

Chapter 1041

—

Jodie. This might work on other people, but you would only be making a fool of yourself by doing this to Louis.”

Xyla took a look at Ryleigh and continued.” I refused to accept it when I learned that Louis had gotten engaged to her. Six years! For six years, I had been trying to win over his heart, yet he still didn’t choose me in the end. I need to know why. I need to know why he would rather choose her over me.”

Ryleigh looked at Xyla.

Xyla gave her a smile and said, “I didn’t feel bad losing to Ryleigh.”

You guys come from a good family. You’re destined to have everything you want the moment you are born, and you don’t even need to work hard for it,” Jodie shouted hysterically. “But I’m different. If I want something, I need to work for it. I don’t think I’m inferior to you rich girls, but why does the world have to be so hard on me!?” Looking at Jodie, who was crying and sobbing profusely, something crossed Ryleigh’s eyes, and she said, “Can it be the same as what your parents give you and what you get for yourself? If I only knew how to ask for something, it would be better for me to stay at home and be a rich lady at home than to come here and get criticized by you.

“Putting our identity aside, both of us are the same. My family didn’t help me, nor did Louis when I was applying for the music academy. You think that you’re not inferior to us, but how can you be so sure that we’re not as hardworking as you are? If you want something, you need to work for it. It’s the same for everyone. Why should people who live a privileged and affluent life need to make compromises because your life is hard? Nobody in this world is living an easy life. Do you think those cleaners, delivery men, and construction workers are living an easy life? Do you ever hear them complaining about anything?”

Jodie suddenly stopped crying.

Ryleigh looked toward another side and added, “So what makes you think that people born into a wealthy family won’t work harder than you?”

The wind blew through the branches, and a few flower petals dropped to the grass.

After a long while of silence, Jodie suddenly gave a cold laugh, “Hah! Don’t make me laugh, please. Even though I’ve put in so much effort, I still couldn’t get what I wanted, so what makes you think you can convince me that you’ve worked hard in just a few words?”

Just when Ryleigh was about to say something, Xyla interrupted and said sarcastically, “You tried your best to squeeze yourself into high society. You sold your body and used everything you could to get yourself a man, but do you know why you failed in the end? That’s because high society is never short of smart women like you. You need more than just a pretty face. Brain is a good thing, and I suggest you use it sometimes.”

Jodie's face turned red and blue with embarrassment after Xyla humiliated her. A smile then appeared on Xyla's face as she said, "If you had worked hard and had become a real ballerina or a pianist, you would certainly attain more than you have right now."

Jodie's body trembled, and she clenched her fists tightly.

Xyla walked closer to her and added, "I remember the music academy had high hopes for you, but you were the one who let them down. Weren't those rich people willing to invest in your dance dream? But you, did you return the favor?"

Jodie stumbled. Her legs gave way, and she fell to the floor,

Xyla looked downward at her, her face bereft of emotion. "You were the one who put yourself in your current situation, and you still have the guts to say that you've worked very hard for your dream? Don't make me laugh, please! You decided to rest on your laurels, and you still want to get recognition from people. Do you think everyone is blind?"

After that, she glanced at the few female instructors. "You chose the wrong team, buttered up the wrong person, and refused to use your brains to think over the situation yourself. Do you think you represent justice? No, you're just idiots. Honestly, it's the first time I've seen such brainless people." The few female instructors hemmed and hawed. They felt embarrassed and humiliated at the same time.

Chapter 1042

They knew they had stood up for the wrong person, and they felt too embarrassed to stay here. Just when they were going to leave Jodie behind and run away, Xyla called out to them. "Hold on a second. You people were very aggressive just now when you were criticizing her, so what now? Is it that hard for you people to open your mouth and apologize to her?"

Seeing that they refused to apologize to her, Ryleigh said, "Forget about it. I don't need their apology."

"That's your business. They did the wrong thing, so they have to apologize. If they can't even apologize for what they've done wrong, they might not be fit to be an instructor. In that case, I suggest they pack their stuff and go home as they will only negatively influence the students."

No matter how reluctant those female instructors were, they could do nothing but apologize to Ryleigh under Xyla's oppression.

Ryleigh accepted their apology. Xyla pulled out a lipstick and freshened up her makeup through the phone screen. "I'm tired of talking so long. I'm done, so I'm out of here."

Xyla closed the cap of her lipstick and turned around. Ryleigh put Jodie aside and chased her. "Wait..." Even though Xyla heard that Ryleigh was calling for her, she did not stop. nor did she turn around. "You don't have to thank me. I didn't do it for you."

