

My Unexpected Marriage to the CEO by Pumpkin Witch Chapter 351

Chapter 351 What On Earth Did You Put In The Wine

It wasn't until the waiters took the glasses of wine away that Lean finally let go of me, I almost suffocated because he had covered my mouth for so long, and now I was gasping for air, Even though he had done something appalling, Lean folded his arms together, acting as if his plan had succeeded, "What on earth did you put in the wine?" I asked. Lean shrugged. "It's not going to kill anybody. Why are you so nervous?" After staring at him for a few seconds, I decided that I didn't want to waste time on him so I just walked away, I figured it wouldn't be too late to go out and stop his plan from happening, With a sinister smile, Lean dragged me back and blackmailed me. "You're planning to tell on me, aren't you? Aren't you scared that I'll kill you?" I didn't think that he'd kill me just to keep my mouth shut. After all, he had been imprisoned before, and I was sure he'd rather not go back there again. He chuckled, as if he hadn't a care in the world. "Look, I'll be honest. I put something in two glasses of wine, but the other ones are safe. By now, I think everyone has been given a glass of their own. And whoever ends up drinking the wine i spiked, I guess they're the unlucky ones." Ten minutes later, he decided to let me go. Unfortunately, it was too late to stop his plan now. People were sitting around the bonfire in groups of twos or threes, barbecuing and chatting. Nobody knew how many glasses of wine they had drunk. "Eve, what took you so long? Give me the cumin," said Louise. I came back empty-handed. "I, um... forgot to bring the cumin," I stammered. "You're not even menopause yet. Why is your memory deteriorating?" Louise bantered. "I'll go back inside to get it." When I turned around, Louise stopped me. "Don't bother. Let's just ask one of the waiters to get us some." Afterwards, she spoke to one of the waiters and asked him to fetch us some cumin, I went back to where I was and sat down. Then, I saw Lean walking out. He was looking

around, seemingly waiting for something interesting to happen. There weren't many people attending the bonfire party, and most of them chose other activities such as playing cards or bathing in a hot spring. A few of the employees who came to the party stayed for a while, and then they left. So in truth, there were only a few of us at the bonfire party remaining, Derek, Layne, Becky, and I were all sitting at this table. Aaron, on the other hand, was sitting on a bench next to us. . Meanwhile, Lean was sitting on a chair far away from us. Louise and Charlene were busy grilling up some food. Personally, I thought that it would be uneventful for Lean to stay here, because he wasn't even chatting with any one of us. But surprisingly, he was just sitting there, cross-legged and relaxed. I could tell that he was waiting for something to happen. I wasn't sure who drank those two glasses of wine that he had spiked. From the looks of it, only the wine in front of Derek was left untouched. "Don't worry, my love. Like you always tell me, I'm not going to drink," he said with a smile. He probably noticed that I was staring at his glass. All this time, Becky was just quietly sitting aside with her head down as if she wasn't even there. Suddenly, she raised her head and whispered, "Derek, I feel a bit cold. I want to go back to my room." "But you haven't even eaten anything yet," said Derek. Becky looked at me and said, "Eveline, do you mind sending me some food later? I don't feel very good. I want to rest." Naturally, I had no choice but to agree to her request. After a while, Louise placed the grilled kebabs on several plates and served them on the table. "Don't be picky, alright? I'm not a professional cook, so don't judge me if they're not delicious!". Layne was the first to take a bite. After swallowing the food, he grinned. "It's incredible, Louise. You did a better job than the actual cook." Louise broke into laughter. "You're shitting me, right? That's just flattery!" "I'm not exaggerating. If you don't believe me, let's have everyone try it," replied Layne.

become destitute in the future, I can sell barbecue

for a living,” she proudly declared. Upon hearing her say that, Layne joked, “If you get to a point in your life that you’d have to resort to selling grilled kebabs for a living, I’m the one who’ll be blamed for it.”

