

A Ruling Passion – Chapter 0211

In order not to rouse Mark's suspicion, Arianne asked to leave an hour and a half earlier from Lily in the afternoon. She did not ask Eric, afraid that he would tell Mark.

When Arianne left the office, she bought some fruits and hailed a cab to the hospital. It did not take long before she found Will's ward. She hesitated for a moment, caught in a dilemma, before she finally knocked on the door.

Will's clear voice rang from behind the door. "Come in."

Arianne felt inexplicably assured when she heard his voice. She pushed the door open, revealing a small smile. "I got off work early today and thought that I'd drop by since you're hospitalized. How are you feeling?"

Will was a little stunned as though he did not expect to see her. When he regained his senses, his eyes were filled with joy. "... I didn't think you'd come. I'm okay. My leg is fractured, it's not very serious. Have a seat."

Arianne observed Will and felt the guilt in her heart growing. He had been hale and healthy before this, and now, he was dressed in a hospital gown, lying on a hospital bed with a cast on his leg. He looked pale and weak. "Uh... Sorry..."

Will smiled and asked, "Why are you apologizing?"

Arienne bit her lips. "Tremont's took over Sivan's... So much has happened since you came back, I don't know what to say. I apologize on behalf of Mark Tremont, but I have no control over him. I'm sorry. I've always considered you my best friend. My memories with you are the best... It's better for you to stay away from me. As long as there's no connection between us, the Sivans should be okay. You will be okay."

Will's smile froze. "Why do you think that Sivan's will be acquired? Why did I get engaged and broke it off? I don't care about any of that, and yet, you asked me to stay away from you. Ari, you don't know me. I'm not naive to think that I can still be with you, but as your friend, I won't stay away from you. I think Mark Tremont is only possessive of you because of revenge. I'm afraid there'll be a day when he hurts you to the point of no return and kicks you out. What are you going to do if I'm not around? I know what you want to say, we all do. Don't say it. I don't regret the things I've done. Since I've come to this stage, I can't turn back now."

After taking a breath, Will continued to say, "I stopped myself from looking for you. I know about the second time you were hospitalized after your miscarriage, but I didn't go to you. I was worried Mark would treat you even worse. Mark Tremont... I can't see through him. He's kind to everyone but you. Forget it. Ari, I just want you to know that I'm not going anywhere. I don't care if things get worse for me. Compared to that, asking me to stay away from you feels even worse."

Arienne's eyes were red. "... I'm not worthy of this. Even if you don't care about yourself, what about your parents? They've worked so hard for the family business, and it's gone just like that. What would they think? Actually, Mark Tremont isn't as bad as you think. He's quite nice to me."

This was all Arianne could say. After all, she had agreed to keep it to herself. She must not complain in front of Will. She did not know if Mark would ever kick her out. Keeping her caged forever in the Tremont Estate seemed more likely.

Will thought Arianne was being absurd, “Quite nice to you? How so?”

A Ruling Passion – Chapter 0212

Arianne inhaled deeply before she said, “When I threw a tantrum after my miscarriage, saying things I shouldn’t have, and letting the world know that I cheated on him... He didn’t mind. There are many other examples. That’s enough for me. It really isn’t that bad. Will, I’m really doing well. My only pain is that I’m the daughter of a sinner, and I’m indebted to the Tremonts. In fact, Mark satisfies all my material needs, and he’s my type as well. Hatred isn’t the only thing that exists between us. We spent more than ten years together. It’s more than love. We’re family. It’s really not that bad.”

Upon hearing Arianne’s words, the light in Will’s eyes visibly dimmed. “Is that so? That’s good, then, if it’s true. I hope he won’t let you down...”

Arianne could no longer stay so she said, “Um... I have to leave now. Rest well.”

Will nodded. “Okay...”

When Arianne was at the door, Will suddenly called out. “Ari!”

Arianne stopped in her tracks but did not turn around. The tears that she had been holding back were threatening to fall.

