

Chapter 31 The Second Woman He Misjudged

Upon hearing Rachel's words, Nathan immediately recalled the lonely figure in his memory.

He silently placed his palm on his forehead out of helplessness.

"That memory isn't merely an exceptional one, it's an unforgettable one too!"

"Alright, fine. Let's not talk about him."

Speaking of that person, Nathan felt a sudden chill running up his spine.

Rachel took a few steps forward and placed the sweat-soaked name card on Nathan's table. ①

"I'm two minutes late on the first day of work, so whatever Mr. Chapman has decided to do with me, I will accept."

Nathan squinted at Rachel. "What, you think I'll fire you over this?"

Rachel lifted her head and looked at Nathan in surprise. "Is that not the case? It's my first day of work..."

Nathan nodded. "Procedurally, I should. But I'm not the type to give up on potential employees just

because of that. Besides, I like the way you handled the situation today."

There was something else Nathan withheld saying. Not only was she the second person he had misjudged, but she was a woman too!

Rachel nodded gratefully in excitement. "Thank you!"

Nathan, too, nodded slightly before he passed Rachel an employee tag. "This is yours. You'll start on the first floor as a simple design staff, are you okay with that? As I've said before, you'll start from the bottom."

Rachel received the tag with sincerity and respect. "Yes, I understand. Thank you, Mr. Chapman." 1

Nathan then pointed at his door. "Now go ahead, my assistant will lead you to your station."

Rachel quickly nodded and retreated from the office.

Sat at his table, Nathan squinted before video calling the contact information on his desktop screen.

The moment the call was connected, Edward's flawless face appeared full-screen on the computer screen.

Edward said impatiently, "Nathan, you really do have free time, don't you?"

Nathan's mouth twitched but he composed himself with a smile. "Nope! I just hired a prodigy designer, but I've decided to let her start from the bottom so she doesn't get too cocky."

Still impatient, Edward's head cocked. "Does she even pay attention to you?" 3

"Of course! She's willing to climb up from the very bottom, no questions asked! What's funnier is that she's the second person I've misjudged! I can't think of anyone who I can misjudge aside from you."

Edward's cold expression turned into a wicked smile. "With your intelligence, isn't it easy for you to misjudge anyone?"

Edward never once looked at his camera, only showing Nathan his profile view.

Sounds of keyboard buttons being punched were continuously coming from the video call.

Suddenly, the sound of button punching stopped.

Edward, who up until now had been ignoring Nathan, finally turned his face to look at him.

"What did you say? A woman?"

Nathan nodded slightly without sensing anything amiss. "That's right! A woman!"

In a rare occurrence, Edward lifted his hands to applaud Nathan with a calm gaze from his cold eyes.

"Looks like you're interested in that woman. That's good, you can finally say goodbye to singlehood."

Nathan shot a glare at Edward. "What do you mean I can 'say goodbye to singlehood?' I only have my business in mind. But Edward, do you want to come to my office and have a look? That woman is so smart, she can rival you!" 2

Edward returned the glare after hearing Nathan's proclamation.

"Rival me? Don't be ridiculous, I have no interest in other women, I'm married."

Nathan shook his head deliberately. "Oh, right, you are married. Except for the part where you only care for your son. You don't even touch your wife, I can only wonder how wronged your woman must feel."

Beep beep beep— As soon as Nathan finished his

sentence, the call hung up. ①

Nathan shrugged nonchalantly. After all, he was not wrong!

Although Edward had registered for a marriage certificate with a mysterious woman, there was no reception ceremony! After five years of marriage, not once did he get frizzy with her!

Meanwhile, a suited-up Anne led Rachel to a tiny cubicle by a window.

"Here's your station in the future."

Rachel nodded lightly as she saw the readily-available tools on the table, then smiled at Anne.

"Thank you."

Anne was slightly taken aback. "Right, in two days, there will be a company-wide design competition. You can enter it by designing your own work and submitting a finished product."

She looked at a stunned Rachel and added, "If you are awarded the top three places, you'll be promoted. There will be other companies attending the final ceremony, so you might be able to gain some fame through that."

As Anne began to step away, Rachel asked, "Why

are you telling me this?"

Anne stopped in her steps and paused before she answered, "President Chapman told me to relay this to you. Remember though, you don't have much time – two days. Most of the other participants are ready with their products. If you want to enter, I can register for you, but your product..." 2

Before Anne could finish, Rachel nodded enthusiastically. "I want to participate! I will turn in my submission to you in two days, so please do help me with the registration, Anne."

After hearing Rachel's dedicated confirmation, Anne turned around and left. 1

The other female employees pressed their palms together with discontent.

'That Rachel is sitting right here! She was led here by the president's assistant, Anne!'

'She pointed her down the wrong hallway! No matter what, she had to be late!'

'How could it be! She was late yet she could stay in the Chapman Group?! President Chapman hated people who are not punctual!'

Evidently, the special condition on which Rachel arrived in the Chapman Group was noticed by

everyone in the company.

Everyone around was whispering among themselves, discussing Rachel, but no one attempted to start a conversation with their new colleague.

Rachel ignored the whispering that was happening around her as her mind was preoccupied with the company-wide design competition. 1

Chapter 32 Design Competition's Theme

Rachel moved her mouse around, clicking through different links as she searched for information to the Chapman Group's latest design competition.

Fine, detailed illustrations and graceful fonts were littered around the website.

Her attention snapped to the theme of the competition, namely, youthfulness, the future, and hope.

Rachel half-closed her eyes as countless ideas flashed through her mind.

'Youthfulness, the future, and hope, huh?'

