

A Ruling Passion – Chapter 0161

Arianne couldn't eat anymore, so she picked up the plate of salmon and went upstairs.

Rice Ball seemed to be very fond of salmon. After cleaning the plate in just a flash, the white ball of fluff started rubbing itself against her leg.

Kneeling down to stroke Rice Ball's soft fur, Arianne felt her mood significantly lift. "Little Rice Ball, you were a stray cat before, but why are you this chubby?"

A cold snort came from outside the studio. Arianne snapped her head around and caught a glimpse of Mark's figure passing by followed by the sound of his study room's door being shut.

She didn't take him seriously and even secretly rolled her eyes. Sometimes, even animals were more humane than humans. At least watching Rice Ball made her happy.

After Arianne was done playing with the cat, she went back to the bedroom and slept. Since it was too boring at home, she decided to return to work at her office tomorrow.

It was midnight when Mark felt a little tired from sitting in front of his computer. He closed his eyes and rubbed the space between his eyebrows. He thought about going

to his bedroom to sleep but quickly changed his mind when recalling the dirty looks Arianne had thrown him.

Mark was suddenly alerted by some noises on the window sill, so he got up, intending to check it out. All of a sudden, he felt something fluffy touch his legs.

His body froze, his skin crawled, and his scalp went numb. He was rooted to the ground by some mysterious force and couldn't even kick away Rice Ball, which had glued itself to his leg.

"M—Mary...!" He asked for help with great difficulty, but there was no response from downstairs. The servants in Tremont Estate had long retired at this hour.

He gritted his teeth and endured it. After a while, Rice Ball lost interest in rubbing up against his leg and jumped onto his desk instead. It showed great interest in Mark's laptop, which was still powered on, and went into a 'keyboard dancing' mode. Mark watched as countless strange symbols were added to the fruit of his labor and felt that his brain was about to explode. "GET OFF!"

Rice Ball paused to look at him then resumed dancing, with no intention of stopping until it pressed down every single key on the keyboard.

Mark hurriedly grabbed the thin blanket from his sofa and wrapped it around Rice Ball so he could carry it into the bedroom. "ARIANNE!"

Arianne was startled awake by Mark's shout. "What?"

All she saw was Mark tossing the cat wrapped in a thin blanket onto the bed. Before Mark could vent his anger, Rice Ball came out of the blanket and found itself a good place to lie down beside Arianne.

Mark realized what his actions had contributed to. This was his bed!

"You... You will either get rid of it or raise it in the backyard! Don't blame me for doing something if I see it again!" He was about to lose his mind. Mark always had an inexplicable resistance toward small animals since he was a child and that damn cat actually found its way inside his study.

Realizing what had just happened, Arianne was a little afraid. "Alright, I'll keep it in the backyard starting tomorrow and keep it out of the house, okay? Do not do anything to it if you see it in the yard. Deal?"

Mark felt unwell after touching the cat. He went downstairs and called Mary to change the sheets then went into the bathroom and slammed the door behind him.

When Mary saw Rice Ball upstairs, she instantly knew what had happened. She didn't dare to speak but swiftly changed the bedsheets and returned Rice Ball to the studio room. Only after making sure that the door and windows were locked did she feel relieved.

After the incident, Arianne couldn't sleep anymore. The sound of the running shower from the bathroom pierced her ears. It sounded even louder on a quiet night like this one. Half an hour later, the sound finally stopped as Mark came out, wrapped in a towel and wearing a scowl on his face.

A Ruling Passion – Chapter 0162

Arianne was too lazy to be bothered about Mark. She pulled the blanket over her head and proceeded to sleep. All of a sudden, she felt a dip in the bed. Was Mark going to sleep in this room tonight? If she wasn't mistaken, he came out with only a towel just now.

She got up awkwardly and found another quilt. Just like that, the two of them slept the night away on the same bed but under different blankets.

The next morning when Arianne got up, Mark was still asleep. His blanket had slipped down to his chest, and she stared at his sexy collarbone with guilt. Although it wasn't her first time seeing it, looking at it early in the morning still made her blush a deep shade of red.

