

Chapter 1031

Maisie lowered her eyes. ‘Then what about the young heir of the Knowles...’

Madam Nera sighed. ‘There’s nothing left of him. Not even his body could be located. What’s more, he’s the only descendant the Knowles have. Although Rick is still young, I don’t think he’ll be able to recover from the pain within a year or two after losing his flesh and blood.’

Maisie pursed her lips.

To be honest, I still can’t accept the death of that child. Noilace was just a young child, but because of Madam Knowles’ selfishness and hatred for the Knowles, the Knowles were devastated, and even Zeta died because of her mission.

Maisie sent Madam Nera off after chatting with her for a long time. At this time, Lucy walked up to her and said, ‘Ms. Vanderbilt, the La Perla Group has sent you some flowers.’ ‘La Perla?’ Maisie was stunned. She remembered that La Perla seemed to be the company that belonged to Pearl Santiago’s family.

Soul Jewelry had not been in touch with La Perla until now, more or less because of the issue that Pearl had run into back then.

Maisie saw the flowers that the staff brought in, and the big characters on the card clipped onto the bouquet were indeed a congratulations message from the La Perla Group. Lucy was unaware of the grievance between Maisie and the daughter of the Santiagos, so she said with a smile, ‘La Perla and Taylor Jewelry are both very well-known companies in the jewelry industry. Getting the blessings of these two top guns would probably make the other jewelry companies feel so envious.’

Maisie smiled helplessly. ‘I guess so.’

Soon, she saw a figure appearing at the entrance. It was Quincy. Quincy then motioned the bodyguards behind him to bring in a larger flower basket while greeting Maisie. ‘Mrs. Goldmann.’

Maisie could not help but laugh. ‘Who has sent us such a big flower basket?’

Quincy replied, ‘Mr. Goldmann said that your new branch has just opened, and he has to show you some support.’ Lucy went with the flow and added, ‘With Mr. Goldmann showing his support, our new branch’s momentum is really off the

charts.’

Maisie struck the top of her head lightly with her knuckle, while Lucy exclaimed softly and left the scene with a smirk.

Maisie looked at Quincy. ‘Where’s Nolan?’

Quincy looked outside..

There was a Rolls-Royce parked outside the venue. The rear window was lowered partially, and the man sitting in the back seat was looking in their direction.

Maisie walked toward the car, leaned forward to the car window, and looked at him. "Did you do this on purpose?"

Nolan stretched out his hand and stroked her cheek with an ambiguous smile. "I'm here to show your business some support. Are you happy?"

She rubbed her cheek against his palm. "How can I not be unhappy? I think even the jewelry store next door is jealous of me now." "Then just let them be." Nolan laughed and withdrew his hand as the hilarity in his eyes remained unchanged. "I'll pick you up after work."

She blinked. "Is there any important event going on tonight?"

He smirked. "You'll find out about it tonight."

In the evening, Nolan really lived up to his words and came to pick her up.

Maisie leaned on him tiredly. "Is there really a huge event? I don't want to go back home to put on makeup and dress up for the occasion."

Nolan hugged her. "There's no need for those. You already look stunning."

"Really?" Maisie rested her chin on his shoulder and rubbed her own face. "But what would you do if I were to be outshone by other women if I didn't wear makeup?"

Nolan rubbed the corner of her lips with his fingertips and chuckled. "I won't do anything because no other woman can even come close to outshining you."

The car was parked at the Summerton Auction Hall's entrance.

Maisie was a little surprised after she got out of the car with him. "Are we here for an auction?"

Nolan wrapped his arm around her waist and brought her into the auction venue. The ushers led them to a private room on the second floor.

It had been three years since Maisie last came to this place that was why it was inevitable for her memories to resurface.

She took a glance downstairs and then looked at him. "Are you planning to bring me to relive some of my memories?"

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Nolan hugged her from behind, and his warm chest could be felt beating against her back. "You were in the room located directly opposite this room three years ago while I was in here."

He buried his face into her neck with a hint of glee flashing across his eyes. "It's just that you were here to bid on jewelry three years ago. So, we're here tonight to get you the best jewelry this place has to offer."

