

Bring Your A Game, Mr Chapter 73

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Chapter 73 To a Pleasant Cooperation

“Don’t be sad, Grandma. I’ll try my best, so don’t worry about me.”

Seeing that Elise had softened her attitude, Laura knew that she had made the right move, and she quickly added, “Well, you said it yourself. I’ll give you another chance, then. The next time you’re back, you have to bring along your husband so I can meet him.”

All of a sudden, Elise felt that she had fallen into a trap, but since she had already said it herself, she could only agree. “Okay, I’ll try my best.”

Upon getting her word, all the sadness disappeared from Laura’s face. “Come here. Let me take a good look at you to see if you’ve grown any taller or chubbier.”

Speechless, Elise could clearly feel that she had fallen for her trap, but even so, she had no complaints about it.

After having dinner with her grandparents, Elise went to her bedroom on the third floor. Opening the door, she immediately saw a huge poster with the letter H printed on the bottom.

Lifting her gaze, she stared at her own poster with an unreadable look in her eyes. However, very quickly, she looked away and scanned around the room. Everything in the room was exactly how it was when she left; it showed how careful Robin and Laura were in keeping her room.

Then, she paced to the storage space in her room and opened the door. The space was filled with digital albums and posters, and she found the limited edition of her own album she published back then.

“Since Mikayla likes it so much, I’ll bring a few albums for her. I think Matthew likes it as well, so I’ll bring a couple for him, too,” she muttered as she took out a few albums and signed the letter H with a Sharpie pen. When she was done, only then did she leave the storage with the albums in her hands.

“Ellie!” Laura suddenly called out while pushing the door open.

Setting the albums aside, Elise asked, “What is it, Grandma?”

Laura walked into the room and passed her the lucky charm she got for her. “Elise, take good care of yourself out there. The most important thing is your safety,” she said while putting on the lucky charm around Elise’s neck. “Your grandpa and I are old, and we don’t know how many remaining days we have. You’re the only one that we worry about the most.”

Throwing herself into her embrace, Elise said, "Grandma, I'll take care of myself, so stop worrying about me. You have to take care of yourself, too."

Laura stroked her head. "Yeah, I know how to take care of myself at this age. Actually, I came looking for you because I have a favor to ask from you."

While Elise was looking at her in confusion, Laura reached into her pocket and took out an antique-looking locket. "This was my dowry back then. My family was against my decision to marry your grandfather, and so many decades have passed since then, but I've not thought of going home to take a look. So, I don't know how my family is doing now."

This was the first time Elise heard Laura mentioning her own family, the Richardsons, and she couldn't help but ask, "Do you have any siblings from your family?"

"I have a younger brother, but I haven't contacted him over the years and don't know how he's doing now. Previously, I heard rumors saying that his family have moved to Athesea, and since you're there as well, I wonder if you can help me out," Laura said.

"Just tell me what I can do for you, Grandma!" Elise said with a rough guess in her mind.

Looking at the locket in her hand, Laura sighed. "Although I made the tough choice not to contact them for decades, they're still constantly on my mind. If you have time some day, please help me look for them."

"Okay, I got it, Grandma!" Elise replied.

Then, Laura added, "My brother's name is Leonard Richardson. Please send him my regards if you find him."

After making a mental note of the name, Elise said, "Don't worry, Grandma! I'll ask around Athesea when I'm back there."

Having received Elise's assurance, Laura nodded. "Great! Thank you, Elise."

"You don't have to be so courteous to me, Grandma! If you would like to meet them some day, I can even—"

Before Elise could finish her sentence, Laura interjected, "There's no need to meet up. I just need to know if they're doing well. That's all."

Even though Elise didn't completely comprehend it, she respected Laura's decision and put it on her mind to remember this matter.

So, Elise stayed a night at home and said goodbye to her grandparents the next day. Before leaving, she even called for a courier service to have those albums sent to the Griffiths'.

After leaving her home, Elise didn't return to Athesea. Instead, she changed into a new look with a different makeup and headed straight for the airport. With the Mesdra passport she had from years ago which was registered under the name Sare, she checked in for the flight and got her boarding pass.

At the same time, Alexander had also arrived at the airport together with his assistant, Cameron. "Mr. Griffith, here's your ID and passport. I've already checked in for you, and your boarding pass is here as well. Boarding will commence in another twenty minutes."

Alexander nodded in reply and checked the time on his wristwatch. "Did you contact the interpreter? What time will she arrive?"

"I called her, but nobody picked up the phone," Cameron answered nervously.

Hearing that, Alexander knitted his dark brows tightly together and whisked out his phone to call the number that he was given before. A couple of rings later, someone picked up his call and he asked, "Hello, am I speaking to Sare?"

Recognizing that it was Alexander's voice, Elise suppressed her own voice, and almost immediately, a neutral and rather hoarse voice echoed through the call. "Yes, I'm Sare! Mr. Griffith, I'm already at the airport."

When he heard that she was already here, the expression on his face relaxed a lot. "I'm at boarding gate number 153. Are you coming over?"

After checking the boarding pass in her hand, she explained, "I'm sorry, Mr. Griffith, but since I'm in economy class, I won't be boarding together with you. We'll meet during the transit in Singapore later, then."

"Why don't you come over, and I'll get my assistant to upgrade you to business class?" Alexander suggested straight away. "In that case, we can also discuss the job onboard."

Thinking that she didn't have to pay for the upgrade fees herself, Elise immediately agreed. "Sure. I'll see you in a while."

After hanging up the call, Alexander waited in silence. Barely three minutes had passed when a slender figure walked toward him steadily. The woman had chestnut brown hair and was wearing black sunglasses. Although she was casually dressed, the elegance she was exuding was impossible to hide. Stopping in front of Alexander, Elise spoke first. "Hello, Mr. Griffith."

Looking up, Alexander saw an elegant and charmingly matured woman, whom he would not associate with the ugly Elise that he remembered. He stood up from his seat and greeted her in a gentlemanly manner. "Nice to meet you, Miss Sare."

Smiling gently, Elise extended her hand at him. "It's a pleasure to meet you, Mr. Griffith."

Returning her smile, Alexander shook her hand, but the moment their hands touched, he felt an inexplicable familiar feeling surging within him. With a calm expression, he surveyed the person in front of him and said composedly, "Your reputation precedes you, Miss Sare. Hopefully, we'll have a pleasant cooperation during the next few days."

