

Divorce 941

Chapter 941 Taking Advantage

I stepped into the elevator and immediately dialed Atlas, asking if he was in the office.

"Yeah, just finished a meeting," he replied.

I instructed him to wait for me in the office, assuring him I'd be there soon.

Skipping the lobby, I headed straight to the underground parking lot. I hopped in my car and drove straight to ATL Empire.

Since my relationship with Atlas was confirmed, I rarely visited ATL Empire to avoid unwanted attention. The probing gazes were something I hadn't quite gotten used to.

Today, as I entered the building in a hurry, I paid no attention to how others looked at me. I greeted the receptionist and headed upstairs right away.

Atlas was indeed waiting in his office. When he saw me, he walked out with a smile, pulling me into a warm embrace.

Looking down at me, he asked, "What's got you rushing over here like a fire's lit under you? Are you coming to me for comfort?"

Without hesitation, I nestled against him. Looking up, I recounted the incident with Lola, who had come looking for me.

I asked Atlas, "Do you know if Trinity went to the Avila family?"

Atlas shook his head firmly, saying, "I don't know if she went to the Avila family. I've been waiting for news from Jared, but he hasn't responded."

I believed Atlas's words at this critical moment; he wouldn't lie.

"It's strange. Not only is she with the Avila family, but she's also with Stella. I'm worried about her safety." I expressed my concerns to Atlas.

Then, looking at him, I asked, "Could our prediction be wrong? Is she not trying to test the loyalty of her family's subordinates but instead slipping past everyone's sight to work together with Stella? What could they be scheming together?"

My imagination ran wild. "Could she have fooled Anson?"

"No way." Atlas asserted confidently, then hesitated. He picked up the phone and instructed, "Immediately check the updates from Yare. Make sure to check everything thoroughly."

I glanced at him. "Could Anson be playing dumb with us?"

"There must be a deal between her and Stella," Atlas stated. "It looks like I need to make a trip to Yare."

"You want to go to Yare?" I asked.

"Stella has secrets there," Atlas explained. "I need to figure them out."

I handed him a USB drive. "This is what Trinity left behind before she left. She asked Lola to bring it to me before the court hearing. Take a look at the evidence inside. Shouldn't we provide it to Adrian immediately?"

I continued, "After all, the information here involves more than just Matthew's case. She's implicated in several criminal cases."

He quickly returned to his desk and

turned on his computer. After

examining the contents of the USB drive, he nodded. "Adrian already has the information from here, but Trinity's details are more specific and persuasive. It can serve as supplementary material."

With Atlas's affirmation, I hurriedly said, "Then I'll go and deliver it to him."

As I reached for the USB drive, he suddenly pulled me into his arms, pressing me onto his lap.

While gazing at my face, he said, "Don't go through all that trouble. I'll call him over. Conveniently, there are other things I need to discuss with him."

I teased, "I don't have the power like you do, where I can get everything done with just a few clicks of my fingers."

He kissed me, smiling. "As long as you make the call, who dares not to listen to your orders?"

I chuckled. "Helping others is helping oneself. I'm not as bureaucratic as you."

He bit my lower lip, provoking me to slap him playfully. Only then did he release me.

"Are you a dog? Why are you always biting me?" I protested, licking my lips.

Little did I know, this one action stirred up trouble. He immediately seized the opportunity, kissing me passionately and tangling his tongue in a heated war with mine. After a satisfying kiss, he let go, smiting as if he had won a major victory.

Chapter 942 Out of Character

His kiss left me all flustered and disoriented. Playfully, I slapped him and said, "Be serious. You're always like this." He spoke with deep affection, "I haven't seen you for half a day."

"You're getting clingier." I scoffed, giving him a stern look.

"Is that a bad thing?" He shrugged.

I scolded him, "Quick, call Adrian. It'll take some time for him to get here. Can you focus on some real work?"

Unabashed, he continued pecking my lips. "You are my real work."

I sighed in resignation, giggling as I dodged him. "Were you like this, clinging to me when we were kids?"

He immediately retorted, "Nonsense. Back then, it was you clinging to me."

