

Happiness 449-458

The Promise of Happiness

### **Chapter 449 You Will Never Be Good Enough**

After Natalie removed her mask, Lia was so startled that she knocked over her cup of coffee.

“How is this possible? Why do you look exactly like her?”

In the past, Lia had been blackmailed by Yara and hated her to the core. Now, Lia was seeing the identical face appearing on Natalie.

Although their features were alike, one could still tell the difference between Natalie and Yara when they looked carefully.

Natalie was much more beautiful and exquisite than Yara.

Besides, Natalie exuded an air of composure that Yara would never be able to attain.

“I’m Yara’s twin sister. It isn’t strange that we look alike.” Natalie asked Lia, “Is your makeup pouch with you? Please lend it to me.”

“Sure!”

Lia snapped out of her shock and handed Natalie her makeup pouch.

Natalie took out eyeliner, mascara, eyeshadow, and lipstick. She quickly applied heavy but elegant makeup in order to diminish her unique demeanor and appeared more like Yara.

Both Lia and Yandel exchanged glances. They had a look of surprise on their faces.

Meanwhile, Melissa was standing at the reception on the ground floor dressed in a purple dress. She looked very pleased with herself.

“All of you have better be nice to me.” Toying with her sunglasses, Melissa said arrogantly, “Why isn’t Yandel here yet? Have you informed him and passed him my message?”

“Ms. Nichols, please wait for a while more.” The receptionist tried her best to placate Melissa, “Mr. Moss will be here soon.”

“You keep telling me to wait. I have been waiting for close to thirty minutes now. How long more do I have to wait?” Melissa glared at the receptionists and threatened them, “When I see Yandel later, I will get him to fire all of you! So useless!”

The three receptionists looked at the haughty Melissa. Since they had no idea who she was, they had no choice but to endure in silence.

It was an awkward moment.

Just then, a clear female voice could be heard saying, “Melissa, what are you doing here?”

Melissa turned around and saw Yara holding on to Yandel’s arm intimately. The top half of her body was practically leaning onto him.

That scene pissed Melissa off.

She yelled, "Yara, what the hell are you doing?"

A look of complacency flashed across Natalie's eyes, but it disappeared in an instant.

Instead, she hurriedly removed her hand from the crook of Yandel's arm and looked worried. She acted as if she had been caught in the act by Melissa.

"Nothing." Natalie gave a lame excuse. "It's not what you think. There is nothing between Mr. Moss and me. Please don't get the wrong idea!"

"Wrong idea? I saw it with my own eyes!" Melissa said coldly, "How can I believe your words? You promised me that you wouldn't take Yandel away from me. It has only been a short while, and now, you are trying to seduce him again!"

"Melissa, watch your words," Natalie warned her. "No matter what, I am still your sister, and this is a public area. Please mind your manners! I was just discussing work matters with Mr. Moss in broad daylight. What have I done wrong?"

Melissa stared at Natalie with hatred.

"You are a promiscuous whore!"

Melissa's insult infuriated Yandel.

Although Melissa's words were actually directed at Yara, Yandel could not stand the fact that it was his boss who was taking the beating.

"Melissa, shut your mouth right now." Yandel looked at her icily. "Compared to her, you will never ever be good enough. If I hear another insult from you, I won't let you off."

## **Chapter 450 Secret Of Yara**

The moment Yandel said those words, Melissa felt the rage in her burning inside.

She pointed at Natalie and howled, "Yandel, you obviously like me first. Why are you protecting her now?"

Before coming downstairs, Natalie was doubtful. She wondered if was inappropriate to let Yandel get close to Melissa.

Now that she had witnessed the possessiveness that Melissa had over Yandel, it was clear to her that Yandel was just a catalyst. The bad blood between Yara and Melissa had existed a long time ago. Things only blew up now.

Natalie narrowed her eyes and mulled over it for a moment.

However, Yandel could not tolerate Melissa's beratement on his boss as that was his bottom line.

“Melissa, when are you going to wake up? All of this is just your wishful thinking.” There was a darkness in Yandel’s eyes. “I have never said that I like you! Of course, I will protect her and not you! So stop asking all these unnecessary questions and bring disgrace upon yourself.”

The hand that Melissa was gripping onto her sunglasses became tighter that she was about to break the frame.

Yara had promised her that she would not fight with her for Yandel!

