

You'll Fall for Me, Today or Tomorrow Chapter 351 - 355

Jacque had always been an observant man. Therefore, he refused to believe it was just another joke coming from his wife.

He probed further, "What exactly is going on? Tell me everything you're aware of!"

Sandra answered with a smirk, "It's nothing more than a hypothesis! Maybe it's just my imagination, but I sincerely hope that's the truth! After all, I don't need such a foolish niece like Shermaine!"

She then told her husband everything ever since the conversation she had with Clarissa at the hospital.

"Can you just get to the point already?"

"We're about to reach the best part!" Sandra teased her husband with a cheeky smile and added, "Jackson pulled my leg and said Clarissa and Shermaine might have been swapped in the first place..."

Initially, Sandra thought that was impossible when those were merely fictional plots of typical soap operas.

However, she secretly prayed Clarissa was affiliated with the Wynters as she was really against the idea of having Shermaine as her niece.

"It sounds like a joke, but is it really just a joke? I mean, the screenwriters get their inspiration from their lives as well!"

Jacque shook his head with a serious expression and rebuked, "I'm pretty sure you have been imagining things again. It might have something to do with the grudges you're holding against Kayla and Shermaine."

“As much as I’m irked by their presence, is there anything I can do to turn the tables around?
She’s your freaking sister—I have no choice but to keep everything to myself and let her get
you to do her biddings at no cost! I can’t believe you don’t even bother to reprimand her even
when your career is at stake because of her! Jacque, your sister doesn’t care about her
brother, but I care about my husband!”

Jacque was no longer his indifferent self when he heard Sandra. He leaned over and expressed his gratitude, “Thank you so much for everything you have done.”

Sandra snorted and went dead silent. A few seconds later, she insisted, “I might have gone slightly overboard with my hypothesis, but don’t you think it’s worth investigating? What if Clarissa is a member of the family? If she’s not, we’ll just forget about it!”

Jacque responded with a frown. After much considerations, he nodded and asserted, “I’ll get someone to figure out if she’s related to the family, but you need to keep your expectation in check and stop taking this seriously.”

Sandra beamed in satisfaction as the outcome wouldn’t really matter. It was obvious she could never see eye to eye with Kayla and Shermaine.

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Clarissa told Damian to keep himself entertained and had the butler and nanny keep an eye on him before making her way to the gym with Ellie. Never in a million years would Clarissa show up in a gym if it weren’t because Ellie insisted on having Clarissa tag along with her.

After a cardio session, they joined a yoga class together.

Ellie told Clarissa the benefits of practicing yoga, “You’ll get to try different postures if you’re flexible enough to twist and turn your body! It’s going to be beneficial to you and Uncle Matt!

On top of that, it’s great to build up your physique!”

Clarissa started flushing and gaped at Ellie's statement. She then asked in return, "Stop bringing this up as if it's not a big deal! Aren't you embarrassed the slightest bit?" "Huh? You're literally my aunt! Why are you embarrassed when I'm merely talking about you and your husband?"

"I-I'm not embarrassed! Y-You're the one who needs to mind your words! Y-You have never—"

Clarissa stuttered with her lips twitching against her will.

All of a sudden, things got awkward between the duo because of the things Clarissa brought up.

Ellie cleared her throat and rebuked, "Actually, I have a boyfriend. You don't think I have never done it, do you?"

Clarissa went dead silent and wrapped up the conversation as she had no intention to poke her nose into Ellie's relationship with others.

They exchanged glances and burst into laughter when they saw one another in the eyes.

"I'll get you a membership and enroll you in a few lessons with a personal instructor. If you don't feel like making your way here, just get them over to Zen Highlands and make yourself

a yoga studio for your lesson. We'll go ahead and give it a try today."

Ellie dragged Clarissa away with her and made their way to the yoga studio of the gym.

At the end of their lesson, Clarissa couldn't feel her limbs anymore. As someone who was relatively stiff, it was a tormenting experience at the beginning of the class. Nonetheless,

she couldn't wait until she could twist and turn her body at ease.

I need to stay till the end of the lesson! It's a confidence booster I need that's gonna allow

me to be on par with Matthew in bed!

After their yoga lesson, they headed over to a beauty salon for a self-pampering session.

Clarissa dared not engage in a conversation anymore after the last incident she had to go through.

She couldn't believe the content of her conversation was made known to others when it was supposed to be confidential.

When Ellie was the only one left in the room, she said, "I have prepared Matthew a New Year gift! It's a fictional story I have adapted from the ups and downs of our relationship! Actually, I'm thinking of producing a movie based on the book, but I don't have the capital to get everything started! Care to invest in me?"

Ellie, who had a facial sheet on her face, sat upright and asked, "Are you serious? If you're

serious, then I'll definitely get you the capital you need!"

She then chuckled and added, "Aunt Clare, you're such an ambitious woman! I can't believe

you're trying to display the affection you have for Uncle Matt in front of everyone! Are you

trying to make others envious of you?"

Clarissa responded with a sheepish grin and rebuked, "No! I'm just trying to get Matthew

something that's going to surprise him!"

"Urgh! You have no idea how tormenting it is to be around both of you!

Well, I think it's going

to turn out just fine! In fact, I think a lot of people are going to enjoy your book and movie! I

can't wait until I get a few folds of return on investment!"

"Why don't you keep your expectation in check when I'm just a rookie?"

"Trust me and have faith in yourself! If you can't handle it, I'll get Mr.

Justin over to help you

with the production!"

Clarissa shook her head and said, "No way! How can you get such a famous director to be

my assistant director? I'll only work on it after New Year. You need to keep this between us

because it's meant to be a surprise."

“Hmm! That’s interesting!”

Clarissa wrapped up their conversation with a satisfied beam. When she recalled she had the gift for Matthew ready, she couldn’t wait for New Year to come sooner in anticipation of his response.

