

A Ruling Passion – Chapter 0111

Perhaps Tiffany was just busy, so Arianne didn't think much of it.

It was then that Butler Henry's voice was suddenly heard coming from downstairs. Mark had returned...

He didn't seem like he was planning to go anywhere tonight. He took a shower and changed his clothes as soon as he came back. Neither of them spoke at the table over dinner. The atmosphere was rather tense.

Mary served the last dish and soup. "Madam, since you've been feeling unwell lately, I had the kitchen make some nutritious soup for you. Although a bit fishy, it's good for your stomach. Please bear it and have some, even just a little."

Worried about getting nauseous again, Arianne quickly covered her nose. "I don't want it... Mary, I told you not to prepare anything with a fishy smell. I can't take it."

Mary put a small bowl of the soup in front of her. "just cover your nose and drink it. It'll be fine. I spent the entire afternoon preparing this soup."

Not wanting Mary's effort to go to waste, Arianne had no choice but to cover her nose as she held the slimy looking bowl of soup up. Even with precautions, the scent still

wafted into her nose. The strong stench immediately caused her stomach to turn. She got up and rushed into the washroom. The small amount of food she had was all expelled out of her body.

Mary was extremely worried to see her like that. Knowing that Arianne was stubborn, she could only turn to Mark for help. “Sir, look at madam... What should we do? She had always had a weak stomach. She’s still young... If something goes wrong again...”

Mark frowned but continued shoveling food into his mouth with the exquisite spoon in his hand. His movements seemed almost mechanical. “She’s not three years old. I don’t need to worry about everything.”

Mary tried pressing a bit harder. “Can you at least care about her a little?”

Mark set his cutlery down, then picked up the napkin and gracefully wiped the corners of his mouth. There wasn’t emotion in his eyes. “Are you ordering me around?”

Mary lowered her head, holding back the tears in her eyes as she returned to the kitchen, feeling sorry for Arianne.

By the time Arianne was done throwing up, Mark was still sitting at the dining table. He didn’t continue eating, so he was obviously waiting for her.

“What now? I gave you money to see a doctor and you still look like you’re dying. Who are you showing that to?” Hurtful words rolled off Mark’s tongue as soon as he opened his mouth.

“I... I’m fine. Just mild gastritis. I’ll be fine if I take my medicine.” Arianne concealed her emotions and acted like she was fine while returning Mark his card. “Here, I spent a little for the checkup. I’ll pay you back once I get my salary.”

He didn’t even look at the card she put on the table. The corners of his mouth turned into an irritated frown. His knuckles were clenched white before he finally loosened it as his suppressed voice turned weak. “Go away.”

Arianne had lost her desire to eat, so she went directly upstairs. Behind her was the sound of dishes breaking. She stopped to turn around and saw a huge mess on the floor. Mark went past her upstairs, then left Tremont Estate after changing his clothes.

The commotion caused Mary to come running out of the kitchen. “Madam...”

Arianne smiled at her. “It’s nothing, Mary. I just upset him. Get someone to clean up the dining room.”

At the hospital, Tiffany sat on the cold floor. The doctors that were passing by just looked at her then sighed helplessly and left.

The door of the operating room behind her was still open. Lillian Lane's cries came from inside, repeatedly stabbing her in her heart like sharp steel knives.

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John Lane died on the operating table. She thought she could at least take a breath of relief after having enough money to perform the operation. As long as he could live, every cloud had a silver lining. She didn't expect this bad news to follow without giving her a chance to gasp for breath.

A few moments later, Lillian came out with red eyes. "Tiffie... Go and see your dad one last time..."

Tiffany shook her head weakly. "I don't want to... Mom, I'll get his funeral settled early morning tomorrow. You can go back and rest."

Lillian didn't move but cried even more sadly on the spot. Her frail body shook like a leaf, and she looked like she was going to collapse the very next moment.

The thought of going back to a ghastly and crowded rental house that looked like it was in the ghetto scared her. As a wife from a once wealthy family, she had never gone through this kind of ordeal.

