

CHOSEN 1601

Chapter 1601

Addie's face was a colorful palette of emotions. Ashen, then pale, then finally a deathly gray. "...What did I do wrong? Why did she get picked over me? No one knows the old man better than I do..."

"You're asking me why?" The young woman sneered, "The fact that you're asking that question is the answer"

If Addie still didn't know where she went wrong, she was truly beyond saving. Even if she was called back, she'd remain the same. Not that she had planned to let Addie return anyway. She came here to find a replacement for Presley, true enough. But as for Addie, her task was to plunge her into deeper despair. She offered her a glimpse of hope, just to complete her mission.

The newly hired maid arrived with a small suitcase in no time. The woman merely said, "Let's go," and led the maid away from the office under the envious gaze of others.

The others only wanted a peaceful job to support their families. As for the commotion, they'd just watch and refrain from making any

Once the commotion died down, the office resumed its usual state, everyone waiting for their work, leaving Addie alone. She remained frozen for a long time, until an office worker snapped at her. "Once you're done with the registration, find a place to wait. Don't stand in our way"

Addie was hardly in the mood to argue. She picked up her two suitcases, looking for a spot in the office, only to find no vacant spots. The people were staring at her with guarded and rejecting faces.

She also had no intention of squeezing in with these grubby country women. So she walked outside with her luggage. The cold wind bit into her. Addie shivered, looking at the pitch-black sky outside, with

no idea what to do.

She had some money on her, but she couldn't just live off it forever. She could find a place to stay, but she had to wait for employers to pick workers. If she left, she'd miss the job opportunities. So she had to wait here

The cold wind was biting, and she missed her life at the Harper's more than ever. By now, she'd usually be dining. Every meal at the Harper's was lavish and she'd save a portion of each dish for herself. She ate whatever the Harpers ate. From delicacies to gourmet dishes, she had tasted it all. Her past life was so beautiful that her current situation seemed particularly bleak

She drowsily waited until the next morning. She woke up hungry and saw women happily carrying their luggage, following well-dressed people Obviously, they had found work. She quickly got up and ran into the office.

Seeing the new office staff, she quickly asked, "Has anyone asked for me?"

The staff member took one look at her, her face hardening instantly. "What's your name?"

"Addie."

The staff member checked the registration form, looked at Addie's file, and chuckled coldly. "Minimum wage of fifteen grand? Well, you can keep waiting!"

Addie detected her sarcasm. Her body was already numb from the cold last night, but now, hearing these words, she began to feel uneasy. Tve worked at the Harper's for decades. Fifteen grand is a bargain for my experience...

The staff member couldn't be bothered to argue, just shaking her head in silent mockery.

People around them had heard Addie's shrill voice and turned to look.

"Fifteen grand? Who does she think she is?"

“The Harper’s housekeeper? The one who was on TV with a swollen face yesterday?”

“Her? And she expects fifteen grand? Ha, I wouldn’t hire her for one and a half grand!”

“Not even for a hundred and fifty! Hire her and have a ticking time bomb in my house? No, thank you!”

The unabashed whispers around her finally made Addie realize the reality of her situation. She quickly pulled out her phone to check the news. Seeing that online comments were no different from what these people were saying, she slumped to the ground in defeat.

Just yesterday she was on TV, and then someone released the CCTV footage from the Harper Mansion. She was being publicly shamed.

How could this be? With the CCTV footage out, who would hire her? She was being pushed to a dead end.

Early in the morning, Elizabeth video called Chloe. “Addie has always been a thorn in my side. Presley always protected her, whatever I said fell on deaf ears. I finally managed to get rid of her once, only for that Alonso girl to bring her back. It’s infuriating.”

Chloe was propped up in bed, bare-faced and groggy. Her hair was slightly messy, and her white nightgown exposed a delicate collarbone. She gave a small smile, ruffling her hair. Her voice was low and husky from just waking up, slightly muffled. “Your health is more important. There’s no need to worry about an outsider.”

Elizabeth sighed, “I know, but I just can’t control my temper when it comes to her! I can’t stand her, and every time I see her I get angry. It’s a vicious cycle. And the old man always trusts and protects her!”

Chloe gave a light laugh, “Well, you won’t have to see her anymore.”

Elizabeth nodded, her face instantly brightening. “You’re a lifesaver! Finally got that annoying old hag out of my house. And I heard Presley himself kicked her out! Maybe he’ll finally see the light. All these years of trust wasted on such a person, I’d love to see his face!”

Even though Elizabeth sounded indignant, her slight pouting made her seem adorable.

Chloe smiled, blinking slowly. The smile on her lips was full of indulgence and affection.

"I wonder how he is doing... All worked up over an old maid... Do we even have a maid in the house now?"

Knowing Elizabeth, she had a tough exterior but a soft heart. Chloe watched her in silence. Elizabeth pursed her lips, a hint of discomfort on her face. "I'm not worried about him!" she emphasized, "I just don't want him to have any regrets. No matter how cold he seems on the outside, he's still your biological father. He always says that it's fine and not to worry about him, but how can I not worry? I can't just let him always cater to my feelings!"

"I think I can handle it, as long as it makes him a little happier, and not so conflicted. It's just a stubborn old man, right? No matter how stubborn he is, I still ended up with his son."

Chapter 1602

Chloe could totally empathize with Elizabeth. Why wouldn't she? How could she put Damon in such a difficult position?

"I understand." Chloe agreed, smiling knowingly. "He can't outsmart us. We've spent the most time with his son and his grandson."

Elizabeth couldn't help but laugh. "Exactly! He can't deny it even if he wanted to"

Chloe smiled indulgently, her eyes twinkling with a certain lazy charm that made Elizabeth shake her head in amusement. "If it wasn't for the fact that I have Royce, and you have my son, I would definitely seduce you! With that kind of appeal, no wonder you've got my stubborn son head over heels."

This didn't seem like something a mother-in-law should say c2

Chloe found Elizabeth's peculiar train of thought amusing. She looked down and covered the exposed skin at her neckline.

"No need to cover up, I'm just looking. I can't really touch you! My son's the lucky one! Where is he anyway? Not by your side?"

Chloe tilted her phone to show the empty bed next to her, devoid of Damon's presence.

"Where did that boy run off to? He should be having a big breakfast. How could he leave you alone?"

Chloe was tempted to end the call. Her mother-in-law was far too frank! She spoke so bluntly without any sign of embarrassment.

