

Mistaking the CEO for a Gigolo Chapter 1057

Kyle gave him another reassuring pat on the shoulder. "I'm sure you'll become a great fighter, Juan. The Hidden Masters won't even be a match for you by the time you get back!"

"It'll probably be your turn next, Kyle. Let's have a spar when we meet again!" Juan said with a smile.

"Sure!"

John helped load his suitcase into the trunk. "Come on, Juan, it's time to go."

"Alright."

Juan's phone started ringing moments after the two had gotten into the car.

He saw that it was an unknown number and hesitated a bit before answering, "Hello? Who is this?"

"Have a safe trip, Juan!" A familiar voice was heard sobbing on the other line.

Juan froze. Mommy?

He stared at his phone in disbelief and saw that the call was still ongoing. Afraid that he was dreaming, he pinched John hard on the arm.

John yelped in pain. "Ow! That hurt, Juan! Why'd you do that?"

"Am I dreaming?"

John frowned. "No, Juan. We're on our way to the airport right now."

Nicole's voice came on the phone again. "It's Mommy, Juan! You're not dreaming! This is Mommy's new phone number! You can save it to your contact list on WhatsApp!"

Oh, my god! It really is Mommy!

Juan could barely contain his excitement. "Where are you, Mommy? Should I go see you?"

"Don't ask any questions, Juan. Just do as I say, and you'll soon understand what's going on." Nicole hung up the phone immediately after saying that.

Juan hurriedly saved her contact on WhatsApp, and received a picture shortly after.

He took a good long look at the picture before coming to a shocking realization.

This is... Imperial Garden? Mommy is in Imperial Garden? Wait... That skinny woman we saw is our Mommy? Now I see why Kyle wouldn't let us call her a bad woman! But... Why won't she see us if she's already returned?

John noticed the shocked expression on his face and glanced at the picture. "Don't worry, Mr. Seet will take good care of Mrs. Seet!"

"John, do you know what happened to my Mommy?"

"She has completed the treatment for her hallucinations, but her body will take some time to recover. Relax, I'm sure she'll be all better by the time you get back!"

Juan lowered his gaze as he tried to control his overwhelming whirlpool of emotions.

Now I see what Daddy meant earlier... If Mommy were to die as a result of our little prank, I'd definitely regret it for the rest of my life!

"Please tell my Daddy that I understand his reasons for doing this, and that I won't let him down! I'm going to make my parents proud!"

John flashed him a smile of approval. "Very well, I'll be sure to pass on the message."

Meanwhile, back at Imperial Garden, Nina and Maya were sighing heavily as they stared at Nicole's room door on the second floor.

"Say, should we even continue our battle with that homewrecker? We're no match for her without Juan!" Maya whispered.

"I'm not one to back down, especially from a battle that has already begun! You're not going to chicken out now and take Daddy's side, are you? After everything Mommy had done to raise us, we must give it our all!"

Maya felt her eyes tear up as she recalled how Nicole had worked tirelessly day and night to raise them after they moved houses.

"Mommy..." She burst out crying eventually.

Nina tried to console her, but she only seemed to cry even louder than before. That was when Nina got an idea and decided to cry along with her in hopes of softening up Evan's heart with their tears.

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The crying was so loud that both Evan and Nicole came out of their respective rooms at the same time.

"What's gotten into them?" Nicole asked curiously.

"I'll go check it out." Evan hurried into the living room.

The maids were trying to console them, but they ignored them and wailed on until Evan walked up to them.

"What's wrong?"

Maya looked up at him with tear-filled eyes and said, "We miss Mommy, Daddy..."

It was the first time Evan had seen children of their age crying like babies for their mommy.

He exchanged glances with Nicole who was upstairs and decided not to go against her decision.

"Your Mommy has already given Daddy a call, okay? She said she'll be back really soon!"

Maya stopped crying immediately after hearing that. "Did Mommy really call you, Daddy? Why didn't she call us, then?" She asked with her eyes wide open in surprise.

"That's because she wanted to give you guys a surprise by showing up out of the blue." Evan said after a brief pause.

Maya blinked a couple of times at him as she tried to determine if he was telling the truth.

Nina wiped her tears and spoke up as well, "If Mommy's coming back, then it wouldn't be appropriate to have that skinny woman around! Mommy is the one who truly belongs in this house! You need to kick that woman out, Daddy!"

