

All Too Late Chapter 416

Chapter 416

Chapter 416 Too Many People Know This

“Vanessa, there is something we need you to cooperate with,” Kathleen said coldly.

“How’s my daughter?” Vanessa couldn’t get out, so she couldn’t see Yareli.

“She’s in a very stable condition now. It’s up to you to decide on whether to cooperate with us or not.” Kathleen looked at her meaningfully.

Vanessa paused. “How do you want me to cooperate?”

“Tomorrow, I will hold a press conference, and you have to expose what the Hoover family did to my mother on the spot,” Kathleen said coldly.

What?

Vanessa frowned.

Samuel said coldly, “You don’t have a choice, Vanessa. Now you and your daughter are in our hands. Don’t play any tricks. If you don’t cooperate with us, Yareli will be the one who suffers.”

Vanessa’s fists clenched tightly. “I can cooperate with you, but I want to see my daughter wake up.”

That was her only wish.

Kathleen nodded. “Fine. Just you wait!”

With that said, she turned around and exited the room.

Samuel followed her out too.

“Do you have a way to wake Yareli up?” Samuel furrowed his eyebrows.

“Of course.” Kathleen turned and entered Yareli’s room.

She took out a pill and a shot.

The pill was given to Yareli to eat first.

The shot was then used to inject into Yareli's vein.

A few minutes later, Yareli really opened her eyes.

She sat up suddenly. "Where am..."

Before she could finish speaking, she felt like she wanted to puke.

Kathleen opened the bathroom door.

Yareli ran out of bed, entered the bathroom, and began to vomit.

After a while, she screamed.

Ahhh!

Kathleen stood at the door with her arms folded. "Don't make a fuss, it's just a lovebug. Just flush it away with water."

Soon, the sound of flushing the toilet came from the bathroom.

Yareli walked to the sink and kept rinsing her mouth.

Then, she came out and looked at Kathleen with a grim face.

"What on earth happened to me?" Yareli was stunned.

Seeing that Samuel was standing aside, her face became even more embarrassed.

Samuel was indifferent and expressionless.

"You fell into a coma. Don't you remember?" Kathleen asked coldly.

Yareli sat on the bed. "I only remember that I was trying on clothes in the fitting room of a mall. Suddenly, a woman with the same face as me walked in. Then, I don't remember anything, even until now."

She still felt scared thinking about it.

Kathleen sneered, "That's because someone pretended to be you."

Pretended?

Yareli bit her lip. "Who? Who dares to do such a thing?"

“A lot of people,” Kathleen said quietly.

Like me.

Kathleen said indifferently, “Since you can’t remember it, it doesn’t matter. You are not important anyway.”

As she opened the door, Rory pushed Vanessa in.

Seeing Yareli, Vanessa cried out excitedly, “Yareli!”

“Mom?” Yareli was shocked.

Why is she here?

They hugged each other.

“What on earth is going on?” Yareli asked in surprise.

Vanessa explained, “Lauren wanted to murder me. But I was rescued by Clarissa and handed over to Kathleen.”

What?

“Then what about me?” Yareli wondered.

“You were framed to be the one who tried to murder Kathleen and her daughter,” Vanessa said agitatedly.

Yareli gritted her teeth. “What? It must be the woman who looks exactly like me!”

Kathleen said coldly, “The woman who looks exactly like you is Nicolette. Yareli, as long as I don’t show up now, you are a murderer.”

Yareli paused. Then, she asked, “How are you never going to show up?”

Kathleen smiled sarcastically. “I can. It doesn’t matter what I do as long as I can watch you go to jail.”

Yareli roared, “It’s Nicolette who wants to murder you! She hates you to the core.”

Kathleen’s eyes were sharp. “Don’t you hate me? Don’t you want me to die?”

Yareli was at a loss for words.

Of course I want to!

If Kathleen's dead, Samuel will look at me!

Kathleen said indifferently, "So you two are the same. In short, as long as I don't show up, you will be locked behind bars."

"You!" Yareli was angry.

Kathleen sneered at her. "Also, I can start over with a different identity, and it will have no effect on me. Anyway, Kathleen in the legal sense has been blown up by you, and when your case is settled, nobody will care who I am."

Kathleen made Yareli's face contort with fury.

