

The Substitute Wife My Poor Husband is a Billionaire

Chapter 317: Apologize •

Pleasantly surprised, Janet looked up from her phone and sneered at the HR staff. Then she began to type out her reply to Brandon. "Miss Lind, please sign on the resignation notice," the staff member said through gritted teeth. She grew angrier when she saw that Janet began to tinker with her phone. Ignoring her, Janet texted Brandon back. "Are you serious, Mr.Larson? What did you find?" The message from Brandon was a godsend. She was just about to accept the fact that the Larson Group had given up on her. Brandon replied with a long message. "Upon investigating the matter, we found out that Lester Silk Fabric took over the platform recently. Luna didn't upload the design drafts a year ago, but a few days ago. The data was tampered with. Lester Silk Fabric used their connections and managed to get to your works before the show officially began. They asked Luna to make a collection based on your works and posted them on the platform. They tampered with the date and time stamp of the post to frame you for plagiarism." Janet had already guessed that it was Lester Silk Fabric behind this, but she had no idea

how they did it. "How did you find that out?" The platform was now owned by Lester Silk Fabric. How could they have let Brandon investigate them? "We have tech guys here. They were the ones who found evidence of them tampering with the platform's database. Even if they had altered the original date of uploading, our tech guys were able to retrieve it. We also have a video confession of the staff who tampered with the data." Brandon's words lifted a weight off of Janet's heart. He sent two videos to Janet and said, "We've done what we could. You should be able to take it from here now, right?" All of a sudden, Janet felt a surge of energy. She stood up with a confident smile and said to the HR staff member, "I didn't do anything wrong and I knew that the company won't fire me because of some groundless accusation!" As she spoke, she tucked her phone away. The staff member gritted her teeth and glared at her angrily. "Janet Lind, you plagiarized someone else's work yet you feel no shame?" Janet ignored her. She turned around and left without looking back. ***** Tiffany looked up in surprise when Janet entered her office. "What's up, Lind?" "Miss Fisher, can I have Ritchie Lester's number?" Janet asked politely. In Tiffany's eyes, she looked inexplicably relaxed, as though her career wasn't in danger. Tiffany looked at her warily and then nodded slowly. "I have his number, but may I ask why you need it?" "I want to call him and

apologize," Janet answered simply. "Lind, are you crazy? Go back to work. You didn't plagiarize anything, so keep a low profile for now. There are enough discussions about you already," Tiffany scolded. After saying that, she lowered her head and continued to work. But Janet stayed glued to the spot, staring at her with fierce determination. After hesitating for a few seconds, Tiffany relented and held up Ritchie's business card. She said in a resigned tone, "I don't know what you're up to, but I hope you know what you're doing." Janet reached for the card with a bright smile. Of course she knew what she was doing. That evening, Ritchie received a call from an unknown number. "Mr. Lester, this is Janet Lind from the Larson Group. After giving it some thought, I want to apologize in public," Janet said, her voice as sweet as honey. When Ritchie heard this, he was surprised. Then, he sneered. He was under the impression that Ethan's wife was a stubborn woman, but it turned out he was wrong about her. Janet had given up so soon. "You're scared, aren't you?" With a smug smile on his face, Ritchie smirked. "Come to Lester Silk Fabric tomorrow. You can apologize there in person."

Chapter 318

Press Conference Ritchie had a devious grin on his face when he hung up the phone. "Call all the designers under Lester Silk Fabric and the people in charge of the fashion week," he barked at his secretary. "I want them here tomorrow. Call some

famous personalities in the fashion industry as well. We need people in authority for the event." The secretary nodded respectfully. He was about to leave when Ritchie stopped him in his tracks. "Where the hell are you going? I'm not finished yet. Get your ass back here." The poor man scurried back, cursing his boss in his mind. ver "Invite every media outlet in Seacisco, especially the ones that prioritize viewership over anything. And make sure to tell them to hype up the event as much as they can!" Ritchie sat back on his chair as his plan began to take shape. "Get the biggest function hall for the press conference. I want hundreds of people to be there. Oh, and don't forget to arrange for a live stream, too. Contact our usual sponsors and tell them their products will be displayed throughout the feed. We might as well make some money while we're at it. And remember-our main goal is to discredit Janet and end her fashion career for good." 1 Another evil grin spread on Ritchie's face. He wanted to screw that woman over so badly that she could never get back on her feet again. The secretary pursed his lips and jotted every detail down. This time, he made sure that his boss was finished before leaving the office. The sun shone bright and early the next day. Just as planned, the press conference was held at the largest meeting hall in Lester Silk Fabric. Cameras littered all around the room, squeezed in among the throng of people who came to watch the spectacle.

Even as she swept a glance over the crowd, Janet didn't feel panicked in the slightest. "It looks like the Lester Silk Fabric really wants to do you in," Tiffany remarked from beside her. She turned to look Janet in the eye. "You're not just going to stand there and let yourself be bullied in public, are you? What's your plan?" A faint smile appeared on Janet's lips. "You'll find out soon enough. Don't worry. I'm not particularly inclined to suffer any misplaced grievances, either." With that, she walked onto the stage, all calm and grace. The room finally settled down as Janet took her place. Without wasting her time, she whipped out a flash drive and held it up for all to see. "Sorry for taking up your time, everyone. In order to convey my sincerity more properly, I have prepared a couple of videos for today's press conference." From a distance, Ritchie frowned and narrowed his eyes. He could sense that something wasn't right. Why was Janet so composed in such a situation? If anything, she should be mortified and humiliated right now, especially in front of all these people. What was she up to? He leaned over to his secretary and asked in a hushed voice, "Did she find something?" "She can't have," the other man replied confidently. "We've taken care to sweep everything. All the evidence has been locked away. I think she's just bluffing." At this point, Janet had already plugged the drive to a computer, and one of the videos

was playing on the widescreen Ritchie's eyes widened like saucers as they watched an employee of Lester Silk Fabric tampering with the time stamp on the website. The scene changed, and this time, the same man was sobbing hysterically as he divulged what he had done. n The clips ended, and a deafening silence fell in the room. Janet took the microphone and said, "As you can see, this is what really happened. Lester Silk Fabric managed to get hold of my designs prior to the show. After that, one of their designers, Luna Mccoy, posted my entire portfolio online and edited the details to make it look like she was the original designer. There is your truth. Once again, I thank each of you for coming to hear me out today. If you have further questions, kindly direct them to Mr.Lester. I'm sure he can give you better answers than I can." She gave Ritchie a meaningful look, then, and gestured in his direction with a wave of her hand. 2 As soon as she did, the crowd burst into an uproar.Chapter 319 The Ensuing Drama Shocked, Ritchie cursed out loud, "Fuck that bitch!" His secretary was also scared silly. Glaring daggers at him, Ritchie was pissed off and kicked him in the ass. Pointing his finger at the big screen, he cursed again, "What the fuck are you doing standing here for? Turn off the projector right now!" The secretary stumbled to the stage and proceeded to turn it off. Ritchie snorted, smoothed over his suit and made his way onto

the stage. This happened to be his territory, not Janet's. He lifted his chin and approached her, holding his head up high. "Janet Lind, you better be careful with what you say. As far as I can see, you were just making things up so that you can get yourself out of your predicament!" As he said this, he turned his eyes from her and exclaimed, "Give yourself up. Apologize right this moment! Don't waste any more of our time here!" W "Then why did you turn off the projector if I was, indeed, making things up? That's a sign of guilt. If you're so sure of yourself, you should allow me to show everyone the proof. I'm sure that everyone here is smart enough to tell if I actually made up the evidence or not," Janet smiled and said in a calm voice. Ritchie was exasperated to hear that. He clenched his teeth tightly and pointed his finger at the door. "I thought you came here to apologize. If you're not going to do that, why don't you leave this place immediately?!" While smiling, Janet didn't say a word. Instead, she turned to the audience before her and said word by word, "Everyone should know the truth by now. I'm going to sue Lester Silk Fabric for slandering my name." After finishing her speech, she didn't bother to argue with Ritchie anymore and went ahead to leave the stage. This scene was live streamed and everyone saw for themselves what had happened. Everyone in the room and the audience in the live stream room was shocked to say the least. The

audience began to discuss this amongst themselves. Even though Janet had only played the videos once, the reporters had gone out of their way to record them. "Mr.Lester, could you please offer an explanation for what happened just now?" "Lester Silk Fabric and the Larson Group have been rivals for years now. Was this why you decided to slander Miss Lind in this way? In order to taint the Larson Group's name?" "If your statement about Janet plagiarizing one of your designers' pieces was true, is there any evidence to back up your statement?" The reporters all turned to look at Ritchie and kept on asking him and Luna questions. "Miss Mccoy, are you going to make a statement? After all, weren't you the one who accused Miss Lind of plagiarism in the first place? What are your thoughts on the current situation?" "Did Mr.Lester instruct you to do this?" "Tell us, what's the nature of the relationship between the two of you?" Being ambushed by the reporters, Luna's mind went blank and she felt very embarrassed. She said frantically, "I have no idea. Don't ask me..." Under the dazzling flashing lights of the cameras, Ritchie couldn't even keep his eyes open. He kept cursing out loud while pushing the reporters in front of him away and saying, "Get the hell out of my way! Turn off your damn lights! You're blinding me!" His secretary hurried to stop his curses. If Ritchie's father found out about this, he would be very angry. Having

