

Bring Your A Game, Mr Chapter 51

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Chapter 51 To Be a Good Person

Jasmine's hands clenched silently as she inwardly comforted herself. Don't be afraid. You're not the one who did this. It's Rita that b*tch who did it, so don't worry about revenge. Even if Elise wants revenge, she will go after Rita.

Although Jasmine felt so, when Elise appeared in front of her in the next second, she was still shocked, and she jumped up from the stool. "E-Elise, how are you here?"

Elise smirked evilly and sat down next to her. "What? Surprised to see me?"

Jasmine controlled her emotions before saying, "What's so surprising about that? It's just that I haven't seen you for a few days, so I'm a little surprised to see you all of a sudden."

"Is that so? I think you'd much prefer Elise to be locked up in the mountains and starve to death," Mikayla commented bitterly. She had already cursed Jasmine in her heart a million times. Who would have thought that Jasmine, a high school student, was actually vicious enough to do such a thing?

"What are you talking about? I don't understand a word of it." Jasmine was still trying to feign ignorance.

Elise did not have that much time to spend with her though. "It seems that you have amnesia and need me to remind you."

When Jasmine heard these words, her knees had already gone weak. She looked at Elise incredulously, but the latter only smiled slightly and recounted the whole story. Hearing the story, Jasmine stumbled and she fell on the ground. Elise looked at her from above and proclaimed, "Don't be afraid; I will settle the accounts between us one by one. But now, I just want to let you see how the thing you want most falls into my hands."

With that, she got up and said to Mikayla, "Help me watch her here. It will be my turn soon for the public speaking competition."

"Don't worry! Elise, I will keep an eye on her. You just do your best."

Elise did not look at Jasmine again, and after hearing the host read her name, she walked toward the stage. As she stood on the stage, all the spotlights hit her as if she was in control of this stage. Next, she held the microphone, and fluent pronunciation came out of her mouth.

"Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Elise Sinclair..."

The moment her voice flowed out, it was as if she was playing a tape of a recorded speech. The audience below the stage all held their breath, their eyes fixed on her on the stage. Even Danny was also completely attracted to Elise.

“Young Master Griffith, I really didn’t expect that this ugly monster’s enunciation would actually be so good.” The person sitting next to Danny couldn’t help but speak, but in the next second, Danny shot an icy gaze over. So, that person immediately changed his tone. “Sorry, I misspoke. It’s Elise. Her enunciation is too good. If I didn’t know who she was, I would’ve thought she was professionally trained.”

Although these words were praising Elise, Danny inexplicably had a sense of pride too. “We can’t judge a book by its cover,” he said while looking at Elise on the stage. Even if her looks were not beautiful and were even rather ugly, it was difficult to cover up her talents. In fact, he found that he could no longer look at her with the same thoughts as before.

After Elise’s speech, the whole audience resounded with a burst of applause, while Elise smiled and bowed deeply to the audience below the stage before she came down. As soon as she stepped off the stage, Mikayla rushed forward. “Elise, you’re great! Your voice really sounds good and better than any of the public speaking tapes I’ve listened to.”

Moreover, the language teacher’s eyes were full of appreciation as well. “Good, Elise. Your speech was great. I haven’t heard such fluent enunciation for a long time.”

Although Elise had long been used to hearing words of praise, at this moment, she still felt a little shy. “Thank you, if it weren’t for you, I don’t think I would have come to this competition,” Elise said to the teacher very seriously.

The teacher looked at her with a gaze full of pride. “Good luck; I’m very optimistic about you.”

“Thanks.” Elise returned backstage, and at this moment, Jasmine’s face was ashen as she looked at Elise in a different light.

She used to think that her Chinese level was similar to Elise’s. Even if Beter said that her level was not the same as Elise’s, she never believed it until today when she listened to Elise’s speech. Now, she realized that Beter’s words were euphemistic, and she and Elise were far too different. In fact, Elise was far above her, and she still foolishly thought that as long as Elise did not participate in this competition, she would have a chance to win the prize. It was simply ridiculous because Elise’s ability was simply impossible to surpass.

“I’ve lost, Elise.” Jasmine’s tone was very low and feeble. She slowly closed her eyes and continued, “I did all those things. It was a momentary lapse of reason that caused me to do those things that hurt you. Now you can dispose of me any way you want.”

Elise smiled, but her smile didn't look too genuine. "Dispose of you? I never wanted to dispose of you."

When Jasmine heard this, she thought things would turn around for her, and she opened her eyes to look at Elise. However, the next words Elise said sent her to the depths of despair.

"Disposing of you will only dirty my hands, and I am the kind of person who is best at never doing anything myself. Instead, I do things by the hand of others."

Hearing this, Jasmine panicked. "What do you want? Elise, I'm telling you that my daddy is very powerful. If you dare to touch me, he will not let you go..."

"Then I'll wait for it. Enjoy your last day of freedom."

From tomorrow onward, your nightmare will begin.

With that, Elise turned and walked away. At this moment, Jasmine still did not understand Elise's words and thought that Elise was simply scaring her.

But little did she know that everything was already too late.

The Chinese Week competition came to an end, and without a doubt, Elise got the highest score overall, which caused quite a stir. The city's best foreign language universities were inquiring about her, and overnight, Elise became the talk of many prestigious schools.

"Elise, are we just going to let Jasmine go? Shouldn't she be given a serious punishment for doing something so outrageous?"

Mikayla was a bit puzzled, but Elise just smiled. "Don't worry! Everyone has to pay the price for what they did."

Mikayla nodded in agreement. "Yes, so I always tell myself to be good."

The two smiled at each other and walked home together as the moonlight stretched their shadows.

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Chapter 52 Karma

A day had passed, and Jasmine spent the entire night in fear. When the sun rose, the Anders Residence kept getting visitors knocking at the main door.

"Open the door!"

"It is only right to pay up for what you owe! Stop hiding in the house."

"Pay us back!"

The entire Anders Residence was jam-packed and surrounded by waves after waves of people. After the bankruptcy, the Anders were barely able to survive by selling their properties. With loan sharks coming over to their place, the Anders realized that it turned out to be Jasmine who had taken on usury with a steep interest rate.

"You're such a disgrace to the family!" Angered, John slapped Jasmine forcefully. Upon feeling the searing pain on her cheek, she turned on the waterworks. Still, she couldn't be bothered by it as she paid huge consequences to be able to take out a loan.

Immediately, she kneeled with a loud thump. "Dad, help me! Please help me! I'll be dead if you don't!"

"I don't have any money. Solve the problem that you created yourself!" Then, John rolled his sleeves and left in anger while Jasmine quickly ran after him before clinging onto his leg.

"Dad, I have no choice anymore. I took some pictures for them to be able to take out the loan..." When John heard Jasmine, he felt as if he was struck by lightning before he staggered a little. With complete shock, she stared at this daughter of his whom he had been spoiling ever since she was born.

"Jasmine, I really don't know what to say to you anymore." John was so furious he spat blood before he lost consciousness and fell to the ground.

"Dad... Dad!" Still, no matter how much Jasmine shouted, her father never answered. Although she dropped out of school, rumors about her were still being spread around the school without any signs of stopping.

"Have you guys heard that the Anders went bankrupt?"

"It's not just that! I also found out that she took a usurious loan, and those loan sharks went to her house to get their payment back. Her father got so pissed off he passed away!"

"I guess that's karma for Jasmine. After all, she used to boast a lot because her family was rich."

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Since many students weren't happy with Jasmine's attitude back then, they all gathered together to gossip about her.

On the other hand, Elise also heard some rumors about Jasmine at school. Still, she wasn't bothered because it wasn't really related to her. Moreover, she was kind of in trouble right now.

Ever since Elise's outstanding performance during the Chinese Week's speech competition, many colleges reached out to her with all sorts of scholarship proposals to try to get her to enroll in their school. She had been accepting calls from colleges admission offices, but she rejected all offers by telling them that she had no interest in language majors.

"Elise, come over to mine tonight. I'll get my mom to prepare your favorite crawfish dish!" Mikayla leaned over with an excited look on her face and suggested when she noticed that school was about to be over.

