

## **Mute Bride 381**

### **Chapter 381 Need Not Empathize With Him**

Arthur had passed away two days ago; however, the news of his death was kept secret in order to arrest Jason. His body was currently kept hidden in Tran-Q's mortuary without informing his friends and family.

The moment Justin lifted the white cloth, his knees turned weak. Clang! He grabbed the armrest of the mortuary bed beside him, and only then did he avoid falling.

Frankie wanted to help him up when he saw Justin's condition. However, he declined any help with a hand gesture, and his hand that hung in the air was trembling slightly. It was as if the energy in his body was depleted instantly at the sight of his grandfather. And it took a lot of effort for him to lay his eyes on the old man who had passed away.

Grandpa...

No one knew better than Justin how much effort Arthur had spent over the years to protect him and how much effort he had expended to nurture him into the adult he was now.

Most of the members of the Burton Family only prioritized benefits. That was an undeniable fact! It was also a fact that Arthur was very strict with him. Yet, none of these could change the truth that Arthur genuinely loved him.

Grandpa's the only relative I have in this world...

"How long have you known?" Justin's voice echoed in the empty mortuary.

Rachel stood by the door a little stunned, but she said nothing. Her silence explained everything.

He didn't turn around as he asked her with his back toward her, "You pretended to cooperate with Jason and got in touch with the Jockey Club. You made a deal with Dillon and went to Jublen. You did everything just for today's sake, am I right?"

Still, she did not answer, and her silence was her answer.

Suddenly, he let out a laugh and raised his head.

At this moment, he felt like a fool. A manipulated fool who was being played around by her.

For so long, I was worried about Rachel's safety. I tried so many ways to persuade her not to contact Dillon and the others. I went to the Investigation Bureau to bail her out. I even mobilized material resources, financial resources, and manpower to help her re-establish Hudson Pharmaceuticals, thinking that desperation drove her. But, in reality? In reality, her relationship with Janice was still very close, and she set up such an immaculate trap to arrest Jason just to avenge her relatives' kidnapping years ago.

"Justin." She wanted to say something, anything at all. But after silently opening and closing her mouth for a while, she only managed to say, "The dead cannot be resurrected. I'm sorry for your loss."

"I bet you're feeling fantastic right now."

"I'm sorry, I..." Rachel was hesitant to speak.

The person I wanted to arrest was Jason. I have never thought about killing Old Mr. Burton. It was really just a trap. No one would have thought that Old Mr. Burton would die of a cerebral infarction two days ago, least of all me.

"What are you sorry for?"

Then, she watched as he turned around slowly. His stern face was expressionless, but his eyes were bloodshot. As he stared at her, it seemed as if the blood vessels in his eyes might burst at any moment.

He looked at her with sorrow. "Jason got what he deserved. No matter how we look at it, he deserved to go to prison. Back then, he kidnapped your grandmother, so it's natural for you to arrange such a ploy just to arrest him. Likewise, I also got what I deserved. I had tortured you for so long and caused you so much unrest in your life. So, it's natural for you to despise me for the passing of your family and friends.

I'm not surprised that you didn't consider my feelings when you executed this plan. I'm not qualified. I'm not worthy..."

As he spoke, his voice held a tremor. However, he continued speaking as if he was possessed. It was as if the words he said were not for her. Instead, it was a mantra he was using to convince himself.

To persuade me to understand her actions. But, how can I understand this? What wrongs has my grandpa committed? At the end of his life, he couldn't even see me, his unfilial grandson!

She slowly clenched her fists hanging by her side as she watched his dejected state. Finally, as she felt suffocated with every passing second, she said, "I'm sorry. I'll take my leave first."

As soon as she came out, she bumped into Justin's assistant, Frankie.

"President Hudson."

Frankie asked worriedly as he glanced at the mortuary, "Is President Burton alright?"

She frowned as she heard his inquiry, and she did not know what to say. After all, she had personally suffered the pain of the death of her relatives. To this day, it still remains as one of the most significant losses she has ever encountered.

However, Frankie misunderstood her silence and thought that Justin lashed out at her. Therefore, he quickly explained by saying, "President Hudson, President Burton's temper has never been the best. Not to mention that Old Mr. Burton is his only relative in this world after all. The strictness and harshness of Old Mr. Burton on President Burton also directly correlates to his love for him. He can't even see his Grandpa for the last time, so he must be feeling distraught. Please be more understanding of him, President Hudson."

"Rachel doesn't have to understand him!" Julian's voice came from behind the two of them. He had just dealt with the inquiries from the leaders of the other hospitals and rushed over immediately.

“Rachel also didn’t get to see her grandma for the last time when she passed away. Justin should have thought about this when he did the same to her back then. What goes around comes around!”

“Dr. Peters, how can you speak such words? President Burton is your cousin. He—”

“I have always been a supporter of the truth. No one should attempt to impose their morality on Rae!”

Meanwhile, she was as silent as the grave.

It’s precisely because I had personally experienced the death of my loved ones that I empathize with Justin’s feelings at the moment. But Julian has a point too. I need not empathize with him. He reaped what he sowed.

There were too many grievances and entanglements between them, and she couldn’t be bothered to think about who was right or wrong.

Let’s just end things here. Everything is over between us.

“Rae, let’s go!”

“Sure.”

When Rachel left, she looked back at the mortuary. She could see the tall figure inside standing motionlessly like a sculpture through the translucent curtain.

The temperature in the morgue was very low, and it showed in the condition of Arthur’s corpse, which had been resting here for two days. There was a thin layer of frost on his gray hair and eyebrows. His face was blue and gray, showing no sign of life.

In the meantime, Justin stared at Arthur’s corpse blankly. He was still in disbelief.

Even so, he could not blame anyone. He only had himself to blame for actually listening to Robin's words and went to Belleville on a business trip by himself, leaving behind Arthur who had just come out of surgery.

I can only blame myself for trusting Julian and leaving Grandpa under his care without letting anyone visit him. I only blame myself for committing a lot of sins. I had wronged Rachel first and then my relatives.

"President Burton." Frankie's voice sounded behind Justin. "Do you want to notify the board of directors regarding the news of Old Mr. Burton's death? People have been calling to ask about the situation in the hospital."

"Notify them."

"Also, Old Mr. Burton's lawyer. You should pay the lawyer a visit too and inquire about the inheritance distribution—"

"I don't want to talk about this right now."

Frankie's words were interrupted abruptly. After hesitating for a long time, he finally said, "My condolences, President Burton."

The next day, the news of Arthur's death was published in the newspaper, and an obituary was issued. The funeral date was set and would be held after a week.

Behind a simple obituary, there was a hidden undercurrent of unrest with Burton Group's board of directors due to the power vacuum. People in the same circle could glimpse a hint of what was happening due to the incidents centered around the Burton Group.

"Initially, Robin was the indisputable winner. But now, because Jason was arrested, due to this, it froze all the equity and assets under his name. As a result, his main backer has fallen. I'm sure this idiot is now unable to make a move."

In the Hudson Pharmaceuticals' office, Jolly held a cup of coffee and analyzed the current situation of Burton Group.

"According to the current equity distribution of the Burton Group, Justin will be the largest shareholder after inheriting one part of the equity if Old Mr. Burton doesn't have a will. So Burton Group will eventually be transferred to him. However, I'm afraid it's still a little difficult for us to acquire Burton Group with someone like Justin around. Don't you think so, Chris?"

#### Chapter 382 Plan in Acquisitioning Burton Group

"Chris?" Jolly called out several times before Rachel came back to her senses. "Huh? What is it?" "I've been talking to you for a long time. What were you thinking?"

"Nothing. I didn't sleep well last night. What were you saying again?" "I was talking about the acquisition of Burton Group." Jolly took a sip of her coffee. Then, she pondered and spoke, "We're almost ready with our preparations. As long as Robin remains as the president after Burton Group's board of directors meeting, then there will be great hope for us in succeeding."

Honestly, Carter Enterprise's goal earlier was to acquire Hudson Pharmaceuticals. However, before she returned to the country, Rachel proposed a juicer target for the Carter Enterprise—to acquire Burton Group. Thus, both Rachel and Jolly had been advancing toward this goal.

Be it Rachel returning to the country and working for Burton Group, sorting through the relationship between Burton Group's internal shareholders and senior management, or later leaving Burton Group and taking away numerous valuable connections and directing Burton Group's focus on Hudson Pharmaceuticals. In reality, it was all a diversion planned by the two.

Currently, the entire Burton Group administration was engaged in an internal struggle. Robin and Justin were fighting against each other. Even the board of directors was on the brink of falling apart.

As the heiress of Carter Enterprise, how would Jolly simply come over to Hudson Pharmaceuticals and become Rachel's assistant? It was merely a ploy to muzzle the public.

