

Chapter 31 Do You Have A Boyfriend

Today, Micheal brought Mia over. He just wanted to apologize and compensate Gabrielle accordingly. There was nothing else he intended to do but that.

However, Mia's enthusiasm seemed a bit too much for him.

"Oh, I see," Mia replied with an apparent disappointment on her face. She sensed Michael's annoyance, so she decided not to provoke him anymore. After all, nothing good would ever come out if he got annoyed.

"Miss Jones, we're leaving now. If you finally have the requirements, please feel free to contact me at any time," Michael said in the most businesslike tone he could. With that, he turned around and left.

For some reason, Mia did not leave and instead walked over to Gabrielle. "Miss Jones, do you have a boyfriend?" she asked with great interest.

"No," Gabrielle answered without even thinking about it.

It was true, though. She really did not have a boyfriend. Westley was just her husband in paper, so they were technically not a real

couple. She would divorce him once Nellie came back.

"That's great. My brother doesn't have a girlfriend either. Would you consider—" ❏

"Mia, I said let's go now!" Micheal shouted by the door. He had heard Mia's absurdity, so he immediately called her to stop. He knew that she would blabber nonsense as soon as she was out of his sight, and he did not want that.

"I'm coming!" Mia shouted back while rolling her eyes.

"Miss Jones, I'm serious about what I've said. Think about it. My brother is a great man. If you want, I can send you his information later. I swear he's not fierce and cold usually. He's actually a warm-hearted man once you get to know him," Mia hurriedly said, deliberately emphasizing her brother's traits. As soon as she said those words, she finally left.

True enough, Gabrielle received the file not long after as Mia promised. It was about Micheal.

From his basic information to his love life, everything was indicated there. Gabrielle figured at once what exactly Mia was trying to do.

Unfortunately, regardless of how amazing Micheal was, she was not interested. ①

Gabrielle did not reply to Mia's message. Instead, she locked her phone and threw it aside. Then, as she lay on the bed, her eyes felt heavy, and drowsiness caught her eventually.

The next day, because she was not seriously ill, she was finally discharged from the hospital.

It was Westley who picked her up. Of course, he did not come there of his own volition. Miley forced him, and there was nothing else he could do about it.

Gabrielle was well-aware of it, so she did not take it to heart when she saw his sullen face early in the morning.

After all, she never expected that he would pick her up, nor would he be kind to her.

Thanks to Mia, Gabrielle learned that it was Micheal who saved her and not Westley. As a result, she detested Westley even more.

Westley was a liar, and he took credit for something that he did not do. If it were not for Micheal and Mia, Gabrielle would never have known the truth.

"Have you finished packing up, Gabrielle? I've already asked Alvin to go through the discharge procedure for you. He's waiting for us upstairs. We can go back now if you're done," Miley thoughtfully said while looking at her.

Truth be told, it was the first time that Gabrielle had met someone who cared about her so much.

"Thanks a lot, Grandma. Yes, I'm done packing up. You know, I'm fine. I could've been discharged yesterday," Gabrielle replied while looking at Miley with a smile.

"Westley, help Gabrielle and take her bag. Let's go now," Miley ordered.

In this world, only she could order Westley like that.

"It's okay, Grandma. I can do it myself. It's not that heavy anyway," Gabrielle reasoned out as she hurriedly took her bag. 'How dare I ask Westley for help?' she asked herself inwardly.

Just when Gabrielle was about to grab her bag, Miley prevented her from doing so. "Gabrielle, you don't have to help him. Westley is your husband. It's his duty to do favors for his wife. If you keep pampering him like this, he might not take you seriously in the future," she lectured.

Since Miley insisted, Gabrielle did not protest anymore. Miley knew that Gabrielle and Westley were not a real couple. Even so, she was insistent on treating them as one.

"Thank you, Westley," Gabrielle said to Westley politely.

The latter merely glanced at her. With her bag in his hand, he strode out of the room without saying a word. ④

Westley's tall and slender figure disappeared in a jiffy. ①

"Grandma, please don't say such things. It might upset Westley," Gabrielle said while helping Miley walk out of the room.

"Gabrielle, Westley is an impatient and irascible man. From the looks of it, he might even be worse in the future if nobody straightens him immediately. Gabrielle, as his wife, it's your job to do that."

"Grandma, you're aware that he wanted to marry Nellie, not me," Gabrielle said with a bittersweet smile. She had always been clear about her place in the family.

Also, she had sworn to herself that she would never cast covetous eyes on the man that did not belong to her.

"Gabrielle, it doesn't matter who he wanted to marry in the past. What matters now is that you're Westley's legal wife and my only recognized granddaughter-in-law. What happened between him and Nellie is now gone in the air," Miley explained solemnly while holding Gabrielle's hand.

"But, Grandma—"

"Gabrielle, do you like me or not?" Miley interjected before Gabrielle could even protest. ¹

"I... I do. In fact, I like you very much. I've never experienced the feeling of being loved by my grandparents as they died a long time ago. Thank you for giving me a chance to experience it," Gabrielle said gratefully. She had always been appreciative of the beautiful things she had been given, including having someone whom she could regard as her grandmother. ⁴

Fortunately, she could also tell how others sincerely feel towards her.

"I see that you really like me. Well, I like you too, so I hope you live a good life in the Morris. Please stop thinking about leaving us every day," Miley urged. Although it was not apparent in her face, she could coax anyone into doing what she thought was best. That being said, she would do everything she could to make Gabrielle stay.

Gabrielle liked Miley, but she knew her place. She might have had sex with Westley already, but it was not enough reason for her to be with him.

"Grandma, I like you, and I know that you feel the same towards me. Even so, my marriage with Westley is only temporary. We have no feelings for each other, and I have to leave once Nellie comes back," Gabrielle insisted despite knowing that what she had said would only anger Miley. Nevertheless, she still wanted to make it clear to the old woman.

"Gabrielle, did you really have to piss me off? Do you want me to have a heart attack?" Miley asked with a feigned scowl. She was only pretending to be angry in order to persuade Gabrielle even more.

Just as Miley had anticipated, Gabrielle was taken aback and felt a little frightened.

"Grandma, I... I didn't mean that. I don't want anything to happen to you. If anything, I wish you live a long life."

"Gabrielle, I don't care whether Nellie comes back or not. As long as I'm alive, Westley can never divorce you nor marry her. I was the one who asked you to go to the registration office. Without my permission, nobody can divorce you," Miley said in an unusually

daunting voice.

Of course, she had gone through a lot more than Gabrielle and knew how to hit the nail on the head. She must admit, she was indeed intimidating when she said those words.

"Grandma, let's go home now," Gabrielle said in defeat. She knew better than to press Miley regarding that matter. ³

Besides, Westley would definitely find a way to divorce her once Nellie came back. It was better to leave it to him instead. ⁶

Chapter 32 Treat Her Better

With Miley's insistence, Westley had no choice but to take Gabrielle back to the Vineyard Villa.

"Grandma, we're back. I'll ask Alvin to drive you back to the Morris' Mansion so that you can rest early." Westley had no plans of inviting his grandmother into the villa. He wanted her to stay in the car and let Alvin drive her directly to the Morris' Mansion.

Miley's face darkened, and she deliberately stared daggers at his grandson. "Westley, don't you love me anymore? We've just arrived at your house. Why don't you invite me inside for a cup of tea?"

Westley was at a loss for words. He could not think of anything in protest and could only look at Miley incredulously.

"Gabrielle, come and help me get out of the car. You're also the owner of this house. Will you welcome me as a guest?" Miley asked Gabrielle, who was standing outside by the car door.

Meanwhile, Gabrielle looked at Westley cautiously. She sensed that the look in his eyes had become colder.

'Grandma, you didn't have to flatter me. If I

know, Westley only wants to throw me out of the Vineyard Villa. He doesn't seem to stand my presence, let alone be his mistress for so long.' ①

"Well, Gabrielle, it seems that you don't want to welcome me either. Fine. I won't make trouble for you two. Alvin, drive me back to the Morris' Mansion, will you? I won't come here ever again," Miley ordered with a scowl. Seeing that Gabrielle did not do anything, Miley pretended to be angry to coax Gabrielle into doing what she wanted.