After staying like that for a while, Tiffany stood up. Her legs were tingling from numbness. “Mom, I’ll send you back.”

Lillian grabbed her hand. “No need, Tiffie. I know you have worked hard these days. I haven’t been of much help in my poor health and ended up troubling you. Just... let the hospital handle whatever is needed. I can go back by myself.”

Tiffany nodded lifelessly like a puppet and didn’t say anything.

Taking one last look back into the operating room, Lillian then walked away with tears in her eyes. Her lavish life had come to an end, and the horrible rental house would be her future home. She had no choice but to face the reality.

From the beginning until the end, Tiffany never shed a single tear. It wasn’t because she wasn’t sad. The feeling of having her soul pulled out of her body made her so numb that she didn’t even have the energy left to cry.

By the time she walked out of the hospital with her father’s death certificate, it was pouring outside. The corner of her pale lips curled into a smile as she watched the panicked crowd running to get shelter from the rain.

She found herself walking into the rain before she knew it. A big raindrop fell on her. She didn't feel any pain, but it was so cold that it chilled her to the bone.

All of a sudden, a big hand pulled her back under the roof from behind. "Did you lose your mind?"

She turned around and spoke with an icy tone. "My dad died on the operating table. Why is our family so unlucky...?"

Jackson West frowned at the news. "When did that happen?"

Tiffany didn't reply. She stretched her hand out to catch the falling raindrops. Perhaps the cold could wake her up just a little.

A lavishly dressed middle-aged woman watched the scene in surprise from a black Maybach nearby. This was the first time in so many years she'd seen her son caring for a lady like this. Should she be feeling relieved?!

After a long moment, the driver asked, "Madam, should we wait for sir to get in?"

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Summer West coughed, then leaned back into her seat weakly. “No need, let’s go.”

As the car quickly disappeared into the rain, Jackson felt a bit glum. He had lost count on how many times his mother had abandoned him like this, regardless of the situation he was in. He even once suspected if he was really her biological son...

“My condolences, the deceased maybe gone but you should carry on living well. Why do this to yourself?” Jackson failed to completely hide his dismay of being left behind while consoling Tiffany.

“Mr. West, I take it that no one has ever died in your family.” Tiffany rolled her eyes at him, then went straight into the rain.

Jackson breathed a sigh of relief, knowing that Tiffany had recovered from the sassy remarks she threw at him.

No wanting to return with all the negative emotions, Tiffany made her way to Ethan’s place. What she needed now was comfort. The comfort... of her lover.

When she opened the door and went in, Ethan was taking a shower. She sneezed then found a towel to dry her wet hair. Out the corner of her eye, she saw Ethan’s phone

flash on the bed. She casually picked it up and instantly froze. The blood in her entire body felt as though it was flowing backward and the thunder outside roared at the same time.

Ten minutes later, Ethan came out of the bathroom. He was slightly taken aback at the sight of Tiffany, then quickly snatched his phone back. “Why are you going through my phone?!”

Tiffany gave him a death stare. “Did you do something wrong? Why are you so afraid of me going through your phone?”

“Why are you here?” Ethan changed the subject coldly.

Tiffany felt sad and amused at the same time. “Why can’t I be here? I rented this house for you for five years. Do you know where my mom and I are living now? At the ghetto! There are all sorts of people living around there. My mom and I are terrified whenever we go back. Is this how you treat me? My family covered the expenses for you to study abroad. My dad even helped you find a good job when you came back to the country. I didn’t even want to get you involved when my family got into a huge mess! Yet this is what you do to me?”

Ethan scratched his head irritably. “It’s not what you think. If you’re willing to listen to my explanation, then listen quietly. If you aren’t willing, then the door is over there. As for the education expenses and the rent that your family gave me, I’ll pay it back as soon as I can, alright?”

Unsure whether it was the coldness or her anger, Tiffany trembled all over as the man in front of her grew unfamiliar. She couldn't believe it or accept it "Then explain yourself...! I would like to hear what you have to say!"