Ryleigh followed behind her and frowned.

Why did you help me then?"

She paused for a while before adding, "In any case, I still need to thank you."

Even though she did not like Xyla, that latter did help her. She would feel bad if she did not thank her. Xyla stopped in her tracks, turned around, smiled at Ryleigh, and said, "You really want to thank me?"

Ryleigh looked at her in confusion.

She put her hand under her chin and said meaningfully, "If you want to thank me, why don't you give Louis to me instead?" Ryleigh was stunned. When she finally came around to her senses, she fought back. "He is a human, and I can't give him away like he's an item. Besides, we're married, and you should try not to get him back." Xyla chuckled and said, "Who told you that I'm going to get him back? Do you think Louis Lucas is the only man in this world? He's the stingiest and most stubborn man I've ever met, and I have had enough of him. I'm not going to give up my whole forest because of one crooked-neck tree."

Ryleigh was shocked.

She momentarily thought a ghost or something had possessed Xyla. Hadn't she been hellbent on getting Louis back when she returned from overseas? How did she give up so soon?

Xyla's phone rang, and she picked it up. "I'm sorry, darling. Something came up, and I had to get rid of it. I'll go to meet you right away. Alright, alright, I'll buy you dinner to make it up for you, okay? That's decided then."

She hung up the call and put her phone back into her bag. "A matter of a few hundred dollars at the cost of my appointment. I'm out of here."

Xyla left without turning her head back, leaving Ryleigh to stand frozen stiff with a dumbfounded expression etched on her face. She still couldn't come around to her senses even after Xyla was gone in her car. Louis came out of nowhere and said, "Now you believe that there's nothing between her and me?"

Ryleigh was stumped. She turned her head around to look at Louis, who was leaning against a wall, and asked, "She... Did she just call another man 'honey'? She has gotten over you so quickly?" Louis shook his head helplessly. "Do you want her to fight with you for me?"

Ryleigh replied with a pout, "Of course, I don't want to..."

He stopped in front of her and pinched her cheek. "No one can get me away from you, Ryleigh."

Ryleigh lowered her head. "Did you ask her to come and help me?"

Louis squinted and replied, "You can't take on Jodie alone, so I could only get help from her. She's very familiar with Jodie, so you'd have a better chance of winning with her by your side."

Ryleigh was stunned. She lifted her head to look at him and asked, "So you were aware of everything about Jodie a long time ago?"

Chapter 1043

Louis raised his eyebrows. "Of course, I do. I have seen a lot of women, so do you think she can fool me with those petty tricks?"

Ryleigh did not say anything. Initially, she thought no man would be able to differentiate batches from other ordinary women.

She crossed her arms in front of her chest and asked incredulously, "Then why did you behave like a stupid man during the incident with Willow?"

Louis was momentarily stumped when Ryleigh brought up the incident from three years ago. He was caught between tears and laughter as he said, "I didn't even like Willow, alright? When my mother said that she's my cousin because of an item of evidence, did I believe it?"

Ryleigh was stumped. It seemed to her that Louis was right. He had never admitted that Willow was his cousin.

Suddenly, she remembered something and went closer to him. "Then am I a scheming girl to you?"

"You?" Louis crossed his arms around his chest and laughed. "If you're considered a scheming girl with your intelligence, I'm afraid that there are no scheming women in this world."

"What? How could you!?" Ryleigh shouted angrily.

Louis grabbed her into his arms, and his smile broadened. "I'm just stating the truth. But this is why I like you. You're simple, cute, and easy to be bullied."

Ryleigh showered his chest with her fists. and Louis stopped her by grabbing her hands and securing her tightly in his arms.

"Of course, no one can bully you other than me." Ryleigh rolled her eyes at him and said, "You said that because you can't bully Xyla, right?" Louis rested his chin on the top of her head and said, "Why do you have to be jealous of her? Does a man need so many reasons when he chooses the woman he likes?"

Perhaps for other men, picking a perfect and flawless wife to spend the rest of their lives respectfully was the right choice, but he did not need it. He had been raised in a good environment, so he had been exposed to too many good women.

The reason he had chosen Ryleigh over Xyla was not that Xyla was bad. It was because he had seen too many resemblances in Xyla. They led the same life and were harsh to themselves. When they were together, they would interact like friends more than lovers.

In his memory, Ryleigh was as excellent as he. If he had come across her earlier, he might not have married her.

However, the reality was that even though he had never interacted with Ryleigh before, he had heard of her many times from other people and was interested in her.

