

The runaway groom (Irene and Isaac)

Chapter 921

Johnny refused to listen to or to understand Lulu.

But as the stalemate persisted, Pippa suddenly had an idea.

She whipped out her phone to answer it. "Hello? Oh! The surgery is done? Thank goodness... That's great news!" Johnny's eyes lit up in turn. "Is it about the captain's surgery?!"

Pippa nodded. "Yes. They're saying it was a success." Lulu's hand eased from the doorframe right then.

She smiled, rejoicing, although her eyes still welled with tears. Pursing her parched lips,

Lulu said, "As long as he's alright." "Can you undergo the C-section now?" Johnny asked.

Lulu said nothing, but it was basically a silent approval.

After they wheeled her into the delivery room, Johnny was about to turn and leave when Pippa stopped him. "I was lying, Johnny,"

Pippa said.

Johnny looked at her in surprise, but he was soon frowning. He obviously understood

what Pippa meant.

"That call just now..."

"No one called me," Pippa admitted.

"It's fine. It's better this way." Johnny, however, praised her instead.

They would not have gotten Lulu to undergo the surgery otherwise—were they supposed to just let two lives end on her whim? Settling down on the bench just then, Johnny sighed and prayed that both Martin and Lulu would be safe.

"It's definitely a difficult day for them," Pippa said.

Johnny agreed. "Absolutely. I didn't think that they were that close either,"

He was certainly shocked when Lulu declared that she could not live without Martin, and that their bond was that strong. Knowing that Lulu and Martin were both good people, he could only wish that they were fine.

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After over an hour, Lulu delivered a girl, but the baby appeared bruised all over perhaps because she had been stuck in Lulu for too long.

As the baby was taken away to observation, Johnny sighed emotionally. "A girl is fine too." At the very least, Martin had a child now.

Still, Johnny's delight soon faded because there was still no word from Martin. Only Pippa stayed with

Lulu when she was wheeled out to the maternity ward. "Congratulations, it's a girl." Pippa smiled.

Lulu nodded and looked around—not spotting Johnny anywhere nearby, she asked, "Where's Johnny?" Pippa paused for a moment before saying, "He's checking up on the captain."

Lulu closed her eyes just then.

She was too tired, and the obstetrician was telling her to rest too. She was soon sound asleep.

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When Lulu woke up, it was already the next day, and she saw Irene the instant she opened her eyes. Irene took Lulu's hand and asked softly, "Are you feeling hungry? Thirsty?"

"Thirsty," Lulu replied—her throat felt parched.

Irene poured Lulu a glass of warm water, and Lulu took a couple sips to ease her throat's dryness. "Thank you," Lulu said.

"You must be tired."

"Not really," Irene replied.

"Then why do you look as worn out as me?" Lulu could certainly see that Irene was exhausted.

However, Irene did not tell Lulu about what was happening on her end—Lulu had just delivered her child and was very exhausted.

It was not to mention that Martin had yet to regain consciousness.

"That's your fault. You really gave me a fright, y'know?" Irene said, giving Lulu's hand a squeeze. "Honestly, you're supposed to be giving birth, and Martin was almost in danger. How could I not get worn out from worry?"

Lulu smiled. "Thanks. I know it's been hard on you." "Nah, it's fine," Irene replied.

"I want to check on Martin," Lulu then said.

"How?" Irene asked. "You had a C-section—there's a slit on your stomach that was just stitched together. You're not getting out of bed today, but don't worry. I've been to Martin's ward to check on him. He isn't conscious yet."

Lulu nodded. "As long as he's fine, I'm relieved."

Staring at her for a while, Irene suddenly said, "I really envy you, y'know."

Lulu wanted to roll her eyes at her friend. "What's there to envy? Your husband is rich and handsome, you have two sons already, and you don't have to worry about living expenses and the like. Saying that you're envious of me feels more like mockery."

The runaway groom (Irene and Isaac)

Chapter 922

Irene lowered her eyes to hide her emotions. "Isaac really wants a daughter." Lulu

was silent for a moment. "How could he be so greedy?"

"He never mentioned it, actually," Irene said quietly. "I just think it's regrettable I can't grant him his wish."

