

Chapter 464 Rose's Advances

Everyone has different goals in life. Some pursue wealth and fame, aspiring to be the greatest. Some choose a quiet and simple life, living peacefully and having the freedom to do anything they want.

Doctor Maniac chose the latter.

After experiencing all sorts of things, he preferred living simply. He didn't mind spending the rest of his life inside the village. Nothing else mattered as long as he could treat patients and had enough food to survive.

"It's nothing. Did you know Bain had a problem with the Campbell Family in the past?" Lance asked, staring at the doctor.

He had met a lot of interesting folks in this place. When he first saw the easygoing Doctor Maniac, he didn't think the doctor was an exception. There were only a handful of ordinary people here and he wasn't really one of them.

He could have committed a crime or he possessed certain skills that were valuable to Bain.

Lance figured Doctor Maniac must be extremely talented. It was tempting to dig deep into his past, but that would be distasteful. He wouldn't do that.

"Everybody in the village knew that if goons from the Campbell Family infiltrated the forest, they could never get out of here alive. Bain doesn't just give empty threats." Doctor Maniac sneered.

Because of the bad blood that broke out between Bain and the Campbell Family, people in the village became more cautious towards them. Their clan members wouldn't dare to step in Bain's turf without any reason.

If anyone dared to break the rules, they would suffer the consequences.

Lance felt cold inside the hospital. The air surrounding them was so grim that he couldn't stay there any longer. He decided to look for Gabrielle.

"Anyway, Doctor Maniac, I'll be going now. I have to see Gabrielle," Lance said, then he headed to the door.

Doctor Maniac was in a daze as he stood by Bryce's bed, recalling the past encounters with the Campbell Family.

Just like Bain, he hated them so much.

They were the reason why he stayed in seclusion all this time.

Dr. Siren was on a mission to avenge Professor Curt. He could only do that by staying under Bain's protection and making himself stronger. He would wait for an opportunity to strike. Otherwise, he could never forgive himself.

After Lance left the hospital, he immediately spotted Gabrielle and Rose coming his way. They were holding a handful of fresh vegetables.

"Lance, what's up?" Gabrielle smiled, a little bit surprised.

She and Lance were undeniably close, like brothers and sisters. They had been best friends since Gabrielle was young.

Every time she saw him, she would lighten up.

"I was looking for you. That's a lot of vegetables you picked. Are you going to eat them for dinner?" Lance quietly reached out to take the vegetables from Gabrielle. He thought they looked heavy.

"Hmm, for dinner. It's okay, I can carry these myself." Gabrielle insisted.

"Lance, you'll be surprised. The vegetable patch was so huge and the garden was very lovely. They grew so many kinds of vegetables and fruits and they're very self-sufficient. It's incredible. Also they plant flowers there." Gabrielle excitedly shared.

She found it amazing how everyone had been diligently working in the fields. Even though they were vigilant against enemies, they still found time to be productive.

But then again, they really had to. It was for their own survival. They couldn't afford to eat meat every day because they rarely went outside to get supplies. It was wise to plant and grow crops by

themselves.

"I know. It's pretty amazing, huh?" Lance knew too well. He had the same reaction when he first came to the forest.

The village wasn't entirely filled with men. The women here weren't only skilled in combat, but they were also good farmers.

But most of these were done for leisure. Bain had other sources from outside the village that would send many other food items like flour and rice. Surely, vegetables wouldn't be enough.

"I guess you really know much about this place. Well then, we should head back now. It's almost nighttime. Rose said we'd cook dinner together." Gabrielle wrapped the vegetables tightly in her arms and hummed her way back.

When they were picking vegetables earlier, it reminded her of that time when she and Westley went to Miley's farm. Remembering it made her miss Westley so much.

It made her realize that despite what

happened between her and Westley at first, her memories of them together were full of warmth and happiness.

"Lance, can I tag along?" Rose asked.

"Of course, Rose. It's your house too, we're only guests here." Lance smiled.

Hearing this, Rose didn't hesitate. "You are a true gentleman. If I could, I've always dreamed of getting married to someone like you."

Rose had always been like this, straightforward and unfazed. There was no stopping her from doing what she wanted to do.

She never held her words back.

Realizing that Rose was flirting with him, Lance blushed. He had never seen this coming.

Despite her cold aura, she knew how to flirt. Additionally, she was undeniably stunning from head to toe.

"Rose, have you already been engaged or married? Why did you say 'if you could'?" Gabrielle asked curiously.

Rose had the freedom to get married if she wanted.

"Marriage is nothing but a pipe dream. As long as I'm a fugitive, there's no way I could get married. I don't want to cause trouble for anyone. Especially to men like you, Lance." After flirting with Lance, Rose walked away with the vegetables in her arms.

"She doesn't hold back, does she? I hope you're not angry. I'm sure she means well." Gabrielle tapped Lance's back.

Lance shook his head. "Do I seem petty to you?"

"Of course not. You're very generous, upright, and kind." Gabrielle meant what she said. To her, Lance was someone close to perfect. He was reliable, trustworthy, and loyal.

"Shall we go?" Lance patted her head and Gabrielle nodded with a smile.

They could only depend on each other right now. The situation took a toll on Lance. As the eldest son of the Carter

family, he would always get what he wanted. But now, he was trapped here, unable to do anything.

He thought it was easier for him to leave if he was alone, but he wasn't. With Gabrielle and Bryce here, he had to take responsibility.

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No one would feel good when encountering such a situation.

Moreover, Lance was a man full of pride. Now that he had to live under someone else's roof and listen to what others said, it was expected that he was in a bad mood.

"Lance, what did Bain say to you? It doesn't look like you're in a good mood." Seeing the obvious change in Lance's expression, Gabrielle couldn't help but ask once Rose was far away.

She could tell by Lance's face that he was in a bad mood. Because he had just talked to Bain not long ago, the only logical possibility would be something related to Bain.

