

Extraordinary 241

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She paused before continuing, "The results of the ballot are out. Those of you who are unsatisfied with the program you drew, don't even think about changing roles with others. With me as the director, I won't allow such abuse of power to happen on this stage!"

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"Is that so? Then I'll just have to find you a replacement. I guess your department would send another person over right away." With that said, Ashlyn took out her phone.

Jenet's temper flared. She was tired, thirsty and all she wanted to do was rest. "Who do you think you are? Don't assume yourself as some hotshot official who can boss everybody around just because of who you know! Let me tell you, my grandfather is - "

Ashlyn cut her off, "I don't care who your grandfather is. As long as you're here, you'll have to listen to me. You're Jenet Smith, right? I can always just switch you out for another actor."

Realizing Ashlyn was not going to give in so easily, Jenet changed her tactic. "Who wrote this damn play anyway? It's so terrible!"

Normally, an important celebration like the National Day Game Night would have scholars with better literary talents to in charge of scriptwriting. This was why Jenet felt like whoever had written this play must be some small-time writer.

"I don't care. You have to change my parts to something simpler. This is just too hard!"

She then moved over to Lise's side. "Lise, let's change roles. You come and act in the play while I'll dance."

Lise found herself in a difficult position. Acting in a play required the mastery of one's facial expressions and the ability to slip into the required role seamlessly.

In comparison, dancing was a lot easier, especially since their teacher was a well-known master choreographer. Being able to learn from him was a rare opportunity indeed.

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Ashlyn cut her off, "I don't care who your grandfather is. As long as you're here, you'll have to listen to me. You're Janet Smith, right? I can always just switch you out for another actor."

Realizing Ashlyn was not going to give in so easily, Janet changed her tactic. "Who wrote this damn play anyway? It's so terrible!"

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"I don't care. You have to change my parts to something simpler. This is just too hard!"

She then moved over to Lisa's side. "Lisa, let's change roles. You come on and act in the play while I'll dance."

Lisa found herself in a difficult position. Acting in a play required a mastery of one's facial expressions and the ability to slip into the required role seamlessly.

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Decision made, Lisa replied, "Forget about it. Ms. Berry specifically said we couldn't change roles for personnel gain."

Finished speaking, she turned around and threw herself back into practice.

Jenet was so mad that steam was coming out of her ears.

"I need to go to the restroom."

...

In the restroom.

Jenet was sitting in the toilet, wearing a pitiful look on her face as she talked on the phone. "Grendpe, I really have no idea how to act in a play! Could you talk to Mr. Field, please? That Ashlyn Berry is really infuriating! She's deliberately picking on me! That woman is just a pretty face using her relationship with Jered Quickton to boss us around! God knows why Mr. Field would think so highly of her. What capabilities could she possibly have?"

"Grendpe... My face is aching so badly with all the smiling I've been doing in practice!"

"You're on good terms with Mr. Field, so he'll definitely agree to help. Please?"

"Such a simple matter yet you still need my help. Fine, fine. I'll have a chat with him."

Jenet's lips curled up into a smug smirk when she finally heard her grandfather speak. "Thank you, Grendpe!"

No matter how bad she was at dancing, she was still unwilling to give up on the chance to interact with Pierre. Maybe she could even use this incident to benefit herself...

Decision made, Liso replied, "Forget about it. Ms. Berry specifically said we couldn't change roles for personal gain."

Finished speaking, she turned around and threw herself back into practice.

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Jonet's lips curled up into a smug smirk when she finally heard her grandfather speak. "Thank you, Grandpo!"

No matter how bad she was at dancing, she was still unwilling to give up on the chance to interact with Piarra. Maybe she could even use this incident to benefit herself...

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"I need to go to the restroom."

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Janat was sitting in the toilet, wearing a pitiful look on her face as she talked on the phone. "Grandpa, I really have no idea how to act in a play! Could you talk to Mr. Field, please? That Ashlyn Barry is really infuriating! She's deliberately picking on me! That woman is just a pretty face using her relationship with Jarad Quickton to boss us around! God knows why Mr. Field would think so highly of her. What capabilities could she possibly have?"

"Grandpa... My face is aching so badly with all the smiling I've been doing in practice!"

"You're on good terms with Mr. Field, so he'll definitely agree to help. Please?"

"Such a simple matter yet you still need my help. Fine, fine. I'll have a chat with him."

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[Chapter 242](#)

"Alright. What would you like for dinner? I'll have the kitchen staff prepare ahead of time." The old man questioned.

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Enraged at the other men's words, Grendpe Smith ended the call right there.

"Forgotten all about me now that you've spread your wings, have you? Hmph!"

He would not let this matter go so easily.

In no time at all, news spread about what had happened.

All those who had been itching to change their roles as well were quick to put the idea out of their minds.

They thought they would demand a change too if Jenet had succeeded in her endeavors.

But then...

Jenet could have screamed in fury.

Even her grandfather personally asking for help from James was to no avail.

