

Always Been Yours Chapter 1431

I have nothing else to say except that it's great to have you back, Darling. Kieran's fans wasted no time in welcoming him back and immediately spammed their good wishes under the post. Once he was aware of Nicholas' decision to inform the public of his well-being, he whisked out his phone and started browsing through the comments.

When he saw the fans and netizens arguing about whether they should place their faith in the Sawyer Group's official statement, he decided to take a selfie to soothe their ruffled feathers. Then, he posted it on Twitter and wrote the caption, "I'm back."

In the picture, he was standing on a field dressed in a casual suit with the golden rays landing on him. He was indeed a sight for sore eyes, despite his rugged looks due to his recent stay in the hospital. He still exuded an aristocratic charm that silenced their squabbles.

Darling's gotten more handsome." "I was worried that the news from the Sawyer Group was false, but I'm at ease now seeing his picture." "I'm gonna save this picture as my phone wallpaper."

Fans that fell for his appearance were swept up off their feet by that picture of Kieran once again. Later on, Kieran arrived home to see a bowl of salt by the door.

Then, Stefania's voice rang out, "Throw a pinch of salt over your left shoulder to chase away all the bad luck." He felt it was unnecessary, but he still listened to her and did as he was told before joining Stefania and Tobias for lunch.

In the blink of an eye, the new year was right at their doorstep once more. Nicholas was busier than ever as preparations for the Sawyer Group's annual dinner were underway.

On this very day, Stefania came to visit the boys and told Tessa all about it. "You should attend the annual party with Nicholas," "Okay." Tessa nodded and agreed. Soon, it was the day of the annual dinner.

All employees of the Sawyer Group were in attendance. The venue was heavily decorated to make it look lively and festive. There were also several expensive gifts placed on the stage that were meant to reward the best employees of the year.

Those gifts garnered the staff's attention as they hoped to be the lucky ones awarded this year to kick off the new year with a grand entrance.

After some time, when Stefania saw that the party was about to start, she poked Tobias' side before striding into the hall with a hand linked with his.

Their appearance immediately garnered everyone's attention. Although they were well in their middle ages, they still looked relatively young as they took good care of their health.

"Chairman Sawyer. Mrs. Sawyer," the employees respectfully greeted them wherever they went. Tobias and Stefania also returned their greetings warmly.

Finally, they went on their own way after exchanging the customary pleasantries; Tobias went to chat with the company's shareholders while Stefania talked to their wives.

Not long after, one could hear excited gasps and screams throughout the banquet hall. "Master Kieran's here!"

"He looks so handsome today."

"Master Kieran smiled at me!" The female employees couldn't help but fangirl as they tightly gripped each other in their enthusiasm.

Kieran donned a formal white suit as he appeared in the banquet hall. He was a feast for the eyes with his striking face and well-built body.

"Good evening, everyone," he greeted them with a smile as he waved when he saw how passionate the employees were about meeting him.

His action only made the female employees go even wilder. Finally, Nicholas and Tessa entered the hall. They were dressed in matching formal wear and sauntered hand in hand.

Everyone held their breaths the moment Nicholas and Tessa made their appearance. They were truly a sight to behold with their striking looks and composure.

Nicholas wore his usual bespoke black suit, but people still couldn't move their eyes from his perfectly sculpted face and the distinguished air surrounding him.

On the other hand, Tessa was dressed in a light-colored evening gown as she placed her arm delicately on his. She had a white shawl draped across her shoulder and looked dignified yet elegant.

They made a gorgeous picturesque scene as they stood side by side, truly bringing out their captivating features. Besides that, Gregory was an added surprise.

He held Tessa's hand as he tried his best to mimic Nicholas' solemn gaze, which rather backfired as he still looked as adorable as ever. "President Sawyer and Miss Tessa are such a match made in heaven."

"The Young Master is so cute. He's so soft and cuddly I wanna hug him."

“Miss Tessa looks better than on television.” The employees couldn’t help but gossip in fervent whispers. All in all, Tessa and Nicholas’ grand entrance was the climax of the night.

Always Been Yours Chapter 1432

A brave employee stepped forward to greet Tessa. “Miss Tessa, you look better than in pictures.” “You’re so graceful too.”

“I like you, Miss Tessa.” Tessa nodded with a smile as an acknowledgment of their praises. Then, Nicholas gracefully walked up the stage. Once he was right before the mic, everyone unconsciously fell silent.

“The new year is fast approaching. So, I’d like to wish everyone a happy new year and thank everyone here for all the hard work you’ve done.” Then, he paused for a moment as he scanned the whole room.

Tessa stood beneath the stage, looking up at the extraordinary man with pure, unabashed love in her eyes. Nicholas spoke up once more.

“We intentionally asked for all the employee’s wish lists. So, the prizes this year are quite something. The biggest prize is a car.”

That got all the employees amped up. Then, Kieran walked over from the other end of the stage as he was the host for the night and in charge of managing the scene.

He continued where Nicholas ended and said with a charming smile playing across his lips, “I’m going to let all of you in on a little secret. That car right there is worth a hundred thousand.”

“Oh, my God! It’s a luxury car.” The employees once again got into a heated discussion. Kieran continued to chime in when he felt the atmosphere was reaching its peak, “I believe everyone is eager to get started. So, why don’t we ask our handsome president to do the honors for the first draw?”

“Yes!” Everyone cheered as they went along with his suggestion. Alas, Nicholas rejected it. “It’s okay. I don’t want to take what’s theirs.”

“Come on, Mr. Sawyer. You should get the ball rolling!” someone in the crowd shouted, and the others echoed their sentiment. Unfortunately, he still insisted on not participating.