He had been amazed and impressed by her when he saw her on the stage in Bassburgh High, but he did not think she would be the woman who would walk the rest of his life with him.

However, destiny was unpredictable. When he saw Ryleigh, she was no longer the "perfect Ryleigh" she used to be. Even though she was flawed, she was straightforward and simple despite being born into a wealthy family. This was something he couldn't find in other women who came from the same background

1/2

19:11

as them. Therefore, he chose Ryleigh in the end.

Several days later... When Ryleigh met up with Maisie in a coffee shop, she recounted everything that had happened in the academy.

While Maisie was stirring her coffee, she lifted her head and asked, "So, Xyla stepped in and saved you from your predicament?"

"That's because your cousin said I can't handle Jodie alone," Ryleigh said with a pout.

Maisie chuckled. "Well, my cousin isn't wrong. Putting that Jodie aside, you're the only one who would get bullied like that in the academy."

Ryleigh lowered her head to sip on her coffee. She looked vulnerable and helpless but refused to admit it. "I won't let other people bully me next time."

"If they come to look for trouble again, I'll fight back. I want them to know that I, Ryleigh Hill, isn't a pushover!" Ryleigh said confidently.

Maisie put her hand on her forehead and said, "I guess they won't come to look for trouble any more about this time. Honestly, it's very easy to counter them. If you can prove the worth of the orchestra department to everyone, won't you be able to shut their mouths?"

Chapter 1044

Ryleigh was stumped. After a short while, she lowered her head and sighed. "That's what I'm worried about. Although the music trailer featured the orchestra department, I'm worried that the audience won't accept it. What if I messed it up? Wouldn't it be embarrassing?" Maisie looked at her and said, "Well, what's done is done."

She put down the cup and picked up her purse. "Let's go."

"Go where?" Ryleigh asked.

Maisie paid the bill at the cashier and replied, "I'm going to show you a nice place." Ryleigh hurriedly took all her stuff and followed after Maisie.

Maisie parked her car outside the gate of Lebaron Town. Ryleigh looked at the gate through the window. She was stunned and asked, "Lebaron Town?"

Maisie got out of the car. Many visitors were bustling here and there in Lebaron Town, and it was very lively

Ryleigh was walking next to her. When she saw that Maisie had bought two tickets, she turned to look at her. "What are we doing here in a tourist spot? Do you not need to work?"

"Of course, I need to," Maisie said as she stuffed a ticket into her hand. "Aren't you worried that your audience can't accept the orchestra? Well, we can have a live orchestra performance here to test their taste."

A few students were performing on the street. It was not a rare sight in a tourist spot like this, and Ryleigh tugged at Maisie. "Zee, you're not asking me to..."

Maisie laughed. "I'm sure you can do it."

"But... We don't know them. They won't lend me their instruments, right?" Ryleigh asked.

Maisie turned her head to look at her. "In this world, money isn't the solution to every problem, but sometimes, it can solve some of our problems."

Then, Ryleigh saw Maisie walking toward the group of students, and she was stunned. Maisie had been leading a frugal life, so since when did she become such a spendthrift

After striking up a deal with them, Maisie spun around and waved at Ryleigh.

Ryleigh had no other choice but to walk toward them. The students were fans of the orchestra. When they heard from Maisie that Ryleigh majored in orchestra, they warmed up to her quickly.

They all had the same hobby, and Ryleigh soon became friends with them.

They were a group of people who liked to perform on the street as well as to promote the orchestra. However, people were not very interested in the orchestra most of the time. Even if they performed for a whole day, they might earn about \$50 in a peak season, but during the low season, when there were fewer tourists, they would only be able to earn ten or so dollars at most. Not only that, but most of the tourists would just be looking at them or taking photos. They were not interested in the orchestra at all.

Ryleigh pressed her lips tightly. The general style of the orchestra was different from modern mainstream music. It had a very small audience, and if they did not add some twist to their performance, nobody would want to watch it.

1/2

19:11

Llapiei 1044

She rested her chin on her hand and fell into thought. After a while, Maisie brought a group of people over. All of them were holding musical instruments and bags.

Ryleigh was stunned. "Zee, why did you..."

Why did you spend so much money again?' Maisie looked at her and said, "I invited them over to help you guys. Here will be your stage." While Ryleigh still couldn't come around from her shock, the group of people had put down their musical instruments.

Looking at the pile of modern instruments in front of her, Ryleigh soon had an idea.

What if I combine contemporary pop music with classical music? When two different elements collide, I'm sure it'll give the audience something new.'

