

# A Ruling Passion – Chapter 0061

Lily nodded slightly. “I’ll take my leave now, if there’s nothing else.”

As soon as she returned to the office, everyone in the department of design flocked to her. “How did it go, Miss Pierre? Did he approve it?”

Lily went straight into the CEO’s office and only spoke when she saw Eric. “It has been approved, Mr. Nathaniel.”

Eric didn’t seem surprised at all. “Okay, get the janitor to clean up the office. You may all get off work early today.”

The entire department of design cheered as soon as the news got out. Everyone except for Arianne, who was still seated at her desk.

She quietly packed up her things and went to the bathroom. In front of the mirror, she reapplied her lipstick to cover up her pale lips. She didn’t want Mark to be upset when he saw her at home.

All of a sudden, she heard someone speaking inside one of the toilet cubicles. “I think Arianne is the one who forced Mark Tremont to make their marriage public. He’s always kept their relationship under wraps and even rejected the sketches when she went over

to submit them. I honestly suspect there weren't any issues with the sketches to begin with and it was Arianne who botched things up. Otherwise, why would everything go smoothly when Miss Lily went over to submit them this time? I really wonder what kind of tricks she pulled to climb into Mark's bed..."

"I'm curious too! I was really shocked to learn about her relationship with him. After doing some research on the net, I'm not surprised anymore. He took her in and they shared the same roof for so many years. Lucky women like her just have everything handed to them, don't they? She can just force her way through by using any trick. A nice guy like Mark would definitely give in. She even had a one-night stand with Mr. Sivan's third son. It'll be a wonder if Mark is even kind to her. She deserves that kind of treatment!" the other person said. "I know, right? How can someone like that even marry Mark?! It's so unfair!"

"Yeah! Well, the higher she climbs, the harder she will fall. Let's just wait for it. Things won't go well for people like her! We almost went crazy from all the overtimes. If it wasn't for the break, I'd have taught her a lesson! Turns out that she's just a slut despite looking reserved."

Arianne, having no desire to find out whose conversation she was listening in on, immediately left the bathroom before the two could come out.

On her way back, she bought a cup of bubble milk tea. The warm cup in her hands immediately dispelled the winter chill.

She couldn't recall where she heard this, but a boba was supposedly able to cheer up a bad mood.

Not long after Arianne came out of the milk tea shop, she was forced to stop by an oncoming Rolls-Royce.

She stood on the spot, not bothering to try evading the car. The only person who drove like this was Brian, under Mark's coercion. This wasn't the first time it happened, so she didn't even feel scared.

Arianne opened the door, got into the backseat, and greeted Mark casually. "You got off work early too?"

Mark didn't respond to her as he continued resting with his eyes closed. With his face covered by his firm hand, he looked a lot less hostile.

Arianne didn't mind being ignored. At least, she didn't need to take a cab home today.

The bubble milk tea flowed through the straw, and its sweet aroma burst inside her mouth.

Brian was a little nervous sitting in the driver's seat. He wanted to remind Arianne to refrain from drinking milk tea in the car because Mark despised any lingering scent in his car. However, Mark hadn't said a word yet.

Mark frowned slightly when he finally smelled the bubble milk tea. “What’s that?”

Arianne looked at him innocently. “Boba, milk tea...?”

He just stared back at her without saying anything.

She leaned forward and brought the straw to his lips. “You... wanna have a taste?”

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Mark was slightly taken aback but then curiously took a small sip. The rich sweetness of the milk tea immediately exploded in his mouth, causing him to frown even more. For someone like him who didn’t fancy sweets since he was a child, this was pure torture.

Arianne suddenly snapped back to her senses. What had she just done? Why did she give him the milk tea she had drunk? Did he actually just drink it?!

Arianne jolted when she saw the lipstick mark she left on the straw. She held the cup close to her chest and looked out the window. Although she pretended that nothing had happened, she was panicking on the inside. Should she still drink the remaining milk tea?

Mark didn't know what was going on through her mind at the moment, but he was amused by the way she tightly held her drink. He had only taken a small sip, why did her heart ache this much over a beverage?

When they were approaching the Tremont Estate, Mark's cell phone suddenly rang.

He took a glimpse at the screen and instantly rejected the call.

"Take the call, pretend I'm not here," Arianne said softly.

