

## **Wedded Bride 571**

### Chapter 571 Unpleasant Encounters

Since Sheryl was present, the two men pretended that they were meeting for the first time. But she felt the tense atmosphere as if the two were ready to beat each other up any time.

It irked Charles to see Anthony's hand on Sheryl's shoulder.

With a snort, he challenged, "Are you?"

His voice was full of contempt.

A sly smile had formed in his lips. Charles thought, 'She is Autumn, and she is still legally my wife. If I don't let her go, Sheryl will never get married to Anthony.'

Turning to Anthony, Sheryl suggested, "It's already late. How about we leave now?" With a frown, she went to get her daughter, but Shirley refused to leave and wanted to continue playing with Charlie and Amanda. It was the first time she had children to play with because, in America, Shirley had no friends.

"What's your name?" Charles suddenly asked the little girl. His mellow tone and loving look drew Shirley to him.

The little girl was not shy. Tilting her head, she surveyed the gentleman who had spoken from head to toe. Then she gave her name.

Charles stared at the cute girl with doting eyes. 'She is my child, I am sure of it. But where is the other?'

he wondered.

"I learned that today is your birthday. Is that right?" He continued to speak gently.

"Yes," Shirley replied, her head bobbing up and down. There was no awkwardness between the man

and little girl.

Turning to Sheryl, Charles proposed, "Now that your daughter is here, why don't you all stay so we can

celebrate the children's birthdays together?"

He was doing everything possible to keep Sheryl with him and ensure she would never leave again.

"But..." Sheryl hesitated. She wanted to stay but looked at Anthony to check his reaction.

Charles looked at Anthony and extended the invitation. "Mr. Xiao, I hope you can stay. It is our first

meeting. And please forgive me for not paying much attention to you," he said politely.

Anthony noted how Charles stressed the words "first meeting". 'What is he trying to do?' Anthony

wondered. Laughing, he turned to Sheryl and said, "Sher, it's impolite to turn down Mr. Lu's kind

invitation. Shirley is having fun now. So, how about we stay a little longer?" Sheryl looked at him in

gratitude.

Giving his consent made Anthony feel that he was showing Charles how intimate his relationship with Sheryl was. 'Besides, she's my girlfriend now, ' he assured himself.

The tension between the two men was so palpable that everyone there felt it. And Sheryl, who sensed it quickly, couldn't understand why. She thought, 'It's only their first meeting. How could they detest each other like this?'

Among those present, Gary was the happiest. He was celebrating his great-grandson's birthday, and his granddaughter-in-law was back. Feeling content, he said to himself, "I will have no regrets even if I leave this world now."

But Anthony's arrival did turn the merry atmosphere into a slightly awkward one. The people in the party all knew Anthony and now realized he had hidden Autumn. So, it wasn't only Leila who felt like she was unwanted. They all scoffed at him, and some even got mad. Leila giggled at his predicament. She decided to change her mood drastically.

"Miss Xia, you and Mr. Xiao look like a good match. When do you plan to get married?" Leila asked

Sheryl unexpectedly. She was enjoying the slightly embarrassed look the other woman gave her.

"I..." Sheryl stammered with a bit of a frown. While she and Anthony had discussed marriage, she had not made a decision. Knowing her feelings for Anthony, Sheryl was not comfortable discussing personal matters with other people, especially a new acquaintance. She decided to let nature take its course.

'Maybe in time, I will learn to love him,' she thought to herself. Sheryl didn't want to think about it for now.

But Anthony was the exact opposite. Laughing aloud, he joined the conversation. "Soon. Sher and I have been planning our wedding," he said with confidence.

"Is that so?" Leila replied with an ear-to-ear smile. She was snickering inside, 'It doesn't even matter that Autumn has returned. Because she loves Anthony now, and not Charles.' Leila felt victorious.

With a fake smile, Leila spoke to Sheryl, "Miss Xia, you are a lucky woman. You not only have a lovely daughter, but you also have a handsome fiance who adores you."

There was a hint of contempt in her voice which she could not control. Leila mistook Shirley as Sheryl's adopted child, not knowing the woman had given birth to twins.

Anthony cut in with a courteous smile, "Miss Zhang, you are also quite fortunate." Sheryl only kept quiet. "You have a very cute son. I hope we'll be hearing good news about you and Mr. Lu soon," he said.

His statement pleased Leila tremendously, and she chuckled and said, "You will." The exchange had Charles gripping his cup tightly and his brows drawing together to form a frown.

Unable to control his temper, he tossed the chopsticks on the table and gave Leila a hard look. "I promise you will regret it if you continue talking rubbish," he threatened.

Anthony may be standing in between him and Sheryl, but he did not care. Charles was confident of winning his beloved wife back. What he hated was for Sheryl to misunderstand his relationship with Leila.

His threatening words worked. Leila was terrified, and she held back her tongue. She didn't dare utter another word.

Isla was curious how Autumn lost her memory. To satisfy her curiosity, she finally asked, "Mr. Xiao, I heard Miss Xia lost her memory. And she's forgotten about her past. What happened to her?"

Isla thought to herself, 'Perhaps, Anthony is the only one who knows what Autumn went through and

suffered three years ago.'

Anthony had never spoken about it to others. This time, he smiled and replied, "Sher was in poor health after giving birth to Shirley. She began taking pills to make her well. But the medication had a downside: it made people forget their past."

"Did Miss Xia choose this option?" Isla asked. It puzzled her to hear that Autumn would do this. "Of course, it was her decision," Anthony asserted.

"But it was good for her since she didn't have very happy memories in her past," he added. He spoke casually while looking at Sheryl. "Thankfully, Sher and I lead a happy life now," Anthony said. Sheryl stared at Anthony. She had never heard him be so chatty with strangers about her.

And she felt very uncomfortable when he touched her affectionately in front of Leila.

"What is wrong with you? You're not behaving like yourself!" she hissed at him. His behavior was annoying and embarrassing, and she didn't like it.

But Anthony simply ignored her questions.

The meal ended, and so did the two men's acrimonious debate. Sheryl and Anthony headed back to

the hotel with Shirley. The child had fallen asleep on her mother's shoulder. Perhaps she was exhausted from jet lag.

Fearing Sheryl would get tired from carrying Shirley, Anthony offered, "Sher, let me help you with Shirley. You must be exhausted," he said worriedly.

"No, thank you. I can handle this," she refused firmly. She moved aside to continue walking.

"Are you mad at me?" Anthony finally asked. "What's wrong? Are you angry with me for coming over with Shirley without telling you?" he persisted.

Scowling, Sheryl retorted, "Anthony, your behavior at the party was quite rude. Did you know that?" She was trying to be calm but was already exasperated.

"I don't like that man," he finally admitted. "Sher, you're my girlfriend. I can't and won't allow another man to get close to you like we are. Besides, he likes you. And I can sense that," Anthony complained.

"Now that your show is over, we're going back to America. Our flight is for tomorrow morning," he declared presumptuously.

"You even bought tickets?" Sheryl asked dumbfounded. Anthony making decisions without asking her opinion was quite upsetting for Sheryl.

"Yes, I did," Anthony replied, not realizing his decision would displease his girlfriend. "I knew you've been busy these past several days, and I didn't want to bother you with these trivial matters," he explained.

Anthony never expected Sheryl to be so annoyed with him. She snorted in disgust. She took a deep breath, and then told him, "Why are you so unreasonable? If you want to leave, you can go. But I'm staying here."

#### Chapter 572 A Fight

The shock brought by Sheryl's words kept Anthony rooted to the spot. His mind got crowded with too many thoughts at once. 'What does she mean by asking me to leave alone? Does it mean she has decided to stay here? Does it have something to do with Charles? Does she get back her memory?' Fear clutched his heart as he looked at Sheryl's cold face. Finally finding his voice, he asked, "What do you mean by that? Does it mean you're not leaving with me?"

Lifting Shirley higher in her arms for a more comfortable position, she said impatiently, "I have promised to be a contract model for BM Corporation. I'm not going back to America."

In reality, Sheryl didn't sign the agreement yet. She had decided earlier to follow Sue's advice and



discuss it with Anthony first. If he disagreed with her decision, she had made up her mind to turn down the offer.

However, finding out that Anthony bought their tickets without consulting her first made her change her mind quickly. She felt disrespected and that enraged her. 'This is an important decision. Although I was nearly convinced by my boss, I have decided to talk it over with Anthony. Why did he have to interfere in my affairs and make a decision without consulting me?

It was not his decision to make. It only means one thing, he has no respect for me.

Sometimes people say things in the heat of the moment without meaning them. But from the bottom of my heart, I was serious. I wanted to stay in Y City.'