Yet, she did not keep to her promise. Instead, she had gone behind her back and seduced Yandel! She has made a fool out of her!

“Yara, don’t forget about your secret!” Melissa’s eyes were filled with hatred and provoked her, “If Samuel finds out about your secret, do you think you can still retain your position in the Bowers family?”

Secret?

What secret?

Natalie was slightly taken aback.

Which of Yara’s secret does Melissa know?

“Melissa, there is really nothing going on between Mr. Moss and me!” Natalie walked up to Melissa to try to hold her hands in order to get her to reveal the secret.

Instead, Melissa took a huge step back and slapped Natalie’s hand away. “Yara, stop putting on an act in front of me! Do you think I will still believe your words? Get lost!”

The blood had shot up to her head, and Melissa left the building in a huff.

With a stone-cold face, Yandel told everyone at the reception, “From today onward, all of you will be transferred to the branch at Jadeborough. If I ever find out that anyone of you revealed what had happened today, I will make sure you will regret ever having a tongue.”

“Yes, Mr. Moss!”

Yandel and Natalie returned to the office on the top floor.

Natalie picked up her cup of coffee but found that it had turned cold.

It was then she regained her senses and told Yandel, “Yandel, you will have to think of a way to ask Yara out for a date later. Make sure she has a hard time explaining herself to Melissa. Try your best to keep her busy but there’s no need to be overly stressed out. If we cannot get away with it, so be it. No matter how realistic my hyper-realistic mask is, I will still have to remove it eventually.”

Yandel nodded. “Boss, I will get to it right away.”

Once Yandel left, Lia studied Natalie’s face in detail.

It’s so much alike!

Yet, she is so much more stunning than Yara!

Even Lia was admiring her beauty.

After studying her for some time, Lia realized that Natalie was still deep in thoughts. “Ms. Nichols, what are you thinking about?”

“Nothing. I’m just a little tired.” Natalie shook her head and said, “What happened earlier on was a lot trickier than I had imagined.”

She had originally wanted to get rid of Melissa. Unexpectedly, she found out that Melissa was aware of Yara’s secret.

Hmm... Yara’s secret?

What kind of secret will give Melissa the edge to threaten Yara?

Does this secret have anything to do with my two babies?

### **Chapter 451 What Are You Doing**

That day, Natalie was so distracted that she kept spacing out at work.

“Are you sure you’re okay?” inquired Lia when she noticed how troubled Natalie seemed.

Having finally decided to come clean, Natalie picked up her documents and sighed, “I actually have a personal issue to deal with. That’s why I have trouble focusing today. I’m afraid I might have to get off work early to recompose myself.”

Lia then nodded in response, permitting Natalie to take the rest of the day off.

Meanwhile, Melissa could feel her eyes swelling up behind her sunglasses after leaving the Dream Corporation office building. The more she thought about what happened, the more her heart ached. It even got to a point where she felt like her heart was on fire.

Even though Melissa came from a loving family, she had always lived in Yara’s shadow.

It took Melissa quite a while to find someone she cared so much about, but in the end, Yara ruined it for her.

“Yara, you lying piece of sh\*t! I swear I’ll destroy you!” muttered Melissa, promising herself that she would get her revenge on Yara.

Then, the woman made her way to the Centurion Corporation office building.

Staring at the magnificent structure, Melissa was convinced that she was about to get her vengeance.

However, before she could even step into the building, she was stopped by a security guard at the entrance. “Stop!”

“I’m Melissa Nichols and I’m here to see your CEO, Samuel Bowers,” explained Melissa after removing her sunglasses.

“I have no idea who you are, lady,” responded the guard directly.

Displeased with the attitude, Melissa scowled at the security guard as she shouted arrogantly, "Just who the heck do you think you are? You're nothing but an uncultured guard dog! How dare you stand in my way! I have some important matters to discuss with Mr. Bowers, so you'd better take me to him now!"

"I'm afraid I can't do that if you have no appointment or the papers to show for it." The security guard ignored Melissa's insults and stood his ground.

"Are you hard of hearing or something? I just told you that I have important matters I need to discuss with Mr. Bowers!"

The guard glanced at Melissa and sneered condescendingly, "That's what they all say; the people who couldn't set up an appointment to meet Mr. Bowers. Now, if you don't walk away quietly, I'll have to get rid of you myself."

"Why you little..." Melissa got so furious that her head was about to explode when she was denied access to the building.