This time, I dismissively said, "Sure, I can't remember anything now. Feel free to make up whatever, and I'll believe you."

The mention of this topic weighed heavily on my heart. I appeared sad, saying, "If I can't remember anything, it's a terrible situation. Whether it's something beautiful or sorrowful, I wouldn't know."

I couldn't accept the fact that my memories were deliberately erased, possibly by someone very close to me. This was why I wanted to stay at Amethyst Apartments these past two days.

I genuinely felt lost, not knowing how to face my parents.

Seeing me troubled again, Atlas quickly said, "We should not dwell on that. Let's call Adrian and have him come to my office right away. It's a good time to discuss the suitable time for the trial." I promptly straightened up, got off his lap, and urged him to call Adrian.

The call went through, and Adrian readily agreed, saying he would be at ATL Empire shortly.

Coincidentally, I received a call from Lauren. I quickly answered, and her tone sounded urgent, "Chloe, has Ivanna contacted you?"

I responded, "Isn't Ivanna with you in Bourdamun? She hasn't contacted me."

"Oh no." Lauren exclaimed, "She hardly slept last night. She was gloomy and unhappy the whole time. I tried to console her all night."

"She called me last night. How come

she's upset again? Her voice

fine on the phone. What's

sounded f

going on?" I inquired, wondering why this matter had resurfaced

"Don't even mention it. It's all because of Jared. There's still no news from him." Lauren complained.

"Ivanna's pregnancy symptoms have

been stronger, so it's normal for her to feel down. She said she met with the crew this morning to discuss the outdoor scenes for this season decided to stay at the hotel instead of accompanying her because she was working." Lauren explained.

Listening attentively, I empathized with Ivanna's situation.

"When I woke up, I found the crew members there, but she wasn't. I asked if they'd seen Ivanna, and they said they hadn't seen her all morning.

"I went outside to check my car, and

it was gone. She might have driven back to Foswood," Lauren said in frustration. "I can't return to

Foswood without a car. I don't even know where to catch a ride. Try

contacting her for me. I'll figure out a

way to get back to Foswood."

I quickly assured Lauren, "Don't worry. I'll contact Noah and ask him to send a car for you."

"Okay, please hurry. I'm afraid she might do something foolish, like going straight to the hospital for an abortion or something," Lauren said with concern.

Chapter 943 How Commanding

I promptly ended the call and dialed Noah's number, instructing him to send someone to drive Lauren back to Foswood.

With that sorted out, I called Ivanna, but her phone was switched off.

A sense of unease crept over me, and I turned to Atlas, asking, "Are you really not aware of Jared's whereabouts lately? What's going on with him? This is so irresponsible of him! I used to have a good impression of him, but now he seems so unreliable."

At this point, I was furious.

Atlas became serious too. "I really haven't heard from him. Don't worry, I'll find him."

Hearing his assurance, I spoke with a commanding tone, "Don't just placate me. You must find him quickly. If anything goes wrong, I won't take responsibility. Tell him that he's going to lose his son if he doesn't straighten things out as soon as possible. Got it?"

Atlas raised an eyebrow and nodded while maintaining a serious expression.

Seeing his attempt to act earnestly, I couldn't contain my anger. "Stop pretending to be all serious. Atlas, you have 24 hours. Find him quickly, or don't expect to see me again."

I finished my statement coldly and walked away.

He quickly caught up and pulled me into an embrace. "Why are you angry at me? He's the one making a mistake, so you can't punish me for it. That's just unfair. I didn't say I wouldn't find him."

Just then, his secretary knocked on the door and entered. Seeing Atlas embracing me, about to kiss me, she immediately closed her eyes and retreated. Atlas just ordered coldly, "Get out." Blushing, I quickly buried my face in his chest.

The secretary hurriedly left the office. Atlas said, "I promise to find him within 24 hours. Now, give your husband a smile."

Hearing this, I realized that if he could find him in 24 hours now, it meant he hadn't put in much effort.

Damn. He played me for a fool.

Seizing the moment while I was in a daze, he quickly kissed me and said, "Smile for me."

