

Chapter 703 Realization

As Loraine pondered further, she began to piece together some clues.

Sullivan didn't really reject her request outrightly the previous night. She was the one who came to the conclusion that there was no hope and didn't bother to inquire any further. And thankfully, she was proven wrong!

With this new realization, a genuine sense of joy washed over Loraine.

Regardless of the circumstances, the bottom line was that Ariadna now had a chance of recovering.

Ariadna herself was so excited that she soon found herself out of breath. Tillie quickly hurried over, gently patting her back to help her catch her breath. "My darling, didn't I tell you not to get too excited?" she grumbled helplessly.

Ariadna blushed and whispered softly, "I'm just so happy."

Still holding onto Loraine's hand, she playfully shook it and addressed her affectionately, "Loraine, you're a sister to me."

Loraine was momentarily surprised by her statement, but she quickly recovered herself and responded with a warm smile.

Loraine was an only child. She'd never had siblings, so she was very happy to have such a sweet girl like Ariadna as her sister.

Ariadna seemed a bit embarrassed as she continued, "After listening to what you said yesterday, I thought deeply about it



and I found that I still want to live. You were very correct. I need to cherish life and live for myself. I'm truly grateful that you've helped me, Loraine."

Loraine couldn't help but grin sheepishly in joy and relief. After carrying the burden of concern for an entire night, the knowledge that the problem had finally been resolved lifted her spirits beyond belief.

"I'm very glad that you've finally come to this realization," she said, ruffling Ariadna's hair.

Initially, she had believed that the possibility of borrowing the surgical robot was a lost cause, but now, the miraculous reversal of the situation was so heartwarming and yet very surprising.

Perhaps fate couldn't bear to see such an adorable girl meet an untimely end.

"Loraine, did your boyfriend also help with this issue?" Ariadna suddenly asked her. "If he did, please thank him on my behalf. Once I recover, I'll personally express my gratitude to him!"

When Loraine heard this, she couldn't help but recall what Sullivan had said the previous night – that he needed to consult Marco about the robot.

So, could it be that Marco was the one who intervened to resolve the matter?

She couldn't be absolutely sure, but she smiled and nodded to Ariadna, admitting that Marco had indeed helped.

By now, Ariadna's frail condition was increasingly evident. After a short conversation, she was already looking exhausted. Tillie kept shooting glances at Loraine, who found it quite amusing. But eventually, Loraine decided to leave Ariadna to her rest. She

bid her goodbye and quietly exited the hospital room.

As Loraine made her way over to Marco's ward, her mind was abuzz with thoughts.

She had a feeling that Marco's relationship with the Solar Company was more intricate than he had let on. She even wondered whether Marco might have contributed to the company or perhaps they owed him some form of debt or obligation.

How else could the Solar Company lend out such a costly ninth-generation surgical robot on two occasions for his sake?

If it was not a debt of gratitude, then perhaps Marco's connection with the Solar Company was much more than just a mere former partnership.

If it wasn't directly business-related, then what kind of relationship could it be?

With these questions bothering her mind, Loraine walked into Marco's hospital room where she found him engrossed in a financial magazine. When he heard the sound of her entry, he quickly looked up. Seeing that it was Loraine, he immediately broke into a smile.

Loraine walked briskly to his bedside and took a seat, saying in a casual tone, "The Solar Company is willing to lend the surgical robot to Ariadna. Her condition can now be treated."

Marco didn't seem surprised to hear this news. It was as if he had anticipated it. "That's good to hear," he said with a chuckle.

Loraine looked straight at him, trying to figure out what he was thinking. "Well, this is actually due to your influence," she hinted. "By the way, Marco, how come the Solar Company has been willing to lend me the robot twice in a row? And Sullivan



also mentioned yesterday that seeking your opinion was necessary before the robot could be given out. Is your relationship with the Solar Company more than just a simple partnership?"

Marco immediately felt like he was under siege. Was she interrogating him? Though he was trying, he still couldn't come up with a believable explanation!

