

Wedded Bride 751

Chapter 751 Inopportune Rendezvous

"No!" Laura aggressively told Junia, "No matter how old he is, in my eyes, he will always be my son.

His future is my responsibility and I can't watch him waste his life with such a woman. Absolutely not!"

Then, from the corner of her eye, Laura caught a glimpse of Sheryl coming in with Shirley. She rushed

straight up to her and began accusing, "Sheryl Xia, you leech! Tell me! Where are you hiding my son?"

Shirley got scared at the sight of the angry woman and hid behind Sheryl. Seeing this, Sheryl clenched

her fists with anger trying to control herself.

She then crouched down, holding Shirley in her arms tightly and comforting her with a soft voice, "Don't

be afraid, Shirley. You're safe; mommy is here..."

Even so, the little girl was still shaking with fear.

Seeing her daughter so terrified, Sheryl almost yelled back at Laura but then bit her tongue just in time,

thinking it would only scare Shirley even more.

Hiding Shirley behind her back, Sheryl addressed Laura, "I haven't hidden your son anywhere. I've

already said that he and I have nothing to talk about. Please don't bother us any longer. I want nothing

to do with you nor your son."

"Don't play dumb with me!" shouted Laura. With a sneer, she continued, "Anthony wouldn't just disappear like that. You're keeping him away from me."

Convinced of her deduction, she inched closer to Sheryl and went on, "You have no shame. You act as if you're separated from Anthony when, in fact, you're just trying to get rid of me. I am his mother; you have to tell me where Anthony is!"

"I already told you that I don't know where Anthony is!" Sheryl exclaimed in frustration. She didn't really care whether Laura believed her or not. She just wanted to be left in peace. She also didn't care where Anthony was either. Shirley was her only concern at that time.

Laura was scaring her and Sheryl couldn't stand seeing her daughter like that.

Eventually, she decided to hold Shirley in her arms and leave. However, Laura prompted her body in front of the elevator and would not let them pass. Annoyed, Sheryl asserted with a stern face, "Excuse me!"

Her expression alarmed Junia, who immediately tried to plead with Laura, "Forget about it, Aunt Laura.

I don't think Miss Xia knows where Anthony is. You ran into her by accident and she was alone. So let

them go please."

But Laura wouldn't budge. She began shouting, "They may not be together now, but this bitch knows the whereabouts of my Anthony. Besides, his car is still outside; so he is definitely at her house."

"Don't push me," stated Sheryl firmly. Her patience was running really low. She stared right at Laura reiterated, "As I said, I have no idea where he is. If you don't let us go, I will call the police."

"Fine, call the police!" Laura insisted. Waving her hands through the air frantically, she added, "Call quickly! When the police get here, I will tell them that you are hiding my son and ask them to arrest you.

Shameless bitch!"

"You!!!" Sheryl said stepping toward Laura. Their faces were just inches apart. In spite of her anger, she eventually contained herself and turned away.

She was worried about Shirley and decided to simply ask Laura, "What do you want in order to let us go?"

"Very simple, give me my son!" she answered. Sheryl rolled her eyes and began pacing frustratingly.

Seeing her, Laura commented, "I do not believe any of your words. You have to sign a written declaration that you have not and will not have any contact with Anthony anymore. In addition, you

must verbally break up with Anthony in front of me. Understand?"

"That's ridiculous!" Sheryl revolted. She couldn't believe Laura's irrational attitude.

As if her request wasn't enough, she started threatening too, "Or else you are not going home today!"

She then blocked the elevator doors, crossing her arms and holding her chin up expectantly.

Sheryl was barely holding it together. If Shirley were not there, she would not be so calm. She thought

about calling Nancy and asking her to take Shirley home. Suddenly, Arthur's voice resonated from

behind her, "What in the world are you doing?"

Sheryl finally felt a sense of relief. She turned back and saw both Arthur and Amy coming her way.

Amy walked quickly to her and asked, "Are you all right?"

"I'm fine," Sheryl answered briefly. She didn't want to get into details at that point. All she cared about

was Shirley. Tilting her head slightly towards the little girl, Sheryl let Amy know that she was terrified.

The girl's face provoked a strong reaction for Amy. "Poor kid; she doesn't deserve going through all of

this at her age."

After a few seconds of confusion, Laura finally mumbled, "Uncle Arthur..." Worried about his judgment,

she took a few quick steps towards him and began inquiring, "What are you doing here?"

Arthur simply replied, "That's what I just asked you. Why are you here?" It was difficult for Laura to figure out what he was thinking as his face was indecipherable.

"Me?" she decided to question rhetorically, unsure what else to say. She then glanced at Sheryl and eventually requested, "Uncle Arthur, please leave this matter alone."

Seeing that Arthur would not be easily convinced, she explained, "After what you said yesterday, I decided to talk with Anthony and find out why you were mad at him. But he is nowhere to be found. So I am here to find out from this bitch where he is."

Sheryl kept quiet, comforting Shirley in her arms and pretending not to hear Laura.

That only made her angrier, and eventually she exploded, "Stop putting on an act! If you don't let Anthony go, you will have to deal with me!"

"Who do you think you are to talk to her like that?" Amy interrupted her. She was about to teach her a lesson herself.

However, Laura immediately adopted a guilty face and pleaded, "Aunt Amy, you don't know this woman."

She is pretending to be all innocent, caring for her child while using Anthony. No good man should ever get involved with such a woman. If there were no problem with her, why would she still be single now? It's obvious she's just looking for a father for her child. She knows I'm right, so she doesn't even dare to argue against me."

Laura paused for a few seconds to let her points sink in and then went on, "Anthony was a doctor. Of course she would be all over him. He even quit his job as a doctor to be with this bitch and offered to raise her daughter. As his mother, I can't ever agree to that."

Laura directed her eyes to Amy and started persuading her, "Aunt Amy, you are a mother, too. If you were me, would you allow your son to marry such a woman? This woman is of the lowest class. An educated man like Anthony should only wed a woman of equal status."

"Equal status?" exclaimed Amy laughingly. She looked Laura straight in the eyes and then questioned

her, "So, you think that you and Anthony are better than our Sheryl?"

Chapter 752 Anthony Was Still Here

"Of course," Amy retorted. Laura was fuming mad. She failed to notice the underlying meaning behind

Amy's words. And in a voice full of derision, she continued to lash out, "I have known many girls like

her. Girls who are ambitious enough to dream of marrying into rich families. Ha! But I'm not stupid. And

I will never allow her to be a member of our family."

Then she hastily turned towards Arthur. She tried to squeeze her way past him and said, "Uncle Arthur, move aside, please. I'll teach that bitch a lesson."

"Don't you dare?" Arthur, who was enraged by the sudden outburst of Laura, stood firmly to block

Laura's way. His face was emitting a strong sense of total displeasure and he said in a cold tone, "I

won't let go of you if you dare lay a finger on her."

"Uncle Arthur?" Taken aback, Laura stared incredulously at Arthur. She could faintly discern that

something was off and asked, "What do you mean?"

Holding Laura's bewildered expression, Arthur sneered. And he reminded her, "I've warned you

yesterday to mind your son. But obviously, you paid no attention at all. You just let it slide and went too far."

Arthur, who was still looking at her with open disdain, contemptuously continued, "Don't worry. It

doesn't matter if you hate, loathe or detest my Sheryl. She feels quite the same way towards your son

too. We don't know where Anthony is, but if you'd find him one day, please tell him I want to talk with

him!"

"Your Sheryl?" she asked unwittingly. Laura seemed to have caught up something from Arthur's words.

Still dumbfounded, she asked Arthur in complete astonishment, "What do you mean? You and Sheryl...

What's your relationship?"

"She is my granddaughter," he curtly replied. His voice sounded warm but with an imposing tone.

Arthur, who still couldn't contain the revulsion of disgust, continued to glower at her. And he muttered,

"The bitch you referred to is my granddaughter!"

"How... how can it be possible?" Laura stammered in shock. Her mind was in total mess. "Her last

name is Xia, but yours is Zhao. So how can it be possible?" she asked pressing for an answer.

"It's none of your business. Suffice to say that it's something you need not know," he said cutting her

words off. Arthur gave her an icy-cold stare and menacingly mouthed, "Don't be afraid that Sheryl will

marry your son. He is not rich enough to suit her. If you dare speak ill of Sheryl again, I will teach you a

lesson. And you'll live to regret it."

When everything had dawned on her, Laura was rooted to the spot. She was stunned. She stood

transfixed for a brief moment and was unable to move. Her face showed conflicting emotions. Never did she expect that Sheryl was Arthur's granddaughter.

Deep regrets clouded her mind. If she had known from the start, she wouldn't be that harsh towards Sheryl. And now, Arthur was extremely displeased with her. She felt so mortified.

