

Divorce 821

Chapter 821 Diverting Attention

Atlas contemplated, then looked at me. "It's cruel. There might be people investigating, and someone may move on her. They may seize the opportunity to dispose of the heiress and establish a new faction." His words made my heart leap into my throat.

"Don't worry, Jared is still there."

"But currently, he can't find Trinity either, right?" I looked at Atlas and countered, "And Trinity is alone."

"Although we haven't found her yet, his people are not to be trifled with. As soon as there's a hint of movement, it's equivalent to finding her. If Trinity is in danger, Jared will take action, or Trinity herself will act, and that will change the outcome. You can rest assured."

Atlas let go of me, took off his coat, and said, "I'll shower. It's too hot!"

The phone rang just as he was about to go to the bathroom.

He paused, took out his phone to check, and quickly answered it. After listening for a while, he only said, "I got it!"

He hung up the phone and said, "I'll go shower. Wait for me."

I knew he still wanted to continue our conversation. He casually placed the phone on the sofa and went into the bathroom.

I hung up his clothes and checked the time. It was already late. Then, I tidied up the bed and lay down, waiting for him.

He showered quickly, and in no time, he came out. As he dried his hair, he said, "About the call just now, they've confirmed the identity of the deceased in Bourdamun." "Huh? They found out?" I sat up straight, looking at him.

He wiped his wet hair while looking at me. "This person is from Tarnstead, has a criminal record, hasn't returned home for many years, and has been keeping himself busy in Foswood.

"A couple of months ago, his mother fell seriously ill and needed money. Suddenly, he was sent a considerable sum to treat his mother. They're suspecting it's a bribe." "How did they confirm he was bribed?" I asked eagerly.

"It just happened that the number used for payments matched the one used to transfer the money. This indicates that their mastermind is the same person." Atlas paused and said, "It also raises another question. This incident ruled out our speculations. It doesn't seem to be from an organization or involve Denton!" "But I clearly saw a person with a snake tattoo in the elevator!" I looked at him with a puzzled expression.

He walked over and sat on the edge of the bed. I saw that his hair was still quite wet. I got up, took the towel from his hands, and helped him dry his hair. After a while, I reached out to comb his thick, dark hair.

He reached out to embrace my body, and with a gentle tone, he said, "There's a simple explanation to this."

I stopped my hands, looked at him, and asked, "What do you mean?"

He took the towel from my hands, threw it into the laundry basket, and walked back. Then, he lifted the thin quilt on the bed and embraced me before explaining, "You're not wrong, but it doesn't rule out the possibility of diverting our attention."

I sat up straight. "You're right! He reached out from behind me, pressed the button, and your speculation is entirely possible."

Atlas smiled, quickly pulled me back

into his embrace, and then said, "Our multiple investigations have not found anyone from an organization in Bourdamun. Moreover, Dylan's investigation that day was very thorough, and we didn't find anyone matching the physical

characteristics you mentioned."

"That's a problem," I affirmed. "But he definitely appeared in the elevator on the fifteenth floor."

"We checked all the guests on the

fifteenth floor and found no trace of

this person. This indicates a

problem. It doesn't rule out that after

he got off the elevator, he took off

his coat in a blind spot in the

surveillance and slipped away," Atlas

said as he played with my hair.

I looked at him. "So our suspicions are confirmed. It's still someone familiar around us! The audacity!"

In my mind, I couldn't help but think of what Johnson told me. "Since she came back from Bourdamun, she hasn't been to the company much!"

Could it be her?

Chapter 822 Enormous Intel

I nestled back into Atlas's embrace, muttering, "If that's the case, finding the mastermind behind all this should be easy."

"How so?" Atlas lowered his gaze affectionately, bending down to kiss me.

I responded willingly, then said, "Not many people know about the snake tattoo."

He laughed, pulling me into his arms and patting my back. "When you play stupid games, you win stupid prizes."

Atlas knew my thoughts and who I suspected.

"Before you came back, I called Johnson. He mentioned that Liora hasn't been to the company much lately. It seems she's still shaken up after the incident in Bourdamun," I informed Atlas, patting his chest. "Sleep now. I'll make her even more shocked," Atlas said, teasingly asking, "Can you sleep?"

