

The Silent Wife Chapter 30

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Chapter 30

In the office of Burton Group, Justin was reading the plans of a project from his laptop.

“Mr. Burton, our greatest competitor for the East Pearl Project this time is Imperial Group. They’ve already negotiated the terms for the piece of land, so it’s quite difficult for us to overtake them at this moment.”

Frankie’s voice, which was filled with worry, came forth from behind the laptop.

Justin said, “Easy doesn’t exist in building a business.”

Frankie chewed on Justin’s words.

Burton Group was an established company, so their competitors would naturally be powerful too. Moreover, an insignificant competitor would not possibly show up in front of Justin.

Just as they were talking, Justin’s eyes darkened as he saw something on the laptop screen.

“What’s wrong, Mr. Burton?” Frankie’s heart skipped a beat as he started worrying for the staff in the engineering department. “Is there a problem with the plan?”

It was only after seeing the laptop screen, which was turned around by Justin, did Frankie come to a sudden realization.

The screen showed Justin’s mailbox. Half a minute ago, he received an anonymous email that only contained a picture, and the content of the picture was...

Frankie’s expression turned sullen. “Mr. Burton, this picture...”

Rachel and Julian were visibly seen in the picture, and the pair was in a treatment room. Julian was holding Rachel’s hand while checking on her with his head lowered.

Justin stared fixedly at their hands which were held together and ordered coldly, “Look into the IP address and find the sender.”

Frankie shivered as a chill ran down his spine. “Yes, sir.”

Staring at the picture, Justin tapped the table with his finger. His eyes darkened more at the thought of the incidents that happened recently.

Although the Hudson Family had successfully swapped Rachel with Amber and made the former marry into the Burton Family, the outcome was not as well as they had expected.

On the other hand, Rachel's eyelids had been twitching the whole afternoon, and she felt perturbed for some reason.

She stayed in the hospital until the evening. Just so happened, Julian was about to get off from work, so he fetched her home too.

The moment they arrived at the Burton Residence, Sue stopped them.

With a displeased look, Sue darted a glance at Rachel and said, "Julian, why did you guys come back together?"

Before Rachel could write something in her notebook, Julian had already spoken up to explain. "Coincidentally, I was done with work, so I drove her back. It's just a small favor since *we're* relatives."

"Who says she's our relative?" Sue cast a disdainful glance at Rachel. "No one knows how long more she will be able to stay at ours. 1-"

"Mom." Julian immediately interrupted Sue with a slightly sullen look.

Seeing Julian's reaction, Sue had no choice but to clam up reluctantly and bite her tongue. "Alright, I'll stop. It's rare that you come home this early, so let's spend some time together," Sue said kindly.

Considering Rachel's situation in the Burton Family, Julian nodded and turned to Rachel. "Rachel, go and have some rest first. I'll call you when it's time for dinner."

Rachel looked at Sue hesitantly.

"Go ahead." Sue wanted to talk to Julian and had no desire to be bothered with Rachel, so she waved her hands about and wanted Rachel to leave quickly as if she was a jinx.

Rachel was relieved.

After hearing the sound of the door closing from upstairs, Sue removed her disdainful look and peeled an apple for Julian, who was sitting across from her on the couch. After some small talk, she asked, "Julian, I heard Amber is now an intern in your hospital?"

"Mm-hmm." Julian was a little absent-minded.

"Amber is the second daughter of the Hudson Family. Not only is she educated with a good family background, but she's pretty and innocent too. I've met her

before. She's a kind girl. Do take care of her more since she's working with you now."

Julian replied indifferently, "She doesn't work with me."

After seeing how Amber hurled insults at a patient in the morning, Julian decided that he would definitely not accept someone like her to become his assistant intern. Regardless of how she got into the hospital, he was determined to ask for Amber to be replaced.

"Did Rachel tell you something?" Sue furrowed her brows. "That mute, she can't talk yet she's good at gossiping. She just can't bear to see her sister doing better than her."

Julian wore a solemn expression. "Mom, can you stop judging a book by its cover?"

He was well aware that his mother was a mean woman. In addition to Justin's attitude, Julian knew Rachel's situation would be full of hardships in the Burton Family, so he felt sorry for her.

"I'm not judging a book by its cover. I've investigated it before," Sue explained to Julian patiently. "The mute's mother was a mistress and caused Amber's mother's death back then. A woman like her is a

jinx."