Her words dropped like a bombshell for Anthony. He seized Sheryl's arm to hold her back. Sheryl was startled and the sleeping Shirley almost fell from her arm. Fortunately, the sudden movement didn't wake Shirley. She gave Anthony a glaring look.

Dropping his hands to his side, Anthony clenched his fists. "You're not staying to be BM Corporation's model. You're staying because that man is here, aren't you?" he accused harshly.

Anthony was a proud and confident man. However, he had a feeling that Sheryl wouldn't choose him

over Charles when she remembered her past. He knew he should have a serious talk with her. At the moment, he couldn't restrain his anxiety and anger. Sheryl had promised to go back to America before coming to Y City. The fact that she was now going back on her words frustrated him and inflamed his anger. He sneered at Sheryl, "In order to be with that man, you are willing to give up all that you have achieved in America. You're desperate to come back, aren't you?"

Behind his accusing words, Anthony was worried. He wasn't sure that he had really won Sheryl's heart.

His sharp words were designed to test her real thoughts.

His words cut straight into Sheryl's heart. Her face reflected the hurt that she felt at Anthony's words.

She was heartbroken and angry.

She opened her mouth but no words escaped her throat. There were no words to describe the desperation she was feeling. Forcing a bitter smile, she said to Anthony, "We're both tired. It would be better if you leave now."

With that, Sheryl turned around and headed back to her room with the still sleeping Shirley in her arms.

Following behind her, Anthony tried to apologize and explain, but Sheryl closed the door on his face.

Being suspected made her sad and desperate. It was a terrible feeling. Back in the bedroom, she just realized that Sue was not back yet.

After putting Shirley on the bed, she went to the bathroom to fetch a basin of water. She smiled tenderly at her daughter's sleeping form. She gently wiped her face clean and washed the sticky traces of cakes on her small hands. She changed into a T-shirt before going for a short bath.

It had been a long day and the simple bath refreshed her body. Climbing into the bed, she drew Shirley in her arms. With her daughter beside her, she felt comforted.

She was about to fall asleep when she heard a key turning in the door. It was Sue. Sheryl covered her nose as the reek of alcohol hit her nostrils. Obviously, Sue had one drink too many.

"Sher, you..." Sue started blabbering in a loud voice, but she was interrupted by Sheryl. "Keep your voice down, please. You will wake Shirley." Coming back after having a few drinks, Sue found Anthony sitting at the doorstep, his face full of remorse and shame. He didn't leave even after Sheryl closed the door on him. Sue asked him what had happened. He just shook his head and sighed deeply.

Her heart was moved with pity and sadness for Anthony. Too much alcohol had made her lose her cool and she stormed inside to tackle Sheryl.

She opened the door without preamble and swayed drunkenly to Sheryl's side of the bed. She started ranting at her but Sheryl interrupted her. Sheryl wanted to spend some time alone to cool herself down and give Anthony some time to think about the whole thing. She knew that both of them were to blame for the argument. Anthony made a mistake in buying her ticket without consulting her. Admittedly, it was a small issue, but she made it big out of pique. The fight had already happened. She didn't know how to make peace now.

The image of Anthony sitting outside with his head on his hands, made Sue's temper rise. She had to speak her mind or she would go crazy.

"Well, what the hell? You have forgotten you have a daughter, haven't you?" Sue snarled at Sheryl.

"Who took good care of your daughter while you were working? Who was there to make sure you have nothing to worry about?"

"You're drunk," Sheryl said, frowning. Sue gave an unladylike snort.

"I'm not drunk at all." Sue sneered. The only time she could speak her real thoughts was when she had too much to drink. "Sheryl, you're a selfish bitch. When you needed him, you smiled at him and showed

your concern for him. Now that you don't need him, you lock him outside. He was squatting outside the door when I came back. He looked miserable and pitiful. What mistake did he make? Why are you torturing him like this?"

It was only then that Sheryl knew that Anthony hadn't left, but instead was just sitting outside in the cold. It made her feel bad.

"Mimi, this is between Anthony and me. Please don't concern yourself with our problem," Sheryl spoke with a stern voice. She wanted to solve the problem alone. Sue was only adding to the problem. She should have stayed out of it.

"Yeah, you're right. You're a couple. Your problem is not my concern. Just pretend that I'm talking nonsense because I'm drunk." Smiling bitterly, Sue continued, "My brain is having a hard time understanding what's happening. You have such an excellent boyfriend! Why are you taking him for granted?"

Sheryl kept quiet. She continued, "You are always going out with that man. Why are you so obsessed with him? He's not even half as good as Anthony. In order to be with him, you prefer to hurt Anthony.

Don't you have a conscience? You're not being fair to Anthony.

When you were busy working, he was the one who took care of Shirley. When you were sick, he stayed by your side day and night. Tell me, what did he fail to do perfectly? Just speak out." After finishing her rambling, Sue felt as if a weight was lifted from her chest. Her eyes became unfocused and dreamy.

Feeling anxious that her outburst had given away her feelings for Anthony she covered her face with her hands.

Sue thought, 'I can't bear it any longer. Because of our friendship, I give up on my feelings for Anthony.

I put more importance in our friendship. So, how can she be so ungrateful?

She has Anthony's heart, but she doesn't value his love. It's so unfair!

Sheryl could understand Sue's feelings, but she minded her criticisms. She felt that she was being judged unfairly.

'Why is it that everybody thinks Anthony is perfect and he can't do anything wrong, while putting all the blame on me, ' thought Sheryl.

Pulling out her phone, she sent a message to Anthony asking him to check in at a hotel and rest. After sending the message, she turned off her phone. She spent the whole night tossing and turning on the

bed, unable to sleep.

It was almost dawn when she finally succumbed to sleep. When she woke up, she found that Sue had left with all her belongings. Unlike Sheryl, Sue slept like a log. When she woke up, she decided to move to the apartment that BM Corporation had allocated to her. She was too embarrassed to face Sheryl.

She remembered ashamedly that she had blamed Sheryl fiercely and sided with Anthony last night.

Meanwhile, Shirley who had slept soundly the night before, woke up bright and early. She had tried on the dress that Sheryl bought for her and was spinning on the bed. Sheryl watched Shirley with amusement and reminded her gently, "Be careful. You may fall down."

"Sher, does my dress look nice?" Shirley asked happily, still twirling on the bed with her new dress, waiting for her mother's compliments. The sound of the doorbell startled Sheryl. After a short hesitation,

she got up to open the door. There was no need to guess who was standing outside. She knew that it could only be Anthony.

She looked at him coldly and asked impatiently, "What's the matter?"

"I just dropped by to bring breakfast for you and Shirley. Just have some food." Anthony seemed back to his normal self, calm and gentle unlike last night when he was wild and accusing.

However, what had already happened couldn't be ignored. It was impossible for anyone to pretend that nothing had changed.

The same went with Sue. There was no taking back the words that she said last night, when she was under the influence of alcohol. Although Sheryl didn't say anything, Sue couldn't pretend that nothing had happened.

Chapter 573 You Are Not My Mother

Sheryl hesitated for a moment and decided to let him in. Shirley showed off her new dress to Anthony once again. She did a little twirl for his benefit. After he smilingly exchanged a few words with her, he said gently, "Shirley, I want to chat with Sher. Could you go watch cartoons for a while?"

"All right." Shirley always knew when to take a cue and give them their space. She didn't want to bother them.

After Shirley walked away, Anthony hesitantly said to Sheryl, "I have cancelled the flight ticket."

Deep down, Anthony knew that he had made a mistake, but he had seen no other option. He had been



utterly desperate to take her away and have her all to himself.

"Really?" Sheryl said to Anthony in front of her, not entirely believing his words. As the meaning sank in, a ghost of a smile appeared on her face.

"Sher, I know you're mad at me," Anthony said to Sheryl with a sad smile. "I thought things over for a long time last night. I really shouldn't have bought the tickets without asking you first. More importantly,

I shouldn't have said all those words. I sincerely apologize for my behavior."

Sheryl had also calmed down after a night, so she had the potential to forgive Anthony.

With her brows knitted slightly, she had no idea how in the following days she could maintain their relationship.

"Why are you silent? Please say something," begged Anthony, staring at Sheryl with a look of desperation.

"I don't know what to say," said Sheryl with a smile.

Indeed, she had realized there was nothing she could say to him.

"Don't you want to discuss the contract of BM Corporation with me?" Anthony voluntarily brought up the

subject himself to make conversation. He felt insecure and vulnerable, which had something to do with the city and the people in it.

