

Happiness 524-536

The Promise of Happiness

### **Chapter 524 The Group Photo**

Clayton's words really touched Malcolm. Natalie used to call him "Old Man" and teased him. Hence, it never came to his mind that she would compliment him in the face of her kids.

"Ha! Did you hear that? I'm not lying to you. I'm really your daddy and mommy's master," Malcolm asked gently.

With that, Franklin and Sophia greeted him courteously, "Mr. Trevor, nice to meet you!"

Malcolm was tickled pink at the twins' mellifluous voice.

Shortly after, he distributed the local food products from the highland to all of them before heading toward the counter to order six sets of kid's meals. Four out of the six sets were for the four kids, whereas he needed two sets to fill himself up.

The unique sight of a white-haired elderly with four adorable kids was undoubtedly an eye-catching view in the fast-food restaurant. There were even reverberations of the customers giving compliments in the entire place.

"Look at the four adorable kids! They must be the elderly's great-grandchildren! He's really blessed to have kids with such good looks alongside him!"

"I agree with you! I can barely take my eyes off the girl! She's even prettier than other child stars on TV!"

"She looks exceptionally sweet and adorable at such a young age. I'm sure she'll look even more gorgeous when she grows up!"

Malcolm could not resist wondering who Franklin and Sophia's biological mother was.

After swallowing the French fries in his mouth, he wiped the tomato sauce off his lips and cut the crap. "Franklin, Sophia, who is your biological mommy? Has she ever visited you throughout these years?"

Xavian and Clayton held their breath as they were curious about that too.

Craning their necks, the duo asked inquisitively, "Yeah! I seldom hear you mention your mommy. What kind of person is she?"

In a split second, Sophia's hand trembled uncontrollably. As a result, some corns dropped from her spoon.

As she felt a prickle of inexplicit uneasiness, she did not know how she should answer any question about Yara.

On the other hand, Franklin wiped off the excess oil on the fried chicken wing with his handkerchief as he replied nonchalantly, "We're clueless about that too! I've only heard that Daddy doesn't like her.

Anyway, she had passed away not long after we were born. We are the only ones who live with Daddy all these years..."

Franklin was reluctant to talk about Yara. Thus, he would rather lie that she had passed away.

Sophia nodded instantly and added, "Franklin is right. That's the case."

It never occurred to Malcolm that Franklin and Sophia had gone through such pathetic moments. He let out a deep sigh and consoled the twins, "It's all right. I believe there will only be joy and happiness in your life from now onwards. All of you have a complete family now with your daddy and mommy. Other than that, all the others around you, including my wife and I, will shower you with unlimited love..."

That's true! The moment Natalie and Samuel's figures flashed across the four kids' minds, blissful smiles broke out on their faces.

Recalling how his old pal blew trumpet blissfully about his granddaughter-in-law bearing fraternal twins, Malcolm could not help but snort inwardly. Pfft! Even though I can't hope for my grandson to get married in the near future, I'm surrounded by four adorable kids now! Haha! The four of them are definitely more stunning than his twins! After all, he only has a pair of twins, but there are two pairs alongside me now!

Malcolm was over the moon. He was sure as h\*ll that the four kids looked better and were more intelligent than his boastful friend's great-grandchildren!

Prevailed by his vanity, he whipped out his phone from his pocket and requested excitedly, "Everyone, mind if we take a group photo together? I want to send it to my wife and best friend so they can have a look. I'll be able to look at our photo whenever I miss you after I'm back to the highland again."

The four kids liked him very much and were more than happy to have a group photo with him.

Malcolm grabbed the opportunity to carry Sophia in his arms.

Undeniably, as the only girl among the four kids, she was just the sweetest cotton candy. Argh! How I wish to bring her back to the highland with me!

Click! Click! After a few clicks on the phone, he looked at the group photo taken gleefully. Soon, he sent it to Donna and Kenneth.

### **Chapter 525 Have You No Shame**

Meanwhile, Kenneth was enjoying a live opera performance.

As the climax approached, he accidentally took a glimpse of his phone and noticed that he had received a message from an old friend who had been out of touch for a long time.

So, he waved his hand and gestured for the singer to pause, promptly silencing the band and orchestra.

After that, he took a sip of tea and calmly swiped his finger across the screen to find a photo of an old man with four kids.

As soon as Kenneth saw that, he immediately spat all the tea out.

He had seen Malcolm Trevor's face before that, so he naturally recognized the man.

However, Kenneth was surprised that he actually recognized the kids as well.

Among them were two of his great-grandchildren, as well as Xavian and Clayton, who saved his life.

Why are the four of them together?

Attached to the photo, was some taunting words.

Hmph! You have two great-grandchildren, but I have four! That's twice what you have!

While the performers were waiting to continue, Kenneth was completely caught up by the message and ordered the butler to get a car ready. "I'm heading over right now."

"But Sir, what about the performance?"

"I'm no longer interested!" Kenneth's mind was consumed by the photo and no longer wanted to continue with the performance.

The butler was unsure of what was going on. He thought that Kenneth had some urgent business to attend to, so he quickly arranged for a ride.

On the way, Kenneth could not help but call Malcolm.

As soon as Malcolm picked up, Kenneth could hear the blaring music of a fast-food restaurant as well as the kids' laughter.

"Where are you now?"

