

Surprise 491

One Night Surprise Chapter 491 Timmy or Jimmy?

Josephine had originally asked Courtney to pick a birthday present with her, but after they had browsed through many shops in the shopping mall, Courtney started to find her a burden.

“Josie, I think that this bag’s nice. I’m sure that Great-Aunt Alicia will love it.”

Courtney slung the bag on herself and twirled it in front of Josephine as she modeled it on herself. However, Josephine merely rolled her eyes at Courtney. “Please, Mommy. You seem to be picking a gift for yourself. Great-Aunt Alicia’s nearly sixty years old, so she wouldn’t fancy bags with gold rims.”

As soon as Courtney heard that, she silently put the bag down and trailed after Josephine, who had already turned around to enter another shop.

“How about this silk scarf? I think this scarf suits Great-Aunt Alicia very much, and it’s her favorite color too.”

At that moment, Josephine was tugging on the straps of her bag with both hands, and she peered out of her hoodie to reveal a pair of large, bright eyes. She considered Courtney’s suggestion seriously and the shop assistant was quite perceptive too, so she quickly squatted down and enthusiastically held the scarf in front of Josephine as soon as she saw that. “Hey there, this scarf here is our best-selling product, and many customers came to get this when it was first released. This is the only one left, so if you like it, you should probably grab it as soon as possible.”

As soon as Josephine heard that, she nodded her head and the slight frown on her face disappeared. “I’ll skip this then. Great-Aunt Alicia mentioned that she doesn’t like best-sellers.”

After she had said that, she turned on her heels before marching to the next shop decisively.

They finally entered the final shop on the second floor of the shopping mall, and at that point, Courtney’s soles were slightly swollen. She took a seat in the public waiting area of the second floor, and she looked at Josephine with a defeated look. “I’m feeling tired. How about—”

“Mommy, look!” Josephine’s shrill voice suddenly made Courtney stifle her words.

She glanced in the direction where Josephine was pointing with a slightly confused look. “What is there to see?”

“This shop, Dolce Patisserie, is owned by Fiona’s dad, and she said that we can go and try everything for free.”

There was a glimmer in Josephine’s eyes, and there was an excited expression on the five-year-old’s face, which was hardly ever seen. After she had said that, she instantly dragged Courtney’s hand and bounded toward the shop.

There was a group of five people lining up in front of them at the entrance to Dolce Patisserie. Josephine then pushed Courtney to the front so that she could help Josephine to take a look at the menu. Since she was left without a choice, Courtney could only stand on tiptoes and recite the menu to Josephine.

“That would be twenty-five.”

The cashier stretched out with his hand at the little boy in front of Josephine. However, the boy grabbed the huge slice of cake and gobbled it as he disregarded the cream smeared all over his face. The boy did not seem to have the intention to pay for the cake.

At that point, the cashier’s expression changed. “Hey, you brat! Are you going to dine and dash?! Where are your parents? Get them here right now to pay for this!”

The boy turned around and tried to run off, but the cashier was agile and managed to grab the boy around his collar. Before the cashier could say anything, the boy, who was perhaps anxious or angry, kicked him several times.

The cashier could not control his anger upon being kicked, so he carried the boy in the air. “Where are your manners?! Don’t even think of leaving this place today if you don’t pay for the cake!”

At this moment, Courtney saw the unfolding scene and she was about to say something when Josephine suddenly popped her head out from behind Courtney. Subsequently, Josephine tugged on the cashier’s orange apron. “Hey there, sir. He could be Fiona’s classmate too.”

“What do you mean?”

“I’m Fiona’s classmate too. I thought that we’re allowed to try the desserts in the shop for free?”

The cashier placed his hands on his hips and roared, “Are you planning to dine and dash too?!”

Josephine felt that the handsome guy’s words were true. However, she could not seem to fathom why he was so mad when Fiona had actually agreed to this. As such, Josephine nodded her head firmly.

“Fiona said that I could do so.”

Swiftly, Courtney put a stop to the debacle before the cashier grabbed Josephine around her collar too. Courtney quickly took out some money and pointed to the little boy, whose face was already distorted from struggling too much. “Let him go. I’ll pay for the cake.”

After the cashier received the payment, he released the little boy before the boy fled and disappeared without a trace.

Josephine ate her tiramisu dejectedly after they bought the dessert. At that moment, Courtney thought that she was upset because Fiona had lied to her, so Courtney was just about to comfort her when a soft voice rang out and interrupted her thoughts. “I’ve seen that boy before.”

“Huh?”

“He was the one who hurt Angie the last time I went to the orphanage with Great-Aunt Alicia. I remember one of the staff members saying his name. His name is either Timmy or Jimmy.”

As for Courtney, her heart skipped a beat as soon as she recalled the incident, and frankly speaking, she didn't have a good impression of this hot-tempered little boy.

"How could a child from the orphanage turn up here? Could it be that you've mistaken him for someone else?"

"I don't think so." Josephine had a strong impression of this little boy because of his dark, naturally curly hair. "Perhaps some kind couple adopted him? Mommy, you're silly."

"Josephine!" Courtney could no longer stand it. "You've doubted my intelligence more than once today!"

"Mommy, let's go upstairs to take a look. I've figured out what to buy for Great-Aunt Alicia."

After Josephine said that, she dragged Courtney's hand and ran off in the direction of the third floor. Meanwhile, Josephine disregarded the angry hollers in her ears.

Finally, Josephine chose a bangle for Great-Aunt Alicia. She leaned her tiny body on the glass display, and she reached out to point at one of the bangles. "I want that one there."

At that moment, Courtney glanced wide-eyed at the two hundred and eighty thousand price tag.

"Josephine, where would you get the money to buy this?"

"Have you forgotten about the last time where Jordan spent a million to buy you bags?"

Suddenly, it dawned on Courtney. Back then, Josephine had just been told that Jordan was her brother, so she had been at one point quite fretful that he would ask for that money back.

After paying for the bangle, Courtney impatiently dragged Josephine back home. They walked one after the other into the underground car park, but before Courtney started the ignition, she turned to look at Josephine, who looked quite normal. "Josie, actually, regarding the matter with Fiona today—"

"Mommy, I know what you want to say."

"Yup?"

"Fiona mentioned that her daddy owns Dolce Patisserie because Ethan told her that his dad was one of the directors of Sunhill Enterprise. As for my dad, he's the president of Sunhill Enterprise, so I reckon she must have thought that Ethan was lying."

At that moment, Courtney was quite perplexed by Josephine's train of thoughts, so she looked at Josephine incredulously. "Who told you all of this?"

Josephine pouted and responded by shooting Courtney a look to signal that she should figure it out herself. "Anyway, I don't really like Fiona. Ethan likes her only because of her naturally curly blonde hair. Someday when he goes to Dolce Patisserie and realizes like I do that he doesn't get free desserts, then he would definitely come to his senses."

Her sensible words somehow rendered Courtney speechless and Courtney stifled the comforting words that she'd spent quite some time coming up with.

"Mommy, there's someone in front."

Courtney had just started the ignition, and she was just about to drive out of the underground parking lot, but her path was blocked by a boy lying in the middle of the road.

Josephine leaped out of the car before Courtney and ran toward the unconscious little boy to stand in front of him. As soon as she saw his features, she couldn't help exclaiming, "Mommy, it's Jimmy."

Courtney quickly checked up on the little boy's condition and found that his face was pale and his breathing was quite shallow. His originally dark complexion looked as pale as a white sheet as he lay there lifelessly. She realized the severity of the situation, so she decisively took him into her arms and got him into the car before speeding off to the hospital.

Along the way to the hospital, Courtney also instructed Josephine to call Linda in advance. "Linda, there is a little boy in our car whom we suspect is poisoned. He looks quite unwell, and we're now on the way to the hospital, so could you please get a stretcher ready? Thank you."

One Night Surprise Chapter 492 Let's Keep Him Under Our Care, Alright?

In the hospital, as the nurse came over to register the patient's details, five-year-old little Josephine spoke up in a childish but insistent voice. She confirmed the patient's name with the nurse. "Jimmy. J for jam."

She hesitated between 'Timmy' and 'Jimmy' for a moment, but shortly after that, she decisively chose the name that she preferred out of the two.