Looking at the time, Elise agreed cheerfully. "Sure! I'll drop by your house after school."

"Great! You're the best, Elise!"

Grinning at her friend, Elise sent Matthew a text to notify him that he didn't have to pick her up from school. Although Elise had texted Matthew, she still noticed his car parked outside when she came out from the school with Mikayla. Then, Matthew got out of his car and walked toward them.

"Let me fetch you guys," he suggested. Upon hearing that, Elise turned toward Mikayla while Mikayla shrugged. "Sure. I'll ask my driver to leave so that the three of us can head back together."

Thus, Mikayla and Elise got into Matthew's car before they headed to Mikayla's place.

When the auto music player in the car started playing H's classic songs, Matthew glanced at Elise from the rearview mirror. Right when he was about to say something, Mikayla exclaimed in shock, "Wow, you like H's music as well?!"

Shifting his gaze toward Mikayla, Matthew hummed a little. "I've been her fan for many years now."

Right then, Mikayla felt like she had found her soulmate. "Really? Me too! I took a liking to her after I heard her first song, Abandoned Sea. I've got all of her songs on loop in my phone."

"Really? I guess we all have similar interests." Matthew grinned. Upon hearing that, Mikayla turned toward Elise in shock. "Elise, do you like H's music as well?"

At this moment, Elise coughed a little as if she was trying to hide something. Still, she nodded when she met Mikayla's excited gaze. "I guess I do."

Immediately, Mikayla got even happier as she started rambling about her love toward H to Elise. She could still remember every song that H had ever released

ever since her debut song, Abandoned Sea. Toward the end, Mikayla sighed. "I've been H's fan for many years now. Still, it's too bad that she never revealed her true identity to the public even until now, so I still don't know what she looks like. Nevertheless, I've been attracted to her music for many years now."

Matthew felt the same. "I'm curious about what a talented girl like her looks like. I wonder if I'll still have the chance to listen to her songs in the future."

Elise stared at those two, who looked as if they were deep in thoughts and kept quiet.

Matthew's car reached Mikayla's place in no time, and he entered the house along with Elise after Mikayla invited him in as well.

Mikayla's mother, Heidi, was a woman of gentle nature. Upon seeing Elise, she greeted in a friendly manner. "You must be Elise! Mikayla always talks about you. Welcome to our home!"

Elise smiled politely. "Thanks for inviting us over."

"Make yourselves at home, and drop by if you guys are free," Heidi said before she went to the kitchen to prepare dinner while Mikayla pulled Elise to her bedroom excitedly.

"Look, Elise! These are all H's albums. Besides the limited first and third-edition albums, I've already collected all of the other albums!"

Mikayla eagerly introduced Elise to all of her album collections before she took one of her favorite limited edition H albums and passed it to Elise. "I'll give you this as a present!"

Staring at the album, Elise could tell almost immediately that this was Mikayla's favorite. "I don't want to snatch my best friend's favorite album. It's better if you take care of it. Besides, I have the first and third-edition albums at home. I'll bring them over for you next time."

Upon hearing that, Mikayla was over the moon. "Are you serious? Oh my God! Do you know that I've been wanting to get my hands on the limited first and third-edition albums for a really long time? I couldn't get it even though I searched through many channels. I can't believe you had them all along! Elise, I love you so much!" She planted a kiss on Elise's cheek while Elise wiped it off with a disgusted look. "Your saliva got on my face!"

Still, Mikayla wasn't offended at all. At this moment, she was on cloud nine at the thought of being able to own all of H's albums.

Right then, Heidi came in with a plate of fruits. "What are you guys talking about? You look really happy."

Mikayla went forward and clung onto Heidi's arm cheerfully before she put on a mysterious facade. "It's a secret."

Heidi chuckled. "Oh? You're keeping secrets from me now?"

Still, she continued peeling lychees before passing them to Mikayla. "Mrs. Lester went to the market and brought your favorite lychees again. Try it."

"Thanks, Mom!" Mikayla gave some lychees to Elise, and the three of them started chatting.

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Chapter 53 Do Your Best to Find Arise Interpreters

Mikayla's father, Luke, came back around dinnertime. As everyone sat together around the dining room, Elise couldn't help but feel comfortable around them.

"Don't be shy, Elise. Make yourself at home." Luke then turned toward Matthew and said again, "Thank you guys for being our Mikayla's friends and taking care of her."

"Dad, do you know that Elise is super smart? She got first place in both the Mathematical Olympiad and Chinese Week's speech competition. She's literally my idol!"

"You have much to learn from Elise, then."

Mikayla stuck her tongue out in embarrassment. "Of course. She's my idol, after all."

The warm sight of the family being chatty put Elise in an absentminded state, and to hide her emotions, she slightly lowered her head to keep her expression out of sight.

After dinner, Elise and Matthew left Mikayla's house.

On the way back, she couldn't help but lean back on her seat and close her eyes to pretend to be asleep. Nevertheless, the image of her being with her parents years ago kept flashing past her mind when she closed her eyes. Despite the memories being old, the images were still crystal clear.

Right then, Elise opened her eyes and looked out of the window before a streak of tears fell from her eye.

"It's the weekend tomorrow. Do you have any plans?" Matthew asked out of the blue, breaking her out of her thoughts. Immediately, Elise looked away and answered lightly, "I'll probably work on my assignments."

Then, Matthew asked again, "I heard that a new hot spring spa opened in the west region of Athesea. Do you want to go to the spa together?"

Elise shook her head. "Nah. I don't really like hot springs."

"What about a movie together? There's a new comedy movie that just premiered, and it's apparently really good."

At this moment, Matthew's enthusiasm undoubtedly changed Elise's last impression of him.

"Matthew, you—" Before she could finish her sentence, Matthew cut her off. "Please don't misunderstand me. I was just worried that you might be bored. Besides, my grandpa also wants us to accompany you more often."

"Thank you for your concern, but I have my own arrangements."

Matthew caught on to the hidden rejection behind Elise's words. I guess maybe I was indeed a little too pushy. "Alright. Let me know if you want to go anywhere, and I'll bring you there."

"Hmm."

When Matthew fetched Elise back home, they ran into Alexander, who was descending the stairs. Then Elise took the initiative and greeted him.

Glancing at Matthew, who was standing behind Elise, Alexander shifted his gaze nonchalantly before he spoke to Elise. "Grandpa wants to see you later, so go over to the study room once you're free."

"Alright. I'll head there right away." Then she went upstairs and headed toward the study room.

Once Elise left, the atmosphere between Alexander and Matthew tensed up as Alexander warned his brother, saying, "Do not try to approach Elise. She's not someone you can handle."

Nevertheless, Matthew didn't look bothered as he smirked. "What are you talking about? I'm just following grandpa's wishes and taking care of her. How could you misunderstand my actions?"

Then, he continued, "You appear to be free, so shouldn't you focus on company work? I heard that the company is going to start a new project, and a huge sum of money has been invested in it. You better be careful in case anything happens."

Although Alexander's eyes darkened, his face remained emotionless. "Remember what I said to you. Do not cross the line." It was clear that he was talking about Elise instead of the company.

Still, Matthew acted as if he hadn't heard him and declared in a nonchalant manner, "Don't worry, Alex. I won't get involved in company matters, and I'll know what to do for the others."

"You better."

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Meanwhile, Elise knocked on the door to the study room.

"Come in..."

After getting permission to enter, she pushed the door to the study room open. "Grandpa, I heard you were looking for me."

Upon seeing Elise, Jonah smiled before waving at her. "Come here, Ellie."

Elise walked toward Jonah obediently before he passed her a document. "This is one of the company's important meetings, and I want you to attend the meeting with me tomorrow."

She was taken aback. "Me? I don't know anything, though."

Nevertheless, Jonah smiled warmly. "It's fine. Just pretend as if you're walking around with me."

Toward the end, Elise agreed to Jonas's proposal as tomorrow was the weekend, and she didn't have to go to school, anyway. Hence, off to the Griffith Group, she went with Jonas the following morning.

