

Runaway 901

Chapter 901

It was midnight, and a sea breeze blew over the crystalline surface of the waters, sending the salty odor in the air up to the shore.

It was so cold that anyone would be shivering, but the police officers hiding in the steel containers at the port remained unaffected. Their eyes were sharp and focused as they monitored the situation outside.

They were all concentrating on a certain ship, thanks to a tip from their mole. Once there was movement, everyone would storm it and make arrests.

Because their quarries were planning to move the ship to international waters to make their trade, they had to make their move ahead of time—mobility was poor at sea, and they must apprehend everyone in one swift stroke before the ship left!

Once the ship started its engine, the lieutenant barked orders to move!

They surrounded the ship and kept it berthed in the port, and moved in to make arrests.

Everyone on the ship was an outlaw, trading objects and substances that hurt others as much as themselves. Most of them were murderers too, and if they were arrested, it was either a death sentence or years—even decades—of prison time.

Naturally, they would not go quietly.

A brutal fight immediately ensued!

The crack of gunfire echoed beneath the night, leaving the heart pounding!

This was going to be a sleepless night as Martin led his men to board the ship, taking point since he was the captain.

Fortunately, despite the officers taking some losses, every person on the ship was arrested without stragglers.

Martin also suffered a flesh wound, but it did not hamper his movement at all after he disinfected it and had it bandaged.

However, this was not the time for rest—the gang leader was nowhere to be found.

Martin then pointed at a black hooded figure crouching near the wall and said, "I'll question that one."

The black hooded figure was soon taken to an interrogation room, and Martin told one of his officers, "I'm going to make a call to tell Lulu I'm safe."

"Yes, cap!"

Martin stepped outside to make the call, and Lulu answered soon enough. "Hello?"

"It's me," Martin said. "Come over to the precinct, tell them that you're bringing me dinner."

Lulus quickly understood what he was getting at. "Okay."

With that done, Martin returned to the interrogation room.

It appeared that the suspect was not saying a word despite being caught red-handed for trading contraband.

He was certainly a tough nut to crack, refusing to cooperate.

Soon, Lulu arrived at the precinct with some lunch boxes.

The squad was especially careful around her since she was pregnant.

"Hello, ma'am! The captain is in interrogation room no. 3. I'll get him for you—just wait in his office."

Lulu quickly waved the officer off. "No, it's fine. I can go there myself. It's been a long night for everyone, hasn't it? It's almost daybreak, so you must be hungry. I've brought a lot of meatballs, so have some too."

With that, she put the lunch boxes she brought on the table.

Everyone was certainly famished at this hour.

"Thanks, ma'am."

"You're welcome." Lulu smiled. "Eat up—I'll go check on Martin now."

"Okay!"

With that Lulu brought the remaining lunch box with her to the interrogation room.

As she opened the door, the man in the black hoodie was left gaping when he saw her, his pupils dilating!

Martin then turned to the officer who was in charge of taking the suspect's testimony. "You can go take a break now."

The officer then saw Lulu and put away his notebook. "Yes, cap. Hey, Lulu."

"There are some meatballs outside. You can have some," Lulu replied.

"Lulu..." Ricky began.

However, Martin promptly strode up to him and clasped a hand over his mouth, waiting until the other officer left before leaning in to whisper a warning into Ricky's ear. "Keep it down if you want to talk to Lulu."

After the other officer closed the door, Martin turned off the cameras too.

He had let Lulu in, using the excuse of bringing food because she had already resigned.

The rule during suspect interrogation was that the suspects were not allowed to meet anyone before they confessed, let alone someone they knew.

And Martin naturally did not want the others to know that Lulu knew Ricky.

"Talk. Just pretend I'm not here," he said, sitting down at the table while eating the meatballs.

"Ricky." Lulu had a hard time believing that the tanned, scrawny man whose wrists were cuffed to the table was Ricky.

He even had a scar on his face!

Likewise, Ricky was staring in disbelief at Lulu's swelling belly!

Chapter 902

Ricky's whole body was trembling as he rasped, "Who's the father?"

Lulu walked up to him but did not answer, instead asking, "Were you involved in that trafficking ring?"

Ricky's eyes, however, were red and fixed on her. "Did you kiss and make up with Zachary?"

Martin's fork paused just as he was about to reach for another meatball, but he soon carried on as if he

heard nothing.

At the same time, Lulu was staring patiently at Ricky. “Don’t worry about me. You have to tell me everything right now, so that I know how to help you—”

“Hah!” Ricky snorted. “You’re going to help me? How? Can you bend the law to your will?!”