Kick her out? But that's your Mommy! I'm not about to kick her out after all the trouble I've gone through to get her back here!

Nicole took a deep breath as she watched from upstairs. Juan's already been sent off. I don't know what Nina and Maya are planning to do next, but I have to do something before Evan sends them off too!

"If you won't kick that woman out, how will you explain it to Mommy when she gets back?" Nina questioned Evan boldly.

Evan thought about it for a moment before replying, "Don't you worry about that, okay? You've got a press conference coming up for that new product, remember? You should just focus on your preparations..."

He tried to change the subject, but Nina cut him off suddenly, "Mommy had a really difficult time raising us, Daddy! You mustn't hurt her like this!"

"Nina is right, Daddy. You should get rid of that woman or Mommy would feel really sad when she comes back! Are you really going to hurt Mommy like that?"

Evan froze. Looks like they're not going to drop this unless I give them a satisfactory explanation... So I've got a troublemaker upstairs and two downstairs... I'd better come up with a solution or I won't be getting a single moment of peace and quiet!

"Go get rid of that woman now, Daddy!" Nina's tears began falling once again.

"We can help you say it if you can't bring yourself to, Daddy!" Maya sobbed along with her.

Right when Evan was at a loss for words, they heard the sound of footsteps coming from upstairs.

Nina and Maya looked up and were both shocked to see the woman standing before them.

"Nina, is it just me or does she look very much like Mommy?" Maya asked.

Nina just stood there with her jaw hanging as Nicole slowly made her way towards them.

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Nina frowned. Is she really Mommy? Why is she so skinny? Wait... Is she that skinny woman disguising herself as Mommy? Hmm... This doesn't look like a mask though...

Maya too, stared wide-eyed at Nicole. Is she really Mommy? Why does she look so pale? Just what did she go through?

Nicole reached out her skinny hands and patted them on the head. "Nina, Maya, it's Mommy!"

The two broke into tears and hugged her after hearing that familiar voice of hers. "Mommy..."

“We’ve missed you, Mommy...”

“I’ve missed you all too!” Nicole shot Evan a glance and continued, “I’m that woman you were all calling a homewrecker, so stop pressuring your Daddy, okay?”

Nina and Maya wiped their tears off. “We’re sorry, Mommy! We shouldn’t have called you a homewrecker! Daddy, we’re sorry for misunderstanding you!”

“It’s alright, Daddy doesn’t blame you.”

The two then held Nicole’s hands and asked her what she had been through as well as her current condition, all of which she answered honestly.

“Don’t worry, I’m fine. Nina, I won’t bite you anymore now that my hallucinations have been treated.”

“Why are you so skinny, Mommy?”

“It’s just a side effect of my treatment, that’s all. I’ll be okay after nursing myself back to health. I was planning to see you guys after I’m fully recovered so you’d all get to see a beautiful and healthy Mommy.” Nicole tried to brush it off casually.

“You always look beautiful to us, Mommy!”

“Yeah! You’re the prettiest person in the world, Mommy!”

Nicole let out a smile of relief and hugged her daughters tightly until Evan spoke up, “Nicole, it’s time for you to get some rest. Maya, go make your Mommy something nutritious, okay?”

The two kids then got to work in the kitchen while Evan remained in the room with Nicole.

Recalling his behavior and actions earlier, Nicole asked, “Evan... You didn’t lose your memories, did you?”

Evan tensed up. Oh, crap! I got so worked up by their crying earlier that I forgot about the whole memory loss and Wicca poison act!

He quickly got to his feet and tried to explain himself, “Ah, about that... I just regained my memories all of a sudden! I didn’t even realize it until you pointed it out, Nicole!”

Just regained your memories? Like hell I’d believe that!

Nicole kept quiet and simply stared at him, waiting to see what other excuses he would come up with.

Unable to figure out what she was playing at, Evan pretended to wince in pain and discomfort. “I think the poison is acting up again... I’d better go take my medicine...”

He then quickly went into his bedroom upstairs, but Nicole followed him inside before he could close the door and stood there eyeing him from head to toe.

I know for sure he’s faking his memory loss, but I’ve yet to confirm if he was also lying about the poisoning... His face is somewhat pale, but he doesn’t seem to be acting like someone who’s been poisoned.