"Me? I'm enjoying fried chicken and fries at a fast-food restaurant," Malcolm mumbled, "Hehe. You saw the picture I sent you, right?"

At that moment, Kenneth was not so much interested in Malcolm's situation. The only thing on his mind was the four kids and why they were with Malcolm.

"Which restaurant is that? I'm going over!"

"Why? Did you miss me that much?" Malcolm smugly said after he swallowed the French fries in his mouth. "I'm at the McDonald's on Jennen East Street. It's good that you're coming. You can see how cute these little sweethearts are!"

"You just wait right there."

"I'll wait for you just here."

After the call ended, Kenneth told the driver where Malcolm was and asked him to step on it.

Meanwhile, Malcolm smiled at the children who were indulging in their ice creams and said, "You guys can slow down. There's no rush. A good friend of mine is coming over."

The four played along and nodded.

Soon after, a Rolls-Royce Phantom stopped right in front of the restaurant, and Kenneth hurried inside with his cane in hand.

Immediately, he spotted Malcolm and the children at a corner by the window as they were rather eye-catching in the restaurant.

The kids had ice cream all over their faces, looking like adorable little kittens.

At that moment, Kenneth could no longer hold in his confusion, so he hurried over to their table.

Malcolm saw him coming and stood up. "Let's see you brag about your twins now, Kenneth," he said with raised eyebrows.

However, before he could continue, Kenneth's expression had already darkened as he questioned, "How dare you show off in front of me. Have you no shame, Malcolm Trevor?"

### **Chapter 526 Four Puzzled Faces**

Malcolm was confused.

These kids are my apprentice's children. Why can't I show them off?

"Great-grandpa..." Franklin and Sophia looked at Kenneth and called out to him after they lowered the ice cream in their hands.

Even Xavian and Clayton recognized him and said, "Grandpa..."

As soon as the children addressed Kenneth, they all looked at each other, puzzled.

"Xavian, Clayton, what is going on?" Franklin raised an eyebrow and asked. "Do you guys know our Great-grandpa?"

"He's your Great-grandpa?" Xavian and Clayton pointed at Kenneth.

Sophia nodded affirmatively.

"Mmhm. He's daddy's Grandpa, which makes him our Great-grandpa!"

Hearing that gave Malcolm an instant realization. "You're Samuel's grandfather?" he said while pointing at Kenneth.

"That's right! Samuel is my grandson, and Franklin and Sophia are my great-grandchildren." Kenneth stared at Malcolm. "Why are my great-grandchildren here with you? What in the world is going on?"

"I'm your grandson's master. Is it not normal for me to be with them?" Malcolm's mind was blown. "This is incredible! Even though I knew you both had the same last names, I actually never thought about making that connection."

How complicated yet surprising for this to be the case.

Once things got cleared up, Malcolm and Kenneth both had their jaws wide open for quite a bit before closing them shut.

The two met each other after they got old, and neither of them ever talked about anything related to money. So, their conversations mainly revolved around health and current issues. No one had any interest in the other's family background.

Neither of them would have expected that one was Samuel's grandfather while the other Samuel's master.

At the same time, Xavian and Clayton also understood what was going on, that the man they saved was Samuel's grandfather.

"So you're our stepdad's grandpa, Grandpa," Xavian said excitedly.

"That's right! That means we'll have to address you like how Franklin and Sophia address you, right, Grandpa?" Clayton chimed in and nodded.

Nevertheless, Kenneth furrowed his brows and looked at the two at the mention of stepdad.

"What stepdad? Who's your stepdad!"

"Samuel Bowers of course!" Clayton answered seriously with his chin rested on his palm. "He's going out with my mommy and they're very sweet together."

Xavian and Clayton are both Nichols. On top of that, their mother is in a relationship with Samuel. Which means...

Kenneth came to a realization and asked, "Is your mother, Natalie Nichols?"

"That's right!"

"That's right!"

The two answered at the same time, and that answer gave Kenneth quite the shock.

Kenneth hated Natalie's guts. To him, she was a vixen who bewitched Samuel.

It was hard for him to imagine that the woman that he loathed was the woman that raised Xavian and Clayton to who they were. Was she the one that gave me all those prescriptions as well?

That realization felt like a slap on Kenneth's face.

"Do you know our mommy?" Xavian asked excitedly with his chin rested on both his hands. "Now you understand how great Mommy is, right?"

Franklin pouted and rolled his eyes at Kenneth. "Not only does he know her, he actually doesn't like her!"

"This is why we don't play with him!" Sophia chimed in. "There's something wrong with Great-grandpa's eyes. He can't read properly, nor can he judge someone properly!"

### **Chapter 527 Too Many Surprises**

At that moment, Xavian, Clayton, and even Malcolm's expressions darkened.

"So you were lying, Grandpa. You don't like our mommy," Xavian said with a saddened expression.

“Don’t feel sad, Xavian.” Clayton took Xavian’s hand and turned toward Kenneth. “Since Grandpa hates Mommy, we’ll just have to cut ties with him!”

Even though the brothers were close with Kenneth, Natalie was the only choice they would make if forced to choose between the two.

Kenneth felt terrible and was at a loss for word.

Right then, Malcolm spoke begrudgingly. “Kenneth, let me tell you this. Your grandson is my senior apprentice, while Natalie is my junior apprentice. She’s a great person. Your great-granddaughter has already said it as nicely as she could. If it were me, I would have said that you were blind!”

