

Wedded Bride 1241

Chapter 1241 Don't Act Tough

'If Charles did whatever Melissa asked of him, then all my efforts to please this old woman would not be in vain. But as far as I've observed, he does not just blindly obey her.

If Charles finds out that I set Sheryl up with his mother, I might be unable to get back to Shining Company. I don't think Melissa could help me with that, ' she brooded, distressed.

As she thought it over, Leila was at a loss and didn't know whether she should work with Melissa in framing Sheryl.

"I haven't washed up yet. You know what? I was so thrilled that I was up the whole night. As long as I can teach that bitch an unforgettable lesson, I don't mind staying up and getting wrinkles on my face,"

Melissa said in high spirits. She entered the bathroom while she spoke to Leila on the phone. As she walked up to the mirror, she was stunned. She touched the corner of her eyes and abruptly screamed,

"Oh my God, Leila! I got new wrinkles around my eyes. What should I do?"

When Leila heard her scream, she smiled defiantly. 'A genuinely elegant woman would never scream like that, ' she thought to herself and sneered.

"Oh, Aunt Melissa, you must be kidding. You're young and beautiful. I don't think you would get

wrinkles. You must be seeing things because you didn't sleep all that well last night," Leila attempted to flatter Melissa.

The older woman gently touched the harsh lines around her eyes and asked skeptically, "Is that so?"

She sighed and went on, "You know what? For women my age, wrinkles are the worst enemy. Oh, never mind. Focus on driving. I'll talk to you later."

Melissa carried on saying some things and then reluctantly hung up the phone.

Leila dropped the phone onto the passenger seat. Her red lips curled into a contemptuous smile.

'She is nothing but an old, pathetic ex-convict. She doesn't even have a husband or a boyfriend. Why is she so concerned about looking good?'

At Eton Kindergarten

Clark held his sister's hand and obediently greeted his teachers at the gate of the school.

Sheryl waved at her lovely children with a smile. All of a sudden, Clark trotted over to her and motioned for her to bend down. She did as she was asked. He whispered in her ear, "Mom, if Grandma is still upset when you get home, please just ignore her."

Sheryl was surprised and touched by her son's sweet advice. With a warm smile, she replied, "Mom knows what to do. Don't worry. Grandma is an elder and I will always respect her."

"If she goes too far, please call Dad, okay? Don't act tough. I hate seeing you suffer," Clark pleaded with a worried look.

Sheryl patted his little head lightly, deeply moved by his innocence and concern. 'What a good boy! He is always so sweet, ' she joyfully thought as Clark ran back toward the gate to join his sister.

Watching her son and daughter walk through the gate hand in hand, Sheryl became lost in her own secret world.

'Several years have passed. My kids are already in kindergarten. When I lived with Shirley, I felt tired yet happy taking care of her. After going through so much, Charles and I finally got back together. Just as I started to experience the happiness of being with my family, trouble found me again.

Since Melissa got out of prison and moved into Dream Garden, she has been screwing up my life. She has kept bugging me and getting me into trouble. I was fed up with such a lousy life. But I couldn't do anything about it. She is my husband's birth mother, after all.

So I decided to endure her being unreasonable, and I told myself to live with it. But when will I stop

living such a life?'

Sheryl shook her head and smiled bitterly.

When she thought of what Melissa had said to her, Sheryl turned around and got into her car. The

moment she buckled up, her phone rang.

She took out her phone. It was Nick calling.

"Am I interrupting, Sheryl?" Nick's delightful voice, along with some workroom noises, resounded from

the other end of the line.

Sheryl couldn't help but laugh. She joked, "It sounds like you're much busier than I am. You've only

been out of the hospital for a couple of days. Have you instantly gone back to being a workaholic?"

Nick scratched his head and smiled, embarrassed. Sheryl was right. He was, in fact, at work. Lash

Technology was moving forward and making some progress. He needed to finish a project as soon as

possible to make more money for his company.

"Don't worry about me, Sheryl. I'll take good care of myself. Oh, I almost forgot what I called about.

When are you free? I'd like to treat you and Isla to a meal for checking in on me at the hospital. As for

the medical expenses I owe you..." Before he could finish his sentence, Sheryl interrupted.

"We're all friends, remember? Why are you still so formal with us?" Faking a sullen voice, Sheryl

added, "I accept your invitation. But if you continue to mention the medical bills, I'll get angry."

"Fine, fine, I won't bring it up. Please don't be mad at me," Nick conceded. He was grateful to Sheryl,

knowing that she was doing him a favor. At the moment, he didn't have enough money to pay her back.

"Good. Have you called and informed Isla?" Sheryl asked.

"I'll call her right after this. I'll meet you two at The Four Seasons Restaurant tonight, okay?" Nick said

gladly.

Sheryl agreed without a second thought. She didn't think Leila would stay and eat dinner at Dream

Garden. As a matter of fact, Leila had gone to her house several times, but they seldom met. Even if

Sheryl saw her, the former would only curtly say hello. She didn't like Leila after all.

Sheryl heaved a deep sigh at the thought of possibly dealing with two horrible women. After regaining

composure, she started the engine and headed straight for Dream Garden.

The second Nick ended the call, he planned to call Isla. But as he was about to dial her number, Bob

entered the office.

"Mr. Ge," the assistant greeted.

As Nick looked up and saw Bob, he suddenly remembered something. He asked, "Did Wilson give you a hard time last night?"

The assistant smiled at him and replied, "No, he didn't. He had a good time."

"I see. Did he say anything?" Nick continued. He was slightly surprised at how Wilson reportedly behaved the previous night. 'I agreed to meet Wilson but failed to keep my word. He is a grumpy man. He was supposed to be upset with me. But what's going on?' he thought.

"Here is the thing. I got several hot call girls to serve Wilson, and he enjoyed their company. Perhaps he had too much fun with them and hasn't gotten up yet," Bob explained. The assistant shook his head when he recalled the scene at the bar the previous night.

He hadn't expected that Wilson, the president of Amtel Company, was a lecherous man. 'When Wilson caught sight of the beautiful women at the bar, he automatically flirted with them. It was like a reflex. I don't know how he runs his company so well, ' Bob thought.

Of course, he didn't share his thoughts with his boss.

Bob's explanation set Nick's mind at ease. After thinking for a while, Nick said, "I'll make an appointment with Wilson for the contract signing this afternoon. I was worried that we might have lost the deal. Well done, Bob. Expect your bonus this month."

The assistant was overjoyed at what his boss just said. With a big smile on his face, Bob said, "Thank you, Mr. Ge. I was just doing my job. I will work even harder."

"I'm looking forward to an even better work performance from you," Nick encouraged.

Upon hearing this good news, he forgot all about calling Isla. Wasting no time, he buried himself in work once more.

At the hospital

Cassie sat in her office taking a break. Suddenly she got a call from Gamora, who told her that she was coming over to see a doctor.

Suspecting that her colleague friend might set her up again like the day before, Cassie lied to her, telling her that she wasn't on duty and that she should go to a different hospital.

She hung up the phone hastily and soon forgot about the call. But what she didn't expect was that

Gamora appeared at her office within half an hour.

Cassie was frightened at the sight of her; Gamora wore a pair of black sunglasses that covered half her face as well as a black mask. Cassie didn't recognize her until Gamora called out her name.

'Only popular celebrities dress that way to avoid being followed by the fanatic fans. Gamora isn't a star.

Why is she dressed like that?' she wondered.

Cassie was still lost in thought when Gamora pulled her to a corner where nobody could bother them.

Making sure that they were alone, Gamora took off her sunglasses and her mask, revealing her face to

Cassie.

'Oh my God!' Cassie almost screamed when she saw Gamora's face, but remembering that she was at the hospital, she quickly slapped her hand over her mouth.

"What...what happened to you?" Cassie asked, pointing at Gamora's face.

Her friend's face, once pretty and delicate, was swollen. Her big eyes were also swollen, looking like she had been beat up.

Suddenly, Cassie understood why her friend was dressed the way she was. 'If I were in her shoes, I would do the same as she did. People would stare at her if she hadn't disguised herself that way, ' she thought to herself.

She had been boiling with anger at Shawn's and Quill's insulting remarks and actions and at Gamora's setting her up, but now, when she saw her friend's face, some of her anger sizzled off. Now she was worried about her friend.

"Cassie, please help me!" Gamora pleaded, looking at Cassie with tearful eyes. She took a hold of Cassie's hand.

At her friend's request, Cassie thought of her job. 'I am a nurse and my job is to help the patient. She is a patient, and she is crying and asking me for help. If I refused to help her, I would not be a qualified nurse.'

Cassie sighed, rose from her seat and got the medical kit. As she went back to her injured friend, she started to take care of the bruises on her face.

