

Runaway 381

Chapter 381

The woman who stood at the door had her long hair tied up elegantly, and was dressed in a white tailored dress. Though she only had a pair of pearl earrings on, she appeared graceful despite the simplicity.

“You are...?” she asked as she watched Irene.

Irene was left spacing out for a moment—the woman looked exactly like she did in the photo.

Still, she quickly came to her senses and cried, “Please, you have to help me...”

Behind her, Ricky kept up his act. “Get back here or I’ll kill you! Did you think you could run from me?!”

Irene then looked pleadingly at Layla, saying, “He’ll kill me if I go with him—please, you have to help me!”

Fortunately, Layla was kind enough to stop the man behind Irene. “Please let her go, or I’ll have to call the cops.”

“She’s my woman! I can do whatever I want! Mind your own business?!” Ricky snarled, really looking the part of a rogue just then, although he lacked the appearance to really look menacing.

He took after his mother, and was good looking but has a rather kidlike face, and was not really brutish.

Layla frowned. “There are cameras here. You are breaking the law, and I can call the hotel staff here right away.”

Ricky snorted, but caught the cue to release Irene. “Call them all you want! I’ll be right next door—tell them to come any time!”

With that, he left, while Irene kept pretending to be scared and said gratefully, “Thank you.”

“It’s fine,” Layla replied.

However, just as she was about to close the door, Irene quickly stopped the door and asked, “May I stay here?”

Layla hesitated and said, “Okay.”

“Thank you,” Irene said.

As Layla poured Irene a cup of tea, she said, “Here, have a drink to calm down. Was that your boyfriend?”

“...Yes. He’s always had a bad temper. This time, he’s saying that I’m cheating on him and he’s trying to kill me,” Irene said as she picked up the cup.

“You shouldn’t stay with men with violent tendencies,” Layla asked. “You should break up with him.”

Irene nodded in agreement, and suddenly asked, “Are you married?”

She regretted it as soon as she asked it—what even was she asking? Of course she was, give her age! Still, Layla smiled in amusement from her question. “Yes, my daughter is twenty this year, in fact.”

That left Irene stunned—Layla has a daughter?

She could not recall Isaac having a sister, or him ever mentioning having one.

“What’s her name?” Irene asked.

“Erin Gooding,” Layla replied.

Irene nodded, but she had never heard of that name. Moreover, the daughter’s last name was not Jefferson, but Gooding like Mick.

Though she could not make heads or tails of their relationship, Irene knew that she should not be asking too much or she would arouse suspicion.

“There’s this person I know, Isaac Jefferson...” She mentioned Isaac out of nowhere.

However, Layla appeared unaffected as she asked, “Who is he?”

Seeing that she was not reacting at all, let alone surprised, Irene decided that Layla clearly did not know Isaac.

But that only left Irene confused.

What was going on here? Was she just confused?

But she clearly saw her photo on Isaac’s desk... It was such an enigma!

“Why did you suddenly mention that name?” Layla asked.

Irene did not know how to explain just then. “I—It just came to mind.”

Then, Layla tried to tell her to leave politely. “Do you have other places to go? My husband will soon return, and he doesn’t like strangers.”

Irene put down her cup. “Alright, I won’t impose... Thanks for helping me, or I’d definitely have been really hurt.”

“It’s fine.” Layla then walked Irene out of the door, and that was when Mick arrived.

Seeing Irene at the doorway, his face fell!

“Why are you here?!”

Chapter 382

Irene was going to explain herself when Layla said, “She had a fight with her boyfriend. I saw them and tried to help, so I let her in.”

Mick turned to level a sharp look at Irene. “Really?”

Irene nodded. "Yes. It was a coincidence..."

"You know her, Mick?"

As Layla glanced between Irene and Mick, Mick walked over to put a hand around her shoulder. "She's Stephen Carr's apprentice. I saw her when I met him."

Layla's tone became even kinder just then. "You're a doctor?"

"Yes," Irene admitted.

Suddenly, Layla held her head and frowned as if in pain.

"Another headache?" Mick asked mildly.

Layla nodded.

"Let's get you back inside for your meds." Mick led Layla inside, then turned back to Irene and warned, "I don't like people who pry into my private affairs. I won't play around if I find out that this wasn't a coincidence!"

Irene said, "I'm not."

"It'd better be!" Mick snapped before shutting the door.

