

Wedded Bride 741

Chapter 741 Let Me Be The One You Trust Most

Leila arched her eyebrows. After a long pause, she said to Charles, "Do you think I wanted to do this? I was left with no choice because of you."

"Because of me?" Charles asked in puzzlement.

"Charlie is my son. He has been with me since the day he was born. But you took him away from me and forbade me to see him again. Today I just wanted to see him but was forced to do it in secrecy. So is there anything wrong in this?" Leila inquired angrily.

"Stop talking nonsense!" Charles sneered, "I have never forbidden you to see him."

Charles cast a contemptuous glance at Leila and added, "If you want to meet him, you could have just gone to my house. Why did you follow him secretly? Obviously, your intentions are questionable."

"You won't understand." Leila smiled coldly and said, "You are now with that woman, and Charlie has been completely brainwashed. He refuses to meet me now. What could I do in such circumstances?"

"Don't lie to me," Charles sneered. "No matter who Charlie lives with, you should not follow him secretly. If you dare do that again, I will not spare you."

Charles left immediately after issuing the threat to Leila. He was worried about Sheryl and went back to

accompany her.

Looking at Charles' receding figure, Leila felt very jealous of Sheryl. 'Why is that bitch so lucky? She gets everything I desire. I have followed the boy for several days but to no avail. I should take more drastic action now!

I must let that bitch feel the pain of losing her family and loved ones, ' she swore to herself.

A devious smile played on Leila's face.

Sheryl and Charlie were with Shirley when Charles came back. Sheryl was unable to cheer Shirley up despite all her efforts. Only when Charlie talked to her, she would sometimes raise her head and smile.

"What should I do?" Sheryl helplessly asked Charles on seeing Shirley's listless condition. Sheryl couldn't help herself and burst into tears in Charles' arms.

"Don't worry," Charles consoled her. Then he added, "The doctor said autism is not a serious disease. I will find the best psychologist for Shirley. I promise you she will be cured soon."

"Really? Do you really mean that?" Sheryl asked Charles tearfully.

"Yes!" he promised confidently. He lovingly glanced at Sheryl and found her more reassured. He felt

pleased that she trusted him.

He hesitated and then said, "But Sher, you must tell me what happened to Shirley. What has triggered this in her?"

Sheryl didn't reply immediately. She hesitated for a long time with a painful expression on her face. "Is there a problem?" Charles asked as he saw Sheryl's expression.

"No, no. It's just..." she stammered. She didn't know where to begin and how to find the right words.

"Sher." Charles hugged her and said, "I hope I can be the person you trust most. No matter what has happened you can tell it to me without hesitation. You know I will always be by your side and support you."

Sheryl was moved by Charles' words. She gave a bitter smile and came out of the ward. Then she told him what had happened last night.

"I was so shaken by all this. If Nancy had not struck Anthony, I can't imagine what would have happened next. When he left, I found Shirley had seen all this. She was scared of the blood flowing down Anthony's face, so..."

Sheryl couldn't continue and she sobbed brokenly.

'If I had paid enough attention to Shirley, would she not have witnessed all this?' she wondered and blamed herself.

"Anthony!" Charles clenched his teeth in rage. Luckily, Sheryl wasn't hurt last night, otherwise, he would have hunted down Anthony and beaten him to a pulp.

"I'm alright now, Charles," she said. Sheryl was shocked by Charles' reaction. She consoled him, "It is over. The most important thing now is to find the right treatment for Shirley."

"I know." Charles knew what he should prioritise first. But he wouldn't spare Anthony for this. He decided to teach him a lesson one day.

"The doctor said Shirley has to stay in hospital for several days. I'm going home now to bring some fresh clothes for her. Please stay here and look after her for some time. She cannot be left alone now,"

Sheryl said to Charles.

She was about to leave but Charles held her back. "Let me go and bring her clothes. You just stay here with her."

"Thank you. But I think it is better that I go." Sheryl gave a soft smile and added, "Don't worry. I can

take care of myself."

She looked at Charles and said, "I will be tough for Shirley's sake. I won't be destroyed when Shirley needs me the most."

"You stay here. You won't know what to bring back," she added. "Fine then."

Charles agreed. Sheryl's words made sense and Charles gave his car key to her. "Take my car and come back soon," he said.

"Okay." Sheryl found Anthony's car parked down when she arrived home. She assumed that Anthony had taken a cab back home last night and so his car was there.

Nancy questioned her about Shirley's condition as she packed. Sheryl was very nervous about her daughter too, but she tried to console Nancy, "Nancy, don't worry. Shirley will be fine."

She finished packing quickly and went back to the hospital. As she was entering she saw Laura there.

Sheryl didn't expect to see her in the hospital. As their last meeting had been very unpleasant, Sheryl hesitated. Then she walked up to her. Looking at Laura's hospital clothes, she asked, "Aunt Laura, what has happened? How come you are admitted here? You..."

"Because of you!" Laura interrupted her. Laura sneered, "You must be happy to see me ill, right?"

"Aunt Laura, I..." Sheryl said hesitantly. Sheryl gave a bitter smile and added, "I don't know why you fell ill. But I am sure it has nothing to do with me."

Please excuse me. I have to attend to some important business." Sheryl was ready to walk away but

Laura gripped her wrist. "What? Do you want to escape? Why are you making excuses?" Laura asked mockingly.

Chapter 742 I Promise You

"Aunt Laura, I really have something important to deal with right now." Sheryl looked at Laura

anxiously. Her daughter was still lying in bed helplessly. She didn't have time to engage in a verbal fight with Laura right then.

"Stop with your excuses. Knock it off!" Laura sneered, "Sheryl, I really don't understand how a girl can

be so shameless. You are beautiful and can have any man you want. So, why do you want to trap my

son? My son is so blinded by your charms that he has nearly abandoned his own mother. He is

unwilling to even see me now. So, tell me, how can you remedy things between me and my son?"

Laura was not afraid to lose face, so her voice was really loud. This attracted a lot of people's attention.

On hearing Laura's words, people gathered around them. They pointed at Sheryl and whispered

amongst themselves. Sheryl felt really uncomfortable but she couldn't say anything.

As Laura was Anthony's mother, Sheryl responded politely and patiently, "Aunt Laura, the relationship between Anthony and me is over. Please let me go now."

"Stop all your lies," Laura sneered again. "I've seen many women like you. You say that your relationship is over, but you are only saying it to deceive me. And when my back is turned, you will be back with Anthony again. You are just a single unwed mother with a child. I know you will never let a successful and rich man like my son out of your clutches."

Laura's words increased the whispers of the people around. Hospitals are often crowded places, and where there are people, there is chatter and gossip. The crowd stood around Sheryl and gossiped about her and Laura's son. These people judged Sheryl with mean words and cast her in the role of an immoral woman.

"I didn't expect such a beautiful girl to be so immoral. She looks so decent," a woman said.

"Neither did I. You can never judge a book by its cover it seems," a young man looked at Sheryl with disgust and said.

"Yes, you are right. If my son is to marry, I pray his future wife not be like her," another woman fervently

said.

Listening to all these insulting words, Sheryl was pained. She was almost reduced to tears. Their words were sharp like knives, cutting her heart into pieces.

Laura couldn't help laughing when she also heard these words. She turned to Sheryl and said, "Do you hear them? It is not only me who dislikes you. See how many people are agreeing with me! Sheryl Xia, it would be better if you look within yourself. If you are a good woman, how is it possible that I do not approve of your relationship with my son?"

"Aunt Laura." Sheryl's face was sad. After hesitating for a while, she continued, "What do you want from me? Why are you creating a scene here?"

"I want to talk to you privately," Laura said directly to Sheryl. Sheryl hesitated but she still agreed to Laura. "Okay, but I don't have much time. So, you had better be quick about it."

"All right," Laura answered with a triumphant smile.

Laura wanted to find a cafe, but Sheryl refused. Sheryl was worried about Shirley and wanted to get back to her quickly. She finally agreed to go to the garden in the hospital.

When they were about to leave, Junia appeared. Junia was shocked to see Sheryl there. She turned to Laura and said, "Aunt Laura, what are you doing? Have you forgotten all that Anthony said?"