Julian frowned. "Who told you that?"

"Amber told me personally." Sue sighed. "This afternoon, that girl came to me, weeping. She told me that an unpleasant incident happened in the hospital this morning and that you've misunderstood her. After hearing her explanation only did I realize how pitiful that girl is. She lost her mother at a young age. It must have been tough for her."

So, it's Amber.

Julian's frown deepened as the guilty party was actually filing a complaint first. "Mom, you can't just

listen to a story from one side."

"What's wrong with you?" Sue's expression changed all of a sudden seeing how Julian was still siding with Rachel after all that she had told him. "Did the mute bewitch you? Why do you keep siding with her?"

"I'm not siding with her; I'm just siding with the truth. Also, Mom, you should stop interfering with

Justin's household matters. He has his life, and we have ours." Julian looked at Sue seriously.

"What do you mean? You,"

"I'm tired, Mom. I'm going back to my room to have some rest first." Julian placed his mug forcefully on the table to interrupt Sue. Thereafter, he went straight back to his room.

Meanwhile, Sue was hot under the collar to see Julian leave.

Rachel was resting in her room and was shocked when she heard a bang from downstairs all of a sudden. Although the room door was closed, she could still hear Sue's angry yell from downstairs.

"After all these years of raising him, he started rebuking me now that he has some achievements?!"

"Please don't be angry, Madam. I'm sure that's not Young Master Julian's intention."

"How is it not? He thinks I'm shameless for staying in the Burton Residence, doesn't he? Even Justin, his cousin, has never complained about me, but he on the other hand-is he really my son?"

"Please calm down and have some tea, Madam."

Just then, another loud bang emerged, which sounded like ceramic shattering.

Rachel tightened her grip on the book, feeling puzzled.

In fact, she thought it was weird all this while. The Burton Family had an extensive family business. Even though Justin had lost his parents at a young age, he didn't necessarily have to be raised by Sue, his youngest aunt.

On the other hand, given Julian's attitude, it seemed like he didn't prefer Sue to stay in the Burton Family

A while later, Rachel finally heaved a sigh of relief as the noise downstairs gradually ceased. Flipping to the next page of the book, she just had no intention to care about these matters of the Burton Family

But alas, the peace did not last long. Before she could finish reading a page, someone flung her door open from the outside without even knocking on it.

Shocked, Rachel lifted her head in puzzlement.

Standing at the door was Sue, who was staring at her furiously as she had nowhere else to vent her anger but at her. "Stupid mute! Pack up your stuff and get out of the Burton Residence immediately!"

Rachel's heart skipped a beat as she gripped the page tight.

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Looking arrogant, Sue was filled with contempt as she glared at Rachel.

"You've seen Justin's attitude toward you. I don't care what tricks you've used to replace your sister to

harry into this family, but do you think you're fit to become a part of the Burton Family given your disability? Don't you dare to start dreaming about approaching my Julian. I'm telling you in your dreams!"

I've never thought of approaching Julian. He's just my grandma's doctor-in-charge.'

Rachel quickly wrote down this sentence to show Sue.

"What the hell!" Sue flipped Rachel's notebook away furiously.

The notebook fell on the floor, so Rachel quickly went to pick it up.

"Mrs. Duncan, get a cab and send her back to the Hudson Residence right now! Tell them that she's not allowed to enter the Burton Residence again in the future; otherwise, they shall bear the consequences!"

Looking contemptuous, Sue immediately ordered the servant to pack up Rachel's stuff and throw them out.

Mrs. Duncan couldn't wait to see Rachel be driven out of the Burton Residence, so she rapidly stuffed Rachel's belongings into the luggage and dragged it out.

Rachel had very few things to begin with, so her stuff couldn't even fill the entire luggage.

Rachel's face turned pale all of a sudden when she saw that a corner of the luggage was not properly zipped up. She staggered toward Mrs. Duncan to take the luggage back from her because there were her mother's relics in it.

"Mm... mm..." Rachel struggled to speak, so all she could do was let out a coarse sound. Despite her trying hard to gesture, no one understood her.

As such, they argued all the way to the entrance.

“Get lost!” Sue pointed at Rachel with an extremely menacing look.

All Rachel wanted was to get her luggage back, but she was mistaken for refusing to leave. As such, Mrs. Duncan pushed her and said crabbily, “We’re asking you to leave. What are you doing?!”

Rachel stumbled and lost her balance. She screamed as her body fell backward.

