

## Standing before Love Chapter 352

Everything happened so suddenly that Kris wasn't sure how to react. She was carrying Hayden's child, but she didn't expect her pregnancy to be revealed during the banquet at Walton Residence. Not only was it revealed, but the Waltons also uncovered the fact that the baby didn't belong to the Waltons.

At that time, she didn't want to remain conscious, so she pretended that she had fainted. She was also scared of waking up, as she couldn't face Gideon and Shelly's wrath. It wasn't until Hayden rushed her to the hospital that she acted as if she had just regained consciousness.

Miraculously, the baby she carried was still intact. However, she would prefer that she had a miscarriage, for nobody would be able to prove who the father was in that case. Without proof, she could easily insist that the baby belonged to the Waltons, which meant she could still salvage her relationship with Gideon, as well as help advance the Starks' Green Palms Project.

And now, the doctor informed her that the baby she carried was a little more than two months old, which was what she had expected, but still, she felt as if it was the end of the world. "Mom..." She couldn't move her body, as her lower body hurt whenever she did. Soon, tears stained her cheeks.

"Did this man bully you? Tell me! Did he force himself on you? I will make sure justice is served! I will go explain things to the Waltons!" Rachel kept on giving Kris a look. For now, they had to blame everything on Hayden, because the most important thing to do was to protect Kris' dignity.

Upon hearing what Rachel said, Hayden wore a grim look on his face. "Mrs. Stark, you're being a little too mean. The love between Kris and I is true. She told me she is only faking an engagement with Gideon, so it will only be temporary. Now, she will no longer need to be tied down to that fake relationship. She already has my baby, so I will take care of her. In a few days, I will propose a marriage with your family."

"A marriage proposal? You?! Don't you even think about it! You're the one who got my daughter into this mess! You rapist! The baby she carries doesn't belong to you! It belongs to Gideon! I will never allow my daughter to marry you! I will sue you!" Rachel's whole body was trembling with rage.

"Sue me? Haha..." Hayden assumed that it was because of Rachel and Cameron that Kris had to get engaged with Gideon. As soon as he heard

Rachel was going to sue him, his face contorted slightly with anger. “Kris and I have feelings for each other! On the contrary, how dare you, as her parents, use her as a chess piece to help solve Stark Group’s financial deficit? She will be under my care from now on, so you can leave now! I can also guarantee that the baby she carries is mine! I’ve already replaced those contraceptive pills with vitamins, so we never took any contraceptive measures to begin with!”

Hayden didn’t think Kris would lie to him about her relationship with Gideon. On the other hand, because he was the one who replaced the contraceptive pills with vitamins, he knew she would get pregnant, and that the baby must be his.

“You—” This time, not only Rachel, but even Kris, was staring at Hayden in disbelief. Kris never expected that the most loving man she ever knew—the man who bought her contraceptives—was the most conniving of all. He didn’t even give her any contraceptives. Instead, he was deceiving her so that she would be pregnant with his baby!

“Hayden, you—” Kris was feeling both frustrated and anxious. So he is the culprit! If it weren’t for him, my pregnancy wouldn’t have been discovered by the Waltons!

“Kris, don’t worry. I will marry you after you cut all ties with the Waltons. From now on, we will be together...” When Hayden looked at her, his gaze was as gentle as could be. However, she could detect a hint of obsession and madness in his gaze.

All of a sudden, she got an odd feeling about everything. Throughout their relationship, Hayden had allowed her to do anything she pleased, and he unconditionally bought into all of her crappy lies. In fact, she could almost get away with anything. But then, he was even more possessive than most other men. Whenever he couldn’t find her in the Stark Group, he would give her a call to find out her whereabouts.

There was once when she switched her phone into silent mode during a meeting in another company, and he ended up giving her almost a hundred calls within the span of three hours. Her initial reaction was to feel touched by his actions, but she was frightened now when she noticed the crazed look in his eye. She hesitated for a moment, but in the end, she still couldn’t say anything.

When Rachel observed the two of them, her heart was heavy with disappointment. Kris didn't listen when I told her to cut ties with Hayden. Look at the mess she made now! "Hayden, you might have your plans, but don't you forget that we are Kris' parents." It wasn't until then that Rachel recalled that Cameron hadn't spoken at all, so she moved behind him to tug on his arm. "Cameron, say something!"

The look on Cameron's face couldn't get any darker. Before that, he would turn a blind eye to whatever it was that Kris did. This time though, she had crossed a line. Now that Stark Group was still going through a crisis, he didn't have any more energy to expend to deal with the mess Kris made. In fact, the only reason he didn't slap her in the face right away was because he didn't want to bring even more shame to the family name.

With a chilly look and a stiff voice, he told Hayden, "Mr. Fuller, as Kris' father, I would like you to inform your father of your intentions if you want Kris' hand in marriage. After all, my daughter isn't someone I can give away to just anybody."

Hayden's eyes lit up upon hearing what he said. "I will give my father a call right away!"

"Do whatever you want. For now, please give my family some space and time for a private conversation," Cameron stated coldly.

Despite Hayden's hesitation, he decided to save Cameron some dignity. After tucking Kris properly under the blanket and telling her that he would soon be back, he left the ward. As soon as the door closed behind Hayden and the ward was once again blanketed in silence, Cameron slapped Kris on the face mercilessly while she was still lying on the bed. As a result, Kris' head turned to the side, and her lips were tinged with blood.

"Ah, Cameron! What the hell? Why did you slap her? You—" There was another loud slap, but this time, it landed on Rachel's face. Soon enough, her face became swollen as well.

The atmosphere tensed up as Rachel stared at the man before her in disbelief. With a gloomy look on his face, he snapped, "Just look at what you have done! Your daughter cheated in her relationship and got pregnant with the Fuller Family's baby! Not only did she not abort the baby, but she even failed to conceal the truth, and now everybody in Bradford City knows that my daughter is a shameless b\*tch who cheated in her relationship! Don't you

know that my company is in a predicament? What have you contributed to the family other than trying to get my shares in the company?" Cameron was furious.

He was already running out of time to resolve the crisis that Stark Group was facing, but Kris had ruined his only opportunity to do that. According to what Hayden said, he had always planned on getting Kris pregnant. After that, he even eagerly leaked the news, which ruined Kris' life, as nobody other than Hayden would want to marry her after everything that had happened. Most importantly, Cameron had no idea what he could do anymore to solve the crisis that Stark Group was in.

Meanwhile, Kris felt her face had gone numb because of the slap. When she regained her senses, she stared at her father with a pitiful look on her face. "Dad, am I only a tool to you, just like what Hayden said? I am in so much pain now, so how could you slap me and my innocent mother?"

## Standing before Love Chapter 353

"Innocent?" Cameron turned around to face Rachel, who was sobbing nonstop. For the first time ever, he was revolted by her presence. Compared to her, Myra's mother would never do something as foolish. She taught Myra well, to the point that even he had to be wary of her. In the least, Myra's mother would never raise such a piece of incompetent trash who ended up being a liability to the company.

"Your mother isn't innocent at all! She must have known early on that you had a fling with Hayden, but she never informed me about it! Did you two think you are able to toy with everybody around you?" Cameron had a chilly gaze in his eye.

As Kris kept her arms resting on the bed limply, she clenched her fists as she inhaled sharply; all she could feel was a sense of despondency. Meanwhile, Rachel was also extremely disappointed in what happened.

Throughout her marriage with Cameron, he would always order her around. Despite her title of Mrs. Stark, she had no claim to power. Even after all those years, Cameron never gave her any of the company's shares, nor was he willing to offer any to his daughter. Other than that, Kris and her had to help him fight Myra's mother, and then Myra, but in the end, they could only suffer humiliation by his hands.

“Why does it matter?” Clenching her teeth, Rachel wore a look of despair, yet she was fierce and resilient all the same when she glared at the man that she had spent her entire life serving. “Cameron, Kris and I don’t owe you sh\*t! We have always been obedient to you! For the sake of your career, Kris forced herself to be with the man she hates, so why does it matter now that she failed, and the Waltons won’t invest in the Green Palms Project? Have you forgotten that your eldest daughter didn’t even want to help you? Don’t you feel guilty at all for treating Kris and I like this?”