After that, Ryleigh became more confident. She turned around to look at the group of students behind her and said, "I'm going to rearrange three pieces, so come and help me."

The group of students looked at each other and nodded.

Ryleigh borrowed a laptop and began arranging a score on the spot. She made two copies of the score, one for the students and the other for the three musicians.

The three musicians always performed in

bars. They loved music, and the music adapted by Ryleigh was just pop music with classical style, so it was not an issue for them.

Chapter 1045

Many passersby and tourists had gathered outside the courtyard. After all, the combination of modern and

classic musical instruments was rather eyecatching.

The song “Dance of the Dark” started with the combination of bass and electrophonic organ. Toward the middle of the song, harp, flute, and drums joined in, stirring up the souls of the people around as well as shocking them.

Then, the song changed again. It became “Lighthouse” and “Love under the Sky.” The former was played with flute and guitar, while the latter was a mixed arrangement played with violin. It did not sound out of place at all.

More and more tourists were gathering around them. Maisie had been uploading their performance live. Initially, there were only 100 or so viewers, but more and more viewers joined the live session as time went on. Soon, about 100,000 viewers were watching their performance online.

#1 want the original song!#

#The clash between contemporary pop and classical music! I like it!

#The girl playing the harp is so pretty!#

#Is it only me, or the girl playing the harp looks a lot like an instructor from the orchestra department in the Royal Academy of Music?#

#I’m learning how to play the harp now. Classic musical instruments are my favorite!#

#Is this another advertisement?

#1 think it’s more like a promotional video. The combination of modern and classic music is great!#

When their performance ended, Ryleigh had them farewell before returning to Maisie. “How was it?” Maisie handed her phone to Ryleigh and said, “Look at it yourself.” Ryleigh hurriedly took over her phone and was shocked. “There were so many viewers!?”

Maisie couldn’t help herself but chuckle.” Now you know what to expect. Make sure you don’t mess up the trailer later on.”

Ryleigh was so happy that she gave Maisie a hug. “Thank you so much, Zee!”

In the meantime, at the Royal Academy of

Music...

Louis was making coffee in his office when he received a message on his phone.

He picked his phone up and froze when he saw the message. Maisie had sent the recording of Ryleigh’s performance on the street to him.

He watched the video and let out a laugh before saving the recording on his phone.

Ryleigh waved her hand at Maisie after she dropped her at the academy. After that, she hopped happily into the campus.

When she was climbing the stairs, she bumped into Jodie and froze.

Initially, she wanted to pretend that she did not see her. However, Jodie grabbed her arm and hissed when

she walked past her. "Now you and Xyla have made me look like a fool. Are you happy now?" Ryleigh let out a smirk and pulled her arm out of Jodie's grip. "Ms. Smalls, please be reasonable. We were not the ones who made you look like a fool.

"Can't you find the reason from yourself as to why Xyla chose to expose you?"

Jodie looked at her expressionlessly and said, "It was hard enough for me to return to the academy. I'm just paving my path. I didn't do anything wrong."

She went closer to Ryleigh and added, "I'm aware that people like you who are born with a silver spoon in your mouth look down on someone like me. I just want to fit into society. What have I done wrong? But it's because of you and Xyla that everyone is pointing their fingers at me right now." Ryleigh looked at Jodie, who was gnashing her teeth in exasperation. Her face sank, and she asked, "SO you think you're weak?"

Jodie did not say anything.

Ryleigh then continued in a severe voice. "Don't always think that you're the victim and that it's other people who push you into your current situation. It was you who wanted to harm me in the first place but got exposed by Xyla instead. If you think you're being wronged, then what about me? What you can do, we can't do. Don't you think you're a little bit too double standard?"

Just when she turned around and prepared to leave, Jodie suddenly grabbed her, refusing to let her go. Ryleigh was infuriated and shouted, "What the hell is wrong with you?" "Let's make a bet then. Let's bet which side the public will stand on. Do you believe that people will always have sympathy for me since I'm the weak one?"

Chapter 1046

Jodie smirked.

Ryleigh did not understand what Jodie meant, and she suddenly let go and fell backward. Ryleigh's expression was distorted in shock. When she wanted to reach out and grab her, Jodie had already fallen down the staircase.

Ryleigh froze, and the scene in front of her instantly reminded her of the scene when she had been framed as the person who had pushed Naomi downstairs.

Several students coming upstairs saw Jodie fall down the stairs, and they covered their mouths and screamed in fright.

They then raised their heads and saw

Ryleigh's hand hanging in mid-air.

