

Mr. Edwards' Unraveled Life

Chapter 841

Bonian pressed the keys into her hand. "It's no use to me."

His voice was light, but the gesture was real.

Jayde hesitated—then pocketed them. A car would help. No more depending on others for rides or Lele's drop-offs.

Franklin wasn't done. "And since you won... the Pearl Harbor project's yours."

Jayde stared, stunned.

Bonian wasn't.

He offered Franklin a nod and led her out.

In the car, Jayde blurted, "You knew, didn't you?"

"Knew what?" Bonian glanced over, unreadable. "That this was a setup to pick partners? Franklin doesn't throw parties just for fun."

Of course he didn't. And Bonian had played the game perfectly.

Jayde fell silent, watching the city roll by.

No wonder Bonian stayed with the company. He was a strategist through and through.

They wrapped the business in a day. Jayde assumed they'd head home—but Bonian had other plans.

The hotel manager found her the next morning. "Miss Leung, Mr. Lepage is waiting. He booked the entire beach."

She blinked. "He what?"

The manager smiled. "He said it's for you."

Embarrassed but intrigued, Jayde changed and went down.

The sea stretched out in front of her, gulls wheeling, waves curling against the shore.

“Like it?” Bonian’s voice beside her.

“It’s gorgeous,” she said before she could stop herself. Her cheeks warmed.

She tried to pivot. “Work’s done. Shouldn’t we head back? You and Ethan are both gone—who’s minding the company?”

Bonian’s gaze drifted out to sea. “Someone’s got it covered.”

There was something in his voice. Tight. Guarded.

Jayde winced. “Sorry. I didn’t mean...”

He slipped his hands in his pockets, watching the waves. The wind tousled his hair. The seagulls called, lazy and free.

Jayde sipped watermelon juice in a beach chair, sun on her face. For the first time in ages, she felt... free.

She glanced at Bonian and smiled. She got it now—why he’d done this.

They stayed one more day, then flew back. Neither said it aloud, but they were both eager to return. Bonian had a company to check on. Jayde missed her mother. Missed Lele.

He ran into her arms the second she got home. “Mom!”

She staggered. “Lele! Not so hard!”

“Sorry,” he mumbled.

Jayde kissed his forehead. “You’re healthy. That’s all I need.”

Mrs. Leung was doing better too. The doctor’s news was cautiously hopeful: healing had started. With the right meds, progress was possible.

Jayde couldn’t stop smiling.

She asked the nanny what had changed.

“Not much. She has nightmares sometimes. Wakes up clinging to that peace-locket bracelet, calling your name.”

Jayde’s heart ached—but there was hope now. That mattered.

Later, Lele approached her, hesitant. “Mom... is Grandma sick?”

She froze. “You know?”

He nodded.

“Do you think she’s... different?”

Lele tilted his head. “Not really. She’s great. Just a little unique.”

Jayde pulled him into a hug, tears threatening. “Yeah, sweetheart. She’s just special.”

When she told Bonian later, pride tinged her voice. “Lele’s amazing. I didn’t think he’d handle it like that.”

“You raised him right.”

Jayde paused. “What about Ethan? He didn’t get the project. What’s your dad saying?”

Bonian glanced at his watch. “Ethan’s off the board. They’re saying he’s not blood.”

Chapter 842

Jayde’s jaw dropped. “So how’d Ethan end up here?”

“He’s adopted,” Bonian said quietly, brow furrowing. “Hardly anyone knows. I didn’t, until recently.”

Jayde’s thoughts raced. Mr. Lepage had used Ethan as a rival—to sharpen Bonian. A pawn in a twisted game.

Neither brother had truly won.

She opened her mouth to say something comforting, but Bonian cut in, calm as ever. “I would’ve been furious before. Now? I’m not fazed.”

Jayde blinked. “Why not?”

Bonian met her gaze. A small smile tugged at his lips, then vanished as he looked away. “Because I care about different things now.”

Work used to define him. His father’s betrayal would’ve gutted him. But not anymore.

Jayde knew what he meant. Mr. Lepage couldn’t touch what mattered most to Bonian now—unless he tried to hurt **her**. And Bonian would never let that happen.

The air stilled, thick with everything unsaid.

Jayde’s cheeks warmed. She opened her mouth, but Bonian beat her to it.

“Remember what I said at the hotel?” His voice dropped. “I’ve given you time to think. Don’t I deserve an answer?”

An answer. The word hit hard. Years ago, Mrs. Lepage’s four-million-dollar offer and a brutal reality had buried that dream. Now it was back—right in front of her.