Lulu put a hand on his shoulder. “Ricky...”

“Don’t say my name!” Ricky bellowed in agitation.

Martin looked up then. “You don’t have to talk if you don’t want to do it. Lulu, you can go now.”

Lulu turned to him. “Martin, give me some time...”

“Don’t you see that he’s being hostile?” Martin pointed out. “You won’t come to an agreement with him anytime soon.”

Ricky then glanced between Martin and Lulu.

Sharp as ever, he asked, “You... And him...?”

“We’re married,” Martin said.

Ricky was left dumbfounded, the rage in his eyes slowly fading, leaving only shock and disbelief!

Lulu then told Ricky, “He’s telling the truth. We’re married... and I’m having his child.”

“Hah. Haha!” Ricky laughed ironically, and at himself. “As long as it’s not Zachary Slate.”

He would never have been able to accept it if Lulu made up with Zachary, after Zachary and his family hurt her so much.

If Lulu still forgave Zachary after all that, Ricky would probably die from a heart attack!

Ricky studied Martin, who appeared solemn and dignified in his police uniform, which certainly gave a sense of security.

Ricky slowly understood why Lulu would choose Martin instead of him.

What he wanted and yearned so much for was ultimately not his.

It was a dream shattered, with nothing left for him.

Deflated and looking like he was done with life, he groaned, “Just ask whatever you want to know!”

—

It turned out that after he left Cloud City to look for Lulu, he had tried to start his own business while doing so.

However, he was swindled of all his money soon after he left and was bullied terribly, ending up homeless and wandering the streets.

He had thought about going back and contacting Irene, but he was too embarrassed to do so when he had nothing to his name!

“Ricky, tell me you didn’t do anything bad,” Lulu said, looking him straight in the eye.

Nonetheless, Ricky bluntly said, “I did.”

“What, did you kill someone?” Lulu asked half-jokingly.

Ricky, however, paused and murmured, “Yeah...”

His expression was cold and jaded—the bright and cheerful youth from before was no longer seen.

Right now, he did not even seem to care about a thing.

Lulu started to stumble backward at the revelation, and Martin had to quickly catch her.

Clenching on Martin’s hand, her voice was shaking. “W-What should we do?”

How could they get Ricky out of this? If there was someone who could do it, who would it be?

She was so nervous that she did not know how firmly she was holding onto Martin.

But despite Lulu’s nails breaking skin, Martin remained unmoved and said mildly, “Calm down. You’re pregnant!”

Ricky looked at Lulu in turn and said calmly, “It’s fine. I get to see you, and see that you’re happy. Don’t feel sorry for me—I put myself on this path and I won’t blame everyone. It’s my destiny.”

Lulu could not think, let alone decide what to do.

Martin said, "It's not like we are completely out of options."

Lulu's eyes lit up right then and she turned toward Martin with eyes full of hope. "Do you know what to do?"

"He can confess to everything and fight for leniency. And most importantly, we still haven't arrested his ringleader," Martin replied, before turning to Ricky. "If you can help us apprehend him, that's a contribution on your part, and it would definitely help immensely. There's also the chance for you to gain parole for good behavior while you're serving your sentence, and that's the best option for now."

Chapter 903

The glow in Lulu's eyes slowly faded. She murmured, "But... is he still going to prison?"

"That's inevitable, but it's better than being executed." Martin sighed, then turned to Ricky. "What do you think?"

Lulu turned to Ricky too. "Ricky..."

"I'll do it," Ricky said very calmly.

He knew how grave his crimes were, and no matter what he did to atone, he would not be free from punishment.

In fact, Martin's idea was the best.

"Go home. Leave the rest to me," Martin said, helping her out of the interrogation room.

Lulu understood that she would cause trouble for Martin if he stayed too long as well, and she was certainly not worried with him in charge.

Even so...

She turned toward Ricky, who pursed his lips and smiled. "You should go."

With that, Lulu left the interrogation room, and Martin walked with her out of the precinct.

"I can't go yet," he told her. "But you haven't slept well, have you? Try to get some sleep. I'll buy breakfast when I get home."

"It's fine," Lulu said. "What do you want to eat? I'll cook."

“Not while you’re pregnant,” Martin replied. “Just listen to me and get some rest. I’ll be here to help Ricky—like I said, the only thing we can do is try our best to reduce his sentence.”

Lulu nodded, while Martin returned inside the precinct.

He wrote a list of all charges against Ricky after he confessed and received approval from his higher ups to have Ricky embedded in the crime ring he was in.