The quieter and calmer Rachel appeared, the more antsy the people around her behaved.

Several design staff members wheeled themselves on their office chair to the employee who had previously tricked Rachel.

"Melissa, I hear the new girl isn't just 'someone!'"

"Not only that! Anne led her out of the president's office!"

"Don't be fooled by the fact that she has the same position as us. Just look at her station, she has the sunlight and space, she's definitely someone special!" 1

"Tsk tsk, that sounds about right! Could she be the president's relative or something??"

"Meh, I don't think the president has a shabby relative like this. What is she wearing anyway, eBay?"

"If not a relative, is she the president's secret lover?"

Melissa could no longer take it. She scoffed and looked at Rachel with disdain.

"Lover? If she is the president's lover, would he put her here?"

When all the other women heard that, they snickered.

"That's right, I don't think so too! She looks good, but our president is not tasteless like that!"

"So if she's not a relative, not a lover, and still gets regarded so well by the president, there is only one explanation."

"What???"

"It means this woman is a prodigy in fashion design! What does the president look for the most in an employee? Their talent!"

...

The moment those words were uttered, all the women frowned.

If Rachel was his relative or his lover, it would not have been so difficult! Yet if she truly was the design prodigy that the president genuinely appreciates, then that would be a difficult one!

Melissa narrowed her eyes and said, "Don't worry, she can't be a prodigy like that! If she was a prodigy, why would the president put her among us?"

Upon hearing Melissa's explanation, everyone breathed a sigh of relief.

"That's right, she can't be a prodigy!"

"Besides, the Chapman Group is the world's leading company in fashion design. Our ability to enter this company is proof that we're already top designers ourselves!"

"That's right! If she's here, she won't be that much better than us!"

"Melissa, you have a high chance of winning the

company's competition this time!"

"That's right! Your talent is the best on this floor, so you have the best chance of winning! Don't forget about us after you've been promoted!"

...

Melissa smiled with her eyes. "That's impossible! Everyone here is so good, the chances of any of us winning are honestly the same."

However, her gaze was locked onto Rachel, who was thinking with her chin on her palm. Even if she agreed that it was improbable that Rachel was a design prodigy, she could not completely eradicate that possibility.

No matter what, she had to look out for this newcomer.

Rachel pulled out her pencil and sketch paper from her bag, but her progress was discontinuous as she had started and stopped several times.

Her brows bunched up gradually. 'Youthfulness, the future, and hope. Should it be red or green?'

Click— She placed her pencil on the sketch paper.

Her thoughts were so chaotic that she could not

produce any inspiring ideas.

So, Rachel kept her sketch paper without a hurry and exhaled deeply.

It was not a good idea to draw in her current state of mind.

If she were to force it, the final product would not have been her best work.

The clock ticked by the second as lunch hour arrived, when most employees chose to leave the company grounds for food.

The office was quickly rendered silent. Rachel took her phone out and found her top contact that had a picture of Ziggy smiling as bright as sunshine.

She whispered into the phone and recorded a voice message, "My lovely darling, have you eaten yet?"

Before long, Ziggy replied with a voice message.

"Mommy, I've eaten! Their food is not as good as mine, so I only ate half of them. What about you, mommy? Have you eaten?"

Hearing the voice that was filled with childish naivete in her phone, Rachel felt like all of her

exhaustion had disappeared. A gentle smile slowly replaced the tiredness on her face.

She spoke into her phone once again, "Of course I did. You know me, I can't stand hunger. I have to eat the moment I'm hungry."

"Okay, good. How was mommy's first day of work? Remember to tell me if you have any problems."

Rachel shook her head with a smile. "You cheeky little kid, do you not trust me?"

"Of course not! I trust mommy the most! Mommy is the cleverest!"

Rachel touched the wallpaper on her phone – a photo of her and Ziggy, with yearning.

Although she had only left her son for a morning, she could not help but miss him.

As if Ziggy had heard Rachel's heart, he sent her a picture in the next moment.

Rachel opened up Ziggy's picture and slid her finger across Ziggy's sunny face as her own brightened up.

Just like that, she placed her phone aside and picked up her pencil again, as her newly-inspired

hand started gliding across the sketch paper smoothly.

It did not take long before the sketch was done.

The sweet off-shoulder dress had eye-catching puff sleeves, and the hem of the blouse had a wide ruffle. The hip-hugging skirt had a series of flower petals woven down it, leaving two bows on both sides of the skirt hem that connected the waist part of the skirt.

The design was unique, sweet, and youthful.

Rachel retouched the edges and the arcs, then wrote the theme of the design on the bottom of the page before keeping it.

Youthfulness, the future, and hope.

She shook her head a few times, having the impression that the design was not perfect, but could not spot the flaws she might be missing.

Chapter 33 If Women Can Say What They Mean, Then the Regina Georges of the World Wouldn't Exist!

Rachel carefully kept her draft away. Since she did not get enough sleep the night before, she gave a long yawn before slumping over her desk and took a nap.

Nathan, who had been observing Rachel from his office the entire time, slowly stood up and walked to the fridge in the corner of his office.

He opened up the fridge full of an assortment of cakes and desserts.

Nathan simply took out a few of them, including a bottle of milk, and slowly made his way downstairs.

Seeing as no one was around, he put the food down on Rachel's workstation.

He then slotted his hands in his pocket and looked at Rachel sleeping. Before he returned to his office, he set the air-conditioning on the first floor to a higher temperature.

Very quickly, lunch hour had passed and people began to return to the office.

The noise returned too, replacing the serene silence.

Hunched over her work desk, Rachel yawned and slowly sat upright.