She intended to expose Yara to Samuel, but she never thought that she would have trouble meeting the man.

Since that was Samuel's office, Melissa dared not force her way in like she did at Dream, so she had no choice but to walk away after throwing a few more nasty words at the security guard.

Melissa blamed Yara for the humiliation she suffered outside the office building, so she stormed over to knock on the woman's bedroom door as soon as she got home.

"Seriously?" responded Yara with her eyebrows tightly knitted. She had just gotten home and was about to unwind herself when she heard the loud banging on her door.

Glaring at Yara after she opened the door was the enraged Melissa. "What do you-"

Before Yara could finish her sentence, Melissa lifted her hand and gave the woman a good hard slap to the face.

The smacking sound was so loud that it resounded throughout the house.

Shocked by the sudden attack, Yara covered her cheek and froze for a second. "What the hell is wrong with you, Melissa? What was that for? Are you out of your mind!"

Even though Yara would like nothing more than to respond to the slap in kind, she decided against it because she needed Melissa to keep her secret.

"You should know what it's for if you remember what you promised me. What happened to the illegible bachelor you promised me? As I told you, I like Yandel a lot, and you promised me that there was nothing going on between you two. So why the heck did you go meet him? Do you think you can backstab me and get away with it?"

"Melissa, you have to trust me. We only met up to talk about work." Yara had indeed gone to see Yandel, but it was purely for business.

“Do you think I was born yesterday? I will never believe you again because you’re a selfish liar! In fact, I don’t see the point of keeping your secret for you anymore!” shouted Melissa, gritting her teeth.

### **Chapter 452 Drenched In Tears**

“I’ll tell Samuel everything! I was able to see the man today, but sooner or later, it will happen. And what it does, I’m going to tell him everything about Franklin and Sophia!” swore Melissa.

“You went to him today?”

“Yes, I did. Do you have a problem with that? You have only yourself to blame!” stated Melissa with a smug.

Yara was hesitant at first, but after listening to Melissa, she hardened her resolve. Enough is enough! I kneeled before her, and I begged like a dog, but somehow, that’s still not enough. I even tried to explain my meetup with Yandel, but she would have none of it.

Slap!

Yara smacked Melissa on the face, just like the woman did to her.

“How dare you-”

Before Melissa could continue, Yara slapped the woman once more.

“You dare lay a finger on me? Have you forgotten about what I can do to you? I know your secret!” yelled Melissa.

In response, Yara grabbed Melissa by the chin and narrowed her eyes at the woman. “You’re gravely mistaken if you think I’ll be the only one affected if you spill the beans. Dad, you, and your mother have benefited greatly from the Bowers family for many years. And you think they’ll only come after me?”

With that, Yara withdrew her hand from Melissa, who was taken aback after listening to her.

As much as Melissa wanted to destroy Yara, she knew that the woman had got a point.

Yara then walked over to the mirror to check her swollen cheek before continuing, “You must be fooling yourself if you think you’re going to see Samuel anytime soon. “I don’t know if you know this, but Yandel and Samuel are not on the same level. Not even I get to see the man often, much less you.

“I tried to be reasonable with you because I didn’t want you to do anything rash, but you just can’t stop yourself, can you? Do you think you’re the only one who knows my secret? Dad and Aunt Yvonne are aware too, but they’re way smarter than you since they know when to keep their mouths shut. If you really want to ruin Dexmed Pharmaceutical, then go ahead. We’ll see how you fare after the Bowers decide to pull out of the business.

Suddenly, Melissa gulped and was relieved that she did not get to meet with Samuel that day. If I had told Mr. Bowers the secret, I would’ve ruined my easy life!

After some thought, Melissa apologetically reached out to hold Yara’s hands. “I’m sorry.”

Although Yara disliked Melissa, she decided that it was best to just accept the apology since the woman was willing to keep her secret once again.

“Please forgive me, Yara. I promise I won’t do it again,” pleaded Melissa.

Yara nodded in response, but she knew it was only a matter of time before Melissa exploded like a ticking bomb. I have to figure out a way to shut her up for good.

On the other hand, Natalie had no idea that Melissa and Yara got physical with each other.

All she could think about was the secret Melissa mentioned. Even though she knew that it could be unrelated to the twins, she could not help but imagine the possibility. The twins might have died a long time ago, but I still have to keep searching for their bodies. As their mother, I owe them that.