Sheryl hesitated and remained silent for a good while. Then she said to Anthony, "I haven't signed the contract yet. I planned to discuss it with you, but after yesterday..."

It had been much easier to blurt out hurtful things yesterday. Exposing herself and explaining her wishes to Anthony were much harder.

"Can you at least tell me why you want to stay?" 'She is Sheryl now.' He believed that she would by no means stay for Charles. Their love story was over, according to him.

His remarks yesterday had been attempts to cover up his diffidence.

"BM Corporation has given me a good job offer." Sheryl smiled and continued, "I have mentioned to you that I couldn't get a sense of belonging in the US. I am a native of Y City all along. I really feel out of the element in the US."

"Since Shirley is getting older, her education is my primary concern. I have mulled over this for quite a long time. I want her to attend school in Y City. BM Corporation has assured to help me find a really

good kindergarten and an apartment there. It also offers a generous annual salary. I couldn't refuse these conditions," resumed Sheryl, after a pause.

"Sher, I have already told you..." Anthony furrowed his eyebrows slightly. Sheryl didn't have to worry about these things, but she refused to listen to him.

"I can give you all of these. Don't you think the three of us could have a great life in the US?" said Anthony with a deep frown.

It did not seem like he could change her mind. She had a firm idea of what her life should look like.

"Anthony, like I already told you, I don't like depending on you. I want to make my own living and provide for my child," Sheryl said calmly. "Most of your business operations are at home. You stay in the US only because of me and Shirley. Now that we have moved back to Y City, you don't have to shuttle back and forth. Isn't that better?"

I really don't understand. Why do you not want me to come back?" said Sheryl to Anthony, with a confused look.

"Because I am apprehensive about what could happen." Anthony smiled bitterly. Charles truly panicked him and he didn't trust him one bit.

Sheryl raised her eyebrows with disdain. "To put it plainly, you distrust me, don't you?"

"No..." spluttered Anthony. He had no idea how to explain what he was feeling. But it occurred to him that they would end up fighting if this conversation continued. He decided to let it go at that moment.

"Well, we should both think over everything carefully. I won't push you to do anything. Sher, I hope you consider my advice."

After that Anthony walked out of Sheryl's room.

At Leila's

The sight of Sheryl truly struck a terrible blow to Leila. Every time Leila closed her eyes, she thought of

Autumn's hateful eyes boring into her before "death".

She awoke from her nightmares, screaming. She was sweating all over her bed.

'Why, why does Autumn haunt me after all those years? Why does she come back?'

Leila wiped the sweat off with the back of her hand. She went out to pour a cup of water, only to find

Charlie leaning on the French window on the balcony. He had gotten ready already. He stared at the

scenery outside, waiting for someone to arrive.

"Who are you waiting for?" blurted Leila.

"My father," Charlie answered, "he promised to take me to visit Sher today."

He often thought of Sheryl and the cute little girl. He normally didn't like kids, but her smile was so charming that it could disarm him and make him surrender to all her wishes. She was easy to please and fun to spend time with.

At the sound of the casual mention of 'Sher', Leila's rage flared. She threw down the cup she was holding in rage. She shouted at Charlie in front of her, "Charlie, you'd better stay away from Sheryl from now on. You are not allowed to meet her without my permission. Keep that in mind."

It was the first time Leila had spoken to Charlie so harshly. Charlie recoiled and did a double take. He then said with a frown, "I have complete freedom to be friends with whoever tickles my fancy. You have no right to stop me."

Leila clicked her tongue in exasperation. She realized that she had given Charlie so much freedom that he would no longer listen to anything she said. She had never imposed any restrictions and it was too late to do so.

"I am your mother. You just listen to what I say," Leila said firmly, putting her foot down. Leila was

terrified of the invisible power. She had raised Charlie for so many years, but it paled in comparison with the thin blood ties between them.

'From Charles to Sheryl, Charlie voluntarily associates with them. Even though I live under the same roof with him, he acts as a stranger with me.'

Leila was afraid that her lies would be exposed if she let Charlie continue to get in contact with Sheryl.

This was why Leila wanted him to stay away from Sheryl.

"You are not my mother!" he yelled at her. Charlie's remarks shocked Leila dumb. He looked at her coldly. He was really interested in biology and astronomy all along. Unless his memory deceived him,

Leila was Type O while he was Type AB. It looked like he knew more than he had let on.

Chapter 574 Leila's Ultimatum

A few days ago, Charlie read a book on biology. From there, he learned that regardless of Charles' blood type, it was impossible for Leila to be his biological mother.

The book also said there was a possibility of genetic mutation.

The boy had kept that secret in his heart for days. He didn't mean to divulge it, but somehow let it slip out today.

His revelation startled Leila, and he saw panic in her face. She gaped at the boy and demanded, "Who told you that, Charlie?"

Rushing towards the boy, Leila grabbed him by the shoulders and screamed, "Tell me, who said that?"

The boy said nothing. Then suddenly, something clicked in Leila's brain. 'Sheryl! It's her!' she thought.

Envy filled her thoughts. 'It doesn't matter if she has amnesia or not. The fact is she doesn't like me.

So, it must be her, ' Leila decided.

"Did Sheryl say that?" she asked again. The woman was becoming very agitated. "Ahhh!" the boy cried out in pain as she continued to shake him. "Tell me if she did it!" With her face so close to Charlie's, she looked like a mad woman. Her madness started to frighten the little boy.

"Let me go!" he finally cried out, and tried to squirm free. Leila's reaction to what he unintentionally revealed confirmed his suspicion.

"Listen, Charlie," she pleaded, while tugging at his shoulders. "You're my son. That will never change. I gave birth to you and raised you. And I did not bring you up to talk back to me. You had better keep that in mind," Leila warned the boy.

Despite her fury, Leila's face had turned pale. She was sure it was Sheryl who fed Charlie those things.

Leila believed that Sheryl only pretended to have amnesia, and was merely setting a trap for her.

Grimly, she thought, 'I know her tricks now. And I will never fall for them.'

"I'm your mother. Sheryl is..." she paused as anger bubbled inside her. "She's a bitch! So, why do you

prefer to believe her instead of me?" The woman was now frustrated. She stared at the boy, who

remained silent. Right now, she didn't like him very much. And for a moment, she kept thinking he was

just as obnoxious as Sheryl.

Charlie finally shouted, "Enough!" Her words and behavior depressed him and right now, he didn't know

what to do. He might appear more mature than other kids, but he was still a child. And it was hard to

bear such a big secret.

At that moment, Charles arrived. He knocked, and Charlie hurried to open the door before Leila could

react.

As soon as Charles entered, he sensed something was wrong inside the room. He looked down at his

son and asked, "What's wrong, Charlie?"

For the first time since meeting the boy, he saw fear and confusion in Charlie's face.



Leila regained her bearings and screamed, "Give my son back to me!" Marching up to Charles, she stopped when they were face-to-face. "Give me back my son!" she repeated.

"What the hell are you doing?" Her behavior startled him, but he only frowned. Looking at her, he felt Leila was now beyond reason.

The woman let out a scream. Then without a word, she grabbed Charlie and hauled him into his room.

She dumped the boy inside and locked the door.

Charlie was now crying and kept banging at the door. "Let me out of here! Let me out!"

The boy was starting to panic now.

"Leila, what are you doing? You're frightening the kid!" Charles demanded. He wondered, 'What happened to Leila? She was fine last night. Why is she behaving like this now?'

"Frighten the kid?" she hissed at Charles. "That's my son in there. What does he have to do with you?" she said with contempt.

"He's my son, too!" Charles retorted. Not sure about what happened to Leila, Charles was now concerned about Charlie. He swore to take the child away from the place. He would never leave him with this mad woman.

"Don't forget who you are, Charles," she reminded him. "I brought him up. He is my son, and no one can take him away from me," Leila sneered.

"Who said I was going to take him?" Charles asked as he held on to his temper. He was struggling for patience but Leila's fury was starting to rub off on him.

"You! You want to take him away from me," she threw back at him. Leila could not hold back her rage.

"You took my son with you and spent the whole day with Sheryl. What about me? Don't you feel sorry for me?"

She was on the brink of tears, but held back. "Yes, that woman looks like Autumn. But she's not, Charles. She is Sheryl, Anthony's girlfriend. Do you really think she cares about you?" she challenged.

There was no stopping Leila now. Sneering, she told Charles, "She's very happy now with her fiance and child. Why don't you simply let her go?" Leila sensed Charles hardening his stance, and this further fueled her to continue mocking him. "Don't you love her? When you love a person, you want to see her happy, right?" "Stop. I don't want to talk about that," Charles cut her off.