The auction kicked off, and the first item displayed on the stage was a South African pink diamond worth tens of millions of dollars, and the VIPs started to bid for the diamond.

Maisie looked at Nolan, who looked indifferent. It was obvious that he had not come here for the pink diamond. Thus, she wondered what kind of jewelry Nolan planned to give her tonight.

Nolan did not even bid for the first few items, so Maisie could not help but lean closer to him. "I'm starting to get curious."

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Nolan approached her ear and whispered, "Are you?"

She chuckled. "How could I not feel curious about it? I don't think the competition has been very fierce for the first few items, so I guess the main event is in the second half of the auction." This had completely piqued her curiosity.

Nolan stroked her black hair with a deep smirk. "You're worth it."

Maisie looked at the stage, and the following item to be auctioned was a rare gemstone—a canary tourmaline.

She stared at the tourmaline displayed on the projection screen, and the beams of surprise radiating from the bottom of her eyes were even more intense than when she first saw tanzanite.

Tourmaline was known as the rainbow hidden in a gemstone. It had vibrant color hues and usually scored the highest in color grading among all colored gemstones. Almost all colors that could be seen in the light spectrum could basically be found in tourmaline.

The most precious tourmaline usually came in red, blue, and green hues, and yellow tourmalines had always been known as the nobles among all tourmalines.

Canary tourmaline was different from other ordinary yellow tourmalines. Not all yellow tourmalines could be deemed canaries. Only those that did not have any green, gray, and other variegated hues could be categorized as such.

Canary tourmaline was even rarer than tanzanite. Because of its rarity, it had always been challenging to locate large carat canary tourmalines in the market.

Thus, the price soared to \$250,000,000 as soon as the bidding for the canary tourmaline started.

Sure enough, the competition was ferocious, and the bidding price of the canary tourmaline had already arrived at \$360,000,000 in only a matter of seconds.

Nolan raised his placard unhurriedly. "\$500,000,000."

Someone in the audience increased the price to \$600,000,000. Nolan then one-upped that person by offering \$650,000,000. When the audience saw that the person bidding was Nolan, everyone gave up bidding at once.

The canary tourmaline now cost \$900,000,000, not an amount of money that anyone could easily make appear out of thin air.

The auctioneer on the stage chanted, "\$ 900,000,000 for the canary tourmaline, calling once! \$900,000,000, calling twice! Does anyone else want to try their luck?"

All the other attendees glanced at each other in dismay and put down their placards. Hence, the auctioneer dropped the gavel. "Canary tourmaline sold at \$ 900,000,000! Congratulations to Mr. Goldmann!"

The staff placed the canary tourmaline in a brocade box and sent someone to deliver it to the private room on the second floor.

Nolan signed his name and handed a black card to the staff.

After confirming that the transaction was successful, the staff handed the brocade box to Nolan with both hands. "Mr.

Goldmann, congratulations."

Nolan handed Maisie the brocade box. "Are you happy?"

"Of course!" Maisie took the box into his hands with a grin and opened it. The canary tourmaline lying inside the box glowed with a faint yellow luster under the light, looking exceptionally pure.

I create jewelry for a living and understand just how precious a canary tourmaline is. So how can I not be happy about this?"

She raised her head and took the brocade box into her arms. "Thank you, Nolan."

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Nolan hugged her. "So, how will you express your appreciation?"

Maisie stood on tiptoe and kissed him on the lips. "This is my favorite gift that I've ever received in my life. I'll definitely keep it for a lifetime."

Nolan kissed her on the forehead and between the eyebrows. "I'm glad as long as you're happy."

The next day, flowers were in full bloom in the music academy, and the garden in the academy was filled with tender verdures. People were walking in the corridors, and several instructors passed by too.

"I heard that Jodie has returned to the academy to be an instructor. But didn't she major in ballet?"

"So what if she majored in ballet? She won an award as a pianist. She won't be at a disadvantage even when she returns to her alma mater as an instructor."

"It's said that she and Mr. Lucas were students of the same department, and she was the belle of the solo instrumentation department of the music academy. They would've been the perfect couple on campus if they had got together back then. It's a pity that the Lucases wanted their son to marry

someone who's equal to him in status and family background. Not to mention that Mr. Lucas wasn't interested in finding himself a girlfriend back then."