He threw a silent glance at her, as though telling her that he didn't really care about her opinion, but he simply didn't want her to hear the content of the call.

Arianne shut her mouth resentfully. When they arrived at Tremont Estate, she got out of the car and went toward the back door out of habit. Mark stopped in his tracks when getting out of the car and remarked coldly, "Are you unused to using the main door?"

She turned back and went in through the main door with her head hanging. The security guard at the entrance greeted her respectfully, "Madam."

She hung her head even lower and fled to the kitchen to find Mary. She only felt at ease when she was around her.

Mary was prepping some vegetables when she saw Arianne come in. “ Oh, you’re back so early today?” she said with a smile.

Arianne put her bubble milk tea down and skillfully rolled up her sleeves to help out. “The company gave us a break I ran into Mark and came home with him.”

Mary moved the vegetables away. “Then what are you doing here in the kitchen instead of accompanying sir? Shoo, shoo. Neither of you are spending enough time together. Now hurry to his side!”

Arianne turned speechless for a moment. If she was comfortable around Mark, why would she need to even hide in the kitchen as soon as she got back?

Mary forcefully pushed her out when she saw Arianne still dawdling around. “Hurry up and do what you’re supposed to! I don’t need any help here.”

Arianne went upstairs dejectedly, deciding that she’d retrieve a fresh change of clothes before hitting the shower. When she entered the room, she saw Mark sitting in front of the window while talking on the phone. She tiptoed around the room and directly went downstairs after picking up her clothes.

After taking a shower, Arianne leaned back against the sofa in the living room and read a magazine. The fatigue from the past few days finally took a toll on her, and before she knew it, she had dozed off.

Mary came out of the kitchen when she was done preparing dinner. She deliberately ignored Arianne, who had fallen asleep, and went upstairs to inform Mark, “Sir, dinner is ready.”

Mark didn't take a shower or change his clothes. This meant that he would be going out again later. When he walked downstairs and noticed Arianne sleeping on the sofa, he took a blanket that was stacked to the side and pulled it over her body. His movements weren't the gentlest, but rather, seemed to be irritated instead. Mary watched the scene with a meaningful smile on her face.

“Sir, should I wake the madam up for dinner?” Mary asked carefully.

“No need, ” Mark relied indifferently.

The smile on Mary's face broadened. It seemed like Mark still cared about Arianne.

About an hour after the meal, Mark looked at the watch on his wrist then got up and walked to the door. “Mary, I'm going out to attend to some matters.”

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Mary shuffled forward, took out his shoes and put them down neatly. “Don't worry, I'll make sure that Mrs. Tremont eats once she wakes up.”

Mark did not deign to reply, pursing his lips instead.

As his car drove away from the Tremont Estate, Arianne woke up sheepishly. She pulled out her phone and checked the time. "Mary... Why didn't you wake me?" she grumbled.

"Mr. Tremont told me not to," Mary replied, stepping forward with a smile. "He wanted you to rest more. You've been exhausting yourself over the past few days. I've warmed up your meal and brought it over. You must eat before going back to sleep, no matter how tired you are. By the way, Mr. Tremont just left."

"Mmmh," Arianne replied, still in a blur. She got up and sat at the dining table before noticing that Mark had left his phone behind. She had not intended on concerning herself with it, but it rang. Furthermore, the screen indicated that Aery Kinsey was on the other end...

Mary looked at her and said, "Answer it for him, Mrs. Tremont."

"Forget it," Arianne said, shaking her head, "He'll soon realize that he's left his phone at home and will come back to get it."

Mary sighed, as if she thought Arianne lacked determination. Suddenly, she picked it up and answered the call, "Hello? May I ask who this is?"



“Who are you?” Aery replied rudely from the other end.

“Why do you have my darling Mark’s phone?”

Arianne motioned for Mary to hang up the phone, she ignored her. “I’m the housekeeper of the Tremont Estate. Mr. Tremont is in the shower with Mrs. Tremont. You may speak to him when he comes out.”

Arianne widened her eyes. The context in this message was a little overwhelming, she momentarily lost the ability to process it all. Aery was in a similar predicament. “What did you say? They... They’re... in the shower, together? How is that possible? Mark clearly told me that he was on his way!”

“Fine, don’t believe me,” Mary replied irritably. Then, she ended the call.