Jodie was sent to the hospital. The students who had witnessed what happened said that they saw Ryleigh at the scene and that her arm was stretched out at the moment.

– The principal and a few of the school's directors glanced at Ryleigh, who was sitting in the office for interrogation.

When Louis came, Charles followed behind him. He asked the principal about the incident, and the principal

looked at Ryleigh hesitantly.

Louis vetoed their suspicion on the spot." Ryleigh wouldn't do this."

The situation was delicate and difficult for the principal. "The students all said that Ryleigh was at the scene when Jodie fell down the stairs. The two of them were the only ones present at the time, and Jodie wouldn't have done it for no reason..."

Louis frowned, and his expression turned stern and cold instantly.

Charles pondered for a moment and said to the principal, "I don't think that Ryleigh could have done such a thing either. Since only two people were present when the incident happened, there must be some misunderstanding. So let's wait until Jodie wakes up and ask her for her side of the story."

The principal nodded. "Yes, that's the only way."

Louis walked into the office, half-knelt in front of Ryleigh, and placed his palm on the back of her hand. "I believe in you."

Ryleigh recovered from the trance slowly, but she did not seem to be able to return to her senses completely. She lifted her head and stared at him.

Louis hugged her, held her in his arms, and comforted her gently. "It's okay, I believe that you're innocent, and I'll prove your innocence to the others."

Ryleigh buried her cheeks in his shoulders and neck. "Louis, I'm afraid. I'm afraid that they won't believe me."

Louis stroked her hair, and a hint of murderous chill flashed across his eyes that were glaring elsewhere. "Don't worry. I'll be by your side."

At the hospital...

It was already the next day when Jodie woke up in the hospital bed.

The principal and some of the directors were there to visit her.

Charles was also there in the ward. He asked Jodie what had happened yesterday, and Jodie explained weakly, "It's not Ms. Hill's fault but mine instead. I shouldn't have said the things that I said and agitated her..."

The principal and the directors looked at each other in dismay when they heard the explanation. Charles narrowed his eyes and said nothing.

One of the directors said to the principal, "Ryleigh is Louis' wife. I think it's better to discuss it with Louis first. Our students are now spreading the news, saying that Ryleigh is the one who pushed Jodie down the stairs. Wouldn't the students think that our instructor can get away with murder because of her relationship with someone else if we were not to do anything?"

The principal frowned and seemed to be thinking about the director's question. He then said after a long time, "Then we'll discuss with Louis about suspending Ryleigh temporarily." A hint of sheer coldness flashed across Jodie's lowered gaze upon hearing this.

I've said that the public opinion will eventually be by my side. Everyone will sympathize with those who show weakness and fragility. As long as Ryleigh is being crucified as the murderer in this incident, I'll no longer have to be talked about by others in the academy in the future!

Charles returned to the academy and recounted everything to Louis.

Louis sat on the couch with his fingers interlocked and both hands placed on his thighs. He gritted his molars and lifted his head sullenly. "I think it's best to hand this matter over to the police for further investigation."

Charles looked at him and paused for a bit. "You plan to pass the matter to the police for investigation?"

Louis explained calmly, "Ryleigh is innocent. She'd never push Jodie down the stairs, and she also has no reason to persecute Jodie. But since Jodie wants to prove that Ryleigh is the person who harmed her so badly, we'll hand it over to the police and let them deal with this matter."

Chapter 1047

Charles also thought that what Louis suggested made sense.

'A clean hand needs no washing. Handing this matter over to the police and letting them look into and solve the case is the best thing that we can do now.'

In the evening, Ryleigh sat on the bed with her knees bent inward, not wanting to eat anything for dinner. Louis made dinner, pushed open the bedroom door, walked to the edge of the bed, and picked her up.

Ryleigh wrapped her arms around his neck and said softly, "I don't have the appetite to eat."

He carried her to the dining table. "Even if you don't have an appetite, at least eat some. I don't want you to starve in the middle of the night."

Ryleigh jerked him. "Am I going to get fired?"

Louis rubbed the top of her head and leaned over to kiss her forehead. "No, I have already handed the matter over to the police for further investigation."

Ryleigh was astonished. "You handed it over to the police?"

Louis fetched her a bowl of soup and placed it in front of her. "The police's investigation findings will always be the most convincing evidence. We'll get to shut the mouths of all those people as long as the police can prove your innocence." Ryleigh bit her lip and lowered her head. "Am I too weak?"

Louis stroked her cheek. "You're not weak, but very strong instead."