"Then you're being paranoid," Lulu told Irene. "Why pressure yourself when he's not saying anything?"

"Fine, I'm the greedy one, alright?" Irene smiled.

"You are greedy. You'd want a son if you had daughters instead... but that's human greed for you. It's endless, and humans only ever ask for more," Lulu said, suddenly staring at the ceiling. "Irene... I just want to live the rest of my life peacefully with Martin."

"And you will," Irene said. "Martin's surgery was a success."

Lulu pursed her lips in silence, while Irene suddenly apologized—Johnny had told Irene everything and that Ricky would have been the one getting shot if not for Martin.

In the end, Ricky was the one who caused them so much trouble. Sighing,

Irene said, "I didn't think that he would mess up so badly."

"He's just a kid," Lulu told Irene reassuringly—Ricky was simply led astray.

"But it's still a grave mistake," Irene pointed out. "His life would have been over."

Lulu became silent.

Even if Ricky had contributed a lot to Bob's arrest, he was not avoiding prison for his crimes—the only difference was that it was a lighter sentence thanks to his help in arresting Bob.

Moreover, he could get parole for good behavior while in prison, and it was already the most ideal outcome.

Irene agreed too, since there were no other options in this matter.

Ricky had to take responsibility for his own actions, and he should learn and mature after this. "Let

me get you something to eat," Irene said then, getting to her feet.

Lulu was just feeling a little hungry as well, and she could drink and eat easily digestible food six hours after her C-section.

Still, Irene was limping since she was afraid of putting too much pressure on her sprained leg.

Lulu frowned. "What happened to your leg?"

Irene turned to Lulu and joked, "I was so worried about you that I sprained my leg when I rushed here."

While Lulu was left speechless, Irene asked, "Feeling guilty? If you are, you can have your daughter be betrothed to Tommy." Lulu

was speechless at that—that was even more ridiculous!

Lulu protested, "She's just a baby—"

Irene cut her short. "My son is too." Lulu

laughed. "Did Isaac agree to this?"

Irene felt as if her heart clenched from the mention of Isaac, leaving her with a dull ache in the chest. She

still had not received word from James, and that meant they had not found Isaac.

She was absolutely worried since they did not know if Isaac survived at all.

"He just has to listen to me," Irene said and stepped out of the ward, closing the door behind her.

She did not want Lulu to see the worry on her face.

"Ms. Spencer." Johnny greeted Irene when he arrived with some lunch boxes and saw her outside Lulu's ward.

Irene smiled in return as he continued, "I was just bringing Lulu some chicken soup. My mom cooked it—she said it's good for women just after they give birth."

"Thank you," Irene replied. "I was just going to buy her some food."

"I can bring it for her next time," Johnny offered. "Hospital food is really plain."

Irene nodded. "Thanks for the trouble."

"It's nothing." Johnny smiled and opened the door to the ward.

As he strode inside with the lunch boxes, Irene limped and followed him when her phone started to ring.

She whipped out her phone and saw that it was James.

Was there news on Isaac?! She

quickly answered it.

The runaway groom (Irene and Isaac)

Chapter 923

Irene was so anxious her voice was shaking. "Hello?"

Meeting Lulu's eyes just then, she quickly stepped out of her ward and leaned against the wall outside, calming herself for a moment and asking softly, "Is there news on Isaac?"

James was quiet for a while before answering, "It's bad news."

Irene's heart sank, and it felt as if every bit of strength she had was drained from her body.

Afraid of bad news, she almost did not want to listen...

But that was when James said, "Someone leaked the news that Mr. Jefferson is missing."

Irene had no idea what that would lead to, and she asked, "Is that something concerning?"

James was quiet again before saying, "It would be great if you can speak on his behalf. You're legally Mr. Jefferson's wife and would therefore inherit everything, so—"

"Isaac's not dead! I'm not inheriting anything!" Irene shouted, but she soon regretted it—she should not have responded to James like that, but she was really in a bad mood!

She could not accept people talking about Isaac like that, and she would get easily agitated.

Nonetheless, she apologized. "I'm sorry."

"It's alright," James said, knowing the pressure was on her—like everyone else did.

Stan and Zachary were still unable to find Isaac, meaning his fate was still unknown.