If he was forced to reveal his true identity now, Loraine wouldn't treat him with such gentleness anymore. The affectionate kisses and spoon-feeding were privileges he didn't want to lose.

One lie often required countless more lies to cover it up, so Marco's mind raced at lightning speed as he fought hard to concoct a story. "What kind of relationship could it be?" he asked with a smile.

After buying some time with that question, he paused and kept racking his brain for excuses. Eventually, he spoke up again. "If it was in the past, it might have been because I was the CEO of Bryant Group. But now, I've stepped down from that position, and I can't even reach the upper echelons of Solar Company. I honestly have no idea what's going on."

But Loraine didn't seem to believe him. So, Marco cleared his throat and added with a serious expression on his face, "I believe it must be because of the good deeds you've done, like helping with the rural road construction. Solar Company must have heard about your kind-heartedness, beauty, and talent, so they found you trustworthy enough to lend you the robot."

Why was he suddenly praising her like this? Loraine wondered as she tried to prevent herself from blushing.

But before she could retort, her phone suddenly started ringing.

She pulled it out, and without looking at the caller ID, answered it.

In the quiet hospital room, Cayson's voice came through exceptionally clear, "Lorrie, are you back in Vagow? Why didn't you tell me that you've come back?"



Chapter 704 Something Is Up

Marco's gaze instantly became clouded, his eyes looking sorrowful, as if he had been abandoned.

Loraine had done nothing more than answer a simple phone call, but his gaze made her feel an odd sense of guilt, almost as if she had been caught cheating.

If it were anyone else, it might not have been a big deal, but Cayson... Both of them knew exactly the kind of feelings Cayson had for Loraine.

All of a sudden, Loraine's phone had become like a hot potato in her hand. But she tried to look composed. Yet, she felt a bit awkward as she cleared her throat and explained, "Cayson, I forgot to inform you that I had some matters to attend to at the hospital."

Cayson's concerned voice immediately boomed into her ear, sounding very tense, "What happened? Is something wrong? Wait for me. I'm coming over right away!"

When Marco overheard this, his dissatisfaction grew even stronger. If not that Loraine wouldn't like it, he would have been compelled to interject with a snide remark.

Right now, he was like a jealous dog vying for her attention.

Seeing the telltale signs on his face, Loraine quickly covered his mouth to prevent him from saying anything. Then she explained to Cayson, "I'm fine. No need to worry about me."

If it wasn't about her at all, then Marco was the only reason she



could make such an overnight journey back to the city without even informing anyone else. After drawing this conclusion from her brief explanation, Cayson fell silent, but his breath was growing heavy.

Meanwhile, Marco was busy sticking out his tongue and lightly licking Loraine's palm, before lifting his gaze to meet her eyes, as if complaining silently that she still hadn't hung up yet.

Loraine's body was tense, and she was biting down on her lip to suppress any strange noises from escaping her mouth. "Cayson, is there anything else? If not, I'll hang up now," she said to Cayson in a murmur.

All she wanted right now was to quickly end the call and properly scold this attention-seeking big dog called Marco!

But Cayson hesitated for a moment and then sighed softly, "Lorrie, if there's nothing important, I wouldn't have disturbed you in the first place."

Loraine could sense the sadness in his voice. Since their last encounter, he'd been trying hard to distance himself from her.

He added, "Besides, it seems you've stopped paying attention to me unless it's work-related, haven't you?"

For a moment, Loraine didn't know what to say in response. She had been avoiding Cayson for some time now because she feared that they might have such an awkward moment one day. Yet, even after going to great lengths, she still ended up getting caught in this situation.

She remained silent and said nothing. Luckily, Cayson didn't press her any further. Instead, he said in a gentle tone, "Anyway, Lorrie, something is up. It's a bit difficult to explain over the phone. Can you come to the company right now?"

Loraine was taken aback by his statement. Cayson had been in charge of Universe Group for years. The fact that he wanted her to come right now could only mean that something had gone wrong with the Group.

But what kind of problem could have come up in such a short period of time? Loraine wondered.