Still, Irene could hear Layla from inside. "You didn't have to be so loud. She's just a girl."

Mick replied, but his tone was soft. "I'm just worried about bad people."

Irene was under the impression that Layla was being paranoid, but Mick's reaction made her suspicious.

It seemed that he was very paranoid about letting people get near Layla – but why? "Irene, Irene—"

Ricky poked his head out from behind a pillar just then, calling out to Irene.

Irene walked over and returned to their room with him, where he asked impatiently, "So? Did you get anything?"

Irene shook her head. "Nope."

"Then we came for nothing? The room was for nothing?" Ricky groaned. "Well, I'm hungry now—buy me a nice dinner, Irene, since I just did you a solid."

Irene glanced at her watch then. Seeing that it was already nine, she hurried outside. "Next time. I have to get home now—it's very late now."

Ricky rolled his eyes. "I'm no longer useful, huh? Anyway, what about the room?"

"You can sleep there," Irene replied and left.

Ricky stared at her, blinking, and decided that sleeping in a grand room like this was no loss—it would be a waste if he did not enjoy himself here.

He threw himself on the bed, his limbs spread widely when he suddenly thought of Lulu. He thus whipped out his phone to text her.

[What are you doing?]

He sent the text, and waited for a long while...

It was not until he almost fell asleep when his phone chimed, and he quickly checked it.

[Just left work.]

[This late?] Ricky quickly replied.

[Yeah. That's my work—they call me in whenever.]

[Sounds hard. Have you had dinner yet?]

[Nope.]

Ricky sighed then- they could have had dinner together if she were in the city.

[Me neither.]

[Go eat already.]

[If only we're closer.]

Lulu sent an emoji of a dog rolling its eyes, and joked: [I will buy you a nice dinner if you come over.]

Ricky, however, became spirited right then. [Really?]

[Really.]

Ricky suddenly found sleeping in the presidential suit not that urgent. He promptly ran out to the train station, buying the last ticket to Sunny City for the night, whereas Lulu threw her phone aside to take a bath...

Meanwhile, Irene was rushing home, but entered to find nobody.

She was left dumbstruck—where was everyone?

“Mrs. Watson?” she called out, even as she checked the bedroom...

Chapter 383

It was empty with no sign of anyone inside, not even Tommy.

Irene's heart almost leaped out of her throat just then. Where was everyone? Where had they gone?

As panic seized her, she rushed out of the door, only to see a car driving inside.

Jimmy the chauffeur alighted to open the door, and Isaac emerged with Tommy in his arms.

Mrs. Watson came out as well, and she was carrying several bags.

Irene walked up to them and asked, "Where have you been?"

That was when she saw that Tommy's cheeks were red, with his usual smile gone. In fact, he looked rather upset, and there were red circles around his eyes as if he had been crying for a while.

Sharply realizing that something was wrong, she asked, "Is Tommy sick?"

Isaac simply ignored her and headed straight inside with Tommy in his arms, but Mrs. Watson walked up to her and whispered, "Tommy had a fever..."

"Mrs. Watson," Isaac growled.

Mrs. Watson quickly stopped and entered the house after him, leaving Irene pursing her lips as she followed.

As they returned to the bedroom, Isaac stood before the window with Tommy in his arms, while the baby tamely lay over his shoulder, his eyes narrowed and his eyelashes damp.

"He must be sleepy. I can coax him." Irene held out her arms, but Isaac simply shifted aside, keeping his distance.

"I'm sorry," she apologized softly then. "I was going to come home early, but I was delayed. I didn't want to be late--"

Isaac cut her short. "Get out if you're done."

Irene was left at a loss for words.

She stood there for a while, until she quietly left the room—Tommy had to sleep, and she would have to wait before explaining herself.

Still, when Mrs. Watson found her stepping out with an ashen look, she asked, "Have you had dinner, Mrs Jefferson?"

Irene shook her head. "No."

"I'll make you something then," Mrs Watson said

"You don't have to. I'm not hungry," Irene replied.

Mrs. Watson sighed. "You have to understand. We were all surprised when Tommy suddenly came down with a fever, and it was like he wouldn't stop crying. I've never seen Mr. Jefferson being so helpless and flustered."

Irene hung her head. "It's my fault."

She had failed to care for her child as a mother and her family as a wife.

"You just have to come home earlier next time," Mrs. Watson assured her.

"Okay," Irene said, and Mrs. Watson returned to her work.