What happened five years ago became Natalie worst nightmare.

She could still remember the suffocating smell of gasoline as she watched her children who were covered in blood taken away by Yara. No matter how hard she tried, she lost her children anyway in the end.

Natalie’s face was immediately drenched in tears when she thought of that, and at that moment, she could feel two petite pairs of hands trying to comfort her.

### **Chapter 453 Mommy Needs Some Comforting**

When Natalie lowered her head, she found the young siblings staring worriedly at her. “Franklin? Sophia?”

Immediately, she could feel a lump in her throat. If my children were still alive somewhere, they’d probably be as adorable as these two. But I know that it’s very unlikely.

Franklin got even more concerned when he noticed the tears rolling down Natalie’s cheeks. “Please don’t cry. Did somebody bully you?”

“You can tell us. We’ll protect you,” assured Sophia, who got emotional as well when she saw how sad Natalie was.

Because of the little ones’ comforting words, Natalie’s heart completely melted, so she wrapped her arms around the children and embraced them as tightly as she could. “I’m fine; nobody’s bullying me. I just had a bad day, but now that I have you two, I feel so much better!”

“Sophia and I were so worried about you when we saw you crying,” voiced Franklin.

Then, Sophia quickly nodded in agreement. “It’s okay if you feel like crying. We’ll keep you company.”

Seeing how thoughtful the children were, Natalie found the reason to smile once again. “Thank you. I feel much better now because of you two.”

When Samuel got home that evening, he saw Sophia playing with her toy just beside the window as the silvery moonlight showered over her.

The little girl had eyelashes so thick that they looked like little fans above her eyes.

“Why are you still up, Sophia?” inquired Samuel with a slight frown. “You should be asleep at this hour.”

Had it been Franklin, Xavian, or Clayton in the little girl’s place, Samuel would have used a much less gentle tone.

The man had always had a soft spot for Sophia, so he would never raise his voice at her.

Then, Samuel bent down to pick up his already drowsy daughter.

“Daddy, you’re finally home,” uttered Sophia as she rubbed her sleepy eyes.

“Why aren’t you sleeping in your bedroom yet?”

“Mommy cried today, Daddy. I think she remembered something really awful because she looked very sad,” informed Sophia concernedly.

Samuel furrowed his eyebrows the moment he heard his daughter.

“I stayed up because I want to tell you this. We’ve already comforted her, but we think you should do it too. Don’t upset her, okay?” continued Sophia.

Samuel could not help but smile at Sophia when he realized how thoughtful his daughter was. I knew there was a reason I preferred to have daughters over sons. Girls are just more caring and loving.

“Daddy, did you hear what I just said?” questioned Sophia.

“Yes, I did. But you know you can’t stay up this late, right? I’m going to let it slide this time, but you have to promise me that you won’t do it again, okay?”

The little girl then quickly responded with a nod since she did not want to get in trouble. “Okay, Daddy. I promise.”

After tucking Sophia in, Samuel tiptoed out of her room and went to his.

He was greeted with the smell of alcohol as soon as he stepped inside.

Sitting on the balcony was Natalie in her light-colored nightdress, and surrounding her were a couple of beer bottles.

Worried that Natalie would catch a cold sitting out in the open like that, Samuel went over to carry her up from the floor.

“Hey, you’re... you’re home.” Natalie was slurring her words with her eyes half-open.

#### **Chapter 454 Her Soft Spot**

Samuel stayed beside Natalie after carrying her over to the bed.



He brushed his hands lightly across her cheeks, trailing the tear stains on her face. "You did it on purpose, didn't you? You sat on the ground drinking on a cold night because you wanted to get sick deliberately, right?"

As Samuel pointed out, she drank over her limits because the pain of losing her child was too much for her to bear.

She buried her pain deep down in her heart, but her well-concealed grief was let loose that day.

At the end of the day, she was not as tough as she made herself up to be.

All this while, she had been putting up a strong front just to conceal and protect the fragility in her

Now that she was drunk, she could not really hear what Samuel said. She held on to her clothes, mumbling to him softly like a cat. "I-I'm sorry..."

She thought Samuel was angry with her so she apologized to him.

"I'm not trying to control you. I'm just afraid you might catch a cold," Samuel said before pausing to look at her. "I'll ask Gavin to carpet the floor if you like drinking on the ground."

Despite what he said, Natalie still apologized to him over and over again.

