

Wedded Bride 701

Chapter 701 Would You Dare Play It

"Mr. Lu, you're finally here," Kitty said in a mincing voice as she approached Charles in a pretentious manner. Kitty actually came here today to take all the opportunities to seduce Charles.

She stood beside Charles and put her arm around him. However, Charles avoided her touch in an unemotional way.

Staring at her arm hung in the air, Kitty felt upset. But she had to pretend to be not affected at all. So she said to Charles in an artificially sweet voice, "I have been waiting for you the whole afternoon."

"Oh, really?" Charles replied sarcastically. Charles cast a glance at Kitty and asked expressionlessly,

"Why are you waiting for me?"

Kitty wasn't able to answer Charles' question for a little while. She was dazed. She couldn't believe that Charles would really be so uninterested in her. All the while she believed that she was pretty and she was confident that she would be able to get him.

Well, anyone could agree that Kitty was prettier than the other models. The sexy swimsuit she was wearing today had even accentuated her curvy figure. Even Sheryl was impressed when she saw Kitty's figure. However, Charles didn't have any reactions at all.

Kitty felt more frustrated and couldn't help looking down at her figure. Was the swimsuit not fit to her?

After thinking twice, she realized that the problem was not the swimsuit.

She was wearing a black swimsuit with two shoulder straps crossed at the back and tied around her neck. It actually gave her a very attractive sex appeal.

Additionally, her wavy chestnut hair was tied in a ponytail. Her long and slim legs came under the hem.

All these made her more attractive and sexy. Even the waiters couldn't help but glance at her every time they passed by. How could Charles not even cast a single glance at her?

"The truth is," Kitty started to explain after she was able to appease herself, "we have prepared some games for the party and we wished to invite you to play with us."

"Okay," Charles crisply accepted her invitation. He could already see through Kitty's scheme. The reason why he decided to agree was so he could get a chance to fail her plan and embarrass her in the end.

Then Charles turned to Sheryl and said, "Let's eat something." Charles took a bunch of roast meat and handed it to Sheryl, "Taste it."

Sheryl hadn't eaten anything until now because she was busy taking care of Shirley. So when she was given the roast meat in Charles' hand, she couldn't help but suddenly notice her hungriness. She was extremely grateful to Charles' thoughtfulness.

Charles was fully aware how busy Sheryl had been earlier and he knew that she hadn't eaten yet. So he went toward the barbecue grill, rolled up his sleeves, and roasted some meats for her. After he handed the roasted meats to her, he said, "I roasted these meats myself. Do they look delicious?"

"You did? Really?" Sheryl then gave him a suspicious look. A disbelief was reflected on her face. She could still remember that unknown disgusting thing Charles had cooked the last time so she couldn't help but doubt if these meats roasted by him could truly be eaten.

Anyway, they looked slightly delicious.

Sheryl took a bite to taste it and then nodded to Charles. "It is delicious!"

When Charles heard her compliment, he laughed happily like a child who was rewarded by a teacher.

Kitty who was still standing beside Charles witnessed all their sweet interactions. She was overly

fuming inside. When she couldn't take it anymore, she faced Charles. She put on a big smile to hide

her fury and said, "Mr. Lu, can we start the game now?"

"Sure," Charles replied in agreement. Then he turned to Sheryl, "Sheryl will play with me."

"No, I will not," Sheryl slightly shook her head. She was not interested in any of the games prepared by Kitty at all. She was also aware that Kitty wouldn't want her to play with them. So if she chose to agree with Charles, Kitty would definitely hate her more.

After casting a glance to both of them, Sheryl found a very good excuse, "I have to accompany Shirley and Charlie in the room."

"David can take care of Shirley and Charlie. Just enjoy your stay here and relax," Charles tried to persuade her. David felt more wronged upon hearing Charles' statement.

He had been very busy the whole afternoon. Now that he got an opportunity to sit down and eat a bunch of roast chicken wrings, Charles suddenly let him watch over the two kids.

But he didn't have any choice. Although he didn't want to, he still pretended to agree on Charles' suggestion and showed pleasure to accompany the two kids. "Yes, I can take care of the kids. Miss Xia, you just enjoy playing with them. Don't worry about Charlie and Shirley."

Sheryl thought that Kitty would also refuse to include her in the games. But to her surprise, Kitty merely

laughed ironically and said, "Sheryl, a lot of people are already urging you to join. I hope you are not that mean to continue refusing."

Sheryl suddenly remembered Charles' back injury so she eventually nodded in agreement.

She agreed to join in the games because she wanted to watch over Charles. If Kitty and the other models would go overboard, she could stop them.

Kitty laughed sarcastically when she heard that Sheryl had eventually agreed to play games with them.

The first game arranged by Kitty was just a normal drinking competition. The winner was, of course, Charles. But the loser was Sheryl. The punishment was to swim a lap in the swimming pool.

Sheryl never thought of swimming so she didn't bring any swimsuit with her. And since she was still wearing a tracksuit, if she jumped into the water, the clothes would become transparent and everybody would be able to see through her body.

Worst of all, Sheryl couldn't swim.

Charles also knew that Sheryl couldn't swim. He had actually tried to teach her many times before but she just couldn't learn.

Since Kitty had known Sheryl for quite a long time, obviously she also knew that Sheryl couldn't swim.

Did she intentionally prepare this game to hurt Sheryl?

"Sheryl, you must honor a bet. Or are you scared?" Kitty said faintly. She laughed sarcastically seeing that Sheryl was stunned for a long time.

Sheryl was provoked by Kitty's bitter words. Even though she couldn't swim, she still decided to jump into the pool. But Charles immediately seized her arm and asked angrily, "Are you crazy? Do you want to die?"

"I..." Sheryl didn't know what to say. She just stared at Charles not knowing what to do.

Charles cast a cold glance at Kitty and said, "How about this? I'll take the punishment by drinking a bottle of beer so Sheryl doesn't need to jump into the pool. What do you think?"

This suggestion was highly agreeable to Kitty. This was actually their initial plan. She told the other models that she would take care of Sheryl to make sure that she would always lose in the game. That way, they could provoke Charles to drink more for the sake of Sheryl. She knew that Charles would always save Sheryl.

Sheryl glimpsed at Charles and said with utmost concern, "You couldn't drink any more. If you continue

to drink..."

Sheryl felt worried about Charles' injury. But Charles merely smiled reassuringly and pacified her,

"Don't worry. I can handle this."

Witnessing the two whispering to each other, Kitty felt more upset.

She took a bamboo stick and cut it into a size of a toothpick. Then she said to them, "The next game is more exciting."

She smiled mysteriously and continued, "This game is called Pass The Toothpick. One should pass the toothpick to the next person by mouth. No using of hands or other materials. If one drops the toothpick, he or she must take the punishment. The game won't end until the toothpick is passed to a full a circle.

Then the last person should cut the toothpick into half. Then the second round will start, this time with the shorter toothpick. This will make the game even more exciting. Mr. Lu, would you dare play it?"

Chapter 702 Head Above Water

Kitty muttered those words on a challenging tone.

Charles answered with a half smile, "I don't play these kinds of games."

That idea was difficult to swallow for Kitty. She paused for a while, unsure of how to take his refusal.

Everyone at the bars he frequented played that game. She had done her homework! So Charles

straight out rejecting it was not something she had expected.

"Come on, Mr. Lu. We're here to have fun. If you refuse, we'll have to penalize you," Kitty insisted. She was a bit irritated by that point and was having a hard time hiding that.

"I'd rather accept the penalty," replied Charles nonchalantly, refusing to give in to her whims. It wasn't his intention to be a party pooper, but he was way too familiar with these kinds of mind games.

Kitty had a feeling that Sheryl had something to do with it. So she gave her a dirty look, planning her revenge.

In the meantime, she had to deal with Charles. To make him feel the burn of his punishment, she had someone bring a bottle of vodka mixed with paint thinner. The concoction could make one extremely sick, especially if taken after other drinks. Kitty presented it to Charles in a blackmailing manner. "Well, if you continue refusing to participate and, therefore, dampen the mood of the party, you have to drink this. I like to call it the 'death trap'; it's 50% alcohol, and another 50% of... that chemical they use in paint. Can't remember the name right now, but anyway... you should think twice before making a decision."

"I don't need to think at all. Let's get it over with," Charles declared. He opened the bottle right away.

Annoyed, Kitty wished him a "bottoms up" right before he poured the whole thing down his throat. With

a sarcastic tone, he then asked her, "Have I paid my dues now?"

Everyone at the party was silent. Charles' stubbornness made them quite suspicious. Noticing their

looks, he responded with a harsh glance adding, "All right! We have had enough fun for tonight. Party's

over! Now let's all get back to sleep. Tomorrow we're coming back to work after lunch."

