

Divorce 981

Chapter 981 The Past Cannot Be Looked Back Upon

Lauren shook her head and said, "No, how could I take advantage of Chelsea? Besides, I don't have the time or interest to manage those things."

"But Chelsea doesn't have the money, right?" I asked, and suddenly, it became clear to me.

Smiling, she said, "After we completed all the procedures, I told Chelsea to take over the house. However, Chelsea told me that she couldn't afford it. I suggested getting a loan because the bank had a support policy then. I secretly had her go to Oliver, and the loan was arranged."

This turned out just as I expected.

"Chelsea has solved all her worries because it was a no-interest policy, and the principal could be repaid in five years. She doesn't have to deal with the landlord, and repaying the loan was easy! In the end, she got this house. Chelsea gained with no loss," Lauren said casually.

I smiled and said, "No wonder Chelsea loves you so much! Why didn't I meet you earlier? When I was in the construction business, my funds occasionally ran dry. It was tough for me at that time." Lauren smirked and said, "You're fortunate you didn't know me back then. If you did, Matthew might have conned you even more."

As soon as she spoke, both of us burst into laughter.

Lauren continued, "That's how life is. True contentment brings lasting joy! Look at yourself now. You're living much better than you were with Matthew, right?"

I nodded and said, "I'm thankful to have Atlas in my life! I didn't anticipate such happiness."

Then, I asked, "Actually, being with Oliver...you had a good opportunity to make money back then! Be frank, do you regret it?"

Lauren shook her head faintly. "Honestly, I'm not interested in money. You might not believe me when I say this, but money is just a number to me. If I were interested in it, I would be wealthy, as quite a few people sent me money back then!"

I completely believed her, as those people were pervasive.

Of course, if I were in her shoes, I would have done the same. That's how business people are they'll do anything to achieve their goals.

"What attracted me to him was his

calmness, modesty, and status. won't deny that I enjoyed being superior, with everyone flattering

me ve always been vain, longing to

be admired."

I knew what Lauren said was true because we had a genuine friendship. She had protected me and stood up for me.

I will never forget what Lauren has done for me in this lifetime. Sincerely speaking, she was the sole reason I was still alive.

Lauren continued to speak in a gentle tone, "Money isn't everything, although it's essential. The feeling he left me with was unachievable by wealth."

I nodded, fully understanding the kind of feeling she was talking about.

"What's the big deal about being rich? Even with money, people still lower themselves to please others correct? Lauren then said bitterly "But it wasn't until that day that had completely woken up from my dream."

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Whenever she brought up this subject, I knew Lauren was having terrible difficulty finding a way to communicate her resentment.

"I understood that this kind of feeling

is not mine. Receiving love and

praise from others, yet the one expressing it all has little regard for you. This type of humiliation hurts. It really hurts!"

Lauren looked pale as she gazed at me. Oliver appeared to have caused her great pain.

Although I couldn't comprehend the feelings deep within her, I knew the pain of being undervalued, especially after she had given up all her dignity.

I patted her hand and advised, "Lauren, don't overthink it. Don't hold onto this feeling in your heart all the time. You can only start anew when you let it go."

Lauren looked at me with a wry smile and replied, "Start anew? I have never thought about starting anew. My life is a mess, and where is the opportunity to start over?"

Chapter 982 The Real Ruthless Person

I did not particularly enjoy hearing her say that.

I asked her, "Lauren, are you eighty years old? Why are you feeling so depressed when you are only in your thirties? Give him another chance, allow him to treat you well, and show him how much you are loved."

I gave her a fierce look and said, "It's true that Oliver is regretful. He has been searching for you nonstop since you disappeared! He has gotten thin, and it shows his concern for you. Try to forget what happened! Isn't that better?"

Lauren shook her head slowly. "It is impossible."

My heart ached to see her attitude.

I asked as I gazed at her, "Since you claim it's impossible, why not start over by finding someone who loves you? Must you torment yourself?"

I had wanted to discuss this with Lauren for a long time. Oliver would be best for her. Despite not being a businessman, he was a well-respected individual. They previously shared an understanding and made an excellent combination of their respective skills and looks.

