

Gu Lingfei 681

Chapter 681 | [Serenity & Zachary]

Sonny recoiled behind his mother.

Turning around, Liberty picked her son up and said, "Sonny, this is Mr. Lewis. You met him before."

Sonny simply stared at Duncan. As polite as he usually was, Sonny refused to say hello to Duncan.

"The child is beautiful," Mrs. Lewis complimented. Mrs. Stone's elder niece was broad around the beam, but her son was rather handsome.

"Duncan, your scary face scared the little guy. He won't let you touch him." Mrs. Lewis tore one into her youngest son.

Since the incident when Duncan got a cut on his face, Mrs. Lewis was all for her son to go under the knife to remove the scar and get his good looks back. However, the headstrong b*stard refused to take her advice and do the surgery. He had no consideration for his mother who nearly had a heart attack and cried so many nights over the accident.

Many years had passed, and the scar remained.

The once hunk now found himself single at thirty-five... Hang on. Duncan was about to celebrate his thirty-sixth birthday. The sons of other families were fathers of two or three kids at the age of thirty-five. Yet, there were no takers for her thirty-six-year-old son.

As Mrs. Lewis did not often find Duncan taking to a child, she seized the chance to have a go at him.

With a smile, Duncan replied, "That's just because I'm not familiar with Sonny. He won't be scared of me when we see each other more."

Mrs. Lewis frowned. "See each other more?"

"Liberty rented one of my shops to turn into a breakfast place. I pass by that area on my way to work, so Sonny will see me every day," Duncan explained.

"Please excuse me, Mrs. Stone, while I say hello to your son."

Clive and his wife were receiving guests on the other end, so they were not with their mother.

Mrs. Stone gave a nod smilingly as Duncan made his way to Clive.

Mrs. Lewis took a few glances at Liberty but without any good intention. Without saying anything more to Liberty, Mrs. Lewis chatted with Mrs. Stone as they sauntered into the house.

Elisa waited until the two ladies were far before pulling Liberty aside and uttering, "Let's kill time here and go into the house later so my mom has enough time to share about the pains of raising children with her friends."

Curling her lips, Liberty understandingly answered, "Sure."

“I don’t like the way Mrs. Lewis was looking at you, Liberty. Don’t take to heart how they look at you. With my mom around, they won’t dare try anything.”

Elisa could discern Mrs. Lewis’s disapproval of her cousin.

The moment Mrs. Lewis found out that Liberty had a shop off Duncan to start a restaurant, Elisa caught the wariness in Mrs. Lewis toward Liberty. It was like Mrs. Lewis was on guard against her cousin for eyeing Duncan.

“Elisa, I’m used to getting that kind of look.”

It did not bother Liberty at all.

Although Liberty was one of the stars of the event tonight, it was only for one night to get to know the upper crust of Wiltspoon.

She would leave the Stones’ residence by daylight and return to her rented apartment. Liberty would be getting materials to renovate her shop for a fresh look after the New Year’s holidays. She was going to be occupied with all the purchase of necessities.

The higher society was not for Liberty.

There was no need to force herself into a circle where she did not belong.

Liberty was aware of that. Aunt Audrey had money, but her wealth had nothing to do with Liberty. Liberty wanted to depend on herself to generate wealth and live better days.

“The thing is, Mrs. Lewis actually thinks you would go after her son.”

Outspoken as she was, Elisa blurted out what went on in Mrs. Lewis’s mind.

Liberty found Elisa’s anger amusing. “I’m not even angry, Elisa. I could see that too. The people at Lewis & Co. also believed I was trying to get in Duncan’s pants, but who cares what they think? I just came out of hell, and I’m not going to jump back into marriage again.

“Hank’s mother is on a pension of three thousand bucks a month, and she’s not someone who is easy to please. She kept finding fault with me. It would be tougher to get along with Mrs. Lewis since she lives in privilege. I would be nuts to pine for her son.”

The failed marriage gave Liberty an insight and a new lease of life. She would think twice before stepping into another marriage.