Kitty, however, didn't care about his announcement. She had more reasons to rejoice, especially after

seeing Charles drink that entire bottle. It was then time to take care of Sheryl, who just happened to be

facing the pool and daydreaming. With quick feet, she took the chance and knocked her into it when

nobody was looking.

Hearing the splash, Charles instantly looked back and saw Sheryl as she was falling into the water.

Reflexively, he jumped right in after her.

He remembered Sheryl couldn't swim before she even began crying for help.

Her struggle led her to swallow too much water, both through her mouth and her nose.

The lack of air was slowly suffocating her.

But she was a fighter; she kept thinking of how to stay alive.

Through her coughs, tears, and hands splashing the waves, she could feel her body getting weaker, her energy getting lower.

Sheryl was on the verge of seeing death with her own eyes.

She desperately hoped that she could grab onto something that could help her stay afloat: a bar, a stair, anything. As the time lapsed, she felt the rest of her memory getting devoured by the water and her consciousness gradually disappearing like the mist under the sun.

Then a strong arm grabbed her by the hips, lifting her to the surface. She could breathe again. Her body responded by violently coughing out all the water.

Through the madness, she could hear Charles' soft but reassuring voice.

As he laid Sheryl on the ground, holding her head tilted upwards, he comforted her, "Sheryl, I'm here.

Stay with me. You're okay now."

A strong sense of peace took over her mind and body, like a warm blanket on a cold night.

In her dreams, every time she would get into any kind of danger, Charles was always beside her. That

day he proved that he was there in real life as well.

As Sheryl was recovering, Kitty strolled over to seemingly check on her. "Oh, my god. Sheryl, are you okay? You can't swim? Now I understand why Mr. Lu would rather drink that than play the game."

Sheryl was still coughing, though not as much. When hearing Kitty's words, she quickly looked up at her with blazing eyes.

Her look frightened Kitty for a second. Impulsively, she reacted, "Why are you staring at me like that?"

"Why am I staring at you?" asked Sheryl rhetorically. After a short sarcastic laugh, she commented,

"Kitty, you should know why yourself."

"What? I don't know. You are being so ridiculous!" retaliated Kitty. She kept evading Sheryl's glances and then continued arguing in a louder voice, "This is what I get for caring about you?"

"Ha! Kitty," Sheryl struggled to speak. She didn't have the energy for a full-on argument. She also didn't use to care much about Kitty's earlier deeds. However, that time she had gone too far. She nearly killed her... on purpose!

So Sheryl decided to gather all her energy and addressed Kitty, "Would you give me an explanation as

to why you pushed me into the pool?"

Hearing that her fall was not an accident, Charles turned furiously toward Kitty awaiting a good explanation. Although, truth be told, no excuse would be good enough to lessen his anger. He nearly lost Sheryl again. He would be damned if he let Kitty go that easily!

What surprised him the most was that she had dared to do such a thing in front of him and that she was so blatantly denying it.

With a raspy, aggravated voice, he ordered Kitty, "Talk! What do you have to say about it?"

Frankly, he was not expecting nor waiting for an explanation. Kitty was already guilty in his eyes.

Sheryl's words were enough for him to blame her, as she had no reason to lie.

"Mr. Lu, please don't trust her words. Why would I do such a thing?" Kitty pleaded. Seeing no change in his attitude, she hastily added, "There were so many people beside the pool; the floor is so wet. She must have fallen accidentally. It's just easier to blame it on me since she obviously can't stand me. Low blow, Sheryl! Low blow!"

At that point, Kitty tried to pull a confident look and force herself to make eye contact with Sheryl. She knew that Sheryl wasn't the most assertive person and figured she could easily break her down. This

time around though, Sheryl straightened up and looked Kitty right in the eyes. It could have been the adrenaline from the shock or the fact that Charles was there.

Either way, that attitude suited her much better; so much better, in fact, that Kitty swallowed hard and had to reinforce her argument, "Sheryl, I know you don't like me much. But to fabricate such serious charges against me! Now, that's too much! Mr. Lu and many other witnesses were here. Can anyone testify? Did anyone see me do anything? Do you really think I'm such an evil person? Although I don't like you either, I wouldn't go as far as to kill you. What you're saying is totally absurd! You have no basis for your accusations." Kitty went on and on. She was putting on such a good act. After finishing with Sheryl, she moved on to persuading Charles, "Mr. Lu, please don't listen to her. I saw her slip and fall into the pool by herself. I don't know why she keeps insisting that I pushed her."

"Stop this nonsense! You know as well as I do that you did it. I saw you!" Sheryl exclaimed, interrupting her. That statement took Kitty by surprise. In her rush to move away from the scene, she had missed the moment when Sheryl turned around right before falling; Sheryl even caught Kitty's giggle as her back slammed against the water's surface. So Kitty's hypocrisy was truly disgusting to her.

Seeing how Kitty kept quiet, perhaps thinking about her next move, Sheryl continued, "Just stop pretending, Kitty. The truth always comes out." Sheryl was so assertive that Kitty could hardly think of anything else to say. For a moment, it felt like she had no escape.

Soon enough, however, she realized that it was Charles whom she had to convince, not Sheryl. So she quickly directed all her explanations toward him.

With sad eyes, almost full of tears, she stepped up her game. "Mr. Lu, I know you and Sheryl are together. I realize it's hard for you not to trust her. But please, for a second, put on your boss hat and look at the situation objectively. Whose explanation makes more sense?"

Chapter 703 Dare To Take A Bet On Me

A bitter smile crept on Kitty's face as she spoke to Charles in a shaky voice, "I know that you love Sheryl so it's natural for you to always believe in her. I can understand that." "But this time, it has something to do with my reputation. So, I hope Mr. Lu could make a fair judgement," she added.

While staring affectionately at Charles, she continued, "If Mr. Lu still chooses to believe Sheryl, then I have no other choice but to accept it. I have to admit that I am inferior to her. She is always skillful in seducing a man, anyway."

"Kitty, are you still going to inflict injustice to Sheryl? Don't you have any remorse at all?" asked Charles

while pointing at Sheryl. He sneered and gave Kitty a cold stare.

Although Charles had drunk a lot, fortunately the last bottle only contained water.

Alice had been watching over Charles from the beginning of the game because she was afraid that Charles would be framed. So when she noticed that Kitty and the other models were lurking outside, she took the opportunity to pour out the liquor and replaced it with water. That was also why Charles was confident to drink it.

As she heard Charles' words, Kitty was taken aback and she felt anxious. She thought that Charles would be forced to be impartial when faced with many people. However, she didn't expect that he would still speak for Sheryl.

At the thought of this, Kitty laughed grimly. She turned to Charles and said in an aggrieved tone, "It seems that Mr. Lu has always been determined to trust Sheryl and speak for her."

"Yes, of course! That is exactly what I will always do," replied Charles with a sneer. Initially, Charles had planned to talk to Kitty in private when all people left. After all, she was a woman and he wanted to give her some face. But he didn't expect that things would turn out this way.

Now that it was Kitty who took the initiative to screw things up, Charles decided to disregard her feeling anymore.

"Absolutely, I will believe in Sheryl's words. Or do you expect me to believe you instead?" asked

Charles in a cold tone. The sneer didn't leave his face while he helped Sheryl to sit by his side carefully.

When Alice saw it, she hastily put a clean towel around Sheryl's shoulders. After making sure that

Sheryl was already fine, Charles then turned to Kitty and was ready to give her a punishment.

However, Kitty was still kept in the dark so she laughed scornfully and continued, "Well, perhaps you

are already in a relationship with Sheryl. And now that she is your lover, it is natural for you to trust her

and be partial towards me. So, what are you going to do with me then?"

Sheryl trembled in anger upon hearing Kitty's words but she chose not to say anything. Charles patted

her shoulder and smiled softly to comfort her so she was a little bit relieved.

Taking a glimpse at Kitty who was still acting like an overlord, Charles said, "You said that I am a

prejudiced. Now, to prove me wrong, you have to show me an evidence that would show Sheryl really

just slipped by herself because I always believe that she would never create troubles intentionally."

"What kind of evidence are you still looking for? There are so many people here and they probably saw

what happened too. Just as the old saying goes, 'Four eyes see more than two'. I was at the end of the line that time so I clearly saw she slip." Kitty also sneered to Charles and continued, "Mr. Lu, you said earlier that you would give me a chance to explain. But from the looks of it, you are still trying to defend Sheryl no matter what I say. Why don't you just tell me exactly what you want to say? There's no need for you to beat around the bush.

Where do you think should I find the evidence you are looking for?" Finally, Kitty had stopped her illusions. It was clear to her now that Charles would never trust her. He only believed in Sheryl. "I have only seen it with my own eyes so I really don't have any idea where to find the evidence you want," she added.

"You are lying!" Charlie's voice was abruptly heard. He composedly walked through the crowd and stopped in front of Kitty.