She grinned mockingly and said, "You make it sound so easy, but it's just too hard. Never mind that I'm in my thirties, even if I were to consider my reputation, do you think I still have such a chance?"

She gave me a serious look before saying, "Being by his side for a decade, and then becoming a mistress to the point of caring for his terminally ill wife. In the end, she gave me a slap right before she died. That swat woke me up!"

Her eyes stared at me, filled with profound feelings.

Of course, I know Oliver's late wife was a ruthless person. It was an invisible, unseen slap that shattered all hopes.

"Who in the entire city doesn't know about my remarkable achievement? Do I have the prestige to find someone who likes me? Who would like me?"

She laughed after saying that, but her gaze conveyed a deep sadness. My heart ached to see her like this.

I had to admit that I did not want to see her in this state. I liked watching her laugh and talk gracefully, being energetic, and standing up for others.

She now seemed to dislike social gatherings. I was aware that the wound in her heart had not yet healed.

I knew she frequented the pub to drown her sorrows, but I did not want to give her too much advice. I even avoided discussing such subjects out of concern that they would hurt her.

"I already dare to face the world with

my head held high. Chloe, do you know why I desperately tried to persuade Ivanna to keep the child? Because you know how much I long for a chance to be a mother!"

My eyes immediately got wet as Lauren stared into them.

"But I am aware of how extravagant this is. I've lost this opportunity that any woman can have!" Her head dropped suddenly, and tears streamed down her cheeks.

"The reason went abroad was to live and die independently. After getting tired of wandering and seeing, I wanted to find a place I enjoyed. I wanted to die young and bury myself there.

"In my next life, I hope to marry someone who loves me, have children, and live a normal life," Lauren murmured, her head down.

I felt intense heartache and grabbed her hand.

"However, when I was saved and revived, I began to believe that perhaps my suffering in this world was over should strive to act like a dignified person once more because I still have you all." Her smile flashed on her face.

"Too many people are cursing me," she whispered as she wiped away her tears. "I want them to realize that even if they keep cursing me, I can face it."

Lauren laughed as she spoke. The laughter sounded lonely and bitter.

At that moment, the tiny room's door was abruptly shoved open.

Chapter 983 Strange Atmosphere

A hoarse voice spoke, "Lauren, I know I was wrong. Give me another chance, and I can give you everything you said. We can get married, have children, and live the life you want!"

Both of us were stunned. Lauren turned her face away, quickly wiping her tears.

Standing at the door was Oliver Hansen.

Neither of us knew how long he had been standing there. However, it appeared that he overheard our conversation.

The three of us stayed silent, and only our breathing could be heard.

After a while, it was Lauren who broke the silence. She looked at Oliver with a distant expression and said, "I don't want to see you. Can you please not disturb us while we're having dinner? Thank you!" Mr. Oliver glanced at me and apologized, "Ms. Chloe, could you please excuse us? I'd like to talk to Lauren."

I quickly nodded and said, "Of course!"

As I was about to get up and leave, Lauren grabbed my arm and coldly said, "Chloe, if you walk out of this room today, we are no longer friends. Our relationship ends here." She then stared at me while gradually releasing her hold on my hand.

Feeling uneasy, I glanced at Mr. Oliver and chose to stay seated without moving. Because I knew, in this matter, Lauren wouldn't compromise, even if I were her best friend.

Mr. Oliver, understanding the situation, stopped making things difficult for me. He spoke, "Lauren, please don't be like this. I've reflected on myself, and I know I was wrong from the beginning. It's my fault, and I've let you down!

"In the days without you, I truly understood my own heart. My life can't be without you! You are already a part of me! Without you, my life has no meaning. I..."

"Sorry, Mr. Oliver, please don't disturb us during our meal!" Lauren said in a detached manner, "Your life has nothing to do with me! Please have some self-respect!"

Mr. Oliver walked into the small room, determined not to leave. He looked at Lauren and said, "Lauren, I know I've caused you pain. Please forgive me. I promise to devote the rest of my life to you, to care for you, and to never again let you suffer! I can do it!"

"But I no longer need someone to care for me," Lauren said decisively.

Lauren looked at me coldly and asked, "Can we change to another place to eat?"

I looked awkwardly at Oliver.