Naturally, they were all worried too.

Trying to stay calm as possible, she asked, "What do I have to do?"

"I sent Stan back to Zidonia," James replied. "He was on the plane with Mr. Jefferson, so you'd be a lot more persuasive if he's by your side when you speak to the employees."

Irene rubbed herself firmly between the brows. "What if they asked about Isaac? What should I say?"

"Just tell them that he's injured and hospitalized," James replied.

They must keep everyone in line for now. The rest could wait.

"Yeah," Irene murmured softly, sitting on the bench just then while appearing withered.

Her mental state was at its lowest point, too!

"Once you're done over there, you and Stan can come back to Franconia together," James said. "Zachary is still searching for Mr. Jefferson, so you don't have to worry too much. I mean, even Stan managed to come out unscathed."

"Yeah," Irene replied and hung up.

Still, she remained on the bench, feeling very helpless.

She had no idea how she would face this situation alone without James, Stan, and Zachary's help. "Ms.

Spencer?" Johnny stepped out of Lulu's ward just then, a lunch box in his hand.

Irene quickly mustered her spirit as she looked up. "Has Lulu finished eating?"

"Yeah," Johnny replied. "She's much more spirited after learning that the captain is fine. You have no idea how stubborn she was—she kept refusing the C-section even though she couldn't give birth naturally, and she kept saying that she would die with Martin! It's like she doesn't even care about the baby... We were really scared out of our minds."

Irene was actually left in disbelief. "But wasn't Martin barely hanging on at the time? She should have more reason to deliver her child instead, right?"

"I mean, that's what anyone would think, right?" Johnny sighed. "I mean, the child is Martin's, and if anything were to happen to him, he would still have a child for posterity at least. I honestly don't know what Lulu was thinking just then... must be her head going haywire from fear."

That certainly would explain her stubbornness.

However, Irene did not think so, considering Lulu's previous profession as a forensic doctor. That

line of work was not for the faint of heart, just as they must constantly stay level-headed. Would

Lulu really have given in to hysterics?

Still, Irene did not tell Johnny about her suspicions, and she simply smiled.

After Johnny left, Irene returned inside Lulu's ward, sat by her bed, and stared at her with a scolding gaze. "What's that look for?" Lulu asked. "Do I have something on my face?"

Irene was giving her the creeps!

Irene asked bluntly, "You're hiding something from me, aren't you?"

The runaway groom (Irene and Isaac)

Chapter 924

Lulu was actually left stunned for a moment. "W-What am I hiding from you?"

Irene's question was to the point, and she was staring fixedly at Lulu's face. "I heard that you were refusing to deliver the baby while Martin was in surgery. Why?"

As Lulu lowered her gaze, Irene pressed on. "Is your child really Martin's?"

It was not as if she was suspicious, but Lulu's decision at the time begged a lot of questions.

Lulu declared that she would give up and die if Martin did... and take his son with her to the grave?! It was simply illogical.

"Actually, forget it," Irene said, since she did not want to push Lulu too far. "I won't ask if you don't want to tell me."

"The baby would be gone if not for Martin," Lulu suddenly said, looking up to meet Irene's gaze. "There's more, and I hope you can keep this a secret for me."

Irene nodded. "Yeah."

"The baby... is Zachary's," Lulu said flatly.

There was no emotion in her voice even as he mentioned that name. She had composure too,

because she was over him.

However, Irene was assuredly surprised by the answer. Lulu's baby was

Zachary's?!

Suddenly, she realized that she should have realized that sooner.

After all, Martin had not known Lulu for that long, and there was no way Lulu would get pregnant with a man's child so soon after meeting him.

However, Irene suddenly said, "Martin is a good man."

He has certainly been good to Lulu, even accepting her child.

One can imagine how understanding, forgiving, and kind a man he was from that alone.

Lulu certainly thought so too—she agreed that Martin was a man that any woman could entrust their life to. Looking at Irene, Lulu

said, "It seems that I must treat him better from now on."

Irene smiled. A man like Martin was certainly worth cherishing. She then asked, "Can I

meet Ricky?"

She was not supposed to stay here for that long—she could be at ease since Martin and Lulu were fine.