Then, someone else suggested, “Why don’t we ask Miss Tessa, then?”

The majority of the crowd agreed with that. So, Tessa nodded and walked up the stage, not wanting to disappoint everyone. Kieran immediately walked over to her with the lucky draw box in hand and quipped, "Tessa, let's see how lucky you are, shall we?"

"Yes, we shall." She chuckled before reaching out her hand. She didn't hesitate as she swiftly pulled out a ticket and passed it to Kieran. "And now it's your turn to do the honors. I think that it's best that I don't look."

He nodded and opened it with a snap. "Let's see how lucky-"

However, he was stunned when he saw the name in the slip that he trailed off mid-sentence. Tessa saw his reaction and asked in confusion, "What's wrong? Did I not get anything?"

Then, she leaned over and was perplexed to see that she actually drew the first prize. Kieran came back to his senses and exclaimed loudly, "Tessa, you're truly blessed by the heavens! We were just talking about the biggest

prize, and you got it! Lady Luck is truly shining on you tonight!" All the employees had their mouths agape when they heard his words.

"Wow. Did she get the first prize? Miss Tessa is so lucky. God, imagine if she tried her luck with a lottery slip!" "Aw, man! I was just thinking of trying my luck to see if I could draw the first prize. I didn't expect Miss Tessa to beat me to the punch."

Kieran laughed awkwardly. "I promise. We didn't cheat." Tessa also smiled. But, when she saw the disappointed faces of the crowd, she announced, "That doesn't count. I'll draw again."

Then, she picked another ticket. But, this time, she wasn't that lucky anymore and only got a gift card worth 10. So, Kieran handed the gift card to her while he joked with the employees beneath the stage. "See. We didn't rig the draw."

Everyone laughed at his joke as they proceeded to look at the box with eager eyes. So, the draw officially started amid the crowd's laughter as the employees lined up to try their fortune.

Tessa was also involved in handing out the prizes to the lucky winners. She smiled broadly as she watched the huge reactions from the staff when they received a good prize.

Besides that, the employees also loved collecting the prize from her as they used this opportunity as a meet-up with a famous musician. "Miss Tessa, I got a gift card."

"Third prize for me!"

“I got a crystal cup.”

Tessa was exceptionally patient with these people. In fact, she even cheered those who had no luck with the lucky draw this evening, encouraging them not to give up and try again next year.

And for that reason, the employees of Sawyer Group loved her even more, for they could sense that Tessa had no airs. Later, several of them even came forth and proposed a toast. ‘Happy Holidays, Miss Tessa.’

“Thanks.” Tessa substituted the wine with fruit juice as she toasted them in return, one by one. Furthermore, she would also take the initiative to find topics to communicate with the employees while they were still at the party.

All in all, Tessa got along with them like a house on fire, and she successfully gained the favor of countless employees. During this period, Stefania and Tobias also kept tabs on Tessa from the side.

They were extremely satisfied with Tessa’s grace and decency. As family members, Timothy and Sabrina also showed up halfway through the lucky draw.

Since the employees of Sawyer Group were familiar with them, they greeted the two politely, “President Reinhart, Miss Gulliver, you’re here. as well. Happy Holidays.”

“Happy Holidays,” the two greeted the employees back before walking hand-in-hand toward Tessa. “Tess. Nicholas, they called out cheerily.

“Oh, you came,” Tessa responded happily while Nicholas greeted them with a nod. They scanned their surroundings and commented rather tacitly, “It sure is lively.”

“Well-we only get to organize the company’s year-end party once a year, so of course, it has to be lively.” Tessa chuckled. Sabrina was interested in the lucky draw game she saw taking place in the corner of the room.

“Tess, may I try my luck at the lucky draw?” She shot Tessa an expectant look. Nonetheless, Tessa turned to look at Nicholas. instead of responding immediately. After all, those rewards were meant for the employees of Sawyer Group.

Nicholas instantly realized the reason behind her hesitance just with a look. So, he curled his lips into a faint smile and permitted, ‘Sure. Go ahead and try your luck.’

“Thank you, President Sawyer. Thanks, Tess!” Sabrina bounded straight to the lucky draw area immediately after expressing her gratitude.

Still, she had no intention of robbing the employees of Sawyer Group of their rewards. She didn’t lack anything. Besides, she took an interest in the lucky draw event purely

because she wanted to join in on the fun. Timothy followed her as he was worried that someone would bump into her.

Meanwhile, in the lucky draw game area, Kieran greeted them enthusiastically after he saw the two of them approaching. "Hey, you guys are here! So-do you guys want to try your luck?"

"Me, me! It's precisely the reason I came over," Sabrina had already placed her hand in the box while she spoke. She randomly fished out a lucky draw ticket. Unfortunately, luck wasn't really on her side that evening, for she only managed to draw a gift card worth ten bucks.

Even so, she still smiled happily. She even teased Timothy, "Here! A Christmas gift for you." "Thanks." Timothy took it with a smile. His eyes were drowned with fondness and gentleness as he looked at Sabrina.

Gregory also made his appearance just then. "Uncle Kieran, I want to draw a prize too." He looked at Kieran with eager eyes, looking adorable beyond any reason.

Overwhelmed by his cuteness, Kieran personally brought the lucky draw box to him. "Here you go. Let's see how lucky you are." Unexpectedly, the little guy was pretty lucky, for he successfully won a phone.

Just as Kieran handed over the prize and was about to say something, Gregory was already dashing toward Tessa with the mobile phone in his arms after thanking Kieran.

"Mommy, look! I got a mobile phone. For you." With that, he held the prize in front of Tessa as though he was presenting a valuable piece of treasure. "Thank you, Greg."