been spoiled by the Lester family since he was a child, Ritchie happened to be very irritable at this moment. Before he took over the company, his parents had to repeatedly remind him to control that temper of his. His secretary cleared the way for him while speaking to the reporters. "Please, sirs, madams, Mr. Lester can't answer all of your questions right now. We'll announce on our official website if we have any comments." Finally, Ritchie and the senior executives of Lester Silk Fabric were able to escape the madness of the room. Chapter 320 Take The Blame When she got home, Janet kicked off her heels and collapsed into bed. Now, she felt much better. "It's finally over!" After resting for a while, she got up and turned on the computer. She briskly posted the evidence on the forums Luna had posted to slander her before. A few hours later, the forums came to life as users discussed this matter heatedly. The dramatic turning-of-tables that had happened at the press briefing soon made headlines. Related videos went viral on the Internet. Suddenly, Janet's phone started to ring. It was Tiffany. "Lind, I'm impressed. Have you seen the comments on the post? Everyone's calling you a warrior. You really knocked them dead!" "Oh, my God! Seriously?" Janet moved her cursor to check the comments Tiffany was talking about. She had been focused on the media's reports until now and didn't know what people were saying in the comments. When

Janet read the comments, she found that the video of her talking on the stage had been spread all over the Internet. There was a lot of positive feedback. "Wow. Heart. Heart. She's so elegant and generous! And a fierce warrior too!" "She's a lovely girl. Such a polite and beautiful goddess plagiarized someone else's work? I doubt it!" "She's so pretty, I'd kiss her all day!" "Even though I'm a girl, I want her!" Janet buried her face in her hands, her cheeks blushing furiously. She had never been praised by so many strangers in her life. The next day, in the Lester Silk Fabric building... "Nonsense! These reports are all bullshit! How dare they call me rude?" Furious, Ritchie started trashing his office. He was in trouble, but there was nothing he could do. In recent years, Lester Silk Fabric and the Larson Group had become two very high profile companies. What with Janet's fiasco, the media was having a field day. In the span of just twenty-four hours, the reputation of Lester Silk Fabric was destroyed and its stock price plummeted. "There's nothing we can do to refute the evidence that Janet posted online. What we can do now is to try our best to keep the news from spreading. Mr. Lester, it was your idea to bring in more reporters there..." the secretary reminded Ritchie in a trembling voice, picking up the documents Ritchie had thrown on the ground. Ritchie glared at him, speechless. He picked up another stack of papers from the table and threw

them at the secretary's face. "I'm not an idiot. You don't need to remind me what I said." Things didn't end there. Brandon sent people from the Larson Group's legal department to help Janet file a lawsuit against Lester Silk Fabric. The second they got the notice of the lawsuit, Lester Silk Fabric responded quickly and held a press conference in the afternoon. Luna expressionlessly read a script in front of countless reporters, her face pale as a ghost under the limelight. "I admit that I peeked at Janet Lind's work before the show started. Then I bribed an employee to tamper with the upload date on the database. I falsely accused her of plagiarizing my work, and I did all this to gain fame and attention. I am responsible for all of this. My actions have nothing to do with Lester Silk Fabric." In the Larson Group, Janet stopped the video on her phone and sighed. "No class! Lester Silk Fabric made an ordinary employee take the fall!" Chapter 321 Ask Brandon Out For Dinner Gerda clicked her tongue unhappily. "Everyone knows they're using Luna as a scapegoat. She's just an ordinary employee. How on earth could she manage to do all of this? Lester Silk Fabric is really heartless." The other designers had also seen the video circulating the Internet. They began to discuss in hushed voices, but the general consensus was that Lester Silk Fabric was a cold blooded company. Janet pulled her chair and sat down. There was no point in dwelling on it now

that things had been settled. "I can't say I'm surprised. Now that Luna has taken the blame, we can't do anything to Lester Silk Fabric." "And what about those designs? Are they really not gonna put them back on the show?" Gerda puffed out her chest indignantly Janet smiled at her colleague gently. "It doesn't matter. Look on the bright side. I have gained considerable fame because of everything that's happened. Now, all eyes are on my work." In the end, Luna was put behind bars. And Janet had become an online celebrity. Many people now knew her name and saw her designs. Some even paid for it. When the dust settled, Janet poured all her energy into her work. She had been so busy with this matter the past few days, so now she could finally focus on other things. "By the way, Lind, I've been meaning to ask you something. How'd you get the evidence?" Gerda was talking about the videos that Janet had posted on the Internet, which had amassed more than a million views. Janet froze. After a few seconds, she broke into a smile and waved her hand dismissively. "A very capable friend helped me get them." Gerda nudged her arm and asked curiously, "What friend? A boyfriend perhaps?" Janet's eyes twinkled. "It's a secret. Gerda, is it just me or do you have a lot of time on your hands? Have you finished your design for this month? Don't come running to me again when the deadline approaches." "Ah! My God! I still have thirty-four

drawings to finish!" Gerda scratched her head and hurried back to her desk. Janet couldn't help but chuckle. Suddenly, she thought of the tall and straight back of Brandon. Now that she thought about it, she realized that Lester Silk Fabric had gone through all this trouble just to set her up. It must have cost Brandon a lot to get his hands on the evidence. Janet couldn't help but feel a little strange. Brandon had helped her countless times, but she hadn't really ever met him in person. She owed Brandon too much and she doubted she could ever repay him. After thinking about it for a long time, Janet finally plucked up the courage to send a message to Brandon. "Mr.Larson, would you be willing to let me treat you to dinner? You've helped me a lot and I'd like to express my gratitude somehow." 2 After hitting send, Janet put down her phone and wrung her hands nervously. The chairman of the Larson Group had probably tasted all the splendid dishes this world had to offer. But it was a token of her appreciation.Chapter 322 A Warning At the CEO's office of the Larson Group. The Larson Group's stock price had fluctuated over the past few days. Now that the situation was favorable for the Larson Group and its stock price had more than recovered, Ethan decided to seize the opportunity to put more pressure on the Lester Silk Fabric. Garrett hadn't slept properly in the past three days, dealing with the bad press: He was yawning sleepily when

Ethan's phone pinged. "Someone texted you." When he saw the name on Ethan's phone's screen, Garrett snickered. "It seems your wife's missing you." Ethan smacked Garrett on the back of the head and grabbed the phone. Instantly, his expression darkened when he read the text. "What is it? Why's your face like that?" Garrett asked seriously, the smile wiped from his face. "Janet's asking Brandon out for dinner." Ethan put his phone down and sighed. "If I refuse, she'll be very disappointed." Garrett leaned back with his hands clasped behind his head. "Yeah. You can't have dinner with Janet without her seeing your face. Last time, when you and Janet went to the company's masquerade ball, you almost exposed yourself. It'd be unwise to take such a risk again. It's not good for my heart either," he sighed. Ethan frowned and started typing out a brisk reply. "Thank you, but there's no need for you to treat me to dinner. You're an employee of the Larson Group. I helped you to protect the reputation of the company." Janet read his message and quickly replied, "But Mr.Larson, you could've just dismissed me." "If I dismiss any employee when something like this comes up, how will we keep the talented ones? Keep up the good work. That's thanks enough, Miss Lind," Ethan replied politely, keeping things professional. 1 He had deliberately distanced Brandon from her ever since what happened last time. He didn't want her to

suspect him of anything. Reading his reply, Janet had no choice but to give up. Ethan put down his phone, kicked the sofa Garrett was lying down on, and said, "I want you to relocate the one who had tried to force Janet to resign. Transfer her to a subsidiary company. Then, bring Charis here." Garrett was just about to take a nap. Hearing Ethan's orders, he helplessly peeled his eyes open and stood up from the sofa. He muttered under his breath, "This job will definitely be the death of me." Charis had expected that Ethan would want to have a talk with her, but when she received the notice, her heart still skipped a beat. "Why did you want to dismiss Janet?" Ethan asked in a low voice. He shoved his hands into the pocket of his slacks, and the light from the window elongated his shadow on the floor. "I just wanted to protect the company name," Charis answered defensively. Ethan narrowed his eyes at her coldly. "From now on, I'll take care of all matters related to Janet. No one other than me. Understood?" Ethan's cold voice sent a shiver down Charis's spine. She winced and smiled bitterly, as though she had been wronged. "I see how it is. You don't trust me now? Brandon, I don't have any ulterior motives, I swear. Ethan had already noticed that something was wrong with Charis. He never brought it up before because he didn't want her to look bad. She and her family had always valued their image. "I'm just warning you not to act against Janet.