"Yeah, right! Were you playing me for a fool? You could have found him from the start." I glared at him, brewing with anger.

"I did my best!" he quickly insisted.

I couldn't really do anything with him. After all, he was my Atlas. I had to force a smile, but time was of the essence.

Then I said to Atlas, "You better keep your word. You know how I am with promises."

"If I find him ahead of time, is there a reward for me?" he teased, looking playful.

"Are you bargaining with me now? This is something you should've done in the first place. What more do you want as a reward?" I 'glared' at him.

"Just add in a bonus for me," he whispered in my ear.

Hearing that, I blushed instantly. "Atlas, this is a serious matter."

He quickly let go of me and added, "Let's consider it settled then. I'm a man of my word."

I didn't bother arguing further with him. I quickly headed out, saying, "Wait here for Adrian. I'm going to the hospital."

Atlas nodded. "Be careful, don't drive too fast. Take it easy."

I got into the car and sped into the distance.

When I arrived at the hospital, Lauren called me. She asked, "Have you contacted her?"

"No, but I've reached the hospital," I replied as I hurried toward the gynecology department. "Have you gotten in the car?"

"Uh-huh." Lauren hesitated for a moment and then softly a there's any news, inform me

immediately. I'm on my

"If

"Alright." I hung up, already at the entrance of the gynecology

I headed for the

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doctor's office, who had previously

examined Ivanna.

At the entrance, a medical assistant stopped me. Anxiously, I asked, "Excuse me, has someone named Ivanna Moran been here today?"

"Yes. She was here." The assistant confirmed.

"Where is she?" I inquired urgently. "What was she here for?"

"Abortion. She's done, and she had already left," the medical assistant replied coldly.

My head buzzed for a moment.

Chapter 944 Losing Her Child

I felt like I had been struck by lightning, freezing in place as a chill enveloped me.

Ivanna was too impulsive! At this age, couldn't she think more empathetically? Couldn't she consider what she could do to fight for herself?

I sensed an unprecedented sense of helplessness.

Seeing me standing there like a statue, the medical assistant seemed a bit startled. She looked at me and asked, "Are you okay? Do you feel unwell? Do you need help?"

I collected myself, shook my head numbly, and weakly asked, "How long ago did she leave?"

She seemed a bit perplexed by my question. "Are you talking about Ivanna?"

I nodded.

She responded indifferently, "She left quite a while ago."

I thanked her in a soft voice. She just raised an eyebrow and continued with her work, paying no further attention to me.

As I turned around in a daze, I pondered. She must have gone home by now. At this moment, she must be feeling lonely and helpless, needing care more than ever.

With these thoughts, I ran out of the hospital, quickly got back into the car, and headed straight to Amethyst Apartments.

During the journey, I called Lauren again. She answered right away, "Did you find her?"

"Yeah. She indeed went to the hospital." My tone was somber, tinged with a sense of heartache.

"Ah.... What happened? Did she...?" Lauren couldn't help but ask anxiously.

I just sighed, unable to find words to respond.

Lauren suddenly stomped her foot, saying, "It's all my fault, I... Why did I sleep? I shouldn't have been too relaxed with her. I..."

As she was lamenting and blaming herself, I suddenly heard another voice on the phone, "Don't worry. Don't blame yourself..."

What was going on? Why did that sound like Oliver's voice?

But when I listened more intently, the voice was gone.

I only heard Lauren's regretful voice continuing, "How is she now? She's too impulsive. Sooner or later, she'll regret it. Ah. It's all my fault..."

"Don't blame yourself. Maybe it's

fate. Everything is her own choice

So what can we do? I'm on my way back to Amethyst Apartments now. You can head straight there."

I told her and then stepped on the gas pedal hard, rushing back.

Upon returning to Amethyst Apartments, I stopped the car and ran upstairs. I had never felt that the elevator could be so slow.

On her floor, I burst out of the elevator and pounded on the door with all my strength.

While knocking on the door, I opened my bag and searched for the key to both her houses. I remembered both sets of keys were in my bag, but why couldn't I find them? The more anxious I became, the more I couldn't find them. Just when I was desperate, the door opened.

