

TSBMMOUS 181

Chapter 181: Did He Arrange All Of These

One day, Ayla was sitting in her office, continuously revising her designs. This week, she was really too busy to do anything else.

She had sewn dozens of clothes herself. She only had a few hours of rest every day.

The only good thing was that Brian had gone on a business trip, so she could at least have some free time.

Linda walked in and saw the clothes on the mannequins.

"Ayla, are you an idiot or something? Mr. Clark isn't here to look at what you've done! You don't have to do any of that to please him."

Putting down the needle, Ayla said, "Linda, if you've got nothing better to do, just go away and stop bothering me. Whatever I want to do, let alone who I want to please, it's none of your business."

Wasn't it better if they just ignored each other? There was no need for Linda to come here just to mock her.

"Don't pretend to be oblivious of your own deviousness. The only reason you have what you have now is because you climbed onto Mr. Clark's bed, didn't you? Do you think a newcomer like you, who hasn't even graduated, can be on an equal footing with someone like me?"

Linda walked to the sofa and made herself comfortable. She had been wanting to talk to Ayla to let her know her place in this company.

"I have no intention of competing with you, and I don't want anything to do with you, either. Whether Mr. Clark is the reason I have what I have today or not, I don't give a d**n."

Ayla had never wanted any of these, nor did she want to stand in the limelight.

All she wanted was for people to admire the clothes she designed.

"So, you're aware of it. The fashion show, the cocktail party, and the media reports were all Mr. Clark's arrangement, and he did it all for you. Don't forget who you really are. Listen to me, you're just a nobody!"

Linda sneered before she walked out of the room. As she stared at the clothes in front of her, Ayla suddenly felt lost.

If it weren't for that woman's remark, she would've been quite confident in her own abilities.

And even though she didn't care about the reports, was true that the fashion show had positive responses.

But if Brian was the one behind all of it, what did he want? For what purpose did he do all of that? Ayla sat on the sofa, contemplating for a long time.

By the time she stood up, it was already dark outside. She didn't turn the lights on, so she couldn't see anything.

When she got up, she accidentally bumped into the table, leaving a bruise on her knee.

However, she didn't feel any pain from it. She grabbed her handbag and went downstairs.

As soon as she reached the first floor, she ran into Hank.

"Miss Woodsen, it's already late. Why haven't you gone home yet? Would you like me to drive you home?"

Before Brian left on his trip, he told Hank to watch over Ayla.

However, she had been too busy at the office, and she hadn't gone to see any other man recently.

For a while, she just stared at him in a daze, before she asked, "Mr. Cooper, can I talk to you about something?"

Her words surprised Hank.

"Miss Woodsen, if there's anything you need, just let me know."

The two of them went to the coffee shop across the company.

As soon as Ayla sat down, she asked, "Mr. Cooper, tell me, did Mr. Clark arrange the media reports for the last fashion show?"

"Miss Woodsen, why would you suddenly ask such a question?"

Hank was surprised to hear that from her.

Only a handful of people were aware of what Brian had done for Ayla.

Even she, herself, didn't know. Who on earth told her about it?

"Just tell me. Did he do that for me?"

Ayla wanted to know the answer.

If it was true that Brian arranged everything behind her back, then she would give up on her career.

Hank kept his mouth shut.

This question was difficult to answer.

He didn't want to lie to Ayla, nor did he want to go against Brian's order.

"I assume that your silence means Brian did it, didn't he?"

All of a sudden, desperation arose in Ayla's heart.

Why did Brian do it? What good would it bring him? and how would she benefit from it?

"Miss Woodsen, you're mistaken."

Hank shook his head in denial. He didn't want to cause a rift between Ayla and Brian due to something so trivial.

It was true that Brian had personally talked to those reporters and invited them to the fashion show, but it was no big deal.

However, nobody knew about this.

How did Ayla find out? If she got mad at Brian because of this matter, it would be difficult for Hank to explain this problem to Brian upon his return. Ayla didn't believe Hank.

Judging by how hesitant he was, it was true that Brian had gotten in touch with the media in advance.