Kathleen gazed coldly at Vanessa and asked, "Have you made up your mind?"

Vanessa pursed her lips. "You have to let Yareli go."

Kathleen's eyes were cold and sharp. "You made a lot of requests. You want me to save her, and now you want me to let her go. Believe it or not, I will murder you two here!"

Vanessa and Yareli trembled together.

Kathleen lost her patience. "I can save you or murder you, so don't take it too far!"

"Kathleen, as long as you're willing to let Yareli go, I won't just attend any press conference. I can even help you sort out Luna Zeller."

Luna Zeller was the name of Old Mrs. Hoover.

Kathleen narrowed her eyes. "So you are finally working with me now?"

Vanessa looked at her faintly and said, "I want you to help send Yareli to Turlen. Do you agree?"

Kathleen smiled coldly. "Then it depends on your sincerity."

Vanessa paused and said, "Don't worry, I'm full of sincerity! Just let me have a few words with Yareli alone, okay?"

Kathleen and Samuel glanced at each other, and they then turned to go out.

Yareli said agitatedly, "Mom, how can you promise them this?"

Vanessa said calmly, "Listen, Yareli. When you reach Turlen, go and see your biological father immediately. I've informed him a long time ago. He won't just leave you out to dry, and you will not suffer if you stay with him."

"My biological father?" Yareli furrowed her eyebrows.

Vanessa held her hand and continued, "Anyway, stop asking. Someone will pick you up when you get off the plane. I can see now that Nicolette is the most ruthless one. So, just leave this place."

"What about you?" Yareli asked worriedly.

Vanessa explained, "I'll be fine. Kathleen won't murder me. At most, she will send me to prison, so don't worry."

Yareli said anxiously, "That won't work either! Mommy, if nothing works, how about we go to Luna?"

Vanessa became furious. "Why don't you understand? Luna is already working with Nicolette. We can't trust her anymore! Otherwise, do you think Nicolette is capable of pulling off such a big stunt on her own?"

Yareli pursed her lips. "Why?"

Vanessa just realized and said, "Why else? Too many people know this secret. If you, me, and Uncle Zachary are dead, the only one left knowing will be Nicolette. By then, Luna will surely find a way to murder her."

Does Nicolette think that she can escape?

In her dreams!

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Chapter 417 The Winner Takes It All

A woman as vicious as Luna would never let anyone who owed her off the hook.

Hence, she was determined to stay and watch Nicolette suffer.

"Mom, I'm not leaving. I can't leave you behind." Yareli was reluctant.

“Stop wasting time and leave now!” Vanessa gritted her teeth. “Remember this, don’t try to save me or come back for me. Also, be more obedient to your biological father. All he has is a son and a daughter, who are younger than you, but no wife. As long as you use your head the right way, you won’t have to worry about your livelihood.”

“Mom.” Tears welled up in Yareli’s eyes.

“Listen to me. Leave now.” Vanessa caressed her daughter’s face and said, “Go.”

“All right.” Yareli nodded in response.

“Ask Kathleen and the rest to come here,” Vanessa said.

“Okay.” Then, Yareli turned around and left.

Moments later, Kathleen and Samuel entered the room with Charles in tow.

Vanessa stared at them coldly while she stated, “Kathleen, I want you to send Yareli to Turlen. She’ll never return to this country from now onward. What do you say?”

Kathleen replied flatly, “Okay. I agree.”

“Do you promise?” An icy expression shrouded Vanessa’s face.

“If you don’t trust me, we can call off our deal now.” Kathleen remained indifferent.

To that, Vanessa sneered, “You’ve probably figured out what happened by now, haven’t you, Kathleen?”

“I’d still like to hear about it from your perspective,” Kathleen replied.

Vanessa took a deep breath before she began. “It’s simple. Luna is a jealous and narrow-minded person. After she found out about Trevor and your granny, she immediately set off to look for my father, Hector. Then, she told my father she’d collaborate with him on one condition. And that was to kill your mother.”

Kathleen frowned upon hearing that. “Kill?”

“Yes!” Vanessa nodded before continuing, “However, my father was soft-hearted and left your mother at the entrance of the orphanage owned by the Johnson family.”

“Soft-hearted?” Kathleen scoffed, “That’s a load of crap. Would you still consider me soft-hearted if I provide medical treatment to you after I break all of your limbs?”

