Ruling 961

Chapter 961

Jackson's patience had reached its peak. He stared at her gloomily. "Do you have to do this to me? What the hell are we? Won't you…" Be with me?

He kept the final part of his sentence to himself, because he couldn't control the tremors in his voice.

Tiffany hung her head. "It's not that… Aren't we going to eat? Let's grab a bite. I'm hungry."

Jackson didn't answer. He strode quickly to the car, obviously enraged. Tiffany heaved a sigh and quickly followed him. She was waiting for him to speak but did not receive those words.

They arrived at the steakhouse. Jackson automatically ordered her favorite medium-rare steak, as he knew her preferences. In the past, he'd always order for her whenever they went out for a meal. She wanted to tell him that she couldn't take rare meat, but she didn't, so she added onto the order, asking for a bowl of pasta.

Tiffany ignored the steak once it was served. Instead, she finished her bowl of pasta. Food portions were small in this restaurant, so she felt like an elephant eating bird food. At the same time, she was too embarrassed to ask for a second helping. It seemed embarrassing for a girl to eat too much.

Jackson could see that she had ignored the steak and that she was still hungry. "Are you worried about me poisoning your steak?" he mumbled. "It's not like I made it.

“Maybe you can give me a well-done steak instead?” Tiffany asked hesitatingly. “My stomach’s been upset lately. I need fully cooked meals…”

He stared at her empty pasta bowl and his eyes flashed with a teasing glint. “Are you sure that your stomach’s upset? I thought you liked your steaks medium-rare?”

She didn’t answer. He thought that she was feeling embarrassed, so he asked the waiter to take the steak away and to bring a plate of well-done steak instead.

The air suddenly turned to silence. Jackson put his knife and fork down and gazed at her seriously, as if he had something to say, but kept his mouth shut. His stare made Tiffany feel very nervous. She couldn’t resist any longer, so she spoke up, “When are you going back? The finance department issues have been resolved. You won’t be staying for much longer, will you?”

Jackson nodded. “I’ll probably go home in about two days. So… I’d like to talk to you before I leave.”

She lifted her hand and tucked a lock of her hair behind her ear, feeling so nervous that she was too afraid to look him in the eye. “A-About what?”

He lowered his gaze. “What are we? I’m getting tired from holding on for so long. Won’t you be with me?”

He’s finally said it! Tiffany’s heart trembled. She was just about to answer when… his phone suddenly rang.

Jackson felt strangely nervous when he saw Atticus's name on the screen, for he knew that Atticus would never call him unless it was important. He answered the call without hesitation. "Hello? Is everything alright with mom?"

Atticus sounded panicky on the other end. "Your mom's been in an accident. Put whatever you have aside and come home."

Chapter 962

Jackson immediately rose to his feet. "Okay. I'm coming home at once. Where is she hurt? Is it serious?"

Jackson heaved a sigh of relief when he heard that Summer had only hurt her leg. After ending the call, he turned to Tiffany and said, "You enjoy your meal. My mother's been in an accident, so I have to rush home. I'll pay for the meal. We'll talk on the phone later."

He had already disappeared before Tiffany could answer. She felt slightly disappointed but was worried about Summer at the same time. When she arrived home, she waited until Jackson had nearly arrived home before calling him. "Is Mrs. West alright?" she asked.

Jackson was in the hospital. "It's nothing serious. Her right leg is broken. She's complaining about her troubles in her old age, that she's always getting hurt and is worried that she'll end up a cripple. She's in a pretty good mood. It's late, why aren't you asleep? Get an early night's rest. Gotta go."

She did not insist on continuing the conversation. She mumbled a reply and ended the call.

Nothing seemed peaceful this summer. At the Tremont Estate, Arianne held Aristotle, consumed with anxiety. Aristotle had suddenly contracted a fever in the middle of the night. There were no signs of him catching a cold; it just happened all of a sudden. Mary and Mark were packing Aristotle's things before heading out, getting ready to head to the hospital.

Aristotle couldn't sleep. His entire body was scalding. His little cheeks were red. He did not cry or fuss, but he did not eat either. He looked very weak. Arianne wept from heartache.