When she made her way back to Zen Highlands, Damian rushed over and showed Clarissa his doodles on a random book.

“Mommy, what do you think of my masterpiece? It’s a family portrait of our family!”

Clarissa gaped at the presence of the book that had been doodled in and out. She could vaguely tell it was the custom-made book she had prepared Matthew in advance.

Oh, God!

On the other hand, Damian was unaware of the things that would be in store for him. He

beamed in satisfaction in anticipation of his mother’s compliment.

Meanwhile, Ellie leaned over and started complimenting, “It’s actually not half bad! I’ll

introduce a few artists to you and get them to teach you the proper way to paint! Speaking

of which, is this your mother’s book?”

Ellie turned around and noticed something was wrong when she caught a glimpse of

Clarissa’s darkened expression.

After she took another peek at the book, she asked with her lips twitching involuntarily, “I-Is

this the present you have prepared for him?”

Ellie noticed Clarissa was about to let loose of her emotions. Afraid of the things awaiting

Damian, she immediately rushed over to bring the little boy away with her.

“You’re in big trouble, Damian! Of the all things available for you to draw, why have you

chosen to draw on this particular book? Can’t you get yourself something else?”

The nanny wouldn't stop apologizing, "I'm so sorry, Ma'am! I was supposed to keep an eye on him! Actually, that wasn't just the only book that's—" Ellie was rendered speechless by the havoc Damian had wreaked. However, the little boy continued chuckling in Ellie's arms. "It's so fun!" Clarissa finally snapped out of bewilderment and returned to her senses. She enunciated her son's name at the top of her lungs, "Damian Quigley!" Her son finally stopped laughing the moment he felt a chill running down his spine. Angst was written all over his face as he wrapped his chubby arms around Ellie's neck. Ellie got ahead of Damian and said, "W-Well, since things have gotten to the point of no return, why don't you get the publisher to prepare you another book?" "It's not going to make it in time!" "W-Why don't you delay your plan for a year?"

Clarissa couldn't suppress her wrath any longer. She dismissed Ellie's suggestion and warned her son with her teeth greeted, "Damian, I'll allow you to defend yourself! Why have you barged into the study and doodled on my books? Why hadn't you gotten yourself a piece of paper or something?" Unsure if Damian was startled or overwhelmed by a sense of guilt, he went dead silent with his lips pursed. "Hello?" The aggrieved little boy wrapped his arms around Ellie's neck with all his might. His pair of eyes had started brimming with tears. "Oh? Are you trying to play the victim? Ellie, leave him alone! I must have been spoiling him so much he can't even behave himself anymore! It's about time to discipline him! Thankfully, it's my books he has ruined instead of Matthew's documents! Otherwise, he's in a real mess!

Come over here at once, Damian Quigley!”

Ellie was intimidated by Clarissa’s ferocious look as she had never seen Clarissa getting worked up.

Meanwhile, the startled little boy started inching over to his mother’s side.

Out of the blue, Matthew made his way into the house and noticed something seemed to be

wrong. He then found out his son’s eyes were welled up in tears.

“What’s going on?” The moment he broke the silence and directed the question at the

conflicting trio, Ellie brought Damian away.

While bouncing up the stairs, Ellie said, “Uncle Matt, Aunt Clare has something for you! Why

don’t you go ahead and check it out? I’ll bring Damian upstairs with me!”

“Hold it right there, Ellie! Bring back that rascal!”

Clarissa was about to go after Ellie and Damian, but Matthew stopped her in the nick of time

and wrapped his arm around her waist.

He leaned over from behind and asked in a hushed voice, “Clare, what sort of gift have you prepared me?”

Clarissa’s mind was all over the place. In the end, she made up her mind to show him the

book that was full of doodles she had prepared him.

Matthew took it over and stared at Clarissa with his brows arched in confusion.

“I-It was supposed to be a surprise! Urgh! It’s your son’s fault for ruining my plan!” Clarissa

ended up burying her face in her hands.

You’ll Fall for Me, Today or Tomorrow Chapter

352

Matthew asked Clarissa to turn around and caressed her head. He moved her hands away

from her face and responded with an intimate gaze.

“It’s fine as long as it’s something from you! In fact, it’s the best gift I can ever ask for!”

The words of reassurance failed to put a smile on Clarissa's face. Instead, she responded with a frown.

"Damian has ruined the book that's supposed to be a unique gift for you! Are you sure you don't mind? It's supposed to be a surprise during New Year's eve! I guess it's more of a shock rather than a surprise now!"

Clarissa turned around and glared in the direction of their son's bedroom. She thought it was about time to teach their son a lesson for the things he had done. On the other hand, Matthew chuckled and raised Clarissa's chin against her will.

He leaned over and whispered, "Don't you think it's quite a unique gift from you and our son?"

We'll consider it a surprise from you and him!"

Clarissa took another peek at the doodles that were all over the book and felt another strong urge to cry.

Immediately after Matthew figured out the things going on in her mind, he held her firmly in

between his arms and asserted in a gentle tone, "Just give yourself a break, okay? I'll teach

him a lesson and have him bear the consequences of his actions soon!"

He knew he had to say something to console the upset woman.

Otherwise, she might let

loose of her emotions and take things out on their beloved son.

Nonetheless, Clarissa had no intention to give up just yet as she was certain it was one of

Matthew's attempts to deceive her.

She turned around and reprimanded him, "I'm pretty sure it's another lie of yours! In fact,

you're the reason he's such a naughty boy! You're supposed to discipline him instead of

spoiling him! What are we supposed to do if he turns into a delinquent in the future?"

She wouldn't stop picking on him to take out the disappointment she had been holding

back. Matthew had no choice but to play along with her to keep her occupied.