I quickly snuggled into his embrace, saying, "I'm already asleep."

He immediately flipped over, pinning me beneath him. "But I'm not tired at all."

I burst into laughter, and he wasted no time making his move.

Shortly after I entered my office the next day, Lauren walked in, exuding a confident aura with her short, stylish haircut.

She rushed to my side and said, "Guess who I ran into last night?"

"Who?" I looked at her curiously. She couldn't wait to tell me this early in the morning. It must be something big. I knew her too well. She looked at me mysteriously, saying, "Liora!"

I immediately rolled my eyes at her. "You're excited just because you saw her?"

Lauren raised an eyebrow. "You should ask who she was with!"

"Who?" I asked eagerly.

She leaned in and whispered a name, "Felix Vanson!"

I was a bit bewildered. "Who is Felix Vanson?"

"Ha! You have no idea, right? But many people do!"

"Hurry up and tell me!" I was anxious. This person must be someone important.

With a smug expression, she replied, "He's the head of Foswood Prison."

She asked me with meaningful intent, "Do you get it now? That's where Melanie is detained."

I was somewhat stunned and immediately asked, "Are you sure?"

Lauren looked at me, dead serious. "When have I ever given you the wrong information? I'm serious!"

"Where did you see this?" I asked incredulously. This information was huge.

"I went to Marioposa for dinner with two friends last night. That's when I saw them," Lauren explained with her usual mysterious demeanor.

Honestly, I admired Lauren for this

She had incredible insight, ears

everywhere, and a photographic

memory for the influential figures in Foswood's high society.

"She didn't see you, did she?" I asked cautiously. "This information is too valuable, and the amount of intel is enormous!"

"Most likely not. They came out of a

private room one after the other, and I deliberately avoided them. Besides, with my short hair now, she only saw me once when I left the

hospital. I'm confident she still

thinks of me as the girl with the long

hair."

Lauren's analysis was spot-on. Even now, she exuded the image of a girl with flowing locks.

"Why didn't you take a picture? Next time, be sure to capture it. It might come in handy." I expressed my regret.

"I wanted to, but they came out one after the other, and there was no way I could tell they were together. Even if I took a picture, it wouldn't show they were in cahoots. Such a photo wouldn't be useful," Lauren argued.

"Think about it. It must be connected. How could they end up together for no reason?" Lauren questioned with a hint of mockery. "This speaks volumes."

"I must say, it explains a lot. Considering Melanie's confession, they dare to flaunt their association now. They're practically asking for trouble!"

Just then, the phone on my desk rang. I saw that it was an unfamiliar number and considered picking it up.

"Hello?" I answered politely.

"Chloe, it's Liora."

I immediately looked at Lauren, surprised.

Chapter 823 An Unexpected Meeting

Lauren's reaction was lightning-fast, pressing her ear against my phone.

I was at a loss for words.

Liora's voice rang out from the phone, seemingly carefree. She continued in a cryptic tone, "Surprised, huh? Well, it's not every day I call someone like you."

"Indeed! Considering I don't have much rapport with you, Ms. Liora, your call must have ulterior motives. So, spill it. What's the game plan?" I scoffed, dripping with sarcasm. "Haha... How about we meet?" She suggested, taking me off guard once again. This was truly bewildering. What kind of scheme was she cooking up?

"Meet? There's got to be a reason for that," I casually remarked, and Lauren gave me a thumbs up.

"Some things are better to be discussed face-to-face," Liora confidently asserted.

"I don't think it's necessary to talk with you. Is your bag of tricks running dry? It can't be, right?" I responded disdainfully.

"Chloe, what about Ardora? Don't you have anything to say?"

"I'm not interested." I declared firmly, wondering what game Liora and Melvern were playing. Why did they keep bringing up Ardora?

"Don't act so indifferent. After all this time, it's about time we had a face-to-face chat. Who knows, I may have something you want." Liora's tone remained ambiguous.

"I'm not interested in anything you have. Our tastes differ. But if you want to meet, get to the point. Don't beat around the bush." I was genuinely curious about her intentions, and asked, "So, spill. Where shall we meet?"

When she heard me finally giving in, she quickly said, "Since you love going to the Vanderberg Palace so much, let's meet there at 11."

After that, she hung up.