Griffith Group was one of Athesea's most famous multinational conglomerates, and it was situated right in the most bustling part of the city. They were involved in many industries and had investments from business economics and real estate to the entertainment industry.

On the other hand, this was Elise's first time entering the Griffith Tower. While trailing behind Jonas, she entered the elevator along with him to the meeting room on the top floor. Upon entering the room, everyone stood up. "Welcome, president!"

Jonas greeted them before requesting for them to sit down. "You guys don't have to be so uptight. Just continue with your meeting."

While everyone sat down, Alexander walked toward Jonas. "Why are you here, Grandpa?"

"I'm just here to take a look. You don't have to worry about me. I'll just listen at the back."

At that, Alexander had no choice but to return to the podium to continue the meeting. "Our upcoming project for the next season will be the crude oil extraction project in Aris..." Elise wasn't interested in listening to their business meeting, so she took her phone out and started playing games.

"The preparation for the project in Aris has been done, and we are progressing from the discussion with the Aris government. However, we are facing another serious problem right now."

Frowning, Alexander motioned for the project manager to explain.

Then, the project manager continued, "It's not a huge problem, but the interpreter that we had with us previously wouldn't be able to work with us anymore. We have to find a new interpreter as soon as possible, or our discussion with the Aris government might take a toll. To everyone's knowledge, the Arise language is a lesser-known language, and not many people can interpret it. It's rather hard to get a suitable interpreter for this project."

This is indeed an issue. Right then, Alexander instructed his subordinates, "I want all of you to do your best to look for Arise interpreters. We need to get a new interpreter no matter how much we need to pay them, as the project's progression can't be delayed any longer."

"Yes, President Griffith."

After the meeting ended, Alexander handed Griffith Group's latest financial report to Jonas in the president's office. Nevertheless, instead of reading the report, Jonas called out to Elise, who was standing a distance away from them. "Come over, Ellie. I want you to help me to read this report."

Elise, who was summoned, stopped playing her game and walked over. When Jonas handed her the report, she looked hesitant because a financial report was not one to be read by unauthorized personnel.

"Read through it and tell me what you think about it."

Hmm... Well, if he says so. Elise had no choice but to take the report and start reading it.

Right then, she had to admit that Alexander was great at managing the company. Through the financial report, Elise could see that Griffith Group had been profiting stably throughout the entire season.

However, her gaze paused somewhere before she quickly looked away after a while.

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Chapter 54 Let's Eat Beef Stew Again

Seeing that Elise finished reading the report, Jonas asked, "What do you think?"

Elise answered truthfully, "Griffith Group's financial report is outstanding, and there seems to be almost no problem, but..."

She trailed off and glanced at Alexander. "But I think there's a problem with one of the statistics."

Upon hearing her, Alexander had his eyes brightened while Jonas looked calm. "Tell me about the problem."

Elise took the report and flipped it open to page five before pointing at one of the statistics. "This project, the Genesis—although the financial report shows that it is gaining profit, you'll realize after seeing the same projects that the Genesis is gaining way too little in terms of profit—there might be a problem here."

Immediately, she pointed out the problem in the report. The projects got the same amount of investments but had discrepancies in profits. It's not convincing to me that there's nothing fishy about this project.

At this moment, Jonas grinned. "Not bad, Ellie! You have sharp eyes! Alex, get your men to investigate this."

"Yes, Grandpa."

"By the way, were you guys discussing hiring a new interpreter during the meeting just now?"

Alexander could feel a headache rising hearing that. If they only needed a regular interpreter, they would definitely have no problem finding one by offering high pay. However, it was too hard to find an interpreter for the Arise language.

"Grandpa, I'll continue to follow up with the interpreter's case. We will surely find a suitable candidate."

"Alright. I won't get involved in it if that's so. Still, plan your steps properly."

"I understand, Grandpa."

Then Jonas stood up and turned toward Elise. "Ellie, you should stay at the company for a while and return with Alex later on. I still have matters that I need to wrap up here."

"It's fine, Grandpa. You don't have to worry about me. I'll get back on my own in a bit."

Still, Alexander quickly interrupted Elise before she could say more. "Don't worry, Grandpa. I'll send her home."

"Alright. Please take care of Ellie for me."

Then Jonas got up and left. After he left, Alexander got his secretary to bring Elise to the lounge. "You can rest here for a bit. There are snacks in the drawer, and you can eat them if you're hungry. I'll take you out for dinner once I'm done with my work."

Though feeling rather awkward, Elise nodded. "Actually, you don't have to take care of me since I'm not a kid anymore."

However, there was a serious look on Alexander's face. "I already promised grandpa that I'll take care of you well, so don't make things hard for me."

Shrugging, Elise no longer refused Alexander's offer. "Can I borrow your laptop?"

Immediately, Alexander got his secretary to bring Elise a laptop. After settling Elise down, he went back to his office to continue working.

Unbeknownst to Alexander, Elise started tapping away at the keyboard after he left. She was typing at lightning speed as rows and rows of codes filled the laptop screen while she analyzed the content on the screen breezily. Finally, the laptop browser brought her to Griffith Group's hiring portal.

Staring at the 'Hiring Arise Interpreter' job post, she recalled hearing that they were looking for Arise interpreters during the meeting just now. Coincidentally, Elise studied the Arise language and was fluent in it.

Then she hit the 'apply' button. At the same time, Alexander's assistant exclaimed in the president's office, "Young Master Griffith, someone just applied for the Arise interpreter job!"

Narrowing his eyes, Alexander replied, "We shall test this person's ability through the online assessment."

"Yes, Young Master Griffith."

After reading the documents sent to her, Elise took less than 3 minutes to translate everything before sending the documents back.

"Young Master Griffith, the translations are excellent. It seems like this person is fluent in Arise." Alexander's assistant sounded really excited while Alexander said lightly, "Find a way to get this person to work for us no matter how much they want from us."

“Young Master Griffith, the candidate only does online real-time interpretation.”

Right then, Alexander’s eyes darkened. Online real-time interpretation without revealing their face? How mysterious!

“Give me the laptop.”

After handing Alexander the laptop, his assistant watched as he started tapping away on the keyboard with a similar speed as Elise. At this moment, Alexander was trying to track the candidate’s IP address to know their real identity. However, the candidate was too smart and actually managed to slip away with any evidence every time he was close to tracking them down.

This time, Alexander knew that he had finally met his match, so he decided to just contact the candidate himself.

On the other hand, Elise didn’t expect Alexander to be so cautious. Thus, she had no choice but to reveal one of her frequently used IP addresses to lower his cautiousness.

‘You don’t have to suspect me of having ill intentions. If I really wanted to do something, your company’s system would have been hacked earlier on.’ Elise was being honest, and her confidence right then made Alexander believe that she really didn’t have any ill intentions.

‘Alright. I’ll send you the documents later on. Looking forward to working with you.’ Alexander was finally willing to let Elise become the Arise interpreter for the project.

A while later, Elise received a few documents. Without any delay, she quickly started translating while the sound of keyboard clicking could be heard from the lounge.

Time passed by in the blink of an eye, and when Alexander was finished with his work, he finally remembered that Elise was still in the lounge.

Upon entering the lounge, he saw Elise clutching the laptop while staring at something on the laptop. Nevertheless, the screen was changed to the recent hottest teen drama by the time he got closer to her.

“Let’s go get dinner.”

Right then, Elise pretended to close her tab with the teen drama. “You’re finally done with work. I’m starving.”

She closed her laptop.

“What do you want to eat?” Alexander asked. At this moment, Elise pondered seriously before replying, “I feel like eating beef stew again. Why don’t we go to eat beef stew again?”

Alexander raised his eyebrows. "Don't you have anything else that you feel like eating?"

Still, Elise shook her head. "I've been eating it so much throughout the years, and I don't think I can stop eating it now."

Alexander couldn't do anything to change Elise's mind since she had already made her decision. "Alright. Let's go eat beef stew, then."

Then he took Elise to the pan-European restaurant again. Upon smelling the familiar scent, a satisfied grin appeared on Elise's face. "Hey, can I get one set of beef stew? Wait, hang on, please make it two."

"Alright. Please take a seat. The food will be ready soon."

