

## The Kiss 1131

### Chapter 1131

Mr. Lanos, are you that nosy? So what if I have feelings for that male colleague? How can you help us?"

Chase responded with a slight grin, "Nothing is impossible. When I finish up my work in the next couple of days, I'll arrange something for

Selinda remained silent.

She had said all that with a hint of annoyance and sarcasm, not expecting him to actually agree.

Save your effort. Mr. Larios, I can handle my own business. You don't need to worry about me!" Belinda retorted, clearly not pleased.

Chase arched an eyebrow. "So you're planning to pursue him on your own again?"

Salinda frowned and turned to face him seriously, "Mr. Larios, yes, I pursued you once and failed, but that doesn't mean I need to chase after every man like. I'm not that unattractive!"

Chase chuckled, "Indeed! With your qualities, I'm sure there are men chasing after you."

Selinda didn't want to deal with him anymore. She had once thought of him as gentle, witty, and always calm with a hint of humor. Now, he just seemed sarcastic and annoying.

Elhor was right. This man was not cut out to be a serious boyfriend. Anyone who ended up with him would get hurt.

Seeing that Belinda was not responding, Chase also got bored and didn't say anything else. He turned to look at Ida, who was also staring at her phone, so he quietly leaned over to take a peek.

Iba was reading a complaint from Byran.

Eyran texted. "You shameless woman, you betrayed me; I hate you!"

Ida didn't reply.

Syran sent another message. "You told my brother I was harassing you; what kind of trick is this? Why don't you talk about how you seduced me in the first place?"

Ida adjusted her glasses but still had no intention of responding.

Within 10 seconds, another message from Byran arrived. "Now my brother has beaten me up for messing around. Are you happy now?"

Ida's brow furrowed slightly. After hesitating for a while, she finally responded, "Where did he hit you?"

"Everywhere! You wicked woman, it's all your fault!"

"Learn your lesson and stop bothering me. Then you won't get beaten up."

"Impossible! You slept with me and think you can just walk away? I'll come find you when my brother is not around! You better not see other men behind my back, or I'll bite you!"

Ida pinched the bridge of her nose. "Looks like your brother didn't beat you enough."

\*I will never submit; I just don't want to upset my brother, he's not well lately! I will never succumb to violence!"

Ida didn't bother to reply anymore. Talking to such a stubborn kid was a total waste of time.

Perhaps because Ida didn't respond, Byran started to coax her. "Ida, what are you doing? My brother locked me in my room. Can we video chat?"

Ida still didn't respond. Just as she was about to turn off her phone, Byran's video call request came in.

Ida was going to decline, but before she could, Chase took her phone.

Chapter 1132

By the time Ida realized, it was already too late.

The video call had connected. Bryan moved out of the frame, looking somewhat displeased. In an arrogant tone, he said, "Ida, forget it; I forgive you!"

I also did something wrong today. I shouldn't have disturbed you at work; I shouldn't have made you mad.

I won't be so capricious next time: I'll wait till you finish work before looking for you."

Chase replied, "Mr. Howard, you seem to get it! You know Ida hates it when people interfere with her work, and you quickly realized your mistake too."

As soon as Bryan heard his voice, he stared at the screen, "It's you again! Why are you holding her phone?"

Before Chase could speak, Ida snatched the phone. "Hang up!"

"Ida..."

Bryan's voice suddenly stopped because Ida hung up the call and switched off the phone.

Then, Ida glared at Chase, "What's your problem?"

Chase shrugged, "I just wanted to see if he is really serious about you! Now I can confirm that the lad isn't bad; he's a bit arrogant, but he knows how to admit his mistakes. I think it's worth it for you to hang out with him a bit more."

"Stop talking!" Ida rolled her eyes at him, turned her face away to rest, and ignored him.

Chase was laughing happily when he accidentally noticed in the rear-view mirror that Belinda was looking at him with disdain.

They arrived at the Blanchet Villa.

As they got out of the car, Belinda noticed several bodyguards guarding her uncle's house, which was a bit strange.

