

That Can Be Arranged chapter 12

Chapter 12 Too Many Coincidences for Comfort

"Yes, sir!" The bodyguards immediately moved in synchronization as they dragged Sophia and Lauren like the women were two burlap sacks of potatoes. Upon reaching the entrance, they unceremoniously threw them out the doors.

The members of the orchestra who had gathered around to watch this were stunned speechless, and a stifling hush followed Nicholas' ruthless and unforgiving gesture.

Tessa, too, took a while to recover from the initial shock of it all, and she didn't snap out of her daze until Nicholas spoke again.

"Greg, are you hurt?" Nicholas drew closer to Gregory, a warm, fatherly concern filling his dark orbs. He looked entirely different from the intimidating and domineering president he had been moments ago.

"I'm fine, Daddy," Gregory answered with a gentle nod of his little head.

When everyone heard this, they let out a collective sigh of relief.

Knowing that she was the cause of this fiasco, Tessa stepped forward with her shoulders squared and said apologetically, "I'm terribly sorry, President Sawyer. Those two were after me, but Gregory nearly got hurt in the midst of the chaos. This is all my fault!"

When Nicholas heard this, he gave her a brief, frosty look, then retracted his gaze as he replied stoically, "Yes, this all happened because of you, but since somebody else has been punished for it, I'll let you off the hook." He paused, then added in the same frigid tone, "It's almost time for lunch anyway. I'll bring Gregory home after we dine at the restaurant. Come along."

With that, he deftly picked Gregory up into his arms and headed for the doors.

As Gregory leaned against the curve of Nicholas' broad shoulder, his mind began to race. He was desperate to come up with a plan to stay by Tessa's side for the rest of the day.

Tessa, on the other hand, dared not dawdle as she straightened her clothes and followed Nicholas out of the building.

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The three of them were presently housed within a private restaurant by the name of Winston Trove. Being one of the most exclusive private restaurants in the industry, the head chef manning the kitchen was as good as any Michelin-star chef, and he had once been involved in the food preparation for a national banquet. Members of the upper-crust society and famous icons had tried to dine here, but the restaurant wouldn't take them in unless they had a reservation made at least a month in advance!

Under normal circumstances, Tessa would never be able to step foot into a place like this. It was only because of Nicholas and his powerful connections that she was able to sit here today for what would be the most expensive lunch of her life.

That being said, the pressure that came along with such fine food was insurmountable and suffocating. Tessa sat stiffly in her seat, unsure if breathing was something she could afford to do in the presence of a world-renowned business mogul.

Conversely, Nicholas seemed rather at ease, if not overtly impassive. He ordered a few dishes, and when he handed the menu over to Tessa, he said flatly, "Order whatever you like."

She took the menu graciously, intending to order something simple for herself, but when she saw the prices on the menu, her eyes nearly bugged out of her head.

These prices are ridiculous! She stared at the numbers incredulously. Broccoli stir-fry that comes with a three-digit price tag? What, was the broccoli planted in golden soil or something?

Shuddering at the thought of the bill that would come at the end of this meal, she made a small order and picked out the cheapest fruit juice there was, then shakily handed the menu back to the waiter. "Thank you." She managed to thank the attendant, still in disbelief.

It didn't take long for the dishes to be served, and all of them looked as delicious as they smelled. They were arranged neatly at the center of the dining table, so aesthetically pleasing that it was hard to believe they were actual food.

As Tessa's gaze swept over the dishes, she noted with no small amount of surprise that they all featured luxurious ingredients, the names of which she probably could not pronounce!

More to the point, the dishes before her would at least fetch a four-digit price tag each!

She gulped, suddenly finding herself at a loss for words as she mused wistfully to herself, These rich folks sure live differently. This meal alone would cost me a month's worth of income!

Just then, a sweet and childish voice pulled her out of her thoughts. "Lunch will be on Daddy today, Miss Pretty Lady, so dig in!" Gregory grinned at her adorably.

Tessa flashed him a gentle smile upon hearing his invitation. "Alright."

She might have agreed to dig in, but she hardly ate anything at all.

At the sight of this, Gregory asked worriedly, "Why aren't you eating, Miss Pretty Lady? Do you not like the food?"

Nicholas looked up at her inquisitively when he heard this and pressed, "What is it? Does the food not agree with your palate, Miss Reinhart?"

"Oh, no, it's not that. Everything's delicious," Tessa said hastily, then promptly shoveled a few spoonfuls of food onto her own plate.

Both father and son said nothing more after this, and the three of them ate their meal in silence.

Nicholas wasn't much of a talker, though he did help Gregory load up his plate every once in a while.

Tessa, on the other hand, was so mortified by the idea of things turning awkward that she chose to dedicate most of her energy to deshelling prawns and crabs for Gregory, but at that moment, Nicholas pointed out in his signature deep baritone, "Miss Reinhart, Greg can't take crabs. He's allergic to them."

Blinking in surprise at this new information, she said, "Really? I'm allergic to crabs, too!"

"Really?" Gregory exclaimed, delighted that he had something in common with his favorite pretty lady. He added enthusiastically, "You know what, Miss Pretty Lady? I'm not just allergic to crabs, but prawns and other shellfish as well! I can't touch them, but I can eat fish!"

Tessa couldn't hide her bewilderment when she heard this. "What a coincidence! Me, too!"

Next to them, Nicholas listened to their exchange with a somber expression on his face. He was starting to think that this woman was trying to get on Gregory's good side, but upon closer observation, he noticed that she indeed avoided the prawns and crabs, though she ate a healthy portion of fish.

He also noticed that she was a rather fastidious eater. She had delicately picked out the green onions, cilantro, and carrots from her food, and all these happened to be the same things that Gregory hated.

What was even more ridiculous was how her taste in food matched Gregory's to an exact tee, and she was just as picky as he was.

The revelation made Nicholas gloomy. He liked to think of all these as coincidences, or more accurately, coincidences that had been deliberately created by this woman.

Midway through lunch, Tessa excused herself to use the restroom.

The moment she left their table, Nicholas pulled out his phone and hurriedly texted Edward, his assistant. 'How's the investigation on Tessa Reinhart coming along?'

Meanwhile, Edward had spent a whole morning looking into everything there was to know about Tessa and her background. However, he was overcome with shock when he laid eyes on the information he had painstakingly retrieved.

This... She...