

Wedded Bride 1101

Chapter 1101 Gary's Persuasion

"That's very impressive, Sher!" Isla praised her with a look of admiration. 'The case for Tarsan

Corporation isn't an easy job, but she can fix it on her own in such a short time. She really is

something.' Such thoughts of admiration filled her head.

"Since they showed their sincerity, we should also give them our efficient work in return," Sheryl

responded. "Just give me some more time. When I can get all the work done, you can go inform Tarsan

Corporation."

In a good mood, Isla replied in a cheerful voice, "Got it!"

'Once she finishes this first draft, the rest of the work can be accomplished easily. As long as the

party's over, we'll be well paid, ' she mused.

"How about you take a few days off and have a good rest at home after the case?"

Isla suggested earnestly that her friend should take a break.

"Are you advising me to focus on my fight with Charles' mother?" With a weak smile, Sheryl countered

Isla's suggestion, avoiding giving her a proper reply.

"No, I'm hoping you can prove your innocence soon."

With seriousness written all over her face, Isla quickly explained.

"I know. Don't worry, Isla. I know what to do." Decisively and a little defensively, Sheryl fixed her gaze on Isla.

"I'm glad to hear that. Now that you said so, I won't mention it again," Isla nodded. "Well, I'll leave you alone so you can focus on your work. See you later!"

"Isla!" Sheryl called out. "Thank you!"

When she spoke, her voice carried much sincerity. Truly, she owed much care and support to her friend.

"Come on, Sher. We're good friends. Why are you being so formal?" said Isla with a warm smile. "I'll be happy as long as you do take care of yourself."

It was past ten in the morning when Sheryl finally worked out the whole scheme. As she went through the entire plan, she nodded her head with satisfaction.

All the papers in her hand, she headed to Isla's office. "I finished it, Isla!" exclaimed Sheryl with excitement, standing in front of her.

"Well done, Sher! I'm going to give Tarsan Corporation a call," Isla gushed. Staring at the thick documents in Sheryl's hand, she was basking in the thrill.

To fill her in, Isla called over Irene. The latter asked them to go to Tarsan Corporation with their scheme the following day.

"Now that you've finished the case, you don't have much work for today. How about you go home and get some sleep? Tomorrow we'll go to Tarsan Corporation and get it done!" Isla said, full of energy.

"That's a good idea. I'm a little sleepy. Since Charles' mother is still at the hospital, I can go home and get some sleep without being disturbed," Sheryl returned, yawning and stretching lazily, "Exactly. Now come on, you can go home now. Oh, how did you get here? Do you need me to give you a ride?" Isla offered. It suddenly occurred to her that Sheryl had returned home just several hours ago without getting to sleep.

"Thank you! If you didn't mention it, I would've asked you to give me a ride."

Sheryl grinned at her kind friend.

With a loud laugh, Isla responded, "You naughty girl. Let's go!"

"Alright," Sheryl gladly replied.

When Isla drove Sheryl to Dream Garden, Nancy was serving Melissa in the hospital so only Gary was left at home.

As Sheryl entered the house, she bid Isla a farewell. Walking into the living room, she found Gary sitting alone with a pensive look on his face. "You're back, Sher," the old man addressed her.

"Yes, Grandpa,"

Sheryl nodded politely.

"Would you like to sit down and have a little chat?" Looking at Sheryl with his amiable eyes, he proposed a short sitdown.

"Sure, I'd love to. If you want to find someone to talk to, I'll always be there," she agreed with a genuine smile. Sheryl couldn't help but always respect this gentleman.

For being such a reasonable elder, he deserved respect. Unlike some, he seldom meddled with Sheryl's and Charles' matters. Although he lived in Dream Garden, he gave the young couple enough privacy and respect.

"What's up, Grandpa?" Sheryl asked, settling herself on the couch.

As she took her seat, he went straight to the point.

"As for what happened to Melissa, do you have something to tell me?" he asked frankly. Last night, he had overheard their fight in his bedroom, but he didn't want to get involved in their quarreling.

Even so, judging by the noises, he could feel that Sheryl was the underdog in that argument.

'In normal cases, the winner wouldn't hurt herself...but Melissa did, ' he thought in confusion.

"What did you hear last night, Grandpa?" Not knowing he overheard them, she wasn't sure how much Gary had heard about their quarrel.

"I heard you argue with each other, but to be frank, I didn't hear the conversation," he said honestly.

As she stared at him anxiously, Sheryl asked, "Grandpa...do you think she really attempted to end her life because of me?" If Gary didn't believe her, she wasn't certain if she could still stay in Dream Garden.

"I don't know. My instinct tells me that Melissa isn't the victim. But why did she commit suicide if she wasn't bullied?"

Puzzled, the old gentleman shook his head.

"I'm not accusing you, Sher. I heard that you and Charles had a fight last night. Now our family is a

mess, and no one is happy. That's not something I want to see," he sighed. He simply wanted her to know why he asked to talk with her.

"Grandpa...I didn't..." She tried to defend herself. When she heard that Gary didn't blame her, she had to admit that she was very grateful.

Meanwhile, she didn't know how to address his confusion. Apart from an oral explanation, she couldn't find any strong evidence to prove that she was innocent.

"Sher, I know that you're a good girl. But Melissa used to be a good mother. When she left home, Charles was already a teenager, so he remembers many things about his mother. Although they hadn't seen each other for fifteen years, they share the same blood.

I don't know if Charles made another mistake on this matter. I hope you can forgive him and give him another chance for the sake of your history and his love for you.

Of course, this is only my own opinion. I don't know whether my guess is right or not. If it is, I will apologize to you on behalf of Charles and his mother. You suffered a lot because of them. But if my guess is wrong, I think an apology can almost settle the problem."

His tone was earnest and sincere, putting Sheryl at ease in spite of the situation.

After hearing his thoughts, Sheryl knew that he had the same doubt as Charles did, but however, he tried to comfort her indirectly.

Chapter 1102 Don't Dodge The Problem

Gary grilled Sheryl but not up to the point of breaking her. Calmly, Sheryl said, "I swear, I never lied to you. You should know it because I lived with you. But if you really think I have a hand on what happened, it's a proof that you really didn't know me at all. And, I can never change what you think. I think now, more than ever, that I can't force you or Charles to believe in me."

Gary saw Sheryl already exhausted. "I see. As you said so, I think I already know the answer. Go upstairs now and take a rest. I know you didn't sleep well last night," Gary commanded softly. She had a point. Gary already knew who was lying.

Despite knowing it, he had no intention of getting involved in this matter.

'Only when they have gone through these things themselves can they learn something and know how to live their lives. If I always give them good advice on everything, perhaps they might have fewer problems, but I don't think it does them any good. If they never suffer pain or loss, how would they learn to cherish things or people? Or how would they know how lucky they are to have each other?' he

mulled.

He thought it would be for the best.

"Well, Grandpa, I'll go ahead and take a rest!" Gary just nodded, and Sheryl gave him a little nod as

well. Then, she headed upstairs.

Gary remained where he was as he watched Sheryl disappear. Then, he went his way.

Going straight to the bedroom, she dropped her handbag on the sofa and threw herself onto the bed.

The moment her head touched the pillow, she drifted into a deep slumber. She was very exhausted

these past few days, both physically and mentally. When Melissa arrived at Dream Garden, she was

still sound asleep.

"Bring these to my room, Nancy," Melissa ordered as soon as she entered the house. She liked to think

and act as if she was the hostess of the house.

"Yes, Mrs. Lu. What else can I do for you?" Nancy replied obediently. Nancy remained standing where

the bags were and waited for more instructions.

"That's all. Leave me now!" Melissa answered indifferently. After dismissing her, Nancy headed upstairs

with the bags.

When the maid was heading upstairs, Melissa seated herself on the sofa. Though Melissa was allowed to be discharged from the hospital, she was still weak for she had lost lots of blood.

She committed suicide by slitting her wrist. But she didn't regret that decision! 'It doesn't matter as long as I can save my son's lifetime happiness, ' she thought. She still firmly believe that Charles wouldn't be happy with Sheryl and her method of achieving her goal was morally right.

As she snapped back to reality, she stood up and headed to her room. She decided to take a rest. As she walked past Charles' bedroom, she saw the door shut. "Charles is supposed to be at his office now. Why is his room closed?" she murmured, frowning.

She walked back and stopped right in front of Charles' room. Out of curiosity, she pushed the door open.

The sight surprised her. Then she got angry. The sight that Sheryl was sleeping in bed peacefully displeased her so much. She shouted harshly, "Sheryl!"

Sheryl stirred in her sleep. A shrill voice continued shouting, "I almost died in the hospital. But look at you. How could you sleep like a baby?! I'm very impressed!" Melissa was shouting at top of her lungs.

She didn't care if she had just gotten out of the hospital. She was really mad, blood boiling to the max!

Sheryl slowly opened her eyes. After a few seconds, she turned to the direction of the yelling. "Mom,

you are back? I thought you were in the hospital," Sheryl replied. Her sleep vanished at the sound of

Melissa's continued yelling. Then, she slowly got up and sat at the side of the bed.

"As you see, I am safe and sound. Were you expecting me to die when you learned that I committed

suicide?" Melissa snapped. 'The nerve of that girl! Wait 'til I tell Charles, ' she thought. She felt

triumphant that she could be right! It was obvious on her face.

