**Ruling 1141**

Chapter 1141

Arianne remained silent. She did not expect Will's wife to be so aggressive. Not only did his wife humiliate her by causing a big scene, but she even went to Mark's office to do it. Arianne felt pity for Will. He was such a gentle and elegant man, and yet, he married such an unreasonable and uncouth woman. Moreover, she was not the woman he loved. It seemed like the burden on Will's shoulders was much heavier than she had imagined.

Mark exploded in anger when he saw Arianne keeping quiet. "Say something! What does your silence mean? An admission of guilt?! I'm only in my early thirties, I don't want to die in anger because of you!"

Arianne helplessly said, "What do you want me to say? I've said what needs to be said. It's really just an innocent meal. He asked me out as a friend to catch up. What would you have me do? He's a nice guy, I can't find it in me to reject him. As for the past, shouldn't we face it openly? Running away or hiding only makes us look guilty. I've not done anything I should feel guilty about, why should I run?"

After a brief pause, Mark suddenly asked, "Do you still like him?"

Arianne replied without hesitation, "I don't. Also, Will said that time is an interesting thing. It's able to make you dislike something you used to like. Likewise, it's also able to make you like something you used to dislike. For example, you seemed so fierce and intimidating in the past, I didn't think I would like you. And yet, didn't I fall in love with you in the end? I no longer have that throbbing feeling in my heart that I used to have for Will. It's an obvious win for you, and yet, you're getting angry over nothing."

Although Mark only snorted in response, Arianne knew her words had affected him. At the very least, she seemed to have calmed him down a little. Fortunately, she did not fight fire with fire and used Tiffany's method to handle the situation instead. At this moment, she realized why Tiffany had Jackson in the palm of her hand. No matter who was in the right or wrong, as long as one gained the upper hand

with coaxing words, men would always give in. After a moment, she asked in an attempt to test the water, “Can I return to work? I still have some unfinished business there…”

Mark glared at her. “You’ve got time to eat with Will, but you don’t even have time to accompany me?”

Arianne smiled wryly. “Forget I said anything, I’ve asked for the day off anyway. I’ll accompany you instead. Where do you want to go? It’s the end of the year, our company’s not too busy, what about yours? Why don’t you go to your office? I’ll accompany you. You can work while I read in your office. Maybe I might even be able to help you… What do you think?”

Mark paused to think for a moment before he said, “Alright, we can have dinner in the evening as well.” He was actually really busy. He had a meeting to attend in the afternoon. Now that he realized the situation was not as serious as he had thought, there was no need to cancel the meeting.

Arianne sighed in relief. She made a good call by suggesting they go to his office. At least, he would be busy and would not have time to argue with her. If they had gone home, it was likely that their argument would continue.

When they arrived at Tremont Tower, Davy saw Arianne and sighed in relief. It seemed like everything was fine. It was good that nothing happened. Otherwise, he would be the one to suffer the most since he was Mark’s secretary and spent a lot of time around Mark.

Chapter 1142

When they entered the office, Mark immediately got back to his work while Arianne took off her shoes and sat on the couch, flipping through a fashion magazine. Occasionally, she would peek at Mark to study his expression. She could tell he was still angry. Although it was not a pleasant expression, at least he was not going to explode in anger. However, his angry gaze still made her uncomfortable.

Arianne finally felt slightly more carefree when Mark left to attend one of his meetings. She video called Tiffany on her phone and said, “Tiffany, you wouldn’t believe what just happened. I’m so glad I’m alive and able to talk to you!”

Tiffany was in the office. Her gossip radar activated immediately as soon as she heard Arianne’s words. She snuck to the stairwell away from prying eyes and ears. “What’s going on here? Who would dare to put their hands on you? Is it Mark?”

Arianne nodded her head fiercely. “Will came to my office earlier in the morning. He asked for your number and asked me out for lunch as well. Who knew his wife would be waiting for me at the entrance of my office when I returned. She knows about my past with Will and rushed up to curse at me as soon as Will left. She caused such a big commotion that I’m currently the topic of everyone’s discussion. Not only that, but she even went to Mark’s office to complain. Needless to say, Mark instantly came to my office. Anyway, I’m in Mark’s office now. I had such a scare today.”