Perhaps in other people's point of view, it wasn't that big of a deal.

But to her, it was.

Just as Hank was about to say something, Ayla got up and walked away.

He was surprised to know that she also had a bad temper!

'I better tell Mr. Clark about this as soon as possible,' he thought.

Instead of going back to her apartment, Ayla went to a bar nearby. She sat alone at the bar counter, ordering a glass of whiskey.

The strong liquor burned her throat, causing tears to fall from her eyes.

It turned out that she was still capable of shedding tears.

The whiskey tasted salty and bitter in her mouth, so she decided to order another glass on the rocks.

'I can't understand what Brian is thinking. Does he really want to keep me or not?'

Meanwhile, Lucas entered the bar and saw a familiar figure sitting in front of the counter.

He initially thought he was mistaken, but upon a closer look, he realized he was right.

"Lala," he greeted.

The sound of his voice made Ayla turn her head and look at Lucas.

They had previously set up a meeting, but they didn't get to see each other.

To her surprise, they accidentally met each other at this bar.

"Lucas, it's you! What a coincidence! Are you here alone?" said Ayla.

"I am! I actually just wanted to have a drink. By the way, what are you doing here on your own? Did Brian do something to you?"

Lucas took the glass from her hand.

"A glass of fruit wine, please," he said to the bartender.

“This whiskey is too strong for you, Lala. You shouldn’t be drinking this. You’re going to get hammered.”

After saying that, he gave her the glass of fruit wine, and drank the whiskey for her.

A smile appeared on Ayla’s lips.

“Aren’t you supposed to be with Miss Green right now, Lucas? She’s pregnant. You should be taking care of her!”

“So, you still remember all of that, huh? Are you still mad at me?” Lucas smiled bitterly.

Even Tatum was now aware that Haley was pregnant, and because of that, abortion wasn’t an option anymore.

He couldn’t shirk his responsibility.

But what would happen to Lala? How could he let her face Brian on her own? If that man was taking advantage of her, there would be no one around to protect her.

And since she came here to drink alone, something terrible must’ve happened to her! Otherwise, she would never come here alone just to drink.

Chapter 182: Her Happiness Was Lost Two Years Ago

Ayla stared back at him.

“I’m not mad at you. Why would I get mad at you? Lucas, did you know? For so long, I’ve felt like I owed you so much for everything you’ve done for me. And it’s good that things turned out the way they did.”

A bitter smile appeared on his lips.

Her words implied that she wanted to move on from him and start a new life with Brian.

Lucas kept drinking a shot of whiskey one after another.

“Lala, do you feel happy when you’re with Brian?”

If she said that she was happy, would he just give up on her? And if she said that she loved being with Brian, should he just smile at her and wish her all the best? However, Ayla just chuckled.

“Happy, you say? Lucas, don’t you know? I used to think that I could someday live a happy and fulfilling life, but ever since that day two years ago, that happiness was lost. No matter how hard I kept trying to search for this so-called happiness, I could never find it. I’m not happy at all; not one bit.”

The smile on her face faded, and was replaced with tears.

Lucas put down his glass and embraced her.

“Lala, happiness can easily be gained as long as you want to have it. Why can’t you just face how you truly feel? Can’t you just follow that voice inside your heart?”

It seemed that during these past two years, she never once felt happy.

If she hadn't gotten drunk, she never would've told him how she truly felt.

"Are you going to start anew with Brian? To find your happiness?"

Was she planning to take back what she had lost from Brian? But that man could never give her the happiness she desired! How could she be so stubborn about this? Ayla drank another glass of wine.

"Is it even possible for me to be with him?" That man lacked morality.

He was willing to do whatever it took to gain what he desired.

If so, what did Brian want from her? Did he want her body? Or her heart? And after he had gotten what he wanted, would he just hurt her again? Upon seeing that Ayla was so drunk, Lucas helped her out of the bar.

"Lala, you're drunk. Let's go," he suggested.

"I'm not drunk, Lucas. I'm not!" she murmured repeatedly.