If Miley were an actress, she would have won a best actress award. Her acting was excellent and could fool anyone. ①

"Gabrielle, what are you waiting for? Come here and help Granny. Do you really want to make her angry?" Westley finally budged to Miley's requests. With an exasperated sigh, he asked Gabrielle to help his grandmother.

Not wanting to delay any longer, Gabrielle quickly walked towards the car and looked at Miley respectfully. "Grandma, let me help you."

"About time! Why did you even hesitate? I've been nothing but kind to you!" Miley scolded Gabrielle with a feigned scowl.

"Grandma, I know that. I'll always remember how kind you are to me for the rest of my life,

" Gabrielle replied with sincere gratitude. She then held Miley's hand and helped her get out of the car carefully.

"Grandma, please enjoy your tea here. I'm going back to the company," Westley chimed as he got back into the car.

"Westley, how dare you leave?! You must stay at home and take care of Gabrielle. Your wife is sick, but you'd rather go to work than accompany her. Don't you want to be a good husband?" Miley asked while glaring at him. ²

"Grandma, Gabrielle is fine, but the company isn't. I have a lot of things to deal with in the company."

In all honesty, Westley did not wish to be with Gabrielle, not even for a minute. ⁵

Unfortunately, Miley was persuading him to stay at home and be with Gabrielle for a day. Wouldn't that be torture for him?

"Your company has a lot of shareholders and executives. Don't they need to do something? Why do you have to do everything? I'm sure the company won't fall if you take a day off," Miley reasoned out sternly. It seemed that she had no plans of letting Westley leave. ⁴

Seeing Miley's sternness, Gabrielle only had one thought in mind: Miley is amazing.

She may be an old lady, but she was a domineering female boss.

In her mind, Gabrielle silently gave her grandmother 10,000 likes.

"Grandma, it's not as serious as you said," Westley retorted exasperatedly. He had no idea what do with Miley anymore.

Sadly, Miley merely paid him a sideways glance. She then turned to look at Alvin and said, "Alvin, your boss is going to take a day off to accompany his wife at home. You back to the company and take charge of his work for now. If you can't, just leave it for tomorrow. Don't you dare bother Westley, understand?"

Alvin looked at Westley cautiously and then nodded seriously in response. "Understood."

"Okay then. Go now." Miley waved at Alvin. With that, he left as told.

Neil came out to welcome them. Seeing that Miley was there, in fear of offending her, he immediately put on a smile. "Madam, Mr. Morris, Miss Jones," he greeted one by one.

Unfortunately, Miley seemed displeased with the Neil's greeting. "What do you mean by 'Miss Jones'? Gabrielle is Westley's wife. From now on, you should call her Mrs.

Morris. Tell that to everyone. If I hear anyone call her 'Miss Jones' again, I'll be angry," Miley ordered sharply. ⑥

Then, she looked at the butler with a fierce gaze, which made him obey at once.

"Madam, I see. I'll tell everyone right away," Neil agreed. Well, he had no choice anyway.

The Vineyard Villa belonged to Westley and had always been in accordance with his orders.

However, the servants obeyed and respected Miley the way they would to Westley.

Miley was as domineering as a queen. Nobody dared to defy her words in fear of suffering from her wrath.

"You're an old friend of the Morris. You should know the rules by now. Don't let me remind you this again," she reiterated.

Of course, Neil humbly accepted her request. "I apologize, Madam. I'll do as you wish right away." ④

Just as he promised, he immediately left to inform the servants. He was afraid that they would make a mistake and, in turn, displease Miley even more. ③

If that happened, things would be very

difficult to deal with.

"Gabrielle, it seems that you've suffered a lot here," Miley remarked as she held Gabrielle's hands.

"I'm fine, Grandma. Things are actually good here," Gabrielle reasoned out. Well, she did not want any conflict to occur between Miley and Westley because of her. 4

Unfortunately, her explanation did not seem to work.

"Gabrielle, you don't have to speak for Westley. I can see things myself." Miley cast a stern glance at Wesley and added, "That bastard must have ordered these servants to treat you like this."

As if her words were not enough to condemn Westley, she concluded, "Westley, I've already told you not to bully her. You and the servants are plotting against Gabrielle, aren't you?"

Miley was sure that it was Westley, who ordered the servants to call Gabrielle 'Miss Jones'. After all, he was the head of the villa, so it was only right for the servants to obey him. Without his order, how could the servants call Gabrielle that? 1

"Grandma, why don't you ask Gabrielle before you make a conclusion?" Westley

asked, his eyes looked glum in annoyance. He looked at Gabrielle coldly, which made her feel somehow intimidated.

She figured that his patience must have reached its limit. If she did not do anything, she would be the last one to suffer in the end.

"No, it's not like that, Grandma. It was actually me who asked them to call me 'Miss Jones'. I didn't like the way they addressed me before. They were so formal and polite, so I asked them to call me that instead. It has nothing to do with Westley," she quickly explained. Blaming herself was better. At least it would not be inconvenient to anyone.

After hearing Gabrielle's explanation, Miley had no choice but to believe her.

"Gabrielle, you're so kind! Westley treats you like this, but you still choose to be on his side. What can I say to you?" Miley was at awe at how considerate Gabrielle was. It actually made her like Gabrielle more. 4

Instead of saying something that could make Westley look bad, Gabrielle put the blame on herself instead. What a silly girl!

"Westley, did you hear that? Even though you've bullied her many times, she's still on your side. You'd better treat her better!" Miley preached.

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Miley preached.

Without saying a word, Westley turned

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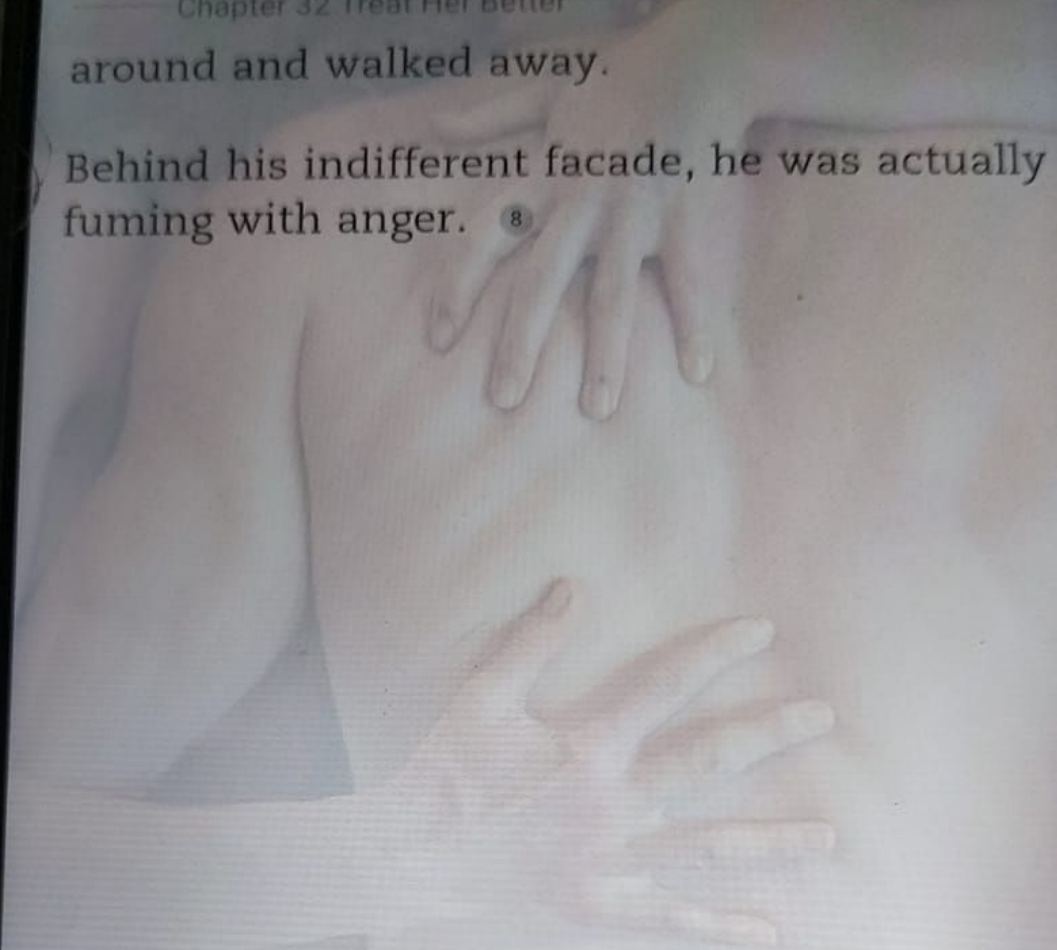
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around and walked away.