"I hope so too!"

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Chapter 74 The CEO Is Drunk

After Cameron was finished with the upgrade procedure, Elise and Alexander soon boarded the flight headed for Singapore. More than ten hours of flight and transit later, they finally reached Aris.

The moment Elise got off the plane, she was incredibly exhausted, but she was the only one amongst the three of them who could speak Arisian, so she was the most important person in the group; despite her sleepiness, she had to help them to communicate with the locals until they reached the hotel. Upon contact with the bed, relief washed over her, and she fell into a deep slumber.

Elise spent one whole day adjusting to the jetlag and only recovered on the third day. After waking up, she saw the message Alexander had sent her earlier. 'Miss Sare, I'll meet you at the hotel lobby at 8.00AM.'

She replied 'okay' after reading the text and then put down her phone. Then, she quickly washed up, changed into a set of formal business attire, and put on the glasses she had prepared earlier, making herself look like a professional career woman.

When she reached the lobby, Alexander and Cameron were already there waiting for her.

"Miss Sare!" Cameron greeted and passed a schedule to her. "This is Mr. Griffith's itinerary for the day. You'll need to accompany him the whole time as his interpreter, so your workload will be very heavy today. Are you okay with that?"

Taking a glance at the schedule, Elise thought that it wouldn't be a problem and answered, "It's alright. I'm okay with it."

With that reply from her, Cameron breathed a sigh of relief. He had been working as Alexander's assistant for years, and he knew his work attitude very well. When it came to work, Alexander had always been meticulous, and previously, Cameron was worried that Elise might delay the progress of their work, but he could now set his mind at ease after hearing her answer.

The three of them got into an MPV car, and Elise started to brief them on the culture and geographical climate of Aris. "Aris is a small country with a population of not more than ten million. Located in the Eurasian continent, it has a temperate continental climate with cold winters and warm summers. The annual temperature difference is rather huge; it is dry most of the time and it rains very little. It's summer now, so the precipitation is low and the air is quite dry. So, you can bring a bottle of warm water with you to quench your thirst, Mr. Griffith."

"You seem very familiar with Aris," Alexander pointed out casually after hearing her explanation.

Composedly, she answered, "When I was in university, I fell in love with the fruit, medlar, and thought it would be a good idea to find out more about the local culture of Aris. As for learning the local language, it was only because I can gain more credits in university for learning a minor language."

At her reply, Alexander couldn't help but steal a peek at her. This girl looks like she's only around twenty years old, so I didn't think that she had already graduated from university. "Looks like you did really well in your studies."

"I was rather bright and skipped a grade in the middle, so I managed to start university earlier," Elise answered honestly.

"Where did you attend university?" Alexander asked next.

"University of Edinburgh."

At the mention of Edinburgh, Alexander seemed very interested. "What a coincidence! I did my double degree in Cambridge back then."

As Elise had already seen his resume a long time ago, she was more than aware of his education background, and she didn't appear surprised to hear him mention it now. "Anyone who could enter Oxbridge are talented people. It's easy to tell that you're a person who did really well in your studies."

Even when complimented, Alexander didn't appear flattered. "You're indeed a professional interpreter, Miss Sare. You're a very good conversationalist."

Elise smiled politely, and time seemed to pass very quickly while they were chatting. In just half an hour's car ride, they reached their destination.

The project that the Griffith Group would be working with the Aris government was an oil exploration project, and hundreds of millions had been invested. Knowing that Alexander would be arriving, the Aris government had sent their representatives to await him at the entrance, and the sounds of firecrackers greeted him when he arrived.

"This is a local culture of the Arisians," Elise hurriedly explained. "Lighting the firecrackers shows that they're welcoming you."

It wasn't until the sounds of firecrackers had died down that Alexander finally got out of the car. With bright smiles on their faces, the government representatives walked toward him and extended their hands at him as they spoke in fluent Arisian. "Welcome to number one mining factory of Aris to monitor the work, Mr. Griffith."

The second Elise heard that, she immediately translated it for Alexander and helped him to exchange some opinions with the Arisians. After that, she followed them as the government representatives led them into the mining area to observe the work.

The whole while, she was serious in her job as the interpreter and managed to achieve a good flow of communication between both parties. Very quickly, it was noon, and the government representatives brought them to a restaurant which they had arranged beforehand.

"Mr. Griffith, the local food here is a little sweet. I'm not sure if it will be to your liking," Elise whispered softly into Alexander's ears.

In reply, he said, "I've lived in southeast Asia for a period of time. I think I can take it."

When he said that, he thought that the sweetness level of the food would be similar to food from the Philippines, but little did he know that all his appetite would be gone after he tried the local cuisine. This is more than a little sweet—it's over-the-charts sweet! he thought.

Sitting next to him, Elise noticed that he couldn't get used to the local flavors. So, she made use of the time when she made a trip to the bathroom to order a bottle of yogurt drink for him from the reception. "Have some yogurt to drink, Mr. Griffith. I'll take you to a restaurant which serves spicy food when this is over."

His stomach couldn't help but rumble at her words. Since he hadn't eaten anything the whole morning, he was already famished, but none of the dishes from the spread on the table was to his liking. Taking the yogurt drink from Elise, he said, "Thanks."

The culture at the dining table was more or less the same regardless where they went, and as representatives from the government, the Arisians kept refilling Alexander's glass. As the locals had a liking for fruit liqueurs with a low alcohol content, Alexander didn't even feel tipsy after a few glasses.

Next to him, Elise advised, "Mr. Griffith, don't have too much of this fruit liqueur because the effect of the alcohol hits very badly afterward."

However, he merely took her advice nonchalantly. "It's just a few rounds of fruit liqueur. It will be okay."

Hearing that, Elise decided not to say anything else anymore. After all, he was the boss, and she was just his employee.

When the lunch was over, she went up next to him and asked in a whisper, "Mr. Griffith, are you alright?"

Right now, Alexander's face was already blushing bright red, obviously from the reaction to the alcohol. "I think I'm fine," he muttered, but he clearly sounded unsure of himself.

Hurriedly, Elise took out a box of mints and passed it to him. "Have a few mints and try to sober up a little. You didn't eat much at lunch earlier. I know a rather good restaurant here; I'll bring you there to give it a try."