However, she had no idea if she would have the time to return after this, and she therefore should visit Ricky while she was here.

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After Lulu helped Irene contact Johnny, he brought Irene to meet Ricky. Irene almost could not

recognize her stepbrother.

Cuffed on the wrist, he was now scrawny and very tanned, while his face was bruised and his forehead bandaged. Unable to find any trace

of Ricky's former self from the man before her, Irene felt her eyes turning moist.

She could not help blaming herself for not going after him back then, for he might not have gone astray! "Hello, sister."

Nonetheless, Ricky was looking at her with a twinkle in his eyes, unlike his melancholic self right after he was arrested. Smiling, he said, "You

don't have to feel sad for me, y'know."

As Irene said nothing, Ricky asked, "Is he alright?"

When Martin took the bullet for him, Ricky realized that Martin was a real man, and he earnestly acknowledged Martin right then. Lulu would definitely be protected if she stayed with Martin.

However, Irene did not quite realize who Ricky was referring to, and she said, "Lulu and her daughter are both fine."

"I meant Officer York," Ricky told her.

Irene was taken aback, but she quickly replied, "He's fine too."

"I see. That's good." Ricky first heaved a sigh of relief before then sighing again emotionally. "Lulu has a daughter now, huh? That's great."

"Is there anything I can do for you?" Irene asked.

"You don't have to worry about me, Irene. I'm fine," he replied. "Lulu and Officer York had already done all they could to earn me leniency from the courts. Even so, I have made mistakes, and I must now pay the price."

Irene stared at him just then, realizing that he had really matured. Nodding, she said, "I

can't stay for long, so..."

"I know." Ricky grinned. "Just go. Don't worry about me."

Irene lowered her head and pretended to straighten her hair when she was actually wiping her eyes. "I'll come to visit when I

can," she said and left.

Leaving the precinct just then, Irene booked two tickets back to Cloud City. The other was for Brian

Adams, who was still in New Kent.

Irene would return to Cloud City with him, while Stan awaited.

She visited Lulu again and told the latter she was leaving before she went, and Lulu did not ask her to stay.

But despite Irene pretending that she was fine, Lulu could tell that something was weighing on Irene's mind that she was not telling Lulu.

The runaway groom (Irene and Isaac)

Chapter 925

Irene was still moody on the flight to Cloud City, and it was written all over her face. "What's wrong?" Brian asked. "You're scowling although the patient was saved."

Irene came to her senses right then, and she sighed even as she glanced at him. "I'm thinking about something else." "Oh," Brian replied, and he did not bother her again.

Irene then said, "Thank you for your help."

"Oh, it's fine," Brian replied—it was actually not a big deal, and Irene would not have asked him if it was not that important.

Moreover, he owed her—he would never have become director of Hotmesh Research if not for her, since he had always been a loner who did not have influences to call upon.

He was convinced that he would not amount to much in life, and he was surprised to have such an opportunity appear in his life. "Are things going well at work?" Irene asked—things certainly had been rough for her when she first became director herself.

Brian knew that too. He said, "Well, they're more accepting of me since I'm old and I've been working there for a while. Things

were a little different for you, with the rest having trouble accepting you since you're too young and since you were airdropped to the post of director."

Irene thought about it, and she had to agree.

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Soon, their flight landed in Cloud City, and Stan was waiting for Irene at the airport while she said goodbye to Brian. As they got into the car and left, Irene was leaning against the window, her eyelids heavy. "Where are we going now?" "To a hotel. You need some rest," Stan replied.

Irene looked up at him from the rearview mirror. "James asked you to come with me to Twinrise, didn't he?" "That can wait. We'll be staying a day anyway, and you need some rest after traveling back and forth—"

"I'm not tired," Irene said. "I can't sleep even when I lie down, so let's not waste our time and get this done, then return to Franconia."

Moreover, there was still no word on Isaac, while her sons were still there—how could she feel at ease?

"Okay," Stan replied, stopping the car in front of the hotel. "Your clothes and anything else you would need are prepared in your room."

Her clothes were certainly too wrinkled to be presentable.

Irene alighted, inadvertently using her wounded foot, and it hurt a lot.