Behind his indifferent facade, he was actually fuming with anger. 8



Chapter 33 So Hypocritical

Westley went right into the study as soon as he stepped into the house. He remained there the whole morning and displayed no sign of leaving before lunchtime.

Gabrielle had spent the whole morning in the living room with Miley, chatting and drinking tea.

"Madam, Mrs. Morris, lunch is ready. Please go to the dining room." Neil appeared to inform them that lunch was ready.

Miley was pleased to hear Gabrielle being addressed in this manner, but Gabrielle felt uneasy.

But then Gabrielle realized Miley wouldn't be here for long. As long as Miley was happy, she wouldn't mind.

"Where is Westley?" Miley inquired as she cast a glance at Neil.

"Mr. Morris said he still had a few e-mails to deal with, so he wouldn't be able to join you for lunch. He said that you and Mrs. Morris don't need to wait for him. He will eat later." Neil had just returned to the study to inform Westley of the upcoming lunch. That was the response he received from Westley.

But Neil was well aware that while Westley was swamped with paperwork, he also wished to avoid Miley and Gabrielle.

"He is at home now. Why doesn't he want to have lunch with me? Does he dislike me?" Miley kept a straight face as she looked at the butler. ①

'I just relayed what Mr. Morris said to me,' Neil grumbled to himself. 'I'm just a housekeeper.'

"Gabrielle, go, ask Westley to have lunch with us." Miley instantly tasked Gabrielle with this tough role.

Gabrielle was actually relieved that Westley declined to have lunch with them. She hadn't expected Miley to ask her to go get him. It was too soon for her to be happy. ⑤

"Maybe it's not a good idea, Grandma. Westley is busy. When he's working, he doesn't like to be interrupted. It will affect his work." The truth was, she didn't want to talk to Westley. ②

Being thrown out was not really a huge deal. What was worse, he might strangle her on the spot.

"From what I've heard, if one does not eat well, his IQ will drop. If Westley continues to

be so focused on his work that he refuses to eat, I believe he should resign as CEO of the Morris Group as soon as possible. I'm concerned that the group will be assigned to a member with a low IQ," Miley voiced calmly. ①

Gabrielle was taken aback by her words. She was really Westley's grandmother. She rebuked her grandson without any care.

"Grandma, I'll go ask him to join us for lunch now."

Gabrielle hurried to the study.

She was about to knock on the door once she reached the study, when her phone suddenly buzzed.

She saw on the screen that it was a message from Mia.

"Gabrielle, I've compiled all of my brother's information for you. Have you read it yet?

If you have any more questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. I swear I'll tell you everything I know."

Gabrielle's mind was filled with just one thought: Mia was so excited for her brother to marry. Was she worried that her brother wouldn't be able to find a suitable partner?

It was easy for a man like Micheal to marry. There were a bunch of ladies waiting in line for him to choose from.

"Gabrielle, you are welcome to speak with my brother in person. It will be preferable to staring at a pile of dull numbers. It's beneficial to get to know each other by interaction.

Didn't you say you'd invite my brother to dinner to thank him for saving your life? Have you made plans for dinner? When and where would you eat? If you don't have any idea, I can recommend you some places. Do you want to have a look?" ②

Mia proceeded to enthusiastically suggest places. She wasn't embarrassed if Gabrielle didn't respond at all.

Gabrielle could tell she was a talkative girl based on her pretty, lovely face and warm, smart eyes. She realized she had been right all along.

Gabrielle didn't have to reply to Mia. She was capable of answering her own questions.

Her charm was endearing. It was easy to get along with her.

So it was hard to believe that such a cheerful girl would leap off a building for a guy, particularly if the man was a playboy like

Cayden.

This was, after all, her own private issue. Gabrielle had no business interfering as an outsider.

"Mia, could you recommend me a restaurant?" She sent her a WeChat message.

Gabrielle didn't eat out too much. The majority of the restaurants she and Sloane visited were small ones. She could choose a better restaurant if she were to invite Micheal for dinner.

She'd spare herself a lot of trouble if Mia could recommend one.

"Okay, then. I'll see to it that both you and Micheal will be satisfied. When are you going to have dinner together? "

"Tomorrow night?"

She intended to visit the studio the next day. She would have lunch with her coworkers and dinner with Micheal in the evening.

"Not a problem. I'll notify you once I made a reservation. "

Gabrielle exhaled a sigh of relief. One of her concerns had been solved. She planned to return the check to Micheal after they had dinner together. Maybe they wouldn't meet

again in the future. ②

Gabrielle didn't want to be involved with so many men, and Mia was enthusiastic about having her and Micheal together.

This was a bad idea.

She would tell Micheal she was married in person tomorrow to avoid any misunderstanding.

She looked at the study's door after putting away her phone. The door opened just as she was about to take a deep breath and knock.

With an icy expression on his face, Westley, tall and straight, stood at the door and glared coldly at Gabrielle, causing her to stiffen in fear.

"What are you doing skulking around the study door?" he questioned coldly.

"I... I came to ask you to lunch. I was about to knock on the door when you walked out. What a coincidence!" Gabrielle smiled awkwardly.

About to knock on the door?

Well, this woman really didn't blush when she lied.

Inside, he'd been watching the surveillance

video. For more than five minutes, the woman stood at the door, fiddling with her cell phone. She had no plans of knocking the door at all.

She was probably here because his grandmother compelled her to come to ask him to eat. She'd rather play on her phone for a bit than invite him to lunch right away. She was adamant on not doing so.

That was why he was eager to open the door, only to be greeted by Gabrielle's hypocritical smile.

She was disgustingly hypocritical.

A suspicious Westley said, "Gabrielle, were you reluctant to come and invite me to lunch?"

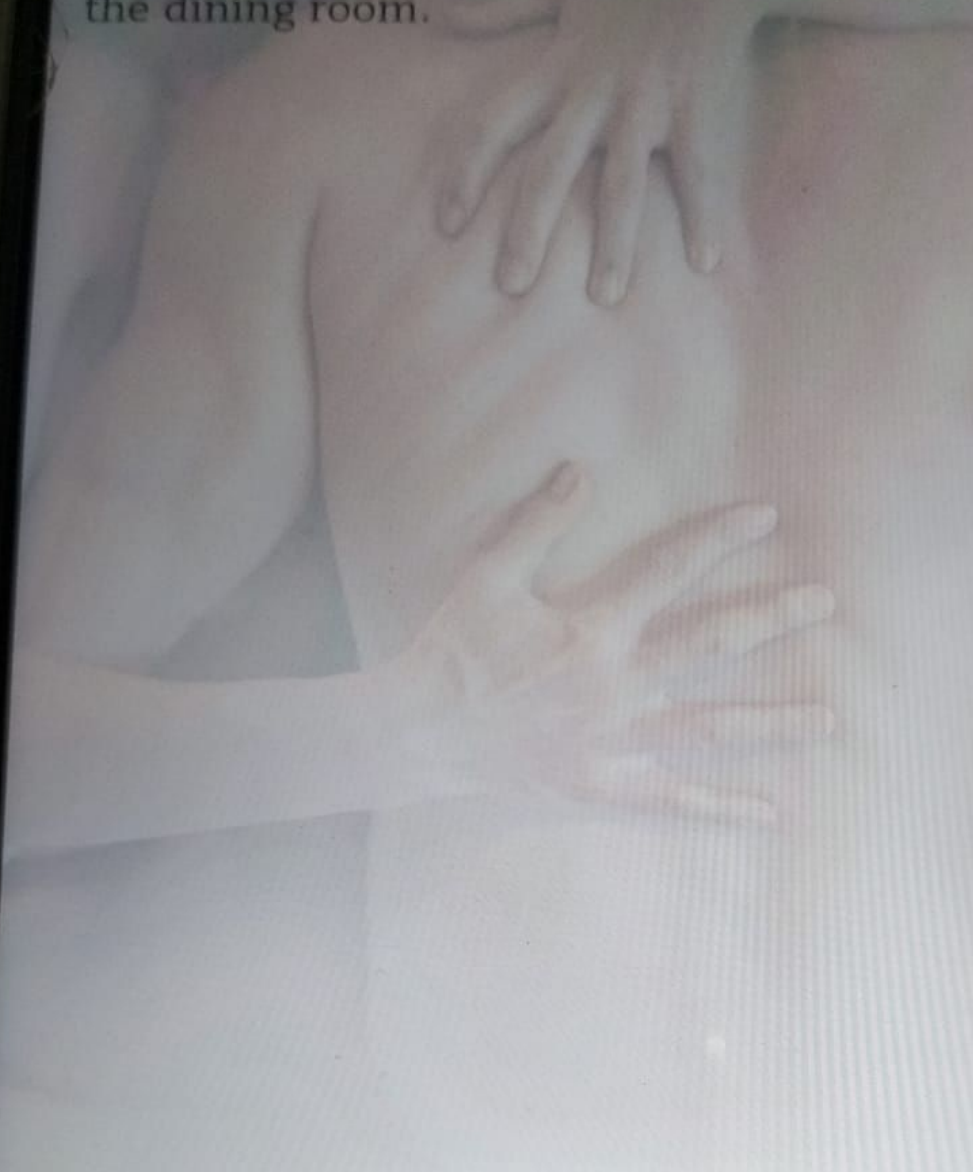
Well, she was anxious about coming here, so what should she do?

