

## Chapter 119 The Business Dinner

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Having persevered through a number of episodes, the restoration of the Bryant family's castle was finally completed. This proved that there was no problem with Loraine's plan.

After the restoration, the castle looked more solemn and elegant than ever before, and its structural soundness improved tenfold. The success of the project made Loraine's name even more famous and well-regarded in the industry.

She was soon invited to an important business dinner.

Not only did the guest list include wealthy businessmen, celebrities and elites from all walks of life, but a number of government officials, too. It was a lively scene.

Loraine had come on her own. She wore a white dress, which was a classic choice. With

her brown hair coiled up on top of her head, revealing her slim neck, she looked smart and elegant.

As soon as she arrived, everyone's head turned in her direction.

Even at a distance, Marco could see her across the crowd.

As the CEO of Bryant Group, he stood among the guests.

Lorraine noticed Marco's presence too, but she was trying to avoid any contact with him.

Marco was not about to let her get away that easily. Taking the initiative, he walked over to Lorraine.

In such a confined space, it was inevitable that they'd meet. Lorraine had nowhere to hide.

Noticing that Lorraine was alone, Marco frowned.

"Lorraine, this business dinner isn't as simple as you think. The guests come from different backgrounds. It's risky to attend an event like this on your own; you need a male companion. I can accompany you, if you like."

Marco had a thorough understanding of the business circle. A good-looking and capable woman like Loraine, with no background, was likely to become prey to malicious male counterparts.

He would never let such a thing happen to Loraine.

Marco stood so close that Loraine could smell his cologne. She instinctively took a step back, trying to keep some distance between them.

Marco's words were annoyingly patronizing. How could he look down on her like this?

Was it simply because she was a woman? So what if she was on her own?

Loraine rejected him indifferently. "No, thanks. I can look after myself just fine. I've been on my own all this time without any help from you."

And with that, she left.

Marco stared after her. He was miffed.

How could she be so stubborn? Was it really necessary for her to push him away so resolutely?

Thirty minutes after her encounter with Marco, Loraine was beginning to feel bored.

The reason she attended the dinner party was to meet more outstanding people in her field, but she had no interest in socializing with the crowd.

In a mere half hour, she was already exhausted, longing for a break and wanting to be alone.

Unfortunately for Loraine, she was far too popular and well-known to go unseen.

A flock of investors accosted Loraine and drank toasts to her, one after the other.

"Miss Torres, would you like a drink?"

"Yes, Miss Torres. Let's be friends. Perhaps we'll invite you to draft plans for our villas and office buildings in the future."

They were all articulate while proposing their toasts to Loraine. The truth was, however, that they were just trying to get close to her.

Loraine turned down all the toasts. "I'm sorry. I have a low tolerance for alcohol, so I can't take any more."

Among the men she rejected, a few were

sure to see this as a challenge.

A middle-aged man of medium height pulled a long face.

"Miss Torres, allow me to introduce myself first. My name is Gilmore McCoy and I have been doing business in this field for years. If you want to work in the construction industry, you'd better have a drink with me."

Lorraine raised her eyebrows. "Are you threatening me?"

Gilmore gave her a vague smile and looked her up and down.

"I think you're a smart woman. You've been dating a lot of men since your divorce, haven't you? It's not easy for a single woman to work in the construction industry. I assume you wouldn't mind getting another sponsor?"

Gilmore's seedy gaze made Lorraine feel sick.

"Let's see if you have the capacity to be my sponsor."

Lorraine smiled and reached out one of her hands. She planned to splash her drink all over that wretched man as soon as she got

the glass.

But before she could take the drink, a big, forceful hand took the glass away.

"I'll drink it for her."

Marco appeared at Loraine's side and took her under his wing.

He looked around solemnly. "Who else would like to propose a toast to Loraine? I will drink it all."

The predatory men's plans were dashed by Marco's presence. They were extremely disappointed.

Who would dare force Marco Bryant to drink? Whoever did would most certainly be putting their head in the noose!

Cold sweat poured from Gilmore's forehead. "Mr. Bryant, you are indeed a heavyweight. It just occurred to me that there's something else I need to do. I'm sorry, but I must be leaving."

He rushed away, but soon, he turned back and stared at Marco and Loraine with clenched fists.

As long as Loraine was under Marco's protection, no one dared make a move on her.

Loraine suddenly felt peaceful again. The expression on her face, however, didn't improve.

Marco had all but declared ownership of her just now. Since they had divorced, Loraine didn't want to be treated as Marco's woman. Unfortunately, at present, it seemed like Loraine was unable to rid herself of him.

He followed her closely, which made it very difficult for her to lose him in the crowd.

A waiter suddenly bumped into Loraine, spilling red wine all over her white dress.

"I'm so sorry, miss!"

The waiter bowed his head and apologized profusely.

The wine stains were conspicuous, but Loraine didn't blame the waiter.

"It's okay," she said graciously. "I'll clean it up in the bathroom."

As she spoke, Loraine walked towards the

ladies' room. Seeing that Marco was still tailing her relentlessly, she turned around and teased, "Well, are you planning on following me into the ladies' room?"

Marco froze.

