

Runaway 151

Chapter 151

Irene stepped outside her room the instant she hung up, where she found Isaac leaving his room as well.

Their eyes met, and Isaac spoke first. "Are you going out?"

Irene nodded. "A good friend of mine is in trouble. She asked me to help."

Seeing that he was heading out as well, she asked, "You too?"

"Yeah."

Isaac strode off, asking, "Where are you going?"

Irene told him the address after receiving it from Lulu.

Isaac turned around to look at her then. "We're going to the same place."

"Eh?" Irene gasped in surprise, though she soon remembered that Zachary and Isaac were close. "Did Zachary call you?"

"Yeah," Isaac replied. "Let's go together."

Irene nodded, and they left in Isaac's car.

Although Irene was riding shotgun, they were both silent. They wanted to talk, but did not know what to say.

Eventually, Irene said, "The friend I mentioned is Lulu Adams—she used to be Zachary's girlfriend."

Isaac did not actually know much about Zachary's personal life. From what Irene said, however, it

became clear that the man had been depressed recently because of relationship issues.

"So, are they having a fight?" he asked.

Irene did not know how to put it into words. "Lulu wants to break up with Zachary, but he is refusing to let her go."

Isaac remained aloof and did not ask any further questions—he never did poke his nose into others' affairs.

Soon, they arrived, and Irene alighted before Isaac did.

Zachary answered the door, and he did not appear surprised to see them show up together. In fact, he had been right next to Lulu when she called Irene.

Standing aside, he said, "Come in."

Irene hurried over to Lulu, who was leaning against the couch and had her face buried in her palms. Dropping to a crouch in front of her, Irene patted her on the back. "Lulu."

Lulu looked up, and her eyes were red and swollen. Her voice was also very hoarse—she had clearly been crying for a while. "Get me out of here."

Irene helped her up to her feet. "Okay."

It seemed that Lulu was exhausted from crying, and Irene had to help her walk.

"Head back to the mansion," Isaac said as he gave Irene his car key.

"Thank you," she said as she took it.

Isaac gave her a look but said nothing.

Once they returned, Irene helped Lulu to the couch and poured her a glass of warm water for her throat.

As Lulu had a couple sips, Mrs. Watson came and asked, "Is she your friend, Mrs. Jefferson?"

"Yeah."

"Will she be sleeping here tonight? Mr. Jefferson..."

"He knows," Irene said.

She understood why Mrs. Watson seemed uneasy—this was Isaac’s home and he never usually allowed strangers, so Mrs. Watson was worried that they would fight again.

Naturally, Mrs. Watson was relieved to hear that Isaac knew, and said warmly, “Very well. I shall prepare a guest room for your friend so that she can get some proper rest.”

“Sorry for the trouble, Mrs. Watson,” Irene replied.

“Oh, it’s no trouble,” Mrs. Watson said, and left.

Meanwhile, Lulu was starting to calm down.

“Are you alright?” Irene asked.

“No,” she replied.

“What happened?”

Lulu did not hold back anything, since Irene was aware of what was going on between her and Zachary.

“Did you know that Zachary had a blind date at that teahouse?”

Irene nodded as she watched Lulu. “I did. Did it go south because of you?”

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“Yeah,” Lulu said. “Zachary told his blind date that I’m his girlfriend. The woman felt like she had been swindled, and called Zachary’s mother right then and there. It was such a mess...”

Irene could actually imagine the scene just then!

“And what happened after that? Why were you at Zachary’s place? Did you talk things out?” Irene asked.

Lulu was quiet for a while before finally saying, “He knows.”

Irene actually thought it was for the best. “You two are still in love anyway. He must be even more

reluctant to break up now that he knows, right? You have no idea how depressed he has been lately—

he actually drinks himself silly every day, and he must have lost a few pounds. It hurts to see him like that, don't you agree?"

As a matter of fact, Lulu did.

Zachary had always had a sunny personality, and it hurt her to see him so depressed.

Even so, Zachary's mother would hate her more after what happened. His mother had already been

dissatisfied with her modest family before, and would now find her untrustworthy for breaking her promise.

After all, Lulu had promised to leave Zachary, but now she was back at his side. It was obvious. how grievous that situation was for her.