“Remember that no matter what happens, Tiff and I are always here. If there really comes a day when Mark Tremont thoroughly disappoints you, you still have us...”

Arianne nodded frantically and left the hospital as though she was fleeing for her life. The office was a little farther from the hospital. Although she had calculated the time it would take for her visit, she had forgotten to factor in the fact that it would be difficult to hail a cab during peak hours. When she returned to the Tremont’s Estate, she was more than an hour late compared to her usual time.

Mark was already home and was chatting with Nina in the living room.

When Arianne saw Nina she was reminded of her promise to Nina.

Nina looked at Arianne and said, “Arianne, didn’t we agree to hang out after you get off work? Your colleagues said you left an hour and a half earlier. I thought you felt unwell and came home, but you weren’t here when I came home. Where did you go? Oh, we’ve already eaten. You probably ate out, right? It’s better for you to call home next time if you decide not to have dinner at home.”

Mark did not show any reaction. In fact, he did not even look at Arianne.

Before she went upstairs, she lowered her head and said. "I've eaten. I went out for something, I forgot to tell you about it. I don't have your number. Sorry. I'll buy you a meal next time."

Seeing that Arianne was low in spirits, Nina could not help probing further. "What's up with you? Why do you look so listless? Where did you go after leaving work early?"

Arianne felt a heated gaze on her and involuntarily looked at Mark. When she met his gaze, she instinctively told the truth. "The hospital. I went to visit a friend. He got into an accident, and his leg is fractured. It's not too serious. Anyway, I'm exhausted. I'll be in my room."

Halfway up the flight of stairs, Arianne heard the sound of glassware crashing from the living room. She inhaled deeply and ignored it. She closed the door after entering her room.

Too lazy to shower in the bathroom downstairs, Arianne used the one in the bedroom. When she came out of the room, she realized with a start that Mark had returned to the room. He was seated in the chair in front of the French windows. Looking at his icy expression, she knew he was angry. She could not help but say, "I went to visit him on your behalf. Don't do something like that again in the future. I don't have anything to do with him. Thanks to you, we're only friends. Nothing more than that. Don't pick on him and the Sivans anymore."

A Ruling Passion – Chapter 0213

Mark sneered. “Hah, only friends? Friends can sleep together as they wish?”

Arianne’s breath caught in her throat. “Please don’t say that. Whatever it is, it has passed. There’s no need to dwell on it. I didn’t even make a fuss about you sleeping with Aery Kinsey.”

He chuckled aloud before he said coldly. “How do you know if I’ve slept with her? However, everyone knows about you and Will Sivan. If I truly intend to dwell on it, you wouldn’t have been able to see him a long time ago. It’s because I don’t care that you’re able to visit him in the hospital, understand? Besides, you don’t care who I sleep with anyway, right?”

Don’t care and don’t mind.

Arianne pondered over his words and wondered if she cared. When she heard the amorous sounds he and Aery made in the hotel, she had fled in panic. She felt empty, and her emotions went through a rollercoaster ride for no reason. Did she mind? She did not love him but betrayal was betrayal. No one could tolerate a betrayal, neither him nor her.

“Anyway, it’s a misunderstanding. It’s up to you to believe it or not,” Arianne said weakly. Her first time had been given to him. How could he not feel it? Aery Kinsey could not be the only woman he had. Was it possible that he could not feel it because he had too many women?

“Yeah, a misunderstanding! Was it not you who were lying in Will Sivan’s bed?! Didn’t you come home wearing his clothes the next day?! What other misunderstandings are you talking about? Don’t tell me both of you took off your clothes and lay on the bed without doing anything.” Mark growled and flipped a small table beside him with a kick. The tea set and books on the table scattered to the floor, causing some noise.

Ariane stiffened. Her lips moved but nothing came out. He had choked her words in her throat. If she had really said that she and Will had only slept on the bed together with their clothes off without doing anything, it would be a joke.