Otherwise, don't blame me if I disregard our long term friendship." Chapter 323 A Long Forgotten Name After a moment's silence, Charis said in a low voice, "I see." Charis was a dignified woman. Before Ethan could say anything more, she turned around and walked out of his office, As soon as the door closed behind her, tears welled up in her eyes.. Ever since they first met, Brandon had never said such harsh words to her before, nor had he looked at her with such cold eyes. She hadn't cried in years. The last time was when she said goodbye to Brandon before going abroad. She had been reluctant to leave him. But now, she felt bad about Brandon's attitude towards her. She and Brandon had worked together for years. They had shared the company's ups and downs. But all of a sudden, with Janet now in the picture, Brandon suddenly was ruthless towards her. Tears rolled down Charis's cheeks as she realized just how important Janet was to Brandon. The hot tears dripped from her chin to the carpeted floor. "I met Brandon first," Charis muttered through gritted teeth. Charis didn't like to be candid with her shrewdness. The reason why she had tried to fire Janet was to win Brandon's heart. In Charis's eyes, Janet wasn't good enough for him. But now that Brandon had taken a liking to her, Charis figured he would deeply fall in love with her and she would eventually lose him for good. Thinking of this, Charis was more determined than ever to

separate Janet and Brandon.. But she couldn't act as overtly as before. Brandon had just warned her not to interfere with Janet's work ever again. She had to be more careful now. On the other side... After Janet got off work, she went home, only to find that Ethan had come home early today. "Oh, the workaholic is back! I'm surprised you still remember the way home!" Janet's voice dripped with sarcasm. Looking at the man who was busy cooking in the kitchen, she was not happy. After all, she hadn't seen Ethan for two or three days. That was because Ethan had been busy dealing with the plagiarism issue the past few days. But he couldn't tell her this. While cracking the eggs into a bowl, he found an excuse. "When I crossed Ritchie's path, he made a lot of trouble. The manager of the shop at work fired me. I've been working part time the past few days while looking for a stable job." Then, he paused and said sincerely, "I'm sorry that I haven't been here for you these days." In fact, there was some truth to his story. Ritchie had indeed caused him a lot trouble after all. Hearing this, Janet's heart immediately softened. She walked over to help him with the vegetables. "So, what happened? You didn't tell me the truth. I was worried something bad happened to you." "The problem's been solved. Don't worry," Ethan said with a reassuring smile. That much was true. Ethan had really solved the problem that had been plaguing them the past few days. "Your

brother is really hard to deal with." Janet pouted like a child. After transferring the egg into the pan, Ethan turned and his eyes landed on Janet's earlobe. His Adam's apple bobbed up and down as he gulped. "How about having dinner and then a little bit of exercise to unwind: "What kind of exercise?" Janet looked up at Ethan curiously. Almost immediately, she saw the lust in his eyes. His face was so beautiful. It was as though God had chiseled his face to perfection. His eyes stared deep into hers, filled with burning desire. Janet's face turned as red as a tomato. She quickly lowered her head and said shyly, "You're so naughty!" Then she focused on chopping the vegetables. Amused, Ethan patted her on the head affectionately. He really liked it when she blushed. He could feel that she liked him, but she always pretended to refuse him. He had to admit it really turned him on. But the romantic atmosphere was instantly soiled by the sound of the phone ringing. "Keep an eye on the eggs, okay? Don't let them burn." Ethan stroked Janet's hair. Then, he took off his apron and walked to the living room to pick up his phone. A long forgotten name appeared on the screen. It was Patrick Lester.

Chapter 324 Nora's Birthday Ethan pursed his lips. He glanced back at the kitchen at Janet, then opened the glass door to step out onto the balcony He was a little surprised to see that Patrick was calling him. It was winter and the cold wind was unforgiving. Ethan

stood on the balcony, letting the wind blow his hair. "Why on earth are you answering the phone outside? Isn't it cold out there?" Janet's voice broke the silence. Ethan was lost in his thoughts and didn't notice when Janet slid the door open and poked her head out. Narrowing her eyes at him suspiciously, she looked at the phone in Ethan's hand. He was answering the phone out on the balcony again. Was it Charis calling again? "It's Patrick Lester." Amused by the quirky expression on her face, he pulled her into his arms and finally answered the phone. "Ethan, why the hell did you keep me waiting?" Patrick's irritated voice came from the other end of the line. "I was busy just now," Ethan simply replied. Patrick didn't give a damn about whatever Ethan was up to. There was something he needed to talk about with Ethan, so he went straight to the point. "Your grandma's birthday is coming up and we're throwing her a party. She wants you and your wife here." Without waiting for Ethan's response, he hung up abruptly. — — Janet had overheard Patrick's loud voice. She looked up at Ethan and asked hesitantly, "So are we going?" Ethan held her tighter and sighed. "We are. Patrick seldom summons me. There'll be nothing but trouble if we disobey him. Besides, I haven't seen my grandma in a very long time. It's only right that I be there on her birthday." Janet smiled at him sweetly. "I can tell that you're fond of her." It

was true that Ethan's expression softened when he spoke of his grandmother. Nora Lester, Ethan's grandma, was a distant relative of the Larson family. She had known Ethan's mother when she was a girl. Although she didn't approve of what Patrick had done, she couldn't do anything about her son's decisions. She had always felt sorry for Ethan and used to secretly send him money. She was the only Lester who ever cared about Ethan. Thinking of this, Ethan rested his chin on the top of Janet's head. "She's a kind lady," he said calmly. It had been a long time since they last met-too long. "Let's not talk here. It's so cold!" Janet whined, her teeth chattering. Suddenly, a thought occurred to her. She shouted, "The eggs! I forgot all about them!" She broke free from Ethan's embrace and ran to the kitchen in a hurry. Ethan followed behind her. He stared at Janet, who was extremely flustered, and he couldn't help but smile. "You silly girl! I told you to keep an eye on the eggs!" Shaking his head, he gently pulled her to the side while he cleaned up the mess himself in the kitchen. Twiddling her thumbs, Janet stood in the corner, restlessly watching Ethan clean up after her. "I'm sorry. I thought you were talking to Charis, so I rushed to you and forgot I was cooking." Ethan had guessed this. After drying his freshly washed hands, he raised his eyes to look at Janet seriously. "It's my fault. I didn't give you enough sense of security."

After saying that, he spread out his arms and said gently, "Come here." Janet obeyed and leaned her face against his chest, blushing slightly. Then, thinking about the invitation from Patrick, she murmured, "The Lesters treat you badly, especially Ritchie. He hates you and I just got him into trouble. He probably has a huge grudge against us. Won't something bad happen if we just go there?"

Chapter 461 In Order To Survive Shelia didn't notice what was going on at all. She wiped off the sweat collecting on her forehead in a casual manner, flipped the meat over, and went on to roast it. "But if you really don't want to tell me, then forget about it. I was just being a little curious."

Narrowing his eyes at her, Victor said nothing, and silently retracted the knife he was hiding behind his back. He had a feeling that Shelia didn't mean him any harm. Shelia crushed some fruits and poured the juice over the meat. "Well, this definitely could be eaten. Here you go." "And what about you?" Victor turned to look down at the meat Shelia was holding out in her hand and didn't make a move to take it. "I'll roast some more for myself later." Seeing that Victor wasn't going to take the meat, Shelia smiled as if she had just realized something. "Don't worry about it. This meat isn't poisonous. You can rest assured and eat it with ease." Victor was on high alert right then, watching Shelia with vigilant and cold eyes. Even though Shelia happened to be an easy-going person,

this didn't mean that she was reckless. She had thought that Victor had gotten lost. But after she saw his injuries, she knew she was wrong and he was on guard against her. "I'm not very hungry. You go ahead and eat." Victor turned to look away and placed the meat aside. "I'll roast the rest for you." Seeing that he wanted to help, Shelia nodded and said, "Okay, it's perfectly fine if you don't eat." She took a bite out of the meat. After chewing for some time, she furrowed her brows and stuck out her tongue. "It's really hard to chew. It was not cooked fully yet. The meat I gave you just now must be the same. Why didn't you tell me? You even finished it." Seeing that Shelia spit the meat out, Victor didn't say a word and only continued to roast the meat. Putting her meat aside, Shelia turned around and spotted Victor's smiling face. "Why are you smiling? Van, you did this deliberately, didn't you?" "What? Am I smiling?" Victor never even realized that he was smiling. He lifted his hand and gently touched the corner of his lips. "Allow me to roast the meat for you. You have gone a long way. Go and get some rest." "I'm not tired at all. I'll just sit right here." With her hands propped under her chin, Shelia proceeded to sit down next to Victor. Seeing Victor roasting the meat so skillfully, she blinked her eyes and said, "Van, you're good at cooking meat, aren't you? Did you learn this skill all by yourself?" "I "Yes. I learned how to survive in the