Lauren said to me disapprovingly, "You don't need to look at him. find it

at, you don't h

If you

answer me. I can leave."

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In my helplessness, I looked at Lauren. Just as I was about to speak, she grabbed her bag from behind her and stood up.

I quickly got up, grabbed the bag, and said to her, "Lauren, don't be angry. I can eat anything."

Oliver reached out and grabbed her arm. "Lauren! Don't be like this... I truly miss you!"

His tone was full of pain and a hint of resentment

Lauren forcefully shook off his hand, angrily saying, "Enough! Please stop making useless gestures. I won't repeat the same mistakes! The

woman who used to stay by your side has also died!" e P

"Sorry," I mouthed at Oliver before quickly following Lauren downstairs.

I wept in my heart. My delicious

meal was disrupted, and I was so hungry that my stomach was growling. The food about to reach my mouth was just messed up like that!

To my surprise, Granny was near the stairs with the food. Without waiting for her to ask, Lauren had already rushed out.

Greedily, I told her, "Granny, pack it for us. I'm taking it away!"

Granny agreed with a nod, quickly turned back, and efficiently packed the food in a container at the counter.

I thanked her, stuffed some money, and hurriedly chased after Lauren.

Chapter 984 A Strange Woman

Lauren was striding along the street alone as I chased after her. I quickly grabbed my things and got into the car, swiftly starting my car to catch up to her.

I parked my car close to her and honked. She turned her head and glanced at me, opening the car door.

She looked grumpy, and I said, "Why are you mad at me? I didn't ask him to come. My meal got ruined, and I'm not even complaining! I'm starving now. Did I do anything wrong?"

Knowing what she had done was improper, she sighed softly and said, "Let me join you for some food. It's close by. Pull over, and I'll drive!"

We switched places, and she drove directly to the restaurant she mentioned.

It dawned on me that it was the "Marioposa" restaurant near Ivanna's workplace.

Their food was delicious, indeed. I did, however, also bring the takeaway with me.

After we got into Marioposa, I grinned and said, "This is such a fortunate coincidence. I can savor both meals?"

Lauren looked helpless.

I asked mischievously, "Lauren, if I hadn't followed your advice just now and left, would you have stopped considering me your best friend?" She gave me a severe look and said, "If a friend can't be in my shoes, is that the kind of person we can still be friends with?"

"Thank goodness I'm timid," I murmured as I stuck out my tongue at her.

She glared at me, looking calm and composed.

We ordered several dishes in Marioposa, satisfying my ever-growing stomach. That was when I finally felt happy and satisfied.

I had no idea how Oliver would feel, but I sensed that reconciling could be complicated.

After the meal, we left the restaurant while chatting and strolling.

We were in a small neighborhood and noticed numerous clothing boutiques. Lauren dragged me into one.

Surprisingly, the clothes in the little

boutique were nice. Despite being a small-brand retailer, the designs were distinctive, and I enjoyed some pieces.

I found maternity wear that would be very suitable for Ivanna. Just as my

handed that piece of clothing,

a swifter hand yanked it away.

I glanced at the woman who took the clothing. I was surprised to see that the woman was the one who had run into me that day in the store!

Her smile was hard to read as she looked at me.

I did not hold back and asked, "Miss, do you know the 'first come, first serve' rule?"

Her smile deepened, and her eyes were full of provocation, saying, "You were here first?"

I recognized this voice very well, but as I looked closely at her face today, I was positive I had never seen it before.

I asked, "Who are you? Do we know each other? Or did you mistake someone else for me?"

I asked this question because when Ivanna saw her, she said she looked like Harmony.

"You do realize that who I am has nothing to do with you? I just have to get what I want, that's all," she remarked maliciously.

I kept staring at her, thinking that her words seemed to have some profound meaning.

Lauren observed our impasse from a distance, walked over slowly, and continued to examine her closely.

The woman ignored Lauren's questioning stare.

Lauren asked, "This piece of clothing

does matter to us, though. It's ironic

because what you stated also

applies to us. If we like it, we won't

let to t go!"

After saying that, she snatched the clothes and shouted, "Salesperson, pack it up!"

Chapter 985 A Mysterious Woman

The woman's eyes narrowed and she gave Lauren a hostile glance.