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Chapter 352 You Orchestrated Everything

“Layne, do you like wheaten food?” Derek asked abruptly. It was then that I noticed that there was some steamed bread on the table. Layne had ordered it and he was the only one who ate it. I suddenly remembered that the first time I had a meal at Layne’s house was when he peeled some crayfish for Louise. There was a plate of steamed bread on the table back then, as well. “Yeah. He usually eats steamed bread or wheat noodles at home,” said Louise. As Derek lit a cigarette, he asked, “Aren’t you supposed to be a local?” After chewing his food and swallowing it, Layne smirked and said, “They say southerners prefer rice, while northerners love noodles. But that’s not always true.” Upon hearing an intermittent cough, I turned my attention towards Aaron. He had a glass of wine in one hand, and the other covering his mouth. The liquor in his glass was shaking slightly because of his coughing “Is it alright for you to drink while you’re sick?”. Charlene asked as she put some kebabs on the table. “It’s fine. Alcohol is actually a natural deterrent to colds,” Aaron replied with a smile. Derek and Layne began to talk about the differences between the north and the south. Meanwhile, I brought some food to Becky’s room. The door of her room was open, but there was nobody inside. A waiter who was cleaning up the place told me that she had gone to the hot spring. Thus, I brought the food with me to the hot spring, The hot springs in the resort were designed in accordance to the place’s geographical environment. There were large

pools that could accommodate several people at a time, and there were smaller pools that were separated. At the moment, there were lots of people in the big hot springs, but Becky wasn't among them. After walking along the hot springs for a while, I inadvertently looked up and saw a person standing near a cliff. Judging by her figure, it must be Becky. I stopped just a few paces behind her. "Didn't you say that you were feeling cold? What are you doing out here?" I asked, staring at her back. Slowly, she turned around and took off her hat and sunglasses. Based on how haggard she looked, I guessed that she must've been miserable these past few days. I felt bad that she had to experience something that horrific at such a young age. "Becky, it's not easy for anyone to live in this world. I know it's difficult, but you need to move on from your past and try to be happy," I said, attempting to comfort her. Becky shot me a cold glance. "You orchestrated that kidnapping, didn't you?" Her words left me stunned. I was aware that she would think that I was just playing nice, but I never expected her to think that I had something to do with that kidnapping. "I did what?" Her accusation was so ridiculous! Becky stared at me with unblinking eyes. It was as if she was so sure that I had committed a heinous crime. "If you weren't behind that whole thing, then why would you risk your life to save me? You must've told him to play that video in front of us on purpose, because you wanted to humiliate me! Eveline, what the hell is the matter with you? Do you want me to lose everything? Listen here, you! I may be dirty, but Derek definitely doesn't think so. I'm sure you can agree with me on that." I was compelled to defend myself at this point. "Becky, I tried to save you out of the goodness of my heart." "The goodness of your heart? Are you kidding me? You wanted me to die! Why on earth would you be kind to me?" Not wanting to waste my time on her anymore, I just gave her a perfunctory response. "You know what? Think whatever you want to think. It looks like you don't even want to eat anything, so I'm leaving." When I turned around, Becky grabbed my hand. A strange smile suddenly appeared on her cold face. "Would you like me to test

which one of us Derek cares about more?” Her words sent a chill down my spine.

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Chapter 353 Don't Do Anything Crazy

I wanted to get rid of Becky, but her grip on my hand was too tight. Gradually, she loosened her grasp. “Do you think Derek will forgive you if he finds out that you pushed me off a cliff? Do you believe he'd still be willing to be with you after that?” “Becky, don't do anything crazy! If you do that, you could die!” Becky broke into a maniacal laughter as she slowly backed away towards the edge of the cliff. At this point, I was panicking. I had no idea what to do. Suddenly, someone rushed over and pulled Becky back in time. @ “Little girl, are you insane? Derek, you need to send her to a mental hospital!” Louise said in a voice laced with sarcasm. When I turned around, I saw Derek heading towards me. He must've seen what happened just now. It was then that Becky threw herself into his arms, bursting into tears. I rooted to my spot, watching her folly. She was crying as though she had suffered something traumatic. Because of that, nobody would have the heart to blame her for making trouble out of nothing. After that twisted interaction, Derek escorted Becky back to her room. Louise and I just went back to the bonfire. There, only Aaron and Charlene remained. Lean must've left a few minutes ago. Louise felt really sorry for me. In all honesty, I felt upset when I saw how Derek spoiled Becky and tolerated her antics. But to be fair, she had already suffered through a horrifying experience that left her in a mentally fragile state. If Derek had ignored her and got mad at her earlier, she probably would've done something irreparable. And by then, I might not even be able to live with Derek in peace. Aaron asked us what happened, and Louise told him every detail. It left him speechless, and uncertain of how to react. “Let's just stop thinking about it and drink.

Besides, “if Derek betrays you, I’m going to show him no mercy!”