Was she drunk? If she was, then why did she still feel so heartbroken? And if she was indeed drunk, why was that man still in her mind? She was so foolish.

She had known beforehand that she would just get hurt, and yet she loved him anyway.

As he walked her to the side of the road, Lucas said, "Why are you so stubborn, Lala? If you had chosen to leave this place with me, things would've been different!"

He was willing to take her away, but she didn't want to go. She would rather stay with Brian and get hurt.

How could he feel at ease as he watched her make her life miserable? The love of his life wanted to be with another man, and all he could do was watch as things unfurled before his eyes.

"Lucas, some things are inevitable." Ayla placed her hands on Lucas' shoulders.

Her legs had grown weak because of the liquor, but she was still sober.

Glancing back at her, he said, "Okay, you need to rest now. Let me drive you home."

He then opened the door of his car and let her in.

But all of a sudden, Ayla held his hand.

"Lucas, I don't want to go back there. Don't take me back to that place."

She wanted to be away from that apartment just for one night.

That place only reminded her of that heartless man.

Lucas sighed.

"You're exhausted, aren't you? I understand. I won't send you back."

Instead of the apartment, he drove her to a hotel.

On their way to the hotel, Ayla fell asleep on the passenger seat.

After pulling his car over, Lucas decided not to wake her up.

Instead, he gently picked her up.

Meanwhile, Haley had been waiting in Lucas' room. She had been pregnant for three months, but he still felt indifferent towards her.

His attitude made her upset, but at least he wasn't meeting up with Ayla.

Unfortunately, he would always go out to drink every night.

Was he really so uncomfortable around her? She was pregnant with his child! Didn't he feel anything about that? Just as she was about to leave, she noticed Lucas heading towards the room, carrying a woman in his arms.

She recognized that it was Ayla.

"Lucas, what are you doing? Didn't you just see her not long ago? Why did you bring her here? Are you trying to p**s me off on purpose? You really want me to lose this baby, don't you?"

Haley scolded Lucas.

Without even casting her a glance, he went into the room, placing Ayla on the bed.

Haley followed him in.

Before she could start the argument again, Lucas pulled her away.

"Haley, just go back to sleep. Let's talk about this in the morning, okay?"

He knew that Ayla was tired, so he just wanted her to get a good night's sleep.

Reluctantly, Haley chose to go back to her room and slammed the door shut.

'I knew it! That tramp, Ayla, got drunk on purpose because she wants to be with Lucas! Meanwhile, Lucas was sitting on the edge of the bed, watching as Ayla drifted into slumber.

Her eyes had dark circles around them.

She probably hadn't rested well for a long time.

Her life with Brian must be horrible.

So, why did she keep choosing to be with him? By the time Ayla woke up, it was already noon.

When she turned around, she saw Lucas beside her on the bed.

Gradually, she came to her senses, and remembered that she had gotten drunk last night.

Carefully, she placed the blanket over his body.

But despite how quietly she moved, Lucas still woke up. He reached out to grab Ayla's hand.

"Lala, are you awake? How do you feel? Did you sleep well last night? She withdrew her hand, and said, "I'm sorry for causing trouble for you last night, Lucas. I drank way too much."

He then got up to look her in the eye.

“Don’t drink alone again like you did last night. If you’re having a terrible day, give me a call. And if Brian is mistreating you again, come find me, and I’ll help you as best as I can.”

He didn’t want her to feel desolate.

But other than to take her away from Antawood, he couldn’t do anything to help her.

As a matter of fact, his presence around her would only get her in trouble. Ayla nodded.

“Okay, I will. I’m just really busy with work recently, but I’m fine.”

It was true that she had been working long hours to finish her designs.

But if all the accolades she gained only happened because of Brian’s manipulation, was there still a point in continuing to work on her craft? Lucas held her in his arms.

“I know that I’ve hurt you, Lala, but can you still treat me as your friend? You shouldn’t bear all these burdens alone.”

Ayla pressed her cheek against his chest.

She had lost this sense of relief for so long.

During the years she was with him, whenever she was in great pain, she would always press herself close to his body like this.