Vanessa was at a loss for words.

At that moment, Kathleen's expression darkened. "Surely he received some benefits from Luna. Why are you trying to clear his name?"

"Right. My father should have just killed your mother!" Vanessa narrowed her eyes.

If he had done so, there wouldn't be so much trouble now.

"That's right. That way, your sins would be concealed." Kathleen sniggered. "Karma has got you back for it now, but you would end up far worse if your father had actually killed my mother."

Vanessa gritted her teeth.

"Keep talking," Kathleen said. "How did you and Luna start to work together?"

Vanessa stared blankly at Kathleen. "Although my father sent your mother to the orphanage, he kept tabs on her all these years. He didn't expect Luna to catch on to that. At the time, your mother married your father and had given birth to Charles."

Just then, Charles' gaze turned sharp. "So, you're saying Luna was behind the incident when I got separated from my parents in the past?"

"Yes." Vanessa nodded lightly.

Charles clenched his fists tightly at that.

That Luna is too wicked!

"What about you two?" Kathleen stared directly into Vanessa's eyes. "What did you and Zachary do?"

Then, Vanessa took another deep breath and continued, "We covered up her trails. You were Luna's target after your parents passed away. However, no one expected that you would get taken in by the Macari family."

Kathleen looked at Samuel silently.

It suddenly dawned on Kathleen that she could have died if the Macari family had not taken her in.

Naturally, Kathleen was grateful to the Macari family for raising her.

"Old Mrs. Macari did a meticulous job protecting you," Vanessa said. "That's why we couldn't get our hands on you. Fortunately, you didn't have too much interest in your mother's identity. Thus, we didn't have to kill you at once. We only made a move after you and Charles came back and started investigating."

Kathleen coldly uttered, "What about Granny? Does her death have anything to do with you?"

"No. I never laid hands on your granny. It was her who wanted to end her own life," Vanessa replied, shaking her head.

At that, Kathleen descended into a moment of deep thought as silence ensued.

"All I know is that she called Trevor over the phone before she passed away," Vanessa answered. "Luna told me this herself."

Kathleen pursed her lips.

She had nothing to ask anymore.

"Do you have proof?" Samuel stared at Vanessa without a hint of warmth. "Words alone are not enough. Do you have any evidence to back up your claims?"

"All the evidence is locked up in my overseas safety deposit box," Vanessa answered.

"What's the password? I'll send someone to retrieve it," Samuel said while wearing a glacial expression.

To that, Vanessa told them the bank where the safety deposit box was and her password.

Samuel had many powerful connections overseas.

He sent someone to the bank to retrieve the evidence with just a phone call.

"I'm curious, Vanessa. Didn't my granny treat you guys well?" Kathleen croaked. "From what I know, she often doted on you and Zachary."

Vanessa clenched her fists. "That's why I didn't want her to die back then! I just wanted her to remain unconscious for a while. I wanted to get all of the Yoeger family's inheritance before taking care of her until her death. But you came back."

Kathleen sneered coldly, "My mom never knew about her identity. She was only curious about why she got left behind at an orphanage. As for Granny, she suffered a deep longing for my mom over these forty years. They were both in the same city, but because of you guys, they never reunited!"

Vanessa muttered, "As the saying goes, every man for himself, and the devil takes the hindmost."

"Hmph!" Kathleen scoffed. "So you're saying I shouldn't blame you for this?"

Vanessa fell silent.

“Why did you say I’m vicious then?” Kathleen chuckled coldly and continued, “I’m just letting others have a taste of their own medicine. You’re such a hypocrite, Vanessa. As the saying goes, the winner takes it all. So, you should admit you’re incompetent and not blame others.”

Vanessa lowered her gaze. “You’re right.”

It was indeed a total defeat for her.

“Nicolette has already killed Zachary,” Kathleen said unhurriedly. “So you guys are next in line.”

“What?” Vanessa’s eyes nearly popped out of their sockets. “That’s impossible. How could she kill her biological father?”

She did not believe Kathleen’s words at all.

“Believe whatever you want. I have no reason to lie to you.” Kathleen lazily glanced at her while speaking without haste. “All in all, I’ll throw you and your daughter out onto the streets if you don’t cooperate with me. I bet Nicolette will be ecstatic if that happens.”

