

Quadruplets Unite: Mother's Words Are Law! Chapter 1 – 10

Chapter 1

Emmeline Louise had just turned on the shower when a large hand clapped over her mouth from behind, preventing her from crying out, and she was forced to the ground.

After that, her assailant forced himself upon her and had his way...

Emmeline wanted to scream for help, but all she could manage were whimpers and moans. The man behind her was far too strong and overpowered her; she could hardly breathe.

It did not take very long before her legs turned to jelly, and her head began to spin. The shower was still on, and her damp skin was as smooth and slippery as silk.

“How dare you! I’ll kill you!”

“What are you resisting for? You wanted me to do that, didn’t you? Well, I’m just fulfilling your wishes!” The man growled fiercely with no signs of stopping. Instead, he grabbed Emmeline and turned her around, taking her from the front instead.

Before she could get a glimpse of her assailant, he had thrown a towel over her face, preventing her from identifying him. Throughout the entire incident, she was unable to see who he was.

When he was finally finished with her, the man tossed a bank card onto the ground.

“You’re the one who drugged me, but I won’t use that as an advantage. Here’s ten million as compensation for taking your virginity!”

The door slammed shut, and the man strode out.

Emmeline lay inside the bathtub, unable to move. Who the hell was that man? Why had he decided that she was the one who had drugged him?

Later on, when she checked with the hotel's front desk, she discovered that they had no records of such a person, and even the surveillance records had been obliterated. The only identifying information she had came from the bank card itself; the cardholder was someone named Abel Ryker!

Emmeline's attempts to trace this Abel Ryker fellow led her to the Ryker Group, but the reception desk told her that Mr. Ryker had been out of the country for some time. No one had been able to get in contact with him.

Emmeline stood in a daze, clutching the bank card that held ten million dollars in its account. She had no way of knowing if the man who assaulted her was indeed the cardholder.

Searching the internet for his whereabouts proved futile.

This man had robbed her of her virginity just like that and vanished into thin air as if he had never existed. The whole thing was like a nebulous dream.

However, reality soon intruded with a vengeance because Emmeline discovered that she was pregnant!

Her wealthy middle-class family was thrown into complete uproar! Emmeline's father upbraided her and cursed the day she was born, while her stepmother washed her hands of such a stepdaughter and kicked her out of the house.

Overnight, Emmeline went from being a pampered, spoiled rich girl to the slut who was the talk of the town.

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Five years passed in the mere twinkling of an eye.

“Extra! Newsflash!” The headlines were all over the news, catching Emmeline’s attention. “Head of the Ryker Group warded in critical condition. Abel Ryker returning today from overseas to visit him.”

Under the brief write-up was the photo of a man in a black suit and white tie. He looked tall and well-built, his countenance clean-shaven and handsome. His classic features hinted at an enigmatic air, and even in such a poor-quality photograph, his dark eyes were coldly decisive.

Emmeline drew a sharp hiss of breath. Could this handsome, almost bewitching man be the one who mistook her for someone else five years ago?

Her sons did bear some resemblance to him.

Quickly, she undid her apron and tossed it onto the coffee counter, then swooped down and embraced her four-year-old son. “Since you’re not going to kindergarten today, why don’t you come with Mommy?”

“Where are we going, Mommy?” Hesperus blinked his dark eyes curiously and put down the Rubik’s cube he was holding.

“To see your daddy!”

After her family chased her out of the house and disowned her, Emmeline had rebuilt her life entirely through her own efforts. Currently, even without a man by her side, her children led a good life.

Unfortunately, in an unforeseen stroke of Fate, Hesperus had been diagnosed with a blood disorder.

Emmeline had to find the father of her children so she could save her son's life!

Half an hour later, mother and son arrived at the hospital that was under the Ryker Group's control. They brought with them a fruit basket as a gift. A nurse informed them that old Mr. Oscar Ryker was the only patient in the entire wing, and he was in the innermost VIP suite. However, when Emmeline got there, she was stopped by several bodyguards dressed in black.

“Wait, isn't that the little slut about town?” Two well-dressed, wealthy women came out of the hospital room and eyed Emmeline. “Who does she think she is, coming to visit Oscar?”

“She's probably come to the wrong floor. She's certainly not fit to see him!”

“What was her name again? Oh, right, Emmeline!”

Emmeline?

Alana Lane frowned when she heard Emmeline's name mentioned and immediately turned to look.

The young woman that the bodyguards were barring from entering the VIP suite was tall and very beautiful. Her face was bewitchingly charming, and her eyes were clear and sparkling. It was indeed her cousin Emmeline.

“Why are you here? A woman like you has no right to visit a place like this.” Alana walked straight to Emmeline and eyed her arrogantly.

“Why shouldn’t I visit?” Emmeline retorted coolly. “You’re certainly taking an interest in other people’s affairs, Alana!”

“How dare you talk to Ms. Lane in that tone?” One of the wealthy women chastised Emmeline. “Ms. Lane is Abel Ryker’s fiancée, which means she’s Oscar Ryker’s future daughter-in-law. Of course she’s taking an interest in your coming here.”

“That’s right. I don’t know who you think you are, daring to speak to Abel’s fiancée in such a manner!”

“Abel Ryker?” Emmeline’s heart skipped a beat. The man already had a fiancée, and her own stepmother’s niece, no less? She was sadly out of touch!

“Ask Abel Ryker to come out now and see me!” Emmeline demanded angrily.

“Do you really think you’re in a position to see someone like Abel?” Alana said mockingly. “Anyway, his flight’s been delayed, and he’s not here yet. I advise you to leave right now, so you don’t disgrace yourself any further!”

“I agree. Look at her clothes! They’re like what someone would use to clean house! Is she so poor that she can’t even change into something decent?”

“It’s not just that she’s poor; she doesn’t know her place. Her kids are all several years old now, and she still doesn’t know who the father is, imagine that!”

“Hahaha, it’s really too hilarious for words!”

“Mommy, the air in here really stinks!” Hesperus pinched his nose with his pudgy little fingers. “There are a lot of smelly dung beetles in here jawing away!”

“Hey, you insufferable brat, who do you think you’re talking to?” The two wealthy women were both embarrassed and humiliated. “Apparently no one ever taught you any manners!”

“Who do you think you are, talking like that? Who says he hasn’t any manners?”

Emmeline was enraged and rolled up her sleeves, ready to protect her son with stronger measures if necessary.

“Be quiet!” Alana was afraid that if Oscar was disturbed by the squabbling, he would think that his future daughter-in-law was not a considerate person.

She glared at Emmeline. After giving birth, her cousin had somehow become even more enchanting than before. Emmeline’s complexion was porcelain-smooth and fair, and her eyes were luminous and clear. In fact, she was utterly alluring through and through.

She had to get this woman out of here! Abel would be landing very soon; she could not afford to let him see Emmeline!

Alana controlled herself, suppressing her anger. “Emmeline. I know you’re here to see Old Mr. Ryker, but you really aren’t in a position to do so. Just look at that fruit basket of yours. It’s so shabby, it’s disgraceful. You’d better go before Mrs. Ryker comes out of the room; that’ll save me the trouble of throwing you out!”

“Exactly! It isn’t just anybody who gets to see Mr. Oscar Ryker, even if they bring gifts worth several hundred thousand dollars. You think you can get in to see him with just that measly little basket of fruits? You must be dreaming!”

“Such a shameless hussy! You really don’t know your place!”

Emmeline tossed the fruit basket into the nearest trash can. It landed with a loud thump.

“So what do you think Oscar Ryker would like as a gift, hmm?”

“Oh, plenty of things, but can you even afford them?”

“That’s right. You’re mighty thick-skinned, aren’t you, talking big like that?”

“I certainly can’t afford presents worth several hundred thousand dollars,” Emmeline returned blandly with a faint smile. “Well then, I’ll just present your Old Mr. Ryker with a great-grandson. He ought to like that. Offspring are really important to the older generation for carrying on the family line, right?”

Great-grandson?

The area outside the VIP suite was suddenly so quiet one could hear a pin drop. Everyone’s eyes turned to young Hesperus.

This adorable little boy with the porcelain-fair complexion was...

My goodness, one look at his brow and beautiful eyes, and one could see the Ryker family resemblance!

Could he...could this little boy truly be the child of one of Oscar’s sons?

Chapter 2

Oscar Ryker had three grandsons. Which of them had sired this little boy everyone was staring at?