“I... I don’t know,” she stammered.

“That’s not an answer, Jayde,” Bonian said gently but firmly. “Yes or no—I just want clarity.”

She felt cornered, caught in the intensity of his eyes. “I really don’t know. If it matters that much... give me a few more days.”

“I’ve already given you plenty,” he said, then saw her panic. His tone softened. “Fine. You know I’m hooked on you. I’ll wait a little longer.”

And he meant it. As long as she’d decide—he’d wait forever.

But Jayde couldn’t face him. Not yet. At work, she started dodging him, sending others to deliver documents she normally would’ve handled herself.

Bonian noticed. His mood soured. The office felt it.

“Mr. Lepage is unbearable lately,” someone groaned.

“Five revisions and still not good enough? What does he want?” another muttered.

Jayde kept her head down, typing steadily, until someone noticed.

“Secretary Leung,” a colleague whispered, “you never get yelled at. What’s your secret?”

Jayde froze. “I—uh—I don’t...”

It was too late. The staff swarmed her, begging for survival tips.

She fled to a quiet meeting room to escape the chaos—and stopped cold.

Bonian was there. Laptop open. His gaze like ice.

She hesitated. “Wrong room. Sorry—”

“Jayde.” His voice cut through. “You’re avoiding me, aren’t you?”

She looked away. She didn’t mean to hurt him—she just couldn’t face what he’d asked.

Bonian stood, closing the distance. “You could’ve said no. But hiding? You think I’m a monster?”

“No,” she said quickly. “I just—” She faltered. She didn’t have a good excuse.

He sighed, heading for the door. “I told you I’d give you time. I won’t push. Just... stop hiding.”

The ache in her chest lingered long after he left.

After that, she tried to act normal again. No more dodging.

And the office felt the shift. Bonian’s mood improved—not warm, but no longer explosive. The staff nearly wept with relief.

Jayde kept her part quiet.

But soon, bigger problems took over.

Mr. Lepage collapsed. What started as high blood pressure turned into a crisis—coronary heart disease, among other issues. He was in a coma.

Jayde finally understood why he’d clung to Bonian. Ethan wasn’t blood. Bonian was his only real son, and he needed to hand over the company before it was too late.

Jayde could accept that. But Bonian? Not so much.

He visited his father often, but each time came back quieter.

“He’s not entirely wrong,” he finally said, lips tight. “But I still can’t forgive him.”

Jayde saw it then—real confusion in his eyes. The man who always had answers now looked lost.

She stayed by his side, offering quiet support. “If you can’t make sense of it, stop trying. He wants the company to thrive—make that happen.”

She couldn’t forgive Mr. Lepage either. But she wanted Bonian to find peace.

Eventually, he returned to the company, more focused than ever.

Chapter 843

Bonian had finally cleared the backlog at Lepage Group. He hadn’t seen Jayde all day—she hadn’t come to the office.

At home, Jayde was mopping floors, prepping to bring Lele back from the hospital. His recovery had gone well. She couldn’t wait to have him home again.

She changed clothes and was just about to head out when Bonian arrived.

He caught her hand. “Perfect timing. I want to take you somewhere.”

“Now?” Jayde hesitated. “I was going to pick up Lele. He’s been waiting, and he knows you now—he calls you Dad. If you come with me, it’ll mean a lot.”

Bonian’s voice was calm. “I get it. You love him. So do I—he’s my son too. How about this? Come with me first. Then we’ll go get Lele. No delays.”

He’d planned something special, and if she skipped it now, it would all go to waste.

Jayde looked at him, conflicted. Then nodded. “Alright. Let’s make it quick.”

They drove to a mall, and Bonian led her to the top floor—to a bridal boutique.

Jayde’s heart skipped. White gowns shimmered in the window.

She turned, stunned. “You brought me here?”

Bonian didn’t flinch. “I already paid. Full price. No refunds.”

He handed her the receipt. The number made her blink. “This much? For dresses I haven’t even tried on?”

“The shop doesn’t refund. And I’m not a lawyer anymore, so I can’t argue it,” he said with a smirk. “Just try one on. Humor me.”

This wasn’t a proposal. It was a quiet attempt to make things right. A step forward.

The assistant welcomed them in, her eyes lighting up when she saw Jayde. “You’re stunning. Any style you like? I’ll grab it.”

Bonian pointed to a fishtail gown. “That one. And maybe something with a long train.”

Jayde hesitated—then gave in.

With help, she slipped into the mermaid gown. When the curtain slid open, Bonian’s breath caught.

