

Wedded Bride 721

Chapter 721 Junia's Wishful Thinking

Anthony was a little surprised to see Junia come over to them. He said, "There was no need for you to come here on your own. I told you I would pick you up at the hotel."

"I did not sleep as well as I do at home as this is a new place. I decided to come over here with some breakfast that I picked up from nearby. Please join me for breakfast, Anthony." Junia motioned Anthony to share the breakfast.

Anthony felt somewhat sorry for her and said, "It is very kind of you to do this for us. But do not trouble yourself like this anymore."

Junia stared at Anthony and said, "Such courtesy is not needed between us as we are good friends."

After Junia set the table, Laura woke up. Anthony marveled at Junia's unstinting devotion. She took care of their every need including providing them with daily necessities.

"Anthony, go ahead and complete the discharge formalities. I am feeling well enough now," Laura urged Anthony after having breakfast.

Anthony nodded and went to complete the discharge procedure. Laura suggested to Junia some scenic spots in Y City that would be worthy of a visit.

"It sounds good." Junia smiled in agreement.

After leaving the hospital, the three went directly to Southern City Mountain to enjoy the extraordinary and soothing scenery. It had a panoramic view at the summit.

"How long will it take to reach the summit?" Junia asked Anthony at the foothill.

"We will reach the summit in approximately two hours if we go at a good speed," Anthony replied calmly and gently.

"Two hours?" Laura exclaimed and found the time and efforts required to reach there beyond her endurance.

"I am definitely too old to reach the summit," Laura collapsed onto a stone step and complained to Anthony.

"Since it is so far let us drop that and move on to the next sightseeing spot," Anthony calmly suggested.

"No," Laura frowned and said, "we must reach the summit. The view from there is fantastic. Otherwise, our visit to Y City will be incomplete."

"Aunt Laura's words do make sense. That is exactly my thought also!" Junia asked Anthony for an

easier alternative way to reach the summit.

"There are cable cars available," Anthony said and continued, "but they cover only the lower section, and it takes about half an hour more for us to reach the upper section."

At that moment, Laura glanced at Junia and suggested that Anthony and Junia go towards the summit without her. After that they could move ahead to the next attraction.

"But..." Junia started to object but then she paused and frowned.

"No more wasting time!" Laura urged them to start hiking before the darkness.

"Okay." Junia glanced at Anthony and the two of them walked towards the promenade.

Squeezed into a cable car, the two were overcome with embarrassment. Their faces flushed and their hearts beat wildly.

Anthony broke the ice, "This is my first time to visit Southern City Mountain despite living here in Y City for quite a long time."

"Why?" Junia glanced at Anthony and asked him with great composure, "Have you not been here with your girlfriend?"

"I was single then," Anthony smiled and said, "and I was too busy with work to find time to relax."

"So, tell me how did you acquaint yourself with Sheryl?" Junia diverted the subject to Sheryl and asked curiously, "I suppose you were not romantically linked with Sheryl at that time."

"Yes, you are right." At first, Anthony was hesitant to recall his relationship with Sheryl. Then he forced himself to talk to Junia, "At that time, I was Sheryl's physician and we were good friends."

"Oh... so Sheryl was your patient at that moment?" Junia looked at Anthony with growing suspicion and continued, "I was told by Laura that you were an accoucheur, a male midwife. Was Sheryl expecting her baby at that time?"

"Yes, she was expecting her daughter." Anthony nodded and then suggested they stop talking about Sheryl and enjoy the scenery instead.

"Okay." Junia nodded in approval and turned around to enjoy the splendid scenery of the mountains, lush spots and refreshing air.

"The scenery is extraordinarily appealing!" Anthony smiled and then suggested Junia hang a red rope around the wishing tree at the summit to pray for meeting her Mr. Right soon.

But Junia politely refused to do so. She expressed her trust in herself to find her Mr. Right.

"It is nothing but a wish. Why not try it?" Anthony smiled and urged Junia to do so.

After getting off the cable car, Junia complained of the long distance and her tiredness due to her lack of exercise.

Thus, Anthony had to trail back to support Junia up the hill.

Anthony looked at Junia helplessly and said, "Do you remember your swearing to conquer this mountain?"

"I remember but..." Junia's voice trailed and she succumbed to Anthony's cold jest.

Supported by Anthony, Junia somehow found it in herself to reach the summit. The stunning panoramic view lifted her spirits and justified the long and tiring climb.

"Look, this is the path that led us to this summit."

"Look, is that the hotel I am staying in?" Junia excitedly pointed towards various directions of the city with growing pleasure.

"Definitely," Anthony smiled indulgently as he replied.

After a tour of the summit, Junia found herself before the wishing tree as if possessed.

Actually, Junia believed in the supernatural power of the wishing tree.

"Young girl, buy a red rope. Tie it and you will meet the man of your dreams." The vendor urged Junia to buy a rope and to write down her name and her beloved's name together for receiving the heavenly help.

"Junia, there is no harm in buying one! Try it, and I am sure it will work." Anthony edged toward Junia and tempted her into buying one.

"Okay, okay, leave me alone. I will buy one," Junia asked Anthony to move aside and bought a red rope. She recorded Anthony's name and hers and hung it around the wishing tree.

Chapter 722 What Do You Want To Buy

Anthony kept teasing Junia all the way down, making her so annoyed she couldn't help fantasizing about strangling him and impatient for them to reach their destination.

After going down from Southern City Mountain, Anthony took Junia and Laura to visit the grotto. After a scrumptious dinner, Laura excused herself, saying she was tired and wanted to get some rest. In

reality, she just wanted to give the two of them the opportunity to spend some time alone.

The chemistry between Anthony and Junia was undeniable, so she decided it was time to take her leave.

"Let me give you a ride, Mom." Anthony got up and rushed to his mother's side.

"It's okay darling, don't worry about me," Laura quickly interrupted. "The hotel isn't far from me, I could use a walk for some fresh air."

She smiled and continued, "I'm not as energetic as you youngsters. Give Junia a nice tour around town and make sure she gets home safe. Okay?"

"Aunt Laura, don't worry about me." Although Laura had told Junia about her plan in advance, she still didn't feel good about it. She continued, "I don't feel like going anywhere else this evening. I saw a cinema on the way here, so perhaps I'll go and catch a movie. Anthony can send you back, I'll be fine on my own."

"No, no, there's no need." Laura glanced at Anthony and said, "Actually, going to the cinema sounds like a good idea. Anthony, why don't you join her for a movie?"

"No really, it's fine," Junia protested with a shy smile. "I prefer to go alone."

Anthony remembered his previous mistake and decided to watch a movie with her to make up for it, an apology through actions. He told Laura, "Mom, please take care. I'll go catch a movie with Junia. Call me when you've reached the room safely, okay?"

Junia's and Laura's faces both lit up with happy smiles when they heard Anthony's words.

At the cinema, Anthony asked Junia which movie she wanted to watch. Junia picked a romantic movie and Anthony offered to buy the tickets.

Before he could even turn around to join the ticket queue, Junia grabbed Anthony's arm. "Will you... Are you planning to... leave me alone like last time? If you are, please just tell me now, I really don't mind watching alone."

"Junia, I told you that was a mistake I will never repeat again and I meant it. Will you please let it go?"

He added, "Don't worry, this time I'll buy two adjacent seats."

Junia smiled and replied, "That would be great."

"Can they be in adjacent rows instead of side by side?" Anthony asked half-jokingly.

"Just go and get the tickets!" Junia exclaimed, making Anthony burst into laughter.

Anthony couldn't focus on the movie. Although he maintained a nonchalant exterior, he actually couldn't

stop thinking about his affair with Sheryl.

The movie finally ended at 10 o'clock. After dropping Junia off at the hotel, he headed straight for

Sheryl's house.