With that done, he released Ricky, who pretended to have escaped and made his way back to his gang, but now as a mole.

He would now be passing information to the police to help them arrest the ringleader!

—

When Lulu returned home, she sat lethargically on the edge of her bed for a long while.

Deciding that it was about time, she got up and headed to the kitchen to cook.

She was done just as Martin got home. “Wash your hands. Breakfast is ready!”

Martin had actually bought breakfast, and he said, “I told you that you didn’t have to cook, didn’t I?”

“I can’t let you come home without eating something warm, can I?” Lulu replied as she put the food on the table.

Martin put the food he bought on the table too, then headed to the washroom to wash his hands.

Lulu took everything out of the box and laid it on the table—it would be a waste if they did not eat that too.

As Martin returned and took a seat, Lulu ladled a bowl of soup for him. “Drink something warm before you eat.”

Martin drank a spoonful. “It’s good.”

Lulu sat down as well, clutching her stomach and gently rubbing it.

“Martin...” she murmured.

“Yeah?” Martin looked up.

She returned his gaze as she said, “Thank you.”

“Why are you being this formal?” Martin replied. “We’re married.”

“I...” She was hesitant to continue. “Uh...”

“There was a love triangle?” Martin asked nonchalantly.

Lulu was not at all surprised since Martin had always been sharp—he must have noticed something, given Ricky’s outburst.

She felt at once enfeebled and embarrassed. “I only thought of him as a younger brother.”

“Thought so,” Martin replied. “You’re not into brats.”

Lulu rested her chin on her hand then, watching him as she asked, “Well then, who do you think I’m into?”

Martin put some salad on her plate, saying, “Me, of course.”

Lulu giggled in amusement and admitted, “Ricky came on this path because of me. He wouldn’t have left Cloud City if I never left...”

“It’s fate,” Martin said, looking her in the eye. “Don’t assume responsibility for the mistakes of others. I don’t like it when you shackle yourself over everything.”

Lulu reached out to hold his hand. “Are you my instructor in life? Why does that cheer me up so much?”

Chapter 904

Smiling, Martin said, “You’re being overly sentimental. That’s why you feel shackled.”

Lulu smiled too. “Is that flattery I hear?”

“Not really,” Martin replied earnestly. “Being too sentimental isn’t good, because you’ll be easily affected by everyone and everything around you. I find that to live unconstrained, a clear mind is needed first and foremost.”

Lulu frowned. Did that not mean said person would become too unsentimental?

A person should at least have a couple of people they cared about, should they not?

Watching Martin just then, she said, "If you're that calm, I guess you'll remarry right after I die. All women are the same, aren't they?"

Martin was speechless for a moment and stared back at her. "How did you manage to warp my words that badly?"

Lulu laughed. "I'm just kidding, You should look at your face."

Seeing that she was laughing, Martin laughed too.

Her smile was fake back when they first got married, but he could feel that it was earnest now.

He happily put more salad on her plate. "Alright. Time to eat."

"Yeah," Lulu replied and picked up her fork.

—

Martin went to bed right after dinner. He was very sleepy since he went without sleep for the entire night.

At the same time, Lulu cleaned up the table and the kitchen.

Not wanting to bother him, she prepared herself for a stroll—her doctor told her before that it would help ease her delivery.

She headed to their room to get her coat when she saw Martin's bandaged arm.

She raised her brow and walked around the bed, watching him.

Martin, who was a light sleeper, opened his eyes groggily when he sensed someone watching him.

As his eyes focused on her face, he murmured, "Lulu?"

"You're hurt," she said.

"Oh, it's just a flesh wound. I'm fine," he assured her.

Lulu felt guilty nonetheless. "I've really failed as a wife. I didn't even know that you're hurt."

“Hey,” Martin said, taking her hand. “You’re not at fault. It’s mine, because I didn’t tell you.”

“Does it hurt?” Lulu asked.

“No,” Martin said, shaking his head. “What’s a flesh wound to a big man like me?”

“You’re still flesh and blood,” Lulu pointed out, but she leaned in to give him a kiss on the forehead. “Alright, sweet dreams. I won’t wake you up again.”

Martin still had work in the afternoon—he could only sleep in the morning.

With that, Lulu left the bedroom and gently closed the door behind her.

As she took her stroll, she took out her phone and called Irene.

Irene happened to be in the courtyard with her baby, who could now stand but not walk.

Whenever she tried to draw him forward, he would simply start to drop forward, though Irene managed to catch his little frame each time.

She had a carpet laid out, but the fall might hurt him nonetheless.