Nicole couldn't really conclude anything due to the lack of evidence, so she decided to have a look at the medicine he was taking. "Show me this medicine of yours, Mr. Seet!"

Evan paused for a moment before handing her a bottle of pills from the shelf. She's well-versed in acupuncture, but she doesn't really know much about medicine. I wonder if she'll fall for this...

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Nicole took the bottle over and examined it curiously.

The pills inside were white in color, and there were no labels on the bottle to indicate what they were for. "This is the medication to treat your Wicca poisoning?" She asked.

"That's right." Evan nodded.

She poured two of the tablets onto her hand and sniffed them. What the... There's no smell at all! What on earth is this stuff?

She handed the bottle back to Evan and said, "Go on and take your medicine, then. I'll check your pulse afterwards."

I may not be able to confirm what these pills are, but I should at least be able to detect something from his pulse!

Evan shot her a glance as he calmly retrieved two tablets from the bottle and swallowed them.

Right as he was trying to figure out a way to brush her off, Maya's voice came from downstairs. "Your meal is ready, Mommy! Come eat it while its hot!"

Phew! Perfect timing, Maya!

"Go on, Nicole. You can check my pulse later."

"Oh, don't worry. It won't take long."

The more reluctant he was to have his pulse examined, the more determined she was in finding out if he was actually poisoned.

"I made you some soup too, Mommy! Come eat while it's hot!" Nina called out to her as well.

"Come on, let's not keep the kids waiting! You can check my pulse all you want after you're done eating."

So he's agreeing to it, then? Fine, I guess it can wait... "Alright."

Evan waited till Nicole was downstairs before checking his pulse and went into deep thought.

Hmm... It's too strong and regular for a person who's been poisoned. I wonder if she'll leave me if she finds out I was lying... That aside, the fact that she chose to endure the suffering from her illness all by herself bothers me... Does she think I would leave her or something?

"Nicole, it doesn't matter if you're rich, poor, healthy or sick... I swore to stay by your side, so you should learn to depend on me in your time of need!"

Evan made up his mind and had his maid secretly bring Nina into his study room.

“Nina, don’t you think you should apologize for calling your Mommy a homewrecker and misunderstanding me?”

“But I already apologized, Daddy!”

Evan cleared his throat. “That wasn’t sincere enough. Could you do Daddy a favor to make up for it?”

“What is it?”

Evan told her his plan and continued, “I know things have been hard for your Mommy, raising the three of you all by herself. I regret not being there with her when she lost her memories as well as her difficult times. Now that we’re back together, I want to have her depend on me so she doesn’t have to suffer alone anymore.”

Nina gave it some thought and agreed with what he said.

Daddy’s right... Mommy should’ve let him keep her company while battling her illness. Running off on her own without saying goodbye and creating that scandal was taking it a little too far!

“Okay, Daddy. I’ll do whatever you need me to.”

“Very well, listen carefully now...”

Evan bent down and whispered the instructions into Nina’s ear.

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Meanwhile in the dining room, Nicole had a smile on her face as she enjoyed the food prepared by her daughters.

“Your cooking has improved a lot, Maya!”

“I’m just glad you like it, Mommy! I’ll adjust the recipes according to your physical condition, so just tell me what you like to eat!”

Nicole nodded happily, but she didn’t really have the appetite to eat much. “Mommy can’t finish it all, Maya. I’ll go check on your Daddy’s illness, okay?”

Maya was surprised. Illness? What illness does Daddy have?

“What happened to Daddy?”

Huh? Does Maya not know about Evan’s poisoning? Is he hiding it from her, or was the whole poisoning thing a lie to begin with?

“Well... I’ll find out after I check his pulse, Maya.”

She then ran upstairs with Maya, only to find Evan lying in bed while Nina kept crying beside him.

“What’s wrong, Nina?”

“Daddy coughed up blood, Mommy!”

“He what?”

Both Nicole and Maya panicked when they saw his pale face and the bloodstains on the corner of his mouth.

She quickly checked his pulse and frowned at how strange it was.

I’ve never seen anyone’s pulse alternate between being strong and weak like this... What kind of symptom is this?

Unable to determine his condition, Nicole decided to call her mentor Wesley for help.

After hearing about the symptoms, Wesley said, “That’s an indicator of severe poisoning. He is in critical condition and must be rushed to a hospital right now!”