Still, Irene held her hand and assured her, "It's fine. Relationships mend, and with Zachary being understanding and protecting you, I'm sure his mother would see your virtues as well "

Lulu, however, was not that optimistic—the look on the face of Zachary's mother had been terrible.

"Actually, I think everything is much better now." Irene pressed on. "You're now back with Zachary, and you can face this trail together. When you shouldered everything alone, it was hurting you both, but

now, Zachary isn't hurting anymore. Even if his mother is standing in your way, I'm sure he'll work hard to resolve that."

Now that things had come to this, Lulu had to agree.

"I hope things will improve from here," she sighed lengthily.

"Yeah. Let me get you my pajamas—you should go get a warm shower in the meantime." Irene headed off to her room to do so, before taking her to the room Mrs. Watson prepared.

The mansion was large, and the guest room had its own shower.

"I don't have new pajamas—you won't mind, right?" Irene asked with a smile.

“You used to wear mine anyway. It’s all the same...” Lulu said. “Thanks, Irene. I feel much better after talking to you—you should get some rest. You don’t have to worry about me.”

Irene was worried, however. “I’ll stay with you.”

Lulu then remembered something, and could not help asking then, “By the way, about the man who came to Zachary’s house with you—is that Tommy’s father?”

Irene shook her head and said feebly, “If only it was him.”

“Eh? Why would you say that?” Lulu was confused.

“Isaac Jefferson is my husband,” she said quietly. “But I had Tommy from an affair...”

Lulu sighed, understanding just then that Irene’s situation was much more complicated than hers. “Then does he know about Tommy? Doesn’t he care?”

Irene sat feebly beside the bed—it was precisely what she was worried about.

“I... I never thought about a life with Isaac before, but after a while...”

“You’ve fallen for him?” Lulu asked, though it was more a confident statement than a question.

Irene nodded earnestly. “It’s unexpected, even to me...”

“Not really,” Lulu said. “I’ve never met him, but I can see from his appearance alone that girls go crazy for him. Being young and rich, he just has to be a little nice to a gal for her to be head over heels for him.”

Irene could not refute her point..

Although Irene used to prioritize inner beauty over appearances, it turned out that she was only human—she certainly admired Isaac’s gorgeous looks, falling for him just because he was a little nice, even forgetting the horrible things he had done to her.

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Beauty really pulls the wool over one’s eyes, does it not?

“I’m actually surprised that I’d have feelings for him. I want to tell him about Tommy, but I

always have trouble speaking around him. Don't you get it, Lulu? I've never had regrets before until I met him...'

”

Lulu raised a brow. “You regret having Tommy?”

Irene shook her head. “I regret being so impulsive that night.”

She had never regretted having Tommy, because he was her treasure.

She regretted what she did, because she wanted to offer her best of herself to Isaac after falling for him.

Even if Isaac told her that he did not mind, she did.

Sitting beside her, Lulu said earnestly, “Maybe I'm wrong, Irene, but I'd believe you if you told me that an average Joe does not mind that you have a child.

“But Isaac Jefferson is no average Joe, is he? He can have any woman he wants, and he may be infatuated with you for now. However, as time goes by, are you sure he can still accept another man's child?

“People have imaginations, and when he sees Tommy, won't he be imagining you getting it on with another man? Will that really not affect your relationship in the long run?”

That was exactly what stopped Irene from coming clean with Isaac.

Tommy was not his son—would he earnestly be nice to another man's child?

And for her part, she would refuse to send Tommy away to live with someone else.

“I may be wrong, and even petty...”

“No, you’re right.” Irene knew that Lulu had said all that out of concern, and she also understood the reasoning behind those words.

After all, who knew if Isaac was just having a passing fancy with her? And how long would said. fancy last until it passed?

It was her who should not get caught in the moment.

Even if she had to confront her own feelings, she must keep thinking straight.

Inhaling lengthily, she said, “I know what to do.”

“Are you going to divorce him? Actually, he might be different from other men...” Lulu quickly tried to dissuade her.

“No... Things aren’t that solid with us anyway. We’re just living together because we have a marriage certificate.”