Arianne felt guilty. “Mary... I understand that you’re outraged on my behalf, but... Mark will be angry if he finds out about this...”

“I don’t care,” Mary pouted. “I’ve served the Tremonts for most of my life. I wouldn’t mind retiring now. You, however... My biggest concern is whether you can get along with Mr. Tremont. You should do something about these fawning women. Those women will always have their sights on a man like Mr. Tremont!”

Ariane fell silent. She had no way of dealing with Mark's other women. She couldn't anyway.

Mark returned soon after.

Ariane handed his phone to him. "Aery Kinsey called. I answered it for you."

Mark looked at her, took the phone, then turned and left "Don't ever touch my phone again," was all he said.

Loneliness flashed across her eyes, but her gaze returned to calm soon after.

At around ten at night, she had just entered the deep sleep stage when her phone rang, it was a call from Ethan.

She quickly answered, afraid that something had happened to Tiffany again. "Hello?"

"Ariane, I need your help," Ethan replied in an even tone. "Do you have time for a chat?"

It didn't seem like it was anything serious. She checked the clock and said, "Whatever it is, it's late. We can talk tomorrow. I was actually asleep."

Ethan hesitated, then said, "I want to ask Tiffie to marry me, and I need your help. The case against her family hasn't been resolved and she's been frowning every day. I don't want to see her like this, so I thought I'd propose to her earlier than I'd planned. Just in case she starts making wild assumptions. I'm kind of worried... and I don't have time tomorrow, as I've promised to go out with her."

Arianne no longer objected when she heard that it was about Tiffany. "Where are you? I can't get a cab here. I might be late..."

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"I'll pick you up. Give me your address. I'll be over in a minute," Ethan said.

Half an hour later, Ethan's car arrived outside the gates of the Tremont Estate. Arianne wrapped her coat tightly around herself and quickly ducked into the car.

The late night temperature was freezing.

The security guard on night shift at the gate noticed that Arianne had entered a car that was not Mark's and prudently wrote down the car plate number.

Arianne wasn't in the mood to venture too far off, so she told Ethan to stop at the intersection. "Let's talk in the car. It's really, really late."

Ethan looked exhausted. "I'm too tired today. Come to my hotel. I'll call a cab for you when we've finished discussing. There are a lot of details to go over, and I don't want to be thrown off my game when I do this. You're Tiffie's only best friend, and I don't know who else to turn to for help. Just this once, okay?"

Arianne couldn't bring herself to reject him, so she followed Ethan back to his hotel.

They walked into his hotel room. The takeout that Ethan had previously ordered was delivered soon after. "Would you like some?" he asked.

Arianne shook her head. "No need. Why are you eating so late?"

"I'm helping Tiffie out with locating the whereabouts of the culprits behind the lost jewelry materials. I haven't had a good night's rest in days," Ethan explained as he ate. "I'm sorry for making you come all the way here..." Before he could finish, he accidentally spilled some broth and dirtied his clothes.

"I need a shower. Wait for me," Ethan frowned. He looked like he was in an extremely bad mood.

“It’s alright, it’s alright. You go ahead. I’ll wait for you here,” Arianne said, trying her best to soothe him.

Ethan nodded, got up, and walked into the bathroom.

The hotel bathroom had a weird design. Its walls and doors were built with half transparent glass. When the room filled with steam, everything inside could be seen.

When Arianne realized this, she hastily turned around. The idea was to wait outside, but the bathroom was on the right side of the door, and she would have to pass by if she wanted to get out. She pondered for a moment, shut her eyes, and groped around towards the door.

Before she could find the doorknob, someone opened the door from outside. She opened her eyes and came face to face with Tiffany’s astonished face.

“Tiffie...?” A string snapped in Arianne’s mind, and she was suddenly at a loss for words to explain this.

Tiffany was about to speak when she saw Mark marching over, engulfed in hostility from top to bottom from the corner of the hallway. His expression was frightening, and he had two bodyguards tailing him.

When she heard the pattering sounds of water in the room, Tiffany's expression immediately changed. She made a decision and pushed Arianne back inside, shutting the door firmly behind her.

By the time Mark arrived in front of her, Tiffany had her back against the door. "Hello, Mark. What brings you here?"