Louise put down her glass heavily. Afterwards, we all drank a lot just to drown our bitterness in alcohol. . The entire time, Aaron was coughing. And the more he drank, the worse his cough became. I told him that he should stop drinking, but he said that he was fine. O When I finally felt tipsy after having several drinks, an employee of Dere International came to tell me that Derek was waiting for me at the hot spring and asked me to go there. With an unsteady gait, I staggered towards the hot spring. – A few meters away from the small pools, there were many dressing rooms. Not long after I arrived, a waiter brought me a bathing suit and left. I glanced at the bathing suit in my hand and realized that it was a two-piece bikini. I had never worn a swimsuit before, let alone something as revealing as this one. After a moment of hesitation, I walked into a dressing room. I felt so awkward and self-conscious when I put it on. “Are you done?” Derek asked, knocking on the door. “Isn’t there any other options? I don’t think this swimsuit is a good fit for me,” I responded. “That swimsuit is your size, isn’t it? How come it doesn’t fit you? Open the door. Let me have a look,” Derek replied as he stood outside the door. He was my husband and he had already seen every inch of my body, so there was no need to be shy around him. With that in mind, I decided to open the door. Derek came in and closed the door behind him. All he was wearing was a pair of swimming trunks, exposing his muscular upper body. He was eyeing me up and down with a smile on his face. “You’re gorgeous, Eve!” Despite the compliment, I still felt nervous. Just then, I heard voices coming from outside. “Layne, I feel hot!” It was Louise’s voice. “You’re clearly drunk,” said Layne. Louise drank like a sailor earlier, so she was probably hammered by now. Seconds later, I heard the sound of swashing water. She must’ve gotten into one of the hot springs. “Layne, do you love me? Louise said drunkenly. “Of course, I do.” “Then, let’s have sex!” she replied. Her casual words frightened me. She was probably drunk! She must be! If Louise had sex with Layne while she was drunk, she was going to regret

it once she had sobered up in the morning. I have to stop her! I was in a hurry to open the door, but Derek stopped me. He held me in his embrace and whispered to my ear, “Hey, you shouldn’t meddle with their affairs. They’re a couple. Let them deal with their own problems.” His words calmed me down at once. He was right. Louise and Layne were a legally married couple. It was within their rights to have sex. So, why was I trying to stop them?

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Chapter 354 I Don’t Regret It

“Louise, look at me. Who am I?” Layne was still acting rational. Louise giggled at him. “You’re Layne, my wonderful husband. How could I ever mistake you for someone else?” “Are you really willing to do that with me? Won’t you regret it?” “We’re already married. Sooner or later, you and I will do it, so why would I regret it?” Louise replied in a slurred voice. This wasn’t the first time that I’d seen her this drunk. And back then, she wouldn’t do something like that no matter how hammered she was.

Wait a second....

Did Louise accidentally drink the wine that Lean tampered with? That was the only reason to explain her strange behavior. Soon, I heard ambiguous sounds coming from outside. When I heard that Louise sounded like she was in pain, Layne immediately apologized, saying that he would be gentler. Later on, her pained voice had turned into pleased moans. Layne tried his best to restrain himself, but Louise was high on pleasure. The dressing room was narrow. Derek’s upper body was naked, and I was dressed in a revealing bikini. Hearing Louise and Layne have

sex outside was turning us both on, sit “Gradually, our breaths came in short intervals.

The wine I drank before had quite a kick. I was starting to feel warm and dizzy. I could feel that Derek was tightening his grasp on me. Our bodies were so close that I could hear his strong heartbeat. Our skins felt as warm as boiling water. When he pressed me against the wall of the dressing room, he untied my bra using one hand. After taking off my bikini, he began to kiss me violently “Layne, this is my first time. I’m yours now, so don’t do anything to betray me in the future!” It sounded like Louise was exhausted. Breathlessly, Layne replied, “You are my wife, and I promise to be good to you for the rest of my life!” “Will my skin peel if I soak in the water for too long?” Louise asked, chuckling. “Let’s go back to our room, shall we?” suggested Layne. “Carry me,” she replied. “Sure.” At times, whether something was right or wrong depended on the result. Louise and Layne appeared like they weren’t a good match, but in the end, they fell in love. As Louise’s friend, and someone who had seen their love grow, what else could I do aside from give them my blessing? Once they had left, Derek carried me in his arms and strode into the hot spring, continuing what we were doing before. The water in the hot spring rippled. The mist from the steam prevented me from seeing his face clearly. Louise always told me that Derek was my Mr. Right, but for some reason, I wasn’t sure if he was indeed the right person for me. I was starting to wonder if we might break up someday. After we finished, we went back to our room. At midnight, Charlene knocked on the door and told me that Aaron had a fever. She knew that I used to be a nurse, so she wanted to ask me if there was an emergency treatment she could apply. Derek and I got dressed and went to Aaron’s room along with Charlene. I placed a hand on his forehead and found that he was burning up. “This was supposed to be a cold. How did it get so serious?” I asked. “He was drunk. By the time I found him, he was lying on the snow-covered ground. I have no idea for how long