Vanessa’s face fell.

Is Nicolette really so ruthless?

Then, Kathleen walked out of the room to allow Vanessa think her options through.

Samuel and Charles also left with her.

Meanwhile, at the living room, Clarissa was sizing up Yareli.

The latter furrowed her brows and said, “I’ve seen you before.”

“Did you just remember that?” Clarissa questioned indifferently.

It was then that Kathleen approached them.

“Kathleen, what’s with the female lovebug in my body?” Yareli roared.

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Chapter 418 Do You Accept

"Do you think I'll tell you if you question me with that tone?" Kathleen shot a poker-faced look at Yareli.

The latter was at a loss for words.

"Rory, send her back to her ward and lock her up," Kathleen said in annoyance. "Help give her a quick refresher since she doesn't know her place."

"Got it!" Rory replied before approaching to grab Yareli's arm.

"Let go of me!" Yareli struggled.

However, Rory did not loosen her grip one bit.

"You've gone too far, Kathleen!" Yareli hollered. "How dare you do this to me in front of Samuel?"

All that came from Kathleen was a snort.

"You don't have to show her mercy, Rory," Samuel chimed in.

"Understood!" Rory nodded.

She got more dauntless after receiving Samuel's instructions.

Following that, Rory aggressively dragged Yareli to the latter's room and tied her to her bed.

"I hate you, Kathleen!" Yareli roared.

Kathleen stood in front of the door while looking at the tied-up Yareli. "Rory, give her a sleeping pill. She's too noisy."

"Okay." Rory nodded once more.

"Don't you dare! Kathleen!" Yareli's voice was deafening.

"Why wouldn't I dare?" Kathleen scoffed.

Then, she took a sleeping pill and forcefully shoved it down Yareli's throat.

"Mm-Mmph!" Yareli struggled with all her might but to no avail.

In a matter of minutes, she drifted off and succumbed to sleep.

After that, Kathleen instructed Rory, "Give her one sleeping pill everyday. Make sure she stays quiet until the day we ship her off."

"Got it." Rory nodded.

Kathleen then turned on her heel and returned to the living room.

Only Charles and Clarissa was there.

"Where's Samuel?" Kathleen was puzzled as he was there just a moment ago.

That was when Charles pointed at the second floor, hinting that Samuel had gone upstairs.

Kathleen frowned.

"So, you've decided-" Charles looked at Kathleen and was hesitant to speak.

Pursing her lips, Kathleen eventually answered, "Charles, I think I do like him."

"I knew it." Charles sighed.

"I'm not going to see you off, Charles. Goodbye." With that, Kathleen walked up the stairs.

A hint of bitterness caused Charles' handsome face to contort.

Clarissa asked curiously, "What's wrong, Charles?"

"I'm just thinking that maybe there's no need for memories of love," Charles said flatly.

"That's not necessarily true," Clarissa muttered. "Kate is behaving the way she is now because she fell for Samuel after she lost her memories. But there's no guarantee she'll still be in love with him after she regains her memories."

Charles fixed his gaze on her. "You don't know how special Samuel is to her. Especially after she heard how Vanessa said she would have died if not for Samuel and the Macari family's protection."

"But will Samuel accept a love that's heavily laced with gratitude?" Clarissa was curious.

"Of course, he will," Charles replied. "That's what he wants. To be linked to Kate in all ways so that she can't leave him."

Clarissa stuck her tongue out after she heard that. "What a strange man."

"He's very capricious too," Charles added. "All right, let's go."

"Okay." Clarissa nodded. Then, she followed Charles as they departed Florinia Manor.

Later, Kathleen went to the bedroom, but Samuel wasn't there either.

He just woke up. Why isn't he resting? Where on earth did he go?

She then stepped out of the bedroom and went to the study.

The door was left slightly ajar, revealing that the lights were switched on inside the study.

So, Kathleen pushed the door open and entered.

Inside, Samuel was sitting on a chair. His handsome face looked slightly pale and tensed.

"Is your wound hurting?" Kathleen asked in concern.

Samuel nodded.

"I'll go get your medicine. Let's dress your wound again," Kathleen said.

With that, she got ready to leave.

That was when Samuel abruptly shot up from his seat to approach Kathleen.

He inched closer, giving her no choice but to retreat backward until her back was against the door.