Perhaps this was the last time she would ever do it again.

Chapter 183: A Slap In The Face

Ayla smiled at him.

“Lucas, I’m fine. Anyway, I need to go. I have to go back to work now.”

She couldn’t afford to stay here for too long. More importantly, she didn’t want to cause an even bigger misunderstanding.

“Lala, is he really worth all this effort?” Lucas just couldn’t understand her.

This woman had been with him for more than two years, and still, he couldn’t figure out what she was thinking most of the time.

Perhaps he never could.

Ayla took a deep breath.

“Lucas, you need to know that I’m doing this for myself, not for Brian. Your question makes no sense.”

It was true. She did it all for herself, and she wouldn’t change any of it for Brian’s sake. If everything was predetermined to happen, then she would start from square one.

“In that case, don’t push yourself too hard. And don’t let anyone bully you, you hear?”

Lucas had already known her decision, but he still couldn't change her mind. He had no other choice but to let her do whatever she wanted.

Ayla nodded firmly.

"I know, Lucas. Please don't go against Mr. Clark. I doubt you can defeat him. And don't worry! He won't do anything to me."

"Lala, what are you going to do if he dies?"

If Lucas were to enact his revenge, he wanted to make sure that she wouldn't suffer in the process.

And if she were happy with Brian, he might even toss out the idea of vengeance. His words left Ayla stunned.

"What do you mean by that, Lucas? Why do you think he'll die? Are you planning to do something to him?"

The sound of her anxious voice and sight of concern in her eyes were like daggers to Lucas' heart. It was just a hypothetical question, and she had already gotten so anxious about it.

Then, she was probably lying if she said that she didn't love Brian anymore.

Lucas forced a smile.

"I'm just kidding, Lala."

It might be true. He was probably just joking, but she took it seriously.

Upon hearing that he was jesting, Ayla breathed a sigh of relief.

"I need to go, Lucas."

He wasn't planning to delay her any longer because he knew that she was too busy with work lately.

The newspapers were full of reports about her designs, and the grand fashion show.

Those were probably the results of her efforts.

As soon as Ayla opened the door, someone slapped her face before she could even react.

Haley hit her so hard that she staggered back several steps.

Fortunately, Lucas was there to keep her from falling.

Although Haley didn't make a scene last night, she had been waiting outside the room for the entire night.

She wasn't gracious enough to let her man stay in the same room as another woman. Ayla could taste blood on her lips.

That slap made her feel like her face was burning, but she didn't feel angry about it. She just looked at Haley and saw how haggard and pale this woman was.

Perhaps she felt restless due to the fact that Ayla was sleeping in the same room as Lucas last night. "Haley, why the hell did you slap her?"

Lucas shouted at Haley as he held Ayla's arms.

"Why can't I? That b***h deserves it!"

Haley frowned, covering her belly with one hand.

"You..."

Lucas wanted to slap her back, but his hand froze in midair. "If you want to hit me for the sake of that b***h, then do it!"

Haley growled.

"If you have the b***s to do it, then hit me so hard that I'll have a miscarriage. And when that happens, you can finally live a happy life with your b***h!" she added.

Her snide remarks angered him so much that he carried out the slap.

With nothing to support her, Haley fell to the floor.

"Lucas! You didn't have to do that. I'm okay."

Ayla never expected that he would actually hit Haley.

"Lala, you shouldn't let people trample on you like that. She hit you for no reason. I won't let anyone harm you from right under my nose, because I love you so much, and I'm willing to do anything for you."

Lucas held Ayla. He just witnessed her getting slapped by Haley.

How could he just stand there and do nothing? As Ayla wiped the blood from her lips using the back of her hand, she said, "I'm fine."

After speaking, she wanted to help Haley up.

But then, she noticed that her face was ghastly pale, and there was blood flowing between her legs.

"Lucas, Miss Green, she's..."

Ayla was horrified by what she saw.

"Take her to the hospital at once!" she urged Lucas.

Quickly, he picked Haley up and ran downstairs as fast as he could. Upon their arrival at the hospital, Haley was brought to the emergency room, while Lucas and Ayla waited outside.