"Don't worry. It's alright," Laura sneered. "It does not matter what he said. He is my son. I am responsible for his well-being and his happy life. Everything I do is for his good. If I don't do the right thing just because of his few angry words, he will blame me in the future."

"But..." Junia frowned and stopped herself. 'Even I have given up on Anthony. I don't know why Aunt Laura is so stubborn, ' she thought to herself.

"It will be alright. Don't worry." Laura smiled as she patted Junia's hand. "I will come back soon."

After she comforted Junia, she turned around and said to Sheryl, "Let's go."

Sheryl followed Laura to a quiet pavilion in the garden. There were some small sparrows hopping around and flying low.

Sheryl spoke first, "Aunt Laura, if you want to say something, just say it directly. Please don't waste my time and yours by beating around the bush."

'I don't want to see her, and she doesn't want to see me. Then why don't we say all the things we want to say right away and never see each other again?' Sheryl thought to herself.

"Excuse me? When Anthony is not around, you cannot even talk politely and respectfully to an elder, can you?" Laura sneered and said, "You really have two faces, don't you? Acting as a polite and sweet girl in front of people and showing your real face behind them. If Anthony could see your true colours right now, he would be really surprised."

"Aunt Laura, please stop being so dramatic," Sheryl answered coldly. "We are both adults, so we should behave like adults. If words make you happy and comfortable, say as many as you want. But, it will be better to say all you want to outright. It will save a lot of time."

"All right." Laura gave a false laugh. "It is rare for us to agree on something but I agree with you on this.

So listen to me clearly — I want you to stay away from my son."

Laura looked at Sheryl and said calmly, "You said that you are an adult, so please be one. Think about this — how can any parent allow their son to marry a woman like you? Except for your pretty face, what makes you qualified to be Anthony's wife?"

Sheryl did not respond. She listened to Laura's words silently.

Laura didn't stop and even meaner words came out of her mouth. "Let us talk about family first. My

family is highly educated and has generations of doctors. How about your family? You are alone, with no one to help you. Except for a daughter who was born out of wedlock, you have nothing. Next, let us talk about your career. Anthony gave up his chance to be a well-paid doctor and became a businessman for you. And you? You are just a nameless model. Besides, you are a single mother and Anthony is a prize catch. No one would ever want a daughter-in-law like you."

After belittling Sheryl for a long time, she started to persuade her to give up on Anthony. "Miss Xia, I know that you are an educated person. You should know the saying that only a well-matched marriage can succeed. Even if you two get married, you will not live happily in the future. I just want to remind you that Anthony will be happier in the future with a girl like Junia who is a good match for him and his status. Trust me, I will never accept you into my family."

So, I need a promise from you. A promise that you will break up with Anthony as soon as possible and that you will never contact him again in the future. Can you make that?"

Laura watched Sheryl closely.

'A gold-digger like her must be using every trick in the book to trap and seduce rich men. She will never easily give up a man like my son. If she still insists on clinging onto him, I will offer her money to leave

my son alone, ' Laura thought to herself.

However, to her surprise, Sheryl made the promise without any hesitation.

She glanced disdainfully at Laura and said, "Aunt Laura, I agree to everything you said. I promise that I will never contact your son or see him again. Can I leave now? I am in a hurry."

Chapter 743 Crank Calls

As Sheryl prepared to leave, Laura was a little stunned by her instant and unconditional promise. She then stopped her by saying, "How could you walk away without my permission?

You most definitely cannot just leave. I am still not done with you!" Sheryl ran out of patience and turned around to tell Laura in no uncertain terms, "Aunt Laura, I have acceded to all your demands and now it is time for you to stop blaming me."

"I will not tolerate any more of your hypocrisy and duplicity!" Laura smiled coldly and said, "I know that you are far too cunning and greedy to agree to breaking off your relationship with Anthony without a reason."

Laura asked Sheryl in a contemptuous manner, "What scheme is cooking in your brain now? What plan are you thinking of?"

Sheryl, feeling a little humiliated, replied helplessly, "I have agreed to part ways with Anthony as per your demand. I fail to understand what else I need to do to satisfy you?"

Sheryl was mindful of Shirley's condition. She was not interested in arguing with Laura and wanted to finish this conversation and leave as soon as possible.

The unpleasant episode last night had cemented Sheryl's desire of distancing herself from Anthony.

She had absolutely no intentions of entertaining any connection or even thoughts of him in the future.

She managed to talk to Laura sincerely, "Aunt Laura, I am fully aware of your intention to keep Anthony from me. I realize you will never accept me as his wife and will do your best to spoil our possible marriage. Considering all this I have terminated my relationship with Anthony and now you are nothing but a stranger to me."

Saying this Sheryl left the garden. Laura was still unconvinced.

Laura reflected for some time on Sheryl's easy consent. She suspected Sheryl of some ulterior motive.

She thought that as a safety measure she should confirm it with Anthony.

"Aunt Laura, how did your talk with Sheryl go?" Seeing Sheryl leave, Junia came over to help Laura back to the ward.

Laura frowned and told Junia, "I still... doubt Sheryl's claim to have ended her relationship with

Anthony. What do you think Junia? Do you think this could be true?"

"I cannot say!" Junia helped Laura to her bed and poured a glass of water for her. She then said,

"Sheryl is a sensible woman. She would not lie to you, I think. Please believe her."

"Definitely not! I sense something is amiss," Laura frowned, "and I believe she is somehow plotting to

marry Anthony without my knowledge."

"Aunt Laura, please do not trouble yourself with this matter any more." Junia looked at Laura helplessly

and said, "Your health is more important. Don't stress yourself out with all these thoughts."

Honestly Junia was beginning to regret her visit to Y City with Laura.

"Junia, do you not understand that I want to clear the way for you and Anthony?" Laura looked at Junia

meaningfully. "I sensed more cunning than sincerity in Sheryl's words."

Junia forced a smile on her face and said, "Whatever you think and do, I kindly request you not to

involve me in it. I am not interested in this undesirable match any more."

"Junia..." Laura's voice trailed away and she was very upset at Junia's words.

"Aunt Laura! I am very sorry." Junia felt it was necessary to prevent Laura from further match making.

"Please drop this matter or I will be forced to leave you alone and go back home."

Seeing Junia get upset, Laura decided to let the matter rest for sometime.

She tried to change the topic. She requested Junia to call Anthony as she wanted to meet him.

"Okay." Junia nodded in approval. She herself wanted to ask Anthony to fulfill his role of a devoted son.

This way she could be spared from taking care of Laura. She was tired and felt she could not bear a single day more in Laura's company.

But the calls went unanswered and Laura became anxious about that.

Junia threw her cellphone down in exasperation and said, "He is not answering my calls. I have tried several times."

Laura requested Junia pay Anthony a visit at his house. She wanted to see if he was in any trouble.

Junia agreed after some initial reluctance.

As she knocked on the door of Anthony's house, no one opened the door. She tried a few more times and waited for some minutes for someone to come out.

Back in the ward, Junia relayed this news to Laura, who became even more anxious.

Her maternal love for Anthony drove her to tears and she imagined the worst had happened to him.

Junia, seeing Laura distressed over Anthony, had to console her by reminding her that Anthony was a mature and grown-up man. He could take care of himself.

After consoling Laura and giving her some food, she left her to sleep. She walked out of the ward and called Anthony again. There was no response still.

At last, she had no option but to text Anthony. She texted him requesting him to call back his mother as soon as he was able to.

In Sue's apartment

Anthony saw the message and dismissed it roughly. Sue came over to ask him why he was not answering the calls. Someone was obviously trying to reach him desperately.

"These are crank calls!" Anthony replied nonchalantly. He was in no mood to answer Junia's and his mother's calls.

Chapter 744 A Little Unpleasantness

"Junia," Sue read the name flashing on Anthony's cell phone screen. She gave Anthony a questioning look and asked, "Who's Junia?"

Anthony dragged her into his arms and teased, "What? Are you jealous?"

"Yes, I am," Sue admitted. She turned to look at him with serious eyes and added, "I can tell this is a woman, judging from her name. She calls you relentlessly, even when you're here with me, at my house. Is she your mistress?"

Anthony looked at her incredulously. "What utter nonsense are you talking about?" He frowned slightly.