When they arrived at the hospital, the doctor's initial diagnosis was to recommend a full body check-up, as Aristotle was a premature baby and these situations happened very often.

Tears stung Arianne's eyes when she heard this. She knew that it wouldn't be smooth-sailing. The doctors had determined that she could never have children again, yet she managed to deliver Aristotle by some miracle. Even though her risky premature birth went off without a hitch, and both mother and baby were safe, she always felt that she had been too lucky. So lucky that it felt unreal…

The examination went on for two hours. Drawing blood was supposedly a painful procedure, yet Aristotle did not cry. It was as if he didn't even have the strength to cry.

Once the final test results were out, it was discovered that Aristotle had a congenital heart disease! It had gone unnoticed, as there had been no obvious symptoms in the past, except some noise in his heart during tests. They were only able to determine this after his sudden fever, which had caused pneumonia.

After settling his hospital admission, Arianne finally collapsed in the corridor and sobbed. They could only stabilize his condition now. The best solution was surgery, but that would have to wait until he was four or five years old. Aristotle was too young at the moment.

Mark had Mary take care of Aristotle in the ward, then walked towards Arianne and pulled her into his arms. “There, don’t cry. It’s going to be fine. These complications are perfectly normal. It’s not incurable. Medicine is so advanced now, nothing’s too risky. There’s no need to be so sad. Didn’t the doctors used to say that you can never have children? But didn’t Smore come into this world anyway? This is a miracle. Who’d let a miracle disappear, just like that? This is only a small test. Smore will get through this.”

Arianne leaned into his chest and sobbed. “I gave my life to bring this baby into this world. Of course, I’d be sad. I’m so scared that something might happen to him. You have to go to work tomorrow, so you should go home and rest. Mary and I can take care of him. It’d be much more convenient for me to stay behind, anyway, so I can feed him. Smore will cry if I’m not around.”

Mark gently patted her on the back. “You’re not the only one who’s close to Smore, you know. How can the company possibly be more important than our baby? I’ll stay too. You should go in and rest with Smore. Mary and I will be here. The doctors have already said it—we’ll just have to wait until Smore is old enough to have surgery, and he’ll be cured. Don’t cry.”

After a night in the hospital, Smore’s fever went down the next morning. However, he had to be administered with an IV for a few days to get rid of the symptoms of pneumonia. His tiny arm was swollen from being pierced by the needle and looked much chubbier than usual. Last night, Mark watched the nurse like a hawk as she administered the needle. Fortunately, she had successfully administered it in one go. Mark probably would have lost his temper if she had had to do it again.

Chapter 963

Aristotle seemed more energetic now that his fever was gone. His appetite had returned too. Arianne was relieved. She forced Mark to leave. She couldn’t possibly let the baby’s illness drag the entire family down. It’s not like they had to stay next to him all day.

Meanwhile, in a different hospital, Jackson stayed by Summer's bedside the entire night. The next morning, he bought lychees and grapes at his mother's request and peeled them for her. He put the bowl in her hands. "I think, aside from the inconvenience from your bad leg, nothing's really stopping you from eating. Don't you have a chauffeur? What happened?"

Summer complained as she ate. "Seriously, my chauffeur has always been a steady driver. It's been so many years. His wounds are more serious than mine. Go and buy some supplements and pay him a visit later. His injuries are considered work-related, so we'll pay for whatever's necessary in the medical bills. Everything was fine when we went out yesterday, but then a car suddenly rammed into us right after we passed an intersection. It seemed so deliberate. The car drove off after that. The traffic police have investigated, and your dad has been keeping track. That car used an illegal license plate, so they won't be able to catch them yet. I guess I'll just have to chalk it up to dumb luck."

Summer's casual explanation drew Jackson's suspicions. An illegal license plate, seemingly deliberate, drove off after ramming into the vehicle… All of this sounded like a sinister plot… But who would take a shot at Summer? She never caused trouble on purpose. The Wests didn't have enemies. Hopefully, this was all just a misunderstanding…

Summer changed the topic as he went into a daze. "By the way, didn't you go to our subsidiary branch? How was it? Have you seen Tiffie yet?"

He raised his brow and asked, "What are you trying to say?"