Irene was tired, and had to lean against the wall to keep standing, but it was not until over an hour later that Isaac stepped out.

She straightened when she heard the door open, and asked, "Is Tommy asleep?"

Isaac still ignored her and headed straight to their bedroom, but Irene followed him and tried to explain, "Are you still upset? Look, I didn't mean to be late, and I swear I've never cheated on you. As for Tommy, it's my fault for not taking care of him..."

However, Isaac was quietly taking off his jacket, which he threw over the couch carelessly. Then, loosening his collar and unbuttoning his shirt, he suddenly said with sharp irony, "Finally done being busy?"

Irene was left staring at him, bitterness welling in her heart.

She sniffled, suddenly wanting to cry, but she kept her eyes wide to hold back the dampness welling up in her eyes.

She did not like to cry. She understood that she had made mistakes, but she still aggrieved—what she did was not unforgivable! Why could he not give her a chance to explain?

Did he have to hurt her like this?

"What do I have to do for you to forgive me?"

She kept her voice low so that she sounded normal, but the quiver in it was

unmistakable, so she soon stopped holding back and ranted, "Why are you refusing to talk to me? I know we aren't at the point where we can trust each other unconditionally, but I've been working hard!

I've even thought about it from your

point of view to see what happened with Harvey Gooding, but it's obvious he was

just pranking you! Are you that faithless in me, or yourself?!"

Isaac slowly turned around just then.

Chapter 384

Irene could not hide in time, and Isaac saw her trying to blink back her tears.

There was a twitch in his gaze, though soon he regained his calm. "Are you upset?"

Irene wiped her own face firmly and said stubbornly, "I'm not."

"Oh."

Isaac turned and headed to the shower, leaving Irene clenching her fists and absolutely frustrated by his coldness.

Throwing away all pretenses right then, she ran in front of him just to snap, "You don't believe me, do you? Fine! I'll cheat on you right now!"

As she tried to run away, Isaac grabbed her by the wrist and chuckled. "You're going to cheat on me?"

Irene struggled. "I'll do it—you don't believe me anyway! Then you would actually have a reason to get upset with me!"

Isaac pulled her a little firmly then, and she immediately fell over his chest. He then held her tightly with one hand while he lifted her chin with the other, and she could cry from the pain just then.

Struggling even harder just then, she complained, "Let me go..."

Isaac leaned in and planted his lips firmly on hers to stop her from speaking- reaching deep, biting hard and utterly possessive.

Irene wobbled, unable to resist his assault, and all she could feel was pain.

Isaac scooped her up in his arms and headed for the bed, and as Irene nestled against him, she asked softly, "Are you still upset?"

"That depends on your showing."

With that, he put her on the bed, and her slender form seemed to sink into the bed.

Her hair was a mess and she looked utterly vulnerable, her pink lips now a fresh red because of Isaac, and the teeth marks on it distinct.

She wrapped her legs around Isaac's waist, and his eyes were suddenly as dark as the void, with an inferno that could consume everything blazing in its depths.

And Irene certainly was consumed by its flames, and was left unable to breathe or sense anything around her aside from his blazing body.

ooter 384

213

They kept at it until midnight, until Irene's legs were trembling. Unable to get off the bed to take a shower, Isaac carried her to the bathroom, though he was basically relying on him to do everything while she lazily rested her eyes.

After a long while, she rasped, "I won't do anything like cheat on you..."

"I know."

Isaac kept her wrapped like a cocoon, with only her head poking out as he carried her. "I want a daughter."

Irene was almost dozing off, but her eyes widened right then.

What was that supposed to mean?

As she looked up, Isaac lowered his gaze to meet hers. "Why aren't you getting pregnant after we've done it so many times?"

Irene was speechless—getting pregnant was exactly what she had been worried about.

It was why she had been taking contraceptive pills, which she put on her dressing table disguised as vitamin supplements.

After all, if she were to get pregnant again, her career would be delayed again and she might not even accomplish her dream in this life.

“We already have Tommy...”

“I prefer a daughter. We’ll name her Mimi.”

Irene’s heart sank—he must want a daughter so badly that he had already thought of a name. Everyone normally preferred having sons, but he somehow preferred having a daughter?

“Tommy doesn’t even have a proper name yet,” she complained.

“I’ve already named him. The hospital needed a form filled, so I’ve named him for now.”