"Lucas, do you think she'll be okay?"

Feeling helpless, he rubbed his temples. He was conflicted about how he should feel right now. He wasn't even sure whether he wanted to keep that baby or not.

Ayla looked at him, and apologized, "I'm sorry, Lucas. This is all my fault."

If it weren't for me, things wouldn't have turned out like this.

If harm befalls that child in her womb, I will resent myself for the rest of my life."

"Stop it, Lala. It's not your fault."

Lucas caressed her swollen cheek.

Haley's palm print was still apparent on her face, so he felt sorry for her.

Ayla also touched her face and smiled faintly.

At the same time, the corners of her mouth twitched due to the pain. The operation lasted around two hours, and they waited outside until the red light turned off.

"Doctor, how is she?" Lucas asked as he held the doctor's hand.

"I'm sorry, Mr. Collins. We couldn't save the baby."

Regret was evident on the doctor's face as he shook his head.

Upon hearing that the baby didn't survive, Ayla was taken aback.

"Lala." Lucas held her arm.

"Lala, are you okay?" "I'm fine."

Of course, she was fine. But she just witnessed the loss of a life, and it reminded her of her own child.

"Stay here with Miss Green. I'm going to buy some food," said Ayla.

"Lala, I'll just ask someone else to do it. You also need to rest. I'll ask one of the nurses to give you a cold compress for your face."

Her face was so swollen, so she shouldn't go outside right now

"No, I'm really fine. I'll be back soon. Don't worry."

In all honesty, Ayla didn't feel any pain coming from her face now.

She then went out of the hospital and bought some chicken porridge; one for Haley, and the other one was for Lucas.

"This one is for you, Lucas. When Miss Green wakes up, tell her to have some of this porridge. She needs to replenish the nutrients in her body and get plenty of rest. Also, you need to talk to her properly, and don't do anything to make her upset!" she advised.

She was well aware of the fact that any woman would be heartbroken at the loss of her child.

Without saying anything, Lucas nodded.

Ayla didn't say much after that. Moments later, she left the ward.

Chapter 184: I Have Nothing To Say

Ayla left the ward and dragged her exhausted body into the hospital garden. She really could not figure out how things turned out like this. She then sat on a bench and gazed at people who came and went.

There were also pregnant women who passed by in front of her with their bulged belly.

'What the hell did I do wrong this time? Why does nothing good ever come out of everything I've done?' she mused. All of a sudden, two familiar figures came into her sight —Toby and Molly.

She wanted to walk over to them and say "hello" but decided not to.

A memory of what had happened to Haley suddenly crossed her mind, so she immediately stood up and hid behind a big tree.

Careful not to be seen, she watched as Toby helped Molly walk into the building. It was not until they walked in that Ayla came out from behind the tree.

Not long after, she left the hospital and hailed a cab.

"Clark Group building, please," she said to the taxi driver.

"Okay," the driver responded with a nod.

"No, wait. Go to the HM Garden instead,"

Ayla hurriedly said as she changed her mind. She figured that it was not right to go to the company like this, so she had better go back to Brian's apartment first.

Once she arrived at the door of the apartment, she took out the key from her purse and opened the door.

She was expecting that the apartment was empty.

However, the instant she opened the door, she smelled a strong stench of tobacco, making her choke and cough uncontrollably.

She turned to look at the sofa and saw that Brian was there, smoking.

'What is he doing here?' she wondered in disbelief. Something suddenly occurred to her.

At the thought of it, she smoothed her hair and pulled it down to cover her left cheek that was bruised and swollen, hoping that he would not notice it.

Now that she was all set, she casually walked to the sofa and said indifferently, "You're back."

"What's with that look? Aren't you happy to see me back?" Brian asked with a sneer as he stubbed the cigarette out.

"Don't you want to know when I came back?" Although his voice was calm and expressionless, Ayla could tell that he was unhappy. She cast a glance at the ashtray and found that it was full.

'Did he come back last night?'