wilderness." Victor spoke in a deep voice. "Survive in the wildness?" This was the very first time that Shelia had ever heard of such a thing. "Why did you go out of your way to learn that?" Imitating what Shelia did earlier, Victor also crushed some fruits and poured the juice over the meat. Also, he used a knife to slice the meat. When he heard what Shelia asked, his eyes darkened visibly. After a while, he said, "I have no idea." In fact, Victor knew the reason why. He learned that because he wanted to be prepared in case of any crisis. Carolyn knew ahead of time that even under her protection, Victor would find himself in danger one day. She pushed him to learn more skills so that he would at least have a better chance to survive in case of an emergency. "Alright." Pouting, Shelia continued to focus her gaze on the burning flames. Out of the corner of his eye, Victor caught a glimpse of Shelia's profile and the dust that rested on the tip of her nose. He stretched out a hand to wipe off the dust. Shelia was startled and turned to look at Victor with a blank expression. When Victor looked straight into Shelia's eyes, he started to feel a little embarrassed. He retracted his hand, looked away, and explained, "Your nose has dirt on it." "Is that so?" Shelia went ahead to rub her nose with the back of her hand. "And what about now? Is it still dirty?" "No," Victor said, glancing over at Shelia. "Good." Shelia smiled. "Van, what else did you learn other than roasting meat? I

want to learn too. Can you teach me?" "Why do you want to learn this?" "In order to survive." The words came out of Shelia's mouth very naturally. Chapter 462 Come With Me "In order to survival," shelia said casually. But Victor felt sad upon hearing that. "Is the meat ready to be flipped? It's on the verge of being burned." Shelia pointed out. Upon recall by Shelia, Victor saw a small burn on the meat's exposed side when he looked at it closely. He flipped the meat over while he was still thinking about what she just said. He had second thoughts about whether or not to ask her about it. It was, after all, Shelia's own business. Shelia, on the other hand, didn't seem to take it seriously. She asked, "Will you please teach me?" "Hmm," Victor said after a while. "Is that a yes?" Suddenly, Shelia's eyes glowed, and she broke into a grin. Her two dimples, meanwhile, became much more stunning. Victor nodded, "Okay." Shelia grinned broadly as she said, "Thanks so much, Van. You are the kindest individual I've ever encountered, except for my caretaker in the orphanage." "Orphanage?" "Yap! That's where I was raised. However, two years ago, the orphanage was taken over and the old woman was unwell and died." Shelia's eyes clouded as she spoke about this. "The elderly woman was a wonderful friend. When I was younger, she prepared great meals and gave me a lot of fresh fruits." 'She is an orphan...' Victor pursed his lips. "A guardian was

needed to look after you since the orphanage was taken over. Why didn't you leave with the other kids?" Shelia looked up at Victor and answered, "I didn't want to leave." That was the only home Shelia had known for so long. "Are they okay with you being outdoors on your own?" Shaking her head, Shelia said, "No. But I was desperate to visit her tomb, so I fled. My whereabouts remain unknown to them, and I don't intend to return." In spite of the dingy ground, Shelia lay down immediately. She was bathed in shards of sunshine that had been scattered by the trees and fallen to the ground. She placed her hands behind her head, her lips quivering. She sighed with disappointment as she gazed up at the sky. "I want to visit her." "So, what keeps you from doing so?" "There are people guarding the area. They'll find me if I go there. She had no idea that I have a name now. I'll tell her my name when I meet her again in the future," Shelia said, blinking her eyes. Victor's black eyes remained fixed on Shelia and he said nothing. Shelia continued, "If she had the chance to see you, Van, it would be more than likely that she would like you. She had a soft spot in her heart for adorable kids. She said that I was a lovely girl." Adorable? It didn't seem appropriate to use this term to describe a boy. Looking at Shelia, Victor concluded that the adjective "lovely" was an apt description of her features, particularly her eyes. Without thinking twice, Victor

asked her, "Since she was responsible for your upbringing, how come you got your name so late?" "She was unable to communicate since she was deaf, mute, and illiterate. She never referred to us by name. Only a poker card was in my possession." Shelia gently removed it from her pocket as if it were a treasure and presented it to Victor as she spoke. "In the orphanage, each kid was given a unique card. When the elderly woman split the fruits, she put them on the cards and let us take them as we pleased, but we were naughty,' shella erupted into laughter, which was maybe due to the reference to the pleasant thing. Victor stared at the card—the King of Hearts. "Hey! Did I get the best card?" Shelia inquired. "It's definitely the best." Shelia retracted the card and said, "I am the only one with the King of Hearts." The meat was toasting as they were conversing. Victor gave her the meat after he re-applied the juice. "It's all set to go. Eat, please." A growl came from her gut just after his words ended. Shelia was embarrassed, so she put her hand to her stomach and ate the meat with a greedy slurp. "Yummy! It's much better than the meat i made myself! Van, you're outstanding!" Victor's expression softened somewhat. Shelia felt rejuvenated after a good meal. As she rose to her feet, she said, "Let's keep going!" Victor nodded and was ready to rise when Shelia abruptly extended her hand to him. "Come on, get up." Victor was taken aback,

and after a little pause, he took Shelia's hand in his and replied, "Sure." After learning the hard way, Shelia used a dart to put marks on the tree trunks. They had lost track of time as they went. The sun had cooled down considerably. Shelia assisted Victor in sitting down on a stone and drank some water. "I'm not sure how far we'll have to travel until we're out. Hopefully, we can get out before the sun sets." Victor drank some water as well. His body was perhaps exhausted after so much walking, and he was coughing up blood for the second time. He said incoherently, "I'm sure we can. Let's move forward." "You still have the energy?" "Like never before..." Shelia nodded and continued to hold Victor. In her forward motion, she murmured, "Van, you look rather frail. After you return, be sure to eat extra." Victor lowered his gaze to the side of her face. Shelia's small face was covered in mud after a day and a night in the forest. "And you? What's your plan?" "Plan?" Shelia was slow to respond. Victor remarked, "What are your plans once we leave the forest? Where will you be heading?" "I don't know... I want to continue my travels and explore the world's finest rivers and mountains. I'll go to the police station when I can no longer walk and beg them to take me back," Shelia answered with a grin. "Shelia." Victor appeared to have made up his mind after staring at Shelia for a long time. "What's the problem?" "Please come with

me after we get out of here. I'm sure my grandma will like you, I will defend you if she doesn't like you. You can count on me." "You want me to come with you?" "Is it all right with you? If you don't want to, it doesn't matter." Victor was concerned that Shelia might refuse. Shelia paused for a while before asking, "Are you joking right now?" "No, I'm not. I promise to treat you the best I can." Victor convinced her. Shelia nodded and smiled at Victor, saying, "Okay. I'll agree when we get out of the jungle." "Sure." The moment they emerged from the woods, though, everything changed. • Chapter 463 Let Her Go The sun started to disappear below the horizon, basking the forest in a pale red glow that passed through the branches and leaves. The light glimmered on the bodies of Victor and Shelia. They had been walking since high noon and now, the sun was setting. Their tiredness was assuaged when they saw a relatively spacious country road. "Finally, we're out of the forest. Maybe we'll meet local villagers if we walk a little further. We can..." Before Shelia could finish her sentence, she saw Victor stop walking. She was confused. She looked at Victor, wanting to know why he stopped. "Van?" "Well, well, well, i didn't expect you to come out alive." Norton's voice came, Shelia looked for the source of the voice. She saw three cars that were parked not far from them. Norton stood at the front, looking at them intently as he played with a

knife. Shelia could feel right away that they were Victor's enemies. She instinctively moved to shield Victor, who in turn stood protectively in front of her. Victor didn't take his eyes off Norton, watching his every move. In a voice that only Shelia could hear, Victor said, "Run into the forest when I tell you to. You won't get lost even when it gets dark. When we were finding our way out of the forest, I put marks all the way. Follow these marks and you can get back here." "And then?" Shelia asked, her eyebrows furrowed. Victor looked straight into Shelia's eyes. "Walk along this road. When you meet villagers, borrow a mobile phone from them, and call this number." Victor knew that Norton didn't intend to let him go. Norton just wanted to play a game with Victor by throwing him into the forest. Victor felt that if he couldn't escape this predicament, Shelia shouldn't be implicated. He had promised to give Shelia a family, bring her back to see his grandmother, and treat her as his own family. But it seemed that Victor could not fulfill the promise he made in the forest. Holding Shelia's hand, Victor wrote a phone number on her palm with his fingertip. "Shelia, call the number once you get hold of a mobile phone," he whispered. "This is my grandmother's number. Call her and she will pick you up wherever you are." Shelia just looked down at her palm. Seeing that Shelia didn't respond, Victor looked at her and asked in confusion, "Shelia?"

