Ruling 1041

Chapter 1041

Soon, Don returned with some men. Ethan's face had been so badly burnt, it was no longer recognizable. Since he had the same build as Alejandro, Ethan had hidden his past from the public and undergone numerous plastic surgeries. Appearance-wise, he had practically become Alejandro Smith's twin. To make his disguise even more convincing, he had destroyed his own fingerprints.

After all that he'd been through, Ethan no longer wanted to fight for anything from Mark anymore. The only regret he had was Tiffany, the girl who had given up everything she had for him. There was nothing that would make him happier than to live with his loved one in peace, so he planned to look for Tiffany the moment he returned, making amends for everything he had done in the past.

Don grabbed his injured leg when he saw that Ethan was silent.

"There's nothing you can do now. It was Melanie who had been secretly passing you information, am I right? Here I was, trying to get rid of her eyesore, but who would've thought that she could only see you in her eyes. If it hadn't been for her, Tiffany would've been dead by now. So if you're not willing to continue this Alejandro charade, you're welcomed to die, and Tiffany will be right behind you!"

Ethan was in a lot of pain, his face pale and beads of sweat clinging to his forehead, but he did not even groan. Calmly, he bargained, "Let go of her and I promise you, I will carry on living as Alejandro. Ethan Connor no longer exists in this world!"

Don let go of his hand and laughed, saying, "So you're Ethan Connor? Good, very good. From this day on, you will be my grandson. If we're going to do this, we're going to do it right. I'll make the arrangements for you to be discharged as soon as possible. As for your leg… Cripple it is, then. I suppose it's quite the bargain for you to trade your leg to keep you and Tiffany alive, huh? Not to forget the lifetime of riches. Don't you agree?"

Ethan gritted his teeth and closed his eyes, “I agree.”

Don’s expression changed from cunning to loving, reaching out a hand to cover Ethan with a blanket. “My dear Ale, listen to your grandfather and live together with Melanie. I’m not forcing you to love her. As long as she doesn’t give up on you entirely, you can do whatever you want. You can even keep your feelings for Tiffany, I don’t care. All I care about is the relationship between the Smiths and the Larks.”

Ethan silently acknowledged his words.

When Mark and Jackson arrived at the hospital, they were told that the owner of the car was already dead from the burns he had suffered.

Both Mark and Jackson had a gut feeling that someone had deliberately murdered the driver, just so that they were not able to find out whatever it was that they were looking for.

Therefore, they had no choice but to look for Alejandro directly (for convenience purposes, Ethan Connor would be referred to as Alejandro Smith). Alejandro’s ward was being guarded. However, they predicted that they would not be able to find out anything, even if they had asked Alejandro.

They were destined to return empty-handed this round.

Arianne was so shocked when she heard about the incident, she almost choked, rushing to Tiffany’s house to console her with Smore in her arms.

“Tiffany, are you alright? You must be in shock! Do you want to get a checkup in the hospital?”

Tiffany replied calmly, “I’m fine, just a little shocked. I feel alright, no discomfort anywhere. In fact, I’m feeling great, actually, I’m getting married tomorrow. So don’t worry.”

Arianne raised an eyebrow, commenting, “I think Jackson and Mark’s efforts are in vain. If someone had actually planned all this, they wouldn’t leave any traces behind. However, I do find it a bit strange. Who would want to harm you, and how did Alejandro know that you were in trouble, able to save you just in time? Alejandro’s actions are so suspicious, he’s clearly involved in this somehow.”

Tiffany became confused the moment she tried to analyze the situation deeper. “I’m not as smart as you guys, so I can’t make heads or tails of it. I’d better not think too much, otherwise my child might become stupid as well.”

Chapter 1042

Arianne scowled, “What are you talking about? What has using your brain got to do with your child’s intelligence? You silly goose! Anyways, you aren’t in contact with Alejandro anymore and you should stay away from him. To be honest, I always get a very strange feeling when I see him, but I can’t quite put my finger on it. Anyway, you should rest at home and prepare to be the most beautiful bride tomorrow.”

Tiffany smiled and said, “Alright then, you should come early tomorrow morning and accompany me. I’ll leave Smore with Mark; he’s married, so he can’t be the bridesman. The same goes to you; you can’t be my bridesmaid either, so I had to spend a sum to hire someone to do it, and neither of them are people I know.”