Sheryl was stunned to have heard Charlie's voice. She gazed at him and persuaded him, "Charlie, don't get involved in this matter. Just go and play with Shirley. I will be fine. There is nothing to worry about."

However, Charlie just stood still as if he didn't hear anything. Although he was much shorter than Kitty, he was calm yet a little bit furious. He glared at Kitty and asked in a rather cold voice, "You've just said that you saw her slip with your own eyes, right?"

"Little boy, you shouldn't get involved in this matter. You better get out of here," said Kitty in a scornful tone. A sly smile appeared on her face.

She did not take Charlie seriously at all.

However, Charlie ignored Kitty's words and said again, "Please answer my question."

Kitty hesitated for a while. She took a glance at Charles only to realize that he didn't have any plans to stop his son. So she looked at Charlie and impatiently said, "Little boy, I have already said many times that I saw her slip but I don't know why Sheryl is still slandering me. Do you understand now?"

When he heard Kitty's words, Charlie sneered. Then he said, "Really? That's just what you want people to believe. But, what if I tell you that I saw you push Sher into the pool? You even dare pretend that you care about her. What a hypocritical woman!"

"Why are you telling a shabby lie this time?" Kitty asked. She was so anxious when she heard Charlie's statements. All the blame was laid on her now. She didn't know how to get out of this trouble.

Out of exasperation, Kitty glared at Charlie and said, "Don't get involved yourself here. You better get out as soon as possible. You nasty ill-bred creature! This is none of your business! Don't try to make troubles here!"

Kitty was so indignant that she couldn't control herself anymore and said such harsh remarks to Charlie. After a short pause, she continued, 'You are just a kid. We can't believe what you just said.'

"Why can't we believe him?" Charles butted in. He also glared at Kitty and said, "He is my son and I know how to educate him. It's you who are just talking nonsense here. Don't you know that it's inappropriate to say such harsh words to a kid?"

He stared at Kitty and paused for a few seconds. Then he continued, "He is my biological son and I know him well. I can tell if he is lying or not. So, are you still going to continue your sophistry?"

Kitty was take aback and said, "Mr. Lu, I didn't mean it. Please don't misunderstand me." Kitty suddenly realized that she was too rude to say those words to a kid so she tried to explain herself. She looked at Charles and hastily said, "Mr. Lu, I was just so anxious that I said those harsh remarks to Charlie. I didn't mean them. And I didn't really push Sheryl. Please believe me."

However, Charles just sneered and replied, "Charlie is telling the truth. Kitty, I think it's best that I call the police right now. I'm sure they would find out what really happened here."

Kitty's face turned pale upon hearing Charles mention the police. The models who supported her and spoke for her earlier also kept silent. They were aware that things had turned the other way around.

Obviously, they would not implicate themselves.

All of a sudden, Kitty remembered the bottle of wine which Charles drank earlier. The effect of the drug should have manifested by now. But, why was he still awake? At the thought of this, Kitty realized that something was not right.

"Mr. Lu, you..." Kitty stuttered. "Are you really going to do that?" asked Kitty in a rather shaky voice.

She laughed grimly and continued, "Even if you call the police, I would still say the same thing. I would definitely not admit something I didn't do. You have to be clear about that."

"I assure you that you will confess what you have done," Charlie said abruptly in a loud voice. His words caught everyone's attention. All their eyes were on him.

Sheryl also turned to him and said in a soft tone, "Charlie, don't get involved in this matter please. It has nothing to do with you. Don't worry. I will handle this. Just go and play with Shirley."

"Sher, don't worry about me. I have an evidence to prove your innocence. It is this woman who pushed you into the pool." Charlie then turned to Charles as if waiting for his approval. When Charles nodded slightly, he looked at Kitty with a sly smile and said, "Dare to take a bet on me?"

Chapter 704 It's Not Fair

"Why not? Sure, I dare to take a bet with you," Kitty answered with head held high. Since many people were looking at her, Kitty was challenged by this young boy so she impulsively agreed to bet with him.

Additionally, she was confident that Charlie couldn't show any strong evidence against her.

"Follow me," Charlie commanded as he turned around. He was going to the exact spot where Sheryl fell.

Charlie led the way while the rest followed him. Sheryl also stood up and followed. She was curious to know what tricks Charlie had.

"Is this spot where Sher exactly fell?" Charlie asked faintly. He turned around and looked in Kitty's direction, expecting her to answer his question.

Kitty nodded and answered arrogantly, "Yes, that is. So what?"

She gave Charlie a sardonic smile and said in a faint voice, "As you can see, the floor around the pool

is all wet. It's not impossible for someone to slip and fall into the pool accidentally. Do you really want to prove that I caused Sheryl's accident by just showing us this place? That's so ridiculous. Everyone saw that she fell from here."

"Of course I know that you can't be convicted by merely showing this spot." Charlie kept calm, and his face was expressionless. He caught a glance at Kitty and added grimly, "What can truly convict you is the pair of muddy footprints."

Upon hearing Charlie's last words, everybody fastened their eyes on the footprints. Charles immediately understood what Charlie was trying to do. He delightedly stared at him and thought to himself, 'Although he's just a child, he is already as smart as his father.'

Sheryl felt a little concerned so she tugged Charles' coat tail and said, "Just bring Charlie back. He is just a kid. He shouldn't be involved in this kind of trouble."

Charles just smiled softly. He was absolutely confident that Charlie could solve this matter. He believed his son could do it well.

"Don't worry about him," Charles gently reassured Sheryl. Then he added calmly, "Since he's just a kid, he naturally has a different insight and mindset compared to us. Just wait and see. I think he really has

some proofs."

Sheryl looked at Charlie in puzzlement.

Kitty also saw the two muddy footprints. They came in different sizes. However, she couldn't find anything unusual at all. So she asked Charlie impatiently, "Stop playing enigmatic. What do you want to prove by these footprints?"

"As we all know," Charlie paused for a while. "If Sher truly fell into the pool by accident, the floor must have some elongated footprints that would show someone slid and fell. But look at these footprints carefully. The smaller footprint is a muddy one while the other footprint shows the full sole. Neither of them shows any trace that someone slipped. So, it's obvious that someone really pushed Sheryl, and that was why she fell into the pool."

"You are talking nonsense!" Kitty yelled. She had belittled this child so much. She wondered how could this kid have such a strong reasoning capacity. "There were so many people here and they probably have passed by this area too. Why would you insist that these footprints belonged to Sheryl?" she asked dubiously.

Charlie stared at Kitty with his confident eyes. "You can check everybody. All of you here are wearing flip-flops except for Sher and Dad. They hadn't changed their shoes since they came back from the farmland and mountain climbing as well. So there must be mud all over the soles of their shoes.

Therefore, the large footprints must be Dad's and the smaller ones must belong to Sher."

Upon hearing Charlie's words, Sheryl was dumbstruck. She never thought that Charlie would have such a rigorous logical thinking. No matter how intelligent he was, he was still a 5-year-old child.

Everyone including Sheryl was surprised by Charlie, let alone Kitty. She began to stammer and didn't know what to say. She never expected that she would be defeated by a young boy.

"What else do you want to say?" Charlie asked firmly. He eyed Kitty sarcastically.

For someone who attempted to afflict Sheryl, he would never allow her to succeed.

"I..." Kitty hemmed and hawed. Eventually, she said to Charlie, " These are just footprints. How can they prove anything?"

Then she added with a sardonic smile, " You are just a child. Whatever you're saying now is just nonsense."

She stretched out her hand and was about to shove Charlie but Charles was prompt enough to seize

her hand. He angrily yelled, "How dare you! You also want to do the same to Charlie in front of so many people?"

Kitty felt a slight pain from Charles' grip. She looked at Charles with knitted brows and asked, "Mr. Lu, do you believe in a child's words? I wouldn't push..." Kitty wasn't able to complete her words because Charles immediately interrupted her.

"It is not you who have the final say!" Charles gritted his teeth out of anger. "The evidence is already right in front of you and yet, you are still trying to justify yourself?" Charles' facial expression hardened.

He added, "Kitty, from now on, you are never allowed to set foot in my company. I will discuss this matter with Miss Ye and I will pay the penalty if there's any. I will let Miss Ye deal with you. I won't meddle in it."

Then he turned to the other models with a cold look. "All of you, listen carefully. If I hear any of you slander or gossip anyone from your group in the future, I will not hesitate to teach you a lesson just like this. I can easily sack you all. I have more than enough money to find your replacement. Take it to yourselves seriously. Do you understand?"

Kitty looked pale. She didn't realize until now that Charles was beating the dog before the lion and she was exactly the unlucky dog that was punished.

Now she understood that Charles was only getting even with her for Sheryl. And he was making it clear to the rest of the models that he was always on Sheryl's side and if they tried to do something unpleasant towards her again, they would never have a good ending.

Unfortunately, she didn't realize this fact earlier. Everything was too late now.

