

CHOSEN 1621

Chapter 1621

“So what? Are you trying to get your hands on the Harper family?”

A gloomy voice from Robin resonated in the room, as his impending share ownership was interrupted by Yasmine’s words. Not to mention her remarks were all laced with sarcasm, making it impossible for the old man to talk about the shares

Attacking his grandson when he was down was enough to shake him How could he possibly feel at ease?

“Just speaking some truth. Although I hate to admit it, my daughter is the future lady of the Harper family We have to keep accounts clear

Robin sneered, “So you and your daughter are planning on the Harper family again?”c2

Yasmine raised an eyebrow. “Not interested, just depends on my mood.”

Presley huffed coldly “Arrogant’ Delusional! Absolutely ridiculous!

Yasmine glanced at him indifferently, her lips curled in a cold smile it seems like some people still haven’t learned their lesson”

The old man instantly understood what she meant, his face turned a terrible pale. This Global Economic Summit will be attended by Mr. Robin and personally. As for the company’s idle shares, they will be fully managed by Robin He roared angrily, his gaze fixed on Yasmine

However, Yasmine’s sarcasm only grew thicker, her demeanor nonchalant. “So it’s true that Royce and Elizabeth are dead?”

Robin smiled at the old man’s words. “It’s settled.”

“Hmm.” Yasmine chuckled, “So confident?”

“None of the crew members survived. I naturally wouldn’t want anything happen to them, but the reality is so cruel. No matter how lucky they were, they probably couldn’t escape this disaster”

Yasmine softly brushed the blanket on her lap. “Has the cause of the plane crash been announced? The reporters are keeping an eye on it, right? And, shouldn’t the shareholders here get an answer?”

Robin paused. The maintenance was not up to par, and there were also issues with the engine oil.”

“Well, poor maintenance, causing the entire crew to lose their lives. They don’t take other people’s lives seriously, and they don’t take their own lives seriously either. In this day and age, having an aircraft that doesn’t meet safety standards is an enormous joke

Yasmine mocked, “As soon as Royce and his wife had an accident. Mr. Robin became the new chairman of the Harper Group. Now, the shares are also about to become yours? Royce still had his two sons, and they are both directors and shareholders. As their uncle, have you thought about how you’re going to treat them?”

They’re all Harpers. The Harper family is their home, and how could I mistreat them?!”

Yasmine smirked, “If you won’t mistreat them, then it’s a good time to make a statement today”

Robin’s face darkened, “Yasmine, this is a shareholders’ meeting, not your personal stage Why are you so confrontational and sarcastic?”

There are many reasons, but recently, my daughter has clearly been pushed into the limelight, enduring all kinds of slurs and insults, and for this, I have to hold you responsible Her expression was as calm as water yet righteous as she spoke.

Robin paused. "Hold me responsible? Robin laughed softly, "Ms. Summers is ambitious, coveting others belongings, and making them her own. What am I to her, to always bear the responsibility for her accumulated mistakes?"

"Absolutely nothing" Yasmine scoffed, "Even accidental deaths can happen to your own brother. How dangerous it must be to be close to you?"

Robin's forehead twitched, his eyes flashing a fierce gaze at Yasmine, what do you mean by that? The sinister tone made everyone in the room shiver, a chill crawling up their spines. Even the old man, who was by his side, had never seen Robin radiate such a chilling aura.

"Mr Robin knows what I mean" Yasmine laughed lightly. I always thought Mr. Robin was a prudent man, but it seems not. If you want to gain full control of the Harper family, fair competition is fine. You are all Harpers after all, and the old man can't be that biased. The best should prevail, no need for underhanded tricks Mr Robin, perhaps you know your own abilities, and realize you may not be the most suited"

"Yasmine

What followed was an unexpected roar from Robin, making the meeting room tense to the extreme. Everyone couldn't help but tense up, their faces slightly pale, and they dared not even breathe. However, Yasmine, as the person directly involved, remained seated there, unfazed and unruffled, still wearing a calm smile "Can I take Mr Robin's reaction as embarrassment into anger?"

"The Harper family's internal affairs don't need an outsider like you to interfere. This is a normal company decision making issue, the shareholders meeting is not a place for you to make baseless comments. If you have objections, you can raise them, but anything unrelated to the company's decisions

"Speaking so much, doesn't it just prove that I object to you? I disagree with distributing Royce's shares to you"

Robin fell silent for a few seconds, realizing how emotional he had become. His expression changed slightly, and he bent down to sit, his gaze sweeping across the entire meeting room before he managed to force a smile "Sure, you can disagree, what about the others?"

The crowd held their tongues, turning their heads towards Presley, some faces showing a hint of sarcasm

Their disagreement was useless, right? The final decision still lay with the old man if their opinions truly mattered, then the initial dismissal of the executive director, and even directly appointing Robin as the chairman of the Group, wouldn't have happened

Presley looked at Yasmine sternly, "What did you mean by what you just said? What are these underhanded tricks?"

The smile in Robin's eyes subtly diminished, but he simply sat there, exuding an air of indifference, giving everyone a sense that no matter what they said, he was guilt-free and had no need to defend himself.

"If you don't even understand your own son, that's truly terrifying." Yasmine didn't add anything else.

Given Robin's "innocent until proven guilty" demeanor, she took on an even stronger 'hone of my business' attitude.

When it came to indifference, how could Robin be more at ease than her? After all, the person with a guilty conscience knew it best.

Yasmine's nonchalant attitude planted a seed of doubt in everyone's mind. She didn't have to say anything, but something had already taken shape in everyone's minds

Indeed, Presley's momentary silence caused Robin's calm facade to crumble

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When it came to psychological battles, Yasmine was no pushover.

Robin's ability to endure for so many years demonstrated the depth of his mental fortitude. But as humans, we all had our weaknesses. Furthermore, Robin's intentions were clear as day. Taking him down wasn't going to be a difficult task.

The old man's silence, coupled with the subtle signs of unease emanating from Robin, brought a faint smile to Yasmine's eyes. "Shall we wrap this up? The Global Economic Summit is about to start. I don't mind Mr. Presley and Mr. Robin attending as representatives. But as for the share distribution, think we can leave it for another day"

As she spoke, she started to wheel herself away. However, a loud "bang" sounded from behind her as Robin slammed his hand on the table.

All eyes turned to him

"Since when did you start making the decisions for the corporation?"