As she said this, Arianne thought of Eric again. He would be the bridesman if he were still around.

Shortly after, Jackson had arrived for Tiffany, but Lilian stopped him right by the doorstep. “Jackson, you’re not allowed to enter this door before the wedding day—it’s taboo. Tiffany isn’t allowed to go to your place either. Anyway, the wedding’s tomorrow.”

Tiffany laughed at Jackson from the other side of the door. “You can go now, I’m fine. Remember to come for me early tomorrow.”

Jackson smiled as well, but his face had a flash of impatience. “Alright then… Are you really that superstitious? Can’t I be here because I was worried about you? Anyways, you can’t be absent tomorrow, so be a good girl and wait for me alright?”

Although Jackson seemed to be smiling on the surface, his words resonated fear and concern. Tiffany got serious as well as she said, “I will. I’ll definitely wait for you to come. I won’t miss tomorrow for the world.”

Lillian got goosebumps from listening to their conversation. “Alright, alright, can you two please stop flirting with each other, I’ve got goosebumps now. You can save the flirty talk when the two of you are alone at home and no one would bother you. You should hurry home now, Jackson. Get some rest.”

Jackson turned around and left with a heavy heart. After everything that had happened today, he was terrified of losing her. That was such a close call, just a little longer and…

Arianne did not stay for long either. “I should get going as well, I’ll head back and pack up my stuff. I’ll come back early tomorrow morning to help you with your makeup. It’s a Monday tomorrow, so I’ve already applied for my leave.”

Tiffany hugged Arianne, of course hugging Smore as well while she was at it. “Alright, drive safe tomorrow. I’ll be waiting for you.”

Back at the Tremont Estate, Arianne saw a pair of shoes by the entrance through the edges of her eyes and knew that Mark was home. She did not dare to talk about the accident back at Tiffany’s because she was afraid that Lilian would be worried sick if she found out, so Lilian was kept in the dark about the accident.

When she arrived upstairs, she saw that Mark was sitting by the window and asked, “How was it? Was it just a waste of time?”

Mark looked at her with a strange look. “How did you know? Indeed, it was a waste of time, the man’s already dead and there’s no way of asking Alejandro about the details directly. It’s rather complicated. A lot of things have been happening recently, so you shouldn’t bring Smores out too much. What if something were to happen to either of you?”

Arianne pouted her lips, “What would happen to me? No one’s targeting me, they’re targeting Tiffany. Also, where would I find the energy to bring Smores out when I’m busy at work most of the time? By the way, isn’t Alejandro crippled? He didn’t seem to be crippled when he was able to drive and save Tiffany despite public knowledge. Based on this, could it be that this Alejandro isn’t the Alejandro we know?”

Chapter 1043

Mark seemed amused as he looked at her. “What do you mean? Go on, tell me what you think.”

She lost confidence from the way Mark had looked at her. “I’m not as smart as you, so you can think about it yourself. I’ve got nothing to say.”

He got up and stood in front of her, then slowly picked up Smores. “I know what you’re trying to say. You’re suspecting that this Alejandro isn’t the real Alejandro, and you’re suspecting that… Ethan is somehow involved with him, right? I have the same suspicions, but where’s the evidence? There is none. So unless we can get our hands on some concrete evidence, we have no way to confirm or prove it.”

Arianne knew that Mark had the same thoughts as she did. “I haven’t told Tiffany about this since it’s only our suspicions. I’ve met Alejandro before, and I felt strange when I did. He felt so familiar yet so distant. He has always been going against you, yet he wasn’t being nasty about it. But he’s trying to get close to Tiffany on purpose, and that’s what I find strange. Also, I remember the time when I met him, he told me that when Smore is able to speak, I must remember to teach Smore to call him uncle.”

Mark seemed as though he wanted to change the subject. “Alright, there’s no point talking about this when there’s no evidence. I’m taking Smore out for a walk on the patio.”

Out at the patio, Mark had asked Butler Henry to report everything that he had found on Alejandro again. Too many coincidences have happened in Africa, Ethan had gone missing in Africa. His body had never been found, so it could be assumed that Ethan was still alive, couldn’t it?