She went up and rang the doorbell. The face of Devin appeared on the doorbell screen, "Oh, it's Ms. Wesley!"

Belinda nodded, "Devin, I came to see Ellinor. Is she home?"

Devin asked carefully, "The lady is home. Ms. Wesley, did you come alone?"

Belinda answered truthfully, "No, I brought two friends with me."

"Uh... who are your friends? Do they know our lady?" Devin asked again to confirm their identities.

Belinda nodded, "They know Ellinor; they're good friends. Just tell Ellinor that I brought Chase and Ida to visit her."

Devin hesitated for a moment, "Alright, Ms. Wesley, please wait a moment."

Then the image on the doorbell screen disappeared.

Belinda thought that Devin probably went to ask Ellinor, right?

But when did the security here get so strict? She remembered that there weren't bodyguards at the door before.

Chase and Ida had also gotten out of the car. After seeing the tall bodyguards at the entrance of the Blanchet Villa, they exchanged a glance.

Soon, Devin came out with several servants. The servants behind him were carrying some tools that seemed familiar.

"Devin, how about it? Ellinor said my two friends can go in with me, right?" Belinda asked as she approached.

Devin looked serious. He glanced at Chase and Ida standing not far away, then said, "Ms. Wesley, because we've never seen the two friends you brought before, they need to go through some security checks to ensure they're not carrying any dangerous items before they can see Mrs. Blanchet."

Belinda was stunned, "Security checks?"

Chapter 1133

Well, no wonder she recognized the things in the hands of those guys following Devin. They looked like airport security equipment.

"Devin, is this really necessary? They are Ellinor's friends; they are not bad people!"

Devin insisted, "Ms. Wesley, it's Mr. Blanchet's order before he left. Anyone who comes to see Mrs. Blanchet needs to go through security checks. We're just following orders."

Feeling helpless, Belinda replied. "Okay then, let me talk to my two friends and see if they can accept this."

Devin showed respect, "Alright."

Belinda felt it was a bit too much to do security checks at the front door. She wondered if Mr. Larios and Ms. Gipson would accept this kind

of treatment.

As she walked over to explain, Chase spoke first, "It's fine; we can go through the security checks."

Somewhat surprised, Belinda asked, "Mr. Larios, don't you and Ms. Gipson feel offended?"

Chase smiled, "Mr. Blanchet is doing this for Ellinor's safety; why shouldn't we accept it?"

Feeling awkward, Belinda said, "As long as you guys don't mind. It wasn't like this before. It's probably because Ellinor is pregnant and Theo is overly worried."

"It's fine; tell them they can check us."

"Alright, I'll let them know."

After Belinda informed Devin, he instructed his men to conduct thorough security checks on Chase and Ida and refused their gifts.

"I'm sorry, but Mr. Blanchet is concerned about Mrs. Blanchet's health and doesn't allow her to eat food bought outside. Your kindness is appreciated, but the gifts can't be brought in."

Chase smiled, "Okay, we understand. Mr. Blanchet really cares about his wife."

Devin didn't seem to catch the sarcasm in Chase's words. After the security checks, they all entered the courtyard.

The Blanchet villa's living room was spacious and bright, with a few waiting servants and no one else.

After inviting them to sit, Devin politely said, "Please wait here; Mrs. Blanchet will come shortly."

Then he went upstairs to get Mrs. Blanchet.

Obviously, he hadn't asked for Ellinor's permission before they arrived.

About five minutes later, Ellinor slowly came down the stairs.

She was wearing a housecoat, and her hair was casually tied in a ponytail, looking a bit tired.

Accompanying her was a child.

After seeing Chase and Ida, Ellinor's expression remained calm, not making eye contact with them.

Belinda stood up, excitedly walked over, and complained, "Ellinor, your house is like Fort Knox now! We have to go through security checks just to get in, and our gifts aren't even allowed in. It's stricter than airport security!"

Ellinor responded with a faint smile, "Aren't these all your kind-hearted uncle's requests?"