Sheryl saw the look on Melissa's face. It was time to fight back! "You get me wrong! You must be very

impatient to set me up! Are you itching to tell the whole world that you decided to take your own life due

to my humiliation? That's below the belt! If you died, who would prove my innocence?" Sheryl sneered.

"I hope you are not stupid enough to think I would explain my actions for you, Sheryl," Melissa scoffed

with a disdainful look. "But let me tell you this one. I did this on purpose! I wanted Charles and the other

people in Dream Garden to change their perception of you. My final intention is for Charles to divorce

you!"

"Up to the risk of killing yourself? Just for breaking us apart?! I don't get it, Mom."

Sheryl was surprised with Melissa's revelation. She didn't think anyone in his right mind could commit suicide just to achieve a goal. Life was too precious to lose! Unless, there was already something wrong with Melissa's head...

"There is no big reason behind it. I just simply hate you. I don't want to see you in Dream Garden,"

Melissa replied casually. Charles' mother didn't expose the real reason. When the right moment came, she was sure to let Sheryl see the big picture.

Melissa's explanation was simply not believable. Sheryl believed that there was more to it. She just didn't want her to know it. But time would come, Sheryl knew, that the reason would be divulged. But for now, whatever it was, it didn't matter. At least, she already got something she wanted—the evidence

to prove her innocence.

"So, that is your agenda! I see. Like it or not, I will not leave here. You can continue setting me up.

While I am going to wait for the day I will be kicked out!" Sheryl declared. 'Let the battle begin!' she thought. Glancing at her wristwatch, she got out of bed and fixed herself. Since Melissa still stood by

the door, Sheryl said, "It's time to pick up Clark and Shirley. I have to go. Please help yourself here."

With that, she went out and hurried downstairs. She went straight to the garage.

When she drove over to the kindergarten, there was no sign of the children yet. She rummaged

through her bag and got her phone out.

She played the video she had recorded. The image was clear and so was the audio. The recording was

of good quality. She was very satisfied with the result.

After contemplating a little bit, she opened Wechat and sent the video to Charles.

She then turned her phone off and placed it inside her bag.

As she lifted her head and looked ahead, she saw many kids get out of the kindergarten. She went out

of the car and started looking for the kids. "Mom!" Clark greeted cheerfully.

"Mom!" Shirley called out gladly. The two kids shouted in unison.

Sheryl hugged the two kids. Then, she guided them towards the car. "Get in, kids," Sheryl said lovingly.

The kids slipped into the car quickly. After she helped them buckle up, she returned to the driver's seat.

She started the engine and drove away. She planned to take her kids out for dinner, so she decided to

ask Shirley first. She looked at Shirley and caught her eyes. Then she smiled and asked, "Would you like to eat out, sweetie?"

Then Sheryl continued, "What do you want? Pizza?" "Pizza?! Of course I love to. But didn't you tell us that we couldn't often eat it?" asked Shirley. Shirley beamed at the thought of eating out and eating pizza. Just like other little girls, she couldn't resist her excitement.

"Yes, I said it was not good to eat them too often. But it has been a while since the last time we ate it.

So it's okay," Sheryl explained with a small smile. She didn't like the kids eating fast food. But it was okay to indulge in it once in a while.

"Yay, Mom! You are the best! Clark, we are going to have pizza," exclaimed Shirley. Shirley turned to Clark clapping her hands happily.

"Shirley, pizza is not yummy. Let's just go home to have dinner. The food Nancy cooks is delicious," answered Clark. Clark tried to persuade Shirley while staring at her skeptically through the rear-view mirror.

"I know, because Nancy cooks for us every day. But I want to eat something different. I want to eat pizza. Come on, Clark. Let's have pizza, okay?" Shirley pleaded. Shirley gave Clark a pitiful look.

"Clark, just say yes. After we have pizza, we will go home immediately. Does this work for you?" Sheryl negotiated as she read Clark's mind. That was why she proposed to go home as soon as they finished dinner.

"Mom, tell me the truth, what's going on with you and Dad? Dad will be on his way from work soon.

Why don't you just take us home?" Clark asked bluntly. He felt something was amiss between his parents.

"You are still too young to understand. And it's not right to know matters that concern the adults. Don't worry. Your dad and I are good!" Sher tried to explain without hinting anything at Clark. She knew that Clark was perceptive for his age. She didn't want him to burden himself with anything that concerned them, the adults. Clark was still too young for that.

"If that's the case, why do you want to take us out to dinner?" Clark asked again. He didn't believe her mother's vague explanation.

"Because it's been a while since the last time we ate out. And, I also crave pizza."

Clark suddenly remembered one of his lessons. "Mom, my teacher said kids who avoid problems are

not brave!" Then, he continued, "So you are not a brave person, Mom!" He pouted as he tried to lecture his mom with what he learned in school.

"Of course I am brave! And hey, I am not a kid anymore," countered Sheryl. She was surprised with Clark's mini lecture.

"Now that you're a brave person, you should face the problem instead of running away from it!" Clark said, as he continued looking at his mother. This was one proof of Clark's intelligence and fast understanding of his surroundings.

"I never run away from my problems," Sheryl retorted. She couldn't help rolling her eyes as if she was charged of something she didn't do.

"Prove yourself, Mom. Let's go home!" Clark insisted. Sheryl admired his persistence.

Chapter 1103 The Truth

As much as Sheryl and Shirley wanted to eat out, they failed to persuade Clark. To compromise, Clark agreed to Sheryl's suggestion of taking the pizza home.

Shirley also agreed on that idea. It was better to take it home than nothing at all.

Sheryl really enjoyed the company of her children. When she was with them, she forgot all her worries.

She even forgot others. It seemed that her world was rotating only around her children. Her focus was

only on Clark and Shirley.

Ever since she turned off her phone, she hadn't checked it for calls or messages. She was unaware of the numerous missed calls and messages she received.

While Sheryl was enjoying her time with the kids, Charles, on the other hand, was really anxious by this time. He couldn't contact Sheryl! He tried to contact her for several times, even left her message after message. But, there was no reply!

In his heart, he knew the reason why he couldn't contact Sheryl. He knew the reason why they had a problem. It was all connected with his dear mother. At first, since Melissa came to live with them, he was starting to get annoyed with Sheryl. He couldn't understand a kind and considerate girl becoming very vicious!

But just an hour ago, he suddenly received a video recording from Sheryl. Although it was a sneak shot, the recording was completely clear.

The video showed their bedroom. The voice recorded unmistakably belonged to Melissa. He clearly heard everything she said.

He was a little bit shaken. Even though Sheryl didn't say anything, he could still understand her actions.

Who wouldn't be? After all, his mother was no saint.

But what made Charles really feel sad was his guilty for Sheryl. Why did he doubt her? Didn't all the hardships they overcome proof enough of her loyalty and love? Of her character? Wasn't this just another obstacle that they had to win together?

Charles looked at his watch. He knew it was time for Sheryl to pick up the children. But when he drove to the kindergarten, he found no one anymore. So, he rushed home.

His anxiousness reached its peak when he reached home. Sheryl and the kids had not arrived yet.

But, somebody was in a good mood to see him. Melissa walked to his direction and gave him her best smile. "Charles, it's good to see you. I missed you."

Charles did not look at Melissa. He didn't even return her greetings. In short, he didn't like to see her.

"Charles!" Melissa shouted a bit. She didn't like her son's attitude just now. And she wanted to get to the bottom of this. "What happened? Is there anything wrong with you?" she asked.

"Where is Sher?" he asked. He wanted to shout at her, but controlled himself. He suppressed whatever anger he was feeling. After all, Melissa was still his mother. She still deserved to receive even a little

respect.

"Sher? I don't know. She hasn't come back since she went out this afternoon," Melissa answered feigning ignorance. Melissa knew very well that Sheryl went out to fetch the kids from school, but she pretended not to know. So what if not telling him what she knew would create a problem. It was her objective anyway to create a wedge between them. She would do everything to achieve what she wanted.

When Charles looked at her, he saw her eyes as sincere as ever. If Charles had not seen the video, he would have believed her. But now, after knowing the truth, he just turned away from her and walked out. He was nearing his car when his mother called him.

"Charles, where are you going?" Melissa asked gently. She didn't understand why Charles was frantic to find Sheryl.

"I am going out to find Sher!" Charles answered. He wanted to say more, but stopped himself. He wanted to talk to Sher first.

"Charles, is Sher still angry with me? If you find her, you must help me to persuade her. I..." Melissa

continued. She continued acting as the good mother-in-law who was so sincere and concerned to her daughter-in-law. Her acting was definitely improving each day.

"Mom!" Charles shouted, stopping Melissa with whatever else she was going to say. "Cut it out, will you? You have just been discharged from the hospital. Go to your room and rest!" Charles really didn't want to hear her telling more lies. As much as he would like to control himself, he failed. He was reaching his breaking point.

Melissa was shocked by his words. She detected anger in his voice. She couldn't accept the fact that Charles' attitude to her changed in just a snap of a finger.

'What made him like this? Did I do something he didn't like? But I just came back from the hospital,' Melissa thought. The harder she thought, the harder she felt to figure out the reason.