The real Alejandro Smith is crippled, but the current Alejandro Smith didn’t seem to be. Of course, it was possible that the real Alejandro had been pretending to be a cripple when he was actually normal all along.

Anyhow, there was still much to be investigated about whether Ethan was Alejandro. Mark had hoped that he wasn't because Alejandro's motives towards Tiffany were all nothing but clear, but if Alejandro really was Ethan, that meant both Tiffany and Jackson were in danger.

The next day, Arianne had left her home before Smore woke up since it was in the wee hours of the morning and the sun had not yet risen. Butler Henry drove her over to Tiffany's. Arianna had already left instructions for Mark to bring Mary along with Smore when he left the house so that Mary could look after Smore with him.

Both Tiffany and Lilian were awake when she arrived at Tiffany's. They were busy helping Tiffany get changed into her dress, combing her hair, and doing her makeup.

Tiffany was wide awake and did not look tired at all as she chatted away with Lilian while Arianna fulfilled her role as her makeup artist and worked on her diligently.

The mother and daughter had been living in a three bedroom house which was more than a hundred square meters, so it looked pretty spacious. The house still seemed pretty simple even with the red coloured balloons with the word "Congratulations" spelled out on them. When Arianna was done with Tiffany's makeup, Lilian suddenly teared up. "Tiffany, remember to treat your in-laws well when you live with the Wests. They are good people and Jackson treats you well. I'm glad that all my good karma has been repaid on you, though it's partially because of your luck as well.

Tiffany pulled out a tissue and handed it to Lilian. "It's my big day today mum, let's not talk about this, you're making me cry as well. I might need to touch up on my makeup later."

Lilian wiped off her tears in a hurry. “Alright alright, I won’t talk about it. I’m an old woman now, and I hope you won’t be disgusted with me when I come and visit.”

Tiffany stood up and hugged Lilian. “Of course I won’t. I won’t leave you alone either. Jackson’s mum likes you so much, so you’re not alone, aren’t you? You’re only marrying off your daughter, not losing her, so stop crying now.”

Arianne turned away as she saw the touching scene, she was actually the one who felt the most jealous. When she had gotten married to Mark, not only were there no such grand arrangements, it was quite depressing. In fact, she could even say that she had been forced to marry him. She did not even have any relative to send her off when she got married, hence no one would miss her or shed a tear for her. At that moment, Arianne thought of Helen, the woman who had said that she would make amends to her, the one who would only appear occasionally. If she had truly wanted to make amends, she would come and see Arianna openly and publicly to repay her with the warmth she had missed out on.

Chapter 1044

She had never missed Helen more than she did at that moment, her feelings mixed with hatred.

When it was almost eight, Jackson and his crew arrived and parked downstairs. A lot of details had been skipped because of Tiffany’s pregnancy, not wanting to make it hard for her. Therefore, Jackson entered the house without any obstructions and personally carried Tiffany out of the house and into the car.

Arianna was supposed to take care of Tiffany closely, getting in the car with them as well, sitting in the driver’s seat while the couple sat at the back. Lilian had gotten into the second car.

After going around almost half the city, they arrived at the hotel past eleven.

It was hard for her to miss a handsome man with a child in his arms, so Arianne saw Mark carrying Smore amongst the crowd as she entered the hotel lounge. She was afraid that Smore would make a fuss if he saw her, so she decided not to meet up with them.

The ballroom had been well decorated. it was not an exaggeration to say that the decorations went all the way up to the ceiling, with bouquets of white flowers placed everywhere, especially near the path where the bride and groom was going to walk, with red and white rose petals scattered all over the floor. It all looked so sacred and grand.

The archway by the entrance was also woven with flowers and had warm tassel lights hanging from it. Smore constantly tried to grab onto the lights. but Mark managed to stop him from succeeding just in time.

As the clock struck twelve, Tiffany walked with Lilian towards Jackson.

Jackson was wearing a very well-tailored suit, looking flawless no matter which angle you looked at him from. He was standing straight and had a bright aura around him that made onlookers jealous, envious that such a fine and handsome man was about to be married.

However, Tiffany did not dare look at him today, her face flushed red and her head lowered.

Jackson teased her, whispering in her ear, “You look very beautiful today,” causing her face to instantly blush bright red.

