

The Divorce 321

Chapter 321 The Baby Shower

I locked eyes with Stella. "If you don't want people to know what you've done, it's best not to provoke me."

I walked out and addressed the doctor who had escorted me in. "Sir, could you please take me back?"

He calmly nodded. "Certainly."

I was worried that leaving the doctor there might put him in danger.

Back in the car, a wave of nervousness washed over me, causing my hands to tremble. I turned to the doctor and said, "I'm sorry for involving you. They won't harm you, will they?"

"No, it won't be that serious," he replied. Then he started driving.

"How is his condition?" I asked the doctor, still feeling concerned.

"You saw it yourself." He glanced at me. "The injuries to his limbs aren't too serious, but the head injury is

severe.

"So when do you think he'll wake up?"

His response was ambiguous. "That depends on how he responds. It could be anytime."

We reached the spot where we had switched cars earlier. The other car was still waiting. I thanked the

doctor and returned to the car that had brought me there, and we parted ways.

In the car, I decided to call Nick. Then, I explained the situation to him with a heavy heart.

Nick fell silent, then said, "Go back and rest.

the "Mr. Nick... I..." I struggled to express my remorse to him. Nick didn't say much and just hung up phone.

Even though I had finally seen Atlas, I didn't feel relieved. A sense of unease hung over me.

After my argument with Stella at the reception, I was convinced that Kennedy's death had something to do with them. I wasn't afraid of Stella, but my biggest concern was Atlas. He was in a comatose state and

defenseless.

The doctor had assured me that the people around Atlas were loyal, but I couldn't help but feel uneasy

Atlas was unconscious right in front of them.

was too embarrassed to approach Nick after this incident. The only thing I could do was have Grayson

Respir close eye on ATL Empire

Surprisingly, I soon ran into Stella again, this time at Matthew's party. I couldn't help but wonder why

Stella was there. She and Matthew had no apparent connection. In private, though, I couldn't be so sure.

Matthew had been flaunting his project with a connection to Celine, so it wasn't unreasonable for Stella to attend the celebration.

Many influential people in the local construction industry came to the party. Matthew had made a big scene a few months ago during our anniversary celebration. Now, he was throwing a lively party for his son with his mistress. He no longer cared about his reputation.

I was unsure what the guests were thinking, but I was sure most were there to watch. My presence made no difference, but I had no choice. Matthew had sent Johnson to pick me up.

He wanted me to bring Ava along so he could show off his perfect family. However, no matter how confused I was, I wouldn't bring my daughter along to such an event.

Besides, how would this drama play out?

Chapter 322 The Show Has Just Begun

Lauren was aware of the situation and offered to accompany me, but I declined. I didn't want her to get involved.

I suspected she had ulterior motives for wanting to be there, but I told her to let it go. There was no need for her to get mixed up in this mess.

Lauren relented, so I brought Carol, who used to work at Tanum Corporation. I had my reasons for bringing her, and I didn't have to explain them. Carol was perfectly capable of handling the situation on her own.

The party for the baby took place at La Dolce Vita. The venue was packed, and Matthew stood at the entrance, welcoming guests from all directions.

When Johnson brought my car to the entrance, Matthew rushed down the steps and opened the car door.

He seemed a little unhappy when asked. "Chlo... where's my little girl?"

I calmly said, "Everyone already knows you have a son and a daughter."

He forced a smile and said, "Well, you better come in!"

Carol quickly stood by my side and handed two cash envelopes to Matthew.

I asked Carol in a hushed tone, "When did you prepare these?"

"Well, I couldn't show up empty-handed, could I?" Carol smirked mischievously.

I teased her, "You're so generous! But you've just wasted your money."

Carol just grinned devilishly without replying.

Many people stared at us as we entered the hall, surprised I was there. Their looks felt like a slap in the face. Luckily, Myra saw us and waved us over, making things less awkward.

She took my hand and whispered, 'Chlo, I didn't expect you to come. You've got guts!'

I smiled, "Just a token gesture."

After taking our seats, I spotted Melanie not too far away. She had gained some weight after giving birth

and had put extra effort into her appearance, exuding a newfound maternal charm.