Kenneth had experienced too many surprises in that one day, but what Malcolm said still gave him another round of shock.

“What did you just say? She’s your apprentice as well?”

“Of course!” Malcolm brushed his beard and replied angrily. “I’m not the type that would accept apprentices on a whim. That’s why I only have three apprentices so far. Your grandson is one of them, and the second is someone you don’t know. Natalie is the third!”

“Is she that good?”

“What nonsense is this!” Malcolm slammed his hand on the table. “Even though she’s a woman, she’d be better than your grandson if she grew up in a better environment! She always tells me how proud she is to have me as her master. But let me tell you, in a few years’ time, I would be the one proud to have her as my apprentice!”

“Then, the prescriptions that I showed you...”

“Don’t tell me Natalie was the one who wrote them?” Malcolm figured it out immediately.

At that point, no matter how reluctant Kenneth felt, the facts were all laid out in front of him.

“Yes.”

“No wonder I thought those prescriptions were amazing!” Malcolm slapped his thigh in ecstasy. “They were from my favorite apprentice! How could they not be?”

With that, gathering ended on a rather sour note.

Malcolm left the fast-food restaurant with the children and left Kenneth there alone.

Kenneth could not bear the contempt the kids and his friend had for him and crumpled to the seat behind him as soon as his legs gave in.

How could this be?

He had always thought that Natalie somehow bewitched Samuel and talked his great-grandchildren into hating their own mother.

With that being his impression of Natalie, Kenneth never sought to understand more about her. He would have never expected that what he heard that day would shatter everything he thought he knew about Natalie.

In the end, there was nothing he could say.

If it were not for the outstanding education she gave her two children, he would not be sitting there at all.

Suddenly, he was reminded of the phone call from before and realized that the familiar voice he was talking to was none other than Natalie's.

He figured only a woman with a heart of gold would treat an old total stranger that patiently and considerately.

In a daze, Kenneth returned to the Bowers residence.

And as soon as he got off the car, the butler noticed that Kenneth did not look so good, so he immediately offered assistance.

"Sir, are you okay? Let me help you inside."

Kenneth stayed quiet, but the exhaustion got the better of him, so he had no choice but to allow the butler to support him along the way.

"Sir, Ms. Yara just arrived," the butler told Kenneth. "She's waiting for you in the study."

"Let's head over then."

Upon Kenneth's arrival at the study, Yara immediately went up to them and shot a look at the butler.

The butler caught on and let go of Kenneth to let Yara take his place beside him.

That said, Kenneth instinctively brushed her off before she could place her hand on him.

### **Chapter 529 Ulterior Motive**

"Great-grandpa often buys me strawberry pudding in the past." Sophia's eyes brimmed with tears as she recounted. "But now that he has been sweet-talked by that bad woman, he doesn't believe my words anymore!"

Likewise, Franklin heaved a deep sigh.

He had immense love for Kenneth. However, that reason was not compelling enough for him to compromise and acknowledge Yara as their mother.

Xavian and Clayton took out two aircraft models from the cabinet.

"This is..."

"Franklin, this is a gift from your great-grandpa to us!" Clayton said with a serious look on his face. "He mentioned that he has got someone to prepare him three models, and one of them is for you. But because you all aren't on good terms, he didn't dare gift it to you."

With his eyes glued on the plane model, Franklin's expression changed a little.

"Great-grandpa..."

Xavian nodded. "Clayton and I have no idea he's your great-grandpa at that time. We could tell his love for his grandchildren through our interaction with him then."

The heads of the four kids drooped over their shoulders, and the brows on their adorable faces scrunched tightly.

Indeed, there was nothing they had to be doubtful of toward each other.

Be it toward Sophia, Franklin, Xavian, or Clayton, Kenneth loved them equally. Nonetheless, there was no way they could continue to get along with him if he remained resentful toward Natalie.

Just as worry shrouded the three brothers, Sophia smacked herself on her head and exclaimed, "I have an idea! Why don't we make Great-grandpa change his mind about Mommy?"

It was as though her words came as enlightenment that the boys instantly agreed in unison.

"That's right! Perhaps Old Mr. Bowers doesn't like her because he hasn't got to know Mommy well!"

"Given that we like Mommy so much, there's no way Great-grandpa will not like her!"

"We can definitely try that!"

And so, the four of them huddled together and started rattling off ideas they had in their mind. Confidence grew within them as they came up with a perfect plan.

In the blink of an eye, it was three days later.

Malcolm was getting ready to head back to Mount Surya, and Natalie and Samuel wanted to send him off at the airport.

At the thought that he was leaving soon, Malcolm could not help but feel his heart twinged with pain.

"Old Man, I've peeled this for you." Natalie pulled out a bag of de-shelled pumpkin seeds and stuffed it in his hand. "You can munch on them if you're craving a snack during the journey."

Malcolm took the bag of pumpkin seeds.

"I knew you adore me the most among my three apprentices." As he said that, he threw an annoyed glance at Samuel. "Look at you. You're in no way comparable to Natalie."

Samuel uttered, "Nat has never cracked pumpkin seeds for me. If you continue showing off, I'll make sure you won't be able to bring them onto the plane with you."