Jolly said, "After Robin took over Burton Group, he made several idiotic decisions. These decisions aroused dissatisfaction among the board of directors for a long time. Some small shareholders had even planned to withdraw their investments in Burton Group and sell the decentralized stocks privately."

Rachel frowned slightly as she heard the analysis. "But with Old Mr. Burton's death, part of the equity will eventually fall into Justin's hands once the inheritance is distributed. So even if he's no longer the president of Burton Group, he still has a vote as a major shareholder of Burton Group."

"It doesn't matter. As long as Robin makes the situation in Burton Group even worse than it is now, Justin would not be able to save it, and he would have no choice but to sell the Burton Group."

"But will the Burton Group's board of directors still trust Robin?"

"Well, this isn't hard. According to my Mom, we should give Robin a little benefit."

Marilyn had been in the business industry for so many years. So, with decades of experience on her back, she could immediately grasp a particular company's weaknesses once she understood the problem.

For someone as vile as Robin, he would do anything for profit. He did not have the kind of feelings that Justin had for Burton Group. As long as Carter Enterprise offered an olive branch, he would go all out and grab it to save himself.

Rachel nodded as she heard the suggestion. "Then, we'll do as Mrs. Carter instructed. We should request Robin to a meet-up tomorrow afternoon."

The corners of Jolly's lips curled up in a smirk. "Looks like Burton Group will undergo drastic changes yet again."

...

In Burton Residence, Frankie brought the food and drinks he had bought from the supermarket and delivered them. As soon as he entered, he saw wine bottles next to the sofa.

Clang! Frankie had accidentally kicked a wine bottle beside his feet and made the bottle roll all the way to the sofa.

Suddenly, a hand dangled from the sofa. The hand searched around the ground for a long time until it found a bottle of wine which was half full.

“President Burton.” Frankie hurried over and snatched the bottle of wine from Justin. “Stop drinking!”

“Give it to me!”

The man on the sofa was unshaven and had a hoarse voice. No one knew how long he had not slept. His eyes were bloodshot, and the blood vessels were spread out like spider webs in his eyes.

Frankie looked around, putting the wine bottle on the coffee table next to Justin, and said, “President Burton, you can’t go on like this. Tomorrow’s the funeral, and many members of the Burton Family are still waiting for you to preside over said funeral.”

Justin let out a mocking laugh. “Members of the Burton Family? Who else is there in the Burton Family?”

Five years ago, Tina went insane and was sent abroad. My second uncle, Jason, is currently in prison. According to the amount of his smuggling, he’ll definitely be executed. And now, my only Grandpa, who truly loved me, had also left. So who else is there in the Burton Family? Those distant relatives eagerly eyeing the distribution of the inheritance and wanting a share of the pie? Can they be considered as members of the Burton Family?

Frankie sighed and said, “Even so, you can’t make things difficult for yourself. President Burton, life must go on. Burton Group is currently a mess. What can Robin do? You know that he’s incapable. The company is still waiting for you.”

“Whoever wants to care for the company, they can go ahead! I don’t care!” Justin said, then got up and went to the liquor cabinet to get another bottle of wine.



“President Burton!” Frankie tried to stop him.

“F\*CK OFF!” Justin coldly pushed Frankie away rudely. He took a bottle of imported wine from the liquor cabinet and staggered to the dining room in search of a glass.

Suddenly, the sound of the car engine came from outside the yard. Frankie turned to look, and his eyes lit up at what he saw.

“Miss Hochmann, you’re finally here.”

“Where is he?” Gloria looked around. Then, she followed Frankie’s gaze and saw Justin pouring the wine in the dining room.

“This is no time for you to be drinking!” Gloria quickened her pace and hurried over to snatch the wine glass from Justin’s hand.

At once, there was a change in Justin’s facial expression. “GIVE IT TO ME!”

“Give it to you?!” Gloria was furious. “FINE! Here it is! I’ll give it to you!”

As soon as she finished speaking, she threw a glass of wine at his face under Frankie’s shocked gaze.

Splash! The imported wine splashed onto his face. The liquid flowed down his cheeks onto his neck, and the wrinkled shirt on his body had also gotten wet as a result.

Angered, Gloria put down the glass hard. “So is it delicious? Did you drink enough? WAKE UP, JUSTIN!”

Justin was indeed a little more sober after that. When he saw Gloria in front of him, he lowered his head in silence. He looked pathetic and pitiful, like a man who had lost his fighting spirit.

After a while, he said, “I just want to drink. Leave if you don’t wish to see me like this.”

"How you look is none of my concern! I'm here to tell you that it's not time for you to die yet. Yes, you are distraught because your Grandpa passed away. But who hasn't experienced the death of a relative? Go to the street, grab anyone, and ask them if they have experienced it before! Or you can directly call Miss Rachel and ask her!"

Gloria slammed her hand directly on the table and shouted, "When Miss Rachel's grandma passed away back then, she was no less devastated than you are now. But, she could cheer up and try her best to live on. So why can't you? YOU ARE A MAN!"

Frankie could no longer stand back in silence. "Miss Hochmann, President Burton isn't upset because of this..."

"Then, what's the reason?"

"It's b-because..." Frankie hesitated for a long time, not knowing how to explain. Later, he gritted his teeth and uttered, "Old Mr. Burton didn't die of natural causes."

"What?" Gloria was startled, and she was in disbelief.

Meanwhile, Justin said nothing. Instead, there was sorrow and misery in his bloodshot eyes.

Arthur's body was sent to be cremated from the hospital yesterday. It was Justin who personally accompanied him. But, the more he thought about it, the more suspicious he got on the way to the cremation center. And thus, he had Frankie seek a forensic medical expert to do an autopsy.

Frankie said, "The examination detected toxins in Old Mr. Burton's body, and it was injected into his body recently."

Gloria was in a state of disbelief and said, "How is that possible? Wasn't Julian the one who kept watch at the hospital? No one could enter the ICU without his signature."

Frankly took a deep breath and slowly spat out, "President Hudson had gone in."

In an instant, Gloria's facial expression changed instantly. That is impossible! The Rachel I know wouldn't have done something like this!

## Chapter 383 Abnormal Death

Gloria fell into a huge shock. She could not believe a word spoken by Frankie. "You mean to tell me that Miss Rachel has something to do with Old Mr. Burton's death? How is this possible? She has no grievances with him, so why would she want him dead? No, Miss Rachel is not such a person!"

"I know you won't believe it." Frankie took out a photo. "Miss Hochmann, take a look at this if you don't believe me." "Frankie, that's enough!" Justin suddenly reprimanded, not letting Frankie continue.

However, Frankie did not listen to him, so Gloria saw the photo on his phone in the end.

Gloria slightly tightened her hands into fists on her side as she saw the photo in Frankie's hands.

Finally, Frankie said, "This was taken yesterday. Why would two people who are enemies meet in private?"

In the photo, Rachel and Robin were eating in a restaurant.

"President Burton sold half of his shares to Robin in order to help President Hudson before, and I found out about the transaction information that Robin had sold all his shares to President Hudson. Moreover, President Hudson is still buying Burton Group's decentralized shares privately and frequently keeping in touch with Burton Group's shareholders. To put it simply, if we guessed correctly, President Hudson is assisting Carter Enterprise in acquiring Burton Group. If Old Mr. Burton is still alive, this scheme will definitely not work. But once Old Mr. Burton is dead, and the equity is decentralized, anything is possible."

Although Gloria did not understand business affairs, she still understood everything when she heard this.

“How could this be?”

Gloria shook her head and added, “Miss Rachel wouldn’t kill anyone. Even if Carter Enterprise wishes to acquire Burton Group, she wouldn’t utilize such a ruthless tactic...”

Frankie said, “No one has this motive and the opportunity to drug Old Mr. Burton except for President Hudson! But, even if it wasn’t done by President Hudson, judging from the list of suspects in the current situation and who stands to benefit the most with Old Mr. Burton’s death, I’m afraid she was still somewhat involved in this.”

However, Gloria still refused to believe such a thing.

At that moment, the sound of someone dragging the wine glass came from the dining table. It was Justin who had poured a large glass of imported wine. He raised his head and chugged down half of it. All the while, his hands trembled uncontrollably.

“The matter ends here, and no one should mention it again. The funeral will be held as scheduled. Grandpa died of cerebral infarction and no other reason.”

Gloria stared blankly at Justin. It was a no-brainer why he cooped himself up in the house for the past two days and got wasted like this.

Then, Frankie left to continue working on preparations for the funeral, and Gloria was the only one left. She put aside the wine bottles on the ground, pulled out a chair, and sat down. “Have you ever thought of investigating this matter clearly? Since there’s a problem, you should investigate it. What if it has nothing to do with Miss Rachel?”

“But what if it has?” Justin dropped those words casually and rendered her speechless.