“Irene? You have a call.” Sheryl Harris approached her with her phone just then.

Irene scooped her baby up with one hand and took the phone in the other. “Who is it?”

“Lulu,” Sheryl replied.

Irene quickly answered, “Hello?”

“I have something to tell you, but you need to prepare yourself.” Lulu’s tone was grim.

There was no hiding this, so she decided to tell Irene sooner—so that Irene could prepare herself mentally.

Irene quickly remembered what they talked about in their last call.

“Is it about Ricky? Tell me!”

“He’s a criminal,” Lulu replied.

Irene's fingers clenched on her phone, calming herself down even as she asked, "What did he do? Is it serious?"

Chapter 905

Lulu replied, "Yeah, it's serious."

Irene heaved a deep sigh. "How bad is it?"

"He's involved in murder," Lulu said shortly.

Irene's face fell, and she quickly sat down with her baby since her legs suddenly caved.

The baby was not staying put, however, and was flailing around, clapping her cheek one moment and grabbing her hair the next.

"I just want you to be prepared, Irene," Lulu said then. "That's why I'm telling you this. Martin will do his best to help Ricky too."

"I'm counting on both of you," Irene replied. "Try to help him whenever possible. I can't go over there right now, with both my children here and Isaac gone..."

"Don't worry," Lulu assured her. "Martin and I will do our best."

"Yeah," Irene murmured softly. "Thank you."

"It's fine," Lulu told her.

Hanging up, Irene carried her baby back into the mansion, but it seemed that he was reluctant, and he started crying as soon as they stepped inside.

As such, she had to stay outside and keep teaching him how to walk.

That was when a car drove into the compound, and Irene looked up to see James Cross hurrying to her. "What are you doing here?"

James appeared hesitant to speak even as he watched her, so she said, "You can tell me, whatever it is."

Even so, James only seemed to scowl harder, and he stood there appearing flustered.

Whatever it was, it must be very difficult for him to tell her.

Sensing that it was serious, Irene asked, “What is it? Why are you panicking so much?”

James then quietly said, “Mr. Jefferson is in trouble.”

Irene wobbled, stumbling a step backward unsteadily.

She felt as if her heart was clenching, while James quickly helped her to the bench nearby and took her baby off her hands.

“Mrs. Jefferson?” he asked tentatively.

However, Irene was still clutching her chest—she just found out that Ricky was in trouble, and now Isaac was too.

She really could not take it, and she certainly could understand why James was hesitant to speak.

The man had always been calm and composed—it had to be something very serious for him to lose composure.

“What happened? Just tell me,” she said, trying to sound as calm as possible.

As James looked at her, he said, “We shouldn’t get ahead of ourselves. We haven’t found him yet, so we’re not sure what happened to him—”

“What do you mean you haven’t found him yet?!” Irene exclaimed, staring fixedly at him.

James averted his eyes right then. “His plane crashed.”

“What?!” Irene’s pupils dilated as she gaped in disbelief and denial.

“I’ve already sent our people over. Local police are involved too,” James said.

All Irene could feel right then was her chest hurting and the taste of blood pumping in her mouth.

She clenched her knuckles, her nails digging into her palm as she asked in anguish, “Was there no other information to go on with?”

“No,” James replied, hanging his head.

Irene felt pain even as she breathed. She cried, “Where did his plane crash? I have to go there!”

“Mrs. Jefferson—” James began.

Irene waved him off and cut him short. "Don't try to talk me out of this."

"I'll go there," James said regardless. "You have to stay with your children."

Irene looked up into his eyes. "I have to stay with him too."

This was Isaac they were talking about!

James understood that too.

However, they did not know if the plane crash was an accident or engineered, so they must keep a constant eye on the children.

At the same time, Irene's head was working rapidly while she took deep breaths to calm herself down.

Soon, she managed to compose herself and said, "I'm taking our children to Franconia."

Isaac had told her before that he wanted to move the family there, since they had a house and everything else.

Like James, she was worried that it was unsafe to stay in Zidonia.

James thought about it and agreed with the idea. "I'll make the arrangements."

Irene nodded. "Make it fast."

Every second was grilling for her now—she wanted Isaac found as soon as possible, but she also had to consider their children!

"James," she murmured frailly, yearning for some comfort just then. "Is he going to be alright?"

Chapter 906

James did not dare to look at Irene, let alone answer her.

It was not as if he refused to offer her any comfort.

The truth was that he did not come straight to Irene after he was informed about Isaac's plane crashing, but instead, he sent anyone they had over to the scene immediately.