Mark’s anger grew when he saw Arianna remaining silent. “No retorts? Nothing to say? You left work an hour and a half earlier to visit him in hopes of preventing me from finding out. Can’t you be a little smarter? If you’re going to do something like that, make sure, at least, that I don’t find out!”

Ariane bit her lips so hard that they almost bled. She felt as though her heart was being pricked by pins or like he had stomped on her heart. It felt awfully suffocating.

“It’s not like I wanted to hide it from you. I knew you’re going to get angry. I still have a long life ahead of me. You have enough time to slowly torment me. You don’t have to pick a fight with me over this. It’s absurd. You can pick on other matters to fight with me if you want. However, using cheating between us as an excuse to fight is ridiculous. Our relationship isn’t like that anyway. You don’t even care about it, you just want to pick on me!” Ariane truly could not understand why Mark would explode in anger over the strangest reason.

“Absurd? Between us? Then what do you think our relationship is like?” Mark asked coldly.

“You don’t love me. I don’t love you either. You want revenge so don’t get feelings involved. To me, you’re my only family, no matter how many times you’ve crossed the line. I’ll always cherish your kindness and remember that you’ve given me a home and taken care of me for over ten years.” Arianne spoke honestly about what she thought about their relationship, unaware that her words had thoroughly enraged him.

A Ruling Passion – Chapter 0214

Mark’s hand with prominent joints pinched Arianne’s chin as he stepped forward and looked at her with an expression of ridicule. “I’ve... never seen you as family. Even when you were a kid, I’ve not forgotten about my revenge. Each time I saw you, I felt like killing you. When you reached puberty, I suddenly realized that you’ve grown up, growing easier on my eyes. Do you understand what I mean? I waited for you to reach eighteen before I had you, but Will Sivan took you from me. What belonged to me was sullied. What do you think I’ll do?” He continued to say, “How can you be so foolish to think of me as family? I’m someone who’s waiting to take your life. I’m only keeping you now as my plaything. Why do you think I forbid you from interacting with other men? It’s because, like an object, you’re my possession. I don’t like others touching you. I don’t love you, and I never will. I don’t care either if you don’t love me. Stop talking about how I took care of you for ten years. It’s no fun like that.”

Arianne felt as though she was looking at a stranger as she looked at the man standing before her. Did he really say those ruthless words? She used to think it was his natural disposition to be cold and distant, but now, it seemed like he was truly ruthless. His words were like sharp blades that cut her. The family love that she treasured was nothing but a joke. The man whom she had spent ten years with only thought of her as a plaything.

Ah, she truly had nothing. Arianne held back the tears in her eyes and forced a smile on her face as she said, "Thank you for being honest. I didn't know that's what you think of me. I know better now. I'm just a plaything who hogs the title of Mrs. Tremont."

Mark's hand that was pinching her chin loosened up. He could see the hurt in her eyes. It seemed as though she was not as unaffected as he had thought. As it turned out, there were times when she was sad as well.

Arianne could no longer meet Mark's eyes. She shoved him away lightly before she went downstairs. Rice Ball's leg had gotten better, and it sprang into her arms. She carried the cat to the backyard and sat on the swing, swinging both of them. At the same time, tears streamed down her face. "Rice Ball, you're the only one I have now. You have to live well, okay? If I lose you as well, I don't know what I'll do."

As though it understood Arianne, Rice Ball mewed lazily.

When Arianne heard footsteps approaching behind her, she quickly wiped her tears away and wore an indifferent expression on her face. It was probably Mary or Henry. Those two would be the only ones who would be concerned about her in this place. However, contrary to her expectation, it was Nina who had showed up.

Nina sat down next to her naturally and swung the swing, following Arianne's tempo. "I heard you arguing with Mark. What he said is a little over the line."