Chapter 682 | [Serenity & Zachary]

“Don’t worry. I won’t give Mrs. Lewis a chance to make things difficult for me. Don’t be mad.”

“You’re so forgiving, Liberty. I would never allow anyone to look at me that way if it were me. I’d make her pay.” Liberty smiled.

How could she compare herself to Elisa?

Elisa was an heiress born with a silver spoon.

Liberty was an orphan who lost both parents at a young age.

"I got your back from now on. You must let me know if anyone gives you an attitude or bullies you. I'll kick their *sses for you."

"Jasmine's here."

With Jasmine and her shoppingmode brother arriving at the scene, Liberty alerted Elisa and distracted her from the topic.

Jasmine dragged her shoppingmode brother along to the event so she could get a free ride off him and feast to her heart's content at the party.

It was a pity that Serenity was not in Wiltspoon.

"Jasmine."

Elisa and Liberty walked up to them.

"Why did you take ages, Jasmine?"

As Elisa drew close and intimately held Jasmine's arm, many looked over and recognized Jasmine. Some were even whispering among themselves.

"Isn't she Mrs. Lowe's niece? It's been a while since I've seen her."

"I bet Mrs. Stone doesn't know what Ms. Sox did when she got drunk. Mrs. Stone will be in for a surprise for inviting Ms. Sox when she ends up on the ground like last time."

"I heard Ms. Sox is good friends with Mrs. Stone's niece. It explains why Ms. Sox got the invitation."

"We should stay away from her. This person is a joke."

Oblivious that she had become the center of gossip, Jasmine asked Elisa, "Was I late? I read the time on the invitation. I believe I've arrived early."

She then greeted Liberty and carried Sonny before complimenting Liberty with a smile, "Your outfit today really shows off your curves, Liberty."

"You can call me fat. I don't mind it at all."

Liberty could face criticism from others for her own flaws. She did not control her eating, so why stop others from calling her fat?

She had been putting in the work to cut down her size.

"I speak from the heart, Liberty. You're of ample proportions. You have the makings of the richest woman in Wiltspoon."

Following Jasmine's praises, Liberty replied smiling, "So you're saying I have the potential to be a wealthy woman."

"Let's not forget that Mr. Charles foretold that things will be difficult for Liberty and Seren before they can enjoy the easy life."

With Sonny in Jasmine's arms, she and her shoppingmode brother followed Elisa into the main house of the Stones' residence.

Drake had the pleasure of meeting these ladies before. It was impolite of him to butt in while the girls were chatting. Hence, he quietly became a wallflower, secretly hoping Mr. Bucham would arrive soon. At least, he would have company.

Ring, ring, ring...

Liberty's phone rang.

Stopping in her tracks, she pulled out her phone and looked at the display screen. By the looks of the number, the call came from a landline.

"Who's calling you? Is it someone from your ex-husband's family?" Elisa asked with concern upon seeing Liberty's reluctance in answering the call.

"I don't know who's the caller. It's a landline."

After much hesitation, Liberty picked up the call in the end.

"It's me, Liberty."

Liberty uttered, "Mike?"

"What do you want?"

Liberty's voice turned flat.

Mike let out an awkward laugh on the other end of the line. "I heard you got a million bucks from your husband when you divorced him."

Chapter 683 | [Serenity & Zachary]

It alerted Liberty's internal alarm bells to ring.

She callously asked, "Who told you that I got that much money? I didn't work or have any income after I got married."

"Your mother-in-law said so. Liberty, my business has hit a rough patch and is in the red. I lost all the money I profited from over the years. I don't have cash going into the business, so I was thinking if you could lend me a million bucks."

Liberty sneered in anger.

There were no boundaries when it came to these people.

They would not stop bugging her and Serenity.

"You might want to look in the mirror and see if you can find your dignity, Mike. After all that you've done to me and my sister, you have the gall to ask me for money?! That's right. I do have a million dollars, but I won't lend it to you. I'd rather give the money to anyone else than you!"