They in turn confirmed the plane had crashed within Dunesia borders, and just before James arrived at the hilltop mansion, he was further informed that they found the wreckage on Darcy's Peak, the highest

peak of the country.

It was common knowledge that while airplanes were the safest way to travel, a crash was always lethal!

That was why he did not dare to give Irene an answer—her disappointment would be worse if he gave her hope!

Fortunately, Irene waved him off feebly. “I get it. Just make the arrangements... Can you get us out before sundown?”

“Yes,” James replied.

Irene took her baby back from James just then, but it felt like her chest was hollowed out—as if her heart was taken away.

She tightened her hold on her baby, as if seeking a handle on reality.

The baby started to struggle from the discomfort, but Irene never noticed until he started to cry.

Coming to her senses, she quickly eased her hold around her baby just as Sheryl came out of the mansion.

“What’s wrong?” Sheryl asked.

Irene looked at Sheryl blankly and shook her head. “Pack our things, Mom.”

“What? Why?” Sheryl asked in surprise.

“We’re moving to Franconia,” Irene said.

Despite Irene doing her best to pull herself together, Sheryl immediately noticed that something was wrong when she saw the weariness in Irene’s expression. “What happened?”

Irene did not want to tell the truth, afraid that Sheryl might collapse from the truth.

“Isaac’s been wanting to migrate to Franconia, but we stayed because of my work,” Irene said instead. “Now that I’ve resigned, we could go there now—it would be convenient for Isaac too, since the Remy headquarters is there.”

Sheryl thought that Irene was making sense, and yet...

“Do we have to leave in such a hurry?” Sheryl asked.

“Yeah.” Irene nodded. “We’ll be going today.”

Sheryl leered at her suspiciously. “Why do I have this feeling that something’s wrong with you?”

After all, Irene had never once mentioned living in Franconia, but they were now leaving out of the blue?

The sudden urgency was certainly unusual.

Irene pursed her lips and tried to smile, intending to reassure Sheryl.

However, Irene’s smile was uglier than a crying face, to the point that Sheryl was snorting. “Don’t smile if you can’t—you look hideous. I won’t ask anything if you don’t want to tell me anyway. I’ll start packing up.”

Then, as Sheryl started to head inside, Irene called out to her. “Mom? Can you take my baby too?”

Sheryl turned and did so.

The baby was beaming right then—he was used to Sheryl carrying him, and he was happier than when Irene carried him around.

While Sheryl was busy wiping his drool, Irene arched her back, pressing both chest firmly on her chest.

Sheryl glanced at Irene, and there was a brief look of worry in her eyes before she sighed and returned into the mansion with the baby.

Meanwhile, the dam on Irene’s emotions collapsed instantly, and she felt such a crushing weight her spine could snap.

The sun was right overhead, but all she felt was coldness around her.

Her whole body shivered as she stood alone, spacing out for so long her legs went numb.

She was staring blankly into thin air, her vision blurring even as she looked at people.

When she got to her feet, her head went dizzy and she blacked out, falling to the ground right then.

Eagle saw her fall unconscious and he quickly carried her into the mansion.

Sheryl panicked when he saw them—what on earth happened that could leave Irene blacking out?

“Shouldn’t we take her to the hospital?”

Aside from being an incredible martial artist, Eagle was slightly learned in medical knowledge as well.

He naturally could tell that Irene was actually fine, and that she was just unconscious from mental distress.

“She just needs some rest. She’ll recover soon,” he said.

Sheryl quickly told Eagle to take Irene to Tommy’s room, but just as he was about to put Irene down, she suddenly opened her eyes wide. “Isaac...”

Chapter 907

Eagle was not startled by Irene suddenly regaining consciousness. Instead, he quietly said, “It’s good to have you back, ma’am.”

Irene’s eyes focused on him just then. “What happened to me?”

“You were unconscious,” Eagle told her.

Irene scanned around the room as she slowly remembered what happened and started to sit up.

Seeing that she was still frail, Eagle reached out to help her, but she waved him off. “It’s alright.”

She could sit up on her own.

Eagle paused and withdrew his hands, clasping them over his back as he usually did.

Looking at him just then, Irene murmured, “Eagle...”

“Yes, ma’am. Just say the word, and I’ll get it done,” Eagle replied respectfully.

“There’s something I need you to do,” Irene said. “But I have another request before that.”

“I’m listening, ma’am.”

“Can you come with me to Franconia?” Irene asked.

Since Isaac was the one who hired Eagle, they must have signed an agreement beforehand.