While she stretched and yawned, she accidentally pushed a pastry to the floor.

Rachel was a little astounded as she picked up the piece of pastry.

Even more stupefying was the desk full of pastries, cakes, and a bottle of milk. 'Where did these come from? Who gave it to her?!

Rachel glanced at the roomful of other employees who were staring at her before returning her attention to herself.

'It can't be them anyway.'

It was then that everyone around her saw the snacks and treats on her workstation. 1

At the same time, their eyes widened in jealousy and envy.

All those treats were upper-class desserts! These were not something normal people could afford. In other words, only people with high societal status could buy them!

Needless to say, Nathan of the Chapman Group loved those treats so much, he had a fridge full of them at all times!

'Which means the snacks on Rachel's desk were given to her by the president?'

'But why? Why would the president pay so much attention to a new design staff member? It's almost strange.'

He was so attentive that they could not help but feel jealous.

Rachel shook her head. Without knowing from whom and where the food came, she could not bring herself to eat them.

So, she took the food and was prepared to throw them into the rubbish bin.

The other ladies were in shock at Rachel's action!

This woman wanted to throw away the president's treats!

A bestowal like that, and she was going to throw it away??!

Did she not know those were desserts only the president could afford?? Or was she doing that on

purpose to catch his attention?!

In truth, Rachel did not know Nathan's habits even though everyone else did.

Seeing that Rachel was going to dispose of the food, the girls around Melissa approached Rachel all at once. ①

"Oh hi, you're new, aren't you?"

"Rachel, is it? Nice meeting you."

...

Rachel stared at the ladies in bemusement. "Can I help you?"

The ladies frowned. "Um, are you not going to eat those?"

Rachel looked at the treats in her hands before she retracted them from above the rubbish bin and handed it over to the women. "Oh, do you want them?"

The moment she spoke, the gaggle around her grabbed at the food until there were none left – not even the bottle milk.

Rachel shook her head as she puzzledly watched the women with their prizes before looking at the Chapman Group's previous competition winners'

products.

Melissa tightened her fist, her face dripping with hostility.

She wanted to get her hands on one of the treats, but she had just tricked Rachel because she did not like her.

'If I approached her after that, wouldn't it be embarrassing?'

Seeing the other staff members' joy, she pursed her lips. Not only were the treats rare, but Nathan also touched it! They were the president's favorite!

Rachel straightened her body, feeling a chill down her spine, before scratching her itchy nose.

Sitting in his office, Nathan was startled, unable to understand Rachel's behavior.

The less he understood, the more he wanted to clarify.

Nathan called Edward on video call again.

Time after time, his call was rejected by Edward, but he was patient. At the twentieth call, Edward finally picked up the call. ①

Seeing the storm brewing on Edward's face, Nathan was taken aback for a split second. "Edward, you

look like you're having a bad day. Who pissed you off?"

Edward's face darkened even more as he heard Nathan's knowing question.

"Shut up! If you have anything to say, say now, or I'm gonna hang up."

Nathan stopped him. "Wait. I have a question. If a woman knew you gave her something to eat and she still threw it away, what does it mean?"

At this point, Nathan did not know Rachel was not aware that he gave her the desserts and how precious they were. Like other people, he thought everyone would be knowledgeable about them, not realizing Rachel was an outlier.

Edward shot a glare at Nathan. "Best not get involved with this kind of woman. Tricks like that no longer work in this era. I can't think of any other reason aside from her having an ulterior motive. Anything else?"

Edward was giving Nathan a cold shoulder, but he was even more disgusted by the woman he was talking about.

Before this, he was interested to know the woman Nathan was talking about, but now, it seemed like

Chapter 34 The Son Fetching the Mom

Nathan sighed, wondering how he had managed to keep his friendship with a weirdo like Edward for more than a dozen years.

Edward cared about – or it could even be said that he prioritized – his son, but he had never allowed pictures of his son to appear anywhere and that was because he wished to protect him.

Similarly, pictures of his wife Rue had never appeared anywhere as well, though outsiders said he was trying to protect her.

However, Nathan understood. Edward simply did not want Rue to appear anywhere, or else it would have connected him to her.

Nathan tilted his head as if he did not understand anything at all.

Years ago, Edward had told him that he slept with a woman and it was pretty clear that he was very attracted to her.

He even publicized his search to find that woman.

That woman was later known as Rue. So the searches ended as she appeared, but why was he so

disinterested in her after that?

It almost felt like he was disgusted by her.

If not for that reason, why was he willing to endure five years of abstinence just to not touch her?

Nathan shook his head. Edward's mind had always confused him.

In no time at all, the office hour was over.

Rachel briefly packed up and only left after most of the others were gone.

While she walked, she took her phone out to call Ziggy. ①

Before she could dial the number, her messenger received a voice message from her beloved son.

She stopped at the entrance of the building and played the voice message.

"I can see mommy!"

Rachel stopped short. Before she could even begin to think about what was happening, a cute voice called out to her.

"Mommy!" ①

Rachel lifted her chin abruptly and saw Ziggy

Chapter 10 of The Sun is Shining

beaming at her with his cute little bag.

Within that split second, she felt like the happiest woman in the world!

Her son was nothing like the other toddlers who needed to be taken care of. Instead, he would take care of her, the mother. 1

She suddenly thought of what Ziggy had told her at the entrance of Minnow Nursery School.

"Mommy, wait for me in front of your company after work, I'll go and fetch you!"

She did not think much of it, but her son actually made his way to her company.

Rachel knelt down, waiting for Ziggy to run to her before they hugged each other tightly.