“Mr.Clark, I’m sorry.I...”

Should she explain it to him? If she did, would her explanation even work?

“Where have you been?” Brian asked as he lifted his gaze on her.

Although some of her hair was covering half of her face, the wound on her cheek did not escape his scrutinizing gaze.

Also, he caught a whiff of alcohol on her.

He could imagine what this woman did last night.

Yesterday, Hank called him and told him everything.

As soon as he hung up the call, he left everything behind and took the earliest flight home.

He waited for her the whole night, but she did not come home until now.

‘What does this woman want? Was she trying to p**s me off?’ he mused.

“I...I just drank some wine yesterday, so I didn’t come home,” Ayla nervously answered, not wanting to make Brian angry.

“Just some wine? How much exactly did you drink? Smell yourself! You smell like you bathed in ajar of wine! Don’t make a fool out of me!” Brian exclaimed.

Then, he stood up, walked over to her, and lifted her chin with his thumb and index finger.

“What happened to your face? You’d better tell me the truth, or you’d regret it,” he warned.

When he spoke, his voice was icy cold that almost made Ayla tremble in fear.

“I have nothing to say,” she answered through gritted teeth.

As she stared at his angry face, she knew that he would not believe her regardless of what she said.

He would only distort her explanation, even if it was the truth.

“Ayla, what do you take me for? Answer me! That Lucas...what’s so good about him? Did he force Haley to have an abortion just to get you? Perhaps you two did something that you shouldn’t have done, so you could anger Haley and make her have a miscarriage?”

Brian had the means to know whatever he wanted right away.

As a matter of fact, he already knew what had happened last night and this morning to Ayla.

He was waiting for her to give him an explanation until the morning, only to hear that she had nothing to say

. ‘Could it be that the explanation was useless after what had happened between her and Lucas? Does she still have no feelings for me? As Brian looked at the red handprint on Ayla’s face, he could not help but wonder how stupid she was.He did not have the heart to tell her what Lucas and Tatum’s relationship was because he did not want her to be sad.However, what she had done felt like a knife in

his heart, piercing through him. Ayla scoffed and retorted, "You already knew about it. Why bother to ask?"

Since he had already known everything, why did he have to ask about her explanation?

"It's because I wanted to hear it from you, but you did not even give me the chance," Brian said with a sneer. If only she told him the truth, he would have just let it go. Sadly, she did not.

"Even if I'm living here, I'm free to do everything I want. Whoever I am seeing is none of your business! It has nothing to do with you," Ayla fired back.

Brian wanted to be in control of her.

She knew about this, so there was no need for her to ask him if he had done all those things for her regarding the fashion show. The more he wanted to control her, the less she wanted to satisfy him.

All of a sudden, Brian pulled her and threw her onto the sofa.

Although she landed on the cushion, Ayla still got hurt by the impact.

"What's so good about Lucas? Tell me! What can he do that I can't? Argh!" he bellowed as he ripped Ayla's chiffon skirt in rage.

"No! Stop!"

Ayla shrank away from him and tried with all her strength to keep him away.

"Unfortunately, it's not up to you," Brian responded frighteningly.

How could he let her go anyway? In the end, Ayla passed out in pain.

Brian lost control yet again.

Could he blame himself? This woman was driving him crazy! Once he was done with his evil deed, he went to the bathroom and let the cold water run down every inch of his skin. He quickly took a shower, changed his clothes, and left the apartment, leaving the place in a mess and Ayla alone.

Ayla's body hurt so much that she could not even turn over, much less stand up.

When she opened her eyes, her vision was blurred, and her body was trembling in pain.

It took her a while to see everything clearly.

Only then did she realize that her body was covered with bruises that were left by his violence.

'He must be very angry with me, so he did this, right?' she asked herself inwardly.

Although Brian seemed to be doing everything to get back with her, he only pushed her farther and farther away. Sometimes, Ayla felt that her happiness seemed to be right in front of her eyes.

However, as she reached for it, it seemed even farther than she had thought.

Everything that had happened made her sure of one thing—she and Brian were impossible to be together again.