"Why do you keep saying you're sorry?"

"I'm sorry... I should've stayed strong," she muttered, clenching his shirt with her small hands. "I promise I will get myself together tomorrow. Just let me do what I want till then."

"What can I do to help?"

"Nothing, really..." Natalie shook her head at him. Sorrow clouded her almond-shaped eyes. "It's too late to do anything now."

Samuel was lost. There was nothing else he could do for her except for giving her a hug.

Natalie cried in his embrace until her strength left her. As time passed, she fell asleep in his arms with stains of tears on her face.

Seeing this, Samuel wiped them off tenderly as memories of what she had been through flooded him.

Yes, she was bright, wise, and talented, but she also had had her fair share of hardships in life.

Some scars were especially difficult to deal with, and he did not want to force her to open up to him. He simply wanted to be there by her side whenever she was in pain.

Just like what he was doing at that moment.

He dipped his head and planted a deep kiss on her lips.

When Natalie felt his warmth, she snuggled in his chest as if she longed for his warm company.

The two of them held each other tightly throughout the night.

They found the comfort and solace they each needed from each other.

The night passed, and morning came. Natalie woke up in Samuel's sturdy embrace and reached out to touch his chest.

"Hasn't anyone told you that you're not supposed to tease a man early in the morning?" A hoarse voice suddenly rang in her ears.

"I'm not teasing you..."

She drew back her hand, but it was already too late. Samuel had already caught her. "Then what were you doing?"

Natalie could not bring herself to say that she was touching him, so she lowered her gaze, trying to shy away.

Samuel found her behavior tantalizing. Although they had slept together before, she was still attractive and bespelling in his eyes.

"What about something more exciting?" he asked.

Actually, Samuel had thoughts of just taking her the night before, but he controlled himself and held his thoughts captive because Natalie was going through a hard time, but when her fingers ran across his chest in the morning, it sparked the passion he had been trying to suppress all this while.

Despite all his efforts to not give in to his desires, Samuel found himself to be completely helpless whenever Natalie was around.

Knowing full well where Samuel's hand was leading hers to, Natalie glared at him. "No."

Yet, the more she turned him away, the more it ignited his desire to conquer her. He flipped around and pushed her under his body.

"Samuel!"

"You'll have to use something else if you're not using your hand."

He did not give her a chance to object. His lips wrapped around hers securely, sealing off any chance of her saying no.

#### Chapter 455 Guiding Her Moves

That kiss sparked off Samuel's unquenchable desires, setting off episodes of passionate intimacy.

When everything was finally over, Samuel carried her in his arms gently, planting a kiss on her lips. "I want you to come to me whenever you face any problem in the future."

Natalie's cheeks were still flushed from earlier on. When she heard this, she stared at him for a moment, wondering what he was talking about.

Soon enough, she figured he must have seen her in her most vulnerable moment yesterday.

"Samuel Bowers."

“Yes?”

Short as his reply was, his voice was enough to tug at her heartstrings.

Her gaze fell as she looked away. Her thick eyelashes blocked Samuel’s gaze from reaching her eyes which were filled with mixed emotions.

“I need more time... I’m used to fighting on my own and trusting no one else but myself,” she mumbled softly. “I need time to learn to open up to you and count on you.”

Natalie knew she would take a long time before she got used to this. It might be easy for other people to depend on their loved ones, but not for her.

Her past had pained her too much.

It was true that she finally came to accept and reciprocate Samuel’s love, but she still had to deal with her past. It would not be easy for her to make progress.

“Nat,” Samuel sighed. “I will wait for you my whole life.

Samuel knew he had no other choice. Despite his playful nature, Natalie seemed to have him under a spell, so much so that he would not settle for anyone else other than her.

Hence, he was willing to spend the rest of his life waiting for her.

This promise warmed Natalie’s heart. She looked up at him and kissed him.

Samuel was startled at first, but he quickly caught on and returned her kiss rhythmically as if he was guiding her moves.

Another round of long and heated coupling commenced until Samuel finally let her go again, rubbing her red lips with his fingers.

“How could you be so sexy?” he asked, drilling his gaze through her. “I can never have enough of you.”

“It’s about time we stop. You still have to go work,” Natalie replied, pushing him off the bed.

Natalie knew it would not be a good idea for both of them to continue staying in bed. She was aware that given his stamina, he could go on for a long time.