This was the true source of Justin’s pain. He was willing to believe that Rachel would not do such a thing. However, he also believed that he was a sinner that deserved all this pain. It’s natural for Rachel to take extreme actions against me since she hates me. I deserve this. What if? What if she really

hates me so much and did this to make me feel the loss of a loved one? How should I deal with this fact after I find out?

Gloria felt extremely upset as she saw him continue drinking.

Just how did the two of them become like this?

Later, in the evening. The branch detection center of the Riverdale Investigation Bureau was located near the lakeside of West Magnolia. It was only 5 kilometers away from the Riverdale Penitentiary. Generally, the prisoners sent here were serious criminals waiting to go on trial. Furthermore, there was a high probability that these criminals would either be sent to the Riverdale Penitentiary or executed.

Sue came out of the detention center, and her eyes were still teary.

Someone parked a white car on the side of the road, and the person who got off was Julian.

As soon as Sue saw the person coming, her facial expression sank. She wiped her tears and walked toward the other side.

"Mom!" Julian walked over and stopped her.

"Don't call me Mom. I don't have a son like you!"

"Mom! Can you calm down?"

"How can I calm down? My son, my own son, sent his biological father to prison!"

"That's a result of his own actions!"

Sue gritted her teeth and uttered, "Since you think he deserves this, what are you doing here?"

"I bought you a flight ticket for tomorrow, and you will live in Montenegro starting from tomorrow. So, don't stay in Riverdale anymore."

"What?!" Sue was in disbelief. "Are you chasing me away?"

Julian said indifferently, "I don't think you would want Justin to know that it was you and Jason who had planned the abduction case? So leaving Riverdale is the best option you can take right now."

Sue's face was trembling. "Julian, what exactly are you trying to do?"

"I don't want to do anything. I just don't want to be looked down upon and live my life with a guilty conscience."

After saying this, he stuffed her into the car. He ignored her struggle as he locked the car door. Then, he stepped on the accelerator and drove the car away from the West Magnolia Detention Center.

Three days later, at Arthur's funeral. Since Arthur established most of the fame and fortune of the Burton Family in Riverdale, many wealthy families attended the funeral personally as a sign of respect.

At the memorial service scene, there was a long queue in the parking lot. There were cars lined up on the streets all the way outside the venue.

Justin, dressed in black with a white flower on his chest, bowed and shook hands with those who came to the memorial service.

"I am sorry for your loss."

"Thank you."

Frankie took the initiative to help greet people as he knew that Justin was in a terrible mood. "Thank you. There is a special lounge over there, and refreshments are available. So, everyone, please take a

break in the lounge. We will start when everyone has arrived.”

There were many people in attendance, and they filled the entire lounge.

Finally, Frankie said, “President Burton, the shareholders are here too. Let’s go over and greet them.”

“Sure.” Justin nodded slightly and walked toward the place where the shareholders were seated.

At the memorial service, an emcee was responsible for recounting Arthur’s life and his contributions to charity.

“Fellow uncles.”

Most of the shareholders were older and could be considered as Justin’s elders.

“Old Mr. Burton left suddenly. I heard that he didn’t have a will written?”

“Yeah.”

“How could it be so sudden? We wanted to visit him at the hospital before, but the hospital said that he was in the ICU and his situation was unstable. So, it was inconvenient to visit. Where were you at the time?”

Someone interrupted when they heard that. “President Gunson sent him on a business trip.”

Then, someone replied huffily, “Robin! What was his motive to send President Burton on a business trip at that hour?”

After that, everyone started discussing and threw out theory after theory during the discussion.

After a quick look around the venue, Justin realized that Robin was not in attendance yet.

At this moment, the emcee had finished introducing Arthur's life. "Old Mr. Burton left suddenly without leaving any will, so everyone should make a notary. According to the right of inheritance, Old Mr. Burton currently has only one grandson, Mr. Justim Burton, and a granddaughter, Tina Burton, who is far away in Montenegro. However, Tina has no ability to take care of herself, so the part of the equity currently allocated is temporarily represented by Justin..."

"Wait!" A male voice suddenly came from the door, attracting everyone's attention.

"President Gunson?"

The person who came was indeed Robin. He was dressed in a black suit and still as arrogant as usual. He did not look like he was attending a funeral. Instead, he looked like he was attending a cocktail party.

"Today is the memorial service for Old Mr. Burton. President Gunson, please don't make a scene."

"That's right. Please postpone any talks about the company's affairs."

As he disregarded everyone's comments, he thundered, "Who said that Old Mr. Burton did not leave a will? Here in my hand is the will left by Old Mr. Burton!"

In an instant, there was an uproar in the venue.

#### Chapter 384 The Appointment of an Heir

Amid the uproar, Robin walked up the steps arrogantly and snatched the microphone from the emcee. "This will, in my hand, appoint the heir to the 40 percent equity under Old Mr. Burton's name and all the inheritance distribution issues of the Burton Family."



Everyone at the venue made clamorous comments after they heard Robin's words. Suddenly, Frankie stood up. "President Gunson, with all due respect, how do we know whether the will in your hand is the real deal? In other words, you're all talk without any substance to back up your claim. So it couldn't be that you want us to believe you just like that when you say Old Mr. Burton has left the entire Burton Group in your hands in this will?"

"Yeah! How could we believe this will?"

"Who knows if it's the real thing?"

"It's fake. I heard that Old Mr. Burton didn't see anyone before his death."

"That's right! That will. How could it end up in his hands?"

Sure enough, Justin's status in Burton Group was not something Robin, who just became the president for two days, could rock.

Furthermore, the key to Burton Group lay in the word 'Burton'. The biggest shareholder was Arthur. Therefore, he had the final say on who would be the president.

"My words are not credible, but the lawyer's words are credible. Am I right?" As soon as this sentence escaped Robin's lips, those words gradually silenced the people at the venue.

It was only then that everyone noticed the person following behind Robin was not his usual assistant. Instead, the man in the suit was about 40 years old, and he looked rather old.

At once, someone recognized the man.

"That's Old Mr. Burton's lawyer!"

"It's Mr. Walker."

After that, the lawyer took the microphone that Robin handed him with a severe expression. "Everyone, please let me speak. I'm Michael Walker, and the will in Mr. Gunson's hand is indeed the will left by Old Mr. Burton on his deathbed. It was mainly a recording and my notes. The notary office has notarized the will, and it had legal effect."

Meanwhile, Justin kept staying silent. However, the moment he heard these words, his pupils contracted. "Mr. Walker, are you saying my Grandpa left a recording before he died?"

Michael looked at Justin and slightly nodded as he heard the question. "Yes."

"What did Grandpa say?"

"It's all here in this will."

Robin gave up his spot for the lawyer. "Mr. Walker, I think everyone is anxious. Why don't you just read the will directly?"

"Very well."

In the huge memorial hall, the portrait of Arthur was facing everyone. It was decorated with bright yellow and white chrysanthemums. However, the memorial service of a wealthy family was never just as simple as mourning. This will that suddenly appeared affected the emotions of everyone present.

"According to the doctor's appraisal, Old Mr. Burton was conscious before his death, and he had the mind and the right to make decisions. Therefore, he had entrusted me, Michael Walker, as a notary lawyer to be present before his deathbed and record the will. The following is the content of the will. The real estate under Old Mr. Burton's name, including shops, facade houses, etc., is divided into two parts. One will be handed over to the trust foundation to take care of his granddaughter, Tina. If Tina recovers, she can use it freely. Old Mr. Burton holds 43 percent of Burton Group's shares. According to his request, a sole heir has been appointed for the shares."

When everyone listened to this part, they became anxious.

Justin is naturally the first heir, regardless of Old Mr. Burton's sole focus or the laws on inheritance rights. However, since there's a will, it means that there is an unforeseen circumstance.

As expected, Michael announced, "The sole heir is Julian Burton, the grandson of Arthur Burton."

Who? Everyone looked surprised when they heard the name.

"Who is Julian Burton?"

"Who's that? Have you heard of him?"

"No, I haven't."

As the discussion got louder, Frankie was also stunned by the turn of events. "Who? Julian Burton?" Justin, who was beside him, frowned slightly. It was also his first time hearing the name.

Then, someone piped up, "Doesn't Old Mr. Burton only have one grandson? Who is this Julian Burton? Where did he come from?"

"That's right. Were you perhaps mistaken?"

Michael nodded politely toward the person as he heard that line of inquiry. "I'm sure of it. In addition to the will, I have a DNA test here. The test confirms that Mr. Julian Burton is a member of the Burton Family that was lost and just found recently. He is Old Mr. Burton's grandson."

"Where is he then?"

"That's right. Who exactly is he?"

At this moment, a figure walked up the steps unhurriedly. Each step taken was slowly, as if they were waiting for everyone's attention.

The discussion voices gradually faded, and all eyes were on the man who came to the stage.

Like a shot, someone had realized something. Unbelievable!