Since Alexander was famished and had had quite a lot of fruit liqueur earlier, his stomach was already burning, but he had to maintain a calm composure. Hence, he pretended everything was fine until he got into the car, and his head started spinning when it drove away.

Seated beside him, Elise didn't even have time to react when she heard a barf and realized that Alexander had thrown up. This scene was more horrible than the last time when he was drunk.

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Elise frowned in annoyance as she thought, I've already warned him against the effect of the fruit liqueur earlier, but he still couldn't restrain himself. Regardless, I can't leave him by himself now when he's in this state.

Despite that, she shuddered when she recalled what happened the last time.

Back at the hotel, she went straight to the hotel staff and passed them a stack of bills while requesting, "Please send him back to his room."

Seeing the wad of cash in front of their eyes, the hotel staff didn't even hesitate for a second before he called another colleague over to help him bring Alexander back to his room.

The next morning, Elise happened to run into Alexander when she stepped out of her room and saw that he had already recovered his usual energy. "Morning, Mr. Griffith," she greeted.

His eyes were fixed on her for a few seconds before he finally uttered, "Morning."

They got into the elevator one after the other, and the moment the doors slid shut, he said, "Sare, thanks for bringing me back yesterday." Then, he whisked out a cheque he had prepared beforehand and passed it to her. "This is for the trouble you went through."

Stealing a peek at the cheque, Elise was shocked to see that it was worth 200,000! All I can say is, he's a really, really generous man! she thought.

Nevertheless, she felt that she didn't deserve it because she didn't do much, so she rejected it. "That's alright, Mr. Griffith. It's just a small matter that's not worth mentioning."

Her words made him grow solemn, and when he spoke again, his voice sounded a little aloof. "I don't take rejection very well. Moreover, I don't want anyone else to know what happened last night."

So, he's using this money to buy my silence? After thinking for a while, Elise decided to accept the cheque in the end. Why didn't I realize before that Alexander has the habit of giving cheques?

"Thank you, Mr. Griffith. Rest assured that I won't breathe a word about what happened last night," she promised.

With her assurance, Alexander was relieved, and he grunted in reply. Just then, the doors slid open, and Elise let him out first out of politeness.

Today, she accompanied him to have a meeting with the Arisian government until 7.00PM when it finally ended. Stretching herself, Elise was already very tired, and she returned to the hotel directly after finishing her work. In the hotel, she had a quick shower before plopping onto bed and soon drifted off to sleep.

Such busy days continued for the entire week until the cooperation between the two parties reached an agreement. After the signing of the contract, it also meant that her work had come to an official end.

"Mr. Griffith, are we booking the flight back tomorrow?" she asked eagerly as she couldn't wait to go back home.

However, Alexander said, "We'll go back in a couple of days. Accompany me to a place tomorrow."

Anxiously, she argued, "The work here is finished, Mr. Griffith. How about if I go back first, and you can stay back to enjoy yourself for a couple of days?"

Stopping in his tracks, he peered at her and asked in indifference, "How am I supposed to enjoy myself when I can't speak the local language?"

So now you realize my importance? Elise thought in silence and rolled her eyes. "Okay, I can stay a couple more days, but I have to charge extra."

Fixing his eyes on her, he asked, "Are you in need of money?"

Without hesitation, she nodded, thinking, That's for sure! Everyone is in need of something as good as money!

"I'll pay you extra by hourly pay," he added.

Elise's face lit up. "Sure, Mr. Griffith!"

The next day, she woke up early in the morning, but Alexander only contacted her in the afternoon. When she saw him, she couldn't help but ask, "Mr. Griffith, didn't you say that you wanted to go out? Why did you contact me so late in the day?" Don't you know that I'm paid hourly? This delay has caused me a big loss!

Of course she could only say the last part in her heart and not out loud at him because she didn't have the guts to!

Despite that, Alexander seemed to have read her mind. "I can save some money by using your services a few hours less."

Speechless, Elise complained silently, What a frustrating capitalist he is! But on the surface, she plastered on a smile and asked, "So, where are we going today, Mr. Griffith?"

Instead of answering her, Alexander led her into a cab and passed the address on his cell phone to the driver, who drove the car to their destination.

Aris was renowned in the world for its oil industry, but another speciality of this country was stone gambling. The last thing Elise could think of was Alexander bringing her to a stone gambling market.

In the world of stone gambling, such a saying existed: "A cut could make one rich and another poor, while another cut could change one's destiny and reduce another to rags."

Both of them hopped off the cab, and what awaited them was a couple of historic, old streets. All along the streets, shops and stalls of different sizes selling mineral rocks with a variety of shapes and colors lined the streets.

It was Elise's first time to visit such a place. "Are we here to buy rocks?" she asked in confusion.

"Yeah. Come and take a look at this."

Then, they took the street on the right and ventured into the path. Suddenly, Elise realized that there were not only locals here; there were also some Europeans and Africans who looked really sharp, and she reckoned they were businessmen.

Alexander brought her to a street corner and stopped. With his eyes fixed on a rock, he said to her, "Ask him for the price of this rock."

Following his orders, Elise spoke to the seller in fluent Arisian, but a bewildered look flashed across her face when she heard the price for the rock. "A sh*tty rock like this costs 8,000?!"

Raising his brow, Alexander asked, "8,000 in which currency?"

"Of course it's in USD! The person who buys this sh*tty rock for 8,000 USD must have a hole in his head."

Just as the words left her lips, Alexander said, "I'm buying that rock. Go and buy it for me."

Shocked beyond words, she gawked at him in disbelief, but she was only his interpreter now, and it was none of her business what her employer wanted to buy. Therefore, she swallowed back her advice to him against buying it and spun around to negotiate with the stone seller instead. In the end, she made use of her bargaining skills and managed to get a 500 USD discount, closing the sale at 7,500 USD.

Elise was at a loss for words when she held the rock in her hand, but Alexander was expressionless as he continued walking. On the way, he ended up buying five pieces of stones in different sizes, with each ranging from 5,000 to 20,000 USD.

As Elise watched him hand out wads of cash, she could feel her heart wrenching. "Mr. Griffith, what are you going to do with these stones?"

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Chapter 76 You Have a Sharp Tongue, Miss Sare

Instead of answering her, Alexander glanced at the rocks she was holding and said, "Let's find a place to cut them open."