Melissa was thinking miles away, and Charles took the chance to get away from her.

When he was about to leave Dream Garden, he saw Sheryl's car approaching.

She pulled over and got out of the car, followed by the two kids with smiles on their faces.

At that moment, Charles finally felt relieved. He got out of the car as well and walked towards Sher.

"Sher, is your phone turned off?" Charles asked. He didn't want to elaborate his question anymore for

fear of the children understanding what he meant. Clark, especially. He was too perceptive for his age.

Sheryl also felt uneasy with the question. She didn't want her children to know that something was

definitely wrong. Clark already hinted earlier that he noticed something was amiss between her and

Charles. Sheryl wouldn't like her children to be unhappy. "Yes, the phone is low bat. I didn't have time

to charge it," Sheryl simply answered.

Charles just nodded at her. Then, he turned to the kids and asked, "Clark, Shirley, what have you

learned in school today?" Charles felt happy to see the two children smiling. He knew that they would

eagerly answer his question. Every day, they always came home telling him the new things they

learned.

Shirley proudly answered, "We learned a lot today! Do you want us to teach you?" Shirley couldn't help

giggling. She knew already what her father would answer. It was always like this.

"Wow! It seems that you really learned something new today. You teach me what you learned later,

okay?" Charles was already in a good mood. His temperament quickly changed as soon as he saw his

wife and kids.

"Okay, Dad, I can't wait. I can't wait to teach you how to dance! Make sure you will be a good student later," Shirley laughed happily. Shirley could really imagine his father dancing! She burst into more laughter.

"Okay!" Charles answered enthusiastically. He couldn't help but feel excited also. Shirley's enthusiasm was infectious. He nodded to Shirley to show that he would be a good student, and he was starting to be a good one at that moment.

"Shirley, do you want teach Dad to dance or eat pizza first?" Sheryl asked. Sheryl showed the pizza in her hand to remind Shirley of their take home food.

"I love to eat pizza!" Shirley quickly answered. Then, she turned to her daddy. "Dad, I want to eat the pizza first. Would it be okay?"

"No problem, kiddo! You can teach me as soon as you have time," Charles answered. Then, Charles guided Shirley towards the door.

This time, he turned his attention to Clark. He said, "Clark, go eat pizza with Shirley." Charles took Clark's hand and entered the house. Shirley took the pizza from Sheryl and went straight to the dining room.

"Dad, Mom, I don't like pizza. It's Shirley who loves it. What I want to do is talk to you both," Clark said.

Clark removed his hand from his dad's grasp. Then, he faced his mom and dad, looking at both of them.

Charles and Sheryl exchanged brief looks. "Talk to us? About what?" Sheryl asked. It was Sheryl who spoke first. She knew what this was all about, though she was hoping that he would drop it.

"Mom, Dad, tell me the truth. You have been arguing recently, haven't you?" Clark bluntly asked. Clark saw the exchanged looks between his parents. Now, it was his turn. He kept on looking back and forth between his parents. He wanted to know what was really going on between his mother and father.

"Absolutely not. We are not arguing. And if ever we do, we make sure that we reconcile before the day ends," Charles explained. Charles knew it! Despite how careful they were in front of their children, they still knew something was up. Especially with Clark... Nothing really escaped his perceptive son.

Clark saw the look on Charles' face and knew that he was lying. He felt a little bit angry at him. He said,

"Dad, you're a big man. You have to man up with what you did. If you say you and Mom have really reconciled, you have to show it.

Otherwise, you'll be shameful in the eyes of others."

Charles didn't know the right words to tell his son.

"Clark, your dad and I are really good. Don't think too much," Sheryl answered Clark, comforting him.

Sheryl saw how uneasy it was for Charles. She knew he was thinking on how to explain the situation to

Clark. She also saw in Clark's face that he wasn't happy with what was happening either. She felt Clark

knew that she was just giving him an explanation which he wanted to hear, not what he should know.

"Dad, did Mom tell the truth?" Clark asked, looking intently at his dad. Obviously to them, Clark didn't

believe what Sheryl said. And now, he was looking at Charles seeking for answers.

Seeing the expression on Clark's face, Charles now decided to tell the truth. He knew that Clark was

naturally sensitive. They couldn't really fool him with some excuses or lies. "Clark, what you have just

said now is right. Your mom and I did really have a misunderstanding. And, we haven't really sat down

to talk about it."

Charles continued to explain, "I know I was wrong, and that I have misunderstood her. So I want to

apologize to her and ask for her forgiveness. Clark, do you think your mom will forgive me?"

"That's right, Dad. You should face the problem. If you want Mom to forgive you, ask her personally!"

Clark replied. Then, Clark smiled. He knew that once his dad apologized to his mom, he would be forgiven. He knew how much they loved each other.

And they would still be a happy family!

His fear of having a broken family would not happen to them.

"Now, your mom and I are going to our room to talk about this. Will you be okay with that?" Charles was very lucky to have such an understanding son.

"I like that. But I think you should first ask Mom if she would agree with you."

"Of course." Turning to his wife, Charles asked, "Sher, are you willing to go up and talk?" Charles looked Sheryl in the eye. He took her hands in his, hoping that she would agree.

Sheryl just looked at him, without speaking. Actually, she did not want to explain anything at all. Things already happened anyway. And more importantly, Charles already knew the truth.

So, was there still something to talk about? She believed there was nothing more.

Chapter 1104 The Decision To Move Out

Thinking about his mother's reaction, Clark suddenly felt very unhappy. "Mom, can't you recall what I've just said to you? The last thing you should be doing is avoiding these problems. I understand that you

don't want to forgive Dad, but at least you should give him an opportunity to explain himself. Otherwise, he will feel so sad and like he has been wronged."

Seeing Sheryl keeping silent, Clark began to shake her hand gently, in his attempt to convince her once more. "Mom, please, just let dad explain."

"Oh, fine...I'll listen to you and hear what your father has to say," replied Sheryl helplessly. She thought that if she persisted on saying no, Clark would keep nagging her until she agreed.

"That's alright, Mom," Clark answered in a happy tone as he patted Sheryl's hand lovingly. "So, since you've agreed, you can go upstairs and have a talk with him now. I will wait here and eat pizza with Shirley," Clark added.

Sheryl didn't have any other reason to refuse Charles anymore. Following him, she went into the bedroom upstairs.

"Sher, I've seen the video you sent me. I'm really sorry. I didn't know what the truth was, and that was why I questioned the situation before." Charles got straight to the point and expressed his apology to Sheryl. He felt sorry for treating her the way he did.

He didn't want to elaborate on other trivial things, and especially not on something that didn't matter. He

also knew that Sheryl would feel more impatient and disappointed with him, if he kept going on about senseless things, instead of apologizing up front.

"Well, now that you've learned about the truth, we don't have anything else to talk about, now do we?"

Sheryl responded to Charles' apology in a cold and relentless voice. She didn't feel like she was ready to reply to his apology, nor accept it. She wasn't the kind of person who liked to complain about how hurt she felt by another person.

"Sher, I'm so sorry. I know that you feel wronged, and I know that it's all my fault. Nevertheless, I promise that after supper, I will tell my mom that our family of four will not live in Dream Garden from this point forward. I'll find another incredible home, and we can just move out. I've been thinking about it for a long time. What do you think?" Charles spoke his mind. Once he learned the truth, he made the decision on behalf of him and his family to move out.

"What? You want us to move out? Wait...Aren't you afraid of your mother's disapproval?" Sheryl never thought that Charles would make the mindful decision to make such a sacrifice, especially for her sake.

She was surprised but relieved at the same time.

"Of course, I know that she won't agree with my decision. However, even though she doesn't agree, the most important thing to me is that our family can live a happy life together. I truly mean it, Sheryl," said Charles firmly. He wanted to make it clear that she was a priority to him.

Noticing Sheryl's expression, which boasted with pure disbelief, he immediately added, "I need to admit something though. I decide to move out, not only because we can live a happy and peaceful life together, but also because I don't want to unmask my mom. I mean, regardless of anything, she's still my mom. She hasn't been living in Dream Garden for a long time, so I couldn't just ask her to move out.

I just can't understand why she doesn't like you, nor what is in her mind. Whatever happens, Sher, I promise you that she will never come between, nor separate us ever again. I don't even care if she uses suicide to threaten me. You and the children will always come first!"

Sheryl had to admit, what Charles said was very admirable. At least in her mind, this kind of promise brought her more relief than a mere apology.

She felt at ease, as Charles had just promised her his loyalty. What else could she ask for?

No matter what she lost in Dream Garden, she wouldn't fear anything else as long as she still had her kids and Charles.

"I have a question. Is moving out truly at your discretion? Do you think that your mom will agree with your decision?" Sheryl's question indicated that she was permitting this decision.

"Don't worry, Sher. I will discuss my decision with my mother. I've made a promise to you, and I will make it clear to her that no one can stop us from moving out or being together." Charles made a firm vow to Sheryl.

Realizing that Sheryl was finally convinced, Charles continued, "Sher, can I ask you for just one thing? Can you just bear my mom for a few days? Just until we move out. No matter what my mom says to you, all you have to do is ignore her words. You should know that she is..."

"Fine. Please, there's no need to remind me whatsoever. I know what you're going to say. I promise, as long as we can have our life back and live a peaceful life together, I don't mind how she treats me in the next few days. I'll tolerate it." Sheryl cut Charles off.