Sensing the man's immense jealousy, Malcolm hastily clutched the bag tightly in his arms.

I've always thought Samuel is uninterested in women, not even the prettiest ones. But look at how possessive he is now... Tsk tsk. How scary!

"Samuel, I'd like to have a word with Natalie alone."



Samuel turned and headed to the vending machine not too far away to buy a drink for Natalie so that Malcolm would have some time alone with Natalie.

“Master...”

Malcolm advised, “Dexmed Pharmaceutical should have long lost its footing ever since Arnold’s passing. But given it manages to survive and even remain so glamorous on the outside, I bet there must be a powerful hidden force in the dark. I know you’ve been bothered by your mother and your granddad’s matter. When I left the mountains this time, I mobilized my connections to help you investigate in secret.

However, I couldn’t find any helpful information. I’ve thought about it; the only possibility is that the hidden force is too powerful, and that’s why even the people I’ve enlisted couldn’t seem to advance in investigations. I’m sure the hidden force must have ulterior motives that he’d agree to help Dexmed Pharmaceutical so readily.”

### **Chapter 530 A Ruse To Gain Sympathy**

Despite being mentally prepared, Natalie could not contain her shock after hearing Malcolm’s words.

“Natalie, I’m old and no longer have the drive and energy I used to have when younger...” Malcolm endearingly patted Natalie’s head. “The dead are in the past; what matters at present are those who are still alive. Since you’ve already found your true love and happiness, perhaps keeping yourself safe is of utmost importance to you now.”

“I know...”

“It’s good that you understand.”

Before Malcolm could pull a smile, Natalie’s almond-shaped eyes glinted with stubbornness as she remarked, “Knowing is one thing, but being able to do it is something else. I know you’re doing it for the good of me, but there’s no way I can give up just like this. I must find out the truth about my granddad’s death. He has always been a benevolent and merciful man all his life. I can’t just let him die without reasons.”

At once, Malcolm knew Natalie had a mind of her own. Despite being able to relate to her feelings, he could not bring himself to allow her to risk herself.

He heaved a sigh. “Natalie, remember that we will always be here for you. No matter how difficult or dangerous situations are outside, the members of Mount Surya will always be your pillar of support.”

“Thank you.” Natalie felt her eyes welling up with tears as she said that.

Unable to stand the sight of a tear-filled farewell, Malcolm waved his hand in dismissal. “I can’t stand women crying. Please don’t cry. Otherwise, Samuel will definitely find trouble with me for making you cry!”

Natalie was amused by his comment.

“Master, have a safe trip.”

“Sure.”

With that, he trotted toward the boarding gate, one hand dragging his luggage and the other tightly grasping onto the bag of pumpkin seeds.

“Can’t bear to see Master leave?” Samuel lovingly looked at Natalie and gently wiped the tears forming at the corners of her eyes. “We can always find time to visit him and Mrs. Trevor at Mount Surya every year.”

“All right.” She nodded profusely.

After getting out of the airport, the couple headed in different directions.

Samuel returned to Centurion Corporation to handle work matters, while Natalie headed back to the Bowers residence to teach Sophia the basics of medicine.

Even though Sophia was small in size, her concentration level for learning was relatively high. She could even bury her little head in the books for a long time.

There were many times when she would come across rarely used terms in the traditional medicine guides. Yet, she had never once grumbled about it. Instead, she would patiently try to recognize and understand those words.

While the girl was busy studying, Franklin, Xavian, and Clayton sat by her the entire time.

Franklin would search through the dictionary, Clayton would help her write notes, and Xavian would make fresh fruit juices for Sophia.

Seeing the great bond between the four children, Natalie felt a warm sensation within her.

About three hours later, Sophia was still eager for more knowledge. Nevertheless, Natalie was worried that the intense lessons would take a toll on the little girl’s eyes and health, so she did not continue teaching her.

Having taught Sophia all this while, Natalie realized how the former had a true knack for studying medicine, which had far exceeded her own potential when she was young. Fortunately, she had made the right decision so that the girl’s talents did not go to waste.

“Mommy...” Taking a sip of the strawberry juice Xavian made, Sophia called out sweetly.

“What is it, Sophia?”

“I...” The little girl secretly pinched herself on her thigh to summon her tears. “I miss Great-grandpa...”

As much as she missed Kenneth, it was all part of making the act more convincing that she would put in so much strength to pinch herself.

At the sight of Sophia’s act, Clayton hurriedly shot Franklin a look.

Seeing that, Franklin understood and forcefully pinched his butt and chimed in, “I-I... I miss Great-grandpa too...”

Without a doubt, Natalie understood the emotions the children were going through.

It certainly would not be a good feeling to be torn between two of their loved ones—one being Kenneth and the other being herself.

They're, after all, Samuel's children and Kenneth's blood-related great-grandchildren. As the saying goes, filial piety is the foundation of all virtues. There's no reason I should forbid the kids from missing their great-grandpa.

Natalie bent down to look at them in their eyes. "Sophia, Franklin, if you guys miss Great-grandpa, you can always go and visit him."

### **Chapter 531 Let Her Get More Sleep**

"Hurray!" Sophia clapped her hands in excitement.

"Can we meet him tonight? We really miss Great-grandpa so much!" Franklin suggested.

Watching the scene from one side, Xavian and Clayton saw an opportunity and quickly lent a helping hand.

