

Chapter 1145

Superciliousness

At the branch of Universe Group, Loraine was working in her office when her phone vibrated. She picked it up to find a message from Francis.

Loraine skimmed the message, which was an invitation to a banquet, but she chose to ignore it and put her phone down.

At that moment, her assistant knocked and entered the room. "Miss Torres, the cooperation with Willtech hasn't been finalized yet. The project team members are getting anxious."

Willtech was a giant in the industry, and securing a partnership with them was crucial for Universe Group. Concerned, Loraine asked, "Why haven't we signed the deal with them? Have you contacted their person in charge?"

Remy smiled helplessly. "They keep saying that their boss needs to confirm it personally, but we've been unable to reach their boss at all."

After a moment of thought, Loraine instructed Remy to remain patient while she tried to contact Willtech's boss herself.

She then messaged Marco to inquire about the whereabouts of Willtech's boss. Soon after, she received a reply.



Loraine learned that Willtech's boss was attending a banquet that evening, one hosted by many business tycoons in Zodiac.

Realizing the connection, Loraine was surprised. Was this the same event Francis had invited her to?

She reopened her chat with Francis and confirmed it was indeed the same party.

Marco then texted, "What happened? What's with this guy?"

Loraine explained the situation about Francis's invitation and her need to meet Willtech's boss.

She expressed her complete trust in Marco by directly asking, "I want to attend the banquet, but I'm concerned about what the Wilson family might do there. What's your advice?"

"I'll have someone look into it. If there's no problem, I'll go with you," Marco responded quickly.

Loraine smiled. She texted him playfully, "I need a partner to attend the banquet. I can't go if you don't come."

Marco was momentarily stunned when he saw Loraine's playful text, then responded with a voice message, his voice low and joyful, "Your partner can only be me, and my partner will only be you."

Loraine bit her lip, a smile spreading across her face as her heart swelled with affection. After a moment to compose herself, she organized her schedule for the

evening.

That night, Marco arrived to escort her to the banquet.

Although the event was formal, Loraine was there for business reasons and chose not to over-dress. Yet, her gown was elegantly tailored, and her makeup was flawlessly applied, lending her an air of sophistication.

Marco held her hand as they entered the hall gracefully, whispering sweet nothings that made her cheeks flush with a glow that only heightened her allure.

As they made their entrance, the bustling chatter of the many distinguished guests of Zodiac's elite hushed.

The men looked on in admiration, while the women's gazes held a tinge of envy at the sight of the couple hand in hand.

Marco responded to their stares with a cool glance, causing some to look away.

Yet, many were bold enough to approach, eager to engage with Marco, the charismatic eldest son of the Cruz family—a title that drew people to him.

Marco, devoid of arrogance, conversed with the guests with grace and poise, Loraine at his side.

In the shadows, eyes flickered with jealousy toward Loraine.

The societal circles of Zodiac were profoundly materialistic, often valuing lineage and social standing above personal achievements and capabilities.

Despite Loraine's ascent to the presidency of Universe Group through her merit and impressive professional accomplishments, to some, these feats paled in comparison to the prestige of an inherited title.

There was a persistent rumor in Zodiac that Loraine was a hoyden from the countryside, which only fueled the crowd's skepticism about her suitability for the young master of the Cruz family.

A lady from a noble family, unable to hide her disdain, remarked sharply, "What status does this Loraine hold? How dare she stand beside the young master of the Cruz family?"

Loraine, just turning around to retrieve her drink, caught every word.

Raising her eyebrows, she looked up to find the lady giving her a defiant stare.

With a calm smile, Loraine approached the group of women.

Normally, she would ignore such pettiness, but she couldn't allow their gossip to tarnish her reputation, especially not in front of potential business partners.

Those young ladies, caught off guard by her direct approach, were visibly flustered.

Julianna Diaz, the lady who had spoken, felt slightly relieved upon realizing that Marco hadn't noticed the exchange.

She had a close relationship with the Wilson family,

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+120 Points at most

which made her dismissive of Loraine. Additionally, seeing Loraine approach alone, without Marco's accompaniment, she felt there was nothing to fear.

"You seem upset, country missy," Julianna taunted. "Try not to shout like a village woman in such a refined place!"

Loraine maintained her smile as she replied smoothly, "I remember what you said today..."

Though her tone was light, her words carried an implicit threat. "Should any rumors I hear in the future be traced back to you, I'll be sending lawyers' letters to your home, one by one, to teach you the importance of minding your words."