“Y-Yes—Uh-huh—Alright—”

Matthew listened to the upset woman without interrupting her.

Otherwise, he might be the one who would have to face her wrath.

After she had enough of complaining, Matthew brought her back to their room and held her

firmly in between his arms.

Things got increasingly intimate between the duo as they started reading the book Clarissa

had prepared.

“Is this the way you feel the first time you see me? Are you afraid of me?”

Well, you can’t deny

it’s love at first sight for you as well, can you? I shouldn’t have left you alone back then!”

“Stop it!” Clarissa couldn’t take it anymore as the man unveiled the things she had in mind

without holding back.

She glared at him in the eyes and said, “Had you taken advantage of me back then, I might

not have fallen for you!”

Matthew begged to differ. He said, “No! In fact, you would be head over heels in love with

me way ahead of the initial timeline because we were a match made in heaven!”

“Stay away from me! You’re such a shameless man!”

Matthew burst into laughter and pinched the blushing woman’s cheek.

He then leaned over

and kissed her. “Are you sure you want me to stay away from you?”

“I-I—H-Hey! S-Stop it!”

Ellie, who was outside of their room, found out they were in the middle of a great time when

she leaned over to eavesdrop on their conversation.

She then brought Damian downstairs with her and told the little boy,

“You need to stay away

from your parents for the time being as they are in the middle of something. Also, you have

to stop getting on your mother's nerves. Otherwise, she's going to pick on you again."

Damian, who had mastered the art of putting on a pitiable front to win others' sympathy,

stared at Ellie with his lips pursed in an aggrieved manner.

Ellie chuckled and said, "Haha! It turns out you're quite a great actor, huh? It's not a big

deal—everyone goes through it in their life!"

The little boy stared at Ellie with his head tilted in confusion. He asked,

"Were you a naughty

girl when you were young?"

"Don't even get me started! You're still young—I'm pretty sure you're going to get yourself in

more trouble in the future! You need to exercise caution whenever you're up to something.

Well, I don't think you're able to grasp the things I'm talking about. In short, try your best to

keep others in the dark when you're the one at fault."

Although he couldn't really grasp the concept behind the orated speech, he asserted, "Okay!"

...

On the other hand, Jacque told Sandra he had acquired the outcome of the investigation. It

turned out Clarissa and Shermaine were given birth at the same hospital.

In fact, it wasn't a

secret as their mothers used to be patients of the same ward.

Nonetheless, others failed to link the missing pieces of puzzles together throughout the

years.

Now that it was brought up out of the blue, the ones aware they were given birth one after

another couldn't help but wonder if they had been swapped.

Sandra gaped at the news her husband shared with her as a random joke her son had

brought up in front of her turned out to be a possible truth.

"Jacque, isn't it obvious? I can't believe it's true! What the heck is wrong with the Quigleys?"

How dare they resort to something as cheap as this? It's obvious Clarissa is one of us when she resembles Mom so much! Meanwhile, Shermaine has done nothing apart from putting the family to shame! Think about it, Jacque! She has made use of you to threaten Matthew and hired someone to take Clarissa out! Maybe Matthew was never the reason she wanted to take Clarissa out! I think she's aware of Clarissa's identity all along!" Sandra was certain her speculations were spot on. She stared at her husband in disbelief.

Meanwhile, Jacque was taken aback by the possibility as well.

"Jacque, what are we supposed to do next? What if we're right? Isn't that horrifying?"

No ordinary people could take in such ridiculous news over the night.

Jacque suggested, "We need to stay calm for the time being as we can't be certain if

someone's behind this or not. Maybe it's just the nurse's negligence."

Sandra gave it a thought and rebuked, "That might be the case, but Shermaine seemed to

have figured out the truth since some time ago! That might be the sole reason she wanted

to kill Clarissa—she was afraid she would have to leave everything she had as a member of

the Smallwoods behind!"

"Alright, you need to stop overthinking things because you don't have the things it takes to back your statements."

"What sort of evidence do you need? Shermaine has seen Mom's photo and met Clarissa in

person more than once, but she never brought up anything in front of us! If she's innocent,

why hasn't she mentioned anything about it? She's just afraid we're going to be suspicious

of her! In other words, she's the mastermind behind everything!"

"We can't be certain if that's the truth. Maybe it's just a coincidence.

Therefore, I want you to

keep this between us until we're able to verify Clarissa's identity."

Sandra's objection was written all over her face. Her husband added, "Sandra, this is going to involve a lot of people. We'll definitely acknowledge Clarissa as a member of the family if she's innocent. However, we can't just chase Shermaine out of the family over the night when she's Kayla's favorite! They can't possibly leave her alone just because she's not their biological daughter! There's no way Clarissa and Shermaine will patch things up with one another over the night! As their seniors, we need to take these into consideration and decide on the next best course of action for the sake of everyone!" Sandra snorted and reprimanded her husband, "No one is going to appreciate your effort for taking everyone's sake into consideration!" "I need to think on Kayla's behalf since she has always been a simple-minded woman." "What about James? We're talking about his family! He needs to bear the consequences of his negligence! All this while, he has been playing the role of a lovely husband, but I think those are nothing more than an act! In fact, who knows if he's having an—" Jacque couldn't stand his wife going on and on. He instructed, "That's enough! Just give me a break! You're not allowed to bring this up in front of others until we can verify Clarrisa is a member of the Smallwoods!" Irked, Jacque made his way to the bathroom, leaving his frustrated wife behind with her lips pursed. Do you really think I'm going to stop just because of your instructions? Since you need something to prove Clarissa's identity, I'll get you something to prove you wrong! At the end of the day, the outcome was the only thing that would matter. Therefore, she thought it wouldn't be necessary to figure out the things that had gone wrong back in the day. Those

were merely a waste of time.