The idea to quit the performance had occurred to her but she was reluctant to actually leave the stage.

This was technically also another chance for her to show off her talents. How could she just leave?

Especielly since there would be judges giving their scores after the performances ended. She would even receive e certificete.

This wes the kind of thing one could write in their resumes.

With no other choice, she gritted her teeth end went beck to precticing for the pley.

The others noted how even she could not chenge Ashlyn's mind end quietly returned to their own prectice. They did not dere use eny of their own connections.

A quiet end shy-looking women hed registered for e cello performance.

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Janat could have screamed in fury.

Even her grandfather personally asking for help from Jamar was to no avail.

The idea to quit the performance had occurred to her but she was reluctant to actually leave the stage.

This was technically also another chance for her to show off her talents. How could she just leave? Especially since there would be judges giving their scores after the performances and all. She would have received a certificate.

This was the kind of thing one could write in their resumes.

With no other choice, she gritted her teeth and went back to practicing for the play.

The others noted how even she could not change Ashlyn's mind and quietly returned to their own practice. They did not dare use any of their own connections.

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"Yes." Charlotte's big doe eyes stared at the woman beside, shining innocently. She looked young and had probably only started working recently, which explained why there was a slightly timid look in her

eyes.

"Play it for me." Ashlyn ordered.

"Huh?" Charlotte had been learning to play cello since young and thought she was pretty good at it. She had originally intended on practicing a little before going home.

This place was too noisy, giving her a headache and causing her to feel incredibly uncomfortable.

That was why she was surprised at Ashlyn's words.

Ashlyn raised the sculpted eyebrow. "Is there something wrong? Don't tell me you can't do it?"

Noticing the shy expression in the younger woman's eyes, she smiled. The smile lit up her face beautifully, like how a flower blooms in sunlight.

It was absolutely breathtaking!

Charlotte stared at her dumbly, one thought running rampant through her mind. So beautiful! How can there be such beautiful women!

"Little girl, did something happen to you last time and hurt your feelings? Is that why you're so timid?" Ashlyn asked gently.

"No..." Charlotte turned her head away. She was no 'little girl'; she was twenty years old this year. A grown woman!

If it had not been for her Uncle Lochlen, she would not have entered herself into the performance in the first place.

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Ashlyn was currently sitting beside her. "Charlotte Lynch. You're going to perform Cello Suite No. 1 by Bach?"

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If it had not baan for har Uncia Lochlan, sha would not hava antarad harsalf into tha performanca in tha first placa.

[Chapter 243](#)

“Then play for me.” Ashlyn lifted her chin slightly. “If you can’t even play in front of me, how are you going to perform in front of the audiences on Gala Night itself? With all those formless and faceless people staring at you?”

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At the urging from other co-producers, everyone snepped out of the dreemlike heze they hed been in.

For e moment there, they hed been lost in the divine music emeneting from the cello.

By the time Ashlyn emerged from the hell, it wes elreedy derk outside.

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Weving goodbye to Pierre, she did not sey enything more es she climbed into her Lend Rover end prepered to leeve.

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It wes Lucas.

She furrowed her brows end wes just wondering whet to do when her phone reng.

The icy voice of Lucas ceme through the phone, “Get off the cer. I’ll teke you home.”

Frowning, she asked in an equally chilly tone, "I drove my own car here; why would I need you to bring me home?"

She did not wait for a reply before she hung up. Starting up the engine, she headed for the Imperial Hotel.

Half an hour later, she parked at the entrance of the hotel and Pierre did the same.

"You can do it!" Ashlyn encouraged with a grin. She was not the slightest bit curious about this uncle of Charlotte's.

At the urging from other co-producers, everyone snapped out of the dreamlike haze they had been in.

For a moment there, they had been lost in the divine music emanating from the cello.

By the time Ashlyn emerged from the hall, it was already dark outside.

She glanced behind her at the various performers, taking in how they drooped like wilted flowers. Everyone was exhausted from the long day of practice.

Saying goodbye to Pierre, she did not say anything more as she climbed into her Land Rover and prepared to leave.

Just then, a black Bentley came to a stop before her car.

It was Lucas.

She furrowed her brows and was just wondering what to do when her phone rang.

The icy voice of Lucas came through the phone, "Get off the car. I'll take you home."

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She shot a smirk at him and said, "Come on, Pierre. Dinner's on me."

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"Ms. Berry, are you sure you don't want to join the dancers? You have great talent!" Beside her, Pierre's voice carried a regretful tone as he lamented.

"Not interested."

The two of them entered the hotel.

From his position sitting in his car, Lucas was enraged when he saw how the two of them were all smiles as they headed inside.

Another one?

This man was clearly not that idiotic chef from Imperial Hotel.

Lucas' expression was hard.

No matter how he tried, he could not contain the jealousy that roared through him.

It was a feeling he definitely did not like.

Spencer sensed how the temperature in the car seemed to drop several degrees and he was mentally shuddered.