Gabrielle was well aware that Bain didn't necessarily treat everyone with kindness. So, in most cases, people would not be treated well by him. It was possible that

Bain might have said or done something to Lance.

Besides, Lance's aggrieved face proved that he was in a bad mood. Gabrielle would be blind if she couldn't see it.

"Nothing. I'll tell you later," Lance said as he thought that they shouldn't talk about it outside.

After all, the people here were all very sensitive when it came to the topic relating to the Campbell Family. Thus, he felt it would be better to talk about it behind closed doors. Otherwise, if their conversation was overheard and spread to Bain's ears, it would become difficult for them to leave the forest.

Lance's cautiousness made Gabrielle a little suspicious. And the feeling that Lance was hiding something serious from her grew stronger.

At first, she thought that the village and Bain weren't so bad. But now, seeing the nervous look on Lance's face, she couldn't help but doubt her assumptions.

Even if Bain was not a bad person, that

didn't mean he was also a good person. After all, they were now in someone else's territory, so it was better to be careful.

"Lance, is it serious?" Gabrielle moved closer towards Lance and asked in a very low voice.

Lance stared at Gabrielle's face. He knew well that Gabrielle didn't like it when others hid things from her, so he thought directly telling her would be better.

But now was not the right time to tell her.

Bain was now directing his suspicions clearly at Gabrielle.

"Gabrielle, let's talk about it at night." Lance decided to tell Gabrielle about this after the night fell.

"Lance, is it about me?" Gabrielle fixed her eyes on Lance, her expression full of seriousness.

Lance really felt that sometimes being too smart was necessarily not a good

thing, just like Gabrielle was right now. Even if he tried, he couldn't keep what he didn't want to say hidden.

He had the feeling that whenever he was with Gabrielle, she could see right through him and know whether he was hiding something.

"Gabrielle, I'll tell you tonight. Let's go back first. We shouldn't keep Rose waiting for a long time." Lance reminded Gabrielle.

His words essentially implied that since Rose was still here, now was not the time to talk yet.

Gabrielle, of course, could grasp Lance's point and said, "Okay, let's go back first. Let's see what Rose is going to cook for dinner."

Just like that, Gabrielle didn't ask any more questions. Being a smart individual, she didn't need Lance to explain everything. She could grasp the rest of the scenario as long as Lance could explain a part of it.

There had a kitchen in the house they

lived in. Although it was not fancy, it was enough to cook meals.

"I'm sorry for not waiting for you guys' return. I've already started cooking. You two are really close, I envy you." Standing by the kitchen counter, Rose watched the two come in from the window and couldn't help but joke.

Both Gabrielle and Lance didn't look very good. Gabrielle glanced at Rose with a slightly embarrassed look, then went to the kitchen with the vegetables.

"Rose, you must be tired today. Let me help you wash the vegetables." Gabrielle put the vegetables on the table and started picking them.

"Gabrielle, I was just kidding. If you are upset, I will apologize. I didn't mean it," seeing the sullen look on Gabrielle's face, Rose said.

Rose had a straightforward attitude and would say whatever came to mind without much thinking. But, if she really said something that made others upset, she would apologize and resolve not to make the same mistake again.

"No, it's okay, Rose. What delicious food are you going to cook for us tonight?" Gabrielle shook her head, indicating that she didn't mind, and quickly changed the topic. What Rose said was a harmless joke, so she didn't take it seriously.

"Thai food. There are curry chicken, curry shrimp, Thai soup, pineapple fried rice, and some vegetables. What do you want to eat, Gabrielle?" Rose listed out the names of the dishes very seriously.

"No, I'm good. I'm glad to have the chance to eat the Thai food you make," Gabrielle said with a smile.

She didn't want to tell Rose that she was allergic to seafood. She felt that it was not a good thing to reveal about it here.

"Okay. I'll have someone deliver the rest of the ingredients right away," Rose smiled and said.

"Rose, thank you so much." A sense of embarrassment hit Gabrielle.

After all, it seemed like cooking dinner

for them was troublesome work.

"You are welcome. It's rare to have guests here. Also, I like you, and I'm willing to cook dinner for you," Rose said with a smile.

"Rose, here's what you want." A man came in with a large bag of ingredients and placed it on the kitchen counter.

"Thank you," Rose looked at the man with a smile on her lips and said.

"You are welcome, Rose." After the man finished speaking, he left.

Rose turned her sight at Gabrielle and said, "Gabrielle, you can go out to have a rest after picking the vegetables. I'll finish cooking soon."

"Rose, don't you really need my help?" Gabrielle looked at Rose uneasily.

After all, they were the ones who lived in somebody else's house, so it should be them who cooked the dinner for Rose.

"I'm good here. You already helped me with the vegetables. Or are you afraid that I will poison you?" Rose deliberately

teased Gabrielle.

Gabrielle immediately shook her head in reaction to this question. "Rose, why would you think so? You are such a good person, and you treat us so well," she added.

"So you think I'm an honest and kind woman?" Rose curled her lips into a smile.

Although she usually had a cold demeanor, that couldn't mask the fact that she was a beautiful woman.

"Rose, I'll leave the kitchen to you. I'll go out first." Gabrielle didn't delay any longer and quickly got up and went out.

Rose not only looked beautiful, but her cooking skills were really amazing.