She couldn't say no to Westley and Miley's demands. She had to do everything they asked her to do.

"That is not something I am unwilling to do. Let's go to lunch now that you've come out. Grandma is also expecting us." Gabrielle had no choice but to smile, no matter how reluctant she was.

"How hypocritical of you." Without waiting

for a response, Westley proceeded to head to the dining room.



Chapter 34 Westley Is A Mean Man

When they arrived at the restaurant, Gabrielle looked crestfallen. She knew that Westley disliked her, but she didn't know he hated her that much. 3

"Gabrielle, dear, what's wrong? Was Westley mean to you again?" Miley asked, gesturing for Gabrielle to sit next to her.

The three of them sat around the table, with Miley in the middle. Somehow, Gabrielle ended up sitting straight across the table from Westley. Whenever she raised her head, she saw Westley's indifferent face.

"No, no, he wasn't mean to me. I..."

"Neil, can you take away the seafood? We shall not be having seafood in the future," Westley interrupted, overshadowing Gabrielle.

"Westley, what are you doing? Why would you ask for the seafood to be taken away? Let Gabrielle eat the seafood. It is low in fat, and it will help her be more beautiful. If you don't like it, you can eat other things," Miley chastised him.

There were Australian lobsters, hairy crabs, abalones, and caviar on the table. If they

were taken away, Gabrielle would have nothing to eat.

Miley suspected Westley did it on purpose.

"You want her to be more beautiful, but she will end up in hospital if she eats that. I don't want to be accused of 'murder'," Westley said coldly. 7

Gabrielle was allergic to seafood, so she was moved when Westley asked the butler to remove it, thinking he was protecting her. But after his cold response, her heart sank again.

"What are you talking about? Murder?" Miley's expression darkened. 'Westley is getting more and more impolite, ' she thought.

"Grandma, I'm allergic to seafood," Gabrielle explained.

Miley looked relieved for a moment, before turning serious again. She looked at Gabrielle with sympathy in her gaze. "Gabrielle, why didn't you tell me? Neil could have prepared something else. What do you like to eat?" she asked.

"I can eat everything except seafood. I'm not a picky eater," Gabrielle said gently.

Gabrielle knew that she was adopted, so she

didn't dare to be picky about anything. She was always grateful for anything the Jones offered.

Miley was saddened by Gabrielle's words. It seemed that Gabrielle suffered in the Jones family.

"Westley, ask the kitchen to cook more dishes that Gabrielle likes to eat in the future. Neil, remember that Gabrielle can't eat seafood." Miley turned to look at Neil who was about to remove the dishes.

"Yes, Madam," Neil responded.

"Westley, it is nice to see that you care about Gabrielle." Miley raised her eyebrows and looked at Westley.

If he didn't care about Gabrielle at all, he wouldn't have known she was allergic to seafood.

"Grandma, if something happens to Gabrielle in Vineyard Villa, I will be charged with murder," Westley explained coldly.

Miley's expression darkened again. She shouldn't have expected him to say something nice.

"Nonsense! Don't say such things in front of Gabrielle! You're scaring her!" Miley warned him.

"The Jones are not cowards. Are you a coward, Gabrielle?" Westley asked. A real coward would not marry him.

Also, after spending the last few days with Gabrielle, he was sure that this woman was not only brave, but fearless.

"Gabrielle, don't take him so seriously. He has a sharp tongue but a soft heart," Miley advised.

"Grandma, I don't mind. And I should thank Westley for remembering that I'm allergic to seafood." Gabrielle smiled gently.

In Westley's eyes, such a bright and happy smile looked hypocritical.

"Neil, prepare more dishes." When the atmosphere at the table was finally harmonious, Miley's mood lightened.

"Neil, go get a few bottles of good wine."

"Grandma, you would like to drink?" Gabrielle asked, observing the happy look on Miley's face.

"I'm so happy to have you and Westley here for dinner today. We should celebrate with a bit of wine. What do you say, Gabrielle?" Miley asked, turning to Gabrielle. 5

"I can't drink too much, so I don't drink too

often,"

Gabrielle said uneasily.

She wasn't confident about her drinking capacity at all. Sloane was rumored to be able to drink a thousand glasses of wine, but Gabrielle herself couldn't drink more than three. ①

"Yes, good girls don't drink much outside, but you can drink here at home whenever you would like. Westley has a cellar full of excellent wines, so you can just ask Neil to bring you some." Miley happily shared the secret of the Vineyard Villa with her.

"Grandma, that is my collection," Westley reminded her.

He didn't want just anyone to drink his treasured wine, and he definitely didn't want to waste it on Gabrielle.

"Westley, don't be mean! Gabrielle is your wife! Don't worry, Gabrielle. If you want a drink, come to Morris' Mansion. I have my own collection, too. We don't need this rude man's wine," Miley said, obviously insulted.

Miley's comments made Gabrielle's heart soar. She was such a lovely old lady, and Gabrielle felt honored to have her on her side. ②

Even if Westley was a terrible man, it wasn't all bad. Miley seemed to like her, and that was something Gabrielle had never experienced in her life.

The butler soon brought two bottles of good red wine from Westley's collection.

"Westley, can we drink the wine? If we can't, just let Neil take it back," Miley said, looking at Westley pointedly.

Neil was already about to open the bottle, but he froze when he heard Miley's question. He didn't know what to make of the situation.

"Neil, open the wine," Westley ordered, too tired to deal with Miley, who was constantly siding with Gabrielle. It seemed as if Gabrielle was born to be the bane of his existence.

If he had known, he would have called off the wedding, or sent someone to force Nellie to come. ②

Staying with a temporary wife was already horrible enough.

The butler quickly opened the bottle and poured some wine for Miley. "Madam, enjoy your wine," he said.

"Pour some for Gabrielle and Westley," Miley reminded him in a low voice, but Westley

still heard it. ②

"Grandma, I have a lot of emails to reply to this afternoon," Westley said.

"Emails? You are resting at home, and you should be honored to be able to drink with me. If you don't appreciate my company, go to your study and answer your emails, and I'll drink with Gabrielle. But don't you dare call me your grandmother if you do that!" Miley could always find a way to deal with Westley. ③

Westley was annoyed, but he knew he lost. ④

"Okay, I'll drink with you," he finally agreed. ⑤

Chapter 35 In His Arms

When Miley was young, she accompanied her husband to his business meetings and various social engagements. She did this mostly so she could drink.

Very few people knew she was a heavy drinker.

Thus, at her persuasion, Westley and Gabrielle drank a lot. They also ate the nutritional soup made especially for them. Soon, the both of them were too full to keep going.

"Grandma, I can't drink anymore. I'm so drunk. It feels like my face is burning." Gabrielle put down her glass.