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Chapter 55 You Don't Have to Care About Her Next Time

Elise dragged Alexander to the seats outdoors. From his uncomfortable expression, she could tell that he wasn't used to eating at such places. Still, seeing how Elise was enjoying the situation, Alexander wasn't appalled at all. Instead, he continued accompanying her there.

"Two beef stews coming right up. Please do enjoy your food."

After the owner had served them their beef stews, Elise couldn't wait any longer and started digging into her food with a spoon. Upon tasting the familiar food, she felt her cravings being satisfied. "Eat up! It's delicious!"

Although Alexander really wanted to tell her that he didn't like food with gravy-like texture, he had to admit that he fell in love with how beef stews tasted after having tried the dish once. Unable to control himself, he picked up his cutlery and started eating as well.

"It's good, isn't it?"

"Hmm... It's not bad."

While Elise ate at a fast pace, Alexander could feel his gaze softening as he stared at her messy eating manner.

Unbeknownst to them, a red Ferrari parked at the side of the road at this moment.

Ashlyn, who was sitting at the driver's seat, took off her glasses and looked at Alexander, who was eating outdoors, in disbelief. Initially, she thought that she

had mistaken someone else for him. However, she confirmed that the person that she was seeing was Alexander after seeing Elise's 'appalling' face.

Unable to stop herself, Ashlyn unbuckled her seatbelt and got out of the car before walking toward them. "Alexander, it's you!"

Upon hearing that, Elise paused before she looked up instinctively to see Ashlyn. Immediately, she felt as if her appetite was gone.

Nevertheless, Ashlyn ignored her and initiated a conversation with Alexander instead. "Alexander, why are you eating this food? These kinda places are extremely unhygienic, and you might get food poisoning," she explained with a disdainful look on her face.

To her surprise, Alexander replied nonchalantly, "I'm fine. It's nothing much." Then, he turned toward Elise and asked, "Are you done eating?"

Picking up the last piece of potato in her stew, she took the time to chew on her food. "I'm done."

"Let's go back, then."

Elise mumbled an agreement while Alexander called out for the owner to pay the bill. During the entire process, none of them bothered to acknowledge Ashlyn, who showed up out of nowhere.

Right then, Ashlyn gritted her teeth in anger while her hands clenched up into fists. Then, she quickly ran after them. "Alexander, how could you leave just like that?! Are you still blaming me for what happened previously? I..." She looked reluctant. Still, she decided to say it after giving Elise a look. "I was in the wrong previously, alright? I only did it because I was stupid. Can you forgive me, considering our friendship for so many years?"

At this moment, Alexander raised his eyebrows. He had always seen Ashlyn more as an acquaintance, as they only interacted because of their families. In the past, he used to admire Ashlyn's strong and independent character. Moreover, since she liked the same violinist as he did, he felt as if they were similar people.

However, he realized that his impression of Ashlyn might have been wrong ever since what happened previously.

"Calm down, Miss Lawson. Since we are not as close as you perceived, you don't really have to care about my feelings." From Alexander's tone, it was obvious that he wanted to distance himself from her.

Still, Ashlyn acted as if she didn't understand what he meant. "That's great. I was really worried that you would still be mad at me! By the way..." She suddenly recalled something and started digging through her bag before taking two violin concert tickets that she had prepared earlier out of her bag. "Alex, this is the concert ticket to our favorite violinist, Mike! He's performing in Athesea the day

after tomorrow, so I got my friend to help me get VIP tickets. Why don't we go together?"

Truthfully, any ordinary man would have accepted Ashlyn's offer right there and then, as no one would be able to resist a lady like her. However, Alexander rejected her without any hesitation. "I'm sorry, but I'm really busy with work, so I don't have the time to do so. Do enjoy the concert yourself."

Immediately, Ashlyn's face darkened. This is Alexander's first time rejecting me.

At this same time, Elise felt slightly awkward standing between the two of them. "Guys, why don't I go back by myself first?"

While this was what Ashlyn wanted, Alexander spoke up before she could say anything. "Wait for me here. I'll go get the car now."

Elise could only nod her head while Alexander walked away. After he left, Ashlyn glared at Elise before she warned, "Elise Sinclair, you'd better be mindful of your place and the difference between you and Alexander. You two are in completely different worlds, and it's impossible between you two. Stop trying to delude yourself about things that would never belong to you."

Nevertheless, Elise retorted without any hesitation, saying, "I could say that same to you! Ashlyn, you need to stop trying to delude yourself about things that would never belong to you. Can't you see that Alexander doesn't even want to talk to you? Aren't you embarrassed for constantly pestering him?"

"You!" Agitated, Ashlyn raised her hand and wanted to slap Elise, but her hand was grabbed tightly by Elise in the next second. "What's wrong? Are you trying to pick a fight with me just because you can't win verbally? Is this how young ladies are supposed to act? Where are your manners?"

Immediately, Ashlyn pulled her hand out of Elise's grip. "Just so you wait, Elise. The game has just started, and I have all the time in the world to toy around with you." After saying that, she turned around and headed toward her eye-catching Ferrari before disappearing from Elise's sight.

Upon getting in the car, Alexander asked Elise, "What did she say to you just now?"

Not expecting the question, Elise simply answered him, "It's nothing. We chatted."

Right then, Alexander gave her a look. Although it was obvious that he didn't believe what Elise said, he didn't try to probe and just said, "You don't have to care about her next time."

While Elise agreed with what Alexander said, she got curious and asked, "Do you like her?"

However, she didn't expect the atmosphere to become completely quiet after the question. Oh no! Why did I even ask him about this?!

"I don't." The answer that Alexander gave was completely his style. Short and sweet.

Upon hearing that, Elise felt sudden happiness blooming within her before she commented, "She looks like she really likes you, though." She was unaware that she sounded bitter when she said that.

Frowning, Alexander turned around to give Elise a look before he replied quietly. "You ask a lot of questions."

Elise quickly shook her head. "Whatever. I won't ask you questions anymore. It's nothing important, so you don't have to take them seriously!" Then, she quickly changed the topic. "I'll rest for a bit. Wake me up when we get home."

At that, Alexander hummed a little as an answer to her.

Bring Your A Game, Mr Chapter 56

[/ Bring Your A Game, Mr Chapter 56 Do My Best](#)

Elise leaned back in her seat and slowly closed her eyes while Alexander gazed at the sleeping lady from the rear mirror with a faint, yet heartwarming smile. As soon as Elise got home, she immediately turned on her laptop and hacked into the computer in Alexander's office to erase all the data trails she left behind earlier that afternoon.

When Elise was done with that, she proceeded to translate Aris' documents for Alexander until midnight. Then, she sent the first completed document to Alexander, who responded with a text message not long after. 'You're super efficient! For that, I think you should be rewarded with a pay raise.'

However, Elise felt speechless with the man's response because she was going to repay Alexander's favor anyway. After all, she believed everything came at a price. Therefore, while she was helping Alexander as a gesture to repay his kindness, there was still no reason for her to offer her service without charging him.

'Well, my efficiency depends on the pay, and you pay me well.' Elise replied to Alexander's message just as the latter sat in front of his monitor screen with a smile. Deep down, he began to find this mysterious translator rather interesting.

'Don't worry. You'll be paid handsomely.' Alexander responded with another text message before he sent another one. 'Send me your account number. I'll make the transfer right away.'

Stunned by the man's response, Elise blinked in disbelief. Really? This seems easier than I thought. Although she was recently in desperate need of money, she knew she mustn't let Alexander know her true identity. Therefore, she gave the man a proxy account number not long before she received a notification. "One, two, three, four, five... One million!" Elise was caught in a trance, wondering if Alexander was really so generous.

'Thank you so much, Boss!' Elise replied, whereupon she transferred the money from her proxy account to her own one.

After Elise was done with her business, she was about to log out of the intranet, only to receive Alexander's message before she could do so. 'We're going to do a site inspection at Aris. Would you be interested in taking on the job as an on-site interpreter by then?'