Recalling how he treated Rice Ball last night, Arianne wickedly pulled Mark's blanket over his head. To further secure it, she even threw her blanket over him so that he could taste the feeling of waking up from suffocation!

Having done all that, she happily went downstairs for breakfast and instructed Mary to put Rice Ball in the backyard and keep it out of the house. After ensuring that Rice Ball was already taken care of, she then headed out to her office.

An hour later, Mark poked his head out of the blankets and was weirded out by them. No wonder why he suddenly felt so hot just now. He was sweating and even had a nightmare. He felt as though he was being crushed under a mountain...

At Glide Fashion Design Company, Eric came out of a meeting with a contract in hand. "This is the contract with Tremont Group. Which of you will get it signed? I still have a business trip to make in the afternoon so I won't be able to go. I have also arranged a dinner for the evening. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that is very rare to come by. We need two names. You may discuss amongst yourselves first, then confirm with Miss Pierre."

Everyone instantly jumped from joy at the news. Who wouldn't want to eat with Mark Tremont? Of course, apart from Arianne, who was probably tired of eating with him.

Regardless, since Arianne was here, no one dared to say what was in their heart.

"What's there to discuss? Mrs. Tremont will naturally take one of the spots, then she can bring whoever she wants to bring," someone said.

"Hey, cut it out. There's tension in their marriage right now. Stop making jokes..." someone chimed in.

Eric cleared his throat. "Alright, I don't really care. You guys decide for yourself."

After saying that, he went straight back to his office so he wouldn't have to listen to the discussion.

Arianne could hear the mocking tone in her colleagues' words. Everyone knew she had 'cheated on' Mark and her marriage was probably in shambles right now. The fact that they would say something like this was obviously to embarrass her.

She would ignore things like this in the past, but now, her patience had run thin. "Think whatever you want. I've grown tired of eating with him since long ago. I'll give you guys the opportunity to get this contract signed and keep the money. No need to thank me."

No one would think that she was being generous. They only thought that she was showing off. Although everyone shut their mouths, Arianne knew exactly what was on their minds.

The final decision was that the supervisor, Lily, and another elite of the design department would get the contract signed. Both of them left the company early in the afternoon and went to Tremont Tower. As soon as they left, one of the busybodies couldn't hold back her tongue.

"Arianne, as Mark Tremont's wife, aren't you jealous that other women are eating with your husband?"

Arianne didn't even raise her head. "Jealous over what? A dog that eats shit won't change even if you beat it, and a dog that doesn't eat shit doesn't need to be beaten."

She just compared Mark Tremont to a dog! The busybody shut her mouth resentfully with a horrified expression on her face.

A Ruling Passion – Chapter 0163

Eric, who was about to leave the company, burst out into laughter when he heard what Arianne said. He called Mark as soon as he stepped out of the elevator and repeated what she said without missing a beat.

Mark looked impossibly brooding on the other end of the line. "Laugh all you want, Eric. I'll make laughing impossible for you later. Do you still want that contract signed?"

Eric forced himself to stifle his laughter. "Cough, cough... Uh, it has nothing to do with me. I just heard her in the passing. Haven't I been kind enough to tell you?"

The corners of Mark's lips curled up thoughtfully. "Eric, ask Arianne to sign the contract with me. Otherwise, I won't be attending the appointment. I won't meet anyone from your company either, for that matter. You have an hour and a half until office hours end to decide."

All traces of humor left Eric. “Big bro, don’t do this to me. What can I possibly do to Arianne if she refuses to go? Fire her? She’s your wife, what can I do? Besides, she said that she’s bored of eating with you and she doesn’t covet the little commission from the contract signing. Do you know what this means? She despises you!”

Mark scoffed lightly. “I said what I said. That’s all. I’m hanging up now.”

Being hung up on, Eric gritted his teeth and made a U-turn as he called Lily Pierre and the second person, who were already on their way to the Tremont’s, to come back.

Returning to the office, he went to Arianne directly. “My fair lady, there’s an emergency. Go get the contract signed. Mark asked for you. Even if I’m bros with him, he always plays fair. He won’t have the back door open just because it’s me. As an employee of this office, can you put aside your personal grudge and consider things for the company? Just once?”

“I’m not going,” Arianne said faintly.