She made sure to properly arrange all her work before leaving. There shouldn't be any situation that Cayson would find difficult to handle.

But Cayson wasn't the type to make jokes, so there was no way this could be a prank either.

Assuming a serious expression, Loraine assured him, "I'll come over right away."

As soon as she hung up, her waist was pinched suddenly, catching her off guard and nearly making her stumble.

"What does he want?" Marco asked, his face clearly showing his displeasure.

But Loraine shot him an annoyed look and began straightening her clothes as she extricated herself from his arms. "Of course, it's just for business reasons. He needs me to come over to the company."

When it came to work matters, Marco would never try to pester Loraine. Nevertheless, he sounded concerned as he asked her, "What happened with Universe Group?"

Loraine paused for a moment, before explaining the situation to him, "I really don't know. Cayson said he couldn't explain over the phone, so I have to come to the company."

Marco's brow furrowed in thought as he tried to imagine what was really going on. Despite his bemusement, he had to admit that Cayson wouldn't resort to such crude methods just to deceive someone. "Do you need me to go with you? Maybe I can help," he said to Loraine.

But she glanced at his injured leg and chuckled, "No, just focus on making a full recovery. If I come back and find out you've been up to any mischief, you'd better be prepared for the consequences."

Marco couldn't help but feel somewhat helpless. Since there was a legitimate business Loraine needed to attend to, there was no way he could stop her. After giving him a peck on the cheek, Loraine assured him, "I'll be back before long."

For Marco, these words were the most beautiful and melodious words in the world.

They signified that he and Loraine remained together, and no matter where either of them went, he/she would always return to the other.

Even after Loraine had left, Marco still savored her kiss on his cheek. It took several minutes before he regained his composure and fell to thinking.

After leaving Bryant Group, and now staying in the countryside with Loraine these days, it was quite inconvenient for him to communicate with the business world in the city, so he was unable to get wind of a lot of happenings on time.

Whatever could make Cayson urgently summon Loraine to the company was likely not a minor issue, so it would certainly be known by other members of the business community in the city.

After pondering for a moment, Marco made up his mind. Picking up his phone, he dialed a number and ordered in a firm tone, "Investigate what's happening at Universe Group. If Loraine is facing any difficulties, assist her discreetly. Be careful. Make sure she never finds out."



Chapter 705 Keep Trusting Me

Lorraine parked in the parking lot of the Universe Group building and grabbed her bag before heading towards the CEO's office.

Along the way, employees greeted her as usual, though most of them were surprised at her unexpected return. Looking around, Lorraine didn't see any signs that anything disastrous had happened at the Group. There was no panic at all among the employees.

She sighed in relief. Since there was no sign of panic or fear, it meant that the situation was still manageable.

Eventually, she got to the CEO's office.

Cayson had been waiting for her. He stood up the moment he saw her enter. "Lorrie, you've lost weight and gotten a bit tanned," he remarked with a half-smile. "Has Marco not been taking good care of you?"

Lorraine was rendered speechless by his statement. Sometimes, she couldn't help but admire Cayson's demeanor. It was as though even if the sky were falling, it wouldn't disturb his composure.

"I'm fine. What exactly has happened?" she asked him, eager to understand the situation. "I've been busy lately, so could you please go straight to the point?"

Cayson looked at her, a wry smile tugging at his lips.

He really wanted to ask her what she was busy with.

Busy taking care of Marco?

Didn't the three years of serving him teach her anything about his true nature? And yet, here she was, diving back into his arms.

But he knew very well that he didn't have the right to say such things to her.

After all, he had crossed her boundaries once before. If he were to ask her such questions, it would only widen the gap between them.

So, Cayson cleared his throat slightly and tried to maintain a composed expression. "I can't explain everything in just a short time. Why don't you take a seat?" he offered, gesturing towards the couch.

Loraine sighed in resignation and sat down across from him.

Cayson then began to prepare tea, working carefully and without rushing.

Though it might seem crazy, this stolen moment alone with Loraine was the only opportunity he had and he cherished it deeply.

