

Desires DH 61

Chapter 61

“That’s all?” Evan was a little surprised. He had been expecting something serious.

He sat back in his chair. “I’ll make the necessary arrangements.”

“Do you have anyone in mind?” Dan asked

Evan thought about it. Somehow, the first person who popped into his head wasn’t Jake, the experienced managing director of JK Couture, or any of JK Couture’s more senior designers, but Anya

Damnit. Why was he thinking about her again?

He could feel a headache coming on. Something was really wrong with him. He hadn’t been acting like his usual self for the past two days

His thoughts never strayed far from Anya and he had no idea why.

He couldn’t stop thinking about her soft, pink lips.

He honestly detested that woman but somehow, he couldn’t seem to stop thinking about her either

“What’s wrong with you?” Dan reached out and peered at Evan’s face when he caught his friend lost in his thoughts. “You’re

spacing out.”

“It’s nothing” Evan yanked himself out of his thoughts. He collected himself and gave Dan a cool look

“So, do you have any recommendations?”

He was more concerned about the choice of designer.

His cousin’s wedding was just around the corner. They really needed a designer who had great taste and knew how to get

the job done

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“I’ll speak to the folks at JK Couture and let you know as soon as I find someone suitable”

“Thanks”

“No problem.

Meanwhile, at JK Couture

Anya was just done with the design for Mdm Welton’s hat

Sydney arrived then.

She was currently working in the media department of Welton Group. The department had little work. Most of the work

involved the occasional press conference and talking to the press. You had to appear in front of the cameras.

The work clearly suited Sydney, who loved appearing in front of cameras and the press.

She didn't turn up at JK Couture because she missed Anya or because she wanted to get to know the company better.

She was here looking for trouble.

She needed an excuse though. Luckily, the media department was hosting an event today and needed someone to help out. The other departments were all busy with their own work.

She came to JK Couture to request someone to help them out with their event.

It

t was a great

great opportunity to order Anya around and humiliate her in the process. Naturally, Sydney wasn't going to let it slip through her fingers.

She tottered into the office on her four-inch heels and sashayed into Jake's office to inform him of her request.

Jake had no clue about the history between Anya and Sydney.

He agreed to Sydney's request.

They headed to Anya's desk to discuss the matter with her.

Anya's spirits fell as soon as she saw Sydney.

They plummeted as soon as she heard Jake tell her that she was to help Sydney out with the media department's event.

Anya would rather die than do that. She turned towards Jake. "Jake, I'm feeling unwell. Is it alright if I don't do it?"

"You're unwell?" All thoughts except concern for Anya fled Jake's head as soon as he heard that. "Do you need to see the

doctor?"

He had forgotten all about Sydney's request.

Sydney knew that Anya was feigning discomfort. But she hadn't expected Jake to take Anya's side so readily.

Incredulity and contempt dripped from her words as she spoke. "Ms. MacMillan, so, you happen to feel unwell at the exact moment I decide to request your help."

"Seems like too much of a coincidence to be true."

"Are you suggesting that I'm pretending to be sick?" Anya said calmly. "I'm simply telling you the truth. I don't feel too good right now."

The look on Sydney's face darkened. Scorn colored the look in her eyes. She knew that Anya was just putting on an act.

She had walked right past the woman when she had been making her way to Jake's office. Anya had looked fine.

Yet here she was, moaning and whining about how sick she felt because she had work to do.

Sydney wasn't going to let her off that easily. She raised her voice slightly and began taunting her stepsister. "Ms. MacMillan, do you have anything against the media department? Are you unhappy about doing us a favor?"

"I wouldn't dare." Anya leveled a frosty look at the other woman. Her nails pressed into her palm.

"Well, in that case, please follow me."

"I told you, I'm not feeling well."

"Ms. MacMillan," Jake finally said. "I'll find you someone else. Anya's not feeling well."

The look on Sydney's face took on a dark and thunderous shade when she heard what Jake had said. She couldn't believe it. The man took Anya's side.

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"Mr. Hanson, can you not tell that she's lying?" Sydney said darkly to Jake.

She had no idea that Jake was in love with Anya. He wasn't going to take Sydney's side.

It didn't matter that Sydney had just called Anya a liar to her face.

Jake was firmly on Anya's side. "Ms. MacMillan, I'll get you someone else."

"Do you honestly believe what she told you?" Sydney couldn't believe her ears. She couldn't stop herself from raising her voice angrily at the man. "We're just asking for some help. Why do you seem so reluctant to provide it? Do you have anything against the media department?"

"Ms. MacMillan, you're reading too much into the matter," Jake said politely. "I'll get you another person right away."

He didn't let Sydney say another word. Instead, he turned away and walked off.

Sydney was convinced that Jake was on Anya's side and trying to help her get out of helping Sydney. As soon as he was gone, she turned and jabbed her finger at Anya. Her voice was filled with contempt. "My good sister, you sure didn't waste any time in hooking up with your boss. I have to say that I'm truly impressed!"