Ziggy's meaty hand caressed Rachel's head as he smiled caringly. "Mommy, you weren't bullied on your first day of work, were you?"

Rachel chuckled as she shook her head. She then held Ziggy's tiny hand. "Baby, next time, you don't need to come and get me, understand?"

Ziggy's eyebrows furrowed quickly. "Why? You don't like me coming to get you, mommy?"

"Mommy is moved, but compared to this, mommy is

more concerned about your safety. You're still so young, it's dangerous to walk around on your own. There are so many human traffickers around. If they saw my handsome baby and kidnapped you, I would've been alone." 1

Rachel pouted in feigned sadness.

Ziggy rubbed Rachel's head and said seriously, "Mommy, don't worry! No one will be able to kidnap me, because it means they would first need the capability." 1

Rachel held Ziggy's hand tightly. "No, you can't. I can't risk having you be kidnapped!"

"Mommy, don't worry. It won't happen."

Ziggy softened his voice but still looked at Rachel sincerely.

Rachel wanted to say something else, but at that moment, her phone rang. 1

Calmly, she picked up her phone. "Jodie? What's up?"

"Rachel? Your mom looked for me and said she wants to see you," Jodie's emotionless words rang in her ears.

Recalling what had happened in the cafe, Rachel's

Chapter 34 The Confrontation
eyebrows furrowed coldly. "I will not see her."

Jodie's reply sounded like it came with difficulty. "Your mom is at my place now. She said she will not leave unless she sees you. Now that the Bennets and the Bluemel's are in-laws, it's hard for us to chase her away..."

Rachel started to squint. "I'm coming now."

Seeing Rachel's knitted brows, Ziggy placed his hands over them and gently pulled his hands apart, soothing them.

Ziggy's behavior immediately made Rachel feel a tinge of warmth coursing through her veins.

When Rachel hung up the phone, she took Ziggy into her arms. "Baby, let's go to the Comer family house." 1

Ziggy nodded without asking any questions.

"Okay."

Rachel and Ziggy went to the Comer manor by taking a cab. The moment they arrived, they recognized the familiar figure at the door.

Rachel's footfalls slowed as her hand tightened her grip on Ziggy before she marched ahead.

Jodie quickly stood beside Rachel apologetically.

"I'm sorry, Rachel. I couldn't get her to change her mind, so I had to call you."

Rachel shook her head. "No, I should apologize to you for troubling you."

Seeing that Jodie was standing beside Rachel, Ian shot a dirty glare at Rachel as he pulled Jodie to his side.

"How many times do I have to tell you, stop hanging out with this woman! Why are you so disobedient?!"

Jodie stomped her foot stressfully. "Ian, don't say that! I told you Rachel is not the kind of person you think she is!"

Both Mr. and Mrs. Comer also looked unhappy as they dragged Jodie into the manor and closed their gate.

Since Rachel was used to it, she was aloof to the whole show of disgust.

Ziggy, however, frowned angrily.

'Why are those people doing that to mommy?!' .

Mrs. Bennet looked at Rachel, who was in pink health and was slightly astounded before she looked at Ziggy. 1

Her eyes widened in surprise.

'Dear heavens! They look so alike!'

Both Rachel's and Rue's children were almost identical, no wonder Rue was so anxious about this!

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Rachel's stay in the Orange Country with the child would be too dangerous for Rue!

Rachel should not threaten Rue's position! Initially, Mrs. Bennet still felt a little guilty about Rachel, but now, she felt it was a natural and necessary step.

She did not even bother pretending... 1

Chapter 35 This Time, I Will Not Resign Myself to a Lesser Fate for Other People's Future

Mrs. Bennet adjusted her handbag while she moved her gaze slowly from Ziggy and back to Rachel.

Her brows were knitted in wretchedness. "Rachel, you know I hate people who break their promises, and you are that kind of person! What did I teach you when you were young? You should always keep your promises, but look at you now! You disappoint me!"

Upon hearing Mrs. Bennet's words, Rachel's heart froze.

This was her first time meeting her mother after five years, yet there was no morsel of concern or even a pretentious greeting.

The moment Mrs. Bennet saw her, all she did was condemn and blame her. She thought her mother would show her a little kindness and yearning, even a little bit will do...

Unfortunately, there were never any, to begin with.

Rachel scoffed in a faked indifference. "What are you talking about, Mrs. Bennet? I don't

understand."

Mrs. Bennet was stupefied. "Rachel, what did you call me?"

"Mrs. Bennet, am I wrong to call you that?" Rachel asked.

Mrs. Bennet retorted in fury, "You have no heart! Rachel, don't forget, I brought you into this world after ten months of pregnancy! I am your mother!" 2

Rachel shook her head and took a few steps back as if she had just heard the most startling insults. "No no no, Mrs. Bennet, please don't make jokes like this. The only person you gave birth to after ten laborious months is Rue."

Mrs. Bennet's face was red as she palpitated loudly. "Fine! Since you didn't want to recognize me as your mother, I will cut to the chase. You don't understand? What don't you understand? Rachel, don't forget it was you who promised me to leave the Orange Country so you wouldn't affect Rue! Why are you back now?!"

Rachel grinned coldly. "Affect her? When did I ever affect her perfect life? It's been five years since I left the Orange Country. People have already forgotten the things that happened five years ago, so what

effect did I have on Rue's life?"

Mrs. Bennet was a little taken aback. It was true, Rachel's scandal from five years ago had died down and most people have forgotten about it. 2

Five years ago, she had used the same excuse to chase Rachel away but this time, what Rachel said had a point.

