

Love Me Or Leave Me

#Chapter 291 - Read Love Me Or Leave Me Chapter 291

Chapter 291

At Kelly's words, the worry that had been gnawing at Charlie's heart finally began to ease. The fear that she might reject him and dislike him had been his greatest terror. "How terrifying?" Charlie muttered under his breath. Knowing that Claire didn't break up with him because she hated him made him feel slightly petulant and somewhat proud. Kelly, however, remained silent. Meanwhile, Hayden tactfully stayed out of their conversation, sensing the delicate nature of the moment. "How terrifying can it be? Do I look like someone who gets scared easily?" Charlie said defiantly.

Kelly smiled wryly before she spoke, "My grandpa had a wife and multiple lovers, fathering twelve children in total. In the end, only my dad survived. My dad, too, followed in his footsteps, taking many lovers besides his wife, who together bore him nine children. However, none of them survived. I... was born when my dad traveled to Zentscape before his marriage and had a fling. Since all the children of the Jones family had perished, they finally thought of me and decided to bring me back."

"When I returned to join the Jones family, my mom officially became my dad's wife. Upon my return to the Jones family fold, my mom was formally married to my dad. His first wife was divorced, left with no room to object. Chuck, the Jones family... it's tainted. It doesn't suit you," Kelly added with a sigh. Charlie found himself rendered utterly speechless by her revelations, and Hayden was equally taken aback.

"Do you have to be the heir of their family?" Charlie asked, his voice filled with frustration and pain. He couldn't fathom why she would choose to remain in such a sordid, horrifying place as she had described.

"Chuck, my mom is here," Kelly explained with a bitter smile, looking deeply into Charlie's eyes, her expression grave. "She loves my dad. She's a hopeless romantic. Despite how hard I've tried to convince her, she refuses to leave him. I can't just abandon her. Besides, my dad is a very dark, sinister figure, and he's well aware of my fears for her. He manipulates this fact to control me, threatening my mom's safety to ensure my compliance. If I refuse to stay, he would torment her... maybe even worse. Chuck, they wouldn't hesitate. They're capable of murder. Everyone in the Jones family, related by blood or romance, they're all driven by their twisted desires. That's why I've vowed never to marry or have children. I can't risk having my children suffer the same fates as the other unfortunate souls in the Jones family, murdered by their own kin at a tender age."

Charlie was left speechless, aghast at the revelation. Naturally, he didn't want his future children to end up murdering each other or suffer any harm. The realization that the

members of the Jones family were indeed monstrous people hit him hard. "But I do like you," Charlie stated stubbornly. "What if we just stay together and decide not to have children? That way, we don't have to worry about them being targets of internal family plots," he proposed earnestly. Kelly, stunned by his suggestion, stared at Charlie, contemplating his words.

The more Charlie considered it, the more sensible it seemed to him. He believed they didn't need any more children, considering how the Carter family already had plenty. Stacey and Hayden had five children; Adrian had two; even Bryce, who seldom visited, had two sons. Carter Villa practically functioned like a childcare center, constantly bustling with children playing every time he visited. Thus, the idea of not having children didn't bother him. "No," Kelly replied sharply, without a moment's hesitation. She didn't want Charlie to sacrifice the chance to have his own children because of her. "You should leave. Don't try to find me again," she added somberly.

Hayden, who had been quietly

observing, could no longer keep his silence. "Kelly, if you believe that distancing yourself from Charlie will improve his life, think about this. If you don't marry him, he might end up never marrying or having children. He could be alone forever," Hayden interjected. Kelly was visibly shaken by his words and turned to look at Charlie, who returned her gaze. "Could you two at least exchange contact information?" Hayden suggested.

These two had been at odds since they met and had yet to even exchange phone numbers. Without contact details, maintaining any form of relationship after they parted would be impossible. Prompted by Hayden's suggestion, Charlie quickly snapped out of his reverie and hastily pulled out his phone. "What's your number?" he asked eagerly. Initially, Kelly hadn't considered exchanging numbers, but Hayden's earlier comment deeply affected her. After a brief hesitation, she finally gave Charlie her private number, saving his number in her phone in return.

It was working hours, so she didn't have much time to chat with them. Moreover, they couldn't linger for too long either, lest the ever-watchful collateral relatives, eyeing the assets of Jones Group, grew suspicious. Kelly gently ushered Hayden and Charlie out, stating she needed time to process and reflect. Though anxious, Charlie had no choice but to respect Kelly's request for space.

After they left the headquarters of Jones Group, Charlie followed Hayden back to the hotel, where he couldn't resist voicing his anxieties aloud. "Hayden, do you think Claire will refuse to be with me? What if she still doesn't want me?" Charlie's mind was overrun with turmoil.

Hayden deliberated for a moment before responding, "Instead of worrying about that, you should focus on honing your marksmanship and combat arts. If you have the time, it'd be best to learn some medical skills as well." Charlie looked perplexed as Hayden

continued, "There are many dangers within Jones Group. If you insist on being with Kelly, you'll likely face daily threats of assassination, ambush, and poisoning."

Charlie frowned deeply, musing

aloud, "Jones Group is too perilous. Maybe I should just run away with Claire. And if she's concerned about her mom, we can take her with us." Hayden remained silent, knowing Charlie was merely grappling with his thoughts. Deep down, Charlie was aware of the harsh realities that would come with entangling himself with the Jones Group. After sharing his thoughts, Charlie lapsed into a long silence. He remained quiet for several hours until the sun had set and Hayden called him to dinner. As he stood up, Charlie murmured to himself, "She's not cut out for this kind of life. Claire was never like this before. She used to be such a simple, joyful girl."

Hayden was at a loss for words. Although he wasn't familiar with what Kelly had been like previously, he had certainly heard about the daunting and fierce power struggles that plagued Jones Group. "Let's go, it's time to eat," he suggested, breaking the awkward silence.

Charlie nodded in agreement and replied, "Okay." Together, they left their room and enjoyed a meal at the hotel's restaurant. After dinner, as they returned to their room, Charlie, driven by a sudden curiosity, inquired, "Hayden, how did you manage to win over Becky's heart?"

Chapter 292

Hayden briefly recounted the story of how he had pursued Becky, Charlie listened attentively at first, but after a few seconds, he became exasperated. He pushed Hayden away and snapped, "All right all right, shut up already! Stop showing off. You can't wipe the smile off your face. Hayden chuckled, knowing he wasn't exaggerating. His relationship with Becky had indeed been sweet and idyllic

Later that evening, Hayden prepared to leave. Arranging the meeting between Charlie and Kelly had been a feat in his already packed schedule. Now that the two had met and exchanged contact information, his role as a mediator was essentially complete. Whether Kelly wanted to see Charlie again or whether Charlie wanted to pursue Kelly further was now up to their efforts and fate.

On the flight back, Hayden reflected on the complexities of the Jones family. He couldn't help but worry about Charlie's love life. The Jones family was notoriously intricate and perilous, a fact evident to anyone who knew them. Not only was it unsuitable for Charlie, but it also wasn't ideal for Kelly. However, her lineage bound her to that terrifying family, making escape impossible. Understanding this shed light on why Kelly had disappeared without a word all those years ago. However, Hayden wondered if Charlie could let go

of his feelings for Kelly. At that thought, Hayden worried about the future. If Charlie were to get hurt because of the Jones family, Becky would undoubtedly be heartbroken.