Lauren stood up, looking at me. "What is she planning?"

"I'm curious to discover what's in her bag of tricks. I got to go," I said, glancing at the time.

"I'll come with you," Lauren said. "I haven't seen Bella for a long time."

"Now that you mention it, it has been a while since I visited the Vanderberg Palace and saw Bella. Let's go. We can head there now," I replied.

Lauren held me back. "Hey, why the rush? The key figure usually makes a late entrance, you know? Don't go too early. It may make her think you're anxious."

"I'm not in a hurry. Didn't you say it's been a while since you saw Bella? We can go see her first," I explained.

Lauren sighed. "Even if you want to see Bella, it doesn't have to be today. Let her wait. If she takes the initiative to meet you, something must be important. Make her wait!"

I glanced at Lauren. "What if she's up to something bad again?"

"That's very likely. We need to figure

out a way to find evidence against her and Felix Lauren said excitedly. "I wanted to call you when I

discovered it last night, but it w

too late. I spent the night " Wanet

guessing

whether she would cause trouble again, especially with Matthew's case nearing the trial. This woman is absolutely insidious!"

"You're right! I have Grayson dig into Felix's background and find some evidence. It might come in handy." I thought aloud. "By the way, Lauren, I suspect Bourdamun's incident is related to her. After all, Stella isn't even in Foswood during that time."

"Could it be connected to Trinity? From what I know, Stella was inseparable from Trinity during that period. Then suddenly, both of them left Foswood," Lauren said with a serious expression. Lauren's words made me realize I had overlooked this detail. "Do you think Trinity and Stella might have joined forces?"

"It's a possibility. Although Trinity

has an unusual relationship with you, it doesn't mean she would reject Stella's advances because of you. But one thing is clear. She's already distanced herself from

Stella," Lauren reminded me.

Taking in Lauren's words, I pondered the situation and Liora's sudden request for a meeting.

Suddenly, an idea struck me.

"Let's go to the Vanderberg Palace!" I said, pulling Lauren along.

Chapter 824 Where Did You Get Your Confidence From?

It had been a while since I visited the Vanderberg Palace, and its serene atmosphere still captivated me.

Of course, beneath the facade of tranquility and elegance, I was well aware that each room held its fair share of hidden intrigues.

As we entered, the receptionist greeted us with a smile. "Ms. Chloe, Ms. Lauren, long time no see!"

I smiled back, asking, "Is Bella around?"

"She is. However, Mrs. Liora is waiting for you in the Diamond Hall on the second floor." The receptionist smiled and said, "She said that once you arrive, you can head upstairs."

Lauren and I exchanged glances. She gestured for me to proceed, saying, "You go upstairs. I'll see Bella. We'll have lunch together later."

"Alright." I nodded and headed upstairs.

Having been here countless times, I navigated the familiar paths easily. When I reached the door of the Diamond Hall, I was about to knock when I heard a voice from inside say, "Come in. There's no need to knock."

I raised an eyebrow and pushed the door open.

There, Liora was seated at the table, preparing tea. Without looking up at me, she remarked, "Very punctual."

"Naturally. It's basic etiquette for a businesswoman," I replied, walking over and taking a seat without hesitation.

I wasn't in a hurry to speak. She was the one who invited me here, after all. There was no way she would not have an intro.

Sure enough, she couldn't hold it any longer and looked at me. "Don't you want to ask why I called you here?"

"Since I'm already here, why don't you tell me?" I replied.

She placed the freshly brewed tea in front of me. Taking a sip from her cup, she closed her eyes in contentment. "Hmm... Good tea! I've never taken the time to appreciate the tea here before. Surprisingly, it lives up to its reputation."

I didn't feel the need to offer a superficial response. I was just lounging in the chair and observing her. It seemed a bit absurd watching her perform this one-woman show.

"Chloe, maybe we should have talked long ago." She finally leaned back in her chair, facing me directly.

"I've never felt the need to," I stated plainly.

"You've never?" She asked, smiling with a touch of bitterness. "It's not good to lie."

"What's your definition of a lie?" I countered.

"You've always been honest with me..."

"Wrong!" I interjected. "You said it

wrong. It's you who should be

honest with me. It seems your memory isn't too sharp, Ms. Lora. But, that's fine. You'll have plenty of time to reflect on this matter."