“Oh, come on, Liberty. We’re family after all. Look, you girls were stubborn then. You didn’t get your husband to pay us for family support. He married you without forking out a dime to us. Look where it landed you. You should ask your future husband to pay for our grandparents’ care, so he would feel responsible to the family and would not ditch you unnecessarily.

“Your future husband will only treasure you if he commits a sum of money to marry you. You don’t have use for the money you have now anyway. Why don’t you lend me the million dollars? I’ll pay you back when my business recovers. Besides, you and your sister are the reason my business is failing.

“My business wouldn’t have suffered if you didn’t ruin me with your post on Twitter. I’m taking in a loss every day.”

“I’m not going to lend you the money! Not even a dime!”

“Liberty...”

Liberty hung up on the call.

With the phone slammed in his face, Mike cursed his heart out.

“What did she say?”

His father inquired concernedly, “Is Liberty going to lend you the money?”

“Dad, you know she won’t do that. We’re not even on the best of terms. Even a good friend won’t lend me a million bucks.

Restless, Mike paced around the living room.

They were now back in their hometown, and everything cost them money. It was fine when Mike’s business was doing well before, and he was bringing in clean profit every day. However, Mike was put out of business and about to lose his capital. He started to count pennies.

Old Mrs. Hunt would be discharged from the hospital and return home in two days. With the New Year around the corner, the old lady wanted to be home for the celebration.

The Hunts, apart from Old Mr. Hunt who had been caring for his wife in the hospital, were now living in their hometown and taking turns going into the city to take care of Old Mrs. Hunt.

Oh, right. John was still in the city, looking for a job.

However, many companies were on early Christmas and New Year leave, so it had not been smooth sailing for John.

Stone Group came down heavily on John. Any companies interested in hiring John for his capability would receive a call from Stone Group thereafter. As the companies did not want to step on Stone Group’s toes, they would change their mind about hiring John.

John even attended interviews with companies that were at odds with Stone Group, but the outcome was the same.

He spent some money to ask the manager of the human resources department at these companies why they would not take him in. The companies replied, saying that John had crossed someone, and any companies that hired him would be made the enemy.

John asked the human resource managers if the person was from Stone Group.

The response he got was, "Did you p*ss Stone Group off too? Don't you come from a farming town? Does your family own a farm? I'd advise you to go pursue a career in that. At least, you can earn a livelihood. It's unlikely you will find a job here."

Chapter 684 | [Serenity & Zachary]

Despite John's persistent questioning, the human resource managers would not reveal to him who else, apart from Stone Group, was putting an end to his professional career.

John knew that someone had Serenity and her sister's back. He thought it was Elisa at first, but now it seemed there was someone more powerful than Elisa standing behind the sister.

Who could it be?

The person had the power to stop anybody from hiring him in Wiltspoon.

Having lost his confidence, John decided to wait until Grandmom was out of the hospital and send his grandparents back to their hometown before figuring something out in the new year.

"What do we do now?"

Stuart was anxious. "Whoever's behind Serenity and her sister must be some sort of big shot. They're the reason for our job losses and business failures. You're feeling the pinch too even though you don't run a huge business.

"Mike, we can have a family meeting when your grandmom is out of the hospital. We should apologize sincerely as Serenity had asked and see if things will change for the better."

Serenity mentioned that they should apologize for framing the sisters, tarnishing their names, roasting them, and putting them in the face of cyberbullying.

Mike was hesitant.

"It's bad enough as it is. What's so difficult about issuing a public apology online? We can offer gifts to Liberty and her sister after the public apology. We must clean up our act and apologize this time. Things might be better when the sisters put the matter behind them."

Mike uttered resentfully, "It was too much of Serenity and Liberty. Sure, we started it, but it was only a Twitter post. So, we hired people to troll them, but they fought back too. It's been hard on us the last two months. We suffered quite a huge loss.

"We're even now, but the girls won't back down. Must they push us this far?"

Mike was not ready to forgive and forget.

He added, "They can't let go of their resentment toward us and still hold the incident against us, Dad. It's likely we won't ever reconcile with the sisters. I can bet my money that they will try and take back their parent's property."