After several hours, the plane landed back home. Stepping off the aircraft, Hayden saw Becky, the love of his life, waiting at the airport with their children. His face lit up with a smile, and he quickened his pace toward them. "Daddy!" Abigail and Aaron called out simultaneously as they ran toward Hayden, their faces beaming with excitement. Unable to resist, Hayden knelt to scoop up the kids in a big hug.

It was a weekday, so Jeremy, Lillian, and Kevin were at school. Only Abigail and Aaron, being younger and not yet enrolled in kindergarten, could come to the airport with Becky. Soon, she joined them, wrapping her arms around Hayden and the children in a warm embrace. "You've worked hard. Let's go home," Becky said softly.

Hayden nodded with a smile. "Yes, let's go home." Becky reached out to take Abigail from his arms, and the two of them, each carrying a child, walked toward the exit. They arrived at the underground parking and got into the car with their children. After getting into the car, Hayden finally spoke, his tone tinged with complexity. "Charlie and Kelly's situation is quite complicated." He didn't want to keep anything from Becky. Although he knew it would worry her, he felt she had the right to know.

As they drove toward Hoggard Manor, Hayden slowly explained the details of his meeting with Kelly to Stacey. Her face grew solemn after she heard about the whole situation. "How did it come to this?" she asked, clearly distressed.

Hayden sighed. "You should discuss this with your parents, Adrian, and Bryce. They need to be prepared. If they decide to support him in pursuing his feelings, or if they choose to persuade him to give up, now is the time to act," he said after a long pause.

Is there no other way?" Stacey's voice trembled with concern. However, Hayden remained silent.

The atmosphere in the car grew heavy with tension. Once home, Stacey immediately pulled out her phone and added her parents, Adrian, and Bryce to a group chat before she made a video call. Everyone except for Bryce, who was likely occupied with work and couldn't join, answered almost immediately.

However, that didn't matter now. Since most of them had answered the call, Stacey hurriedly relayed everything that Hayden had just told her to her family. After listening to Stacey, Patrick,

Debra, and Adrian fell into a deep silence. Debra even felt a twinge of regret. If she had known, she wouldn't have allowed anyone to dig into Claire's past. Yet, to say she regretted it entirely, Debra couldn't quite articulate her feelings. If she hadn't instructed someone to investigate Claire, Charlie might never have known why he was dumped, perhaps spending his entire life pining for his first

"I got it Becky, don't overthink it. Just focus on your life with Hay. As for Chuck's matter, your dad and I will discuss it," Debra said, quickly regaining her composure and trying to comfort Stacey. Although it wasn't in Stacey's nature to overthink, she was deeply concerned about Charlie's safety. The Jones family was terrifyingly powerful and influential, and the thought of them finding out about Charlie's past relationship with Kelly filled her with dread. She couldn't shake the fear that they might try to harm Charlie if they learned about his connection to Kelly.

Hayden noticed the worry etched on Stacey's face and tried to reassure her. "Don't worry. I've arranged for people to protect him." The Hoggard family specialized in robotics, you know, creating robots not only for daily use but also for security. Many household heads had custom-made robots from Hoggard Technologies as their bodyguards due to the company's formidable reputation in security. However, Hayden knew that relying solely on robots wasn't practical, especially when Charlie was away from home alone. Robots needed human oversight. So, he had arranged for a few trusted individuals to be on standby. If Charlie encountered any danger, these people would command the robots to protect him. Hearing this, Stacey was initially stunned, her mind racing with the implications of what Hayden had just said. But soon, she felt a wave of relief wash over her, knowing that steps had been taken to ensure Charlie's safety. Still, her worries didn't entirely vanish.

As time flew by, half a month passed, during which the Carter family remained on edge, fearing that the Jones family might harm Charlie. The tension in the household was palpable. After two weeks, Patrick and Debra couldn't hold back any longer and decided to call Charlie. They realized that if there was no other solution, perhaps the engagement could be called off. Sometimes, remaining unmarried could also be a form of happiness.

When Patrick and Debra made the call, they were far from confident. They knew Charlie well enough to anticipate his reactions. In the past, Charlie had never sought out Kelly because he didn't understand why she had broken up with him. He might have thought Kelly simply didn't love him anymore, which was why he never tried to find her. However, now, he knew the real reason behind their separation. It wasn't a lack of love but because Kelly didn't want to burden him with her family's troubles. Because of this newfound understanding, Charlie was never going to let go of her.

In fact, over the past two weeks, he had been relentlessly messaging Kelly, pleading with her to see him just one more time. Unfortunately, Kelly hadn't agreed to a single meeting. Desperate, he had resorted to waiting for her at the entrance of Jones Group's headquarters. Yet, he couldn't even close. Each time, her bodyguards interceded:

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When his parents called him, Charlie

Chapter 293

When his parents called him, Charlie was puzzled But answered swiftly, trusting his family Implicitly. However, by the end of the call, his eyes were red-rimmed with unshed tears. He couldn't believe even Debra was urging him to give up, as that was against his intention.

Determined, he continued to linger at the entrance of Jones Group headquarters. Another two weeks flew by, and his persistent presence caught the attention of every employee at Jones Group. Initially, people were curious about his identity, but as time passed, they realized he was there for Kelly.

The direct descendants of the Jones family quickly investigated Charlie and were pleasantly surprised by what they found. They couldn't believe that Charlie was the brother of Hayden's current wife and had even dated Kelly in the past. I Kelly and Charlie reunited, that would mean an indirect alliance between the Jones family and the Hoggard family.

Given the advanced robots produced by Hoggard Technologies, if they sided with Jones Group and supplied their top-tier robots exclusively to them, excluding the other two major conglomerates in. Yowhayton, that would make the company stronger than ever. At that thought, the direct line of the Jones family was ecstatic. They immediately summoned Kelly home to question her about her relationship with Charlie.

The direct descendants of Jones Group weren't the only people who discovered Charlie's special status, as the collateral descendants also quickly learned about his pursuit of Kelly. As Kelly was the sole heir of Jones Group, they naturally took a keen interest and promptly investigated Charlie. They found out that he was a celebrity in Zentiscape, and that he had a past romantic relationship with Kelly. Given the current situation, it was clear that Charlie still wanted to be with Kelly. The collateral kins were troubled by this information.

A marriage alliance between Jones Group and Hoggard Technologies would undoubtedly benefit the former. However, that would also cement the direct line's dominance. If Kelly bore an heir with the backing of the Hoggard family, the position of the direct line would become unassailable. The collateral branches were alarmed. They had only one thought, and it was to make sure Charlie did not end up with Kelly.

In a sudden twist, even the collateral branches had set their sights on Charlie. They sent their people to approach him. Of course, unless necessary, they had no intention of resorting to force against him. After all, they didn't want to offend Hoggard Technologies, as they still needed to buy robots from the latter in the future. If they angered Hoggard Technologies and were denied access to the robots while others weren't, they'd be at a significant disadvantage.

