

A Ruling Passion – Chapter 0131

"Hello, vice chairman."

Tiffany spiritedly turned her head towards the door, following the uniformed direction of gazes from everyone in the office.

As a newcomer, it was required of her to give her superiors a good impression. However, when her eyes landed on Jackson's frivolous expression, she wanted to die. "What kind of vice chairman is he?" she asked someone next to her, muffling her voice.

"The boss's son. Our vice chairman. He manages the entire company. The old chairman is now an arm-flinging shopkeeper. Bright Incorporated is the West family's head office..."

Tiffany couldn't hear the rest of whatever her colleague had said, nor was she in the mood to listen anyway. She never thought that she'd end up in Jackson's grasp. She had fully intended on leaving a good impression on her superior, but it seemed like there was no need for it now. After everything she's been through, it was obvious to her that Jackson West did not have a good impression of her. It would be impossible to turn this around.

It was like a shattered, beautiful dream. She couldn't laugh about it at all. She thought that Jackson would be only too eager to give her a hard time, but unexpectedly, he didn't even look at her. Instead, he walked into the office straightaway.

Tiffany pulled out her phone and sent a message to Arianne again: I forgot to check the almanac before going out today. It's my first day at the office, and my boss is Jackson West! Looks like I'll have to find another job all over again.

Arianne was confused when she received the message: Why would you need to find a new job? I don't think you need to. Just do your job, and he'll do his job as your boss. You've refused the small salaries from small companies and it wasn't easy for you to get this job. Don't be willful.

Tiffany wasn't completely ignorant of everything that Arianne had pointed out. A thorough evaluation suggested that there wasn't really a big grudge between her and Jackson. She had only refused to compensate him after barging into his car... He had only been arrogant to her ever since and spewed hateful words to her whenever he spoke...

With great difficulty, she managed to pull through until noon. Tiffany met Arianne at the previous Chinese restaurant, prepared for a thorough ranting spell.

Arianne had just arrived downstairs from her office when she spotted Ethan, who was leaning against a car on the side of the road. Knowing the circumstances of Tiffany's break up now, she found it extremely difficult to treat Ethan with civility.

This was especially so when she saw him fully-dressed in a suit and leather shoes, as it reminded her of Tiffany's dire straits. This made her even angrier.

She had initially intended on ignoring him, but she couldn't restrain her rage. So she walked up to him and said, "I wasn't aware that you and Tiffie had broken up. I'm sorry for troubling you into driving me."

Her words may have sounded civil, but in truth, they contained heavily-laden animosity. If she had known that they had broken up, she would never have accepted his help.

Ethan smiled indifferently. Arianne would have found out sooner or later; he had expected this. "I've come here today to ask for your help."

"We're not exactly friends," Arianne snapped icily. "Since you've given me a lift, I'll do what I can. Consider it my payment for your favor. I don't like owing anyone anything, even though... your car was a gift from Tiffie."

She gritted her teeth firmly when she said the words "Your car was a gift from Tiffie". She couldn't understand Ethan's innermost feelings, nor could she imagine why a man would abandon a woman who'd loved him wholeheartedly. Besides, he was adding insult to injury when her world was collapsing.

Ethan's expression sank. He pulled out a bank card from his wallet. "Pass this on to Tiffie for me. The password is her birth date. You're right, she gave me my car, including all of my expenses when I was out of the country. The money in this card would be sufficient to pay her back for all of it. Feelings can't be completely explained, but I don't want to. It's best not to owe her anything. I don't care if that's what you think of me."

Arianne wasn't into radical measures, so she wouldn't lose all rationality and curse at him. Instead, she gritted her teeth and said, "Thank you for not letting her investments over the past few years go to waste!" Then, she took the card and left, without even turning back. To this day, she still remembered all of Tiffany's descriptions of how much her feelings for him meant to her. She also remembered how fragile and disappointed Tiffany had sounded in her message to her, when she told her that they had broken up.

A Ruling Passion – Chapter 0132

Arianne spotted Tiffany sitting by the window with one glance when she arrived at the restaurant. She recollected her emotions then slowly walked towards her and sat down.