Tessa took the item from Gregory and grinned from ear to ear. The others also started praising the little guy for being so sensible. The atmosphere was cheerful and lively as everyone enjoyed themselves.

In contrast, the atmosphere surrounding Adam and Joseph's family members was far more desolate.

Perhaps it was because Nicholas had just struck them down; the shareholders present dared not even breathe a word in their presence. Some even went out of their way to avoid them as though they were the plague.

Due to that, Adam and Joseph's family members were bristling with anger. Of course, what only pushed them to the brink of their rage was the fact that their fathers, Adam and Joseph, should have been present on such an occasion.

Yet, they were absent because of Nicholas, which hindered them from executing any schemes that might knock Nicholas down a peg. It was already very late when the year-end party. ended that night.

Nicholas was getting ready to take Tessa and Gregory home when he realized that Tessa was looking rather sleepy. Before they departed, he called Kieran to his side and instructed, "I will leave the clean-up to you. Don't worry. Edward will stay behind and assist you."

Always Been Yours Chapter 1433

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Always Been Yours Chapter 1434

"Of course. Just go home and leave the rest to me." Kieran waved Nicholas goodbye. Tessa leaned against Nicholas during their ride back home. At this moment, she felt exceptionally at peace and drowsy as she sniffed the minty fragrance on his body.

Meanwhile, Gregory, who was in her arms, had long fallen asleep. Tessa abruptly blinked awake when she sensed that the car had come to a stop.

She instinctively swiveled her head and groggily looked out of the window. Then, she muttered softly, "Oh, we're home." With that, she intended to pick Gregory up and get out of the car. However, Nicholas beat her to it.

"I'll take him back to his room and put him to bed. Go ahead and wash up first if you're feeling tired. You should rest. Don't wait up." Immediately afterward, Nicholas left the car with Gregory in his arms.

Warmth filled Tessa's heart as she stared at the man's back silhouette. She followed closely behind. Yet, she quietly tiptoed to the baby's room and checked on Gordon instead of washing up in the master bedroom.

The little guy parted his lips as he slept soundly in the room. Tessa's heart was overwhelmed with pure, unadulterated love as she stared fondly at the little guy in his crib.

Then, she carefully tucked him in before closing the room with an inaudible click. As the entire family had retired to bed rather late last night, they woke up slightly later than usual the next day. Nicholas headed straight to the company after breakfast.

He had just sat on his seat when he heard. Edward knocking on the door and entering. "President Sawyer, Zachary, Calvin, and Felix are here. They say they want to talk to you."

Nicholas narrowed his eyes when he heard those names. Still, he nodded dispassionately after he gave it a thought, agreeing to meet them. "Sure. Bring them up to my office."

With that, Edward acquiesced with a nod and left. Soon, he strode into the office again, but this time with the trio in tow. Nicholas didn't hesitate to beckon the three older men to take a seat.

Once they took their seats, he drawled knowingly, "I wonder what brings the three of you here today."

The three of them exchanged glances before biting the bullet. Eventually, they came to an agreement and allowed the calm and composed Zachary to do the talking. "Nicholas, we won't beat around the bush with you. We are here today to make a deal with you. Just state your condition as long as you agree to let our fathers go."

This was the decision they made after careful consideration last night. These days, they could clearly sense the division resulting from the absence of the two elders in the family. It has been decided. We need to be flexible in finding a way out, and the most crucial thing to do now is to bail our fathers out. As long as we can do that, we can retrieve whatever we lost once the time is right.

Yet, little did they know that Nicholas could see through their intentions with just a glance. In fact, this deal was precisely what Nicholas wanted. He curled his lips into a cold smirk and asked in a glacial voice, "Any conditions?"

"Yes, any conditions." Zachary nodded resolutely. A shrewd gleam flashed across Nicholas' eyes before he said languidly, "In that case, I want the management right for the branch office of Sawyer Group in Europe."

Zachary, Calvin, and Felix's facial expressions took a turn for the worst almost as soon as those words escaped Nicholas' lips. Felix had a nasty scowl on his face as he snarled through his teeth, "You are simply taking advantage of the situation!"

Although the other two men remained mum on the matter, there was no doubt that they also felt the same way. They felt that Nicholas was not only taking an inch but taking a whole mile.

Alas, Nicholas didn't care what they thought as he looked at the rather displeased-looking trio. "You guys were the ones who permitted me to state my demand as I like," he reminded them flatly.

"It's true, but you can't make such a deal!" Zachary attempted to bargain. Unfortunately, Nicholas completely dismissed him. "That's my condition. Take it or leave it. I can give you some time to think about it. Come to me again when you make up your mind."

Once he said that, he immediately dialed his extension, called Edward into his office, and ordered, "Kindly see our guests off."

Edward nodded, walked up to Zachary and the others, and gestured politely, showing them the way out. The three brothers' angry frowns deepened. Yet, they couldn't do anything against Nicholas.

In the end, they had no choice but to leave. Once they were back in the car, Felix and Calvin looked at Zachary and demanded, "Well? What now?"

"We will go to the police station and discuss this matter with our fathers, Zachary concluded. Soon, the three arrived at the police station. Since Zachary and the others had bribed the police beforehand, Adam and Joseph were actually doing pretty well in the station..

When the two saw their sons approaching, they immediately asked about the outcome of the meeting with Nicholas today. "What did Nicholas say?"

"That kid is simply too greedy! He wants the management right for the Sawyer Group branch office in Europe!"

Always Been Yours Chapter 1435

Calvin didn't bother waiting for Zachary to speak as he took the lead and reported the outcome of the meeting with Nicholas earlier. Adam and Joseph fumed with rage once they heard his words.