"No." Shelia pulled her hand back. Her eyes were a little red. "I don't want to remember the number, nor do I want to." "Shelia, be a good girl." Victor frowned. He was so anxious that he coughed violently as soon as he finished speaking. Shelia remained adamant and clenched her fists. She just didn't want to spread her palm and let Victor write the phone number again. Even if Norton couldn't hear what Victor and Shelia were talking about, he could tell that they were reluctant to leave each other. With a condescending sneer, he said, "Tut, tut, tut, this is so touching. Such strong feelings for each other! I'm so moved by you." Victor tensed up when saw Norton approaching them. He intuitively pulled Sheila behind him. Victor was seriously injured and keeping himself standing steadily was taxing for him. It would be hard for him to fight off Norton. Norton deliberately walked up to them slowly. Victor and Shelia stepped back. Losing patience with them, Norton pulled Shelia towards him. Norton was too fast for Victor to stop him. "Let her go!" Norton kept a firm grip on Shelia's wrist. He found satisfaction in hearing vexation in Victor's voice. "You know you look pretty," Norton said as he wiped the mud on Shelia's face with his thumb. He knew this would all the more incense Victor, Disregarding body pain, Victor rushed over and tried to take Shelia back from Norton. But he stopped in his tracks when something silver flashed

through his eyes. It was a knife that Norton pressed against Shelia's neck. Victor spat out a mouthful of blood. "No." "What are you saying?" Norton said in a contemptuous tone and gave Victor a mocking smile, pretending not to hear what Victor had said. Victor felt that he had difficulty in breathing. He clenched his fist and tried to steady himself. "What you want is my life. It has nothing to do with her. So, let her go!" "Oh, wow! This is so touching." Norton curled his lips. "But I don't want to let her go. I don't where she comes from but I find your reaction quite interesting. Mr.Sullivan, do you think it's boring for you to die alone? I can do something about that and let her accompany you." With red eyes, Victor breathed heavily. With the tip of the knife pressed against her neck, all Shelia could do was raise her chin. Her body was tensed up. But when she saw Victor spat out blood and beg for mercy, she scoffed at Norton. "Is that all you can do? Threaten kids?" Norton kept his mocking smile plastered on his face. Yet, his eyes narrowed in anger when he heard Shelia's disdainful words. "What did you just say?" "I said you are a loser." Shelia swallowed. "You just feel a sense of accomplishment by threatening two kids. What's more, you don't have in you to do what you intend to do. So, cut the crap. If you want to kill me, then do it." "Shelia..." Victor desperately tried to stop Shelia. He knew that she was provoking Norton. He was afraid that Shelia would

make Norton's hackles rise and the man would do just what she was saying. Norton was indeed angry. He looked fierce, but he kept his voice in check as he talked to Shelia. "Oh, really? Looks like you really want to die." Shelia rolled her eyes. "I can help you with that," Norton said, laughing derisively. He turned to his men and instructed them, "Tie her up." Victor squinted his eyes and asked anxiously, "What are you going to do?" Norton didn't answer. He just glared at Victor. Norton's men did as they were instructed. With her hands and feet bound, Shelia was taken to one of the cars. Victor was made to ride a different car. Victor racked his brain thinking about where Norton was taking them. Chapter 464 Victor Woke Up "Ahem! Ahem!" The river was flowing rapidly. As soon as the water rushed over, it inundated Shelia, making her choke easily Victor saw how Shelia's face became paler by the moment. His hands clenched into fists, and the blue veins on his neck became very visible. He gritted his teeth and yelled, "Let her go!" Unable to open her eyes because of the gushing water, Shelia had difficulty speaking. She actually wanted Victor to run away. But the moment she opened her mouth, she was choked by water. Soon enough, her eyes became redder. Looking at the exasperated expression on Victor's face, Norton scoffed at him. He thought that Victor might be strong but he was useless in this kind of situation. "You're making me laugh,

boy. Do you think that I'm a good man? Why the hell should I obey you?" With a cunning smile, Norton approached the rope, squatted down, and blew the unsteady flame. "But for the sake of you wanting to save her so much, I will give you a chance. There's still some good in me, huh? What do you think?" Victor could just glare at Norton. He would do whatever it took to save Shelia. Looking Shelia, who was in the middle of the river, Norton squinted his eyes and snapped his fingers. Immediately after, two men behind him appeared and stood between the rope and Victor. Norton slowly stood up and looked at Victor with a wry smile. "Here's what I'm thinking. These two are the weakest among my men. The one on my left has only killed two people, and the one on the right has killed five." After a brief pause, Norton continued, "You want to save her, right? Knock them down!" As soon as Norton finished speaking, the two men who had been holding Victor's arms let go of him and took a few steps back. While playing with the knife in his hand, Norton touched its tip with his thumb and warned, "But of course, you have to hurry up. Defeat these two before the rope breaks. Otherwise, you can say goodbye to your good friend. The moment she's washed away, I'm afraid that you won't even find her corpse." Looking at the flickering flame, Victor didn't care about anything else. Time was of essence, so he quickly rushed up and fought against the two men.

Norton was a mercenary and the most popular leader the Roaring Tiger had. Of course, even his weakest subordinates should be strong as well. Moreover, Victor was currently badly injured. But even in his peak state, he might not even be able to defeat one of the two weakest subordinates of Norton. Both of them were tall and burly men that could easily flip Victor over. Without a doubt, Victor was at a disadvantage from the very beginning. As Victor rushed over to them, the two men punched Victor right in his abdomen one after another, and hit his back with their elbows. Bam! As soon as he was hit, Victor staggered and struggled to stand steadily. But because he was hit repeatedly, his strength left him, and he eventually knelt on the ground. The pain of his bones being broken scattered all over his body, making him feel somewhat awake. At this time, Victor's face looked black with bruises. He still tried to stand, not ready to give up. However, before he could even get back on his feet, he saw another punch coming. He was still able to subconsciously use his arm to block it, but it didn't make much difference. As he was hit again, Victor spat out a mouthful of blood, and a tooth also fell out. At this point, Victor's vision became blurry. Nonetheless, he still managed to fix his eyes on the rope, which was only a few steps away from him. It didn't matter how many injuries he obtained. As long as the fire was put out and the rope was grasped,

Shelia's life could be saved. He got her into this trouble, so he was willing to do anything to rescue her. As much as his mind wanted to go on, his body couldn't keep up any longer. Eventually, he fell back to the ground and lost his consciousness. 'Is it raining?' After some time, Victor was somewhat awakened when he felt droplets of rain falling on his face. He struggled to open his eyes, but his vision was still blurred. He just lay there on the ground, watching the raindrops fall. He couldn't help but wonder if he was still alive. His consciousness hadn't fully recovered yet, so he thought that he might be dreaming. But soon enough, the sharp pain that pierced every inch of his body made Victor realize that he was still alive. 'Shelia...' Victor wanted to stand up, but he couldn't move even an inch. He could only move his hands a little bit, grabbing the mud under his hands in vain. Trying his best, he turned his head to look at the river, only to find that there was nothing in it anymore. There was no trace of Shelia. "Ahem!" Victor coughed violently, spurting out more blood. Forcing himself, he grabbed onto the soil and opened his eyes as wide as he could. He looked at the river expectantly, as if he was waiting for something to show up. He waited for a long time. In fact, he didn't even know how much time passed by. But he never found the person he had been waiting. He hoped that someone would raise her head from the river or come

out from somewhere and call his name. Due to loss of blood and the excruciating pain he was experiencing, Victor couldn't keep himself awake. Eventually, he lost consciousness again. When Victor woke up again, he was finally saved. Carolyn's subordinates found him near the river. The operation to rescue him lasted for two days and two nights. After a doctor's diagnosis, it was found out that Victor had fractures in eight different body parts. The bones in his right knee were shattered, his chest and lungs were inflamed, and the critically ill notice was issued six times. The first thing Victor did after he woke up was ask Carolyn to send people to look for Shelia. He was still wearing an oxygen mask and struggled speaking. His life was not completely out of danger yet, but all he cared about was Shelia. Carolyn didn't even know who Shelia was, but she could sense that she must be a very important person due to his concern for her. Therefore, she didn't dare delay to send people to search for Shelia along the river. The search lasted for seven days, but Shelia couldn't be found. One week passed and there was still no news about Shelia. All Carolyn was able to give Victor was a crumpled playing card that got wet from the rain and then dried by the sun. Its surface was mostly covered with mud, but one could easily recognize that it was the King of Hearts. Two years later, Victor completely recovered. The first thing he did after fully recovering was buy a graveyard. He put

the King of Hearts card in a box and buried it under a tombstone. There was nothing on the marble tombstone aside from the card. There wasn't even Shelia's name on it. In the second year of Victor's recovery, while Karl was on a business trip, he suffered a sudden heart attack. People still tried to rush him to the hospital, but he was declared dead on arrival. 1 It was also in that year that Carolyn sent Victor abroad. After two more years, he finished his studies and finally returned. He began taking over several small companies under the control of the Sullivan Group. In the shortest time, Victor raised the sales of these companies from a very low level to one of the top in the industry. Since Victor was able to prove his outstanding ability, Carolyn gradually handed over the Sullivan Group to him. : At this time, Roger entered the ward where Rachel was. There he saw her sitting on the edge of the bed, holding a bowl of porridge, and coaxing Joey to eat more. "Mommy...I can't eat any more." Joey had been eating porridge for about half a month. So now, he couldn't even stand the smell of porridge anymore. Rachel sighed and had no choice but to put the bowl down. Then, she said, "Eat it again when you get hungry." Joey stuck his tongue out, not intending to eat it. Then, he saw Roger standing at the door, so he politely greeted, "Mr.Jimenez." 1 In the past half a month, Roger came to the hospital to visit Joey from time to time.