Anya gave her a mirthless smile. She stared at her stepsister like one would a circus act. Fury had her tightening her fingers around the file in her hands. She tilted her chin up proudly. "Why are you trying to make me look bad in front of my boss? What do you get out of it?"

"Is that what you call this? This is just an act," Sydney retorted, her words dripping with disdain. "You feel absolutely fine, don't you?"

"You didn't have to single me out. Or were you acting on the orders of your department?" Anya snapped back fearlessly. "I know you just want to order me around and make me feel bad. You don't have to resort to this."

"We're no longer family," she continued calmly. "If you continue to harass me or try to make my life difficult for me, don't blame me for hitting back when I get upset."

The look on her face and the tone of her voice made Sydney freeze momentarily in shock.

Her impression of her sister had been of a woman who was afraid of causing trouble for others.

Before she had been driven out of the MacMillan family, she had been treated like a servant.

She would do whatever anyone told her to do dutifully and quietly.

It had only been a year. Something had changed.

It then struck Sydney. It was her sister. Her sister had somehow changed.

She had become more strong-willed.

But, so what? She had nothing. She was no match against Sydney.

Sydney was confident that she could easily crush the woman.

Besides, she was working at Welton Group now. No one could be sure that she wasn't here for Evan. Sydney had to destroy Anya if she wanted to have Evan to herself.

She would not allow any woman to get any closer to Evan.

Especially if that woman was her sister, Anya.

"That's right! I just want to order you around," Sydney said obnoxiously, raising her eyebrow. "Let me tell you something. Anya. As long as I'm around, you're not going to have any chances with Evan!"

Evan. It was Evan again.

The mention of the man's name sent Anya's head throbbing.

Honestly, she wasn't interested in Evan at all. Not in him as a person or his family fortune. She had zero interest in either. Zilch. Nada.

Anya scoffed, derision spilling from her lips. "I'm not interested in him. Please stop bothering me."

Sydney didn't believe her. Why would she be working here of all places if she wasn't interested in the man?

Sure, she was a fashion designer.

But there were countless fashion design agencies all around the city. Why had she chosen this one?

Did Anya think that she'd fall for her lie? Sydney honestly wondered who the idiot was here.

She smiled mirthlessly at Anya. The next moment, a dark look descended on her face. She leveled a murderous glare at her stepsister. "You want me to stop bothering you, Anya? Sure. I want you to swear to me.

"About what?" Anya wasn't interested in continuing this conversation with Sydney.

Sydney was her enemy. So was her mother.

The whole MacMillan family was her enemy.

She couldn't keep the conversation up any longer. That would be insulting the honor of her dead mother.

"Swear that you'll never fall in love with Evan. If you do, you'll die a horrible death!"

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What a vicious oath! Only a woman as vicious as Sydney could've thought of such an oath. Anya stared quietly at the woman. All she wanted to do right now was grab the glass of water on her desk and throw it at Anya's face.

She wanted to tell the woman to get out of her office.

But she couldn't do that. She had to swallow her pride and bide her time before she fulfilled her ambitions.

Anya knew that she wasn't powerful enough right now. She couldn't act rashly.

Honestly, her stomach turned at the thought of making that oath.

But she had to stop Sydney from harassing her any further, Intruding into her personal life and dragging her precious kids and Ellie into the mess. She shoved down the abhorrence she felt towards Sydney and uttered the oath.

A look of satisfaction settled on Sydney's face. "I'm going to hold you to your word."

"I'll hold you to yours too. Stay away from me. I don't want you in my life."

"Do you think I want you in mine?" Sydney raised her eyebrow at Anya in disbelief before spitting out viciously. "You think. too highly of yourself!"

"You can go now." Anya didn't want to spend another second with her.

The sight of Sydney brought up memories of her own mother.

If only the MacMillans had done the little that had been needed to keep her mother alive.

They were the reason her mother was dead. They had killed her mother,

She would never forget that!

"Hmph!" Sydney wasn't interested in sticking around either. She threw one last angry glare at Anya before stalking out of JK Couture.

Sydney's unexpected visit in the morning had not caused Anya any trouble.

But it had ruined her great mood that morning

The fact that she had interrupted Anya while she had been in the middle of designing Mdm Welton's hat had made things

worse.

Her thoughts were in a mess now.

She didn't want to make any mistakes in the design. Anya got up and went to the pantry. She decided to make herself a glass of fruit juice. She told herself to calm down and pull herself together. She needed to turn her thoughts back to Mdm Welton's hat and its design.

There was no one in the pantry at the moment.

Anya got a sachet of ready-made fruit juice and dumped it into her glass. She added some hot water and stirred the drink. Then, with her fingers clutching the glass tightly, she leaned against the counter and started sipping at her juice slowly as she tried to pull herself out of the sour mood that Sydney had put her in.

She went through half the glass of juice.

Then, her best friend, Cindy, called.

She had returned to the country.

Anya's spirits rose when she got Cindy's call. You could literally see her brighten up like the skies after a storm. Her voice was filled with excitement and glee. "Cindy! Are you back?"