“Guilty? How dare you even mention that to me?” As if having heard a joke, Cameron began mocking her mercilessly. “Don’t you know how the public will judge me and Stark Group from now on? Who do you think you are? If I so wish to, I can sleep with any other woman I want, and get them to give birth to my baby! I’m sure I won’t even get such an incompetent daughter like her!”

Rachel staggered backward subconsciously as soon as she heard that. Just now, she was enraged, which was why she talked back to Cameron, but she never expected to hear such despairing words from him. If I so wish to, I can sleep with any woman I want, and get them to give birth to my baby. I’m sure I won’t even get such an incompetent daughter like her! What he said pierced her heart like daggers.

She felt suffocated when she clenched her fists. Seeing red, she launched forward to slap Cameron. “You are inhumane, Cameron! You vile cockroach! How could you treat Kris and I like this?”

She reached out to slap him, but he caught her hands and then shoved her backward, which caused her to fall onto Kris’ bed. Panicking, Kris tried to stop her parents’ fight. “Mom, Dad, stop it! Don’t fight—”

“Rachel Parker, have you ever thought about why you could stick with me throughout all these years? Let me tell you; you are nothing compared to Jenny Eckhart. Your only merit is that you’re obedient. Now that you have even lost that, the Starks no longer need you and your daughter!” With that, Cameron let out an angry huff before opening the door of the ward to leave.

Standing there in the ward, Rachel could feel her whole body trembling as what just happened was beginning to sink in. After some time, she finally started to weep, and Kris was also sobbing in a hushed voice. In the end, both of them were wailing in each other’s embrace.

“Kris, did you hear what he said? He’s not your father, but a demon! I shouldn’t have been so naive! Why did I assume that I could get everything that I want by relying on him? H-He never forgot about that b\*tch!”

The mention of Jenny’s name gave Rachel a headache. If it weren’t for Rachel’s help, Cameron would never have been able to seize everything from Jenny and claim Stark Group for himself. Now, he was obviously being ungrateful by trying to cut ties with Rachel.

In addition to the pain in her belly and on her face, Kris was overwhelmed by the headache she felt. Reaching out to hold her mother’s hand in a tight grip, she consoled the latter. “Mom, you have nothing to worry about. I won’t let things get even worse.”

However, she couldn’t help but feel a sense of bitterness. After the incident, the Waltons wouldn’t let things slide that easily. In fact, she was certain that the contracts that Stark Group and Walton Group signed would most definitely be cancelled. “Mom, I still have some loyal subordinates in Stark Group. Don’t panic. Let us take this one step at a time,” Kris said with grim determination.

Meanwhile, in Walton Residence, Shelly had been fretting for almost an hour, which was starting to get on Edward’s nerves. Therefore, he chided, “We have something important to talk about, so you’d better go watch over Gemma at the hospital in case she gets into more trouble when she is alone!”

Before Shelly left, she made sure to give Gideon a reminder. “Gideon, I will never allow Kris to marry into our family! I don’t care if you have business dealings with that b\*tch’s company. All you have to do is to cut all ties with her! Our family have a reputation to uphold in Bradford City!”

“Leave, now! Why are you still blabbering?” Edward knocked his walking stick on the floor heavily as he issued an order. Upon hearing that, Shelly bit on her lip before leaving the place. As soon as she was away, Edward cast his stick on the floor.

At the same time, Samuel was also sulking. Nonetheless, he poured a cup of tea before serving it to Edward politely. “Dad, calm down.”

“Calm down? If I calm down, isn’t this matter going to be swept under the rug?” Edward glanced at Gideon with piercing eyes. “My granddaughter couldn’t get her hands on a man, nor could my grandson keep his woman in

line! After everything that happened, those b\*stards in Bradford City will be talking behind my back!”

“Grandpa...” Gideon clenched his fists. The incident with Kris was a grave insult to him. I will take care of that b\*tch later. I have more pressing matters to deal with at this point in time. There was a chilliness in his eyes as he thought so. “Grandpa, we can’t drag this on. We need to somehow spend the money that we were planning to invest into the Green Palms Project.”

The money was a huge sum that they planned to launder bit-by-bit, and the Green Palms Project offered them the perfect and legal opportunity to do so, but they didn’t expect such a conundrum. They had to get rid of the money as soon as possible, or else the Waltons would be doomed. However, investing into the Starks’ project was no longer an option, as the public would perceive the Waltons as spineless cowards. The mere thought of it brought a livid expression to Edward’s face.

“We can no longer rely on the Starks.” Frowning, Edward wore a solemn look on his face. “No matter what we do, we are bound to get the attention of somebody. We’ll be done for if anybody finds out what we’re up to.”

“Why don’t we invest the money in Central Square? Aren’t there a few foreign companies that were registered recently? We can start from them, just like what we did a few years ago, and we need to make sure that we leave no trail.” Samuel made that suggestion after mulling over the situation. “Central Square is a government project, so we have a lower chance of being suspected. Besides, they are still in the fundraising stage.”

“I suppose that’s our only option for now.” Edward pulled his lips into a thin line. “Remember to leave no evidence, and make no mistakes. We can’t afford to be careless anymore. Find a few small companies in Bradford City that we can lure into investing in Central Square alongside us by stating a high profit margin. We need them to cover up for us.”

“Understood, Grandpa.” Gideon nodded in all seriousness.

After that, Edward turned to look at him with a deep frown on his face. “By the way, annul your engagement with Kris Stark. Issue a statement that reveals her debauchery. We won’t take in someone like her!”

## Standing before Love Chapter 354

“Sure.” A fierce look fled across Gideon’s eyes. Even if Edward and Shelly said nothing, he wouldn’t want to have anything to do with Kris. She doesn’t know her place, so she will get a taste of my wrath!

It was a long night. While some people were fretting over their problems, some had a good night’s sleep. The next morning, Myra needed to go to the hospital for her prenatal checkup. Tony would be keeping her company, as he needed to check on his fractured arm and his other injuries.

That morning, the Hart Family had breakfast together. It had been a long time since they last had such a jolly breakfast together. Sebastian couldn’t help but lament, “It would be perfect if Damian and Katie are here.”

Smiling, Serena said, “You can always summon him if you want him back home.”

“He’s in the military, so he can’t just up and leave! Since he has chosen to become a soldier, he will have to obey their rules all the time!” Sebastian glared at Serena.

With a smile, she commented, “But I suppose he should come home during festive occasions. The Lantern Festival will be happening soon, so it will be nice if Damian gets to come home, even if only for a day.”

Upon hearing that, Sebastian got all excited. “I suppose I can start preparing for the family dinner now! Instead of inviting any outsiders, let’s have dinner among ourselves. And you, ahem. Uhm... Estelle, you can invite your brother,” Sebastian said rather awkwardly.

“What did you say? I didn’t hear you.” Estelle pretended that she didn’t hear him.

Furious, he retorted, “Just forget about it if you missed it!”

“Grandpa said you can bring your brother along to celebrate the festival with us, Miss Langley. After all, Grandpa will be personally involved in the preparations for the banquet!” Serena repeated Sebastian’s message in his stead.

While glaring at Serena, Sebastian chided, “You sure blabber a lot!”



“You’re the one who passed this trait down to me.” Ever since Serena got together with her new boyfriend, she had transformed drastically for the better, so Sebastian was actually feeling happy for her.

“Old Master Sebastian, I won’t be having lunch at home today, since I will be going to the company with Tony after my prenatal checkup.” Myra informed Sebastian of her plans after some thought.

Sebastian was most loving when he was talking to Myra. “Go on ahead. You can order your lunch with the servant. I will have the driver deliver your lunch to you by noon when they’re ready.”

“You’re being partial! I only got to have canteen meals while working in City Hall!” Shawn interjected while arching his brow.

Upon hearing that, Sebastian rolled his eyes at him and Estelle. “I will treat you two like royalty when you produce an heir to the family like them!”

Shawn scratched his nose sheepishly when he heard that statement. Since Estelle didn’t want kids yet, he supposed he wouldn’t be getting such treatment anytime soon. When breakfast was over, everybody left for school, work, or to the hospital respectively.

While Tony and Myra were on their way to the hospital, Tony had gotten a few calls. Judging from his conversation with the caller, Myra surmised that it had to do with Stark Group. After he hung up, she leaned in closer to ask, “Will the Waltons no longer invest in the Green Palms Project?”