However, soon, the collateral kins of the Jones family discovered that every time they sent someone to approach Charlie, their men would be intercepted halfway. For various reasons, they would be diverted and taken away. It became clear that Charlie had

someone protecting him. The collateral factions had their networks. Hence, it didn't take much for them to find out who was shielding Charlie. As expected, it was none other than the Hoggard family, but this made the situation even worse. If Kelly and Charlie got back together, there was a high possibility that the Hoggard family might protect Kelly too.

111

Chapter 299

It wasn't just the main and collateral branches of Jones Group that noticed Charlie. Soon, other conglomerates in Yowhayton also caught wind of Charlie's pursuit of Kelly. Given their rival status and with Kelly being the heir of Jones Group, these two conglomerates immediately started

investigating Charlie's background. What they found made them uneasy. Under no circumstances could they allow Kelly and Charlie to be together.

If the two got together, that would make Jones Group indirectly aligned with Hoggard Technologies through this union. It would be incredibly disadvantageous for the other two conglomerates if Hoggard Technologies began to favor Jones Group. The previously calm atmosphere among the conglomerates in Yowhayton became fraught with tension and danger, all because of Charlie's sudden appearance.

Meanwhile, Kelly was furious. She had been waiting for Charlie to leave and wondered why he wasn't. After receiving the messages from her grandpa and father, Kelly didn't respond to them immediately. Instead, she went to find Charlie right away. She dragged Charlie to the airport and effortlessly got him onto a plane using her status as the heir of a conglomerate. Before they parted, Kelly couldn't control her tears. Her eyes reddened as tears rolled down her cheeks. "Chuck, you should leave. Don't come looking for me anymore. We're not suitable for each other," she said, her voice choked and hoarse.

In response, Charlie hugged her tightly and then kissed her passionately. "I will find a way," he said firmly. "Claire, we will be together," he repeated, his tone unwavering. Upon hearing that, Kelly stared at him, her heart aching. However, it only lasted for a second. She quickly shoved him into the plane and ordered it to take off immediately.

Kelly was right to act quickly. No sooner had the plane departed than her grandpa and father, the most powerful members of Jones Group's main lineage, arrived. After realizing Kelly had sent Charlie away instead of keeping him, their faces darkened with fury. Kelly's father, Ronan Jones, immediately slapped her hard across the face.

In the next moment, Kelly was taken back to the family home. She was instructed to bring Charlie back and secure the marriage alliance with the Carter family by her grandpa and Ronan. However, to their dismay, Kelly refused to comply. Then came the beating. This time, a brutal one. For the Jones family, there was no room for familial

affection. To her grandpa and Ronan, Kelly was merely a tool with the bloodline of the main lineage. By inflicting pain, they believed they could break her spirit and force her into submission. They had used this method countless times before, and Kelly had yielded many times. However, she resolutely refused this time.

Eventually, the punishments became so severe that she was covered in blood, barely clinging to life without treatment. The top-tier doctors of the main lineage were summoned to treat her wounds. Kelly knew she wouldn't die, as her grandpa and Ronan wouldn't let her since she was the sole heir of the main lineage.

While lying in bed receiving treatment, her mom finally appeared, offering comfort and persuasion. This was a familiar tactic of her grandpa and Ronan. In a sense, her mom was there to console her, but in reality, it was a threat. If Kelly didn't comply, her mom would be the next to suffer. "Kelly, just listen to your dad. Isn't Charlie the guy you like? Isn't it wonderful being with the one you love?" her mom said, sitting by the bedside, her tone earnest and heartfelt.

Chapter 294

Kelly had compromised too many times, to the extent that Ronan and her grandpa thought this tactic worked well to deal with her. But this time, she was truly exhausted. Kelly turned away, not looking at her mother. "Kelly," her mom called from behind.

"Claire." Kelly suddenly spoke, or rather, it was Claire speaking. To her, she wasn't Kelly Jones but Claire Sullivan. If her mom hadn't insisted on being with her dad, she would never have stayed here. Now, she was truly exhausted. If it meant dragging Charlie into this mess and involving him, she suddenly thought that sometimes it was okay to give up. She felt it was fine to just end things once and for all.

After all, she was a human with feelings too. From her 20s to her 30s, she had spent the best years of her life here. She was ready to make sacrifices and spend the rest of her life in this hellhole. Hence, she couldn't understand why they had to drag Charlie into this mess. She thought, 'I know mom's love is important. But what about mine?' At that thought, tears silently rolled down her cheeks.

"Kelly, what's wrong?" Kelly's mother, Lydia Sullivan, paused for a moment, then continued, her voice gentle.

Claire's heart ached as she heard Lydia's voice. Her moment of willfulness passed quickly, and she soon regained her composure. She shook her head in response. "It's nothing."

Upon noticing how down Claire felt, Lydia's heart ached for her. She bent down and gently gathered her into her arms. "Go to Zentscape," Lydia urged softly, cradling Claire close. "Go find Charlie. Claire, you and him truly love each other. You'll be happy

together." Kelly's eyes reddened at Lydia's words, and she desperately wanted to ask the latter if she was still the same loving mom who cherished her more than anything.

When Kelly was little, Lydia always saved the best food for her. Even when she was sick, Lydia insisted on going to work, sometimes taking night shifts to save money for a trip to the amusement park, just to see Kelly smile. Those childhood memories seemed so distant now, and the thought made Kelly's heart ache even more. Lydia pulled out a tissue and gently wiped Kelly's tears. "Why are you crying?" she asked tenderly. Kelly suddenly felt overwhelmed and reached out to embrace Lydia tightly.

After a long while, the door to the room opened, and Ronan entered. He rarely wore a warm expression of fatherly love, but today, he tried. After he sat down on the edge of her bed, he said, "Kelly, don't blame me. I have no other choice. You are the only direct descendant left. Besides, you and Charlie admire each other. That makes you two a perfect match. Don't you think so?"

In reality, Ronan and his father, Ryker Jones, had a plan to breed a new heir, as Kelly was too disobedient. If she continued to refuse marriage and refused to produce an heir, they would have to resort to binding her and having a doctor forcibly retrieve her eggs to create a new heir. To them, Kelly's rebellion and resistance were like a child's silly games.

However, raising a child from scratch would take an incredibly long time, and they couldn't even ensure that this newborn would grow up healthy. They feared that, despite their best efforts to protect the child, it might meet the same tragic fate as those before, falling victim to countless unforeseen accidents. The lengthy process of nurturing a new heir left them vulnerable, giving the conniving relatives ample opportunity to seize power before the heir could come of age.

Faced with too many uncertainties, they had delayed raising another child, indulging Kelly in her childish whims. With Charlie's sudden appearance, they felt a wave of relief and vindication. It seemed their decision not to take the drastic step of extracting Kelly's eggs had been the right one. "Are you worried he might be harmed?" Ronan asked, his eyes boring into Kelly's.

Before long, Ronan added, "Kelly,

have you investigated Charlie's background? He's Hayden

Hoggard's brother-in-law. If Charlie were to... I mean, if he were to be with you the Hoggard family would undoubtedly protect him. He'd be safe. Besides, if the Hoggard family only supplies to us and stops supplying robots to the other two major families and our collateral relatives, we would monopolize the industry. We would dominate Yowhayton by then, and no one could harm us. You and Charlie would be the pride of the Jones family."