And so, Elise followed him into a store, and when people heard that they wanted to cut their stones, many people in the store gathered around them. "You didn't buy the stones from me, so there will be a charge for the labor fee. For every stone we cut, it will cost 1,000 USD," the owner of the store said.

Rich people really know ways to spend money, Elise thought in sarcasm and asked, "Do you still want to cut the stones here, Mr. Griffith?"

The next second, Alexander took out his credit card and swiped it. Since this was how the situation had turned out, the only thing left for Elise to do was pass the stones in her hands to the craftsman. At the same time, the crowd in the store stared at the stones which were about to be cut open and moved in closer.

The craftsman studied the first stone, and he reckoned that it wouldn't show any signs of jadeite judging from the pattern and the color of the stone, so he asked Elise, "How would you like to cut it?"

Before she could translate, Alexander interjected, "Start cutting from the left side and then cut it into half."

After she conveyed his message, the craftsman brought the stone to the machine straight away. People in their line had very steady hands, and they were incredibly meticulous. Therefore, the cutting process was a little slow, and as everyone watched in anticipation, the first stone proved to be a waste.

Everyone sighed, and even Elise felt that it was a pity. Tens of thousands of dollars is gone just like that! she thought.

"Miss, are we going to continue cutting?" the craftsman asked, whereupon she turned to Alexander.

"Continue cutting the others!" she answered. Well, I don't feel the pinch since it's not my money, anyway!

Immediately, the craftsman cut another of Alexander's stones, but after cutting three stones continuously, not a single shard of jadeite could be seen. The crowd were beginning to lose their interest, and amongst them, Elise sighed helplessly. On the other hand, Alexander peered at the last stone composedly and said, "There's still one stone left. Cut it as well."

After hesitating for a couple of seconds, Elise advised in a whisper, "Mr. Griffith, let's not cut that last one. We haven't had any luck yet so far, and we'll only make a joke out of ourselves if we continue with the cutting."

At her words, he looked around and asked, "Do you know anyone here?"

We're in a foreign country. How could we know anyone here? she thought in confusion and shook her head in reply.

Unexpectedly, he said, "Since we don't know anyone here, we don't have to be afraid of being embarrassed. Furthermore, even if we do make a joke out of ourselves, it won't affect us because nobody knows us."

His words seem to make some sense! Elise thought to herself and realized that she could learn a thing or two from him about being shameless.

The craftsman had nothing to say to their decision of cutting the last stone and simply brought the stone to the cutting machine. This stone was about the same size as the ones before, but it felt a little heavier in his hands. Could this one contain jadeite? he wondered as he started to work on the stone. Carefully, he ground the surface of the stone with the machine. Barely three minutes had passed when Alexander suddenly shouted for him to stop. "Wait a minute!"

"What is it?" Elise asked.

Looking at the stone, he said, "Tell him to start cutting from the bottom right, but it has to be done slowly."

Elise translated his words, and the craftsman did as he was told, changing the direction of the cut hurriedly and began cutting from the bottom right. But with this cut, sporadic green started to appear on the stone.

With sparkling eyes, the onlookers exclaimed, "It's green!"

Immediately, all eyes turned to them as someone said, "This stone is not bad and looks like it will have a good jadeite."

Hearing that, Elise glanced at the stone nervously, and slowly, the amount of green surface began to increase, but the color looked much better than regular jade.

"It's the imperial jade!" someone exclaimed out of nowhere, and an uproar burst out amongst the crowd.

"I've been in this trade for years, but I've never seen an imperial jade being cut. I can't believe I actually got to witness it today!"

"Only one inch has been cut, and nobody knows how big it will end up. If it's only that small part, then it's worthless."

Listening to their discussions, Elise watched the stone without blinking. It's just a regular-looking stone, but it has the imperial jade inside. While gold has a price, jadeite is priceless. If there's really a good piece of imperial jade inside, then he'll make a lot of money.

"Miss, does this stone belong to you?" a European middle-aged man asked, whereupon she hurriedly shook her head.

"It's not mine; it's my boss'," she explained.

Then, the man turned to Alexander and asked in fluent English, "Sir, will you sell your stone to me? I'll offer you three times the price you paid."

Three times the price! Dumbfounded, Elise remembered that this stone was bought at 20,000, and now, he could get 60,000 by selling it!

However, Alexander merely answered, "I'm sorry, but I don't plan to sell this stone."

Still, the man refused to give up as he added, "Sir, your stone has only shown one inch of green for now, and nobody knows what lies inside. You won't make a loss if you sell it to me now, but if your stone really only has one inch of jadeite, then it will be worthless. Not even the jade it has now would be worth anything then."

Regardless, Alexander was unmoved and was determined not to sell his stone!

Seeing how unwilling he was to sell his stone, the man couldn't help but say, "Young man, you should stop while you're ahead. It's not easy to run into imperial

jade, and you're simply lucky to have one inch of it. Judging from your stone, that's probably how much it contains. In the end, it will just be a worthless stone."

Annoyed by his words, Elise retorted, "Since you already called it a worthless stone, why are you willing to spend so much money to buy it from us? Are you an idiot knowing that it's a bad deal but still decided to go ahead with it?"

Her words made him flush angrily, and he glared at her before leaving in a huff.

While Elise was unbothered by him, Alexander couldn't help but glance at her and commented, "I didn't know you had such a sharp tongue, Miss Sare."

"I was merely speaking the truth. Clearly, he was trying to take advantage of us. Does he really think that everyone else is as dumb as him?" Then, she turned to the stone. "Do you think there's more jadeite in this stone?"

He didn't answer her, and they looked at the stone intensely. As the cut got deeper, the amount of green grew, and the crowd cheered.

For the first time, Elise felt what it was like to take part in stone gambling—adrenaline pumped through her veins, and she didn't even dare to blink as she kept her eyes fixed on the stone. When one surface of the stone was completely ground away, a piece of imperial jade with a deep green color appeared before everyone's eyes. The craftsman stared wide-eyed at the stone in his hand because this was the first time after years of being in this trade that he had encountered such a good piece of imperial jade.

"Sir, could you please sell this stone to me?" another European man stepped forward and asked.

This time, Alexander didn't keep him hanging and asked instead, "How much are you willing to pay?"

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The man contemplated for a moment and said, "5 million!"

Dumbstruck at hearing the figure, Elise thought, The stone which he bought for 20,000 has a price of 5 million now!