Robin said, "Let me introduce: this is another grandson of Old Mr. Burton, Julian Burton."

Soon, Julian stood on the stage with his hands behind his back. It was his habit after performing surgery.

"Sorry for being late, I was in the hospital performing a surgery, and it's also my last operation. I think most of you here today are not unfamiliar with me, so I won't bother with introductions. You have heard the contents of the will. When the equity redistribution announcement comes out, I will be taking over Burton Group. My name is Julian Peters, and I'm also Julian Burton."

The hall was as silent as the grave. Then, after a few seconds, everyone exclaimed in shock.

"Isn't that Justin's cousin?"

"Yeah. How did he become Old Mr. Burton's grandson?"

The moment Justin saw Julian, he stood up abruptly. He stood out amongst the crowd in black with a height of nearly 6'3 feet, and he looked at Julian, who was on the stage, in disbelief.

Likewise, Julian was also looking directly at him.

When their eyes met, the familiarity of living under the same roof for more than 30 years seemed to disappear in a puff of smoke. What was left was only the unknown and boundless loneliness.

The memorial service ended in a hurry.

In the afternoon, Hudson Pharmaceuticals. “Chris! Breaking News!” Jolly didn’t even knock on the door when she barged in while Rachel read a financial report.

In the meantime, Rachel was not surprised by Jolly’s exaggerated actions anymore. She did not even raise her head. “The director of the Marketing Department had an affair with the secretary and was caught by his wife and got slapped in the face? Or the new intern from the Finance Department got rejected yet again when they tried to bribe their supervising officers?”

Jolly was akin to a humanoid gossip maker. Due to the nature of her work, she needed to connect with various departments. Hence, she knew all the gossip of each department like the back of her hand.

“No! This time, it’s really big news! If you knew about this, you wouldn’t be able to continue reading your report. Trust me!”

“Fine, fine. Tell me.”

“At the Burton Family’s memorial service in the morning, a lawyer read out Old Mr. Burton’s will and appointed the heir to the equity of Burton Group. Guess who’s that heir?”

Rachel perfunctorily said as she flipped to the next page of the report, “Who else could it be? Currently, the Burton Family only has one heir.”

Jason is imprisoned, and he is deprived of his basic political rights. He will never be released from prison in this life. Thus, he has no right to inherit anything at all. As for Robin? He’s merely a blind follower of Jason.

Jolly retorted, “Do you think I’ll consider that as breaking news if it was Justin?”

“If it’s not him, then who else can it be?” Rachel finally raised her head.

“You’ll never be able to guess who it is no matter how hard you try.” Then, Jolly took a deep breath and said slowly, “It’s Julian.”

## Chapter 385 The Right Decision

Rachel was utterly flummoxed, and she could not believe what she had just heard. "Pardon?" "Julian! I said, Julian Peters! You weren't mistaken." Jolly emphasized Julian's name over and over again excitedly. "Can you believe it? Julian is the grandson of Old Mr. Burton, an illegitimate child of the Burton Family."

Suddenly, Rachel's hand shook, and the pen she was holding created a tragic scratch on the report.

Not noticing Rachel's reaction, Jolly continued saying, "Everyone is now guessing who Julian's father is. Old Mr. Burton only has two sons in total. So his eldest son, Justin's father, is likely to be Julian's father. After all, Sue was his sister-in-law. So the story of the affairs between a brother-in-law and sister-in-law is now spreading."

"That's impossible!"

"Huh?" Jolly was taken aback. "Why is it impossible?"

"When Justin's father died, Julian wasn't even born yet."

"Really?" Just like those outsiders, Jolly did not know when Justin's father died.

After that, Rachel explained, "The relationship between Justin's father and Old Mr. Burton was not very good. He ran away from home and got married secretly in the past. When he died unexpectedly, Justin was only about three or four years old. Later, Old Mr. Burton took Justin home, but because he was young and afraid of strangers, Sue followed him to the Burton Residence to take care of him."

These are the things Justin told me back then. I still remember them very well.

Jolly said, "Was Sue already married, right? So then, who was her husband?"

"I'm not sure. But Julian was indeed born in the Burton Residence."

“Could it be that Old Mr. Burton has a third son?” Jolly made a presumption with her overactive mind.

Rachel side-eyed Jolly and said, “Have you ever thought of another possibility?”

“What possibility? If it’s not Justin’s father, doesn’t that indicate that Old Mr. Burton has a third son? There’s no way it was Jason.” Jolly was in a world all by herself when she finished her sentence. However, she realized something when she finished her rant.

She looked at Rachel in surprise. “No way!”

After putting down the pen, Rachel took out her car keys. “I’m heading out for a while.”

“Hey, take me with you!”

“No, you have to go home. Your parents will probably be looking for you once they hear the news.”

With Julian suddenly becoming the successor of Burton Group, they must postpone Carter Enterprise’s acquisition plans for Burton Group. At the very least, they have to figure out the current situation.

Rachel drove out of Hudson Pharmaceuticals alone.

“Sorry, the number you have dialed is currently unavailable. Please try again later.” Unfortunately, Julian wasn’t picking up her calls.

No doubt, there must be many people who want to call Julian at this hour.

Therefore, Rachel called the hospital again.

The call went through, and Julian’s intern answered the phone. “Didn’t you know? Dr. Peters had resigned from the hospital.”

“When did this happen?”

“Dr. Peters submitted his resignation report half a month ago. Today, the resignation process was finally over, and he had packed up all his things. The hospital also switched several of us to another mentor.”

“Then, do you know where he’s gone?”

“I’m sorry, I don’t.”

“Thank you. Sorry for the inconvenience.”

“No worries.”

Rachel hung up the phone and drove aimlessly on the streets of Riverdale. She didn’t even know where to begin to look for Julian for a moment. He most probably won’t be at home.

It was already evening. The electronic screen displayed the city planning map of Riverdale in the city center. The real estate development advertisements of ‘The Banks of the Green River’ filled the streets and alleys. Even the billboards on the bus station platform are full of them.

She suddenly recalled something. Then, she drove directly to Green River Street.

After parking the car on the side of the road, she walked along the riverside path in Green River Park for a while. Then, finally, she saw a familiar figure in the distance, and he was sitting on the lawn and watching the children playing in the distance.

“I knew it! You’re really here.”

Julian was a little stunned by her appearance, and he turned his head to look at Rachel. His eyes brightened momentarily, but they immediately turned bleak. Then, he asked faintly, “What brings you here?”



"I heard about the incident at the memorial service."

"So you're here to ask me about my background?"

Rachel was slightly startled. "Can't I ask?"

Julian said nothing in response. Instead, he took a white coat from his bag and spread it out beside him. "Have a seat."

"It's okay. I..."

"Nah, it's fine. I don't need it anyway. I just brought it out as a souvenir."

Despite what Julian said, she still sat directly on the ground. She picked up his white coat and put it on her knees. As she looked at the Tran-Q's logo above, she said, "I used to constantly think that you just want to be a doctor and a good one, at that."

"How about now?"

"I still feel that way now."

He was slightly taken aback, and he looked at her in surprise.

Based on today's situation, everyone who knew him would think that he had gained astonishing triumphs, so he could not wait to resign. After all, how could being a doctor be any better than inheriting Burton Group?

However, Rachel said, "If you were that kind of person, you wouldn't bring this coat out. No matter why you decided to accept Old Mr. Burton's will and inherit Burton Group, I believe you'll always be a good doctor. You have your own reasons for everything you do."

“Everyone is guessing who my biological father is. They all think that I have stayed in the Burton Residence for so many years, all for the sake of today.”

“You are you. He is him. You two are different people.”

Her words made him frown slightly. “You knew?”

“Well, I saw you talking to him on the phone once.”

As he heard this, his facial expression changed.

However, she didn’t care as she continued, “At first, I thought he might be trying to threaten you to get Old Mr. Burton’s information. But now, it seems that it is simply human nature. After all, he is your father, yet you stand on the side of justice in the end. It must have been quite hard on you. Julian, if I had known about this at the time, I wouldn’t have made things difficult for you. For that, please accept my sincerest apologies.”

A trace of complex emotion flashed in his eyes. Shortly after, he attempted a small smile and said, “It’s okay. You don’t need to apologize. I just did what I was supposed to do.”

“Alright then, a piece of advice? You don’t have to care what others say. Since you’ve made a decision, just keep moving forward.”

She stood up and reached out her hands to him. “Get up. I’ll walk with you.”

The sunset dyed half of the sky red and Rachel’s smile was gentle as if it could heal all wounds.

At that moment, the gloom in Julian’s heart disappeared temporarily. He held Rachel’s hand and smiled. “Okay, let’s go.”

It now appears that I have made the right decision. No matter what was sacrificed, I can only protect the one I love by standing at the pinnacle of power. No matter how much I love being a doctor, I don't want to look back anymore. I don't wish to watch my beloved woman being tortured like before while I can only stand there and do anything.