“Jayde... you’re gorgeous,” he said softly, like the wind had been knocked out of him.

“You two look like a dream,” the assistant chimed in. “That dress was made for you.”

Jayde stared at her reflection. It was beautiful. For a moment, she let herself imagine what could be.

“Want to try another style?” the assistant offered.

Jayde nodded.

The next dress, heavier with a dramatic train, took longer to put on. While she changed, Bonian stepped out to grab her favorite milk tea.

Just then, Livia passed by. She heard a voice she recognized, froze, and stepped into the shop.

Inside, the assistant was mid-pitch. “This veil’s hand-stitched, studded with diamonds—gorgeous and sturdy. Want to try it?”

Bonian wasn’t back yet. Livia assumed Jayde was alone—playing dress-up to bait a proposal. In her mind, Jayde was just a fling.

Livia strode over, voice dripping with venom. “Why bother? You can’t afford it. Even with a loan, who’s it for?”

Jayde’s smile vanished. She had been in a good mood—excited to see Lele. Livia ruined it in seconds.

“This is none of your business,” she said coolly.

Livia sneered. “You stole my man. That **is** my business. Bonian’s marrying **me**. Take the dress off and leave—or I’ll do it for you.”

Jayde’s eyes narrowed.

Let her try.

Chapter 844

Livia’s glare was icy as she reached for Jayde’s dress, but Jayde didn’t flinch. She seized Livia’s wrist and shoved her back. Livia stumbled, nearly hitting the floor.

“You’ve got some nerve,” Livia snapped.

Jayde, who usually kept things civil around Bonian, wasn’t holding back. “You come at me, I push back.”

Livia seethed. Jayde had won Bonian—and somehow even softened Mrs. Lepage’s disapproval. That stung. How could she let it slide?

She lunged again. Jayde sidestepped, and Livia crashed to the ground.

As the Gomez family’s daughter, Livia had once held the upper hand. Mrs. Lepage used to adore her. Now, she had to watch from the sidelines as Bonian played house with Jayde and their son.

Humiliation burned through her. “Jayde, I’ll end you!”

She didn’t care that it was broad daylight. Jayde wasn’t scared—but before she could speak, Bonian appeared, milk tea in hand.

He walked over, calm but steely, and planted himself between them. Grabbing Livia’s arm, he flung her back with force. Then he turned to Jayde, voice gentle. “You okay? Are you hurt?”

Jayde shook her head.

Livia stared at them, wounded. “Bonian, do you even remember me? This isn’t fair!”

She had believed he left law because of Jayde, not because of his father’s betrayals. She thought she mattered. But he made his feelings unmistakably clear.

“I told you it was over,” he said. “You didn’t listen—who’s to blame?”

Then he added, cold and deliberate: “Nobody touches Jayde.”

His anger flickered, barely restrained. Pulling out his phone, he called his assistant. “Start the full acquisition of Lin’s company.”

Livia froze.

He might have left the courtroom behind, but Bonian was still a force in business. And now, he was about to destroy her family’s company.

“Bonian, how could you? I’m your fiancée! Our families agreed! You’re punishing my family for her?” Her voice broke. She cursed him.

But Bonian didn’t flinch. He didn’t care about appearances anymore. He wouldn’t let anyone hurt Jayde.

He was about to act when Jayde caught his arm, shaking her head. She didn’t want him caught in a scandal because of her.

Then she stepped forward. “I don’t need anyone to fight my battles. You came at me, Livia, so I defended myself. But chasing after someone who doesn’t want you? That’s not living.”

Livia sneered. “You’re one to talk, Jayde.”

Before Jayde could reply, Livia raised her voice, drawing attention. “Look at this woman! She stole her sister’s fiancé—and mine! Watch out for her!”

Crowds formed—people always loved a scene.

Someone pointed. “Isn’t that Bonian Lepage?”

“Yeah. Used to be a lawyer. Big-shot businessman now.”

“Thought he was engaged. Guess not!”

“Two women fighting over one guy? Is he worth it?”

“Mr. Lepage, legally, isn’t this bigamy?”

The gossip swirled, but Bonian didn’t waver. He pulled Jayde close and spoke loud and clear.

“Listen up. I don’t care about anyone else. No matter how perfect they seem—I’m not interested. Jayde is the only one I love.”

Jayde’s heart clenched. He’d once made a stand like this for her—back then, it felt like a promise. But everything fell apart after that. His kindness still tugged at her, but he’d made one mistake she couldn’t forget: Emmie.