"You..." Samuel croaked. "I'm still angry with you."

Kathleen was puzzled. "Angry?"

"Yes!" Samuel's handsome and pale face looked displeased. "You made me pass out, took the risk, and went all alone. That's why I'm angry."

Kathleen flashed him an awkward smile. "Why are you angry? I've returned unscathed. Moreover, Desiree and I are fine."

"So you think I shouldn't be angry with you because you returned in one piece?" Samuel asked with a grim face.

"Y-Yeah...?" Kathleen replied hesitantly.

Although she tried to sound assertive, she was scared of Samuel getting angry with her.

However, she felt the sense of oppression that Samuel gave her was not as strong as before.

Could it be true that I'm not afraid of Samuel but scared of liking him, as he once said?

Now that Kathleen admitted to liking Samuel, the oppression that she felt before had vanished.

Samuel looked intently at her.

Kathleen balled her fists, not knowing what to do. "Tell me directly if you're angry with me and don't want to see me. I'll leave."

A frown marred Samuel's countenance.

"Bye then!" Kathleen turned around.

Before her hand could even touch the doorknob, Samuel hugged her tightly from behind.

Her waist was delicate and soft. On top of that, she gave off a faint fragrance that was pleasing to smell.

The situation made Samuel feel like the two had returned to the past before Kathleen lost her memories.

"Don't leave." Samuel sounded hoarse.

"Won't I be an eyesore to you if I stay?" Kathleen chuckled bitterly. "You should be dancing with other girls and enjoying life!"

She tried to break free from Samuel's hug.

That made Samuel wrap her in his embrace more tightly.

"You have such a big temper." Samuel gazed at her meaningfully and said, "I've already explained myself. Why are you still jealous?"

Kathleen said nothing.

Thus, Samuel rested his chin on her shoulder and spoke hoarsely. "Kate, I'm just worried about you. I don't want you to leave me again."

Kathleen instantly turned around and said, "Maybe it won't take long before you get sick of me, Samuel."

"That's not going to happen." Samuel was certain. "I'll never get sick of you. Ever."

Kathleen raised her head as her bright eyes looked at him.

To that, Samuel returned her gaze without a word.

He then lowered his head to plant a feather-like kiss on Kathleen's red lips.

"Hey! I didn't say you could do that!" Kathleen protested coyly.

"But the look in your eyes..." Samuel murmured with slight hoarseness.

Says otherwise.

"Whatever!" With that, Kathleen turned to leave.

Samuel was rendered speechless.

Once again, he got convinced that girls had a fiery temper.

He eventually turned and went into the bedroom.

After a while, there was a knock on the door.

"Come in," he said.

Subsequently, the butler entered the room, explaining, "Mr. Macari, Mrs. Macari asked me to redo your wound dressing."

"Where is she?" Samuel questioned in a frigid voice.

"Mrs. Macari is having a conversation with Vanessa now," the butler answered.

"Okay," Samuel responded gently. "Please prepare some midnight snacks."

"Right away, Mr. Macari." The butler nodded.

After the butler redid Samuel's dressing, he left the room.

Meanwhile, Kathleen gave Vanessa some instructions, then left the latter's room to go to the living room.

It was not long before Samuel came down the stairs.

Seeing that, Kathleen deliberately snorted.

That made Samuel's lips curl into a subtle smile. He then walked over to her and offered, "I asked the staff to prepare some midnight snacks. Have some with me."

"I'm not hungry," Kathleen rejected.

"I am, so accompany me." Samuel grabbed her hand. "I can't eat well without you."

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Chapter 419 Trying To Act Pitiful

Kathleen gazed back at Samuel in silence, wondering how he was so skilled at making her swoon.

Her curiosity got the better of her, so she asked, "Were you always this good at acting coquettish?"

"Coquettish?" Samuel frowned, feeling bewildered, as he had always thought only women would do that.

"Yeah. Like what you did just now," Kathleen explained pointedly.

"No." Samuel held her hand and brought her to the dining hall, where he sat her down.

There was light supper on the dining table.

He picked up the cutlery with one of his hands and started eating the pasta.

Once Kathleen looked at his injured hand, a pang of sadness broke out in her heart.

When Samuel noticed she was staring at him with a look of guilt and misery, he asked, "Aren't you hungry?"