"I didn't mean that, Uncle Arthur," she said weakly as she finally gathered her wits to speak up. Laura gave a bitter smile and started explaining to Arthur, "I didn't know she is your granddaughter."

Much to her chagrin, Laura apologized and concluded, "If I knew she is your granddaughter, I wouldn't say such harsh words."

She then turned her gaze towards Sheryl and cautiously said, "Child, we are family. Why didn't you tell me your real identity?"

Sheryl opted to ignore her question. After all, she didn't feel like saying even a single word to her at all.

Seeing Sheryl's indifferent attitude, uncaring towards her, Laura felt more embarrassed.

Then she moved her gaze back to Arthur and said, "I'm sorry Uncle Arthur. It is all my fault. If I only knew she is your granddaughter, I would be polite right there and then and be friendly with her."

She reasoned out to Arthur as she tentatively cast a glimpse at Sheryl. In a slightly pleading tone, she

said, "Let me invite you for lunch. It's my treat. I want to make up for the grave mistake I committed.

Sheryl, you can come too."

Laura said in an imposing and lofty way as she tilted her gaze back to Sheryl. At the back of her mind, she still believed that Sheryl long wanted to be with Anthony. So she safely assumed that Sheryl must still be polite with her.

She watched Sheryl closely and demanded, "Insist with your Grandpa to come with us, for my sake.

And ask him not to be angry at me."

Laura's face blushed out of humiliation. And she gave off an awkward smile. She certainly expected that Sheryl would help her. But Sheryl remained nonchalant with Laura's hypocrisy.

Sheryl felt intensely irritated. She was totally annoyed that she couldn't bring herself to say any good words for her.

"We won't go for the lunch," Sheryl remarked with utter calmness as she permitted herself a small mirthless smile at Laura. "I'm sorry, but I have to decline your invitation. I'm afraid that I'd already lose my appetite knowing that we'd share the table with you. All I wish, for now, is that you stop coming here

and bothering me."

"You.." Laura was rendered speechless by the bluntness of Sheryl's response. Her face contorted in anger but she managed to restrain herself. With refrained emotions, she said, "Sheryl, don't be so stubborn! The honor is yours to be invited to have lunch with me, so don't..."

"I don't feel honored at all much less need it from you," Sheryl immediately countered at her. Her tone was full of indifference.

Hearing those words, Laura couldn't help losing her temper. She completely ignored Arthur, who was standing by near her. She exploded in a fury and yelled at Sheryl, "You are shameless! Let me warn you.."

"What are you accusing of?" Arthur's authoritative voice rang in her ears, interrupting her. He could no longer stand the way Laura had been treating his granddaughter right before his very eyes. "Who is shameless?" he asked in slowly, enunciating each word as he spoke.

The severity of Arthur's voice and demeanor snapped her out of her towering rage. Her body shuddered and in a trembling voice she uttered, "Uncle Arthur, I..."

"Grandpa..." Sheryl prompted. Sheryl started to feel the emotional toll within her. And she didn't want to

prolong the conflict with Laura, so she said to her grandfather, "Don't say anything to her. Shirley should rest now."

"Okay." Arthur relented. Arthur nodded his head in acknowledgement. Noticing the tiredness creeping at his granddaughter's face, he said to Sheryl, "Then go upstairs with Shirley. Have a rest. Let me deal with her."

Laura got impatient and look disgruntled. When she saw Amy and Sheryl making their way towards the stairs, she shouted, "Stop! Don't leave! You must give Anthony back to me, otherwise, I won't let go of you!"

Sheryl was confused about why Laura was still so arrogant even with Arthur's presence. She frowned slightly and asked her, "Why are you so sure that he is in my house?"

"It's quite obvious," Laura replied sarcastically. Laura snorted and added, "During the period that I was in the hospital, he didn't want to visit me, because of you. I went to his house earlier and he wasn't there. So where do you think I expect to find him now? Where else except in your house?"

Laura stood glaring contemptuously at Sheryl and said, "Moreover, I just saw Anthony's car at the front gate of your apartment. So he must be here!"

Laura was adamantly conclusive that her son was at Sheryl's place. Sheryl could discern from Laura's stern expression that she was warning her not to deny it.

With a slight frown creasing on Sheryl's forehead, she paused for a long while taking in for consideration all that Laura had said. She knew Anthony's car was parked outside. She thought that Anthony just left it there, and went home taking a cab. Then as she continued to deduce, a sudden realization hit her that maybe he had never gone straight home since that night.

If he was still here, then there was only one place he could go.

Sheryl put the pieces together to figure out. And she sensed that she knew where he was now.

Chapter 753 You Are Not Qualified

Arthur was extremely morose as he said to Laura, "Stop your nonsense! I've told you that Sheryl has nothing to do with Anthony. What you should be doing is keeping an eye on him. Please keep him away from Sheryl, and I can assure you that Sheryl won't be seeing Anthony again..."

"Grandpa!" blurted Sheryl. She paused for a moment before she continued speaking to Arthur, "I think I know where Anthony is now."

Though Sheryl said it very plainly, Arthur looked astonished, as if he were missing something. Hearing that, Laura sneered, "Well, well, that explains everything."

"Sher, are you sure what you're talking about?" Arthur asked.

"Of course, I am," she answered. Sheryl glanced at Laura and said, "I said that I think I know where he is, it doesn't mean that I'm sure about it, it just means that he's probably there. I can take you there so you can see for yourself, but there is definitely a possibility that you still won't find him there either."

"All right, all right, I get your point," Laura said, impatiently, while not so subtly motioned for her to lead the way.

Of course, Laura didn't believe what Sheryl had said. In her mind, she was absolutely certain that Sheryl knew exactly where Anthony was, but she was just refusing to tell her.

Although she had known Sheryl was Arthur's granddaughter, she still looked down upon her, which was the exact feeling she got when she had first met her. As far as Laura was concerned, Sheryl was lying.

As they walked into the elevator, Sheryl held Shirley in her arms and she could feel her baby trembling.

Sheryl gave her a warm mommy squeeze and kissed her on her squishy, round cheek, Amy looked at

Shirley and said, "Poor girl, why must she go through all of this at her age? She just got out of the hospital! This is too much, for someone so young, to have to deal with already!"

Laura glanced at them, with not one shred of compassion, nothing but malice in her eyes, and sneered,

"Don't be so dramatic! She's just got a little cold. Why do you have to make it such a big deal?"

She seriously thought that there was nothing very wrong with her at all.

But Junia felt very differently. Based on the way Sheryl looked at Shirley, she wore a look of undeniable

fear on her face. How could a common cold be so nerve wrecking for a mother? There had to be

something more. Plus, Shirley did look a little off.

Junia couldn't help herself. She just had to know the truth. So she asked Sheryl what was the real

situation with Shirley.

With distain and loathing, Amy glanced at Laura and said, "Why don't you ask her and her good son

about it? Can you find any young guys who..."

Arthur interrupted, "Come on, that is not an appropriate conversation to have in front of the children.

Okay?"

Amy understood what he meant and respectfully stopped. Laura still sneered at it, but Junia felt more

confused than she had originally been.

Arthur looked at Laura and said flatly, "Whether Sheryl can or can't help you find your son, I'd prefer you to keep a large distance away from us from that point forward. You live your lives and we live ours, and we won't owe each other any more. Okay?"

Laura sneered, "Uncle Arthur, since you have already decided to act like strangers to me, I'm just fine with that." She didn't have to be polite to Arthur any more since he had told her that he didn't like Anthony at the beginning and wanted to sever any ties with them.

The fact of the matter was, that he was just the friend of her departed father-in-law, after all, so there was no reason for her to associate with him anymore.

So Laura smiled coldly and said, "Very good, then. I can make sure that Anthony won't go to see Sheryl. Now, if only she can stay away from him. You have my word."

With the ding of the elevator, the door opened. Sheryl walked out of the elevator first, with Shirley still in

her arms. Amy was wondering if Sheryl would take Laura to her apartment, so she asked her, "Sher, where are you taking her to? Anthony isn't in your room, is he?"

Sheryl ignored Amy and turned to face Laura saying, "Wait here for a second. I'll be right back.

And then she took Shirley back inside so she could get some rest. Upon returning to the group, she turned to Sue's apartment and rang the bell.

Sue called from behind the closed door, "Who is it?"

"It's me, Sheryl," Sheryl answered.

Anthony had been there for a little while. He was making lunch. He kept trying to erase the memory about what had happened that night, but the throbbing pain that he still felt from the wound on his head

made it extremely difficult to do so.