Once the operation was over, Jimmy was wheeled out of the operation theater and back to the wards. He looked quite weak and his face was still as pale as a white sheet. The doctor explained his condition to Courtney, who was waiting patiently outside. "It wasn't a case of poisoning. He merely had an allergic reaction to chocolate, and we've already cleared the remains of chocolate from his stomach. However, there is something that we find quite surprising—"

"What is it?"

The doctor hesitated for a moment before speaking up with a complicated look on his face, saying, "Besides chocolate, we also found plasticware and foreign objects like clothes in his stomach. It's quite fortunate that we did this surgery; otherwise, the accumulation of these items in his stomach over time would be disastrous."

As soon as Courtney heard that, she frowned slightly and turned to look at the child, who had deathly pale lips.

"How's he doing now?"

"He's no longer in a critical condition, but we still have to monitor him because it's quite serious. The nurse will pop in to place a drip on him, and he will need to stay in the hospital at least for the next three days."

She nodded in response and sat down by Jimmy's side. As for Josephine, she clambered up on Courtney's body upon seeing Courtney seated in the chair and clung to Courtney's neck while looking in the same direction at the kid on the bed.

“Does this mean that Jimmy wasn’t adopted by a kind couple? He might have sneaked out by himself then.”

Josephine came to that conclusion as she spoke in a childish voice. Just then, Courtney glanced at her, and there was a pained look that flashed across Courtney’s eyes.

“Do you mean that he’s been mistreated, so he sneaked out?”

However, Josephine smacked Courtney’s forehead in disagreement. “Mommy, you’re so silly!”

“Josephine! What do you mean by that—” Courtney clenched her teeth and forcefully came up with these words.

“Great-Aunt Alicia told me before that all of the orphanages are under the state’s care, so basically, there wouldn’t be any cases of mistreatment of children. Besides, World Vision Orphanage just recently won the best in the district award. They’re famous for being kind and patient with the kids in their care.”

At that point, Courtney’s indignant look gradually dissipated as she listened to Josephine’s eloquent explanation. She turned to stare incredulously at her daughter. “Josie, how did you know all of this?”

“Great-Aunt Alicia talks about this at the dining table every day. Mommy, you should watch the news more often in your spare time.”

“So, do you mean to say that Jimmy sneaked out of the orphanage and ate all of this random plasticware and clothes outside?”

“I think so.” Josephine nodded.

“Since that’s the case, then we have to send him back.”

As Courtney spoke, she removed Josephine from her lap and took out her cell phone to search for the contact number of World Vision Orphanage. Although she was doubtful of Raymond’s intentions and motives, she did not think that he would resort to making use of a child to gain anything.

“Hey, I’ve found it—” Courtney instantly dialed the number she found on the internet.

“Where’s Jimmy? It’s time for his drip.”

Suddenly, a nurse’s voice rang out from the side, and Josephine hurriedly lifted her little hand. “We’re here, Miss.”

Ring! Ring!

The nurse came toward them after hearing Josephine’s voice. As for Courtney, she was waiting for the phone call to be connected, so she moved backward slightly. She looked at the nurse injecting the medication into the bottle before inserting the infusion line. Subsequently, she removed the cap on the needle tip and reached out for the back of Jimmy’s hand. After some hesitation, she finally decided to search for another vein on his feet that could be easier to handle.

As soon as the nurse lifted the hem of Jimmy’s pants, Courtney’s phone call was put through at the same time. “Hi there, this is World Vision Orphanage. How can I help?”

Courtney remained silent as she stared wide-eyed at Jimmy's ankle. There was a cold look that flashed across her eyes, and the loud buzzing noise in her ears suddenly caused her head to spin. She lost her grip on the phone in her hands, after which the phone fell to the ground with a resounding bang.

"Hello... Hello... You're crazy!"

The woman on the other end waited for quite some time, but she did not get a response at all, so she finally hung up the phone after her patience wore out.

Meanwhile, Josephine suddenly turned her head around upon hearing the commotion. She noticed Courtney's pale face and the beads of perspiration that appeared on Courtney's forehead. She also saw Courtney's slightly trembling body.

"Mommy..."

"Josie, we'll keep Jimmy under our care for the time being, alright?"

Courtney tried hard to speak in a calm voice as she kept herself upright by holding onto a chair desperately before taking a seat shakily.

"Okay."

Although Josephine wasn't aware of what was going on, she gladly accepted Courtney's suggestion and went along with it.

Josephine followed the direction of Courtney's intent gaze and also noticed that there was a strange design on Jimmy's ankle.

It was two young leaves wrapped around a young stalk, and there should have been a crescent on the stalk, but the design on his ankle was devoid of it.

At that point, Courtney calmed herself down and she suddenly recalled Josephine's inadvertent words before they came to the hospital. Just then, something suddenly dawned on her.

"Josie, did you mention that Jimmy was of mixed Otharian and Vietnamese descent?"

"Yeah. The director of the orphanage said so."

"Could you help me pick up my phone on the ground, please?"

"Sure." Josephine nodded and picked up the phone before handing it over to Courtney. As soon as Josephine's soft, tiny hands touched Courtney's palms, she could feel a wet and greasy sensation. At that point, she contemplated to herself, Mommy's behaving quite abnormally.

Courtney sat up straight and focused the camera on Jimmy's ankle as she took a photo. Subsequently, she sent the photo to Oliver, followed by a text message. 'Is that what it looks like?'

After quite some time, her cell phone screen lit up. 'Yeah.'

On the other end, Oliver could not help frowning upon seeing the photo. He deduced from the photo that the person in question was a child, and from the clothes, he also deduced that this photo was taken

in the hospital. As such, he instantly made his way downstairs to his car, and he sent off a text message right before he started the car ignition.

'I'll be there shortly.'

In less than half an hour, he arrived at the hospital, and the two of them sat facing each other in the hospital cafeteria. Both of them had solemn expressions on their faces. Oliver placed the photo sent over by Courtney side-by-side with the sketch of the tattoo that he had prepared previously.

"Besides the missing upper portion, the remaining parts of the sketch are a complete match with the photo. We can't be mistaken. Who's the kid?"

Meanwhile, Courtney pointed at the building behind her. "The kid is currently upstairs receiving an infusion. Josie met him before at World Vision Orphanage. This kid is of mixed Otharian and Vietnamese descent. He was originally supposed to be adopted by a Vietnamese family, but in the end, for some unknown reason, he was brought over to Melrose City and abandoned."

As soon as Courtney mentioned this, she suddenly realized something. "Could it be that guy who brought him here?"

Oliver did not express his comments, but his usually calm features were distorted at the moment. He contemplated the situation in his mind and felt that there were plenty of details worth figuring out, but he did not dare to jump to any conclusions.

"I'll investigate this point, but you must keep this child by your side for the time being. I think it'll work out best if you bring him home with you as soon as possible and keep him out of the public eye as much as possible." Oliver somehow sensed that this kid played a crucial role.

She nodded and took the two photos in front of her to place into her bag. "I'll have this then. I need it for something."

In response, Oliver nodded and stood up to leave. However, he suddenly recalled something, and he reminded, "We have to continue investigating the lead on Walter too. Hopefully, we'll be able to find this guy. I know that he probably doesn't know too much, but surely he would have information that's useful for us."

As soon as Courtney heard his words, her expression darkened significantly. She nodded and bade farewell to Oliver before walking off hastily in the direction of the wards.

One Night Surprise Chapter 493 He's Asking for Directions

Goldsmith Street spanned across the busiest part of Melrose City's commercial area, and a new face had silently joined the waves of workers heading to work.

It was Angie. She was striding toward Citron Apparel in a light brown suit, white chiffon blouse, and a pair of nude-colored heels. The sleeves of her blouse were lifted up slightly, revealing her fair arms, making her look exceptionally slender and professional.

As she traversed Goldsmith Street, many young men would sneak a peek at her, and their eyes would light up with flirtatious gleams.

Right then, this version of Angie was exuding a similar aura as Courtney—calm and collected—looking like a queen bee.

Meanwhile, an exceptionally jarring sight occurred amidst the unceasing traffic—a white sedan was crawling by the side of the road. When the driver pulled over next to Angie, he poked his head out.

“Get in. I’ll give you a lift.”