Unknown to the two walking side by side, a black car was parked by the river. The man's gaze seemingly penetrated the windshield as he sat on the back seat and watched their retreating silhouettes. His temples throbbed fiercely, his cold pupils contracted, and a wave of misery appeared in his usually calm and deep gaze.

#### Chapter 386 Passive-Aggressive

The air in the car was almost frozen. In the rearview mirror, Frankie could not bear to look at the man's facial expression in the back seat. "President Burton, why don't I go and ask?" "What are you going to ask?" Instantly, Frankie was at a loss for words. What am I going to ask?

Frankie knew Justin's current mood better than anyone else. No one could understand the pain of being betrayed by their own family. Julian was the cousin he grew up with, and Rachel was the woman he loved all his life. Yet, both of them walked away from him at the same time.

"Let's go."

After saying those two words with much difficulty, he finally retracted his gaze and leaned back against the back of the chair feebly.

Even though he was odd to think this, he did not hate anyone or feel any anger.

At the moment when Julian appeared at the memorial service and was announced as the heir of Burton Group, Justin had no other emotions except for a moment of astonishment.

Similarly, Justin was neither angry nor even jealous when he saw Rachel rush over to the park a while ago and walk side by side with Julian on the path along the river, looking like a match made in heaven.

At this moment, Justin finally understood what it meant to lose. The real meaning of loss was that one did not even have the qualifications to retain something or someone.

It's better this way. The current Julian is capable enough to protect Rachel. He is her best refuge.

"Frankie."

"Yes, President Burton."

"Book me a flight to Montenegro."

"You're going to Montenegro?" Frankie was stunned for a moment, but he nodded in agreement shortly after. "That's right. You need to rest for a while. Don't worry. I'll help you make proper arrangements regarding the matter on Burton Group. Well then, when will you be back?"

However, Justin did not say a word. He didn't know how long he would be away. He seemed to have no reason to stay in Riverdale any longer.

...

Everyone thought that the president of Burton Group was about to be replaced by Julian. But after the reallocation of shares, Julian actually tried his best to resign at the first general meeting of shareholders. Instead, Julian proposed that Robin remained as Burton Group's president, while he would be the vice president.

"But the vice president is President Burton. So if you're the vice president, then President Burton..."

Out of the blue, this sentence came out, and everyone looked at each other in dismay.

A few gazes landed on the position that initially belonged to Justin. However, the seat was empty at the moment.

After the memorial service, Justin said he was not feeling well and did not come to Burton Group ever again.

“Mr. Zimmer, are you senile? Julian is now the largest shareholder of Burton Group. He has the right to appoint and remove any positions in Burton Group. The entire Burton Group belongs to him. Do you think a mere position of a vice president will do anything?” Robin rudely scolded the person who spoke.

The person was obviously angry from being jabbed by Robin.

After all, Julian was a suddenly assigned leader. Despite him being the largest shareholder, he still has not gained the favors of the other shareholders. Julian did not have his own men or network in Burton Group. Furthermore, these shareholders were stubborn. Although they showed respect outwardly, they had different sinister ideas inwardly.

Even so, Julian was not angry. Then, he said in a low voice, “Everyone had misunderstood, Justin is my cousin, and he has been in Burton Group for so many years. His contributions are obvious to all. Who stipulates that there can’t be two vice presidents in a company?”

Once again, the crowd was taken aback by this declaration.

Later, Julian added, “My initial intention was to let him return to be the president. But it’s best to postpone this decision, considering the frequent changes of the company’s presidents in the short term will have too much impact on stock market fluctuations. I think everyone has no opinion about this, right?”

Julian’s humble and gentle attitude surprised everyone.

At once, Robin raised his hand. “I’ll express my stand first. I have no opinion anyway. I have nothing to say if you guys want me to retire from this position one day.”

As the crowd noticed Robin listening to Julian’s words, everyone felt even more shocked. Then, the crowd started whispering.

"I heard that Julian is a humble person before, but I didn't expect him to be so generous in matters related to interests."

"Yeah, he has already received so much equity. We can't stop him from doing what he wants. But no words can describe this humble attitude of his."

"If only President Burton were here—it's rare to have a discussion without conflict. Even President Gunson isn't causing a scene today."

"Oh... He's arrogant and entitled. You know how President Burton was..."

"To put it bluntly, he's petty."

The final result was that everyone unanimously agreed with Julian's suggestion. Robin still remained as the company's president. Meanwhile, as the company's first and second shareholders, Julian and Justin would both be the vice presidents.

As soon as the meeting was over, the crowd was dismissed. Robin greeted Julian courteously and complimented him. "President Peters, your tactic of retreating to win some ground is working well. In comparison with Justin's pettiness for not attending the meeting, you have instantly gained the favors of these shareholders with your humble attitude.

However, Julian said faintly, "Justin is not petty. I grew up with him. He is more subtle than you think."

"Could it be that he would make a comeback?"

"Who knows?"

"Then I will be in the first line of defense and help you in that battle if that is truly the case. I'll accept any assignment from you, even if I have to undergo the most severe trials, President Peters. I'll deal with him for you!"

Justin did not speak. Instead, he turned his head and looked out the window. The trial will be held in two days.

One month later...

"Wait a minute. Your face is a little oily. Makeup artist, please touch up the makeup."

"Right!"

"Okay, we can start now."

Leroy was shooting the cover of Hudson Pharmaceuticals' new packaging endorsement in the studio, and Jolly was commanding the staff like she was Leroy's assistant.

Rachel was speechless. "Are you my assistant or Leroy's assistant? You are receiving payment from me yet working under him. I'm suffering a great loss."

Jolly raised her eyebrows as she heard Rachel's complaint. "I'm doing it for your sake! I'm doing this so that the endorsement advertisement for our company in this issue will look better."

"It doesn't do much even if it looks good, does it? No matter how beautiful the idols are, do you think fans will support them once they are in a relationship? From what I see, the greatest contribution you can give to the company is by breaking up with Leroy."

"Instigating a discord, are we? I'll tell Julian later that you weren't meeting a client two days ago. You just stayed at home for the whole day and didn't go on a date with him on purpose!"

"Shh!" Rachel immediately covered Jolly's mouth. "Will it kill you to keep quiet?"

Jolly slapped Rachel's hand away and said, "Why are you acting like a thief? No, I just want to know what's happening with you and Julian right now. Rumors are circulating in the company that you two are getting married."

“Nothing is going on. We’re just friends.”

“Who are you kidding?! Friends, seriously?” Jolly said with a look of disdain, “Will friends send roses and cakes to your office every few days? Besides this, let’s talk about the cooperative tie between Burton Group and Carter Enterprise. Do you think he’ll go against all opinions with his ability and agree with my mom’s condition if it wasn’t out of his respect for you? He suffers a great loss by agreeing with my mom’s condition! Right now, the more my mom sees Julian, the more eye-pleasing she feels. Just two days ago, she even asked me to persuade you to marry Julian sooner. In the future, the two companies will join forces and merge into one.”

Rachel was reading a magazine on the sofa. However, she did not turn a page for a long time, and her look was one of utter absent-mindedness.

When Jolly noticed Rachel’s discouraging state, she was frustrated. Then, she nudged Rachel a little. “Did you hear a word of what I said? Why do you look like your soul has left your body these days.”

Rachel raised her head and spoke out of the blue, “Tomorrow’s the 18th.”

“Yeah, what about it?”

Rachel frowned slightly as she heard the confirmation. But, then, she said in a casual tone, “Tomorrow’s the day for Jason’s execution.”

Jolly was stunned by the news.

Chapter 387 We Are the Same

In Riverdale Penitentiary. “You don’t seem surprised at all.” Across a vacuum glass, Julian held the phone and looked at the man over the glass.

The man was in his fifties, and his sideburns were completely white. He looked like a man in his seventies, and he no longer had the same high-spirited energy as before.



Jason stared at Julian for a long time before he spoke, "Murderers like to go back to the crime scene and watch the follow-up development after killing the person. You, too, are similar to them."

"Are you comparing me to a murderer?"

"Aren't you? You killed me!"

Julian snorted when he heard that, "It was your own evil thoughts and greed that killed you."

Surprisingly, Jason was calm. He continued to look at Julian as if he wanted to engrave his look in his dim eyes.

"Actually, we are the same like father, like son. You and I, we both wanted power, wealth, admiration, and respect. We wanted to step on others. The only difference is that you pretend like you don't want it, while I never hide the fact that I want it."

Julian furrowed his brows slightly when he heard this outrageous claim.

"Why exactly did you ask to see me?"

Jason was sentenced to be executed, and the day for his execution was tomorrow. However, prisoners had the right to see their relatives and friends before the execution. This was a favor granted by the

law.

Of course, Julian could have chosen not to come. However, he still came.