Braca had a child beside her and appeared starkly different. She looked worn out like an old nanny who

Had done most of the work in the past month. Nonetheless, she smiled

baby to the

Myra leaned over and whispered, "Poor thing. Caring for Melanie has been a real trial. She can be quite the handful. She practically tortured the old lady, and Grace has been up all night looking after the child."

I smiled and kept my silence. This wasn't the right time for me to speak.

However, staying quiet wasn't enough. Some people were trying to take advantage of me, and I finally understood Matthew's intention in inviting me.

Someone approached me, saying, "Hey, Chlo! I didn't expect to see you here!"

I turned to see Stella, who looked beautiful. Although I had mentally prepared myself, I was still shocked. Liora, who I hadn't seen in a long time, was with her.

Seeing the two of them together, I knew today's performance would be tricky.

I also noticed that many around us were eager spectators. Some were reveling in the drama, some were simply curious, and some were probably nervous for me.

Good and ill intentions mixed in the air, but I didn't care. Since they were prepared, I had to play along. After all, over the past year, Matthew had toughened me up to the point where my skin could deflect

bullets.

I smiled sweetly. "Yes! It's a joyous celebration."

"Chlo, you're so kind. That must be why Liora says she wants to learn from you!" Stella said, trying to

smooth things over.

"Chloe is amazing. She's not just anybody. No matter what people say, she's part of the Murphy family! Well... she used to be!" Liora bantered, and Stella followed up with a witty comment.

Their teamwork was surprisingly seamless.

Suddenly, a lot of eyes turned our way. After all, it was unexpected for Matthew's ex-wife to show up. The freshly groomed and radiant Melanie sauntered over, looking cheerful. We became the center of attention.

Chapter 323 What She Did

She approached gracefully, but her smile didn't quite reach her eyes. Those serpentine eyes were fixed on

face, and I could see the tension in her jaw. Such restraint must've been painful.

my

Maintaining a calm smile, I watched them eagerly begin the performance. Myra was so nervous that she hardly dared to breathe. She nudged me several times, and Carol was gearing up for a fight. I grabbed her and gently pushed her back down.

"Oh! I was wondering who it was. It's my sister-in-law!"

I smiled at her. “Melanie, what game are you playing? We had never called each other that before.

Where’s the ‘sister-in-law’ coming from?”

Carol wasn’t going to let it slide. She immediately chimed in, “Exactly! Matthew is already yours, so where’s the ‘sister-in-law’ coming from? You have a son now, so maybe start acting like a mom. Chloe has

already taken a step back for you.”

Suddenly, Melanie adopted a pitiful look. Her eyes reddened, and her lips quivered as if she had been wronged

The whole room fell into silence. Some had already left their seats and awkwardly shuffled over, craning their necks to get a good look. I was sure everyone had heard her words.

Ha! I knew the show was finally about to begin.

Melanie had been coached. She had transformed into a fragile little woman—a wolf in disguise!

Since she deliberately changed her character to play the Innocent, I couldn’t disappoint those eager for drama. I was prepared, though I didn’t know what they were scheming. If need be, I’d fight tooth and nail.

“How could you say that? I’d never make things difficult for you,” I said with feigned sincerity.

Melanie dabbed her eyes. “Chlo, I hope you can forgive me. It’s all my fault. I had a bad temper during

pregnancy. I shouldn't have made you angry!"

People around us stared at Melanie, their eyes wide.

I wasn't angry! If I were, I wouldn't have come today!" I said kindly, "Please, stop this. It's not a good look

on such a happy occasion. There are so many guests here!"

Melanie seemed genuinely surprised by my attitude, She glanced at Stella and Liora before looking back

Then she asked, "Chlo, you really don't blame me?"

She seemed almost astonished. "I shouldn't have insisted on taking Ava out for her birthday. I didn't mean anything by it. Ava is still my niece, and Matthew adores his daughter. So, I went to the kindergarten and wanted to treat Ava to a meal."

Suddenly, I understood their plan. Though I was furious, I kept my composure. I had to be careful not to be drawn into their scheme.

"I should've asked you about picking up Ava. Then you wouldn't have been so angry that you pushed me down. Fortunately, I got to the hospital quickly. Despite being born prematurely, the baby is fine! The thought of what could've happened makes me shudder."

The people around us were stunned. This incident was known to very few, and only a handful o

present that day.

They all looked at me in disbelief.

Some said, "Oh my! No wonder the baby is premature! So, that's what happened?"

