

Right Person, Wrong Time Chapter 311

Chapter 311

Chapter 311 Wishful Thinking

Kylie noticed how Tony was speaking for Nicole without considering Kylie's feelings. However, once they got to the topic of their company's partnership, Kylie managed to conceal the anger on her face as she pursed her lips before speaking.

"I'm the new head designer of F&M Apparel. They wouldn't have sent me over if our company wasn't interested in working with you guys."

Tony responded with a warm smile on his face. Nevertheless, his words weren't as kind. "Miss Anderson wasn't just the head designer of F&M Apparel. She had also won a few anonymous gold medals and was even the judge of a few large competitions. What about you?"

His words were like a stopper that had been shoved down Kylie's throat as she didn't know what to say after that. Previously, when Nicole was in F&M Apparel, the company had spilled all of its resources on her since she was the head designer.

As a result, the other designers had no opportunities to win any titles, even if they wanted to. It's not that I don't have the skills; it's just that I didn't get any opportunities! Kylie thought.

Joanna hastily spoke up when she saw how furious Kylie looked. "Alright, we should stop bothering you since you have so much to do, Mr. Larson. You can let us know if Miss Lisa needs anything, and I'll get the rest of the design department to provide the necessary support."

Tony didn't have much to say after that, so he merely glanced at the two women before ordering the logistics department's people to move the computer and other furniture upstairs.

Since they had been talking in a public area, all of the people from the design department had heard what they said. They now knew that the new staff member from F&M Apparel didn't have much power over them. For the most part, the design department would still be working with Nicole.

The designing team immediately regretted sticking up for Kylie earlier. It didn't matter if Kylie was the new head designer of F&M Apparel. What was the purpose of them sucking up to Kylie if Gardner Corporation wasn't exactly working with her?

Kylie's face was flushed from all the anger she felt. She had assumed she would be able to overpower Nicole after obtaining the role as the head designer of F&M Apparel.

She thought that she'd finally be able to get to a more comfortable position in life. Yet, she hadn't expected to still be under Nicole's control even after moving to Gardner Corporation!

Joanna hurried forward to comfort Kylie when she saw the displeased expression on Kylie's face. "Let's head back to the office, for now, Kylie." Kylie understood what the other woman meant—she couldn't lose her temper in front of the rest of the department as it would be embarrassing. So, she had no choice but to contain her rage and follow Joanna back to the office.

Meanwhile, on the highest floor in Gardner Corporation, Nicole couldn't help but chuckle when she heard Whitney describe how Kylie had embarrassed herself.

Whitney was extremely pleased with the whole situation. "It's a shame that you didn't come down with us, Nicole. Daggers were shooting out of Kylie's eyes after she heard what Mr. Larson said. I was so happy!" she cried.

"You didn't get involved in the fight, did you?" Nicole shot Whitney a side-eye. Whitney pouted and scoffed before speaking. "Well, if you didn't tell me not to get involved, I would have definitely stepped forward to fight them!"

When Whitney first came down with Tony, Nicole had already reminded her not to get involved. Nicole figured it was best for Whitney to observe the situation by the side.

It's a shame that I didn't get to go in and show off for a second. Otherwise, I'd honestly be able to get a good laugh at the dejected look on Kylie's face, Whitney thought.

Nicole smiled when she saw the disappointed look on Whitney's face. "There's no rush. Kylie came to Gardner Corporation claiming that it was for F&M Apparel's partnership with them, but the truth is that she wanted to take over Ann.

She didn't know that I had signed an individual contract with Gardner Corporation." Alas, Kylie's plans had turned out to be nothing more than wishful thinking.

Since Kylie had just obtained her new role as the head designer of F&M Apparel, she naturally hoped to produce significant results in her work.

So naturally, if Kylie had taken over Ann, it would have been a perfect opportunity for her to shine. Tsk. Her perfect plan just went down the drain, Nicole thought sardonically without an ounce of pity.

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Chapter 312 Worried

It was a shame that Kylie's idealistic plans had crumbled into dust as she simply wasn't fated to benefit from Ann's fame at all! Even though the public knew of it as a collaboration between Gardner Corporation and F&M Apparel, it was actually a collaboration between Gardner Corporation and Nicole.

No one could have expected Colton to be so forward-thinking—he had already decided to use Nicole's name when he first drafted the contract for Ann.