He didn't know why, but for some reason just staying outside Sheryl's building gave him a surprising sense of ease.

It was now almost 11 o' clock. Anthony looked up and saw that the light in Sheryl's room was already off. He wanted to go up and talk to her so badly but just didn't have the courage to. Not wanting to go back yet, he lit up a cigarette, trying to exhale away the unexpected yearning in his heart.

Just as he was putting out the cigarette and getting ready to leave, he caught sight of Sue hobbling out of the building.

With Laura in town, he had totally forgotten all about Sue. Watching her limp away, he quickly opened his car door and got out.

Sue didn't notice Anthony approaching. She was more focused on her movements. She knew that if she slipped and fell, she could become a cripple for life.

She heaved a deep sigh as she made her way down the stairs slowly, taking it one step at a time.

There was nothing that she could lean against for support and all she could do was take extreme

caution.

After what seemed like ages, she reached the final stair and mentally celebrated her success.

Suddenly Anthony called out from somewhere behind her. "It's already so late. What in the world are you doing out here?"

Sue was so startled. Then she lost her footing and with it, her balance.

Fortunately, Anthony reacted quickly and managed to catch her in his strong arms.

Upon seeing the face of her rescuer, Sue frowned and smacked his shoulder. "You scared the wits out of me! Why did you sneak up on me?"

"You answer my question first." Anthony's eyebrows were furrowed too. "It's already late and you know you're having difficulty walking. What are you doing out here?"

"Fine, but first could you help me up?" Sue asked, feeling slightly embarrassed. Her entire body was pressed against him, fully supported by him, making the whole situation even more awkward and embarrassing.

Anthony helped Sue back on her feet and repeated his question again sternly, "Now tell me, why were you headed out?"

"Nothing important," Sue answered with knitted brows. "I just wanted to go out and grab a bite," she continued.

"What?" Anthony asked disbelievingly. Then he started nagging, "Don't you remember what I told you? I've stocked your fridge with fruits and yogurts and so much more, it's practically a mini buffet in there! I've even prepared some meals for you and put them in there. All you need to do is open the fridge and choose what you want to eat. What could possibly possess you to leave the house and ignore my words?"

Sue looked down at the floor the whole time, too embarrassed to look at him. She knew he had a strong point. Finally, she found the right comeback. "It's none of your business. Who do you think you are? You're not my keeper!"

"You..." Anthony was left speechless by her attitude. He took a deep breath, quenching the anger building in his chest. He asked again, "Just tell me, where were you planning to go? If you don't tell me, I'm going to carry you back to your house right now."

"Please, don't!" Sue hastily dropped the attitude and begged Anthony.

Her funny one-legged flamingo-like stance made it hard for Anthony to fight a smile from creeping onto his face, but he maintained a grim face anyway.

Seeing that his stern approach was working, he asked her yet again, "If you don't want me to do so, just be honest with me. Why are you out?"

The unsmiling expression on Anthony's convinced Sue that there was no escape from the situation and she finally admitted, "Oh come on, lighten up a little! I just wanted to go and buy something."

"Buy something?" Anthony asked sarcastically, "And what might that something be?"

"Sanitary pads!" she blurted out. "Are you happy now?!" Sue's voice went up in volume out of shame and embarrassment.

She hadn't intended to say anything, but Anthony had kept pushing and pushing and even threatened her, leaving her with no choice but to tell the truth.

Anthony was stunned into silence.

He had thought that he had prepared everything for Sue, giving her no reason at all to have to leave the house. But he had forgotten that Sue was a girl and required extra provisions. The tables had turned and now he was the one turning red with embarrassment.

"Well, are you satisfied with my answer?" Sue asked angrily. "Now if you'll excuse me, I need to get to the shop before it closes."

"Why didn't you just call me and ask for help? Don't you have my phone number?" Anthony creased his brows and asked Sue, genuinely puzzled.

"What's the use of calling you for this? How can you help?" She forced her face into a neutral expression, trying to hide the embarrassment and awkwardness she felt. She loved Anthony, but having to tell him that she was on her period made her feel like hiding in her blanket and never coming out.

She looked into his eyes and asked, "Would you really buy them for me if I call you up?"

Chapter 723 Shopping

Anthony was stunned silent. A subtle smirk crept up Sue's face as she moved to leave Anthony behind where he stood.

Albeit hesitantly, Anthony found himself grabbing her arm. "Sue, just wait here, ok? I'll go buy them for you."

Before Sue could stop him, he was already walking away.

Given Sue's injured foot, he felt it his responsibility to take care of this for her. 'I just have to buy some necessities. I can do that, can't I?' he told himself.

'Besides, the supermarket would be pretty dead by then, ' he thought.

Luckily for Anthony, there was one nearby.

As uncertain as he was, Anthony managed to look for something properly arrayed over the shelves he needed casually.

But another problem awaited him. The rows were filled with all kinds of napkins.

He stood there for a while, contemplating on the products — for all-day and all-night, some with wings and some without wings. 'What does that even mean?' Anthony, being the calculating man he was, decided to get one of every kind — a safety measure.

It took him everything to push down the redness creeping up his face as he heard a couple young girls snickering behind him.

'I'm a grown man, for goodness' sake, I can manage to buy some damn sanitary napkins on my own, ' he thought to himself, quite strongly.

The woman at the cashier was a tad uncertain as she was beeping the items in. "Sir... are you sure

you're getting all of them?"

"Yes!" he almost squeaked. "Just please speed it up if you can," he added more properly. He couldn't help tapping his foot incessantly.

"Sir, are those for your girlfriend?" He heard from behind him. He stared at the two girls. "Those are too many for your girlfriend," one of them suggested.

"Oh, really?" Anthony felt his face warmed up.

The girls laughed — how amusing. They picked out a certain brand and kind of napkin for Anthony to buy.

"Wow, thank you," he didn't expect the help, but he was much more grateful for it than he'd ever care to

admit. The bill was finally settled, and he could exit the whole situation.

He sighed deeply as he headed back to where Sue was waiting. He was still quite flushed.

As much as they helped him, he hoped to never see those young girls again.

He found Sue sat on the parterre, idly shining her shoes. Her feet must've been killing her.

Feeling concerned, Anthony offered to walk her home.

When they arrived at Sue's house, Anthony handed her the bag from the store. "Well, well, look at that.

You must be quite experienced buying these," she teased.

He gave her a pointed stare in return. Sue snickered. Trying to ignore her, Anthony directed his

attention instead to the absolute mess of Sue's house.

"It must be true. Look, you got the good brand right away!"

Anthony groaned and relayed the details of his little shopping situation. This made her hysterical.

"You're telling me," she said as she came down from her laughing high, "you picked out of every kind?"

"I didn't know, ok? Better be safe to get them all than get the wrong one," Anthony defended himself.

It made Sue laugh even harder. Warmth filled her heart — she found herself lucky Anthony cared about

her the way he did to Sheryl.

They spent the night with Anthony tidying around the house, and Sue nodding along as he chastised

her for her messiness. "I haven't been able to visit as much as I used to, but while you're still injured,

you'd better rest up at home. Just call me whenever you need, okay?"

"Yes, yes..." Sue waved her hand at him. He was sweet, but she was tired of the nagging.

"I just want you to get better. Can't you at least listen to me?" he complained. One might also say he was almost pouting.

When Sue heard a knock on her door the following day, she was eager to meet Anthony.

Her smile faded a bit when she opened the door and found Holley standing in front of her.

Holley hadn't been around much, but after hearing of her injury, she must've wanted to check in. She had some gifts with her, but Sue couldn't bring herself to feel pleasant about them.

"Miss Ye, what brings you here?" "Expecting someone else?" she asked as Sue led her inside.