Sandra showed up at Olive's foundation the next day. Clarissa was summoned to the foundation for something as well.

Initially, Sandra had to tend to something else, but the moment she was made aware

Clarissa would show up at the foundation, she left everything behind and rushed her way to the foundation.

Clarissa wasn't particularly surprised about running into Sandra at the foundation. They

returned to their respective position after a simple catch-up session.

Occasionally, they

would run into one another for work.

Once Clarissa had everything sorted out and made her way back, Sandra departed and

dropped by the Smallwood residence. She made something up and made her way into her

sister-in-law's bedroom. After a short while, she departed to the hospital.

Sandra acquired the aid of the doctor she was acquainted with and handed over the strands

of hair to him before making her way back home.

I'll just have to wait until I get my hands on the result!

You'll Fall for Me, Today or Tomorrow

Chapter 353

After having a class with the yoga teacher, Clarissa kept on practicing at home.

Other than the weekly classes, it required consistency to become skilled in yoga.

Every morning, the woman would practice some stretches for a short while. At night, she

would usually work out as well. Since she was trying to be stern toward Damian these days,

she didn't need to spend much time playing with him.

However, every time Clarissa saw her adorable son acting all obedient, she would have a

strong urge to pull him into a hug and peck him on his face.

Yet, she restrained herself from doing so. I've to teach this little one an unforgettable lesson, lest he becomes more wayward in the future. Experts say that children tend to get more rebellious between two to three years old. Previously, Damian had shown some signs, refusing to obey me intentionally. After coming to D City, everyone doted on him, so he became overly pampered. I'm the only one who could remain stern in front of him, so I have to be firm in order to discipline him.

After tucking Damian in, Matthew went into his bedroom, but there was no sign of Clarissa.

She had gone to the gym room again, as there was a dedicated space for her yoga practice.

The man sauntered toward the gym room and heard a soothing tune from inside. Pushing the door open, he saw the woman lying on a yoga mat, stretching her leg backward.

However, her movements weren't fluid, and she struggled to balance herself. A few seconds later, she stretched another leg.

Since Clarissa was at home, her body-hugging sportswear was more revealing than usual.

She was wearing only a sports bra as her top, showing her fair-skinned and slim waist. Her beautifully toned leg muscles were tensed up as she practiced seriously. Soon, her forehead was drenched in sweat, and her breathing got heavier as she became strained.

It was only an ordinary yoga pose, but in Matthew's eyes, Clarissa appeared extremely tantalizing. His body heated up and stiffened instinctively.

In silence, he tiptoed into the room. As Clarissa was bending forward, she felt a pinch on her hip.

Startled, she stood upright immediately and saw Matthew smiling faintly at her with his

hands in his pocket, as though nothing had happened.

"I can see that your body is rather unstable. Do you need me to hold you?"

"Hold my waist and only let go when I ask you to," Clarissa answered without giving it much thought.

Clarissa started bending her body over again while Matthew's big hands were around her waist. She extended one arm forward while the other held her ankle up slowly, trying to balance herself. Thanks to Matthew, she could stand on one foot steadily.

"O-Okay... You can slowly let go of me," she said.

However, Matthew didn't let go, but his hand slid along her body gradually instead.

"Ah..." Clarissa yelped.

Losing her footing, she fell into Matthew's arms.

Annoyed, she glared at him. "What are you doing?"

Matthew flashed her an innocent smile. "I saw that your posture wasn't right, so I adjusted it for you."

"What? How do you know that it's not right? Stop fooling around."

Clarissa pushed him away and resumed her previous posture. Even without Matthew's help,

she gritted her teeth and persevered. Nevertheless, after a few trials, she was still unstable.

Seeing that, that man chuckled. "Let me help you. I promise I won't fool around. I don't know

how a correct posture looks like, but I feel that your body has to be in a straight line to look elegant and pleasing.

After some thought, Clarissa agreed with him and let him help her again.

Sure enough, she trusted Matthew blindly and ended up in his embrace once again. The two

fell onto the yoga mat in unison.

"Matthew Tyson!"

Enraged, she shot daggers at the man, who pinned her on the yoga mat with a devilish

smile.

"I sincerely wanted to give you a hand, but I couldn't hold myself back because of your seductive posture."

His words further provoked Clarissa.

"I wasn't seducing you! Scram!" she protested while poking his chest.

Matthew let out a hearty laugh. "Oh? Really? Why are you practicing yoga then? Aren't you trying to train your body to be more flexible to improve the quality of our lives? At this

thought, I automatically relate yoga to..."

"What the hell? Get lost! Who... Mmm!"

The man sealed her lips. In the midst of their passionate kiss, he mumbled in a croaky voice,

"Let me examine the result of practicing for days..."

"Go away.... Mmm... No..."

Her resistance didn't make any difference. In the end, Clarissa experienced a night with him after yoga practice.

Afterward, Matthew commented that yoga did help improve her flexibility. If she kept on

practicing, she might be able to adopt more difficult postures in bed.

Feeling exhausted, Clarissa was in no mood to practice yoga anymore.

Practicing yoga at home made her feel as if she was doing it for Matthew's sake.

As a result, Clarissa no longer practiced at night, but in the afternoon when Matthew was

not at home, so he couldn't disrupt her deliberately with ill intention.

Nevertheless, the man seemed to have read her mind and asked on purpose, "Clare, why

aren't you practicing yoga at night? Go ahead, I'll help you out."

Her face flushed beet red for a moment. Ignoring him, she lowered her head and taught her son some words.

Staring at her reddened ear, Matthew was amused. I know those thoughts of hers like the

back of my hand. It's fine that she doesn't practice yoga at night. We can still exercise

together on the bed, which is going to be even more pleasurable. Meanwhile, Sandra went to the hospital to get the DNA test report at once.

The second she saw the result, a scornful smile broke across Sandra's face. I knew it.