Yasmine had her back turned to him at that moment, and upon hearing his words, a wry smile tugged at the corner of her lips. Turning around, she smiled and said. "It seems like you're really determined to get your brother's shares today, aren't you?"

Robin scoffed. "And what if I am?"

The old man's face darkened slightly

Robin continued. "Damon is now completely focused on your darling daughter, and Nathan, as usual, couldn't care less about the company. Since he has his older brother to rely on, he's been living like a

spoiled brat. If not me, who else is worthy of these shares?"

Yasmine chuckled, "So it sounds like you're the only one left. All those more competent than you have been kicked out of the company, and those meant to die have died. So the shares can only go to you."

Her words were certainly thought-provoking

“You’re talking nonsense! The previously silent Presley suddenly shouted, his cane thumping loudly on the floor.

Yasmine’s words were a thinly veiled accusation. Robin had killed his own brother and sister-in-law, and kicked his nephews while they were down, all for the sake of gaining power. He refused to believe his son was capable of such terrible deeds.

Everyone’s heads lowered even more

Yasmine’s claims were audacious and baseless. No one would be happy hearing such accusations. Furthermore, Robin’s position as chairman was handed to him by Presley himself in front of everyone. If Yasmine’s claims were true, then had he been manipulated by his own son?

In the end, without evidence, all this talk was pointless.

However, Yasmine didn’t seem like the type to throw baseless accusations. If she was telling the truth, then... Though everyone kept their heads down, they exchanged meaningful glances.

The meeting room was very quiet, and the old man’s somewhat heavy voice, which carried a tinge of anger, sounded especially distinct.

“Robin is now the chairman of the Harper family. He has the right to distribute the company’s shares. This matter is settled. Meeting dismissed.”

“So you’re saying, this shareholders’ meeting was just a way for you two to announce the decision, and we’re just here for decoration?” Yasmine’s voice was cold

Presley halted, choosing to be upfront “What? Do you expect us to distribute our family’s shares to you unconditionally?”

A few shareholders raised their eyebrows. There was no such thing as a free lunch.

I'm not asking for handouts," she paused, and labked up at the old man with a smirk. "Royce, your trusted son of many years, is now missing and presumed dead. Yet you can calmly accept his presumed death and even attend this shareholders' meeting to distribute his shares. How are you able to do that?"

Presley's face tightened, his gaze on Yasmine was full of animosity

"That was the life he chose" He yelled, his voice tinged with rage and resentment

I spent years grooming him, only for him to throw it all away for a worthless woman. If it weren't for his insistence on marrying that woman, if he hadn't been so indulgent with her, he wouldn't have left with her. She's the one who led him to his death, along with his stubbornness. if he had listened to me. his life wouldn't have ended up so pitiful. He chose this path He brought this upon himself."

Yasmine shook her head, her lips pressed into a thin line She chose not to respond. She left the rest of the conversation to another person.

"The path was my choice, the woman was my choice, and whether I live or die doesn't concern you greatly"

The door to the meeting room suddenly opened, and a calm, indifferent voice echoed throughout the room. Everyone looked up in surprise, their expressions a mix of shock and elation when they saw who

had entered the room

Presley froze, relief and joy visible in his eyes as he looked at Royce, who had just walked in

Robin abruptly stood up again, his usually calm and gentle face filled with emotions Outrage provoked by Yasmine aside, he was now faced with Royce, who should have been dead but was standing there unscathed

The plane had been completely destroyed, and none of the crew survived. Even though they hadn't found his and Yasmine's bodies at the time, given the severity of the crash, he never doubted that they could have survived

The only possibility was

He couldn't continue that thought. Because that possibility, added to his guilt, made it impossible for him to remain calm. "Royce, how

"How am I still alive?" Royce's expression was placid, and his tone flat. It was hard to tell what he was thinking at the moment, but the more it was like this, the more it made Robin feel uneasy.

Despite his years of restraint, Robin couldn't hide his emotions. His expression changed slightly, and the hand he had on the table clenched into a fist. "It's good that you're all right."

Royce didn't spare him another glance. He turned to the elderly man, his expression as calm as ever. "If life and death mean nothing to you, and you're utterly disappointed in me, then me going back to the Harper family would only be a thorn in your side. In fact, whether I have those shares or not doesn't matter to me."

He paused, shifting his gaze to Robin "Speak up about what you want and what you cherish. As your older brother, I may very well satisfy your wish if you want the shares, take them all. Look out for our

father in the future, will you? If any issues arise, don't hesitate to contact me."

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Having said his piece, he headed towards Yasmine under the scrutinizing gaze of everyone present. "Shall we?"

Yasmine nodded "Of course."

As he started to wheel Yasmine away, the booming voice of Presley echoed throughout the room. "Hold it right there!"

Yasmine's hands rested on the armrests of her wheelchair, her gaze fixated on the elaborate design of the plush carpet beneath them. Her eyes held a hint of sardonic amusement

Despite his ostensible indifference. Royce halted in his tracks. Years of care and familial ties prevented him from completely disregarding the old man's command

Presley's expression softened slightly He supported himself with his cane and slowly stood up, walking over to him. He scrutinized him carefully for a while before returning to his stern expression "What did you mean by what you said earlier?" he demanded.

"I believe Robin heard me clearly Royce responded impassively.

"You plan on severing ties with the Harper family, just like your son did?!"

"No"

"Then what was the meaning of your words?!"

"I thought you'd be used to it by now."

Facing the old man's hostility, Royce finally furrowed his brows. For the sake of everyone, you needn't tire yourself over me, and I don't have to pretend to be the obedient son in your presence. It's always been this way. If it weren't for Damon finding his beloved wife, we wouldn't have come back in the first place. Since you can't seem to tolerate Damon and Chloe, I don't see the need to return to the Harper family anytime soon."

Presley was visibly quivering with rage. "You're willing to give up on the company and surrender your shares?!"

Royce's brow furrowed. "Didn't you make the decision already?"

'You'

"Damon doesn't want them, and Nathan doesn't care. I have no use for the shares either. If my younger brother wants them, then he should have them. He's my own flesh and blood, and I'll do my best to support him. Fortunately, he values what I don't, I can easily fulfill his wishes without feeling any loss I hope he can lead the Harper family to new heights. With these final words, Royce wheeled Yasmine towards the door.

"Stop right there!! Presley stood still for a moment before turning around to shout at Royce's departing figure. Royce didn't seem to hear him.