However, she did not know if Eagle could escort her to Franconia under those terms, and she really needed him.

Though Eagle had only recently become her bodyguard, his abilities were beyond question!

“Of course, ma’am.” Eagle replied. “It’s in my contract that I’ll escort you anywhere you go.”

“Thank you.” Irene pursed her lips. “I need you very much right now.”

Eagle lowered his eyes to avoid looking at her. “Yes, ma’am.”

“Now go to the hospital and bring Mrs. Watson home.”

Mrs. Watson had recovered considerably, and while Irene would like to let her rest further, they could not afford to wait before they left the country.

“Ask her if she’s willing to come with us to Franconia,” Irene added. “I’ll be covering for her medical expenses as well. Ask our old chauffeur as well, and tell him to pack everything if he says yes. If he says no, we’ll pay him what he’s due immediately.”

After all, she planned to bring everyone over at once, because these were the people she and Sheryl were familiar with.

She was worried that Sheryl might not adapt to a foreign place since she did not know the language.

The children could slowly learn and she could hire a tutor to instruct Tommy and Sheryl.

However, all of that would take time.

“Yes, ma’am,” Eagle replied and left.

While he was gone, Irene helped Sheryl pack up their daily necessities and some of her own clothes.

She then stared at Isaac’s wardrobe for a moment and helped him pack some too.

What if they found him and settled down afterward? He would be without his clothes!

—

James soon returned, but Irene was not done packing.

“You’re done already?” she asked.

“You should come to our office before going to Franconia,” James told her.

“Why?” Irene asked in confusion.

And at this juncture?

“We don’t know when Mr. Jefferson will return,” James replied. “That’s why I enforced a media blackout. I don’t want everyone to be worried once it goes public.”

Everyone would stay in line under Isaac’s leadership but would inevitably get restless with their imagination if they realized that Isaac was in trouble.

Irene did not know that, but she could tell that James spoke sense. “What do I do?”

“Just show your face and say that Mr. Jefferson is letting you learn management,” James said.

“Okay.” Irene nodded.

However, James saw that she was too pale, and he asked, “Would you like to put on some makeup?”

Irene nodded again. “Wait for me here.”

She went upstairs and put on a suit—her only formal business wear.

She then put on a thick layer of makeup to cover her paleness before heading downstairs.

James saw that her appearance was fitting and he said, “Let’s go.”

They left the house and James drove her to the Twinrise Enterprises headquarters, parking the car in the basement.

James turned to look at her just then. “Stay calm.”

She was a little nervous, but she managed to gather herself. “I’m alright.”

With Isaac missing, she knew she must help him keep things together for now to prevent unrest.

She heaved a long sigh, opened the door, and alighted.

Puffing her chest and rearing her chin, she headed toward the elevator, with James in tow.

The elevator soon arrived.

Chapter 908

As Irene strode into the elevator, James followed her like he usually did with Isaac.

“Mrs. Jefferson.” Some of the employees in the building greeted Irene when she passed them.

Irene would respond with a small nod and a faint smile.

Then, arriving outside Isaac’s office, she said a little too loudly, “James, inform everyone that we will be having a meeting soon.”

And with that, she headed inside Isaac’s office right away.

Having heard that, some of the employees slid up to James, asking, “Mr. Cross? Is Mrs. Jefferson really calling for a meeting? What’s going on here?”

“Mr. Jefferson mentioned before that she would start learning management of the company,” he replied.

“She’ll probably announce that at the meeting and properly introduce herself.”

“Really?” someone exclaimed softly. “But isn’t she the director of Hotmesh Research? I just saw the video of her being interviewed days ago. It had a lot of views.”

“She resigned,” James said.

“I see!” Someone else came up, butting in. “Such a shame... Everyone was saying Mr. Jefferson married her for her looks, but it turns out that she’s already so accomplished despite being so young.”

James quickly added, “She spent time studying at Mead Clinic in Minerva.”

“Oh, I know that place. It’s the world’s top medical research center,” yet another person added.

People were starting to flock around James and they were all very very interested in Irene, mainly because she was Isaac’s domestic partner.

“That’s the one,” James replied. “Once she returned to Zidonia, she took up the post of director of Hotmesh Research, and led the successful development of an artificial heart. She’s a famous heart surgeon as well, but since both her and Mr. Jefferson were too busy at work and could not spend time at home, she decided to resign to take care of their family. However, she’s also used to working and

cannot calm down, and since Mr. Jefferson is heading to Remy now, he's letting her learn a couple things about company management while she's free."