"Yes, I'd only heard about the premature birth. I never expected this. That was so dangerous!"

"I didn't see that coming. Chloe... isn't as simple as she seems!"

"Haven't you heard? Thankfully, they got to the hospital in time!"

"There must have been a reason why Matthew didn't stay with her

us were

Listening to the discussions, my anger reached its peak. I clenched my fists tightly under the table and

looked at Melanie.

Carol was already fuming with rage, and she stood up.

Chapter 324 Hate Provocation

gently held Carol's wrist with a strained smile. "Melanie, are you sure about this?"

Seeing that Carol was already upset, Stella added fuel to the fire. "Melanie, why bring this up at a time like

this?

Melanie knew her words were having an impact and continued to play the victim.

“I’m happy. Otherwise, none of you would get to see my son today, and Matthew wouldn’t be as happy as he is now! Let’s not hold grudges, Chloe, I won’t blame you for causing me to give birth prematurely. Can’t

we all get along? After all, we’re all part of the Murphy family!”

“I’m not part of it,” I couldn’t help but retort.

The onlookers immediately turned their stern gazes toward me. I could tell that if I said “no,” they might tear me apart. I smirked, realizing how cunningly they had orchestrated this.

It was a blatant attempt to turn everyone against me. One wrong step and my reputation in the city would

be irreparable. I would be labeled a scheming woman.

This was precisely what the three women wanted.

I maintained a composed facade as I looked at Melanie. Then, I stood up and surveyed the entire hall. I spotted Matthew chatting with a few business partners not far away. There was no way he didn’t know

what was going on.

“Matthew!” I called out loudly, causing Myra to turn pale with fear. Carol glared at Matthew, then marched

toward him.

The entire room turned their attention toward me, some expressing discontent. I saw a smug expression

on Liora's face.

As expected, Matthew acted as if he hadn't heard my call. Carol forcibly pulled him over when she reached him

With a resigned expression, Matthew stood in front of us. He smiled and asked, "Ms. Stella, Mrs. Liora, why aren't you sitting?"

Chlo, don't just sit there. Help me attend to the guests!" He placed his hand on my shoulder.

dodged it Don't Wrong person! Mrs. Melanie is feeling wronged:

looked at Matthew and asked. I'd like to hear your version of the events regarding Ava's birthday

Matthew quickly glanced at Stella. It was clear to me that this whole scheme was Stella's doing.

"Oh dear! It's a joyous day. Why bring this up?" Matthew asked, "Melanie, what did you do this time?"

I immediately understood that Matthew was also an accomplice. I tested him to see if he knew the situation.

Melanie played her part perfectly, immediately crying. I just wish that Chloe could understand me. They say that once you become a mother, you must let go of grudges!"

“Chlo, you see, Melanie is no longer pursuing this. Let’s just move past it. Today is the baby’s party. I knew you didn’t mean to push her that day. Let it go!” Matthew spoke like a peacemaker.

“Don’t... I’m someone who takes things seriously. Are you both absolutely sure?” I remained calm, looking

at Matthew.

Inside, I was burning with anger. This time, Liora attempted to mediate.

“Chloe, isn’t this a bit much? Shouldn’t you let it go? Try to be the bigger person. Melanie has already apologized, and you can’t stir up trouble today, can you?”

Stella quickly chimed in, “Exactly, Chlo! Enough already. Let it go!”

They were all advising me to take the high road. Was I such a terrible person?

“We understand that you may have felt wronged, but time has passed. After all, Melanie and Matthew have a child now. You need to move on. Today, we all saw how sincere Melanie is. Why

for other women?” Liora played the role of peacemaker.

It seemed like I was the joke!

complicate things

Stella played her part convincingly. “Forget it, Mr. Matthew. Let’s get the party started! Chloe, don’t make things difficult for Mr. Matthew. It’s a day of joy. Let’s be happy for the children!”

I stared at them in disbelief. I couldn’t believe my eyes. How had these demons turned into angels today?

Just as everyone looked at me with disdain, a dark figure lunged toward

Chapter 325 The Bane of the Murphy Family

Carol reacted incredibly fast. Before the shadow reached me, she swiftly pulled me away. Just as I got up from the chair, the shadow collided with it, resulting in a loud thud. The entire room gasped in shock. I was still trying to process what was happening.