Eventually, Jason restrained his scrutinizing gaze on Julian a little. "Tina is still abroad, and I hope you can take care of her."

Julian remained silent. He did not say yes, nor did he say no.

“How’s your mother? Seeing as she did not visit me for so long, she must blame me.”

“She’s abroad.”

Jason was slightly startled. Then, he looked at Julian again and actually complimented him. “You’ve done a good job! To achieve great success is to put aside all feelings and relationships, even if it is family. You are better than me in this aspect!”

“Are you done?” Julian felt a little impatient. Then, he raised his wrist and glanced at his watch. “I’m busy.”

As Julian said that, he made a move to get up.

Jason hurriedly stopped him. “Julian, c-can’t you call me Dad, just once, please?”

Julian glanced at Jason, and a layer of indifference slowly covered his usually warm eyes. “If I want to achieve great success, I need to put aside all feelings and relationships, even if it is family. Isn’t this what you just taught me?”

After saying this, Julian hung up the phone and left without looking back.

Only Jason was left standing there, holding the receiver in his hand. He tried his best to hear something from the other end of the phone. But unfortunately, he could not hear anything.

When someone was about to die, the power and wealth he had pursued throughout his life seemed to be no longer important, akin to a cloud vanishing into thin air. Jason never thought that his only wish before his death was to hear Julian call him Dad.

After coming out of the penitentiary, Julian realized that the sky was not dark yet. Instead, the fiery clouds on the horizon lit the hills in the distance red, complementing the sycamore trees in fall.

Julian drove to the penitentiary alone without bringing anyone.

The car drove away from Riverdale Penitentiary. Heavy metal rock music played along the way, and the music almost shook off the car's roof. Usually, Julian would never listen to this particular genre, thinking it was too noisy. However, he currently felt that the louder it was, the better it was for him. My heart won't feel empty when my ears are filled with noise.

Nightfall came, and Rachel was putting the clothes on the balcony back into the house when she saw it would rain outside.

Meanwhile, Jolly was carrying a child in each of her arms. They were watching cartoons on the sofa. The two children each held a large bag of snacks. After having a bite by themselves, they would give Jolly a taste of the snacks.

Anyone who saw this scene would be envious.

Rachel glanced at the time and said, "It's getting late. Charlotte, Samuel, brush your teeth and go to bed."

The two children were very obedient and went back to the room hand in hand.

Jolly picked up a bag of potato chips and stuffed the chips into her mouth. Then, she garbled with a mouth full of food, "You're just jealous of me and want to ruin my happy parent-children hour."

"I want to ask you something."

"What is it?"

"Have you contacted Julian today?"

Jolly shook her head at the question. “No, but I did send him a message in the morning. My dad has a friend who suffers from a heart problem. I want to ask him if there is an expert he knows that can take a look. But he hasn’t gotten back to me yet.”

Rachel frowned. The message I sent him hasn’t received any reply yet either.

“What’s wrong?”

Just as Rachel was about to say something, her phone suddenly rang. Speak of the devil, and he shall appear. It was a call from Julian.

“Hello?” After pressing the answer button, she headed straight back to the balcony.

“I’ve been busy for the whole day today, and I only saw the message just now. So what’s the matter?”

His weary voice came from the other end of the phone.

Then, at once, she said, “It’s nothing. I just want to ask you if you have time on the weekend. Jolly and the others plan to go to the suburbs to have fun together on the weekend. We’ll be bringing along the children. Leroy, Ria, and Victor will all be there too.”

“This weekend?”

“Yeah.”

“Sure, I have time. I will pick you up when the time comes.”

“Okay!”

“By the way, I have seen what Jolly asked me about. So, I will organize the way of contact and information and send it to her so that she can check that carefully.”

Rachel felt relieved when she heard nothing unusual in his tone.

“Then, rest early, and don’t stay up late.”

“Good night.”

After the call ended, Rachel stood on the balcony holding her smartphone. As the night wind blew, she suddenly felt inexplicably absent-minded.

“Yo! Don’t stay up too late.”

Suddenly, Jolly’s teasing voice rang from behind.

Rachel was so startled that her phone nearly flew out of the balcony. Then, she glared at Jolly. “Don’t you know it’s not good to scare someone? What if I have a heart attack because of that scare? What then? Also, why are you eavesdropping on my call?”

“I’m just curious. You know, concerned about your love life.”

“Love life?”

Rachel headed straight into the room after shouldering Jolly aside. “Julian said he’ll help you sort out the contact method and information regarding the cardiac expert you asked for. So remember to check in when he sends it to you. Don’t forget.”

“Then, why didn’t he tell me directly?”

“Nonsense, you’re always by my side. Telling me is the same as telling you.”

“Yeah, you’re right. But I still want to ask, why didn’t he tell me directly?”

Rachel was rendered speechless. “Jolly, are you a recorder?”

Jolly said triumphantly, “In my opinion, this recorder will have the opportunity to be a bridesmaid soon.”

“Don’t spew nonsense!”

With that, Rachel threw a T-shirt she had just taken off the hanger into Jolly’s face. “Fold your clothes properly!”

“Rude!”

As Jolly folded her clothes, she muttered her complaints, “I really should let Julian see you like this. By the way, do you have any plans for tomorrow? If you don’t, come shopping with me. I have no clothes to wear.”

“I have things to do.”

“What is it that you possibly need to do?”

“I have to go to the Riverdale Penitentiary in West Magnolia.”

Jolly was taken aback. “What are you going to do there?”

Rachel frowned as she heard Jolly’s question. Then, feeling a mixed bag of emotions in her heart, she gradually stopped folding the clothes in her hand.

As the saying once said, ‘Everyone hits a man who is down.’ After Jason was convicted and sentenced to execution for his smuggling case, his underlings avoided him like he was the plague. Even Robin,

his Godson, is also trying his best to distance himself from him. So, I'm afraid there won't be anyone present to collect his corpse.

## Chapter 388 Never Truly Even

The following afternoon, Rachel went to the Riverdale Penitentiary. However, the execution was over by the time she arrived. "A total of two prisoners were executed today. May I ask which one are you here to pick up?" "Jason Burton."

After that, the person in charge glanced at the list in his hand and said, "Jason Burton has already been taken." Rachel was slightly taken aback. "Who picked him up?"

"His nephew. Look, here's the signature."

Rachel was startled again when she saw the signature on the list. Then, after a while, she regained her senses and said, "Thank you."

"You're welcome."

When did Justin come back?

A month ago, Arthur's funeral and memorial service were held on the same day. After both events ended, the law redistributed the internal equity of Burton Group according to Arthur's will. As a result, Julian became the largest shareholder of the Burton Group in a genuine sense, serving as the vice president. In contrast, Justin left Riverdale to go abroad before the shareholders' meeting. Before he left, he only went to see Gloria. At that time, Charlotte was still at Gloria's place. He went to say goodbye to Charlotte, but he did not say when he would be back. He only told Charlotte to be good. In a blink of an eye, a month has passed.

Rachel closed the car door, put her hand on the steering wheel, and she hesitated for a long time. Then, finally, she turned on her phone and swiped to contacts. Her slender fingertips lingered on the name 'Justin Burton' for a while. Eventually, she swiped down and called Frankie instead.

“Hello? Assistant Beckham? It’s me, Rachel.”

“President Hudson? Is something the matter?”

“It’s not a big deal. It’s just that there was a contract with Burton Group before, and President Burton signed it. But, unfortunately, there’s a problem with the contract.”

“Which contract? Why don’t you send me the contract?”

“I can’t explain it briefly over the phone. I would rather communicate with him face to face when he comes back. Is he back?”

“President Burton? Yeah, he’s back. Didn’t he contact you?”

“Where is he now?”

Since Rachel asked hastily, Frankie, who was on the other end of the call, was stunned for a moment.

What’s this situation right now?

Autumn was approaching, and the continuous rain in Riverdale for several days brought chills. The cemetery looked more and more desolate.

After Justin put the urn in the cemetery, the staff shut the graveyard.

“Thank you for your hard work.”

“It is what we should do. This is our job. Not to mention that you also gave such a big commission.”



Justin said nothing as he held an umbrella; he looked at the tombstone in front of him. The name 'Jason Burton' was engraved precisely and clearly. Jason, you have lived this life shamelessly seeking personal gain. If there is truth to reincarnation, I hope you will live your next life more righteously.

"Then, we'll get going first. It's a bit cold today. Sir, please don't stand for too long."

Justin hummed in agreement.

The rain was getting heavier and heavier, and the staff was wearing raincoats to facilitate their work. They left in a hurry, but they saw a woman come in with an umbrella when they left the cemetery.

Several people were surprised. Not many people would come to the cemetery at this time and under such terrible weather conditions.

Justin stood in front of the tombstone for a long time.