He had to force himself to think about something other than Sheryl. But, all of a sudden, he could hear that Sheryl was just outside the door of the very space that he was occupying. What should he do? He was caught so off guard that he dropped the spatula onto the floor, leaving a splatter of what he was making on everything it hit on the way down.

Sue smiled pitifully when she saw the anxious clumsiness that Anthony exhibited at just the mere sound of Sheryl's voice.

She was very well aware that she couldn't compete with or replace Sheryl forever. Even if for the moment, it was her that Anthony was with. She knew that Sheryl was the only one that mattered most in his heart.

She glanced at Anthony and said, "I think you'd better move to somewhere that you can't be seen. It's probably better for you if you find someplace to hide for a moment."

Coming back to his senses, Anthony quickly took off that apron, picked up the freshly fallen spatula off the floor, stealthily wiped up the splatters left behind, and turned to quietly address Sue, "Okay, whatever you do, please don't tell her that I'm here."

Sue looked at him, smiled sweetly with compassion in her eyes, and nodded.

After Anthony was well out of sight, in her bedroom, Sue slowly walked over to open the door. She froze when she saw that Sheryl was not by herself. She saw that there were five people standing in front of her.

"Sheryl, what are you..."

"How is your foot feeling now?" Sheryl interrupted her.

Sue paused for a moment and she got her bearings. "Yes, I've been feeling a bit better and you..."

Sheryl interrupted her again, "Are you cooking now? You seem a little off, are you sure you're okay?"

Sheryl glanced at Sue and sneered. She knew that Sue didn't know how to cook. When she stepped into the room, she didn't see any fast food boxes, but she smelled the distinct aroma of a delicious meal being made from scratch, coming from the kitchen.

So that gave her the feeling that she was pretty sure that Anthony was there.

Sue was very clear about the possibility of what could happen if she found out that it was Anthony who had been cooking. Sheryl used to be her close friend, after all, so they knew each other pretty well.

The tension in the room was so tense that she could almost taste it. She wanted nothing more than to make the awkwardness go away. Thinking as quickly as she could, she managed to say, "I'm making lunch out of a new cookbook I found."

"Really?" Sheryl asked with peaked interest. "I assumed that you had asked somebody to make lunch for you. I remember that you have never cooked before."

"You're right. Not before today. However, once I saw the cookbook I figured I would give it a shot today." Feeling at least a little pride at how she covered that up effortlessly made her smile to herself

before remembering the matter of Anthony hiding in her bedroom. With the reality of the situation setting back in, Sue was nervous and prayed to herself that Sheryl bought her story. But suddenly she realized that she couldn't allow her to control the conversation this way in her own home. She frowned and asked Sheryl, "What are you doing here? What is the reason for you to think it is okay to just invite so many people to come over to my place without letting me know?"

Laura looked at them with a half smile and said, "Well, well. Sheryl, I'm a little confused. You said that you would take me to see my son, but why do you bring us here?"

Oh, as far as I know, your apartment is not too far from here, right? Why don't you take us to go see if he's in your room?"

"Shut up! You want to go and see if you can get to my room on your own?! Go ahead and try... I DARE you!!" Sheryl said through gritted teeth.

She took Shirley back home so as to avoid her having to be exposed to that foolishness and not being able to rest, but Laura wanted to look for her son in her apartment. How could she let Shirley be disturbed again? She was not going to let anyone, least of all, Laura, make her child couldn't get the

rest she needed to recover. As a mother, it was her job to protect her kid! And damn it all, she was going to do just that. If protecting her daughter meant fighting the whole world and even dying, she would do it happily.

Everyone was shocked by what Sheryl had said, especially Sue.

Sheryl was always kind, quiet and soft. In the time she had spent as her best friend, she had never seen Sheryl like that.

"What are you talking about?" Laura was sullen. "Do you have any idea who you're talking to?"

"Is that something I should be aware of?" Sheryl turned to Laura, and in a solid, firm tone, she said, "I don't need to know who you are, you're just a nobody to me. Why don't you just stop acting like one of my elders, because you're not qualified to do so."

Hearing that, Laura froze in her tracks.

Chapter 754 Crossing The Line

Sheryl was done with all of it. Laura had been pestering her for far too long, and if she could only get a hold of Anthony, she wouldn't have to deal with it anymore.

She turned to Sue and said, "I know Anthony's at your place. Please just tell him I need to speak to him."

Sue didn't know much about the Laura issue. All she knew was that Anthony didn't want to see Sheryl

at all, so she plastered on a crafted, innocent expression. "Don't be silly. Anthony is your boyfriend.

Why would he be in my house?"

Sheryl's jaw tightened. "Stop pretending." "Sue, we used to be good friends. I don't care what you and

Anthony do together, that's your business. Right now, I just need to find him and have him sort things

out with his mother so that they'll leave me alone. I just want to be with my daughter as soon as

possible."

It was quite a plea, but Sue remained stubborn. "I told you. He's not here." She wasn't certain about

Sheryl's motives. But judging from the people coming with her, there must be something bad. She

would not sell Anthony.

"So? Will you let me see him?" Sheryl's expression turned hard, and determined. "Or should I just go in

and find him myself?"

The words ticked Sue off. "Excuse me?" She stepped forward in warning. "Don't go overboard, Sheryl.

This is my home. You have no right to come barging in when you want to."

The smile on her face was quite hostile. "You're his girlfriend," she taunted, "he's missing, and this is where you look for him? You're being ridiculous."

Something snapped in Sheryl, and that wasn't lost on the other woman. "Sue," her voice went dangerously low. "You'd better bring him out here, right now, or you're not going back in that house with your face in order." Sue could hear the deep anger in her voice, but she resisted.

Sheryl took a deep breath to calm herself, and yelled, "Anthony, get out here now! You think you can get away with what you've done without facing the consequences? Be a damn man and sort this out yourself. I'm not going to keep fixing the mess you've made."

Anthony was hidden away in Sue's bedroom, trying not to listen to what was going on outside. But he couldn't ignore Sheryl's raised voice.

A wry laugh escaped him. He wanted to explain himself to Sheryl and make it right. He weighed his options in his head, and he knew that it would be a bad time to come out.

If he proved Sheryl right and came out of Sue's bedroom, it would mean a definite end to their relationship.

To Anthony's mind, it was just a little spat with his girlfriend. Once she calmed down, they could go back to normal.

His head was full of excuses, trying to justify himself, so he wouldn't dare come out and ruin their relationship for all those years.

While he was lost in his own thoughts, the door burst open with a loud thump. It was Sheryl. He was stunned frozen in his place.

The shame took over him. "Sher, I..."

"I don't care," Sheryl cut him off. When she pushed past Sue and walked into her bedroom, she was not at all surprised to find Anthony there.

"I'm not here to deal with you. Someone's looking for you, and I need you to sort things out with her so she'll leave me alone."

She turned around to someone Anthony couldn't see. "Just get in. You're looking for him, aren't you?"

When Anthony took a step forward, he wasn't pleased about the surprise. Laura and Junia were standing just outside. "What are you doing here?"

Even with her feet getting better, Sue had to limp back to her bedroom when they burst in. She couldn't

stop them. "Are you serious? This is my damn house!"

When no one responded, she shoved Laura back. "Get out for Christ's sake!"

"Who the hell do you think you are?" Laura didn't even budge. She smirked at her. "I'm looking for my son, here. You think you can stop me?" Laura's words were furious.

Sue was stunned silent.

This woman was Anthony's mother. 'What have I done?' Her thoughts started racing. She had just offended her future mother-in-law.

Paying no more mind to Sue, Laura went over to Anthony's side. She looked at the gauze on his forehead and was filled with concern. "My dear, what happened? Why..." she began. "Why are you injured?" Her concerned tone turned a tad angry. "Did someone do this to you?"

She couldn't worry too much about anything but her son's health.

She moved in closer to reach for him, but Anthony noticed and moved out of her way. He didn't want his mother there. "I'm fine. Why are you here?"

"I'm looking for you," Laura replied. Arthur's words suddenly came to her mind, and she asked with a

frustrated expression, "Uncle Arthur, I have my son here now. Could you repeat what you said? Now that everyone's here, you can deal with my son."

Arthur, however, was quite done with it. Without a second thought, he blew Laura off and turned to Sheryl instead. "Sher, we should head back now. Shirley is waiting for us."

Sheryl nodded, feeling some relief to get out of there. Before leaving, she turned to Laura. "I found your son for you. You'd better remember what you promised me. I don't appreciate those who break their promises to me." Her words were subtly threatening.

Sheryl usually respected elders very much, but Laura was not worthy of her respect. Laura had gone way too far. She was like a child throwing a tantrum, and it put everyone around her in distress.