However, she didn’t feel any pain as she had imagined. A pair of big hands supported her back steadily from behind. “What are you guys doing?” A cold rebuke emerged.

Rachel lifted her head to see Justin’s frigid face under the light. At this moment, he was staring at the front with a slightly angry look.

Rachel’s belongings fell out of the luggage and spread over the floor. With that, Justin immediately realized that she was going to be chased out.

“How dare you?” Justin let go of Rachel as his face darkened even more.

“I-It’s...” With her face turned as pale as a sheet, Mrs. Duncan stuttered while glancing at Sue helplessly

Neither did Sue expect that Justin would appear all of a sudden. Guilt-stricken, she still said stubbornly, “Justin, we can’t let this woman stay. The Hudsons are clearly playing with us by doing as such. We can’t be bullied by them!”

“Whether I keep her or not is my own business. Others have no right to interfere with it.”

Justin’s voice wasn’t too loud but it was strong, and no one was excused from his statement.

It was rare to have moments like this where Sue would feel embarrassed. She raised Justin on her own, and everyone in the Burton Family respected her, so she had always been arrogant. However, she didn’t dare to be haughty when faced with Justin.

Immediately, she was intimidated and attempted to exhort Justin nicely, “Justin, don’t be angry. You shouldn’t take your marriage lightly. You guys have not registered anyway, so it doesn’t count.”

Hearing that, Rachel clenched her fists as she became hopeful all of a sudden.

The marriage between the Burton Family and the Hudson Family was a sudden decision. Although Rachel couldn’t escape from it, if Justin was determined to abandon her, there was nothing Jefferey could do either. If that happened, she wouldn’t have to continue staying cautiously with the Burton Family.

However, Justin caught a glimpse of Rachel's hope in her eyes. At that moment, without even realizing it, Justin's face darkened.

Is she hoping to leave the Burton Family? In her dreams!

Justin's strong and loud voice emerged in the yard. "If you're referring to this matter, you don't have to be worried, Aunt Sue. We'll get our registration done tomorrow by 2 P.M."

"What?"

There was a change in everyone's expression, including Julian, who just walked out of the house upon hearing the noise.

Seeing Julian walk out, Justin's eyes darkened even more. He grabbed Rachel abruptly and stared fixedly at her. "Without my permission, she's not allowed to leave the Burton Residence, even if it's her own will."

Rachel moaned and gritted her teeth as she felt her arm hurting.

In everyone's eyes at that moment, it seemed as if Justin was protecting Rachel.

However, Julian's eyes darkened.

Sue wore a sulky look but didn't dare to say anything further.

After all, they were staying at the Burton Residence, and Justin was the master of this place.

"Follow me upstairs." After giving the short, precise command, Justin retracted his gaze from Rachel and strode toward the mansion.

Rachel quickly took the luggage and followed Justin. While passing by Julian, she heard him asking in a low voice, "Are you okay?"

She nodded and quickly caught up with Justin as she didn't dare to stay on any longer. However, Justin

overheard Julian's question and felt disturbed for some reason.

Once the door of the master bedroom upstairs was closed, the mansion became silent.

"What's going on?" Giving off a cold aura, Justin unbuttoned his blazer and sat down on the couch.

Rachel shook her head. *I don't know.*

"Oh, really?" Justin snorted. "Are you very close to Julian?"

His cold voice echoed in the room while Rachel's heart jolted.

"Mm... mm..."

Before she could think of a reply, Justin stood up suddenly and grabbed her cheeks with a fierce look. "You're really something. Aunt Sue wants to drive you out because of Julian, isn't it?"

"Mm...mm..."

"You're refusing to admit it? What's it about then?"

Rachel shook her head incessantly to deny it, but Justin showed her his phone. On the screen plastered a picture of her and Julian in the hospital.

Justin did not let go of her cheeks and continued with harsher words. "Does Jefferey think that he would be able to seize the Burton Family through his two daughters?"

Rachel shook her head helplessly as tears welled up in her eyes.

Justin's pupils dilated as he saw her weak and helpless look. "The reason you willingly replaced Amber to marry into the Burton Family is due to your grandma's illness, am I right?"

Rachel's heart skipped a beat when she heard the word 'grandma'. Fear accumulated in her eyes at once.

What does Justin want to do?

"Is that why you're so obedient to Jefferey?"