"Are you done chatting? Time for breakfast."

Suddenly, the soft and warm voice of Royce came from the video. Chloe smiled, this was a tone he only used in front of her mother-in-law. Just as she was about to end the call, she saw the video screen flicker. Elizabeth switched the camera, and Royce appeared on the screen.

At first, Chloe thought she was seeing things. But luckily, she had a strong ability to accept new situations.

The video was a bit shaky, but she could clearly see Royce in simple homewear, wearing a pink apron with four little pink pigs on it. Although Chloe didn't watch cartoons, Anya always mentioned these little animals.

They were probably Peppa Pig and her family. Papa Pig, Mama Pig, Peppa Pig, and George Pig.

Somehow, she suddenly thought of her in-laws, Damon, and Nathan. She couldn't help but laugh softly.

Elizabeth held the phone seriously, pretending to Royce that she was still chatting with Chloe.

Royce thought she was still talking to Chloe, he wiped his wet hands on his apron, then bent down to pick up the clothes that had fallen on the floor. In the end, he gathered all the dirty clothes in his arms. He looked like a perfect house-husband, cooking and doing laundry with ease. His proficiency was not something achieved overnight.

Chloe covered her mouth and snickered softly, watching as Royce left the bedroom, the video following him.

It wasn't until he reached the door that Royce stopped, turned around, and said, 'Eat your breakfast soon. Elizabeth, what are you doing?'

Elizabeth didn't expect Royce to suddenly turn around. She was caught red-handed. It was too late to hide.

The video showed Royce striding over, his handsome face filled with irritation. Elizabeth quickly switched the camera and ran to the side with her phone "What are you doing? I'm chatting with my daughter-in-law!"

"Did you just sneak a picture of me?"

"No" Elizabeth denied firmly. "Chloe has been looking at me the whole time! Why would I take a picture of you? If you don't believe me, ask her!"

Elizabeth held out the phone, showing Royce's face.

Chloe quickly straightened her posture, letting her hair fall in front of her, blocking the exposed skin of her chest. Then she softly called out, "Hi"

Royce pursed his lips and responded with a low "Hmm" He didn't ask about the argument with Elizabeth, but instead asked, "Why did you intentionally cause such a commotion yesterday?"

Chice smirked As expected, her father-in-law was incredibly astute. She had tried to shift everyone's attention to Addie, using her as a decoy and a shield, but he had still seen through her

"The Global Economic Summit is about to begin, and it's the time of year when companies tally their achievements. This directly affects the Forbes ranking and the Fortune 500

"The Starlight international in my hand, including the industries my mother left me, have all gotten on track, along with the Alonso Corporation that recently came into my possession Although these can't match the scale of the Harper Group, they pose a threat to the Harper family.

"Regardless of the ranking as long as im within the Fortune 500 or Forbes, I will be a rising star in the business world and will overshadow the Harper Group and him Robin has just taken over the Harper family and he definitely wont allow this to happen

"Whether it's for the reputation of this Global Economic Summit, or for the future threat to the Harper family and the stability of his current position, he must want to suppress us and eliminate all threats

Royce listened quietly, showing no surprise or shock at Chloe's words Instead, he asked calmly "So? You want to provoke him to act against you?"

Chloe didn't deny it. "He will definitely target us! Damon will threaten his position as chairman, and the industries in my hands will directly affect the Harper family's reputation internationally. He's bound to come after us sooner or later, so we might as we steer him onto the course we

want from the get-go. If it's going to be a standoff, I won't back down just because we're dealing with the untouchable Harper family."

Royce paused for a moment, a smirk playing on his lips as he watched her through the phone screen. "So, you're saying you've factored us into your scheming?"

Chloe gave an apologetic smile, "About that, I'm sorry..."

“Never mind, you’re right. Any businessman worth his salt wouldn’t allow anything threatening to go unchecked. If it’s inevitable for him to make a move against us, your foresight in preparing for it is commendable! But are you sure he’ll just willingly fall into the trap you’ve laid out for him?”

Chloe responded with a smirk, “As long as there’s desire and greed, they’re bound to fall into it. And Robin, he clearly wants a lot...”

Chapter 1603

Royce nodded, neither confirming nor denying Chloe’s statement. How long had Robin been suppressing his ambitions? And now, to take over the company, he had been going through all this trouble.

“If you want to follow this path, then go ahead. If something goes wrong, someone will surely take the fall for you.”

Chloe gave a slight smile and a nod. The person he was referring to was, of course, Damon. It seemed that Damon had inherited his father’s penchant for spoiling women. It looked like father and son would have plenty to talk about in the future.

“... What are you two blabbering about? Move aside, move aside...”

Elizabeth had been wanting to interrupt their conversation but hadn’t found the right moment. Now, finding a gap in their conversation, she quickly pushed Royce away. “Chloe and I are the perfect duo right now, okay? Why are you talking to her so much? Chloe, Chloe, you must take good care of yourself, and my chubby grandson. Oh, my grandson is gonna be my little lucky star...”c2

Elizabeth was unhappy with Royce hogging her time with her daughter-in-law. She pushed him aside and eagerly started a conversation with Chloe

Elizabeth’s warmth warmed Chloe’s heart, her smile was gentle and affectionate. No wonder her father-in-law adored her mother-in-law so much. She was such a kind and lovely woman, even she wanted to spoil her.

"I will take good care of myself, you don't need to worry." She reassured Elizabeth softly.

Elizabeth nodded with a satisfied smile.

"Hey, why are you still here? I want to chat with my daughter-in-law..."

"It's time for breakfast Royce's deep voice echoed.

"I don't want to eat. I'm busy chatting with my daughter-in-law."

"Eat first, and chat later"

"No..."

"Elizabeth!"

"You dare to scold me?! You Chloe, look at him. He bullies me, just because he's handsome!"

Chloe was both amused and confused by Elizabeth's outburst. Was this a quarrel or a compliment?
Royce was also at his wits end with his whimsical wife

Elizabeth's crying was clearly fake Her anger might not be real either, but even with her fake crying and relentless nagging, he was at a loss. Over the years, he had never found a way to truly restrain her. With her, he was truly hopeless.

"I didn't scold you, sweetheart. Let's have breakfast first."

"But I want to chat with my daughter-in-law." Elizabeth grumbled.

“Elizabeth Chloe was about to speak when she heard Royce’s voice filled with resignation, “I’ll bring the breakfast over.”