Sheryl recalled herself saying these kinds of words many times after Melissa came back. Regardless,

each time she made her attitude clear, a conflict was born between her and Melissa. Sheryl felt uneasy.

She knew that, whenever she displayed kindness to Melissa, it was followed by Melissa's efforts to frame her once more.

She was uncertain about what the result would be this time around. However, she didn't want to think about it at that moment. All that she could do was wait and find it out.

During dinner, all of the family members were present at the table, and no disruptive behavior seemed to be present. Looking at her family, Shirley even thought that their family was extremely happy. She couldn't even tell that her parents weren't talking with one another earlier in the day.

However, Clark knew about every detail of the relationship between his parents. That was why he also knew that it had been better than before.

He felt grateful for what he had done to reconcile his parent's relationship. If it wasn't for him who acted as a mediator, his parents wouldn't have made up so quickly.

Thinking of this point, Clark felt proud and pleased with himself. As he enjoyed the positive mood in the room, his appetite was bigger than ever.

After supper, Nancy brought the two kids to freshen up and then took them back to their room to sleep.

They both needed to get up early to go to the kindergarten the following day.

Clark and Shirley were good children, as they never opposed going to bed on time.

Seeing that his kids had already fallen asleep, Gary also made his way to his room after supper. At that moment, Charles thought that it was the perfect time to take on his mother.

"Sher, could you please go and fetch my phone? I think I've left it in the bedroom," Charles said as he exchanged a serious look with Sheryl.

Sheryl nodded her head, as she knew what Charles was about to do. She definitely didn't want to be in the room when it happened, and that was why she left.

Once she was in the bedroom, she took her time to bring Charles his phone. She stood behind the door and opened it slightly, as she wanted to hear their conversation.

"Mom, are you feeling okay? Are you still feeling lightheaded?" Charles knew that losing a lot of blood for any human being, was accompanied by dizziness and nausea.

"I'm fine, Charles. Don't worry about me." Melissa proceeded to put on the mask of a sensible mother in front of Charles.

Charles paused for a while. He behaved so not because he was moved by his mother's thoughtfulness towards him, but because he recalled in his mind how she had treated Sheryl in the video.

He couldn't grasp that his mother had a split-personality.

"Mom, I have something to negotiate with you. It's quite important." After a deep sigh for plucking up to his mother, Charles came straight to the point.

"What kind of thing? Just name it, son. As long as it is within my reach, I will agree with it. After all, I am your mother and you are my son," Melissa replied in a pampered voice.

"Mom, I have talked to Sheryl. We've decided to move out with Shirley and Clark tomorrow." Charles looked into Melissa's eyes as he told her the news in a calm voice.

Melissa was taken aback at Charles' request and responded in a surprised voice, "What? Why do you want to move out? Do you feel uncomfortable living here?"

"Mom, believe me...That's not the problem. It's not about us being comfortable or not. I just don't think that you can get along with Sheryl. Besides, at your age, I want you to live a happy and relaxed life.

In the beginning, it was my very own ignorance that caused today's situation. It is often said that it's very difficult for a mother-in-law and daughter-in-law get along with each other. Hearing this kind of

saying at first, I didn't take it seriously. Otherwise, you wouldn't have almost lost your life with the suicide attempt. So, from my point of view, Sher shouldn't live with you here any longer. After all, the most important thing right now is your psychological and physical health. Don't you think so?" Charles began to explain to Melissa calmly.

Chapter 1105 Answer

Throughout the whole conversation, Charles kept his eyes on Melissa, observing her facial expressions closely and waiting for the slightest suspicious change. He wanted to catch the exact moment that her expression changed so he could call her bluff immediately.

Much to his disappointment, he didn't detect any change at all in her expression. In fact, ever since he had broken the news that he was planning to move out with his family, she seemed to have frozen in shock.

"Mom?" Charles said gently as he put his hand on hers. He couldn't help feeling guilty at Melissa's reaction. He even started to doubt himself, wondering if he was making the right decision to move out.

"Charles, did Sher say something to you? Never mind, forget it. I'm getting old and don't understand the way you youngsters think nowadays..." Melissa's voice trailed off. She sounded forlorn and

defeated.

Tears started to form in her eyes.

Charles was instantly brought back to the day his father passed away. Melissa had a huge fight with his father right before he went out, and left the house. Sadly, his father had met with an accident that day and died before the ambulance could arrive. When his mother had heard the news, she had exactly the same expression that she was wearing now. Afterwards she had left, and he had never seen her again for the next fifteen years.

"Mom, I'm doing this for you. I know you've only moved in with us for a few days, but you look so miserable. I hate to see you like this." Charles tried to comfort her, hoping that she wouldn't take it personally.

Melissa shook her head and smiled weakly. "No, no, it's not that I disagree with your decision. As a mother, I just want whatever is best for you, and makes you happy."

She had never seen this coming. In the process of breaking Charles and Sheryl up, she had nearly lost her life and had almost no regrets. But now, they were planning to move out, and she was going to lose her son just like that.

Once they had moved out and had their own home, she would no longer have any reason to stick her nose into their business.

If that was the case, Sheryl would be getting exactly what she wanted. No, she was not going to lose that easily, not after all the effort she had put in!

Melissa faked a deep sigh and said, "Charles, you are still young. There is still so much that you don't know. No mother would ever be willing to let their children get hurt, and naturally would never want to be far from their children. I have already made a huge mistake by leaving you for fifteen years. So..."

"You don't want us to leave, do you?" Charles blurted out, not letting Melissa finish her sentence. He had absolutely no intention to say such a thing. But he couldn't bear to see the tears in his mother's eyes, and his heart instantly softened.

"If I want to be selfish, I would say yes. I don't want you to leave me. But you are my son, and I don't want to cause any difficulties for you." She paused for a while, looking sadly at Charles. Then she asked, "Did you make this decision because Sher and I don't get along well?"

Charles was quiet. Melissa quickly continued, "If that is the case, then there is no need for you to move

out just to solve this problem. I have been thinking about it, and I have decided that I will stop interfering and reduce my interactions with Sheryl." The look in her eyes was so sad and desperate, Charles felt his determination disappearing quickly.

"Mom, no, that's not how it is at all," he said earnestly. His heart felt like someone had cracked it into half and was drowning it in an ocean of his mother's tears. Not only was his heart aching, but it was also hurting with every breath.

"Charles, I want you to know that no matter what, I hope we can still live together. I admit, Sher and I have our differences, but since you are okay with her now, I have to accept her as my daughter-in-law. From today onwards, I will try to tolerate her, regardless of who is in the wrong during our arguments. I will try to be more inclusive to her for your sake," Melissa told him in a sincere tone.

"But Mom, I..." Charles wanted to tell her that he still intended to move out with Sheryl.

But Melissa quickly put her finger on his lips, not letting him continue. Fixing her eyes on Charles, she said earnestly, "Son, I have never asked for anything from you. But just this once, I am begging you to stay. To be honest, I came back to Dream Garden not because of your grandfather, but because of you. If you leave, there is absolutely no reason for me to be here anymore."

Not only were her words desperate, but also there was a terrified look in her eyes. She was scared of losing her precious son and she willing to do anything to make him stay.

"Charles, I promise, from now on I will not get into any arguments with Sheryl. I'll try to forget the past and start a new chapter with her. I will try to be a better mother-in-law to her. Please believe me, Charles," Melissa pleaded.

She knew her son well and knew that he would be easily swayed by her pleading. Even though it meant that she had to indirectly admit that she had been mistreating Sheryl, she didn't regret it, as she knew that it was worth it. Her biggest fear was being apart from Charles.

Her words had the desired effect. Charles wanted to say something, but just couldn't say it.

After all, she was his mother. He didn't have the heart to do this to her.

"Okay, Mom. I'll think about it," he said, frowning slightly. The words came out of his mouth before he could stop himself.

Sensing her son's weakness, Melissa attacked before he could think any further. "Thank you, Charles.

I'm happy to hear that. Just give me some time, and I will prove to you that Sher and I can get along,"

she said.

"It's getting late. You should head back to your room and get some rest, Mom. Good night!" Charles wrapped it up quickly. He knew that there was no way he was going to win. His mother was not going to agree to his moving out.

"Good night!" Melissa replied with a bright smile.

Sheryl overheard the whole conversation between the mother and son. However she didn't feel in the least bit upset or disappointed with Charles as she knew that he was a filial son.

But she was worried that despite Charles knowing Melissa's true colours, he might still choose his mother over her. Blood was thicker than water, after all.

Charles had already turned around and was about to go to his room. Suddenly he turned back to his mother as he was hit by a thought.

"What's wrong?" Melissa asked. She couldn't figure out what was running through her son's mind.

Charles remained quiet, but she could tell from his expression that he was perplexed and he didn't know whether he should say it or not.

"Mom, there's actually something I've been meaning to ask for some time now. But I don't know how to

say it," Charles began after some hesitation.

"It's okay, dear. What is it you want to ask?" Melissa asked with a warm smile.

"Mom, I know you've disliked Sher right from the start. Despite all her efforts to win your heart, you still dislike her, right?" Charles finally managed to ask. "But I just don't get it. Why? Why do you dislike her so much?"