Summer smiled. "You know what I'm trying to say. I put a lot of effort into this. Don't you dare waste my efforts. Ever since I met her, I knew that you and Tiffie were made for each other. I can always tell when you like someone. Work harder. I'd like to take a walk with my grandchild and show him or her off to my friends before I become a complete cripple. I've been so unlucky lately. Who knows if I might really become crippled one day. Consider this your filial duty."

Atticus wasn't around now, and there wasn't anyone else around. Jackson opened his heart to Summer. "I was going to talk about us, last night when I was having dinner with her. And then I got that call about your accident. Is it my fault? I'll take it slow. We'll have another chance. I'm going to focus on you now. I did exactly as you've said, but is it really that easy?"

Summer was upset. "Aw, of all the times for me to get into an accident. I ended up getting in your way. I'm fine here, don't worry. I can help you keep an eye on the main office. Go to South Park and spend more time with Tiffie. Hurry."

Jackson felt helpless. "Do you really think that I can go whenever you tell me to? It's a few hours' drive. I didn't sleep much last night. How am I supposed to drive? Fine. I can see that you don't really need me here. I'll leave when someone arrives to take the next shift. Everything in the subsidiary branch is settled, so I don't have to go now. I'll stay in the main office for a while. I'll visit when I need to." Actually, he really wanted to spend more time with Eric, who had been stuck at home every day since his discharge from the hospital, burying himself in creative design. He had hired a maid to take care of his daily necessities. Most important of all, they were concerned that no one would be around when his illness flared up.

Summer's heart ached for her son, so she didn't force him. "Fine, fine, fine. You handle it then. Your dad will be here soon. You can go now. I won't be leaving the bed at the moment, so you won't be of any use to me."

Jackson knew that Atticus wouldn't leave Summer's side for too long. In fact, Atticus would have stayed with her if he didn't have to settle the procedures for the accident. "Okay. I'm leaving then. Call me if you need anything."

Once he left, Summer picked up her phone and sent Tiffany a message: 'Tiffie, will you be coming home this weekend? I miss you. I'm old, and I don't get to see you.'

Chapter 964

Tiffany had just arrived at the office when she received the message and immediately replied: 'I've heard from Jackson that you've been in an accident. I was just thinking of coming home to visit you this weekend. I'll drive home after work this Friday.'

The lychee in Summer's mouth seemed to taste extra sweet once she saw that message. Since Jackson couldn't go over, then having Tiffany come home would be no different. She happily replied: 'Okay. Then come straight to my house after arriving home on Friday night. I should be discharged by then. I'll have delicious food waiting for you. We'll eat together when you arrive.'

Tiffany calculated the time and decided to take the afternoon off on Friday, then go home straight away. Summer was still longing for her after the accident. She couldn't make her wait that long.

Jackson drove to Eric's home immediately after leaving the hospital. The house was spotless thanks to the housekeeper. Everything was neat and tidy. Eric sat in the living room, by the window, sketching on his design manuscript, as if he wanted to leave his passion behind before the end of his life.

He seemed to be in pretty good spirits and did not look like a dying man at all. The calmer he looked, the sadder others felt.

Jackson picked up a pillow on the couch and threw it at Eric. "Have you been staying in the house every day? Wanna go out and have some fun with us?"

Eric caught the pillow and hugged it. "Where? A club? I can't go there. I can't drink, and I have to watch my diet or my death will come even sooner. I'm doing just fine now. I don't have to go to work, and I can

relax and do whatever I want. This feels nice. I just can't understand why I used to enjoy such a reckless life. This calm feeling is pretty good too."

Jackson curled the corners of his lips, strode forward, and placed his hand on Eric's shoulder. "Damn, you've lost a lot of weight. We don't have to go to clubs, you know. It'd be inhumane of me to drag you to a club at this point. I mean that we should walk around more, enjoy the world around, enjoy a peaceful life."

Eric sighed. "Do you think that if I climbed a mountain right now, I would die along the way? I want to walk around too, but… I'd like to stay alive for a few more days…. The weather is too hot. I don't think I can endure it. Don't worry. I'm hoping to watch you get married before I close my eyes. Seriously, hurry up and get Tiffany back. This is the first time I've ever seen you so in love. I won't be able to rest in peace with you two still apart."