Justin's eyes were so frosty that it would leave one flustered. Rachel instinctively wanted to recoil, but her back was already flattened against the wall, and she could feel the coldness from it.

"Have you ever thought that if Jefferey can control you due to this matter, so can I?"

At that moment, Rachel felt her blood run cold.

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There was a tinge of coldness coming from his fingers onto her cheeks that were held with force. However, the voice ringing next to Rachel's ear was even colder.

At this moment, she felt her head ringing as it went blank. Anxious, she quickly turned to look at Justin.

It was only then that he gradually let his grip off and took his seat on the sofa again. With his chin slightly tilted upward, he said with an arrogant, cold look, "I thought that you were lying. Now I see that you're willing to do anything to help with your grandma's illness."

After a few moments, she suddenly remembered that she had to breathe, so she took a deep breath in too quickly. Due to that, she choked hard and ended up holding her neck with her body leaning against the wall as she had a consecutive string of coughs.

She choked so badly that tears welled up in her eyes. Amidst her coughs, her hand that was holding a pen trembled. 'What do you mean?'

Seeing that, he calmly took a breath in before letting it out. As he tucked his crossed fingers between his knees, he looked up at her before saying, "I want to make a deal with you."

There was a brief pause before he continued his next sentence.

"I want the Hudson Family's prescription."

It's the prescription again! He's indeed coming for the Hudson's prescription!

When she heard that, her face turned pale as she shook her head several times. 'What prescription? I

don't know."

The Hudson Family's prescription was a trade secret that serves as the key livelihood of Hudson Pharmaceuticals. Even Amber didn't know much about it, much less Rachel, the neglected daughter who was born out of wedlock.

"We're not in a rush."

Of course, he was aware of the limitations of her capabilities.

"The Hudson Family owns many prescriptions, but I only want one-the one in Jefferey's private safe."

Upon hearing that, she shook her head helplessly. 'You're asking too much from me!

No matter which prescription he'd ask for, she wouldn't be able to obtain any of them.

"Too much?" As he looked at her neat handwriting on the notebook, his face turned dark. He then looked at her with a cold gaze before he blurted, "That's right! I'm asking a lot from you because it's what you Hudsons owe me!"

Years back, they were the ones who caused Katie's death in that fire. It was a blood debt that had to be paid back, so there was no way he'd be asking too much from them.

As his train of thoughts ran through his mind, his face turned even darker. In a cold tone, he continued, "Jefferey will be celebrating his birthday at the end of the month. If you manage to get it, I'll help you eliminate the evidence he has against you. You will no longer be restricted by them."

Hearing his deep voice echo in the room, she shuddered.

Justin wants to do something to Grandma...

No way!

"Have you considered it?"

'Give me some time'. She could only compromise.

Nevertheless, she knew that she was unable to do what he asked of her. Not to mention, she didn't even know where the safe he mentioned was. How could she get the prescription?

"Are you trying to negotiate with me?"

Gritting her teeth, she held onto the pen tightly as she wrote, 'Grandma's operation is next Monday. I can only do that after her operation ends.'

Looking at her determined look, he knew that he'd gained nothing if he were to push her further. After giving it some thought, he briefly replied, "Okay."

After waiting for so many years, he didn't mind waiting for a mere few days.

"Don't try to pull anything funny." Before he left, he gave her a warning. "Don't forget. No one is going to have your back if you screw up."

Right after that, the door was slammed shut with a bang, causing Rachel to tremble.

After a few seconds, she held onto the arms of the chair before she sat down as her legs felt weak.

It seemed that she could no longer reside in the Burton Family nor in Riverdale, so she must bring her grandma and leave as soon as possible.

The next day.

When Justin was about to head out in the morning, he bumped into Julian at the door.

“Morning.”

“Waiting for someone?” Justin nodded in acknowledgment as he gazed past Julian and noticed that he was leaning against a car like he was waiting for someone.

Without bothering to evade, he replied, “I’m going to work. On the way, I’ll bring Rae to see her grandma at the hospital.”

“Rae?” The nickname sounded extra unpleasant to Justin’s ears as the look in his eyes turned cold.

At this moment, Rachel came out of the house carrying a minimalistic white tote bag. Seeing the two men looking at her, she was stumped.

What are the odds of such a coincidence?

She had even deliberately decided to leave a little later than usual just to avoid these two men.

“Morning, Rae!” Julian’s voice traveled past Justin’s figure and entered her ears.

