

## Chapter 91 Caught Stealing Food

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Alice never would have expected Jack to lose his temper so suddenly. With wide eyes and a pale face, she turned to Caroline and said, "Mom, how could Dad..."

Caroline sprung to her feet and pulled Alice closer to her. She said gently to her daughter, "Rachel humiliated him. He was already in a bad mood when he got home and you continuously asking questions only made him worse. I don't blame him for losing his temper."

"But... But I don't want to kowtow to that bitch Elisa's tomb. I don't see why I should."

For a moment, Caroline's eyes darkened dangerously. But she quickly took a deep breath, calmed herself down and said in a level voice, "Alice, listen to me carefully. We have to do it."

"Mom?" Alice said in confusion.

"Why are you still afraid of a woman who's been dead for 24 years already?" Caroline said. "We're going to sweep the tomb anyway, but no one has to know whether we kowtowed or not. We can just go through the motions to keep the peace. Right now, the most important thing is getting you back to the Sullivan Group as soon as possible. Otherwise when Rachel has already hooked up with Victor, it might already be too late to put our plan into action."

Alice listened carefully to Caroline. When she'd finished explaining her reasoning, Alice pursed her lips, hesitated, then nodded.

The following day, Jack, Caroline and Alice all set out to the cemetery in the suburbs where Elisa was buried.

Once the fancy BMW had eased to a stop in the parking lot, Alice opened her door and got out. She was followed closely by Caroline, with whom she linked arms. She looked around the cemetery with a faint hint of disgust on her face.

This was the first time she'd been here since Elisa had died.

Coming here wasn't her idea of how she wanted to spend her day, but if she wanted to get back in with the Sullivan Group, she was just going to have to swallow her pride and deal with it. She glanced at Caroline out of the corner of her eye and then said in surprise, "Mom, why are you so pale?"

Caroline reached up with her free hand and touched her face. She forced a smile. "Am I really?"

Caroline had been feeling uncomfortable from the moment they'd entered the cemetery. It was like someone had run their icy fingers down her spine, causing her to break out in a cold sweat and filling her with a feeling of dread. Every time she'd blinked, she'd seen Elisa's face behind her eyelids. Elisa had been dead for the past 24 years, but Caroline was still haunted by her.

Alice narrowed her eyes and looked at Caroline suspiciously.

Caroline looked away, refusing to meet her gaze. "Alright, let's go find Elisa's tomb."

"Okay," Alice answered.

It took the three of them a long while to find Elisa's tomb. Jack wasn't much help in searching for it either; he hadn't been to visit the cemetery for quite some time. When they did eventually find it, it was exactly how they remembered it to be. At the head of the tomb was rectangular, marble headstone with the words, "Here Lies Elisa Bennet" engraved on it. The black and white photo of Elisa in the upper right corner of the headstone showed her smiling charmingly down at them, her gentle eyes almost seeming to be alive. Elisa had always been elegant and delicate. The photo had captured that aspect of her very well. When she'd been alive, she'd had the most even temper and civil manners. It wasn't hard to see that she was the daughter of one of the most famous female socialites.

"That's strange. I wonder who else comes here aside from us," Alice muttered when she noticed the bouquet of lilies in front of the tombstone.

Caroline was just as surprised as her daughter. She had thought they'd arrive here to find Elisa's tombstone covered in weeds and dirt. But it was clean, well kept, and the lilies had obviously been left here not too long ago. She turned her puzzled gaze to Jack, only to see he looked just as confused as she did.

"Mr. and Mrs. Jenkins, you're here." Andy suddenly appeared near them. He was dressed in a decent black suit, looking neat and presentable. He'd just so happened to have heard Alice's question. "The flowers are from me. Lilies were Mrs. Bennet's favorite."

His eyes glossed over them, down to their empty hands. They'd brought nothing.

Alice frowned. "What are you doing here?" she said irritably.

"Miss Bennet has entrusted me with ensuring that the three of you keep your promise," Andy said with a smile. "I've been waiting here for you lot for quite a while now. Miss Bennet asked me to take a video of the three of you kowtowing and apologizing. She said she would very much like to see it."

Alice's eyes widened.

They were never going to kowtow to Elisa's tomb. They had planned to come to the cemetery, sweep the tomb, and then leave. They never would have expected Rachel to find someone to watch them. Obviously, their plan wasn't going to work.

A little while later, Rachel's phone alerted her to a new message. She cleaned the dirt off her hands--she'd been busy weeding, and unlocked her phone to see Andy had sent her the video.

Lukas had specifically come to find Rachel before he left the Sue Garden. He'd spoken to her seriously, offering her many advices and suggestions. But in the end, he'd warned her not to disobey Victor. Her disobedience could become dangerous and detrimental to the baby's well-being. And right now, the safety of the baby was the most important thing.

"Rachel, why are you slacking off?" a sharp female voice said from behind her.

Rachel slipped her phone into her pocket and stood up. She turned to see who was speaking to her, but with the bright sun shining directly into her eyes, it took her a moment to properly focus.