Tiffany was shocked. “Did I hear wrongly? Will's wife cursed at you for having lunch with Will? Who gave her the right to do that? Isn’t it just a meal? Did you retaliate? If I were there, I’d definitely give it to her. Even if you and Will aren’t together, can’t both of you be friends? You were made to sever all ties with Will because of Mark previously. What’s wrong with having a meal? How ridiculous! Did Mark do anything to you?”

Arianne nodded in agreement. “No. He was just about to blow his top, but I managed to explain everything to him clearly so I’m fine for now. However, I have no idea when and if he will blow up later. This incident is like a landmine. It’s fine if no one touches it, but as soon as it’s touched, it would explode. I didn’t really argue with Will’s wife. There’s no need for that. She doesn’t have any shame, but I do. Why should I humiliate myself by making a scene in public? It doesn’t matter if I’m single, but everyone knows I’m Mrs. Tremont now. Mark’s reputation is much more important. Anyway, I really didn’t expect Will to marry such a woman.”

Tiffany said, “Well, speaking from Will’s perspective, it doesn’t matter who he marries if he can’t marry the one he loves anyway. His happiness isn’t important as long as the other person is happy. Isn’t his marriage arranged by his family? That woman really doesn’t deserve him. Anyway, forget it. They’re married and even have a child together. What a pity! I suppose the meaning of his life is to maintain his relationship with his wife for your sake”

Arianne fell silent for a few seconds before she finally replied, “I really don’t wish to see him suffering for the rest of his life because of me. I’m already in love with someone else, and I’m happy with my life now. His situation makes me look heartless. It’s always better to have an open mind and to look to the future. Let the past go with the wind. What’s the use of holding onto the past so tightly? It would only make things more difficult. If he contacts you again, you should talk to him about it. There are some words that I can’t say to him. Anyway, you should get back to work. Bye for now.”

After the video feed disconnected, Arianne sighed. She was confused. She felt as though she had wronged Will by letting go of the love he had shown her all these years. However, Mark had also loved her all this time, silently protecting her for the past ten years…

When Tiffany heard that Arianne had been cursed at, it, naturally, did not sit well with her. She called Will immediately.

After Will had heard about the incident, he was furious. He wanted to question his wife for her actions and even thought about ending their unhappy marriage. However, when he saw Pumpkin playing by herself in the corner, he could not bring himself to act. He should not have met up with Arianne in the first place. This was all due to his selfishness. After running into Arianned in the shopping mall, he had been having sleepless nights.

Such was life. People would deny their fates in the beginning, but in the end, they still had no choice but to accept it.

Chapter 1143

By the time Mark was done with his meeting and had returned to his office, he was shocked to find Arianne had fallen asleep on the couch. Although the radiator was turned on in the office, it would still be cold to sleep without a blanket. He walked up to wake her up. “I’m done with my work, let’s go eat.”

Arianne opened up her eyes and sat up in a daze. She felt a little dizzy, and her nose was runny. Who knew that taking a nap for such a short while would give her the cold. She really felt that she was weak and too prone to catching a cold. “What… What time is it?”

Mark held out his wrist in front of her and pointed at the time on his watch. “What time is it? It’s after working hours now. Did you catch a cold?”

Arianne sniffed. “I think so, but it’s not a big deal. Let’s go.”

The moment they stepped out of the company, Arianne was hit by a gust of cold wind and shivered. She instinctively shrank into Mark’s embrace. “It’s so cold!”

Mark grinned. He reached out and grabbed her shoulders without paying attention to gazes from onlookers. “Get in the car. You’ll feel better inside.”

Arianne enjoyed her moment of being protected by him. His height made him a human windbreaker.

Janice saw everything as she stood by the elevator door. She found the scene painful to watch. Although she knew she had no right to be jealous, she could not help but feel uncomfortable as though there was

a thorn at her side. She was definitely not the only woman who lingered around Mark, but she was definitely the most stubborn one. Her life had already begun to revolve around him the moment he sponsored her.