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Loraine's serene and elegant bearing, coupled with her composed yet playful tone, momentarily left the group of socialites flabbergasted and silent.

After a few seconds of stunned silence, Julianna was the first to recover, though she was seething with both embarrassment and irritation.

How did a mere country bumpkin, who had grown up in a backwater town, manage to make them feel cowed?

Her cheeks burning with indignation, Julianna couldn't help but sneer, "Come on, do you even know where to find a decent lawyer? My uncle is friends with the famous top attorney Jimmie Todd. Need a hand in hiring a lawyer?"

Loraine's expression turned oddly amused at Julianna's words.

Just as Julianna was starting to feel a sense of triumph, a merry and lively laugh came from behind Loraine, accompanied by an affectionate greeting. "Lorrie!"

Loraine turned, pleasantly surprised to see Jennie.

Then again, it made perfect sense for Jennie to be invited to such events, given that she had begun taking over her family's business.

Jennie bounded over, hugging Loraine's arm affectionately, and quickly picked up on the tense atmosphere.

She glanced at Julianna and her friends, then asked, "Lorrie, what's happening here? Did someone upset you?"

Recalling Julianna's boast, Loraine smiled and replied, "This young lady here just mentioned that her family is on good terms with Jimmie and offered to help me hire a lawyer."

Jennie pressed her lips together, trying to stifle a laugh. But eventually, the humor got the better of her, and she burst out laughing.

Flustered and annoyed, Julianna snapped, "Who are you, and what's so funny?"

Jennie, still chuckling, said, "Oh, I am just a bit tickled to hear you claim acquaintance with my boyfriend. Let me call him over to help my bestie with her case."

Julianna and the other socialites were left gaping, exchanging looks of shock and disbelief.

Her boyfriend was Jimmie?!

Since the Fowler Family primarily conducted business overseas and Jennie had only recently taken charge of the family business, none of these socialites were familiar with her.

Julianna dismissed Jennie's claims as mere bluster, so she shot Jennie a look of scorn, chuckling derisively.

"You're just bragging, aren't you? Do you even know who Mr. Todd is? Claiming he's your boyfriend? Watch out, or he might sue you for every penny you've got! And believe me, I'll be present in court, prepared to testify against you for fabricating your relationship with Mr. Todd!"

Jennie, unperturbed, made a phone call, her tone tinged with impatience as she commanded, "Come to me, now!"

The socialites were even more convinced that Jennie was lying. Given Jimmie's stature, how could he possibly be summoned like some obedient lapdog?

But soon, their eyes widened in disbelief as they saw the charismatic and handsome Jimmie approaching.

He leaned in beside Jennie, his demeanor gentle, and asked, "What's the matter?"

Jennie snorted lightly, explaining the situation.

Grasping the situation instantly, Jimmie cast a frosty glance at Julianna and said, "Indeed, the Diaz family sought my assistance, but now I see no reason to help."

Julianna's face turned ashen, a mix of embarrassment and anger. Clenching her teeth, she shot a sarcastic look at the trio and sneered, "Mr. Todd, what does my spat with Loraine have to do with your girlfriend? Or is it that you're involved with Loraine?"

Jimmie remained composed, replying calmly, "Loraine is my girlfriend's best friend, so she's naturally a friend of mine as well. Even without Jennie's connection,

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Loraine and I have been business partners for a long time."

His gaze sharpened. "However, Miss Diaz, with your recent accusations, if I hear any rumors circulating, I will take legal action for defamation and ensure you face financial ruin!"

In an instant, the faces of the gathered socialites changed, and they dispersed hastily. Julianna, with a reluctant mutter that she was just joking, quickly made her exit.

With the altercation over, Loraine expressed her gratitude to Jennie and Jimmie.

Jennie waved her hand dismissively, while Jimmie spoke softly. "Marco found Willtech's boss earlier; they're in the midst of conversation, but you still need to talk to him personally."

Loraine nodded and headed in their direction. As she approached, Marco seemed to sense her presence and looked up. Their eyes met, and they exchanged a knowing smile.

A man in his fifties, Kenji Glyn, the boss of Willtech, stood beside Marco.

Loraine greeted Kenji with poise and elegance.

Impressed by his conversation with Marco, Kenji chuckled warmly upon seeing Loraine. "So, you're the talented CEO that Marco was raving about?"