Only then did Elizabeth smile, “Okay, I’ll wait for you.”

Without any hesitation, she kissed Royce on the cheek in front of Chloe. It was as if she was a completely different person than the grumbling

woman just a moment ago.

“Who are you chatting with? Huh? Chloe was blushing from watching the two people in the video when she was suddenly startled by a very familiar voice next to her ear

Elizabeth and Royce, hearing the voice, looked through the video to see Chloe turning her head at the sound, only to be pushed down into the bed covers Damon’s tall figure covered hers and he began to kiss her deeply.

Elizabeth’s mouth dropped open in surprise, her eyes wide and round. The scene lasted for only a few seconds before the screen flickered. Maybe Chloe had deliberately covered the phone to prevent them from seeing something inappropriate. Or maybe Chloe was caught off guard and dropped the phone In any case, they could no longer see what was happening, but they could still hear

Elizabeth blinked uncomfortably, but she pushed the idea of being appropriate to the back of her mind. She strained her ears to hear what Damon and Chloe were doing

“No Damon “Chloe’s breathing was suppressed and short, her voice low as she rejected Damon. However, the sound of breathing, the sound of cloth rustling, and even the sound of kissing were all still audible

“Damon!” Chloe gasped suddenly, her voice filled with surprise and urgency

The nightgown she was wearing was definitely Damon's handiwork. His excuse for it at the time was if he couldn't eat, couldn't he at least touch? So the nightgown she was wearing was either short enough or had a low enough neckline, all to make it easier for him to get his hands on her, to take advantage.

Just like now, the man's warm lips were right at the edge of her neckline. The strap had long slipped off her shoulder due to his action, and the skin on the edge was already half exposed.

Chloe clenched her teeth, fearing Damon's next move might be even bolder. She hadn't even had time to turn off the video call.

Hearing Chloe's shout, Elizabeth suddenly jolted and quickly shouted at the screen, "Damon, Damon! You better be careful! Your wife still has my chubby grandson in her belly! Don't you dare go all the way..."

Royce, standing to the side, looked sophisticated and handsome, but he couldn't help but rub his forehead. What on earth was he supposed to do with this woman? Couldn't she see that her daughter-in-law was also a bit shy?

Hearing Elizabeth's voice, Damon finally released Chloe. She bit her lip, her eyes closed as she adjusted her somewhat ragged breathing. Elizabeth's voice still echoed in her ears. She was going to die of embarrassment.

Damon got up, one hand propping up her side, his slender fingers pulling up her strap, and straightening out her tousled hair. He looked at her blushing face and moist lips, and he smiled slightly.

Chloe stared at him wide-eyed, and punched him on the shoulder a couple of times. Damon chuckled, caught her hand, kissed it, and said in a low voice, "How many times have I told you, you scratch like a cat."

Every word he uttered now sent shivers down Chloe's spine. The tone, the voice, it was just unbearable. And not to mention, there were two very much alive and very much present spectators, even if separated by a phone call.

“You punk, you better stop right now, you hear me? If you hurt my precious grandson, I swear I’ll have your family jewels!”

Chloe sighed. It was a ludicrous mix of embarrassment and humor.

Damon, pressing his thin lips together, wore a rather grim expression.

Chapter 1604

He straightened up, picking up his phone which had fallen on the bed. His handsome face had just flashed on the video call when, a second later, Elizabeth’s call was abruptly ended.

Elizabeth, who was about to say something, blinked in surprise after hearing the beeping sound, her eyes then flaring with anger. “That cheeky lad dared to hang up on me!”

She immediately called back and was hung up on. She called again, and again was hung up on. Without a second thought, Elizabeth knew this was Damon’s handiwork!

She decided to send a voice message this time. “Chloe, if your husband dares to hang up on me again, I’ll I’ll cry on you!”

After much thought, Elizabeth felt it was unfair to threaten others by crying, but despite the hesitation, she was firm. Chloe was her chosen daughter-in-law, how could she bear to see her cry?c2

When she called again, the video call was finally answered. Chloe appeared on the screen, her cheeks flushed.

Elizabeth was quite pleased with herself. See, her daughter-in-law was the most pleasing. “Chloe, he didn’t hurt you, did he?”

Chloe’s face reddened even more. “No...”

“Wait until I come back and I’ll deal with him. Just bear with him for now. Let him have his way.”

Chloe was starting to regret answering the call.

Damon, on the other hand, gave a silent smirk, ruffling Chloe’s hair. “Let’s have breakfast.”

The video call continued. Chloe and Elizabeth ate cheerfully on either end of the video call. Damon and Royce glanced at each other through the screen and then turned away, each watching their wives eat breakfast.

Royce was sitting next to Elizabeth, still wearing an apron. Damon was sitting next to Chloe, also still wearing an apron. The baby blue apron featured a white kitten with large, round eyes.

The two handsome men had not made eye contact since the beginning. However, they both felt helpless.

The mother-in-law and daughter-in-law seemed to get along too well, which was proving to not be a good thing. Was it really necessary to keep the video call on even during breakfast?

Chloe figured that thick skin was forced out of necessity. The incident that had just occurred would have been enough for her to hide in embarrassment for a long time, and she definitely wouldn’t want to meet Elizabeth and Royce anytime soon. However, she was now calmly having breakfast with them on a video call, convincing herself that it was pointless to dwell on what had happened and that it was important to act naturally

Hmm....she was starting to understand how people like Wendy managed to appear in public with an air of superiority, even after their reputations

had been tarnished.

After finishing breakfast, Chloe and Elizabeth looked up at each other through the screen, shared a glance, and then turned their attention elsewhere, both breaking into laughter for some unknown reason.

Royce and Damon looked at them in confusion, "What's so funny?"

Chloe covered her mouth, her laughter more modest. However, Elizabeth was the opposite, pointing at the screen and laughing at Damon.

"Why is it a kitten, hahaha. it's so cute, but it looks so weird on you, hahaha..."

Damon looked down at the apron he had grown accustomed to wearing and hadn't thought to take off, noticing the little white kitten in the middle, his face darkening. As Elizabeth continued to laugh uncontrollably, Damon removed his apron and tossed it onto a nearby chair.

Royce glanced at the modestly laughing Chloe, and also removed his Peppa Pig apron without a word.

Neither of them looked particularly pleased.