"Franklin and Sophia really miss their great-grandpa a lot, Mommy! They've mentioned it a couple of times when they're with Xavian and me!"

"Mommy, please let them meet their great-grandpa tonight!"

Seeing how the kids were eager about meeting Kenneth, and since there was nothing to disagree about, Natalie nodded. "Sure, we'll visit him tonight."

With that, she instructed Gavin to make arrangements for their transport.

It was as though Gavin was overwhelmed with guilt that his gaze was floating around as he stuttered, "T-The chauffeurs have all taken a day off. T-They won't be able to send Mr. Franklin and Ms. Sophia over to the manor..."

"They've all gone on a break?" Natalie narrowed her eyes as she questioned.

"Y-Yeah... A-All on a break." Gavin nodded firmly.

"Are there any cars available?"

"Yes." Gavin paused for a split second. "You want to-"

Without hesitation, Natalie interjected, "Gavin, can you give me the address to the Bowers manor? Franklin and Sophia miss their great-grandpa. I'll drive them there to visit him and bring them back afterward."

"That..."

Afraid that Kenneth would give Natalie a hard time while at the manor, Gavin seemed hesitant with his words.

But noticing the pleading gazes of Franklin and Sophia, Gavin let out a few dry coughs as he swallowed back those words he had wanted to say.

“The GPS has the address. I’ll get you a car right away.”

Not long after, a car pulled up in front of the Bowers residence.

Natalie got into the driver’s seat, Franklin took the passenger seat, and Sophia, Clayton, and Xavian entered the vehicle’s back seats.

“Sophia and Franklin are going to meet their great-grandpa. Why are the two of you in the car, Xavian, Clayton?” Natalie asked with her brows furrowed.

“Mommy, let Xavian and I follow along since we have nothing else to do either. I promise we won’t create trouble for you.” Clayton raised his arm as he said that.

“Yeah! Let us go together! I promise you that we won’t get into trouble.” Xavian also stuck his hand up high.

Being very clear that the pair of boys always knew their limits and would not go overboard, Natalie gave the green light to the boys’ request.

“All right!”

Natalie stepped on the accelerator, and at once, the car sped off toward the Bowers manor.

After around forty minutes, the car stopped steadily in front of the location.

“We’re here.”

Franklin unbuckled his seatbelt and turned to look at Natalie. “Mommy, aren’t you getting off the car and following us inside?”

“No.” Natalie shook her head and patiently explained, “You should know that Great-grandpa doesn’t like me. You all can head in by yourselves. I’ll stay out here so that I won’t ruin the atmosphere.”

Franklin sighed. It did not come off as a surprise to him that Natalie would refuse to accompany them back to the Bowers manor.

Thankfully, the four kids had thought of a plan beforehand.

“Mommy, it seems like Sophia has fallen asleep.” Xavian leaned close to Natalie and whispered. “She has been very hardworking while learning medicine from you. I bet she must be tired out after the class earlier since she was revising through the whole of last night.”

The sight of Sophia deep asleep with her arms wrapped tightly around her bunny plushie came into Natalie’s eyes as soon as she turned around.

Her breathing was slow and steady. It almost felt like she was in a deep and cozy sleep.

In that instant, Natalie had a sudden revelation—she had completely overlooked that Sophia was only but a young child. Despite her high attention span, how will she be able to withstand long hours of learning when even most adults can’t?

Franklin deliberately remarked, "Sophia keeps saying she wants to meet Great-grandpa just now. How can she fall asleep now? Clayton, hurry and wake her up!"

"No problem." Clayton agreed readily.

Just as he was about to give Sophia a nudge, Natalie hurriedly tried to stop him. "She's so exhausted that she fell asleep. Why are you all forcing her awake? Let her get more sleep!"

### **Chapter 532 I Thought You Would Not Talk To Me**

Franklin clenched his grip tightly on his seatbelt.

We've spent so much time discussing the plan to make Great-grandpa have a better impression of Mommy. If they never get to meet each other, how will he change his perception of her?

He then stealthily pinched himself on his buttock again, and tears welled up on the rims of his eyes again. "Mommy, Sophia has fallen asleep, but she has been looking forward to visiting Great-grandpa. Can you carry her inside? That way, she'll surely be over the moon when she wakes up to see Great-grandpa later..."

Franklin and Sophia had always been sensible children and had barely ever requested Natalie to do anything for them.

Hence, it would never cross Natalie's mind that the four children would devise a plan against her to improve her relationship with Kenneth.

Natalie turned to look at Franklin. Seeing tears swirling around his eyes, she could not bear to reject his earnest plea.

"All right, I'll leave after leaving you guys to your great-grandpa."

Unbuckling her seatbelt, Natalie opened the car door and got out of the driver's seat. She then walked to the back seats to carry Sophia, who was still in a deep slumber.

In truth, the little girl was not asleep.

Worried that Natalie would see through the trick, she clenched her fingers so tightly they were nearly sweating. Her eyes remained shut, not daring to steal any peeks at all.

"Clayton, Xavian, I should be back shortly. Wait for me in the car in the meantime."

"Okay."

"All right."

Xavian and Clayton's replies were coherent.

Natalie then sauntered toward the manor while carrying Sophia in one of her arms and holding Franklin's hand with another.