Lowering her head, Kathleen slowly began to eat the food.

Supper soon passed as a tired look crept onto Samuel's face.

When he stood up to leave, Kathleen rose to her feet too, saying, "Samuel, I'll walk you back to your room."

He stared at her impassively for a moment before nodding in reply.

They soon arrived at his bedroom. That was when Kathleen stepped forward and helped Samuel unbutton his suit.

Lowering his gaze to glance at her, Samuel asked uneasily, "Am I right to say that you're only willing to take care of me because I got hurt for your sake?"

His direct question caught Kathleen off guard.

She raised her head, shooting him a strange look. "Would you be angry if I said yes?"

Samuel kept mum.

"You're too greedy, Samuel." Kathleen continued chiding, "When I wasn't in love with you, you did everything you could to beg me to stay. Now, I'm giving you a chance, yet you're questioning my motive of staying by your side."

Samuel remained silent as he kept his gaze lowered.

"Get changed by yourself. I don't care anymore," Kathleen snapped, infuriated by his lack of response.

"Kate, don't go." Samuel panicked. "I won't ask such things anymore."

Turning around, she shot him an emotionless stare. "Really? I don't believe it."

He was rendered speechless.

She added coldly, "Samuel, sometimes it's not good to care about certain things too much. Since I'm willing to stay, it means I'm sincere about it. If I didn't want to stay, I wouldn't even if you put on a pitiful act."

He still didn't reply to her.

Kathleen came over again and helped him remove his tie. "Be more obedient, okay? I like an obedient man. Even if you're not, at least try to act like one."

He responded gruffly, "Okay."

Since she likes me to be obedient, I'll act that way. I can't go wrong as long as I obey my wife.

After removing Samuel's shirt, Kathleen put her hand on his belt, causing him to purse his lips and blush.

Noticing the awkward atmosphere, she said, "What are you embarrassed about? We were married couple then."

"It's been a long time since I touched you," Samuel croaked.

"Okay. Let's not dwell on that. You were on bed rest for a week, and I was the one who took care of you. I've already touched and seen every part of you." She wore a solemn expression.

He pressed his lips into a thin line. "Everywhere? Including there?"

"Y-You!" She saw red in embarrassment. "Of course! I needed to clean you while you were bedridden. Aren't you a germophobe?"

Samuel was rendered speechless again.

She took off his belt and folded it before slapping it against her palm lightly.

"Take off your pants."

Upon hearing that, he let out an amused chuckle.

Kathleen immediately realized her ambiguous action and words as she roared angrily, "Samuel, you're a pervert!"

He looked at the ground. "Okay. I'll take them off."

Speechless, Kathleen certainly did not expect that helping him to get changed would be so troublesome.

I thought I was the one in control, but I was wrong!

Samuel soon changed into his sleepwear bottoms, and Kathleen helped him to put on a top.

"Samuel, were we also like this in the past? Whereby you would do whatever you want, and I could only follow along?" She held his black silk pajamas.

He pondered for a while before answering, "I think so."

It was true that Kathleen was very cooperative back then, and she had no complaints, just like a submissive wife.

Kathleen pursed her lips. "No wonder I got bullied by you, but I'm not the same as before."

Samuel smiled. "I like every side of you."

"Empty words," she remarked, not trusting his words.

"How do you want me to prove it to you? Gouge my heart out?"

Her brow furrowed.

"Do you want to see it?" he asked. "I can do it now."

This man is so annoying. Feeling speechless, she said, "Is your body made of steel?"

"Done." She finally finished assisting him into his pajama top. "It's getting late. You should go to bed soon."

However, Samuel slung his arm around her waist. "Kate, we still have a lot of time to be together."

"We'll see," said a chuckling Kathleen.

With that, she pushed him away and walked out of the room.

His lips curled into a smile. No matter what, Kate will always be with me. As long as she can stay by my side, I'm happy. That alone is more than enough. I'm satisfied with it.

The next day, Kathleen and Samuel brought Vanessa to Macari Group.

The press conference would be held at the company's building.

Samuel didn't allow Kathleen to disguise herself as Yareli or anyone else.

Thus, Kathleen could only wear a mask and a pair of shades, blending in with the crowd.

Many people came to the press conference that day as Samuel had invited almost every reporter from multiple media outlets in Jadeborough.