He hesitated for a moment and said, "She is the daughter of my mother's friend. I came to Y City with mom and her this time. Even if I just consider her as my sister, my mom thinks she would be a perfect choice for my wife. My mom has probably caused new trouble for me. Maybe that's why she's calling."

"Is she pretty?" Sue asked, ignoring his explanation. She put a slice of watermelon into his mouth while leaning against his chest, waiting for his answer.

"Yes," Anthony replied honestly.

Sue couldn't help but feel sour with his response. All along she thought that Sheryl was the only one trying to put a distance between Anthony and her, but now she realized, there was even another woman, Junia.

'His mother doesn't like Sheryl, so she might not like me either, ' Sue thought.

"Anthony." Sue raised her head and looked at Anthony. He hadn't shaved for days and was now sporting a shadow on his chin.

"What's up?" He lowered his head and looked at Sue.

"How do you..." she stammered. "How would you define our relationship?" Sue couldn't quite believe she mustered the courage to ask Anthony that. But it had been bothering her for a while. What they had confused her and she just needed to know how he felt.

Anthony was stunned. To be honest, he often came to Sue's place because he felt at ease here and he could do anything as he pleased.

He didn't quite know how to answer her question because he had never thought about it. So he tried to dodge the question. "What kind of relationship do you think we have?"

"I..." Sue felt a little sad because she didn't get the answer she wanted to hear. But she understood that

Anthony couldn't possibly forget Sheryl in one night, so she tried to find peace with it again.

'I can wait,' she said to herself.

Tamping down her feelings, she smiled at Anthony and asked, "Do you mean you will agree if I want to

take our relationship further?"

Anthony frowned but nodded reluctantly.

Sue smirked as she coyly slid her hand in his pants. Anthony groaned and held her by the waist, dragging her to the bedroom.

After they made love, they remained in bed, exhausted yet satiated. "How about we visit your mom together?" Sue started to ask.

"What brought on this idea?" Anthony asked, his voice filled with surprise.

Sue poked his chest. "You agreed, remember?" she reminded. "You nodded when I said I wanted our relationship to go further." She leaned against his chest and continued, "I think we're already at that phase of our relationship where I could go with you to visit your mom as your future wife."

She gave him a small smile. "I haven't gotten the chance to treat your mom these past few days. But now, I feel better and my foot feels fine. I should at least spend some time with her, don't you think?"

"We can talk about this later," Anthony snapped. He pushed the quilt away, dragging his feet off the bed. Sue's words caused his chest to tighten. He managed to put on his pants and walked out of the room, leaving Sue in shock.

Anthony was almost at the door when Sue came to him, not even bothering to put on her clothes.

"Where are you going?" Sue asked in confusion, holding him by the elbow.

Anthony swallowed. "I just need some air. I'm gonna head out for a bit." He shook off her hand and left, not bothering with a goodbye.

Sue watched him go as she fell to the floor on her knees and burst into tears.

Maybe deep inside, she had always known that Anthony only saw her place as a place of refuge when he craved flesh, and she was no more than just a prostitute housed in it. While thinking that, she still wished that he had even a little love for her.

Her illusion that their relationship was something real and out of love shattered into pieces when he walked out.

She didn't know how long she cried for, sitting on the sofa in a daze. It was dusk when she heard the door open and the light on the living room turned on.

Sue blinked at the sudden brightness. She raised her hand to cover her swollen eyes and tried to see who was in her house. When her eyes landed on Anthony, she felt shocked yet happy but she didn't

want to seem desperate. "Why did you come back?" Her tone was strong but indifferent.

"I got some snacks and fruits. Also some vegetables for those dishes you like when I cook for you. Do you like them?" Anthony said in a tender tone.

He knew he had to tread lightly. He panicked after hearing what she thought of their relationship. He hadn't even figured out his feelings for her yet, or what he wanted out of their relationship.

So he decided to take a walk to think things through. After his feet went tired and his head hurt from thinking, he still found that Sue's place was the most comfortable place for him, so he came back.

He didn't quite know how he'd face her after walking out. He knew he hurt her, so in a feeble attempt to apologize, he bought all the things he knew she liked.

"You don't have to use these things to console me." Sue was not a kid. She didn't need trivial things to make her feel better or to forget being hurt. And Anthony's reaction hurt her. When he walked out, she knew that he had never considered even marrying her.

He only came to her because he wanted to feel better after being hurt by Sheryl.

"Sorry." Anthony walked up to her and embraced her. Then he said in a soft tone, "I know you are angry with me. You haven't eaten dinner right? It's bad for your health. Let's have dinner now. You can

go on losing your temper on me after dinner."

Sue was amused but she held back her laughter. She wanted to ask questions again but thought against it.

So she just kept silent.

Anthony felt even worse as he knew that Sue was holding back. He knew a lot of things were bothering her but now, she may not open up anymore.

He was the same way when he was with Sheryl. They both had the utmost adoration for the persons they loved, desiring their attention and love.

Anthony kept on persuading Sue to eat more during the dinner, hoping to at least make her feel a little better, a little less hurt.

But going through the unpleasantness, Sue hardly spoke during dinner.

In the hospital

Charlie kept Shirley company and never left. Sometimes, Shirley's eyes held different emotions but her face was always blank, expressionless.

It was late. Charles looked at Sheryl and said, "Sher, go home and rest. I'll accompany Shirley tonight."

Sheryl shook her head slightly. She wouldn't feel at ease even if she went home. She would rather stay here and be with her daughter.

Chapter 745 Don't You Like Charlie

"I will stay here. Charlie is very young and staying up late is bad for his health. You take him home and be with him," Sheryl looked at Charles and said. "It's okay. I can take care of Shirley on my own for a few hours," she added.

"Sheryl, why do you always undertake to do the jobs that belong to men? Why do you ignore me?"

Charles looked into Sheryl's eyes and said, "I am Shirley's father. I think I should stay with her tonight instead of you."

"I..." Sheryl smiled bitterly and said, "I didn't mean that. I just thought..."

"I understand. I know what you meant," he interrupted. Charles walked up and hugged her gently. "I know you worry too much about Shirley. But I have promised you to do my best and hire the best doctors to cure her. Please trust me."

He heaved a deep sigh and said, "You go home with Charlie and I will stay here tonight. You are tired out and I will manage better if there is any emergency in the night. I will rest tomorrow morning when

you come back. Just do as I say please."

"But..." Sheryl wanted to refuse but Charles did not give her a chance. "Sher, listen to me and obey me.

This is an order so do not argue," he commanded.

Sheryl went home with Charlie on Charles' insistence. Nancy had prepared a nice dinner for them.

Both of them had no appetite, however, and did not want to eat anything. Charlie just asked for a glass of milk and Sheryl had a bit of hot soup.

Nancy asked Sheryl about Shirley's condition cautiously. Her eyes got wet on hearing Sheryl's narration about her situation. She felt guilty and apologized to Sheryl, "It was all my fault. If I had noticed that Shirley was out of her room and standing at the door, maybe she would have been fine today and not in the hospital like this."

"Nancy, it is not your fault, really. I should have also realized that she was out of bed." Sheryl smiled bitterly. She knew clearly that Nancy could not be blamed for this.

So she consoled Nancy and then took Charlie to Shirley's bedroom. "Charlie, you can sleep in Shirley's room tonight. You will like her bed. It is very comfortable and you can play with her toys if you wish."

"Okay." Charlie nodded his approval. When Sheryl was about to leave, he grasped Sheryl's hand. He said timidly, "Can you... sleep with me? I want you to be with me."

Charlie didn't know why he made this request. When he had lived with Leila, he had always refused to sleep with her, though she had sometimes wanted to cuddle him. He had just wanted to keep away from her as much as possible.

So he had believed it was his nature to be a loner. But on coming to know Sheryl, Shirley and Charles, he realized he liked to be with them.

Surprised, Sheryl looked at Charlie. She always thought of Charlie as an independent and self possessed boy, totally different from Shirley.

"What... did you say?" she asked in surprise.

"Nothing. Good night." Charlie blushed and tried to dodge her question.

Sheryl smiled. She didn't leave but stayed and slept with Charlie. She knew she would not be able to fall asleep in her own desolate room, so staying with Charlie was a good choice.

She couldn't see Charlie's expression in dark as she asked him, "Do you miss your mom? She must also be missing you."