Gamora hissed the moment Cassie touched her face with the alcohol swab. "It hurts. Be gentle, please!" Gamora demanded.

It took Cassie a while to handle all the wounds. When Cassie thought that her task was finished,

Gamora rolled the sleeves up on her shirt, and there were black and blue marks all over her arms.

Cassie's eyes widened; she stared at the bruises with a rattled expression. 'Oh jeez. How did she get so many wounds? Who did this to her? Someone must have abused her, ' she screeched in her head.

"Did those guys hit you?" Cassie blurted out without much thought.

Gamora nodded and with sadness etched on her face, she said, "Yes, they did. They blamed me for what happened yesterday... After they left the police station, they beat me and..." And there she stopped. She lowered her head and burst into a fit of loud crying.

Cassie felt bad for what had happened to her even though it wasn't her fault for what those rascals had done to her. Gamora was her former classmate after all. Now that she had learnt about her being mistreated, she didn't know how to comfort her.

"Those people... are beasts..." After Gamora uttered those words, she cried even more.

"You can sue them. You can bring them to justice. Why didn't you call the police?" Cassie looked at her friend.

"Call the police?" Gamora let out a wry laugh, and with a bitter smirk, she responded, "Their parents are influential people and know the head of the police. Some of them get away with killing people. If I called the police, they might kill me."

Cassie's heart missed a beat. She was a law-abiding citizen and all the people she knew were also law-abiding citizens. She had never gotten involved with police officers or the people in the underworld. If it weren't for Gamora, she wouldn't have met Quill and Shawn.

"What are you going to do now?" Cassie asked.

"I will play it by ear," Gamora replied. With a sigh, she continued, "Now that I can't leave them, I have to resign myself to my fate."

"Are you still planning to go back to those bad guys?" Cassie asked in disbelief. She didn't understand why Gamora would want to be with those bad people especially after what they had done to her.

Raising her head, Gamora focused her gaze on Cassie as she replied, "I have no other choice. I'm not good at anything and I don't have a high education background. I can't find a good job. I want to lead a comfortable life. I want to live in a big house, eat delicious food and wear designer clothes and carry designer handbags. I have to rely on them to live the life I want."

"What if they get upset and kill you? You're not safe with those guys." Cassie's voice increased in volume; she clenched her fists. 'Gamora doesn't deserve this. She deserves better.

She is young and beautiful. Why did she choose to live such a life?' she thought.

Gamora looked at Cassie and there was a tinge of embarrassment flashing through her eyes. Giving

her a small smile, she assured her, "Don't worry about me. As long as I please them, they will not beat me."

Realizing that she couldn't make Gamora change her mind, Cassie decided not to continue trying to dissuade her from them; she dropped the subject and switched onto another topic. Several minutes later, Gamora stood up from her seat and headed straight for the office door.

When she reached the door, Gamora turned to look at Cassie and said, "I'm sorry for getting you involved in this. But since you're already in it, please take care of yourself."

Cassie stared at Gamora with bemusement written all over her face. She felt like it would be their last meeting 'It seems like Gamora and I are not close enough for her to say those words to me, ' she muttered silently after Gamora had gone out of sight.

Cassie shook off her head. Soon enough, she forgot about Gamora's visit and continued on with her work.

In Holley's apartment

No sooner had Holley got out of the bathroom than she heard her phone buzzing.

Seeing Rachel's name, she let out a sneer. 'She's called me more times yesterday than she's ever called me last year.

It looks like she has no one else to help her out. Otherwise I wouldn't be her last hope and she wouldn't be calling me. I can't push this stupid woman too hard. She is still useful to me, ' she brooded.

Holley waited another minute, and when her phone stopped ringing, she strolled over to her table in no rush, and then picked up her phone to unlock it.

The very next second, her phone rang again like she expected.

This time Holley wasn't in a hurry to pick up the phone as well. Her phone kept buzzing, and after several minutes, she answered the phone as if she had foreseen that Rachel had run out of her patience and would end the call the next minute.

"Hello, is this Ms. Bai calling? I'm flattered. What can I do for you?" Holley said as if she was talking about the weather.

Anger fermented within Rachel as she sensed the sarcastic tone in Holley's voice. Considering that she

was in a helpless situation, plus she needed her help, she suppressed her fury.

"Holley, I know you always want to put Sheryl down. Last time, we had an argument, so you stopped

your plan. Don't you think it was a pity to put your plan aside? Without my help, you can't win over

Sheryl. Now we're in the same boat. If I lost everything, it wouldn't be good for you," Rachel said

matter-of-factly. Even though she was calling to turn to Holley for help, she still stressed how important

the role she played in the game to defeat Sheryl.

Her remark made Holley sneer inwardly. 'Rachel is out of options, but she still put on airs in front of me.

Does she take me for an idiot? It's so funny.'

Chapter 1242 Did She Take Me For An Idiot

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Chapter 1243 Miranda Was Irritated

"Ms. Bai, I do want to bring Sheryl down. But I have no choice but to give up on our plan. We're in

serious trouble. Charles is doing all he can to trouble Tarsan Corporation. I'm merely an employee. I

don't have much power. If you can't do anything about it, then what on earth could I do?" Holley said.

"Holley, don't talk nonsense. Didn't you say you had found a way to show Lance's wife the video? Can

you do that? Is the person who will deliver the video for us reliable? Since Lance doesn't care about

our corporation, we don't need to keep walking on eggshells around him," said Rachel sternly.

As she clenched her phone with uneasiness, she could feel her hands starting to sweat. At that point, she wasn't so sure whether or not Holley was still under her control.

"Of course. Don't worry, Ms. Bai, I already told you. My guy is reliable. This time, I'll execute the plan step by step and I won't allow any accidents to happen. I'm looking forward to seeing how Lance's wife will react...It will definitely be something unforgettable for Lance," Holley replied confidently on the phone.

Hearing the firmness in Holley's tone, Rachel felt rather relieved and her heart rate seemed to slow down.

Still, as she thought of Lance's and Chuck's mercilessness, Rachel couldn't help but clench her teeth out of hatred. 'Lance has pulled all he's capable of to stop me from exposing the video. I have to respond appropriately. This can only be a win for Tarsan Corporation...Lance and the others will be in trouble. Holley and I can then seize the opportunity to make more development plans for the company.'

"Holley, remember your words. I will believe in you again. I hope you won't let me down this time!"

"Ms. Bai, you can rest assured that this time, I'll complete the task without any problems."

Holley's promise sounded firm and confident.

After talking to Rachel, Holley immediately dialed Bernard's number.

The call was picked up on the first ring. "Hi Bernard. It's Holley. Please proceed with the plan as discussed. No matter how you do it, show Lance's wife the video as soon as possible. When the plan is successfully completed, I will pay you in full."

"Okay." Although Bernard wasn't expecting Holley's sudden order, he didn't say anything more. Since she was going to pay him generously, he just had to do as told. Soon after the call, Bernard got to work.

While Miranda, Lance's wife was resting in the villa, the doorbell rang unexpectedly. Wondering who would come to visit her at that time, she went to answer the door.

From the security footage, Miranda saw a young man in a black suit holding a folder—he seemed anxious. Thinking that the man seemed a bit familiar, she opened the door.

"Hello, Mrs. Zhan. I'm Mr. Zhan's assistant. He told me to pick up a conference document that was left at home." After explaining, the young man had to wipe away the sweat on his forehead.

"Okay, please come in. You can rest and have some water first. Did he tell you where the document is?"

I can have the housekeeper find it for you," Miranda kindly offered.

"Mr. Zhan didn't tell me exactly where it was. He said he might have left it at home or just somewhere in the company office...so he asked me to come here and look for it."

The young man then pulled out a jewelry box from his pocket and offered it to Miranda. "This is what Mr. Zhan asked me to give to you. Please open it and have a look."

"Lance? Why would he do something romantic? We've been married for so many years and he hasn't surprised me in a long time. Why would he suddenly give me a gift?"

Still, Miranda took the box over from the man and couldn't help but smile warmly.

After she received the gift, the assistant casually glanced at his phone and said to her, "I just got a message from the secretary. Apparently, they found the document at the office so I should go back now. I'm sorry for bothering you."

"It's no trouble. It's lucky that they found it. When Lance comes back, I'll have to criticize him for his carelessness!"

After seeing the young man off, Miranda eagerly opened the jewelry box. To her surprise, there was no necklace inside. Instead, the box contained a flash drive.

'Why would he give this to me?'

The gift piqued Miranda's curiosity about his intentions.

Not knowing what to expect, she connected it to her laptop. What she saw shocked her speechless.

In the drive was a disgusting scene of her husband having sex with another woman.

For a while, Miranda sat still and wide-eyed, panicking inside. But she reminded herself to calm down.