Elizabeth, seeing her son's annoyed expression, gradually stopped laughing. "Alright, alright, that's enough for today! Chloe, let's have breakfast together again tomorrow. You gotta eat more, and as soon as I get things sorted out, I'll come home and spend time with you and my precious grandson!

What about Damon, her own son? Was he being completely ignored?

"Don't call again unless it's necessary!" Damon commanded with a stern face.

Elizabeth paused, her lips pursed and her eyes drooping, she turned to look at her husband with a pitiful expression.

"Darling, look, your son is treating me like that

Royce wiped away the soup residue from Elizabeth's lips, shooting Damon a cold look, and even without speaking, Chloe could feel the chill from his gaze

Without another word, Damon ended the video call. The dining room was once again quiet, and Chloe breathed a sigh of relief. She cautiously looked at Damon, then picked up her spoon and served

another bowl of soup. "This soup is really delicious. You're amazing. Everything you do is the best."

She was clearly buttering him up. Still his mood was visibly off.

Damon glanced at the nearly empty soup pot, a faint smile crossing his lips. He lowered his gaze and lifted Chloe's shirt, patting her belly gently. Her belly was slightly round, making a "thump thump" sound when patted. He looked at her, "Are you sure you want to eat more?"

Chloe pushed the bowl in front of her towards Damon. "It's for you."

Her obedient demeanor melted Damon's heart. How could this woman be so adorable?

He stood up, carrying her in his arms and placing her on the dining table. "If your employees saw you acting like this, would their faith in you shatter?"

Who would've thought that this strong businesswoman, who they regarded as a goddess, could act so charmingly at home?

Chloe's eyebrows twitched slightly, her eyes shimmering with a hint of mischief. "Should I give it a try?"

Damon hummed lowly, leaning down to kiss her passionately. His husky voice was full of threats. "I'd love to see you try."

Chloe chuckled lightly. "If they knew I was such a pushover, how would I ever manage them?"

"A pushover?" Damon gave a wry smile, "And how exactly have I taken advantage of you?"

Chloe, her eyes twinkling, retorted, "What do you think?"

Damon chuckled lowly, leaning in towards her once more.

They resumed the romantic entanglement in the bedroom that had been interrupted by Elizabeth. Chloe's breath hitched slightly, her hands clutching at Damon's shoulders, surprisingly compliant and reciprocating Damon's advances.

Her gaze was slightly dazed.

Chapter 1605

The two briefly separated, with Damon pecking at her, his low and enticing voice gently echoing into the air.

*So tell me, what was all that ruckus about yesterday?"

Chloe, clinging to Damon, tried to steady her erratic breathing.

"I... I just set a trap for him."

"What?"c2

"Well, he's been after me anyway, so I can't just stand there and let him hit me head-on. I think he's been struggling to find a way to deal with me, so I thought I'd help him out."

Damon raised an eyebrow, "So, you purposely confronted Addie at the Harper Mansion and disclosed your plans to the press in public? All part of your scheme?"

Chloe nodded affirmatively. Damon, noting her discomfort, held her and led her to the living room couch.

Upon sinking into the soft couch. Chloe found a comfortable position and continued. "Robin, he wants to uphold loyalty and righteousness. He clearly wants to target you and me, but he hesitates, all in an attempt to maintain a virtuous image in public. I'm just giving him the opportunity he's been looking for. Otherwise, knowing that there are people out there waiting to pounce, it's nerve-racking..."

Chloe sighed, her expression twisted with frustration, "Robin is too cautious, always hesitating, and it's driving me crazy..."

At this, Damon chuckled, "Is that all?"

Chloe grinned, "Just the beginning."

"However, at yesterday's press conference, Robin didn't mention anything you expected him to."

"I guess he's thinking of catching me red-handed?"

Damon fell silent for a moment. "You are repeatedly challenging my grandfather and Robin publicly. You're determined to drag yourself into this. huh?"

The smile on Chloe's face gradually faded, replaced by a serious expression. "I want to help you. There are things that you can't do, but I can."

After a moment of thought, she added, "You've poured so much time and effort into the Harper family. We can't just abandon it. If you want to fight, Robin won't outdo you..."

"It's too late." Damon cut her off with an indifferent tone.

Chloe was taken aback. "What's too late?"

Damon chuckled before leaning in to peck her lips. "It's no loss if the Harper family falls. As he spoke, a cold glint flashed in his eyes.

Chloe fell silent. Indeed, the current situation of the Harper family was far from optimistic. Apart from the minor market turbulence caused by Addie's press conference yesterday, the Harper Group's business in Asia and the EU had been repeatedly hindered since a few days ago.

Projects under development were halted, completed projects could not open as scheduled, and even ongoing projects were being snatched up by competitors. The Harper family's business scope was extensive, and these incidents, though minor, were distressing for them.

Robin initially didn't pay much attention. After all, he had just taken over the Harper family, and there were countless issues within the company. He simply assumed these incidents were par for the course. No one could achieve perfection, and business was no different. No one could guarantee a 100% success rate.

Moreover, these were minor business branches, and while managing such a large company, he didn't have the time to worry about these inconsequential issues. However, if they kept occurring, he had no choice but to pay attention.

Such problems arose just after he assumed control, and if word got out, it would certainly affect his reputation. So he kept these issues under

wraps.

He had estimated that just the losses incurred by these minor projects getting halted and targeted, amounted to 3% of the Harper Group's total

assets.

What did 3% represent? It might have sounded insignificant, but when calculated against the Harper Group's total assets, it was not a figure to be

scoffed at.

So he had been investigating the matter, but whoever was pressuring the Harper family's projects was very discreet. They knew someone was targeting them, but couldn't identify who. After much thought and considering the timeline of when the projects started having issues, he could only point the finger at Damon. And with Damon now detached from the Harper family, the only person who could help him was the currently high-profile Chloe.

The Global Economic Summit was looming, and in the coming months, he couldn't allow Chloe to overshadow him, nor could he afford to see the Harper family's total assets decrease during his short tenure compared to Damon's.

If we were talking about pressure, indeed. Robin was under a lot of it. Hence, dealing with Chloe was inevitable for him. For now, he wouldn't let the media expose the issues with the overseas projects.

Presley was still hoping for his nephew to return and take over, and although Robin held most of the shares, Damon's shares hadn't been officially reclaimed, and Royce's shares were idle.

He was now a director of the Harper family, but what if Damon changed his mind and used his brother's shares to oppose him.