However, Rue's and the Bennets' fate was tied tightly together, so Rue's protection was their priority! The safety of Rue's secret was of utmost importance! Hence no accidents were allowed to happen to Rue! 2

"So what if it has died down? The memory of those things you did are still there, and if someone wants to return it to the spotlight, it will still affect your sister!"

Rachel's cold eyes shot a glare at Mrs. Bennet. "Who do you think will retell old stories? Since everyone knows the story, it won't gain traction even if it's dug out again. So they won't do it unless someone arranged for it."

Rachel trained her gaze on Mrs. Bennet the entire time.

Uncomfortable, Mrs. Bennet trembled. How would

she bring up that old story?

Rue told her that Edward had investigated Rachel before, which meant Edward had his doubts about Rue.

If this event was brought into the limelight again, it would mean that Rachel would be brought in front of Edward once more.

If Edward restarted his investigation of Rachel because of that, it would spell the end of Rue!

If Rue was finished, the Bennet Group would be done!

"Hmph! It was such an embarrassing period for us, why would I bring that up again? Rachel, are you really determined on not leaving the Orange Country this time?"

Rachel looked at Mrs. Bennet with all her determination. "This time, I will not resign myself to a lesser fate for other people's future and leave the Orange Country. Besides, Mrs. Bennet, please stop looking for me. I would love not to see you ever again. We no longer have any connection, so I don't want to spend my energy on a stranger, am I making myself clear?"

Hearing Rachel's chilly words, Mrs. Bennet was

Mrs. Bennet's face was as red as a tomato as she pointed at Ziggy fiercely. "You uneducated rascal! Is this how you speak to your grandmother?"

Ziggy tilted his head, confused, but his eyes were full of disgust and unadulterated loathing.

"Grandmother? I don't have such a thing, I only have my mommy!"

Mrs. Bennet scoffed at Rachel. "Look at what you raised, it's just like you! A wild goose never laid a tame egg, indeed!"

Rachel stared at Mrs. Bennet apathetically. "Thank you for your compliment, but I don't need you to tell me my son is a good kid, I also think that myself." 1

Ziggy watched Mrs. Bennet carefully before he placed his finger on his lips and shushed quietly.

"Sh! Old lady, please don't say that about yourself! I do think you look like a goose, but you saying it will only scare other people. Do you know that?" 3

Almost on cue, Mrs. Bennet's face turned green. She palpitated as her body shook violently, as though she was going to fall over in hypoxia. 3

Chapter 36 I Can't Be Bothered to Use Swearwords on People Like This

Mrs. Bennet looked at Rachel, hoping she would reprimand Ziggy for speaking out of order. Though instead of doing that, Rachel gave Ziggy a thumbs-up.

Seeing that, Mrs. Bennet almost passed out.

Rachel rubbed Ziggy's head. "Baby, you're so good. How did you learn to scold people without using swearwords?"

Ziggy shrugged. "It's not that, I just can't be bothered to use swearwords on people like this."

Rachel chuckled softly. "You're so good at it!"

Mrs. Bennet clenched her jaw upon seeing Rachel's persistence and eventually dropped to her knees with a pitiable look on her face.

"Rachel! I beg you, seeing that I carried you to term and that I gave you your life, promise me that you will leave the Orange Country forever. Can you do that?"

Faced with a second kneeling from Mrs. Bennet, there was no longer any hint of sympathy from

Rachel.

Slowly, she lowered herself to Mrs. Bennet's height. "Mrs. Bennet, this seems to be your second time groveling for me, a younger generation, right? I'm curious, everything that you do, does Rue know?"

Mrs. Bennet tightened her jaw. "I don't care if she knows, as long as she lives a happy life." 1

Rachel's lips turned up mockingly. "Oh, you. You sacrifice so much of yourself to make sure Rue can live well and have no care for anyone else, including yourself."

Rachel's words made Mrs. Bennet a little hopeful. "So Rachel, you will..."

Interrupting Mrs. Bennet, Rachel declared, "So I want to learn from you. I have no one else, so I want to live reasonably well given that I have no capacity to take care of anyone else, including you. Do you understand, Mrs. Bennet?"

Mrs. Bennet was stupefied for what felt like minutes.

Immediately after, her face switched into an unprecedented rage. "Rachel! How can you be so heartless?! Are you even human?! I am your mother! I even kneeled for you, yet you still refuse to make

the promise! You did it the last time!"

Rachel stood up and smiled cordially. "Last time. Five years ago, I promised you because you were my mother. But now, five years after that, you aren't. To me, you're no more than a stranger. I don't owe a mere stranger anything, do I?"

Mrs. Bennet sat on the ground in defeat. Within the five years, Rachel had changed. She was no longer kind-hearted and obedient and instead, she had turned cold and distant.

Mrs. Bennet stood up from the ground as submission faded from her eyes and uncovered the condescension.

"Rachel, it must be difficult raising a child on your own, right? You don't have an income, you don't have a husband, you must lack money, right? Your child will need to go to school soon, which will take quite a bit of money. I'm worried about you!" 4

Rachel squinted in silence, waiting for Mrs. Bennet to finish.

Naturally, Mrs. Bennet continued, "Look, I can give you some money and help you open up a shop which will be enough to support yourself. In return, you'll leave the Orange Country forever!"

Rachel could not help herself but applaud. "Mrs.

Bennet, you really are willing to spend money just for me to leave the Orange Country! I don't even know why you're so insistent on it." 1

She rolled her eyes. "However, let me tell you this. I can afford to raise my son. Whatever other children get, he will get, so don't worry about that. Also, Mrs. Bennet, I've never laid eyes on your stinking money since the beginning, and will continue to not care about your money." 2

"As for the Orange Country, I will not leave. So give up, Mrs. Bennet."