However, Alexander rejected the offer directly. "This price doesn't reach my expectations. I'm sorry."

The other party wasn't expecting that Alexander would be unwilling to sell it, and he continued, "8 million. That's my final offer."

Still, Alexander didn't seem interested, and the craftsman stepped in to speak to Elise. "Miss, this stone has a very good color after cutting one side, but I'm afraid the depth of the color might not be what you would expect. If you sell it now, you can still make a killing. However, if you continue with the cutting and find out there's no more jadeite inside, I don't think you can fetch a high price for your stone anymore."

Looking at Alexander, Elise asked, "Mr. Griffith, do you want to sell your stone now?"

After a moment of consideration, he answered, "I think I've always been rather lucky, so I don't plan to sell it for now."

After receiving a reply from him, Elise interpreted it to the craftsman, who decided to stay out of it seeing that Alexander had chosen not to heed his words even though he was just being kind. His years of working here had shown him all types of stone-gambling scenes—some became rich overnight because of this sport, while there were also others who lost every single penny.

The former were usually people with better luck, while the latter were mostly people who didn't know when to stop. Hence, he returned to his work place without another word and continued cutting the stone with the machine.

As the commotion over here was too huge, more and more people started to gather, with the majority of the people watching in anticipation.

"Wow, there's more jadeite!"

"Imperial jade! It's really the imperial jade!"

"I've been around for so long, and it's been years since I last saw such a fine piece of imperial jade."

"This guy is really lucky to have gotten such a good piece of stone."

The comments from the crowd came one after the other, with the most being cries of excitement, and even Elise was stunned by the scene unfolding in front of her eyes. About half an hour later, the cutting of the stone was completed, and it turned out that two thirds of the stone was top-grade imperial jade. Based on the color and look, it was estimated that it would worth at least hundreds of millions if made into a complete jewelry set.

"Congratulations, sir. Your stone is the prettiest imperial jade I've seen in my years of experience in this business. I know a few jewelry companies, and I wonder if you'll be interested to know them."

Elise interpreted this gentleman's words to Alexander, who replied, "If the price is good, I can consider selling it."

When Elise had translated his intentions into Arisian, excitement washed over the crowd, and a few interested buyers came forward to ask about the price.

“30 million! I’m paying 30 million for this stone. Will you sell it to me?”

“I can offer 35 million!”

“38 million! I hope you’ll consider our jewelry company,” someone offered and passed a business card to Alexander. Peering at the card, Alexander saw that the man was from the third largest jewelry company in the world, and he announced his lowest price. “50 million. If you’re agreeable, I’ll sell this jade to you.”

The man contemplated for a moment and answered, “Please wait a moment while I make a call to ask for permission.”

When the onlookers heard the astronomical price of 50 million, all of them were stunned; it was simply unbelievable that a stone could be sold at such a price—50 million!

Meanwhile, Elise gawked at the stone. Just two hours ago, it was still a regular mineral rock, but it was now worth 50 million, and she was actually there to witness the historic moment of how this came to be.

“Sir, let’s make the deal and sign the contract now! After signing the contract, the accountant from my company will immediately send over the money.”

Turning to Elise, Alexander said, “Miss Sare, I’ll need to trouble you to draft the contract for me.”

This was not an issue to her at all. Hence, both parties drafted the contract, and after negotiations, they signed the agreement without any problems. Within a few minutes, Alexander received the notification of the money transfer.

After all was said and done, Elise left together with Alexander, but she was so shocked speechless that it took her a while before she spoke again. “Mr. Griffith, I think you kinda have a little of my admiration.”

Hearing that, he turned around and cast a look at her with a soft smirk on his face. “You flatter me, Miss Sare. I just got lucky.”

Acting as though she had just discovered America, Elise chased after him hurriedly and asked, “Mr. Griffith, will you teach me how to pick out stones?”

“Huh? You’re interested, Miss Sare?” he asked with raised brows.

Elise bobbed her head eagerly; her interest was in anything that could make money!

"We're unrelated in any way, so there's really no reason for us to discuss this topic. In addition, I paid a high price to hire you as my interpreter; shouldn't you pay me some fees as well if you would like to pick up stone gambling from me?"

I knew it—nothing comes free in this world! she thought to herself, then asked through gritted teeth, "So tell me: How much are you charging? It's not a problem if it's within my ability."

Instead of answering her, he asked, "Do you think I'm in need of money?"

Of course Elise knew that he wasn't, but what would he want if not money? Suddenly, she cast him a wary look and asked, "What do you want?"

Amused by her reaction, he asked, "What do you think?"

She paused and shook her head, then he told her honestly, "I can teach you stone gambling, but you'll have to teach me Arisian as the tuition fees."

"That's all?" she asked with sparkling eyes.

Alexander gave her a knowing nod, whereupon her face lit up beautifully. "That's easy. It's not a problem at all!" This is much better than paying him in cash!

"Alright. So you'll give me a lesson every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday until I master the language," he said.

Dumbstruck, she thought, That means I'll have to dress up as Sare every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday to meet him? That's too risky. What if I'm exposed? "What if I have something on? Adjust the time a little and make it two times a week at most. Also, I'll only teach you online and won't meet you in private."

This was a point which Alexander didn't refuse. "That's fine, but at least one hour each session."

With the agreement achieved between them, Elise immediately said, "Since we've already agreed on it, why don't you start teaching me stone gambling now? We're already here anyway; let's not let this amazing learning opportunity go to waste."

After hesitation, he replied, "Not today. We'll stay another day and come back again tomorrow."

Elise was about to ask him for the reason, but when she saw his face, she stopped herself from saying anything. Since he's said so, so be it, she thought. "What are we doing now, then? Are we going back?"

Looking at her skeptically, he asked, "Aren't you hungry?"

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Chapter 78 See You Again Someday

After his reminder, Elise realized that she was indeed a little hungry.

Hence, she took the initiative to say, "I know that there's a food street here. Let me take you around."

Alexander murmured in agreement and followed Elise to the food street in Aris. After about a twenty-minute drive, they arrived at Aris' landmark commercial street.

The place included a combination of food and shopping, so it was suitable for people to go shop and enjoy food at the same time.

"What do you want to eat?" Elise asked, then recommended several local snacks. "The shrimp gnocchi, skewers, casserole, and barbecue meat are all pretty good. Would you like to try them?"

Alexander answered, "Let's have some casserole."