he'd been there, but it must've been long enough for his fever to get worse," said Charlene. Aaron was still conscious. Seeing that everyone was at his bed, surrounding him, he smiled weakly. "Don't worry, guys. I'll be fine after a good night's sleep. Man, I failed to do my duty as a doctor, and now I'm a burden to you guys instead." I told Derek to call the manager of the resort. I assumed that they must have some medicine here. Then, I asked Charlene to find warm water and some towels to help lower Aaron's body temperature. When it was only me and him in the room, I asked him, "Why were you lying on the snow-covered ground?" He looked at the ceiling with a blank stare. "I suddenly felt like my body was burning up at the time. Lying in the snow made me feel more comfortable." I shook my head, letting out a sigh. "You're a doctor, Aaron. You're supposed to know how terrible that idea was!" "Eve, L..." He wanted to say something, but he stopped midsentence. "What's wrong?" I asked, looking at him. He was staring at me as though he was trying to organize his thoughts. Just then, Charlene brought in the warm water and towels, and Derek had brought some antipyretics. Since it wouldn't be appropriate for me and Charlene to help Aaron wipe his body, Derek had to do it. Through the help of the medicine and our efforts to cool his body down, Aaron's temperature would soon drop to a normal level. Thus, we went out of the room. It was then that Charlene spoke to me. "Eveline, do you mind if I sleep in your room? I have to talk to you about something." Derek had to stay in Aaron's room to take care of him, so I agreed to Charlene's request. "Sure. Let's go."

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Chapter 355 Fight For My Happiness

Charlene and I returned to my room and lay on the bed, but she didn't fall asleep. It was late at night, and everyone in the resort had gone to bed. The place was eerily silent—even the pattering of the snow was audible.

“Eveline, you are the one Aaron loves, aren’t you?” Charlene asked, breaking the silence. Her question startled me. “No, no. You have misunderstood it.” Darkness pervaded the room. Charlene sounded gentle. “When I brought him back from the snow, he was a little unconscious. But he kept murmuring the name ‘Eve’. Isn’t that you?” I opened my mouth to speak but didn’t know what to say. Her words surprised me. At that moment, I remembered Aaron trying to say something but stopping on second thought earlier in his room. “He must have been delirious from the fever,” I said at last. “Doesn’t matter. It counts even if he was delirious. People usually mumble their loved one’s name when they are ill. He has called out the name that’s been hidden in his heart for a long time.” I fell silent I looked at Charlene and saw her smile in the dark. “Eveline, I didn’t mean to judge you or anything. Don’t overthink. I am in no position to judge anyone. I’m not his girlfriend.”.. “Charlene...” “But I won’t give up. I have to fight for my happiness,” she interrupted me; I could hear the determination in her voice. The next morning, Charlene and I went to see Aaron. He had recovered from the fever. At that moment, I remembered what Charlene told me last night. Since the situation was complicated, I decided to maintain a distance from him. I inquired about his health and came out of the room, a Just then, Louise opened the door of her room and walked out. She was standing at the door in her pajamas. Her hair was a crumpled mess. The red marks on her neck revealed how passionately they had had sex last night . “What are you looking at? Is something on my face?” Louise sleepily raked her fingers across her face. Her reaction surprised me. She looked calm even after what had happened last night. I couldn’t help but wonder if she had already accepted Layne in her heart. “Nothing.” I smiled, “Then why are you smiling like this?” I shrugged and teased, “Well, I’m just curious to see how many hickeys you’ve got.” Louise looked at herself and scratched her hair, trying to hide her embarrassment. Just then, Layne wrapped his arms around her from behind and kissed the top of her head. “I’m sorry. I’ll be gentle next time. I was too excited yesterday. So...” I

didn't expect Layne to shamelessly flirt with his wife in front of me. Louise looked equally embarrassed. "Oh, come on. Don't show off. It's still early in the morning," I teased to ease the awkwardness. We all freshened up and changed. Then, we had breakfast together. Louise sat down and picked up her phone. "Why is it switched off?" she mumbled and connected the charger. As soon as she turned on the phone, it chimed relentlessly with missed calls and messages. Louise frowned and stared at the screen. "Why has my father called so many times? And..." She stopped. I stepped closer and saw several missed calls from Felix. At that moment, her phone rang again: it was a call from Felix. She looked at Layne. After a moment's hesitation, she finally picked up the call. Her face turned pale after she hung up.