"Don't make fun of me." Ryleigh turned her face away and said with a pouty mouth, "I always don't know what to do when I encounter such matters. If only I could be like Zee."

Louis chuckled, turned her head toward him, and made her look directly at him. "There's no need for you to do too well. I'd rather you hide behind me forever."

Ryleigh flung his hand away and said seriously, "No, I can't be a pushover all the time. I want to go and see

Jodie tomorrow."

Louis could not win against her in the argument, so he had no choice but to compromise.

The next day, Ryleigh went to the hospital. Jodie smirked when she saw her in the ward. "I heard that you've been suspended." Ryleigh did not say anything.

Jodie leaned against the head of the bed, and a glimmer of pride flashed across her eyes. "I told you earlier that all people sympathize with the weak. I'm the victim of this incident, and you, Ryleigh Hill, are the perpetrator in the eyes of the public."

Ryleigh stared at her. "So, are you satisfied now?"

"How can I be satisfied with just this?" Jodie sneered. "You've only got suspended. If it weren't for Louis, you would have been fired from the academy long ago."

Ryleigh lowered her head. "Will it do you any good for you to drive me out of the academy?"

"Will it do me any good?" Jodie said with a chuckle, "As long as I get to chase you, the eyesore of my life, out of the academy, it'll do me all kind of good. Not to mention that I'll make you suffer by making you into public enemy No. 1."

Ryleigh smiled and looked up at her. "I'm sorry, but I'm afraid that I'll have to disappoint you."

Jodie was slightly stunned, only to see Louis appearing at the door all of a sudden. He coldly showed her the voice recording that he had on his cell phone, and she could not help but tremble from head to toe. "You!"

Ryleigh stood with her arms akimbo and snorted. "What kind of double standard is that? You're okay with you framing me, but I can't do the same to you? Jodie Smalls, let me tell you this, you're the one who brought all these upon yourself. You deserve it. And don't take the public as fools. There's always something to hate in everyone.

Ryleigh walked out of the ward, thought of something, and stopped at the door for a split second but did not look back. "By the way, we've handed this matter over to the police. So good luck, Ms. Victim."

Jodie's face gradually turned pale, and she yelled hysterically as she broke down and swept all the medicine bottles off the table.

Louis submitted the recording to the police, together with Jodie's diagnosis. After the investigation, the injuries recorded in the diagnosis could not be confirmed as being caused by getting pushed down the stairs as there would be a slight difference in the severity of the injuries.

Chapter 1048

The police asked the principal to mediate the issue, and the principal released an official statement on campus after learning the truth. On the same day, after the recording was uploaded onto the school's website, the instructors and students of the academy were shocked by the news.

After Jodie was hospitalized for a few days and returned to the academy again, her desk had been cleared, and a letter of dismissal could be seen left on it.

Several female instructors pointed at her and glanced at her from time to time.

"I always thought she was so kind. I didn't expect her to be such a scheming person.' "It's a shame that I always thought she seemed so pitiful and had shown her so much support before this. She really deserves this."

"I heard that she was already quite a scheming person when she was still studying at the academy. It's no wonder Mr. Lucas didn't take a fancy to her back then."

When Jodie overheard the discussions that went back and forth behind her, her complexion ashen as her hands trembled involuntarily.

The image that I've created and maintained for so many years has been eradicated completely. After so many years, I finally got to return to the academy, but everything has been ruined now, all because of Xyla and Ryleigh!

Jodie picked up the things on the desk and left the office with a cardboard box in her arms, while those students who once fancied her all turned a blind eye.

Jodie threw the cardboard box into the trash can downstairs.

I'll never let this pass!

She took out her phone, dialed a number, and said aggrievedly after the call got connected, "Mr. Hathaway, I'm Jodie... I've thought this out. I agree to be your lover."

The other party snorted while slowly pouring wine into the wine glass in his hand. "I thought you didn't want to be my lover before this. May I know what made you change your mind so quickly?"

Jodie clenched her fists tightly.

'It's not that I don't want to be his lover. It's just that I want him to think highly of me and leave a good impression.' Who's Yorrick Hathaway? He's the son of a tycoon in Yaramooi, who is way superior to those men that I've managed to approach so far. He is not married and has no official girlfriend either. He only has dozens of lovers all over the world. He'll always be accompanied by someone different whenever he travels to a country.

"He's never been stingy when he's around women. Apart from that, he's never shown any of his lovers any genuine feelings or given them an official title. I know that countless women should want to approach him due to his status and identity. If I had not pretended to reject him at first and played hard to pique his interest in me, it would have been impossible for me to obtain his contact information.