"In your dreams," Kelly retorted, glaring at Ronan, her words laced with venom.

Ronan's smile faded slowly. After a moment, he sighed, his tone earnest. "Kelly, don't disappoint me. Please. If you marry Charlie and align the Hoggard family with us, the entire Yowhayton will be at our disposal. The Jones family will be in power of the country."

With a resounding sound, Kelly slapped Ronan in the face. "I will never agree to this. Don't you dare involve Chuck in your schemes," Kelly declared coldly.

Upon seeing Ronan's furious expression and the murderous glint in his eyes, Lydia hurriedly stepped in, grasping his arm. "Ronan, don't be angry with Claire. She's just a child. I'll talk to her. She'll come around." Ronan snorted and stormed off, clearly displeased. Only then did Lydia breathe a sigh of relief. Once he was gone, Lydia gently took Kelly's hand, pleading softly, "Claire, listen to me. Talk to Charlie. You won't regret it."

Meanwhile, watching the room's surveillance footage, Ryker and Ronan were pleased. They were already anticipating the future with glee. Once Kelly married Charlie and secured the Hoggard family's alliance, Yowhayton would be theirs. After Kelly agreed, Ronan and Ryker wasted no time packing her off to Zentscape to find Charlie.

Chapter 295

"What a fool you are," Lydia said helplessly. "All right. I won't force you. But once you arrive in Zentscape and found Charlie, think about it carefully. I actually think you and Charlie are truly a good match. Both of you are good children."

Kelly was irritated and said, "Mom, I'm leaving." Although she was leaving, she was not alone. The Jones family had arranged many bodyguards to keep her safe openly and secretly. No matter what, Kelly was the sole heir of the Jones family. No one could afford it if someone took advantage of the situation and killed her. Soon, Kelly left.

Meanwhile, the Jones family used their relationship with Hoggard Technologies and sent a message to the latter, informing Hayden that Kelly was going to Zentscape to find Charlie and imploring Hayden to protect her. Hayden, who was at work, was startled after reading the email from Jones Group. But soon, he realized Jones Group's motive and thought he would never help them.

The reason why Hoggard Technologies could get to where it was at present and gain the trust of all nations was because it never favored anyone. Otherwise, no one would trust Hoggard Technologies in the future. No matter how advanced the products Hoggard Technologies developed were, nobody would dare to use them. After all, high-tech products were weapons. If Hoggard Technologies sided with their enemy and bought the products of Hoggard Technologies, those robots might turn against them, and they would be doomed eventually.

Hayden refused Jones Group's request directly through e-mail. In Yowhayton, Ronan and Ryker, who had laid out a plan, were surprised when they saw the email.

Meanwhile, the other two prominent plutocratic families in Yowhayton also paid close attention to Kelly's trip. They even arranged for someone to follow Kelly to Zentscape secretly. Needless to say, they were truly worried about Hoggard Technologies favoring the Jones family. Little did they expect that something big would happen to the Jones family three days later.

Ryker and Ronan, as well as Ronan's wife, Lydia, were all dead. Three of them died in the mansion. Joshua noticed something was wrong and reported it to the police. The police went over to investigate it and found that the murderer was Lydia. The incident immediately became international

news.

Although Kelly listened to Lydia and went to Zentscape, she didn't look for Charlie. She only wanted to walk around and get some fresh air before going back. When Kelly saw the news, she was stunned. She couldn't believe it and wanted to go back immediately. She wanted to know what had happened and wondered why Lydia killed Ronan and Ryker. Her sanity told her that such a thing would never happen. She couldn't control her emotions and collapsed, though.

The bodyguard following her stopped her and handed her a letter, saying it was from Lydia. It wasn't until Claire took the letter and saw Lydia's handwriting that she believed it was Lydia's decision. It turned out that Lydia never loved Ronan.

Over 30 years ago, Lydia had an older sister, Leilani Sullivan, who was also Claire's aunt. Leilani had been very smart since she was a child and was a genius praised by many people. She had skipped grades and attended university earlier. After graduating from university, she went abroad to study. The country she went to was Yowhayton.

Back then, everyone thought Leilani would have a promising future and looked forward to the day she returned from studying abroad, earning a lot of money and making a name for herself. Little did they expect that they would receive the news of Leilani's death from Yowhayton one year later. Everyone felt sorry for that, but Lydia thought otherwise.

When Leilani was studying abroad,

8vel

she had sent a message to Lydia. Thus, Lydia knew Leilani had a boyfriend in Yowhayton, and that person was the president of the terrifying Jones Group, Ronan Jones. Before the accident happened, Leilani had sent message to Lydia, saying Ronan wanted to kill her and asking Lydia to save her. However, Lydia couldn't afford to go

abroad to save Leilani at that time. She didn't even know the formalities of going overseas. After such a delay, she received the news of Leilani's death in the end.

Lydia went to confront Ronan, but it was of no use. Later, Ronan had a crush on her and forced her to be his lover. During the period he imprisoned her, she thought of many ways to murder Ronan but failed in the end. She was tortured by Ronan in return and lived a life worse than death.

The Jones family's personal physician was very skillful. Every time after Ronan had tortured Lydia viciously, the physician would save her life and let him continue to torture her. At that time, Lydia even thought she was going to die at Ronan's hands, just like Leilani. Fortunately, someone plotted against the Jones family, and she seized the chance to escape.

In truth, she didn't escape by herself. When she fled, the people of the Zentscape embassy saw her and saved her secretly. After all, she had stayed with Ronan for some time and knew some of his secrets, which she handed over to the government, who later sent her back to Zentscape. After she had returned to Zentscape, she found that she was pregnant.

Lydia had thought of all kinds of ways to get rid of the baby in her womb but failed. Later, when she felt fetal movements, she slowly accepted the baby, which was Claire. She thought Claire was only a child and different from Ronan. Little did she expect their peaceful life to be disturbed again over 20 years later. The reason was still because of Claire, as she was the only surviving lineage of the Jones family, and Ronan needed her back as an heiress.

Lydia knew Ronan very well and was aware of his tricks. Although she could lodge a report and seek help from the motherland, there was no way the latter would arrange for someone to protect her and Claire every day.

Lydia understood the importance of being the only heir to the Jones family and knew that she and Claire couldn't escape this time. It would only make her fall out with Ryan if she resisted stubbornly. She and Claire might be forcibly separated and not have a chance to see each other in the future. In the end, Lydia pretended to be in love with Ronan, took the initiative to approach him, and returned to the Jones family with Claire.

Lydia had been very cautious for the next few years and finally realized that Claire couldn't fit in the Jones family. In the past few years, Claire resolutely refused to get married and give birth to an heir. Lydia was both gratified and distressed. She was glad that Claire was different from those scumbags of the Jones family. At the same time, she was distressed as to why Claire would have to get involved with those scumbags.

Chapter 296

At the same time, Charlie also learned about the news. Lydia had ordered the bodyguards in advance to send the letter to Charlie's hand. Besides, the bodyguards informed Charlie that Claire was in Zentscape.