"Stop "

Presley's roar echoed throughout the conference room, causing everyone present to shudder. However, Royce didn't pause for even a second. He disappeared from sight, leaving behind a stunned silence.

As the automatic doors of the conference room closed, an awkward silence descended upon the room. Presley stood where he was, his rage still palpable No one dared to provoke him. While Robin

remained standing in place, his hand still resting on the table, he began to tighten his grip and his expression—grew progressively gloomy

Although Royce didn't explicitly say anything, Robin could tell from his words that he had suspicions. Perhaps the only reason he survived was that he had foreknowledge and didn't board the plane.

What concerned him more was that he finally got the shares. Royce's appearance didn't reclaim the shares, instead, he effortlessly gave them to him. But he still felt a sense of injustice and humiliation. Because Royce had turned all of his past struggles and sacrifices into a meaningless joke.

Decades of effort, all dismissed with a single casual comment. He wanted it, so Royce gave it to him. Now he had everything, but it was all due to his generosity

A handout

Robin's hands clenched into fists. After all his efforts, everything he had was due to Royce's concession and generosity. How ironic

The meeting ended under some unknown circumstance. The shareholders, like escapees, didn't dare to make a sound and hurriedly left the conference room.

The journalists waiting outside, however, had already begun buzzing with excitement. Royce's appearance was undoubtedly thrilling. Today's shareholders' meeting was, in part, to distribute his shares. Now, a man everyone thought was dead appeared unharmed before them. How could they not be excited?

As Royce wheeled Yasmine out, the journalists rushed forward, all eager for a scoop

"Mr Marpac how did you survive the plane crash? What was the situation like?"

"Reports suggested that the plane exploded mid-flight, a situation where survival would be impossible. What really happened?"

"Regarding this shareholders' meeting, how do you feel about Presley's decision regarding your shares?"

"How is your wife doing now?"

"Mr. Harper..."

Royce's expression was cold. "From now on, I have nothing to do with the Harper Group

Perhaps in an attempt to prove something, the usually reticent Royce responded to the barrage of questions with a single sentence. But it was still as icy as ever

Among the many questions, he only gave one response, yet that one response sent a thrill through everyone present.

“Another person has severed ties with the Harper family!!”

“It seems the shares couldn’t be saved.”

“What is that old man thinking? One after another, they’re all driven away. It’s hard to understand what he’s trying to do.”

“Who knows? He’s probably just used to dominating others. From the start, he couldn’t accept Elizabeth Royce even resigned early because of this. Presley really is dissatisfied with Mrs. Harper Now, with his own grandson and the granddaughter-in-law he found, it’s clear that neither of them met his approval. Isn’t this a problem that’s been brewing for a while?”

“Presley clearly puts too much stock in the Harper family. He’s hell-bent on having his son and grandson pour all their energy into the Harpers. But both father and son are on the same path, abandoning their careers for women, which is in stark contrast to old man’s thinking. When values don’t align, being together is just mutually irksome, right?”

“Heh, it’s pretty laughable when you think about it. Ms. Summers net worth these days, I reckon there aren’t many in all over the whole world, who can hold a candle to her, right? Isn’t she so much better than Ms. Wendy, who he was so desperately smitten with back then?”

“Well, who knows about that, probably just because they’ve burned bridges in the past, it’s impossible to mend fences now, right?”

“So the ultimate winner of this shareholders meeting is still the incumbent Chairman, huh?”

“Looks like it. Even Royce’s comeback couldn’t turn the tide this time Seems like the Harper dynasty is on the brink of a change”

“Am I the only one who’s curious about Elizabeth’s condition?”

The buzzing crowd suddenly fell silent.

“Yeah, is Elizabeth even alive? Judging by Royce’s grim expression, things don’t look good ”

The appearance of Royce undoubtedly stirred up a whirlwind of interest Conspiracy theories about the plane crash began to circulate online There were various versions, and opinions were divided

Most of the speculation centered around Robin, who seemed to be the biggest beneficiary since the plane crash. His presence in the company was greeted with awkward expressions and attitudes from the staff The impact of the incident on him was profound.

Meanwhile, the internet was rife with conspiracy theories surrounding the plane crash, with the second most popular topic being the controversy over Chloe’s design copyrights. To mitigate his negative online image, Robin immediately directed the Public Relations Department to tackle the issue. The PR Department’s strategy was to promote one and downplay the other. They pushed posts about Chloe to the top, overshadowing Robin’s trending topics

“Using a dead person’s design, aren’t they afraid of being haunted? And it’s plagiarism, aren’t they afraid of ghosts knocking at their door at night?”

“Plagiarism is the same as copying People like this should be boycotted”

Watching the post about her quickly overtake the one about the plane crash, Chloe laughed like a cunning, sly fox. After contemplating for a while, she picked up the phone and dialed a number at the company

Half an hour later, the internet was practically paralyzed Not because of anything else, but because of Chloe's audacious move. At a time when everybody was waiting to mock her, she shockingly announced that her new series would start filming ahead of schedule

There was no promotion of the series afterwards, so everyone thought she had backed down. At the very least, they thought the series would be put on hold, waiting for the storm to pass, before making any further decisions. However, she chose to go ahead at this critical juncture.

The barrage of online attacks was relentless. This time, it seemed like all those waiting for Chloe to explain had been incensed

"We we waited for two days, she hasn't given a single explanation, and the next news we hear is that they're starting filming early

"What the hell? What is she trying to say? Does she think we're nitpicking? That we're making a big deal out of a deceased person's work?"

"She can use the work of the deceased, but she didn't even explain beforehand. If it wasn't discovered by others, would she have kept it a secret that the work was actually someone else's?"

"I'm really disappointed in Ms Summers this time I've always admired and trusted her. I've been waiting for her to give us, her fans, a satisfying response, but she still hasn't changed her ways"

That's right, I've been telling other fans to stay calm, and I firmly believed that she would surprise us. But now, we are so disappointed."