"What do you mean?" She looked at me, her eyes devoid of any goodwill.

"It's simple. You'll have quiet time to contemplate these things," I clarified.

"Chloe, I underestimated you. I didn't expect your luck and abilities to be

so formidable. I admit, I've been too

careless in the past." Coen too

I could tell she was speaking the truth.

"Well, now you understand. It's never too late. So, don't provoke anyone

too fast. Learn to stay low-key. There's no harm in that!" I said

nonchalantly, glancing at the tea she

brewed for me. I had no desire to

drink it.

The more I got to know this person, the more I felt she was dirty. No wonder everyone who knew her had a poor opinion of her.

I reached for a larger glass and poured myself a glass of water.

"Speak up. What's the real purpose of inviting me here?" I asked candidly. "Otherwise, we have nothing to talk about."

"Haha!" She gave a cold laugh and resumed her previous posture. "You think highly of yourself, don't you?"

"Not really. It's just that you invited me here," I retorted.

Liora's eyes narrowed for a moment. She composed herself and continued, "Fine, let's get down to business."

I remained silent, simply observing her.

Examining me, she continued when she saw I wasn't speaking, "I invited you here to discuss how you will take in Ardora."

Now it was my turn to laugh. I sat up and asked, "Did I hear that correctly? Take in Ardora?"

My expression caught her off guard, and she stared at my face, unsure of what I meant. "Is that such a surprise?"

I looked at her intently and questioned, "Where do you get your confidence from?"

Chapter 825 Relying on Men

My question seemed to enrage her. She glared at me, her face flushed.

"Chloe, I invited you here today with sincerity. Never mind where my confidence comes from. I want to discuss Ardora with you because there's some connection between Ardora and you." I took a sip of water, signaling her to continue.

Seeing my silent approval, she relaxed.

"After all, it was your ex-husband's. I understand the bond between husband and wife. He's also your child's father! Moreover, isn't it a convenient way to settle the score if you take over Ardora?" As she spoke, a trace of disdain involuntarily appeared on her face.

"It's not easy being a woman from out of town struggling in a city like this, especially if you have a child. Opportunities like this aren't always readily available. Expand your influence while you can. After this opportunity passes, you may not get another one."

Her words sounded a bit like tough love, all for my sake. But, at the same time, it hinted that I climbed up the ladder through my association with Atlas.

"Is this a concern for me?" I replied with a distant tone. "Though if someone else said it, I might be moved."

"Don't deny it. Haven't you relied on men? Otherwise, how could Bourdamun fall into your hands?" She didn't bother hiding the disdain in her eyes, adopting a condescending demeanor.

I remained unfazed, watching her with a calm expression. The more she acted this way, the more I understood the urgency in her heart.

I speculated why she and Melvern sought me out to take over Ardora.

"Liora, it's not your place to question me. Let's get back to the topic of Ardora." I was still calm. "Why are you trying to sell Ardora to me? What connection do you have with it?"

Indeed, my words completely infuriated her. Liora slammed the table. "Chloe, what do you mean by that?"

"I meant what I asked." I sat there calmly, not letting her stir up my emotions. "Is there anything wrong?"

"Ardora is my investment, my operation, I-"

"Can you say that with confidence?" I cut her off. "Informed people all know about your connection with Ardora. It's only been a few months, and you've conveniently forgotten.

"Do you think it's yours just because its owner is in jail? Do you have such ambitions that you can just take over others' things? Have you gotten so used to occupying someone else's belongings that it has become a habit of yours? Can you be so self-righteous about it?"

"Chloe! Ardora is one of my major shareholders! They mismanaged it, delivered poor quality, and caused serious construction issues, so I have the right to take over!" Liora insisted, escalating the argument.

"A major shareholder? That needs the acknowledgment of Melanie or Matthew, doesn't it? As far as I know, Ardora started as a sole proprietorship. Since when did it become a joint-stock company?"

Without allowing her to catch her

breath, I continued, "Moreover,

issues with the project-don't you know them best? Do you think Melanie and Matthew are the only clever ones? Do you think they're the only ones who can see through your tricks?