A Ruling Passion – Chapter 0215

A Ruling Passion – Chapter 0216

Nina shrugged. “If I didn’t hear his words earlier and see him going berserk because of you today, I wouldn’t have believed that he likes you. If he doesn’t, I’ll definitely fight for a chance. However, it’s different now. I’ve never liked stealing another person’s partner. You’re quite amazing, being able to turn a gentle and angelic man into a devil. I’ll give you two thumbs up.”

At this moment, Mary suddenly appeared, “Oh, you girls are chatting here! Come, have some fruits.” Since she had heard Nina’s words, it seemed like her prejudice toward Nina had disappeared as well.

Nina could feel the change in Mary’s behavior as well and gracefully accepted the fruits. “Sure, leave them here, Mary.”

Mary put the fruits down and looked at Arianne. “Ari, sir is furious. Why don’t you Never mind, it’s a waste of breath talking to you. Both you and sir are too stubborn. In this regard, you’re both really similar!”

Arianne lowered her head, keeping quiet, when she was suddenly fed a piece of peach by Nina. Not quite used to being fed, her expression was stiff when she thanked Nina with a smile.

Nina grinned. “Arianne, I was really ugly when I was a little girl. I attended the same kindergarten and elementary school as Mark. I was an ugly duckling, and he was the prince. Can you imagine the difference? He’s someone I’ve adored for many years. You can’t say things like you don’t love him, okay? My heart can’t take it that he isn’t loved...”

There was a brief instant when Arianne caught something glimmering at the corners of Nina’s eyes. It was her tears, bright like a falling star.

Mark left at night again. This time, Nina did not follow him. No one knew where he went. When it was one in the morning, Arianne was shaken awake by Nina. “Mark isn’t home yet. Aren’t you worried?”

Still drowsy, Arianne told her, “Why are you like Mary? He’s a grown man. He won’t get lost. I can’t control him, it’s futile to look for me...”

Nina was persistent, climbing into Arianne’s bed. “Are you calling him? I’ll call him if you don’t. If I go out and look for him and find him drinking or drunk, I’ll take him to a hotel. Tell me you’re not gonna get annoyed by that!”

Arianne could only take her phone and call Mark. The call rang for a long time, but no one picked up. Just as she was about to hang up, the call connected. Jackson’s helpless voice could be heard on the other end of the line. “Hey, this is Jackson. My dear sister-in-law, it seems like you didn’t forget to call and ask about Mark! He drank too much, and he doesn’t want to go home. He’s with me now. Do you want to come and pick him up?”

Indeed. Mark went drinking. Arianne was in a daze. “No, let him stay with you. Sorry for the trouble.” After she hung up, she lay on the bed again. She said to Nina, “Go back to sleep now. He’s not coming home tonight. He’s with Jackson.”

Nina gave Arianne’s buttocks a light kick in dissatisfaction before she returned to her room.

The next day, when Arianne had just sat down at her desk in the company, Lily suddenly told her, “Go to the office. Mr. Nathaniel is asking for you.”

She hummed in acknowledgment.

Arianne was about to knock on said man’s office door when she heard him on a call in the room.

“What else do you guys want from me?! Have you asked how I felt when you asked me to take over the newly-acquired trash of Glide back then? Now that I revived it with painstaking effort, you’re asking me to pass it to my second brother? Did the Nathaniels pick me up from the roadside? Am I not your biological son?! I have nothing to say to you anymore. Bye!”

Arianne knocked when the call ended. By then, Eric had already calmed himself down.

“Come in.”

Arianne smiled self-deprecatingly. “He has always been like that to me. I envy the rest of you sometimes, being at the receiving end of his gentleness. I’ve been with him for more than ten years, but I’ve never...”

Nina did not have any intention to tease her. Instead, she felt rather sympathetic. “Based on my past understanding of him, I think he only said those words out of anger. I don’t know what has happened between both of you. However, based on my womanly instincts, I don’t think he’s being honest. Initially, I didn’t believe he likes you. I even thought you forced him to marry you by faking a pregnancy and using whatever tricks people used in dramas. However, I believe it now. Didn’t he insist on marrying you?”