She decided that she would come clean, but only when Isaac became certain that it was truly ‘till death do them part.

“Actually, I can help you raise Tommy if you really love Isaac. You know I can help,” Lulu

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suggested, sincerely being considerate toward her just then.

Irene shook her head.

She would raise her own child, after carrying him around for ten months.

In fact, she would rather keep her child than her relationship.

Lulu sighed then—for herself and Irene.

Their relationship problems were certainly convoluted!

“Go take a shower now. Give me a shout when you need me,” Irene said, getting to her feet.

“Okay,” Lulu replied.

After returning to her room, Irene took a shower but could not fall asleep afterwards. She sat by the bay window, hugging her legs as she stared at the moon outside.

Click-

The doorknob turned just then.

Chapter 154

Irene turned when she heard it, and got off the window seat, walking up to Isaac when she saw him. "How's Zachary?"

Isaac loosened his collar. "He's going to resign from the hospital and start work at his family's company."

Irene's expression darkened. She knew that Zachary loved being a doctor—giving up must cause him misery.

"Win some, lose some." Isaac could see that she was worried. "Don't worry about him."

Irene helped him take off his jacket but kept her eyes lowered. "I'm not."

Staring at her just then, Isaac thought that she was being different today.

Irene hung his jacket and asked, "Are you going to take a shower before you sleep?"

"Yeah," Isaac replied.

"I'll warm the water for you," Irene said as she went to the bathroom.

Isaac caught her wrist then and asked, "Something on your mind?"

Irene smiled. "Does it look that way?"

She just wanted to live peacefully with him, and confront her feelings for him.

And yet, Isaac's heart raced as she was being agreeable and tender!

He scooped her up in his arms just then, and Irene wrapped her arms around his neck as she looked into his eyes. “No shower?”

Isaac placed her on the bed, and crawled on top of her. “You think I’m dirty?”

Irene shook her head. “No...”

“I’m very clean,” he said, and leaned in to peck her pink lips with his.

There was a smile on his eyes just then, and he lifted her hand, placing it on his collar as he quietly said, “Help me.”

Irene averted her eyes shyly, and he turned her face toward him—he was at once unreasonable and overbearing.

“Look into my eyes.”

Irene shoved him and pouted. “You’re a bully.”

Isaac grinned, loving her the way she was now, and leaned in to brush his cheek against hers. And I’ll only bully you.”

Irene beamed. “So you can actually be sweet.”

“I’m only human,” Isaac replied.

He was not inhuman—it was only natural that he was less aloof around the woman he loved. As he

caressed his cheek, his fingertips slowly moved down to her neck. He realized he could

not pull himself away from touching that fair, delicate skin!

Irene turned away slightly, giving her silent consent by not resisting.

Isaac hence went wild and reached underneath her clothes!

The sudden rush of cool air underneath left Irene cringing a little, but Isaac glued himself to her to offer her his warmth!

Soon, Isaac had her in his arms as they curled in tandem under the sheets, kissing passionately and filling the air with flaring hormones.

However, just as they were about to melt into one, there was an urgent knock on the door!

Irene quickly came to her senses from the dizzying heat and pushed the man on top of her. Someone's at the door."

"Yeah," Isaac murmured distractedly—he was not particularly eager about answering the door, and his lips were practically glued to her skin.

"It's not locked!" she reminded him.

Knock, knock-

The person outside was clearly in a hurry, and Irene was worried they would enter.

What if they came in? That would be embarrassing!

"They won't come in," Isaac mumbled.

That was when Mrs. Watson called out, "Mrs. Jefferson, your younger brother is here... He's saying that your father has passed away."

Boom!

It felt as if something blew up in Irene's head then, leaving her pupil dilating.

She appeared terrified, and Isaac came to his senses as well.

Watching her, he asked softly, "Are you alright?"

Irene was too miserable to speak.

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Irene suddenly felt cold all over, and Isaac gathered her into his arms, whispering into her ear as he comforted her.

"It'll be fine. I'm here with you."

A crystalline teardrop trickled off the corner of her eye and disappeared into her hair.

"I hate him... But it hurts so much." Her voice was shaky and hoarse.