"How dare that kid put forth such a condition!" Joseph hissed through gritted teeth. Then, he spat out a few nasty remarks before looking at Adam. "What do you think?"

The others also turned their attention to Adam. A cunning glint appeared in Adam's dangerously narrowed eyes. "Since he dares to make such a deal, we will grant his wish!"

"Grant him?! But... Uncle Adam, we are talking about the management rights of the whole of Europe." Felix was displeased by Adam. In his opinion, there was no way they should give up and allow Nicholas to do as he pleased.

Zachary and Calvin also chimed in and expressed their disapproval. On the contrary, Joseph merely tilted his head at Adam and said nothing. He knew better than anyone that Adam wasn't someone who would relent so easily.

And he was right on the money. Adam sneered, "We're merely agreeing to his deal. There will be plenty of chances for us to deal with him once we successfully get out of this place. When that happens, I will make sure he pays everything he has taken from us back with interest."

Later that day, Zachary, Calvin, and Felix made their appearance at the headquarters of Sawyer Group again.

Edward knocked on the door and entered the office. There was a hint of a smile playing on his lips as he informed, "President Sawyer, it's just like you predicted. Master Adam and Master Joseph's sons have returned. They are downstairs now. Do you still want to see them?"

"Of course," Nicholas sneered as he requested Edward to lead the three to his office. The three brothers showed up again in Nicholas' office a few minutes later.

"We have come to an agreement. It's impossible for us to hand over the management rights of the whole of Europe. We can, however, hand over half." Zachary got straight to the point and directly stated the result of their discussion.

Nicholas didn't say anything as he stared them down. Instead, he simply leaned into his chair and tapped his fingers lightly on the table. The office fell into silence, and the atmosphere was very oppressive.

Zachary, Calvin, and Felix looked rather unhappy as they stared at the man who remained silent after their proposal. Eventually, Felix and Calvin gradually lost their composure. They planned to use their statuses as his elder to pressure Nicholas into agreeing.

However, Zachary shot them a warning look, stopping them before they could speak. Sure enough, Nicholas noticed their antics. Still, he merely looked at them as though he wasn't seeing them at all.

At this moment, Zachary let out a light cough. He intended to persuade Nicholas with a passive-aggressive approach.

"This deal is our biggest concession. Not to mention, the success achieved in Europe over the past few years had been the result of our fathers' hard work. That's why we can't hand over the management rights of the whole of Europe to you. Otherwise, I fear they won't be able to take the blow once they are released."

Nicholas finally expressed his opinion upon hearing Zachary's words and nodded in agreement. The idiot musketeers breathed a sigh of relief after they received Nicholas' approval.

Calvin immediately asked eagerly, "When will you let our fathers go then?" "I will have someone draft the contract as soon as possible. I will let the two of them go once you sign the contract."

This was the first time Nicholas spoke after the trio had shown up with their proposal. With that, the three left, feeling delighted with the outcome. Kieran and Tobias came not long after they left.

Once they entered Nicholas' office, Tobias inquired, "What were your uncles doing here?"

Although Kieran didn't say anything, he still looked at Nicholas with concern. Nicholas smiled faintly as he replied, "They wish for me to let Granduncle Adam and Granduncle Joseph go."

"What did you say?" Tobias pressed on. "Of course, I disagreed. But they made an offer." Hence, Nicholas briefly told them about the content of their discussion earlier.

Kieran and Tobias were thrilled at the news, for even though they only agreed to hand over half of the management rights, it was enough to make Adam and the others suffer a significant loss.

Regardless, they couldn't help but worry after their happiness subsided. "Releasing Adam and Joseph is undoubtedly akin to breeding calamities for the future. They will surely cause trouble for us in the future."

By the time Tobias finished his sentence, the furrow between his brows was scrunched up in concern. Kieran also nodded profusely, acknowledging

the truth in Tobias' statement. "If they can come up with a car accident this time, who knows what tricks they will think of to deal with us next time."

"Have no fear. Although I agreed to let them go, that doesn't mean the police are willing to." Nicholas chuckled lightly, utterly nonchalant. As for Tobias and Kieran, they were both taken aback after they processed the meaning behind his words.

Nicholas arrived early at the company the following day. This time Edward knocked on the door and walked in not long after he entered the office, but he came bearing good news. "President Sawyer, I have finished drafting the contract you requested yesterday."

Always Been Yours Chapter 1436

After that, he handed a file to Nicholas for a final check. Nicholas looked through it, nodded in satisfaction, and said, "Contact my uncles. Tell them to come over and sign this contract."

Edward swiftly carried out the task. Zachary, Calvin, and Felix showed up in Nicholas' office in less than half an hour. When Nicholas saw them, he waved the drafted contract in his hand before handing it over. "Have a look and sign it if there's no issue."

They exchanged a look with one another, took the contract, and checked it for any loopholes. However, their facial expression drastically changed the moment they read through the contents of the contract, especially Calvin. His volcanic temperament instantly erupted, and he criticized, "Are you not afraid of drowning yourself to death in the gigantic pool of wealth profited from all these companies?!"

"We can't hand over all these companies to you, Zachary also immediately expressed his disapproval sullenly.

It turned out that the management rights indicated in the contract were all branch offices that Nicholas had picked out long ago, and they were the most profitable companies in Europe.

As Nicholas had expected that his bullheaded yet foolish uncles would not agree to his terms, he wasn't surprised when he was confronted with their rejection. He merely intoned calmly, "That's fine with me. But you have to think twice, no? We can pretend that our previous discussion never took place if you do not wish to agree to this deal."