Nicole curled her lips into a smile. I bet F&M Apparel will regret every single action after they hear about this, she thought. The office beside Colton had been unoccupied throughout the year, but there would always be cleaners who dropped by to clean it up.

So, there wasn't a stale scent when Nicole entered the room. The logistics department was especially enthusiastic since Nicole was someone who mattered to Colton. Moving everything up to the top floor took less than one hour.

Since Nicole had moved upstairs, Whitney naturally shifted her spot upstairs as well. However, there was only one empty office, so Whitney got Tony to arrange a seat for her. She overtook one of the spots left behind by a secretary who had quit.

That evening, after working hours, Colton paid a visit to Nicole's office. "Why don't you follow me back to Gardner Residence tonight, Nicole?" He pressed his lips and hesitated for a moment before continuing. "Grandpa misses you," he explained.

This was a legitimate reason, and Nicole couldn't seem to find a way to reject him, so she simply pursed her lips while nodding. "Okay."

She had been too occupied with F&M Apparel's matters recently, so it was true that she hadn't gone around to visit the old man in a while. Previously, Benedict had given her a call. Even though he hadn't directly told her to visit him, it was clear that he wanted her to drop by.

Nicole had initially planned on visiting Gardner Residence in the next two days, so she simply agreed to Colton's suggestion when he invited her over.

She told Whitney about her plans before following Colton to the Gardner Residence. Everything went well until they opened the door and saw Olivia in front of their eyes.

Olivia's face darkened when she saw Nicole. Nevertheless, she seemed thoughtful enough to consider Benedict's feelings, for she simply suppressed her emotions without saying much.

When Nicole saw Olivia, she instinctively flinched. Regardless, she decided not to start a fight with Olivia since she had just arrived and was about to visit Benedict. Colton glanced at Olivia before speaking in a slow and lazy tone. "What are you doing here, Aunt Olivia?"

Olivia seemed rather displeased to hear his words. "What does that mean? Can't I come back to my own home?" Colton chuckled at this. "Of course not. I'm sure Grandpa is glad to see you here."

The angry look on Olivia's face faded slightly as she spoke in a calmer tone. "Grandpa's not feeling too well recently, so I wanted to talk to your father about the surgery." Colton frowned when he heard the woman's words. "Didn't the doctor say that Grandpa's too old for surgery?"

Olivia nodded. "Well, another way we could do this would be to hunt down White's apprentice. Even though White is dead, his apprentice has inherited all of his skills. So, if we could find the apprentice, Old Mr. Benedict would have a chance of survival," Olivia replied.

"Okay. I'll go visit Grandpa, and we can discuss this later." Colton didn't say much—he simply led Nicole upstairs.

Nicole's face seemed rather pale. Is Old Mr. Benedict really that ill? I can't believe they're actually trying to look for me. Colton shot Nicole a look, and he gently questioned her when he saw the uneasy expression on her face. "What is it? Are you not feeling well?"

Nicole hastily put on a neutral look as she shook her head. "It's nothing. I was just worried after hearing that Old Mr. Benedict is seriously ill."

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Chapter 313 There's Still Hope

Colton reached his hand out and rested it on Nicole's shoulder to comfort her. "Don't worry. The Gardners will figure a way out." Nicole pressed her lips together without saying anything.

After all, she had already promised her master that she would no longer apply her medical skills to anyone else. Since she had no way to help Benedict, she felt there was no point in worrying about this. So, she forced a smile onto her face as she followed Colton into Benedict's room.

Once they opened the door, they were greeted by the familiar scent of antiseptic. Nicole gazed at the old man who was lying on the bed. His face was almost the same color as his white bed sheets, and he had his eyes shut as he rested. "I brought Nicole over to visit, Grandpa," Colton uttered softly.

Benedict slowly opened his eyes when he heard some noise. He looked fatigued, and a puzzled look flashed across his face when he looked up and saw Nicole.

Then, after a while, he seemed to recall something. "Is that Nicole? How's your mother? Is she still ill?" His voice was deep and hoarse—it sounded like someone playing the cello with broken strings. He sounded terrible.

"My mother has... passed away... for years now, Grandpa..." Nicole explained as she stepped forward to look at the older man. Benedict blinked a few times as if he recalled something, and he finally seemed to realize what was going on after a while. "Madeline is gone, huh. I see."

Madeline Houston was Nicole's mother. Benedict seemed somewhat dejected upon this realization. "I see... It's about time for me to meet her." Nicole felt rather confused as he seemed to have aged at least a few years in the past few days. She looked up and gazed at Colton.