Westley's wine was very tasty. When she first began to drink it, she felt nothing. The more of it she drank though, the more she wanted. Soon enough, she was completely drunk.

"Well, Gabrielle, then don't drink anymore. Why don't you have some more soup? It's good for your health." Miley immediately served another bowl of soup to Gabrielle.

"Come on, Westley. Here's more for you too." Miley placed a bowl in front of him. 2

Although it looked and tasted good, Westley

didn't want anymore. The soup smelled faintly of Chinese medicine, which Westley hated. ②

Westley took a look at Gabrielle, thinking, 'She really loves this soup. This must be her third bowl.'

Has she had too much?

Even if she wants to make a good impression in front of Miley, she doesn't have to torture herself like this.'

"Grandma, one bowl is enough for me. I can't take another bowl," Westley said.

Seeing how happy Gabrielle was, Miley didn't care whether Westley would like another bowl or not. After all, one bowl of soup was enough to get them both drunk with desire. ⑪

"Oh well, you never listen to me. Not like Gabrielle here." She looked at Gabrielle happily.

"Is the soup tasty?" Miley asked her with a smile. ⑦

"Yes, Grandma! The soup is very good. It smells a bit like herbs. Why aren't you having any?" Gabrielle asked, sipping the soup with a faint smile.

"This soup is made specifically for you young

people. I'm old and have no need for it. If you like it, you can ask the cook to make it again in the future. It's made with mutton, bones, and several Chinese medicines, which makes it smell less fishy. It has to cook for a whole morning to make it tasty. It's the perfect meal to strengthen your body after you get out of the hospital," Miley explained.

"Well, it's delicious. Thank you, Grandma,"

Gabrielle said, smiling brightly.

Gabrielle thought it was lovely that she was being so kind to them. Westley, however, thought that the old woman was up to no good. 2

After all, the Morris were not simple people.

"Come on, drink up. You look too thin. The Jones will think that we're bad hosts, letting you starve," Miley said, coming up with a ridiculous reason to urge Gabrielle to keep drinking.

"Grandma, I'm not thin at all. I would actually like to lose some weight," Gabrielle said.

"You don't need to lose weight. You've already lost too much. If you lose some more, you'll be bone-thin. Am I right, Westley?" Miley glanced at the reserved man.

Westley stayed quiet, lost in his thoughts.

Miley knew Westley very well. When he was deep in thought, he would naturally frown.

She realized that she should stop now or else Westley might notice something.

"Gabrielle, didn't you just say that you were a little drunk? I think you're almost done with your dinner. Why doesn't Westley escort you back to your room?" Miley looked at her. Gabrielle's white face was red. She didn't know it was because of the alcohol, the soup, or her suggestion.

All in all, it was exactly what she had wanted.

"I am a bit dizzy, but don't bother Westley. I can find my way back to my room myself." Even a little drunk, Gabrielle could clearly see how dark Westley's face was.

Of course, he didn't want to stay with Gabrielle.

"You can't even stand straight, how could you make it back to your room by yourself? You could end up falling down the stairs." Miley was firm in her convictions. She would not give Gabrielle the chance to go back to her room by herself.

"But..."

"Westley, take Gabrielle back to her room. I've also drunk a little too much wine tonight. I think I'll take your room for the night, if that is alright?" Miley said, looking at Westley. 3

It was not a negotiation. She was going to take his room.

"Of course. I'll take Gabrielle back to her room first." Westley stood up and walked over to Gabrielle. He seemed so tall and strong as he looked down at her.

Gabrielle was startled by his sudden approach. She looked up at him with her bright, black eyes.

"W...Westley, I can do it myself. I'm fine. Don't worry about me." Gabrielle didn't want him to take her back to her room.

"Are you sure you're alright?" he asked.

"Yes." To prove her point, she quickly stood up, but her feet were so weak that she fell forward. Fortunately, Westley caught her in his arms.

Instead of falling to the ground, she let herself fall into him. Her face met with his chest. At the sound of his strong heartbeat through his shirt, her face grew even warmer

than it already was. ①

She felt so humiliated and thought about how she always embarrassed herself in front of him.

"Oh, W... Westley, thank you very much." Gabrielle quickly pulled away from him, her face so hot she didn't dare look him in the eye.

"Really, Gabrielle? If I hadn't caught you, you would have fallen right to the ground. You really underestimated how much you had to drink." Westley cast a scornful glance at her and thought, 'I hate people who overestimate themselves.

From my experience, they are the stupidest.

She kept drinking despite how drunk she was. She was asking for trouble.'

"Oh, she's very drunk, isn't she? Westley, hurry up and take her to bed." Miley urged.

"I... Oh..." Before Gabrielle could protest, she was lifted up into the air by Westley.

"Hey! Westley, you don't have to do this..." Gabrielle reminded him in a low voice.

"Don't make this take any longer than it needs to. You've already wasted enough of my time," Westley said coldly.

Chapter 36 Betrayal

In all her life, this was the first time that a man had embraced Gabrielle so intimately. 5

Oddly enough, Westley's action somehow gave her a sense of satisfaction.

Her happiness with Westley was always fleeting and today would be no different. As soon as she walked into the room, Westley grabbed her and threw her on the bed forcefully. The softness of the bed did very little to comfort Gabrielle.

Gabrielle searched her mind to understand his temperament and failed to grasp the reason behind it.

"Stop, it hurts..." With sadness she looked at him pleadingly. As her eyes filled with tears and her face flushed with emotion she tried to look away before he could see his effect on her.

"Gabrielle, is something wrong and did I hurt you?" asked Westley, with a quizzical look on his face.

Wesley was concerned and hesitant to leave her in such a state.

Despite his concern, his expression was void of emotion and he glared coldly at her as she

recoiled in discomfort on the bed.

"Gabrielle, what is the matter?" Gabrielle continued to groan in discomfort and it was at this point that Westley couldn't help but begin to worry that something was really wrong.

"Hm... My insides feel as though they are on fire. Westley, do you think that maybe it was your wine we had at dinner?" she asked anxiously as she pulled her collar, suddenly alarmed that these were the deadly effects of an undetected poison.

'There is nothing wrong with the wine,' Westley thought to himself. 'Gabrielle just had too much to drink. I mean, she almost drank up the whole bottle of wine for crying out loud! Who could survive that without a little discomfort?'

"I hardly think that it was the wine. After all, it is fermented and mulled by the best winery in the business. It is meant to be enjoyed in moderation, with each sip savored until the last drop. One would think you have never enjoyed such good wine before." He did not conceal his dislike for her at all.

Gabrielle was not surprised with his attitude; as Westley had never been affectionate to her in the past.

"You are probably right Westley, don't worry

about me. I just want to get undressed and go to bed. It's alright, you can leave me now." Gabrielle felt hot and bothered, as she toyed with the thought of taking off her clothes right now.

Westley frowned; unapologetic and walked towards the door.

But he found that the door was locked.

He distinctly remembered using his leg to shut the door as he came in. Certain that he hadn't locked the door, he was just as confused as to who had. ¹²

He immediately realized that it must have been Miley. ²

'What will Gabrielle think?' he thought silently to himself. 'Surely she would be concerned once she came to her senses.'

Suddenly he had a flashback of the scene at dinner earlier that evening; and with a look of horror he realized she was not intoxicated but must have been drugged. Her reaction couldn't be to the wine; maybe it was the something in the soup.

Fear began to overshadow the scowl look on Westley's face, as he remembered a similar incident that had occurred to him not too long ago. How could one forget the time he had been framed for a crime that he did not

commit? ④

Westley considered himself shrewd and definitely not gullible; yet here he was outsmarted by those whom he'd trusted the most, for the second time!

He drifted into deep thought remembering his first taste of betrayal with the Jones family. He had blamed his misfortune on his own carelessness; yet Tobias and his wife were equally responsible for the events that unfolded that night. The couple had secretly connived to drug him and forced him to have sex with Gabrielle.

Time had not dulled the sting of betrayal he felt at this very moment because of Miley. He was taken advantage yet again and this time in his own house. Feeling powerless, Westley resigned to the fact that he couldn't do anything to her.

Her title as "grandmother" was befitting indeed!

In a fit of rage, Westley kicked the door hard. His aggression was only met with silence from the other side of the locked door.

"Neil, can you hear me? Open the door if you are outside.