His ears picked up Charlie's cry from inside the bedroom and worried about his son. "I'm his father, and

I'm going to take him away," he said with a frown.

"You can't!" Leila snapped. She stood in front of the bedroom door and declared, "From now on, you are not allowed to see him. Unless..."

Impatient, Charles asked, "Unless what?" He glared at the woman, waiting for an answer.

"Unless you marry me." A crazy smile lit her face. "If you marry me, legally you will be Charlie's father.

And the three of us can live happily ever after. Isn't it just perfect?" she asked.

"Oh I know only Sheryl will own your heart," she said scornfully. "You're obsessed with her, I get it. But what about her? She doesn't even remember you. Her vows have long been forgotten. And you want her to be my son's stepmother? No way! I will never agree!" Leila declared.

"You're insane!" he told her coldly. Charles saw the madness in her eyes.

"Yes, I'm insane!" Leila admitted. "You forced me to become insane. So, you have no other choice, Charles, if you want to see your son. Don't take too long thinking about it. And don't try to take him away," she warned. "Or I will take him to a place where you'll never see your son again. I will make sure you'll regret it for ten, or twenty years, or even a lifetime."

"Daddy..." Charlie called weakly from his room. "Please go. I'll be fine," the boy told his father.

"Charlie! I'm going to take you away. Do you hear me?" Charles looked bitterly at Leila.

"I'm fine, Daddy. Please go," he begged Charles. Charlie had calmed down since he was locked in. The boy resolved to find a way to escape, knowing he couldn't stay there anymore.

The man felt torn inside. He hated the thought of leaving his young son behind. But looking at the fierce woman before him, Charles knew he had no choice but to go.

He left with his mind jumbled with thoughts on how to rescue Charlie.

Once Charles left, Leila eventually settled down. She stared at the bedroom door and listened. There was no movement from behind. Once, she treated Charlie as her own and loved him with all her heart.

But from now on, she made up her mind that he would only serve as a pawn.

"Since he can't accept me as his mother, I will stop treating him like a son," Leila muttered angrily.

Meanwhile, Sheryl somehow sensed that something terrible was happening to Charlie. It was an uncanny connection that she could not explain. So, she called Charles.

Not wanting to worry Sheryl, Charles assured the woman that everything was fine and that he would visit Charlie soon.

Sheryl felt relieved after his assurance.

Because it was Shirley's first time to visit Y City, Sheryl planned to take her around the city that afternoon. The little girl was fascinated by everything she saw on the street. And the young mother did her best to make the child happy.

They went to a children's store and Sheryl bought several clothes for her little girl. Mother and daughter had a great day together.

Chapter 575 Still Alive

"Really?" Sheryl asked surprised. "Do you really think this place is better than America, Shirley?"

Recent events had made Sheryl actually reconsider her current circumstances. However, she wanted to find out how Shirley felt about it too.

"Yes, I like here," replied the little girl. She kept thinking to herself, 'America is just so different. But here... here I have my friends, like Amanda and Charlie. Also, they are all like me, with my skin color, facial features and dark hair, different from those children in America who are all blondes.'

"Tell me, if we were to live here and never come back to America, would you like it?" Sheryl continued.

"Or if you had to attend school here, could you get used to it?"

"If we stayed here, could I play with Amanda?" asked Shirley. Her sweet voice and innocent look made

it look like she was asking to stay, not just considering it.

Sheryl stood no chance against her cuteness. Her heart melted, and she quickly replied, "Absolutely, my love." Shirley hesitated to confirm for a few seconds, but once she finished processing the offer in her little mind, she nodded in agreement. "Okay Mom, I am willing to live here."

Sheryl cared a lot about her opinion. She didn't want to do anything that her little daughter would not feel comfortable with.

So hearing her say those words sealed the deal for Sheryl as well.

"Autu..... Uhm... Miss Xia?" Isla called out to her from behind. Sheryl had taken Shirley out to a locale near Cloud Advertising Company. That was also where Isla regularly went to, during her afternoon tea break.

"Miss Zhao?" said Sheryl after taking a second look at her. A few seconds earlier, her eyesight had quickly brushed over Isla's image failing to register who she was. The previous night Isla had worn an exquisite dress, giving her a completely different allure. But at that locale, standing in front of her was different Isla, a competent, professional businesswoman in a suit.

So it took Sheryl a few moments to discern who she was.

"What are you doing here?" inquired Isla quite excitedly. She was so excited that she even grabbed

Sheryl's hand while asking that question. However, Sheryl was not too receptive to her gesture.

Gently pulling her hand away from her, Sheryl answered, "I was just taking Shirley around. This is her

first time in China." She then tried to reciprocate Isla's kind interest by asking back, "And you Miss

Zhao? What are you doing here?"

"My company is near here. And I am coming out to buy some tea or food for my employees. They

really appreciate these small attentions. But, I'm so glad that I ran into you," Isla expressed in an

attempt to bridge the gap that time and memory loss had put in between them.

However, Sheryl kept it casual by stating with a respectful nod, "You are a good boss, Miss Zhao." Isla's

sight was fixed in Sheryl's direction trying to make sense of the situation. 'Autumn, how did you forget

everything?' she kept wondering in disbelief.

'The company is still yours. It is you that always came out here to buy food.'

"Auntie, where is Amanda?" Shirley timidly interrupted her thoughts, while pulling on her suit's hem.

"She is at home. Do you miss her?" Isla elaborated happily. She kept looking lovingly into Shirley's

eyes, noticing just how similar they were to Autumn's. "If you miss her, then tomorrow I will bring her

out to play with you; how about that?" Isla went on, grabbing the opportunity to see them again.

"Great!" exclaimed Shirley enthusiastically. Isla then straightened up and addressed her old

friend, "Miss Xia, let's exchange phone numbers, and tomorrow I will have someone pick you up."

"You don't have to bother yourself about it," Sheryl replied shyly. She didn't want to be a nuisance for

Isla.

"Nonsense! It would actually be my pleasure. Amanda is always talking about Shirley, and Shirley also

has no playmates here; so it would be good for both of them to hang out, and it is no trouble for me at

all." Isla was quite excited about it. This was her chance to have some bonding time with Autumn,

which she had been dreaming about since she was pregnant. Her dream was finally coming true.

Sheryl eventually agreed and after arranging all the logistics of the next day, excused herself politely.

She took Shirley back to the hotel, and then called Sue to invite her out for dinner.

However, Sue's line was consistently ringing busy. So with a deflated sigh, Sheryl gave up after several

attempts. 'Perhaps some time afterwards, Sue would feel at ease with me, ' thought Sheryl.



At the hospital

After hearing what had happened last night, Chris was in utter disbelief and shock. Unable to fully grasp the news, she kept asking Sam, "Wait what... What did you just say? Can you say it again, please?"

"I said Autumn is still alive, but she has lost her memory," Sam reiterated on a slower pace. He heated a glass of milk for Chris while reminding her, "Luckily your effort to match Leila with your brother didn't work; otherwise, imagine the dilemma he would have right now facing Autumn again."

The relief in his tone, however, didn't make Chris feel any better.

She kept remembering that Leila had already slept with Charles. What could she do about it now?

She felt extremely remorseful. Why was she always so impulsive? How was she going to face her sister-in-law with all the guilt inside her?

Chris's regrets were eating her up. She couldn't possibly fathom the idea of Autumn being alive. So she suggested on a hopeful note, "Sam, maybe you've mistaken her for someone else..."

How could that be possible? A person who had been missing for three years suddenly appeared back in their lives. She simply couldn't accept it.

"I have known Autumn since childhood, so it is nearly impossible for me to mistaken her for anyone else," argued Sam puzzled by Chris' reaction. With a tense stare he insisted, "And even if I were to make a mistake, it's highly unlikely that your brother would confuse his own wife, don't you think?"

"But what if..... What if she's simply a look-alike? What if that woman is not really my sister-in-law?"

Chris argued back, still refusing to accept the fact. The more she thought about it, the more alarmed she felt.

By that point, Sam had almost had it with her. His frown and angry stand needed no explanation. Yet, he decided to add, "Chris, what you just said better not be heard by your brother; otherwise, your relationship will never be the same."

"But what I said... is also possible, isn't it?" she attempted to reconcile. It wasn't that she was unhappy about Autumn being alive. Initially, Chris had worried that Charles would not get over the sorrow of losing his wife, and at this point she was beginning to worry about him being used by some evil person, who had created a so-called sister-in-law that abruptly appeared with her memory completely lost. It just felt like too much of a coincidence to her.