"I know," Isaac said.

Blood runs thicker than water.

Lionel was her father—there was no way she felt nothing!

"I want to see him." She scrambled to her feet.

Isaac helped her get dressed. "Calm down."

"How could I?!" She suddenly shouted from agitation, but soon realized that she should not have taken it out on Isaac, even if she was feeling miserable.

"I'm sorry," she said quietly.

"It's not your fault," he told her as he wiped away her tears.

She stared blankly at him, and suddenly threw herself into his arms and bawled, her shoulders shaking as she did!

Isaac returned her embrace and patted her on the back.

It took a while for her to calm down, dress up, and leave the house.

She did not manage to see Lionel when she reached the hospital. His body had already been wheeled into the morgue and covered in white cloth.

Irene paused in hesitation for a moment, and started walking toward it.

Samantha was crying hysterically nearby, and she pushed Irene away. "You jinx! Your father died because of you—"

"Mom!" Ricky Spencer promptly cut her short. "How could you blame her?! You were the one who kept arguing with Dad until he choked and died!"

He was there when Lionel died, and he naturally knew that Lionel's death had nothing to do with Irene.

Samantha shot him a vicious glare just then—why did her boy always side with everyone else, as if he did not know his own family?

Irene stared icily at Samantha then.

While Lionel was terminally ill, he could have lived a little longer—it was most definitely Samantha's fault that he died so abruptly.

Feeling guilty, Samantha averted her eyes, but kept crying and howling as if she was heartbroken.

“Oh, what are we going to do without you?” she cried, not forgetting to throw shade at Irene as well.

“Look at that daughter of yours! She's not even shedding a tear! You raised her for nothing!”

“Mom,” Ricky said, pulling Samantha along. “Let Irene have some time with Dad.”

Samantha turned to glare at her son, but Ricky pretended not to see it and kept dragging her away, allowing Irene some time alone with Lionel.

Irene appeared calm, but her knuckles were balled at her sides, exposing how she felt!

Isaac held her hand in silence, offering her warmth. She slowly calmed down thanks to his comfort, and

she strode up to pull down the white cloth to see Lionel's face.

Although his eyes were closed, it was clear from his expression that he did not die peacefully!

Irene stopped crying, and turned toward Ricky. “You were there when he died, right? Did he say anything?”

Ricky was just about to speak when Samantha beat him to it. “What else would he say? He's leaving everything to Ricky!”

It was obvious Ricky wanted to protest, but Samantha shot him a glare and snapped, “What, you think I'm lying?! I'm your mother!”

She put considerable weight behind the word ‘mother, as if to warn Ricky that she was his only family.

Ricky's lips twitched, but he stayed silent.

However, Irene did not actually hope for anything from him anyway—she was just testing Samantha.

She would show no mercy, given Samantha’s attitude.

Although she did not want anything from the Spencer estate before, she now decided that she would take it all!

Chapter 156

With a cold and severe tone, Irene told Samantha, “You don’t get to decide who the Spencer estate goes to. Also, I’ll investigate my father’s death, and I’ll destroy you if you are guilty.” “And I’ll destroy you if you take a cent from my son’s inheritance!” Samantha retorted.

“Mother...” Ricky was still trying to dissuade Samantha.

Lionel had just died, and they were already fighting right in front of his body. How could he rest in peace at all?

“I’m telling you, Ricky—don’t listen to your father! I’m your only family, and that woman has nothing to do with you!” Samantha bellowed furiously, because it really upset her that her own son kept siding with Irene.

She was convinced that Ricky’s attitude was all Lionel’s fault, that he had given his son all the wrong ideas!

After all, how could there be a bond between step-siblings?

Moreover, her personal grudge against Irene meant she could not allow him to be family with Irene, and

the conflict over the inheritance would only drive them further apart!

Nonetheless, Irene called her out by name right then. “Samantha White—my parents never got

divorced, and that makes my mother and myself the designated heirs. No matter what you try, you won’t get anything as long as I decide against it!”

Panic showed in Samantha’s eyes, but she quickly calmed down. “It’s in your father’s will. Everything belongs to Ricky.”

Irene was not about to argue with her in front of Lionel's body, and quietly told Isaac, "Let's go."