Neil, c'mon!"

It dawned on him that his efforts were pointless. No matter how loudly Westley shouted, there was no response at all.

He knew, without a shadow of doubt, that Miley was the mastermind behind all of this.

The worst part of it all was that Westley began to feel a burning sensation, stemming from his abdomen running down to his limbs.

The burning sensation was not new to him and he knew exactly what the cause was.

More convinced than before, he was confident that the wine was not responsible for how he or Gabrielle felt. This was the work of Chinese medicine that must have been added to the soup by Miley.

'Damn it! The Chinese medicine must have something else in in!'

As he recalled, he had less than Gabrielle. It made sense his symptoms were much later than hers. All in all she must have had two or three bowls of soup, so it was understandable that her reaction was so intense.

From across the room came a dull thud that caught his attention. The sudden noise interrupted his thoughts.

Westley turned to where the noise had come from. Much to his surprise, Gabrielle had rolled out of the bed, with her dress torn open. There she was before him her white, tender and slender legs bare not hidden from his prying eyes.

Slowly he began to recall the pleasure she had brought him on that fateful day at the Jones family home.

The memory melted the feelings of betrayal that had overwhelmed him before. The only betrayal he could think of was how his body instinctively responded to the vision before him.

"Oh, it's so hot... Turn on the air conditioner. .. Turn on the air conditioner...", Gabrielle pleaded. She lay on the floor, unwilling to get up.

The coldness of the floor was a welcome relief to her body. How else would she survive the effects of drinking so much of the tainted soup?

The heat emanating from her body threatened to drive her insane. Overwhelmed she softly muttered, "It's so terribly hot... I can't think straight." Gabrielle became aware that the cool comfort provided by the floor just moments earlier was waning and she thought that a cold shower would be the next

best thing. She managed somehow to stand on her feet but at the sight of Westley standing behind the door, she walked towards him instead. She seemed to have no control over her body and her legs instinctively propelled her to where he stood.

"Gabrielle, stay away from me!" The fire burning in Westley's body continued to rage, but when he saw that Gabrielle was walking towards him, his face turned cold.

"I... I feel horrible!" Gabrielle seemed oblivious to his pleas and planted herself firmly front of him, with a ravenous look across her face.

"Gabrielle, don't get close to me. Go take a bath if you feel uncomfortable." Westley struggled to retain his composure. Desire threatened to overcome him now that Gabrielle was so close; he felt his last ounce of self-control escape his body completely.

"What's the matter Westley?" she asked him, Gabrielle placed her slender hand on his chest with concern.

Through his unbuttoned shirt, Gabrielle could feel his heart racing under her touch. Right then she felt her own heart begin to beat faster as though it wanted to match his; beat for beat. 3

"Gabrielle, go away." Westley grabbed her

hand tightly and moved it away from his chest as though it was the cause of symptoms. He stared at her blankly.

"Ouch! That hurt." Gabrielle looked at him sadly.

She bit on her trembling lips and tried to hide her embarrassment. She tried to look away before he could see her eyes welling with tears. She couldn't decide if the pain in her hand hurt more than his blatant rejection of her.

After what seemed like an eternity, Westley finally let go of her hand. But as soon as he loosened his hand, Gabrielle pounced on him like an octopus, wrapped her body tightly around his and kissed him fiercely.

This was his breaking point. Westley turned around and pressed Gabrielle against the door, kissing her overbearingly.

'Gabrielle, you started this. You can't stop me now.' 4

Westley swiftly picked her up and made strides to the bed with her in his arms.

When the throngs of passion had subsided, Gabrielle drifted to sleep. Westley pulled the quilt over her, stood up and went out onto the balcony.

Neil was not surprised to see Westley, and looked at him beaming with joy.

"Mr. Morris, the cook is preparing some sweet soup. Shall I bring you a bowl?" Neil greeted him as if he knew nothing.

But Westley would not be deterred so easily and promptly probed him, "Neil, did you lock the door last night? Where is Grandma?" Westley was not hungry just yet, least of all for that dreadful sweet soup! The thing on his mind now, was to figure out what had happened last night.

Chapter 37 Wendy's Call

Neil was not the least bit surprised. Westley had said exactly what he expected him to say.

"Madam asked me to lock the door so I did. I won't object if you want to punish me. Just do it." Neil stood still and waited for Wesley to punish him.

Miley had been the mastermind behind this plan. Westley looked upon Neil, knowing he couldn't actually punish him.

"Neil, we will discuss it later. Where's grandma? Is she still asleep in my room?" Westley questioned. He had to come down from the balcony to enter the living room because his room was locked from outside.

"Madam went back half an hour ago," Neil said honestly.

"Do you mean grandma has gone back to her house?" Westley's face turned black.

It was clear that Miley did not want to take responsibility for everything that happened. 2

This wasn't going to work. Miley was getting increasingly more playful. 2

It appeared that she had planned everything

Chapter 37 Wendy Lau
that took place earlier

"Neil, did grandma ask you to make the soup?" Westley glanced at Neil.

Stunned, Neil gave a slight smile. "You are truly Mr. Morris. I cannot keep anything hidden from you. Indeed, Madam gave me the recipe for this soup. I was planning to prepare it for you and Mrs... Miss Jones. It seems that you don't need it anymore."

"Neil, you should burn that recipe. If this happens again, I think it would be best if you returned to the old house," Westley stated with a cold face.

Neil understood that Westley was furious, but he had been caught in a dilemma.

He had been a servant to the Morris for a long time. Miley had been the one to promote him. When Westley later started to live on his own, Miley had specifically asked Neil to look after him.

Because of this, Neil had felt closer to Miley. It made dealing with the two of them very difficult.

"I understand, Mr. Morris." Neil nodded.

It was better to listen to Westley as long as he was still living in the Vineyard Villa.

16:26

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"I'll go to the company later. Leave Gabrielle alone."

"Before you leave, Madam would like to tell you something." Neil retrieved a note from his pocket and handed it to Westley.

Westley's face darkened once more.

'Westley, every man in the Morris is indomitable. There are certain responsibilities that come with the marriage, especially after you two become a real couple.

I want to have a great grandchild as soon as possible. Westley, give it your best efforts.

Gabrielle is a good girl. Do not continue to bully her.'

Westley crumpled the note into a ball and threw it into the trash can.

How could she tell him to give her a great grandson? He did not want to have a child with Gabrielle. ①

Besides, Miley had been a great grandmother for years already. Westley's brother's child was nearly three years old.

She did not need to ask him for more.

Gabrielle had slept deeply. When she woke

"Miss Jones, are you sleeping well? Dinner is ready for you if you are hungry."

"Okay, I'll come down to eat a little later." Gabrielle was hungry. It was already 10 o'clock in the evening. The incident at noon had consumed so much energy and left her ravenous.

"Okay."

Gabrielle dressed quickly and slowly made her way downstairs, only to find that Westley was nowhere to be seen.

Gabrielle couldn't stop herself from asking Neil as he set the table for her dinner. "Neil, where is Westley?"

"He went to the company this afternoon," Neil replied honestly.

Westley drove to the company in the afternoon after meeting with Neil.

"Has he not come back yet?" It was already so late. Did Westley have to work overtime until the morning?

"He did not mention anything so I don't know. I have no right to ask about his private affairs. If you would like to know when Mr. Morris will return, it would be better to ask him yourself," Neil suggested.

Surprised, she shook her head and refused. "No, thanks. He would be unhappy if I were to call him. When did grandma go back?"

"She returned this afternoon."

After finishing her meal, she went back to her room and called Wendy.

She wanted to leave Westley as soon as possible. If he continued to torture her like he had this afternoon, she was afraid that she would eventually lose her life.

'Where on earth does Bryce go?'

"Gabrielle, it's so late. Didn't you go to sleep? What happened?" Wendy asked with concern.

Had the incident with the Jones family never happened, Gabrielle would think that Wendy truly cared about her.

But if it were the case, Wendy shouldn't have drugged her adopted daughter and forced her to sleep with a man.

Although Gabrielle could never trust Wendy as she had before, she also could not forget how she raised her for twenty years. She was also Bryce's mother.

"Mom, I need to know. Do you know where my brother is?" Gabrielle asked directly.

