

Wedded Bride 1151

Chapter 1151 A Difficult Situation

"Don't be silly, Sher. There's no need for us to be so formal with each other!" Isla shook her head fondly and smiled happily at Sheryl. Then her face grew serious, and she asked Sheryl, "Thank God you're here. The company is in a really bad state at the moment. I really don't know what to do. What do you plan to do?"

"First things first, how many staff do we still have?" Sheryl asked. She knew the situation wasn't good, but she wanted to know how bad it was. That was why she had come to Cloud Advertising Company.

"We've lost about two thirds of our staff. The ones who are still here seem unreliable too. I don't think they are planning to stay; they just haven't found a better place yet. Either for that reason or for another, they are still undecided over what they want to do. I don't think any of them is still here because they sincerely believe in us." Isla's face turned even gloomier, for part of her had been hoping that Sheryl could miraculously come up with a solution to settle their problem. This felt like a nightmare. In fact, not even in her worst nightmares could she imagine the company being reduced to such a bad situation.

"Okay Isla, here's what I need you to do. Send out a notice and get everyone to gather in the meeting

room in 5 minutes. I have an announcement to make," Sheryl said firmly.

"Okay." Isla agreed, without thinking any further. She didn't doubt Sheryl's judgement at all, so she didn't ask why. She just nodded and went to notify their staff. While Sheryl was gone, she had been running the company and dealing with the problems all by herself. She felt as if she might collapse in exhaustion at any time, and now she was glad to hand over the reins to Sheryl.

She was so grateful that Sheryl was here to have her back. Even though her own issues hadn't been settled, but at least she could help take some of the pressure off Isla's back, giving her much needed relief.

Truth be told, Isla knew perfectly well that there was nothing that Sheryl could do to reverse the problem. Once the word spread, it was impossible to undo the gossip. If she wanted to be selfish, she could easily stay away and there was nothing Isla could do to force her to help. All they could do was to wait and let the gossip be replaced by other hot news and eventually die by itself.

After all, time heals all wounds, and that included wounded reputations as well, not just emotional but also physical wounds.

Five minutes later, the few remaining staff were gathered in the meeting room.

"I believe everyone knows about the recent events, so I'm not going to go into further details about it.

Nor am I gathering all of you here so I can tell my side of the story and try to make all of you believe

me. I don't expect any of you to trust me blindly. What I do want to tell you though, is that I'm not

leaving this company. So if any of you think that staying at this company and still being associated with

me will be harmful to your careers or personal life, then by all means, please hand in your resignation

letter as soon as possible. I'm not forcing anyone to stay." Sheryl chose her words carefully and spoke

in a clear, crisp tone. When she was done, she looked at everyone in the room, checking if her

message had been heard.

She wasn't surprised to find everyone avoiding her eyes. Some played with their pens, twirling and

clicking them. Others simply looked down at their hands or at the table, showing no indication at all that

they were listening to her. It was a huge difference from when she used to have meetings with her staff,

when all of them used to look at her attentively and took down notes eagerly.

Nobody wanted to acknowledge her. In fact, the way they were acting was as if she wasn't even

standing in the room. But Sheryl knew that they had heard her words loud and clear.

"Let me repeat myself. If you have lost faith in me and the company, feel free to step forward. I will not judge or penalize you. I will even help to make the process easier and inform the financial department to pay your salary immediately. All you have to do is be brave enough to reveal your stands."

Everyone was silent. Not a single person would tell her whether they were planning to stay or to leave.

None of them wanted to be the first to make a stand.

Sheryl scanned the room again, observing the body languages of the staff. When the news first broke, some of the people in the room had even comforted her and told her that everything would be okay.

Now, she had obviously lost their support. To make things worse, they wouldn't even look at her!

Sheryl couldn't help feeling disappointed. She thought she knew her staff well and even considered some of them as her friends, but in that instant, she saw their true colors. She didn't blame them though as it was only human nature. She knew reality was always cruel.

"Very well. Since no one has said anything, then I take your silence as your decision to stay!" Sheryl said loudly and provocatively. She knew what all of them were thinking and wanted to push them to speak their minds. They all wanted to leave, yet none of them wanted to be the first person to speak

up. Even now, they were scared of what other people would think. She was done with all these pretence. Didn't they understand that the more straightforward they were, the more she would respect them?

She paused again and looked closely at everyone in the room. She noted that they got a bit more restless.

Finally, some of them looked up at her. Their faces were fretful and almost panicked, and she knew she was close to breaking them. Still, they remained quiet. They didn't know where Sheryl was going with this. They feared that it was all just a test and Sheryl actually had a plan to save them and the company. If they walked out now, it would be such a waste.

"I must say, I'm touched by your loyalty. Even in these darkest times, you still have faith in Cloud Advertising Company. With all of you by my side, I am certain the sun will shine on us again. To show my gratitude to those of you who are willing to stay, I have an exclusive offer for you. I will prepare a lifelong contract for you. Once you sign it, you will automatically receive more company benefits."

Sheryl allowed her words to sink in. She was offering them a good deal by offering them better benefits by signing the contract. But at the same time, if they signed the contract, it meant they were committing

the rest of their lives to Cloud Advertising Company.

If she had made the offer a few months ago, before the scandal had broken out, they would sign the contract in a heartbeat. No doubts, no second thoughts. But with the current situation that Cloud Advertising Company was in, it was a very risky decision to make. No one in his right mind would decide to stay in such uncertain conditions, especially those who had families to think of.

And then all at once, everyone started talking. They couldn't hold their silence anymore. It was clear that Sheryl didn't have any kind of plan to save the company. No boss would ever offer a lifelong contract with increased benefits. If Sheryl was giving them such an insane agreement, it meant that she was truly desperate and worse still, didn't have any other options.

Now that it was all clear, they couldn't keep their cool anymore. They had to make themselves heard.

"I'm sorry, Ms. Xia. Could we have two or three days to think about this?" Finally someone stood up.

"That's right, boss. We can't make such a big decision on short notice like this. We have families and other commitments. Some of us are the sole breadwinners for our families. This is our lives we're talking about here. Please, give us some time to think about it.

"

Upon finally hearing their thoughts, Sheryl instantly felt more relieved. Her lips curled up into a tiny smirk. Although what they were saying seemed perfectly reasonable on the surface, she knew that they were all lying through their teeth and twisting words so they didn't look bad. Of course, she didn't bother trying to call their bluff. She just smiled patiently and pretended to nod understandingly. Deep down, she was satisfied that her agenda had been fulfilled. She wanted to get rid of all those who had lost faith in the company.

That was Sheryl's style of doing things. She would rather bear the burden alone than to work with a dissident group of people who could possibly turn against her.

"Ms. Xia, I have actually been planning to tell you this for a while. My wife's health hasn't been good recently, and there is no one to take care of my kids. I have to quit my job for a while so I can take care of my family. When my wife gets better, I might consider rejoining the company."

"Ms. Xia, I would like to tender my resignation too. My family has found me a job in the government sector, and I have to report for duty next Monday..."

"Ms. Xia, I would like to resign too..."

One by one, the remaining staff tendered their resignations. The excuses they made sounded so far-fetched, and some didn't even make sense. Sheryl wasn't upset, however. She was actually happy to see these fake people leaving. With a fake smile plastered on her face, Sheryl announced cheerily,

"For those of you who want to leave, please proceed to the HR department. Once you have completed all exit procedures, you are free to go.

Well, that's all for this meeting. There isn't much work left to do in this company. I was planning to retrench some staff anyway. Making your decision to leave is not just for your own good, but for the company's good as well. Be sure to decide wisely!"

Shortly after Sheryl finished her words, all the people just walked out of the meeting room with their tongues wagging.

Sheryl couldn't hear what they were talking about, and she didn't want to know either. She just watched them leaving the room, feeling nothing but indifference.

"Sher, why did you let all of them go? Now there's only two of us left! What kind of company only has two staff? Can we even be called a company with only two people?" Isla heaved a deep sigh. She

finally released all the stress she had been feeling throughout the meeting. Now that everyone was gone, she couldn't help questioning Sheryl.

"Why don't you tell Charles what's going on? I'm sure if he knows the state our company is in, he can do something to help!" Isla couldn't bear to watch Cloud Advertising Company collapse like this. As she and Sheryl had put in years of time and effort, this couldn't be the end! Was their hard work all for nothing?