When she'd managed to blink away most of the stinging sensation from the blinding light, it was to see the new housekeeper of the Sue Garden, Olivia. She also just so happened to be the other maid who'd been gossiping about Rachel. She was the more timid of the two, and had kept silent during the dispute between Rachel and the arrogant maid.

Olivia planted her hands on her hips and glanced down at the lawn where Rachel had been working. "What exactly have you been doing?" she shouted. "All I asked you to do was weed. Why has it taken you so long to pull out a few weeds?"

Rachel just lowered her eyes and said nothing. She was too tired to fight with Olivia right now. Olivia had woken her up early that morning and sent her to weed without breakfast. It was nearly noon now, and she'd still had nothing to eat. It was also very hot outside. The sun was merciless and had sapped any remaining strength she'd had.

Rachel's silence and apparent noncommittal attitude made Olivia furious.

"What's wrong with you?" Olivia demanded.

Rachel slowly raised her head to look up at Olivia. She could see arrogance and pride written all over her face.

Rachel's quiet, almost dull stare made Olivia vaguely uncomfortable. She also felt a little timid in her gaze. She quickly puffed her chest up and squared her shoulders, trying to look tougher than she felt. "Don't forget your place, Rachel. You're now nothing but a servant in the Sue Garden. Don't think you're better than the rest of us just because you're pregnant. You're nothing more than a servant who has to weed. Do you understand? Don't look at me like that.

"I suggest you..." Olivia trailed off to swallow the nervous well of saliva in her mouth. Why was she feeling so timid? She finished speaking after a short pause, "I suggest you hurry up and work! Don't just stand there looking at me."

"Alright," Rachel said indifferently and knelt down again. She didn't feel like fighting with Olivia, it was just easier for her to carry on weeding. Rachel's lack of response almost disappointed Olivia. She'd been hoping for a little more fight, or a little more sass. This indifferent attitude was boring. It also occurred to her that she had probably been looking for trouble where there was none.

Instead of leaving the situation as it was, Olivia got angry. She gritted her teeth and wrinkled her nose in annoyance as she said, "There will be no dinner for you tonight unless you pull out all those weeds. Do you understand?"

Rachel raised her head obediently and put on a fake smile. "Yes," she said, then went back to her work.

Olivia snorted indignantly and left.

Rachel only finished weeding late that afternoon. By the time she trudged back to her bedroom, she was so exhausted that she fell asleep the moment her head touched her pillow. It wasn't until midnight that she woke up because she was starving.

She had to find something to eat. She snuck out of her bedroom and up towards the main hall of the building. There wasn't much security. Only a handful of sleepy guards that didn't notice when she slipped inside.

She didn't care what she ate right now, as long as it was something. She hadn't eaten since yesterday.

Rachel hurried downstairs to the kitchen. After a quick search, she found some bread and milk in the fridge. She took them, and hurried back out into the dining hall. She was going to take the food to her room to eat, but the sound of an engine being turned off caught her attention.

She froze, blinking in thought.

It was too late at night for there to be visitors, so it must be Victor returning home. Rachel knew she couldn't let him catch her secretly eating. If he saw her, he was probably going to punish her further. Rachel hurried to the living room and crouched down behind the sofa. She was planning to hide there until Victor went up to his room, then she was going to run back to hers.

"Mr. Sullivan, you're back," said a servant. Rachel heard the steady tap of Victor's footsteps as he walked into the room, very near to where she was hiding.

Rachel pressed closer to the sofa, making sure she was as out of sight as possible. It was late, she was tired, and she couldn't help that she yawned.

She listened as the sound of his footsteps came closer and closer, then stopped. Rachel waited tensely for him to move again, he didn't. Then she looked up, directly into his cold stare. He'd found her.

# Chapter 92 Victor's Warning

Rachel was shocked. She couldn't believe he'd seen her so easily. She didn't know what to say. She was torn between so many different emotions.

"What are you doing in here?" Victor asked in a deep voice.

"Enjoy the moonlight," Rachel said calmly. She stood up to face him, hiding the bread and milk behind her back.

Victor stared at her expressionlessly for moment, then he narrowed his eyes as he said, "Show me what you have."

Rachel furrowed her brows in mock confusion, trying to pretend she had no idea what he was talking about. "What do you mean?" She even managed to make herself sound surprised. "I don't have anything."

"You have three seconds to show me," Victor said in a voice so completely devoid of emotion that it was oppressive. Rachel suppressed a shiver, and it wasn't just from the cold night air. However, she didn't say anything. She just stared right back at him.

Victor's already dark eyes darkened even further, making them look like endless black pools. "Three," he said, starting to count.

"Okay fine. Here," Rachel said in exasperation. She took a deep breath and held the bread and milk out to him. It was useless to try and hide anything from him, especially when he already knew something was amiss.

The hard, cold expression on his face softened slightly when he saw the food.

Bread and milk?

Why had she snuck out here at this time of night just to steal bread and milk? Victor looked between her and the food. He narrowed his eyes in suspicion and said, "Rachel, what are you up to? What kind of game are you playing at?"