Belinda gave a bitter smile, "Theo is indeed being a bit over the top. But he's doing this for your and the baby's safety. He's abroad and can't be with you, so of course he's worried."

Ellinor gave a sarcastic smile but said nothing.

Then she sat down on the sofa with Baber, casually looked at Chase and Ida, and asked, "What brings you two here?"

Upon seeing Ellinor safe and sound, Chase and Ida felt relieved, but they could clearly feel the tense atmosphere in the Blanchet Villa.

Chapter 1134

Chase caught on to Ellinor's hint from her eyes. He grinned and said, "Ms. Mendoza, we don't just come to you when we need something. right?"

Ida chimed in. "It's been a while since we've seen you. We just came to have a chat."

Both of them avoided calling her boss in unison.

Ellinor responded, "I'm kinda bored anyway. Your visit is right on time. We can play some poker to kill time."

Chase grinned. "Sounds good!"

Belinda chimed in. "Cool Mr. Larios gave me a half day off. I can join you guys for some poker."

At this moment, Marissa Blanchet emerged from the kitchen with two maids.

"Ellinor, I heard you have friends over, so I made some snacks. Please invite your friends to try them."

Ellinor, who usually respected Marissa, surprisingly ignored her goodwill this time.

Belinda stood up and said, "Marissa, thank you!"

Marissa looked at Belinda with a gentle smile, "Belinda, it's been a while since you've been here. I almost couldn't recognize you! You've become more and more beautiful!"

Belinda blushed at Marissa's compliment and responded awkwardly.

Chase and Ida also stood up and greeted Marissa.

Marissa, though polite to Chase and Ida, whom she had never met before, had a hint of caution in her eyes.

"You must be Ellinor's friends, right? Please don't mind. Theo cares a lot about Ellinor. He is afraid that she might get hurt, so he checks all visitors for security. It's not personal."

Chase grinned and said, "No worries, we understand."

Ida remained silent.

After the maids put down the snacks, Marissa sat down next to Ellinor and Baber.

When Marissa sat down, the other three also took their seats.

\*Come on, please try the snacks I made and give me some feedback."

Marissa invited them again and picked up a cookie that Ellinor liked and handed it to her. "Ellinor, this is your favorite red bean-flavored cookie. I baked extra for you."

Ellinor declined politely but coldly, "Thank you, but I don't want anything sweet right now."

Marissa paused but didn't get angry. She handed the cookie to Baber, who was next to Ellinor, "Here, kiddo, try this cookie and tell me if it's good."

Baber happily took the cookie and started eating.

Ellinor glanced at Baber but said nothing.

With Marissa around, the youngsters couldn't really chat and fell silent.

Actually, in the past, Marissa usually wouldn't get involved in the youngsters' affairs. After delivering the snacks, she'd go back to her room and let them chat freely.

Chapter 1135

But the sudden appearance of two strangers had Marissa feeling a bit twitchy about leaving her daughter-in-law alone.

She knew her presence was creating an awkward vibe, but she had no intention of ducking out. After picking up a glass of water from the table, she took a sip and said. "Did I hear you guys mention poker? I absolutely love poker; I just don't get many chances to play. You wouldn't mind me joining, would you?"

Chase was silent, and so was Ida.

Ellinor had a poker face on, not uttering a word.

Only Belinda managed an awkward chuckle and said, "Sure! Marissa, you can partner up with me."

Marissa happily replied, "Sounds like a plan! When do we start?"

Everyone exchanged silent glances.

Finally, Ellinor spoke, "Let's begin after lunch! I wouldn't want my friends to starve while playing poker."

Marissa could sense the irritation in Ellinor's voice. She laughed awkwardly and replied, "Yeah, we'll play after lunch. Don't you worry, Ellinor, I wouldn't dream of making your friends go hungry."

Ellinor smiled, "Really? I thought the Blanchets were capable of anything."

Marissa's face faltered for a moment, but she managed to keep her smile warm.

Getting up, she said, "You guys chat; I'll whip up lunch. I'm sure you guys will appreciate a home-cooked meal after your long journey."

-Belinda politely stood up, "Marissa, I can help you."