Rachel grabbed Ziggy's hand, no longer wanting to attend to Mrs. Bennet. "Baby, let's go home."

Ziggy nodded earnestly. "Mommy, remember to wash and cleanse your face when we get home."

Ziggy's underlying meaning could not be any clearer.

At the sight of Rachel leaving, Mrs. Bennet tried to get the last word in. "Rachel, you really should leave the Orange Country. If you wait till your dad makes a move, your life will be in shambles!"

Even though Mrs. Bennet was loud enough to reach Rachel, Rachel did not slow her pace.

Her mind was made, and no one could convince her otherwise.

Ziggy's big, round eyes squinted. 'Looks like that's mommy's family.'

'It's so nasty.'

Although Mrs. Bennet's words were cold and cruel, Rachel had already accepted that fact and had no hope for any of the Bennets.

Ziggy slowed down eventually, to which Rachel asked in confusion, "Ziggy darling, what's wrong? Is it too much for you? Let me carry you." 1

Ziggy shook his head but opened up his arms at Rachel.

"Mommy, I want a hug."

Rachel shook her head but complied even though she did not understand Ziggy's intention. 1

She patted Ziggy's back. "Baby, what's wrong? Did mommy scare you?"

Ziggy shook his head lightly and said, "No, I think mommy is so cool! But mommy, you're wrong, you're not alone, I'm always by your side." 1

As if returning the favor, Ziggy patted on Rachel's back seriously.

Rachel took a second to respond but she then hugged Ziggy tightly. "That's right, you're always by my side, I shouldn't have said that."

Ziggy rubbed Rachel's head. "Mommy, did that witch use to bully you? Did the entire Bennet family used to bully you?"

Memories of Rachel's experience growing up raced past her mind, including that time when she was beaten up by Mr. Bennet while she was pregnant with Ziggy.

She shuddered uncontrollably before she gave Ziggy a gentle smile. "Those are the past. Mommy will become stronger in the future, so no one can bully me and my baby, right?" 3

Chapter 37 Missing Out

After Rachel's declaration, Ziggy replied with a straight face, "That's not right! I should be the one to protect mommy, not the other way around!"

Rachel nodded with a smile. "That's right, my baby is protecting me!"

At the same time, a Lincoln stretch limousine slowed to a stop on the side of the road.

A side window of the limousine lowered, unveiling Nathan, as well as another man with flawless features and aloof nature, to Rachel.

Nathan was a little taken aback seeing the child in Rachel's arms. The child was face-to-face with Rachel, so he could only see his back and not his face.

Edward, meanwhile, was wholly focused on the document in his hands, not sparing any attention to anything outside.

"Mr. Chapman."

Rachel nodded and greeted simply.

Nathan nodded in response and looked at the child in Rachel's arm. "The child is..."

the car. 2

After the limousine left, Rachel cocked her head in bafflement.

Her hand slowly clutched at her chest as an empty feeling crept up into her heart.

'Who was that other man? Was it Mr. Chapman's friend?'

"Mommy, what's wrong? Are you unwell?"

Seeing as Rachel was suddenly clutching onto her chest, Ziggy's heart almost jumped out of his own chest. 1

Rachel shook her head lightly. It took a while, but the empty feeling eventually subsided.

"Don't worry, I'm okay now." 1

Jodie, on the other hand, was finally released after being locked in the house by Ian and her parents. She immediately ran to the window only to see that both Rachel and Mrs. Bennet were gone.

Her heart started to pound. 'They wouldn't have gotten in trouble, would they?'

She began searching for her phone but was not successful in her search.

"Looking for this?"

Ian, with his alcohol breath, wandered behind Jodie with her phone in his hand. ①

Jodie's eyebrows furrowed. "Ian! Why are you drinking again?"

Ian sighed in helplessness. "The moment I see Rachel, I think about Rue! We promised to be together forever, but she married some other guy and had a kid with him!"

"How am I supposed to reconcile with that! I love her so much, why can't she just be with me?! What's so good about that Edward? He's just a spoiled rich brat!"

Ian tipped the bottle of white wine into his mouth again.

Although Jodie felt sorry for Ian, she did not know how to console him.

So she lunged forward and grabbed the bottle from his hand, but failed to budge in the face of the much stronger Ian.

"Ian! Stop drinking! You've already had a hemorrhage, stop, please!"

Crash— As a result of the fight, the bottle shattered

and as the smell of alcohol filled the hall, pieces of shards scattered across the floor.

Ian screamed at Jodie while he grabbed onto her tightly with his hands. "Tell me, Jodie, are you still my younger sister!"

Jodie bit her lip tightly and nodded. 'If I had a choice, I don't want to be your sister.'

"I am..."

Upon hearing Jodie's answer, Ian tightened his hands on her shoulder. "So you are, but why are you always opposing me? Why can't you listen to me?!"

Frowning, Jodie patted Ian's back. "Ian, don't get so upset, go rest. Stop drinking, alright? I'll listen to you..."

"As if you do! I asked you not to hang out with Rachel anymore, why do you keep disobeying me! Why!"

With a surge of strength, Ian pushed Jodie backward.

Jodie fell backward onto the sofa.

She looked at Ian, unable to understand. "Ian! Why do you hate Rachel so much?! You must have a

reason! I can't accept you telling me not to hang out with her with no reason at all!"

Ian laughed darkly. "You want to know why I hate her? Alright, then! Because Rue doesn't like Rachel, so I don't either!" 4

Agony came and left Jodie's eyes quickly. "Ian, just because of that? Just because Rue doesn't like Rachel, so you don't like her as well?"