Irene frowned—what did he mean by for now? Did he not actually think about it?

Given how hastily it was done, she did not hold out much hope.

“What did you name him?”

“Ike.”

2/2

Irene was speechless—that was so plain!

“What are you thinking? He’s going to carry that name for the rest of his life!”

“Both our names start with ‘T.’”

“You didn’t think at all, did you?”

Irene was annoyed—even if the name was not actually bad, Isaac’s attitude soured it.

Could he be a little less casual about this?

“If we had two daughters, we could name them Mimi and Kiki, right?”

Afraid to answer, Irene replied, “I’m sleeping.”

Isaac placed a hand on her belly just then, seemingly looking forward to getting her pregnant.

He loved Tommy because he was his first child—his flesh and blood.

Even so, he wanted a daughter as well, though there was also another more personal reason: if she got pregnant again, he had every reason to demand that she resign from work and stay home until she gave birth.

It would certainly be killing two birds with one stone.

On the other hand, Irene was absolutely terrified—she did not want another child.

Although she woke up early next morning, Isaac kept his hands around her and stopped her from getting out of bed.

“It’s early. Stay in bed for a while.”

“I need to be at the hospital today.”

Isaac was speechless.

Was her job really that much more important?

“Tommy is sick,” he said quietly.

Chapter 385

Irene pursed her lips—she was aware that she should be staying home right now to take care of Tommy.

However, Stephen Carr would be examining Layla Gooding today, and there is a possibility that he would operate on her. Irene herself might be allowed to watch, and it would allow her to find out her secret.

That was why she must go to the hospital today.

“I’ll try to come home earlier, okay?”

She was not great in trying to appeal, and actually came off stiff.

Isaac was speechless, so she wrapped her arms around his neck and cajoled, “Pretty please?”

Even though it was not her best skill, Isaac enjoyed her trying to cozy up to him.

Smiling faintly, he said, “Get home by five.”

“Home by five, got it.”

“Good.”

Isaac finally agreed to it, and Irene gave him a peck on the lips. “I’ll have something to tell you by then.”

“Okay, and stay away from Harvey Gooding,” Isaac told her.

“Yes, definitely,” Irene promised—it was not easy to calm Isaac down, and she was not about to upset him again.

After a brief silence, he asked, “Do you believe in me? If that’s so, why were you still upset with me?”

Isaac gave her a cool look—even if it was obvious the footage had been doctored, he was upset because Harvey and Irene were clearly closer now.

Naturally, he did not want anyone near his woman.

“I’ll make him leave as soon as possible.”

Irene understood that Isaac was being a little petty, but him being childish was really adorable. It was such a far cry from his usual lofty and aloof appearance, but every side of him was bewitching nonetheless.

Moreover, his childish reaction would send her heart pounding, allowing her to feel that he was flesh and blood—a person with his own feelings.

Irene left the room after changing to check on Tommy. Mrs. Watson told her that his fever flared once in the night, but she had already fed him medicine and he stayed asleep until now.

Still, Irene felt guilty as she watched Tommy—despite being his mother, she was never with him.

“I’m sorry, baby...”

“Babies get sick often,” Mrs. Watson told Irene then. “You don’t have to worry—I’ll take good care of him.”

Irene was certainly more than grateful toward Mrs. Watson—she would not be able to work without worry if not for the latter, and she would always keep that in her heart.

Since she had certain things to prepare, she left early for the hospital, having nothing but a glass of warm milk..

Stephen arrived at the hospital before she did, and Mick Gooding was there with Layla too.

“I’ll be discussing the surgery with Mick, so bring his wife to undergo a CT scan. I’ve already checked—there won’t be anyone there now, so you can do it yourself and bring the scan results back.”

“Okay,” Irene replied.

She glanced at Layla, who was dressed plainly but remained stunning anyway, and she had the air of someone affable and mild-mannered.

“Please come with me,” Irene said.

Since they met yesterday, Layla did not keep her distance, and smiled as she followed.

“You mentioned having headaches last night. Is your condition neurological?” Irene asked.

Layla nodded. “Mick told me that it’s because I have a tumor in my brain.”

Irene realized with a start just then.

Since there were not many people in the hospital at the time, Layla was the first to

get a CT scan after Stephen pulled some strings. When she was done, the scan results were also quickly passed to her.

As Irene checked it, however, her face fell.

The thing in her brain was no tumor...