“Mr. Tremont and his wife seem really happy together. I heard that his wife is ten years younger than him. I’m so envious of her. He seems to dote on her a lot.”

When Janice heard the conversation in her surroundings, she grew even more uncomfortable in her heart. She hastily walked out and left the company.

At the White Water Bay Cafe.

Arianne sent Tiffany a photo the moment she sat down. “I’m having dinner at your man’s cafe.”

Tiffany had also sent Arianne a photo of her eating at home. Although it was only herself and Jackson eating together, Jackson had made quite a number of dishes. Each of them looked delicious.

Mark was slightly disgruntled when he saw Arianne’s unceasing attention on her phone. “Who’re you talking to?”

Arianne waved her phone in front of Mark. “It’s Tiffany. It’s nothing, we’re done talking now. Let’s eat.”

Mark paused for a moment before saying, “We’re not going home tonight. I’ve already informed Mary.”

Arianne looked at him. “Again? Are you sure that’s alright? I’m worried about Smore.”

Mark, on the other hand, seemed relaxed. “I’m not satisfied with our previous date. We’re going to re-do it. Smore’s able to live just fine without you, what are you so worried about? Mary’s able to take care of him just fine.”

Although what Mark said was true, Arianne still missed her son. It was a mother’s instinct after all. Mothers would always think of their children no matter where they were. However, in Mark’s case… She did not want to go along with his idea, but she knew she had no choice because of the incident with Will. Otherwise, she would not have a good night’s sleep. “Alright, but we really should return home early in the morning.”

As the food was brought out in courses, Mark carefully poured Arianne a bowl of soup. “I’m going overseas tomorrow. Be a good girl and stay at home while I’m away. I’ll be video-calling you every day.”

It had been a while since he had gone on an overseas trip that lasted for a week. She nodded and replied, “Alright.”

Chapter 1144

Mark was slightly unhappy at Arianne’s simple response. “Are you that eager to see me go on a business trip? I’ll be gone for a week, don’t you have anything to say about it at all?”

Arianne shook her head earnestly. “I have no objections. Why would I object to you going on a business trip? Don’t worry, I’ll stay at home. One week will fly past in just a blink of an eye. It’s not like you’ll be away for more than a month. I’m sure you’ll still be busy during the festive seasons. Well, regardless, we

have to be together for our New Year Reunion at least. Saying that, I can understand that you're busy most of the time throughout the year."

Mark was lost in his thoughts for a moment before he decided to bring up a sensitive subject. "If I find out that you meet Will again while I'm away, things won't end the way they did today."

Arianne lowered her head and drank her soup. She had some opinions but did not dare to verbalize it. She only said, "Quit nagging. The food's getting cold."

After they finished the meal and left the cafe, it began to snow.

Arianne was freezing and rushed to hide inside the car. She rubbed her hands together to keep herself warm. "Is it cold where you're going?"

Mark reached out to switch on the radiator in the car. "No, the weather's pretty good there."

Arianne jokingly said, "That's nice. It's too cold in the house. It's just the right time for you to get away."

He looked at her from the corners of his eyes. "Why do I feel like you're excited about me being away? Should I not go? I won't feel at ease leaving you like this."

Arianne was rendered momentarily speechless. “H-how… How am I excited? Why would you cancel your trip when everything has already been arranged? Forget it… I’ll keep quiet so you don’t think I’m eager to see you leave or do something while you’re away.”

Mark did not say anything.

Arianne did not understand what was going through his mind as they drove to the hotel.

As soon as Arianne entered the room, she quickly switched on the radiator. She knew what was going to happen next. She did not dare to meet Mark’s gaze. Despite being married for quite a while now, she was still shy at heart despite Arianne.

Mark took off his jacket and asked for her opinion, “Shower together?”

“No, no, no… You go ahead. I’m still full from dinner so I’ll just rest for a moment.” Arianne refused his offer.

Mark did not say anything and entered the bathroom.

Arianne took a deep breath when she heard the sound of running water in the bathroom. She kept telling herself to calm down. Was this not a trivial matter? She should have gotten used to it by now. At that moment, something caught her eyes. She spotted something in Mark’s jacket pocket. She curiously took it out and saw a very small jewelry box. It was not the first time he had given her something like this. Did he buy her another one again?