Out of instinct, she looked up and offered the source of the voice a smile, but her smile quickly faltered when her eyes met Justin’s. Hence, she tentatively gave a nod in response without budging.

“Let’s go. I’ll take you to the hospital.”

Julian’s voice could be heard once again. It was as warm and gentle as the morning sunlight.

“There’s no need for that. I’ll drop her off on my way to work.” At this moment, Justin’s voice echoed in the front porch, somehow dimming the warmth of this morning’s sunlight.

Hearing that made her face freeze.

“Rae...” Julian’s gaze turned serious.

Inevitably, she didn’t have the guts to look at Julian in his eyes as her clutch on the tote bag strap tightened. Under Justin’s pressuring gaze, she slowly threaded toward him and got into his car.

He didn’t even have to say anything else.

Meanwhile, Julian seemed like a kicked puppy as he watched her sitting in Justin's car.

As Justin walked past Julian, he put his palm on Julian's shoulder firmly before saying in a cold tone, "You should call her Rachel; she is your in-law, not your friend."

Upon hearing that, Julian froze in his tracks.

As the MPV left the front porch, the atmosphere at the scene seemed too heavy for a day in summer.

The white figure standing at the front porch became smaller and smaller in the rear mirror, and Rachel couldn't help but sink into a state of guilt.

"What's wrong? Are you unwilling to be in my car?"

At this moment, a cold voice spoke up from beside her. At once, she snapped out of her thoughts and shook her head in denial.

"Then, are you disappointed because you didn't get to ride with Julian?"

Once again, she shook her head. 'I don't want to ride in his car. Even if I didn't get into yours, I wouldn't have gone with him.'

"Oh? Really?"

'Madam Parham doesn't like it when I get too close with Julian, so I will keep my distance from him.'

After being around Justin for some time, she learned that it was vital for her to get things straight so that unnecessary misunderstandings wouldn't happen.

Hearing that, he couldn't help but scoff. "Very sensible of you."

Sue had always taken Julian's marriage seriously. Usually, she wouldn't even approve of normal girls, much less Rachel.

After taking a glance at her, Justin turned his attention away to the view outside the window before he said monotonously, "Stay away from Julian. Don't get into trouble."

She nodded immediately to indicate that she had understood.

Seeing how obtuse she seemed, he no longer felt like talking to her. Hence, he shut his eyes and leaned back into the seat.

The view outside the window was moving backward at a high speed, and it was silent in the car. Hearing the steady and soft breaths coming from the man sitting next to her, Rachel no longer felt

anxious.

At this moment, she tentatively turned to look at him.

The scar on his face seemed to have faded a lot, and he didn't look as scary and tenacious in his sleep.

Just as she was observing his features, she suddenly saw from her hindsight that the driver was checking her out from the rearview mirror. At once, she was stumped. Not knowing what else to do, she quickly bowed down to reach for her tote bag that had fallen between the two seats in hopes that the awkwardness would dissipate.

The moment she picked up the tote bag, her wrist was grabbed by a big hand.

Inevitably, she was caught off guard. She initially thought that Justin must have woken up, but he seemed to be still having his eyes closed when she turned to check on him. Nonetheless, she also noticed that droplets of cold sweat trickled down his forehead where the scar was imprinted on his skin. *He must be having a nightmare.*

Would a person like him get nightmares too? Though she couldn't understand why, she felt a little bad for him.

After a few moments, she finally calmed herself back down and decided to carefully retract her hand back.

"Katie..."

After a string of murmurs, he suddenly opened his eyes. At this moment, his gaze was as cold as a sharp sword, puncturing into her eyes in a swift action. Stupefied, she couldn't help but shudder as she held her breath

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The atmosphere in the car almost felt like it was frozen.

Justin looked like he was still trapped in his dream as he hadn't loosened his grip on Rachel's wrist. His sharp gaze slowly turned out of focus as he looked in her direction, and it seemed like he was looking at someone else through her.

At this moment, she was too terrified to budge an inch.

"Mr. Burton, we've reached the hospital."

The driver's announcement managed to snap him out of his thoughts, clearing the haze before his eyes as he began to get a clear look at the woman in front of him. Almost immediately, his expression turned back to his usual cold look before he blurted, "Get down."

Not daring to delay further, she quickly obliged by grabbing her tote bag and got out of the car.