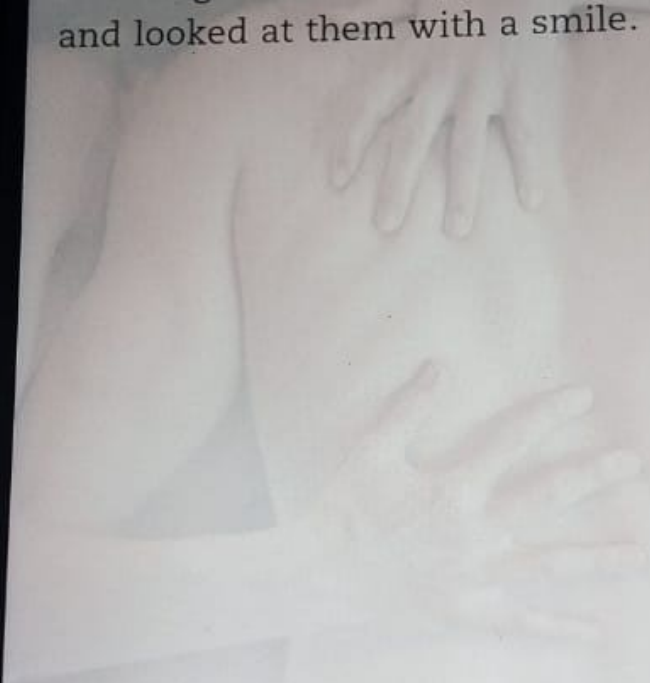
Looking at the dishes on the table, Gabrielle almost drooled. They smelled good and looked delicious.

"Rose, you are really amazing. The dishes look delicious!" Gabrielle couldn't wait to try the Thai food Rose made.

"Let's sit down and eat. Have a taste."

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Rose urged the two of them to sit down and looked at them with a smile.



Chapter 466 Everyone Had A Secret

Lance frowned at the sight of the curry shrimps.

Gabrielle was allergic to seafood, so she couldn't eat any of it. For some people, allergies didn't cause too much trouble—perhaps just some rashes that could be remedied by antihistamine medication. But for others, it could be fatal. They might exhibit severe symptoms such as difficulty in breathing.

Lance already knew about Gabrielle's allergy, so when he saw the seafood spread before them, he frowned.

"Gabrielle." Lance gave a meaningful look to Gabrielle. She instantly knew what he meant with the way he called her name. Gabrielle pursed her lips in turn.

It was a stern reminder not to eat any of it. Otherwise, she might suffer serious consequences. Gabrielle had to admit

that it was one of her weaknesses, almost like her Achilles' heel.

Where they were right now, it was dangerous to expose such weakness to other people—especially to the residents of the village. Worse, Rose was Bain's subordinate. Lance and Gabrielle didn't know if Rose was a friend or foe, but they couldn't take a chance. They wouldn't let Rose know for fear she might share it with Bain.

If they found out about her allergy, Gabrielle would lose the upper hand. She wouldn't and couldn't allow that to happen. They had already gone too far; they couldn't afford to go back to square one.

That was why she understood what Lance was trying to tell her. She didn't nod or provide any indication to give it away.

"Lance, please sit down first. These dishes Rose made look so delicious. I can't wait to dig in," Gabrielle said calmly, belying the knot of fear lodged inside her. She pulled Lance by his hand

towards his chair before sitting down herself.

Gabrielle knew very well that Bain sent Rose to test them. She was there to observe them closely, notice any small fact about them. The more weaknesses Gabrielle exposed, the more disadvantageous it would be for them. Naturally, Gabrielle had to summon all her acting skills to pretend nothing was amiss.

"Don't you like Thai food?" Rose asked Lance, raising her brow in inquiry. Lance didn't bother hiding his expression at all. He looked thoroughly disgusted. He grimaced and didn't even touch the food.

Rose misunderstood Lance. Perhaps he didn't like the food she cooked, which hurt her and made her upset. They had no idea that she spent time and effort in cooking this meal, and they couldn't even be grateful. On the contrary, Lance clearly showed his revulsion towards the dishes. Rose had to tamp down her irritation. Anyone in her position would be unhappy.

"No, it's not that. I just didn't expect you to be so good at cooking. You really surprised me this time, Rose," Lance said with a smile. He might have caught himself at the last minute because all traces of disgust were gone. His face now exuded appreciation.

Lance berated himself for letting his mask slip—even for a few seconds. Nevertheless, it was easy for him to hide his real emotion. He was Lance Carter, after all. He wouldn't be the CEO of Carter Group for so long if he didn't possess even an ounce of duplicity.

"Lance, I'm flattered. Did you think I'm someone who only learned to use a knife to cut people and not vegetables?" Rose was not angry at all. She smiled softly at Lance, but her words sounded a lot like self-mockery.

Rose was not stupid. Lance didn't say that he disliked the dishes she served, but his face said it all. Then, he pretended to be surprised at her cooking skills. Well, Rose was more observant than he gave her credit for. She immediately knew he wasn't surprised

but disgusted. 3

Still, Rose found it impressive that Lance could quickly adjust his mood and facial expression. The CEO in him really showed through. He was good at managing his emotions, switching to whatever suited the moment.

'Use the knife to kill people?'

Gabrielle's eyes widened in surprise at hearing Rose's words. She said it so casually, as if killing people was nothing.

"I'm sorry, Gabrielle. I forgot that you've never witnessed bloody scenes. Forget what I said just now and eat first. I want you to taste my dishes and let me know what you think." Rose spoke to Gabrielle apologetically. Rose's hands were clasped in front of her.

Rose was used to speaking with people who got into fights, people who used knives to hurt others. That was why she was used to talking freely and straightforwardly like this. Even the women in the village were fearless this way. Rose felt a little sorry for Gabrielle, who had neither seen nor experienced

the bloody fights they used to engage in. She was so innocent in so many ways.

Rose simply didn't know how to get along well with Gabrielle. They were polar opposites. Rose acted toughly and spoke roughly, while Gabrielle was gentle and obedient. It was challenging for Rose to pull herself back. However, she saw her sister in Gabrielle, which made her want to be closer to the other woman. They were different, sure, but Rose actually liked Gabrielle.

Rose liked her enough that if Bain asked her to test them, she wouldn't do it.

Therefore, when it came to the way she dealt or talked with the pair, Rose considered Gabrielle's feelings. They were not the same as Gabrielle, who was raised to behave like lady. Rose was used to talking rudely and casually—something that Gabrielle might never get used to.