Colton knew what she was about to ask, so he replied before she could say anything. "You can stay here and chat with Grandpa for a while. We'll talk later."

He thoughtfully left them alone in the room. After he strode out, he clutched the doorknob for a while before shutting the door softly and walking away.

"Stop saying nonsense, Grandpa. You'll get better soon. I heard them say that you'll still be able to live for a long time as long as you get the surgery done," Nicole comforted him.

Benedict seemed to have accepted his fate as he simply scoffed at her words. "Hmph. All of that is just nonsense. The doctors had already said that I wouldn't survive this when I was abroad.

This surgery probably only has a 10% chance of success. I'd rather die peacefully in bed than on the cold and hard surgical table.

She smiled when she saw how the old man was regaining some of his wittiness and humor. "The surgery actually has a 50% chance of success.

"So, you should give it a shot, Grandpa." He frowned when he heard the girl's words. He wanted to sit upright, but his arms couldn't seem to support his body. So, Nicole hurried forward and stacked some pillows behind his back for him to sit up.

Once he settled in a comfortable sitting position, he began to talk. "You're not fooling me, are you, Nicole? They would have already done the surgery for me if the success rate was that high."

This was a brain surgery they were talking about, and his tumor was pressing against one of his nerves, so the chances of success had to be low.

Nicole shook her head as she explained herself. "I'm not lying, Grandpa. I saw someone whose illness was even more severe than yours when I was abroad.

Back then, the doctor still claimed that there was a 50% chance of success. This number I'm giving you is already an underestimation."

"Are you sure?" Even though Benedict was old, he still wanted to live. Yet, he had previously refused to do the surgery since there was only a 10% chance.

But if things were as Nicole claimed them to be, then he would no longer have to go through the torture of his illness. That would be perfect...

"I'm sure." Nicole gave him a firm nod. She believed that there had to be another doctor who was as outstanding as White. Someone else might be able to achieve her standards even if she couldn't perform the surgery.

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Chapter 314 Lost Control

Since I can't perform the surgery for Old Mr. Benedict, perhaps I can find other doctors. I met many skilled and talented doctors while training as White's apprentice, Nicole thought. Unfortunately, she had rarely contacted any of the senior doctors since White left, but she could still ask around for Benedict's sake.

Benedict let out a wide grin after he heard Nicole's firm answer. "If what you say is true, then, of course, I'd be willing to have the surgery."

Nicole smiled. His illness was getting increasingly severe—he was even showing signs of dementia. She was afraid that it would really be the end of him if he didn't receive treatment soon.

They both continued chatting for a few hours and she managed to cheer him up as they spoke.

Soon enough, Benedict could no longer fight off the sleepiness, and started yawning a few times. Nicole used this as an excuse to leave the room. Unfortunately, she found Colton standing outside the door when she walked out.

She froze for a moment before she shut the door and turned to look at Colton. "Grandpa said that he was sleepy and wanted to nap, so I figured that I wouldn't disturb him any longer."

Colton grunted in response. They walked side-by-side along the corridor for a while before he questioned her. "Are you serious when you say that my grandfather's surgery has a 50% chance of success?"

Nicole would have never expected Colton to be the sort of person who would eavesdrop on someone else's conversation! But since he had heard what she said, she decided there was no point hiding it. "Yeah. I met a few skilled surgeons when I was abroad, so I can ask them if they could help Old Mr. Benedict," she replied.

He smirked. "You mentioned that there was a doctor who claimed that there was a 50% chance of success in a patient whose condition was worse than my grandfather's. Can I know who this doctor is?"

She pressed her lips together and lowered her gaze before mumbling her reply. "White."

Colton had sharp ears, so he heard her words the first time. "Do you know White personally?"

"Yeah. I met him twice while I was at the hospital." Nicole was worried that Colton would realize something, so she hastily explained the situation. "I didn't feel too well after giving birth to Hayden, so I was a regular at the hospital back then. That was how I met White," she said.

He didn't say much after that, and he simply lowered his gaze thoughtfully. After she hesitated for a moment, she posed him a question. "How has Old Mr. Benedict's memory deteriorated so much overnight?"

"Grandpa's tumor grew bigger, and it's pressing against his nerves. Furthermore, he lost his temper a few days ago, and the doctor said that he's showing signs of memory loss

because the tumor is affecting his nerves,” Colton explained. Nicole felt tears welling up in her eyes for a moment, and she was at a loss for words.