Marissa waved her off with a smile, "No need, just keep them company. I've got help."

With the maid's assistance, Marissa headed to the kitchen. As she passed Devin, she gave him a meaningful look.

Devin nodded, understanding her signal, and moved to stand behind Ellinor.

With Marissa gone and Devin stepping in, the conversation remained superficial. Nothing of substance was being discussed.

Ellinor thought for a moment, then whispered something into Baber's ear.

Baber then got up, grabbed a cup from the table, and ran off.

Turning to Devin, Ellinor said, "I have guests, Devin. Can you look after Mr. Blanchet's adopted son? I'm sure you don't want him hurting himself with the cup. That would be on you guys."

Devin was in a bind. He was glancing at Mrs. Blanchet and then at Baber, who was running off with the cup, not knowing what to do.

A maid had already gone after Baber. After some thought, Devin decided to stay put, "Mrs. Blanchet, Baber is being taken care of. You have nothing to worry about."

Ellinor's gaze hardened slightly, "So you're saying that you're willing to ignore the safety of Mr. Blanchet's child just to eavesdrop on my conversation with my friends?"

Devin looked uncomfortable, "Mrs. Blanchet, what are you implying? I wouldn't dare eavesdrop on your conversation. I'm just here to serve you and your friends and follow any instructions you may have."

Ellinor gave a cold smile, "If you were truly concerned about serving my friends, you wouldn't have conducted that ridiculous security check in the first place."

Devin replied, "That was Mr. Blanchet's directive..."

Ellinor waved him off, "Enough with the explanations! I just asked you to look after the boy; are you going or not?"

Chapter 1136

Devin bowed his head, "Alright, don't get mad. I'll fetch Baber right away."

After saying this, Devin quickly went off to look for the kid.

Ellinor shifted her gaze to Belinda, "Belinda, you go and help Devin keep an eye on that mischievous boy."

Belinda, being a simple-minded girl, nodded without a second thought. "Sure, Ellinor!"

Belinda also left, leaving Ellinor alone with Chase and Ida in the living room.

Taking advantage of the quiet, they quickly caught up.

Ida whispered, "Boss, what's up with you? Why aren't you answering your phone or replying to messages?"

Ellinor replied, "Someone messed with my phone. It only takes calls from Theo. I can't get through to you guys, and I can't send messages either"

Chase frowned, "Why? Is Theo trying to keep you here to pop out babies?"

A hint of sarcasm flashed in Ellinor's eyes, "I guess he knows I found out about him manying another woman. He's scared I'll leave but wants the baby, so he's keeping a close eye on me."

Chase gasped, "Holy moly! He's not really planning on keeping you here until you give birth, then taking the baby, is he?"

Ida kicked Chase, "Get a grip. Don't freak out; we're at the Blanchet Villa"

Chase cleared his throat and straightened up, "Boss, what's your plan?"

Ellinor said, "You guys figure out a way to get me out of here"

Chase rubbed his chin, "Looks like Marissa was pretty cautious earlier. Doesn't seem like she's letting you go easily."

Ellinor knew Marissa was siding with her grandson, Theo. She was watching her every move, so leaving openly was nearly impossible.

"I didn't say today. Which one of you can give me a phone? I need to be able to contact the outside world at any time."

Chase nudged Ida, "Ida, leave your phone with her, I still need mine."

Ida shot him a cold look. "So only your phone is useful and mine's not? You leave yours!"

Seeing them bickering made Ellinor frown, "Really? Is it this hard to lend me a phone?"

It wasn't that they didn't want to lend her a phone; Ida was just worried about the mess of messages from Bryan.

Ida took out her phone, cleaned up the content, and handed it to Ellinor

Ellinor quickly pocketed it, "Later, you guys distract Marissa Blanchet with some poker Don't let any suspicious expressions slip; only when she's happy will she let, her guard down!"

After instructing them, Ellinor got up and headed to the kitchen.

The kitchen at the Blanchet Villa was big, spacious, and bright

Although Manssa was preparing lunch, the staff didn't dare let her do it herself. The old lady just sat and instructed the chef on how to prepare the dishes.