"No, I don't. Not even a little." Charlie shook his head. He wanted to tell her he doubted Leila was his mother. He controlled himself. He just said to Sheryl, "I don't like her."

"Charlie, why not? How can you not like your own mother?" Sheryl asked in puzzlement. As far as she knew, there were hardly any children who didn't like their moms. Charlie's words surprised her.

"I don't know either," Charlie replied with a frown. Then he said to Sheryl, "Anyway, I think she is different from other mothers. Other mothers always care about every detail with regard to their children

like food and clothes. They fuss over them when they fall sick, but she..."

Charlie paused and then added, "What she cared about was to make use of me to get to dad. She reminded me everyday that I should be good and quiet to make everyone happy and to win his heart. So I don't like her."

"Didn't she... take care of you a little bit also?" Sheryl asked Charlie with sorrow as her heart melted.

"Hardly ever. She was not really bothered and was always plotting to get dad interested in her. I took care of myself mostly," Charlie answered, indifferently. Sheryl hugged him. In Sheryl's embrace, he felt so comfortable like he was with his real mother.

Sheryl hugged Charlie closer. It was the first time that Charlie had talked so much about himself with her. She felt so sorry for him because he had suffered so much at such a early age.

Charlie was still sleeping soundly when she woke up the next morning. He had snuggled to her as she embraced him the whole night. She realized that Charlie was not as mature as he seemed but just a regular three-year-old kid.

She sat up cautiously and silently as she did not want to wake him up.

She planned to make some porridge for Charles but Nancy had done this for her. Nancy had begun the breakfast preparations immediately on waking up. She had made Charles' favourite pancake and Sheryl's favourite wonton and porridge.

"Nancy, why did you wake up so early? You should have slept for some more time," Sheryl lovingly scolded Nancy.

"I did not sleep well. So I decided to get out of bed and start the breakfast preparations." Nancy smiled.

"I have made wontons for you. Sit down and have some while they are fresh."

"Okay." Sheryl sat at the dining table and began eating. Charlie came out of the bedroom soon.

He had woken up as soon as Sheryl left and had dressed himself before coming to the living room.

Nancy wasn't very close to Charlie so she didn't say anything to him. She just passed a bowl of wontons to him.

Sheryl shelled a boiled egg for him and said, "Eat well. We will leave for the hospital after breakfast."

"Okay." Charlie began eating in silence. Sheryl looked towards the kitchen and said to Charlie, "Help yourself. I'll go to the kitchen and help Nancy."

Nancy was packing breakfast for Charles as Sheryl came to the kitchen. She reminded Sheryl to be careful while holding it as it was very hot.

Sheryl looked at Nancy and said, "Nancy, stop your work for a while. I want to talk to you."

"What? Why? Is something wrong?" Nancy was confused and wondered what the matter was. She felt instantly anxious.

Sheryl looked over her shoulder and asked in a low voice, "Don't you like Charlie?"

Nancy's face sobered immediately. "Sheryl, you should know that he is another woman's son with Mr. Lu. How can you bring him to your home and accept him?"

Nancy was confused as to why Sheryl could be so tolerant. Sheryl had gone through so many

hardships because of Leila. It was incredible that she should take care of Leila's son with so much love and dedication.

Sheryl arched her eyebrows and asked with a frown, "So what? Is there anything wrong with that?"

Charlie is an adorable child."

"Sheryl." Nancy said with concern, "You are too kind. You should realize this kid is a threat to you and your peace of mind. You should not encourage him."

"What threat? What do you mean?"

Nancy looked at Sheryl and bitterly said, "As far as I know, Leila won't give up on Mr. Lu easily. If you keep her son with you, she will have a perfect excuse to get close to Mr. Lu. Are you not worried that she may cause new trouble for you?"

Nancy heaved a deep sigh and added, "I think it is better that you stay away from him and send him back to Leila. She then won't have any excuse to..."

Chapter 746 Unbiased Treatment

"Nancy! He is just a child." Sheryl intervened and said, "Regardless of what his mother did, he is innocent and I can never even think in my wildest dreams to harm him. How can you even think that I

will be so cruel to him?" The vulnerability of Sheryl was clearly reflected in her voice.

Nancy scowled and looked at Sheryl; she wanted to help her make a decision. "Sheryl!" Nancy called

her politely. "You're a kindhearted woman, but you don't have to be kind to everyone. Leila is Charlie's

mother. Can't you figure out what will happen? Charlie will definitely support his mother when you will

have words with Leila. So, what will you do about it then?" Nancy said in aggression. "You have to think

about it at any cost and make up your mind. It is not just about the sake of yourself, think about your

daughter too. Why don't you understand Sheryl? This is for your own better future," Nancy added.

Sheryl glanced at Nancy and said, "That's enough nonsense for now. I totally understand what you said

and how concerned you are for me and my daughter, but Charlie is just a child to me. It's true that he is

Leila's son, but no matter what his mother had done, it was all that happened before he was born. He

has nothing to do with that! And keep in mind that I can't do any harm to a child.

And, I heartily believe that you will be nice to him too. Will you, Nancy?"

"But listen..." Nancy wanted to say something but stopped and gasped. Indeed, it was now clear that

Sheryl was determined to cause no harm to Charlie.

Sheryl was indeed a kindhearted woman! That kind of woman was easy to be hurt even on the smallest

of things. What happened with Brent was the best proof of this! Thereby, it was somehow inevitable that she would never hurt anyone or let alone a small child.

However, Nancy truly wanted to help Sheryl to protect herself. Though, when Sheryl turned her down, she had no way but to accept her decision.

"Okay. Do whatever you think is right for you," Nancy grunted.

And, Sheryl continued exhorting her to be nice to the kid. She told her in clear-cut words that she must not even think of any evil plans to hurt Charlie in any way. Nancy nodded and Sheryl walked away without even looking at Nancy. As soon as Sheryl stepped out, she was shocked and abashed to see Charlie standing by the door of the kitchen.

Sheryl got embarrassed and thought that Charlie must have heard what Nancy and she were discussing inside. She got extremely tensed and started to curse herself in the heart. She was very nervous and ashamed. However, she gathered enough courage to inquire in awe, "Charlie, what are you doing here? Is everything Alright?"

Charlie signaled the phone and said, "Dad is on the call."

Sheryl grabbed the phone hastily and hold it on her ear. Charles informed Sheryl that Shirley was still asleep, hence she didn't need to reach the hospital in a hurry. She hung up the phone immediately.

Charlie was sitting by the table enjoy each bit of his delicious wonton. Sheryl looked at him and was horrified in mere confusion. She was constantly wondering how would she bear if Charlie had listened to the conversation. She was ashamed and was not even able to make eye contact with Charlie.

Even though he is just a child, but he can easily comprehend every sentence that he would have heard while standing by the door. All this time Sheryl was hoping deep inside her heart that Charlie would not have listened to anything. She thought that she was just overthinking and there was nothing to worry about at all.

Sheryl didn't want him to be affected by all what was happening between the elders of the home. She wanted to safeguard his innocence as her utmost priority and to shower him with love and nurture. But, realizing that after listening to the conversation Charlie would never trust her, Sheryl got more tensed.

Just a mere thought of losing Charlie's trust was enough to make her upset.

It wasn't until near seven o'clock, Sheryl decided to go to the hospital to give breakfast to Shirley. She carried a thermos and took Charlie's hand and left the home hastily. Charlie kept his head down and

walked with her without even making a single sound. Sheryl was afraid to confess Charlie but she could no longer resist asking him, "Charlie, did you hear what we said just now?"

Charlie looked up and stared at Sheryl. "What?" he asked while trying to act normal.

Sheryl was not able to make eye contact with Charlie and thus, she rolled her eyes up and said, "I mean, did you hear what Nancy and I were discussing in the kitchen? Were you listening to us?"

Charlie still kept his head down and remained silent. It was clear that he had no words to answer Sheryl in any way.

Sheryl squatted, and took a deep breath to finally gather enough courage to look at him and said,

"Charlie, you don't have to worry about anything in front me. You can tell me anything, it's okay honey."

Sheryl was now feeling a bit relaxed. After waiting for him for a while, Sheryl continued, "It's okay if you heard us, and I want to tell you that Nancy didn't mean to harm you, she was just..."