Old Mr. Benedict must be thinking about my mother even with all the confusion in his head, so that means he must really miss her a lot. He truly treated my mother as his own.

After Madeline got married to William, her parents died in an accident. He took all of her inheritance and built the Anderson Family. However, no one had expected him to turn into such an uncontrollable man after he became rich—Madeline was the one who suffered the most.

While they were in the hospital, she would often nag Benedict; maybe it was because she had already treated Benedict as her father.

Colton halted his footsteps when he realized the tears forming in Nicole’s eyes. He reached his hands out to touch the skin around her eyes as her silent tears trickled down her cheeks.

His warm fingers trembled as he brushed her tears off. “Alright. Stop crying. It’s not a big deal,” he murmured gently while gazing at her teary face.

Perhaps it was because she was thinking of her mother, or maybe it was because she knew that Benedict wasn’t going to live for long—either way, Nicole lost her grip on her emotions as she sobbed.

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Chapter 315 Contacting White’s Apprentices

Nicole stopped crying after a short while. She sniffled as she thought, It’s a good thing I didn’t put on any makeup today. Otherwise, my face would be a mess.

LIVE

An error occurred. Please try again later

She reached her hand out to rub her face as she nodded. “I’m fine. I’ll spend the next few days asking around for doctors who may be able to help Old Mr. Benedict.”

Colton didn't decline her offer. "Thank you for your effort, Nicole." They bumped into Anna as they were walking out, and Anna stopped in her spot when she saw Nicole's bloodshot eyes and stuffy nose.

Anna gazed at Nicole for a long while before turning to glare at Colton. "What did you do, Colton? Did you make Nicole cry?"

Colton felt utterly misunderstood at this point. He hadn't done anything, yet Anna had directly placed the blame on him. "No, Mom. I didn't—" he started explaining himself exasperatedly.

However, Anna wasn't in the mood to listen to him. She simply hurried forward to grab Nicole's hand. "Nicole, if Colton did something bad to you, I'll apologize on his behalf. Please don't take his actions to heart."

Nicole hastily shook her head when she saw how worried Anna was. "It's all a misunderstanding, Mrs. Gardner. I was chatting with Grandpa earlier, and he happened to talk about my mother. I felt rather sentimental after that. It has got nothing to do with President Gardner at all," she explained.

Anna heaved a sigh of relief upon hearing Nicole's words. "It's fine. If you miss your mother, you can always treat me as your mother." Anna pulled Nicole in for a warm hug and gently patted her on the back as she spoke.

Nicole's body stiffened for a moment as it had long been since anyone had hugged her that way. It was an unfamiliar feeling for her to receive such care from a motherly figure.

After a while, Anna let go of the younger woman. "It's getting late, and Edith has already prepared dinner. Why don't you stay for a meal, Nicole?" Nicole thought of rejecting the offer when she learned that Olivia was home. Nevertheless, Anna seemed to have realized this before Nicole could say anything.

"Julia previously told me that you and she were best friends and that she was the doctor in charge when you gave birth to Hayden. She's here as well. Why don't we all have a meal together?"

Nicole could no longer bring herself to reject Anna's sincere invitation, so she simply nodded in agreement. Olivia wasn't the only one at the dining table—Julia and Richard were there as well.

Olivia had been talking, but she immediately snapped her mouth shut, and her expression turned grim when she saw Nicole entering the dining room.

Nicole didn't want to start anything with Olivia, so she merely walked over and sat beside Julia. Julia was surprised to find Nicole having dinner with them, so she leaned

close to Nicole as she teased her. “You came over with President Gardner. Is anything going on between both of you?”

Nicole immediately glared at Julia. What is this girl thinking about? “Don’t even start!” Nicole hissed. Julia pouted when she saw the annoyed look on Nicole’s face.

Since other senior members of the Gardner Family were at the dining table, Julia decided to keep mum about the matter. Most of the family members discussed Benedict’s condition while they had dinner.

Benjamin had his brows knitted since the start of dinner, and he seemed rather unhappy. “We can’t afford to delay Dad’s surgery anymore.

The doctor said that the tumor was pressing even harder on his nerves after he lost his temper. So, he might not even last until the end of this month if we don’t proceed with the surgery.”

Olivia no longer wore a long face at the mention of Benedict. “I got someone to contact White’s apprentices previously, but I didn’t seem to get any responses. Apparently, all of White’s apprentices disappeared after White passed away.”