“Yeah. The Waltons issued a statement, and Gideon and Kris’ engagement was also annulled.” Tony grabbed Myra’s hand with his free hand before scratching her palm. “Would you like me to intervene? I can still save Stark Group if I do it now.”

Back in the days, Stark Group was but a small company with a dozen or so employees, including Cameron. Jenny Eckhart invested in the company using her family’s money, and she led the company in completing a few major projects. That was why the company was able to expand into a medium-sized business in Bradford City within the short span of three years.

However, Cameron was ambitious. Although he might have loved Jenny back then, it couldn’t compare to his ambition. After witnessing the company expand and flourish under Jenny’s management, he was worried that she

might take over his position, so he began stripping her of her power. Later on, he even cheated on Jenny with Rachel, which led to the subsequent deterioration of Jenny's mental state, as well as her untimely demise.

Jenny was a prodigy in business, which was hard to come by in the Eckhart Family. Unfortunately, her life was ruined because she married the wrong man. Myra only cared about Stark Group because it was her mother's handiwork, but just like her mother, she was aiming for neither power nor riches.

As soon as she realized that the company would still be in the hands of the man who made her mother suffer instead of herself, even if the company managed to recover from the crisis, she suddenly no longer felt like helping them.

"You don't have to save them." There was a fleeting sense of melancholy in Myra's eyes when she stared at the road ahead. "Tony, my mother was the one who built up the company, so it was her life's work. I don't want to watch as Cameron, Rachel, and Kris suck it dry."

Since she didn't want the company anyway, and the company going up in flames would make those people suffer, she would rather see it in ruins. "The Stark Group as it is now is what used to make my mother suffer, so you don't have to salvage it. More than twenty years ago, it used to be an insignificant company, so the incident might just put it back in its place." Myra smiled self-deprecatingly.

Sensing her emotional turmoil, Tony reached out to hold her hand before asking in a soft voice, "Won't you regret this?"

"I won't." She turned her palm to hold his hand. Suddenly, she let out a naughty chuckle. "I still have twenty-five percent of Hart Group's shares anyway. Is this not better than Stark Group?"

Hearing that prompted Tony to hold her hand even tighter. "As long as you're happy." After a pause, he suggested, "Since that is the case, I can make Cameron suffer a bit more in the meantime. One day, you will get the company back." It was a promise that Tony made to Conan; he would give Stark Group back to Myra as a betrothal gift.

Soon, they arrived at the hospital. During Myra's prenatal checkup, the doctor went through all of the necessary steps as Tony observed from the side. He

was also listening intently, and made notes when the doctor gave his instructions. Even the doctor commented on how fortunate Myra was to have such a loving husband, which made her blush intensely.

The checkup indicated that everything was normal. After that, it was Myra's turn to accompany Tony to the surgical department. When the doctor received news of his arrival, he quickly prepared for the checkup. Luckily, Tony seemed to be making good progress in his recovery.

Just when the two of them were about to leave after thanking the doctor, the door of the office flung open abruptly. A nurse was standing by the door, panting for breath, looking as if she feared she might have missed out on something. As soon as she saw Myra, who was beside Tony, her pupils shrunk.

"What's the matter, Miss Boulanger?" The doctor could hear her labored breathing, so he assumed that there was an emergency.

However, Hayley shook her head. "It's nothing, Doctor Randall. I merely came in search of someone." Then, she bit on her lip while staring at Tony.

She didn't expect Tony to be discharged so quickly, and she didn't expect her name to be excluded from the list of doctors and nurses who would be conducting scheduled checkups for Tony at his house either. When she asked the lead nurse for a reason, she was told in a roundabout manner that it was the Hart Family's decision, so it had to be obeyed.

## Standing before Love Chapter 355

Instead of saying that the Hart Family arranged it, I would guess it was Tony's fiancée, Myra, who arranged it. Hayley wasn't willing to give up, but at the same time, she knew she had no way of getting closer to Tony.

A while ago, she heard another nurse mention that Tony would be coming for a checkup. Although she was also aware that he only came because Myra needed to do a prenatal checkup, Hayley came regardless without even coming up with a reason.

"Are you looking for someone?" The doctor, Alvin Randall, was startled by her presence. When he noticed how Hayley was staring at Tony, he assumed he was looking for the man sitting across from him. With a smile, he replied, "Miss Boulanger, are you here for Mr. Hart? You're just in time. He just

finished his checkup. It seems that he is making good progress in his recovery.”

“Yeah.” Hayley gave a faint nod, her face visibly turning a shade of red.

Meanwhile, Myra also glanced in the direction of the woman who was standing at the door after noticing the slight commotion. She knew the woman as the nurse who was responsible for taking care of Tony when he was hospitalized some time ago. For a few times everyday, she would drop by his ward to check on his injuries. However, she never saw Hayley around the house during subsequent checkups after Tony was discharged.

Among them, Tony reacted most calmly to what was going on. At the same time, he was also the only one who totally ignored Hayley. When he stood from his seat, Myra leaned closer subconsciously, which allowed him to loop an arm around her waist. After that, they moved toward the entrance while maintaining that intimate posture.

All the while, Tony wore a blank expression without even sparing Hayley a glance. Feeling slightly awkward, Myra greeted Hayley instead. “Hello, Miss Boulanger.”

But then, Hayley didn’t seem to notice her at all as she continued to stare at Tony. Just when they were about to pass her by, she bit on her lip before speaking. “Mr. Hart, I would like to speak to you alone.”

As if he didn’t hear Hayley at all, Tony walked on without stopping. Feeling surprised, Myra turned to check the gaze that Hayley held while staring at Tony, which triggered an odd feeling within her. “Tony, the nurse is talking to you.” Myra nudged Tony using her elbow.

Lowering his head, Tony kissed her on the forehead. “Come on. We can ignore inconsequential people.” Although he had such a gentle expression when he was looking at Myra, he kept an expressionless face when he glanced at Hayley.

When Hayley noticed that, her face darkened, and she clenched her fists tightly. “Mr. Hart, is there some sort of misunderstanding between us?” She sounded bitter as she spoke, but her gaze was resolute. “Mr. Hart, if that is the case, I can give you an explanation.”

Myra would be an idiot if she wasn't able to decipher what Hayley had in mind by that point. Having arrived at the hospital as an intern not long ago, Hayley was beautiful, had a great physique, and was also a top student. Most women who met Tony were hardly immune to his charms, so Myra was certain Hayley had fallen for him when she looked into Hayley's eyes.

So she is after my man... Myra squinted, but she heaved a sigh after that. Fine. She's just a university student who hasn't even graduated. I don't need to get all worked up because of this. Therefore, she held back Tony before lifting her head to smile at him. "Let her talk since there is a misunderstanding. Don't just walk away with such a stone-cold expression. She had taken care of you for such a long time after all."

Despite the fact that Tony was wearing a frown while being held back by Myra, he finally stopped in his tracks before turning around to face Hayley, who didn't take Myra's actions kindly. She perceived it as a slight, and that Myra was just showing off the fact that nobody other than her was able to influence Tony.

Such thoughts soured Hayley's mood, but she didn't want to lose the opportunity to talk to Tony. Ignoring the awkward look on Alvin's face, she bit her lip while walking toward Tony and Myra. Then, she tucked a strand of hair behind her ear to reveal her delicate ear. Feeling slightly uneasy, she said, "Mr. Hart, although I am a fresh intern, the lead nurse is appreciative of my skills and abilities. I am as good as other nurses. Besides, I have a letter of recommendation from my lecturer, which is proof that I worked my way up to the position. Thus, it is advisable that you secure my help in your recovery process, as I will be able to perform better than other nurses."

Her face was flushed due to embarrassment, which coupled with those clear eyes of hers, she was practically shining. However, Tony merely observed her with a look of indifference. "Are you done?"

Hayley froze before she glanced at Myra and nodded slowly. Upon seeing that, Tony returned a curt nod before turning around with Myra in his arms as they left together. To him, what Hayley said was pointless, as he didn't usually waste time on inconsequential people.

By then, Myra smiled as she mused, Tony must have recognized Hayley's intentions early on, which is why he treated her so indifferently. It seems like this is also the reason that this beautiful nurse isn't included in the list of medical personnel in charge of the checkups conducted in his house.

All of a sudden, she recalled the situation back when she was still with Sean. He had a lot of women around him, to the point that rumors among his employees indicated that he would never turn down a woman as long as she was beautiful enough. Back then, she was constantly exhausted from trying to chase those women away. On the contrary, she never had to worry about that when she was with Tony.