Eric was about to go insane. “Will you two stop dragging me into your dispute? By the time you reconcile, I’m the only one left at a loss. This contract will earn me at least 1.5 million dollars—that’s one million and five hundred thousand dollars!”

Arianne looked at him and asked airily, “Do the Nathaniels lack this bit of money?”

Eric looked serious as his tone turned proper. "This has nothing to do with the Nathaniels. They don't need it, but I do."

Arianne took in a deep breath. "Then call him now and ask him what he really wants."

Eric called Mark obediently but the call was not answered. "I can't help it, he isn't picking up. Why don't you go with Lily, okay? I need to go on my business trip now. We'll talk later. What's urgent is what's happening now."

Arianne nodded in agreement, albeit very reluctantly...

When Lily and the other person chosen for the signing came back, Eric explained the situation. Lily was indifferent while the other person pulled a long face and went back to her desk. "I didn't expect a proper company like this to play nepotism."

Eric was offended. "This is not nepotism. It's a request from the business partner. Can you say no to the boss? No. So go back to work now, will you?"

Since he said what Arianne wanted to say, she kept quiet.

After the episode, Lily and Arianne took the company car to the Tremont's. They were there to briefly discuss the contract with Mark, as he would certainly not sign it in the

office. Arianne could guess as much. If h e were to sign it there, she would turn and leave without hesitation. She would rather die than eat with him!

A Ruling Passion – Chapter 0164

Arriving at the forty-sixth floor of Tremont Tower, Mark Tremont's secretary, Ellie Amore, placed two pairs of slippers in front of the two ladies. "Please change into these."

Lily changed into the slippers as told, but Arianne ignored the order. Of course, she still knocked before entering the office and only went in after Mark gave permission. She was here to sign the contract, after all, not to quarrel.

"Mr. Tremont, this is the contract from our company. You can have a look first. There's no hurry to sign it. Let's have a meal together later and you can take the time to consider," Arianne said with a formal tone.

She stood tall and straight with a smile. Other than her shoes that she had not changed, there was no fault.

Mark scanned the document that she had passed him seriously, leaning against his chair. His somber front surprised Arianne, as she thought that he would make things difficult for her. It seemed like he really didn't intend to mix work and personal affairs; although, she still couldn't figure out why he'd asked for her to be present for the contract signing.

After a moment, he flipped the folder close and put it aside. “Not much issue. We’ll talk at the table.”

As he said so, he got up to wear the suit jacket draped on the back of his chair. Ellie Amore naturally went to straighten up his collar for him, her movement fluid as if they had been married for years.

Arianne shifted her gaze, inexplicably feeling offended by the scene...

Lily witnessed everything and could not help doing a double take at Ellie Amore. She was a beauty with a hot body. There was nothing to pick on. However, was it really appropriate for her to straighten the CEO’s clothes in front of his wife?

On the way to the restaurant, Arianne rode with Lily while Mark went with Ellie Amore. He had only brought along his secretary.

Lily could not help asking Arianne, “Don’t you think that the secretary and Mr. Tremont share an unusual relationship? I’m not gossiping, just want you to be careful.”

Arianne shrugged. “Can’t help it, can’t be bothered.”

Her six short words seemed light, but how much weight did they actually contain... She did not even know how many women he had outside. One Aery Kinsey took half of her life away. What else could she do?

Lily kept quiet and did not delve further, suddenly feeling that Arianne was pitiful.

Arianne practically read her mind and could not help chortling. "Do you think I'm pitiful? No, I'm not, at all. I got what everyone else dreams about but can't have easily. What's there to pity me for?"

Lily chuckled alongside her. "You're right. It's not unusual for a man like Mr. Tremont to have women outside. What's important is that you're still Mrs. Tremont. Your words in the office that day caused such an uproar, yet you're still undisputedly his wife. It's not pitiful at all. It makes people envious. Others are curious why Mark Tremont married you when you don't have any background and won't divorce you even when the whole world knows that you've two-timed him."

Arianne liked Lily's forthright manner. She spoke what was on her mind and was not sarcastic. She asked her instead, "Are you curious too?"

Lily nodded frankly. "Yup, I'm curious as well."