She remembered the spray ointment Eagle gave her and took it out of her bag, spraying some on the swollen part of her leg. It had a cooling sensation and a strong scent, but Irene felt it take effect soon enough, and her foot did not hurt so much.

She then took a shower at her hotel room,

After that, she changed into fresh clothes and put on heavy makeup to hide her pallid face. Bzzt—

Her phone vibrated on her desk, and she picked it up while applying lipstick with her other hand.

However, after she glanced at the text, she froze.

She did not tap on it, because the notification alone shocked her.

Her fingers were shaking as she tapped on the whole text, and she sprang to her feet.

"Stan!" she called out once she stepped outside, though Stan was already waiting for her outside. "You're ready? Let's go—"

Stan trailed off when he saw that Irene was still holding her lipstick and wearing her slippers. Even her hair was still wet—a clear sign that she was not prepared.

On the other hand, Irene's throat seemed to clench from excitement, as if she suddenly could not speak. It had not been that long, but her face was red from pent-up emotion.

She simply raised her hand, holding up her phone screen in front of Stan.

"Look!" Stan lowered his eyes to the screen and saw the text...

The runaway groom (Irene and Isaac)

Chapter 926

[Isaac Jefferson is in my custody. Return Smartville Tech to me if you want him released. Based on my understanding, you're his wife. That's why I'm messaging you.]

Stan frowned after reading the message, and he whipped out his phone. "I'm calling James." They had to discuss this.

Irene, however, stopped him and asked, "Is Smartville Tech that company you mentioned before? The one bought below its market value?"

"Yes." Stan nodded.

"Is it really important?" Irene asked.

From her perspective, no matter how important it was, it would never be more important than Isaac's safety.

Stan quickly understood what she was insinuating, and he said solemnly, "We did misbehave in our effort to acquire Smartville." He was being vague, since they were playing against the unspoken rules in trade and commerce.

Smartville was definitely important to Remy and its subsidiaries, because the research and development of AI chips will soon decide market trends.

Isaac had his sights on Smartville back then—specifically, the prodigies who formed the core of the company. While

Remy already had many subsidiaries, Isaac had definitive goals for their future development.

Founding a company like Smartville would take too much time and money—acquisition was the best option.

Moreover, the company's capital was dwindling from poor management, not to mention that they were not affluent in the first place.

Smartville had to start financing to keep themselves afloat, but they needed too much capital and had already accessed many channels. Even then, their options were limited—stocks and bonds were the only things that were earning them enough capital.

Hector Vaughn therefore had to resort to those, and Remy in turn funneled their money into Smartville's subsidiaries. Remy started purchasing Smartville's stocks and bonds, and they had a stranglehold on Smartville soon enough.

All Remy had to do was dump all Smartville's stocks and bonds, and their market value sank to rock bottom!

At that point, Remy just had to direct their subsidiaries to press the issue on Hector, forcing him and his company into desperation. They had no choice but to agree to it!

With that, Remy claimed Smartville at a price way beneath its market value.

Irene, however, did not understand any of that—to her, Isaac's safety was the most important part. Staring at

Stan, she said, "Can I say yes?"

Stan was afraid of making the call and so suggested, "Why don't we discuss this with James and Zachary?"

"Why are we discussing this at all? Isaac's safety is far more important!" she snapped and returned inside her hotel room. After a brief hesitation, she replied to the text: [Okay.]

Then, she quickly sent another: [But I must be allowed to see Isaac first.] [No.]

The response was short and determined.

Irene was going to argue when Stan stormed inside, staring seriously at Irene. "We really should talk about this, Mrs. Jefferson." Irene flung her phone on the table.

She just could not understand.

Maybe she did not know how losing Smartville would affect Remy, but from her perspective, nothing was more important than Isaac's safety.

"Fine! Let's discuss it!" she snapped.

Fuming, she suddenly did not want to finish up on her makeup.

Stan called James right then and told James about the message Irene received, the contents, and Irene's decision. James hesitated for a while before saying, "Actually, she calls the shots in the absence of Isaac."

If Irene insisted on doing it, they had no way of stopping her, especially when it concerned Isaac's safety.

Moreover, Hector had made such a big move because he was desperate while they let down their guard—not expecting that he would sabotage Isaac's plane.