Whoever the father was, it definitely could not be Abel Ryker, the third grandson. He had been overseas for a while now. This was probably Adrien Ryker’s child. After all, everyone in Struyria knew that Oscar’s second grandson was a notorious playboy and man-about-town.

Goodness!

The wealthy women and their daughters all wore envious expressions. After all, they had come with extravagant gifts to visit Oscar for the sole purpose of ensnaring one of the Ryker grandsons. Which ambitious mother would not want their daughters to marry into Struyria's wealthiest family?

Unfortunately, this shabbily dressed young woman called Emmeline Louise had stolen a march on them by showing up with a child in tow. The other women felt like strangling her.

"Emmeline!" Alana looked livid. Furiously, she ordered, "You get out of here right now and take your son with you, so he doesn't cause trouble! Do you think the Ryker family doesn't know exactly what sort of person you are? As if any of the Ryker boys would have a child with a slut like you!"

"That's true too," the wealthy women agreed sycophantically, nodding vigorously. "She's probably so poor she's gone out of her senses. She doesn't even know who the father of her child is, so she's trying to blame Mr. Abel!"

"She's just a scheming little wretch with ulterior motives, you'd better send her packing!"

"Security!" Alana turned to the bodyguards. "Throw this woman and her son out so they don't disturb Old Mr. Ryker!"

"Yes, Ms. Lane!" The bodyguards moved forward menacingly.

"This is Abel Ryker's son!" Emmeline planted herself in front of Hesperus. "If you harm one hair of his head, I'll make you regret it!"

“Hahaha!” All the wealthy women began laughing, and even the bodyguards smirked derisively.

“Emmeline, you really know how to throw blame around, don’t you? You’re such a liar too! My fiancé has been overseas the entire time; do you think he’d be able to suddenly father a child with you?”

“Your precious fiancé gave me this at the time!” Emmeline brought out the bank card and waved it at Alana. “The cardholder is Abel Ryker, or am I mistaken?”

“Where did you get this? Do you think you can make everyone believe you with a canceled card?” Alana snatched the bank card from Emmeline and snapped it in two, then tossed the pieces into the trash can.

Emmeline was staggered. This was the only thing that her children’s father had left behind! Without hesitation, she immediately slapped Alana hard across the face.

“Get this crazy bitch and her insolent son out of my sight!” Alana held her stinging cheek and snarled, gritting her teeth.

The bodyguards charged forward.

Unexpectedly, Emmeline met them with a flurry of hard blows and several good kicks. Alana and the other women present were flabbergasted.

The bodyguards sprawled on the corridor, groaning and gasping in pain.

Alana stared at her cousin. When had Emmeline learned to fight like that?

Emmeline was just considering whether or not to continue the fracas when the door of the VIP suite opened, and a sharp, stern voice snapped, “Who’s causing all the disturbance out there?”

The atmosphere suddenly turned chilly. Alana immediately closed her mouth, and the bodyguards got up from the ground in awkward embarrassment. Rosaline Ryker, nee Turner, was standing in the doorway. She was Abel Ryker's mother.

Oscar Ryker had two sons and three grandsons. Abel was the child of his second son.

"Madame Ryker." Alana pointed accusingly at Emmeline. "That crazy woman's causing a ruckus, and I've been trying to stop her!"

Rosaline turned her alert, intelligent eyes toward Emmeline. A slight frown creased her brow as if she recognized her.

Alana's heart gave a leap of joy. Emmeline was notorious by now; it looked like her reputation was a byword in all of Struyria.

"What is she making a ruckus about?" Rosaline asked. "The Rykers have nothing to do with her."

Alana answered quickly, "Oh, she's just a shrew causing a fuss for no reason; just throw her out, and everything will be fine!"

"She's wrong," Hesperus answered suddenly, craning his head up to look at Rosaline with solemn eyes. "Hello, pretty lady, I'm here to see my daddy. I'm not causing a fuss for no reason!"

Pretty lady? Rosaline's eyes lit up, and she bent down to get a good look at this little charmer. "Who are you calling pretty?"

"You, of course!" Hesperus shot a sidelong glance at Alana then looked back at Rosaline. "Pretty lady, don't listen to this auntie. My Mommy isn't a shrew. She is!"

Rosaline was thrilled to be unexpectedly called a pretty lady, and she beamed at Hesperus.

Alana could not take it anymore. “Impudent little b*stard, who are you calling an auntie?”

“Did you see that, pretty lady?” Hesperus pointed accusingly at Alana. “Isn’t she a shrew?”

Alana hastily buttoned her lips, her heart pounding hard at her brief loss of control.

“You really should call me Granny, you know.” Rosaline lightly stroked Hesperus’s hair. “My grandson is around your age.”

“I’ll call you Granny then! You look like a really nice person. Maybe you’re actually my Granny!” Hesperus’s acting skills reached a new high, and Rosaline’s heart melted completely.

“Security, hurry up and throw this woman and her child out of here!” Alana was frantic by now. “This noisy brat is bothering Madame Ryker!”

“Don’t throw your status around and try to bully people,” Rosaline chided, frowning slightly. “Have them escorted down; that will be just fine.”

“There’s no need for that,” Emmeline answered, taking hold of Hesperus’s small hand. Since Abel had not shown up yet, there was no point in her staying here for now. “We’ll make our own way down, ma’am.”

“Mommy!” Hesperus caught hold of Rosaline’s hand and tugged her toward Emmeline. “Mommy, I want to play with Granny for a while. I’ll go down by myself later.”

Emmeline was about to say no when she saw her son batting his eyes cutely at her. This young rascal was trying to worm his way into the Ryker family so he could function as an insider! He really was a little devil.

However, her eldest son Helios was even more of a little devil than his young brother. At this very moment, Helios was now at the airport, scrutinizing the arrival terminal for the man in the picture that had been printed in the article.

That man was supposed to be his daddy...Abel Ryker!

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Abel Ryker strode out, his eyes shielded behind dark sunglasses. He was surrounded by bodyguards, four in front of him and four behind. The weather had experienced a cold snap, causing the temperature in the arrival terminal to drop to freezing point. The passengers hurried on ahead, anxious to get out of the cold, and the area within a 30-foot radius was deserted, apart from Abel's bodyguards.

Actually, no! A little boy in a black suit was standing there, blocking Abel's way. From a distance, the child actually looked like a miniature version of...himself.

"Daddy!" Just as Abel's attention was drawn to the stylish little boy, Helios called out to him.

Daddy? In some confusion, Abel turned around. Aside from himself and his bodyguards, no one else was behind him. Who could the boy be addressing?

"Daddy!" Helios spoke up again in a clear, confident voice. "I'm your son."

“Hey, little fellow.” It was rare to see Abel stunned as he was now. In a change from his normal bad-tempered manner, he knelt down by Helios and said gently, “Are you lost? I can accompany you out of here and help you look for your parents.”

“You don’t need to look for Mommy. She’s gone to see great-grandfather and wait for you there,” Helios announced portentously. “There’s no need to look for Daddy either. You’re my Daddy!”

“How could I possibly be your Daddy?”

Helios answered with the utmost gravity, “Just look at the resemblance. There’s your answer! Do you even need to ask?”

Abel took off his sunglasses and scrutinized the little boy in front of him. The young rascal did, in fact, look very much like him. He looked up at his bodyguards, who concurred by nodding.

“But you’re not my son...” Abel chuckled. “You must be Adrien’s boy. You have the family resemblance, at least.”

“But Mommy said my daddy’s called Abel Ryker, the man in this picture. That’s you, right?” Helios showed Abel his phone screen.

Abel’s brow creased in a slight frown. Yes, the man in the picture was definitely him. It had been taken overseas at the airport in the country of Waverly when he was boarding the plane there.

Who had taken such a recognizable photograph of him?

Chapter 3

“What’s your Mommy’s name?” A distinctly chilly note crept into Abel’s voice. It would appear that some scheming woman was trying to frame him!

“Emmeline Louise.”

Emmeline Louise? Abel shook his head. He was certain he did not know this woman.

Meanwhile, Emmeline drove back to the café where she worked and parked her Porsche in the garage. She had just put on her apron when she heard someone calling her name frantically.

“Emma!” The agitated voice came from the doorway. “What on earth did you do to offend the Ryker family? Dad’s insisting that we all go back home right now because he says the Rykers will take action against us!”

It was Emmeline’s older brother, Ethan. Apparently, he had rushed over and was out of breath.

“I was kicked out of the family five years ago. I’m not going back!”

“But...but Dad said if I don’t bring you back with me, he’ll cut me out of the family business!”