After reading the letter, Charlie rushed to the airport desperately, bought a ticket, and boarded the next flight to Strico. In the letter, Lydia said she would ask the bodyguards to send Claire to Hoggard Villa when everything was over, and Charlie could go there for Claire.

Meanwhile, in Jacaster, Claire wanted to return to Yowhayton but was stopped by the bodyguards. The bodyguards took her into a car and sent her directly to Hoggard Villa in Strico. It was Lydia's arrangement beforehand. She asked them to keep an eye on Kelly after everything was over and never allowed Kelly to return to Yowhayton to look for her. Moreover, Lydia even commanded them to escort Kelly to Hoggard Villa in person.

Although all the direct lines that once manipulated them had died, no one could guarantee that the branch family wouldn't send someone to assassinate Kelly once they officially assumed authority. Therefore, Lydia believed Kelly should seek refuge within Hoggard Villa for her safety in the immediate future.

As for other relationships, Lydia had already made up her mind. As long as Claire didn't want to regain her identity as Kelly Jones, didn't covet the power and authority of the Jones family, and didn't compete with the branch family for status, she would have no conflicting interests with the Jones family's branches. Moreover, Claire could also receive protection from the Hoggard family after being with Charlie.

If Claire regained her identity as Kelly and stayed in the Jones family, it would be impossible for the Hoggard family to stand by their side and protect Kelly. After all, the Hoggard family had such a big family business. She believed Hayden wouldn't ruin the entire family's future for a woman - especially who was his brother-in-law's wife.

In contrast, if Claire broke away from the Jones family, refrained from getting involved in their bid for power, and just lived as an ordinary woman - particularly Hayden's brother-in-law's wife - there would be no problem for the Hoggard family to grant Claire some influence and provide her a measure of protection.

Lydia had checked on the character of the Carter and Hoggard families and found they were both excellent families. Hence, she was willing to bet they would help her protect Claire well.

In Hoggard Villa, Hayden and Stacey also received a scheduled email from Lydia's alternative account in advance. A whirlwind of emotions swept through them as they read the email - surprise, suspicion, unease, worry, and expectant.

Not only were they surprised to receive such an email, but they were also astonished that Lydia and Ronan's relationship turned out to be a truth far more complex than the mere infatuation they had assumed. The suddenness of the email left them doubting its authenticity. Meanwhile, the breaking news from Yowhayton had them on edge, fearing potential consequences. Lydia's mention in the email of sending Claire to seek refuge in their home added to their concern, especially since Claire hadn't arrived as promised. They couldn't help but worry about whether something might happen to Claire along the way. Amidst the uncertainty, they awaited Claire's arrival.

But while they were swallowed by the mixed feelings, Stacey's phone suddenly rang. It was Charlie. Before she answered the phone, Stacey had anticipated what Charlie wanted to ask. She believed Charlie must have received the same news and called to inquire about Claire. Despite her assumptions, Stacey quickly answered the phone.

True to her suspicions, Charlie indeed called to ask about Claire. Stacey could only be honest with Charlie, assuring him they would arrange to find Claire and appease Charlie.

Meanwhile, after knowing that Claire hadn't arrived at Hoggard Villa, Charlie became extremely panicked and worried that something might happen to her. Suddenly, a doubtful thought came to his mind, 'Or did she return to Yowhayton? No! She can't go back now! Absolutely not! If Claire returns at this critical time, the Jones family's branches surely won't spare her!'

Charlie had called Claire earlier but couldn't get through, and all the calls went unanswered. After finishing the call with Stacey, he couldn't restrain himself and continued to call Claire.

At the same time, on the highway, Claire was being watched by the bodyguards while traveling to Strico. To prevent Kelly from calling someone to "rescue" her, the bodyguards had no choice but to put aside her phone and bag, ensuring she couldn't make any calls. After all, Kelly had been in the Jones family for a decade and learned quite a lot. If they handed her the phone, she might summon mercenaries, escape from them, and return to

Yowhayton.

As time passed, Charlie arrived at Hoggard Villa but didn't see Kelly. Plus, her phone remained

frustratingly unreachable. Charlie's anxiety grew with each passing second. After an hour, he could no

longer wait idly and picked up

clothes, intending to go to

his

Yowhayton. Instantly, Hayden grabbed Charlie and reminded him, "I've asked my friends in Yowhayton to keep an eye on her. If Kelly goes back, they'll tell me. But for now, she may still be in Zentscape."

"But what if she goes back?" Charlie yelled out of control, tears welling up. Charlie insisted on leaving, and no one could stop him. Stacey was so anxious that she tried her best to pull Charlie, but it was futile.

Finally, Hayden's bodyguards stepped in, forcibly restraining Charlie and preventing him from leaving. Regardless of whether Kelly had returned to Yowhayton, Charlie couldn't go there at such a critical time. The sudden deaths of both direct descendants of Jones Group overnight have surely thrown Yowhayton into chaos. Given Charlie's special identity, going there at the moment would be akin to walking straight into danger.

Charlie struggled fiercely, leaving

Stacey to watch with aching

concern. Holding Charlie, she kept comforting him. As he failed to

break through the grip, Charlie finally broke down in tears and begged Becky to let him go. Stacey also cried, but she couldn't release him. She couldn't bear to watch Charlie walk willingly into danger. They cried from day to night, and even the children joined in, turning their home into a chaotic scene.

At 8 p.m., Hayden's subordinate finally confirmed that Kelly hadn't returned to Yowhayton but was on the highway to Strico. Hayden hurriedly informed Charlie and Stacey.

Hearing the news, Charlie, whose eyes were red from crying, immediately raised his head. Hayden then urged him, "Let's go. I'll take you to pick her

up!"

Stacey was equally surprised but relieved by the news. However, with so many children in the house, Stacey could only stay behind and ensure their safety. Then, she watched Hayden take Charlie to pick Claire up.

After getting into the car, Charlie remained very uneasy. He tried to speak several times, but no words escaped his lips. Hayden handed him a piece of bread and advised, "Eat something to fill your stomach. You'll need more strength later."

Chapter 297

Charlie looked at Hayden, then took the bread and bit into it. "Is she really still in the country?" Charlie asked anxiously while eating.

Hayden promised, "I won't lie to you."

Charlie suddenly laughed happily, but after a while, his eyes turned somewhat sad. "Her mother passed away; she must be very sad."

Hayden stated solemnly, "Yes. So you must restrain yourself and comfort her properly later. Just keep her company."

Charlie immediately nodded heavily in agreement. After finishing the bread, Charlie hurriedly took out his phone and searched online for the news of the Jones family. He spent quite some time reading, then turned to Hayden and whispered, "Is there any chance... to bring Claire's mom's body back?"

Hayden was silent for a long time and then said, "It's a bit difficult."

Charlie sighed helplessly upon hearing his reply.

But after a moment of hesitation, Hayden added, "But it's not solely impossible."

"What?" Charlie exclaimed, looking at Hayden with bright eyes. "Is there a way? What's it?" Charlie asked expectantly.

Hayden said cautiously, "The entire direct descendants of Jones Group have died. If Kelly doesn't pursue it further, everyone in Yowhayton might consider it a win-win situation and arrange for a swift

burial. When her body arrives at the funeral home, I can arrange for someone to secretly replace Mrs. Sullivan's ashes and bring them back."