Samuel sat at a table, a hint of coldness flashing across his attractive face and deep, dark eyes.

Rory soon brought Vanessa forward.

The latter was in a wheelchair, looking somewhat pale with Bluetooth-enabled earphones in her ears.

She could hear Yareli's voice through the device.

"Mom, I've boarded the plane. It's about to take off. I'll turn off my phone soon."

"Okay." Vanessa nodded and ended the call, then looked toward Kathleen, who was sitting among the crowd.

Kathleen had her arms crossed in front of her chest as she stared back at Vanessa placidly.

Yadiel was ordered by Kathleen to send Yareli to Turlen.

Vanessa knew that if she dared to mess around, Yadiel would immediately kill Yareli.

I can't believe Kathleen would resort to such vicious tricks. She's grown up too fast.

After taking a deep breath, Vanessa announced, "I'm here today to clarify something to all of you."

The journalists looked on quietly.

"Everyone knows my relationship with Kathleen Johnson. Her mother, Rebecca Johnson, was actually the daughter of my adoptive mother, who was the deceased Old Mrs. Yoeger and Trevor Hoover," Vanessa continued.

Everybody was astounded.

Although the Hoover family was not based in Jadeborough, many people knew about them.

"When my adoptive mother married my father, he knew she was already pregnant," Vanessa added solemnly. "Everyone knew about this. Later, my adoptive mother gave birth to a daughter, but after a few days, that girl was abducted. It was actually my father's doing, but he did that because someone asked him to do so."

Everyone was dumbstruck again, not expecting that someone had the power to threaten Hector.

"That person is none other than Lu— Ugh!"

Bang!

A gunshot was fired at Vanessa's forehead, causing her to fall forward and slump onto the table.

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Chapter 420 Be The Scapegoat

The sudden gunshot caused chaos.

Kathleen immediately stood up and walked over to Vanessa while Samuel checked on Vanessa and found that she was no longer breathing.

Tyson had sent people to go after the shooter, and the other subordinates dismissed the reporters at the scene.

Looking at Vanessa, who got shot in the forehead, Kathleen uttered flatly, "I didn't expect her to die like this."

Samuel replied indifferently, "It seems like Luna doesn't want Vanessa to tell the truth."

"Does she think killing Vanessa is enough to hide what she's done?" Kathleen scoffed. "This only proves that she's feeling guilty."

"We should wait for Tyson's findings before doing anything."

Kathleen turned toward Rory. "Take her body away."

"Got it." Rory nodded.

After a while, Tyson came back with the other subordinates.

Judging from his expression, one could tell he had failed to capture the shooter.

Kathleen took a deep breath. "Luckily, we still have a piece of evidence to prove Luna is the mastermind."

"You mean the piece of evidence left by Vanessa?" Samuel inquired in a deep voice.

She nodded. "Ask your men to work on that piece of evidence. Otherwise, we'll be the scapegoat for the death of Vanessa."

"Don't worry. We won't get blamed for this." Samuel nodded in response.

"These people are getting more and more daring." Kathleen clenched her fists. I won't let them off!

Half an hour later, the evidence kept by Vanessa was disclosed to the public, and it implied that Luna was the mastermind.

What was more unexpected was the plummet of the Hoover family's company stocks.

Even the company's market value dropped by billions.

When Kathleen got the news, she went to meet Samuel and asked, "Was it you?"

Samuel nodded, admitting that he was the one who caused the drop in numbers.

Kathleen widened her eyes in surprise.

"Why are you so shocked? It's merely a minor thing," Samuel stated self-mockingly, as his health condition did not permit him to help her in things that involved physical strength.

Hence, he figured he could use his intelligence to assist her.

"A minor thing?" Kathleen stared at him with her arms crossed. "If it were my company that lost billions in an hour, I would've gone berserk."

"Don't worry. I'll help out if your company faces any trouble," Samuel promised.

"Gosh! Knock on wood!" She frowned. "My company is going to have a ribbon-cutting ceremony after a few days. Try not to say anything negative about it."

Samuel's lips curled into a smile. "Then, I wish for you to earn more money and take care of this useless person." He pointed at himself.

Kathleen had no words to reply to him.

Meanwhile, a lady with a gorgeous appearance arrived at the Hoover residence. Then, another woman opened the car door for the former. "Old Mrs. Hoover is waiting for you."