Another female instructor tutted and shook her head. "It's pointless for us to think about it now. Mr. Lucas is now married, and apparently, Ryleigh Hill is his perfect match. I really can't understand why Mr. Lucas would take a fancy to someone from the orchestra department."

Ryleigh and Ruby were walking down the stairs and just happened to overhear the comments that the instructors of the solo instruments department were making about Ryleigh.

Ruby frowned and then laughed out loud deliberately. "It's no wonder that some students from the solo instruments department are so arrogant and defiant. It turns out that they've been taught so. Sure enough, the apples don't fall far from the trees."

The instructors turned their heads and were about to say something, but they saw Ryleigh's upset expression. Thus, they muttered something to each other and left in a hurry.

Ruby stared at their backs as those instructors walked away and shook her head. "The sense of superiority of those who studied in solo instrumentation hasn't changed one bit after so many years."

Ryleigh lowered her gaze and said nothing as if she was pondering over something.

In the afternoon, Ryleigh went to Charles' office and knocked on the door.

After obtaining permission to enter, she pushed the door open and poked half of her head into the room. "Charles."

Charles put down the teacup, looked away from the newspaper, and raised his head." Ryleigh, what's wrong?"

Ryleigh pursed her lips and walked slowly up to the desk. "Is learning to play in an orchestra really not as popular as learning to perform as a soloist?"

Charles stopped what he was doing for a split second, took off his glasses, and cleaned the lens with his handkerchief.' Do you think so too?"

"Of course not." Ryleigh looked at him sincerely. "I've never thought that any orchestra performer is inferior compared to any solo musician. What we learn to play in an orchestra are usually classical pieces that world-renowned composers or musicians pass down. Some of them are even thousands of years old. So, why isn't it attracting more attention than solo instrumentation? I just don't understand..."

She lowered her gaze. "What we play are musical instruments too. The symphonies that we put out are a genre of music too. So why is it that orchestra performers are the only ones who are being restricted and excluded?"

Charles glanced at her for a while and then gave off a smile. "Ryleigh, everybody's preferences are different. We can't force everyone to like an orchestra's classical performance. The only thing we can do is bring the orchestra's world to more young people, promoting the symphonies that those great composers had left behind."

He stood up, stood in front of the window, and looked into the distance. "I felt as confused as you when the academy wanted to abolish the orchestra department and focus all their attention on developing the solo instrumentation department back then. But apart from me, there were so many more people who shared the same belief that I have who stood up for the charm of the orchestra. As long as we believe that the orchestra has its value, it'll never disappear."

Ryleigh lowered her head. "But the number of people who can persevere in liking the orchestra is getting fewer and fewer by the day."

Charles turned to look at her. "Even when everyone's given up on it, there's still hope as long as there's one person left who's still insisting on preserving it. The battle is only over when the last person decides to give up too."

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Ryleigh was startled.

Charles walked up to her and patted her on the shoulder. "Ryleigh, we can't expect others to fight for us. When everyone else is looking down on you, the more you have to prove it to them."

Ryleigh's confusion was instantly cleared after listening to Charles's guidance.

She smiled, thanked him, and then left his office. "I understand now, thank you."

Looking at her leaving his office, Charles gave off a satisfied grin.

In the next few days, Ryleigh brought in a few students from the orchestra department.

They obviously looked a little bewildered.'

Ms. Hill, why did you summon us here?'

Ryleigh looked at the music manuscripts in her hand and laughed. "Let's start a hand!"

One of the girls looked even more confused. "A hand?"

Another girl sighed. "What kind of band can we form? The students from the solo instruments department will surely laugh at us for playing music for a funeral when they see us rehearsing."

"Yeah, thanks to them, we're often not in the mood to practice recently."

Ryleigh glanced at all those dispirited students and clapped her hands once." Those who tell you that the orchestra is only suitable for playing music for a funeral are all blind. They're the ones who don't know how to appreciate what great musicians have left behind for us. So, if we don't do something to prove them wrong and pop the massive and egoistic bubbles that they surround themselves with, they'll only treat us even more like rubbish!"

The students were caught off guard, probably because this was their first time seeing Ryleigh being so inspiring.