"Chris!" yelled Sam. He intensely looked her in the eyes and said, "Stop this. You can't say such words again. There is no doubt that person is Autumn. You too will know once you see her."

Chris dared not continue her argument, but was still reluctant about accepting Autumn's existence.

This mysterious Sheryl who seemed to be her long-lost sister-in-law was starting to intrigue her more and more.

In a different corner of the town, stepping out of Leila's house with his head hung low, Charles wasn't sure what to do about Charlie. His pleadings had really affected him. He couldn't stand seeing his son locked in.

Fortunately, Leila hadn't taken his phone away too. So as soon as Charles arrived at work, Charlie called him. With a hopeful whisper, the boy requested, "Dad, could you pick me up tonight?"

"But... she locked you in, didn't she? How would you get out?" Charles wondered. He too had thought of taking Charlie away by force, but feared that Leila would be angry enough to hurt the boy if he tried.

Charlie giggled through the phone and said, "I secretly hid away one of the keys, but I didn't want her to suspect anything; so I kept quiet earlier."

"Good boy!" stated Charles proudly. His smile had returned to his face, and his heart filled with hope

and ambition. This time, he was going to get Charlie out, and never allow Leila to get close to him again.

He had to... for the kid's own sake.

Outsmarted by the boy, Leila unsuspectingly went to bed that night. She could have never imagined that Charles and his son would collaborate against her. When she woke up, Charlie's room was empty.

He was nowhere to be found. Panicked and frustrated, she couldn't think straight any longer. She rushed without any hesitation to the hotel where Sheryl was staying to hold her accountable for

Charlie's disappearance.

Chapter 576 A Fight

"Sheryl!" Leila shrieked out at the sight of Sheryl. Sheryl and her daughter were walking out of the

hotel. Sheryl was taking Shirley out to grab some food. Watching Leila striding towards her furiously,

Sheryl stopped and stared at her puzzled. Leila walked straight towards Sheryl and even before Sheryl

could greet her she landed a tight slap on her face.

Leila's slap came as a hard blow on Sheryl as if she intended to take the life air out of Sheryl in that

one blow.

Sheryl sank to the ground. She was completely flabbergasted. "Sher..." Shirley cried out with a concerned look. Shirley knelt down immediately and tended to her mom who was bruised and swollen on her face. "Who are you? Why did you strike Sher?" she berated Leila indignantly.

"Shirley, I'm fine," Sheryl assured her daughter, as she just got over the shock. Sheryl patted Shirley to comfort her, and then stood up slowly. Irritated by Leila's sudden attack, Sheryl frowned at her and asked, "Miss Zhang, what are you doing?"

"You know what you did. Do you need me to explain it to you?" Leila sneered. "You should feel lucky I just slapped you. I wish I could kill you now," she continued as she was still fuming and gritting her teeth.

"Did I do anything wrong to you? Why did you hit me without a reason?" Sheryl snapped back with a frown. Sheryl stood straight and demanded an answer from Leila. Sheryl was far from being a gullible girl who would take such bullies lying down.

"Why the hell did you come back?" Leila asked as she walked up to Sheryl slowly. Looking at Sheryl safe and sound, standing right in front of her eyes, she was trembling with rage. She literally wanted to disfigure her. "You could have stayed in America to lead a happy life. Why did you return to snatch my

happiness? Since you came back, everything has changed. You have even turned my son against myself. What do you want?" she spoke, her voice trembling.

"I have no idea what you are talking about," Sheryl replied. She knitted her eyebrows as she stated, "I never stole anything from you. Nor did I alienate Charlie from you. There must be some mistakes."

"Mistakes?" Leila snorted sharply. She turned to the passers-by and summoned loudly, "Everybody, this woman has her boyfriend and child. But she returned from abroad to steal away my man and son.

Don't you think she is a shameless woman?"

Leila was dejected and completely broken as she went on venting out her anger on Sheryl. 'My son has deserted me, and my plan to get married to Charles is also spoiled. I want her to pay for what she did to me. I will never forgive her, never, ' she resolved.

By this time a large crowd had gathered around them. People started whispering to one another while pointing to Sheryl. Noticing the reproachful glances of the strangers, Sheryl felt embarrassed. Her face turned red. She held Shirley's hand and said to Leila, "Miss Zhang, don't talk nonsense. I never did any of these. I will never admit anything I have not done."

Leila seized Sheryl's hand tight and raised her other hand in an attempt to slap Sheryl again. Little

Shirley was watching the argument holding her mom's hand. The moment Leila raised her hand, she

pounced on her and bit her hand hard. The bite was so hard that Leila glared at the little girl and

pushed her away with the same hand while the other hand was still in the air.

Sheryl was only worried about her daughter. She tried to shrug away from Leila but her grasp was too

tight to get freed so easily.

At last, she stopped struggling. 'It's okay as long as Shirley is safe, ' she said to herself.

Sheryl closed her eyes and held Shirley tightly with one hand as she waited for the strike. However,

Leila's hand didn't fall on her face. As she fluttered her eyes, she saw Anthony gripping Leila's hand.

With a stern look, her boyfriend howled at Leila, "Are you out of your mind? What are you doing here?"

"Hi, Anthony," Leila greeted with a crooked smile on her face. "Please keep an eye on your girlfriend.

Don't let her hook up with my man. You know what? She even hid my son," she continued.

"Shut up!" Anthony yelled and glared at her with furrowed brows. Then he turned towards Sheryl, and

asked in a concern voice, "Are you alright, Sher?"

"I'm fine," Sheryl replied. She stooped down and checked on her daughter. After making sure Shirley

didn't get injured, she stood up and explained to Leila in a very calm voice, "Miss Zhang, I'm not going to repeat myself. I didn't steal your man. Nor did I hide your son. If you continue to behave like this, I'll call the police."

Sheryl picked up her daughter. "Now that Charlie is missing, you should look for him. Why did you come to me?" she reasoned with Leila.

"He had never done this before. He never ran away from home before he met you. You must have said something to him. Otherwise he wouldn't have left me," Leila continued to blame her. Pointing to Sheryl, she shrieked hysterically, "You are responsible for all this. It's all your fault. You're such a bitch."

"Are you done now?" Anthony growled at Leila. He snatched Leila's hand and shoved her away from Sheryl. "Get out of here right now. Or I'll teach you a lesson," he threatened her.

Leila noticed Sheryl from a distance and thought that she might not have hidden Charlie. Still before walking away, she glared at Sheryl furiously. "I'm warning you. If I find you have anything to do with Charlie's disappearance, I will not spare you," she warned as she walked away.

Sheryl turned her face away from Leila and remained silent. As Leila went out of sight, Anthony came



closer to Autumn and tried to give her a hug just to make her feel safe and comfortable. However, Sheryl walked away carrying Shirley in her arms. "I need some time alone," she said to Anthony.

Anthony nodded his head in agreement. Sheryl carried her daughter inside the hotel. Anthony observed the receding figure of Sheryl and felt miserable for the humiliation she had suffered. The more he thought about it, the more furious he became. Basking in rage, he drove straight to Shining Company. He held Charles responsible for the entire debacle.

'I must meet Charles and warn him to stay away from Sheryl, ' he told himself.

He barged into the company. Before reaching Charles' office, he was stopped by David. "Hello sir, do you have an appointment? If not, please come here another day. Our CEO is busy now," David said to him politely.

"Charles, I need to see you," Anthony shouted looking towards Charles' office. With a sniff, he continued, "If you're a man, just come out. You said you love her. Is this how you love her? How can you allow her to be bullied like this?"

Charles got really miffed to hear the loud noise inside his office. He recognized Anthony's voice. He opened the door and said to David, "Let him come in."

"But..." David uttered in hesitation. 'This man looks hostile to Mr. Lu. What if he hurts my boss? How can I let him in?' he looked troubled as he thought.

"Just let him in. It's okay," Charles commanded. Charles was really looking forward to meeting Anthony.

He could not wait to get the opportunity to make it clear to Anthony that his wife belonged to him no matter if she had forgotten her past and embraced a new name and identity.

Following Charles's orders, though with a hesitation, David moved aside and made way for Anthony to go inside Charles's office. Fuming with anger, Anthony stepped into Charles's office and slammed the door behind him. As impatient as Charles was to meet him, Anthony also could not wait any longer to get even with him. The moment the two came face to face with each other, Anthony blew a punch on Charles's face.

Charles dodged his attack briskly. "Thank you for looking after my wife and child these years. But now I will take care of them," he spoke in a very cool voice.

"Stop it!" a panic-stricken Anthony shouted as he came over to Charles. He could not understand why Charles still behaved in such a composed manner after his wife had left him for so many years.