“So let him! That’s not a bad thing!” Emmeline was not about to spare her brother’s feelings. “At least you won’t need to see that wretched woman!”

“But Emma, the family business is what keeps my family fed,” Ethan whined. “If I get cut out of it, what’s going to happen to the three of us? We’ll starve to death!”

“Wouldn’t it be much better if you started your own company?” Emmeline retorted, annoyed. “You’re not going to starve to death, not with all your networking and business contacts!”

“Where am I going to find that much start-up capital?” Ethan was not about to give up his grievance so easily. “That woman controls all of Dad’s assets!”

“I’ll ask the bank to advance you a loan!” Emmeline snapped impatiently. “I’ve told you repeatedly not to hope for anything from Dad, but you never listen!”

“You’re talking mighty big all of a sudden, Emma! Do you think the bank’s going to advance you a loan just because you ask? Who do you think you are?”

“Is fifty thousand enough?” Emmeline pulled out her phone. “My classmate just became president of the bank. The money should arrive any minute now.”

“It’s definitely enough.” Oddly enough, Ethan seemed rather fearful all of a sudden.

“What if the venture fails, though? I need to figure out what I could use as collateral.”

Emmeline was about to tell him that she would stand the cost if his business venture failed when her phone suddenly rang. The number on the display was an unfamiliar one. She picked up the call. “Nightfall Café. What would you like to order?”

A frosty voice replied, “Your son’s with me.”

“What an amateurish scam. I’m not about to fall for that!” Emmeline hung up the call and was about to resume her conversation with her brother when the phone rang again.

“Hey, scammer, listen here...”

“This is Abel Ryker!”

Emmeline was just about to give the “scammer” a good telling-off when she heard his name. Her heart stopped for a moment.

Abel Ryker! He had finally shown up! It had been five years since she had given birth to his children, and she still did not have the slightest idea of what he looked like!

Did her sons resemble him?

“Where are you?” Emmeline’s tone was equally chilly.

Abel was not pleased at all to be mistaken for a scammer. Coldly, he replied, “Your son was hungry. He’s eating at the Burger King by the airport right now!”

Only then did Emmeline realize that her oldest son was no longer upstairs.

The little brat had taken matters into his own hands again!

She ended the call at once and thrust one hand out at Ethan imperiously, demanding, “Give me the keys to the Phaeton now!”

“What do you want my beat-up old car for?”

“I have an emergency!” Emmeline snatched the keys from an unwilling Ethan, tossed her apron onto the counter again, and ran out the door.

Forty minutes later, after speeding down the highway, she arrived at the Burger King by the airport. When she pushed open the glass door, she saw Helios sitting at one of the tables, happily munching on a burger. His chubby little legs dangled, and he swung them carelessly.

Sitting beside him was an imperious man in a black suit. His presence was so commanding that it almost made Emmeline close the door and back away slowly. Her brows arched slightly.

The man looked to be at least six feet tall, and his physique seemed to indicate he might have had training in the military special forces. His countenance was so handsome, and he carried himself with such an aristocratic air!

Her children had inherited their father's perfect genes, after all! No wonder all her sons were so handsome!

"You're this boy's mother?" Abel was the first to speak. To be fair, the moment he saw how good-looking Helios was, he already expected the boy's mother to be uncommonly pretty. However, he had not anticipated that she would be such a beauty.

In fact, to call her astoundingly beautiful would be no exaggeration.

Abel had never been moved by any beautiful woman, but he could not deny that this young woman's loveliness had taken him aback for a split second.

"Yes, Mr. Ryker!"

"Did you teach him to shout 'Daddy' at every man on the street as well?" Abel smiled derisively at her.

"There's only one man who's this boy's Daddy!" Emmeline retorted icily. "Abel Ryker, the man who tossed a bank card containing ten million dollars at me five years ago, at the beginning of autumn, on a rainy day at the Grand Struyria Hotel!"

"It sounds like a chapter out of some cheap romance novel," Abel answered with a mocking smile. "But I'm in no mood to listen to your fairytales!"

"Abel Ryker!" Emmeline was furious. "You got me pregnant, and now you're just going to shirk all responsibility?"

“Miss,” one of the bodyguards said, blocking her way. “Mr. Abel’s been overseas the last few years. You must be mistaken!”

“Is there another Abel Ryker in Struyria who can afford to toss away a bank card with ten million dollars in its account, just like that? If it’s not you, then who else would it be?”

“Perhaps that man just picked the card up on the street somewhere,” Abel said with a shrug and a nonchalant wave of his hand.

Emmeline was taken aback. What Abel said was definitely possible and not an exaggeration, and it was not like she hadn’t thought about this possibility before. However, her sons all resembled him!

Nonetheless, this proved nothing.

Suddenly, Emmeline lunged forward.

The bodyguards tried to block her way, but she twisted aside and neatly evaded them, ending up beside Abel.

The bodyguards’ expressions grew hard, and they were about to rush forward to attack Emmeline when Abel raised his hand to stop them.

Instead, he suddenly reached out and yanked Emmeline off-balance, causing her to fall headlong into his arms. Getting one hand around her slender waist, his expression darkened.

However, Emmeline was like a wriggly little vixen; she slid out of his arms in a trice. At the same time, she reached out and plucked a single hair from Abel’s head lightly and easily with her slender fingertips.

Abel narrowed his eyes and asked frostily, “What do you think you’re trying to do?”

“I’m going to send this for a DNA test,” Emmeline answered with a coy smile.

“So you play dirty tricks too. How unimaginative!” Abel stood up abruptly and dusted down his suit, turning to leave. “Ms. Louise, I’m returning your son to you. I advise you to keep an eye on him so he doesn’t go around yelling for his Daddy on every street corner!”

“Hold on!” Emmeline blocked Abel’s path. “Did you come back to marry Alana Lane?”

“What has that got to do with you?”

“If you’re going to marry her, even if my boy is yours, I’ll leave you alone.”

“No, I am not!” Abel’s face looked as if it were carved from stone. “Alana Lane and I aren’t close!”

Suddenly, Emmeline’s phone began ringing. She glanced at the display and realized it was her second son calling. Her heart stood still for a moment. Had something happened to Endymion?

Hurriedly, she turned aside and answered the call.

“Mommy, I’m coming home now.”

“Why?”

“My teacher said that if I don’t go home, the kindergarten will need to close down.”

Without pausing, Emmeline yanked open the glass door and raced out. The bodyguards were unable to stop her departure either.

Helios sat at the table, swinging his legs in a carefree, insouciant manner. Waving his pudgy little hand, he called, “Bye-bye, Mommy! Drive carefully ok!”

“Mr. Abel, we’re sorry!” The bodyguards lowered their heads in shame.

“All of you underestimated her!”

The bodyguards eyed the adorable yet troublesome little boy sitting on the chair. “What do we do about this young sprout, though?”

“He has a name!” Abel sounded slightly irritated. He knelt down beside Helios and asked, “What’s your name, young man?”

“Helios! But everyone calls me Sun.”

“Helios...Sun. That’s unusual. Sounds good, though.”

“Thank you for the compliment, Daddy!”

“Don’t call me Daddy. I’m not your father.”

“Then what do I call you, Daddy?”

Abel stared at the boy, completely at a loss. However, it began looking more and more as if he would have to take the young troublemaker home with him.

The boy’s mother seemed extremely scatterbrained. Just one phone call and she had run off, leaving her son behind.

Once the group had exited the Burger King, a fleet of nine black Rolls-Royces made their stately way down the road and stopped in front of the entourage.

Abel hoisted Helios up in one arm and walked to the second Rolls-Royce with him.

“Oh wow, Daddy! You’ve got style! You’re almost like royalty!” Helios knew exactly when to flatter Abel. His expression was exaggerated, and his dark eyes were sparkling. He looked utterly adorable.

The boy’s face was so innocent and chubby that Abel could not help dropping a kiss on his cheek. It was the first time he had experienced such a warm, tender feeling.

“Ahem!” Coughing to cover his uncharacteristic lapse, he got into the car and settled in, straight-backed and imperious. Once more, his usual aloof, haughty expression settled over his face.

He had never liked displaying emotion, and he had no intention of dropping his mask any time soon, particularly not in front of a little rascal.

However, Helios fell asleep in the back seat, lulled by the slight jolting of the car as it drove along. Initially, he had tried his best to keep his chubby little body upright, but his head began to sink lower and lower. In no time at all, he slid down and toppled against Abel.