“Pfft!” The two female instructors’ peals of laughter came from the door, and there were several students from the solo instruments department standing beside the instructors.

“Ms. Hill, the only person that you’re proving wrong with what you just said is you. The orchestra department is already at death’s door,

so why even struggle?”

Ryleigh’s expression dimmed. “Who told you that the orchestra department is already at death’s door?”

One of the female instructors crossed her arms and smiled arrogantly. “Isn’t this a known fact? How many people have your department recruited this year? Has your department managed to recruit more than 100 students?”

“Most of the talented students have applied to pursue their dream as a soloist. Didn’t the piano and violin solo major take up 40% of the total application this year? Even the number of students that the other solo majors recruited is several times higher than what the orchestra department has. The only thing that awaits the solo instruments department is a bright future. Is that something that your department can compare with?”

The students of the orchestra department who were standing below the stage looked aggrieved when they heard those comments. Nobody would want to hear that what they majored in was worthless.

Ryleigh released the fists that were hanging on her sides and chuckled. “It’s said one can never master everything in music. You don’t even fully understand the music that great musicians had left behind for us, yet you’ve already started to belittle their creations.

“Did the 12 years of compulsory education teach you only to worship what’s new and forget everything that was left behind so that we can learn from them? All you’ve done so far is humiliate the classical music that we people from the orchestra department learn to play in the name of love for music, and to what purpose? Proving to the public that the modern music you soloists play is superior? Is this your upbringing?”

The female instructor’s expression changed. “Ryleigh Hill, what I’ve put forward are the facts. You’ll have to accept it eventually even if you don’t want to.”

“Why should I accept it as it is!?” Ryleigh pointed to the outside, and her voice sounded sonorous and powerful. “Are you acting so arrogantly only because the musical pieces that have been shortlisted by the academy to be submitted to any international music summit over the years are all from your department?”

“Then I dare you to answer this question of mine. What would you tell any foreign media if they were to ask you about any musical masterpiece in the history of music that you’ve played before this? Are you going to tell them about the jazz, soul music, or blues that you soloists love so much?” The rehearsal hall was silent for a moment, and the students from the solo instruments department looked at each other and did not dare to utter a word.

As for the female instructor, she choked on her saliva as she was probably shocked by Ryleigh’s dominance throughout the whole debate. She then opened her mouth, “You, what kind of fallacy are you trying to-”

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Ryleigh jumped on the stage, pointed to them, and refuted, "Is this a fallacy? This is the truth! Jazz originated in the Afrenikan-Zlovakian communities of New Oakdale, Letherbridge, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Soul music also originated in the Afrenikan-Zlovakian communities found throughout Zlokova, while blues music originated from the deep south of Zlokova around the 1860s. These three genres are known as the three major musical genres of modern music, and you don't need me to tell you that."

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"However, these music genres emerged only around the 19th to 20th century. We've mastered these genres, and that's something to be proud of, but what are we going to tell the public when classical music is being put forward?" Ryleigh chuckled. "Classical music has been primarily a written tradition since at least the 9th century, spawning a sophisticated notational system ever since. The earliest extant music manuscripts are said to date from the Carolingian Empire that flourished during that era. The Fradianites popularized such symphonies in the 12th century. They stood the test of time during the Renaissance period that took place from the 14th to 17th century and evolved throughout the whole history of humanity.

"It's famous for its high emotional penetration and its pompous, majestic harmonies that give a symphony its dynamics. You'll run into a gentle caress among waves of rigidity and sometimes a harsh punch in the face among the soft embrace of the symphony. So, you can argue that a soloist can do that too. But tell me now, can a soloist compare him or herself to the might of an orchestra?"

One of the solo instruments department students froze instantly and shook his head anxiously.

Ryleigh laughed out loud. "So, there you have it. Classical music is almost 1,000 years older than modern music, so why should the music that we dedicate our lives to be looked down upon?"

Ryleigh then jumped off the stage and walked toward the two instructors." Subjectively speaking, the reason modern music, the genres that you people study in the academy, has a better development when compared to classical music is that it's more pleasing according to the modern aesthetic. Thus, the truth is that your aesthetics are cultivated under the nurture of modern music, so it's only natural for you to think that classical music that we play in the orchestra department is not your cup of tea."