However, Angie didn’t even spare him a glance. She picked up her pace, leaving the car behind in two shakes. Alas, Elijah could only restart the engine and chase after her. Following a few cycles of cat and mouse, Elijah’s face turned grimmer with every rejection. In the end, he resorted to getting out of the car and blocking Angie’s path.

“Let’s talk,” he said as he stood slightly astride. Just as Angie was going to ignore him once more, he grabbed her by the arm, sending warmth from his typically warm palm to her slightly chilly arm. Meanwhile, Angie looked at his slender hand reflexively and tried to break free from it.

“Fine, talk.”

With that, she gazed at him calmly, and it was only then Elijah noticed she had chopped her waist-long hair into a bob, giving her a mature and professional look.

“Let’s talk somewhere else.”

“I still have to go to work.”

Elijah’s gaze turned complicated reflexively, but still, he gave in after a deep sigh. “I’m going back to Manhattan in two days. You should come with me.”

Angie’s heart twinged when she heard Elijah was going back, but then something crossed her mind, and her wavering expression turned cold once more.

“No, I won’t go with you. Courtney needs me now.”

“Are you talking about Citron Apparel?” Elijah asked with slight incredulity. “I’ve already found a lead to their issue this time. You, on the other hand, should follow me back to Manhattan and take up a degree. I’ve already contacted—”

“Yes, I will take up a degree, but not in Manhattan.” Angie swallowed her frustration and interrupted him. With that, she looked into his eyes, but the blazing sun blinded her a little.

“I’ve already received my acceptance letter to Melrose University. So you don’t have to bother yourself with my college stuff.”

Elijah was slightly taken aback. Something didn’t feel right to him, and an inexplicable coldness was creeping up his heart.

“You...”

He nodded, though he had wanted to tell her she was already an adult, and it was her decision whether to go back to Manhattan or which college she went to. However, all that got stuck in her throat, and in the end, all he could say was, "Come back to the manor when you're available. I'd like to hear about your plan."

Angie's eyes turned red-rimmed after she heard his words, but she tried hard to keep composed.

"I've got a lot on my hands lately, so no need to bother yourself with this."

"Angie!"

One would eventually have to yield in a heated argument, and suppressed anger surged beneath Elijah's eyes while blood drained from his tightly clenched fists.

"I am still legally your father, and it will continue to be until this adoptive relationship ceases."

However, it made things worse, as her eyes only turned redder after his words.

"Don't you think this is exactly why I won't go back to Manhattan or your manor? Do you think I don't know why Tanya resigned? You threatened and fired her, no? Because she saw and heard what she shouldn't have. If you're so afraid of people discovering our relationship, then why still bring a ticking-time-bomb like me wherever you go? Isn't this your best chance to get rid of me?"

Being an eighteen-year-old maiden, she was basically like an open book, and she showed no signs of cowardliness as she bore into him. She tried searching for something in his gaze, but even the hint of anger that flashed across his eyes was concealed perfectly.

Meanwhile, the surrounding air turned silent. Alas, they didn't continue the conversation that wasn't meant for public discussion, and who but themselves to blame for the awkward situation they ended up in.

As Angie shifted her gaze away, she slowly regained her composure, and her voice was much calmer too. "Don't worry, Elijah. I know what I should do. It's just that I need some time." For that, she even forced a smile. "I think Alex from the other day is quite nice. He's funny and gentlemanly, and we got along quite well."

At that, he looked up subtly as his fathomless gaze loosened. "I see."

Once again, he was struck with the revelation that the little girl who clung to him every day and pestered him to tell a story like a five-year-old despite being twelve had now grown up. She had now learned to control her emotions and feelings, and with time, she would no longer need him.

"Hey, Angie!"

Angie was going to bid Elijah farewell when a voice caught her attention. She reflexively looked past the tall, slender man in front of her, right at the young man waving at her not far away.

With a beaming smile, Zeke ran toward Angie. His white T-shirt accentuated his broad figure, and his fair face exuded youthfulness.

Sensing Elijah's gaze, he looked questioningly at Angie after a slight hesitation. "This is..."

“I’m—”

“He’s asking for directions.”

Angie wasn’t sure how she felt exactly when she interrupted Elijah, but what she knew was that she wasn’t delighted to hear Elijah introducing himself as her father.

“Sir, you’ll find Sunhill Hotel if you go down this road and turn left at the third intersection. I have to go now; we’ve got work to do.”

With that, she dragged Zeke along with her and walked straight toward Citron Apparel without ever looking back.

Upon arriving at the company’s elevator, Zeke, who had been deep in thought all this while, finally spoke out his worries. “Angie, I think you should be mindful of strangers. I mean, mobile GPS is so advanced now. Surely that guy was trying to hit on you.”

It wasn’t until she got well acquainted with Zeke that she realized this seemingly obtuse young man was actually astute. Meanwhile, she nodded absent-mindedly at Zeke’s warning, and as the elevator reached the eighth floor, Zeke stopped her when she was about to step out.

“Why don’t I treat you to breakfast and talk about the investigation you asked me to dig into in the meantime?”

If he had only suggested the former, Angie would’ve likely walked away without hesitation. But because he brought up the investigation, she went back into the elevator after a split second’s hesitation.

Natasha had deliberately hired designers to turn the building’s rooftop into an employee’s cafeteria, and Zeke and Angie sat by the window with soy milk, buns, and scones in front of them. For breakfast, all Angie had was a mouthful of soy milk. With a somewhat grim expression, she said, “Regardless of the credibility of your sources, I’d still have to go.”

Zeke was munching down a bun as Angie spoke, and he choked on it upon hearing her words, taking a long time before he finally could breathe properly. With that, he patted his chest and promised, “Don’t worry. It’s definitely right. It’s just that you can’t go alone. I’ll go with you.”

One Night Surprise Chapter 494 I Used to Be Like Her

Angie and Zeke had to alight a few vehicles before they could finally board a janky bus that headed straight for Silvercreek District’s fishing village.

They’ve spent nearly an entire day traveling, yet they still hadn’t reached the fishing village when the sky turned dark. Exhausted, Angie leaned against the horrifically dusty window. The beautiful afterglow outside shone on her face, making her alluring features even more gorgeous.

Silvercreek District used to be a janky old fishing village that only got prosperous in recent years because of its tourism culture. Now, the locals had become relatively well off. However, where Angie and Zeke were heading was a more remote village.

Zeke mentioned that Walter had been hiding in this village after resigning and had become a fisherman.

Later, the bus pulled over at the Silvercreek District's bus stop, and a bunch of middle-aged women with pricing signs surrounded Angie right as she got off the bus. Having zero patience to entertain them, Zeke pulled Angie out from the crowd.

"I've asked around. All the vehicles that can take us to the village have stopped operating for the day. And I bet we won't be able to find Walter even if we get a cab and go there now. It's better that we crash here for the night and head over tomorrow."

Angie nodded at that, agreeing with his suggestion.

Silvercreek District wasn't big, so after the two checked-in into a relatively clean hotel and roughly sorted things out, Zeke took Angie to the restaurant below the hotel for dinner.

After the food was served, Zeke dug in immediately while Angie barely had an appetite, distracted by the thoughts in her mind. After a couple of forceful bites, a young girl—looking to be fifteen or sixteen—next to their table caught her attention.

The young girl was dressed in punk fashion from head to toe, and her colorful dreadlocks were exceptionally showy. When Angie looked over, the young girl was sitting with her legs crossed on the restaurant's bench, chugging a stein of beer without a care for the world.

Sitting across her was a middle-aged man. He looked like a decent guy with his white dress shirt and briefcase next to him. Right then, he said nothing but snatched the stein glass from the girl.

"Piper, I'm not joking with you."

Piper nodded as she smiled brightly. "Neither am I. I'm going wherever you go."

"You shouldn't. I'll only hold you up."

"Divorce her then. I'm waiting. Hehe..."

As Piper smiled, she began swaying side to side, and her pair of eyes gleamed from the reflections of the restaurant's lights. On the other hand, the middle-aged man's face tensed up because of her words.

"You'll have to wait a little longer." His face turned grave as he spoke. Angie watched silently aside, having a nagging feeling that a hint of viciousness inconceivably flashed across the man's eyes.

However, the young girl, tipsy at this point, suddenly got up and walked to the man. Then, she wrapped her arms around his neck and bawled, "It's been three months since you last came to me, and you wouldn't answer my calls either. I thought you didn't want me anymore. Don't ever do this to me again!"