Arianne paused before saying, "Is it possible for someone like him to tolerate a drop of unfaithfulness from his lover? But let's say there's no lover in the first place. I don't have

a background, nor do I look incredibly pretty or voluptuous. As for why he married me, I haven't figured it out up till now. I can't answer you either."

Lily pondered before replying, "I don't believe any cheating was involved. Indeed, other people aren't like you. Had it been any ordinary person, they would have been enjoying themselves at home rather than working out here like you just to feed yourself."

Arianne smiled, and the conversation ended. Soon, they arrived at the restaurant. Both of them put on professional smiles once they got out of the car and entered the restaurant with Mark courteously.

Seated in the booth, Lily accepted the menu from the server and passed it to Mark "Mr. Tremont, please make the call."

Mark did not take the menu, however. With an affable smile, he said, "Let Arianne order. She knows what I eat and what I don't."

Lily was stunned for a moment before she broke out of it and passed the menu to Arianne. "Here you go."

Arianne glanced at Mark and had an impulse to order everything he didn't like. Once she remembered that this was a partnership discussion and she could not act simply on her whims and desires, she racked her head for the dishes and wine that he preferred in her impression.

A Ruling Passion – Chapter 0165

When the dishes were served consecutively, a hint of a smile grew more apparent at the corners of Mark's lips. It felt like a breath of fresh air.

Arianne was rather puzzled. Was something wrong with him today? She knew that he always had a facade in front of everyone but something did not feel quite right.

After a moment of observation, she picked out a detail. No matter how he smiled in the past, his eyes looked like they were covered with ice. There was no emotion in them. Today, however, even his eyes were beaming...

Mark did not come up with absurd requests during the meal, which kept Arianne on edge. The contract was soon signed. The process was so smooth that it felt like a dream to her.

It was around eight at night when they exited the restaurant. The night breeze during this season was still a little chilly. Lily asked, "Arianne, are you going back with Mr. Tremont?"

Before Arianne could answer, Mark replied, "She's my missus. Of course she's going back with me. Ellie, let Miss Pierre send you back."

Ellie Amore nodded and followed Lily into the company car.

Mark felt strange today. Arianne dared not go home with him. When Lily and Ellie Amore left, she said directly, "Alright, there's no one else here. You don't have to act like you're the best to anyone and everyone anymore."

Mark glanced at Brian, who was in the driver seat, and said, "Isn't he someone?"

Arianne was speechless while Brian felt sorry for himself, being innocently dragged into this.

Nevertheless, had Mark just cracked a joke?

In the car, the man rested with his eyes closed as if he was exhausted.

Arianne watched the fleeting scenery outside of the vehicle. She felt at peace, even missing Rice Ball. Had the little guy eaten? Was it cold in the backyard?

A fast tempo ringtone interrupted her thoughts. It was not her phone, but Mark's.

Mark picked up the call with his eyes still closed. "Hello?"

Aery's cutesy voice came from the other end of the line. "Mark darling, what are you doing? It's my birthday today. Have you forgotten? I'm at Zero Degree Bar. Can you come and keep me company? I've told my friends that you're coming. You'll come, right?"

Arianne grabbed the hem of her clothes reflexively and waited, but she did not hear Mark's reply.

Turning to look at him, she realized that he was also looking at her.

Their gazes met for a few seconds. Mark suddenly said, "I'm tired. I won't be going. I'll give you your gift next time."

After that, he hung up straight away and put his phone aside nonchalantly.

Returning to the Tremont Estate, Arianne did not even enter the house but directly headed to the backyard to find Rice Ball, all the while asking Mary if Rice Ball behaved well at home today.

Mark stopped to watch as Arianne scooped Rice Ball up into her embrace delightedly before he entered the house.

When it was time for bed, both of them laid on the same bed, but there was no interaction. This was what they meant by the most familiar stranger, was it not?

When Arianne was nearly asleep, Mark suddenly asked, “Does it still hurt?”

A Ruling Passion – Chapter 0166

Arianne was sober at once. “Which part do you mean?”

For a moment, Mark did not know how to reply. After a short period of silence, he heard Arianne faintly say, “The accident’s injury has healed, and the miscarriage surgery was successful too. It stopped hurting a while ago. Aery Kinsey is having fun with a group of friends in the bar now, she must not have gotten hurt in that accident, right?”