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Chapter 316 Fight

“I got someone to contact those people too, but I heard that White’s apprentices stopped practicing after White passed away.” Sorrow flashed across Benjamin’s gaze as he spoke. Of course, they wouldn’t have had to put in this much effort if it weren’t for the fact that Benedict’s condition was worsening.

Olivia felt rather frustrated upon hearing Benjamin’s statement. “Perhaps White’s apprentices were faking it all along. They used to depend on their master—that’s why none of them dare to practice on their own now that their master is gone. They simply aren’t skilled!”

Nicole pressed her lips together and scoffed to herself when she heard Olivia’s offensive comments. During Nicole’s first year there, she had indeed played the role of White’s assistant. But as time passed, Nicole started performing a few surgeries, while White only observed to ensure that nothing went wrong.

White had an excellent eye for talent—Nicole no longer needed White’s supervision after two years, and she completed all sorts of complicated surgeries independently. However, she hadn’t been able to reveal her true identity as she was still working with F&M Apparel back then.

“Let’s just try to find White’s apprentices for now. We can look around for other doctors as well,” Benjamin uttered with a sigh. Then, all of a sudden, Anna spun her head to look at Julia as she seemed to recall something. “I recall your master being affiliated with White somehow, Julia. Do you know any of White’s apprentices?”

Suddenly, Julia was stunned to hear her name at the dining table. “No!” She hastily shook her head. There was a look of guilt in her eyes. She realized she might have been too quick to say no, so she quickly explained herself.

“White might have known my master, but they weren’t too close. They’ve only met a couple of times. I don’t know his apprentices at all,” she uttered.

Anna gazed at Julia suspiciously. “Are you sure?” she asked. Julia immediately nodded. “Yeah. I don’t know any of White’s apprentices.” Since Julia insisted on her answer, Anna decided she wouldn’t push Julia further.

Nonetheless, Olivia could tell that something wasn’t right as well. So, she spoke up without any hesitation. “Now’s not the time to keep secrets. Old Mr. Benedict’s illness can’t drag on like this. You need to tell us if you know one of them!”

Julia’s face turned pale. As a doctor, she knew they couldn’t afford to delay Benedict’s treatment, but as Nicole’s friend, she knew how much White’s death had impacted Nicole.

“I... don’t know,” Julia whispered.

Olivia could sense that Julia was lying, and she thought that Julia wanted to seize this opportunity to ask for some money. “You should just tell us what you know, especially since Old Mr. Benedict’s life is in danger.

So, why are you hiding the truth? Did we not give you enough money?” she asked in a rude tone. Olivia was being exceptionally straightforward and impolite toward Julia, perhaps because she was projecting all the annoyance she felt toward Nicole onto Julia.

Julia’s face turned stark white when she heard Olivia’s words. Richard knew that Olivia’s words had been too harsh when he saw the look on Julia’s face, so he hastily spoke up for Julia. “Julia would tell you if she knew something. You don’t have to be so harsh.”

Olivia scoffed and rolled her eyes at Richard. “I wonder who taught you to be so rude to your seniors. Hmph.”

A faint smile surfaced on Richard’s face, and he looked directly into Olivia’s eyes as he retorted, “That’s true. I bet Old Mr. Benedict would’ve been doing better if you hadn’t triggered his temper.”

“You—” Olivia was about to start a fight when Benjamin cleared his throat and frowned at Olivia. “That’s enough. Stop fighting. Will you only feel satisfied after fighting with everyone here?!”

Olivia held her tongue back as she gave Richard a cold scoff before looking away. The Jenkins Family was pretty wealthy themselves, and Richard was born with a silver spoon in his mouth, so he had never had to compromise with others since he was young.

He stood up and held his hand out to hold Julia’s arm. “I’m afraid we won’t be able to have a peaceful meal today, Uncle and Aunt Gardner. Julia and I will leave now. We’ll visit Grandpa some other day.”

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Chapter 317 Hot-Tempered

Richard was a pretty good-natured man, but he couldn’t stand it when others harmed those he held dear. Anna knew that her nephew was a good-tempered man only until someone insulted the people he cared about.

Naturally, Richard got annoyed because Olivia kept going at Julia. Anna let out a sigh and nodded. “Sure. Go ahead. You guys can come again some other day.”

Julia had intended to tolerate Olivia’s temper and stay behind to accompany Nicole, but she couldn’t say much since Richard had announced their departure. Nicole could tell that Julia was hesitant to leave, so she smiled to show Julia that she was fine without Julia.