Before she could begin, Tiffany began jabbering on and on, "I'm done for, I'm done for. I thought that I had found a good job, but I never thought that my boss would turn out to be Jackson West! I've knocked into his car and said a few hateful words to him too. I've never met anyone who doesn't hold a grudge! I definitely won't last very long in his company. I might as well pack up and leave instead of waiting for him to fire me..."

Arianne was a little rattled. She was thinking about Ethan's reasons for seeking her out. If she gave this card to Tiffany, she would undoubtedly believe that Ethan was doing well in life, the kind of life that meant that he could spend millions without batting an eye. There was no greater slap in the face than telling someone that their ex was much better off than they were...

Tiffany grew anxious when she noticed her silence. “Say something, Ari. What should I do now?”

Arianne calmed herself and said, “Tiffie, I may not know Jackson very well, but he’s close to Mark. People like him have pretty good tolerance, and probably wouldn’t begrudge a young girl. Just keep doing your job and see how it goes. I... have something to tell you...”

Tiffany propped her chin on her hands and stared at her innocently. “Go ahead.”

“Ethan came looking for me at my office, downstairs. He asked me to give you something.” This was Arianne’s conclusion after much deliberation. There was no use in holding on to the card. Knowing Tiffany, she would have let go of all uncertainties. Perhaps this money could be used as a consolation prize to make up for her losses.

“What... did he ask you to give me? Haha... What good could there possibly be? Nothing except money could make me happy now. He’s wise to avoid coming to me, because I’d beat him to death!” Tiffany sounded like she was joking, but her eyes clouded over with unmistakable sadness, which looked like it could spill over.

“That’s exactly it—money. And it’s not a small amount either.” Arianne pulled out the card. “The password is your birthday.”

“Oh, I guess my past isn’t a complete loss. Ari, I’ve ordered all of your favorite dishes. You’re pregnant now, so you should eat more. Tomorrow’s Saturday. Let’s pay that

letter's author a visit as soon as possible and clear up your father's matters. You'll be able to relax then," Tiffany picked up the card and quickly changed the topic.

Arianne simply nodded and didn't say anything more. She could see right through Tiffany. As a friend, she could not expose her and had no way of consoling her. This was Tiffany's last shred of dignity.

A black Rolls-Royce was parked across the road from the restaurant. Brian glanced at the rear View mirror and carefully said, "It seems that Madam did not take the initiative to contact Ethan Connor. it was Ethan's initiative to go and see her... As for why he had given her money... I'm not sure. Madam and Tiffany are the only ones in the restaurant. There's no one else..."

The man in the back seat released a cold mien, closed his eyes and solemnly said, "Back to the office."

Arianne went back to the Tremont Estate after work. Mark hadn't arrived home yet, so she casually asked Mary about it. Mary, however, seemed overjoyed. "You've been very concerned about sir lately, Madam..."

Mary would never call her "Madam" in Mark's absence. She was obviously teasing her.

"Mary... I'm just asking," she said, feeling awkward.

Mary's smile grew even more profound. "Yes yes yes, you're 'just' asking. You're shy about it too... Sir has called. He won't be back for dinner. You wash up and get ready for dinner."

Arianne did not insist on explaining herself. After her shower, she sat obediently at the dining table and waited to start her meal. She watched as the dishes were served, one by one. Then, her gaze instinctively gravitated toward the seat across from hers. That was Mark's spot...

A Ruling Passion – Chapter 0133

Tomorrow, she would finally get to clear up things with 'Mr. Sloane' who sent the letter. Perhaps after that, she would finally be able to sit with Mark and enjoy a peaceful meal together...

After dinner, Arianne strolled around the garden before she went back and laid down in her room. Since the pregnancy made her easily fatigued, Arianne turned in early for the day. The quality of her sleep was better than ever, so she didn't even realize that Mark had come back and taken a shower. It was only when she stirred awake in the middle of the night that she realized that Mark had been sitting in front of the French window all this while.

"You're back...?" she asked in a daze.

Mark didn't respond but she didn't care. She only wanted to take care of her personal business as quickly as possible so that she could return to her warm blanket.

As she headed toward the door, his cold voice suddenly rang out. "Why did Ethan give you money?"

Arianne stopped in her tracks as her mind suddenly became clearer. "You were having me watched?"