The girl's sobs attracted the surrounding customers' attention. Even Zeke, who had his head buried in his food the whole time, had put his cutleries down. Mortified, the middle-aged man hurriedly coaxed and dragged the young girl out.

Zeke had a huge mouthful of food in his mouth, and he couldn't help commenting upon seeing the scene, saying, "Why do so many young girls nowadays like to throw themselves at married, middle-aged

men? They sure don't cherish themselves." After swallowing the food in his mouth, he thought for a moment and added, "And her dreadlocks don't look good either, unlike your hair now."

Angie turned grim upon hearing his words and slammed her hand on the table. Her unforeseen action startled Zeke, and the poor guy choked on his food again, rendering his face scarlet from suffocation.

"Not even food can shut you up, huh?" Angie grumbled and left the restaurant straight, heading back to her room to sleep.

When she was waiting for the elevator to arrive at the lobby, she saw the couple again. The young girl had her arms wrapped around the man's neck, giving him smooches as she said, "I'll leave with you tomorrow. We'll leave tomorrow."

The man raised his chin, trying to evade the young girl's kisses, but to no avail. Just then, he noticed Angie, who was approaching their direction, and a hint of embarrassment and contempt flashed across his face evidently.

It took Angie aback, and she stopped a distance away from them. Later, when the elevator arrived, the man helped the young girl inside, and Angie raised her hand, signaling for the couple to head up first.

After waiting for a while more, Zeke showed up, jogging over to her. Suddenly, his words at the restaurant, in addition to the scene of the couple waiting for the elevator a few minutes ago, popped into her mind.

So love like this is ridiculous and even sordid in other people's eyes, huh?

As the elevator ascended, Zeke, who had been sneakily observing Angie a few times, spoke up gingerly. "I spout bullsh*t very easily after a meal. I'm sorry, please don't be mad."

Just then, a 'ping' sounded, and the elevator door opened. Angie got out first, and after her mood got a little better, she stood in front of her door, saying plainly, "I used to be like her, so I overreacted a little."

"Sorry?"

Angie rolled her eyes in response and pointed to her hair. "I'm talking about her dreadlocks."

—

The following day, Angie and Zeke took a cab first thing in the morning to the fishing village Walter was said to be at. The village was smaller than they imagined, so they managed to enquire about Walter's house without barely any effort.

An older lady was mending a fishnet under a huge banyan tree at the entrance to the village. Upon hearing their inquiry, she pointed inside the village with her lips, taking her time to say, "Walk straight ahead. Walter lives in the easternmost house. You should consider yourselves lucky. He and his family had left a long time ago and only returned recently."

As they walked further into the village, Angie's heart grew heavier. She said nothing the entire walk as an indescribable worry lingered in her heart.

"My husband's out. What brings both of you here?"

The woman, who was drying a fishnet at the entrance, looked up from beneath her straw hat and sized Angie and Zeke up with wary eyes.

Just when Angie wanted to answer, Zeke beat her to it. "We've come to return Mr. Church the money. He had relieved us back in Melrose City. We've found jobs and managed to save up a bit of money. So we thought we should return it to him."

As he explained, he pulled up a stack of cash, so the woman, who had been on guard this whole time, eased up completely. With that, she invited Angie and Zeke into her home.

"The receipt for the loan is with Mr. Church, so we're wondering when will he be back?"

The woman nodded continuously, expressing that she understood, but the next second, she frowned. "Walter barely tells me anything, and he headed out this morning before the sun even came out. I don't know why he went out, so I can't say for sure when he'll be back."

"No worries. We'll wait."

With that, Angie shot Zeke a hinting gaze, and he rolled up his sleeves immediately. "Mrs. Church, are you going to sun-dry these fishes? This looks heavy. Why don't I help you out?"

The woman giggled at that, quite pleased with this warm-hearted young man. Meanwhile, Angie snuck into the cubicle aside.

One Night Surprise Chapter 495 Walter's Death

The building was a vintage-looking, single-story detached house. The living area was at the center of the house, with two bedrooms facing each other, and the kitchen was located in a separate structure at the end of the house. After Angie had surveyed both rooms, she came out with a dark expression.

"What's wrong?" Zeke, who took notice of her unusual expression, pulled her to one side when he had the chance.

"I saw a family photo in the room on the left. The girl in the photo was the one we met last night," she replied, leaning her tired body against the kitchen door frame with both arms folded across her chest.

Zeke's expression fell. "That's too much of a coincidence. Are you saying that—"

Upon seeing a terrified Zeke reaching his hand and drawing circles above his head, Angie immediately understood what he meant and calmly responded, "Yes, I remembered the man calling her Piper."

He fell silent, after which he wiped his mouth before heading toward the main door.

"Mrs. Church, let me help you."

Zeke helped her to move the baskets of salted fish out from the small warehouse beside, and the woman took out the salted fish to dry them in the sun. While they were busy with their tasks, Zeke struck up a conversation.

“Mr. Church told me that you guys have a daughter named Piper, but why don’t I see her around today?”

“Piper occasionally stays at her friend’s place in town. She didn’t come back yesterday, so she should be back later in the afternoon. When she comes back, I’ll have her make something for you both. My baby girl is really good at cooking.”

The woman didn’t notice the hidden meaning in his question, but Angie felt a lump in her throat upon seeing the joy and pride on Mrs. Church’s face at the mention of her daughter

After moving all the fish out from the warehouse, Zeke, who felt a little dizzy when he was straightening up his body after bending over for a long time, suddenly heard a flustered voice from behind. “Mrs. Church, bad news! Something happened to Mr. Church!”

— —

When Angie and the others arrived at the hospital in Silvercreek District, the hospital had announced Walter’s death.

The moment the woman, who could barely hold herself together, saw the white cloth covering the hospital bed, she completely broke down. Before she managed to extend her trembling hands, she fell back and passed out.

The villager, who had sent Walter to the hospital, felt heartbroken upon seeing that. “It’d be better for her not to see him. Life still carries on for the living.”

Angie dared not look at the dead body as well. Zeke, who had lifted the white cloth in order to confirm whether the dead body was Walter, retched in the washroom for a solid ten minutes.

“It’s him,” Zeke confirmed when Angie handed him a tissue; his face blanched.

“It’s too much of a coincidence.”

“Yes, I agree.”

The villager had found Walter when he was on the way to the town to purchase stocks. Judging from the scene, he could tell that Walter had been involved in a car accident. The accident had sent Walter flying over the guardrail and onto a branch of a tree at a steep slope. Walter had stopped breathing when the villager rescued him from the tree.

Unfortunately, there were no security cameras along the road from the village to the town. Plus, Walter had left home before dawn, so nobody knew what had happened on his way to town.

Mrs. Church repeatedly fainted. It only then did Angie know that tears just would not fall out when one was in extreme sorrow; all Mrs. Church could do was to bellow in a hoarse voice. The way she sank into deep grief was truly unbearable for the others to watch.

The doctor came up to them once when she was in despair, carrying a sealed plastic bag that contained Walter’s keys, wallet, and phone that he had had on him. Mrs. Church was so weak that she couldn’t even take the bag from him, so Angie helped her to do so. At that moment, a thought flashed across her mind.

“Mrs. Church, do you know the password of Mr. Church’s cellphone?”

She managed to unlock the phone, and the cracked screen emitted a soft light. Angie’s hand was pale when she held the phone in her hands while an indescribable emotion welled up inside her—an emotion that felt like either rage or guilt, and it nearly devoured her.

After that, she put the phone aside and dashed out of the hospital.

The last message that Walter had received on his phone had been sent to him at 3.00 AM. In that message, Piper, his daughter, had confessed to him that she had fallen in love with a married man, and she had decided to elope with that man.

Walter had replied to her text at 3.05 AM. ‘I’ll come right away.’

Tears gathered in her eyes. She was able to imagine the anxiety Walter must have felt when he walked on the dark road in the middle of the night. Worries and despair were still within him when the accident happened... If I did something yesterday, all of this might not even happen.

When she was in the cab on her way to the hotel, her whole body trembled non-stop. Zeke, who had run as fast as he could and had managed to catch up with her, took her delicate hand in his, his feelings as conflicted as hers.

