

The More the Merrier

Chapter 491 Arissa Takes Care Of Mary Personally

Why didn't Mary's son accompany her here for treatment?

At that line of thought, Arissa's brows knitted together deeply as puzzlement gripped her.

"He's at the police station," Tim answered curtly.

Benjamin swept his gaze over the boy before he gestured to Ethen about talking to him privately.

"Have you made all the arrangements over there?"

In response, Ethen nodded. "Yes, everything is in place. He won't be released so easily."

Benjamin nodded in approval, his alluring face cold and forbidding.

"Keep a close eye on him and don't allow him to get out."

"Understood, Mr. Graham!" Ethen replied.

He had made all the arrangements meticulously, so Raphael couldn't possibly get out of prison in the next few years.

Meanwhile, Bradley merely eyed them and listened quietly without butting in.

Don't tell me it was Mr. Graham who got Tim's uncle into prison?

Arissa, on the other hand, was entirely ignorant about the situation. Since the person in question was Mary's son, she inquired in concern, "Why is he at the police station?"

However, Tim pursed his lips and kept mum.

He instinctively didn't want her to know that Raphael picked on him.

Seeing that her son wasn't saying anything, Arissa didn't pursue the matter any further.

She glanced at Benjamin, sensing that he probably knew something. She then decided to ask him about it later.

Shortly after, Mary came out after her examination. Tim hurried over to support her. "How was it, Mdm. Mary?"

"It was just a checkup, so it didn't hurt at all!" Mary reassured.

Upon hearing that, Tim breathed a sigh of relief.

Shaun then walked out of the examination room and whisked Mary away for other examinations.

The whole group of people went along.

Mary did a total of five different examinations before Shaun allowed her to go back and rest.

Benjamin, Ethen, and Bradley went with Shaun to discuss Mary's condition while Arissa wheeled Mary back to the hospital room with the children.

"Where will you all be staying tonight, Issa?"

Mary was reluctant to have Arissa stay at the hospital since it was quite late then.

"They'll probably be staying at a hotel, but I'll be staying here tonight to take care of you, Mdm. Mary," Arissa answered.

Hearing that, Mary waved a dismissive hand. "No, it's okay. There are doctors and nurses here, so there isn't anything to do even if you stay. Go back and have a good rest. Besides, you've also just recovered. Don't tire yourself out again!"

"It's not tiring to take care of you. Even if I leave, I'll worry. Also, Tim wants to stay to keep you company, so it's all the more vital that I stay," Arissa explained.

Tim couldn't possibly leave with them and abandon Mary in the hospital all alone.

Arissa really couldn't bring herself to do that. Thus, she decided to follow suit and keep Mary company as well.

She had found her child at long last, so she yearned to have more interaction with him.

"Take Tim back with you to rest!" Mary insisted.

"I'm not leaving, Grandma! I want to be with you!"

Tim clutched Mary's hand, staunchly refusing to leave.

At that, Mary heaved a sigh.

"I'm not trying to give you the boot. It's just that you've kept me company for the entire day without getting any rest. Go back with them and have a good rest. Then, you can come back tomorrow to keep me company!"

She stroked his face with a look of anguish.

"Grandma, I can also rest in the hospital. I don't want to part with you!"

Tim remained adamant, and his eyes even turned red-rimmed.

Glimpsing that, Mary caressed his head in distress. "All right, we won't part then. You can stay at the hospital to keep me company."

That was exactly what Arissa had expected, and she was glad to see her son showing Mary such tender love.

She wheeled Mary back to the hospital room before going into the bathroom and getting a basin of warm water for Mary to wipe her face.

"I think I won't shower you today, Mdm. Mary. I'll give you a wipe."

Mary wanted to do it herself, but Arissa didn't allow it.

Verily, Mary was touched to see that she wasn't at all averse to her but exceedingly amicably instead.

"Thank you, Issa!"

"Don't mention it!" Arissa replied with a smile.

Then, she turned and said to Tim, "Sweetheart, you should go and have a shower, too!"

"I'll do it, Ms. York!"

Tim wanted to take over the duty of wiping Mary's face, but Arissa pushed him away.

"I can manage. Go and take a shower, quick! You can't go to bed late as you are a kid!"