And Livia didn’t miss a beat. “You want to love each other? Fine. But should it come at someone else’s expense? Remember Emmie?”

Jayde’s stomach turned at the sound of her sister’s name.

Bonian’s grip tightened protectively. “Whatever mistakes I made, they’re mine. Don’t drag Jayde into it. Come after me if you want. Leave her alone.”

His embrace was solid. And it only made Livia look more desperate.

Chapter 845

The mood shifted.

“Guy’s got guts,” someone murmured. “Standing up like that?”

“Real love right there.”

“Girl, let it go. You’re only hurting yourself.”

Every word cut deeper into Livia’s pride.

Bonian didn’t let up. “Jayde’s not perfect. Neither am I. But it’s no one else’s place to judge.” He took Jayde’s hand. “Let’s go.”

He hadn’t forgotten the real reason he brought her here: to try on wedding dresses.

Jayde worried about the attention this scene would draw. Bonian was a public figure. Scandals stuck.

She began to take off the dress she was wearing, but Bonian stopped her, offering the milk tea. “Drink this. Try on a few more.”

“But—”

“No buts.” His voice softened. “I know you want to be with me, but you’re scared. That’s fair. If I were you, I’d be a mess too. But life’s short. Are we really going to wait until we’re old and gray to figure it out?”

He paused, serious now. “Think about Lele. My mom’s not in the way anymore. Just give me the chance to make things right. Maybe... even another kid?”

He brought up Kevin and Norah. They had split, struggled, then reunited. Now Kevin was a doting father to a daughter he adored. Bonian envied that warmth—and wanted it with Jayde.

She couldn’t deny she wanted it too. But doubt still lingered.

Still, she stayed. She kept trying on dresses while Bonian changed into matching suits. In the mirror, they looked like a perfect pair.

From a distance, Emmie watched, calm. Seeing Bonian happy brought her an odd sense of peace. But she knew Jayde’s fears—and she knew they needed to talk.

Meanwhile, Bonian’s public defense of Jayde went viral. In their group chat, his friends lit up with reactions.

Cody: A guy risking it all for love? Guess we’re all suckers for romance.

Esteban: Let them be in love, fine. But I want *no* part of this.

Kevin: Bonian used to roast me for being soft. Now look at him.

Cody: Esteban’s next. Kian used to be married to work too—until Ophelia got him.

Esteban: Why not you, Cody? You need love more than me.

Cody: Me? I’m busy. Love’s too much trouble.

Kian: You’re both next.

Kevin: Yup. I’m with Kian.

Cody and Esteban fell silent.

Kevin grinned at his phone just as Norah walked in. “What’s funny?”

“Just the guys teasing each other,” Kevin said, pocketing his phone. “They’re all convinced Cody and Esteban are falling next.”

Norah raised an eyebrow. “Bonian’s not married yet?”

“Not yet. But it’s coming. They’re trending.”

Norah hadn’t been keeping up. Between her dad’s chemo and raising two kids, she’d had her hands full.

“We’ll see,” she said.

Kevin pulled her close. “Let’s plan a trip. I’ll take you anywhere.”

Norah laughed. “Forget it. Traveling with two toddlers? No thanks.”

“We’ll bring help. Easy.”

“Maybe after Dad gets better.”

Kevin nodded. No rush.

Back in Bincheng, Jayde tried on more dresses. Bonian snapped photos and bought her favorite. She frowned. “We didn’t agree to this—”

“I changed my mind,” he said, kissing her forehead. “You look best in a wedding dress. I love you.”

Her eyes stung. She saw the effort, the care. But she still pushed him back.

“Rest up. The company needs your focus.”

Bonian saw through her deflection. “Jayde, no more running. I want a real answer. I’m sure I want you. If you’re not... no, don’t say it. We have Lele. He deserves a full family. And don’t forget—you left me first.”

Chapter 846

Jayde’s mind was a storm. She couldn’t deny it—her feelings for Bonian were shifting. Even if she could ignore her own heart, there was Lele to think about. Would he grow up without knowing his father?

“I need to talk to Lele first,” she said, meeting Bonian’s eyes. She wasn’t dodging anymore. “This isn’t just about us—it’s about him. He doesn’t even know you’re his dad yet.”

Bonian loosened his grip, a flicker of relief passing through his eyes. It wasn’t the answer he wanted, but it was a step forward. “Alright. Take your time.”

Jayde felt a little lighter. His willingness to wait, not pressure her, meant everything.

Nearby, Bonian turned to his assistant, calmly instructing him to finalize the dress purchase and start preparations.