Only then did Julia walk out with Richard. After they left, Olivia continued speaking in an exasperated tone. “Kids nowadays can’t take criticism at all! They can’t even stand it when their seniors give them some advice!”

Anna was rather displeased to see how Olivia was still complaining even after her nephew had left. “Richard has a pretty good temper. He wouldn’t have been so vicious if you had spoken politely.” Wendy spoke up for Richard as well. “Yeah. Richard has always been an easygoing guy.”

Olivia narrowed her eyes and glared at Anna and Wendy before scoffing. “Are you guys saying that I’m bad-tempered?” She threw her cutleries on the table and stood up. “It seems like my presence isn’t welcomed here. Fine. I’ll leave!”

Benjamin couldn’t help but rub his forehead and let out a sigh when he saw Olivia getting mad. Everyone had been gathered for dinner, yet the atmosphere turned tense because of her.

Great. Everyone’s leaving now, he thought. Anna could tell that Benjamin was annoyed, so she tried to calm him down. “It’s fine. I think it’s best that they don’t interact with each other.”

“My sister’s temper is really getting progressively worse,” Benjamin uttered while shaking his head. Despite this, they couldn’t completely cut ties since they were all blood-related.

Wendy lowered her head as she mumbled to herself. “Her temper is beyond bad. Sometimes, I don’t even know what she’s angry about.”

Anna beamed while she shouldered on good-naturedly. “That’s enough out of you. She’s older than you, so you shouldn’t talk about her like that.” The dinner went on smoothly for Nicole after Olivia left. Judging by the way she acted, it seemed like Olivia had a grudge against everyone.

After the meal, Nicole stepped out of the house. Wendy stopped her for a moment and told her how bad Olivia’s temper was before telling her not to take it to heart. Nicole didn’t make any comments after that—she simply responded with a faint smile.

Once Nicole left Gardner Residence, she gave Julia a call. Julia was still out having dinner with Richard, but they had a crisis to resolve since Benedict couldn’t hang on for much longer.

Nicole told Julia to meet her immediately after dinner as Nicole wanted to talk to Julia. Julia understood what Nicole meant, so she agreed to meet up.

After Julia finished her meal hastily, she met Nicole in a café. Nicole had arrived thirty minutes earlier, and Julia jogged over to the location as she knew that she was late.

There was a thin layer of sweat on Julia’s forehead when she finally showed up, and she was panting even after she sat down. This rather amused Nicole. “Did you just come from a fight?”

Julia ordered a glass of water and gulped it down before speaking. "I hurried over right after you gave me a call. Yet, I had to act calm as I finished my meal because I was worried that Richard would suspect something otherwise.

I told him that I was heading home before I came over to meet you." Julia pouted as she spoke. "It's all your fault! I jogged over because I was worried that you would get impatient while waiting."

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Chapter 318 Severely Ill

Nicole couldn't help but laugh when she saw how flustered Julia looked. "Pfft!" Nicole burst out in laughter. "I've already waited for half an hour, so a few minutes doesn't make much of a difference."

Julia rested her chin on her hand and quickly got down to the main issue. "You're looking for me because of Old Mr. Benedict, right?"

Nicole nodded in agreement to her deductions. Julia had initially assumed that it was related to Olivia, and she thought that Nicole wanted to apologize to her, so she quickly waved her hand. "Olivia's temper has always been bad. I've already ranted to Richard, so it's fine. I'm your friend, so I'd never betray you!"

Nicole beamed as she looked at the big-hearted woman before her eyes. "You sure are a generous person."

"I'd do anything for a friend, wouldn't I?" Julia grinned as she spoke.

Nicole let out a small burst of laughter. "Well, I have to say—you did pick a good guy. Richard stood up for you at dinner earlier, so you know that he's a guy you can trust."

Julia was pleased to hear Nicole praising Richard, and she nodded proudly. "Of course. Richard has always been a friendly man, but he becomes especially manly when he's protecting me!"

The moment Nicole saw the wide grin on Julia's face, she knew that she wouldn't be able to stop the woman once she started talking about her man. "Alright, alright. You can praise Richard another day, okay? Let's talk business first. How's Old Mr. Benedict's condition now?"

Julia wiped the smile off her face when she heard Nicole's words. Then, with a serious expression, she looked at Nicole. "What is it? Why do you care about him so much? Are you planning to take action?"