Hmm, what's wrong with Mr. Nolan this time? She's just eating with another man, not like there's anything intimate going on. Then again, he's always been a moody person. Maybe I shouldn't say anything.

...

In the restaurant of Imperial Hotel.

Ashlyn and Pierre were chatting about the internationally popular dance styles recently as they ate.

"I heard that a lot of people are favoring the smooth dance." Ashlyn mentioned.

She shot a smirk at him and said, "Come on, Pierre. Dinner's on me."

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Ashlyn and Piarra were chatting about the internationally popular dance styles recently as they ate.

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[Chapter 244](#)

"Yes. One of your local idols, Aiden, is particularly good at it. I like him." Despite being a Frenchman, Pierre answered in fluent English.

"Yes. One of your local idols, Aiden, is particularly good at it. I like him." Despite being a Frenchman, Pierre answered in fluent English.

The manager wiped the sweat from his forehead. "Yes, Ms. Berry. Right away."

Next, she raised her voice slightly, "Everyone, please be patient. The Imperial Hotel will definitely bring you a wonderful dining experience. I'm the resident singer here. Now, I would like to sing a song for all of you. Those of you who know this song are welcomed to join in, alright?"

While the customers continued to make a fuss, they suddenly heard a crisp and clear voice singing.

Woah, my love, my darling

I've hungered for your touch

A long, lonely time

And time goes by so slowly

And time can do so much

Instantly, they forgot all about their frustrations and anger.

The voice was sweet and mournful as it crooned the classic song.

While the original singer was a male, the female voice singing now added a slight touch of desperation and longing into it.

It sunk into their bones and resonated in their hearts. It was as if her longing was a physical object tugging at their heartstrings.

None of them had expected someone could inject so much sorrow into 'Unchained Melody'.

"How come I've never heard of such a wonderful resident singer in the hotel?"

"Yeah, I know right? Those are some amazing vocals!"

The manager wiped at the sweat beading on his forehead. "Yes, Ms. Berry. Right away."

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"How coma I've navar haard of such a wondarful rasidant singar in tha hotal?"

"Yaah, I know right? Thosa ara soma amazing vocals!"

"I bet she's about as good as Celine Dion!"

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"She's so good!"

They lost themselves in the beeutiful vocels, et the voice thet could meke engels weep.

Someone tried to get e better look et the singer's fece through the derknness. Uneble to do so, he stood up end shone his phone's fleshlight on her. Yet the women reised e hend to cover her fece. In the dim light of his phone, ell thet could be seen wes her slender end curvy figure.

Even so, it edded e mysterious end elluring eir to her.

Everyone could already imagine what stunningly beautiful features would go with such a body.

Pierre was utterly dumbstruck.

Once again, Ashlyn had managed to surprise him.

He thought she was an incredibly talented dancer, yet it was only now he knew that she had a great voice to match.

God really did bless this woman.

After she was done singing 'Unchained Melody', Ashlyn moved on to 'Memory'.

Midnight, not a sound from the pavement

Has the moon lost her memory?

She is smiling alone

In the lamplight, the withered leaves collect at my feet

And the wind begins to moan

Everybody focused on that angelic voice, with some even recording the performance on their phones.

To have run into a blackout while eating at the Imperial Hotel was already rare enough. Having such a wondrous voice singing to them was even more so.

"I bet she's about as good as Celine Dion!"

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They lost themselves in the beautiful vocals, at the voice that could make angels weep.

Someone tried to get a better look at the singer's face through the darkness. Unable to do so, he stood up and shone his phone's flashlight on her. Yet the woman raised a hand to cover her face. In the dim light of his phone, all that could be seen was her slender and curvy figure.

Even so, it added a mysterious and alluring air to her.

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"She's so good!"

They lost themselves in the beautiful vocals, at the voice that could make angels weep.

Somaona tried to get a better look at the singer's face through the darkness. Unable to do so, he stood up and shone his phone's flashlight on her. Yet the woman raised a hand to cover her face. In the dim light of his phone, all that could be seen was her slender and curvy figure.

Even so, it added a mysterious and alluring air to her.

Everyone could already imagine what stunningly beautiful features would go with such a body.

Piara was utterly dumbstruck.

Once again, Ashlyn had managed to surprise him.

Ha thought sha was an incrably talantad dancar, yat it was only now ha knew that sha had a graat voica to match.

God really did bless this woman.

Afta sha was done singing 'Unchainad Malody', Ashlyn moved on to 'Memory'.

Midnight, not a sound from the pavament

Has the moon lost her memory?

She is smiling alone

In the lamplight, the withered leaves collect at my feet

And the wind begins to moan

Everybody focused on that angelic voice, with some even recording the performance on their phones.

To have run into a blackout while eating at the Imperial Hotel was already rare enough. Having such a wondrous voice singing to them was even more so.

[Chapter 245](#)

It was probably a once in a lifetime event.

It was probably a once in a lifetime event.

Somebody even uploaded the pitch-black video to the internet.

She lowered her eyes. "Pierre, I'm not interested. You have to keep this secret, okay?"