However, Elise hesitated. "Their casserole is known for being spicy. Can you handle it?"

"Yes. Let's give it a try."

So, Elise took out her mobile phone and searched for the nearest casserole restaurant. When she walked in with Alexander, the Arisians gave them a warm welcome and led them to the private room on the second floor.

"What ingredients would you like in the casserole?" Elise asked while referring to the menu.

She listed, "Ground beef, shrimp, duck, portobello mushroom..."

Alexander also said, "Ground beef, shrimp, duck, portobello mushroom..."

The two of them spoke at the same time, and they even mentioned the four same ingredients in unison. Elise looked up at Alexander, who remarked in surprise, "Miss Sare, I didn't expect that you and I would have the same preferences."

Elise exclaimed, "I know, right! It's such a coincidence."

In the end, the two of them ordered two servings of casserole made from those four ingredients. Elise loved casseroles very much, and she had since she was a child. The casseroles in Aris were simply the best, so Elise enjoyed it very much.

"Do you want anything to drink? The specialty here is the soy milk," Elise said, but Alexander didn't like soy milk. "I'll have a can of Coke."

Without even thinking, Elise rebutted, "Carbonated drinks aren't healthy. Let's change it. Why don't we get you fruit juice instead?"

But, Alexander was persistent. "Casserole and Coke is the ultimate combination."

Elise couldn't out-talk him, so she gave up and ordered a cup of soy milk and a can of Coke. While the two of them were happily enjoying their meal, two figures appeared on the street, one chasing after the other while the latter shouted, "Catch the thief!"

When Elise heard the noise, she subconsciously looked out the window and saw a fair-skinned man chasing a tan-skinned foreigner while yelling, "Catch the thief!" However, the people around them were all unbothered, and not a single person took the initiative to help. It was as if no one could hear them.

The tan-skinned man was heading their way, so Elise instinctively got up, but Alexander reached out and held her down by her shoulder. Shooting her a look, he jumped over the railing in front of the window and landed firmly on the ground. It happened so quickly that Elise didn't even have time to react as she watched Alexander stride forward in just a few steps before subduing the thief.

Elise hastily ran down but was stopped by the waiter. In a rush, she took out her purse and handed over a stack of cash; only then did the waiter let her go. When she walked out, the crowd had already surrounded the thief that Alexander caught.

The fair-skinned man caught up and managed between breaths, "You wretched thief. How dare you steal from me!"

The man cursed, then unmercifully extended his foot before kicking the foreigner. Even so, the man held on tightly to his wallet, unwilling to let go.

"Thank you for your help, kind sir. I've called the police, and I believe they'll be here soon."

The fair-skinned man spoke to Alexander in their local slang, but Alexander replied in English, "I'm Cittadelian!"

The Arisian wasn't expecting this, so he was surprised. "Thank you so much! Who would've thought I'd bump into a fellow Cittadelian!"

While conversing with the man, Alexander glanced at the thief, who was on the ground after being subdued, thereby noticing that the thief didn't look frightened at all.

"Hurry up and return my wallet to me. Otherwise, I'll make you suffer!" said the Arisian as he reached out to grab the wallet from the foreigner's hand.

Unexpectedly, the man didn't hesitate in the slightest before he bit down hard on the Arisian's hand.

Alexander slightly narrowed his eyes and kicked the man, who ended up lying flat on the ground while the wallet fell out of his hand. The foreigner didn't care anymore and simply got up from the ground before running away. The Arisian wanted to chase after him, but the foreigner ran away so quickly that he disappeared into the crowd in an instant.

"You should take a look and see if anything's missing."

The Cittadelian picked up the wallet and roughly glanced through it. "Thank you all so much. In fact, the money in this wallet doesn't matter, but my ID card and passport are in here. If I lose those two things, going back to Cittadel would be troublesome. The embassy of Aris is located so far away from here, and it's also very troublesome to go through all the procedures. So, thank you very much."

Alexander replied nonchalantly, "It was nothing. Don't mention it."

The man then took out a business card and handed it to Alexander. "This is my business card. If you ever need anything in the future, feel free to contact me."

After briefly scanning through the business card, Alexander was surprised. "You're from Northcliff!" In fact, he was the successor of the famous Hayes Enterprise in Northcliff.

This is such a small world!

Frederick Hayes gave a brief explanation. "My family is doing business in Northcliff, so I'm getting by all right. If you encounter any difficulties in Northcliff in the future, or if there's ever a situation where I can be of use, feel free to get in touch with me."

Keeping his business card, Alexander said, "I'm Alexander Griffith from Athesea. I believe fate has brought us together."

Frederick's eyes lit up when he heard his name. "Are you Alexander Griffith, the leader of the Griffith Family in Athesea?"

Alexander was well-known in the industry for his resolute business methods, so his name wasn't foreign to Frederick, who didn't expect to meet the man here today.

"It's a pleasure to meet you, Mr. Griffith! I'll definitely visit you when I go to Athesea someday."

Alexander gave a slight nod. "That's kind of you, Mr. Hayes."

As the two were talking, the phone in Frederick's pocket rang. "Mr. Griffith, I have some business to attend to, so I'll take my leave first. I'll see you again someday."

"Hope to see you too."

After sending Frederick off, Elise couldn't help studying Alexander before saying, "I didn't expect you to be so agile, President Griffith."

He was brave enough to jump from the first floor just like that. One floor was at least three meters high, yet he wasn't afraid of injuring his legs.

Coming back to his senses, he answered, "At that moment, I didn't think much about it and just jumped! Let's go back and continue eating our casseroles."

Elise withdrew her gaze and followed Alexander back upstairs to continue eating. When the two of them had had their fill, they left the restaurant. To their surprise, as soon as they walked out, they were surrounded by a group of tan-skinned foreigners.

What was more surprising was that the leader was the foreigner who had just escaped!

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Chapter 79 Better for Us to Run

Elise was dumbfounded as she took in the fierce expressions on the dozen or so foreigners they were faced with.

"That's them! Attack them!" The leader ordered sternly, whereupon Elise and Alexander exchanged looks and came to a tacit agreement. Standing back to back, they stared vigilantly at the group of people.

"What do you want?" Elise asked, but the foreigner ignored her and directly pounced on her. She dodged to the side, and in the next second, Alexander kicked the foreigner's stomach, causing the latter to take several steps back.