Ethan deleted everything from his phone, then said, "Sasha and I are only friends. We work in the same company. That's all. If you insist on thinking that there's something between us, then I don't feel like explaining anything to you."

"Sasha?" Tiffany asked with a sneer. "Sounds awfully affectionate. Why do I insist on thinking there's something between you two, you say? Well, you guys are already calling each other 'dear', as well as sending good morning and good night texts to each other. Do you take me for a fool? Ethan Connor, do you know what's so disgusting about you? You just can't seem to tell me that you're not in love with me anymore. Do you have to humiliate me this way? Is money all that's ever between us? What do you mean by paying back your education expenses and rent as soon as you can? Do you think that will solve everything? Let me ask you again, were you the one who donated thirty thousand dollars anonymously for my dad's surgery?"

Ethan lowered his head. "No, that has nothing to do with me."

His reply chilled her heart and extinguished the last bit of hope she had. "Ethan Connor. I want to know, why did you date me in the first place? I have a feeling that you've never liked me. I couldn't even see the slightest passion and love you have for me in your eyes."

Ethan finally lifted his gaze and looked at her directly. His answer was very frank. "For a good future. Yes, I've never liked you, let alone loved you. I still have very important

things to do. I have no time for a relationship. You can think whatever you want of me. Whatever I owed to your family, I will repay in double and that's it."

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Tears rolled in her eyes, but Tiffany tried her best to keep them from falling. "Hnnn, I can tell that this Sasha is just like me. We're nothing but your stepping stones. Instead of getting angry, I should sympathize with her. Your eyes are as cold as the harsh winter wind. That's how you've been looking at me since before, I was just too fond of indulging in my own fantasies. No need to pay back the money. Since I willingly spent it on you, I have no right to ask for it back. Thank you for teaching me a lesson. Thank you for giving me a hard blow when my entire world is crumbling. You really disgust me!"

Having said that, she turned around and left. It was then that tears finally came streaming down her face.

She understood everything the moment Ethan came out of the bathroom. The first thing he worried about was not the fact that she was soaked to the bone, but the secrets he had in his phone. The disappointment was too much that she could no longer continue deceiving herself.

She went back to the rental house in a daze. The old-fashioned residential building had only five floors. There was no property management. Every floor was occupied by about

ten households of various types of tenants. The occasional drunken shouts she heard were frightening. The corridors were very dark too.

Tiffany sorted out her emotions in front of the door, then fished out her keys. When her gaze fell on the door lock, she suddenly noticed a few scratches on it. Since the door lock was newly replaced when they moved in, these were signs of a break-in!

In her nervousness, her palms began to sweat. She grabbed a steel pipe from the corner, then pushed open the door with her trembling hands. The light was quickly turned on, and she was greeted by a messy sight. The neatly tidied rental house was now in shambles. Her mom laid unconscious on the ground.

“Mom! Mom! What’s wrong?” She rushed forward and cried like a child with her mother in her cradle. Her strong facade was completely shattered by the series of unfortunate events.

Lillian’s lips were pale and she was unresponsive. In her panic, Tiffany took out her phone and called Arianne.

Arianne was about to sleep when she received the call. “Hello...? What’s wrong, Tiffie?”

“My house has been burglarized! I don’t know what’s wrong with my mom! I can’t wake her up... I don’t know what to do... Help me, Ari! Help me...” Tiffany cried while shouting hysterically.

Arianne quickly got out of bed in shock. Her sudden movements brought about the throbbing pain in her lower abdomen. She winced in pain and instantly felt weak. "Tiffie... don't panic... Send me your location I'll go there with a few bodyguards. It'll be fine... Everything will be fine. Just ensure your own safety first, alright?"

Knowing Tiffany, she would never cry for help like an ordinary girl unless she was in serious trouble. This made Arianne extremely anxious. She endured her abdominal pain as she ran downstairs and shouted for Butler Henry. With two bodyguards with her, they rushed to where Tiffany lived.