I was instantly petrified.

Ivanna was pale-faced, wearing a nightgown that exposed her legs and feet. She stared at me helplessly, like a child who had done something wrong.

I felt both angry and hurt. Walking in, I grabbed her. "Why are you still wearing such a short skirt? Can't you..."

"Chlo."

Before I could finish my words, she called out with a soft tone and threw herself into my arms, crying bitterly.

My bag dropped to the ground with a thud. I held her, and my nose tingled. Tears welled up in my eyes. I was unable to describe my feelings at this moment.

I patted her like I was consoling a child. "Don't cry... Don't cry. Go lie down. You don't know how to care for yourself, exposing your skin to the cold air like this. You'll get sick. Quickly lie down, and I'll make you something to eat."

But she clung to me and was even more stubborn than Ava.

I muttered, trying to conceal my overwhelming anger, letting her hold onto me and vent her suppressed emotions. I couldn't coax her, no matter what.

After a long time, she gradually

stopped crying. I continued to soothe her, "Listen, go lie down. Don't catch a cold. This is the time when you're most likely to get sick. If it's gone, it's gone. Take care of yourself. You can have another baby in the future."

She listened to my words and became dumbfounded.

Feeling a bit puzzled, I wondered if I had said the wrong thing, afraid that she might be overly saddened and fall into depression because of my words.

But the next moment, her actions made me even more horrified.

Chapter 945 False Alarm

Suddenly, she burst into laughter, an unrestrained laugh that it sent shivers down my spine.

I was utterly bewildered. "Ivanna, don't do this!"

She laughed even more sinisterly, making me feel uneasy. I grabbed her and said, "Ivanna, stop laughing. Wake up, don't be like this, listen to me..." She abruptly shook off my hand and looked at me. "What's wrong? What should I listen to? I... I'm fine, I didn't do anything..."

I stared at her in confusion, not understanding what she was saying.

After a while, I finally processed her last few words.

She didn't do anything?

I got angry and yelled, "Stop laughing and talk to me properly!"

Seeing my expression, she realized I was genuinely upset. She suppressed her laughter and looked at me.

"I... I didn't do it. The baby is still here. I couldn't bear to do it. Chloe... I couldn't bear it." Her voice grew quieter as she spoke.

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Listening to her words, I stared at her dumbfounded before questioning, "Explain. What happened? Did you really not get an abortion? You're still pregnant?"

She nodded vigorously. "This is my first child, and I couldn't bear to kill it."

After saying this, she pursed her lips, and her eyes immediately turned red.

"When the doctor picked up the instruments, I jumped off the operation bed and ran back."

Hearing her explain, I was stunned for a long time. I shouted angrily, "Ivanna, you scared me! Can't you act rationally? Your actions could have cost lives, do you know that?"

I yelled at her without mercy, "My heart has been on a rollercoaster with you! You... What kind of person are you? Are you a child? You're unbelievable!"

I was incoherent, but thankfully, this might be the best news I've heard today. I suddenly laughed, finding it hard to control my emotions.

I didn't know how to express my feelings at this moment.

After taking a deep breath, I continued, "Oh my God. What a hospital! I asked the MA why you went there, and you know what she told me? She said you went for an abortion and you were done with it. This is so irresponsible of her! It really scared me!"

Ivanna also chuckled. "Maybe she didn't know. I ran off without going through with it. There were many patients today." "But none like you."

After saying that, I plopped down on the sofa, waving at Ivanna. "Don't come over, let me catch my breath."

"Sorry." She stood next to me and apologized.

"You should be sorry to yourself." I retorted. "I have to tell you, Ivanna, I don't even know how I drove back. ran through red lights all the way back. If something had happened, your child would be fine, but wouldn't. How would you deal with that?"

We both fell silent for a moment. Finally, I sat up. "Ivanna, do you think what you did is right?"

"I'm conflicted. I don't want to use the child as a means of pressure against him." She explained.

"Can you stop being so tangled up? We've both worked so hard, constantly doing your bidding. Can't you understand that? Can you please spare us some peace of mind instead of creating one drama after another?"