Before Loraine could prompt him to speak, Cayson said to her, "The day you left the company, Reynolds came to see me."

Loraine was surprised. "What? Reynolds? What did he come to see you for?"

Cayson looked up and met her gaze. "He wanted to bribe and manipulate me into cooperating with him in sidelining you while you were away from Universe Group," he explained.

But Loraine scoffed dismissively. "What kind of wild imagination does he have? But frankly, I think he's had some ulterior motives for a while now. I don't believe for a second that he wasn't involved in Duran's incident."

"Lorrie," Cayson said, his lips pursed as he whispered softly, "aren't you afraid that I might actually get swayed by him?"

Loraine rolled her eyes exasperatedly. "How could you be?" she retorted. "Cayson, we grew up together. I know what kind of person you are. If you were to betray me, then I would have no one else in Universe Group that I can trust."

Cayson broke into a smile when she said this. "Keep trusting me then," he said to her.

Loraine chuckled. "Anyway, thank you for letting me know about Reynolds. I'll be on guard against him," she assured him.

Cayson said nothing and remained silent for a moment. Then suddenly, he said to her, "Lorrie, it's not just Reynolds you need to be on guard against. I sincerely hope you'll consider yourself more often, instead of always making sacrifices for others especially those who have hurt you. In fact, you should be even more cautious with such people."

Even though Cayson's words were veiled, both of them understood who he was referring to.

Loraine immediately put down her teacup, the smile on her face no longer as bright. "I understand you, Cayson. I'll consider your warning. But this is my life and the decisions are mine to make, and I'm sure I won't regret them. I know my limits," she said firmly.

Cayson involuntarily tightened his grip on his teacup and kept his gaze fixed on Loraine who was now cold and distant. He



couldn't help but regret bringing up the topic with her.

He shouldn't have brought it up yet. Now, he had ruined their rare moment just by indirectly referring to Marco.

Cayson couldn't help feeling very resentful.

Why was it that after discarding Loraine, Marco was still able to win back her love? How on earth did he do it?

By now, Loraine had finished her tea and she got up to her feet. "Cayson, I'll arrange for someone to keep an eye on Reynolds. Again, thanks for letting me know. I'll take my leave now," she said and made for the door.

Cayson had initially intended to stop her, but when he opened his mouth, he found himself at a loss for words. By the time he found his voice again, Loraine had already gone out of the office.

He watched her retreating figure, his fists clenched tightly. After a while, he let himself relax and slowly reclined back onto the couch. Then he pulled out a photograph from his pocket and smiled as he looked at it.

It was a photo of him and Loraine together when they were children.

No matter what was going on now, he would wait patiently.

Now that Marco was no longer part of the Bryant family, what else could he boast of?

Moreover, the Torres family had always disliked Marco, but they were quite satisfied with him.

As long as he could bring down Loraine's defenses, he would surely be the one to get her at last.

He was sure that one day, Loraine would willingly fall into his arms.

Cayson caressed the photo and murmured affectionately, "Lorrie, just wait for me. I'll prove to you that only I can bring you happiness."



Chapter 706 Reynolds' Plan

Since after the incident with Duran occurred, Loraine had been vigilant about Reynolds. She had assigned someone to keep a close eye on him, and for a considerable period, he seemed to show no sign of causing trouble which prompted her to lower her guard.

Yet, not long after she did this, Reynolds had once again started causing trouble.

After leaving the CEO's office, Loraine contacted her subordinates. It didn't take long before she received the information she sought after.

She scrutinized the details closely, her brows furrowed in surprise as she discovered recent significant financial activities in Reynolds' accounts.

Just then, her assistant knocked on the door and walked in. "Miss Torres, some project leaders have learned of your return and they want to see you."

"What's the matter?" Loraine asked with a sigh as she rubbed her temples to help ease the mental stress.

But her assistant hesitated, carefully gauging her expression before replying, "They want to present their project reports to you and request additional funding."

Loraine's hands froze. "Requesting more funds? Why? What's going on?" she asked in surprise.

The assistant was clearly unable to provide a clear answer.