She had kept herself strong throughout the confrontation, but her shoulders slumped once they left the hospital.

Isaac put an arm around her shoulder and pulled her towards himself, then said quietly, "Let's get you home."

"Yeah," she murmured.

When they returned to the mansion, they found Lulu waiting in the living room.

She must have heard the commotion when Irene left, and Mrs. Watson told her that Irene's father had passed away. That was why she waited for her, since she was unable to sleep anyway.

It was the same for Mrs. Watson.

Keeping her distance since Irene was with Isaac, she asked in concern, "Are you alright?"

"Yeah," Irene rasped. "It's late now. Everyone should get some sleep."

With that, she headed upstairs, with Isaac behind her.

Once inside her room, she curled into a ball on her bed. Isaac held her from behind, his body pasted against her dainty figure, offering her silent comfort.

Even so, she never slept—her eyes were open until sunrise, and bloodshot.

Despite feeling worn out, she quietly got out of bed.

Isaac did not sleep much either, and only dozed off near sunrise.

Irene did not want to wake him, and picked up her phone as she headed to the balcony to call Sheryl.

It must have been very early—it took a while for Sheryl to answer.

“Hello... Irene? Missing Tommy?” Her morning voice was hoarse.

“Mom... Dad is gone,” Irene said nasally.

“Let him leave all he wants.” Sheryl seemed to misunderstand her.

“He’s dead,” Irene quietly explained. “You should come back.”

There was no response from the other end as Sheryl’s expression froze.

“Mom? Are you alright?” Irene asked worriedly.

“I—I’m fine,” Sheryl replied as she came to her senses.

However, she did not sound that way.

“It’ll be difficult to bring Tommy on your own. I’ll go

“No, that’s going to take time. I’ll be there, don’t worry.” Sheryl cut her short.

Although Irene was worried, Sheryl continued, “I’m bringing nothing for myself, so I can carry everything Tommy needs.”

With that, she hung up.

Irene could feel how urgent it was for Sheryl just then.

Chapter 157

The air was chilly in the morning.

Irene folded her arms, thinking to herself that she should have told Sheryl sooner—she could. have seen Lionel one last time, then.

Lionel’s death was not really peaceful, perhaps because he regretted not being able to see Sheryl one last time.

“What’s on your mind?”

Irene heard the voice just as she felt a cardigan being draped over shoulders, and she turned to find

Isaac standing there. His facial features suddenly seemed indistinct and he appeared more languid than usual, though he was much more affable now.

Turning away, she said, "I just called my mom... I should have told her sooner. I'm the reason. why she never got to see my father one last time..."

"It's not your fault. They are their own people, and they can decide for themselves."

People who are in love would never live apart -separation itself is their own choice, and not something others can decide for them.

They were both adults and could think for themselves independently, which was why Irene did. not have to feel guilty at all!

Taking a deep breath, Irene said, "There's still time. Get some sleep—you didn't sleep much because of me last night."

Isaac stared into the distance. "It's fine. I'm staying with you."

Irene glanced sideways at him just then.

People are at their most vulnerable when they lose their loved ones.

However, having someone with them—even if they said nothing—staves off the loneliness, offering comfort in spirit!

As the skies brightened, Irene left without breakfast, refusing Isaac's offer to go with her.

After all, he had work to do, and had already stayed with her long enough. Moreover, she had already composed herself.

The first thing she did is head to the lawyer's office, and inquire about the legal process of the inheritance. It turns out that Ricky had a legal right to the estate even if Samantha never married Lionel.

It was not as if Irene wanted the Spencer estate as her own, but Samantha had basically killed Lionel for the sake of the inheritance.

That was reason enough for Irene to stop her!

Still, she could not deny Samantha entirely since Ricky had legal capacity to be an heir, meaning that the legal route was futile. She must come up with an idea later too, since the current priority was to

arrange for Lionel's funeral.

No matter how unpleasant things were between them, Lionel was still her father, and her grief was genuine.

However, when she arrived at the hospital to arrange for Lionel's body to be sent to a funeral home, she found out that it had already been taken away.

Checking the records, she saw that the papers bore Ricky's signature.