Jackson's smile grew bitter. "Why are you saying this too? My mom's been pushing me to see Tiffany every day. But I don't think she's interested in me anymore. I was so at ease when we were together, but once we broke up, too many uncertainties started coming up. We… used to know each other so well, but after the break up, it's like we don't even know each other anymore. Love is such a complicated and strange thing."

Eric fell silent, seeming to have remembered something.

"Has reminiscing caused you to realize that you've never truly fallen in love, or found anyone unforgettable?" Jackson asked teasingly.

Chapter 965

“Yes, there’s one regret,” Eric instantly replied.

That’s right, life was full of regrets. In the end, there was no time to fix them all.

Suddenly, Jackson turned serious. “Don’t worry. I’ll get her back. My wayward ways have long been drowned by her every twinkle and smile, ever since I met her. I’ve never loved anyone like her. I never thought of marriage until I met her. You go back to your drawing. I’ll take you for a walk around some greenery this weekend. We’ll go somewhere cooling. Don’t forget to leave your sketches to me. I want… something to remember you by.”

Eric nodded. “Sure.”

…

Time was always moving at an inadvertent pace. One always wanted to hold onto it, but at the same time, could only watch as time slipped away.

Friday arrived in the blink of an eye. Aristotle was discharged and sent home. He was just as cheerful as ever, blissfully unaware of the big scare that he had just given to Arianne and Mark.

Arianne didn’t get to sleep much over the past few days. She would always jolt out of sleep in less than two hours every time. She breastfed Aristotle herself and changed his diapers. Her power naps here and there hadn’t been very useful. There were black rings around her eyes. She threw herself on her large, soft bed from the moment she arrived back home, refusing to get up. For the first time ever, she ignored Mark’s germaphobia and did not take a shower before going to sleep.

Of course, Mark didn't snub her. He even tucked her in with a duvet. "The past few days must have exhausted you. Have a good rest. I won't go to work today. I'll stay home and take care of the baby. You can relax and sleep."

Arianne lifted her hand at him. He walked closer towards her, bent down, and looked at her. She wrapped her arms around his neck, smiled, and kissed him on the lips. "Thank you. I'm going to bed now."

He smiled. "Mm."

She waited for him to go downstairs, then eagerly slipped into her dreams. Just as she was about to fall asleep, her phone rang. She immediately found life extremely difficult… She saw Tiffany's name on the screen and decided to answer. "Hello? Smore has just been discharged. I'm exhausted. I was about to go to sleep. Are you coming back this weekend?"

Tiffany was aware of Aristotle's admission into the hospital. "It must have been hard on you. A mother's job is truly difficult. Your son will be fine. He'll be big and strong in the future. I just wanted to tell you that I'm coming home this afternoon. Jackson's mother has invited me for a meal. I'll have to visit Smore tomorrow. Get some sleep. I won't keep you. I have to go to work."

Arianne let out a long sigh after the call. She turned off her phone and went to sleep.

Mark may not have been able to spend too much time with Aristotle, but he was capable of taking care of the baby on his own. Besides, he had Mary to help him. Unfortunately, he had received a sudden

phone call from the office and had to leave to settle some affairs. He promptly took Aristotle along with him to the office. Mary tagged along too.

This wasn't his first time bringing his baby to the office, so his employees were much calmer compared to the first time when he brought the baby along. However, the sight of a big, 1.8 meter tall man carrying a baby in the front of his suit set off a huge contrast. People couldn't help taking a few extra glances, especially since both man and baby looked very attractive.

"Mr. Tremont, we've found a great piece of land!" his secretary, Davy, announced excitedly. "It's someone's personal property. They're urgently in need of a turnover, so they're looking to rake in a large sum. They've probably heard about Alejandro's maniacal purchasing skills with land. Therefore, this land will be placed on a bidding war. We have to move fast!"

Mark felt uneasy when he heard the words "bidding war". Alejandro would probably have heard of this bidding war. If he wanted to snatch that piece of land from Alejandro, he would have to foot a hefty price. He couldn't discard his reason completely. However, when he remembered that Alejandro had snatched property away from him twice, he felt vexed. "We'll match every bid that Alejandro makes for this land."