Mary waved a hand, signaling Tim to go and take a shower. "Hurry up and go!"

Only then did Tim head to the bathroom.

Subsequently, Gavin and the other children surrounded Arissa. "Do you need any help, Mommy?"

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Chapter 492 Someone Is Worried About Arissa

Arissa shook her head smilingly and shooed the children away so that Mary wouldn't feel awkward.

"No, it's fine. Go and sit at the side. You'll make Mdm. Mary feel embarrassed by looking on over here."

When Mary heard that, she burst into laughter. "See? I told you to let me do it myself."

"You're still weak, so it's better for me to do it. Here, turn over so that I can wipe your back."

Arissa used to be a volunteer and would go to a retirement home to take care of the elderly. For that reason, she was very adept at taking care of Mary.

Clocking her extreme patience without any hint of impatience, Mary smiled in relief.

"Thank you for going to such trouble for me, Issa!"

"Don't say such things, Mdm. Mary. Or do you not like having me as a relative?" Arissa teased.

"Of course not! I love having you as my relative! You're so kindhearted!"

Mary was moved, and her eyes turned red-rimmed.

Arissa changed a basin of water and continued wiping Mary down. She showed no sign of disdain; instead, she was exceedingly meticulous, her movements gentle.

"If we're speaking of kindheartedness, you're far above me, Mdm. Mary. If it weren't for you taking Tim home back then, he wouldn't have survived to this day. Thank you! It must have been difficult for you throughout the years."

Sheer gratefulness flooded her as she gazed at the white-haired lady.

She was already so old then, yet she still took a child back to raise. It must have been difficult for her!

“We didn’t find it difficult to raise Tim. Thanks to him, our days were filled with so much joy. However, he was forced to live a hard life with us.”

Seeing that Mary felt bad for Tim, Arissa comforted her, saying, “It’s a good thing for him to experience some hardships when he’s young. Only then will he be even more mature and diligent when he grows up. Those experiences helped to shape him.”

At that, Mary nodded with a smile.

Just then, Benjamin came in, only to see that Arissa was wiping Mary down. At once, he was caught between a rock and a hard place.

When Arissa saw him, she waved a dismissive hand. “Go out first.”

Benjamin closed the door and beckoned Ethen over. “Did you not look for a caregiver?”

“I did, but I haven’t found a suitable one,” Ethen reported honestly.

Benjamin frowned at his answer. “Hurry up and find someone. She can’t possibly take care of Mary alone.”

Heh! Someone is worried about Arissa!

Ethen stole a peek at Benjamin and snickered.

In turn, Benjamin shot him a glare. “Hurry up and go!”

“Understood!”

Ethen hastily went to look for a caregiver, and he even increased the pay.

A moment later, Benjamin recalled that the children were all in the room, and his brows creased deeply. He phoned Gavin and ordered them to come out.

Good Lord! That woman is another one! She’s wiping Mary down, yet she allowed the kids to be there!

“Why did you call us out?”

Gavin stood in front of Benjamin.

Sweeping his gaze over the five siblings, Benjamin instructed, “In the future, all of you have to come out when Mary is getting a wipe. Do you understand me?”

The five children wore innocent expressions on their faces. “We didn’t peek!”

“Even so, you’ve got to leave the room!” Benjamin insisted.

No matter how old Mary is, she’s still a woman, so she’ll still feel embarrassed. Hence, it’s not appropriate for them to be present.

Zachary curled his lips and retorted, “Mommy didn’t ask us to leave!”

“Your mommy is heedless!”

Eyeing him, Benjamin added, “Do you follow your mommy’s orders to the letter?”

“Of course!” Zachary puffed his chest out proudly.

Benjamin’s lips pressed into a thin line. He took them over to the bench at the side and sat down. “Where’s Tim?”

“He has gone to take a shower!” Gavin answered.

Benjamin nodded in acknowledgment. “Later, all of you go back to the hotel with your mommy to get some rest. I’ll stay here.”

“But Mommy just told Mdm. Mary that she’s going to stay here overnight!” Gavin interjected.

“I’ll talk to her in a while.”

Honestly speaking, Benjamin didn’t want Arissa to stay. She had just recovered, so her body might not be able to take it if she were to stay up all night to take care of Mary.