Confused and undecided, Elise settled to pretend as if she didn't see his message and went to bed right away, since she didn't signify her intention. In the meantime, Alexander waited and waited until the lady went offline. Sensing the mysterious translator's refusal to show herself, he reckoned she was likely just trying to protect her own privacy and reluctantly chose to respect that. After all, he didn't think it was a big deal as long as she didn't do anything that could jeopardize the company's interest.

The next morning was a Monday, yet Elise happened to be running late for class. As she hurriedly scurried to her classroom, her math teacher was seen to be in the middle of a lesson. "Can I come in?" Elise braced herself to accept the teacher's scolding, as it was known among the students that she didn't take kindly to anyone who was late for her class.

Nonetheless, the math teacher only responded with a smile and greeted her. "Yes, please!" After hearing what her teacher said, Elise was stunned as she slowly walked into the classroom.

"That's unfair. Our math teacher is obviously biased toward her. How could she be allowed to enter the class just like that?"

"Tsk! Tsk! Tsk! Well, what do you expect? She is the teacher's favorite student, so of course, she is going to enjoy all the 'privilege'."

While the two students leaned closer to each other and talked behind Elise's back, she had completely no idea what they were gossiping about. Nonetheless, she just went straight to her seat and sat down just when her math teacher subtly gave her a strange gesture. "Well, since Elise is already here, I have something important to announce."

Elise looked up, placing her gaze on the math teacher as she noticed the latter adjusting the glasses on his nose bridge. Soon, the teacher happily made an announcement. "Elise's extraordinary result in the last Math Olympiad has been brought to the Education Ministry's attention. Therefore, it has been decided that Elise will represent Athesea to attend the Math Olympiad in Northcliff City, along with the other representatives."

As soon as the teacher made his announcement, the whole class cheered in surprise and excitement. After all, the Math Olympiad that Elise was going to attend was a national competition in which she would be competing against many other tough rivals. Meanwhile, those students, who were talking behind her back a few moments ago, were instantly rendered speechless after hearing the news that Elise was going to attend National Mathematics Olympiad, as they couldn't challenge her extraordinary talent.

"For the sake of Elise's participation in the Math Olympiad, the Education Ministry will be organizing a Math Olympiad boot camp that'll take about half a month. Elise, please prepare yourself before you report yourself at the venue in two days." The math teacher's words were like a stone falling into the water, as it caused huge ripples on the surface. In the meantime, the entire class turned their attention to Elise, only to notice the calm look on her face.

A boot camp, huh? That means I'll be isolated, right? This seems like a perfect reason for me not to stay at the Griffith Residence. Elise raised her eyebrows, finding the surprising turn of events interesting deep down.

When the class was over, the math teacher summoned Elise to the office. "I have high hopes for you, Elise. Therefore, I sincerely hope the boot camp will help you prepare better to score a resounding triumph during the Math Olympiad. After all, this is no longer just about you, as the whole school is now counting on you to make us proud. Needless to say, I wouldn't want to pressure you too much. So, just do it as if it is your normal exercise." The math teacher nagged for the next few moments before giving Elise two exercise books. "Please have a look at them. You could always come to me if you have any questions."

"Sure, thank you, Sir." Elise carried the two books her math teacher gave her before going back to her classroom.

"That's awesome, Elise! I can't believe you're going to participate in the Mathematics Olympiad. Actually, I heard that Zachary Newman from Cloverfield High would be taking part in this competition too. This news is going viral across our school forum, and there are even some students who place their bets on your results," Mikayla said while showing her iPad to Elise.

Nevertheless, Elise only took a glimpse of the screen and asked, "Who is Zachary?"

Soon, Mikayla went on to answer her classmate's question. "Zachary is a top student from Cloverfield High and has always managed to score first place every year. In fact, he won first place last year when he attended the Mathematics Olympiad; but because of you, he had to settle as the first runner-up this year. However, most of the people in Cloverfield High believe that Zachary was only outmatched by you because he had a high fever back then. Therefore, he swears to do better than you do this time in the Mathematics Olympiad. That's why many of us are betting on both of you."

Deep down, Elise couldn't help but find what those high-school kids were doing silly.

“Elise, I bet on you with half of my pocket money for this semester, so you must win.” Mikayla looked Elise in the eye pitifully, but Elise only patted her head.

“Silly girl. What if you lose the bet?”

“Then I’m going to be broke for the rest of my days.” Mikayla tried to play on Elise’s sympathy.

While her friend seemed speechless, Mikayla added, “My future depends on you. So please do your best, Elise.”

Upon hearing that, Elise helplessly nodded her head. “Alright, I’ll do my best.”

Bring Your A Game, Mr Chapter 57

/ [Bring Your A Game, Mr](#)
Chapter 57 Someone Like Elise

In order to make it for the boot camp, Elise worked overtime every night just to get all of Alexander’s documents translated. Fortunately, she managed to get her job done on the day just before the boot camp. After sending Alexander the documents he needed, she finally heaved a sigh of relief as she walked out of her room and headed downstairs. Then, she coincidentally ran into Alexander, who happened to come back from somewhere else as both of their gazes met.

“You’re back.” Elise greeted the man.

At the same time, Alexander took off his blazer and put it aside, gazing at her while casually asking, “I heard you’re going for Mathematics Olympiad Boot Camp tomorrow, right?”

Having told Jonah about the boot camp earlier, Elise wasn’t surprised that Alexander knew about the matter. “Yeah, I’ll set out the next morning and be away for half a month.”

“I’ll take you there tomorrow then.”

“Sure.” Elise nodded and gave an affirmative reply.

The next morning, Elise left her room right after she finished packing her belongings just when she saw Alexander already waiting for her at the door. Meanwhile, the man came closer to her and held her luggage the moment he saw her. “Let me take that.”

Elise obediently handed her luggage over to the man, whereupon both of them descended down the stairs. Then, Alexander placed the lady's luggage into the car trunk while the latter entered the vehicle.

"Where is the boot camp?"

In response to that, Elise reached for her phone and searched for the location before Alexander hit on the gas pedal and drove off.

While Mathematics Olympiad Boot Camp was a closed session that was held in the school, Alexander didn't leave right away after taking Elise there. Instead, he held her luggage and walked her to the female dormitory. On their way there, Alexander's good looks inevitably turned many heads until both of them arrived at the dorm. It was then that Elise said, "Alright, I'll have my luggage back. I can take care of myself from here."

As Alexander handed the luggage over to Elise, he went on to nag at her. "Focus on your boot camp, but if there is anything, please don't hesitate to call me."

"Okay. Okay, I heard you. You can go now." Elise obediently nodded her head.

Alexander had his eyes glued to Elise until she entered the female dormitory, but as soon as he turned around to walk away, he quickly found himself surrounded by a number of girls. "Hello, Mr. Handsome. Do you mind giving me your number?"

"Yes, I do." Alexander turned the girls down outright and strode away from them. In the meantime, the girls, although unhappy with the man's cold rejection, couldn't resist his charm, as they would die to be his girlfriend.

On the other hand, Elise proceeded to approach the dorm keeper upon arrival and learned that her room was 503. Then, she went to her room and saw someone making her bed. Thus, she made the first move and greeted the lady. "Hi!"

Meanwhile, Amanda fixed her gaze on Elise's face, her eyes filled with disgust and disdain. After that, she sized Elise up and judged her for being poor from her simple outfit, showing no interest in entertaining her.

Nonetheless, Elise only shrugged her shoulders in response before she opened up her luggage and took her belongings out of it, ready to make her own bed. At that moment, the door was open once again, whereupon another girl came into view. While she appeared to be in a fancy outfit, Amanda reckoned the former must be from a wealthy family. Therefore, she enthusiastically flattered the girl and said, "Hi, nice to meet you. Welcome to our hostel! I'm your roommate, Amanda Hudson, and I can't wait to see what excitement our future has in store for us."

Samantha showed a friendly smile and replied, "Nice to meet you. My name is Samantha Greene." Then, she looked around the room and saw two available bed frames, whereupon she picked the one next to Elise. "I'll pick this spot."

As soon as Samatha finished her words, the maid stepped inside the room and made her bed for her. Seeing that, Amanda deduced that Samantha was no ordinary person and decided to treat her cordially, unlike the way she did to Elise. The next moment, she offered to share some of her tidbits with Samantha. "These are some tidbits my dad bought me when he went on a business trip overseas. Please try some."