When Ellinor walked in, all the staff bowed respectfully to her.

Chapter 1137

Marissa saw Ellinor walk into the kitchen, her face showing a hint of surprise, "Ellinor, what brought you to the kitchen? Go chat with your friends, I'll call you when it's time to eat "

Ellinor smiled, "No womes, they're munching on snacks. I just came to see if there's anything I can help with."

Marissa waved her off, "No need, there are a lot of people helping already. The kitchen is full of cooking fumes. You're pregnant now; it's not good for you to be in

here.”

Ellinor looked down at her belly as she gently rubbed it, “Granny, you really care about the little one inside me, don’t you?”

Manssa sincerely said, “Of course, that’s my great-grandchild in there. How could I not care?”

Ellinor chuckled, “So once the baby is born, am I going to be dismissed as the mom?”

Marissa was taken aback, quickly grabbing Ellinor’s hand, “Ellinor, what are you talking about?”

Ellinor gave a bitter smile, “I just suddenly feel like I have no freedom in this family. I feel like a baby-making machine that needs to be taken care of by everyone.”

Marissa explained, “Ellinor, you’re pregnant, so I have indeed been more attentive to you. But even before you were pregnant, I truly cared about you. I’m old, and I do want to see my great-grandchild, but I never saw you as just a baby maker”

Ellinor still looked down, “But I feel like you and Mr. Blanchet have changed.”

Marissa held her hand tighter, “Theo’s been busy lately. Once he’s past this busy period, I’ll have him come home and be with you.”

Ellinor gently pulled her hand back, “If you don’t need my help, I’ll leave.”

She turned and walked out of the kitchen, looking quite downcast.

Marissa watched Ellinor’s retreating figure, feeling a pang in her heart. She called out, “Ellinor.”

Ellinor stopped and turned around, “Granny, is there something else?”

Marissa got up and walked over, gently touching her face. “Ellinor, you might be more sensitive because of your pregnancy, so don’t overthink things. Theo really cares about you; I can guarantee that. I know Theo has people keeping watch and not letting you out, and you’re upset about it. But he’s really worried about something happening to you while he’s overseas and can’t get back in time.

How about this? If the weather’s good tomorrow, I’ll go out with you. Those people won’t stop me, wherever you want to go, I’ll be there with you.”

Ellinor’s plan worked, she feigned surprise, “Really?”

Marissa answered seriously, “Of course, when have I ever lied to you?”

“Thank you, Granny! But I’m not sure where I want to go yet; it’s really uncomfortable to feel this restricted. I’ll let you know once I decide.”

“Okay, I understand Theo has indeed been a bit overbearing. I’ll talk to him later. Go chat with your friends. I’ll call you when lunch is ready.”

Ellinor obediently nodded and turned around, her docile expression instantly became calm and composed.

She was indeed angry about her lack of freedom, but she no longer expected anyone from the Blanchet family to lift the restrictions. It seemed they all held the same attitude

She decided to act gentler, so Marissa could take her out, and then find a chance to escape. It would save a lot of energy.

As for Theo, she was deeply disappointed.

As for her position as Mrs. Blanchet, she was willing to give it up and let someone more suitable take it.

Chapter 1138

As Ellinor returned to the couch, only Ida was left.

She sat next to Ida and asked, "Where did the other guy go?"

Ida waved her hand lightly, pointing towards the view outside the glass window of the Blanchet Villa's living room.

Following Ida's gaze, Ellinor saw Chase on the lawn, holding Baber and playing with Belinda.

Ellinor squinted, "When did Chase start to like kids?"

Ida adjusted her glasses and asked, "Ellinor, do you really think he likes kids?"

Ellinor replied, "What else?"

As she spoke, Ellinor noticed Chase helping Belinda remove a leaf that had fallen on her head. Quite considerate of him.

Belinda instinctively stepped back, thanked him, and then focused completely on Baber, maintaining a certain distance from him.

Seeing this, Ellinor frowned.