Tears almost fell from Arianne's eyes when she saw the gloomy, old-fashioned residential building. She hadn't visited Tiffany ever since they moved here so she wasn't expecting it to look like this.

The place was extremely messy and crowded by all sorts of people. It was definitely not easy to manage.

By the time they got upstairs, Tiffany was crying until she was on the verge of collapse.

Arianne called the cops then sent Lillian to the hospital. Fortunately, she had only fainted from shock and would be fine.

Tiffany cried in Arianne's arms at the hospital's corridor for two hours. She had told Arianne everything, and Arianne felt extremely sorry for her. Other than feeling sad for her, the pain in her abdomen prevented her from giving Tiffany any other responses.

She wasn't even able to offer her words of comfort. Beads of sweat rolled down her cheek as everything before her eyes started to turn blurry.

Butler Henry noticed her pale complexion, then asked in concern, "Madam, are you feeling unwell?"

Arianne clutched her lower abdomen as she endured the pain. "I'm... I'm alright... All of you return first, I'll keep Tiffie accompanied. If Mark is looking for me, just inform him of the situation."

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Butler Henry acknowledged her instructions then left the hospital with the other bodyguards. It was finally then that Arianne collapsed on the chair. "Tiffie... My stomach hurts..."

Tiffany wiped her tears and shouted for a doctor. The doctor gave Arianne a preliminary check up then concluded, "You're experiencing a miscarriage symptom. Better rest up. We'll only be able to assess further after at least a week. Your health is too poor."

Tiffany was shocked. "You're pregnant? Whose child is it?"

Arianne sighed in resignation. "Whose do you think it is?"

"It can't be... Will's?" Tiffany said weakly.

Arianne grew depressed. "Tiffie, I can't possibly bring myself to do that kind of thing. It's Mark's child. Please keep my pregnancy a secret. He doesn't know about it."

"What? He doesn't know? Why didn't you tell him? Maybe he'll treat you better if you told him! You really need to learn how to fight for yourself. Don't be like me. I gave everything and ended up with nothing. I really wasted my effort on an ingrate!" Tiffany huffed indignantly.

"I haven't given anything to Mark... This is what I owe him. I don't want to fight for his everything. Tiffie, you don't understand the suffocating pressure that comes when you owe someone too much that you can never pay them back." There were so many meanings hidden in Arianne's words. Tiffany couldn't get it so the conversation ended there.

The next morning, Lillian finally woke up. Arianne wished that she could find them another place to live, but she had no money at the moment. She once again regretted returning Mark's card to him last night. Why did this always happen? The more she didn't want to owe him, the more she ended up owing him...

After this incident, Tiffany also felt that they couldn't live in that kind of place anymore. "Don't worry, Ari. I still have some money with me. For the time being, it's enough to pay

rent. I can't afford living in the urban area, but suburbs are okay. So don't worry about us. I'll find a job that pays enough to cover our living expenses and clear off some debt."

Arianne nodded to her as she wondered how she could help Tiffany.

She called a cab home and called Eric to take the day off from work. She didn't plan to stay in bed for a week until the next checkup. She would just rest for a day.

Upon entering the house, Arianne noticed two pairs of ladies shoes at the entrance. One was black and the other was red. The heels were about ten centimeters tall, the type she never fancied. So... some other women came to the house...

Mary came up to greet her Willi a bitter face then whispered to her, "They're from the Kinsey family. They're here to find sir. He is at home."

Arianne nodded then changed into slippers and directly went upstairs. As soon as she reached the stairs, Helen called out to her.

"Arianne."

She stopped in her tracks then turned around to look at Helen with an expressionless face. Helen was suddenly flustered. At this moment, Arianne's aura was similar to Mark's when he was serious.

Aery greeted her in her cutesy voice. "Where were you last night, big sis? Why didn't you greet us when you saw us?"

"How do you want me to greet the both of you? Mom and little sister?" Arianne replied coldly.

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Aery was vexed, but she had to retain the smile on her face in front of Mark. "Looks like you're in a bad mood, big sis. Could it be that you were out all night yesterday meeting someone that you shouldn't be meeting?"