"That's right! I'm at the airport. I called you as soon as I landed."

"Really?" Anya said. Her voice was trembling with excitement. "I'm at work now. I can't pick you up at the airport. Let's meet after I knock off work today. Are you okay with that?"

“Of course! It’s great! I can’t wait to see you again.” Cindy sounded equally excited. It had been years since she had last seen Anya

Cindy had almost forgotten how her best friend looked like.

Had she become prettier while Cindy had been gone?

Anya had always been beautiful since she had been a kid. She had been a princess to them all.

They could have gone abroad to study together. In fact, they should have been returning to the country together right now. But then something had happened in her family.

Otherwise, they wouldn’t have been separated for so many years.

Cindy didn’t want to dwell on that. The thought made her chest twinge painfully. “Drop by the new apartment my dad got me when you knock off work. I’m not moving back to my parents’ place in the meantime. We can have a good heart-to-

heart talk.”

“Okay.” Anya nodded her head profusely. “Text me your address.”

“Sure,” Cindy said in a chirpy voice. She was clearly looking forward to their reunion. “I’ll see you later this evening then.”

“Yup. See you!”

Anya ended the call. She was feeling so much better now.

She decided to head back to her desk with her glass of fruit juice and get back to work.

It was then that her phone rang again.

Anya's eyes flew to the unfamiliar number blinking on her screen.

After a moment of hesitation, she answered the call.

The warm voice of Mdm Welton sounded from the other end of the line. "Hi, Ms. MacMillan. Do you have time to have lunch with me later? Let's talk about my hat."

Chapter 64

The call from Mdm Welton came out of the blue.

Anya was mildly surprised when she heard the old lady's voice.

Mdm Welton seemed surprisingly forward.

Anya wasn't expecting an invitation to lunch over a hat's design.

Something didn't seem right here.

She tried not to think too much about it. After a moment of stunned surprise, Anya yanked herself out of her thoughts and replied politely. "Mdm Welton, I won't stop working on the hat until you're happy with it. As for lunch...we have a canteen for the staff at Welton Group Tower."

"But I'm at the lobby downstairs right now. Won't you join me for lunch?" The old lady appeared to have taken a liking to Anya. She hadn't forgotten about her since that dinner they had had together.

She seemed insistent on having her get to know her own grandson.

The Weltons were a powerful family in high society but the old lady didn't care much for the antiquated rules that other folks in high society usually followed.

She didn't care where Anya came from.

As long as Evan liked her, that was all that mattered.

Of course, those were the old lady's views. Evan's marriage was the concern of the entire family. It affected their family's interests and reputation. It didn't matter if the old matriarch didn't care who Evan's future wife was and where she came

from.

Evan's parents and Evan's friends cared deeply. They would not approve of Anya.

But the old lady had her own worries regarding Evan's marriage.

Her grandson never spoke about girls. She wondered if he were interested in women in the first place. Marriage seemed like such a distant goal at the moment. All she wanted him to do was to start dating.

It would be great if the relationship eventually led to their marriage but it wouldn't matter if it didn't. Anya wasn't going to end up at the losing end of the deal. She would make sure of it.

With that thought in mind, Mdm Welton decided to go on the offensive and help her grandson find a girlfriend.

At least, she would be able to know for certain if he were interested in women.

That would leave her with one less thing to worry about.

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“What? Mdm Welton, did you just say you’re at Welton Group Tower right now?” Anya blurted out. She couldn’t help but be

impressed by Mdm Welton. The old lady was truly a woman of action.

Anya couldn’t believe that she was at Welton Group Tower right now.

Perhaps she should sneak downstairs and take a look.

Anya felt torn. She didn’t want to spend too much time with the old lady. She didn’t want her grandson to suspect her of trying to worm herself into his life again.

She wasn’t interested in being accused of something she hadn’t done.

“That’s right. I’m downstairs right now. Do you have time to discuss the hat’s design?” The old lady’s warm and friendly voice sounded from the other end of the line.

Anya believed her. She must be downstairs.

The young woman wasn’t dreaming

Anya bit her lips. After a moment of hesitation, she finally spoke. “I’ll be downstairs in a minute.”

So be it. Let Evan suspect her intentions. Let him confront her and question her motive.

The old lady would vouch for her.

Mdm Welton could tell her grandson Anya hadn't done anything and that the old lady had been the one who had invited her

to lunch.

The old lady sounded delighted when Anya accepted her invitation to lunch. "That's great. I'll see you then."

Three minutes later, Anya had her drafts with her as she rushed downstairs.

She hurried out of the elevator as soon as the doors slid open.

The old lady was dressed in an elegant looking dress and seated in the waiting area. She was clearly waiting for Anya.

Anya slowed down as soon as she saw Mdm Welton. After a moment, she realized what she had done and quickened her pace instantly.

"Mdm Welton, I hope I didn't keep you waiting." Anya took the seat across Mdm Welton and placed the drafts on the coffee

table between them.