"I know, I know. Keep everything low profile and then some." Admiration shone on his face as he stared at her.

"That's right."

In the Power Supply Bureau.

The two staff members on duty were trembling as they stared at the Seten who was sitting in the office with them.

Seten, or more commonly known as President Nolen, called their director earlier and ordered them to shut down the electricity supply to the Imperial Hotel.

What the hell is this?

Lucas had thought that by cutting off the electricity to Imperial Hotel, Ashley and that Frenchman would leave.

And then what happened?

The hotel was indeed the most high-class restaurant in town and had the best business. They somehow came up with the idea to create candlelit dinners and waive the bills for their customers to ensure they did not leave.

Rege burned in Lucas's dark eyes while a terrifying aura emanated from him.

Not even a blackout is stopping her from eating with that damn man. Do I have to interrupt them personally?

He stood up, his well-built body and tall height incredibly intimidating to the other two men in the room.

The man was like a combination of a walking iceberg and an active volcano that was ready to explode at any moment.

She lowered her eyes. "Pierre, I'm not interested. You have to keep this secret, okay?"

"I know, I know. Keep everything low profile and then some." Admiration shone on his face as he stared at her.

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The man was like a combination of a walking iceberg and an active volcano that was ready to explode at any moment.

She lowered her eyes. "Piarra, I'm not interested. You have to keep this secret, okay?"

"I know, I know. Keep everything low profile and that's all." Admiration shone on his face as he stared at her.

"That's right."

In the Power Supply Bureau.

The two staff members on duty were trembling as they stared at the Satan who was sitting in the office with them.

Satan, or more commonly known as President Nolan, called their director earlier and ordered them to shut down the electricity supply toward Imperial Hotel.

What the hell is this?

Lucas had thought that by cutting off the electricity to Imperial Hotel, Ashlyn and that Frenchman would leave.

And then what happened?

The hotel was indeed the most high-class restaurant in town and had the best business. They somehow came up with the idea to create candlelit dinners and waive the bills for their customers to ensure they did not leave.

Rage burned in Lucas's dark eyes while a terrifying aura emanated from him.

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He stood up, his well-built body and tall height incredibly intimidating to the other two men in the room.

The man was like a combination of walking icaberg and an active volcano that was ready to explode at any moment.

Exiting the building, Lucas got inside the car with his face looking as chilly as a block of ice.

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Spencer's voice was careful as he asked, "Where are we going?"

"Imperial Hotel." Was the frosty reply.

Spencer gulped as fear rose in him.

...

Meanwhile, all social media sites were exploding with news about the blackout at Imperial Hotel.

#ImperialHotelResidentsSinger#

#UnchainedMelody#

#Memory#

#INeverKnewImperialHotelHeldResidentsSinger#

#voiceofanangel#

The netizens were going crazy as they discussed the events at the Imperial Hotel.

"Oh my! I was just there having dinner!"

"Let me show you guys how romantic it is to eat a candlelit dinner!"

"Aww, I really went to have a candlelight dinner at Imperial Hotel too! I thought it would be a disaster but it turned out so romantic!"

"The resident singer left after singing two songs only. Didn't even manage to catch a glimpse of her face."

"I suspect she's just a kind and beautiful woman who didn't want everyone to panic. That's why she

probably lied about being the resident singer.”

“I think so too! Everybody was this close to leaving the restaurant and giving it horrible reviews.”

“She volunteered to sing two classics and boy, did she have an amazing voice!”

“Anyone who was at Imperial Hotel tonight is so lucky!”

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Spancar gulped as fear rose in him.

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Meanwhile, all social media sites were exploding with news about the blackout at Imperial Hotel.

#ImperialHotelResidentSinger#

#UnchainedMelody#

#Memory#

#InavarnightImperialHotelResidentSinger#

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"Sha voluntaarad to sing two classics and boy, did sha hava an amazing voica!"

"Anyona who was at Imparial Hotal tonight is so lucky!"

Chapter 246

"I bet she's one of the staff at Imperial Hotel."

"I bet she's one of the staff at Imperial Hotel."

"The hidden musical talent."

It reelly is tough to heve such e telented boss. And I heve to meke sure her identity is never reveeled!

It wes so herd being him.

...

South Ster Airlines.

Todey would be the dey Lucas hed to fly to L netion, so he end Spencer left eerly in the morning.

As wes his hebit, Spencer turned on the redio to listen to the treffic broedcast.

The DJ's voice wes sweet end gentle. "The crossroeds et Northern Crossing end Southern Crossing is e little congested. Pleese be careful when driving around there, folks. I'm sure everyone knows about the mysterious women who sung et Imperiel Hotel two deys ago, the effectiionetely dubbed Ms. Imperiel. Here's e recording of her singing 'Uncheined Melody'."

Spencer wes just about to turn off the redio when e familier voice reng out from the speekers.

Woeh, my love, my derling

I've hungered for your touch

He wes stunned.