As I gathered my wits, I realized Grace had lunged at me and ended up on the ground. Her forehead had hit the chair during the collision, and now she was hurling insults in my direction.

“Chloe, you wretched woman! After serving you for ten years, I never expected you to be so heartless and

vile!

She listed my crimes, “You not only took the Murphy family’s property but you also got involved with a man who brutally beat up my son. He was left battered and bruised. Chloe, you’re a despicable person!

Have you no shame?”

The crowd of onlookers gasped again, staring at me like a demon.

Carol’s face flushed with anger, and she roared, “Hey, why are you twisting the story?”

Liora watched with folded arms, seemingly relishing my discomfort and her victory.

Grace continued, “Haven’t we treated you well? Haven’t we provided for you both, ensuring you lacked

nothing?”

Looking at the older woman on the ground, I felt powerless. I regretted my decision to be here today. Perhaps I should have maintained my distance from this family from the beginning.

“You’ve taken our house and incited a stranger to beat my son within an inch of his life. Chloe, you’re a disgrace, an abomination!”

The spectators gasped once more, their eyes filled with a mixture of shock and disgust. Matthew’s gaze was fixed firmly on my face. I had no idea what was going on in his mind.

This man had once enveloped me in sweet words and promises, but now he stood there, watching his mother berate me

It made sense I had become the bane of the Murphy family.

You dare show up here today? You can’t bear to see the Murphy family thriving, can you? You heartless chi Did you ever consider that your karma would catch up with you when you pushed Melanie? Youll

coming to your

omous as they come.

Carol took a step forward. “What are you talking about? Why aren’t you holding Matthew accou wouldn’t be here if he hadn’t persistently called my boss and had Johnson pick us up! You people.

I raised a hand to stop Carol’s outburst and calmly smiled at Matthew.

“Nonsense!” Grace screamed.

This was the first time I had seen Grace in this state. If only she had been this spirited when she was younger, she might not have endured a lifetime of frustration. I wondered what had finally caused her to

explode.

It seemed that in private, Melanie had been coaching Grace. She had indeed been brainwashed.

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“Now that there’s a grandson in the Murphy family, your little schemes are over! Do you think you waltz back into the Murphy family? Not unless I’m dead! Today, I’d rather this event not happen at all than

let you fool everyone, you evil woman...

She struggled to stand and Matthew finally remembered to help his mother up.

“Mom! Calm down... Don’t stoop to her level! She’s not worth it!”

Matthew’s words echoed in my mind with a resounding crash. This, I suspected, was his true opinion. I

had an intense urge to rip off the false facade he was wearing and reveal the hypocrite beneath.

Suddenly, the entire hall lit up, and everyone turned to the large screen on the stage...

Chapter 326 Mysterious Ally

The sudden brightness in the banquet hall stunned everyone. All the large screens had lit up, capturing

everyone's attention.

A familiar video played on the screens. It was footage of Ava's birthday when Matthew had carried her out of the school gate to collect her gift. Then, Melanie arrived.

The people in the banquet hall were puzzled and started whispering, "What's going on?"

Even I was surprised, wondering who had orchestrated it. It seemed I had an unexpected ally in attendance. I couldn't help but glance at Johnson, who had come over with Matthew earlier. Besides Matthew and Melanie, Johnson was likely the only one who knew the whole story.

As the video played for the second time, someone exclaimed, "Oh my, isn't that Melanie? What's she-?!"

The person's exclamation drew even more attention as everyone focused on the repeated violent scenes. Finally, someone made a bold guess, "Isn't that Melanie? She's pregnant yet causing trouble at a kindergarten. She even kicked someone when they got out of the car."

"Look, did you see that? She couldn't stand still. My gosh!"

"Thankfully, an ambulance came. Chloe didn't move at all and even got hit by Melanie."

The terrifying video sent shivers down everyone's spine. People gasped and murmured in shock. I turned away from the screens and looked at Stella and Liora, who watched the footage.

Melanie was no longer as composed. She pointed at the screens and shouted, "Who the hell did this?!" She turned to Matthew and said, "Didn't you tell say-"

"Shut up!" Matthew snapped.

Johnson demanded, "I thought we deleted all the footage. Who did this?"

Matthew glared at me and growled, "Chloe..."

I shrugged and raised my hands, saying, "What? Feeling flustered when faced with the truth?"