'Isn't he supposed to break down? Isn't he supposed to be exasperated and heartbroken? Why is he still confident that Sheryl will come back to him?' Hundreds of questions ran back and forth in his mind, making him puzzled and frustrated all the more.

Anthony was oblivious of the time Charles had spent in despair without Autumn. But Charles would never show the delicate side of his mind to his rival.

"You're such a bastard!" Anthony sneered, as he gnashed his teeth. As he spoke, he came at Charles and attacked him with full strength. Overcome with hatred and anger, he had no choice but to beat up Charles to vent his feelings.

Charles avoided his attack at first. But noticing Anthony was serious, he decided not to dodge anymore. The two men were caught into a fierce fight in a matter of few seconds beating, punching, kicking each other and literally trying to pull each other apart.

Chapter 577 Stay Away From Her

Alice and David frowned. They didn't know what to do. Alice looked at David and asked, "Is everything okay?"

"How should I know?" David replied. He could vaguely recall that the man was Mrs. Lu's attending doctor. Mr. Lu hadn't been to see him for several years. But how could his boss and the doctor come to

blows when meeting after such a long time?

David had absolutely no idea about Sheryl. He also had no valid excuse to go in to help. He was forced to wait outside and could do nothing about it.

Alice patted David on his shoulder and said, "You don't worry, David. Mr. Lu is a good boxer, after all."

David was a little relieved when he heard that. He could recall that Charles used to practice boxing many years earlier. He was good enough to win a championship easily. But in the last few years he had seldom put on his boxing gloves. David was confident that Charles wouldn't take too severe a beating.

While Charles thought that he could defeat Anthony, it actually wasn't so easy. Anthony was as strong as Charles. If they kept on fighting, they would both get injured.

Charles punched Anthony in the nose and the latter started bleeding. Anthony wiped off the blood and tried to fight again. Charles angrily shouted at him, "Enough! Just stop, you bastard!"

"I'm here to teach you a lesson today, Charles. You have Leila and Charlie but you want Sheryl and her daughter too. Can't you leave them alone?" Anthony threw a punch at Charles and connected.

Charles snarled as he touched the wound on his cheek. Charles too, was injured on the face.

"Leave her alone?" Charles raged. "Anthony, don't you know who she is? She is my legally wedded wife, Autumn. We would not have separated from each other for so long if you had not hidden her.

It's because of you that my wife and daughter are away from me. You tore my family apart. After all that you have the cheek to ask me to leave them alone. How dare you do that? Ridiculous!"

What made Charles angrier was Anthony's betrayal. He had blindly trusted him. However, because of Anthony he had to be apart from Autumn for three long years. Thank God he had found her. Now he wouldn't miss the chance to get her back in his life.

Anthony couldn't control his anger. He stepped towards Charles, grabbed him by the collar pushed him against a table. Charles couldn't move. Anthony gritted his teeth and spat out, "I'm warning you Charles.

Remember her name is Sheryl and she's my fiancéé now. You remember to keep your hands off her and stay as far away as possible. Otherwise, I assure you that you'll regret not doing my bidding."

Anthony finished his long list of rules. Charles didn't care about it and paid no notice to his words.

Of course he would never accept Anthony's suggestion. In his mind he did not see Autumn and Sheryl as being different persons. He knew they were one and the same — his beloved Autumn and his

daughter!

"Really? Your fiancé? So that means you are not married yet, right?"

Charles shook off Anthony's hands and freed himself. He sneered and said, "You know, Autumn married me and eight months later she was pregnant as well. Look at yourself. It has been three years since you know her but you are just engaged to her. She would have married you by now if she really loved you. If she has made you wait for three years, don't you wonder why?"

Charles believed Sheryl didn't love Anthony at all. It had just become a kind of habit for her to accept his help. The poor soul was not even aware of her true identity. How could she know whom she really loved?

Anthony was miffed at Charles words. He knew some of that was true and it hurt his ego. He stared at Charles and shouted at him, "Yes, you were married and your wife was soon pregnant. How could you allow her to be substituted soon thereafter, though? My feelings for Sheryl are different. She's the woman I love and respect. I'll always be there for her when she needs me. I'll always comfort her when she's upset. It was me who was there to hold her hand when Shirley had her first tooth and her first fever and also when she spoke her first word. But you, you're just a stranger to her. So how can you

now come and say that you love her?"

Anthony used Charles' pain points to torment him and Charles did the same to him. So both ended

deeply hurt, especially Charles. He thought about and regretted all that he had missed in the past three

years. Autumn, Shirley and he should have been a happy family together.

Anthony paused and then poked him again, "Don't you think it's too late for you to think about her now?

What about the two new loves in your life, Leila and Charlie? Also Autumn would never share her man

with others. Probably you know better than me about this, don't you?"

Charles had to admit to his fault and face it. But he was not going to let that become a hurdle in getting

Sheryl back in his life and loving her again.

"Well, you mark my words, Anthony. It does not matter whether she's Sheryl or Autumn, I am confident

that she'll love me once again. This time I will never let go of her. I'll find her wherever you hide her,"

Charles said firmly.

To be frank, Anthony had sensed the change in Sheryl. He knew that something was destined to

happen when she and Charles met again. He couldn't change that even if he took Sheryl away.

Charles still wouldn't give up.

Anthony continued to hold his fists and insisted, "Charles, just let her go. Do you really think she'll love you again? Don't you even dare to have a hope about it.

Autumn was determined when she took that pill to erase her memory. She wouldn't like to remember any of those sad memories. And now Leila is your girlfriend. It seems that you have no chance at all."

Anthony ruthlessly continued, "You keep saying that you love her and harping on all you did for her.

However, where were you when she was taken away? Also where were you at the time of her delivery?

Or even this morning when Leila slapped her? Is this what you call love? Is this how you uphold your fucking vows?

You do not understand Sheryl at all. She made a clean break from you three years ago. She didn't want to see you ever again. That was the reason she took that pill."

He bent to pick up his crumpled coat from the floor and continued, "Look, I know you can locate wherever Sheryl and I go. So, I think, we'll stay here instead. You can attend our marriage and watch when we have our children. I will devote my whole life to take care of her. I swear I won't make her sad at all. I'll try my best to be a better husband than you.



So, if you truly love her please stay away from her. Instead pray for her future happiness with me. Don't waste your time pining for her."

Chapter 578 How Charles Suffered

"Don't move!" A furious Charles pulled Anthony by the collar and growled, "Autumn was pregnant with twins when she disappeared. Why is there only one child now?"

After spending a lot of time to trace what happened to the missing twin, Charles had no other option but

to ask Anthony. Since he had conspired to hide Sheryl, Charles believed he knew the truth.

"I don't know," Anthony said while shrugging. 'There is no way I am telling him what happened, ' he

thought to himself. But he felt like gloating when seeing how anxious Charles was. With mocking

laughter, he taunted Charles, "That's what you need to find out yourself. As for myself, the only thing I

have to do is make Sheryl happy."

"You..." Charles sputtered, his face turning red. He was indignant but could do nothing, short of beating

Anthony up to make him talk.

Anthony raised his chin, removed Charles' hands from his collar and shook the suit coat in his hand

before turning to walk out the door. David, who was standing outside the door, rushed inside and

gasped at the bruise slowly forming on Charles' face. At first, he stared blankly and then asked, "What happened to you, Mr. Lu?"

"Nothing!" he mumbled. Gingerly, he touched the swollen corner of his mouth. Fortunately, he only sustained bruises, and there was no blood.

Anthony's words kept playing in his head. If Leila did anything to get Sheryl into trouble, Charles vowed to take drastic measures.

Sheryl never expected to be slapped so hard on the face by Leila when she took Shirley to eat out. Her ears were still ringing, and she felt her cheek immediately swell up due to the force of the slap.

After the shock of seeing her mother hurt, Shirley stood beside Sheryl and with sad eyes comforted her.

"Do you want me to blow on your face to make the pain go away?" she asked. The little girl remembered how her mother would blow on the area when she was hurt.

"I'm fine," Sheryl assured her daughter. Despite the pain and embarrassment she felt, Sheryl was pleased with her daughter's heartwarming behavior. So, she patted the girl's face and urged her, "Go ahead and enjoy your food."

Today, Shirley was remarkably well-behaved. After finishing her food, Sheryl took the little girl back to

the hotel, where they saw Isla holding Amanda's hand, waiting at the lobby.

Isla initially planned to have someone pick up Sheryl from the hotel. But on second thought, she decided it would be more sincere to come herself. So it was a complete surprise when they learned that Sheryl had gone out. Having heard what happened at the hall earlier, and seeing Sheryl's swollen face now, Isla quickly figured out the culprit.