"Got it," Stan replied. "We'll head back once we're done here." Putting

down his phone, Stan said, "Let's go to Twinrise now." "Yeah," Irene replied softly.

She dried her hair and tied it up.

And once she was done putting on her lipstick, she left her hotel with Stan.

The runaway groom (Irene and Isaac)

Chapter 927

Their car stopped outside the front entrance of Twinrise

Enterprises. Stan alighted, walking around the car to open the door for Irene.

Arching her back as she got out, she then stood upright before the building.

Even if she was not used to this, she did her best to make herself look imposing.

After all, she understood that if she appeared too weak in Isaac's absence, the company would fall to chaos. She needed to look strong, even if she had to pretend!

Stan was actually concerned if Irene could keep everyone in line, but she never seemed to be cowed. It afforded him slight relief.

But this time, Irene was not acting like before—she was solemn throughout, without a hint of a smile. She had Stan gather the executives, but not in the conference room.

She wanted to speak to them in full view of everyone in the building.

Once everyone was there, Stan headed to Isaac's office to inform Irene. "Mrs. Jefferson..."

He found her sitting behind Isaac's desk, clicking on various pages about company management! Stan was a little speechless... Was she doing some last-minute studying under these circumstances? Irene certainly was—she had no experience otherwise.

All she did so far was not faint from taking the stage, but she knew nothing else!

She had to consider enrolling herself in business school when Isaac returned, or she would never understand the nature of

his work.

Closing the laptop, she rose to her feet. "Just checking out if there is anything I can use. It's not like I can learn anything on the fly."

"Of course," Stan replied.

Staring at him for a second, Irene then asked, "Do you think I won't be able to master

this?" Stan shook his head. "No, but..."

"But what?" Irene pressed.

"I think you should continue your career in medicine," Stan said.

He was convinced that Irene should not give up on her profession as doctor. She was such a specialist that it was a waste she did not save more lives.

Irene pursed her lips—she loved the profession she chose as well.

If she married an average Joe who was willing to be a househusband, she would not have to give up on her career.

But she married Isaac, and he would never give up the empire of commerce for her sake!

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As Stan opened the office door, Irene stepped outside—everyone was already there, waiting.

Even before she spoke, someone asked, "Word has it that Mr. Jefferson's plane crashed. Is he alright?" After all, plane crashes were usually fatal.

She looked coolly at the person who asked that question and allowed her gaze to linger briefly on the other faces, observing all their reactions.

"I'm sure everyone found out about the plane crash in the news," she said. "There were two bodies found, but those were only the pilots. Stan Hill here was on the same plane too, but he's unscathed after landing with a parachute. Unfortunately, Isaac wasn't that lucky and was slightly hurt. He's now admitted to a hospital, and that's why I'm here—to tell you in his stead that there's nothing to worry about, and to continue working as you will."

She deliberately mentioned that she was there in Isaac's stead to indicate that she was there representing Isaac.

And what she said was certainly true—the pilots were the only ones announced dead, while Stan appeared perfectly fine. If Isaac was really dead, would she still be able to stand there with such composure?

"There's been rumors spreading that Mr. Jefferson was killed in the crash," someone said just then. "I knew he'd be fine! Someone must be trying to stir chaos here!"

The runaway groom (Irene and Isaac)

Chapter 928

Irene smiled faintly, appearing almost harmless just then. But her words were far from that.

"I don't want to hear further rumors that would jinx my husband. I'm sorry, but if I catch anyone saying such things, they will be dismissed."

Everyone was immediately quiet, since they had all discussed that possibility.

Naturally, none of them want to be fired either, since this company's benefits were the best. That was when

Stan's phone rang.

It was a ruse he and James had planned beforehand, calling in the middle of the meeting after Stan changed James's caller ID to 'Isaac Jefferson' instead.

He deliberately angled his phone so that others could see it before he answered the call. "Yes, Mr. Jefferson. She's here with me. I'll pass her the phone now."

Irene played along too, taking the phone and saying softly, "I'll be back soon. Don't worry." With that, everyone believed that Isaac was calling.