This time, I didn't try to comfort her. She wasn't a child anymore and needed to understand the logic behind it. Despite being decisive and efficient at work, why was she so oblivious to her own matters? "Why do you think you're using the baby to pressure him? This matters to both of you, not just yourself, Miss." I sternly explained.

"After meeting him, ask him about it.

If he clearly states that it's not the right time or that he isn't ready, you can decide what you will do with the baby. There won't be any problem with that. If things come to that point, I would think you should also ditch the man!"

Chapter 946 Negativity

She looked at me, utterly helpless. I knew she genuinely loved this man.

"But if you decide to give up without even talking to him, that's a big problem, Ivanna. Do you understand?"

"But... This is too embarrassing!"

"You're just two people in love who'll have a child of your own. How is that embarrassing?" I asked.

When I saw that she wasn't arguing, I continued, "Jared can also judge your character based on this incident and your actions. He might choose not to be with you because you're too self-centered or irrational. Do you understand? You're torturing us."

When she heard me say that, she suddenly became nervous and started glancing at me.

She shook my shoulder and said, "Alright, don't be mad. I was wrong. Can't you forgive me? I'm just so frustrated! I feel like he doesn't care about me, and I'm afraid to ask for his opinion."

She lowered her gaze and continued, "But when I was on the operating table, I couldn't bear to go through with the procedure. I want to keep this child, no matter what the future holds. I want to raise this child, even if I have to do it alone, and even if I might no longer believe in love."

"What happened to your confidence?"

I felt a little bitter and shouted at her. "If you keep being so indecisive, you'll lose him sooner or later! Other women will be attracted to him, even without Trinity. Jared is an attractive man. If you keep loving him like this, how will you compete with other women? You need to love with confidence, do you understand?"

"But I don't understand him. I always feel like he's so far away from me," Ivanna murmured.

As she kept venting to me, I was filled with frustration.

Suddenly, remembered Lauren and said, "Alright, stop talking. Call O Lauren quick. She's rushing back right now, and I'm sure she's anxious. Don't let anything happen to her. I really can't handle you."

As I spoke, I looked for my phone everywhere, but I remembered my bag was still on the floor at the door, its contents scattered everywhere.

As I started to pick everything up, someone knocked hard on the door. I thought it was Lauren.

I ignored the things scattered on the floor and rushed to the door to open it.

Lauren stood outside anxiously.

I didn't expect to see Oliver behind her. I didn't know what was going on. Why was she with Oliver?

Lauren stormed into the room angrily.

When she saw Ivanna in the living

room, she shouted at her. "Why wouldn't you listen to me, Ivanna? What did I tell you last night? We had an agreement. Why did you do this?" en.swhovels.net

"Lauren..." I said.

But she completely ignored me and continued to berate Ivanna. It looked like Lauren was really upset. "You really break my heart."

She turned to me. "You too, Chloe. She's dressed in such thin clothes. She has no experience with this, but don't you know what's going on? Why didn't you tell her something? If she gets too cold, it won't be good for her health. Why didn't you tell her to go back to bed?"

I could see that she was angry, and I wondered if her anger was directed at the person standing at the door.

Chapter 947 The Scoldings Continue

I couldn't help but glance at Oliver.

I thought he was the kind of man who only realized what he was missing after he lost his partner. He probably wanted Lauren right now.

"What are we supposed to do now that you're weak and sick? Why do you do this to yourself?" Lauren walked in briskly, pulled Ivanna along with her and said, "Hurry upstairs and lie down."

I sniffed disapprovingly and said to Lauren, "There's no need to blame me for this. Ask her about it yourself."

Then, I turned to Oliver and said, "Please come in, Oliver. Why are you..."

Before I could finish my sentence, Lauren said, "You should go now, Mr. Oliver. There's nothing here for you, and I'm safe. Don't worry. Thank you for escorting me back today. This is about us women, and there's no need for you to stay. Please leave."

Oliver awkwardly nodded and said to me, "Take care of her. I'm leaving."

He turned and left. He seemed compliant.