What caught her attention was that there were two boxes instead of one. Each box was placed in each jacket pocket. She opened both boxes to have a look. It was a pair of earrings and a necklace. As a designer, she could tell the earrings represented a loving relationship while the necklace seemed ordinary.

Before Mark came out from the bathroom, she returned the boxes to their original places. Her heart was, naturally, filled with anticipation, but she still needed to feign ignorance.

When Mark finally came out from the bathroom, Arianne rose from the bed.

He suddenly took out a box from the closet and said, “Wear this later.”

She was curious. “What is it?”

Chapter 1145

Mark’s eyes had a meaningful look to them. With that, Arianne had a vague idea of the box’s content. She felt her face grow hot. She took the box with her to the bathroom and opened it. She had guessed correctly. It was a very special set of pajamas. To be more precise, it was black silk lingerie. The more she looked at it, the hotter her face burned.

Naturally, she was not bold enough to walk out in just the lingerie. She wore a bathrobe over it, feeling uncomfortable. She had stalled for time in the bathroom, wasting forty minutes in there, before she finally emerged from the bathroom. If she were not afraid of incurring Mark’s wrath, she would have stayed longer in there.

The moment the bathroom door opened, she met Mark's gaze. She saw his eyes flashed in anticipation before it vanished immediately as soon as he saw her dressed in a bathrobe.

"Take off your bathrobe."

She shook her head and refused, "I don't… I haven't worn this kind of apparel before, and I feel uncomfortable everywhere. Can't you turn off the lights first?"

Mark walked toward her and reached out to raise her chin. He lowered his eyes to look at her as he said, "The lights are staying on tonight. I want to see you."

At that moment, Arianne could clearly feel her heartbeat racing. It felt as though her heart was going to jump out of her chest.

His eyes were deep and dark like a bottomless abyss, easily sucking her in. She found it difficult to avert her gaze. When she finally regained her senses, he had already taken off her bathrobe. She instinctively raised her hands to cover her chest. Alas, he was quicker and grabbed her wrists.

He studied her body as a look of satisfaction flashed in his eyes. "I knew it would look good on you."

Arianne felt as though her brains had stopped functioning at that moment. She did not even dare to look in the mirror. Who knew Mark would prepare this beforehand? It was not right to say he was unromantic after all.

Suddenly, Mark carried and threw her on the soft bed.

Arianne shrieked, and the next thing she knew, Mark had already taken off the towel around his waist and pressed himself on top of her. “You look really nice, Ari.” She could feel his breath on her. His gentle voice was slightly hoarse. She felt her own breath hitched.

She fell into a trance as he buried his face in her neck. She could clearly feel his movements, and she was powerless to stop him. She could only let him do as he pleased.

She could tell that tonight was very different from the other night. His emotions, his wildness, each and every move was so passionate it was as though there was no end to it!

All that frenzied passion only ended late morning the next day.

Arianne was not in a hurry to get to work since Mr. Yaleman would only brush it off if she was late for work. However, it was different for Mark since he had a plane to catch.

As they hurried back to the Tremont estate, Arianne changed into a fresh set of clothing and rushed off to hug Smore before hailing a cab to the office. After all, Mark would definitely miss his flight if he had sent her to the office.

When she arrived at the office, the scene from the night before began to replay in her mind. A grin subconsciously bloomed on her face. When she regained her senses, she quickly adjusted her expression to one of indifference.

Robin looked at Arianne earnestly and asked. “Arianne, did something good happen to you? You’ve been spacing out from the moment you stepped into the office. You’ve also been grinning to yourself.”

Arianne coughed. “It’s nothing. I… I just recalled some… interesting stuff.”

Robin was a naive young woman so she, naturally, did not find anything strange with Arianne’s words. “Oh, the samples from before have been done and submitted. Did you receive a present from your husband, Arianne? He should be quite the romantic.”