Arianne did not understand Nina’s words. “What do you mean? After hearing what he said, you still think we have some sort of relationship?”

Nina looked up at the sky that was dotted with stars. She mulled over her words before she finally said, “Don’t tell me you think he takes care of you and married you just for revenge? If he really wants revenge, there are worse things he can do. He wouldn’t even deign to waste his entire life on you just for revenge. With his ridiculously high IQ, how could he come up with such a crappy revenge plan? What he says is probably the opposite of what he feels. He exploded in a rage after you said you don’t love him, right? What he wants is your love, but you went on and on about familial love.”

Nina continued to say, “I have to say, you’re really stupid. He wants romantic love. You know, the kind between a man and a woman? With his character, there’s nothing he

wants from you except for romance. Honestly, I adore him. I investigated him and discovered he didn't have a promiscuous lifestyle. The only woman he had is Aery Kinsey, your half-sister. With his status, isn't that rare? Most men who are worth hundreds of millions or trillions have women lining up next to them. Put that aside, Aery Kinsey is your half-sister. Do you think that's a coincidence? If you ask me, I don't think he has done anything with Aery Kinsey. I think he's just trying to rile you up. To think that you think he stayed by your side for more than ten years, taking care of you, and waiting for you to grow up, just to be your brother or father? Family bonds, my a*s!"

Previously, Arianne did not have a great time with Nina nor did she get along with Nina. Moreover, she did not approve of her behavior as well. However, she had to admit that Nina's words made sense. She began to doubt herself. Did she get it all wrong? Mary had also told her that Mark liked her. However, when she recalled the expression on Mark's face when he spoke to her, she thought it was ridiculous. Other people's marriage was loving and sweet to the point of giving onlookers diabetes. Her marriage, on the other hand, started with torment. Why must she be different? Bullsh*t! She had never heard of a man treating the woman he liked in that manner.

The longer Arianne pondered on it, the more she thought it was impossible. "Nina, there's no need to console me. I'm fine. I'm used to it. Even if he hits me, I won't be surprised. However, he hasn't done that yet. Things are too complicated between us. How can all of you see things so clearly when even I can't? It's impossible for him to like me. I don't feel that way for him either. It's strange. I was only eight when I arrived in the Tremont Estate. At that time, he was 18, a legal adult. You're asking me to consider romance with him? It's absurd."

Nina looked like she had seen a ghost. "Both of you are husband and wife now. People say that marriage is the grave of love. Once you date, get married, and give birth, that love will turn to familial love. In the end, the root of it is still love. You started with familial affection for Mark so it's the opposite way around. Your love is only beginning now. If you don't believe me, switch from 'you don't love him' to 'you love him' before you make him angry the next time. I assure you the outcome will be different."

Arianne felt her mind bursting with thoughts, and she no longer wanted to continue talking about this. She diverted the topic to Nina. “Don’t you like him? Why are you helping me by telling me these?”

A Ruling Passion – Chapter 0217

Arianne pretended like she heard nothing and went in. “Mr. Nathaniel, what’s the matter?”

Although Eric had reined in his emotions, he did not smile and was unable to conceal how upset he was. “Uh... Please go to Mark’s office. There are a few contracts that need his signature. We need the agreements urgently. We’ll have to work overtime these coming days. However, since your health is poor, you don’t need to stay overtime. This sudden decision is made due to an emergency. Who knows, I probably won’t be in charge of this company soon. I’ll have to make sure everything is done before that happens.”

Arianne nodded and took the documents before she returned to her desk. After packing up, she headed downstairs to hail a cab to the Tremont Tower.

Smoothly entering the building and reaching the forty-sixth floor, she took the initiative to remove her shoes and stepped on the floor barefooted. Mark’s secretary, Ellie, stopped her outside. “Please hold on. I’ll report your arrival.”