"Poor quality? I'm sure we'll need a thorough investigation! Ardora's loan was Matthew's personal act, right? How did it become your investment? Your attempt to deceive is so crude." I pressed on, my tone assertive.

Chapter 826 Confrontation

She stared at me, her gaze unwavering.

Then, she let out a disdainful snort. "Looks like things are really tough for you, Chloe. You were dumped, but you're still very devoted to your cheating ex-husband. It's clear that you worry about him. Unfortunately, it didn't matter how clever you were. He still walked away with the assets. Do you really think you're so smart? You're just a wife he cast aside. It's a pity Ardora has nothing to do with you." Liora used the opportunity to belittle me smugly.

I wasn't bothered at all.

I played with the cup on the table and casually responded, "You got one thing right. Ardora has nothing to do with me. But it has even less to do with you. If Ardora's going on the market, I'd discuss it with Melanie or Matthew, not you."

I glanced at Liora with a sly smile and added, "What? Did you really think you could do whatever you wanted after infiltrating them? There's no way that would happen."

"So what? Even if you want to help Matthew turn things around, Melanie can just testify against him. He'll have to stay inside," Liora said fiercely. "Don't forget, Melanie is the primary witness and the legal representative. If she insists, you won't stand a chance."

I just stared at her and withheld the words that were on the tip of my tongue. I couldn't say too much now. Loose lips sink ships. I couldn't risk tipping my hand.

"I just want Matthew to taste the bitterness of betrayal and lose everything for a lover's whims. And this will be all because of his sweetheart's actions. Haha... You should thank me, Chloe. I helped you get revenge for your stolen husband!"

I nonchalantly replied, "There's a saying that would fit this situation perfectly, Liora. 'Those who commit many wrongs will bring about their own destruction.'"

"Haha... But they're the ones inside, not me!" She laughed triumphantly, drank the tea in her cup, and poured herself another.

I took a sip of water, calming my emotions.

Then, I casually poured myself another cup of hot water and said, "You've seized someone else's property and shamelessly put it up for sale. You won't be able to get that dirty money."

Liora was not willing to concede and retorted, "Don't you act all righteous, Chloe. Didn't you rely on your looks to find a backer to get to where you are today? Don't forget how

Matthew played you!"

She couldn't miss a chance to strike at me. Through gritted teeth, she said, "You can reject Ardora, but it will never return to Matthew's hands.

"Don't forget that the issue with Harmony is far from over!" She reminded me vehemently.

I smiled indifferently, neither humble

nor arrogant. I'll sell my looks to

anyone who will willingly buy it. You're right. The matter with Harmony is far from over indeed. But it's not just about Harmony. Nothing will be swept under the rug so easily."

Liora's eyes remained fixed on me, and her hands clenched on the table.

This confrontation needed a bit of edge. She might think she had the upper hand if I was too soft on her.

I glanced at her and said with a

smile on my face, "Maybe you don't know me that well. I'm someone who takes things very seriously. I want to understand something won't let go until it's crystal clear. I won't let anyone try to pin

something on me."

I deliberately emphasized, "I'll give no quarter, especially when it comes to my own safety. For example, when I fell into the sea..."

She immediately interrupted, "What does your falling into the sea have to do with me? That was Stella's doing-"

As the words escaped her lips, she seemed to realize she had let something slip and slammed on the brakes. Her eyes met mine, trying to retract what she said, but it was too late.

Chapter 827 Pay the Price

I couldn't help but chuckle. I looked at her as I asked, "So you're saying Stella did that all by herself? Didn't you recruit plenty of accomplices? If you're trying to say that it was Stella, you're an accomplice too!"

Her mouth twitched. "You-"

"And that dump truck? Do you really think it won't be traced? Don't forget, the heavens are always watching. Also..."

I locked eyes with her, making it impossible for her to look away.

"Do you want me to keep going? You came to talk, didn't you, Liora?" I cooled down my expression, leaving her no room for thought.

I narrowed my eyes and probed, "Oh, maybe you don't know this, but Melvern has already placed Ardora's shares on my desk. Didn't you discuss this with him?"

"What?" Liora looked at me in shock, a sinister hostility in her eyes.

She clearly had no idea what Melvern had done. It seemed like it was all a coincidence.