When the security at the manor saw the arrival of the two children, whom they had not seen for a long time, they were elated. Besides clearing the way immediately to allow their entry, they also specially reported their arrival to Kenneth.

Throughout their way in, Franklin had to guide Natalie since she had never visited the manor before.

“Mommy, this way.”

And under Franklin’s guidance, Natalie finally arrived before the luxurious and impressive-looking manor, with Sophia in her arms.

As Kenneth had received word of his precious grandchildren’s arrival, he could not contain the excitement of meeting them and thus was pacing around the room with his walking stick.

“Oh my... Franklin and Sophia, my precious babies...”

As he muttered to himself, he walked out to see the two children and, at the same time, Natalie.

“Y-You...” Kenneth’s pupils constricted at the sight of the woman before his eyes.

It did not cross Natalie’s mind that she would run into Kenneth since she had only wanted to pass Franklin and Sophia to the butler before heading back to the car.

Startled, it took her a moment to recover to her senses. But just as she was about to explain, Franklin let go of her hand and hopped over to Kenneth happily.

“Great-grandpa...”

Perhaps because Kenneth had not heard Franklin’s crisp and clear voice for a long while, it struck the former at the soft spot in his chest.

“Oh, my dear child!” He bent over and pulled Franklin into his warm embrace, unwilling to let him go.

“I miss you so much, Great-grandpa!”

“Me too.” A pang of melancholy surged within Kenneth at once.

“Great-grandpa, not only do I miss you. Sophia misses you a lot too!” Franklin pointed his tiny finger toward Sophia, whom Natalie was carrying in her arms.

As though the siblings were communicating through telepathy, Sophia rubbed her eyes at that very moment. She cast her sleepy gaze to Kenneth and sweetly said, “Great-grandpa!”

As soon as Natalie put Sophia down on the ground, the latter outstretched her two tiny arms and ran toward Kenneth.

“Great-grandpa, I miss you so much...”

The little girl’s sweet voice instantly left streams of hot tears flowing down Kenneth’s wrinkled face.

How could anyone, especially Kenneth, not love the two adorable kids?

“I-I... I thought you two said you won’t talk to me anymore?” Kenneth’s heart ached terribly. “Why did you change your mind to visit me?”

That sentence was what Franklin and Sophia had been anticipating.

Without hesitation, the two kids pointed their fingers in the direction of Natalie.

“It’s Mommy!”

### **Chapter 533 Our Hard Work Is Wasted**

Natalie was confused when Franklin and Sophia pointed at her in unison.

Since their drivers happened to be on leave, Natalie had to drive them to Kenneth’s house.

“I-”

When Natalie wanted to explain, Franklin quickly interjected, “Great-grandpa, I initially didn’t want to talk to you. However, Mommy said that blood is thicker than water. She explained that since you’re Daddy’s grandpa and our great-grandpa, we can’t be mad at you but should love you instead.”

Sophia chimed in with her cute voice, “Indeed! We used to think that you’re overly petty, but Mommy asked us not to give you the cold shoulder because of her. She also said you’ll be heartbroken if we don’t talk to you on purpose.”

Natalie was rendered speechless.

Although Natalie did say something similar before, they described it in a way that she was seemingly a noble and righteous woman.

As Kenneth gazed at Natalie, the sternness on his face slowly faded away. “Is it true? Did she say so to you?”

Franklin raised his eyebrows. “Of course! Didn’t you see that she carried Sophia with one arm and held my hand with the other when entering your house? Why would she do so if she was reluctant to let us see you?”

Immediately, Sophia nodded her head in response. “Yes! Great-grandpa, my brother and I are only five years old. Since we don’t know much, how can we lie to you?”

After a short moment of confusion, Natalie finally realized what the children intended to do.

They want to help me make a good impression before Kenneth!

Before Natalie could say anything, Kenneth invited her in. “Why don’t you come in and have a seat?”

“Well-”

When Natalie hesitated, Kenneth heaved a sigh and said, “As an elder, I’ve invited you. I believe you won’t turn me down, right?”

“No...”

“In that case, come in and sit down.” With that, Kenneth entered the house with his walking stick.

Natalie had no choice but to follow Kenneth into the living room.

After everyone was seated, the butler asked the maids to prepare tea for Natalie and yogurt for Franklin and Sophia.

Then, Franklin grabbed the chance to hand over a jade pendant to Kenneth. "Great-grandpa, Mommy wants to give you this beautiful jade pendant with a horse engraving. She always wanted to gift it to you but didn't have a chance to do so. Hence, I'm handing it over to you now..."

While most elders preferred dragons, Kenneth was fond of horses.

Kenneth immediately took a closer look at the jade pendant. Within seconds, he could tell that it was of high quality. Besides, the horse engraving on the jade pendant, looked as if it was alive. It was certainly done by a reputable artist.

At that moment, Kenneth felt that Natalie was thoughtful by giving him the nice-looking jade pendant.

While Kenneth was deep in thought, Sophia handed over a handkerchief to him and explained, "Great-grandpa, Mommy also wants to give this to you. The beautiful flower embroidered on it is our late great-grandma's favorite."

Kenneth's late wife loved lotus, for it symbolized purity and elegance even though it grew in the mud.

Deep down, Kenneth was impressed by Natalie's thoughtfulness. All the more so, the gifts were just to his liking.

Nonetheless, Natalie actually didn't prepare the gifts.