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Chapter 356 Colin Tried To Commit suicide

We had planned to stay here for three days, but now, we had to abandon our breakfast and hurry home. Some of the senior executives of the company were entrusted with the rest of the trip. On our way back home, Louise appeared to be quite calm. She didn't even react violently when she saw her father lying on the bed with an oxygen mask. Meanwhile, Felix leaned against the window, staring blankly at Louise as she entered the ward. When he saw Layne follow her in, he immediately averted his gaze, visibly infuriated. This was the first time Derek and Felix had seen each other ever since they fought. They both avoided eye contact, as if they were strangers to each other. "What happened?" Louise asked, walking to the bed calmly. "He ingested numerous sleeping pills," said Felix. "Why would he do that?" Louise stared at her father as the man lay helpless on the bed. Felix said, "Yesterday, he came to my bar to see you, but you weren't around so he left. I sensed that something was off about him, so I followed him out. I was knocking on his door, but

nobody opened it. Fearing that something happened, I called the police and we got into the room in time.” Afterwards, he took out a folded paper from his pocket and handed it to Louise. “I found this on the coffee table.” Once it was in her hand, Louise unfolded it. I glanced at it and instantly knew that it was a suicide note. It turned out that Linda and Colin’s assistant had been conspiring to steal all the assets of his company, and now the company was in damning debt. I figured that Colin must’ve called Louise yesterday just to see her daughter one last time. Sadly, she missed the call. Fortunately, Felix saved his life. Otherwise, Louise would live the rest of her days in guilt and regret. Though they never seemed to get along, it didn’t mean that she would be indifferent to her father’s demise. All of us stood there for a while until Colin woke up: Tears welled up in his eyes the moment he saw Louise. Soon, the doctor came in to examine Colin. He told us that Colin was now out of danger. On many occasions, Fate was unpredictable. I knew that it must not have been easy for Colin to build his business from nothing. And now, all of his painstaking efforts had been in vain. It was understandable that he would feel like he had nothing left to live for.

Obviously, Linda and Colin’s assistant must’ve fled the city already. They orchestrated this whole farce well, I must admit. Colin knew that they were the ones who did it, but he couldn’t get his hands on any shred of evidence. Right now, he needed a large sum of money to pay off his debts. But the amount that he’d need was staggering. Felix was leaning against the window previously, but now he was standing straight with his hands in his pockets. “...” “I’ll solve this problem,” said Layne, cutting Felix off. Felix frowned at that, biting his lower lip and feeling conflicted. I could understand how he must feel right now. Colin was the man behind Linda’s plan to make Felix and Louise break up. Felix had every right to hate him. But Colin was her father, and if something were to happen to him, Louise would certainly be devastated. Felix didn’t want

to see her sad, so when he sensed that Colin wasn't in a good state of mind, he decided to follow him and see what the man was up to. It was fortunate that he did. Otherwise, he wouldn't have pulled Colin back from the jaws of death in time. He wanted to help Colin with his crisis, but he wasn't in the position to do that at the moment. Feeling like he had nothing left to do here, Felix left. Derek and I left as well a few minutes later. All that was needed to solve Colin's problem was money. Once we had arrived home, I cooked a simple meal. We were already seated at the dining table, but I had no appetite. Louise was my best friend, and she'd always been supportive of me. Now that her family was going through this crisis, it was natural that I hoped I could help them. I was trying to figure out how I would talk to Derek about this. He was more than capable of helping Louise.