"It's okay. I'm really hungry. Let's eat first." Gabrielle gingerly picked up some food with chopsticks. Rose almost held her breath in anticipation of what she

thought of the dishes.

"Gabrielle, go ahead and help yourself. If it doesn't taste good, please don't tell me. I'm afraid I will be heartbroken," Rose chuckled. She joked with them to liven up the atmosphere because it felt like there was a cloud hanging over their heads.

Gabrielle was no stranger to Thai cuisine. She had tried them before in Antawood. Honestly, she found Rose's dishes more delicious than the ones she ate in restaurants. There was no doubt that Rose was seriously great at cooking.

Maybe it was because they were in Thailand, where the ingredients and water used were local, so the food tasted more authentic. Maybe that was why these dishes Rose made were naturally different from those made in other countries.

It was normal for a dish to taste best when it was cooked where it originated from. The flavors were enhanced.

"Gabrielle, you look like you're enjoying it. Am I right?" Rose noticed that

Gabrielle lowered her head and ate heartily. It made her so happy. Rose always felt a certain sense of accomplishment and pride whenever others enjoyed eating the food she prepared.

"Rose, these are all scrumptious. They're even more delicious than anything I've tried in Thai restaurants in Antawood. You're not from Thailand, are you?" Gabrielle glanced at Rose's short golden hair and her lovely face.

It was clear to anyone who looked at Rose that she was of mixed-race. However, it was hard to tell where her parents came from. It wasn't clear if either of them was Thai. Even so, Rose's take on Thai cuisine was mouthwatering, so maybe she was also part-Thai.

"No, I just came to the village for a period of time. I lived in Bangkok for more than half a year before, and I liked Thai food so much. The dishes have few ingredients and are relatively easy to prepare. I try to cook as often as I can. So I guess I become good at it after practicing so many times." Rose gave

Gabrielle another faint smile. But it was evident that she was proud of her cooking.

"But I'm flattered that you think highly of the dishes I cooked. I'll work harder in the future and try to improve my cooking skills more," Rose said as if she was joking. In the village, she seldom did the cooking. Besides, there were people here who were so much better than her in the kitchen.

"Rose, you're really meant to be a chef." Gabrielle praised her sincerely. She did not say that to flatter Rose, but it was an honest assessment. Gabrielle had eaten at several popular restaurants, and she could confidently say that Rose's cooking skills were comparable to those of a chef.

"Gabrielle, thank you for that sincere compliment. If you want to encourage me, then please eat more. That will certainly make me happier. Why aren't you eating the shrimps?" Rose couldn't help but ask since she realized that Gabrielle didn't even touch the shrimp.

"Gabrielle doesn't like shrimps; she prefers chicken. You can prepare more chicken recipes in the future. But as for me, I like shrimps, so I'll eat them," Lance answered for Gabrielle directly. He didn't give her a chance to speak for herself, especially since he didn't want Rose to know that there was a specific reason why Gabrielle couldn't eat seafood.

Rose just stared at Gabrielle and didn't say anything else. Gabrielle lowered her head to eat. She never really cared about personal preferences because as an adult, everyone had secrets.

Chapter 467 Her Identity Was Not Simple

After dinner, Rose didn't say anything more and left directly.

Gabrielle finally breathed easier. Throughout the meal, she was so tense that her shoulders were stiff. Now, she could relax.

With Rose hovering near them, Gabrielle thought of all the things Lance wanted to tell her but couldn't because someone else was with them.

But with Rose gone, Gabrielle could ask him about it. She was dying to know what news he had for her.

"Lance, did you have something to say to me? Rose isn't here anymore, so you can talk freely," Gabrielle said anxiously. She was fidgeting with her fingers.

It had been pressing on her the entire night. If Rose wasn't here, Gabrielle would have asked him already. She

wanted answers.

"Yes, I have something to tell you." Lance turned on the TV and scanned their surroundings even though he knew it was only Gabrielle and him. He couldn't help but be hyperaware of their environment.

It was a small colored TV, probably brought by people who lived here before. The transmission signal was extremely poor, so only the Thai channel was available. It was also pretty grainy.

Lance didn't want to watch TV, and he didn't care about the content. What he needed was the sound to drown out their conversation. Even though there was no one else in the room, he didn't want to risk being spied on.

"Lance, you're making me a little nervous." Gabrielle had to lower her voice after seeing what Lance had done. She had seen movies about people doing this to avoid others from eavesdropping. Somehow, it made her uneasy and nervous.

It was not something to be afraid of, but

now he made her nervous. Lance was always cautious, but this was a bit too much—even for him.

She had never been at ease since she came into the forest. She was always pulsing with raw fear, and because of the dangers all around, she kept her guard up. It was the first time Gabrielle ever experienced anything like it—as if things could come crumbling down any minute.

"Gabrielle, don't mind what I just did. What I'm about to tell you is the thing that ought to make you nervous." Lance hadn't decided yet whether to divulge the latest news to Gabrielle or not. He was still debating with himself.

"Lance, go ahead." The room was enveloped by the sounds on TV, of people speaking Thai. Gabrielle darted her eyes from the screen to Lance, who was sitting with his hands on his lap.

"Is it about Bryce? Has his condition gotten worse?" Bryce was almost always on Gabrielle's mind. They came here for him. If anything happened to him, she

wasn't sure she could take the pain. She wouldn't be able to explain it to the Jones family when she would go home. Gabrielle's anxiety only heightened.

"It's not about Bryce. Gabrielle, do you know the Campbell Family? Specifically the Campbell Family in Italy?" Lance faced her and asked without preamble. He waited for her reaction.

"The Campbell Family in Italy?" Gabrielle furrowed her eyebrows in confusion and shook her head slowly. How could she know someone from Italy? From the sound of it, it seemed like they were a powerful family.

Yet, something itched at the back of her mind. She tried to think harder, and something clicked. Her eyes widened as she recalled hearing about it for the first time.