The assistant stared, stunned by the sheer weight of the workload and even more stunned by the fact that someone had managed to bring their CEO to heel. *Who is this woman?*

Jayde, unaware of the scale of Bonian’s gestures, would’ve probably second-guessed herself if she knew. He sensed her hesitation but gave her the space she needed.

That night, she lay sprawled on her bed, thoughts racing. Only when she glanced at the clock did panic hit—*she was late picking up Lele.*

“Crap!” she yelped, bolting up and grabbing her keys.

Traffic was brutal, her car crawling forward inch by inch. Flustered, she called Lele’s teacher.

“Ms. Gong, I’m stuck in traffic—I’m so sorry. Please don’t let Lele leave the gate.”

“Don’t worry,” Ms. Gong assured her gently. “I’ll keep an eye on him.”

At the kindergarten, Ms. Gong put down the phone and scanned the yard for Lele. He usually waited at the gate when dismissal time neared. She went to find him and asked one of the kids, “Have you seen Lele?”

The child pointed to the gate. “He was just there, but now he’s gone.”

The bell rang.

Ms. Gong’s heart dropped.

She rushed toward the front, scanning the area frantically. Parents swarmed the gate, each collecting their children. One by one, Lele’s classmates disappeared into the crowd.

“Bye, Lele!” his best friend called, waving.

Lele waved back weakly, standing alone. *Where’s Mom?*

A woman in a black dress knelt down in front of him. “Are you Lele?”

He studied her face—so familiar. “You look like... my aunt,” he said, cautious.

Emmie smiled, emotions flickering in her eyes. “I’m a friend of your mom’s.”

“Do you know where she is?”

“She’s probably stuck somewhere. Come wait with me—we’ll be nearby.”

Lele hesitated. Jayde had always warned him about strangers. But this woman didn’t feel like one. After a long pause, he nodded. “Okay... but I leave when Mom comes.”

Emmie gave a soft smile. “Deal.”

She took him to a nearby café. Lele eyed her coffee curiously, but Emmie wagged her finger. “Coffee’s for grown-ups. It’s bad for your brain.”

Lele froze mid-reach. “It’ll make me dumb?”

“Exactly. Dessert only,” she said, amused.

Relieved, Lele ordered hot milk and tiramisu, his mood brightening.

Emmie stared out the window, her eyes distant. She hadn’t meant to come—hadn’t meant to get involved—but curiosity had drawn her here. And now, sitting across from this boy with Bonian’s eyes, something deep and quiet stirred in her.

“Auntie?” Lele tugged on her sleeve.

She blinked and looked down at him. “What’s wrong?”

“You’re staring outside a lot.”

Emmie smiled faintly. “Just thinking. Is the dessert good?”

He nodded enthusiastically. “Yup! But... why’d you bring me here?”

That innocent question hit harder than he knew. Emmie struggled to answer, her emotions tangled. But Lele didn’t press—he just kept eating, content.

Meanwhile, Jayde received Ms. Gong’s call—and everything in her world cracked.

“What do you mean he’s missing?!”

Her breath came in sharp bursts, her hands trembling. But she forced herself to focus. “I’m on my way.”

She called Bonian and explained the situation, then abandoned her car and sprinted to a nearby road. Within minutes, she'd flagged a rideshare and was racing toward the school.

Chapter 847

When Bonian heard Lele was missing, he nearly stormed out of the boardroom mid-meeting.

Shareholders stared at him, stunned. "Mr. Lepage, where are you going? We haven't finalized the proposal—"

"Then postpone it," he snapped. "I have more important things to deal with."

"But—"

He was already gone.

Jayde arrived at the kindergarten, breathless, and spotted Ms. Gong's pale face.

"Any sign of him?" she demanded.

Ms. Gong shook her head, guilt etched across her features. "I looked everywhere... I don't know where he went."

Jayde felt her knees buckle. *No. Don't panic. Don't think about the worst.*

"Check the cameras!" she barked, snapping back to action.

"Yes! Right!" Ms. Gong scrambled, scolding herself for not thinking of it sooner.

But before they reached the security office, Jayde saw a small figure at the edge of the gate. Her heart leapt.

"Lele!" she screamed, rushing forward and pulling him into her arms.

He looked up, startled. "Mom?"

Jayde's voice trembled. "You scared me to death." Her tears came freely now. "Where were you?"

Lele, seeing the fear in her eyes, wilted. "I'm sorry, Mom. I didn't mean to scare you..."

Ms. Gong exhaled in relief. If anything had happened, it would've been a scandal. She knew Lele's family situation wasn't ordinary—and Jayde's privacy always came first.