"Okay," Charlie interrupted her. And, he looked up at Sheryl in a strange way. He was sure that Charles didn't love Leila. He was constantly thinking that he was born as a result of a mere mistake between his parents.

There was a constant battle going on in the mind of Charlie. What all he could think of was who his real mother was if it wasn't Leila??

"Are you sure it is okay?" Sheryl asked him again in embarrassment. She wanted to clear all doubts but all in vain since Charlie did not want to talk about it. Sheryl thought that Charlie was too calm and mature for his age.

"I'm fine Sher, trust me," Charlie replied coldly. Charlie hailed a taxi and took Sheryl's hand. "Come on fast, Shirley must be waiting for me. I want to meet her soon."

Charlie successfully managed to change the topic and they both remained silent throughout the journey. They both reached the hospital and Shirley was still asleep. Charlie sat beside Shirley's bed and began thinking all that had happened again. Sheryl put the breakfast Nancy prepared on the table and said to Charles, "Come and eat something, you have been staying up here all night, you must be very tired and hungry too."

"I'm all good." Charles smiled warmly and asked Sheryl if she had had breakfast.

"Yes, I already had." Sheryl nodded slightly, and she stood up and went out to get some hot water. At the same moment, Charles caught Charlie staring at him.

There was a constant battle going on in his mind. He was thinking about whom he should choose to be with once he could find out about his own mother.

"Charlie, what happened? What are you thinking son?" Charles looked at Charlie and asked with great concern if he was feeling sick.

"No, I'm fine Dad." Charlie shook his head but Charles still asked him to stand in front of him. He asked, "What's on earth is the matter with you? Tell me! What is bothering you? Have you had your breakfast yet?"

"Yes." Charlie nodded.

But he still looked sorrowful. Charles frowned and looked at his son. "Charlie, you can tell me anything. I'm your father. I love you, my son."

Charlie paused a bit; it seemed he was figuring out whether it was right to ask this yet. He questioned

Charles, · "Dad, will you marry Sheryl?"

Charles was taken aback by what Charlie just asked; he never expected Charlie would ask him that question ever. In mere shock, Charles could do nothing other than starring Charlie for the next couple

of minutes.

He didn't know how to answer him, so he paused for a while and replied, "Charlie, so you like Sher,
don't you?"

"Yes, I do like her," Charlie responded.

He did like Sheryl but he didn't know if he should like her or not since, she would be her stepmother. It
was just that Charlie was afraid that he would no longer matter to his father, once his father married
Sheryl.

"So what would you say if I make her your mother?" Charles smiled and looked at Charlie in mere
desperation. Charlie didn't say yes
or either no.

Charles was not able to understand why his son was behaving like that. · But being a father, he was
sure to protect his own boy. Since, Charlie had told him that he like Sheryl, but he was worried. Thus,
determined to give his son some faith, he decided to make his son believe that he would be loved by
his father forever.

Charles said to Charlie, "Remember this, I am your father, so I'll always love you no matter who I marry.

I won't leave you and I'll be always responsible for you. If I marry Sheryl, she will love you, too. And, together we both will have your back!

Think about it yourself, haven't she always been nice to you? I know that you have been trying hard to act be nice and mature, and I am proud of you my son. But. I want to tell you, honey, you don't have to be like that. You don't have to suppress your desires. You can tell us anything you want including your worries about the evil stepmother. I promise that I won't let anything bad happen to you at any cost, okay? I won't let you compromise in any situation." Charles hugged Charlie tightly as a symbol of love.

Chapter 747 The Culprit

"So... does it mean that Shirley is my sister from now on?" Charlie was clever enough to get the point.

He looked at Shirley with growing affection because she was very nice and he liked her a lot.

"Of course," Charles smiled as he replied and continued, "I will treat both of you with the same love and affection. Do you understand this Charlie?"

"Okay, I am very happy." Charlie nodded and his eyes brightened up.

Sheryl came back with the water and brought with her a group of people into the ward.

Charles dropped the box at the sight of Sheryl's family which included Arthur, Amy, Andy and Abby.

Abby tried to avoid eye contact with him as if guilty.

Charles had continued to send some holiday gifts to the Zhao family during these years. The contact between them had gradually lessened as the whole family bore a grudge against him when Autumn went missing.

Amy was particularly unhappy at the sight of Charles and Charlie. She did not wish Charles to pester Sheryl after the long separation.

She blurted out, "Charles, you ought not to have come here!"

"Grandma Amy." Sheryl felt duty bound to speak up for Charles. She knew Amy's anger was partly out of love for her.

"Charles has taken good care of Shirley last night. He has been with me and supported me through this whole ordeal. He deserves our love and respect. Please do not blame him anymore." Sheryl tried to change Amy's attitude.

But Amy ignored Sheryl and spoke coldly to him, "No more of your hypocrisy and duplicity! Leave this place right now! We do not need you!"

Sheryl was somewhat upset by Amy's rudeness to Charles.

At that moment she was standing between them and could feel Amy's hatred for Charles.

Amy glanced at Sheryl and continued, "You should rely on your family rather than someone who has harbored ill will against you. You do not need his help to take care of Shirley. We will be with you and help you!"

"Mom..." Abby thought it was necessary to let Andy clear the air. Charles was not really at fault — he had just been careless to lose Sheryl.

She was overcome with a growing guilt over Amy's accusation against Charles who remained quiet.

She forced a smile and said, "Mom, Charles should bear the joint responsibility for Sheryl's missing but there is someone else who is the bigger culprit. So do not just blame Charles anymore!"

"Abby!" Andy, sensing something drastic, immediately stopped Abby from saying more on this.

"What is the matter with you?" Amy sensed something amiss from Andy's and Abby's interaction with each other. They tried to act normal on the surface but she sensed a simmering weirdness and strain in their relationship.

Andy grasped Abby's arm tightly and told Amy nonchalantly, "It is nothing serious. Actually, I mean we

have come to inquire of Shirley's health. Let us not waste our time arguing with each other and creating a scene here. Dad, I request you to introduce the two psychologists to Sheryl. They are experts and will help cure Shirley."

"That sounds good!" Amy got distracted. She exclaimed to Sheryl, "Arthur was a well known doctor before his retirement. He has many contacts with experts in psychology and counselling. He can refer some good doctors to cure Shirley properly."

"Really?" Sheryl asked eagerly. She prized and loved Shirley over everything. She would do all that was necessary and hire the best doctors to ensure her recovery.

"Of course." Arthur nodded reassuringly and then asked Charles, "But what on earth has happened to little Shirley? She was happy and healthy the last time we saw her."

"She..." Sheryl glanced at Arthur helplessly. She did not know how to narrate the entire episode leading to Shirley's condition.

"Sheryl, feel free to talk to us!" Amy touched Sheryl's hands lightly and glanced at Charles menacingly.

"Your family is your backbone. We will always support you through all hardships."

Saying this, she glanced at Charles with growing hatred and asked Sheryl, "I hope no one is abusing

you and Shirley!"

Sheryl realized that Amy was hinting about Charles.

She immediately said, "Grandma Amy, please do not involve Charles in this. You are totally wrong about this. He is not involved in Shirley's accident."

On seeing Charlie watching all this with interest, she suggested that Charles take the little boy out of the ward.

She decided to reveal something in the absence of the innocent boy.

"Okay! Let us go out for some time, Charlie. Sheryl, feel free to call me if necessary. Charlie and I will be waiting outside."

Once they walked out, Sheryl began to

relay a detailed account of the unpleasant encounter from the previous night. Everyone present was

shocked to learn it was Anthony who was to be held responsible for this condition.

Abby was the person who was most shocked.

"Sher, are you sure? Was it really Anthony? Did you see his face clearly?" Amy could not reconcile

herself to the dark side of Anthony. She had always found him to be a gentleman and soft mannered.

Arthur also found it hard to accept what he heard. He asked Sheryl, "Is what you just said true? Did all this really happen?"

"Definitely! It is the truth and a harsh reality. This is the level he sunk to." Sheryl replied with a forced smile and continued, "I never expected Anthony to commit such a horrible act!"

Sheryl's revelation nearly prompted Abby to disclose Andy's involvement with Anthony. Sensing that Abby was slowly losing her control and was about to spill the beans, Andy immediately brought Abby outside.