The Campbell Family in Italy was Bonnie's family. She was Gabrielle's sister-in-law and the eldest daughter of Campbell Family.

She didn't know much about her family, except that they were the largest foreign

clan in Italy and that they had a good relationship with one of the most powerful families in the country.

Anyway, it was a big family notorious for evoking fear from people. They were the kind nobody wanted to mess with. So, why did Lance suddenly ask about the Campbell Family? Surely, they didn't have anything to do with the forest?

"Yes, the Campbell Family in Italy is currently one of the largest clans there and also one of the top clans in the world. Did you know that?" Lance moved a little closer to her, his voice insistent. There was a sense of urgency when he spoke to her.

Gabrielle blinked hard. Fear shot up her spine, and she found that her hands were trembling. She already knew it spelled disaster when someone offended the Campbell Family, but why did her cousin ask about them seemingly out of nowhere?

The eldest daughter of the Campbell Family was married to the eldest son of the Morris family in Antawood. It was

not made public, and even the photos of Bonnie and her daughter were never shared. It was all for their safety, to protect them from their enemies.

Gabrielle was still confused. She initially thought Lance was going to tell her something about Bryce, but she did not expect this. Perhaps it was Bain who told him to do so.

She always felt that Bain was far more clever and sinister than he looked. He probably intended to look like an easy target, but Gabrielle knew he was more powerful than he let on.

"Lance, why are you suddenly asking about them? Their turf is in Italy, far away from here. Have you ever offended them or done something to put you on their radar?" Gabrielle asked him directly.

Gabrielle needed to know the reason first. She didn't want to endanger her sister-in-law and her family, so Gabrielle didn't mention them yet.

"Gabrielle, Bain has a grudge against the Campbell Family. They wounded his men

after some altercation involving their business. They're sworn enemies. If Bain finds out that someone living here knows the Campbell Family and is friends with them, he will kill that person without hesitation," Lance said anxiously. He wasn't a man who easily gave in to fear, but this time, it was there in his voice and his eyes. He was scared.

What made him anxious wasn't fear for his own life, but for Gabrielle's.

Gabrielle paled, and her pulse pounded in her ears. Her breathing quickened, and her mouth suddenly became dry. She never once considered how serious things were.

There were words that stuck out. If Bain found out anyone remotely related to the Campbell Family, he would kill them. Gabrielle swallowed hard, and beads of sweat collected on her forehead.

Gabrielle didn't just know anyone from the Campbell Family, she was related to them. She was the sister-in-law of the Campbell Family's eldest daughter. In

short, she was family.

If Bain found out about her identity, would he kill her immediately? No questions asked? No negotiations?

"Gabrielle, what's wrong? You don't look well." Lance was worried. Gabrielle looked like she had just seen a ghost.

"Lance, are you serious? How could Bain hate the people of the Campbell Family so much? At least enough that he would kill any one related to them?" Gabrielle struggled with her rising panic. Even her mind betrayed her and conjured images of bloody and brutal fights—scenes where people were hurt or killed.

It was yet another nightmare she wasn't prepared for—that Bain and the Campbell Family had enmity between them. Who knew how long this was going on?

If Bain found out how she was related to the Campbell Family, she would be in danger. He wouldn't hesitate to take her life.

Gabrielle already knew this was a

dangerous place, but it gave her another reason to leave as quickly as possible. She was not safe. She deluded herself into thinking that Bain wouldn't harm her. But if he found out about Bonnie and Gabrielle, he might just bury Gabrielle alive. As she thought of this, a chill ran down her spine. She felt a numbness in her limbs. ③

"Of course I'm serious, Gabrielle. I wouldn't joke about this. Bain personally told me that there were people from the Campbell Family just outside the forest. For the time being, they wouldn't dare enter the village for fear that Bain and his men would hurt the person they came to look for. Bain and the Campbell Family didn't have such open hostility between them until recently. So there must be a reason why the Campbell Family gathered enough courage to come here. That's why Bain is suspecting that someone inside the village either knows a member of the Campbell Family or is close with any of them. The Campbell Family is looking for someone but they are still hesitant to make any trouble for Bain," Lance explained hurriedly. He had

to make Gabrielle understand how serious this situation was. ²

Suddenly, hope sprang inside Gabrielle.

She could think of one reason why the Campbell Family would be there outside the forest. It could only be Westley's doing. He probably asked his brother and sister-in-law for help, so they sent their people here. ⁵

If that was the case, then did it mean that Westley was outside the village too? ¹

Just moments ago, she was frightened for her life. But now, she had mixed emotions—she was happy but nervous. She was happy because Westley came for her, which meant that he really loved her and cared about her. He wouldn't go to such lengths if he didn't.

But she was also nervous because Bain was a formidable enemy. The forest was surrounded by the most advanced weapons. That alone would inspire fear in anyone outside the village.

Her happiness was quickly extinguished. The more she thought about it, the more

fearful she became. Her entire body trembled. Gabrielle really shouldn't have come here on impulse in the first place. She might meet her end here before she could take Bryce home. Plus, she even put Westley in danger. ⁶

Thinking about her complicated and high-risk situation, she plunged into extreme sadness and frustration.

Chapter 468 Push Her To Death

Just thinking about it made Gabrielle deeply uncomfortable. Her stomach churned. She was anxious, scared, and sad.

"Bain doesn't trust me enough to tell me about it, so he sent me away and spoke with you alone. Isn't that right, Lance?" Gabrielle raised her brow, but she was clenching her fists. She wasn't as clueless as people thought.

Lance was surprised at how fast Gabrielle had caught on. He was rendered speechless for a while. What else could he say? She already figured it out even before he finished explaining.

"So you understand how important your answer is, Gabrielle. You have to be as honest as you can. Are you familiar with the people of the Campbell Family? Gabrielle, listen to me. I don't want Bain to become suspicious of you. I know his

temper. He can easily harm you whenever he wants, and nobody will bat an eye." Lance was staring intently at Gabrielle and placed his hand on top of hers. He was desperate to make her understand how serious this situation was.