Lorraine's expression darkened slightly as she realized that something was amiss.

Cayson had asked her to come back immediately, only to end up telling her that Reynolds had approached him. And after further investigation, it was now evident that Reynolds had been up to more than just that.

When she left, the company's finances were stable. So how come they were suddenly experiencing a shortage of funds?

"They think I'll just approve their request without questions?" Lorraine scoffed. "The funds for each project are more than sufficient to sustain their operations. Tell them to provide detailed breakdowns, and then they can approach me once they've thoroughly reviewed their reports and ensured that nothing is amiss!"

The assistant nodded in understanding and left the office to go deliver the message. Once again, Lorraine contacted her subordinates and instructed them to investigate the problematic projects.

As expected, they soon discovered numerous irregularities. All of the projects had excessive expenditures.

Even more intriguingly, Reynolds was somehow involved with these problematic projects. In some cases, he directly interfered while in other cases, his subordinates had meddled.

Lorraine's lips curled into a cold smile when she got this report. She had only been gone for a short period, not that she even left or resigned. How dare Reynolds orchestrate such a massive operation as if she was irrelevant or non-existent?

If Cayson had not been loyal enough to call her back and inform her of Reynolds' plan, she would have been completely left in the dark.

Her subordinate who had come to deliver the report was still standing beside her. "Miss Torres," she said to Loraine, "we also found that Reynolds has been in contact with several major shareholders of the company."

The purpose of such interactions was clear enough. He was attempting to solicit or buy support, just like how he tried to do with Cayson.

But not everyone was as loyal as Cayson in the company.

Nevertheless, Loraine nodded expressionlessly and waved off the woman. "Thank you. Keep investigating. Keep a close watch on Reynolds. Try to gather more evidence of his attempts to bribe shareholders and harm the corporation."

She had expected that her departure would stir up the old foxes in the group, but it never crossed her mind that Reynolds would be so bold as to misappropriate company funds.

As the day wore on, people came in and out of the office, and Loraine swiftly made decisions and delegated tasks to her staff with the sole aim of stabilizing the situation of things as quickly as possible.

Meanwhile, Reynolds was currently speaking to another senior shareholder of the company.

He wore a placid smile on his face as he said patronizingly, "Rico, we've worked together for so many years. You should know me very well by now? I'm someone who only has the company's best interests at heart, not my own interests. It's been that way for years."

With a look of concern, he continued, "Everything I've done has been for the benefit of the corporation. Would you rather support that little girl, Loraine, instead of me?"

But Rico chuckled and replied, "Reynolds, you're getting me confused with this talk. Which one of you doesn't work for the company's benefit? Everything Loraine has done since she took over has also been for the company's good. And since everyone is working for the company's good, it doesn't matter whom I support! In fact, there's no need to support anyone over anyone."

When Reynolds heard this, he narrowed his eyes and sneered, "She's untouchable for now because we the old folks are keeping her afloat! But she's just a woman after all. When she faces real challenges, she won't be able to handle them. Just think about it... for instance, look at her attitude towards that illegitimate child of the Bryant family. Even Aldo must have lost his mind when he put a woman like her in charge. Are we really going to tie our interests to a lovesick girl?"

As Reynolds kept speaking, Rico's stance began to waver, suggesting that he'd found Reynolds' argument persuasive.

Sensing this, Reynolds seized the opportunity to reveal his intentions to Rico. "But you see, I'm different. I only strive to maximize the benefits for our shareholders. Think about it, Rico. If you support me, I promise you smooth sailing from now on!"

Rico laughed and shook his head. "No, I'm not Duran. When Duran got thrown into prison, it was so he would serve as a scapegoat. We understood it perfectly. I'm not like him at all."

Reynolds's expression instantly soured when Rico said this. He was angry, but he tried to suppress it by saying, "Fine. I understand your point. But let me be clear. This time, I'm confident enough to take Loraine down!"

Fearing that Rico would still not believe him, he added in a low voice, deliberately creating a sense of mystery, "Do you know why Loraine left the company for so long this time?"