Mark narrowed his eyes, releasing a dangerously hostile mien. "Step aside."

"I have a female friend showering inside. It's not really appropriate for you to go in right now. Are you looking for Ari? She's not here," Tiffany said hesitantly.

On the other side of the door, Arianne, who had overheard all of this, wasn't sure if she should feel moved or sad...

The whole thing felt strange to her. She had only just arrived at the hotel with Ethan, and both Tiffany and Mark arrived. What was going on? It's no surprise to find Tiffany dropping by to see Ethan, but hadn't Mark gone out with Aery?

Before she could dive in any deeper, Mark ordered his bodyguard to knock down the door.

She took a few steps back, panicking. Then, she shut her eyes and knocked on the bathroom door. “Ethan! Get out, hurry!”

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Unfortunately, Ethan couldn't hear her and continued showering, most likely, the bathroom was sound proof.

Soon, the bodyguard snatched the room card from Tiffany and unlocked the door. Arianne was now face to face with Mark, it was like looking at a field of snow. The look in his eyes made her feel very guilty, even though she hadn't done anything wrong. She timidly backed away...

Tiffany struggled out of the bodyguard's restraints, rushed forward, and shielded Arianne. “Mark Tremont, if you have something to say, be civilized about it. I'm just as anxious as you are! However, can we wait for Ethan to come out of the bathroom before straightening this out? I'm certain that Ari isn't that kind of a person, and neither is Ethan!”

Ethan finally noticed that something wasn't right outside. He put on his bathrobe and walked out, only to find a large group in his room. “What's going on?” he asked, taken aback.

Mark's gaze turned cold. Tiffany snapped irritably, “You're asking me? How should I know?”

Ethan finally made sense of the situation and quickly explained, "I have some matters to discuss with Arianne. Just as we arrived at the hotel, I dirtied my clothes while I was eating. So I took a shower..." Before he could finish, Mark icily cut him off. "If you're going to make excuses, at least use your brain!"

Ethan couldn't be bothered to repeat his explanation. He turned to Tiffany. "Is that what you think too? That I'm lying to you?"

Tiffany looked at him, then turned to Arianne. After a few moments of hesitation, she was about to answer when Ethan smiled. "Alright. No need to say a word. Let's all agree that there's something between us!"

Mark shot Arianne a look, lifted his hand, then turned around and left.

The two bodyguards stepped forward and dragged Arianne out. Even though they were not man handling her, Arianne felt as if she were drawn and quartered.

Was he that suspicious of her? Was she a slut to him, just because of whatever happened three years ago?

Mark wore a terrifying expression the entire way home.



Arianne lowered her gaze and stayed silent. She didn't feel like explaining anything. Everything you say is considered a lie when someone doesn't trust you anyway.

When they arrived at Tremont Estate, Mark grabbed her by the wrist, dragged her to the bathroom in their bedroom, and sprayed her with ice-cold water. She shivered from the cold.

She looked up at him and got a full view of the anger and dissipating patience in his eyes. There was one more thing hated.

Mark turned around and walked out, as if he could no longer bear the sight of her. "Come and see me when you're clean!"

The bathroom door slammed shut with a bang, its sound mirroring the pang in her heart.

Arianne stayed in the bathroom and stared into space for more than an hour. Her clothes were completely drenched. She couldn't walk out in these. Of course, she couldn't possibly ask Mark to bring her pajamas either.

When the skin of her fingertips began to turn white, she reluctantly wrapped a towel around herself. It was a man's towel and could only cover up the most private areas. She even had to walk carefully, afraid of lifting her legs up too high.

Up on stepping out of the bathroom, she found that the entire room was fogged up with the thick stench of smoke. She coughed for a good measure of time.

This time, Mark did not put out his cigarette. Instead, he chose to be indifferent. The bottle of whiskey on the table next to him was half finished.

Arianne tried her best to breathe as little as possible and walked behind him. “What do you want to say?”

Mark’s finger tensed and changed the shape of the cigarette between his fingers. “Do you think I’d say anything?”

The atmosphere had reached a deadlock, quiet like a wild animal in the night, ready to swallow its prey at any moment.

Then, the glassware on the small table was swept onto the ground. Mark’s anger finally erupted. He got up and grabbed her shoulder. “Are you that anxious?! Anyone will do, right?! I’m still alive!”