At that thought, she grasped onto Tony's hand tightly without paying attention to the upset-looking Hayley behind them. Then, she suddenly stopped in her tracks to stand on her toes before giving Tony a kiss on the cheek. After that, she leaned in closer to whisper into his ear, "This is your reward." With that, she dragged him along to leave the hospital. She wouldn't give Hayley a chance, more so when Tony didn't even fancy her.

Behind them, Alvin stared at their retreating figures before heaving a sigh. He walked out of his office to give Hayley, who was frozen on the spot, a pat on her shoulder. "Cheer up, Miss Boulanger. Everybody has someone who is fated for them. You can't have something that isn't meant for you."

Upon hearing that, Hayley hung her head low to cover up the look of dejection in her eyes.

On the other hand, Myra sighed as she got into the car outside the hospital. "You sure are lucky to constantly have beautiful women coming after you. I feel like I am such a bother. If it weren't for me, you could have had so many women."

With a half smirk on his face, Tony glanced at her. She was about to buckle up her seat belt, so he leaned in to take it from her. When he buckled it up for her, he gave her a peck on the lips. "Do you want me to go after all those women?"

Rolling her eyes, she replied, "You can if you wish to. I won't hinder you in your pursuit."

"You cheeky brat! Say what you mean!" He pinched her cheek. It felt nice to the touch, so he went on to rub them, which earned him her glare. She had gained some weight as of late, so her face had gotten chubbier as a result. Tony seemed to like to pinch and rub her cheeks—a gesture that was seemingly reminding her that she had gained weight.

"I'm going to skip lunch!" She pulled her lips into a thin line.

“You have to eat. I will be extremely sorry if a diet affects your health even if you don’t feel sorry for yourself.” Tony didn’t even flinch when he said such icky words.

For a moment, Myra was rendered speechless by his words, but she told him the truth afterward. “Well... I felt happy just now.” She couldn’t help but reach out to grab his hand. “You are mine, so you will have to keep your eyes on me even when other women give you their attention, just like what you did just now. Do you hear me?”

## Standing before Love Chapter 356

Myra’s rare show of her more dominant side amused Tony. Turning his palm over to hold her hand, he commented, “Who else should I look at if not you?”

Blushing, Myra retracted her hand and then glared at him. “Drive! You’re setting a bad example for the other employees if you’re never on time!”

That finally shut him up, and he started the car engine before driving off. Halfway through their journey, Estelle gave Myra a call, which she picked up without hesitation. “Is something the matter, Estelle?”

“Myra, it’s me!” The voice that came through didn’t belong to Estelle.

As soon as Myra heard that voice, her face fell. She could also hear Estelle fretting over the phone. “You b\*stard, Sean Chase! I’m warning you! You’d better return my phone, or else I will get the security guards to chase you out!”

“Listen to me, Myra! What happened to the Green Palms Project isn’t what you see on the surface. It’s not just a financial deficit, but someone has been deliberately targeting it! I’ve spent an entire day tracking down the culprit. Do you know that Tony Hart is behind Stark Group’s predicament? Myra, I already told you that you shouldn’t believe in that man! This time, I have proof that I can send you right away to show that I am telling the truth! This time—”

“I already know what’s going on behind the scenes of that project.” With a frown, Myra gave a cold reply.

Sean was panting heavily as he spoke, but when he heard her calm response, he seemed to be momentarily startled. However, he quickly went on to say, “But Tony—”

“Tony already informed me about his actions beforehand.” Myra pulled her lips into a thin line before cutting him off once again. “Sean, I don’t want people to know about this, so I would appreciate it if you could destroy the evidence you hold.”

“Myra—”

“Other than that, I hope you will not interfere with things between me and Tony in the future. And stop harassing me by calling me.” With that, she hung up.

When she turned to meet Tony’s gaze, she saw that he gave her a once over before asking with a smirk, “Who is the popular girl now?”

“I don’t want these kinds of attention.” Myra waved her hand as she spoke. Sean had really outdone himself by sneaking into the film set to snatch Estelle’s phone just so he could give her a call. By this point, Myra really didn’t know what she could say about this. Upon hearing what Myra said, Tony chuckled. Although he was fairly certain that Myra wouldn’t go back to Sean, her reassurance still came as a relief for him.

Back in the film set, Estelle snatched her phone back from Sean, who was stunned to the spot. Begrudgingly, she spat, “Sean Chase, consider this a warning! Don’t disturb Myra’s life! She currently leads a life that is much happier than she ever lived! Tony can provide her with everything that you couldn’t give her by thousands of folds! You were the one who ditched her back then, so it’s too late for you to get her back now!”

After that, she gave the security guards beside her a look. Rather awkwardly, one of them told Sean, “Sorry, Mr. Chase. The set isn’t open to the public today.” They were being courteous by citing that as a reason, as they couldn’t afford to offend either Estelle, who was a famous celebrity, or Sean, who was the director of a company.

Abruptly, Sean smiled in a self-deprecating manner. Without even looking back at Estelle, he walked forward. Is Myra happy? She sure seems to be. I have seen her make all sorts of expressions while she was with Tony. She smiled at him, stared so lovingly at him, and joked with him, but she never seemed to be in despair or pain, which was how she felt when she was with me. But all I want to do is make it up to her. If she is willing to return to me, I will do everything I can to earn her love... With his hands by his sides, he clenched his fists while treading forward.



This time, Cameron seemed to be serious about what he said. After getting someone to clear out Rachel and Kris' belongings in Stark Residence, they got a call that informed them to take everything away.

Initially, Rachel was still baffled by his actions, as she assumed what happened last night between them was nothing more than an argument. Although both of them said some harsh words, she thought Cameron's anger would subside after the night. Therefore, she didn't expect him to be so merciless in his actions.

The fact that Kris and her were kicked out of the house without good reason riled Rachel up. When she thought of the predicament they were in, she gave Cameron a call. However, he didn't bother to pick up even after Rachel called him using another number.

In the end, she went to his company in hopes of being able to catch him there, but the registrars who had always been nice to her were determined to not let her in. With a resigned look on her face, one of the registrar told her, "Madam, please don't put us in a difficult position. It's hard to find a job nowadays. President Stark already warned us that anybody who dared go against his order will be fired."

Rachel had no way to counter that, because she always made sure to establish her image as a kind and understanding person, but she never expected it to turn out to be a hindrance to her in the matter. When she was on her way back to the hospital, she saw the merciless statement that the Waltons issued, which pointed out that the engagement between the Waltons and the Starks was annulled because of Kris' acts of indecency.

There was still space to maneuver around last night's incident if nobody exposed the truth. Besides, nobody actually confirmed that Kris wasn't pregnant with Gideon's child; all they had were rumors. Nonetheless, the statement issued by the Waltons could easily link Kris to the woman who had an affair even though they didn't make a direct accusation.

Kris is still so young! Who will marry her after such a scandal breaks out? The Waltons had gone overboard! she thought. Not only did none of them go visit Kris when she was in such a weakened state, but they were actively trying to destroy her. They totally forgot how Kris had helped them when they just arrived in Bradford City.

Other than that, they also took back the benefits they promised with the project of Central Square. When Rachel gave Shelly a call, the latter pushed her away with words of mockery. When she finally got back to Kris' ward, she told Kris everything. It turned out that Kris already got a grasp on the situation, as she already called Cameron, Gideon, and even Edward, but none of her attempts worked.

All of a sudden, she realized that to Cameron, she was nothing but an effective weapon against Myra, and at the same time, Gideon was using her as a handy chess piece. Now that things had turned out like this, they had both decided to give up on her. She used to fantasize about gaining something through them, but it was all for nothing.

With her phone gripped tightly in her hand, Kris instructed her mother calmly, "Mom, file for a divorce with Dad by citing irreconcilable differences."

Startled, Rachel replied, "Kris, this is only temporary. When your father's anger subsides, we will—"

"We will only be repeating the same cycles even after his anger subsides. Mom, Dad will never give us any of the company's shares before he dies. I have evidence of his affair. This time, we will force him to give up some of his shares to us through legal means. Of course, if he isn't willing to give us that, he will have to accept us back into the family like VIPs." Kris gritted her teeth.