I backed off from the topic of Melvern and tried to pressure her instead. "You've squandered so much of his money, so you must owe him an explanation. Think about how he'll deal with you if Ardora doesn't end up in his hands."

I smiled at her and watched her face turn pale.

"But don't forget, Ardora isn't yours. You can't take what isn't yours, even with your cunning ways. What you did in the dark will eventually come to light," I added, stoking the fire.

"So what on earth gave you the confidence to come to me for money? I'm not your mom! There's no reason for me to support you," I said disdainfully with a touch of wickedness in my tone. Liora erupted. She stood up abruptly, grabbed the tea cup from the table, and flung it at me.

I was ready for her and dodged aside. The water splashed along my shoulder and a few drops landed on my face. However, it was meaningless.

I seized the opportunity to pick up the large cup of hot water I had just received and retaliate unapologetically. Every drop of the scalding water found its mark and landed on her face. She screamed as the water hit her. "Ah! Chloe, how dare you splash me?"

"Oh, you wicked woman!" Liora wiped her face, pointing at me angrily. "How could you "

"Why wouldn't dare?" I looked at her unflinchingly, maintaining my provocative tone. "You have a

terrible memory. I warned you. Don't provoke me. If you do, I'll retaliate, every time. Do you think I'm here to exchange pleasantries with you?"

I sat down, slamming the handkerchief on the table and startling her. Then, I grabbed the teapot and poured another cup, staring at her with a measured gaze.

She took a step back, looking at me in fear. "W-What are you doing?"

"What am I doing? Who are you to challenge me like this? I'm not the type to get angry just because I don't see eye to eye with someone, but it's a different story when it comes to you

flipped the script, my face growing dark.

Her face reddened and her eyes fixed on me malevolently.

I continued, "And remember this. Ardora is something I want. I have my ways, so don't waste your efforts. I have a bad temper, so don't challenge me. If you do, you'll find yourself at a dead end.

"If there's nothing else, I'll take my

leave. See you at the court the day after tomorrow! You're right. I am sentimental. I'm dealing with that heartless ex-husband. I don't need anyone else to worry about it. How I punish him is my business. Don't interfere."

"Chloe!" Liora roared.

I frowned at her. "Shh! Stop that. You might not have any shame, Liora, but I do. The people who come here are pretty important. Stop screaming like a shrew. See you the day after tomorrow."

I stood up, grabbed my bag, and headed out. I took a step and paused, turning back to look at her. "You've done many terrible things, Liora. It's time to pay the price. What do you think?" After I said that, I walked away with a cold smile.

Chapter 828 Letting Ardora Go

Lauren looked surprised when she saw me come in and asked, "Why are you back so soon?"

"There was nothing worth discussing with her," I replied disdainfully.

I quickly greeted Bella. "Long time no see, Bella. What are we having for lunch?"

I walked over to her and watched her busy herself gracefully. Every move she made exuded a captivating beauty.

Bella smiled elegantly, glancing at me. "It's been a while. Have you been busy lately? I hear construction has already started in Bourdamun."

"I'm busy as always. While they're working over there, Avalon Hills will be up next," I reported.

My impression of Bella was improving, and I had become increasingly captivated by her.

"Matthew's trial is coming up soon, isn't it?" She put down what she was holding and wiped her hands.
"Are you feeling confident?"

"Since Ardora's legal representative is Melanie, all I can do is ensure Matthew's freedom and prevent him from going to jail. But Melanie will have to pay for her mistakes," I explained. Bella shook her head.
"You've got it tough."

Then she casually mentioned, "I baked some cake and made porridge with two simple vegan dishes. We'll have a light lunch."

I sat down. "That sounds perfect. It's exactly what I was craving."

Lauren joined us and handed me a cup of tea. "What's the deal with Liora? What is she really up to?"

"She's doing the same thing as Melvern. She's trying to convince me to take over Ardora."

"Why do they suddenly want to let Ardora go?" Lauren pondered, her brows furrowing.

"Those two aren't in cahoots. They just happened to have a similar plan," I said, thinking as I spoke.

Lauren looked at me, puzzled. "You mean they didn't communicate with each other, and even though they both want to act, their goals aren't aligned?"

I nodded in response.

"So they both think you're an easy target?" Lauren scoffed.