Lauren closed the door before the elevator even arrived.

I bent down to pick up the scattered items on the floor, stuffing them into my bag.

Then, I looked at Lauren interestedly and asked, "What's going on? Did you... How? Did he bring you back?"

Lauren sighed helplessly. "It's such a small world! You asked Noah to get someone to bring me back, didn't you? The person who came to pick me up was him. If I wasn't in a hurry, I would never have gotten in his car."

"Oh..."

I was confused. "You've misunderstood me. How would I know it would be him? So, he's in Bourdamun too?"

Lauren said scornfully, "Yes. Wherever I am, he's there too, like a lingering ghost."

Then, she said shortly, "Don't mind me, just take care of her. Look at her. What is she even doing here? Go upstairs, quickly."

Ivanna chuckled and grabbed Lauren's arm, playfully saying, "Okay, don't be mad. I'm perfectly fine now."

"What do you mean, fine? Is it fine for you to lose the child? How do we explain this to everyone?" Lauren pressed Ivanna fiercely.

Ivanna was completely dumbfounded by Lauren's outburst.

I wanted to laugh, but I couldn't. It was good that Lauren was dealing with Ivanna today.

"You're too stubborn, Ivanna. I've

never seen anyone like you before. We've tried hard to comfort you many times, but you still do

whatever you want. I really don't net

know what to do with you," Lauren scolded without mercy. She stopped talking when she saw Ivanna looking sorry for herself.

Lauren shook her head helplessly and said, "Get in bed. Don't let me see you do that again. What do you want to eat? I'll make it for you. I must have owed you big time in a past life."

Then she walked toward the kitchen with a warm and caring demeanor like an older sister.

To be honest, she was becoming

more and more like an older sister to

us. She wasn't like this at all when first met her. She had been a delicate, elegant woman who

seemed to only know how to enjoy life and maintain a perfect image.

But now, Lauren had become increasingly gentle in private even though she still maintained her bold and powerful appearance.

Ivanna and I exchanged looks. We suddenly burst into laughter, and it was getting harder to control ourselves by the minute.

Lauren was bewildered. She turned

around to look at us, not knowing what to say: After a while, she said

t's going on with you two? If

"What's going

you have something to say, just say

it. What's the matter? I was s worried."

Still laughing, I pointed at Ivanna and said, "Don't be mad, Lauren. Ask her. I just gave Ivanna a piece of my mind a moment ago, so she can explain herself to you." Lauren's face immediately darkened and she stared at Ivanna sternly.

Chapter 948 Having It All

When Ivanna saw Lauren's dark expression, she nudged her shoulder and said, "Alright, don't be mad anymore. I didn't do anything, and I still have the baby."

With that sentence, Ivanna silenced Lauren completely.

Lauren looked at us, her mouth agape in shock. Then she asked me, "Is that true?"

I nodded solemnly. "She didn't go through with it. When she got on the operating table, she regretted it and called it off."

Lauren was puzzled and asked me, "Didn't you go to the hospital to ask about this?"

"I asked the medical assistant, but she didn't explain things clearly. She just said a patient named Ivanna had come in for an abortion and was done with it. I thought she had done it and had gone back, but the reality is... well, you can see what happened," I explained and chuckled.

Lauren collapsed onto the sofa, looking utterly dejected. She lay there staring at the ceiling, seemingly without hope. After a while, she said, "Let's make some food. I haven't eaten all day. Every time I open my eyes, I start looking for her. If this goes on, my blood pressure will skyrocket. Living with you is like being on a roller coaster. But the good thing is, you didn't do anything dumb."

"Let's go out to eat. There's nothing at home, and what's left isn't fresh." I suggested.

"Should we go to the supermarket?" Lauren said quietly as she struggled to get up.

"I want seafood. Can I have some?" asked Ivanna.

As I was about to respond, Lauren cut in. "What seafood? Are you for real? We're half dead because of you, and you dare say you want seafood?"

Ivanna realized her mistake and blushed in embarrassment. "I'll treat you to a meal, then. Is that okay?"