Mark did not say anything. That marked the end of their conversation.

Soon, Arianne’s even breathing could be heard. Mark tucked her in and closed his eyes.

The next morning, he woke up feeling like he was being stepped on. There was a distinct weight above him that was stepping around and moving. Opening his eyes, he realized with a startle that it was Rice Ball. The white ball of a body was moving freely on him.

Not daring to exhale deeper, Mark carefully stuck his hand into Arianne's blanket with the intention to wake her up so that she could take care of the lump of fur on him. Unfortunately, he could not make too big of a movement. It was as if his strength had been sapped away. He made a few nudges but failed to wake her up.

His hand moved up slowly to pat her face, but when it passed the front of her body, a soft surface met his palm. Mark froze in both his movement and his breathing...

"Meow..." As Rice Ball mewled softly, Arianne opened her eyes. When she took in how the kitten was pawing at Mark, her brain stopped functioning briefly. Her reaction finally kicked in as she frantically picked Rice Ball up and moved him out of the room.

Mark retracted his hand. The softness could still be felt with a lingering warmth...

Arianne did not realize that Mark's hand had been placed right in front of her before. Once she took Rice Ball to the backyard, she reminded the kitten weakly, "Oh, Rice Ball, you're really living in the moment, huh? He doesn't like you, why do you keep attaching yourself to him?"

After asking the question, she stared at Rice Ball in silence. An animal's thought process was simple. The reason it pleased a person was either because the person was kind to it and it naturally got close to them or... it had to please the person because they were not being kind to it... It was how it gained favor or got loved so that it would not be abandoned.

It seemed like in the past... she was just as pitiful and lowly as Rice Ball. No matter how much Mark hated her, she would still try her best to please him... It was just that it was no longer necessary.

"Rice Ball... don't go near him. He won't like you. If you keep this up, he'll chase you away, do you understand? Be good and stay in the yard. It's so spacious here. We have flowers and greens, a swimming pool too... But don't go near the pool, you'll drown if you fall. You hear me?" As Arianne spoke, she felt a pinch on her nose.

It was Saturday today. She could keep Rice Ball company for the entire day since she did not have to work.

Rice Ball was not allowed in the house, so she read a book while lounging in the sun, seated on a chair in the backyard while hugging the kitten. It was a serene leisure.

The wind was a little strong today. Even when there was sun, it was still rather cold.

Arianne had a thin blanket draped around her, but the chilly wind was still gushing in from her collar. She wanted to go into the house, but she could not bear to see Rice Ball being alone.

If Mark went out, she could bring the kitten inside, but the man had not come downstairs at all...

Mark summoned Mary from the study room. "It hasn't been a month since her miscarriage. Why is she staying in the wind in the yard?"

Mary looked hesitant to speak. Slightly frustrated, Mark said, "Just say what's on your mind."

It was only then that Mary dared to speak. "Madam likes the cat, but since you banned it from coming into the house, she can only keep it company in the yard. She usually has no time for it due to her work, but it's the weekend now. Of course, she's making the most out of it with the cat..."

Mary did not say it explicitly. The truth was that if Mark was not around, Arianne could not have been so stupid to stay in the windy yard.

A Ruling Passion – Chapter 0167

How could Mark not understand what Mary meant between the lines? He pursed his lips before saying, “I’ll be heading out later and won’t be back for lunch. I’ll come home around four in the evening.”

Mary hustled out to prepare his clothes for the outing and went to the backyard after that. “Ari, sir is going out shortly and will only be home at four in the evening. Don’t stay in the wind out here. It’s not even a month yet. What if you get other illnesses in the future from being so weak?”

Arianne replied in a whisper, “I’ll head inside first. Let Rice Ball in for me after Mark leaves.”

Mary nodded and couldn’t help being delighted. It wasn’t for much other than her feeling that Mark was concerned for Arianne. He never told the house staff that he was going out in the past, nor would he inform his return time. Even his dinner at home was an impromptu callback after a spontaneous decision. His anomaly today was obviously for Arianne and Rice Ball’s ‘space’.