"You seem disappointed to see me," she suggested. "I suppose you are waiting for someone else's arrival." "No, of course not," Sue quickly denied. "It's always a pleasure."

Holley put away the gifts and then assisted Sue on the couch. Guilt struck Sue, and she couldn't quite look her in the eye. "Can I get you anything, Miss Ye?"

"Please, just recover. You don't have to worry about manners with me." She wouldn't have a wounded person fetch her drinks.

"Please do help yourself," Sue offered instead.

The two exchanged a smile. "How did you end up like that anyway?" Holley glanced at Sue's wounded

ankle and inquired of how Sue had hurt her foot.

"It just happened," she sighed. "Blame my carelessness."

"You'd better take care of yourself Sue. You can never be too careful with your feet — your know your job demands them."

"Fine. Your words actually make sense, Miss Ye." Sue replied in defeat as she glanced at Holley. Sue stayed composed, but there was a slight tug in her gut. Something told her Holley's sympathy was part of some other motive.

Her suspicion arose further when Holley asked how her progress was with Anthony. There it was. Sue didn't like the question.

She thought it useless — there would be only one answer anyway. "He still has Sheryl by his side. So that's the end of it." Sue was quiet for a moment. That was the truth and she knew it, but she couldn't get rid of a certain feeling in her heart that might have resembled hope.

"Sue, you know you can talk to me, right?" Holley's face looked eager to help. A little too eager, Sue thought. "I'm here, you know that? For anything."

Chapter 724 Holley's Dissension

"Miss Ye!" With more than a subtle hint of guilt, while trying to sound as convincing as she could, Sue interrupted Holley before she could continue speaking. "I do not see any reason that you would have to even ask me that question. Like I said, Anthony and I are just friends."

Feeling her patience began to fade, Holley continued, "Sue, who do you think you're kidding?! You really can't continue telling that lie. I mean you can try to tell other people that crap, but you have to at least be honest with yourself!" Awaiting her response, Holley glanced expectantly at Sue, before she continued speaking. "Listen, I know very well that you expected Anthony to arrive in stead of me. The moment you saw me, you became really disappointed, right?"

With a look of shock, Sue let out a cold smile and snapped, "Not even close to being believable! Oh, my goodness! Definitely not!" Sue glanced at Holley and it could clearly be seen that as much as she tried to hide it, she was very excited. So to continue to redirect the conversation she was trying to avoid, she said, "Now, the fact that you decided to grace me with your presence is what comes as a pleasant surprise to me."

However, with all the lengths she was going to avoid the obvious, Holley could see very clearly that Sue was dancing around the matter at hand. Especially, when over on one side of the room, she saw

the pair of slippers that were obviously reserved for a man.

Thus, Sue was rendered speechless and had to admit her questionable relationship with Anthony, as

the pair of slippers marked a clear romantic connection between the two of them.

Sue therefore reluctantly acknowledged her partiality toward Anthony.

And she forced a smile at the reality of Anthony's preference to Sheryl, who was living opposite to her house.

At that moment, Holley's face lit up and she said, "Oh! That's exactly why I came by to talk to you."

Sue was a bit confused by Holley's sudden excitement. "What? I am sure I don't know what you are talking about" Sue wasn't sure what exactly she could have meant.

Barely able to contain her excitement, Holley, as if she had a secret she couldn't wait to tell, said, "Do you not see that a once in a lifetime, an opportunity is unfolding right before your very eyes?!"

Looking a bit dumbfounded, Sue said, "Miss Ye, now I am totally confused!" Sue furrowed her brow and turned up her mouth as if to say "Huh"? Holley's words perplexed her and she was wondering where she was going with this.

Seeing that her words were leaving more questions than answers for Sue, Holley suggested explicitly that Sue should take complete advantage of Anthony's frustration over the illicit relationship between Sheryl and Charles to win Anthony over.

"Now that is completely out of the question!" Sue said decidedly, "Miss Ye, I have to admit that, yes, there is something romantic between Sheryl and Charles, but by no means would that make Sheryl be considered a fence-sitter. Moreover, Anthony has not yet confirmed Sheryl's betrayal. It is nothing but a rumor, I suppose."

Holley therefore criticized Sue for her childish innocence and naivete that was proving to be extremely counterproductive.

Holley glanced at Sue meaningfully and said calmly and gently, "During your time of recuperation, something drastic happened. Do you still remember the encounter of the mountain resort?"

"Yes, I do remember that." Sue nodded gently. She had injured her ankle on the previous night when they were about to go to the mountain resort. The still fresh ache of her ankle made her stop for a moment.

"After that, despite their excellent performance, Tammy and Kitty were fired by Charles. From what I

was told, the reason was because they had offended Sheryl."

"This reason is less complicated than just that." Sue frowned and said to Holley, "They deserved to be dismissed by Charles, who considered their unkindness to Sheryl, whom he loved, to be unacceptable."

"Sue, your heart is too big and you are too kind to allow yourself to think bad of Sheryl." Holley looked at Sue helplessly and continued with as much composure as she could muster, "To be perfectly honest, Charles' connection with our company is entirely due to his partiality to Sheryl. Moreover, I was told by unnamed sources that there must have been something sexually-illicit between them during that night in the private guesthouse."

Thus, Sue's suspicion and fear were stirred up by Holley's dissension.

"What I am saying is true and real! You just gotta believe me." Holley urged Sue to exploit that opportunity to help make Anthony fall in love with her.

"But..." Sue said with great hesitation. Sue's voice trailed off as she paused, full of indecision.

"No more of this shilly-shally!" Holley suggested that Sue should strike while the iron was hot, so to

speak, and act quickly so that she could take full advantage of the situation and have it work in her favor.

Holley continued to push by saying, "I was informed that Laura is making a match between her son and a beautiful young girl. By no means would you like be bested and humbled this way, I suppose."

"But I think this issue should call for a closer investigation and I am attempting to get to the bottom of the facts." Sue frowned and continued, "Anthony did not talk to me about Sheryl's betraying him. So I am afraid that there's no reason to..."

"How foolish you are!" Holley looked at Sue helplessly and said, "Anthony is man of morals with a humble spirit. He would have no intention to embarrass himself or her by making Sheryl's betrayal public!"

Holley, after going back and forth about it, finally suggested that Sue do something proper and fitting for the matter at hand.

Then she rose up to take her leave.

Sue was then left with her own thoughts, despairingly torn by indecision and uncertainty.

As Holley walked out of Sue's house, she bumped into Sheryl who was about to go out. Since having

the meeting with Laura, Sheryl hadn't been in the best of moods. Upon seeing Sheryl depressed and unhappy, Charles granted her an indefinite period of leave to get herself back on track. After having spent one day in leisure and laziness at home, Sheryl decided to go out for a change.

"Miss Ye, what are you doing here?" Sheryl asked Holley, looking a bit confused and puzzled.

Holley smiled mischievously and replied that she came to visit Sue, getting an update on her condition, since she had a spare moment.

"Really?" Sheryl smiled curtly and asked Holley, "How is Sue feeling now?"

Chapter 725 She Is Not An Outsider

"Sue's fine. She's getting better. I think she will be able to walk in a while," replied Holley with a soft smile. Staring at Sheryl, Holley then asked, "How are you these days? What's up with you? Have you adjusted to working in the Shining Company?"

Before Sheryl could reply, she went on to continue, "Don't worry. I have punished Kitty and Tammy. If this happens next time, just tell me. I will handle it. You don't have to trouble Mr. Lu. I will help you to deal with it."

After hearing this, Sheryl felt uneasy. She glanced at Holley and said, "Miss Ye, it is not as you think.

Please don't misunderstand me."