Lauren was not going to let Ivanna off the hook. "It's not about who pays. You're just too stubborn. Thankfully, you stopped yourself before doing something foolish. Otherwise, I would have... sigh." As Lauren spoke, tears nearly fell from her eyes.

"I really regret what I did." Ivanna looked at her belly and then at us.

We were both speechless. What could we say? We were all best friends.

"Let's go to Fisherman's Wharf." I suggested.

Ivanna said, "I want to eat at home. It's more comfortable that way."

Lauren quickly added, "Go and change, then. We'll go to the seafood market, and we'll have a seafood feast tonight."

As soon as Lauren softened her stance, Ivanna immediately smiled with teary eyes. "I'll go get changed."

She went upstairs. Lauren and I exchanged glances and heaved a sigh of relief, feeling a little lost for words.

I quickly called Atlas to tell him what was going on so he wouldn't worry.

He asked us what we wanted to eat and if we wanted to go out for dinner.

I told him Ivanna wanted seafood, and we were thinking of going to the Fisherman's Wharf, but Ivanna preferred to eat at home.

"Alright. It's crowded there, and the

food isn't that good anyway. You guys wait at home. I'll get someone to buy the ingredients and send them over," Atlas said.

"Okay, we'll just go to the supermarket," I agreed and hung up the phone.

Lauren looked at me and asked, "What's wrong? Don't we need to go buy the seafood ourselves?"

"Atlas said he would send someone

to buy it and get it delivered to us Let's go to the supermarket and get some fresh fruits and vegetables," I suggested.

Lauren sighed. "He's the only man you can rely on."

I knew she was talking about Atlas and implying that Jared wasn't dependable.

Ivanna came downstairs after

changing She looked refreshed after

washing her face. I told her that

Atlas would buy some seafood and

send it over, and we were going to the nearby supermarket.

Ivanna laughed and said, "Looks like he found another reason to get a free meal."

I snorted disdainfully, "We're dealing with something serious here. We were really scared. What do you mean, a free meal? He's going to buy the seafood."

She quickly stuck out her tongue. "I won't let a free meal slip away!"

Chapter 949 A Strange Smile

At the supermarket, we bought a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables.

I quietly told Lauren, "I asked Atlas to find Jared."

Relieved, Lauren nodded and said, "He's the only one who can give her the answers she wants. It doesn't matter how hard we try. It will all be in vain if Jared doesn't come back. We won't be able to overcome this otherwise. Who knows? If she has another mood swing, she might create more trouble."

I nodded in agreement and whispered, "Don't tell her about this. Don't give her any hope. It would be best if we could find Jared, but we shouldn't disappoint her if we can't. If Jared finds out about this and rushes back, it'll be a pleasant surprise for her."

Lauren solemnly agreed.

As we talked, we saw Ivanna waving at us. She pointed at a large durian and said, "Let's buy one of these to take home. I really want it."

Lauren frowned and asked, "Are you sure you want to buy that? Aren't you afraid it'll make the room smell?"

"Let's buy it. It tastes great, and we can just open the windows to let the smell out." Ivanna had a greedy look on her face.

Lauren just rolled her eyes and said, "Buy it, then. I hope your baby won't come out smelling like durian though."

The three of us burst into laughter.

At that moment, someone bumped into me, making me stagger.

When I turned around, I met eyes with the woman who had bumped into me. She smiled faintly and walked away without apologizing.

But that smile of hers was strange.

Her gaze was cold and mocking, and had more than a touch of ill intent.

I stood there, stunned, as I watched her walk swiftly away.

Lauren looked at me while staring at the departing figure and asked, "Who was that? Do you know her?"

I shook my

head, looking at the

gradually disappearing figure. Shee did seem vaguely familiar. "Why do I

Nike I've seen her befo Sheet.

Ivanna looked at the fleeting figure too, and said, "Why does that person look so much like Harmony?"

I exclaimed, "Exactly!"

Lauren said, "Didn't you see her face?"

I nodded in surprise and said, "I did The way she looked at me was strange, and her smile was sinister, but she didn't look anything like Harmony."