Not far from Jason's tomb was Arthur's cemetery, and there was only a small path between the father and son. A little further away was the joint tomb of Justin's parents.

I was only three years old when my parents died in a car accident, and I have no impression of my biological parents. So for me, Grandpa and Sue are my real relatives.

Justin sprinkled the wine on the tombstone as he thought of this, "Jason, a farewell toast for you."

When he spilled half of the wine, he raised his head and drank the rest. After that, he stared at the tombstone as though in a trance for a long time.

"If you drink too much here, it will not be good for the security guarding the tomb."

A familiar female voice rang out behind him, and it startled him out of his stupor.

This moment was like a dream to Justin. In astonishment, he turned around and saw Rachel standing behind him, holding an umbrella. She looked at him with her pair of quiet eyes, showing no emotion.

“What brings you here?”

“I thought no one would be there to take care of Jason’s funeral affairs since you’re not in Riverdale. So, I went there.”

Justin was slightly startled but not too surprised. He knew Rachel’s temperament. She has always been kind and attentive.

“Thank you. Jason treated your grandma terribly. How can you still treat him like this?”

“Everything between any two persons settles once the other party dies.”

Since Rachel did not want to talk too much about this matter, she changed the subject. “When did you come back? Why didn’t you inform me?”

After saying this, she suddenly realized that there was no need for Justin to share his itinerary with her. So, she explained again by saying, “Charlotte has been asking when you will come back.”

“I just came back. I wanted to organize some things at hand before contacting you.”

The rain was getting heavier. The crackling sound of the rain hitting the umbrella felt like it would eventually hurt the hand.

The biggest advantage of rainy days was that one only needed an umbrella to separate people from the world around them. It was as if there was only each other left in the world.

No one spoke for a moment. Hence, the atmosphere was a bit awkward.

People you have truly loved, even if it was a one-sided affair where only one party had poured in their love in the relationship, it was impossible for the so-called 'even' to exist. It was because the love and hatred had long been embedded deep in the bone and embedded in every single nerve. Both parties would still be affected whenever they met again, and there would never be a peaceful day for the rest of their lives.

"Hey!" A shout broke through the rain curtain and cut through the awkward atmosphere.

When both Rachel and Justin turned around, they saw the guard at the cemetery. He was wearing a raincoat as he shouted at them from a distance, "This place is about to close. When are you guys leaving?"

Rachel hurriedly responded, saying, "Sir, we are leaving now."

It was the cemetery rule to be closed before dark.

"Let's go."

Rachel glanced at Justin, and the two left in tandem.

"I'm going to pick Charlotte up this Friday."

"Friday? It might be impossible on Friday. Jolly had asked Leroy and the others to go out and have fun. We'll bring the two children, and they all agreed."

"In that case, it's fine. I'll pick her up next week."

"Why don't you join us?"

"No need." Justin quickly rejected the offer without hesitation. "You guys can't truly enjoy yourselves if I go."

“How is that so?”

“Won’t Julian be there too?”

“He won’t mind,” Rachel vowed. “Julian said that he would want to have dinner together when you came back. No matter what the others say, he still regards you as his cousin.”

Justin’s eyes were disinterested, but he did not explain himself further.

Suddenly, she thought of something and abruptly felt that she had spoken too much.

Even if Julian doesn’t mind, maybe Justin himself does. After all, neither Julian nor I told him about Old Mr. Burton’s death in time.

There was a moment of silence before Justin asked, “Did you drive here?”

“Yeah, my car is right over there.”

As the awkwardness eased, she silently let out a sigh of relief.

In the parking lot at the cemetery entrance, there were two cars. One red and one black parked very close to one another.

Finally, he said, “Then, be careful on the road, and pay attention since it’s rainy. Tell me when you get home.”

“Okay.”

“Get in.” He opened the car door for her.

Just as she was about to get in the car, she suddenly turned her head and blurted out, "Are you free? If you're free, why don't we have dinner together later?"

He was stunned for a moment. Then, a trace of astonishment appeared in his cold eyes.

## Chapter 389 Karma Transmigration

It rained heavily outside the window, and the raindrops beat the leaves of the sycamore trees on the streets of Riverdale to pieces. There was a constant stream of people in the English restaurant. The restaurant's atmosphere was undoubtedly much more lively and boisterous than a French restaurant.

"The fish and chips here are good; Charlotte and Samuel like them very much," Justin said. As he spoke, he poured a cup of tea for Rachel. "After dinner, I'll order a takeaway for two fish and chips, and you can take them back for the children."

"You still think about the little gluttonous duo?"

"In the past, I was too busy and spent too little time with Charlotte. If you are busy in the future, you can leave both children to me. Then, you can pick them up when you are not busy."

These words sounded inexplicably unpleasant.

Rachel's eyes darkened slightly. "Regarding things in Burton Group, is Robin still giving you a hard time after Julian took over? Why don't I talk to Julian?"

"There's no need for that. Robin didn't make things difficult for me. In fact, after Julian took over, it was a lot easier on me. I even took a month's leave, and no one has urged me to return."

Justin pretended that everything was fine. Rachel took his words at face value and actually let out a breath of relief.

“That’s good. I told you things would still be the same even after Julian took over. He’s your own family, after all. At the very least, he won’t let a man like Robin show off his authority.”

Justin didn’t answer; instead, he gave her the fish and chips and urged, “Eat more.”

After Julian joined Burton Group, Robin really stopped putting pressure on me. In other words, I have no pressure in Burton Group now because I have nothing to do. The moment someone overruns my work, it also means my authority has been overridden. Even so, I can understand everything Julian has done. If it were me, I would have done the same myself. Why? Because I’m the biggest threat.

“Did Charlotte cause any trouble during the days I’ve been gone?”

“Most of the time, she’s very well-behaved. But if you really want to know, you should attend the parent- teacher conference for her when the time comes. There was no huge trouble, but there were many small issues. For example, she was having many disputes with her classmates.”

“Let Victor be strict with her. She has never been in contact with her peers since she was a child, so she is used to being self-centered.”

Rachel was a little surprised.

“What’s wrong?”

As he saw her looking at him in astonishment, he asked, “Is there something on my face?”

After that, she immediately came back to her senses. “No, I’m just a little surprised. Didn’t you always think that it’s not a bad thing for Charlotte to be self-centered?”

“If she’s too self-centered, she’ll be vulnerable toward setbacks in the future. I can’t accompany her for the rest of my life.”

“Yeah, that’s true. Don’t worry. She’s alright.”

She smiled. "There are so many people backing her up, so there's nothing to be afraid of."

Just as she was talking, her phone suddenly rang. It was Julian.

"Sorry, I'm going to answer this call."

"Sure."

Rachel left the seat and pressed the answer button while walking toward the bathroom, "Hello?"

"Rach, where are you?"

"Out having dinner."

"With Jolly?"

"No, with Justin."

The other end of the phone went suspiciously silent for a long time. Rachel glanced at the screen of her mobile phone curiously. However, she did not hang up. "Hello? Julian?"

"Huh?"

"I thought you hung up the phone. It's raining today, and the signal must not be good."

"When did he come back?"

"I don't know. We just coincidentally met today, so we had dinner together, and we were just talking about work."

"Where are you? I'll pick you up."

Rachel was slightly stunned.

His tone suddenly made her feel uncomfortable.

She kept frowning after she came back from the washroom.

"Sorry to keep you waiting for a long time."

As he saw her furrowed brows, he couldn't help but ask, "What's wrong? Did something happen?"

"It's nothing. Let's eat." Rachel squeezed out a smile.

Julian's attitude on the phone earlier made her feel inexplicably uncomfortable.

He stopped asking further when he sensed that she didn't wish to say more. So, instead, he only kept giving her food, asking her to taste them. Meanwhile, he, himself, did not eat much.

After dinner, he ordered an English dessert for her.

"They have this here?"

Rachel felt surprised as she looked at the mouth-watering sea salt caramel pudding in front of her. "The last time I ate this was five years ago."

In the past, only the cook of the Burton Family could make this, as they were not sold outside.



“Have a taste.”

After taking a bite, she was even more surprised. “It tastes exactly the same as I imagined it to be.”

Even after so many years, she still remembered the warm feeling in her heart the first time she had this sea salt caramel pudding.

I remember that day very clearly. Justin was not at home that day, and it was raining heavily too. When I returned from outside, I was locked out by Sue until the middle of the night when Ms. Grace secretly let me in and made me sea salt caramel pudding.

Although it was an unpleasant past, such a touch of warmth was also a memorable thing for Rachel. “I remember that only Ms. Grace can make this, and I didn’t ask her how she did it back then. I also don’t know where she is now.”

Justin replied, “This place is established and run by Ms. Grace.”

Rachel’s eyes widened, “Really?!”

“It’s true.” Justin smiled, and it softened the austere look on his face. “Why don’t we call her out, and you can ask her personally?”

“Is she here?”