"I'm not going to ask for his help every time I face difficulties. Even without our staff, we still have each other. Isn't that how we started this company? We did it once, we can definitely do it again. What do you say? Will you stand with me and save this company?" Sheryl didn't believe that this was the end of the company. In fact, she saw the departure of their staff as a blessing. She could rebuild the company with sincere, hard-working people. Although the company's reputation wasn't very good at the moment, she was confident that their skills and charisma would help them recruit more staff and collaborate with other companies. She was looking forward to the challenge of rising again with fresh blood, with Isla by her side.

"Yes, we're still here, but..." Isla opened her mouth and wanted to say something, but she failed.

The staff in the financial and HR departments wanted to leave too, but luckily they were more conscientious than the other staff. They were considerate enough to stay through the process of helping the other staff complete the exit procedures.

Chapter 1152 Breaking News

Looking around, Sheryl immediately felt like she was on a deserted island, and she happened to be the ruler of it.

Although she had the whole island all by herself, she felt like sooner or later, she would starve to death, because there was nothing to eat.

Sheryl heaved a deep sigh, and in a determined but still reluctant voice, she said, "This is not a big deal. We can always start over."

Then again, even with that optimism, she wasn't in a better situation than a king of an uninhabited island. All of her employees had quit, except Isla.

Meanwhile, Isla didn't know how to comfort Sheryl. This was, in fact, a devastating situation. As she was scrolling on her phone, a piece of news suddenly caught her attention. "Wait, Sher! Look at this!" she screamed in surprise, making Sheryl's heart skip a beat. Sheryl leaned over.

A high, modulated voice could be heard from the video as the host announced, "Breaking news! We all know about Sheryl Xia cheating on her husband, the CEO of Shining Company. But our journalists have gathered another revelation.

No need for more details. Roll video!"

Immediately, the security videos that Charles had copied started playing on the screen. Sheryl and Isla watched as Duncan and the two kids kidnapped appeared on the video. The kidnapper then got his phone to dial Sheryl and called her. His voice was clearly heard in the security footage. He threatened Sheryl to admit that she had an affair, and that she was the woman in the naked photos.

Following the security footage were the evidences that Charles had intended to show at the press conference.

The proof stated that those naked pictures had been processed, and the security videos had clear images and sound, enough to disapprove what had been previously assumed.

At this point, anyone who saw the news would understand that Sheryl had been, indeed, framed.

Her eyes still glued on the screen as the host summarized and concluded the problem, Isla beamed

and exclaimed, "Look, Sher! It's about you! Everyone will know that you are innocent, and your problems now are resolved." With happy tears built up in her eyes, Isla then turned to Sheryl with a smile.

"Let me have a look," Sheryl replied. Instead of a smile on her face, a confused expression plastered on it as she took the phone from Isla. She never thought that Charles would be able to find those security videos overnight. Moreover, she didn't expect that he would contact all the television networks to release them and prove her innocence in such a short time.

Isla interrupted her train of thought when she spoke again and suggested that she look at the comments below the video post. Previously, when the news had come about Sheryl's cheating, there were a lot of negative and hurtful comments below the reports, so she could never dare read them.

However, things were a lot different now that the truth had been exposed to the public.

The comments section had been flooded as new comments popped up every second. Sheryl and Isla read the top comments and the first said, "Turns out that Mrs. Lu has been set up! Oh my God!"

While the second comment read, "Wow. I can't believe that Mrs. Lu's children had been abducted, and she had been forced to admit that she had an affair. I didn't know that these plots that I only watched in

dramas could also happen in real life. I have to admit, though, that she is a brave woman and a great mother at that!"

A netizen replied on that comment and read, "Oh, I definitely agree with you. She admitted something that she didn't do, most possibly knowing that would place her reputation out of line just for the sake of her children. Indeed, she is a great mother!"

Another had replied to that very comment and read, "I think that she is not only a good mother, but she is also a good wife, because, otherwise, Mr. Lu would not have trusted her and tried to prove her innocence."

The comments about her went on and on, and all the reviews were in Sheryl's favor.

Sheryl was about to stop reading them when a comment caught her eye. It read, "But, who is behind all of this?"

Sheryl clicked on the reply to that comment, which said, "It must be Duncan Qiu. I have some reliable source. He was one of the managers of Tarsan Corporation, and from what I had heard, he had some grudge against Mrs. Lu, because of some business problems."

There was a reply after that. "We all know that Duncan Qiu was fired from Tarsan Corporation. He must be a bad guy or had done something wrong, or else, he wouldn't have gotten fired."

"At least, he got arrested. That's good news!"

Sheryl read on but was surprised by Isla's squeal. "Mr. Lu did it, Sher! From now on, no one will wrongly judge you!" Isla hugged Sheryl tightly for a short while and smiled at her. She really did feel happy for her best friend.

Sheryl gave Isla a weak smile and then continued to stare at the comments calmly. After all that had happened to her recently, she learned to stop caring about what other people thought of her.

Not long after, Sheryl's phone started ringing. She was overwhelmed by the number of calls she was receiving from her previous clients. They all apologized to her and proposed to place big orders as a form of reconciliation.

After all, the CEO of Cloud Advertising Company was Sheryl, the wife of Charles. Since Sheryl turned out to be innocent, it meant that she and Charles still had a good relationship, and they didn't want to stop their cooperation with the company.

They were determined to cooperate, because they were all afraid that Charles might take revenge on

them once he learned what they had done to Sheryl.

Frowning, Isla realized immediately the intentions of those clients and grabbed Sheryl's phone, dropping it on the sofa. With folded arms, she scolded, "Why are you still taking their calls? Let me remind you that they chose to stop working with us and left us when we were in trouble. Now that you were proven to be innocent, all they want now is to butter you up, because they won't dare to displease Charles."

Sheryl bit her lower lip and thought about this situation candidly. After a short while, she replied, "They stopped cooperating, because I am Charles' wife and they thought I cheated on him. They didn't want to get themselves into trouble."

Isla rolled her eyes and heaved a deep sigh. "Whatever. Just ignore them still. The truth is out, and I am certain that we will get new clients soon," Isla said with a decisive and determined tone. As a matter of fact, Isla couldn't control her anger as soon as she remembered what their former clients had done to them, and she was determined not to work with those disgusting people ever again.

Sheryl looked at Isla and sighed. "Don't take it too heavy, Isla. You are right. They chose to leave us,

and we will not work with them again. I know we don't have a big company, but still, we can't allow ourselves to bring back bullies like them," she said in a decided tone.

Isla's anger slowly subsided, and the crease on her forehead started to fade as she replied, "I agree with you. We should just ignore them and teach them a lesson. Let them regret their decisions."

The news had spread quickly like wildfire. In a blink of an eye, those staff, who were about to finish their resignation procedures, immediately swarmed to Sheryl's office like bees.

Sheryl looked at all of them, while Isla looked at them in disgust and contempt. "What are you all doing here? There is no need to say goodbye. Just leave as soon as you finish your procedures," Isla quipped, rolling her eyes at them. Her anger started to come back as she knew why they came here in the first place.

'They decided to resign earlier, and there is no way we will accept them again,' Isla thought.

She and Sheryl would rather hire inexperienced but dedicated and loyal employees than let these irresponsible people continue to work here.

With an embarrassed look on his face, one employee immediately spoke. "I was wrong, Ms. Xia. I want to continue to work here. My wife just called me from the hospital, and she said that her doctor told her

that she would recover soon. She asked me to focus on my work, and that she could still take care of our children."

Another spoke clearly in desperation. "Ms. Xia, I was mistaken. The vacant position in a government unit that my parents had gotten me with some connections has been taken already, so I can't go there anymore. I want to stay here..."

Isla's anger just continued to rise inside of her as she heard these desperate and shameless excuses.

A few minutes ago, they all had been eager to quit their jobs, and now they were too thick to use all kinds of excuses possible just to keep their jobs here.

In short, they were all snobs. After the rumors on their boss got the company in trouble, they all intended to leave, but now that Sheryl's name had been cleared, they were desperate to stay. For sure, the company was not going to let this slide.

Chapter 1153 Always Be Bad

After the public exposure of the truth, Sheryl's reputation was restored, and she was even more famous than ever before, which meant that the tragedy served her quite well in the end.

If anything, at least this time she gained a worthy reputation.

With Sheryl in charge of Cloud Advertising Company and Charles backing her up, their days at the company would be better than ever before.

Or, at least that was what the employees thought. All they really wanted was a safe environment to work in. Surely, they didn't know that when they'd made their choice, Cloud Advertising Company had nothing to do with them.

"Why are you guys still here? I thought that you'd already left? Why are you returning now?" Before Sheryl could speak, Isla had already lectured the employees for her.

"Isla, there must be a misunderstanding between us. It's not that we want to leave here, but..." Of course, they didn't want to let go of such a good opportunity to stay in the company.