They used the same tactic at the meeting at other subsidiaries, and after a tour in every company in Zidonia, she returned to Franconia right away.

Zachary had also returned from Dunesia, and he met them in the conference room of the Remy headquarters. It was night, and there was no one around the office.

Only the lights in the conference room were up, and they were trying to think of a plan. If they stuck to

Irene's decision, there was no need to discuss anything.

After all, what could be more important than Isaac? Money?

They could just make more.

Moreover, losing Smartville Tech would not lead to Remy's bankruptcy.

It was not as if James did not agree with Irene's decision, but he simply had his suspicions.

After Irene showed him the message she received, he had someone trace the source of the text, but the source was encrypted and they could not find the source.

Nonetheless, he said, "After investigating, I actually don't think Hector Vaughn has Mr. Jefferson." "Why would you think that?" Irene asked.

"Mr. Jefferson would negotiate with Hector himself. He would not allow you to be affected," James said. Irene turned silent.

That was certainly true! Isaac would never allow something like this to involve his family. "Maybe he's hurt and can't talk?" she suggested nonetheless.

James shot down the idea. "Stan didn't even get a scratch." In fact, they had jumped off the plane at the same time.

Even if Isaac was hurt, the said injury would not be that serious.

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However, James had that part wrong—Isaac was hurt.

Still, he was not hurt because of the parachute, but because he landed on an uninhabited mountain. He dropped his

phone in the process and could not receive any calls.

After landing from such a high altitude, there certainly was a serious gap from where he intended to land.

He trudged through the mountain for two days and nights, without food or drink. He was already weakened, but when it rains, it pours—literally.

As rain poured overhead out of the blue, he slipped and fell into a ditch, going unconscious. He had no idea how long he was out, but he heard something as he stirred.

His vision was blurred as he tried to get up, only to find that one of his legs was immobile. He reached out to it and realized that it was plastered.

"You're awake," someone said in Dunesian. As Isaac had learned it, he understood. "You saved me?" he asked.

The woman appeared surprised that he understood her.

She appeared pudgy and kindly, smiling as she said, "No, my husband did."

"What happened to my eyes?" Isaac asked, realizing that he had trouble seeing clearly—as if someone had put a thin veil before his eyes.

He could not even see the woman, aside from a vague silhouette! "I'm not sure," the

woman said. "Maybe you hit your head really hard!"

The runaway groom (Irene and Isaac)

Chapter 929

Isaac became silent.

He was perfectly fine before he fell.

How could his vision turn bad from that?

He would have not argued if he hurt his legs, since he did feel the agony from his right leg before he blacked out! "Let me get you some water," the woman said, and she brought him a glass of water.

Isaac did not drink it. Instead, he asked, "Where am I?" "Dunesia," the woman replied.

"Where specifically?" Isaac pressed.

The woman answered, but Isaac had never heard of it—like most foreigners, he only knew the more famous locations and not remote areas.

"Can I make a phone call?" Isaac asked.

"What is that?" the woman asked in return, leaving Isaac speechless.

Was he really in Dunesia? Why would she not know what a phone call was? It seemed a little

unlikely, so who were these people?

Isaac remained impassive and said nothing after that, so the woman said, "Please get some rest! My husband and I still have to harvest the grapes from the vineyard."

And with that, she left—Isaac watched as the blur before him disappeared. He closed his eyes,

attempting to let them rest.

But he still was not seeing clearly when he opened them.

In fact, his vision was now blurry and darker, and he could not make out the outline of the objects around him. He was really going blind!

His leg was still hurt too...

Even so, he was sharp enough to realize that the woman just now was not normal.

They must be pretty near the vineyard she mentioned, however, since he could smell the scent of fresh grapes. If his hunch was right, they were in a distillery for red wine.

It was impossible for there to be no phones around. So why was she lying, and

who were these people?

Feeling on edge, he did not lie down again. Instead, he quietly listened to everything around him.

It was quiet enough for him to tell that there was no one else in the room, though he heard movements from a distance. It was probably the people working at the vineyard and the machines in operation!

-

Irene was feeling a headache, and she was rubbing her temples firmly. The text had given her

hope, only for James to dismiss it.

Closing her eyes, she asked, "What if? I mean, what if they really have Isaac?"