Abel wanted to push him aside, but the sensation of the boy’s soft cheek against his shoulder was like a revelation to his senses. A warm feeling settled through every fiber of his being. Involuntarily, he reached out and eased the little boy into his arms.

“Daddy...it smells good...”

What was he talking about? Did it smell good because he now had a Daddy, or was he talking about how good his burger smelled earlier?

Somehow, Abel could not prevent himself from smiling.

The bodyguard in the passenger's seat glanced at the rearview mirror and had a sudden attack of goosebumps.

Was this warm, affectionate, rather scattered man really Abel Ryker?

Chapter 4

Emmeline showed up an hour late to the kindergarten.

“Ms. Louise,” the kindergarten teacher said apologetically. “We just got a visit from the Ryker family and they said that they would shut the kindergarten down unless your son stays. The principal thought that it'd be best to send Moon home first.”

Upon realizing that the Rykers would go to such extremes for a child, Emmeline's brow furrowed in surprise. It was likely Alana's doing, given her abundance of idle time.

“What the.” Emmeline smiled. “I don't see the point of sending them to school if they hate it, so I'll be keeping them at home for a few days.”

“I agree,” the teacher commented. “Your children are really smart, Ms. Louise. I hate to admit it, but we often have to look up the answers to their questions online.”

“Thank you for your hard work thus far,” Emmeline hastily thanked.

“You should go back and look after your children then.” The teacher took a glance at the time. “They should be home by now.”

After bidding farewell, Emmeline drove back to Nightfall Cafe in the old Phaeton car.

Once she had reached the cafe, she found Endymion getting occupied by the computer in the study room.

“Hey, Moon.” Emmeline ruffled his hair. “You hungry yet?”

“Nope,” Endymion replied as his eyes were fixated on the red dot on the screen. “Is Star still with great-grandfather?”

“Yeah, he’ll be there playing for a while.”

“Sun is heading that way too.”

“He’s with Abel right now and they’re going to see his grandfather at the hospital.”

“How did it go with daddy?”

“Well,” Emmeline replied with a sigh. “He isn’t admitting to it.”

“Hmph!” Moon puffed up his cheeks. “What a jerk!”

“Pfft!” Emmeline chuckled. “He looks fine to me; he’s not a complete jerk.”

“Then why didn’t he admit that he’s our father? We’re four years old now!”

“I mean there’s no proof yet.” Emmeline scratched her head and mumbled, “Even mommy is getting a little confused...”

Suddenly, they heard the door below being kicked open and a lady shouting, “Emmeline Louise, get down here now!”

It was Emmeline’s stepmom, Alondra Lane.

“Stay here.” Emmeline patted her son’s head and said, “Mommy’s going to check what’s going on.”

“Okay.” Endymion nodded his head back. “Call me if something goes wrong.”

“Yes, sir!” Emmeline joked before rushing down the stairs. With each passing day, her kid grew more endearing—and, as she reflected on it, more like Abel!

“Are you out of your mind, Emmeline?” Alondra shouted toward the stairwell, “How dare you offend the Ryker family! They would’ve destroyed our only business! If it weren’t for Alana, the entire family would’ve bankrupted!”

Alana? Emmeline looked to the side and noticed that Alana had come along too. She was standing elegantly at the front door in a white dress. Many would-be customers decided against entering the cafe because of Alana’s intimidating presence. Emmeline held onto the railing and jumped down the remaining few steps.

“My dear cousin,” Alana sneered, “You’re already a mother yet you’re still running wild like a child?”

“Why won’t you shut up for once then?” Emmeline immediately grabbed a hold of Alana’s jaw and growled, “Go stand by the side like a mannequin, will you?”

Alondra swatted Emmeline’s hand away and scolded, “Don’t be ridiculous to my niece. She’s about to be married into the prestigious Ryker family!”

“Oh my, congratulations!” Emmeline sarcastically remarked.

Alana held her head high and proudly responded, “Are you just jealous of me since no one wants you and your illegitimate children?”

“I’m giving you 2 minutes to get out of my place now, or I’ll make you sorry for it!”

“Stop it now!” Alondra yelled, “Did you know your father collapsed after hearing that the Ryker family planned to ruin our business and it was Alana that convinced them to do otherwise? Are you really going to argue with her?”

Emmeline calmed down after Alondra mentioned her father. In the end, they were blood-related and she felt heartbroken after hearing the news of her father.

“Apologize to Alana now!” Alondra scolded, “I can’t believe you’re not even sending your kids to kindergarten!”

“I knew it was your doing!” Emmeline immediately marched forward upon hearing that and was about to slap Alana before her wrist was caught by someone. She turned around to see that it was her brother, Ethan.

“Emma, stop making things worse! Even I, your brother, am about to lose my job!”

“What happened?” Emmeline withdrew her hand after noticing her brother’s pale face.

“I got a call from Louise Corporation and they’re going to terminate me because of the fuss you caused to the Ryker family! What are we going to do now?”

“Yes, Emma, please stop!” Suddenly, Emmeline’s sister-in-law, Grace Cooper, burst in, sobbing. “I was about to do a headline interview on the Ryker family, but because of you, the studio got their call and canceled the interview! I can’t afford to lose any more interviews!”

“Hahaha!” Alana laughed. “Emmeline, you’re quite the jinx! You’re ruining the lives of everyone in your family!”

“Sis?”

“Emma?”

“Apologize to Alana now!”

“Hmph, what does she want as an apology?” Emmeline hummed.

“Never, ever, show your face in front of the Ryker family again!” Alana warned while glaring at Emmeline. Oh, how she wished she could punch Emmeline in the face, but in reality, she was too weak to get close to this woman! Emmeline’s strength was so incredible that she could easily take on two or three guys.

“I’ll swear on behalf of my sister!” Ethan hurriedly responded, “The Ryker family is a respectable family that we dare not associate ourselves with!”

“It’s not enough,” Alana said, “Emmeline scolded me too. I’d like to remind you that I’ll soon be a part of the Ryker family. If the Ryker family caught news of this, I can’t promise that I’ll always side with you for the sake of my aunt!”

“That’s right!” Alondra glanced arrogantly at the siblings. “My niece has tolerated quite enough!”

“Yes, we get it!” Ethan nodded his head. “I’ll apologize on behalf of my sister. We’re sor-”

“Shut up!” Emmeline pulled Ethan aside and splashed a cup of cold coffee onto Alana’s face. “Stop making a fuss. Get out of here or I’ll make you regret it!”

“Emma!” Ethan shouted, “Louise Corporation is really going to fire me if you do that!”

“Emma! Do you really want me to lose my job?” Emma exclaimed.

“Go and beg Alana for help!”

“Apologize to Alana!”

“Ugh, this is annoying!” Emmeline dropped her head down. Alana proudly lifted her head up, awaiting for Emmeline’s apology, but instead, Emmeline turned around to make a call.

“Yes, ma’am?”

“Send a big order to my brother; the type of order with a commission of more than half a million dollars. Then, arrange an interview between Grace and a famous figure in Struyria!”

“Yes, ma’am!”

After Emmeline hung up the phone, she returned to the cafe just as Ethan and Grace were apologizing to Alana. As Alana dared not go too far with Emmeline’s patience, she arrogantly stomped out of the cafe with Alondra. Soon, Ethan and Grace’s phones rang. They picked it up and left the scene with their faces brimming in joy again. Emmeline finally returned upstairs, remembering that she had to cook for her child. However, there was no sign of Moon in the study room, besides a note on the table, which Emmeline picked up to read.

“The Sun and the Star have gathered, except the Moon. I’m going too. I’ll see you soon, mommy.”

“Damn it!” Emmeline crumbled up the note. All three of her sons were now headed toward Abel!

Chapter 5

As soon as they arrived at the hospital’s entrance, Abel stepped out of the car, and the chauffeur took off toward the basement parking lot. With Helios fast asleep in his arms, Abel resisted the temptation to nibble his lovely plump cheeks. Although Abel had a son of similar age, it was his mother, Rosaline, who had been raising him. Having only seen images of his son, Abel wondered if his kid would be as adorable as the one in his arms.

After receiving word that her son was on his way, Rosaline waited patiently in the foyer for him to arrive. Her eyes lit up when she saw him. “Abel, my dear boy!”

“Hey, mom,” Abel greeted back. As he was often away from home, he had little opportunity to speak with his mother. Rosaline noticed the child in his arms and instinctively reached her hands out to carry him.

“Good boy. I didn’t know you went home and brought Timothy along,” she said.