Bain was a loyal man, especially to people he trusted. But he was also ruthless and vengeful. He didn't let things slide easily. If anyone offended him or crossed the line, he would take revenge. And he wouldn't stop until he accomplished his goal.

Lance was well aware of that. And as someone who did not scare easily, he was frightened to his core right now.

He didn't care so much about himself, but Gabrielle was another story. He couldn't let Bain hurt or harm her—absolutely no way.

"Lance, I..." Gabrielle broke off, for she had no idea how to say it to him. She stood up, looking embarrassed and unsure.

"Gabrielle, tell me the truth now. Do you

know someone from the Campbell Family? I'm not your enemy, remember?" Lance knew something was off, that Gabrielle was hiding something from him.

He had a vague idea of what Gabrielle was trying to tell him. But it was difficult for him to believe that Gabrielle, who grew up in Antawood and was raised to be dutiful and obedient, could have anything to do with the powerful Campbell Family in Italy.

He sighed and ran a finger across his forehead. With all that was happening, he shouldn't be surprised about anything anymore, especially after she married Westley—one of the movers and shakers of Antawood.

'Wait a minute. Westley?

Yes! That's it!' The eldest son of the Morris family, Wilson, was supposed to take over the Morris Group's business. Everyone expected him to, but instead, he went abroad and never came back. Someone said that he had been living there ever since.

Instead of being the CEO of Morris Group, he chose to settle abroad. For a while, it was the only thing Antawood citizens talked about.

What if Wilson had married Miss Campbell and then lived in the house of the Campbell Family in Italy? It wasn't far-fetched. That all made sense. The Campbell Family's business was more profitable than that of Morris Group's, and they had wider reach. The Morris family was rich and powerful, but they paled in comparison to the Campbell Family.

"Gabrielle, is Miss Campbell's husband the eldest son of Morris family?" Lance wasted no time in asking Gabrielle. He needed to know the truth.

Gabrielle stiffened. A muscle in her jaw twitched, and she bit her lip to stop it from trembling. She could feel her heart beating wildly.

Lance was so good at guessing. He hit the bull's-eye just like that.

"Gabrielle. It's true, isn't it? All you need

to say is yes or no." Gabrielle's reaction didn't escape his notice, and Lance knew he was right. It didn't take long for him to piece it together.

And the look on Gabrielle's face was enough confirmation for him.

"Uhm, yes." Gabrielle nodded slowly. She hung her head low before slumping back down on the chair.

Lance already knew he was correct, but hearing that one word from Gabrielle still shocked him. He held onto his seat to steady himself. Their problems were only escalating.

"So basically, Gabrielle, Miss Campbell is your sister-in-law." Lance tried to process everything he knew. It was astonishing. Before they came here, he never thought they would be facing one problem after another. And now, Gabrielle was apparently related to a member of the Campbell Family. It was no wonder why they came here to take her away.

"I think I understand why people from the Campbell Family have gathered

outside the forest. Westley most likely told his brother about it. He knows we're stuck here." Lance had to acknowledge that their circumstances just went from bad to worse. Things were getting out of his control. What was he supposed to do? He couldn't solve everything! ¹

Lance had to get a grip on himself. He shouldn't lose his focus; people depended on him—including Gabrielle and Bryce. First things first, he couldn't let Bain know about the relationship between Gabrielle and the Campbell Family. Bain should never learn the truth.

Lance was a man who didn't crumble under pressure, but even the prospect of Bain finding out Gabrielle's connection to the Campbell Family frightened Lance.

If Bain got wind of it, he would definitely kill Gabrielle. Lance had reason to believe it. Bain would not show her any mercy.

"I thought it was Westley, too. He knew that I followed you to Bangkok and then the forest. But I'm not sure if he's here."

Gabrielle had no idea whether Westley was waiting for her outside the forest or not. She wanted to contact him so badly.

"Gabrielle, what're you going to do if Westley is indeed waiting for you outside of this village? We have no idea what's happening out there. All the signals are cut off, except the satellite phone. I can get access to it, but if I use it, Bain may get suspicious." Lance crossed his legs and drummed his fingers on his knee. They had so many problems and not one solution.

Lance only planned to take Gabrielle to see Bryce and together, they would bring him home. However, Lance didn't expect the series of events that greeted them here. What was supposed to be a simple rescue turned into a life-threatening situation. He couldn't help but regret bringing Gabrielle in the first place.

If he could turn back time, he wouldn't even think of taking Gabrielle. The forest was hell for her, and it was him who sent her there. Lance was racked with guilt. What had he done?

"Don't worry, Lance. If Westley did come, he would find a way to get us out of here." Gabrielle was afraid too, but she tried to console Lance.

Those weren't empty words. She fully believed in Westley, and she trusted him. If he was out there, he wouldn't leave without her.

She was confident that Westley would use all his resources to help them. He wouldn't walk away without saving them.

"Gabrielle, you should know that if... I mean, what if it's Westley who's the reason why Bryce is in a coma? How will you feel then?" Lance had to remind Gabrielle. It was a difficult question, but they had to get it out of the way.

Lance trusted what Bryce said because there was no point for Bryce to lie and frame Westley.

It was quite an accusation, but it was not unwarranted. Lance was certain Westley had the power to do so. He had the Campbell Family's support; he could count on them to help him, and nothing

seemed impossible for Westley.

He would move heaven and earth to do whatever he wanted. That particular thought sent shivers down Lance's spine. It was dangerous and reckless to mess with someone like Westley.

"Lance, do you believe what Bryce said?" Gabrielle had to ask. She had to know what Lance thought.

"I do. There's no reason for Bryce to set up Westley. He never lies, and you know that." Lance wanted Gabrielle to know what kind of person Westley truly was. He was a fearsome opponent.