Piper was nowhere to be found in the hotel. When Angie was asking the receptionist at the reception counter, a maid, who happened to finish cleaning a room, overheard their conversation and interrupted, “I heard that lady talking about a high-speed rail that will depart at 3.00 PM when I was cleaning her room.”

It was 2.20 PM at the moment.

When Angie and Zeke arrived at the high-speed rail station, it was already 2.40 PM. Fortunately, the high-speed rail station in the town was not large, so they were able to spot the girl with colorful dreadlocks in no time.

However, the current scene was a little different from what she had imagined.

A girl with tears all over her face was holding a man’s luggage with both hands, refusing to let go no matter what that man said.

“You promised to take me with you last night. Why are you going back on your words?”

“Last night, I went to see you make things clear with you, but you were drunk, and you started babbling nonsense. I only promised you that you could come to see me off.”

The man tugged his luggage a few times but failed. He was so mad that his eyes were burning with rage, but the girl seemed to have no intention of giving up. All she could think about at that moment was to follow him like a duckling.

Slap! The man threw a tight slap on the girl’s face, causing her to fall onto the floor. Seeing that he finally had an opportunity to escape, he immediately took his luggage and attempted to flee the scene.

Angie's eyes reddened when she saw that. "Hey, you b*stard!" Angie picked up a wet floor sign beside her and strode toward them. Before the man was able to make sense of the situation, she slammed the sign on his head, which caused him to stagger and nearly fall.

"Who are you? Why did you hit him?"

At that instant, sorrow turned into rage, and a shocked Piper grabbed Angie by her hair in an attempt to wallop Angie. However, with a wave of her hand, Angie blocked Piper's attack and gave her a slap in the face.

"You are a b*stard too!" Angie cursed.

At that moment, both Piper and the man were stunned. When Piper yelled at her and attempted to fight back, Angie slapped her hard on her face again.

In the clamor of the crowd that gradually gathered around, Angie's voice coldly rang through the air. "Your father is dead."

Piper blinked twice with her large eyes, unable to make sense of the situation. Angie, however, continued to stare at her coldly, observing her every tiny expression, and cruelly reiterated, "Walter, your father, is dead. Your father died because of you; your mother cried so much that she fainted multiple times in the hospital. She tried to call you, but your phone was switched off. Meanwhile, you are here, wearing dreadlocks that you think are cool while pestering a married man, playing victim."

Piper's pupils dilated at her words; she refused to believe anything Angie had said. "That's nonsense. That's impossible!"

"If it wasn't because of you who sent him a message at 3.00 AM, telling him that you are going to elope with a man, he wouldn't get out of bed before dawn to rush to town. You should be aware that there were no cabs available at that time, so he could only walk to town, which resulted in him being hit by a car and getting his face disfigured!" she shouted at Piper, raising her voice at the end of her sentence, completely shattering a sixteen-year-old girl's mental defense.

Piper slumped to the floor while tears coursed down her cheeks uncontrollably as she mumbled, "I didn't. I didn't send any messages to my father. I didn't tell him." She buried her face in her palms and cried so hard that she nearly suffocated. The brutal reality was far more painful than her lost love.

However, Angie, who heard her mumbles, was shaken to her core. When she finally returned to her senses, she asked, "It wasn't you?"

One Night Surprise Chapter 496 The Stalker

If not Piper, then...

Focusing her cold gaze on the man who was ready to escape from the crowd, Angie ran up and kicked his suitcase away before dragging him by the hair. Zeke, who had been watching this all by the sidelines, gulped as he was thoroughly dumbstruck.

Angie then dragged the man to Piper.

“Were you the one who sent the message to Walter using Piper’s phone?”

Even though the man was beaten up by Angie, he stared back fiercely without words. Out of nowhere, he started smirking in the vilest way possible, indirectly triggering Angie so much that she grabbed his collar. “Why?”

Piper also repeated her words while she slowly collected her thoughts. “You didn’t want to bring me along, so why did you do that?”

Standing up with great effort, the man spat a mouth of blood before saying calmly, “What evidence do you people have to say that I did it? Even if I did, how would I be charged, seeing as the person is already dead?”

Angie then kicked the man hard, causing him to fly back as Zeke quickly hugged her from behind to prevent her from attacking again.

“Calm yourself, Angie. It’s useless no matter how much you hit him.”

If she kept assaulting him, even if she did not go to jail, she would still be detained. It was quite obvious that the man was just agitating her on purpose.

Reigning her emotions under Zeke’s persuasion, she picked Piper up from the floor, saying, “Let’s go to the hospital.”

Just as the trio was about to exit the pickup area, the man suddenly showed a sinister smile. Slowly increasing the pace, the man then took out a paring knife at arm’s length from Angie and stabbed her back without hesitation.

Feeling her back suddenly turn cold, Angie then crashed to the ground as a sense of pain and blood loss enveloped her. Hearing the commotion happening behind her, she tried her best to turn her head around but to no avail.

Although the knife had pierced her skin, the man was stopped by an opposing force before he could do further damage. He only looked somewhat in disbelief at the appearance of the man with a cold gaze, who grabbed the weapon with his bare hands.

“T-The stalker from...”

The next second, he was then kicked far away by Zeke.

Blood flowed profusely from his head as he crashed into the chair head first. Taking out his phone tremblingly, he bellowed somewhat deliriously, “I’m going to call the police now and say that you all ganged up on me. I’m going to make you all go to jail!”

With a cold face, Elijah only carried Angie, who at this point was already unconscious, and warned, “I know that you’re not afraid of jail time. But I wonder if your debtors will go knock on your family’s door once they find out that your child and wife are hiding away in Evergreen Mountain?”

After Elijah and the trio left, the man then quickly hung up in uncontrollable fear and shock.

Opening her eyes once again, Angie found herself already lying on a bed in the hospital of Silvercreek District. As the door to her ward was opened, she turned to see that it was Zeke who had entered.

Zeke beamed upon learning that she was awake.

“It’s good that you’re finally awake.”

When Angie was unconscious, Zeke had been tormented by self-guilt, unrest, and the threat from the stalker.

Propped up by Zeke, Angie then took a sip of water. He hesitated a little but, in the end, asked, “Did you know the direction-asking middle-aged man yesterday?”

With a slight delay, Angie replied, “I don’t.”

“Let’s call the police, then. I think that he might be a pervert.”

“What did you say?”

“He might’ve saved you, but just think about it for a second: How did he show up at such a convenient time? I suspect that he must’ve stalked you along the way. From my point of view, this person is very shifty!”

Feeling more and more creeped out, he took out his phone and was about to inform the police.

On the contrary, Angie just felt a headache, as she did not get to see what transpired behind her before she fainted. If so... Angie then grabbed Zeke’s hand.

Creak! The sound of the door being opened alerted the two as they both looked toward the entrance. Zeke, who quietly snuck the phone behind him, saw the stalker slowly walk in with a stern face.

“Were you stalking me?” Clutching the bedsheet, Angie tried hard to hide the panic in her voice.

“I don’t think the word ‘stalk’ is appropriate.” Elijah opened up the containers of food that he had brought. “I bought some food. Eat up first. The doctor said that you can be discharged once you wake up, so follow me back after this.”

Noticing Elijah’s bandaged hand, Angie could see that the hospital’s first-aid techniques were a bit lacking, as his long and slender fingers had been all wrapped up like a mummy’s, making him look somewhat comical.

Thinking back, Angie remembered that Elijah had found her a mentor in Taekwondo at the age of 13. She would come back with cuts and bruises, and he would always tend to her wounds. Because of this reason, Angie learned for five years straight, returning with small injuries often.

The moment she fell, Elijah was the only person that came to her mind.

Not noticing that Angie had calmed down, Zeke felt a wave of fear as he thought about what Elijah had said. Kidnapping people in broad daylight? One would think that this is a lawless zone.

“Ok.” Angie remained silent after that.

Seeing Angie agree to Elijah's terms, Zeke, who was still on high alert, was suddenly shocked by her actions. He tilted his head and reminded her, "Angie, didn't I just tell you that this man is very shifty? Why did you agree to go with him?"

"I can't ride a bus with my injuries." Eating hastily, Angie then gave Zeke a box of food, saying, "Eat up now. We'll follow him once we're finished here."

Us? When did it become us?