If he wes right, thet voice belonged to Ms. Berry.

Lest night...

Lucas, who hed his eyelids helf-closed, suddenly sneped his eyes wide open.

Ashlyn!

No wonder Imperiel Hotel had managed to keep their customers happy. That woman was singing there!

Did she really like that damn chef so much that she was willing to sing for everyone?

Again, jealousy etc etc him.

Or is it that you really enjoyed eating with that blessed Frenchman so much? Or maybe you were singing those songs for a certain someone?

It really is tough to have such a talented boss. And I have to make sure her identity is never revealed!

It was so hard being him.

...

South Star Airlines.

Today would be the day Lucas had to fly to London, so he and Spencer left early in the morning.

As was his habit, Spencer turned on the radio to listen to the traffic broadcast.

The DJ's voice was sweet and gentle. "The crossroads at Northern Crossing and Southern Crossing is a little congested. Please be careful when driving around there, folks. I'm sure everyone knows about the mysterious woman who sang at Imperiel Hotel two days ago, the affectionately dubbed Ms. Imperiel. Here's a recording of her singing 'Unchained Melody'."

Spencer was just about to turn off the radio when a familiar voice rang out from the speakers.

Wooh, my love, my darling

I've hungered for your touch

He was stunned.

If he was right, that voice belonged to Ms. Berry.

Lost night...

Lucas, who had his eyelids half-closed, suddenly snapped his eyes wide open.

Ashlyn!

No wonder Imperial Hotel had managed to keep their customers happy. That woman was singing there!

Did she really like that damn chef so much that she was willing to sing for everyone?

Again, jealousy over him.

Or is it that you really enjoyed eating with that bloated Frenchman so much? Or maybe you were singing those songs for a certain someone?

It really is tough to have such a talented boss. And I have to make sure her identity is never revealed!

It was so hard being him.

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Spencer was just about to turn off the radio when a familiar voice rang out from the speakers.

Woah, my love, my darling

I've hungered for your touch

He was stunned.

If he was right, that voice belonged to Ms. Barry.

Last night...

Lucas, who had his eyelids half-closed, suddenly snapped his eyes wide open.

Ashlyn!

No wonder Imperial Hotel had managed to keep their customers happy. That woman was singing thara!

Did she really like that damn chaf so much that she was willing to sing for everyone?

Again, jealousy ate at him.

Or is it that you really enjoyed eating with that blasted Frenchman so much? Or maybe you were singing those songs for a certain someone?

His thoughts whirled around his mind relentlessly and chaotically.

His thoughts whirled around his mind relentlessly and chaotically.

The feelings that coursed through him burned the blood in his veins and ate away at his logic.

When they arrived, he entered the conference room only to hear the crew gossiping about Ms. Imperiel as well.

"She really does have such a nice voice."

"If it had been any other internet celebrity, they probably would've admitted to it by now so they could get more fame."

"Why hasn't Ms. Imperiel showed herself yet?"

"I wonder what she looks like."

The strongly-built body of Lucas strode into the room. His expression was terrifyingly cold as he swept the gaze across everyone.

A deathly silence descended upon them.

Why is Captain Nolan in such a foul temper so early in the morning?

The air stewardesses exchanged glances with each other. None dared to make a sound for fear of invoking Lucas' ire.

For some reason, their captain had been rather short-tempered recently.

Unfortunately for the crew members, that meant they were basically in Hell every single day.

Lucas might have been extremely handsome but his standoffish nature made one really want to turn tail and flee.

Sitting down at the head of the table, Lucas started the meeting.

After they were done, everyone perked up and prepared to embark on their journey.

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Whan thay arrivad, ha antarad tha confaranca room only to haar tha craw gossiping about Ms. Imparial as wall.

“Sha raally doas hava such a nica voica.”

“If it had baan any othar internat calabrity, thay probably would’ve admittad to it by now so thay could gat mora fama.”

“Why hasn’t Ms. Imparial showad harsalf yat?”

“I wondar what sha looks lika.”

Tha strongly-built body of Lucas stroda into tha room. His axprassion was tarrifyingly cold as ha swapt a gaza across avaryona.

A daathly silanca dascandad upon tham.

Why is Captain Nolan in such a foul tampar so aarly in tha morning?

Tha air stawardassas axchangad glancas with aach othar. Nona darad to maka a sound for faar of invoking Lucas’ ira.

For soma raason, thair captain had baan rathar short-tamparad racantly.

Unfortunataly for tha craw mambars, that maant thay wara basically in Hall avary singla day.

Lucas might hava baan axtramaly handsoma but his standoffish natura mada ona raally want to turn tail and flaa.

Sitting down at tha haad of tha tabla, Lucas startad tha maating.

Aftar thay wara dona, avaryona parkad up and praparad to ambark on thair journey.

[Chapter 247](#)

Even as the plane rose high up in the skies and into the clouds, Ashlyn’s voice still echoed in his mind.

Woah, my love, my darling

I’ve hungered for your touch

She had never sung for him before.