Ellie received Mark's permission shortly after. "Please enter."

When Arianne walked in, Mark was writing with his head lowered. The way he was so focused was truly captivating.

Arianne shook herself out of her daze and placed the documents on his table. "Mr. Tremont, I'm from Glide Design. Please have a look at the documents."

Mark glanced at the documents. He did not intend to disregard it, but his attention was caught by her bare feet, causing him to frown. He looked at the documents before signing them. When he was done, he tossed it to her. "You can leave now."

Mark did not look at her the entire time and seemed impatient. It was as though her presence made him uncomfortable. Arianne suddenly recalled Nina's words. If Mark Tremont saw her as a plaything, why would he go out and drink after they fought? He was drunk and stayed at Jackson's place too. If she was just a plaything, why was he so angry and showing his temper to her. Should he not be indifferent? For some reason, she was overcome with the urge to test out the theory. She gently asked, "Are you coming home for dinner? Don't drink so much next time..."

Mark's hand that held the pen froze. He looked up at her coldly. "I've already quit smoking. Are you going to make me quit drinking too? I'm not a good man who can stay away from both tobacco and alcohol. You're overstepping your boundary."

That was right. He quit smoking because she told him to. When Will had spoken about it, she did not think too much about it. However, in hindsight, it was odd.

Now that Arianne had tested the water, she wanted to take it further. “Did you mean what you said last night? Am I not even family in your eyes? Am I really just a toy?”

Mark stabbed the pen in his hand into the pen holder with a dark expression. “This is an office, it’s a place for work. Don’t make me regret signing those documents.”

Arianne quickly kept the contracts and turned to leave, afraid that he would really regret his decision. She was not going to damage the company’s profit for personal reasons. Ultimately, she did not manage to get anything out of him.

Glide Design had a meeting in the afternoon, and everyone stayed to work overtime at night. Arianne knew that Eric was in a tough spot now. Hurrying to have the agreements signed was so that he could maximize the earnings before the company was handed over to others. Although Eric asked her not to work overtime, she stayed, not wanting preferential treatment. She was not a frail weakling anyway.

A Ruling Passion – Chapter 0218

Arianne called home and informed Mary that she would not come home for dinner since she was working overtime.

Mary nagged at her, worried that her body could not endure hard work, but she did not say anything else.

When Eric exited his office to make himself a cup of tea around eight at night, he was taken aback when he saw Arianne was still around. "Why haven't you gone home?"

Arianne replied nonchalantly, "I sit here all day, it's not like my work is physically arduous. It's not tiring at all. I can handle this. If I feel unwell, I'll leave early. Don't worry about me."

Eric was still concerned. "It's already past eight. We'll stay till half-past nine latest. So you can leave now. It's fine."

Arianne glanced at him before she finally turned off her computer and packed her things up without saying anything. Being a man, Eric had more pride. Although she had overheard his conversation earlier, she could not directly comfort him. Moreover, it was his family's problem. It was not her place to meddle.

It was nearly nine when Arianne arrived home. The Tremont Estate was brightly lit. Mark must be home. The moment she entered the house, Rice Ball catapulted into her embrace. Nina slipped out from the living room and stealthily took a fancy-looking box of cake out like a magic trick "Here you go! You must have worked hard."

Arianne thanked her, accepting the sweet treat.

Nina clicked her tongue. “No worries, it’s not like I’m waiting for your thank you. Clean up and go to sleep. I think Mark’s in the bedroom.”

Arianne looked upstairs and took her shower in the bathroom downstairs, afraid she would disturb Mark, before returning to her room.

Surprisingly, Mark went to bed early today. His breathing was steady, evident that he was already asleep.

Arianne could not help being softer and gentler with her movements. She carefully lay down on the bed, feeling herself relax. Working overtime was exhausting, but she had nothing to do at home. Moreover, staying at home would only increase the chances of her and Mark fighting.

“What time is it now?” Mark asked suddenly.