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Chapter 357 I Can't Help Your Friend

"Eveline?" Derek called me. I returned to my senses and looked up at him. He called me Eveline so seriously only if he had something important to say. "I can't help your friend this time," he said bluntly. Though I understood his decision, my heart sank with dejection. Colin's problem couldn't be solved with a small sum of money. Derek had no obligation to help Colin. I couldn't blame him for this. I lowered my head, put the food in my mouth, and nodded. "I understand." Derek put down his chopsticks, "His company is facing a lot of problems now. Money alone cannot fix it. I can buy the entire company, but I don't want to. After all, I'm a businessman-it would be meaningless if I did that. It might only help you feel better," he patiently explained. The situation was indeed complicated, and I couldn't force him to do it for me. "It doesn't matter. I can understand," I said, forcing a smile. "People encounter problems every day. We can't help everyone," I added.

“Besides, this might be a good opportunity to repair their father and daughter relationship. Don’t you think so?” Derek’s words lifted my spirits. If Layne could solve the problem, Colin might wholeheartedly accept him as his son-in-law. The next morning, I went to the hospital to see Louise. I was glad to see that she was fine. I told her that Derek might not be able to help, and she was okay with that. “Don’t worry. Layne said he would fix this. I believe he has a solution.” I knew Louise didn’t care about her father’s money or company. * She was never fond of materialistic things and always yearned for family attention. The fact that her father had lost everything overnight was a relief to Louise. After all, she was all her father had now. Perhaps this misfortune was a blessing in disguise where Louise could get close to her father. Derek and I watched TV in the living room after lunch. Derek told me that his father had booked a restaurant for a family reunion dinner tonight. My stomach clenched with anxiety when I heard that. His father had never liked me, so I didn’t want to be a part of this dinner. I lowered my head and fell silent. Derek wrapped his arm around me protectively. “I know you don’t want to go. We can eat at home if you want. I don’t want to go either.” I sat up straight and stared at him. “I don’t want to go because no one likes me. I don’t want to make anyone unhappy. But you don’t have a reason to avoid the reunion. After all, that’s your father. He would feel bad if his son didn’t join the annual family reunion dinner. As a son, you have to fulfill his wish. If you don’t go, your father will only hate me more.” Derek examined my face, pulled me closer to him, and stroked my earlobe with his cheek. “Honey, you are so considerate. I am the happiest and luckiest man in the world.” I smiled at him. His words were like the gentle breeze caressing my heart. After a while, he released me from his embrace.

“Dad has invited my grandfather to the family reunion dinner. However, Grandpa doesn’t want to come. How about we pick a day to have a reunion dinner with Grandpa in Qinben?” My heart swelled up with joy

when he mentioned Grandpa-I adored the old man. "Okay." I nodded happily.

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Chapter 358 Has She No Family

The New Year was just a few days away. Before the beauty salon was closed for the long New Year holiday, Lavinia gave every employee a New Year's gift. Everyone was packing up and preparing to go home to spend the holiday with their family. I was fiddling with the dummy and reviewing what Lavinia had taught me. "Eveline, why don't you pack your things? We are closing the salon. Hurry up and go home to enjoy the New Year holiday," said Megan. I looked up at her and smiled. "I'm not in a hurry. You guys go ahead." I had stopped celebrating the New Year after my father's accident. New years were difficult for me. Life just wasn't the same without him. I felt lonely and dejected while the rest of the world reunited with their families. Marrying Shane hadn't changed anything either. I didn't feel like celebrating the New Year. Megan was my classmate in junior high, so she was aware of what happened to my family. She clicked her tongue as she remembered it. "Shit! I'm sorry, Eveline." I shook my head and smiled at her. "No, that's okay." "By the way, don't you have a tall, handsome husband? Go home soon. Maybe your husband is waiting to have dinner with you." "Okay." I nodded, not wanting to continue this topic. Lavinia's beauty salon covered a vast expanse. Usually, some staff and students stayed here, but everyone had left today. The holiday had commenced, and everyone broke from their usual humdrum and returned home. The entire building became empty in minutes. I sat down and continued to study. Every time Lavinia gave us a lesson, I would look at her in awe. If I could be as successful as her one day, I would be more confident around the Sullivan family during the family reunion dinner. That way, Gifford's attitude toward me might

