

None of the film crew liked Shandie.

She had brought this upon herself.

Still, if they had kicked the female lead out, who will take over her place?

Both Jerry and Sam were caught in a dilemma.

The female lead of the movie was a young girl in her twenties who had just graduated from the police academy. Most of the experienced actresses in the entertainment industry were in their thirties.

Nowadays, it was rare for veteran actresses to take up young roles, so the crew had initially auditioned actresses in their twenties. After the news of Shandie being accepted for the role using her connections went viral in the industry, no one would want to replace her.

The film had begun shooting. It was hard to get a suitable replacement whose schedule was empty on such short notice even if they used Sam's name.

Right then, a face that resembled the original character in the comic popped up in Sam's mind.

His eyes lit up. "I have someone in mind!"

He dashed out of the set immediately.

"Hey, Mr. Sleight! Who are you talking about?"  
Jerry ran out after him.

That was the first time he had ever seen Sam sprinting this quickly.

Outside, Arielle was about to get into Vinson's car when Shandie's voice rang out from behind. "Arielle! Wait up!"

When Arielle's head jerked around subconsciously, she saw Shandie sobbing sadly. "Arielle, it was all my fault. Can you please tell Mr. Nightshire not to pin the blame on our family?"

Arielle scanned Shandie carefully and realized the latter's gaze was full of hatred though tears were streaming out of her eyes.

Snickering inwardly, she thought, *Look at how bad her acting skills are. She isn't fit to be the female lead.*

Putting on a helpless expression, she uttered, "It's not that I don't want to help you. Mr. Nightshire won't change his mind easily. You can get mad at me, but why did you throw his name card onto the ground right in front of him? Also, I wanted to give this name card to Dad. How could you take it away from me?"

"You—" Shandie was at a loss for words. Her heart was simmering in resentment, but she couldn't vent her frustrations right now.

At this point, she had no choice but to bow down to Arielle.

She was prepared to get on her knees to beg for

Arielle's help when someone rushed past her.

She blinked twice and saw Sam standing in front of them, panting heavily. The director seemed like he wanted to say something, but couldn't do so as he was short of breath. Hence, he bent down slightly and took deep breaths.

*Huh? What is he doing? Oh, has he regretted kicking me out? Is he here to beg me to resume shooting?*

*The most important thing right now is to resume shooting. If I'm still the female lead, Henrick might forgive me this once.*

*I'll become a popular celebrity after the film's release. By then, I can earn more than the profit that my family is set to earn from the deal they struck up with Nightshire Group.*

*Ha! I don't have to beg for Arielle's help, then!*

Shandie grew increasingly excited. As Sam was rude to her earlier, she decided to insult him before agreeing to return. *I must make him beg for my return!*

Ignoring Arielle, she turned to Sam and announced arrogantly, "Look at how anxious you are. You're only realizing your mistake now? Let me warn you. I won't agree to return easily! You need to visit my house and apologize sincerely before I agree to forgive you and resume shooting. Besides that, everyone on the film crew needs to listen to my instructions, get it?"

Shandie was all cocky now. She would've lifted her tail haughtily if she had one.

Sam shot her a look full of disbelief as his lips twitched. "What are you talking about?"

Shandie furrowed her brows. "I'm talking about the future arrangements! If you want me to return, please show me your sincerity!"

"Ha!" Sam sniggered. He glanced at Arielle before looking at Shandie. "You're wrong."

Shandie was dumbstruck.

Without hesitation, Sam ignored Shandie and went to Arielle. "Miss, do you have any acting experience?"

Shandie was speechless once again.

*Why is Sam posing that question to Arielle?*

A strong sense of foreboding nagged at her.

Arielle's puzzled voice rang out. "No. Why?"

Sam hesitated before blurting out, "Miss, you resemble the original character in the comic that was adapted to our film. I was wondering if you're interested in taking up the female lead role of our film?"

Shandie's eyes widened in shock.

*Wait. Sam isn't here for me. He wants Arielle to*

*replace me? So I said those words for nothing?*

At once, Shandie felt her cheeks burning up in embarrassment.

Humiliation, fury, and chagrin overwhelmed her.

She couldn't stop herself from shooting daggers at Arielle and Sam.

*I can't let Arielle steal the spotlight from me again and again. She must disappear right now!*

Shandie kept her resentment in check as she glared at them both for one last time before stalking away.