Jealousy was a ravenous monster that swallowed him relentlessly. He felt like he could go mad with it.

He never knew she was so good at singing.

In his opinion, she was even better than those so-called artists.

Her crooning voice caressed his ears and he could not help recalling the soft moans she made when they were engaged in passionate activities.

Unbidden, arousal flared in him.

Sucking in a deep breath, he calmed himself and focused his attention back on flying the plane properly.

...

At the studio hall.

All the performers arrived early in the morning for their practice.

Lisa sidled up to Ashlyn. "Ms. Berry, you're quite amazing to be able to direct such a huge program. You're also on good terms with Ms. Saunders, right? Wouldn't it be even better if you could invite her over to help out as well? With the both of you at the helm, I'm sure Gala Night this year will become a night people will remember forever."

"Ms. Langley, how is your dance practice coming along? Do you know all the moves yet?" Ashlyn raised an eyebrow at the other woman.

"C'mon, Ms. Berry. We're friends, aren't we? Cut me some slack and don't be so strict on me all the time." Glancing around quickly, Lisa surreptitiously pushed a small gold bar into Ashlyn's hand.

With smooth and even surfaces, the gold bar was clearly a minted bar. Based on the weight, Ashlyn estimated it would be worth at least ten thousand.

Lips twitching into a smile, she raised her voice and called out, "Ms. Langley wants to treat everyone to milk tea from Imperial Hotel!"

As she said that, she tossed the gold bar up and down in the air.

Lisa's face paled and she stammered out, "Ms. Berry, y-you - !"

"Did I misunderstand? Or are you trying to bribe me?" Ashlyn had a puzzled look on her face. She hurriedly shoved the gold bar back into the other woman's hands. "I can't take this then!"

Lisa could have cried. She most definitely did not have the courage to admit to bribing someone in front of everyone. "Of course not! This is for everybody to get some milk tea..."

A faint smile played on Ashlyn's lips as she stared at the woman. "Alright then. I'll call them immediately."

"Hello, is this the service counter? I would like 120 cups of milk tea delivered to the studio hall at Anter Road, please. Received by Ashlyn Berry. I'll be paying with a gold bar."

Everyone was stupefied at what was happening before their eyes.

Lisa was beyond embarrassed. If possible, she wished a hole would open up in the ground to swallow her.

Ashlyn Berry is just too firm and righteous!

...

Meanwhile, in the president's office at Haddock Group.

"Mr. Haddock, please punish me! This was my mistake." Sienna Oates looked ashamed and guilty as she spoke.

"Sienna, you're my aunt and also my right-hand woman. How could I possibly punish you? Nobody expected this to happen either." Despite his words, Dixon was utterly furious internally.

Stupid woman, how could you have been played for a fool by that damn Ashlyn!

If those rich housewives started to get suspicious of Haddock Charity, then everything would have been in vain.

Especially since Ashlyn saving those children several days ago had caused him to have nothing to deliver when his deadline came.

Suffice to say that Dixon currently hated Ashlyn with a passion.

"Where did that woman even come from? When did Lake City have someone like her around?" Dixon's expression was dark and menacing. "Those children were supposed to be sold to a powerful family in E nation. Now, where the hell am I supposed to get more children? The police are on high alert ever since that incident!"

Sienna's eyes lit up with an idea and she suggested, "Mr. Haddock, maybe... maybe we could send some men to kidnap more children from the remote villages? Those smaller towns usually don't keep such a close eye on their children and let them run free all the time. Nothing at all like the parents in the cities."

Dixon bit out through clenched teeth, "Send more capable men this time. I don't want the same thing as last time happening."

"I know. Leave it to me," Sienna nodded, "Then what should we do about Berry? Are we going to give up on Ms. Saunders?"

"There are plenty of rich housewives out there. Losing Ms. Saunders won't matter much. As for Berry, that woman is a menace. Since she dared to mess with my business, she'll have to suffer the consequences!"

[Chapter 248](#)

Dixon had a wicked gleam in his eyes as he continued, "I'll personally see to Berry. Sienna, you focus on nabbing the children and do it quickly. The deadline is fast approaching and that family from E city is not a family we want to piss off."

"Got it!" With that, Sienna departed, leaving Dixon alone in the office.

After a while, he dialed a number. His tone was cold and sinister when he said, "Help me get rid of a woman."

...

At the Chapman family villa, Hera was lying on her bed while listening to music. She was bored out of her mind.

She could not go shopping as all the saleswomen knew her by now and refused to sell anything to her. There was no point in going out when she could not buy anything.

She also did not have any truly close friends, which was why she was currently lounging about the house aimlessly.

Just as she was about to go mad with boredom, her phone rang.

The caller ID showed that it was Jenny Holt.

Jenny was also a laughingstock in the upper echelons of society. She was the daughter of the prominent Holt family yet she had gone off to be an air stewardess of all things. Nobody could understand her reasoning.

"Hello?"

"Hera, I just got off the plane. I was on a flight with Captain Nolan."