"I think she's become arrogant because of her popularity. She does whatever she wants, not caring about her fans feelings

"Doesn't she feel like she's embarrassing herself? Does she think all her fans are brainless and will support her unconditionally"

“Every time something involves her, it’s always a huge mess. Its like she wants the whole world to know about her. Too much drama, I’m unfollowing

“Don’t expect all your fans to be mindless and support you unconditionally”

Chice naturally saw all of these negative comments. Her expression wasn’t good, but she chose to remain silent. She didn’t change any of her plans because of the online comments, and the filming ceremony went ahead as planned

With the male and female leads in place, along with a few selected newcomers, the filming ceremony was well attended. Moreover, Chloe’s move this time was both baffling and infuriating Without explaining the previous incident, she left everyone who was waiting for a follow-up development, holding their breath unable to vent their frustration

As a result, people started paying more attention to how Chloe would handle the matter So on the day of Chloe’s filming ceremony, she invite anyone as reporters and spectators flocked to the scene, including haters and former fans.

The filming ceremony was a crowded event didn’t need to

The mood of everyone was unstable, with haters publicly mocking Chloe’s fans for being mindless Chloe’s fans, from being initially indignant to not being able to say a word in the face of the haters open and veiled jibes felt both stifled and upset

In short, Chloe’s persistent silence maximized everyones curiosity about the matter

*Starting filming at a time like this has she no shame? Shes a world-renowned perfumer, blatantly plagiarizing someone else’s design with such an attitude -Who’s going to support her?”

“For the record, we fans won’t support you. Out of respect for once being your fan, i’m kindly advising you, instead of making a big fuss about starting Giming, why not apologize publicly and not start filming at all? The series is bound to flop its a waste of human and social resources, which is highly unethical

“I’m finding this woman more and more annoying. This time, she’s not only slapped her fans in the face, but also her own face: What a joke!”

Chloe’s car had just arrived at the filming ceremony, and a crowd of reporters and onlookers quickly swarmed over

The bodyguards from the two cars behind quickly formed a human barrier, blocking everyone out. Only after ensuring total safety did Nate dare to open the door and carefully escort Chloe out of the car

Chloe was wrapped in a pink puffer jacket, and her slightly loose-fitting outfit didn’t make her appear baggy, but rather added a touch of charm to her appearance. She wore the hood of her down jacket, her neck nestled in the collar, and she walked towards the venue under the escort of her bodyguards. There was still a bit of time before the cameras would start rolling, and not all the actors had arrived yet. However, all the journalists attention was fixated on Chloe.

“Ms. Summers,” one of them asked, “have you seen the news online?”

“About the theft of the quilting guild’s designs, can you give us a response today?”

“Yeah, Ms. Summers,” another piped up, “even your fans are particularly unhappy with your actions this time. Don’t you think you owe them an explanation?”

At that moment, Chloe had reached the front. She paused, facing the journalists, and offered them an inscrutable smile.

“Fans?”

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“Fans?”

The journalist didn't expect Chloe to suddenly respond to his question. He paused for a moment and nodded somewhat dazedly. Right. The whole internet is buzzing, don't you know about it?

"Indeed, you've gathered quite a following. They've all been silently supporting you, haven't you noticed?"

Chloe's lips curled up into a sarcastic smile.

"I personally don't consider myself a public figure. I'm honored to have fans. As for the silent support, Chloe chuckled. I appreciate it, but I would encourage everyone to give their energy to themselves and their families first." "ch

Although Chloe's words were tactful, they completely upset the already restless fans present. "What are you implying? Shouldn't we support you?"

Chloe raised an eyebrow even though she was smiling, there was already a coldness in her eyes.

"Every time you face something, we're the ones who silently support you. We're the ones who talk people down when they're attacking you, and maintain order among fans."

And you've probably forgotten it was us, your fans, who fought those who targeted you. Without us, you would have been torn apart by now. And now you're fed up with us?"

"What kind of person do you think you are, always causing problems. Being your fan is exhausting."

"So was wrong to ask you not to be my fans."

Chloe's words were obviously cold and assertive. Her aura silenced everyone in the room.

Tim: "Not a public figure. I'm not now and I never will be. I'm honored to have fans, but I must make it clear that I cannot give you anything in return."

She paused her gaze becoming sharper and colder

Think about why you became my fans in the first place. If you consider me your spiritual nourishment, don't expect me to be grateful for anything you do for me you're complaining about how hard it is to be my fans, well, I never forced you to do anything for me if it's something you chose to do, then don't bring about it in front of me Our relationship is a one-way choice, not a mutual agreement It's your decision and has nothing to do with me Figure out where you stand and then think about whether you have the right to act out in front of me

Chice's words enraged the fans present, but they couldn't refute her. They voluntarily became her fans, and they actively defended her against the haters and even tried to protect her reputation Everything they did was of their own accord, and it indeed had nothing to do with her Their previous arguments had made them look like a joke

"You're simply outrageous. We we supported you for so long, and this is how you repay us!"

"We finally get it You really don't care about us at all. Fine, we'll just stop supporting you. Let's consider everything we've done for you in the past a waste

Then why are you still making TV shows, and what about your company and the perfumes you design? Without fan support, who do you think, you are Do you really think you're so great that you don't need anyone?"

"You we completely offended your fans We're looking forward to your show flopping"

Tight: You'll fall so miserably you won't recognize who your grandmother is

Chice smirked casually saying. Do you know who my grandmother is ?"

stopped by the reporter

The fan who spoke up froze, thinking for a moment, with a hint of panic in his eyes Chloe's grandmother was none other than Quenesi

With a glance at everyone Chloe ignored the reporters frantically recording her words and turned to leave. But she wi

Ms Summers dont you thank your words today might alienate all your fans? Your show is about to start flaming, flop

Chloe paused then slowly turned to face the

expression

and indifferent

in find a replacement dis my own fault

Let the work speak for itself if they

After saying that she turned and led towards the stage

were momentarily stunned by Chloe's words but soon, they felt opbeved. This woman, she had grown them too many surgebats. ways she was always assertively in control Many had called her arrogant kul obat vthers saw as arroga

But in this case, there was already some unfavorable news about her and she had just offended all vđ they really couldn't think of any other way for her to do it. Although rything depended on merit, an today (actions today were anything but wise

in Chice, seemed natural

I alw wanted bu turn the i

marketing strategies

Yet for some reason they couldn't give up on Chice They were always anticipating her next move. Maybe the really want afraid of what the Despite the anger her popularity remained undiminished. Not everyone

jesume fan support to succeed. Many had ganed expuste popularity through controversies

On the distant stage a few actors stood. They had clearly leard what Chloe had said Given the current utuation, they A few even began to feel uneasy

pprove of Chiers actions.

They had a few minor works under their belt and had finally gained some exposure and a bit of popularity. They were eager to move forward and didn't want to jeopardize their future for Chloe's seemingly doomed show. If those people's anger was spread out to them by then, they would really not know how to move forward in the future.

