

Save Myself From Desperation by Cara Agnes

Chapter 15

Ashley swiftly turned toward Valentin, her clear eyes brimming with astonishment and surprise.

She murmured, "You just said it wasn't you who sent Tom down!"

Valentin was speechless, not knowing what to say.

He then glanced emotionlessly at Tom.

Tom's excitement hadn't fully subsided when he suddenly felt a chill down his spine.

He wondered, "Um, what's going on? Did I say something wrong?"

Items at this kind of auction typically ranged from lesser to finer quality, with the prices of the items increasing toward the end.

At the moment, an antique piano was being auctioned.

It was preserved from the medieval era to the present, and its starting bid was a hefty one million dollars.

Jessica had her heart set on this piano.

Having missed out on the princess crown earlier, she was determined to acquire this piano.

Jeremy didn't want to see Jessica disappointed again, especially since she was the only sister he acknowledged.

So, Jeremy was fully determined to acquire this piano, repeatedly raising his paddle, quickly raising the bid to two million dollars.

Witnessing this affectionate scene between the brother and sister,

Ashley's eyes shifted slightly, pondering. She then turned to Valentin and asked, "Can I bid too?"

"Of course," he replied, his eyebrows slightly raised. "Do you like this piano?"

"I don't." Ashley shook her head, and raised her paddle following the previous bidder.

"Two million four hundred thousand dollars."

Hearing this bid, the auctioneer immediately looked toward the second floor and excitedly repeated. "Ms. Ramos bids two million four hundred thousand dollars!"

175

12.8

Chapter 15

Hearing the name "Ms. Ramos," the Ramos family members frowned. deeply.

Especially Jeremy, who suddenly looked icy. "That troublemaker, does she have no self-awareness? How dare she bid? She must be trying to snatch Jessica's thing again!"

Jeremy was infuriated. He then raised his paddle and shouted, "Two million six hundred thousand dollars!"

"Two million six hundred thousand dollars! Bid number 20, Mr. Jeremy Ramos, bids two

million six hundred thousand dollars! Any more bids? Don't miss out on this chance if you love pianos!" The auctioneer announced loudly.

"Three million six hundred thousand dollars." Ashley bid calmly once again.

This bid caused a collective gasp from the audience.

One amongst the crowd thought, 'She actually added one million dollars. Ms. Ramos is no ordinary bidder.

Hesitating for a moment, Jeremy gritted his teeth and raised his paddle. "Three million eight hundred thousand dollars!"

Ashley followed calmly. "Four million eight hundred thousand dollars."

Jeremy thought irritably, 'What the hell? Another one million dollars.

The auctioneer, flushed with excitement, announced, "Four million eight hundred thousand dollars! Ms. Ramos bids four million eight hundred thousand dollars! Bid number 20, Mr. Jeremy Ramos, will you continue to bid?"

Jeremy hesitated again. He had thought over two million dollars would be enough to secure the piano, but the price now had soared to over four million, far exceeding his expectations.

Evan, seething with anger, glanced toward the second floor and said, "That troublemaker, she just wants to snatch Jessica's thing!"

Jessica bit her lip, tears welling up in her eyes. "Dad, if Ashley wants it, let her have it. I don't mind."

"My dear daughter, don't talk like that, Evan said, his heart aching with sympathy as he gently patted her hand. "You liked the princess crown so

Chapter 15

much, and yet you didn't get it. How can I let you be disappointed again?"

Having said this, Evan turned to Jeremy and instructed, Jeremy, keep bidding."

Jeremy nodded and raised his paddle again. "Five million dollars"

With the price reaching this point, the other guests in the hall stopped bidding.

After all, not everyone could afford spending five million dollars on a piano.

Ashley smiled faintly, "Five million six hundred thousand dollars."

The auctioneer immediately looked in Jeremy's direction, asking, "Mr. Jeremy-Ramos, Ms. Ashley Ramos bids five million six hundred thousand dollars. Will you bid again?"