She didn't expect Mark to be so 'free' as to have a firm grasp on her every move.

Mark didn't reply to her, so she took his silence as admission. "The money is for Tiffie. Something like compensation for their breakup. I was only passing it on," she explained.

Without waiting for him to speak, she went straight to the washroom downstairs. Up until now, she still kept things separated clearly between them. Under normal circumstances, she wouldn't use the washroom in the bedroom, especially when he was home. To be more precise, she felt uncomfortable using it, as she was living on his charity.

By the time she returned to the room, Mark was gone. She guessed that he must have gone to the study room.

Arianne made a cup of black tea and sent it to the study room. Neither of them spoke.

Early next morning, she tidied herself up and went out to meet Tiffany at the station. They bought the tickets for a three-hour train ride according to the address on the envelope.

On their way there, Arianne felt a wave of unspeakable excitement. The fog that had been clouding the sky for many years was about to be lifted. She had been waiting too long for this moment...

Since Tiffany was born with a silver spoon in her mouth, she had never taken a train in her life. She was quite excited for her very first experience. "Ari, after we settle everything about your dad, we should take another trip back there and enjoy ourselves. We need a weekend getaway to relax our minds!"

Enjoying herself wasn't on the list of Arianne's priorities right now. She kept her head lowered as she carefully studied the letter in her hands. "Tiffie, I've never believed that my father was the one who caused the incident back then. The accident killed so many people and he had to shoulder the blame... He's probably been unable to rest in peace under his grave... Wait until I get to the bottom of things, I'll have the whole world know that my dad is innocent.. I'll clear his name...!"

Tiffany grabbed her hands. "We'll definitely get to the bottom of things. We're getting closer and closer to the truth. You should enjoy the scenery along the way instead of getting lost in your own world. It's so beautiful! After this, you can throw the evidence in Mark's face! If you choose to continue living with him, then make him treat you better!"

Arianne cheered up at the mention of Mark. She had never even dreamed of clearing away her sins in the past. Now, she wanted to be able to stand up in front of him and look him in the eye...

A Ruling Passion – Chapter 0134

Three hours of train ride was neither a long nor short journey. The moment the train stopped, Arianne immediately stood up with her backpack, feeling eager to get off. Tiffany followed closely behind her. “Hey, slow down! You still have a little one in your tummy!”

It was almost noon when they reached a small, dilapidated town based on the address. This was where the letter was sent. The entire town was lifeless. Aside from a few elderly people tottering along the streets, they didn't really see any energetic young people around.

The economy of the town was bad so the young people were mostly working in the surrounding cities, leaving only the elderly behind.

After making several enquiries, they finally arrived at ‘Mr. Sloane's house’. A two story house that was so run down that it looked inhabitable greeted their sights. The front door with overgrown weed was left ajar. It seemed like no one had lived here for a long time.

Arianne couldn't shake off the bad feelings in her heart. The envelope looked aged and the letter wasn't freshly written. Perhaps it was only sent out after a very long time? It was at this moment that an old lady with graying hair came out from next door. Tiffany went up to her and asked, "Granny, is there a Mr. Sloane living in this run down house...?"

The old lady thought for a moment then said, "Not around anymore for a long time. No one has lived here for three years. I'm not sure if his last name was Sloane since he'd never spoken to anyone. I heard he had a terminal disease, so he's probably dead now? There used to be a couple living here with their child. The lady passed away first, and no one knows where the child went. The house was left vacant since then."

Arianne's heart sank. "Granny, are you really sure? Someone recently sent me a letter from this address..."

The old lady started getting impatient. "I don't know, I don't know. In any case, no one has been in or out of this house for a few years now."

This was undoubtedly bad news for Arianne. Apart from the letter in her hands, she had no other clues. There was no way she could uncover the truth like this.

She wasn't willing to accept that. The hope that was finally reignited in her couldn't be snuffed out just like that.

After a moment of hesitation, she made her decision. “Tiffie, let’s go in and have a look. Maybe we’ll find some clues.”

Tiffany felt a little reluctant since she had never done anything like this before. “Ari... isn’t this trespassing? Although the door’s not locked, we can’t just barge in like this.”