Lauren lifted her eyebrows in defiance.

The woman smiled with disdain and said, "This is a case of birds of a feather. Both of you are skilled at seducing men. You are truly the degenerates of society!" These remarks implied that she must be familiar with us.

The woman shifted her gaze to my face and sarcastically said, "You should learn the lesson from her bad example. Behave yourself!"

I said confidently, "Don't be so snarky in front of me, no matter who you are. You will only embarrass yourself!"

The woman said, "Well, let's wait and see. Don't be too confident."

"You behave in such a weird way, yet I'm not afraid. You should be more sensible and avoid looking for trouble. It's better to keep your mouth shut," I warned her.

"Good luck to you!" She glanced at me threateningly, then turned and walked out of the boutique.

The salesperson in the boutique had already packed our items.

Lauren asked the salesperson, "Do you know this woman?"

The salesperson shook her head and replied, "No, I don't know her. She probably saw you come in and followed you!" The salesperson looked at me while saying this. She had observed it. After we settled the bill, we left the boutique. Lauren frowned and asked me, "Who is she exactly?"

"When you were talking to her, I observed her carefully. She doesn't seem to be the Harmony I know. Harmony is not as cunning as her!" I had to say.

"Moreover, this person seems to be very familiar with both of us!" Lauren said it with certainty.

"But we've never met her. Is there someone like that that you can recall?" I asked.

Lauren confidently shook her head. Although I don't know her either, she resembles Harmony in height, walking style, and eyes.

I gathered my thoughts and said to Lauren, "Whatever! We can't let her affect our mood!"

Lauren smiled. "Right! Let's continue!"

As soon as they left, my phone rang. It was Atlas. I nodded at Lauren before leaving the store and picking up the phone.

"Have you had lunch?" he asked softly.

"Yes, I ate with Lauren! How about you?" I asked sweetly, feeling genuinely delighted to hear him.

"I'm having lunch with Mr. Brown, summing up some things!" His voice was very gentle.

"Oh, you're with him!" I exclaimed.

"Want to join us?" he asked.

"No, you take care of it. I'll stroll around with Lauren then head back to the company."

After hanging up, Lauren teased me, "You two can't be separated even for a moment! Inseparable!"

"He and Mr. Brown are discussing

the case together. Besides, isn't Liora still there?" I had always tried to avoid being too affectionate in front of Lauren. After all, deep down, she was still healing.

At that moment, Johnson's call came in. I released Lauren's arm and answered.

"Ms. Chloe, Mr. Matthew wants to go to the company tomorrow, and I-I wanted to ask for your opinion!" Johnson's tone was a bit hesitant.

I held the phone and gave it some thought. "I don't have any objections. The company is his, and he should think for himself."

"Mr. Matthew asked for my opinion, so... that's why I called you! Those who perjured themselves in court..."

"These people absolutely cannot

stay, not a

à single one," I said. Afteret

these words, I suddenly felt . Wasn't I still intervening? belongs to

"Your opinion is the right one,

Johnson. You know Matthew andet

Ardora Construction the best.

Have

faith in your judgment! Any decision you make is the right one!"

Before hanging up, I couldn't help but ask, "How did you arrange things for him?"

Chapter 986 Stay Calm

I knew several of the Murphy family's properties had been sealed, and Matthew was homeless.

John understood what I was asking and immediately responded, "He's been renting a small house for now. He says he doesn't care about any other property. He just wants to reclaim the small house you two used to live in."

A wry smile twitched at the corner of my mouth. I silently sighed at his realization that had come too late.

"I'm hanging up." I told John.

Laurie realized it was John on the phone, so she turned to me and asked, "What's going on?"

"Let's go back to the company. We'll talk in the car," I said. In truth, I felt uneasy.

Matthew had regained his freedom, but seeing him in a predicament like this worried me.

I was concerned that Matthew would have a hard time in the future. He was like a giant baby who refused to grow up. Once he calmed down, he would regret this if he still had a conscience.

I explained John's intentions to Laurie. She glanced at me, and I could tell what she was about to say. I spoke first. "I won't get involved! Do you think I have nothing better to do?"