He did not foresee that Charles and the little boy were out there and may eavesdrop on his conversation with Abby.

Chapter 748 Give Me More Time

Andy pulled Abby intensely to the staircase which was diagonally opposite the ward. He dragged Abby so hard that she couldn't free herself and spill the beans to Sheryl. Andy closed the door of the staircase immediately. He felt relieved and involuntarily loosened his grip. Abby yelled at him with rage as she tried to pull herself free, "Release me! I can't hide the truth from Sheryl any longer. I'm stricken with guilt. I'll tell her the whole truth right away." Unknowingly, Charles was just outside the ward. Since

the wall was not soundproof, Charles could still clearly make out what they were talking about despite the door being closed.

"Are you insane?" Andy exclaimed. Although Andy tried his best to fully control his voice, Charles could still hear him clearly. They didn't know he was eavesdropping.

"If you tell her the truth, I'll look like a deceitful person. Don't you realize that? Regardless of what Anthony did, he saved our son's life before. We owe him. Can't you just stand on our side and keep your mouth shut?" Andy pleaded as he persuaded her to side with him.

"Save your breath. I have made up my mind," Abby clicked her tongue in contempt. "Anthony did help Rick find a matched heart donor and I can't thank him enough for that. But we can show our gratitude to him through other means. Why do you have to do things against your conscience?"

Abby continued with a bitter smile, not allowing Andy to speak, "Didn't you hear what Sheryl has just said? You heard what that bastard did to Sheryl, didn't you? That scumbag attempted to rape Sheryl. The worst part is, Shirley was there and she was too young to witness that horrific scene. She was so scared that she got tensed up. Now, she has developed autism. Shirley is my great-niece. Now tell me,

how can I stand on your side and keep my mouth shut?"

Abby's heart ached as she pictured a panic on Shirley's face. She looked at Andy who was in front of her and said with regret, "If I had told Sheryl the truth earlier, she would have known Anthony's true colors and kept a distance from him. Then all those things wouldn't have happened. Most importantly, Shirley would have been perfectly fit and well with complete happiness."

As her eyes were fixated onto him, she said to Andy with determination, "Andy, we shouldn't do things which prick our conscience. Sheryl is my niece. I can't act as if I'm a stranger or a bystander who keeps her in the dark. We should..." She became more excited as she spoke and her face turned red.

Andy cut in to stop her from blabbering and raised his voice a bit, "Abby! please listen to me." Andy lifted his hands and gently held Abby's shoulders to comfort and calm her down. He said to her insistently, "I admit that I didn't cover all the bases before I helped Anthony. But you should consider the fact that Sheryl's story might be unreal. Anthony did help save Rick. That's the thing we are absolutely sure of. Abby, I beg you, let us please stay out of this mess."

"No! I am not doing that," she shouted. Knowing that Andy still didn't budge on the issue, Abby was enraged beyond measure. She violently shook his hands off her shoulders. She clicked her tongue in

despair and told Andy, "I have been married to you for so many years. I don't know your true nature until today. You are such a selfish person. How can you be so distant and cruel to Sheryl and Shirley? I can't hold my tongue any longer from revealing the truth to Sheryl. Keep that in mind. I will not force you to do anything but think about it carefully before you make a decision."

Abby felt a great disappointment towards Andy. Before she was able to turn around to leave, Andy stopped her. He took her by the hand and implored her, "Abby, please give me more time, will you? Give me two more days, just two days. I will meet Sheryl to apologize after I repay Anthony. Is that agreeable to you?" His eyes begged Abby.

Abby had already made up her mind. But when her husband eventually budged on the matter and appeared to be sincere, her determination disappeared. She couldn't turn him down the way she did minutes ago.

She hesitated for a while. Finally, she asked, "Do you mean it? Or is it just another lie to stop me?"

"Of course not," Andy promised sincerely. "Believe me, after two days, I will tell the whole story to everyone."

"All right. I will give you one last chance then." She believed him anyway. Abby smiled bitterly and spoke to him, "Andy, make sure not to let me down again. Remember, there is no second chance as this is the last." Andy nodded reassuringly.

Abby turned around and opened the door. She walked out with Andy following her. The moment they stepped out, they spotted Charles sitting right outside the ward. They had been too preoccupied with the secret buried deep in their heart to pay any attention to the people in the corridor of the hospital.

They both glanced at each other and didn't know what to do at that moment.

A sudden pang of guilt and embarrassment welled up inside Abby. Their selfishness deepened the misunderstanding between Charles and Sheryl and continued their separation. She felt too ashamed to look at Charles, so she immediately lowered her head to avoid eye contact. After her senses came back to herself, she strode towards the ward without a second thought. On the other hand, as Andy walked towards Charles, he asked, "Cigarette?"

"Why not?" Charles inclined his head slightly. He knew Andy had something to tell him in private so he tilted his head sideways and said to Charlie tenderly, "You can go and play with Shirley. She needs you."

Charlie understood it so he walked inside the ward to give them space for a private conversation. After

Charlie closed the ward door, Charles silently followed Andy to the window. They stood facing each

other. Andy brought a packet of cigarette out of his pocket and gracefully shook it until one cigarette

showed a little. He handed the packet to Charles and helped him light a cigarette. They both smoked

without talking for some minutes. Suddenly, Andy broke the silence and said, "I'm sorry."

"For what?" Charles asked in an irritated tone. Even without the knowledge of the whole story, he could

still make a rough guess from what he had heard when he eavesdropped a while ago. He was certain

that Andy was involved in the disappearance of Sheryl back then.

"I know you heard us," Andy said with a bitter smile. "When I found Sheryl in Anthony's department

back then, she made it clear that she didn't want to see you again. I hesitated for quite some time. But

she was so serious. I didn't want to force her to do anything. She was unstable and close to a

breakdown. I planned to tell you her whereabouts after she pulled herself together. But she took the

drug. Then..." He paused and heaved a deep sigh.

He resumed, "Rick was diagnosed with congenital heart disease. Anthony found a matched heart

donor and used this to control me. He warned me not to tell you about Sheryl's whereabouts. I had no choice but to follow him."

Whenever Andy remembered this, he couldn't help blaming himself. He couldn't think straight when faced with such an exhausting situation. Since Anthony could find a suitable donor, Arthur could surely do it too. Arthur also had a wide network of friends. If only he had turned to Arthur for help instead of Anthony, he might have been free from being controlled by someone.

After all, when it came to the life of his beloved son, he couldn't compose himself and think reasonably.

"So, you just watched the situation and let Anthony take her away. Suddenly, you and your whole family disappeared without a clear reason. You stayed away on purpose and avoided me like a widespread disease. You deprived me of the knowledge about her whereabouts for 3 years. What if I haven't heard what you said today? Do you really have any plans to tell me the truth?" Charles was enraged.

Andy knew he was wrong. He couldn't do anything but to lower his head in embarrassment. He repeatedly apologized to Charles, "I'm sorry. I'm really sorry for what I have done. I know it can't be undone. My apologies and reasons are pointless. I can't fix your pain. But I still want..."

"Enough is enough!" Charles furiously cut him off. Out of annoyance, he yelled at Andy, "Of course you

can't!"

Frightened by Charles' rage, Andy suddenly stopped. He knew Charles was in great bitterness at the moment. No matter what he said, Charles wouldn't listen to him. He trembled in fear so he leaned forward and rested his hands on the window sill to stop himself from shaking.

"Since you are Anthony's accomplice, you must know where my other child is. Am I right?" he softened his tone and anticipation could be observed in his reaction. After three years of unsuccessful search for his other child, Charles lost his hope. But now that he learned about Andy's secret, he found that there was still something to expect. His heart lifted at the thought that he might meet his other child sooner or

later. He stared at Andy with a lighter mood compared to a moment ago and waited for his answer.

Andy glanced at Charles. He hesitated for a while and said, "Sorry, I can't tell you now."

He continued speaking to prevent Charles from responding, "I can only assure you that your child isn't in danger."

"What do you mean by that?" Charles asked. However, Andy kept beating around the bush. He avoided Charles' eyes and said, "Charles, give me two days. After that, I will tell you everything you

want to know. But I can't do that now. Please, don't push me."