Arianne didn’t bother to think so much at this point. Without a word, she pushed open the door and marched in. The musty smell in the house immediately assailed her nose. She covered her mouth as she had a coughing fit.

The furniture in the house was pretty old-fashioned. Years of neglect had reduced it into a state of disrepair. There were cobwebs everywhere, and strangely enough, there was a bowl of half eaten noodles left on the dining table. However, it had already turned into a moldy lump by now. Most of the stuff in here was left untouched. The wardrobe upstairs in the bedroom was left wide open, and most of the clothes were still in there, covered in a thick layer of dust. It would seem like the owner of the house left in a hurry.

The two searched every nook and cranny. They found nothing of value except for a water damaged photo before they left the place.

Tiffany dragged Arianne away to have a meal at a simple restaurant in the small town, then bought the return tickets. Naturally, neither of them were in the mood for sightseeing after the unexpected turn of events.

Arianne carefully studied the photo they found. She could make out a man, a lady, and a child in the photo. She could tell it was a boy from the way he dressed. However, the photo was partly damaged, so she couldn't get a clear look of their faces and upper bodies.

Even if they could restore the photo, finding a person in this big world was like looking for a needle in a haystack, especially when the person was very likely to be dead.

A Ruling Passion – Chapter 0135

She refused to believe that Mr. Sloane was dead. How could a dead person send a letter?

“Stop thinking about it for now, Ari. Let's take this matter slowly. I'll help you analyze it too. I passed this letter to you shortly after I received it. Given the distance from here to the capital, it wouldn't take a long time for the letter to be received. The sender must be alive, or at least, when he sent the letter. He might have used an invalid address to send the letter because he didn't want you to find out where he lives now. Hmm, I'm not quite sure what's going on here, but Mr. Sloane is definitely not dead. Don't be discouraged. Since he sent the first letter, he will send another one for sure. We'll just have to wait! He may not want us to track him down, but he can't just leave us hanging like that, right?” Tiffany tried her best to comfort Arianne.

“Don't worry, I'm fine, Tiffie. I've waited for so many years, I can continue waiting... I'm fine really...” Arianne put the photo away and forced a small smile. She didn't want to make Tiffany anxious like her.

Her initial plan was to figure out what happened in the incident back then during this trip. If her father was a victim instead of the root cause of the plane crash, then she would have a good talk with Mark about it. She would be able to cast aside the sin that had burdened her for more than a decade and reverse the case for her father. Then after that, she would confess about her pregnancy to Mark. But of course... she didn't dare to think about that in detail yet.

Now that she was in a deadlock, she would have to follow her initial plan until she couldn't keep her pregnancy a secret from Mark any longer. Then she would give birth to the child and leave Tremont Estate, carrying her sins with her... This wasn't an ending that she wanted!

The sky was already dark by the time Arianne returned to Tremont Estate. There were lights in the house, but they weren't brightly lit. Mark wasn't home yet...

Arianne was too tired to move after running around during the day. She trudged through the main door, took a shower then laid down in the bedroom. She didn't even have any appetite to eat.

Out of fear that Arianne's gastric would act up again, Mary brought her meal to the bed. "Ari, get a small bite. Don't starve yourself. Sir said he won't be coming back tonight. You should rest after you're done eating."

Arianne got up and took a few spoonfuls of food before her stomach churned. She rushed into the washroom and threw up the small amount of food that she'd just eaten. When she rinsed her mouth in front of the mirror, she realized that her complexion was strangely pale.

Mary frowned in concern. “Why have you constantly been vomiting lately? I hope it’s nothing serious. Even if sir doesn’t care, you should still take care of yourself.”

Arianne dragged herself back to the bed weakly. “I’m fine... Mary. Take the food away, I don’t feel like eating today...”

Mary sighed, then went downstairs with the food tray. After thinking for a while, she secretly called Mark on the phone. “Sir, madam threw up again just now. She didn’t even eat anything and looked really pale. I can’t convince her... You should give her some care. She is in poor health...”

Mark hung up without saying anything.

Wiping her tears away, Mary took a glance upstairs then helplessly returned to her room.

In the CEO’s office at Tremont Tower.

Mark stared at his phone for a good while. He picked up his coat then took the elevator downstairs.