Find out who did this!" Johnson continued to express his frustration. It seemed he had done everything

ensure he had left no traces of the footage. Otherwise, Matthew wouldn't be so confused.

Mathew scolded him but didn't move to turn off the screens.

sonran off and returned shortly after, saying, "Damn it! The control room is locked:

Carol rolled her eyes disdainfully. "Why bother turning off the screens? Everyone has already seen everything. Do you want to dig our eyes out? Matthew, did you think you could get away with it just because you paid someone to delete the footage?"

Melanie glared at Carol. "Shut up! Who do you think you are?"

"I'm no one special, but I like speaking my mind. If you did something, you have to own up to it. Even if you paid to delete the video, the heavens are still watching. Liars will always get their karma. Mrs. Grace, if you don't understand what's happening, come over here."

Carol bent to pick up the chair Melanie had knocked over and placed it before one of the screens. "Sit here and observe before you start hurling accusations."

The onlookers laughed, "This family is something else. They keep trying to slander Chloe in front of everyone. Is that fun for them? They've been through so much together, so why do this?"

"The Murphys are telling blatant lies. Don't they fear karma? They even forced Ms. Chloe to come today. Matthew set up this whole thing to humiliate his ex-wife, right?"

Matthew was furious. "You're spouting nonsense, Carol!"

"Are you still denying it?" Carol looked at him fearlessly. "Everyone, don't jump to conclusions before seeing the truth next time. Be especially careful of the things said by those who lie. They pretend to let things go when they're at fault from the start."

I kept my smile as I looked at Liora and Stella.

I'm impressed, Matthew. You're so unlucky for constantly falling at your setups. Instead of having an affair this time, you gathered a mob to slander Ms. Chloe at your party. Why are you ruining yourself?" "Oh my, why is it so lively here? The party hasn't started yet, has it?"

Chapter 327 An Uninvited Guest

Everyone turned to the entrance when they heard the slightly mocking voice. To my surprise, I saw the uninvited Lauren walking in. I instinctively face-palmed in amazement.

Lauren's presence shocked everyone. She had exposed Matthew's affair at our wedding anniversary a few months ago. The supposedly upright Matthew even went to court for our divorce.

Lauren's actions caused Matthew and I to divorce. His notoriety skyrocketed immediately after. Although Lauren was once his mistress, she had exposed him for his affair with Melanie.

Today, she again appeared at Matthew's son's full moon banquet. I knew she wasn't here to enjoy the food, either. Her appearance always held some significance, and it seemed Matthew would pay the price

today.

I was even more surprised because we agreed she was not supposed to come. I wondered why she came anyway. I covered my eyes, realizing that another exciting show was about to begin. Still, I didn't know

what she would do this time.

As I looked around, I noticed a middle-aged woman accompanying Lauren. Judging from the former's age, attire, and demeanor, I knew she was not Lauren's friend. Instead, the middle-aged woman appeared

somewhat raunchy..

She followed Lauren with a nervous smile. Anyone could tell the woman had applied significant foundation to her face. Her eyes were sharp and greedy as she scanned her surroundings. She appeared

amazed by the luxurious setting before her.

For some reason, I felt like I had met her somewhere. Still, I didn't know where Lauren had found this

woman.

Suddenly, Grace exclaimed, "You bitch! Matthew, get her.....get her out of here!"

Everyone was shocked as their eyes darted around, trying to figure out who Grace was cursing. It seemed

she was referring to the woman beside Lauren.

Lauren chuckled at the chaos. Then, she turned to the woman and softly prompted her to scan our side of

the room.

Soon after, she stepped past Lauren and pointed at our group, asking Lauren, “Which one? Is it her or her?”

The woman’s finger ultimately settled on Melanie.

Lauren grinned, gave the woman a thumbs up, and raised a brow

After receiving approval from Lauren, the woman approached Melanie and wailed, “Oh, my dear daughter and grandson! I finally found you! Quick, let me see my grandson.

Matthew was dumbfounded. He stared at Lauren, who was standing at the door, smiling.

He had probably guessed Lauren was up to no good. However, he didn’t know what she would do. When the woman ran toward Melanie, Grace went berserk. She screamed at Matthew to throw the woman out.

At that moment, Stella pulled Liora aside and looked at the woman frustratedly.