It was only natural—he was Lionel's son and had every right. On the other hand, Samantha could not have done it since she was not legally married to Lionel.

Irene rushed to Spencer Mansion, and to no surprise, she found that Samantha was dressed fully in black and had already set up a funeral, while carrying herself as if she owned the place!

Irene knew that Samantha was planning to preside over the funeral and convince everyone that she was Lionel's wife—she was a guest trying to outshine the host!

As she walked into the mansion, Samantha was still ordering everyone around, and glowered when she saw Irene approaching.

Irene was the person she wanted the least to show up, because she would rather everyone forgot about her.

"What are you doing here?" she growled at Irene with a glare.

Irene was unaffected and not inclined to argue—anything could wait until after Lionel's funeral.

"I should be asking that question—I'm Lionel's daughter, and you're an illegitimate mistress. I have every right to tell you to leave and even make you, and letting you stay is my grace. So understand this: I'm letting you stay because you are the mother to my father's child, but know who owns this place."

The word 'illegitimate' left Samantha's face ashened—it was her Achilles' heel, and she always hated Lionel for not marrying her.

She gritted her teeth as Irene headed into the mansion. Murderous intent seized her right. then, as she realized that Ricky would never claim the entirety of the Spencer estate as long as Irene was alive!

Seeing that Irene was walking toward a steel shelf, a venomous look appeared in her eyes and she darted forward, pushing it just as Irene passed through underneath, sending it crashing down on Irene!

"Die, Irene Spencer!" she laughed vilely.

Irene noticed the movement, and her eyes widened in shock and disbelief as the steel shelf loomed!

"Watch out!" someone called out.

Then, before the steel shelf reached her, a dark figure ran to her side, pushing her firmly away from the falling shelf.

With a loud crash, the shelf collapsed, and Irene's face turned pale when she saw who it was who saved her!

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It was Ricky!

"Ricky!" Samantha ran to him in terror, fearful of the worse.

Ricky was already unconscious when she lifted the shelf off him, and she slapped his cheeks, crying, "Get up, Ricky! Please, you're scaring me... Don't do this to me..."

Samantha's tears were genuine this time—Ricky was her only son, and everything she did was for him.

She had pinned all her hopes on him!

She could not live without him!

"Why are you so stupid?! Why would you save her?! She's trying to take everything from you!"

On the other hand, Irene was bleeding from her knee, but she whipped out her phone to call an ambulance even before taking a look at her own injury.

When she limped over to check on Ricky, however, Samantha seemed to be convinced that she was

out to hurt Ricky, and pushed her away. "Don't touch my son!"

Irene stumbled, but coolly said, "Let me tend to him if you want him to be safe—I'm a doctor, I won't hurt him."

Samantha, however, was cradling Ricky's head and crying hysterically, "It's your fault he's like this..."

"You did this to him because you wanted to hurt me," Irene said, rising to her feet. "Since you don't want me to look at him, I won't. It's more money for me if he dies anyway."

Those words punched Samantha exactly where it hurt!

Glaring viciously at Irene, she raved, "I knew it! You're evil!"

Irene simply thought nothing of her ravings, and simply took charge of the funeral arrangements, instructing the funeral home employees to keep working and not bother themselves with Samantha.

"No!" Samantha suddenly shrieked. "T—There's blood..."

Irene quickly went over to check on Ricky, and saw the blood seeping out of his hair.

He must have been hurt, and checked the wound.

Samantha did not stop her this time. "Is he going to be fine?"

Irene ignored her as she focused on checking Ricky—she found a shallow cut on top of his head, but it was not life-threatening at all.

She deftly stopped the bleeding, and the ambulance soon arrived, taking Ricky to the hospital while a worried Samantha followed.

With that, Irene was now fully in charge of the funeral arrangements.

As she entered the hall, she scowled when she saw the urn of ashes placed on a table.

Samantha had Lionel's body cremated before Sheryl could return, preventing Sheryl from seeing Lionel one last time.

She clenched her fist in frustration—Samantha was utterly heinous!

Bzzt-

Her phone started to ring—it was a call from Sheryl.

She would soon arrive in Cloud City, and needed Irene to give her a ride.