Chapter 966

Davy was suddenly filled with fighting spirit too. He was feeling extremely uplifted. "Okay! The auction will start at 2PM. I'll make preparations at once!"

When they arrived outside the auction venue, Aristotle was fast asleep. Mark told Mary to hold onto him in the car. It would be inappropriate to bring a baby to such a stiff event.

His guess was right. Alejandro came too, and he had Jett attend the event. Alejandro waited outside in the car.

The auction this time was a clear struggle between two elites and no one else. Mark had given a price that no one else dared to raise, from the very beginning. Only Alejandro's lackey, Jett, was willing to contend against him. He looked at Jett and continued raising the price, showing no signs of emotion.

He wasn't the impulsive type. If Alejandro, in a bid to release his frustrations, were to raise the price to sky-high rates, then sell it to him, that would undoubtedly prove that he had been cheated. He would give up if the price reached a certain amount.

A few rounds later, the price had been raised to what others would consider "sky-high". Even the host was finding difficulty in holding his microphone steadily. Mark clearly hesitated when he called out his price. Jett deliberately shot him a sardonic stare. His eyes darkened. Just as everyone else began to think that he would raise the price, he said, "I concede."

Jett seemed slightly surprised. Mark ignored him. He got up and immediately left the venue.

The final price for this land simply wasn't worth it. If Alejandro liked it that much, he could have it.

By the time he arrived back in the car, Aristotle was already awake. His eyes were wet from tears. Mary was at her wits' end. "Aristotle only ever wants you or Mrs. Tremont whenever he wakes up from sleep. I can't seem to handle his grumpy mood."

Mark reached out and took Aristotle into his arms. "It's alright. I'll cheer him up."

Then, Alejandro's car approached them. After a bout of hesitation, he winded down the window.

Alejandro winded his window down to look at him, his eyes flashed with taunting. "I thought you'd fight me to the bitter end. If you really want that land, just say the word. I don't have to fight with you."

He smirked. "Are you that fond of having others surrender to you, Mr. Smith? You're barking up the wrong tree. Tremont Enterprises isn't going to collapse from losing a piece of good land. Congratulations, Mr. Smith. You've just acquired new land for an exorbitant price."

Alejandro may look like he was smiling, but his eyes were flashing with an eerie chill. It's true, the price he had paid for this piece of land wasn't worth it at all. However, he had beaten Mark once again, which was his goal. Now, Mark was taunting him like a fool. Of course, it angered him. However, he couldn't show it. The first one to lose his temper loses.

Suddenly, Aristotle wiggled his way towards the car window, allowing a peek of his tiny little face. It was as if he was wondering who was talking to his daddy. Alejandro was taken by surprise. This baby was certainly more likeable than the adults. He had an utterly adorable little expression on his face. He smiled faintly at Aristotle then closed the window.

Jett was concerned. "Sir, Master Smith has been making inquiries over your perpetual land purchases. He's just called today, asking what you're doing… s-saying… that regardless of how much money the Smiths have, this is no way to spend it…"

Alejandro closed his eyes calmly, leaned against the back of the car to rest, and replied, "I'm now the only heir to the Smith fortune. The authority is mine. I can do whatever I want. He can't control me."

Chapter 967

Jett paused. “But… I’m afraid that Master Smith may come down here and visit you if this continues…”

Alejandro’s eyes flew open. “Are you saying… that the old man might take a trip, all the way here to see me? Looks like his sickness isn’t so bad after all. He’ll probably survive a few more years then. This is so irritating… Are you afraid that he might realize that I’m not the real Alejandro? Actually… Wouldn’t discovering the demise of his last heir to the Smith fortune be the most cruel thing?”

Jett was too afraid to expand on the topic. He knew that the real Alejandro was probably dead when he began suspecting this Alejandro. Now, he had confirmation.

Jett felt diffident when Alejandro mentioned the words “he’ll probably survive a few more years then. This is so irritating.” This was because Summer had been working hard on getting Tiffany and Jackson back together, so Alejandro had orchestrated a car accident. It wasn’t life-threatening, but the warning seemed too menacing. He was worried that Alejandro might boldly rise up against Master Smith…

This matter was far too sensitive. One slip of the tongue and he would lose his life. The more he considered it, the more he felt that it would be better to keep his mouth shut.