Therefore, the kid gradually got acquainted with him. What Joey liked about him was that Roger would bring some snacks when he came. Although Joey couldn't eat too much, he could at least taste something aside from porridge. Of course, Joey could only eat them in secret. When Joey greeted Roger, Rachel turned around and was surprised to see him. "Didn't you say that you wouldn't come today?" Every time Roger came here, he would send Rachel a message in advance to ask her if she wanted to eat something or if she needed something. Although she would say no every time, he would still insist on getting her something. Last night, when Roger asked, he said that he had an important project meeting today, so he might not be able to come. If he could still visit, it would probably be very late already. "Well, initially, I couldn't come." Looking at Rachel, Roger hesitated for a moment before finally saying, "But I got a message." In response, Rachel furrowed her brows in confusion. "Rachel, Victor woke up." Roger broke the news. Chapter 465 Dark Circles The operation done to Victor lasted for more than 70 hours. The door of the operating room opened and closed for several times as doctors went in and out. Lukas and Carson couldn't do anything but wait outside until the procedure was finished. Finally, on the fourth day since the operation began, the indicator light outside the room was turned off. This indicated

that the surgery was successfully done. Victor's life was saved, but he wasn't completely out of danger. Then, he was wheeled to the ICU. It was not until two days ago that his vital signs became stable. He became eligible to be transferred to the general ward. However, he was still in a coma. Carson invited an expert in the field to check Victor's condition and give a diagnosis. However, it wasn't what he was expecting. Victor sustained serious injuries. Although his old wounds had healed, they still had an aftereffect. Moreover, his new injuries just made matters worse. In the end, he said that only a miracle could save Victor's life. "Can you at least tell us when he will wake up?" Carson asked in a gloomy tone. "I'm afraid I can't say that either." The expert couldn't help but frown as he made things straightforward. "In fact, if I may be blunt, please consider preparing for the worst-case scenario." "So, you're saying there's a chance that he'll never wake up? Is he going to become a vegetable for the rest of his life?" Although the expert didn't say this, it was obvious that this was what he meant. It was not a hundred percent, but there was a huge chance that this was it for Victor. Except for Carson and Lukas, Rachel was the first one to know about this. Carson Carson deemed that Rachel had the right to know. He leaned against the wall outside Joey's ward, holding a cigarette between his fingers. He looked slightly disoriented, and there

were dark circles round his eyes. He just went down to tell Rachel about this important thing. But when Rachel heard the tragic news, her face didn't show much surprise. It was as if she had already prepared herself for something like this. In fact, Carson was a bit shocked. He didn't know when she became this mentally prepared. Perhaps, it was when Victor had been in a coma for about half a month after the surgery. Or it might have been even earlier. She was also there outside the operating room for 70 hours before the indication light turned off. After a moment of silence, Rachel glanced at the cigarette in Carson's hand and reminded him in a low voice, "This is the area for children's wards. You can't smoke here." As if he regained his senses, Carson put out the cigarette. Seeing her indifferent expression, he didn't bother continue discussing about Victor's grim condition. He then changed the subject and asked, "Anyway, how is the little boy?" "Joey? He's fine. The doctor checked him up yesterday and said that he has been recovering pretty well. In fact, it's expected that his plaster will be removed ahead of the initial schedule." Carson turned his head and peeped through the glass panel on the door. He saw Joey sleeping soundly in the bed. With a faint smile, he stretched for a bit and said, "Good for him. Alright then, I'm leaving now." After saying that, Carson turned around and left without looking back. It seemed that he really just visited to tell Rachel

about the doctor's diagnosis regarding Victor's condition. Apart from that, he had nothing else to say. In the blink of an eye, two days eventually passed by. Although she was made aware of Victor's condition, Rachel didn't intend to visit him. She just stayed in Joey's ward almost twenty-four hours a day. At the same time, Carson didn't show his face to her again. Because the diagnosis came from an expert, she was also convinced that Victor would never wake up. But now, Roger broke the news that Victor had miraculously woke up from being in coma. Obviously, Rachel was stunned. She stared at Roger for a long time without being able to speak a word. It was as if she was still judging Roger's expression if he was saying the truth. "So, Rachel... Do you want to go upstairs and see him?" Roger asked slowly. This time, Rachel pressed her lips hard and remained silent. Out of nowhere, someone gently pulled her sleeve and pulled her back from her deep thoughts. "Mommy, I want to see Daddy..." It was Joey, pleading in a soft tone. She failed to hide the fact that Victor was in a coma after obtaining serious injuries. When Joey woke up in the hospital, he actually had a vague guess. Later on, he found that Rachel had always been absent-minded and Victor hadn't come up in any of their conversation. Therefore, when Joey finally found out the truth, Rachel didn't have the heart to hide it anymore. Hearing the full truth, Joey didn't cry or say

anything, nor did he pester Rachel to go to the ICU to see Victor. Instead, he just smiled and made a joke. "Mommy, Isn't daddy bad? They say bad people live long lives. So, we don't have to worry too much about him." Looking at Joey's bright eyes, she felt a lump in her throat. After a few moments, she mustered her courage and nodded. "Yes, of course." The following two weeks, Joey had a good rest in the hospital. He didn't mention Victor, as if there was nothing wrong going on. But Rachel knew that Joey would actually wake up in the middle of the night from time to time and look at the ceiling with his eyes wide open. He was a brave kid for keeping it all inside him, but Rachel was aware that he missed Victor so much. "Okay..." Rachel's heart softened, and she agreed. Victor's ward was in the second inpatient building. Since Joey's wound hadn't fully healed yet, it was inconvenient for him to walk all the way there. So, Rachel simply let him sit in a wheelchair. Roger pushed the wheelchair for him, and the three of them went to Victor's ward together. Soon enough, they reached the elevator. Ding! The elevator finally stopped at the floor of the ward where Victor was. It turned out that the entire floor was a VIP ward, and there was only one patient at this time, Carson was sitting on the sofa in the hall, dealing with his work. When he heard that there were steps approaching, he furrowed his brows and eventually saw three people approaching like a family.

2 wer If Victor had seen this scene, Carson knew that he would have been very jealous. "Little guy, it's the first time I've seen you up here. What brings you here?" Carson asked Joey as he quickly set the document he was holding aside and raised his eyebrows. "Have you been beaten?" Joey asked, blinking his innocent eyes. "Me? Beaten? Why would you ask that? Do I look like someone who will be beaten easily? Ha! I'm the one who beats others, you know?" "Then where did those dark circles around your eyes come from?". "Dark circles?" Carson almost choked at Joey's question. In a panic, he picked up his phone, opened its front camera, and looked at his face. He realized that Joey was right. He looked totally haggard, and his eye bags were so big that it seemed like someone punched him. But of course, this was only to be expected. He hadn't have a good sleep for half a month. Carson was originally a handsome young man, but even he was susceptible to stress and fatigue. "Ha-ha!" Joey couldn't help but laugh after seeing the upset look on Carson's face. Hearing Joey's seemingly innocent laughter, Carson realized that he was fooled by this little guy again. Shaking his head, Carson stepped forward and pinched Joey's face hard. "You, brat. How dare you tease your godfather? You have guts, huh?" Joey felt a sharp pain on his face and retorted, "Huh? Who said that you are my godfather? I don't remember recognizing you as one." "You have

no opinion regarding that. Your father and I grew up together. We are best friends. He's the one who picked me. So, that's how I became your godfather." Carson raised his eyebrows and crossed his arms in front of his chest. "Unfortunately for you, even if you don't want it, that fact won't change." Joey tried to pull Carson's hand away using his uninjured hand and said, "Humph! If I don't want to admit it, no one can make me!" Carson clicked his tongue as he withdrew his hand from Joey's face. Then, he muttered in a slightly low voice, "I also didn't expect that I would have a godson someday. But as I said, it's a fact that you can't change. So, you'd better change your attitude towards me." Joey didn't say anything more, but he stuck out his tongue at Carson. Out of the corner of his eye, Carson recognized Roger standing there. He then tried to regain his composure and commented, "I see that you're not busy today, Mr. Jimenez." "Well, I heard that Mr. Sullivan has woken up. So, I came here with Rachel and Joey to see him," Roger explained. He didn't plan to lose his composure just because of Carson's sarcasm. "Oh, I see." Then, Carson pointed at the room and said, "His ward is over there. He is resting inside. You can go and see him." Chapter 466 Tacit Cooperation Rachel looked at the ward Carson pointed at, she became gloomy. No one knew what was going through her mind. "Let's go," Roger reminded Rachel gently.