"Not at all." The old lady smiled graciously at the young woman. The latter was dressed in a plain white blouse and a black skirt today

In spite of her plain-looking clothes, she was glowing radiantly with youth and beauty.

Mdm Welton found the sight extremely pleasing.

Anya nodded before reaching out and flipping open the folder before her. "Mdm Welton, here are some drafts I've done for the hat. Please take a look and let me know if you like them."

The old lady picked the folder up and glanced at the designs before her. She liked them very much.

She found herself looking at a vintage-looking beret. Embroidered onto the side of the beret was a small rose,

The rose added a touch of something special to the beret.

It was neither ostentatious nor was it overly plain.

She liked it very much.

The old lady placed the folder down. "I'm very pleased with the design. Ms. MacMillan, let's have lunch together. I've invited Evan to join us."

Anya's eyes widened instantly when she heard what the old lady had said.

Chapter 65

Why would Mdm Welton invite Evan to lunch as well?

Anya would rather kill herself than have lunch with the man.

The young woman yanked herself out of her momentary stupor and mustered a stiff smile at the old lady. "Thanks for the Invitation, Mdm Welton. I'm really sorry but I don't think I can join you for lunch."

The old lady knew Anya was just shy. She beamed at her. "Don't worry, I can speak to Jake. He won't stop you from joining us for lunch."

Anya could feel her heart skip a beat. Jake wasn't the reason she was turning down the offer to join Mdm Welton and Evan

for lunch.

The reason she was doing it was because she didn't want to have lunch with them at all.

She couldn't tell the old lady the truth though. Anya wracked her brains furiously as she tried to come up with another excuse. "Mdm Welton, I have an appointment this afternoon. That's why I can't join you for lunch."

"Is that so? What a coincidence." The old lady seemed crestfallen when she heard that. "I made a trip to Welton Group Tower just so I could have lunch with you."

She sounded terribly upset. Anya felt waves of guilt assailing her.

The young woman bit her lips. "Let's have lunch another day, Mdm Welton."

"Alright then." The old lady couldn't possibly drag Anya off to have lunch with her when the latter had told her that she had something to attend to. But she couldn't stop a hint of disappointment seeping into her words. "Honestly, I'm not sure if Evan's going to have time to join us for lunch. I simply mentioned his name in passing. He'd join us if he had the time. But if he didn't, I suppose I'll just have to have lunch alone..."

Anya fell silent.

She had a feeling that the old lady was on the verge of convincing her to do something that she really didn't want to do.

She was right. She ended up joining Mdm Welton for lunch.

After all, she had nothing on for lunch.

It had been an excuse.

She couldn't believe herself. She gave in every single time. She was such a sucker.

Anya honestly couldn't believe what she was doing. Then she remembered what Mdm Welton had said. Evan might not be joining them. He was a busy man after all. It made sense that he wouldn't have time to have lunch with them.

She should calm down and stop jumping at every shadow.

The likelihood of Evan turning up for lunch with them was incredibly low.

He was probably swamped with work.

The thought of that set Anya at ease.

Soon, the time came for lunch. Anya and Mdm Welton headed out. The latter had made a reservation at a fancy restaurant.

She had asked for a private suite..

It was a great restaurant. The décor was elegantly done and the place quiet.

The food was delicious.

The fact that Evan didn't turn up made everything infinitely better.

Mdm Welton had called the young man a while ago and had been told that he was busy and couldn't join her for lunch. Anya's heart rested back into her chest instantly. Her worries set to rest, she let herself relax and started to enjoy her meal with the old lady.

The old lady didn't seem particularly affected by Evan's absence. She seemed happy to have Anya with her.

She must be really lonely.

Evan was busy with work. So were his parents, who were tending to their business overseas.

The other kids in the family were busy with their work and life too.

They rarely had any time for her.

Happy to have someone spend some time with her, the old lady wouldn't stop placing orders for more dishes.

The two women dined happily in their suite. In the middle of their lunch, someone suddenly pushed the door to the private

suite open.

The man who wasn't supposed to show up for lunch was standing right in front of them in a sharp suit. Anya reeled back from the sight.

Mdm Welton beamed with delight. "Come on, Evan. Hurry up and take a seat."

"Granny, why are you dragging another one of my employees out for lunch again?" Evan's lips quirked up into a smile as he threw a look at Anya. The young woman had fallen into a sudden stillness.

How did she manage to do it?

She had somehow gained his grandmother's favor. His grandmother had made a special trip to Welton Group Tower so that she could invite Anya to join her for lunch.

Evan couldn't help but be secretly impressed.

He also couldn't help the suspicions rising inside him. Was this another one of Anya's cons? Had she somehow deceived his grandmother into liking her?

The thought was firmly lodged in his mind. When Anya excused herself in the middle of lunch and headed to the washroom, Evan made a similar excuse and left the suite too.

He stopped her in front of the washroom and then, in a husky voice, said. "I'm impressed, Ms. MacMillan."

Chapter 66

This was the first time Evan had done something like this to Anya. Physically trap her in a corner.