Brian's eyes were sharp enough to spot Mark coming out from the office's entrance from the Rolls Royce. He hurriedly got out of the car and opened the rear door. "Sir," he greeted.

"Back to Tremont Estate." Mark sounded a little irritated.

A Ruling Passion – Chapter 0136

"Understood." Brian noticed Mark's bad mood and cautiously drove back to Tremont Estate.

When they passed by a drugstore, Mark suddenly spoke up. "Stop the car."

Brian quickly stepped on the brakes. Mark got out of the car and went into the drugstore. "Bring me some medicines for stomach problems," he told the staff.

"Is it a gastric or something else? What are the symptoms? Is it for an adult or child?" the staff asked.

Mark frowned slightly. He thought for a moment then replied, "Irregular appetite... Chronic nausea and pale complexion. For an adult."

Once he was done purchasing the medicine, he went back to the car with a sullen face. Brian didn't dare to ask any questions. He just stepped on the gas and brought him back to Tremont Estate.

Mark went straight to the bedroom with the medicine. Without looking at the person lying on the bed, he tossed the medicine on the bedside table. "Take the medicine."

Arianne sat up from the bed, not understanding what trouble Mark was trying to make. "What medicine?"

There was no reply. He loosened his tie with his skeletal hand while looking rather irritated.

Arianne took out the medicine and had a look at it. "I'm fine. No need for medicine."

She wasn't going to take the medicine since it wasn't a gastric problem to begin with. Besides, most of these medicines weren't suitable to be consumed by pregnant women.

It didn't take a genius to figure out that it was Mary who called Mark. Otherwise, he wouldn't suddenly come back and bring her medicine.

Mark looked at her coldly. "I didn't leave in y office and run back here to watch you throw a tantrum. If you're sick, then take your medicine!"

Arianne was a bit speechless. How was she throwing a tantrum? She was only feeling unwell and tired. "I'm not throwing a tantrum... I'm really fine. I don't need any medicine. If you're busy, then go back to work..."

She didn't know what was going on either. Somehow the words that came out of her mouth sounded like she was really throwing a tantrum and even blaming him for neglecting her due to work...

She shut her mouth, and silence set in between them. Mary brought a glass of water and knocked on the door that was left ajar. "Madam, listen to sir and take the medicine. He still cares about you."

Arianne could feel the vein on her temples throbbing a few times. "I... I'm really alright... Just leave me alone..."

Mary came up to her and shoved the glass into her hand. She even helped her figure out the dosage of medicine. "Madam, you're not a child anymore. You need to take responsibility for your own body. Here, take the medicine."

Arianne tensed under Mark and Mary's gaze. It seemed like there was no escape from the situation... but she mustn't take the medicine. "It's not a gastric problem. I don't need the medicine. Mary, Mark still has work in the office. Please see him off. I'll be fine after taking a rest."

This put Mary in a difficult situation. "Madam... I..."

Mark ran out of patience. He turned around and went downstairs with a cold face. "Forget about it if she doesn't want to take it. Don't call me again for something like this. I'm not that free!"

Mary threw Arianne a blaming look, then hurried downstairs. "Sir, please don't be angry. Madam must be upset because you never come back to spend time with her. It's just a small tantrum. She's your wife after all... You watched her grow up, and you still don't understand her?"

A Ruling Passion – Chapter 0137

Mark paused in his footsteps but didn't stop. "Can't she say what's on her mind by herself? Does she need someone else to say it for her?"

Mary shut her mouth resentfully. Seeing that Mark was going out again, Brian was about to quickly get the car out of the garage when Mark's deep voice stopped him. "I'll be driving myself."

Brian hummed in response. Sweat had broken out in his palms. The words 'don't mess with me' were written all over Mark's face right now. Whoever dared to go up to him now was courting death itself!

"Brian, take Arianne to the hospital tomorrow morning. Have a thorough physical examination performed on her and bring me the report." After giving this order, Mark's car quickly disappeared into the night.

Hearing the sound of the car leaving Tremont Estate, Arianne got out of bed and stood in front of the window. She felt a little upset. After all, Mark had purposely bought her medicine, and she didn't expect things to turn so sour...