"Mr. Lu, I think this is unfair," one of the models said bitterly. She was the closest model to Kitty so it was just normal that she stood up for her. "Everything that the child said was just inference. It couldn't be considered as strong evidence. You are now dismissing Kitty merely because of his words. Are you not being unfair to her?"

"Who are you?" Charles glanced at the model. "Do you want to get justice for her?"

"I am Kitty's friend," the model answered calmly. "Nobody knows the real reason why Sheryl fell into the pool. Each sticks to his own argument. But Sheryl is safe and sound now. However, you are firing Kitty due to this matter. Anyhow, Kitty is the one who suffers losses. We all know your relationship with Sheryl. But in front of so many people, you apparently favor her. Is that reasonable?"

"So how do you think should I deal with this matter?" Charles asked. He was trying his best to pacify his anger.

Chapter 705 I Want to Stay

"In my opinion," the model sneered as she addressed Charles, "Sheryl is the one who should be blamed for all that happened here. She sowed the seeds of discord among the models which eventually led to this debacle. Mr. Lu, if you really want everything to go well here, you have to fire Sheryl rightaway, because she is the real cause of all our discords."

Sheryl was totally speechless. She glared at the model and thought, 'How could she just mindlessly blame it all on me. How could it be my fault when I was the one who got framed and nearly drowned?' She was just about to retaliate when Charles spoke. He sneered at the model and asked, "And what if I don't do that? What will you do?"

"Then don't blame us for disregarding your feelings," the model replied cheekily with a contemptuous smile on her face. She was confident that they made an excellent team and what Charles said was nothing but a threat. But if they united and threatened him with a strike, Charles might come under the pressure and dismiss Sheryl. She just wanted to gamble on this.

She looked straight towards Charles and spoke in a very calm voice, "Mr. Lu, you are rich and powerful. There would be millions of expert professionals willing to work for you. And since you look down upon us to such an extent, how about we simply quit and you can find some better models to work for you?"

Then she just turned to Sheryl and continued in a sarcastic manner, "Oh, I'm mistaken. How could I forget? You still have Sheryl to help you, don't you?"

Both Charles and Sheryl were amazed to see her audacity. Both of them remained quiet as she continued with her rude and cheeky manner as she addressed Charles. She laughed and muffled her mouth looking at Sheryl. She said, "Sheryl, ah, she is a little older than us, and she is a mother. But you do rest your heart, her stage manners is not so bad. Perhaps she can get the show done perfectly all by herself." She thought she played her cards well.

"Are you threatening me?" Charles's face was calm and absolutely bereft of any emotion. "You think you could get away with it by saying so?" he asked.

"Oh no! I dare not," she said. She chuckled, "I'm just telling you the truth. We have been friends for many years. We have been together through thick and thin for all these years. We stand by each other

no matter what. If you're really going to fire Kitty for fussing over the trifles, we will just quit."

"Are you sure?" Charles paused for a second, and asked, "Is that what you all think?"

The models were standing there as quiet as a mouse. He said, "I'll ask you for the last time, are you

really going to quit for Kitty?"

They still kept silent. Charles turned to spoke to David, "David, get their dismissal contract ready. I want

it the first thing in the morning tomorrow on my desk."

"Yes, Mr. Lu," David spoke in a somber voice. He glanced at those models and his face turned grim

wondering how dare they compare themselves with Mrs. Lu. That was so ridiculous.

"Alice," said Charles, "is that bottle of wine still here? Give it to the police, and check it out. Do you

understand?"

"Yes, Mr. Lu. I will take care of it," said Alice, nodding her head. A weird silence spread all over the

room where everybody was just too scared to speak. Both Alice and David proceeded to carry out their

designated task. Sheryl stood there with her eyes lowered and a frown on her face.

Charles had a much controlled temper at present. If it had happened earlier, he would had fired all

these people without giving it a second thought. Waiting for them to make their own choices was something absolutely unimaginable.

Such naive girls. How could they think that they could threaten Charles? Now their plan had backfired.

Kitty's face became white as a sheet of paper as she heard Charles mention the wine but she tried to behave as if nothing had happened. The truth was that she felt her feet stuck to the place where she was standing.

No wonder Charles did not react when he drank the wine. Her plot had already been discovered already! How ridiculous she was!

After this, it was clear to the model that Charles had got things into an impasse. The sudden shift in the behavior of Charles was a complete surprise to her. She looked at Charles in dismay and asked, "Mr. Lu, are you going to be on Sheryl's side?"

"Of course I am," said Charles with a calm face. "I'm by Sheryl's side always in Shining Company. If anyone dares to bully her, he is bullying me too. You can try if you don't believe that."

Charles spoke in a determined voice and stared at the models. After hearing that, a model who had been hiding behind, said to Charles in a meek voice, "Mr. Lu, I... I want to stay in Shining Company."

"Me too!"

"Me too!"

Only one of them had to speak her mind and the rest followed gradually. At first it was single voices coming from different models who had gathered there. Soon the entire crowd spoke together in an unified voice. Kitty and her ally remained silent and watched how the crowd moved from their side leaving them alone. There was a rush among them to get Charles' permission to let them stay.

The model who had spoken against Sheryl got furious. All this while she had seen all the models dancing to the tunes of Kitty. She addressed them and said, "Look at you! What are you doing? Have you all gone out of your mind?"

"Tammy, it was the two of you who invited this trouble upon yourself. But why should all of us take the consequences?" said a model who was the first one to say that she wanted to stay with Shining Company. Her words drew the attention of Charles and Sheryl towards her. The cat was coming out of the bag. She continued, "I can't say what kind of person Sheryl is because we seldom got along with her. But we all know in our hearts, you just thought that it was easy to bully her, and that's why you've

done this."

She laughed scornfully and said, "You said that you would teach her a lesson tonight, so you must know clearly whether Kitty did it or not."

"You..." Tammy Tian didn't expect that they would betray her at this critical time. She sneered, "Well, now you guys think that you can challenge me, huh?" Her face went red in anger and embarrassment.

Charles and Sheryl had their eyes fixed on her as the smart cover on her face was being pulled down by her own mates.

"We are just concerned about our future," said one model. The salary offered by Shining Company was so attractive. It was just not worth giving up such a large sum of money for Kitty.

"Mr. Lu, we're not with Kitty. We're willing to stay."

In an instance, the rest of the models changed their sides from Kitty towards the company. With that the matter was resolved once and for all. After that, Charles didn't pursue this matter any further.

At the end, Kitty and Tammy Tian were fired. On their way back home, Sheryl turned towards Charles, and asked, "Is it worth doing so just for me?"

"Why not? You deserve it." Charles turned towards her and smiled. He said, "I have already told you

that I will be your strongest supporter here."

Sheryl lowered her head without uttering a single word.

Charles' attitude really put her in a dilemma. No matter how much she wanted to stay away from him,

fate always had a different plan for them. Circumstances brought them together time and again. And

she could feel her mind changing towards Charles slowly.

When he got to the door of Sheryl's house, Charles stopped and said to her, "Have a hot bath and go

to bed as soon as you can."

"You too," Sheryl said in a calm voice.

The next day, Sheryl woke up late. The exhaustion of the previous day left its mark on her. When

everyone gathered in the hall, they couldn't see Kitty and Tammy Tian there.

Alice had received Charles' instructions and sent them back overnight. She had already told Holley

about what happened. Holley promised this must be dealt with seriously in accordance with the policy.

Chapter 706 Fickle Women

After what happened last night, those models were now aware that Sheryl held a special place in

Charles' heart. So, they all started to crowd around her to butter her up.

"Oh dear Sheryl, you've got an awfully glossy skin. How do you usually take care of it?" said one of the models.

"Yeah. And look at your figure. No one would think that you've already given birth," added another.

"Sheryl, it was all because of Kitty. She drove a wedge between us. But don't worry, we are all friends now. Well then, could you put in some good words for us to Mr. Lu?" Another model was not able to hide their real motive anymore.

"Yeah, that's right," another model agreed.

Sheryl couldn't deal with such flattery but she still smiled politely.

'They are a group of fickle women. They can easily change according to circumstances. They don't really mean any words they say at all, ' she thought.

Sheryl remembered the time when Chris visited their rehearsal. These models acted the same then.

They had also said the same words to her.

Sheryl hesitated for a few seconds before she replied to them, "Guys, Mr. Lu and I are just friends.

Regarding what happened last night, Mr. Lu just did his job and it has nothing to do with me."

She continued with a smile, "If it happened to anyone of you, Mr. Lu will definitely do the same."

"Come on. There's no need to stand on ceremony," one of the models said. She stepped forward and held Sheryl's hand intimately. Sheryl remembered this model. She was the one who took the lead in saying that she wanted to continue working in Charles' company. Her name seemed to be Rita Ding.