He loomed over her like a terrible shadow, exuding both an intimidating air of authority as well as a magnetic charisma. Anya felt as if she had been caught in a vast net. It wrapped itself around her tightly like a stranglehold. She felt herself gasping for air.

She knew it. She had to stay away from Evan.

He was too dangerous.

"Mr. Welton, I have no idea what you're talking about." Anya tried to pull herself together, shoving aside the shiver of fear and startlement inside her while remaining calm and composed.

She lifted her face slightly and stared him in the eye.

“Is that so? Are you sure you have no idea what I’m talking about?” Evan’s dark eyes stared right back into Anya’s bright and beautiful ones. They seemed to look right into her soul.

Anya

felt a shiver ripple through her body. She bit her lips unknowingly.

“I really don’t, Mr. Welton.”

“Stop pretending. There was a hint of forcefulness in Evan’s voice. He leaned towards Anya with his full and terrible weight.

They were standing so close, they looked as if they were about to fall into each other’s arms.

Anya threw herself into the wall behind her instantly. She had no idea what Evan was talking about.

The young woman blinked furiously as she tried to keep her cool. “Mr. Welton, I’m not pretending. I honestly have no idea what you’re talking about.”

“Are you sure you’re not putting on an act right now?” The look in Evan’s eyes darkened. His hand shot up and grabbed Anya’s chin tightly. The man tried to turn Anya’s face towards him so that he could look her straight in the eye. “Do you really have no idea why my grandmother asked you out for lunch?”

Anya froze. Realization dawned on her then. So, this was what he was going on about.

He believed that she had somehow tricked his grandmother into asking her out for lunch.

She knew it. She had been right.

Evan detested her. Everything she did seemed suspect to him.

“I didn’t do anything. Mr. Welton. Your grandmother invited me for lunch,” Anya said quietly. Her eyes were dark with disillusionment as she stared at the man whom she had once been in love with for so many years. “You can ask the old lady herself if you don’t believe me.”

“You should know that I wasn’t the one who volunteered to design her hat. I was just doing what I was told.”

She spat those words out softly, then after a moment, spoke again. “Will you release me now, Mr. Welton?”

Evan didn’t want to let her go at all. He pursed his lips as his fingers pinched her soft chin. The next moment, he was leaning in again and gazing down at her like a predator with his prey. His words came

out husky. “Are you sure you’re not lying to me?”

Anya caught the mild mint-flavored scent of smoke drifting from Evan’s lips as he spoke.

She hated the smell of cigarette smoke.

Yet somehow, it didn’t smell so bad now. In fact, it smelled especially good.

The young woman couldn’t help the sudden shiver coursing through her body. She didn’t know why the man had to stand so close. He just wanted some answers, didn’t he? Besides, she thought he disliked her.

Couldn’t he take a few steps back and talk to her like a normal human being?

“I’m not lying,” Anya said as she held her breath. “Mr. Welton, please release me. If you honestly don’t want me around, I can return to the room and tell Mdm Welton that something has cropped up and that I have to leave right now.”

“Are you in a hurry to go?” Evan threw her a look.

He had no idea why he couldn't stop thinking about

on the wor

Evan was struck by how he couldn't stop thinking about the way she smelled. The sight of her lips drove him insane. He wanted desperately to kiss her.

Seized by the impulse, he lost all reason. The fact that this was the woman who had set him up became lost to him for a single instant.

His mind blanked out completely.

Only one thought remained in his head.

He wanted to kiss her. He wanted to kiss those red lips.

He wanted them wet and swollen from his kisses and he wanted her breathless from the lack of air and filled with only his

breath.

Then, he realized what he was thinking. He must be going mad.

Chapter 67

Evan's eyes darkened with desire.

Meanwhile, Anya was still reeling from what Evan had said earlier. He had asked her what the hurry was.

all from Evan's lips.

Those words had shocked Anya speechless when she had heard them

She froze. Her eyes widened in disbelief as she stared at the man before her.

Honestly, what was going on in his head?

Logically speaking, he should be telling her to get as far away from him as possible. He did hate her guts, after all.

So, why had he said something like that?

It didn't make any sense at all.

"Mr. Welton, may I leave now?" Anya wasn't going to dwell too much on what Evan had meant by what he had said. She didn't dare to. She was terrified that he had somehow found out about the children.

He might take them away from her.

She wouldn't know what to do then.

The thought sent terror coursing through Anya's veins. They were standing too near each other and that terrified her too. Alarmed, she tried to push him away. Right now, she couldn't care less if he were

her boss' boss.

Her soft hands touched his firm muscles. It was akin to a spark that set aflame the fields.

Evan clenched his jaw tight.

He couldn't believe how soft her hands felt.

He was seized by the impulse to grab her hands and hold them in his own.

He must be out of his mind. He couldn't believe that he was hungering for a woman who had tricked him.

"You may leave now!" Maybe he was worried that he might not be able to hold himself back. That he might kiss her.

Evan shoved down the desire to kiss Anya and yanked her aside. His voice, when he had spoken to her, was rough with

desire.

