

Chapter 395 Jewelry Store

Upon ending the call, Loraine's frustration only grew.

Her phone buzzed suddenly, and she saw a message from Obot.

"Loraine, don't be down. Marco is a jerk. He's not worth your pity."

Witnessing Marco berate himself under a different persona, Loraine felt both furious and amused. She typed back forcefully, "I'm not pitying him! He's a complete jerk!"

Holding his phone anxiously, Marco hadn't intended to annoy Loraine.

Due to his clumsy speech and chaotic mood, he only dared to console Loraine as Obot.

Upon receiving a response from Loraine, Marco breathed a sigh of relief and felt a weight lift off his shoulders.

He preferred Loraine's hatred over her shutting him out.

With Marco's help, the online rumors about Laura and Marina quickly died down. Loraine chose not to sue them.

Internet users gradually turned their focus to the president of Cheap and Fine Group.

Davy's love story with his wife became public, and people found it charming. Cheap and Fine Group gained many admirers.

Before long, Universe Group and Bryant Group officially revealed their collaboration with Cheap and Fine Group.

Suddenly, the new business district project was Vagow's hottest topic, and everyone wanted in.

The day after the news broke, Jennie sought out Loraine.

"Ahhh! Lorrie!"

Jennie rushed towards her. Loraine embraced her, feeling helpless.

"What's going on?"

"Lorrie, did you partner with Davy Jones?"

Loraine nodded and noticed her friend's face had grown rounder. She playfully squeezed Jennie's cheeks and said contentedly, "You must've had a great time lately."

Jennie shrieked, "It's all because of this course! Can you believe it? My family forced me into a fashion boot camp a few days ago. It's so exhausting."

Jennie pinched her own face, looking sad, and then changed the subject.

"Enough about me. How did you persuade Davy to join? He's a multinational corporation's CEO! Plus, Bryant Group must've offered you a huge share of the profits, right?"

Loraine was taken aback. "What?"

Aware that Marco had been handling the scandal involving Laura and her daughter, she had been angry with him and hadn't kept up with the internet news.

Jennie pulled out her phone and opened the statement from Bryant Group. Loraine squinted her eyes.

This wasn't the arrangement they had agreed upon earlier. Bryant Group had not only handed over most of the profits but also granted majority control to Universe Group.

Loraine's feelings were conflicted, and her mind was in disarray.

Was this Marco's so-called compensation?

Did he believe that she wouldn't be mad at him if he made amends like this?

"Lorrie!"

Jennie suddenly threw her arms around Loraine's neck and behaved like a spoiled child. Loraine smiled helplessly and asked, "What's the matter?"

"Lorrie, I want to join your project and open a jewelry store on the shopping street!"

Loraine gently stroked her soft hair, surprised. "You?"

Her dear friend was someone who never pursued anything. Hearing such serious words from Jennie was unnerving.

Jennie sniffled and nodded vigorously, "Yes. I am destined for success. Just you wait and see!"

Loraine chuckled. "What prompted you to start a store? I remember you saying you cherished freedom and lacked ambition, right?"

"Ugh, don't remind me!"

Jennie covered Loraine's mouth with her hands, making a pouty face.

"It's all because of my exceptional friend. My family keeps comparing me to you. They believe if I work as diligently as you, I can inherit the family business."

Loraine couldn't help but laugh.

Jennie scrunched her nose, grumbling, "I told them I could just rely on you, but my parents kicked me out. They said unless I reclaimed the partnership, I couldn't return home."

Loraine smiled softly, asking, "What's your take on it? If your parents are forcing you into business, I wouldn't advise joining the project. It's quite challenging."

Jennie fell quiet for a moment.

In fact, she had started managing her family's enterprise. Accustomed to idleness, she found it exhausting.

However, she also wished to be strong enough to support Loraine. If Loraine faced trouble, Jennie wanted to be there for her.

Jennie said firmly, "Lorrie! I'm not being coerced, and my family can help you too."

Jennie's family held significant influence in the jewelry sector, setting industry trends. Their involvement in the CBD would certainly benefit Universe Group.

Loraine's heart warmed.

"Excellent news! The upcoming commercial district expansion will bring in investments by auctioning off prime storefront locations on the main strip. With your family's



+120 Points at most influence, securing a prime spot is practically a guarantee!"

Jennie exclaimed with enthusiasm, "Then I must claim the top position!"