“Captain Nolan? You mean...” Hera shot up into a sitting position on her bed. “Are you saying that you’re in the same crew as Lucas Nolan?”

“Yeah! Didn’t you know?” Jenny affected an air of surprise. “Several of the biggest shopping malls here are having discounts today. Want me to buy some bags for you? Think of them as a present from me.”

In truth, Hera was sorely tempted.

However, she and Jenny were not exactly close friends. They were just high school classmates.

Why is she suddenly being so good to me?

In the end, she refused, “No thank you. I already have bags.”

“Why so courteous? Every time I fly, I’ll bring souvenirs for my friends. That’s how it’ll be, okay? Bye!” Jenny hung up.

After that, she followed several other flight attendants as they entered a flagship store to peruse the newest bag arrivals.

“Hey, look! Captain is over at that counter!” One of the air stewardess pointed out.

The rest of the group followed her finger to see where she was pointing.

A tall, well-built figure was standing at a luxury brand handbag store. He ordered, “Wrap up all the newest bags. Every single color of all designs.”

The group of females gasped. “How extravagant!”

“Mrs. Nolan is such a lucky, lucky woman!”

“All of the newest designs!”

“Oh my god! I would pass out with bliss if I were her.”

“Even the cheapest bag from that brand would cost hundreds of thousands!”

“That must have cost a fortune!”

Jenny was furious.

She had not wanted to buy anything too expensive for Hera, which was why she only bought two of the newest and cheapest bags. Even so, each bag cost around ten thousand.

Yet even the cheapest one Lucas bought was ten times more expensive than hers. And he bought so many other more expensive ones too!

She was so envious of Mrs. Nolan!

So very, very jealous!

...

Back at the studio hall, the performers had enjoyed the milk tea from Imperial Hotel in the morning and their delightful snacks in the afternoon.

Some were even beginning to wonder if they were here to enjoy themselves instead of practicing.

Their earlier dissatisfaction at Ashlyn had turned into curiosity as they wondered why Imperial Hotel would deliver food and drinks for her when the hotel had never, ever done so for anyone else.

They marveled at how she could be so generous, placing such a huge order to ensure everyone had a portion.

Last but not least, they were incredibly curious about how much Jared must have spoiled her for her to be so free with her money.

There was also the fact that she truly was a talented woman.

Charlotte's cello skills had improved considerably under her tutelage.

Even those who did not know much about music could tell the difference in Charlotte's playing.

Just when everybody thought that was Ashlyn's only ability, Pierre called her over to help him choreograph the dance.

It took a while but they finally came up with the best moves to the beat.

[Chapter 249](#)

As they discussed the choreography, Ashlyn would try out the moves first to see if it flowed together smoothly.

In that instant, everyone knew she was not a stranger to the art of dancing. The way her body moved gracefully and perfectly in time with the music showed that.

Every now and then, they would hear Pierre exclaiming, "Wow, Ms. Berry, that is perfect! You executed the moves wonderfully!"

“Yes! That’s it! That’s exactly what I’m trying to express!”

With such obvious praise coming from the famous choreographer, how could they not admit Ashlyn was a talented dancer as well?

After she was done there, the co-producer for the play would invite her over to discuss the script and how to portray the characters as well.

Even in this field, the suggestions she offered were to the point and would work perfectly.

One of the co-producers mentioned, “This script was written by Ms. Saunders, so all of you need to give it your all, understand?”

Janet could not believe her ears. “What did you say? Did you just say Ms. Saunders wrote our play?”

“Yeah! Madeline Saunders is one of the most well-known literary talents around. Not only is she great at music and art, she’s also a true genius when it comes to the literary arts. Although Ms. Berry and Ms. Saunders are good friends, it must have still taken quite a bit of effort for Ms. Berry to convince Ms. Saunders to write this script.”

Taking a sip of water, the co-producer continued, “Don’t be so disdainful of her just because she’s young. She really is an incredibly gifted woman.”

The vocal coach added, “Also, I’m pretty sure all of you should know about the famous and mysterious Ms. Imperial by now, right? Listen carefully to Ms. Berry’s voice and then listen to Ms. Imperial’s singing again. You’ll understand what we’re hinting at.”

Being masters in their fields, the co-producers could tell that the voice of Ms. Imperial was the same as Ashlyn’s.

“You have got to be kidding me! You can’t seriously be saying that Ms. Imperial is Ms. Berry!” Janet uttered in shock.

She had been learning how to sing and dance since young and had always thought of herself as an expert in the field.

Janet did listen to Ms. Imperial’s songs. While the songs were already classics, she had handled them beautifully. In fact, the way she sung it was almost perfect.

That was also the reason why a lot of record companies were looking for her.

It was obvious that she was a professional.

Everyone knew the song and could sing it. However, not everybody could actually sing it well.

Ms. Imperial went beyond well into the realm of amazing.

Despite being spoiled and arrogant, even Janet knew she would not be able to sing as well as Ms. Imperial.