Arianne started. Was he not asleep? Despite her shock, she instinctively glanced at the clock and said, “Ten minutes to ten.”

The bedroom fell silent again.

It took a while for Arianne to realize that Mark was not really asking for the time. He was clearly upset that she had come home so late. Feeling guilty, she could only use Eric as a scapegoat. "It's not like I intentionally came home late. I overheard Eric on the phone with his family. I think they want him to hand the company over to his second elder brother. He disagreed and quarreled with them. That's when he asked me to send the agreements to you. From today onward, the staff will be working overtime. I can't always leave early. After all, I'm part of the company as well. Moreover, Eric treats me quite well."

Mark did not reply. He turned around with his back facing her, and that was all for the night.

Arianne sighed in relief and was fast asleep when the fatigue caught up to her.

The next day, Arianne was sent to the office by Mark. Before she sat down, Tiffany barged in. "Ari, is Eric here? I have a few contracts to verify with him. It's urgent!"

Not knowing why Tiffany was in a rush, Arianne replied, "He's not here yet. Just wait here for a bit."

Tiffany checked the time and sat down helplessly. "Jackson gave me the contracts yesterday, but I forgot to send them over. He needs them today so I can only rush here first thing in the morning. I'm still half asleep. What time does Eric usually come in?"

Arianne glanced at the entrance. “Should be anytime now. Eric usually isn’t late. Just give it a moment. You, too, how could you forget about work? Fortunately, you’re in Jackson’s company. If it’s any other company, you would’ve been fired. Tiffie, your eye bags are drooping to your chin. Can you take better care of yourself? You’re still young, and you aren’t even married yet. Don’t do this to yourself. Don’t work part-time too late into the night.”

A Ruling Passion – Chapter 0219

Tiffany looked a little self-conscious as she touched her cheek in a daze. “Really? I can’t help it... If I don’t work part-time, I won’t be able to support my mom with that meager salary. Alright, let’s not talk about that. It’s making me sad.”

As soon as it was eight, Eric entered the office. Tiffany quickly greeted him with the contract in hand. “Help me sign this quickly! I need to send it back to Jackson in the office before nine!”

Eric was clearly startled by Tiffany’s sudden appearance. He fumbled in his pocket but was unable to find a pen.

Upon seeing this, Tiffany conveniently handed him a pen from Arianne’s desk. “Hurry, hurry!”

As soon as the contract was signed, Tiffany disappeared like a gust of wind.

Eric was still in a daze. “Arianne... What contract did she ask me to sign? I didn’t even have the time to read it. I hope it won’t come back to bite me in the butt...”

Arianne burst out laughing. “Come on, is that even possible? That’s from Jackson West. You can find him if anything happens. I’ll get to work now. You should get to work as well.”

At the West family’s head office, Bright Incorporated.

Tiffany panted heavily as she handed the contract over to Jackson. She had almost gotten herself killed by trying to make it back to the office on time.

Jackson looked at her calmly. “I think I passed this contract to you yesterday, right?”

Tiffany looked somewhat guilty. “I... I forgot about it yesterday... I was too busy. However, I brought it back to you within the stipulated time, right? I didn’t cause any delay. You... you’re not going to deduct my pay, are you?”

Jackson folded his arms across his chest and crossed his slender legs. A faint smile could be seen on his face as he said, “I’m well informed about my company’s staff’s workload. I have no objections about you working part-time after office hours, however, it should not interfere with your day job. Not only that, but look at your complexion. You look terrible! If this continues, you’ll look like an aunty in her forties before you even hit thirty.”

Jackson's words hit Tiffany's sore spot, causing her to look gloomy. "Do you think I want this?" She straightened her back and shrugged it off. "Is there anything else, boss? If not, I'll excuse myself."

Jackson shrugged. "You may leave."