Charlie thought about it carefully and nodded in surprise. "Yes! That's feasible!"

"Don't think about it first. I'll send someone to have a try. If possible, we can bring Mrs. Sullivan's ashes back. You should comfort Kelly later and never let her return to Yowhayton. Many people in Yowhayton want her dead now. If she goes back, she will die," Hayden warned.

Charlie immediately nodded and replied, "I got it."

Hayden fell silent for a while and then said, "For the coming days, you'd better stay at my house with Kelly. Don't venture outside. The family branch of Jones Group may hire mercenaries to assassinate Kelly. Only the Hoggard family can protect her."

Upon hearing Hayden's words, Charlie was so touched that his words turned into sincere gratitude. "Thank you," he said earnestly. "I'm sorry to cause you trouble this time." Charlie had never imagined burdening Hayden before, but at that time, only the Hoggard family could ensure Claire's safety.

"Don't be polite. We are family," Hayden said earnestly.

Two hours later, they finally met in the service area with Claire. As soon as the bodyguards saw Hayden, they immediately handed Kelly to Hayden without hesitation.

Almost immediately, Charlie rushed forward and enveloped Kelly in his arms. Kelly had been on the verge of breaking but tried hard to hold it back. The moment she was embraced by Charlie and found someone she could rely on, she finally couldn't hold back any longer and burst into tears in Charlie's arms.

As it was not safe outside, Hayden motioned Charlie to take Kelly back to the car. Charlie then swiftly picked Claire up and returned to the car together. The cars of the Hoggard family were specially reinforced; even if someone fired shots from outside, the bullets would struggle to penetrate the windows.

However, amidst all the potential threats outside, Hayden soon ordered the driver to leave and return to Strico.

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When they were on the way back, Hayden sent a message to Stacey, informing her that they had successfully picked up Kelly so that Stacey wouldn't be so worried about them at home.

In truth, Stacey had been worried about them. But as soon as holding Kelly, she finally breathed a sigh of relief..

as she saw the message from Hayden with a photo of Charlie

Acknowledging the concern within the Carter family, Stacey promptly shared the messages in the family group chat to provide reassurance. When the Carter family received the news and learned that Charlie and Kelly were with Hayden, everyone instantly felt relieved. Having unwavering trust in the loggard family's security system, they were sure that Charlie and Kelly would be safe around Hayden.

After calling Stacey and confirming that Charlie and Kelly would go to Hoggard Villa several times, Debra also packed her things up, intending to go over to take care of the children.

Patrick was very helpless, but he didn't stop Debra in the end. He knew that Becky had her hands full with children, and with Debra's assistance in taking care of the kids for Becky, Becky could also spend time with Kelly. Becky and Kelly were about the same age, so they should get along better.

When the rest of the family also wanted to go with Debra, Patrick firmly stopped them. After all, Kelly was currently going through a difficult time, and having too many people visit would only burden her and make her feel exhausted.

After reconsidering it carefully, everyone agreed that Patrick's view was reasonable and finally suppressed their worries. However, they instructed Stacey to promptly inform them if anything happened so they could lend a hand if needed.

It was almost dawn when Hayden and Charlie took Kelly back to Hoggard Villa.

Kelly had enough crying and calmed down, but she still insisted on returning to Yowhayton. Both Charlie and Hayden then quickly showed her the letters or emails they had received from Lydia. Finally, Hayden added, "I'll find a way to send your mother's body back. If you go back, you're simply sending your life to them. Your mom won't feel at ease even if she is down there."

His words instantly brought tears to Kelly again. "Mom didn't tell me." She choked and said in a hoarse voice, "She has never told me about the before."

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Charlie hugged Claire and comforted earnestly, "You hoped you could live a happy life."

mom probably just doesn't want you to worry about her. Perhaps she

"But I misunderstood her... I've misunderstood her for so many years. I thought she was just infatuated, that she genuinely liked that jerk, Ronan..." Claire sobbed uncomfortably. "If... If I knew things would go to this point, I wouldn't have left. I wouldn't leave!" Claire's eyes were red as she spoke through her tears.

Holding her in his arms, Charlie nodded and coaxed her, "I knew."

When Stacey saw them coming, she hurriedly welcomed them. Come inside." Then, they entered the living room of Hoggard Villa together and sat on the couch.

In a short time, the children all ran over, eyeing them curiously, especially Abigail and Aaron, who couldn't resist their inquisitiveness. But they were all taken away by Jeremy in the end. Jeremy pulled all his younger siblings aside and warned seriously, "Don't disturb them."

"Why?" Abigail asked in confusion.

Lillian looked at Claire, who had just come to their house, in the living room, and said seriously, "She is crying."

Chapter 298

"Why is she crying?" Aaron asked.

"Maybe she's upset," Kevin guessed, looking equally puzzled.

The group of little children were whispering amongst themselves nearby. They thought their voices weren't loud enough to be heard, but Stacey caught every word. Hayden also overheard the children's whispers and decided to take action. He immediately walked over and gently guided them out, leading them upstairs to play. Kelly, or rather Claire, needed rest, and she shouldn't be disturbed right now.

Once upstairs, Hayden asked the children to play quietly and not to go downstairs to disturb Claire. Meanwhile, Stacey was busy preparing food and drinks for Charlie and Claire downstairs. Claire hadn't eaten in a long time, but she wasn't feeling hungry. She just felt miserable and drained.

"Do you want to rest for a while? We've prepared a guest room upstairs," Stacey offered gently. Then, turning to Charlie, she said, "Charlie, take Claire to the room to rest. If you're tired, just get some shut-eye. Call me if you need anything to eat. I'll have someone prepare it right away."

Charlie nodded. "Okay." Without wasting a moment, he picked Claire up. Stacey led the way, and Charlie followed her upstairs, carrying Claire in his arms. Stacey opened the door to the guest room they had prepared in advance and stepped aside to let Charlie carry Claire in. After they entered, Stacey hesitated for a moment before carefully leaving the room, not wanting to disturb them.

She then went downstairs, prepared some fruits and milk, and brought them back upstairs. She thought they might want something to snack on or drink later. After setting the tray down quietly in the room, Stacey stepped out and closed the door softly. As soon as she came out, she was met with five pairs of curious eyes – Jeremy, Lillian, Kevin, Abigail, and Aaron – all looking up at her with

questions written all over their faces. All the children were curious about Claire's sudden appearance Stacey thought for a moment and decided to bring them downstairs to talk.

"Mommy, who's that lady?" Kevin asked curiously.

Stacey pondered then said, "She's the girl your Uncle Charlie likes the most."

The children's eyes lit up with surprise and excitement.

Abigail exclaimed, "Someone finally wants Uncle Charlie?"

Stacey was taken aback by this comment but laughed, nodding in agreement. "I guess so."

"So, will she be our aunt in the future?" Lillian asked happily.

"But why is she crying?"

"Did someone mistreat Aunt Claire?" Jeremy asked with a concerned frown.

Stacey struggled to explain the situation to the children as it was too complicated for them to fully understand. "No one mistreated her. Aunt Claire... Something happened at home. Her mom... just passed away, so she's very upset, Stacey said cautiously, choosing her words carefully.