Nicole shook her head while giving Julia a bitter smile. "I can't bring myself to do it, so I can't be much help. Nevertheless, Master White had a lot of good friends around when he was still alive.

I want to understand Old Mr. Benedict's condition so I can ask those friends about it. It'd be great if one of them had the confidence in treating the old man."

Julia pressed her lips together without coercing Nicole into doing anything. She could already tell that Nicole had approached her about this issue, so she pulled out a bunch of well-organized documents before placing them on the table.

"Take a look at this. This is Old Mr. Benedict's medical records. I've gathered everything available in the past few years."

Nicole lowered her gaze to look at the files. "I can't believe you have such comprehensive records," she replied.

Julia inclined her head in slight mischief. "This is the reason you wanted to meet me at this hour at night, right? I knew it." Julia continued speaking when she saw how focused Nicole was. "Take a look at the piece of paper on top. This CT scan shows the location of Old Mr. Benedict's tumor."

Nicole's face sank when she saw the documents in her hands. The old man's condition had been fine a few weeks ago, but his condition had deteriorated drastically recently. Nicole pressed her lips together. The success rate of this surgery is probably 50% if Master White is the one who does it.

Julia was a doctor, but she wasn't a surgeon. She knew that Benedict's condition was severe, but she felt even more worried when she saw Nicole frowning. "Do you think it's going to be hard?"

Nicole nodded in consternation. "Yeah. If we did this a few weeks ago, his chances of survival would have been higher, but I'm afraid it's pretty tough now."

Julia couldn't help but feel like things were looking bad for him when she saw the look on Nicole's face. Nicole remained silent for a moment before she spoke again. "I understand the gist of it now. I'll contact a few of my master's old friends tomorrow, and we'll talk about it then."

Julia gulped when she saw how apprehensive Nicole was. "Are you sure you don't want to do the surgery yourself, Nicole?" she blurted out in a whisper.

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Chapter 319 Phone Call

Julia knew what was going on in Nicole's mind, so she continued talking. "I can tell that you care about Old Mr. Benedict. At least you might feel more confident if the patient is in your hands, right? Unfortunately, Old Mr. Benedict can't wait for much longer. He has to do it within this month."

Nicole lowered her gaze. She understood the logic behind this plan, but... "I think it's best that I contact others and ask them for now," Nicole said after calming herself down.

Julia no longer tried to suggest anything to Nicole after that. Nicole was the one who had to make her own choice, after all. "Sure. Take this. It's not convenient for you to be out now, so you can just ask me if you need to know anything about Old Mr. Benedict."

Nicole beamed and nodded gratefully. "Alright. Thank you so much, Julia."

"We're all friends, so there's no need to thank me. Don't worry about it. It's all fate! It'd be great if we manage to help Old Mr. Benedict, but we can't do anything even if we fail," Julia spoke in an attempt to comfort Nicole.

Nicole smiled without saying anything else.

The next morning, Nicole began to contact a few of her master's ex-colleagues once she got to Gardner Corporation. It had been years since White passed away, and she had barely kept in contact with any of White's ex-colleagues. However, she had no choice but to look for them now since Benedict was in such a state.

Nicole started in a polite voice when her first call was picked up. "Hey, Mr. Ekman. It's me, Nicole." The doctor on the other end of the line was shocked to hear from her—she had disappeared without a trace after White's death.

Of course, the doctor wouldn't have expected her to call him. "Nicole! What is it?"

Then, she explained Benedict's situation to the doctor, but the doctor seemed to turn increasingly silent as she continued talking.

Finally, the doctor only started talking after a short while. "After hearing your description of the patient, I don't think it's advisable to have surgery, Nicole. He's old, and the tumor

is pressing against his nerves. He doesn't stand much of a chance on the surgical table."

She froze as she hadn't expected such a response. She pressed her lips before speaking in a determined tone. "If you're the one doing the surgery, what do you think are the chances of success, Mr. Ekman?"

The man sighed. "20% at most."

That's really low! Nicole bit her lip as a hesitant look flashed across her gaze. She paused for a moment before whispering to the man. "I did a surgery like this with Master White in the past, Mr. Ekman. That person's condition was almost the same as Old Mr. Benedict's, but Master White said that there was a 50% success rate."

Mr. Ekman seemed somewhat exasperated after hearing Nicole's words. "You know how the top surgeon in the world was Master White back then, right? Even though I trained with him, my skills will never be at his level.