"Is it really that obvious?" Melissa was surprised. She looked into his eyes and knew that she couldn't dodge this anymore. If she avoided the issue, her son would seriously consider moving out.

Even if she managed to divert the issue this time, she wouldn't be able to avoid it a second time.

"Yes, it is. Both Sher and I can see it clearly," Charles nodded.

"So that's why Sher is so hostile to me. She knows that I don't like her," Melissa said in realization. But even though she admitted that she did not like Sheryl, she was not planning to tell Charles the real reason.

She quickly came up with a lie that would seem convincing enough for Charles to believe.

"Mom, I want to know the answer," Charles insisted. Sheryl had never given her a hard time, and he

knew it. Despite Melissa's treatment towards her, she was still very respectful towards her mother-in-law. However, he kept quiet and didn't dispute Melissa's statement. He just wanted to know why his mother hated Sheryl so much.

"Very well, since you insist," Melissa sighed. "Your father and I were deeply in love, and the whole city knew it. We were one of the ideal couples, and everyone looked up to us. What they didn't know was that your father cheated on me."

"Dad had an affair?" Charles gaped at his mother in disbelief.

"Yes, he did. And Sheryl looks a lot like that person. In fact the first time I saw her, I even thought it was the same person!" Melissa lied calmly.

Chapter 1106 Charles' Apology

Charles empathized with Melissa. For a woman, there is nothing more devastating than having to withstand the man of her life betraying her for another woman. At the same time, it was equally awkward for him as a son to confront this truth that had been a part of his parent's life.

"How did Dad and that woman ..." Charles wanted to know more about his father's affair back then.

"As a wife, I always believed in your father. But at that time, I had a very strong intuition that something wasn't right between them. When I decided to look into the matter, I was shocked to find out that they

had been staying with each other for more than a year. Then I decided to do whatever was needful to save my marriage. I tried my best to make the woman stay away from your father, but all my efforts fell flat on their faces. I could see my world falling apart. I had never felt so incredibly helpless in my life. At last, when all other attempts failed, I made a last yet bold choice. I asked for a divorce from your father. I gave him a clear choice. It was either her or me. And then, your father finally broke up with that woman and came back to me." Charles gazed at his mother's face as she spoke. Myriads of emotions played on her face as she went into each and every detail of that time as if the moments were still alive in her heart.

"However, that woman was not willing to end her relationship with your dad. To get your dad back, she rushed back to Dream Garden time and time again, and argued with your dad, accusing him of abandoning her so ruthlessly. Luckily, your dad realized that it was a mistake to get involved with that woman, so every time the woman came back to look for him, he showed himself to be absolutely over with her."

"Even then, she still didn't give up. To make the situation worse, that woman held me accountable for

everything. She held a grudge against me. To punish me, she tried hard to set me up many times, even ruin my reputation. Though she could not make it, what she had done left a deep mark on my mind.

And that's the reason why I can't bring myself to be nice to Sher no matter how much I try. I admit that I have been extremely unfair to her."

Melissa paused to watch Charles' reaction. Her face was filled with remorse as she continued,

"Charles, Sher looks so much identical with that woman. Every time I look at her face, all those moments of despair come alive in front of my eyes. I find it really odd. In fact, at one point in time, I even felt..."

"You mean Sheryl may be related to that woman by blood? And that is why they look identical?"

Charles interrupted his mother. He was rather dubious about the whole idea.

"Earlier, I thought so," Melissa explained. "So, after I came back to Dream Garden, I secretly investigated the woman involved with your dad before. I followed where the woman had gone. In the end, I found out that the woman has been married to another man, and they only have a son. Then I became assured that Sher has nothing to do with that woman. It is a mere coincidence that she looks like her!"

Charles let out a gasp of relief in silence. Then he nodded and commented, "So, they have nothing to do with each other, right?"

"Yes, it was my fault. I have thought too much into it. So much that I started to misbehave with Sher."

Melissa admitted her fault in front of Charles. She looked extremely remorseful as she explained, "It was all because of a mistake. I regret how I have treated Sher." She looked at Charles' face to gauge his reaction.

Melissa further implied that she would never treat Sheryl in that way ever again.

Charles settled Melissa in her bedroom and walked back to his own. He believed in what Melissa told him and hoped that the relationship between his mother and his wife would improve for the better.

When he entered the bedroom, Sheryl was lying in the bed, awake. She realized that he entered, but didn't look at him; instead, she stared blankly towards the ceiling. Charles was at a loss for words. He

didn't know how to start the discussion. After a few moments of hesitation, he finally spoke to Sheryl.

"Sher," Charles called out to turn her attention towards him.

"Charles, if you are going to say something that I don't want to hear, please hold it back. I need to get a

peaceful sleep. Tomorrow morning, I have to get up early and head for Cloud Advertising Company. I

have a very important client to meet. I have to present the first draft for the case I have been working

on lately." Sheryl interrupted him. She did not turn towards Charles even for once as she spoke.

"Sher, I am sorry," Charles said politely. Since Melissa came into Dream Garden, Sheryl had heard the

same apology from Charles so many times that she didn't even want to reply to it anymore.

She ignored Charles' apology once again and just kept her eyes closed, trying to avoid a conversation.

"Sher, I know you don't want to hear my excuse. I know you are tired of it. But I still want you to hear

me this one last time. Please, I beg you. Just give Mom another chance. She promises that she will not

meddle in our affairs anymore. Please give her another chance." Charles' voice trembled as he spoke.

Somehow he did not have enough confidence in what he had said.

He had no idea why he didn't feel confident enough when he said this to Sheryl. Clearly, he had some

doubts deep down. However, he wanted to believe in what Melissa told him and earnestly wanted

everything to be sorted between Sheryl and Melissa.

Sheryl did not reply. In fact, she did not have complete faith in his words. She knew that no matter how

much ever Charles tried to make peace between her and his mother, it was a farfetched dream. Hence,

she remained quiet.

"It's late. You should go to sleep now." Sheryl turned her back and then added, "To tell the truth, Dream Garden is our home. It doesn't matter whether we stay or leave. What really matters is what kind of life we are going to lead?"

Sheryl finally broke the silence and was willing to say something more. Charles seized this opportunity and understood what Sheryl meant by saying that. He fixed his eyes on her. The earnestness in his eyes melted Sheryl's heart. After all, how long could she be angry at him? He promised at once, "Sher, please rest assured. If Mom picks on you again, I will stand by your side and won't let her misbehave with you anymore!"

Sheryl gave him a meaningful smile. She was willing to trust him. However, she couldn't stop her doubt that Charles would still not be able to fulfill his promise. He would end up surrendering to Melissa again next time. She could feel the helplessness that Charles faced every time there was a discord between her and his mother.

"Go to sleep," said Sheryl politely. She didn't want to say anything anymore.

The next day when Sheryl came into Cloud Advertising Company, she was in a foul mood. With one look at her face, Isla understood the state of her mind. She came closer to her and asked with a lot of concern, "Sher, what's going on between you and Melissa? And about what Aron had taught you, have you got it done?"

Sheryl carried a frown on her face. She looked too rigid and unapproachable to talk. Evidently, she didn't want to talk about it. She replied maintaining the same frown on her face, "Isla, this is not the right moment for us to discuss that. We should head towards Tarsan Corporation without delay, and finish our first draft at the earliest. After that, we can sit around and chat as much as we want."

"I know it's important to handle Tarsan Corporation, but Sher, you get to understand that what has been troubling you is also as important. To tell the truth, you look bad today. I don't know what's happening between you and Melissa, but you are not supposed to let your own stuff affect your work!" In fact, even Isla couldn't put her mind at rest at all because of Sheryl. Sheryl had been so energetic and focused towards her work when she had joined back. Her positivity had filled the office environment with renewed vigor and motivation. But since Melissa stepped into Dream Garden, everything had changed. It seemed as if someone had taken the peace and happiness out of Sheryl's life.

"I got it. Rest assured. Let's plan how to demonstrate our first draft to our client and win over their trust.

It will be soon time for us to go to Tarsan Corporation. We have to hurry up and strategize how to pitch for the deal." Sheryl managed to drag Isla's attention back to what she was concerned about right now.

"Okay. After we get this done, I will pay my full attention to you. I will help you solve your family issues,"

Isla said with a smirk as if she was threatening Sheryl. However, all her attempts to make Sheryl open up fell flat on the face. Clearly, she was defeated by Sheryl's solemn and no-nonsense attitude.

"Okay. After we get this done, you can give your full attention to me. You can even move into Dream Garden and live with me," Sheryl joked, but her face betrayed her words.

"Spare me for the time being!" Isla rolled her eyes at Sheryl, with a mischievous smile on her face.

It wasn't until ten o'clock in the morning that they arrived in Tarsan Corporation. "Hello, I am Sheryl from Cloud Advertising Company. I have made an appointment with Irene."

Sheryl greeted the receptionist. She shared a cordial smile with the receptionist as their eyes met. It

was quite evident that they had met before. Sheryl was speculating whether the girl remembered her or not.

Indeed, when the young woman raised her eyes towards Sheryl, a clear beam flashed over her eyes.

She replied at once, smilingly, "Of course. Ms. Xia, Irene is waiting for you. Please come with me."