Chapter 386

Layla saw the stunned expression on Irene's face.

"Is everything alright?"

She peeked at the CT scan as she spoke, but she did not understand what she was looking at.

As a doctor, however, Irene did—there was a distinct nail-sized object in Layla's hippocampus. Irene could tell from both position and the imaging that it was no

tumor.

Irene then asked, "What are your headaches like? Do they last for a while, or are they just short episodes on each occasion?"

Layla thought about it. "I don't know... I think it just happens whenever I try to remember, but I tend not to remember anything, and my head will hurt briefly if I try to focus too hard. There are occasions when it lasts, especially recently—not even medication helps."

Irene seemed to realize something then, and after another glance at the CT imaging, she said, "Let's go back now."

Layla nodded, but asked again, "I thought you look a little serious just now. Did my condition deteriorate?"

Irene shook her head. "No, you don't have to worry... By the way, you said you had a daughter? Didn't she come with you?"

"She's in Minerva—it's where we live. Mick wouldn't have returned if not for my condition." Layla said.

"But the medical facilities there should be good, right? Why stick to Dr. Carr?"

"Stephen has been a good friend of Mick for years," Layla replied. "Mick is also worried that others might mess up, that's why he brought me back. Stephen was the one who operated on me before, too."

"You knew about that surgery?" Irene was surprised that she knew—from what she could tell, the thing inside Layla's brain had been surgically implanted.

"Yes, I had the same symptoms years ago, and Stephen operated on me at the time. I felt better after he removed the old tumor, but it seems that I suffered a relapse..."

Irene realized then that Layla knew that she had surgery, but not the truth.

Who was lying to her about the tumor?

Her husband, Mick? if that was the case, why?

Layla also mentioned that she lost some memories, and whatever it was, it was implanted in the hippocampus...

That could not be a coincidence. A conspiracy, perhaps?

“Layla,” Mick called out as he approached them.

It seems that he and Stephen had agreed on another surgery, and came to check on Layla right away.

As he strode toward them, he handily grasped Layla’s and asked mildly, “Are you tired?”

“I’m fine,” Layla said softly. “It’s just a CT scan.”

Even so, Mick said, “You’re sick. I’m also worried that this surgery might be different. I

“It’s alright. I’ll be fine.” Layla gave his hand a squeeze.

Irene watched them from behind, and decided that they really loved each other, and it has to be genuine sentiment given their age.

What else could it be?

However, even as she stared at Layla from the back, she felt that the relationship was not as simple as it looked.

Returning to Stephen’s office after that, she passed Stephen the CT imaging, and he breathed a deep sigh after looking at it.

“Dr. Carr, may I ask you a question?” Irene asked just then.

Stephen gave her a look, and said as if he knew, “You saw this before coming here?”

“Yes,” Irene admitted right away.

“I can tell you, but you have to promise to keep a secret,” Stephen said as he returned to his chair.

Irene was silent—she could not promise Stephen that, because she must tell Isaac that Layla was his mother if that proved to be true. Moreover, Isaac himself was investigating the matter.

“What?” Stephen looked up at her.

“I think there’s a conspiracy involved-”

“What does that have to do with you?”

Stephen suddenly did not appreciate Irene’s behavior at this moment.

He had allowed her to be involved because he felt that she was a person who could keep secrets, but that would not happen with her current attitude.

Irene hesitated, but eventually said, “I don’t think you’re aware, sir, but I’m married. My husband’s name is Isaac Jefferson, and Layla looks a lot like her-”

“What?!”

The door suddenly swung open violently, as the person there clearly heard Irene!

Irene turned toward the door to find Mick glaring at her with crimson eyes—Layla, who was standing beside him, was stunned by his reaction too.

“Mick...”

Layla put an arm around Mick’s, and he suddenly realized that he was overagitated—Layla was still with him.

However, Irene could see that he was panicking.

Why? What was he trying to hide?

Layla asked mildly, “What got you upset, Mick?”

“No, I just misheard,” Mick quickly tried to assure her. “Did I scare you?”

Layla shook her head. “I’m fine, but you don’t look too good.”

“I’m just thirsty. Could you get me something?” Mick said.

“Okay,” Layla replied.

Having diverted her away with ease, Mick turned to level a vicious glare at Irene. “You’re Isaac Jefferson’s wife?”

Irene took a step back, and kept a hand on Stephen’s desk to keep her balance. “Yes.”