Game?

His callous comment made Rachel angry.

"Believe it or not, I just came here to get bread and milk." She stared bravely up at him as she spoke. She could see by the look on his face that he was suspicious. He thought she'd stolen something else, like a damn thief.

Without another word, she turned around and left.

Victor glared at her retreating back, then down at the bread and milk in his hands. His expression darkened. Olivia knew when Victor would return home. She'd rushed over to greet him, and had been just a minute too slow to intervene in the interaction between Victor and Rachel. But she had heard most of their conversation.

"Mr. Sullivan, I'm so sorry about this. This is my fault. I didn't have anyone stationed to

guard the kitchen. I didn't think she'd sneak in and try to steal food. I-"

Olivia immediately fell silent when Victor looked up at her with a murderous expression. "You didn't let her eat anything?" he said almost too calmly.

Olivia blinked in shock.

What Victor said was true. She hadn't allowed Rachel to eat the entire day, and she'd withheld her dinner from her as a punishment. But she couldn't admit that to Victor. If he knew what she'd done, he would show her no mercy. Olivia immediately knelt down in front of him. In a trembling voice she said, "Mr. Sullivan, please don't misunderstand. I would never do such a thing. You told me to treat Rachel like a servant, but I still care about the baby. I didn't let her do any heavy lifting, and I most certainly wouldn't have starved her!"

Olivia paused, trying to come up with something else to say to make him believe her. "If you don't believe me, Mr. Sullivan, you are welcome to ask the others. The last thing I'd want to do is starve her."

She was convincing enough that Victor believed her.

The blood that had been rushing furiously through Victor's veins from his earlier anger began to calm. His breathing evened out and he relaxed. Without a second thought, he threw the bread and milk on the ground.

So Rachel had just been pretending. She'd made sure he'd find her, clutching the bread and milk like she'd been starved. She'd obviously wanted nothing more than to garner his pity. Victor's eyes were glittering with malicious intent now as he stepped forward. He stomped on the bread as he walked in the direction in which Rachel had gone.

When she returned to her room, Rachel drank two glasses of warm water to try and ease her hunger somewhat.

After she'd drained the last drop of her second drink, she stared at the glass until her eyes unfocused and she became lost in thought.

She had to buy food. Without proper sustenance, she wouldn't last a week under the workload Olivia had given her. Suddenly, the door to her room slammed open.

Rachel snapped towards the sound, immediately preparing herself for the worst. It was Victor, and judging by the look on his face and the way he was walking, he was angry.

'Seriously?

Is this man really this angry about me stealing some bread and milk?'

Rachel watched as he approached. She unconsciously moved her hand to cover her stomach, trying to protect the baby from anything that might happen now. When Victor saw her defensive movement, the icy look on his face turned dark. To him it seemed that she was only pretending to care about the baby so she could use it again him.

"Vic-" Rachel started, but didn't get very far.

"What are you up to this time, Rachel?" Victor snapped. Rachel was instantly confused by his accusation.

As he stalked closer, she started backing up.

Victor was only further angered by her retreat, but he had no idea why. He whipped out his hand and grabbed her tightly around the wrist. "You were pretending to be hungry just now, weren't you? You deliberately went to the kitchen to steal food when I came back. You planned it all out so I'd see you and feel sorry for you. You're just pretending to be starved and mistreated."

"Excuse me? Are you insane?" Rachel blurted out before she could stop herself. Victor's groundless accusations were making her furious. She'd been starving and had just wanted to get something to eat. Now Victor was here accusing her of pretending, just so he'd feel sorry for her.

Victor narrowed his eyes and snapped, "Say it again. I dare you."

Rachel lowered her eyes just in time to roll them without Victor seeing. While she was standing meekly before him, she was silently cursing him to hell and back.

'I said what I said,' Rachel thought to herself. 'You're insane. But I'll be damned if I'll say it again. I'm not stupid. I don't want to give you any more reason to punish me.'

Rachel put on the biggest fake smile she could muster and looked up at him. She blinked her eyes innocently, but said in a voice laced with venom, "What do you want me to repeat? I didn't say anything. It's late, Mr. Sullivan. You're tired. I suggest you go to bed and rest. I know I have to rest. After all, I have to look after myself now. I'm alone in this world."

"Rachel, I'm warning you. Don't play games with me. You are not alone, and you know it. Just keep in mind," Victor reached out and clutched tightly at her chin, "that you could be dead. And with you, that baby." 1

Rachel's facial muscles twitched, then she paled at his threat.

Before she could say anything, Victor let her go and stormed towards the door.

As he left, he slammed the door so hard behind him that Rachel felt the sound in her bones. But the noise was enough to bring her back to her senses. She swallowed hard as she stared at the closed door, afraid that he'd change his mind and come back. When it seemed that she was safe, she flopped down on the bed and pressed her hand over her stomach. She could feel her heart racing in her chest from the adrenaline and fear.

She wasn't afraid of death, but she couldn't bear the thought when it came to her baby.