Furthermore, I'm getting old, and I no longer have the same amount of mental capacity. However, you performed such surgeries when you were with Master White, so I believe you can get it done independently. Perhaps you would be able to have a 50% chance of success."

Nicole was silent after hearing the man's words. She had assumed that the other doctors would be able to promise a 50% chance, but...

"Alright. I got it. Thanks, Mr. Ekman. Please keep this a secret," she muttered.

"Your master is gone, Nicole. Those family members have apologized as well. If he were still here, he wouldn't have wanted you to waste your skills away.

"You're a rare genius, you know?" The senior doctor conveyed thoughtfully. Nicole had mingled with nearly all of the doctors back when she was shadowing White.

After all, White had never taken any apprentices before Nicole. So, it came as a shock when White took an outsider from the medical field as his apprentice one day. Nevertheless, the rest of the doctors were thoroughly impressed by White's choice.

Even though Nicole wasn't given professional training, she was a quick learner with a knack for understanding medical-related issues. Moreover, she managed to deal with many complicated cases even at a young age.

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Chapter 320

Chapter 320 Deep in Thought

Nicole made a few other calls, but she received similar answers. All of them said that the most they could promise with Benedict's condition was a 20% success rate.

This made Nicole feel rather hopeless. She clutched her phone with a helpless look on her face—she felt like she didn't have any idea what to do.

Eventually, she threw her phone aside. She decided that she no longer wanted to make any calls—she knew that most of the other doctors' answers would be the same. She could hear a ringing in her head as she pressed her fingers against her eyes.

She had only shut her eyes to rest for a moment when Whitney pushed the door and walked in. "This is an agreement sent from downstairs, Nicole," Whitney said while walking in. Whitney stopped talking when she saw how pale and tired Nicole looked.

"What's wrong, Miss Nicole? Are you not feeling well? Do you need me to send you to the doctor's?" Whitney asked.

Nicole shook her head as she opened her eyes to look at the documents in Whitney's hands. She spoke while taking the papers into her hands. "I'm fine.

I might have been too tired recently. It's no big deal." Whitney took a long, careful look at Nicole's face while frowning. "You're scarily pale, Nicole."

Nicole hastily looked through the documents. The contents of the records were about hiring an ambassador for Ann. The ambassador they were looking at was Sarah Brenner, one of Nicole's classmates in high school. What a coincidence, Nicole thought. "I'm fine. Old Mr. Benedict has been ill recently, so perhaps I'm just worried about him."

"You don't have to worry, Nicole. The Gardners are powerful—I'm sure they will have their ways. We don't have to worry about them," Whitney said. "I know."

Nicole smiled as she lowered her head to sign the documents. "Sarah Brenner used to be my classmate, so I can be the one to talk to her about this ambassadorship."

Whitney no longer continued the previous topic when she heard Nicole talking about work. "Yeah. I'll let the design department know about this," Whitney replied with a nod.

"You can make an appointment for today afternoon. Tell her that the founder of Ann, Nicole, wants to meet her. We'll see if she can take some time for a meeting," Nicole said.

Whitney nodded and left the room after receiving her orders. After she left, Nicole leaned back against the chair and spun it around to face the back of the office.

The office room had a great view—the large floor-to-ceiling window behind her showed her the spectacular scenery outside. She glanced out at the sight as she fell deep into her thoughts.

Am I really going to just watch Old Mr. Benedict die on the hospital bed? She lowered her gaze to look at her hands and shut her eyes as she recalled how her master had been lying on the hospital bed a few years ago.

Her master had worn a pained look on his face when he spoke to her. “I swear on my innocence, Nicole. I’ve never wronged a single patient, yet I ended up with a patient who tarnished my relationship! Being a doctor is supposed to be a sacred career, yet this career just ruined my life!

You shouldn’t be a doctor anymore, Nicole. Everyone else is going to criticize you if they know you’re my apprentice. So, don’t be a doctor anymore, Nicole!” Moments before her master died, he clutched her hand while mumbling to her.

Nicole knew that it wasn’t her master’s intention for her to watch a patient die without saving the patient. He simply didn’t want her to inherit his title as he was worried that it would harm her.

Nicole was aware of this all along, but she simply couldn’t bring herself to move past her beloved master’s death. She had witnessed him dying on the hospital bed with sorrow-filled eyes, and all of this had happened because of his patient’s act of slandering him.

What should I do, Mom? Am I really going to watch Old Mr. Benedict die without doing anything?

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