“No,” Abel explained while passing Helios to his mother, “This is Helios. I haven’t met Timothy yet.”

“Helios?” Rosaline frowned. With Hesperus upstairs, she was taken aback by another unknown child! They also looked very identical to each other, perhaps...

Rosaline’s heart trembled as she asked, “Whose child is it?”

“He said his mother is Emmeline Louise.”

Emmeline again? Rosaline frowned upon hearing Emmeline’s name. At this point, that wretched woman had built a reputation for herself in Struyria! Despite being frustrated, Rosaline could not deny the adorable and chubby little boy in her arms. It would have been wonderful if Helios and Hesperus were her grandchildren too.

“So, is it true that Emmeline gave birth to your children?” Rosaline raised an eyebrow at her son.

“I only met one woman.” Abel said firmly, “Five years ago when I returned to fulfill my duty as a member of the Ryker family.”

“But they look so similar to you.” Rosaline was about to suggest Abel to take a paternity test but ended up believing her son’s claim that Alana was the only woman he had slept

with. Unfortunately, Abel despised Alana for her malicious scheme. Despite Alana giving birth to Timothy, he refused to acknowledge her as his wife and put off getting married.

They went to the highest floor and visited Oscar. From the looks of it, his condition had not improved. After a while, Abel walked out of his room with a somber face.

“Don’t worry,” Rosaline reassured Abel with Helios in her arms, “Your father had asked for the Wonder Doctor and the doctor agreed to treat your grandfather tomorrow.”

“Alright then.” Abel massaged his forehead as he responded, “I’ve heard the doctor’s superb medical skills. At least there’s hope for grandpa.”

“Let’s head back to the mountain villa to rest. You must be tired from taking such a long flight.”

“Yeah!”

Suddenly, Hesperus emerged from the resting area opposite of them. “You must be daddy, seeing how handsome and stylish you are.”

“Timothy?” Abel frowned. “Why are you here? Aren’t you supposed to be in school?”

“This isn’t Timothy!” Rosaline exclaimed embarrassingly, “This is Star, Hesperus!”

“Hesperus? Whose son is this?” A chill went down Abel’s spine as he could already somewhat guess the answer.

“It’s Emmeline’s.”

Abel felt his words were stuck at his throat. He brought back a Sun and now a Star had been waiting for him. What’s with that damn Emmeline? He could feel his head spinning, but he could not say no to the adorable boy staring at him with wide, hopeful eyes.

“I’m not your daddy, but I can’t abandon you here until your mom picks you up. Follow me.”

“Thanks, daddy!” Hesperus beckoned to Abel to pick him up with open arms.

“Sun is sleeping.” Hesperus pointed at Helios and giggled. “Teehee, he’s even drooling!”

Rosaline was overjoyed after seeing Hesperus and Helios. Oh, how she wished they could have been her grandchildren instead!

They then made their way to the elevator and waited for it to arrive. Ding dong! Both Abel and Rosaline nearly passed out when they saw another kid in the elevator as the door opened! Abel felt like he had poked a hornet’s nest as he was surrounded by these adorable kids.

“And you are…” Abel took a deep breath to calm his nerves as he crouched down while speaking to the kid.

“Daddy!” The child chirpily responded, “I’m your son, Endymion…”

“You’re the moon then?”

“Yeah!” Endymion’s obsidian black eyes glimmered. “The sun, the moon and the star have gathered! We’re all your sons.”

“Luca,” Abel mumbled to his assistant as he stumbled backwards. “Lend me a hand.”

~

Although Alana was not allowed into the Ryker family’s residence according to her will, she quickly learned that Abel brought three children back home. It was then she realized that Sun, Moon and Star were also Emmeline’s children!

What the? How did Emmeline manage to give birth to four kids?!

Alana ran back to the Louise residence and got straight to the point with Alondra after seeing that Maxwell was not there.

“Auntie, how could you be so clumsy back then? I mean, why didn’t you take all four of her children?”

“You want all of her children?” Alondra was in the midst of applying a silk face mask as she spoke. “Your aim was to have a child of the Ryker family’s bloodline. You and Abel can always try for another baby. If I gave you all four of them, how are you able to justify getting another one?”

“I guess so…” Alana mumbled before pinching her leg in frustration. “I can’t believe Abel entered the wrong room five years ago after returning home! I clearly drugged him and was waiting for him in the next room!”

“We also shouldn’t have kicked Emmeline out of the house on that day. Otherwise, there wouldn’t have been a misunderstanding!”

“What do I do now? Those three rascals are getting in my way!”

“What are you panicking about?” Alondra responded, “Didn’t you bribe the supervisor from the Biology Department of Ryker’s Hospital? If the Ryker family wants to get a paternity test, the results should come from that lab right?”

Instantly, Alana’s face flushed red and lowered her head as she mumbled, “I’ll call him later then.”

“Huh?” Alondra tilted her head to look at Alana. “Your face is getting red, Alana. What’s wrong with calling Dr. Reid?”

“It’s not that simple!” Alana started squirming uncomfortably. “It’s risky to try and fool the Rykers. Besides, Dr. Reid agreed to work with me in the first place because... because...”

“You slept with him?” Alondra gasped.

Chapter 6

“Shh, pipe down, auntie,” said Alana as she hastily covered Alondra’s mouth with her hand.

“What’s so surprising about that?” replied Alondra. She pushed Alana’s hand away and continued, “The child you bore for the Ryker Family is already 4 years old after all. If Abel finds out that you are still a virgin during your wedding night, then we might be in serious trouble!”

“Nah, I haven’t been one in a long while,” replied Alana, visibly more relaxed. She no longer felt like she needed to pretend anymore. She continued, “I wouldn’t dare take advantage of Cristopher without compensating him fairly.”

“Then hurry up and give him a call,” urged Alondra. “Just sleep with him again if you have to. You can figure out how to get rid of him once you become a mistress of the Ryker Family.

Emmeline woke up the next day and started scrolling happily through the messages from her sons.

Sun wrote, “Abel has another son, mommy!”

Moon wrote, “His name is Timothy and he’s the same age as us!”

Star wrote, “I heart that Alana is his mommy!”

Emmeline responded with a surprised emoji.

Abel had a child with Alana?

Then why did Emmeline bother with chasing after that bastard?

She could just easily move on with her life and forget about him! Emmeline did not need or want Abel to own up to what he did to her all those years ago, but she wanted to know if the children she bore were indeed his!

If he was the biological father, she wanted his blood to save her child.

Emmeline finally got out of bed. She planned to run a DNA test on the hair strand she got from Abel and compared it to her son’s.

She easily acquired a strand of hair from her son’s bed.

But what of the strand of hair from Abel?

Oh crap, Emmeline wrapped the strand of hair in a piece of tissue paper and stuffed it in her pocket after she grabbed it from Abel!

However, she had inadvertently washed her jeans last night!

Ahhh!

Emmeline hurried up to the balcony to find the pockets of her jeans empty.

Damn it! Why was I so careless?

She went through a lot to get that strand of hair off of Abel's head and now she had to do it again! Emmeline was not about to give up, she was determined to get another strand no matter what it took!

Picking up her phone, Emmeline made a call and said, "Find out where Abel is right now."

After a short while, the phone rang. "He just arrived at the Ryker Group building and is currently in a meeting."

"Got it," replied Emmeline. Just as she was about to hang up, the voice at the other end said, "Don't forget your promise, boss. You said you'll stage your appearance today."

"I'll see how things go," replied Emmeline as she hung up impatiently. She then hailed a cab.

After 40 minutes, Emmeline arrived at the entrance of the 89-floor building belonging to the Ryker Group.

~

Abel was sitting in the CEO's office after his meeting when the secretary walked in and announced, "Ms. Alana is here with some homemade refreshments."

Abel replied in a deep voice, "Let her in."

Just as he finished speaking, Alana pushed open the door and entered with a box of desserts in her hand.

"Abel"

The secretary hurriedly left and closed the door behind her.

Being Abel's fiancée, Alana was going to be one of the future bosses of the Ryker Group, so everyone was trying their best to curry favor with her.

With a scowl, Abel remarked, "Don't get too cozy with me, I don't even know you that well."

"..." Alana was silent with an uncomfortable look on her face, before breaking into a smile and raising the box in her hands. She said, "Try it, I made these myself."

"I did not let you in for the desserts," said Abel with a glare. He continued, "Who gave you the authority to use the Ryker Family name to remove those three children from their kindergarten?"