Feeling somewhat wronged, Zeke put down the box of food and said puffingly, "No. I'm not going with him, nor will you, for that matter. I'll get a taxi so that you won't have to catch a bus."

Hearing this, Elijah observed with interest the somewhat young and naive man, questioning, "So, you think that Angie isn't safe with me? But what makes you think that she's safe being with you? Fortunately, she did not sustain any major injuries today. Otherwise, you wouldn't be sitting here so calmly having this conversation with me. And you, why didn't you discuss with Courtney what happened? It's fine that you don't want to return to Manhattan with me, but you need to show that at least you are able to live normally here."

After Elijah had lectured them, Zeke looked up only to find that he had regained that cold and emotionless expression, making it seem like the person just now wasn't him.

Pondering about the whole situation, Zeke felt something was more and more amiss.

"Do you... actually know him?"

Giving in, Angie replied, "In his words, he is my father. Foster father, to be exact."

"What?"

The revelation made the young man jump up from his chair with a pale face.

One Night Surprise Chapter 497 Not a Coincidence

It was already the dead of night when they reached Melrose City. Elijah called Courtney and sent Angie to the Melrose Hospital. Lying on the bed, Angie covered half her face with the blanket, leaving only her eyes exposed so she could observe Courtney.

Although Courtney was gently redressing Elijah's wound, she spoke in a stern tone. "You don't have to look at me like that. I shouldn't have let you come to Citron Apparel if I had known what your thoughts were."

After hearing Elijah's summary of what happened, Courtney had cold sweat running down her back, as she couldn't imagine how guilty she would feel if that knife had fully stabbed Angie.

"I'm sorry."

Since Angie had admitted her mistakes, Courtney did not reprimand her further because Elijah was right in that she herself had a similar personality too. Back then, she had done the same things as Angie at Sunhill, so she wasn't in a position to say how out of line she acted.

As Courtney's bandaging techniques were better, Elijah could at least move his fingers now. Nodding satisfyingly, he then noticed Courtney's wrist when she reached out to pick up the scissors.

Showing a rare smile, Elijah asked, "When did such children's play interest you?"

Suddenly understanding his words, Courtney lowered her head and looked at the sticker. Not replying, she diverted the conversation while tidying her things.

"Did you say that Walter's dead?"

Angie remembered that before she left Silvercreek District Hospital, she saw Piper undoing her dreadlocks on the bathroom floor. Feeling somewhat stuffy inside, she nodded.

"Is this a coincidence?"

"I don't know." Shaking her head, Angie then retracted her gaze while Elijah said bluntly, "It isn't"

Taking out his phone from his suit pocket, he tapped into the photo gallery and gave it to Courtney.

"Piper was pestered by a middle-aged man when she first entered middle school. That time, they were both in Melrose. After Walter found out, he even called some people to beat them up. Since then, the man stopped stalking her. Finally, Walter quit and brought his family back to Silvercreek."

Looking through the photos, Courtney frowned upon noticing something was wrong.

"This Shawn Kaiser person had one million wired into his bank account..."

Nodding, Elijah confirmed her thoughts.

"That man's name is Shawn Kaiser."

"Being an avid gambler, he had already racked up quite the debt outside. Three days before, he had a million transferred to his account, which he then went to Silvercreek District to find Piper, so this could not be just a coincidence."

Angie then finally understood the whole situation.

"Walter got into the crash because he had received the message, but Piper had said that she didn't send any message to her father."

Becoming a bit more serious now, Courtney asked, "What about Shawn?"

Standing up, Elijah also had a similar expression.

"Shawn won't tell. He has a wife and kid, who is just a month old. He has to ensure their safety, so forcing him to open his mouth will only force him to death."

His words made the atmosphere in the ward even heavier, while Courtney and Angie had awful expressions on their faces. At this moment, a nurse suddenly entered, seeming a bit panicky.

"Courtney, the child is acting up again."

Standing up, she reminded Angie to rest up earlier when she reached the entrance and told Elijah, "I want you to meet someone."

Following Courtney, Elijah then reached the VIP children's ward downstairs. Opening the door, he saw a tanned boy pacing around the ward barefoot. Besides the blanket and pillow on the floor and a bed, there was nothing else in the room.

"Jimmy."

The moment Courtney entered, the little boy immediately quieted down. With his suspicious gaze turning excited, he ran up and hugged her leg. This scene made Elijah slightly curious.

"Who is this little fellow? I have never seen him before."

After hearing Elijah's voice, the child looked up with eyes full of terror and rejection as Courtney patted his head while explaining patiently, "You don't have to be afraid of him. He's my friend."

But her words failed to reassure him as the kid was running behind the bed and growling as soon as Elijah wanted to get close to him.

With an awkward expression, Courtney looked somewhat resignedly at Elijah as she took out a piece of sticker while picking up his unhurt hand.

Sticking it to the back of his hand, Courtney then turned toward the cowering boy in the corner and said, "See, I didn't lie to you, did I?"

The boy calmed down the second he saw the back of Elijah's hand, his wolf-like alertness slowly going away. Walking toward them cautiously, he only smiled upon closing in enough to see what the picture was on the paper, and then he grabbed Elijah's hand.

Elijah only felt a bit baffled by all this.

Although Courtney tried coaxing the kid to go to bed, he kept his silence while holding a whiteboard in his hand. Drawing on it for some time, he showed her. It depicted a fierce-looking woman who had a syringe in her hand and was aiming it at him, who in turn was hiding behind the bed. After seeing this, Courtney then hummed a lullaby to comfort him.

"Your method seems a bit familiar. Did you also communicate with Jordan like this?"

His words reawakened Courtney's memories of five years ago, and the happy thoughts temporarily cleared up the doubts in her eyes.

"This is why I have an inexplicable feel toward little Timmy here."

With Courtney at her side, the tired child then fell asleep soon after. Seeing that he was in a deep sleep, Courtney then carefully folded the hem of his pants up and hinted at Elijah to take a look.

Elijah frowned upon seeing the tattoo on his ankle, asking, "What is this?"

Briefly explaining what took place, Courtney had a request for Elijah after he had fully grasped the situation.

"Timmy's going to be discharged tomorrow. I want to bring him back to the Duncans' ancestral home. But, there're a lot of eyes there, so I don't think that it's the most suitable place for him. That's why I..."

“I’ll be flying back to Manhattan in a few days’ time to take care of something, so just send him to my manor. There are not many servants there, and I’m the only one living there anyway.”

With the light casting a dark silhouette, Elijah cut Courtney off before she could finish, his stoic face lightening up a bit.

“I will also check up on the dead lead on Walter, so you don’t have to worry about anything.”

Nodding somewhat gratefully, Courtney then exited the ward with Elijah

“How’s Old Master Duncan?” His cold voice echoed through the corridor.

“He still hasn’t gotten any better.”

One Night Surprise Chapter 498 Missing Tina

Courtney’s aunt, Alicia, called her on her birthday to invite both Courtney and Alexander back to the Somerfields for a meal. As they did not hail from a business background, the Somerfields did not really pay attention to much etiquette. The celebration only involved a feast, and the family gathered around happily.

At the table, Josephine was trying to get the meat from a pincer of a crab, which she then gave to Alicia after amassing a plateful.

“Happy birthday, Great-Aunt.”

Laughing joyfully, Alicia was visibly elated. Seeing this, Courtney wondered how much happier she would become if she were to see the present Josephine had prepared for her.

Unexpectedly, Josephine, who was still eating the crab, slowly took out the jade bracelet with her oily hands, giving it to Alicia. Hesitatingly slightly, Alicia then started to sob before actually crying on her husband’s shoulder like a child.

Alexander, who was still eating soup, was bewildered at this scene as he met the gaze of his bewildered daughter.

“Great-Aunt, if you don’t like it, you can exchange it at the shop. You don’t have to cry,” saying it with a nose full of crab roe, Josephine panicked slightly. Upon hearing this, Alicia looked up and gave her a few pecks while hugging her with an overjoyed face.

“I like it. I like it very much.”

Dizzy from the kisses, Josephine couldn’t help but ask, “If you like it, then why are you crying? Fiona is also a crybaby. When I asked her why she cried, she said it was because she liked Ethan.”

Hearing this, Alexander had a rare smile appear on his face. He raised his eyebrows and asked, “Then, do you like Ethan? After all, Mr. Langley likes you very much.”