"Could she have some plan that makes her want to give up Ardora?" I muttered to myself.

I couldn't quite figure out the plot here. She had made a significant effort to secure Ardora, only to suddenly decide she didn't want it. That didn't make sense. Had she really fallen out with Melvern? Or were they trying to set a trap for me? I couldn't get to the bottom of this.

But it was definitely unusual that both of them wanted to get their hands on Ardora.

Bella checked the time and said, "Let's eat and talk."

The three of us enjoyed a fantastic lunch. Betta's cake was especially exceptional. It was soft and sweet, with a lingering fragrance. I wanted to learn how to make it and share it with my family.

Life would always be merrier if you had a family.

I had asked myself these questions many times.

Can't I take a step back? Why am I getting myself involved in these life-and-death struggles? But some people just love to stir up trouble!

It all made me feel weary.

Ivanna had just woken up and called me. She asked where I was and when I would see her tonight.

We agreed on a time to meet, and I asked if she wanted to join us for dinner, but she said she was still in bed.

After ending the call, Bella said, "Is there any news from Trinity?"

"You know about that too?" I asked in surprise.

She nodded. "Jared happened to be here that day."

Suddenly, I asked her, "What do you think about Jared and Ivanna's situation, Bella?"

Lauren also looked at Bella, waiting for her response.

Bella looked at me, smiling indifferently, and said just two words, "It's complicated."

My heart sank. This was a situation I really didn't want to face.

"The Huffman family already sees Jared as one of their own. It's deeply ingrained in him. Besides, there's no way to separate them in business." Bella's voice was gentle, but each word pressed heavily on my heart.

I couldn't help but feel weighed down.

"Many have feared Jared these past few years, especially those under the Huffman family. Trinity is ruthless, but there are some people she can't touch. But Jared is different, and..."

Chapter 829 A Surprise Slap

Bella stopped talking and smiled faintly without delving any further.

I didn't press her.

After all, Bella was someone with impeccable discretion. I understood her, even if she chose not to say certain things out loud.

It seemed that Trinity's ruthless move this time had a purpose.

After chatting for a while, we said goodbye and left to head back to the office.

As we reached the entrance, we bumped into Oliver, who was on his way in.

He immediately froze, his gaze fixated on Lauren's face.

I quickly greeted him, but he only responded with a nonchalant hum. His attention was fully on Lauren.

"Lauren..." he murmured, his eyes filled with longing.

I glanced at Lauren discreetly. Unfazed, she nodded slightly at Oliver. "Sorry, Mr. Oliver. We're in a bit of a hurry."

With that, she calmly led the way outside, showing no hint of hesitation.

I admired Lauren for that. She remained indifferent as if they had never met. As an outsider, I couldn't help but feel a little awkward.

On the way back to the office, Lauren didn't bring up Oliver at all. Instead, she asked, "Do you think what's going on with Trinity is some kind of trap?"

I shook my head resignedly. "It's hard to say at the moment, but I'm worried about Ivanna."

"True. Those two were living a carefree life in Bourdamun a while ago. I thought they would be able to have a peaceful life," Lauren sighed.

"Spend some time with Ivanna," I advised Lauren. "She's been upset since Jared left without saying goodbye."

Back at the office, I called Grayson to inquire about the situation on his end. Grayson told me that Jared had already left Jitador and was also planning to return to Foswood.

I also briefly mentioned the need to investigate Felix. Surprisingly, Grayson had already started the investigation. "When Melanie changed her statement, I checked with the prison and identified Felix." We agreed to meet when he returned.

After I hung up, I sighed in relief. Regardless of the circumstances, Grayson would be back in Foswood before Matthew's trial, which reassured me somewhat.

I felt slightly at ease about Trinity's

situation since Jared would be there. But now that I knew this was a trap set by the Huffman family

themselves, I wasn't as concerne

especially since it wouldn't appropriate for outsiders to

intervene.

Currently, my priority was to handle Matthew's case before taking a breather.

After Liora's unexpected visit today, I thought she must have been frightened, but I was wrong, and she had given me a surprise slap in the face.

When Ivanna came to see me, everyone had already left work. Carol knew we had some business to attend to and had also left work as usual.

At seven o'clock, we arrived at the second-floor banquet hall of The Aviary. To our surprise, quite a few people were already there.