"I know. I know you," responded Holley. She grinned and continued, "Don't worry. I won't poke my nose into your private affair. But..." Holley paused for a while and finally said, "I can't allow the company's interests to be compromised. Charles fired two models. Do you know how much money the company has lost because of this?"

Though Holley wore a smile face, her words were laced with sharpness. "I just want to remind you to be careful before doing any such thing the next time."

"Miss Ye, I have something to discuss with you." Glancing nervously at Holley, Sheryl hesitated for a few seconds and finally said, "In fact, I think it is not appropriate for me to work at Shining Company anymore. What do you think? I need your opinion on this matter."

"Why?" asked Holley with a frown. "Are you angry about what I just said?" added Holley.

"No, no. Of course not," replied Sheryl while shaking her head. She looked at Holley and explained,

"Actually I have mentioned it earlier to you. I told you that I didn't want to go there, but you declined my request. Now I am also responsible for whatever has happened."

Sheryl looked at Holley with unseeing eyes and then stopped for a while. "I have thought about this for

quite a long time. I think I can't go to Shining Company anymore but I am afraid our company will suffer even greater losses. Miss Ye, please arrange to send other models to Shining Company."

"Sheryl, you are really very simple-minded," said Holley. She gazed at Sheryl and then asked in a rather casual yet cold voice, "Sheryl, do you really believe everything will be solved if you stop working at Shining Company? You are wrong."

"What do you mean, Miss Ye?" asked Sheryl with confusion.

"Well, since you don't understand, I will have to be brutally frank with you." Saying this, Holley sneered and went on, "Charles said he didn't care about any other model as long as you were willing to go to his company and work there."

"What? Are you serious? You must be kidding." Sheryl was taken aback by Holley's words. She hastily asked, "What do you mean?"

"I mean..." Holley hesitated to find the right words. A few seconds later, she said, "He came to our company on the pretext of picking some good models. Actually, the real reason was you. He came here for you. If you quit at this time, then I am sure he will end the contract with our company. So don't say

this again. If you quit at this key moment, our company will really suffer huge losses."

Sheryl was stunned completely by Holley's revelation.

She had never figured out Charles' real intentions and she was very surprised when Holley told her the fact.

Sheryl just felt that she was surrounded by conspiracy. Quietly she left Holley and went to Shining Company. She directly went to Charles' office instead of the training hall.

All the employees in Shining Company were clear about Sheryl's importance to Charles, so no one dared stop her. Sheryl walked in directly but stopped when she saw Archer and Judith sitting there in an aggressive posture.

Seeing this, Sheryl turned to go back.

"Miss Xia, wait." David rushed up to her and tried to stop her. However, Charles waved his hands at him and winked. David soon walked out and Charles said softly to her, "Didn't I tell you to take a break and rest at home? What brings you here, Sheryl?"

"I have got something to ask you," replied Sheryl, her eyebrows furrowed. Saying this, she glanced at Archer and Judith and then added, "Well, I will come later as you have guests now."

"Is this the way you discipline your employees, Mr. Lu?" Archer asked sarcastically. He smiled grimly at Charles and then went on to add, "We are talking about business, but your employee just walked in without permission. You didn't even scold her. What if we were talking about some business secret? What if this woman heard and then revealed the secret? In this way, I am afraid our company would suffer great losses. What do you think of this behavior, Mr. Lu?"

Hearing this, Sheryl frowned slightly and then said in an apologetic tone, "I am sorry, Mr. Lu. I didn't mean to intrude. Please continue with your meeting. I will leave right away."

She was about to leave as she finished her sentence. "Wait!" said Charles. He leaned on the couch, looking at Sheryl. Though Archer and Judith were sitting across him in an aggressive manner, Charles looked relaxed.

He stopped Sheryl, walked up to her, held Sheryl by her hand and brought her to sit beside him. "She is not an outsider. There is nothing to hide from her."

Hearing this, Sheryl was moved and blushed.

"Well, then who is she?" asked Judith viciously. Judith glared at Sheryl as if she were her rival in love.

She then stood up and looked at Sheryl with piercing eyes as if trying to find out all information of

Sheryl. Sheryl was plainly but neatly dressed. She wore no famous brands.

But Judith could tell from Charles' eyes that this woman was important to him and that was why Judith

was not convinced by her external looks.

Judith came from a reputed and powerful family. She was not willing to lose to the woman in front of

her.

Although Sheryl was agreeable to temporarily postponing her talk with Charles, she was determined to

talk to him later. Glancing at him, Sheryl stood and said calmly yet politely, "Mr. Lu, I am not going to

bother you right now. You are busy with your business. We can talk later."

"Sheryl, I have said that there is no need for you to leave. You are not an outsider. Remember that."

Saying this, he then held her hand tightly and continued, "You are not the person who should get out."

"What do you mean, Mr. Lu?" asked Archer in an unfriendly tone. He derisively thought he had never

met such an arrogant man before. 'I am his elder, but he does not show any respect to me. This is

ridiculous!' Archer thought to himself.

He laughed scornfully and then continued, "Do you mean to say that I am the person who should get

out of here?"

"Maybe," Charles replied. He looked at Archer and replied indifferently, "I still don't understand what else I have to talk to you about. We are both clear about why you came here today, right?"

Archer's face turned pale with rage as he heard this from Charles. Glaring at him, Archer replied indignantly, "Charles Lu, you better not be so arrogant. I am older than you, but you did not show any respect to me. You are looking down your nose at me."

"Did you say that I should respect elders?" asked Charles in a cold tone. He helped Sheryl sit down on the couch and continued, "You better figure out how to be a respectable elder first or I am afraid that you don't deserve to say these things to me."

"You..." stuttered Archer. He was too furious to utter a single word, but he also understood that Charles was telling the truth. Archer knew that he too had been very rude to him.

After a small pause, he responded, "Charles, I have to admit that I was wrong. I shouldn't have schemed against you with Anthony. But, I..."

Sheryl furrowed her eyebrows as she heard Anthony's name. Charles told her to stay here so she

obeyed. But now that she found Anthony was also involved in this matter, she glanced at Archer.

Unexpectedly, when she looked up, Sheryl found Judith staring at her. She was looking at her intently,

her eyes filled with anger.

Chapter 726 Regretting What I Have Done

Archer clung onto Judith's arm and hurriedly told Charles, "I'm in charge of all these. My daughter has no idea about it."

When Judith had returned home from Hong Fu Restaurant, she had angrily confronted Archer and threatened him that if he didn't solve the matter immediately, she would deny him as her father.

All along, Archer had raised her to be everyone's apple of the eye. This time, he had to come down off his high horse to meet Charles. All the invitations had been sent out and cancelling the engagement party would be a big scandal for him.

Wearing a smile, he told Charles, "I made all the decisions. If you must find someone to blame for, please just blame me alone. Judith is not aware of all these things. She has her eyes only on you. And that's why she wants to marry you. If you are really furious, I could help you get even with Anthony. But the engagement party..." He moved closer for a while and whispered, "The engagement party couldn't be canceled in any way."

"Charles..." Judith tried to say something as she went over to him. She then tried to sit between Sheryl and Charles in wanting to separate them. Charles grimaced and moved up a bit. However, Judith continued to follow him and said, "When you told me that my dad had collaborated with Anthony to oppose you, I blatantly scolded him. If we get married, we will be a family. How could he help others trouble you as a father-in-law? Don't worry, if you don't really like him, we will stop seeing him. Let's just enjoy our life. What do you think of it?"

Surprised with what she heard, Sheryl was nearly stunned.

In desperation to be with Charles, she was willing to give up her relationship with her father. She was unbelievable.

"Judith..." Archer smiled dryly and pleaded Charles sincerely, "My daughter has been spoiled by me."

He then strove to show his sorry. "You can ask me everything you want. I can even give all my shares to Judith if you agree to get engaged with her. With that, both of you would be the largest shareholders of Eagle Group. No one can get your position. What do you think about it?" he added genuinely.