She didn't expect the two kids to make up stories to help her by giving Kenneth some gifts in her name.

At that moment, Natalie felt amused and speechless by their thoughtfulness.

Although Natalie understood their kind intention, she didn't wish to claim the credit.

After a while, Natalie looked up and said, "Old Mr. Bowers, The children said so because they were kind-hearted. Nonetheless, I should explain it to you. I didn't prepare the gifts for you."

### **Chapter 534 The Kids Are Anxious**

The atmosphere was reduced to a state of awkwardness after Natalie finished.

Besides, Franklin and Sophia looked crestfallen upon hearing her words.

The next moment, Franklin pulled Kenneth's sleeve and argued determinedly, "Great-grandpa, it was nothing like what she said. She said so because she thought you didn't like her. Also, how can Sophia and I be so clever?"

Sophia blinked at Natalie repeatedly and chimed in, "Exactly! Franklin is right. Mommy, please tell Great-grandpa that you have prepared the gifts for him, while Franklin and I only brought the gifts along with us!"

Since Kenneth was observant, he roughly knew what was going on.



“Why do you say so?”

Franklin and Sophia quickly cast a pitiful glance at Natalie as though they were begging her.

Franklin and Sophia did so much, hoping to improve the relationship between Kenneth and Natalie. Therefore, their effort would pay off only if Natalie played along.

Deep down, Natalie also knew that the kids did it for her.

However, she wouldn't claim the credit because she didn't prepare the gifts in the first place. All the more so, it wasn't as simple as the kids thought to deceive Kenneth.

As Natalie looked into Kenneth's stern eyes, she explained, “Franklin and Sophia thoughtfully prepared the gifts for you, for they know that these will be just to your liking. I don't really understand you nor know your preferences. Besides, I can't possibly know what the horse and lotus mean to you.”

Franklin and Sophia were nervous upon hearing her statement.

“Mommy, Great-grandpa believed that you are the one who has prepared the gifts for him. Why did you want to clarify it?” As Sophia felt that her effort was in vain, tears began to well up in her eyes. “No one knows the truth if you don't say it.”

Meanwhile, Franklin clenched his fists in frustration and asked Natalie, “Why do you have to be bothered by it? It makes no difference as to who has prepared the gift, as long as your relationship with Great-grandpa can improve. Besides, we don't mind if you claim the credit!”

While Sophia began weeping, Franklin was all irritated.

At that moment, Natalie felt that the children sincerely loved her even though she wasn't their biological mother.

After a while, Natalie squatted down and pulled Sophia and Franklin closer to her.

Natalie wiped away the tears on Sophia's face and gently pried open Franklin's clenched fists. Then, she said slowly, “You don't mind, but I do. I understand you wanted to show your great-grandpa that I'm a kind person. However, I didn't wish to do so.”

Natalie paused for a while and continued, “I can't claim credit for something I didn't do. At the very least, I must make things clear beforehand. Although it's good to be liked and understood by others, we have to be righteous first and foremost!”

As Sophia and Franklin stared at Natalie, their frustration and impatience slowly faded away.

Franklin lowered his head and said, “We only wanted Great-grandpa to treat you better. Since he was biased against you, Sophia and I wished to make him understand you more.”

Sophia nodded in agreement after Franklin finished.

At that moment, Natalie couldn't continue lecturing them but hugged them tightly.

Kenneth stood with the help of his walking stick and witnessed how Natalie got along with Franklin and Sophia. Hence, his stereotype toward Natalie slowly changed. He felt that Natalie understood the children's thinking better than Yara and could teach them how to become better people.

As the saying goes, actions speak louder than words.

Kenneth began to understand why Franklin and Sophia were fond of Natalie.

Then, the coldness on Kenneth's face wasn't as intense when he glanced at Natalie.

### **Chapter 535 Change Impression Of Her**

Deep down, Sophia and Franklin still felt a little dissatisfied.

However, they remembered what Natalie taught them just now and came up to Kenneth to apologize.

Franklin pointed at the jade pendant and the handkerchief in Kenneth's hands and apologized, "Great-grandpa, we're so sorry for lying to you. We got these presents from Uncle Steven."

At the same time, Sophia gazed at Kenneth with embarrassment and said, "Uncle Steven said you would surely like the presents. Anyway, Franklin and I will never lie to you ever again. Please accept the presents if they are to your liking."

Given that Kenneth used to overindulge the kids, it was his first time seeing them apologize to him.

Therefore, Kenneth was impressed because Natalie had taught the kids well and, more importantly, they were willing to listen to her.

At that moment, an outsider would even think that Natalie was the kids' biological mother, instead of Yara.

"Great-grandpa... why don't you say something?" Sophia asked.

After coming to his sense, Kenneth felt that the passing thought was absurd.

Regardless of how well Natalie educated Sophia and Franklin, she could never replace Yara as their biological mother.

Kenneth nodded and said, "Well, I'll accept the presents. However, bear in mind that we shouldn't lie to others. All the more so, it's surely not a good thing that you start lying at such a young age."

"We know now."

The two children agreed in unison.

Since Natalie had fulfilled her responsibility as a temporary driver, she thought she could leave now.

She gazed at Kenneth and said, her tone remaining dignified, "Old Mr. Bowers, allow me to excuse myself if there's nothing else. I won't disturb your quality time with Franklin and Sophia and will come again to pick them up later."