Knowing that Jett was determined to keep mum, Alejandro lost his interest and changed the topic. “Put the plan for Tiffany’s miscarriage on hold. I’ve changed my mind. We had Tanya previously, so we couldn’t use Lynn at the time. Now, I think it’s time to use her. Have her contact Jackson again. As for Tiffany’s fetus… Let it stay alive, for now.”

Jett may not understand what made him change his mind, but he secretly heaved a sigh of relief. He had been uncomfortable with the matter from the very beginning. “Okay, I’ll send a message.”

By the time Mark arrived back at Tremont Estate, Arianne was already awake. Seeing the sullen look on his face, she strode towards him and asked, “Where did you go with the baby? Who has upset you?”

He stuffed Aristotle into her arms. “It’s fine. I have some matters to attend to at the office. I’ll come home when they’re done. Why don’t you sleep a little more?”

Arianne planted a kiss on Aristotle’s cheek. “I don’t want to end up staying up all night from sleeping too much during the day. I’ve slept the entire morning. I just woke up. I’ve had enough sleep.”

The space between Mark’s brows crinkled from exhaustion. “I’m going to the room to get some rest.”

Mary waited for him to go upstairs before spilling the beans. “Mr. Tremont was at an auction. That man, Alejandro, snatched a piece of land he wanted again. Mr. Tremont is upset because of that.”

Arianne didn’t know what to say. If this was done out of frustration, the Tremonts and Smiths were on equal grounds in terms of finances. Mark kept on losing because he was considering other reasons. Chances of gaining anything from Alejandro were slim. Alejandro was acting more like a stubborn maniac with money. In contrast, Mark was far more rational.

After some thought, she handed Aristotle over to Mary. “Mary, take care of the baby for me. I’m going upstairs to check on him.”

Mary nodded. She understood. “Go. Mr. Tremont only ever listens to you. He looked so sullen on the way home that I was too afraid to console him.”

Arianne found Mark sitting in the chair in front of the French windows when she entered the bedroom. He was resting, looking very indolent. In the past, he would be holding a cigarette in between his fingers too.

She walked towards him and wrapped her arms around him from behind. Then, she placed her cheek against his. “What’s wrong? You can tell me if something’s bothering you. Don’t keep it all in. You’ve already quit smoking for me. There’s nothing else to relieve you.”

He turned his face to the side and nuzzled against her. “It’s fine. Just issues at work. I don’t want to make you worried too.”

Chapter 968

Arianne felt helpless at the sight of him in this manner. Only two things worried him now — Eric’s illness and Alejandro. She couldn’t help with Eric’s illness, but there was still a chance with Alejandro. She remembered Tiffany’s friendship with Alejandro and wondered if she could get a breakthrough from there. Perhaps Mark would be in a better mood once the issue on land was settled…

Suddenly, Mark grabbed her hand. “Is Mary taking care of Smore? He’s not fussing?”

“Mm.” She nodded. “He’s a good boy now. Aren’t you tired? Get some rest. I’m going downstairs. I don’t want to bother you.”

He pulled her into his arms and buried himself into the unique fragrance of her breasts. “No, you’ve already disturbed me, so you have to take responsibility.”

Arianne sat on his lap, her cheeks flushed. She knew what he wanted to do. It was a rare opportunity for peace and quiet. She wrapped her arms around his neck and kissed him.

Just as they were kissing passionately, Mary pushed the door open with Aristotle in her arms. “Ari, where are the diapers…” Mary ran into the bashful scene before she could finish her sentence and retreated. “I’ll find them myself! Smore has wet his diaper. I panicked and forgot to knock on the door. I didn’t see anything!”

Mark and Arianne paused in embarrassment. The locked eyes and laughed. Arianne bit her lips shyly. “I’ll get Aristotle’s diapers. You get some rest. We’ll continue this… tonight.”

Mark kissed the corners of her lips reluctantly. “Okay… Go ahead.”