Seeing her friend's joy, Loraine felt relieved. However, remembering Marco would also bid, her mood dampened.



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Chapter 396 Undercurrent

The announcement of a joint bidding by Bryant Group and Universe Group ignited a fresh surge of excitement.

Nearly every company in Vagow communicated their eagerness and interest to participate in the bidding.

After all, even Jennie's family, primarily focused on the jewelry business, couldn't resist such a sought-after project, so it was natural that others wanted in.

This left Loraine swamped with work.

Thankfully, Cayson had returned from his vacation after visiting her at the Torres family residence, providing much-needed assistance in preparing for the bidding.

Lorraine's mood had been down these days, but Cayson's help in the bidding process lifted her spirits.

She exhaled and expressed her gratitude. "Cayson, thank you. I wanted you to relax, but I never anticipated you'd go out of your way to help me."

"Is there a need for such formality between us?" Cayson grinned. "However, Lorrie, if you truly want to show your appreciation, you could accompany me to the bidding, sparing me the trouble of finding a female partner."

Lorraine hesitated.

Cayson's eyes darkened, and with a smile, he suggested, "Jennie will be at the bidding too, right? If you decline, I

might have to ask her to be my companion."

His remark eliminated Loraine's uncertainty.

It was merely a friendly social engagement. Why should she question his intentions?

Worried Cayson might misinterpret her hesitation, Loraine smiled and agreed, "Never mind. Jennie has been swamped lately. I'll be your female companion."

Soon, the day of the bidding arrived, and Loraine accompanied Cayson to the event.

Before it started, Loraine went backstage to check on the preparations to ensure nothing went wrong.

As fate would have it, she encountered Marco.

Marco, accompanied only by Carl and dressed in a suit with a stoic expression, appeared normal once again, as though his vulnerability that day had been a mere figment of her imagination.

Since their last argument, this was the first time they had crossed paths, creating a slightly awkward atmosphere.

"Loraine..." Marco attempted to halt her. He intended to apologize to Loraine, but upon seeing Cayson next to her, his eyes darkened. "Why is he here?"

"Lorrie and I are both CEOs of Universe Group. It's only natural for us to attend this event together. Do you have a problem with that?" Cayson asked.

The gazes of the two men met, revealing an underlying tension.

Marco scoffed, his words laced with menace. "This project is led by Loraine and me. I heard that you returned without a break. In reality, there's no need for concern. Loraine and I can handle it."

Cayson's expression turned icy.

Loraine's frown deepened, not wanting to engage with Marco. She glanced at Cayson instead.

"Cayson, we're almost set to begin. Let's head out."

Cayson couldn't help but feel smug when he noticed Loraine's reaction.

Angrily, Marco called out, "Loraine!"

Cayson smirked before responding, "Though we're collaborating on this project, Mr. Bryant, there's no need for you to concern yourself with Universe Group's affairs. I hear you're quite the dutiful son, managing to save your family from imprisonment. Impressive!"

Marco's face darkened. He did not care about others' opinions. But he did care about Loraine's.

He had sent her numerous messages, all ignored.

As he conversed with Loraine as Obot, he resorted to sharing work-related matters in hopes of catching her attention.

Despite his efforts, Loraine seldom replied to Obot, seemingly upset and unresponsive to his messages.

He worried his cover had been blown.

Anxiously, he tried to explain, "No, I..."

Lorraine, still irritated, ignored him. Her cold expression remained as she prepared to leave with Cayson.

Desperate, Marco attempted to keep her there.

Cayson intervened, "Anything else? Lorrie and I must get ready for the bidding. If there's nothing more, please step aside."

Disregarding Cayson, Marco dejectedly pulled his hand back, seeing Lorraine's unresponsive face.

Lorraine scoffed and departed without a backward glance at Marco.

All Marco could do was watch them leave, consumed by disappointment.

Once they were away from Marco, Cayson regarded Lorraine with worry.

"Lorrie, are you alright? If you're not up for it, you can leave. I'll handle the bidding."

Cayson wished Lorraine would distance herself from Marco and avoid Bryant Group-related projects.

Lorraine's expression softened as she shook her head. "I'm fine. As a sponsor, I must be present for the bidding."

However, realizing the other sponsor was Marco, she knew she couldn't escape him. Annoyed, Lorraine bit her lip and sighed.