Wendy remained silent for a few seconds. "Gabrielle, I understand that you are in a hurry but you know as well as I that looking for a person abroad is like searching for a needle in the sea. Your father and I have already sent multiple people to look for him. We can't afford to offend Westley. We are doing everything possible to find him. Give us time."

Oh, they couldn't afford to offend Westley.

It was really quite ironic. She knew that Westley was not to be trifled with. The fact was that Bryce had taken Westley's fiancée away, and Wendy had drugged him and forced him to have sex with Gabrielle? Westley had been terribly offended!

"I know, mom. I'll go to bed now." Gabrielle immediately hung up the phone.

She had been sleeping the whole afternoon. Now she couldn't fall asleep at all. She logged on to WeChat and saw Sloane had made a new post.

It was a picture of barbecue. Obviously, she was barbecuing. A message from Sloane came in.

"Pretty girl, do you have time to have a barbecue?"

Chapter 38 Feeling Sorry For Her

Gabrielle and Sloane were frequent customers of the Best Flavor Barbecue restaurant situated on the Maple Road in the ancient part of town.

Immediately she saw Sloane's picture on WeChat Moments, she knew where Sloane was.

Since Westley wasn't home, Gabrielle told Neil she was going to see her friend and called the driver.

"Gabrielle, come here. Glad to meet you!" Sloane waved at her. ②

Gabrielle dashed over to Sloane, only to find out she wasn't alone.

"Lance, why are you here?" Gabrielle was shocked when she saw him.

Lance grinned as he saw her stunned. "I was close by when I saw Sloane's WeChat Moments. Aren't you glad to see me?"

His comments made Gabrielle laugh. "How can I deny you, Lance? It would be more fun to have barbecue with more friends."

"As I previously said, Gabrielle is more delighted to see you than I am." Sloane

sipped her beer and poured a glass for Gabrielle.

"Sloane, I will pass on beer today." The prospect of drinking beer terrified Gabrielle. She remembered how heavily she had drunk during lunch.

"Gabrielle, you have always fancied beer with barbecue. Are you sure you don't want to drink today?" Sloane stared at her, puzzled as to what had happened to her.

Since she married Westley, she had been a very different person.

"I will pass on alcohol; I had too much of it at noon, and it makes me feel sick. I would rather eat." Gabrielle nibbled on a roasted beef.

"Are you all right, Gabrielle? I don't believe you're in a good mood. You seem to be exhausted. Is Westley bothering you?" Sloane felt sorry for her.

'Is Westley a devil? Does bullying Gabrielle satisfy him?' she thought to herself.

Lance was filling Gabrielle's glass with water. When he realized what Sloane said, the expression on his face changed. He was furious as he remembered what happened in the Jones family residence that afternoon. He recalled Gabrielle's allergy to seafood and

how Westley, on the other hand, not only made her peel shrimps, but made her eat them.

As he remembered, Lance wished he had beaten Westley.

"Is Westley being unkind to you, Gabrielle? Is he constantly bullying you?" Lance seemed to be concerned.

Gabrielle took a sip from the cup while acting unperturbed. "I was not bullied by Westley, Lance. He is always occupied with work. He can't really have time to bully me."

Lance could tell Gabrielle was lying. He was certain Westley was maltreating her.

"How did you feel the other day?" Lance inquired about the shrimp she ate during their visit to the Jones.

After the incident, he had wanted to see Gabrielle, but Wendy didn't allow that.

"I'm alright. I vomited the shrimp I ate. The anti-inflammatory medication was effective, I felt a lot better after I took the drug. I apologize for troubling you, Lance." Gabrielle sipped more water to mask her guilt. 4

Eating shrimps was a minor inconvenience compared to the sex she had with Westley that day.

"Gabrielle, don't say that. I'm glad you are okay,"

Lance said as he put some food on her plate.

"Westley asked you to eat shrimps, Gabrielle. Are you sure he's okay? Isn't he aware you are allergic to seafood, and you will die if the allergy gets serious? He's a serial killer!" Sloane was enraged as soon as she heard that. ⑩

Gabrielle had almost died after eating seafood by accident, and they were both aware of this. They were aware of the danger of eating what one was allergic to; it was more like eating poison. ②

"Don't get too worked up, Sloane. Westley had no idea I was allergic to seafood that day. He would not have coerced me to eat shrimps if he had known." Gabrielle had no intention of defending Westley. She was just trying to be honest.

Having realized her allergy to seafood, Westley told Neil to take all the seafood dishes off the table.

Despite his blunt language, Gabrielle still believed he cared for her.

"Whatever, he was wrong, and you shouldn't have defended him in the first place. You

would be tortured every day if Nellie didn't return. What is the current state of the Jones? Has the Jones discovered any information about Bryce's whereabouts? You're the most naïve of them all. It would be best if you hadn't been entangled in their issues, but you've been made the scapegoat. Why do you have to go through all of this?" Sloane felt bad for Gabrielle.

"What's wrong, Gabrielle? Could you provide me with more information?" Lance was very concerned.

He had just returned from a month-long trip abroad. Gabrielle's marriage surprised him as soon as he returned home. He couldn't believe what he heard. The truth was hard to swallow.

"Nothing happened, Lance." Gabrielle didn't feel comfortable telling Lance such a humiliating secret, but she knew the secret would eventually come out.

"Gabrielle, you shouldn't be hiding anything from Lance. If you don't have the courage to tell him, I'll do it for you." Sloane could no longer take it. Gabrielle was the most innocent girl among them, and she was the one who have suffered the most. It was completely unjust.

"Don't tell Lance, Sloane." Gabrielle was not happy.

"Gabrielle, I don't care if you are angry; I'm going to tell Lance. He might be able to help." Sloane was unable to assist Gabrielle, but Lance could be able to.

Sloane had decided; she had considered asking her brother Benny to assist Gabrielle if she had no other options.

"Sloane, tell me what's wrong with Gabrielle?" Lance fixed his gaze on Sloane.

This time, Gabrielle did not intrude. Sloane was adamant to tell Lance everything anyway, and she wouldn't be able to stop her from talking for the rest of her life if she tried to stop her now.

Sloane was right. Perhaps she should ask Lance to track down Bryce.

The Carter did not have the same influence as the Carter did.

"When Bryce absconded with Westley's fiancée, Nellie, Westley married Gabrielle and vowed to return Gabrielle as soon as the Jones returned Bryce and Nellie to him. But it was unfair to Gabrielle. She had no clue what was going on, but she was the one who had to bear the brunt of the consequences. Westley is maltreating her. When Nellie comes back, Westley will divorce Gabrielle, 'Gabrielle behind. What should we do?"

Sloane quickly summarized the whole story to Lance.

Lance learned Gabrielle had been pressured into marrying Westley.

"Why did you keep this from me, Gabrielle? You shouldn't have married Westley in the first place. You don't deserve this." Lance was remorseful and felt genuinely concerned for her well-being.

Chapter 39 Something More To This Whole Brotherly Care

Gabrielle felt the overflowing concern that coated Lance's words. She knew that he cared about her very much, and although it moved her, she did not want him to worry.

This matter was only between the Jones and the Morris. It seemed unfair to entangle him in this charade. 3

"Mom is right, Lance. She asked me to get married, so they could gain more time to look for my brother. Otherwise, our family will be in ruins. Westley does have a formidable temper, you know. The Jones raised me, after all, so I don't want that to happen," Gabrielle replied calmly.

More importantly, she was willing to marry someone whom she did not like for the sake of Bryce. Even if she got bullied every day, she could hold down the fort and wait for him to come back.

Yes, she was silly; she silently berated herself.

Lance let out an exasperated laugh. He knew what she was thinking and that she was only pretending to be clueless.

"Gabrielle, I think the Jones wants you to

catch all the blame and not look for Bryce! They do not have the time and patience to look for him. How many days has it been, yet there is no news at all. It is clear as day that they want you to marry Westley!" Sloane muttered discontentedly.

Gabrielle's earlier calm left her, and the smile on her face froze. She wanted to refute, but what Sloane said was almost the same as what she thought now. 6

Wendy had contrived for her to marry Westley and even drugged her.

It was enough proof to strengthen Gabrielle's hunch that they had no plans to look for Bryce and Nellie.

"Is that true? Did aunt frame you to marry Westley?" Lance looked at Gabrielle closely, finding for any inch of clue.