Alana let out a gasp of surprise.

Had Abel found out what she did?

Of course, he had, Those three brats were in Ryker Mansion, it was plain for all to see when they did not go to school in the morning.

"Abe....Oh, I mean, Mr. Abel," said Alana. "They offended Madame Ryker, so I figured I should stand up for the Ryker Family."

"Who are you to interfere in our family matter? Don't do that again!"

Was Rosaline angry at what she did?

Alana was immediately gripped with fear. Madame Ryker was the last person she dared to offend!

It was Madame Ryker who convinced her son to marry Alana in the first place!

“Then...” replied Alana nervously. “I’ll go and apologize to Madame Ryker at once.”

When Alana came out of the elevator, she bumped into Emmeline, who was wearing a simple white tee and a pair of jeans.

Despite her plain unassuming outfit, Emmeline had this captivating allure that grew with each passing day. On top of that, she had a certain arrogant look to her. Alana could not understand what drove Emmeline to possess such confidence.

Alana instinctively knew why Emmeline was there in front of her.

There was no way she allow Emmeline to meet Abel.

“Security! Throw this woman out at once!”

Several security guards rushed forward with rubber clubs in their hands.

Before one of them could stretch out their hands to grab her, Emmeline avoided them in one quick dodge and with a loud thud, she sent the guard sprawling on the ground.

“I’m here to see Abel! So be a good dog and let me pass!” growled Emmeline angrily.

Alana’s face turned pale. Raising her eyebrows, Alana asked, “Why are you seeing my fiancé? Are you trying to seduce him in front of me?”

“Do I look like I give a crap about that?” sneered Emmeline. “I just want to find out if he’s the father of my children!”

Alana was about to hurl insults at Emmeline before she caught glimpse of the elevator to the CEO’s office coming down from the corner of her eyes.

Alana immediately composed herself and with a gentle voice, said, “Are you blaming my fiancé for what happened 5 years ago in the Grand Struyria Hotel, cousin? I saw Adrien go into your room that night. Did you not find him worthy of your affections?”

“What did you say?” Emmeline felt a buzz in her head. “You saw Adrien?”

“Yes, it was 5 years ago, on a rainy night in Autumn. You ran away from home. I was worried, so I went looking for you and I saw...”

There was no mistake, what Alana described was that faithful day 5 years ago.

After she was driven out by her stepmother, she found herself roaming the streets during a drizzle. She then checked herself into the Grand Struyria Hotel that night.

Could it be...that the man back then was not Abel?

“What else do you have to say?” asked a cold voice from behind her. “Was the strand of hair you took from me useless?”

“But how do you explain the bank card with your name?” asked Emmeline as she turned around to look at the man.

“Isn’t that obvious?” replied Alana with a smile. “Maybe Mr. Adrien took Abel’s bank card?”

Emmeline did not know what to say.

She did not care which of the Rykers was going to be the heir to the Ryker Family, but she knew of Adrien’s reputation in Phoenix as a playboy.

She shuddered to think that the father of her children was a lecherous playboy.

However, she was certain of one thing, she had to figure out who was the father of her children. Hesperus's life depended on it.

Hesperus was diagnosed with a blood disorder when he was one year old. Despite having received treatment for the past two years, they had to identify who his father was just in case Hesperus needed a blood transfusion.

Emmeline stood there in a daze when her phone suddenly rang. Annoyed, she answered the phone.

“Boss, they're insisting...”

“Tell them I'm occupied!”

“But boss...”

Emmeline immediately hung up.

This time, it was Abel's phone that started ringing. He turned around and answered the phone.

The voice on the other side went, “Mr. Abel, the doctor refused to come and treat the chairman.”

“What? Why?” asked Abel with a frown. “I'm about to head to the hospital myself!”

“We tried...but the doctor hung up on us and turned off the phone...”

“I don't care what it takes! You can grovel before him for all I care, get me the Wonder Doctor! Offer him 50 million as his consultation fee if you have to! This is the only chance for Old Mr. Ryker to make it through!”

“50 million dollars?” replied the panicked voice on the other side. “At once, Mr. Abel.”

Emmeline was already gone when Abel hung up the phone.

Chapter 7

Abel rushed to the hospital to find Oscar in critical condition.

Lewis and Rosaline were already there. Landen, his uncle, had also just arrived.

Everyone was worried and they could only pray that the old man would survive.

“Lewis,” said Landen, “Why don’t you try getting your contact to plead with the Wonder Doctor again? Our father’s life depends on it!”

“They’ve tried to contact him three times now. I even got them to offer 50 million to the doctor, but they said he hung up on them.”

“Try again, they’ll find a way to get him...they have to...”

Just as the two brothers were in a state of desperation, a bodyguard came in and announced, “The Wonder Doctor is coming. He’s on the elevator right now!”

Everyone there instantly perked up.

The visitation area of the VIP ward went completely silent.

Ahh!

Suddenly, everyone let out a loud gasp at the same time.

“For real? The Wonder Doctor is coming over?” asked Landen

“Yes, Mr. Landen,” replied the bodyguard excitedly. “He’s on his way up as we speak.”

With a trembling voice, Lewis exclaimed, “Go and meet him right now! Finally, help is here!”

Coming to their senses, everyone rushed out the door to meet the Wonder Doctor.

Abel also helped his mother out of the room behind the crowd.

The elevator was slowly rising, and everyone was transfixed at the panel displaying the floor the elevator was that. Their excitement rose along with the number.

“Ding!”

The elevator arrived at their floor and the door slowly opened. All eyes were fixated on the door of the elevator.

Emmeline was immediately greeted with stares from the Ryker family as she walked out of the elevator.

Thankfully no one recognized her as she was in a full protective suit with a huge face mask over her face.

The assistant behind her let out a surprised gasp when he saw the crowd.

Both Lewis and Landen immediately gave a polite bow and greeted the doctor, “You’re finally here, Wonder Doctor.”

The rest of the Ryker family followed suit and bowed before the doctor.

“Mmhmm,” replied Emmeline without batting an eye. She pushed past the crowd of people and walked towards the ward.

She may not need money, but an easy 50 million dollars was hard to turn down. What's more, she could save a life in the process.

"Huh?" exclaimed Rosaline as the doctor brushed past her.

"What happened, mother?" asked Abel quietly.

"The doctor's eyes...seem familiar."

"What?" replied Abel. "This doctor may be famous in the medical world, but his background was always shrouded in mystery. You rarely leave home as it is, how is it possible that you've met him before?"

"But..."

Before she could finish speaking, she saw everyone else walking into the ward after the doctor. Both she and Abel tried to catch up to them.

"They didn't recognize you huh, boss," whispered Benjamin to Emmeline.

"Thankfully!" replied Emmeline quietly.

After both of them entered the ward, the hospital director that tailed behind them stood at the door. He prevented the members of the Ryker Family from entering.

Only the doctor and the assistant are allowed in there. Please be patient and wait where."

"Let's just wait then," said Landen as he rubbed his hands. "There's no need to worry now that the Wonder Doctor is here."

"yeah, dad will make it through this time," replied Lewis as he wiped the sweat from his forehead.

With Benjamin's help, Emmeline got to work. The acupuncture treatment lasted for two hours.

When the two figures in protective suits finally walked out, the people who were anxiously waiting in the lounge area stood up and rushed toward the duo.

"How is my father doing, doctor?"

"Is my grandfather awake, doctor?"

"Wonder Doctor..."

Benjamin immediately stood between the crowd and the doctor, saying, "Just go inside and see for yourselves. The Wonder Doctor is tired, so we'll be taking our leave."

"Then I'll send the good doctor off," said Abel humbly.

"That won't be necessary," said Emmeline coldly as she briefly glanced at him.

That voice...

...and those eyes...

Abel was stunned. He stood there mystified as Emmeline and Benjamin walked past him and went out of the room.

"Doctor!" yelled Abel as he came to his senses and gave chase.

However, before he could get to the doctor and the assistant, both of them had entered the elevator and the door closed behind them.

Abel did not know why he felt compelled to run after the doctor. He just felt that he had to do it.

Failing to do so, Abel could only return to the ward disheartened. When he entered the ward, Old Mr. Ryker was conscious and seemed to be in a good mood.

“How are you feeling, granddad?” asked Abel. He was overcome with joy.

“Leave, all of you,” said Oscar. “I want to speak with Abel in private.”

Everyone had no choice but to obey.

Being the chosen heir of Oscar, it was given that Oscar would want to speak to him alone.