Having been married to Lance for so many years, she knew that he had had affairs but that didn't mean

she could easily accept the fact when she was presented with such explicit proof. It was clear to her

that she had been tricked by the young man who came by earlier—it was all to expose her husband's

affair.

'Lance, you wouldn't have anything you have today without my family's support all these years. Still,

you dare to have a disgusting affair with another woman? I will not let this go. You'll be punished

severely!' Miranda's thoughts were filled with vengeance.

Her eyes full of viciousness, she promised she would make him pay. 'Doesn't he always tell people he

is afraid of me? I'll make sure he knows how scary I can be!'

Calming herself down, she decided to pretend that nothing had happened for the time being to avoid being taunted by others.

It was time for her to pay her husband a little visit. To make her look more dignified, she headed upstairs to put on some makeup and a black and white fashion suit and heels.

When Miranda arrived at the company, she headed for Lance's office, but the receptionist stopped her.

Seeing Miranda's proud demeanor, the receptionist was worried she had offended someone powerful, but she dutifully asked her if she had an appointment set to see the CEO.

Distraught, Miranda reprimanded, "Don't you know who I am? How dare you stop me and ask for proof of my appointment! I hold half of the equity stake in this company. Look at me carefully. I'm Mr. Zhan's wife. Are you telling me that I need to make an appointment if I want to see my husband?"

After telling the receptionist off, Miranda went straight to the elevator before the girl could even react.

Worried that she made a huge mistake, the receptionist hurriedly called Lance at his office to let him know that his wife had just arrived.

As soon as Lance hung up the phone, Miranda opened the door and entered his office. Not having enough time to analyze Miranda's purpose, Lance immediately put on a welcoming smile and walked

over to her so he could hold her hand. "What brings you here? Don't you hang around with your friends today?"

"Why? Can't I come to your office to surprise you? Is there anything that you want to hide from me here?"

Miranda's tone was undoubtedly sarcastic.

"No...Of course not. I'm sorry... you must be tired since it's quite hot outside."

From Miranda's impatient demeanor and sarcastic tone, Lance's confusion about her visit only grew.

Chapter 1244 I Didn't Mean It

As Miranda examined Lance from head to toe, her gaze seemed to pierce through him. After a long pause, she merely snorted, "Is that so? I received an interesting video. Do you know what I'm talking about?"

As she spoke, her eyes were full of shame and fury.

Her words make Lance's heart jolt. 'Did she find the sex tape? God...Rachel is a difficult woman. I

already had the media ignore her but she still managed to cause me this much trouble by giving the

video to my wife, ' he thought with a deep frown. At this point, Lance felt much regret. 'Had I found out

her true colors earlier, I wouldn't have even fooled around with her. Now I'm in this shithole.

The first thing I have to do is get Miranda's forgiveness...' he planned.

"Honey, look, it was my fault. We businessmen sometimes have to pretend to flirt with these women on certain occasions. Someone must have gotten me drunk and set me up during my client meeting. You have to believe me," he explained, acting innocent.

In dangerous silence, Miranda merely stared at the look on his face, only feeling disgusted. As she recalled the satisfied expressions and aggressive advances he displayed in the video, fury grew in her heart. She was impatient to pick apart his lies.

"Do you think I'm an idiot? Do you think I'm still an 18-year-old, naïve, foolish girl? We've been married for years. I know what kind of person you are. Had I known you were a cheater and a coward back then, I wouldn't have married you. Where do you think you'd be if it weren't for me? You're nobody!" she harshly scolded, glaring at him with contempt in her eyes. In her anger, she touched his sore spot.

"Shut up!"

Letting his rage get the better of him, he swung his arm wide and slapped her across the face.

His wife's remark was like a sharp knife that pierced through him, leaving him nothing more than a

deflated balloon. It was true—before he married her, he was an ordinary, poor man, and it was a fact that he deeply hated to admit. The anger began to consume him.

"Who the hell do you think you are? I succeeded with my own efforts. You're in no position to judge me.

Do you hear me?" he cursed, pointing to her face.

"You bastard! You...you hit me! How dare you!" Miranda cried out, shooting daggers at him with her bloodthirsty eyes. Since she was used to Lance's compliant attitude toward her, his slap completely enraged her.

"Look at yourself. Do you know what you look like? An ill-bred woman. Do you think you're too good for me? Ridiculous. You've gone mad, woman. You're old and ugly now. How can you expect me to be faithful to you? Huh?" he suddenly blurted harsh words. Since Miranda pushed his buttons, he no longer had any intentions of pretending to suck up to her or keeping their marriage together.

"You think I'm mad, huh? I'll show you what a mad woman is capable of! You ungrateful bastard!" she cursed at him and her face distorted with rage. She had gotten carried away, and the only thought on her mind was that she would make her husband pay for what he had done to her.

Going ballistic, she shoved everything off his desk, letting it all fall and clatter to the ground.

Extremely furious, Lance couldn't even utter a word. He dashed forward and grabbed her wrist to stop her from going hysterical. Trying to handle his furious wife, he attempted to howl at her to shut her up but he was afraid that his employees would hear him and realize that he was in the middle of a huge argument with his wife. Meanwhile, Miranda tried to squirm out of his grasp. As he struggled to keep his grip on her, he slapped her hard once again to calm her down.

However, his actions only fueled her anger. Completely hysterical, Miranda didn't hesitate to reach for a vase before she smashed it into Lance's head.

The sound of the vase shattering into pieces echoed throughout the office, bringing Miranda back to her senses. On the ground was Lance as he went into convulsions. His lips quivering, he stared wide-eyed at her in silence.

The panic-stricken woman gaped at her husband, who looked devilish as blood trickled down his head, before she looked down at her own hand in disbelief.

Stooping down, she put her shaking finger under his nose only to find that he was no longer breathing.

"I...I didn't mean it...I never expected this to happen. This is all your fault... You caused your own

death, not me! It wasn't my fault! I don't want to go to jail!" Miranda murmured to herself as her whole body shook. All she could do was back away from the body as far as she could without leaving the room. At that moment, terror engulfed her. She had to repeatedly remind herself to stay composed, trying to comfort herself by saying that everything would be fine and that she would find a way out of this mess.

The sound of a telephone ringing almost made her jump.

Suddenly, the idea of finding a scapegoat dawned on her. 'That's it...I just need to find someone to take the blame for me, ' she decided.

After regaining her composure, Miranda picked up the phone.

"Hello! This is Miranda. Lance got tired and is taking a break right now," she said sternly.

"Hello, Mrs. Zhan. Ms. Bai and Miss Ye want to see him for an appointment in ten minutes. I'm calling to ask whether or not he wants to see them," the secretary politely reported.

"Who are they? Is one of them Rachel Bai?" she asked. When she watched the video, she found the woman familiar. After doing some research, she realized that the woman was Rachel Bai.

"Yes, she is one of the visitors," the secretary confirmed.

"I see. I asked my husband and he agreed to meet them. I'm leaving soon," Miranda said as calmly as she could.

'I only have ten minutes. I have to be quick!' she reminded herself.

Now that she targeted her scapegoat, Miranda felt much more composed in spite of the situation.

'Rachel...you're nothing but a slut. It was your fault. You messed with the wrong person. You deserve this, ' she sneered as she thought.

Wasting no time, she wiped the blood off Lance's face and struggled to drag him to the desk until she seated him in his armchair, positioning his arms on the armrests. Hurriedly, she put all the things she pushed off the desk earlier back in their original places. When everything was in order, she pulled out a mirror from her handbag and smoothed down her hair. Without sparing her husband a glance, she straightened her clothes and walked out of the office with a poised expression as if nothing strange happened in the office.

When Holley and Rachel were on their floor, Miranda hid in a corner near Lance's office to watch the two women enter the room. Just as they were about to push the door open, Miranda headed straight to

the safety exit and rushed down the stairs.

While she hurried downstairs, she called up one of her most trusted subordinates who worked as Lance's employee to have him delete all the security footage from Lance's office and fabricate the video. A mere few minutes later, Miranda was notified that the task was completed and she sighed heavily in relief.

When she was out of the building, she drove back to the villa.

'Lance must be upset because his wife found the video. That's why he agreed to see us.

When we tried to see him before, he would always find some kind of excuse to turn us away. Looks like our tactic worked, ' Holley and Rachel guessed.

Instead of knocking on the door, Rachel just pushed the door open and stepped into the office. "Hello,

Mr. Zhan!"

Rachel greeted him as Holley followed her inside. Without receiving a response, the two saw Lance seated in his armchair with his eyes closed.

'Did he really doze off?' Rachel wondered. When she looked at Holley, they shared a confused

expression.

'Should we wait here or come back another day?' Rachel wasn't sure what to do.