"You don't have to say anything. There's no point. All of us can see that you've chosen to leave, which means that Cloud Advertising Company has nothing to do with you anymore. Just take the money and go!" Isla said in an unkind tone.

"Isla, how can you let us leave like this? Ms. Xia hasn't even said anything yet!" Many of them began to regret handing in their resignations.

"Well, I guess I have to take a stand," Sheryl said coldly. "Isla, I'll leave this to you."

After saying that, Sheryl picked up her cellphone and left.

Looking at the scene in front of them, the rest of the staff stood in place with shock and dull expressions on their faces. They all felt the urge to ask for Isla's forgiveness, but they didn't know how.

"What are you all looking at? Don't just stand there! Cloud Advertising Company is not big enough to accommodate all of you, so if you want to leave, then just go." Isla was fed up and didn't want to say another single word to them.

"Isla, everything must be a misunderstanding. You should listen to us and let us explain before making assumptions." They were not willing to leave the company now.

"What? What do you mean by this being a misunderstanding? The only thing that I think is a misunderstanding here, is the naked photos. Isn't that correct?" Isla said scornfully.

"Isla..."

"Alright, guys. Stop telling me anything because I won't listen. Those who said that they wanted to leave are now free to go. Even if you stay here against your will, I will promise you that you will have a tough road ahead, so make the decision wisely!"

Hearing Isla, those who wanted to stay didn't dare to respond. After all, the reason why they were willing to stay at Cloud Advertising Company was to be ensured a better future.

However, if they were doomed to be rejected from the start, it would be completely meaningless for them to stay here and even more so against their own will.

When they turned around to leave, Ellie ran back.

Ellie's expression seemed different from before. She looked at Isla and said, "Isla, everything was my fault. I am the only one to blame here. I changed my mind. I've decided to stay at the company..."

Listening to Ellie's statement, Isla was even more irritated and didn't even wait for her to finish speaking. Instead, she proceeded to leave the premises with Sheryl.

Since she didn't permit the employees any opportunities, she most definitely wasn't going to give Ellie one either.

"Isla, just listen to me..." Ellie remained somewhat reluctant. Who would have thought that Sheryl would

be able to save her dignity in the end, especially after her entire reputation was ruined?

The situation now was entirely different from what it was in the morning.

However, Isla already left. It didn't seem as though she had the strength to deal with the company for a single second longer.

"Ellie, there's no other way out than to leave. It's clear that we've all been dismissed. They're so ruthless... They don't want us anymore! We mean nothing to them." One of Ellie's colleagues could see that she was overwhelmed, so she immediately comforted her.

"Oh, come on now... Please, let's go." The others shook their heads and said to the two who were still hovering at the scene, "What bad luck we all have! None of us has a job anymore and we're not going to change that by staying at this wreckage any longer!"

"Do yourself a favor, don't talk about it and let's go!" Everyone felt helpless; they didn't know what to do next.

At this point, Charles called Sheryl and said, "Sher, have you seen the news today?"

Hearing the excitement in Charles' voice, Sheryl responded, "Yes...Yes, I've seen it." She then nodded with ease.

"Sher, I said I would clear your name, and I did it! They won't misunderstand you anymore." Charles

spoke in a spoiled tone.

"Just..."

"Just what?" Sheryl couldn't understand what else Charles was dissatisfied with. Thinking about how far they had come, their victory must have surely been enough to make him feel better.

"I don't think it's all Duncan's idea. Now, however, all the mistakes are left for Duncan to deal with alone. Rachel hasn't even been punished for this whatsoever." Hence the reason why Charles was dissatisfied.

"Do you think that Rachel planned it?" Sheryl was thinking the same thing. However, she had been so busy lately that she didn't have the time to think about who the planner was.

"Perhaps Rachel and Holley planned it together. Did you see Holley at the scene that day? If they ever meet one another, surely nothing good will come of it! They are both one and the same," Charles said in a firm tone.

"Well then, what shall we do about it?" Sheryl was uncertain whether Rachel would do anything bad again. Then again, she knew what Rachel was capable of.

"You don't have to worry about anything at all. I'll fix this and take care of them," Charles consoled

Sheryl.

"Well, okay then. I think it's best that I go straight home after work," Sheryl said.

"Sher, can you go to the hotel to pick up my mother and return to Dream Garden together?" Charles

had planned to pick her up by himself, but wasn't able to get away from his busy schedule. He had

something very important to do instead.

Nevertheless, he recalled to himself that he promised to pick Melissa up today. That was the only

reason why he had to ask Sheryl to do it.

Charles briefly thought that Melissa would become more fond of Sheryl, mainly because all of the

misconceptions about her were cleared up.

Perhaps it would be good for easing the tension between the two of them.

Sheryl knew what her husband was thinking. She wasn't convinced and didn't want to do what Charles

asked of her, but she proceeded to tell him what he wanted to hear anyway. "Okay, I'll go. Just give me

the address."

"Okay, I'll send it to your cellphone right now. Sher, you should be kind when you see my mother later.

I'm certain that she'll change her attitude towards you once she learns about what happened in the news," Charles reminded.

Sheryl nodded, in an attempt to reassure him that it was okay.

She still wasn't convinced, however, and thought that it would be impossible for Melissa to change her attitude towards her.

After all, the fact that Melissa disliked her was not because of the nude photos. After this incident, no matter whether Sheryl's name had been cleared, her suspicion would remain. Sheryl knew that she would always be viewed as bad in Melissa's eyes.

Chapter 1154 Sheryl's Exploded Hysteria

Agreeing to pick Melissa up was probably one of the worst things Sheryl could have agreed upon. She had no choice. Charles asked her nicely, so declining was not an option.

It didn't matter anymore what Melissa thought. Sheryl knew that what she did was the right thing, and her conscience was clear while doing it. She wasn't in the mood to either think about it or to resolve the issues between them.

Sheryl keyed in the location provided by Charles onto her GPS and made her way to the hotel where

Melissa was staying. Arriving at the hotel, she couldn't help but notice how wonderful the scenery was.

The neatly cut grass lined along the driveway. There were tall red and white roses next to a beautiful water fountain. Its water was splashing majestically as each drop made its way along its tiers and back to the water basin. Making her way into the hotel, she spotted the most elegant hanging chandeliers. They were covered in crystals and sparkled in every direction. Sheryl headed straight to the concierge to inquire, and a few minutes later, a friendly hotel staff led her to Melissa's room.

As soon as she arrived in front of the room's door, Sheryl heard Melissa talking to someone over the phone. She couldn't quite make out what Melissa was saying, but she had an overwhelming feeling that it was bad.

She shook her head in an attempt to remove the bizarre thoughts that were consuming her mind. She reassured herself that she was just overthinking and that everything would be fine.

The hotel staff smiled at Sheryl and gently knocked on the door.

An irritable and impatient voice came from inside. "Who is there?"

The staff answered respectfully, "Sorry for the intrusion, ma'am. There is a lady named Sheryl here.

She said she had come to pick you up."

Hearing the visitor was Sheryl, Melissa hardened her expression. It took a long time before she replied nonchalantly, "The door's left unlocked. Just let her come in."

Sheryl nodded her head toward the staff to express her gratitude. The staff was slightly surprised by Sheryl's attitude and responded by making a deep bow before she left. Sheryl heaved a deep sigh before she slowly twisted the handle and opened the door.

"Mom, Charles asked me to pick you up." Sheryl put on a soft smile as she went inside the room. She tried to hide her uneasiness.

Although she knew that everything was useless now, she still wished for some miracle. She really hoped that Melissa could change her attitude and try to get along with her as time went by.

Obviously, the odds of Melissa coming to terms with her was a shot in the dark, but she still took her chances.

"My son has dealt with that trouble, so you can't help going here and flaunting how he loves you in front of me?" Melissa said with utter sarcasm.

"Mom, now that you know that the news is fake. Why do you need to...?" Sheryl said bitterly as

Melissa's words hit her.

Even though she had psychologically prepared herself before she went to see Melissa, she still couldn't

keep her spirits up to meet her. When Melissa threw scorching satire at her, she still felt heartbroken.

"Do you even need to ask why I comment on you like that? Do you think you are wronged?" Melissa

cut Sheryl off as she put on a terrifying expression.

"Sheryl, you may deceive Charles by your innocent pretenses, but you will never fool me. Why did

Duncan just frame you and not anyone else?" Melissa blurted out as she couldn't contain her anger

anymore. She didn't even realize that her saliva was sprayed at Sheryl's face as she yelled at her.