As she watched the MPV take off from the hospital's entrance, she heaved a sigh of relief. However,

she was still dwelling on what happened earlier as she rubbed her wrist that was held forcefully. Out of instinct, she turned her wrist several times to ensure that it was still intact.

This man is scary even in his sleep.

However... She heard him call out a name earlier.

Was it... Katie?

Meanwhile, Justin was still in a trance after the car had left the hospital.

As the driver held the wheels, he asked with a worried look, "Mr. Burton, did you have a nightmare again just now?"

Justin's thick brows furrowed as his expression turned stoic.

It had been years since he last dreamt about the big fire.

Human's memory was bound to fade off as time passed. No matter how hard he tried to remember, his memory of her seemed to be gradually fading away.

He couldn't recall when was the last time he remembered her face. All he could remember was a pair of eyes filled with tears in the big fire. Every time he tried to take a better look at her face, the dream would end.

Earlier, he saw Rachel's face on the girl in the fire.

At the thought of that, he clenched his fists so tight that his green veins looked as if they were popping out.

How could she?

"To the cemetery." The driver could hear Justin's cold voice coming from the backseat.

The driver was caught off guard when his gaze met Justin's through the rear-view mirror. At once, his hands that were gripping the wheel trembled before he answered, "Alright."

Justin didn't say anything else after that succinct instruction.

Meanwhile, Rachel was spending the entire day at the hospital with her grandma.

It was going to be Monday the next day, and her grandma's operation was scheduled to start early in the morning. It was specially arranged by Julian in regards to Rachel, so she was going to keep her grandma company throughout the night.

"Her temperature's normal. If no problem occurs, she'll be able to undergo the operation early in the morning."

In the ward, Julian was measuring Nancy's body temperature as he spoke to Rachel about things she should look out for prior to the operation.

"She has to fast starting this afternoon. Later around 2 P.M., she'll have to undergo an enema. There will be some slight discomfort, so do give her a heads up to mentally prepare."

With a nod, Rachel wrote, "I'll let my grandma know."

"Right, you must've not had lunch yet." Taking a glance at his watch, he proposed, "Come on, let's eat together."

Nonetheless, she shook her head in rejection. 'No thanks. I'd like to keep my grandma company.'

As Julian was about to say something, a woman's voice cut him off. "Julian, you're here. I've been looking for you high and low."

Upon hearing that, both Rachel and Julian frowned, and they did it almost in sync.

None of them needed to look to know that it was Amber.

Dr. Peters, you can go along with your work. I'll head back in.'

At once, Julian held on to Rachel before he said, "You still need to eat."

That made her halt her steps. In the next moment, Amber was already standing right before the two of them.

When Amber saw how he was holding onto Rachel, her face turned dark.

It took Rachel a moment before she snapped out of the trance and pulled her hand back with a frown on her forehead.

As Julian's gaze swept past Amber, he said coldly, "We're going to eat. What do you need?"

"You two?" The raging fire in her eyes was evident. She gritted her teeth as she said, "Isn't it a little inappropriate for you two to eat together?"

Just as Rachel was about to free herself from his grip, he spoke up. "There are so many people in the hospital cafeteria. What's inappropriate about eating together? Your house rules must be very strict, *Miss Hudson.*"

"I don't mean it that way, ... Julian, I'm here to ask for your thoughts on a case diagnosis..."

"It's lunch break now."

With a courteous yet distant tone, he didn't bother to let her finish as he cut her off. "We can talk after I have my lunch. Let's go."

It was rare for Rachel to see Amber embarrassed like that. What was more, Rachel didn't expect that Julian, who had always been kind to everyone, would treat her so coldly. She was a little stumped at the moment, and she was already led down the hallway away from Amber when she came to her senses.

'Wait. At this moment, she tentatively tugged on his sleeve.

"What is it?" He stopped in his tracks immediately.

'Dr. Peters, you should go ahead and eat. I'm not hungry yet.'

Though it was satisfying to see Amber getting flabbergasted, Rachel insisted on turning him down.

In response, he frowned and asked with patience, "Are you avoiding me? Is there a reason why you're doing that?"

Hearing that, she shook her head before offering him a smile. 'I need to go keep grandma company.

After that, she turned on her heels and headed back to the ward.

The moment she turned around, the smile on her lips slowly went missing. In the current situation she was in, she couldn't afford to offend Sue anymore.

As he watched her walk away, he couldn't help but feel a mixture of sadness and disappointment.