"That is our family's home base. They're married, so they shouldn't have a share of the property. The girls don't have the right to do so!"

"Dad, all children have the right to inherit the property. It's just a custom in our town to leave the inheritance to sons."

"What should we do now? We clearly don't have the upper hand."

Stuart said with utmost regret, "We shouldn't have done that. Your grandmom could've used her savings to pay the hospital bill. It was enough to cover the bill if each of us contributed a little."

"But none of you was willing to fork out the money. We tried to make the girls pay instead. Do you remember what Liberty did when we asked for family support during her wedding? We should've known the sisters are no pushovers. They were only young ladies back then."

Mike sort of regretted it too, but there was no point crying over spilled milk. What was done was done. The Hunts could only continue what they started.

"I'm going to go around to see if I can find out who has the sisters' back."

Mike even pondered killing the girls. He could look for someone to finish them off.

Nevertheless, since Serenity got Noah locked up in jail after the stunt he pulled, Mike had to quit on that thought.

They should apologize and go from there.

Mike would resort to more desperate means if nothing changed after the apology was made.

Even if he had to go down, he was taking Liberty and Serenity down with him.

Chapter 685 | [Serenity & Zachary]

Elisa was there to hear the entire conversation between Liberty and Mike. She angrily uttered, "I can't believe they're still hounding you for money."

"He wants to borrow money from me, saying that business is bad now, and he's in the red. He needs to pump in a million bucks into operations."

"How shameless of him! And I thought I was the most brazen person in Wiltspoon. People called me shameless for going after Mr. York, but compared to your relatives, I'm considered modest."

Liberty ended up soothing Elisa instead. "Don't get worked up over these people, Elisa. Serenity and I will never be on good terms with them. Those people can go to hell for all I care."

The hardship the Hunts faced right now was karma hitting back at them.

"Come on, let's enjoy the buffet and alcohol. Elisa, your pastry chef makes the best desserts. I'm going to eat to my heart's content today!"

Jasmine turned the subject of conversation elsewhere.

Elisa laughed at her. "Desserts are fattening... Liberty, I wasn't not talking about you."

Unbothered, Liberty replied, "Desserts are fattening, but I cut out sweets in my diet."

"I don't care if desserts have high calories. I run and train every day, so a bit of dessert won't kill my weight."

Pulling Elisa along, Jasmine called Liberty and her son to go inside the house.

Since Liberty gave up on sugar, she had to hold out against anything tasty at the party.

Keeping to her diet was the first step to losing weight.

By the time Josh arrived, Jasmine had had her fill and was drunk.

Drake came along as the designated driver for his sister. While helping his drunk sister out, they ran into Josh who was surrounded by a crowd.

Josh came late on purpose so that all eyes would be on him.

It never crossed his mind that Jasmine was on her way out when he had just arrived.

"Mr. Bucham."

Drake nodded at Josh.

"What's going on Ms. Sox?"

"My sister is drunk."

Josh was speechless. It seemed she could not hold her liquor.

"Mr. Bucham, I'm off to drive my sister home."

Holding his sister up by the arm, Drake gave Josh another nod and brushed past him.

Jasmine was not the only person under the influence of alcohol. Even Elisa, who enjoyed more than the occasional drink or two, was smashed.

It was because the pair had somehow chatted about Mr. York, and Elisa called the maid to switch their wine to hard liquor. Jasmine and Elisa took turns downing the drink until they were wasted.

Josh wanted to walk toward Jasmine as the public watched on, so everyone would know he had a thing for Jasmine. Guess the plan went up in smoke.

Even the best-laid plan would go astray and this seemed to be the case for Josh.

Josh only showed up at the Stones' party because of Jasmine. Now that Jasmine was gone, he did not have a reason to stick around.

The Stones' party was the buzz and only ended at midnight.

The following day, Liberty was firm on returning to her little home together with her son, despite Mrs. Stone's insistence for her to stay.