Arianne glanced at Mark, who was sitting on the sofa with an incomprehensible expression on his face. She then went upstairs quietly, not bothering to provide an explanation.

She'd seen the documents on the coffee table. Since Helen personally came, then they must be talking about business. Nevertheless, she still didn't want to see the two women that she hated.

Due to her physical discomfort, she laid in bed, unable to sleep well. It felt like she had only laid down for a short while when Mary called her to eat. However, when she got up and looked at the time, it was already noon.

Arianne raised her legs carefully when she was getting out of the bed. She didn't want to startle the baby growing in her womb again this time.

The first thing she did once she got up was call Tiffany. From the call, she gathered that Tiffany and her mother had found a new place to live. However, the burglars that broke into her house last night weren't apprehended yet. This kind of thing often happened in that area, and most of the cases just ended up unsolved. Since they didn't lose much aside from tens of dollars in cash, the case was concluded just like that.

When Arianne came out and heard Aery's laughter downstairs, she knew that both of them were still around and lost the desire to go down. "Mary, please deliver the meal to my room."

Mary hummed in response from downstairs, then Mark's cold voice rang out in the next second. "You will either dine down here or not eat at all."

Arianne decisively chose the latter. "Mary, I'm not hungry. Don't worry about me."

After being put in a tough spot like that, Mary was starting to feel that Helen and Aery were an eyesore to her. She even brought the dishes to the table with a sour face.

Aery spoke with a blaming tone, "Mark dear, your housekeeper seems to be showing an attitude. She seems to be looking at us like we are an eyesore to her..."

Mark cast a glance at Mary but said nothing.

Mary turned around to leave and then handed the job of serving the dishes to another servant. While Mark wasn't paying any attention, she slipped into Arianne's bedroom with her meal. "Ari, hurry up and eat. Don't be angry at sir."

Arianne shook her head. "Take it away quickly, Mary. If Mark finds out, he will dock your pay for a month. Money doesn't grow on trees. Don't do this because of me. I won't die from not eating a meal. Besides, I'm not hungry yet..." She was lying when she said she wasn't hungry. Arianne was actually so hungry that she could eat a horse. Pregnancy was a strange thing. You were either vomiting everything out or starving to death.

Since Mary couldn't change her mind, she could only take the food away. When she went back to the kitchen, Aery called her out. "Mary, right? Did you just send food to big sis?"

Mark's face sank. "Mary."

Having no other choices, Mary came forward. “Sir... Madam hasn’t been feeling well. She can’t be starved. She never liked strangers in the house. You can’t just starve her like that. Besides... she didn’t even take a bite.”

Mark set his cutlery down heavily on the table. The tone of his voice was cold. “Ask her to come down.”

Mary couldn’t stand the smug expression on Aery’s face and went upstairs angrily. “Ari, sir asked you to go downstairs. The girl saw me when I brought the food downstairs.”

Arianne sighed in resignation. “It’s okay, I’ll go down. Go back to work, Mary. Stay out of the dining room so that you don’t suffer.”

Mary huffed in anger. “I’m not suffering, you’re the one who will. Sir didn’t even give you any respect in front of the outsiders! I’m so angry! That Aery girl calls you big sis so affectionately, but I know she’s been doing bad things behind your back. She’s obviously a vile thing!”

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Arianne didn’t speak. She cautiously walked down the stairs and into the dining room. Mark looked at her coldly. “You need someone to invite you to eat? Have I never taught you the rules?”

She sat down and started eating all by herself since she was famished anyway. Besides, she was certain that Mark wouldn't do anything to her in front of Helen. After all, he still had that perfect image to maintain in front of others. Putting on a sour face was probably the most he would do.

Helen looked at Arianne with a motherly gaze. "Mark, I am extremely grateful for all the care you have given to Ari in the past. As a mother, I can't help but feel ashamed."

Aery couldn't continue watching the show. Before Mark could speak, she interrupted, "Mark dear, you're such a nice person. To think that you could take in the daughter of an enemy and feed her for a few decades."