Jeremy felt the pinch, thinking, To be honest, spending over five million dollars on a piano really isn't worth it. But losing face in front of Ashley, especially when the piano is something Jessica wants, would be even more embarrassing!

Seeing Jeremy's hesitation, Jessica wiped the tears from the corner of her eyes and choked up. "Jeremy, stop bidding. I don't want the piano anymore. Let Ashley have it."

Initially reluctant to bid, Jeremy softened at the sight of Jessica's tears and raised his paddle again. "Six million dollars!"

A sly satisfaction then flickered in Jessica's expression upon seeing this.

She thought, 'This tactic is something I'm well-versed in. By appearing considerate and retreating strategically, the Ramos family will naturally fulfill all my wishes.'

After Jeremy placed his bid, he listened attentively.

The other guests in the hall also held their breath, waiting to see if Ms. Ramos on the second floor would continue to bid.

One of them then pondered, 'Spending six million dollars on a piano really isn't worth it.' Observing Jeremy's rigid back, Ashley thought he must be sweating now.

She pondered, 'Knowing Jeremy as I do, this price is probably his upper
12.23

Chapter 15

limit. If I bid again, he most likely won't follow."

Ashley's eyes squinted slightly, and a faint smile played on her lips. She leisurely put down her paddle, not bidding any further.

Seeing this, the auctioneer raised his gavel and announced loudly. "Bid number 20, Mr. Jeremy Ramos bids six million dollars! Any more bids? Six million dollars going once! Six million dollars going twice! Six million dollars...final call, and sold!"

After saying this, the auctioneer brought down the gavel with a bang.

It signified the auction's conclusion.

The auctioneer couldn't have been more thrilled. "Congratulations to Mr. Jeremy Ramos for winning the antique piano at the price of six million dollars!"

Jeremy immediately breathed a sigh of relief and wiped the sweat from his forehead.

He pondered, 'If Ashley had bid again, I definitely couldn't have followed. It's good that she knew when to stop.

Evan also breathed a sigh of relief.

Meanwhile, the surrounding guests began to whisper.

"In my opinion, spending six million dollars on a piano really is a foolish move!" One commented.

Another agreed, "Indeed, that piano is worth at most two million dollars."

"Jeremy is just a wealthy fool after all! Someone remarked sarcastically.

Another chuckled, "Hahaha, only a fool like him would spend six million dollars on a piano!"

Yet another added amusingly, "Hey, look at the auctioneer, he's almost laughing his head off!"

Hearing these mocking remarks, Jeremy's expression shifted instantly.

He slowly realized the situation and pondered, 'Ashley wasn't actually interested in the piano Jessica wanted but was deliberately driving up the price! She intentionally made me pay six million dollars for a piano to

Chapter 15

make me look like a fool!'

Evan also came to his senses at this moment, so angry,

he stood up abruptly. Seeing that everyone around was watching him, he reluctantly sat back down.

In such auctions, sales are final, with no chance of regret.

The label of being the fool was now stuck on them.

Meanwhile, Tom watched Ashley's maneuver in the private room on the second floor and was thoroughly impressed. He thought, 'Without any effort, she made the Ramos family unnecessarily spend so much. And they can't even express their frustration, just carrying the label of a fool. This move was brilliant!'

Ashley pondered, 'Actually, I know that Jeremy and Evan wouldn't have been so easily provoked under normal circumstances. But when

it comes to Jessica, they always get overly anxious. They are intent on giving Jessica the best while disregarding me, the biological daughter, as if I

were insignificant. Seeing me compete in the bidding, Jeremy immediately defends and

favours Jessica without a second thought, while I, his biological sister, receive nothing but endless reprimands and suspicion.'

Ashley was aware of the reasons but no longer felt as upset as before had seen through the true faces of the Ramos family.

Moreover, there were still many opportunities for her to embarrass t in the future!

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