Before leaving the Stones' residence, Liberty had a long talk with Mrs. Stone. Mrs. Stone wanted to give two houses to Liberty and Serenity, but after consulting with her sister, Liberty turned down Mrs. Stone's generous offer.

Mrs. Stone also wanted to give each of her nieces a lump sum of money to enrich the sisters' material lives.

Liberty refused the kind gesture as well.

Chapter 686 | [Serenity & Zachary]

Liberty said to Mrs. Stone, "Aunt Audrey, Seren and I are young and able. We don't need your help. Don't worry too much about us. Have faith in us. We will get to the top with our own effort.

"I do have one thing to ask of you. Try not to let everybody know that Seren and I are your nieces. We have seen all kinds of people and the ugly side of humanity. I'm worried that others might use us against you or the Stone Group."

After much thought, Mrs. Stone replied, "I'm happy that you think that way, Liberty. You are both strong-willed like me. I'll take a step back since you don't need my help, but you must let me know if things get tough for you.

"It doesn't matter if others don't know about our relationship, but your relatives must know of that fact, or they'll continue to pester you girls for money."

Stone Group's reputation came in handy at times.

"They already know Elisa stands behind us."

Elisa got into it with the Hunts at the shop.

"I won't go out of my way to tell them, but I might use your name to put pressure on them when we take them to court to repossess our parents' home. It should work in our favor."

"Tell me when you decide to start the legal battle. I can help you hire the best lawyer. With the inheritance law, you should win the case."

Liberty knew that she and her sister would get the house back through court. However, the Hunts were despicable and would not easily back off. Even if the sisters won the legal battle, the Hunts would play dumb. The sisters would have to pull out the big guns and use Aunt Audrey's name.

Following the long talk with Mrs. Stone, Mrs. Stone was true to her word and only watched her nieces in the dark. She did not interfere with her nieces' lives.

It was only right to leave the girls to walk their paths.

It took a week before Zachary got rid of his nasty cold.

Since there was work to be done, Callum took over while Zachary was in the hospital. Callum returned to Wiltspoon a day before Zachary was due to be discharged.

With New Year closing in, most factories had put out the dates of the Christmas and New Year closure. York Corporation was rushing the year-end deadlines. After consultation with

Zachary, it was decided that the employees could go on leave during the festive. holidays.

Zachary kept in mind what his wife said to him.

He would get a treat once he got better in health.

Once back at the apartment prepared by the subsidiary company, Zachary got to packing.

“Why are you packing your stuff, Zachary?” Serenity asked in confusion. They had only returned from the hospital.

“Seren.”

Turning on his heel, Zachary faced Serenity and pressed down on her shoulders as their eyes locked. He tenderly uttered, “This is not our home. I don’t want to spend our first night here.”

Serenity’s beautiful eyes flickered. “Oh, you remember what I said.”

Zachary pulled her toward him while inching his attractive face toward hers to nuzzle. He breathed into her ear. “I don’t remember when you swore at me, but I won’t forget that you talked about going all the way with me. To make that happen, I’ve been braving myself to take the shots in the past week.”

It nearly killed him! It was a shot a day.

Zachary had complained to Mr. Tank behind Serenity’s back about the big needles. The way he saw it, the doctor could have used a smaller needle.

“Did it hurt that bad?”

Serenity felt for Zachary when he had to take the shots. It was hard on him.

Zachary had to endure a shot every day.

“It hurt, but I’m better now. How about you give me some sugar and make the pain go away?”

Bearing a smile, Serenity wrapped her arms around the nape of Zachary’s neck and drew her lips against his.

Chapter 687 | [Serenity & Zachary]

Even though Serenity had been hanging around Zachary every day, he could not kiss. his wife, the love of his life.

Zachary had trouble keeping it in his pants.

Now that the ban was lifted, he could not keep his hands off Serenity and demanded kisses.

A while later, Serenity rested against his chest and caught up on her breathing.

“Seren.”

Serenity lifted her chin to meet him at eye level.

With Zachary looking rather solemn, Serenity blinked her eyes. That was quite a quick change of mood. She asked, “What’s the matter? Why do you have that teacher look?”