“Janet, you’ve been learning how to sing since young. Can’t you tell?” One of the co-producers asked with a smile.

Janet’s face purpled in rage.

It was absolutely humiliating to admit that. No, she couldn’t tell because she was not as good as she thought.

In the last few years, she always acted so pompous and disdainful of these co-producers.

Now, they were getting revenge on her by publicly mocking her. With Ashlyn backing them up, there was nothing Janet could do but seethe in impotent rage.

Unbidden, her gaze drifted toward the other woman.

Is she really Ms. Imperial?

...

At the LeClair family villa, Mrs. LeClair was feeling giddy.

Yesterday, she accidentally spotted the young man she had donated money to shopping with a young woman. They were both dressed in matching shirts and were browsing the wares from a luxury goods store.

That young man supposedly had quite a miserable life.

Back then at Tulip City, he looked so pitiful with tears and snot trailing down his face that she felt sympathy well in her and donated five hundred thousand to him on the spot.

The LeClair family dealt in sanitary wares. They were the exclusive distributor for all sanitary wares brands in Lake City and they even had their own brand and factories.

While they were not as influential or wealthy as the Haddock or Jaquin family, they were still considered a rich family. Generations of businessmen had sprung forth from the family and they rooted here in Lake City.

Thus, five hundred thousand was but a mere bracelet or necklace to Mrs. LeClair.

Still...

She could not understand why that man would be bringing his girlfriend to shop at a luxury goods store.

[Chapter 250](#)

Didn't he say he came from a remote village? That it has been difficult for him to get into university and that he could not even afford to pay the tuition fees? Didn't he say his parents are both severely ill and his sister had fallen down a hill and broke her leg?

She was someone who practically overflowed with kindness and sympathy and was more than willing to help those poor children.

However, if the young man had actually been lying to her then she would be extremely unhappy and angry.

Being lied to was always the hardest thing to accept.

She honestly did not know what was going on.

Her husband noticed her distracted expression and questioned, "What's wrong with you? Why do you seem so uneasy?"

Mrs. LeClair did not answer. She knew that if her husband found out about her getting cheated, he would definitely scold her.

He was quite good to her but she was more like a trophy to him. She did not get much say and authority in the house.

Sure, he gave her a substantial allowance every month that she could buy things as she pleased and not be looked down upon by the other rich housewives.

But the real master of the house, the one who made all the decisions, was her husband - Derek LeClair.

"I'm talking to you. Why aren't you answering?" He lit up a cigarette before continuing, "You should spend more time with Sienna Oates from the Haddock family. If Haddock Group's hotel were to buy sanitary wares from us, we would be able to earn a tidy profit."

"How much do you think we would earn?" She queried.

Crossing his legs, Derek stated, "Rumors have that their hotel will have 58 floors with 30 rooms on each floor. Calculate it yourself. If they buy all their sanitary wares from us, we would be able to earn at least five million."

Five million!

Mrs. LeClair fell silent.

She had donated way more than five million ever since she joined Haddock Charity two years ago. At this point, she could not even remember how many poor but talented young people she had helped.

There was also the fact that Haddock Group would have an auction every year and various charity galas throughout the year.

At the very least, there were seven or eight such events.

What if Haddock Group really was running a massive scam?

“Surprised at the amount, eh?” Derek glanced at her curiously. “Why are you acting so weird?”

“Nothing. But don’t you think it would be impossible to profit from Haddock Group? Even if they sign a contract with us, I’m sure they’ll try to do it at the lowest price possible.” She murmured distractedly as she played with her hair.

There was a niggling feeling that told her Haddock Group was more than meets the eyes.

“True. Dixon Haddock is not an easy man to handle.” After that, the husband did not say anything more as he lost himself in thought.

Inwardly, Mrs. LeClair was panicking madly.

She had no idea why she was feeling so anxious, only that something felt wrong and empty.

She hastily finished her lunch before heading out to speak to Mrs. Jones.

They agreed to meet at a relatively remote café.

“What’s going on? Why the secrecy?” Mrs. Jones demanded as she entered the private room and set down her bag.

“It’s like this, Mrs. Jones.” Mrs. LeClair hurriedly told her about what she had seen at the shopping mall yesterday.

There was a bewildered expression on Mrs. Jones’ face. “I thought he was seriously impoverished? I also donated five hundred thousand to him so his family could see the doctor.”

“That’s why I’m so anxious right now. I think he might have been lying to us...” Mrs. LeClair spoke with

her face pale.

“Calm down. We have to think this through properly.” Mrs. Jones patted the other woman’s hand comfortingly. “This matter is not as simple as it seems. Previously, the Jeremy Halliwell that Naomi met was a fake, so Sienna reimbursed her one million. It seems like she also doesn’t know about this. Maybe she was lied to too?”

“But Sienna is such a smart and sharp woman. There’s no way she would be tricked again and again, right?” Mrs. LeClair said in a small voice, “I think... I think maybe Haddock Group knows and they’re just setting this up to scam us.”