"I think I'll wait for Bryce to tell me in person. It's getting late. I'll head to my room now, Lance." Gabrielle didn't feel like talking about it anymore. She chose to avoid it and delay discussing the topic. She didn't appreciate the way Lance was painting Westley as the bad guy.

She refused to listen to anyone who said anything awful about Westley. She had been living with him, and she saw him at his worst. But this was beyond him, and she didn't think Westley was

capable of such sinister deeds.

"Why can't you just face it, Gabrielle?"

"What do you mean? Haven't I done enough? I'm here, aren't I? I'm facing the problem; that's why I have to hear it from Bryce!" Gabrielle couldn't help but lose her temper. What did Lance want? That she would immediately turn against Westley without any proof?

"Fine, go to sleep. Don't overthink it. Take a good rest because tomorrow's another day. And don't talk to anyone about the Campbell Family because it's kind of forbidden around here." Lance reminded Gabrielle. They were in a perilous situation, and they had to be careful with their words and actions.

"I know that, Lance. You too, have a nice sleep." Gabrielle stood up and headed upstairs, her head already pounding because of stress.

Lying on the bed, Gabrielle wasn't drowsy at all. She knew sleep would elude her again, and she was going to spend the next few hours staring at the ceiling. She thought about what Lance

told her over and over again.

Bain thoroughly despised the Campbell Family. So if he figured out that she had a connection to them, would he really harm her? Would he kill her?

The more Gabrielle thought about it, the more scared she became. She spent the entire night thinking about it, making it impossible for her to doze off. She eventually decided to go downstairs and take a walk—to clear her mind, at least.

Chapter 469 A Moon Night

After getting dressed, Gabrielle rushed downstairs with the satellite phone. She tiptoed in fear of catching Lance's attention.

Tonight's moon was quite enchanting. It was bright and its cold sheen looked ever so mysterious. When Gabrielle opened the door, a person standing in the yard caught her attention.

Despite seeing only the silhouette of a thin and tall woman, Gabrielle immediately knew that it was Rose when she saw her short, golden hair.

She was taken aback by the sight of Rose. Gabrielle wasn't expecting her to be there in the middle of the night. It was as if she saw a ghost.

"Rose?" Gabrielle called her.

Rose turned to look at her. With a cigarette in her hand, she took a puff

and squinted at Gabrielle. There was no hint of embarrassment on her face at all.

"The moon is exceptionally gorgeous tonight, isn't it?" Rose asked as she squinted at Gabrielle through a puff of white smoke.

Gabrielle had no idea what Rose was up to.

'Why is she here in the middle of the night?'

Whatever it was, it couldn't possibly be any good.

"Yeah, it's beautiful." Not knowing what to do, Gabrielle decided to just walk out of the house to face Rose.

"You can't sleep? Is that why you've decided to come out and watch the moon?" Rose's voice was calm.

"Yeah. I thought I wasn't able to sleep because of the bed. But on my second night here, I'm still having some trouble sleeping. Maybe it's because this place feels foreign to me. The moon looked so beautiful tonight, I decided to gaze at it

for a bit. I didn't expect to have such an exceptional view of it from here," Gabrielle replied.

"Do you think the moon in a foreign land is more beautiful than the moon in your hometown?" Rose asked as she breathed another puff of smoke.

She looked more natural and even a little charming when she smoked. Gabrielle had seen quite a number of women smoking but none of them looked as enchanting as Rose.

"No. But it is particularly beautiful tonight," Gabrielle answered as she gazed up at the sky from Rose's side.

For some reason, the tension in her mind was eased.

"Do you want one? It helps when you're in a bad mood." Rose handed Gabrielle the pack of cigarettes.

"No, thank you. I don't smoke." Gabrielle shook her head. She was not a smoker so trying it out was a bad idea.

"Rose, did something upset you? Why

are you here instead of sleeping? Did you really just come here to look at the moon?" Curiosity got the better of Gabrielle. She couldn't help but ask. She knew very well that Rose did not come here just to have a view of the moon. There was no denying that she came here to spy on them. Gabrielle had decided to wait and see what Rose would do so she went along with her conversation.

Luckily, the moon was out tonight. Otherwise, they wouldn't have anything to talk about.

If that happened, they would be embraced with awkward silence.

Gabrielle was certain that Rose stood there in the yard, not to watch the moon but to keep an eye on someone.

Despite Rose's intimidating looks, Gabrielle was not scared at all. Instead, she felt close to her.

"I have no other choice. This place has the best view of the moon. After all, we are in the middle of a dense forest. The trees block the view of the moon and

unfortunately, we can't cut down too many trees," Rose replied. She sounded relaxed.

However, Gabrielle was quite sure that Rose was here for something else. Even if it was the best place to enjoy the moon, she had absolutely no reason to come here in the middle of the night.

"We should make the most out of this moment, then. How about I make some coffee? Do you want some?" Gabrielle asked with enthusiasm.

Yesterday, when Gabrielle rummaged through the kitchen, she found that it was small. Despite that, it had everything they could possibly need, including a can of coffee beans and a coffee machine. She thought of making a cup of coffee since she couldn't sleep anyway.

Rose was curious about how well Gabrielle could make coffee.

"Alright. I'm looking forward to trying your coffee," Rose replied with ease.

"Okay. Hold on. Would you like to come

in?" Gabrielle asked as she turned to look at Rose.

"No, thank you. I'd like to enjoy the moon from here. Please go on and make me a cup of coffee. I'm excited to have a taste!" Rose smiled as she gazed at Gabrielle's face intently.

"Alright. Please wait a second." Without another word, Gabrielle turned to go back to the house.

After warming up the coffee machine, Gabrielle began grinding the coffee beans as she wondered about Rose's intentions.

'Was it because of the Campbell Family? Is Bain suspicious of me so he sent Rose to keep an eye on me?

Otherwise, she wouldn't have come here in the middle of the night. It sure doesn't seem like Rose has any romantic bone in her body at all.'