Almost by reflex, Sheryl closed her eyes. She digested Melissa's words and tried to hold her temple.

Then she pulled out a piece of tissue on the desk and gently wiped her face. "Mom, my task today is to

pick you up. If you want to go with me, I'd be happy to wait while you pack your luggage and then we'll

leave together. But if you don't want to go with me, you can just forget that I come by."

Sheryl turned around and started to leave, but Melissa called out from behind. "Sheryl, do you know

that my grandchildren nearly lost their lives because of you? How could you still be so haughty? Aren't

you even feeling guilty?

Melissa got fumed at Sheryl's attitude. Bystanders could treat the whole kidnapping as a mere trick or even praise Sheryl for her so-called sacrifice. But Sheryl was definitely the reason why her kids were kidnapped. Melissa could not believe how she had moved on like nothing had happened and even thought herself selfless.

A truly selfless mother wouldn't allow her kids to be at risk.

A selfless mother should do things like what she was doing now. Melissa admitted she turned to be vicious or even behaved like a monster. But she didn't care what she looked like. She was still a great and selfless mother. All she did was for her son's sake. A mother would always want a happy life for her son.

For her future and her son's, she could do it whatever it cost. She had already gone through 15 years of custody in prison. There was nothing more that she couldn't bear.

"As I said earlier, if you accept my offer, we can go now. If you don't, then I will go alone." Sheryl trembled as she finished her words. Despite of all her mental preparations, it was proved that her preparation was not enough. All her guard was utterly routed by Melissa's vile verbal attack. "I'm just here to pick you up," she repeated.

"Ha, so do I need to thank you?" Melissa replied with a sarcastic smile as if she had heard a silly joke.

"Sheryl, have you ever thought about the reason why I chose to stay here?"

"So Mom, you think that you are being wronged? Now that you feel wronged, why did you refuse our suggestion that Charles and I move out? Why do you always behave like a sensible mother only when in front of Charles? You should've just let your son drive me out of your family. Oh, I get it. Your son seems to be unwilling to break up with me, am I right?"

Sheryl never thought that she could talk to Melissa in such a sardonic voice one day. But she couldn't control her temper anymore.

She was truly enraged by Melissa. She was supposed to initially keep quiet for the sake of her family's future in Dream Garden.

But Melissa's actions did not only test her tolerance but also emboldened her to cross the limit.

So at this point, she finally exploded with rage that had been simmering all this time.

She even felt no regrets after she blurted out her hysterical anger.

"Sheryl, what did you say? Dare you say it again?" Melissa raised her voice louder in disbelief. Maybe

Melissa had never expected that there was a crazy and evil woman hidden inside Sheryl.

With this being said, she felt that it will be better if she could keep Sheryl away from her son, since it would bring devastating harms to him in the end.

Maybe someday in the future, this woman would end up framing her son or even get him trapped in perdition.

No, she must not allow these kind of things to happen, Melissa thought.

"Are you voicing out your true thoughts? In your mind, you feel confident that Charles won't let anything

bad happen to you. So that's why you get more and more unscrupulous and arrogant?" Melissa

interrogated her in an angry voice.

"It seems that you have already made your conclusion on what kind of person I am, so you can just

take it as true. I won't even try to change your mind. You wouldn't believe me anyway, no matter how I

explain to you!" Sheryl shook her head as she replied in a fit of petulance. If Melissa insisted on

misinterpreting her words like this, she'd rather keep her peace.

"Maybe you really can't find an excuse to defend yourself now since your true colors are exposed!"

"Fine. Just as you say, there's no point in coming up with defensive excuses since my true colors are exposed. Are you satisfied now? It's all my fault, okay?"

Sheryl didn't want to hold her temple and have any scruples any more.

Chapter 1155 A Party Under Critical Circumstances

'All I really want is a stable and peaceful life. Why is it so hard for me to achieve?

If the hardship at the beginning of our marriage was a kind of chastening experience, what about now?

Why won't God just let me be? Even after I changed my name, God still keeps tormenting me. Have I really done something wrong?' Sheryl fell into deep thoughts.

"Don't try to speak to me in a pitiful tone. I'm not my son. I won't be captivated by your charming words!" Melissa cried out. She was hysterical, resentful and helpless.

"Yes, Mom. Since you are already aware that your son is captivated by me, I think it would be better for you to treat me appropriately. Be careful, or else I might end up speaking ill of you during a leisurely pillow talk. He will hate your guts forever." Sheryl did not mean any of that. It was temporary anger. She was trying to frighten Melissa into submission so that she wouldn't try anymore tricks on her.

She could not stand how domineering Melissa was. If everything worked out fine because of a little blackmailing, then this was the best way to see it through.

"Sheryl, you are more vicious than I thought. Previously, I thought that you were just a bitch who was good at disguising yourself, but you are far more than that. I never expected that you would blackmail me into listening to you!" Melissa shouted.

She was afraid now. After all, she was aware of the position Sheryl had in her son's heart. She knew that if Sheryl really wanted to get rid of her, she could just easily poison Charles' mind against her. And her son would alienate her!

She thought back to what had happened last time when her son insisted on moving out of Dream Garden. She was well aware that that was Sheryl's intention.

The truth was that her son would follow Sheryl to the ends of the world, and it terrified Melissa.

Raising her head, she checked the calendar behind the clock. Melissa calmed down and she felt more at ease.

Just a couple more days, someone was going to give her a hand. She bet that Sheryl would not be so arrogant at that time. "All right, since you give me no choice, I have nothing else to say. I'll come with you if that's what you want!" Melissa scoffed.

Sheryl had no clue what was going on in Melissa's mind at that moment. But she was willing to come home with her. She finally completed the task which Charles had given her.

As for what Melissa was plotting, she chose not to care about it right now. She was aware that even if she managed to figure out what was on her mind, she would only end up getting upset by the answer.

So she chose not to think about it and be the fool who did not know anything from the beginning.

Sometimes, it was better to be a fool than be someone who knew everything. It was much more peaceful that way.

"Let's go." Sheryl stood at the door and waited for Melissa to pack up.

She wanted to help her pack. But on second thoughts, Melissa had a grudge against her. No matter what she did, she wouldn't appreciate her sincerity. Rather than have a try, it was really better to do nothing.

Charles was not yet back when they arrived at Dream Garden.

Sheryl only knew that Charles had a social engagement that day, but did not know that it was, in fact, related to Tarsan Corporation.

When he had talked to the police, Charles found out that Rachel had moved swiftly. She had already

made a deal with Duncan and had asked him to be the scapegoat for her.

Even though Duncan was fine being her obedient slave, Charles wasn't the same as him.

Rachel had left the city three years back. And she dealt Sheryl a head-on blow as soon as she had

come back. Charles had to get back at her for what she had done to his wife.

Otherwise, he would forever feel like he had wronged Sheryl.

So, the social engagement that was taking place was planned by Charles, exclusively for Rachel.

With the power he had in Y City, he invited almost half of the business big shots. Rachel had planned

not to attend as she was aware that Charles was aiming at her.

However, considering that she had not yet built good connections in the business field since Tarsan

Corporation had moved to Y City, she couldn't just reject the invitation.

She was struggling, not knowing what to do.

Of course, she wasn't the only one. There was one other who was caught up in the struggle—Holley.

"Tell me what I should do now. I should not have listened to your idea. Why did you have to make it

such a big deal? Sheryl is completely all right now, but Charles is going to blame everything on us

anyway. Holley, tell me what I should do!" Rachel cried out in despair.

Rachel was that kinda person; she kicked everyone down the ladder. She had treated Holley like a good friend when she was being useful, but she burnt the bridge when Holley's idea hadn't worked as she had expected.

"Ms. Bai, the last thing you should do is lose your cool. If you don't stay calm, you'll expose yourself easily. So instead of going hysterical here, you might as well go to the dinner party with your party face on," Holley said, controlling her own anger. She was already very upset and Rachel had come over to vent her anger. Holley hated Sheryl more than ever at that moment.

'We were given birth by the same person. Why does everything always go so smoothly for Sheryl? Why did she get the best of everything? Why?' Holley couldn't accept the cruel fate.

Even when Sheryl was on the horns of dilemma, Charles helped her extricate herself from the difficult situation by turning the crappy leads into good evidence. He turned things around for her.

'Why?!' she screamed inside.

"But if I go, Charles will definitely corner me. He might even deal a heavy blow to Tarsan Corporation with his power. What should I do?" Rachel whined. Just a moment ago, she was so arrogant. Now she

was seeking advice from Holley again.