'But if I could get near to Yorrick, or even become his only lover, Ryleigh and Xyla, or even the entire academy, who are they to me?'

She bit her lip lightly. "I'll play my role as a lover in peace, and I won't compete with the others for anything.

The cell phone on the desktop was on loudspeaker, and the caller's identity was unknown. Yorrick lightly

shook the wine glass in his hand, laughed, and his eyes did not even waver. "I'll consider it."

Yorrick ended the call without waiting for Jodie to say anything, lifted his head, and drank the wine from the glass.

The bodyguard walked to his side and lowered his head. "Sir, Mr. Knowles is here."

As soon as the bodyguard finished speaking, Yorrick saw a figure appear at the door. He then put the glass on the table, crossed his legs together, and changed his posture. "Mr. Knowles, you seem free today, huh?" Tristan walked to the couch and sat down on his own. He also did not beat about the bushes. "Where is Noilace?"

Yorrick rubbed his chin with his fingers and narrowed his eyes. "What makes you believe that I have information about the whereabouts of the young heir of the Knowles?"

Tristan scoffed. "I just know." Yorrick poured wine into the glass without haste. "You Knowles now owe me a huge favor." Tristan leaned against the back of the couch, lowered his gaze, and smiled. "Indeed, thank you very much for protecting the future heir of the Knowles."

Chapter 1049

Yorrick put down the wine bottle, moved it aside, and raised his gaze. "I'm interested in your overseas project in Zlokova."

Tristan paused for a split second and frowned. "You're interested in that project?"

Yorrick leaned forward slightly. "That's the coast of the Persian Gulf. It connects the marine traffic between Yaramoor and Zlokova. You do have quite a keen foresight, knowing that you should develop the marine traffic. So, of course, I'm interested in this extremely profitable project."

Tristan smiled. "Mr. Hathaway, it's said that you've always had a picky taste when it comes to project investment. I really didn't expect that my project would catch your attention."

Yorrick placed his arms across the back of the couch. "I won't make you work for nothing. I'll invest a billion pounds into your project." Tristan's eyes moved as he pondered.

'The project actually piqued Yorrick's interest and made him spend such an amount of money. This shows that the coast of the Persian Gulf really has great prospects.'

"An opportunity to invest in the project in exchange for Nollace's whereabouts. Is this a loss to me in a business sense?"

Yorrick smiled. "The project would take up five years, and a lot of liquidity is needed when everything is on the go. Not to mention the incident that involved the

Knowles a while back, I don't think you can guarantee that there won't be any financial crisis after what happened, am I right?"

Tristan frowned.

What he said is indeed correct. Because of the changes within the Knowles, the liquidity that the project has piled up for the later stages is not enough to protect the company from any financial crisis. I've been cracking my head in the past two months precisely because of this matter. After all, the project has already started, and I've signed the contract with Eastwood Enterprise.

'Now that Yorrick intends to take over the project, it is indeed the best thing that could've happened.'

Tristan stood up slowly. "I'll send the contract over by tomorrow, so please bring the child here by then too."

Yorrick looked up at him and frowned. "You may have to fortify yourself mentally for this." Tristan was startled and stared at him. "What do you mean by that?" Yorrick also stood up. "I'll bring you to go see him now. You'll know by then."

The car drove slowly toward the township of Brandscape and arrived at the sanatorium in the town. Tristan stepped into the sanatorium with Yorrick and a few bodyguards.

The director of the premises came out to greet them in person and smiled. "Mr. Hathaway, to what do we owe the honor?"

Yorrick asked, "Where's the child that was sent here a few months ago?"

The director replied instantly, "He's in the backyard."

The director then led Yorrick and Tristan to the backyard. Several kids were playing soccer in the backyard,

and one boy was sitting on the bench in the corridor who did not join them. Tristan recognized that it was Noilace.

The director walked behind Noilace and patted him on the shoulder.

Noilace turned around, and a scar could be seen on his originally smooth and tender cheek. Tristan was astounded and walked toward him. "Noilace..."

Noilace stared at him expressionlessly, but there was a hint of confusion in his dull pupils. The director explained helplessly, "Unfortunately, he suffered a serious head injury before he was brought here, so he can't remember his name or family. As for the scar on his face, we can only wait for his body to fully recover before sending him to a hospital for scar treatment and removal..."

Tristan squatted down, stretched out his hand toward Noilace, and gently stroked his hair. "Nollace, don't you remember me?"

Nollace shook his head.