She pulled out her phone and sent him a text. 'I'm sorry. I'm just too exhausted from going out today. I'll be fine, thank you.'

Sending out the text was like throwing a stone into the ocean. The only difference this time was that Arianne had a strange expectation for Mark to reply... However, nothing had changed. She still didn't get any response from him in the end.

Mark didn't return all night after he left. When Arianne got up the next morning, Brian was already waiting downstairs. "Madam, sir has instructed me to take you to the hospital for a physical examination today. The report... is to be submitted to him."

Arianne's heart skipped a beat. "I... I'm busy today. I can't go. I can go by myself once I find time."

Brian had a troubled expression on his face. “Madam... please don’t put me in a tough spot. I can’t ignore sir’s order...”

Despite Mark’s kind and gentle public image, Arianne knew that the people close to him were well aware of his temper. She didn’t want to make things hard for Brian either.

If she was going to accept the physical examination, then her pregnancy would come to light. She hadn’t even figured out on how to break the news to Mark. “Well... since I’m going out, I’ll just go to the hospital myself after I’m done. It’ll be inconvenient for me to have you follow me around. I’ll just give you the report after that. Is that alright?”

Brian hesitated for a while, so Arianne quickly added, “If you don’t agree to that, you won’t be able to report your task. In any case, you will still get the report in the end and that’s all that matters.”

Brian nodded. “Alright then. Just contact me when you have the medical report so I can pick it up from you.”

Arianne nodded, then went out after breakfast.

She actually wasn’t planning on going out today if Mark hadn’t asked Brian to bring her for a physical examination. She tried to contact Tiffany to think of a way, but her call didn’t get picked up.

In desperation, she had no choice but to bite the bullet and go to the hospital.

In the hospital, she asked for the details of the physical examination from the doctor and skipped the parts that weren't suitable for pregnant women. After receiving the medical report, she double checked it before handing it over to Brian. "The doctor said I'm just slightly anemic and have no other problems," she summarized for him.

Brian was a little skeptical because he knew that Arianne's 'gastric problems' had escalated to chronic nausea. How could she have no other problems aside from being a little anemic? He found someone to review the medical report but couldn't pick out any flaws with it, so it was submitted to Mark.

Mark looked at the pile of reports. Without showing the slightest impatience, he went over every sheet carefully.

"I had someone look at it too and confirmed that her anemia was a little serious. Other than a few missing parts from the physical examination, there shouldn't be any problems with it."

A Ruling Passion – Chapter 0138

Mark nodded then frowned. She had only just healed a while ago, how could she have suffered from such severe anemia all of a sudden?

He made a call back to Tremont Estate. Butler Henry answered the call. “Tell the kitchens to buy more blood nourishing vegetables.”

Henry acknowledged the order and ended the call. Mark’s gaze returned to his work documents.

“I’ll be on my way then,” said Brian in a low voice.

Mark nodded. A knock was suddenly heard on his office door. Brian opened it. When he saw Aery, he frowned but didn’t say a word. Instead, he left immediately.

Aery walked into the office. Her heels made a lofty noise as she moved. Mark frowned. “What are you doing here?”

Aery pouted pitifully. “Mark, darling. I know that you’ve been busy, so I haven’t had the nerve to disturb you. But I miss you I was passing by your office and thought I’d come and see you. I won’t disturb you. Continue your work I’ll leave in a bit...” .

Mark shot her an indifferent look. "If you have something to say, say it."

Seeing that he had seen through her, Aery stopped trying to hide her intentions. "Mark, darling... Have you given any thought to the collaboration that my mother and I discussed with you during our last visit to your house?"

"I've run a check. The current state of your company is not within my area for consideration," Mark calmly replied.

Aery's face drained of color. She had initially thought that Mark's permission for her and Helen to discuss this with him at his home meant that he would likely agree to it. She never thought that it'd turn out this way. "Mark... We Kinseys may not be as great as you Tremonts, but we are widely known in the industry. You can give a try, for my sake..."

Mark still rejected her. "I've made myself very clear. Furthermore, I hope that you'll be able to separate private and public interest. If the Kinseys are suitable partners, I'll consider them, regardless of anyone involved. I'm very busy. Please leave."

Aery was not satisfied. However, she was too afraid to say anything more.