"Ms. Bai, it's not as bad as you think. Even though Charles knows what happened, he has no proof that you had anything to do with the incident," Holley comforted her, calmly.

"Never mind about the evidence! He knows everything! He can easily have all the businesses in Y City isolate Tarsan Corporation with a single word. We'll incur huge losses if that happens!"

Tarsan Corporation was Rachel's last card. Duncan could have helped her deal with the business if he was still around. Rachel had no experience in managing a company.

The former CEO, her husband, was dead, and she then became the CEO.

Chapter 1156 Holley's Suggestion

Rachel's most competent subordinate was in jail. If all the companies in Y City isolated Tarsan Corporation, it would be impossible for the latter to survive here.

It didn't mean Tarsan Corporation would go bankrupt. After all, she could shift her business back abroad. But if Rachel were to do this, she would never have the chance to get back with Charles again.

She had made great efforts to extend her business to Y City for Charles and had no intention of leaving without getting him back.

"Ms. Bai, you think too much. Although Tarsan Corporation is new here, it is still a big foreign-owned company and it has earned great reputation over the years. What are you afraid of? You are a woman and you can make use of this advantage," Holley suggested, her eyes turning icy and firm. She was serious about her words

and confident that Rachel would listen to her advice.

"What do you mean by that?" Rachel asked, narrowing her eyes at the woman. She did not understand why Holley was insisting that she accept Charles' invitation.

"Here's the thing. Ms. Bai, you're a woman and you're attractive. You were also a famous star in Y City. I also think I'm good looking. If we form a team together, I don't think it will be difficult to take Charles' clients from him," Holley replied candidly. 'If I'm to get what I want, I have no other choice but to work with Rachel to deal with Charles, ' Holley thought to herself.

Rachel got to know Holley's plan.

It hadn't crossed her mind that Holley hated Sheryl so much that she was willing to be taken advantage of to get back at her sister.

However, Holley's revenge wasn't Rachel's business. She went along with Holley and didn't mind

executing her plan. 'She is right. In the business world dominated by men, women have an advantage.

Once I satisfy their needs, I can get what I want. When Tarsan Corporation has stable partners and is strong enough to compete against Shining Company, I will no longer be afraid of Charles.

At that time, I can negotiate with him equally, ' she mused.

"So you shouldn't bother wondering how to handle Charles. Instead, you need to figure out whom he has invited this time and then target several big shots," Holley advised. "As long as you bribe them and keep them in your control, they will do whatever you ask of them."

"But what if they turn down my request after I give them what they want?" Rachel asked with arched brows. She didn't mind being taken advantage of. But she was worried that she wouldn't get what she wanted after her sacrifice.

"Men are animals. They are completely ruled by their hormones. We are not going to ask them to do some bad things; we only want them to work with Tarsan Corporation. Although Charles is powerful and bossy, he can't force others to not cooperate with Tarsan Corporation," Holley answered with a confident smile, staring into Rachel's eyes.

"Rest assured, Ms. Bai. I will help anytime you need me."

"You are qualified for the position that used to belong to Duncan. What do you say, Holley?" Rachel offered, flashing Holley a friendly smile.

Rachel thought to herself, 'She has a point. As long as I carry out her plan, Charles will not be able to threaten me.

Shining Company is a leading enterprise in Y City and all the big shots here don't want to offend Charles. But two heads are better than one. Besides, my company is not a small one. As long as I manage to talk some important figures into joining me, I don't think I'll lose the game.'

"Thank you for trusting me. I will not let you down," Holley nodded as she accepted her offer willingly.

Once she worked for Tarsan Corporation, she would have more opportunities to get near Charles.

Smiling at Holley, Rachel said confidently, "That's great news. I'll get the list of guests for tonight's meal.

Let's split up and get them." She had made up her mind. Now that she had made this choice, she would try not to think too much about it. After all, she had already lost her virginity.

To get Charles back, she was willing to whore herself out to other men, and so was Holley.

"Okay. Contact them first. We can meet them another day," Holley urged.

'Do you think you're the winner, Sheryl? Just wait and see. If you want to keep your husband, you'd better keep your eyes open. Game on, ' she thought to herself.

When Rachel and Holley finally reached their agreement, there were only three hours before Rachel needed to attend the business dinner that Charles had organized. After finding out Charles' guest list, Rachel chose several owners of some big enterprises and called them. She proposed to have personal meetings with them and they all agreed instantly. No one would be stupid enough to refuse an invitation

from the CEO of Tarsan Corporation.

They all knew that Rachel was single, after all. If any of them could win her heart, they would be able to control her company. If the lucky man controlled both his own company and Tarsan Corporation, he would no longer need to bow down to Charles.

As a result, everyone who had answered Rachel's call had already started to map out this exact plan.

However, none of the men had the guts to reveal their anterior motives to Rachel, at least not over the phone.

Rachel arrived to the rendezvous with Holley just as the dinner started. When she saw a man, she

introduced him to Holley, "Nice to meet you, Mr. Zhang. This is our new manager, Miss Ye."

She was still very good at socializing. After all, she had been in the show business for over several years and had been to many similar events.

"I'm flattered, Ms. Bai. This lady must be very good at her job. Otherwise, she wouldn't be working for you. I shall learn from you and Miss Ye," Dustin Zhang responded with a beaming smile. He was a cunning, lecherous man in his fifties. Since Rachel had initiated the conversation, he had not taken his eyes off her bosom.

When Rachel had been a star, he had a crush on her. But Charles was her boyfriend back then, so he didn't dare to approach her. Later, Rachel had gotten married to Charles uncle. And then she had gone abroad.

Even after all these years, Dustin Zhang still felt his heart race up at the sight of her.

Chapter 1157 No Drinking

Now that Rachel had become the CEO of the Tarsan Corporation, Dustin thought he would never have a chance to get close to her. Unexpectedly, he got a call from her earlier that afternoon. More so, they also engaged in chatting, the content of which was quite seductive to him.

His mind started racing, not only for Rachel's beauty but also for the Tarsan Corporation.

He thought it was the God that was willing to help him to strive for further improvement in his career.

"Mr. Zhang, you are too kind. With you being our senior, we should learn from you," Rachel said,

blushing. "May I excuse myself? I will just have a look over there."

"No problem. We'll hang out some other day," he smirked. Dustin's eyes lingered on Rachel, and not

until she was about to leave did he reluctantly retract his gaze.

"Sure. I just came back to Y City. It has changed a lot, and I feel like I have a lot to ask about. Please

don't feel annoyed if I do," Rachel smiled. She was so charming and lovely, Dustin could not help

swallowing hard as he stared at her.

"Sure! Sure," Dustin responded unwittingly.

"Well, I have to go now. See you around," Rachel said grinning. Then she went over to the man who

had just entered the room with Holley.

"Rachel, what kind of person Dustin is? Do you know him well? Look at the way he looks at you!" In all

honesty, Holley disdained horny old men. But she would not say no to them if she needed something.

"Don't judge him based on his appearance. His business is also an empire in Y City, just quite like the

Shining Company. So forget about his look." Rachel was helpless. Thinking about her own purpose, she chose not to care so much about it.

"What about the one who just came in? Who is he?" Holley candidly inquired. She was not familiar with all these businessmen.

"That is Lance from Silver Corporation. They've built up a fortune by doing film and television.

Currently, they are involved in different kind of fields, including real estate, hotel, tourism, and new retail. His value is higher than Dustin's. As long as we take them down, Charles will definitely be afraid of us!" Rachel explained.

She had put in a lot of effort on these people. The others, however, were of no use to her. If they would willingly give hands to Rachel, she would never be afraid of anyone in Y City!

"Oh! It turns out that he is Lance. I've heard of him, but I've never seen him in person." Holley nodded, thinking of the probability that the Silver Corporation was the first company Rachel had worked for.

"Lance, it's been a long time since I last met you. Look at you! You look terrific," Rachel flattered. She could not wait to greet the man opposite her.

Like Dustin, Lance was also an old man. His appearance though was quite okay, a way better than Dustin, the greasy old man.

Although Silver Corporation started relatively late, Dustin held Lance in high esteem.

"Rachel, you are prettier than before. Not only that, but you are such a sweet talker!" Lance called her affectionately by her first name. After all, she used to work for him.

"I am so pleased and happy that you still remember the time I once worked with you. I must have caused you a lot of troubles because of my ignorance," she beamed.

"Ha! That was such a long time ago. It's alright. I'm so glad to see you right now. I can set my mind at ease," Lance chuckled, with a demeanor of being her senior.

"Oh, forgive me. I am just so excited that I even forgot to offer you a seat. Let me show you the way. It's such a long time. You can never tell how glad I am to meet you here," Rachel exclaimed.