A few supporting actors became visibly uneasy. Seeing Chloe stand by, they hesitated for a long time, then finally stepped forward to speak

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"Ms. Summers," the actor began, his voice shaky. I'm not sure I'm cut out for this role. Maybe it's best if I..."

Chloe turned to face the nervous actor

A burst of mocking laughter erupted from the audience below the stage.

"Karma's a bitch"

“Guess you’re the only one who doesn’t value your fans. Do you think everyone’s as clueless as you?”^{c2}

This show’s doomed Smart move to bail now. No sense in ruining your future over someone like her

The crowd was in an uproar, with a couple of other actors reluctantly stepping forward

We’re sorry, Ms. Summers We can’t do this either You should find someone else”

Chloe squinted at them, taking a moment to assess their expressions. Then she spoke, her tone icy, “Are you sure?”

Seeing a possible escape route, they eagerly nodded their heads. “Yes Besides, you haven’t even signed a contract with us yet, have you? We haven’t seen the script either, so we should be able to back out anytime, right?”

They felt a wave of relief wash over them Normally, actors confirmed for a role would sign a contract in advance to prevent any future mishaps. It was unclear if it was Chloe’s first time filming, that she was unaware of the process, or if this launch was so rushed that she hadn’t had a chance to sign a contract

with them yet. Either way, they were grateful for this chance to reject the show. The audience was right. They had come a long way and couldn’t afford to throw away their futures so carelessly.

Chloe watched them silently, her face betraying no emotion. Then she blinked slowly, “I believe this show will be successful. Are you sure you want to drop out?”

|“

Think carefully before you answer. You have the liberty to change your mind, but once I make a decision, there’s no turning back. If you reject me now, you will forever be blacklisted. Don’t accuse me of threatening you. I have the power and you don’t. I won’t be magnanimous enough to let you all take advantage of me in this situation and then, in the future, offer you benefits without bearing a grudge”

The actors blushed with embarrassment, but with Chloe's current reputation, they really didn't know what would happen in the future.

Chloe's recent comments about fans had already sealed her fate. Nowadays, everyone knew that planning various marketing strategies to attract fans was common practice, but she was different. She completely offended her fans.

It was important to note that, although she wasn't a superstar, her fan following was no less than some A-list international celebrities. The reason everyone was eager to associate with her was primarily due to her enormous fan base, with her abilities coming second.

Now, she had personally destroyed her own reputation, and there was really nothing left for them to trust in her

"If that's how you feel, we have nothing more to say"

Chloe smirked. "Do you know why I didn't sign a contract with you in advance?"

The actors looked startled and a bit anxious

"Because I wanted you to have a choice. It's your life, and you get to decide your path. I wanted to see firsthand how you would choose at the crossroads of life. Since you've made a choice, I'll respect it. There's no contract between us, so you're free to come and go as you please. None of you are irreplaceable"

Their faces darkened. As actors, they knew their uniqueness was paramount. Each role was tailor-made for a specific person. The last thing they wanted to hear was that they could easily be replaced. If they were replaced, they would lose their uniqueness and struggle to stand out in the highly competitive entertainment industry

Their futures would be fraught with failure.

“Why are you still standing there? This place is no longer yours. Please leave immediately” Chloe looked at them coldly

The actors were provoked by her attitude, “Ms. Summers, you should worry about yourself. It’s not up to you to decide whether we can be replaced

A mischievous thought arise within Chloe, “Really? You, a bunch of rookies who openly admit their incompetence, have such a sense of superiority?”

Chloe turned towards the backstage area, giving a slight beckoning gesture. Several people emerged from the backstage and walked towards the stage They each took a bow and introduced themselves, with their names and the roles they were taking over All of them were replacements for the actors who had just quit

The individuals who had been pushed aside were now visibly embarrassed. The faces of the newcomers who had just arrived looked very unfamiliar, and they had practically no popularity

The crowd fell silent

“What’s going on? Did she have a backup plan?”

“What a coincidence that it’s exactly those who qui.”

“Isn’t this clearly a case of having substitutes ready?”

Someone in the crowd, clearly intent on tarnishing Chloe’s reputation, sneered. The crowd joined in the chant

The actors who had just quit, standing on the stage, managed a cold laugh. “The term substitute implies that we were the first choice. If we hadn’t refused today, you wouldn’t have had a chance”

One of the new actors frowned and responded, "Perhaps you didn't know, but we had already signed contracts with Starlight International. Initially, we didn't understand why Ms. Summers needed us when she already had actors. Now it's clear that she foresaw your decision today"

The expressions of the actors who had quit changed dramatically. "You had already signed contracts?"

The crowd looked puzzled, and the actors who had quit felt a sense of unease. They had a feeling that something was off but couldn't figure out what Chloe was up to. Given Chloe's nature, they suspected she had a trick up her sleeve

Ignoring their confusion, the new actors remained indifferent "Besides, even if we're just the understudies, we don't mind. Opportunity is really important to us in this circle. As long as it's an opportunity, we won't miss it. We're not the only ones serving as stand-ins. Who can truly say they haven't been a second choice at some point?"

"Opportunity knocks but once. I'm grateful to everyone who passed up the chance before me and left the opportunity on the table. A huge thank you to Ms. Summers for giving us a platform to showcase our talents."

Chapter 1627

The rookie's words left everyone in the room slightly uncomfortable. Silence ensued. Sure he was a greenhorn, but he certainly knew the ropes, it was a refreshing change from some of the short sighted individuals present

Everyone likes a bit of flattery, and Chloe was no exception. She received his words with a soft smile. Taking the mirror Chloe's face was lit up with a gentle grin. She addressed the audience. The marketing models nowadays are constantly evolving, and with them the deceptive techniques are also on the rise. Those with real strength who can withstand the tests are few and far between. Fan groups can be a very daunting force over someone starts dictating the pace the entire industry is bound to fall into disarray and turmalin don't need fans because I can't provide the constant interaction and consideration you might expect. Perhaps in some unseen corner, there are out there supporting me whom I can't see. I shall call them unseen supporters my fans. But since you're my fans, Larudt still arvien all of ta allocate more of your energy time and emotions to yourselves and your families

You can follow me but I am not your everything. I might never be able to slow down or change my course for any one of

We all have our own lives to live. I don't see any danger in being a little selfish as long as it doesn't hurt anyone or break any laws. Maybe might think | am a little selfish or self-centered “

We all have our own lives, and no one has the right to judge

I say it once more I believe in proving myself through my work believe that I am irreplaceable. Even if someone could replace support me. It's up to you to make your choice

No one could argue against it. Actually everyone understood this just that there were not many people who could dare to say it without Choice did. Because no one was sure if they would end up as one of those people who used the fans

Sometimes the truth can be a blow to one's pride causing discomfort Some people preferred to live in a world of adulation and illusions involved in fan-culture wouldn't dare to disclose the hard truth

“Do you think you're so talented” one of the actors who had chosen to quit earlier challenged “Have you not realized your current talent alone seems rather unrealistic don't you think?”

ront beg you to

one has a limit. Your customers are clearly the general public. How do you explain stealing someone else's designs? No matter how talented you are you can't win over consumers while crossing boundaries. There's no such thing as a free lunch.”

about having fans after all?