It was a feeling that he had not felt before in the past two decades.

As soon as she walked into the ward, her grandma looked at her with a stumped expression. "Why are you back already? Didn't you go to eat with Julian?"

How did you know that?

Obviously, Rachel was surprised to see her reaction.

"How can I not know? I was the one who asked him to bring you to get something to eat," she said with a triumphant smile on her face. "Dr. Julian is a good man. Not only does he look good, but he's also good in many other aspects as well. Most importantly, I can see that he has feelings for you. Rae, you should grab the chance."

At once, Rachel reached forward to cover her grandma's mouth. *Don't say that! We shouldn't tarnish his image and name. The relationship between us isn't what you think it is. You're overthinking it.*

What is Grandma thinking? Is she trying to play cupid?

Seeing that Rachel had gotten all flustered, her grandma thought it was best for her to stop going on. Nonetheless, she still felt a little dissatisfied with how the conversation ended. "Rae, never think too lowly of yourself. In my eyes, you are so much better than Amber."

Hearing that, Rachel could only shake her head helplessly.

Whether she was better or not, it no longer mattered. The truth was, she was already married to Justin.

At this moment, her grandma held onto her hand before sighing, "My beloved Rae is all grown up already. You're a chip off the old block; you look as beautiful as your mother was."

Rachel didn't really have many memories about her mother, and whatever she now knew were stories

she heard from her grandma. From her grandma's eyes, her mother was smart, gentle and kind-she was the finest woman in the world.

How did my mother die?

When Rachel brought this up, her grandma's face turned pale, and she fell silent.

Just as Rachel thought that her grandma would tell her the story as she usually would, she suddenly lowered her voice before murmuring, "Because of a piece of the prescription."

Prescription? Why is it the prescription again?

At once, Rachel's heart skipped a beat. She simply stared at her grandma with a dumbfounded face.

Her grandma then asked, "Rae, do you remember what happened when you were young?"

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Shaking her head, Rachel gave her grandma a blank look.

She couldn't remember most of the things that had happened when she was young. All this while, she suspected she learned the ability to recollect memories a little later than other children since she couldn't remember much. Besides that, she only remembered a little of the time before she arrived at Riverdale.

Seeing her reaction, Nancy reached out her frail, bony hand to brush several strands of Rachel's fringe behind her ear, revealing her neat, beautiful face.

As if she was talking to herself, she murmured, "It seems that you don't remember. If you did, you wouldn't have followed Jefferey here."

Hearing that, she was dumbfounded. *Why? Didn't Dad bring us over to Riverdale because he thought that our old place wasn't safe?*

When Rachel was young, she lived in the mountains with her grandma and mother. After a huge forest fire happened which resulted in her mother's death, Jefferey brought her and her grandma over to Riverdale. "Of course not, that old dog, he did it because..."

Because of what?

After the accident was brought up, Nancy looked uneasy. Sadness seemed to have emanated from her clouded eyes.

At this moment, Rachel tugged on her grandma's sleeve. *Grandma, are you okay?*

All of a sudden, Nancy snapped out of the trance before she replied, "Yeah."

She then gently patted the back of Rachel's hand as she said, "Rae, you must live a happy life. We just have to be honest and true to ourselves. That suffices. Your mom who's looking over you from above will want you to be safe and sound."

Upon hearing that, Rachel nodded obediently.

"Right, Rae, do you still keep the box that your mom left for you?"

Yes. She nodded once again.

"You must keep it well."

Grandma, what's inside the box?

From what seemed to be the beginning of her memories, Nancy had been asking her to keep the box well. However, the box was square like a cube, and there was no opening to it. It looked like a piece of wood that had been tinkered on.

Nevertheless, Nancy referred to that as a box.

"One day, when you open it, you'll know."

She said that meaningfully, but Rachel was still confused. She couldn't help but feel that her grandma was hiding something from her.

As the operation was scheduled to take place in the early morning, Rachel could only catch a wink of sleep for a brief moment.

The fact that Julian would be the lead surgeon for the operation made her feel so much more at ease.

The light of the operation room was on while she waited alone. At the break of dawn, the operation was finally done and the door of the operation room was pushed open, revealing Julian who walked out as he was taking off his mask.

"The operation was successful. Your grandma is fine." With his gaze fixed on her, he told her with a smile.

It was only then that Rachel could heave a sigh of relief as she lay back against the chair.