Andy turned and walked towards the ward, leaving Charles in dismay. Charles irritably stubbed his cigarette out. He tossed the cigarette into the basket angrily and went back to the ward.

Andy and Abby, with a sober look on their faces, were sitting on the other side of the bed. When Charles got inside, Abby gave him a smile with guilt, but Charles ignored her and went right past her.

Amy took Sheryl's hands and rubbed them gently and lovingly. As tears formed in her red-rimmed eyes, she said, "My baby girl, you have suffered so much at such a young age. It's unfair. It is really unfair for you."

"Grandma Amy, it's not a big deal. Don't cry. See, I'm as good as the beautiful sun." Sheryl squeezed her hands gently to comfort her. As she tilted her head, she noticed a little movement from Shirley's bed. Shirley was awake. Sheryl rushed towards her and asked affectionately and tenderly, "Shirley, how do you feel? Do you feel any better?"

When Shirley saw a bunch of people surrounding her, she panicked. Feeling uncomfortable, she instinctively leaned towards Charlie for security.

Charlie took Shirley into his arms and calmed her gently, "I got you. Don't be afraid."

Chapter 749 He Is Not Right For You

Everybody was stunned, looking at Shirley's terrified expression. Much more surprised was her mother who took in her daughter's fright.

Her own daughter was so terrified of her that tears were streaming down Sheryl's cheeks. She stared at her daughter, wanting to ease her fear, and asked, "What's wrong Shirley? I'm your mom. Why don't you want me to hold you?"

But Shirley kept silent. Sheryl felt more and more disheartened seeing how her daughter reacted towards her.

Shirley buried herself into Charlie's hug. He held the young girl to reassure her. Seeing her daughter feel calmer, Sheryl felt better.

Arthur furrowed his brows and looked at the people in the room. "Now, don't just stand there. Leave.

Shirley needs to be alone. Everybody gets out. Please."

He had witnessed Shirley rejecting her mother's touch. It might have been due to the psychological trauma the poor girl had suffered. All he knew was that she needed help, and he would help her get treated.

Abby led Amy by her hands and helped her out of the room. She felt guilty, seeing the sadness on

Sheryl's face.

They all stood outside the door in silence. Arthur helped Sheryl out of the room. He patted her shoulder

in comfort. "Don't be too worried. Actually, it's no use getting worried. Take care of yourself and prepare

for everything that is about to happen. But for now, take it easy. Alright?"

"I understand, Grandpa." Sheryl lifted her head to look at him in the eyes and forced a small smile. But

deep inside, she wasn't fine at all.

"I know someone who may be able to help us out. Don't worry. I will do everything I can to make sure

that Shirley gets treated. I promise," Arthur swore to her.

Upon hearing Arthur's words, Sheryl felt a little more at ease and confident that Shirley would be better.

"Sher," Amy held Sheryl's hand and spoke gently. "I understand how you feel. And I may not be able to

do anything now. If you ever need my help, just call me, okay? And stay away from Charles. I don't

trust him," Amy said.

"Grandma Amy..." Sheryl said in disagreement.

Abby held a hand up to stop Amy from saying anything more. "Mom, this is none of our business.

Sheryl is not a kid anymore. Who she spends time with is her call. She knows who's right for her and who can make her happy. So leave her be."

"One should not be judged by his looks alone. Just take Anthony. Such a fine looking man but we've seen him for what he truly is," she mumbled.

Amy continued, "Just because they're happy now doesn't mean they're meant to be together forever.

The most important thing is to find a person who truly loves her and cares about her. Someone kind. I think that Charles just doesn't deserve our Sheryl."

"Grandma Amy, please," Sheryl complained, urging her grandmother to change the topic. "This isn't about me. With Shirley's current state, I just can't make my feelings a priority. Charles is Shirley's father and I can't stop him from being with his daughter. But I promise that I'll be careful and consider what you're saying. I'll think about everything before I make a decision about my relationship with Charles."

After hearing Sheryl's promise, Amy felt more reassured and nodded her head slightly. "That's fine."

After a few more whispered warnings to Sheryl, she left.

Amy and Abby went home, and Andy followed suit. But Arthur didn't leave. It occurred to him that one of his former student worked here as a doctor and maybe he could help. So he went to talk to this doctor. After hearing the young girl's state, the doctor promised Arthur that he would do everything he could to cure Shirley.

As he came out of the doctor's room, Arthur heard someone call out his name.

He turned around and saw Laura, smiling at him. She walked up to him. "I was a little unsure whether I saw right. But I was convinced I recognize you and called you anyway. What are you doing here?" she asked.

Laura knew Arthur because he was one of her father-in-law's friends, and he was a doctor, just like her.

Arthur recognized her immediately. He wanted to be nice to her. But knowing that she was Anthony's mother and thinking about what Anthony had put Sheryl and Shirley through, he couldn't even pretend to be happy to see her.

Seeing Arthur's blank expression, Laura thought that he didn't recognize her. She smiled and tried to remind him, "Don't you remember me? I am Carlson Xiao's wife. You and my father-in-law are good friends."

"I know you," he acknowledged. "Do you need something from me?"

Laura was taken aback with his response and felt a little embarrassed. "Well, nothing... Nothing serious. I just wondered what you were doing here. That's all. Are you not feeling well?" she inquired sincerely.

Before Arthur could answer, Laura continued, "If you're not feeling well, you should see a doctor immediately. Never get hospitalized or checked when your body is at its worst. At your age, you should get checked regularly, even if you feel fine. We're not as strong as we once were when we were younger. You should really take good care of yourself. As you know, my father-in-law..."

"Do you want me to get ill?" Arthur cut her off. His tone was cynical and judgmental. If anything, he didn't trust Laura as much as he didn't trust her son.

Laura was stunned speechless. She looked at Arthur and didn't understand why he was so hostile towards her.

"Uncle Arthur, how could you say that?" Laura awkwardly stared at him and tried to defend herself, "I just said it because... because I care about you. I wasn't trying to offend you."

"Thank for your concern but it is unnecessary. Especially when it's from you," he clipped. "If you have so much spare time in your hands, why not pay attention to your son? Please watch over him and stop him from doing such despicable things," he continued.

"What?" Laura felt utterly puzzled with his statement. "What do you mean by that?" She was so stunned that she couldn't say anything more but ask.

"Please do me a favor and tell your son that if my great-granddaughter doesn't get better, I will teach him a lesson. You have my word," Arthur said with a hardened expression.

Laura hesitated to answer but she was still confused. "Uncle Arthur, because you're my senior, I greeted you with respect and showed care for your health. But what you're saying is simply unreasonable. How could you ever think that my son would do something terrible to a little girl? Why blame him for your great-granddaughter's illness?"

She gave an ironic smile and continued, "Would you take responsibility for what you've just said?"

Arthur narrowed his eyes and replied, "I will definitely be responsible for what I said. So just tell your son what I said, word-for-word. He'll know what I mean."

After finishing his words, Arthur didn't want to elaborate with Laura any more and directly left the

hospital. And Laura was left no choice but seethe at his annoying words. However, the more Laura thought about his words, the angrier she turned.

A few minutes after her encounter with Arthur, Junia found her. Junia walked over to her in concern.

"Aunt Laura, why did you leave your room again? The doctor said you need to rest. Why do you always ignore the doctor's orders?"

Chapter 750 Discipline Your Son

Junia saw Laura speak with someone she didn't know. However, by the time she had approached

Laura, the man had already walked away. From the vantage point she had while walking in their

direction she could only make out that he was a tall man bathed in mystery. Therefore, she couldn't

help but ask, "Who was that? New friend? Old friend?"

Looking a bit annoyed, Laura quickly answered shortly, "Nobody." Laura was still angry at Arthur's

attitude and in no mood to talk to Junia. Then, her eyes narrowed as she turned to Junia and

demanded with a cold sneer, "Call Anthony to come here. I have something to ask him."

Laura's mind was racing. The more she thought about the things Arthur had said, the more uneasy she

became. Arthur couldn't have simply made some things up. It had to have come from somewhere.

There had to be a good reason. There must be something that she was missing.

After a few attempts to reach Anthony, she turned to Laura. With a cynical smile strewn across her

face, Junia replied, "He still doesn't answer my calls." She said what she could to try to convince Laura

to take it easy. She said, "Laura, I think it would be best if you didn't try to get in contact him just yet.