Laurie chuckled and said, "I'm not saying you shouldn't get involved, but you need to weigh the pros and cons. I explained the logic to you at the very start. If you keep meddling, he'll only become more dependent on you. Eventually, it will affect your relationship with Atlas. Think about it!"

Laurie's words were straightforward but reasonable.

I nodded. I know that this was the kind of thing a real friend worried about.

I believed that this wouldn't come between me and Atlas, but I couldn't take advantage of the situation.

Laurie suddenly looked at me and asked, "What if Ardora can't sustain itself?"

"They'll have to deal with that themselves!" I said decisively.

"Don't you want to acquire it?" Laurie asked tentatively.

"I used to think about that just to vent my anger. But I don't want to anymore. It doesn't benefit or help Tanum Corporation in any way, and I won't act impulsively. I'm sure that acquiring Ardora Construction would only be a burden! What do I need it for?" I replied.

Laurie relaxed into her seat, gave me a thumbs up, and said, "Keep that mindset. Stay calm!"

It was a decision I had made today. I could handle the follow-up work for Matthew, but it would take too much energy, and the benefits would not outweigh the costs!

Back at the company, Carol handed me two invitations. I glanced at them casually. They were invitations to a business networking event in the second half of the year. I placed them on the table. In reality, events like that didn't really benefit us.

"Will you go back to Amethyst Apartments after work tonight? It's just the right time to visit that lady. Didn't you buy her some clothes?" Laurie looked at me and asked.

I knew she was talking about Ivanna,

so I grinned and said, "I need to go back to Pleca Park early. We dealt with something important today. The two old folks at home will want to know what happened. If we don't go back, they'll get anxious!"

"That's true. After all, this has been causing a stir for so long." Laurie nodded. "You're all set! I'll find something to do too."

I quickly suggested, "How about you

visit the market area, Laurie? Eleanor

has been discussing some door-related business these days, and don't know how it's going. Could you check it out for me?"

She immediately nodded. "Okay. I'll go right away."

Throughout the afternoon, I thought about Matthew's situation. I told Laurie that wouldn't involve myself in Matthew's business, but deep down, knew that was to reassure

her and stop her from worryin SLIKE

about me. Too many things were related to me. I couldn't just let them go.

When Atticus called, I composed myself and quickly answered. "Hello, Atticus."

"Where are you?" Atticus asked.

"In the office," I replied. "Are you still in Foswood?"

"I'll come over," he said without answering my question.

"Alright. I'll wait for you." I replied.

After that, we hung up.

It had been a while since I had last seen Atticus. I hadn't had time to see him since he mentioned he had returned to Foswood.

He soon made his way to my office as he was close by.

Chapter 987 The Show Is About to Begin

Atticus walked to my office and sat across from me.

"Have you been in Foswood all this time?" I asked. I knew he hadn't attended the court session today, but I was sure he had some representatives there.

"Yeah," he responded lightly, "You changed the strategy?"

I knew he was asking about the court trial.

"Melvern Sunny stepped in for her, so we could only resolve the issue with Matthew, though it may not benefit her," I said. "You were right. Melvern is coming for you!" "He's afraid I'll break free," Atticus pointed out.

"But Liora has already been cast aside. I just received accurate information this morning that Melvern's source of funds is unclean, so it looks like he's adopting a two-pronged approach. Atlas has promised to support you wholeheartedly, too," I didn't hide Atlas's meaning.

Atticus's eyes brightened.

"Please thank him for me," Atticus said politely.

"Melvern hasn't found the best way to deal with you yet. Otherwise, he wouldn't hesitate to let go of Liora. But Matthew was released in court today. Liora knows she's useless to Melvern now and even ruined his investment!" I grinned.

"That's not important. What's important is, do you still want Ardora?" he asked.

"What does my decision to acquire Ardora have to do with him?" I asked.

"If you want it, he'll use Ardora to pull you into the circle," Atticus said.

"I won't get involved in their fights. His investment is for Liora, and I have nothing to do with it!" I replied, "Since Matthew was released in court, he's broken free from Liora's trap!"

"Melvern is looking for support and to be someone to control from behind the scenes. He wants Echelon Group, and Ardora is the stepping stone. He seems to prefer you. Don't forget, you have ATL Empire behind you!" Atticus revealed.