Finally, Lilian passed Tiffany's hand to Jackson and said, "Jackson, I leave Tiffany in your care now. Don't you dare mistreat her."

Jackson promised her with a solemn face, "I promise I will take good care of her. She's the most beautiful being I've ever seen in my life. I will cherish her with all I have, never looking at someone else ever again."

Tiffany wanted to tear open his flirtatious mouth, her face turning even redder.

Jackson held her hand as they walked up towards the altar one step at a time, through all the petals in their path, a priest waiting for them at the end of their walk. At that moment, the big screen at the front of the stage began to play a video montage of their wedding photos, countless petals falling from the air as that happened.

When they stood in front of the priest, the pair looked at each other and smiled. The priest recited his prayers and arrived at the important part, asking Jackson, "Mr. West, do you take Ms. Lane as your lawfully wedded wife? Do you promise to be faithful to her in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health, to love her and to honor her for all the days of your life?

Jackson looked into Tiffany's eyes and vowed, "I do."

Chapter 1045

At that moment, Tiffany didn't dare to breathe too heavily, scared her tears would ruin her makeup.

The priest then looked at her and asked, “Ms Lane, do you take Mr. West as your lawfully wedded husband? Do you promise to be faithful to him in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health, to love him and to honor him for all the days of your life?

Tiffany choked and firmly stated, “I do!”

The priest gently smiled, “You may now exchange your rings.”

The bride and bridegroom held out each other’s rings, putting it on their wedding ring fingers. Before the priest could even say that he could kiss the bride, Jackson rushed up and impatient kissed Tiffany on the lips. Other than the taste of the lipstick, he could taste her lips. Finally, she was his.

Summer’s cheers were the loudest from amongst the guests below the stage. She did not bother with the etiquettes of being a rich man’s wife, clapping her hands excitedly. With tears of joy falling from her eyes, she looked at Atticus, who was next to her and said, “All the effort I put in raising him over the past 30 years has finally paid off. What a journey it has been!”

Her friends that were beside her laughed heartily, Atticus feeling embarrassed as he whispered begrudgingly, “Will you calm down? You don’t have to be so excited.”

However, Summer couldn’t keep herself calm. When the ceremony was over, she handed Tiffany a pair of flat slippers that she had specifically prepared for Tiffany in advance, afraid that she would be tired.

“Tiffany, I was worried that you’d be tired due to your pregnancy. Head over to the rest area for a break, there’s no need for you to entertain the guests. You must be tired from everything that has happened since this morning, I’ll bring you some good food to eat.”

Tiffany looked at Summer, who was kneeling down to change her shoes for her, and felt a slow warmth unfurl in her heart. Gently, she said, “Thank you, mum.”

Summer looked up at her and smiled. “Don’t mention it. We’re a family now, so what’s there to thank for? I’ve been waiting for the day you become a part of our family for a long time. I’ve always thought you were a fine woman, since the day I met you. I suppose Jack has finally made the effort to do something right for once, bringing you into the West family.”

Tiffany laughed as she asked, “The day you met me, when was it? I can’t even remember.”

Summer thought about it before replying, “I can’t remember that well, to be honest. What I do remember is that you were at the hospital’s entrance or somewhere else on that day, while I was in the car and Jack was under the eaves. I saw you from a distance when Jack went towards you with an umbrella.”

If it was at the hospital… Could it be when her father had been admitted into the hospital for the first time? She was at her lowest point at that time and hadn’t been in a relationship with Jackson yet. They had only begun to contact each other when Jackson donated money for her father’s surgery. Fate seemed to have its own way of doing things, working behind the scenes for her to repay Jackson’s kind deed. It appeared that the saying “Do good and good shall come to you in unexpected ways” was true after all. However, Tiffany thought that she was the luckiest one.

As they were talking, Arianne entered the rest area with food in her hands. “Tiffany, I’ve brought you something nice to eat. You didn’t even eat anything this morning, just a glass of milk. You must be hungry, right?”

Tiffany took the plate from Arianne with glee, her ears standing up. Now that the ceremony was over, she did not have to be worried about her makeup being ruined. “I feel so happy at the moment,” she confided.

Arianne pursed her lips and smiled slightly, “I can tell.”