There's no way they can look so alike for no reason. It turns out Clarissa is the daughter of

the Smallwood family and the offspring of the Wynters. Shermaine is only an imposter.

Sandra then went home. As soon as her husband came back, she laid out the report in front of him.

After reading it, Jacque wasn't as astonished as before, but he still couldn't believe his eyes.

How could this happen?

"Whether it's an accident or not, nothing can change the fact that Clarissa is our

blood-related niece. I collected her hair and Kayla's hair for the test myself. Now the truth

has been uncovered. As Kayla's brother and Clarissa's uncle, what are you going to do?"

Rubbing his forehead, Jacque seemed to be in a tight spot.

"Sandra, the New Year is coming. Can't we have a peaceful New Year?"

"What has this got to do with the New Year? Are you trying to deny that Clarissa is your niece?"

"No, I'm not denying it, but exposing this truth isn't as simple as you think. As I told you

before, this matter is rather complicated. We can't..."

"Yeah, right, it's complicated. Everything is complicated in your eyes.

You're the one who

makes things complicated. To me, it's only a very simple matter. Just reunite with Clarissa,

so she'll know that the Wynters have her back. As for Shermaine, we'll talk to her when she's

out. Then it'll be up to Kayla and James whether they want to keep the both of them or

choose either one. That's none of my business. Anyway, I really like Clarissa."

Glancing at her husband's furrowed brows, she added in a low voice, "We don't have to care about the Smallwoods. Since Clarissa is your niece, you can no longer be on bad terms with the Tysons. Matthew might lend you a helping hand for Clarissa's sake. I'm doing all these things not only because I dislike Shermaine, but for you and our family." "I totally understand everything you said."

"It's great that you get me. Let's come clean with Clarissa before the New Year, so we can take the opportunity to bond with her and the Tysons. Don't you still have many issues to deal with? It'll be awkward if you seek Matthew and Clarissa's help after the New Year straight away."

Knowing his wife's thoughts, Jacque was deep in thought. Sandra didn't speak further, as she believed her husband was able to get his priorities right.

After a long while, Sandra came out of the bathroom and went through her skincare routine at the dressing table. Only then, Jacque part his lips to speak.

"Let's meet up with Matthew and Clarissa this weekend and see how things go afterward.

We'll have to talk to Kayla about this separately."

The woman's lips curled up into a broad smile. "Okay, I'll contact Clarissa."

"Sure, go ahead with that."

Since Jacque had agreed with her, the couple contemplated how to spill the beans to

Clarissa. Then, Sandra made an appointment with the latter and her husband for a meal.

Judging from their solemn attitude, Clarissa could already foresee what was coming her way.

I guess the two have found out about me and Shermaine. Otherwise, Sandra wouldn't have

tried to sound me out so suddenly.
Hesitant and troubled, she gazed at Matthew.
“Should we meet them? I’m certain they already knew. I told you they have suspected it long ago. What if they ask me to reunite with them when we meet?”
Matthew consoled the woman, who was like a cat on hot bricks. “Yes, we should. They already knew the truth, so we have no reason to hide it anymore. However, they can’t force you to reunite with them. We’ll see how things turn out when we meet them. Besides, didn’t you say that Mrs. Wynter was a nice person? Even if she isn’t your aunt, you can still befriend her, as she seems like someone worth looking up to.”

With her face all scrunched up, Clarissa replied, “Yeah, I have no other choice.”

This outcome was inevitable. Since she was able to discover this secret, others might do the same as well. It was only a matter of time. Sooner or later, she would have to face reality.

You’ll Fall for Me, Today or Tomorrow

Chapter 354

Meeting with Jacque and Sandra was relatively more tolerable for Clarissa.

On the contrary, if it were James and Kayla coming to see her, Clarissa would surely refuse to meet them.

Both couples agreed to meet at a remote tea room where it was more secluded, and when

Clarissa and Matthew reached, Jacque and Sandra had waited for a little while.

Clarissa and Matthew weren’t late. In fact, it was Jacque and his wife getting anxious to meet Clarissa.

As soon as they stepped in, Sandra looked at Clarissa with a countenance filled with joy and

relief. She was so impassioned that even her eyes were a little reddened and brimmed with tears.

Jacque, on the other hand, seemed more composed, but his expression was rather

complicated, as though it still felt incredible to him.

As soon as Clarissa sat down, Sandra held her hands like a family elder. It was like Jean

Valjean knowing for the first time that the little girl he just met was

Cosette, and Sandra was

no different from Jean Valjean who couldn't hide the tremor in his voice.

How she longed to

just hold Clarissa and cry all she want.

"Clarissa, I'm sorry for all the sufferings you must have been through all these years. In

fact..."

Sandra was exceedingly emotional, and she revealed the fact that

Clarissa was in actuality

Jacque's niece.

It didn't take too long after they sat down for Sandra to spill everything.

It was fortunate that Clarissa had already been aware of that, so she was prepared.

Otherwise, if they had been completely kept in the dark, they would have been utterly baffled

at that point.

Clarissa wondered how anxious this couple must have been to tell her and Matthew the

truth.

Am I so welcomed?

Clarissa felt a little awkward, and Jacque couldn't help as well but start, "Sandra, let's slow

down and talk while we enjoy the tea. Matthew and Clarissa, I believe you're already aware

of this matter before this, aren't you? It was mind-boggling to me at first, but since that's the

fact, I think we shouldn't just stay silent about it. After all, this is something serious, don't

you think?"

Clarissa turned to Matthew, and within his eyes, she saw encouragement and support.

It was then that Clarissa finally spoke, "Mr. and Mrs. Wynter, yes, I'm aware of this matter, but I have no plans to reunite with them, to be honest. I'm doing well in the Quigley family.