They were creating a huge commotion, so all the pedestrians moved far away from them, afraid of getting involved.

When one of the foreigners saw that they were attacked, he waved his hand, and four to five of them moved forward. Alexander was fast and immediately defeated two of them, but the foreigners approached them one after another, causing Elise to feel a little worried. "We can't carry on this way. I think it's still better for us to run."

Alexander murmured in agreement before punching a man's face. He used so much strength that the man's mouth overflowed with blood, but Alexander didn't have the slightest intention of stopping. Several of the foreigners glanced at each other, instantly understanding that Alexander wasn't easy to deal with, so seven to eight of them surged forward together and attacked him from different angles. When Elise noticed this, she didn't waste any time in extending her legs and kicking them.

The two of them worked in perfect coordination, and they easily defeated the group of people until they were all on the ground.

"Let's go!" Alexander said as he grabbed Elise's arm and started running.

"Quickly chase after them! Don't let them get away!" the foreigner shouted, and a few of his followers began to pursue them.

Alexander led Elise as they weaved through the crowd until they managed to hide in an alley. Elise took a look around before pointing to the right side of the street. "Let's go there."

Without even thinking, Alexander ran over to the right side. They lost track of how long they had been running and only stopped when they didn't sense anyone behind them.

Elise took huge gasps of breaths. It was her first time being pursued like this. Alexander looked behind them, then realized that they were holding hands and subconsciously let go before saying, "They didn't catch up to us. I think we've lost them."

Looking up at him, Elise said, "President Griffith, I had no idea you were so skilled at fighting!"

Alexander turned back and fixed Elise with a profound look, and for a moment, he suddenly found her very familiar!

Strangely, her silhouette was similar to the one in his memory. Elise was a little embarrassed to be stared at like that, so she hurriedly asked, "President Griffith, why are you looking at me like that?"

Alexander retracted his gaze, then shot her another profound glance. He was a little dubious, but he asked, "Miss Sare, do you race cars?"

Elise wasn't expecting him to ask this question. Has he found out?

When this thought occurred to Elise, her heart started to beat uncontrollably. Masking her emotions, she replied nonchalantly, "President Griffith, you're joking, right? I'm a girl. How could I possibly know how to race cars? I don't even have a driver's license."

Alexander figured that he must be mistaken. How could she possibly be the girl who raced with me!

"Oh, it was just a random question!" Alexander controlled his emotions as well. "Let's go back."

When Elise heard this, she was relieved. Agreeing with him, she followed beside him as the two of them walked in the other direction.

After going back to the hotel, Alexander's suspicions weren't completely eliminated, so he made a phone call. "Help me investigate this person called Sare. I want all of the information about her, including her journey through life since she was young, her hobbies, and everything she likes."

"Okay, President Griffith."

After hanging up, Alexander couldn't help but laugh as he wondered what was going on with him. He had just seen someone with a similar silhouette as her, yet he was already trying to find out information about her. I must be under a spell.

The next day, Elise followed Alexander to Jade City again. But, this time, he chose to use another street, where the stone path didn't look the same as the one they used before, and there were only a few drabby workshops around them.

Feeling a little curious, Elise asked, "Why did we come here?"

Alexander explained, "Few people come here, so we might be able to get good stones here."

Elise nodded knowingly. She followed Alexander into a shop selling stones, and only then did he speak. "Choose the stones which you think are good first. Treat it as training."

Elise didn't understand what Alexander meant, but since she had decided to learn stone gambling from him, it was only natural that she had to obey him. So, she began looking around the shop and ended up choosing two stones that she found suitable.

"Sir, how much are these two?"

The boss was unfamiliar with Elise, so he randomly stated a price. "The left one is 200,000, while the one on the right is 350,000."

Elise was a little pained. "They're that expensive?"

The boss glanced at Elise, then figured that she wouldn't buy the stones, so he said, "The stones in our shop are of pretty good quality, and they have a high possibility of containing jadeites. If you're just taking a look, I suggest you go to another shop. Don't waste my time."

When Elise heard this, she undoubtedly understood that he thought she wasn't going to buy the stones. Originally, she wanted to obey Alexander and buy these two stones as practice, but now, she decided not to buy them.

"Forget it, then! I'll take a look at the other shops!"

With that, Elise pulled Alexander to the stone shop on the opposite side. The owner of the first shop long expected that Elise wasn't going to buy anything, so he couldn't help sneering, "Everyone thinks that they're such experts these days."

Compared to the surrounding shops, the stone shop on the opposite side was rather deserted. Besides the owner, there wasn't a single customer.

"President Griffith, what do you think of this shop?"

Alexander cast her a sweeping glance, then said, "You can see for yourself first. Choose two pieces as practice."

Elise couldn't stop herself from silently cursing him when she heard him say those words again, but she still walked around the store. When the owner saw that he had customers, he greeted them enthusiastically. "Take a look here. We have the highest quality stones here. You can choose whatever you want."

Elise followed the shop owner around and learned about the several types of rough stones available in the shop, then eventually picked two of them. "Sir, please help me cut open these two stones."

Upon hearing this, the owner was obviously a little uncertain as his shop hadn't had any business for several days now.

"Are you sure you want these? Over here, we charge up front." Without hesitating, Elise took out her card and swiped it, spending 100,000 in one go.

Upon seeing how resolute Elise was, the owner said, "If that's the case, let me get the master to cut it open for you."

Elise figured this was good, because she had just saved herself the money of hiring a master. Then, the shop owner called the stone master over and retrieved Elise's stones. "Miss, you have good taste. These stones look good," the boss couldn't help but praise. Although there wasn't much of an expression on Elise's face when she looked at the two stones, she was still looking forward to it.

The stone master carefully cut open the rough stone and slowly went deeper until he reached the center, but there was no sign of anything green at all. The owner was flustered, and sweat beaded his forehead. "Why don't we try opening the other one?"

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Chapter 80 His Birthday Is Coming Soon?

Elise could accept such an outcome. After all, stone gambling was also gambling, so she had to be willing to admit defeat.

“Okay. Let’s open the next piece.”

The boss hurriedly asked the stone master to cut open the other piece of stone, and he didn’t forget to remind the stone master to be careful. They didn’t expect that after it was opened, it was still just a piece of junk.

Elise let out a soft sigh. Having lost another 100,000, she looked at Alexander, who just gave her a soothing look. “It’s just a piece of stone, so it doesn’t matter. You can still look around.”