A trace of panic flickered in Gabrielle's eyes. She quickly defended, "No, don't listen to Sloane. She is merely exaggerating! Everyone in the family is trying their best to find Bryce."
"

"Who's exaggerating? Your parents want you to marry Westley and Bryce to Nellie. If that happens, then the Jones, the Morris, and the Collins will become related by marriage! Of course, the biggest beneficiary will be the Jones. Don't you see that it is one enormous

trick devised by your parents so as not to offend both the Morris and the Collins?" Sloane fervidly explained.

She had been in a rich and powerful family for many years, so she was pretty clear about how devious rich ladies could be.

They could do anything absurd to scale their family's interests and reputations — precisely what Wendy was doing.

She wanted to seize Westley with one hand and hold Nellie with the other, pleasing those two affluent families in the process. But she could also offend them in the end!

The Collins alone was not easy to deal with, but Wendy was overly presumptuous to involve the Morris, too. 'Had she forgotten the very sound of Westley's name?' Sloane wondered.

"Sloane, it's not as bad as you said..."

"Are you planning on staying married to Westley?" Sloane's brows knitted, directing all her frustration to Gabrielle.

Gabrielle flinched and, for the first few moments, was rendered speechless. When she reminded herself that Sloane was sitting across from her, waiting for answers, she quickly shook her head and said, "I have no plans."

Gabrielle glanced at his face and meekly asked, "Will you really help me find my brother?" Lance detected the faint glimmer of hope in her voice.

"I will try my best to find him. If I fail, I will help you leave Westley. Will you cooperate with me when that time comes?"

"Why are you hesitating? He is ready to help you find Bryce and leave Westley. Just say yes!" Seeing that Gabrielle was uncertain, Sloane interjected, urging her to agree.

"Gabrielle, I will do my best not to disappoint you. That is if you are willing. I promise I won't make things difficult for you."

She was the apple of Lance's eye, and he would never force her to do anything without her permission.

"Of course, I am willing. I hope you can help me find my brother as soon as possible. As I cannot wait for that to happen, let us drink a toast to your good luck!"

She picked the bottle again and proposed a toast to Lance. 4

Reclaiming the luck machine was not easy, but the mere thought of Westley made Gabrielle want to flee as far as she could.

"I will help you achieve whatever you want,"

Lance echoed as he raised his cup and gently clinked with her. ①

"Thank you, Lance." Gabrielle looked at him gratefully.

"No need to thank me; it's me who wants to help you." He shrugged nonchalantly.

"You sure are lucky to have such a kind cousin." Sloane pouted in envy.

They both had an unreliable brother, but at least Gabrielle had a cousin who watched over her.

"My cousin is also your cousin." Gabrielle smiled at Sloane, her inexplicable sad mood starting to lift.

"That's not true. How could Lance be my cousin?" Sloane denied, not wanting to impose herself.

Besides, Sloane always had an inkling that there was something more to this whole brotherly care Lance had for Gabrielle than meets the eye. She was hoping, though, that she was only over-scrutinizing things. ②

The three drank beers one after another. Unbeknownst to them, Gabrielle had already drunk too much. ③

Chapter 40 They Are The Real Couple

A black Cayenne passed by and stopped. Sitting in the back seat, Westley frowned as he looked at Gabrielle, who was sitting in a stall across the road, drinking a glass of beer. She was draped across the man sitting next to her and from the looks of it, she seemed drunk.

She must have drunk too little during the day for her to go drinking at the stall in the middle of the night. And to think he had been worried that she was fed up with the way he had treated her earlier in the day. The woman he was seeing here looked happy and not tired as he had feared.

Westley recognized the man whose arms were around Gabrielle's shoulder. It was Lance from the Carter. Lance had been hostile to him during their stay in the Jones' house and now he understood why.

It was quite obvious that Lance had feelings for Gabrielle.

"Mr. Morris, is that... Miss Jones?" Alvin said to Westley in disbelief, his gaze still trained on the spectacle in the stall. He didn't even dare to turn around and look at the man he was asking. And he had his reasons. As soon

as Westley had told him to stop the car, Alvin had clearly felt the temperature in the car drop, chilling him to his marrow.

Of course, Westley had told Alvin to stop the car because he had recognized Gabrielle.

He was certainly displeased to see Gabrielle being held intimately by another man, irrespective of the fact that she was obviously drunk.

"Mr. Morris, do you want me to go and...?"

Before Alvin could even finish, Westley had already opened the door of the car and was heading towards the stall, determination clearly written all over his body.

"Well, I want more drink. I am not drunk yet. Westley is a devil, a bastard..."

With her head on Lance's shoulder, Gabrielle alternated between drinking and cursing Westley. She was clearly in a bad mood.

Westley, who by then was almost close to them, clearly heard all the venom directed at him. He wasn't surprised to discover that Gabrielle thought badly of him.

"Gabrielle, you shouldn't drink so much. You are drunk."

Lance tried to grab her glass from her hand.

"Well, I don't feel drunk yet...

"I still want more drink," came the reply.
"Westley is so mean," Gabrielle continued.
"He never allows me do anything. He treats me like trash and cannot even hide his disdain for me. I know he doesn't like me and I feel the same way too. Who would even want to marry him? Certainly not me! I don't want him at all..." 2

"Gabrielle! Gabrielle!"

Sloane, who had been silently sitting opposite Gabrielle, furiously whispered. She had also been drinking and was now tipsy. Upon raising her hand to take another swig from her glass, she had glimpsed Westley walking towards them. She had been so frightened that she dropped her barbecue to point at him.

His sudden appearance at such an odd hour made her believe he was truly the devil.

It was just horrible.

Gabrielle and Lance could not see Westley because their backs were turned away from him. The only signal that something was wrong was the sudden chill they felt.

"Sloane, what's wrong? Why...
you look like you have seen a ghost?"

Gabrielle asked with concern.

Sloane immediately sobered up and tried to tell Gabrielle that Westley was standing behind her without giving too much away. To her, he looked like a ghost. No, even worse than that, he looked like the devil.

"G...Gabrielle, West...Westley..."

Sloane was too drunk to speak clearly.

"Westley, he is
like a ghost..."

Well, he's not only a ghost. He is also the king of ghosts." ①

"The king?"

Gabrielle,"

Westley's cold voice called from behind before Gabrielle could answer.

"Yes, Sloane, the king of ghosts," she replied without thinking.

Then without warning, someone snatched Gabrielle's glass from her hand and smashed it on the ground.

This caused Gabrielle to sober up rather quickly. With a feeling of dread, she stood up and stared at the man standing behind her.

'I had thought you would rest in bed, by now?'

Westley's words stung Lance's heart.

Did it mean that he and Gabrielle were truly a couple?

"I just went out for drinks with Lance and Sloane. Lance is my cousin. Surely, you must have seen him during the dinner we had at the Jones family's house. Am I now forbidden from spending time with my cousin?" Gabrielle quickly explained. She was scared seeing Westley like this, and even more terrified that he would vent his anger on Lance.

"Lance, can you clearly hear that?" Westley said in a voice as cold as ice.

Lance understood what he was implying.

Since Gabrielle had introduced him as her cousin, he would have to let go of her. Not willing to put her in any more danger, he slowly removed his hand from her waist.

"Westley, Gabrielle has never betrayed your trust or done anything to wrong you. I hope you can reciprocate her loyalty by treating her better," Lance calmly said as he looked boldly at Westley.

From the way Gabrielle trembled in his presence, it was clear that Westley maltreated her.

And this knowledge broke Lance's heart.

It also made him hate Bryce with a ferocity he had never experienced before. Bryce had eloped with Westley's fiancée, forcing Gabrielle to marry the devil as a substitute.

He planned on teaching Bryce a lesson the next time he saw him.

"Lance, this does not concern you. You may be Gabrielle's cousin, but still, you have no right to pry into our affairs. What happens between me and Gabrielle is private," Westley intoned in his characteristic cold manner. He wanted to make it explicitly clear to Lance that he would not tolerate the presence of a third party in his affairs.

"What do you mean, Westley?" By this time, Lance was furious. Was Westley trying to keep him away from Gabrielle?

"Gabrielle, enter the car so we can go home," Westley said, ignoring Lance outright. 2