As soon as Tiffany returned to her seat, she received a notification from the bank on her phone that showed 1,200 dollars had been deducted from her card. She nearly exploded in rage. She did not even have to guess to know this was her mother's doing. The card that Ethan passed her was almost empty now, there were no thousands of dollars for her mother to swipe! Tiffany instantly called Lillian on the phone, but the latter did not dare to pick it up and canceled the call. She called Lillian persistently until the latter switched off her phone.

Tiffany felt as though she was going to die from the anger. She worked so hard every day to earn money, but her mother brainlessly blew away all the money! Her mother treated her like a money-making machine. Not only did Lillian not feel bad or sympathetic, but Lillian even ordered her around at home. She really felt like she was going to lose her mind.

After surviving another day of work, Tiffany slipped into the bathroom to put on heavy makeup after everyone had left. Ordinary part-time jobs simply were not enough to support her vain and spendthrift mother. For this reason, she resorted to working in a nightclub. She only had to entertain some guests and drink with them. The income was quite reliable. Even she did not expect that she would be reduced to working this kind of job.

At the company's gate, Jackson's car suddenly pulled up to the side. "Where are you going? I'll give you a ride."

A Ruling Passion – Chapter 0220

Tiffany lowered her head in fear of being noticed. "No need. I'm going the other way since I still have something to do. You can go on ahead."

Jackson was not blind nor was he a fool. Girls, generally, only carried handbags that were huge enough to hold a phone and some cosmetics to work. However, Tiffany had been bringing a black garment bag to work lately, and it was obviously not something she had just bought. He was quite curious about where she went in a rush after work. He complied but asked the driver to stop the car at the intersection. He watched as Tiffany entered a cab and ordered the driver to tail them. The driver was a little confused. "Sir, aren't you going back to dine with madam today? Where are you going? We're running late..."

Jackson frowned. "Inform my mom that I won't be back for dinner today. I've got something else to do." He followed Tiffany all the way until he saw the taxi stop in front of a nightclub. After hesitating for a moment, he asked the driver to stop the car and entered the nightclub alone. This nightclub operated earlier than the others, and there were not many guests at this hour. There was mostly staff walking here and there. Other than the waiters and public relations managers, the rest were escorts. He had a bad feeling about this.

After thinking for a moment, Jackson went to the front desk to ask for some details instead of directly questioning Tiffany. As soon as the front desk heard the inquiries, the staff's attitude turned rather nasty. "Sir, we welcome you to have fun here. It's only that and nothing else."

Jackson nonchalantly took out a stack of money from his wallet and slammed it down on the table. Then, he showed a photo of Tiffany on his phone to the staff. "I want her. Bring her to my room."

It was a headshot that Tiffany provided in her resume. She was not wearing any makeup in the picture and looked extremely pure. Even then, it was not difficult to identify her.

When the front desk staff saw the stack of money, Jackson was quickly led to a VIP room. "Sorry about earlier, sir. Please wait for a moment, we'll bring the girl here right away."

In the dressing room, Tiffany was rather surprised to hear that someone had specifically requested her presence. She was only working part-time here and did not have any regulars. Who would request for her? She frowned at the thought of having to drink a lot again. However, she had no choice but to do it for the sake of money. After all, this job paid her daily. Due to the money she borrowed from Jackson when she got scammed during the blind date, she would not be receiving several months' worth of salary. Hence, she had no choice but to work here to make a living.

After Tiffany changed her clothes and did her hair, she put on her high heels and made her way to the VIP room. She stood in front of the door. After making sure that it was the correct room, she forced a smile on her face before she strutted into the room.

The lights in the room were not at their brightest so it was quite dim inside. Since it was bright in the corridor outside, she could only vaguely see a slender man sitting on a sofa in the room. She could not see his face at all. She walked forward and clumsily poured a glass of wine.

“Did you come alone?” Tiffany asked stiffly. Her conversational skills were not great, and she sounded strange.

Although the man did not respond to her, Tiffany brought the glass of wine to the man and continued to say, “D-Do you want me to make the room brighter?”