"Does he think Atlas can't handle it?" I scoffed. "And I don't want Ardora!" I replied firmly.

Atticus was here to find out what I was thinking. He thought I wanted Ardora, and since Liora wanted Ardora, too, I couldn't let her succeed.

But she had no reason to claim she had invested in Ardora.

And Melanie's time had also come to an end.

Atticus nodded and smiled. "This time, I'll ensure he leaves and can't return!"

"He has several identities unknown to us. You'd better be careful and subtle," I reminded Atticus.

Atticus wasn't surprised. It appeared that he understood his rival as well.

"Regardless of his identities, trying

to control Foswood will not work out for him if he makes the same. mistakes twice, I'll be waiting!
Atticus said confidently, showing that he was well-prepared.

"I can rest assured, then. And you don't have to worry about Liora as well. It's only a matter of time before she faces justice. It just depends on how much of a rush you're in," grinned as I spoke, glancing at

Atticus. I found him very interesting.

This problem had taken up most of my youth for over a decade, but I continued entertaining it.

"Oh, by the way, Atticus! Have you sold those houses? All 50,000 square meters?" I asked. "What do you mean?" asked Atticus.

"If still some are available, reserve three for me," I told him. "Bigger ones!"

"Well, it's up to you. I suppose you need more than one or two," He said straightforwardly.

"If you really can't secure the follow-up project in San Cosbech..."

"Don't worry about that. Remember, you need to do a good job with the follow-up design. It'll definitely be mine. Melvern won't be able to intervene since he's now in

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Foswood," Atticus assured me

confidently.

"But hasn't he handed over the design to us yet?" I questioned with some doubt.

"He was waiting for the court trial to decide his next step. If everything goes smoothly, he'll be here in a few days," Atticus seemed confident in his victory.

I smiled and said mischievously, "Looks like you're bulletproof!"

We chatted for a while longer before he got up to leave. Before he left, he reminded me to find a way to let him review the initial draft of the design.

As I watched Atticus walk toward the elevator, I thought he had already set up the game.

I was looking forward to seeing how he performed.

Chapter 988 Things Are Getting Serious

It seemed like a great show was about to begin.

But I had already decided to stay out of it and watch this time.

After work, John came in, which I had expected because I knew he had something to tell me. But I had not expected that he would come over right after our phone call. I sensed he had some doubts.

I knew John was on my side, but it was unlikely he didn't have any affection for Matthew after all those years they spent together. John was an intelligent guy. Melanie might have influenced him, but he was still well aware of whom he owed favors.

John had a plan in mind. Our conversation was straightforward, and there was no need to beat around the bush.

He looked at me and said, "I haven't told him all the facts, Ms. Chloe. I was worried he wouldn't be able to accept so much all at once!"

I pondered momentarily and told John, "This is something he needs to face sooner or later. It would be better if he found out sooner."

John continued, "I'm ready. I'll spend time with him to support him and talk to him. I went out to buy some groceries, so I took the opportunity to come see you."

John knew what I wanted, but it was hard for him.

"He has no chance of turning things around right now. There's trouble ahead for the issues in Muborough. Communication is needed to resume the construction and depends on the development company's thoughts.

"After all, this has affected their sales. If they can be flexible about it, Mr. Matthew will be better off. If not, things could get difficult for Mr. Matthew. The situation is looking grim."

I certainly understood this. Liora was the one who had worked on all those projects. If Liora decided to interfere, it could cause a lot of trouble.

I reminded him, "First, let Matthew stabilize; don't rush him. Liora could still be up to something. Matthew will be in trouble if she colludes with the developers over there!"

John immediately caught on. "You won't let Liora off, will you, Ms. Chloe?"

"That depends on what she does," I replied disdainfully.

"Even if construction resumes, there are problems with funds and other aspects. Mr Matthew's past troubles and the cases involving Muborough are tough. Even the banks refuse to help. Who else can help him?" John said with concern.

"To be honest, Mr. Matthew cares about his reputation. I... I'm worried about him... I'm afraid he won't be able to handle it," John said, glancing at me.