The expression on Helen's face turned dark as she tried her best to suppress her anger. "Shut up."

Aery put on an innocent look. "Am I right, mom? Big sis is really lucky."

Arianne's hands froze. She couldn't even swallow the food in her mouth. This Aery Kinsey always seemed to be able to pick a good moment to disgust her.

Mark closed his eyes to wipe away the anger in his eyes. He then got up and said, "Enjoy your meal. I'm done. We'll continue our talk later in the study room."

Helen stood up and smiled at him. "Sure, thank you."

Mark stomped his way upstairs in silence, naturally out of his anger toward Arianne.

After Mark left, Arianne felt more comfortable eating instead. Without any hesitation, Aery shot a look of disgust at her. "Seems like Mark dear is only feeding you enough to survive instead of pampering you like a high class lady. You eat like a starving ghost, it's no wonder Mark dear isn't attracted to you and finds you annoying. A woman like you will never be worthy of standing beside him in public."

Helen quietly hissed at her. "Shut up! I have warned you many times already, don't..."

Before Helen even finished speaking, Arianne decided that she had enough of her 'superficial care'. She said matter-of-factly, "Isn't that why Mark keeps you around? Well, am I right, Aery? If he had a perfect wife, a mistress like you wouldn't even have any place to stand."

Aery was fuming from getting scolded by Helen and taunted by Arianne. Feeling aggrieved, she stormed upstairs to find Mark in the study room.

Helen and Arianne were left alone at the dining table. Helen let her fervent gaze fall on Arianne, but the latter was disgusted. She could neither bear it nor have the desire to face it, so she set her cutlery down decisively. "Mrs. Kinsey, please take your time and enjoy the rest of your meal."

The word 'Mrs. Kinsey' pierced into Helen's heart like a needle. "Ari..."

Arianne ignored Helen because she had no interest in seeing her crocodile tears. She had no need for maternal love that came too late, especially if it was to make up for her wrongdoings in the past.

It was around three in the afternoon when Helen and Aery were finally leaving.

When Arianne heard the commotion outside, she felt irritated for some reason. Then all of a sudden, she heard Helen's voice. "Let me bid my farewell to Arianne. She didn't look so good, I'm guessing she must be feeling unwell."

Arianne frowned then held her breath. In the next moment, someone knocked on her bedroom door. She flipped over and pretended to not hear it. Nevertheless, the door was still pushed open.

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"Arianne, I'm leaving," Helen carefully called out. "Go to a doctor if you're not feeling well. Don't drag it out."

She couldn't contain her disgust. "It's not your place to concern yourself with me, Mrs. Kinsey," she replied icily. "You should be more concerned about the members of the Kinsey family."

Helen's body stiffened. She felt slightly embarrassed. Aery tugged on Helen. "Please don't subject yourself to someone else's cold shoulder, mother. You may want to acknowledge her as your daughter, but she doesn't acknowledge you as her mother."

Helen let out a sigh and quietly walked downstairs to leave. Aery was feeling completely disgusted. Once upon a time, she was the only daughter in Helen's eyes. However, Arianne had now made an appearance all of a sudden, and she had the man she loved under her thumb as well. The thought of this angered her greatly!

Not too long after, everything went silent outside. Arianne got up and went downstairs to find something to eat.

Just as she stepped out from the bedroom, she ran into Mark, who was just leaving his study. His gaze darkened as their eyes met. With a sullen look on his face, he tried to turn his gaze away, as if he was too disgusted to look at her any longer. Then, he quickly walked downstairs to the main door.

Arianne watched him as he left, pursing her lips in silence. It was all she could do but to stay quiet. When would days like this end? It was like she had been trapped in a dense fog and could not see a sliver of light.

She went back to her room after her meal and found a message from Will: “Is this a convenient time to call?”

She called him back immediately. The call connected after a few seconds. Will’s voice sounded mildly excited, “How have you been, Ari?”

Her spirits lifted. She walked to the window and pulled open the curtains, taking in the fresh air. “I’m pretty good.”