Samuel did not mind it at all that Natalie put an end to this. Instead, he took a good look at the shy woman, suddenly feeling satisfied and contented.

She is my woman.

He was just so glad that she was his.

The couple went downstairs to wash up and have breakfast. Natalie was just about to leave the house when Xavian and Clayton pulled her to a corner in the living room.

“What is it?” Natalie looked at the children. “What’s with all the whispering?”

The two children exchanged a glance and nodded at each other.

Clayton spoke first. "Mommy, could you run a diagnosis on someone we know? He's an old grandpa. He's really nice to us, and we really like him. Could you please help him?"

Xavian nodded fervently beside his brother. "Yes, Mommy. He's really nice."

The two children knew their mother was an experienced doctor, but this was the first time they requested that she take a look at a patient.

"Is he the one whom you all asked me to write a prescription for?" Natalie caressed their heads, smiling at them.

"Yes!" they replied in unison.

Natalie was surprised.

Although the boys were only five, Natalie trusted them enough to know that they would be able to have a good judgment for whom they were dealing with.

"I can, but not now. Dream is expanding right now, so I might not have the time to do that, but I can pen down the medication for y'all. This medication is good for heart diseases."

"Thanks, Mommy!"

Natalie took out a sticky note and scribbled down the medications she prescribed on the piece of paper before passing it to Xavian and Clayton.

The kids were elated. The thought of being able to help the old grandpa get better excited them.

As for Natalie, she did not even ask who the children were helping. After saying goodbye to them, she went off to work.

She had a whole day of work ahead of her, so she stayed at the company until dusk.

"Ms. Nichols, I heard there's a black market in the suburban area and that they sell some really precious and rare medication there. Will you be interested in going over to take a look?" Ross asked her when she was about to get off work.

Precious and rare medication?

"Really?" Natalie's curiosity was piqued when she heard that. "Of course!" There was no reason why she should not pay a visit. I should go right now.

### **Chapter 456 Are You Not Interested**

There were three things that Natalie was passionate about. Not money but good wine and medicinal drugs.

If she had to pick one among the three, she would choose the last one.

Over at Dream, she had hidden many rare and precious traditional medicine in her safety deposit box, but despite how much she had in her collection, she was never satiated. She simply had to go and look for new ones whenever there was an opportunity.

Yandel smiled when he saw the thrill on Natalie's face. "See, Ross, I told you she would be interested. You said she wouldn't want to go to the black market, but it turns out you worried too much. She will definitely be up for it as long as she gets to get more drugs."

Ross nodded in agreement. "You could really read her like a book."

"That's for sure!" Yandel smiled proudly. "She might have a lot of people working under her, but I'll always be the one who knows her the best."

Meanwhile, Lia came over and held Natalie by her arm. "Ms. Nichols, may I go with you? I would really love to visit the market."

"Of course!"

"Yay! I'm so excited about it."

A smile curved on Yandel's lips as he gazed at the two women feeling pleased about the trip, but his smile froze when Ross tapped him on the shoulder and challenged him.

"Mr. Moss," he said, "You might have worked with Ms. Nichols for the longest time, but all of us admire her the same. We also know her very well."

Yandel felt rather annoyed, but on another thought, he figured it was a good thing that so many employees really cared for Natalie.

Thinking of that again, put a smile on his face.

The lot set out for the black market in the same car.

The market was located in a diffusely populated suburb, but one could even find people of the most bizarre and impressive backgrounds here.

There were a few tycoons and people from prestigious families who bought assets in the area.

After they got off the car, Natalie and Lia took the lead and walked ahead of Ross and Yandel.

Lia darted her curious gaze around the area as she walked around. She had heard of this place before, but because Lionel was so strict with her, she never got the chance to come to a place like this.

Now that this chance landed her, she told herself she must milk it and enjoy herself to the fullest.

Items like untreated stone, antiques, precious gems and weird drugs were laid out in the hall immaculately for the perusal of customers.

Since Natalie was not interested in other items, she went straight to the display that showed drugs, but to her disappointment, she found nothing intriguing after taking a look.

It was not that those drugs were not rare ones, but rather, they were too old compared to the ones she had back in her safety deposit box. Those exhibited paled in comparison to her own collection, so even after examining them for a long time, she did not make any purchase.

“Is there anything you like, Ms. Nichols?” Ross asked.