Then he anxiously explained to Charles to get his pardon, "I admit that I did terrible things to you. I can

do everything to compromise for what I have done. But please, the engagement party... It must not be canceled. I have already sent out all the invitations." He nearly knelt in front of Charles.

"Mr. Jiang, you must have misunderstood something," Charles shook Judith's hand in disgust and said unemotionally. "The person who promised to get engaged with your daughter is Anthony, not me.

There was no promise or commitment made between Judith and me. All the things were cleared by you and I never agreed to be engaged with Judith. So whether the party is canceled or not, it has nothing to do with me at all." Charles directly refused his request.

"You..." Archer got furious and offended by his words. Remembering his conversation with Charles earlier, he didn't show a convinced attitude, nor he refused his offer. So he thought that Charles had agreed on him and happily went back to prepare for the engagement party. Now Charles didn't recognize it at all. Archer then realized that he was fooled.

"Are you tricking me?" Archer suddenly understood his evil intention. But unfortunately, his daughter had already been deeply in love with Charles. He didn't even know how his daughter could get through the agony if she learned that the engagement would be canceled.

"It's not late for you to be aware of this point," Charles said to Archer while smiling sarcastically. "Do

you really think your game plan with Anthony is perfect? Now that you joined hands to get even with me, why couldn't I do the same, right?" Charles said flatly with a shrug.

"Charles Lu, you asshole!" Archer shouted as his face went red and his voice trembled. He managed to pull Charles by the collar of his shirt and tried to punch him. Yet, before he was able to make any action, Charles had already caught his hands.

Charles' cold eyes, gawking like the winter ice, nearly froze him.

Charles stared at Archer grimly and said coldly, "Go to Anthony and tell him not to play dirty behind my back again or else I wouldn't discharge you anymore."

After that, Charles set Archer's hands free with a wry smile and said, "Now you can go. I trust that you understand everything. But..." Charles pretended to advise him kindly, "You must handle it quickly, otherwise it will be too late."

"Judith! let's go." Archer was enraged, his body trembling. He knew that this time he had stood on the wrong side. But it was too late to feel regret. Now, it was more important to cancel the party immediately and give all people a solid explanation.

He was about to take Judith with him when she didn't respond even with a single reaction.

She was in utmost despair. Then she stared at Charles and asked in disbelief, "Charles, why do you think I couldn't match you? Why do treat me like this?"

"Judith, just go." Archer had no choice but to push her to leave. He looked at Judith with sadness. He knew that Charles was a deadpan towards her and his daughter couldn't get any answer from a person like him.

"No, I must figure it out." Judith couldn't accept what had happened and still tried to approach Charles.

She had a strong feeling that Charles had an affair with Sheryl.

"Charles, you must explain to me clearly why you decided to break up with me? Is it because of this woman?" She pointed her finger at Sheryl and yelled at Charles out of bitterness.

Charles felt ridiculous and told her, "Miss Jiang, please wake up. I never started a relationship with you before. How could you say that I break up with you?"

Pestered by this kind of person, Charles heaved a long sigh of resignation.

"You are lying," Judith said with a sarcastic smile. "I truly felt your love to me earlier," Judith added in a confident voice.

Charles smiled ironically and said, "Miss Jiang, I just ate several meals with you before. I did so because I wanted to gain your father's and Anthony's trust. If my behavior made you misunderstand all these, then I apologize. I am sorry."

"No, no, no. That's not true." Judith stopped her ears from listening to his apology. "It's you. It must be you who seduced Charles. I'll kill you!" Judith yelled as she was nearly broke down.

Judith ran to Sheryl and grabbed her by the neck. Sheryl suddenly couldn't breathe.

Clutching Sheryl, Charles hugged her in his arms. His soft voice with an obvious concern came overhead, "Are you okay?"

"I am fine." Sheryl coughed and shook her head slightly.

Witnessing how concerned Charles was to Sheryl, Judith got more furious and began to scream and lunge at them. However, Archer was prompt enough to seize her and interrupt her action.

A clap landed on Judith's face. Archer angrily yelled at her, "Judith, don't lose your head. Wake up.

That guy has never fallen in love with you. Even when you killed that woman, he would never have his eyes on you."

"But I truly love him and I can only think of him," Judith spoken with a heartbroken cry.

Now Archer had started to regret what he had done. He had heard how cruel Charles was, but he ignored these words. Now, he eventually paid double costs.

He should not have agreed with Anthony to compete with Charles earlier.

Chapter 727 Fainting

"Mr. Lu, what happened? Is everything all right?" asked David. The sound from the office had drawn

David's attention. He rushed in to make sure Charles was alright.

After Archer made sure that Sheryl was okay, he was ready to leave with Judith. However, Charles stopped him.

"David, call the police right now," Charles said in a cold voice. He did not even trouble himself to raise his head and look at Archer.

The moment Sheryl had come back into his life, he had promised himself that from then on he would protect her forever. He would never let her suffer the slightest harm. Whoever dare to hurt her would pay the price. He would show them no mercy.

"Charles, don't go too far over this," said Archer angrily. When he heard Charles tell David to call the police, he turned his head suddenly and sharply. He spoke to Charles, "Isn't it enough that you make

my daughter suffer like this? What else do you want to do with her?"

Charles raised his head and looked at him indifferently. He said, "Those who hurt Sheryl must pay the price. In fact, I wasn't going to hold you accountable for what happened. But now..."

He smiled coldly, and didn't finish what he was going to say next.

Judith couldn't help but laugh bitterly. She had loved him for so long, but this man didn't even want to look at her. What a loser in love she was!

After seeing how protective he was towards Sheryl, she finally realized that Charles had just been stringing her along from the beginning. He didn't like her at all!

She could see that he didn't show affection for anyone except Sheryl. His love for his sweetheart could be easily seen from his every act and move, even from his eyes. The more she realized that he didn't love her, the more miserable she felt.

Sheryl interceded with Charles for Judith, but Judith was not grateful for that. She sneered, "Don't pretend to be forgiving and generous. I don't need your sympathy."

'All right, ' thought Sheryl. She shut her mouth and watched Judith being taken away by the police.

After Judith was taken away, Charles gently raised Sheryl's face and examined it carefully. He knitted his brows tightly and was really angry that Judith had done such harm to her. Sheryl's neck was covered with bruises. He was very worried and asked, "Does it hurt? Would you like to go and see a doctor?"

"This is nothing. Don't worry about this," said Sheryl. She waved her hands and calmly assured him,

"It's Okay. I am fine."

She remembered that Archer had mentioned many times about his association with Anthony, so asked Charles, "What does he have to do with Anthony?"

"Nothing," said Charles indifferently. He didn't want to talk about this with her. He didn't want to worry her about this. "You will not understand. You don't know enough about what's going on in the business world."

"Charles..." She frowned at him and asked, "Even though I don't understand much about doing business, I know what 'ganging up on you' and 'scheming against you' mean. Has Anthony done something wrong?"

"It's not a big deal," Charles stated in an understatement. He comforted her, "Anyway, it's all over. Don't

think too much about it."

Charles had Alice pour a glass of juice for Sheryl. Alice came in and reminded Charles, "Mr. Lu, there are some guests waiting for you in the conference room."

"OK, I will see them," said Charles. He placed the glass on the desk in front of Sheryl and said, "It's almost time for dinner. Can you wait here for me for a few minutes? Then we can have dinner together."

After making sure that Sheryl was alright, he went out to meet the guests.

Out of sheer boredom, Sheryl stared at the bookshelf in Charles' office. Then she decided to see if there were some interesting books that she could read to kill some time.