In spite of what Sheryl said, Laura called her out as she walked away. "Stop right there. Have I allowed you to leave?"

She then went to pull Sheryl back by her arm. "I told you before, you have to break up with Anthony in front of me, and guarantee on paper that you're never to see him again. This was your promise. You'd better do what I ask, otherwise your daughter will suffer," she added viciously.

Perhaps Laura didn't realize that threatening Shirley was beyond any threat she could make to her, and

Sheryl went livid.

"What..." she said dangerously slowly. "What did you just say?"

Laura's expression went cold. "I said..." "That's enough!" Anthony stopped her.

He glared at his mother in disbelief. "Haven't you had enough, mom?"

He laughed, almost hysterically, in defeat. There was no more hope for him, after all that had happened. He would never be with Sheryl again.

His mother didn't know how dear Shirley was to Sheryl. She didn't know that Sheryl would die for her daughter, that she was more of a mother than Laura could ever be to Anthony, and he knew that she crossed a very dangerous line when she threatened Sheryl's daughter.

And yet, Laura thought she could use Shirley to get to Sheryl and come out of this situation unscathed.

How stupid Laura was!

Chapter 755 That's enough!

"Haven't I had enough?" Laura repeated Anthony's question in an angry tone. She couldn't believe that her son would think she was being unreasonable. Laura got infuriated when she heard what Anthony said. She didn't think that Anthony would still stand by Sheryl, no matter what happened! Now, not only

did he ignore her feelings, he had condemned his own mother! She sneered and said, "What has gotten into you? I'm doing it all for your own good. How can you blame me for that?"

"That's enough!" Anthony shouted. He didn't think that he was wrong, either. "You keep saying that you did that just for me, but do you really know what's good for me? Do you know what I really want?" he asked. His tone was cold and clipped. "All you've given me are material things I don't want. From my childhood until now, you've meddled with my decisions. You controlled everything. You made decisions for me without even considering what I would feel. Those decisions were made for your own good, not mine!"

Anthony was fuming. It seemed that all his feelings bottled up inside of him all those years, being under his mother's control, took over and just blew up. "You..." Laura began. But she, too, was too angry to continue.

Sheryl was standing near them, silently watching everything. "I don't want to be involved in your problems. Anthony, please take care of your mother. But make sure she stays away from me or you won't like what I'll do."

Even though Sheryl tried her best to be polite with her statement, Laura still thought she was looking

down at her. Laura demanded that Sheryl apologize for speaking to her so arrogantly, but failed, as

Sheryl had no intention to continue their conversation. With Arthur and Amy, Sheryl left Sue's house.

Amy could no longer contain her anger towards Laura. How could she talk that way to such a nice

person like Sheryl? "Laura has gone too far today," Amy said. "It was not your fault! How could she

blame you? Sher, don't be afraid of her. If she dares to trouble you again, call me and I'll help you take

care of her."

Still reeling from what had happened, Amy remained angry. It was all because of Anthony, she thought.

"And if Anthony dares to come after you again, you must call me, too. I'll help you take care of him as

well."

"Thanks, Grandma Amy. I know you care about me so much. But trust me, and let me handle this

myself," Sheryl assured her. "Now I just hope they will never bother me again. If they would just leave

me alone," Sheryl said what she really wanted. She didn't want anything to do with them anymore.

"I agree. You would be so much happier without them," Arthur agreed. He said to Sheryl, "I really don't

know why Anthony has changed so much. But if Graig were still alive and he saw this, he might die out

of anger."

Sheryl didn't want to think about Anthony anymore, and why he had changed into a person she couldn't recognize. From now on, she wouldn't care. It was none of her business. All she wanted now was to go home and be alone.

Junia saw that Laura was finally with Anthony, so she decided to leave. "I feel better now that you're with Anthony, Aunt Laura. I should probably get going. I have a flight back at 2 p.m., so it's time for me to leave."

Junia couldn't help reminding Anthony, "Aunt Laura has been in the hospital for a long time. She's not in very good health. I know you are angry now, but be careful what you say. Don't let her get angry anymore."

Junia left right after, leaving the room with only three people — Laura, Anthony, and Sue.

At first, Sue was very eager to meet Laura, but she did not expect that they would meet during such a situation. She was not prepared at all. 'Will she like me? What will she think of me? What can I do if she doesn't like me?' Sue had a lot of questions. She was so nervous to meet Anthony's mother.

She went to the kitchen and turned off the gas stove. She then prepared some fruit and tea for them.

She tried her best to be polite and act composed in front of Laura. "Aunt Laura, please sit down and have some snacks. Make yourself at home." Sue smiled at her, trying to make a good first impression.

It was only during this time that Laura noticed Sue who was standing by her side. She glanced at Sue and studied her. She found her good looking but not as natural and graceful as Sheryl. She really didn't understand her son's taste. Why did he date a girl who was less graceful than the last?

"You are?" Laura asked Sue, not bothering to hide her condescending tone. She found no reason to act differently towards Sue.

Sue just wanted to introduce herself, but Anthony stopped her. He glanced at Sue, with no hint of his feelings for her in his eyes, and said lightly, "She is just my friend." He avoided Sue, unwilling to look her in the eyes.

'Friend? Is that all?'

Sue couldn't help but think so after what he said. She smiled bitterly, constantly wondering what she ever meant to him.

After all the time they had spent together, she had hoped that he'd say at least that they were lovers.

She had no idea that deep in his heart, she was just a friend to him. A friend! Was she that kind of friend he could easily have sex with?

Sue felt dizzy. She didn't want to be with Anthony and Laura, and lose control of her emotions. So she stood up, needing to leave the room. "I'm not feeling well. I'll just get some rest," she told Laura and Anthony. "Please make yourselves at home and go on talking."

She excused herself and went to her bedroom. As her door closed, Anthony realized he had said something that upset Sue.

He felt bad and wanted to make it up to Sue. But his mother was still here, and he didn't want to confront Sue in front of her.

He wondered whether his mom would treat Sue as badly as she treated Sheryl if she knew the nature of their relationship. He didn't want the same thing happen again.

Even though Sheryl looked poised and soft-spoken, she had never let anyone bully her. She fought back as best as she could. Sue was different. If she was bullied, she would have no idea how to approach the situation and face the difficulties.

So for Sue's own good, he felt that it would be better for him to keep this matter a secret for the time

being. The less his mother knew about their relationship, the less harmful it would be for Sue.

"What the hell is going on with you?" Laura asked. Laura knew her own son well. She knew him so well that she knew he was lying about his relationship with Sue. Despite what he might think, she couldn't be fooled so easily. She had just found his clothes strewn on the balcony. If they were truly just friends, what reason would they have to live together?

She looked at Anthony with reproach and said, "Oh, don't make a fool out of me, Anthony. At least you have the courtesy to tell me the truth. Who is that girl to you?"

"We are just friends," Anthony repeated. "What do you want me to say, Mother? That we're lovers?" he asked. Anthony took a deep breath, trying to hold his anger in, but he had fed up. "Why won't you trust me? What else do you want me to say? Do you so desperately want me to admit that she's my girlfriend?"

Hearing her son's frustration, Laura backed away. "All right. All right. You don't have to be so angry."

Laura held her hands up in surrender. She didn't want to fight with Anthony about this anymore. She hadn't even dealt with Sheryl yet. And now, there was her problem with Sue. With how things were

going, she had to worry about her son her entire life.

"Remember what you told me today, Anthony," she pointed out. "So don't come home, going around, telling everyone that she's your girlfriend. I'm telling you, this girl is not good for you. Sheryl might even be better than her. Even though Sheryl was once married, at least she runs in the same social circle as us, unlike this Sue."

"That's enough!" Anthony shouted. He frowned at her and continued, "Haven't you said enough? And can you actually hear yourself? When I was with Sheryl, you were so convinced she was bad for me and now you're saying that she's not? What do you really want, Mother?"

"I... I don't want anything." Laura pulled her lips into a thin line and continued, "I just don't want any of those two girls for you. Whatever fun you're having with Sue, I hope you know enough to not take your relationship seriously. Do you understand?" Laura knew that these girls just didn't deserve her son.

Anthony couldn't help but smile bitterly. He knew what Laura really thought of Sheryl and Sue, so he went along with it. "Wow, Mother. If I didn't know any better, I'd actually think you're quite open-minded." Laura's eyes narrowed. "Is that supposed to be a joke?"

Don't ridicule me like that. And besides, all I'm saying is that you're not bound to lose anything if you

just treat your relationship with either of these girls as child's play."

"Enough!" Anthony felt upset and frustrated, knowing that he could never understand what was going on in his mother's head. "Why have you come here anyway? If you have nothing nice to say, you should go home now."