After that, he rose to his feet and stared them down coldly as he instructed, "Edward, kindly show these three uncles of mine the way out."

Zachary, Calvin, and Felix were about to explode when they were faced with such disrespect. "Nicholas, are you really going to cross swords with us? We're your uncles!" Felix questioned sharply.

Nicholas merely curled the corner of his lips into a condescending smirk as he drawled, "I thought we'd already fallen out long ago." When Zachary looked at the man whose facial expression was as cold as ice, he knew that there was no turning back regarding this contract.

The other two, who were slower on the uptake, also came to the same realization. In that instant, they were engulfed with a violent wave of anger and humiliation.

They looked at Zachary, silently asking what they should do. Unfortunately, Zachary knew no alternatives. The veins on his hand that was holding the contract protruded as he clutched it tightly. "We will sign it."

As soon as these words escaped Zachary's lips, the trio immediately had distressed looks on their faces. Soon enough, they signed the contract. Once Zachary reluctantly handed the contract back to Nicholas, he asked with a somber gaze, "When will you release our fathers?"

"I did promise to let Granduncle Adam and Granduncle Joseph go, but at the end of the day, it's still up to the police to decide whether they can be released."

A devious gleam flashed across Nicholas' eyes as he kept the contract away. In short, what Nicholas really meant was that although he withdrew the lawsuit and decided not to sue Adam and Joseph, the evidence of their illegal operation was still conclusive. Therefore, the police would definitely punish them according to the law.

Zachary, Calvin, and Felix were struck dumb. before they finally comprehended what Nicholas meant. Their bodies trembled with rage at that epiphany.

"Nicholas, you tricked us?!" Zachary's eyes reddened with fury as he glared ferociously at Nicholas. Calvin even wanted to beat Nicholas up.

Alas, Edward held him down before he even managed to come close to Nicholas. At the same time, Edward called the company's security personnel to Nicholas' office.

Nicholas sneered as he looked at them with unbridled disgust in his eyes and ordered coldly, "Send them away." However, the three couldn't possibly be willing to leave just like that, especially after they found out that they were tricked. "Nicholas, ask your men to let go of me!"

"Give me back the contract!" The three bellowed as they struggled to break free. Nicholas simply ignored them. Moments later, the security personnel dragged them out by force.

Although they felt as though the last string of their sanity was on the brink of snapping, there was nothing they could do. Meanwhile, Adam and Joseph had been desperately waiting for good news from their sons at the police station.

Yet, they waited for hours only to see their sons stomp over, bristling with anger. Adam immediately caught on that something was wrong as he demanded, "What happened? Did Nicholas go back on his words?" "Dad, Nicholas tricked us!"

Calvin furiously recounted the incident that took place just now. As the two elders didn't expect to be outfoxed by Nicholas, they were so enraged that they could feel their blood pressure rising to dangerous levels. Finally, after several deep breaths, the two managed to hiss, "How dare he!"

Nicholas was utterly oblivious to the fact that he had been cursed to hell and back, courtesy of his darling relatives. Well, even if he were made aware of it, he wouldn't care.

That evening, when Kieran found out that Nicholas had succeeded in setting Adam and Joseph's sons up, he immediately took Timothy to Dynasty Gardens to

celebrate. During the dinner, he talked about the scene he saw while he was at the company that afternoon and laughed jubilantly.

“Tessa, if only you were there to witness the look on their faces when they were forced out of Nicholas’ office this afternoon. Oh, I should have recorded that!”

As he spoke, he toasted Nicholas in admiration, “Nicholas, you are, no doubt, still the smartest one between us. You have successfully avenged me by making them suffer a great loss.”

Nicholas curled his lips into a slight smile. It was apparent that he highly appreciated the compliment. Likewise, Timothy also looked at Nicholas in admiration. Then, he said jokingly, “Nicholas, seeing as how you are able to effortlessly get your hands on so many good companies, it seems to me that there is much to learn from you in the future.”

Just like that, the three men drank and enjoyed themselves. Tessa and Sabrina exchanged glances at each other. Nonetheless, they paid no attention to the men who were drinking.

Sabrina carefully scrutinized the baby in Tessa’s arms. She honestly felt that Gordon had managed to grow rapidly within such a short period of time as she exclaimed with excitement, “Tess, why do I feel that Gordon resembles you more as he grows?”

“I feel the same way.” Tessa looked at Gordon tenderly. At this moment, Gregory leaned over. Then, he chimed in with his bell-like voice, “Little Brother looks like Mommy. He will be very beautiful. when he grows up.”

Both women burst out into unrestrained laughter when they heard this. Tessa ruffled Gregory’s hair as she elaborated with a gentle chuckle, “Greg, beautiful isn’t exactly the word we would use to describe a boy’s appearance. We usually associate the word beautiful with girls.”

Gregory stuck out his tongue when he heard Tessa’s explanation. It was a fun-filled evening. Before everyone realized it, they had begun discussing their Christmas plans. Tessa tilted her head at her younger brother and asked, “What plans do you have for the Christmas holiday this year?”

“Well, I have zero plans at the moment. Do you have any plans in store for me, Tess?” Timothy responded with another question, Tessa nodded and proposed, “Come over and join us for dinner if you have no special plans for Christmas.”

Timothy naturally agreed after he heard Tessa’s invitation. That night, the three men imbibed quite a bit of alcohol. When Tessa laid her eyes on Kieran and Timothy, who were utterly wasted, she suggested, “Look at you two getting drunk like this. Why don’t you guys stay for tonight?”

“No, I can’t be third-wheeling you and Nicholas.” Kieran shook his head and refused immediately. Timothy followed suit and nodded profusely.