"We all know your relationship with Mr. Lu. But don't worry, we are all your friends now so we will never

talk nonsense about it," Rita Ding added while still holding Sheryl's arm. "You are so cool, Sheryl. You already have an excellent boyfriend beside you. All of us saw him too. He is a very gentle and a caring man. Now, Mr. Lu is also fascinated by you. How did you do that?"

Rita Ding looked curiously at Sheryl and continued, "One is a considerate man who takes good care of you and the other is a haughty boss who is handsome and rich but also very kind to you. Who will you choose?"

Sheryl exhibited a displeasure upon hearing her words. She had been trying to get rid of Charles and she didn't want her private life to be talked about.

She didn't know how far she would go with Charles but at this moment, she was still Anthony's girlfriend. If ever she would get together with Charles someday, that would only happen after she broke

up with Anthony.

She didn't want to be looked upon as a cheater.

"I told you Rita Ding, we are just friends," Sheryl countered. She was already frowning. "Can you please stop saying things like those?"

"I'm just chatting with you," Rita Ding said with a pout. She couldn't understand Sheryl at all. So she continued with a smile, "If I were you, I would definitely choose Mr. Lu. Anthony is sweet but he is not perfect. On the other hand, Mr. Lu is handsome, rich, powerful, and full of charm. It would only make sense if you dump Anthony and choose Mr. Lu."

What Rita Ding really meant was to relieve Sheryl's guard against herself. She planned to become Sheryl's best friend so that she could get a chance to be noticed by Charles.

But she didn't expect that her words would completely irritate Sheryl who had just been standing aside without saying a word.

Rita Ding didn't realize that there was something wrong until she noticed Sheryl's silence. Then she hastily clarified, "Don't get me wrong, Sheryl. I didn't mean anything bad."

"Okay, that's enough," Sheryl replied flatly.

Rita Ding glanced at her in embarrassment. She dared not say anything more in fear of having the same ending as Kitty.

Sheryl remained cool and unmoved. After a while, Alice came over and called her, "Miss Xia, Mr. Lu is waiting for you in the car."

Sheryl came here by Charles' car so it was already expected that she would return the same way.

But because of what Rita Ding had just said, Sheryl realized that she should start staying away from Charles. So she briefly replied to Alice, "No, I'll take the bus."

"But..." Alice was stunned. She froze for a few seconds. 'She was just fine a while ago. How come she seems to be a different person now?' she thought to herself.

Before Alice could hold her back, Sheryl had already gotten on the bus. Alice had no choice but to turn around and tell Charles, "Miss Xia decided to take the bus, Mr. Lu."

Charles was a little surprised at first. But on second thought, he felt it was okay. He decided to just let her go and leave her alone for a while. Anyway Shirley was in his car now. He would talk to her after they got back to the company.

The bus stopped at the entrance of the company. Charles immediately dismissed the models after giving them a half-day off. They would be back to work tomorrow. When all the models were gone, Charles came up to Sheryl and asked, "What's the matter with you?"

"I'm fine," Sheryl replied, shaking her head slightly. "Shirley and I got to go home now," she added.

"I'll drive you home," Charles offered. Not allowing Sheryl to retort, Charles held her in his arms and put her into the car peremptorily. 'When you wanted to calm down earlier, I gave you time. Now you want to

run away from me again? No way!' Charles thought.

At Sue's apartment

Anthony was already here for two nights and the pettitoe that was used as a cold compress to Sue's swollen ankle was already stewed and was eaten by Sue.

Anthony even claimed that it was a dietary therapy for Sue to eat the pig's trotter to heal her injury. Sue was pissed off by this idea.

Since today was the day of Sheryl's return from the hiking trip, Sue began to urge Anthony to leave early in the morning.

"You've already stayed here long enough. It's time for you to go home, isn't it?" Sue looked at Anthony in displeasure. She sighed and continued, "I've almost fully recovered. I suppose you should leave soon."

Actually, Sue was only thinking about Anthony. She didn't want Anthony to be misunderstood again.

After all, he was still Sheryl's boyfriend. If Sheryl saw him here, it would be difficult for him to explain again.

However, Anthony replied in a cool voice while cleaning up the room, "No need to hurry. You can't even get out of the bed. I will only leave if you can already manage to do everything by yourself."

"Hey, you're really..." Sue paused and frowned. "I told you already, I'm fine now. Why would you still stay here? Do you..." Sue was not sure if she should really ask. "Do you have a crush on me?"

Eventually, she said it.

"You wish," Anthony replied shortly. He cast a glance at her and added sulkily, "No worries, I will leave as soon as you recover."

Chapter 707 Hide In The Bedroom

Anthony had already stayed in Sue's apartment for two nights and he took good care of her. She

admitted that it had been a good time. However, Sheryl would be coming back today. Sue had already thought that it was time for her to return Anthony to Sheryl. She didn't intend to be an intruder, though she claimed to compete with Sheryl. Besides, she was not fully prepared to do that. When Sue thought of Sheryl's return, her face turned gloomy. There was no better way to drive Anthony away so she said crossly, "I told you, we are only friends. You should not interfere with my personal affairs. You'd better get out of here quickly. Leave me alone!" She feigned impatience but deep in her heart, she was struggling. On the one hand, she hoped Anthony would storm out. On the other hand, she was looking forward to his stay, though it was nearly impossible.

"What the... What is wrong with you?" Anthony asked casually while staring at Sue calmly. He was not enraged by Sue's rudeness. He thought to himself, 'We are friends so I must take care of her. I know how inconvenient it is for her to be alone while still injured. I won't leave until she fully recovers.'

Anthony wasn't aware that his feeling for Sue had changed. Maybe because his full attention had been only focused on Sheryl for the past years.

It was actually very unusual that he insisted to stay at Sue's apartment even though he was aware that Sheryl would be coming back today. "Why won't you listen to me? You're getting irrational. Sheryl is

coming back today so you can't stay in my apartment anymore. She might misunderstand you again,"

Sue continued urging him. "Come on, it's best that you leave now. Otherwise, you will meet her at the hallway later," Sue snapped while chafing her hands together. She couldn't help but frown because

Anthony was very difficult to persuade.

"What are you worrying about? We are innocent. We didn't do anything wrong. So what if Sheryl sees me walk out of your apartment?" Anthony said with a bitter smile. 'Sheryl will never overthink about my relationship with Sue. In other words, she never cares about me or whom I am staying with. Especially now that she is getting closer to her ex-husband even though she hasn't remember the past.'

Anthony made sense but Sue didn't feel comfortable at all. "You stupid man! Don't think it's just as simple as that. Have you already forgotten? You had numerous fights with Sheryl because of Charles.

You always feel jealous when they are together even though you don't really have any actual evidence that they have an affair. You only assumed things. What if Sheryl will also feel the same toward us?"

Sue said reluctantly with a bitter chuckle. She actually felt pity for herself. 'Isn't it the most terrible thing to teach the one I love to win his girlfriend's heart back?' she thought.

"We are friends so Sheryl should trust us. Her relationship with Charles is different," Anthony retorted loudly. 'Sheryl and Charles were husband and wife. They are still legally registered as a couple until now. That's the reason why I have always been jealous and ended up fighting with Sheryl many times. I am afraid she will leave me sooner or later.'

"It's the same, indeed," Sue countered. "The most important element in keeping a relationship is trust. Since you don't trust her, you shouldn't demand her full trust as well," Sue said, glancing at Anthony's direction. Sue knew exactly why Anthony and Sheryl weren't getting along well. Sheryl didn't show her love towards Anthony. And that made Anthony unconfident of their relationship. However, his suspicions and accusations pushed Sheryl farther.

"Enough of your lecture," Anthony interrupted Sue. "I will handle this myself. There is no need for you to worry so much."

When Sue noticed that Anthony was lost in his thoughts, she stopped persuading him. As a matter of fact, she was not interested in lecturing him. It was just that seeing their ongoing tension made her anxious. She hoped that they could eventually settle everything. Either they reconcile and get back together or they break up quickly.

Anthony contradicted Sue because he was just in a mess. Sheryl had gone to the suburbs of Y City for two days with Charles. He couldn't help but think of so many possibilities. He had a lot of foolish notions. He didn't notice his deep feelings for Sheryl had gradually disappeared until today and he was bewildered by this discovery. He didn't know what to do.

He didn't have any plans to marry other women aside from Sheryl. 'What should I do? Should I marry Sheryl and force myself to fall in love with her again or should I just break up with her?' Anthony thought. It was giving him headaches.

When Sheryl and Shirley arrived at their apartment, Nancy was already preparing dinner. Sheryl immediately came to help her while Shirley excitedly pulled Nancy's hand to talk about her experiences. Since she had a great time, she was very eager to share her happiness to Nancy.

Sheryl was glad to see that Shirley and Nancy were getting along well like a grandmother and a granddaughter.