"Okay, let's go." Lance strutted towards the leather sofa in the private room. As soon as he settled himself down, he waved his hand towards Rachel—a gesture of acknowledgment.

"Okay, Lance. I have to make a toast to you later. Thank you so much for guiding me in those years.

You really made me feel that I was appreciated," she declared, praising him. Rachel opted to humbly

lavish him with praise, even though she knew that the current strength of the Tarsan Corporation did not pale in comparison with the Silver Corporation.

Being a tough woman herself, she basically understood when to yield and when not to. It didn't matter to her as long as she could achieve what her mind was set to do. And that was to take down Charles and to humiliate Sheryl as much as she could!

The venue was packed with a group of people indulging loud conversations when a sudden feeling of strong aura swarmed in, rendering them all speechless.

Lance, who was on the couch, immediately rose to his feet and glanced at the door.

'Oh, it's Charles!', he thought.

As the last one to arrive, obviously, Charles was the king. He was someone of importance.

"Well, everyone is here? Then, let us take our seats,"

Charles offered, looking at the guests who were situated in the waiting area.

Soon after, he occupied the host's seat.

"Mr. Lu, we dare not to take seats without you. We would rather wait for you," someone flattered.

"All right! Don't be so reserved. Let's take our seats. It's just a simple meal for us. It's no big deal."

Polite as Charles was, his face exuded coldness.

The atmosphere was way more uncomfortable because of him.

Lance was apparently not afraid to say his piece. "Since Mr. Lu is here, let us all be seated. Mr. Lu is quite busy. Let us get started. We will finish dinner in no time so that Mr. Lu can go home early and have a rest."

The guests slowly settled themselves after they heard Lance's words.

"Waiter, please serve the dishes. Hurry up." Holley said to a waiter who stood nearby her.

"Okay. The dishes will be served soon," the waiter nodded respectfully and ran outside.

"Mr. Lu, please let me propose a toast to you," Lance stated. He was trying to ease the atmosphere.

"I cannot drink today." Unexpectedly, he was rejected outright by Charles.

"Well... Since Mr. Lu cannot drink wine today, how about tea? This is Longjing tea. Please have a taste?" Lance was a little bit embarrassed. Obviously, he could not force Charles to drink.

Chapter 1158 Are You Biased Against Me

In a cold voice, Charles said, "I don't drink green tea." His self-control, reserve, and aloofness were almost inhuman. His heart was too frozen to care about others.

"It's all right," Rachel replied without even flinching or looking affected by how Charles treated her. She turned towards the waiter. "Please, replace with black tea, and don't forget to add some chrysanthemum in it. Thank you." Rachel looked at Charles and remembered how this suited his taste when they were still lovers.

As for Charles, he wasn't fond of drinking tea. But after becoming the owner of such a big company, he had to engage in some social and business activities. Liquor was out of the options, so he turned to drinking tea instead. Then again, according to Chinese medicine, drinking too much green tea can cause cold syndrome in a person's stomach, so he chose to drink black tea.

Even then, Charles wasn't fond of the taste of black tea, and Rachel knew that. She was very attentive of him, because she added some chrysanthemum into the black tea to make the taste better.

The fragrance of chrysanthemum complimented the rich taste of black tea. Their neutralization made the taste neither too strong nor too astringent. Rachel recalled how much Charles had felt the moment the aroma lingered in his nose and the taste of the first sip in his mouth.

She was about to let the waiter leave as the waiter nodded, following her instruction, but Charles was

quick to stop the waiter.

"I don't drink black tea anymore. Please, I would like a glass of soda water," he told the waiter.

"Yes, sir," the waiter replied. He was clever to see who was in charge of the situation and did what

Charles had asked without even waiting for Rachel's addition. Still, Rachel wasn't fazed.

"Well, it seems like your taste has changed a lot after all these years." Rachel smiled and continued,

"Does that mean I can't treat you the way I used to? Do I need to get to know you and understand you from a new perspective?"

Charles ignored any of her questions. The waiter was back with the soda, and he just took a sip from

the glass. He then turned to the rest of the people at the table and said, "Everyone, please. Relax and

let's all start to dig in."

Everyone else looked at each other, feeling a bit embarrassed. One replied almost immediately, "Oh,

yes! That's the way it should be, isn't it? Mr. Lu, after you, please."

Back in the past, there were rumors and gossips about the love story of Rachel and Charles

everywhere, which, of course, created a sensation. Girls were so envious of Rachel for winning

Charles' heart. Its influence was not less than that of Sheryl's erotic picture scandal in recent time.

Everyone at the table knew what happened to them, but they weren't aware of how important Rachel was to Charles now. They wanted to know whether he still had feelings for her. Was she still important to him deep in his heart? Was Rachel more important than Sheryl?

Since they still did not know Charles' attitude towards Rachel, they wanted to play safe and did not dare to offend her or make her feel embarrassed.

Rachel had Tarsan Corporation to support her, and even Lance and Dustin also intended to cooperate with her. Now, if Charles was also backing her, then she would be really difficult to deal with. They had to be extremely careful.

Now that they were at the same table with the two, the relationship between them could be discerned at a glance.

From the conversation, facial expression, and body language, it was clear how Rachel was still good to him that even the dullest person could see that. On the other hand, it seemed that Charles had no interest in her anymore.

They could even see the obvious dislike in his eyes everytime he took a glance towards her.

His eyes were full of coldness and disgust.

"Everyone here must know that Tarsan Corporation has just settled down in Y City. What you do not know, however, is that its CEO is not the previous one. I am really concerned as to how Ms. Bai would lead such a big corporation to gain a firm foothold in Y City." As Charles said this, his warning eyes focused on every single guest.

He clearly showed his own attitude to this case—Rachel did not have any strength and ability to lead the corporation to gain a firm foundation in this city. It was obvious that Charles wanted to tell everyone that Shining Company would draw a clear line with her company. Regardless of whatever happened, he would just stand by and watch.

Moreover, whatever everyone else here was going to do about it, that was none of his business as well.

Everyone else glanced at each other. After Charles had made such a statement, of course, they would follow the steps of the Shining Company. After all, they were the leading enterprise in Y City.

Since they were doing business or wanted to do business with his company, they would not dare risk to offend Charles. Their own development depended more or less on his company.

Meanwhile, Holley frowned and snapped back, "What do you mean, Mr. Lu? What you just said will

make everyone reject Tarsan Corporation and lose opportunities to grow strong together with us. Yes, it is not long enough since Rachel took over the company, but I know she is taking her work very seriously. You haven't seen anything like her work and her achievements, so why do you believe that we can't stand on our own feet in this city?"

She stared at him with a frown on her face, and thought about how she would had been this man's wife if Sheryl did not exist in this world. If only she had such an excellent husband, then she would not have to live like this. So pathetic!

Charles shrugged slightly and replied in a cold voice, "I didn't say anything. That was all you. As a matter of fact, I was wondering if your corporation would have a bright future, since you two decided to work together." He couldn't care less if he made Holley lose her face in front of so many people.

Under the table, Holley's fists started to clench. However, she was reluctant to show her weakness, so she asked him, "You are biased against me, aren't you?" She stood firm on her ground, unwilling to submit. How dare he look down on her and say such words in front of everyone!

"Of course not. You are wrong about me, Miss Ye. I am not biased against you at all. The truth is, I just

don't like you very much. I don't even want to pay any attention to you or even look at you, and frankly, I even hate it when you sit here like this." Charles looked at Holley. His eyes were full of anger and disgust.

He couldn't believe how great she thought she was that she even dared to sit and eat at the same table with him. Especially, after she and Rachel had set Sheryl up. Did she think that he was so easy to deal with?

Did she think that he knew nothing about what they had done? Or, they thought that he still loved Rachel, so they assumed he wouldn't retaliate against them?

Holley's heart started to race with anger. "Mr. Lu, you... What do you mean? Can't you save me some face in front of so many people here?" she asked. She was so angry and managed to control her temper, but her face failed to hide her inner feelings.

Charles scoffed, "Save you some face? Really? You don't deserve that!" His tone was not heavy, but it was quite shocking and fell heavily into everyone's ears. They glanced each other and did not dare to whisper nor make a noise. However, they all wondered why Charles was so angry and harsh with Holley. Did she do something wrong against him?

Lance knew he had to do something to help thaw the atmosphere. He gave Rachel a hint and said,

"Rachel, how could you bring such a girl to our dinner without consideration? Now, please, get her out of here, and don't let her put a dampener on our day."