When Tessa saw this, instead of forcing them, she eventually turned her attention to Sabrina. She said apologetically, “Sorry for having to trouble you to look after Timothy for me tonight. I truly appreciate all your hard work.”

“No worries, Tess.” Sabrina nodded in response before she swiftly left with Timothy in tow. Once they returned to the apartment, she struggled to help the man into the bedroom. She breathed a heavy sigh of relief the moment she successfully positioned him on the bed.

Since he was alternating between sobriety and drunkenness, his misty eyes, coupled with his handsome facial features, made for a pretty seductive sight. Sabrina couldn’t help but be enthralled by his good looks.

She only came back to her senses after a while. The moment she did, her cheeks flushed beet red with embarrassment. After a while, she bent over and helped the man undress.

Yet, just as she undid a button, a warm hand suddenly grabbed her wrist, followed by momentary dizziness. Afterward, she stared blankly at the man who was pinning her down on the bed.

“Sabrina...” Timothy called out in his charmingly husky voice. His voice sounded so good that it made Sabrina’s heart skip a beat. Hence, she unconsciously tightened her grip on Timothy’s clothes, anticipating yet feeling anxious about what was about to happen next.

The man in front of her leaned closer and closer. At the same time, the surrounding atmosphere was so silent to the point that they could hear each other’s powerful heartbeats.

The air around them became increasingly warm too. Sabrina couldn’t help but close her eyes. In the next second, their lips touched with utmost tenderness as it deepened.

Sabrina froze for a moment before she took the initiative to wrap her arms around the man’s neck and raise her head to respond to the kisses. The temperature in the room gradually rose with their passion.

Two figures could be seen hugging each other tightly under the bright moonlight that shone in from the window. Just when everything seemed to be about to fall into place, Timothy returned to his senses at such a crucial moment. Remorse flashed across his eyes as he looked at the disheveled woman in his arms. “Sorry, I couldn’t help it.”

As he spoke, he helped Sabrina straighten her clothes with trembling hands. Sabrina looked over with dazed eyes. Her gaze was so alluring, which made her look all the more delectable in Timothy's eyes.

As a result, his Adam's apple bobbed in his throat slightly when he saw this, and the veins on his forehead bulged as he tried to resist giving into his lust.

Therefore, Timothy took a deep breath and hastily pushed himself off in an effort to calm himself down, creating a gust of breeze with his rushed movements. Sabrina also finally calmed down at this moment.

A trace of disappointment could be seen in her eyes as she stared at the man who stood by the bed. Actually, I don't oppose what was about to happen just now. After she gave it some thought, she couldn't help but sit up and ask, "Why?"

Timothy instantaneously sensed something was off with her tone when he heard that. He knew that she might have misunderstood him, so he bent down and gently kissed her forehead to soothe her.

Always Been Yours Chapter 1437

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Always Been Yours Chapter 1438

"I don't want us to have our first time under such a circumstance. It's not what I expected." "What do you mean by it's not what you expected?" Sabrina looked over in confusion.

Timothy sat beside her and took her in his arms. His voice was indescribably gentle as he explained, "No flowers. No rings. I don't want to make you feel as though I'm not cherishing you."

The disappointment in Sabrina's heart instantly dissipated, and her heart was filled with immense affection when she heard the man's remarks.

She snuggled into his embrace and returned the hug with a fierce one of her own. Then, she rubbed her cheeks against his chest and murmured, 'Actually, I don't mind these, as long as that someone is you.'

"I mind, though. I want the best for you," Timothy elaborated as he lowered his head and leaned closer to Sabrina. My woman, whom / wanted nothing but to cherish and love dearly.

Happiness and warmth rushed through Sabrina's heart when she heard that. It was as though dozens of cotton candies had filled her heart. Meanwhile, in Dynasty Gardens, Nicholas was feeling a little wobbly at the moment..

So, Tessa helped him back to their room and took care of him. Nicholas' twinkling eyes were filled with fondness as he watched his wife puttering about.

After a quick wash-up, the two lay down on the bed while hugging each other. Although they weren't doing anything, the atmosphere in the room was surprisingly cozy.

"Another year is about to pass right before our eyes. Time flies so fast," Tessa sighed. Nicholas lowered his head and planted a kiss on her forehead before he said with a faint smile, "None of that matters to me. I'm happy as long as you are by my side."

"My, my. Such sweet words. Did you sip some honey today?" Tessa looked up at the handsome man in front of her as her lips were painted with a loving yet contented smile. Nicholas became even busier in the next few days.

It was the same for Tessa, for she had to accompany Stefania to shop for the goods. needed for Christmas. Not only did they have to get new decorations and whatnot, but they also had to purchase suitable Christmas gifts for the Sawyers family friends.

Since the family would be celebrating Christmas at the Sawyer Residence this year, Tessa brought Gregory and Gordon there every day these days.

This undoubtedly made Remus utterly delighted. Just like that, Christmas Eve arrived after several days of being a busy bee. Several relatives paid them a visit and wished them Merry Christmas early in the morning.

Tessa was wholly swamped with work as she helped Stefania entertain the guests. Fortunately, these guests didn't stay for long. and left soon enough. The final batch of kins happened to leave by the time Nicholas brought Kieran and Timothy over.

As Nicholas laid his eyes on his wife, who was so tired that her forehead was beaded with sweat, he immediately stepped forward and tenderly wiped the sweat for her. "Thank you for your hard work."

"I'm fine, though." Tessa smiled sweetly at him. The instant Kieran was faced with the two being lovey-dovey right after work, he commented mischievously, 'Spare me please, Tessa. It's Christmas. I am in no mood to watch you being all gooey with Nicholas."