Just when Mark was prepared to head out after changing, he suddenly recalled that Arianne had taken pills behind his back. He had thought that her morning sickness was her gastritis. He was actually unable to see through her lies...

It must be due to the baby in her womb that she had refused to take the medication that he had taken home for her. It was not like she did not care for the baby...

Subconsciously opening the drawer that Arianne kept her medicine, Mark saw two small bottles inside. One was empty while another was quite full. They were both folic acids. They would not be needed anymore now...

Hearing footsteps coming upstairs, Mark closed the drawer. He turned to open the door and head downstairs nonchalantly. His footsteps slowed down when he saw Arianne coming.

Noticing his reaction, Arianne slowed down her pace as well and looked at him curiously, as if waiting for him to speak.

“The cat... don’t let it into the house,” Mark said.

“Oh.” She knew what he was going to say.

After making sure that his car had left the Tremont Estate, Mary let Rice Ball into the house. Arianne carried it while rolling her eyes in her mind. She would do the exact opposite of what he said!

Her phone rang out of the blue. Putting Rice Ball down to answer the call, she saw that it was Tiffany. “Ari, what are you doing? Are you free to come out?”

Arianne answered after a moment of hesitation. "I don't really feel like going out. Why don't you come over? Mark will only be back at four in the evening. It's just me at home."

Forty minutes later, a cab stopped outside of the Tremont Estate. The bodyguards at the door could not help being puzzled, as there were rarely people with cabs here since only the wealthy lived around this area.

Luckily, Arianne had informed them of the guest. When Tiffany got off, the bodyguards opened the door directly.

Arianne went to her while carrying Rice Ball. "Tiff, how come you thought of hanging out with me today? Don't you have to cook for your mom at home?"

Tiffany sighed. "Let's go in and talk. I have so much to rant about. My blood boils whenever my mom is mentioned..."

The both of them sat in the living room as Mary served them hot tea. "Miss Lane, have some tea."

Tiffany nodded with a smile, and her gaze landed on Rice Ball in Arianne's arms. "Since when did you have a cat? It's so round. Can you carry it?"

A Ruling Passion – Chapter 0168

Arianne snorted softly. “It’s a stray cat that I picked up. Mark didn’t allow me to keep it, but I insisted otherwise. After we fought several times, he agreed to allow me to keep it in the yard. I only let it come into the house when he isn’t home.”

Tiffany gave her a thumbs up. “You are freaking awesome for having the guts to fight with Mark I didn’t expect you to be a wolf in sheep’s clothing.”

Not wanting to talk about Mark anymore, Arianne changed the subject. “So, what is this about you having a lot to grumble about and your blood boiling at the mention of your mom?”

The expression on Tiffany’s face turned bitter and hateful. “I’m so vexed right now. I feel like the rest of my life is bleak if I’m going to live with my mom. It’s too exhausting... I’m working at Jackson’s company right now and also working part time at night. Even with two incomes, I can’t support my mom. She just can’t get rid of her obsession with luxury goods and her habit of spending frivolously. Not only that, she’s into playing mahjong and gambling away quite a huge sum of money. Everytime we talk about it, it just ends in fights. I’m so done with talking about it with her now.”

Arianne, having already known a little bit about this before, could only comfort Tiffany. “She must not be used to the life of an ordinary person. It’ll get better in time. Don’t worry too much about it. But you have to make her understand that the situation is

different now. There's no mountain of wealth at home for her to squander. You have to also let her know how exhausted you are. She has to feel sorry for her daughter, right?"

Tiffany wasn't counting on Lilian to pity her. "Come on now, if she really feels sorry for me, she wouldn't expect me to prepare three meals a day for her as if she's disabled. She doesn't even do any housework at home. I have to do everything. If my dad were still alive, he definitely wouldn't be able to stand her acting this way. My biggest fear is that she'll find out there's still some money left in the card that Ethan previously asked you to pass to me. If she finds out, I'm sure she'll spend it all in just a few days. I'm saving that money to pay the down payment for a house. I've seen a few houses and found one that I like, but I still need a bit more to have enough for the down payment."

Arianne could see a young woman striving to live in Tiffany, and she was a little envious. She wished to be able to live like a normal person too, even if it meant that she had to worry about life. At least she would have freedom, a life goal, and hope.