The woman grabbed Melanie and scrutinized her from head to toe. “Oh, I’ve missed you so much, my dear daughter. You made it so hard for me to find you.”

Chapter 328 A Show to Behold

I almost laughed aloud after finally realizing who that woman was. She was Melanie’s biological mother. The woman was a drama queen. She kept repeating. “You made it hard for me to find you.”

However, her expression felt out of place. I wondered what she was looking for.

After birthing Melanie, the woman left her with the Murphys and showed no concern over the years. Since that was the case, I couldn’t believe her struggles to find Melanie.

The Murphys caused a stir when they moved out of their old place. The woman would only need to ask around to find their new place. Considering her attire, she probably didn't fare well alone. Now, she had

found a lucky break.

I knew she was a troublemaker, too. Her return meant that the Murphys, especially Grace, were in for dark times ahead. I couldn't help but glance at Grace, shaking with anger. I felt genuine sympathy for her.

After all, she had sincerely cared for Ava over the years.

I admired Lauren for managing to find that woman. I wondered where Lauren had found her. Evidently, the woman's return was a severe punishment for the Murphys, especially Grace.

now but became an onlooker. It felt great to sit

I was the main character just back and watch such an entertaining show. No wonder Grace became so hysterical just now. After all, that woman had become a homewrecker to the Murphys long ago.

Melanie was in utter shock as the older woman held onto her. The former tried to break free but couldn't.

Melanie never showed respect to those she considered beneath her, and that woman's attire showed she was of a lower social status. Therefore, Melanie was furious, roaring, "Let go of me, you old hag! Who are

you?! Get lost!"

The woman's expression turned stern as her eyes glinted with greed. She did not expect Melanie to scold

her.

Finally, I realized why the woman's eyes looked so familiar. They were the same ones Melanie had. I was

confident that the woman was Melanie's biological mother.

"Don't you know who I am, you heartless brat?! I'm your mother!" The woman was fuming. "I went through hell to birthday you. Now that you're living a good life, you've forgotten your mother? How can you be so

heartless?

Melanie was petrified. After finally regaining her thoughts, she asked again. "Who are you? Get away from

me!

"I am your mother!" The woman pointed at Grace in anger. "Ask that old hag who I am. Grace, tell her!"

Grace was livid as she pushed Matthew aside. She frenziedly ran toward the woman and grabbed her hair, yelling, "Abby Patton, how dare you show your face here?! I'll kill you!"

Chaos erupted as the two women wrestled. It was impossible to separate them.

Lauren sauntered over and mocked, "Well, it looks like no one will serve food anytime soon. Are you

hungry, Chloe? I've handled the formalities, so let's find a nice place to eat. That's their family matter-you're not one of them."

Matthew bellowed, "Lauren!"

Lauren smiled at him fearlessly and said, "Ha! Savor the taste of betrayal, Matthew. As for you, Melanie, I can torment you without lifting a finger. How dare you trick me? You're not even on my level."

Chapter 329 Ticking Time Bomb

Lauren tugged at my hand, I glanced at Carol, and then we left together. When we arrived at a fondue restaurant, Carol could not wait to ask Lauren how she found Melanie's biological mother.

Lauren smiled smugly and told us everything. She had tasked her friends with finding Abby and had been waiting for an opportunity to put her to use. It was clear why Matthew was so embarrassed.

Lauren had searched for Abby for several months. About a month ago, she received word that Abby was in the suburbs. The older woman had been hopping from one place to another, marrying and causing

trouble for her various husbands.

However, Abby had never established herself properly.

Lauren

had brought her back to Foswood in time for Matthew's party. She had wined and dined Abby for an entire evening, subtly influencing her. Hence, Abby could not wait to reunite with her 'successful'

daughter.

Carol and I burst into laughter as we listened to Lauren's story. It was quite a spectacle, and the Murphys

were in for some turbulent times ahead.

Lauren had planted a ticking time bomb within the family. It seemed they would never have peace again.

I admired Lauren for her audacity. I knew she held grudges, and I was fortunate not to have crossed her." Lauren, you're amazing. Thank goodness I've never done anything to offend you."

Lauren enjoyed our laughter but soon grew severe, saying, "Don't think too highly of me. I only did it to get back at Matthew for you. I'm not the type to pursue vengeance relentlessly."