When they were about to eat dinner, Shirley begged Nancy to feed her. But Sheryl stopped her and told her to eat her dinner by herself. Shirley twisted her lips but still obeyed her mother.

Nancy said smiling tenderly, "Shirley is still young and we haven't seen each other for a few days so it's okay for me to feed her. I think it's better for her to be close to me."

"But she doesn't do anything whenever you are beside her. She will be spoiled," Sheryl said with a forced smile. Nancy only replied with a smile as well.

After dinner, Shirley immediately went to her room. Since she played a lot in the farm for two days, she was very exhausted. So she fell asleep really soon. When Sheryl noticed that Shirley was already sleeping soundly, she went out of the room and quietly closed the door behind her. She saw that Nancy was still doing some housework so she said, "Nancy, that's enough. It's too late now. You should go to bed."

"It's okay. This won't take long," Nancy replied softly with a smile. After a moment of consideration, she walked towards Sheryl and asked, "Sheryl, how are you and Mr. Xiao doing recently? Did you break up?" Nancy knew that it was not appropriate for her to ask. After all, Sheryl was her boss. She didn't have the right to interlope with her personal affairs. However, she only wanted to know the status of their relationship because she wasn't sure if she should tell Sheryl of what she accidentally saw or not.

"Why are you suddenly asking about our relationship? Did something happen when I was away for two

days?" Sheryl asked. She was curious about Nancy's question. After all, Nancy had been a very good baby sister and never asked about her personal affairs.

"N-nothing," Nancy stammered. She was hesitating whether to tell Sheryl that she had seen Anthony or not.

"You are not telling the truth," Sheryl dubiously said. "I know there's something you're not telling me.

What is it?" Sheryl stared at Nancy insistently and inquired.

"Nothing. You have been with Mr. Xiao for quite a long time. Either you are getting married or breaking up, you should talk about it. I think if he wants to break up with you, he should tell you personally,"

Nancy said vaguely. She was not telling the exact truth but she was already hinting something. She actually wanted to warn Sheryl of Anthony's cheating.

"Nancy, what do you mean? You know something, right?" Sheryl asked again. Sheryl furrowed her brows, looking at Nancy unblinkingly.

Sheryl didn't stop asking Nancy until she finally gave in. She heaved a deep sigh and said, "Not really a big deal. When I went shopping for vegetables yesterday, I saw Anthony walk out of Miss Wang's

apartment. It seems that he has been living there."

Nancy frowned and added, "I didn't see him leave today. Mr. Xiao is your boyfriend. It's inappropriate for him to live in another woman's apartment. I guess he is still there until now."

"Are you telling me the truth?" Sheryl asked. 'I have seen Anthony in Sue's apartment twice but during those times there might be some sort of misunderstanding. How about this time?' Sheryl thought.

'He asked me to keep my distance from Charles. But what has he done? Doesn't he know he should distance himself from Sue?'

Sheryl felt unhappy with her thoughts.

Nancy nodded and assured Sheryl, "I'm not telling a lie. This is a sensitive and an important matter.

Maybe you can try visiting Miss Wang so you can see if Mr. Xiao is there or not."

Sheryl considered Nancy's suggestion. Then she anxiously sprang to her feet and said shortly, "I'll see."

When they came back from the farm, Charles sent her a lot of fruits and vegetables. Since they were all fresh and organic, she wasn't able to decline. She thought of using it as an excuse to visit Sue. She went to the kitchen and picked a watermelon, some peaches and other vegetables. After she put them

in a basket, she went out of her apartment.

Sue and Anthony were having dinner when the doorbell rang. Sue's ankle was still hurt so Anthony went to open the door. He thought it could be some deliveries. But when he checked through the peephole, he saw Sheryl standing outside. A look of panic crossed his face.

Although nothing had happened between Sue and him, he still felt guilty being caught in Sue's apartment. After all, Sheryl was still his girlfriend. It was normal for her to think negatively if he was caught in another woman's apartment.

"Why don't you open the door?" Sue asked. She noticed that Anthony was just standing still behind the door.

Anthony turned to her and replied with knitted brows, "It is Sheryl."

"Sheryl?" Sue echoed Anthony's words before she realized what she was saying.

In the morning, she did her best to urge Anthony to leave but she failed. Now, who would expect that Sheryl would be standing outside her door?

"Hide in the bedroom," Sue urged him and pushed Anthony towards the bedroom. That was the only

way to avoid Sheryl from seeing Anthony.

She thought, 'Anthony looked after me these past few days and I must be grateful to him. He is such a kind friend. I know that he has a deep feeling for Sheryl so I won't do anything to ruin their relationship.

I can't bear to make Anthony's life harder.'

When she noticed that Anthony still didn't move, she said, "Why are you still standing there? Hurry up and hide in the bedroom. Let me open the door." Sue pushed Anthony again but he still didn't move.

Her face turned red because of anxiety and embarrassment.

"Why should I hide? If I do that and Sheryl still finds me inside your bedroom, it will be much harder to explain. We are innocent and nothing untoward happened between us. Why are you so anxious? Let's just open the door and face her," Anthony said calmly while looking Sue into her eyes. After Anthony realized that his feeling for Sheryl had gradually subsided, he seemed not to care about what she would think anymore. He wanted to face her bravely without any inhibitions.

Sue was enraged and blamed, "You are really..."

Chapter 708 Ridiculous

As soon as she wanted to say something, Anthony, who was standing on the side, opened the door.

Sheryl was standing at the door. She did not show any surprise or dismay on seeing Anthony in the

house.

"Oh, it's Sheryl. Come in," said Sue immediately putting on a smiling face. Sheryl came in but still stood near the door. Sue demanded, "Why have you suddenly come here?"

Sue and Sheryl were not getting along too well these days. Sue wondered why Sheryl had suddenly come over. She thought that Sheryl was not surprised to see Anthony there, indicating that she knew Anthony was there. She told herself that Sheryl had deliberately come to confirm herself of his presence.

"Oh... Anthony, you are also here," Sheryl said. Sheryl glanced at him indifferently. She spoke in a calm voice, as if it were very normal for him to be there.

As his girlfriend, Sheryl didn't think about questioning him about this.

"Come in." Anthony made way to let her in. He asked her, "Have you eaten yet? Do you want to eat something if you are hungry? Join us at the table."

"No, thanks," said Sheryl. She turned to Sue and said, "Yesterday you didn't come to the farm, so Mr. Lu asked me to bring you some fresh fruits and vegetables."

"Really? I can't believe Mr. Lu would be so considerate as to think about me. Thank him so much on my behalf." Sue smiled faintly and said, "Have a seat, Sheryl. My foot was injured, so I can't move around too much to fetch some refreshments for you. Please feel at home."

Sue mentioned her foot deliberately so that Sheryl would notice it. On seeing her swollen ankle, Sheryl frowned a bit and said, "No wonder you didn't come to the farm. How did you sprain your foot so badly? It looks serious."

"It's all right now." Sue smiled as she talked to her, "My doctor said that it's not a big deal. If I rest for two more days I will recover and be fine."

"That's good to know." Sheryl nodded slightly. Seeing that they were eating, she said, "Well then, I should go now. I do not want to interrupt your meal."

"Sheryl..." On seeing Anthony just standing there and saying nothing, Sue said to Sheryl, "Anthony came over because my foot was injured. He was afraid that I wouldn't be able to take care of myself..."

"It's OK. I can rest peacefully knowing that he is here to take care of you. Please continue with your meal. I'm leaving." Sheryl smiled.

Sheryl didn't know her own mind. Before she came here, she had thought that she would ask Anthony

what he had in mind about their relationship.

However, on reaching Sue's house, she saw them sitting at the same table and having a meal just like husband and wife. Suddenly she found herself a fifth wheel in their presence. She just wanted to leave quickly from Sue's house as it made her feel depressed.

"Sheryl! Stop and listen to me. Sheryl!" Sue tried to stop her and explain things to her. However, the more Sue asked Sheryl to stop, the faster she walked away.

Sue stared at Anthony and said, "Why are you still sitting here? Hurry up and chase her. Explain everything to her."

Anthony hesitated for a long time. Finally, he ran behind Sheryl and caught up with her. He grabbed her wrist and asked, "Are you angry?"

"Why should I be angry?" Sheryl asked scornfully. She said, "What are you doing here? Why don't you go back quickly and take care of her?"

"Sher..." He took Sheryl's hand and said, "I know you are unhappy about this. But as you could see, her foot was hurt, so I..."

"So you came to her house to live with her and take care of her. She is an unmarried woman. Anthony, have you ever considered that you have a girlfriend? What would Sue think?"

"I know that, I know," Anthony said with a frown, "I knew you would misunderstand the whole situation if

you got to know this. That is why I did not mention anything to you. I didn't expect that you would come to know about this in this way."