Arianne’s cheeks were still flaming red when she arrived downstairs. Mary did not dare tease her about it. After all, Mark was still home. She knew what Mark was like. She’d receive a good scolding if he flew into a rage. “Ari, next time, put the diapers in a more obvious spot. Then I’d be able to find them easily.”

Arianne nodded. “I understand. The last pack of diapers were finished. I forgot to put them in the baby’s room. It’s still on top of the cupboard by the foyer. I’ll get it for you.”

After changing Aristotle's diapers, she checked the time. Tiffany should be home by now, so Arianne gave her a call. "Tiffie, have you arrived yet? Or are you going back in the afternoon instead?"

Tiffany was frantic. "I've just arrived at the West family residence. I was parking the car. My driving skills suck, so I need to be careful and avoid banging into their gate. Give me two minutes. I'll talk to you when I'm done."

Then, Tiffany put her phone, which was still on call, aside. She carefully parked the car, then heaved a sigh of relief and picked up the phone again. At the same time, she noticed that Jackson had just parked his car in the yard and was stunned. "Ari, I thought that I was the only one who'd gotten an invitation from Jackson's mom. I never expected for Jackson to be here too…"

Arianne found this very normal. "It's his old home. Is it that strange for him to be there? You're at his home, and you're still afraid of bumping into him? I need to talk to you. Talk to me when you're alone."

Tiffany focused and ignored Jackson. She walked into a corner. "You can talk. I'm alone now."

Arianne conveyed her idea, "Aren't you friends with Alejandro? He's been messing up the property market in the capital lately, and it's been frustrating for Mark. Could you tell him to stop being such a jerk? Purchasing property at exorbitant prices can't be good for him either. Yes, you can increase the value of land or maintain its value, but he's got so many and at sky-high prices too. Isn't that insane? I don't want much. Just a piece of land will do."

Chapter 969

Tiffany felt troubled. "Oh? You want me to talk to him about that? That's not a good idea. The last time we had a meal, I told him about my pregnancy. He left without eating a single bite. I haven't spoken to

him in days, and you want me to talk to him about this? I don't think I can. I had a suspicion that he was interested in me, but now, it's pretty much confirmed. We've stopped talking. I can't seek him out…"

Arianne wasn't discouraged, despite hearing this. "Fine. It really doesn't seem like a good idea for you to see him now. I'll find another way. I want to meet with him. It shouldn't be a problem for you to set up a meeting for me, right? I'll speak to him in person."

"Sure." Tiffany agreed. "Setting a meeting should be fine. I'll contact him for you later."

Tiffany turned around after ending the call and nearly stumbled into Jackson's arms. She jumped from fright and stumbled backwards. "How long have you been there?" He couldn't have heard about her pregnancy, could he?

Jackson's expression looked normal. His handsome face carried a sense of impetuousness. "I just got here. I wanted to help you move your car. I can't park my car with your car parked like that… What's with the big reaction?"

It didn't seem like he had heard anything, so Tiffany let out a sigh of relief. She hadn't decided on how to approach the subject of her pregnancy with him. This was the West family residence. If Summer found out, the whole world would know too. It wasn't appropriate to discuss this here. "It's nothing… I'll move my car. Keep an eye out for me. If I end up with any damages, I can't afford to pay!"

Jackson stood behind her car and directed her. Everything was fine at first, when suddenly, Tiffany's car reversed towards the entrance door uncontrollably. Jackson noticed something amiss and raised his voice. "Stop! You're going to hit something!"

Then, a loud “bang” was heard. Jackson was as stunned as a wooden puppet. He gave up the struggle. Tiffany poked her head out of the car window. “Have I hit something? Why do I feel as if I’ve hit something? What were you yelling about? I couldn’t hear…”

Jackson hung his head and heaved a sigh of relief. “It’s fine… The metal grill is bent. The back of your car isn’t in good shape either… Get out of the car, I’ll park it for you. You go inside.”

Tiffany refused to believe him at first, until she got down from the car and inspected the scene. Then, she felt embarrassed. “I didn’t do it on purpose… I can drive, but I’m not good with parking… Your yard isn’t as wide as a parking lot. I can’t seem to find my bearings…”

Jackson pulled her aside defeatedly. He would do it himself. “Are you saying that my yard is too narrow?”