Irene quickly took a taxi, arriving at the station and waited for a while until Sheryl arrived.

Tommy was almost two months old now, and his cheeks were very pudgy.

Irene was overjoyed and excited to see her boy again, her heart almost melting as she took him from Sheryl's arms.

She felt that this was the happiest moment in her life, but her eyes felt so puffy she could not even laugh.

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Irene was convinced that she had failed as a mother.

She could not stay with her son in the days immediately following his birth, let alone give her son a complete family.

"Your father..." Sheryl began just then.

That was when Irene looked up at her mother, and saw the terrible look on her face.

She must have been crying.

"Sorry, Mom," she said apologetically. "I should have told you sooner so that you can see Dad one last time."

Sheryl did not blame her—Irene had mentioned Lionel's condition before, but she paid not heed.

Breathing a long sigh, she said, "I'm unhappy and feel much grief against him, but he's gone now, and

it all ends with him. That's why I'm here—I should be there to send him off as his wife.”

Then, handing Tommy's belongings to Irene, she said, “Tommy is still very young. Take him

-I'll go back to Spencer Mansion.”

Irene was worried. “I should go with you-

“No. Tommy is just a baby—he should not spend too much time with the dead. I'm fine on my own.”
Sheryl said, her stance firm and her appearance calm.

Irene, however, knew that her mother still had feelings for Lionel, or she would not have refrained from divorcing him for so long.

Sheryl must be hurting inside now after Lionel suddenly died—she was pretending to be fine. because she did not want to worry Irene.

Still, Sheryl had been more open-minded ever since she recovered from her surgery. While she did not divorce Lionel because of lingering feelings, she also understood that Lionel hardly deserves much sentiment just for his adultery.

Her feelings were less than mere attachment, and not a far cry from dissatisfaction!

Clapping her daughter on the shoulder, she promised, “Don't worry, Irene. I'm a changed person, and

not as weak as I was before. Surviving alone made me understand many things, and I won't allow my

weakness to make you suffer again like before. I'll never allow Samantha White to bully me, especially since I'm still your father's legitimate wife and she's just some cheap mistress—I'll be the one presiding over Lionel's funeral.”

Irene did a double take, suddenly looking upon Sheryl in a different light just then.

After recovering from her surgery, Sheryl had certainly become staunch.

Nodding, Irene said, “I'll be there later.”

Sheryl gave Tommy a tender look then. "No, it's fine. I know you want to spend more time with Tommy now-you were forced to part with him just after you delivered him, and it's

been almost two months now. It's normal for you to miss him, so just leave your father's funeral to me, and take good care of Tommy. Remember, the living is always more important than the dead!"

Sheryl was certainly as attached to Tommy as Irene was to her own child, since she had been tending to her grandchild almost soon after his birth.

Lionel was gone anyway—caring for Tommy took priority.

"He just needs one ounce of powdered milk if he's hungry, or he'll belch a lot if he has too much. Also,

stick to cloth diapers with airy cotton—disposable ones get stuffy no matter how good they are. I've brought everything he needs here, so you can use them once you get home,

Sheryl then rambled, as if worried that Irene would not take good care of Tommy.

"

Irene nodded. "Okay."

They then split up at the train station, with Sheryl returning to Spencer Mansion while Irene brought Tommy to Isaac's mansion.

Lulu was just about to leave, but when she saw Irene returning with Tommy, she warily looked behind before running up to give the baby a hug.

Worried that Mrs. Watson would see them, she asked, "Your mother came back?"

Irene nodded.

"But what would Isaac say if he sees Tommy here?"

Irene was looking at Tommy with a tender look. "If he knows, he knows."

Lulu was confused. "You don't care about him now?!"

“I may be in love, but I’m not about to hide my own child because of him. I agreed with what you said yesterday, but after seeing Tommy again, I realized that everything else – including Isaac doesn’t matter to me. I want to be with Tommy, and that’s it.”

–

Lulu was left in awe of her motherly love, and naturally did not try to talk her out of it.