Jayde took Lele home immediately. Bonian arrived shortly after, and when he heard the full story, his face darkened like a thundercloud.

Lele shrank under his gaze.

Jayde didn't interfere. This was a lesson Lele needed.

After Bonian's stern scolding, Lele looked utterly defeated, like a balloon losing air. Jayde's heart softened, but she still had to know.

"Why did you leave school?" she asked, kneeling to his level. "Didn't I teach you to stay inside?"

Lele hesitated, then glanced at Bonian before muttering, "Someone took me to eat..."

Jayde's blood turned cold.

She grabbed his shoulders gently but firmly. "Who took you? Did they give you anything weird? Are you okay?"

Lele nodded quickly and explained, and slowly Jayde's panic turned into a quiet dread.

"What did this woman look like?" she asked, bracing herself.

"She looked like my aunt..."

Jayde froze.

Emmie.

The name hit like a blow to the chest. Bonian immediately stepped forward.

"Lele, come here."

Lele obeyed, sensing the tension in the room.

Bonian gently comforted him, then turned to Jayde. "Take a breath. He's safe. That's what matters right now."

Jayde nodded, but her limbs were numb. "I need to lie down. I'll be out for dinner."

"Mom..." Lele started, but Bonian gently held him back.

Jayde closed her door behind her and slid down against it, the cold floor soaking through her clothes. She'd spent so long searching for Emmie—desperate, angry, hopeful. But Emmie never reached out.

Now she sees Lele? But not me?

She knew why.

Emmie still loved Bonian.

By dinner, Jayde had pulled herself together. Her face was calm again. Lele had questions but remembered Bonian's warning and stayed quiet.

After Lele went to bed, Bonian finally spoke.

"She's probably free now," he said quietly.

Jayde looked up.

"If she's willing to show herself, it means she's safe," he added.

Jayde nodded slowly. "I guess so."

Bonian studied her carefully. "She has her reasons. Don't overthink it."

Jayde exhaled. "I'll try."

From then on, she made sure she was never late again—always the first at pick-up and drop-off. But her eyes scanned the crowd each time, always searching. Hoping.

And always disappointed.

Lele noticed the change but stayed silent.

Bonian was buried in work. His assistant suggested involving Jayde in the new project.

"No," Bonian said flatly. "Don't tell her. Let her keep her normal workload."

The assistant opened his mouth, but Bonian's stare shut him down.

"Understood, Mr. Lepage."

Bonian rubbed his temples just as his phone began to ring.

Chapter 848

The assistant's face shifted. "Mr. Lepage, there's a call for you..."

The front desk said someone wanted to see him. Bonian frowned—he didn't meet just anyone. That'd be asking for chaos.

But the assistant added, "She says her name's Emmie..."

Bonian's eyes sharpened. "Send her up."

He headed to the reception room. When the door opened, a woman stepped inside—and Bonian froze.

"Your face..."

She looked like Emmie—same build, same features—but something was different. Her presence was sharper now, like a blade drawn from its sheath. Gone was the softness he remembered.

She sat down. Up close, the contrast was starker. Her collarbone jutted out, her shoulders were bony—she was thinner, tougher. In a black dress, she looked like a rose blooming in the dark.

"Long time no see," she said, voice thick with emotion. "Didn't think you'd recognize me."

Bonian exhaled, his frown easing. "It's you."

She nodded. "It's me. I'm different now—I was burned. Seventy percent of my skin was replaced."

She spoke like it was someone else's story, but the weight of it hung in the air.

Bonian's eyes darkened.

"I'm glad you still knew me," she said with a faint smile.

He cut in, his voice low. "I'm not Bryan anymore. Don't call me that."

The coldness in his tone struck her like a slap. Her smile faltered. "After everything I went through, I didn't expect you to be... this cold."

This wasn't the reunion she'd hoped for.

Bonian didn't flinch. "That's just your imagination. You've always lived in your own world. Still do."

His words weren't cruel, but they cut deep. Emmie's hands clenched in her lap. Her eyes dropped.

"I know you're marrying Jayde..."

"Is that why you're here?"

She looked up, gaze intense, as if trying to memorize his face. "If Jayde wasn't in the picture... would you have picked me?"

She wasn't here to steal him back. She just needed to know—had there ever been a chance? She'd always assumed she was too late, that Jayde had claimed his heart first.

Bonian didn't hesitate. "No."

"Why?" Her voice cracked. "Without her, I would've stood by you. I always would've had your back."

