if she had confirmed something. And she did not like it.

He could only conclude that she had an eye for reading people and a wide range of networks. No wonder she was one of the most trusted people by their boss and one of the highest paid compared to the other ordinary employees.

"It is not what you think." He suddenly felt the need to explain himself. "I like her." But when he saw the scowl on her face, he quickly added. "And no. I have no intention of hurting her."

He knew that many people around here liked Ria and seemed to protect her from the big, bad wolf like him. He understood now why. But he was not the same as before. He did not pursue her just to hurt her. He knew better now.

"But you do understand that..." Alona was about to lecture him, but he stopped her, knowing what else she had to say.

"I know about her baby. We talk about him. And I will meet him tomorrow." He told Alona, knowing that was the secret they were not telling him.

Not that Ria was ashamed to talk about her child. She just did not like people talking about her personal life. And he understood her now. She was only protecting her child and herself.

"You know about Edison." Her eyes were wide as saucers. "And you are absolutely, unequivocally sure that you are ok with it." She sounded like she was asking a question more than stating a fact.

He nodded as he replied. "I have never been sure of my life." He smiled at her, knowing that was a big deal.

He knew what most of them would be thinking. What was an eligible bachelor like him doing with a woman with a child? But that was not what was important to him. Ria was. And he was willing to do anything for her.

"Then, I guess there is nothing else I can say." Alona stood from her position and looked at him one last time. "Just please don't make her cry."

"I promise." He said, knowing that Alona was merely looking after her friend. "I only want to make her happy."

Then, Alona turned around and was about to leave when he stopped her. "Hey, can I ask a question?" She then turned again to look at him. "What can I give Edison? I want to buy him a gift."

She smiled at him as if amused at his question. She gave him a few possible things he could consider. But before she left, she gave him some advice.

"But if you think that things are too much for you to handle, let her down easy. You might think you know what you are getting into, but in the end, you might change your mind."

Then, she was back at her desk, working hard like before, while he was left to think about her parting words. He could be stubborn about it and ignore her warning. But in truth, she was right.

He had to tread lightly in this relationship with her. He liked her, but could he handle a kid? What did he know about taking care of a child? Nothing, but he was willing to learn and love that child.

However, what about his family? Would they like her, knowing how traditional his father was? Would they accept her for having a kid out of wedlock? Could he go against his family if they disapproved of their relationship?

He believed he would in the name of love.

Chapter 1070 High in fever and a delusional state

She could hardly open her eyes as she struggled to get into her work. She knew she was going to be late. She had no excuse for it other than she woke up late. But in her defense, she hardly had enough sleep.

She still felt tired from yesterday or probably getting sick. She could not tell since her mind was still cloudy from fatigue. Then, Edison had been grumpy, too, last night. But he seemed to be ok when she left him with Sasha.

Maybe it was the lack of sleep, but whatever it was, she had to shake it off since she had an early meeting with the board about their trip. "So, pull yourself together." She mentally pepped herself up.

She ran towards the elevator about to close, but it was already full of employees in a hurry. She had no choice but to wait for the next

one since taking the stairs was out of the question.

"You made it." She whispered to herself as she tried to catch her breath when she came out of the elevator on her floor.

She did not run or climb the stairs, but she still felt exhausted. Slowly, she made her way to her table, struggling to stay on her feet. Something was wrong with her. She could feel it.

This time, she knew it was not exhaustion or lack of sleep as her vision started spinning. Was she sick? Maybe, but she could not be. She closed her eyes and dropped to her desk as she tried to rest her body.

Maybe she just needed a few minutes to get back in shape. She just had to doze off for ten minutes then she would feel better.

.....

"Are you alright?" Suddenly, she heard someone speak in front of her desk. From the sound of her voice, she knew it was her boss. "You know there is no sleeping on the job." She jokingly said as she moved around her.

"But I am glad that you are back. We missed you around here." She could hear her say. "I heard you did great with the negotiation. Sir Alex and Josey would surely give you the job."

She wanted to respond but did not feel like sitting up and talking to her as she rested her head on her arms on her desk. Then, she continued to close her eyes.

"Hey, what is wrong with you?" She could hear the concern in her voice as Brenda finally walked towards her.

"Oh my! You are burning up." Her boss mumbled, sounding shocked as she felt a cold hand on her skin. "You are sick. Why did you even bother to come to work?" She seemed to reprimand her and panicked at the same time.

But she could not care less about what she was saying as she felt like her body was full of lead. And her joints seemed to be stuck with pins and needles as she struggled to move. But all she could say were moans of pain and the lack of energy to form words.

"Wait! Stay awake, and I will call for help." Brenda stated as she attempted to understand what she was saying while her mind swirled around her head.

"Hey, Brenda. Have you seen..." Then, she heard nothing else as everything went blank. Like she was floating in space.

She could not understand what was happening. She knew she had gone to work but who turned the lights off as all she saw was darkness. She also felt confused as her ears strained for any form of noise. But she could not hear anything.

Where did everybody go? Why was she alone as she moved her hands to hold on to something, but her hands felt nothing. That was weird because she knew she was sitting at her desk.

"What is happening?" She kept asking, but nobody was answering. She wanted to move, but where was she going? There was nothing around her but the black, seemingly empty cold space.

"Where am I?" She kept asking questions but to no avail. It was a waste of effort since she could not even hear her voice.

Then, a few seconds later, she finally heard voices. But this time, it was loud and chaotic. Somebody was talking to her, or somebody was talking to someone. She could not tell. She was more confused because she could not open her eyes.

They just kept chatting around her, but she had no idea what they were saying. And who were they? She did not recognize any of their voices. It sounded foreign to her.

Then, she felt the blackness sucking her back. Eventually, it was all quiet again. She was alone again with nothing. She felt trapped in a black box. After a while, she had enough. She wanted to break free.

She forced her eyes open but was blinded by a bright light this time. She had to bring her hand up to cover her face as she closed her eyes again. But it was hard. Her hand seemed to move in slow motion before it reached her eyes.

"Hey, you are awake." She finally heard a familiar voice. And the noise earlier seemed to have disappeared.

"What is going on?" She asked as she attempted to open her eyes again, slowly this time. Then, she noticed the white paint on the ceiling and the wall. "Where am I?" She knew she was not home or at her office.

"You are in the hospital." Finally, she shifted her eyes to the source of the voice. "You have a high fever, and we have no choice but to take you here."

"Zach, what are you doing here?" She was surprised to see him, still confused about what was happening around her. "What again?" His words seemed to jumble inside her mind as she tried to process her situation.

"You came to work sick, and we needed to bring you to the hospital to get treated." Zach slowly explained to her, hoping she would pick it up eventually. "Do you understand? How are you feeling?"

She finally understood him as the words finally clicked in her brain. Things were getting less fuzzier as the dizziness dissipated. Then, she could see him now when her eyes finally adjusted to the light.

"Better. I think." She answered his last question.

"Good." He responded with a smile as he held her hand in his. "Don't worry. I will take care of you."

She could not believe that he was here with her. She had been sick before, but nobody cared for her other than herself. Maybe she was still high in fever and in a delusional state.