Rosaline was the last one to leave and she closed the door on her way out.

Outside the ward, Julianna, who was Landen’s wife, looked unhappy.

She glanced at both of her sons, her eyes filled with dissatisfaction.

“What are your orders, granddad?” asked Abel with his hands holding onto Oscar’s hand.

“Look at this...” said Oscar as he lifted his left hand up from under the sheets. His thumb and index fingers were touching each other.

“What am I looking at?” asked Abel with a frown. He was confused as he could see nothing between Oscar’s fingers.

“As expected, you can’t see it,” said Oscar as he wiggled his fingers. He continued, “Isn’t this a needle?”

A needle?

Abel drew his head closer to Oscar before finally noticing the almost invisible outline of a needle between his grandfather’s fingers.

“What is it for? It looks very peculiar!”

“The Wonder Doctor dropped it,” said Oscar with a smile. He continued, “The doctor’s reputation is well deserved. I felt much better after just a few needles were inserted through my skin. For a moment, I thought I was cured! But it seems like she had her moment of carelessness too.”

Fiddling with the strange needle with his fingers, Abel replied, “Yeah, he must be really careless to misplace sure a priceless-looking thing!”

“I need you to do something for me,” said Oscar. “Consider it my last wish to you.”

“What is it, granddad?” asked Abel as he held his grandfather’s hand tightly.

“Ask and I will deliver.”

“Find the Wonder Doctor and make her wife.”

Cough

Abel almost choked when he heard that. Amused, Abel said, “Are you alright, granddad? The Wonder Doctor is a man, I have no interest in men.”

“Foolish boy! Did I raise a dense grandson to be my heir? The doctor is obviously a woman, a young and beautiful woman. Why would you say she’s a man? Idiot!”

Huh?

Abel asked, “How did you know that it was a woman? Wasn’t the doctor in a full protective suit all this while?”

“It’s her eyes, you fool! Her eyes betrayed her identity!”

The eyes?

Abel was finally coming around, as even he and his mother were drawn to the Wonder Doctor's eyes for reasons unknown. Having Oscar confirm that something was up meant that they were right.

Those sparkly and captivating eyes were an enigma.

Oscar had come across countless people in his life, so there was hardly any reason to doubt him when he claimed that the Wonder Doctor was a woman, and a young one at that.

As for whether she was beautiful, that was a different question, as the eyes alone were not enough to tell whether she was beautiful.

“Are you catching on now?” continued Oscar, “For a young woman to have such skill in medicine, she's a keeper! Our family will only continue to grow powerful if she joins the family, so make her your wife, Abel.”

“But...you know when it comes to women, I...” murmured Abel in embarrassment.

“Didn't you just say you were not attracted to men? So that means your sexual orientation is not an issue, right? replied Oscar.

“That's not what I meant...”

“Then there's nothing else to talk about. As the heir to the Ryker family, you have no reason to turn down my request. This is your mission!”

“...”

When Rosaline returned home, she was greeted by Alana at the front door.

She was there to visit Thomas, as it was the weekend. The Rykers only permitted Alana to see her son on weekends.

At that moment, Thomas was playing in the garden with Sun, Moon, and Star.

The four boys were getting along well with each other.

“Look at how happy you all are. I bet your mommy loves you very much huh?” asked Thomas with a sullen look. There was a glint of sadness in his obsidian-colored eyes.

“What are you talking about? All mommies love their children,” replied Helios.

“Yeah, what kind of question is that?” asked Endymion.

“If Thomas had to ask that question in the first place, it means that there’s also a different answer to it.” deducted Hesperus.

“You are correct,” said Thomas dejectedly. “My mommy doesn’t even love me.”

“Do you mean Alana?”

“That lady is scary!”

“No wonder she doesn’t love you!”

“My luck sucks!” said Timothy with a sigh.

“We have the best mommy in the world!”

“She is also the most beautiful woman ever!”

“Why don’t we introduce you to our mommy one day?”

“Yes, please!” replied Timothy happily as he clapped his hands together.

As the four boys were happily talking, the butler entered the room and beckoned to Timothy. He said, “Your mother is here to see you, Timothy!”

Chapter 8

“I won’t go! I refuse to see her!” Timothy exclaimed as he ran off. Alana had other intentions aside from wanting to meet her son.

“Madame Ryker, are the three kids still at the Ryker Mansion?” Alana asked. Rosaline sipped her cup of tea and replied, “That’s right. They’re playing with Timmy in the garden right now.”

“In that case, do you know the parents of these children?” Alana questioned. “Emmeline said that Abel is the father. Hopefully, that’s true. I’m waiting for Abel to return and go for a paternity test.” Rosaline said.

“That won’t do!” Alana uttered. “Why’s that?” Rosaline was taken aback by her response. “I mean that Emmeline recalled that Adrien is the father,” Alana swiftly explained.

Rosaline was dazed. “It’s Adrien? How can that be? I don’t agree with this!” she uttered.

“Madame Ryker, disagreeing with it won’t change anything. Besides, if you look after them too much you will come across as being envious of Auntie Juliana. Once Abel and I are married, I’ll be sure to give birth to multiple grandchildren for you! How does that sound?” Alana said.

Rosaline was speechless. However, she felt dissatisfied and proceeded to phone Abel to come over with Adrien. Alana sneered as things were going according to plan. If Rosaline insisted Adrien undergo a paternity test, she would urge Abel to marry Alana.

After a while, Abel and Adrien arrived. The four children gathered before them. “Who are these three? When did you give birth to them?” Adrien asked. “Congratulations, Mr. Adrien. These three are yours. Were you unaware of that?” Alana said.

Adrien almost fell from the sofa. He stared at Alana with widened eyes and said, “What did you just say?” Alana smiled and continued, “Mr. Adrien, five years ago during early autumn, I saw you enter the Grand Struyria Hotel with the mother of these three, Emmeline!”

Adrien finally fell off the sofa from immense shock. He pointed to the three children and muttered, "These three, are mine?" Abel and Rosaline were upset.

"Adrien, you should undergo a paternity test just to be sure," Abel said. "That's right! There's a hospital close by. That should make things convenient," Alana added.

Rosaline stood up and said, "I'm exhausted. If the results prove that they are Adrien's children, don't bother informing me about it!"

"You got it, Madame Ryker! You should get some rest now," Alana replied. Rosaline turned to Abel and added, "Abel, it's about time to prepare for your wedding with Alana. Timmy is grown up now, but I'm still eager to look after your children. It's not just one that I hope for, I want at least three grandchildren!"

Abel drank his tea in silence. He was looking forward to embracing the three children. "Isn't Abel our daddy?" Helios frowned. "That's right. Why did it suddenly change?" Endymion asked. "What's going on?" Hesperus was confused.

"You all have no right to quarrel here. Once the test results are out, you'll see for yourselves that Adrien is your father!" Alana said. How can you speak to them in this manner? Timothy is my son, which means he's part of the Ryker family. Where did you get the courage to scold them?" Abel uttered.

Alana realized that she was getting carried away. "I'm bringing my son upstairs to read," Abel said as he lifted Timothy. Alana remained at the Ryker mansion to wait for Adrien to return with the results. She had informed Christopher about it beforehand. Once the results are out, no one else can dispute the fact that Adrien was the father of the three children.

Christopher delivered the paternity test results after lunch. Alana stood on the stairs as she gave him a wink. Everyone else had their attention on the test results and failed to notice the gestures between Christopher and Alana.

"Mr. Adrien, the paternity test results indicate that your DNA is a match. That means you're the father!" Christopher said. Although Adrien had expected the results, he could not suppress his joy. He embraced the three children with teary eyes.

"Congratulations, Adrien," Abel said with a bitter tone. "As you can see, I was right all along," Alana said as she walked down the stairs. "I was certain that they were Adrien's kids. They look just like his father!" she added.

“Abel, it was the same woman that brought these kids over. However, you only have one while I have three!” Adrien uttered. “Adrien sure is the best. He gave me three healthy grandchildren just like that. Hah, this is wonderful news!”

Everyone turned their heads towards the laughter coming from the entrance. It was Julianna. “Mom, come see your grandchildren!” Adrien uttered.

Julianna glanced at Rosaline and said, “I came over after receiving the phone call. It sure is my lucky day!” Rosaline turned away as she snorted.

Julianna reached out to Helios, Endymion, and Hesperus. “Nice to meet all of you. I’m your Granny,” she said. The three children glanced at each other in silence.