Among those who spoke were the actors who had just chosen to quit Chloe gave her a knowing smile She knew this person was trying to to win over fans and increase her own popularity. The other woman was clearly trying to ride on her coattails

Chloe gave a shy smile. As said, I don't need fans I need satisfied customers. As for the accusation of stealing designs. I claimed this design was mine. But also never said it was mine nor did I ever say I stole it. I'm curious as to why you all assumed I was a thief in the first place?

The room fell silent. People looked at each other, confusion written all over their faces. Chloe could not help but laugh at the sight. They had been led by the nose up until this point and still didn't understand what was going on. It was too easy to manipulate them. But without them, how could she have

SC Deeded

The design is mine, but neither is it stolen."

"Not stolen? Are you saying you got permission from a dead person?"

> Chloe seemed to be on the verge of clearing her name, one of her previously hostile fans shouted out refusing to give her redemption.

Chloe's words were cut short by the outburst, but the next moment another voice rang out. When did she become a dead person? | Everyone looked to see Elizabeth, dressed in a burgundy velvet dress and a warm cotton shawl, making her way onto the stage with a grave. At first, no one reacted. But a few seconds later, someone yelled out. "It's Mrs. Harper. Only after that did the scene roar back into

Mrs. Harper she's.

After such a severe plane crash, she » perfectly alright with what happened?

None along that she wasn't dead?

The speci

The atmosphere i

“What a splendid character

lotted Elizabeth's figure cordly. His face mur

faling. The

The driver shavere

strategic mom had let all those who opposed her grasp their teeth and qualif

The most notable among them were Hardy and of

Recently, Robin had been having a rough time dealing with capitalism and the Yunebed vadbo gutation as the abordera testing Exen though there was to extend, she had successfully planted seeds (

And now. Chice had pruned off this stud

He had thought he could use this opportunity to knock Chios down a peg with his exan ültung a foyer

At this year's Global Economic Summit, if she and her daughter overshadowed the Harper family....

The old man was competitive as he'd always been. How could he possibly allow anyone to get the better of the Harpers?

The Obsidian Corporation alone had been a thorn in the old man's side for years. And now he had to deal with two women? No way.

Chapter 1628

He'd tried to figure out Chloe's game plan all this time.

In essence, her success was built on others. There were always those who despised her, and she, she was adept at climbing over them to reach greater heights. So naturally, he wouldn't be as foolish as those before him, always juring into the fray

In the end, it was either she died, or he did.

There were plenty of people in the world to use. He'd been setting the stage for so long, and today was about time to reap the fruits of his labor But this was the current situation

All along. Chloe had let the online situation escalate Each time she was insulted online, it became more and severe Everyone was waiting for her to explain, but she remained silent, doing as she pleased and infuriating the public.c2

She accumulated others anger bit by bit, gradually watching waves of people pay attention to her. Word spread from one person to ten, from ten to a hundred With such massive online traffic, she didn't need to waste any financial or mental resources She effortlessly directed everyone's focus onto herself

The more it was suppressed, the stronger the rebound would be. She had been constantly suppressing everyone's attention and emotions, and then she found a certain point to suddenly release them. The effect of this was simply unprecedented

This woman, she was too good at manipulating people, subtly pulling everyone into her plans She perfectly understood everyone's thoughts; every step of the situation was within her predictions.

She was too good at understanding people and controlling the situation.

He knew that she also knew what role he played in all of this. So he now knew even more clearly that he had been used. From the moment Elizabeth suddenly appeared on the scene, he understood this.

The situation he'd been manipulating was actually already controlled by Chloe. She was truly calculating.

He was wrong, he knew not to underestimate this woman, but he still did. Being used by a woman, especially such a young woman, it felt truly infuriating. His breath hitched and the pressure in the car intensified.

“Any news from Wendy?”

His sudden cold voice made the driver stiffen, and after a few seconds, he responded, “None”

Robin turned to look at the launch ceremony outside the car, silent for a moment before he slowly cracked a smile.

“Let her have her moment. There are plenty who can’t stand her Let’s go!”

“Yes”

The driver quickly responded, sighing in relief as he started the car and drove away.

Elizabeth’s appearance was undoubtedly the highlight of the launch ceremony. Everyone was stunned by her sudden arrival. There were so many questions the reporters wanted to ask, but there was no chance

Elizabeth walked up the stage under the escort of her bodyguards, stopping when she reached Chloe

Chloe smiled at her and Elizabeth faintly returned the smile. At this time, Elizabeth was dignified and elegant. Her words and actions represented her position as Royce’s wife Maintaining appearances for

Royce was something Elizabeth had learned over many years and was one of her greatest strengths

She took the microphone from Chloe’s hand and calmly addressed everyone in the audience below with an expressionless face. 7am Elizabeth, t original designer of all the embroidery designs I designed the patterns, and I drew the diagrams Chloe got these designs from the Harper hasily al (rry request was even involved in every stitch of the embroidery on the costumes. Who’s the simpleton that believes

Chloe is a thief without any evidence And moreover. I'm alive and well, not a single hair out of place let alone dead? It's ridiculous Yes, I disappeared after a plane crash, but ant a Corpse needed to confirm death? Should I hold you responsible for spreading rumors?