change a little. I hoped for things to get better, so I was studying hard to improve my skills. I was so engrossed in learning that I didn't know how long I had sat there, bending down. My neck was stiff when I tried sitting straight. I pinched my sore neck, picked up my bag, and stood up to leave. However, the light in Lavinia's office was still on. Seeing that the door was open, I stepped inside and saw Lavinia sprawled on the chair, gasping for breath. "Mrs. Mayer, what happened? Where is the medicine?" Lavinia lifted her hand with great difficulty and pointed at her desk. I opened the drawer and found the medicine. I poured some water, helped Lavinia sit, and put the medicine into her mouth. A few minutes later, her breathing returned to normal, but her face was still pale. "Eveline, why are you still here?" she asked weakly. "There's no hurry. I haven't finished practicing what you taught me today, so I stayed a little longer." Lavinia emptied the glass of water and took a deep breath. "Eveline, God will reward you for your hard work. Keep it up. You've impressed me." "Mrs. Mayer, why are you still at your office? Don't you have to go home?" Lavinia smiled. "I'm different from you. No one is waiting for me at home. So it doesn't matter where I stay. The New Year holiday is nothing special to me." I just wanted to ask if she had a family but ultimately decided against it. I felt it was impolite to pry into other people's personal life. Moreover, every family had problems of its own. Mrs. Mayer looked glamorous, but that didn't mean she hadn't been through hardships. She had become a successful woman only after overcoming adversities. Perhaps she, too, had a painful past. I didn't want to unravel it. "You should go back now. Your lover must be waiting for you at home," Lavinia advised gently. "But..." I was worried about leaving her alone. She understood my hesitation and smiled at me. "Don't worry. I have the medicine. Nothing will happen. You carry on." Since she insisted I leave, I grabbed my bag and left.

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Chapter 359 Look Who's Here

When I went downstairs, Alvaro called me. He had been calling me several times already, but I didn't want to answer him. • He was quite a persistent and patient individual. He just kept on calling since I wasn't answering, Annoyed, I decided to pick up the phone. "What do you want?" I said, very irritated. He sounded really serious on the other end of the line. It was different from his usual flirtation. "Eveline, do you mind coming to my grandmother's house with me? She's hosting a reunion dinner, and I'm sure she'd love to have you. My grandma has already acknowledged you as her granddaughter-in-law." "No way," I said, hanging up on him. This time, I wasn't going to give him a chance to threaten me. He was always making me do things that I didn't want to by threatening me. Fortunately, he didn't call again after that. Derek was out, so I'd be alone when I got home. Honestly, I had no idea where to go at the end of the year. Everyone had family reunions to go to, but I had nowhere to go. After standing by the road for a few moments, I thought of Kevin. He was still single, so he probably was alone whenever it was a holiday or a festival. So, I decided to buy some gifts and hailed a cab to Kevin's house. After getting out of the car, I walked towards the alley where Kevin's house was located and noticed a person walking towards me at the entrance. He looked familiar. Once I was able to take a closer look, I found that it was Aaron. © "Eveline, don't you have a family reunion dinner to attend?" Aaron was also surprised to see me. I shook my head, glancing at the fruit basket in his hand. I smiled at him and asked, "Are you here to visit Kevin as well?" Seemingly embarrassed, he nodded. "I am." All he knew was that Kevin lived in this alley, but he wasn't sure where exactly the house was, so I led the way. After a while, we arrived at Kevin's house. There, I knocked on the door. Charlene was the one who opened it. She was surprised to see me and Aaron here. "Aaron, Eveline, did you come here together?" "Actually, no. I ran into him at the entrance of the alley," I explained. The surprise

on her face was replaced by a smile. “Well, come on in, then!” Afterwards, she shouted, “Dad, look who’s here!” Kevin walked out of the kitchen wearing an apron, pleasantly surprised to see me. “Eveline?” “Mr. Eaton, I’m here for a free dinner,” I bantered.

Kevin wiped his wet hands on his apron, and then he turned his gaze towards Aaron. Charlene hooked her arm around Aaron’s and introduced him to Kevin. “Dad, this is my boyfriend, Aaron Hudson.” I was surprised at her declaration, and then I looked at Aaron to see his reaction. That night, in the resort, Charlene declared that she would fight for her happiness. Did Charlene succeed? They were lovers now? And so soon? Aaron put down the fruit basket and put on a smile. “Mr. Eaton, it’s nice to meet you. Please, call me Aaron,” he said. Kevin eyed Aaron up and down. Based on the look on his face, he was certainly satisfied with Aaron. A handsome, modest, and courteous man like Aaron would certainly pass Kevin’s standards. Kevin nodded at him and smiled. “Alright, grab a seat, you two. Dinner will be ready soon.” Aaron and I said in union, “Thank you!” And so, Kevin went back to the kitchen. I didn’t want to be a third wheel to Charlene and Aaron, so I went to the kitchen to help Kevin out. However, he didn’t want me to go through that trouble, so I just stood aside and chatted with him. Once all the dishes were ready, I took all of them to the small dining table. He specially heated a few bottles of beer. Clearly, he was delighted to have us as guests today. He had been worrying about Charlene’s marriage, but now that she had such an excellent boyfriend, Kevin must feel relieved now. While we were having dinner, the snow fell down heavily outside. The wind was blowing some of the snow into the house through the window. I was sitting next to the window and got up to close it. Outside the house, I saw a silhouette of a person standing there.” It was too far away to recognize the person, and it was hard to see at night. But I guessed that any man standing in this alley at this time of the night must be a homeless man.