After a moment, the two retreated to the door, intending to wait for the CEO to wake up.

Chapter 1245 Scapegoat

Suddenly, Holley and Rachel heard loud noises coming from the outside, accompanied by footsteps approaching them.

The door was kicked open.

"Freeze! Hands Up! Put your hands where I can see them!" Dressed in uniforms, a crowd of police officers broke down the door. One of them showed his badge, while the remaining two grabbed a hold of the two women.

Rachel and Holley were caught off guard by the scene. Needless to say, they were both in shock.

'What's going on? We didn't do anything wrong, so there's nothing to be afraid of, right? Perhaps they're here for Lance...If it's not us, then it must be him. Did he do something wrong? Lance runs a business in the entertainment industry, so it is possible that he'd get into some type of trouble along the line. In fact, it's very likely that he did. Even if he thought he'd managed to get away with it, it doesn't mean he'd remain lucky forever, ' they speculated, relieved about the idea that it was him the officers

were looking for and not them.

However, what was about to happen next, would completely catch them off guard. Several officers

walked up to Lance, and one reached out his hand and placed it under Lance's nose to see whether he

was still breathing.

Then another officer walked towards them and said coldly, "We received a call and were informed that

someone got killed. You are now the suspects of this case and are permitted to come with us."

It was Miranda who instructed an anonymous person to call the police. It was her intention to set

Rachel up.

"What? What are you talking about? I did nothing wrong," Holley and Rachel exclaimed in shock at the

same time as they tried to process the officer's demands.

"Sir, there must be some sort of misunderstanding. Lance agreed to meet us ten minutes ago. How is it

possible for him to get killed in such a brief period? Besides, we just arrived here. Even if he's dead

now, we have nothing to do with it. We...we're innocent," Rachel explained in a trembling voice. Her

anxiety got the better of her.

She immediately felt uneasy. Holley backed up Rachel's words, as she stood up for herself and her boss. They weren't about to accept the consequences for something they didn't do. They were involved in a homicide case, after all.

"It doesn't matter what you say now. We'll investigate the case and find the culprit, but until we do, you'll have to go to the police station with us and cooperate with our investigation," the police chief began. Without giving them the opportunity to respond once more, he ordered his men to take Holley and Rachel away and block the scene.

Under the cold, bright lights, the cold sweat dripped from Holley's and Rachel's foreheads. They were sitting in an interrogation room in the police station.

The police continued asking them how they murdered Lance, and ignored their previous claims, which suggested their innocence. Both Holley and Rachel felt like they were losing their minds. They had no idea how they had gotten themselves involved in a murder case. They continued stating that they were innocent.

"So, the victim died exactly around the time you arranged to meet him. We currently have the security camera footage, which was taken in Silver Corporation. It shows that you were arguing with Lance. As

it stands, you're the most likely suspects in our case," an officer said calmly. In fact, he was furious with the two women, who seemed as though they were completely oblivious. However, to make them confess, he had to control his anger.

As the two women remained silent, he changed the topic immediately. "Since you're still claiming innocence, tell me why you arranged to meet with the victim today. As far as we know, Ms. Bai, you are experiencing serious problems in your company. Shouldn't you be busy solving problems? How come you had the time to meet with the victim unless it was to discuss a serious matter?"

"We... we've never had any problems with Lance before. We met up with him to discuss business. My company is currently experiencing a crisis, so I intended to turn to him for help. However, we never got to meet up with him. He was already dead when we arrived," Rachel replied, forcing herself to remain calm.

Holley nodded her head several times.

"Sir, I'm telling you now, we are both innocent. Please believe us. We're women and we think we might have been framed. It's impossible for us to have killed Lance," Holley added.

"Well, according to the employees of Silver Corporation, you requested to come over to the victim's company several times before. However, he refused to meet with you. Perhaps that's why you got upset with him. Both of you had a motive," the officer continued.

"Stop. This is just you making an assumption and not stating a fact. You don't have any proof to support it. I'm telling you that we have nothing to do with it," Holley extricated hurriedly as she glanced at Rachel, who was sitting dead silent with a terrified look on her face.

At this point, Rachel only had one thought in her mind and that was to hide the sex video footage from the police. That video would ruin her entire reputation. What was worse, it might even be mistaken for evidence to prove that she threatened or blackmailed Lance.

Since both she and Holley were innocent, she didn't think they would be sent to jail. There was no evidence to support the police's claims.

"How do you know we don't have any evidence, Miss Ye?" the officer countered, observing the facial expressions on the two suspects' faces.

His question left Holley and Rachel shocked.

"Well, I told you I had the surveillance video showing you meeting with the victim at Silver Corporation.

It shows you two being the only ones who entered the victim's office and even fought with him this morning. We're just not sure who beat him to death, or whether both of you played a part in his death.

You don't believe me, huh? Would you like to watch the video yourselves?" he went on.

The two were dumbstruck as they heard what the officer said. He then proceeded to show them the video. Sitting back in his chair, he watched their perfectly painted faces turn extremely pale. 'What the hell is going on here?

We didn't kill him. So, why does the evidence suggest that we're the murderers? Did someone set us up? Who would do this to us?' A million questions ran through their minds.

The two felt puzzled and completely helpless at the sight of the video.

"Sir, please listen to me. We didn't do this. We are innocent and that surveillance video... It must be fake. Please, you must believe us. We would never in a million years do such a thing," Rachel cried out desperately.

Holley's mind started racing. 'It's impossible for both Rachel and me to leave here together. All of the existing proof is against us. I don't know who framed us...All I know is that neither of us did it.

I'd rather take a chance and admit guilt for this than having both of us ending up in jail. Rachel can get out of here and try and figure out the truth. Since we're innocent, the truth is bound to come out somehow, ' she brooded.

The next second, another thought popped into her mind.

In fact, she started speculating about Lance's death. She suddenly thought of a person, whom she believed had something to do with it.

'If I take the initiative to take the blame, Rachel will be grateful towards me and trust me again. I need to be trusted by her once more.

If we were to be put behind bars together, no one would be able to help us, nor prove our innocence.

Then it would be over for the both of us...There's no other way.

However, I might have to spend some time in prison, ' she lingered.

Chapter 1246 Am I Not Allowed

After dropping off her kids at school, Sheryl came back to Dream Garden. Before she could step out of her car, she saw another car following behind her in her rear-view mirror. When she took a closer look, she saw that it was Leila's car.

To signal that she needed a place to park, Leila rolled down her window and whistled. The sharp,

obnoxious noise took Sheryl by surprise.

"Who does she think she is?" murmured Sheryl, irritated by the woman's entrance.

"Does she think this is her house?"

"Mrs. Lu..." The driver tilted his head toward Sheryl.

Though he just called her name, Sheryl knew what the driver meant—he wanted to know whether or not they were going to make room for Leila to park. Since they were in the only spot left for parking, the driver couldn't make the decision on his own. Silent and tight-lipped for a while, Sheryl finally nodded her head slightly to the driver. Originally, Sheryl didn't intend to do Leila any favors, but since she didn't have to head out that day, she could let her car stay in the underground garage earlier than usual.

With Sheryl's permission, the driver quickly restarted the car and parked it in the underground garage.

Without hesitation, Leila drove forward to take Sheryl's place. When the car door sprang open, a pair of long, slim legs stretched out from inside the car before a delicate face wearing black sunglasses poked out as well.

The woman was dressed rather glamorously—her black skirt perfectly highlighted her body's curves

and her top's neckline exposed her sexy collarbones that were decorated with a shiny blue-emerald neckless. Clearly, she had put effort into her appearance before arriving. Although she had indeed fulfilled that purpose, Leila ignored the idea that as a woman, the most charming way for her to show her beauty was to look delicate and vulnerable. Her rather brash entrance spoiled that sense of beauty.

Disgusted at the sight, Sheryl turned around and walked into the house.

Behind her back, Leila stared at her coldly as she bit her lips.

The deep grudge she had against Sheryl was stronger than ever. Inside her heart, Leila screamed, 'Every time I see this bitch, all I want to do is skin her and feed her bones and flesh to the dogs. If it weren't for that bitch, I wouldn't have stayed in prison for so long! She's the one who made me waste my most wonderful years in that goddamn hellhole! It's all her fault! I'll never forget!'

At the thought, resentment and hatred filled Leila's chest in an instant. The emotions almost made her completely lose control of herself.

When she came back to her senses, Leila followed Sheryl into the house. In the dining hall, Melissa was watching the clock, waiting for their arrival.

"Sher!" Nancy called out to her as soon as Sheryl stepped into the dining hall. A signaling wink

accompanied the greeting.

While Sheryl was away, Nancy had to go through a rather unpleasant experience.