Rachel looked down at her stomach. Recently, she had been attaching more and more importance to the unborn baby. She was starting to care for the little life more than she'd thought she ever would.

She used to be an egoist.

She used to think of her fetus as nothing more than a cluster of cells. Something she'd rid herself of the moment it threatened her life and her interests.

But now... Just the thought of something happening to the baby made her heart ache in a way she couldn't explain. If something were to happen... She shook her head. No, she would

make sure it never did. She would give up her life to save this baby if necessary. She was now a totally different person than she'd been before; she couldn't decide whether that was a good or bad thing.

"Don't listen to you father, little one," Rachel whispered to her belly. "I'm going to keep you safe. Do you understand? Your mommy is a capable woman. She isn't some simpering damsel who is going to lay down and get stepped on. When I find your Aunt Abby, we will all run away together. I promise, you're going to get the life that you deserve. Just trust me."

Rachel fell asleep shortly after that. When she woke a few hours later, it was to find that it was raining.

The autumn wind was pumping outside, driving the rain hard against her window. Rachel raised her head and looked out the window at the sky. The heavy grey clouds and the oppressive fog made her feel all the more sleepy.

The baby didn't mess with her appetite much these days. However, she'd felt more tired recently than she had in a long while. She wasn't sure if her fatigue was being caused by her pregnancy or the autumn weather.

The quiet, restful atmosphere of her room was broken by someone banging loudly on the door.

The sound startled Rachel awake, driving away any remnants of sleep that had still been lingering in her body. "Rachel!" Olivia yelled from outside as she continuously pounded her fist on the door. "Do you even know what time it is? Get up!"

Rachel hadn't even had the chance to get out of bed before Olivia barged into her room. She obviously had a spare key.

"Rachel! Are you deaf? Did you hear me?" Olivia demanded as she came to stand at the end of Rachel's bed.



# Chapter 93 Roger Was Back

Rachel sat upright on the bed. Due to being awakened by the startling noise, her eyelids still felt a little heavy, and there was obvious displeasure in her gaze. When Olivia looked into her eyes, she couldn't help but feel intimidated.

In a slightly trembling voice, she suggested, "You should go shopping today! Here's a shopping list." Olivia tossed a notepad onto the bed and continued, "These are the items you'll need to buy today. Everything on that list must be bought from the designated stores. Oh, one more thing. You must buy every item on that list. Otherwise, I'm going to punish you for it!"

Having said that, Olivia turned around and left.

Rachel scanned through the notepad and found more than twenty items on the list. At first glance, the list wasn't that long. But upon a closer inspection, the designated stores for each item was far away from each other. It would take at least fifteen minutes to drive from one store to the other.

And her biggest problem was the fact that she didn't own a car.

Olivia was deliberately making things difficult for her.

Rachel's eyes dimmed, but she wasn't necessarily upset. On the contrary, she thought that this was a good chance to go out and buy some food for herself in secret.

And so, Rachel took a shower, changed her clothes, and left the Sue Garden along with the list.

On the front porch of the main building, Olivia was standing with her arms crossed. She watched as Rachel walked out while holding an umbrella, with a contemptuous, arrogant look in her eyes.

She snorted, "How dare you tell Mr. Sullivan on me? Rachel, we'll see who has the last laugh!"

Just when Olivia was about to go back inside, she noticed a young maid coming out of the kitchen with a steaming glass in hand. The maid was on her way to Rachel's bedroom. Olivia's eyes darkened, and she blocked the maid's path.

"What's that in your hand?" Olivia took a step forward, glancing down at the beverage.

The young maid lowered her head and replied respectfully, "Miss Brooks, this is milk with cinnamon and honey. The dietitian had specially prepared it for Miss Bennet."

Upon hearing that, Olivia's eyes glinted with annoyance. "Miss Bennet, you say? Why haven't I heard that there's a 'Miss Bennet' in the Sue Garden?"

"I'm so sorry, Miss Brooks. I meant Rachel..." The maid immediately understood what Olivia was trying to say, so she quickly changed the way she addressed Rachel.

"Remember, the only person we're required to serve is Mr. Sullivan. Rachel is just another servant," Olivia sneered.

The maid nodded firmly as a response. Olivia stared at the glass of milk in the maid's hand, and figured that it was something really good. The milk was fresh, considering that it had been airlifted here, and top-quality cinnamon and honey were added into the beverage. Clearly, this milk could do wonders to the skin. The first time Olivia saw Rachel drinking it, she was only a maid, and all she could do back then was to watch her enviously.

But now, she was the housekeeper, while Rachel was a maid like all the others.

A tinge of contempt flashed through Olivia's eyes as she ordered, "Bring that glass of milk to my room."

"What?" The young maid was stunned.

Olivia glared at her because of her reaction. "Did you not hear me the first time? Do you want to keep working in the Sue Garden? In that case, just do as I say, and don't ask any stupid questions!"

When the maid heard this, she remembered how humiliated the other maid was when she was literally kicked out of the Sue Garden. The young maid's body quivered in fear as she quickly shook her head and replied, "I'm sorry for questioning you, Miss Brooks. Please, don't fire me! I'll bring the milk to your room at once."