The Board of Directors wouldn't just follow the one with the most shares. His position was far from stable. If another hiccup occurred during the Global Economic Summit, his position as Chairman could be hanging by a thread.

He simply could not tolerate Chloe's presence, given the sum of all issues at hand. He just couldn't find the right reason or loophole in the past.

Now, however...

When Damon had said, "It's too late," Chloe hadn't understood. But her plan had already been set in motion, and there was no reason to stop.

Elizabeth was now in the deep south, where mostly men went off to work to earn their living, leaving behind women and children. The economic conditions were poor, and life was simple and primitive.

The reason she came here was because of a favor Chloe had asked her. Even thinking about the plane crash that occurred later still gave her chills. If Chloe hadn't rushed over to stop them, informing her about her pregnancy in the midst of the rage sparked by her grandfather, would she still be alive and well, eagerly awaiting the birth of her beloved grandson?

And there was no chance she could complete the mission entrusted to her by her parents.

Chapter 1606

Hiding their survival and their whereabouts was the initial plan, so they had sought out this remote and impoverished place. They wanted to allow the obstinate old man to reflect on his wrongdoings. However, the old man's unyielding attitude continuously left them disheartened

He had no idea that their departure was prompted by his overbearing and hateful demeanor. Even after the plane crash, shouldn't he feel some form of remorse? Apparently not

Alyssia continuously made silent compromises, only to be repeatedly pushed away by him. She repeatedly gave in for Royce's sake, and Presley remained ungrateful time and again. Now, with Damon and Chloe, he was repeating his past behavior. She couldn't comprehend how a person

could be so stubborn.

Sometimes, she even felt that her initial concessions and guilt towards him were utterly foolish. Chloe was her lucky charm, and she never doubted that for a moment. She certainly wouldn't waver in her attitude towards the old man's prejudice against Chloe

The people here lived a primitive life due to the poor economic conditions. Initially, she didn't know why Chloe had brought her to this place c2

But later, she understood. When the girls in this place got married, it was customary for their families to make quilts and wedding dresses. On the quilts were images of dragons and phoenixes, and on the wedding dresses were dancing phoenixes, even other animals, clouds, and flowers, all sewn by the women themselves

For her, this was a veritable paradise.

Her parents wish was for the Norwood family's embroidery skills to be passed down. She had devoted herself to this for a few years, but the pace of modern life was too fast. Neither young women nor wives had the time for it. Things had been delayed, and up until now, there had been

no progress

Now that Chloe had brought her here, she finally understood the significance of the period drama she had taken on, which everyone had

dismissed

Today, she could assist the economic situation in this poor region, let her embroidery skills shine, and with the help of the period drama. popularize and pass on the art of embroidery It was a win-win-win situation.

She used to be upset because Wendy tried to please her with embroidery, and Chloe remained indifferent. She even had a temper tantrum when Chloe first accepted the script for the period drama. Who could have thought that Chloe had such long-term plans?

She had also been assigned a secret task and was now working overtime to complete it.

Elizabeth was in charge of the costume work for the film crew here. Meanwhile, Chloe was in P City, in touch with Starlight International's Public Relations Department, promoting The Queen extensively. There was even a promotional event scheduled for the coming Friday

The department's multi-faceted publicity campaign was in full swing Prime-time slots on major websites, promotional videos, posters—it was as if everything had been prepared ahead of time, immediately seizing one of the most popular topics of the moment.

Of course, there were those who questioned and ridiculed the intensity of the promotion.

“Such a massive campaign for their first show, aren’t they afraid the ratings will slap them in the face?”

“Do they think they’re so popular that they don’t have to worry about ratings?”

Yet, Starlight International gave no response, confident and unbothered.

Although Damon no longer had the backing of the Harper Group, it seemed he wasn’t any less occupied than before. Last night, he had mentioned that he would be in Europe for a while

Chloe knew he must have had other matters to attend to, so she naturally didn’t object to his trip.

His flight wasn’t until morning, but Damon still prepared breakfast and ate with her

“I might be gone for a bit longer this time, Jane will be with you at all times, and I’m leaving Nate here with you. You don’t need to go to the company You can have fun, but not too much Your most important task now is to take care of yourself. You’re a soon-to-be mother, Mrs. Harpes, and everything else is secondary

Chloe nodded repeatedly finding Damon’s fussing amusingly excessive

Sensing Chloe a nonchalant attitude. Damon put down his fork, held her close to him, and looked at her seriously. “I won’t get you involved in the Harper family’s mess if you want to help me, then I’ll let you But Chloe, you better listen, while I’m away, if anything happened to you, I won’t let you off!”

Chloe was used to his harmless threats i know! There’s a baby in my belly, and i will definitely take good care of myself. Don’t worry. When you come back, I promise to have gained a couple of pounds to show you!”

Damon smirked. “No junk food from outside, no going out alone, no

"Alright, ainght, I really get it. I'll definitely take good care of myself" She was no child, and life was too good to risk

Damon stared at her for a while before he finally gave in Chice breathed a sigh of relief when he finally stopped nagging. But the thought of him leaving made her feel a bit down. She clutched at his collar, her voice tinged with sadness. "How many days will you be gone? When will you be back?"

Damon squeezed her shoulder, "I can't be sure."

"What's your estimated duration of the trip?" Chloe persisted.

"About two weeks."

Chloe immediately looked up at him, "That's quite long..."

"If you miss me, I'll try to return sooner."

"I will miss you."

Chloe rested her head on Damon's chest and readily agreed. If such a simple matter could bring him back earlier, she was more than willing

Damon chuckled softly. "Or should I help you alleviate your longing first?"

"Huh?" Chloe didn't catch on at first, but the next second she was lifted up in his arms. "What are you doing?"

Damon smirked, "I'll tell you in the bedroom."

The day after Damon left, Chloe received a package from Elizabeth.

Three theatrical costumes.

The design of the costumes came from the now-trending Inherent brand's designer, Katie. By integrating Elizabeth's embroidery designs, the color scheme appeared particularly bold and unique. Chloe was very pleased

Online promotion was in full swing. Despite the numerous comments of dissatisfaction and sarcasm, the attention it garnered was quite high. Faced with such blatant advertising, Robin, he couldn't help but take notice.

Staring at that promotional photo, he curled his lip into a sarcastic smile. The thoughts of the young generation, he really didn't quite understand.