Ivanna speculated, "Could she have had plastic surgery?"

Her words shocked both me and Lauren.

As we waited in line to pay after we finished shopping, I deliberately kept an eye out for Harmony, but didn't see her anywhere.

When we returned to Ivanna's house, Atlas's people had already delivered two big bags of fresh seafood.

We thought that Atlas might join us for dinner, but he called to say he had business to attend to and wouldn't be coming back.

When Ivanna saw what time it was, she suggested I go pick Ava up and bring her here for dinner.

I had no choice but to head to the kindergarten to get Ava and Jenny. Then I told my mom we would be back later for dinner.

When the kids arrived, the house immediately became more lively.

My daughter's chatter kept Ivanna laughing uproariously, while Lauren, who was busy in the kitchen,

complained, "Can you believe this

troublemaker?"

I quickly joined Lauren in the kitchen and helped her cook while we continued our banter.

Despite the chaos, we were both genuinely happy. Ivanna still had her baby, and we were all having a good time.

Chapter 950 The Man on Their Minds

After our banter, I told Lauren about Liora, leaving her astonished. "Looks like Liora really is pushing her luck. She's reckless; do you think she might have hidden Melanie somewhere, or has she silenced her for good?"

"It's not that extreme. Atlas says it's not time to deal with Melanie yet. Anyway, I'm sure she feels like she's in prison, no matter where she is. Even if she is outside, she wouldn't dare show up anywhere." Lauren sighed. "She's made her own bed, and now she has to lie in it. Melanie's definitely not a good person. She's just as bad as Liora."

Talking about Liora reminded me of Stella. I told Lauren about Stella's situation, whispering, "I think Jared isn't with Trinity. But I can't figure out how Trinity got involved with Stella."

I was willing to confide in Lauren about certain things, especially since she had considerable influence in Foswood. Knowing some insiders would help me greatly.

Lauren looked at me and speculated, "I suspect there must be a business deal between her and Stella."

I nodded. "I agree."

At that moment, Ava ran in and asked, "When can we eat? I'm starving!"

We shared a smile, and Lauren remarked, "That little girl's a clever one."

At dinner, the three of us and the two little ones, ate, chatted, and played, nearly turning the house upside down.

I noticed that Ivanna's eyes were fixed on Ava as she laughed with her hand resting on her belly. I assumed that Ivanna was thinking about her future baby. Her absent-minded smile hinted at her daydreams. Lauren and I exchanged glances, silently sharing a sense of relief.

As it got late, the two little ones grew sleepy. I made a quick call to my mom, telling her we'd sleep here tonight and I'd take the kids to kindergarten tomorrow morning.

Just as we were about to leave, there was an urgent knock on the door. We exchanged glances again.

Lauren said, "It's late. I'm guessing your man is here to pick you up."

I shook my head confidently. "No. Atlas wouldn't knock like that." Lauren and I looked at Ivanna. Ivanna suddenly sat up straight.

Lauren hurried to open the door, and to our surprise, there stood

Jared the one we had been waiting for. He looked weary. His crisp shirt was wrinkled, giving him an O exhausted appearance.

His eyes went past Lauren as he peered into the room. Atlas stood behind Jared, smiling and observing my reaction.

I couldn't help but feel a little

doubtful, even as I saw Jared in the flesh, which was exactly what I had wished for. That was quick. We had agreed on 24 hours, but it hadn't

even been 10 hours.

It seemed Atlas needed a talking-to; he played too loose with his plans. Despite seeing Jared right in front of me, the rapid turnaround left me skeptical.

Lauren stepped aside, allowing Jared to walk in. He quickly approached Ivanna, who was sitting on the sofa, staring blankly as the man drew nearer.

When Jared reached out toward her, Ivanna erupted in a hysterical roar. "Get out! I don't want to see you!"

Her outburst frightened Ava, who clung to my leg. Even Jenny was scared.

I knew Ivanna's pent-up rage had finally burst forth.

I glanced at Lauren, signaling to her.

We packed our belongings discreetly

and quietly retreated, leaving the

two

of them to deal with the storm that was brewing in their hearts.