Earlier in the morning, while Nancy was busy preparing breakfast for Melissa, the latter waited at the table. The otherwise peaceful morning was ruined by a petty mistake—when Nancy served food onto the table, she accidentally brushed against Melissa's arm.

The contact made Melissa's face twist into disgust. With a glare, she immediately yelled, "What are you doing? How can you be so careless to touch my arm?"

And for someone of your old age, you're as careless as a child!"

All her life, what Melissa had suffered through and hated most was other people touching what belonged to her without her permission, including her own body. In her eyes, what Nancy had just done was absolutely nasty and it infuriated her.

"Mrs. Lu I'm sorry. I'm so sorry. I didn't mean to..."

As Nancy stuttered out an apology, she nervously stared at Melissa's furious face.

Regardless of Nancy's apology, Melissa continued abusing until she got tired. She then headed straight

for the bathroom without sparing a glance at the woman she had just insulted. As she spewed harsh words at Nancy, Melissa couldn't wait to scrub her arm clean at the thought that Nancy's hands were dirty from doing all the housework.

Watching Melissa go into the bathroom, Nancy realized that all the towels had been sent to the laundry, leaving none in the bathroom.

Afraid of further aggravating Melissa, Nancy ran out to find a new one for the former to use.

Before knocking on the door to pass the towel to Melissa, she found that there was some commotion coming from inside—Melissa was loudly complaining about something. "I can't stand it anymore! As long as Sheryl and Nancy stay in this house for one more day, I won't get a good night's sleep. Sooner or later, I have to drive them both away. Their presence here ruins everything...I have to punish them!

Thank god Leila is coming today. I know she hates them as much as I do. Once she arrives, I'll give those two a taste of what a real nightmare is...."

Melissa's outburst left Nancy wide-eyed.

Though it was no surprise that Melissa hated her and Sheryl, she couldn't believe that Melissa would go to such an extent that she would conspire with Leila to drive people away from the family.

The more Nancy thought about it, the more anxious she grew. It was hard to imagine what it would be like if Melissa successfully carried out her plan.

'No, it won't happen. Charles would never let her do that...Sheryl has been part of this family for so long! If she was driven away, who would care for the kids?'

As the thought sunk in, the sound of running water came from the bathroom and at once, Nancy pulled herself back to her senses. Composing herself, she carefully knocked on the door to pass the towel to Melissa.

Since that incident, Nancy had been waiting to tell Sheryl about it.

Now that Sheryl and Leila were home, Nancy felt the urgency to tell her friend about Melissa's intentions before it was too late. Unfortunately, Sheryl couldn't understand her subtle hint.

With cold eyes, Melissa stared Sheryl down. When she heard someone else's footsteps, her face changed instantly—she must have immediately known it was Leila. A burst of happiness overcame her and she bypassed Sheryl, walking straight toward her friend. "Leila, you finally come! I missed you so much!" she eagerly called.

Hearing the warm and hearty tone that Melissa used to greet Leila, Sheryl couldn't help but feel a little jealous. Leila must have been Melissa's ideal daughter-in-law.

Not wanting to watch the scene any longer, she turned her head away and asked herself in her heart, 'Has she ever treated me as friendly as she just did with Leila?' The thought made Sheryl turn a little gloomy.

Meanwhile, Nancy caught a glimpse of Sheryl's expression. She thought that maybe Sheryl could have figured out Melissa's plot.

Responding to Melissa's welcoming gesture, Leila walked toward her as well.

"Aunt Melissa, I missed you too! I've been looking forward to seeing you." She faked a smile.

As the two shared a hug, Melissa looked so pleased and excited with her arms around Leila. After a moment, she stepped back and studied the latter from head to toe. With a thoughtful look, she gently said, "Look at your pretty face. It looks so pale. Have you been eating right? I've been so worried about you. You must take care of yourself because I want you..."

Something made Melissa pause—it wasn't yet the right moment to say what she was supposed to share with Leila in private. She always appreciated Leila and regarded her as her daughter-in-law. Of

course, it was her dream for Leila to end up as Charles' wife, so that the latter could take care of both herself and her son. In front of Sheryl, Melissa knew that it was better to watch her tongue for the time being.

Suddenly, she turned to look at Sheryl and Nancy. "What are you doing? Don't you see that we are having a guest? Go and make tea for Leila!" she ordered.

"Yes, Mrs. Lu." Lowering her head, Nancy headed for the kitchen just as was ordered.

Melissa gave Sheryl an unhappy look. "You go help her. I want to be alone with Leila. It's private, you're not allowed to listen."

'Not allowed?'

Sheryl couldn't believe what she just heard.

'I am Charles' wife! Your daughter-in-law! How can you treat me like a stranger in front of an outsider?'

Do you have any idea of the awful things she has done to this family?' As Sheryl thought to herself, she had to hold back the tears welling in her eyes.

'You'll never accept me. Why don't you just kick me out of this house? If that's the case, I wouldn't be

here to stand in the way of your little moment with Leila. Why did you ask me to stay this morning?

You said I was the hostess of the family this morning. Yet you are now treating me as an outsider. In

your eyes, I'm nothing!

As she recalled how happily and eagerly Melissa received Leila earlier, Sheryl's heart sank. Never had

she seen Melissa show her anything close to that.

After shooing Sheryl away, Melissa simply turned back to Leila to share in another embrace—the sight

made Sheryl despair. Without a word, Sheryl froze as she wore a dull, indifferent look. In her heart, she

told herself, 'This will be the last time she'll ever hurt me.' With a deep breath, she calmed down at last.

Chapter 1247 Hurry Up

'Anyway, I've always known that Melissa will never acknowledge me. It's not that bad. If I accept that, I

won't need to rack my brains to try and please her, ' Sheryl thought.

Without another word, she followed Nancy into the kitchen. While the latter made tea, she stole several

glances at Sheryl. Every time she tried to speak, something stopped her.

Preoccupied with her own thoughts, she initially didn't notice Nancy's anxious expression. When she

snapped out of her trance and detected the hesitant look on Nancy's face, Sheryl asked in confusion,

"Do you have something to tell me, Nancy?"

Going on alert, Nancy looked up to check the kitchen door, making sure they weren't heard. With a tense look on her face, she leaned in closer to Sheryl and lowered her voice saying, "After you left this morning, I overheard Mrs. Lu..."

Briefly, she filled in Sheryl on what happened. Out of good will, she reminded Sheryl, "I could tell Mrs. Lu doesn't take a liking to you. She might give you a harder time later. You must be careful."

The other merely nodded in reply. Having lived under the same roof with Melissa for a while, she learned a thing or two about her.

'Melissa is an arrogant, stubborn, pretentious woman, and she loves being flattered. That's why she gets along with Leila so well.

Her biggest problem is her sharp tongue and quick temper—she couldn't tolerate losing an argument.

Perhaps she got angry about what I said to her last night. She didn't know how to vent her anger, so as a result, she just blurted all her complaints out when she was alone, ' she analyzed.

In spite of that, Sheryl didn't believe that Melissa was as vengeful as Nancy described her to be. 'No matter how much she hates me, she is unlikely to really hurt me or get me into trouble, at least for the

sake of Charles and her grandchildren, ' she continued to muse.

Stroking the back of Nancy's hand, Sheryl tried to say something to set the other's mind at ease when

Melissa's yelling suddenly reached their ears. "Where is our tea? We've been waiting for so long. Did

you forget my order?"

Immediately, Sheryl called back, "Please wait a minute."

To satisfy the other two women, Nancy prepared the tea and put the cups and teapot on a tray, ready to

be served.

In the living room, Melissa nodded at Leila while the latter gave her a subtle smile.

Behind Leila's back, her hand was balled up into a clenched fist. A hint of anxiety flashed in her eyes.

'Will this plan really work? I'm not so sure...' she thought and fidgeted in her seat.

In a second, Nancy emerged into the living room with two cups of tea and Sheryl followed behind her.

Serving Melissa and her guest, Nancy poured the tea into two exquisite teacups before taking several

steps backward. "Mrs. Lu, Miss Zhang, please enjoy your tea."

Knowing that Nancy would otherwise stay and take care of things, Sheryl gave her a nod, signaling that

she could leave.

In this situation, Sheryl didn't want to give Melissa any chance to scold Nancy so unreasonably again.

Lately, when Charles' mother was in a bad mood, the maid was always on the receiving end of her fits.

Understanding what Sheryl meant, Nancy left the living room.

Lifting her eyes slightly, Melissa secretly cast a glance at Sheryl. The next second, she reached out and rubbed her temples, grimacing in pain.

At the sight, Leila instantly got up and rushed to take a seat next to the woman. Worriedly, she said,

"Aunt Melissa, you don't look so good. Are you all right?"