However, as soon as he said that, he received a slap from Stefania, who was standing next to him. "Hurry up and find a girlfriend if you don't like seeing others displaying their affection in front of you. Otherwise, in the upcoming Christmas, not only will I ask Tessa and Nicholas to continue tormenting you mentally with their affection, but I will also act lovey-dovey with your Dad in front of you for every Christmas Eve dinner party."

"Mom, am I even your biological son? Why are you so cruel to me?" Kieran pressed his hands on his chest, exaggeratedly donning a hurtful expression. Stefania snorted softly, "I can be even crueler like a stepmother if you want."

"Mom doesn't love me anymore. Console me, Timothy Kieran rushed into Timothy's arms. with a look of abject despair. His joker side amused everyone else in the room. Remus also couldn't help the chuckle that escaped his lips..

After they joked around, they eventually sat down in the living room. Nicholas, Kieran, and Timothy were having a game of chess with Remus and Tobias. Meanwhile, Tessa was virtuously refilling their tea from time to time.

Although she maintained her poise throughout the match, that still couldn't stop her growing amusement as Kieran's cries rang in her ears, "Hey, hey! How the hell can you capture my chess piece even after I move it to this spot? No, no, no. This doesn't count. I will start again."

"Kieran, do you not understand the meaning behind the saying, 'life is like chess, no regrets?" Timothy was rendered speechless by his audacity. I have never encountered a chess player as shameless as Kieran. He keeps retracting his moves, demanding a redo!

Still, Kieran didn't stop his antics as he continued, "This game is solely for entertainment purposes and not a formal competition. So, who cares about that philosophy of yours?"

Tessa couldn't hold it in any longer as she laughed out loud. Next to her, Stefania, who was looking after Gordon, also giggled. When Gordon saw Stefania's smile, he waved his petite hands and babbled happily. Stefania was instantly taken prisoner by his cuteness when she noticed this.

Always Been Yours Chapter 1439

Stefania tapped his little nose affectionately and cooed, "Gordon, are you laughing at your Uncle Kieran for acting shamelessly too?" Gordon responded with a round of cheerful giggles.

On the other hand, Gregory paid zero attention to the comings and goings around him. Instead, he sat at the coffee table, focusing on preparing Christmas greeting cards.

He planned to give each of the family members a unique greeting card. Afterward, the chef at the Sawyer Residence prepared a table of sumptuous dishes, officially kick-starting the Sawyers' Christmas Eve dinner.

The family enjoyed themselves as they sat around the dining table. Remus felt nothing but gratified as he looked around the dining room. It had been a long time since the atmosphere in the Sawyer Residence was this lively.

Remus' face flushed due to having drunk a little just now. Nevertheless, he was in an exceptionally good mood after dinner. When he ambled away to his seat on the couch, he waved to Gregory and Tessa. 'Come here, you two.'

"Great-Grandpa." Gregory hugged Remus thigh affectionately. Tessa came over while carrying Gordon in her arms. She was rather intrigued by his request and couldn't help asking. "Are you okay, Old Master Sawyer?"

"I'm fine. I just want to give you some gift cards." As he spoke, he took out three gift cards and handed them to Gregory, Gordon, and Tessa, respectively. Tessa was naturally in charge of keeping Gordon's gift card.

In truth, Tessa was a little surprised, for she never expected that she would receive a Christmas gift from Remus. "Thank you, Old Master Sawyer." She smiled sweetly at Remus. At this moment, Kieran jokingly approached Remus. "Merry Christmas, Grandpa. You can pass me my gift card now."

"Do you think you deserve any gifts when you have spent no effort in finding a girlfriend? Run along. I have no presents for you." Remus waved, shooing him away.

The others immediately burst into raucous laughter when they saw this. In the meantime, Gregory unleashed his savvy nature. He carefully held the gift card in his hand as he trotted toward Kieran.

Sure enough, Kieran noticed the little guy's movements. A gratified smile painted on his face as he said, "Greg, as expected, you are still the most caring and sensible out of the bunch.. You are here to console me with your gift because you know I'm feeling upset, aren't you?"

"Uncle Kieran, I'm not giving you my gift. I'm here to wish you a Merry Christmas and ask for my Christmas gift."

After his short and serious speech, Gregory began giving Kieran his Christmas greetings. "Merry Christmas, Uncle Kieran, and I hope that you can date a beautiful lady

next year. Okay. You can give me my Christmas gift now. Oh, Uncle Kieran, don't forget about Gordon's gift too."

As soon as these words escaped his lips, everyone in the living room was in utter stitches. Even Kieran, who was the victim in this situation, was between laughter and tears. So, with Gregory as the lead, everyone else also took turns exchanging well-meaning wishes while distributing the gifts.

Once it was over, everyone realized that Gregory and Gordon were the ones who received the most gifts, for not only did everyone get them gift cards, but they also bought them toys.

After that, the family made themselves comfortable in the living room. Just then, Remus suddenly brought up the topic of Tessa going overseas. "I heard that you plan to go abroad after Christmas."

Tessa froze for a moment before nodding slightly. Still, as she was somewhat worried that Remus would disapprove of her decision, she used this opportunity to explain her thoughts carefully, "Miss Hathaway wishes for me to be the special guest for Group Two's performance and get to know the members of the group. That way, I can take charge of the orchestra group once I return in the future."

After that, she looked at Remus, feeling a little anxious. However, it was as though Remus didn't notice the tension in her eyes because his smile never wavered. He merely nodded, pleased.