Sheryl was a little overwhelmed by the receptionist's heartiness. She nodded with a smile and followed right behind her. Sheryl took deep breathes to calm herself as she walked behind the receptionist. She closed her eyes once and opened it with a sigh, muttering a prayer.

The inner dilemma that Sheryl was going through did not evade the receptionist's eyes. She let out a laugh and explained, "Ms. Xia, I bet you are not even aware of this. You have done me a big favor. In fact, I was always looking forward to a chance in order to show my gratitude to you."

"Oh! Are you? But what is it for?" Sheryl looked bewildered as she said. Her already crowded mind struggled to process the new information, and it came out absolutely clear on her face.

"I don't know whether you still remember me. The last time when you came to Tarsan Corporation, you were received by me. At that time, I was instructed not to allow you to enter. But you forced your way, and then a series of unhappy things happened. Mr. Qiu got furious, and tried to blame all of it on me. In fact, he went to the extent of firing me!"

Hearing this, Sheryl got completely perplexed. She asked, "So, my last visit almost took you to the

verge of losing your job. Then what is it exactly that makes you be thankful to me?"

The receptionist smiled once again and tried to pacify Sheryl's growing inquisitiveness. "Let me finish, please. When Ms. Qiu fired me, it felt like the most cursed moment of my life. It was a moment of despair, and I was packing my stuff. Right at that moment, I was informed that our CEO fired Mr. Qiu. So my job was saved. Moreover, to my surprise, the CEO decided to raise my salary to comfort me. I could never thank you enough for that." There was a spark in the receptionist's eyes and a humble smile on her face as she related the whole incident to Sheryl. She further revealed to Sheryl that her life was changed for better ever since she met Sheryl.

"Oh, I got it." Sheryl smiled heartily as she finally understood why the receptionist had changed her attitude toward her so abruptly.

It took them a long walk from the front desk to the conference room. Evidently, enough time to have a hearty recapitulation of Sheryl's last visit and even a complete account of what followed after that.

Somehow, talking to the receptionist made Sheryl feel better, and a genuine smile appeared on her face. Good vibes come from absolutely unexpected quarters at the time when you are not even

expecting them. As they reached the conference room, the receptionist turned towards Sheryl once again and said, "Ms. Xia, please allow me a moment. Let me inform Irene, and she will be right here."

"Please do. Thank you," Sheryl nodded.

"Not at all. It is my duty. Please wait here." The receptionist gave Sheryl a big smile and left.

After a short span of waiting, a woman in uniform approached them. Seeing Sheryl and Isla, she greeted them, "Nice to meet you. I am Irene, assistant to the CEO. Ten minutes ago, the CEO had to leave for a meeting held at our headquarters. So I have been instructed to meet you. I hope you will not mind it."

Chapter 1107 Words From The Depths Of Her Heart

"Don't say that, Irene. We understand that your president must be very busy. It's very nice of you to come and meet us." Sheryl would not pay attention to such things. After all, a collaboration between Cloud Advertising Company and Tarsan Corporation has already improved their status.

Truth be told, the fact that Tarsan Corporation sent the CEO's assistant to meet with them was already proof that Cloud Advertising Company was being respected and taken seriously by the former.

"Please have a seat, Ms. Xia." Irene, the assistant, smiled and gestured toward two velvet chairs. She then gracefully raised a hand to call the attention of the man standing just outside the door. "Zachary,"

she said with a sweet, warm voice, "kindly pour out some tea for Ms. Xia and this beautiful lady."

"Okay, Irene," said Zachary before quietly walking away.

"Irene, please take a look. This is my first draft of the plan." Sheryl went straight to the point, not a second after politely sitting down.

Irene respectfully held out her hands to receive the plan book. She studied it carefully. Sheryl, who sat across from Irene, looked intently at the assistant. She could feel her own heart beating. She needed this to work.

Moments later, Zachary came in and served the guests some tea. When he was finished, he left courteously, without a word.

It took Irene a whole hour to go through the entire draft. For Sheryl, every second in that quiet room felt like an eternity. She realized just how serious Irene was and felt reassured that Tarsan Corporation was indeed the right entity to work with.

"Well, I'm impressed," a voice finally cut through the silence. "This is a great plan." Irene's approving taps landed on the cover of the now-closed plan book.

"Really?" Isla could not help but ask.

"Of course! I think it's excellent. Ms. Xia deserves the honor of being named the best planner in Y City.

Tarsan Corporation is very lucky to be collaborating with Cloud Advertising Company," Irene smiled, still full of praise.

"Irene, are there any parts that need improvement? This is just the first draft. I can..." Sheryl felt waves of happiness and excitement come over her.

"In my opinion, the plan is perfect as it is. I see nothing that needs to be modified. To tell you the truth, Ms. Xia, I am just in awe of your talent. You don't have to worry about making arrangements. I will relay the final review to our president at once. If she approves it, you can proceed with this plan on the day of the reception."

"That's great! Thank you so much, Irene." It seemed things were going smoothly at work. Sheryl beamed with joy.

"Oh, please! I should be thanking you, Ms. Xia. You have made such a wonderful plan for Tarsan Corporation. Our president will be very satisfied." Irene's polite remark played over and over in Sheryl's head.

It was noon when Sheryl and Isla left Tarsan Corporation. Before leaving, they had invited Irene to have lunch with them. She politely declined because of her busy schedule.

"It's a pity Irene couldn't come. Come on, Isla. Let's stuff ourselves with the most delicious food we can find!" Sheryl was in a really good mood. At that moment, she forgot all the troubles in her family.

"Sher, I feel bad about eating out with you today." Isla smiled as she spoke. She was in a good mood as well.

"And why do you feel bad?" Sheryl was smiling, too.

"You know, this big impressive plan was all yours! Irene admired your work so, so much. You are a great contributor to Cloud Advertising Company. Now you say you're going to pay the bill! I don't deserve this reward. I didn't even do anything. Of course, I feel bad. Hmm...I wonder what I'm going to order."

"Haha! If you really feel that way, you can pay the bill. We'll get to eat together either way." Sheryl laughed heartily.

"No, forget it. You're the boss of Cloud Advertising Company, and I know you big shots love paying for

other people. I don't want to say no and take that away from you." Isla promptly took back what she said.

"Well, since I'm in a good mood today, that's fine. I'll pay the bill." Sheryl flashed Isla a toothy grin.

"Let's have Japanese food! I haven't had it in a long time." With that, a decision was made.

"Okay, you're the boss." There was a tone of adoration in Sheryl's response.

At 2 o'clock that afternoon, the presidents of Tarsan Corporation and Shining Company were scheduled to meet.

This time, they were meeting at the Shining Company headquarters.

The collaboration between Shining Company and Tarsan Corporation had attracted much attention.

After all, Shining Company was a leading authority in Y City and was one of the first and brightest in its field; Tarsan Corporation had only recently shifted its focus on developing Y City, but its strength was in its vast knowledge base and support from other countries.

A close relationship was bound to improve the reputation of both companies.

"Mr. Lu," a shaky voice said, "the president of Tarsan Corporation has arrived." David stood at the door of Charles' office, looking awkward.

"Oh really? Wait for me in the meeting room? I'll be right there." Charles was not paying full attention.

He was preoccupied with the document in his hands and could not be bothered to look up at David's worried expression.

"But..." There was mild panic in David's voice. He felt it necessary to inform Charles of something, but he seemed unsure how to.

"What's wrong?" Now Charles could not help looking at David. After all, this man had been around for years and had never sounded so uncertain, until now.

"The...president of Tarsan Corporation. Do you know who it is, Mr. Lu?" When David saw Rachel coming just moments earlier, he put two and two together and realized that she was the president of Tarsan Corporation. They hadn't seen her for years.

"Who?" Charles had never met the head of Tarsan Corporation. Naturally, he did not know who it was.

"It's Rachel Bai." David looked dead serious.

Charles froze. He could not believe what he just heard.

'Has she returned?' he thought.

"Isn't she abroad?" Charles realized the redundancy of his question. After all, Tarsan Corporation was established and developed abroad.

"So she went to work for Tarsan Corporation!" Charles seemed to understand why the said entity wanted to collaborate with Shining Company.

"So Mr. Lu, shall I tell her you won't be able to make the meeting?" David knew that Charles certainly did not want to see Rachel.

Charles was about to agree when he spotted Rachel walking from the meeting room to the president's office. She smiled at him. "I haven't seen you in years. Are you still this heartless? We're old friends.

You should at least show some courtesy, shouldn't you?"

"You may take your leave now." Charles politely dismissed David.

The secretary nodded and left the president's office with obvious unease.

"Charles, how long has it been since we last saw each other? It's been three years. Do you still hate me this much?" Rachel closed the door after David left.

Charles did not want to talk to her.

"Well, since Mr. Lu doesn't want to talk to me about personal matters, can we talk about business

instead?" Rachel was frustrated, but she did not intend on giving up so easily. She held out her right hand with a professional smile. "Mr. Lu, maybe we can start over and get to know each other again. I'm Rachel Bai, president of Tarsan Corporation."

"What do you want?" Charles regarded her with a cold stare. He did not shake her hand.

"Mr. Lu, do you think I returned to Y City because of you?" Rachel sneered. "Or do you think that after all these years, I would still be missing you? Don't be so full of yourself..."