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Chapter 360 Why Are Your Trousers Broken

“Eveline, what’s wrong?” Charlene noticed that I had been standing by the window for a long time. “There’s a person outside,” I said. Both Charlene and Kevin stood up and went to the window as well. After glancing outside, she went to the door, opened it, and rushed out. I saw her braving the heavy snowfall and dragging that man towards the house. I admired her kind act when I saw what she did. I thought she was helping the homeless man. But when I saw who the person she brought into the house was, my eyes widened. It was Lean. We had no idea for how long he had been standing there. But judging by how covered his hair and clothes were in snow, he’d been out there for a long time. He had kept his head down ever since Charlene dragged him in. Different from his usual arrogance, he appeared a little embarrassed. Then, he saw that Aaron and I were here as well. Naturally, he was curious as to what we were doing here. “Lean, why didn’t you come in? It’s too cold outside,” Kevin said in a gentle tone. Just as he had said before, even though Lean wasn’t his son, he wasn’t going to hate him just because of what Gifford and Belinda had done. In silence, Lean scratched his hair irritably, causing the snowflakes on his hair to fall down. Kevin pointed at the sofa. “Have a seat, lad.” However, Lean just stood rooted to his spot. Annoyed, Charlene practically dragged him to the sofa. It was then that he sat down obediently. “You haven’t eaten yet, have you? Charlene, could you be a doll and grab your brother cutlery and a bowl?” Kevin ordered. Charlene did as she was told and handed them to Lean. Every now and then, Lean would cast curious glances at me and Aaron. Noticing Lean’s gaze, Kevin pointed at Aaron. “This is Charlene’s boyfriend, Aaron.”

Then, he looked at me and said, “Eveline, you don’t need me to introduce you to him, do you?” Lean seemed surprised by what he heard. With an inquisitive gaze, he pointed at Charlene and Aaron. “You two are together? Since when? And why didn’t I know about this?” After swallowing the food in her mouth, Charlene rolled her eyes at him. “Do I have an obligation to inform you about my relationships?” “Not really.” Lean chuckled. Kevin took an empty bowl and picked out some peppercorns from the pasta. While he was in the process of doing that, he said, “I seem to recall that you’ve never been fond of peppercorns as a kid, Lean.” Lean froze when he saw how Kevin was removing the peppercorns one by one. Judging by the look on his face, I could tell that he was moved.

I guessed that this was the kind of genuine affection that he never got from Gifford. Though Gifford was always doting on him, it probably felt very different. Kevin’s tender affection was simplistic, and he focused on the little things. Although his actions were ordinary, they were more real and touching than the money and material objects that Gifford provided Lean. The sound of fireworks could be heard outside, and we were gathering around a small table and eating happily. This was what a family reunion dinner should be like.

I noticed that Lean was a lot more docile in front of Kevin than he was in the Sullivan family. Perhaps everyone had different sides, and they would show a different side in front of people. Around someone as amiable as Kevin, Lean had hidden all of his arrogance. Later on, Kevin told us funny stories about his students. The rest of us began to recall the fondest memories of our school days. When I narrated my time in school, I subconsciously glanced at Aaron, but I didn’t expect him to look at me at the same time. As our gazes met, we read each other’s minds. We both smiled at the same time. A few seconds later, we averted our eyes from each other. Kevin told us a lot about Lean’s childhood. When he spoke of the story of how little Lean was stung by bees when he

tried to destroy a beehive, Lean laughed so hard that he fell backwards on the sofa. “Lean, why are your trousers broken?” Charlene asked him bluntly in front of everyone. Upon hearing her question, everyone looked at Lean’s pants. He immediately sat up and covered his crotch. I couldn’t help but laugh at his reaction.