As Shandie left without warning, Arielle narrowed her gaze.

After a brief silence, she gazed at Sam and rejected his offer. "Thank you for your offer, but I'm not interested in joining the entertainment industry."

"Well..." Sam didn't expect that she'd reject his offer. He immediately tried to convince her. "I've been working on this film for a few years. Please consider my offer. We have an excellent film crew and production team. If you can act well, you'll definitely bag the Best Actress Award next year. I guarantee you'll propel to stardom!"

Arielle remained unfazed while she shook her head. "I'm sorry, but I'm not interested, and I don't have time for this. Thank you for the offer, though."

She gave Sam a wave before entering the car.

Vinson had overheard the entire exchange in the car. He turned to Arielle and inquired, "This film has potential. I think it will be a hit, so you should consider his offer."

Arielle shook her head without hesitation. "I'm busy with something else."

Vinson's gaze darkened. Confusion flitted across his face as he blurted out curiously, "Actually, I've been wanting to ask you some questions."

Arielle met his gaze. "What is it?"

Vinson paused for a moment before asking, "Who are you?"

Arielle was taken aback, but Vinson continued, "You're one of the Southalls, but we first met on an uninhabited island. To be honest, I ran a background check on you and found out you grew up in the countryside. I don't believe that, though. Who are you? And why did you return to the Southalls?"



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Arielle lowered her gaze silently. Vinson couldn't tell what was on her mind because her eyes weren't visible to him.

Just when Vinson thought he wouldn't get an answer, she suddenly looked up. "Revenge."

"Huh?" Vinson thought he was hearing things.

Arielle stared at the landscape outside and revealed, "I came back to take revenge for my mother."

"Revenge?" Vinson was astonished. He immediately realized who she was talking about. "Oh, you mean Mrs. Southall... No, Ms. Moore. Rumor has it that your mom committed suicide because she suffered from depression. You don't think she killed herself?"

"Of course not!" Arielle stated firmly. "I don't remember my childhood clearly, but there are snippets I remember. There are clues to prove my mom didn't commit suicide. For example, the moment she died, the Moore family became the Southall family. Also, I couldn't find any traces of my mom in that house. I'm pretty sure she was murdered instead."

Vinson's gaze grew dark. "Who do you suspect? Your dad?"

Arielle nodded before shaking her head. "I'm not sure. It's either him or Aunt Cindy. Perhaps they both did it together. I'm still investigating the matter. When the truth is revealed, I shall make

sure the culprit gets punished!"

Vinson inclined his head. "No wonder you said you're busy. If you discover your dad was the culprit, what will you do?"

"I'll make sure he gets what he deserves," came Arielle's calm reply.

She wouldn't let him off easily!

"Got it." Vinson stared at her. "If you need my help, just let me know. You don't have my name card, but you have my number. Just give me a call."

Arielle lowered her gaze. "Thank you."

Strangely, Vinson's words gave her a sense of security.

Before she realized it, he had become her pillar of strength and support.

Vinson inquired, "By the way, do you want me to call off the collaboration between my company and Southall Group?"

Arielle stiffened. "Didn't you say you'll call it off?"

"It depends on you," Vinson responded, his gaze tender.

Warmth spread in Arielle's heart as she told him, "Go ahead and call it off. Shandie's too annoying, so I want her to shut up for now."



"Got it," answered Vinson with a nod. "If you want me to resume the collaboration, just call me."

Arielle suddenly had an urge to spill everything out, but she only managed a curt, "Thank you."

Vinson pretended to touch his ears impatiently. "I told you that you don't have to thank me."

Arielle couldn't stop herself from giggling.

The reason she returned to the country was to find out the truth and avenge her mom before restoring the Moores' former glory.

Before she achieved her goals, she wasn't thinking of extending her social circle lest her friends got implicated.

Right then, it suddenly occurred to her that it would be nice to have a friend like Vinson.

Soon, they arrived at the Southall residence.

Arielle got off at the foot of the hill lest someone else grew suspicious.

Vinson gave her one last look and parted his lips to say, "Do you remember my suggestion? You should run a DNA test if possible. If you find it uncomfortable to do it at other hospitals, you can ask for my help."

He made a gesture for her to give him a call.

Arielle inclined her head before closing the door.