Gabrielle couldn't help herself from overthinking. She had to be wary of her emotions. She had planned on leaving the village the moment she saw an opportunity. Luckily, she let go of that

ridiculous idea. Otherwise, she would have died from all the traps hidden in the dense forest.

Soon, she finished brewing the coffee. It had calmed her down. She took a cup for Rose.

"Rose, coffee is ready. Give it a try." People loved the coffee Gabrielle brewed. Even Remy had said that she had a future as a barista.

"Thank you, Gabrielle," Rose said as she took a sip of coffee.

It tasted phenomenal. Much like the coffee made by her barista in Bangkok.

"How is it?" Gabrielle took a sip. It wasn't as good as the coffee she made in Antawood. The coffee beans she ordered back home were first-class. The beans here were medium, at most. It was expected that they would taste different.

"It's good. It tastes like a barista brewed it," Rose exclaimed as she took two consecutive sips. She loved the way it tasted.

People in that village came from all over the world. All of them liked coffee. The former tenant in the house Gabrielle and Lance were staying at was obsessed with coffee. He was the one who left the machine and the coffee beans. However, his coffee was much more inferior in comparison to Gabrielle's. ²

Despite using the same machine and the same beans, their coffee tasted different. It must have been the way the coffee was prepared.

"If you like it, there's more in the pot. I can get you another cup if you'd like." Gabrielle was surprised by how much Rose liked her coffee.

"No, it's fine. People should control their desires. If you indulge in things, you will eventually lose interest in them." Rose wasn't a greedy woman. To her, things were more valuable when there was a scarcity of them. If one drank coffee like water, even the best coffee in the world would taste simple.

"Gabrielle, as payment for your amazing coffee, I'll tell you a secret," Rose

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whispered in her ear.



Chapter 470 Men Knew Men Better

Gabrielle was as pale as a sheet of paper after hearing what Rose told her. Could Bain really be suspecting her? If he were, then it was disgruntling that Rose shared the secret with her.

Rose was watching her like a hawk and there were other people nearby. One wrong move and they could send Gabrielle into the afterlife.

Until now, Bain hadn't confronted her because he didn't have any evidence of Gabrielle's relationship with the Campbell Family. He might have hated them to the core, but he would never drag an innocent woman into his revenge plot. He wouldn't be foolish enough to destroy the peace around the village he made. And besides, she was Lance's cousin.

But once he found a link between his pursuers and Gabrielle, he wouldn't

hesitate to kill her, no matter how much he respected Lance.

Gabrielle scanned her surroundings. Seeing some figures moving under the tree made her spine shiver.

Rose was right. Bain had set his sights on her. But what could she do? She could only hope that the Campbell Family would reconsider before making any rash decision.

Otherwise, the consequences would be serious.

They had Gabrielle by the throat. For her own sake, she knew she had to be very cautious.

"The coffee was delicious, but it's about time we go to bed. The moon isn't going anywhere. As long as there's good weather, it'll shine brightly every night." Rose chugged down her cup and gave it to her.

Gabrielle understood. Rose was nonchalantly brushing off the danger.

Was Rose really protecting her? Gabrielle

with the few people hidden in the dark.

Bain made quick work of things. He didn't want to spend time thinking. Once he suspecting someone, he'd want the truth as soon as possible.

The boss had their house surrounded while Rose tried to extract information from Gabrielle.

Lance didn't want to act rashly. Instead, he tried to observe the women. If Rose or any other person tried to harm Gabrielle, he was ready to take action. To his relief, they were only chatting.

"Were you eavesdropping?" Gabrielle thought it was no surprise. Lance had been on edge the past couple of days. And in truth, she had nothing to hide from him. They were on the same side.

"I was watching, yes. But I couldn't hear what you were talking about. Did Rose say anything to you?" Lance asked sternly. He still had doubts what those people's intentions were.

Gabrielle was too trusting. She could never fight Rose back.

She was too kind to think of anyone badly.

"Lance, Bain is suspicious of me. Rose came here to spy on me," Gabrielle answered.

"That's not good. What did you say to her? Did you tell her about your relationship with the Campbell Family?" Lance asked worriedly.

Gabrielle shook her head. "I'm not that stupid, Lance. I think Bain was trying to test me. He suspects me, but there's no proof. He's a reasonable man. If not, he would've killed me a long time ago."

"Good. That's good. Anyway, you should keep your distance from Rose for a while. We can't attempt escapes either. If you can't get in touch with Westley, then forget it. Even if you use the satellite phone I gave you, Bain will just trace the signals back." Lance sighed desperately. "Bryce isn't going to wake up soon no matter how much we look after him. You understand, don't you? I need to get you out of here first. You have to go home, Gabrielle. Bryce and I

have nothing to do with the Campbell Family so Bain won't turn on me so easily."

He brought Gabrielle to the forest, so he had to find a way to get her out safely. As long as he could do that, he could pacify Bain.

"I should be safe as long as I stay put and keep Westley off the radar. The Campbell Family wouldn't break in forcibly, would they? So Bain won't take action first." She didn't know what happened between them, but she hoped Bain was no savage.

"Gabrielle, please listen to me. I'll find someone to pick you up as soon as possible. Promise me you'll do as I say without questions." Lance was laying his life on the line. He'd never let Gabrielle die in a place like this.

"Lance, don't worry so much. Everything's going to be alright." Gabrielle tried to smile despite the fear.

"No, Gabrielle. I brought you here and I will make sure you go back home safe. Westley and I don't get along, but... I

know he'll give you the happy life you deserve. You'll see him again soon, alright? I promise," Lance admitted, his voice quivering. "But as long as I'm here, I'll do whatever I can to keep you safe, alright? Now, go to bed."

In his heart, Lance knew he was no match for Westley. Be it his riches, his connections, and his love.

If there was one person that could protect Gabrielle, it was Westley, not him. Only a man could know another man so well.

"Alright. Good night, Lance." Gabrielle didn't want to say anything more. She went back to her room and locked the door.