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She shot me a sarcastic look to tease me and then sighed, "In a way, I feel sorry for you. I just couldn't stand Matthew getting away with everything. So, I took revenge on your behalf."

I tried explaining my feelings to Lauren. I felt apologetic about how Melanie had treated her. Before I finished, Lauren interrupted, "You don't need to explain. Do you think I'm oblivious?"

Her response stunned me. I looked at her in surprise and asked, "You knew? I wanted to confess several times, but I was scared."

Lauren feigned anger and teased me, "I'm a reasonable person. I know it wasn't your fault. I decided to confront Matthew independently, which had nothing to do with you. Anyone would defend their own. especially a mamage. I just think Matthew's a jackoff.

Carol agreed, "She's right, Ms. Chloel He's an asshole for continuously harassing you. He even teamed up with outsiders to slander you. If it weren't for that footage, those Idiots would've gotten away with it

Her words weren't exaggerated. Indeed, the situation was tough.

Lauren nodded. "Can you honestly let this slide? If I were you, I couldn't do it!"

I remained silent for a while and then said, "This time, I want to set up a trap for three of them, but it will take some careful planning. I want to make them regret ever messing with me!"

Lauren squinted and leaned forward to look at me, asking, "Do you have a plan already?"

I glanced at her and Carol, and they immediately understood my gaze. They leaned in, and I whispered a few things to them.

Chapter 330 The Birth of the Secret Plan

When I finished explaining my plan, Lauren slammed the table. "I knew you were a sly fox! Your plan is the way to go. We either stay still or make a big move. Let's go with your plan."

After some thought, even Carol exclaimed, "Ms. Chloe, you blew my mind! I know what to do for your next

steps.

We were elated as we celebrated our newfound determination.

"I've had this idea for a while now," I said as I looked at Lauren thoughtfully. "It's just that the timing wasn't right. I wanted to keep it to myself, but they kept pushing me. The Murphys thought I was an easy target, didn't they?"

Lauren dipped a mushroom into the fondue and added, "They don't deserve forgiveness. Ivanna was right when she said you were too kind-hearted. Being that way brings more trouble, Chloe. It's not about avoiding the Murphys. You must get rid of them if you want to live in peace."

Carol concurred, "Let them tremble at the mere thought of you."

I nodded, knowing Carol and Lauren were more ruthless than I had been. "I think it's time to act since Melanie and her biological mother have reunited. I can't let this chance slip by."

Lauren volunteered, "I'll take care of Liora's side."

The three of us placed our hands together in a show of unity. After leaving the restaurant, we walked toward the setting sun.

Lauren dropped me off at home before leaving. That night, I received a call from Johnson. From his tone, I knew he was genuinely pleased. I did not expect him to make such a wise move today.

I would have been at a loss if he hadn't shown the surveillance footage on the big screen. After all, I couldn't act against Grace for Ava's sake. Grace's insults had already turned everyone against me, and the people present grew increasingly hostile toward me.

I thanked Johnson over the phone,

Johnson, feeling regretful, said, "Hey, there's no need to thank me, Ms. Chloe. The truth is, I appreciate your kindness. I don't know what came over me last time. I felt like I was under a spell. You saved my

family, and now we're living as a happy trio."

I listened silently to Johnson's remorseful words, genuinely pleased. He continued, "I realized no woman

better than my wife. I learned that the affairs meant nothing and that those women were only after

"I must thank you. My wife keeps reminding me that you've helped our family significantly. We'll always be grateful to you."

I felt content hearing Johnson's words. I was pleased that he had come to his senses and taken connective actions before it was too late.

Johnson said. "So that's why I'll always help you, Ms Chloe. Besides, Melanie kept tormenting me. Oh my god, I was so helpless!

Although I had already heard about this from Myra, I finally realized it was also Johnson's way of venting his frustrations. He also told me what had happened at the banquet after I left. Grace was no

match for

Abby and even got beaten up

Naturally, Matthew helped his mom, especially in public. After all, anyone would be furious if an outsider attacked their mom Matthew beat up Abby in front of everyone. Ultimately, the two older women ended

up in a hospital

Johnson chuckled, "Judging from Melanie's attitude, she's siding with Grace. It seems the drama isn't over yet. People shouldn't mess with Lauren, either."

"What about the banquet? I asked