"Mom! I can't take it any longer. I want Arielle to move out now and disappear from my sight! I never want to see her again!" she declared the moment she stepped into the house.

Cindy was busy dealing with her secret overseas slush fund, so she replied impatiently, "I know you don't like her. Do you think I like her? I told you we need to wait for an opportunity to make her slip."

It didn't matter whether Arielle grew up in the countryside or not, for she was just a young girl in her twenties.

Arielle was young, so it was pretty easy for her to commit a mistake, especially when it concerned her love life.

Cindy was already busy finding the perfect candidate to seduce Arielle.

Right then, she was irritated by how Shandie was kicking up a fuss.

*If Shandie was half as clever as Arielle, I wouldn't have to do so much.*

As Cindy ignored her, Shandie grew increasingly antsy.

"Mom, it can't wait! If this goes on, we shall be the ones who get kicked out!"

Cindy continued typing furiously on the keyboard and replied without looking up, "Don't worry. You'll be fine as long as you shoot your film obediently."

Stop provoking Arielle behind my back."

Shandie bit her lips as her face turned ashen.

She had no idea how to inform Cindy about the earlier incident at the film set.

Shandie's sudden silence had Cindy feeling puzzled. The latter looked at her daughter quizzically. It suddenly occurred to her that Shandie should be on the film set instead of at home.

She shut her laptop and asked, "Why are you home at this hour? Are you done for the day?"

In response, Shandie stuttered, "Uh, something happened at the film set. I... Uh, they said..."

Cindy's scowl deepened. She knew her daughter well enough to know that something had happened.

"What on earth happened!" she demanded sternly.

Shocked by Cindy's expression, Shandie's eyes reddened as she explained hastily, "Arielle took the female lead role away from me. I can't resume shooting, and I also have to compensate them one hundred million for breaching the contract. Mom, I need your help!"

Cindy's eyes widened in shock.

"What did you say? She took away your role, and you have to compensate one hundred million for

breaching the contract?"

Shandie nodded profusely. "Yes, she brought Mr. Nightshire to the set to insult me! Mom, I can't take it anymore. You need to help me. That country bumpkin bullies me! After what her mom did to you, are you going to let her daughter bully me?"

"Shut up!" Cindy slammed the table in fury.

She had lost it at the mention of Maureen.

Her eyes reddened while her face contorted in anger.

Shandie knew her mom would lose it when she mentioned Maureen, but she had no idea it would be such an intense reaction. Her body was shuddering in fear, but deep down, she was pleased by Cindy's reaction.

*Mom has been living peacefully for too long. I need to provoke her so she regains her senses.*

"Where is Arielle?" Cindy choked out.

*Shandie's right. Maureen has always been above me. Even though she's dead, the ladies in Jadeborough have always compared us in secret. I can't let her daughter bully my daughter. No way!*

Chapter 96



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Shandie answered, "She entered Mr. Nightshire's car, so I don't know where she is."

Right then, the housekeeper knocked at the door. "Mrs. Southall, Ms. Shandie, Mr. Southall is back. He wants to see both of you downstairs."

When Shandie heard that Henrick's back, her whole body trembled in dread.

She tugged at Cindy's clothes instinctively. "Mom, what should I do? Dad's going to punish me."

Cindy didn't even flinch and replied calmly, "That's good news. Since Arielle bullied you, I shall inform your dad. He won't let this slide! Don't worry. Your dad adores you more than Arielle as you grew up by his side."

Cindy turned on her heels to leave.

Shandie was flustered, for she had pushed the blame onto Arielle out of fear. She didn't even tell her mom that Vinson had called off the collaboration with Southall Group.

*Shit, Dad's back. How should I explain?*

She was sweating profusely when the housekeeper urged, "Ms. Shandie, you should head downstairs now. Mr. Southall wants to talk to you."

"I'm not deaf. Stop being annoying!" Shandie gave the housekeeper a menacing glare and pushed her away before stalking down the stairs.

*Fine. I shall head downstairs. Mom will deal with it. I don't think Dad will disown me just because of one contract.*

Shandie caught up to Cindy and appeared relaxed.

Downstairs, Arielle had just arrived when she saw Henrick storming in furiously.

She immediately knew Nightshire Group had informed Henrick about the revocation of their deal.

Pretending not to know anything, she went to him with a concerned expression on her face. "Dad, what happened? Why are you so upset?"