“Nina, have the servants take your Daddy to the hospital!”

“I’m on it!”

With that, Nina ran downstairs while Maya looked at Evan with teary eyes. How did Daddy collapse all of a sudden? He was just fine a while ago!

“What happened, Daddy? Can you hear me? Daddy, please say something...”

She kept sobbing as she called out to him, but Evan kept quiet as he had to make it look convincing. Nina knows I took some medicine to make my pulse irregular, so she can explain it to Maya later...

Moments later, the servants arrived to take him to the hospital.

Nicole put on a face mask and a large coat with two layers of shirts underneath before getting into the car with her daughters. This should hide how skinny I am...

Nina felt her heart ache when she saw Nicole like this. “Mommy...” She called out while holding her by the hand.

“Don’t worry, Mommy’s fine. You be sure to take good care of your Daddy when we get to the hospital, okay?”

Nina nodded. “I will, Mommy.”

Maya’s eyes were filled with concern as she held Evan’s arm tightly and prayed. Please be alright, Daddy... Please be alright...

Evan was rushed to the emergency room upon arrival at the hospital while Nicole waited outside with Nina and Maya.

Maya looks really worried... Should I tell her the truth now? Nina thought to herself.

She then turned to look at Nicole who was pacing about absent-mindedly and decided to drop the idea. On second thought, that can wait... Daddy’s efforts would’ve been for nothing if Mommy hears us!

The doctor came out after a long wait and walked up to Nicole. “Mrs. Seet, your husband is in critical condition. We’ll need to get him hospitalized so we can monitor his vitals at all times.”

“Alright, sure. You’ve got to save him, doctor!” Nicole said.

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The tears in her eyes and the concern in her voice just goes to show how much she cares about her husband, so why would he choose to fake his illness? Why would he lie to his wife like this? I just don’t get it...

Of course, the doctor didn’t dare ask any questions and simply did as instructed by Evan.

“Rest assured that we will do our best, Mrs. Seet.”

“Thank you, doctor.”

Evan was soon transferred to a regular ward with Nicole, Nina and Maya keeping him company beside his bed.

Nina saw how pale Nicole was and feared that she would collapse. “Maya and I will stay here with Daddy, so you should go on home and get some rest. We’ll call you if anything happens, Mommy.”

Maya too, was worried about her wellbeing and said, “She’s right, Mommy. Don’t worry, we’ll take good care of Daddy!”

Wesley said it’d take at least three days for him to get here. I hope nothing happens to Evan until then...

Nicole thought to herself as she looked at Evan. “No, the anxiety will drive me crazy if I wait at home. I think I’ll stay here with your Daddy too.”

Evan’s finger twitched slightly when he heard that. Oh, Nicole... If you wouldn’t leave my side even for a second now, why did you avoid me when you needed me most? Sigh... Perhaps this is the only way for you to truly understand how I felt back then...

Seeing as Nicole refused to leave, Nina and Maya stopped trying to persuade her any further.

Maya later returned to Imperial Garden and prepared a meal which she delivered to Nicole at the hospital. “Thanks, but I’m not hungry,” Nicole said.

“You should eat something, Mommy. How will you look after Daddy if you collapse as well?”

“That’s right, Mommy! I can feed you if you’d like!”

Nicole smiled at them as she took the lunchbox over and began munching away. Yeah... I’ve got to eat well and keep myself healthy so I can look after Evan...

Evan tugged at Nina’s hand and winked at her when Nicole got up for a glass of water.

Nina understood what he meant and began brainstorming for a way to get Nicole to leave the ward.

Wait... Did I just see Daddy tug at Nina’s hand before closing his eyes again? What’s going on here?

Feeling confused, Maya leaned in closer to Evan and whispered in his ear, “Daddy? Can you hear me?”

Of course, she got no response from him at all.

Nicole turned around and looked at Maya. "What's wrong?"

"I...I think I saw Daddy tug at Nina's hand... He..."

Nina cut her off anxiously, "You must be seeing things, Maya. How could Daddy do that if he's still unconscious?"

But... I...I saw it... Maya stared at her blankly.

Nicole figured Maya must have been too worried about Evan that she started imagining things. "Maya, why don't you go out for a walk with Mommy? Let's go get some fresh air, okay?"