Will switched topics to Tiffany. “I’ve heard that Tiffie’s dad has passed away. Her mother... well, honestly speaking, can’t really manage things. How about we help her with the funeral? Tiffie doesn’t have anyone else by her side at a time like this. Let’s meet up at the hospital, if it’s alright.”

Arianne gave it some thought then agreed. She couldn’t possibly abandon Tiffany at a time like this. She was pretty free today anyway. Besides, she had been resting the entire afternoon. Her lower belly didn’t hurt so much anymore.

The security guard at the gate made a phone call when Arianne left, taking note of the direction she was heading to, “Sir, Madam has left the house.”

Mark checked her location on the phone when the call ended. His gaze sank when he confirmed her destination. He put out his cigarette, grabbed his coat, and left the office.

At the hospital, Tiffany and Will had completed all necessary procedures. John Lane's body had been sent to the funeral parlor for cremation.

When Arianne arrived, Tiffany shot Will a resentful glare. "You asked Ari to come? She's not feeling well. I never intended to ask her for help."

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Arianne was afraid that Tiffany might accidentally spill the beans, so she quickly interjected. "I'm fine. I won't stop worrying if I don't help you either."

Will smiled. "Wait for the. I have to go to the toilet."

Tiffany grabbed Arianne's hand after Will left. "Your hands are so cold. The doctor told you yesterday to be on bedrest for a week, yet you're still running around. Will can help me out. Why don't you go home?"

Since Arianne was already here anyway, of course, she wasn't going to leave now. "Alright already. Don't spout nonsense in front of Will. I'm fine."

On the other end, Will had arrived at the door to the toilet when he paused in his footsteps. His gaze met with a pair of cold eyes. After a brief silence, he spoke up, "Don't tell me that you followed Ari all the way here?"

Mark's gaze darkened. "Ari? Looks like you're pretty close to my wife."

Will felt a pang in his heart when he heard the word 'wife'. "Mark Tremont, I don't care how you managed to force Ari into marrying you, but you should be good to her or someone else might replace you."

Mark curled his lips into a sneer, "Who do you think you are to speak to me like that? Her ex boyfriend? Or... someone who's waiting to replace me? How I treat her has nothing to do with you, Sivan. Do yourself a favor and disappear from her life completely. Just because I've allowed you back into the country, doesn't mean that you can brazenly try to rekindle your old flame."

Will balled his hands into fists. For the first time in his life, the insufferably arrogant man in front of him gave him the urge to lunge at him and punch him. "Are you threatening me? Yes, it's easy for you to crush the Sivan family. On the surface, you may look like you have everything under control, but you still have to carefully watch out. How sad..."

"If you don't love her, please let her go. I can see right through you. You've been tormenting her all this time! Otherwise, why would you invite her to my engagement party and not care if Wendy was dressed in the wedding dress she designed? You even arranged for her to give a speech!"

Mark narrowed his eyes and released a dangerous mien. Yes, he made sure that someone recommended Arianne's wedding dress design to Wendy; he had ascertained that Wendy would choose that particular wedding dress. He had also brought Arianne to the engagement party on purpose and arranged for someone to put her on the spot to give a congratulatory speech...

"Heh... Will, I've given the Sivan family a chance, but you've refused. Furthermore, whether Arianne is treated well or not, or if she lives or dies, isn't the Tremont family's business. You are not fit to have any woman that I've touched, even if I've thrown her away. So what if you slept with each other three years ago? It must feel awful to love someone that you'll never have, right? Perhaps you should make a choice—the Sivan family or continuing to dream about a woman you'll never have."

Mark left after he had finished his speech, with a terrifying smirk on his face. His Italian handmade leather shoes brushed against the cold, hard floors, creating dull, depressing thuds, just like the sound of Will's heartbeat.

Will clenched his fists tightly. His mind reconsidered his idea from three years ago and festered madly. He wanted to abandon everything and whisk Arianna away to a place where no one knew them. As long as she nodded her head, he could abandon everything... Couldn't he?