At this, Jeremy's eyes widened with understanding. He looked upstairs, worried about Claire. The twins, Lillian and Kevin, along with Abigail and Aaron, were too young to fully grasp the gravity of death. They couldn't comprehend how terrible and sad it could be.

Claire still wanted to return to Yowhayton, but Charlie kept holding her, staying by her side, and constantly comforting her to prevent her from leaving. In the first few days, Claire couldn't even eat. It wasn't until a few days later that Hayden informed them that Lydia's body had been brought here and would be transported back to the country through special channels soon.

Claire was stunned. She couldn't believe that Hayden could arrange all this. She thought, 'But... this is the Hoggard family.

With their connections, it doesn't seem all that impossible. Those people in Yowhayton are probably eager to close the case as soon as possible and bury Mom and the others. Then those collateral relatives can openly compete for the management of Jones Group.'

In the end, Claire decided she didn't care anymore. She didn't want to get involved in the chaos within Jones Group at all. All she wanted was to see Lydia's body one last time.

Just as Hayden had said, Lydia's body was brought back two days later. When Claire saw Lydia's body with her own eyes, she couldn't control herself and broke down in tears. Charlie stayed by her side the entire time, and they prepared Lydia's funeral together. Given the circumstances, the burial had to be conducted quietly. Fortunately, after Lydia was laid to rest, Claire's emotions finally began to stabilize.

For the next year, Charlie remained by Claire's side, providing quiet companionship. A year later, Claire finally emerged from her grief. With everyone's blessing, Charlie chose Valentine's Day to set up a romantic proposal. He proposed to Claire, and she said yes. Charlie was so overjoyed that he immediately stood up, hugged her, and spun her around in sheer happiness. After the successful proposal, Claire took Charlie to the cemetery to visit Lydia's grave. Claire sat in front of the tombstone for a long time until dusk before quietly leaving.

Three months later, the Carter family prepared a wedding for Charlie and Claire in their hometown of Alagua City. Due to Claire's special identity, the wedding couldn't be too high-profile, but the family still prepared and decorated the place beautifully and festively. When Charlie was about to get married, all the children in the Carter family eagerly volunteered to be flower girls and boys. In the end, Charlie and Claire couldn't stop smiling at these adorable little kids. Claire decided to let all the children be flower girls and boys for their wedding, which made the children ecstatic. They huddled around Claire, full of excitement and joy.

On the wedding day, they didn't invite many guests; it was mostly family members. Although there weren't many outsiders, the celebration was incredibly lively, and everyone was in high spirits. The whole day was filled with happiness and joy. When the wedding was over and night fell, the Carter family set off fireworks that lit up the sky beautifully all night long. After that night, Charlie finally had his own partner, and their love story reached a new chapter.

Due to their special status, Charlie and Claire couldn't go on a honeymoon abroad. However, for the two lovers who had been separated for more than ten years, being together was their greatest happiness, and the idea of a honeymoon didn't matter much.

A few months later, Claire began experiencing morning sickness. After a visit to the doctor, they received the joyous news that Claire was pregnant. Everyone was thrilled, but Charlie and Claire were the happiest of all. They were both surprised and eagerly anticipated the arrival of their baby. Charlie decided to take a break from his work in the entertainment industry, turning down drama roles to focus on staying at home with Claire. He devoted himself to taking care of her and learning all about parenting.

Interestingly, as Charlie immersed himself in learning about infant care, he also invested in many baby products, which turned out to be a profitable venture. Charlie thought, 'I can only properly

support my wife and child if I have money. I'm about to become a man who needs to provide for his family!

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Chapter 299

Ever since Charlie got married, he didn't have as much time to play with the children in the family. As a result, the children missed Charlie more and were very curious about the baby in Claire's belly.

During Christmas, all the children in the family came back. Even Bryce and Ramona brought their two sons back. So, a large group of children all ran to Claire, curiously observing the unborn baby still in its mother's womb.

However, Charlie wouldn't allow the children to look for too long. After all, children were playful, and there were so many of them. What if they accidentally pushed Claire?

He only gave the children two minutes before chasing them away. He quickly isolated all of them three feet away from Claire and wouldn't allow them to get any closer.

The rest of the family also understood Charlie's idea. They would call their children over and educate them seriously.

Fortunately, the children in the Carter family loved all their siblings very much and knew that the baby in Claire's belly was also their future younger sibling. They were careful whenever they approached Claire and would even stop running and walk carefully around her.

The adults had told them not to run around Claire and not to push her. Pregnant women might miscarry if they fell down, and a miscarriage would kill the baby in Claire's womb.

Claire felt very warm and happy when she saw how everyone was taking care of her and how many people in the Carter family were looking forward to the birth of her baby. The Carter family was really a warm and happy big family. The atmosphere here was completely different from that of the Jones family.

Occasionally, Claire would still think of Lydia. She couldn't help but wonder that if Lydia was still alive, she'd definitely be happy to see how well the Carter family treated her.

On Christmas night, the chef prepared a sumptuous dinner, and Charlie also personally cooked her favorite dishes.

After the meal, everyone went to watch the fireworks together. The Carter family prepared a lot of fireworks. After all, there were children in the family who liked lively activities and watching beautiful fireworks.

But Claire didn't expect that she would suddenly have contractions while setting off the fireworks. She was about to give birth.

Almost the next second, Charlie noticed something was wrong with her and rushed over immediately. Then, the entire Carter family was in chaos. Nobody was in the mood for

Christmas anymore. They were all anxious but were quick. They drove Claire to the hospital immediately.

Debra quickly called Stacey.

Since getting married, Stacey and Hayden took turns going to Carter Villa and Hoggard Manor during Christmas. It was their turn to celebrate Christmas at Hoggard Manor this year, so they weren't at Carter Villa.

At Hoggard Manor, Stacey suddenly received a call from Debra. She was surprised to learn that Claire was about to give birth.

Hayden, who was still setting off fireworks with the children, was stunned when he heard Stacey's surprised voice and then smiled. He stood up and approached Jack to ask him to take care of the five children.

Jack was also a little surprised. He didn't expect that Claire would give birth on Christmas. But this was a good thing, and he was also happy. So, he immediately agreed to help Hayden take care of the children.

With Jack and Audrey helping to look after the children, Hayden was no longer worried. He immediately took Stacey outside and was about to catch a taxi to the hospital.

"Daddy, Mommy, is Aunt Claire going to give birth? I want to go too!" Jeremy said seriously as he ran over immediately after hearing them.

Over the past few years, Charlie often played with Jeremy so Jeremy had a very good relationship with him. He also wanted to go over, knowing Claire was going to have a baby.

"I want to go too!" Lillian echoed.

"Me too!" Kevin followed.

Lillian and Kevin soon ran over excitedly. Their eyes glowed with excitement.

Abigail and Aaron were still young, so they didn't understand what their siblings were saying. But when they heard that their siblings wanted to go together, the two kids clamored to go along as well.

"Why don't we all go together? It'll be more lively with more people. It's a happy occasion anyway, so it won't be a problem," Audrey said with a smile. Jack also said, "Although there are a lot of kids, we're going together, so it shouldn't be a problem for each of us to look after one or two of them." Stacey smiled. She looked at her parents-in-law and nodded. "Okay, then we'll go together."