Arianne started at the mention of a present. The jewelry boxes she had seen in Mark’s jacket pockets… He did not give them to her even when they said goodbye that morning. Did he forget about it? He probably did. He was already in a rush that morning since he was busy last night…

However, thanks to Robin’s reminder, the boxes were stuck in Arianne’s mind for the rest of the day. The first thing she did when she arrived home was to check if Mark had left the boxes behind.

Chapter 1146

He did. As expected, he had actually forgotten to give it to her last night. However, it seemed like not all of the presents were for her… She only found the necklace. The pair of earrings that signified a perfect love was nowhere to be found. He even left her a note. ‘I got this gift for you, but it slipped my mind, and I forgot to give them to you last night. I’d like to see you wearing it when I come home.’

She did feel not happy, most likely because the earrings were not there. Should she ask him about it or should she feign ignorance?

Mary strode over, carrying Aristotle, while Arianne was lost in her thoughts. “Ari, what are you doing? You didn’t check on the baby when you arrived. What are you daydreaming about?”

Arianne regained her senses and took Aristotle into her arms. “It’s nothing. I’ll take Smore for a walk downstairs. Call me when it’s time to eat.”

Mark video-called her during her walk in the garden.

She held the phone with one hand, facing the camera toward Aristotle. “I’m walking in the garden with the baby.”

Mark glanced at Aristotle. “I don’t want to see him. I want to see you.”

Arianne found a spot and sat down. That way, it would be less tiring. Aristotle was growing bigger, and he was dressed in more layers during winter. Carrying him with one arm was especially tiring. “Why would you want to look at me? What’s there to look at?”

Mark did not respond. Instead, he gazed at her face from the phone screen. The expression on his face was completely different from the way he looked at Aristotle.

His stare made Arianne squirm. “Aren’t you busy? It must be hard on you. There’s a time difference, and yet, you have to find the time to video-call me. I went straight home after work and didn’t do anything else. If you’re here to check up on me, you don’t have to worry. I’m hungry. I’m going to eat now.”

Mark lowered his voice as he said, “Call me honey.”

Arianne was taken aback. She looked around, making sure there was no one around before she sighed in relief. “Why? No way…” She still remembered how he had forced her into calling him honey last night. There was no way she was going to do it now!

Mark laughed but did not force her. “I’ll hear it from you when I get back. Go and eat.”

Arianne sighed in relief when he ended the call. There were many times during the duration of the call that she wanted to ask him about the earrings. However, she could not bring herself to do it in the end.

During dinner, Mary chatted with Arianne as she fed Aristotle baby food. “Mr. Tremont really does treasure you. He didn’t really leave any instructions for Smore before leaving, but he kept reminding me to keep track on whether you get home on time every day. He even asked Henry to send you to work every day. He said he’s worried about you.”

Arianne did not reply. She knew what he was worried about. He was more worried about her meeting Will than he was about her safety.

Due to Mark’s special instructions, she stayed at home over the weekend. When she was bored and had nothing else to do, she made desserts and invited Tiffany over.

Tiffany's stomach had grown even bigger. Thanks to the extra layers from her winter clothes, she looked as though she was close to giving birth. However, she was still as energetic as ever, prancing around happily. She was no different from before she was pregnant. However, her appetite had grown. Her mouth never seemed to rest. She would probably eat everything if Jackson did not watch over her diet.

Chapter 1147

Tiffany munched on the desserts as she sang Arianne's praises. "Ari, your desserts are just as tasty as ever. It's great to be smart, you learn everything much faster. It didn't take you long to learn how to make desserts back then."

Arianne smiled as she poured Tiffany a glass of warm juice. "Slow down. No one's going to take it away from you. I'll make some more for you to take home later."

Jackson watched from the side, helpless. "Don't eat too much dessert, or you won't be able to eat your meals later. Desserts will make you fat."

"Pregnant women are supposed to get fat," Tiffany whispered, "I haven't gotten that fat, and you already despise me? Ari doesn't make desserts every day. Of course, I'm going to eat more of it."

Arianne noticed that Tiffany had developed a fondness for eating the fruit on top of the desserts. The fruits were simply for decorative purposes, and the strawberries and kiwis were mostly sour this season. However, Tiffany did not even blink. She was growing suspicious. "Tiffie, do you know the gender of your baby yet?"