You just need to focus on taking care of you and recovering. That is more important than anything else

right now."

"Is he still refusing to answer your calls now?" Laura didn't expect that Anthony would still refuse to

answer Junia's calls. She thought he would have calmed down after all these days. After a brief

moment of awkward silence, she anxiously spoke up, "Junia, , We can't just continue to sit here and

wait. Ask the doctor if I can be discharged now. I'm ready to go." Before Junia could say something,

she added, "I must find him now!" Her tone was a bit more stern.

"Aunt Laura, you just have to let these things go sometimes," Junia said. "Anthony is no longer a child.

He can look after himself very well. You just need to take it easy," she added.

"Cut the crap. Just go to the doctor!" Laura had an impatient and semi-aggressive tone that would not

be ignored.

Junia had no choice but to go find and try to compel the doctor, as she was instructed. However, the doctor refused her request. The reason being that he wanted Laura stay in the hospital for another night for observation. But the doctor also said that, as long as all of her test results were good tomorrow, she could leave right after she got the results.

Upon returning to Laura's room, Junia then had to relay the doctor's response and recommendations to her, "Aunt Laura, what's the big deal? So you stay for another night? Whatever you want to say to Anthony, I'm sure it can wait until tomorrow. You shouldn't just leave the hospital before your doctor says it's okay because you want to have a word with him. What do you say?"

Seeing great disappointment in Laura's face, Junia added, "When you've gotten some rest like the doctor asks, your test results should be back to normal. And once that happens, I promise I will take you to see Anthony, okay?" Then, with a huge grin on her face, she added, "Plus, Anthony must still be angry. So how about we just allow him the opportunity to calm down for the whole night? As a matter of fact, giving him this time may also find him in a much more receptive mood. How does that sound?"

When Laura saw how much it really concerned Junia for her to take the doctor's advice, she eventually

accepted the fact that she would have to stay for another night. Yet, part of her, was still worried. With a

sigh, she said, "That's fine. I will do what you and the doctor ask and stay here." Then she added, "But you absolutely must promise me... promise me that you will make sure that you will complete all of the discharge paperwork and protocols tomorrow."

"Don't worry about it. I will be sure to make it my business to do it." Junia nodded her head in acceptance of the agreement.

Laura smiled sarcastically. For she knew that tomorrow would be the day she would find out exactly what terrible thing Anthony had done that had made Arthur as infuriated as he had been.

If she found out that it was Arthur saying horrible things about her son, she would never allow him to continue uninterrupted. She would definitely speak up and defend her son's honor.

Her son was a good man. He was not one that Arthur could easily speak ill of.

The next morning, Laura made sure that she got up early and impatiently urged Junia to complete the discharge paperwork and protocols.

Having to stay in the hospital that night was a little boring for Junia. During the course of the night

before, she had already put her best foot forward as far as dealing with Laura. She had been more

tolerant and patient than she thought she could be with this woman who actually had nothing to do with

her at all. The only thing she wanted to do was to return Laura to Anthony. From now on, whatever

Anthony said, she would not look after Laura again.

After finishing the formalities, Junia took Laura to Anthony's house. But when they arrived and knocked

on the door, there was no answer. They continued knocking for quite some time, but there was still no

answer.

When they continued to get no answer, Laura decided to try to call up, but even there she was still

getting no answer. Laura glanced at Junia with pure concern on her face and asked, "Why didn't

Anthony answer when either of us called?"

Beneath her furrowed brow, Junia said, "Your guess is as good as one at this point." She thought about

what would happen if he didn't show up eventually. She even considered calling the cops to report him

as missing, if he didn't show up soon. Was she supposed to continue to keep looking after his mom?

"I guess there is no one in there. Is it more likely than not, that he has gone out. Don't you think?" Junia

inquired.

But Laura, with a forceful tone, replied, "There's no way. That's impossible."

With knitted brows, she added, "If he has come out, he would have let me know. Junia, you have told me that he wasn't here the last time you stopped by here, right?"

"Yes," Junia said, nodding slightly. She then stated in a calm voice, "Plus, he even didn't answer my calls."

"Okay, I've got it," Laura said. She believed she had an answer in her mind. Then she smiled sarcastically and said confidently, "I always know that Sheryl couldn't give up my son so easily. I'm fairly certain that they must be together these days."

"Is that even possible?" Junia said in disbelief. She creased her brows and commented, "From what I saw of Sheryl's attitude last time, I don't think Sheryl would be partial to tell lies."

"You must be blinded by her feigned innocence," Laura said as she shook her head. She smiled ironically and continued, "I have seen too many women like Sheryl. She put forth a great deal of effort to gain Anthony's affections. So, how could she just let him go so easily? Yes, at first glance, she said

that she had broken up with my son, but actually she is still making an effort to try to keep him. I believe that wherever she is, there we will also find Anthony. Now, if she were to get pregnant later on, at that point, I couldn't definitively say no in terms of letting her into our family."

"Is it..." Junia hemmed and hawed. "Is that even a possibility?" With creased brows, Junia inquired.

"That is definitely possible," Laura smiled emphatically as she answered. "Junia, do you remember the last time you followed Anthony? Just bring me to that place and I will teach that woman a lesson,"

Laura said grimly with a hardened expression.

"But..." Junia narrowed her brows and hesitated for a while, taking deep breaths trying to find something to dissuade her aunt from doing this.

Laura interrupted Junia's pause, "Stop stalling. Get a move on it. Let's get there. The sooner the better." Laura narrowed her eyes and added, "I also know that you don't want to have to accompany me any more. I will let you go about your day. But first, I need you take me to find that woman."

Hearing Laura's words, Junia felt too embarrassed to refuse Laura anymore. So she said nothing and headed in the direction to take Laura to see Sheryl.

Meanwhile, at the hospital, Shirley was also getting discharged.

Charles had originally planned to drive Sheryl home, but Sheryl declined and said, "Oh no. Don't worry yourself about it. I'll be fine. You and Charlie have already been here in the hospital for the last two days. You should just take Charlie back and get some rest."

In a hushed tone, Charles said, "I'm fine, don't worry. I can drop you off on my way home. And I will not go upstairs because I know Shirley needs a good rest right now. Then I will bring Charlie back."

Seeing that she couldn't change his mind anymore than he could change hers, Sheryl had no choice but to accept his offer.

After getting everyone into his car, Charles proceeded to drive Sheryl and Shirley back home. Upon reaching their home, he helped them to the door before returning to his car. He only started his car and left after he saw that they were both safely tucked away in the building.

At that precise moment, Junia and Laura happened to be have been waiting for them for a long time. It was Laura who saw Anthony's car first. Then, with a sarcastic smile, she said, "You see the car, right? See I just knew he must be going there to see that bitch."

Junia tried to provide some kind of objective perspective and give Sheryl the benefit of the doubt by

adding, "Isn't it possible that there is some kind of misunderstanding here? Maybe there is more going on than you know..." However, Laura, not wanting to hear anything that may have sounded like an excuse for Sheryl, insisted on dealing with her own opinion as if it were a fact. She said, "You just wait and see. I will show you what kind of person that bitch is and teach her a lesson."

But Laura's words just disgusted Junia. Whatever Sheryl had done, the Xiao family was still a decent family. Laura kept on referring to Sheryl as a bitch, which Junia felt was extremely vulgar.

"Aunt Laura, why not just let her go?" Junia creased her brows as she gently advised her. All the while, Junia kept hoping she would take her advice. "Plus, there are so many apartments here. The reality of the situation is that I don't even know which house Sheryl is living in. How could we know which one so that we choose the right room number?" Junia added.

With a sarcastic smile, Laura said, "I will wait for them to show up then, since I don't know the room number." Laura narrowed her eyes and added, "I don't believe they can stay in the house and never go out."

"Aunt Laura, do you really believe that what you are doing right now is really necessary?" Junia narrowed her brows as she completed her inquiry. "Anthony is a grown man. He knows what he should

be doing and what he should steer clear of. And he can make decisions himself. You always insert yourself in his affairs like this. Eventually he is going to get tired of this and then he's going to tell you about it. Why do you take it upon yourself to do so?" Junia added.