When Arissa had finished wiping Mary, Tim had also finished showering and came out. Thus, she carried the dirty water over to get rid of it.

The instant she saw that her son had washed the clothes he was wearing, she was stunned for a moment. At the same time, she felt sorry to see him so independent at such a young age.

True enough, children raised in destitution are mature beyond their age!

Chapter 493 Are You Not Following Me

“It’s time you go back, Ms. York. I’ll wash Grandma’s clothes.”

Tim went to the bathroom door, wanting to take over the chore of washing Mary’s clothes.

"I'm not leaving. I'll be staying to keep you both company tonight. Also, I'll wash Mdm. Mary's clothes. You go out and keep her company instead," Arissa replied smilingly.

Tim bit his bottom lip, not quite sure what to say upon seeing that she was still washing the clothes.

Arissa turned her head slightly and looked at him. "What do you want to say to me?"

As his eyes met her earnest gaze, Tim shook his head.

"Sweetheart, hurry up and go to bed. Kids have to sleep early to grow tall and strong. I'll also rest when I'm done with all this," Arissa urged gently so that he didn't have to waste his time here with her.

"Come here, Tim! I've got something to say to you!"

Hearing Mary's holler from the bathroom, Arissa leaned out and interjected, "Why don't you put that on the back burner first, Mdm. Mary? It's late now."

She was worried that it would affect Tim's sleep, so she felt that it was better for them to talk another day.

Mary glanced at her. On second thought, she also felt that it would be better to talk sometime later.

At that precise moment, Benjamin came in with the children.

"It's late, so go back and rest. Mary needs to rest, too!" he said to Arissa.

With her eyes pinned on him, Arissa stated, "I'm staying here tonight."

All at once, a frown marred Benjamin's countenance. He gestured for her to step out.

Seeing that he had gone out, Arissa reckoned that he might want to say something to her, so she washed the foam off her hands before stepping out as well.

"What do you want to say to me?"

"Take the children back to rest. I'll stay here tonight, so don't worry."

Benjamin stared at her fixedly.

Meanwhile, Arissa looked the man up and down. "You haven't rested for a day and a night, no?"

Benjamin was busy searching for their child last night before rushing back to Dellmoor during the day, so he hadn't had any rest.

At her remark, Benjamin arched an eyebrow and stepped closer to her, the gap between them so negligible that she could smell the alluring smell of him.

Her heartbeat started racing.

"How did you know that?"

Meeting the man's ebony eyes, Arissa swallowed, her gaze shifty.

She stole a peek at Benjamin's handsome countenance.

"Hmm?"

Benjamin leaned over, his gaze scorching.

Arissa's face flushed bright red. "Didn't you say that you were searching for our child last night? Then, it goes without saying that you didn't sleep!"

Benjamin continued staring at her intently, the corners of his mouth turning up slightly. Well, well... She's still not admitting to it, huh?

"You stayed up late as well last night. What were you doing?"

Snorting softly, Arissa fibbed, "I was also searching for our son!"

Benjamin sniggered, causing embarrassment to deluge Arissa.

"Were you not following me?"

Benjamin lifted her chin, his gaze dark as night.

At his question, Arissa choked. Oh God, he knows!

"I was following my son's leads, not you!"

Quirking an eyebrow, Benjamin pinched her face with his long and slender fingers.

"Take the children back to rest!"

Arissa cast a glance at him, and asserted, "I want to stay and keep Tim company!"

"There's no rush. I'll talk to him. Are you not going to bother about Gavin and the rest anymore?"

Benjamin's brows furrowed.

Conversely, Arissa was startled. After coming over, all her attention was on Tim, so she neglected her other five children.

"They've got you to watch over them, haven't they? I-"

Benjamin's attitude abruptly turned hard. "Go back and rest. Or do you want me to have the bodyguards escort you?"

Arisa was rendered speechless.

"You didn't sleep either, but I slept the day away!"

"My body can take it even if I don't sleep for a few days and nights. Can you do the same?"

Benjamin harrumphed.

At that, Arissa pursed her lips.

"Go back and have a good sleep. Don't have the kids worry about you."