Helios turned to Abel and asked, “Daddy, is this true?” Abel could feel his heart aching. “I’ve told you that I’m not your father. It’s him,” Abel replied.

“Did mommy make a mistake?” Endymion said. “It’s up to mommy to make the decision!” Hesperus uttered. “You’re right. We have to tell mommy!” Helios replied as he pulled out his phone.

“It’s better to let your mother know so that she can be a part of the family and all of you can be reunited!” Julianna said. “That’s right! She gave birth to three adorable children so I must marry her!” Adrien added.

Abel frowned as he was feeling upset. He had no reason to feel that way but he could not control his feelings.

“I don’t think that’s a good idea,” Alana said.

Chapter 9

“What do you mean? You don’t have a say in this anyway,” Julianna said. “Everyone knows that Emmeline is a slut. Therefore, she is unworthy of being married to Mr. Adrien,” Alana replied.

“That’s the Ryker family’s fault. She was pregnant before marriage and was uncertain of who the father is. However, now that we know the truth, we must hurry and accept her

into our family. It's not easy for a woman to care for three children by herself!" Julianna uttered.

"Granny is right! Mommy had a rough time!" Helios nodded. "She gave it her all to take care of us!" Endymion said. "Mommy developed neurasthenia and she can't sleep well at night!" Hesperus added.

Julianna squatted and embraced the three children. "The three of you had it rough as well!" she said.

"Emmeline is incompetent and she goes out with people on the streets. She has nothing going for her. Mr. Adrien deserves someone better. Isn't it better to only let the children stay?" Alana said. Julianna hesitated and gave it some thought.

"You're vicious! How can you say that!" Helios yelled. "That's right! I don't want to leave mommy behind!" Endymion glared at Alana. "You must be envious of my mommy! You gave birth to Timothy yet daddy didn't marry you. You must be bad!" Hesperus uttered.

Alana was embarrassed. "My grandchildren are right. You are envious. It's been four years yet you are still not part of the Ryker family." Julianna said.

Rosaline carried Timothy in her arms and said, "That's not an issue. My grandchild is here with me so I'll make the call. Abel and Alana's wedding will be conducted this month. After that, they give birth to a handful of grandchildren for me!"

"Grandad gave me a task so I must complete it," Abel said. "What does that have to do with your marriage? Why don't you think about Timothy instead?" Alana smiled and said, "That's right. Once we get married, I can help you complete the tasks that you mentioned!"

“That won’t do. I want to marry the Wonder Doctor!” Abel uttered. “Not bad. If the Wonder Doctor becomes a part of the Ryker family, it would greatly increase our reputation!” Adrien sneered.

Julianna clapped and said, “Indeed. Abel, the Wonder Doctor is famous in the medical field. If she becomes a part of the family, that means her knowledge will be passed down with the Ryker family!”

Alana turned pale. Rosaline was left speechless as well. “Anyway, we won’t interfere with your plans,” Julianna said. She carried Helios and said, “Adrien, carry my two other grandchildren. We’re heading back now. Be sure to call Emmeline over so that we can arrange your marriage!” Adrien carried Endymion and Hesperus joyfully.

Abel stood up from the sofa and said, “Wait, I brought the children over with Emmeline’s consent. Therefore, you have to ask for her approval before taking them away.”

“I’m their father!” Adrien uttered. “Emmeline is their mother. She raised the kids by herself so you don’t have a say in this,” Abel replied. “That’s right. The kids are staying here. Wait for Emmeline’s return before making the decision,” Rosaline added.

“Alright, Adrien is their father at the end of the day, and that won’t change. We’ll be back for them,” Julianna said as they put the children down. Alana carried Timothy and said, “I’m taking Timmy out for a walk.”

“Take good care of my grandchild!” Rosaline uttered. “Don’t worry. I’ll look after him!” Alana replied and hurried off. She brought Timothy to a children’s playground on the fourth floor of a shopping complex.

Alana bought an entrance ticket to let Timothy play by himself. However, he looked at her and said, “I know that you will ask for something from me after this. It’s better if you speak now, or else you’ll ruin my day.”

Alana poked Timothy’s forehead forcefully and uttered, “You’re a sly brat, you know that?” Timothy held back his tears and asked, “You’re not my biological mother, am I right?”

Alana was dazed and said, “Nonsense. How can that be?”

Chapter 10

“You won’t scold me if you are my biological mother.” Timothy had a stern look.

“Rosaline took you away when you were born. Doesn’t that mean you didn’t have your mother to educate you?”

Timothy was stunned and lowered his head.

“Timmy.” Alana grabbed both his shoulders, “I was only anxious because you weren’t by my side. Remember not to tell Grandma.”

“Is that true?” Timothy raised his head and looked at Alana.

“Of course, it is. I beg you. Tell Granny and Daddy that you miss me and want to stay with me. When Daddy marries me, I will be able to accompany you every day.”

Timothy nodded. Even though Alana did not look like one, he wanted a mother to love him, just like the other children.

“Also, you need to cry when you see your father. Don’t let him marry some Wonder Doctor. Otherwise, he won’t love you anymore when they have another child. Understand?”

“Okay.” Timothy nodded like he understood everything.

“That’s all. Go and play. I’ll be waiting for you here.”

Timothy walked towards the playground sadly. He only saw Alana playing with her phone when other children’s mothers were by their sides. She did not act like his biological mother at all and did not even care about him.

Timothy walked out alone after walking around the place twice.

Alana was still playing with her phone and forgot that she had brought Timothy with her.

After Timothy left the playground, he took the elevator and prepared to go home. However, he slipped and fell off the railing.

“Help!” Timothy started crying.

Emmeline was pushing a shopping cart. When she saw a child dangling on the elevator, the child reminded her of her triplets.. Emmeline pushed her shopping cart away and leapt on the elevator to carry Timothy in her arms.

Timothy was heavy and caused Emmeline to fall on the floor. However, she hugged him tightly and used her body as a cushion.

Everyone around them was shocked and started to surround them.

Timothy looked fine, but Emmeline’s forehead was bleeding.

“Call 911 and send them to the hospital!” One of the bystanders shouted.

Soon, someone called 911 and both of them got sent to the hospital.

Timothy had a bruised elbow, while Emmeline needed eight stitches on her forehead. She was sent to get an IV drip.

“Miss.” Timothy looked at Emmeline and said to her with tears in his eyes, “Thank you for saving me.”

“It’s all right.” Emmeline pinched his cheeks. “Children are all blessed.”

Timothy stared at Emmeline and said, “Miss, you are so pretty. You’re like a movie star.”

Emmeline laughed after hearing that. She asked Timothy, “Where is your mother? You are so cute. I’m sure your mother is a beauty.”

Timothy lowered his head and mumbled, “I don’t have a mother.”

“You don’t have a mother?” Emmeline was shocked and felt a pain in her chest, “Whom did you come here with?”

Timothy said softly, “I’m here by myself.”

He knew he was lying, so he dared not look into Emmeline’s eyes.

“Where are you staying?” Emmeline wanted to embrace this child badly. He looked a lot like her triplets. However, she could not hug him because of the IV drip injected into her hand.

Timothy gave her a phone number, and she told the nurse to contact Timothy’s parents.

The Ryker family did not know Alana had lost Timothy yet. When the butler heard the nurse telling him Timothy was in the hospital, he was shocked and informed Rosaline immediately.

Alana only realized Timothy went missing after Rosaline called her.

She scolded Alana through the phone, “Thankfully, someone rescued him. Otherwise, I’ll make you wish you were never born!”

“Madame Ryker, calm down. I will go to the hospital now...”

“No! I already called Abel. He is on his way now. You are such a jinx!” Rosaline shouted before slamming the phone.

Emmeline’s IV drip had been removed as Timothy fell asleep while lying by her side.

When she remembered that his parents would be there to pick him up soon, she informed the nurse and left.

When Abel arrived at the hospital, he saw his son sleeping on the hospital bed. Instead of Emmeline’s hand, Timothy’s hand was holding onto the blanket now.

“Miss, you are so nice. You are like my mommy...” Timothy spoke in his dreams.

Abel frowned. He seldom met his son, so he was not close to him. However, his heart still melted from seeing his cute face. It was a bittersweet moment.

“Timmy.” He called softly and carried Timothy.

“Who was the person who rescued my son?” Abel asked the nurse.

“A beautiful young lady. Her name is Emmeline Louise.”

Abel frowned when he heard the name. He wondered if the whole incident was caused by Emmeline on purpose since it was too much of a coincidence.