After mulling over it seriously, Josephine then nodded.

This made Courtney feel like a great disaster had befallen her. "I do not want you and Cameron to become relatives."

"Miss Cameron's temper is a bit short, so I don't want to become related to her as well."

...

Alicia laughed so heartily that her eyes squinted. She asked the young child, "Josie, do you know what relatives by marriage mean?"

Thinking that it should be no different from relatives, Josephine did not think about the meaning too much, seeing how happy her Great-Aunt was.

Standing up, she took another crab and continued eating.

While Courtney was eating soup, the phone on the table suddenly lit up. It showed that a message was sent by Cameron, making her think that she really shouldn't speak about other people behind their backs.

'Tina was saying that she's missing her godmother, so I picked her up to let her stay overnight at my place.'

Still eating the soup, Courtney only replied with an 'OK'.

—

Afternoon the next day, Courtney received a call during her lunch at the hospital's cafeteria. It was from Tina's form teacher, asking if something had happened to her, since she was absent from school yesterday.

Feeling something off, Courtney hung up calmly before phoning Cameron.

After Cameron picked up the call, her voice had a hint of fatigue. Upon hearing what Courtney said, she instantly said in disbelief and shrilly, "You said that I had picked Tina up yesterday? I didn't!"

As Cameron had just rushed a press release for a project overnight, she had planned to sleep as soon as she got off work, but Courtney's words were like an adrenaline shot, completely dispelling her sleepiness.

"Come to the Duncans. We'll talk further there."

Feeling a sense of dread creeping from within, she said those words with great effort before hanging up, unrest slowly enveloping her.

When she reached there, Alexander and Cameron were already waiting for her in the reception room of the Duncan Family with solemn faces.

"Courtney, what did you mean on the phone? You were being so vague that it made me panic in fear."

Seeing Courtney enter, Cameron quickly went up to her. On the way back, she was so lost that she also called for Alexander to come back.

Sitting down teary-eyed, Courtney took her phone from her bag and opened up the messenger app.

'Tina was saying that she's missing her godmother, so I picked her up to let her stay overnight at my place.'

'OK.'

Cameron, who saw the conversation, jumped up from the sofa with wide eyes and said in disbelief, "It wasn't me! I was on overtime all night yesterday and didn't even go home, so how could I have sent you the message..."

Suddenly remembering something, Cameron had a terrifying thought flash through her mind.

"I went to the supermarket downstairs to buy some coffee. During that time, I had somehow lost my phone. It was a young lady that returned it to me just as I was about to leave the place," saying that, she fished her phone out from her bag and opened the text log between her and Courtney, only for it to show a conversation from very long ago.

This time, Courtney was truly afraid. She felt that she needed to do something while a layer of cold sweat formed on her forehead after a brief spell of dizziness.

"Courtney..."

With his deep gaze, Alexander was worried about how these continuous blows affected her.

Hearing him call out, she tried her best to look up. With eyes full of pain, she matched Alexander's gaze and said hoarsely, "Alexander, please save Tina..."

As Cameron wasn't in the know, she naturally could not connect the previous events with Tina's disappearance, so she comforted Courtney by saying, "We'd lost Tina when she was much younger. Since she is grown up now, we can try searching for her. Maybe things aren't as complicated as we think..."

But her words did not enter Courtney's ears. The latter was trying hard to make herself calm down when suddenly, an idea shot through her mind.

Folding her sleeves up, Courtney then pointed to the symbol on the post note and asked with teary eyes, "Have you seen this before?"

Closing her eyes, Cameron recalled her memories frantically before clapping.

"I remember now. When I was at the food section of the supermarket yesterday, I bumped into a man there, and his back, no, it was his neck that had this exact symbol."

Her words were like a hammer that smashed Courtney's chest, after which she picked up her phone and wanted to go out.

Her hasty footsteps were stopped by a low voice as Alexander stood up with pity in his eyes. But, he had to keep his cool at that moment and reminded Courtney, "You would only alert them by going to him now. He could be long gone from that supermarket by now. Finding Tina through the man isn't the only way. I'll be going to the school to see what information I can glean from there. Cameron, I want you to call the police now and accompany Courtney."

“I’m going with you.”

As a torrent of emotions raged inside her, Courtney tugged on Alexander’s shirt with trembling hands. Alexander, who turned around and embraced her tightly, gave Courtney’s exhausted mental state an energy boost.

“Just wait for me to come back.”

Saying that confidently, he then left through the Duncans’ main entrance.

One Night Surprise Chapter 499 The Sudden Recall of a Memory

In the teacher’s office, Tina’s homeroom teacher had already made sense of the general situation, so she called the two students over. They nodded to the grim-looking Alexander, who was sitting on the sofa.

“These two were the students who were with Tina when they got off school yesterday, so they should be the last ones who saw her.” Pointing to the taller individual, the teacher said, “Tell us about what happened, Ristelle.”

Alexander’s gaze then landed on the girl named Ristelle.

“It was the announcement of the mock exam grades yesterday. Tina scored well, so we planned to celebrate after school. But after eating just a piece of cake at a dessert shop, Tina suddenly said something came up and left without explanation.”

“Something came up?”

As Alexander lowered his gaze, the other girl nodded, adding, “That’s right. I saw that Tina had an unnatural expression on her as we entered the dessert shop. Usually, we would play around, but she did not speak much yesterday. It was as if she had something on her mind. When she left, she did it in a hurry. She did not even bid us farewell properly.”

After they finished, the two girls nodded confidently.

Gazing at them somewhat coldly, Alexander asked, “Which dessert shop was it?”

After twenty minutes, Alexander’s car had arrived outside the shop, after which he subtly shifted his body to the car door. Observing the pedestrian outside silently, he had done a good job of hiding all his emotions behind his cold gaze.

“I got it. I told the boss that my sister had gotten lost. Add a five hundred on top, and she gave it all to me.”

About fifteen minutes later, the driver’s door was opened, with Eric hastily entering the car and giving the black thumb drive to the man behind him.

Plugging the thumb drive into the computer, Alexander did not want to waste any more time, his expression sinking as quickly as the video was fast-forwarded.

The footage showed that at 6:35 P.M. yesterday, Tina and her two friends had entered the shop, sitting by the left side. During that period, the waiter had served three desserts, to which Tina only had two bites of her cakes before leaving the shop with her bag at 7:08 P.M.

Frowning, he easily noticed that Tina had obviously stopped her footsteps the moment they entered the shop. For the remaining duration, she kept staring at something on her right-hand side, but the surveillance camera's angle did not include what she was looking at.

Feeling in a bit of a pickle, Alexander slightly relaxed by leaning against the seat. While massaging the middle of his eyebrows, he was suddenly struck by a thought, and he immediately rewound the footage.

Just before Tina left, there were two people who passed through the footage in a flash, seeming like they had come from the right side of the shop to the entrance. Leaving first, they were soon followed by Tina.

Although Alexander's instinct was telling him something, their silhouette was too blurry, so he couldn't make their faces out. After thinking for a while, he sent a screenshot of them to Oliver.

'Help me take a look at this. I want to know who they are.'

Oliver, who had received his message, was assigned to troubleshoot data just then, so he took advantage of the empty space while the computer was looping through the database to refine the given image before sending it back.

'It'll take some time to ascertain their identities, but you should be able to see their faces somewhat clearly now.'

Staring at the image Oliver sent back, Alexander had his handsome face slowly contorted. Some troublesome and complicated matters resurfaced until his fingers relaxed and some complexion returned to his face.

After getting himself to be calm again, the slight moisture in his hand reminded him of what he was recalling.

'No need. I know who they are.'

Being almost suffocated by the atmosphere in the car, Eric, who turned back to look at Alexander's expression, gulped upon finding out that Alexander's face could not be any more solemn.

"One hour. Find all the footage after Tina had stepped out of the shop to the exact moment she went missing and deliver it to my office."

"Yes, President."

Hearing this, Eric had a bead of sweat forming on his forehead. After sending Alexander back to Sunhill, he started busying himself and ran himself ragged to Alexander's desk after one hour.

"President, I've sent all the footage to your email. Do you have any further instructions?"

"Get the car."

After checking the footage, Alexander still had a solemn face. Slamming his laptop shut, he had already walked out before Eric could even have the chance to catch his breath.