Olivia smiled with satisfaction. "Good. I'm just worried that some sneaky maid might drink it secretly. If that were to happen, how will I ever explain it to Mr. Sullivan? I'm telling you to bring it to my room, so that nobody will ever have the chance to drink the milk other than Rachel."

'It's obvious that Olivia just wants to drink the milk herself, but she still made up an excuse. I'm not an idiot,' the young maid thought to herself. However, she could only keep her mouth shut about this matter.

Meanwhile, Rachel took a taxi downtown. After searching for a long time under the rain, she finally managed to cross off a few items on the list, and now, her hands were full.

Perhaps due to pregnancy, her physical strength had diminished by a large fraction. Just a few minutes of shopping had already siphoned her energy. After glancing at the list, she directed her gaze towards the gray, gloomy sky. She figured that she should rest for now, so she went into a mall and found a seat in a cafe, where she immediately sat down to rest.

During this time, there were a few customers in a men's clothing shop diagonally opposite from the cafe she was in.

Slowly, the door of the fitting room opened from the inside, and then a man came out. He was dressed in a dark blue suit, highlighting his slender figure.

The shop assistant stared in awe at this man, at a loss for words of how handsome the man was. Meanwhile, a woman sitting on a sofa and reading a magazine stood up when she saw the man walk out. When she walked towards him, the shop assistant finally came to her senses. "Sir, you look dashing in that suit!"

"Thank you," the man replied politely. Then, he turned to the woman.

The woman helped straighten his tie, and then took two steps back. She eyed him from head to toe, while nodding in satisfaction. "That suit does do your figure and your face justice. You should wear it when you go to work the day after tomorrow."

"In that case, I'll take this suit," the man said as he looked at himself in the mirror.

The woman took out a VIP card from her purse and handed it to the shop assistant. With a smile, she said, "We'll take this one, along with the other suits he tried on earlier. Please wrap them all up."

The shop assistant's eyes widened in surprise, and she quickly took the card. Hurriedly, she wrapped up the suits, and swiped the card, for fear that the woman would change her mind. After all, it was quite a big order.

"Clara, you do know that you don't have to buy me so many suits, do you? I already have a lot of them," he remarked, glancing at the woman disapprovingly.

"A few suits won't cost me that much. Just consider them as a congratulatory gift for becoming the new general manager. You don't have a choice but to accept them now." While Clara was speaking, she carried Riley. The little girl was currently eating a candy on the sofa when her mother carried her. Afterwards, Clara asked softly, "Riley, do you think Uncle Roger looks handsome?"

Riley looked at Roger with her doll-like eyes as a bright smile appeared on her face. "Yes, he does look handsome!" The sound of her voice was so sweet.

Roger smiled back at the girl as she took her from Clara's arms. "I'm flattered you think so, Riley. You're a sweet little girl. I'll give you another candy later."

Riley nestled into his arms, grinning from ear to ear.

Soon, the shop assistant accomplished the bill, and handed back the VIP card back to Clara. In a respectful manner of speaking, she said, "Miss Jimenez, Mr. Jimenez, your bill has been settled. We'll deliver these suits to your address this afternoon."

Clara nodded and said to Roger. "Let's go. We still have time to look at the other stores."

"Sure. Perhaps we'll find a beautiful dress for Riley." Roger pinched Riley's nose with affection, while the little girl smiled happily in his arms. Shortly, they all walked out of the store.

Clara was about to say something, when she noticed Rachel sitting inside the cafe.

Roger didn't notice that Clara had stopped, so he walked on before he noticed that she wasn't following him. He then turned around and asked in confusion, "Clara, is something wrong?"

Upon hearing his question, Clara quickly averted her gaze from Rachel. Panic arose in her eyes, and a strange look appeared on her face. Shaking her head, she said, "No, it's nothing. Let's go."

Roger creased his eyebrows, doubting her answer. He looked at the direction she was looking at, but before he could figure out what caused her to stop, Clara suddenly said, "Didn't you

mention that you wanted to buy a dress for Riley? There's a children's apparel store over there. Let's go and have a look, shall we?"

"Hey, Clara... Are you okay?" This was the first time Roger had seen her so anxious, so he was a bit worried about her.

Clara's lips twitched unnaturally when she said, "Yes, I'm okay. What could possibly go wrong?"

Roger examined her expression. And after a while, he still couldn't gather what was going on with her. For the time being, he decided to drop the subject and followed Clara into the children's apparel store.

Once they were inside, Roger picked out different dresses with Riley in his arms. During the entire time they were there, Clara just followed them in silence. Nobody could tell what was on her mind.

After a while, Roger was still worried about her. "Clara, are you really not hiding anything from me?"

## Chapter 94 Clara's Secret

"Of course," Clara lied, looking directly into Roger's suspicious eyes. She casually pursed her lips and said, "I just want to go to the restroom. Wait here with Riley."

"Alright," Roger said with a nod.