Charles ignored what Lance had said and picked up his glass to drink his soda as if nothing had happened. Holley really was nothing to him, and he obviously did not want to waste any extra time on her.

Rachel had no choice. She turned to Holley and gestured for her to get up and leave. At this point, it was the best way to solve their difficult situation. It was also the best way to stop any further discussion about the future of her company, or her ability to do keep it standing firm.

However, Holley was full of pride that she would not listen to her. Instead, she ignored Rachel and turned to Charles once more. She bit her lip and swallowed hard before she said out loud, "Mr. Lu, don't be so cruel to me. I am still new in Tarsan Corporation and the circle. If I offended you before, please forgive me, and don't be too hard on me. I promise that it won't happen again!" For Holley, no one could make her leave.

Once she stood and walked out of here, she would definitely lose her face.

After all, those who attended this feast were people of fame and prestige around the city. She was afraid that after this meal, they would all laugh at her and look down upon her behind her back.

Once more, Charles chose to ignore Holley's pleas. He turned to Lance and asked, "Lance, you were once Rachel's boss. Am I right?"

Lance looked at Holley for a moment before turning towards Charles. "Yes. She started her career in Silver Corporation," he confirmed. Deep inside, Lance could not help but feel a faint sense of unease as he could not think of any reason why Charles would ask this question.

He could not help but overthink that Charles was unhappy about this, and that he might decide to punish Silver Corporation. It would place him and his corporation at risk! Beads of sweat threatened to come out of Lance's temples.

Even if Lance did intend to plot some dirty deals, at least he would carry them out in a sneaky way. He also hoped that no one would know his connection with Rachel. However, what Charles had just stated indicated that Rachel was in cahoots with him.

Then again, Lance would not take the blame for Rachel. He thought again and again how to deal with

this problem. Before Charles could speak again, he added, "However, Mr. Lu, you know that the entertainment circle has always been the most mobile place for money and people. After Rachel became a popular celebrity, she forgot all about Silver Corporation and the resources we provided her with. If I remember correctly, when our agent tried to renew her contract with us, Rachel didn't give our agent a chance to do so."

Lance did not dare look at how Rachel would react. Besides, he could not care anymore about what Rachel would think of him after hearing what he just said. At that moment, he just wanted Charles to give him a chance to explain and regain himself. He wanted to make Charles stop doubting him, and so he tried his very best to do so.

"So, does that mean, you can no longer influence her, right?" Without any hint of emotion at all, Charles looked into Lance's eyes, and gave him a meaningful smile. Then he turned his attention towards his food and started to eat.

Chapter 1159 Lost For Words

As soon as Charles started to eat, everyone else reluctantly ate as well. On the other hand, Lance looked at Charles for a moment and felt relieved by what he just said. He cast Rachel a hurried glance

before Charles could notice this, and hinted her to do what she needed to do.

Rachel's eyebrows furrowed in resignation. She turned her head towards Holley and looked at her with guilt evident in her eyes.

Holley immediately read what was on her boss's mind just by looking into her eyes. Even though she was unwilling to leave, she still had to make a compromise right now for her revenge. Clenching her fists tightly once more under the table, she heaved a deep breath to control her anger. Then, she transfixed her gaze on Charles and said calmly, "Very well then. Mr. Lu had expressed his dislike of me being here, so excuse me everyone, and please, enjoy your meal."

She stood up and placed her chopsticks down slowly before she exited the private room with reluctance.

Rachel sighed as soon as Holley left, thinking that this would ease Charles' anger. Before she could accost the stone-cold CEO, however, a nonchalant and loud voice cut through the silence. "Ms. Bai, don't you think you should accompany your excellent subordinate outside?" Charles asked, slanting his defiant eyes at Rachel.

Rachel's eyebrows slightly twitched as she stared flabbergasted at Charles. She did not want to believe

it, but the implication in his message was obvious. Not only did he plan to kick Holley out, but he also planned to kick herself out.

'So, this is why he invited me to this meal. This is to take revenge. He wanted to embarrass me and

Holley deliberately in front of these people, ' she thought.

She swallowed a lump in her throat. "Mr. Lu, you... You..." With an awkward expression, she

stammered, suddenly not knowing what to say as she was at loss for words.

'Asking me and Holley to leave means that he intends to make Tarsan Corporation an enemy.

I had made so many calls and tried to please these old men. Will my efforts be in vain because of this?'

she thought.

Once again, Lance knew that if Rachel went against Charles' wishes, this dinner would not end well, so

he turned to her, breaking the silence in hopes of breaking the tension as well. "Ms. Bai, didn't you hear

what Mr. Lu just said? Just go and follow her," he urged. He wanted to remind the woman not to irritate

Charles.

Initially, Rachel meant to argue with Charles to make herself stay here, but Lance chose to side with

Charles, and no one was going to back her up here anymore. Eventually, she rose from her seat and stepped out of the room. 'I already messed up with Charles. I can't afford to cross with Lance as well, ' she reminded herself as she closed the door behind her.

Meanwhile, Holley was still outside the private room. She planned on leaving entirely, but she gave up that idea. The more she thought about what happened inside, the angrier she got. She was really upset about how Charles treated her, and she couldn't just let that go easily. Her eyes widened as the door opened and out was Rachel, who seemed to have been kicked out as well, judging by her facial expression.

Gaping at the frustrated woman, Holley asked, "What happened? Why are you here?"

Rachel crossed her arms over her chest. "Charles did this. I don't know what Sheryl said or did to him, but I'm sure that he humiliated us like that for her. It's so annoying! Why does he have to do this?" she whined with a disgruntled look.

In fact, she was more frustrated than how Holley felt at that moment.

Holley tried to calm herself down as she placed her hands on Rachel's arms. "Ms. Bai, I don't think we have any other choice. Now that Charles clearly despised us, we have to steal his clients. As soon as

Tarsan Corporation is as strong as Shining Company, for sure, Charles will not ignore you anymore.

What do you think?" Holley encouraged.

She was afraid that Rachel might not be able to survive this blow, so she tried to cheer her up.

Rachel looked back at Holley and with a resolved face, she assured determinedly, "Don't worry. I am not the kind of person who gives up easily. Now that I have made up my mind, I will not stop until I get what I want."

Holley removed her hands and smiled at her. "I'm glad to hear that, Ms. Bai. As long as you stick to your goal, I will be right beside you and help you out," she said, matching Rachel's determined voice.

Rachel looked back at the door of the room and turned to Holley. "Let's get out of this place. No need to waste time in places we are not welcome in," Rachel said. They started to walk outside of the restaurant with confidence and determination looming inside of them. For Holley, this setback shouldn't frustrate her too much at all. Even though her plan did not work, she was sure that she would resolve into another plan to handle Sheryl.

She didn't want her half-sister to lead a nice life as long as she didn't let her go. They walked side by

side with heads up, already thinking of their next move.

Meanwhile, as soon as Sheryl reached home with Melissa, the latter didn't immediately retire to her own bedroom. Instead, she took comfort in the living room and started to watch TV.

Sheryl ignored Melissa and paid her attention to her children, bringing them upstairs directly. She gave Clark and Shirley a bath before she took them to their room. She sat beside the bed as she tucked her adorable kids in and looked at them with a tender look on her face. Soon, her baby girl fell asleep, but her cute son was still awake, looking back at her.

In a low voice, Clark said, "Mommy, you should get some sleep, too. We can take care of ourselves. I know you must feel tired."

When she heard her son's sweet words, a smile was displayed across her face. With a nod, Sheryl replied lovingly, "You are my good boy. I am going to sleep, too. I just want to make sure that my lovely children are comfortable. Good night, honey. Mommy loves you both."

She moved in to kiss Shirley's forehead and turned to kiss Clark's as well. Before she could stand up, Clark sat up and leaned on her ear. "One more thing, Mommy. Please, don't go to the living room. I saw Grandma, and she didn't look good. If she saw you, she might give you a hard time," he whispered.

Sheryl turned to her son and asked in surprise, "Oh, my son, will she?" After hearing what her son had just said, she was lost for words and did not know what to say next.

Clark nodded. He glanced around with wary eyes and then moved closer once more to whisper in Sheryl's ear, "I know everything, but don't worry, Mommy. Whatever happens, I will always be by your side."

Clark's words tugged a few heartstrings, making her heart melt. She turned to look at her son and gave him a weak smile, not knowing how to react. After a moment, she tucked Clark in once more and said affectionately, "Go to sleep, son. Mommy will always protect and love you. Both of you."