"No! Not only that! It's because, because I finally had the chance to marry Rue, even the Bennets agreed to our marriage! Rue wants it too, but what happened? It's because of Rachel's pregnancy that ruined Rue's name!" 3

"Mom and dad have never accepted Rue ever since, and they're unwilling to let me marry her! If it weren't for Rachel, that whore, Rue would already be my wife. She wouldn't be married to Edward, and she wouldn't have Edward's child!" 5

As he was speaking, Ian's face slowly turned from anger into happiness as though he was already living his dream... 3

Chapter 38 If Only I Wasn't Your Sister

Jodie was speechless. She had never thought that was the reason Ian hated Rachel so much.

'Rue again, it's always about Rue!'

Time after time, no matter what phase of abnormality Ian was going through, it was inevitably because of Rue!

This time, unsurprisingly, it was Rue again!

"Even Rue and Edward's child should've been mine and Rue's, it's our son..." 6

Ian uttered in a drunken stupor, his mind completely filled with Rue and no one else.

Seeing drunk Ian, Jodie quickly stood up from the sofa and held onto Ian's shoulder tightly.

"Ian! Stop sinking deeper into your fantasies! Rue has already married Edward, she will never marry you!"

Ian pushed Jodie away angrily. "Stop your nonsense! Rue is my wife! We have a child together! I know all of you are just jealous of us!"

Falling heavily on the ground heavily, broken shards pierced Jodie's skin and sank themselves

deeply into her palms.

She gasped and as she looked at the shards on her palm, she felt no pain at all.

Blood stained the transparent glass shards on her palm before it dripped onto the ground through the glass shards. Mixing with the white wine on the floor, the dripped-blood manifested into a menacing red.

At this point, the alcohol collected in Ian's body finally took its toll as Ian staggered backward.

Jodie's eyes suddenly widened. As she watched Ian stumble toward an area filled with glass shards, her heart raced.

She immediately clambered up from the ground and caught the falling Ian.

Ian's body collapsed onto Jodie's arm, forcing his weight onto Jodie's shard-laden hands.

Jodie groaned deeply, her face paling almost immediately.

She dragged Ian to the sofa and brought out a blanket from his bedroom to cover him, not forgetting to wipe his sweat off with a tissue.

She then looked at Ian with kindness even though

her bloodless lips were by far more noticeable on her pale face.

"Idiot Ian, everyone can tell that Rue's pleased about marrying Edward! It's so obvious that she chose Edward over you. What are you still unclear about!" 3

Hearing Ian's steady breaths on the sofa, Jodie exhaled and finally noticed the wounds on her hands.

She inhaled sharply. Although the blood-stained shards were halfway embedded in her hands, she did not cry out or even tear up.

Tensing her jaw, Jodie quickly extracted the shards from her palm and threw them into the bin, violently shaking for each piece she pulled out.

It was only after all the shards were removed that she stopped shaking.

Jodie stared at her wounded, blood-stained hands in silence.

Then, she quietly knelt down to pick up all the glass shards that were still on the ground before sitting on the edge of the sofa, watching as Ian slept.

'I'm fine even just watching him silently like

this.'

In a mall, Rue impulsively swiped the black card Edward had given her on all the branded handbags and accessories.

After marrying into the Bluemel family, Edward demanded that she quit as the general manager of the Bennet Group, wanting her to stay home as a full-time housewife.

Her main task was to take care of Josh.

She was reluctant, but she had no choice other than to comply to please Edward.

After all, Josh was not her child and neither did she have the capacity to care for another woman's child!

Moreover, Josh was not close to her; he was practically silent at home. He would only talk to her perfunctorily when Edward was at home.

She did not mind that.

However, when she was alone with him, he was as cold and silent as a dead man, just like Edward.

She thought she might go mad if she continued to stay in the Bluemel mansion every day!

The only way for her to relieve her stress was to go shopping every day. Edward's card was limitless, so she never had any transactions rejected!

Furthermore, Edward never asked about the things she spent on. ①

To Edward, this amount of money meant nothing.

Edward also promised to let her go back to being the general manager of the Bennet Group after Josh turned seven.

'I only need to endure this for two more years! Within these two years, I must make love with him at least once!' ②

She must have her own child to calm herself down and have more control over the situation.

Suddenly, Rue's phone rang.

After seeing the caller ID, Rue picked it up calmly.

"Mom, how was it? Rachel is settled, isn't she? When is she leaving the Orange Country?" Rue asked after walking to a corner with fewer people.

There was no anxiety on her face because she trusted Mrs. Bennet completely. She knew Rachel

had always been obedient to Mrs. Bennet, and she was used to being the black sheep of the family, getting the short end of the stick. 3

So she should be fine if she continued to get the short end of the stick.

There was a pause on the phone. "Rue, I finally saw her! The child with her is completely identical to the one with you! It's like they came out of the same mold!" 1

Rachel chuckled and said, "That's alright, mom, as long as Rachel leaves the Orange Country with the child, it doesn't matter how similar they look." 5

Mrs. Bennet sighed. 1

The sigh strung Rue's relaxed heart up high as a bad feeling welled inside her.

"Mom, why are you sighing? What happened?"

Mrs. Bennet paused again before she spoke, "I tried everything, but Rachel will not leave the Orange Country! Rachel has changed, she's become persistent. She told me that we are strangers, and she wasn't even phased when I kneeled at her!"

Rue's brows furrowed, even her lips were pursed tightly.