After a pause, Ryleigh poked her finger against the shoulder of one of the female instructors. "I won't force every single one of you to appreciate what we do in the orchestra department, but I also won't allow you people to belittle us!"

The female instructor swayed slightly as her expression turned agitated and her complexion paled. Even those students standing around the instructors were dumbfounded, while the students of the orchestra department applauded. It was only then that the applause pulled the female instructor back to her senses, and she dodged Ryleigh's finger. "What's the use of you telling us this? Do you have the ability to get the academy to accept it? The academy has always only focused on developing our department, so, Ms. Ryleigh Hill do you think you can change it with just a few words?"

The female instructor stared at Ryleigh's sulky face and sneered. "Now tell me, since when has our department lost the opportunity to perform during all the important occasions? We're not the only ones who think the orchestra is lacking in the aesthetic department, Ryleigh Hill," Ryleigh was about to say something when Louis appeared in the corridor. "The highest achievement in music is the tolerance and respect one shows for other genres of music. If you can't even show basic respect toward other music genres, then don't humiliate modern music and other soloists in front of others."

The female instructor's expression looked embarrassed, and the arrogance that she had been emitting since the beginning of the debate was suppressed instantly because of Louis' appearance.

The students all nodded at him. "Mr. Lucas."

Ryleigh looked at him and pouted. "Why are you here?" "I bear good news for the orchestra department." He stopped in front of Ryleigh. "For the shooting of the pilot film that will be submitted to the international summit, our foreign investors have chosen the orchestra department to be in it."

Ryleigh was surprised. "Huh?"

The expression of the two female instructors became more and more dissatisfied. "How could it be the orchestra

Louis glanced at them and asked indifferently, "Why can't it be the orchestra department?"

They choked on their reply.

Louis looked cold and crossed his arms. "You might be blind, but it doesn't mean that others are blind too. Moreover, you're not someone who can represent modern music when it comes to commenting on classical music. In short, you're not qualified enough to do that."

The two female instructors did not dare to say anything, so they could only leave the scene after the defeat.

Ryleigh frowned and stuck out her tongue behind their backs. Louis raised his hand, pinched the back of her neck, and pulled her into his arms as she amused him. "What are you proud of?"

She turned around and said in a muffled voice. "They sounded more arrogant than I am now, so why can't I be proud?"

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Ryleigh slapped his hand away and said, "I just can't stand seeing them like that.

Hmph!"

Louis pinched her puffed-up cheeks. "If I didn't come over, were you going to fight them?" Ryleigh looked at him, deep in thought, but didn't speak. At that moment, a beautiful woman in a long dress stood not far away with a smile on her face. "Lew." Ryleigh stared at Louis, who had great luck with women. The woman walking over wasn't as pretty as his ex-girlfriend Xyla but was just as graceful.

She could guess who this woman was. She was probably Jodie Smalls that the other instructors had been talking about a few days ago. Xyla was an international supermodel who had a classy grace, while Jodie was a ballet dancer who was demure and elegant, gentle as water.

Louis looked at her, then frowned. "Who are you?"

Ryleigh turned away and covered her mouth, trying not to laugh. Jodie was probably surprised when Louis didn't recognize her and paused, feeling a little awkward. "I'm Jodie, don't you remember?" "Oh, it's you." Louis sounded indifferent. "Can I help you?" Jodie smiled. "I've returned to the academy. I heard that you've always been here, so I came over to see." Her eyes then drifted toward Ryleigh. "Who is this?"

Louis hugged Ryleigh's shoulder. "My wife."

Jodie was surprised. "You're married?"

Louis squinted. "Is that weird?"

Jodie shook her head. "No, I'm just surprised because I thought..." She looked down with a smile on her face. "I thought you would be with Xyla forever."

Ryleigh crossed her arms. Jodie didn't feel like a simple girl. Had she intentionally mentioned Xyla? Ryleigh hugged Louis' arm. "Honey."

Louis looked at her curiously because of what she called him. She didn't notice his expression but was doing this intentionally. "Isn't Jodie Smalls the prettiest girl on your campus? Why don't you introduce us?" Jodie wasn't expecting Ryleigh to say that, and her eyes shifted over to Louis.