“She should be,” Justin said while raising his hand to call for the server.

However, when he turned his head, he saw a figure coming in from the restaurant’s door. The smile in Justin’s eyes suddenly disappeared.

The visitor looked around and happened to meet Justin’s eyes.

Likewise, she also spotted the figure, and her eyes contracted a little in response.

Julian was dressed in a brown trench coat. Under silver-rimmed glasses, his eyes were warm yet spirited, and he walked straight to their table.

“Julian.” Rachel stood up.

He looked at her and said, “It’s raining cats and dogs today, so I wanted to pick you up.”

Once the concise sentence fell, the air suddenly condensed.

She furrowed her brows and said, “Didn’t I say I drove here? So I can go home by myself!”

“I’m worried,” said Julian. As he spoke, he even gripped her arms. “Let’s go. I’ll take you home.”

All of a sudden, Justin grabbed Julian on the shoulder. “Julian.”

In an instant, the facial expression on Julian’s face sank. “What are you doing?”

“I should be asking you that. What are you doing?”

“I’m here to pick up my fiancée. What do you think I’m doing?”

Like a shot, Justin’s arm suddenly froze. Fiancée?

Similarly, Rachel was also stunned. Since when did I become Julian’s fiancée? Why am I not aware of this?!

At this moment, many people in the restaurant had started looking at them. Since she did not want to embarrass everyone, she apologized to Justin, saying, "I'm sorry, I have to go first."

Justin's hand on Julian's shoulder trembled. It froze for a second and fell.

"Rachel, let's go." Julian took her bag and glanced at Justin before leaving. His eyes were icy, as if he had turned into another person.

She was dragged away by Julian, and when she was about to reach the entrance, the server stopped her with a bag. "Ma'am, the fish and chips that gentleman packed for you."

Just as she was about to take them, Julian said, "There's no need. Let him keep it for himself."

With that, Julian directly took her and left the restaurant.

There was only Justin left on the seat, and she did not have the time to finish the sea salt caramel pudding across from him.

When he looked at the back silhouettes of the two people leaving, they looked like a perfect match. The only trace of warmth on his face disappeared with the disappearance of Rachel's figure. Almost instantly, a great sense of loss swept in.

He abruptly frowned and grasped the corner of the table to pant. Then, as he felt his chest seemingly crushed by a boulder, he gasped for air.

Is this considered karma? Justin thought mockingly. I let Rachel suffer in the past, and now it's my turn. I deserve to suffer as she did. I deserve all this.

## Chapter 390 Stop Having Illusions

Rachel and Julian took the elevator to the underground garage together. Suddenly, he said, "It's raining heavily outside, so don't drive your car for the time being. I'll send you home."

As he said that, he walked ahead on his own. She looked at his back and halted her tracks. "Julian, let's talk." His figure froze slightly.

He parked the white car in the garage corner with the windows closed. Although it was late fall and not hot, the air in the vehicle was stuffy.

Rachel frowned as she sat in the passenger seat. "Julian, I want to know what you are doing."

"I'm worried about your safety when it rains. So what's wrong with me picking you up?"

Rachel looked at Justin incredulously as she heard his response. "I said I can go back by myself. I'm an adult, not a child. It's just raining."

"Are you blaming me for being meddlesome?"

"Julian, do you have to talk like this?"

"How do I talk?"

"Sarcastic and bitter!"

The words echoed firmly in the car.

She had always been blunt with her words, especially with her friends. She silently looked at the man in the driver's seat, who she considered her best friend of the opposite gender besides Hans. If anything, Julian could be regarded as her benefactor.

Meanwhile, he also looked back at her. His usual warm eyes were filled with suppressed emotions at this moment. Finally, after a long time, he took a deep breath and said, "Rach, I'm sorry. I apologize. Today was my fault. I did something wrong. I've been in a bad mood recently. Let's not talk about this, okay?"

All of a sudden, she felt a sense of unspeakable suffocation. I would rather he quarrel with me now than reluctantly apologize.

“I’ll send you home.”

His voice pulled her back from her thoughts. But then, she held the steering wheel. “Wait a minute. I’m not asking you to apologize to me. We are good friends.”

Although she tried her best to explain patiently, her frown betrayed her inner anxiety. “Why did you say that I’m your fiancée in front of Justin?”

Julian’s hand on the steering wheel slowly slipped, and he did not speak for a long time.

After a long while, he leaned on the back of the chair and looked at Rachel. “Rachel, if I remember correctly, you said that you never want to have anything to do with Justin in your life. You said you dislike his pestering. Isn’t this the easiest way to stop him?”

“Maybe, but I don’t like to lie. Besides, it’s not fair to you either.”

“What if it’s true?”

She was startled by his words.

“W-What do you mean?”

“I wish for you to be my girlfriend, fiancée, or even my wife. Is that clear enough?”

At that instant, Rachel felt panicked.

It was six years ago when I met Julian. At that time, he was so nice. Just like Hans, he was a light shining into my dark world. I never thought that such a person would like me romantically.

After he said his piece, he took her hand like holding up some precious treasure; his movement was very light. "Rachel, I know it's not easy for you to let go of many things, but I'm willing to accompany you on your journey if you would have me. I hope you can give me a chance to take care of you and your children."

Perhaps the word 'children' triggered a particular place in her mind, and Rachel suddenly came back to her senses. She abruptly withdrew her hand and was scared to look into his eyes. "I'm sorry, Julian."

Just like that, his hand was left hanging in the air, slightly stiff.

"I'll just drive back by myself."

She hurriedly pushed open the car door and got out of the car immediately.

"Rach!" Julian called her from behind.

Although she paused her footsteps, she did not look back. "The rain isn't so heavy, so I'll just drive by myself. You, too, pay attention when you drive home."

"Rachel!" Julian raised his voice suddenly. "Are you uncomfortable because I lied that you are my fiancée? Or because I said that in front of him?"

There was a big difference between the two.

Her back stiffened slightly, and she left in a hurry without answering the question.

At this moment, Rachel just wanted to escape from this scene that made her feel uneasy quickly. She knew that running away was shameful, but everything happened so suddenly that she didn't know what to do.

The rain did pour heavily. According to the weather forecast, there would be constant rain for a week due to the typhoon.

She drove out of the garage alone.

At this time, Justin had just come out of the elevator with a to-go container in his hand when he saw Julian was making his way toward him.

“You’re not leaving yet?” Justin looked at Julian in surprise. Then, he looked behind him reflexively. “Where’s Rae?”

Julian’s facial expression was gloomy, as if he had changed into a different person. Then, Julian punched Justin before he could react, and his fist made direct contact with Justin’s cheek.

“Ugh!” Justin grunted in pain. His entire body staggered to the side and knocked over the stainless steel trash can. The to-go container in his hand fell to the ground, and that caused all the fish and chips to scatter against the pavement.

“What right do you have to call her that?” The sound of Julian’s roar came from overhead.

Justin raised his head in disbelief, but all he received was another punch.

However, Justin had been trained since he was a child. After receiving two punches, Justin quickly returned with a punch of his own.

With that, Julian also fell to the ground, and his glasses fell out to quite a distance.

Then, Justin got up and kept a safe distance. “Julian, have you gone mad?”

Julian panted and stood up against the wall. He glared at Justin angrily, his warm eyes now bloodshot. "Am I crazy, or are you crazy? How can she still have a meal with you in peace despite being tortured so much by you back then and witnessing your devilish state?"

"Are you talking about Rae?"

"I said, don't call her that! You're not worthy!"

Once again, Julian's growl echoed in the huge garage.

Justin was startled again, and his cold eyes contracted. "Do you know what you are talking about?"

"Of course, I know! You're the one who doesn't know what you're doing!"

"I just had a meal with her. We have a daughter together, Charlotte. So even if you and Rachel are engaged and will get married in the future, I will still go back to see Charlotte."

"Do you think such words will convince yourself or me?" Julian sneered, "Justin, I know you too well. You are a person who will do anything to achieve your goals. In fact, your memory has already recovered, right? However, you are still pestering Rachel. Don't you dare think I don't know what you're up to.'

In an instant, Justin's facial expression froze.

"I warn you. Stay away from her! Stop having illusions! She can't be with you anymore!"

Julian gave him a cold stare, then bent down to pick up his glasses and drove away.

Justin's temple throbbed abruptly amid the loud roar of the engine.



After an unknown amount of time, Justin picked up the to-go container that had fallen on the ground and threw it into the trash can. He happened to see himself in the reflection of the elevator. There were several apparent marks of a fight under his eyes. When he saw the nearly visible bruises, Justin thought, It sure didn't take long for the bruises to show up.

He raised his hand and touched the bruises, making him gasp in pain. Then, his pale fingers brushed the corners of his lips, and he saw blood on the tip of his fingers. What a shock! Julian definitely did not go easy on me with his punches.