Tiffany shook her head. "I don't know. I think it's a girl. Besides, we want it to be a surprise. The doctor asked if we want to know, but I don't see the need for it. If I say it's a girl, it's a girl."

“Well, what if it’s a boy then?”

Tiffany paused. “Well, if you don’t mind…”

Arianne immediately cut her off. “I mind! Eat your food and take care of the baby. I’m waiting for you to give birth.”

Jackson was speechless. Tiffany’s brain circuitry was just as abnormal as ever. Halfway through their meal, Jackson received a call. He had some business to attend to so he had to leave.

Tiffany munched on a fragrant piece of pork ribs as she said, “See that? This always happens. He’s too busy. He doesn’t even stop during the weekend. Mark has gone on a business trip, right? Jackson always comes home to cook for me after work. Then, he rushes back to the office to do overtime after dinner. I feel exhausted just watching him. Maybe I should just eat at your place, at least, he won’t have to tire himself out by running back and forth. It’d save him a lot of trouble if he could finish everything at the office in one go.”

Arianne nodded in agreement. “Sure. Just come over whenever you want to eat. I think Jackson has lost quite a bit of weight lately. He has to manage the company and take care of you. Any man would find that difficult to achieve, let alone a pampered child like him. However, he’s been doing really well.”

Tiffany smiled, feeling very pleased with herself. “I really struck gold, didn’t I? My heart does ache for him. I’ve told him many times that I can deal with my own meals, but he insists on cooking for me. He even fetches me water when I’m thirsty. I’m getting ready to take time off so he can relax. Otherwise, he worries about me being in the office all the time.”

Suddenly, Tiffany frowned and huffed. Her smile vanished from her face.

Arianne thought she was choking and quickly grabbed a glass of water. “What happened? Are you alright?”

Tiffany returned to her senses and thoughtlessly sucked on her fingers. “It’s nothing. The baby just moved. It kicked so hard that I found it hard to breathe for a moment. Seeing my stomach moves every time the baby moves is kind of freaky to me. I just can’t believe that there’s something alive and moving in my belly. It’s freaky.”

Arianne was rendered speechless. Who would describe their child’s movement as freaky? Tiffany should feel blessed instead, right? Pregnancy was a wonderful thing, but why did it sound so strange when Tiffany described it.

Jackson was so busy that he still did not return during dinner.

Tiffany naturally stayed back to freeload.

Mark video-called Arianne as usual. The call had just connected when Tiffany suddenly announced from the side, “Ari, Will’s gone. He has left the country again.”

Chapter 1148

Arianne flashed Tiffany a ‘grateful’ smile. What a good friend she was.

When Tiffany saw the peculiar expression on Arianne's face, she finally realized her transgression. "Video call from Mark?"

"Yes." Arianne nodded with a forced smile. "He calls at this time every day."

Mark's expression darkened. "What does Will's departure have to do with you? You don't need to know about it."

Tiffany stuck out her tongue, too afraid to speak.

Arianne was having a headache. "I never said it has anything to do with me. Will and Tiffie are good friends. I'm sure there's nothing wrong with Tiffie and I talking in our free time, right? Stop picking a fight, you big baby. I'm feeding your son."

This time, Mark ended the call very quickly, probably because he was upset. Arianne ignored him. There was no need to cajole him at this stage.

"I didn't notice that you were having a video call with Mark," Tiffany said in a cute tone, "It was an accidental slip of the tongue. I was only making conversation. Mark can't be mad at you again, right? He's a big man, standing at more than 180 centimeters tall, but his pettiness is the size of a whole continent."

Arianne giggled, covering her mouth. “That’s just how he is. This doesn’t really constitute as mad just yet. It’s fine.”

Tiffany noticed the ring on her finger and clicked her tongue. “That’s a really pretty ring. I’m so fat now that I can’t even wear my wedding ring. I can only wear it when the baby is born. I wouldn’t have believed that even my fingers have gotten fat if my wedding ring didn't fit.”