She looked around and found that they were all books she was not interested in. She was about to go out to chat with Alice when she suddenly glanced at a photo frame on the bookshelf.

Sheryl had always doubted if she was Autumn or not. Even though she had some memory flashes occasionally, she was not sure. When she saw this photo, she finally knew that there was a wonderful similarity between the two of them.

They looked exactly the same. It was like looking at herself when she was staring at the woman in the photo.

She opened the door of the bookshelf and took out the photo frame. Since Charlie had broken the frame, Charles had put it inside the bookshelf.

Sheryl held the photo frame and carefully scrutinized Autumn's picture. In the photo, Autumn was leaning against Charles' shoulder and smiling happily. It seemed like she was the happiest woman in the world at that moment.

Suddenly, she was overcome by a terrible headache. Some fragments of past memories rushed to her.

She was overwhelmed by the pain. At the same time Alice came in to deliver some files to Charles'

office. She saw Sheryl crouching in front of the bookshelf with her head in her arms. Her face turned

ghostly pale with fright. She threw the files down and ran to Sheryl. "Miss Xia, what's wrong with you?

Are you OK?" she asked anxiously.

Then she noticed that Sheryl had found the photo frame and instantly knew what had happened. She

hastily called out David to help. As they rushed Sheryl to the hospital, they also informed Charles of the

whole matter.

As soon as Charles came to know about that, he became so worried that he left his clients behind and rushed to the hospital.

When he arrived at the hospital, the doctor was examining Sheryl. He waited for the examining procedure to be completed. David and Alice were sitting beside him. They were silenced by his serious look. It was difficult for them to say a word in those circumstances.

David hesitated for a while. He watched Charles pacing around anxiously as he worried about Sheryl's health condition. He wanted Charles to calm down and rest. Finally he said, "Mr. Lu, don't walk around like this. Please sit down and rest."

"Do you really think I can rest now? When she is in the examination room?" Charles asked. He smiled bitterly and asked Alice, "What happened to her? When I left the office, she was fine. How come she fainted suddenly?"

"I don't know, either." answered Alice. She clasped David's hand tightly and said timidly to Charles,

"She had already fainted when I came in. I saw that she was holding a photo of your wife. Maybe she was stimulated by something when she saw that photo. That could be the reason she fainted."

Charles suddenly remembered that it had happened in his own house last time, and he said nothing more. He stared at the doctor's room with fear in his eyes. He was afraid that something bad would happen to her.

"Who is the patient's family member?" a doctor called out from near the examination room. He had finished the examination.

"It's me." Charles hurried up and asked the doctor, "Doctor, what's the matter with her now? Why does she always faint?"

"She's fine," said the doctor. He comforted Charles, "It not as serious as you think." Just as the doctor said those words, Charles couldn't control himself from saying impatiently, "Are you kidding me? She has fainted, and you say she is fine?"

"Can you calm down and listen to me first?" said the doctor. He looked into Charles' eyes and said calmly, "The patient has lost her memory because of the stimulation of drugs. But now she has the symptoms of memory awakening, so that's why she always has a headache and has sometimes fainted. That is the precursor to the awakening of her memory."

"Really? Are you sure about that?" asked Charles. He looked at the doctor. "Is there any way to cure

her?"

The doctor shook his head and said, "Well, according to her health condition, you just pay more attention to her health. She is all right now, you can go in to see her. But be careful, do not take too long, what she needs most now is a good rest."

Chapter 728 A Life Of Memories

"Okay," the word came out dry from Charles' mouth. The news of Sheryl's memory returning did not spark anything within him.

Whether she was Sheryl or Autumn, whether or not she remembered her past — it was her life, and he had nothing to do with that. It didn't affect how he felt about her.

What did concern him, however, was how often her head ached, and how often she felt faint lately.

"Sher," the nickname felt right on his lips, he thought. It didn't matter if the woman in front of him held new memories that day, he would treat her as he always would. "How are you? Do you feel better now?" He went to her side in concern. It pained him to see her in such a state, leaning on the bed with a needle in her hand, looking fragile and restless.

At that moment, Sheryl felt more whole. She remembered many things. She looked at Charles and felt

the affection she had tucked away within herself — she had loved him deeply.

Even so, she could not completely recall the moment when she had her baby. She could piece most things together, but not the piece she cared for the most.

"What's wrong?" Charles prodded. "Are you feeling sick?" When she didn't answer, he motioned to David. "Call the doctor in."

It snapped Sheryl out of her little trance, and she sighed. "I'm fine, Charles. I don't need to see the doctor."

"You worry me," he sounded uncertain. Charles sat down near her, but not close enough to disturb where she rested. "What can I do? If something happens to you, what can I do?"

Sheryl gave him a smile. It was slight, but reassuring. "I'm fine. I promise." 'Autumn,' she suddenly thought of the name. She was Autumn, and she still was, even if she had led a different life for three years.

"What's the matter?" Charles wanted to comfort her, make her feel safe. But he knew that a million things were going on in her head, he could see it in her eyes. She was in front of him, but her mind was far away, putting together pieces of a life she has drifted away from.

He took her hand in his. "Do you remember everything?"

The question made her swallow dry. She never expected Charles to be there as she recovered, and she wasn't sure how to deal with it. After thinking for a while, she shook her head. She didn't want to lie to him, but she just didn't know how to face him.

As she looked up, she caught a glance at herself in the mirror on the wall across from there. It stunned her. Those were her eyes looking back at her, on her own pale face and empty expression. For a moment, it seemed as if her reflection had kept the secret all along. During those three years, Autumn lived inside of her.

Now, she could see herself, Autumn, standing in her own skin, next to Charles — the man she had once called husband.

"Charles, I..." An ache crept up in her chest.

"That's okay." He stopped her. He knew how much harder it must be for her, and he didn't want any guilt to worsen the burden she was undoubtedly putting on herself. He leaned in to hug her tightly. "I'm glad you're fine."

His words moved her. Sheryl could barely respond, but her heart was full of warmth — a feeling she did not realize she was so familiar with.

He gave her another reassuring smile. He brought her hands to his lips and kissed them gently. She was a treasure to her, one that had been lost and finally recovered.

Sheryl could feel the softness in his touch and in his voice, and it warmed her so.

"The doctor said that what you need now is good rest. I'll go get you something to eat." With the same gentleness, he helped her lie back down on the bed and pulled up her covers. He turned to Alice and with a sharp voice he said, "You're to take care of Sheryl. If anything happens, call me immediately."

"Of course, Mr. Lu." She nodded and reassured him.

While Charles was away, Alice could see Sheryl stirring on the bed as she struggled to get some sleep.

She moved to sit beside her. "I'm so glad you're back, Mrs. Lu."

Sheryl smiled in appreciation. She was quite restless inside. She wasn't completely sure about how she felt, or what the aches in her chest were for.

For three years she lived with her head muddled, things that were important to her ceased to exist in her own mind, and she had made far many new memories in that state. How could she face her life as

it was? How would she deal with Anthony and Charles?

Alice could almost hear her overthinking. "Let me tell you something." It made Sheryl pause and look at her, at least. "While you were gone, Mr. Lu was possessed. He dedicated everything to looking for you around the world.

You came back eventually, but your memories were gone. I'm sorry that you had to deal with something so unfortunate, the two of you loved each other very much. I figured you both would feel like a part of you was missing, for a long time." She smiled, almost relieved. "Now you're back, truly back, and I couldn't be happier for you."

"Has he really... Has he really been looking for me all this time?" Her question came out hesitantly.

It had been three years, and a lot could change in that time, she knew it. If she were Charles, she wasn't sure she would keep looking.

"No, Mrs. Lu," Alice said earnestly. "You were gone for years, and everybody thought you were probably..." She paused for a bit. "Well, dead. But Mr. Lu never stopped believing you were out there.