He met her eyes. "You don't even know why. And that's the reason."

Emmie went still. Then her shoulders dropped, the weight of years lifting off her. His words were harsh, but they freed her from the prison of what-ifs.

She rose slowly. "I get it."

At the door, Bonian's voice stopped her. "You're really not going to see her? She's still your sister."

Emmie's lips curled faintly. "I'll be at your wedding."

She walked out.

Bonian decided not to tell Jayde about the visit—not while her emotions were still so raw. If Emmie showed up at the wedding, the sisters could face each other then.

Jayde, unaware, wrestled with the proposal. Her mood didn't go unnoticed.

"Mom, you seem sad lately," Lele said one evening.

She knelt down to his level, brushing hair from his worried face. "Lele... can I ask you something? Do you want to meet your real dad?"

Lele tilted his head, thinking. "Kinda. But not really."

Jayde blinked. "Why not?"

He shrugged. "In my heart, Uncle Lepage is already my dad. I don't care about some stranger."

Jayde swallowed. "What if I told you Uncle Lepage is your dad?"

Lele froze—then broke into a grin and threw his arms around her. "Uncle Lepage's my dad? You're not kidding?"

Jayde laughed, stunned. "You're happy?"

“Super happy! I’ve wanted him to be my dad forever. I even tried to help him with you—but he’s hopeless.” He clapped a hand over his mouth, eyes wide.

Jayde grinned, pinching his cheek. “You little schemer.”

Chapter 849

Lele’s acceptance lifted a huge weight off Jayde’s heart. She didn’t have to worry anymore.

That same day, she told Bonian. The second she said yes, he pulled her into his arms and kissed her deeply. When he finally pulled back, he rested his forehead against hers, breathless.

“You have no idea how long I’ve waited for this, Jayde.”

His voice trembled. Her heart clenched—she’d suffered too, agonizing over walking away all those years ago. But now... now they were here.

They set the date and told Mrs. Lepage first. She barely blinked, teasing her son for taking so long to “get his act together.”

Jayde’s father was gone, and Mrs. Leung was still recovering, but Jayde wanted her to know. Sitting beside her, she said gently, “Mom... your daughter’s getting married.”

Mrs. Leung didn’t fully grasp it, but she saw the light in Jayde’s eyes and smiled. “Jayde, be happy. You deserve it.”

Jayde teared up, her heart aching with gratitude.

They told their friends next. Norah, Jace, and the rest blew up the group chat with congratulations and promises to be there.

Then Jayde realized—they’d told everyone but one.

That night, Bonian held her close and said quietly, “I saw her a few days ago.”

Jayde turned, startled. “Why didn’t you tell me?”

“She’s not ready to see you.”

Jayde paled. The room tilted. Bonian caught her.

Knowing Emmie was alive but still avoiding her stung. Jayde blamed herself—had she failed as a sister?

Bonian gently stroked her hair. “It’s not your fault. It’s her choice. She’ll come to the wedding.”

Jayde's eyes lit up with cautious hope. "She will?"

"She said she would. And she's let go of her feelings for me."

Jayde nodded, swallowing the lump in her throat.

With the wedding only two weeks away, everything kicked into high gear. Bonian had already bought the dress. When it arrived, Jayde gasped.

"You picked this?"

His assistant grinned. "Mr. Lepage had me get it days ago. Just for you."

Bonian held the gown up. "It's perfect for you. Keep it."

Jayde's heart swelled. The look on his face, the thoughtfulness—she hadn't realized how much she missed this kind of sweetness.

The two weeks flew by. The Lepage Group scaled back operations—everyone was pitching in. Word spread fast.

"Only Secretary Leung could pull this off," someone joked. "She bagged the coldest boss in the company."

"She's got skills," another chimed in. "No one else could melt Mr. Lepage."

Jayde heard the whispers and the quiet jealousy—but she didn't care.

The venue was the Century Hotel, booked out entirely by Bonian. Decorations took three days, handled by the best planners in the city. The wedding cars came from Bonian, Kevin, and Norah.

Seeing it all, Jayde's heart swelled with gratitude—and a strange ache, like her joy was dipped in something bittersweet.

Norah nudged her during the final venue check. "Pretty moving, huh? I helped with this, by the way."

Jayde wiped her eyes, smiling. "Thanks for everything."

"Don't sweat it. That's what friends are for. Just don't cheap out on my wedding gift."

"No way," Jayde laughed. "I'll toast your table twice."

They laughed together, the sound easy and full.

The night before the wedding, Mrs. Lepage called them to the old house. She handed Jayde a small box.