Worry lined Isla's pretty face as she thought of how painful it must feel to have a swollen cheek of that extent.

On seeing Sheryl's face, she quickly approached her. "Oh, Miss Xia!" she cried out. "Amanda and I have come for you," Isla said.

Seeing Amanda, Shirley let go of her mother's hand and ran to play with the other girl. After the unpleasant encounter with Leila, Sheryl had been in a bad mood. But seeing how happy Shirley was with a playmate, she eventually agreed to stay.

They headed to a nearby café with children's play facilities to allow the two girls to enjoy themselves.

Recalling Autumn's preference in coffee, Isla ordered two cups with the proper mixture. She was glad

Sheryl's taste had not changed despite losing her memory.

"What happened to your face?" she finally asked once they were seated. "Did Leila do this to you?"

Unable to control herself, she questioned Sheryl with a hint of annoyance.

Holding her cup of coffee, Sheryl paused before finally nodding.

She had no idea when she had offended Leila. 'Is there anything wrong with my close relationship with

Charlie? Leila was definitely overreacting!' Sheryl thought to herself. Isla frowned at the display of

Sheryl's sudden turn of emotions. She sighed in defeat not long after. As she sat next to Sheryl, she

maintained a foot of distance with her face turned to her direction.

"It's better to ignore her. That woman is insane," Isla advised Sheryl. Unable to hide the contempt in

her voice, she told Sheryl, "Think of it as being bitten by a dog. We can't bite the dog back, right?"

'How can she understand my feelings when she's never gone through my experience?' Sheryl

wondered while smiling at Isla.

Deciding the time was right, Isla shifted topics from Leila to Charles. "Do you know what Charles went

through in the last few years?" Isla paused to remember Charles' struggles. As his friend, she

witnessed his misery at failing in every attempt to find Autumn. And her heart truly ached for him. Isla

wanted Sheryl to know these things. Hopefully, the woman would have an idea what Charles had to live through in the three years since she left.

The statement startled Sheryl, who thought what Charles went through was none of her business. She frowned at Isla and was about to say she didn't want to know. But the other woman quickly spoke.

"While Charles may pretend not to care about anything, in truth he's what you might describe as spoony."

"Is he now?" Sheryl replied with a cold smile. "No wonder his wife always has a feeling of insecurity," she said, her expression contemptuous.

Sheryl seemed to have misunderstood what Isla just said. Ignoring the look of scorn on the woman's face, Isla sat back comfortably, thinking she had the entire afternoon to explain things to Sheryl.

"You have it all wrong," Isla said smiling. "Leila is not Charles' wife." The revelation momentarily confused Sheryl. After recovering, Sheryl now appeared interested to hear the rest of the story.

She sat without speaking or moving and waited for what Isla had to say next.

"Charles' wife is my best friend. Her name is Autumn Zhao. She is both kind and attractive," Isla began.

She paused, expecting a reaction. When there was none, Isla was slightly disappointed but continued, "It all started when Autumn married Charles, which was a twist of fate."

Once she began, Isla could not stop and told Sheryl everything, including the love and hate that was part of the story. Sheryl soaked it all up, and couldn't imagine why there was a mother so cruel-hearted.

Fortunately, the poor girl married the right man, who took her out of her miserable life.

"Then what happened?" Sheryl asked eagerly. "Tell me, what happened next!" Charles and Autumn's story now fascinated Sheryl, and she kept urging Isla to continue with the story.

Isla paused to drink coffee and gather her thoughts. She squinted trying to remember and said, "Then Autumn became pregnant with twins. Unfortunately, the Lu family servant was blackmailed to poison her food. She became mentally unstable, and would break down even with insignificant things."

Hearing this, Sheryl sighed heavily. "The girl truly suffered much."

The truth was Sheryl felt a little heart-broken. She couldn't understand why she identified with Autumn's

tragic experience. "How can she be so ill-fated?" she spoke aloud.

"You're absolutely right!" Isla said with a wry smile. "On her ninth month of pregnancy, Autumn

suddenly disappeared. We had no information about how to trace her and Charles went utterly crazy searching for Autumn everywhere. He nearly turned Y City inside out. Still, he couldn't find his wife."

Sheryl stared at Isla with a horrified look.

Isla continued her story about Autumn's disappearance. "When Charles found the warehouse where Autumn was held captive for a while, he broke down after seeing a pool of dried blood. There was no sign of her. That was when he fell seriously ill. Since then, he stopped smiling and hardly ever talked.

All he did every day was to eat, sleep or leave the house to get drunk. For the past three years, he lived like the walking dead. But, he never gave up searching for Autumn."

Chapter 579 The Changed Attitude

"So, what happened after that? Did he find her?" The love story of Charles and Autumn had captured Sheryl's imagination. Who could resist such a wonderful story? Charles loved autumn deeply. She believed that a love like that was a gift from God and being separated from one another was a great tragedy.

Isla shook her head, throwing Sheryl an ironic look. "Autumn has been missing for three years. I'm her best friend and I nearly gave up on finding her. But Charles has never given up looking for her and insists that Autumn is still alive."

'Loving Autumn so much, Charles must have felt instinctively that his wife is still alive, ' Sheryl sighed.

'It's hard to imagine what he must have been through during those years. It's his firm belief that Autumn is alive that keeps him going.'

Sheryl had no idea why their story tugged at her heartstrings and why she cared so much what happened to them.

"Something is off..." Sheryl said as an afterthought. Frowning at Isla, she asked,"If Charles truly loved Autumn to such an extent like what you said, how come he had an affair with Leila and had Charlie as a result?"

At the mention of Leila, Isla's countenance became grim. "Nobody knows for sure what kind of relationship Charles had with Leila. Before Autumn vanished, Leila had been scheming to steal Charles away from Autumn through any means possible. She had many tricks up her sleeve. Later, she also disappeared around the same time as Autumn. When she came back, everybody was shocked to learn that she has a little boy. I also don't know where the boy came from."

Sighing, Isla explained to Sheryl,"Miss Xia, Leila is a person of no consequence. Charles has never



been interested in her. Even with her son, she can't change anything. In Charles' heart and mind, Autumn is the only woman that mattered."

"Why exactly are you telling me these things?" From the beginning, Sheryl had an odd feeling that Isla was trying hard to explain Charles and Autumn's story to her. It was as if she was explaining Charles' side of the story to her. But what could be her relation to all these things?

Whoever Charles loved, Autumn or Leila, was not her business. She was just listening as a third party.

As interesting as their story was to her, she would soon forget about it.

"I'm sorry, Miss Xia, you must think I'm a blabbermouth." Shaking her head, Isla realized that it was understandable for Sheryl to be confused. Sheryl had no idea that she was Autumn who had lost her memory. She didn't know that Isla was explaining for Charles' sake. "It's just that you look like my friend. So every time I see you, I can't help but think about her."

Sheryl's eyes widened. "So you mean I look like your friend, Autumn?" Strangely enough, the information upset her. Sheryl didn't mind if Isla mistook her for Autumn but she felt bad because Charles might have also thought the same as Isla. Knowing how Charles felt about Autumn, Sheryl felt uncomfortable.

What if Charles thought she was Autumn and that was why he was pursuing her?

"Yes, you really look like her." Laughing wryly, Isla said, "Don't mind me, Miss Xia. Today, I just really needed someone to talk to. As Autumn has been missing for such a long time, I have no one to confide in. As it is, I just have too much to say to her and when I saw you, I just got carried away."

"It's all right." Sheryl laughed and said, "I am greatly honored that you shared such a touching love story to me."

"Miss Xia..." Reaching for Sheryl's hands, Isla said, "I heard that you came to Y City for business. Now that you have finished your work here, would you consider living here for good?"

"I'm thinking about it." Smiling slightly, Sheryl confided to Isla, "Actually, I really like Y City, and I'm seriously thinking if I will go back to America or stay here."

"So, what about just living here?" Eagerly waiting for Sheryl's reply, Isla saw the confusion in her eyes and explained, "What I mean is you can just stay here with us. I have never seen Amanda so compatible with someone. She really hits it off with Shirley. I think it's fate that brought you here," Isla said. "I hope you can stay here."

Without saying anything, Sheryl just smiled noncommittally.

Her mind drifted to Leila. She thought that she must be going a little crazy because all her efforts in ensnaring Charles were fruitless.

Suddenly a thought entered Sheryl's mind that made her sit up straight. 'Leila blamed me for hiding her son. Is there a possibility that Charlie is missing?' The thought made her uneasy. She had grown to love that little boy and she couldn't bear if something bad happened to him.