Just before Natalie wanted to leave, Kenneth said, "Since you're already here, why don't you have some tea and play chess with me?"

“Chess?” Natalie asked curiously.

Kenneth sneered gently and asked, “Do you know how to play Go? If not, do you know international chess? Please don’t tell me that you don’t know either of them.”

“I know how to play Go.”

“In that case, let’s play for one round.”

Natalie wasn’t against Kenneth’s invitation to play chess, but her sons were still waiting in the car.

“Since you know how to play Go, why are you still standing there?” Kenneth frowned as he asked Natalie.

“My two boys are waiting for me in the car.”

Feeling surprised, Kenneth put on a faint smile and said, “Are Xavian and Clayton here today?”

Initially, Kenneth was already delighted to see Franklin and Sophia. Once Kenneth knew that Xavian and Clayton were here, he couldn’t help but feel overjoyed.

Natalie was a little shocked because Kenneth knew her sons’ name. Nevertheless, she didn’t want to hide it from him and merely nodded in response.

Immediately, Kenneth instructed his butler, “Wouldn’t it be too boring if they have to wait while we play Go? Go to the car and bring them here!”

“Yes!” The butler took action once Kenneth finished.

In the meantime, Natalie stared at Kenneth in perplexity.

Am I imagining things?

Why do I feel like Old Mr. Bowers treats Xavian and Clayton very well?

After a while, the butler led Xavian and Clayton into the house.

When Kenneth saw the four cute kids, he couldn’t help but heave a sigh.

Given Kenneth’s old age, fame and wealth were meaningless to him compared to the four sweethearts who could make him happy.

### **Chapter 536 Will She Lose Badly**

Kenneth was delighted because all four of his great-grandchildren were cute and outstanding.

“Get some candies, ice-creams, and cakes for the kids...” The butler quickly ran into the kitchen upon listening to Kenneth’s order.

Apparently, Kenneth was very fond of them.

However, Natalie couldn’t agree with Kenneth’s overindulgence toward the children and argued determinedly, “Old Mr. Bowers, since Franklin and Sophia are still young, they might become obese

from eating too much sweets. Besides, the food isn't good for their health, and they might get tooth decay."

Kenneth refused to heed her advice and said overbearingly, "It's okay. I'll be happy as long as they're happy. I don't care how you usually teach them. However, since they're here, I must pamper them and let them eat anything they want."

Oh dear...

Natalie wanted to continue arguing with Kenneth; nonetheless, she held her tongue when she saw his flushed face.

Once Kenneth turned around to get the chessboard ready, Natalie pointed at the children, signaling them not to eat so much.

The smart children instantly understood what Natalie meant.

After a while, the sweets and cakes were served, and the chessboard had been put in place.

Among all the kids, only Xavian knew how to play Go.

While eating walnut cookies, Sophia murmured, "Isn't Great-grandpa very good at playing Go? Will Mommy face humiliating defeat?"

Franklin disagreed with it while eating fried cakes. "Don't worry! I can make a mess out of the chessboard before Mommy loses. In that case, Great-grandpa can't win and say unpleasant words to her!"

Clayton roughly knew that Natalie was a good Go player; nevertheless, Xavian was even more confident about her capability.

"Xavian, can you tell them which rank Mommy is at now?"

Xavian lowered his voice and replied, "You don't have to worry about Mommy. We can eat the cakes and watch them play. Besides, it will be too soon to tell the winner and the loser!"

Hence, the kids enjoyed eating the cakes and sweets while watching the game quietly.

By rule, a player had to guess whether the pieces on the other player's hand were in odd or even numbers. If the player made the right guess, he could start the game.

When Natalie wanted to grab a few pieces to let Kenneth guess the number, he waved his hand and said, "No need for that. I'll let you play with black pieces. You may start the game."

Deep down, Natalie knew that Kenneth said so because he belittled her.

Remaining reticent, Natalie merely flashed him a faint smile and replied, "Since Old Mr. Bowers has said so, allow me to pick the black pieces."

"Sure. Go ahead."

After giving it some thought, Natalie put down a black piece on the chessboard, thus making the first move.

Kenneth followed up with a white piece once Natalie completed her move.

As time went by, there were more black and white pieces on the board.

While Natalie's interval to put down black pieces was roughly the same, Kenneth needed a longer time to think about every next move.

Besides, Kenneth frowned deeper as time dragged on. He initially thought it would be a simple game but eventually realized many hidden traps. The seemingly casual moves that Natalie made earlier became increasingly crucial as the game went on.

Refusing to admit defeat, Kenneth tried his best to resist and break Natalie's tactics.

As Kenneth was deep in thought, Natalie didn't disturb him but merely had her tea and ate some cakes.

Kenneth wanted to turn the tide when the game would come to an end soon. However, due to his impatience, he lost even more pieces.

Kenneth didn't like to drink and smoke but was particularly obsessed with playing chess.

Although Kenneth underestimated Natalie and didn't start the game well, he didn't expect that he would lose so badly.

Since Kenneth always proclaimed himself as the master of Go, he felt that he would soon lose his dignity.

In the meantime, the butler could tell that Kenneth was frustrated. Hence, when he poured some tea for Kenneth, he deliberately swept the pieces away from the chessboard.