Upon hearing this, Sheryl noticed that Melissa didn't look well. 'She was good and energetic when I went to the kitchen. Why does she look sick all of a sudden?' she wondered in confusion.

With a frown, she inquired, "Mom, did you get a headache?"

In a weak voice, Melissa answered, "Yes..." Rolling her eyes to look at Sheryl, she continued,

"Somehow my head is killing me. Since Nancy isn't around, you go upstairs and get my medicine."

"But..." Sheryl hesitated. Melissa's words of forbidding her to enter her bedroom rang clear in Sheryl's head.

"Aunt Melissa, how about I go and get it for you? Please tell me where I can find it," Leila instantly offered.

Her eyes widening, she stared at Sheryl in fury and cursed, "You can't even bother to do me a small favor like this, huh? Even if I die here, you'll just think it's none of your business, right?"

'She's being so unreasonable again. I said nothing, but she just likes to think of me as an evil woman,' she sighed inwardly.

"Please tell me where you placed the medicine. I'm on it," Sheryl calmly answered. Since Melissa had a bad headache, Sheryl didn't want to argue with her.

The response was satisfying enough and Melissa weakly replied, "It's a white drug bottle. It's in the first drawer of the bedside table in my room."

After a pause, she sternly added, "Don't touch my other stuff."

'You're thinking too much!' Sheryl snapped back in her head. With that, Sheryl turned around and headed upstairs.

When Sheryl was out of sight, Melissa glanced around carefully to make sure she didn't catch any sight of Nancy. She grabbed Leila's hand and pulled her to the table.

"Hurry up! No one is around.

"I'll keep an eye out," Melissa instructed.

With her shaking hand, Leila pulled a small drug bottle out of her handbag. A surge of trepidation took over her as she thought of taking the pills in her hand. Leila stared at the bottle with a stunned expression.

"What are you doing, Leila? Pour the powder into the tea. Hurry! We're out of time!"

Melissa lowered her voice as she urged.

Looking up at Melissa, Leila worriedly said, "Aunt Melissa, I'll lose consciousness after taking these pills. Please send me to the hospital in time...

or my life will be in danger."

Thinking about how to set Sheryl up, Melissa paid no mind to what Leila said. Waving off the comment,

Melissa responded, "Don't worry about that. Be quick! She'll be back soon. It'll be difficult to carry out our plan when she does."

To dispel all her misgivings, Leila gritted her teeth and poured the powder into her cup, stirring it well.

Mesmerized, she watched as the white power completely dissolved in the green tea. As she picked up the cup to drink it, Melissa stopped her.

"Wait. Drink it when Sheryl comes downstairs," Melissa said.

Fixing her eyes on the tea, Leila swallowed nervously and nodded in agreement.

Because of Melissa's warning, it was the first time that Sheryl had entered her bedroom. Never would she have expected herself to be standing inside.

Since Melissa moved in, her room had been refurbished. As she surveyed the interior design, she noted that it was indeed, luxurious, going rather well with Melissa's usual style.

Without lingering inside, Sheryl went straight to the night table and opened the first drawer just as she was instructed to. Inside, the white drug bottle came into view.

'I guess this is what she needs, ' she thought. Picking the bottle up, she walked out of the bedroom.

When she reached the first floor, she saw Melissa and Leila happily chatting away—the old lady didn't look as sick as she did a few minutes ago. As skeptical as Sheryl was, she had no intention of voicing her doubts—she didn't want to get into trouble with those two.

"Mom, here it is."

Promptly, she handed the bottle to her.

Though Melissa snatched the bottle from Sheryl's hand, she didn't take the medicine. Instead, she rubbed her temples and smiled at Leila as she said, "I don't know what's going on. After I talked to you, my pain is almost all gone. It's unbelievable."

With a smile, Leila responded, "Aunt Melissa, I think you had a headache because you haven't slept well. There's no need to take medicine, now. You just need more rest. Taking too many pills can be harmful to your health."

Chapter 1248 Scare The Hell Out Of Me

Leila's endearingly sweet words satisfied Melissa. The pleasure radiated from the old lady's face as she glanced at Sheryl sternly, and then shifted her gaze back to Leila. "That's really nice of you, Leila. If you hadn't come to visit me, I might still have a headache. You're the first person that has ever been so gracious and good to me. Unfortunately, someone only succeeds in upsetting me," she said with a sigh.

Melissa's insulting words towards Sheryl brought much delight to Leila, who was more than happy to see Sheryl get bullied.

In response to Melissa's rude words, Sheryl simply smiled.

Sheryl's response disappointed Melissa. She then pointed to the tea in front of Leila and said, "Here,

Sheryl made it for you. Please have some tea. I hope you'll like it."

Leila's heart jolted. The moment she feared the most finally arrived.

After spending several years in prison, she finally learned how to cherish life. At this point, she was

more scared of death than ever before. However, to put Sheryl down, she was forced to drug herself.

She wasn't sure if she had made the right decision.

'Is it really a good idea to put my life in the hands of others? I mean, what if she fails to send me to the

hospital to get immediate treatment?' She hesitated for a second.

Melissa noticed the hesitant look on her face. With a smile, she urged, "Leila, I got the tea as a present

from one of my good old friends last year. This tea is difficult to find. Please, try it."

Terrified as she was, Leila proceeded to drink the tea.

Later, the two women switched the topic, leaving Sheryl standing there in silence. As a result, she sat

down and watched them quietly.

About half an hour later, Leila's face turned as pale as a white sheet. Her forehead was covered in

beads of sweats; swaying from side to side, she fell down on the couch.

"Aunt Melissa, hurry up! Please, send me to the hospital..." Leila said in a weak tone, her face

distorting in pain. The only thing Leila could think about, was that she couldn't die like this. 'I must get through this somehow. I don't want to die, ' she told herself.

Melissa giggled on the inside, as she knew that the drug was taking effect. However, she didn't show it on her face. She then shouted, pretending as though she was worried, "Leila, what's wrong? Did you have anything bad to eat?"

Sheryl was startled by the scene displayed in front of her. 'She was fine a minute ago. How come she suddenly got sick? Is she faking an illness?' she wondered with arched eyebrows.

She moved closer to Leila and reached out her hand to touch her forehead. However, before she could touch Leila, Melissa interrupted, hitting her hand away. The old lady hollered at Sheryl, "You must have put something in the tea! Otherwise, she wouldn't have been poisoned."

'What? Leila was poisoned?' Sheryl's eyes widened in shock.

Sheryl didn't even suspect that Leila was poisoned. Melissa's statement left her in immediate panic.

'If Melissa is right, then she needs to be sent to the hospital right this second. Otherwise, her life will be

in grave danger.'

At the thought of this, Sheryl ran towards the table and grabbed her cellphone. She called their chauffeur and asked him to wait for her at the gate of Dream Garden.

As she ended the call, she dashed back to the couch where Leila was lying helplessly. With a panic-stricken expression, she said to Melissa, "Mom, we need to take Leila to the emergency room at the hospital immediately, before it's too late."

Upon hearing this, Melissa realized that she forgot something. 'Oh, wait...I remember now. Leila told me to send her to the hospital the moment she loses consciousness or her life will be in danger.

There's a possibility that she might die!' she reflected.

Suddenly, a horrible thought dawned upon her.

'If Leila dies, I can simply place all the blame on Sheryl. That way, Sheryl would be sentenced to death, or at least be put behind bars for the rest of her life which is what she deserves. That way, she will never have the chance to step into my house ever again...'

Melissa was overcome with excitement. The next second, she was caught in an infinite state of apprehension.

'Although I really hate Sheryl, Leila is innocent. She has been good to me, and I already planned for her to become my future daughter-in-law.

No, I can't do this. I can't let Leila just die, ' she decided.

"You're right, Sheryl. We need to take her to the hospital right now," Melissa replied in a serious tone.

Sheryl and Melissa worked together to pick Leila up from the couch. Sheryl then carried Leila to the gate and Melissa followed.

Walking towards the gate, the chauffeur had just arrived in time. Spotting the three coming his way, he hurried out of the car, opened the door and sprinted towards Sheryl to help her. He didn't dare to ask what happened. He just held Leila up with his hands and put her in the back seat of the car. Turning to Melissa and Sheryl, he waited for their next instruction.

"To the hospital," Sheryl said as she opened the door of the passenger seat. Before she got into the car, she turned around and said to Melissa, "Mom, please don't worry about Leila. I'll let you know when she wakes up."

Examining the extent of the trouble she had caused, Melissa panicked. Hence, she only managed to

nod at Sheryl.

Watching the car speed away, Melissa felt her legs turning numb. She reached out her hand to grab a hold of the wall.