I didn't interrupt, and John

continued, "It won't be easy to clean

up this mess. I need to figure out how to solve the problem with his house. The place where Grace Murphy lives is too big and probably won't be easy to transfer. M

Matthew also says it'll be enough as

long as he can keep the smaller

one."

"I have a suggestion for you. You can introduce Matthew to Adrian. I can help you with that. But I can't get involved in anything else!" I made myself clear.

I continued, "Would you pass him a

message about our child? It's about her household registration. Please let him know it was my decision. don't want him to repeat his

belire

mother's mistakes and adopt a child who has a family for no reason. And anyway, the adopted child testified for him at the crucial moment!"

I brought this up on purpose. I assumed Atlas used this point when handling Arton's case.

I was very grateful to Atlas. He had silently resolved the issue of getting Arton to testify. I had always worried about getting him to show up for court.

Atlas had thought about my circumstances and taken care of me. He wouldn't let anything go if it troubled me in any way.

John nodded earnestly as he listened to me. I also gave him a few points of advice about Ardora.

John asked, "Is it true that you don't want Ardora, Ms. Chloe?"

I firmly said, "No, I don't."

After John understood my meaning, he got up and left.

It was fortunate that John was still there for Matthew. He was loyal and could take care of things for him.

I called Atlas after work. He excused himself, saying he had to attend to some business and couldn't pick me up. He promised to return later and asked me to return to Fremont Bay.

I parked my car in the parking lot when I returned at lunchtime.

As soon as I stepped out of the elevator, I saw Michelle in the lobby.

Chapter 989 True Intentions

When I saw Michelle Manson, I was impressed with her persistence despite myself.

I moaned quietly, "Oh, she looks like she works here!"

She noticed me as soon as I walked out and quickly approached me.

Coincidentally, my phone rang with a call from Laurie, who wanted to tell me that Michelle was still downstairs.

I could only helplessly reply, "You're a little late with that information."

She joked, "Well, good luck to you then! Or should I come back and rescue you?"

I smiled faintly. "There's no need for that. I need to face her at some point."

Michelle was standing next to me as I said that.

I ended the call and looked at her unfriendly, asking, "Just get straight to the point. Don't beat around the bush. You're putting pressure on me. Speak! What is it?"

Michelle grinned shamelessly and said, "Actually, it's nothing urgent. I just wanted to invite you for a meal and a chat."

"If it's nothing urgent, let's skip the meal. I'm busy every day and barely spend time at home. On the rare occasions when I do have free time, I prioritize spending it with my family. You know I have a daughter. don't have the luxury of staying out," I said in a down-to-earth manner.

She had joked about me being a woman with a child during a gossip session at the class reunion, but she seemed to have forgotten those nonsensical remarks. She was bothering me again as if nothing had happened. I wasn't surprised that no one liked her. She was shameless.

I continued, "Anyway, I don't think we have anything to discuss, Michelle. You come here every day blocking my door like it's your workplace, and it's annoying! If you have something to say, just say it. Otherwise, don't interfere with me!"

"There is something!" I had expressed my dissatisfaction so clearly that she realized I would not be easy to deal with, so she had no choice but to say that.

I looked at her helplessly. "Just tell me what it is!"

Michelle replied with a fawning smile, "My boyfriend wants to get to know you. After all, we were classmates. He wants to invite you out for a chat and see if we can do anything together. We're all friends, and I'm sure things are simpler when people are close, right?"

I chuckled and said, "I'm in the field of architecture. I'm not involved in traditional business. What could we possibly have to discuss? Even if he is in the building materials business, the materials in my current projects have been specified in the contracts and can't be substituted. I don't know what we could do together."

I immediately shut down any possibility of working with her.

Michelle grabbed me and said, "Come on, Chloe! Why are you being so difficult? just want him to get to know you We might be able to work together in the future. I'm not asking you to give him a project right away. Just think of this as a chance for you two to get to know each other!"

"That's impossible! Didn't you say I relied on other people for my projects?" I said.

Michelle's face stiffened, smiled, and said, "Cut me some slack, Chloe. I have high hopes for this boyfriend of mine. Can't you help me out a little?"

"As I said, I know you, and you know Atlas. If he can't work with you, what about Atlas?" Michelle spoke as if it were a matter of course.