Tristan placed his hand on his shoulder, and there was a hint of guilt on his face. "I'm sorry, it's all my fault. Let's bring you home now. I'm here to bring you home to your parents." Tristan got up, took Noilace's hand, and said to Yorrick, "Thank you, but I want to take him home for treatment now."

Yorrick shrugged and did not plan to stop him.

Tristan took Nollace back to the Knowles mansion.

Rick and his wife felt very distressed when they saw their child's current condition, especially Mrs. Knowles

Chapter 1050

She hugged Nollace and cried out loud, "I was so worried about you! You're finally back!"

Nollace stood in place and let her hold him expressionlessly. His gaze looked dull, and he was also bewildered by the existence of the Knowles and his parents.

Mrs. Knowles noticed something, let him go slowly, and stroked his cheek with her palm. "Nolly?"

Rick glanced at Tristan. "Uncle, what happened to Nollace?" Tristan put down the teacup. "He has lost his memory."

Rick was astonished.

Mrs. Knowles shed tears again and held Noilace in her arms tremblingly. "It's okay. He's home now. As for his memory, he'll gradually remember everything."

Back at Bassburgh, at Soul...

Maisie was going through the resumes of the candidates applying for the jewelry designer position, including their previous creations.

Lucy, who was standing by her side, could see her hesitation. "Ms. Vanderbilt, are you dissatisfied with these designs?"

Maisie propped her chin against the palm of her hand and frowned. "I'm indeed not very satisfied with these samples. It just feels like something is missing from them."

It was said that someone's workpiece was the best way for other jewelry designers to get to know them. A workpiece that had been given a certain level of attention would take up a lot of effort, and patience was also a very important element. Maisie had especially added two extra requirements when she put out the vacancy.

Firstly, the candidate had to be bold but meticulous, and they must know how to infuse their personal flavor into their own creations. Secondly, the candidate must be able to handle colored, gothic, and antique jewelry designs.

However, it was obvious the several workpieces that she had gone through had failed to achieve the effect she expected to see.

Lucy picked up those samples and skimmed through them. "But I think they look pretty good."

Maisie smiled. "They do look good, but what I want to see in these pieces is the soul of their creator."

Lucy wondered. "Their soul?"

Maisie looked at the drawings. "These jewelry pieces all look too common. Let's put the lack of creativity aside first, these designs look rough and simple, and there are color-matching problems too. The main piece mustn't look more prominent than the other components of the jewelry. Otherwise, the overall look will give others a dazzling and exaggerated sense of complexity. If that's the case, the color of the jewelry will be the only thing that others see, not the soul of the design itself."

Lucy looked a little confused, and Maisie stared at her. "Have you ever seen a peacock spread its tail?"

Lucy paused for a bit and nodded. "Yes. Maisie added, "There are multiple colors on the peacock's tail when it's opened. There are purple, green, blue, yellow, white, and red, making it look extremely bright and eye-catching. But it doesn't look very

cluttered, does it? That's because the colors spread from the roots of the tail to the tips as if there's a gradient. The blue on a peacock's body is equivalent to the main color of a jewelry piece, while the bright patterns at the tips of the tail are equivalent to the embellishments.

"So, as you can see, the patterns on the tail of a peacock contrast with the blue of the peacock itself, while the color of the tail feathers looks relatively duller than these two colors. That's why it doesn't create a conflict between the two main colored elements of the peacock.

Therefore, the color of a peacock when it has its tail spread looks very colorful, but at first glance, the highlights will still be the blue on the peacock and the patterns on the tips of the tail instead of the whole bird. The colors that expand from the core only make the color of a peacock appear to be layered. That's why the colors can be pleasing to the eye."

Lucy nodded instantly. "So that's why."

Maisie continued to look through all the workpieces and seemed to have found something, and her eyes were fixed on that design drawing.

The workpiece was a retro, gothic Pisces bracelet. The main body of the bracelet was hollowed out with carved branches, leaves, and flowers, and the sapphire inlaid in on the fishes' mouths was definitely an impeccable finishing touch. She flipped through the resume of the designer of this workpiece and was surprised by what she found. 'It turns out to be her?'

Meanwhile, at the Topaz mansion...

Anthony was sitting on the couch drinking tea. He noticed that Naomi had just returned from outside and was standing at the entrance, taking off her shoes. "Naomi, you've just recovered. Why don't you take it slow in order for your body to recuperate?"

Naomi walked to the couch. "I only want to go out and have a look."

Anthony put the teacup down and asked all of a sudden, "Are you still willing to go back to the music academy and continue with your studies? If so, I can help you contact the academy."