Ida, knowing the inside story, hinted at a guess. "I think he's probably stuck in a rut, unable to get out easily, right?"

Ellinor looked at Ida and asked, "What's the deal?"

Ida said, "We grew up with Chase, and we all know that he was popular with girls since he was a kid, but he never took any of them seriously. Because of this attitude of his, no girl took him too seriously either, no girl thought he was their only choice

Like attracts like, so over the years, there were no girls around him who truly cared for him.

But Ms. Wesley is pure and sincere, she used to bring him homemade lunches with love and treats him with the utmost seriousness, like a normal person. He's never been pursued so seriously, isn't that a fix? If it weren't for you forbidding him to approach Ms. Wesley, I guess he might seriously start dating her"

"Serious?" A hint of complexity flashed in Ellinor's eyes, "His seriousness means thinking about marriage?"

Without hesitation, Ida said, "Definitely not. You know he's a man who doesn't want to get married"

“So you’re saying, this love affair is going nowhere, even if he’s serious, it’s just a game!” Ellinor had a rather pessimistic view of love, “Belinda was once hurt by a man who was ready to get married. She only dates men who want to marry, she can’t bear to be hurt again. That’s why I don’t let Chase get close to her.”

Ida nodded thoughtfully. “A relationship with no future can be very damaging to a woman, it can even affect her mentality for life.”

Ellinor remained silent.

Yes, even the strongest woman couldn’t avoid being hurt in love.

In the yard of the Blanchet Villa.

Chase held Baber up high. At first, Baber was scared of strangers, but then he slowly relaxed and found it fun, he was even giggling now.

Belinda watched Chase under the sun. His face was full of gentleness as he amused the child. She thought they looked lovely.

“Mr. Lanos, I didn’t expect you to like kids this much.”

Chase brought Baber, whom he had been holding high, back into his arms and asked, “Do you think I like kids?”

Chapter 1139

Belinda gave a nod, “If you didn’t like kids, how would you have the patience to make them happy?”

Chase responded, “I just noticed you looked a bit worn out holding the kid, so I came over to lend a hand.”

Belinda was taken aback, and her heart skipped a beat. He said he helped her because he thought she was tired.

Hold on! Don’t overthink it. Chase was always fair and impartial to women, there was no hidden meaning

Belinda quickly dismissed the unnecessary thoughts in her head, saying. Thanks, Mr. Larios. But I think you actually like kids. If you didn’t, even holding them would feel like a chore. My ex-boyfriend was like that, he didn’t like kids and was always cold towards them.”

Upon hearing Belinda mention her ex-boyfriend, Chase squinted his eyes and chuckled. Then why were you still with him?”

Belinda sighed. “He treated me well. He always tried to make me happy, and I thought that once we had our own kids, he would definitely become more tender towards them. But later, I found out that his kindness to me was all fake. He just wanted to use me and take advantage of my family’s connection with the Blanchet family.”

As she spoke, Belinda’s face turned gloomy.

Chase held Baber's hand and gently poked Belinda's face.

Belinda snapped back to reality, feeling a little awkward.

Chase softly said, "Forget about the past. Don't blame yourself, either. You're great; It's all that guy's fault."

She was great? Belinda was a bit surprised. Was Mr. Larios trying to comfort her?

Even though she was great, he still didn't like her? This kind of consolation made her even more self-doubting.

Just then, Belinda's phone rang, playing a cheerful tune.

She took out her phone and answered, "Hello, Jacob? Whats up?"

The man's voice on the other end was gentle but slightly anxious, "Belinda, have you finished up with Mr. Larios and Ms. Gipson? It's lunchtime: I can order some takeout and bring it to you. If a girl doesn't eat on time, she might get low blood sugar,"

Belinda was slightly embarrassed by her colleague's consideration, "Oh, no need! I'm at my uncle's place now; I'll be having lunch in a bit"

Jacob sounded confused, "Your uncle's place? Belinda, you mean Mr. Larios and Ms. Gipson also went to your uncle's house?"