Chapter 1046

“I’m going out then. You stay and talk,” Summer said.

Topics of conversation between the pair grew bolder once Summer left as Tiffany did not need to concern herself with her image anymore. She had to remain reserved while Summer was around. “Ari, why won’t you ask Mark to do a wedding ceremony too? I was stunned when I walked into the venue. They’ve really spared no effort. It’s like a dream. But when I thought of how it’ll all be taken down after the wedding, it seems like such a waste. A lot of money must have gone into this wedding. I never lifted a finger. The Wests really care about me, and I feel so important, like a precious treasure. I’m so blessed…”

Arianne shrugged. “Mark and I are pretty much an old married couple. Why should we have a wedding ceremony? We’re just getting by. It does feel like a shame sometimes, but there’s no need. Humans should be more mature. We’ve already had our son’s one month celebration, so it’d look like a joke if we have a wedding ceremony now.”

“I’m not like you at all. If it were me, I’d be filled with so much regret that I wouldn’t be able to sleep at night. He’d have to re-do our wedding ceremony for me. I saw Mark carrying Smore around outside. Aren’t you going to talk to him?” Tiffany mumbled incoherently with a chicken thigh in her mouth.

Arianne shook her head. “No, I need some peace and quiet. Both of them tire me out. Smore will want me to hold him when he sees me. I’m going to have bulging biceps from carrying him around all the time.”

Tiffany laughed so hard that she nearly choked. “How can such a tiny baby give you bulging biceps? You’re exaggerating. You’re overexaggerating.”

Arianne did not explain. “You’ll understand what I mean soon anyway. Give it a try and you’ll know. Your stomach has grown. I can see it on this wedding dress if I look closely.”

Tiffany suddenly remembered something. She reached behind and loosened the lacing behind her wedding dress. “This is too tight. I want to change after eating. Wedding dresses are pretty, but it’s so inconvenient.”

The wedding finally ended in the afternoon, after 2PM. TIffany returned to White Water Bay Villa once again, and it all felt very different. Previously, she was only Jackson’s live-in girlfriend. Now, she was the lady of the house. She immediately felt much more relaxed.

Jackson watched her as she fiddled with and inspected everything. “What are you doing?” he asked with a smile. “You’ve been living here for quite a while. Haven’t you finished looking?”

She pouted. “That’s different. I was the guest. Now, I’m the lady of the house. How is that the same? It wasn’t clear if we’d end up together before this day, and I could move out anytime. From now on, this will be our home. I’m worried, I might be too excited to sleep tonight. By the way, it’s our wedding night. Shouldn’t we… you know… Do something naughty?”

Jackson poured himself a glass of water and made her a glass of fresh orange juice. “What kind of naughty things can we do? You had it easy. All you needed to do was walk down the aisle. I’ve been managing everything in this wedding, and I haven’t stopped at all. Plus, I had to manage the company. Everything is finally done now. I just want a good night’s sleep tonight. I’m exhausted.”

“Most people consummate their marriage on their wedding night, and you’re going to sleep?” Tiffany whined. “Why were you so energetic back when you toyed with girls? You’ve lost your appetite, haven’t you? Is it because my body isn’t what it used to be, and my big belly?”

Her words made Jackson spit out his drink. “What are you saying? Have I ever snubbed you? Stop trying to pick a fight. Okay, I’m going to take a nap and recharge, then make dinner for you tonight. By then… You can ‘play’ with me however you like.”

His words made Tiffany’s heart throb. Nevertheless, she couldn’t “play” however she liked with her big belly like that. “Then I’ll sleep with you. I got up way too early this morning, so I have to catch up on some sleep. According to the internet, more sleep can help the baby grow faster.”

Chapter 1047

“Stop it, you. You clearly want to go to sleep, and you’re using the baby as an excuse,” Jackson exclaimed snobbishly. “It’s agreed. We’re sleeping together. Don’t touch me or I won’t be able to sleep well and wake up tonight, and... Do whatever you want.”

…

Nighttime, Smith Estate.

Jett drove Alejandro back from the hospital and helped him into a wheelchair. However, this time, it was no longer an act.

Don Smith had prohibited Alejandro from getting medical treatment in the hospital for his legs, so he was discharged early. From now on, a personal doctor would administer an IV to him in order to decrease the inflammation.