News of the successful development of the artificial heart was everywhere, and almost everyone at Twinrise Enterprises had seen that video interview.

Irene had certainly been down-to-earth and candid, and judging from her response to the interviewer's questions, she was not one who hogged the spotlight.

She also did not claim all credit, and everyone naturally had a good impression after watching the interview.

Most importantly, while they all believed that she married Isaac thanks to her good looks, she actually depended entirely on her own abilities to win his heart!

"Alright, that's enough. It's time for the meeting," James said then, cutting them off or he might say too much and let on his attention.

With that, the crowd around him dispersed and shuffled into the conference room.

Still, there were those who commented that a medical professional might not be able to learn company management.

—

In Isaac's office, Irene was standing in front of his desk, her fingers brushing over it.

As she looked up to his seat, she seemed to see Isaac in it, working like he usually did.

His face looked so vivid...

Still, the image soon faded and Irene lowered her eyes in disappointment.

Soon, the door opened and Elliot entered. "Mrs. Jefferson? Mr. Cross asked me to inform you that everyone is in the conference room now."

Withdrawing her hand from the desk, Irene said, "Okay."

"Should I take you to it?" Elliot asked, worried that Irene was not familiar with the office building.

However, though Irene had visited before and knew where it was, she did not refuse Elliot either.

“Sure,” she replied evenly and strode out, heading straight to the conference room.

Arriving outside the door, the secretary quickly walked up and opened the door.

As Irene strode inside, everyone got to their feet.

She headed straight to the main chair, casting a sweeping glance over the crowd of around twenty, and she gestured. “Please be seated.”

Chapter 909

James brought Irene a chair as well, and after she sat down, she said with an even tone, “There’s no cause to worry, everyone, and you can be candid too. I’m not here to take a job, and I actually don’t know a thing about managing this company, so I’m just here to learn. There would probably be plenty of things which I’d need everyone’s instructions and guidance for.”

It was just the right tone of voice to indicate the purpose of the meeting.

“You’re giving us too much credit, ma’am.”

Everyone was already aware of that since James had already told them, and no one was about to provoke her when she was their boss’s wife.

In fact, they were perfectly respectful since she was not throwing her weight around, and she spoke with such earnestness that there was nothing much to nitpick.

Smiling, Irene continued, “Isaac has told me that you’re all the backbone of the company, and that I’ll definitely learn something from everyone here. But I resigned to take care of my family, so I’ll only come to learn when I’m idling. For one, I can kill time with this, and he always seems so busy—I wouldn’t even know if he’s really busy or faking it.”

One of the executives raised his hand then and explained, “Actually, ma’am, there’s already plenty to do here, while Mr. Jefferson also had to attend video conferences to oversee Remy abroad. He had to travel this time because of a company acquisition going awry. It’s a branch company issue and there are people in charge, but Mr. Jefferson is still needed for executive decisions.”

Irene’s hand grasped her knees beneath the table.

She never did learn about the nature of Isaac’s work, and she only knew that he was very busy.

Her heart was stricken with guilt just then—she really should have resigned earlier to take care of home, so that he would not have to worry too much.

Be that as it may, she refrained from letting any of her insecurity show at all. She joked, “No one here is covering for him, right?”

“Don’t worry, ma’am,” another executive quickly said. “Mr. Jefferson is always too busy to have time for anything else.”

Irene pointed at them and smiled just then. “Are you sure about that? I think I wouldn’t be aware if he’s having an affair, but what about you?”

“Uh...”

“Ma’am...”

“It’s alright, calm down. I’m just joking.” Irene kept smiling.

The joke was to ease the tension, while insinuating that she did not just come to learn—she was here to prevent Isaac from having an affair!

“Anyway, the main purpose I’m here today is to explain that I’ll be here to learn about managing the company and to formally greet everyone,” Irene said as she rose to her feet. “That’s all for today—dismissed.”

As she strode out of the conference room, everyone else followed suit.

Inevitably, there were small whispers too.

“So Mrs. Jefferson is here to keep an eye on Mr. Jefferson.”

“He’s probably not having an affair, right? He’s always so busy...”

“Hey, you never know. Hadn’t you heard what Mrs. Jefferson said? Would we know if she doesn’t?”

“True. She shares a bed with Mr. Jefferson—she would know him better than we do!”

“So learning to manage the company was just a smokescreen. She wants to keep an eye on the boss.”

“I won’t blame her. Mr. Jefferson is young, handsome, and rich. Women are all too willing to throw themselves into his arms.”

“That’s right. Is there ever a man who isn’t fickle?”