Finally freeing herself of him, Loraine turned around and left. She didn't see that two other men were also following stealthily.

Once she had entered the bathroom, one of the men attached an "Out of Order" sign to the door. The other took out a handkerchief soaked with some kind of liquid.



## Chapter 120 An Unexpected Attack

In the bathroom, Loraine turned on the tap and began gently rubbing the stains off with a towel.

It was so quiet that all that could be heard was the sound of running water trickling into the sink.

It happened so suddenly.

Two figures rushed toward Loraine from behind.

One reached out his arms to hold her down while the other tried to muffle her mouth with a handkerchief. Their movements were strong and swift, like two beasts hunting down a little lamb.

But, unfortunately for them, Loraine was anything but a little lamb.

Loraine spun around as soon as she saw their reflection in the mirror. She sidestepped them abruptly, causing the attackers to rush

into the washstand and crash into each other.

Without hesitation, Loraine violently swung her foot upwards and gave each of them a ferocious kick in their groins.

"Ah!"

"Ah!"

The attackers let out wails of agony and slumped to the floor, their faces twisted in pain and their hands firmly clutching their private parts.

Loraine didn't even think of showing mercy when she kicked them. Both assailants were brawny and about six feet tall, yet both had completely lost strength amid their pain.

Seizing the opportunity, Loraine grabbed the handkerchief from one of the men and gave the other a swift kick in the head.

The poor man's head was bashed against the wall, and he fell unconscious before he could make a sound.

His partner regained enough of his senses to realize what was happening, but he couldn't move because of the pain between his legs.

Loraine couldn't afford to falter. She tightly pressed the handkerchief over his mouth and nose.

The attacker's eyes widened in surprise. After failing to squirm away from her grip, he eventually fainted under the influence of the drug.

Within sixty seconds, Loraine had taken care of two muscular men by herself.

Tossing away the handkerchief, Loraine breathed hard as large drops of perspiration glistened on her forehead. Her heart was still racing, but her adrenaline dropped back down to a normal level.

She let out a deep breath, trembling slightly as she reflected on what had happened.

She had sensed something off when she entered the bathroom. She had a strange feeling that someone was watching her.

So she remained alert even when she was cleaning her dress.

Loraine saw the two men follow her in when she spotted their reflection in the bathroom mirror. Her self-defense instinct was

immediately alert, and her body switched into fight mode.

Who could sneak into the ladies' restroom like this? They must have tailed her on purpose. No doubt, these men were after her.

Fortunately, she took the caution to prepare in advance so she could take the initiative and fight back just in time.

Loraine bent down and examined the two assailants carefully. They were going to be unconscious for a while. They looked like ordinary people and were even dressed in waiter outfits.

The handkerchief was laced with a soporiferous agent, a very effective and powerful one.

Why would they do this to her? She didn't even know who they were.

Loraine frowned and searched through their clothes. She managed to find something.

There was a room card for the presidential suite in one of the men's pockets. The room was located on the top floor of the hotel.

Why would a waiter have this on him?

Someone must have ordered them to do it.

What did this mysterious person want? Did they intend to get her drugged and dragged into the presidential suite?

Lorraine narrowed her eyes and contemplated with the room card in her hand.

Meanwhile, Marco had been waiting for Lorraine for so long that he finally realized something was wrong.

He rushed to the ladies' room and stopped when he saw a maintenance sign hanging on the door.

His face darkened.

Despite the inappropriate entry, Marco barged into the bathroom.

"Lorraine!" Marco shouted in alarm when he burst in.

There was no one in the bathroom, but there were signs of a fight on the floor. The faint scent of the soporiferous drug was still hanging in the air.

Something happened to Lorraine!

Marco stared around in shock, but it wasn't

long till a fiery, uncontrollable rage came over him.

Bang!

He smashed the cold, hard washstand with his fist, gritting his teeth. The pain sobered him.

It must have been one of the guests who dared to carry out their scheme in this place. If Marco's hunch was right, the conspirator must still be here.

Marco dashed back to the banquet hall, enraged.

The attendees were still busy having the time of their lives. But, in Marco's eyes, any of them were suspects who conspired to attack Loraine.

Marco clenched his fists tightly and ordered his men, "Lock this entire place down. Search everyone!"

A group of bodyguards, suited up in sharp black uniforms, swarmed into the hall and executed Marco's command immediately.

The guests erupted in panic. The business dinner suddenly fell into chaos.

"Mr. Bryant, what is the meaning of this?"

Klein was the first to inquire about the situation.

Marco swept through the hall with an austere expression. His voice rang with a suppressed fury. "Lorraine is missing. I suspect that one of the guests has kidnapped her. Everyone here is a suspect. I will turn this place upside down and force the truth out myself!"

"What? Miss Torres is missing?" Klein's eyebrows knit together in bewilderment.

Marco did not have the patience to explain to Klein. He turned to his people and told them to seal off the hotel completely.

Klein frowned. "I understand that you're worried about her, but the guests present today are not ordinary people. There are entrepreneurs and government officials. You'd better calm down."

Marco was in no mood to take suggestions.

"Save it. I don't care who they are. No one is allowed to move until I find Lorraine!"