Chapter 1607

The hype for The Queen was so intense that on the day of the press conference, the room was bursting at the seams with journalists.

Chloe herself was present, personally hosting the event. "Thank you all for your interest in The Queen," she began. "This is the first series I've ever produced, so it holds a special place in my heart. I may have been a bit overzealous in the promotional phase, fearing that it might bomb. I would like to apologize if we've caused any disruptions to your daily lives"

Her words were broadcasted live, and the online audience's resentment subsided a bit upon hearing her acknowledgement of any wrongdoing.

"As for the script, I personally love it and have a strong feeling it's going to be a sensation The storyline is superb and the costumes are a definite highlight. We've heard your calls for a sneak peek, so tonight, we'll satisfy your curiosity and introduce the main cast

As she stepped aside, the electronic screen adorned with promotional images of The Queen slowly parted, revealing the three main actors striding confidently forward. Each wore a unique costume, their distinct personas illuminated by their distinctive makeup and clothing.c2

The revolutionary appearance of the costumes, stripped of traditional embellishments and with a chilled color palette, was a sight to behold. The meticulous detail in each costume, from the cuffs to the waistband, was adorned with exquisite embroidery

This revelation left the crowd momentarily speechless, the radical departure from tradition too much to take in at once

“Ms. Summers, isn’t this supposed to be a period drama?” a journalist finally asked.

“Of course it is,” Chloe replied

“But the costumes.”

“Not all costumes looked like that, Chloe interrupted smoothly “I have the utmost respect for history and have taken that into account when designing the costumes I’m sure if you were to look up historical images, you would find the answer.”

With that, the topic was effectively closed No one dared to question her further, fearing they would expose their own ignorance.

After the journalists finished snapping shots from every angle, they couldn’t help but praise the stunning visuals they had captured.

Crysti Watson, who had been dragged from the set to attend the event, seemed a bit dazed. As a supporting actress, she was the only one with notable fame compared to the other two actresses. Her sudden prominence led some to speculate that Chloe was daringly relying on a cast of

newcomers for The Queen.

To address concerns about casting, Chloe just coyly hinted at future announcements. She also invited Miles and Katie, the renowned costume designer and makeup director from Starlight International, to join the stage. Their presence served as a testament to the production’s quality.

As the press conference was nearing its close, a voice rang out from the crowd of journalists. "The embroidery on Ms. Watson's costume looks familiar Isn't it the design you posted a few days ago, Ms. Summers?"

The crowd turned to look at Crystis costume, nodding in agreement after a closer examination.

"Right, we only saw the embroidery design before it didn't occur to us that it was meant for the costumes."

"Does the embroidery design also come from you, Ms. Katie?" asked the same journalist

Katie shook her head "No, the embroidery and costume designs are separate. I wasn't in charge of the embroidery." She glanced at Chice for approval Chloe gave her an assuring look, easing her worries.

Then, the journalist turned his attention to Chloe. "May I ask where you got the embroidery design, Ms. Summers?"

Chloe looked at him, her smile slightly eerie "What are you implying?"

The journalist responded calmly. "There's no need to beat around the bush, Ms. Summers. You've been silent about the designer of the embroidery Have you forgotten about the security footage from Harper's Mansion you released a few days ago?"

Chice chuckled softly, her smile sending chills down Katies spine. It looked like the reporter had some dirt on Ms. Summers and was baiting hei

for a reaction aiming to make her look bad But, surprisingly. Ms Summers looked as if she was ready to take the bull by the horns

"Of course i remember Would you like me to replay it for you right here?"

The reporter shrugged, "If you're up for it, I wouldn't mind at all"

Chapter 1608

Chloe nodded and effortlessly cast a video from her phone to the larger screen, and one of the trending footage from a few days ago materialized before the crowd.

The video showed Addie, treating the servants in her home with disdain, a sight that left the crowd of journalists speechless.

Chloe's intervention was a breath of fresh air, garnering appreciation from all those present. But what was the issue with the video anyway?

It wasn't until Chloe descended from the upper floor, her rolled-up documents prodding Addie's chin, that a journalist called out, "Stop!"

Chloe smirked and paused the video as requested c2

"May I ask, Ms. Summers, what is it that you're holding right now?"

Everyone curiously focused on the object in Chloe's hand When she had first entered the room, she was empty-handed. Now, she held something that was surprisingly stealing the limelight Considering the recent events, the crowd began to speculate. Could it possibly mean. ?

Facing the journalist's question, Chloe raised an eyebrow. "Just some documents, nothing you need to concern yourself with."

"But you did go upstairs in the video. What were you doing there?"

Chloe's face hardened a bit. "Do I need to report to you every time I eat or use the restroom?"

The journalist scoffed, “Ms Summers, you entered Harper’s Mansion empty-handed. As we all know from the video, you didn’t greet anyone from the Harper family when you arrived. You could say you barged in. And then you took something from the house. Isn’t that a bit inappropriate?”

Chloe responded with a light smile.

The journalist continued. “Upon leaving Harper’s Mansion, you neither went home nor returned to your office. Instead, you immediately held a press conference and unveiled the content of the documents. If I’m not mistaken, Ms. Summers, the design you made public is the one on Ms. Watson’s dress, which you took from the Harper family, isn’t it?”

The crowd gasped collectively, looking at the screen with a newfound realization. The rolled-up documents and the later-revealed design seemed too coincidental. The conclusion was inevitable. Chloe’s design originated from a less than honorable source.

“I used to live in Harper’s Mansion. Isn’t it only natural for me to take a few things?” Chloe retorted.

The journalist smirked, a look of ‘I’ve got you figured out’ plastered across his face.

“Ms Summers, since you’re so forthcoming, why don’t you tell us who designed the embroidery on Ms. Watson’s dress, which you’ve proudly displayed to the public?”

Everyone’s gaze landed on Chloe. Even if she didn’t say it, they all knew the answer. They were just waiting for her to admit it. Her admission would be very different from their speculation.

Chloe remained silent, the smile gradually fading from her face. Crysti also realized something was amiss.

“Ms. Summers, correct me if I’m wrong, but wasn’t Elizabeth born into a family renowned for their embroidery in the South?” The journalist continued to press on as Chloe remained tight-lipped. “Even if

you are close to Damon and Elizabeth, using her design without her permission is theft, plagiarism, or perhaps you’ve simply appropriated someone else’s design?”