Clara smiled warmly at him. "I won't be long. Don't give Riley anymore candy while I'm gone; wait for me to get back." She looked between the two of them again then left the children's clothing shop. As she exited the store, she unconsciously quickened her pace.

She hurried over to the cafe where she'd previously seen Rachel.

Rachel was still there. She was currently drinking a glass of fresh orange juice and checking the weather on her phone. According to the forecast, it was supposed to stop raining soon. Finally, she'd be able to continue with her shopping.

Once she'd finished her juice, she set the glass down on the table and gathered her things. She picked up her shopping bags, and was about to leave the cafe when she noticed a very familiar woman approaching her. She squinted at her, trying to remember who she was... Then she raised her eyebrows and said in surprise, "Dr. Jimenez?"

"Miss Bennet, it's nice to see you again," Clara greeted her.

Rachel smiled at her. "I didn't expect to see you here. But it doesn't look like you're here to sit down and have a coffee."

Clara had left her bag and phone with Roger. It was rather obvious she hadn't come here to buy anything.

"Miss Bennet, you're so observant," Clara smiled sweetly and looked down at all the bags in Rachel's hands. "I took Riley to buy some new clothes. I saw you sitting here and thought I'd come and say hello."

She narrowed her eyes and tipped her head towards Rachel's bags. "Are you shopping alone, Miss Bennet?"

"Sort of," Rachel replied with a blink.

"Are you... Are you leaving now?" Clara asked, starting to sound a little more concerned.

"I am. I've got something else I have to buy at another store," Rachel said with a nod of affirmation.

"I see." The tense expression on Clara's face visibly relaxed. It was so obvious that Rachel noticed her change in demeanor almost immediately. This only made Rachel more suspicious.

"Dr. Jimenez, is there something wrong?" Rachel asked casually, pretending that it was nothing more than a friendly question.

"No. What could be wrong?" Clara blinked and changed the subject, "Miss Bennet, you are carrying so many things. It's not convenient for you to hold them all by yourself, especially

you are pregnant now. I could ask my driver take to you to your next destination."

This only made Rachel even more suspicious that Clara was hiding something from her. She narrowed her eyes slightly, but not enough for Clara to see.

But she needn't have worried. At the exact moment, Clara had glanced out the window to look at the children's clothing store. She could see it from where she was standing. Clara tilted her head a little to get a better view, and was able to see Roger and Riley inside. Roger was carrying Riley now, and was patiently standing listening to the saleslady talk.

When Rachel didn't answer, Clara shook her head and smiled warmly at her. "I'm sorry. That was a little out of bounds. I won't be offended if you decline, I thought it would help-"

"It's actually not a bad idea at all. Thank you Dr. Jimenez, I really appreciate it," Rachel replied with a smile.

She had no idea why Clara was so eager to know where she was going, and when she'd be leaving the cafe, but she trusted Clara enough to know she wouldn't hurt her. Clara had saved her life once, after all.

"It's my greatest pleasure," Clara said and took some of Rachel's bags to help her carry. She turned and accompanied Rachel downstairs.

The two of them didn't speak much on their walk. They were each lost in their own thoughts.

Clara and Rachel silently reached the gates of the shopping mall, where Clara's driver had been waiting for her for some time already. Clara fussed over Rachel. She insisted on helping her get all her bags in the car, and making sure she was settled. Only once the car had pulled into the road and rejoined the traffic did she finally breathe a sigh of relief. She closed her eyes for a moment, allowing her thoughts to overwhelm her before she raised her head. She opened her eyes again and turned to head back to the clothing shop.

"Mommy!" Riley's sweet voice reached her ears the moment she turned around. Clara's heart thudded nervously against her ribs and her eyes widened in astonishment.

Rodger was standing behind her, holding Riley in his arms. He'd seen everything.

Clara could do nothing but stare at them for a long while. She tried multiple times to say something, but every time her words failed her. Finally, she managed to say, "Roger, I..."

In Apliaria, in one of the most famous and wealthy neighborhoods, was the Jimenez Mansion.

The maid bowed respectfully to Cynthia and Clara as she said, "Mr. Jimenez has said that the two of you should eat without him. He said he has work to do and won't be joining." The maid straightened up to glance quickly around the dining room.

"What is wrong with this man, honestly," Cynthia Jimenez said in irritation as she put her spoon down. "Food is such an important part of staying healthy. If he keeps skipping meals because of work, his stomach is going to suffer. I'll go and talk to him."

She stood up, clicking her tongue disapprovingly.

Clara quickly shot to her feet when she saw Cynthia was going to Roger. She managed to

keep the dark expression off her face as she said, "Let me go talk to him, Mom. I think he's got jet lag. It's perfectly normal for him to have no appetite."

"I don't care if he's jet lagged. He can't eat nothing. If he refuses to come here and eat with us, you can bring his food to his room," Cynthia said stubbornly.

Clara smiled and nodded. "Alright, Mom. Just don't worry about him too much. You know he's a workaholic."