A walk could do her good and clear her head.

Nina chuckled inwardly when she heard that. Just as I was struggling to come up with an idea, this opportunity falls right into my lap!

"Go on, Maya! I'll look after Daddy, so don't you worry!"

Maya shifted her gaze back towards Nicole and nodded slowly. "Okay, Mommy."

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"Come on, let's go."

Nina waited till the two of them left the ward before calling out to Evan, "The coast is clear, Daddy!"

Evan opened his eyes slowly and glanced around the room.

Ten minutes later, Nina went running after them with Nicole's coat in hand. "Nina? What are you doing here? Where's your Daddy?" Nicole asked when she saw her.

"Daddy is still in his ward, Mommy. I noticed you forgot your coat, so I thought I'd bring it out for you in case you got cold!" She replied while draping the coat over Nicole's shoulders.

Nicole gave her an uneasy look and said, "Let's go back inside. I'm worried about leaving him alone in the ward."

"Okay!"

"Sure!"

Nina watched from behind as Nicole walked back to the ward in front of them. Her thin and weak figure cast a long shadow under the fluorescent light, but hidden in that weakness of hers was an intense perseverance fueled by her concern for Evan.

Nina could tell that her mommy really loved her daddy, so she wasn't sure if she was doing the right thing by helping him like this. I wonder how Mommy will react when she gets back to the ward...

Nicole's face was as pale as sheet when she opened the door and saw the empty hospital bed inside.

"Nina, where's your daddy?" She asked anxiously.

Nina played along and pretended to look surprised as well. "I don't know, Mommy! D...Do you think he woke up and went to the bathroom or something?"

"Go look for him, now!"

With the help of the doctors and nurses, the three of them searched every nook and cranny of the hospital, but there was no sign of Evan whatsoever.

Suddenly, John came over and handed them a letter from Evan.

"Mr. Seet called. He asked me to hand you this letter."

"Where is Evan?" Nicole asked anxiously as she took the letter over.

"I don't know. Mr. Seet had someone deliver this to the office, and I brought it over as soon as I got it. I haven't seen him at all," John replied.

Nicole tore the envelope open and recognized Evan's handwriting as soon as she began reading the contents of the letter.

Dear Nicole, I am writing to inform you that I'll be leaving. The company, the kids, and Imperial Garden are all yours. Take care, and goodbye.

Nicole shuddered uncontrollably. Evan's gone? He's really gone?

"Mommy, I think this is Daddy's final letter to us! He doesn't want to be a burden to you, so he's gone somewhere far away to wait for his death!" Nina said after reading the letter.

Nicole felt her mind going blank. It was as if her heart and soul had been ripped right out of her body.

Wait for his death? This... This isn't like Evan at all! He wouldn't just up and leave like this! He wouldn't...

Nina clenched her fists when she saw Nicole's eyes tear up. "You did the same thing when you had those hallucinations back then, Mommy! Daddy learned this from you! How noble of him!"

Noble? Perhaps it would seem noble to someone who is afraid of being burdened, but... To me, it's just plain cruel... I was hoping to have the doctors stabilize his vitals while waiting for Wesley to get back and save him, but he just left us all with this note... If he succumbs to the poison, I'll never be able to see him again... No, I can't let that happen!

"No, he isn't like Mommy. He... He'll come back..." Nicole said with a sniffle.

Maya burst out into tears. "Why does it have to be like this? Why can't we all just face it together as a family? Why do you always leave us behind?"

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Why do you always leave us behind?

Those words stabbed at Nicole's heart like a knife, and her tears fell onto the letter in her hand.

I only ran away because I didn't want to end up hurting Evan under the influence of my hallucinations... I...I really wanted to stay by his side... You mustn't do what I did, Evan! You have to come back! I'm willing to look after you! I'm really worried about you... Please come back!

Overwhelmed by her emotions, Nicole felt the ground spinning underneath her as she coughed up a mouthful of blood. "Pfft!"

"Mommy! Are you okay?"

"Mommy! Mommy!"

Both Nina and Maya were on the verge of breaking down at that point. John called for a nearby doctor, and Nicole was rushed into the emergency room immediately.

As she lay on the hospital bed on her way into the ER, Nicole saw Evan's handsome face flashing before her eyes and let out a faint smile.