Samantha took a glimpse of those tidbits and turned Amanda down. "I'm sorry, but I'm trying to slim down recently, so I'm staying off tidbits. Thanks for offering! Anyway, my mom told me to bring along some fruits, so let me share some of them with you." She then got up and reached for the fruits she had, grabbing two boxes of pineberries before giving each of them to Amanda and Elise. "These are for you both."

Elise fixed her gaze on the pineberries before her and looked up with a smile. "Thanks, but pineberries are not my cup of tea."

However, Samantha directly placed the box of pineberries on the table and said, "These pineberries taste really good. You should try them out because everyone who's ever tasted them falls in love with them right away."

Upon hearing Elise's words, Amanda thought she had never seen pineberries before and ironically mocked her for that. "Pineberries are rare and expensive, and I doubt you've ever tried them before. You could've been honest with us instead of saying you don't like them because we're not going to laugh at you for that."

Nonetheless, Amanda's sarcastic words didn't sit well with Samantha, even making her feel disgusted. Thus, Samantha shifted her gaze to Elise and comforted her. "It's okay. It's just a box of pineberries. If you don't like them, I could bring you some other fruits next time."

"Thank you." Elise responded with a smile.

"You're welcome. Anyway, now that we're all roommates, I hope I could learn a thing or two from you ladies. After all, I was forced to join this boot camp by my parents even though my result during Mathematics Olympiad wasn't impressive at all. Thus, I'm not confident that I can pass the boot camp and make it to National Mathematics Olympiad."

"You're too humble, Samantha. Everyone who came for this boot camp is not to be taken lightly." Amanda ingratiated herself with Samantha.

"By the way, have you guys heard about Elise? She scored full marks during the Mathematics Olympiad held in Athesea. I heard that she is also joining this boot camp. If I could be her roommate, I'd learn so much from her. How wonderful that would be!"

While Elise was surprised by Samantha's unexpected words, Amanda beat her to it and responded before she could utter anything. "I heard that Elise is not just an ace when it comes to Mathematics Olympiad. She was also the champion in the

public speaking competition during Chinese Week. My father was there to witness it, and when he came home, he kept nagging at me to be more like Elise. Thus, I'm actually interested in meeting her myself, but I guess someone like Elise wouldn't bother entertaining lousy students like us."

Is she saying that I'm difficult to get along with? That's prejudice. In response to Amanda's biased words, Elise asked, "Are you friends with her? How come you know so much about her?"

While Amanda was rendered tongue-tied, Samantha interfered with the awkward situation and shrugged her shoulders. "That's okay. It'd still be our honor to get to know someone like her."

Humiliated, Amanda remained silent and glared at Elise.

"Let's have a revision together tonight," Samantha said to Elise, who seemed surprised to hear that.

"Sure."

The two ladies didn't seem to be bothered by Amanda's presence as they proceeded to leave their hostel room together. In the meantime, Amanda was left behind as she angrily watched the two of them disappear from sight amidst a pleasant chat.

As soon as they left their room, Samantha made the first move and asked, "Oh yeah, I know I should have asked this earlier, but what's your name?"

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[/ Bring Your A Game, Mr](#)
Chapter 58 I Could Teach You

Elise flashed a smile and said, "I'm Elise."

Samantha gaped at her in astonishment. "Wait, you're Elise?"

Elise nodded. "In the flesh."

For a moment, Samantha could not recover from her daze. She thought about what Elise had said to Amanda minutes ago, and only then did all the pieces click. "That explains why you put Amanda down the way you did; if someone was badmouthing me to my face, I'd have slapped them!"

Seeing how serious Samantha was amused Elise. She liked that Samantha was not the stereotypically aloof heiress that one might expect, but she gave off the impression that she was kind and approachable instead.

“By the way, Elise, I heard that Zachary Newman is here at the boot camp, too. Having the both of you here is like waiting for a legendary showdown to happen! I can’t wait to see which of you will emerge victorious at the end of the boot camp!”

This was the second time Zachary’s name was brought up in Elise’s presence. She figured he must be some kind of math whiz for everyone to praise him behind his back.

Presently, Elise and Samantha came to a stop at the classroom doorway, whereupon they saw that the room was filled to the brim with other boot camp participants. Their arrival instantly caught the room’s attention, though everyone’s gazes lingered on Samantha the longest. After all, it was hard for a fine-looking girl like her to keep from standing out in a crowd.

“Excuse me,” one of the boys piped up boldly, addressing Samantha. “You can sit next to me if you’d like.”

However, his invitation was swiftly rebuffed when Samantha, having taken one glance at the vacant seat next to him, said apologetically, “Sorry, but I’m going to sit with my friend.”

With that, she pulled Elise over to the last row of seats and declared, “Let’s sit here, Elise.”

Elise did not object to this. She had only just sat down when her phone beeped in her pocket, and she fished it out to see that there was a new message from Jamie, which read, ‘Hey, Boss. Heard that you’ve gone into isolation or something. Send me your location, and I’ll bring goodies for you some other day.’

You fuss over me too much, Jamie, Elise thought with a rueful smile. A few taps on the screen later, she sent her location.

Once that was done, she kept her phone just as a middle-aged man appeared at the classroom entryway. He was holding a thermos flask as he walked in, and a hush descended upon the room as everyone registered his presence.

“Good day, everyone. Welcome to the Mathematics Olympiad Boot Camp. I’m Henry Bolton, and you may address me as Mr. Bolton. I’ll be in charge of your studies for the next half a month, and as we kick off this boot camp, let’s hope that all of you will give it your best for as long as you’re here. Now, in order to keep everyone from getting distracted during camp, please hand over your phones.”

Upon hearing this, Samantha immediately grew reluctant. She had initially hoped that she could play a game or two that evening, but now that she was going to surrender her phone, she might very well die of boredom before tomorrow. Dread filled her as she groaned. “Do we really have to hand over our phones?”

Elise, on the other hand, was unfazed by this. She didn’t think having a phone would make a difference to her boot camp experience. When the student in

charge of collecting everyone's phones reached their row, Elise handed her phone over without protest.

"I'll keep an eye on your phones throughout this boot camp. Should any of you have an urgent call to make, come see me privately," Mr. Bolton announced. "Seeing as today's the first day, I've prepared a set of exercises for all of you to get a feel of what this camp is all about. Think of it as an entry test, something that will ease you all into this boot camp experience."

The classroom was charged with frenzied energy when everyone heard this. Those who were gathered here for the Mathematics Olympiad Boot Camp were mathletes in their own right, and a test was exactly what they needed to prove how strong they were.

Before long, Mr. Bolton passed the exercises down each row, and silence filled the room as everyone set themselves to work. When Elise got her papers, she perused each page fervently and found that almost all the questions were doable, though the last one was tricky.

Picking up her pen, she began writing down her workings and answers.

Meanwhile, Mr. Bolton was observing the students on the other side of the door when another teacher came down the hallway and asked good-naturedly, "Hey, Henry. Giving the kids a test run?"

Mr. Bolton grinned as he explained, "I figured I should see how well they cope right off the bat."

"I heard that one of the students here got full marks in the City Mathematics Olympiad. That's potential right there."

Mr. Bolton had already gotten wind of this, but he admittedly had higher regards for another student—one of his own, no less—by the name of Zachary.

"Like you said, I'm giving these kids a test run. It's the only way for us to pick out the cream of the crop," Mr. Bolton pointed out with a long sigh. There had been a make-or-break question from the National Mathematics Olympiad last year, and no student had cracked it to date. Having deliberately put it to the test today, Mr. Bolton hoped that a hard blow would knock some self-awareness into these kids.

"Well, guess I'll be waiting for your good news, Henry," the other teacher quipped humorously before walking away.

The two-hour test was over in a blink of an eye, and everyone looked defeated as they handed in their papers.

"The last question got me beat; I couldn't come up with an answer at all."