This was the first time I had attended a gathering like this since graduation.

Right after leaving school, they tried to stay in touch, but Matthew and I were busy building our business at that time, which left us no time for get-togethers. All our time was spent on sales.

Later, after I gave birth to Ava, my schedule became even tighter.

Over time, we grew apart from our classmates.

When Ivanna and I walked into the private room, we realized we were a little late.

Michelle, who appeared to be the

host, stood up and waved. "Oh, Chloe! You're such a busy woman The whole group of us had to wait for you Aren't you ashamed? You're here too, Ivanna. Excellent! Long time no see!"

Michelle began blaming us as soon as she opened her mouth.

"Late? Didn't you tell Chlo it was at seven?" Ivanna retorted. "We even got here early."

Michelle blushed and busied herself

with arranging our seats while

greeting everyone. "Take a look around. Recognize anyone? This is Chloe, our former campus belle and Matthew's ex-wife, who we were just talking about. Quite a small world, isn't it?"

Her words immediately drew everyone's attention to me.

Chapter 830 Blabbermouth

Michelle's remark immediately attracted curious glances, and everyone turned toward me.

I could read all kinds of meanings into those glances. I was certain that was what Michelle intended.

Ivanna was visibly displeased. She opened her mouth, wanting to retaliate against Michelle, but I quickly pulled her back, signaling her not to speak. I smiled calmly and nodded at everyone.

"Yes, Matthew is my ex-husband. We all know about my past marriage. Looks like Michelle provided quite a detailed introduction! We haven't met in years, so it'll be good for everyone to catch up with each other."

As I made my little speech, people understood my implications, and all eyes now turned to Michelle. Of course, the meaning in their eyes varied.

Michelle blushed, attempting to defend herself, "Hey! Why are you all looking at me? I just have a loose tongue, haha... We've all finally gotten together after so long. Was it so wrong of me to share some updates? Besides, it's the truth, and I didn't say anything wrong, did I?"

She tried to justify herself, and Ivanna retorted, "Haha! Not at all. You're just keeping people informed, right? You really haven't changed. After all these years, you're still a blabbermouth." Many people laughed.

Michelle's nickname in college had been Mini Meddler, and now Ivanna had called her a blabbermouth.

Once we sat down, the other two women who had been in our dorm came over eagerly. "You're still so beautiful, Chlo. I can't even tell that more than a decade has passed."

"Exactly, talk about anti-aging. I believe it's real, now."

Everyone teased me, and a few guys looked at me, agreeing with the compliments.

I looked at them warmly. "None of you have changed much, to be honest. You're all still the same. You've just matured."

"I heard you were coming this time, so I came too. Otherwise, what's the point of meeting up? We see each other often enough. Meetups have been arranged eight hundred times this year alone!"

"That's so true."

There was clearly something unsaid in their words.

Ivanna glanced at me and whispered, "I wasn't wrong, was I? The person who planned this has too much free time."

Everyone chatted warmly, and the

party did become pretty lively. After

all, it had been many years since we last met, a

and it was nostalgic to

reminisce about what happened

when we used to be together every

day

Of course, someone brought up Matthew again, which was an inevitable topic. I didn't avoid it and answered their questions openly.

I had nothing to hide.

When Michelle saw everyone crowded around me, her eyes filled with a strange light and a disdainful expression. She quickly laughed and took over the conversation.

"Oh dear! There's no need to sigh, everyone. Chlo isn't that unlucky. She bid farewell to Mr. Wrong just to meet Mr. Right."

She had drawn everyone's attention with just a sentence. She pretended to be innocent and said, "Really, it's true. Chlo is flourishing. Don't be fooled by that heartless Matthew. She has a wealthy backer now."

To anyone listening, it sounded like I was with a rich guy.

Ivanna immediately responded, "What's wrong? Are you jealous? Didn't you find yourself a wealthy backer as well? There's plenty of fish in the sea, after all. It's no wonder you smell like fish."

Everyone burst into laughter. I didn't understand why they were laughing.

But I noticed Michelle's face turning red from embarrassment. It looked like she was trying to contain her emotions.

I quickly changed the subject, asking everyone, "By the way, does anyone have Beatrice's contact?"