"I know that all too well. I don't see why he can't put his work aside for a bit now that he'd back. He needs a break. I also remember him saying something about resigning from his job in America. What on earth could he possibly be so busy with in that case?"

Clara looked up from speaking to the servant when she heard what Cynthia said. She'd been asking the servant to prepare a plate of food for Roger, but now she was smiling in embarrassment at her mother. "He's going to report back to the company here in a few days. I think he wants to be well prepared."

Cynthia sighed dramatically and shook her head. "I wish he'd put as much effort into finding a girlfriend and getting married as he does into work. I'm tired of worrying about him. He's making me old before my time."

Clara laughed softly at her mother. She walked closer to her and laid a comforting hand on her shoulder. "I don't think you should worry so much about him. Roger is something special. There are many girls out there who have a massive crush on him. Marriage shouldn't be a problem. If a man like Roger can't find a girlfriend, what hope do those male colleagues of mine have? They won't stand a chance."

"But how can I not worry about him? I know you said there are many girls who have a crush on him, but the problem is that he doesn't like any of them. Most people his age are already married with kids. But just look at your brother. He doesn't even have a girlfriend." The more Cynthia spoke, the more evident her worry for her son became. "I mean, Victor and Roger are the same age! Victor has already been married and gotten divorced."

Clara squeezed her mother's shoulder gently. She drew a breath to speak, hesitated, and slowly said, "Mother, there is no need to rush into marriage. Just be patient, things will all work out in the end."

"You always were good at defending your brother," Cynthia said with another heavy sigh. Then she glanced lovingly at her daughter and said with a small smile. "I have a feeling that Roger won't be getting married any time soon. He's too busy with his own things... But what about you?"

"Me?" Clara couldn't keep the surprise out of her voice. They'd just been talking about Roger, and now somehow she'd become the topic of conversation. "What about me?"

"When are you going to have another baby?" Cynthia asked with a smile.

Clara took the plate of food from the servant when it was brought over. She shook her head slowly, tapping her fingers against the plate. "Riley is only a year old. I'm already so busy with taking care of her on my own. And you know how busy work is..."

"Okay, Okay. You've made your point. You and Roger are always so busy. When he was abroad I didn't even bother asking him to rest. I knew he wouldn't listen to me and I'd just be wasting my breath. Especially because I only got to see him a few times a year. And you? You work right here in Apliaria but I barely see you either! Every time I want to see you, or invite you over to dine with me, you always tell me you're busy with work." Cynthia snorted indignantly. "You're a lady from a distinguished family, yet you insist on being a surgeon. Do you really think I won't be able to support you? You go into work every day to wield scalpels and needles and other horrible looking things. You have to see death, and blood and gore... I really don't think that type of lifestyle is good for a lady."

Clara stayed silent for the moment. What was she supposed to say? Every time she came home to see her mother, it was always the same lecture.

In response, she just smiled and murmured, "I know", and "You're right". Before her mother could start off on another tangent, Clara quickly said, "Mom, let me take this food up to Roger and convince him to come down. Then you can lecture us both. How does that sound?"

"Off you go then," Cynthia said and waved her hand dismissively.

Clara nodded and hurried upstairs to Roger's room before her mother could say anything else.



## Chapter 95 Roger Once Loved Rachel

Clara had been standing at the door of Roger's room for a while, before she finally mustered enough courage to knock on the door. Seconds later, she heard footsteps coming from inside, and soon, the door was opened. Roger had changed into his pajamas. When he saw Clara at his door, he was a bit surprised. In a hoarse voice, he greeted, "Clara."

"Mom is worried that it'll be bad for your stomach if you don't eat anything. That's why I'm here to bring you some food," she replied while making her way into the room.

Roger closed the door once she was inside, and took off his glasses. He just nodded and hummed in a tone devoid of emotion.

"Roger, I'm so sorry. I never meant to lie to you."

When he heard Clara speak, he was sorting out some documents.

For a moment, it made him pause and lower his gaze without saying anything.

"Roger, are you planning never to talk to me again?" Clara's eyes were filled with regret and guilt. From the corner of her eyes, she saw the documents he was sorting. Her eyes quivered upon seeing them. "Wait a second... Are you planning to go back to America?"

Roger set aside the papers and didn't answer her question. Instead, he looked at her and asked, "Had I not seen her today, how long were you planning to hide this from me?"

Clara was rendered speechless.

"Sister, you, of all people, know why I came back to this city," Roger said in a calm tone.

"I..." Clara wanted to speak up, but she found no words to respond to his statement. She then lowered her gaze for a moment, thinking of what she should say next. Moments later, she said, "Roger, it's been over two years. I had thought you've given up on her already. Two years ago, she got married, and it broke your heart to know that it would be impossible to be with her."

Roger's eyes darkened. "But now, she's divorced, isn't she?"

Clara was stunned.

After a long silence, she clenched her fists and scowled. "You think you'll be able to work things out between you two just because she's divorced now? Roger, open your eyes! Do you think she's worth all of this effort? My God, Roger! Don't you know how many ridiculous things she's done in the past two years? She doesn't deserve..."