"Alright." Rachel nodded and walked towards the ward. Roger followed her, pushing Joey's wheelchair. Carson's arms were placed over his chest. He was lost in thoughts for a while. Just when he was about to say something, Joey spoke before him. "Mr.Jimenez." "Is anything the matter?" Roger asked. He stopped and looked at the little boy. Carson was not standing very far away. As a result, Joey could see him from the corner of his eye. He raised his eyebrows as if he was giving Carson a hint. But after taking a quick glance at him, Joey turned his gaze elsewhere. "Mr.Jimenez, I need to use the bathroom." Rachel overheard what Joey was saying. "How about I take you there?" "No!" Joey replied in a very decisive tone. There was a serious look on his face. "Mommy, I am a boy." There was a bathroom in Joey's ward, so it wasn't a problem for Rachel to take him to the bathroom. But at that moment, they were no longer in the ward. So it wouldn't be appropriate for Rachel to take a boy to the ladies' room, just like it wouldn't be right for her to take him to the men's room. In reaction to Joey's words, Rachel looked at both men. First, it was Roger, then her gaze fell on Carson. She didn't want to bother the former, Carson soon observed that she was staring at him. Apparently, she wanted him to take Joey to the bathroom. He coughed and refused to pay any attention to Rachel's gaze. After that, he took out his phone and turned around as if nothing had

happened. He managed to give Joey a thumbs up without Rachel noticing. Then, Carson pretended like he was answering the phone. "Hello, Mr.Ramos! I have read the plan you sent to me..." While talking, he headed towards the nurses' workstation. But he wasn't very good at acting. The phone's screen lit up while he was still holding it to his ear. This implied that there was no call at all! Rachel saw what just happened clearly and understood that it was all a sham. "It's okay. I will take Joey there. He is actually right. It is very embarrassing for a boy like him to be taken to the bathroom by you." Roger smiled gently. "Thank you very much," Rachel said to Roger. But when he heard those words, they displeased him. He thought that Rachel ought to have been closer to him than she was. The past few days, they got along really well. Both of them were always in one another's company. But for reasons best known to her, she still alienated him. From the look of things, Rachel still didn't love him. Roger knew that it couldn't be achieved rashly. Still, he couldn't stop himself from thinking about the night Rachel was standing outside the operating room where Victor was operated on. Notwithstanding, he and Joey headed towards the washroom. After some time, Carson came back. "Where is Joey?" he asked Rachel knowingly. Rachel took a quick glance at the phone in his hand. "Are you through with the phone call?" "What?" Carson

followed Rachel's sight and took a peek at his phone. Then a smile appeared on his face. "oh, I am through with it. I was left with no choice! My subordinates are too bad at making plans." "Of course they are!" Rachel narrowed her eyes. There was a fake smile on her face. "You're not very good at acting!" When Carson realized that Rachel knew that he had pretended to answer the call only moments ago, the smile on his face disappeared. He touched the tip of his nose and coughed to ease the awkwardness of the situation. "Don't you want to go in?" Rachel raised her head in order to look through the glass panel on the door. This ward was a suite. But from her point of view, only the living room could be seen, and it was empty. She couldn't see Victor, Rachel pushed the door open in no time and walked in. "The doctor said Victor would lie in the bed for two months. He has to undergo half a year's rehabilitation training." Carson's voice came from behind her. "He is in a stable condition now, except..." "Get out of here!" Victor's voice interrupted Carson's speech. Rachel stopped and saw a man in a suit coming out of the room. He looked dejected. There was a document in his hand. He ran into Rachel and Carson as soon as he came out. He was stunned at first, then his face flushed. "Mr.Scott!" A work card hung around the man's neck. It was quite noticeable. He was an employee of the Sullivan Group and the director of the

project department. There was no need asking about what just happened to him. Rachel could tell from the man's expression that the project plan had been denied by Victor. He must have been driven out! Her attention was drawn to the name on the work card. His surname was what really interested Rachel-Ramos.

The whiskey tasted bitter, but it could never be as bitter as my heart.

I felt like my heart was being grilled on fire.

The burning sensation gradually overwhelmed me, and soon, I felt numb.

"Simon, what happened to you?"

Vanessa asked worriedly.

"I was going to propose to Caroline today, but that damned Charles ruined my plan!"

I replied, laughing at myself.

Though I knew that Caroline still had feelings for that bastard, I was still devastated when I saw them together.

"Simon, you're hammered.

I'm cutting you off,"

Vanessa remarked, visibly concerned.

She then tried to take my liquor away from me.

I dodged and bent over the counter in pain.

All I wanted to do right now was to hide the vulnerability and sadness in my eyes.

"Caroline lied to me! She told me that it was impossible for her and Charles to get back together and that she's willing to try being with me.

She gave me so much hope, but in the end, she destroyed that spark of hope herself.

I can't accept this!"

Vanessa patted me on the shoulder and responded,

"Simon, this isn't your fault.

Don't blame yourself."

"Am I so inferior to Charles? That asshole took her for granted and hurt her deeply.

But for some reason, she still couldn't forget him!"

I slammed the shot glass onto the bar counter; my eyes, glinting with resentment.

"Simon, you haven't known Caroline for a long time.

How are you so sure that she's your one true love?"

asked Vanessa one day Her question stunned me and I had no idea how to respond.

She's right.

Do I really love Caroline or am I just infatuated with her?' My mind became chaotic.

I pondered and pondered, but I still couldn't come up with a definitive answer.

"Since you can't figure it out yet, go ahead and keep drinking.

Simon, you are an excellent man.

You're smart, charming, kindhearted, and there's so much more to you than all of that.

Lots of women would probably throw themselves at you given the chance!"

Vanessa also raised her glass and gulped her whiskey down I chuckled at her remark and gulped down the rest of my alcohol.

Gradually, both she and i got even drunker.

Once we were done drinking, we helped each other out of the bar and hailed a cab by the roadside.

When I dropped Vanessa off at her house, she held my hand and wouldn't let go.

As I looked into her charming eyes, I somehow couldn't resist her.

I just let her lead me into her house.

She took me to the bed and pressed her supple body against mine.

I could feel the warmth of her breath.

The sweet fragrance of her body amalgamated with the smell of liquor.

By now, I was completely drunk.

I turned over and pinned her to the bed with my knees.

I held her face up and kissed her soft lips.

Vanessa put her arms around my neck and kissed me back.

She was so sexy and enchanting.

Soon, I was immersed in her beauty and could no longer resist her.

1 Caroline's POV: The next morning, I woke up feeling relaxed.

As soon as I opened my eyes, I saw a pair of deep eyes. "Are you awake?"

Charles was leaning against the pillow, staring right at me.

His fiery gaze made me feel like I was melting.

Scenes of what happened to us last night flashed through my mind like a flood.

I was both surprised and embarrassed.

'I took the initiative to kiss Charles! To make matters worse, I even had sex with him!' When I looked down, I found myself lying completely naked on the bed.

To top it off, he had left countless of hickeys on my body.

I could still hear his moaning in my ears.

Soon, I began blushing.

"Caroline, you still love me, don't you?"

Charles whispered in my ear.

"No, I don't! Last night was a mistake."

My face turned grim and the burning sensation gradually dissipated.

3 "Caroline, please give me one more chance," he pleaded.

He then got on top of me and pressed me under his body, wrapping his arms around me.

The way he looked at me with those pleading eyes looked so charming.

And as I stared back at him, my heart started beating like a drum.

All of a sudden, sadness flooded into my heart and I felt choked.

I soon began to weep.

"You don't even remember what happened between us before.

How can you still ask for my forgiveness?"

"Caroline, even though I lost my memory, my body still remembers you,"

Charles replied.

"That's just a normal physiological reaction.

You slept with Raina, remember? She's beautiful and really sexy!"

I scoffed.

In all honesty, I was too focused on the fact that he had wronged me that I didn't realize that I sounded so jealous.

Charles chuckled, leaned closer, and planted a kiss on my forehead.

"You're the only one I've ever slept with.

Do you have any idea how miserable I was ever since you disappeared?"

His husky voice sounded so sincere and affectionate.

My heart raced as I looked at him in disbelief.

‘He’s never slept with Raina? How is that possible?’