Jett stayed silent the whole time, unnerved. He had never expected so much to happen over the past few days, all during his time off of work. Alejandro's real identity was no longer a secret, but Don Smith hadn't had time to speak to him yet. He had been by Alejandro's side for a while, so it would be impossible for him to say that he was unaware of it. He wasn't sure what might happen to him now.

As they walked, Alejandro suddenly spoke in a soft voice, "If the old man asks you about it, just insist that you were never aware of it. Tell him that I'd been very cautious around you and that I never allowed you to get too close. He's accepted me and what I've said, so he won't do anything to you."

Jett was shocked. He used to be scared of Alejandro and had been threatened into submission. His perception of Alejandro had changed, however, causing him to nod, "Okay."

They returned to his bedroom and Alejandro had just been helped into his bed when Melanie walked in to inform him, "Jett, grandfather is looking for you. Go to him, leave all of this to me."

Jett shot Alejandro a look, grunted in reply, then turned around and left.

Melanie walked to the side of the bed and sat down, asking, “Does it hurt?”

Alejandro didn’t answer. How could it not hurt? The old man had prohibited him from using pain killers, probably to sear this memory into his brain. He was always in pain. He was in so much pain that he couldn’t sleep.

After a while, he asked, “Why did you tell me about the old man’s plan?”

Melanie pursed her lips, then answered with a seemingly self-deprecating smile, “What would you have done if I kept my mouth shut and Tiffany died? I didn’t want to see you unhappy, but I regret telling you now. If I had known that you would risk your life to save hers, I wouldn’t have told you. You nearly died; did you know that? Even though you’ve survived, you’ve turned into a cripple. You’re lying here on this bed, handicapped, while Tiffany and Jackson celebrate their wedding day. How are you feeling? You must be very upset, right?”

Alejandro showed no signs of emotion. Instead, he closed his eyelids, sighing, “They’re just legs. It doesn’t matter. Thank you.”

Melanie thought that she was hearing things. This insufferably arrogant man was actually thanking her, and over a woman too. She felt incomparably confused. “Even if it doesn’t matter to you, it matters to me. I don’t want to be with a cripple for the rest of my life. Can’t you ever consider my feelings too? Tiffany is so important to you, yet I don’t matter at all? I’m your official wife.”

Her questions were left unanswered, as Alejandro had closed his eyes. She gritted her teeth, got up, and left. She had to speak to the old man. Alejandro would be permanently crippled if his legs were left untreated. She didn't want that.

She arrived at the courtyard to find Don Smith talking to Jett. She didn't dare interrupt them, so she stayed away and observed from a distance.

She could faintly overhear Don Smith's discussion with Jett—it was about Alejandro.

"I planted you next to him for so long. How could you have not noticed a thing?" Don Smith asked Jett.

Chapter 1048

Jett kept his head very low, answering, "I did not. He'd always be extra cautious with me. He wouldn't let me get too close to him."

Obviously, the old man didn't believe him, commenting, "I've always liked you, Jett. I hope you're not lying to me. You're very different from how you used to be. You used to be a loner, but now, you have a family to feed…"

Jett frowned, "Sir, I really had no idea. I've never… Betrayed you either."

Melanie hesitated for two seconds when she heard this, then strode forward. “Grandfather, may I have a word with you in private?”

Don Smith’s face switched to a kindly expression when he saw Melanie. “Of course. Come, talk to me. Jett, you may be excused.”

Jett shot Melanie a grateful look, then hurried away.

Melanie secretly let out a sigh of relief, then got straight to the point.

“Grandfather, it was wrong of Alex to fake his handicap and lie to you. I told him about your plans to kill Tiffany because I didn’t want him to be upset. It’s all my fault. Otherwise, this wouldn’t have happened to him. He’s your only grandson and the only heir to the Smith family. Please calm down and let him continue his treatment at the hospital. He’ll really turn into a cripple if this continues.”

Don Smith did not reveal Alejandro’s false identity. Instead, he simply asked, “Were you aware that Ale’s legs were perfectly fine?”

Melanie hung her head guiltily, admitting, “Yes… I’m sorry.”