"Me, too. I couldn't even understand the question, let alone work on it. I dread to think about how I did on the test." A couple of students huddled together to

lament over the paper, and the boy who spoke first glanced over at Zachary, who sat not too far away. "Hey, Zach, what do you think of the paper?"

Zachary pursed his lips and answered plainly, "I gave it my best shot."

The boy couldn't hide his surprise at this. "Humility becomes you, Zach. Anyway, did you manage to crack the last question? What was the answer?"

At the mention of this, Zachary frowned and confessed stoically, "I got one-half multiplied by the square root of three for the first sub-question, but that's about it."

"Damn, if the first sub-question was all you managed to crack, then what hope is there left for the rest of us?"

Zachary offered no response to this. His own strength in terms of math olympiads had been reflected through this test, and he was painfully aware of how much more work he had to put in for the rest of the boot camp.

Toward the back of the classroom, Samantha was dejected as she whined, "Elise, the last question was ridiculous! I'm probably going to flunk math camp." She never wanted to join this boot camp in the first place, and she had told her parents as much. But they had been so resolute that they would rather make backdoor deals than have her not join the camp at all. Now that she realized how challenging math olympiads were, she wanted to pack up and go home.

Just then, Elise offered kindly, "I could teach you how to solve the problems if you'd like."

All thoughts of abandoning camp were struck out of Samantha's mind; it was as if Elise had turned into her saving grace. "Really?" Delighted, she practically pounced on Elise, wrapping her arms around the girl's neck as she exclaimed, "That would be amazing! I love you, Elise!"

Somewhat taken aback by the sudden display of affection, Elise said, "Okay, you can let me go now."

Samantha chuckled and released her. "Come on, let's go back to the dorm so you can teach me math."

They sauntered back toward the dormitories and found that their final roommate had arrived as well. "Hi, I'm Riley Bolton."

"I'm Samantha Greene. Pleasure to meet you," Samantha greeted brightly.

Elise introduced herself with a smile. "And I'm Elise Sinclair. Welcome to Dorm 503."

Riley was in disbelief when she heard Elise's name and belatedly asked, "You're Elise Sinclair? As in, the same Elise Sinclair who got full marks in the City Mathematics Olympiad?"

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/ [Bring Your A Game, Mr](#)
Chapter 59 She's Elise!

Elise was calm as ever as she hummed in affirmation, but Riley, on the other hand, was rather overwhelmed. "You're, like, beyond amazing. You have no idea how much I look up to you. I never thought I'd actually get to become roommates with you! I go to Cloverfield High, which is next door, by the way."

"Okay, can we save the chit-chat for later? Elise, you have to help me out with those questions from the test!" Samantha was a little antsy as she dragged Elise toward the desk.

Riley interjected when she heard this. "Are you guys going through the questions? Mind if I join in?"

Following this, the three girls huddled over the desk, and Elise went about explaining the questions from earlier. By the end of the session, even Samantha—who had looked clueless throughout the entire test—managed to wrap her head around the questions.

Riley, on the other hand, gained new understandings as well. "I went through countless workings, and my answers came out different each time. For a minute I thought I'd messed up somewhere in the calculation, but as it turns out, I was using the wrong method all along."

"Elise, is there another approach we could use for this question?" Samantha pressed.

Elise glanced at the question and said slowly, "Well, yes... but I don't recommend the other approach because of how complicated it is."

Just as they were discussing this, Amanda walked in on them. At the sight of the three girls gathered by the desk, she drawled sourly, "How pretentious."

Riley had never met or heard of Amanda before this, but she wondered how anyone could sound so unfriendly from the get-go. Riley shot her a frown, a little peeved by her hostile demeanor.

Meanwhile, Samantha simply ignored Amanda. Instead, she tugged on Elise's arm and said, "Why don't we go over a couple more questions before we call it a day, Elise?"

More than happy to oblige, Elise quipped, "Sure."

Riley wasted no time in joining them. "I'll stick around with you guys."

At that moment, there was a knock on the door, and a voice called out from the other side, "Hey, Elise? There's someone by the school entrance asking for you!"

Elise couldn't help but be a little taken aback. Who would be asking for me? She didn't stop wondering until she reached the school entrance and saw Jamie, who was carrying two carrier bags of snacks as he exclaimed, "So this is where you've been hiding, Boss!" Heaven knows I've been calling you all day only to find that you've turned your phone off, he wanted to say.

More to the point, he had pleaded with the security guard at the entrance with dire efforts before the stubborn man finally allowed him to pass. Presently, Jamie held up the bags and said, "These are for you, Boss."

"What, all these?" Elise gaped in shock at the inordinate amount of snacks in those bags.

"Come on, Boss, these probably won't last you more than a day! Eat all you want. I'll bring more over if you run out."

A sudden thought crossed Elise's mind as she took the bags from Jamie. "By the way, could you log into my account and check if there's any news? Let me know if there is."

Jamie made a noise of agreement. "Got it, Boss! Now run along and get some rest. It's getting late as it is."

He had only just said this when the sound of an approaching car came within earshot. The both of them turned simultaneously to see a familiar car pulling up at the school entrance. Elise froze, and as her heart threatened to stop beating, the backseat window of the car rolled down to reveal half of Alexander's features.

Jamie rubbed his nose sheepishly. "I'll get going now, Boss!" With that, he hurried away from the scene. Following this, Alexander got down from the car and walked up to Elise.

"I thought you were going home," Elise mumbled.

Alexander said nothing, but he kept his gaze on her for a while before answering, "I passed by that pan-European restaurant you like and figured I'd buy you beef stew."

She could hardly believe that he would actually buy her beef stew. "Thank you! I'd buy you a meal to show my thanks, but that will have to wait, seeing as I'm going to be in isolation for the rest of this math camp."

He gave a 'hmm' in response. "That's fine with me."

A little weighed down by the carrier bags in hand, Elise said, "Right. I'll be getting back to the dorm now."

"Okay," Alexander replied as he handed the beef stew over to her. She took it graciously, and for some reason, she felt as if she was carrying lead, even though the take-out couldn't weigh much on its own. Thank heavens he hasn't asked about Jamie yet.

At the thought of this, she visibly relaxed.

Alexander did not retract his gaze until after Elise had gone into the dormitory. Then, his eyes flickered over to the direction in which Jamie had left.

Judging from their interaction earlier, anyone could easily tell that Elise and Jamie were on good terms. Alexander thought about the dinner party last time, where he had seen Elise and Jamie together; she had said that the both of them had only met not too long ago and barely knew one another.

Taking out his phone, Alexander made a call and instructed gloomily, "Help me look into this guy named Jamie Keller and all those who are even remotely associated with him."

"Yes, Mr. Griffith," came the reply on the other line.

He hung up the call after that. With one last glance at the school entrance, he turned to get into his car and left the premises.

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The next morning heralded the official first day of the Mathematics Olympiad Boot Camp, and Elise, along with Samantha and Riley, arrived early in the classroom.

It didn't take long for Mr. Bolton to show up with the test papers from the day before. Upon seeing this, everyone in class quieted down, and not a single breath was drawn as they waited for Mr. Bolton to speak on the lectern.

"So, we unofficially kicked off boot camp with a test yesterday, and I spent the better part of my night going through all your answers. I think it's safe to say that this paper is challenging in its own right, but I never expected for one of you to actually get full marks for it."

The students buzzed with surprise when they heard this. Nearly everyone looked at Zachary in awe, but the boy was equally bewildered as he sat stiffly in the front of the room. He knew the test had started out with predictable and basic questions, but it got trickier toward the end, and he never did answer two sub-questions. In short, there was no way he had gotten full marks on the test.

“Way to go, Zach! You were just being modest yesterday, weren’t you? You said you did fine, but it looks like you scored full marks without even breaking a sweat!”

“Yeah, Zach! You had us thinking you did poorly on the test, but who could have thought you had such an impressive trick up your sleeve? All things aside, you owe us a meal.”

Exasperated, Zachary pressed his lips into a thin line and corrected, “Look, I can’t be the one to have scored full marks. My answer for the last question was incomplete.”

“What?” The two students from before asked in unison, one as astounded as the other.