“Nothing as of now,” she said honestly. “I don’t think there’s anything that caught my attention. Maybe I’ll come around next time. Perhaps I’ll come across something I like then.”

The four of them roamed around until they came to the area of display for precious stones used for stone-gambling.

There was a pile of untreated stones in the area. They looked painfully regular on the outside, but once they got processed, those jade could be sold for thousands. Given this lucrative profit, many would buy these raw stones.

They were sold in units of a pound. The cheapest one was priced at hundreds per pound, while the most expensive one was at tens of thousands.

If a stone happened to contain premium jade, then its price would leap. However, if it were just a normal piece of rock, then it would be worthless.

Thus, it went without saying that this particular area of the black market was awash with interested buyers.

Many of them became broke because they betted on these stones, while others became rich overnight because they were lucky.

Potential buyers gathered around with magnifying glasses in their hands, scrutinizing raw rocks of different sizes on the racks.

“Do you want to try, Boss?” Yandel asked.

### **Chapter 457 Walking Right Into A Trap**

Natalie won her first sum of capital which enabled her to start Dream from stone-gambling.

Yandel was there when she won the bet. She was only twenty-six back then. He witnessed how she came from a nobody to a big shot in the business world.

She was way thinner years back, but her eyes were spirited and observant. Even back then, Yandel could see the sparkles of determination shining in her eyes.

Her gaze was telling that winning was her only option, and that conviction made her stand out in the crowd.

When Yandel and Natalie were in a similar situation after all these years, both of them could not help but reminisce on the past.

"I'll pass," Natalie said, shaking her head. "What are the odds of actually getting a jade? I had nothing to lose years back, so I wouldn't mind trying. Come to think of it, it's rather ironic. I have anything I ever wanted now, but I lost the courage to even give it a try."

When Lia and Ross overheard their conversation, they looked at Natalie in surprise, not knowing what to say about their unexpected discovery.

Both of them could not believe that their chairwoman used to do something this relentless. In fact, they wondered what was it that she could not do.

While they were looking at untreated stones, Natalie suddenly spotted a familiar figure.

It was Thomas. Beside him, was a fetching woman in a gown.

Her black and red gown augmented her fair skin, making her look all the more endearing as she lay in Thomas' embrace.

This woman was not Yvonne, Thomas' current wife.

Natalie was standing not far away from both of them. Their distance was close enough for Natalie to feel the intimate dynamic between the two of them. It was obvious that Thomas relished her company.

Back when he was still courting Yvonne, he was even willing to chase Natalie's mother out from the Nichols family because he wanted to marry Yvonne. Natalie did not expect him to turn his back on his wife again.

She glared at them fiercely as they walked past.

Yandel and Ross stopped and turned around when they realized something was amiss.

"What's the matter, Boss?" Yandel asked.

"Over there."

He trailed Natalie's hostile gaze and saw Thomas and the other woman.

Everyone's face darkened when they saw the couple.

"You know what? I just changed my mind," Natalie mumbled angrily, clenching her fists. "Since I ran into someone I know today, I might as well just try my luck with those stones, but before that..."

With just one gaze at one another, Yandel, Ross, and Lia knew just what to do.

"Is there anything we can do?"

Natalie assigned each of them tasks and they went off to carry out their assignment.

As for Natalie, she stayed where she was to wait and see how things would turn out. There was not a single hint of mercy in her eyes as she glared at Thomas and the woman.

Mom wouldn't have died just like that if it weren't for him.

It so happened that there was a fresh pile of raw rocks coming into the black market that day. Most of them were big and filled with weathering rinds. Judging from the appearance of these jade stones,

customers present thought those stones had the potential of turning out to be jade, but Natalie shook her head when she saw them.

She could tell that the rinds on those stones were partially natural and partially artificial. They were painted on manually since there was a high demand for jade stones with weathering crusts, so sellers were always at an advantage when since the demand was higher than the supply.

They went to great lengths to imitate real jade stones.

In fact, they did such a spectacular job that it would take an extremely well-versed stone-gambler to know the difference.

Just as Natalie was looking at the stones, Yandel went up close to her and whispered in her ears, "Everything went as planned. That woman fell for it."

"Give me a second, Yandel. I'll go change into my hyper-realistic mask."

"Sure thing."

Yandel knew what Natalie had in mind. Just the sheer thought of it excited him.

Natalie returned after just a brief moment. When she came back again, she was already wearing the mask she wore when she went to the Nichols family as the "secretary".