Summer saved the day just in time. She limped towards them with Atticus’s support. “You’re here, Tiffie! Come in, it’s hot out here.”

Tiffany felt a surge of warmth whenever she saw Summer. She smiled as she greeted her. “Okay. I just got here. Your leg hasn’t healed yet, so you shouldn’t be walking around like that.”

The trio completely ignored Jackson. Tiffany was the only one in Summer’s eyes at the moment. “I heard a loud bang. What happened?”

Tiffany stuck out her tongue. “I reversed my car into your gate. It was an accident. It’s the large gate outside the yard…”

“Haha, it’s fine,” Summer chuckled. “I’ve been meaning to change it anyway. Tell Jackson to park your car instead. Don’t you worry. I’ve prepared a lot of your favorite dishes and fruits. Would I have missed out on the chance to see you if my leg wasn’t injured?”

Tiffany felt guilty. “I’m sorry… My job is too far away. I’ll visit you when I come home for the weekends, for as often as I can.”

Chapter 970

Summer was appeased. “You should have done this long ago. I’ve told you, the relationship between you and Jackson doesn’t matter. This is between us. We should talk more often. Your mother and I agree. Come, sit down. We’ll be eating very soon.”

Tiffany nodded. She had just sat down when Jackson walked in. The weather was too hot outside, so there were a few extra droplets of sweat on his smooth forehead. He let out a sigh of relief when he felt the air-conditioning in the house. “Mom, I need a glass of water. Do you have any ice?”

“Get it from the kitchen yourself,” Summer said, annoyed. “Get Tiffie a glass of fruit juice while you’re at it. You know what she likes. Make it slightly warm; girls should avoid having too much ice.”

Jackson shot Tiffany a begrudging glare, then headed straight into the kitchen.

Tiffany was feeling slightly pleased and very grateful at the same time. Summer was so nice to her…

Suddenly, Summer eyed her tummy and asked, “Have you been sitting around a lot lately? Have you been exercising after your meals? Your stomach has grown… It looks like you’ve developed a small belly?”

Tiffany lowered her head and stared at her belly apprehensively. She was wearing a tight black dress today. It wasn’t obvious when she was standing up, but her stomach protruded once she sat down… She usually wore office wear, so she didn’t notice. Now, it seemed… that her pregnancy was showing, and it had only been slightly more than two months. Arianne wasn’t showing that much during her pregnancy…

She smiled awkwardly. “Maybe… I need to lose some weight.”

Summer held her hand earnestly. “I was only pointing it out. Why would you need to lose weight? Women look better with curves. Boney women look unhealthy. It’s fine, I have a small belly too. No one would dare snub you. Have you been coping well at work? It’s been so long since your break up with Jackson… Are there any other men in your life? I’m just asking, don’t look too much into it.”

Tiffany refused to believe that Summer was “just asking”. She was gathering information for Jackson. She laughed. “No, no. I’m focusing on my career now. You’ve put me in such high regard and made me assistant director, so I must work hard. I’m quite happy at work. Everything is fine.”

Summer was well aware of Alejandro’s presence but did not point it out. “You’re still young. It’s a good plan. I believe in you. Do your best. I’ll give you a personal ‘year-end bonus’ at the end of the year.”

Jackson soon emerged from the kitchen, holding a glass of iced water and a glass of orange juice. He walked towards Tiffany and put the juice down in front of her. Then, he strode to the couch right across

from hers and sat down. He relaxed and leaned back against the couch, probably because this was his home. He even crossed his legs. Summer curled her lips. “Posture, please!

He didn’t care. “It’s not like we have any visitors. Why can’t I sit comfortably? I’ll limit the number of my visits if you’re that annoyed by the sight of me.”

Summer rolled her eyes at him. “Go to the kitchen and help with the food if you’re that bored. Doesn’t Tiffie like your cooking? Go!”

He glanced at Tiffany. “Nope. I’m tired.”

Tiffany drooled every time she remembered his cooking. She thought of the little one in her belly and decided to be more willful. “What are you complaining about? You got off work early today. It’s not like you’re asked to cook every day… You can’t possibly be reluctant to even cook for me right? Has our relationship deteriorated that much?”