Mick narrowed his eyes and started to approach her, but Stephen quickly stepped in between them. “Calm down, Mick.”

Mick simply shoved him away. “You did this on purpose, didn’t you?”

Stephen’s face fell in disappointment right then. “How many years have we known each other, Mick? Don’t you trust me at all? Everyone would know by now if I never kept your secret.”

Mick realized that he was out of line just then, and actually looked flustered. “I’m sorry...”

“I didn’t know that she’s been married since she’s young, and to Isaac Jefferson at that,” Stephen explained then. “Maybe this is destiny. I did that operation on Yvaine Lynd, and now her daughter—in-law has become my apprentice...”

“Stop!” Mick cut him short.

Stephen actually felt that Mick was getting unreasonable just then, and tried to talk

him out of it, “Even if both myself and Irene kept quiet, there’s no hiding this. If we don’t take it out of Layla’s head, she’s going to die—she can’t bear the stress after two surgeries. Yes, she might slowly remember after it’s removed, but she would’ve eventually found out anyway. There’s no way you can hide it...”

Mick turned toward Irene with red eyes then. “Then she must not tell Isaac Jefferson.

For him, being able to hide it for another day was just fine.

Even if Layla would one day remember everything and hate him for it, he was willing to accept it—but the truth must not come to light just yet.

Murderous intent fueled him, and he growled, “You’re a doctor, Stephen. With both of us working together, we won’t leave a trace—I’ll make sure you have all the fame and riches for the rest of your life even if we get caught.”

“Mick!” Stephen was stunned by his words, and quickly told Irene, “Leave us for now, Dr. Spencer.”

Right now, Mick was seeing red and was capable of anything.

“Don’t even think about it,” Mick simply moved up, blocking the way to the door and shutting it.

On the other hand, Irene had a general idea now after hearing so much.

Stephen and Mick were good friends, and Stephen had agreed to surgically implant something that affected Layla’s memories in her brain.

While Layla was under the impression that she had undergone a surgery, the truth was that she had two—and it would be the third if they were to operate on her again

now.

Chapter 388

And right now, whatever it was in Layla’s brain must be extracted, or it would kill her.

Mick’s intent to silence Irene was a clear sign of his guilt—that Layla was in fact Yvaine Lynd. He must have renamed her after himself, but was sentimental enough about her old name to use another name that meant ‘night’..

Irene understood most of it, but not about how Mick made the switch without the Jeffersons noticing!

Keeping herself calm, she stood off against Mick and retorted, “Even if I didn’t say it, did you think you could hide your secret forever? You have two choices right now- the first is not to do anything about that thing in Layla’s mind, and keep her amnesiac even if it risks her life. The other is to extract it, though that means she would regain her memories and you won’t be able to lie your way out once she remembers. But I wonder—would she hate you more if she finds out that you killed her daughter—in-law? Unless you choose to do nothing, of course.”

Mick stumbled right then—he was certainly afraid to see his beloved hate himself.

Seeing that Mick was relenting, Stephen gave Irene a look to leave, while he walked up to stop Mick. “It was going to come apart eventually. Don’t keep making this mistake.”

“You think this is a mistake?” Mick was shocked that Stephen actually thought so.

“Yes. It’s not a mistake to love, but you denied a boy’s right to his mother’s love. That’s your mistake,” Irene voiced her thoughts right then—Mick was the reason Isaac had to live as an orphan for the most of his life.

“What would you know?!” Mick screamed right then. “The Jeffersons would have eaten her up and spit her out! Her life would’ve been worse had I not taken her with me! She would be dead if not for me!”

Irene actually could not argue against that, since Isaac’s father had definitely been murdered—if anything, Mick might be the reason Yvaine Lynd was still alive.

“Swear not to tell Isaac Jefferson, and I’ll spare you,” Mick said then.

Although it was a concession on his part, there was no way Irene could do it.

“He’s my husband. I can’t.”

Mick chuckled. “Then I have no reason to let you leave this room with your memory intact.”

Irene frowned.

However, even Stephen was glaring at her now—from his point of view, she could have walked away safely.

But now, it was out of his control—Mick knew what he wanted. Even though he had a lapse in judgment before, he was coherent now.

Mick turned toward Stephen then. “You helped me once, and you can help me again. I’m not telling you to help with murder—just make her forget everything that happened today.”