In order to cheer Tiffany up, Arianne patiently explained, “This is very normal. Try to avoid wearing bangles, rings, or any jewelry during the third trimester of your pregnancy. You’ll definitely get fat, and you’ll be bloated from your pregnancy. By then, you won’t be able to take them off even if you want to. My health was at risk during my pregnancy so I didn’t gain much weight. Smore was born prematurely as well, there were many twists and turns. I’d much prefer having a normal pregnancy like you. You should be grateful. Smore will have to go for surgery when he’s a few years older due to congenital deficiency. My heart aches every time I think of it. It’s all my fault.”

Tiffany felt much better. “You’re right. You suffered too much back then. I’m quite blessed. By the way, I think Tanya’s just been discharged. I asked the nurses during my prenatal examination this morning. Apparently, Jett has been taking care of her the whole time during her stay at the hospital. He never left. Jett’s really not bad. I wonder what she was thinking back when she was trying to trick Jackson. Didn’t things work out well in the end?”

Arianne avoided adding to the conversation. One false move, and she would end up bringing up Alejandro.

Jackson finally returned at 9 PM. Tiffany was yawning continuously when she left with him.

Arianne felt strangely content when she watched the pair walking side by side into the night. She waved at them. “Have a safe drive home.”

…

Mark returned on Thursday. Arianne found out beforehand so she put on the necklace that he had gifted her.

When Arianne arrived home, she found Mark playing building blocks with Aristotle. She strode forward, put down her bag, and teased Aristotle. “Daddy’s home, are you happy?”

Aristotle stared back at her calmly before snatching the building blocks in front of him. The corners of Arianne’s lips twitched. “I thought people say kids have bad memories? Is he still holding a grudge against me just because I accidentally touched his building blocks previously?”

Chapter 1149

Mark was not paying attention to what Arianne was saying. Instead, he looked at her ears and said, “Why aren’t you wearing the earrings?”

Earrings? Arianne looked confused. “What earrings?”

“The earrings I gave you before I went on my business trip,” he replied with a frown.

Arianne was getting increasingly confused. She pulled out the necklace from underneath her collar. “You gave me this necklace.”

Mark's body stiffened. "Are… you sure?"

Arianne nodded confidently. "Yes. Your gift was a necklace, not earrings." She would love to know where those earrings had gone. Who did he give them to?

Mark did not reply to her. He carefully went over every detail of his business trip over the past few days. The necklace was meant for a client. The client was a woman, a Singaporean woman. The earrings were for Arianne. He had actually made a mistake. Despite the vast difference of meaning behind the two gifts, he had made a mistake because the boxes looked so similar. It was all because he was in such a rush that morning.

That explained why the female client had looked at him strangely ever since she had received that gift from him. He thought it was a cultural difference and did not dwell on it. She had asked to meet up with him a few times, but he had turned her down outside of discussing work. In hindsight, it seemed like she had… misunderstood him.

Arianne knew something was amiss when Mark remained silent. "So, where are the earrings?"

He averted his gaze. "What if I told you that I mixed up your gift with a gift for a client? Would you believe me? I didn't expect this…" The most important thing now was to figure out how to deal with that client. They had a long-term partnership ahead. He could not be too aloof toward her. In a way, he had pretty much made the 'first move' even though it was not intentional.

Realization finally dawned on Arianne. "Actually, I saw two boxes that night, and I knew what was inside the boxes. I was wondering why you would give me such a plain necklace instead of the earrings that

clearly looked like it held a deeper meaning. Your client is a woman, isn't she? Since she's a client, I'm sure she understands the industry. She probably knows what those earrings signify. Are you sure it won't cause any… misunderstandings?"

Mark thought long and hard about it. "I'll take care of it. You keep the necklace. I'll choose a new present and exchange the earrings. Since it's a misunderstanding, I can explain it. I won't give you jewelry that's already been worn."

Arianne felt more relaxed after listening to his explanation. However, the thought of his business trip was to see a female client and the fact that he had given her a pair of earrings that signified love still made her uncomfortable. "Do what you must. I'm going to take a shower."