Henrick furrowed his brows and snapped, "It's none of your business. Is Shandie back? I want to see her and her mom now!"

Arielle shot the housekeeper an uneasy look, so the latter immediately scurried upstairs to summon Shandie and Cindy.

Soon, they both walked down the stairs.

When Cindy spotted Arielle, she immediately averted her gaze and gave Henrick a warm smile. "Dear, why are you back at this hour? Are you suffering from a headache because you drank too much last night?"

"The nerve of you!" Henrick barked out angrily and pointed at Shandie. "Ask your daughter how she offended Mr. Nightshire! He called off the deal

with our company out of anger!"

Cindy's lips parted in shock as she had no idea about this.

Her astonished gaze landed on Shandie, who cowered back in fear. "I know nothing. D-Dad, is this a misunderstanding?"

"Misunderstanding?" Henrick raised his phone. "I had just returned from work when Nightshire Group called me. The person in charge told me you offended Mr. Nightshire, so they are canceling all collaborations with us! Tell me. What happened?"

Cindy's shock heightened when she heard what Henrick had said.

Clenching her fists, she demanded, "Shannie, what happened? Did you upset Mr. Nightshire?"

"No! Of course not!" A terrified Shandie denied instantly.

She had already calmed down before getting downstairs. Now, upon seeing how furious Henrick was, she couldn't stop her legs from trembling.

"Hmm? Are you telling the truth?" Strangely, Henrick calmed down after venting out his anger. He took a deep breath before uttering with an indecipherable expression, "Explain what happened today in detail."





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Cindy didn't think much about it as she thought Arielle was trying to sow discord among them. Gently, she urged, "It's alright, Shannie. Tell the truth. Was it Arielle who got you into trouble?"

Shandie hung her head low silently.

She wanted to pin the blame onto Arielle with her mom, but her lies could be debunked easily. Hence, she dared not utter a word.

Cindy thought Shandie was afraid of Henrick, so she turned to Henrick and said, "Dear, I know you're protective of Arielle. However, this has nothing to do with Shannie. Earlier, Shannie came home and told me that Arielle brought Mr. Nightshire to the set to take away the lead role from her. I believe Arielle must've said something for him to call off the deal."

She then turned to Arielle and declared frostily, "Arielle, I can't believe you're so evil! Never mind if you hate your sister and took the lead role from her. Why are you doing this to our company? What evil plans are you hatching?"

Henrick felt his head throbbing. Still, the slightest trace of sanity that remained told him the usually obedient Arielle wouldn't do something this horrible.

Holding back his fury, he demanded, "Is this related to you?"

Arielle shot Cindy a taunting glance before replying, "Dad, I have no idea Aunt Cindy hates me

that much to suspect that I'm involved in this. I didn't want to reveal the truth, but since she tried to pin the blame on me, I have no choice but to reveal everything."

Her demeanor was cool.

Hearing her words, Cindy began to panic.

Arielle raised her chin and revealed, "It all started with Mr. Nightshire's name card. I'm the ambassador of Soir Coffee, so he gave me his name card. I wanted to give it to you, Dad, but it disappeared after I went out."

"What?" Henrick hissed. "That name card is extremely important. Why didn't you keep it well?"

Arielle didn't bother beating around the bush. "Because Shandie took the name card without telling me and even used it to gain her lead role—"

"Shut up!" Shandie shrieked, unable to stand the humiliation.

Henrick glared at her and barked out, "You should shut up! Let her continue!"

Shandie dared not go against him.

Hence, Arielle explained how Shandie used the name card to get the lead role. After Vinson found out the truth, he brought Arielle to the set and revealed everything. In the end, the film crew kicked Shandie out.

At this, Arielle exhaled sharply. "After losing her lead role, Shandie flung Mr. Nightshire's name card onto the ground in anger. Mr. Nightshire was terribly upset and announced he'd call off all collaborations with our family. On the way back home, I tried to persuade him to change his mind to no avail," she lamented and gave Shandie an exasperated glare.

Shandie burst out angrily, "Liar! I bet you didn't even try to persuade Mr. Nightshire to change his mind!"

Arielle shook her head sadly. "Shannie, why are you still blaming me? Don't you know your mistake? We are all family. Why would I risk Dad's company just to get back at you?"



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