Louis only had his eyes on Ryleigh. "There's no need to introduce you if you already know." Ryleigh rolled her eyes. "That's not the same. She's your school friend, and you introduced Robbin and Blake to me. We can't discriminate against your female friends, can we?"

Louis knew she was doing that intentionally, so he chuckled, "You're right Now you know her too. She's a former pianist, Jodie Smalls." Ryleigh looked at Jodie with a smile and extended her hand. "Hello Ms. Smalls. Nice to meet you." Jodie looked at Ryleigh, and when she extended her hand, Ryleigh retracted hers and turned around to speak to the students in the practice hall. "Practice well. We need to bring glory to the orchestra!" The few students were motivated. "Yes, ma'am!" Ignoring Jodie's awkward expression, Ryleigh dragged Louis and left.

When they walked to the classroom building, Louis pulled his arm back and pulled her into his arms. "Are you jealous again?" Ryleigh smacked his hand away and turned to face him. "What do you mean by jealous? I just can't stand her."

After saying that, she imitated Jodie. "Lew, aww, look at me. I'm so sweet."

Chapter 1037

Louis enjoyed her 'performance and couldn't help but say, "You can do that too."

Ryleigh was disgusted. "No way!"

Louis leaned in closer to her. "Weren't you nastier when you called me honey?" Ryleigh paused and quickly looked away. "Did I? I didn't, no way. You misheard."

He pinched her cheek and made her look at him. "Playing dumb, are we?"

Before Ryleigh could speak, Louis kissed her. She was surprised but then started smacking him playfully. "We're in public, Mm! He ignored it, then backed her up against the wall and took her breath away, taking in all her sweetness. When Ryleigh saw someone walk past them again, she pushed him away anxiously and turned around while she blushed, fanning with her hand,

"Professor Lucas." A student nodded at Louis, who responded with a nod.

Ryleigh hid behind him and tried to slip away after the students walked away.

Unfortunately, Louis caught her. "Where are you going?" Ryleigh whispered, "I'm going back."

"Why? You don't have class in the afternoon." He then hugged her.

Ryleigh was stunned but put her arms around his neck. "How did you know?"

He smiled. "How could I not know?" She blushed again. "You're not allowed to even when I don't have class..." Her voice trailed off. Louis stood there and looked down at the person in his arms before raising his eyebrows. "Oh, that's what you were thinking about?"

Ryleigh choked and smacked him. "You're a b*stard!"

Louis laughed. "You know that already."

Louis drove her to an area with high-end villas that were just one station away from the school.

Ryleigh walked into the house with a minimalist decor with him. There was a balcony outside the huge window, and the balcony was connected to the master bedroom, which faced the sea.

"When did you buy this place?" Ryleigh walked into the room from the balcony and looked inside. Louis stood behind her and opened the door for her. She fell inward as the room had wooden floors.

Louis laughed.

She angrily got up. "You did that on purpose!"

Before she could find her balance, Louis pulled her into his arms. "This was my private dorm while I was in university.

Other than Bobbin and Blake, you're the first woman I've ever brought over."

Ryleigh paused and suddenly asked, "Not even Xyla?"

Louis pushed her down on the bed and kissed her before she could react. "I told you, you're the first woman here. You should be punished."

Ryleigh hugged him. "Louis Lucas..."

He kissed her passionately. His chest was thumping, and sweat started dripping.

In the evening...

The setting sun shone onto the green curtains. Ryleigh woke up in Louis' arms, looked at his sleeping face, which was just inches away, and planted a kiss.

Louis suddenly started chuckling, and Ryleigh was surprised as she had been caught. She sat up. "You were pretending to be asleep!" Louis hugged her tighter, placing his chin on the top of her head. "I don't feel like sleeping when you're around."

Ryleigh poked his shoulder. "I don't have clothes to change into."

Louis said, "Wear mine."

She frowned. "What about tomorrow?"

Louis kissed her cheek, "I'll get someone to send something over."

Chapter 1038

The next day...

Ryleigh sat crossed-legged on the couch in Louis' loose T-Shirt, waiting for someone to bring her clothes over.

She happily went to get the door when the doorbell rang.