There are people who love me there, even though I have only Grandma left now. She has aged, and this will be too much for her. Besides, everything is fine for us now, and there's no reason for me to go back to them."

Sandra grew agitated at that. She looked at Clarissa and spoke hurriedly, "How can you say that there's no reason? Plus, we don't need a reason. The Quigleys aren't really your family.

Your true family is the Smallwoods and us. What reason do you need to come back to your real family?"

Nevertheless, Sandra wasn't able to change Clarissa's mind. She shook her head in response. "Mrs. Wynter, think about the enmity between me and Shermaine. Do you really think it's a good thing for me and Shermaine to return to our birth family after everything that happened?"

Sandra was suddenly at a loss for words. "But..."

There was something else she wanted to say, but Jacque cast his eyes toward her and shook his head.

Sandra was a little displeased, but she didn't carry on because she thought that her husband might be able to persuade them.

Jacque turned to Clarissa before speaking, as he had noticed that this matter was fully at Clarissa's discretion.

Hence, he decided not to ask for Matthew's opinion and directly dealt with Clarissa.

“Clarissa, even though a lot of things had happened, and maybe not only you, but it would also take a while for them to be able to accept this, now that we know about it, at least me and my wife, that is, your Uncle Jacque and Aunt Sandra want you to know how much we love you as our niece. We can keep it a secret for the moment, but your Aunt Sandra and I hope that you don’t keep your distance from us. At the very least, there’s nothing wrong between us.”

As he said that, he laughed softly and even brought up something else so that Clarissa wouldn’t be too resistant. “Just treat us as some ordinary elders. You may even get along well slowly with some elderly strangers sometimes, isn’t it? Besides, I know that you and Damon are friends. You may also treat us as the parents of your friends, but just don’t feign unfamiliarity with us.”

Clarissa had to admit that the way Jacque went about it was more acceptable for her.

Despite that, she remained silent, not knowing what to say.

Seeing as such, Sandra soon learned the key to communicating about that matter with

Clarissa and quickly seized the opportunity to persuade her, “Clarissa, let’s forget about our

biological relations for the moment. Even if we were not related by blood, didn’t we get

along pretty well with each other? I feel a sense of familiarity around you, and you don’t

despise me as well, do you? Just think of me as an ordinary elder and we can go about this

slowly; we can wait until you get close to us and are no longer resistant. Is that okay?”

Clarissa knew very well that if she kept turning them down, they would also be displeased.

Clarissa didn't really wish for any family affection from the so-called uncle and aunt in front of her, neither did she need it. It was just that they had made it very clear that they were there with a 'claiming kin' intention, and she was reluctant to turn them down either. Hence, Clarissa nodded.

"Mr. and Mrs. Wynter..."

"You should stop calling us that; that's too formal. It's Uncle Jacque and Aunt Sandra," Sandra corrected her.

However, Clarissa still found it hard to bring herself to address them that way. "I hope you don't tell anyone about this for the time being. As you said, I may treat you like a friend's parents, so I'll go with Jacque and Sandra, alright? In the future... Well, if we really get to that point in the future, then only we switch the address terms. Otherwise, it would be a little awkward."

"Well..."

Sandra turned to her husband, and Jacque nodded. "Clarissa is right. We'll do with that for the time being."

"Alright, at least that's better than Mr. and Mrs. Wynter."

Both the family reached an agreement, and Sandra just got closer with Clarissa because of that. She couldn't help but start chatting with her about other things. "I've noticed how familiar you look when I first met you. It wasn't until later that I came to know that you look just like your grandma when she was young. You look exactly alike. I was even wondering back then that how did two strangers who don't know each other look so much alike. And here we are. It's not two strangers after all; it's family."

Clarissa smiled and seemed to have understood something. Shermaine might have known my blood relationship with the Wynters earlier on. She must have also seen the photos of Hannah when she was young.

“Besides, Shermaine doesn’t feel like a kind person to me. With all those brutal things she committed, she doesn’t really feel like part of our family. It was when I saw you back then that I realized we have been fooled by her. You’re such a kind young lady... Oh, right, it’s almost year-end. You must come over to spend the holiday with us this year. We’re a family...” Sandra continued to ramble on. She seemed to have a lot to tell Clarissa, but the key message was her expression of fondness for Clarissa and their bond. As with Shermaine, Sandra simply referred to her as a disreputable person. Even before she knew that Shermaine and Clarissa had been switched, she had had no qualms in voicing her disfavor toward her niece, Shermaine. Clarissa was exceedingly embarrassed and didn’t know how to react to Sandra’s zest. Comparatively, Jacque and Matthew appeared much quieter than the two women. They chatted for a while about the Smallwoods and the current circumstances. Undoubtedly, they didn’t go deep into the subject either. After their tea session for the entire afternoon, Sandra wanted to have dinner with them. Her geniality was hard to decline, as Clarissa’s rejection would always be dismissed. Hence, she found it hard to turn her down, and so they went for dinner together. It was quite a coincidence for them that day. They would usually meet one or two acquaintances or friends when they went out for a meal, and that particular restaurant was where Clarissa met the Smallwoods couple for the first time and got into a dispute later. It so happened that the Smallwoods couple had also come to the restaurant that very day.

James and Kayla were treating someone to dinner; someone whom Clarissa didn't recognize.

That was not the point, though. The point was that when Kayla saw that her brother and sister-in-law were actually having dinner with Clarissa and Matthew and that Sandra even held hands with Clarissa so intimately, it felt like a fatal blow to Kayla.

At that point, Kayla was struck dumb and almost stumbled giddily into her husband's arms.

Tears started streaming down her face almost immediately. Seeing as such, even Clarissa had to admit that she was impressed.

Not even the female leads from those love stories of heartbreak could bring themselves to

tears at such a rate that Kayla did, neither would they appear as anguished as Kayla was,

and both these qualities were commonly displayed by those female leads who often played a seemingly innocent and naive role.