“I don’t regret giving birth to Tommy, just as I won’t hide him. I was paranoid before—with a man like Isaac, he’ll eventually get sick of me even if Tommy was never born. Also, hiding my child from him would be no different from lying to him, and being irresponsible in our relationship. I love him, and therefore should show him everything about me. It’s only human nature if he can’t accept Tommy, and I won’t blame him. If he can...”

She gently brushed her finger on Tommy’s soft cheek, her heart and eyes fixed on her tiny child—her own flesh and blood.

“If he can accept Tommy as if Tommy were his own child, I’ll naturally play nice. I won’t hesitate to leave if he’s only paying lip service by saying he doesn’t mind, but treats Tommy harshly.”

Seeing that Irene had made up her mind, Lulu refrained from saying anything against it. “You’ll probably be busy with your father’s funeral, won’t you? I’ll have a few days free after finishing my work here, so I can help look after Tommy.”

Then, glancing at Tommy, she added, “His eyes actually resemble Isaac’s... Who knows? Fate may have brought them together, and you two might actually make a happy family for him.

“Boo–hoo...”

Tommy was suddenly crying.

Mrs. Watson had just arrived downstairs after cleaning the rooms upstairs, and heard Tommy’s crying.

“Why do I hear a baby crying?” she asked aloud in curiosity.

Chapter 160

Mrs. Watson then noticed the tiny child in Irene’s arms, and hurried toward her, asking, “Where’s this baby from?”

Before Irene could answer, she asked, “Is he yours, Ms. Adams?”

Lulu glanced at Irene and smiled tenderly. “I wish—I’m not that lucky.”

That naturally puzzled Mrs. Watson. "Then, whose is he?"

"Mine," Irene replied.

Mrs. Watson gaped. "Mrs. Jefferson... W—What did you just say?"

Suddenly coming up with an idea, she asked, "Could he be Mr. Jefferson's?"

Irene shook her head. "No."

"What?!" Mrs. Watson became flustered. "If he isn't... then who's the father? Did you have a child with another man?"

"Yes," Irene replied, having no intention of denying it.

"Irene." A deep, slightly angry growl could be heard behind her just then.

Irene turned to find Henry leaning against his crutch at the doorway. He was glowering, and must have overheard her conversation with Mrs. Watson.

"Come with me," he growled, and headed to Isaac's study.

Money Penny was with him, and he leveled a cool, accusing look at Irene as well.

After all, Henry had admired Irene in the past, and even held high hopes for her.

To think that she was actually so... unseemly!

Irene passed Tommy to Lulu and quietly said, "Wait in your room."

Lulu nodded and warily brought Tommy to her room.

At the same time, Mrs. Watson was staring worriedly at Irene. "Mrs. Jefferson..."

Even so, Irene had to face this—Henry would eventually find out anyway. Taking a deep breath, she entered the study, and Money Penny closed the door behind her.

“Come here,” Henry commanded, and Irene went to stand before the desk.

“So, you really cheated on Isaac?” he asked.

He was already aware of the rumors, but to see it with his own eyes infuriated him further.

After all, he was the one who had arranged for Irene to marry Isaac.

But now that things had turned out like this, how could he face his own son or Isaac?!

Irene said nothing.

Bang!

Taking her silence for admission, Henry slammed his palm on the table, startling Irene and making her flinch!

It was the first time she had seen him being this angry—he had always been kind to her.

Even so, she knew very well that she was the one at fault.

“I’m sorry...”

“Fat load of good that does!” Henry huffed.

Money Penny patted his back to calm him. “Sir, you knew about this. There’s no need to get upset you would only harm your health.”

Indeed, Henry was furious when he first found out, but to see Irene holding a living child with his own eyes...

He had trusted her so much, even footing the bill for her mother’s surgery, only for her to humiliate and betray Isaac!

This was how she repaid his favor!

“You’re nothing compared to your grandfather!” Henry bellowed.

In fact, the reason he was still being this polite was because Irene’s grandfather had saved his life!

Eventually calming down, he said, "You don't deserve to stay with Isaac after this."

Irene agreed, but things were different for them now—they had feelings for each other.

"Henry..."

"Don't call me that!" Henry snapped, cutting her short. "I was the one who consented to this. marriage from the start, so I shall end it myself now!"