"Great. Thanks, Mr. Welton." Anya wasn't going to stay a moment longer now that she had gotten permission to leave,

She slid past him and marched off.

Then, Evan spoke again when she reached the entrance of the washroom. "Get back to the suite. You can return to the office after you're done with lunch. I won't let you upset my grandmother."

His grandmother seemed to like Anya very much.

She seemed to enjoy Anya's company as they had lunch together.

Evan was of the firm view that he loathed women like Anya who resorted to trickery and deception to get what they wanted. But on account of his grandmother, he was willing to put up with Anya just this once.

Anya, on the other hand, felt trapped. This really wasn't the time and place for a leisurely lunch. She wasn't in the mood to eat at all.

But Evan had given the command and she had no choice but to comply.

She steeled herself and returned to the suite.

Lunch went on smoothly. Everyone kept their thoughts to themselves as they ate.

After the meal, Mdm Welton went home while Anya and Evan made their way to the office separately. Everything appeared

fine.

That was when Anya released a sigh of relief.

She threw herself back into work and continued working on Mdm Welton's hat.

Afternoon brought Carol to Anya's desk. The senior designer had come bearing trouble once again.

Her ploy to frame Anya as a thief had failed.

Now, she was back with something else.

She shoved a heap of prototypes onto Anya's desk right before it was time to knock off work and told her to deliver them to the factories.

The factories were scattered all across the city.

It would take her hours before she could get every one of those prototypes delivered.

Anya eyed the clothes on her desk. The first thought that popped into her head was that Carol was trying to put her in a

spot again.

She had seen the streak of malicious glee flashing across Carol's eyes.

She wasn't being paranoid. She knew that Carol had done this on purpose.

It was alright. Anya could take it. She had to. She was still serving her probationary period. She wasn't her match right now. She had to keep her job.

She would take anything that Carol threw at her as long as it wasn't an attempt to cast aspersions on her character.

Carol was simply trying to give her more work and stop her from knocking off work on time.

Anya could handle a few late hours.

But if she were to spend the evening delivering the prototypes to the respective factories, she wouldn't be able to make it to Cindy's place on time.

She didn't want Cindy to wait up for her. Anya called Cindy as she made her way downstairs with her arms full of clothes. "Hey, Cindy, I'm so sorry but I'm going to be really late."

“How late is really late?”

Anya sighed in exasperation. “I have no idea. An hour or two, I guess. I have to deliver some prototypes to the factories. It’ll take some time to get them all to the respective factories.”

“Sweetheart, tell me where you are right now,” Cindy said immediately when she heard what Anya had just said. “I’ll be your delivery guy.”

Anya smiled. “I can’t trouble you with this. It’s my colleague. She’s supposed to guide me at work but she’s been trying to make my life difficult for me. This was extra work that she threw at me.”

“Really? That’s unbelievable!” Cindy had just graduated from school and hadn’t had a proper job before. Besides, her family was rich. She didn’t have to suffer the typical abuse at work. She had no idea how horrible people could be at work. “Why is she such a jerk to you?”

“Beats me.” Anya honestly didn’t want Cindy’s help. She didn’t want to drag her friend into her mess. “Give me an hour or so. I’ll head over to your place right after I’m done with my deliveries.”

“Are you sure you don’t need any help?” Cindy wasn’t lying when she said she wanted to help her friend.

“It’s alright. Just sit tight and wait at home,” Anya giggled.

“Sure!”

Chapter 68

Anya ended the call and clutched her prototypes to her chest tightly. She took a deep breath and exhaled loudly in an attempt to release the exhaustion that had been building up inside her throughout the day. Then, she headed downstairs and headed to the subway.

Since Jake was busy today, he couldn’t give her a ride. Anya was glad. She didn’t want to be put in a situation where she had to explain why her boss was giving her a ride across the city.

She got to the entrance of Welton Group Tower.

It must be her unlucky day because that was when she ran into Evan again.

Anya tried to pretend that she didn't see the man. She quickened her pace, turned around and headed towards the subway

station.

The Welton Group Tower was located very conveniently near the station. However, the factories that she had to head to were scattered all across the city. It would take her some time to make her rounds. All Anya could do was to hurry up.

Unbeknownst to her, Evan had caught her slipping away to the station:

His dark eyes stared at the streak of shadow dashing into the distance and darkened.

The young woman's arms were filled with clothes. Was she bringing work back home?

Curiosity flickered across Evan's eyes. He couldn't help but turn towards his assistant, Hayden. "Do you where she's going?"

have any

Idea

Hayden had no idea who Evan was talking about. A look of bafflement appeared on his face while a note of uncertainty crept into Hayden's voice as the man spoke. "Mr. Welton, who are you talking about?"

Evan glared at his assistant. "Anya MacMillan."

Anya MacMillan?

Surprise colored Hayden's eyes. He started scanning the area, searching for Anya. It didn't take him long before his eyes finally landed on someone in the distance.

It was Anya.