Her whimpering was ostentatious, and every single cell within her was theatrical at best.

"Jacque, Sandra, how could you... Shermaine is still suffering in prison, yet you're

fraternizing with our enemy behind our back, and you're so intimate together. Is this how you

treat us and Shermaine? It's totally unfair to us. If Shermaine finds out that her Uncle Jacque

and Aunt Sandra who dote on her the most actually do such a thing in her back, how

miserable would it be for her?" Clarissa was indifferent all the while, and there was even

some aloofness in her eyes.

She was silently watching Kayla's performance assisted by James at the side who kept

comforting her lowly.

What a bummer. Sandra was annoyed, and her displeasure was also shown on her

countenance. She didn't want to entertain them either, so she took Clarissa's hand and started, "Let's go in. Jacque, you deal with it." That's his sister, anyway. It had always frustrated Sandra to have to tolerate Sandra and her husband. Now that she was with Clarissa and Matthew, she could finally stop pretending. Jacque frowned as he found himself in a difficult position. He smiled rather apologetically at Matthew and Clarissa before turning to face his sister and brother-in-law. "Kayla, let's talk about this when we're home." "Talk about this at home?" Kayla didn't plan to give in so easily; she prepared to badger them. Hence, when she saw Sandra leading them forward into the restaurant, she stopped crying and demanded as she turned to Jacque, "Jacque, what do you mean by this? And Sandra, stop right there. What

are you trying to do? My biological daughter and your favorite niece have been framed and jailed by these two people, and she's still in deep water in the prison. Yet, as her uncle and aunt, you don't even consider helping her. Instead, here you are, having dinner and associating with this enemy. You... How can you be so heartless and cruel? Aren't you fear of retribution?"

You'll Fall for Me, Today or Tomorrow

Chapter 355

Fear of retribution?

Clarissa couldn't help but snort within herself.

It's never Jacque and Sandra who should fear retribution. Instead, it's the Smallwoods

couple who treat their biological daughter like an enemy who should fear retribution.

Kayla wailed in such an entitled manner as though the world owed her something. The

people who didn't know what happened might be wondering how mistreated she was. James only stood at the side, holding his wife and comforting her softly. Nevertheless, neither did he reprove anything his wife expressed. His attitude was as good as acknowledging his wife's stance. Setting the grudge between Clarissa and Shermaine aside, even the behaviors of that couple alone vexed Clarissa, and she disliked such parents utterly. Pressuring her own brother and sister-in-law in public in such an aggressive way, and not to mention twisting the facts, this woman is no different from some blatant blackmailers. Clarissa thought to herself that the Wynters must have helped the Smallwoods couple a lot in the past. But these two people never seem to remember the kindness others have shown them. They just take it for granted; they're just two ingrates.

Needless to say, Clarissa could feel the wrath of Sandra who was standing beside her. She's even trembling. God knows how mad she must be. "Jacque, how can you..." Kayla was still whining, and Jacque couldn't bear to be rough on his sister, but Sandra could no longer stand it. "Shut up, the two of you. James, aren't you aware of how much help and support Jacque has extended to you in the past? And now you're wailing here, chiding us for not fearing retribution, hahaha... Well, let retribution come to us then, and we won't help you anymore. Supposedly, your daughter has committed an offense and has been sent to jail, and that's the outcome of an impartial judiciary. Nonetheless, you're insistently claiming that she has been wronged. Why don't you prove her innocence with evidence then? What's the use of

you groaning here? Do you think your whimpering will help to clear her name? Or do you think Jacques will risk his reputation and do the dirty work for you just because of that? Kayla, you can't be such an ingrate. You may not remember how your brother has sacrificed for you, and you may not feel sorry for him, but I do. I treasure my husband, and I feel sorry that he has done so much for you just to be treated in such a way in return. Jacques, let her whine all she wants. Let's go." Stunned by Sandra's cry, Kayla stopped weeping and looked at Sandra walking over to yank Jacques away. Only after the few of them left the corridor that James said to his wife, "Alright, let's go in now. Mr. Baker is still waiting for us." Only then did Kayla remember that they still needed to ask for a favor from Mr. Baker. They turned around, just to find that Mr. Baker didn't seem pleased. James explained hurriedly, "Mr. Baker, I'm sorry you had to witness that. My wife was very concerned about our daughter, and she has always been rather emotional all these years, not to mention we've met someone who has a beef with us, hence..." "Has a beef? Is Mr. Matthew Tyson the person whom you have a history with?" As soon as James noticed Mr. Baker's tone, he became very heedful. Instead of referring to it as 'having a beef', he described how Matthew's wife, Clarissa had stolen his daughter's man and explained the matter in an ambiguous manner...

A grudge that arose because of romantic interests always seemed better than that which happened as a result of his daughter's intention of killing. It was unknown whether Mr. Baker believe his words or not, but they entered a private room together.

On the other hand, Clarissa and others also entered their private room. Sandra had started treating Clarissa as a family member, hence, she didn't hold herself back at all and began criticizing Kayla.

"Shameless. Jacque, that's your favorite little sister, who's terribly presumptuous. If I had known then that your sister is such a shameless person, I wouldn't have got married to you at all." Listening to that, Clarissa's lips twitched a little, and she started, "Sandra, calm down."

In response, Jacque smiled helplessly. "Well, let's not talk about that. Come on, let's dig in.

Don't let them ruin our appetite."

"It's already ruined."

Sandra turned to Clarissa and uttered, "You've seen that yourself, and I don't mind if you would mock at me, but that's exactly why I despise them. To be frank, I don't even wish that

Clarissa would go back to such parents. They're way over the line."