Though I was taken by surprise, I still remained composed.

"Who knows if you’re lying or not?"

"It seems that I went too easy on you last night.

Do you want to enjoy having sex with me again?"

Charles removed the sheet, revealing his naked body.

I quickly grabbed the sheet and wrapped myself in it.

"Stop it!"

I blurted out, staring at him nervously.

I knew better than anyone just how hard he fucked me last night.

1 Just looking at Charles’ face made my heart ache.

‘God, I’m so spineless.

This is so upsetting! After hearing his explanation, I knew that all the indifference I showed him and my disguise had been torn down.

I truly hated myself for being so weak.

Aside from that, I hated Charles for always messing with my heart.

He sighed, wiping the tears from the corner of my eyes.

"Caroline, if you keep crying, I won’t let you go home,"

he warned.

"Are you blackmailing me again? What bargaining chip are you going to use this time?"

My face turned grim and I became wary of him at once.

I used to be at Charles' mercy because I was a powerless woman.

It was neigh impossible for me to resist him.

But now, I was no longer the weak woman I used to be.

Nobody could push me around anymore! Charles chuckled at my response.

"Don't mistake my intention.

I just don't want to see you cry.

My heart breaks every time I see you shedding tears."

His deep gaze made me feel as though he was staring into my very soul.

"Save your sweet words for another woman.

They won't work on me!"

"If you're going to keep talking nonsense, I wouldn't mind fucking you again."

The smile on his face disappeared and his eyes became sullen.

I was immediately silenced.

"Good girl."

Charles brushed my hair and leaned over to kiss me.

However, I pushed him away at once.

"Next time, you won't be able to sleep with me so easily,"

**I snorted, got dressed, and was about to leave.
But the second I reached the door, he blocked my path.**

"What are you doing?"

I asked impatiently.

"Caroline, let's get married again."

"Ha! You wish!"

I shot him a glare, pushed his arm away and walked on.

"You forgot this."

Charles put a document into my arms with a smile on his face.

As I stared at the file, I felt conflicted.

"Are you really going to give up the custody of the kids?"

I asked in disbelief.

"I want you to see just how sincere I am.

Caroline, I hope you'll think about my proposal carefully.

I want to get remarried to you.

No matter how long it takes, I'm willing to wait for your answer,"

Charles promised.

1 After a long silence, I finally left with the document.

Once I left the room, Elena walked up to me.

"Ma'am, Mr. Wilson has been waiting for you at home for a long time." Chapter 464 Control Your Woman

Charles' POV: As I

watched Caroline walk away, I was satisfied.

Right now, I had mixed feelings.

At first, I thought that Caroline and I would never get back together again, but I didn't expect that a turning point in our broken relationship would just show itself.

Scenes of the passionate night we spent together flashed through my mind, and they put a smile on my face.

My heart was soon filled with warmth and satisfaction.

I was sure that Caroline still loved me.

Otherwise, she wouldn't have taken the initiative to kiss me.

'It's a pity that I couldn't do whatever I wanted to her when she sobered up.

If that weren't the case, I would've kissed her as much as I wanted to make up for the lost time.

Soon, I got dressed and walked out of the room.

I no longer felt depressed.

Once I was ashore, a figure came rushing towards me.

"Charles, I finally found you! You are here!"

It was Raina.

She was wearing ragged clothing, looking as disheveled as a drowned rat.

"Raina? What are you doing here?"

I asked, visibly confused.

"Charles, I've been waiting for you the whole night.

Why did it take you so long to come out?"

Raina complained.

I backed away from her in disgust.

"How dare you show up in front me? I still haven't forgotten about what you did to Chloe, you bitch!"

"Charles, please give me a chance to explain.

I never meant to hurt Chloe.

I was just so scared at the time,"

Raina pleaded as tears fell from her eyes.

"Is that why you chose to hurt Chloe? Do you have any idea what would've happened to her if I hadn't come in time?! My sister

helped you out of the goodness of her heart, and yet you repaid her with animosity,"

I shouted, glaring at her.

Raina shook her head, desperately trying to appease me.

"If you want, I can apologize to Chloe.

Please, Charles.

I'll do anything for you to forgive me!"

"Do you honestly believe that you have the right to ask for my forgiveness? I'm warning you, get the fuck out of my face and get

as far away as you can."

I withdrew my gaze from her and started walking away.

However, Raina threw herself at me and held onto my leg like her life depended on it.

"Charles, I'm begging you, don't leave! i'll do anything, just let me stay with you."

I stopped in my tracks and kicked her away, Raina staggered backwards and fell to the ground.

She cried out in pain and her eyes welled up with tears.

"Charles, how can you be so heartless?"

.

"I never intended to be cruel to you, but you're ungrateful little cunt."

Having said that, I took out my phone and played a video.

A year ago, Raina admitted that she killed Rita in order to get closer to me.

She recounted a detailed description of how she killed Rita.

From the sound of her voice, I could hear that she took pleasure in doing the crime.

If anyone else had heard what she said, they would tremble in fear.

It was then that I decided to turn up the volume so that everyone around us could hear it clearly.

Seconds later, I saw the frightened and conflicted expressions of the crowd.

A smile appeared on my lips and joy filled my heart.

It was time for Raina to pay for all that she'd done.

If I let her roam free, she might come between me and Caroline again.

•
"Charles, you had my confession recorded? How can you do this to me?"

Raina's eyes widened in disbelief.

She screamed in bloody horror, sprang to her feet, and tried to snatch my phone away.

"Raina, it's game over for you.

Don't even think that I'd be crazy enough to help you,"

I warned.

"Charles, am I so inferior to Caroline? Why do you take such good care of her, and yet you keep pushing me off the deep end?"

Raina asked, sounding like she was the victim.

"You're nothing compared to her.

In fact, you're not even qualified to compete against her."

After casting Raina a cold glare, I left.

Once I was in the car, Edward suddenly sent me a video and a message.

"I've heard that Raina has been antagonizing Caroline many times.

Get your woman under control! If she ever tries to hurt my daughter again, she'll regret it!"

I played the video and saw Raina being raped by two burly men.

Disgusted, I closed the video.

"Raina isn't my woman.

Caroline is my only woman,"

I replied.

2 I was so annoyed that I pulled a long face.

I hated Raina even more now.

Caroline's POV: When I got home, I was so exhausted and conflicted.

The moment I saw the document Charles gave me, I could no longer pretend to be tough.

The love that I had buried deep in my heart was uncovered bit by bit.

ISU COV I had no idea how to face Charles anymore.

This morning, I almost ran away from him.

Seconds later, I noticed my father sitting in the living room.

Upon seeing that I had returned, he frowned and asked, "Did you spend the night with Charles?"

I nodded, feeling guilty.

"What happened last night? Is this how you'll get your revenge?"

he grunted.

"Charles said that he's caught the murderer and he gave me this document."

I took out the document and handed it to my father.

Upon reading it, he was surprised.

"Is Charles serious? He's giving custody of the kids to you? Why would he do that?"

"His signature is already on the document.

He's serious about this,"

I said, oblivious that I defended Charles on instinct.
1 Confused, my father asked, "Why haven't you signed your name yet? Once you and the kids have reunited, all your ties to Charles will be severed!"

My father was right.

Once I signed this document, my connection to Charles would be completely severed.

2 Just the thought of it made my heart ache.

A bitter smile appeared on my lips as I replied, "I want to think about it carefully."

"What's there to think about? Isn't it your greatest wish to get your children back?"

My father was visibly flummoxed.

"I... I don't know, Dad."

I shook my head, feeling just as confused as him.

"Caroline, are you still in love with Charles?"

"I don't want to talk about that right now.

I'm exhausted, Dad.

I just want to go to my room and rest."

I frowned impatiently and turned around to go upstairs.

"Caroline, never forget that he once caused you to lose your child, and he cheated on you with another woman before you two even got divorced! Have you forgotten just how much pain he caused you in the past?"

+ "I haven't forgotten, Dad.

I never could,"

I murmured.

I could still remember how my unborn child was turned into nothing but a pool of blood.

And how the man I loved most was intimate with another woman while I was suffering.

Even if I wanted to, I could never forget that.

However, now I know the truth of the matter was that Charles never betrayed me.

And he didn't have sex with that bitch, Raina, either.

As I wondered if there had been some sort of misunderstanding about what happened a year ago.

As I comforted myself, a glimmer of hope ignited in my heart.

Soon, I shut myself in the bedroom, sitting in silence for a long time.

My mind was in shambles.

The TV was on, but I wasn't in the mood to watch anything.

After a long time, a news report caught my attention.

"The police have arrested Susan Lively's murderer.

The murder case is solved."

Upon looking at the man carefully, I felt that something was wrong.

I didn't recognize that man.

There was no spider web tattoo on his arm.

I sprang to my feet, shocked to my very core.

'That's not the murderer!'