The crowd was left speechless by Elizabeths words. Their faces turned awkward, some even starting to panic Especially the three actors who had just quit at this moment they also realized what was going on, and their faces displayed extreme unease it turned out she knew all along that Ekzabeth wasn't dead, and there was no theft or copyright infringement The costumes were designed by Katie, and the embroidery was designed and stitched by Elizabeth From the beginning Chice was innocent

They looked at Chloe with a hint of fear and she stood there, calm and composed, neither flustered nor excited. She never panicked because of anything nor did she get excited for any reason Just standing there, she inexplicably compelled people to look up to her to admire and aspire to be like her

am deeply grateful to Chice for giving me this opportunity and can finally have a chance to be able to fulfill the task my parents gave me before they passed away Chloe saved my life, and gave me the chance to make up for my felong regret. She's also my daughter in law, so i wont allow aliyone to speak ill of her I know her well Don't think you understand her just because you've observed from afar if you havent interacted with her, none of you have the right to accuse her insult her or doubt her

“What if someone only praises her?”

Elizabeth “That's acceptable She deserves all the praise and admiration”

There was a low chuckle from the crowd

Chloe stood on the side, wearing her usual smile on her face, but inwardly, she was feeling a bit embarrassed due to what Elizabeth had sand What was this?! She only allowed others to compliment her

Feeling a bit uncomfortable, she ran a hand through her hair, dropping her gaze to hide the embarrassment and confusion in her eyes.

The atmosphere gradually started to liven up at this point. The fans in the audience now knew the truth and, with Elizabeth's open support and affection, they were inclined to believe in Chloe's character once again.

"We're sorry Ms Summers. We misunderstood you."

"Yeah, as your fans, we didn't trust you enough. We're sorry. It won't happen again."

"I knew you'd never stoop so low, but I must apologize anyway. I'll be sure to support your TV shows, and I'll remain a faithful fan from here on out."

Chloe grabbed the mic and said: "I've never been one for accepting apologies. Once a mistake is made, the damage is done. No amount of 'I'm sorry' can erase what's already happened. Frankly, I can do without fans like you. Don't get all sensitive and think I'm being too harsh. If I stabbed you in the back out of the blue, could you still smile and say, 'It's okay'? If you could, I really have no comment. 1, personally, do not have the noble habit of repaying kindness with ingratitude."

Chapter 1629

The crowd below was awash with embarrassment. Reflecting on Chloe's earlier comments about "not needing fans," they felt a deeper sense of shame.

She didn't do anything wrong from start to finish, and it was clear that explaining the misunderstanding would have completely resolved it, and her fans would still be her fans. However, she had said so many things that "offended" them before that.

Now that they thought about it, what was wrong with her encouraging them to think for themselves, and to spend more time with their families?

Who else had the courage to say those things? Who wasn't afraid of losing fans? Who wasn't trying desperately to attract more fans?

Only she could speak so frankly.c2

In such a situation, the memory was most profound, and the impact was deepest

The misunderstanding was completely dispelled, and everyone realized that they had misunderstood Chloe from the beginning

The appearance of Elizabeth, and her favoritism towards Chloe, gave everyone a deeper understanding of Chloe's character. The relationship between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law was traditionally complex, but even Elizabeth, Chloe's mother-in-law, liked Chloe so much, which proved that Chloe's character truly stood the test of time. This coupled with Chloe's candor, not only didn't reduce the number of people who supported her, but it also skyrocketed

This group now included a sizable number of older parents and grandparents. People who could make young people realize not to blindly chase celebrities, and even take care of themselves and spend

more time with their families, were too well-liked.

This girl is really a good one. I've never met anyone as honest as her. Don't worry, girl, when your show airs, I'll make sure my sons and grandsons watch it with me"

"In this day and age, there are so many unscrupulous businesses using those deceptive marketing tactics. If you're not careful, you'll be fooled. The girl is telling the truth. If someone can't even handle the truth, they deserve to be tricked for a lifetime."

"Yes, those who dare to speak on ment are almost extinct these days."

The situation online improved in an instant.

Chloe's official Twitter followers were changing every second. The number of followers broke a hundred million.

The news of breaking a hundred million caused the fans to celebrate again. They all tagged Damon's main account

“@Damon, your wife's followers have exceeded one hundred million, congratulations.”

“Your wife is so excellent, I want to compete fairly with you for her @Damon

“Your wife's followers have exceeded one hundred million, how much pressure do you feel seeing so many people like her? @Damon”

“I wish Ms. Summers could be my wife, could you let her go? I know I don't have money, but you don't either, right? I believe I can treat her a thousand times better than you @Damon

“Yes, yes, yes' We like her so much, and we're definitely not worse than you. For her better and happier future, let her go. @Damon.”

@Damon, this is her, Chloe. I love her! Let her go if you love her”

” can't deny you're handsome, but the fact that you're broke is also true. I'm definitely better than you. Quit it, although mentioning money is low, being broke is even lower. @Damon, be sensible, quit it.”

Seeing these messages, people followed suit, and also followed Damon's account. Suddenly, far away in his office, having a meeting with a group of internationally renowned businessmen, Damon's phone suddenly began to ring incessantly. He opened Twitter, saw the messages people had tagged him in, and his handsome face instantly darkened.

In the large conference room, all the internationally renowned businessmen were embarrassed, not knowing what kind of news their young leader had seen

He was always aloof, mature, and never showed his emotions But now his face was completely grim, and there was an undeniable angry low pressure emanating from him. He sat in the main seat of the conference room in an expensive black suit, with his legs elegantly crossed. His extraordinarily handsome face was slightly tilted, and his dark eyes were fixed on the phone, where a growing sense of coldness was gathering

Although the people in the room were curious, their reactions were not big. They were all sitting quietly in the seats, either playing with the pens in their hands, tapping on the documents on the table, or looking at Damon's reaction with smiles on their faces

These people were all at the top of international business, and their auras were naturally noble, strong, steady and calm, with emotions hidden too deeply. They seemed naturally charming, each with their own style, but they all undeniably stood at the top.

Any one of them could be a "hot item as a "dominating CEO" It was not easy to see too many emotions from their faces.

"Forget it, or I'll block you"

"Get lost"

"You think you're richer than me?"

At this moment, Damon, looking at those comments, couldn't hold back. He sat in the office's main seat, pressed the keyboard of his phone, and started to fight back with a cold face.

The people in the conference room were both puzzled and speechless, some even smirked and took out their phones, opening a social networking site.

Just now, Damon's message alert sound, plus their recent attention to Damon and his rumored "wife", made it very easy to find the app. Their attention to Damon and Chloe made it easy for them to know what exactly had happened

Damon was still replying to those netizens coveting his wife online. Seeing his replies, the people in the office couldn't help but smile silently.