“Do you still remember the first time you came to my shop to help? The students didn’t even dare set foot into the shop because you were there.”

Zachary put his hand on her face, caressing his thumb against her soft skin. There was a smile across his face. “You rushed me to go back to the office. I was furious because you didn’t appreciate that I was trying to help you. You even tried to hurry me along.”

In the past, he was always stuck-up, grumpy, and sour-faced in her presence. He acted as if everybody owed him.

“What are you trying to say to me, Zachary?”

Serenity did not stop Zachary from brushing his finger against her face as she enjoyed the intimate caresses. It felt as though she was a gem to him.

“There’s one thing I’ve kept from you.”

“What’s that?”

Zachary fell silent before saying, “You must promise that you won’t get angry with me, Seren, and you can’t go back on your word.”

Serenity stared at him, and he did not shy away from her gaze.

After looking into each other’s eyes, Serenity nudged him away to create a distance between them.

“Zachary, are you trying to trick me? You want me to promise that I won’t get angry and that I won’t go back on my word before you tell me what’s up. What if you’re going to tell me something that will make me blow up? Am I supposed to suck it up and pretend everything is sunshine and roses?”

“Let me put it out there I won’t take one for the team. I’ll pinch and bite you when I’m mad!”

Zachary reached out to hold her.

However, she slapped away his hand.

“Don’t touch me. Tell me what you’ve been hiding from me, and I’ll decide whether it’s enough reason not to abuse you.”

Zachary uttered, “Erm, I don’t just have the property in Brynfield.”

Folding her arms, Serenity asked, “And?”

“I have a villa on the hilltop in Regent Residences. I have been living there until we tied the knot. I only brought the ready-to-move-in house in Brynfield at the last minute before we signed the papers.”

Serenity glared at him.

Regent Residences?

What was the price per square foot of the villas there?

Serenity had been keeping an eye on property prices as she was doing the math to save for a down payment. She would not dream of living in a villa. Hence, Serenity did not pay much attention to the luxury areas.

Pulling out her phone, Serenity checked online for the price per square foot in Regent Residences. It was then she realized Regent Residences was an exclusive area, and those living there were loaded.

Chapter 688 | [Serenity & Zachary]

To think Zachary owned a villa there and it was on the hilltop with the best view too

Stuffing her phone back into her pocket, Serenity turned around and walked to the sofa for a seat. She did not break gaze with Zachary.

Zachary was looking at her. He wondered if she was angry or pleasantly surprised.

Serenity appeared surprised, but not the good kind.

“Seren, w—we rushed to get married, so I...”

Zachary drew close and sat next to her. The moment he took a seat, Serenity scooted to the side, pulling a distance between them. She told him off, “Stay right there. Don’t come too close to me.”

Tensing her facial lines, Serenity uttered furiously, “I know why you kept it from me. Do you think I’ll go after your money when I find out you own a villa?”

“How much do you make annually as a senior executive in York Corporation? I bet it’s a few million dollars. You’re always busy at work, either working overtime or going to business parties. Do you claim the spending and hours from the company? You didn’t have a girlfriend or a wife. You said that your family is doing well financially, so you don’t need to hand out an allowance to your parents.

“You must have saved a lot of money to buy a villa that costs more than ten million.

“I know you’ve been holding out on me since the day we got married. You think I’m a conniving woman, out to get your money.”

While speaking, Serenity picked up the cushion on the sofa and smacked Zachary with it. “Zachary, for you to hide a villa from me, you weren’t 100% honest with me. I can’t believe you took it out on me the other night for keeping things from you and not treating you like family.

“That’s some double standard you have there.”

Zachary let her whack him with the cushion. It did not hurt anyway.

He chose to tell Serenity about the villa, but he had more than one property. Zachary brought up one to see how Serenity would react when she found out that he had something to hide from her.

She was mad.

“Yes, Seren. You’re right. I have double standards. I know I’m so full of myself. You’re right to say that about me.”