His superior appeared inordinately interested in the new designer from JK Couture. Hayden couldn't understand why Evan was so drawn to the young woman. He remembered that she had only been to his office once.

Had she made that much of an impression on Evan?

It didn't matter what he thought about her though. Evan was interested in the young woman, which meant that it was his job to find out where Anya was going. "Mr. Welton, I'm not sure."

"Let me look into it."

The curiosity in Evan's eyes dimmed as soon as he heard that.

"Don't bother," he said. He had asked on the spur of a moment.

Hayden couldn't believe his ears,

He froze momentarily. Evan seemed quite interested in knowing where Anya was headed. Why had he lost his interest?

The young man fell into a momentary silence. "Mr. Welton, are we still meeting Mr. Jamerson?"

“Let’s go.” Evan had work to do.

Anya was but one of many women he had run into in his life.

Yet somehow, he couldn’t seem to get her out of his head.

“Yes, sir.” Hayden nodded immediately.

While Anya took the subway alone to her first factory, Evan sat in his Bentley, mulling over work as the car drove smoothly down the street.

The two had gone their separate ways.

Neither expected their destination to be the same. Evan was meeting Jamerson at his factory while the first factory that Anya was dropping off the prototypes at was Jamerson’s factory.

There was only one reason Evan had decided to grace Jamerson’s factory with his presence.

It had a great location.

The factory was located on a piece of land adjacent to another that he had had his eye on. If he could acquire the land, he would be able to build a huge deep-water port that would eventually rake in hundreds of millions in revenue.

Evan wasn’t going to let such a strategically advantageous piece of land slip through his fingers. Besides, Shane had his eye on the land too. He probably had the same idea that Evan had.

Evan couldn’t afford to let Shane make a move before he did. If Shane got the land, he would be able to use it as a bargaining chip against Evan.

Evan wasn't going to allow that to happen. He had to take action before anyone else did..

It didn't take long before Evan's Bentley was sliding smoothly into Jamerson's factory.

Meanwhile, the subway that Anya was on had arrived at the station right across the factory as well.

She got off the subway and started running across the street, towards the factory.

Before she could step into the factory, her phone rang. It was Ellie.

Her children missed their mother.

They were desperate to hear their mother's voice.

Nathaniel, the little imp, wouldn't stop harassing his aunt and pleading for the woman to bring him to his mother.

Cornered by the two devils, Ellie was left with no choice but to call their young mother.

Chapter 69

"Ellie, I'll be home late tonight," Anya said. She had been planning to drop Ellie a call later to let her know that.

After all, she was going to head to Cindy's after work.

"You're working late again?" Ellie asked.

"It's not work," Anya said. "Remember my best friend, Cindy? She's just came back. I'm going over to her place later."

Ellie had no idea who that was.

After a few moments of confusion, she finally recalled who Anya was talking about. Cindy has been Anya's best friend.

"Is she back in the country?"

"Yup, she is. That's why I'm going over to her apartment. I'll have to trouble you to take care of the kids again." Anya couldn't help the wave of guilt rising within her at the mention of her children.

She had been so busy since she had started work. She hardly had any time for her children.

The thought of that sent another wave of guilt surging in the young woman.

"It's no trouble at all. But they wouldn't stop asking for you though," Ellie said before placing the phone against Nathaniel's ear. She murmured to the young boy gently. "Come on, Nate, it's your mom. Say hi to your mom."

Nathaniel knew his mother was on the other end of the line. He immediately started shouting into the phone excitedly. "Mama! Mama.."

"Hey, Nathaniel, my sweetheart. That's right, it's Mom." The sound of Nathaniel's voice sent tears welling up in Anya's eyes.

She missed her kids so much. How she wished she could be back home right now, with her darlings in her arms.

"Mama..." Eudora wanted to talk to her mother too. She wasn't going to let her brother have all of their mother's attention.

Unfortunately, that was the only word they knew to say to their mother. Besides "mama", they didn't know any other word.

It was enough for Anya.

Anya sniffled. Her voice was choked with tears. "Hey, my precious Dora. I love you too."

"Ellie, I'm thinking of bringing them to the SeaWorld this weekend." She tried not to take the kids out. She didn't want the MacMillans to know that she had children.

Her darlings had not had a chance to get out of the house for some time.

"Are you sure?" Ellie didn't disapprove of the idea but she appeared slightly concerned. "Aren't you worried about bumping into the MacMillans?"

That was a distinct possibility.

After all, Mdm MacMillan had turned up at Ellie's apartment building to issue her a stern warning. She knew where Anya

lived.

"We'll wear disguises. It'll be fine." Anya's mind was made.

She was going to bring her kids out and let them have a glimpse of the world outside. She couldn't keep them locked up at home all the time. That wouldn't be good for them.

"Alright," Ellie finally said after a moment of silence. A simple disguise should do the trick.

"Ellie, I have to go now. I'll be heading straight to Cindy's place after work. I'll feed the kids when I get back."

“Sure.”