But then again, she thought, 'It doesn't concern me.

Charlie has parents. What right do I have to be worried about him?'

They sat talking at the café for most of the afternoon. Sheryl felt distraught as she thought about Charlie. Isla invited them for dinner but Sheryl declined since she was feeling tired and she wanted to go back to their place to rest.

Isla was clearly disappointed, but she didn't detain her.

It was only a ten-minute walk from the café to the hotel. Isla offered to drive them back but Sheryl refused. Sheryl and Shirley walked hand-in-hand back to the hotel.

After the Fashion Show, most of the models, including Sue had already signed contracts with BM

Corporation and moved to the apartments provided by the company.

Since Sue left, she never contacted Sheryl. It made her feel sad because Sue was her trusted friend.

For the models who didn't sign contracts yet, some went back to America, and some continued to stay

at the hotel. But BM Corporation no longer paid their expenses.

Sheryl was an exception. BM Corporation was willing to absorb her into their Y City office as a contract

model. But they were not forcing her to make a decision.

'The more tolerant BM Corporation is to me, the more nervous I become, ' Sheryl thought.

While walking back to the hotel, Shirley surprised Sheryl by asking, "Sher, can I play with Amanda later

on?"

"Do you like her?" Sheryl asked her daughter, surprised. She couldn't believe that the two girls would

be so compatible with each other.

Shirley nodded excitedly and said to Sheryl, "I like Amanda and I want to live here."

Sheryl smiled but said nothing.

To stay or leave, was now the biggest dilemma in her mind. Even if she decided to stay, she didn't

know how to say that to Anthony.

They found Charles silently waiting for them at the hotel when they arrived.

Her first instinct when she saw Charles was to grab Shirley's hand and turn away. But Charles had already seen them and hastily caught up with Sheryl. Catching Sheryl's arm, Charles knitted his brows and asked, "What's going on? Why are you avoiding me?"

"Let me go!" Frowning, Sheryl shook off Charles's hand agitatedly. Looking up directly in his deep eyes, she asked, "Mr. Lu, are you kidding me? Is there any reason why I should avoid you?"

Charles' eyes narrowed. He had no idea what had happened. 'Why did Sheryl suddenly changed her attitude with me?'

"Sher, what's the matter with you?" Holding her chin up so she could meet his eyes, he asked, "Are you still angry with me because of Leila? If so, I apologize to you. I..."

Chapter 580 My Pleasure

"Mr. Lu, please stay away from me. Why are you acting like this?" Sheryl said with consternation. She maintained a safe distance from Charles and continued, "We are not friends. And I bear no grudges against you, so there is no need for you to come here and apologize."

"What's gotten into you?" Charles frowned and asked her, "How should I know what really happened to

you if you wouldn't tell me?"

Sheryl sneered, "Mr. Lu, I don't know you, and you don't know me either. We're just strangers to each other. So I think it would be better for us to stay that way instead of making some fuss.

Well, if you'd excuse me, I need to leave."

Sheryl didn't wait for Charles to answer and she immediately left with Shirley. Charles wanted to stop them but he didn't know what to say. So, all he could do was stare at their receding figures.

Sheryl was still flustered even when they entered their room. Shirley was standing beside her, frowning a bit. She then shot a timid look at Sheryl. She hadn't seen her mom being like that before.

"Sher, I'm hungry," Shirley said in a light voice. Sheryl came back to her senses when she heard that.

She was so pissed off after what happened between her and Charles that she even forgot to take Shirley to dinner.

She bent down and smiled at Shirley. "Honey, mommy will order food delivery, okay?"

"Okay," Shirley answered and sat quietly beside her.

When Sheryl turned on her phone to browse some restaurants and order something for dinner,

someone knocked on the door. Shirley ran to open it so it was already too late for Sheryl to stop her.

When the door was opened, Anthony was standing there. Sheryl put down her phone and asked, "What are you doing here, Anthony?"

Shirley was happy to see Anthony. She saw that he was carrying some bags in his hands. It must be dinner for them.

"I assumed that you hadn't had dinner yet, so I bought something for you," Anthony confirmed her guess. It seemed like nothing had happened. Anthony acted as normal. He bought the dinner from the restaurant that Sheryl had been fond of when she was still Autumn. He didn't know whether she still liked the food there.

"Smells good," commented Shirley. Shirley was like a greedy little kitten sniffing the bags in Anthony's hands. She also didn't leave Anthony's side when he got in. Sheryl was actually not feeling hungry, but when she smelt the food, she suddenly heard her stomach grumbling, which made her feel a bit embarrassed.

Anthony smiled warmly and said, "Come on, let's have dinner."

Sheryl sat beside Shirley and started skinning shrimps for her.

Anthony brought a lot of food and they wouldn't be able to eat them all, so he put some of them into the

fridge. He then sat by the table, took out some tissues for her and said, "Wipe your hands and have your dinner. I can skin shrimps for Shirley."

Anthony behaved so naturally. At the looks of it, he already felt comfortable doing things like that. It was as if he had done that a million times already. Sheryl was somehow already used to it, so she obediently took the tissues, wiped her hands and started eating.

Anthony was quick at peeling the shrimps. Since Shirley was just a little girl, she could easily get full.

But Anthony continued peeling shrimps, and this time it was for Sheryl.

The meal tasted delicious for Sheryl, but she felt a little uneasy when she saw Anthony peeling shrimps for her. "You don't need to do this. I'm not a child anymore, I can peel the shrimps myself," she said.

"It's all right. It's my pleasure." Anthony smiled. "I would love to skin shrimps for you all my life," he added with a wink.

Sheryl didn't have much reaction on what he said.

"Are you okay?" he asked. He noticed that Sheryl was a bit unhappy after he said those words so he



thought she didn't like it.

"Yes, I'm fine," Sheryl answered expressionlessly. She then stood up and started to clean the table.

Anthony stopped her and said, "Just leave this to me. I can do this. Just go and stay with Shirley. It's

almost her bedtime."

Anthony was the kind of a man who would always be considerate and make arrangements for you, so

you wouldn't need to worry about anything if he was with you. Every woman would definitely dream and

love to have this kind of a man, but not Sheryl.

She didn't like the feeling of being weak and helpless in front of him. But, how could she tell him about

it without offending his feelings?

After dinner, Shirley sat on the sofa to watch TV. After a while, she started looking for her mom. The

little girl had played with Amanda the whole afternoon, so she must be dead tired. Sheryl held her in

the arms and took her to the bathroom to take a bath. But before she could even finish bathing, Shirley

had already fallen asleep, so Sheryl quickly finished bathing her and put her on the bed lightly.

"Silly girl," Sheryl whispered while lovingly stroking her wet hair.

After making sure that Shirley was sleeping comfortably, she got out of the room. She didn't see

Anthony so she thought he'd already left. However, she found Anthony smoking at the balcony. She

opened the door and asked, "Since when did you start smoking?"

"Sorry." Anthony glanced at her and put out his cigarette immediately.

Sheryl couldn't help but frown again.

She hadn't said anything yet but Anthony's already acting like a child who got caught doing something

wrong. His abrupt apology gave Sheryl an impression that she was already giving him too much

pressure.

"I've never seen you smoke before, so I thought that you didn't smoke," Sheryl explained.

Anthony smiled and said, "Yes, I smoke. Actually, I have been smoking for several years already. The

reason why you have never seen me smoke is that I've never done it in front of you. I thought you

hated the smell of cigarettes and it's also not good for the child.

And I will never do it in front of you."

Sheryl was upset for no reason. She paused a bit before saying to Anthony, "It's getting late, you should

leave."

She didn't want to waste both of their times arguing about this matter so she decided to let him go

home.

Anthony walked out of the balcony. But he turned back to her and said,"Sher, I've thought about the BM

Corporation's contract..."

Sheryl looked at him and noticed the wound on his cheeks. She remembered that she also saw some

bruises on Charles' face earlier. She frowned and asked Anthony,"Did you go to see Charles?"

Anthony froze for a moment. He thought that it was Charles who told Sheryl that they had seen each

other and they had a fight. So he angrily confirmed,"Charles told you that, didn't he? Sher, I've already

told you, you have to stay away from him. He's not good to you."

Sheryl didn't know what kind of a man Charles was. But since she heard the story from Isla, at least

she could be sure that Charles was a soulful man.

So Sheryl felt a little annoyed when she heard Anthony badmouthing Charles for no reason.

"Anthony, couldn't you just calm down and think about it well? Did you really think Charles would come

to me and tell me that you had seen each other? Just seeing the the wounds and bruises on both of

your faces, who else won't know what happened?"