She used to willingly carry all the burden that her father put on her in hopes of one day gaining his shares. After more than twenty years though, she came to learn that someone as sly as Cameron would never easily give up on his power while he was still alive.

"What? Kris, what did you just say?" Rachel's face blanched as she nearly stumbled over.

"Mom, it's all my fault. I was afraid to break your heart, so I didn't tell you that Dad had an affair." Kris bit her lip. In reality, she didn't hide the truth out of concern for her mother, but because Cameron offered her money back then to have her keep it a secret.

## Standing before Love Chapter 357

Back then, Kris was still feeling jealous at Myra for getting a car, so she accepted Cameron's offer without hesitation. From her point of view, someone

as prestigious as her father would undoubtedly have a few mistresses. As long as those women stuck to themselves and did not affect her mother's status within the family, she was willing to turn a blind eye to their affairs. It was also out of concern for her mother. After all, Cameron never was someone who could have a leash put on him. If she irked him by blowing things out of proportion, the status of both her mother and her within the family would be endangered.

"Dad cheated on you, but he threatened me that he would chase us out of the family if I told you." Taking a deep breath, Kris clenched her fists. "I wouldn't be afraid if I was the only one involved, but I knew you wouldn't be able to take such a heavy blow, so I hid the truth from you. Mom, I'm sorry..."

"No, this can't be..." Rachel could feel her blood gushing to her brain. The man who I should have gained full possession over cheated on me? It's just like how he cheated on Jenny with me back then! She felt suffocated by the shock she received.

The only thing that she considered as a success throughout her entire life and was most proud of was the fact that she managed to claim Cameron as her own even though she couldn't compare to Jenny in all other aspects.

After that, she chased both Jenny and Myra out of the house, while she became the matriarch of the Stark Family. She even mocked Jenny to her face about the fact that Cameron belonged to her instead of Jenny, who was Cameron's legal spouse. However...

"Hahaha!" All of a sudden, she burst into a fit of hysterical laughter. No longer able to support herself, she sat down on Kris' bed limply. Regardless, her hysterical laughter went on until her eyes reddened as she teared up. Even Kris was starting to fear her.

After a long while, she suddenly recalled what Cameron told her that day. Who do you think you are? If I so wish to, I can sleep with any woman I want and get them to give birth to my baby. Then, I won't only have such an incompetent daughter!

It wasn't until then that she realized it wasn't an empty threat. In fact, Cameron might very well already have other children who were born from his affairs. She clenched her fists so tightly that her nails dug into the flesh of her palm. Turning her attention to Kris, she asked, "How long has it been since you knew about the affair?"

Kris was a little intimidated by Rachel's demeanor, but she could only deal with the situation one step at a time upon reaching that point. Biting her lip, she answered, "It has been four years—Ah!"

Smack! Kris received another slap, which made her stare at her mother in disbelief.

Rachel, on the other hand, cried and laughed simultaneously as she returned the look. "Kris, I'm your mother. How dare you lie to me about this?"

"Mom, I—"

Although Kris tried to explain herself, Rachel cut her short. "How could I not know your personality? How could I know nothing about my daughter's behavior? Back then, you bought yourself a car after you mysteriously gained an amount of money. When you told me it was your father who gave it to you, I was surprised that someone like him would offer you so much money without reason. I assumed that his paternal instincts had somehow awoken, but alas... You took his money, didn't you?"

By the end of her sentence, Rachel held a fierce gaze. As someone who was capable of defeating Jenny, she had a few tricks up her sleeve, so it was no surprise she ended up deducing what happened back then. Even when compared to her husband's infidelity as well as the Waltons' betrayal, her daughter's deception hurt her the most.

Panic-stricken at her stare, Kris quickly tugged on Rachel's sleeve. "Mom, I was wrong; I know I made a mistake. Back then, Dad was both threatening as well as luring me in with wealth, so I dared not oppose him. Besides, I was afraid that you might be hurt by the truth. Back then, you thought you finally won Jenny in your long-standing feud by taking her man away from her, but someone else ended up snatching him away from you. I was afraid it would come as too heavy a blow—"

"Enough!" Rachel's bloodshot eyes made her look even more menacing. After casting Kris a final glance, she decided to leave the ward. "It's a shame you would treat your mother like this despite the fact that I have always been concerned about your future. You really disappoint me!" After a series of shocking revelations, she could hardly face her daughter.

Kris was starting to panic when she saw that Rachel was about to leave. “Mom, this isn’t the time for infighting. I know I made a mistake back then, but you’re my mother, so you will forgive me—”

“I will.” Rachel had a chilly look on her face. “But not now. Kris, you have to learn who to never betray.” With that, Rachel disappeared through the doorway.

Staring at the empty doorway, Kris slowly clenched her fists. She already lost everything, so she wouldn’t know what to do if even her mother abandoned her. Looking at her own belly, she bit on her lip so hard that it nearly drew blood.

...

Meanwhile, Tony and Myra headed to Hart Group without delay. When Tony was busy with work in his office, Myra helped Leo with a series of administrative tasks. Otherwise, she would feel bored since she had nothing else to do. Regardless of her intentions, Leo was happy that he could get a few tasks crossed off his list.

At noon, she had lunch with Tony. As she was relatively free in the afternoon, she ordered some fresh flowers to be delivered to the office. After spending a few days with Sebastian in Hart Residence, Sebastian and Lisa taught her quite a few tricks in floral arrangement, which she grew to appreciate. Since she had nothing else to do, she ordered some flowers so that she could have fun arranging them.

After arranging the flowers into three vases, she put one of them at the reception room in Tony’s office, another one in the lounge, and then gave the final one to Leo as a present, which came as a pleasant surprise to him.

When she returned to Tony’s office, she noticed he was wearing a grim expression despite the fact that he was engrossed in work before she left. Startled, she quickly caught on to the reason behind his mood swing. After letting out a chuckle, she explained, “I only arranged some flowers for Leo because I’m bored.”

Hearing that, Tony cast his pen aside while arching his brow. “Why don’t I get one on my desk?” Apparently, he was getting jealous over the smallest things.

Smiling, Myra said, “I thought you didn’t like such fancy things, and that putting them in front of you would only annoy you.”

After that, he beckoned at her, upon which she walked up to him obediently. Then, he reached out to loop an arm around her waist to position her on his lap. She was rendered speechless by his familiar movement. It sure seems like he’s getting accustomed to doing this.

With that in mind, she decided to just kiss him on his cheek. “If you’re interested, I can have the flower shop send more flowers, and I’ll arrange them for you. How does that sound? I promise to make yours look the prettiest.”

She knew he liked her to take the initiative. Sure enough, his grim expression melted away as he glanced at her from the corner of his eye. “Is floral arrangement your new-found hobby?”

“It’s not bad. The fragrance of the flowers is comforting. Just looking at them seems to greatly improve my mood as well.” Myra nodded.

Upon hearing that, he gave her a pat on the shoulder. “Go make one for me, then.”

With a nod, Myra left for the reception room to order some more flowers over the phone.

Meanwhile, Tony called Leo on the company’s integrated phone system. “Find me a two-storey shoplot at a quiet location. It needs to have a great view and abundant sunlight so that plants can grow. However, it doesn’t have to be a spot where a lot of clients would frequent.”

## Standing before Love Chapter 358

Leo remained silent as he mused, Director Tony wants to set up a flower shop, but doesn’t want too many clients to know the address. I guess he’s doing this just to pamper Miss Myra. Although he was already used to seeing how Tony would dote on Myra, Leo couldn’t help but exclaim mentally, since his past self would never have believed Tony was capable of such deeds toward a woman.

However, Leo quickly carried out Tony’s orders, starting from finding a suitable shoplot. Myra knew nothing about it as she worked on arranging the

flowers into another vase before bringing it out from the lounge, only to find that the atmosphere outside the lounge was different from when she left.

In fact, the atmosphere in Tony's office was slightly heavy. With a morose look, Tony held an almost hostile gaze in his narrow eyes. His features were stiff and serious when he tapped on the surface of the table with the index and middle finger of his left hand, which produced a series of light yet unnerving tapping noises. At the same time, his eyes were narrowed into slits as he stared forward dangerously.

Standing in front of him was a woman with a pale face. She was in a champagne-colored office wear that looked both formal and elegant. Her curls cascaded down her back, which gave her the allure of a mature woman. However, her body was stiff, and there was a hint of sorrow in her eyes. The woman was no stranger to Myra, as she was the director of the finance department, Ivy Jameson.