Now everyone will see he was right to keep looking for you."

She smiled reassuringly, but Sheryl had that complicated feeling in her chest once again. How could she have deserved Charles' love for her? How could she face him after all he had done for her?

She was with Anthony the past few years. And while they never slept together, She couldn't help but feel bad for Charles.

It was a long day, Sheryl thought. "I'm quite tired now. Thank you, Alice. I'll try to sleep for a while." She closed her eyes and tried to will the loud thoughts away.

"Alright, Mrs. Lu. You have a good rest, and call me if you need anything. I'll just be at the door."

Alice made her way out, and Sheryl was alone in the room. It was chaos in her mind. Too many thoughts came rushing in and out, too many 'what-if's' and 'what-should've-been's.' It was too much for her.

When Charles returned, he was as quiet as possible so as to not wake her. She could still hear him, of course, because she was wide awake, but she had no mind to face him.

She didn't know how.

For a time, Charles thought that as long as Sheryl recovered her memory, they would be able to find the child. Her memories were back, but something about this cursed day still kept it away from them.

'Maybe...' he started to think. 'Maybe it's better this way. Maybe it's better that she doesn't remember the pain of having a child, and losing one.'

Chapter 729 Knowing The Truth

At the hotel

Laura and Junia stood in front of the hotel gate. They were waiting for Anthony to pick them up. Laura was slowly gaining confidence that she could dissuade her son from marrying Sheryl. Till now their plan had been working for them. After Laura pretended to faint, Anthony thought she was really ill and stayed with her most of the time. And she knew that Anthony had never seen Sheryl since then.

Both Laura and Junia were happy that their scheme worked.

Hence, both the ladies stood there sharing niceties with each other. Laura took this opportunity of Anthony's absence to pep up Junia a little more. Laura patted Junia's hand and said, "Junia, I have done everything I could to help you. Next it depends on you in terms of whether or not you can win Anthony's heart. You must grip this opportunity."

"Aunt Laura, don't worry. We have won half the game. Now Anthony has a good impression of me,"

Junia said smiling confidently. As both the ladies thought that they had out smarted Anthony and after

all the games they played, he would most definitely move away from Sheryl, neither of them noticed that Anthony had gone out of the hotel.

Anthony had had a stomach upset, so he had gone into the washroom at the hotel. When he went out, he wanted to play a trick on them so he tiptoed to them. At that time, Laura was speaking with a smile,

"A good impression on you? That's great. I don't have any other wish except that Anthony and you get married. Only then will all my efforts be worthwhile."

"Don't worry, Aunt Laura," Junia spoke with a big smile on her face. "I have followed your instructions and it has really worked. My disagreeing with your behavior in front of Anthony has helped me win his trust. Now he feels that I will give him sensible and genuine advice. Hence, he even listened to me when I asked him not to see Sheryl any more, ' she added with a confident smile on her face. "So now I think I have the opportunity to be with him," she added.

"That's really good," Laura said with a big smile. She felt relieved, thinking that Sue could finally replace that single mother in her son's heart who had no family background. 'Anthony is young and blind in love. He will never understand why I am doing all this. But whatever I am doing is only for his good. Perhaps he will understand when he becomes a father himself, ' Laura thought to herself. Then

she continued her words, "I know my son. He wouldn't listen to you if you oppose him. But if you can make him feel that you are on his side, it will be very easy to convince him. I don't think that woman will be able to keep my son happy. You are destined to be my daughter-in-law." Saying this, Laura touched Junia's cheek lovingly.

"Aunt Laura..." Junia lowered her eyes as she blushed. She felt a little shy. "It is you who know your son best. If you hadn't pretended to be ill, I wouldn't have got a chance to approach him." She showed her great gratitude to Laura.

As both the ladies were freely speaking about how their scheme was working well for them, they did not even notice that Anthony was standing right behind them. After hearing their words, Anthony was dumbstruck.

A playful gesture that he had planned for surprising his mom turned out to be a great revelation for him.

He just wanted to frighten them by cropping up, but instead the one who got truly scared was none other than he, himself.

This was so ridiculous.

All the while he had just been a fool! He froze at the spot he stood. Too scared to even call them. Too scared to confront them. Needless to say, he was heart broken by what his mom had done to him. But it left him to become absolutely numb.

Suddenly, Laura felt it was taking unusually long for Anthony to come back. "Why hasn't Anthony still arrived here?" Laura asked. Having said that, Laura suddenly had an uncanny feeling that kind of scared her. She then turned around and there he was. Anthony was standing right behind them.

He stood there motionless. His face was as white as a sheet, as he stared right into his mother's eyes.

It was utter embarrassment for Laura. As Junia noticed Laura had turned absolutely silent after turning around, even she felt something was wrong. Then even she turned around to come face to face with Anthony. Both the ladies were dumbfounded to see him. Laura tried to gather her speech as she stammered, "When... when did you arrive, Anthony?"

She wanted to confirm if Anthony had heard their talking. Anthony looked at her without even casting a glance at Junia who stood there, petrified.

Anthony curved his lips in a sarcastic smile and said, "I arrived when both of you were busy appraising each other."

Laura understood that he had heard everything. She could not find words to explain to him. "Anthony, please listen to me. I can explain it..." Junia spoke hastily. She took a step forward and tried to hold Anthony's hand. But Anthony just shook her hand.

"That's enough. What else do you still want to explain?" Anthony asked her in an angry voice without even looking at her face. "You want to fool me again?" Now he turned towards her and gave her a sardonic smile. Junia lowered her eyes immediately. Then he continued his words, "I was so silly. You just said a few words and I just believed in you. Junia, I did not expect this from an educated and independent girl like you!"

"Anthony!" Laura frowned at him as she interrupted his terrible words, "What are you speaking?" She tried to defend for Junia, "It has nothing to do with Junia. If you truly want to blame someone, you should blame me. It was me who instructed her to do so."

"Yes of course. How did you think that I wouldn't blame you?" Anthony said with an ironic smile. "I find it

difficult to believe that you are my mother? You schemed with another woman to cheat me. I have been with Sheryl for three years. I thought that you truly wanted to know her. I took her to see you with

so much of expectations. But what have you done? You humiliated her in front of me. I just believed that you were testing her. Mom, do you think I am a fool?"

"Do you know what kind of nonsense you are talking? Is this how you talk to your mother?" Laura creased her brows. She then tried to pacify his anger. "Whatever I have done, it was only for your good. Just think about it yourself. Do you think Sheryl has no relationship with that man? Why do you insist on wasting your life with such a disreputable women? How can I, being your mother, accept this kind of women as your wife." Laura realized that there was no point pretending anymore. It was the time to take the bull by its horn.

"You know nothing at all!" Anthony yelled at Laura with a sardonic smile. "That man is Shirley's biological father. It was he who kept harassing Sheryl. Sheryl does not have an affair with him at all."

Anthony tried to defend Sheryl.

"What?" Laura's eyes were wide open when she heard Anthony's words. Even after she heard what Anthony said, she heart did not soften towards Sheryl. She remained firm on her opinion and said, "So what? Although she was not with that man earlier, what is the guarantee that she will not an affair with

him later on?"

"Shut up!" Anthony couldn't help but speak sternly. His mother's attitude towards Sheryl hurt him beyond words. He felt so belittled at the very thought that Laura just refused to trust Sheryl, he felt he would never be able to face Sheryl. He was so confident that his mother would like her once she met her. But here, Laura had closed all doors for her even before she met Sheryl. She came here with a scheme to separate her from him. He cast a cold glance at Laura and said sarcastically, "From now on, you must not meddle in my relationship with Sheryl. I can handle it myself."

He then glared at Junia grimly. "And you, as a girl, please respect yourself. You can't get someone like this. No one would like to be with you if you try to get him by hook or by crook."