So what if she was Mrs. Tremont, who was envied by many? No matter how gorgeous a quagmire looked, it was still a quagmire. Its intrinsic quality couldn't be changed.

Seeing that Arianne didn't continue the conversation, Tiffany suddenly thought of something and lowered her voice. "Ari, I hope... Mark hasn't been touching you lately."

"What...?" Arianne's face instantly turned red.

“You can’t do that for at least a month after a miscarriage. Besides, he doesn’t treat you very well. You must cherish yourself and not let him touch you,” Tiffany advised her solemnly.

Arianne coughed twice softly. “No... he won’t touch me. He doesn’t lack that with so many women out there.”

Tiffany creased a frown. “You’re saying that he has other women out there? Who? There’s never been any scandal like that surrounding Mark. I see, rather than having a good character, he’s just good at hiding it very well. Did he really do such a horrendous thing? The nerve of that guy!”

Arianne grew nervous at her slip of tongue. “That was just a casual remark! Even if he does, I haven’t caught it yet. You better not go around spewing that...”

She didn’t dare to tell Tiffany about the relationship between Aery and Mark. Knowing Tiffany’s personality, she would definitely hunt Mark down for that.

Tiffany breathed a sigh of relief and dropped the subject. In the afternoon, she left before Mark returned.

Arianne returned Rice Ball to the yard again. By four o’clock, Mark’s car arrived at the entrance. He was really punctual.

When he got out of the car, Rice Ball approached him with an 'enchanted' catwalk, even though it was supposed to be in the backyard right now. He frowned at it then quickly strode through the door and went upstairs as though he would die on the spot if he came in contact with Rice Ball.

A Ruling Passion – Chapter 0169

Seeing the clear disgust on Mark's face, Arianne was secretly flustered. However, she didn't make any comments. After all, she couldn't ask everyone to like Rice Ball just because she liked it. She was satisfied with just being able to keep it by her side.

Arianne was even more surprised by the fact that Mark had no plans to go out at night. Why would a man who always avoided coming home as much as he could suddenly stay at home so obediently every night now? With Mark around the house, Arianne felt more uncomfortable, and she had even less time to spend with Rice Ball.

When she went to bed at night, she suddenly recalled what Tiffany told her during the day and felt her face growing hot.

Mark laid next to her, looking at his phone with his back turned to her. The densely packed text on his screen made her head hurt just by looking at it. She even wondered how he managed to stare at it for so long.

The phone suddenly rang and startled her. It was Mark's phone and the display showed that it was from Aery...

Mark didn't get up to answer the phone, but there was some irritation in his tone. "Hello?"

Aery's voice came through from the other end. "Mark dear, thank you for helping our family. If it wasn't for you, our family would have definitely gone bankrupt. You're really nice to me. My parents would like to invite you to dinner. I thought that you'd be tired of eating outside from all the socializing you need to do, so why don't you come to my house tomorrow? I'll personally cook for you!"

Without waiting for Mark to speak, Arianne turned her back to him and covered her ears, disgusted by the midnight disturbance.

She didn't expect Mark to not only protect Aery, but even easily agreed to the conditions that she had previously requested for the sake of grossing Arianne out. Although it was Arianne who proposed helping the Kinsey family out, Mark's actions right now clearly had nothing to do with her.

Mark's lips curled into a smile when he noticed the movement behind him. "Fine, I'll be there tomorrow afternoon."

He ended the call, but Arianne had naturally lost her desire to sleep without any way to vent the anger in her heart.

After awhile when Mark seemed to have fallen asleep, Arianne was still so angry that she didn't even want to share the same bed with him. Hence, she gathered up her blanket and went to the guest room.

Early next morning, Mark's phone constantly rang. He even put it on loudspeaker, so Arianne could hear Aery's cutesy voice from the guest room.

Since Arianne didn't sleep well last night and was roused from her sleep early in the morning, she could no longer suppress her irritation. She went out of the room barefoot and shouted from the stairs. "CAN YOU STOP THAT FOR A MOMENT?"

After a brief silence, Mark came out of the bedroom. He had changed into his suit and seemed to be getting ready to go out. He looked indifferent when he saw her, then he walked past her and went downstairs.