Don Smith carried a smile on his face, one that seemed to belie his insidious intentions. “You should leave this matter alone. I have a plan. How can I possibly relax when Ale refuses to behave? I need some form of control over him, something to help me feel more assured.”

Melanie gathered all her courage and replied. “It’s not for anything else, I just don’t want to live the rest of my life with a cripple. I’d rather divorce him than have him never walk again. I agreed to this marriage because I knew that he wasn’t really a cripple. My family complained a lot before the marriage because of his legs. I’m not good with words, so please don’t mind me grandfather. I’m still young, and I don’t want my life to become narrow so soon.”

Don Smith was surprised. He had never expected for Melanie to say such things to him, especially for Alejandro’s sake. After a long pause, he sighed. “Okay, I’ll promise you that he can continue his treatment. Your feelings for him are remarkable. You know he doesn’t love you, that he’s in love with another woman, yet you’re still capable of doing this.”

His words had hit the nail on the head with Melanie, making her feel uncomfortable. She knew that Don Smith was simply trying to make her angry by being so straightforward in his words, so she refused to fall for it. “To love is to give, to empathize. Some things, no matter how difficult, must be endured. I’m going to take care of him. Jett and I will take him back to the hospital tomorrow morning.”

She turned around after saying her piece. She did not notice how grim Don Smith’s expression had become, nor how he suddenly tightened his grip around his cane.

White Water Bay Villa.

Jackson had finished cooking, ensuring that every dish was perfect before going upstairs to wake Tiffany.

He was clearly the more exhausted of the two, yet he had been able to wretch himself off the bed. She, on the other hand, was sleeping to no end.

He walked up to the bed and planted a kiss on her lips.

“Time to wake up, you lazy, little pig. Dinner’s ready. My mom’s going to nag me for starving you if you don’t get up.”

Chapter 1049

Suddenly, Tiffany flipped up like a carp, as if she had been startled. As a result, the pair stared at each other, cradling their foreheads in pain. Jackson never thought that Tiffany would be so careless in spite of her pregnancy, getting up so roughly like that. His forehead had ended up colliding with hers. He hadn’t even had the chance to avoid her.

Tiffany was close to tears from the pain. “What were you doing? That hurt…”

He was both innocent and helpless. “What do you mean? I just came upstairs to wake you up for dinner. Can’t you get up more gently? I’ve never met a more careless pregnant woman in my life. Come on, get up or the dishes will grow cold.”

Tiffany went into a daze, then returned to her senses. “I dreamt that we broke up again, then I heard you calling me for dinner and remembered that we’re married, and we’ll never be apart again. But I was in a daze, so I didn’t know what was a dream and what was reality. I wanted to find out which was real as soon as possible. I didn’t know that you’d be so close to me, which is why I bumped into you. And you’re teasing me for having a slow brain.”

Jackson curled his lips, reached out to stroke her head.

“It’s real,” he assured her, “We’ll never be apart again. From now on, try to avoid these kinds of bad dreams. Regardless of how silly you are, you have me to protect you. No one else but me would dare say anything against you.”

Tiffany grasped his well-defined hands, then lifted her own hands too. She gazed at their wedding rings and felt as if something had filled her heart.

There was no space for sadness anymore.

“It still feels like a dream. We’re actually married… It looks easy, but it’s not. By the way, most people enjoy exciting wedding nights. Why is ours so quiet?”

He grabbed her hand and helped her off of the bed, explaining, “My mom only kept the wedding ceremony. She was worried that it might tire you out. Isn’t it better to have this peace and quiet? You could do whatever you want if you weren’t pregnant. Based on our current situation, it’s better to keep it clean. Let’s eat.”

When they arrived downstairs, the fragrance wafting up from the dishes filled Tiffany with gluttony. “Your cooking always looks good and tastes good. This is the best part of marrying you. I’ll always be well-fed.”

Jackson nearly choked to death. “Is that the best part? Isn't there anything else?”

She smiled sweetly and said, “You’re good in every aspect. You’re the best in the world.”

He smiled as he helped put some of the food on her plate. “That’s much better. I only have three days of wedding leave. Your current situation prohibits us from going on a honeymoon, so you can rest for a few more days. I’d prefer it if you could just rest, yet you always insist on carrying on.”

Tiffany curled her lips in silence. Of course she wasn’t going to just hang around and rest. She’d get sick from too much sleep.