"Come on, Leila, you can't die now. If something happens to you, I will never forgive myself..." Melissa muttered. She was extremely agitated. All of a sudden, Nancy's voice reached her ears.

"Mrs. Lu, what's wrong? Did something happen?"

Watching the scene from afar, while Nancy was busy gardening in the back yard, she heard the car drive away. Exiting the gate, she found Melissa standing by herself and muttering in a panic.

'Why did she say that she'd never be able to forgive herself?' Nancy wondered. She thought that Melissa was acting rather strange than usual.

Taken by great surprise, Melissa glared at the maid fiercely and scolded, "What the hell is wrong with you? You scared the living life out of me!"

"Oh, I'm so sorry, Mrs. Lu. I called you several times but you didn't answer me," Nancy apologized.

"Uh...Where did Sher and Miss Zhang go?" she inquired as she looked around, noticing that there was no sign of anyone else at home.

"Leila drank some tea and got poisoned. Both you and Sheryl will be in big trouble if Leila doesn't wake up," Melissa warned with a stern, dark look on her face.

Upon hearing this, Nancy was astonished and terrified. 'Wait...How come I'm involved in this?

The tea was poisoned? That's impossible. I was in the kitchen the whole time to prepare the tea and didn't leave it until it was served. No one even had the chance to touch it.

Besides, how did Melissa know that the tea had been poisoned? She isn't a doctor. How could she possibly make the assumption that Miss Zhang was poisoned?' the maid thought doubtfully.

Interrupting her train of thought, she then saw the ferocious look in Melissa's eyes and didn't have the nerve to blurt out her doubts. As a result, she lowered her head and moved aside.

'When Sheryl comes back, we'll get to the bottom of what happened. I hope Leila will pull through this, ' she prayed.

In the Lu family's residence

Melissa had made her way to her bedroom. She couldn't stop thinking about what she had done, as she paced back and forth anxiously.

At this point, she was extremely scared. Since Leila had been carried into the car, her heart kept beating fast.

'This time the stakes are way too high. If Leila dies in the hospital, the problem will be elevated,' she thought.

Melissa never wanted to hurt Sheryl. All she wanted, was for Sheryl to propose a divorce to Charles so that she didn't have to be faced with seeing her every day. However, she had never thought that she would have to sacrifice a person's life at the expense of achieving her goal.

'I hope Leila will make it. More importantly, I hope I manage to kick Sheryl out of my house this time,' she pondered whilst praying.

Chapter 1249 Does It Really Make Sense

Sheryl hadn't returned yet. She was probably still in the hospital. Was she waiting for Leila to wake up?

Sheryl and Nancy were the only two that knew about Leila was being poisoned. 'I must do something to make others believe Sheryl poisoned Leila!' Melissa thought.

A streak of gloom flashed through her eyes but soon disappeared.

She thought about the situation for a moment and immediately got out her cellphone to make a call.

The person on the other end of the line simply asked her, " Mrs. Lu, how can I help you this time? What

would you like to report now?"

"A family scandal," Melissa said these two words at ease. She was way too calm to be taken seriously.

"A family scandal, Mrs. Lu? Did I hear correctly?"

"Oh, enough with the unnecessary questions. Listen, what I'm going to tell you right now is important..."

Melissa opened her mouth. She paused for a second and then slowly explained her plans.

The man on the other end of the line listened patiently. As he waited for her to finish her story, a spur of

excitement appeared on his face. Raising his eyebrows several times, he replied, "Okay, well, this is

definitely big news. Thank you for sharing your 'family scandal, ' Mrs. Lu."

"Just keep your mouth shut. Remember, you never heard it from me. If you do, you'll suffer the

consequences," Melissa said coldly.

"Yes, of course. I am aware."

At the police station

After careful consideration, Holley finally made the decision to confess her guilt. She had it in her mind

that Rachel wouldn't let her down.

As Rachel kept defending herself, Holley's voice suddenly came out.

"It was I who accidentally killed Lance. It was all my fault and not Rachel's! She had nothing to do with it."

Upon hearing this, both Rachel and the police were shocked. Holley's voice was so loud that her confession echoed in the interrogation room.

Rachel stared at Holley in confusion. At this point, she felt strange, as though she had become a complete stranger to her.

There was a warm flutter in her chest that left Rachel speechless. Suddenly, tears filled her eyes.

She never expected Holley to take the blame for Lance's death.

She thought they were always at odds with each other, but she was surprised that Holley took all the blame on her.

"Holley, you..." Rachel was crying and at that moment, unable to speak.

Holley looked at Rachel in the eye. She hoped that Rachel could find out the real murderer.

She had a lot of doubts about Rachel, but she had no other choice right now.

The only thing she could do was hope for the best.

"Ms. Bai, you go back first. I believe that the truth will come out one day, and that we can get together again," Holley said firmly.

Actually, she had guessed who the real murderer was. Once Rachel was out, all she needed to do was investigate Lance's wife. Then the truth would come out.

She believed she would soon be released after the murderer was caught.

Rachel immediately understood what Holley meant. However, she was uncertain about how to get to the bottom of the truth. She had no idea what to do next.

Even though Rachel was unaware of what to do, she could see that Holley needed her commitment.

Under Holley's intense gaze, Rachel hesitated and said, "Holley, you can rest assured. I'll find a way to fix this."

"I believe you, Ms. Bai."

At that moment, even the policeman admired Holley for confessing to the murder.

He was used to people fighting against each other in the police station to pass the blame on to others.

Never before had they ever come across a voluntary confessor like Holley.

Both Holley and the police listened to Rachel, who was sobbing, as though she had depleted all of her strength to restrain herself.

Her crying was light yet very touching.

After five minutes, Rachel raised her head to face Holley.

With her teary face, she looked rather pitiful at this moment.

"Holley, thank you." She spoke slowly yet firmly.

Rachel was taken to another room for more questioning.

"So, Holley admitted to killing the victim. Since you were present at the time, we need you to describe the scene to us."

"Well, I was thinking about how to negotiate with Mr. Zhan about the business. I was completely unaware that there was a conflict between them. Perhaps Holley killed Mr. Zhan accidentally."

Once the police realized that Rachel was unable to provide them with valuable information, they had to let her go.

Holley was then temporarily imprisoned as she had to wait a few days before being sentenced. As for

Rachel, she was free to continue her normal life.

After leaving the police station, Rachel wandered in the streets in a daze. She felt confused and scared.

She recalled the day when she first saw Holley. At that time, Holley had just broken up with her ex. She was very arrogant back then.

They always bickered about something or other and tried to hurt each other with the meanest words.

Seeing each other's embarrassment some how made them happy.

Sometimes, Holley really annoyed Rachel.

However, whenever she felt the helpless, Holley was still there to support her. This time, there was no exception.

She stopped thinking of her memories with Holley.

She didn't want to think too much, nor did she know how to save Holley. She decided to go home to take a nap. She hoped that things would be better when she woke up. However, this wasn't a realistic thought, given the circumstances.

Nevertheless, she still remained hopeful that she'd be able to come to a conclusion and perhaps even

find a solution the next day.

Rachel returned home. She felt exhausted. She threw herself onto the bed, and dozed off immediately.

But soon she had a nightmare.

In Rachel's dream, she could see the cold walls of the prison cell and the images of handcuffs on her hands.

Waking up in the middle of the night, she found herself breaking out in a cold sweat.

Maybe she didn't trust Holley that much. She was worried that Holley would regret her decision and betray her.

Rachel got out of bed. She felt extremely uneasy and started to pack her luggage, as though doing these trivial things could set her mind at ease and comfort her. She felt like the best thing for her to do would be to run away. As for Holley...

At that moment, all she wanted to do was forget about Holley. She admitted to herself that her thoughts

were mean, but what could she possibly do?

On the other hand, Holley was at the police station. Lying down, she tossed and turned, unable to fall

asleep.

She felt extremely upset as she recalled whether or not placing her life in Rachel's hands, was a good idea.

She acknowledged just how indifferent and irresponsible Rachel actually was. She was scared that Rachel's promise was on the spur of the moment. She was even more afraid that Rachel would leave this country.

Actually, she did know Rachel well. Perhaps it was because they were similar. They somehow always managed to perceive each other accurately.

The next day, before sunrise, Rachel arrived at the airport. She booked a ticket to fly abroad.

She seemed restless and tense, as though she was running from something.

Approaching the security corridor, Rachel saw a group of people patrolling the airport in armed police uniforms.

Even though she tried to calm herself down, Rachel fled with a guilty conscience as soon as she realized them walking her way.

In her empty house, Rachel sat in the middle of the living room and immediately burst into tears.

She wanted to evaporate all of her grievances, fears and guilt for Holley through crying.

Did it really make sense to escape like this and live like a rat in a sewer all her life?

Was this really the life she wanted for herself?