Benjamin's voice had gentled slightly then.

Glancing at him, Arissa relented, "All right, then. I'll go back. However, I've got to wash Mdm. Mary's clothes first."

Benjamin's brows creased deeply once more. "The caregiver will be coming over in a while, so you don't need to do that anymore."

"You hired a caregiver?"

Arisa didn't expect him to be so thoughtful that he even thought of hiring a caregiver for Mary.

Chapter 494 Kissing Her Passionately

"Yup. Ethen said the caregiver will be here in a while. Just leave the unwashed clothes, and she'll handle it when she arrives," Benjamin replied casually.

"Oh well, I can finish it before leaving!"

When Arissa went in and saw that all her children were there, contentment suffused her. She didn't feel the least bit tired.

"Hurry up and go back to rest, Issa. Just leave the clothes first. I'll just wash them tomorrow."

Ultimately, Mary felt bad for troubling her.

"I'm about done, Mdm. Mary. It'll just take a few minutes more. Do rest first!"

Arissa flashed her a smile before going into the washroom and washing the clothes. Then, she hung them up to dry. Only after doing all that did she take her leave and said goodbye to Mary.

"Mdm. Mary, I'm going back to rest. If there's anything you need at night, just tell Benjamin."

"All right, don't worry about me anymore. Hurry up and go back to rest. I'll also be sleeping in a while, so I won't be needing anything."

Truth be told, Mary was rather exhausted then.

Nodding, Arissa walked over to Tim and crouched beside him.

"Sweetheart, come back with me to rest, okay?"

Alas, Tim shook his head and dashed over to Mary.

Giving a soft sigh, Arissa smiled and reassured gently, "Don't be afraid. I won't take you away. I'll be leaving. Keep Mdm. Mary company tonight and rest well."

Tim stared at her, not quite sure whether she was going back to Dellmoor or someplace else.

"I'm leaving, Sweetheart! I'll be back tomorrow! Bye!"

Arissa bid her son farewell in a gentle voice before she brought Gavin and the others back.

"Bye, Tim! Rest well. We'll be back tomorrow to play with you!"

"Bye, Tim! See you tomorrow!"

The five children bid Tim and Mary goodbye before they left with Arissa.

"Rest first!" Benjamin said before he saw Arissa and the children out.

When Arissa saw that Bradley was still there, she called out, "Follow us back to rest, Bradley! Benjamin will be handling things here."

Studying them, Bradley nodded in agreement. "Okay!"

At that turn of events, Benjamin swept his gaze over the man.

"Benjamin, keep an eye on their condition since you're staying. Phone me if there's anything," Arissa reminded.

In response, Benjamin nodded. "Don't worry. I'll handle everything perfectly!"

When they arrived downstairs, he carried the children into the car. "Go to bed earlier when you all get back!"

Arissa nodded. She then bent down to climb into the car when she suddenly remembered something. She pulled the man to the side.

"Why is Tim's uncle at the police station? Do you know the reason?"

At her question, Benjamin's gaze flickered. "Don't ask so many questions. Go back and rest, quick!"

Arissa eyed him with a frown. "Do you think I won't investigate the matter if you refuse to tell me?"

Benjamin's brows furrowed, and he glowered at her. "He committed domestic violence, so Tim lodged a police report and had him arrested."

Never having expected such a reason, Arissa was shocked to the core.

"Who was the victim?" she demanded frantically.

Was it Mdm. Mary or my son?

Benjamin's expression turned icy cold. "Both weren't spared!"

All at once, Arissa's brows knitted deeply together, and her heart twisted in agony. So, my child grew up in such an environment?

Deep-seated guilt and anguish inundated her.

This is all on me for not remembering that I still had another child! If only I had returned earlier! Then, I would've found him earlier, and he wouldn't have had to suffer as much!

Upon seeing that she was blaming herself again, Benjamin stroked her hair. "Stop blaming yourself. Go back earlier."

Arissa looked at him, upon which the man jutted his chin in the direction of the car, reminding her that the children were all waiting for her.

Composing herself, Arissa urged, "Remember to rest as well at the hospital!"

"Will do!" Benjamin flashed her a smile.