The gorgeous lady nodded.

When she reached the door to Luna's room, she knocked before entering.

Upon seeing her, Luna stated with an impassive countenance, "Your face seems well sculpted."

The gorgeous lady touched her face and grinned in confidence. "It's all thanks to your great help, Old Mrs. Hoover. You found a good doctor for my plastic surgery and to treat my legs."

"Since I've done so much for you, you should do something in return," Luna said frostily. "Why is Vanessa still alive?"

"She's dead now." The gorgeous lady seemed a bit anxious.

"But she left evidence, didn't she?" Luna was displeased. "Now the evidence implies that I'm the culprit. If you want me to continue to help you, you need to come up with a solution to this."

"Old Mrs. Hoover, since Vanessa has died, we can blame everything on her and say that the evidence is fake." The gorgeous lady explained, "Besides, even though Kathleen has obtained proof, they haven't confronted us yet. That means that the evidence isn't enough to prove that you're the one who did it."

Luna did not say a word, considering her suggestion.

The gorgeous lady felt slightly nervous. "What do you think, Old Mrs. Hoover?"

"Since you know what to do, go ahead and carry out your plan," Luna ordered as her gaze darkened. "Now, the problem is, what should we do with my grandson?"

"I'll think of a way to take Zion back, Old Mrs. Hoover."

"No, he's useless now. I want the daughter of Samuel and Kathleen."

What?

The gorgeous lady was stunned as she felt that mission's difficulty was a tad high.

"Why? Can't you do it?" Luna stared at the lady with her sharp, piercing eyes.

"Yes, I can." The gorgeous lady nodded. "Old Mrs. Hoover, don't worry. I'm sure I can do it."

"Go ahead then," Luna ordered. "Time waits for no one."

"R-Right away!" The gorgeous lady walked out of Luna's room.

The other woman, who opened the door for the gorgeous lady earlier, said, "Ms. Yoeger, this way, please. I'll send you out."

The gorgeous lady's expression turned sour. "My name is now Ashley Zeller. I'm the niece of Old Mrs. Hoover. Don't get my name wrong!"

"I understand," the woman said awkwardly before sending her to the door.

The woman then went to Luna and helped massage the latter's shoulders. "Old Mrs. Hoover, can we really trust Nicolette?"

"She bears a grudge against the Yoeger family. And she did her recent work pretty well, didn't she?" Luna replied coldly. "I don't care if Kathleen has evidence or not. I just want my grandson safe and sound."

The woman nodded.

Still, Luna continued menacingly, "Kathleen keeps going against me, so I need to find someone to deal with her. I won't let Kathleen off!"

"Yes, she's too arrogant," the woman agreed.

A cold glint flashed across Luna's eyes. "Trevor's never forgotten that woman. She must die for stealing my man! Since her descendant wants to avenge her, her descendant must suffer as well!"

The woman nodded.

When Ashley exited the Hoover residence, a car came to a stop in front of her.

Then, a man got out of the car.

When she saw the man's face, her eyelid twitched.

What's she doing here? Wyatt silently mused as he walked over to her.

"I never knew the Hoover family had such a beauty like you," he flirted.

Ashley raised her gaze. "Who are you?"

"Are you Ashley Zeller?" Wyatt sized her up.

She nodded. "Yes, I am."

"Luna mentioned you to me before. She wants us to have a marriage of convenience." Wyatt stared at her. "Are you interested?"

"You're pretty direct." Ashley fiddled with her fingers.

"I don't like beating around the bush." Wyatt asked coldly, "I need a wife now.

What do you think?"

"I think we should start as friends..." Ashley extended her arm to shake hands with him. "Wyatt Watson."

Glancing at her hand in disdain, he scoffed, "I don't want to play games with you. Since you still need time to consider about it, take your time then. I don't want to wait."

With that, he entered the car and left.

Ashley was rendered speechless by his abrupt departure.

She assumed Wyatt was attracted to her appearance, but he was actually interested in her identity.

I didn't expect my identity as Ashley Zeller would come in handy. This identity alone is enough to cause Wyatt to think about having a marriage of convenience with me. I wonder who this Ashley is. If she's that important to the Hoover family, why did Luna ask me to impersonate her? How strange.