Perhaps because Tony noticed Myra's presence, he seemed less gloomy. Nonetheless, he picked up the document in front of him before throwing it onto the table in front of Ivy. In an indifferent tone, he ordered, "Redo this report. From tomorrow onward, you will start working at Springdale City."

"I won't go to Springdale City!" Having noticed Myra's presence, a hint of agony fled across Ivy's gaze. Biting her lip, she continued to stare at the man in front of her stubbornly.

"Miss Jameson, this is the company's decision." Tony's face fell, his eyes holding a look of dismay.

"Is this the company's decision, or is it yours?" Ivy gritted her teeth before continuing, "Tony, are you transferring me because you can't change my mind? What are you afraid of? Is it because you're worried that having me around might displease her?"

All of a sudden, Ivy pointed at Myra, who was startled by her movement. Her eyes reddened as she spoke. "All I wish for is to be able to pursue you freely! Is that a crime? I didn't do anything to Miss Stark! Everybody has their freedom to love someone! I know you don't like me, but that's your problem! You can't stop me from liking you! Besides, Myra isn't a good match for you! Tony, won't you get someone else even if it's not me? Do you know what those people outside are saying about you? They say—"

“That’s enough!” A chilly look enveloped his features as he glared at Ivy with his piercing eyes. Standing up, he bellowed, “Get out!”

“I won’t!” Ivy finally mustered up enough courage, as she knew she would never have the chance to express her feelings again if she didn’t do it now.

She had loved and waited for Tony for many years. Unlike Gemma, she would never resort to underhanded tactics, but she loved him as much as Gemma did. If it were up to her, she wished Tony would find another woman even if he didn’t like her. She had no idea why he would even want someone who was a divorcee. To be honest, she didn’t even get why Myra was considered better than her or any other woman.

“You were the one who was constantly providing for her! What has she ever done for you? Tony, will someone like her still be around you when you hit a low in life?” Ivy was yelling at him with a hoarse voice.

Upon hearing that, Myra clenched one of her fists. Then, she walked up to Tony while holding the vase before setting it down on the corner of his desk. After that, she began tidying up the documents in front of him which were messed up during his outburst.

“I know you’ve given her some of the shares of your company! On what basis does she deserve that? The shares were accumulated through generations of hard work by the Hart Family! What has she done to deserve all that?” When Ivy witnessed what Myra was doing, she assumed Myra was just trying to make her look bad. All riled up, her face was red as she couldn’t help but shout at the top of her lungs. However, nobody knew whether what she said was intended for Tony or Myra.

Tony wore a deep frown as he reached out to pull Myra into his arms, which she allowed him to. “On what basis, you ask?” With a mirthless chuckle, he answered, “On the basis that she’s my fiancée, as well as the future wife of the director of this company! Would that suffice as a reason?”

Ivy was devastated by what she heard. Although she knew full well that Tony was in love with Myra, and that they would soon be married, she could still hardly accept it as the truth when she heard it from him. Staggering backward, she nearly drew blood as she dug her nails into the flesh of her palms. “Tony Hart! Don’t you know what I’ve done for the company?!”



“Which is why you’re now the finance director of our company,” Tony replied without emotion.

“Finance director? Did you really think that’s what I want?”

“I don’t care whether that’s what you want or not. All I know is that that is all the company and I can provide.” Tony was wearing a stiff smile.

“That is all you can provide...” Without warning, Ivy burst into laughter until her tears rolled, staining her cheeks, which made her seem ghastly. After glancing at Myra and then at Tony, she walked up to them without hesitation before stopping in front of Tony, or rather, in front of Myra. “Miss Stark, tell me why do you like him? Just a few months ago, you were married to Sean Chase, whom you loved deeply. You even cut ties with your family in order to marry him, so why would you fall in love with Tony all of a sudden? Don’t you dare make up any fancy lies to deceive me!” Ivy stared at her intently.

Upon noticing that Tony was about to speak up for herself against Ivy, Myra squeezed his hand with her own hand that he was holding, which brought a frown to his face. Then, she stated matter-of-factly, “I know you don’t think I’m a good match for Tony. You even doubt my feelings for him.”

As Myra spoke, Ivy glared at her as if indicating that she would make Myra pay dearly if she lied. However, Myra didn’t seem to care as she wore a nonchalant smile. “I know that there are things that you will never believe in no matter how I phrase them. And I never thought of giving you any promise or explanation. My relationship with Tony only has to do with us. If we like each other, we don’t care how people perceive us. Because I like him, and I know he likes me, I will never give up on our relationship. Will you give up if you were in my shoes?”

Ivy choked on her own words upon hearing what Myra said. Begrudgingly, she glared at Tony. “I will never go to Springdale City! As I said, the fact that I like you has nothing to do with anybody else but myself! As long as you and Myra haven’t married each other, I will never give up!”

“Suit yourself,” Tony uttered mockingly before dialing the internal landline. “Leo, take Miss Jameson away. Her presence is unwelcomed.”

Upon hearing that, Ivy’s countenance shifted drastically. Soon, the door of the office was opened, and Leo entered with a blank look on his face while looking at Ivy. “Let’s go.”

Ivy looked hurt. Seeing that she wasn't about to leave, Leo reached out to drag her away. He held her in a tight grip, so her wrist was bruised when she cast his hand away as soon as they got out through the door.

"Ivy, why can't you just accept the fact that the director doesn't like you romantically?" Leo grabbed her hand again when he noticed she tried to barge in again.

## Standing before Love Chapter 359

"Let go of me!" With abandon, Ivy seemed resolute about whatever it was that she was going to do. "Leo, you know how I feel! Sebastian already announced that their wedding will be held next month! What should I do if that happens?"

As she went on, a look of grief shrouded her features. "How could he treat me like that after I spent all those years chasing after him? Is my effort throughout the years all for naught?"

Leo didn't let go of her hand. There was a fleeting pain in his gaze when he noticed how hurt she was. Regardless, he only stated aloofly, "There never is a reason for things like this. Director Hart had always made himself clear, nor had he ever given you false hope. You know full well that he was the one who bestowed our positions in the company to us. Not anybody could just walk in and get to this position. We only had a chance because he gave us one. Have you forgotten how he helped you when you were bullied by your cousin's family? Now that he will be getting married to Miss Stark, you should let go and give him your blessing."

"Let go and give him my blessing?" Ivy froze on the spot before her whole body began trembling. "Let go and give him my blessing... Let go and give him my blessing..." While repeating that single line, she wore a look of grief.

After spending all those years chasing after Tony, she couldn't possibly just let go and give him her blessing now. However, she also recognized that he transferred her away after she only bad-mouthed Myra a little. It was apparent that she had no place in his heart, whereas Myra managed to quickly steal all of his attention when she wasn't looking. He even disregarded their many years of friendship for Myra's sake.

"Leo, can't you help me?" She wheeled around all of a sudden to look at Leo. Before that, he already led her to a nearby pantry, and also passed her a piece of tissue.

After taking the tissue from him, she stared at him with a maniacal gaze while holding his hand. “Please help me! You have spent so many years working beside Tony, so he trusts you the most! All you need to do is pull a few tricks to drive a wedge between Tony and Myra, which will quickly grow into an irreconcilable difference. After all, they only knew each other for such a short while, so they won’t be able to tolerate each other as soon as they notice each other’s flaws. Then, they will part ways!”

Ivy spoke as if she’d found a way to salvage the situation. With bloodshot eyes, she held Leo in a death grip without a care in the world. “Leo, we’ve been friends for so many years. I’m sure you’ll help me out, won’t you? You’re the person who Tony trusts the most, so you’re the only one who can pull this off!”

While watching Ivy descend into madness, Leo pulled his lips into a thin line as a look of derision glinted in his eyes. “Huh, we’ve been friends for so many years... Ivy, you flatter me.”

“So will you help me or not?” She bit on her lip. Although Leo did nothing to indicate his feelings for Ivy, she knew all along that he fancied her. There was once when she accidentally saw a message that he wanted to send her. However, it was still in his draft box as he never sent it.

“I won’t help you.” When Leo noticed the drastic shift in Ivy’s countenance, he couldn’t help but mock himself. There was a grimness in his eyes that looked like bottomless pits as he stared at Ivy. “Even if I neglect the fact that Director Hart truly loved Myra, I will never do something to betray him after working beside him for all these years! Ivy, you should be able to give him your blessing if you are indeed in love with him, and aren’t looking to claim him as your possession.”