"I'm the one who decides whether she deserves me or not," Roger interrupted her abruptly with a frown on his face. "Sister, just put the food on the desk. If you have nothing else to say, I'm afraid I'll have to ask you to leave me alone. I still have important matters to attend to."

Upon seeing the displeasure on his face, Clara's eyes welled up with tears. "I knew you'd be like this once you see her. That's why I did my best to hide her from you."

"Do you think you'd be able to stop us from seeing each other for the rest of our lives?" Roger asked.

"I know it's impossible." Clara shook her head, and then she pondered for a moment before saying, "Roger, believe it or not, the moment I heard that she got divorced, I've been contemplating on whether to tell you about it or not. After she got married, you went abroad. During the past two years, you hardly ever visited home. Dad and Mom are getting older, and their deepest wish is to see you get married and have children. All they want is for you to have a loving family, but you..." 'You completely disregarded their feelings.'

Clara didn't finish her sentence. After a moment of silence, she continued, "I know you came home this time because you heard that she's divorced now. As your sister, I also wish for you to be happy. That's why I've been thinking, as long as you're willing to come home to pursue her, it wouldn't matter how bad her reputation had gotten. All I can do now is to help you persuade our parents to accept her. I will do that, for you, my dearest brother!"

Truth be told, Roger was moved by his sister's words, but he didn't say anything.

Clara took a deep breath, held his shoulders, and looked into his eyes. "But you have to know one thing... Rachel is pregnant."

Roger was taken by surprise. In a quivering voice, he said, "What did you say?"

"Roger..." Clara was heartbroken to see the look of devastation on her brother's face.

Roger hadn't been in a relationship for a long time. One time, his mother got so anxious that she once doubted her own son's sexuality. It even took her a long time to accept the possibility that it might be true. Once she had mentally prepared herself for it, she told Roger that it was okay if he were gay. As long as he could live a long, happy life with his loved one, she would always support him. When he heard his mother say that, a wry expression appeared on his face.

However, unlike their mother, Clara knew everything. She knew the reason Roger hadn't gone out with women all this time was because the woman he truly loved got married two years ago.

He was in love with Rachel.

Clara knew that all too well. There was a time when she saw him go into a bakery despite the fact that there was a storm, just so he could learn how to bake a cake for Rachel's birthday. And it broke her heart to witness her beloved brother sit on a stairwell, drinking alone during Rachel's wedding day.

From the moment Clara saw the look on her younger brother's eyes when he was walking side by side with Rachel, she already knew that he would love this girl for the rest of his life. Anything remotely related to Rachel, Roger would always volunteer to take care of it himself.

That was why Clara didn't want him to see that woman again. It frightened her that Roger wouldn't be able to contain himself around Rachel. Even though she knew that it would be impossible to prevent them from seeing each other for a life time, she really didn't want to see her brother in the same state he was two years ago. Back then, he was no better than a

walking dead. And on that same day Clara saw him heartbroken, she vowed to hide the truth for as long as possible.

"She... When did she get pregnant?" Roger said in a hoarse voice; his eyes welling up with tears.

"I only found out a few days ago, but according to the prenatal examination, she's been pregnant for over a month." Clara paused to look at her brother with pity in her eyes, and continued, "She got pregnant during the time when she and Victor got divorced."

The clamoring sound of falling papers resonated throughout the room.

Roger dropped every sheet of paper he was carrying, too shocked to hold onto them.

Tears were about to fall from Clara's eyes. She stepped forward, holding her brother. "Roger, it's time to let her go. Some people are just not destined to be together. No matter how hard you force it, nothing will come of it."

Roger's eyes fell on Clara's face; the look in his eyes turned grim. It took him a long time before he managed to find his voice again. "Clara, I have loved her for nine long years. The love I have for her has been engraved into every fiber of my being. How am I supposed to let her go."

Clara just looked at her brother, too hurt to utter a word.

"From the first time I laid eyes on her during high school, I couldn't stop thinking about her." Roger smiled bitterly. "If it were that easy to forget her, I wouldn't have stayed abroad for the past two years! So, please, stop trying to dissuade me from my decision. It's not gonna work."

"But she's pregnant! Roger, the two of you—"

"Sister, how did you find out she's pregnant?" Roger interrupted her.

Clara couldn't say a word. She paused for a moment, averting her gaze from Roger's eyes. Embarrassment flashed through her eyes. Pretty soon, she regained her composure, but he still noticed the unnatural expression on her face. He could tell that she was hiding something from him, so he grabbed her shoulder.

"Clara!" he shouted her name.

Clara stared back into his eyes.

After a long time, she decided to tell him everything that she had seen and heard regarding Rachel.

During this time, Rachel had bought every item on the list. She put all the bags at her feet, and stood outside a building.

When she went shopping in the building, the rain stopped, and the sun was about to come out. However, by the time she finished shopping and came out, it was raining cats and dogs. From time to time, she could feel raindrops seeping into her skin due to the strong gusts of wind.

While she was trying to figure out a way to get home, her phone rang.