"But what about you? Why don't you come back with me?" said Laura worriedly. She added, "It's impossible for you and Sheryl to be together again. And I don't think you and this girl can have a happy ending either. What's the point of you staying in this city now? Why don't you just quickly pack your bags and come with me?" Laura didn't even bother to hide her eagerness, trying to get her son to come home with her.

Chapter 756 He Had No Answer

"I'm not leaving," Anthony said with furrowed brows. "Just go back. I know what I'm doing," he continued, trying to urge Laura.

While they were arguing, Laura received a call from Carlson. Yet she was shocked to hear him shouting at her over the phone, telling her that he had a flight in the afternoon and would be arriving in Y City soon.

As the call ended, Laura stared at her cell phone in shock. She wasn't even able to say a word and started doubting if the caller was actually her husband.

For years since she got married to Carlson, he has always been kind to her and never got angry with her. Today was the first time she had ever heard him get angry, much less be mad at her.

"Now, it seems neither of us need to go back. Your father said he will come here in the afternoon,"

Laura said. She looked at Anthony and continued, "Just get ready to pick up your father."

Anthony nodded his head slightly but retained his hardened expression. "Okay. You go ahead and just wait for me downstairs. I need to talk to Sue."

Laura nodded slightly. But she turned to him before leaving. "Make it quick. And if you truly don't love her, just let her know and break up with her. She's not worthy of you," she advised.

Anthony couldn't take his mother's mumbled opinions anymore and eventually had to resort to gently escorting her out the room. He turned to the closed bedroom door in front of him with mixed emotions.

He knocked on the door softly and called out, "Sue, can I come in?"

Anxious, he didn't wait for her to answer and just went in. He saw Sue's frail figure sitting on the bed, lost in her thoughts. While he couldn't see her expressions, he knew that she was sad.

"Don't forget to eat, okay?" he said gently. "I cooked you something. You have to eat it while it's hot."

Anthony kept talking to cut through the silence.

"And you only have a few fruits left in your fridge. Don't forget to stock up.

And there's only a few pieces of your pills left. Remember to get back to the hospital to get checked so you can ask for a prescription," Anthony added, seemingly reminding her of everything he could think of.

Hearing his words, Sue couldn't help but smile wryly. She spoke without turning around, "What are you doing? I've done all these things on my own before, even before we met. I can handle it. You don't have to remind me of every single thing."

"I care about you," Anthony said with a dry smile.

He didn't know exactly what he felt for Sue. All he knew was that he cared about her. He was concerned about her well-being.

"You care about me?" she scoffed. "Why? Are you worried that I would realize that I'm just your plaything? Someone to hang out with when you're bored? And that when you leave and get tired of me,

I'd try to kill myself?" she said sarcastically.

"Sue, don't say that," Anthony said with narrowed brows.

"So what on earth do you want me to do? Just tell me," Sue challenged. She let out a bitter laugh. "You never promised me anything. You were just gonna leave me. Who am I to you? Am I just your friend?

Or your girlfriend? A sex buddy?" she kept asking. "Because honestly, I don't know anymore."

"Don't call yourself that. Please. I just..." Anthony trailed off, really not knowing what to say to make her feel better. He just stared at Sue, not knowing how to answer her questions. He refused to answer because he didn't know how to define his relationship with her.

"I was already holding back. Believe me, I have a lot more terrible things to say," she admitted. When she went into the bedroom earlier, she stood by the closed door and listened to Anthony and Laura's conversation. She was curious of what Laura thought of her. But with Laura's unkind words, she instantly regretted wanting to hear anything at all.

Her strong emotions drove her into saying everything she was thinking of.

She then stood up and walked over to Anthony. "You can leave. I'm not a crazy person who will keep on harassing you. I can just act like I've had a one-night stand with a terrible partner. Now, get out," she

said, her voice filled with a mix of anger and sarcasm.

After saying her piece, Sue felt tears threatening to fall from her eyes. She immediately turned away from Anthony as she allowed the tears to stream down her cheeks. "And once you walk out that door, don't ever come back. I never want to see you again," she said.

"Sue, please. Don't be like this." It broke Anthony's heart to see Sue try to act strong. He knew he hurt her, and that she wouldn't let it show. He glanced at Sue and tried to explain, "My father is coming. I have to pick him up in the airport. Just..." He stopped to gather his thoughts. "When everything's done, when I've fixed things, I will come back to see you, I promise."

As soon as the words left his mouth, Anthony felt a tinge of confusion. Even he didn't understand why he'd make such a promise to Sue. But however or whatever he'd decide their relationship should be, he had to come back and explain things to her, and maybe, say goodbye.

"Anthony..." Sue turned hastily as she heard Anthony open the door. She had a strong feeling that Anthony would never come back if he left this time.

She stared at Anthony with tearful eyes and said, "I know I've always asked this question, and I hope

that by now, you can answer me."

"Okay, go ahead," he urged. Anthony kept his voice calm.

"I..." Sue glimpsed at Anthony awkwardly and hesitated for a second. "I just want to ask you, how do you... how do you define our relationship?" She sighed heavily, finally able to ask that question again.

She didn't know why she was desperate to get an answer. Even if the answer was not what she wanted to, she also would like to know it anyway.

However, Anthony still didn't answer her question directly. "That question," he stammered. "I'll answer that question when I come back."

If he tried to answer now, he didn't know how much he'd mean it or even if he could answer it.

All the mixed emotions he was feeling were overwhelming him. He had so many things to do, and he needed time to figure out their relationship.

He glanced at Sue briefly and said, "I have to leave. Take care of yourself, okay?"

Anthony walked to the door in silence, stepped out, and closed the door gently. As she heard the door click, Sue couldn't help but burst into tears.

Anthony felt his heart break a little, hearing Sue cry from the other side of the door. He nearly went

back in again, just to hold her, but he held back.

He went straight downstairs and out of the house. Laura was standing beside his car, waiting for him.

When Laura finally saw Anthony, she asked, "What took you so long? Was she trying to stop you from leaving?"

"Mom, can you for once stop it with your judgmental antics?" Anthony turned angry. He glanced at Laura, his eyes turned into thin slits in frustration. "You always think that every girl that has ever approached me is up to something. Why are you like this?"

"Well, they've all been terrible, haven't they?" Laura replied. "You are my son. Everything I do is for your own good. I have seen too many girls like Sue. Gold-diggers trying to find their way into rich families like ours," Laura added, her voice filled with arrogance.

Chapter 757 Do You Know What Happened

"Mother, you thought the worst of Sheryl too. You thought she was greedy and after my money. Now you have changed your mind. Do you know the truth now?" Anthony retorted and glared at Laura in contempt. He couldn't understand why his mother had thought poorly of Sheryl. Her perception of Sheryl was baseless and fully wrong. He had been in a relationship with her for three years, yet his

mother never accepted her as her prospective daughter-in-law. 'My mother was not satisfied with Sheryl earlier. Now she thinks Sue is not good enough for me. Who does she want me to marry? In her opinion, no woman in this world is good enough for me,' he thought.

Laura blushed with embarrassment. She forced herself to stay calm. She looked at Anthony and argued, "Sheryl is an exception. She doesn't want your money as she is from a rich family. But even she had ulterior motives. As she has a child she knows it is impossible for her to get married into a rich and powerful family. So she seduced you and you were stupid enough to become involved with her." If Sheryl hadn't had a daughter, Laura might have accepted her in these changed circumstances.

"Enough. We are going to pick up dad, aren't we? Let's go or we will be late," Anthony interrupted Laura's tirade and urged her. He was already fed up of his situation with Sheryl and Sue and Laura's words annoyed him further. He wished his mother would give him some space and stop interfering with his love affairs. He would be grateful if she left him in peace for some time.

When they reached the airport, Carlson's plane had not yet landed. They waited for several minutes and soon Carlson was walking towards them. Carlson's face was gloomy, but Anthony didn't pay much attention to it. He thought his father was tired and probably had a bad flight. He greeted his father with

a smile but Carlson slapped him hard right across the face. Anthony saw stars. Laura was shocked at her husband's behavior.

She screamed as she held onto her husband's arm, "Are you crazy? Why did you slap Anthony? What the hell are you doing? This is a public place and he is a grown man. Have some sense."

"Let go of me. I will beat him to a pulp. Just ask your damn son what he has done. I will teach him a lesson he will never forget today," Carlson furiously pushed Laura away and shouted. He was so ashamed to be blamed by Arthur because of what Anthony had done to Sheryl. Anthony had sunk so low that it was unforgivable. Carlson was tormented after Arthur narrated the whole incident to him.

"Carlson! Let us go home first, shall we? We can talk about whatever has happened once we reach home, okay? People are watching here. It is shameful," Laura scowled and said persuasively. Although she had no idea what had happened and why her husband was furious at their son, she managed to bring him back to his senses for some time at least.

