

## Standing before Love Chapter 23

The color drained from Myra's face.

"Myra, I have never been interested in you. Do you want to know why?" Sean cackled cruelly, as though he was relishing the moment. "You are a contentious woman and it turns men off. Even if I am burning with desire, just looking at you would dampen my mood!" Then, he picked up his suit jacket and phone, leaving her without another backward glance.

In the study, Myra stared at the abandoned thin blanket on the couch unblinkingly, her gaze eerily empty.

"Miss Stark, Miss Hay from the Hay Group is here to see you." Myra received a phone call from the receptionist the moment she arrived at the company in the afternoon.

She was feeling slightly tired at that point. "Pass her the phone."

There was a rustling noise and a sweet and crisp voice spoke over the line. "Myra, it's Sasha. I'm at the ground floor of your company."

"How can I help you?" Myra wasn't too friendly because she wasn't close with anybody from the Hays, apart from her mother-in-law.

Sasha laughed warmly. "I passed by Sean's company because I was running some errands today, so I figured I should invite you to lunch, Myra. I'll wait for you at the Italian restaurant just beside your company."

Myra wanted to reject her invitation but she thought of something suddenly. In the end, she changed her mind. "In that case, hang on for a bit. I'm coming down now."

After hanging up on the call, Myra checked her reflection in the mirror. However, the woman staring back at her didn't look great.

And so, she tried to pump herself up.

When she arrived at the restaurant, Sasha was stirring the cup of coffee in front of her out of boredom.

Her eyes lit up when she saw Myra. Standing up eagerly, she pulled Myra over to the round table in a friendly manner.

“Myra, why don’t you ever ask me to hang out with you? I phoned Aunt this morning and she said that you usually keep to yourself—it must be boring for you. I’ll hang out more often with you in the future, alright?”

Myra pulled her hand away from Sasha’s grasp while regarding the latter’s naïve and lively expression in silence. She sat across from Sasha while replying to her flatly, “I’m usually quite busy.”

Nevertheless, Sasha didn’t seem to register Myra’s distant behavior because she was still laughing happily. “Myra, you are giving Chase Group your all. My cousin is truly blessed to be married to a woman like you.”

Myra laughed mirthlessly deep down. Almost everybody from Bradford City knows that Sean is a playboy. Every night, he is out gallivanting with other women; how is that a blessing?

Sasha noticed Myra’s silence and she knew that she had misspoken. Hence, she rubbed her nose in embarrassment.

“How can I help you, since you asked me out?” Myra asked directly while picking up the cup of coffee which Sasha ordered for her prior to her arrival. However, she only took a sip before putting the cup down on the table because she didn’t like cocoa-based beverages.

Sasha broke into a grin again when she asked Myra tentatively, “Myra, I heard that the Hart Group is interested in the design of the Sunny Bay Project by the Chase Group.”

Since Myra remained silent, Sasha cleared her throat as her large eyes blinked several times. “Myra, do you know who is in charge of the project in Sean’s company?”

After asking that, Sasha paused and she took out a pink gift box from her handbag. There was a light gray ribbon tied around the box, and it appeared especially intricate and elegant.

When Myra turned to look at the box, Sasha pushed it in front of her. “I bought this present specifically for you during my trip to Paris, Myra. I figured you

would not have tried this limited-edition perfume before. Why don't you try it out?" she asked, a smile on her face.

Sasha hid the enthusiasm in her gaze very well.

All of a sudden, Myra burst into a fit of soft giggles and she pushed the gift box back toward Sasha. "I'm sorry Miss Hay, but I do not fancy perfumes. It so happens that I am the person-in-charge of the Chase Group for the Sunny Bay Project. I wonder if there's anything else you'd like to know?"

Sasha's initially smiling face froze instantaneously and she stared at Myra in disbelief.

Then, her gaze shifted toward a work badge Myra had on—"Leader of Team A in the Design Department, Myra Stark".

I heard that a woman named Stark showed up for the discussion between the Chase and the Hart Groups.

Sasha was stunned into silence. She was about to say something but Myra took out a hundred from her handbag and placed the cash on the table.

"My treat today, Miss Hay. If there's nothing else, I'll be heading back to the company." With that, Myra walked toward the entrance of the restaurant without even waiting for a reply from Sasha.

Sure enough, Sasha is here to ask about the Sunny Bay Project. Looks like it's no longer a secret that the Hart Group has selected the Hay, Reid and Chase Groups.

Myra received a phone call from Eva as she made her way back to the company. "Myra, you did good. Sasha may be my niece but Sean is my son, after all. I know that you've contributed immensely to the Sunny Bay Project this time. Go ahead with what you think is right and I will back you up."

Myra's tone softened immediately. "Alright, Mom." She paused before adding, "I heard from Greta that your backache has returned. I'll schedule an appointment and accompany you for a checkup at the hospital soon."

Eve was pleasantly surprised and she could not hide how pleased she was with Myra. "How could I expect you to disrupt your schedule for me? I'll ask Greta to accompany me. You should develop your relationship with Sean if

you have the time. I know that you are still in love with him. Don't you worry, Myra. I will never allow random women to join the Chase Family."

Myra kept quiet for a very long time before replying calmly, "Mom, I've arrived at the company; I've got to go."

After hanging up, Myra saw Sean, who was walking into the company, not far away.

A group of department managers were following him from behind while updating him with current reports along the way. He was wearing a grave expression. He looked down at one of the report folders as he marched forward while voicing questions for those who were following him from behind.

The corner of his suit flapped up as the wind blew against it. He looked especially clean-cut and handsome. The female staff, who were walking past him, blushed discreetly.

Suddenly, he frowned, as though sensing Myra's gaze. Sean looked up casually and his intense gaze met Myra's absent-minded one. His eyes remained still and he turned away coldly, almost as if she was just another stranger walking by.

Myra recalled the incident in the morning and her heart clenched in pain. And so, she shifted her focus while making her way into the elevator quietly.

Once she returned to the Design Department, everybody congratulated her heartily when they saw her.

Myra was slightly confused so she asked Tilly about it. It turned out that the Hart Group had eliminated the Reid Group from the Sunny Bay Project due to plagiarism of design. The Hart Group also announced to the public that they would no longer be involved in any proposals related to the Reid Group. In short, it meant that the Hay Group was the only competitor against the Chase Group.

"Miss Stark, the project manager from the Hart Group personally gave us a call just now. Initially, the phone call was for you but you weren't around at the time. That is why Miss Foster answered the call instead, but we could hear their conversation clearly. Mr. Logan spoke highly of your design draft. You didn't have the chance to see Miss Foster's face but I can tell you that she was bubbling with jealousy."

Tilly was giggling softly—she obviously did not like Elsie.

Myra's lips curled into a smirk when she saw that. Just as she was about to say something, a loud woman's voice interrupted them. "Why are you gloating? You mentioned that you did not discuss the project with Mr. Logan; instead, you claimed that you spoke with Director Hart. If you discussed it with Director Hart, why would Mr. Logan praise you for your elegance and proficiency in presenting and your outstanding performance? I wonder how many times you had to entertain Mr. Logan in exchange for that compliment. You're shameless!"

"How dare you?" Tilly hissed as she turned and was about to argue. However Myra stopped her while staring calmly at Elsie. "Why do you care about how I did it? You should secure a project too if you can," she mocked.