Ivy bit on her lips so hard that she almost drew blood, but she didn’t even seem to notice. Great despair, helplessness, loathsomeness, and envy quickly ate away at her from the inside, leaving her in agony.

“No! I wasn’t trying to claim him for myself! You know nothing! What right does Myra have to stand beside Tony? She’s a useless wimp! She must have approached him deliberately! I heard Myra was fighting with her sister over family possessions, so she must be trying to use Tony! Someone like her doesn’t deserve to marry Tony! It doesn’t matter if Tony marries another woman, as long as it isn’t Myra! Any random woman is a far better choice than Myra! Myra—”

Slap! Ivy's head turned to the side after being slapped. Standing in front of her, Leo was wearing a morose look as the veins on his forehead pulsated. While staring at Ivy, who seemed to be distorted by rage and envy, he chided her in a hushed voice, "Ivy, wake up!"

With a hand over her face, she turned around to look at Leo in disbelief. "Leo, you slapped me... Did you just... slap me?" Her feeble voice carried with it great agony and grief.

Leo had his hand that he used to slap her clenched into a tight fist. Although he wanted to pull the woman who was feeling most aggrieved into his arms, he managed to stop himself from doing so. Softly, he apologized, "I'm sorry. I was just afraid that you might have gotten a little paranoid. Ivy, Myra doesn't need anything other than Director Hart's love to be able to be with him. As long as she has that, nothing will pose a problem between them. You shouldn't be throwing all sorts of prerequisites into the mix when it comes to relationships, or else it's no longer unconditional love."

Upon hearing what he said, Ivy was momentarily stunned before falling into great despair. She shriveled like a withering plant as she hunched over. "I shouldn't be throwing all sorts of prerequisites into the mix when it comes to relationships..." she muttered. Lifting her hands, she stared at her palms. "No wonder he never even looked my way even though I put in so much effort over the years..."

She was shrouded by despair while wearing a blank look on her face. "On the contrary, Myra could amuse him greatly with even the tiniest of gestures. He never showed that side of him to me, so Myra was the only one who has exclusive access to that side of him."

Memories of the past gradually surfaced in her mind. No matter how hard she'd tried to approach him, he was always just out of reach even when she thought she was getting so close to him. But it turned out that it wasn't because she didn't try hard enough; it was just that he didn't want to give her a chance.

To other people, her exuberant youth and her deep-rooted feelings meant nothing. She was the only one who treasured them. "I see... So I'm a total failure..." All of a sudden, she laughed until tears rolled down her cheeks while her body trembled vehemently.

While observing her vulnerable side, Leo couldn't help but step forth to hold her in his arms. He sounded sorry as he spoke in a hoarse voice. "Ivy, don't be like this. There are so many other men in this whole wide world, so Director Hart isn't the only man available. As long as you look closely, there'll be other men who'll be able to bring you joy like how Director Hart made Miss Stark happy."

"But they're not Tony Hart..." Seemingly exhausted, Ivy rested her chin on Leo's shoulder as she mumbled with a blank stare.

Leo's heart spasmed at the sight of it. Yeah, there's only one Tony Hart in the whole wide world. I might never be able to get to his level even if I spent my whole life working on my success. Despite so, I want to give her happiness.

"Ivy, can you give me a chance? I've always liked you, as much as you liked Director Hart. I would like to make you happy so that you can live a cheerful and carefree life. Is that alright?" Speaking gently, he put both of his hands on her shoulder to put some distance between them before staring into her eyes.

## Standing before Love Chapter 360

With an earnest gaze that indicated to Ivy his deep love and gentle desire to protect her, Leo continued to stare at her while waiting in trepidation.

Hearing his sudden confession, Ivy was stunned. Although she knew early on that he fancied her, she always feigned ignorance because she didn't want to complicate things.

She was swayed by his sudden confession, but chose to immediately push him away in panic while biting her lip. "Leo, the man I like is Tony. Even though he doesn't like me, I won't give up before he gets married." Her final sentence sounded rigid, either because she really refused to give up or she was trying to turn Leo down.

As soon as Leo heard that, his gaze dimmed. A frown appeared as quickly as it disappeared before he smiled at her. "I'm at my wits' end if you're not going to change your mind even after I did that." With that, he switched to a more serious demeanor. "Ivy, even if you're unwilling to give up on Director Hart, you shouldn't lay a finger on Miss Stark, or else..." Or else, even I will not be able to save you.

After biting on her lip, Ivy replied, "I know that. I was only venting my frustrations just now." She glanced at Leo, only to notice the deep gaze he held. Somehow, she panicked as her heart spasmed all of a sudden, which prompted her to walk toward the entrance. "But it doesn't mean I'll give up!" When she reached the entrance, she stopped in her tracks to deliver that sentence resolutely.

When Leo stared at the door that slammed shut abruptly, a bitter smile crept onto his face. So it didn't work after all. She's such a proud woman, so she wouldn't notice just how long I've been waiting for her while staying by her side.

...

Back in the office, Myra looked at Tony, who was frowning. Sighing, she reached out to smooth out the crease between his brows. "Stop frowning. You look glum."

When he turned to look at her, his features smoothed out as he reached out to hold her hand before putting it by his lips to give it a kiss. While staring at her, he asked, "Aren't you jealous or angry at all?" He figured any woman would be angry after being harassed by Ivy.

Although Myra was indeed a little annoyed by Ivy's shenanigans, she didn't bear a grudge against Ivy. After some thought, she asked, "Are you transferring Miss Jameson to the branch company from headquarters?"

"Yeah." Tony gave a curt and nonchalant reply.

Myra nodded. "I see... No wonder she was so hostile toward me." Then, she glanced at the man before her. "Why did you transfer her when you approve of her abilities as the finance director? Isn't it a waste of her talents to have her work in the branch company?" she questioned. No woman who has a shred of dignity would ever tolerate such treatment.

Speechless, he stared at the woman in front of him before pinching her on the waist abruptly. "Why do you think I did all that?"

Shocked by the sudden sting, she glared at him. "Perhaps she bad-mouthed me in front of you again?"

Tony furrowed his brows together once again, obviously recalling the harsh words that Ivy spouted in front of him.

But Myra merely shrugged indifferently. “You’ll never ditch me because of what she said, so she can run her mouth all she wants. She’s feeling vexed by her circumstances, so you just need to let her vent. Since she’s a smart woman, she’ll get around it soon enough.”

Unlike Kris, Gemma, or a lot of other women, Ivy was intelligent. Even though she would run her mouth, Myra believed that she wasn’t as vicious as she seemed. Sometimes, we women are prone to stubbornness and overthinking, just like when I was with Sean. Regardless of everything, she ended up falling out of love with Sean, and life went on. At times, she even thought her past self was pretty laughable. Once Ivy comes to that same realization, she’ll be able to start over with her life as well.

“You sure know her well.” Tony gave her a side glance, obviously unhappy that she wasn’t even jealous.

With a smile, she said, “I was just spouting nonsense. To be honest, I just don’t want you to feel like your investment in the person who you trained over the years to be your right-hand man was a waste.”

Startled, Tony let out a chuckle before pulling her into an embrace. “What should I say?” Then, he planted a kiss on the top of her head. “If she gives you any trouble—”

“She won’t.” She cut him off with certainty before he could finish his words.

“How can you be so confident?” While staring into her eyes, he arched his brow.

“I can sense that’s just how she is,” Myra said after some thought. “You’ve already made yourself clear, so someone as proud as her won’t come to me again. It would equate to admitting that she had failed in her endeavors.”

Tony rubbed her head lovingly. While he didn’t usually do that, he did it naturally this time.

Then, Myra tucked herself closer to him. “Don’t be angry. Go back to work. Old Master Sebastian just sent me a text, telling us to come home for dinner

earlier.” After that, she glanced at the vase of flowers that she brought over not long ago. “This is the prettiest one.”

Tony couldn't help but let out a chuckle before sending her off to get some rest.

...

There wasn't a lot to do. When Tony was finally done, it was also almost time to clock off work. Just when they were about to leave, Leo came knocking on their door with a morose look on his face. “Mr. Hart, the front desk called to inform you that President Stark is here.”