"You mean if I hadn't come over, you never would have told me about this?" Sheryl sneered.

"I didn't mean that," said Anthony, "I just wanted to tell you later."

"Sher," he took her hand again and said, "you and Sue are not getting along these days. I was afraid that you would never let me take care of her if you knew about it. I didn't want you to be angry."

"So, it turns out that deep in your heart, you think of me as an inconsiderate and selfish woman." Sheryl smiled bitterly at him. "Anthony, can you see that we have been drifting apart gradually? I think we need to take a step back and see if it is necessary for us to be together."

"Sher, what do you mean?" When he heard what Sheryl said, his sad face suddenly changed. He held her tightly by the wrist and demanded, "What did you say? What do you mean by that?"

"You know very well what it exactly is," Sheryl said scornfully. "Since I got back here, I have felt that we are going in different directions and I am losing you gradually. I don't know what you want me to do or how to do it. I don't know if we can get along as before. I am really confused. I don't know how to handle our relationship. I'm so sorry, Anthony. I think I need some time and space. Let me think about it."

"I am really sorry," she added faintly. Sheryl glanced at him. Even when she was torn by conflicting thoughts, she never showed any hint of it on her face. So from Anthony's point of view, she was rather indifferent — what happened didn't make any difference to her.

From her point of view, too many things had happened in recent days, and she sporadically recalled the past. The recalling of what she had been through sometimes made her breathless. She thought that she needed some time to figure out what to do.

After she had said this, she turned and wanted to go back to her house. Anthony suddenly shouted in her direction, "Do you mean to say that you wish to break up with me?"

Sheryl was in a daze. What did he say? Break up? She had never thought about that. She only thought that her life was in a mess recently, so she needed some time to sort it out.

She turned back to look at him and asked, "What do you mean?"

"Isn't it what you want?" Anthony mocked, "You said all that just because you wanted to break up with me, didn't you?"

He sneered and talked to her, "Sheryl, I came here just to look after Sue. You can't make such a big fuss over it."

"Don't you understand why I was so mad at you?" Sheryl smiled bitterly. Anthony hadn't been like this earlier. But obviously he had changed a lot now. She talked to him, "I am your girlfriend, so I have the right to know what happens. At least you could tell me what you were planning to do."

Anthony sneered, "Sheryl, before you reproach me, you should remind yourself of your own earlier actions. When you and Shirley went to live in Charles' house, did you even remember that you have a boyfriend and that you were answerable to him? Did you ever think about me then? Don't you think it is ridiculous to question me about this now? You have behaved in worse ways than I."

Chapter 709 You Should Ask For A Leave

"You..." After hearing Anthony's words, Sheryl completely gaped at him.

Staring at Anthony, she felt he was so strange. Was the person in front of her now still the same

Anthony that she used to know?

"So..." Sheryl was at a loss for words. Eventually, she asked in disbelief, "Are you getting even with me now?"

"Whatever you think," Anthony said. He then waved his hand impatiently to Sheryl. "Let me just remind you that what I have done was just a drop in the ocean compared to what you have done. So, if you want to break up with me with such an excuse, I am sorry but I can't accept it," Anthony said to Sheryl with a shrug.

Sheryl smiled wryly after hearing Anthony's words. She couldn't figure out why Anthony suddenly became like this. She even didn't know how to rebut.

All she could do was only smile bitterly. "Anthony, you have really changed," Sheryl said in a faint voice.

"Everybody changes," Anthony countered. He fastened his eyes on Sheryl and inquired, "Dare you say that you have never changed?" He arched a brow and continued, "Sheryl, I can swear that I don't have any relationship with Sue. But, how about you? Can you swear that you don't have an affair with Charles?"

If it was before yesterday, Sheryl could definitely say no.

However, because of that accidental kiss, she couldn't be that assertive anymore. She cast a glance at

Anthony and just said helplessly, "I don't want to argue about this with you."

"It is not that you don't want to. You really dare not to." Anthony smiled sarcastically. Then he added

grimly, "Sheryl, whatever you may be thinking right now, I want to remind you again that my mother will

come tomorrow. If you still haven't changed at all, then I hope we can still pick her up together

tomorrow." Anthony didn't want to cancel it anymore since he had planned this meeting for such a long

time.

Finally, Laura agreed to see Sheryl. He truly didn't want to miss this opportunity. "I honestly still want to

be together with you. I will wait for you at 3:00 PM tomorrow. If you still want to be with me, you should

ask for a leave."

Sheryl remained silent. She was overwhelmed by mixed emotions. She only wanted to go home

quickly.

When Sheryl arrived home, she sat on the sofa for a long time. Nancy noticed her so she came to her

with a glass of water. Her voice was full of concern. "What's wrong with you? Aren't you feeling well?"

Sheryl looked horridly pale and Nancy was extremely shocked to see her face.

"I'm fine," Sheryl replied absentmindedly while she took the glass from Nancy. It was still in summer, but Sheryl completely felt chilly.

Sheryl didn't get a wink of sleep the whole night. What Anthony had said kept troubling her mind. She really didn't know when did they start suspecting and guarding each other.

She was supposed to feel delighted because she could finally meet Anthony's mother. However, she just couldn't feel any happiness at all.

She wasn't even sure if it was really necessary to see Anthony's mother.

The good thing was, Sheryl seemed to have gotten along well with other models recently. Without Kitty and Tammy stirring up troubles, the models were being friendly to each other, at least on the surface.

During their break time, Rita took a bottle of water and went over to Sheryl. She handed the bottle to

Sheryl and asked kindly, "Sher, what on earth is wrong with you? You look so distressed."

Then she added, "Are you okay? You look slightly pale."

Sheryl took the water and expressed her gratitude to Rita, "I am fine. I just didn't have a good sleep last

night."

Rita just believed Sheryl's excuse. Then she whispered something else to Sheryl's ear, "Have you

heard that Shining Company is in trouble right now? There have been rumors that it is allying itself with

the Eagle Group. The daughter of the Eagle Group CEO is only 23 years old. She's not only pretty, but

also from a very rich family. I heard that she has just graduated from a topnotch university overseas.

Surprisingly, she doesn't mind being a stepmother at such a young age."

"A stepmother?" Sheryl was confused. "What does that mean?" She didn't hear such news recently.

"Are you serious?" Rita stared at Sheryl in disbelief. "Mr. Lu didn't tell you?" Rita still couldn't believe

that Sheryl was so innocent of what was happening around her. So she added, "Mr. Lu will soon be

engaged to the daughter of the Eagle Group CEO. If that happens, what about you? How should he

deal with you? Should he let you be with him without any status?"

"I told you, I don't have any relationship with Charles," Sheryl said with a frown. She furrowed her

brows slightly and added, "If you continue to talk nonsense like this, I will teach you a lesson."

"Okay, okay, I won't say it again," Rita said faintly. Sheryl didn't know what was wrong with her. Since

she heard that Charles would be engaged with the Eagle Group CEO's daughter, she felt upset.

She even directly refused Charles' lunch invitation in the afternoon.

She would rather eat with Rita than talk with Charles again.

"Mr. Lu, these are documents about the Eagle Group's machines. All the necessary information is here." David handed over the documents to Charles and continued, "Judith Jiang is still daydreaming about being married into the Lu family. She has no idea that she would lose her own family soon."

"Just put it there," Charles motioned David. He cast a glance at him and asked, "Why is she suddenly ignoring me?" Charles looked desperate trying to ask for David's help. "Do you know?"

"She?" David asked back. "Who is she?" David went blank for a moment because he couldn't figure out what Charles meant. Then instantly, he thought that Charles only had Sheryl in his heart. When he realized it, he hastily opened his mouth, "Rumors have been circulating in the company that you would be engaged to Judith Jiang soon. Is it possible that Miss Xia heard about it and she..."

When Charles heard David's words, his hardened expression softened. He continued David's interrupted words, "She feels jealous?"

"Maybe," David answered faintly. "By the way, Mr. Lu, the HR Department reported that Miss Xia has

asked for a leave this afternoon."

Charles had specially instructed that all news about Sheryl must be reported to him. No wonder the HR

Department immediately reported it without any delay.

"Did you ask the reason?"

"Yes, I did. She said it's a private matter. Since the HR Department knew your relationship with her,

they just approved her leave." After reporting about Sheryl, David said, "I'll go out for now if there's

nothing else."

Charles just waved his hand to David. With knitted brows, he kept on thinking what could be a possible

reason for Sheryl to ask for a leave. When he couldn't come up with anything, he decided to call

Sheryl. During that time, Sheryl had just boarded Anthony's car so she directly rang off.

"Charles?" Anthony laughed sardonically. "He is so shameless to still follow around you."

Sheryl said nothing and just ignored Anthony's sarcastic remarks.

Whatever happened between her and Anthony, Laura was still her elder. That was why she should go

and see her. This was the real reason why she asked for a leave.