However, her face fell when she saw the woman outside was Xyla. "Why are you here?"

Xyla looked at her and smiled. "You're living together after your wedding."

Ryleigh was going to close the door when Xyla suddenly held the door open and stuffed a bag of designer clothes into her hands, "Hold these. I wouldn't have wanted to come over if not for Louis." Xyla put on her sunglasses with a smile, turned, and left. Ryleigh froze for a few minutes, tossed the bag to the floor, and angrily stomped her feet. "I'm going to mess you up. Louis Lucas!" After throwing a tantrum, Ryleigh picked up the bag of clothes. Having something to wear was better than nothing!

Xyla returned to the car and received a text from Louis, who asked if she had sent the clothes over.

Xyla: [I did. Don't ask me to deliver anything anymore. It's not fun, and I even got misunderstood.]

Louis: (Didn't you explain to her?)

Xyla: (Do you think she'd listen? You should coax her)

Louis: (Can you come to the academy today? Xyla: [You're messing up my date, Louis Lucas. Are you going to pay for that?])

[You have a new message]

Xyla opened the app, and it showed that she had received \$150.

At the Royal Academy of Music... Ryleigh walked into the campus in a classy dress that fitted her perfectly, but she gnashed her teeth when she remembered that Louis had gotten Xyla to send it over.' That horrible man! Saying that I was the only one there, but Xyla knew the address. What a liar!' Ryleigh returned to the instructors' block, but a few instructors suddenly blocked her. "Ryleigh, why are you so arrogant?"

Ryleigh was curious. "What do you mean?" "What do I mean?" The instructor chuckled. "Jodie returned to teach, but you bullied her because you were jealous that she was Louis' friend from school?"

Ryleigh paused and realized what was happening. She then raised her brows. "Did any of you see me doing that?"

One of them shoved Ryleigh. "Everyone in the academy knows that. Do you think you can do whatever you want after marrying Mr. Lucas? Jodie is a lot more outstanding than you. Why are you going against her?"

"I'm going against her?" Ryleigh laughed. "Did she tell you that?"

Jodie dashed there at that moment and held them back. "Don't worry about it. Don't let me ruin your friendship." "Jodie, there's no need to be afraid of her. She doesn't have talent other than coming from a family that matches Mr. Lucas'. How could she look down on you?"

"Exactly. She came in through connections. She just used her relationship with Mr. Lucas and Mr. Goldmann. She's pretty much useless

Ryleigh balled up her hand when facing the accusations. "You should watch what you say." She looked at Jodie. "You're putting words in my mouth because I put you on the spot?" Jodie looked pale. "Ms. Hill, I-I don't know what I did to offend you." An instructor shoved Ryleigh-really hard when she saw Jodie being bullied. "How dare you threaten her!?"

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Ryleigh fell to the ground, and the skin of her palm scratched against the floor and bled. She winced and balled up her fist.

The instructor crossed her arm. "Stop pretending. I just pushed you lightly, and you fell?" "If Mr. Lucas saw this, he would say that we're bullying you. You fell, so don't come blaming us."

"You-' Ryleigh was going to retaliate when a woman walked over with her phone. "I'm sorry, I accidentally took a video of the interesting event that just took place. I wonder if this video can help clear this lady's name."

Ryleigh looked over and was surprised because it was Xyla.

The instructors all turned pale.

Jodie smiled when she saw that it was Xyla. "Xy, why are you here?"

She walked toward her. "Don't misunderstand, Xy. It was an accident."

Ryleigh stood up. Xyla turned to look at Jodie. "We're not very close."

Jodie's smile froze, but she still calmly said, "Don't you recognize me? I'm Jodie Smalls."

"I know you're Jodie Smalls." Xyla twirled her phone around and smiled. "But I don't think we're very close."

Jodie started looking embarrassed. It had been a while since she met Xyla. When she had still been dating Louis, they weren't close.

She looked at Ryleigh, smiled, and asked, "Ms. Mayweather, are you here to see Lew?"

Xyla looked at Ryleigh. "How could you bag Louis but can't even deal with this woman and let a few old bats bully you?"

Xyla crossed her arms. "You're a Hill and Mrs. Lucas, and you know Mr. Goldmann. Why are you making it easy for these few side characters?"