Elise, on the other hand, was a little dejected. “Forget it. Let’s not waste any more money. Let’s find something fun to do.”

Alexander replied, “You’re giving up this easily? It seems like you’re pretty half-hearted about this.”

Elise couldn’t quite accept this kind of judgment, so she pouted. “Maybe I just don’t have the talent.”

Alexander simply reassured her, “You have to keep your cool when gambling on stones; don’t get distracted. And when choosing stones, you can decide based on multiple features, such as color and texture. There’s even a belief that the most inconspicuous things will often produce the greatest outcome. Carry on searching with this mentality and see if you can find the stone you like.”

After hearing his encouragement, Elise glanced at the stones around her. In the end, she decided to give it another try. So, she studied the stones in the shop once again. After circling two rounds, she stopped in front of a bunch of stones near the entrance. The shop owner sighed and said, “Miss, these are the cheapest stones in our store. If you want them, I’ll sell them to you at 3,000 per piece.”

By saying that those stones were the cheapest, he was implying that they were simply useless. In the eyes of experts, it was impossible for them to contain jadeite. Regardless of whether it was in terms of their quality or color, they were the worst.

Squatting down, Elise looked at two of the stones, which weren’t big nor small. They weren’t expensive anyway, as they were only priced at a few thousand, so she could just buy them for fun. “I want these two stones.”

The shop owner didn’t expect that Elise would actually spend money to buy this kind of stone. As a businessman, he still had to maintain his reputation, so he

couldn't help but remind, "Miss, the probability of this stone containing jadeite is very low—so low that it can be said to be negligible."

The owner's meaning was obvious. The only thing left to tell Elise was that she was wasting her money by buying these stones.

Elise understood that the owner had good intentions, but she felt that these two stones weren't that terrible, so she just bought them.

After she paid, the owner didn't say anything more. At this moment, Alexander, who was next to her, said, "Since you've already bought them, let's just cut them open."

This was Elise's plan as well, so she requested, "Sir, I'd have to trouble your stone master to help cut these open again."

The owner understood and called the stone master over. Upon taking a glance at the two stones Elise bought, he knew that she was a novice, as she had chosen the stones with the worst quality. So, he said, "Miss, there's a very low possibility of these two stones containing jadeite. Why don't I just cut them open completely and save you the trouble?"

Just as Elise was about to say something, Alexander interrupted and muttered something in her ear, causing her eyes to light up. Staring at him, she asked with uncertainty, "Really?"

After Alexander gave her a nod, Elise said to the stone master, "Please help me cut the stone from the right side of the back of the stone. Cut it slowly, and be more gentle."

Seeing that Elise was unwilling to listen to his opinion, the stone master shook his head helplessly, but he still cut the stone according to her request. He cut it carefully and slowly went deeper. After cutting less than a centimeter of it, his eyes lit up. "It's green! It's actually green!"

Elise's throat tightened when she heard his exclams, and she stared fixedly at the stone, only to see that there was a light green layer underneath the originally gray stone. Although the color was rather light, the jadeite looked to be pretty high quality.

The corners of Alexander's lips curled up as he whispered, "Ice Jadeite. You're lucky."

Elise smiled and asked, "Is it worth a lot?"

Glancing at the stones, Alexander explained, "In its natural form, it's worth around 1 million. If it's made into jewelry, the value will increase by several folds. But, this kind of jade is rare and has great collection value."

Elise was beside herself with joy. "I wonder how much jadeite is in there."

She waited patiently until the piece of stone was completely cut open, revealing about 30 cm of Ice Jadeite.

“Yes, this stone is indeed good,” the owner of the shop couldn’t help but exclaim. “I never thought that a rough stone like this could produce such a beautiful Ice Jadeite.”

When pedestrians passing by the store heard that a jadeite was revealed, they crowded around to watch. After learning that such a good Ice Jadeite was produced from such a rough stone, all of them went in one after another. All of a sudden, a lot of customers poured in, and the store owner was instantly busy.

“What are you going to do with your jadeite?” Alexander asked.

Smiling, Elise answered, “Such a huge piece of jadeite can be made into a pair of bracelets. I can give it to Grandma as a present during her next birthday.”

When Alexander heard this, he completely gave up his idea of buying the gemstone. “I know a stone processing company. They’re pretty good. I can recommend them to you.”

Elise hurriedly thanked him. “Thank you, President Griffith!”

Getting an Ice Jadeite placed Elise in a good mood. She then remembered what Alexander had told her. “President Griffith, do you have some sort of special vision? How do you know that the stone I bought will definitely contain jadeite? And you even knew clearly which method to use.”

Alexander just gave her a mysterious smile, but didn’t answer her question and simply said, “That’s why I’m the master, and you’re the apprentice.”

His reply rendered Elise speechless.

“However, I still have to remind you that stone gambling is based largely on luck. You can’t take it as the foundation of making a fortune and get addicted to it.”

After all, there were millions of people in the world, and too many of them lost their homes and lives due to their addiction.

Elise understood what he meant, so she assured him, “Don’t worry! Unless I’m with you in the future, I definitely won’t come to such a place by myself.”

Alexander was a little relieved. “That’s enough fun for the day. We should go back.”

Elise nodded. “Okay.”

In the afternoon, Elise and Alexander took a flight back to Cittadel. After getting off the plane, they said their goodbyes. “President Griffith, I hope to have the opportunity to learn more from you in the future.”

Slightly raising his eyebrows, Alexander said, "There'll be a chance soon. After all, my Arisian still requires your guidance."

Elise's lips curled up into a smile. "Don't worry, President Griffith. I'll do my best. After this, we'll meet online on Mondays and Wednesdays."

As she spoke, Elise waved to Alexander. After watching him leave, she turned around and was going to leave as well, but an ID card under her feet caught her attention. She picked it up and found that it was Alexander's, so she quickly chased after him. "President Griffith, you dropped your ID card."

Alexander stopped walking and felt around his pocket. His ID card was indeed gone, so he accepted the card that Elise handed to him. "Thank you so much, Miss Sare!"

Elise answered politely, "You're welcome, President Griffith. Goodbye."

After Alexander left, Elise wasn't in a hurry to leave, but took out her mobile phone instead. She just saw that Alexander's birthday was April 6th, and today was April 3rd. His birthday is coming soon?