I finally understood her true intentions. She wanted to use me to connect with Atlas. She was audacious!

I smiled helplessly and said, "Really, Michelle?"

"Atlas never attends social events like this, and I would never do something like this either. We don't interfere or influence each other's business. Why are you making things difficult for me? You'd better drop this idea!"

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Michelle's expression turned slightly unpleasant, but since she had asked me for a favor, she could only force a smile and continued, "Cut me some slack. Just meet my boyfriend once and have a meal together. I promise not to bother you again. I know I shouldn't be here daily, but I've been here all week. Just help me this once, just this once..."

She clung to me as she begged. The scent of her cheap perfume was unbearable.

Chapter 990 Undeterred Chasing

Michelle held onto my arm and wouldn't let go, pressing herself against me.

"Let go of me! If you have something to say, just say it" I impatiently pulled my arm away.

Her clinging annoyed me, and I had to compromise. "Alright, I'll tell you when I'm free!"

When Michelle saw me relenting, she quickly grabbed me again, cautiously asking, "How about today?"

I pulled my arm away again. "I have plans today."

"No? What about tomorrow? Tomorrow, it is!" She seized the opportunity and refused to let go.

I glanced at her, wanting to break free as soon as possible. I had had enough of her antics.

"Fine!" I said reluctantly.

But as soon as the word left my mouth, I almost bit off my tongue.

I just wanted to get her away from me. When Michelle heard me agree, she happily exclaimed, "You're the best! I'm glad we were classmates!"

I cursed her in my heart. 'How shameless!'

"I'm leaving now!" I finished speaking and walked toward the exit, not wanting to stay a moment longer.

Behind me, Michelle shouted, "You'd better bring Atlas with you tomorrow, Chloe! We want to meet both of you!"

Her shout caught the attention of those leaving work, and they all looked at her in surprise.

I walked quickly toward the exit, thinking, forget about it! Atlas wasn't someone you could just meet whenever you wanted. Back at Fremont Bay, I was surprised to see my dad sitting in the living room as I hadn't seen him there in a long time. He was waiting for me.

When he saw me come in, he stood up and smiled. "I'm done with work!"

I sat beside him and said, "Why aren't you working today?"

He said, "We finished early today. There wasn't much to do. The new plants haven't arrived yet. You finished work early, too. Where's Atlas?"

I chuckled inwardly. Dad might have waited here the whole time if I had not returned early today.

"I didn't have much to do either, so I left work early to come home. I had no plans for the evening and wanted to have dinner with you guys," I said.

I always thought my parents treated me pretty well. I was the apple of their eye.

If I had never discovered that I was once the real Stella White, I think I would have had a happy, ordinary life under their care.

But I was the real Stella White; they had deprived me of those memories.

"Hmm! Looks like my daughter is all grown up." My dad sighed.

His words pierced my heart. I had lost my memories, but their

memories of me must still be intact. However, it was clear that they were still very fond of me.

I had no reason not to forgive them.

I quietly took a deep breath, regaining my composure. I asked "Have you seen the news?"

Matthew's case has been

concluded. He was released on the

spet."

I was sure he knew, but he probably didn't know how to bring it up.

My mom came out of the kitchen, wiping her hands. "You're back early today! Where's Atlas?"

"He had something to do. He'll be back later." I lounged on the sofa lazily.

My dad leaned forward to look at me, asking, "Is he okay?"

"We have a lot of things to deal with. I need to wait for him to come back to handle it. It's quite a mess!" I said.

My dad's face grew serious. He said, "I wanted to tell you that this should end now that Matthew has been declared innocent, Chloe.

"You've been kind enough. No

ex-wife could do what you did. You

don't owe anything to the Murphy family. You were very generous, especially considering what he to you in the past. I believe you've done right by your coce. As

for what comes next,

be

careful and don't..."

"I understand, Dad. Don't worry," I interrupted him.

My dad nodded with relief and didn't say anything more.

But I added, "I've made things very clear to Matthew's assistant, and that's the end."

"Hmm! I'm sure I can trust you to handle things," My dad nodded.

He wouldn't have brought up any of this if he trusted me!