James could not be sure that Hector did not capture Isaac either, and he hence suggested, "Text him again and demand to see Mr. Jefferson. Tell him that we'll agree to his demands if he shows us that he has Isaac."

"I asked," Irene replied. "He said no."

Everyone turned silent then because they had no idea what to do. Zachary came up with

nothing after his search.

If Isaac really was fine like Stan, he would have made his way back by now.

On the other hand, Hector claimed that he had Isaac, but he refused to send proof.

That left them in a dilemma.

Irene asked, "Is there any other way to find Hector?"

"No," James replied—the man would have gone into hiding by now, since he was obviously behind everything. He would never dare show his face now.

Irene whipped out her phone and called the number that texted her. The call did not get through.

"His message isn't sent by a standard telco device," James told her. That was why they would never find any address.

Irene put down her phone just now, rubbing her face firmly to keep herself awake! She was not feeling well

after going so long without rest, and her face was pallid. "Why don't you go back and get some rest?"

James asked.

Irene remained silent, and the room was quiet once more. Bzzt—

Irene's phone vibrated on the table just then, and she saw that the number which texted her before just sent another message with an image attached.

Feeling charged once more, she picked up her phone and tapped on the image!

The runaway groom (Irene and Isaac)

As the image—a photo, to be precise—opened, James and Stan craned their necks for a look.

"Mr. Jefferson?" Stan blurted just then.

However, Irene remained still.

She and Isaac had been together for a while, and having shared a bed, she knew his body best.

While the man in the photo was almost of the same height and body shape, that was all there was to it!

In fact, Irene was positive that it was not Isaac.

Then, another text arrived.

[There, a photo of the man himself. Do you believe me now?]

Irene replied instantly: [That's not Isaac!]

Stan was perplexed by her reply. "Wait, that's not Mr. Jefferson?"

"No," Irene replied assuredly.

"How are you so sure?" Stan exclaimed. "Those clothes and figures are obviously him, and there's that black cloth on his face. You can't say it isn't just because you don't see it!"

Irene looked up at him then. "Don't you get why they're not showing us his face?"

Zachary and James immediately understood.

A little slow on the uptake, Stan asked, "Why?"

"Because it's not Isaac," Irene replied. "That's why he wouldn't show the face of that man!"

Hector had instead taken a photo of a man of a similar body shape to mislead Irene into thinking that it was Isaac.

With that, Hector could coerce Irene into giving in to his demands.

However, Hector had underestimated Irene—she could actually identify her man, and a fake would always be a fake.

In fact, the sender was perplexed by Irene's bluntness and was unsure how to keep negotiating right then!

Irene watched the three men before her then. "If we were uncertain if Hector had Isaac before, we are certain now. He doesn't have Isaac because if he did, he would have sent us an actual photo of Isaac, face and all."

Coming to a realization, Stan quickly chimed in. "Yeah, yeah... he wouldn't need an impostor if he had Mr. Jefferson... so where is Mr. Jefferson?"

Everyone else was silent at that, because they had no idea.

It was as if he had suddenly disappeared into thin air!

"Well, we can at least be relieved that Hector doesn't have him," James said, intent on reassuring Irene so that she relaxed a little.

That meant Isaac was probably not in danger.

Irene looked up coolly at James, however, and asked, "Is this your way of reassuring me?"

James lowered his head quietly. It probably did not amount to that!

Still, Irene rose to her feet and said, "James, find an expert who can determine the area where Isaac might have landed."

"Okay," James said.

However, Irene suddenly changed her mind. "No, wait. Leave it to Stan—he was with Isaac before they jumped out of the plane. He's the better man for this."

"Right away!" Stan quickly said.

Irene nodded. "Be quick. Once you determine a general area, call me right away."

"Okay," Stan replied.

With that, Irene left the conference room with Zachary in tow.

"I'll drive you back to the castle!" he said.

As Irene turned toward him, she then remembered that Lulu had given birth to his daughter.

He probably did not even know he was a father!

While she heaved a deep sigh, Zachary told her, "You've traveled between three countries in as many days. You must be tired, so get some proper sleep when you get home."

Irene suddenly asked, "Do you like children, Zachary?"