Chapter 1250 Rachel Chose To Stay

Rachel made up her mind to stay and tried her best to help Holley clear her name. She did it mostly for herself.

She was afraid that she would be influenced by Holley and had to live the rest of her life in fear. She

clearly knew that she was still deeply in love with Charles. She hoped that one day, she could stand in

front of him to confess her love to him openly and with great pride.

Even though she got stuck in the mud, she still anticipated a chance to pull herself out of it and to

embrace her beloved Charles with clean hands one day.

With such hopeful ideas running in her head, Rachel wasted no time. She drove to Silver Corporation

immediately. She stepped on gas and her car zoomed along the empty streets. She was eager to find

out whether any clues were left there.

The lobby was almost empty when she entered the building. She tried her best to hide her arrogance

when she approached the reception desk. The receptionist just finished talking to someone on the phone when Rachel inquired her in a polite tone, "Hello, could you tell me if you saw anyone suspicious or noticed anything unusual on the day that Mr. Zhan was murdered? Anything at all that you remember?" Rachel put extra effort to keep a gentle tone.

"Nope. Except you and Miss Ye, no one else met Mr. Zhan on that day," the receptionist replied firmly.

She tried her best to compose herself, but Rachel still seized a flash of dodge in her eyes.

Rachel was sure that she was hiding something, but she failed to get any evidence. It was a really terrible feeling to be stuck in such a helpless situation. The anger blew out in her heart but she tried her best not to show it.

Being stuck in such a difficult and helpless dilemma, she suddenly thought of a wild idea. 'Perhaps, I could ask Charles for help.'

It was precisely an excuse she needed, since her true motivation was to create a chance to meet Charles again.

Although the gap between them, caused by too much misunderstandings and unhappiness, had grown, at this moment she was still willing to lay down her self-esteem and seek Charles' help.

She thought, 'Perhaps he still remembers our past love, right?' Actually, Rachel was uncertain that

Charles still did, but she still kept a glimmer of hope in her heart.

In order to encourage herself, Rachel bought several bottles of wine and brought them back home. She

was planning on drinking tonight. She used alcohol as a crutch. She opened her first bottle and started

to pour half of it into her glass. Taking her first sip, she couldn't help but smile.

It was not clear how long she had been drinking. A lot of the bottles, now empty, lined up on the table in

front of her. She held to one of them, which was still half-full. Sitting on the sofa, she felt as if she was

on cloud nine—lighthearted and relaxed.

She took another sip from the bottle she was holding. She could feel every drop as it flowed inside her

mouth soothing every tensed nerve she had and clearing her all thoughts off her head. Rachel almost

fell in love with such kind of feeling—relieved and stress-free. It had been so long since she last felt at

ease.

The happy memory of her first kiss with Charles popped into her mind. Actually it wasn't even her first

kiss. To be honest, their first kiss was not the same as the exaggerated description—"uncontrolled

heartbeat where the world suddenly seemed to stop."

The true feeling was more like how she felt now—comfortable and relaxed.

However, at that time she acted more excited than she thought. Maybe that was given. All people who were in love felt excited most of the time. She always thought that she would forever be in the warmth of Charles' embrace.

Now that was all in the past. It was useless to look back.

Rachel wore a bitter smile on her face as she continued reminiscing.

She remembered those days when he was still courting her. Whenever she encountered any troubles,

Charles would help her solve all of them as long as she acted pretty spoiled.

But now, even if she wanted to ask for Charles' help, she had to make numerous preparations to find courage to meet him.

'Rachel, how do you finally lose your love?'

Rachel sighed.

She felt the weight on her eyelids, forcing them to close. She was not even sure what time it was. The night was long enough and she had no intentions of waking up and breaking away from her beautiful

dreams. Finally, she succumbed to its silence. The sound of her alarm broke her sleep. Sobering up,

Rachel stood up holding her head as she felt a minor hangover. She still had to face the reality.

She stripped off her clothes and went straight to the shower. Half an hour later, Rachel started to

carefully apply her facial mask and then painted her face with an exquisite makeup. Even if she was

begging help from Charles, she was not willing to appear in a dispirited image. She stared at her

reflection to check how she looked.

She didn't know how long she stopped in front of the mirror. Finally, she picked up her handbag and

walked out of the house.

It was another sunny morning and traffic was light as usual. It only took her less than half an hour to

drive from her house to the Shining Company. The lobby was busier today for some reason. She

silently made her way to the reception desk.

Rachel slightly knocked on the reception desk to call the staff's attention. "Is Mr. Lu at the company? I

want to meet him," she asked with a tender smile.

The reception staff looked at Rachel. She was absolutely not a stranger. The staff was initially

mesmerized by her presence. She used to see Rachel's face on the weekly magazine before. It took a moment before the reception staff snapped back to reality. She looked at the lady who was smiling in front of her. The difference was that at that time she was the Mr. Lu's girlfriend, but at this moment, she was nothing.

"Sorry, Ms. Bai. Mr. Lu is not at the company today," the reception staff replied politely.

When Rachel heard it, she initially thought that Charles refused to meet her and had instructed the receptionist to decline her request.

Feeling a little embarrassed, she wanted to leave immediately. She loathed Charles.

However, she didn't want to waste her chance to meet Charles. She was stuck in such a tough situation. She could not think of anyone else who could help her aside from Charles.

At that moment, she was really driven into a corner.

"Can you please pass my message to Mr. Lu? Please tell him that Rachel is here and I need his help on a very important matter. This will be the last time I will ask to meet him," Rachel pleaded. She didn't care how that sounded. She was desperate.

The receptionist sneered upon hearing her request. What she thought was that this woman was really

a hard nut. She already told Rachel that Mr. Lu was absent today, but Rachel was still so shameless to ask for a meet up with him.

Even if she wanted to deliver her request to Mr. Lu, that was not possible since he did go abroad on a business trip. How could he possibly meet Rachel if he was not there?

"Ms. Bai, please come back another day. It's not just because you didn't have an appointment with Mr. Lu. The main point is he is not at the company now."

Upon hearing this, Rachel was more certain that it was Charles who refused to meet her.

All right. What a heartless man he was! It didn't matter. Since he didn't want to see her, she would just find her own way to meet him.

With no further discussion, Rachel directly turned to leave.

The reception staff was relieved to see Rachel leave. She was really worried that Mr. Lu's ex-girlfriend would start trouble by insisting on what she wanted. Good thing she decided to just give up.

At the coffee shop near the Shining Company, a few employees were taking their morning breaks.

Taking a window seat, Rachel ordered a cup of cappuccino, and then waited for Charles' appearance.

Her eyes stared at the gate of the opposite building. She made sure that her eyes were able to catch everyone's entries and exits.

Half an hour later, she did not find Charles.

An hour later... Two hours later...

Rachel had spent the entire afternoon sitting in the coffee shop. When it was time to go off work, the staff of Shining Company almost went away, but Charles did not appear.

Could it be true that Charles was really absent?

Rachel got lost in her thought as she looked at her mobile phone. Charles had previously blacklisted her phone number, so she never thought about contacting him by phone.

She thought, 'Since I couldn't find Charles today, I will come back tomorrow. I do not believe that he would never go to work again. Once he returns, I will have a chance to talk with him.'

With that thought in mind, Rachel stood up and left after paying the bill.

It was almost dark while she drove around town. She headed to the club just in time.

Rachel got numbed in the bar. She shook her head with the rhythm of the crowd. Loud music blared as she drowned herself with liquor again.

She could hear Charles' harsh words ringing in her ears. She tried her best to forget them but she failed. She felt each word piercing her heart and tearing it into pieces.

Rachel was too intoxicated but she still managed to drag herself to the dance floor. Considering her state of mind, some strangers took advantage of her. However, she did not care about it. She still wore an enchanting smile on her face.

She was completely driven by animal desire, so she would gladly accept whoever flirted with her. At this moment, what she wanted was to forget about Holley's trouble and Charles' heartlessness.

Rachel stumbled to the washroom. Her head was still spinning from the act she tried to pull off earlier.

Unexpectedly, she heard a familiar name from the outside. Her heart suddenly tightened.

"How pitiful Lance was! He was murdered inexplicably. I've heard that it was a woman who did it. He was so useless." The voice of a young lady was clearly heard despite the sound of the open faucet.

"You are right. He was really pitiful. According to the news, his wife didn't even show any hints of sadness on the day of his funeral. She got his funeral done the old fashioned way. Then, she rushed to deal with the heritage things. After all, money is more important than the relationship between husband

and wife,"

another voice replied mockingly. The running water stopped.

"Hah," the young lady laughed. "Speaking of Lance, I think he was very generous in paying tips when

he was clubbing, so it's really such a great pity that he was now gone."