Stephen, however, did not agree to it. “Layla’s condition makes it clear that it can kill the patient. The same potentially applies to Irene too.”

“I don’t care. I won’t let her leave this room while remembering this!” Mick growled quietly.

Stephen turned toward Irene then, hoping that she would play along for now. “Just say yes.”

Irene pursed her lips but shook her head, leaving him seething. “How could you be so stubborn?”

“This isn’t me being stubborn—it’s about my position. Can I really keep it a secret forever even if I promised not to tell? How could I hide something like this from my own husband?”

“Well, don’t blame me for being nasty now...”

As he spoke, he shoved Stephen away and began storming toward Irene when the door suddenly opened.

“Mick...?”

Layla had returned with his drink, and Mick turned to find that there was someone else with her!

Irene saw him too, and knew right then that she was saved.

“Isaac!”

Chapter 389

Mick started to panic right then—why was Isaac showing up here, and with Layla at that?

Seizing the moment as Mick let his guard down, Irene rushed to Isaac’s side and told him quietly, “That woman is Yvaine Lynd.”

She knew that she just had to say her name, and Isaac would understand.

Isaac lowered his gaze at her, surprised that she would say something like that.

She knew that he was investigating Layla?

However, now was not the time for the questions—he was here because James Cross had tracked Layla to this hospital. After running into her on the walkway, they followed her here.

On the other hand, Mick was paranoid that Isaac had come to take Layla away, and kept her behind his back while glaring at Isaac warily. “What do you want?”

Irene was just about to speak when Isaac raised a hand to stop her, while gesturing for James to pass the DNA test results from before to Mick.

“What’s this?” Mick was clearly reluctant to take it, let alone look.

James shoved it at him again, “You’ll understand when you read it. Even if you stayed abroad, the Gooding family of Sunny City is still more or less a dynasty—it’s not that hard to track you down.”

“What...”

They found him already? How did they do it so quickly?!

What on earth was going on here?!

Mick then turned toward Irene. “You told him?!”

“You were keeping me here,” Irene countered. “And I wouldn’t even have the time.”

She knew that in truth, Isaac had already been investigating Layla.

James appeared to hold contempt for Mick’s behavior. Pointing at the DNA test results, he said, “You’d better read that.”

Mick had a foreboding feeling just then, and read it, stumbling backward when he saw that it was a DNA test.

Layla quickly rushed to his side, holding him up. “What’s wrong, Mick?”

Mick’s face was pale even as he stiffened and kept reading, and he saw that the test confirmed Layla and Isaac were mother and child.

His fingers loosened, and the papers drifted down the floor.

When Layla reached for it, Mick quickly picked them up and tore everything into pieces. “Lies. All lies.”

“Mick?” Layla watched him uneasily, convinced that he was being overly dramatic. What happened?”

Mick squeezed her hand. “It’s fine—it’s nothing. Let’s go home.”

As he put a hand around Layla’s back, however, she could feel his body shaking.

Even so, she softly assured him, “It’s alright. I’ll stay by your side whatever happens.”

Those words left Irene turning toward Isaac—even though he remained mostly impassive, she could see his cheek stiffening for a split second.

At the same time, Layla and Mick reached the doorway. “Excuse me, but you’re in the way.”

Isaac stood there motionlessly, however, and merely kept his eyes on her calmly.

James felt indignant for Isaac, and walked up, saying, “Ma’am, you’re actually—”

“James,” Isaac suddenly said, cutting him short. “Let them go.”

Irene understood his reasoning—keeping Layla was pointless if she did not even remember him.

But he must be torn inside.

His mother was right there, but she did not recognize him.

There was no way he was unaffected—he was just hiding everything inside.

Unbeknownst to any of them, Layla turned around to look at Isaac after heading into the distance.

An unusual look in her eyes appeared for a moment, but she soon turned away, and it was as if nothing ever happened.

Meanwhile, Irene walked over to Isaac and held his hand while turning to Stephen.” May I take the day off, Dr. Carr?”

Given the mess just now, Stephen certainly knows that Irene would not be in the mood to work.

“Yeah,” he said with a side.

Irene tugged at Isaac’s hand. “Let’s go.”

With that, they left the hospital, with James driving.

It was eerily silent in the car—Isaac never spoke, so no one did.

Nonetheless, Irene eventually broke the silence.

“Your mother doesn’t remember you due to something surgically implanted in her brain. I don’t know what it is, but I have a hunch that it hampers her memories.”