Clarissa kept quiet. She wasn't really in a position to comment on that. Even though she didn't like the Smallwoods couple either, and she could talk to Matthew about it, she couldn't really make a remark about them in front of others.

Jacque also turned to Matthew with a regretful look in his eyes. "I'm sorry you had to see that. I didn't expect such a thing to happen. We're really sorry to have disappointed you, Clarissa."

Clarissa smiled awkwardly at that. I'm not disappointed. I don't hold out hope or have any expectations, to begin with.

After the dinner, they didn't run into the Smallwoods couple anymore when they left. It wasn't until they got in the car that Clarissa finally turned to Matthew helplessly, and after

exchanging looks with one another, she let out a long breath of a sigh. Matthew held her into his embrace, while his hand brushed through her hair softly as he leaned down to plant a kiss on her forehead.

“Why are you sighing? They aren’t important anyway. You’d be really silly if you let them get to you.”

Clarissa couldn’t help but pout and lifted her head. “But I’ve let them get to me indeed! So, does that mean I’m silly?”

Matthew curled his lips into a broad curve. “Of course not, my precious Clare is the

brightest, but human emotions will somewhat be influenced by the circumstances or people

around them. Thus, that’s inevitable. If a person can really maintain her composure without

getting influenced by anyone, she’s as good as bereft of feelings.”

Clarissa stared at Matthew and burst out into laughter all of a sudden.

“Well, you said everything; can you make up your mind? President Tyson, with such a

faltering temperament, how can you manage your company well?”

Matthew laughed in response. “I have different programs in my brain for managing the

company and cheering up my wife.”

Clarissa pursed her lips as she returned, “You actually have two different programs in your

brain? Are you a monster? Or a robot?”

She even held Matthew’s head and observed it carefully, as if she was really interested to

find out what was in his brain.

And Matthew let her be, as long as she was happy with it.

However, that didn’t really distract her from her emotions. Clarissa fell silent and leaned

against Matthew’s chest. She held his fingers and fiddled with them unwittingly.

“Frankly, I feel that this matter won’t be concealed for long.”

Matthew acknowledged that briefly.

“Tell me, if they discover that I’m actually their biological daughter, will they feel remorse for treating me so badly in the past? Will they ever be repentant within themselves, and will they apologize to me?”

“They will.”

Nevertheless, Clarissa paused for a moment before she added, “I don’t think they’ll apologize to me. They’ll only feel embarrassed or awkward at most. If I were them, I would be awkward too.”

That was what Clarissa thought. Perhaps the Smallwoods couple won’t be able to accept me so soon. It’ll also feel uneasy and unreal for me if they treat me like how they treated Shermaine.

Hence, she didn’t expect the Smallwoods couple to treat her well or to acknowledge her.

Even if they did find out about it, it was sufficient for Clarissa even if they just stopped holding grudges against each other and maintained a peaceful relationship on the veneer.

Yet, Clarissa clearly had no idea at that moment that she had still underestimated the complexity and depravity of human nature.

...

James and Kayla spared their time to visit their daughter again.

Shermaine always assured them that she was fine in the lockup and that they shouldn’t

worry. And each time, Kayla ended up shedding more tears than she did last time.

In her opinion, the more Shermaine tried to convince them of that and endured the hardship

in prison, the more certain she was that Shemaine was only trying to soothe their minds.

“Shermaine, my daughter, you’ve suffered much, but don’t worry. Come year-end, your dad and I will find ways to get you released from here to celebrate the festive season with us.

We've arranged it, and you may come home temporarily. Just wait a little longer, and it'll be fine soon."

In that instance, Shermaine tightened her grip on the receiver, but it was unnoticeable. She smiled and said, "That would be great. I'm sorry that I couldn't be by your side these two years. If I can celebrate the season with you, even if just for a day, it would be really great."

"Sob... sob... You will. You surely will be able to do that this year. My precious daughter, why is life so unfair to you? You're suffering in this place, and the person who set you up is still at large, getting all lovey-dovey with that heartless man. Everybody knows how loving they are to one another, but little do they know that these are two wicked people who sent my daughter to suffer in here. Also, your Uncle Jacque and Aunt Sandra even—"

"Kay, stop that," James cut his wife off.

Then, he turned to his daughter and said, "Shermaine, don't be worried inside there. They'll let you out for the holiday season. Rest assured, once you're out, we'll seek ways so you won't have to go back in again. Bear with us, we're both looking for connections to help you... As with those people, so many years have passed..."

"Sure, Dad and Mom. I understand. Don't worry. It has been so many years; there's nothing that I can't let go of anymore."

James was relieved at that. "Don't listen to your mom. It's good that you're able to think this way. With our conditions, you're still blessed with a bright future even after coming out of here, so don't worry. All these years, your mom and I have fought hard for you. Everything we own is still yours after you're released. Rest assured."

Shermaine smiled and nodded. Her countenance was so relieved as though she had come to terms with everything that happened in the past. Their visiting time was up, and Shermaine left with the prison officer. Sitting back on her bed in the cell, she clenched her fist so tightly that her nails dug into her palm, and blood started gushing out her palms after a while. At that moment, someone else came in, and Shermaine maintained her smile and nodded, as though nothing had happened. "Hey, Shermaine, we're freeloading again. Did your wealthy parents bring delicious food again?"

They knew that their cell was a little different from the rest, and they were all aware that Shermaine was not only well-taken care of, but also had a backer. She might even get released sooner. All her inmates of the same cell had turned from bullying her to being friendly to her, and such a change was a result of Shermaine's thoughtful efforts. Shermaine smiled. "Don't mention it. We're all friends." Then, she stood up and wiped her hand calmly. One of the inmates looked at her, and just as she was about to say something to Shermaine, she was stopped by another person. They exchanged looks and fell silent. Everyone returned to doing their own things, and no one dared to ask Shermaine about it.