Carlson said in an unfriendly voice to Anthony, "Hurry up and drive. Let's go home. I will teach you a lesson when we reach there." It was impossible for him to forgive his son.

Anthony was completely confused. He thought, 'Why is my father so angry? What did I do? I can't think of what I did wrong.'

On their way home, Carlson and Anthony kept silent. Laura kept asking about what had happened, but got no reply. She tried her best to get Carlson to talk but her effort was useless. As soon as they reached the house, Carlson turned around and slapped Anthony. On seeing this Laura burst out, "What are you doing! Stop it! What has happened to you?"

Carlson, seething with anger, tried to hit Anthony again, but was stopped by Laura. Laura placed herself in front of Anthony and cried, "If you want to hit him again, you have to beat me to death first."

"Laura, you have spoiled Anthony. If you continue spoiling him, he will become a characterless person. He will let you down," Carlson stared at Laura and said with a frown. He threatened Laura to get out of the way not realizing that Laura did not know what their son had done. His whole being was on fire.

The only thing he wanted to do was give his son a good thrashing.

"I don't care. I will always protect him. I am sure he is a good human being. I carried him for nine months. I love him as you never can," Laura said in a sarcastic tone.

Carlson kept quiet. She continued with a sneer, "Has my son murdered someone? Why are you so

angry at him? Why did you slap him? Don't you dare hurt him before you tell me the reason."

"You want to know what happened? Ask him what he has done? Ask him about the wound on his forehead," Carlson glared at Anthony and replied coldly. He found it hard to tell Laura what their son had done. He thought, 'Anthony tried to rape Sheryl. Why did he do such a shameful thing? I will never be able to show my face to Uncle Arthur in the future.'

Carlson's words startled Anthony. He had been injured by Nancy. He felt guilty for his behavior.

Although he was drunk at the time and regretted his indecent behavior, it was embarrassing to tell his parents about the whole sordid incident.

"Wound?" Laura echoed Carlson's word. It was then she realized her son had a wound on his forehead. She gazed at Anthony and asked anxiously, "Oh, my God! What happened? How did you get hurt?"

Laura had noticed Anthony's wound and had asked about it, but Anthony was evasive. As she reached out to check his wound, he moved his head away.

Anthony avoided eye contact and said, "I am okay. Don't worry."

"What happened, Son? Tell me. Don't make me more tense," Laura stared at Anthony anxiously and insisted.

Carlson said contemptuously, "Anthony, just tell your mother how, why and where you got injured."

He sneered, "Now you are ashamed of your behavior. But you didn't feel any shame while stooping so low. Why were you so bold then?"

"Dad..." Anthony whispered. He furrowed his brow and stood still. He was silent for a long time. Then he hung his head in embarrassment and said to Carlson, "I know I was wrong. I shouldn't have done that. I will make up for it."

"Make up for it? What will you do to make up for it?" Carlson said irritably. He was enraged by Anthony's irrational behavior. As he thought of Arthur's accusation, his face turned redder.

"What are you talking about? I am confused. I am not able to follow your conversation. Tell me what happened," Laura asked. She was clueless about what they were talking and was eager to know.

"Tell your mother what you have done. I am so ashamed of you," Carlson ordered impatiently.

After some consideration, Anthony told Laura he had tried to rape Sheryl and that her servant had hurt him to save her. Laura's reaction was so unexpected that Carlson was stumped. She grew even

angrier with Sheryl and cursed her loudly. She didn't blame Anthony at all. Being upset over Anthony's wound she cursed, "What did you say? That damn bitch's servant hurt you? How dare she do that! Wait and see, I'll teach her a lesson." Laura's love was misplaced. Any rational mother would have scolded her son for attempted rape but Laura did not even register the magnitude of it. She didn't realize her mistake. Maybe, in her heart, she didn't care about who was right. All she cared about was the injury sustained by her beloved son.

She looked at Anthony with tears in her eyes and said, "Let me have a look at the cut. Let me change the bandage. Oh, my poor boy! How are you feeling now? Does it hurt badly? Is the wound very deep?" She felt sad and angry at what her son had suffered. She even regarded her son's behavior as normal. She thought, 'They were a couple. It is normal for the man to expect intimacy with his girlfriend.'

Laura's words infuriated Carlson. His heart froze and he yelled at Laura, "Do you know what you are saying? You son did such a shameful thing. His behavior was worse than that of an animal. How can you care about his wound and ignore his mistake?" He looked pale with disgust. He knew his wife

loved their son, but he hadn't expected the love to be so blind and unconditional.

"What do you want me to do? Give him a good beating and then what? I don't care what you think. He

is my son and his well-being is of supreme importance to me. I am worried about his wound and

nothing else!" Laura stated in no uncertain terms. She had loved Anthony more than Carlson ever had.

She didn't mind Carlson ignoring him, and she wouldn't stand by and allow him to beat him up for an

outsider.

She understood that Carlson wanted to maintain a good relationship with Arthur. But Sheryl was

Arthur's granddaughter, not his. She wouldn't allow her husband to beat their son in order to please

Arthur.

"A loving mother always stands up for her son in all the right things. You are a mother with no

standards and are supporting his despicable actions. You have lost all reason," Carlson wagged a

finger at Laura's nose and shouted angrily.

"You are a not qualified as a good father. I had told you several times that Sheryl was not right for our

son. But you chose not to interfere with their relationship. Now your son is hurt and yet you support an

outsider. Are you sure you are a good father? What do you do when your son is bullied? You back up

that Sheryl and promise to teach your son a lesson!" Laura raged. She was terribly upset that Carlson should support an outsider rather than his own son. Although their son had committed a crime, he should still have their support.

"Do you even know what happened? I was on duty when Uncle Arthur called and accused me of bringing up my son with no moral values. If you were in my place, wouldn't you be furious? Your son has committed a grave mistake. He could even be jailed for this if Sheryl complains. You don't even scold him a little and instead blame the girl he tried to rape. Are you in your senses, woman?" Carlson shouted wrathfully. He was extremely agitated and thought Anthony had lost face forever. Laura's blind love and devotion to Anthony made him more vexed.

Chapter 758 Don't Stand In Our Way

"What has he done?" Laura asked aggressively. She stared at Carlson and then asked again, "Didn't you hear what Anthony said? He didn't do anything, yet got hit on the head with a bottle. I let it slide and didn't do anything about it, yet had the audacity to call and complain. What a joke!"

Laura's upper lip curled in disdain as she continued, "What's more, Sheryl and Anthony are dating. It is perfectly normal for them to be intimate with each other. She is definitely not a virgin and has been

sexually active before. Why did she act so modest and prudish in front of Anthony, her own boyfriend?"

Laura was getting more and more worked up. She took a deep breath to calm herself down before

continuing her rant. Glaring at Carlson, she informed him, "I am not going to take any more of this.

They did not suffer any losses but my son has been badly injured." Turning to Anthony, she said in a

softer tone, "Anthony honey, let's get you to the hospital. You need to be examined by a doctor. I'm

worried about you."

She stared at her son for a few beats and said in a rush, her tone getting higher and higher, "If the

doctor doesn't find anything wrong with you, then I will drop this. But if they find even the slightest hint

of problems, I'm declaring war on that family. I will get even with them."

"Are you finished yet?" Carlson bellowed, unable to take it anymore. "Are you really that blindsided?

Don't you realize your son was at fault?" He was determined not to let her make the situation worse.

"Can you just stop putting the blame on others?" he added.

"Really, Carlson? What did he do wrong?" Laura replied sarcastically. "If Sheryl is so modest, then she

shouldn't have agreed to be with Anthony in the first place. After being together for so long, now she

tries to act like a pure woman. What a snake," she said, scornfully.

Laura's harsh, disrespectful words made even Anthony feel sick. He frowned and told his mother,

"Mom, that's enough! I admit, this whole thing was my fault in the first place."

"Darling, don't say that. You didn't do anything wrong," Laura said insistently.

"But I..." stuttered Anthony. He stared at his mother, and was frustrated that he suddenly couldn't find the right words to say.

Carlson gave an irritated snort and interrupted, "Laura, just listen to yourself. You are going to ruin our son someday if you keep babying him like this."

He replayed the call he had received earlier and heaved a huge, helpless sigh as Arthur's words rewinded themselves in his head. It had come as a huge shock to him that his son was dating Arthur's granddaughter.

To Carlson, Arthur was not only a good friend of his father's, but also one of the men he looked up to and respected the most, besides his own father. He was so embarrassed that his son had done such a thing and felt like hiding his face from Arthur forever. Thank God Sheryl hadn't gotten hurt. Shirley, on the other hand, was a whole different story. The poor child!