Isaac turned toward Irene right then!

Chapter 390

“How did you know?”

That question had been nagging Isaac for a while.

Irene explained, “I saw Layla Gooding’s photo on your desk, and she looked just like Stephen Carr’s photo of a special patient. Luckily, I have Stephen’s trust, and I managed to make contact with her. My guess was that you’re investigating her, so I wanted to help you and find out what’s her deal.”

Isaac’s gaze softened right then.

She had insisted on coming to the hospital to investigate Layla-she was helping him in secret without him knowing.

Reaching out to take her dainty hand in his, he gave it a squeeze and said, “Thank you.”

He had actually misunderstood that she was so obsessed with work she could ignore Tommy’s illness-but it was not entirely the case.

Irene smiled. “We’re married-you don’t have to thank me. Also, there’s not much to worry about, since your mother’s memories would return once that thing in her brain is taken out. She’ll definitely remember you... also, I was going to tell you tonight after I got to the bottom of this tonight. I didn’t expect to come instead.”

James suddenly turned and asked, “So, Mick Gooding was the one who put that thing in Yvaine’s brain?”

Irene nodded. “He and Stephen are good friends, and Stephen was the one who operated on her. The reason Mick returned to the country with Isaac’s mother is because she was getting frequent headaches, and not even medication can help now. It might even kill her at any moment...”

“Kill her?!” James stiffened and turned toward Isaac. “Sir...”

Isaac was not reacting much, but he was squeezing Irene’s hand, and she could sense his anxiety. Before she could speak, James said, “Sir, isn’t it likely that Mick Gooding would stop your mother from getting a surgery, just to stop her from remembering?”

“No,” Irene said. “He’s genuinely in love with her, and wouldn’t risk her life just to stop her from remembering. From what I can tell, he’s probably agreed to it already.”

James thought about it for a while. “Does that mean everything would come to light once she regains her memories after the surgery?”

Irene nodded. “Yes.”

“And Layla Gooding is the pseudonym Mick Gooding gave Yvaine Lynd?” James added.

“Probably,” Irene replied, but that was just a hunch given current circumstances.

Over at Sunny City, Lulu Adams received a call from Ricky Spencer, asking for her address.

She was still muddle-headed, so she told him without thinking too much into it and fell asleep.

After a while, her doorbell rang, and she answered the door in her pajamas... to find Ricky, standing there. with what appeared to be breakfast.

She thought she was seeing things, and rubbed her eyes to find that he was really there.

She did it again for good measure, even pinching herself.

It hurt, so it was probably not a dream?

“Ricky, what...”

Ricky grinned. “You told me to come, so I took the last train here.”

Lulu was left speechless for a while. “I was just kidding.”

Ricky shrugged. “Wasn’t a joke to me.”

Seeing that he must have rushed here immediately, Lulu stood aside. “Just come in for now.”

“I bought breakfast,” Ricky said. “Let’s eat.”

Lulu stared at him although she sat down at the table with him, and said, “You can have it. I haven’t even washed my face.”

Ricky simply smiled. “Then I’ll wait. I bought it because I wanted to share it with you.”

Lulu was once again left speechless.

She meant it as a joke, but Ricky was way too serious!

Leaving for a while to wash up and get changed, she returned to sit at the dining table, telling Ricky seriously, “Don’t do this ever again. You gave me a real scare.”

“What, because I’m ugly?” Ricky asked.

Lulu shook her head. “No, because you’re dumb enough to take a joke way too seriously.”

Ricky thought nothing of it. “This is worth it.”

Lulu gave him a look. Feeling that he was getting too flirty, she decided to chase him off. “Go home after you’re finished eating.”

Ricky blinked, and put up a miserable look. “I didn’t sleep at all. You’re not even letting me sleep?”

Lulu frowned. What was with that phrasing? How was she not letting him sleep?

“Get a room in some hotel. I don’t have a room to spare.”

Her house only had one bedroom, after all.

Ricky agreed to it easily nonetheless. "Fine, I'll check in at a hotel, now let's eat-the food is getting cold."

Lulu actually felt a little sorry that she was making Ricky sleep at a hotel after he traveled all the way here.

Even so, she did not relent.

Back in Cloud City, Irene and Isaac had just returned home when Mrs. Watson greeted them and said, " Someone just sent a wedding invitation."

"From whom?" Irene asked before Isaac could.