“You’re a man too...”

The man snorted. "Like you never thought about it. It's just that you haven't done it yet."

In the end, the spark between spouses tends to fade with time, and thoughts would get astray, the key difference being a person's self-restraint: some would decide to go for it when the desire hits, just as some would restrain themselves despite feeling the desire.

It is the only difference that matters.

—

As Irene got in the car at the basement parking lot, she heaved a small sigh of relief—she had been on edge the whole time.

Turning to James, she asked, "How was my performance?"

Chapter 910

James glanced at Irene through the rearview mirror, but he was assuredly surprised by her composure and poise at the meeting just now.

"Very good," he replied.

Irene's smile faded at that and she rubbed her cheeks firmly.

She had been smiling constantly while she had been upstairs, because she had to fake it.

With Isaac's whereabouts unknown, she has to muster her spirit.

Returning to the hilltop mansion, she saw that Eagle had just returned with Mrs. Watson as well.

After alighting, Mrs. Watson quickly went up to her, saying, "Mrs. Jefferson, I'll go with you."

Irene said, "But your health..."

"I'm fine." Mrs. Watson patted her chest. "See? I'm fine."

Irene nodded. "I'll arrange for a doctor for you over there."

"No, I'm really fine," Mrs. Watson insisted. "I would've discharged myself if you hadn't told me to stay at the hospital. I was almost bored to death there! Oh, can I see Tommy now? I've missed him since it's been a few days."

With that, Mrs. Watson jogged into the mansion.

Irene turned toward Eagle at that. "You should pack up too."

Eagle nodded.

—

Irene and her family arrived at the airport at 6 PM, and James had already arranged for a flight.

Although there were a lot of them and a lot of luggage to bring along, they could board right away thanks to James's help.

Even the luggage was flown on the same plane instead of requiring logistics.

Irene stayed calm even as she got onboard, personally coaxing her baby when she started to cry a fit.

Tommy was older, and could stay put with food.

"Mommy, Grandma said we're going on a trip. Is that true?"

Tommy had asked Sheryl why she was packing her things, and she came up with the excuse of going on a trip abroad.

He was certainly happy about it, but Sheryl could not help sighing as she looked at the boy.

Nonetheless, Irene smiled and replied, "Yeah, we're going to Franconia. There are many fun places there—I'll have someone show you around."

"What about you and Daddy?" Tommy asked. "Can't we go together?"

Irene had to withstand a split second of heartache before saying, "We're busy."

Sheryl waved to Tommy. "Over here, Tommy. Sit tight, don't move around."

Even if Irene did not tell her, Sheryl knew that there was trouble.

No matter how hard Irene tried to pretend, Sheryl could read Irene like a book.

Still, Tommy leaned against Irene and said, "I want Mommy to carry me."

"She's busy with your baby brother, Tommy. She can't carry you," Sheryl said patiently.

Tommy pouted unhappily, and reluctantly returned to Sheryl's side. "He took Mommy from me."

Sheryl smiled. "He's still a baby!"

Tommy leaned into Sheryl's arms and looked up to her face. "I'm a baby too!"

Sheryl patted his little head and explained, "You're a big boy now. You have to protect your baby brother and your mommy now."

"And Grandma too," Tommy said, tugging at the hem of her blouse.

Sheryl beamed. "I knew I didn't babysit you for nothing."

Eventually, Tommy fell asleep after wearing himself out from playing, and he had to be carried when the plane landed.

There was a reception waiting, and Irene, still holding her baby, followed everyone in the car.

James helped with putting the luggage into the trunk just as Tommy woke up in the car.

He leaned against the window and looked outside, feeling a little excited at the new environment.

On the other hand, Sheryl appeared melancholic. She was staring at Irene but hesitating to speak.

She ultimately asked nothing, while they soon arrived at the castle.

The grand gardens outside were as magnificent a view as ever.

Because of the time difference, it was afternoon when they arrived.

The quiet castle was suddenly lively.

Pierre greeted Irene immediately when he saw her, having met her before. "Good afternoon, Mrs. Jefferson."

Irene nodded and said, "Once everyone's settled in, you can ask the kitchen to prepare lunch for us."

"It's already prepared, Mrs. Jefferson." Pierre smiled, since James had already informed him of their arrival beforehand.

With that, Irene carried her baby to the master bedroom, while Pierre led the rest to their respective

rooms.

Sheryl naturally stayed upstairs to take care of the children, while Mrs. Watson, the old chauffeur, and Eagle all stayed downstairs.

Later, Irene summoned Eagle and James to her room.