Clark nodded slowly, his eyes already closing as the exhaustion took over him. As soon as the kids were sound asleep, she turned the night light on and closed the main light before stepping out of their room. Then, she followed Clark's advice and headed towards the master bedroom instead of dealing with Melissa in the living room.

On the other hand, Melissa was still upset and was dying to teach Sheryl a lesson. However, after

recalling what had happened in the hotel, she felt a slight fear to mess with her.

'No. I should refrain myself from doing this. I should just ask Charles to get Leila out as soon as possible.

Otherwise, Sheryl will be the hostess of Dream Garden, and she will use this high position to get back at me. I should also talk some sense into Charles to divorce her in a roundabout manner, ' she thought and decided that this was the best idea.

Melissa heard the shower turn on, letting her know that Sheryl had just entered the bathroom. At the same time, Charles' car parked on the garage.

On her first day of Dream Garden, Melissa learned that it usually took Sheryl at least half an hour to take a bath.

She then thought that this was a good chance to have a private conversation with her son.

"Welcome home, son," Melissa addressed as soon as Charles pushed the front door open.

Charles was taken aback to see Melissa in the living room with the television on. As he closed the door behind him, he asked, "Why are you still up, Mom?"

Melissa turned the TV off and placed the remote control on the tea table before turning to Charles once

more. "I was about to sleep already, but I heard your car park, so I decided to wait for you," she replied in a mellow voice.

A grin formed on Charles face, and in a playful tone, he asked, "Mom, did you already miss me that soon already?" Charles then sat across her mother in the living room. He seldom talked to Melissa that way, but he was in really high spirits after successfully making a fool of Holley and Rachel in front of high-end men to avenge his wife. Most importantly, he had proved to the public that Sheryl was innocent.

Melissa returned her son's smile. "We had been separated for years, and now, my son is the CEO of Shining Company. I didn't expect that you would make fun of me like this," she said in an amused tone.

"On a serious note, son, I really do miss you very much even though I only haven't seen you for a couple of days, and I want to catch up with you as soon as possible."

Chapter 1160 More And More Beautiful

"Oh, Mom. You were not resting well these days, so you should have a good rest, or else, I'll be worried and guilty if you become really tired and ill," Charles said with a weak pout on his face.

Melissa smiled as her heart felt warmth and moved by her son's care. She looked at Charles with eyes

full of love. Seeing this, Charles, too, was also very moved by his mother's love.

After all, they had been separated for more than ten years. No matter where they were, what they did, or who they were with in those years, it was still undeniable that they had missed that much time to make great memories together.

It was for this reason that after reuniting once again, they always felt that there was still a gap between the haze.

There was so many things that Charles wanted to talk about with Melissa, but he didn't know how to express himself. The same way Melissa didn't know how to express her love for her son.

However, there was no doubt that they were using their own ways, big or small, to make each other live a better life.

Especially Melissa. She didn't care about how terrible her way would be as long as she did the things that were deemed right for her.

And she would do her best to achieve these right things.

"Oh, dear Charles, you must be tired these days as well. I know that you must have done a great deal with Sher's situation. Go have some rest yourself, and don't exhaust yourself too much. Also, don't

worry about me. I'm fine. I have been so idle all day that I am not anywhere near tired at all."

Charles smiled after hearing her words, and then he suddenly remembered her request before. "By the way, Mom, please, just wait for another two days. I will make sure to get Leila out."

"Son, I'm so glad that you still remember my little request. However, I honestly just said that without thinking. You don't need to pay much attention to that. If this situation is easy to solve, that's good news. But if not, then don't force yourself. Besides, she made a mistake regardless of her reasons to do it. She got herself into jail, and I know it's not easy for us to help her."

Deep inside, Melissa had purposely pretended to be oblivious of anything, as if she did not know who had sent Leila to prison.

Since Melissa didn't know that, Charles would not tell her that it was he that had sent Leila to prison. "I know what I'm doing, Mom, and I won't do anything illegal. Don't worry too much about me."

Melissa replied with a smile. Charles smiled back and excused himself to go retreat in the master's bedroom. Melissa stayed in the living room alone. She smiled gratifyingly as she recalled her call with Leila when she was in the hotel a while ago. She told Leila that she would be able to let her out of

prison.

Back in the prison, since prisoners were only given a limited amount of time to use the public

telephone, Leila wasn't able to ask about the details.

Still, during that limited time, Leila didn't believe her. As for Melissa, she believed that this situation

would be settled soon, and that when Leila finally was out of jail, she wouldn't call Melissa a liar

anymore.

Meanwhile, Charles stopped in front of the door of their bedroom and knocked once before asking,

"Sher, it's me. Are you asleep?" He then opened the door to find that Sheryl was not there.

As Sheryl was rubbing her hair dry with a bath towel, she heard the knock. "I'm inside the bathroom. I

just finished showering," she called out.

Moments later, Sheryl came out to see Charles pouring some wine into his glass. He turned with a wine

glass half full in his hand. Her hair was dripping wet, and there were still beads of water on her

shoulder blades. She was wrapped with a pale pink towel that covered her upper breasts and stopped

just above her knees. The light material of the towel hugged her body tight enough to show her form.

The seductive cleavage of her breasts was inviting, making Charles take a sip on his wine, feeling the

temptation surge through him.

Charles smiled as his eyes wander through Sheryl's body. Her eyebrows furrowed into confusion and she asked, "What's wrong?" "Nothing. It's just that you're becoming more and more beautiful."

Sheryl's cheeks started to turn bright pink. "Really? How come I don't see that?" she asked as she moved towards the mirror and began to look at herself from head to toe, but after doing that, she still did not find any special changes in her.

"You don't?" Charles asked and took a step forward, making her turn to face him. "Well then, let me tell you which parts of you that are tempting and that make me fall in love with you every single day, and that even when we're apart, you still can't get out of my mind," he said softly as he moved closer.

As soon as Charles was standing inches in front of her, Sheryl noticed a hint of strong alcohol.

"Charles, how much wine did you drink?" she asked, taking a step back.

Charles' eyes widened in surprise by how Sheryl looked at her and how she moved a step back. He immediately explained himself, "Not much. I swear, I didn't drink much. I was just in a good mood, so I drank a little. But Sher, you know that I'm not drunk. The reason why I'm acting like this now is not

because I drank much, but because you are more intoxicating than the wine!"

Charles knew that he was not tempted because of the alcohol. Otherwise, he would not be so calm

when he faced his mother. Plus, he could still clearly remember when the designated driver handed

him the car keys, and where he placed the car keys.

As soon as he faced Sheryl, however, his mind began to be hazy and unclear, so he knew well enough

that he wasn't led by the alcohol.

The one who tempted him, the one who made him feel intoxicated was naturally Sheryl, standing in

front of him with just a light cloth to cover her bare body.

As for Sheryl, she couldn't help but feel the longing for Charles, and knew deep inside how much she

missed him. Then again, she thought about she was still a conservative woman, so she should be

reserved.

Then again, she couldn't help but feel how useless this feeling of reserve was when facing Charles.

She finally gave up her resistance. She took a step forward and slowly closed her eyes, not caring

anymore about how her hair was still dripping, how her body still wasn't wiped dry completely, or even

the scent of alcohol emitted from Charles. All she cared about now was how Charles touched her.

Whether or not he was in a drunken state, it was undeniable how gentle Charles was when he explored and landed his lips on parts of Sheryl's soft body, as if he was playing an extremely priceless and treasured piece of art.

He was handling her as if he was afraid that any reckless movement would scar this perfection in front of him.

"Sher, do you know?" Charles spoke as he cupped Sheryl's cheeks, making Sheryl open her eyes to look at him. "I love both you and your body very much. You're mine and only mine forever, do you hear me?" Before Sheryl could respond, Charles greedily kissed her with pure affection surging through his heart.

This atmosphere between them increased Sheryl's lust and desire, and as Charles pulled away to kiss her neck, she asked, "What about you? Will you be mine and only mine for the rest of our lives?"

Without hesitation, Charles looked at her straight into her eyes and replied, "Of course. Unless you personally hand me over to others, in this life, I only belong to you alone until the day of my last breath."

Sheryl felt like fireworks had just exploded inside of her, making her initiate another kiss. Charles took

this as cue and started to pull her towards the bed, letting the towel fall off the floor. As this two savored

this night together, they were wrong to ignore an important premise that what Charles had said just now

was, as long as Sheryl didn't hand Charles over to others, they would be together.

What did that mean?

If Sheryl really intended to give up and hand Charles over to others, did it mean that Charles would

accept it without a fight?

There were some problems that had no resolutions, and if these things weren't noticed by both parties

involved at all, then as a watcher, these things were to be ignored as well.