Just then, Mr. Bolton pushed his glasses up his nose bridge and held up the paper with the full marks. “Well done, Miss Elise.”

Everyone exchanged baffled looks at the mention of this name. Elise? Who is she and why haven’t we seen her before?

The room was buzzing with anticipation. As Elise rose from her seat slowly, everyone turned to appraise her with interest. None of them could hide the shock on their faces when they took in her appearance; indeed, she looked like the scholarly type.

“Miss Elise, come forward and collect your paper,” Mr. Bolton said. She did as told and put one foot out in front of the other, coming to a stop in front of the lectern so she could take her paper.

Seated in the first row, Amanda faltered as she watched Elise with wide eyes. I can’t believe she’s Elise!

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Samantha exclaimed earnestly, “You’re incredible, Elise! I can’t believe you actually obtained a perfect score on the test!”

While she stood at one side, Riley was in awe as she quickly pointed out, “I ought to kneel before you, milady!”

Elise, however, kept a straight face as she took her seat.

Mr. Bolton went on to announce, “While Miss Elise has gotten the perfect score, there are two other students who did well in the test as well—Mr. Zachary, who scored 92 on the test; and Miss Amanda, who scored 90.”

The grimace on Amanda's face waned after she learned that she had received a 90 on the test. It wasn't as impressive as Elise's perfect score, but it was comforting for Amanda to know that she had done better than the rest of her peers.

"The rest of you who have scored below 90 will need to put in the extra work over the coming weeks."

When class ended, a large group swarmed around Elise's desk in fervor. "So, you're Elise. Our teacher has told us how brilliant you are. I mean, we know you won first place in the City Mathematics Olympiad, but we never imagined you to be this good!"

Another student piped up cheerily, "You're like my role model, Elise. You know, Zachary goes to Cloverfield High with us and he's always been the one to be in first place in the City Mathematics Olympiad. You have no idea how completely satisfying it is to see you break his records! I could never stand that high-and-mighty attitude of his anyway. It's about time he gets dethroned!" However, he was oblivious to Zachary's presence behind him when he said this.

"Excuse me." Zachary had spoken up so suddenly that everyone was stunned while they fell into silence before scurrying back to their seats.

Elise looked up and met his gaze.

He was the first to break the silence. "It's been a while since I've had competition. Pleased to meet you."

"Thank you. You did pretty good too," she replied steadily.

Zachary had grown up with countless compliments that were thrown his way, but for some reason, Elise's praise struck a chord in him; he could detect the sincere edge in her tone.

"I'll do my best to surpass you the next time," he said, looking resolved.

She nodded as she encouraged, "I look forward to it."

After giving her a long look, Zachary turned to walk away.

The boot camp participants kept a tight schedule where they had lessons from morning until night. As tiring as the day had been, the girls in Dorm 503 continued their studies for about an hour or so after classes ended. With Elise leading them, even Samantha—who hardly paid any attention to academics—was inspired to do better.

On the other hand, Amanda was competitive by nature. She had a solid foundation to begin with, but now that her roommates had their noses buried in math olympiad exercises, she didn't want to be left behind. She might not be on good terms with them, but she was perfectly fine with studying on her own.

A week flew past in the blink of an eye, and before anyone knew it, the weekend had already arrived. In a demonstration of humanity, Mr. Bolton decided to give the students a half-day break.

Alexander was waiting for Elise by the school entrance.

She was heading out of school grounds with Samantha and Riley, and when she saw Alexander in the distance, she said, "Hey, I have to skedaddle now. I'll see you both tomorrow."

Samantha waved her goodbye and watched as Elise boarded his idling car.

Riley couldn't help but squeal, "Goodness, is that Elise's boyfriend? He's a work of art!"

As she was unable to hide her admiration, Samantha agreed, "I envy her. How can a girl be so lucky as to excel in school and have a hot boyfriend?"

They were only making casual commentary, but Amanda overheard everything by chance. She glanced in the direction of the luxurious ride that was idling outside the school entrance and thought about Elise's day-to-day wardrobe. There's no way that girl comes from a well-off family, so why would she come and go in such a flashy car?

She snorted coldly and snapped, "Please. It's not as if he's her boyfriend for sure. She's probably a sugar baby or something, though it does make me wonder if all the rich men have had a change of taste recently. I mean, surely one has to be blind to want to hang out with the likes of Elise."

"Watch your mouth, Amanda." Riley bridled at this. "Elise is a friend of mine and no one gets to talk about her like that."

Amanda was entirely unfazed as she retorted, "I can talk about her anyway I like. Does Elise look like she's an heiress to you? I think both of you need to get your eyes checked."

"I guess people like you will always try to put others down no matter what," Samantha bit out. "There's no point for me to waste time and energy on you."

"That's right. You should really see a therapist, Amanda. All that bitter resentment can't be good for you."

After having spat those words, Riley looped her arm through Samantha's limb and they walked away, leaving Amanda fuming where she stood.

Amanda glowered at their retreating figures and shouted, "If you don't believe me, then so be it! Just you wait. I'll show everyone that Elise is nothing but a lowlife sugar baby!"

"You—" Riley was about to turn around and knock some sense into the wretched girl when Samantha stopped her.

"Okay, that's enough," Samantha advised. "You can't fight crazy, so let's just ignore her."

The anger that thrummed in Riley's veins was quelled when she heard this. "You're right. She really is crazy!"

With that, they walked away and once again left Amanda glowering behind them. She scoffed contemptuously and thought, I have to collect evidence that proves Elise is a sugar baby. To hell with her reputation as a top student; she's nothing more than a floozy who lives off men's money.

She was determined to expose Elise's true colors to everyone and at this thought, she took out her phone and made a call. "Find me a paparazzi who has excellent photography skills. Whatever the cost may be, I'll pay him accordingly."

As soon as she hung up the phone, a wicked smirk began to play on the corner of her lips.

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Elise thought that they could be heading home after she entered Alexander's car, but she was surprised when he brought her to a fancy Italian restaurant instead. "Why did you bring me here, Alexander?"

He turned to give her a withering look. "Why else would I bring you here at a time like this?"

She blinked at him, and as if beating her to an answer, her stomach grumbled. She flushed and hurried to catch up with him.

They staked out a table by the window and the waiter came by with the menu, which Alexander slid over to Elise as he said plainly, "Order whatever you want."

"Okay," she replied. She took the menu and flipped through it before she ordered a couple of signature dishes. "I'd like to have a mushroom ravioli, an ossobuco, the pan-seared sea bass, a Fiorentina steak and a classic Margherita pizza." She did not hold back with her order.

The waiter then left and returned with all both Alexander and Elise's orders, and within minutes, the table was close to overflowing with food.

As she was starving, she wasted no time in picking up her utensils to dig in.

"The Fiorentina steak is amazing! Here, you have to try some." As she said this, she sliced a piece of the steak and placed it on his plate.

He frowned slightly and gave the meat a cursory glance. Surprisingly, despite his mildly obsessive-compulsive tendencies, he wasn't too offended by Elise's gesture and he speared the meat with his fork and popped it into his mouth. "Not bad."

Alexander thought two words were more than enough to form a true compliment, but Elise had an indulgent smile on her face as she protested, "Not bad? It's scrumptious! I can't remember the last time I had a steak as tender as this. Whatever they serve in the school cafeteria is only good for sustenance, though the flavor is lacking."

While saying this, she grabbed another slice of pizza and took a bite. "If I could have pizza everyday, then life would be a cabaret."

Amusement glittered in his eyes when he heard this, but he quickly suppressed it as he offered, "I guess I could drop by your school with a pizza or two whenever I'm free—if you want me to, that is."

She gaped; she was starry-eyed as she exclaimed, "Really? In that case, you should definitely get more than two pizzas. I have two girlfriends to feed."

He hummed nonchalantly. "That's no problem at all."

It was with a beam when she answered, "Thank you."

Elise appeared to be in a good mood today and her appetite was astonishing as well. She practically bulldozed her way through the meal while Alexander sat across from her, seemingly pleased to watch her eat. It was a complete mystery as to how a face as plain and ordinary as hers could attract him. I must be bewitched, he thought ruefully.