"Why can't I be richer than you? Isn't your money just the allowance Ms. Summers gives you?"

There was something throbbing on Damon's forehead.

"Nowadays, handsome guys are all sugar babies, aren't you a typical example? i think Ms. Summers is just infatuated with your looks for the time being. As time goes by, she'll naturally see clearly"

"Men, having anything is not as good as having money. You know?"

At this moment, Damon's thin lips were pursed into a line. His fingers hovered in the air for a long time, and finally there was a loud "bang" in the office. which attracted everyone's attention. It turned out that his shoe had hit the table in front of him, and he was looking impatient and gloomy

The CEOs in the room were both smirking and raising their eyebrows. It was rare to see this guy being so emotional Moreover, in a conference room where millions or even more were pouring in every minute, it was quite bizarte for him to waste time arguing with online netizens who had no connection to him.

None of them had ever imagined that this guy would have a woman in his life, let alone be so profoundly affected by her. This Chloe was really something else

Chapter 1630

Everyone couldn't help but be curious about Damon at this moment. However, most of them were also reveling in schadenfreude

Maybe sensing the odd atmosphere in the conference room, Damon suddenly lifted his head, adjusted his posture, and coldly swept a look over everyone

Just as everyone else began to adjust their postures, attempting to pretend they noticed nothing and continue the meeting, Damon suddenly spoke, "Dol look like a man without money?"

No one answered his childish and laughable question right away, then they heard him say, "Who has more money than me?"

Was this man ever going to grow up?

Several people pursed their lips, none of them wanting to entertain his question.

Damon frowned, put away his phone, and spoke impatiently "Speak up. Who's richer than met

A few of the CEOs in the room had subtly changed expressions.

Looking at the whole world, there's probably only one person wealthier than you. You can rest easy on that," someone finally answered

Damon's face darkened, "Who?"

Colorado, the regional president in charge of an Asian region, had a spoiled personality. He was currently leaning back in his chair, twirling a pen in his hand, and speaking in a carefree tone

"Of course, it's your precious wife, Ms. Chloe Summers"

His words seemed to lighten the atmosphere in the conference room considerably

Despite their stern expressions and aloof attitudes, it was precisely because of these that any minor change became particularly noticeable among them

This remark seemed to please Damon greatly, his expression that had been icy moments ago was now blossoming, which was proof enough. "Hmm You re right, she's the wealthiest

After he finished an almost unnoticable smile appeared on his lips.

The guys in the office were all speechless. He'd changed so much in half a year's time. He let a woman stand above him, and even seemed to derive a sense of superiority from it

Indeed, men in love could be strangely peculiar.

And so, every man in the room made a mental note:

They would never fall in love lightly, and certainly not become so infatuated over a woman.

In other words, every man at the moment probably had the same thought-

Woman, I will not fall for you.

"Continue" With his mood brightened, Damon was ready for the meeting to go on.

They were currently targeting the Harper Group comprehensively, so naturally they would be busier than usual.

Colorado sighed, straightened up and leaned on the conference table, "Ah, the international summit is just around the corner, and we have to spend energy dealing with the Harper Group Stealing business on their turf, tsk tsk... Why are we doing this."

The others maintained their usual calm demeanor. Women were indeed troublesome creatures.

Damon gave him a cold look, "Seems like you have objections"

"Not at all" Colorado waved his hand. The company is yours, and you can do whatever you want with it, as long as you're happy. I love a good fight, especially when it comes to stealing business, I'm the best at it"

Damon pursed his lips and shifted his gaze to the documents spread out in front of him. "One more off-topic remark, and you can

From the moment Elizabeth appeared at the launch ceremony, the situation had completely turned around. The show hadn't even started shooting, and it was already a hit And it wasn't just a regular hit

Chloe had once again pushed her strategy to its extreme. The attention she received this time was truly enviable

The three actors who had walked out on her were stunned on the spot After the launch ceremony, before Chloe got in her car and left, they stopped her in the parking lot

"Ms Summers"

Chloe raised an eyebrow, stopped in her tracks and looked at the three who had awkward expressions on their faces, not saying a word. Her silence made her seem even colder. After a moment of hesitation, one of them finally spoke, "We know we're the best actors for your roles, and the ones you brought in later are just substitutes for us. If we say we want to continue performing our previous roles

"What do you take me for?" Chloes face slowly broke into a faint smile

"What?"

"You're nobody to me, so why would I let you change your minds in front of me? This is the real world, and you're in the entertainment industry Opportunities won't wait for you. From the moment you resolutely refused to act in my play, you lost all your chances.

People should have some backbone. Please stick to your decision."

The actors turned pale, wanting to say something else, but Chloe didn't give them another chance.

They were all new actors, they didn't want to risk their future careers and lose their current fans, so they chose to back out at the last minute. But now they had truly experienced the cruel reality

Through this incident, they had become famous, but at the same time, it meant they had no hope for the future.

“So Ms. Summers had already noticed their intention to quit acting early on, and it turns out they did indeed quit at a critical moment. Tsk tsk, these short-sighted individuals”

“Aren't actors supposed to act to tell a good story? It turns out they just want to become famous. If any director works with them in the future, they're either blind or resorting to unethical practices”

“They've already admitted their lack of ability, so why continue as actors?”

It was unknown that whether The Queen would succeed in the future, but for now, these actors sure had no way to succeed anymore. A miss is as good as a mile, probably referred to them.

The promotion for The Queen had completely ended, only the shooting and release were left, so Chloe just needed to wait for the results. However, just when she thought there were no more issues and she could finally focus on being a dedicated wife and mother, she finally remembered her passionate mother-in-law, Elizabeth.

Once the media attention was gone, Elizabeth showed her true colors, and as soon as she got in the car, she pulled Chloe close, pinching her arms and legs, holding her face, examining her closely.

“You've lost too much weight.”

That damn Damon, how has he been taking care of you?”

“Have you seen a dietitian yet? Are you getting all the nutrients you need every day? No, from now on, I'm taking full responsibility for your meals.”

Chloe's face was nearly squished out of shape. "I actually eat a lot

"It's not just about quantity, it's about quality. Look at your belly, does it look like you're carrying twins?"

"It's not that far along yet"

"It should be."

Chloe decided to keep quiet. It seemed like any more words would be in vain.