After a while, she stared at him carefully, biting her fork. Then, she cautiously said, “I wonder how Alejandro’s leg is. It was all broken and bloody when I last saw it. Although that happened to him because he tried to save me, you wouldn’t be happy if I went to see him…”

Jackson’s hand stopped in the middle of picking up more dishes. The temperature of the atmosphere seemed to plummet too.

“Of course I wouldn’t be happy if you went to see him. Don’t even think about it. It’s true that he’s in this predicament because he saved you, but it’s also very suspicious. You’d better get that idea out of your head. Don’t think that I’d fall for it, just because you’re taking a step back, and give you permission to see him.”

She knew that this would happen, so she didn’t dare bring it up. She simply felt sorry about the whole situation. Alejandro had already been reduced to this state, yet he still sent her a present on her wedding day.

Suddenly, a knock sounded on the door. She got up and ran to open it in order to avoid the tension in the room. Outside the door stood Summer and Atticus, the former looking rather normal while the latter seemed a bit awkward.

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Tiffany let them in. “Mom, dad, what are you doing here? It’s late and cold. You should dress warmly so you don’t catch a cold.”

Summer surveyed every corner of the house as she entered. Finally, her gaze landed on the dinner table. “I was worried, so I came here to check on you. As expected, Jackson’s only just made dinner for you. Honestly, he never spares my worries. You might as well move to my house. I’d worry a lot less then.”

Jackson’s ears were burning from her nagging. Of course, his face naturally thickened. “She’s only just woken up. I wasn’t starving her. Stop worrying all the time. I love her more than you.”

“That’s right, Summer,” Atticus chimed in. “It’s inappropriate for you to meddle in their family. You weren’t this worried about Jackson when he was young… It’s not appropriate to come here so late…”

That was why Atticus looked so awkward. However, his words had brought Summer’s displeasure. “Yes, I wasn’t this concerned about Jackson when he was younger, but these words shouldn’t have come from your mouth. It’s our son’s wedding day today, so I won’t drag out old scores with you now. However, if I had left the company to its own devices back then, Jackson and I would have ended up begging on the streets for food. Both familial and romantic love would crumble and fall without material support. I’d much rather go on business trips for half a month, come home to our mansion, and hold Jackson while telling him stories to broaden his worldview than stay in a broken old home with him, barely getting by and telling him how much his mother loves him.”

Tiffany was in a daze as she listened to her. She carefully observed the looks on everyone's faces. Her greatest concern was whether Jackson would be upset, but he seemed fine. Instead, he observed Summer and Atticus in amusement, as if it had nothing to do with him.

Atticus did not expect that her flames of war would end up on him instead. He instantly returned to silence. After all, he didn't dare retaliate. It was all true.

Summer did not drag the conversation out. "Tiffie, continue with your dinner. Don't worry about us. We ate before coming here. You shouldn't starve yourself anymore. I'm going upstairs to check on your mattress—some mattresses are not suitable for pregnant women. You'll end up sore all over."

"Okay. Please have a seat, dad," Tiffany said with a self-deprecating smile.

Atticus nodded and sat on the couch. Tiffany went back to the dining table to continue her dinner, then kicked Jackson's leg. Jackson looked at her and smiled vaguely. "What?"

"Are you in a bad mood?" she asked in a voice that only he could hear.

He shrugged. "No, I'm in a great mood. My mom is right. It's a good thing that she didn't spend all of her time with me and ignore the company back then. When I was younger, I used to long for my mother's company. However, as I grew older, I realized that money was very important too. I'm glad that I'm the son of the West family and not some little street urchin."

Tiffany covered her mouth and giggled. Jackson was far more accepting than she was.

Not too long after, Summer came downstairs. “The mattress isn’t bad. It’s just soft and firm enough. You two should take advantage of your wedding leave and have a good rest. I can manage the company for now. Tiffie should have her prenatal examination tomorrow. Jackson, you should take her to the hospital early. A lot of people get sick during this season, and the hospital could be crowded and filled with germs. Get there early and leave as soon as possible.”

Jackson grunted a reply. They were pretty much finished with their food. Tiffany got up to clear the table. “I’ll wash the plates—I can’t make you do everything. You can entertain mom and dad.”