He extended his arms to pull Serenity, together with the cushion, into his embrace Zachary said apologetically, “I know my wife isn’t conniving, and she isn’t out to get my money. Don’t be mad, Seren. I feel bad when you’re mad.”

Giving his arm a good pinch, Serenity peevishly said, “Why tell me now?”

“I usually stay there. I feel that the place is my home.”

Well, it was his personal space, a home that belonged to him.

“I think we should spend our first night there together.”

Pursing her lips, Serenity pinched his arm once more. “You’re only telling me now because you found an excuse to make me less mad at you.”

Despite the pinches, Zachary refused to let go. He trapped her with his arms.

“I really want us to be in our home. It means something to me.

“Please forgive me for keeping it from you, Seren.”

Serenity tried to push him away, but his hold on her was secured. She gave up in the end.

“Is the villa paid for, or are you still paying the mortgage?”

Zachary did the math in mind before uttering, “I joined York Corporation fresh out of college and have been working for a few years. I started off with an annual income of a few hundred thousand dollars. It took me a few years before I earned my first million. Now, I bring home several million a year.

“Although I saved my wages, I wasn’t in the position to pay the house in cash. I’m on a mortgage, but I put down 80% for the down payment, so I didn’t have trouble making the monthly repayments. I put aside some money after deducting the mortgage to afford another property before marrying you.

“That was why I told you that the apartment in Brynfield and the national MPV will go to you if we divorce. It was to make up for your lost time.”

Serenity responded, “No wonder you asked me to sign a contract when we first got married. You were so generous to give the house to me. Since you can afford a villa, why didn’t you get a better car?”

Chapter 689 | [Serenity & Zachary]

After much silence, Zachary said, “I don’t have much savings left after purchasing the villa and the apartment in Brynfield. The car is only a mode of transport. I don’t need a luxury car since the one I have now does the job.”

Zachary was flustered as he was making up more lies to cover up the web of lies* from before.

Serenity gave him another push. “Let go of me.”

“Are you going to run?”

“Where can I run to? I won’t tell you if I plan to run away. I can just pack my stuff and leave. I would be bluffing and trying to scare you if I made a huge commotion to leave. I’d be quiet if I wanted to leave for sure. It will be without hesitation, and you won’t be able to find me.”

With his heart beating out of his chest, Zachary cautiously asked, “Seren, in what circumstances would you leave me?”

“You must be guilty of doing me dirty to ask that question.”

Zachary was quick to deny, “I just want to know, so that I won’t make that mistake and hurt you. I don’t want to give you a chance to leave me.”

Serenity observed his facial features. Seeing that he was calm, Serenity held his face still and looked into his eyes for a long time. She did not catch any signs of guilt in his eyes.

Zachary might be honest or good at hiding his emotions. Either way, she could not read him.

“I can’t stand cheating, domestic violence, and endless lies.”

“I won’t cheat or raise my hand at you.”

Zachary immediately promised.

Serenity ran her fingers across his face. “I hope you’ll keep your word.”

“Only time will tell.”

With something to hide, Zachary ignored the statement about endless lies. Although it appeared he had only lied to her once, a single fabrication was covered up with countless lies. He had not been honest with her many times.

His intention was to probe for Serenity’s reaction. He would come clean to her if she only needed a moment to get over her anger.

Now that he knew where the fine line was, Zachary felt conflicted.

He tricked his wife once, and now he was paying for it. Well, Zachary may not stick around to clean up the mess he created because she might dump him before that happened.

“Zachary.”

Zachary lowered his gaze to meet hers.

“Aren’t we flying home?”

With a flicker in his eyes, Zachary nodded.

“Why are you still hugging me? Let go, so I can pack our stuff to go home.”

Zachary smiled and dotingly planted a kiss on her forehead. He teased, “Why do I feel my wife is more eager than I am?”

“You’re imagining it. I’ve been away from home for a week. I miss my sister, Sonny, my best friends, and Nana. I can’t wait to get home.”

Serenity pulled out a wad of cash from her pocket. It was remuneration from Mr. Tank for looking after Zachary.