Belinda knew she shouldn't disclose the bosses whereabouts, so she said, "No, I went to my uncle's after accompanying Mr. Larios and Ms. Gipson."

She didn't continue because she didn't want them to know that she was the niece of the Blanchet Corporation's president.

If too many people knew, it could cause some trouble.

When she was working at her uncle's company, because everyone knew her status, people would often come up to please her or even to inquire about her uncle's private affairs, which was really annoying!

Jacob was very tactful and didn't ask any more questions. Instead, he asked her nervously and shyly, "Are you free tonight? There's a new movie out. Could we go see it together after work?"

"Huh? There's a new movie? I didn't know!"

"I'll send you the movie poster later, you'll see. If you're interested, we can go see it together tonight."

"Okay, send it to me."

After hanging up, Belinda quickly received the movie poster Jacob sent.

It was a pitch-black poster with no specific characters, just the bloody character of 'death.'

"It's a horror movie!" Chase's voice suddenly sounded nearby.

Belinda snapped back to reality, looking up to see Chase leaning in to look at her phone.

She felt a bit uncomfortable and instinctively tucked her phone away, criticizing him with some discontent, "Mr. Larios, this habit of sneaking peeks at other people's phones is really not good."

Chapter 1140

Chase didn't agree, nor did he continue the conversation. He just muttered, "This Jacob is slacking off at work. I need to have a word with his manager and give him a good grilling"

Upon hearing this, Belinda, afraid that she might get her colleague in trouble, quickly defended him. "He called me during his lunch break. It's not like he's not working

Chase feigned seriousness, "Didn't he text you before lunch break too?"

Belinda explained, "That... That's because he asked me a few questions during his downtime, it's not like we were chatting all the time."

Chase narrowed his eyes, locking deep and mysterious. "You're defending him like that? So are you going to go watch the movie with him?"

Belinda seemed a bit nervous, and her reply lacked enthusiasm, "I'll think about it. I'm not really into horror movies, What if I get scared and scream? It wouldn't be appropriate in front of colleagues!"

A smirk appeared on Chase's face, "Then come with me. I'm quite interested in seeing you scream in fright."

Belinda was taken aback, wondering if she heard him correctly, "Mr. Larios, are you asking me out to a movie?"

Chase nodded affirmatively, "Yes, come with me. If you get scared, you can hide in my arms. I don't mind if you take advantage of me."

Belinda's mouth twitched, "Mr. Larios, that's not funny at all."

She was somewhat repulsed by Chase's playful flirtation. She had always found him attractive, and any casual remark from him would send her thoughts spiraling out of control.

This had to stop! Belinda took Baber from Chase's arms, "Mr. Lanos, thanks for holding Baber for me. I'm hungry, let's go see if lunch is ready."

With that, she turned and walked towards the Blanchet Villa's dining room, with Baber in arms.

Chase followed, whispering. "Seriously though, do you want to go to the movies with me?"

"No!" Belinda's heart raced She couldn't handle Chase playing with her emotions like this. She quickened her pace and entered the house with Baber

Perfect timing, Marissa had just finished preparing lunch.

She greeted them with a warm smile, "Belinda, perfect timing. We were about to call you for lunch. Come, have a seat! Let's see if you like our food."

Belinda politely responded and took a seat next to Ellinor with Baber.

Upon seeing Ellinor, Baber reached out for her.

Ellinor naturally took Baber from Belinda. Even though they weren't related by blood, she knew Baber had grown attached to her, and she didn't mind.

At the dining table, besides Belinda, Chase, and Ida, Devin had also invited Veronica Blanchet and Moran, who was tutoring her, to join them. The table was buzzing with activity

Putnam Blanchet, not a fan of the hustle and bustle, decided to have his meal sent to his room.

Marissa took the head of the table, graciously urging everyone to eat more while constantly filling up Ellinor's plate.

Ellinor didn't eat much herself but fed Baber quite a bit.

Marissa initially didn't want Baber to disturb Ellinor's meal, but he seemed to only want to be with Ellinor as if he were her own child. Left with no choice, she let

Ellinor feed him.