"Are you okay?" Instinctively, he quickly reached out, making a gesture to help support her.

She then shook her head. *Thank you.*

"Don't mention it. It's my job as a doctor. You should go catch some sleep since you didn't rest very well last night. Your grandma's still on anesthesia and she won't be waking up so soon."

Hearing that, she nodded without shifting her body.

Throughout the operation, she had been tense as she waited. Now that she could relax, her legs felt so weak that she couldn't even walk.

Seeing that, Julian felt his heart ache. "Let me help you."

She then waved him off. "I'll rest here for a while. I'll leave my grandma to you then."

Needless to say, he could clearly feel she was distancing herself from him. He was about to ask her something, but he held it back when he saw how weak she seemed. After debating with himself, he didn't speak up about what was on his mind.

"I'll buy you some food then."

Before she could reject him, he had already handed her a bottle of water and left.

Once again, she was alone in the empty hallway.

Since the operation was over, she now had to face the things that she dreaded. She couldn't help but feel nervous about it.

Meanwhile, in the morning, at the Burton Residence.

"Justin, go easy on the caffeine. It's bad for your health."

At this moment, Sue placed a cup of fruit juice in front of him before taking a glance in the direction of the second room. "Rachel didn't come back for the past two days. I wonder what she is up to that she can't even take care of her husband. This is absurd."

As Justin read the newspaper, he said disdainfully, "She's taking care of her grandma at the hospital."

"There are caretakers in the hospital. Is it really necessary for her to be there 24/7? Julian hasn't come home for these past two days too. Every time I called him, he said that he was busy. I'm sure that Rachel is bugging him."

Hearing that, Justin looked up from behind the newspaper with a dark gaze.

"Justin, don't get mad at me if I say this as I know that you feel sympathy for the mute, but the Burton Family isn't doing charity. We don't just take in anyone. Not only is the mute not behaving herself, she even goes out to do inappropriate stuff. I'm sure she has some ulterior motive."

Sue got more agitated as she went on. "Julian's always helping her, and he doesn't even listen to his mother now. You remember how soft-hearted he always was, don't you? It must be the mute who seduced..."

Suddenly, a loud thud sounded from the coffee cup colliding with the dining table. Sue's ongoing nag stopped at once as she looked up frantically to meet with Justin's cold expression.

"Justin, I may have said a little too much, but... I'm doing this for you."

He then cut her off, "Aunt Sue, you can start thinking about Julian's marriage if you're free."

That caught Sue off guard.

"I'm done eating. I'm heading to the company now."

With that, he grabbed his coat and left the dining room in large strides.

Hearing the roar of the engine starting from the porch, Sue blurted out as her face sank, "That mute is such a scourge! Justin made it obvious that he doesn't want my input on this, so it seems that she won't be going anywhere for some time. What a bummer."

As Mrs. Duncan tidied the table, she consoled Sue. "Madam, there's no need to let her bother you. After all, she is mute. That's all she is. Julian won't be interested in her. However, are you really interested in Ms. Amber?"

"Amber Hudson?" Sue scoffed. "What's so great about the Hudson Family? They just run a traditional medicine business. If it wasn't for Justin's proposal, they would've never had the chance to enter our family."

Meanwhile, Mrs. Duncan was confused. "Then you mean..."

"We'll just watch them fight. It'll even be great if they both end up losing. The thing is, I'll have to talk to the Tuscan Family if the mute stays any longer."

At the mention of the Tuscan Family, Mrs. Duncan was stumped. "Are you still dealing with the Tuscans?"

Before she could finish, Sue suddenly recalled something and she beamed. "It's been some time since we last visited Old Mr. Burton."

With a nod, Mrs. Duncan agreed. "Every summer, he'd come from his hometown to the summer villa in

Riverdale for vacation. We have just missed the season."

At this moment, Sue looked like she had an idea. "Ever since Justin got married, Old Mr. Burton has yet to meet his new daughter-in-law. I should go visit him and give him a heads up."

Hearing that, Mrs. Duncan was stunned for a moment before she quickly reacted with a smile on her face. "That's right. You're the one who raised Young Master Justin. Everyone in the Burton household respects you-even Old Mr. Burton listens to you."

What Mrs. Duncan said had sent all of Sue's worries out of the window. With a triumphant look, Sue announced, "This weekend then. Prepare some presents. I'll pay Old Mr. Burton a visit."

"Yes, ma'am."