"Oh, would you stop being such an alarmist, Carlson!" scoffed Laura. She gave her husband a cold glare and continued, "Of course I know the man whom I carried for 9 months. I know him extremely well, much better than you. So good luck waiting for the day I 'ruin his life'."

Anthony frowned and asked his father in a low voice, "Dad, you got the call from Sheryl's grandfather, didn't you? Did he... uhh..." His voice trailed off. "Did he tell you the whole story?" he managed to ask, after clearing his throat a few times.

"That goes without saying," replied Carlson shortly. He laughed and added grimly, "In all my 50 plus years of life, I have never gotten such an earful like that. If he had been standing in front of me, I would have probably dug a ditch to hide in shame."

"You are being way too nice to that old man. Well, I am not going to take any of his blame at all," said

Laura impatiently. She glared at Carlson and growled in dissatisfaction, "I don't see Arthur as a respectable elder. He doesn't even act like one. In no way is he worthy of our respect, especially now that your father is gone. If he calls you again, you pass the phone to me. I'll give him a taste of his own medicine!"

"Mom!" yelled Anthony, half shocked, half frustrated. Frowning so hard, he continued, "Don't be the pot

calling the kettle black. Just take a look at yourself. Are you being a respectable elder to Sheryl? It is no wonder that she is reluctant to show respect to you. Please do some reflection. You know you reap what you sow."

As soon as he finished talking, Anthony turned away from his mother and addressed his father. "Dad, I'm so sorry. Did Arthur mention anything about Sheryl's condition? Is she okay? I'm so worried about her."

Anthony knew that he was in the wrong and had been bathing in shame ever since he had realized what he had done. The guilt made it hard to even imagine meeting Sheryl. He was terrified that she would refuse to accept his apology.

He could only rely on his father to provide the news that would lighten the burden on his chest.

"Of course she is fine," scoffed Laura. "You didn't manage to do anything, did you? She knew you were drunk, yet she let the servant hit you with that bottle. What kind of drastic action was that? It is clear that she doesn't really care about you. What if you'd really gotten hurt?"

Anthony raised his eyebrows at his mother's words, but clenched his jaw to prevent himself from

replying. Both father and son knew it was pointless to keep arguing with the bitter old woman.

Carlson was still for a while, lost in his own thoughts. He seemed to be debating whether or not to tell

Anthony but finally, he said, "Sheryl is fine. Don't worry. But the same can't be said for the girl."

"The girl? You mean Sheryl's daughter? Shirley?" asked Anthony, starting to feel a wave of panic

sinking into his heart. He had never thought that the incident would affect Shirley. He had always

thought of the little girl as his own daughter and hearing that something had happened to her made him

anxious. Knowing the fact that it was caused by none other than himself made him feel like smashing

another bottle onto his own head.

"What's wrong with her? What happened?" asked Anthony, fighting hard to control his emotions. He

looked at his father with bated breath, waiting for his reply.

"I don't know, Anthony," replied Carlson briefly. Carlson frowned slightly, before sighing and continuing,

"From what Arthur said, Shirley seemed to be traumatised after witnessing the events of that night. But

he didn't go into further details so I don't know how serious the issue is."

"Of course he didn't dare to go into details. There's nothing wrong with her!" scoffed Laura again.

Giving a cruel triumphant smirk, she continued, "I saw her just this morning. She seemed perfectly fine.

You two need to stop scaring yourselves. They're just trying to make you feel bad," she finished, in a dismissive tone.

"Laura! That's enough!" thundered Carlson. He could no longer contain the burning fire of rage that kept building every time she opened her mouth. He stuck his finger into Laura's face and growled, "Not another word from you starting from this very moment. Otherwise I'll be sure to make you regret it."

Laura was taken aback by her husband's words since she had never seen him like this before, so she wisely decided to stop talking.

He looked his son and said, "That's exactly why I'm here. I need to go apologize to Arthur. You were obviously in the wrong and we need to go make things right. I'm worried about the little girl too, so this will be the perfect opportunity to go check on her and see if there's anything we can do to help."

"Okay, dad. Understood." Anthony nodded his head once. He continued hesitantly, "Shall we go now, then?"

Anthony's guilt had grown to a mountain size after hearing that Shirley may have been affected. He needed to see for himself that the little girl was okay. He didn't even care how Sheryl would treat him,

and at the moment all he wanted to do was see Shirley's condition. Poor, innocent Shirley!

"You're not going," said Laura firmly. She ran forward and blocked their path. "What's the point of going in unannounced like this? They may not even want to entertain you and chase you away. It is not the right time to pay them a visit."

Carlson stared at his wife incredulously and decided that was enough. He looked straight at her, letting her see the fury in his eyes. "Laura, all this while I've just let you do whatever you pleased and never stopped you from doing what you wanted. This time is different. This is a matter of principle. Anthony was in the wrong and the right thing to do is to go and apologize. You can stay here if you want, but don't try to stand in our way and stop us from going. Be reasonable for once in your life," he said coldly.

Chapter 759 Remorse And Apologies

Carlson stared at Laura for a long while before he finally made up his mind. "If you stop me, I'm going to leave you. Do you understand? I'm not going to tolerate such an unreasonable wife."

Laura was dumbfounded. 'What did he just say?' They may have had their disagreements, but he had never made such a bold declaration like that before. For a moment, all she could do was stare at the man in front of her. It was like all of a sudden, Carlson wasn't the husband she had known for so long.

She could feel something cold from him that she hadn't felt before. He was no longer the man who

always did her bidding.

"So you want to divorce me?" Laura asked, still in disbelief. She couldn't be too sure — maybe Carlson didn't mean it, and maybe it was an impulsive statement. The more she looked into his eyes, the more evident it became how serious he was, and it took her everything to not completely spiral down into panic.

Anthony saw the tension between them, and intercepted, "Alright, that's enough. You're both acting like children. If you don't want to apologize, then that's that. I'll go with dad, and you'll have nothing more to do with it. How's that?"

Laura stayed silent. How did she end up in such a position, she wondered. It was all quite a series of events. Laura was a prideful woman, but she would rather go through it with her son than leave it be.

"No," she sighed in defeat. "I will go with you."

They arrived at Sheryl's place in the evening with all kinds of fruits and tonics as gifts. Arthur and Amy were inside with Sheryl, and were ready to leave when they heard a knock on their door.

Nancy went to greet their guests, but her face went sour when she saw Anthony's face on the other

side of the door. Her demeanor instantly turned unwelcoming, and she turned them away. "What do you think you're doing here? You'd better leave."

"Nancy, I'm just here to see Shirley, I promise. Has she gotten better? Please let me see her," he

pleaded. Anthony knew they had every right to turn him away, but he truly wanted to check on the little girl.

Nancy plastered a bitter smile on her face. "Sheryl and Shirley are completely fine, as long as you stay away from them. They're better off without you bringing your mess into their lives. No one wants to see you." Ready to leave it at that, she moved to close the door.

"Nancy, please." Anthony held it by the edge, desperate to stop her. "I know that I've done wrong. I know I've brought them harm. But please give me a chance to apologize... It means everything to me that they know I'm sorry. That's all. Please don't..." He smiled, and it was a weak smile, but a kind one.

"Please don't shut me out."

Nancy wasn't moved. "We don't need your apology. As long as you leave Sheryl alone, we won't have to shut you out. So go." Her voice was stern.

Observing the whole interaction was Laura, standing behind Anthony, and ready to tell the woman off.

"Who do you think you are, bitch? My son has come all the way down here to apologize, what more do you want?" Her arrogance was surfacing without limit. "If you have any good sense, get Sheryl out here now, or I'm teaching you a lesson."

Nancy just smirked at them. "You stupid woman. You have no right. What makes you think you can demand for Sheryl to see you? Let alone listen to your lame excuse for an apology?" Laura looked ready to pounce on her, when they all heard a voice from inside the house.

"Nancy, what's taking you so long? Who's that at the door?" It was Sheryl. She wondered what could've been holding her up for so long.

Not wanting Sheryl to come out and see their visitors, Nancy hastily called back, "It's no one! I'm coming."

Back in the room, Amy and Arthur got caught up chatting with Sheryl, but they were ready to leave.

"We should get back now. Don't hesitate to call us when you need help, okay? We'll come by as soon as we can." Amy reassured her granddaughter.

"I know. Thank you, Grandma," Sheryl was ever grateful for their concern and affection.

"Sher, it's me, Anthony. Please let me in. I just want to talk." A desperate voice cut through the pleasant atmosphere.

Her expression dimmed, and Arthur was enraged. "How dare he come here! Is he really that shameless? Don't you go see him, Sheryl. I'm going to teach him a lesson."