Anya wanted to end the call but Nathaniel wouldn't let her. He tugged at Ellie's arm insistently, trying to tell his aunt that he wanted to talk to his mother. But he didn't have the words to convey his needs. All he could say was “mama”.

The boy pulled Ellie's phone from her fingers and shouted into the phone repeatedly. “Mama! Mama! Mama!”

Anya felt her chest twinge painfully at the sound of her son's voice.

“Nathaniel, Mom's going to be home soon,” Anya said softly as she dabbed the tears at the corner of her eyes. “Be a good boy, alright? Mom...”

Without any warning at all, Evan appeared behind Anya while the latter was attempting to soothe her boy. His voice was a sudden sound next to her ear. “Ms. MacMillan?”

The sudden bark had Anya whipping herself around in alarm. She looked as if she had just seen a ghost. At the sight of the man, Anya's grip on her phone loosened. The phone slipped through her

fingers and landed on the ground.

It was Evan.

What was he doing here?

How much of the conversation had he caught?

Anya found herself seized by terror.

Would he kill her if he knew that she had secretly had his children?

Would he take Nathaniel and Eudora away from her?

Anya couldn't let herself dwell on those terrifying thoughts. The mere thought of her losing her kids hurt. The pain was akin to driving a dagger into her heart.

She felt her heart spasm with agony.

He must never find out about the kids.

A sudden calm overtook Anya. She bent forward and picked her phone up.

Then, she hung up immediately.

She didn't want Evan to catch the children's voices from the other end of the line. Luckily, Evan hadn't heard a thing. He was simply curious. What was Anya doing here?

Chapter 70

"What are you doing here?" Evan asked as he studied Anya with an unfathomable look in his eyes. A sliver of panic flickered in Anya's eyes.

The young woman gulped. Then, she took a deep breath. "Mr. Welton, I'm going to be straight with you. I didn't follow you and I wasn't waiting here for you."

"I'm here because of work. I'm supposed to deliver the prototypes that my company has prepared to Mr. Jamerson's factory," Anya said before holding up the drafts in her hands.

Evan gave the stack of drafts in her hands a good long look. He pursed his lips. "Okay."

"Well then...If there's nothing else, I'm going in now, Mr. Welton," Anya said.

The young woman had a feeling that Evan hadn't caught the contents of her conversation earlier. Otherwise, he would have suspected something was amiss.

She wasn't going to let her guard down though.

Evan would go absolutely insane if he knew.

She had to keep away from the man.

"You may go.

Evan didn't try to stop her. Anya clutched the drafts to her chest and hurried inside the factory. She had to find the person who was in charge of the place.

Evan watched as Anya disappeared inside the factory. Then, he strolled in slowly with Hayden at his side.

The factory was huge. Mr. Jamerson and his management were standing on the first level, waiting for Evan. Everyone knew that Evan was going to be here to discuss the acquisition of the factory.

Everyone knew who the Nordenic Quartet were.

No one dared to keep Evan waiting.

It didn't take long before Evan and Hayden appeared. Jamerson dipped his head deferentially and hurried towards the young man. "Mr. Welton, welcome! It's an honor to receive you at our humble little factory.

"You're too kind, Mr. Jamerson, Evan replied politely.

Jamerson led him to the meeting room on the second floor immediately so that they could discuss about the factory's

acquisition.

Meanwhile, Anya was heading towards the workshop with her arms full of drafts.

She found herself in a warm room. Her eyes scanned the workshop as she searched for the supervisor.

The man was issuing instructions to one of his staff.

Anya made a beeline towards the man and handed the draft to him politely. They were going to need that to make a pattern.

Irritation coursed through the man Instantly. He detested interruptions while he was working. But as around and saw Anya, his eyes brightened Instantly. This wasn't one of his staff. She was beautiful.

as he turned

soon a

In fact, she looked like an angel who had just descended upon the earth. The man nearly started drooling at the sight of

Anya.

He stared unblinkingly at the young woman. Anya found herself squirming under the man's stare. She coughed awkwardly. "Sir, these are the drafts from JK Couture. It's our latest designs. We need them ready by next Monday. Will you be able to have them done then?"

“Of course,” the man replied readily. It was always a pleasure to speak to a beautiful lady. There was no way he was going to refuse any of her requests.

“Thank you so much.” Anya’s heart was set at ease when she heard the supervisor’s words.

“You’re welcome.” The man eyed Anya brazenly and wouldn’t stop staring at her. He seemed to be undressing her with his eyes. Anya could sense the thoughts going on behind those hungry eyes.

She felt her guts churn but she couldn’t tell him to stop. “I’ll be off then.”

She had to get to the next factory.

The man didn’t want her to leave just yet. He wasn’t done talking to the beautiful woman. “Please hold on a second. I think there’s something wrong with the drafts. Could you step inside my office for a moment?”

He began to lead her towards a room nearby.

Anya didn’t want to stay here for a moment longer. She had to get to the next factory for her next delivery immediately.

But he had mentioned a problem with the drafts. What if he was telling the truth?

The consequences would be unimaginable.

The young woman steeled herself and followed the man to his office.