Could he really do it though? Family pressure constantly reminded him to look at the big picture. He would obediently follow the life that his parents had mapped out for him forever. Should he ever go against them, his entire family would fall into an abyss. Three generations of the Sivan family's fortune would be destroyed in an instant, and he would be the culprit behind it all.

Having to face a woman he did not love was gradually turning the warm blood in his veins to ice, only for it to be melted away again whenever he was around Arianne...

After the matters at the hospital were settled, Arianne, Tiffany, and Will left together. When they arrived at the hospital gate, Tiffany exclaimed in a half joking manner, "What's up with you two? It's my dad who's gone. Why are you two so sullen? Ari's always been like this, but what's up with you, Will?"

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Will glanced at Arianne but didn't reveal the matter involving Mark. "It's nothing. It's late, let's call it a night. Tiffie, you should go home and keep your mother company. "

Tiffany sighed. "You know what my mother's like. Now that my father's gone, she probably won't be able to catch her breath for a few years."

Arianne nodded, "Then I'm leaving. Call me if you need anything."

Just as she had spoken, she noticed a black Rolls-Royce parked not too far away. She remembered the car plate number all too well, it was Mark's car...

It took Brian a quick moment to get down from the car, walk up to her, and take her handbag. "Time to go, Madam."

Arianne did not expect to see Mark here. She looked at Will and Tiffany then followed Brian into the car without another word.

Mark's expression in the car was difficult to read. "What are you doing here?" she asked.

He looked out at the passing buildings. "Why can't I be here?" he asked in a chilly voice.

She was momentarily at a loss for words. She fell silent before speaking, "Tiffie's dad has passed away. I'm here to help with the funeral."

She thought that Mark would continue interrogating her, but he suddenly changed the subject. "John Lane is dead. The money no longer needs to be returned."

Arianne was taken aback, unsure of what he meant by this. She racked her brains for a moment then said, "Tiffie won't go

without paying you back. The large sum is under her mother's name too. Both husband and Wife share it. Her father may be dead, but she'll still pay you back."

He cast her a sidelong glance, the emotions in his eyes completely unclear. "I said, there's no need for payback. You should stop finding excuses to continue seeing Will. We have enough scandals. Stop before you go too far. I'm not that patient."

She finally understood why Mark was being so nice. It left a bad taste in her mouth. "I... I'm not seeing him on purpose, and I'm not embarrassing you on purpose, either..."

However, Mark was not interested in listening to her explanations. He scoffed icily and shut his eyes. Then he leaned against the back of his chair and stayed completely silent.

Arianne knew that he always kept his word. Tiffany would no longer be in debt now. She didn't care what he thought. She could finally relax on Tiffany's problems.

The car stopped at the Tremont Estate. Mark got down from the car and walked straight through the doors. Arianne was a little slower, instinctively holding her belly. Her careful state caught Brian's eye.

"Madam, is your stomach alright?" Brian asked.

Arianne quickly moved her hand away. "Fine, I'm fine."

It was already dark. All of Tremont Estate was brightly lit.

Mary was overjoyed when she saw Arianne arriving home with Mark. “Madam, I’ve made your favorites! prawns and salmon! You loved these the most as a kid. These were air-flown and very fresh when they arrived... I’ve used all—spice on the prawns to mask the fishy smell. You can rest easy and enjoy them. Go wash up and enjoy your meal!”

Arianne instinctively gulped. She did like prawns and salmon sashimi when she was a kid. She hadn’t been able to enjoy them for a long time. The years had passed by like a blur. Now that she was pregnant, she suddenly had a craving.

By the time she sat at the table, Mark still hadn’t come downstairs. She was too scared to touch her cutlery. The fragrance from the all spiced prawns was making her restless. Mary, who noticed her craving, indulgently peeled a prawn for her. “Have a taste. Sir specifically ordered these yesterday. Probably because he remembered how much you loved eating them.”

She lowered her eyelids and did not reply. How could Mark possibly remember her favorite foods?