Ryleigh beamed.

The few instructors lost their tempers." What did you call us?"

Xyla turned and glared at them. "Are you going deaf?" She walked closer to them, and the instructors took a step back, probably stunned by her aura.

"You only bully Ryleigh because she doesn't retaliate and said she came in through connections. If she really came in through connections, you wouldn't be able to bully her. The few of you wouldn't stand a chance."

The instructors stuttered, "That's... Those are just the rules here."

Xyla smiled. "What rules? You're doing all these and telling me that you have rules here? Did you set the rules?"

She stuck her fingers into her hair and combed through it. Her 5'9" modelesque figure and imposing air put them in their place. "Don't you know that Louis invested in the academy and is already a shareholder? Ryleigh would have enough reason to do whatever she wanted just by that alone. Even if she decides to fight you, all you can do is to keep quiet."

The instructors hung their heads and looked pale.

Xyla walked to Jodie and lifted her chin, "As for you."

Jodie was stunned, "W-What do you mean, Ms. Mayweather?"

"I remembered that you had a crush on Louis when we were in school. You pretended to be an innocent girl in public but wrote love letters to him in private.

Who haven't you bullied?"

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When she saw how pale Jodie turned, Xyla leaned closer. "You try to scare the women around Louis away because you're not good enough for him? Do you think you'd get a chance to dance ballet if you didn't get close to me because my father was the director of Royal Crown?" .

Jodie's shoulder shuddered.

Ryleigh looked at her curiously. Xyla patted her face. "Do you think you're so pure and innocent? You used your relationship with me and got to know the people in my father's circle and sold yourself out just so they would pay for your ballet career overseas.

"After so many years of dancing, you still haven't gotten famous, just enjoying life with money people give you. If it weren't because they saw through your plan and cut off your finances, would you have returned?"

TICU!

Xyla didn't speak too loud, but everyone could clearly hear her, and they were shocked. Jodie looked more and more embarrassed. Her face was pale as a sheet, as if she had faced immense shame, while her eyes filled with tears. "... I didn't. That's b*llsh*t."

"Should I make a call to find out for you?" Xyla flashed her phone and almost tapped on her contact list.

The moment Jodie stepped forward to stop her, the few instructors who were supporting her stood in their spots in silence. No one knew if it were true or not, but when Jodie stopped Xyla from making that call, it was clear that she had something to hide. If she was innocent, Xyla could have made that call, and she would still be fine. Xyla laughed. "Don't dare to?"

"Ms. Mayweather, I've never done anything to you. Why are you doing this to me?"

When her real self was exposed, Jodie's facade of gentleness shattered into pieces.

Xyla casually looked at her phone and then looked up. "Because I can't stand you. You pretend to be a victim in front of others, start conflicts, and pretend to be generous so that people like you and push Ryleigh away. I've seen a lot of women like you.

You should become an actress with your acting skills. Why be a ballet dancer?"

Ryleigh looked at Xyla, obviously surprised that the latter would stand up for her. Jodie's shoulders shuddered while she bit her lip. "I don't know what I've done wrong. Ryleigh put me in a tough spot. What did I do wrong?"

Ryleigh couldn't stand it anymore. "What did I do to you?"

Jodie's eyes were red. "Are you going to pretend that you didn't? When I talked to Lew, you put me in an awkward position!"

Ryleigh suddenly remembered what she had done the day before. Even though she was intentional, it wasn't considered a' tough spot'.

Xyla suddenly laughed. "You mentioned me to Louis?"

Jodie was quiet

Xyla crossed her arms. "I don't believe you haven't asked around about Louis now that you're back. If you did, there's no way you wouldn't know that he's married. What was your reasoning behind mentioning his ex in front of his wife?"

"I-1 was just..." Jodie shook and tried really hard to explain. "What I said was true. You loved Lew so much, and you made a great couple. Was it wrong to assume that you'd be together forever?"

Ryleigh looked down but didn't say a word.

Xyla laughed. "Were you really just sorry that I didn't end up with Louis?" Jodie turned pale again as Xyla's eyes pierced through her. "Didn't you mention me because you want Ryleigh to be jealous and cause troubles in their relationship?"