Mark picked up his phone and called Davy. "I've mixed up a gift for my wife and gave it to a client instead. Go and get a more expensive gift from the last necklace. The client will be coming over next month, right? Exchange the gift then. Remember, it has to be expensive. Money is not an issue."

He sighed in relief after giving his instructions. If this went wrong, they would lose the client. He had to make plans to prepare for the worst-case scenario.

## Chapter 1150

The next day, Arianne went to the office as usual. Mark was still suffering from jet lag from his business trip so he was still asleep when she left. She did not ask him for a ride.

Robin pulled her aside when she arrived at the office. "A client named Jessica has specifically asked you to be her personal designer. She says that she wants a gown. She arrived first thing in the morning. Mr. Yaleman is with her now. She looks pretty important. I've never seen Mr. Yaleman being this careful with a client before."

Arianne grunted in reply and was just about to go to the lounge when Robin pulled her back again. “Arianne, you better watch out. That Jessica doesn’t look like someone who’s easy to deal with.”

Arianne smiled. “Don’t worry. It’s not like I haven’t dealt with these people before. She can always ask for someone else if it doesn’t work out.”

At the lounge, Mr. Yaleman quickly dragged Arianne over with an expression full of flattery. “Jessica, this is the fashion designer you requested. Arianne Wynn, right?”

Arianne smiled politely. “Hello, Jessica. I’m Arianne Wynn.”

At first glance, Jessica looked like the quintessential girl-boss. She had distinctly Chinese features and seemed to be past the age of thirty. It seemed like she had used a lot of Hyaluronic Acid fillers on her face, and her skin was as firm as a young girl’s. Her figure was well-maintained, and she had a certain air about her. When she spoke, her accent was distinctly Singaporean. “Hello. Seeing is certainly believing. You’re exquisite, Mrs. Tremont. Mr. Tremont certainly has good taste.”

Alarm bells rang in Arianne’s mind. The woman did not request for her because of her skills as a fashion designer. The woman had requested for her because she was Mrs. Tremont. The woman even mentioned Mark. She found it rather strange. However, realization soon dawned on her when she spotted the earrings that Jessica was wearing. The earrings that were meant for her. This was the client that Mark had gone on the business trip to meet!

It seemed like Jessica did not come here to get a gown designed. It seemed like she was here for a showdown.

“Thank you for the compliment,” Arianne replied, unmoved. “If you have the time, perhaps, we can talk about your gown?”

Jessica kept her eyes on Arianne the entire time. She sized Arianne up boldly. “Okay. Mr. Yaleman, if there’s nothing else, your company is no longer required. I’d like to have some privacy with Mrs. Tremont.”

Mr. Yaleman discreetly slipped away. He shot Arianne a few looks before he left, undoubtedly hinting at her to take full advantage of this elite customer.

Arianne felt helpless. This woman clearly came to challenge her, and yet, she still had to maintain the smile on her face.

When they were finally alone, Jessica finally revealed her true colors. “There’s no need to rush the gown discussion. Let’s talk as friends for now. Mrs. Tremont, you and Mr. Tremont are ten years apart in age. Do you find it… inconvenient? For example, finding similar topics of conversation and so on. From what I heard, you’re an orphan, raised by Mr. Tremont from a young age. However, he had never raised you like a wealthy man’s daughter.”

“Not really,” Arianne replied indifferently, “I’ve always had a good relationship with my husband. It’s true that I wasn’t raised like a wealthy child, but I’ve lived in the Tremont household from a young age. As a guardian, he had his own opinions on how I should be raised. He doesn’t control me now, after all, I’m an adult, and we’re married. You seem rather interested in my husband and my affair, Jessica. Do you know him?”

Jessica instinctively touched her earrings, probably because she thought of Mark. She now carried a hint of shy and girlish expression that seemed to contrast greatly with her girl-boss image. “I do. We’re in the middle of a business partnership. I heard that you're a fashion designer, Mrs. Tremont, and as it happens, I need a special gown. That’s why I came to meet you. Let me be frank, Mr. Tremont is a rather dazzling man in every aspect. You, on the other hand, Mrs. Tremont, seem more like a girly-girl. Aside from your beauty, you don’t seem to suit him very well.”