Arissa gave him a final look before she whirled around to get into the car. She didn't notice that Benjamin took her hand and fell right onto the man.

Wrapping an arm around her waist, Benjamin kissed her passionately.

After that, he pinched her face and declared domineeringly, "Sleep tight when you go back. Don't let your mind wander!"

Arissa blushed to the tip of her ears, her cheeks flaming hotly.

Chapter 495 Your Relationship Is Developing Really Rapidly

"Okay!"

Arissa swiftly got into the car, only to grow even more embarrassed when she was greeted by five pairs of eyes.

Tasked with driving them back to the hotel, Ethen turned back and reminded Arissa, "Sit tight, Ms. York. We're off now!"

Shifting her gaze to him, Arissa nodded.

When she caught sight of him stifling a smile, she gave a light cough and turned to gaze out the window.

Benjamin's tall and robust figure was right outside, making her heart skip a beat.

"Ms. York, there are resting lounges in the hospital, so you don't have to worry that Mr. Graham has no place to rest!"

As Ethen's voice drifted over from the front, mortification swept over Arissa.

"I see," she murmured.

Meanwhile, the five children looked at each other with amusement in their eyes.

"Mommy is embarrassed!" Jasper whispered.

"Mommy's face is so red!" Oliver chimed in.

"Mommy's ears are also red," Jesse added.

Although they were all talking in hushed tones, Arissa could still hear them loud and clear.

She glanced over her shoulder and swept her gaze over them all.

The five children were all grinning from ear to ear.

She reached out and ruffled their hair. "What's so funny?"

All five of them promptly burst into giggles.

"Mommy, your relationship with Mr. Graham is developing really rapidly!"

Jasper was a quick-witted one, and he smiled suggestively.

At that, the corners of Arissa's mouth twitched.

"Are you guys sleepy?"

The five little children shook their heads. Jesse then leaned over and hugged her.

"Are you sleepy, Mommy?"

"Nope!" After all, she had slept a lot that day.

Subsequently, she looked at her five children and commented, "You all didn't even tell me anything before coming over here!"

All five children giggled.

"Mommy, it was Daddy who asked us to come over. He was with you then, so we thought you knew about it!" Gavin admitted.

"Exactly! But we never thought that you were sick. Mr. Graham kept us in the dark and didn't breathe a word about it to us. If we'd known that you were sick, we wouldn't have come here so quickly!" Zachary groused.

Snorting, Arissa leaned back against the seat and threw them all a sidelong glance.

"What did you say to Tim?"

"Mommy, Tim definitely knows that you're his mother. Daddy told him about it earlier. We also told him that we were his brothers," Gavin muttered, afraid that she would be angry.

He cautiously stole a peek at her, only continuing upon seeing that she wasn't in high dudgeon, "However, we didn't tell him how he got separated from us back then."

Stroking his head, Arissa complimented in a gentle voice, "You did great, Sweetheart!"

Zachary tilted his head and gazed at her.

"Mommy, we should tell him the reason as soon as possible. Otherwise, his misunderstanding toward you will persist."

"Did he say anything to you all?" Arissa asked the children.

In response, all five of them shook their heads.

"He didn't say anything, but we could sense that he harbors some misunderstanding!" Oliver stated confidently, nudging his glasses.

"Mommy, he must have misunderstood that we didn't want him and abandoned him!" Jesse voiced her sentiments as well.

The moment Arissa heard that, her heart jolted. She could also surmise all that, but when it came from her children, her heart felt exceedingly heavy.

"I know."

She couldn't bring herself to explain things to Tim, nor did she know whether he would believe it after learning about the truth.

She heaved a sigh.

Taking her hand, Jasper coaxed, "Don't worry, Mommy. He'll understand that you didn't abandon him on purpose after he is told the truth!"

Arissa nodded. "Your daddy said he'd talk to him."

Speaking of that, she was a tad worried that Benjamin might scare Tim.

She hurriedly phoned the man. The ringing tone only rang for a second before the call was answered.

"Hello."

"Benjamin, watch your tone when you speak to Tim. Don't scare him!"

The man on the other end of the phone chuckled. "He's not as fragile as you think!"

At his remark, Arissa was taken aback for a moment. But then, perhaps he's not as strong as he thinks either.