Suddenly, her eyes gravitated towards a physical examination report on the corner of his desk. She noticed Arianne's name on it and gritted her teeth. However, she had to maintain an obedient facade on the surface. "Then... I'll be on my way now. Make sure to get some rest. Don't tire yourself out."

Mark didn't answer. Aery turned around and left with a heart filled with hatred. When she arrived downstairs, she pulled out her phone and called Helen. "It's not that I haven't tried, but the partnership isn't happening. If you're looking for anyone to blame, try Arianne, your wonderful daughter!"

On the other end of the call, Helen massaged the space between her brows, feeling a headache. "Aery, don't drag your sister into every single thing. I already expected the outcome of our partnership. The Kinseys' sources for funds are close to an end. Under these circumstances, Mark only needs to do some research to refuse a collaboration with us. That's why I asked you to plead for sympathy. You've been with Mark for quite a while, yet you've never been able to influence him. You should take some time out and reassess yourself!"

Aery's chest rose and fell rapidly from her immense rage. "Hehe... At the end of the day, I'm always in the wrong. Isn't that right? If Arianne never existed, I'd be the only one in Mark's eyes. Why'd you give birth to her? Mark doesn't even want to see me. I've lost his favor. I can't help the Kinsey family. If you're so protective of Arianne, tell her to convince Mark into cooperating with us. Don't put your hopes on me anymore!"

Helen immediately ended the call. She was sorely disappointed in Aery.

A Ruling Passion – Chapter 0139

Despite everything, Helen couldn't bear seeing the Kinsey family fall. There was no other hope for her, except Ari now...

Arianne walked out of the shopping mall, carrying a variety of bags, waiting for her car in the afternoon. She couldn't help shivering from the continuous gusts of cold air.

She had primarily bought underwear because she suddenly realized that her old underwear had gotten a little too tight for her, and that she couldn't put them on. She wouldn't be able to put on her old underwear in the future anyway, so she took advantage of her free day and bought a few.

Suddenly, a red car stopped in front of her. The window winded down to reveal Helen's smiling face. Her mood immediately plummeted into the lowest recesses of her heart. She pulled a sullen face and turned around to leave without any hesitation.

"Ari! I have something to discuss with you. Can I have a few minutes of your time?" Helen ran after her, pleading with her.

"Mrs. Kinsey, if you have anything to say, speak to your husband or your daughter at home. There is no reason for you to waste my time," Arianne said in a sombre tone.

"Ari... Please don't be like this. I really do have something to talk to you about. Just give me a few minutes, okay?" Helen said, her eyes brimming with tears.

Arianne feigned ignorance. Every time she thought of how the woman before her had abandoned her husband and daughter, she would be sorely tempted to spew curses at her. Especially when she saw Helen driving an expensive sports car, making her nauseous. Were material possessions really that important? She quickened her pace.

Helen suddenly slowed down. “Ari, I have cancer!”

Arianne’s footsteps came to an abrupt halt. She tightened her grip around her shopping bags until her fingers turned white, “What does your cancer have anything to do with me? Are you trying to absolve your regrets in your final moments? That’s your business, it has nothing to do with me. Besides, I despise your insignificant motherly love!”

Helen took a deep breath. “Ari, just give me a few minutes. I can’t park my car here. Can we talk in the car? Just for the sake of the fact that I’ve given birth to you...”

Arianne gritted her teeth, hesitated for a while then turned around to get into the car. Seeing this, Helen quickly opened the car door for her. “Thank you...”

In the car, Helen drove slowly as she chatted with her. “I won’t bring up the past to you, since you don’t want to listen to that anyway. At this point, I don’t want to absolve myself from my sins... I still remember how you looked when you slept in my arms... Your complexion was just like mine—fair. You had such rosy cheeks when you slept too, it was so lovable...”

Arianne frowned. “If you have something to say, just say it. I don’t have time for your moving speeches. I’m fairly certain that you’re here to see me because of the Kinseys. Speak, what do you want from me?”

She wasn't a fool. Helen hardly ever contacted her, and every time she did, it was for the Kinseys. There wasn't a single time she did it purely for the sake of their mother-daughter relationship.