Say, Evan... Which one of us do you think is going to die first, huh? You think you can run away from me, but you're wrong... I'll be waiting for you in the afterlife! We'll always be together, Evan... Forever and ever...

With that thought in mind, Nicole closed her eyes as her consciousness slowly faded away.

Having no other choice, Nina whipped out her phone and gave Evan a call. "Something's happened to Mommy!"

The next day, Nicole woke up and saw a blurry figure sitting next to her bed.

It took quite a while for her eyes to focus, and she frowned when she was able to clearly see the handsome face spacing out beside her.

Huh... Evan? I thought he left? What's he doing here?

She reached out and held his hand, snapping him out of his trance. "Nicole? Thank goodness, you're finally awake!" He asked while staring at her worriedly.

Is this really you, Evan? Or are we both dead and in the afterlife right now?

Evan called for a doctor when he saw Nicole staring blankly at him.

A doctor? Do we have doctors in the afterlife?

Nicole simply watched on in silence as a few doctors came to check on her condition.

"Your wife's condition is now stable, Mr. Seet. Don't worry, she'll be all better soon."

Evan let out a sigh of relief upon hearing that. "Alright, I understand. Thank you, doctor, you may go now."

"Very well, sir."

The sight of the doctors leaving her ward and the warmth of the sunlight on her skin made it obvious to her that they were both alive. But... What's Evan doing here? I thought he left...

Nicole pressed Evan for answers, but he simply told her that she just had a bad dream. He said he never was poisoned, and that he never left them with a farewell note either.

“A dream?”

Nicole grew uneasy. How could that be? There’s no way I dreamt that all! I was awake and alert when it all happened!

At that moment, Nina and Maya came into the ward, feeling overjoyed that their mommy had pulled through.

“I’m so glad you’re alright, Mommy! The doctor said you’ll be all better in no time if you take good care of your diet!”

“I’ll make you something to eat, Mommy! What would you like?”

Nicole looked at them and asked, “Your daddy was hospitalized because of his poisoning, and he wrote a note before leaving us! You were both there when it all happened, so I want you two to tell me... Was it really just a dream?”

Maya wasn’t good at lying, so she didn’t dare look Nicole in the eye. “Daddy wasn’t poisoned...”

She was technically telling the truth, as Evan was indeed never poisoned to begin with.

Besides, Nina had explained everything to her, so she understood what was going on.

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Feeling confused, Nicole turned towards Nina instead.

Nina glanced at Evan and answered exactly the way he told her to. “What Maya said was right, Mommy. Daddy was never poisoned, nor did he leave us with a note or anything. You fainted after coughing up some blood, so we sent you to the hospital, that’s all.”

Nicole recalled that she coughed up blood after reading Evan’s letter.

“That only happened because I read your daddy’s letter.”

Maya kept quiet.

Daddy lied about being poisoned to teach Mommy a lesson and bring us closer as a family, but he’s afraid that she would get mad about it. That’s why he told us to act like it was all a dream!

Nina smiled at Nicole and said, “You coughed up blood because your body was still weak from therapy, Mommy! It had nothing to do with Daddy!”

Is that so?

Nicole couldn’t shake the feeling that something was off about it and took a good long look at them.

I still remember the contents of that letter as well as the pain I felt when I read it... It feels too real to be a dream... Ugh, I can’t even tell what’s real and what isn’t anymore... Regardless, this has taught me a valuable lesson...

She looked at Evan and asked in a very serious tone, "Evan... Assuming you were to fall ill one day or maybe even get poisoned... Would you leave me?"

"No, I won't!" Evan replied without any hesitation.

Nicole breathed a sigh of relief and vowed, "That's good to hear... Well, I won't leave you either, so you'd better take good care of me!"

"Don't worry, I will!" Evan said with a smile.

I'm going to stay by your side, Nicole... We'll be together in sickness and in health, till death do us part...

Nicole didn't doubt his promise in the slightest. From that moment on, she told him everything, down to the most minute detail. If she had a craving for something, he'd know. If she felt remotely ill, he'd be the first to find out.

As for Evan, he enjoyed how honest and dependent she was on him from the bottom of his heart.

Whatever barriers they had between them were now gone, and they could finally go through challenges in life together.

Soon, Nicole was discharged and returned to Imperial Garden with them.

A smile spread across Kyle's face when he saw his mommy looking bright and happy again.