Arianne clenched her hands into fists. There would come a day when she would finally snap...

Around half past ten in the morning, Tiffany suddenly called her. "Ari, can you come out for a while? I have something for you. 'Mr. Sloane' sent another letter!"

A Ruling Passion – Chapter 0170

Arianne started changing her clothes before even hanging up the phone. “Find a place and wait for me, I’m coming out now!”

She finally received good news after having a bad time. At first, she thought the truth would take forever to come, but ‘Mr. Sloane’ had sent a letter again so soon.

She only had one thing in mind and that was to quickly find out what happened back then. As long as her father was innocent, she could justify leaving the Tremont Estate and Mark Tremont. She didn’t want to continue living like a lowlife that was powerless to put up any resistance even when her child was killed...

When she arrived at the coffee shop where they agreed to meet, Tiffany retrieved the letter from her bag. Arianne quickly took it and opened it. However, the content of the letter was a huge disappointment to her. ‘No need to find me. You won’t be able to. I won’t be able to provide you with more clues either. I can only tell you that your father was innocent. I have been troubled by this secret for too long and I won’t be able to rest in peace unless I tell it.’

After she finished reading the letter, her hands began to tremble. Why did ‘Mr. Sloane’ have to give her hope, only to crush it again? So what if she knew and believed that her father was innocent?

Mark wasn’t going to believe it. No one would. Just these few lines in a letter weren’t going to convince anyone. Arianne wanted more than that. She wanted to reopen the case and clear her father’s name!

Upon noticing the expression on her face, Tiffany asked, "What's wrong, Ari? What does the letter say?"

Arianne bit her lip so hard that it nearly bled. "It's of no use at all... 'Mr. Sloane' doesn't want us to find him. He won't let us find him or provide us with more clues. This is all he could tell us. He even said that he's been troubled with this secret for too long and wouldn't be able to rest in peace unless he tells it. Is he saying that he can rest in peace after saying this now? What about me? What should I do with this crushed hope after it was finally ignited in me?"

Tiffany took the letter and carefully checked it but was immediately discouraged. "He used the same address as last time, but there's no one living there. We won't be able to find this Mr. Sloane if he really doesn't want us to find him. We can't even find a way to contact him. Goddamnit...!"

Arianne despaired at the thought of her current situation.

If she were to say that she had a glimmer of hope in Mark before, then there was nothing left now. She only wanted to leave all these problems behind and live like an ordinary person. However, Mark just wanted to torture her and refused to let her go.

"Forget it, Tiffie. Let's forget about this matter. We'll pretend... that we never received Mr. Sloane's letters. I've had enough." Arianne was full of negative emotions.

Tiffany didn't approve of her actions and knew that she had only said that because of a setback. "You can't give up, Ari! This is about your father. As long as he was wronged, you are obligated to help him clear his name. Isn't it too early to give up? Aren't we going to find him? I can pay someone to trace him down. Swear that you won't stop until we find Mr. Sloane!"

"You'll spend money to help me...? Heh... no need, I have money." Arianne suddenly thought of something. Yes, she shouldn't give up. She was just going to find a person. As long as that person was still alive in this world, there was a chance for them to find him.

If she couldn't find him herself, then she could just pay someone to find him. Of course, she wouldn't have Tiffany pay for it. She was Mrs. Tremont. Why did she have to torment herself by not using the Tremont family's money?

It took her a couple of decades to figure this out. She used to be an orphan that Mark took in, so she always felt that she owed him and would never be able to repay him in her lifetime.

Now that she had become Mrs. Tremont, her guilt had long diminished after years of torment from Mark. Once her father was proven to be innocent, she would no longer need to feel guilty. By then, all that would be left between her and Mark was probably only hatred.

Coming out of the coffee shop, she glanced at her phone. It was almost lunch time now. Mark must be having a nice meal with the Kinsey family right now.

She deliberately chose this time to make a phone call to him. Her call was quickly picked up, and she spoke without beating around the bush. "Give me money. I'm shopping with Tiffie."

Mark was taken aback and couldn't react for a while. Why would someone who never reached out to ask him for money suddenly become so direct with it?