"Anthony!" Laura yelled at Anthony with furrowed brows, "Don't cross your limits. It has got nothing to do with Junia at all."

"Whatever you say." Anthony's expression hardened as she looked at Laura. After Anthony had heard their conversation, no explanation from Laura could bring back his faith on her.

"Mom, now you have had a visit. Just go back," Anthony looked away as he spoke to Laura. Then he added unemotionally, "If you still want to stay in Y City, I can't stop you."

But I wouldn't care about you anymore. I will get Sher back now. If you still cannot accept her as your daughter-in-law, then prepare your mind to forsake me as your son as well. I will break all ties with you." Anthony spoke in a stern voice with a very hard expression on his face.

Then he just turned around and walked out of the hotel. Laura was so enraged that her blood pressure shot up immediately. She fell on the ground and lost her consciousness. Junia was utterly scared and supported her with her arms. "Aunt Laura, what's wrong with you? Are you okay?" Junia asked concernedly tapping her on her face.

"Anthony, Anthony! Stop!" Junia called out to him from back out of fear. "Aunt has fainted." She tried to stop him from leaving.

Anthony stopped after hearing her cry. "Now, stop crying wolf," he said without even turning back at them. He stood right there just a few steps apart, resolved not to fall a prey to their trick anymore.

"Don't you get bored of playing the same trick again? I have no faith in your words any more," he said with a hardened expression.

Then he stepped ahead and left the hotel premises ruthlessly. Junia watched him walk away as she

knelt down on the floor holding Laura in one hand.

She then asked for help from a hotel employee and took Laura to the hospital immediately. After the doctor examined her, she said that a delay of even a few more minutes could have resulted in being fatal for Laura.

Junia was extremely worried and angry as she could not get through with Anthony over the phone even though she called him over and over again.

At the same time, she could even understand Anthony's position as well. 'If I were in his place, even I would have thought that Laura was pretending to faint. No one could believe this time it was true,' she thought in her mind.

Eventually Laura opened her eyes. Junia was sitting on a chair in front of her. She took a deep sigh of relief and said in a tearful voice, "Aunt Laura, you really scared me just now."

"Good girls don't cry." Laura tried to pacify her emotions. Laura had a faint smile on her face as she said, "I am okay, don't worry."

Laura glanced around the ward to find her son in the room. Then she couldn't help but smile wryly. She asked Junia, "Where is Anthony? Did he just leave?"

"He..." Junia furrowed her brows as she didn't know how to explain to Laura. Then she smiled and reassured Laura softly, "Anthony has something urgent to solve. Aunt, are you hungry? How about ordering a take-away food for you?"

Chapter 730 Messing Around

"I know you are trying to comfort me," Laura replied with a rueful smile. "He's my son. I know him better than anyone else. He must be very angry with me. He didn't believe I was ill."

Junia looked at her and tried to console her. She said, "Aunt Laura, don't take it too hard. You look utterly washed out. You need rest. We shall talk about it later."

"I'm old and weak now. I know it," Laura said with a bitter smile. "I'm not afraid of death. But I can't bear to leave Anthony alone. I can't see him suffer. But I am disappointed in him now. How can he be so stubborn?"

"Don't say that. You'll be all right soon. The only thing you have to do now is to take a rest. You look tired."

"Junia," Laura took her hand and said, "don't take his words too seriously. Those are only angry words. You take my word for it. Your chance will come soon. Don't give up so easily. You're the only person I

can count on now."

"Well, I know what you mean. But..." She hesitated for a moment.

While she was sitting in the ward, waiting for Laura to become conscious, Junia had considered it quite seriously. She could see quite clearly that Anthony was madly in love with Sheryl. Apparently he would never part from her. It would be abominable of her to force herself on him. Then she reached a decision. "I've decided. I will leave when you are discharged. I'm giving up on him." she said.

"But why?" Laura asked, with startled eyes. "Is it because of what he said? You know that was nonsense. He didn't mean it. The woman has made him lose his mind. He'll straighten things out very soon and return for good. Just give him some time."

"It's not only about Anthony," Junia explained. "I've considered it seriously. Though you're not fond of Sheryl, we have to admit that she's a good woman. Maybe the only criticism against her is that she has a child."

She paused for a moment and continued, "Anthony is very serious about her. I don't think there is a chance for me to win his heart. I feel like I am humiliating myself."

"But you can't give up now!" Laura cried. She was very anxious to change Junia's mind. "You don't

know. You are the only person I can expect to..." she paused suddenly. "I hope you understand. No one wants their only son to marry a divorced woman. Even if she's a good woman, I just can't accept it," she said firmly.

"Aunt Laura..." Junia frowned slightly, wondering why Laura was insisting on this.

"Please don't give up!" Laura said, looking at her with pitiful eyes. She struggled out of bed and approached Junia. "Just give him some more time. If he still insists on his choice, you can do as you please and I'll make no objection. But it's not the right time to give up. I'm not convinced of it."

For a moment Junia did not answer. To comfort Laura, she decided to give in. "Well, I can stay, but no more than a week. Is that okay?"

"One week shall be alright," Laura replied. Laura insisted that Anthony would free himself from his relationship with Sheryl and Junia's turn would come.

Junia did not reply. Whether they would split up or not, she decided to stay aloof from the whole matter.

But she still agreed to stay on for another week.

Laura seemed very pleased by this outcome. A plan formed in her brain. She decided to have a talk

with Sheryl and exert pressure on her.

Anthony left the hotel, distracted. He was sick with the knowledge that he had been cheated by his loved ones.

He laughed angrily at his own foolishness. The look of despair on Sheryl's face came into his mind. He felt desperately sorry for her.

He was eager to discuss the whole matter with her and clear the air.

He drove to the front of the building in which Sheryl lived, but his courage suddenly failed him. He sat in the car, smoked and hesitated for a long time, but did not try to go up.

In the hospital, Sheryl was well enough to return home. Charles confirmed this repeatedly with the doctor before agreeing to go ahead the discharge procedures. He impressed upon her the necessity of taking her medicine regularly.

Sheryl looked at him with a sinking heart. His devoted care for her made her feel uneasy.

"What's the matter?" he noticed her expression and asked gently. "Are you feeling okay?" He looked at her with loving eyes.

She smiled at him, shaking her head slightly. "Nothing. It's just that you are so anxious today."

He chuckled and said, "I want you to take care of yourself. I think you and Shirley should move in with me. If you don't feel well at any point of time, I'll be there to look after you."

"I think I'd rather not." Sheryl refused his offer. "You don't bother about that. I can take care of myself.

Besides, Nancy can help."

Nancy...

Sheryl frowned at the mention of her. She could never forgive Nancy for the trouble she had caused

her. But she had been doing her best since she was hospitalized. So Sheryl didn't know what to do with her.

"Shall we go?" he said then. He held her by the arm and they left the hospital.

He drove her home. When they arrived at the apartment building, Anthony saw them together. He suddenly flared up.

He pushed the door open and stormed up to Charles. Without a word, he raised his fist and hit him in the face.

His fist landed squarely on Charles' face before he could react. When Anthony raised his hand to

punch him again, Sheryl stood in front of him.

"Sher, get out of the way," he cried, red with rage. "Let me teach him a lesson today."

"Stop messing around! Have you not had enough of this?" Sheryl demanded, restraining herself.

Though she was grateful to him, she would never be able to forgive him for concealing the truth from

her. He had deceived her with a lie, just to keep her beside him.

"Messing around? Do you think I'm messing around?" he asked, sneering.

"Oh, don't you?" she retorted. "Do you think hitting someone is good manners?" she asked in a cold

voice.

"I'm sick of being pestered by you and I am very tired. Will you excuse me?" she said.