How did Rachel become so determined within five years? In fact, she had underestimated her, as she did not think Rachel would still be insistent even after Mrs. Bennet had kneeled. 2

That was why Rue left a baby in there even though she knew there would be risks. 2

The best-case scenario was to take one child away and become Mrs. Bluemel by pretending to be Rachel without Rachel ever finding out.

"Mom, we should tell dad! Dad has more ideas, he'll definitely force Rachel out of the Orange Country once again!"

Mrs. Bennet was hesitant. "I know your dad has more ways to do it, but your dad's methods lean toward the crueler side!"

Rue pursed her lips. She did not expect her mother to still harbor a motherly protectiveness toward Rachel!

Suddenly, an idea came to her. "Mom, don't forget what Rachel said today. She said she no longer has any ties with the Bennets. It was her choice to cut off her strings with us, and she even allowed you to kneel with no reaction to it at all! Is this what a daughter should do and say?!"

"Even I feel angry for you, mom, or even worst, I feel bad for you!" 1

Mrs. Bennet recalled the heartache she endured in front of the Comer manor.

Chapter 39 Twisting the Truth

Hearing no reply from the other side of the phone, Mrs. Bennet asked anxiously, "Rue? Are you okay, Rue?"

Rue gritted her teeth. Even at her most hateful state, she could not express herself.

"Don't worry, mom, I'm alright. What can we do if stubborn Rachel doesn't want to leave the Orange Country?"

Mrs. Bennet sighed softly. "If Rachel did not have a child, she wouldn't have been a threat even if she stayed in the Orange Country. But as long as that child is here, it's so much more dangerous for you."

How would Rue not know Mrs. Bennet's line of thought? ¹

Way back when she took the older brother away, she had an urge to take the younger one as well just so she could choke him to death!

After all, if she saw the younger one, she would immediately think of Rachel!

However, that would not do. If there was no baby in the nursery, Rachel would have her suspicions.

It was one thing for Rachel's son to say that about her, but Rachel did nothing to reprimand him for doing it and she encouraged him instead!

She even kneeled for her, yet she was still indifferent! That was cold.

It took only this much for Mrs. Bennet to feel disillusionment, but she did not realize that it was the exact feeling they had conditioned Rachel to since young!

With Rue's provocation, Mrs. Bennet's last remaining kindness to Rachel dissipated completely. ①

"Rue, don't worry! I will tell your dad exactly that. I'll let him handle Rachel and I will no longer take part in it!" ①

After Mrs. Bennet's promise, Rue eventually calmed down. "Mm, mom, the Bennets have everything to lose in this, so you can't ever get emotional over that! Now that Rachel has changed, we can't let her take advantage of us!"

Mrs. Bennet replied with resolve, "Don't worry, Rue, I will no longer be so sympathetic to her anymore. Whatever your dad wants to do with her, I will not intervene." ①

Once she hung up the phone, Rue's eyes narrowed.

Her mother had decided to stop caring about Rachel and passed the baton to her father instead. She believed her father's way of handling things, but...

Even so, seeing how Rachel has changed, her heart was not settled.

After considering her options for a while, Rue picked up her phone to dial another number. 1

A deep male voice answered the phone.

"Hello, who is this?"

Rue narrowed her manipulative eyes and said sadly, "Ian, it's me."

Ian paused for a good while before replying, "Rue?! Why did you suddenly phone me?"

Rue narrowed her eyes with a dark expression, but her voice was full of malign. "I just think that we've been separated for too long."

Ian paused for a second. "Rue, what's wrong? Did someone bully you?"

"No, I just..."

Before she finished her sentence, Rue's crying could be heard through the phone.

Strangely, Rue's face did not show any hint of sadness nor did any unusual movements appear on her calm face. However, her voice was full of heartwrenching despair. It sounded as if she was crying her heart out.

Upon hearing Rue's weeping tone, Ian became antsy.

"Rue, don't cry, please don't cry, tell me what happened."

Rue pressed her lips together. "Rachel came back to the Orange Country. Five years ago, she ruined my reputation, separating us... Because of her, I was even forced to sleep with Edward, have a child with him, and marry someone I don't love!" 6

"And now she has returned. Do you know what she wanted? I thought I'd go and welcome her home, but she told my mom that she was happy to see me suffer and married to Edward instead of you! She already made me this way! Why is she not letting me go?! Why is she saying that about me?!" 2

Rue's voice had almost lost control. Even though Ian had drunk too much and his head was almost going to explode from the pain, he was still filled with fury and worry.

"What did you say, Rue?! You mean this whole thing

was set up by Rachel from the beginning? Even your marriage with Edward was her plan?!" 4

Rue nodded lightly, acting out her superficial lie. "Yeah, but she's back! I forgave her because she's my sister, but how can she say that about me? I don't want to live anymore..." 2

At this point, Ian wanted to slice Rachel into pieces. 'It was all because of Rachel, that whore! She made me lose the woman I love the most!' 1

"Rue, you don't need to forgive her at all! Don't worry, I will never let her hurt you again!"

Rue narrowed her eyes in celebration of her plan succeeding before she continued, "You didn't know. To protect me, my mom asked Rachel to leave the Orange Country because she was scared Rachel's presence might trigger me. And because of what happened before, I had depression, so my mom kneeled to beg her to leave. But even then, she was indifferent to my mom's pleas. Just how much is she trying to ruin me!" 4

Ian's fists tightened dangerously as his face darkened. "That b*tch made you develop depression?! F*ck! Rue, don't worry, I will not let her hurt you! I will also protect you and force her to leave the Orange Country!"

Rue's heart finally calmed down after Ian's promise.

"Thank you, Ian..." 2