“Did you get your pay? Did you check if the amount is right? Make sure they don’t go behind your back and dock your pay.”

While counting the money, Serenity uttered, “I’m homesick.”

She received money for coming all the way to care for her man.

“I’ll only get my wages just before the holidays start. Don’t worry, they won’t dock my pay. I was sent by the headquarters to go on a business trip, so it was paid sick leave.”

Seeing that Serenity had too much fun counting the cash, Zachary said, “While counting the money, are you thinking that I should remain longer in the hospital, so you could’ve gotten more for taking care of me?”

“Yeah. I mean, no. No way. I hope you’re always healthy and away from pain and illness.”

Zachary lovingly dabbed her nose before letting her go.

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“Yeah, right.”

Zachary went on to pack his bags.

Serenity sat down, carrying on with her money counting.

York Corporation was the top company in Wiltspoon for sure. The corporation had deep pockets that even the subsidiary company was generous. Serenity earned a few thousand dollars for the few days of caring for Zachary.

Mr. Tank would have given Serenity more money, but she might suspect something.

After counting the cash, Serenity got up and grabbed her go-to purse. It was a cheap canvas purse that cost a few dollars if bought in bulk online. Nevertheless, the purse was useful and could hold bills worth tens of thousands.

Serenity stuffed the cash into the purse and watched Zachary pack the suitcase. There was not a lot of stuff. She packed his bags before Zachary went on his business trip.

Since Serenity came in a hurry, she only brought along two changes of clothes. The daily necessities were bought here.

It did not take long for Zachary to finish packing. He approached Serenity with the suitcase in tow and said, “Mr. Tank arranged a private plane for us. I’ve contacted the flight crew. Let’s go.”

Serenity put her hand out to him, and Zachary dragged the suitcase with one hand and held her hand with the other as they moved along.

“Zachary, Mr. Bucham is a nice guy. How did you become good friends with him? I wonder if there’s any chemistry going on with him and Jasmine. He’s a brilliant man. It’s a shame that he’s single.”

Serenity sincerely hoped there would be some sort of spark between them.

Zachary smiled. “Mr. Bucham and I have worked together for a long time. We became good friends over time. I didn’t intentionally try to gain anything through him.

“They’ll become friends even if they don’t feel attracted to each other.”

“Yeah.” Serenity stopped worrying about her best friend’s love life.

Everybody had a different approach toward love.

She and Zachary set them up for a date, but the success of a relationship lay on Josh and Jasmine’s shoulders.

A few hours later, Serenity and Zachary made it back to Wiltspoon, and their first stop was York Corporation. Zachary told Serenity to wait for him at the VIP lounge on the first floor while he reported on work to his superior. They would go home thereafter.

“Go on. I’ll wait for you here.”

Serenity took a seat on the sofa in the lounge, gesturing to Zachary to carry on with his work.

It was still early in the day, so she was fine to wait.

Zachary got someone to bring Serenity snacks. He whispered a few words with the two receptionists before hurrying upstairs.

“Ms. Hunt, let us know if you need anything. We’ll be outside.”

One of the receptionists poured Serenity a glass of water.

Rising to her feet, Serenity took the glass from the receptionist and answered with a smile, “Thank you.”

“Don’t mention it, Ms. Hunt.”

The receptionist gleefully responded, finding the CEO’s wife rather friendly.

Serenity’s identity was no secret within York Corporation. Since Zachary had not completely gone public about his marriage, everybody continued to address Serenity by her maiden name.

“I’ll wait for Zachary here. Don’t let me keep you. Don’t mind me.”

The receptionist replied with a grin, “I’ll get back to work then. Just call me if you need anything, Ms. Hunt.”

Serenity nodded and expressed her thanks.

Once the receptionist was gone, Serenity sent a text message to her sister. Since her sister was not responding, she texted her best friend instead.

“I’m back, Jasmine. I’m waiting for my husband to give an update about his work progress at York Corporation. The company is giving me good vibes, and now I’m tempted to apply for a job at the company. I could use some experience in a professional setting.”