Following Alexander's instructions, Eric had parked at a newly built villa area in the New East Block District. After ten minutes, the two of them were standing at the entrance of a duplex-style villa. In tow were tens of strong-looking men in black suits, who were all hired by Alexander to be his bodyguards.

Ringing the doorbell, Eric felt that the group of bodyguards was quite unnecessary.

"Who is it?"

After a short while, the entrance of the villa opened with a middle-aged woman in maid's clothing peeking out. Seeing this amount of people alerted her, so she only opened the door enough for her to see who was outside.

"Hello, we're here to look for..."

Speaking courteously, Eric suddenly stopped up to this point and turned to look at Alexander.

"President Duncan, who are we looking for?"

With a matching expression to those behind him, Alexander did not reply to him as he reached out and grabbed the edge of the door. Seeing Alexander pulling on it forcefully, the weak servant could only let the entrance to the villa be opened.

"I'm looking for Susan," said Alexander coldly, with some hints of anger in his voice. Before he even finished, he had already entered the villa.

"M-Madam..."

As the servant hastily went upstairs, a woman soon came down, donning a light gray robe. Looking about fifty years old, she had around shoulder-length brown hair. Paired with her exquisite makeup and the obvious care she took on her body, she still looked quite youthful for her age.

"How dare you people trespass on private property? Do you think I would be afraid to call the police?"

Standing on the second floor, Susan was livid upon seeing the group of people in black downstairs. Just as she was about to call the police, she saw Alexander standing in front of the pack.

"A-Alexander."

Keeping her phone away, Susan was somewhat shocked at his appearance.

Ever since the takeover of Sunrise Enterprise by Sunhill Enterprise five years ago, the two never really came into contact with each other anymore. Composing herself quickly, Susan then sauntered down the stairs while smiling.

"I still remember the promise with you. But, President Duncan, it would seem that you have forgotten about it, no?"

Looking coldly at the person approaching him, he did not think further as he tried his hardest to suppress his anger, saying in a low and hoarse voice, "Where's Tina?"

One Night Surprise Chapter 500 This Is Illegal

Hearing Alexander's words, Susan stopped for a second before laughing openly. Her shrill tone reverberated throughout the living room, making everyone's hair stand on end.

"Do you mean to say that brat, Tina, has gone missing? Why have you come to poor old Susan when the Duncans lost their child? Did you think that I would kill her as a replacement for Anna's life? She's not worthy!"

Leaning against the staircase railing, Susan trembled slightly. These past five years had thoroughly taught her how tragic it was to be alone; the moment before her daughter fell was still imprinted in her mind, with her failing to forget about it no matter how hard she tried.

She had thought of making Courtney lose something of equal value, but every time Susan would remember what Alexander said to her on the top floor of the Sunrise Enterprise the day Sunhill signed the takeover contract. As a result, Susan could only dispel such ideas again and again.

The rage within Alexander finally manifested itself under Susan's instigation. He snatched the printed screenshots and threw them coldly at her face. As the living room was slowly covered with papers, Susan glanced at some of them and suddenly turned pale.

"Do you have anything to say for yourself?"

The cold gaze staring right into her soul pulled her back to five years ago. Back then, Alexander had her stand on the tethering edge of the top floor while nonchalantly adjusting his cufflinks.

"I think you know best whether Mr. Hunter died of sickness or not. If you don't want to die a dog's death like Anna, I can also arrange for you to live the rest of your life in prison."

"I've already agreed to sell Sunrise to your enterprise. What more do you want?"

"Leave Courtney alone. If I get wind of you approaching anybody close to her, consider yourself dead."

When Susan snapped back from the frightful memory, her knees wobbled as she barely managed to stand straight. Looking again at the group of people in black, she did not dare to be as arrogant as before.

Wiping away the sweat from her forehead, she avoided Alexander's gaze and looked toward the floorboards of the living room, saying, "Yesterday, it was Tina, that little wench, who followed me. It was after a while that I discovered what she was up to, but I only sent her away and did nothing to her."

"Didn't you purposefully lure Tina into an empty alley without surveillance? After that, your car then shortly drove away from the said alley. How dare you say that she wasn't in your car!"

Alexander rushed forward and choked Susan. The rage within him caused him to tighten his grip until she was rolling her eyes and kicking her feet all over. Seeing this, Eric quickly went up and stopped him.

Panting, Susan shook her head vehemently. "I did not. I only rendered her unconscious. I then drove away after that..."

With a sharp gaze, Alexander looked down at Susan slumped on the ground and raised his hand. “Search this place.”

In an instant, the group of people behind him dispersed, heading to every corner of the villa. Looking up in disbelief, she quickly witnessed her lavish villa become dilapidated, with a porcelain vase smashed as its pieces landed beside her leg.

With bloodshot eyes, she shrieked, “This is illegal, Alexander Duncan!”

“You’re welcome to call the police.” While saying this coldly, Alexander, who upon confirming that no traces of Tina were to be found in the villa, nodded and walked out of the compound.

Just as he was about to step out of the main entrance, he stopped. Although his silhouette was slightly blurred by the dim light, his low voice was still as piercing as ever.

“Susan, you better pray that Tina is fine. Otherwise, I will make good on what I said back then.”

His fading footsteps matched her beating heart. It was until he finally disappeared from her sight that she quickly took her phone out and dialed a number.

“Woozy, have you found the brat?”

“I told you that you shouldn’t have messed around with Tina. Are you sure that she was gone by the time you went back? Or did you actually hide her away in secret?”

Susan then fell silent.

Hanging up, she loosened up slightly before clenching her teeth after recalling what happened last night.

On the way back from the villa to Sunhill, Eric kept peeking at Alexander in the rearview mirror. Eric’s hair stood on end after he remembered what had taken place just now.

Looking outside, Alexander had a calm but solemn stare. Suddenly, something came to his mind as he took out his phone from his pocket.

“Josh, about Mr. Hunter’s death that I told you to find out five years ago—”

There was total silence.

“Alright, come back then. As fast as possible.”

After hanging up, Alexander recalled watching Courtney not eat or sleep because of her father’s passing five years ago, which made it a painful memory for him. He ordered Josh to investigate the whole situation after overhearing some of Courtney and Susan’s conversations.

Although Josh did manage to find something, he and Courtney had completely fallen apart at that point. Therefore, he had chased Josh, who was there to report this matter to him, away. Since then, nobody brought this subject up in front of him again.

“Eric, to the police station.”

Leaning on the car seat, Alexander was slightly fatigued from running around nonstop, but he still had to keep his wits about him. In the short timeframe that he shut his eyes, his phone rang again.

“What’s wrong?”

“Alexander, Courtney’s missing—”

Cameron was the one who called and in obvious panic.

“After we came back from the police station, Courtney kept mumbling about needing to find that man, but I told her to hold it off until you return. Yet, she was gone after I accidentally dozed off.”

Closing his eyes, Alexander immediately hung up and called Courtney multiple times but to no avail.

“Go to Sakura Restaurant.”

...

Stepping into the Japanese restaurant, Courtney was greeted by a picture on the wall. At this time, a waiter in a kimono approached to ask about the number of guests.

Waving her hand, Courtney replied, “I’m looking for someone.”

“Who are you looking for?”

“My brother.”

She pointed at the man in the picture.

Understanding her intentions immediately, the waitress smiled before saying, “Mike isn’t working here anymore. So, you’re his sister. You are beautiful.”

While mumbling to herself, Courtney noticed something and showed an embarrassed face.

“Does my brother often mention me to you?”

“He does. He only smiles whenever he mentions his beloved sister each time. The boss had chided him countless times because of this.”

“Then, where is he now?”

Feeling a bit guilty, the woman then tugged on Courtney’s sleeve and went to the side.

“Didn’t Mike tell you? It’s actually because of me. That day, I accidentally spilled some alcohol on a customer’s shirt, and he only got fired because he took the fall for me. I bet he didn’t want to tell you because you might get worried. He said that he has a nice income being a fishmonger at the market too...”

“At the market?”

The woman looked at Courtney truthfully and nodded profusely with gigantic eyes.

“Which market?”

“That I don’t know. But it should be somewhere around here—”

Without waiting for her to finish, Courtney was already about to leave when she suddenly remembered something. Turning back, she shoved two notes in the girl’s hands.

“Don’t tell my brother that I was here.”