“This is for you. An old family bracelet. Not worth much.”

Inside was a piece of green jade—softly glowing, clearly precious. Jayde hesitated. “Aunt Lepage, it’s too much. I can’t—”

Mrs. Lepage slipped it onto her wrist. “It’s for the Lepage daughter-in-law. It’s yours now.”

Jayde froze, afraid to breathe. Mr. Lepage, recovered and quiet, watched silently. He didn’t object. His bond with Bonian had softened since his illness, and he’d warmed to Jayde.

Mrs. Lepage admired the bracelet on her wrist and nodded. “Perfect. Bonian, stay here tonight. The wedding’s tomorrow.”

Chapter 850

“I’ve got some business tonight,” Bonian said, adjusting his cuffs. “A quick trip. I’ll be back early.”

Mrs. Lepage arched a brow. “Still chasing deals the night before your wedding?”

Bonian glanced at Jayde. “A partner in City T asked to meet. It’s locked in—I can’t back out.”

Jayde smiled, unfazed. “Go. Just come back early. Stay safe.”

“Miss me already?” he teased.

“Don’t flatter yourself,” she shot back, smirking.

She walked him to the door. When no one was around, he kissed her forehead. “Wait for me.”

Jayde nodded, soft and certain. “Okay.”

The trip was short—just an hour’s drive. At the hotel, a waiter soon knocked with a tray holding two glasses of red wine. “A complimentary gift for our anniversary, sir. From our private cellar.”

Bonian raised an eyebrow. “Anniversary? I didn’t see any signage.”

The waiter hesitated, then smiled. “We’re still setting up. Please enjoy.”

Bonian let it go, shut the door, and dropped onto the bed. He didn’t touch the wine.

Deep in the night, a soft rustle snapped him awake. The door creaked open. A figure slipped in.

He flicked on the light. "Livia?"

She froze.

He sat up, eyes narrowing. "What the hell are you doing here?"

Livia stepped forward, confidence wavering. The drugged wine should've knocked him out by now. She dropped her silk coat, revealing a low-cut black dress. "Bonian... I know you're hurting. Let me help."

His expression turned to ice. He grabbed her wrist, yanking her back. "What are you trying to pull?"

"I'm your fiancée!" she cried, clinging to him. "I love you. Don't leave me!"

He shoved her off, voice like steel. "How'd you get in?"

Her eyes flicked toward the untouched wine.

Bonian followed her gaze, realization clicking into place. "You spiked it."

She lunged for the glass, trying to destroy the evidence, but he blocked her. He grabbed his phone. "You're insane," he growled, calling the police.

"I've been with you for years," she shouted, desperate. "You're throwing me away like garbage!"

She'd spent so long waiting for him to notice her, hoping Jayde would vanish. When Mrs. Lepage sided with Jayde, Livia snapped. She thought if she could trap Bonian tonight, Jayde would walk away.

"I've told you before," Bonian said coldly. "We're over."

Tears streaked her face. In a final act of madness, she clawed at his shirt and her own, hoping to stage a scene. But Bonian pinned her arms and shoved her onto the sofa, then threw open the door.

The police were already there—along with a few reporters, clearly tipped off.

"She broke in using a hotel key," Bonian said, calm and clear. "That wine—she spiked it. Test it. Handle this by the book."

Officers checked the footage. It backed every word. Livia's plan crumbled in real time.

Turning to the reporters, Bonian's eyes were hard. "Ready to twist the headline? 'CEO's secret hotel tryst before his wedding'? Try it. I'll sue every one of you."

The reporters fumbled apologies, muttering about journalistic ethics.

“Write what you want,” Bonian said, brushing past them.

By morning, the police called. “The wine was drugged. A staff member was bribed—gave her a room key. Livia’s in custody. She wants to see you.”

“I don’t have time,” Bonian said. “Handle it properly. My lawyer will follow up.”

The officer tried to suggest mediation.

“No.” His tone left no room.

When his flight landed, the first thing Bonian did was double back to a flower shop. He picked out a fresh bouquet of morning blooms.

Back home, he found Jayde waiting. He held up the bouquet with a grin. “Like them?”

Her eyes lit up. “You went out of your way to get these? You must be exhausted.”

He looked at her, voice low and sincere. “Thinking of you kept me going.”

Jayde took the bouquet, burying her nose in the petals. “I love them. Will you always be this sweet?”

Bonian tucked a strand of hair behind her ear, eyes warm. “After everything we’ve been through? Of course I will. What are you even worrying about, silly girl?”