As for not answering Charles' call, she just didn't know what to say to him. And she also didn't want to

argue with Anthony again.

Anthony just smiled ironically and then focused on driving.

The second time that Charles called, Sheryl turned off her cellphone. This angered Charles more. He

decided to call Nancy, hoping to know something from her.

Chapter 710 Meet With Anthony's Mother

Shirley was watching cartoon while Nancy was folding clothes. Suddenly her phone rang. Nancy quietly

walked out of the room and gently closed the door behind her. She walked to the other end of the

balcony before she answered the call. It was Charles on the other side. Nancy told him the story

between Sheryl and Anthony in detail. Hearing the entire thing, Charles felt relieved. Now he was finally

clear about it.

"Do you know why Sheryl asked for a leave today?" Charles asked Nancy.

Nancy thought for a while and said, "I heard something when they quarreled with each other yesterday.

I heard that Anthony's mother would come here today, so I think Sheryl is going to pick her up today."

Charles's face turned solemn as he heard this from Nancy. As soon as he hung up the phone, he

rushed out of his office to find Sheryl. He opened the door and took a few steps before he was stopped

by Judith.

"Mr. Lu, I am sorry. I couldn't stop her," David spoke helplessly as he stood right behind her. "She insisted on coming in. I could do nothing to stop her," added David with a sigh.

"Okay, I get it. Go back to your work. I will handle this," Charles replied gesturing his hands indicating David to leave. And then just as David had turned back, he called him again and said, "David, wait. Go and check out if Anthony has ordered dinner at any restaurant today. Try to find out as soon as possible."

David took his instruction and took a while before saying, "Okay, I will check it right now." He hastened towards his seat to follow Charles' order while his head was spinning around. There were countless restaurants in Y City and Charles just asked him to find the restaurant where Anthony had booked a table as if it were just a file lying on his table. David felt so helpless as he had to dredge for a needle in the sea.

"Charles." Judith called him in a soft voice. Judith had just turned twenty-three. She was arrogant and had her head always up in the space. Although there were men who admired and pursued her, she never paid any heed towards them. She had her eyes fixed on Charles. Though Charles had a son, he

was much more brilliant than other men who sought her attention.

She stood in front of Charles and said, "Are you free tonight? I have made reservation at Hong Fu Restaurant. Let's have a meal together." After finishing her sentence, Judith looked into Charles' eyes and waited for his reply with great expectation.

"Judith, you see that I am busy. I don't have time to act the giddy goat with you," replied Charles in a polite yet cold voice. He glared at Judith without any mood swings. Charles just wanted purchase Archer Jiang's company, but he didn't expect that Archer Jiang would want his daughter to get married to him. Although Charles had refused Judith for several times, she just refused to give up. And then there were rumors about them which was really unnerving for Charles.

Charles was irritated and felt displeased to be get involved into this trouble.

"What's wrong with you, Charles? Why are you so impatient today?" asked Judith. Charles' coldly turning down her offer broke her heart. She was not the one to take no for an answer. Her eyes were filled with tears out of insult caused by the dejection. "My dad has said that if you are willing to get married to me, he would give his company to me. As long as we could make concerted effort, I am sure

the company..."

But before she could finish her sentence, Charles stopped her, "Judith, I have told you for several times. I won't marry you. Don't you understand me?" Charles gazed at Judith helplessly. Though he had explained to Archer Jiang and Judith for several times, they acted as if they never understood him.

"I know. I know," replied Judith in a choked voice. She kept looking at Charles with her eyes brimming with tears. Then she smiled bitterly and said to Charles, "You were married before and you have a son, but I am young and never get married. I can understand you. I know you think you are not worthy of me."

After hearing this, Charles rolled his eyes. He had never seen such a narcissistic woman.

After a small pause, Judith continued, "But trust me. Your past does not even matter to me. There is nothing to worry about. I would never turn a cold shoulder at you." As she finished her sentence, Judith showed a soft smile as if she was an understanding woman. "I have never cared about the fact that you were married before and have a son. I only care about you. I only want to live a peaceful life with you, Charles," added Judith.

She stepped forward and tried to hold his hands. Charles anticipated the gesture and quickly removed

his hand. It was so awkward for him to deal with this, especially when his mind was occupied with thought of Sheryl probable meeting Anthony's mother.

"Charles, I am ready to be a stepmother. I promise you that I would love your son and take care of him.

I..."

Before she could finish her sentence, the door burst open and David barged in. He looked at Charles cheerfully and said, "Mr. Lu, I have found it."

David's face was lit up. He felt so relieved that he could find out the restaurant where Anthony had made the reservation and that too in such less time.

David's words made Charles literally jump in his seat. "Which restaurant?" he asked. He stared at David, waiting for his good news.

"Hong Fu Restaurant," replied David. Charles was taken aback by David's words. He remained quiet for a while and closed his eyes as if in a deep thought. Both Judith and David stared at him waiting for his next reaction. Then as he opened his eyes, he turned to Judith and asked, "Where did you make a reservation?"

"Hong Fu Restaurant. What's wrong?" asked Judith. Judith looked into Charles' eyes, trying to find out what happened.

Charles looked at her with his face lit up like a 1,000 watt bulb and said, "Okay. Let's go." Judith was just too surprised in the beginning but then she was really pleased to see that Charles had changed his mind.

She became hopeful about winning his heart. Besides, how long can a man reject a young and beautiful girl like her? Thoughts about her beautiful future with Charles filled her heart. 'After I get married to Charles, I would cope with his son first. I am not a fool. I would never be a stepmother,' Judith thought in her mind.

Anthony and Sheryl headed for the airport to pick up his mother. As they arrived there and were about to get off the car, Anthony stopped Sheryl.

"What's wrong?" asked Sheryl, staring at Anthony with confusion. "Didn't you tell me that your mother is

almost there? Hurry up," Sheryl said as she reached out to open the door.

"Sheryl, I am really sorry for what I did yesterday. I know I was rude. I..." stammered Anthony. Anthony

hesitated for a while and said, "I don't know what's wrong with me. I just can't control my emotion whenever it comes to Charles."

Sheryl took a quick glance at Anthony and said calmly, "Let it go."

"Well... Sheryl, can you forgive me?" asked Anthony. He looked into Sheryl's eyes, anxious yet worried.

Sheryl could see the earnestness in his eyes.

She just smiled softly and responded, "Anthony, I never blamed you for that.

I just feel a little bit depressed. But now let's forget it."

Her word came as a big relief for Anthony. He grinned, held her hands and said, "Okay, let's forget it.

We are going to meet my mom soon. If you are still mad at me, you can punish me when we get home.

But please save my face in front of my mom, okay?" Sheryl saw the childlike excitement on Anthony's face. How much he had been looking forward to this meeting!

"Well, let's go. We must not keep her waiting," replied Sheryl briefly. A faint smile crept over her face.

They were waiting at the gate and soon Laura came out. And just when Anthony was about to greet his mother, he suddenly found that Junia was walking out right behind her. His eye brows were knitted into a tight frown.

"What happened son? Have you forgotten your own mother in just a matter of few days?" joked Laura as she patted on her son's shoulder. She stepped forward with a big smile eyeing Sheryl from the corner of her eyes as she looked lovingly at her son.

"Hello, mom," Anthony greeted Laura with a hug. He then looked around and asked, "Where is my dad? Why are you here alone?"

"Your father is busy with his work, so I came here with Junia," replied Laura with an all-knowing smile. She held Junia's hands cheerfully, staring at Anthony. Anthony's face became a little somber at this gesture of his mom.

Junia stood in front of Anthony and greeted indifferently, "Hello, Anthony."

Anthony shared a glance at her and turned towards his mother. "Mom, let me introduce Sheryl to you."

Anthony held Sheryl's hand and brought her in front of Laura. "This is Sheryl Xia, my girlfriend."

Then he turned to Sheryl and said, "Sheryl, this is my mom, Laura Ding."

"Nice to meet you, Aunt Laura," Sheryl greeted Laura with a smile. However, Laura didn't even spare a glance at Sheryl. She kept looking at Anthony and said, "I am hungry. Let's go. The food in the airport

tasted so terrible. I am famished."

Laura interrupted Sheryl's words directly as if she didn't want to talk to her. Laura's indifferent attitude towards Sheryl was so prominent that neither Sheryl nor Anthony could ignore it. Sheryl looked at Anthony with a puzzled face as Anthony had reassured her earlier that his parents were willing to meet her.

Both Sheryl and Anthony could not help but feel awkward. He took a look at his mother and said, "Well, let's go. I have made a reservation at Hong Fu Restaurant."

Sheryl took a few steps and stood at a distance. Anthony walked to Sheryl and held her hands so as to give her comfort. And just as he was about to console Sheryl, Laura stepped up again. "Sheryl, could you please take my luggage for me? I have something to talk to my son."