Charles, to tell you the truth, I liked you in the past. But what happened after that caused me to get tired of your love. I heard you are now with Autumn—no, Sheryl—and that you have two children.

But I already have what I want. Now I'm the president of Tarsan Corporation. To be frank, now that I have everything that I want, why would I have to chase you? Am I that stupid? Knowing that there's a person out there who already has your heart, it would be utterly shameless of me to still beg for your love. Am I not allowed to be happy?"

Charles believed that Rachel was saying these things from the depths of her heart. "So," he said,

"you've been abroad for three years, and I think that you have changed."

Chapter 1108 A Friend In Prison(Part One)

"To be honest, back when I got married to Edward, I lived a hard life. At that time I hated you so much.

If you were the person I married, I wouldn't be what I am today!"

Rachel said word for word.

"But later on, I began to feel grateful to Edward, because I knew that if it weren't for him, I couldn't have gone abroad at all, much less marry the ex-president of Tarsan Corporation. Although he was old enough to be my grandfather, he was good-tempered and had a thorough view of everything, having gone through all kinds of things in his life. He didn't mind my past at all. Maybe foreigners are just always more open-minded than people here.

After we got married, he was very kind to me. It was a pity that he passed away shortly after. But in his will, he made a substantial bequest to me."

After hearing all these details about her life, Charles didn't respond. After all, birds of different feathers don't flock together. Maybe this kind of life was one that Rachel liked. If it were Sheryl, though, she wouldn't have made such a choice.

"So, Mr. Lu, I choose Shining Company as my partner because I'm most familiar with it compared to any other company. I believe that if we join hands, we'll earn more money, and create more

opportunities." With that statement, Rachel stared at Charles, maintaining a confident tone.

"Now that you've confessed your intentions to me, I also need to be honest with you. Shining Company won't cooperate with you.

To begin with, Chris' father won't agree to cooperate with you. After all, he's gotten a share in Shining Company."

Refusing her offer, Charles was direct.

No matter what Rachel wanted to do with the cooperation, he didn't want to partner with Tarsan Corporation. Knowing that Sheryl has already been in a foul mood lately, he didn't want to cause any other misunderstandings.

"Mr. Lu, are you really deciding to give up this excellent opportunity because of some trivial matters?

This isn't your style of work, is it? In a business circle, why do you need to care about those

unimportant things?" Not giving up, Rachel continued persuading Charles. By no means did she want

to be refused by Charles like that. To cooperate with Shining Company was the best way she could

approach him.

"You think those things are unimportant?"

Charles' expression hardened as he asked her.

"Yes, because all those things are in the past. It's all history now. No one can confidently say that he made no mistakes in his life. I don't believe you would deny my present and my future because of my past, would you? Moreover, if you choose to deny my future, you also deny the future of Shining Company and Tarsan Corporation."

Rachel's voice remained calm as she explained.

"Mr. Lu, you should know that if we doesn't cooperate with you, we will cooperate with your competitor.

Our cooperation would be a win-win opportunity. Are you really willing to let Shining Company be rivaled by its competitor due to personal vendettas?"

Her frankness was a surprise.

The reasoning had Charles pause for a moment. Even he couldn't deny that her words were all true. If

Tarsan Corporation's partner wasn't Shining Company, it would partner with their competitor to work against Shining Company together. In the long term, it wouldn't be in Shining Company's interest to

decline the offer.

"Mr. Lu, I promise you, there are only common business exchanges between us. I won't disturb your private life at all. Furthermore, I won't do anything that may arouse your wife's misunderstanding."

Realizing what Charles was worried about, Rachel thought to offer the conditions to eliminate his concerns.

Putting on a soft smile, he replied, "Ms. Bai, don't pull my leg. I know what you said just now is undoubtedly right. If Shining Company doesn't cooperate with Tarsan Corporation, it'll be like sending a lucrative business away to others so I have no reason to refuse your offer. Let's just settle the deal."

What he said was merely to gain Rachel's trust so that Rachel wouldn't cooperate with his competitors right away. With that, he could use the time to search for a partner much stronger than Tarsan Corporation. Only by doing so, he didn't need to worry about Tarsan Corporation working with Shining Company's competitor.

"Mr. Lu, I'm glad we can come to an agreement," replied Rachel with a big smile escaping her lips.

Although it was a torturous process persuading Charles, all the things progressed following her plan in the end. As long as there weren't any big changes, her dream would be realized soon.

Though Rachel wanted to eat or have some coffee with Charles now, she tried to refrain from such an idea. "Well, if there's nothing else, I have to go. Later on, I'll send my assistant to bring the contract to you, and then you'll just have to sign it."

"That's alright. Take care on your way back."

Avoiding the platitude of politeness, Charles bid her farewell directly.

Though this frustrated Rachel, she made sure to not show any emotion. "Okay, bye."

On his way back home, Charles thought it over carefully and decided not to tell Sheryl about the whole situation. Otherwise, she would overthink it.

"Sher, I'm back."

The first thing he did when he stepped inside the house was to look for Sheryl.

"Why are you back so early today?" It was Melissa who answered, not Sheryl.

"I've finished my work earlier than before," replied Charles briefly as he nodded and took his coat off.

"Mom, where is Sher? Hasn't she come back yet?"

"I don't think so. I haven't seen her."

Her voice was faint as she said it.

"Oh, that's alright, Mom. I have to go upstairs."

Wanting to leave, Charles was already turning around.

"Charles..."

Before he could walk away, Melissa called him from behind.

"What's up, Mom?"

He stopped to listen to what his mother had to say.

"Charles, can I talk to you? I want to talk to you about Sher before she comes back."

With her request, Melissa wore a kind expression.

Granting his mother's request, he sat beside Melissa. "What's the matter?"

"Charles, I know that since I came to live in Dream Garden, I've been a disturbance to your life. I've thought about it the whole day, and I believe I've found the reason. The embarrassing situation now is just because I keep staying at home, becoming idler every day." The way she said it was like she saw through something.

"Mom, stop saying that. We don't have an intention to blame you—"

It was difficult to see his mother feel guilty.

"You just listen to me. What I mean is that I've become like this because I don't have any friends with me. It's time for me to make some friends and enjoy my time with them. By doing so, I wouldn't need to stay at home all the time, and we can enjoy life together with less friction between us."

She cut Charles off and expressed her thoughts.

Melissa's words enlightened him. There was no doubt that what she said was right, so he simply nodded his head and said, "It's definitely time for you to get out there and spend time with other people.

After all, if you continue staying alone like this, you might develop some serious psychological illness.

You can still contact your old friends now?"

How could she still have any friends in the area if she stayed in prison for 15 years? Melissa shook her head and answered honestly, "I don't have any friends here, but I do have a friend I met in prison.

She's a very kind and sensible girl."

Chapter 1109 A Friend In Prison(Part Two)

"Oh? So you have a friend in prison. That sounds good!" echoed Charles. 'When Mom was in jail, she had someone to talk to. Now that she's out, she's got no one to confide in except me, ' he thought,

feeling bad for Melissa.

"Oh yes, she's a nice child about your age. She was good to me and helped me a lot. Unfortunately, she's still in jail. If she could get out right now, I would be less lonely."

The tone Melissa used to narrate the story was one that sounded like she didn't believe it was something that could happen in her lifetime.

Her voice carried a hint of sadness. It felt like she would never find another friend as good as the one she mentioned.

"Were you in a cell?" he asked. He could sense that Melissa cared about that friend very much.

"Yes, we were roommates. At that time, she had just gotten arrested for a couple of days. She would always tell me what was happening outside. She always comforted me, too."

Her reply was in a faint voice.

After some moments, she went on, "I'm really grateful to Leila Zhang for treating me so well. She's a good girl actually, but made some mistakes..."

"Wait, Mom, what's her name?" he interrupt her abruptly.

"She's Leila Zhang," answered Melissa calmly. Of course, it was completely intentional to introduce her to Charles.

Bringing up her name was just a start. She was convinced that she could bring Leila into her son's life again.

"Leila Zhang?" he repeated in disbelief. 'What a coincidence!' he thought.

"Yes, it's her. Do you know her?"

Melissa put on a curious facade.

"Um...no. I just heard about her."

Charles had no intention of telling his mother what had happened between him and Leila.

With a gleam shining in her eyes, she stared at her son and gushed, "Is that so, Charles? Then you must know that she really is a good girl. Can you help me get her out? When I was in prison, she was truly kind to me. I'm dying to talk to her and bring her to nice places where we can walk around."

Upon hearing this, Charles furrowed his brows. His grudge against Leila hadn't completely faded, but as he saw an expectant look in Melissa's eyes, he couldn't bear the thought of refusing her request.

"Charles, please?"

Melissa pleaded, focusing her eager gaze on his eyes.

"Do you really like Leila Zhang, Mom?"

Charles couldn't hide his scowl.

'If Mom truly is fond of Leila, I can get her out. If she can keep Mom company, they could help each other be better people. That will be a good thing, ' he rationalized within himself.

"Yes," she nodded. There was a determination in both her voice and expression.

"I see. I will take care of this," he agreed, smiling slightly. "Is there anything else you need? If not, I'll go upstairs."