Theft, plagiarism, appropriating someone else's design, these terms were intolerable in the design world. The crowd immediately erupted into a cacophony of whispers and murmurs. The journalist stood amidst the chaos, basking in his triumph.

People loved to see those who were successful fall, and Chloe had learned this lesson from her past dealings with Keira.

Understanding human nature and one's temperament made it easy to control the narrative Most people couldn't stand seeing others do better

than them

Facing the triumphant journalist, Chloe knew that his satisfaction wasn't solely due to the money he made from this expose. You must have proof to back your words, my dear journalist friend." Chloe responded calmly, despite the accuracy of his accusations

But then again, she did have a grander plan

I wouldn't make such accusations without evidence Besides the video you just played, the old servant who was expelled is witness"

Chloe cut in "Does she have eyes in the back of her head or something? She was on the ground floor, so how could she see what I was doing upstairs?"

The journalist scoffed, knew Ms Summers would be quick with her words, but I have more evidence. Mr. Robin of the Harper Group can testify!"

A glimmer of satisfaction flashed in Chloe's eyes

Perfect

The crowd gasped at the mention of Mr Robin as a witness. They hadn't expected him to get involved.

"Mr Robin had access to the second floor surveillance footage from Harper's Mansion, which clearly showed Chloe entering Elizabeth's room and leaving with documents. He confirmed that many of the design drafts, which had been in the possession of Elizabeth for years, were missing. I have video evidence as well as an audio recording of Mr Robin's testimony."

The journalist held up his phone, indicating that he had all the evidence at his fingertips.

Chloe flashed a sly grin, letting the reporter rush the stage. Under the flash of the assembled press, the screen of her smartphone came to life, displaying the video evidence she held in her hands for all to see. The video mirrored Chloe's actions precisely as the reporter had just described. There was even a personal video clip from Robin. In the video, he was dressed to the nines in a sharp suit, his face devoid of the warm, genteel smile he usually wore. It was bland, emotionless. "Ms. Summers, there's a limit to everything," he said. "Damon might indulge you, but that doesn't mean you can do as you please anywhere, anytime. Gatecrashing Harper's Mansion is hardly polite, and managing the household staff is not within your purview. Moreover, you took away my sister-in-law's cherished design sketches without a word, using them for commercial purposes. It's beyond comprehension."

Chapter 1609

"I always thought you were sharp, Chloe. Designing isn't something you can take advantage of just because you're tight with someone. Mrs. Harper's life hangs in the balance, and you single-handedly took her designs to gain profits. It's heartless! I hope you return the designs to the Harper family promptly. Considering your care for Damon over the past days, let's end this issue here."

Chloe smirked in silence. End it here? He just publicly announced it in this manner. Everyone knows that the costumes she's promoting for the production aren't clean. Nothing could be worse. And he has the gall to say 'end it here? How generous

The press under the stage was thoroughly excited.

"Ms. Summers is... is this true? You really used someone else's design without permission?"

“Isn’t it obvious? Mrs. Harper is now in a critical condition. How could she agree to let her use her designs?” That reporter was determined to pin

the blame on Chloe c2

*Ms. Summers, you’re a designer yourself. Shouldn’t you be the most resistant to issues of ownership and plagiarism? How could you do such a thing?”

“She probably thought that since Damon spoiled her, everything that belonged to Damon’s mother should naturally be hers”

The smile on Chloe’s face gradually cooled down, and she turned to look at that provocative reporter. “When did you become my spokesperson?”

The reporter’s face stiffened for a moment, but he shrugged off nonchalantly. A clear I won’t bother arguing with you since you’re on the brink of

doom attitude

Chloe’s gaze fell on the work badge around the reporter’s neck, “Gossip Whisper?” She spoke lightly, full of mockery “As a reporter, if you can’t be truly objective, you should at least be efficient in conveying your message to the public in a rigorous and fair manner. Your value lies in solidifying the public’s morals, and ensuring the credibility of the news. Your interviewing style is biased and aggressive, even speaking on behalf of the interviewee. Why don’t you exercise the judge’s rights as well and charge me directly, what do you say?”

Chloe’s gaze was sharp, sweeping through the dense crowd under the stage, and she slightly smiled.

“The saying goes “Greed will be the death of us. If you receive benefits from others, you need to fulfill your obligations diligently. But don’t overdo it. I don’t care about you using your authority for personal gain, but you should at least have the bottom line of a journalist.”

The low murmuring in the crowd gradually quieted down, and some people's expressions began to look off.

Using authority for personal gain, they all had their share in it. Now that it was brought up, they inevitably felt guilty.

Chloe didn't feel any resistance. The industry's certain means and rules were like this at times, and when necessary, she wouldn't reject doing so. But the prerequisite was that no one should use it against her. She's not some saint; she could play the double standard game too!

Facing the gazes around him, the reporter turned pale. "The embroidery design is indeed Elizabeth's. Are you going to admit it?"

"When did I say I wouldn't admit it?"

Chloe clearly interrupted the reporter, causing another round of excitement among the journalists. "So, you're admitting to stealing someone else's design?"

Chloe replied, "The design is indeed hers, but I can't admit to stealing! I don't think that as a member of the Harper family, Robin can accuse me of stealing Elizabeth's design. Perhaps in his mind, as the eldest son of the Harper family, it's outrageous for Damon to take his mother's belongings."

After finishing, she turned her gaze to the reporter, "When you see Mr. Robin, please ask him for me if every decision in the Harper family must go through him? Such a tyrant..."

Chloe paused, suddenly her lips curled into a smile, the humor in her eyes made everyone shudder, then all eyes were on her lips, listening to her voice slowly rise. "Does he have enough power in his hands now?"

Everyone gasped, this Ms Summers, she dares to say anything. The reporter's face turned ugly. Her words stripped him bare.

She just accused him of using his authority for personal gain, and now asked him to pass a message to Mr. Robin for her, isn't this blatantly telling everyone that he's accepted benefits from Mr. Robin?

But Chice didn't say anything more. Some things are better left unsaid. Saying too much will inevitably expose more flaws.

"Today's press conference ends here, thank you everyone for your support"

The journalists were dumbfounded, it's over just like that?

Just letting it go?

Without thinking, they knew that the public would definitely be in an uproar over this matter.

Chloe walked off the stage under the guard of her bodyguards, while the journalists were persistent in surrounding her. They all wanted Chloe to give an explanation, about whether the design will be used again, whether the production will continue, etc.