"Not bad, not bad at all. Being able to take up the role of the music director of an orchestra group in such a short time is enough to prove your ability. As for the children, you have nothing to worry about. Although Gordon is still young, we have helpers at home to take care of him. So, just focus on your career."

As soon as Remus said this, not only were the Reinhart siblings stunned, but the rest of the Sawyers were also equally astonished. Initially, all of them thought that Remus would stop Tessa from going abroad. Yet, to their surprise, Remus actually supported her so openly.

"Old Master Sawyer, does this mean that you agree with my decision?" Tessa looked at Remus in disbelief. Yet, deep down, she was extremely touched by his supportive behavior. Rather, it was Remus who wasn't used to someone looking at him with an earnest gaze.

He turned his head away as he coughed lightly and added awkwardly, "Don't get me wrong. I didn't agree to anything. I just wanted to seize this opportunity to usurp Gordon and Gregory for a while. After all, you don't always bring them over to visit me. This time, none of you will be able to fight against me, for it's decided that Gregory and Gordon will be staying at the Sawyer Residence."

Still, everyone didn't even bother concealing their amusement when they heard such a fake yet pretentious excuse. Once that was over, Kieran also mentioned Timothy's plan to study abroad.

"I remember that Timothy will be studying abroad after Christmas too. So, Timothy, when are you leaving? How long do you plan to study there?"

Always Been Yours Chapter 1440

Kieran looked at Timothy with an expectant gaze. Perhaps because Timothy didn't expect to become the main star of the subsequent discussion, he was momentarily startled.

Nonetheless, he blinked away his shock and quickly responded with a smile. "Everything is settled. I plan to study abroad for two years." "That's long. So, does that mean I won't get to see you for a long time?" Kieran asked, feeling somewhat reluctant.

Timothy chortled at him. "It's not a big deal, though. I can still visit you during the holidays. Besides, we can chat through video calls during normal days too. The only difference will be we can't have a drink together anymore."

Kieran nodded begrudgingly. On the contrary, Remus' eyes were full of admiration as he looked at the young man who had grown more mature and dignified than when he first met him.

"I don't always encounter someone like the two of you, who can still make progress and carve out a niche in your respective fields even after your Dad abandoned you. I have to say-you two are pretty impressive," he commented as he cast the Reinhart siblings a dotting look.

Tessa was overwhelmed with gratitude, for this was the first time she heard Remus praise her. Later, Remus continued, "Keep working hard in the future, especially you. I ought to see if you can carry out the promise you made when we first met."

He directed his last sentence at Timothy. Timothy nodded resolutely as he vowed, "I won't let you down." The family went on with their Christmas Eve get-together that evening. The men drank some wine. Their excuses?

Well, it was winter, and alcohol warmed the body. Frankly speaking, Kieran intended to make Timothy utterly wasted this time. Unfortunately, his plan failed. "I can't accompany you drinking tonight," Timothy declined Kieran's offer, stopping him from pouring any more wine.

Alas, Kieran paid no attention to his refusals and insisted. While he was at it, he muttered, "You already drank this afternoon, so why can't you drink more now? I was still thinking of getting drunk with you."

"That's because, unlike you, a single man, I am going to pay my girlfriend and her family a visit later. Timothy pushed Kieran away with a look of disgust. When the others noticed their interactions, they laughed at Kieran mercilessly.

Kieran felt so frustrated at being the butt of the joke as he ranted, "Can you guys just let me enjoy my Christmas? Can we stop with the girlfriend joke already?"

Unexpectedly, everyone laughed even harder as soon as those words escaped his lips. Although Tessa joined in the laughter, she kept in mind that Timothy was going to visit the Gullivers. When no one was paying attention, she got up, walked out of the dining room, and asked Ian to help her with a few things.

Later, he offered to leave when he saw that it was almost time for him to head to the Gulliver Residence. As everyone knew that he was going to Sabrina's house, they didn't stop him from leaving.

In fact, as someone who had been down this road before, Tobias even jokingly gave Timothy advice. "You have to be on your best behavior when you meet with the elders at your girlfriend's house later. Even if they make things difficult for you on purpose, you have to endure it with a smile. After all, in the eyes of her parents, you are like the big bad wolf who abducted their beautiful daughter whom they raised through countless hardships."

"I understand." Timothy nodded, accepting Tobias' advice. Just then, Tessa bustled over with gift bags of various sizes in her hands. "I prepared these gifts for Sabrina's elders. Really, how can you not inform me that you will visit them today?"

"Well, I thought I could handle it by myself after I saw you running around like a busy bee these days, Timothy rubbed his nose sheepishly and explained in a low voice.

She glared at him with a pout. Nonetheless, she said nothing and only briefly gave him at rundown of the gifts she had prepared. "I heard from Sabrina that both her grandfather and father like collecting antiques, so I specially prepared these two gifts for them. This one here is for Sabrina's grandmother..."

His heart was filled with warmth as he saw the effort that Tessa had gone through as she did her best to take care of everything for him. At that moment, he couldn't help but step forward and hug Tessa. "Thanks, Tess, for being so thoughtful for my sake."

Once Timothy arrived at the Gulliver Residence, he saw the elders of the Gullivers sitting together on the couch in the living room. This included Sabrina's grandfather, Reggie Gulliver, and grandmother, Annalise, whom he had never seen before.

Because they were attentive to healthcare, the two were in good shape despite being well in their 70s. Timothy bowed slightly as he apologized, feeling somewhat embarrassed, "I'm sorry for being late and keeping you waiting."

“It’s fine. It’s good enough that you’re here.” Figario beckoned Timothy to take his seat. Regardless, he didn’t immediately take his seat. Instead, he started distributing the gifts he brought.