In reality, when they just got married,

Stacey was quite reserved in front of her parents-in-law. But after spending more time together, she found that Jack and Audrey were also easy to get along with. They had good family traditions like the Carter family. Now they get along very well and had a good? relationship.

After they made up their minds, they went into the house together to tell Jason and Sharon about it. They were also very happy to hear that Charlie's wife was going to have a baby. So, they quickly told Stacey and the others to go and not to worry about the house. After discussing everything, they soon set off together.

On the way to the hospital, Stacey was very happy. She couldn't help but fantasize about what Charlie and Claire's baby would look like. Would it be a boy or a girl?

Charlie had thought of many names for the baby, including names for boys and girls. All of them were decided after discussing with Claire. It was just that there were too many names that they thought of, and each of them was good, so they couldn't decide which one to use.

As she was thinking, they soon arrived at the hospital. Stacey led the family at the way to the outside of the delivery room. Upon arriving Stacey realized that it wasn't only them who brought the whole family; Adrian and Isabella had brought their two children, and so did Bryce and Ramona, as well as their

parents. The whole family was there.

"How's Claire? How long has it been?" Stacey walked over and couldn't help asking her mother.

Debra looked at Stacey and then the delivery room, unable to contain her happiness. "She just went in. It may take a while." As Debra spoke, she looked toward the group of people following behind Stacey, especially Hayden's parents.

Debra and Patrick weren't expecting Jack and Audrey to come too. They immediately came over to greet them. Jack and Audrey were also very happy and chatted with them with a smile.

When Yolanda saw Abigail and Aaron had come, she immediately ran over to play with them. They were closer in age and met one another often, so they had a close relationship.

Chapter 300

Bryce and Ramona's eldest son was Walter Carter, and the second was Timothy Carter. Their nicknames were Wally and Timmy, respectively. The two adorable kids

hesitated for a moment, but in the end, they also ran to Abigail and Aaron with Yolanda, and the kids gathered together in a group. Jeremy and Damian were the oldest, so they stood together. Lillian and Kevin had always been close to Jeremy since they were little, so they also stood alongside Jeremy.

When the hospital staff saw they were all there, someone quickly came over and invited them to the office to rest. They didn't want to leave, so the nurse brought over some chairs for them to sit and wait.

A woman's painful roar came from the operating room. Charlie stood at the door, anxious.

Adrian and Bryce couldn't help but tease their younger brother when they saw him. The reason was simple. When their wives were giving birth, they were extremely nervous, but Charlie still mocked them from the outside. They had to revenge when the opportunity arose!

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Charlie felt speechless as his older brothers teased him. But no matter what, having family around to distract him made him feel less nervous.

Two hours later, a loud baby's cry was heard in the delivery room. Charlie's eyes lit up, and he exclaimed excitedly, "It's here!"

Everyone waiting outside the delivery room also breathed a sigh of relief at almost the same time. They were happy that the baby was born. They didn't know whether it was a boy or a girl. But it should be very cute either way.

Everyone stood up and waited for the delivery room door to open and for the nurse to bring the baby out. However, after waiting a while, there was still no movement from inside. Everyone became anxious, feeling both restless and eager.

After waiting a few more minutes, the delivery room door finally opened. The nurse came out holding a baby. "Where's Claire? How's she?" Charlie rushed into the delivery room without even looking at the baby. Everyone was speechless. The nurse holding the baby was momentarily stunned and then amused. She quickly went back into the delivery room with the baby.

Claire was soon wheeled out, and everyone learned the baby was a daughter. Charlie carefully held his daughter and followed Claire closely until they returned to the ward. Stacey quickly went over and, along with the nurse, helped transfer Claire to the hospital bed.

After seeing Claire was taken care of, everyone went to look at the baby. However, after just a few minutes, Charlie pushed them all aside.

Charlie held the baby and immediately brought it to Claire, carefully handing the baby to her for a look. Claire also gazed down at her baby. 'She's very tiny and a bit ugly. But, usually, newborns look like that, right?' Claire thought to herself. As she continued to look at the baby, she found herself liking her more and more. This was her and Charlie's baby.

She had only dared to secretly imagine it, never believing they could have a baby. Now, it had all become true. The baby's eyes were still closed and looked very quiet. "Claire, are you tired? Rest for a while. If you are thirsty, hungry, or want anything, just let us know, and we will get it for you," Debra said happily to the exhausted daughter-in-law.

Claire shook her head and said, "I'm not hungry." She really didn't want to eat right now, but she was indeed a bit tired.

Most people in the room had children, so they could tell Claire was tired. "Let's go out for now and let Claire rest well," Stacey said.

Everyone nodded in agreement and went outside together. But the group of children was very curious about the newborn baby. They were reluctant to leave and kept looking back, eager to see the baby. However, the adults did not indulge their curiosity at this time. They picked up the children and went out.

Too many people had come, and it was not practical for everyone to crowd in the hospital. Once outside, everyone stood around until Charlie came out and told everyone to go home. They wanted to go home, but seeing Charlie and Claire in the

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hospital room, everyone felt genuinely happy but reluctant.

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Fortunately, Claire did not stay in the hospital for long. Due to her special status, no one knew if the Jones family had given up on assassination attempts, and waiting outside for a long time was very dangerous. They moved to their home the next day and had a doctor stay at the house to check on Claire and the baby at any time.

The next day, Carly brought Ronald to their house. She had heard Claire giving birth the night before, and she and Ronald were very curious about the newborn. When Ronald arrived, Jeremy

was very happy and immediately took Ronald upstairs so they could see his newborn sister! Although Damian was younger than Ronald, Ronald was too young to remember

much from when Damian was born. Ronald had almost forgotten everything from his childhood. This time, he was extremely happy to see the baby.

Charlie was in the room, taking care of his wife after childbirth while keeping an eye on the baby. Since his daughter was born, she had become the family's darling. From this morning onward, people kept coming by to see the baby, one visit after another.,

When Claire needed to rest, Charlie made sure not to let anyone disturb her. However, when Claire was up and was in a good mood, he did not stop anyone from coming in. He even bragged about his little baby to everyone, constantly telling the children that the baby was the cutest! Claire couldn't help but smile secretly as she watched Charlie boast about their baby.

Stacey, worried the children might cause trouble, also came in to keep Claire company. Carly, Isabella's older sister, soon followed.

When Claire lived with the Hoggard family, Stacey often took time to keep her company. After work, Carly would also bring Ronald to their house to spend time with Claire. Over time, the women's mutual companionship helped their relationship improve, and they gradually became close friends without even realizing it.

Stacey and Carly had both given birth and had a lot of experience with postnatal care and taking care of children. When the three of them sat together, they found themselves with countless topics to discuss. They were very happy and never felt bored.

Seeing that Claire was enjoying herself and was not feeling lonely, Charlie focused on entertaining the baby.

The newborn baby couldn't turn over by herself and was very tiny. Charlie held the baby carefully, afraid of hurting her. However, he couldn't help himself and repeatedly picked up the little one gently, playing with her. This was his and Claire's daughter, who looked as adorable as her mother!