Before Sheryl could do anything, Arthur was already walking towards the door. He was shocked for a moment to see the entire Xiao family waiting for them, and then the shock returned to even more heightened anger. "What are you all doing here? Scheming as a family again to hurt my granddaughter?"

"Grandpa Arthur..." Anthony said in shame, his voice gone low like a deflated rubber ball. "I understand that you're angry, you have every right to be, but..." Anthony tried to explain cautiously, "I don't mean to

hurt her. Could you please let me see Sheryl for a while, I just want to..." His head bowed, he needed to show that he was sincere. "I want to apologize."

His plea was received by Arthur just as badly as by Nancy. "We don't need your apology." Arthur was ruthless when it came to protecting his family. "We will thank you so long as you never bother them

again."

"Uncle Arthur." It was Carlson, this time, to intercede. He felt so guilty as he saw Arthur's furious expression. There was nothing for them to do but keep begging for Sheryl to come out. He was fully aware that these were part of the consequences of their actions. They had done terrible things, and caused unforgivable pain to the mother and daughter. He could only smile apologetically. "We came here to apologize, a sincere apology. I know Anthony has hurt her, and nothing can ever make up for that. But I want to make it clear to her that we know what we've done, and we're taking responsibility. Please trust me, we all need this closure. And whatever you ask of us after this, we will do. If you ever need our help, we will do all we can to help."

Carlson shook his head and bowed down. "I felt so ashamed when you called me. I'm terribly sorry that my son has done such an awful thing to the. It's me that didn't stop him. We deserve any punishment you deem fit. We want to do what we can for Miss Xia."

Arthur's face remained emotionless, and unmoved. Carlson continued, "Uncle Arthur, you and my father are good friends. You watched me grow up, you know me more than anyone here. What

happened was... unfortunate, but unexpected. Now that it's done, we want to end it properly. Won't you

let us do this?"

The expression on Arthur's face finally softened at the sincerity of Carlson's words. He knew he could

at least trust the man's heart. But before he could say something, Laura interjected, "That's right, Uncle

Arthur."

With her tone, she only made things worse. "After all, they were a couple. What's so wrong about it?"

Anthony was drunk that night and he couldn't control himself. He didn't mean to do it. Is no one capable

of being the bigger person and letting it go?"

What she suggested made Arthur's eyes go wide. He couldn't believe her words. "What's so wrong

about it?" He took a step closer. "He was drunk? He couldn't control himself?" At that point, he could

tell there was no hope for that woman. She was blinded by her arrogance and selfishness, and there

would be no reasoning with her anymore. "Get out." His tone went deadly cold.

"Grandpa Arthur..." Anthony quickly tried to remedy the tension again. "My mom hardly ever thinks

about what she says, she'll say anything to get a rise out of you. I'm the one responsible for my actions

here. I'm the one who's at fault. Will you please let me through, Grandpa Arthur?"

All softness was gone from Arthur. "No." His refusal was direct. The whole episode was put on pause,

however, when Sheryl came into view. The others went silent when she approached the door, and

Anthony was overcome with shame. The more he saw her, the worse he felt.

"Sher, you don't need to avoid me. I only want to see Shirley. I want to see for myself if she's gotten

better. There's nothing behind it, I swear."

Chapter 760 Sheryl Won't Accept Their Apologies

Anthony smiled bitterly. "You know I've always considered Shirley as my own daughter," he said. "I'm

worried about her. I really need to know if she is okay.

It was my fault. I brought her into this. Sheryl, please. I want to make it up to her. Please let me see

her."

"No." She continued, "They told me that she developed autism because of what happened that night.

She has totally changed. She won't smile and refuses to talk to anyone. She stays stuck in her room,

all day, by herself. I'm her mother. Do you know how hard it is for me to see her like this?"

"I know. I know," Anthony said honestly. "I know I haven't done right. But..."

Sheryl cut him off, "You have no idea what you and your mother have done to her." She took a deep

breath and continued, "She was already sick that night. But..."

She pointed at Laura. "What you did here just made it worse. I'd hurt you so badly if I could."

Sheryl glared at Laura, thinking if only her blazing eyes could kill her.

However, Laura wasn't the kind of woman to take accusations in stride, so she fought back, "Don't blame me for your failed marriage or for your child's condition. Surely, why she turned out that way is completely your fault.

I had nothing to do with it, neither did Anthony." Sheryl and Arthur grew furious as they heard her words. If Arthur did not find reason and sense, he may have slapped Laura.

Seeing how angry Arthur was, Carlson dragged Laura close and slapped her without hesitation. He had never hit her since they got married, but she crossed the line, and he was having none of it.

"Will you just stop? Leave!" he raised his voice in anger.

Laura held her cheek in shock. She never thought Carlson could ever hit her.

"Did you just hit me?" The weight of Carlson's action slowly sank into her.

Carlson looked at her, with seething eyes. "Leave. Don't make me hit you again," he warned.

She hesitated, looking at Carlson with disbelief, but nodded. "Fine. I'll go. But remember what you did today, Carlson. I promise, I'll make you pay for it."

Laura left, leaving Anthony and Carlson. Carlson turned to Arthur. "Uncle Arthur, I'm so sorry about that. She's being unreasonable. Please don't mind her," he said apologetically.

"I know that you're mad. Please let me know if I can do anything to make it better," he continued.

Carlson slapping Laura was a last resort. Her being there and saying what she wanted didn't do any help and actually made things worse.

Arthur scoffed, "We don't want to see any of you. That's what we want."

Anthony faced Sheryl and asked, "Is that true?" Anthony couldn't help but feel hurt, hearing what Arthur had to say.

"Yes," Sheryl replied simply, her eyes fixed on the floor. "If you and your mother would leave us alone, we'd be fine. We don't want anything to do with you."

For a moment, Sheryl looked at Anthony, who used to be her boyfriend. Back then, they truly trusted each other. But now, she couldn't even tell if he was telling the truth or not.

Anthony was filled with regret. There was no one else to blame for how things ended up with Sheryl —

no one else to blame but him.

But he couldn't give up on Shirley. Mustering up all the courage he had left, he looked at Sheryl, nearly begging. "Sheryl, please. Just once. Please let me see Shirley."

"I said no," Sheryl repeated. She was still mad. There was no way she would let him see Shirley.

"Just go! I don't want to see you again," she snapped at him, unwilling to let him see her daughter.

Anthony looked at Sheryl, trying to find even a hint of forgiveness in her eyes. But all he saw was coldness. Deciding it'd be for the best, he left with his father in silence.

That night, Carlson and Laura fought over what had happened when they met with Sheryl. But Anthony was more than distracted with his own problems. He had to figure out a way to talk to Sheryl again and beg for her forgiveness.

The next morning, Charles came to Sheryl's place. He knocked on the door, only to find Nancy, instead of Sheryl, opening the door. She placed a finger on her lips and whispered, "They're still asleep."

He nodded slightly and asked, "Is everything okay? Did they sleep well?"

Nancy shook her head. "Not really. Anthony and his parents stopped by yesterday and started a fight.

Sheryl was so upset that she wasn't able to sleep until midnight. Poor girl. Why must she always go through things like these?"

"Anthony came again?" Charles confirmed, surprised at Nancy's news. The moment Charles heard about Anthony, his heart tightened. That man just couldn't stop, could he?

"Yes. So maybe we should just let Sheryl rest for now," she advised.

"Of course." He nodded slightly and added, "I bought them some nutritious food. Please cook for them.

And if Anthony dares to come again, call me immediately."

"Certainly." Nancy gently nodded. He wanted to check on Sheryl before going to work. But he knew she needed to rest more than anything and simply left.

Soon after, Sheryl woke up. Sheryl had faintly heard Nancy talking to someone, but she didn't see who the person was. "Who were you talking to?" she asked Nancy.

"It was Mr. Lu. He came to see you." Nancy put the breakfast on the table and added, "He left for work while you were sleeping."

Sheryl then saw the food Nancy placed on the table, knowing that Charles had brought it.

She sighed as she looked at the food. If only this could save her from everything she had been

suffering from.

She tried to eat, picking at her food. As minutes went by, she stopped, knowing the food will be sitting like lead in her stomach.

"Sorry, Nancy," she said apologetically, "I just don't have any appetite. I'm going to take Shirley to see a psychologist. I'll wake her up but can you please prepare her breakfast?"

"Of course." Nancy nodded.

Shirley still wouldn't talk to Sheryl. She just sat there and kept her eyes fixed on the toys Charlie sent her. Sheryl sat by her side and asked, "Do you miss Charlie?"

She didn't answer, but the ray of hope in her eyes somehow betrayed her.