"That's all. Are you sure you can help me get Leila out?" she asked to confirm. Her mood heightened tremendously. 'Sheryl's plan to move out with Charles almost worked, but things will be different now.

Once Leila gets released, I'll have her support, ' she thought, snickering inwardly.

"I will try my best." He still detested Leila, so he didn't give her a direct reply.

Soon after Charles headed upstairs, Sheryl arrived, bringing Clark and Shirley with her.

The Lu family had dinner together as usual. As they finished eating, Sheryl and Charles escorted their

kids upstairs. While Charles headed straight to their bedroom, Sheryl gave the children a bath. After the kids were put to sleep, Sheryl returned to the room. To avoid worrying her, Charles didn't mention the conversation he and Melissa shared.

"How did it go with your recent project, Sher?" he asked casually. Recently, he had been so caught up in his job in addition to all the issues happening at home. It suddenly dawned on him that he hadn't been asking her about her work.

"It's almost done. They're satisfied with my plan so it's going well, so far." Her reply was rather plain. Since she didn't reveal the name of the company, Charles didn't expect that her client would be the famous Tarsan Corporation.

"That's good to hear," he observed with a nod. 'Looks like she didn't face any problems at work, then,' he thought.

The fact that things were going well with Sheryl set his mind at rest.

Since Melissa was discharged from the hospital, she had been much quieter. At least, that was how Sheryl felt. The former didn't mess with her or even appear before her.

With a deep breath of relief, Sheryl naively believed that Melissa had changed her mind about turning

against her. Even though she wasn't that fond of Charles' mother, she was willing to make peace with her as long as the latter didn't start a fight.

After all, she still wanted to have a happy, harmonious family.

But things didn't go as Sheryl expected. If she had realized that it was merely the calm before the storm, she would never have made a compromise with Charles, not to mention Melissa.

If only she had realized it earlier, she wouldn't have let it go so easily.

However, she didn't figure out about the hidden crisis.

Since she fixed the plan for Tarsan Corporation, Sheryl went to the office and got off work on time every day. As time went by, Tarsan Corporation informed her that the wine party was scheduled to be held this Saturday.

"Isla, tell the guys that Tarsan Corporation is going to hold a party this Saturday. Ask them to go and decorate the site," said Sheryl, bubbly and in a good mood.

"Got it!"

Isla nodded at her obediently.

"Has Charles' mother been giving you a hard time recently?"

A couple of days had passed since Melissa returned home from the hospital. Isla wanted to know whether Charles' mother made another move.

"No, she hasn't. Everything's been good, lately. Don't worry about me, Isla," replied Sheryl with a faint smile.

"I'm glad to hear that."

Once she heard this, Isla's worries disappeared.

"Oh, one more thing. I got a call from Tarsan Corporation.

They said that some of their guests can't attend the party, so they asked for all of our staff to attend,"

Isla added as she led the topic to work right away.

"Tarsan Corporation is holding such a grand party. They just transferred their business to Y City, so many of the local companies might not have heard about them yet. It's normal that some might refuse the invitations," Sheryl explained.

When the representatives from Tarsan Corporation first came to Cloud Advertising, they expressed their conditions to Sheryl. A grand, creative party was in order since it would be their very first event in

Y City.

Chapter 1110 Average Aesthetic Standard

"Yes, that's why I agreed to this. It will be a good opportunity for us as well. All our staff are going to be there. We will have the chance to meet some of the most successful businessmen in Y City. It'll be good for Cloud Advertising Company." Isla had the same opinion as Sheryl.

Saturday came quickly. Charles put on a classic suit. As he looked at himself in the mirror, a smile lingered on his lips. He was pretty satisfied with his look for the evening.

"What are you up to? Are you going on a blind date?" Sheryl questioned, with a frown on her face.

She was busy preparing some things when she stole a glance at Charles. As the activity planner, she was naturally supposed to attend the Tarsan Corporation wine party.

"Don't judge me. Aren't you dressed up too? It's just a planning for a wine party of some small company. Is it really necessary to dress up like this? Aren't you worried of being targeted by other men?" Charles retorted.

"Whoever said I was going for some small company's wine party? It's a major corporation, which has recently moved its core business to Y City. Powerful and successful people are attending the party,"

said Sheryl with her nose in the air. All of a sudden, something hit her.

"Wait...Which company's party are you going to?" "Don't tell me you are talking about Tarsan Corporation!"

Sheryl and Charles both blurted out simultaneously. They looked at each other, dumbstruck.

"Yes, I am talking about Tarsan Corporation!" Sheryl nodded, with a mixed expression of shock and surprise.

"So, you have been planning the party for Tarsan Corporation?" Charles asked. He had a bad feeling.

But on second thought, he might be overthinking things.

After his recent contact with Rachel, Charles felt that she had no lingering feelings for him. She was no longer the old Rachel, the one who always stuck to him.

Now, she was the CEO of Tarsan Corporation.

As the president of such an important corporation, she would not be foolish enough to take revenge on Sheryl by sacrificing the image of her company.

"Yes. Didn't I mention it before?" Sheryl asked. Going back to her previous conversation with Charles, she realized that she had not mentioned Tarsan Corporation when she had talked about it with him.

"Charles, what's wrong? Charles?" Charles was lost in his thoughts and had not been listening to her.

He shook off the bad feeling and said, "Oh, it's nothing. I was just wondering...When we arrive at the party, would you like to introduce yourself as the head of Cloud Advertising Company or my wife?

Which would be better?" He decided not to tell Sheryl about Rachel.

He knew how much time and energy Sheryl had spent on this. He did not want her to have any doubts about the efforts she had put in.

'At the party, Sheryl will surely find out that Rachel is the president of Tarsan Corporation. Rachel would definitely stay calm since it will be a party with so many eyes on her. And Sheryl of course, wouldn't be silly enough to ruin her reputation either, ' Charles thought.

"It's hard to decide. There will be people who know us at the party. We might as well go as husband and wife." Sheryl didn't think it was a big deal.

"Daddy, Mommy, where are you going?" Clark ran towards them.

Sheryl embraced the little boy as he approached her. "Daddy and Mommy are going to a very important party, Clark. Nancy will take care of you. We'll be back soon. To make up for today, how

about we take you to the amusement park tomorrow?" Sheryl said in a fond, motherly tone.

"But Mommy, I forgot to tell you. There is a parent-child activity in our kindergarten tomorrow. I'm afraid

we cannot go to the amusement park," Clark said, with a small pout.

"That's all right. Daddy and Mommy are free tomorrow. we'll go to the parent-child activity. Isn't that much better than going to the amusement park?" Charles laughed. He was very fond of going to these little activities with Sheryl.

He had the most beautiful, the most amazing woman beside him, and he couldn't have been happier.

"Have fun at your party, Daddy, Mommy. Don't forget about the kindergarten activity tomorrow," Clark reminded once again, showing them his pearly whites. He was in a good mood for some reason.

"We won't forget," they answered in one voice.

On their way to the party, Sheryl continued the discussion which they had left hanging earlier. "It was really silly of me! I should have thought of this before. Tarsan Corporation was certain to invite Shining Company to their first party in the city. How could I have never expected that you and I would be going together?" She shook her head at her own mindlessness.

"Yeah, that was indeed a silly thing," Charles teased her, but he was thinking about Rachel. He hoped that she wasn't planning to play any tricks this time.

"Hey! It wasn't that silly! It's just that I never think of it that way," Sheryl retorted, with a scoff.

Charles chuckled at her childish words.

After a pause, she turned towards him and said, "And it's not just me. You did not stop to think that the company I was talking about could have been Tarsan Corporation either."

He looked sideways at her and smiled slightly without saying a word. He couldn't tell her how much he had wished that Cloud Advertising Company would have nothing to do with Tarsan Corporation.

Tarsan Corporation's party was indeed a solemn affair. The bouncers standing outside the hotel were in their formal black suits. They looked just perfect and they greeted the guests, "Good evening. May I see your invitation, please?"

The men were handsome and professional.

Since Sheryl was the planner, the men were also arranged by her. To be more specific, Sheryl came up with the plans, and Isla found the men for the job.

Looking at the two professional young men, Charles could not help but praise his wife. "So, it's true that

Cloud Advertising Company has good aesthetic standards."

"Are you saying that Cloud Advertising Company has an eye for beauty, or that I am good at it?" Sheryl asked slyly. Sheryl could sense the strong aura of jealousy coming from Charles.

"Well, you were the one who hired these handsome boys here, right?" Charles asked with a raised brow.

At first glance, they looked well-built and good looking. But when he looked closer, he realized that there were nowhere as handsome as he was. A smile emerged on the side of his lips. "On second thought, they are just average looking bouncers," he laughed.

"Mr. Lu, are you looking down on my aesthetic taste?" Sheryl asked with a smirk. As they were talking, Isla came out from the reception hall. The bouncers bowed to her respectfully.

"Ah! So, it was you who hired the two men here!" Charles exclaimed when he saw Isla. He heaved a long sigh.

"Yes, it was me. What's the matter? Did you think that your Sheryl hired them?" Isla teased. "Mr. Lu, sorry to burst your jealousy bubble, but Sheryl doesn't have eyes for anyone else but you. So I take

care of this kind of stuff."

Sheryl laughed. "Stop making fun of me," she said, embarrassed by Isla's words.