"Put your hand over my shoulder," she said, pulling Yandel's arm.

"Are you sure?"

Yandel's hand moved stiffly across Natalie's shoulder. Cold sweat broke out on his palms as he thought about Samuel's reaction if he were to see this.

## **Chapter 458 Samuel Is Here Too**

"Come on, Yandel. Just do as I say." Natalie looked at him from the corner of her eyes and insisted.

Yandel felt unsure about it, but still, he played along.

Little did he know, Samuel was indeed sitting in his office and sipping from his cup of tea as he observed their every move from a screen in his office.

Samuel started this black market when he was only eighteen. Since he did not launch this project under the family's name, this was considered his own asset.

It was put under the management of another proxy, Weston Yount, so no one knew Samuel was the real owner. All they knew was that this black market was worth a handsome amount of money.

It so happened that Samuel was there that day to see how things were running in the market. He did not expect to run into Natalie here.



If it were not for some urgent work he had to attend to, he would have gone to her. Although he could not spend time with her, he still wanted to know what she was up to on his turf, so he asked Weston to show him the surveillance footage.

It went without saying that Weston was not aware of Samuel's intention. He thought Samuel wanted to know how things functioned on the ground at the market, so he did his job and showed him the footage, waiting for his comments solemnly.

Samuel noticed that Natalie vanished from his sight for a while. When she reappeared, she was wearing a mask that Samuel had never seen before, but still, he was able to recognize her.

Just what is she up to?

Samuel smirked looking at the mischievous woman.

Meanwhile, Weston was still running Samuel through every single procedure in their operation with undiminished dedication. He was totally unaware that Samuel was not paying attention to him until Samuel's cup fell to the ground.

Crash!

When Samuel saw Yandel putting his arm over Natalie's shoulder, the cup in his hand slipped.

Weston jumped at the noise. More importantly, he felt it was a shame that the priceless antique passed down generations ago just shattered.

Did I say something wrong?

"I'll get you another one right away, Mr. Bowers," the poor man quickly said, while he thought hard about what he said in the past few minutes.

Gosh, I swear I didn't do anything wrong!

Don't tell me breathing itself is a sin.

Weston could only conjecture in his mind because when he met Samuel's icy cold glare, he knew he would be digging his own grave if he were to ask some stupid question.

He immediately went to get another cup of tea while Samuel stared at Yandel from the screen.

"Achoo!"

Over on the other side, Yandel sneezed out of nowhere.

He suddenly felt as if someone was watching him and that feeling sent a chill down his spine.

"Are you okay, Yandel?"

Yandel badly wanted to tell her that he did not feel like he could do it, but Ross was already assigned another task, and there was no one else available other than Yandel himself.

"Of course..."

“Fine. I want you to pay close attention,” she said, passing him a quick glance. “I’m really not in a good mood today. I swear I have to burn a hole in his pocket. I want to make him pay for what he did.”

Yandel shuddered at the sound of it, but still, he hardened his gaze and nodded unreservedly. “I’ll do everything I can to assist you, Boss.”

“Good.”

Yandel held her shoulder tight and went over to Thomas.

The woman had just returned to Thomas’ side. From her facial expression, it seemed like things did not go as she wished.

Thomas looked at her tenderly, trying to coax her. “What’s wrong, Yeva? I thought everything was just fine a few seconds ago.”

“Seriously,” Yeva retorted, “I’m better than your wife. She’s just a haggard old woman. The only thing is that she is your wife and I’m your mistress. I was just thinking about this, and it really made me so angry.”

“Come on, she might be my wife, but you’re the most important person in my heart,” he said, pinching her cheek playfully. “I lavish you with all the money I have. What she has is just a tiny portion of what you get. Tell me, is there anything you want from this place? I will get it for you.”

“I want to get some jade stones. I want to try my luck,” Yeva answered, pointing at the newly-arrived stocks.

“I thought you said you only wanted to watch. Since when are you interested in stone-gambling?”

“I just feel like it.”

When Thomas saw that his lover was pissed, he just did as he told without showing any sign of anger.

Natalie and Yandel approached them, but Natalie looked away when they came close. She hated Thomas so much she had to look away to conceal the antipathy in her eyes.

“Oh, hi!” Thomas suddenly greeted Thomas. “Isn’t this Mr. Nichols from Dexmed Pharmaceutical?”