A bitter smile formed on the corners of Helen's lips. "You're as clever as your father. Yes, I do need something from you, but that's not my only reason for meeting you. I want to see you too... I've mentioned that things are not going well for the Kinseys. I've spoken to Mark about working together, but he's rejected us. I had no choice, so I came to see you. This collaboration is very important to the Kinseys. You may not know this, but every business in the capital is vying for the Tremonts' favor. As long as a connection to the Tremonts is established, that business can come back from the brink of death. Not only do the Tremonts have solid funds, but any company that works with them gains fame and fortune."

A Ruling Passion – Chapter 0140

"I'm curious," Arianne said mockingly, "You're pinning your hopes on me instead of Aery?" She certainly remembered how her wonderful mother had allowed Aery to remain as Mark's lover, despite knowing that he was her husband. She even tried to persuade her to leave him. How disgusting!

Helen felt embarrassed. "Ari, I know that you hate me. I had no idea that you and Mark were married when Aery was with Mark. I may have brought up an inadvisable request to you, but I've stopped Aery from any further intimate communications with Mark. They haven't been contacting each other too often lately. You've probably realized this, right? Help me, just this once and I guarantee that Aery will never mess up your lives again. I can also guarantee... that won't appear in front of you again!"

Arianne laughed in spite of her rage. “Are you negotiating with me? As long as I help you, you’ll help me get rid of my husband’s lover and you’ll never show your face in front of me again? Have you ever gone to such lengths for my father and I? Was that Kinsey man that important to you? So important that you’d abandon your husband and daughter, and live such a shameless life now? Stop the car!”

Helen stopped the car at the side of the road. Arianne refused to spend another moment longer with her. Before she left, Helen called out, “I don’t care what you think I’m a dying woman anyway. Perhaps you’d feel better when I’m dead.”

Arianne bit her lips and left, not bothering to look back. All she felt was anger now, but when she thought of how the woman who’d troubled her continuously from her childhood was dying... She couldn’t help feeling a little sad...

The Kinseys’ home.

Helen noticed a pair of expensive leather shoes at the front porch and knew that her husband, Jean Kinsey, was home. She didn’t feel too happy about it, but rather, felt mildly exhausted instead.

She ignored the happy chatter between father and daughter, and opted to go upstairs to her bedroom straightaway.

When she emerged from the bathroom, she found Jean rummaging through her handbag on the bed. She frowned, “What are you looking for?”

Jean looked sullen. "What is this?"

Helen saw the item in his hand and rushed forward to tear it up. "A fake diagnosis report. There's no use for it now."

Jean's expression softened. "You scared me to death. I thought you really had cancer! What do you have this for? By the way, I've heard from Aery that the collaboration with Tremont Enterprise has fallen through. What were you thinking? Didn't I tell you to ask Arianne? What happened? I asked for your help in serious business, not discuss your mother-daughter relationship with Zachary Wynn's daughter!"

Helen stared silently at the man in front of her. Jean Kinsey may be a middle-aged man, but there were still traces of his handsomeness from his youth. Her deep feelings for him back then were also one of her reasons for pursuing the Kinseys without any second thoughts.

After all, the two Kinsey elderly folks viewed her with disdain a few years ago, as she had previously had a child and this was her second marriage. After they passed on, she pretty much blossomed. She felt that she had lived a pretty good life, but now, things were taking a turn for the worse for the Kinsey family and this man was forcing her to set up meetings with Arianne. Furthermore, he was prodding her with insinuations.

After a long pause, she finally said, "Jean, if you don't want me to have anything to do with Zachary or rebuild my relationship with Arianne, don't tell me to see her!"

Jean instantly calmed down. However, he was clearly still enraged. "I just want results."

Helen took a deep breath and said, "There are no results yet. But there will be, soon... Just wait."

She had used cancer as a lie to fool Arianne for the Kinsey family. She had even taken credit for Mark's distant attitude towards Aery, to boot, so that Arianne would think that she was responsible for preventing Aery from being with Mark.

As a mother, she was disgusted with herself. She was also extremely disappointed with Jean, a man who had nothing else but good looks and a glib tongue. At the end of the day, the Kinsey family's survival rested on her shoulders and hers alone. The weather grew chilly at nightfall.