But Chloe kept a straight face and didn't answer in the crowd, she calmly walked up to the provocative reporter from Gossip Whisper, stopped in front of him, and looked him in the eye. Her expression was casual, emotionless, while the reporter felt a chill down his spine under her gaze. "What. what do you want?"

Chloe's brows twitched, she suddenly stepped closer to him, and her low voice carried a faint smile, slowly rising from her throat. "Don't be nervous. You indeed... didn't make a good impression today, but I owe you a thank you this time."

After saying this, she straightened up, gave him a glance with a half-smile, and then left under the protection of her bodyguards.

The reporter had no idea what Chloe was up to, and couldn't figure it out after thinking about it. In the end, he just thought she was crazy. Regardless, using a design without the owner's permission was indeed a reprehensible act.

As soon as the news broke, people online began to boycott Chloe's productions and clothing brand.

"She's a designer herself, yet she does such despicable things. When a person dies, does the copyright of the design become hers? Ridiculous!"

"Can you believe she had the audacity to release the blueprints, and with such a massive marketing campaign? What on earth gave her the courage?"

"This time she's really crossed the line. She admitted it's someone else's design. And not just anyone, but a design left behind by someone who is no longer with us. It's utterly appalling.

It'd been over two weeks since Royce and Elizabeth's plane crashed, and their chances of survival were slim to none. Everyone had already accepted the harsh reality they were as good as gone.

This general consensus only fueled the outrage at Chloe's action. Using the design left behind by someone who was no longer alive? It was utterly unacceptable.

Chloe's reputation took a massive hit, which was something Robin had anticipated. However, his current mood seemed to be less than pleasant.

Chloe's last words seemed to have struck a nerve.

"Do you have enough power at your disposal?"

Not enough

The old man hadn't completely handed over the company and the Harper family estate to him. His position was constantly at risk of being taken over by Damon

His eyes narrowed slightly, a frosty expression settling on his face.

Chapter 1610

In the grand Harper mansion, Robin showed Presley all the news from Chloe's press conference today. Presley watched silently, not uttering a single word. After a lengthy silence, Robin finally spoke. "Dad, it's hard to say this, but we have to face the reality. We haven't heard from Royce or Elizabeth in ages. It's time to accept the situation."

Presley, his eyebrows trembling slightly, replied in a heavy voice. "We haven't find them, and whether they are alive or dead, I need to see them..."

"The Harper empire is in my hands, but the real power has never been. You saw the news, even a woman like her can mock us. Dad, to outsiders, I, the CEO, am nothing more than a joke."

Presley furrowed his brows. "Who dares to laugh at you?"

Robin snorted, but said nothing. The answer was clear. Wasn't it all over the news?

They fell into a silence. After a long while, it was Presley who broke the silence. "I've given you my shares. What else do you want?"

"I believe you have the authority to decide what happens to Damon's shares."

Presley's face turned ashen. "You already have the most shares in the company!"

"If Damon really wants to come back, don't you think I'll be forced to step down as CEO? I may have a lot of shares, but everyone knows you only gave them to me to threaten Damon. If he returns, the Board of Directors might use this as an excuse to remove me..."

Presley's breathing became harsh. "What did you say?! You're not getting any younger. Even if you do take over the company, how many more years can you manage it? Travis, who was always more

interested in the military, has risen through the ranks rapidly. Even if you got the company, you wouldn't have a successor! Why are you so fixated on the company?!"

Robin's only son, Travis, had built an impressive military career in the B city of. He had never relied on the Harper family and had been constantly promoted for his integrity and natural talent as a soldier.

Presley knew that Travis had no intention or necessity to fight for the company's rights, which is why he had been willing to put the company's shares in Robins hands.

At his age, he should have been trying to secure something for his son. But Travis didn't need any of this, so why was he still fighting?

"What do you mean he was always more interested in the military?" Robin scoffed, "If you hadn't favored Damon from the start, grooming him to be the Harper heir, would Travis have had to find another path?" His words were calm, but they were filled with bitterness and sarcasm.

Presley glared at him, his anger palpable. "And then what?" He struggled to steady his breathing. "What do you want the company for? Do you want Travis to abandon the military and go into business?!"

Robin closed his eyes, regretting his emotional outburst "...I just wanted to fight for some respect."

He composed himself, took a deep breath, and his tone softened with resignation. "Dad, I share your vision. I'm willing to give up everything have for the Harper Group. Both Damon and Chloe have disappointed you, haven't they? Besides, you know Damon's temperament. He once threatened to destroy the Harper family. He wasn't joking. Projects in Asia and Europe have encountered problems. Although they were small-scale, the total losses amounted to nearly three percent of the group's assets. His promise to ruin the company doesn't seem like empty words. If he effortlessly regains his shares in the company, he might actually destroy the Harper family. Are you still comfortable handing the company back to him?"

Presley closed his eyes, weariness seeping into his voice. He understood Damon's temperament well. Once he committed to something, he would see it through. He had taught him the importance of keeping his word, and Damon had always excelled at it.

But the threat to destroy the Harper Group was shocking, infuriating, and incomprehensible. Hearing Robin's words now, he was in disbelief "You're saying he's actually acted against the Harper Group?"

Robin nodded, his tone steady. "If you don't believe me, I can have the secretary bring over the company's recent reports right now."

Presley raised a hand to stop him, shaking his head in disbelief. "That's not possible"

Everyone knew about the recent upheaval at the corporation. The Chairman had been ousted, and he'd also stepped down as the CEO of Harper Group. Damon had practically tossed power aside without a second glance.

"He doesn't have the power to go against the Harpers now. A three percent loss it's simply unfeasible!" The more Presley spoke, the more convinced he became, his tone resolute

"But that's the reality I can't fudge the official accounts for the company. Damon may not have the capability, but that doesn't mean Ms. Summers, who is with him, doesn't. Ms. Summers, the sole heiress of the Y Country, an internationally renowned perfumer and entrepreneur. If she really wants to go against the Harpers, it's not entirely impossible. After all, this woman is known for her audacity, and there's nothing she wouldn't dare to do. Damon insists he won't rely on Summers, but if not her, who else could he turn to in his fight against the Harpers?"

The old man was filled with unease. The fact that Chloe was the princess of Y Country had always been a sticking point for him.

Her status as a princess had indeed granted her many conveniences. But at this point, there was no turning back for him.