When Myra heard him, she was startled for a moment before her face fell. On the contrary, Tony betrayed no emotion as he waved at Leo. “Tell him I'm not going to meet him.”

Are you sure you're going to be that direct? Leo was surprised by Tony's response. However, he quickly came to realize it was because both Tony and Myra were fed up with the falsehoods that they had to put up with Cameron. Therefore, Leo left the office. Soon, Tony's phone rang, but he didn't pick up the call. Nonetheless, the call kept on coming, as if the caller would keep on calling if Tony wasn't going to pick up.

“Let me answer it.” Myra reached out to fish for his phone, only for Tony to grasp and answer it before she could. “What's the matter?” He sounded nonchalant, his emotions unreadable.

...

Cameron was on the verge of a meltdown this entire day. Out of the blue, Green Palms Project suffered a financial deficit which kicked up some dust in Stark Group. Other than that, it also brought up the minor issues that the Starks used to be able to cover up. The other companies reached out to help only because they didn't want to offend the Waltons, since the latter were also involved. However, it wasn't enough to solve the problem.

Cameron already brazenly gave the Waltons a call, which got him mocked. Flushing due to anger, he mentally cursed Rachel and Kris again. For lack of a better option, he could only give Myra a call, but it was apparent that Myra had no intention to pick up his call.



After some thought, he called Tony, assuming that Tony wouldn't be giving him a hard time since he was Myra's father. As his mind raced, he heard Tony's voice. Quickly suppressing his panic and sour mood, he begged humbly, "Tony, there's something that I would like to speak with you about."

"What's the matter?" Tony glanced at Myra to calm her down as he continued to deal with Cameron over the phone casually.

"I believe I have spoken to you last time about Green Palms Project." Cameron took a deep breath after that. After all, he still bore in mind the humiliation he suffered in front of them. Yet, he still had to defer to them during such a crucial moment. "Stark Group is in a complete mess now. If you won't help us, the company that Myra's mother built will be dealt a huge blow that it might never recover from."

## Standing before Love Chapter 361

"Will the fall of Stark Group bring any loss to Myra?" Tony arched his brow while questioning Cameron.

"Of course! Have you already forgotten that she has twenty-five percent of the shares of the company? If the company goes bankrupt, she won't be able to get anything."

Cameron gritted his teeth. In fact, it wasn't just twenty-five percent. He was aware that there was someone else who had been buying off the company's stocks that were on the market. Other than Tony, Cameron couldn't imagine anybody else doing that.

However, he could only feign ignorance. "Of course, I wouldn't make you help us for free. If Stark Group manages to fare through this, I'm willing to offer you Green Palms Project's full profit. How does that sound?"

"Green Palms Project's full profit..." There was a hint of ridicule in Tony's voice while he sandwiched his phone between his shoulder and his cheek. He took out a cigarette, only to quickly throw the cigarette into the bin beside him as soon as he glanced at the belly of the woman who was sitting beside him.

After that, he picked up his phone again to continue the conversation casually. "President Stark, you must be joking. How could there be any more profit to the project after everything that happened? It would be a miracle to not suffer a loss."

Upon hearing what Tony said, Cameron's countenance shifted drastically as he gripped onto his phone tightly. "Won't you be able to create miracles if you are the one who strikes? Green Palms Project isn't that big of a project anyway. You might be able to earn more through the project compared to when Stark Group is managing it."

Cameron absolutely believed that given its power and influence, Hart Group would be able to sell off the entire project within mere minutes, which would guarantee full profit. On the contrary, Stark Group wouldn't be able to do much else with the project. Moreover, they might suffer a loss because of that.

It was all because of what Kris did last night, which turned out to be a liability for him. That was why he had to come to Tony in the first place. Since Stark Group wouldn't be able to earn much anyway, he figured he should offer everything up to Tony so that he wouldn't turn down the offer because of the potential loss that he might suffer.

"I never liked putting in the effort just so I could pick up other people's pieces." Tony put on a half smirk as he spoke. "However, I'll consider helping you out if I think there's something to gain out of it." He seemed to be indicating something.

Upon hearing that, Myra lifted her head to check on him. She didn't miss out on what he meant, so she reached out to hold his hand that was still covered in a splint before smiling at him appreciatively.

Arching his brow, Tony whispered into her ear abruptly, "You need to come up with another method if you want to thank me."

Although he's still on the phone with Cameron, he's acting so cheekily! Of course Myra knew what he meant, so she blushed profusely while glaring at him. After that, she walked away from him toward the sofa. Perhaps because she was pregnant, her legs felt tired after standing for some time.

Letting go of Myra, he watched her retreating figure with a smile on his face. Yet, he was merciless while talking to Cameron. "It'll depend on if you're willing to prove your sincerity."

Cameron's face fell as soon as he heard that, for he knew full well what Tony was after. He was aiming for none other than even more of Stark Group's shares. Roughly estimating, Myra now possessed over thirty percent of Stark Group's shares. If he were to hand over more, the company would have to

elect a new board of directors, which would even lead to someone else becoming the chairman of the board.

Throughout his life, Cameron valued power more than his own life, so he would never allow something like that to happen. Yet, Tony wouldn't help Stark Group if he didn't defer to him, spelling doom for the company.

A sense of irritability crept throughout him as he pulled his lips into a thin line and clenched his fists. Tony Hart, you b\*stard! He sure knows how to target my weak spot! As my daughter, how dare Myra repay me like this after I spent all those years raising her?

Cameron was sweating profusely, tormented to make a decision. Seemingly aware of his situation, Tony waited patiently for his decision without rushing him. Begrudgingly, Cameron offered, "How about I give you another five percent of our shares?" An added five percent meant Cameron would still have more shares than Myra, so he was still in control of the board.

Narrowing his eyes, Tony said, "Ten percent."

Cameron's countenance shifted when he heard that. "Mr. Hart, you should be aware how much ten percent of my company's shares are worth. It's way more than the profit you would be able to earn through Green Palms Project! Mr. Hart, you're being a bit too greedy."

"I suppose I should remind you that it is only in the case your company isn't bankrupt that I'll be able to earn more than the project's profit through holding onto ten percent of your shares," Tony refuted calmly.

Hearing that, Cameron's eyes were set ablaze. Ten percent of the company's shares... He was well aware of Tony's intentions. If Myra were to take over the company prior to that, he wouldn't even be half as nervous about it. After all, a girl in her late teens wouldn't be able to handle the company that he had managed for so many years. Therefore, he could easily chase her out of the company.

However, things were different as it were. Myra had enlisted the help of Tony Hart, the man who could subvert everything. While Cameron might still have some confidence in the beginning, it was mostly diminished after his recent business venture. His chest was heaving due to anger as he spoke, and he had cut all pleasantries. "If this is what you wish for..."

Suddenly, his phone began ringing. With a frown, he checked on the screen to see that someone was calling him. As soon as he saw the caller ID, his eyes lit up. Narrowing his eyes, he said to Tony, "I'm sorry, but I have another call to answer. Let us talk about this at another time."

With that, he hung up, while Tony narrowed his eyes upon hearing that. When Myra noticed the dangerous glint in his eyes, she asked while sitting on the sofa, "What's the matter?"

Tony arched a brow at her. "Cameron might have found help."

"Help? Who?" Myra frowned slightly. Who would want to help him at such a time? Haven't the Waltons decided to stay out of this? Who could he possibly have gotten help from? At that moment, a thought crossed her mind, which caused her to frown even deeper. "Could it be... Sean?"

After that, she stood up nervously to walk up to Tony. "Sean told me he has proof of you tinkering with Green Palm Project. If he handed the proof to Cameron, Cameron would never let things slide."

She knew Tony had tinkered with the project, but she believed he would not force Stark Group into bankruptcy. While Cameron might come out of it tattered, she knew Tony wouldn't let things spiral out of control. But if Sean and Cameron decide to work together at this point in time...

Noticing her worry, Tony gave her a faint smile before looping an arm around her waist to lead her out of the office. "Why would I have left all evidence intact when Sean mentioned he has proof?"

"But how could you have possibly removed all evidence?" Myra was getting worried, as Tony only got involved in the mess because of her. If he was implicated and sued for committing commercial crimes... The thought of it caused her to tighten her grip on his hand.

"You don't have to worry about me." He gave her a pat on the back when they entered the elevator. "Don't meddle in this. I have my own plans."