"How are you feeling, Mommy?"

"Mommy's fine, Kai. I heard you're going to further your studies too. As much as I'm gonna miss you, it's important that you pick up new skills which will benefit you in life later on."

"Don't worry, Mommy. I won't let you down!"

After sending Kyle off, Nina and Maya were the only children left in Imperial Garden.

The two of them continued to look after Nicole while keeping up with schoolwork and their own personal affairs.

Nina was working especially hard as her cosmetics press conference was only a few days away. She didn't want to make any careless mistakes that would affect the release of her new product.

Maya couldn't help but admire how focused she was on her work. Should I have Daddy prepare a culinary press conference for me as well? Hmm... No, I should first aim to have my own cookbook before going for a press conference. That way, I can show people a lot more than just a couple of dishes! Nina has always been better than me in everything except when it comes to food, so I've got to put in more effort if I am to outshine her in something!

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At that thought, she turned on her laptop and began making plans.

Beside her, Nicole quietly sighed as she stared at her two serious daughters.

"What's wrong?" Evan asked curiously.

His wife turned to look at him. "I think they're both better than me. When I was around their age, I wasn't as hardworking as them. I was like a fool back then, thinking of the colorful flowers in the Rose Garden and..."

Before she could say "the boy, Tye," her face turned red. She stole a glance at Evan before looking away.

It seemed like the man had figured out what she had not said as he followed her to the bedroom with a bright smile. Upon entering the room, he asked, "What were you going to say? The flowers in the Rose Garden and what?"

"N-Nothing."

"I already know what it is without you even needing to say it. You're thinking of the flowers in Rose Garden and me, who protected you, right?"

Nicole stayed silent.

She raised her head to glance at him before lowering it again. There was a sweet smile on her face, but she kept quiet as she started arranging the skincare products on the dresser.

Evan stared at her for a moment before he stepped toward her and pulled her into his arms. "Nicole, when did our fates entwine? From the night at The Passion or from Rose Garden?"

The woman mulled over his words before giving him a serious reply, "Of course it's from Rose Garden. That's where we first met, after all."

"We've known each other for over twenty years since Rose Garden, but you've only been pregnant once. Don't you think that number's too little?"

His direct words rendered Nicole speechless.

What is he trying to say?

With pursed lips, she twisted her head to look at him. "Although I've only had one pregnancy, I've given birth to four children. That's more than enough kids."

In response, he hurriedly explained, "You can't count by quantity per pregnancy. You're supposed to count by the number of pregnancies. Moreover, I wasn't by your side when you were giving birth to the children. I couldn't take care of you back then. So, Nicole, let's have another baby. Think of it as an opportunity for me to make up for my regret."

She hesitated.

He continued, "Nicole, think of it as a challenge. You've given birth to four previously, so you'll give birth to five this time. Nine children would be a perfect amount. I, too, want to know how my nine children would look like. I wonder what kind of odd babies you can give birth to."

Nine? Odd babies?

"Evan, y-you're asking me to give birth to children to satisfy your curiosity? That's such a weird request. Now I know why I've given birth to weird children. It's because they have your weird genes!"

“My weird genes? Those four have already grown up, so we can’t verify your words. Give birth to a few more, and we’ll observe whether they’ve inherited your genes or mine,” Evan muttered as he held her waist.

She was rendered speechless once again.

Give birth to a few more?

Nicole thought back to the days she had spent raising the children back then. Those were the days when sleep was a luxury – the children had been a handful.

Moreover, her current health was...

“I’m not in the healthiest state right now. I’m afraid I can’t give birth to more.”

“Not being able to do it now doesn’t mean you can’t do it next time. When you recover, we have plenty of time to have more children.”

Nicole did not answer him.

It seems like Evan is adamant about having more children. I’m afraid the next pregnancy will be coming pretty soon.

She quietly made a decision to relax as much as possible while she was recovering. She had to prepare herself well, mentally and physically, for her next pregnancy.

“Evan, when you come back from work, buy some chestnut cookies for me. I’m craving them.”

“All right. What else do you wish to eat? I’ll bring them back as well.”

“I want... I haven’t thought of anything else besides those cookies. I’ll call you when I’ve decided.”

“All right, then. Rest well at home. Don’t do anything that slows down your recovery, and try your best to recover within these few months.”